ROCKS & HARD PLACES
Historic Resources Study

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Cover photo is of Burnt Ranch, ca. 1890, stage stop on The Dalles-Boise Military Road, on the southern bank of the John Day River (OrHi 4626-a).
Dear Friends:

Enclosed is a copy of Rocks and Hard Places: Historic Resources Study, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. This document was prepared for the National Park Service under contract with Florence Lentz, Cultural Resources Consulting, Ellensburg, Washington. The primary author was Stephen Dow Beckham, a history professor at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. The contract also included the updating of the Cant Ranch Historic District National Register of Historic Places nomination form.

This Historic Resources Study traces the human history of the land that today is managed as John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Beginning with the indigenous people and their unique culture, the document details the various themes significant in the historical development of this area. Themes include early exploration, missionaries, settlement, transportation, economic development, paleontological exploration, and recreation and tourism. It also identifies what cultural resources are left today that speak to these historical themes and if they are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

I think you will find this study to be a useful reference in gaining a better understanding of the rich history of the John Day area. This document and the recent publication of the park’s administrative history, Floating in the Stream of Time: An Administrative History of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, add to the growing body of literature about this important unit in our national park system.

Additional copies of both studies are available and may be obtained by contacting the park or Gretchen Luxenberg, Cultural Resources, Seattle Support Office, National Park Service, 909 First Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104-1060, by email at: gretchen_luxenberg@nps.gov, or by phoning (206)-220-4138. Thank you for your interest.

James F. Hammett
Superintendent

Enclosures
Fig. 1. Location Map – John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in north-central Oregon (National Park Service, 1991).
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND CULTURES</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The John Day Band</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Northern Paiute</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources Summary</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two - EARLY EXPLORATIONS AND EXPEDITIONS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Day – Origin of the Place Name</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fur Trade Explorations</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Government Exploration</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources Summary</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three - MISSIONARIES</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant Efforts</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Missions</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources Summary</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four - SETTLEMENT</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Fever</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition of the Land</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement East of the Cascades</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostilities Erupt</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Patterns and Land Programs</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Settlement in the Vicinity of the National Monument</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep Rock Unit</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarno Unit</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Hills Unit</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence Living</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources Summary</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Chapter Five - TRANSPORTATION ....................................................... 95
  Oregon Trail Crossing ............................................................. 95
  Supplies to the Gold Mines ..................................................... 100
  The Dalles-Boise Military Road ............................................. 106
  The Advent of Railroads ......................................................... 114
  Motorization ........................................................................... 117
  Cultural Resources Summary ............................................... 123

Chapter Six - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .................................. 129
  Mining ................................................................................... 129
  Cattle Ranching .................................................................... 136
  Sheep Ranching ..................................................................... 145
  Lumbering .............................................................................. 151
  Cultural Resources Summary .............................................. 155

Chapter Seven - PALEONTOLOGICAL EXPLORATION ..................... 167
  Thomas Condon, Pioneer Geologist ....................................... 167
  Scientific Expeditions in the Late Nineteenth Century .......... 171
  Early Twentieth Century Research ....................................... 177
  Recognizing Educational Values ......................................... 181
  Cultural Resources Summary .............................................. 184

Chapter Eight - TOURISM AND RECREATION .............................. 187
  Early Recreation ................................................................. 187
  Tourism in the Motor Age ...................................................... 193
  Three State Parks and a National Monument ..................... 196
  Cultural Resources Summary .............................................. 201

Conclusion ............................................................................... 207

Bibliography ............................................................................ 211
List of Figures

Fig. 1. Location Map – John Day Fossil Beds National ........................................ ii
Fig. 2. Hypothetical tribal distribution in northeastern ......................................... 6
Fig. 3. Warm Springs Indian woman and traditional .............................................. 10
Fig. 4. Hypothetical territory of the Northern Paiute ........................................... 15
Fig. 5. Fort Nez Perces (Walla Walla) ................................................................. 24
Fig. 6. Ogden's campsites in the John Day watershed ......................................... 27
Fig. 7. Wascopam Mission, Methodist outpost at The Dalles ............................. 38
Fig. 8. Residents of upper John Day valley traveling by buckboard ................. 45
Fig. 9. Chang and Lung On, Chinese residents of Grant County .................... 55
Fig. 10. Drake's 1864 route to "Old Camp Watson" and "Canyon City  ............... 58
Fig. 11. Sketch labeled Camp Watson ............................................................... 61
Fig. 12. Fertile bottomlands near Prairie ........................................................... 64
Fig. 13. Structures and landscape features on the Floyd Officer homestead .... 71
Fig. 14. Home of James and Elizabeth Cant ..................................................... 73
Fig. 15. House locations of Joseph Huntley and Matier (Mettur) ..................... 75
Fig. 16. Clarno School ......................................................................................... 77
Fig. 17. Herders with flocks at summer ............................................................... 83
Fig. 18. Ranch house of the Henry Wheeler family ........................................... 84
Fig. 19. Men at work on the Bob Wright on the Parrish Creek Ranch ............ 85
Fig. 20. Original T.B. Hoover Cabin on Hoover Creek ................................. 88
Fig. 21. The Clarno Grange .............................................................................. 92
Fig. 22. Descent of western flank of the Blue Mountains, Oregon Trail ........ 96
Fig. 23. Gold-mining town of Canyon City, Oregon ....................................... 102
Fig. 24. General route of The Dalles to Canyon City Road ........................... 103
Fig. 25. An eight-horse team pulling a steam boiler ....................................... 104
Fig. 26. Site of the ca. 1900 ferry crossing at Spray ....................................... 105

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Fig. 27. Land grant corridor of The Dalles-Boise Military Road .............................................. 109
Fig. 28. Route of The Dalles-Boise Military Road, 1878 .............................................................. 111
Fig. 29. Burnt Ranch, stage stop on The Dalles-Boise Military Road ...................................... 113
Fig. 30. Columbia Southern Railway time table ........................................................................... 115
Fig. 31. Postcard depicting the John Day Highway ....................................................................... 118
Fig. 32. Picture Canyon, John Day, 1939 .................................................................................... 119
Fig. 33. "Dayville, Oregon, near Fossil Gorge on the John Day Highway" .............................. 120
Fig. 34. Covered bridge over Bridge Creek on Ochoco ............................................................... 122
Fig. 35. Portion of Official AAA Road Map of the Western States ............................................ 123
Fig. 36. “City Hotel and Harness Shop” at Mitchell (City of Fossil Museum) .......................... 124
Fig. 37. Sidewalk Café (c.1945) in Mitchell ................................................................................ 125
Fig. 38. Grant Co. 40, following the old alignment ..................................................................... 127
Fig. 39. Miners with pack mules on the streets of Canyon City ................................................ 131
Fig. 40. Chinatown at John Day, 1909 ......................................................................................... 133
Fig. 41. Gold Dredging near John Day ......................................................................................... 135
Fig. 42. Detail from promotional literature, Clarno Basin Development Co. ............................ 136
Fig. 43. Hay stacking in eastern Oregon ....................................................................................... 139
Fig. 44. Branding cattle in the John Day watershed .................................................................... 142
Fig. 45. View of the Oliver Ranch south of John Day ................................................................. 144
Fig. 46. Sheep shearsers, tiers, and tool sharpeners ................................................................. 147
Fig. 47. Wool buyers at the Henry Heppner warehouse ............................................................ 149
Fig. 48. Kinzua Pine Mills Co. ...................................................................................................... 153
Fig. 49. The Howell Lumber ........................................................................................................ 155
Fig. 50. Postcard view of Mitchell ............................................................................................. 157
Fig. 51. Kam Wah Chung & Co. Building, John Day ................................................................. 158
Fig. 52. Main Street in Fossil ........................................................................................................ 163
Fig. 53. Ghost town at Richmond ............................................................................................... 164
Fig. 54. View of Sheep Rock in the "Turtle Cove" ...................................................................... 168
Fig. 55. Canidae from the John Day epoch of Oregon ....................................... 173
Fig. 56. View of Carroll Rim on Bridge Creek, Painted Hills Unit .................. 178
Fig. 57. View of eroded rock palisades at Clarno Unit ................................. 180
Fig. 58. Early view of Camp Hancock ............................................................. 182
Fig. 59. Headquarters, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument .............. 183
Fig. 60. Berrie Hall at Hancock Field Station .............................................. 185
Fig. 61. Pioneer Picnic at Richmond ................................................................. 188
Fig. 62. Daughters of Martin Hazeltine of Canyon City .............................. 190
Fig. 63. Fishing on the John Day River .......................................................... 191
Fig. 64. Swimming pool at Blue Mountain Hot Springs .............................. 192
Fig. 65. Caravan of auto-tourists in the John Day country ......................... 194
Fig. 66. Auto camp serving motorists at John Day .................................... 195
Fig. 67. Tourists in the Painted Hills Unit ....................................................... 197
Fig. 68. Hikers on John Day River at Sheep Rock ...................................... 199
Fig. 69. Julia A. Henderson Pioneer Park ...................................................... 201
Fig. 70. Independent gas station in Canyon City ....................................... 202
Fig. 71. Advent Christian Church ................................................................. 204

