

# Jeffery/Goodale Campsites along the Craters of the Moon Basalt Lake

by James W. McGill

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## The Jeffery/Goodale Cutoff

Betty Burnett, Irving Merrill, and Fred Dykes have documented the importance of the Jeffery/Goodale Cutoff in the *Overland Journal*.<sup>1</sup> The route became well used on the Oregon Trail system after Tim Goodale led his wagon train across Idaho in 1862. However, information given by Dykes in his *Overland Journal* article indicated that the route was not ignored before that time, as some researchers have tended to imply and who have themselves ignored this cutoff. At least by 1854, Jeffery was promoting the use of this cutoff, and travelers' journals prove its use.

A field trip on any part of the cutoff can be quite inspiring to the average "rut nut." The principal section of the cutoff to be considered in this paper stretches for more than forty miles, starting eight miles southwest of Arco, Idaho, and stretching to about seven miles northeast of Carey, Idaho. The actual distance, as the crow flies if he flew in a straight line, is a bit less than twenty-five miles.

Within that stretch of the trail, from the Lava Creek site to a quite decent campsite just west of the present Butte/Blaine County line,

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is nine miles on a line, but it is at least *18 miles by trail*. The differences in distance should indicate to the reader how winding was the trail between these two points. The forty-plus mile portion of the road may have been the most crooked part of the Oregon Trail system anywhere, continuing for this distance with only a few temporary changes in altitude.

To any person exploring this section of the cutoff, the trail can still be found as original, primeval, indicating the lack of change. Much of this portion of the route is so unique and extraordinary that the features of the landscape also caught the imaginative attention of early travelers. They recorded their observations with very picturesque language. Journal entries of early travelers are detailed and descriptive, indicating how impressed the authors were with what they beheld along the trail. This part of the trail was unlike anything that the pioneers saw any other place along their wearying travels. The trail's physical features along this section are the main reason that little has changed.

The campsite near the line that now separates Butte and Blaine counties is an important feature in this presentation. It is one-fourth mile west and below the hill referred to as "Tom Cat" by Fred Dykes, in *Jeffery's Cutoff, Idaho's Forgotten Oregon Trail Route*, in the caption under the photo, Figure 12.<sup>2</sup> After this, that unnamed camp will be referred to either as the County-line or Tom Cat Hill camp.

At the beginning of the eighteen miles indicated above, Lava Creek, the site of the later Martin, Idaho, was a good campsite. In 1997, Les Broadie, present owner of the ranch there, claimed Lava Creek was the 1882 "Good Camp" of Tim Goodale where the exceptionally long wagon train was assembled. Broadie's grandmother, a pioneer on the Goodale Cutoff in the late 1860s, was a friend to Mattie Martin. She was the wife of Samuel Martin who founded Martin, Idaho, in 1882. Broadie's grandmother and Mrs. Martin claimed that Lava Creek was the Goodale camp.<sup>3</sup> We shall see that there is disagreement over placement of this encampment.

Most of the information presented in this paper will be concentrated on the campsites from Champagne Creek (named after 1881 as will later be discussed), three miles prior to Lava Creek, and on to the County-line site. Almost every yard of the trail through this part of the cutoff is constituted by a single width road. For a great



Figure 1: The dry campsite six miles prior to Champagne Creek. View S-W at the Pioneer Mountains. The basalt rim is seen across the grassland, and the pass through the basalt is on the right.

part of the forty miles the exact ruts vary little. No wagon could move from almost the exact tracks of the wagon ahead. Dykes, in writing about how long the Goodale train may have become, wrote that it may have been "ten miles long," and that the wagons would have been "restricted to one lane by the lava rock terrain."<sup>4</sup> The cutoff had to follow a narrow gap between the basalt and rhyolite rock (cooled lava) and the steep foothills on the southern end of the Pioneer Mountains.

The great fiery lake, which once flowed out at the northern end of the Great Rift National Landmark, pushed massive waves of hot lava up against those foothills for many miles. A portion of that northern flow is now designated as the Craters of the Moon National Monument. The cutoff trail crosses Monument land for 2-1/2 miles over its northern portion.

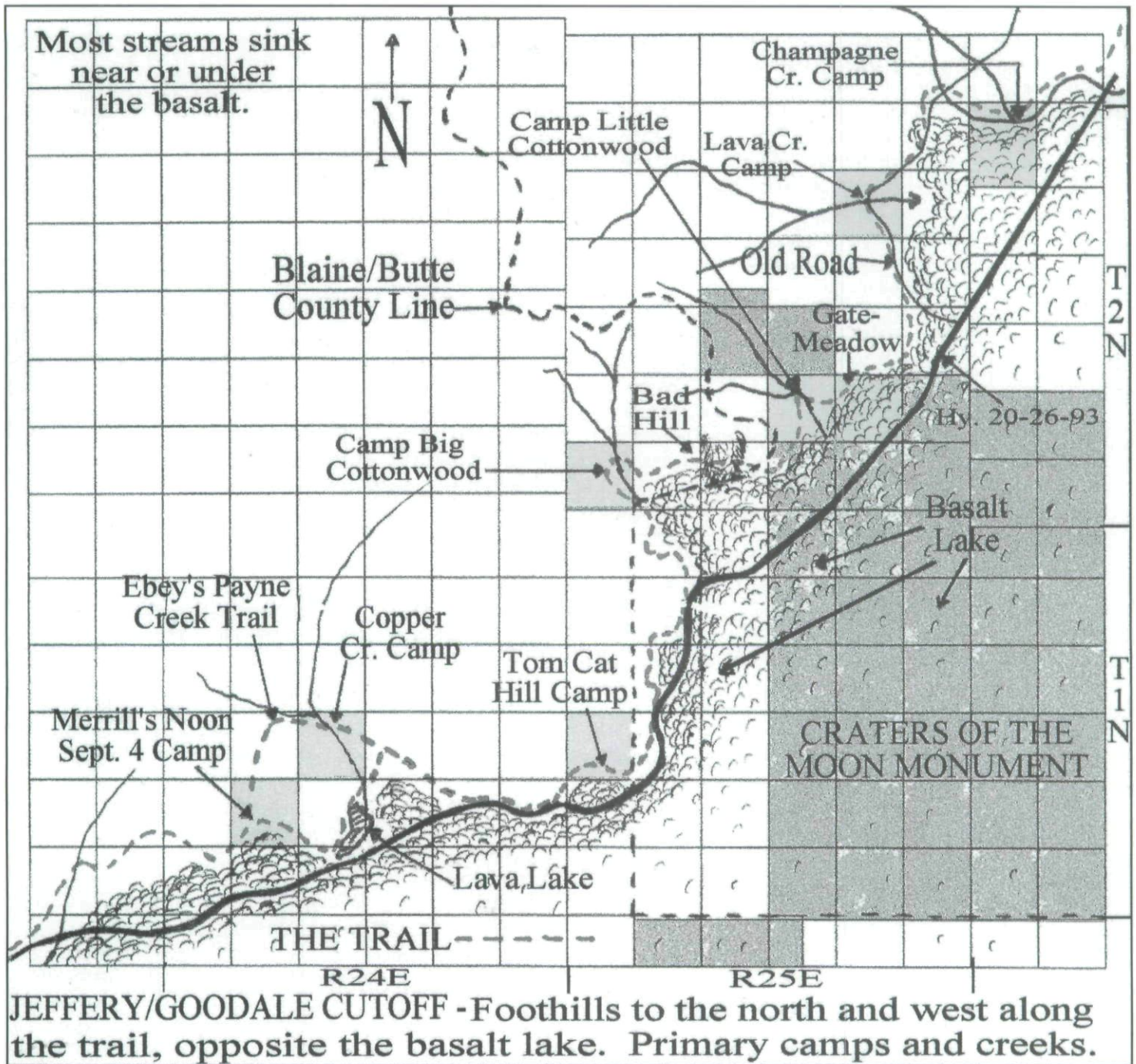
The hardened lava flow is so tight against the foothills that early travelers found barely enough room to drive a wagon along the very edge of the flow, sometimes having to travel across part of the flow. Sometimes wagons also had to cross over projecting parts of the foothills to avoid the piled and immovable basalt. The cutoff fol-

lowed along between the basalt and the steep slopes of the hills. One can picture the wagons moving along next to a lake of jagged waves and terrible boulders, with extremely steep lake-banks on the opposite side. Julius Merrill's journal entries for September 1, 2, 3, 4, 1864, all speak of the spectacular and unavoidable "black rock."<sup>5</sup>

The wagon trains were obligated to follow the foothills in and out, around eroded, concave coves and canyons and convex projections of the sloping hills. Randomly a small alcove with decent grass for the animals would appear; sometimes there also would be springs or streams of water. Only in a few places did the travelers find space enough in these alcoves for camping at night. Some dry camping occurred, as recorded by Julius Merrill on September 2 during their camp the night before.<sup>6</sup>

For some of the same reasons mentioned above, the limited space and the eternal basalt flow, the features of the land have changed very little since the trail was first used. Some of the presently useable road has been slightly improved, but pristine ruts still exist as well.

