

## **SOME ENIGMATIC STATIONS OF THE PONY EXPRESS AND OVERLAND STAGE BETWEEN SALT LAKE CITY AND NEVADA**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Since its inception in 1860, the Pony Express has been an important part of the opening of the west to the American public. However, prior to the 1970s, there was little serious scholarly work on it. In conjunction with the nation's bicentennial, several serious studies were conducted in the 1970s, including Bluth (1978), Fike and Headley (1979) and Berge (1980).

### **THE PROBLEM**

Despite these advances, serious questions remain about several of the stations. Where were they located? Were they actually used by the Pony Express? When were they built? What was life like at the stations? What became of them? What is their condition today? It is the purpose of this study to extend previous arguments on these questions about the most problematic stations of the Pony Express and Overland Stage west from Salt Lake City to the Nevada border. We will also report new information about these stations and collect in one place the descriptions from the relevant accounts of the time.

Documentation on the location and use of the Pony Express stations varies widely. There is accurate information about stations at Salt Lake City, Traveller's Rest, Joe's Dugout, Camp Floyd, East Rush Valley, Lookout Pass, Riverbed, Fish Springs and Deep Creek. Berge (1980) excavated the stations with the best preserved visible remains (Simpson Springs, Boyd, and Round) and removed them from the doubtful list.

Fike and Headley (1979) make an argument for stations at Government Creek and Six Mile (between Callao and Round), which heretofore, had not been considered Pony Express stations. They generated a major controversy over the location of the station at Willow Springs (Callao). Other stations which are

still questionable are Rockwell's, Faust, Dugway, Blackrock, and Burn't. Research is continuing on Rockwell's, Faust, and Burn't. This article will discuss Dugway, Blackrock, and Willow Springs (Callao).

### **METHODS**

Archaeological survey techniques complimented by standard historical research methods seem well-suited to answer these questions. Hawkins and Madsen summarize the advantages.

This is perhaps the most exciting aspect of historic archaeology. The combination of the written documentation with archaeological excavation techniques allows a more detailed investigation and interpretation of the material remains that are the subject matter of archaeological research. At the same time, the detailed examination of physical remains allows a direct assessment of the tall tales, rumors, and myths that tend to collect around well-known historical events . . . [Hawkins and Madsen 1990:5].

Interpretation of some historical documents needs to be done with care. Early maps, photographs, and sales records provide fairly dependable data (although we found one Cadastral map and two early photographs were seriously flawed). Diaries of observers contemporary with the Pony Express and Overland Stage vary in their accuracy. Sir Richard Burton (1861), Horace Greeley (1860), and J. H. Simpson (1876) were careful observers and recorders. Howard R. Egan (1917), though intimately involved with the Pony Express as a rider and son of the superintendent of the Utah stations, did not record his recollections until he was over seventy years old, nearly a half century after the events occurred. He explicitly denies the accuracy of his dates and claims only an impressionistic record.

Interviews with local informants offer equally diverse data. Some local residents are remarkably well informed. In other cases people who claim to know "exactly" where a station was located become vague when pressed for details. Two conflicting claims exist for the station at Willow Springs (Callao), and four different interpretations have been made for the location for Rockwell's prominent Hot Springs Brewery Hotel just 20 miles from downtown Salt Lake City.

Archaeological survey data can be equally difficult to interpret. While significant artifacts still remain at a few sites, it is almost impossible to associate them

with the Pony Express, where the riders travelled light, the Express lasted for only a brief 18 months, and the sites were frequently occupied for several decades before and after the Pony Express (See Bluth 1978). Indeed, we are convinced that virtually all of the artifacts one sees along the trail and most of them on the station sites were associated with the Overland Stage, freighting operations, and even the Lincoln Highway (that operated over much of the same route between 1913 and 1927).

It has been our attempt to weigh a variety of historic and archaeological data, eliminate the most implausible claims, and develop a triangulation from several dependable sources which will support the most plausible argument. Some questions can now be answered with some degree of confidence. For some stations, we have eliminated some possible claims with other questions remaining, and a few problems may never be answered with a high degree of confidence.

