



Trails: Tragedies & Triumphs

**August 5-9, 2008
Nampa, Idaho**

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

26th ANNUAL CONVENTION

**Co-Hosted by
Idaho Chapter and Northwest Chapter**

Convention Booklet



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**Convention Co-Chairs
Roger Blair and Jim McGill**

Welcome to Nampa in the heart of Idaho's Treasure Valley

This booklet is the result of contributions by members of the convention planning committee. Special thanks go to Roger Blair, Jerry Eichhorst, Tom Gray, Larry Jones, Jim McGill, Mary O'Malley, and Don Shannon.

—*Susan Badger Doyle, Editor*

Trails in Southwestern Idaho

Tragedies and Triumphs

The Oregon Trail in southwestern Idaho and eastern Oregon was one of tragedy for some, triumph for others as they neared their destinations. The route of the Oregon Trail was developed slowly over time. The first trails through this area were animal trails. Indians followed the game trails and made new trails. The earliest non-Indians in the area were explorers and fur trappers who followed existing trails and made new routes. In 1809 London-born David Thompson, with the Northwest Company, built a trading post on Lake Pend d'Oreille east of Sandpoint. It was the first house built by Euro-Americans in present Idaho.

In November 1811 Scotland-born Ramsay Crooks and his party traveled down the south bank of the Snake River from west of Burley to near Weiser. They were part of William Price Hunt's Astorians who traveled overland to Astoria, John Jacob Astor's fur-trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River. Their route later became the South Alternate of the Oregon Trail. The first person to follow the entire route of the Oregon Trail was Robert Stuart in 1812–13. Stuart traveled the trail in reverse, traveling from Astoria eastward. During the journey he discovered South Pass, named because it is south of the pass Lewis and Clark traveled over the Continental Divide in Montana.

When fur trapping declined, mountain men acted as guides for missionaries in the 1830s. In 1834 missionary Jason Lee and Nathaniel J. Wyeth were the first party to travel the Oregon Trail to the Willamette Valley. At Fort Hall Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) employees convinced the Wyeth-Lee party to leave their wagons and continue on by pack animals. In 1836 missionaries Henry and Eliza Spalding and Marcus and Narcissa Whitman traveled in a wagon as far as Fort Hall. There they were also persuaded to convert their wagon into a two-wheeled cart. They left the cart at Fort Boise and continued on horseback and foot to their separate destinations.

Between 1837 and 1841 several occurrences led to mass migration over the Oregon Trail during the emigrant trails era, 1841–1869. In the eastern states there was an economic depression. In 1838 missionary Jason Lee, who had visited the Northwest, toured the East and gave lectures to encourage settlement in Oregon. An outbreak of malaria in the Mississippi Valley motivated others who read or heard about the excellent climate in Oregon. Finally, there was the attraction of free land and the belief that settling the Northwest would insure a legitimate claim to the region by the United States.

The Oregon Trail

While the western emigrant trails era was 1841–1869, in southwestern Idaho and eastern Oregon, the era was shortened when miners and settlers began moving into the area in 1863. Between 1841 and 1863 approximately 53,000 people traveled the Oregon Trail through this area. The year of greatest traffic was 1852, when 10,000 emigrants passed through.

The Oregon Trail as a major westward migration route began in 1841. In spring 1841 a party of emigrants led by John Bidwell and John Bartleson departed Missouri for California. The Bidwell-Bartleson party was accompanied by three Jesuit priests, including Father Peter De Smet, who were going to the Flathead Indians. Experienced mountain man Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick was the guide for the Jesuits and their party. At Soda Springs half of the group left the Bidwell-Bartleson party and headed for Oregon, traveling by pack animals and Red River carts.

The next year missionary Elijah White, Indian Sub-Agent to Oregon, led a wagon train of more than a hundred emigrants to Oregon. At Fort Hall their wagons were converted into two-wheeled carts. Thus no one had as yet taken wagons all the way to Oregon. In winter 1842–43, Marcus Whitman made an arduous trip east by way of Fort Hall, Taos, and St. Louis. He visited Washington, New York, and Boston and settled his difficulties with the missionary board. In May 1843 he met a large party of emigrants in Independence. He encouraged them to go to Oregon and promised to join them later on the trail.

At least 120 wagons, 875 people, and more than a thousand head of livestock left for Oregon within days of each other. Whitman met and guided them, and many succeeded in getting wagons as far as the Columbia River. Thirty of the emigrants turned south at the Malheur River, heading for California, and more than 700

of the train arrived in Oregon that fall. The summer 1843 migration has been called the Great Migration. It is significant not only for the great numbers of emigrants but also for the first wagons to reach Oregon.

When early emigrants on the Oregon Trail crossed present Idaho, they already were in Oregon, which at that time extended west from the Continental Divide. The part of the trail through Idaho was often arid and difficult. Most emigrants naturally failed to perceive the possibility of farming the arid Snake River valley, their destination being the abundantly watered Willamette Valley to the west. Landmarks on the Oregon Trail in southwestern Idaho include the Snake River crossing near present Glenns Ferry, the hot springs east of later Mountain Home, the Boise Valley, and HBC Fort Boise near the Snake River crossing to present Oregon.



The Oregon Trail east of Boise. Idaho State Historical Society.

The Malheur River crossing at Vale, with its hot water springs, had been used for many years as a gathering place to rest, take baths, wash clothes, and cook fish. The local Indian tribes, the Shoshones, the Paiutes, the Bannocks, and the Nez Perce, visited the hot water springs as they traveled through the country. Travelers over the Oregon Trail often mentioned the Malheur crossing and the hot springs, where there was grass for their livestock and a chance to rest a bit. However, none of the travelers wanted to remain in the vicinity of the Malheur River for long. They usually reached this stage of their journey in August or September, and conditions were extremely hot, dry, dusty and inhospitable. From Vale the trail headed north toward Farewell Bend where the trail left the Snake River for the final time.

The Oregon Trail South Alternate

Those who did not cross the Snake River near present Glenns Ferry, traveled the more difficult route opened in 1843 down the south side of the Snake. Emigrants referred to the route as the "Dry Route." The name South Alternate is a modern name. There were some advantages to following the South Alternate. One advantage was not having to cross the Snake River twice before getting into Oregon. A few stretches of trail were dry, but overall there were sufficient streams along the route for water, and the Snake River was nearby much of the way. However, late in summer the streams flowing down from the Owyhee Mountains were sometimes intermittent and not reliable water sources. From the time it opened, the numbers of emigrants on the South Alternate were about the same as those who traveled the main route of the Oregon Trail.

Overton Johnson and William H. Winter, who were among the first emigrants to traverse the South Alternate in 1843, noted:

Twenty-seven miles below the Salmon Falls we came to the crossing where the companies which preceded us had passed over to the north side, which is much the nearest and best way, but we, having attempted the crossing and finding it too deep, were obliged to continue down on the south. This is, perhaps, the most rugged, desert and dreary country, between the Western borders of the United States and the shores of the Pacific. It is nothing else than a wild, rocky, barren wilderness, of wrecked and ruined nature, a vast field of volcanic desolation.

The South Alternate begins at Glenns Ferry, Elmore County, and follows the south side of the Snake River for a few miles west before passing into Owyhee County. Emigrants who chose not to cross the Snake at the Three-Island crossing near Glenns Ferry continued on the south side of the river for many miles to the Oregon border—most of the way in Owyhee County. For many miles the high desert terrain was broken by several canyons and streams that had to be crossed. At present Henderson Flats west of Castle Creek, the site of the beginning of the tragic attacks on the Utter Train's by Indians in 1860, the trail left the river bank for about 20

miles and skirted around the south side of many bluffs and hills. The high bluffs and deep canyons in the area were not negotiable with wagons, although old Indian trails continued on top and close to the river.

The trail branched at the southwest corner of Wild Horse Butte. One route stayed within about one mile and parallel to the river, while the other veered southwest. After the routes rejoined, the trail reached the top of Murphy Rim. From there the trail dropped down through a cut in the stone layers under the rim to the level that is about the same as the town of Murphy. The trail curved around the bottom of Murphy Rim back to the northeast and split again before crossing Rabbit Creek. One branch went more northerly for a distance and curved around to rejoin the other route that followed Rabbit Creek on the west side of Guffey Butte. (The routes through this rough area are described in Tours C and E.)

From there the South Alternate followed close to the Snake River again. The South Alternate passed Givens Hot Springs and entered Oregon. In Oregon the trail turned northerly, still staying along the river, and finally crossed the Owyhee River about three miles upstream from its mouth at the Snake River. In about two more miles north it rejoined the main Oregon Trail at a junction across the Snake from the Fort Boise site.

On September 8, 1862, E. S. McComas arrived at Givens Hot Springs.



A South Alternate highway sign.

Drove to Boiling Springs, seven miles. These are two large and beautiful springs, the water looking cool and inviting with a sulphuric smell but it is so hot that a person can not hold their hand in it. Sufficiently hot to boil eggs. . . . The country all the way down the Snake River is one of the most desolate and dreary waste in the world.

James S. McClung described the Owyhee River crossing on September 9, 1862:

we traveled until a bout eleven oclock at which time we cam to a loe place near the river which had ben overflowed whare the green grass was 6 inches high & the prettyest grass I have ever seen So we unyoked & turned out & gra[z]ed some two hours when the cattle began to get sick so we started on evry team was more or less sick over half was not able to work [Some grasses in the area were poisonous to the cattle.]

Indian Attacks on Emigrant Trains in 1854

Relations between emigrants and Indians were generally cooperative and friendly in the early years of the Oregon Trail in the Snake River country. As the numbers of overland travelers in the early 1850s increased, the impact of massive traffic over the trails threatened the resources the Indians depended upon, and conflicts erupted in 1854.

The George Lake and Walter G. Perry train of four wagons from Iowa traveled to Oregon in 1854. The Lake-Perry train was attacked on August 19, about an hour after starting in the morning. As they passed the mouth of a canyon near the junction of the Jeffrey Cutoff and the Oregon Trail, a number of Indians came out and confronted the train. The Indians demanded whisky, and when the emigrants refused to give them any, they offered to trade. Suddenly the Indians began shooting. Perry, Lake, and E. B. Cantrell were shot in the opening fire. Lake was killed instantly, Cantrell was shot in the abdomen and died the next morning, and Perry was shot in the chest and died four days later. Two Indians were killed in the fight, and the rest rode off with five of the emigrants' horses.

The survivors of the Lake-Perry train joined the Jacob Ebey train of ten wagons, making fourteen wagons, about twenty men, and several women and children in the combined train. John Garner's pack train coming from John Jeffrey's Snake River ferry came up and traveled with them. On August 24, as they continued

down the Boise Valley to HBC Fort Boise, the Ebey train came upon the site of the attack on the Alexander Ward train four days earlier.

On Sunday, August 20, 1854, the twenty-two members of a wagon train led by Alexander Ward were traveling on the Oregon Trail along the south side of the Boise river. Two miles south of present Middleton, Idaho, one wagon with three people continued west on the trail, and the other nineteen in the train turned off to the river to noon and let the stock rest and graze. Three Indians made a sudden rush upon the stock and drove a horse off. The Ward party hitched up their ox teams and drove back to the trail where they were attacked by the Indians. They were surrounded by some sixty Indians who shot at them with guns and arrows from the high ground to the south and from the cover of tules and brush on the flood plain to the north. In the fight that lasted nearly two hours, all the men and the oldest Ward boy were killed. While the Indians were running the wagon with the women and children into the brush, William Ward, fifteen, and Newton Ward, thirteen, made a dash for the high sage brush. William and Newton were shot, run down, and both knocked senseless.

Seven men from a wagon train ahead, who were searching for a missing cow, saw the Ward train under attack. They reached the train just as the wagon containing the screaming women and children was being taken toward the river. In an attempt to rescue them, the men were met by stiff resistance from the more numerous Indians. A seventeen-year-old in the rescue party was killed. The other six men returned to where the train had been attacked. Newton Ward had regained consciousness and was taken with the six men who returned to the wagon trains ahead to gather a larger force to rescue the captives.

Two days later a band of eighteen men and an Indian guide arrived where the Ward train was attacked. They saw no Indians. On the south side of the river they found the bodies of Mary Ward, seventeen, and Mrs. White. North of the river, lying upon the campfire in the abandoned Indian village, were the bodies of the three little Ward girls, with their pregnant mother's body beside the fire. What happened to these three women and three young girls makes the Ward massacre the most atrocious of the few actual Indian attacks on wagon trains that occurred on the Oregon Trail.

The youngest Ward boy, Edward, and his cousin, George White, were carried away by the Indians. William Ward regained consciousness the morning following the attack. He was badly wounded and stumbled along the south side of the Boise river until he finally reached HBC Fort Boise the following Saturday. Of the nineteen people in the Ward train, seventeen were killed. The only survivors were Newton and William Ward.

Maj. G. O. Haller led an army expedition from Fort Dalles, Oregon, to find the Indians responsible for the attack on the Ward train. His force scoured the valleys but did not capture any Indians involved in the attack. The next summer, 1855, Major Haller led another expedition from Fort Dalles and succeeded in arresting four Indians. They were tried by a military commission of three officers. The first one confessed, both to his and the others' role in the attack. The four Indians were found guilty on July 17. While the guard was being changed, the first prisoner escaped but was shot dead by one of the soldiers. The next day the remaining three were taken to the massacre ground, where a gallows was constructed over the graves of the victims. At sundown the prisoners were hanged from the gallows and were buried the next morning. The gallows were left standing for years as a warning to the Indians of the Boise Valley.

Winfield Scott Ebey was in the second party to arrive at the site of the attack. On August 24, 1854, he recorded:

Two miles brought us to the scene of the late fight. Every thing showed signs of a hard struggle Six bodies lay by the road partly covered, by persons who had been here before We got our spades & some of us stoped & gave them a decent burial The ground is covered with blood The tent poles and a great amount of half bur[n]t feathers lay around No waggons left. I picked up a hat with two bullet holes in it and saturated with blood. I p[r]esume the owner received the ball in his head A gun barrel was picked up the stock b[r]oke off & badly bent It was used I have no doubt by some man who was struggling desperately for life.



William and Newton Ward in 1913

After burying the dead I put up a notice to those behind to be on their guard, & over took the waggons. Every man now goes armed, Even the drivers carry their rifles in one hand & their whip in the other.

The next day, August 25, 1854, Ebey reached HBC Fort Boise.

I have learned more of the difficulty with the Indians It seems the train stoped to Noon when the Indians (some 60) came up apparently friendly. One of the Indians took off a horse of the party's. The owner kept two [Indian] ponies The Indian brought back the horse & got his poneys One of the men, who was a short distance from the waggons observing the motion of the Indians; saw one of them point his gun at him & supposing he intended to shoot him took out his revolver and shot the Indian down Then the fight commenced in good earnest. Some of the men became frightened & I believe that but two of them did any fighting A young man by the name of [Samuel] Mulligan from the Southern part of MO [Missouri] fought them to the last. It was him, that broke up his rifle fighting It is thought that if all had have stood up to [with] him they would have driven the Indians off Some of the men even crawled into the waggons, the Indians followed them up & killing them all, but the women & children About this time seven men of Mr. Yantes' [Alexander Yantis] train coming back from the fort to look for the lost cow—and were in sight of the fight—got up The Indians then ran to the river about a mile off taking the women & children & some of the waggons, & got in the bushes The party followed them and a fire was kept up for some time—the whites with revolvers & the Indians with HB [Hudson's Bay] muskets

Finally the foremost man of the whites was shot dead & the party retreated to the Fort for more help— Here was their error Had they charged the Indians in the bushes they might have saved the women & children but would probably lost some of their own number— They could hear the screams of [the] captives in the bushes when they left— On their return it was found that the Indians had burned the waggons & had also burned up the children Their bones were found on the spot It is to be hoped they killed them before they committed them to the flames The men think other wise and believe from the screams they heard that the children were burned alive— before their mother's eyes The women (Mrs. Ward & daughter) were murdered & their bodies horribly vio[la]ted. . . . This is one of the most horrible, massacres of which I ever heard. A whole train of people killed in open day— for plunder, & the Indians all escaping— Some 60 head of Cattle & \$200⁰⁰ in gold was carried off. I presume the Indians are now far enough away, & safe from pursuit

Friction with the Indians in the Snake River country made the trail more dangerous following the attacks on the Lake-Perry and Ward trains in 1854. Fort Boise and Fort Hall were abandoned, and military escorts were assigned to meet and to guard emigrants on the trail.

The Utter Train Tragedy, 1860

Unfortunately, efforts to protect emigrants did not always work, and Indian aggressions erupted again in 1860. On September 9, 1860, the Elijah P. Utter wagon train was attacked by Indians along the South Alternate of the Oregon Trail northeast of present Murphy, Idaho. The forty-four-member wagon train was composed of four families, with twenty-one children, some single men, five recently discharged soldiers, and an army deserter. The two-day encounter resulted in the deaths of eleven emigrants and an estimated twenty-five to thirty Indians.

The initial attack occurred on the high ground just west of Castle Creek when the Indians attempted to stampede the stock. (See Tour C.) The strong position of the circled wagons and food that was given to the Indians discouraged additional conflict. The train was allowed to continue on toward the Snake River where the emigrants intended to fill their water barrels. The train stayed on the high ground but was attacked again while going down to Henderson Flat. The wagons were circled, and the fight continued into the next day.

Toward sundown on the second day, each family hitched up a wagon and left the remaining wagons and loose stock for the Indians. But the hungry, thirsty, and wounded oxen could not advance. The attackers pressed their advantage and forced the emigrants to abandon their property and flee. Elijah Utter was wounded, and his wife, Abagel, and three of his children refused to abandon him. All were killed.

The survivors escaped with only the clothes they were wearing, some firearms, and a few other possessions. For more than a week they worked their way down the Snake River, hiding in the daytime, walking at night. They traveled over 75 miles to the Owhyee River crossing, until they were physically too weak to go on. Some were wounded, and all were hungry and exhausted. Here eighteen children, six surviving parents, and a young man waited to be rescued.

Two weeks later, a few Shoshone Indians visited their camp. They traded salmon for what few possessions the survivors still had, and forcefully took their firearms. After receiving some salmon, the Van Ornum family, a young man named Gleason, and the two surviving Utter boys left the camp to try and find a relief party. A short distance northwest of Farewell Bend, they encountered Indians. The three Van Ornum girls and their younger brother were taken captive. The bodies of the others were later discovered by soldiers in an old crater near the site.

Capt. Frederick T. Dent, leader of the army relief force, reported that a party led by Lt. Marcus A. Reno discovered,

gleaming in the moonlight, dead, stripped, and mutilated lay the bodies of six persons. . . . Mrs. Vanorman had been whipped, scalped, and otherwise abused by her murderers; the boys, Charles and Henry Otter, were killed by arrows, Mr. Vanorman, Marcus Vanorman, and Gleason had their throats cut, and besides were pierced by numerous arrows. They appeared to have been dead from four to six days, the wolves had not yet molested them, decomposition was going on however, and Lieutenant Reno buried them.

The bodies were buried where they were found. Mrs. Van Ornum's body was buried 4½ feet deep, separate from the common grave containing the remains of the five men and boys. Local historian P. D. Wood rediscovered the graves and placed a small metal cross to mark the site.

At the Owyhee River camp, Daniel A. Chase Sr. and Libbie Trimble died on October 13, and five days later Libbie's baby sister died. The next day, Danny Chase died, followed two days later by his brother, Albert. All four children died from starvation. After much discussion and prayer, those who remained resolved to eat the flesh of the recently deceased, with the hope of preserving their own lives until a rescue party arrived.

On October 24 an army relief command led by Captain Dent rescued ten survivors. They were the Joseph Meyers family of seven, Elizabeth Chase and daughter Mary, and Emeline Trimble. Captain Dent reported:

found the remains of Christopher Trimble, who had been murdered by the Indians; his body had been much disturbed by the wolves, but sufficient remained to identify it. . . . This boy of eleven years of age, deserves special mention. He had killed several Indians in the fight . . . he then became a prisoner voluntarily with the Indians, in order that he might get some salmon taken to the camp. . . . Two weeks had elapsed since his last visit; it must have been at that time he was killed.

Zacheus Van Ornum became an Indian Scout for the army in an effort to rescue his nieces and nephew. The captive children were traded or stolen by other bands. Reuben Van Ornum was rescued by California army volunteers in November 1862 in the Cache Valley of Utah. Unfortunately, he could not adapt to civilized life again, and it is believed he returned to the Indians. The youngest sister, Lucinda, died soon after being rescued from the Indians by northern Utah settlers. Eliza and Minerva either died of starvation or were killed while captive.

No other Oregon Trail wagon train suffered greater losses than the Utter wagon train of 1860. An Indian attack on a wagon train at Massacre Rocks in 1862 was the last major confrontation between emigrants and native tribes on the Oregon Trail in Idaho. In January 1863 a military force out of Salt Lake City under the command of Colonel Patrick Edward Conner attacked and destroyed a winter camp of Shoshone Indians at Bear River. White settlement came to the Snake country immediately after that, and from then on, Indian aggressions were mostly directed against stages, freighters, and settlers rather than emigrants. While the Indian threat declined on the western parts of the trail after 1863, conflicts with Indians shifted to the Great Plains.

Goodale's Cutoff

In 1862 gold strikes in the mountains of eastern Oregon and the Boise Basin of southern Idaho prompted mountain man Tim Goodale to lead a wagon train over a new route to the goldfields. Goodale's history in the West began when he left Potsdam, New York, in 1830, before his twentieth birthday. As a fur trapper and trader all over the West for several years, he learned the routes of the various Indian trails. This was helpful to him through the rest of his life, as a guide with Kit Carson for John Frémont, as an army guide and surveyor in building new roads, as an emigrant guide, and as a source of information for all kinds of travelers. Goodale was involved in almost every known trade, vocation, and western job that confronted him. At various times he was an explorer, mountain man, game hunter, cattle and sheep drover, emigrant guide, military advisor/guide, surveyor, road builder (notably assisting Frederick Lander), trading post operator, ferryman, cattle and sheep rancher, Indian-emigrant relations mediator, U.S. mail carrier, military stock buyer, and Indian representative to the U.S. government.

Goodale lived with the Indians at times and married first a Crow wife, and later, Jennie, a Lemhi Shoshone. He had children with both women, but we have little information about most of them. Jennie, a probable great-niece of Sacagawea, was his well known companion until his death in 1869. By the early 1860s he and Jennie were living in the area of Boulder, Colorado, where he assisted miners in the area. When word of the new mining discoveries in Oregon and Idaho reached some Colorado miners who had not done well, they asked Goodale to guide them to the mines. He began leading a small wagon train in summer 1862, and as they crossed both Wyoming and southern Idaho, emigrants—mostly with mining interests and some from eastern states—attached themselves to the train. The Goodale train first grew to about three hundred people before about half of them split off in Idaho and headed toward Bannock, Montana.

Goodale followed the Lander Road that he had helped build and came to the Snake River. By the time he arrived at a point near Ferry Butte, upstream from the old Fort Hall site, a new ferry was just being completed to cross the Snake. Although John Jeffrey had helped open and promoted a new route to emigrants on the north side of the Snake River ten years earlier—the same trail that Winfield Scott Ebey traveled in 1854—that trail had been used very little by emigrants. Jeffrey had earlier operated a ferry at the Ferry Butte site for his road, but it had ceased to exist a few years before 1862. The new ferry was being finished in August 1862, just in time for travelers to the mines in Idaho and Oregon.