Descriptions of campsites along this section of the trail make



**JEFFERY/GOODALE CUTOFF - Foothills to the north and west along the trail, opposite the basalt lake. Primary camps and creeks.**

them easily recognizable. However, this writer has discovered that some of the night camps described by trail journalists have been misplaced by recent researchers. One of the purposes of this article is to identify and document every campsite in this area, and to verify those that were used and noted, especially in the journal entries of Julius Merrill. The writings of other pioneers also will be examined, indicating their use of the same sites.

Upon reading the details in the valuable resource, *Bound for*

*Idaho - The 1864 Trail Journal of Julius Merrill*, edited by Irving R. Merrill, grandson of Julius Merrill, and the explanatory material included in the endnotes, this writer questioned whether some Merrill campsites along this section of the cutoff had been miscalculated. Details about the travel distances and campsites in the trail journal, along with information gathered during several trips along this section of the cutoff, were then carefully compared to check the editor's placement of campsites of the Merrill team.

In December 1999, the writer's observations were sent in an informational letter to Irving Merrill.<sup>7</sup> A copy of that letter was also sent to Dr. Merle Wells who assisted in the publication of this journal, and in the compilation of the endnote information. In a following response letter Irving Merrill indicated that the information "deserved careful attention."<sup>8</sup> He also spoke of the possibility that Dr. Wells might review the observations given in the letter and also any photographic evidence. In a related phone conversation Merle Wells indicated to this writer that the endnote information in the journal probably could have used a bit more attention. He voiced an interest in checking the information.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the details found in the journal entries will be recalled and compared to information that was written in journal notes 12-16, "Fort Hall to Boise City."<sup>10</sup> These notes apply to the Merrill campsites between September 1 and September 4, 1864. Photographic evidence also will be presented with this writer's documentation.

Visiting these campsites can be an enjoyable time of remembering and learning for any dedicated trail traveler. Following along this portion of the Jeffery/Goodale Cutoff also can be an enlightening experience, especially if various appropriate journal or diary entries for these camps are known or can be read at the sites.

### Physical Features of the Trail

According to the information written in the Merrill journal on August 31, and endnote 11, prior to entry into the narrow trail miles we will be examining, there is universal agreement that the campsite for that night was at a spot eight miles southwest of Arco, Idaho.<sup>11</sup> This site can now be seen south of Highway 20-26-93 where the volcanic basalt flow approaches the highway. Here two branches of the cutoff eventually came together, after approaching from the east.

The area crossed by both branches of the trail heading toward the junction is now developed ranch land for many miles. This camp was located near the junction of the two branches of the trail, and on the south side of the highway where the present ranch land narrows. This site can be located on a map at T3N, R25E, Sec. 24, NW 1/4 (Figure 1).

As the two branches became one and closely approached the basalt edge, the trail then crossed through a narrow pass in the volcanic flow. The lack of disturbance of the land in this narrow area has left the trail ruts still visible. There the first trail marker west of Arco can be found only a few yards south of the highway. Then the ruts approach the road and disappear under the roadbed. The pre-existent trail then followed from side to side and under the highway bed for about three miles.

Through most of the forty miles from the August 31 camp to the County-line camp, and for almost ten miles beyond, the travelers became very much enslaved by the great volcanic flow. (See Map on page 15.) Beginning at that first camp the travelers followed the northern edge of the flow for 3 miles, and then separated about one-half mile from the rocks for 1.5 miles moving southwest. In the middle of this 1.5 miles, about two hundred yards away on the north

side of the highway are the remains of an ancient log structure along the ruts, not yet officially identified.

The trail then approached the westward turning basalt rim at a point 0.7 mile southwest of the log structure, turned from southwest to northwest, and followed near the north edge of the rocks again. From that point on the present existing road, mostly on the old ruts, follows near the dry lower Champagne Creek valley, and meets the present stream flow after slightly more than one mile. The creek flowed toward the travelers there through a large meadow (Figures 2 and 3). By now, the ruts have mostly disappeared through the watered meadow.

Champagne Creek runs down from the west, from the foothills past its meeting with the trail ruts, 2.5 miles northeast of the Martin site. From there the trail ran 0.7 mile west away from the stream and the campsite on the meadow. The trail then turned southwest around the flow and under the present improved road another 1.8 miles to Lava Creek. After turning southwest, the trail crossed a slightly rough area on top of a more even portion of the basalt for some distance. Two short alternates to that portion of the trail co-existed for short distances before reaching Lava Creek.

As indicated in the first section of this paper, the campsites along the total portion of the trail to be considered have changed little, with the exception of the Lava Creek campsite. That area has been changed in the development of the Les Broadie ranch. Broadie now owns the Martin/Lava Creek site within his ranch.

After passing Lava Creek there are two places along the trail a short distance to the south of the Broadie ranch, which at this present time have some grassy areas. These are both recently grown grass patches. One of these places, less than one-half mile along, is now a ski area. Some of the sagebrush there on the lower part of the hill has obviously been cleared for the ski run, and the grass there is not native. There appears to be a moist area some distance back up a hill from the road near this site. No perceptible amount of water seems to ever have been available there.

One-half mile on to the south of the ski area is a small clearing on a hillside where a little house now sits. There is now a small spring at this site. Les Broadie said in January 2000 that there had never been but a slight evidence of water there. A few years ago Broadie took a Caterpillar tractor to that site and dug deeply to open up that spring for more water.<sup>12</sup> The grass that now grows there is on a small square of land that was once a hillside of sagebrush. There is now enough water to wet the small patch of grass, but no flow down from the hillside.

The present physical evidence, along with Broadie's information, indicate that little water, if any, and probably no grass or feed were available from Lava Creek at the Broadie ranch on south to the northern boundary and gate of the Craters of the Moon Monument land during the years the cutoff was used. That is a distance of almost four miles.

Just south of the gate on Monument land is a reasonable-sized meadow of native grass (Figure 4). There is no visible water source there. Some water may possibly seep up from the porous ground, which helps sustain the large and thick native grass all summer. This

Figure 2: Approaching the meadow on Champagne Creek to the west, the ruts can still be seen for a short distance ahead in the dead grass to the left of the marker.



Figure 3: Champagne Creek, looking downstream back east. The meadow lies one-half mile beyond the sage brush and prior to the distant basalt flow. The trail ran through the meadow going to the right.

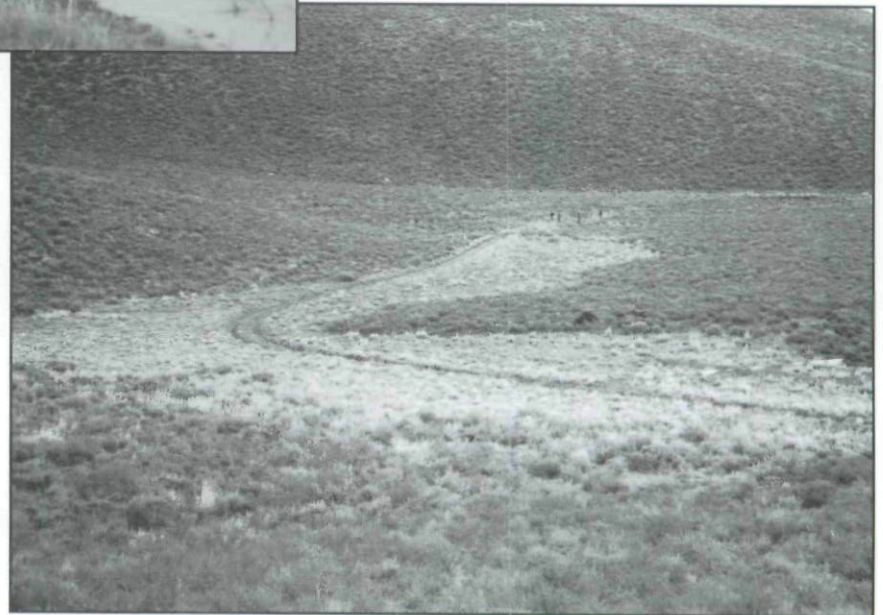


Figure 4: Grass meadow at the Craters Monument gate (beyond the grass), seen from the hillside on the west in late fall. The ruts still come through this meadow.



Figure 5: Little Cottonwood Creek campground, view from the south one-fourth mile away.

meadow is also in a low valley surrounded by elevated land. The water runoff from the hills on the north and west can flow down into the grassy area. This will now be referred to as the Gate-Meadow camp.

Almost exactly one mile on ahead from the grassy meadow is Little Cottonwood Creek with several springs of water and a large lush meadow of grass (Figure 5). All of these facts are important to remember as we consider the Merrill campsites along the cutoff and the detailed information given in entries in the Merrill journal. These facts and distances will be examined later.