In addition to the diaries and historic sources listed in the References, we examined all available indexes of less scholarly sources in order to discover personal accounts of life at the stations (e.g., Bloss 1978, Hafen 1969, Jackson 1972, 1985, Majors 1893, Reinfeld 1966, Trimble 1989, Twain 1980). Under the titles of "Pony Express," "Overland Stage," "Trails," "Roads," and "Egan," we perused the indexes of *The Improvement Era*, *L.D.S. Periodicals*, *Our Pioneer Heritage* and *Treasures of Pioneer History*. We examined the index to the more scholarly *Utah Historical Quarterly* as well as the computerized index of the collections of private papers contained in the scholarly libraries in Utah. Finally, we examined the extensive collection of newspaper clippings from several western newspapers on items of interest to Utah assembled by Dale Morgan and housed in the library of the Utah State Historical Society.

This search was not altogether satisfying. Most of the articles were either brief summaries of the stations containing no new information or recollections of people who visited the stations around the turn of the century; in other words, long ago and long after the events. In the case of the story of the Fausts hosting Horace Greeley, we located the source of the story but placed it at Pleasant Valley instead of Rush Valley, which is claimed by most writers (see Carter 1960).

Local informants provided information on several sites. Mr. and Mrs. David Bagley, and Joseph Nardone were particularly helpful.

## STATIONS

### Dugway

Dugway (also Shortcut Pass), is the nineteenth contract station in Utah. It is located east of the pass between the Thomas and Dugway Mountain Ranges. To locate this station from the monument at Simpson Springs travel about 16 miles (8 past Riverbed) west on the Pony Express Road. The station is about a mile to the south of the main road near a CCC monument.

Site description: The site consists of a depression and rock pile northeast of the CCC monument and south of an arroyo running west to east and dividing the site in half. North of the arroyo is a rectangular rock alignment (foundation?). North of the rock alignment is the remnant of a clearly distinguishable trail/road.

Discussion: Dugway Station began as a tent for the workers on Egan's road (Simpson 1876). Greeley (1860) stopped to rest and water his mules at Dugway and described it as ". . . about the forlornest spot I ever saw." A year later, Burton (1861:555) described the Dugway Station as, "a mere dug out—a hole four feet deep, roofed over with split cedar trunks, and provided with a rude adobe chimney." Following Greeley and Burton, Fike and Headley (1979:71) conclude, "nothing very permanent was ever constructed at the site."

Our on-site survey indicates more development than was earlier supposed, but raises more questions. First concerning the road, the undisturbed road north of the site, which seems to have gone unnoticed by previous investigators, runs for at least a mile in either direction so is clearly more than a driveway. The road south of the arroyo has been used for access over the years and so is difficult to interpret. It is probable that the original road runs on the north side of the arroyo and the road on the south side was made by the CCC in order to gain access to the monument construction area. The observation that this road does not extend past the site lends support for this interpretation.

The presence of window glass on the south side of the arroyo and a rock foundation on the north side raises additional questions. Why would they build a

substantial structure with a stone foundation on the north side of the arroyo near the road and live in a modest dugout south of the arroyo? If they lived in the structure to the north, why are the window glass sherds on the south?

The answer may lie in Bluth's claim that in the 1890s the location was utilized as a halfway stop by the Walters and Mulliner Stage Company on the route between Fairfield and Irapah (Bluth 1978:96). Perhaps the Pony Express Station was a modest dugout, and the structures with the stone foundation and window glass were added during its later use as a stage station.

Water for Dugway Station had to be hauled from Simpson Springs and Riverbed. Although three wells were dug (one reaching a depth of 153 feet) no water was found.

An interesting description of the early development of this station is contained in Simpson's journal.

My party moved at quarter to six. Course nearly southwest, across desert, . . . thinly covered with short . . . sage to "Short Cut Pass," . . . Through this pass Chorpenning & Company, the mail contractors, have made a road, but it is so crooked and steep as to scarcely permit wagons to get up it. In other respects, road today good.