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
List of Tables

Table 1. Military Establishments in Central Oregon ................................................. 60
Table 2. Acreage in Farms, Grant and Wheeler Counties ................................. 67
Table 3. Number of Farms, Grant and Wheeler Counties ................................. 67
Table 4. Wool Production (lbs.), Grant and Wheeler Counties ......................... 150
Table 5. Numbers of Sheep, Grant and Wheeler Counties ............................... 150
Table 6. Some Lands Acquired for State Parks at John Day Fossil Beds ........... 198
Table 7. Units Studied by National Park Service, 1967 ..................................... 200
Acknowledgements

I extend my appreciation to the staffs of the Aubrey Watzek Library and Paul Boley Library, Lewis & Clark College, and the Oregon Historical Society Library for helping facilitate my research missions. The work of librarians is critical to the researcher and, when generously provided, makes the task of "seeking and finding" a joy. Likewise the staff of the Public Room, Oregon State Office, Bureau of Land Management, assisted in my search for cadastral survey plats, review of the Master Title Plats, Historical Indexes, and Control Data Inventories for the townships in each of the administrative units in the National Monument.

Florence Lentz had the confidence to entrust this assignment to me. She was both patient and helpful, loaning a number of materials which she knew would be relevant to this study.

I am also mindful of my research assistants, Stefan and Ethan Aumack, who helped locate and "munch" mounds of statistical information for the Eastside Ecosystem Management Project, U.S. Forest Service, an undertaking which greatly facilitated the development of tables relating to agriculture which are included in this report.

Stephen Dow Beckham
Pamplin Professor of History
Lewis & Clark College
Portland, Oregon
May, 1999
This project has involved the efforts of a small team of people. For the kind assistance extended to me in my efforts to unearth site-specific information on the cultural resources of the John Day country, I wish to acknowledge the staff of the City of Fossil Museum; Jane Primrose, Manager of the Grant County Historical Museum, and Nancy Niedernhofer, National Register Nominations Coordinator for the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.

All of the staff at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument were most helpful to us in our initial site visits, providing access to their library holdings, files, and museum collection. Columbia Cascades Support Office staff at the Cultural Resources office were most supportive and patient, steering us in the right direction when most needed.

Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham kindly lent his acknowledged expertise in Oregon history to the project at a crucial juncture. He synthesized an assembled collection of data on the John Day country and mounted considerable new research at the Bureau of Land Management and elsewhere, weaving all into a comprehensive overview of the region. Early in the project, researcher Pat Erigero performed the important task of assembling documentary materials, organizing data, and outlining the thematic structure of this report. She worked with the staff of the Oregon Historical Society identifying extensive photographic materials. Research assistant Paula Hungar provided new energy and invaluable production skills to the completion of the final report. Without her, the polished finished product would not have been possible.

Florence K. Lentz
Cultural Resource Consulting
Ellensburg, Washington
August, 2000
Introduction
Introduction

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument was created in 1974 by an Act of Congress. According to an early planning document approved in 1979, the purpose of the Monument is:

To identify, interpret, and protect the geologic, paleontological, natural, and cultural resources along the central and upper John Day River and to provide facilities that will promote and assist visitor recreational enjoyment and understanding of the same.

A more recent National Park Service strategic plan has since officially acknowledged the global significance of the Monument's fossil resources and given priority to its paleontological values. Nonetheless, the protection and interpretation of cultural resources remains an important component of the Monument's educational mission. This commitment to cultural values is best demonstrated in the preservation and adaptive use of the historic Cant Ranch as the Monument's headquarters.

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument comprises 14,400 acres in three widely-separated noncontiguous units: Sheep Rock, Painted Hills, and Clarno. All are in the watershed of the upper John Day River in north-central Oregon. While each unit has a distinctive geological history and landscape, all are united in sharing a common cultural history.

The goal of this study is to relate the human history of lands in the vicinity of the John Day Fossil Beds, to identify historic resources within the bounds of the Monument, and to set them in a local and regional context. To that end, this study describes the important themes of regional and national history relevant to central Oregon. At another level, it explores those themes specific to the development of Grant and Wheeler counties, within which the Monument lies.
Indigenous habitation, conquest and settlement, transportation, livestock ranching, mining, lumbering, recreation and tourism were all a part of the human experience in the place known as “the John Day country.”

The study consultants made use of a variety of primary and secondary sources in this effort. These include published and unpublished manuscripts, cultural resource reports, census documents, diaries and journals, historic maps, patent files, General Land Office publications and archival records, oral histories, local histories, historic photographs, and newspaper articles, among others. These documents are annotated in the Bibliography presented at the end of this report.

An overview of extant historic resources across the two-county area was assembled from current Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) records for sites historic listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and/or in the Oregon Inventory of Historic Places. Analysis of pre-historic archaeological site data was not within the scope of this study, and no discussion of such sites is included in this report. SHPO records for historic properties were supplemented with limited field survey in the communities of Fossil, Service Creek, Richmond, Spray, Kimberly, Mitchell, Dayville, Mt. Vernon, John Day, and Canyon City, and along the connecting highways linking these communities. Tourism literature dating from the 1970s to the present was also inspected in order to determine those resources of lasting significance to present-day residents.

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument lies in an area of limited population. This has been its situation throughout the historic period. Until well into the twentieth century, the area was extraordinarily remote and difficult to access. Isolation is the thread that runs through the story of the John Day country. This fact more than any other, accounts for the compressed time frames of human activity in this region – of primitive homesteading concurrent
with a maturing urban culture at Portland not 250 miles away, of lone range-land sheep herding overlapping the age of auto tourism, of twelve-horse team freight wagons beside corporate gold dredging operations.

Although the larger area defined as Grant and Wheeler counties attracted early-day ranchers to its grassy valleys and miners to its forested mountains, the lands in closest proximity to the present-day Monument saw limited settlement. By 1875, government grants of tens of thousands of acres of land to The Dalles-Boise Military Wagon Road Company compelled the General Land Office to withdraw much of the area from public entry. The fossil beds locale drew a sparse, hard-working population who lived a rural, subsistence existence. Most engaged in stock raising and concentrated for decades on the production of cattle and sheep. From the 1870s, geologists of note sojourned in the fossil beds on expeditions to collect specimens, but they did not remain. The scientists who collected specimens wrote their reports in other places. No railroads penetrated the borders of Grant or Wheeler counties until 1911. In a very real sense, the area became that point "where the rough road dwindled down to a trail."