The following distances are now reviewed: The distance from the Merrill train August 31 campsite, a dry camp, to the site of water on Champagne Creek on September 1, was about six miles. From Champagne Creek to the natural meadow that can still be found inside the Monument gate is less than seven miles more, including about three miles from Champagne Creek to Lava Creek.

### The Campsites Recorded by Merrill

The forty-plus mile distance spoken of in the first section of this discussion began at the August 31 dry camp. As before stated, the last of several questionable campsites can be found within the eastern edge of present-day Blaine County, below Tom Cat Hill. The evidence will indicate that the Merrill wagon party camped at that site on both nights of September 2 and 3. The distance given by Julius Merrill for the September 4 travel to the next camp on Fish

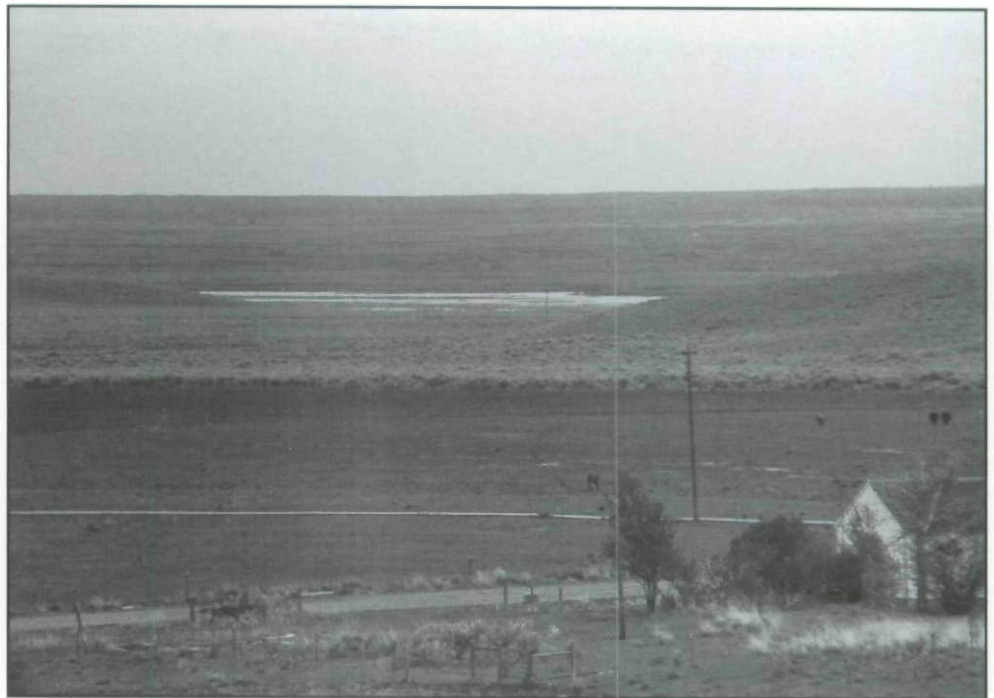
Creek will become important.<sup>13</sup> That mileage will be used in measuring back to the camp the night before, and to assist in accurately determining the placement of the camps prior to September 4.

After leaving the dry camp the Merrill team stopped and watered on Champagne Creek from 10:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., September 1, 1864. Although the grass was burned off then, the large grassy meadow area can still be found (Figure 6). The flat seems to be presently watered more than originally found because much of the Champagne Creek water has been diverted to do this. It is now a cattle grazing area with a stock watering tank.

Irving Merrill and Merle Wells, who assisted with the journal endnotes, were correct in identifying the Champagne Creek stop for the train on September 1. The grassy meadow is the same place mentioned by Julius Merrill on which "Feed would have been plenty but for the carelessness of some whom had set fire to it and burnt over a large amount of territory."<sup>14</sup> The travelers found water for their stock, but little feed. At 2 p.m. they traveled on and found the "road very rocky." That was because, as indicated in the section, "Physical Features of the Trail," the trail crossed part of the basalt field on its way to the Lava Creek site.

In the last sentence of endnote 12, Merrill and Wells wrote that, "The evening camp [September 1] was at the site of the latter community of Martin, now dead."<sup>15</sup> The first problem with this assertion is that Julius' first written statement the next morning was, "Splendid feed last night but no water."<sup>16</sup> The Lava Creek site probably could have supplied plenty of grass for feed, but the stream

Figure 6: Champagne meadow in the distance, looking southeast from the present ranch more than 2 miles upstream on the creek.



also would have supplied *plenty of water!* Secondly, the Martin site was less than three miles from Champagne Creek. After the 2 p.m. departure from Champagne Creek, the Merrill team probably would have gone somewhat farther during the afternoon. This probability will be supported by other information.

The third fact that raises a question is that there was neither “*Springs [plural] one mile in advance,*” from the Martin site nor any grassy place where it was possible to find the “*feed all burnt off near them,*” for almost four miles beyond Lava Creek and then only grass. All of this information also was given in the morning entry of September 2.<sup>17</sup> One mile in advance of this creek, or anywhere near that distance, would have put the wagons only in a dry sagebrush area, the place where the little house now sits on the hillside but which apparently offered nothing to the travelers then. Here Les Broadie only recently opened up the seepage of water into a small spring. As was shown in the second section of this writing, there was no place for much feed, if any, until the wagons arrived at the meadow that is now just to the south of the northern gate of the Monument area.

As before recorded, the distance was a bit less than seven miles from the Champagne Creek “*nooning*” to the Gate-Meadow of approximately two acres of good grass. Since other trains usually stopped on ahead at Little Cottonwood, the grass in the meadow probably would have been plentiful. There exists little evidence that this meadow was a regularly used campsite. And, as before indicated, the Little Cottonwood Creek area is almost exactly one mile in advance from the meadow. The present unchanged Little Cottonwood area well fits Julius Merrill’s description of the water

area on September 2. That native grass area is even much larger than the meadow at the gate, and there are multiple springs. But the grass then had been burned off, just as it had been burned at Champagne Creek.

Another clue that verifies the Little Cottonwood water stop is in the other detailed travel information that Merrill wrote on September 2, along with his description of the springs site.

Road very rough. In going over one hill which was very steep we came near upsetting our wagon and were obliged to unload the larger part of it. Road all rocks in several places. Some so large as to scarcely pass under the wagon. At one place we were obliged to drive over a huge rock just a little wider than the wagons. Had we gone a foot to the right or to the left the wagon would have rolled over.<sup>18</sup>

These conditions fit the Goodale Cutoff for three to four miles, from the Gate-Meadow camp and on past Little Cottonwood including the steep grade of one rocky hill.

The trail from the later Martin site to the meadow probably had been relatively good. Only 0.5 miles beyond the Gate-Meadow camp, however, halfway to Little Cottonwood Springs, the wagons had to climb a first small hill. The cinder soil there was loose and rocky (Figure 7). Beyond Little Cottonwood, after about 1.5 miles, the travelers encountered a narrow gully up a steep hill. Both Winfield Scott Ebey in his trail diary and Dykes in his article called this hill, “*Bad Hill.*”<sup>19</sup>

Besides being very steep, the lower part of the traveled hill consisted of some narrow ruts alongside a deep wash on the right. The

Figure 7: Hill just beyond the gate-meadow. Several sets of ruts are visible in the loose cinder soil up the hill. The later improved road ran from right to left.

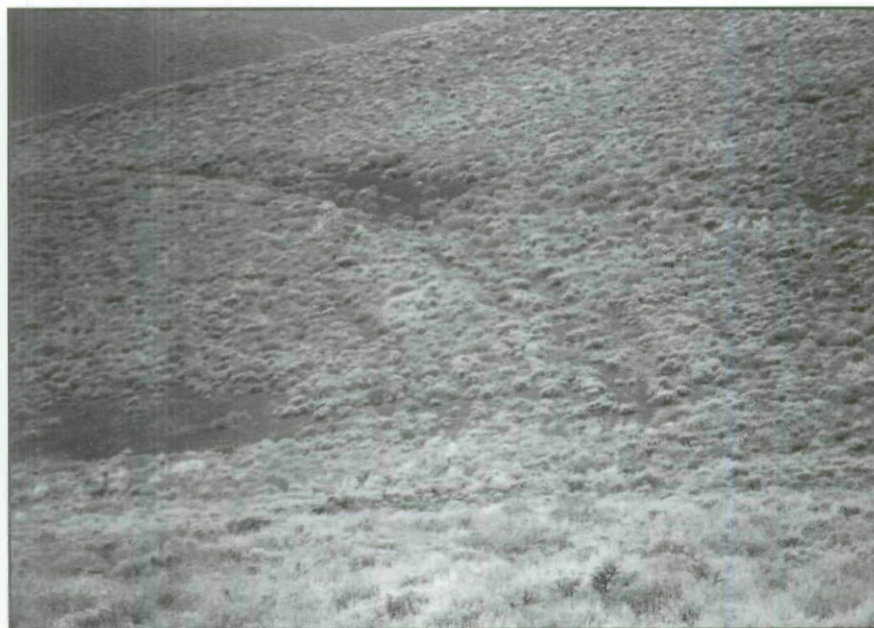


Figure 8: Bad Hill ahead, the ruts go up the Quaking Aspen canyon and to the right over the ridge. The swale/ruts can be seen near the top. Low clouds cover the tops of the mountains.

ruts are now quite eroded and Quaking Aspen trees grow in them (Figure 8). The upper half of the hill is also quite steep, has two alternative swales going to the top, and the trail areas are littered with medium-size and large boulders. This was the hill where the wagon was nearly upset.