At the foot of the pass we find a couple of men of the mail-party living in a tent. They are employed in improving the road through the pass, and digging for water. They have been digging for two weeks in different places in the vicinity, and as yet have found none. At the well, near this tent, they had got down ten feet, and came to hard rock [Simpson 1876:49].

Greeley also describes life at the Dugway Station.

Though at the foot of a low mountain, there was no water near it; that which was given our mules had been carted in a barrel from Simpson's Spring, aforesaid, and so must be for most of the year. An attempt to sink a well at this point had thus far proved a failure. The station keeper here lives entirely alone—that is, when the Indians will let him—seeing a friendly face but twice a week, when the mail stage passes one way or the other. He deeply regretted his lack of books and newspapers; we could only give him one of the latter. Why do not men who contract to run mails through such desolate regions comprehend that their own interest, if no nobler consideration, should impel them to supply their stations with good reading matter! I am quite sure that one hundred dollars spent by Major Chorpenning in supplying two or three good journals to each station on his route, and in providing for their interchange from station to station, would save him more than one

hundred dollars in keeping good men in his service, and in imbuing them with contentment and gratitude. So with other mail routes through regions like this [Greeley 1860:223].

Burton (555–556) also describes his visit to Dugway in some detail.

After twenty miles over the barren plain we reached, about sunset, the station at the foot of the Dug way. . . . The tenants were two rough young fellows—station master and express rider—with their friend, an English bulldog. One of them had amused himself by decorating the sides of the habitation with niches and Egyptian heads. Rude art seems instinctively to take the form which it wears on the banks of the Nilus, and should some Professor Rafinesque discover these traces of the aborigines, after a sepulture of a century, they will furnish materials for a rich chapter for anti-Columbian immigration. Water is brought to the station in casks. The youths believe that some seven miles north of the 'Dug way' there is a spring, which the Indians, after a fashion of that folk, sensibly conceal from the whites. Three wells have been sunk near the station. Two soon led to rock; the third has descended 120 feet, but is still bone dry. . . . The workmen complained greatly of the increasing heat as they descend. . . . The youths seeing me handle the rubbish at once asked me if I was prospecting for gold.

After roughly supping we set out, with a fine round moon high in the skies, to ascend the "Dug way Pass" by a rough dusty road winding round the shoulder of a hill, through which a fiumara has burst its way. Like other Utah mountains, the highest third rises suddenly from a comparatively gradual incline, a sore formation for cattle, requiring draught to be at least doubled. Arriving on the summit we sat down, whilst our mules returned to help the baggage wagons, and amused ourselves with the strange aspect of the scene [Burton 1861:555–556].

Dugway station was still in use when Egan passed in 1862. He recalls—

That riverbed (referring to the previous station) was no place for a station, but they built one there and dug a well that furnished very good, but brackish, water, which they hauled to the Dugway Station, where there were three men and a change of horses for the mail coach. One man tended the horses and acted as cook. The other two were digging a well for water. I was let down that well when they had reached a depth of one hundred and thirteen feet. I have never seen anything like that before or since. The surface soil at this place is a white clay that is very sticky when wet. The walls of this well are of the same material from top to bottom and about the same dampness from three feet down to

the bottom, where I cut my name in the side about two feet above. The wall was very smooth and plumb, no need of curbing and no danger of caving in. Some time after men were put to work boring with a well auger in the bottom. They bored some forty feet and found no change. Then the job of trying more to find water there was given up and it made a nice place to dump the stable cleanings [Egan 1917:219].

Water was dear in the west desert.

### Blackrock

Blackrock (also Butte, Blackrock Springs) was the twentieth station in Utah (noncontract). There were possibly two stations near Black rock. The first was located near the CCC monument near the black basalt mesa for which the site was named. Another possible station was located about two miles east on the east bank of a wash on the old trail/road about one-third of a mile north of the modern road. Both sites are owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Description: The site near the monument consists of eight rock piles (more like graves) associated with a few dozen artifacts dating to the proper period. The second site is an artifact scatter 160 feet in diameter straddling the old trail/road. The assemblage includes fragments of metal and milled wood as well as several sherds of brown, light green, and purple glass bottles. No coins, horseshoes, or complete bottles are present.