It was not until the 1920s that improved roads finally began to open up the region to the modern world. With motorized vehicles, large-scale logging and milling in the area's vast forests of ponderosa pine became viable, and gradually brought a shift in the traditional ranching economy of the two-county area. When the State of Oregon opened two state parks in the vicinity of the fossil beds after World War Two, a new era of tourism ended once and for all — in both symbolic and literal terms – the isolation of the John Day country.

Several important themes of western history have touched this place and merged in the flow of time over this unique landscape. Human beings are inherently interested in human history. Although the mission of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is primarily concerned with educating the public about the fossil record, the human story is compelling. This study seeks to contribute
to the larger interpretative potential of the Monument, and offers a series of chapter recommendations for further expanding historic period baseline data, for filling identified research gaps, and for sharing the human history of the Monument with visitors.
Chapter One

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND CULTURES
Chapter One

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND CULTURES

For more than 10,000 years, humans have inhabited the land now known as Oregon. Anthropologists today consider north-central Oregon a part of the traditional culture area of the Columbia Plateau Indians. Within this region, native peoples spoke languages classified as Sahaptin. Sahaptin-speaking aboriginal groups included the Tenino, Umatilla, Molalo, Cayuse, and Nez Perce (Toepel 1979: 29-47). By the nineteenth century, however, native Plateau peoples shared portions of the upper John Day watershed with Northern Paiute Indians, in a sometimes tense and unfriendly association. The Northern Paiute were speakers of Shoshonean languages, and came from the Great Basin culture area to the south.

"Western Columbia River Sahaptins" are more commonly identified as the Tenino or Warm Springs, the Wyampam, and the John Day. The Columbia River, passing through the northern portion of their homeland, was an integrating force, not a boundary. Sahaptin distribution extended along both the Oregon and Washington shores of the Columbia from the vicinity of Alder Creek, Washington, and Willow Creek, Oregon, west to The Dalles. They occupied the watershed of the Deschutes downstream from its confluence with the Crooked and Metolius rivers, and they held most of the watershed of the John Day River. (Hunn and French 1998: 378-380).

The earliest episodes of contact with Euro-Americans confirm a pre-contact dynamic which, for a time, altered the tribal distribution in the watersheds of the John Day and Deschutes rivers. Horses were the probable decisive factor. The acquisition of horses in the eighteenth century by the Northern Paiute,
Bannock, Shoshone, gave them a remarkable mobility and advantage over the Sahaptins to the north who did not have horses or who, at best, had small herds. In 1805, the Lewis and Clark Expedition found most villages along the Oregon shore of the Columbia River west of the Snake confluence abandoned. The raids of warriors on horseback from the Great Basin had literally driven the Sahaptins onto the islands or to the more defensible villages on the north shore of the Columbia.

Fig. 2. Hypothetical tribal distribution in northeastern Oregon and adjacent regions, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Serrated line represents probable northern boundary of Northern Paiute in the eighteenth century and earlier (Ray et al. 1938: 386).
A revealing place name, "River Towarnahiooks," the "river of the enemies" which Lewis and Clark noted for the Deschutes, spoke to the tension and dislocation which had occurred in that era. William Clark wrote:

The probable reason of the Indians residing on the Stard. [i.e. north bank] of this as well as the waters of Lewis’s [Snake] River is their fear of the Snake Indians who reside, as they nativs Say on a great river to the south, and are at war with those tribes . . . (Moulton 1983 – [5]: 318, 321-323, 326).

The John Day Band

The various units of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument were all part of Sahaptin country in the nineteenth century. While some Indians lived in the region throughout the year, many moved in an annual "seasonal round" shaped by the availability of resources and their skills in extracting a living from the land. In their annual round, the John Day band engaged in three primary activities: fishing, gathering, and hunting.

The culture of the John Day band in the contact period responded directly to the environment of the Columbia River, its tributaries, the surrounding sagebrush-steppe plain, and the more distant mountains. The region was an arid landscape in the midst of one of the continent's largest rivers. Abundant fish, large mammals, and bountiful root crops – more than twenty-five species – as well as berries and other plant products provided diversity and nutritional balance in their subsistence. The harvest of nature's commodities was carried out within the rich, ceremonial life of these people. "First fruits" ceremonies, root festivals, and "first salmon" rituals date from pre-contact times and persist to the present. Among these are the spring Root Feast in April and the Huckleberry Feast in early fall (Hilty et al. 1972: 3).

Important plant resources for the Tenino (Warm Springs), and undoubtedly for the John Day band, included the following:
• Blue Camas (*Camassia quamash*), "Wakamo."
• Bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*), "Pe ah ke."
• Wild Celery (*Lomatium nudicaule*), "Cum-see."
• Biscuit Root or Bread Root (*Lomatium cous*), "Coush" or "Cous."
• Canby's Desert Parsley (*Lomatium canbyi*), "Luksh."
• Indian Carrot or False Caraway (*Perideridia gairdneri*), "Saw-wichtk."
• Field Mint (*Mentha arvensis*), "Shu-ka, Shuka."
• Blue Huckleberries (*Vaccinium*), "We woo no Wash."
• Chokecherries (*Prunus demissa*), "T-mish."
• Black Lichen (*Alectora*), "Koonts" (Hilty et al. 1972).

The root and berry harvests occurred between April and October. The mid-summer months drew families to the mountains to harvest the succession of ripening berries as well as acorns, hazel nuts, pine nuts, seeds, and "black moss," the tree lichen. The plant resources included also the flower stalks of balsam roots – eaten raw – and the stems of Cow Parsnip (*Hunn and French 1998: 381-382*).

The rivers were filled with life. Salmon, sturgeon, steelhead, trout, lamprey, suckers, and freshwater mussels insured food surpluses. The people harvested these at falls, narrows, and eddies. They held the greatest fishery in the Pacific Northwest, fabled Celilo Falls, where the Columbia surged over ledges of basalt before entering miles of narrows. Here the stream literally turned on its side before entering the main cleft of the Gorge. The men positioned wood platforms on pole footings over the roily water and with dipnets harvested immense quantities of fish. These were filleted, skewered with cedar sticks, and wind-dried in fish-processing sheds lining the banks of the Columbia. They also fished with seine nets and, in smaller streams, employed weirs, hook-and-line, gaffs, and fish clubs. The fishery was so productive that it made the Tenino and
their neighbors wealthy. Preservation of their catch was extremely important, for between October and April – a period of over five months – there were no salmon runs in the rivers. Weeks of intense work to catch and preserve fish were critical to cope with lean times and getting through the long and often bitterly cold winters of the Plateau (Hunn 1990: 90, 119-130).

John Day band men were avid hunters. They pursued mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, white-tailed deer, bear and pronghorn. They also hunted western gray squirrels, ground squirrels, coyote, gray fox, red fox, mountain lion, bobcat, lynx, otter, long-tailed weasel, raccoon, porcupine, yellow-bellied marmots, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, ducks, geese, grouse, and swans. The hunting techniques were varied: bow and arrow, net traps (for birds), and snares. These animals provided not only food but hides for clothing, decorative materials, robes, sinew for lashings and bowstrings, and cases for quivers (Hunn and French 1998: 382-383).

The shelters of the Indians of the western Plateau were varied. They constructed conical or A-frame, pole and mat-covered lodges. These included both individual units such as for a family as well as communal lodges, joined together with a series of hearths and activity areas along a single axis. Banked earth around the lower outside walls and an excavated floor two to three feet below the ground provided insulation from both the summer sun and winter winds and snow. In the summer they constructed circular, mat-covered tepees or open-walled brush surrounds. Their sweat lodges were low, dome-shaped structures constructed with willow branches and covered with wild rye grass and earth, the floor scented with fir boughs. They also built low huts, often covered with mats but sometimes with cedar planks, as drying sheds for curing fish (Hunn and French 1998: 384-385).
Fig. 3. Warm Springs Indian woman and traditional lodge of vertical poles with cattail matting, hides (and later canvas) (OrHi Lot 467-29).