Given all the information presented thus far concerning the probable day's travel from Champagne Creek, endnote 13 concerning September 2 should read that "The team [started from] the north boundary of the present Craters of the National Monument on the morning of 2 September. . . ."20

Julius Merrill's progressive description of the route and the road, during the long first paragraph of his journal entry on September 2, fits the physical features of the remaining miles traveled from Bad Hill to the evening camp. Among other things, he wrote that the drive "was very crooked [and] was like following along a rough beach." And when he followed that comment with the statement about "some steep point or bluff" running out into the basalt that they had to cross, he may have been referring to a projection of land three miles south of the Big Cottonwood camp area.<sup>21</sup>

That evening the wagon party arrived at the campsite a short dis-



tance west of Tom Cat Hill. (More information later will substantiate this claim.) Julius Merrill did not indicate the number of miles traveled on that day. However, from the Gate-Meadow to the campsite west of Tom Cat is about thirteen rough and winding miles, a reasonable day's travel and similar to other distances traveled by the Merrill team.

This writer's contention that the County-line site must have been the campsite on the evening of September 2, disagrees with the Merrill and Wells endnote 16.<sup>22</sup> We are in agreement that the night campsite continued for September 2 and 3, when the group decided to lay over. However, the endnote information that "the 2-3 September evening campsite was one mile inside the western boundary of the northwest quarter of Craters of the Moon National Monument," would place that camp somewhere back near Little Cottonwood.<sup>23</sup> The trail only crossed the Monument land for about 2.5 miles from the north gate area.

If that camp had been within the Craters area the total travel distance on September 2 would have been very short, no more than five to six miles even if they had been camped at Lava Creek, and only one or two miles from the Gate-Meadow camp. This also would have left the campers at least twenty-five miles from the next evening, September 4, campsite on Fish Creek, called "Trout Creek" by Julius Merrill. The Merrill endnote 17 placed that night's camp on Fish Creek, and that fact is agreed to by this writer.<sup>24</sup>

That twenty-five miles was not impossible, but we also must consider the following facts. A careful study of the Julius Merrill's journal entry on September 4, shows that travel on that date was *only 11 miles*. From the morning camp to the point on the trail that they "halted for dinner [noon meal]" they drove only six miles. Then in

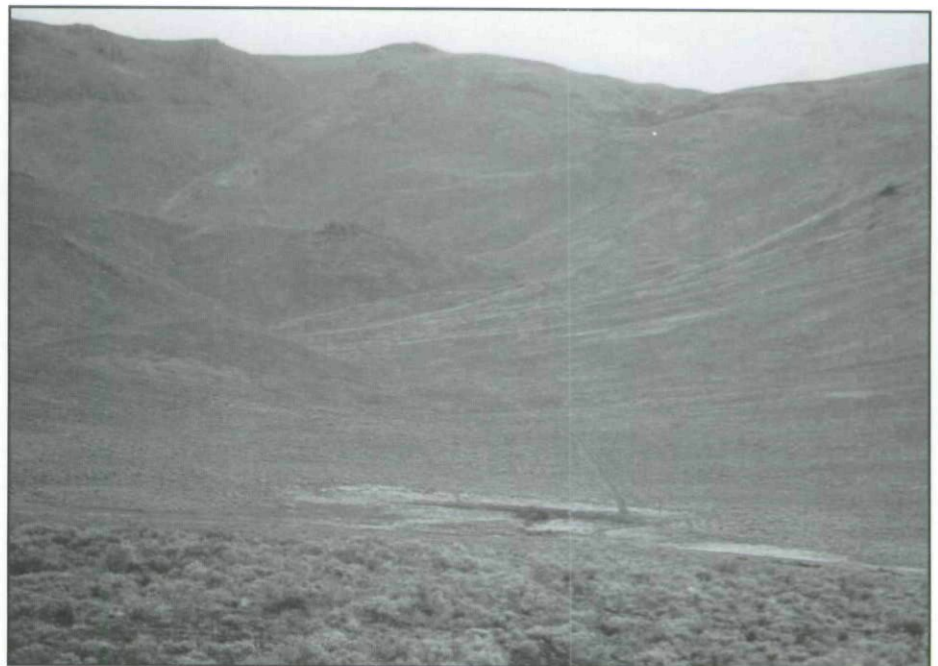
the afternoon they drove five miles more and camped on Fish Creek.<sup>25</sup> The distance from Fish Creek back to the campsite below Tom Cat is almost exactly eleven miles, with little difference either following the old trail ruts near Payne Creek or the later route past Lava Lake!

The noon stop recorded in September 4 was in a grassy valley with more than one spring, one mile north of today's Highway 20-26-93 and 1.5 miles past Lava Lake on the cutoff. The site can easily be seen today from a vehicle when traveling on the present Highway, one mile southwest of the Lava Lake historic Goodale sign (Figure 9). This valley is six miles from the Tom Cat night camp area and a little over five miles prior to Fish Creek on the trail. More information will be given later about this campsite.

Though there were other possible night campsites between the present north Gate-Meadow camp and the Tom Cat Hill camp, the most likely night campsites would have been these two. They not only fit all the actual miles that were recorded, but both still appear today as described in the journal. Too, the journal travel descriptions of the land features between the two are still quite accurate.

The writer has discovered that much of the knowledge about this part of the trail, passed down and retained by some of the "old-timers," is being lost with the passing of the generation who have lived around Arco and the old town sites of Martin and Era. We now retreat again to the first of the researched and discussed campsites along the cutoff. We will attempt to integrate accumulated information from written and other research sources concerning these same camps. We will examine other pertinent facts about all the sites along this same stretch of the Goodale Cutoff for the reader's consideration.

Figure 9: The Merrill September 4 noon camp. The old trail came down the valley beyond from Paine Creek. The Les Broadie wagon train followed this route.



## An Oasis Beyond the Desert

The August 31, 1864, dry evening campsite of the Merrill group near the edge of the basalt field on the south side of Highway 20-26-93, is settled and agreed upon. Others also camped there at times. There are several written accounts concerning the necessary but unnamed Champagne Creek camp next along the trail. This was the first water beyond at least twenty miles of desert.

Irving Merrill's endnote 12, tells of the "level valley, which presently accommodates the tiny Brockie Airport."<sup>26</sup> This reference probably did not intend to indicate that the Champagne Creek watering stop on September 1 was at or near the airport. Though the two branches of the creek once flowed on both the north and south sides of the airport area, nearly one mile downstream the Goodale Trail left the main stream and the grassy camp area along the stream.

There is now a ranch above the airport on the creek almost two miles away from the Goodale ruts (Figure 6). The present foothill road near the airport was the old highway to Blaine County, in some places built and maintained upon the Goodale Trail after joining the ruts west of the creek. The road goes southwest on past the Martin site. In many places the natural cinder roadbed resisted any improvement and the road is still very much the old cutoff trail.

The campsite on Champagne Creek was at the grassy meadow along the stream .7 mile east of the gravel foothill road. The meadow there would have been the first plentiful feed area along the stream. (This site can now be reached by following the present Goodale ruts/road from Highway 20-26-93, up the lower valley that Champagne Creek once flowed through.)

This creek was also an important night campsite to many other travelers. Besides Irving Merrill placing the Goodale camp, July 27, 1862, on Champagne Creek, Nellie Slater, traveling with Goodale, also indicated that his train camped on what was probably this creek. The wagons had come to the needed water of the "small stream" they found after crossing twenty-five miles of desert.<sup>27</sup> The distance she recorded would have included about five miles near Lost River, all in the desert. Nellie's stream was surely Champagne Creek flowing through the meadow within the desert, the first possible source of water.

She wrote that this camp was the same place that the train also waited over July 28, gathering many wagons together. A young man died there the second morning and was buried in the evening. This information, in agreement with the Merrill and Wells endnote 12, opposes the Lava Creek/Martin, "Good Camp," claim of Les Brodie.<sup>28</sup> Brodie now has a "Good Camp" sign placed on Lava Creek.