Some other trains had crossed on the ferry before Goodale's train arrived, but no one knew about the earlier Jeffrey route. Some went the wrong way and had to return. They sat by the river, waiting for someone who knew the way. It is believed that Goodale had known Jeffrey in the Northwest and had been on Jeffrey's route when it was still just an Indian trail. Other trains joined him at the river, and he led them for several days until they arrived at present Champagne Creek in Butte County, fourteen miles west of Arco. There he was soon joined by more trains that were following his well-marked track, and after a couple of days he led the huge wagon train—some 350 wagons—across south-central Idaho toward present Elmore County. Their route has now been designated the Jeffrey-Goodale Cutoff.

When the train finally arrived near the junction with the Oregon Trail, 230 miles from the Snake River crossing, they began to split off into smaller trains again. When they reached the Boise River, the waters were dangerously high that year. All of the trains except those associated with Goodale did not cross the river, but rather they continued on the main Oregon Trail down the south side of the Boise to the Snake River, crossing the Snake to Oregon near the abandoned HBC Fort Boise site. Goodale's train of seventy wagons crossed the Boise River in the area of the present Eighth Street in downtown Boise, and from there began a new route across Idaho.

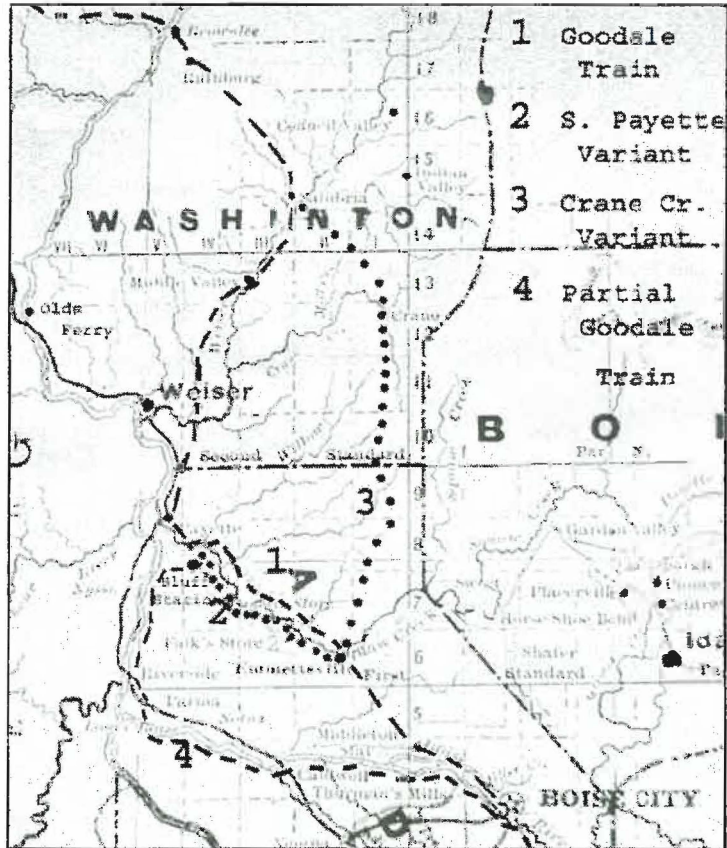
Goodale's train had successfully crossed equally high rivers on the Lander Road, and he got his wagons across safely. Nellie Slater's 1862 journal (her train had been with Goodale but separated near the Boise area), is the best record of the other trains who went down the Boise River to the Snake River crossing near Fort Boise. It is now almost certain that another small train went down the Boise River, crossed near the present site of Parma, Idaho, went straight north across a faint Indian trail (they probably had directions from Goodale), and rejoined the Goodale train on the north side of the Payette River.

Goodale led his train over Indian trails. They went northwest from the area of Eagle, Idaho, leaving the Oregon Trail route on the north side of the Boise River, and took almost a straight course to the top of the highlands on the south side of the Payette River Valley. This area was known early as "Camel Back" for its

canyons and humps. They crossed where the first old highway later started down what was called Freezeout Hill. He took his train down a steep and extremely narrow ridge made by the deposits of the ancient Lake Idaho. The ridge is a few hundred yards north of the old Freezeout Hill highway and is easily seen from a pullout on the road. (See Tour B, #1.)

The train went on through the area of Emmett, Idaho, fording the Payette River at "Tim Goodale's Crossing." Turning west-northwest and then almost west for several miles, they traveled along the north side of the Payette. Where the lowlands along the river became too narrow, wagons could not stay near the river. Tim drove his train north into the mouth of Sand Hollow valley and then quickly turned back to the northwest, up from the valley and over the highlands along the northern side of the Payette River. Passing first through the wide, shallow canyon carved by Big Willow Creek, the route curved around to almost straight west before it finally dropped down from the high bluffs along the river and went through the area of the mouth of Little Willow Creek.

The Indian trails that Goodale followed took him back down close to the north side of the Payette River and near the ford used by the smaller train that had come north from Parma. This later became Bluff Crossing, and not long after a ferry was built on the site.



The Goodale Trail and variant routes

The second group of wagons rejoined Goodale at the crossing. The expanded Goodale train went westerly, almost to the mouth of the Payette River on the Snake, and then turned north through the present area of Payette and followed the east side of the Snake River for several miles, just about on the route of U.S. 95. Where the river turns northwest, Tim led his train somewhat northeast to the mouth of Mann Creek into the Weiser River. For nine miles they went north up Mann Creek, to a point where U.S. 95 crosses the creek. Turning northeast again, and then almost north, Goodale's wagons opened what later would become Thousand Springs Road, about four miles long. Arriving at a location where that road meets U.S. 95 today, Goodale's Cutoff followed the present highway quite closely for about seven more miles, over Midvale Hill. As the present highway drops northeast down toward Midvale, Goodale's Cutoff went into a canyon to the north.

The 1862 route of Goodale's Cutoff soon came down to the flatland, turned easterly and crossed the highway, and then forded the Weiser River in the area of Midvale. The trail went northeast for six miles, crossed over some small foothills to Dixie Creek, and turned north to its crossing of the Little Weiser River—in the Cambridge/Weiser River Valley. A camp was set up before crossing, and the train stayed there for several weeks. Men went out during the day and built a road northwest over the mountains to Brownlee Ferry on the Snake River, in Hells Canyon. John Brownlee had met the train in the valley and hired them to build the wagon road where there had been only a pack trail. A teenager, Martha Jane Roberts, died at the camp and was buried there. Her grave has recently been discovered. (See Tour B, #5, page 24.)

Six months later, in spring 1863, miners opened a new wagon route straight north of Emmett, all the way to Dixie Creek, and intersected Goodale's Cutoff there. Only a few wagons ever traveled over the rugged Midvale Hill after the Goodale train, and the new 1863 Variant north of Emmett, through Crane Creek, became the main emigrant route. This became the important north-south road through Idaho for the next three decades. (That trail route is covered on August 3, in the Goodale pre-convention tour.) Even though Goodale

was aware of the route, he knew that it would require hard road building to get emigrant wagons through. Not having time to build a road, he chose to take his train over the hill.

Travel through the Crane Creek route today gives evidence of what would seem to be an almost impossible wagon route in some places, requiring weeks of road work. Miners worked in the next six months and opened the better route, which allowed freight wagons to go from Brownlee Ferry to the new goldfields discovered in fall 1862 in the Boise Basin. Another road was much improved in about 1876. Parts of it are separate and parallel the old trail, and are evident along the 1863 route.

The 1862 Goodale train built a new road on the Oregon side of the Snake River that went all the way to Auburn, Oregon. The train arrived later than those that followed the main Oregon Trail to Baker Valley. Goodale's Cutoff, including the main 1863 Variant and a route on the south side of the Payette River that was opened about 1864, were significant contributions to Idaho's travel routes. The road that Goodale opened for wagons from the Brownlee Ferry to Baker, was also important for accessing eastern Oregon, especially Eagle and Pine Valleys.

Tim Goodale and Jennie stayed in Baker County, Oregon, for about three years after he led his train there, ranching on the Powder River, assisting on another ranch in Eagle Valley, and operating Brownlee Ferry on the Snake River in 1864–65. Then they moved to Netarts on the Oregon coast, where he lived the last four years of his life. He helped start the town, and he became an oyster fisherman. He was killed in Netarts in May 1869, at age fifty-nine.

Although parts of Tim's original route across Idaho were replaced by improved trail routes, his influence on travel was unparalleled for decades, especially north of the Boise Valley. His cutoff was an important route to central Idaho and parts of eastern Oregon. The portion of Goodale's new route from Boise northwest, down the Payette River Valley, and to the area of present Weiser, became more heavily used after 1863 than the old route of the Oregon Trail. In 1863 a new route was opened that left his trail and went west from Weiser to a new ferry, the Olds Ferry, on the Snake River near Farewell Bend.

When an alternate was also opened along the north side of the Payette River, emigrants went down both sides of the river to Olds Ferry for several years. The 1862 Midvale Hill route found only a few emigrants going north from there to Middle and Cambridge Valleys, because the Crane Creek route north of Emmett, now marked as the 1863 Variant, was so much better. Midvale Hill was just too hard on animals and people until the road there was improved decades later.

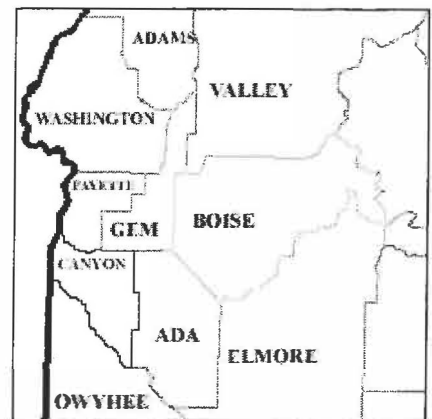
Goodale's trails and subsequent variants were important mining trails. In contrast to emigrant trails, which were primarily one-way, mining trails developed as connecting routes to mining camps. Also, miners assisted in improving roads that emigrants did not have time to do. These mining roads led to the development of local roads as the region was settled.

Southwestern Idaho and Eastern Oregon

Idaho became a Territory in 1863 and Owyhee County was the first county created. On December 31, the first Territorial Legislature decreed that "all that part of said Territory lying south of the Snake River and west of the summit of the Rocky Mountains chain be, and the same is hereby organized into a county to be called Owyhee." Oneida County was formed from Owyhee County east of the 113th Meridian on January 22, 1864, in the same session of the Legislature. In 1879 Cassia County was created from the eastern part of Owyhee County, and in 1930 the people of King Hill voted to join Elmore County.

When Owyhee County was created in 1863, Ruby City was the first county seat. But Silver City, just one mile south, soon became much larger, and on February 1, 1867, it was named the county seat. As mining failed and agriculture became the main industry of the county, Murphy was voted the county seat in 1934. The County Courthouse was completed in 1935 and is listed on the National Register of Historical Places.

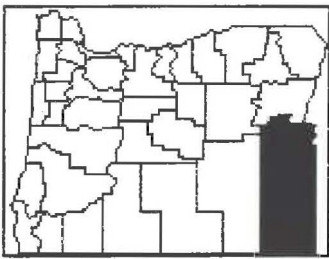
The name Owyhee is connected with fur trappers. In 1819 Scotland-born Northwest Company leader Donald MacKenzie sent three of his employees to trap in this area. These three men were called "Owyhees"



after their home in what was then called the Sandwich Islands. When Captain James Cook discovered and named the Sandwich Island in 1778, he asked the natives what they called themselves and wrote the answer as "Owyhees." When missionaries wrote this name they spelled it "Hawaii." Natives of the islands often were hired by fur-trading companies when ships bound for the Columbia stopped at the islands for provisions. Most fur-trading groups in the Snake River country had several Owyhees in their company. When MacKenzie came back to meet the Owyhee trappers in spring 1820, the Indians told them that other Indians had killed them. The only thing found of the three men was one of their horses with the Indians and the bones of one of the men. The river and the country around it were called Owyhee after these men.

Nampa is in Canyon County. Canyon County was established March 7, 1891, with its county seat at Caldwell. Current sources attribute the name to the canyon of the Boise River near Caldwell, although historians in the past believed it was named for the Snake River canyon that forms a natural boundary for the county. The Oregon Trail passes through Canyon County from east of Boise to HBC Fort Boise on the Snake River.

Across the Snake River, Malheur County is located in the southeast corner of Oregon. It is bordered by Baker County on the north, the State of Idaho on the east, the State of Nevada on the south. Malheur County is the second largest county in the state with 9,874 square miles. The county seat is Vale. Malheur County was first settled by miners and stockmen in the early 1860s. The discovery of gold in 1862 created an interest in this area, which resulted in the establishment of settlements and stock ranches. Basques settled in the region in the 1890s and were mainly engaged in sheep raising. The principal industries of Malheur County are agriculture, livestock, food processing, and tourism. The northeast corner of the county is the center of diversified and intensive farming.



After the Oregon Trail

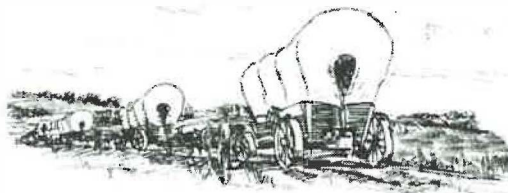
While Idaho continued to draw miners to various mining hotspots through 1869, central Idaho was settled by farmers and ranchers. Completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and the Oregon Short Line across Idaho in 1884 created new travel opportunities. However, earlier roads continued to be used by wagon travelers well into the 20th century. In the early years of the Oregon Trail, emigrants often faced great challenges and tragedies. After the emigrant trails era ended, the development of the region into a settled and productive area highlights the magnitude of the triumphs of the tens of thousands who traveled the Oregon Trail.

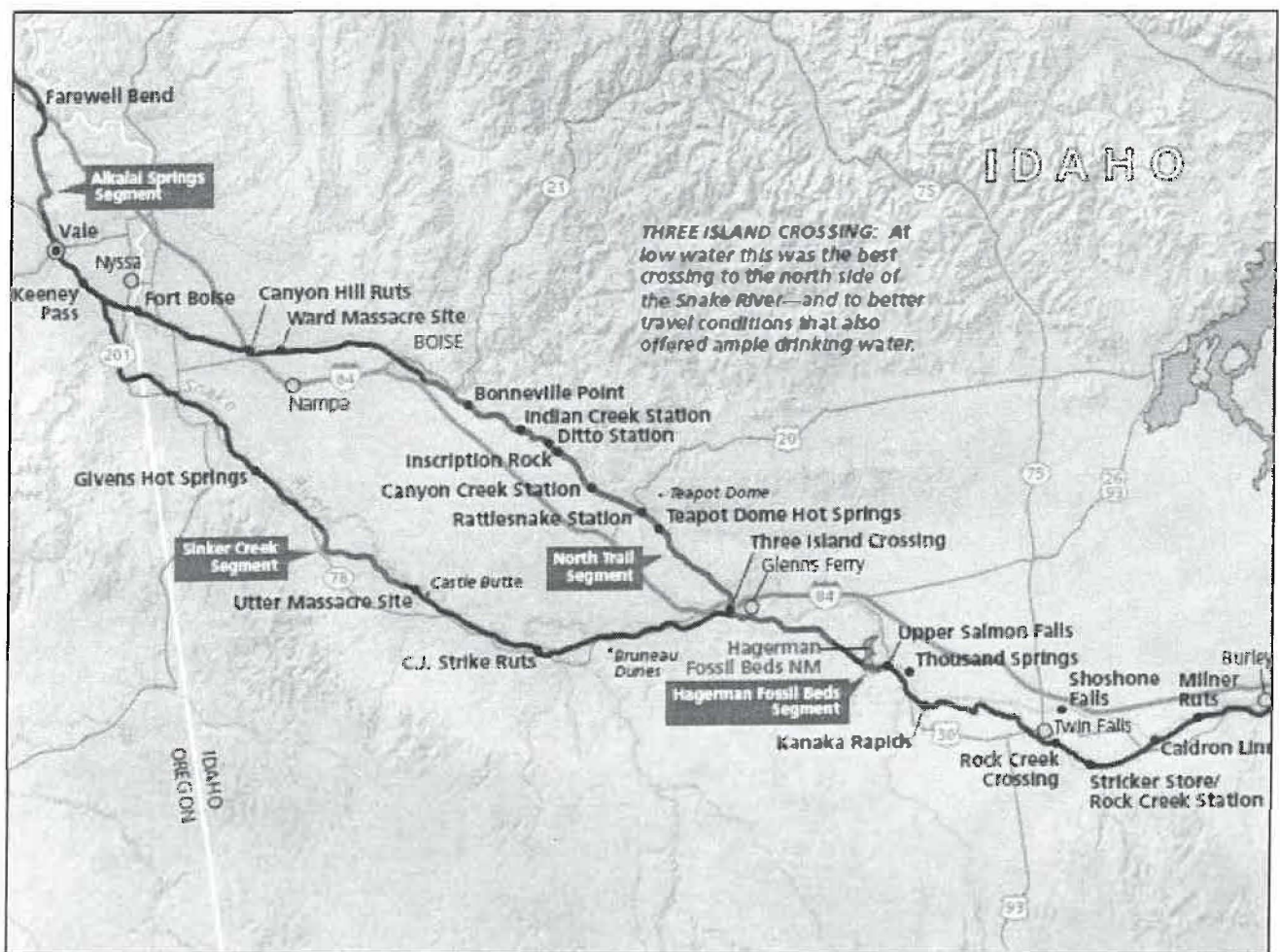
Further Reading:

Doyle, Susan Badger, and Fred W. Dykes, eds. *The 1854 Oregon Trail Diary of Winfield Scott Ebey*. Independence, Mo.: Oregon-California Trails Association, 1997.

Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho. Technical editors, Daniel J. Hutchison and Larry R. Jones. Bureau of Land Management and Idaho State Historical Society, January 1993.

Shannon, Donald H. *The Utter Disaster on the Oregon Trail*. Caldwell, Idaho: Snake Country Publishing, 1993.





The trails in the area of the Nampa convention, from the *Oregon National Historic Trail* map, National Park Service, at www.nps.gov/oreg/index.htm (click on: View Map).



Convention Tours

Tour A – Boise Valley Oregon Trail

Tour B – Goodale's Cutoff, Boise Valley to Cambridge, ID

Tour C – The Utter Tragedy, Part 1

Tour D – The Utter Tragedy, Part 2

Tour E – Five-Mile Hiking Tour

Tour F – Oregon Trail North Alternate and Kelton Road

Tour G– Three Island Crossing and Main Oregon Trail

West and north on old U.S.30, west on U.S. 20/26 to Parma.

5 Fort Boise Park

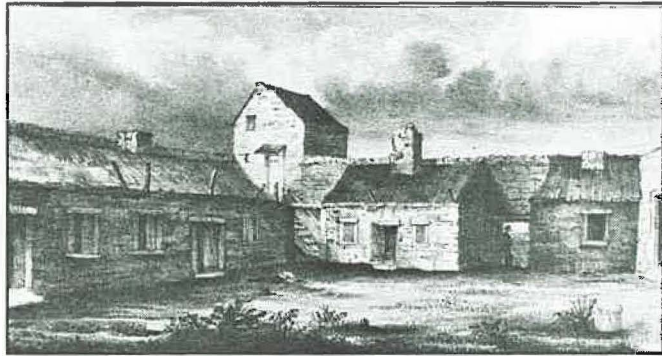
FORT BOISE is a reduced-scale replica of Fort Boise. Idaho Highway Historical Marker #78, "Marie Dorian," and #85, "Old Fort Boise." Modern rest rooms.

North through Parma on U.S. 20/26/95, left (west) on Old Fort Boise Rd (milepost 50), past sign "Old Fort Boise 1834-1855" to sign "Approximate Site of Fort Boise 1834-1855."

6 Approximate site of Fort Boise

APPROXIMATE SITE OF FORT BOISE. Fort Boise was built by Thomas McKay in fall 1834 to compete with Fort Hall. McKay had the backing and support of the Hudson's Bay Company for his venture. By 1836 the HBC obtained control of the new post, and it remained a Hudson's Bay post until it was closed in 1856. The post was managed by Francois Payette between 1835 and 1844. It was staffed mostly by Hawaiian (Owyhee) employees and soon became known for the hospitality and supplies provided to travelers and emigrants. A Boise River flood in 1853 severely damaged the adobe fort.

The fort site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and lies within the Fort Boise Wildlife Management Area. A concrete monument topped with the HBC British Lion is at the approximate site of the fort. View the Snake River where emigrants crossed on islands. Primitive toilet.



Interior of Fort Boise, drawn by Maj. Osborne Cross, 1849

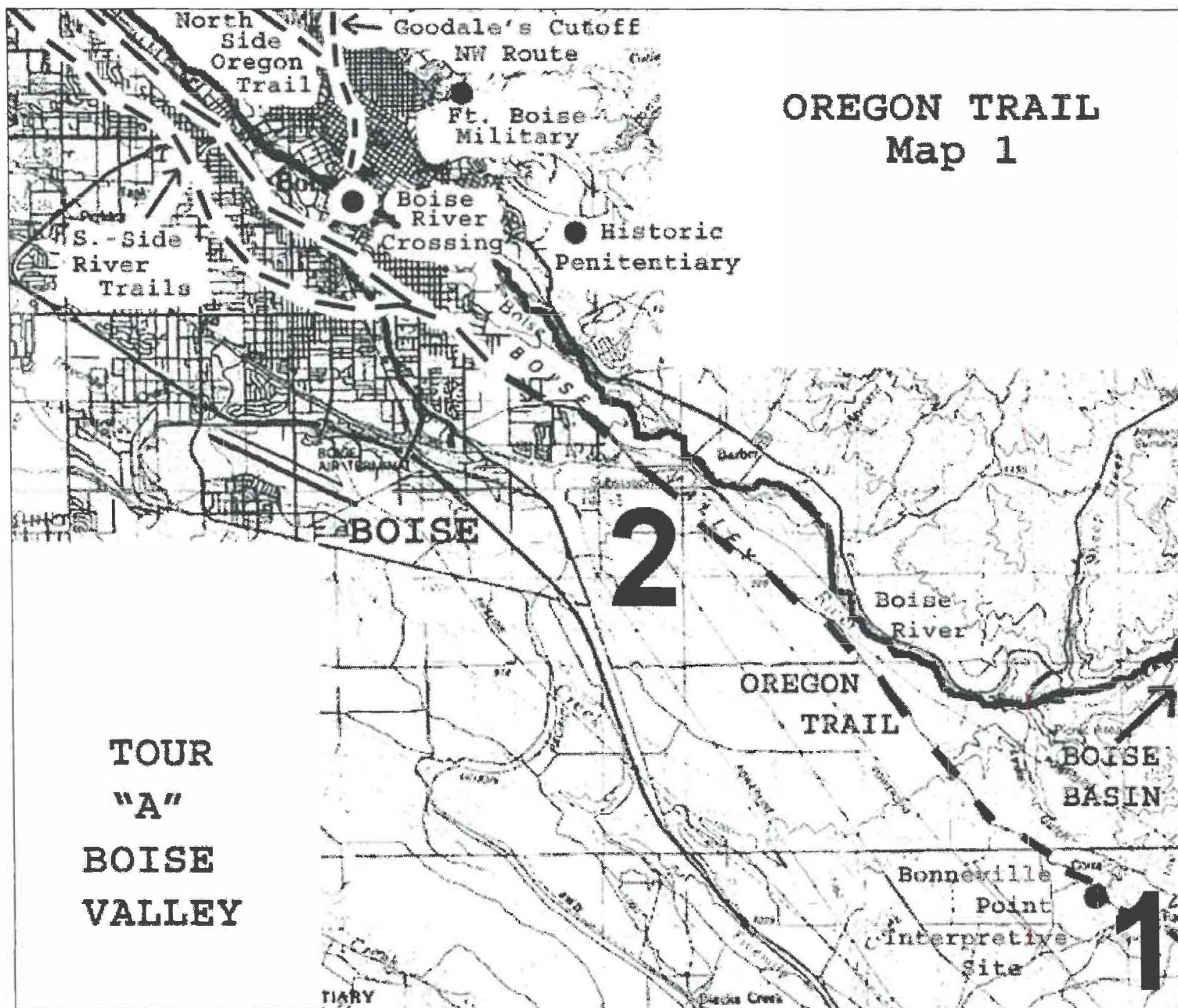
Joel Palmer, September 2, 1845:

We reached Fort Boise. This is a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, established upon the northern side of Snake or Lewis River, and about one mile below the mouth of the Boise river. This fort was erected for the purpose of recruiting, or as an intermediate post, more than as a trading point. It is built of the same materials, and modeled after Fort Hall, but is of a smaller compass. . . . At this place the road crosses the river, the ford is about four hundred yards below the fort, and strikes across to the head of an island, then bears to the left to the southern bank; the water is quite deep, but not rapid.

