
Role of Volunteers: Southern Battalion, Oregon Volunteers

Overview Hugo, Oregon like most places has its Native American history, some known, most not.



This brochure is part of Hugo's Native American Brochure Series.¹

Beckham's Notes On Fort Vannoy² are in two parts; this is Part II of II.

Role of Volunteers "The role of the volunteers was problematic. A company of "volunteers" provoked the Rogue River Indian War of 1855-56 on October 8, 1855, by its wanton massacre of Indian women, men, and children camped independent of and often contrary to the U.S. Army regulars based at Fort Lane, Fort Jones, and Fort Orford. While many volunteers entered service to protect their families, homes, and future prospects, others joined in order to bill the government for their "services," including use of their horses and mules. Almost annually when dry weather precluded mining, some of the Indian haters fomented hostilities and found "gainful" employment (Beckham 1971:128; 152-153)."



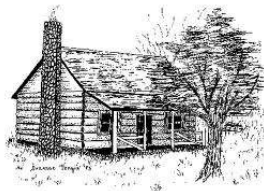
Tensions

"Tensions and disagreements often beset the Volunteers. In an effort to attempt to create a uniform strategy and

command, Major James Bruce of the Southern Battalion on November 8, 1855, at Fort Vannoy issued the following order:"

"Fort" Headquarters

Major James Bruce 1855 Order "Information having been received that armed parties are still in the field with the avowed purpose of waging a war independent of the executive of this territory, and in violation of law and General Order No. 11, issued by the governor October 20, 1855, to wit: 'It is therefore ordered that the commanding officers of the battalions authorized by the proclamation of the governor of the fifteenth of October instant, will enforce the disbanding of all armed parties not duly enrolled into the service of the territory by virtue of said proclamation' and required that all persons not duly enrolled . . . will disband . . . It is also expected and required that all persons belonging to the southern battalion who have been regularly enrolled into the service of the territory will assist in carrying out this order" (Tussing 1935)."



Fort Headquarters "As the various companies enrolled and confronted the prospect of finding and defeating the

Indians who fled into the Rogue River canyon, they established a series of headquarters in the fall of 1855. These included Fort Leland on Grave Creek, Camp Eliff on upper Cow Creek, Fort Vannoy at the mouth of the Applegate River, Fort Briggs in the Illinois Valley, and Fort Miner at the mouth of Rogue River. The U.S. Army operated out of Fort Jones near Yreka, California, and Forts Lane and Orford in southwestern Oregon (Beckham 1971)."

Attitude Of Volunteers

Attitudes Of Volunteers "The actions and attitudes of the Volunteers and their operations out of these posts invoked the concern of settlers in the region. John Beeson, a donation land claimant near Phoenix, Oregon, later recalled:"

"Battles were to these doughty warriors [the Volunteers] sheer speculations; and the grand study was how they should be compassed with the least possible risk, and the greatest possible advantage – to *themselves*. They seemed to have little or no sense of moral responsibility, either toward the enemy, or the authorities under whom they served (Beeson 1858:61-63)."

Fort Vannoy "James T. Chinnock who wrote about Fort Vannoy in 1942 claimed that the site included log cabins, a palisade, and a stockade. Chinnock stated that Long, first operator of the ferry, constructed a cabin at this site and it became one of the initial voting precincts in what was then Jackson County. In 1942 the property was known as the Eisman Ranch (Chinnock 1942)."



"In November, 1933, a Mr. Mattson in Grants Pass told Dr. John Peabody Harrington "that some of the timbers of the old V[annoy] fort are in the red barn that stands on or almost on the site of the old V[annoy] fort (Harrington 1981[28]:459)."

1. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. January 1, 2010. *Program Overview: Native Americans of Hugo, Oregon*. Hugo, OR.
2. Beckham, Stephen Dow. September 30, 1993. *Takelman And Athapascan Lifeways And History, Rogue River Corridor – Applegate River To Grave Creek: Investigations For Interpretive Programs*. Submitted to BLM Medford District. Heritage Research Associates, Inc. Eugene, OR.

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. Send us your e-mail address if you want to know what we are doing.

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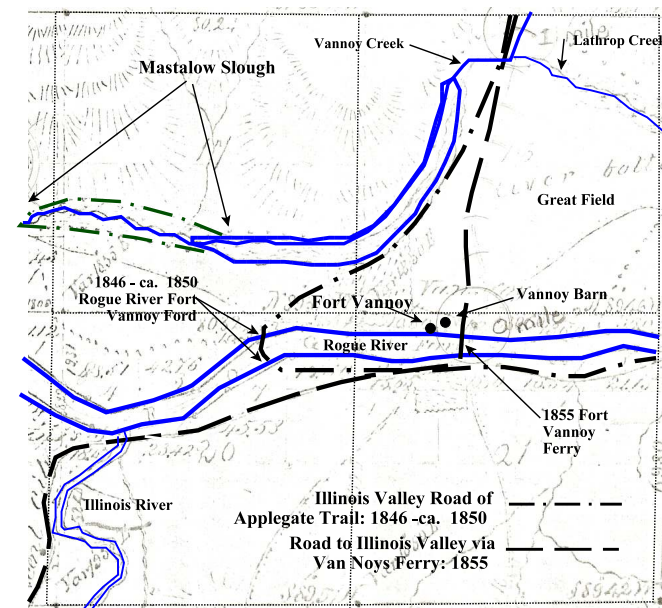
Want more information?
Contact a member of the HNAT.

Brochure NA-32B in Hugo's Native American Brochure Series
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Beckham's Notes On Fort Vannoy (Part II of II)



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Fort Vannoy Region: 1855
1856 GLO Base Map

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**Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society
Josephine County Historical Society**