Nellie said in the same account that the stream was on the edge of the desert. The portion of Champaign Creek along the trail still flows through a desert area (Figure 3). The grassland is in the middle of a sagebrush area only a short distance from the foothills. The stop three miles farther at Lava Creek was at the very base of the Pioneer Mountains.

Oliver B. Slater, Nellie's brother who was also with Goodale,

recorded information that may at first seem to compound the discrepancy. He clearly wrote that after the Lost River camp, "Our next camp was Lava Springs."<sup>29</sup> Between the later named Champagne Creek and the earlier named Lava Creek once flowed another small stream, which was considered part of Lava Creek. However, it flowed northeast into Champagne Creek, and did not sink under the basalt as did the main Lava Creek. By 1917 this water had been channeled into Lava Creek, and at this time no water reaches Champagne Creek. Only after 1881 was Champagne Creek given its present name.<sup>30</sup>

Oliver wrote his information down fifty-three years after the fact. He dated the travel to the camp on the stream on July 28, rather than on July 27 as Nellie had dated it in her sequential diary. He also stated that Indians "had murdered all immigrants that had traveled that way in 1854," and that the distance across the desert was only eighteen miles.<sup>31</sup> Most of Oliver's information was quite abbreviated.

As we shall see, other travelers sometimes seemed to generalized the name and called the waters of the first stream they reached, "Lava Springs." Whether the campsite of Tim Goodale was on the first stream camp area or along the main Lava Creek is still open for discussion. But the camp now on Champagne Creek would have been the first plentiful and necessary water for the Goodale train after the desert, and three miles prior to Lava Creek!

Long before Merrill's group came to this camp, Winfield Scott Ebey indicated in his diary that his party camped in what was called "Grass Valley," as early as August 7, 1854. He wrote of the "good water & grass" there even in August. He also described the large field of volcanic rock that they had followed on their left as they approached the "beautiful little Valley hemmed in between the Mountains on the right and the Lava Bed on the left."<sup>32</sup> This was surely at the meadow on Champagne Creek.

Before the Merrill train nooned on this creek, Clarissa Shipley's journal seems to place her group at this same creek on the evening of June 18, 1864, where they awoke the next morning to "Another beautiful day . . . among the mountains."<sup>33</sup> She also wrote that they had crossed twenty miles of desert (not including five miles near Lost River) without water before the stop at the stream. The fact that many journal writers mention this camp on the stream without a name gives evidence that each were probably on Champagne Creek. Travelers much sooner knew the Lava Creek name.

Then on July 19 of the same year, Mrs. A. W. Loughary wrote that "at sundown [they] reach[ed] water on a mountainside" after twenty-five miles of rough road and "barrenness."<sup>34</sup> From Champagne Creek camp the mountains were only a short distance to the west and north, and Loughary indicated that the water was flowing down from snow, evidently still visible, melting on the mountains. This description in some ways could have fit the conditions at either Champagne or Lava Creek, but her mileage was right for the first stream.

Elizabeth Porter wrote that after traveling over a "dreadful rock road . . . [for] 25 or perhaps 30 miles" from Lost River the wagon train she was with arrived at water at 9 o'clock in the evening on

## Camps Between Hills and Basalt

August 18, 1864. This was surely also Champagne Creek, the "big spring [stream] at right of road."<sup>35</sup> (There was no ground spring rising here or for several miles.) She wrote that it was dusty, but she said nothing about the grass. Two weeks later the Merrill group arrived there to find water, but the grass was burned off.

On July 19, 1866, Stewart B. Eakin wrote that after twenty-five total miles travel, twenty miles from Lost River, his group camped at "Lava Springs."<sup>36</sup> (Consider now Oliver Slater's use of the same name two years earlier.) This mule team caravan may have gone on to Lava Creek but the distance is consistent with other accounts, i.e., Nellie Slater's twenty-five miles total to Champagne Creek. It also agrees with the estimated distance in Porter's account. Lava Creek would have been tiringly farther, and unnecessary if both water and feed were found on the first stream.

The Eakin train left Lost River at about 10:30 a.m., which would have brought it to Champagne Creek late in the day. If they found the necessities at this site, going on along to Lava Creek would have been improbable. There was not an indication that one stream was passed before camping at a second. The next day's exceptionally long and difficult travel to a camp near "Lake Springs" (Copper Creek running into Lava Lake, now in Blaine County) would be twenty-five miles. That is the correct distance from Champagne Creek recorded by Eakin as traveled on July 20.<sup>37</sup>

As late as September 14, 1904, Annie Foster wrote about stopping for water after driving eighteen miles from "Butte River [Lost River]" through the desert without water.<sup>38</sup> This may have been estimated, or the difference in mileage from earlier accounts may have been because of some changes in the roads through the Arco area that saved distance. We do remember that Oliver Slater indicated this same eighteen miles when he wrote his account as late as 1915.

By Foster's time there was a ranch on Champagne Creek, probably the same ranch where the Champagne Stage Station was found as early as 1881. The ranch written about by Foster was probably the ranch mentioned in the A. Champagne water right document, (see my endnote 30). However, the lack of finding that rancher's name in any later records suggests that someone else owned the ranch by 1904. The 1881 description put that ranch at the grassy meadow camp area, not upstream where the present ranch is now situated.

Foster's party found no available grass near the stream, and the rancher wanted to sell hay from the land to the travelers. Foster wrote that most of them "went on three miles to a place called Martin," and camped there.<sup>39</sup> The distance assures us of the prior stop on Champagne Creek, even though then unnamed by Foster.

We can find accounts of travelers stopping at the second stream, Lava Creek, before the town of Martin was founded there in 1882. Champagne Creek may have been more often used simply because it was the first water and grass after the desert. After stopping there some travelers and trains did move on to another camp for various reasons after watering, as we have discovered of the Merrill team and later the Foster party.

Having researched several journals with Jeffery/Goodale information, the writer found little evidence of any campsites between Lava Creek and the identified Gate-Meadow camp that is now just beyond the northern boundary of Craters of the Moon Monument, a distance of about four miles. As before indicated, with little possible grass or water along this part of the cutoff anything except some kind of emergency or wagon repair camping would have been improbable.

The writer could find no evidence of other wagons or trains camped on the meadow at the gate, but there are several possible reasons why this area probably would have been rarely used for a camp. The first reason was that there was no water there. Most wagon trains would have stopped either at Champagne Creek or Lava Creek and the distance to the meadow was short enough that it was not needed for a feeding site without water. And, as earlier recalled, the information in the Merrill journal indicated that water was only one mile beyond this camp, usually with plenty of feed and water at Little Cottonwood Creek.

Another reason may have been that many wagon travelers had maps and were told earlier of better campsites. As early as 1854, Ebey indicated in his trail diary that he had been given a list of camp places and distances by a man named Davis, somewhere near the Snake River crossing.<sup>40</sup> For those knowing ahead of time of the camps it would have been more convenient to either noon or camp at Little Cottonwood, rather than the Gate-Meadow.

All of these facts do not change the probability that the Merrill party camped on the meadow at the gate on the night of September 1, 1864, because all the known information so well places and depicts this very site. The Merrill stock needed feed since the grass at Champagne Creek had been burned off. They may have fed some near Lava Creek during the day movement but that was surely not the place of camping according to the journal, a dry camp without water. Such a dry camp would have been a rarity with water available often from Champagne Creek and on.

Though nothing was recorded by Julius Merrill about a lookout rider going on, as was often the case, one might have returned with the report that the grass also was burned off ahead. In such a case the Gate-Meadow would have been needed for the stock. If we notice the language in which the information was written by Merrill, "Springs *one mile in advance* [my emphasis] and the feed all burnt off near them," this might appear to have been written at the meadow before starting, upon advanced information.<sup>41</sup> Merrill may have known of the burned grass ahead and purposely camped on the meadow. Had not the journal been so specific about the good feed, the lack of water, and the water one mile on ahead this site would have little significance in this presentation!

On along the trail other journal writers wrote about taking advantage of the good site at Little Cottonwood. Elizabeth Porter estimated that her wagon train traveled nine or ten miles from its camp on Champagne Creek to a place of "Plenty all good water and grass and wood."<sup>42</sup> This was Little Cottonwood, a distance closer to eight miles, and the best place where her three named necessities of feed,

water, and fuel could be found. Aspen trees, which would have provided fuel, still abound around the springs and above in the canyon (Figure 5).

She also wrote of this place, "Stopped at middle of rock." This may have indicated that they were in the middle of the whole rock field and/or between Sunset Cone, a bit southeast of Little Cottonwood Creek, and Grassy Cone to the south, all a part of the Craters Monument. Her distance of fifteen miles travel the next day to "Rattlesnake Creek" (Copper Creek north of Lava Lake) is also accurate from Little Cottonwood.<sup>43</sup>

When Clarissa Shipley got up on the morning of June 19, 1864, she may have been only wondering or speculating. After writing in the present tense about the beautiful day dawning upon them near the mountains on Champagne Creek, her next statement, "Another day without water for 20 miles," may only have been in wonder or question about the day ahead.<sup>44</sup> After crossing the desert from Lost River to water at Champagne Creek on June 18, on no other day at least for some distance ahead would the party have encountered twenty miles without water!

