



# CASTOR CANADENSIS

Newsletter of the Jedediah Smith Society • University of the Pacific, Stockton, California

FALL 2024

## Following the Smith Route 1828 – 1829, by Lance Holter

One of the benefits of membership to the Jedediah Smith Society is a great collection of interactive interpretive maps which follow, year by year the adventures and travels of Ashely's Brigade and the subsequent routes of Jedediah Strong Smith, David Jackson and William Sublette.

This summer June/July 2024 I used the 1829 route maps to familiarize myself with Smith's return in March of 1829, from his winter of 1828 spent with The Hudson Bay Company at Fort Vancouver to the Flathead Post on the Clark's Fork of the Columbia River, Montana, thence according to the Burr Map<sup>(1)</sup> up the Thompson River and over to the Head of Flathead Lake (near Kalispell) to meet up with David Jackson's trappers then South through Missoula and the Bitterroot Valley, over Gibbon's Pass and Lemi Pass, Idaho to Pierre's Hole, Henry's Lake and to the headwaters of the Madison River at Madison Lake, now underwater from the Hebgen reservoir.

When one follows these routes one earns a great respect for the immense landscapes, miles of unknown (to American trappers) country crisscrossed with streams, rivers, valleys and mountain ranges, together with the continuous threat of Blackfoot Indian raiders. We must ask ourselves, How did these intrepid explorers find and locate each other within this vast wilderness? For example, one must wonder how difficult would it be for Jedediah, traveling from Ft. Vancouver in 1829, to track down David Jackson's men at the head of Flathead Lake after their last meeting with the July, 1827 Bear Lake Rendezvous. After all, Smith had returned to California in the fall of 1827, suffered the massacre and kidnapping of 12 in his party at the Mojave River, then collecting his men from the 1826 expedition, traveled up the California and Pacific Coast, suffered another great loss and massacre on the Umpqua River in Oregon where 15 members of the party were killed including Smith's trusted friend and clerk Harrison Rogers and then spent the winter of 1828 with the Hudson Bay Company at Ft. Vancouver.<sup>(2)</sup>

Meanwhile, after the 1827 July Rendezvous, other trappers of the Smith/Jackson and Sublette company made their way North past the Salmon River, Henry's fork, crossing the Continental Divide and descended to Yellowstone Lake, describing a lake "100 by 40 miles in diameter, and as clear as crystal. On the South border of the Lake is a number of hot and boiling springs.... resembling a mush pot and throwing particles to the immense height of from

20 to 30 feet."<sup>(3)</sup> Thus becoming one of the first descriptions of Yellowstone Lake known to geographers and mapmakers of that time.

This new country was immense, and disaster after disaster befell the company in 1828. Together with the Umpqua Massacre, Samuel Tullock with Ute and Shoshone allies were attacked by Blackfeet, several were killed, most of their furs, belongings and horses were stolen. 20 men returning from the Columbia River to the Great Salt Lake depot became lost in the Southern Oregon wildlands, with four members never seen again.<sup>(4)</sup>

The various detachments, after traveling these vast distances, met in the fall of 1828 at the Great Salt Lake. Still Jedediah Smith had not appeared. William Sublette traveled that fall/winter to St. Louis with that year's pelts, leaving St. Louis in March of 1829 with fresh horses, mules, merchandise and 60 more men to rendezvous on the Popo Agie (Riverton, Wyoming) on the first of July. Afterwards Sublette set out to find Smith in the Snake River country, where the company had expected Jed to return. Sublette traveled up the Wind River, over Union Pass, down the Hoback River to the Snake River and up the Snake to meet up with David Jackson at Jackson Lake and Jackson's Hole valley. Not finding Jedediah Smith there, the company sent parties in all directions to locate him—finally the Sublette supply train met up with Jedediah Strong Smith together with 165 company trappers at Pierre's Hole on August 5, 1829.<sup>(5)</sup>

After what must have been a great reunion between Smith, Jackson and Sublette, especially after having been the survivors of all this, it was a sigh of relief for the camp to share their stories and enjoy the items in Sublette's supply train. The company then hunted and trapped along the Henry's Fork, and in October moved "...North and East through the North Pass to Missouri lake (Madison Lake at Hebgen), the source of the Madison Fork,

### Table of Contents

Following the Smith Route 1828 – 1829 .....	1–2
Upcoming Rendezvous .....	2
In Memoria Philip Berolzheimer.....	2
President's Message .....	3
Gift of Membership & Donations .....	3
What's New on the Website .....	3
Newsletter Guidelines .....	3
Green River Rendezvous 2024.....	4

Continued on page 2

a region rich in furs but dangerous through the presence of the Blackfeet. Smith assumed general command. For a time the men were unmolested and in November pushed still farther north and east, across the Gallatin fork into the lofty divide between that stream and the Yellowstone. On their way a band of Blackfeet pounced upon them, killing two of their number. “The rest of the company fled, in scattered groups, into the nearby mountains and without further loss of life reunited on “the Stinking Fork” of the Big Horn River (the Shoshone River near Cody, Wyoming), caching their furs at the Big Horn. The entire company returned South and West making their first winter camp in the Wind River Valley, Wyoming. The winter there proved too severe. With grass running out for their animals, the company decided to move to their final winter camp on the Powder River until the spring of 1830.<sup>(6)</sup>

It is notable that among the members of this expedition to Winter Camp were Smith, Sublette, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Joseph L. Meek, and James Bridger among others.

