

“1833 - [In 1833 John Work led his Hudson’s Bay Company brigade north after a trapping and trading expedition to the Sacramento Valley. His party included many who were ill from the fevers which decimated western Oregon Indians in 1833-34.]

Friday, [September] 27 Fine weather. Proceeded on our journey. Crossed the [Rogue] river, which we have left and cut across a point, 10 miles & encamped on a small creek [Lose Creek]. The sick continue very ill Several of them becoming weaker daily. Two horses were lost at the traverse.

Saturday [September] 28 Overcast weather. Continued our course to another Small fork [Jump Off Joe Creek] 8 miles. The road good The sick getting no better.

Sunday [September] 29 Rained the most of the day. The bad weather deterred us from raising camp. The sick continue the same. Some Indians paid us a visit, they seem well disposed. The hunters out, and killed 2 deer and a bear, the deer here are very lean.

Monday [September] 30 Raw cold weather rain in the evening. Proceeded on our journey, to another small creek [Grave Creek] 7 miles. The hunters out but without success.

Oct[o]b[er] 1833. Tuesd[ay], 1 Some light rain during the day Did not raise camp on account of one of the women A[ndre] Longtain’s wife being so ill that she was not expected to live over a few hours, bleeding at the nose and mouth that could scarcely be stopped. The rest of the sick continue much the same. Hunters killed a bear & a deer.

1844 - [James Clyman, a fur trapper, traveled south in June, 1844, having passed up the west side of the Willamette Valley and via the Trappers’ Trail to the Umpqua Valley. His contingent ascended Canyon Creek and camped in the upper Cow Creek Valley. They then continued their journey to the Rogue River.]

[June] 20 Immedatelyl after leaving camp we ascended a mountain of no greate elevation [Sexton Mountain] but verry brushy and steep immediately on the summit the open country commenced with Pine openings and a lengthy desent of dry hard gravelly soil which continued until we reached the [Rogue] river on the whole the country is rough poor and forbined [forbidding?] and of little account even the savages that inhabit this region find a scanty subsistanc there being but few root which are so abundant in the wilhamette vally on our rout to day we saw 4 or 5 squaws hunting after roots which ware much serprised to se us so unexpectedly early in the afternoon we reached the Clamet or Rogues River and a number of the savages came to our camp but as a matter of safety we would not permit them into camp Made 14 miles severa[l] men went to Examin the river only a short distance ahead several parties came to our camp and made every effort and devise to come into camp and nothing short of a cocked rifle would prevent them However we succeeded to keep them back without violence and they sung their war songs in hearing of our camp all night

1846 – [J. Quinn Thornton and his wife traveled over the Applegate Trail. Thornton’s narrative was long-winded on the beauties of nature and equally devoted to castigating Jesse Applegate whom he hold responsible for every misfortune of the journey. In this portion of his reminiscences, Thornton described the travels north from the Rogue River crossing—a location not clearly identified in his narrative.]

[October 19] In the forenoon, we crossed Rogue River, which we found to be a bold and clear stream, three feet deep, about five hundred feet wide, and flowing rapidly over a bottom covered with large boulders. Late in the afternoon we sent out a small party for the purpose of surprising a body of Indians, who had killed an ox of Josiah Morin’s, which had been unable to go any farther, and had been left. The savages had, however, taken the precaution to station spies between the dead ox and our camp, and thus they avoided a surprise.

The two fat cattle that had been brought to us by Mr. Jones had proved to be a very seasonable supply. But the reader will at once see, that this food would very soon be consumed by such a body of half-starved emigrants.

