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Mormon Trail, The

William Hill

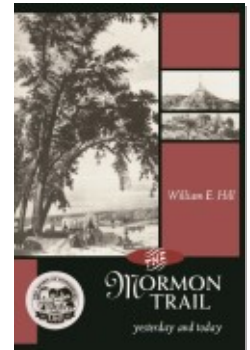
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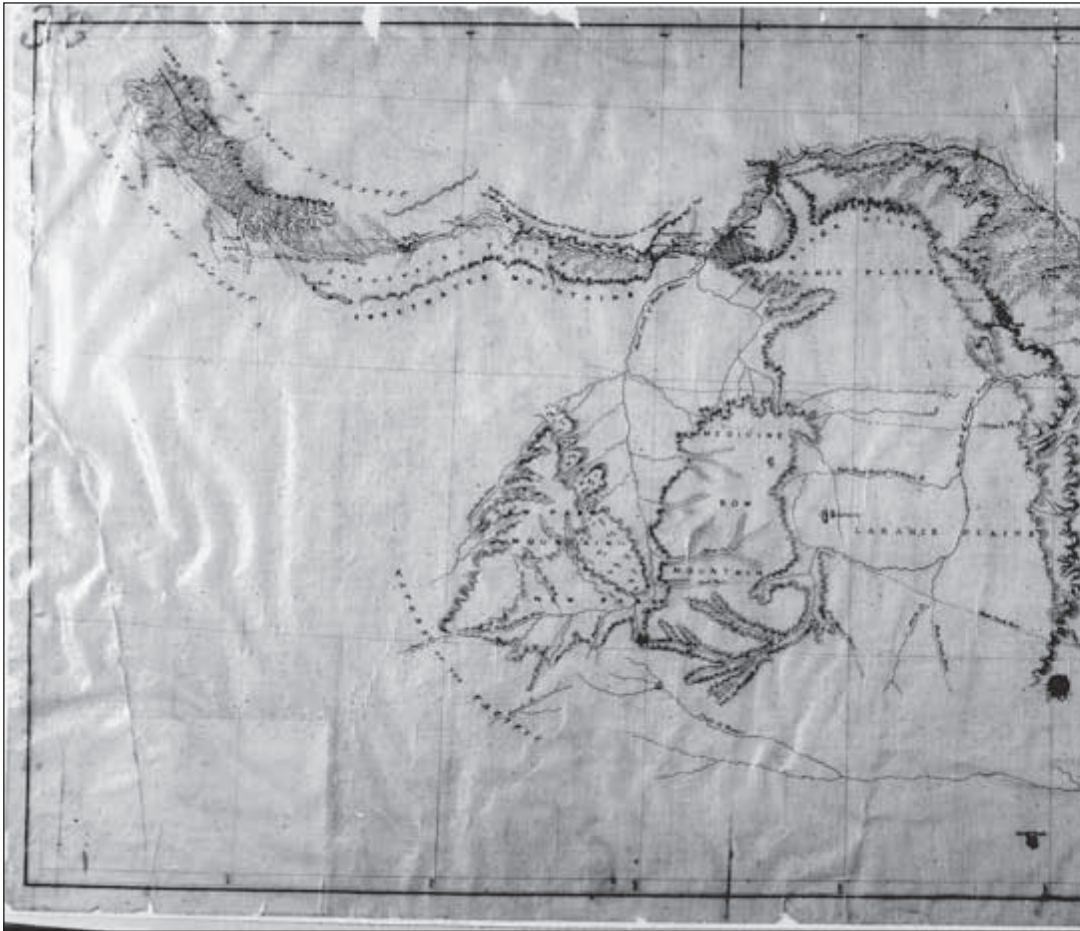
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Maps

BY 1845 IT HAD BEEN DETERMINED THAT THE MORMONS COULD NO longer safely remain in the Illinois area. However, their leadership, under Brigham Young, had yet to determine where they would establish their new Zion. The decision had been made to move west, but not to a specific location. Earlier some had talked of Texas, Oregon, California, or the isolated area of the Great Basin. It seems that, before his death, Prophet Joseph Smith had even prophesied that their Zion would be found in the Rocky Mountains. Two major problems faced by Brigham Young and the other leaders involved the determination of the exact location where they would finally settle and the route to be used to safely bring the Mormons to their “promised land.”

