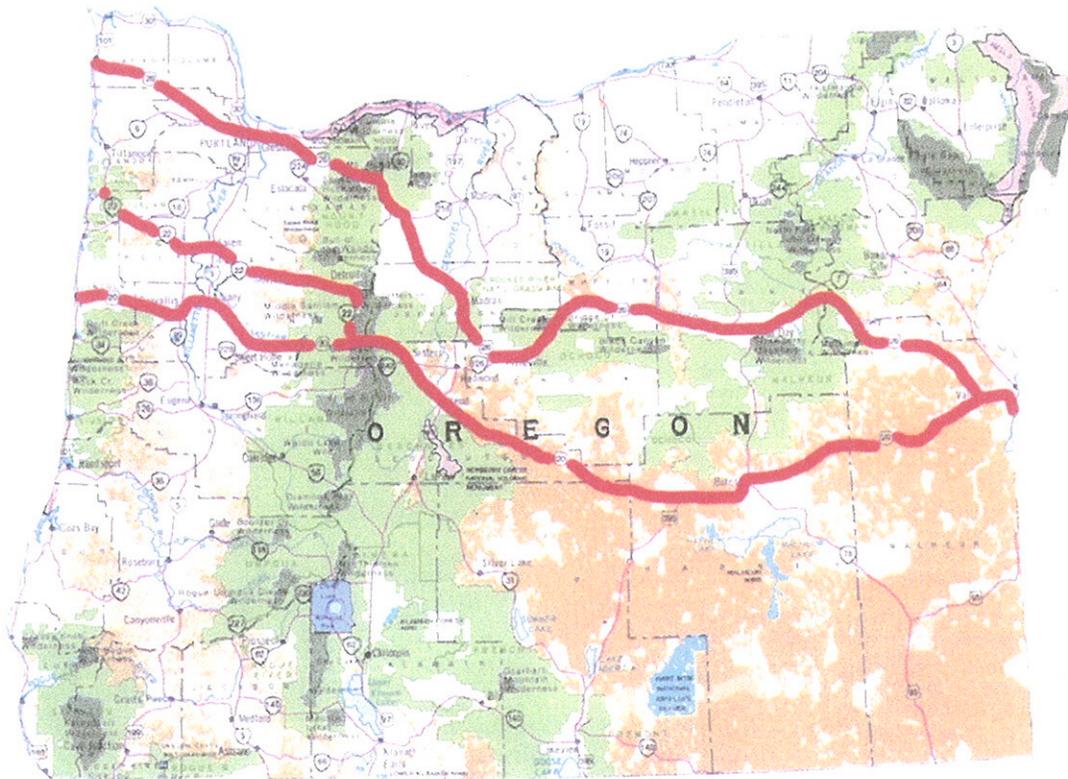


History of Mountain Roads in Northern/Central Oregon from 1848-1930

Travis Cochell
Melissa Traister
Mark Withee



Highway 20
Highway 22
Highway 26

Outline

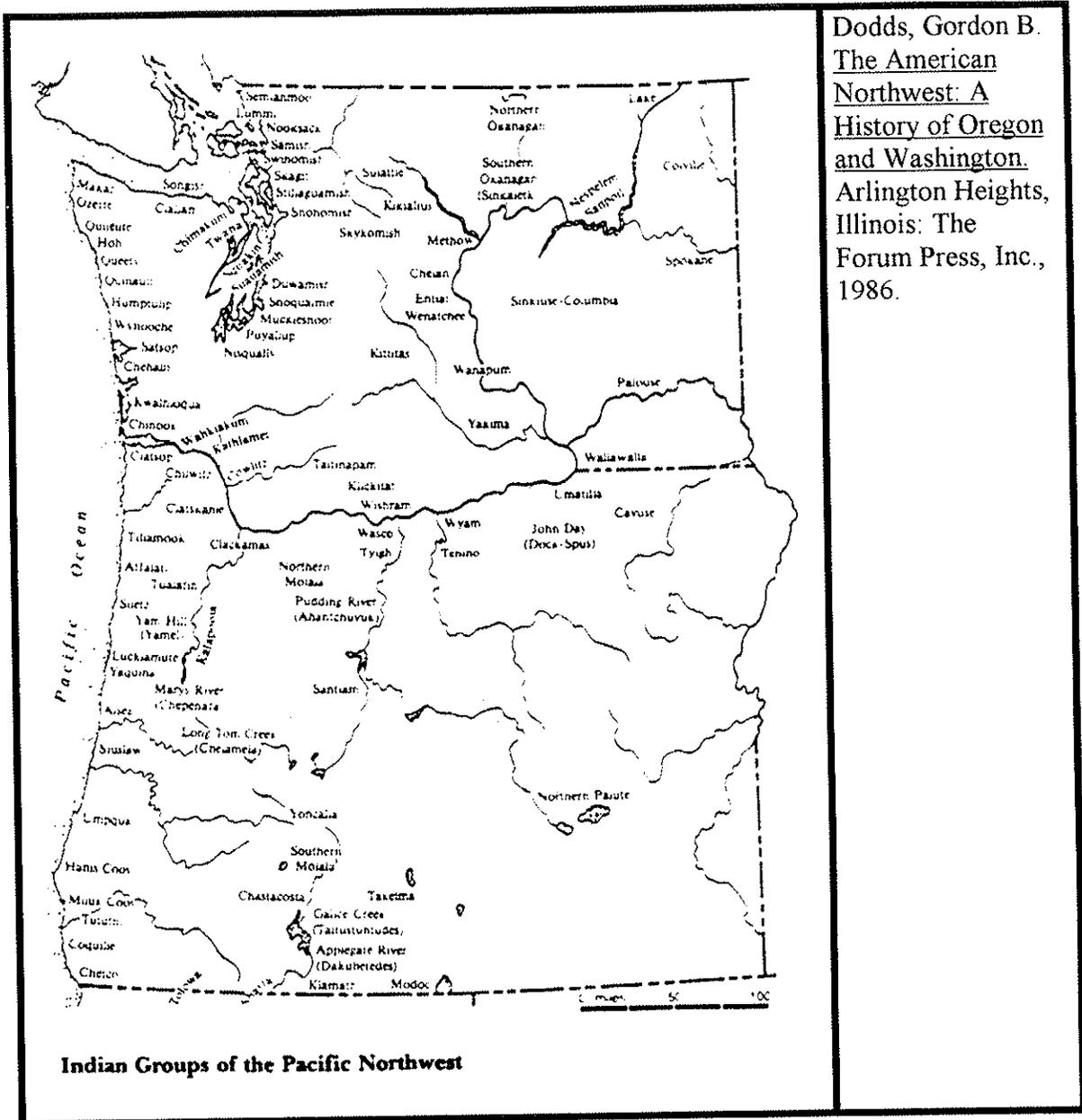
Northern/Central Oregon

1. General History
 - a. Early American Indians
 - b. Early Settlers
 - c. Initial Routes/Passes
 - d. Trade/Commerce
 - e. Why People Move Here
2. County History
 - a. Early Indians
 - b. Early Settlers
 - c. Trade/Commerce/Industry
 - d. Census/Growth
 - i. Who
 - ii. Where From
3. Roads – Chronological
 - a. Towns/Settlements
 - b. Who Built Roads and Why
 - c. Construction
 - i. Who
 - ii. Funding
 - iii. Technology
4. Graphs, Photos, and Maps

<u>Map of Indian groups of the Pacific Northwest</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Map of original districts of Oregon Territory</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Cache Creek toll station</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments of Oregon</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>Historic interest sites</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Map of Barlow Road 1845-46</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Old Barlow route</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Gate Creek Meadow</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Valley of Gate Creek</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Town of Wamic</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Laurel Hill</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Eroded wagon chute</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Rope snubbed tree</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Summit Meadows</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Summit Meadow Map</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Summit House</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>Barlow - Foster tollgate</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>Mr. Arleigh Mitchell-tollgate keeper</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Illustration of the flow of emigrants on the Oregon Trail</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>Mt. Hood Loop Highway</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>Mt. Hood Loop Highway</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>Inspiration Point – Mt. Hood Loop Highway</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Mt. Hood Loop Highway in winter</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Oiling of Mt. Hood Loop Highway</u>	<u>47</u>
<u>Modern Laurel Hill</u>	<u>48</u>
<u>The Oregon Trail 1841-1848</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>Barlow Road, 1846 first wagon road over the Cascades – 110 miles</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>Oregon land surveys for the Barlow Road</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>Pioneers on the Old Santiam Wagon Road</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>Wagon wheel grooves in solid rock</u>	<u>53</u>

General History

The first pioneers into Northern/Central Oregon were the major groups of Northwest Indians. These included Clackamas, Northern Molala, Pudding River (Ahantchuyuk), Santiam, Tualatin, Yam Hill (Yamel), Marys River (Chepenafa) and others (see map below).¹ The Indians created what they needed and shaped the face



¹ Gordon B. Dodds, The American Northwest: A History of Oregon and Washington (Arlington Heights, Illinois: The Forum Press, Inc., 1986), 8.

of the lands to meet their needs. For example, in the Willamette Valley, groups of Indians burned land to drive the game and clear spaces for their villages and routes of transportation.² Many groups worked out a system of land management that enabled them to both use and conserve natural resources. A populous group of peoples in the Pacific Northwest were the Chinook. They lived in gabled longhouses over deep pits with walls of vertical planks. Houses sometimes extended up to one hundred feet in length.³ Throughout the seasons, the Chinook traveled to The Dalles to trade with the Nez Percé Indians. They traded for dried meat, furs, hides, elk teeth, camas, bear claws, and even exchanged slaves. Slaves became the most valuable commodity to the Chinook Indians.⁴

In the late 1800s, however, the Pacific Northwest population included whites, Chinese, Hawaiians, and blacks. The white people who came to the Indian country were different in many ways from the Indian inhabitants. The important differences were in technology, economics, politics, and religion. According to historian Gordon Dodds, “the whites arrived equipped with steel tools and firearms while the Indians had for centuries relied upon stone, wood, and bone.”⁵ Even though there were differences, some similarities arose. The principle resemblance between the whites and Indians was that they shared a dependence upon nature and a curiosity about its existence.

The Chinese began to migrate to the Pacific Northwest in part because of the Kwantung Province of Southern China was in political turmoil and the possibility of obtaining gold. In 1860, a large number of Chinese panned gold around John Day along

² Dodds, 3.

³ Ibid., 10.

⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁵ Ibid., 12.

present day Highway 26. However, the Chinese found other sources of work after the mines ran out. Dodds states, "In 1871, the Chinese were introduced to the salmon canneries on the Columbia River. Here they did the dangerous work of cutting, cleaning, and packing the fish into cans."⁶ After the fishing season, the Chinese moved to Portland and began working on the building of the Oregon Central Railroad.

The first Hawaiian Islander reached the Pacific Northwest in 1788 followed by others several years later. Hawaiians worked for established fur companies including the Pacific Fur Company and the Northwest Company. Hawaiians, as canoemen, sailors, and shipbuilders, quickly adapted to the fur trade. Many whites saw the Hawaiians as a valuable supply of labor as they took the jobs that many Native Americans were not interested in performing. However, Dodds states, "The Hawaiians never developed a cultural foothold in the Northwest. This was due to their small number and they suffered racial prejudice brought by the white pioneers."⁷

The first black person known to have set foot in the Pacific Northwest was Marcus Lopus in 1788. Later, many blacks participated in a variety of roles. Racial participation was illustrated as a black by the name of Moses Harris who led a white wagon train in 1844. Despite the participation between whites and blacks, racial discrimination against the blacks in the form of slavery was present in the Northwest. The government's response was very swift as illustrated by the establishment of the Organic Law of the provisional government in 1843 prohibiting slavery.⁸

Farther south, the Indians in the middle Santiam Wilderness would disappear at times, so immigrants know there must have been trails into Eastern Oregon. Andrew

⁶ Dodds, 79.

⁷ Ibid., 81-82.

Wiley, an early immigrant, supposed that the Indians had a trail over the Cascades and desired to explore the mountains and the country to the east of them. When the first settlers arrived in the Foster Valley, it was covered with Indian dwellings built of sticks and animal hides. The Santiam Indians who lived in the dwellings were a nomadic people, although their wanderings had limits and they used many of the same camps year after year. They harvested camas and other root crops in the valley. As the weather improved, the Indians moved higher into the mountains to hunt, graze their stock, pick and dry huckleberries.⁹ Bands of the Calapooia and Santiam Indians roamed the Western Cascade foothills in their endless pursuit for food. Disease decimated the tribes, and as the number of settlers increased, the Indians' traditional sources decreased. "Potlatch muckamuck" became a familiar request of the Indians who were forced to beg for food. In 1856, the Grand Ronde Reservation was opened by the federal government in western Polk and Yamhill counties; where the Santiam and other Willamette Valley Indians were relocated.

The initial travel routes in northern and central Oregon were mainly Indian trails which were also used by the Hudson Bay Trapping Company. The northern-most route was traveled by an early pioneer in 1845 by the name of Samuel K. Barlow, who used it to blaze cut-off roads on the Oregon Trail. Barlow believed transportation was destined to be a deciding factor in the contest to see if the Oregon Country could become part of the United States.¹⁰ However, Barlow faced a challenge when he and his wagon train arrived at The Dalles while traveling along the Oregon Trail. Ivan M. Woolley, an early

⁸ Dodds, 83.

⁹ Margaret Standish Carey and Patricia Hoy Hainline, Sweet Home in the Oregon Cascades (Brownsville Oregon: Calapooia Publications, 1979), 7.

pioneer, describes his travel on the “old road” to Mt. Hood. According to Woolley, “the early emigrant wagon trains en route from the Missouri River to the Willamette Valley of Oregon, encountered a bottleneck when they reached The Dalles, which was on the south bank of the Columbia River at the eastern portal of the formidable gorge that had been cut through the Cascade Mountains by this mighty river.”¹¹

Barlow and hundreds of other immigrants from the east had arrived at the region’s greatest trading center, The Dalles. This area was used by the native population through the ages, a favored location between the lands of the downriver Indians and the tribes of the intermountain expanse.¹² These immigrants found that there was no way to pass through the gorge except by raft-like structures which floated through the rapids. However, this was a costly and dangerous method to reach the Willamette Valley. Woolley brings to our attention that, “the many rapids made this a hazardous passage and the scarcity of the craft caused long delays which were excessively costly to the hundred or more people usually stranded there.”¹³ The Barlow Road connected The Dalles to the Willamette Valley by skirting south of Mt. Hood.