Winfield Scott Ebey, August 25, 1854:

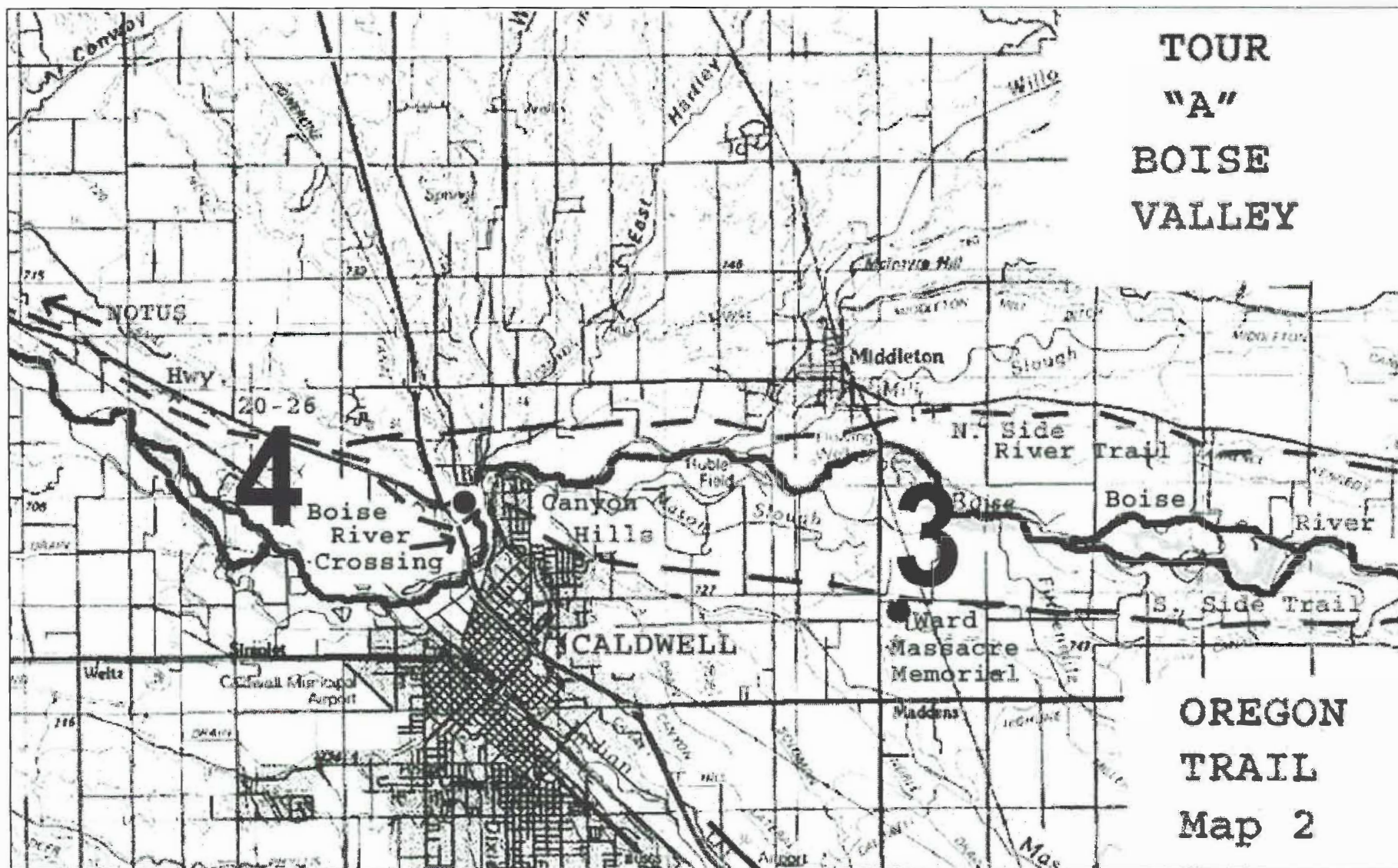
Drove Eleven miles to the Fort [Fort Boise], which we found to be a Shabby Concern. It is nothing but an "Adobe" House with but two tolerble Rooms.

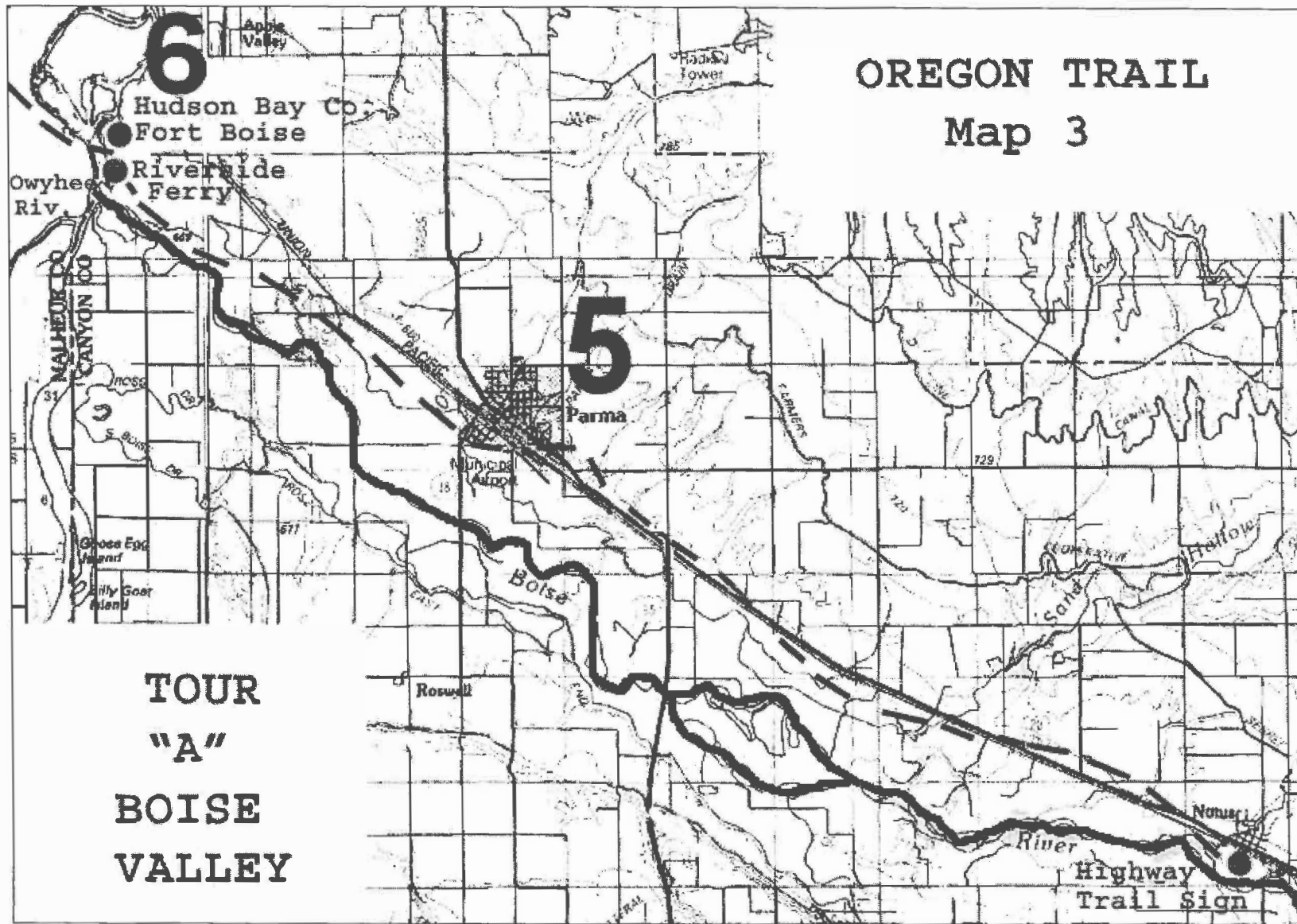
East to U.S. 95, south on U.S. 95. Left (east) on Homedale Rd. to Caldwell. Right (south) on 10th Ave. Left (east) on Karcher/Hwy 55. Right on Caldwell Blvd. to Nampa.



OREGON TRAIL Map 1

TOUR
"A"
BOISE
VALLEY





Tour B

Goodale's Cutoff, Boise Valley to Cambridge, Idaho

This tour will go to Emmett, the Payette River, Midvale, and Cambridge on the original route that the Goodale wagon train opened in 1862. While Goodale's train was not successful in establishing a practical route over Midvale Hill, several segments of Goodale's 1862 route became the main trails to Oregon after 1863. Many Oregon-bound emigrants followed Goodale's Cutoff from Boise to Weiser. By 1863 a new 20-mile trail segment departed from Goodale's Cutoff and went from Weiser to the Olds Ferry at Farewell Bend and connected to the Oregon Trail. After 1863 the route from Boise to Weiser, and west across the Snake, became more heavily used than the main trail going down the Boise River to cross the Snake at the Fort Boise site. Others traveled to settlements in the valleys on lower Powder River in Oregon on another variant opened in spring 1863 that went from Emmett to the Weiser River near Cambridge, and then they followed Goodale's 1862 route to the Brownlee Ferry crossing of the Snake in Hells Canyon. This 1863 Variant became the main route to the Middle Weiser River valley in Idaho and on to the Pine and Eagle Valleys in Oregon.

Highlights and stops on the tour will include the extreme Goodale Ridge going down to the Payette River near Emmett, the Bluff Trail, Mann Creek and Thousand Springs trail routes, Midvale Hill ruts, the Goodale camp at Little Weiser River with Martha Jane Roberts' grave, Salubria town site, Cambridge Museum, and Camp Creek trail ruts. Leader: Thel Pearson.

Leave Nampa Civic Center. Northside Blvd., north to Hwy. 20-26. East to Star Rd. North to Star. East on Idaho Hwy. 44 to Idaho 16. North on Idaho 16 toward Emmett. Turn west on old Freezeout Hill Rd., stop at pullout to see Goodale Ridge.

1 Freezeout Hill (Goodale Ridge)

FREEZEOUT HILL (GOODALE RIDGE). Tim Goodale led his 1862 train over Indian trails that he knew well. From the Boise area they went westerly to the Eagle area, then northwest to where they left the Oregon Trail on the north side of the Boise River. They took almost a straight course to the top of the highlands on the south side of present Emmett and the Payette River Valley. This area was known early as "Camel Back" for its canyons and humps. The Goodale train crossed Jackass Gulch where the old highway later started down what was called Freezeout Hill. The train went down a steep and extremely narrow ridge left by the deposits of the ancient Lake Idaho that eventually eroded to a narrow downward slope. The ridge lies a few hundred yards north of the old Freezeout Hill highway, and is easily seen from top to bottom at a pullout on the road.



Goodale's route down Freezeout Hill

North on Hwy. 16 to Emmett. Left (west) on Hwy. 52.

The Goodale train went on through the area of Emmett, fording the Payette River there at “Tim Goodale’s Crossing.” The train turned west-northwest, and then almost west for several miles, following the Payette on the north side. Where the lowlands along the river became too narrow, and wagons could not travel near the river because of the high bluffs, Goodale turned his train north into the mouth of Sand Hollow. Then they quickly turned back to the northwest, going up from the valley and over the highlands along the northern side of the Payette River Valley. Passing first through the wide, shallow canyon of Big Willow Creek, the route curved around almost straight west before it finally dropped down from the high bluffs to the Payette River at the mouth of Little Willow Creek.

Continue west/northwest on Hwy. 52, following the Payette River to the site of Fort Wilson.

When an alternate route was opened along the south side of the Payette River—mainly by the road work for a stage route—emigrants followed the river west on both sides for several years to Olds Ferry. On the north side over the bluffs, following Goodale’s original route, Harriet Loughary wrote in 1864:

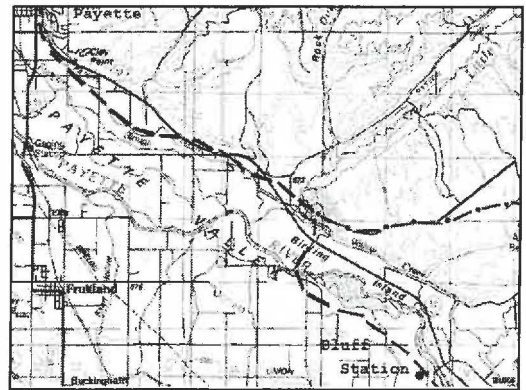
Aug 1st This dates the fifth month since leaving home, and yet we are far from our place of destination. After fording the river we travel down it all day we are meeting long lines of pack animals, also large covered wagons called “prairie schooners” drawn by six mules or six yokes of oxen to each wagon all laden with provisions and merchandise from The Dalles, Oregon, going to Boise City, and other places.

Aug 2nd Still going down Payette river Met to day a circus from Oregon going to the mining towns.

Aug 3d Warm Weather. Are now on a stage line and get news occasionally.

2 Fort Wilson Site

FORT WILSON SITE is at the mouth of Little Willow Creek. At the wayside park, view Goodale’s Cutoff coming down from the bluffs and back to the Payette River. Goodale’s train dropped down to the river near a ford that had been used by a smaller train coming north from Parma. A second group of wagons rejoined the Goodale train on the north side of the Payette River crossing. The ford became known as Bluff Crossing, and in 1864 a ferry was built on the site. Rest Room stop or Payette stop.



West on Hwy. 52 to U.S. 95. Right (north) on U.S. 95 through Payette to Crystal.

The Goodale train continued westerly, almost to the mouth of the Payette River at the Snake, but then turned north through the present area of Payette and followed the east side of the Snake River for several miles, just about on the present route of U.S. 95.

North on Hill Road. Right (east) on Cove Rd. (approximate trail route). Left (north) on Mann Creek Rd. Right on Thousand Springs Valley Rd. Left (north) on Thousand Springs Rd. back to U.S. 95. North on U.S. 95 to the rest area on top of Midvale Hill.

Where the river begins to turn northwest at present Crystal, Goodale led his train somewhat northeast to the mouth of Mann Creek into the Weiser River. For nine miles they followed up Mann Creek north, to a point where U.S. 95 crosses the creek. Turning northeast again, and then almost north, the Indian trail and Goodale’s wagons opened what later would become Thousand Springs Road, about four miles long. Arriving at a location where that road meets U.S. 95 today, the present highway route was followed quite closely for about seven more miles, over Midvale Hill. As the present highway drops northeast down the steep grade toward Midvale, Goodale’s new wagon trail went into a canyon to the north.

3 Midvale Hill Rest Area

Only a few emigrants went north on the Midvale Hill route to Middle Valley and Cambridge Valley—mainly because soon the Crane Creek route north of Emmett, now marked as the 1863 Variant, was so much better. Midvale Hill was just too hard on animals and people until the road there was improved decades later. Adelia Parke wrote later about her mother's family traveling over Midvale Hill:

On a day in May of 1867 one might have seen a covered wagon drawn by a span of big Missouri mules crawling up the slopes toward the summit dividing Weiser from Middle Valley. It must have been a relief to the family of emigrants, there-in, to see ahead the top at last, after a day of jolting, lurching, pounding over a rough, rocky way. They were aware, too, that their destination lay not far beyond this summit.

Continue north on U.S. 95, down through Midvale.

The 1862 route of Goodale's Cutoff came down to the flatland, turned easterly, crossed where the highway lies, and then forded the Weiser River in the area of Midvale. On northeast for six miles, the trail finally crossed over some small foothills to Dixie Creek.

At Midvale go east on Old Hwy. 95, which turns sharply north. Right (east) on Stage Coach Rd. Right (south) on Dixie Creek Rd. to ruts.

4 Dixie Creek Ruts

LUNCH on Bus or at Dixie Creek.

North on Dixie Creek Rd. right (east) on Hall Rd. to the Goodale Camp and Martha Jane Roberts's grave.

5 Martha's Grave at Goodale Camp

MARTHA'S GRAVE AT GOODALE CAMP. From Dixie Creek the trail turned north to the crossing of the Little Weiser River—in the Cambridge/Middle Weiser River Valley. A camp was set up before crossing, and for several weeks the train camped there. John Brownlee met the train in the Cambridge Valley and hired them to build a wagon road northwest over the mountains to Brownlee Ferry on the Snake River, in Hells Canyon. While the train camped there, men went out during the day and built the road where there had been only a pack trail.

From the present Payette town area on north they had also built and cleared some of their trail in places, including up Mann Creek, to open the Indian trails for their wagons. The details of the cutoff's opening from the Middle Weiser Valley on to the Snake River, and then up a canyon on the Oregon, west side of the ferry, and all the way to Auburn, Oregon, will be fully described in the forthcoming Goodale book by James W. McGill.

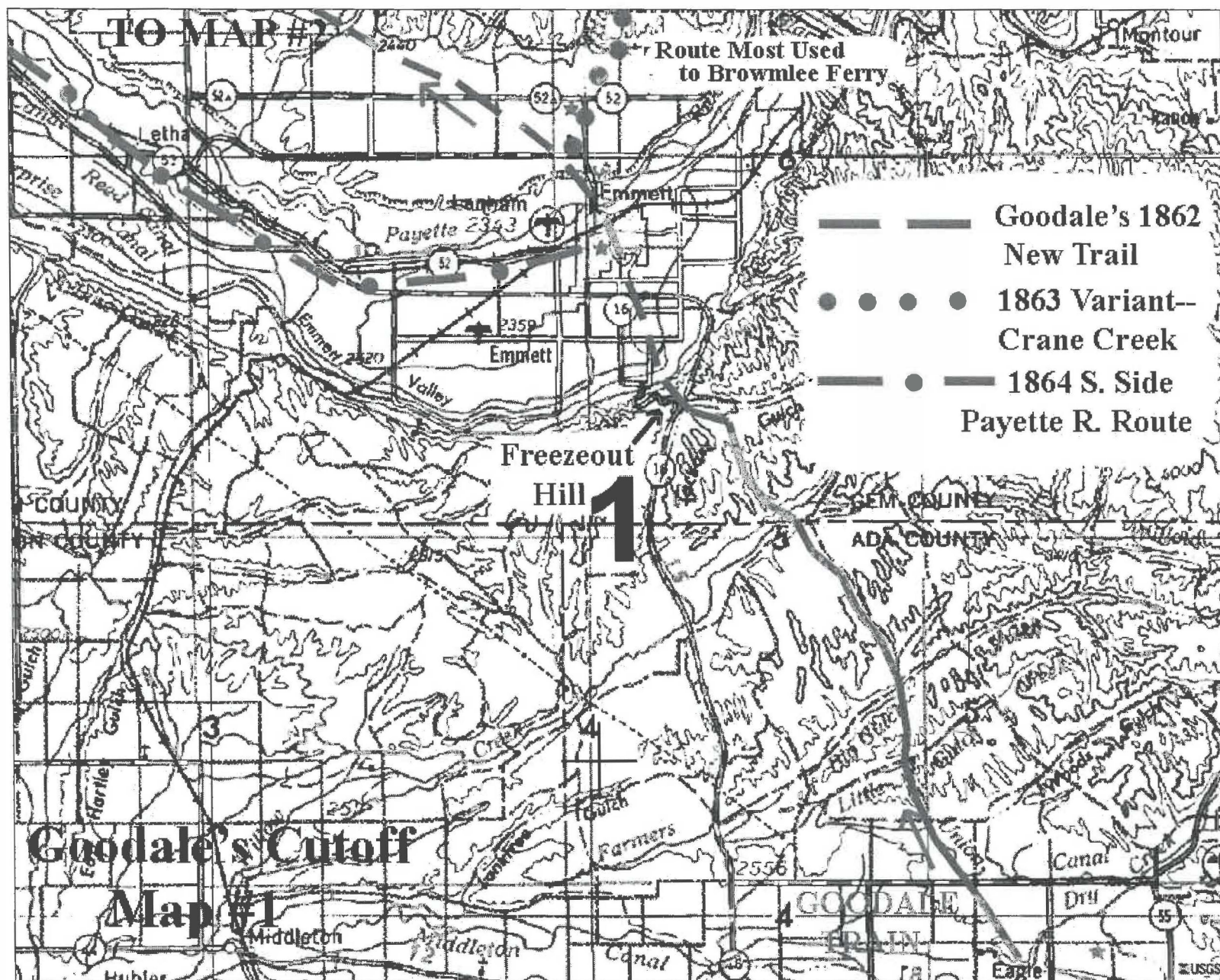
Teenager, Martha Jane Roberts, died at the camp and was buried there. The location of her grave has only recently been discovered.

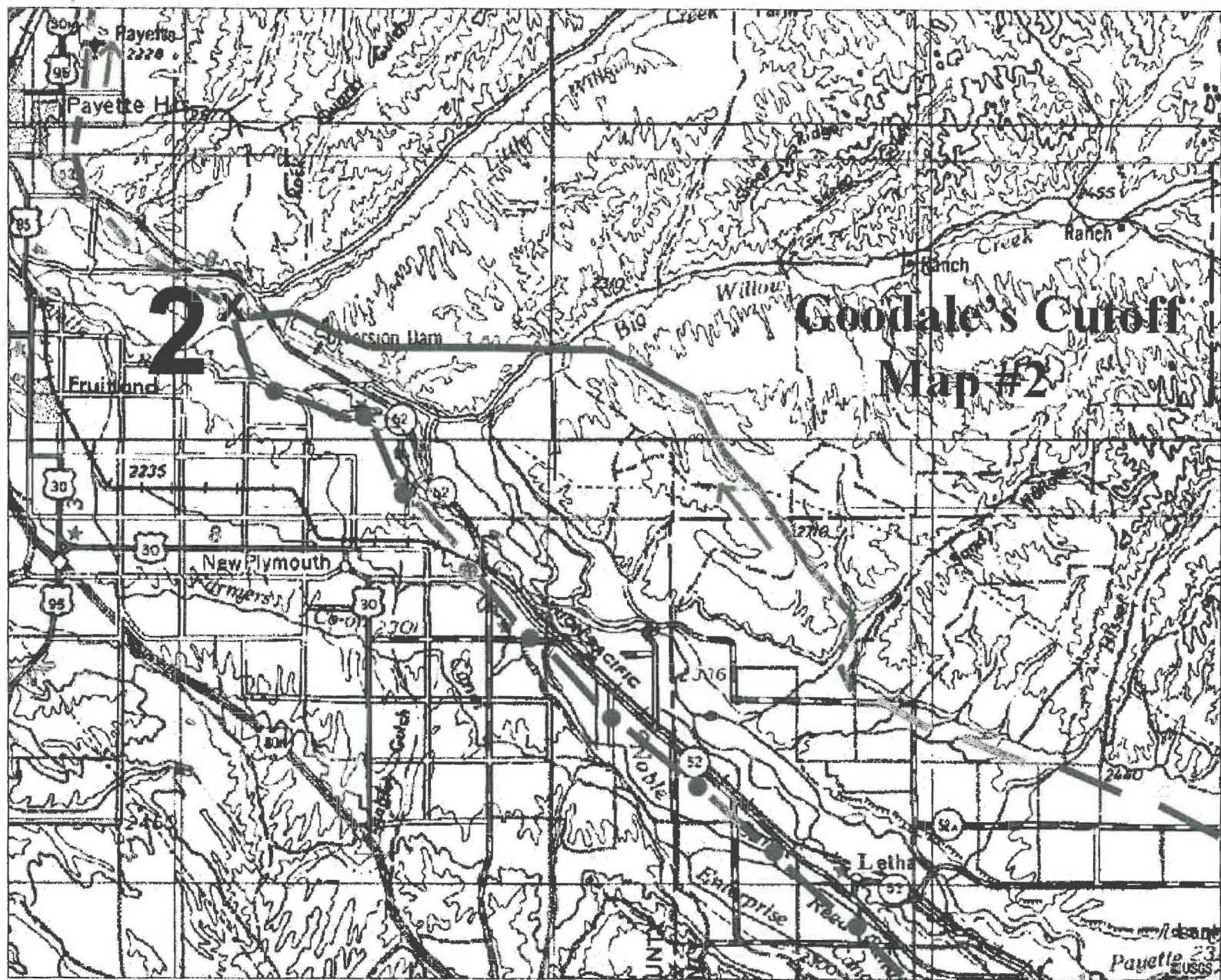
North to the Cambridge Museum in Cambridge, area sights, and possible Camp Creek ruts.