To a certain degree the solution was made for them. The main route west was the route used by the Oregon and California emigrants, which followed the Platte River and North Platte. Therefore, that route was the most likely choice. The emigrants and the traders before them had used a variety of jumping-off sites from the Independence, Missouri, area, north to the Council Bluffs, Iowa, area. By establishing the Mormon camp called “Winter Quarters” in the Indian lands on the west side of the Missouri and the north side of the Platte, not only were the Mormons temporarily providing themselves with some degree of safety from further persecution from the Gentiles, but it also became more likely that they would use the route along the north side of the Platte River. Research indicates that as early as June of 1846 Brigham Young was already seriously considering the Valley of the Great Salt Lake or the Bear River Valley in the Great Basin area. By mid-1847 California was ruled out in favor of the more isolated Great Basin area, and the final decision was made to settle the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Still, in 1846, the specifics of the actual route to follow and exact location of their new Zion had yet to be determined.



FRÉMONT-PREUSS MAP OF 1843—National Archives

M A P

TO ILLUSTRATE AN EXPLORATION OF THE COUNTRY,
lying between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, on the line of the
NEBRASKA or PLATTE RIVER.

By LIEUT. J. C. TREMONT, of the CORPS OF TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS.

1846

THE MAPS DRAWN BY TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS



These problems were also in part solved by the use of existing maps and guides available to the Mormons. The Mormons discussed developing their own guidebook and set of trail maps. While they did publish their own guidebook, they never developed their own set of maps. There were, however, a number of maps that played a significant role in the development of the Mormon route west during their first year of migration in 1847. The maps by John Charles Frémont and Charles Preuss, S. Augustus Mitchell, and Lansford Hastings all helped to show them the way. Even though the T. H. Jefferson map was not available until 1849, it is also included in this section because it shows nearly the whole route and was available to later emigrating Mormons.

The first significant map was the Frémont–Preuss Map of 1843. Lieutenant, and later Captain, John Charles Frémont’s exploration expeditions of 1842 and then 1843–44 resulted in the trail to Oregon being recorded and mapped from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon. Charles Preuss served as his cartographer and deserves much of the credit for the high quality of their maps. Their information was incorporated into most of the maps that were produced by other cartographers. After each expedition the results were made public. The 1845 report included a map of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. In 1846 a seven-section “Topographical Map of the Road from Missouri to Oregon” was produced and available. Its scale was ten miles to an inch. Originally it was part of Frémont’s reports to Congress. More than 10,000 copies were printed and devoured by Congress and the public. Reproductions of these seven-section strip maps may still be purchased today and you can use them as you follow along the route. The 1843 map was a single large map. Joseph Smith had a copy of it in Nauvoo, and William Clayton and Brigham Young had seen it. They were also in the possession of Frémont’s seven-section maps when they left from Winter Quarters in 1847 for their new promised land. While the Frémont–Preuss maps traced the route on the south side of the Platte and the Mormons largely followed the north bank of the river, the maps served as useful references once the Mormon Pioneers reached Grand Island, where Frémont’s route joined the Platte River. At Fort Laramie the Mormons crossed the Platte to the south side. There they joined the established “Oregon Trail,” mapped by Frémont, and generally followed it to Fort Bridger. At that point the Oregon Trail turned northwest to head for Fort Hall and then on to Oregon. The Mormons, however, headed southwest to follow the route proposed by Hastings and taken in 1846 by some California-bound companies which included emigrants George Donner, James Reed, Heinrich Lienhard, and Edwin Bryant.

Also included are portions of two of Frémont's section maps and his map of Salt Lake. The section maps show Frémont's route from Ash (Hollow) Creek on map section II where the trail meets the North Fork after the trail crosses over from the South Platte to Scotts Bluff on map section III. Scotts Bluff is located about in the middle of the map where the trail moves away from the river to bypass the bluffs that appear to come down to touch the river. That portion of the trail also coincides with the pages from Clayton's guidebook and the different diary accounts included later in the book. Look at the corresponding pictorial section also. The Frémont map of the Great Salt Lake was part of Frémont's reports to Congress and would also have been available at that time.