County History

On July 5, 1843, the legislative committee of the Provisional Government divided the Oregon Country into four districts (see map below).¹⁴ In 1844, the districts of Oregon were changed into counties and on June 27, the limit of the counties’ northern latitude

¹⁰ Roy Meyers, Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975 (Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975), 12.

¹¹ Ivan M. Woolley, Off to Mt. Hood (Oregon Historical Society, 1959), 6.

¹² Meyers, 12.

¹³ Woolley, 6.

¹⁴ Donna M. Wojcik, U.S. Census of Clackamas County, 1860 (Oregon City, Oregon: The Mt. Hood Genealogical Forum of Clackamas County, 1974), 1.

When counties were first established in Oregon, Clackamas County was the largest. It encompassed an area of almost a quarter-million square miles.¹⁶ In 1846 when the Columbia River became the northern boundary for the Oregon Country, Clackamas County was reduced in size. Another reduction occurred in January of 1854 when the eastern line was pushed west to the summit of the Cascades to form Wasco County and again in December when Multnomah County was created. By 1860, Clackamas County was restricted to an area of 2220 square miles. The population at the time was 3471 people consisting of 1987 males and 1484 females. It was estimated that 805 children were attending school.¹⁷

Marion County:

Marion County originally was known as Champoeg County until 1849 when the name was changed to Marion County. It was comprised of all the parts of Oregon south and east of the mouth of Pudding River. The eastern boundary was the Rocky Mountains and the southern boundary was the 92nd parallel. In 1847 Linn County was created and the new boundary between the two was put on the South Santiam River and North Santiam River, thence to the Rocky Mountains.

The change of name was in honor of General Francis Marion of Revolutionary War fame. The Weems-Hory "Life of General Francis Marion" was then largely read in Oregon and other frontier settlements. The praise of Marion in this book greatly appealed to the settlers.¹⁸

¹⁶ Wojcik, 1.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1.

¹⁸ Lewis McArthur, Oregon Geographic Names Sixth Edition, (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1992), 536.

Multnomah County:

The Multnomah name is derived from the local Indian language term “E-Mult-A-No-Mah” which referred to an Indian place on the east side of Wap-Pa-Too (now Sauvie) Island at the mouth of the Willamette River.¹⁹

In 1817, according to a Nineteenth Century chronicler, an Indian by the name of Multnomah was chief of the Willamette Indians and ruler of the Confederated Tribes. The tribes included all of the tribes of the Oregon country, from Rogue River to Klamath on the south to the Colville’s and Flatheads on the north; from the Blackfeet Indians and the Shoshones and Siletz on the west.

Multnomah County was created in 1854 by an act of the territorial legislature. It was the policy of the railway officials to apply Indian names wherever possible to the stations they established.

Linn County:

On December 28, 1847 the provisional legislature created Linn County. It was named for Lewis Fields Linn, a senator for Missouri from 1833 until his death in 1843, who had promoted American settlement of Oregon.²⁰

The first settlers to Linn County had a very rough life ahead of them. There were neither roads, bridges, nor ferries, and scarcely any trails to use. Meals consisted of fish

¹⁹ U.S. Census of Multnomah County, 1870 (Portland, Oregon: Genealogical Forum of Portland Oregon Inc. 1973).

and game with boiled peas or grain if available. Mere existence depended on the incessant toil of clearing, plowing, and seeding with whatever seeds had been brought across the plains.²¹

An immigrant by the name of Milton Hale came to Linn County intending to raise fruit but when he wanted to cross the river, he found the water was too high to cross by wagon. He set about building a ferry in order to cross and decided to settle on the site. With Milton Hale's establishment of a ferry allowing immigrants to cross to the other side of the river, he helped establish the towns in Santiam country. The only ferry on the river was on Hale's land claim, so immigrants traveling south naturally headed for this spot. Milton Hale founded the city of Syracuse at the site of his claim and ferry.²²

About 1855 an enthusiastic legislature declared that the Santiam River was a public highway. It was a navigable stream and a small steamboat, with the help of ropes and teams, once ascended as far as Lebanon in Linn County.²³

Wasco County:

Wasco County was created from both the Clackamas and Champoeg counties in 1854. It was claimed that the county was the largest ever created in the U.S., encompassing some 250,000 square miles. Baker County was created out of Wasco County in 1862.

Wasco is the modern name for a tribe of Indians. The Wasco Indians were an upper Chinook tribe, formerly living on the south side of the Columbia River in the

²⁰ History of Linn County (Linn County: Pioneer Memorial Association, undated), 5.

²¹ Ibid., 5.

²² Linn County, 5.

²³ McArthur, 86.

vicinity of The Dalles. The name Wasco is derived from the word wacq-o, meaning a cup or small bowl made of horn.

The Tenino and Wasco Indians were the two main Indian groups within Wasco County, and these two tribes occupied permanent homes, mostly along the Columbia River. Because of the abundance of salmon and trout, the Tenino and Wasco Indians did not roam as much as other tribes.

In 1843, the first large wagon train crossed to plains to Oregon. More than 800 people arrived at Ft. Walla Walla. A group of seventy-one people built boats at what is now known as Wallula and descended the Columbia River. The larger part of the immigrants drove through by land and pioneered the first wagon road of the Columbia. The arrival of the pioneers marked the beginning of a period of transition in the use of Wasco County's stretch of the Columbia River.

Up to this time, commerce on the upper river had consisted largely of the exchange of goods between Euro-Americans and Indians. From the 1840s on, commerce between the Euro-Americans found an important center in The Dalles, where Indians had met and traded for years.

Almost all the emigrants of the 1840s passed through the Wasco County region. These newcomers were so eager to reach the Willamette Valley that few, if any made Central Oregon their home. To the wagon train pioneer, the Wasco county region was a desert to be crossed as quickly as possible.

When white people first settled in this region, the entire county was covered in luxurious growth of natural grasses, which suggested the possibility of stock raising to some immigrants. During the 1850s, Wasco County was one vast cattle range with only

enough land being cultivated to supply the home demands. By 1870, sheep raising had been launched on an extensive scale and The Dalles became the largest primary market for wool in the world.

The first fruit trees were planted at The Dalles in the 1850s, mostly apples, pears, cherries, and peaches.²⁴

Roads – Chronological

Highway 20

By the early 1860s many people wanted to traverse the Cascade Mountains from the Willamette Valley to Central Oregon. Settlers wanted to fatten their cattle on the mineral rich east-side grasses of Central Oregon. Merchants and freighters desired to get supplies to the newly discovered gold mines of eastern Oregon and Idaho.²⁵

The Santiam Pass had long been a place to cross the Cascades, having been used by Indians for centuries. This was a natural low point between mountain peaks. Hudson Bay Company trapping parties including Finan McDonald and Joseph Gervais crossed the Cascades from the North Santiam in August 1825. The following year, Peter Skene Ogden camped near Squaw Flat, north of Sisters, passed Black Butte, and then traveled by three lakes before setting up camp. Despite the difficulty in crossing the Cascades, negotiating six to nine feet of snow for fifty miles, Ogden noted in his journal, July 12, 1826:

“... We have now crossed the Mountains, and I have to observe that with very little labor- a fine road ... might be made.... The Company would derive any benefit from it as a communication between Fort Vancouver and the Snake country...”²⁶

²⁴ Bruce Harris, The History of Wasco County, Oregon (Unknown Publisher, 1983), 2.

²⁵ Lawrence E. Nielsen, Doug Newman, and George McCart., Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon (Bend, Oregon: Maverick Publications, 1985), 74.

²⁶ Hatton, Raymond, Oregon's Sister Country (Bend, Oregon: Maverick Publications, 1996), 81.

Hudson Bay trappers used the Santiam until 1845. Meanwhile, immigrants to Oregon continued to use the Columbia River route for passage to the Willamette Valley. A citizens group offered \$2,000 for someone to find a Cascade pass for the 1845 immigrants. As a response to the offer, there were attempts to discover routes up the South and North Santiam Rivers, but to no avail.²⁷ Other incentives for a trans-Cascade trail or road included reports of good grasslands for the grazing of livestock and the discovery of gold in Eastern Oregon.

In the fall of 1859, Andrew Wiley and a group of men set out from Sweet Home seeking gold, adventure, and a route across the Cascades. They followed an old Indian trail for six days, and then made their way through “trackless forests and lofty mountains.”²⁸ The small party forged on but realized they were lost when they came to a small prairie. This spot is now appropriately known as Lost Prairie. Wiley climbed a nearby peak to get his bearings and spotted a low pass to the east. The group followed a branch of the McKenzie River, skirted lava flows, and then discovered a small lake they named Lost Lake. The group then continued up the Cascades to what they called Large Lake, now named Big Lake. From Big Lake, the expedition traveled for nearly ten miles when at the spot of a “frowning butte” they struck Butte Lake, now called Suttle Lake. The men continued eastward into the Deschutes country before returning west via the Metolius Valley and over the Santiam Pass by Big Lake, and then home.

It was the opinion of the entire group that a good cattle trail could be opened through on, or near their route. They also felt that a wagon road could be made as well and as cheaply as either of the Mt. Hood roads. It was recommended that if anyone

²⁷ Carey and Hainline, 13.

should undertake the construction of the road, Andrew Wiley would be a good choice to lead the project.²⁹

Wiley believed that an advantage of the route was having good places to camp with plenty of grass and water at convenient distances. In addition, the Santiam route would be at least 200 miles shorter than the Barlow route around Mt. Hood in traveling to Ft. Boise. An estimate of the cost for building the wagon road from Sweet Home across the Cascades as far as Warm Springs was about \$1,125.25.³⁰

The settlers' desire for a direct route from the Willamette Valley to Eastern Oregon and a more direct road with lesser grades for the immigration that was pouring in from the east finally brought about the construction of the wagon road across the Santiam Pass.

After Andrew Wiley's discovery of a route through the mountains east of the Sweet Home Valley, he and his friends decided to prepare the trail for public use. Hoping for financial support from the public, they published a proposal in the Oregon Democrat in February of 1860. "If the people do not aid us in the work, and this make it a free road," they said, "we will go on and open it ourselves, and claim a charter and the exclusive right of the road."³¹ They received enough financial aid to start a rough narrow trail that could be used for driving livestock, but hardly for a wagon road.

It was recognized that a suitable road must be built, but it wasn't until March 10, 1864, that the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Wagon Road was incorporated by seven Linn County men. The language used in the statement of the point of beginning

²⁸ Hatton, 82.

²⁹ Hatton, 82.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Carey and Hainline, 13.

is as follows: “Commencing at a point on the East bank of the Willamette river in Linn County, opposite or near the city of Corvallis, thence the most practical route to the town of Lebanon.”³²

In May 1864, the Santiam pass across the Cascades was known as Lake Pass and was described as “the most passable pass across the Cascade Mountains.” A charter granting the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Wagon Road Company the right to charge toll was granted in 1866 by the state government. The first tollgate was built three miles east of Sweet Home on the John Gilliland place. Mr. Gilliland was gatekeeper and superintendent of the road from 1868 until 1880 when the gate was moved farther east, almost to Lower Soda.³³ The superintendent’s records from 1871 show that 3,128 head of cattle and 2,310 head of sheep were driven through the tollgate three miles east of Sweet Home.³⁴ The tollgate at the east end of the road was fifteen miles from Sisters. There was a sixteen-foot gate erected across Cache Creek, which was kept locked to ensure payment of the toll.³⁵ In 1925 Linn County bought all the rights to the original road and stopped the practice of charging for using the road.

Tolls Charged on the Santiam Wagon Road

6 horse team	\$3.50
4 horse team	3.00
2 horse team	2.00
1 horse outfit	1.00
horse and rider	.75
loose horses pre head	.20
pack horse	.20
sheep per head	.03
hogs per head	.03

³² M.J. Nye, The Santiam Pass (Sweet Home: New Era Newspaper, June 22 and August 3, 1933), 10.

³³ Carey and Hainline, 14.

³⁴ Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White. Oregon Historic Trails Report (Salem, Oregon: 1998), 235.

³⁵ Tillie Wilson and Alice Scott, That Was Yesterday (Sisters Oregon: Historical Society, 1974), 86.

Cache Creek Toll Station on the Old Santiam Wagon Road. Also known as the Santiam Toll House. Photo taken in 1948. Don Ellis Collection. Photo No. 1213. Deschutes County Historical Society.



Nielson, Lawrence E., Doug Newman and George McCant. Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon. Bend, Oregon: Maverick Publications, 1985.

In 1871, the road company was given a land grant totaling 861,512 acres to help pay for building of the road.³⁶ This land included every odd section along the right-of-way from Albany to Ontario in far eastern Oregon. The grant allowed the road company to charge toll for the use of the road.

³⁶ Bassett, 235.

The first real work of construction began in 1861. The workers started eastward of Albany and up the South Santiam River by way of Lebanon. In 1865 they were to Deer Creek; by 1867 Fish Creek; and by 1868 across the mountain to Ontario on the Snake River. On the east side there was little work to be done aside from cutting out sagebrush so that the wagons could be driven east of the Cascades.³⁷

In 1865, Captain Charles LaFollette had been ordered to establish a military post in Central Oregon. He and his men caught up with the road construction crew and helped build the road to a location not far from the summit. LaFollette then continued east and established Camp Polk near the present-day town of Sisters.³⁸ The route's name became the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Military Road, which is the name found on the GLO survey maps, but later the road became known as the Old Santiam Wagon Road as far east as Sisters.