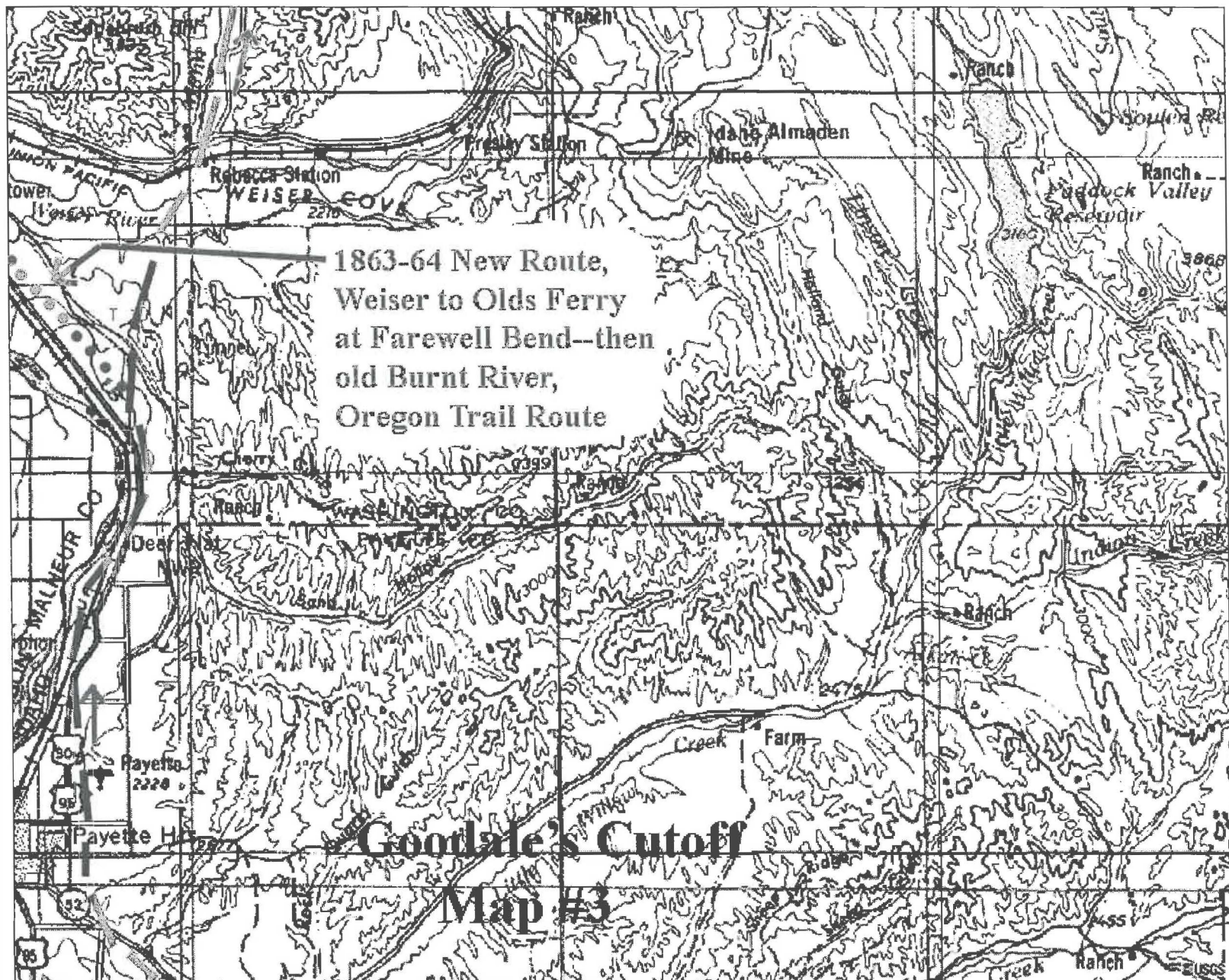
6 Cambridge Museum

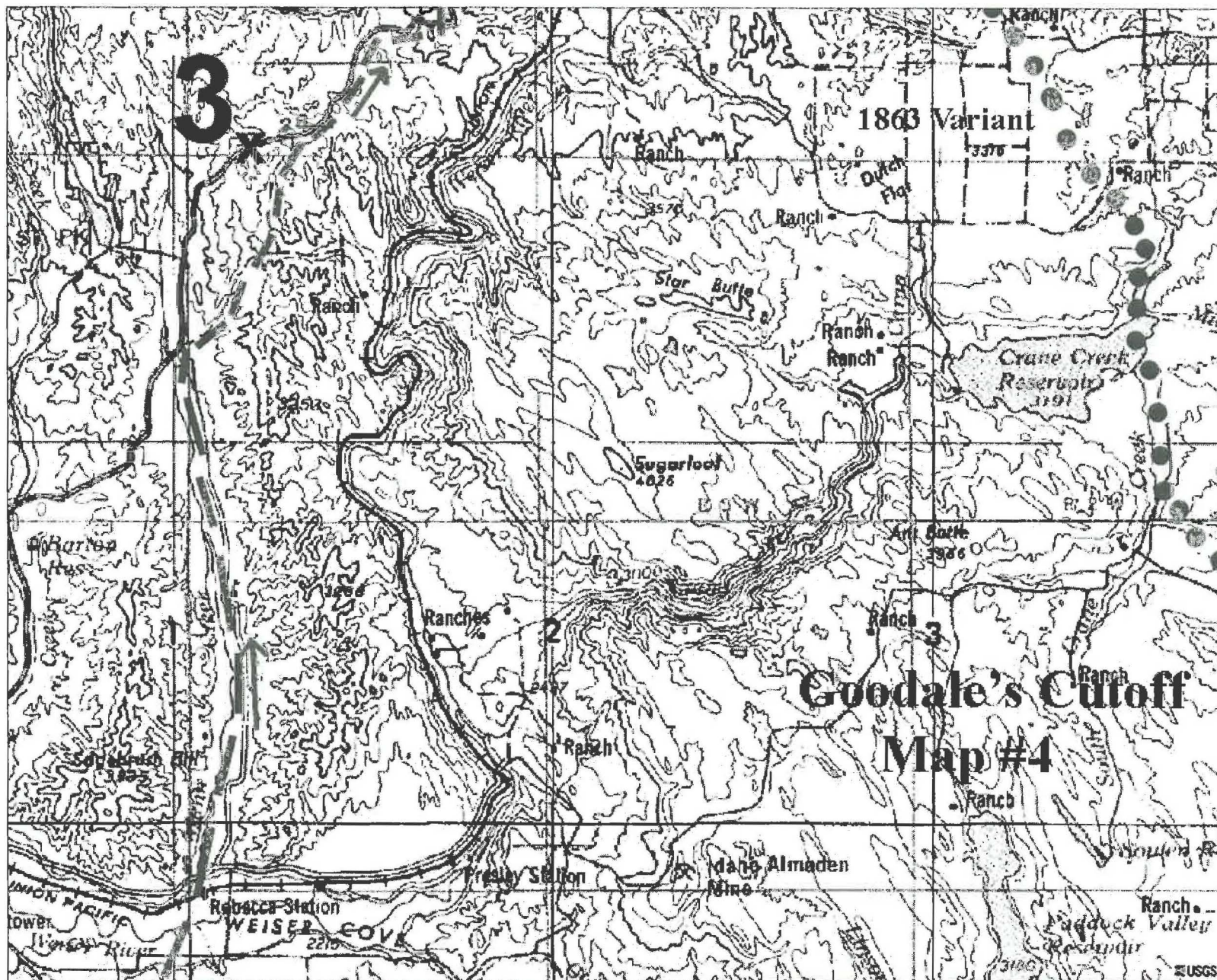
THE CAMBRIDGE MUSEUM has exhibits on local history, as well as geological displays, farming relics, and American Indian and pioneer artifacts.

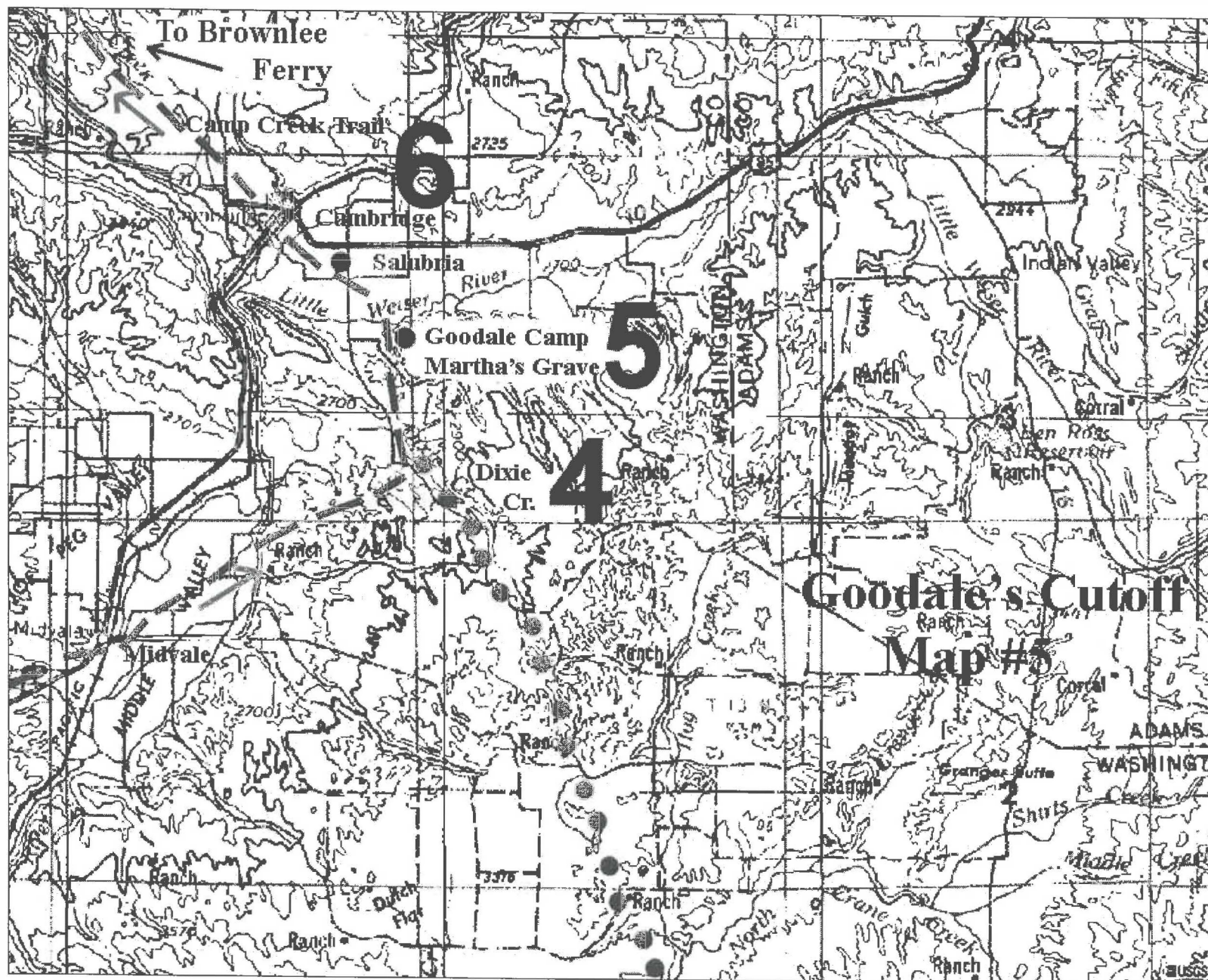
Back to Nampa on U.S. 95.











Tour C

The Utter Tragedy, Part 1: Oregon Trail South Alternate

The tour will go east to historic Murphy, Idaho. After a brief rest stop, the tour will continue to Castle Creek and Castle Butte on the Oregon Trail South Alternate, south of the Snake River, where the 1860 Utter wagon train disaster began. From there it will continue west on the route that the survivors followed toward Oregon. The bus will stop at an OCTA interpretive marker on Weese Road (Sign #1) to view the September 8, 1860, campsite of the Utter train and the site of the first attack on September 9 to the east. The trail route toward the second attack site will also be seen.

A short bus ride and a hike of about 1/4 mile will take participants to overlook the second attack/first death site. An Utter highway sign (Sign #2) will be seen at a stop on Highway 78. Going west, participants will view the terrible Sinker Creek Grade on the South Alternate and the trail crossing of Swan Falls Road, with trail markers in the ruts. Presentations on the Uters and other history of the area will be given all along the way. Lunch will be provided at the Owyhee County Historical Society Museum. A museum tour and bookstore stop will conclude the noon stop.

In the afternoon a short trip down Con Shea Basin Road will give access to two variant trail crossings and views of trail swales. Farther west on Hwy. 78, the tour will stop at Gerald Muller's historic Bernard Ferry Barn, located on the South Alternate trail. The last stop will be at the 1½ mile-long deep swales of the South Alternate, south of Marsing, with a short trail hike.

Presentations and discussions during the bus travel times include the Utter tragedy, geographical and geological features, and Owyhee County history. Suggested Reading for the Utter Tragedy tours: Donald H. Shannon, *The Utter Disaster on the Oregon Trail* (Caldwell, Idaho: Snake Country Publishing, 1993). Available at the OCTA bookstore and museum bookstores.

Leaders: Jim McGill, Jim Hyslop, and Mary O'Malley.

Nampa Civic Center, south on Hwy. 45, east on Hwy. 78 to Murphy.

1 Owyhee County Historical Society Museum, Murphy

Bathroom and rest stop, 25 minutes. The tour will return to the museum for lunch.

East on Hwy. 78, 18 miles to Weese Rd. Left (north) on Weese Road to Utter Sign #1, an OCTA marker on the west side of Weese Rd. The marker is between the two Utter train attack sites.

2 Utter Sign #1: OCTA Marker at Castle Creek and Castle Butte

FIRST ATTACK SITE. View east to the Utter camp site and first attack site, the trail area at the sign, and view west toward second attack site. At Castle Butte, on the night of September 8, 1860, the Utter wagon train of forty-four people camped on the east side of Castle Creek. As they began traveling the next morning and crossed Castle Creek, they were attacked by a small group of Shoshone Indians within about one mile of Castle Butte. They circled the wagons and no damage was done. Then the Indians communicated that they were hungry and would leave the train alone if they were fed. The emigrants fixed food and fed the small band, and the Indians left and went westerly on the trail toward lower Henderson Flat and the Snake River. Castle Creek had been low and the water somewhat cloudy with sediment, and the emigrants had counted on going to the river to fill their water receptacles, but they did not trust the Indians and changed their plans. Instead of following the same route, they chose to follow a route across upper Henderson Flat to the west.

At Castle Creek on September 4, 1862, Henry M. Judson recorded, "At about 12 o'clk we reach castle creek so called from some singular looking rocks having the appearance of old dilapidated castles and other ruins. . . . it is said the Indians two years ago besieged a party of 30 or 35 men on the very spot on which we were corralled & killed all but 3 after a 3 day fight."

3 Lower Henderson Flat

SECOND ATTACK SITE. Short drive and short hike to see second attack site on lower Henderson Flat, where several emigrants died, and the survivors' escape route. By the time the wagons crossed the present Henderson Flats west of Castle Creek, the trail was on a route away from the river for about 20 miles where the emigrant trail skirted around the south side of many bluffs and hills. The high bluffs and deep canyons were not negotiable with wagons, although old Indian trails continued on top and close to the river.

There was a sharp bluff between the flats, with the lower side toward the river, and only a few places to get down where the trail went toward Wild Horse Butte. After about a mile the trail went down a long ravine toward the lower flat. As they started down the ravine, with very tall sagebrush along the sides, the Indians attacked them again. The Indians had ridden along below the bluff and then came up the draw and spread out in the covering of the brush on both sides of the ravine. The wagons were stretched out in the ravine and had to drive hard and fast under arrows and gunfire to get onto the lower flat and circle the wagons again.

Some of the emigrants were hit during the drive, but all the wagons managed to form a circle. The Indians continued to attack, and a couple of men were killed or mortally wounded in the first few hours. As the day passed, other Indians joined the first small group of attackers, until there were estimated to be over one hundred. The attacks continued on and off for about thirty-six hours, through September 9 and 10. That was the first birthday of Susan Utter, the youngest child of the Utter family. There were ten children of the combined families of Elijah and Abagel Trimble Utter, whose first spouses had died. Susan was the only child of both parents.

The most difficult thing for the train was the lack of water, and the animals corralled inside the wagon circle were extremely thirsty. As the second day began to close, the emigrants were able to communicate with the Indians. They reached an agreement that if four of the eight wagons were left with food in them, the emigrants could go on west. As the emigrants began to start on, the animals would not go down the trail, but wanted to go to the water off to the north, about a quarter of a mile away, which they could smell. Then the Indians attacked again. People started to get down from the wagons to leave them, but many were killed there, including Elijah and Abagel Utter and four of their children.

Emeline Trimble, age thirteen, took over the care of five younger Trimble and Utter children. Some of the men escaped on horses down the trail. There are conflicting stories about what happened to each of five men who left the main survivors. Three families other than Emeline's little group survived the attacks, and twenty-seven people went to the river on foot and escaped down the deep river canyon that began north of Wild Horse Butte. The trail was on the south side of the butte. Less than half of this group who were on foot, only eleven, ultimately survived.

For the first several days they traveled only at night, and during the days they kept hidden in the willows along the river. Some Indians followed them on a trail that went over the high plateaus above the river and looked down on the river. At the mouth of Sinker Creek, the third day, they were harassed with rocks being rolled down into the willows by the Indians, but they stayed hidden. It is thought that the Indians did not know how many guns they might have, so they did not go down where the emigrants were hidden. After that they saw no more Indians, and after twenty miles in the canyon, they came out where the South Alternate trail once more followed near the river.

Drive back to Hwy. 78 to Utter Sign #2 at the corner of Weese Rd. and Hwy. 78.

4 Utter Sign #2: Idaho State Historical Sign

Short stop for photos.

West on Hwy. 78. Right (east) on Murphy Flat Rd. to Sinker Grade.

5 Sinker Grade Trail Swales

SINKER GRADE TRAIL SWALES. The trail branched at the southwest corner of Wild Horse Butte and joined again west of Murphy Flat. The Sinker Creek Grade branch stayed within about one mile and parallel to the

river. The other branch went south to a place about three miles upstream to cross Sinker Creek. The route through upper Sinker Canyon was a deep passage, but the grades down and back up were long enough so that they were not too steep for wagons. Some of the existing swales on both side of the canyon have now eroded to 12–15 feet deep gullies. The old Gabica Ranch was later located on the trail that went through the creek bottom, which is sometimes referred to as the Gabica route.

Drive back up to Murphy Flat, view the Sinker-Mora freight Rd. and Murphy Mercantile site, then west to the trail crossing of Swan Falls Rd.

See Tour E for more information.

6 Owyhee County Historical Society Museum, Murphy

LUNCH, REST STOP, BOOKSTORE.

7 Con Shea Basin Rd.

VIEW TWO TRAIL VARIANTS, SINKER CREEK CROSSING, AND MARKED TRAIL. The trail branched again at Rabbit Creek. The left, or west, branch went more northerly for a distance and then curved, following the eastern side of present Highway 78 for about four miles. The right, or east, branch followed down Rabbit Creek until they rejoined on the west side of Guffey Butte. From there the South Alternate went close to the Snake River again, going through Walter's Ferry, Givens Hot Springs, Marsing, Homedale, and on to Oregon.

7a Simmonds Swales, Hwy. 78 (Optional)

SIMMONDS SWALES. South alternate swales on the property of Norris and Jo Simmonds along Hwy. 78 have been marked with a Carsonite marker.

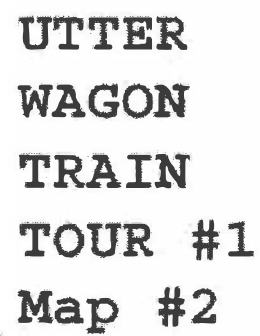
West on Hwy. 78 to Bernard's Ferry Barn.

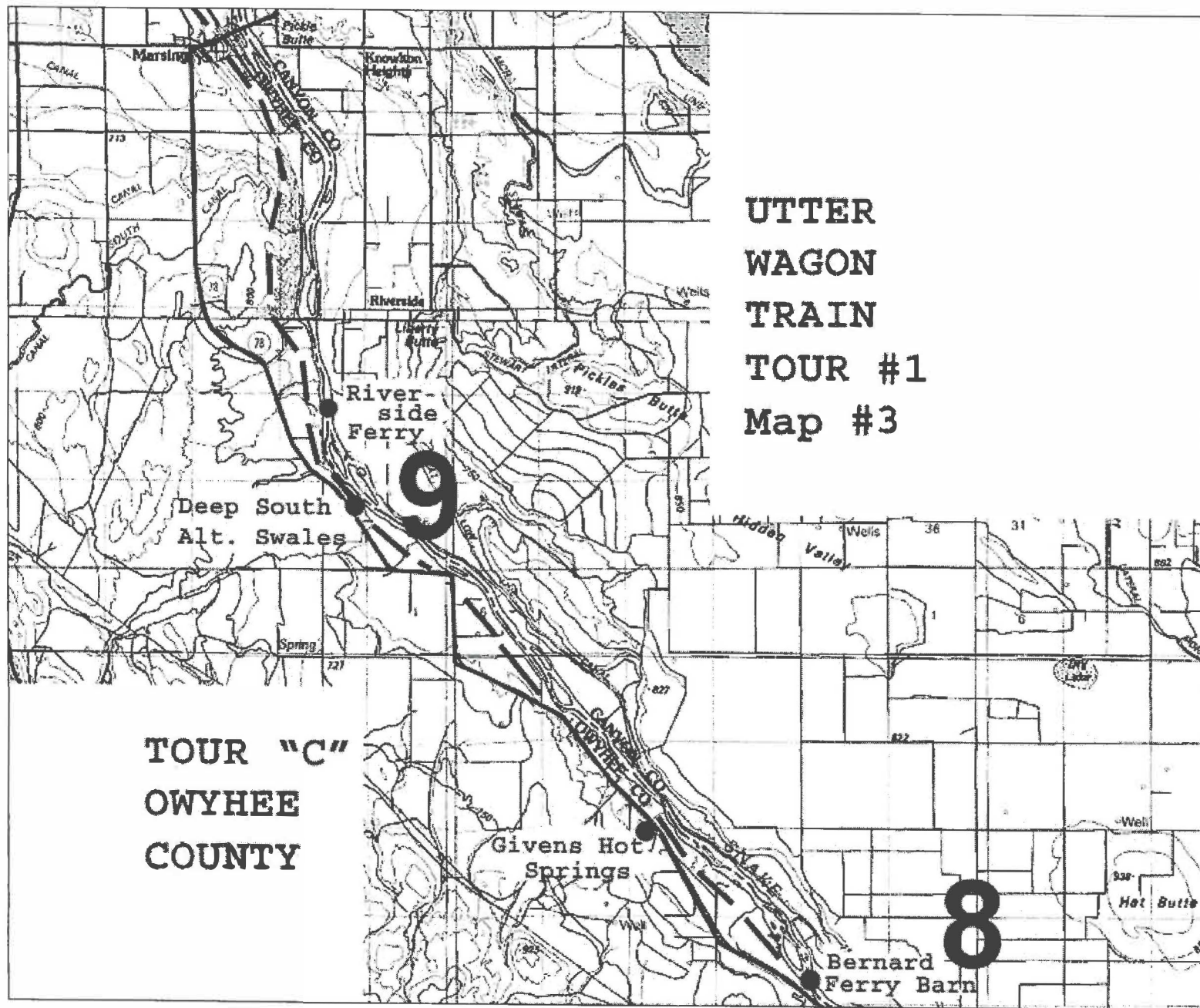
8 Bernard's Ferry Barn

BERNARD'S FERRY BARN. John C. Bernard established a ferry on the Snake River in 1882 and operated it until a bridge was built at Walter's Ferry in 1921. Bernard's Ferry was sometimes known as Central Ferry. Bernard built a fourteen-room hotel and a large stage barn at the ferry. It was a well-known stopping place for travelers and social center for the community. The barn and site are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Gerald and Gladys Muller are the present owners.

