

### EARLY AMERICAN TRAPPERS PIONEERS

#### Few Realize How They Contributed to Upbuilding of the Far West

Few people probably realize the extent to which the early American trappers in the Rocky Mountain region paved the way for the building up of the Far West by blazing the way for the Oregon Trail. There were many of these early heroes who were explorers and warriors as well as traders. Some of them were attached to the great fur trading companies while others "worked on their own." In an interesting story of the exploits of some of these early trappers, Franklin F. Korell says in the current issue of the National Republic:

"The early fur traders and trappers were necessarily men of great courage and determination. They had not only to battle with the elements, and the savages, but with the unfriendly Hudson's Bay company, which had only recently settled its long dispute with that other powerful British company, the North-West, and was determined to claim a monopoly on the fur business of the Northwest.

#### One of First

"One of the first of the Americans to contest with the British was William Ashley, a man of real parts. Ashley was born in Powhattan county, Virginia, about the year 1778, and received a common school education. When thirty years of age he went to Missouri, then called Upper Louisiana, and while there became a brigadier general of militia. He showed an early interest in the fur business and in 1882 organized a company of 300 men, finally penetrating to the Rockies and assuming trade relations with the Indians. He accumulated a fortune and retired, but entered politics and represented Missouri in Congress from 1831 to 1837. Ashley was not only one of the earliest of the fur traders along the Oregon Trail, but gained distinction because it was through his efforts that the Southern Pass thru the Rockies was discovered and the way to the Oregon country made easier.

"Ashley's success was due to his energy, and his ability as an organizer. In organizing his company he chose first to lead it, Maj. Andrew Henry, a frontiersman who had already had experience in the fur country, erecting the first stockade west of the Rockies and fighting with the dreaded Blackfeet Indians.

#### Jim Bridger

"In Ashley's company were numbered young Jim Bridger, later to become a famous scout; Thomas Fitzpatrick, a young Irishman who was to make a name for himself as a fur trader and as a warrior dreaded by the redmen; Jedediah Smith, a young New Yorker who was to write his name large in the history of the development of the West; and William L. Sublette, who was later to develop into one of the greatest fur traders of them all.

### SOCIETY WOMAN TO GO TO THE ARCTIC

#### Mrs. Biddle of Philadelphia Is Planning Vacation Far from Civilization

With the increase of work in State's Attorney A. V. Smith's office because of the bank closings in the county and the added demands for legal advice by supervisors and county officers, the board of supervisors last week approved the appointment of Wilfred E. Hall as a regular assistant state's attorney at a salary of \$3,600 a year.

Hall has acted as special prosecutor from time to time and more recently was appointed to handle the tax objection matters in county court. He has also assisted in the prosecution of criminal charges in circuit and county courts.

With the addition of Hall to his regular staff, Col. Smith now has two aides. Assistant State's Attorney George McGaughey, who

was named to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Sidney H. Block, has been in office since May 1.

Three committees, the fees and salaries, the judiciary and the finance, approved Col. Smith's request for the second assistant.

### Fossil Bones Found in Los Angeles Are in the Field Museum

A collection of fossil bones, including several complete skeletons, of pre-historic animals found in the famous Rancho la Brea asphaltum pits in the city of Los Angeles, has been placed on exhibition in Ernest R. Graham Hall of Historical Geology at Field Museum of Natural History. These animals lived during the Pleistocene period, one to one and one-half million years ago.

Complete skeletons of the saber-tooth tiger, and the prehistoric type of wolf, are included. Other animals, represented by partial skeletal remains, are a prehistoric kind of

horse, a ground sloth, a primitive coyote, and bison, condor and eagle.

Fossils were first discovered in these tar pits in 1908, and since then, scientists have unearthed some ninety species of prehistoric creatures there, according to Elmer S. Riggs, associate curator of paleontology.

Also in the hall is a large mural painting by Charles R. Knight restoring these animals as they appeared in life.

Another addition to the exhibits in this hall consists of two skulls of rhinoceroses which lived in the Bad Lands of Nebraska in the Oligocene period, about 35,000,000 to 39,000,000 years ago.

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