On islands and promontories overlooking the river they erected burial houses. On October 20, 1805, while near the mouth of the John Day River, William Clark described one of these buildings:

[T]he Vaul[l]t was made by broad poads [NB: boards] and pieces of Canoes leaning on a ridge pole which was Suported by 2 forks Set in the ground Six feet in hight in an easterly and westerly direction and about 60 feet in length, and 12 feet wide, in it I observed great numbers of humane bones of every description particularly a pile near the Center of the vault, on the East End 21 Scul bones forming a circle on Mats – ; in the Westerly part of the Vault appeared to be appropriated for those of more resent death, as many of the bodies of the deceased raped up in leather robes lay [NB: in rows] on board covered with mat, &c. . . .

Deposited with the bodies were wood bowls, baskets, skins, fishing nets and trinkets as well as horse skeletons (Moulton 1983-[5]: 311-312).
The women tanned hides and manufactured leather dresses, leggings, shirts, breechclouts and moccasins for clothing. Rabbit skins, dried with the fur, became mittens and stockings. Rabbit skins, cut into strips and twisted, were made into warm blankets. The women usually wore a basket hat woven of Indian hemp or, by the end of the nineteenth century, a cap made of corn husks (Hunn 1990: 141, 143). Contact with Euro-Americans and the Sahaptin-speakers' hold on trade at Celilo Falls, provided a steady flow of new commodities by the end of the eighteenth century. Entering Sahaptin-speaking country on October 20, 1805, William Clark described the natives:

The men are badly dressed, Some have scarlet & blue cloth robes, one has a Salors jacket, The women have a Short indifferent Shirt, a Short robe of Deer or Goat Skins, & a Small Skin which they fastend. tite around their bodies & fastend. Between the legs . . . (Moulton 1983– [5]: 309-311).

Basketry was one of the most expressive and elaborately developed art forms of the Tenino. Utilitarian cedar bark baskets, devices manufactured from a piece of bark bent and stitched, might serve for berry-picking or hauling materials. Beautifully decorated work, however, dominated. The women collected hazel basket, bear grass, Indian hemp and other materials. They manufactured a large inventory of baskets: twined hats, twined root-digging bags, flat twined bags, coiled cedar baskets, and round twined bags. They also manufactured hide parfleches or flat cases for carrying dried food and household goods, especially on horseback (Schlick 1994).

Men made whistles out of bones, steamed and bent bighorn sheep horns for spoons and bowls, and hunted eagles and flickers for decorative and sacred feathers. They wove nets from Indian hemp, carved juniper logs for hide-covered drum frames, manufactured stone pestles, ax heads, adzes, and net sinkers. They used canoes, but probably obtained most of these by trade with people
living to the west who had easy access to cedar trees for construction of dugouts (Hunn and French 1998: 382-383).

The Indians of the western Plateau were arbiters of commerce. From central Oregon they obtained prized obsidian. In the mountains they picked and preserved berries, gathered bear grass, and tanned hides and furs. Along the rivers they caught and preserved vast stores of dried fish. They captured or bartered for war captives and kidnap victims. They traded these "wealth items" at the falls of the Columbia – the center of a regional economy. The commodities passed down the river in exchange for dried smelt, olivella shells, dentalium shells, wappato roots, dugout canoes and paddles, and, after Euro-American contact, cotton and wool clothing, firearms, metal tools, glass beads, brass kettles, metal fishhooks, and other items of utility and decorative value (Stern 1993: 22-23).

They founded their social organization on both maternal and paternal kinship connections. Over time this created a web of relationships, bonding siblings, generations, and communities. Hunn and French (1998) have identified four levels of connection: nuclear family, hearth group, winter lodge household, and the village. Polygynous marriage created yet another set of connections. Village headmen achieved their positions through ability, eloquence, generosity, and devotion to others. The position passed from father to son, provided the son possessed the virtues necessary to have standing among his relatives and others. Celilo village had a "salmon chief" by the early twentieth century. His role was to open and close the season or stop the fishery for escapement or ceremonial reasons. Some villages had a "whipper," an elder who was to mete out punishments with willow withes to unruly children (Hunn and French 1998: 386-387).

Spirit quests at puberty for boys and days of sequestering in the menstrual hut for girls marked rites of passage. These were not noteworthy times of public
rituals but activities for all as they passed from childhood into adulthood. Shamans facilitated communication with the spirit world and, through repeated vision quests, gained powers which they displayed publicly when curing the sick or seeking to inflict misfortune on the unware (Hunn and French 1998: 388-389). Benjamin Alvord, stationed at Fort Dalles, wrote in 1853 about a young Indian male who possessed "elk" spirit power. "The novitiate wished to imitate the elk, who has, from his youth, been the good spirit or guardian of his life. At certain seasons the elk has a habit of wallowing in the mud. The Indian poured several buckets of water into a low place, in the ring in which they were dancing, and after whistling like the elk, laid down to wallow in the mire" (Alvord 1855: 653).

The oral literature of the Wasco and Wishram, Upper Chinookans living west of the Deschutes River, contains numerous cycles of stories involving Coyote, an animating as well as disruptive force in the myth and transition ages. Coyote stories were recounted during the cold months of the long moons in winter as well at the summer berry-picking camps. The oral literature explained how the land came to be and why certain creatures looked as they did and yielded themselves to meet human need (Sapir 1909).

The world of the John Day band was similar to that of the Wasco, Wishram, Wayampam, Tenino and other peoples of the western Plateau. They lived intimately with the land, followed its rhythms with activities attuned to securing a maximum of subsistence resources, and held tenaciously to their pivotal position as key players in the flow of trade and commerce along the river and through the Columbia Gorge. Those people who resided along the John Day River possessed these same lifeways and values. While those who lived away from the main Columbia were less involved in trade and commerce which moved along its waters, they were certainly beneficiaries of its impact.

To the south, however, lived the Northern Paiute and Bannock who sometimes pushed down the Deschutes or into the upper John Day country.
There were thus unsettling times and tensions, especially with the expansion northward of these Indians when they acquired horses in the eighteenth century.

The Northern Paiute

The Northern Paiute, speakers of a Uto-Aztecan language, were also inhabitants of the upper reaches of the John Day River in the early nineteenth century. Anthropological accounts usually confine their residency to the Great Basin, but fur trade diaries document their presence in the John Day region in the 1820s and 1830s and the journals of Lewis and Clark confirm their advance toward the south bank of the Columbia as early as 1805.

Northern Paiutes occupied a vast section of northwestern Nevada and southeastern Oregon. The northern extent of their customary territory included the Crooked River in the Deschutes watershed, streams flowing into Harney and Malheur lakes in the Harney Basin, the Malheur and Owyhee drainages, and a portion of the upper John Day River. They probably held the north slopes of the Aldrich and Strawberry mountains and the bottomlands along the river in the vicinity of Dayville, Mt. Vernon, John Day and Prairie City. Authors of the definitive assessment of these Indians in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, however, speak of their northern boundary with uncertainty, noting: "On the north, for roughly 300 miles, it continued through an undetermined territory beyond the summits dividing the drainage systems of the Columbia and Snake rivers" (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 435-437).

Of the several groups of Northern Paiute, the Hunipuitoka (or, Walpapi), resided in the Crooked River region, while the Wadatoka inhabited the Harney Basin. Either may have made seasonal use of the John Day, especially its fishery. The Northern Paiute of the Columbia and Snake drainages engaged in subsistence activities virtually identical to their northern neighbors. They caught anadromous fish, dug for roots and bulbs, and hunted large game, especially elk.
and deer. In the Great Basin they depended upon rabbits, marmots, porcupine, ground squirrels, ducks, geese, trout, and lake fish. In that region their gathering activity was extensive and involved use of an estimated 150 species of plants (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 438-441).

Fig. 4. Hypothetical territory of the Northern Paiute, denoted by solid lines. Note presence along the John Day in the vicinity of Dayville and Prairie City (Ray et al. 1938: 396).