Another important map of 1846 was S. Augustus Mitchell's "A New Map of Texas, Oregon and California." It was available before the outcome of the Mexican War. It is considered to be the most up-to-date map produced at that time, and it included the most current information based on Frémont's, Charles Wilkes's, and William Emory's works. The only major area that was lacking in reliable detail was what was labelled "the Great Interior of California," or the Great Basin, as we know it today. There appear to have been two versions of the map produced in 1846. One minor difference is that the earlier edition had a chart listing Independence as the starting point of the Oregon route, while the later version had Westport as its beginning. Brigham Young had a copy of one of Augustus's maps for reference on his journey west. Augustus's book with its folded map was small enough to be carried in a shirt pocket. This is a close-up of the map showing the section near the Great Salt Lake. The map shows the main Oregon Trail along the North Platte, through the South Pass, over the Sublette Cutoff to the Bear River and up to and along the Snake River. It does not show the trail southwest of the South Pass to Fort Bridger which the Mormons followed.

The next item shown is the very important Lansford Hastings map copied by hand by Thomas Bullock, "Clerk of the Camp of Israel." It was copied from an original map given to Samuel Brannan and Charles Smith by Hastings in early 1847 while they were in California before their return journey to meet the main party of Mormons on their way west. They met the Mormon Pioneer Company on the Green River east of Fort Bridger and gave the map and waybill to Brigham Young. The waybill, originally written by Hastings, is included later in the guidebook section. While there had been some references to Hastings's map and waybill in Thomas Bullock's journal, they have only recently been located. While the map is rather crude compared to the maps discussed

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP
OF 1852

ROAD FROM MISSOURI TO ARKANSAS

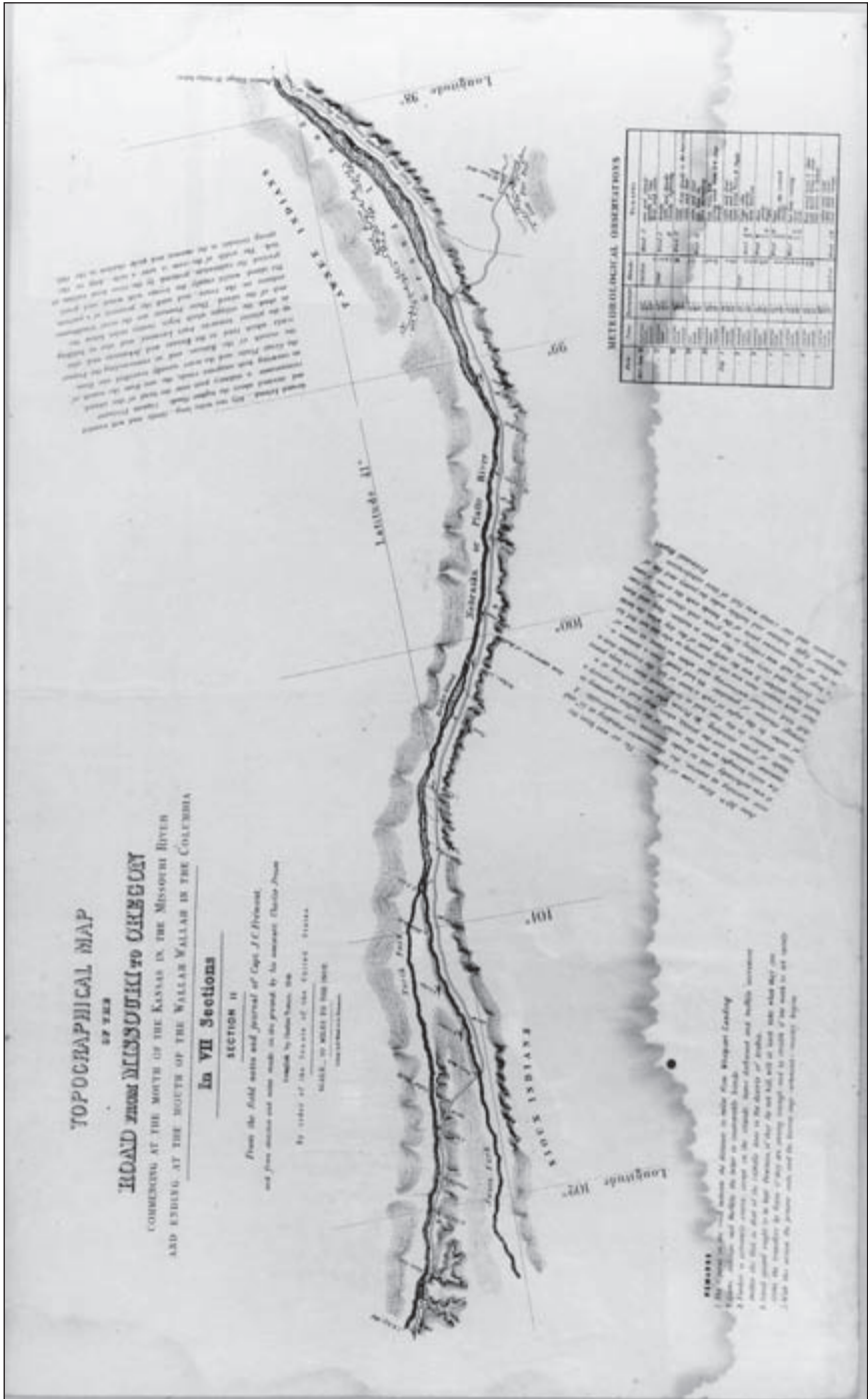
COMING AT THE MOUTH OF THE KANSAS IN THE MISSOURI RIVER
AND ENDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE WALLAR MALLAR IN THE COLUMBIA