Besides the water on Lava Creek, 3 miles, and Little Cottonwood, eight miles from Champagne Creek, there was a small spring 1.5 miles beyond Little Cottonwood near the east base of Bad Hill. Then about two more miles on over the hill there were several springs and a stream in the canyon at Big Cottonwood Creek. After that the next water of any quantity would be found eight miles on at the County-line camp.

The twenty miles of travel Shipley wrote about would have put the campers at the County-line camp. Her descriptions of the day, "rough roads and climbing over the mountains," would have been three hills, Bad Hill, the other similar high ridge three miles south of Big Cottonwood, and then Tom Cat Hill.<sup>45</sup> The various kinds of flows and rocks she described on the basalt lake can all still be seen along this course.

Shipley's account the following day, June 20, of the rough but somewhat improved road, "mountains to go over but not so bad [Payne Creek and up around to Huff Creek] . . . plenty of water today," and the crossing of the "Wood River," took the party on to the west of the County-line camp.<sup>46</sup>

After Ebey had camped on Champagne Creek and moved on down the cutoff, on August 8, 1854, he recorded accurate distances along the trail. These all have helped to verify the movements and stops of later travelers which we have reviewed. He wrote that from Champagne Creek it was three miles to Lava Creek, four more miles along to the small hill that can be found a short distance southwest of the Gate-Meadow (Figure 7), and one mile farther to "a good Camp on the right of the road." That brought his party to Little Cottonwood Creek, but then the group went on "3 miles to bad Hill," climbed the hill, and stopped for noon at the summit.<sup>47</sup> They later went on only a mile more and camped at Big Cottonwood Creek.

The next day the Ebey group crossed the small ridge three miles south of the Big Cottonwood camp and after five miles more, they crossed "another rocky ridge," Tom Cat Hill. The trail ruts can now

be seen on the ridge just east of the County-line with a trail marker in the center of the swale on either side of the ridge. The trail then turned in a westerly direction and would have passed on by the County-line campsite. Their night camp was on Copper Creek, a mile North of Lava Lake. Ebey called it Coral Creek.<sup>48</sup>

## Two Unnamed Camps

Although Ebey did not mention the County-line camp in passing by, there are other accounts that indicate this camp was used by more travelers than just the Merrill party. No information yet discovered put a name to that camp except a possible nickname by Eakin, noted below. Clarissa Shipley's train in all probability stopped and camped there after her twenty miles from Champagne Creek. The camp prior to this would have been eight miles back and the next following camp five miles ahead, neither close to the twenty miles. That was six weeks before the Merrill train camped there.

The September 15, 1904, journal entry of Annie Foster gave one of the strongest evidences of the use of the County-line camp. After camping for a night at Martin, Idaho, Foster wrote that the group she was with went twelve miles during the morning and stopped for lunch at "Cotton Wood Creek." That would have been Big Cottonwood. Her description of those twelve miles is accurate in describing the physical features there today, including the "crookedest road. . . , following a mountain all day," and the lava field of honey comb rocks that were as "heavy as lead." She called this all "Surely wonderful!"<sup>49</sup>

She had been informed by that date that the place of the basalt flow and cinder cones was called Craters of the Moon. She also wrote that the train drove on eight miles after lunch, the distance to County-line camp and the only water anywhere nearby. She wrote that the travelers "camped by a spring for the night. We can see a few pine trees from here. Quite a good many quaken asp[sic]. Not very pretty place. Mountains on one side and lavy [sic] rock on the other."<sup>50</sup>

In all probability Foster's camp was the camp west of Tom Cat Hill. At this place are found two good valleys separated by a small ridge (Figures 10 and 11). They are at the very southern end of the Pioneer Mountains. The two valleys form an M shape in the hillside about one-half mile north of the present highway as it drops down the grade and turns west on Tom Cat Hill. The eastern edge of the two valleys is exactly on the county line. (See Map.) The lower portion of the valleys can barely be seen from the highway because of the large and high basalt flow between the highway and the hillsides around the valleys.

The camp can be reached by either end of the improved road that follows the old trail, from the east end at the top of the hill or from the west end, marked by a white trail marker just off the highway, at the bottom of the basalt flow. The valley on the west has a long flat bottom, approximately one-fourth mile across, with grass along the ruts. There is a small spring along the road exiting the west end of this valley.

The valley on the east side of the small ridge that separates the

Figure 10: The first of two camp areas west of Tom Cat Hill, with several springs and the water tank. Cattle are now ranged here.

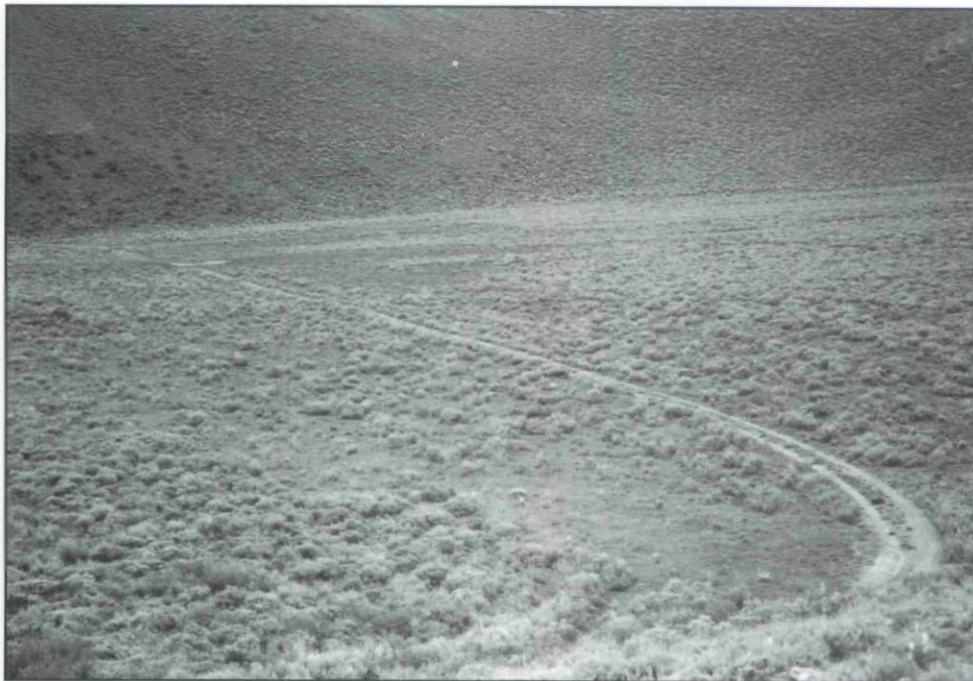
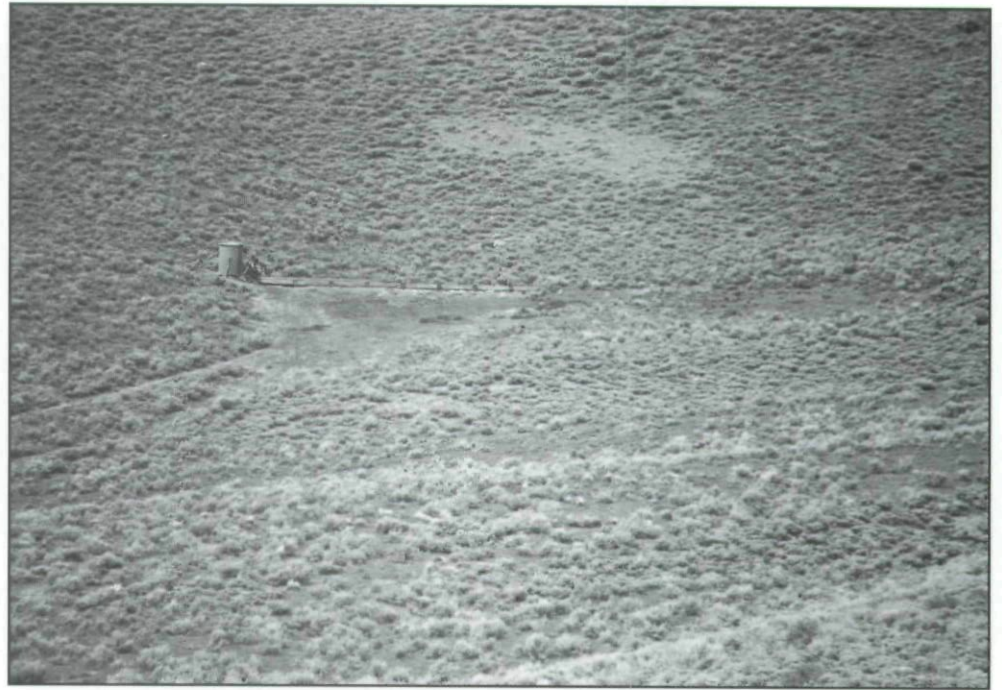


Figure 11: The second flat-bottom valley with good feed, west of Tom Cat Hill. One spring flows along the far exit from the grassland. One set of ruts are a few yards to the left of the road in the grass.

two is narrower and sloping up away from the road. Approximately one hundred yards up from the road can be seen a gray-blue water tank that is now connected to one of the larger old springs there. This can be seen from the highway down Tom Cat Hill. A little higher up to the west of the tank is a set of several other springs of water. Grass grows around and in the valley below both of the springs, and there is good pasture where cattle now feed.

