

A Classic Reprinted

West from Fort Bridger: The Pioneering of Immigrant Trails across Utah, 1846-1850. Edited and with an introduction by J. Roderic Korn and Dale L. Morgan; revised and updated by Will Bagley and Harold Schindler (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1994).

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WHEN PUBLISHED ORIGINALLY IN 1951 as volume 19 of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*, this book made a major contribution to understanding the history of overland routes traveled west from Fort Bridger to California. No other work since has superseded it. One primary option for emigrants had been to continue north and west along the Oregon Trail route to the vicinity of Fort Hall, and then take the California branch to the southwest, catch the Humbolt River, and find passage across the Sierra Nevada Mountains to their California destinations. Routes across the Salt Lake Valley and the salt desert sought to eliminate the extra miles of this northern route "dog leg."

The original book resulted from the "field work" of Roderic Korn, Dale Morgan, and Charles Kelley. They shared freely their interests for locating routes through the Wasatch Mountains, as well as their knowledge of historical documents and sources that could be recovered. It was a remarkably competent team effort: however, Korn died before the work was completed, and the task of committing it to paper fell to Dale Morgan who was anxious to ensure that Korn's work would be appreci-

ated and available to students.

Because the original edition printed fewer than 1,000 copies, the book has long been out of print. Finally, and fortunately, two very able historians, with the support of the Crossroads Chapter of the Oregon California Trails Association and Utah State University Press, were enlisted to revise and update the original work. Bagley and Schindler acknowledge their debt to Morgan for his own beginning revision efforts. They obtained the actual copy that Morgan had "worked" on.

The book discusses, briefly, the Bartelson-Bidwell wagon route of 1841, and John C. Fremont's expeditions of 1843 and 1845. He made the first crossing of the Salt Lake Desert route in the fall of 1845 on his trip to California. However, Lansford W. Hastings promoted it as an emigrant route. The editors see him as both dishonest and downright irresponsible.

Included in this work are excerpts from various journals, letters, and reports of several travelers over these routes between 1846 and 1850.

The "Journal of James Clyman" (21 May-June 1846) reports on the Hastings-Hudspeth trek from Sutter's Fort to Fort Bridger. This party traveled with horses and mules, as Fremont's expedition had the previous fall, and arrived in good time and condition.

The "Journal of Edwin Bryant" records the Bryant-Russell trip from Fort Bridger (17 July 1846), south of the Great Salt Lake to Mary's River in Nevada (8 August 1846), also on horses and mules. They were the first to "choose" the Hastings Cutoff.