In VII Sections

SECTION II

From the field notes and journal of Capt. J.C. Fremont,
and from various other sources, as far as possible, by the assistance of Charles Jones,
Lieutenant, U.S. Army, 1846.

By order of the Secretary of War, GEORGE B. MEADE, Major General,
U.S. Army.



METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

DATE	TIME	TEMPERATURE	WIND	MOON	STATE OF SKY	STATE OF SURFACE	STATE OF AIR	STATE OF WATER	STATE OF SOIL	STATE OF VEGETATION	STATE OF ANIMALS	STATE OF MAN
1846	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858

From the field notes and journal of Capt. J.C. Fremont, and from various other sources, as far as possible, by the assistance of Charles Jones, Lieutenant, U.S. Army, 1846. By order of the Secretary of War, GEORGE B. MEADE, Major General, U.S. Army.

REMARKS: The Missouri River is the largest river in the world. It is the only river in the world that flows from the mountains to the sea. The Missouri River is the only river in the world that flows from the mountains to the sea. The Missouri River is the only river in the world that flows from the mountains to the sea.

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP
OF THE

ROAD FROM MISSOURI TO OREGON

COMMENCING AT THE MOUTH OF THE KANSAS IN THE MISSOURI RIVER
AND ENDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE WALLAW WALLAW IN THE COLUMBIA

In VII Sections

SECTION III

From the field notes and journal of Capt. J.C. Fremont

and from sketches and notes made on the ground by his assistants Charles Price

Command by Indian Names, etc.

By order of the SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

SCALE—20 MILES TO AN INCH

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF THE ROAD FROM MISSOURI TO OREGON COMMENCING AT THE MOUTH OF THE KANSAS IN THE MISSOURI RIVER AND ENDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE WALLAW WALLAW IN THE COLUMBIA. SECTION III. From the field notes and journal of Capt. J.C. Fremont and from sketches and notes made on the ground by his assistants Charles Price Command by Indian Names, etc. By order of the SECRETARY OF THE ARMY. SCALE—20 MILES TO AN INCH.