The Northern Paiutes resided in rock shelters (when available) and also constructed conical grass or tule-covered winter lodges over frames of willow poles. They covered the frames with bundles of grasses, leaving a smoke hole.
and providing a skin-covering for the door. In the summer they found little need for shelter, except in more modern times when they erected a four to six-pole, mat-covered or brush-covered shelter for shade (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 443).

Their clothing had great variation. In summer women normally wore a single or double apron, knee-length and suspended from a belt. They constructed the aprons from twisted and twined sagebrush bark, rushes, or the skins of ducks and coots. People living more distant from lakes made these aprons from the tanned pelts of coyote, badger, or rabbit. "This costume," wrote Fowler and Liljeblad, "along with appropriate foot-wear and basket cap, is probably the oldest in the region for women and was basic in areas where large game was scarce." In the Oregon portion of Northern Paiute country, however, the women more commonly wore buckskin dresses. Men wore breechclouts in summer and added a buckskin shirt in winter. Both men and women wore moccasins, leggings in winter, and capes when the weather was cold. The women in Oregon normally did not wear caps, but the men did, making them from the pelts of small mammals or from the hides of deer, antelope or sheep (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 444-445).

Individual decorations varied but included body tattoos, facial tattoos, ear pendants, eyebrow plucking, and face and body paint, usually reserved for dances as were bone and shell necklaces. Both men and women left their hair loose, but by the 1880s the Plateau influence led both men, and to some extent women, to braid their hair (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 446).

The family was at the center of Northern Paiute social organization. It included the nuclear family of parents and children plus widowed grandparents, unmarried parental siblings, and divorced parental siblings. The family was connected through bilateral kinship traced for three ascending and three descending generations. Groups of two or three families, usually related, made
up camp groups and often participated together in the seasonal round. Such groups might become larger in winter and smaller in summer, depending on resources and the needs of the community (Fowler and Liljeblad 1986: 447-448).

Because of the necessity for a dispersed and almost constantly moving lifeway in order to survive, the Northern Paiute political organization was the family. Senior family members determined actions. Family groups, sometimes joining in camps, might act in common cause to acquire food or repel aggression. Pipe smoking was a universal act of bonding and was integrally involved in discussions and decision-making. "Headmanship seems not to have been inheritable in this region," noted Fowler and Liljeblad, "with most groups reporting that upon the death of such an individual, another was selected by consensus" (1986: 450-451).

Isabel T. Kelly during the summer of 1930 worked among the Northern Paiute to collect oral literary materials from three bands or larger groups sharing far-flung but customary geographical areas. The texts of tales of the Kuyuitikad ("Sucker-Eaters"), the Gidutikad ("Groundhog-Eaters"), and the Goyatikad ("Freshwater Crab-Eaters"), a band residing in the Summer and Silver lakes region of Oregon, made up Kelly's "Northern Paiute Tales." The literary corpus included tales of creation, origin of fire and the sweat lodge, seasons, accounts of the constellations, and a large repertoire of coyote stories (Kelly 1938).

Cultural Resources Summary

Aboriginal use of the lands around and within John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is today actively affirmed by residents of the Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Burns Paiute reservations. Resident tribes have expressed interest in participating in discussions with the National Park Service regarding the management of cultural resources important to their heritage. This would include any efforts to document and interpret tribal histories in the region (Mark 1996: 17).

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
To date, there has been no ethnographic study of lands in or around the Monument; thus, there remains an opportunity to identify any traditional cultural properties, and/or any possible stories or oral traditions associated with the dramatic landforms of the region.

In 1993, the National Park Service contracted for an inventory of archaeological sites within the Monument. This resulted in the re-evaluation of sites already on file at the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, and a new survey of linear transects in all units of the park. Twenty-five new prehistoric and historic sites and six isolated artifact localities were located, bringing to thirty-six the total of archaeological sites recorded in or immediately adjacent to Monument boundaries. The sites located thus far include lithic scatters, stacked rock features or cairns, and a few rock shelters. Since these are considered to represent only a sampling of potential archaeological resources on Monument terrain, the Burtchard report provided direction for further investigation (Burtchard, Cheung, and Gleason 1994: 1-10).

By far the most significant prehistoric sites associated with indigenous peoples thus far found within the boundaries of the Monument are the Picture Gorge pictographs. These are a series of six painted panels of rock art located on the sheer rock walls of the canyon at the south end of the Sheep Rock Unit. First reported in the 1930s by Luther Cressman (1937: 32) in his larger study of Oregon petroglyphs, the Picture Gorge pictographs have since been photographed, documented, and analyzed by various scholars and archaeologists.

Cressman noted stylistic similarities with Great Basin pictographs, but postulated that the designs were introduced by Sahaptin-speaking tribes – the influence perhaps coming out of the east from Nez Perce territory or from the Snake River country further south (Cressman 1937: 69). In 1990, a visiting member of the Warm Springs Reservation informed Monument staff that the
pictographs had particular spiritual significance to the Wasco Indians. To date there has been no definitive proof of either the origin or age of the rock art at Picture Gorge (Mark 1996: 237, 249). Burtchard, et al., recommended that the pictographs be more comprehensively recorded, and that steps be taken to interpret, protect, and minimize impacts to the most highly visible and accessible rock art. The Burtchard report also notes the Picture Gorge Pictographs as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (1994: 165-178).
Chapter Two

EARLY EXPLORATIONS AND EXPEDITIONS
Chapter Two

EARLY EXPLORATIONS AND EXPEDITIONS

The upper John Day country was remote, and familiar to the Western Columbia Sahaptins and Northern Paiute alone until well into the nineteenth century. The lands that later would become John Day Fossil Beds National Monument lay distant from the routes of major exploration in the Pacific Northwest. From the 1810s through the 1850s, a parade of explorers came to the region and, while some passed the river's mouth, few ventured up its course. The region remained largely undocumented and unknown to a larger world.

The earliest Euro-Americans to explore the Columbia River east of the Cascade Mountains were Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and the Corps of Discovery. Dispatched by President Thomas Jefferson in 1803, the Lewis and Clark Expedition was charged with finding an easy portage through the mountains of the far west, extending the commerce of the nation, and mapping the unknown lands of North America. In October of 1805, the expedition passed the mouth of the John Day River en route to the Pacific Ocean. The explorers named the stream Lepages River in honor of Jean Baptiste Lepage, a workman in the party (Moulton 1983-[5]: 319). None of the members of the expedition ascended the river.

John Day – Origin of the Place Name

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, both the United States and Britain turned to the interior of the Pacific Northwest in hopes of building and dominating vast fur-trading empires. Two rival enterprises, the North West Company of Montreal and the American-owned Pacific Fur Company, had both
entered the region by 1812. From as early as 1789, the North West Company – led by skilled explorers Alexander Mackenzie, Simon Fraser, and David Thompson – gradually expanded its fur-trading network westward through what is now British Columbia. In 1810, John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company dispatched an overland party led by Wilson Price Hunt to establish a base of operations at the mouth of the Columbia River.

One member of Astor's overland expedition was John Day (1771-1819/20), a backwoods Virginian and experienced hunter, trader, and miner. Day was said to have been tall, handsome, and physically robust, but was no longer youthful when he joined the expedition. On the banks of the Snake River in Idaho, Day fell ill, and was left behind with his associate Ramsay Crooks. The following spring, the two men reached the mouth of the river, which subsequently bore his name. Near this stream, the men were robbed by Indians and stripped of their clothing. Day and Crooks were soon rescued by the Robert Stuart party of Astorians, and taken on to the newly established post at Astoria, arriving in May of 1912. Day later reportedly suffered either a mental breakdown or disability from extreme depression, but remained in the region in the fur trade even after the sale of the Pacific Fur Company in 1813. He died in 1819/20 in the Snake River watershed (Elliott 1916: 373-374; McArthur 1974: 392-393).

With scant historic documentation to explain it, trapper John Day became legend in the region. His name was forever imprinted on the land through the John Day River and its basin, the community of John Day, and John Day Dam on the Columbia.