The potential for plenty of water and feed would have made this an ideal double campground. The two valleys together would have supplied the needs of travelers for more than just an overnight camp, even for a large train. Julius Merrill's September 2-3 stay would have permitted plenty of feed and water, with some willows near the western spring. Merrill wrote of this place, "We were camped in a little nook of the valley between the hills and this same volcanic rock,

where there was good feed and water. There were several clear, cool springs of considerable size. There were plenty of willows for fuel although some very small, and we decided to lay over."<sup>51</sup>

Merrill seemed to be pleased with this site. He spoke of the one hundred miles before this where "feed had been more plenty than water." His description of the needs that were being supplied at this camp seemed to be more detailed and positive than any other place along the part of the trail that we have been considering. He even shot a sage hen at this camp for the first time since the Snake River crossing.<sup>52</sup>

The Les Brodie wagon train stopped at this camp in the mid-1990s, lined all the wagons side by side, and took photographs. Fred Dykes has some of those photos.

This camp also appears to have been the site of the Eakin noon stop on July 20, 1866; a place he called "Lonesome Camp." He may have called the noon site by that name because of the emotion that could be produced there. When the camper was down in the valley at the campsite he would be surrounded on all sides, and could only see the high basalt pile in front of the camp to the south, the small close hills on the other three sides, and the sky above. Eakin's party would then night camp six miles farther along at "Lake Springs," above Lava Lake.<sup>53</sup>

Annie Foster spoke of trees that could be seen near that site, possibly back up the valleys toward the mountains or across to the south on the basalt. A random pine does grow even in the lake of stone! She said it was not "a pretty place," with mountains on one side and lava rock on the other.<sup>54</sup> This is still a fitting description, especially the view from down in the camp area.

Another nearby view is quite significant. As a wagon began to drop down from Tom Cat Hill toward the camp, on the old trail, now as then the same view down upon some of the basalt encompassed between the highway and foothills does resemble some "plowed ground," part of a description given by Clarissa Shipley. The edge of the rock lake below appears as ripples or plow-furrows, as though the ground had been plowed in a circular motion around the base of the hill (Figure 12). Concerning the higher middle part of the flow, she wrote that some of the rocks "are piled every way and shape, some on top of others."<sup>55</sup>

These are significant depictions since this view would have been very impressive, and would have been nearly the last sight for Shipley before dropping down the hill and turning into the camp below. These were her last recorded thoughts for the day of travel before camping. She wrote nothing of the camp, but most of her daily entries spoke little of any of the camps or the conditions of each. She wrote much about the geologic features surrounding her.

One last unnamed camp was significant, beyond Lava Lake and Payne Creek and just before the trail began to leave the great volcanic field. Though the editor made no endnote comment about the noon stop by Julius Merrill on September 4, the next day after the County-line camp, that lunch site can be easily identified. There are other references to the use of this same camp also. A trip along the old trail even now proves the possibilities for this to have been a night campsite for travelers as well.

With some documentation, now, about the use of this camp the main purpose of this paper will be concluded. From this same point on for a great many miles few campsites on the trail can still be either accurately identified, or they do not now appear as originally used like those that we have been examining.

Ebey first described this same Merrill noon site, which still can be seen beyond Lava Lake. After his August 9 camp on Copper Creek, he wrote the next morning that, "2 miles from last night's camp, to the right of the road is a little spring of water with plenty of grass but *no fuel*."<sup>56</sup> As pointed out by Dykes, Ebey did not follow the road south past Lava Lake where the present "Goodale" historic sign now stands.<sup>57</sup> He followed the original road northwest, west and then south down the valley, which can be seen at a distance from the highway. Ebey's route went up Payne Creek and about 2.5 miles around the mountain, back down to the springs in the valley, above the basalt flow. This site can be seen to the north in the first large sloping valley to the west of the land point beyond Lava Lake (Figure 9).

The view from Highway 20-26-93 substantiates Ebey's observation. There are no trees anywhere in the valley above the area. The grassy meadow there reflects the presence of spring water that keeps it green. There are other smaller springs on up through the valley.

Then a short distance on to the west the view from the highway offers the observer the sight of another smaller valley, with the old trail ruts in the bottom of the valley to the left of a present improved road, going away and uphill to the north (Figure 13). Ebey wrote, "The road then turns to the right [beyond the camp] leaving the Lava field to the left, & passes among the Hills for 4 miles."<sup>58</sup>

Merrill also wrote in his journal after lunch on September 4, "That black volcanic rock we leave to the left. . . . We seem to turn more to the right and upstream [not on a creek]."<sup>59</sup> Up that smaller valley to the west beyond their noon camp we can now look and imagine the Merrill train disappearing over the hill.

Goodale may have camped at this Merrill noon site according to the July 30, 1862, description of Nellie Slater. She wrote that they "camped in a little valley of the mountains," after passing "a little lake," probably Lava Lake.<sup>60</sup> This scene is the last camp area along the mountains of this range. Three miles along would have brought them out to the flat at Huff Creek, known as Deadman's Flat, the beginning of the Carey Valley.

## Conclusion

The information presented is certainly not exhaustive. Additional information, clarifying comments, and even corrections are welcomed and could add to the accuracy and the historical preservation of this knowledge. More information also could assist in increasing interest in this area, as well as the entire Jeffery/Goodale Cutoff. Though this writing has sometimes referred to this route in connection with the commonly used Goodale name, as Fred Dykes attempted to do in his writing, much of the credit should go to John J. Jeffery who initiated use of the cutoff. Certainly Dykes' use of the

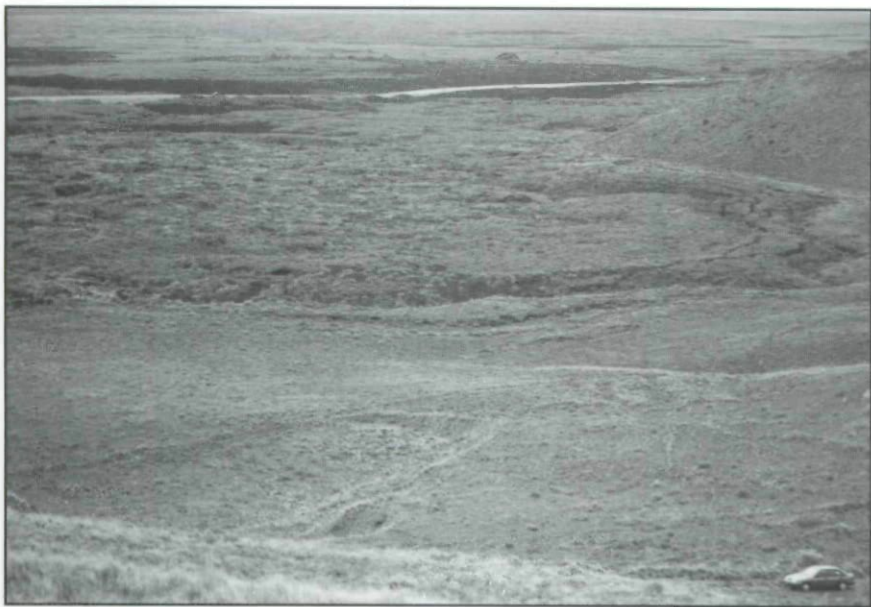


Figure 12: View down the old ruts of Tom Cat Hill at the “plowed” and piled basalt south of the camp areas.

Figure 13: The ruts in the valley on the left of the road finally leave the basalt lake and go for a few miles through the foothills.



name Jeffery/Goodale Cutoff is justified. This name seems to give reasonable credit to both men.

As this writer earlier asserted, there is still so much of this route that is unchanged. Dykes concluded his Winter 1996-1997, *Overland Journal* story about the cutoff by indicating that present-day historians have benefited from the many physical features of the area which have prevented change.<sup>61</sup> These features have assisted in preserving the trail, and in most places have made change almost impossible.

A trip along the cutoff would help observers realize the implications of Dykes' statement, that “Jeffery's route has been less disturbed than other trail routes.”<sup>62</sup> In a comparison to the thousands of miles of the total Oregon Trail system this cutoff is quite pristine. As a microcosm of the whole cutoff, the physical conditions of the forty to fifty miles of the trail and the pioneer sites highlighted by this paper make Dykes' statement even more significant.