9 Deep South Alternate swale south of Marsing. (Optional 1/2 mile hike)

Return to Nampa Civic Center.





Tour D

The Utter Tragedy, Part 2 : Oregon Trail South Alternate and Main Oregon Trail, Malheur County, Oregon

From the Nampa Civic Center this tour goes west to Caldwell by way of I-84. At the west end of Caldwell we will turn onto U.S. 20-26 towards Parma and follow the north, or main, route of the Oregon Trail. On the east side of Parma, on the right-hand side of the road, is a replica of the original Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Boise that was located near the point where the Boise River entered the Snake River (see Tour A). From Parma the tour will turn to the left and follow Idaho 18 through Roswell and cross the state line into Oregon a short distance east from where the road crosses the Snake River. At this point we will be leaving the north route and heading for the South Alternate of the trail. This area is in Idaho and is known as "Big Bend." The time zones were set in the nineteenth century, prompted by the railroads, and even though Malheur is in Oregon, most of it, with the exception of a small extreme southern section, is in the Mountain Time Zone.

The first stop will be at an Oregon Trail sign south of Adrian on the South Alternate. Next we will go the site of the Starvation Camp of the Utter survivors and then back to the highway and an OCTA marker (Utter Sign #3), west of the camp. Continuing north, the tour will see a highway sign (Utter Sign #4) at Oregon Trail Park and kiosk, the junction of Oregon Trail and South Alternate, the Lytle Blvd. route of the Oregon Trail over Keeney Pass, the Keeney Pass kiosk, and stop at Vale for lunch.

In the afternoon we will go to Alkali Springs north of Vale (if time permits), go through Ontario to Farewell Bend, and possibly detour south to the Birch Creek Ruts. Returning to Farewell Bend, the tour will go to an Utter highway sign (Utter Sign #5), the Van Ornum graves, an OCTA marker (Utter Sign #6) with multiple trail swales west of Hwy. 30, and finally to Huntington and the last OCTA marker (Utter Sign # 7) in the city park. Leaders: Tom Gray and Don Popejoy.

Take I-84 West to Caldwell. Take Exit 26 on the west side of Caldwell. Exit the freeway and take U.S.20-26 to Parma. One mile past Fort Boise turn left on Idaho 18 (Roswell Rd.). Follow Idaho 18 signs through Roswell and across the Snake River to Oregon (the highway jogs).

Just across the Snake River bridge on the right side at a pullout is an Oregon Trail sign describing the South Alternate as it followed the south side of the Snake River from Three Island Crossing near present Glenn's Ferry.

Turn right on Oregon 201 and go north through Adrian to Beet Dump Road and labor camp.

North of Adrian, most maps show the trail heading away from the Snake River and crossing the Owyhee River west of the Owyhee Junction community. However, in that particular area there is a very steep bluff along the south side of the Owyhee River. Trail researchers believe that the trail actually followed more closely the present route of the railroad along the Snake River north of Adrian.

Right on Beet Dump Rd. Cross the railroad tracks and turn left on Toombs Rd. Go north on Toombs Rd. (becomes Keck Rd.) to the Owyhee River and site of the "Starvation Camp."

1 Utter Sign #3: Utter "Starvation Camp"

UTTER STARVATION CAMP. The survivors of the Indian attack on the Utter wagon train traveled about 70 miles along the south and west bank of the Snake River on foot, mostly at night for fear of the Indians. In this area the trail headed north along the west bank of the Snake River past the present town of Adrian, and then north towards the Owyhee River, where survivors stopped and made camp.

To the west, on the other side of the railroad bridge and on the south side of the river, is the probable location of the starvation camp. Due to the many floods that occurred on the Owyhee River over the years, no evidence of the camp is left. Some local oldtimers recall seeing what might have been caves dug in the bank of the river.

The survivors may not have realized that they were the last wagon train still out on the trail that year. As a result, stopping at the Owyhee River and waiting for help was futile, for no one was coming along the trail behind them, and all the troopers at Fort Boise had been withdrawn for the season.

From the starvation camp return to Oregon 201. Go north through Owyhee Junction. Just a short distance north and on the right side of the road is a small plaque telling of the starvation camp. In about three miles we will come to an Oregon Trail kiosk and a Starvation Camp interpretive sign on the left.

2 Utter Sign #4: Starvation Camp Sign and Kiosk

SIGN AND KIOSK. The kiosk here was one of twelve authorized by the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial Committee in 1993 to be constructed along the trail in Oregon. A similar kiosk is located on the east side of Vale. A local committee determined what scenes should be depicted and helped construct and place the kiosks. The Vale High School Shop built the two kiosks in Malheur County. The interpretive sign was the result of the cooperation of two states, Oregon and Idaho; three counties, Owyhee, Idaho, and Malheur and Baker, Oregon; and several local historical societies. One interpretive sign is located in Idaho on the highway between Grand View and Oreana, with a small plaque near the site of the first attack. This interpretive sign is almost due north of Starvation camp. The third interpretive sign will be visited later at Farewell Bend.



Just east of here, on the other side of the Snake River, is the probable location of HBC Fort Boise and the Snake River crossing. Both of the routes—the main trail that crossed at Fort Boise and the South Alternate coming up the south bank—came together near this point and continued in a northwest direction toward present Vale.

North on Oregon 201. Where the highway bends sharply to the right, go straight on Fairview Ave.

The Oregon Trail ran in a northwesterly direction from the kiosk area. A short distance north on Fairview, on the right side of the road, is a single post that marks where the road crossed the Oregon Trail. Old timers tell of finding ox shoes and other materials as they farmed the land. There is no visible sign of the trail here now.

Left on Enterprise Ave. Follow Enterprise to the stop sign at Lytle Blvd. Right on Lytle Blvd. to Keeney Pass and the kiosk on the left side.

A number of Carsonite trail markers can be seen along Lytle Blvd., as well as old BLM concrete trail markers. Most of them are on the right side of the bus. A range fire a few years ago revealed some of the swales of the trail. There are a few shallow ravines, which may have started as trail ruts, but rain and runoff have deepened them. This is mainly BLM land, with a cattle guard at the east and west ends marking the federal land borders. In the summer cattle may be encountered along this stretch of highway.

3 Keeney Pass

KEENEY PASS. About six miles from Enterprise Ave. there is a rise in the road called Keeney Pass. BLM constructed a kiosk at Keeney Pass with a number of interpretive signs. The trail can be seen as two parallel ruts going up the hill. A foot trail was built going up the hill to an observation point where you can see about

20 miles to the south-east and the Snake River, and about the same distance to the north where the trail heads for Farewell Bend.

Keeney Pass is named for Jonathan Keeney who built the first permanent structure in Vale. He had a very adventurous life. He made a couple of trips to Oregon, joined the California gold rush, and fought Indians in the Willamette Valley. The discovery of gold in eastern Oregon and Idaho brought him and his family east. He eventually settled near the Malheur River crossing of the Oregon Trail. In 1863 he built a willow and mud structure here that he named "Bully Ranch," and he sold liquid refreshment to the miners and others who stopped there. In 1870 he sold his interest in Vale and built a ferry boat at the Fort Boise crossing. By this time Fort Boise was destroyed by flood waters and fire, and Keeney built some structures on the east side of the river and owned farm land on both side. In 1877 he sold out and moved north of Vale to ranch near Jamieson. He met his untimely death there in 1878 from an accidental gunshot wound and is buried in Dell Cemetery.

Continue northwest on Lytle Blvd. to the Malheur River and Vale.

4 John Henderson Grave

JOHN HENDERSON GRAVE. Just south of Vale, on the west side of the road, we will pass the site of the grave of John Henderson who reportedly died from thirst and was buried by a companion. There is a large boulder with the details scratched in the rock. There is now a interpretive sign and a monument at the site. The road at one time went right by the grave, but when the road was rebuilt a few years ago, it was bypassed.

In Vale turn left on C Street, go two blocks to the park on the left.

5 Vale, Oregon

VALE. The Oregon Trail crossed the Malheur River at Vale. Buckeroo lunch and tour of murals in Vale.

A trader by the name of Turner came east from the Willamette Valley in 1853 and 1854 and set up his store along the Malheur River crossing in the summer. Jonathan Keeney built the first structure in the area in 1863. He apparently didn't have title to the land but took "squatter rights" when he built his mud and willow Bully Ranch. It was later modified and called the Wayside Inn, which his son James ran. When Jonathan moved to the Fort Boise area, he sold his squatter rights to Louis B. Rinehart in 1870.

Rinehart had moved to the Vale area with the first herd of cattle along the Snake River. In 1872 Rinehart built the "Stone House," which is the oldest building in Malheur County still being used. An older stone house is in Arock, but it is not being used at the present time. The Stone House was opened January 1, 1873, with a grand ball hosted by Amanda Rinehart. The building has been used for many things over the years. It was a hotel, a post office, a stage stop, a refuge from the Indians, and is currently housing a museum.

Because most early towns used lumber to construct their buildings, many had disastrous fires. An early Vale City Council passed an ordinance stating that buildings in the center of town should be of stone or brick construction. Since then any fires that started were usually confined to a single structure. In fact, just this past year a fire across from the hotel only involved one apartment. Vale has a nearby sandstone quarry and at one time had two brick yards. Many of the first buildings in Vale have a distinctive stone cap to their walls.

At one time the Vale Hotel was the finest hotel between Salt Lake City and Portland. It is now under renovation following years of neglect. It became the center of town and other buildings soon were constructed around it. Vale became the center for shipping to and from the western part of eastern Oregon. The main roads paralleled the Oregon Trail, which ran through town heading north. In 1907 a branch line from the Union Pacific railroad was built to Vale from Ontario, and then traffic moved east and west instead of north and south. This resulted in a building boom in Vale. Most of downtown was built about this time.

When Malheur County was carved from Baker county in 1877, Vale became the temporary county seat. It took two elections by the citizens of Malheur County to maintain the county seat in Vale. Starting in 1993, the Vale Mural Society has provided funding for a number of murals painted on buildings in Vale and signs on the roads leading into Vale. These murals depict early scenes of this country, starting with a mural of local Indians and extending through the Oregon Trail and other pioneer stories of Vale. Each 4th of July for the last

70 or 80 years, a rodeo has been held in Vale. This is a four-day celebration with a parade and other festivities, including a “suicide” horse race down the butte east of town, across the river, and into the arena.

VALE TO FAREWELL BEND. The Oregon Trail went north from Vale across the low hills to meet the Snake River at Farewell Bend. At this time of year the trail is very dusty and dry. A large range fire three years ago burned about 60,000 acres of grassland, wooden fence posts, and wooden trail signs. No houses were lost, although some sheds were burned just north of Vale. The grass has been replaced in many areas with tall thistles. The tour does not go that way but instead will take U.S. 20–26 eastward to Ontario.

The Oregon Trail was not the only early trail that went through Vale. Two federal land-grant roads, the Willamette Valley & Cascade Mountain Wagon Road (WVCMWR) and The Dalles Military Road, claimed much of the land along the Malheur River and Willow Creek. While The Dalles Military Road was actually completed and carried traffic from The Dalles to Vale and beyond, the WVCMWR was only partially built and not very well surveyed. Both roads were criticized by settlers wishing to farm these areas. This problem was not completely solved until federally sponsored irrigation projects starting in the 1920s purchased these grant holdings.

Different kinds of irrigated crops are raised in the valley. The Owyhee Dam on the Owyhee River, southwest of Nyssa just celebrated its 75th anniversary. At one time it was the tallest concrete dam in the country, and Hoover Dam on the Colorado River was modeled after it. Other rivers in this area have also been dammed. Warm Springs Dam is on the Middle Fork of the Malheur River southwest of Juntura. Beulah or Agency Dam was built on the North Fork in an area that was at one time an Indian reservation. The last dam was built on Bully Creek west of Vale after a flood in Vale and the lower valley in 1957. An earlier dam was built on Willow Creek north of Brogan to supply water to a short-lived orchard project. Antelope Dam and reservoir was built west of Jordan Valley.

The local irrigation districts have built many miles of ditches and laterals and dug tunnels to get the water to the highly productive soil of the county. As we travel through the area, you will see many acres of row crops, such as sugar beets, corn, onions, vegetable and flower seeds, potatoes, hay, and pasture. Just east of Vale, on the south side of the road, is a marker about the Nevada Ditch. This was an early ditch that was dug by hand in 1881. The ditch delivered water from a diversion in the Malheur River, just below Vale, to farms along the way.

At one time livestock were allowed to roam freely over the hills and valleys in the area. A fierce winter in 1888 froze a lot of livestock, so ranchers started to raise feed for wintertime. The livestock, cattle, sheep, and horses continued to roam freely in the summertime, and as a result, some areas became over-grazed. The coming of the Bureau of Land Management brought about some changes that almost eliminated the sheep industry. Cattlemen were required to have a home place and were restricted in the number of cattle they could turn out. Roundups of wild horses were conducted to control their numbers. Wild studs were known to capture ranchers’ mares. The gathered horses were first given away, but later sold. Those that no one wanted were put in feed lots and fed by the government. BLM headquarters is on the north side of Vale. The BLM also has re-seeded burned areas and developed water holes and other activities to improve the carrying capacity of the range.

There has been much volcanic activity in Malheur County in the past. Malheur Butte, between Vale and Ontario on the north side of the road, is the core of a long extinct volcano. According to legend, Indians would climb this peak to look for wagon trains coming their way. South, near Jordan Valley, is an area called the Jordan Craters. Beds of lava rock can be found in many areas, and early corrals and fences were built of this material. There are also a number of lava caves.

East on U.S. 20–26 (Central Oregon Hwy.), north on Hwy. 201 and the Yturri Beltline to I-84 at Ontario. Take I-84 West to Farewell Bend.

6 Utter Sign #5 at Farewell Bend

FAREWELL BEND is so named because it is where early travelers left the Snake River and headed north and west across the hills toward the Blue Mountains. Farewell Bend is now a weigh station and has a restaurant, filling station, and motel. An interpretive sign similar to those at the massacre site and starvation camp is on the left side at the restaurant.

The Snake River makes a large bend going from westerly to north at Farewell Bend. Wilson Price Hunt made camp here in 1812. In 1862 a man named Abernathy built a trading store here. In 1863 Reuben Olds bought him out and built a ferry at this spot. He not only ferried Oregon Trail travelers west, but also gold seekers heading east for the gold fields of Idaho.

Sometime between the first wagon trains and the coming of the railroad, some wagons went north along the east bank of the Snake River and crossed at the Washoe Ferry built in 1863, just north of Ontario, and then headed west toward Malheur Butte and connected with the Oregon Trail. Further north, the Olds Ferry northwest of Weiser connected with the Oregon Trail at Farewell Bend. Several other ferries were also built along the Snake River. Vale had a ferry across the Malheur River operated by Lewis Rinehart in the spring, during high water times, between 1872 and 1882. Most of the ferries in the area closed with the coming of the railroad in 1884.

The Brownlee Dam of Idaho Power backs up water past Farewell Bend when it is full.

Go north on the Huntington Rd. to the Van Ornum interpretive sign.

7 Van Ornum Graves and Utter Sign #6

VAN ORNUM GRAVES AND UTTER SIGN #6. On October 4, 1860, Indians found the Owyhee Camp of the Utter Wagon party and traded salmon for clothing, guns, and ammunition. The Van Ornum family consisting of Alexis and Abigail Van Ornum and their children Mark, Eliza, Minerva, Reuben, and Lucinda left camp to continue on the trail. Samuel Gleason went with them, as did Charles and Henry Utter. They traveled nearly fifty miles to north of Farewell Bend. On a hill toward Huntington they were attacked, and all were killed except for the four youngest children who were taken captive by the Indians. The three girls may have been killed soon after, and Reuben may have been rescued from the Indians and lived with his Uncle Zacheus Van Ornum for awhile and may have returned to live with the Indians. A monument was placed at the site of the massacre, which is about half way between Farewell Bend and Huntington.

Continue on to Huntington and the Utter-Van Ornum Sign #7 in the city park.

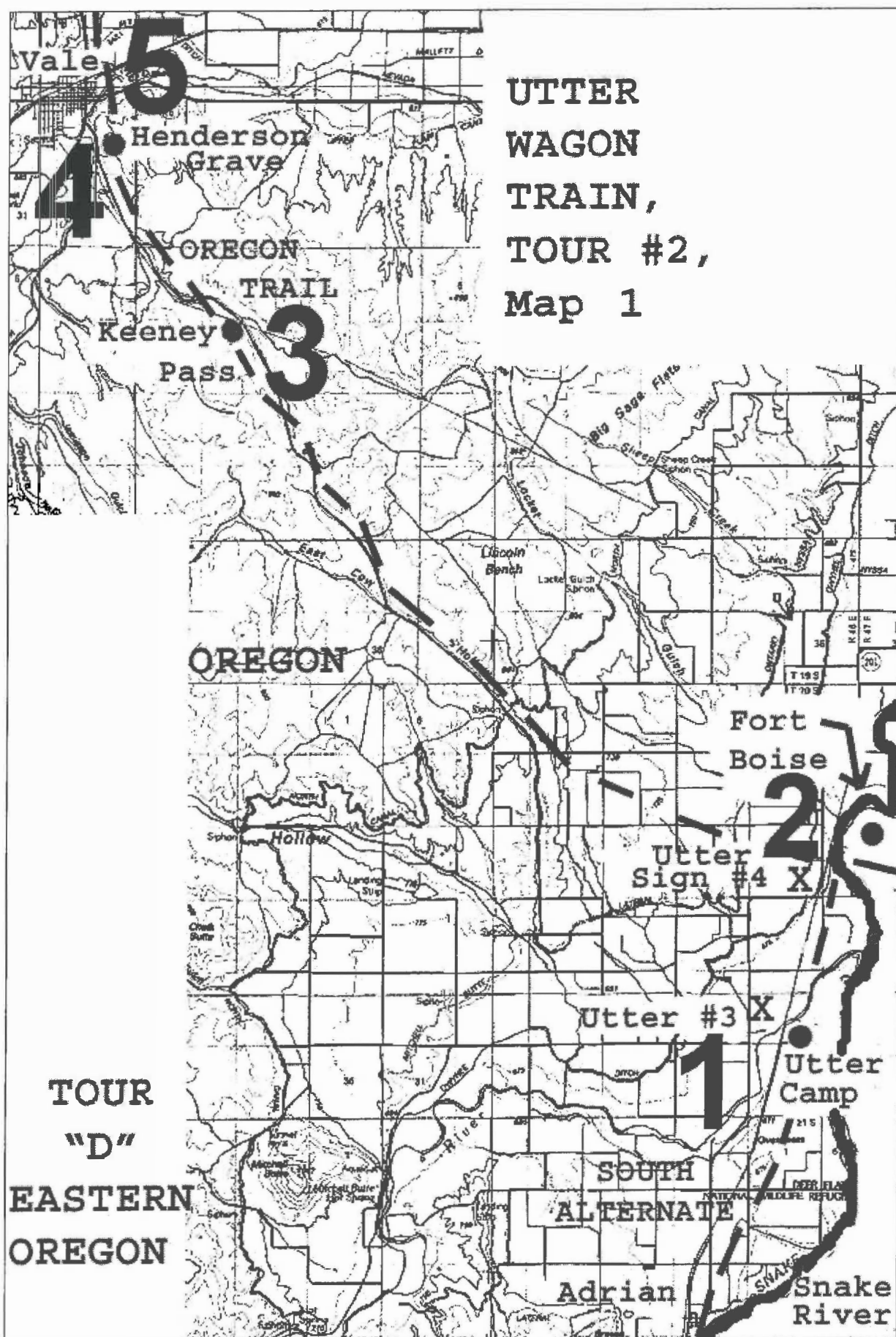
8 Utter-Van Ornum Sign #7, Huntington, Oregon

UTTER-VAN ORNUM SIGN #7. The Huntington High School and students were very helpful with the Van Ornum signs and other signs in Huntington. Huntington has been an important railroad town since 1884. A large roundhouse and buildings for the railroad were built, although the Roundhouse burned down a number of years ago. While Huntington was a "division point" for the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company at one time, with the end of passenger service and other factors, the division point was changed.

Return to I-84 East and Nampa. Travel back to Nampa on I-84, where there will be no dusty roads, Indian attacks, and only an occasional road repair to slow travel. Because of the differing tax structures of Idaho and Oregon—Idaho has sales tax and Oregon doesn't—the east side of Ontario has grown rapidly the last few years and continues to grow. Oregon's largest prison lies just north of Ontario, on the west side of the freeway.



OCTA members installing the Van Ornum Massacre sign in May 2003



Huntington

**Utter-
Van Ornum
Sign #7**

8

**Van Ornum X
Graves &
Utter #6**

7

**Multiple
Visible
Trail
Ruts**

Snake River

Farewell Bend

**Baker Co
Malheur Co**

Utter Sign #5 X

6

Tour #2, Map 2

**TOUR
"D"
EASTERN
OREGON**

Huntington

**Utter-
Van Ornum
Sign #7**

8

**Van Ornum X
Graves &
Utter #6**

7

**Multiple
Visible
Trail
Ruts**

Snake River

Farewell Bend

**Baker Co
Malheur Co**

Utter Sign #5 X

6

Tour #2, Map 2

Tour E

Five-Mile Hiking Tour, Oregon Trail South Alternate

The bus will take hikers to Murphy Flat. The hike will be back toward Murphy on the South Alternate. The 5-mile hike will cover pristine swales from the Swan Falls Dam Road on the south side of the Snake River, south over a small pass for 2½ miles, to a dirt road connection where hikers will be met with lunch and drinks. The hike will then extend in a long arc, 2 miles to the northwest, to Murphy Rim, over which the trail drops through a cut in rock layers. The last ½ mile is downhill to a ranch area where hikers will be met by the bus.

