

JEDEDIAH SMITH TRAVELS THROUGH THE GOSHUTE HOMELAND IN 1827

June 24th N E 40 Miles.

I started verry early in hopes of soon finding water. But ascending a high point of a hill I could discover nothing but sandy plains or dry Rocky hills with exception of a snowy mountain off the N E at the distance of 50 or 60 miles. When I came down I durst not tell my men of the desolate prospect ahead, but framed my story so as to discourage them as little as possible. I told them I saw something black at a distance, near which no doubt we would find water.

While I had been up on the hill one of the horses gave out and had been left a short distance behind. I sent the men back to take the best of his flesh, for our supply was again nearly exhausted, whilst I would push forward in search of water.

I went on a shorter distance and waited until they came up. They were much discouraged with the gloomy prospect, but I said all I could to enliven their hopes and told them in all probability we would soon find water. But the view ahead was almost hopeless.

With our best exertion we pushed forward, walking as we had been for a long time, over the soft sand. That kind of traveling is very tiresome to men in good health who can eat when and what they choose, and drink as often as the desire, and to us, worn down with hunger and fatigue and burning with thirst increased by the blazing sands, it was almost insurportable.

At about 4 O Clock we were obliged to stop on the side of a sand hill under the shade of a small Cedar. We dug holes in the sand and laid down in them for the purpose of cooling our heated bodies. When morning came it saw us in the same unhappy situation, pursuing our journey over the desolate waste, now gleming in the sun and more insuportably tormenting than it had been during the night. [About] at 10 O Clock Robert Evans laid down in the plain under the shade of a small cedar, being able to proceed no further. [We could do no good by remaining to die with him and we were not able to help him along, but we left him with feelings only known to those who have been in the same situation and with the hope that we might get relief and return in time to save his life.]

Maurice S. Sullivan, *The Travels of Jedediah Smith* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992, 19–23) .