With the opening of the wagon road between the Willamette Valley and Central Oregon, Willamette Valley residents began settling in parts of Central Oregon in the 1870s and 1880s, including the Sisters area. In 1945, the *Oregon Journal* gave a historic account of the wagon road:

...By 1890 the traffic of the road had grown to such proportions that it was no uncommon thing to see wagon trains half a mile long sweating their way up the steep grades with Willamette Valley produce for Eastern Oregon, bringing on their return raw wool for Willamette woolen mills. Or to see herds of cattle and horses driven through Santiam Pass, thousands of them during a season, horses going west and cattle going east...³⁹

By the 1890s, freighters carrying wool from Central Oregon to the Willamette Valley constituted a fairly large portion of the road's travelers, which meant business

³⁷ Nye, 10.

³⁸ Nielson, 74.

both for the toll collector and the roadhouse. Many settlers from east of the Cascades also made a yearly trip to the valley to visit relatives, can fruit, and make purchases.

It is estimated that between 1865 and 1881, about 5,000 wagons used the wagon road.⁴⁰ To accommodate the travelers, there were roadhouses and campgrounds all along the route of the Santiam Wagon Road, where men and animals could find food and shelter. The first stopping place traveling east was operated by Charles Mealey who had moved to the area in 1874. Six miles farther along the road at Lower Soda was a roadhouse operated by a man by the name of Finley. Charles Foster ran the next place ,which in addition to accommodations for the weary traveler, had a post office by the name of Garrison Post Office. Four miles farther down the road was a roadhouse owned by the road company and operated by Andrew Wiley. Sixteen miles on east was the company's roadhouse at Fish Lake, which was operated by Henry Burmister and Joe Claypoole. Fish Lake was a favorite stopping place for early travelers on the Old Santiam Wagon Road. Burmister, who offered meals, beds and hay at a price of 25 cents each, operated a roadhouse there for many years. The operators of the stopping places repeatedly treated the people very well and looked to every detail in order to make the stay as comfortable as possible.⁴¹

In 1870, the settlers in Ochoco Valley wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Interior that complained that the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Wagon Road Company was supposed to have finished building the road from Albany to the eastern

³⁹ Nielson, 83.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Carey, 18.

boundary of the state within five years of 1866.⁴² They stated that the company has not built or constructed any road as the law required. The only work that had been done was the building of a road from the Sweethome Valley to a point called Smith's Rock, on the Lower Soda River. It was constructed in such a manner that it was barely possible for lightly loaded wagons. No bridges or ferries were available for crossing several streams. In response to the repeated letters to the government, in 1880 an examination of the road was completed. A report was made in February 1888 that stated:

The work consisted in grading a track sufficiently wide for a single wagon to pass with occasional turnouts where ground was favorable. Where it passed through timber the trees were cut out usually with only sufficient width for a single wagon track. The road occasionally crosses soft places, which were corduroyed, and small bridges of pine poles covered with dirt were made over small, nameless streams. Grades were made where ever necessary in making the ascent by cutting into the hillside, throwing the dirt onto the lower side and binding it with logs laid along. The solid roadbed in many cases was not more than three or four feet wide, and the wheels of heavily-loaded wagons would frequently crash through the loose dirt, leaving nothing but the logs on the side to hold the wagon from rolling down the mountain. Up the road at the head of the Santiam River, there were perhaps fifty trees of good size cut out per mile.

The evident intent of the builders was to make the roadway of just sufficient width to admit the passage of a wagon. The roadway for the whole distance from Wiley Creek to Cache Creek, about seventy miles, was cut about six or seven feet wide. In heavy timber the hubs of passing wagons would rub on the huge trees standing on each side of the road. Coming down Seven Mile Hill travelers were obliged by the narrowness of the road to lift their wagon off the road in order to allow another wagon to pass. They had great difficulty in passing other travelers when they would meet. Trees in the roadbeds were not cut even with the ground but left standing, sometimes a foot high, so

⁴² Cleon L. Clark, History of the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Wagon Road (Bend: Deschutes County Historical Society, 1987), 60.

that the axles of a wagon would just escape them. Where roots projected⁶ across the road, notches were cut in them for the wheels to pass through. In heavy timber the road was a narrow, tortuous track, making it necessary to wind among the big trees trying to avoid them. Where a heavy tree was encountered the road turned to the side of it if possible. Turnouts were very rare, and definitely not enough to accommodate travel.⁴³

The land grants of the Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Military Road were purchased by the Oregon and Western Colonization Company in 1908. The road itself was sold to Linn County in 1925. Present day US 20, which crosses Santiam Pass north of the old Santiam Wagon Road, was completed in 1939. Substantial portions of the old wagon road had been abandoned even before the building of the new highway.

A good place to start comparing the two routes is at the Fernview campground near the hamlet of Upper Soda on US 20 east of Sweet Home. The old route is well above the Santiam River at the southern edge of US Forest Service campground. Continuing east, the old road is still in use since power lines follow it for several miles to House Rock Campground. The south section of the loop trail at House Rock Campground is the pioneer road, which follows a natural bend above the Santiam River. The road crosses to the north side of the river just below the mouth of Squaw Creek and starts up the notorious Seven Mile Hill. Much of the road along Seven Mile Grade is undisturbed and ruts of several feet deep are common. Remnants of several decaying bridges with immense stringers cross gullies and small streams. Some of the old mileposts are still standing and pieces of long-abandoned telephone lines can still be found.⁴⁴

⁴³ Clark, 76.

⁴⁴ Nielson, 75.

Near Snow Creek, two white directional signs read: “Pump chance No 5” and “Pump chance No 8.” These posts date back sixty-five years and denote where water can usually be found for fire-fighting, unless the water source has gone dry. Beyond Snow Creek, logging has made it difficult to follow the old route.⁴⁵

The Santiam road can be seen on both sides of Forest Service road #15 about 200 yards below US 20 just west of Tombstone Summit. The old road goes south of US 20 at Tombstone Summit and drops down to Tombstone Prairie. For most of the next three miles to Lost Prairie Campground the pioneer road is only 100 yards south of US 20. The road is easily followed as a corridor through the trees. Several small streams were spanned by wooden bridges and remnants of two such bridges, and their abutments can still be seen.

The wagon road crosses to the north side of US 20, just below Lost Prairie Campground and then crosses back to the south side about half-mile west of Toad Creek near Forest Service Road No. 2065. Continuing east, the road crosses Forest Service Road No. 2672 and follows a more recent road, which goes to Fish Lake Guard Station. The old road is still visible as a defile through the forest.⁴⁶

At Fish Lake, the Santiam Wagon Road jogged south past the present-day Fish Lake Campground and continued just west of Oregon 126 for a half-mile before crossing the highway to go southeast through a lava flow. The route is still used as a jeep road for about four miles in a northeast and then an easterly direction toward Sand Mountain.

Pieces of the original road show up as deep ruts going as straight as possible, while the jeep road has more turns. Several mileposts can still be seen.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 76.

In several places, especially west of Sand Mountain, the soft sandy, pumice soil makes it difficult to travel. In such places, the road was planked by nailing boards to cross pieces. Rotting remnants of these planked sections still remain.

In T135, R7E, Sec 36, about a mile northeast of Sand Mountain, the old road joins the Sand Mountain Road (Forest Service Road No. 810) and follows it east across the divide known as the Santiam Pass in the years prior to the construction of the present day US 20, to the north.

Near Big Lake, the Old Santiam Wagon Road intersects Forest Service Road No. 2690, a north-south access road between US 20 and Big Lake. From the junction at Big Lake, the old road continues east on Willamette National Forest land as Forest Service Road No. 811 for a mile, at which point it enters Deschutes National Forest and become Road No. 500.

At the Cache Mountain turn off on Road No. 500, the Santiam Wagon Road turns in a more southerly direction to follow the north side of Cache Creek. Cache Creek Toll Station was a popular camping spot for travelers crossing the Cascades. It was the last place to rest the livestock prior to the long, steep climb to Santiam Pass.

From the toll station, the old road continues in a general east-northeast direction for about four miles, at which point the Willamette Valley Cascade Mountain Military Road splits off from the Old Santiam Wagon Road, which continues southeast past Black Butte Ranch, Graham Corral and on to Sisters. Much of the route to Sisters is still a Forest Service road, but sections of the historic route have been lost due to logging and housing developments at Black Butte Ranch and Sisters.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Nielson, 78.

The WVCMM Road continues northeast and crosses US 20 in T14S, R9E, Sec 4, about a mile northwest of the Black Butte Ranch entrance. The old road followed US 20 for about 1.5 miles, and then continued east. Pieces of the old road can still be seen along Forest Service Road No. 1105 at the base of Black Butte.

In 1983, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office determined that the Santiam Wagon Road retained enough historic integrity to warrant eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.⁴⁸ Today the Santiam Wagon Road provides the longest stretches of excellent integrity of historic wagon road in western Oregon. The Santiam Wagon Road Special Interest Area is approximately 24-miles-long, beginning in the Sweet Home Ranger District and ending on the McKenzie Ranger District boundary of the Deschutes National Forest.

Highway 22

The Minto Pass route, which is now approximately followed by modern Highway 22, began with the rumor of a traditional Indian pass to eastern Oregon. Hunters in the region sought a route by which they could travel across the Cascades in order to hunt and trap for the Hudson's Bay Company. Later on, John Minto brought the matter of immigrants before the Marion County Commissioners, as it became a matter of increased public interest. In October 1873, County Judge C.N. Terry and the county commissioners dispatched John Minto, along with Frank Cooper and Henry States, to view the route.⁴⁹

The route simply followed the course of the North Santiam River through seventeen miles of the river's gorge. The first stop for the expedition at the

⁴⁸ Bassett, 240.

Breighthenbush River, which the group members named after John Breighthenbush, a one armed hunter who inhabited the area.⁵⁰ From there they continued to the future site of the city of Detroit and then past the area that became the city of Idanha. They then traveled five miles in the direction of Mount Jefferson and made camp, which was the end of the expedition.

The following spring a petition was made for a road view expedition and a new party was sent out to survey a wagon road up the North Santiam to the Cascades. T.W. Davenport was the surveyor and John Minto, George Downing and Porter Jack were appointed to view. The survey from the courthouse in Salem to Minto Pass, which was discovered by accident, covered eighty-seven and one half miles.⁵¹ Waldo Pass, eight miles north of Minto Pass, was discovered in 1880 by Salem jurist and naturalist John Waldo. The pass was later renamed Hogg Pass, after a Colonel Hogg who worked on developing a railroad through the area. In 1875 a group of men made a trip over the Minto Pass route which was chronicled in the *Oregonian* and further suggested the potential benefits of a wagon road.⁵² This expedition also noted the difficult terrain, which made any trail exceedingly difficult to follow.

In 1878 a cooperative effort was made by the residents of east Marion County to begin the construction of a road across the Cascades on the Minto Pass route. Shares were sold at \$10 and labor, credited at \$1.25 a day, managed to raise a total of \$2800 and after considerable effort was expended a horse trail was established.⁵³ This trail neatly

⁴⁹ John Minto, "Minto Pass: It's History, and an Indian Tradition." Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society vol. 4 (1903) 241-249.

⁵⁰ Lowe, 78.

⁵¹ Minto, 244.

⁵² "Trip Over Minto Pass Route," The Oregonian, 3 & 10 August 1875, p. 1

⁵³ Lowe, 78.

followed along the north bank of the North Santiam River though due to roughness of terrain maps do not always show a continuous trail. General Land Office maps from the 1890s show that the Minto trail was not one of the larger routes. There were many roads and trails between various points in the region but the road to Quartzville was one of the major arteries of that period.

It is not known with a certainty when gold was first discovered on the Santiam River. In 1857 reports were made of the working of claims where a limited amount of work produced from four to six dollars per day. Around 1860 silver was also found on the Santiam and the Molalla Rivers. It was not until the early 60s that the quartz lodes were found on the Santiam. In the Santiam region, “in valley, creeks, gulleys, and crevices” miners went with shovel and pan and obtained colors, or minerals, which wouldn’t pay more than two dollars per day. By the year 1864 several companies were in the Santiam gold fields. Announcement of the discovery of silver-bearing ore on the south fork of the Santiam River was made in 1861, and a Mr. Driggs of Linn County opened up a trail to the new field. Ore was sent to California to be assayed and was found to contain quantities of the metal.⁵⁴

The Minto trail at that time was not built to the standards of a wagon trail and the route was used only on a limited basis for horse traffic. In the spring of 1881 Marion County gave \$200 to John Minto for the purpose of clearing obstacles accumulated since construction of the route four years previous.⁵⁵ Since only \$89 was used in clearing the route, the remainder was used for further surveys of the Upper North Santiam River. Marion County was not interested in the task of constructing a wagon route through the

⁵⁴ McArthur, 85.

⁵⁵ Minto, 246.

rugged terrain, there was demand from the people. In 1913 Country Surveyor Hedda Swart, with five others, formed a survey party that traveled from Niagara to Detroit and a six-foot wide trail was completed.⁵⁶

The route between Niagara and Detroit was again surveyed in 1921 for a road forty feet in width.⁵⁷ In 1925 a narrow one-lane road was constructed between these communities. Three years after the construction of this road the route founded by John Minto, who died in 1915, was officially "discovered" and a preliminary investigation was made. The route was quickly added to the state system and construction on what would ultimately become Highway 22 began in 1931.⁵⁸

Highway 26

At present, Highway 26 stretches from the Oregon Coast to Eastern Oregon. Highway 26 heads toward Mount Hood through Sandy, eventually reaching Madras, where it crosses Highway 97. It also makes a junction with Highway 126 in Prineville. The section of road from Portland through the Cascade Mountains is the area of focus. This section is known primarily as The Barlow Road.