Having covered almost every mile of the cutoff, including most of the alternative routes, this writer and his wife are still awed by the authenticity of this whole trail, but especially by this shorter part of the trail. One cannot seem to get enough of the hikes, the views, the scenes of antiquity, and the pictures that still remain to be taken. Interest has become infatuation and infatuation a powerful driving force.

Dykes has written much to help clarify and verify information about the cutoff. There may still exist a few questions concerning alternates on various parts of the cutoff and some discrepancies over routes and camps used, but the Champagne Creek to Lava Lake portion of the trail had little room for alternatives, except those mentioned. The part of the trail covered here is very unique, so unlike even other parts of the whole cutoff, that words cannot describe what an eyewitness is allowed to assimilate and store in pleasant memories.

## NOTES

1. Betty Burnett, "Goodale's Cutoff," *Overland Journal* 3 (Winter 1985): 31-34; Irving R. Merrill, "Tim Goodale and His Cutoff: A Major Trail Segment During and After the Fourth Emigration Wave," *Overland Journal* 8 (Fall 1990): 9-16; Fred W. Dykes, "Cold, Hard Facts About Jeffery's Cutoff," *Overland Journal* 14 (Winter 1996): 4-16.
2. Fred W. Dykes, *Jeffery's Cutoff, Idaho's Forgotten Oregon Trail Route*, 3rd ed. (Pocatello: Fred W. Dykes, 1995), Figure 12.
3. Les Broadie, interview with author, August 1997. Les discussed at length the incident of Tim Goodale's camp in 1862, placing it on Lava Creek. He had placed a sign, "Good Camp," over the gate leading into the valley against the mountains where the camp was supposed to have been. In the January 1993, *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, BLM and Idaho State Historical Society publication, the information below Map 106 claims Frank Martin was the Martin, Idaho, postmaster. Other resources name his brother, Samuel Martin as the postmaster. The BLM land records, dated August 30-September 3, 1883, for T2N, R24E, Sec. 11, show a building designated as "Lava Creek P. O., Samuel Martin." The home of Frank Martin, miner, founder of Era, Idaho, in 1885, is found on the same records one mile west in Section 10. (Copy of land records from Dick Hill, BLM Archeologist, Idaho Falls, Idaho, BLM Office, December 1999.)
4. Dykes, *Jeffery's Cutoff*, 4.
5. Irving R. Merrill, ed., *Bound for Idaho: The 1864 Trail Journal of Julius Merrill* (Moscow: The University of Idaho Press, 1988), 99-101.
6. *Ibid.*, 99.
7. James W. McGill, personal letter sent to Irving R. Merrill, December 28, 1999. The details about the possible discrepancies discovered by this writer were recorded with citations from the *Journal of Julius Merrill*, including the questionable note information.
8. Irving R. Merrill, undated letter to the author, January 4, 2000. Mr. Merrill wrote that Dr. Merle W. Wells had used the Merrill journal in doing the fieldwork, and then the two of them worked together to identify the locations of the campsites. He also wrote that Dr. Wells had offered to review my observations and any photographic evidence.
9. Merle Wells, phone conversation with author, January 6, 2000. He had received a copy of the Merrill letter too.
10. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 188-89.
11. *Ibid.*, 188. Merrill and Wells indicated the distance at seven miles, but their description indicated the same place that this writer also had identified.
12. Les Broadie, phone conversation with author, January 10, 2000. I requested information about the water and grass conditions south of the Broadie ranch in the early years and the now evident small spring of water about one mile from the ranch. The main purpose was to determine whether there could have been any water available one mile beyond the Lava Creek camp for the Merrill train on September 2, 1864. The 1883 BLM survey plats indicate that there was a miner's cabin at the site where Boadie opened the springs.
13. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 101; Julius Merrill documented that day's drive as only eleven miles.
14. *Ibid.*, 99. Endnote 12, pp. 188-89, concerning this entry, quotes part of Nellie Slater's journal to place Tim Goodale at this camp area two years earlier than Julius Merrill.
15. *Ibid.*, 189.
16. *Ibid.*, 99.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, 99-100.
19. Susan Badger Doyle, Fred W. Dykes, eds., *The 1854 Oregon Trail Diary of Winfield Scott Ebey*, (Independence, Mo.: Oregon-California Trails Association), 146. Boise Public Library Partial photocopy, no date; Dykes, *Jeffery's Cutoff*, Figures 8, 9, 10. Dykes also identified the gully or "ravine" in Figure 8.
20. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 189.
21. *Ibid.*, 99-100.
22. *Ibid.*, 189.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, 101.
26. *Ibid.*, 189.
27. *Ibid.*; Nellie Slater, *Travel on the Plains, 1862*, n.p., July 27, typescript Idaho State Historical Society Library files, Boise, Idaho (hereinafter cited as ISHS Library).
28. Broadie, August 1997 interview.
29. Oliver B. Slater, "Reminiscences of O. B. Slater - 1862," 2, typescript, ISHS Library. According to the last line of the typescript, Slater wrote these memories as late as 1915.
30. A. Champagne and W. Noyes, Water Right Document, filed July 25, 1881, Book 2, p. 262, Alturas County Courthouse, Hailey, Idaho. The two men filed separate water rights for water from "Lava Creek" and "Fifteen Mile Creek," the first water rights filed on either stream. That part of Alturas County where the streams named in the two documents were found became part of Blaine County in 1895, and then Butte County in 1917. By 1885, when the next water rights were filed, Fifteen Mile Creek was called Champagne Creek. The description of the area of Lava Creek found in the second document was at the confluence of the branch of Lava Creek with the other stream, but was not the main Lava Creek. The Butte County land plats of the area, with property owners indicated, are dated on and after 1917. The map indicates that the branch of Lava Creek that before had flowed into Champagne Creek by then flowed into the main Lava Creek. Lava Creek flowed through the Martin property, and still sinks just to the east of the Martin town site.
31. Slater, "Reminiscences," 2.
32. Doyle and Dykes, *Ebey Diary*, 145.
33. Clarissa Elvira Shipley, "Diary," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries and Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890, Vol. 9*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 50.
34. Mrs. A. W. Loughary, "A Brief Journal of the Travels and Incidence of an Emigrant Ox Train Across the Plains from Burlington, Iowa, on the Mississippi River to the Willamette Valley on the Columbia and the Pacific Ocean, in the Year 1864," 21, typescript, ISHS Library.
35. Elizabeth Lee Porter, "Diary Crossing the Plains," in *Covered Wagon Women, Vol. 9*, 27.
36. Stewart Bates Eakin, Jr., "A Short Sketch of a Trip Across the Plains," 21, typescript, ISHS Library. This entry was made on July 19, 1866.
37. *Ibid.*, July 20 entry.
38. Anne Jane Biggers Elliott Foster, "Anne Jane's Journal," 33-34, photocopy, ISHS Library. Entry for September 14, 1904.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Doyle and Dykes, *Ebey Diary*, 139.
41. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 99.
42. Porter, "Diary Crossing the Plains," 28.
43. *Ibid.*



44. Shipley, "Diary," 50. Shipley called Lost River "Skunk Creek," maybe because of a mishearing of "Sink Creek" or "Sinking Creek," which described what the river did farther downstream. For whatever reason, Shipley made the statement about twenty miles without water though this did not fit the landscape. In following the movement of her group, the party crossed the Snake River on June 15, found the spring at Big Southern Butte on June 16, went 10 miles to Lost River on the 17th, and twenty miles to the next unnamed stream for water on June 18, surely Champagne Creek. Unless they purposely passed the water spots on past Champagne and to the next camp that evening twenty miles away, there was no need to be without water along the following stretch of trail!

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid., Shipley thought that they had crossed the Wood River "through six different streams," but this may have included the Little Wood, more than one crossing of the winding Silver Creek, and then the Big Wood River as well!

47. Doyle and Dykes, *Ebey Diary*, 146.

48. Ibid., 147.

49. Foster, "Anne Jane's Journal," 34.

50. Ibid.

51. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 100. In an e-mail from Fred Dykes to the author, dated June 12, 2000, Fred said that the Broadie wagon train that retraced the cutoff in the mid-1990s stopped at the camp area with the water tank, and pictures were taken of the wagons there.

52. Ibid.

53. Eakin, "A Short Sketch," 21.

54. Foster, "Anne Jane's Journal," 34.

55. Shipley, "Diary," 50.

56. Doyle and Dykes, *Ebey Diary*, 148.

57. Dykes, "Cold Hard Facts," 13.

58. Doyle and Dykes, *Ebey Diary*, 148.

59. Merrill, *Journal of Julius Merrill*, 101.

60. Slater, *Travel on the Plains*, July 30 entry.

61. Dykes, "Cold Hard facts," 14.

62. Ibid.

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