

Territorial Road From Myrtle Creek To Jacksonville: 1854

The 1853 Military Road from Myrtle Creek to Jacksonville, Oregon was located and surveyed by Brevet Major B. Alvord, United State Army. There is a reference to the old military road in the Jackson County Commissioners April 4, 1853 Journal which declared the road a public highway.¹ It was declared a territorial road on January 31, 1854 (Oregon Statesman newspaper).¹

The following quote is from *Volume VI - The Pacific Railroad Survey: 1855*².

Page 14. "From Myrtle creek, in Umpqua valley, to Jacksonville, in Rogue River valley, our field work has been checked by a sketch of the military road, located in 1853 by Brevet Major B. Alvord, 4th infantry. This sketch, which I think was never published, was kindly furnished by Major Alvord."

Located and surveyed is the correct view rather than constructed as several known segments of the 1853 Military Road do not match with later evidence. For example, the oxbow of the Applegate Trail is identified on the 1856 General Land Office map whereas the 1853 road shows it surveyed and cutting the oxbow off.

1. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. 2005. Military Road: 1853. Hugo, OR.

2. Abbot, Henry L. *Report of Lieut. Henry L. Abbot, Corps of Topographical Engineers, upon Explorations for a Railroad Route from the Sacramento River to the Columbia River, made by Lieut. R. S. Williamson, Corps of Topographical Engineers, assisted by Lieut. Henry L. Abbot, Corps of Topographical Engineers, 1855.* United States War Department. *Reports of explorations and surveys, to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.* Made under the direction of the Secretary of War, in 1853-4. House of Representatives Exec. Doc. No. 91, 33rd Congress, 2d Session. Nicholson, Washington, 1856.

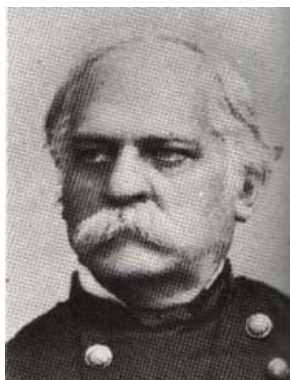
3. Klamath County Historical Society. Applegate Trail II, "West of the Cascades". Klamath Echoes. page 14

4. Hill, Edna May. 1980. *Josephine County Historical Highlights I.* Published by Josephine County Historical Society. Klocker Printery. Medford, OR.

Military Road Constructed By Brevet Major B. Alvord, United States Army: 1853

The 1853 Military Road was located or surveyed for its entire length, and constructed in two documented places: 1. 10 - 11 miles of the Canon, and 2. Grave Creek hills (see *Applegate Trail II, "West of the Cascades"*).³

"Not enough gold has yet been found to repay the labor of procuring it," wrote Major Benjamin Alvord, in 1853. Alvord became the brigadier general of the volunteers for the District of Oregon in 1863.



Benjamin Alvord

Born August 18, 1813 at Rutland, Vermont
Died October 16, 1884 at Washington DC

During the Mexican War Alvord fought at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma for which he was brevetted a major. Following the Mexican War Alvord served as chief paymaster for the department of Oregon. During the Civil War he was appointed brigadier of volunteers in April 1862. He made full brigadier in the regulars in 1876.

Surveyor Jesse Applegate

The 1853 Military Road from Jacksonville to Canyonville was surveyed by Jesse Applegate with a Burt's Solar Compass.⁴

A problem for early surveyors was the mineral attraction in the ground deflecting the needle of their magnetic compass just



enough to produce the errors. By knowing the location of the sun in relation to his position on the earth, the surveyor could adjust the solar compass for the sun's declination. On 26,

February 1836 Burt's solar compass was issued patent number 9428X.

Distance Surveyed from Jacksonville

Place	Miles	+	Chains
Deans's	6 miles	+	30 chains
Dardanelles	11 miles	+	33 chains
Evan's Ferry	23 miles	+	25 chains
Miller's	31 miles	+	53 chains
Rice's [Benson]	38 miles	+	21 chains
Grave Creek	42 miles	+	43 chains
Reavis'	47 miles	+	0 chains
Cow Creek	51 miles	+	45 chains
Ellipp's	58 miles	+	0 chains
Canyonville	69 miles	+	63 chains

More information Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on how you can become involved in your community's land use, and/or history projects.

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission of promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and to preserve, protect, and enhance the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, if requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings. Make checks to the *Hugo Neighborhood* and send them to our Treasurer.

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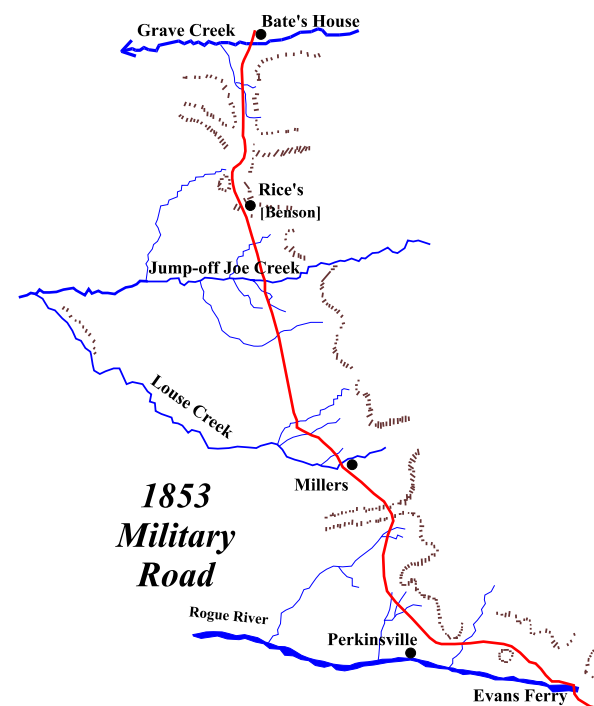
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MAJOR B. ALVORD'S MILITARY ROAD: 1853



Brochure 13A in
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Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee

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