Discussion: Fike and Headley (1979:73) were unable to locate either site. They report, "Reconnaissance and infrared photographs have also failed to produce any evidence. . . . Informants say the station site lies west and north of the volcanic outcrop known geographically as Black rock." Following Fike and Headley, our team surveyed the area near the monument as well as around to the north and west of the "black rock." Although we found some prehistoric sites, there was no sign of a station.

In a 1993 interview, Mr. and Mrs. David Bagley<sup>1</sup> reported a rock pile and artifact scatter 200 feet northwest of the monument that might have been this station. Following the Bagleys, we located the site described above.

Although most writers list "Black rock" as a Pony Express Station, Bluth (1978) claims a stone structure, that was constructed from the abundant black basalt stones surrounding the mesa, was an

improvement undertaken by the Overland Mail Company in July, 1861, a few months at the earliest before the end of the Pony Express.

Before we located the stage station, we also surveyed the well-defined trail/road 1 mile west and 4 miles east of the monument to ascertain if the station was farther away from the black mesa. We discovered several isolated artifacts that could be associated with the Overland Stage and even the Lincoln Highway. We also found a piece from a wood stove about 2 miles east of the monument. Later, an intensive survey and mapping of the area near the stove piece revealed the circle of artifacts described above.

In his recollections, published 56 years after the Pony Express, Egan (1917) reports, ". . . we passed Butte Station about a mile, where there is a very steep pull going west. . . ." This description corresponds to the location of the above "stove" site. Furthermore, it would have been almost equidistant between the stations at Dugway and Fish Springs, while the site at the CCC monument is 13.7 miles over the difficult run from Dugway and 10 miles on the flatter run to Fish Springs.

But what of other possible locations of "Butte" Station? There is no rise in terrain a mile west of the black basalt outcrop where the site has previously been thought to have been. The account by Egan could be construed to place "Butte" station west of Fish Springs where the Boyd Station was located. However no rise in terrain exists west of Boyd either. The last alternative is a Butte Station that is known to exist in Nevada. Its terrain fits Egan's description and is a distinct possibility (Joseph Nardone, personal communication 1993).

Based upon our examination of the documents and our on-site surveys, we consider it possible that there were two stations near "Black rock." The "stove station" may have briefly served the Pony Express, but would never have been more than a Sibly tent with a wood stove and a corral. More likely, it was a construction camp for the transcontinental telegraph. The stone structure would have been constructed to serve the Overland Stage. Not needing to be equidistant between the two adjacent stations to conserve the energy of the ponies, it was located at the point 2 miles to the west near the "Black rock" mesa that provided an abundant supply of building material. It is also interesting to note that undisturbed stones are still scattered over the low rise

to the west and northwest of the CCC monument, while the area to the east and northeast of the monument is completely barren. Since the rather large CCC camp at Simpson Springs, 30 miles east, is constructed of similar material, it is possible that the CCC crew used this area as a quarry for their building material.

Simpson (1876:50) appears to have missed Blackrock, having chosen to turn south along the west slope of the Thomas Range before heading west around the south edge of the Black Rock Hills to Fish Springs.

Greeley does not mention Blackrock but Burton followed the road around the north edge of the Black Rock Hills where the station was later to be built and then south around the south edge of what is now Fish Springs Wildlife Refuge. Burton describes the area—

Having reached the plain (west of Dugway Pass) the road ran for eight miles over broken surface, with severe pitch-holes and wagon tracks which have lasted many a month; it then forked. . . . We chose the shorter cut, and after eight miles rounded Mountain Point (Black Rock Hills), the end of a dark brown butte falling into the plain. Opposite us under the western hills, which were distant about two miles, lay the station (Fish Springs), but we were compelled to double, for twelve miles, the intervening slough, which no horse can cross without being mired [Burton 1861:557].

Burton was right. A year later, in 1862, Howard R. Egan (1917) attempted the same passage with less successful results.