*Lance Holter spent his early years in Wyoming and in the San Bernardino Mountains on the Western Edge of the Mojave Desert and currently lives in Salt Lake City, Utah and Maui where he works as a self-employed building and plumbing contractor, real estate broker and planning consultant. Lance is a former Peace Corps volunteer who served in Tunisia, North Africa 1972-73 building water wells in the Maghreb Mountains of the Sahara Desert. As a serious Western Americana history student he spends as much time as possible fly fishing in the western rivers and lakes known to be the territories of the fur trappers, early explorers and those indigenous peoples who call those lands their home.*

1. *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*. Dale L. Morgan. Bison Books- University of Nebraska Press 1953,1964. pp 16-17.
2. *Jedediah Smith No Ordinary Mountain Man*. Barton H. Barbour. University of Oklahoma Press 2009. pp. 221-224.
3. *Explorations of William H. Ashley and Jedediah Smith, 1822-1829*. Harrison Clifford Dale. Bison Books- University of Nebraska Press 1941, 1991. pp 286-288.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 291
5. *Ibid*, pp. 292
6. *Ibid*, pp. 293-294

## Upcoming Rendezvous

### Red Bluff Rendezvous April 28, 2025 proposed by Jim Ocallaghan

Meeting in Red Bluff, CA. The hotel for this overnight rendezvous will be announced in the Winter edition of Castor.

Smith's trip up the Sacramento Valley was a slow one. Trapping as they went, slowed by mires and sloughs, they reached their farthest point up the Sacramento River near Red Bluff on April 10, 1828. At this point, Smith, evaluating the mountains around him, chose to abandon an attempt to leave California by a northerly or easterly route and instead headed in a westerly direction to the coast and north to the Columbia River and Fort Vancouver.

### Southern California Rendezvous 2025 proposed by Art Hurley

This Rendezvous envisions visiting the monuments / locations mentioned in our “Jedediah Smith And His Monuments” book between Bakersfield and Mission San Gabriel Archangel in the LA basin. It can be done in reverse in an easy two days. To my knowledge there is no marker or monument in the area of the old Pueblo of Los Angeles (Olivera Street Downtown), but the Avila house exists there and was visited by Smith.

Complete details, times, and proposed routes for both rendezvous are available on the website.

## In Memoriam Philip C Berolzheimer

Philip C. Berolzheimer, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, passed away peacefully at his home in Chester, ID on August 19, 2024. Philip leaves behind a legacy of leadership, love, and lasting contributions to his family, community, and industry. Born into a lineage of entrepreneurs who revolutionized the pencil and pencil slat industries, Philip carried forward the family tradition with dedication and innovation.

Philip was born in Oakland, CA on December 20, 1934, and raised in Stockton, CA. He attended prep school at the Cate School in Carpinteria, CA, and graduated from Harvard

University with a degree in Geology in 1957. He later completed the Harvard Business School, PMD Program to strengthen his business skills. He served in the United States Army as a cartographer and was stationed in Japan. During his time in Japan, he proposed to Anne Watkin, his college sweetheart, who would become his lifelong partner and the mother of his three children, with whom he shared a loving and devoted marriage for 65 years.

To read more about Philip's life, to pay respects to the family, or to plant a tree in his honor, visit [baxterfh.com/obituary/philip-berolzheimer](http://baxterfh.com/obituary/philip-berolzheimer)

## President's Comments - Rich Cimino

I hope all of you have had an enjoyable summer. Although Jedediah Smith Society activities slow down during the summer, the leadership has been busy adding legacy material to the website this year, working on the *Castor* to be issued in a timely manner and thinking about how to celebrate Jed's entry into California.

Allow me to introduce myself to you as the new President of the Society. In April of 2024, President Milton von Damm offered an unexpected resignation for health reasons. At that time, I stepped up and volunteered to be nominated and confirmed by vote for President of the Society.

I have been a member of the Society for 26 years, a board member three times, and a leader of two Rendezvous. I was rewarded by not losing a single board member. You should know that the Society is on solid ground and continues to offer you consistency in our mission, our membership, rendezvous field trips, and twice-a-year *Castor* publication

The Society is proud to announce that we will be using outside services for the *Castor* publication. We are fortunate to have the talented Lisa Thompson, who also serves as the Society webmaster, leading this initiative. Her expertise and dedication will undoubtedly enhance the quality of our publication. To keep

mail and printing costs under control, we will also occasionally communicate with you via email.