After some time, Barlow heard about two Indian trails that crossed the foothills of the Cascade Range, one north of Mount Hood (Lolo Pass) and one south. Rev. Alvin Waller, in charge of the Wascopam Mission, suggested that it was possible to go into the Willamette Valley with wagons by going south of Mount Hood. He highly recommended that this might be the best move for them as other travelers had departed a few days

⁵⁶ Lowe, 79.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Lawrence Barber, "Crossing the Cascades Via the Santiam." The Sunday Oregonian, 3 July 1938.

earlier on this route.⁵⁹ William Henry Rector, another prominent leader in the Barlow project offered an opinion. It was, “practicable to go with wagons to the Willamette Valley by going south of Mount Hood and earnestly recommended it as the best thing we could do as it would be impossible to stay long at that place on account of supplies and it be long before we could all get down the river.”⁶⁰ Barlow made a statement to his company of immigrants, “God never made a mountain without making a way for a man to go over, if man exercised a proper amount of energy and perseverance.”⁶¹ Barlow, being impatient of a delay which meant unexpected consumption of supplies while waiting for the boat passage, determined to travel along one of these Indian trails.⁶² Barlow received much disapproval from his wagon team and many thought it was a deadly decision because of the danger involved with snow. Instead, many of the immigrants offered guidance on taking the rafts along the rough Columbia River. However, “against all advice from his wagon team, he (Barlow) determined to attempt the south Indian trail.”⁶³

Shortly after Barlow’s decision to head on the south Indian trail, William H. Rector and Joel Palmer arrived at The Dalles and decided to join him. Rector and his party joined the Barlow-Palmer group about three days later where they were camped, awaiting the return of a scouting party that had gone ahead. That same evening, two of the scouts returned and reported they found a meadow that could be reached by wagons after several days of clearing.⁶⁴ Palmer decided to look further and returned at midnight

⁵⁹ Meyers, 8.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 17.

⁶¹ Adelina Patti, “Oregon’s Historic Road,” The Oregon Sunday Journal 17, (1919): 8.

⁶² Patti, 8.

⁶³ Woolley, 6.

⁶⁴ Meyers, 8.

after a walk of more than fifty miles that day.⁶⁵ After scouting, Palmer doubted that wagon trains could survive the treacherous journey over the mountain passes.⁶⁶ Rector learned from Palmer that there was a cattle trail being successfully used, which could be reached without trouble. Rector states, “I advised that we go as far as we could with the wagons and pack through on the cattle trail and that two men should go on foot to the settlements and get fresh horses and assistance.”⁶⁷

Barlow, Rector, and Palmer jointly adopted measures for the prosecution of the work before them. However, there were hardships. Progress was slow at first because of the season growing late and they were encountering snow. They also came across a large amount of timber that had to be cleared. According to Woolley, “much of the clearing of brush and trees was accomplished by burning.”⁶⁸ Despite the difficulties clearing trails, navigating hills with boulders, surviving the cold with precious little food, and with a touch of ingenuity, crossing a river by pole-vaulting over it, the party reached their journey’s end.⁶⁹

After Barlow arrived at his destination, he obtained from the territorial legislature a charter to open a road across the mountains from “the dalls Mission to valley of clackamus.”⁷⁰ The name of the road as granted at the time was Mount Hood Road, but it was called then, and still is, The Barlow Road (his letter to the Legislator of Oregon is shown below).⁷¹ He set out to improve the barely passable Mt. Hood trail into a road

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Robert Ormond Case, “The Empire Builders: The Barlow Trail,” The Sunday Oregonian 22 June 1947: 21.

⁶⁷ Meyers, 8.

⁶⁸ Woolley, 6.

⁶⁹ Clackamas County Planning and Economic Development Division, Maps of the Barlow Road: Mt. Hood to Oregon City (Oregon City, Oregon, 1998), 1-2.

⁷⁰ Meyers, 1.

⁷¹ Meyers, 4.

over which immigrants could take their wagons. As soon as the weather permitted in the spring of 1846, men and oxen started to build the road, continuing on from near Philip Foster's place, up to where they had left the wagons and their goods the previous fall.⁷² This road was ninety miles in length, beginning near Wapinitia on the east slopes of the Cascades, and ending a few miles south of the present town of Sandy, where it joined old Foster Road. Because of this great length, Barlow kept the road improvements to a minimum, "without adherence to standards of comfort or safety."⁷³

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Clackamas County, 1-2.

December 9th 1845

To The Honorable Legislator of Oregon

I herby report that I have viewed and marked by blasing and cutting away bushes and logs a rout or line for a road begining at the dalls Mission thence South about 35 miles to branch of Shutes river thence west 12 miles to foot of Mountains all prarie thence west to large branch of Shutes river 15 miles thence up Shuts branch north 7 miles timber and sand beach, the rout to this point wagons have pased in Safty thence northwest 10 miles to branch of Clackamus (as believed) thence west by north 3 miles to high prarie. thence north west 13 miles beaver prarie, thence west 4 miles to laurel hill, up to this point^{from Shuts} the rout is tolarably level and mostly heavy timbered Thence down laurel hill to falls creek 2 miles thence down said creek 3 miles to zigzag^{creek} very heavy timber thence down zigzag creek 5 miles to Sandy creek part Sand beach and part heavy timber course west by north to north west, then down Sand creek Six miles mostly sand beach, thence down Sandy north east, east, north east, north west, west by South to crossing of Sandy 14 miles mostly timber some heavy Thence west bearing South to valey of Clackamus 10 miles mostly timber and hilly - from this point to this place no remarkes are nessessary as there is a wagon road opened the cost of Making the road is estimated at four thousand dollars in cash (by me alone) all other persons that^{have} Seen the rout make larger estimates than that shown; all of which is respected Submitted

As: Samuel K. Barlow

Typed copy from microfilm at Oregon Historical Society. Document 1416, from Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments of Oregon (typed as written).

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J. Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

Barlow acquired a partner in Philip Foster of Eagle Creek, and they both signed an agreement to share and share alike in the expenses and the profits.⁷⁴ It has been stated, "Barlow would provide emigrants, at a toll of five dollars per wagon, an overland alternative to the unreliable, hazardous, and expensive boat passage down the Columbia River."⁷⁵ Toll costs were collected for livestock as well. For each head of horses, mules or asses, whether loose, geared, or saddled, the charge was ten cents. The charge was the

⁷⁴ Meyers, 4.

⁷⁵ Clackamas County, 1-2.

same for each head of horned cattle, whether geared or loose.⁷⁶ Most livestock went overland by trail. Earle K. Stewart writes in the *Quarterly* of Oregon Historical Society that he found no evidence of livestock shipment by water even at the time of the first steamboat of the middle river went into service in 1851 between The Dalles and the Cascades.⁷⁷ Because cattle were important to The Dalles mission station, Daniel Lee brought a herd from the Willamette mission, near present-day Salem. This route became known as the Lee Cattle Trail. It went up Hood River Valley, crossed through the Lost and Bull Run lakes area (Lolo Pass), reached the Sandy River near the present site of Zigzag, then headed west to the Willamette Valley.⁷⁸ Large numbers of cattle traveled along the Barlow Road once it was established. However, like the Lee Cattle Trail, the Barlow Road was occasionally blocked by snow.⁷⁹

From 1846 to 1915, the Barlow Road was leased by Barlow to various operators who collected toll. During this time period, the Barlow Road was a one-way road with all immigrant travel heading west through a total of five tollgates. The Strickland Place on Gate Creek (1846-52), Francis Revenue Place (1853-65), Summit House (1866-70), Two-Mile Camp – three miles east of Rhododendron (1871-78), and Toll Gate – one mile east of Rhododendron (1879-1915) (see map below).⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Meyers, 4.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

Historic Interest Sites

MAP
NO.

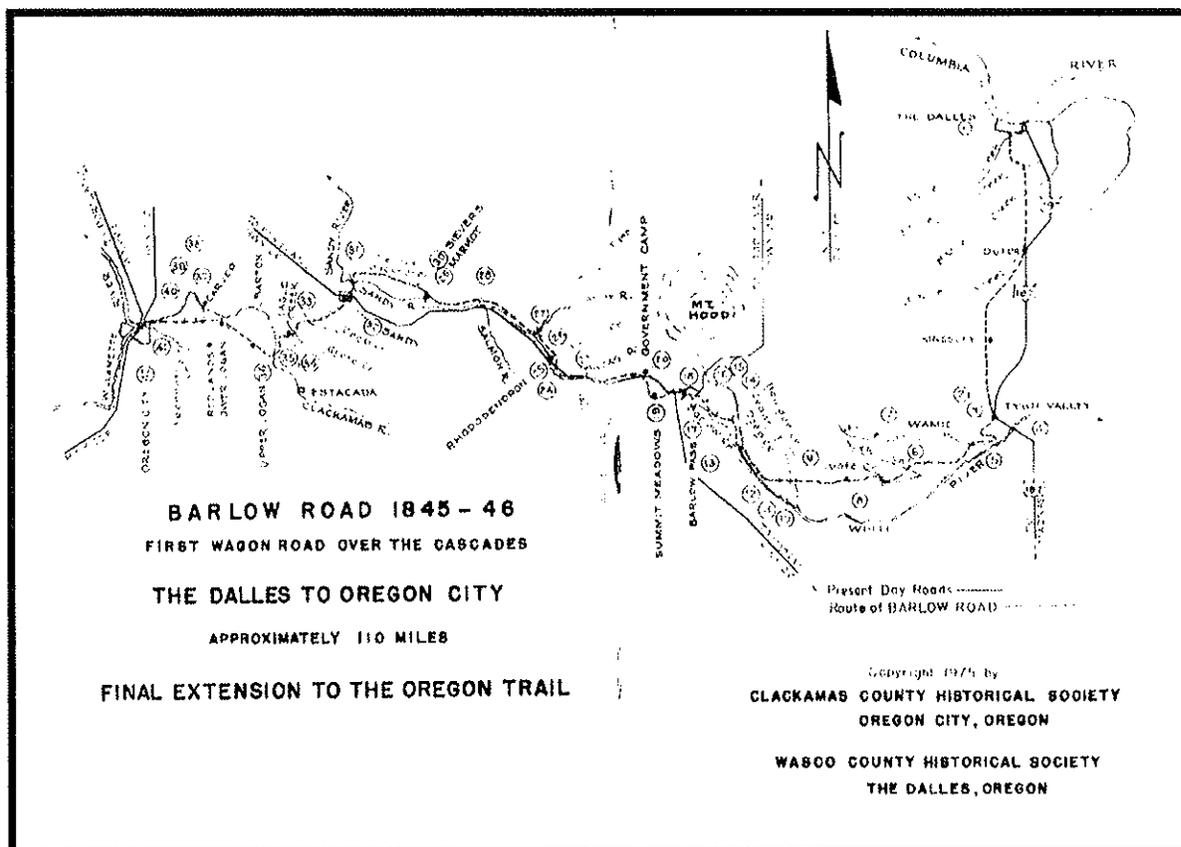
Wasco and Hood River Counties (approximately 58 miles)

- 1 The Dalles
- 2 Tygh Ridge route into Tygh Valley
- 3 Tygh Valley Camp
- 4 Up steep hill to Wamic Plateau
- 5 Three Mile Creek Crossing (Marker in Wamic)
- 6 Rock Creek Crossing
- 7 Gate Creek Crossing/ No. 1 Toll Gate area
- 8 Immigrant Springs (sign)
- 9 Boulder Creek Crossing (recently changed back from name of Crane Creek)
- 10 Cedar Creek Crossing (as above from Forest Creek)
- 11 Deep Creek Crossing (as above from Klip Creek) (marker)
- 12 White River (Little Laurel) Hill
- 13 Old White River Station (marker)
- 14 Klinger's Camp (marker)
- 15 Grindstone Camp (sign)
- 16 Devil's Half Acre (believed to be site of Fort Deposit) (marker)
- 17 Barlow Pass (marker)

Clackamas County (approximately 52 miles)

- 17 Barlow Pass Summit (marker)
- 18 Unknown Pioneer Woman's Grave (marker)
- 19 Summit Meadows, No. 3 Toll Gate
- 20 Government Camp (marker)
- 21 Laurel Hill (marker)
- 22 Meeting Rock (recently demolished)
- 23 Brow Log (only crossing Zigzag River)
- 24 No. 5 Toll Gate (markers)
- 25 Rhododendron (marker), Henry Creek Crossing
- 26 Site Hudson's Bay Trading Post
- 27 Sandy River (first crossing)
- 28 Rock Corral Camp Site
- 29 Marmot-Over Devil's Backbone 7 miles
- 30 Siever's Place
- 31 Francis Revenue's Place, No. 2 Toll Gate, Sandy River (second crossing)
- 32 Sandy (marker)
- 33 Ruts down hill into Foster's Place
- 34 Philip Foster's Place, Eagle Creek (marker)
- 35 Feldenheimer's Ford, Clackamas River crossing
- 36 Upper Logan
- 37 Baker Cabin (marker)-Indian Rock
- 38 Deep ruts headed west
- 39 Holcomb School-ruts south side yard
- 40 Holcomb Hill
- 41 Abernethy Creek (marker)
- 42 Oregon City - End of Oregon Trail, 1845 (approximately 2200 miles) (marker)

Meyers, Roy. Barlow
Road: Bicentennial
Edition 1974-1975.
Portland, Oregon: J.Y.
Hollingsworth Co.,
1975.



The wagons first traveled westward along a grassy ridge, keeping north of a deep canyon (White River). They crossed Rock Creek ten miles southwest of Tyge Valley, one of the White River tributaries where a small but rocky canyon was said to have been named by Palmer.⁸¹ The wagons would then travel west about five miles through open pine timber and Oregon white oak (see photo below). A small canyon was encountered at the east end of a half-mile-long meadow, fording a creek there (see photo below). This place, where the party must have camped because of its grass and water, was to become Gate Creek, location of Barlow's first tollgate (see photo below).⁸² This gate was located near the town of Wamic (see photo below). This tollgate was in operation at the Strickland Place from 1848 to 1852. Evidences remain at that point of the road grade,

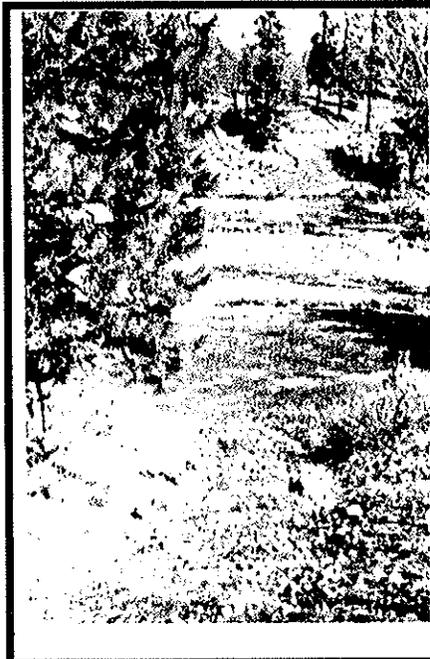
⁸¹ Meyers, 25.