If time permits, hikers will be bused back across the flat and down in a river side canyon where the terrible Sinker Grade ascent of the trail still exists, and the group will hike up the grade to the top and to some ruts in the rock surface.

Leaders: Wally Meyer and Tuck and Kay Forsythe.

THE HIKE

Leave Civic Center Nampa. Quick bathroom rest stop at Owyhee County Historical Society Museum in Murphy.

Drive to starting point (A on map 1) on Murphy Flat. Carry snacks/drinks in pockets or pack.

Begin hike. At a halfway point, in 2½ miles, a dirt road intersects the trail. Lunch and cold drinks in the BLM vehicle. Portable potty provided by Owyhee County Historical Society.

Continue to hike southwest and west, 2½ more miles, going down from Murphy Rim to a ranch where the bus will pick up hikers (B on map 2). Drinks and snacks.

Back to Owyhee County Historical Society Museum in Murphy for rest stop and bookstore. (Jim McGill's books on Murphy Flat Store and Sinker to Mora freight road are available in the bookstore.)

Back to Sinker Grade view. Possible hike.

Alternate to Sinker Grade, or additional tour, depending on time: Bus to Con Shea Basin, Rabbit Creek trail crossing (highway area route), and second site on north of Rabbit Creek route—continued on Con Shea Road.

Return to Nampa.

MURPHY FLAT AND SINKER GRADE HISTORY

SILVER CITY TO MORA ROAD. The trail in this area split into two routes, which eventually rejoined. The most used route was the northern branch, which went gently into Sinker Creek, but then had to climb up one of the worst canyon grades on all the emigrant trails. A short part of the trail on this route became a section of the Silver City to Mora Road, a mine ore road, in about 1884–85. The mine wagons forded the Snake River just west of the mouth of Sinker Creek and took the ore up to Mora on the new Oregon Short Line Railroad. The book *Silver City Road to Mora and Boise*, by Jim McGill, will be available at the convention and in the Owyhee County Historical Society Museum bookstore.

The Silver City to Mora Road, went from Silver City, Owyhee County, to Mora, a small station on the Oregon Short Line Railroad, north of the Snake River in Ada County. It was a route that was used by mine

wagons hauling ore to the railroad for the Silver City mines, which replaced a longer route that was being used that went to Walter's Ferry on the Snake River. It used a river ford near the mouth of Sinker Creek before the Swan Falls Dam was built in the 1890s, which backed the river too high to ford.

The Mora route went north from Silver City, partly down the west side of Sinker Creek, across Murphy Flat, and down a new road very near the Sinker Grade of the South Alternate Oregon trail. Then it followed Sinker Creek in the canyon to the ford before climbing back up a steep canyon north of the Snake River. The road was used from about 1885 through the early 1890s. In 1894 a railroad bridge was built on the Snake River near Guffey, Idaho, that ended the river fording and the Mora route.

SINKER GRADE. On Sinker Grade the small-grained volcanic cinder and gravel that was mixed with the alkali soil on the grade, sediment that was deposited by ancient Lake Idaho over the area, made the climb more difficult. Emigrant accounts of climbing the grade indicate that it sometimes required most of a day for a medium sized train. Double-hitching to wagons, and teams having to make several trips up and down the grade to get all the wagons to the top, were common occurrences. Once the hill was mastered, wagons often traveled only a few miles around the northeastern and northwestern sides of Sinker Creek Butte to a dry camp site.

Riley Root, August 2, 1848:

Our way, to-day, has been over a very uneven and dusty road. We ascended one hill, so steep and sandy, that we were obliged to double our teams to surmount it.

Michael F. Luark, July 28, 1853:

Leaving the creek we ascended the most difficult hill I think on the road it is 2 miles to the summit

E. S. McComas, September 5, 1862:

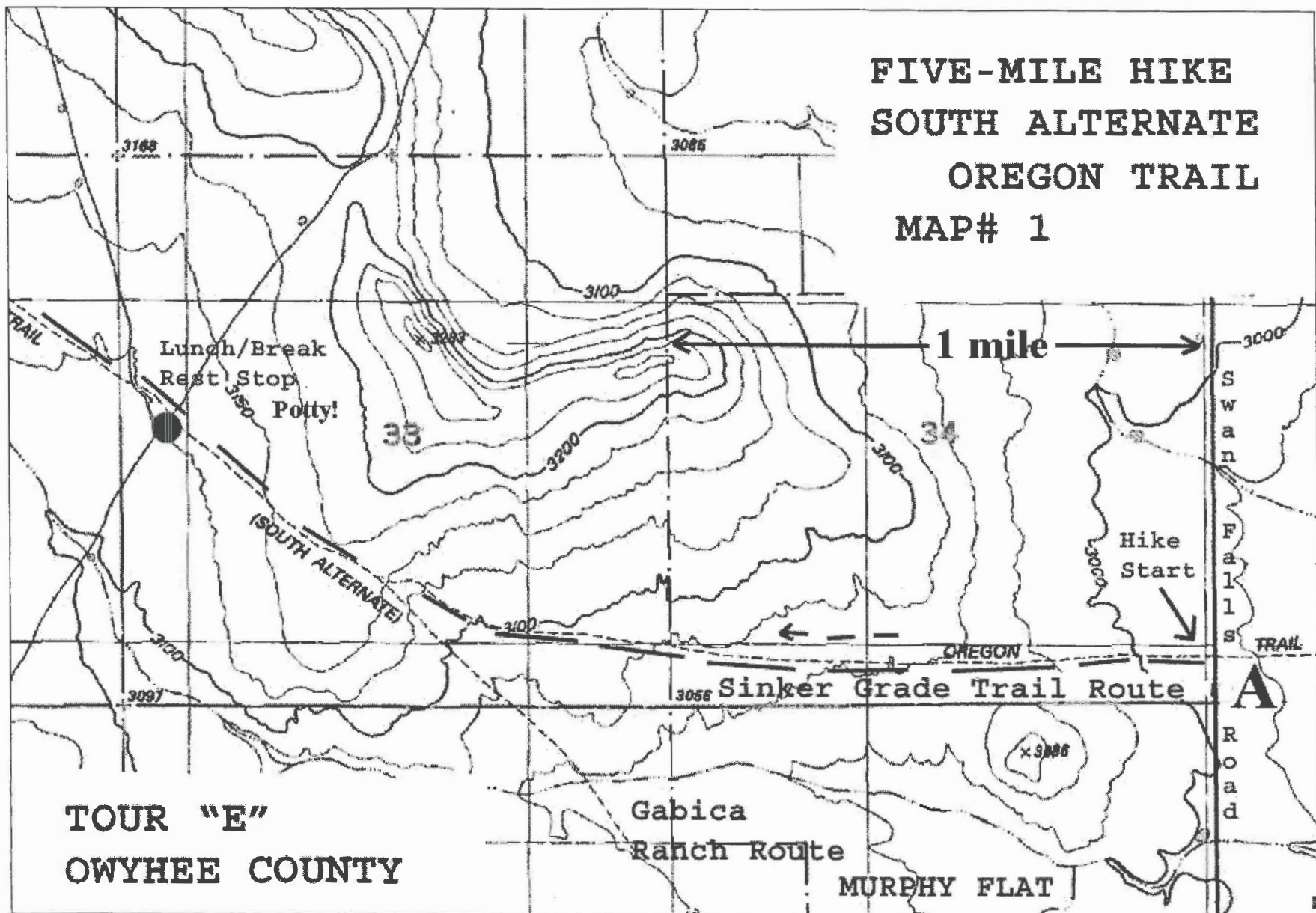
Here we had to climb the worst hill on the Oregon road. Doubled teams and got up by four o'clock.

MURPHY FLAT MERCANTILE STORE. In the early 1900s the camp site became a Murphy Flat mercantile store. The many artifacts on the site still include pre-1880 lead-seam cans and a few other early evidences of the emigrants. The book *Murphy Flat Mercantile*, by Jim McGill, on the history of the area and the store, will be available at the convention and in the Owyhee County Historical Society Museum bookstore.

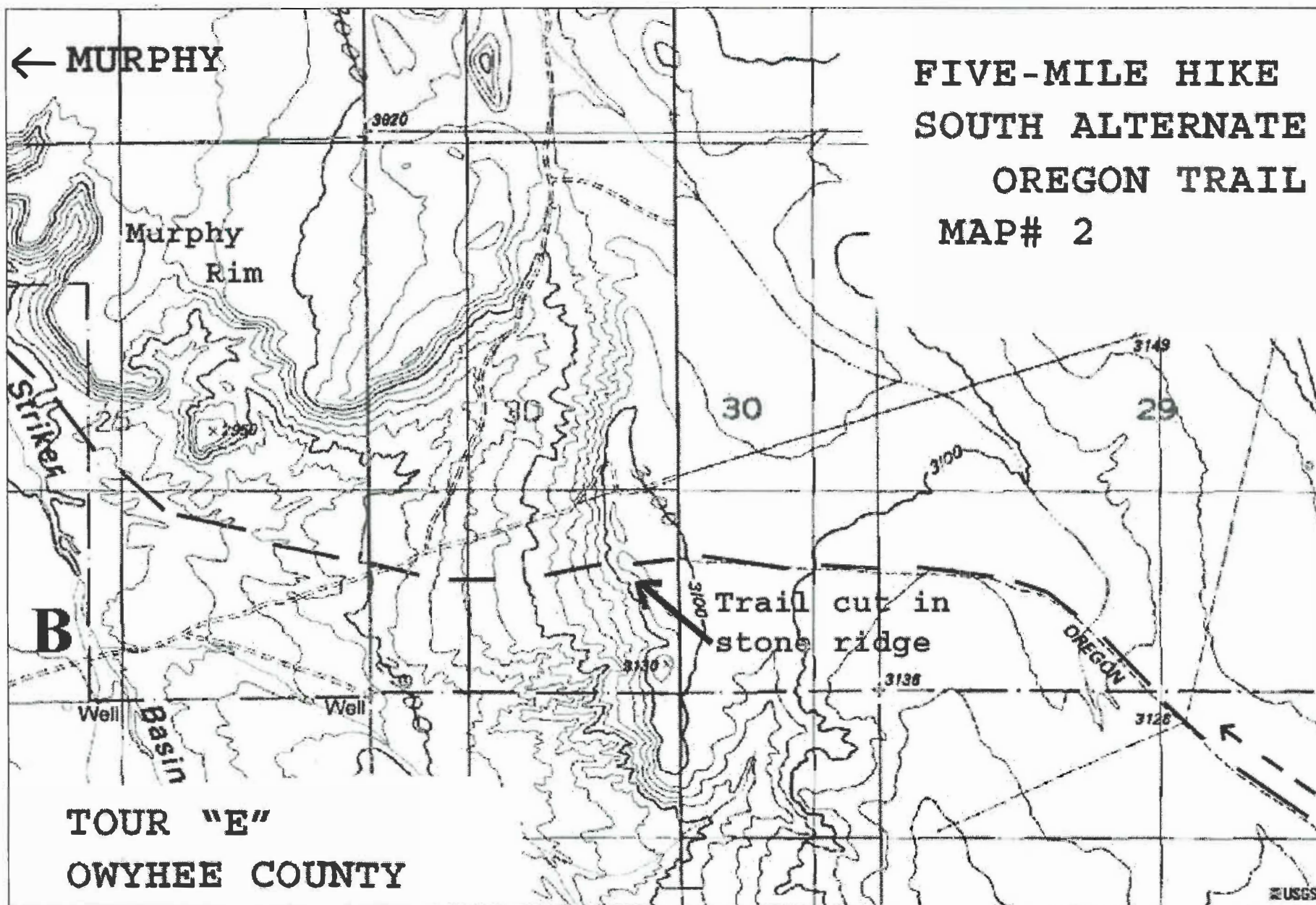
An old store sat on Murphy Flat from about 1908 to 1918 or 1919. An old large cistern has been found west of Sinker Creek Butte on BLM land that was much larger than other cisterns at homes on the flat. All around were artifacts that dated back to pre-1880, mostly lead-seam cans. Other artifacts appear to date about 1900. Records of a 1908 homestead and the stories of several men's lives who built and ran the store for about ten years were found in historic records. It is significant to the South Alternate because it was built on the camp ground used by emigrants who stopped there for a night after a long day of getting their wagon trains up the steep Sinker Grade. The site is located just north of the beginning of the hike and near the bus route of Tour C.

THE TRAIL. From the lower stream crossing, the trail passed westerly for a couple of miles before it turned northwest and was rejoined by the Gabica trail route. In a large curve of about three miles of the trail, northwest to west on relatively flat land, the wagons finally came to the top of Murphy Rim. There the trains would drop through a cut in the stone layers under the rim, down about half a mile to the level that is about the same as that of Murphy. The trail curved around the bottom of Murphy Rim back to the northeast and split again before crossing Rabbit Creek. See Tour C for more trail information.

**FIVE-MILE HIKE
SOUTH ALTERNATE
OREGON TRAIL
MAP# 1**



**TOUR "E"
OWYHEE COUNTY**



Tour F

North Alternate Oregon Trail and Kelton Road

This tour will cover the entire length of the North Alternate Oregon Trail, from the crossing of the Snake River to the termination at Hot Springs Creek. There will be several opportunities to hike in the ruts and view river crossings. It is a long tour and is not planned to return to the Nampa Civic Center until 6:00 p.m. The sites that are viewed in the morning are in reverse order with the actual route. We are viewing these first to take advantage of cooler temperatures for hiking in the morning and to arrive in Hagerman for lunch. In the afternoon we will follow the route from Bliss Point to Hot Springs Creek. We are visiting only the highlights of the North Alternate—there are many more sites along this route which have to be skipped due to time limitations. If extra time becomes available, additional sites can be added to the tour. Leader: Jerry Eichhorst.

NORTH ALTERNATE OREGON TRAIL

The North Alternate of the Oregon Trail (NAOT) was started in 1852 when a ferry across the Snake River was established a mile above Salmon Falls. The trappers who ran the ferry promised emigrants that the new northern route provided better grass and water than the main Oregon Trail. This was the primary route taken by emigrants in this area for the years 1852–1854. An estimated 15–20,000 people traveled this route in those years. The route consists of 63 miles of sand, rock, dust, dangerous streams, and steep hills.

Emigrants crossed the Snake River a mile upstream from Salmon Falls, left the beautiful water and lush grass along Billingsley Creek to climb out of the Snake River canyon, and crossed the rushing waters of the Malad River. A 16-mile stretch with no water was followed by the thick grasses along Clover Creek. The route followed Clover Creek for 5 miles then struck across the desert, finally crossing Clover Creek and King Hill Creek before climbing King Hill, a long steep climb. The route then followed a nearly straight course for Teapot Dome. It crossed Little Canyon Creek, Alkali Creek, Cold Springs Creek, Ryegrass Creek, and Bennett Creek a few miles north of where the main Oregon Trail crossed these streams. The North Alternate rejoined the main trail at Hot Springs Creek.

The grass was good in many places. However, it soon became sparse due to the number of emigrants who traveled this route. The water was good in most areas, yet some streams seemed to cause cattle to become sick and die a few days afterwards. It was marked with disease and death of cattle and people. The route was soon littered with the remains of dead animals. The NAOT became a long cemetery, particularly at the popular camping areas. Cecelia Adams and Parthenia Blank recorded in their joint diary on September 9, 1852, at noon camp by a stream: "Here we found ten graves all in a row – all had died from the 28th of July to the 4th of August. Disease unknown." A few of the graves on the route have been discovered, but the locations of most are unknown.

It is questionable if the route was indeed better than the main Oregon Trail. The grass was generally better, and there were no two-day stretches without water as there were on the main Oregon Trail. The distance was actually a few miles longer than the main trail, and both routes had two large hills to climb.

This route has been largely unknown until recently. Through extensive diary research and exploration, the NAOT route has been identified and previous knowledge amended to correct the route. There are many miles of beautiful undisturbed ruts along this route, some of them up to five feet deep, while in other areas, farming and agricultural use has destroyed the remains of the NAOT.

KELTON ROAD

After the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, new stage and freight routes were established to connect southwestern Idaho with railroad towns in Utah and Nevada. John Hailey established a stage route between Boise City and Kelton, Utah, on the railroad, which became known as the Kelton Road. Hailey

connected Kelton with a route that had been opened from Salt Lake to Boise by freighters in 1863. Kelton thus received all the passenger and express business conducted by Hailey's stage line.

By summer 1869, Hailey had 42-hour stage service between Kelton and Boise. The Kelton Road became the primary source of goods for Boise and central Idaho until the Oregon Short Line Railroad was completed through southern Idaho in 1883. There were 19 stations on the 232-mile route of the Kelton Road. Most of the stations have disappeared over time, but the remains of those at Indian Creek, Canyon Creek, and King Hill Creek are still visible.

The Kelton Road crossed the Snake River at Payne's Ferry near the mouth of Salmon Falls Creek. Payne's Ferry was used by freighters and stages for many years. The scheduled time for stages to cross the Snake River was about 1:00 a.m. Ferry service was needed night or day to provide the 42-hour stage service from Kelton to Boise.

Portions of the North Alternate Oregon Trail route were used in later years by the Kelton Road. There are several significant differences in routes, which will be pointed out during the tour, including where the routes crossed the Snake River to Malad River, from Malad River to Clover Creek, and from Bennett Creek to the west.

NORTH ALTERNATE OREGON TRAIL SITES

1 Trappers Ferry

TRAPPERS FERRY was located about one mile above Salmon Falls on the Snake River. This site is just upstream of the present Owsley Bridge. In 1852 the ferry was described as two wagons that were tied together and a make-shift rope to pull them across the river. In 1853 Henry Allyn noted that the ferry boat was small and could only take one wagon at a time. The ferry was very busy, and often emigrants had to wait a day to cross. Emigrants sometimes even had to pull the ferry across on their own. Emigrants typically swam their cattle and other stock across the Snake River downstream, at the top of Salmon Falls, using an island to help with the crossing. Occasionally Indians helped with swimming the stock across. It was dangerous, and there are numerous accounts of people and animals drowning during the crossing of the Snake River in this area.

2 Riley Creek

RILEY CREEK is a small creek that flows in a roundabout fashion from the cliffs of the Snake River canyon. Some diarists mention coming to a small creek about a mile from the ferry site.

3 Billingsley Creek

BILLINGSLEY CREEK is a beautiful crystal clear creek that also flows from the walls of the Snake River canyon. It flows north from its source, then turns west as it runs to the Snake River. It is currently a world-class trout fishery and the home to numerous trout farms. The NAOT crossed Billingsley Creek about 4 miles from the ferry, in the canyon downstream from Tupper Grade. There was much good grass in the area and many emigrants camped along the creek. The route climbing out of the canyon on the east side is still visible.

4 Malad River

MALAD RIVER is formed from the merging of the Big Wood and Little Wood Rivers. It is one of the shortest rivers in the U.S., but also one of the most interesting. For about 3 miles the river crashes through a narrow rocky canyon with vertical walls. Malad Gorge State Park provides access to the deepest part of the gorge.

The NAOT crossing of the Malad River was located a short distance above Malad Gorge, using an island in the crossing. There was a narrow natural bridge made of boulders that had fallen from the surrounding cliff that crossed the south channel of the river to the island. This bridge of rocks was only two feet wide, but many emigrants walked across the bridge to the island. Wagons were driven across the river a short distance upstream in what proved to be a very rocky crossing with a deep, swift current.

Kelton Road had a bridge across the upper end of Malad Gorge below the island. This bridge was built of long trees, which were laid side-by-side across the river. The tops were planed off to make a flat surface upon which a layer of dirt was spread. The wagons were hauled across the bridge, with the river rushing below in the fifty-foot deep gorge.

Excellent ruts are visible approaching both crossings and on the north side of the river. Cut rocks and ruts are visible at the NAOT crossing site and on the island. The remains of the bridge abutments are still visible at the Kelton Road crossing site.

5 Clover Creek Valley

CLOVER CREEK VALLEY. The emigrants crossed 16 miles of desert after leaving the Malad River. This was the longest stretch without water on the NAOT. There were two ridges which had to be climbed, but neither was significant. At the top of the second ridge, on which Clover Creek Road now runs, the NAOT descended into a gully and turned west until reaching Clover Creek. The route then traveled south along the east side of Clover Creek, turning west as the creek looped around the tip of a bluff, until leaving the creek in the area of Pioneer Reservoir. The water in Clover Creek was described as warm and stagnant. Even today the creek is often slow-moving and becomes quite warm under the hot summer sun. Many emigrants had cattle die after camping along Clover Creek.

The Kelton Road branched northwest from the NAOT a short distance north of Malad River and ran directly to the area of Pioneer Reservoir. The Clover Creek stage station was built where Pioneer Reservoir is today.

Remains of the NAOT for much of the area north of Malad River have been destroyed due to many years of farming and ranching. A few ruts remain east of the town of Bliss, as well as from Bliss Point north to Clover Creek Road, and then north and west to Clover Creek. Many of the ruts along Clover Creek have been washed away by years of spring floods, but there are locations where ruts are still clearly visible. Some of the ruts descending from the last ridge towards Clover Creek are over four feet deep. Ruts are also visible for portions of the Kelton Road in this area.

6 Clover Creek Canyon

CLOVER CREEK CANYON. After leaving Clover Creek, the NAOT crossed the desert heading northwest. After eleven miles it descended into a canyon and crossed Clover Creek. Some emigrants recognized it as the same creek they had traveled along for five miles.

7 King Hill Creek

KING HILL CREEK. Climbing back up into the foothills, the route led west until descending into the King Hill Creek valley. This valley had good grass, but the water was not always good. Although only a few miles from the Snake River, which makes a large bend to the north in this area, the emigrants were behind the hills and could not see the river and did not know it was near. Visible ruts remain across the foothills and in the King Hill Creek valley. The King Hill station was built along King Hill Creek in the 1860s. It was destroyed in one of the first attacks of the Bannock Indian War of 1878.

8 King Hill

KING HILL. Shortly after crossing King Hill Creek, the route heads up a long and steep hill known today as King Hill. This was the most difficult hill to climb on the NAOT. Excellent ruts can be followed for the length of the climb up King Hill.