Also of interest, two board members are suggesting field trips for the spring and summer of 2025. Announcements and dates are in this issue of the *Castor*.

As your Society's President, I focus on maintaining a fully functional Society with membership meetings, the publication of the *Castor*, and an active website that forecasts the Society's activities. I am especially focused on the 200th anniversary of Jedediah Smith entering California. While 2027 is several years away, now is a good time to begin thinking about what interests you, the membership. If you have suggestions, or want to volunteer on a local level to elevate the recognition of Jed's achievements, please email me at [president@jedediahsmithsociety.org](mailto:president@jedediahsmithsociety.org). Please send me your suggestions for improving any area of the Society for consideration.

In the hopes of having more Society members attend our membership and board meeting, we will hold our next meeting (live and online) in Napa, CA on Saturday, November 2, 2025. The meeting facility address is 1230 Olive Hill Lane, Napa California 94558.

### The Gift of Membership

Membership is a key element to our existence as an historical society. This holiday season, please consider giving the gift of Jedediah Strong Smith Society membership to a friend, family member or a local historical museum.

Visit [jedediahsmithsociety.org](http://jedediahsmithsociety.org)

### What's New on the Website

You can find and order the wall map and the bibliography, learn about upcoming events, order *Castors* and other publications. You will also find a complete list of board members; and you can pay membership dues and make donations to the society.

Visit [jedediahsmithsociety.org](http://jedediahsmithsociety.org)

### Donations

Your generous donations will fund our education and outreach efforts regarding Jed's work and life, and will make membership events and Rendezvous possible. Mail contributions to Arthur Hurley, 1230 Olive Hill Lane, Napa, CA 94558 or online at [jedediahsmithsociety.org/donations](http://jedediahsmithsociety.org/donations)

*We are a 501c3 nonprofit; all gifts are fully tax deductible.*

### Castor Canadensis Newsletter Guidelines

The *Castor* is your publication and your contributions are welcome. Please write to [president@jedediahsmithsociety.org](mailto:president@jedediahsmithsociety.org) with your proposed ideas and to learn about specific guidelines for articles.

- Submit articles in Microsoft Word, photos welcome.
- After receipt, the article will be reviewed by a technical editor. Once this is completed the author will be notified.
- Please note the *Castor Canadensis* is not responsible for either the research or the opinions of the writer.



## Green River Rendezvous 2024, by Lance Holter

While re-tracing the route of Jedediah Strong Smith's 1829 trip through Pierre's Hole, Idaho to the Madison River at Yellowstone, Montana, I was fortunate to attend the Green River Rendezvous, July 11 – 14, 2024 on the grounds of the Museum of The Mountain Man, at Pinedale, Wyoming.

On Friday, July 12, I visited the re-enactment camp featuring a number of hour-long symposiums, discussions and demonstrations on various topics of the fur trapper era. It was a fascinating experience and a education. A lecture on Plains Indian hand talking (sign language), began the morning; then an authentic trapper camp set up with equipment; and demonstration and discussion on the Flintlock and Hawken percussion cap rifles used by the woodsmen of the era. This was followed by a lecture on the natural history of the North American beaver, 1820s trapping methodology and history with beaver skinning, hide stretching and hide pressing demonstrations.



Gallatin Range



Fur Trapper Camp

The “problem beavers” were trapped and supplied from a Utah stream and provided by the professional trappers who gave the lecture. There was a fire-making demonstration using flint, steel and cotton cloth. The museum grounds had a dozen authentic trapper and Indian camps with authentic re-enactments of each camp and its equipment. A lecture and discussion on tipi construction and setup was part of the symposium presentation.

What was most interesting was the ability to move amongst each camp and visit with the individual re-enactors, talk story, and share one's interest and point of view. I was very impressed with their scholarly and deep knowledge of the era, both woodsman and American Indian culture. It was notable how absolutely authentic each camp site and dress had been prepared. The participants had mostly made and sewn their own clothing and dress. The re-enactors were thoroughly engaged in bringing back that period of history. For example, there was no evidence of plastic use; the rope and tack was leather; and the

iron fixtures were made by a blacksmith's hand. A true example of a living history museum.

Later in the day and into the evening the authors and editors of The Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Journal, Vol 18, 2024, were present and were honored for their work. A speaker, Jay H. Buckley, honored history professor Fred R. Gowans (1936-2023) in memoriam. Amongst his notable works was Rocky Mountain Rendezvous and lectures on John Colter and Jim Bridger. The next Green River Rendezvous will be July 10-13, 2025 at the Museum of The Mountain Man, Pinedale, Wyoming. Information available at the Museum Website. ([mmmuseum.com](http://mmmuseum.com))



Jedediah Smith Society  
1322 Shattuck Ave. Apt. 401  
Berkeley, CA 94709