⁸² Ibid.



Barlow route leaves the open country at this point, a half-mile southwest of the first tollgate, enters mixed oak and pine timber and begins its climb into the mountains. Present traveled road enters at the left after range fence cattle guard crossing.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.



Gentle, rutted slope looking down toward Gate Creek meadow is the one apparently used by the Barlow train as an exit from this area. Barlow's tollgate is believed to have been located at the foot of this hill. Large barn and farmhouse located here were destroyed by fire in the 1930s. Last usable road across valley floor was a lane beyond the fenceposts visible near the right edge of picture. This road entered via grade on opposite, north hillside.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.



For to the east, down this meadow, the 1845 wagon train entered the little valley of Gate Creek, so named because this was the site of the first Barlow Road tollgate on the eastern side of the mountains. The wagons came from the north, entering through the left tree line, then forded the little creek and proceeded to a point near that chosen by the photographer when this picture was taken. The last road to be laid out across Gate Creek crossed at a point this side of the trees in the foreground.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.



This is how the town of Wamic and its main street appeared in the early days. Picture from old tintype, believed to have been the first photograph taken at this point, probably dates back to the 1860s. Large house in right foreground was home of first settler family, the Jason Cushion Duncan Pratts. During this period, Barlow Road travelers crossed Threemile Creek here. Picture was taken looking south.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

a building foundation, cellar and gatepost.⁸³ Barlow stated this position made the pioneers pay early before they saw what a terrible road it really was.⁸⁴ As indicated by one emigrant, “steep, slippery and muddy paths strewn with boulders were navigable

⁸³ Aubrey L. Haines, Historic Sites Along the Oregon Trail (Oregon Historical Society, 1987).

⁸⁴ Suzanne Ashmun, “Pioneers Descending Laurel Hill Had Little Time For Sightseeing,” Gresham, Oregon Outlook 29 March 1976.

enough for Sam Barlow to call it a road, though many of his customers thought otherwise.”⁸⁵ Another traveler stated, “Worse part of the path, cut out by fire, axe and saw, was Laurel Hill.”⁸⁶ The hill had a sixty per cent grade (the “meeting rock” was recently eliminated to make way for a parking area, a fact bemoaned by Barlow Road historians) which the pioneers lowered their wagons down the steep chute for a drop of some three hundred feet (see photos below). Years of use wore the chute down to seven



“The west end of Laurel Hill down which the early emigrant Barlow party had to let their prairie schooner wagons down by rawhide ropes in 1848.”

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.



Top of eroded wagon chute flanked by several very aged rope-burned stumps.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

⁸⁵ Clackamas County, 1-2.

⁸⁶ Ashmun.

feet deep. Rope snubs and tree drags were used to control the descent of wagons and oxen (see photo below). Some emigrants took their wagons apart and slid them down the steepest slopes. The technique of driving down in a zigzag path included dragging a ten-inch diameter tree with the branches pointed forward to increase friction. Suzanne Ashmun, a reporter for the Gresham Oregon Outlook, states, "it must have been a breathtaking experience to watch a wagon gone wild when a rope broke. The grooves worn from ropes on the tree remained as long as the tree stood."⁸⁷ Despite the money obtained from toll costs during the first two years of the first tollgate, Barlow and Foster terminated their partnership on November 29, 1848. It had not been a profitable venture, but it was a very large step forward in the development of the Oregon Country.⁸⁸



Almost gone-but not forgotten. One of the last remaining rope-snubbed trees. Nothing has ever been done to preserve either the chute or historic trees.

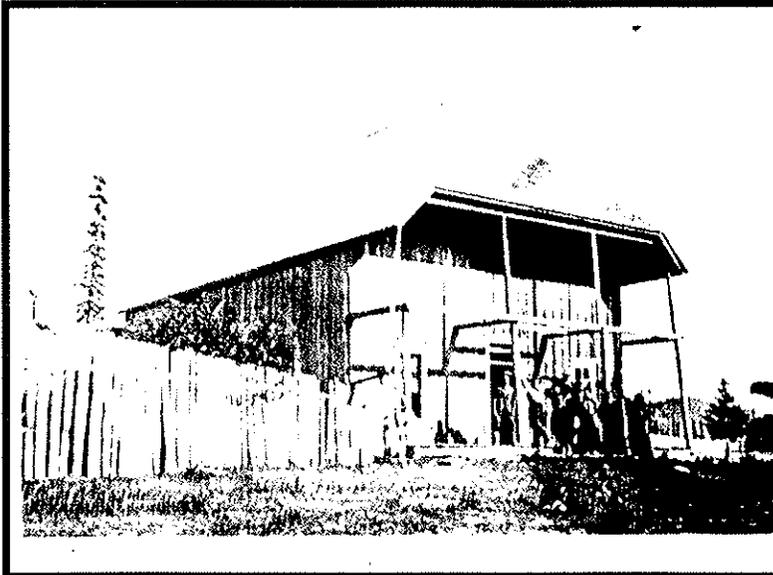
Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

Not much is know about the second and fourth toll gates other than the years of operation. The Francis Revenue Place operated from 1853 to 1865 whereas the Two-Mile Camp operated from 1871 to 1878.

The third tollgate was located at Vicker's "Summit House" one mile south of Government Camp. This is the site of the Barlow Road tollgate during the years 1866-

⁸⁷ Ashmun.

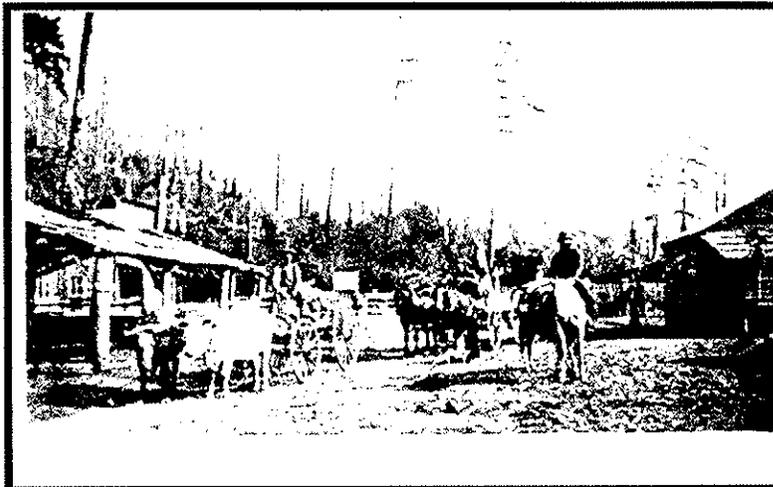
⁸⁸ Meyers, 4.



Summit House

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

The fifth gate called Toll Gate was located one half mile east of Rhododendron, Oregon. This was the most recent of the five tollgates used on the Barlow Road – it operated from 1879 to 1915 (see photo below).



Barlow-Foster Toll Gate – Rhododendron, 1885. Ernest Sievers with ox team. Sam and Sarah Bacon and Adam Kotyman with horse team. Shepherd on horse.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

This site is significant to the period when freighters hauled livestock to the Willamette Valley from Eastern Oregon.⁹⁰ In the fall there were many sheep driven through from the summer range in Eastern Oregon and the Cascades to Troutdale, which was a livestock market headquarters. Toll costs were three cents per sheep, goat or hog. According to Arleigh Mitchell, who was keeper of the tollgate from 1905 to 1908, a

counter would count the sheep (see photo below).⁹¹ People would normally pay but the Barlow Road was never a moneymaker because of the amount of upkeep.⁹²



Mr. Arleigh Mitchell, Toll Gate Keeper, Rhododendron 1905-8. ("Arlie", now 88 years young, may be the last living Toll Gate Keeper.) In background may be seen the two original maple trees planted by Daniel Parker, Toll Gate Keeper.

Meyers, Roy. Barlow Road: Bicentennial Edition 1974-1975. Portland, Oregon: J.Y. Hollingsworth Co., 1975.

Palmer, a vital force in the path finding expedition around Mt. Hood, became involved later-somewhat ironically-in a project developed to compete with the Barlow Road. He was associated with the Columbia River Road Company in 1862 and 1863. They planned to open a trail for pack trains and cattle through the south side of the Columbia Gorge. Its purpose was to provide a shorter, all-season route for travel to the gold fields lying to the east. The project failed because it did not provide a suitable wagon route.⁹³

Despite the efforts in raising money through toll costs, the Barlow Road became almost impassable until 1868, when the road experienced increased use and was improved through minor construction projects; its alignment was eventually adjusted to

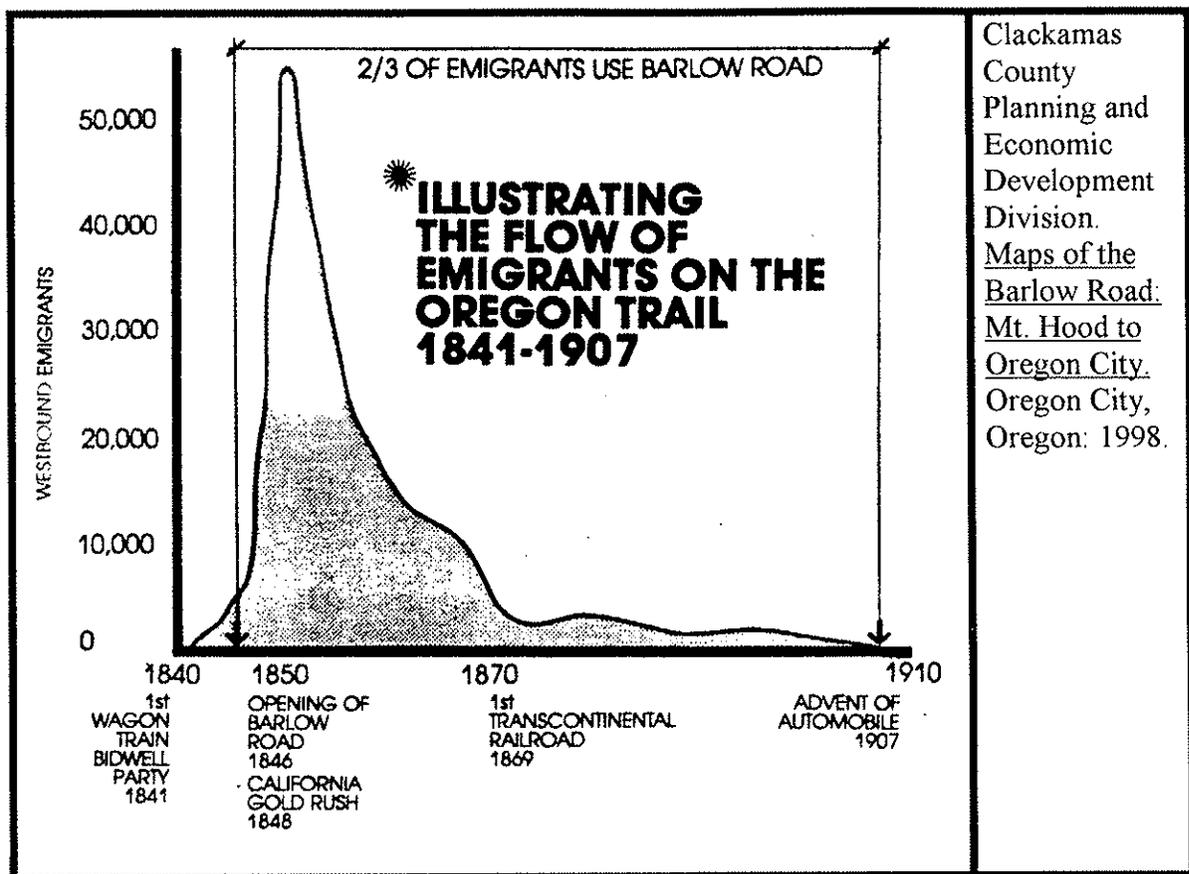
⁹⁰ Haines.

⁹¹ Ashmun.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Meyers, 15.

accommodate two-way traffic (see graph below).⁹⁴ Good efforts were made to improve the road for future settlers. However, it was unsuccessful for some time. The Oregon Journal states, “In 1862, the Mount Hood Wagon Road Company was organized to take over the road and reconstruct it. This enterprise was a failure.”⁹⁵ Two years later, in 1868, a new company called the Cascade Road and Bridge Company was incorporated. This organization successfully made improvements on the road to make it passable and turned it over in 1882 to the Mount Hood and Barlow Road Company. Over the years, the road was continually improved.