October 20. We remained in camp, only changing in the afternoon to a place about two hundred yards distant, for the sake of convenience. In the afternoon I saw a body of Indians, through bushes and grass, about half a mile distant, who appeared to be aiming to get at some cattle. I accompanied some three or four persons along under the foot of a hill, by getting under the cover of which we were out of view. Having arrived at the proper place, we rushed around the point, with our rifles in hand, inspired with valorous courage, when, lo! the mighty enemy we were about to attack, with such vigor, proved to be but a company of squaws, returning from digging cammas-roots. “O, shoh!” said one, chagrined and disappointed, “I hoped that we were about to have a little chunk of fight.” We returned to camp, somewhat crest-fallen.

October 21. We resumed our journey over a wooded and broken country. The return of each day brought an increase of our cares, anxieties, and labors, and a diminution of our strength, in consequence of the scarcity of healthy food. One of the great sources of our anxiety was the expectation of the speedy commencement of the rainy season. We knew that this, causing heavy roads, and very unpleasant and difficult traveling, would also bring with it new sufferings. We most dreaded, as a consequence of these rains, the rising of the streams, and the making of the mountains so slippery as to render them impassable. For some time the clouds wore a melancholy aspect, much in harmony with our gloomy feelings. At length we heard the low moaning of the wind among the pines and soon after, the long dread rainy season commenced. This brought with it new, and, if possible, more bitter denunciations of Applegate. We continued our painful and exhausting journey, half starved, wet, and cold.

[October 22-25, no diary entries.]

October 26. This day Messrs. Brown and Allen, and party, returned to us, informing us that they had proceeded as far as the Siskia Mountains, without learning any thing of the fate of their friends. I succeeded in hiring Mr. Allen to carry into the settlements a traveling bag filled with clothing, which would probably, otherwise, have fallen into the possession of one who hung about the camp, and seemed to hold himself in readiness to appropriate any property he could lay his hands on.

October 27. The cold rains having driven Mrs. Thornton and myself from our bed of blankets, upon the ground, under the open sky; and Messrs. Brown, Allen, and Jones being driven from theirs, which had no more pretension, except that it was made on the lee side of a log, we succeeded, with much difficulty, in making a fire. At no previous time had my heart been so much touched with the misfortunes of my wife. The ground was muddy, the air damp and cold, the rain was descending, we were without shelter, half starved, and exceedingly debilitated: added to which, we knew not where all these misfortunes would end, or what new calamities might yet be in store for us. She did not complain in words; but she looked feeble, hungry, and haggard, and appeared to be suffering severely. I could not but reproach myself for having exposed her to the dangers and sufferings incident to such a journey. Up to this time I had avoided all open expressions of displeasure concerning the cruel and heartless betrayal of Applegate, knowing that the mind should be given to the one great object—that of escaping from the perils in which we had become involved. Nor did I even allow myself to indulge feelings of intemperate anger against the author of our misery, although as I looked upon my much-suffering wife, by that gloomy camp-fire, it required some fortitude to repress them.

Early in the morning we resumed our journey, and traveled through a dense forest of pines and firs, and down a hill-side, where we picked up several arrows that were shot at us by the ambushed savages. Late in the afternoon we encamped on a little prairie, near a small stream of water [probably upper Cow Creek].

1846 – [In reminiscences about the 1846 journey via the Applegate Trail, Talbot Carter recalled the death of Martha Leland Crowley at Grave Creek.]

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....Two years afterward I passed that way, enroute to the California gold mines and, sorrowful to relate, the Indians had exhumed the body....[Later] the mother came to where I was stopping, to inquire if the reports were true.....I told her it was true.

1846 – [Lucy (Henderson) Deady, also a member of the 1846 emigration, recalled the death of Martha Leland Crowley and her burial at Grave Creek.]