Fur Trade Explorations

In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company succeeded to the interests of the North West Company in the Pacific Northwest. George Simpson, governor of its operations in North America, visited the Columbia watershed in 1824 and laid
plans to strengthen British control of the fur trade. Simpson moved the regional headquarters from Astoria to a new post, Fort Vancouver, situated on the north bank of the Columbia near its confluence with the Willamette River. He was also made aware of the steady westward advance of Americans and the real prospect they would soon press beyond the Rocky Mountains. Sensing the potential of the Snake River watershed, he wrote:

If properly managed no question exists that it would yield handsome profits as we have convincing proof that the Country is a rich preserve of Beaver and which for political reasons we should endeavor to destroy as fast as possible (Rich and Johnson 1950: xlii).

Simpson's strategy was to dispatch a succession of brigades into the watershed of the Snake River and to trap out its fur-bearing animals. His plan would bring economic returns to the company in the shorter term and create a region so devoid of small mammals that the Americans, once they crossed the mountains and entered the region, would turn back in frustration. Peter Skene Ogden drew the primary assignment to execute the policy. Ogden's travels in connection with this assignment made him the first Euro-American to enter and explore the John Day basin.

Ogden's first expedition into the Snake country occurred between December, 1824, and October, 1825. At Fort Nez Perces on the Columbia River at the mouth of the Walla Walla, Ogden outfitted a return brigade. Throughout the fur trade era, Fort Nez Perces (subsequently known as Fort Walla Walla) was a center of influence among Sahaptin-speakers and Northern Paiute of the Columbia Plateau. Alexander Ross and Donald McKenzie of the North West Company had built the post in 1818 at the junction of the Walla Walla and Columbia rivers just east of Wallula Gap. Constructed originally of timber, the post burned in 1841 but was reconstructed of adobe and continued in use into the era of overland emigration. During the fur trade, the post was singularly significant as an administrative center for the great "horse farm" operated by the
Hudson's Bay Company. Horses for the brigades were supplied from the herds at Fort Nez Perces. It also was an important depot for trade goods flowing into the lives of Native Americans who resided in the region (Stern 1993, 1996).

Fig. 5. Fort Nez Perces (Walla Walla) at the confluence of the Walla Walla and Columbia rivers, 1855 (OrHi 1651).

Peter Skene Odgen departed Fort Nez Perces on November 21, 1825, proceeding west across the Columbia Plateau to The Dalles. He and his brigade then ascended Fifteen Mile Creek, crossed to the Deschutes watershed, ascended the Crooked River, and then dropped into the watershed of the South Fork of the John Day where the party camped on January 11, 1826. Ogden wrote:
. . . the country we came over this day well wooded with Norway Pine & also a tree strongly resembling the Box wood and altho I may be mistaken it greatly resembles it – the Soil good but stoney we had for part of the day about three inches of Snow distance this day 15 miles  3 Beavers (Rich and Johnson 1950: 113).

Ogden's party had success, taking 265 beaver and nine otter in the Deschutes watershed, but found icy conditions and near starvation on the John Day. On January 14, south of present Dayville, Ogden wrote:

We started early our course W and by N. for three miles and then North 6 miles along the main Branch of Deys River a fine large Stream – nearly as wide again as it is at the entrance of the Columbia and from appearance this river as well as the River of the Falls [Deschutes] also Utalla [Umatilla] take their sources from nearly the same quarter consequently the two first are very long from the winding course they take and from appearances Deys River must have been well stocked in Beaver – but all along our route this day we found Snake Huts [i.e., Northern Paiute lodges] not long since abandoned and from appearances have been killing Beaver from their want of Traps they destroy not many but the remainder become so shy that it is very difficult to take them . . . (Rich and Johnson 1950: 114).

Ogden's brigade entered the main valley of the John Day on January 17. He and his men remained for several days, catching both beaver and otter but coping with high water and loss of their traps. They discovered the beaver were shy or spooked because the Indians had raided the beaver dams and lodges in an attempt to kill the animals to secure pelts for trading at Fort Nez Perces. Ogden found "Snake" (probably Northern Paiute) Indians along the upper John Day. On January 19, for example, he noted:

Early this morning five Snake Indians paid us a visit they traded 6 Large and 2 small Beavers for Knives & Beads and 10 Beavers they traded with my Guide for a Horse I treated them kindly and made a trifling present to an Old man who accompanied them and as far as I could Judge from appearances they appear'd to respect, they were fine tall Men and well Dress'd, and for so barren a Country in good condition (Rich and Johnson 1950: 117).
The privations this party endured were many: hunger, ice, and uncertainty about its route. At the base of the Blue Mountains, where Ogden was about to commence a difficult crossing to Burnt River, he reflected: "we shall leave the waters of Dey's River and I have to remark altho we have taken some Beaver a poorer Country does not exist in any part of the World . . ." (Rich and Johnson 1950: 119).

Ogden's men had trapped 185 beaver and sixteen otter along the John Day. His 1825-26 brigade took him as far east as Fort Hall. He then turned westward, working down the south bank of the Snake, exploring the Bruneau River, and finally ascending Burnt River to retrace his party's January trip through the upper John Day River region. He reached the John Day again on July 1 but did not tarry. On July 3 the expedition ascended the hills to the west to the Crooked River. Ogden guided his party on to the Deschutes, crossed the Cascade Range, and then passed through the Willamette Valley to arrive at Fort Vancouver in mid-July (Rich and Johnson 1950: 196-197).

Peter Skene Ogden led Hudson's Bay Company employees through the upper John Day watershed a second time in early July, 1829. This time his brigade moved northward from the Harney Basin up the Silvies River and over the Strawberry Mountains. In the vicinity of Dayville, the trappers found both elk and black-tail deer; the hunters killed six of the latter. Ogden continued on, arriving at what was probably the entrance to Picture Gorge: "Having reached the main stream we proceeded on following it down for six miles, when our progress was again arrested by high and lofty rocks, and as far as the eye can reach it appears to be the same." The party stopped here near the south boundary of what is now the Sheep Rock unit of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument:

We encamped not wishing from the low state of our horses and from the gloomy prospect before us to advance further for this day, but tomorrow I shall make the attempt though I verily believe were it left optional with the trappers prefer to proceed on and pass by the Dalles. This route would
lengthen our journey eight days and at this season the natives being most
numerous both at the Falls and Dalles stand a chance of having our
horses stolen. Thus situated I am determined to persevere by this river . . .
(Williams et al. 1971: 164).

Fig. 6. Ogden's campsites in the John Day watershed, June – July, 1829. Legend of expedition routes: 1828-29 . . . ; 1827-28 _ _ _ (Williams, Miller and Miller 1971: map).
Continuing downriver the next day, apparently having bypassed Picture Gorge, Ogden's party found a Northern Paiute camp "of fifty men with their families all busily employed with their salmon fisheries." In short order he bartered for fish and obtained two hundred salmon. Ogden wrestled with the vagaries of the men in the brigade:

Canadians are certainly strange beings – in the morning more curses were bestowed on me than a parson would bestow blessings in a month, and now they find themselves rich in food with a fair prospect of soon reaching the end of their journey I am in the opinion of all a clever fellow for coming this way. Such is the nature of the men I have to travel with in this barren country, and truly may it be remarked the reverse of being an enviable one, and if any man be of a different opinion let him make the experiment and he will soon be convinced (Williams et al. 1971: 164-165).

On July 4 Ogden's party reached the North Fork of the John Day at the present town of Kimberly, and was fortified by the purchase the previous day of twenty fresh salmon. He led his party up the North Fork for three days, then turned northward toward Fort Nez Perces, which they reached on July 9. "This ends my fifth trip to the Snake Country," he observed, "and so far as regards my party have no cause to complain of our success" (Williams et al. 1971: 165-166).