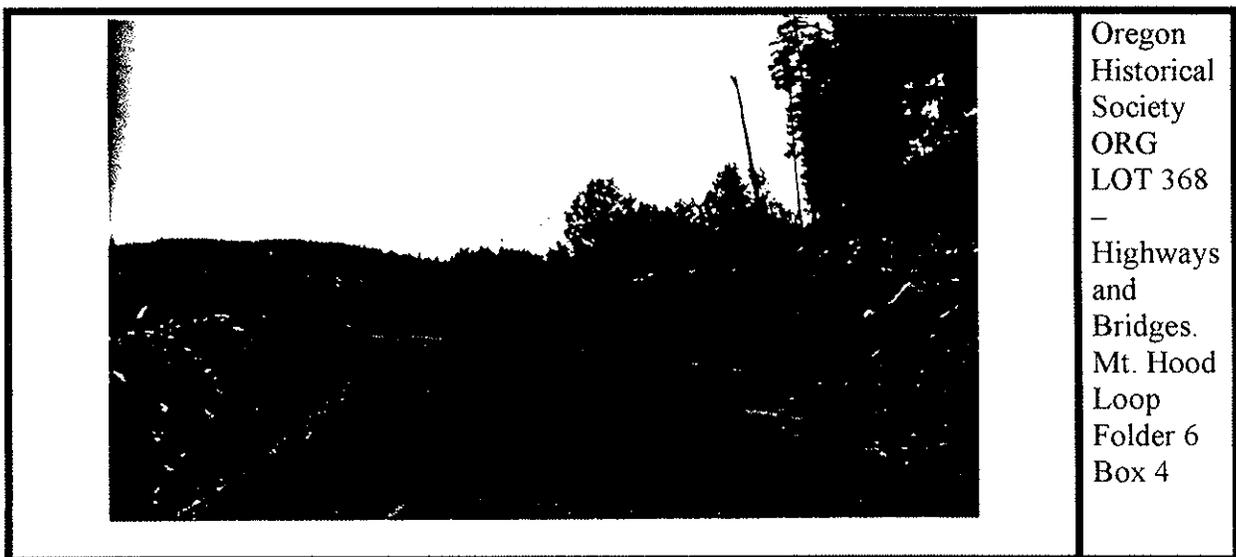


⁹⁴ Robert W. Hadlow, Cultural Resources Report and Finding of Effect on the Barlow Road Historic District and the Pioneer Bridle Trail (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Department of Transportation, 2001), 4.

⁹⁵ Patti, 8.

A second route for another Barlow Road along Laurel Hill was constructed. It is likely that in the late 19th century, the road was realigned to avoid steep segments known as “chutes.”⁹⁶ Along Laurel Hill, the second alignment was constructed as a side hill trail. At the base of Laurel Hill, this second Barlow Road route connected with the earlier route near Camp Creek and followed the same general path from that point west to the tollgate at Rhododendron. A third Barlow Road route avoided Laurel Hill altogether and instead ran west down Little Zigzag Canyon before connecting with the earlier trails at the base of Laurel Hill.⁹⁷

The “Good Roads” enthusiast E. Henry Wemme purchased this third route in 1912 for \$5,400. George W. Joseph received the road from Wemme when he died and deeded the road to the state free of cost in 1919. Soon, the Oregon State Highway Department, the USDA Forest Service, and the US Bureau of Public Roads began construction of a modern route, following much of the third Barlow Road route, and known as the Mount Hood Loop Highway (US 26) (see photos below).⁹⁸



⁹⁶ Hadlow, 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.



Oregon
 Historical
 Society
 ORG
 LOT 368
 -
 Highways
 and
 Bridges.
 Mt. Hood
 Loop
 Folder 6

 Box 4

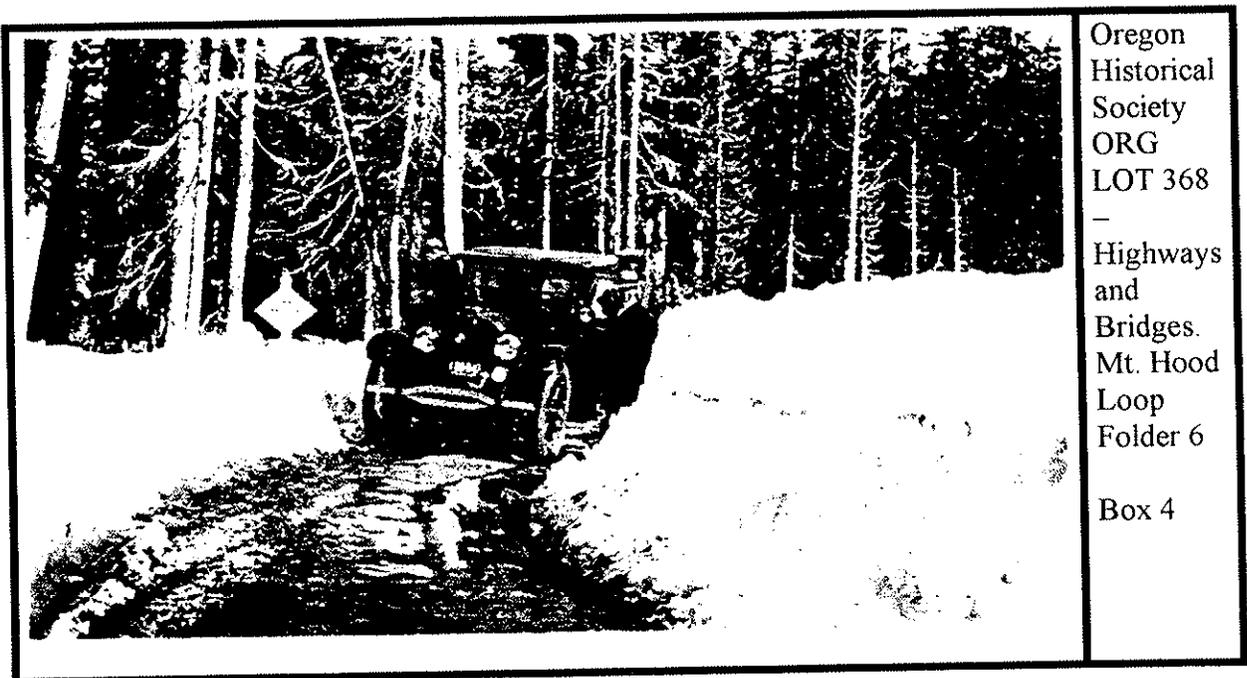
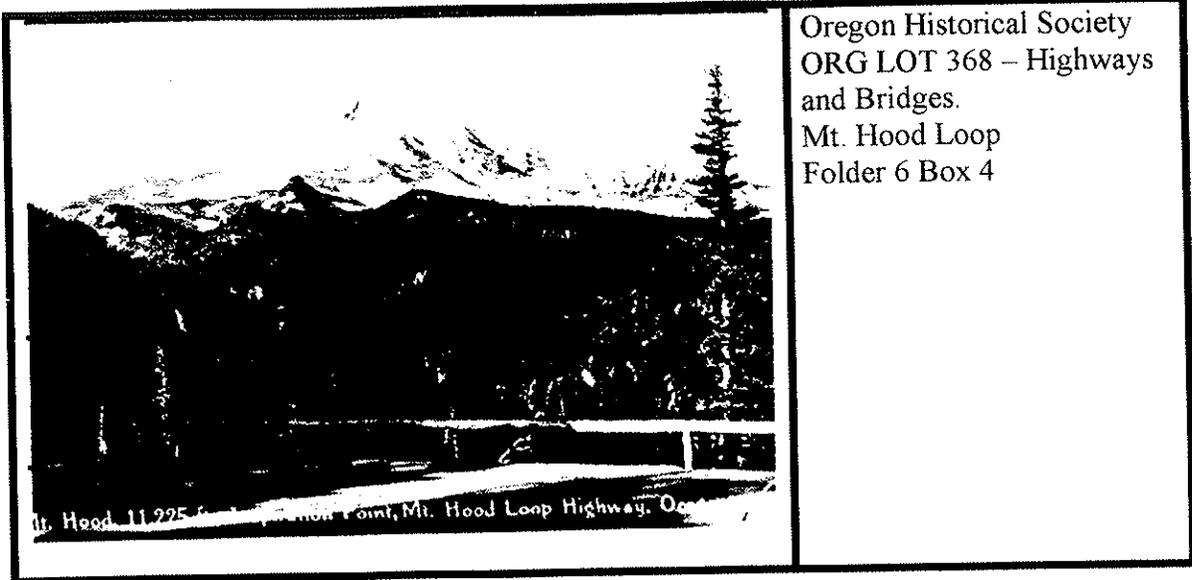
The Mount Hood Loop Highway provided a modern motor route from Portland to Government Camp. Landscape architect Frank A. Waugh was appointed by the Forest Service to help design the Mount Hood Loop Highway. Waugh also had an influence in the establishment of the Mount Hood Loop Recreation Plan. The plan called for developing summer cabin neighborhoods, clubhouses, health camps, and campgrounds throughout the forest district from Rhododendron to Government Camp.⁹⁹ During the two-year period, 1923 to 1924, the Mt. Hood Loop Highway was entirely completed by grading and macadamizing through Clackamas County and opened for traffic the next season.¹⁰⁰ There was cooperation with Multnomah County by providing \$170,000.00 for work done on the Mt. Hood Loop in Clackamas County.¹⁰¹ Construction of the Mount Hood Loop Highway in the early 1920s made Oregon National Forest even more

⁹⁹ Hadlow, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Oregon State Highway Commission, Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1923-1924 (Salem, Oregon: State Printing Department, 1924), 186.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

accessible for Portlanders who sought to escape the city for recreational opportunities. According to the Oregon State Highway Commission, the Mount Hood Highway saw a very material increase use of the Mt. Hood area for winter sports in 1926 (see photos below).¹⁰²



¹⁰² Oregon State Highway Commission, Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1927-1928 (Salem, Oregon: State Printing Department, 1929), 246.

During 1923 and 1924, three major projects took place on Highway 26 in Clackamas County, the Mt. Hood-Wapinitia Forest Road Project, the Mt. Hood-Clear Lake Forest Road Project, and the Mt. Hood Loop Forest Project.

The Mt. Hood-Wapinitia Forest Road Project covered a connection with the Mt. Hood Loop Highway just east of Government Camp. The project was estimated to cost a total of \$10,000.00 coming from the state and government.¹⁰³

The Mt. Hood-Clear Lake Forest Road Project began at the Mt. Hood-Wapinitia survey and extended to Clear Lake, a distance of 7.5 miles. The clearing of the section was done by Heller Brothers during 1921-22 and on May 28, 1924, a contract for the grading and surfacing was appointed by the Bureau of Public Roads.¹⁰⁴ This project was estimated to cost \$141,000.00 to be shared by the State and Federal Government.¹⁰⁵

The Mt. Hood Loop Forest Road Project was constructed by the Bureau of Public Roads. This project extends from the Ranger Station at Zigzag to the Forest Boundary in Hood River County, having a length of 37.48 miles. The estimated cost was \$1,010,000.00 for this project.

During 1927 and 1928, the oiling of the Mt. Hood Highway in Clackamas County was continued and increased by the use of some of the bituminous macadam specifications which have been recently developed (see photo below). At the end of 1928, the road surface was in excellent condition throughout the county.¹⁰⁶ The section from Rhododendron to the Hood River county line only received a light oil surface

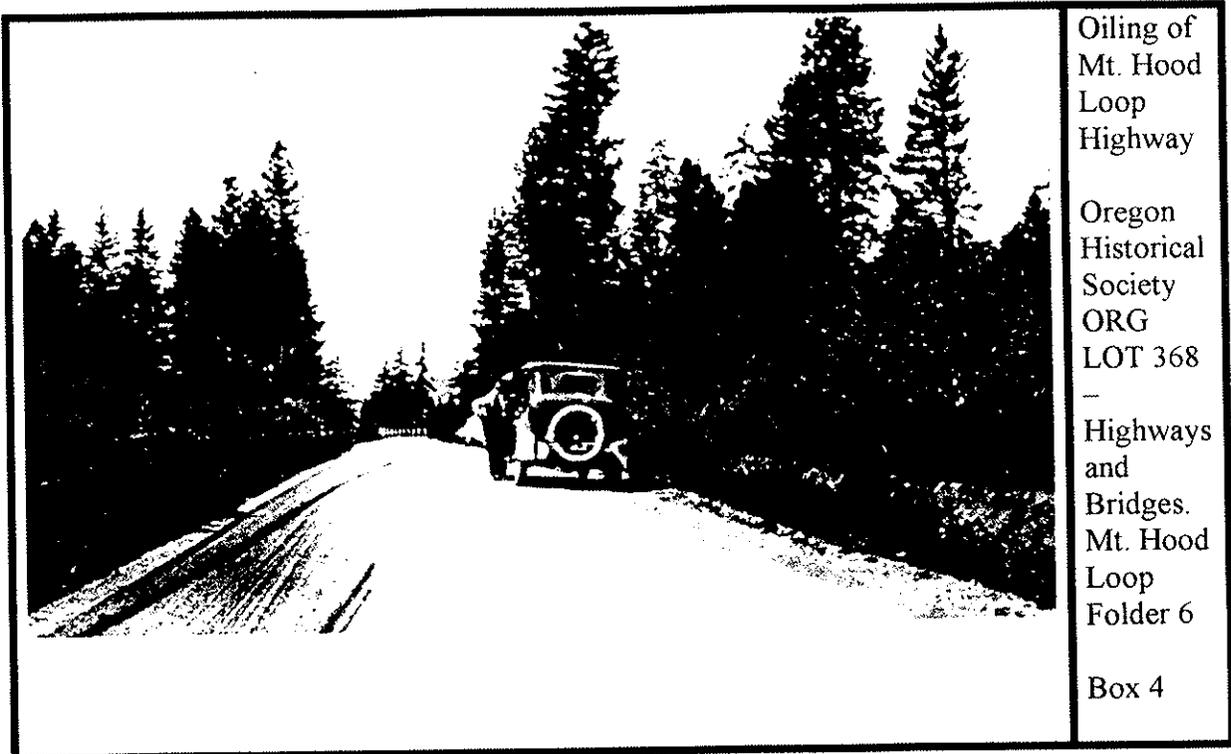
¹⁰³ Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1923-1924, 192.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1927-1928, 246.

