

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

Extract of a letter from Mr. D. D. Potts, of Montgomery Co. dated Rocky Mountains, July 16, 1826.

"The southern branches of the Missouri are Seets Kadu and Lewis River, and others of similar note.— After passing from this valley, in a S. W. direction, we had very good travelling over an inconsiderable ridge—we fell on a considerable river, called Bear River, which rises to the S. on the Utaw Mountains, bears N. 80 or 90 miles, when it turns short to the S. W. and S. and after passing two mountains, discharges itself into the Great Salt Lake. On this river and its tributary streams, and adjacent country, we have taken beaver with great success. Since the autumn of 1824, you have no doubt heard, and will hear by the public prints, of the furs brought in by General Ashley, which were the product of our toils.

The first valley, as you approach from the head of the river, is a small sweet lake, about 120 miles in circumference, with beautiful clear water, and when the wind blows has a splendid appearance. There is also to be found in this valley a considerable sour spring, near the most northerly point of the river. The valley is scantily supplied with timber, as is the case with most of the low grounds of this country. The second or Willow Valley, is better supplied on this point: this valley has been our chief place of rendezvous and wintering ground. Numerous streams fall in through this valley, which, like the others, is surrounded with stupendous mountains, which are unrivalled for beauty and serenity of scenery.

You here have a view of all the varieties, plenty of ripe fruit, and abundance of grass just springing up, and buds beginning to shoot, while the higher parts of the mountains are covered with snow, all within 12 or 15 miles of this valley.

The river passes through a small range of mountains, and enters the valley that borders on the Great Salt Lake. The great Salt Lake lies in a circular form from N. E. to N. W. the larger circle being to S. It is about 400 miles in circumference, and has no discharge or outlet; it is generally shallow near the beach, and has several islands, which rise like pyramids from its surface. The western part of the lake is so saturated with salt, as not to dissolve any more when thrown into it. The country on the S. W. and N. W. is very barren, bearing but little more than wild sage and short grass. The S. E. and E. are fertile, especially near the outlet of the Utaw Lake and Weber's river. The former is about thirty yards wide at its mouth, the latter from 50 to 60, and very deep.

This river rises to the E. in the Utaw mountains, and in its course passes through three mountains, to where it enters the lake. We expect to start in a short time to explore the country S. W. of the Great Lake, where we shall probably winter. This country has never yet been visited by any white person. From thence to what place I cannot say, but expect the next letter will be dated at the mouth of the Columbia. My long absence has created a desire to hear from you, as well as the rest of the people, also my associates. I have been on the very eve of returning this summer, but owing to this unexplored country, which I have a great curiosity to see, I have concluded to remain one or two years. We celebrated the 4th of July by firing three rounds of small arms, and partook of a most excellent dinner, after which a number of political toasts were drunk." D. T. P.