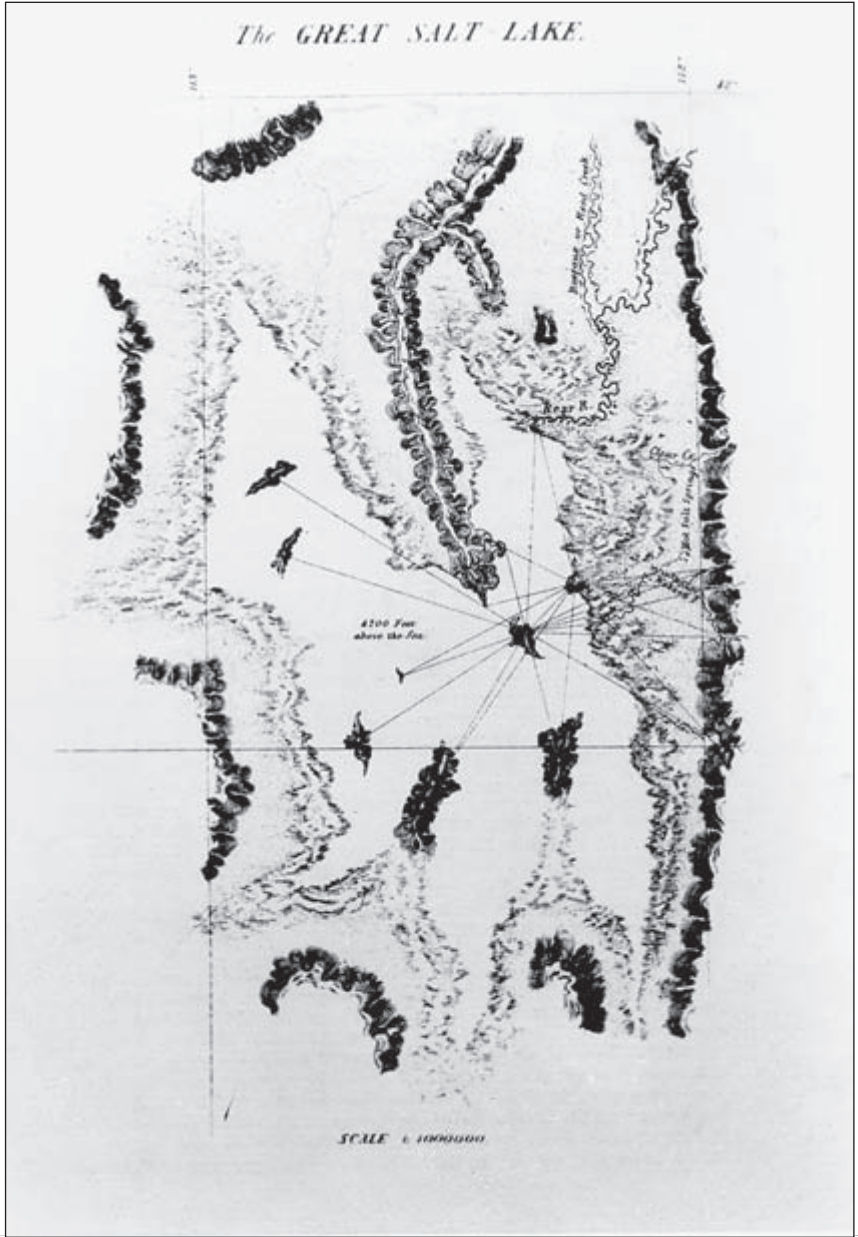


METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Date	Time	Barometer	Thermometer	Wind	Direction	Force	Clouds	Remarks
July 11	5 A.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 11	10 A.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 11	3 P.M.	30.0	60	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 11	8 P.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 11	11 P.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 12	5 A.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 12	10 A.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 12	3 P.M.	30.0	60	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 12	8 P.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 12	11 P.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 13	5 A.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 13	10 A.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 13	3 P.M.	30.0	60	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 13	8 P.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 13	11 P.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 14	5 A.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 14	10 A.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 14	3 P.M.	30.0	60	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 14	8 P.M.	30.0	55	W	10	0	0	Clear
July 14	11 P.M.	30.0	50	W	10	0	0	Clear

REMARKS
 1. The figures in this report indicate the elevation in miles from the Missouri River to the summit of the Sierra Nevada. The figures in the margin indicate the elevation in feet from the level of the sea to the summit of the Sierra Nevada. The figures in the margin indicate the elevation in feet from the level of the sea to the summit of the Sierra Nevada. The figures in the margin indicate the elevation in feet from the level of the sea to the summit of the Sierra Nevada.