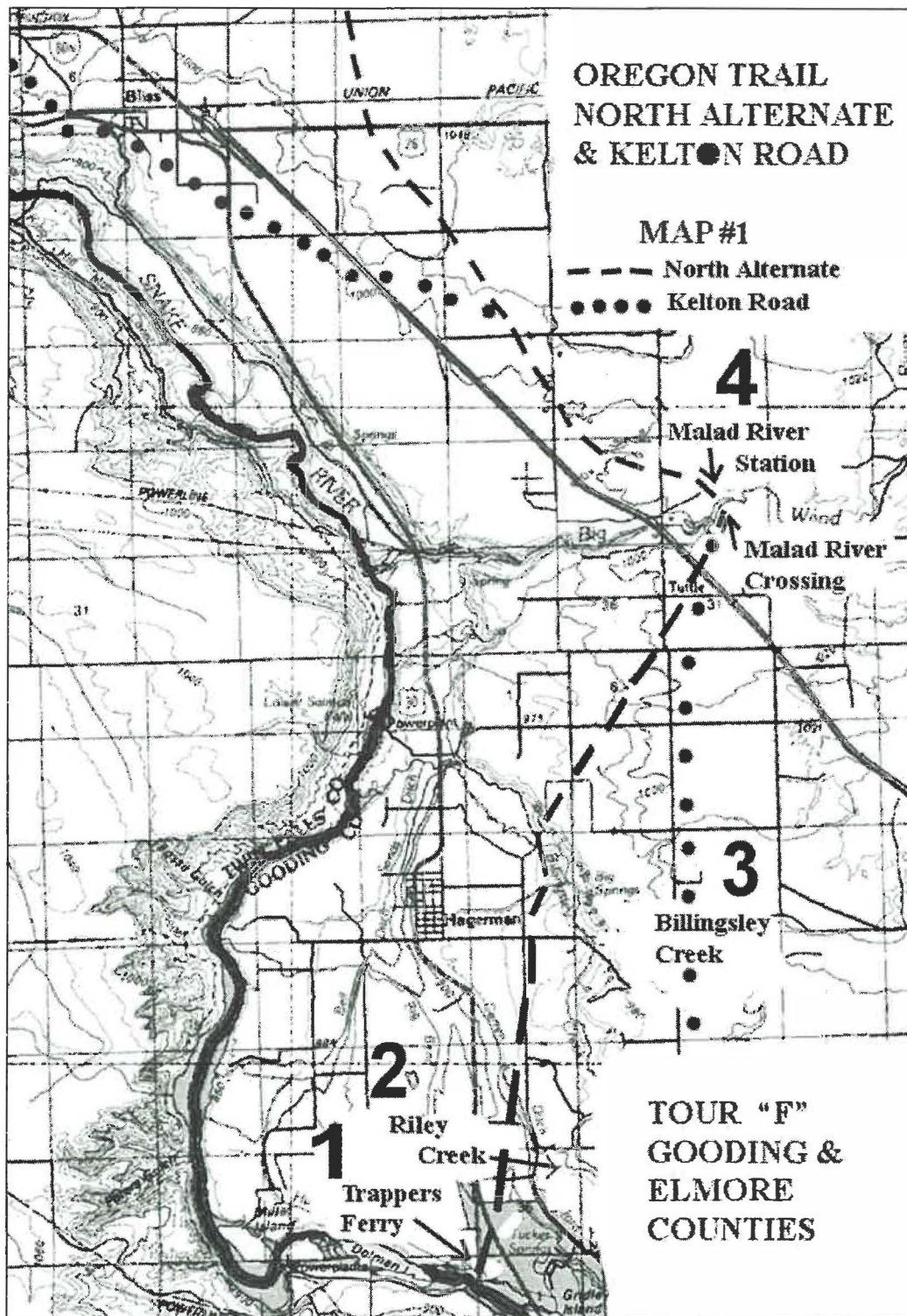
9 Along The Foothills

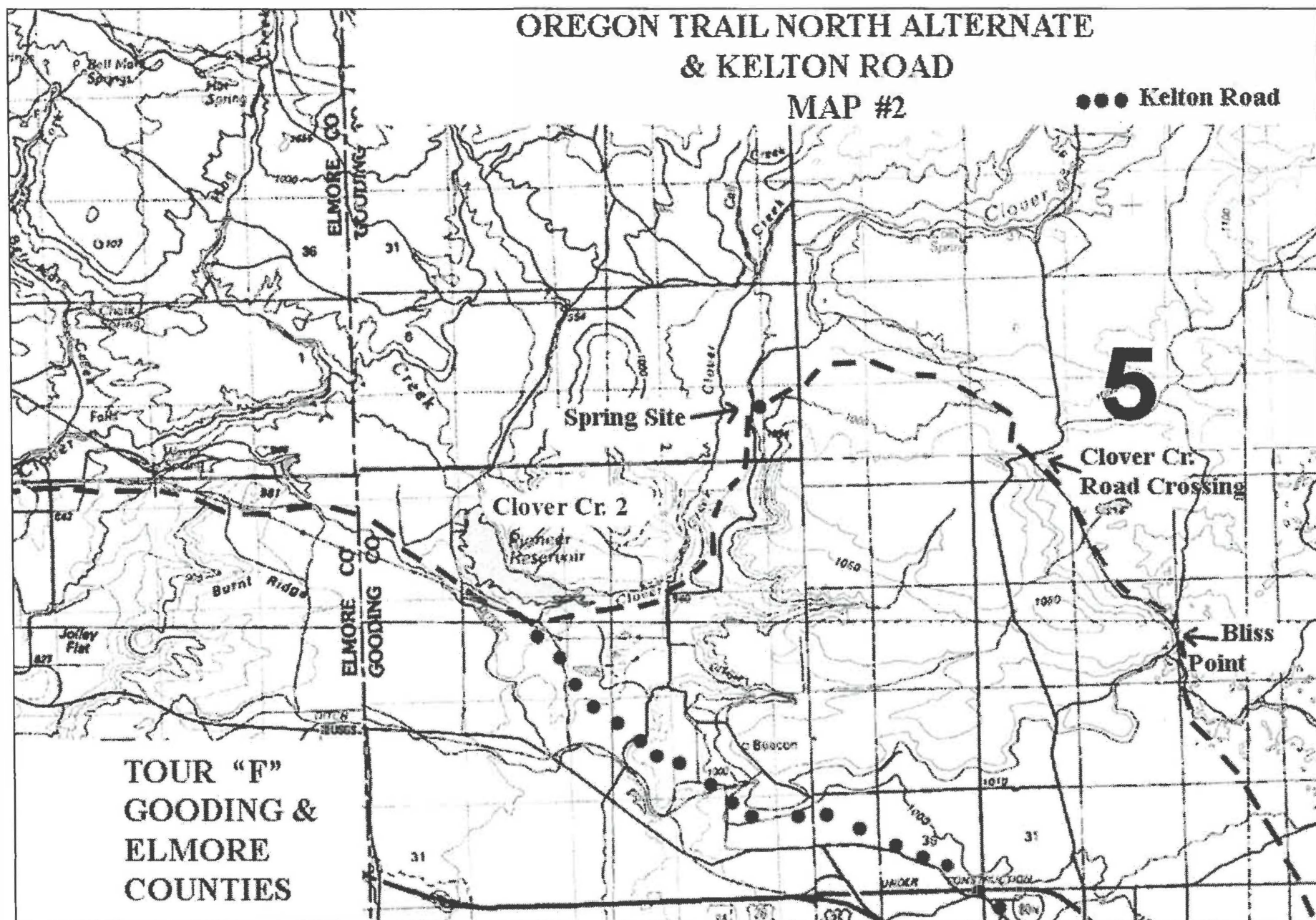
ALONG THE FOOTHILLS. After the NAOT reached the high plain above King Hill, it traveled on a straight line toward the southern tip of Teapot Dome. It crossed numerous creeks along the way. Each had grass and water and was used as a camping area. These creeks are Little Canyon Creek, Alkali Creek, Cold Springs

Creek, Ryegrass Creek, and Bennett Creek. Multiple graves are noted by the diarists at several of these creeks. The NAOT joined the main Oregon Trail at Hot Springs Creek near the intersection of Teapot Road and Ross Road.

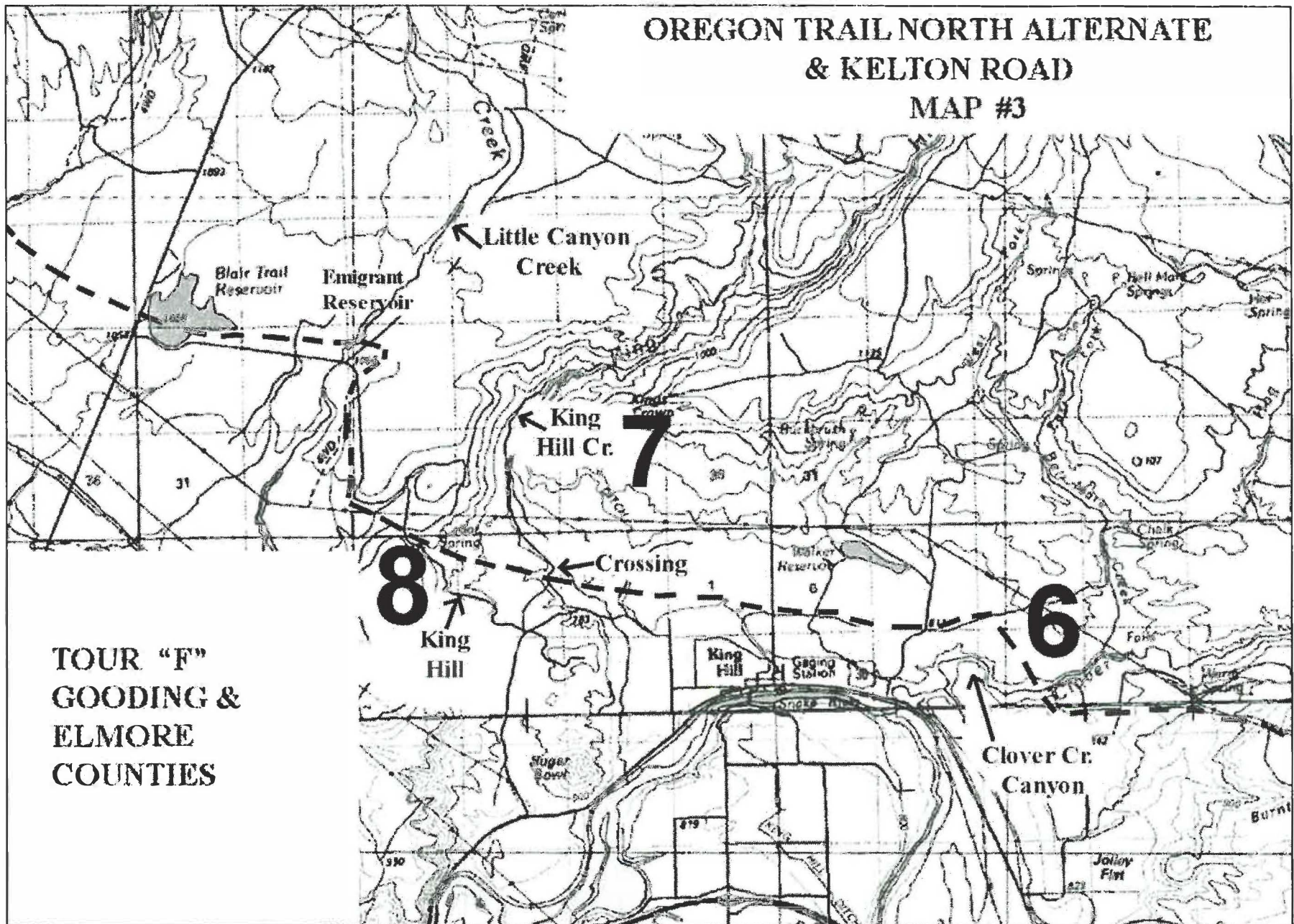
West of Ryegrass Creek, the Kelton Road branches to the north of the NAOT. It continues a couple of miles to the north, until rejoining the main Oregon Trail west of the Hot Springs.

Excellent ruts remain for much of the NAOT along the foothills. Many of these have not been disturbed. Remnants of tin cans are common in some of the camping areas. In addition, there are sections where piles of rocks line the side of the road that likely are improvements done for the Kelton Road.





OREGON TRAIL NORTH ALTERNATE & KELTON ROAD MAP #3



TOUR "F"
GOODING &
ELMORE
COUNTIES

MAP #4

9

53

Tour G

Three Island Crossing Reenactment and Main Oregon Trail

This tour will cover the main Oregon Trail from the crossing of the Snake River at Three Island Crossing to Bowns Creek southeast of Boise. Much of this section of the Oregon Trail will be followed closely on local roads. The key element of this tour is the Three Island Crossing reenactment that occurs at Three Island Crossing State Park. The tour will also include short hikes to the Hot Springs site and the Ditto Creek inscription rock. The Hot Springs site will be visited in the morning and part of the route will be traveled backwards due to the scheduled timing of the crossing reenactment. We are visiting only the highlights of the main Oregon Trail. There are many more sites along this route, and if we have extra time, additional sites can be added to the tour.

The Oregon Trail crossed the Snake River at a location now referred to as Three Island Crossing. The route then climbed out of the Snake River canyon and crossed the desert foothills towards the Boise River. A number of small creeks were crossed on this route. Many of these had good flows of water and were popular camping areas. However, these creeks were often dry and required searching by the emigrants for small pockets of water. The route continued to the northwest until it descended into the Boise River valley. Most of the route has been marked with white Carsonite posts for easier identification of Oregon Trail remnants.

Leader: Jerry Eichhorst

MAIN OREGON TRAIL SITES

THREE ISLAND CROSSING. The crossing of the Snake River was a difficult and risky challenge to the emigrants. The water was swift and often deep enough in holes to force the oxen to swim with the wagons in tow. Several wagons and teams were often chained together to help get all of the teams across safely. Only the first two islands were used in the ford. Many emigrants decided to not cross at this location and traveled along the south side of the Snake River on the South Alternate route until they rejoined the main Oregon Trail at the second crossing of the Snake River across from Fort Boise.

Each year on the second Saturday of August, a reenactment of the crossing is performed at Three Island State Park. Although now supported by boats and emergency vehicles, the crossing is still dangerous and provides a realistic experience of the challenges faced by the emigrants. Passengers are not allowed on the wagons during the crossing. This year will be the 23rd annual crossing.

The interpretive center at Three Island Crossing State Park provides excellent displays and a short movie about the Oregon Trail through Idaho. A gift shop is also available. Box lunches will be provided during the stop at Three Island Crossing State Park.



Photo of a crossing reenactment, http://glennsferryidaho.org/three_island_crossing_org.htm

FOOTHILLS CREEKS. The roads traveled on the tour will follow the Oregon Trail and cross it in several places. A number of small creeks were crossed on the route towards Teapot Dome. These creeks include Little Canyon Creek, Alkali Creek, Cold Springs Creek, Ryegrass Creek, Bennett Creek, and Hot Springs Creek. Most of these had water for the emigrants, but today they are typically dry in late summer.

HOT SPRINGS. The hot springs were a great curiosity for the emigrants. The trail dropped down into a shallow valley beside a number of hot springs that bubbled up from the ground next to cold springs. Some diarists felt uneasy in the area, suspecting it to be an area of the devil. Others report the surprise of animals as they attempted to drink from the hot water. A short hike of about 200 yards on a dirt road will be required to reach the site of the hot springs.

Near the turn of the century, a wooden bathhouse was built on one of the branches of the hot springs. It was followed with a rock bathhouse, which was used until the 1940s. The area was used for holiday celebrations by early Mountain Home residents who picnicked at the bathhouse. There were plans to build a resort at the location at one time. All that remain today are the crumbling rock walls of the bathhouse. Irrigation wells caused the springs to go dry many years ago, so all that remain are the dry channels where the hot springs once were.

KELTON ROAD. When the transcontinental railroad was completed across northern Utah in 1869, roads were built to haul goods and passengers to Boise from stops along the railroad. The Kelton Road was the most popular. It started in Kelton, Utah, crossed the Snake River on a ferry southeast of Hagerman, followed much of the North Alternate Oregon Trail route, and joined the main Oregon Trail a short distance west of the hot springs. See tour F for more information about the Kelton Road.

RATTLESNAKE STATION. Rattlesnake Creek was another dependable source of water and a common campsite for the emigrants. The creek appears to have been surrounded by willows at the time, much as it is today. A number of graves along the creek were mentioned by some diarists.

Rattlesnake Station was a stage and freight stop at this location in later years. It was renamed to Mountain Home and the townsite was eventually moved south into the valley along the railroad tracks as freight and stage traffic disappeared. The remains of the Jackson School and the round rock fort built in 1878 can still be seen.

CANYON CREEK was a popular camping area on the Oregon Trail. After surviving a rocky 12-mile stretch with no water, the emigrants and animals needed a rest. The creek flowed steadily, and there was a sheltered valley for keeping the stock protected. Some emigrants were able to catch trout out of the stream.

This location was homesteaded in the 1860s and a stage station was built. The remains of the stage station are still standing. The station consisted of two buildings. The north building was the cooking building, the south was the sleeping building. The mortar contained deer hair to hold the rocks together. A family cemetery is located against the west edge of the valley.

FOOTHILLS CREEKS 2. Mud Springs Creek and Dry Creek were the next creeks crossed by the emigrants. Neither of these had a good supply of water. The Kelton Road, which had branched north of the Oregon Trail east of Canyon Creek to avoid a very rocky section, again rejoins the trail in the area of Mud Springs Creek. Travelers could often find water a short distance from the trail, or by digging into the sandy bottom of Dry Creek.

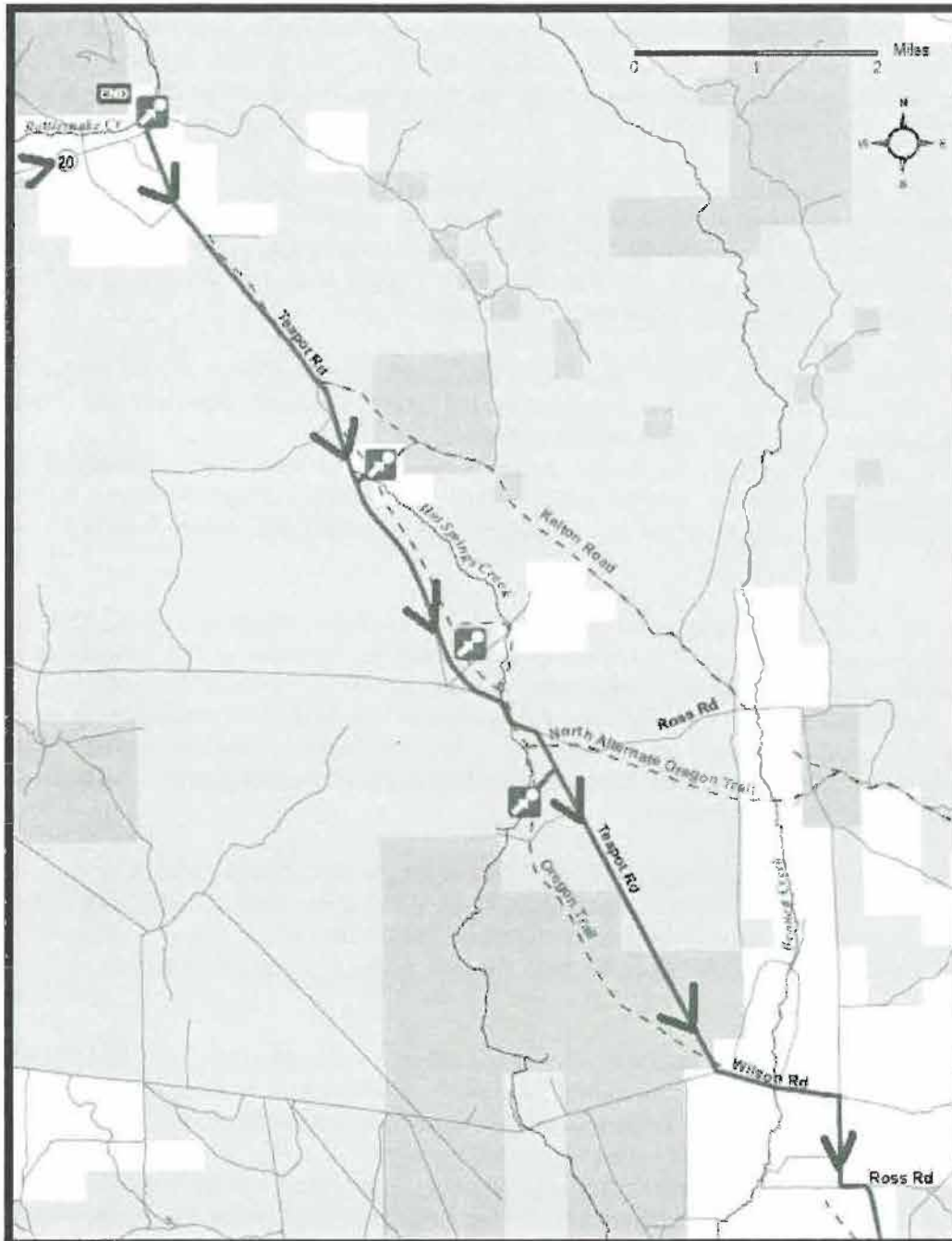
DITTO CREEK. The crossing of Ditto Creek was often noted because the creek was nearly dry. Pools of water could be found by moving up or down the stream. A well-worn Indian trail to Camas Prairie went up the valley. Another emigrant route known as Jeffrey-Goodale's Cutoff crossed the Snake River near Fort Hall and crossed the Camas Prairie before it joined the main trail in this valley.

The landscape changed to include large granite boulders and more grass on the hillsides as the Oregon Trail neared Ditto Creek. Some of the emigrants wrote their names in axle grease on the boulders. A short hike will be required to visit the Ditto Creek inscription rock. This rock contains many names of emigrants which are still visible and readable. This site is on private property, and many thanks go to the owners for allowing access to the site for this tour.

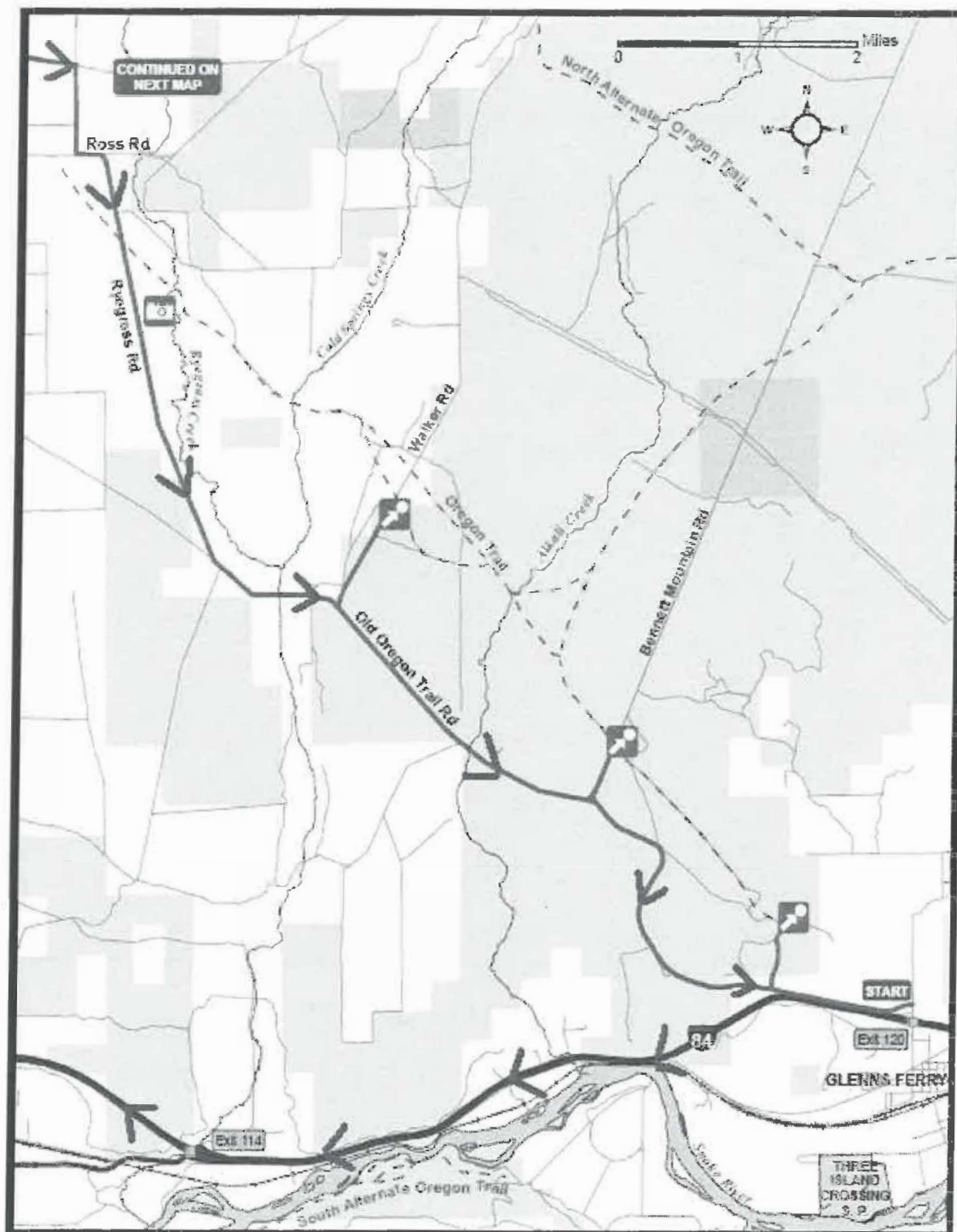
The inscription rock is described in Randy Brown, *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails* (Independence, Mo.: Oregon-California Trails Association, 2004): 320.

