
Before The Trapper's Trail

Southern Oregon's mountainous terrain limited early transportation to walking, horseback, and pack animals. The historical background to the Trapper's Trail is brief.¹

1791 Captain Baker at mouth of Umpqua River.

1792 Captain Robert Gray in the ship Columbia discovered the river he named after his ship.

1805 Lewis and Clark arrive at the mouth of the Columbia on November 7th.

1811 The Pacific Fur Company built Fort Astoria at present Astoria.

1812 Donald McKenzie and party explored the Willamette Valley south to the river bearing his name.

1813 Fort Astoria was turned over to Great Britain and the North West Fur Company and re-christened Fort George.

1814 Dr. John McLoughlin became a partner in the North West Company

1818 North West Fur Company trappers penetrated into the Umpqua country.

1820 Thomas McKay established fort on Umpqua River.

1821 Louis Pichette and Louis Kanota crossed the Sierra-Cascade Mountains south of Pitt River in northern California into the Sacramento Valley.

McLoughlin was instrumental the North West Company's merger with the Hudson's Bay Company.

Ownership of Fort George transferred to Hudson's Bay Company.

Hudson Bay Company Trappers

1824 In 1824 the Hudson's Bay Company appointed McLoughlin as Chief Factor of the Columbia District in the Oregon Country, which comprised 600,000 square miles between Spanish California and Russian Alaska, with Peter Skene Ogden appointed to assist him.

1825 Dr. John McLoughlin removed the fort from Astoria to a new site at Vancouver, Washington.

1825 Hudson Bay Company trappers under Thomas McKay and Finan McDonald followed Indian trails through the Rogue River valley.²

1826 Alexander Roderick McLeod led two different Hudson's Bay Company trapping expeditions south along the coast of which the second expedition penetrated as far south as the Rogue River.

1827 Alexander Roderick McLeod's 1826-27 "Umpqua" Brigade traveled into the Umpqua country, returning to Fort Vancouver in March.

1827 Peter Skene Ogden was a fur trader and explorer for the Hudson Bay Company. His party's 1826 - 1827 expedition made the first documented exploration through the terrain that would be southern Oregon, including Hugo.³ On March 1-3, 1827 he was at an Indian village in present day Gold Hill. His men in the village noted a sickle and two China bowls. Ogden described the country as wild and the rivers too rushing and rocky to have good beaver hunting.

1. Klamath Echoes. 1976. Applegate II, "West of the Cascades".

Sanctioned by Klamath County Historical Society. Klamath Falls, OR.

2. Sutton, Jack. 1966. 110 Years With Josephine County, The History OF Josephine County: 1856 - 1966.

3. Jeff LaLande. 1987. *First over The Siskiyou's*. Oregon Historical Press.

4. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. January 2005. *Naming of Jumpoff Joe Creek: ca., 1839*. Brochure 6 in Trapper's Trail series. Hugo, OR.

Unnamed Jumpoff Joe Creek

1827 On March 4th Ogden's men reported the tracks of two horses in the upper Evans Creek drainage.³

"These tracks were probably made by members of the small party under Jean Baptiste Depaty and Michel Laframboise, who were attached to Alexander Roderick McLeod's 1826-27 "Umpqua" Brigade. Traveling south from Fort Vancouver, McLeod trapped much of the Coquille River drainage and even journeyed south along the Oregon coast as far as the mouth of the Rogue River. The "interior" detachment under Depaty and Laframboise trapped in the Umpqua basin evidently travelling as least as far south a Jumpoff Joe Creek.⁵¹ The headwater of Evans Creek and Jumpoff Joe Creek have a rather low-elevation watershed divide. Consequently, some of McLeod's trappers could well have ridden across this ridge into the upper Evans Creek Valley in January of 1827, where their tracks were seen only two months later by Ogden's men."

On March 15, 1827 Ogden describes the difficulty of moving over the Grave Creek hills without a horse track on an Indian guided trip from the Jumpoff Joe Creek area to Cow Creek.³

*". . . we did not start untill the arrival of our Trappers in the rear who made their appearance at 10 a.m. . . . at 11 a.m. we started and soon after commenced ascending which continued for an hour when we again descended . . . it was almost two [too] steep for our loaded Horses . . . our Guide has no idea of a Horse track and supposes where he can pass it will answer for Horses. . . ."*¹

Jumpoff Joe Creek was not named until 1839.⁴

Want more information? Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on how you can become involved.

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.

Hugo Neighborhood Association

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HUDSON BAY COMPANY TRAPPERS: 1820s



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Brochure 3A in
Trapper's Trail Series



Fort Vancouver

Courtesy of Hudson's Bay Company Archives,
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

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Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee

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