When I reached the desert just east of Fish Springs, the road was very bad, mud hub deep, and my work oxen gave out when I was about four or five miles from Fish Springs and could not budge the wagon another foot. I had the driver unhitch from the wagon, take some grub for himself and the Indians, who had gone ahead with the cattle, and also take my pony and drive the team to water and feed, and come back next morning with one of the Indians to help get the wagon over to hard ground.

When they came back next day we moved the wagon about one-half a mile, where the road was still worse than before. There were three empty coaches stuck in the mud within a half mile of us. Well I had to get out of there some way. There was a part of the load I must not leave alone. So this is how I managed it: We had a double cover on the wagon. We took them off and spread them out on the mud alongside the wagon and loaded the most of the valuables on it and folded the sides and ends tight over all, hitched the oxen to the end

and away we went as easy as pulling a sleigh over a good snow road.

It was easy after that. All was over but the wagon by night. Next day I sent the driver and one Indian back to get the wagon if they had to take it all apart and haul it on the wagon cover, which did not appear to be damaged at all after about ten miles' drag with a load over creamy alkali, sand less but sticky mud. The inside of the wagon wheels had the appearance of an old-fashioned wooden butter bowl. On the outside there would be no hub or spoke in sight, and mud would pile on till of its own weight a portion would fall off, but at next turn of the wheel would be on the job again [Egan 1917:219-220].

Easy indeed. Egan finishes his story—

Well we made it across all right and had no more trouble till we passed Butte Station about a mile, where there is a very steep pull going west and, as the snow had drifted very heavily over the crest, our team gave out just about a couple of rods below the summit and, as there was not expected a mail stage for at least ten or twelve hours, we left the wagon right in the center of the road where there was no passing around it with a wagon or sleigh. So when the stage that night came up to that point, the driver unhitched his leaders, hooked on the back of our wagon and dragged it back down the hill to near the bottom. This we did not know till next morning, when the driver and one of the Indians went back after the wagon, as we were camped some distance off the road and had not heard the Mail pass. My driver made some bad talk, so the Indian said, when he found the wagon down at the bottom, but he hooked on and did not have the least bit of trouble getting over, and when he came to camp was in good spirits and seemed to think it had all worked out for the best [1917:220].

### Willow Springs

The twenty-third contract station in Utah was Willow Springs. While the exact location and ownership have been disputed (see discussion below), we believe it was on the David Bagley property in Callao, Utah.

Description: An 1868 engraving shows the Pony Express station as a small adobe building with a thatched roof. The stage station is a larger adobe structure with a door and two windows in the front and a barn attached to the right end and another barn a few yards to the rear.

Discussion: Considerable controversy surrounds the location of the Willow Springs Station. Local informants and the CCC monument place it on the

Bagley property in Callao, Utah. An adobe structure that could have been the stage station remains in good condition near an excellent usable spring. Initially, the station at Willow Springs may have consisted of only a tent and corral (Bluth 1978). In 1870 George W. Boyd purchased this location in order to supply hay, water, and wood to the Overland Stage under a contract signed in 1867 (Bluth 1978). Although an 1882 Cadastral plat shows no Willow Springs Station, it does show Boyd's home at the above location and the home of F. J. Kearney three-fourths of a mile to the southeast.

Based upon the 1882 map, Fike and Headley (1979) tentatively place the station on the Dorcey Sabey property north of the F. J. Kearney boarding house. Fike and Headley's (1979:80) excavations revealed a foundation and associated mound of adobe, "dating to the proper period and similar to the structure depicted in the sketch from an 1868 photograph."

However, Burton's (1861:560) description of his approach to Willow Springs is clear, "As we advanced the land improved, the salt disappeared, the grass was splendidly green, and approaching the station we passed Willow Creek, where gopher-holes and snipes, willows and wild roses, told of life and gladdened the eye. The station lay on a bench beyond the slope."

To the casual observer this area of Callao appears to be flat rather than containing "benches" and "slopes." However, both the USGS map and aerial photographs show a prominent drainage named Basin Creek that runs just east of the Bagley (Boyd) location. Perhaps Burton was calling this "Willow Creek." Further, the 1882 maps cited by Fike and Headley show no creek east of the Sabey location, but an unnamed creek east of Boyd's (or Bagley's). Finally, Burton describes a stop at a spring six miles beyond the Willow Springs Station, the precise location of Six Mile Spring.