The journals of Peter Skene Ogden's two brigades of the 1820s, both of which entered the John Day watershed, confirm active use of the region by fur seekers and the presence of Northern Paiute Indians along the upper river. Although the Northern Paiute were culturally a Great Basin people, they were clearly engaged in the salmon fishery during Ogden's visit in the summer of 1829. Ogden also noted the presence of the Cayuse in the upper John Day region, observing what he described as the "remains of a Cayouse camp of last fall" and what he thought was the "Cayouse camp road" (Williams et al. 1971: 163-164).

Another Hudson's Bay Company brigade leader working in the Snake River watershed explored the John Day basin. John Work led his party north
from Harney Basin via the Silvies River into the John Day valley in July of 1831. Work wrote: "Crossed the mountains to Day's River, a distance of 22 miles N. W. the road very hilly and steep, particularly the N. side of the mountain. The mountain is thickly wooded with tall pine timber." Work's men camped on the John Day River and bartered for five beaver pelts from two Indians. The next day the trappers traveled sixteen miles down the river to the vicinity of present Dayville. On July 12 Work wrote about his travels and an Indian fish weir:

...we stopped near a camp of Snake Indians who have the river barred for the purpose of catching salmon. We, with difficulty, obtained a few salmon from them, perhaps enough to give all hands a meal. They are taking very few salmon, and are complaining of being hungry themselves. No roots can be obtained from them, but some of the men traded two or three dogs, but even the few of these animals they have are very lean, a sure sign of a scarcity of food among Indians. We found two horses with these people who were stolen from the men I left on Snake River in September last. They gave up the horses without hesitation, and said they had received them from another band that are in the mountains with some more horses which were stolen at the same time... Part of the way today the road lay over rugged rocks on the banks of the river, and was very hard on the already wounded feet of the horses. Five beaver were taken in the morning (Elliott 1913: 311-312).

Work's men remained in camp on July 13 – weary and hungry, obtaining only three salmon from the famished Indians. "They complain of starving themselves," he noted. On July 14 the Hudson's Bay Company brigade traveled twenty-five miles down the John Day River and on July 15 continued another eight miles to the North Fork at Kimberly and ascended it for seven miles. "The road hilly and stony," he wrote. "These two days the people found great quantities of currants along the banks of the river." On July 16 the brigade continued another eight miles up the North Fork then cut across the mountains toward Fort Nez Perces (Elliott 1913: 312-313).

Work's brigade reached Fort Nez Perces on July 18. Two days later he described his ambitious expedition:

29
Since our spring journey commenced we have traveled upwards of 1000 miles, and from the height of the water and scarcity of beaver we have very little for the labour and trouble which we experienced. Previous to taking up our winter quarters last fall we traveled upwards of 980 miles, which, with the different moves made during the winter makes better than 2000 miles traveled during our voyage.

Work's brigade lost eighty-two horses by drowning, theft, death, or being killed for food (Elliott 1913: 314).

During the fur trade era, several scientists also entered the region and passed by the mouth of the John Day River. These included the botanist David Douglas and naturalist John Kirk Townsend. Douglas, a Scottish explorer in the employ of the Royal Horticultural Society of London, traveled up and down the Columbia on plant-collecting expeditions. He sought new ornamentals to introduce into European gardens. Townsend traveled overland in 1834 with Thomas Nuttall, a botanist from Harvard University. Both collected specimens and made notes on their observations. Townsend sold his duplicate bird and animal skins to John James Audubon who used them in his books on birds and mammals (McKelvey 1991: 299-341, 586-616).

Nathaniel Wyeth, an American fur trapper and company owner, explored the Deschutes watershed to the west of the John Day in 1835. An ice merchant who had prospered in Massachusetts, Wyeth sought to compete with the Hudson’s Bay Company. He traveled overland to Oregon in 1832 to examine prospects, returned east in 1833, and formed the Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company. He dispatched supplies and personnel on the May Dacre, a vessel he planned to use for the export of salted salmon to Hawaii, and in 1834 returned to Oregon. His overland party of twenty included the naturalists Nuttall and Townsend as well as the Methodist missionary Jason Lee and his compatriots (Sampson 1968[5]: 381-401).
Wyeth founded Fort William on Sauvies Island at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers and established a farm on French Prairie to grow vegetables and produce livestock for his employees. He personally concentrated on trapping south of the Columbia River in the watershed of the Deschutes River. Winter conditions, hunger, lack of knowledge of the terrain and survival techniques beleaguered the Wyeth party. Far up the Deschutes in January, 1835, camping amid snowdrifts three feet deep, he penned a lamentation in his journal:

> The thoughts that have run through my brain while I have been lying here in the snow would fill a volume and of such matter as was never put into one, my infancy, my youth, and its friends and faults, my manhoods troubled stream, its vagaries, its aloes mixed with the gall of bitterness and its results viz under a blanket hundreds perhaps thousands of miles from a friend, the Blast howling about, and smothered in snow, poor, in debt, doing nothing to get out of it, despised for a visionary, nearly naked, but there is one good thing plenty to eat health and heart (Young 1899: 241-243).

Wyeth, a man of many interests, recorded the first geological comments on Oregon east of the Cascades. On February 6, 1836, on the Deschutes, he noted:

> . . . the upper part of the mountain was of mica slate very much twisted this afternoon the rock was volcanic and in some places underlaid with green clay. Saw today small boulders of a blackrock which from its fracture I took to be bituminous coal but its weight was about that of hornblende perhaps it might be Obsidian but I think was heavier than any I have ever seen (Young 1899: 249).

A fortune in furs and salmon slipped from Wyeth’s grasp. The realities of the Oregon country and the stiff competition of the Hudson’s Bay Company proved too much. He withdrew and returned in 1836 to Boston to resume his career as an inventor and ice merchant (Sampson 1968: 397-401).
Further Government Exploration

In 1841 a contingent of the U. S. Exploring Expedition ascended the Columbia River as far as Fort Walla Walla (formerly Fort Nez Perces) and the Whitman Mission to make a reconnaissance and map the western portion of the Plateau along the margins of the river. The detachment, led by Joseph Drayton, traveled with a Hudson's Bay Company brigade led by Peter Skene Ogden. Nine boats and sixty men in the employ of the company set out in June to ascend the river. The party reached the mouth of the John Day in early July. Charles Wilkes, commander and author of the five volume overview of expedition labors, noted:

At John Day's river great quantities of salmon are taken, and there are, in consequence, many temporary lodges here. Notwithstanding this is a rocky region, there are vast quantities of fine sand deposited every where, which is brought down the river. On this the encampments are necessarily made; and the sand is exceedingly dry and hot, which renders the camping disagreeable. There are few places more uncomfortable; for a basaltic wall rises nine hundred feet or a thousand feet within two hundred yards of camp, which reflects the sun's rays down upon the beach of white sand, rendering the atmosphere almost insupportable (Wilkes 1845[4]: 381-389).

The explorers went on a rattlesnake hunt, killing several, and then moved on into the more arid stretches of the Columbia between the John Day and Walla Walla rivers (Wilkes 1845[4]: 381-389).

In the fall of 1843, John C. Fremont and his exploring party, following the large contingent of overland emigrants, traveled the Oregon Trail and mapped its route to Fort Walla Walla. Fremont's travels took him across the Columbia Plateau to The Dalles. He left most of his men encamped there while he made a hurried trip through the Gorge to Fort Vancouver. Upon his return, his party turned south along the eastern flank of the Cascade Range and entered the Great Basin. Like other explorers, his only contact with the John Day watershed was to cross the river near its mouth. The significance of Fremont's exploration
lay in the superb maps of the Oregon Trail prepared by Charles Preuss, the
flowing and romantic revision of his diaries edited by his wife, Jessie (Benton)
Fremont and published by the Government Printing Office in 1845, and his
recognition that a vast section of the inter-montane American West had no
connection to the sea. He perceived the existence of the Great Basin and
articulated the concept in his writings (Fremont 1970).

