

This post was named after JAMES BRIDGER, the renowned hunter, trapper and guide, who lived in this country nearly half a century. (See portrait page 111.)

"Jim" Bridger is undoubtedly the most noted of all the old plains men, and early pioneers in our far western country. Through the courtesy of W. A. Carter, of Fort Bridger, we have been furnished with a fine picture of Mr. Bridger, and a short sketch of his eventful life—from which we condense:

"Jim" was born in Richmond, Virginia—sometime about the last of the last century—and while he was very small, his parents emigrated to St. Louis, Mo., where, shortly after their arrival, they both died of an epidemic then prevailing in that city. Having no one to look to or care for him, he engaged to accompany a party of trappers who were then fitting out for a trip to the Rocky Mountains.

Entirely devoid of even the commonest rudiments of education, he crossed the then almost wholly unknown and trackless plains, and plunged into the pathless mountains. Greatly attracted by the novelty of the sport, at that time quite profitable, he entered eagerly upon the business of trading in fur. Being naturally shrewd, and possessing a keen faculty of observation, he carefully studied the habits of the beaver, and profiting by the knowledge obtained from the Indians—with whom he chiefly associated, and with whom he became a great favorite—he soon became one of the most expert trappers and hunters in the mountains.

Eager to satisfy his curiosity, a natural fondness for mountain scenery, and a roving disposition, he traversed the country in every direction, sometimes in company with Indians, but oftener alone; he familiarized himself with every mountain peak, every gorge, every hill, and every landmark in the country. He pursued his trapping expeditions north to the British Possessions, south to Mexico, and west to the Pacific Ocean. In this way he became acquainted with all the tribes of Indians in the country, and by long intercourse with them, learned their language and became familiar with all their signs. He adopted their habits, conformed to their customs, became imbued with all their superstitions, and at length excelled them in strategy. The marvelous stories told by Bridger are numerous, but we have not the space for a "specimen." In after years, when it be-

came necessary to send military expeditions through the far western country, the Government employed Bridger as a guide, and his experience was turned to good account as an interpreter of Indian languages.

Mr. Bridger died in 1875, near Kansas City, Mo., having outlived the sphere of his usefulness, there being no longer any portion of the West unexplored, and having reached the period of second childhood.

As this post is one of great historic interest, we publish, in our ANNEX No. 17. Memories of Fort Bridger. To the next station it is 9.5 miles, and is named after that old hunter and trapper,

**Bridger**—and it is as unpretentious as the original. Scrub cedar in the high rocky bluffs, sage-brush, red sandstone and red clay, with bunch-grass for sandwiching, is the make-up of the surrounding country. It is inhabited by a few wood-choppers, some stock men, with herds of cattle and sheep, a few deer, antelope, coyotes and jack rabbits by the thousands. For agricultural purposes, it is in a high state of desolation.

For the next three stations we shall ascend rapidly. The bluffs are nearer, and we cross and re-cross the "Muddy" very often, the little stream being nearly as crooked as the streets in Boston.

A few miles beyond, on the left, is a towering cliff, which comes to a point, near the road, on the side of which are some notable water-lines.

This cliff is about 500 feet in height, and where it comes to a point is pulpit-shaped, and is known as Pluto's Outlook. A little further south is his Majesty's Stone-Yard, to which the railroad company, years ago, laid a track for the purpose of using the flat stone which lay around scattered all over the "yard," but here a difficulty seems to have arisen. The masons reported that the stone was "bedeviled," and would not lay still; when the stone was laid flat in their work, the next morning they would be found on the edge; when laid on the edge and left alone for a few moments, they were found flat-ways. This state of things so alarmed the masons that they abandoned their work and the country, and it is not known what has become of them.

**Leroy**—a side-track, is five miles from Bridger. Near here the old overland road comes down the mountains, crossing the railroad to the west, at Burns' old ranche, the route marked by the line of telegraph