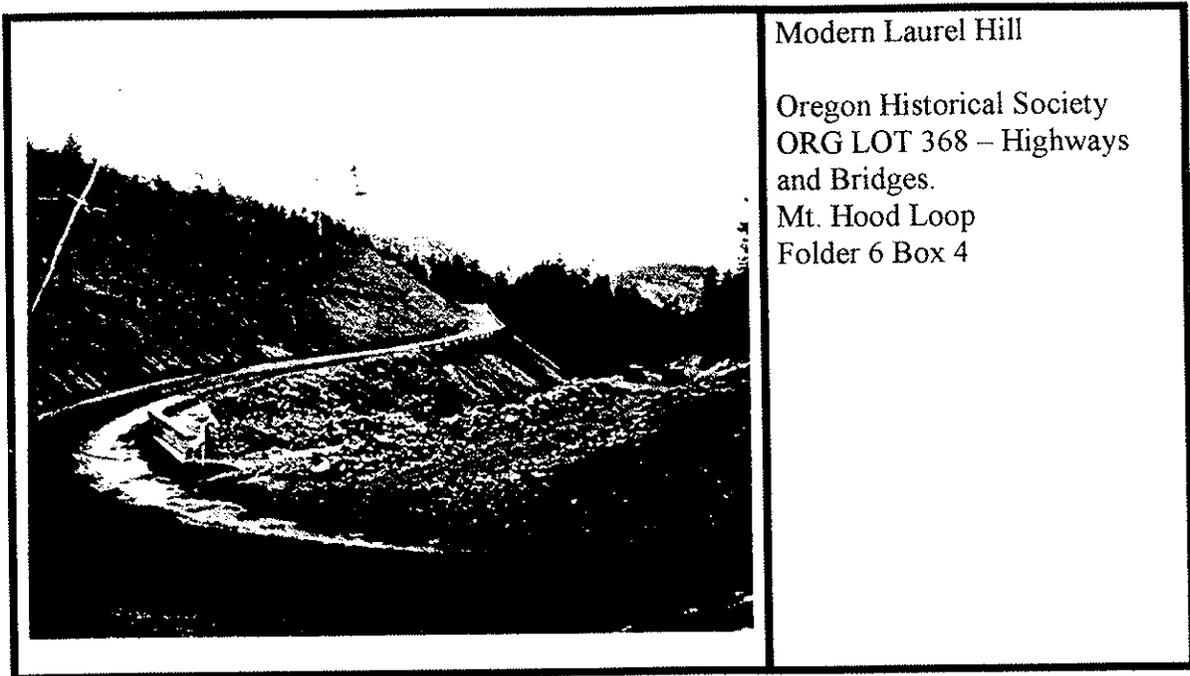
treatment. Light oil was only applied because a considerable part of the distance was either under process or in early prospect of widening and regrading.¹⁰⁷



A reconstruction program was established in May of 1926 by the Bureau of Public Roads to widen the Mt. Hood Loop forest road sections. Widening was necessary because it was found that the previous standards were not of high enough quality to provide for the traffic of the time. According to the Oregon State Highway Commission, widening operations began at the forest boundary at the Zigzag Ranger Station and progressed easterly. The work was handled by day labor. Funds were available for 1926 and 1927, which enabled widening operations to continue to a point about midway of Laurel Hill (see photo below). Some work was also done near Government Camp and Swim in order to provide more parking space for vehicles taking people to the mountain for winter sports. Because state and cooperative funds were unavailable, the project was

¹⁰⁷ Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1927-1928, 246.

abandoned temporarily. The cost of the Mt. Hood Loop forest road project totaled \$115,620.41 with the funds coming from the government.¹⁰⁸



Other maintenance and resurfacing continued on the Mt. Hood Highway in 1927 and 1928. A program was established for the oiling and bituminous macadam construction from Sandy to Rhododendron along the Mt. Hood Highway. Contracts were made in the spring of 1927 to furnish crushed rock and gravel. The crushed rock was obtained from a rock deposit on the Salmon River about three-quarter mile south of the highway and one mile east of Brightwood. This was used to resurface the section from Beaver Creek to Rhododendron. The total cost of this project amounted to \$43,095.82.¹⁰⁹

Thirty-two miles of the Barlow Road, from Barlow Gate, southeast of Mount Hood, to the Barlow tollgate, near Rhododendron, were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district in 1992. Certain elements on private property in Government Camp and Rhododendron were not included in the Barlow Road Historic

¹⁰⁸ Report of Oregon State Highway Commission, 1927-1928, 249.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 252.

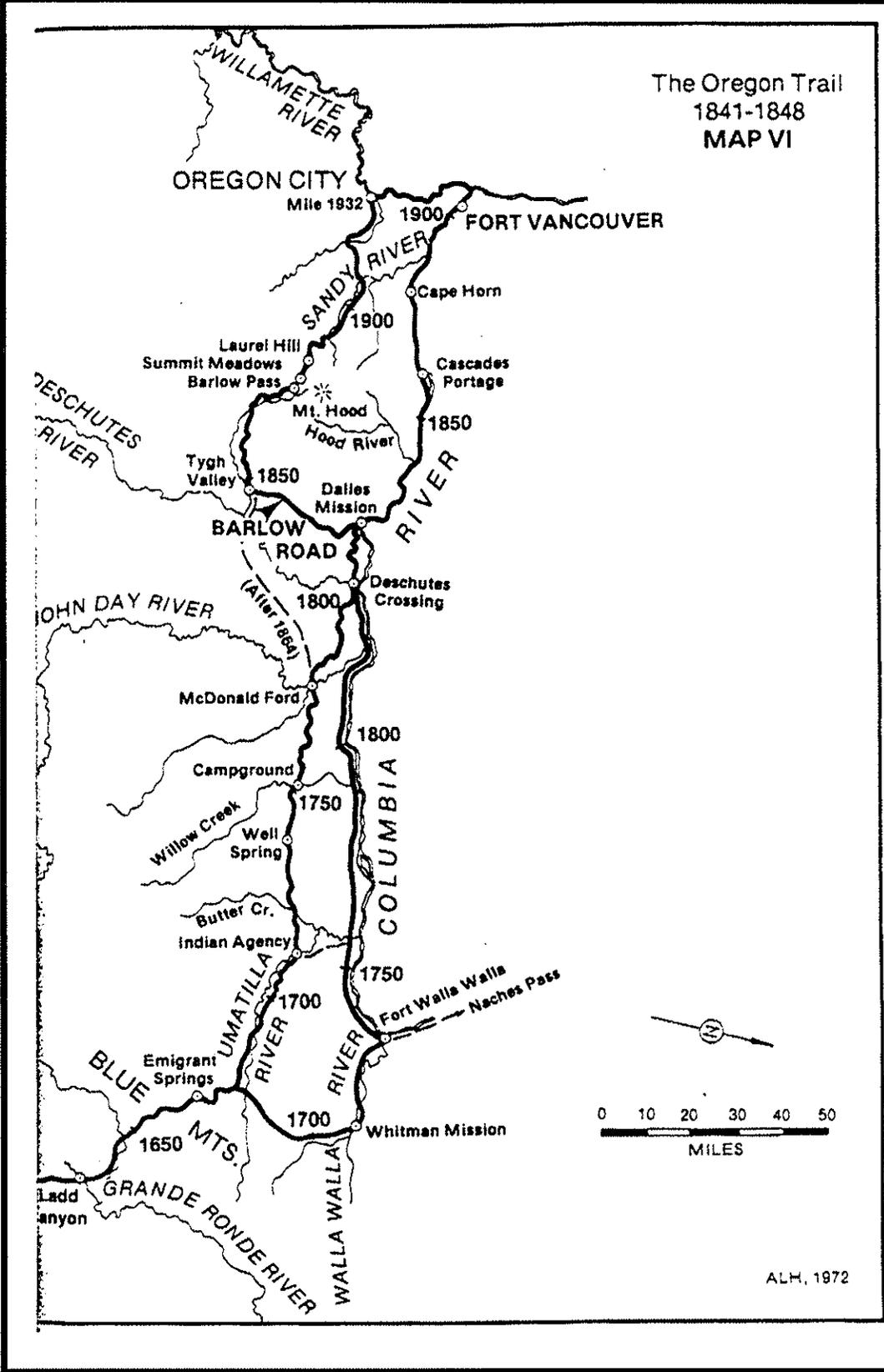
District nomination. They were addressed in a separate multiple-resource nomination completed in 1991, but never submitted to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.¹¹⁰

It has been well said that the construction of the Barlow Road contributed more towards the prosperity of the Willamette Valley and the State of Oregon than any other achievement prior to the building of the railways.¹¹¹ Even though Barlow may have come to regret his efforts, “history restores his road to honor and importance.”¹¹²

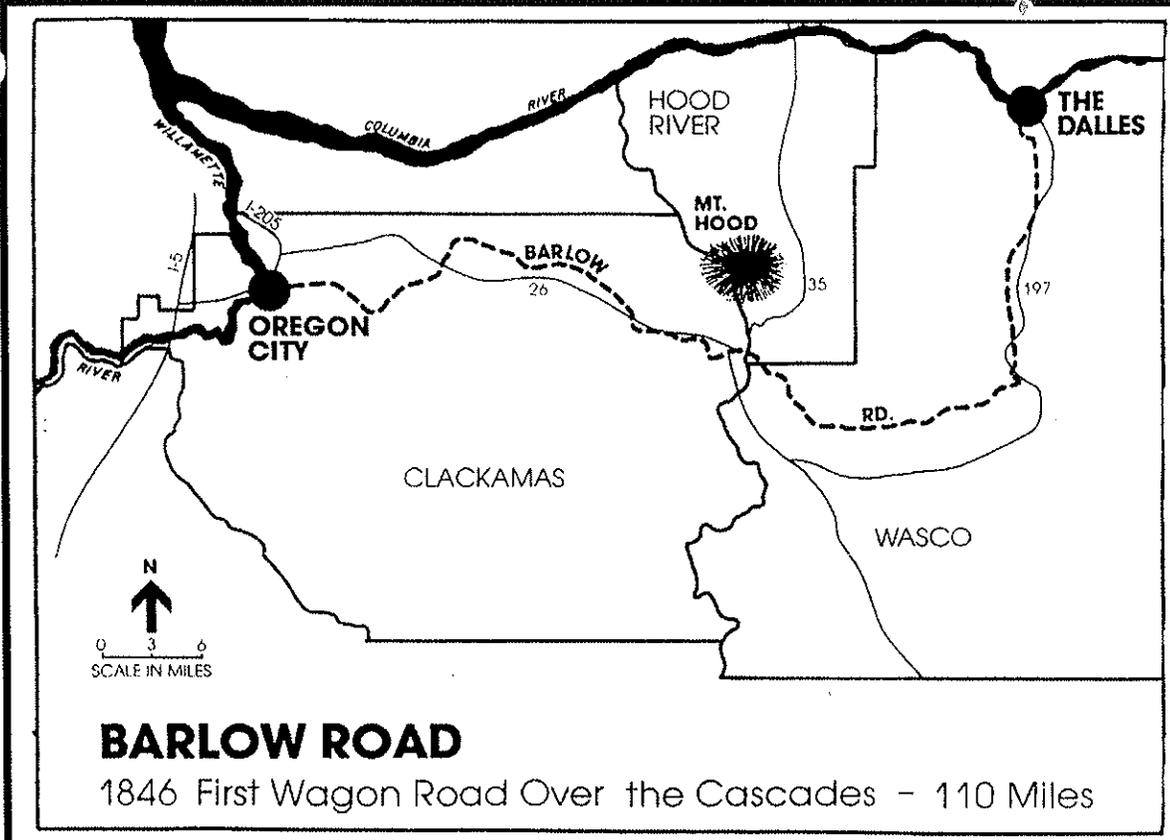
¹¹⁰ Hadlow, 4.

¹¹¹ Patti, 8.

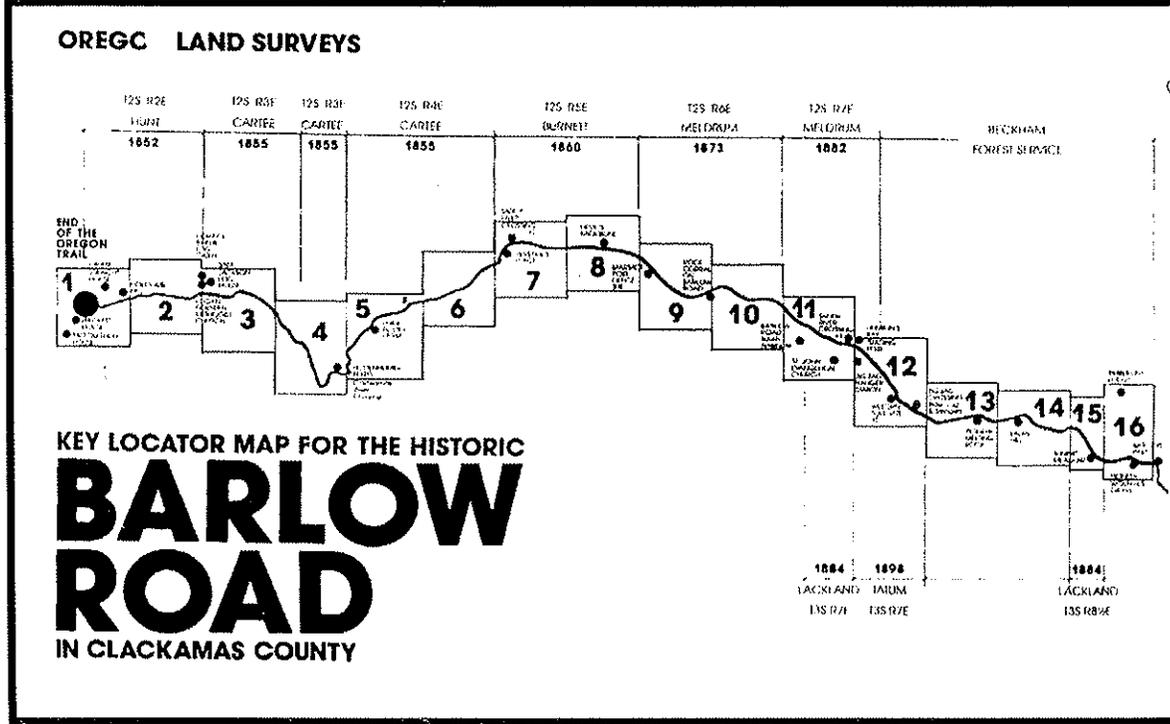
¹¹² Clackamas County, 1-2.