FREMONT STRIP MAPS—National Archives



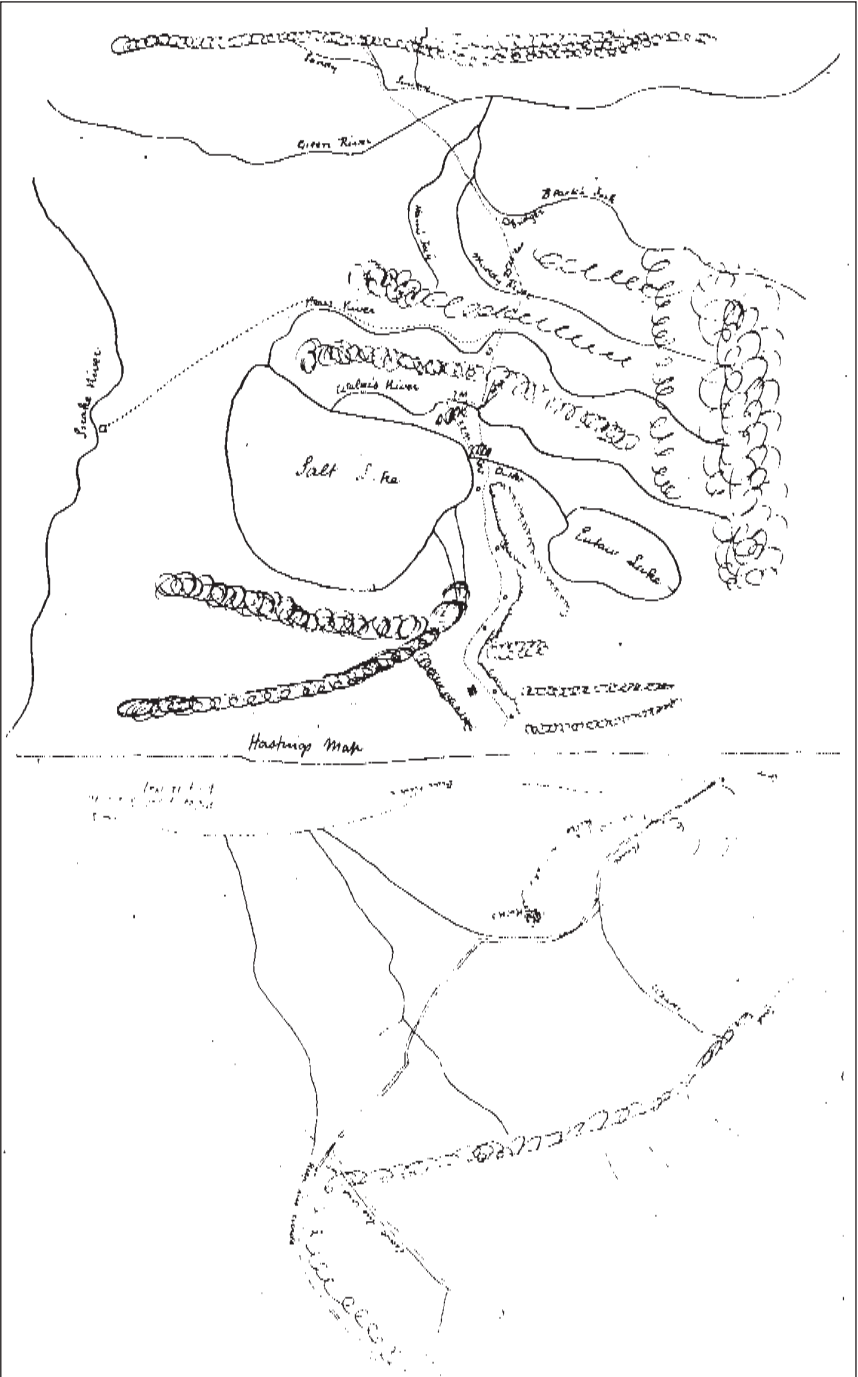
FRÉMONT MAP OF GREAT SALT LAKE—National Archives

above, it is the first copy of a map that showed the route from Fort Bridger to the Salt Lake Valley or what we now know as the end of the Mormon Trail. In recent times this last section of the Mormon Trail has also been called the Pioneer Trail.

The last map is the T. H. Jefferson map. Jefferson had gone west to California in 1846 and then returned east in 1849. He produced a four-section map of the route to California called "Map of the Emigrant Road from Independence, Mo. to St. Francisco, California." It included the route to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Only the third section of his map series is reproduced here. His first two sections are very similar to Frémont's first four sections. (All four sections of the T. H. Jefferson maps are reduced and included in my California Trail book, and the reduced copies of Frémont's seven-section maps are in my Oregon Trail book.) Jefferson had been in one of the companies that listened to Hastings's advice and took his cutoff southwest from Fort Bridger to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake and then finally farther west to meet the main California Trail. From Fort Bridger the early emigrant parties followed a route southwest to Echo Canyon down to the Weber River and Canyon. The Donner Party followed Hastings's advice to cut over the Wasatch Mountains instead of going down the very difficult Weber River Canyon. The Mormon companies followed the tracks left by the Donner wagons. Jefferson's map was not available to the first Mormon parties in 1847 and 1848, but it was available to the migrants in 1849.