One of the emigrants in our party was named Crowley. He had lost several members of his family by death while crossing the plains, and at one of our camps another member of the family, a daughter, Martha Leland Crowley, died. Theodore Prater and Mrs. Rachel Challiner and some others from our wagon train helped bury her. They buried her beneath a big pine tree on the banks of a small stream which they christened Grave Creek, and which still bears that name. The oxen were corralled over her grave so the Indians would not dig her up to get her clothing. Colonel Nesmith saw the grave in 1848 and said it had been opened and that a number of human bones were scattered about. The bones were reinterred and the grave again filled in. Mrs. Crowley, the girl's mother, later married a Mr. Fulkerson of Polk County. My husband, Judge Deady, used often to stop at the Bates Stage Station, on Grave Creek, near where Miss Crowley was buried. It was called the Bates House, but was later renamed the Grave Creek Tavern. The 1854 territorial legislature changed the name of Grave Creek to Leland Creek and the hotel's name was changed to the Leland House.

1852 – [Herman Francis Reinhart traveled west via the Applegate Trail and then sojourned in the mines at Yreka and Jacksonville. In 1852 he traveled north to his brother's land claim on lower Cow Creek in the South Umpqua Valley. Reinhart later recalled his journey.]

At Ev[a]n's Ferry we found a hotel and saloon and quite a little village. We stopt first at a creek called Jump-off-Joe; the second day at Grave or Woodpile Creek; third day at noon at Hardy Elliff at the east side of the big canyon.

1856 – [In February, 1856, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began the forced removal of the Indians from the Table Rock Reservation at the north margin of the Rogue River Valley. George Ambrose, Indian agent charged with managing this tragic "trail of tears," described the travels. The refugees crossed the Rogue River at Jewett's Ferry on February 26 and started down the north bank of the river:]

[February] 28th Thursday, frosty & cool again this morning. While about preparing to leave camp some person killed an Indian who had wandered off some distance from camp in search of his horse which had strayed off during the night, which caused some considerable excitement among the Indians as it went to prove the statement previously made by some evil disposed persons, to wit: that they would be killed by the way. We learned this morning that a party of evil disposed persons have gone in advance of us, as is supposed to annoy us, or kill some friendly Indians. A messenger was immediately dispatched to Capt. Smith at Fort Lane for an additional force to escort us to or thro[ugh] the Canyon if it should be found necessary. We also learned that an individual by the name of Timeleon Love was the person who killed the Indian this morning and that he composes of the party that had just passed. We drove today a distance of eleven miles and encamped on the west bank of Jump Off Jo[e] Creek where we will most probably remain till the arrival of Capt. Smith.

[February] 29th Friday, we remained in camp all day, quite a pleasant day. Capt. Smith arrived about two o'clock. Today we had another Indian to die the first by disease on the road, although many are very sick, however there are no new cases of sickness occurring.

March 1st. Saturday, quite a pleasant spring like morning. Everything being in readiness by times we took up our line of march over a rough hilly mountainous country, and the roads were truly in a horrible condition. I omitted to mention that on Thursday last we took a Northward direction and left the Rogue River to the South of us which brought us among some rough hills, between the Umpqua and Rogue River. After passing the Grave creek Hills we learned that Mr. Love and some others were awaiting us at the house, intending to kill an Indian. Upon going to the house I found it to be a fact, talked with the gentlemen, told them the consequences, went back & requested Capt. Smith to arrest Mr. Love and turn him over to the civil authorities. We passed the house however without any difficulty and encamped on a small stream two miles North of Grave Creek. We drove today a distance of eight miles. We are now in the midst of an hostile Indian Country & not entirely free from danger.

1860 – [In the summer of 1860 Lt. Alexander Piper and Lt. Lorenzo Lorain traveled with 66 men of Company L, 3rd Artillery, from Fort Umpqua on the north spit of the Umpqua River via the Umpqua Valley to the Rogue Valley and the Klamath Basin. Piper kept a brief diary of the route of travel.]

[July] 6th [Wolf Creek, Grave Creek, and Jump Off Joe Creek to camp on Louse Creek] Road good farm houses every few miles”

Beckham, Stephen Dow, *Applegate Trail: Impressions and Experiences of Emigrants and Other Travelers*. Vol. I & II, Lake Oswego, OR., publisher-author, 1995.