Clackamas
County
Planning and
Economic
Development
Division.
Maps of the
Barlow
Road: Mt.
Hood to
Oregon City,
Oregon:
1998.



Clackamas
County
Planning and
Economic
Development
Division.
Maps of the
Barlow
Road: Mt.
Hood to
Oregon City.
Oregon:
1998.



Clackamas
County
Planning and
Economic
Development
Division.
Maps of the
Barlow
Road: Mt.
Hood to
Oregon City.
Oregon:
1998.



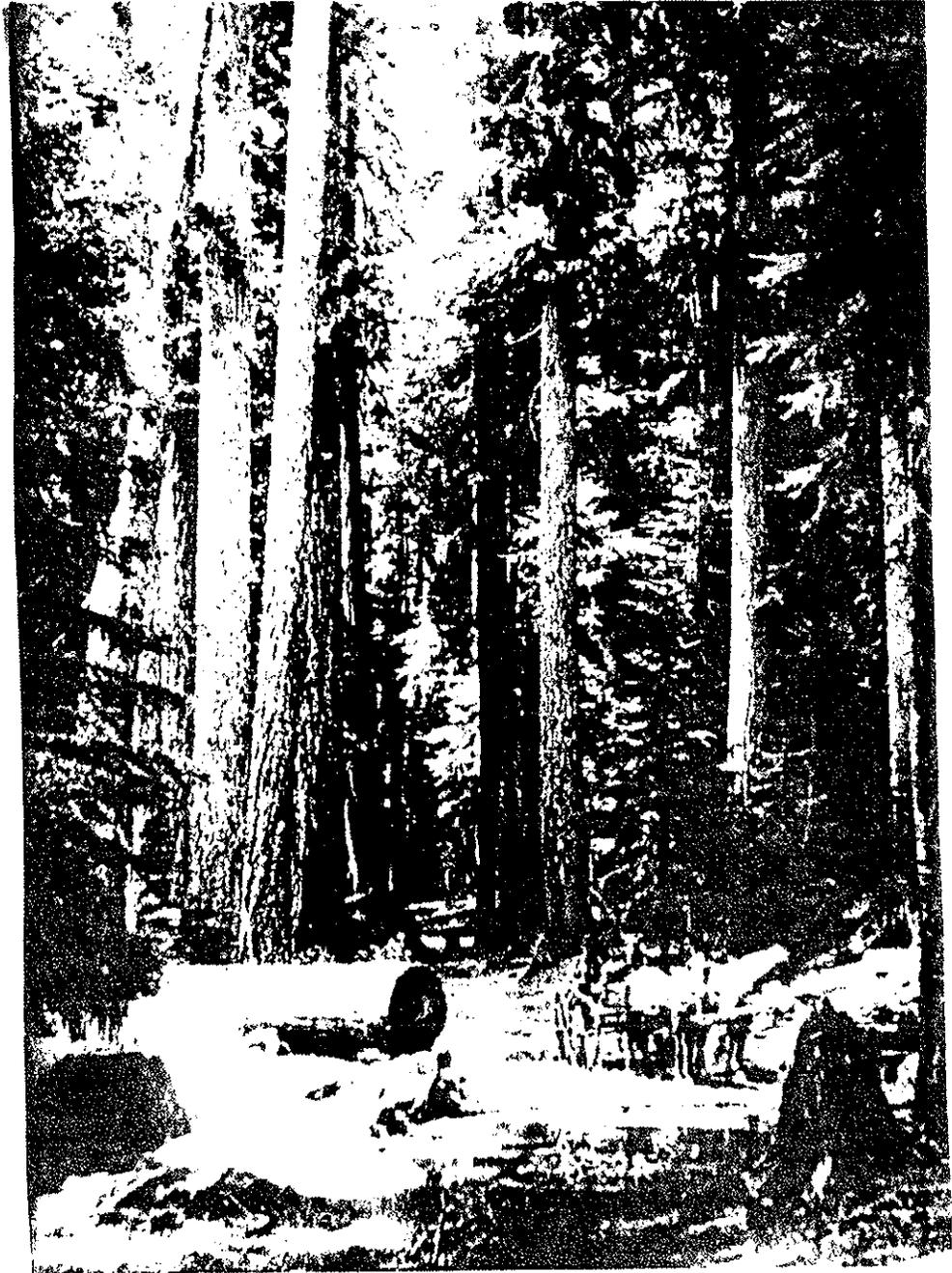
Pioneers on the Old Santiam Wagon Road east of Sand Mtn. Mt. Washington in the background. National Archives Photo No. 95-G-27622.

Nielson, Lawrence E., Doug Newman and George McCant. Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon. Bend, Oregon: Maverick Publications, 1985.



Numerous wagon wheels wore these grooves in solid rock west of Lower Bridge.

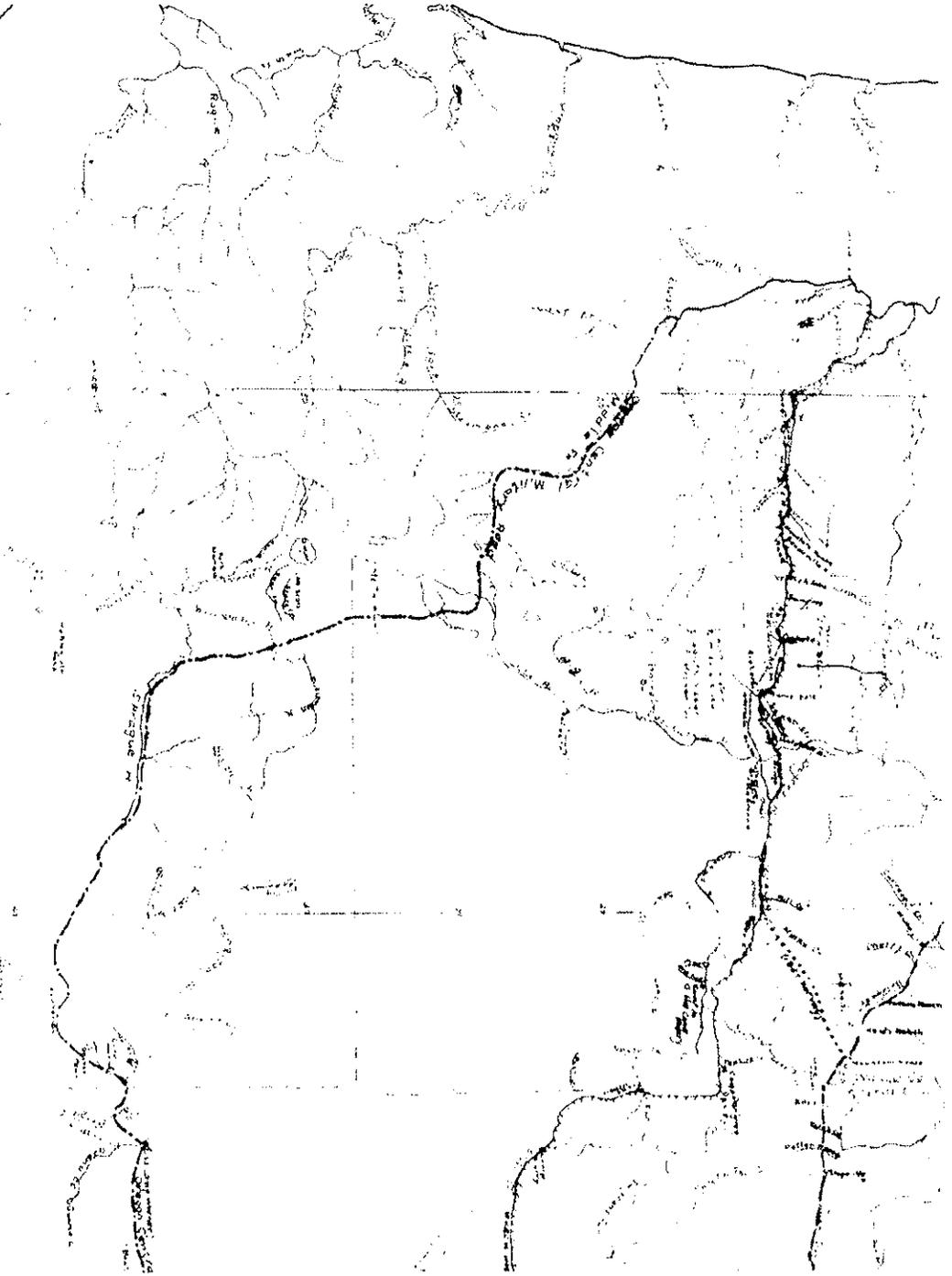
Nielson, Lawrence E., Doug Newman and George McCant. Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon. Bend, Oregon: Maverick Publications, 1985.



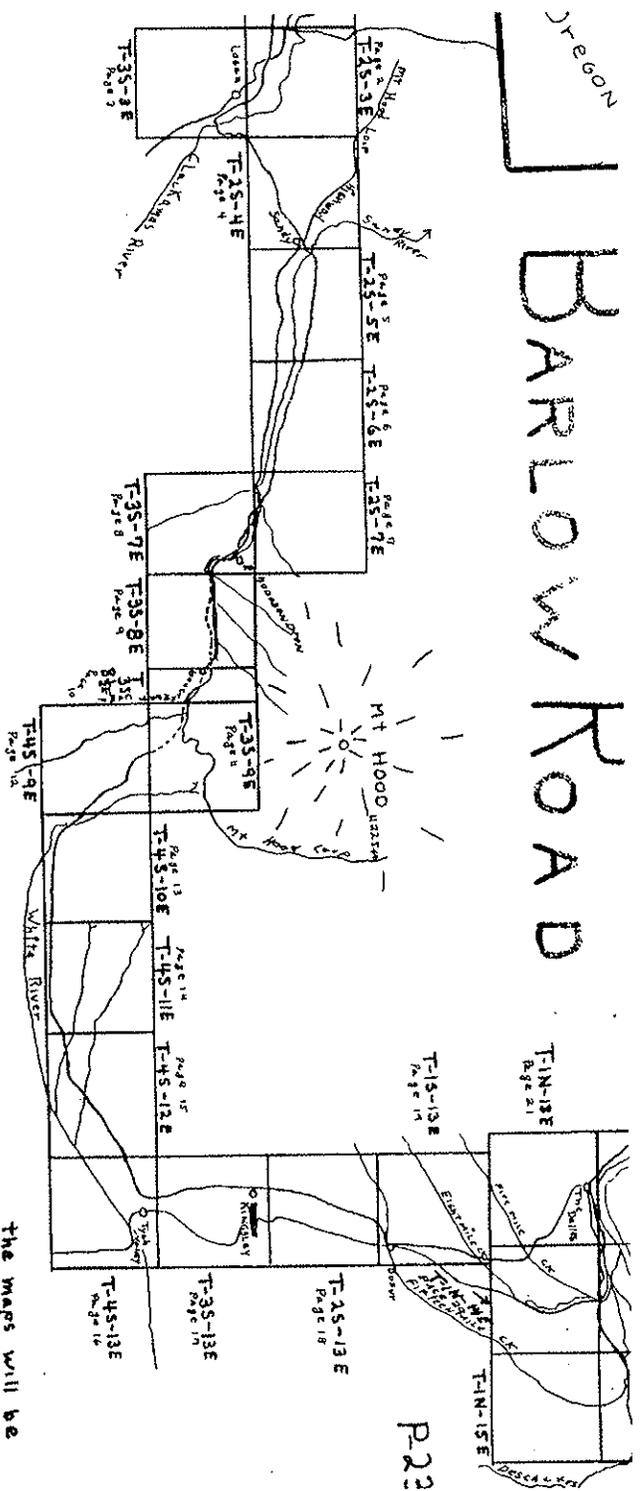
Large trees on Seven Mile Hill near Sheep Creek dwarf driver with wagon and team. Courtesy of East Linn Museum.

Carey, Margaret Standish and Patricia Hoy Heinlin. Sweet Home in
The Oregon Cascades, Brownsville, Oregon. Calappa Publications, 1979.

Map of The Willamette Valley and Surrounding Regions, Oregon, 1857
Clark, General. History of the State of Oregon, Portland, Oregon, 1857.
Bend, Oregon. Descriptive Geography of Oregon, 1857.



OREGON BARLOW ROAD



The Path of The Barlow Road changed slightly throughout it's use because of heavy timber and undergrowth in the mountains, but today it is difficult to trace after 100 years since it was first opened and 50 years since it was closed. Surveys made in the early part of the 1860s account for most of the information concerning the path of the road. Townships East and West were not surveyed until 1900 and the Barlow Road was not shown. This part of the road through these townships will be filled in when information detailed enough is obtained. Some roads will not match exactly sometimes because surveys were several years apart. Date of each survey is given on the left hand side of each page. A handbook to go along with these maps is intended to give color and life to the Barlow Road. CIT will be with this material when it is finished.

The maps will be worked upon as new facts become known. - Presented -

June 12, 1950

Please Turn Back ONE Page (To 22) and fill out the questions.

04 3
Barlow Road
Ref 910.9/135
21276 1916
0400 000

OPER # 2941 364

TRANSPORTATION
LAND
ROADS

MT. HOOD

DATE 00/00/1904
LOCATION OREGON CASCADES
TITLE - AUTO ON ROAD TO MT. HOOD, SW LINE
OF THE D.W.R. TR.

ACCESSION # 000 000
COLL NAME:
PHOTO: GEORGE W. BELLETT 4027
LOC/DRL# 0558P224 ENC/NES 0100000
FOUNDER COLL # REPORT/INT 45
RESTRICTIONS: NO CROSS REFERENCE 4418 FILE # 10177
FEATURES
TRANSPORTATION

OHS Card 6.10 (photographs)



Auto Road to Mt. Hood, Oregon
View of D.W.R. TR. © 1904 by Geo. W. Bell