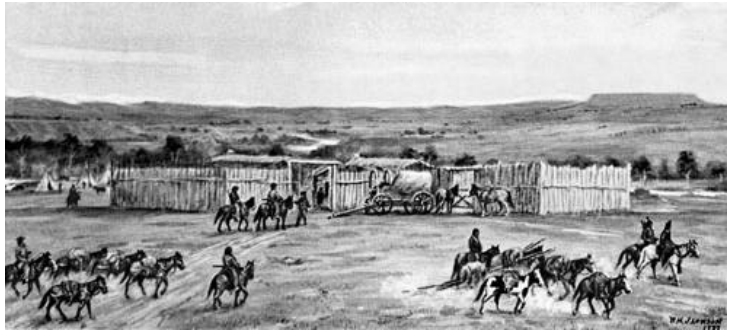


Fort Bridger

Fort Bridger was built in 1843 as an emigrant supply stop along the Oregon Trail. It was privately owned and operated by the legendary mountain man, Jim Bridger.



The altitude of the fort was about 7000 feet. It was a crude collection of rough-hewn log buildings nestled in the mountains, in the center of green pastures, with plenty of water. The fort was two acres surrounded by a stockade eight to ten feet high. Emigrants were disappointed when they got there.

Inside this stockade Bridger built a large log store stocked with dry-goods, groceries, liquor, tobacco, and ammunition. His residence, also built of logs, was diagonally across from it in the opposite corner of the stockade. His ranch and fort was a popular stop as it was in a great location to trade with Mormons, gold hunters, pilgrims, the military, mountain men and Indians.

Bridger didn't operate his fort for very long. The opening of several shortcuts had put Fort Bridger 100 miles out of the way. So, within a few years most of the emigrants were avoiding the fort.

Jim Bridger:

"I have established a small fort with blacksmith shop and iron in the road of the emigrants. They, in coming out, are generally well supplied with money, but by the time they get there are in want of all kinds of supplies."

Emigrant Edwin Bryant:

"The buildings are two or three miserable log cabins, rudely constructed and bearing but a faint resemblance to habitable houses."

Emigrant Joel Palmer:

"It is built of poles and dabbed with mud; it is a shabby concern. Here are about 25 lodges of Indians, or rather white trapper's lodges, occupied by their Indian wives. They have a good supply of skins, coats, moccasins; which they trade for flour, coffee, sugar, etc."