

Hudson Bay Company Expeditions

Southern Oregon's mountainous terrain limited early transportation to walking, horseback, and pack animals. In 1826 - 1827, Peter Skene Ogden, a fur trader and explorer for the Hudson Bay Company, following loosely connected Indian trails, made the first documented exploration through northern Josephine County and the Rogue River (Sasty River). He described the country as wild and the rivers too rushing and rocky to have good beaver hunting (see title page map). The following information is from *First Over The Siskiyou: Peter Skene Ogden's 1926 - 1827 Journey Through the Oregon-California Borderlands*.¹

Page 85 "March 13: . . . at 10:00 A.M. we started with our Guide during the night I strictly guarded him . . . — on starting we left the Sasty River or Fork in our rear taking West N West Course for 8 miles when we advanced 3 miles Course due West and encamped near by a lofty range of mountains . . . this day the Country on all sides appears the reverse of being a level one ⇌ particularly towards the Main Stream which appears to take a South West [mis-copy for North West?] Course and am now of the opinion had we continued following it we would have had some trouble ⇌ the Indians . . . represented it as impossible and this I am now inclined to believe to be correct ⇌ this day we crossed over three small plains well stock'd with Camass Roots in one of them we saw several Men and Women employed in drying roots . . . without him [the guide] we would have certainly had not only a bad but also a Mountainous road ⇌ this with his assistance we have avoided — all along our track this day wood of different kinds and the White Pine of an extraordinary size."

Peter Skene Ogden's 1827 Journey Through Northern Josephine County, OR

The following is an analysis by Jeff LaLande of Ogden preceding journal statements.¹

Page 86 "The brigade's path generally paralleled the present route of Interstate 5 north of Grants Pass. As stated previously, although Ogden's men had reported that the "Clammitte" [Klamath River] (actually the Applegate) was but one mile below their river crossing, Ogden did not personally visit that stream during these several days; the distance was probably considerably greater than that. After leaving the Rogue, the brigade probably camped somewhere in



Cochrane Wetlands Prairie North Of What Would Become Harris Place

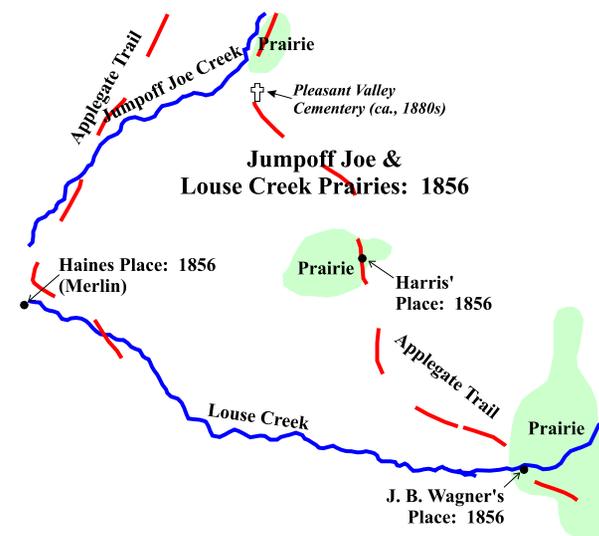
the vicinity of Merlin. Ogden's "lofty range of mountains" may have been Walker Mountain and Mount Sexton, to the northeast and north respectively, but he

probably was referring to the much more rugged-appearing peaks of the Siskiyou visible to the west — peaks that, possibly unknown to Ogden at this point, were actually located across the Rogue River from his viewpoint."

1. LaLande, Jeff. 1987. *First Over The Siskiyou: Peter Skene Ogden's 1926 - 1827 Journey Through the Oregon-California Borderlands*. Oregon Historical Society Press.

Prairies

Page 86 "The three "small plains well stock'd with Camass Roots" were some of the small, grassy openings found in the oak-pine woodlands along Louse Creek and Jumpoff Joe Creek. Ogden mentioned the "White Pine of an extraordinary size." Undoubtedly the trees that caught the chief trader's eye were the locally common, large-diameter sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*) with their tremendous cones." Some of these small plains were documented as prairies in the 1855 field notes for the 1856 General Land Office map for the area²



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

2. Hyde, Surveyor. 1856. General Land Office 1856 Map for T.35S., R.6W., WM (surveyed 1856).

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 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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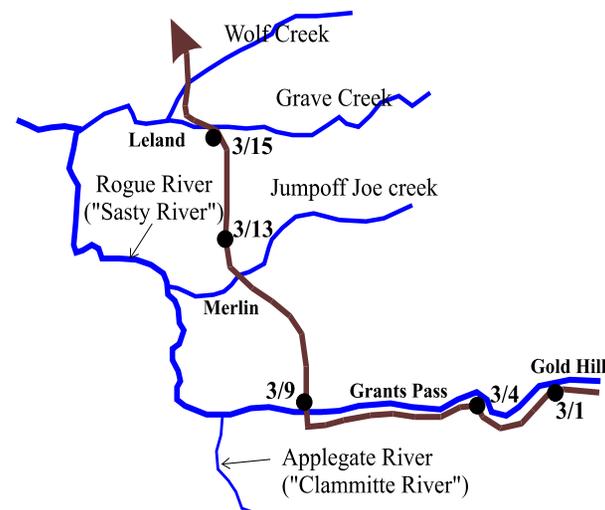
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OGDEN'S 1827 JOURNEY THROUGH NORTHERN JOSEPHINE COUNTY



Brochure 4 in
Trapper's Trail Series



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Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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HNA&HS 2008 - 103

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