
October 18, 1846 Rat Creek Camp Along Applegate Trail (*Trail*) (JA-16C)¹

Hugo's Jacksonville Road (JA) from Willamette Valley to Jacksonville (route of the *Trail*) is located in Josephine County, Oregon from the Rogue River in the south to Grave Creek in the north.¹⁻²

The Oskaloosa Company, 1847³ Sexton Mountain was the first in a series of high, rocky, rugged mountains they had to go over on their way to the Willamette Valley. These mountains were steep and rocky. They were heavily timbered with large fir trees several feet in diameter at ground level. Levi Scott had to select the way among the trees so the wagons would have room to pass (page 130).

The South Road, 1846⁴ Miss Martha Leland Crowley was one of the most beautiful and popular young ladies of the 1846 emigration. She became severely ill with typhoid fever and **died as the wagon she was riding in descended from Sexton Mountain.** The wagon she died in stopped and those behind could not pass (Photos 1 & 2). Those ahead kept traveling because they did not know what had happened. The wagon train broke into two parts. **The broken wagon train got itself together a few miles down the road and camped. The next morning they moved on about one mile and crossed Grave Creek.** Miss Martha Leland Crowley was buried near the crossing (pages 185 - 186). (emphasis added)

1. Hugo Neighborhood. 2009 *Hugo's Applegate Trail GLO Points of Interest*. Brochure 1 in Applegate Trail GLO Surveys Series. Hugo, OR.

2. Hugo Neighborhood. 2009 *Hugo's Jacksonville Road Of Applegate Trail Points of Interest*. Brochure 2 in Applegate Trail GLO Surveys Series. Hugo, OR.

3. Davis, Charles George. 1996. *The Oskaloosa Company, Last Wagon Train to Skinner's in 1847*. Frontier Publishing. Portland, OR.

4. Davis, Charles George. 2001. *The South Road, And The Route Across Southern Oregon*. Page 185. North Plains.

Martha Leland Crowley Died In Upper Rat Creek: October 18, 1846¹

Talbot Carter Reminiscences, 1846⁵ *"Soon a wagon appeared, with weeping and lamentation among its occupants. It was soon learned that an estimable young lady by the name of Crowley, who had been afflicted with typhoid fever, had died... When morning came we found we were a few hundred yards from a small stream"* [Rat Creek]



Photo 1. Rat Creek Near JA-16 Old Stage Road

Virgil Pringle's Diary: 1846⁶ His October entry near Grave Creek follow.

Monday, October 19 – Move one mile to a camp [Grave Creek], having none last night, and spent the day burying Mr. Crowley's daughter, who died yesterday evening, age about 14 years. 1 mile. (emphasis added) Pringle's one mile statement is considered accurate.

Diaries, Journals, & Reminiscences¹

SUMMARY The wagon train route was barely one wagon wide in many places on the north side of Sexton Mountain.

Sunday, October 18. Martha Crowley died descending from Sexton Mountain Pass in the upper reaches of Rat Creek south of the JA-15 Trail site, perhaps along the 1,060' Segment of "Applegate Trail I For North Sexton Pass I-5 East".

Sunday, October 18. The broken wagon train got itself together and camped in the south end of a prairie a few hundred yards from Rat Creek just north of the JA-16, Old Stage Road *Trail* site (Map 1).

Be Respectful *Do not trespass. The approximate 1846 wagon camp location is on private property.*

Want more information?

Contact a member of the Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee.

5. Talbot Carter Reminiscences, 1846. Hugo Neighborhood web page: http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/Experiences_of_Emi_grants.pdf

6. Virgil Pringle's Diary, 1846. Hugo Neighborhood web page: http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/Virgil_Pringle_Diary.pdf



Photo 2. Survey Work Near JA-15

Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee

Hugo is blessed with a rich heritage of historic roads, rough though they were. The *Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee* was formed to bring together all those who want to learn more about the early transportation in the area, from the casual admirer to the dedicated researcher. Its aim is to collect and record information about Hugo's emigrant trails, especially its two historic 1850s General Land Office mapped roads of the Applegate Trail, and to share this information (e.g., through *Hugo History Day*, talks, hikes, group visits, training exercises, workshops, publications, web sites, etc.).

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Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission of promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and to preserve, protect, and enhance the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, if requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area. Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings.

Hugo Neighborhood

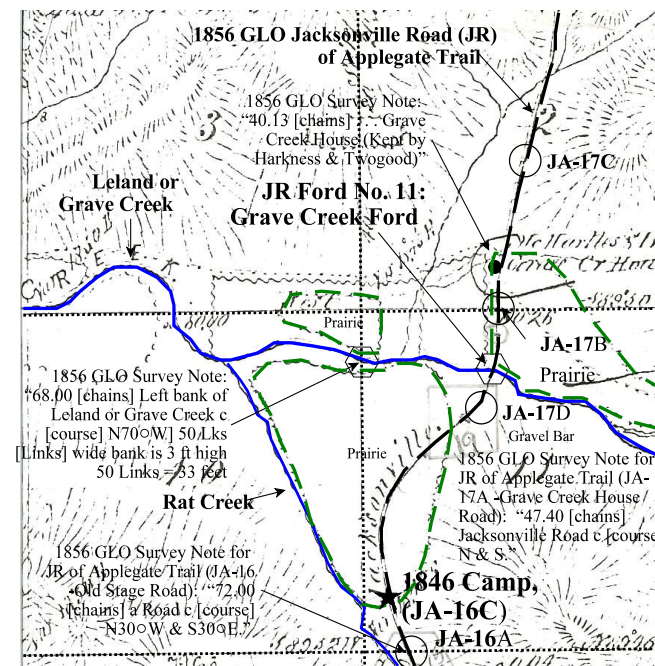
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Wagon Trail Camp At Rat Creek: Oct. 18, 1846 (JA-16C)



Brochure 20C of Applegate Trail
GLO Surveys Brochure Series



**Map 1. Wagon Trail Camp In Rat Creek:
October 18, 1846**
Base Map is 1856 GLO Map

July 16, 2012; Updated July 19, 2012

**Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee
Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society
Josephine County Historical Society**