In an attempt to resolve the issue, we investigated the terrain east of both locations. The area east of the Sabey property (on the east edge of Callao) is flat and devoid of major vegetation or water save for a circle of trees. As we walked west toward Bagley's the vegetation improved until we encountered a lush, cultivated field. Just before reaching the Bagley property from the east we crossed a creek. Finally, the source of water at Bagley's is a flowing spring while at Sabey's it is a small bog that once was a

well. On the basis of Burton's description of the topography, he visited the Bagley location.

However, Burton calls both station's claims into question when he clearly describes the station as a "log hut." Nick Wilson also describes a log structure at "Willow Creek" (Visscher, reprinted in Carter 1960). Perhaps the station at Willow Springs was originally log and was replaced by an adobe structure.

In response to the controversy raised by Fike and Headley's claim, Don L. Reynolds, Director of the St. Joseph's Pony Express Museum wrote to the associate director of the BLM. Based upon extensive reading and three visits to Callao in 1959, 1961, and 1970 Mr. Reynolds states, "So far as I know, . . . there has never been any dispute among local people as to the present Willow Springs Station location on the Bagley Ranch." He concludes, "Since the present Bagley location for the Willow Springs Station building has been regarded as correct for so long by so many, absolutely positive information to the contrary would be needed to change that location now" (Reynolds 1980). Bluth takes essentially the same position as do we.

There is little doubt that both sites existed within a mile of each other along the original trail/road. The Bagley location was almost certainly the stage station. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the stable on the Sabey property served the Pony Express separately since Burton claims an "Express Rider" was at the stage station at the time of his visit. In any case, the structure on the Bagley Ranch remains as a well-preserved example of an adobe structure, faced with wood for durability, that was common construction at the time of the Pony Express and Overland Stage.

Burton (1861) continues the description of his visit,

The express rider was a handsome young Mormon, who wore in his felt hat the effigy of a sword; his wife was an Englishwoman, who, as usual under the circumstances, had completely thrown off the Englishwoman. The station-keeper was an Irishman, one of the few met amongst the Saints. Nothing could be fouler than the log hut, the flies soon drove us out of doors; hospitality, however, was not wanting, and we sat down to salt beef and bacon, for which we were not allowed to pay. The evening was spent in setting a wolf-trap, which consisted of a springy pole and a noose: we strolled about after sunset with a gun, but failed to bag snipe, wild-fowl or hare, and sighted only a few cunning old crows,

and black swamp birds with yellow throats. As the hut contained but one room we slept outside; the Gosh-Yuta are apparently not a venturesome people, still it is considered advisable at times to shift one's sleeping quarters, and to acquire the habit of easily awaking [Burton 1861:560].

"Nic" Wilson relates an interesting incident that presumably occurred at Willow Springs Station,

I rode from Shell Creek to Deep Creek, and one day the Indians killed the rider out in the desert, and when I was to meet him at Deep Creek, he was not there. I had to keep right on until I met him. I went to the next station, Willow Creek, the first station over the mountain, and there I found out that he had been killed. My horse was about jaded by this time, so I had to stay there to let him rest. . .

About four o'clock in the afternoon, seven Indians rode up to the station and asked for something to eat. Peter Neece, the station keeper, picked up a sack with about twenty pounds of flour in it and offered it to them, but they would not have that little bit, they wanted a sack of flour apiece. Then he threw it back into the house and told them to get out, and he wouldn't give them a thing. This made them pretty mad, and as they passed a shed about four or five rods from the house, they each shot an arrow into a poor, old lame cow, that was standing under a shed. When Neece saw them do that, it made him mad too, and he jerked out a couple of pistols and commenced shooting at them. He killed two Indians and they fell off their horses right there. The others ran. He said, "Now boys, we will have a time of it tonight. . . ." Well, just a little before dark, we could see a big dust over towards the mouth of the canyon, and we knew they were coming. It was about six miles from the canyon to the station.