MITCHELL MAP—S. Augustus Mitchell, *A New Map of Texas, Oregon, and California*



HASTINGS-BULLOCK MAP—LDS Archives



T. H. JEFFERSON MAP—Library of Congress



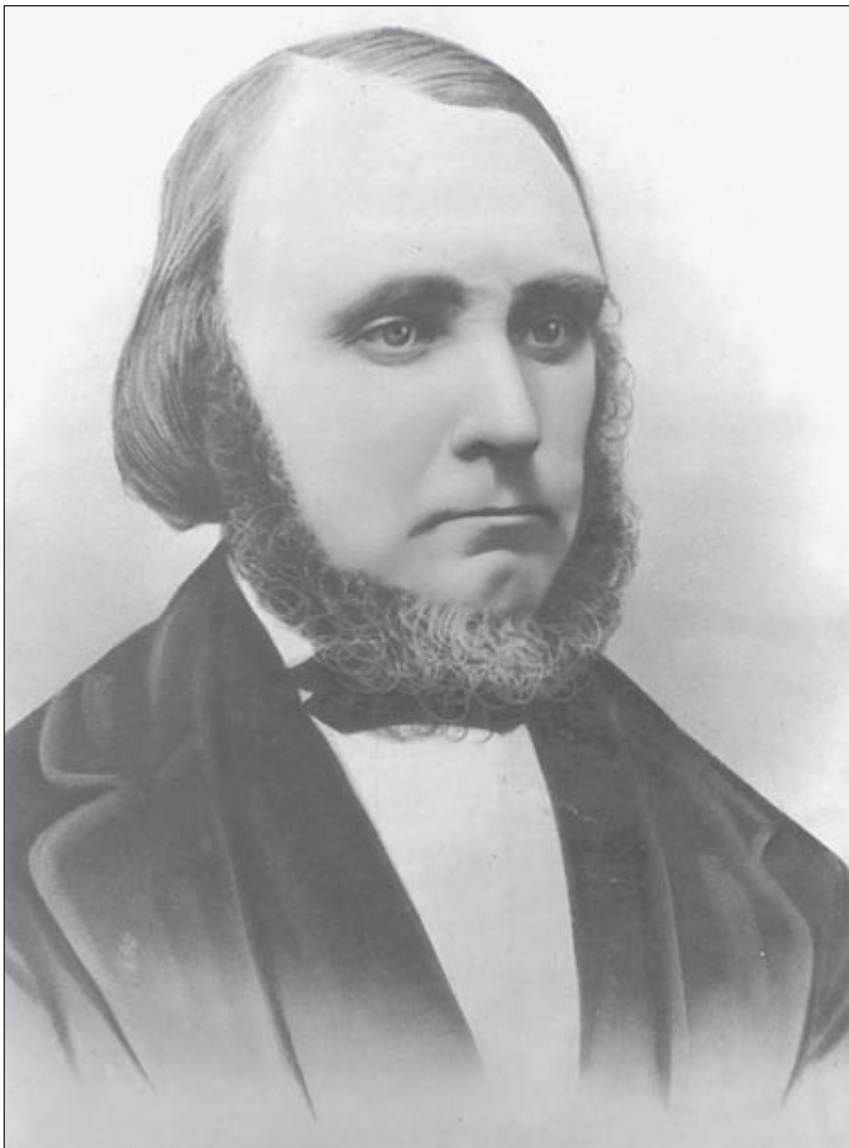
MAP OF THE EMIGRANT ROAD
from
Independence Mo. to S. Francisco

CALIFORNIA

by
T. H. Jefferson.

PART III.

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WILLIAM CLAYTON—Daughters of Utah Pioneers

William Clayton joined the Mormon Church in 1831. While living in Nauvoo he became the clerk for Joseph Smith. During the exodus from Nauvoo he served as company clerk. On his march across Iowa he wrote the words to the hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints." In 1847 he was again given the task of camp clerk for the Mormon vanguard party leaving Winter Quarters.

During their trek to the Great Salt Lake Valley he helped in the development of the roadometer which accurately recorded the distance traveled. He was also given the task of writing a guidebook for future Mormon emigrants. His guidebook was one of the best available. Pages from it, as well as from his diary, are found elsewhere in this book.