BOWNS CREEK. The trail dropped down into Bowns Creek and followed the creek for nearly a mile. Emigrant names may be viewed on some of the granite boulders in the area. Some diaries mention the remains of an Indian massacre near the pillar of rocks south of the road.

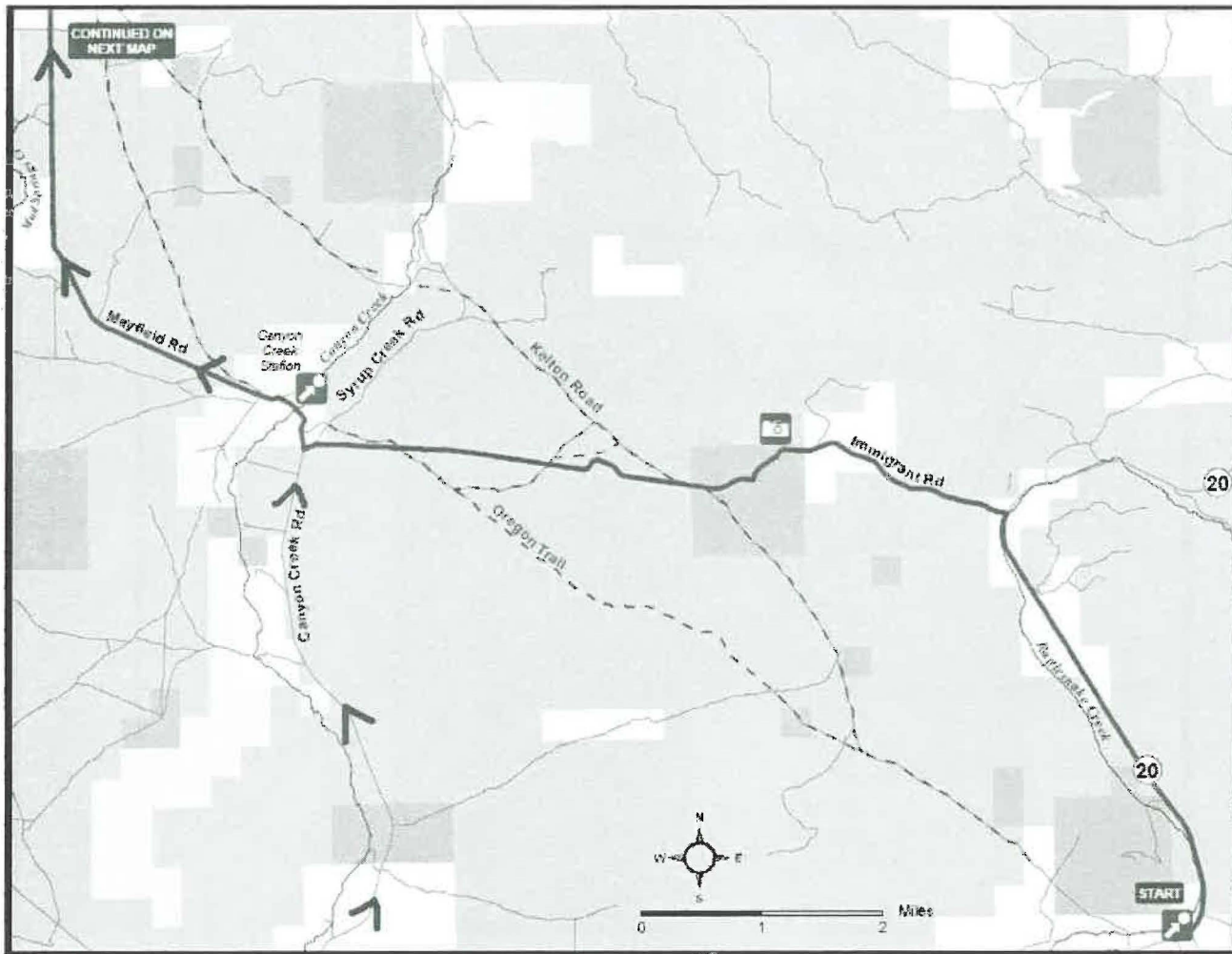
The tour will leave the Oregon Trail here and return to the Nampa Civic Center on I-84. The Oregon Trail continued across the foothills, crossing Indian Creek, Slater Creek, and Black's Creek before reaching the Boise River valley.



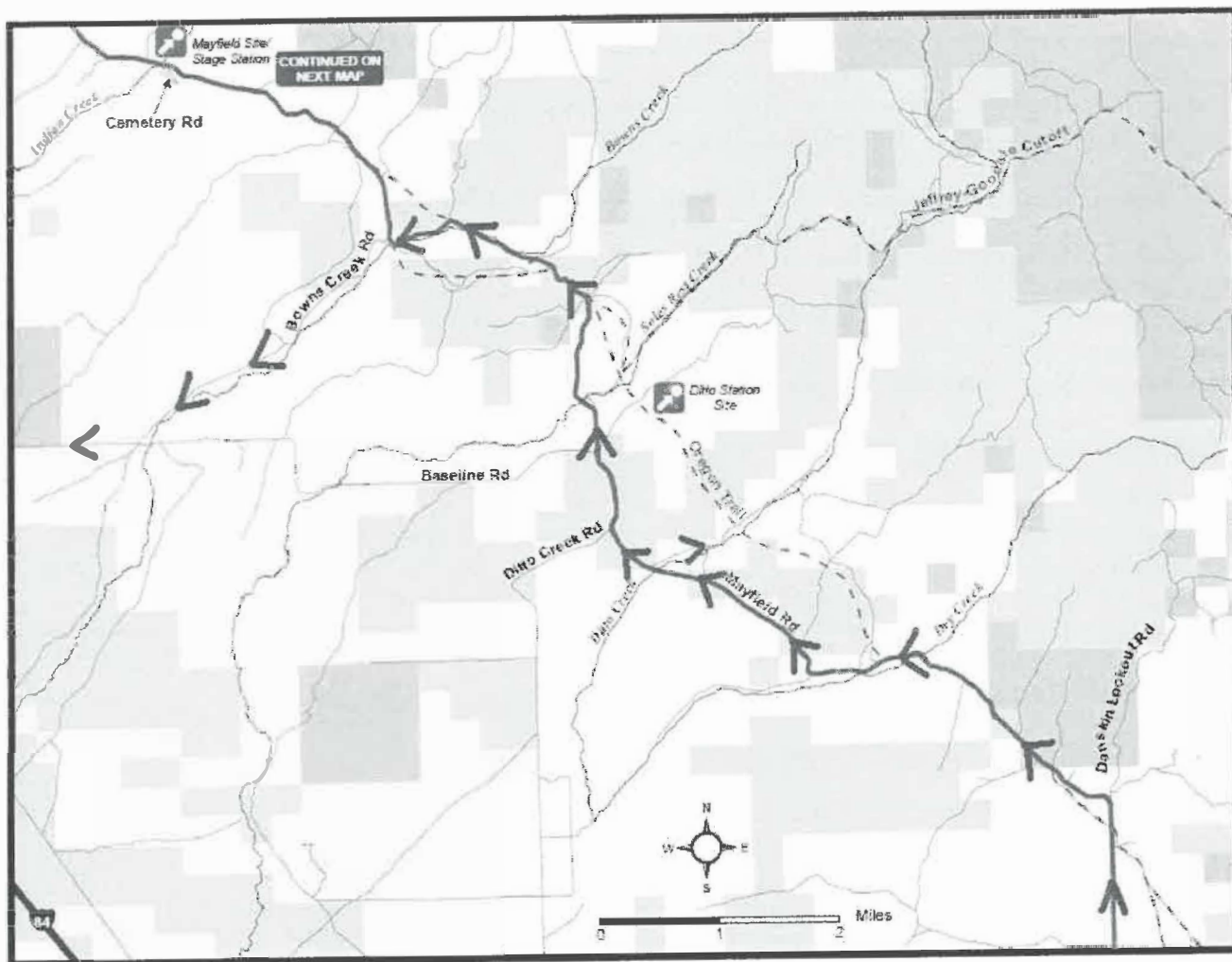
Tour G Map 1



Tour G Map 2



Tour G Map 3



Tour G Map 4

Convention Speakers

Keynote Speaker: Robert L. Meinen, “The National Issue of Concern Regarding Children’s Ability to Connect with Nature: How to Keep it Real in a Virtual World”

Bob Meinen first worked for the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation as Deputy Director from 1979 to 1984, when he became Director, serving until 1987. He then served as Director of the Kansas and Oregon state park systems, and Deputy Director for Parks Operations for the Missouri State Department of Natural Resources. Meinen became Director of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation for the second time in September 2004. Meinen will discuss why it is important to educate young people to appreciate natural and historic resources, for if we fail to do so, we risk losing these important values.

David J. Welch, “Trail Preservation: What We Have Done – What We Might Do”

Dave Welch, OCTA’s retiring National Trails Preservation Officer (NTPO), will present an overview of OCTA’s preservation activities. He will discuss the practical aspects of trail preservation, summarize his personal experiences as NTPO, give an overview of OCTA’s trail preservation “triumphs and tragedies,” and propose where we might go in the future. In addition to serving as OCTA’s NTPO for the last seven years, Welch served as OCTA’s national president (1999–2001) and was twice elected to the board of directors.

Donald H. Shannon, “Indian-White Relations along the Oregon Trail in Idaho”

Don Shannon, author of three books on disastrous Indian-white encounters along the trail in Idaho will examine the Shoshone, Northern Paiutes, and Bannocks and their relations with the fur traders, army, Indian agents, and emigrants. A few of the adverse encounters between the Indians and the intruders in their land were not only tragic events, but also simply atrocious. Shannon will describe the Perry and Ward trains in 1854, the Shepherd and Miltimore trains in 1859, the attack on the Utter train in Owyhee County and subsequent attacks on the survivors in 1860, and the attacks on trains and retaliatory skirmishes that occurred between Massacre Rocks and American Falls in 1862.

James W. McGill, “Tim Goodale’s 1862 Cutoff in Eastern Oregon”

Jim McGill, OCTA’s Mapping Chair, has exhaustively studied Tim Goodale and his family, finding much that previously was not well known and finding that some information that was “known” was inaccurate. He will sketch the lives of Goodale and his family and focus on two sections of Tim Goodale’s Cutoff that have come to be viewed controversially. These are the 45-mile 1863 Variant and the more than 50 miles of trail pioneered by a train he guided from the Brownlee Ferry on the Snake River to the Baker Valley in Oregon. Use of Goodale’s route for over twenty years made Goodale and his trail important to the development of Idaho and eastern Oregon.

Lynn Porter, “Angels Along the Trail”

Nearly one person in ten who started on the Oregon Trail met their fate long before the end of the trail. Illness, accidents, and starvation all took their toll on the harsh traveling conditions. But where are their graves now? Lynn Porter, a senior in anthropology with an interest in forensic archaeology at Idaho State University, will discuss how these graves are located, what to look for, and how graves have been located using modern methods. She has assisted law enforcement with several missing persons cold cases utilizing her human remains K-9 handler and archaeology skills. She has also worked on the location and preservation of historical graves and cemeteries, including several on the Oregon Trail in Idaho.

Ray Egan, as Ezra Meeker, “My Friend, George Bush”

Ezra Meeker will tell his heartwarming story of a black family who, with a contingent of white neighbors, left Missouri in 1844 for freedom and free land in Oregon. Oregon’s “Lash Law” forced the Bushes and twenty-

four loyal white friends to settle north of the Columbia River, near today's Tumwater, Washington. Although unable to own his farm because of his race, Bush saved countless white neighbors and trail survivors from destitution by sharing his harvests. For his generosity, Bush was rewarded with a special congressional bill awarding him his homestead. Meeker makes it very clear why he admired Bush, whom he mentioned in several of his books. Ray Egan previously performed as Ezra Meeker in 2004 at the Vancouver, Washington, convention and again in 2006 at the St. Joseph, Missouri, convention.

Mary Michaelson, "The Goodell/Goodale Connection to Famous Founding Families of the Pacific Northwest"

Mary Michaelson, Assistant Curator for the Lynden Pioneer Museum, has conducted extensive research into the life of Phoebe Goodell Judson, an 1853 Oregon Trail emigrant and author of *A Pioneer's Search for an Ideal Home*. Her research has led to some intriguing discoveries of connections to several other famous Goodell/Goodale family members, as well as to members of other pioneering families of importance in the development of the Pacific Northwest. Her PowerPoint presentation features old and new views of significant sites, rare documents, and people. She will also feature a display table with relevant books, documents, and photographs, many of them never before shared with the public.

Jacqueline Williams, "The Best of Meals, The Terrible Meals: Culinary Tales from the Oregon Trail"

Jacqueline Williams will briefly discuss the foods carried or acquired on the Oregon Trail. Most of her talk will focus on why some meals would be considered delicious, while others left the wagon companies irritable and hungry. Williams is the award winning author of *Wagon Wheel Kitchens: Food On the Oregon Trail* and *The Way We Ate: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843–1900*. She received the 2006 Washington State Library Culture Heritage Award: Taste of Washington, the 1997 Award for Individual Excellence from Washington Museum Association, and the Marie Folkins Award. In 2008 she received the Annual History Award from the Pacific Northwest Historical Guild. She has been published widely in journals and contributed essays to *Encyclopedia of American Foods and Culinary Biographies*.

Pat Packard, "Use of Plants on the Oregon Trail"

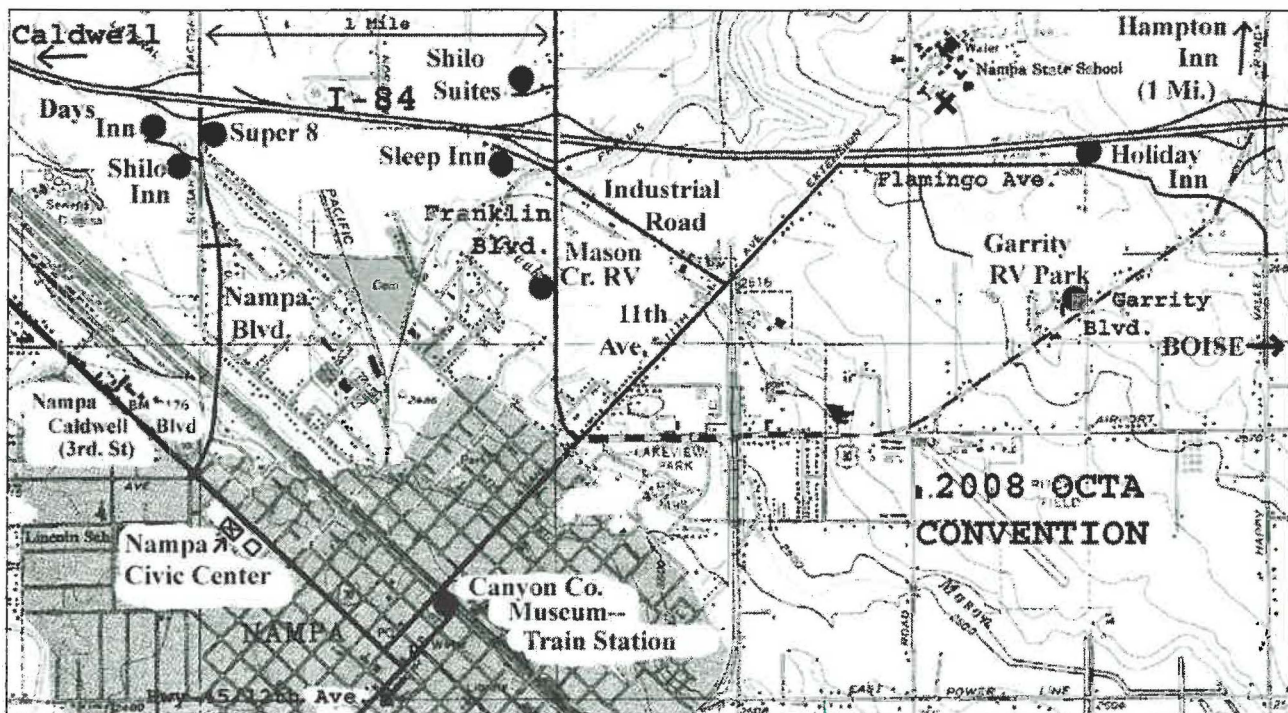
Pat Packard will discuss the influence of vegetation on travelers and their animals for nutrition, health, and other purposes. She will also explore poisonous plants and pioneer attitudes about using unknown wild foods. Packard was a botany professor at the College of Idaho for over thirty years. She is active in genealogy circles, is an Oregon Trail scholar, and has led field trips on wildflowers and plants and their uses for her local historical society.

James W. Henderson, "Indirect Historic Preservation: Emigrant Inscriptions along the Oregon-California Trails"

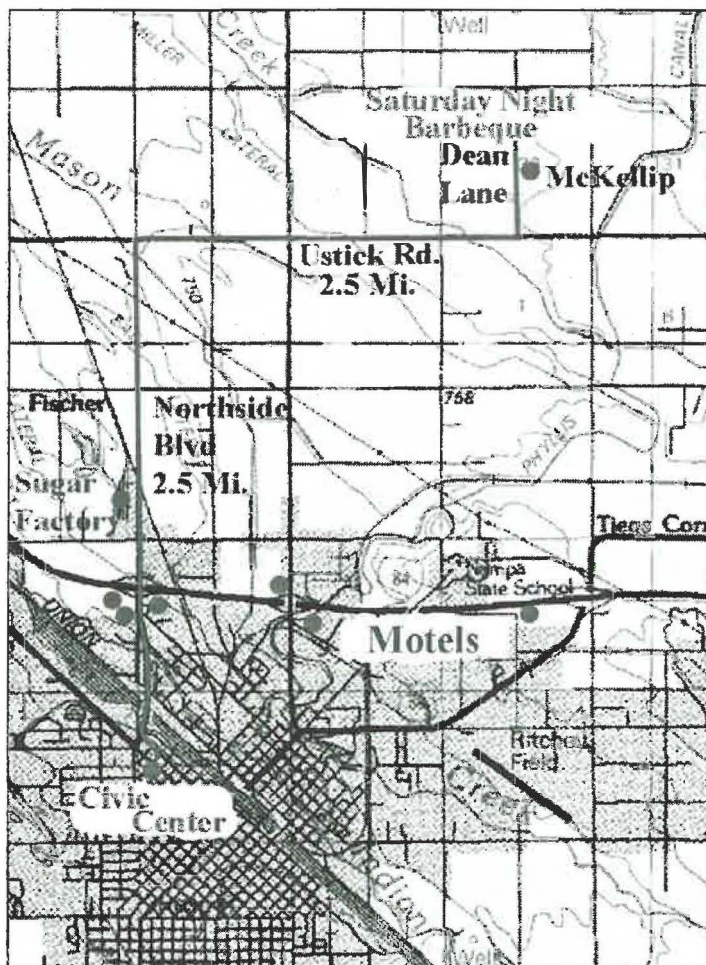
Jim Henderson will discuss a polarized light photographic application that has been successfully used to reveal the rich details of inscriptions along the Oregon-California Trails, many of which were previously thought lost or non-existent. Polarized lighting and digital enhancement have made it feasible to restore—photographically—the visual appearance of the inscriptions as they appeared when first created. These clear photographs have been linked to the typed names and integrated into a searchable database.

Paul Nettleton, "Owyhee County Early Years: Trails, Miners, and Ranchers"

Paul Nettleton, a colorful and entertaining speaker, will discuss his family's relationship to the South Alternate Oregon Trail beginning in 1864. When his family first came to Owyhee County they settled at Ruby City, near present Silver City. They hoped to capitalize on providing beef, milk products, and vegetables to local miners. However, the family soon moved to Sinker Creek and started the Joyce Ranch, where Paul still lives. He will discuss the mining, ranching, lumbering, and overall life in Owyhee County, as well as evidence of a little known trail massacre.



Nampa



Saturday Barbeque at McKellip Ponds Parking is Limited

Shuttle buses will operate between the Civic Center and McKellip Ponds for the barbeque on Saturday evening.

Driving directions for those who drive:

Go north on either Nampa/Northside Blvd. or Franklin Rd. to Ustick Rd.
Right on Ustick Rd. to Dean Lane.
Left on Dean Lane.
McKellip Ponds is on the right, at 18120 Dean Lane.



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2008 OCTA Convention Program

Monday, August 4

Noon – 9:00 pm Registration/Information at Nampa Civic Center

Tuesday, August 5

7:00 am – 9:00 pm Registration/Information at Nampa Civic Center

8:00 am – 5:00 pm OCTA Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Welcoming Reception (OCTA Band, Book Room open)

Wednesday, August 6

6:30 am – 7:00 pm Registration/Information at Nampa Civic Center

6:45 am – 8:00 am Chapter Presidents & Committee Breakfasts

8:15 am – 10:00 am General Membership Meeting

10:20 am – 11:10 am Keynote: Bob Meinen, Director, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

11:10 am – Noon Speaker: Dave Welch

Noon – 1:15 pm Buffet Luncheon

1:20 pm – 4:15 pm Speakers: Don Shannon, Jim McGill, Lynn Porter

4:15 pm – 5:30 pm Chapter Meetings

6:00 pm – 9:30 pm Awards Banquet

Thursday, August 7

6:30 am – 5:00 pm Registration/Information at Nampa Civic Center

7:00 am – 5:00 pm Convention Tours: Buses load at Nampa Civic Center

Tour A – Boise Valley Oregon Trail

Tour B – Goodale's Cutoff, Boise Valley to Cambridge, Idaho

Tour C – The Utter Tragedy, Part 1

Tour D – The Utter Tragedy, Part 2

Tour E – Five-Mile Hiking Tour, Oregon Trail South Alternate

Tour F – Oregon Trail North Alternate and Kelton Road (returns at 6:00 pm)

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm Dinner on Your Own

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm Authors Night, with Lady Marjory Lane, Piano Music of Yesteryear

Friday, August 8

7:00 am – 6:00 pm Registration/Information at Nampa Civic Center

8:00 am – Noon Speakers: Ray Egan, Mary Michaelson, Jacqueline Williams, Pat Packard

Noon – 1:15 pm Buffet Luncheon

1:30 pm – 3:10 pm Speakers: Jim Henderson, Paul Nettleton

3:15 pm – 5:15 pm Workshops

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Dinner and Live Auction at Nampa Civic Center, followed by

Wapato Indian Club dancers and Bona Fide band in the auditorium

Saturday, August 9

7:00 am – 5:00 pm Convention Tours: Buses load at Nampa Civic Center

Tour A – Boise Valley Oregon Trail

Tour C – The Utter Tragedy, Part 1

Tour D – The Utter Tragedy, Part 2

Tour G – Three Island Crossing Reenactment and Main Oregon Trail

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Barbeque at McKellip Ponds, with Bob Miller Band

Shuttle buses will operate between the Civic Center and McKellip Ponds

Notes