Pete thought it would be a good thing to go out a hundred yards or so, and lie down in the brush and surprise them as they came up. . . . Finally the Indians got close enough for us to shoot. Pete shot and jumped to one side. I had two pistols, one in each hand, cocked all ready to pull the trigger, and was crawling on my elbows and knees. Each time he would shoot, I saw him jump. Soon they were all shooting, and each time they shot, I would jump. I never shot at all.

After I had jumped a good many times, I happened to land in a little wash, or ravine. I guess my back came pretty nearly level with the top of it. Anyhow, I pressed myself down so I could get in it. I don't know how I felt, I was so scared. I lay there and listened until I could hear no more shooting, but I thought I could hear horses' hoofs beating on the hard ground near me, until I found out it was only my heart beating. After a while, I raised my head a little and looked off towards the desert, and I could see those humps of sand

covered with grease-wood. They looked exactly like Indians on horses, and I could see several of them near the wash.

I crouched down again and lay there for a time, maybe two hours. Finally everything was very still, so I thought I would go around and see if my horse was where I had staked him, and if he was, I would go back to my station over in Deep Creek and tell him that the boys were all killed and I was the only one that had got away all right. Well, as I went crawling around the house on my elbows and knees, . . . with both pistols ready, I saw a light shining between the logs in the back, part of the house. I thought the house must be full of Indians, so I decided to lie there awhile and see what they were doing: I lay there for some time listening and watching and then I heard one of the men speak right out a little distance from the house and say, "Did you find anything of him?" Then I knew it was the boys, but I lay there until I heard the door shut, then I slipped up and peeped through the crack and saw that all three of them were there all right. I was much too ashamed to go in, but finally I went around and opened the door. When I stepped in Pete called out, "Hello! Here he is. How far did you chase them. I told the fellows here that you would bring back at least half a dozen of them." I think they killed five Indians that night [Visscher, reprinted in Carter 1960:79-80].

In May 1886, Charles Bagley sold his land in Rush Valley to the owners of Faust ranch, bought the Willow Springs Station from George Boyd and moved to Callao (bill of sale in possession of David Bagley). In 1992 his descendant, David Bagley, retains the old adobe house as a small, private museum and is gracious in entertaining visitors and spinning yarns about the Willow Springs Station.

## CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of our research, the current status of these enigmatic stations of the Pony Express and Overland Stage seems to be as follows:

1. Dugway: The exact location is well known. Our survey and mapping identified the original road, corral and stone foundation north of the arroyo. We demonstrated that the station was improved and life became more refined over the years than was previously thought.
2. Blackrock: Two sites were discovered where none were previously known. Remains that appear to have been the stone stage station were located near the CCC monument. A second site was located along the old road two miles to the

cast and equidistant between the two adjacent stations. This could have been either a Pony Express/Stage station or a construction camp from the transcontinental telegraph.

3. Willow Springs: Our comparison (on the ground and on historic maps and aerial photographs) of Sir Richard Burton's description of his approach to Willow Springs with the topography and water sources adjacent to the two disputed locations, makes it virtually certain that the Bagley location served the Overland Stage and probably the Pony Express as well.

The data suggest that at the inception of the Pony Express, there were stations either contracted from existing owners or constructed on approximately twenty mile intervals at Rockwell's, Camp Floyd, Faust, Lookout Pass, Simpson Springs, Dugway, Fish Springs, Willow Springs and Deep Creek. Stations were added during the life of the Pony Express and Overland Stage at approximately ten mile intervals. Most stations evolved over the years. Many began as a Sibley Tent and corral and, if they survived more than a few months, were improved into a crude log structure or dugout. Those located at key intersections or reliable water survived into the twentieth century. They were more permanent structures of stone or adobe faced with wood.

Research continues on stations at Rockwell's, Faust and Burn't. Although we have considerable information as to life style and interesting events at these stations, questions remain as to their location, construction and demise.

#### NOTE

1. David Bagley, personal interviews conducted in 1991 and 1993.

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