

Salina, Fremont's Central road and the Military road to Santa Fe, run for some fifty miles further west, in the Smoky Hill valley. Still further on the valley of the Smoky Hill is of easy access, the slopes are more gentle, and the stream flows almost directly from the West, and in the exact course the emigrant to the gold regions wishes to take. Unlike the routes either to the north or south, it pursues the course which is destined to be lined by settlements in a very short time. The traveler is never more than a few miles from settlements until he passes Salina, which lies near the junction of the Salina with the Smoky Hill Fork. Here the main valley is some ten miles wide, the soil of richest description, and groves of timber plenty. The traveler may pursue either from beyond Salina, having followed the settlements that far, but the proper course to pursue from that point would still be to follow the main valley of the Kansas river. Along this course, emigrants to Pike's Peak are already proceeding. The valley furnishes a fine natural road, going in precisely the right direction, with water and wood convenient for camping. The Smoky Hill river, in its channel, is a narrow and deep stream, and differs, in this respect, from the Platte and Arkansas, which run over beds of sand, scattering in many places through a waste not ankle deep.

The timber is in many places scarce, and on the upper courses of the streams is chiefly limited to cottonwood, willow, alders and other trees, which, growing close to the water-courses, have been preserved from the destructive fires that prevent the growth of other timber. Before the traveler reaches the sources