On the eve of Euro-American penetration of the John Day country, the
U.S. Army mounted two military explorations into southeastern Oregon. The first
was a reconnaissance of the region under the command of Capt. D. H. Wallen.
General William S. Harney, then commander of the Department of Oregon,
recognized the need for military routes for moving troops, supplies, and weapons
in case of conflict with the Indians and the Mormons in Utah. In April, 1859,
Harney ordered Capt. Wallen to examine the drainage of the John Day River to
ascertain the feasibility of the construction of a military wagon road between Fort
Dalles and the Great Salt Lake. In June, Wallen led 185 enlisted men, nine
officers, a physician, and civilian guides and packers eastward. The expedition
included 154 horses, 344 mules, 121 oxen, thirty wagons, an ambulance, and
bridge pontoons for fording streams. Advance work by Louis Scholl, the guide,
confirmed the virtual impossibility of taking wagons via the upper
John Day country. Thus in June Wallen's expedition ascended the west bank of
the Deschutes before following the Crooked River eastward (Menefee and Tiller
1978: 32-33). Except for the loss of horses to Indians, Wallen's expedition was
without incident (Nedry 1952: 237-238).

In the spring of 1860, Harney ordered Major Enoch Steen to continue
Wallen's explorations for transportation routes. Harney on January 17 wrote:

It will be perceived . . . that there exists a succession of large and fertile
valleys from the Columbia river to the Great Salt Lake, susceptible of
maintaining large populations, and which will soon become occupied
whenever the facilities offered by good roads are presented . . . To enable
the emigrants moving into Oregon to do so more expeditiously, I shall cause a route to be opened from the lake, named as Harney lake upon the map, to the juncture of the road from Eugene city, up the middle fork [of the Willamette] to where it crosses Fremont's road of 1843, south of Diamond Peak (House of Representatives 1859: 208-209).

Capt. A. J. Smith commanded escort troops. This party also avoided the John Day watershed and traveled, instead, up the east side of the Deschutes to the Crooked River and then by way of it to the Harney Basin. The contingent encountered hostilities with the Northern Paiute on June 23, but pressed on as far as Steen's Mountain before turning back to its post (Shaver et al. 1905: 635-636, Menefee and Tiller 1978: 40-41).

Cultural Resources Summary

When the era of the fur trade and early exploration ended in the 1840s, the John Day watershed remained Indian country. Explorers Lewis and Clark, naturalists Douglas, Nuttall, and Townsend, the reconnaissance detachment sent out by Lt. Charles Wilkes, and John C. Fremont all crossed the mouth of the John Day River but did not ascend its course. Hudson's Bay Company brigades led by Peter Skene Ogden in the late 1820s and John Work in the early 1830s are the only parties of Euro-Americans known to have penetrated the John Day basin and passed through the immediate vicinity of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Their travels, trapping, and trading left no historical traces except for their diaries. Those remained hidden in the company archives at Beaver House in London until published in the mid-twentieth century.

Military expeditions of the 1840s and 1850s provided new, candid information about central and southeastern Oregon. The maps of Henry D. Wallen and Lt. Thomas Dixon filled in heretofore-unknown territory. Published by the Government Printing Office in the Congressional Serial Set, the reports and Dixon map were thus available to anyone who wanted copies. While the upper
John Day watershed remained obscure – indicated merely by a dotted line for much of its course – the topographical detail of the surrounding country was now more exactly known.

No cultural resource sites associated with early Euro-American explorations and expeditions have been identified within the boundaries or the vicinity of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. While the general locations of campsites along the John Day River were noted by Ogden and Work in their journals, none can be precisely located or verified on the land.

Ironically, the fleeting presence of the hapless fur trader John Day at the mouth of the stream is commemorated by multiple place names throughout the region. The Corps of Discovery workman for whom Lewis and Clark first named the river, Jean Baptiste Lepage, is remembered at LePage Park, a small local park along Interstate 84 near the mouth of the John Day.
Chapter Three
MISSIONARIES
Chapter Three

MISSIONARIES

The Second Great Awakening and quickening of evangelical Christianity in the United States inspired several efforts to mount missions to the Indians of the Oregon country in the 1830s and the 1840s. While the missionaries had no direct presence in the watershed of the John Day, their legacy paved the way for Euro-American immigration into the region.

Protestant Efforts

First to respond to the call were the Methodists. In 1834 Rev. Jason Lee, his nephew Daniel Lee, Cyrus Shepard, a teacher, and lay assistants Philip L. Edwards and Courtney M. Walker set out for Oregon with Nathaniel J. Wyeth's second overland expedition. Within the next six years they established missions in the Willamette Valley, at the falls of the Willamette, on the Clatsop Plains, at Fort Nisqually, and at The Dalles (Brosnan 1932: 164-169).

Wascopam Mission on the western margin of the Columbia Plateau operated from 1838 to 1847. While its inhabitants introduced both vegetable production and stock-raising to the local area, the converts – mostly Indians fishing along the Columbia River – were discouragingly few. There is no evidence that Daniel Lee, H. K. W. Perkins, or Henry B. Brewer had any impact on the John Day band of Sahaptin-speakers. In his "Account of the 'work of God'" at The Dalles in 1839-40, Daniel Lee described how the conversion efforts were directed at the Indians from Celilo Falls to the Cascades. While hundreds participated in communion, the baptisms and commitments to the Methodist faith were negligible (Lee and Frost 1844: 182-195). Jason Lee had raised more than
$100,000 and brought over fifty Americans to the Oregon missions but failed in securing large-scale conversion of Indians. He was terminated as superintendent of the missions in 1843, returned east, and died in 1845 (Brosnan 1932: 230).

In 1835 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent Rev. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman overland to examine potentials for conversion of Indians in the Pacific Northwest. Parker continued on to Hawaii and published his *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains Under the Direction of the A.B.C.F.M* (1838).

Whitman returned east from the Green River in the Rockies persuaded of the region’s promise as a field for missions (Parker 1838). He secured funding, married Narcissa Prentiss, recruited Rev. Henry H. and Eliza Spalding, and in
1836 set out with the Spaldings and his wife for Oregon. The Spaldings opened a mission at Lapwai on the Clearwater River in what became Idaho. The Whitmans settled at Waiilatpu about thirty miles up the Walla Walla River from its confluence with the Columbia. Their mission operated until November, 1847, when it was attacked by the Cayuse Indians. The Whitmans and twelve others died. Whitman had just purchased the Wascopam Mission from the Methodists, but his death led to the abandonment of all A.B.C.F.M. posts in the interior of the Pacific Northwest (Drury 1937). Whitman worked among the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Indians; Spalding preached to the Nez Perce (Drury 1936). Neither had any known impact on the Indians of the John Day watershed.

**Catholic Missions**

The Catholics were third to mount missions in the Pacific Northwest. They had several target audiences – French-Canadian fur trappers, their Indian wives, mixed-blood children, and the Indians. In 1838 Father Francis Norbert Blanchet and Father Modest Demers, both under the auspices of the Diocese of Quebec, traveled overland through the northern Rockies and descended the Columbia River. Within a few years Blanchet and others working under his direction established St. Paul Mission in the Willamette Valley, Fort Vancouver Mission near the mouth of the Willamette, Stellamaris Mission at the mouth of the Columbia, and St. Francis Xavier Mission on Cowlitz Prairie (Munnick 1989).

In 1847 the Catholic missions expanded onto the Columbia Plateau with the creation of the Diocese of Walla Walla under Rev. Augustine M. A. Blanchet, a younger brother of Archbishop F. N. Blanchet. Until its dissolution in 1853, the diocese had the stations St. Ann on the Umatilla River and St. Rose of the Cayouse on the Walla Walla River. Eventually the priests established the churches of St. Rose of Lima, St. Patricks, Frenchtown (Lowden) and Walla Walla in the Walla Walla Valley (Munnick and Munnick 1989). Although the
registers document hundreds of baptisms, marriages, and burials through the auspices of the church, there is no record of influence on the John Day band of Sahaptin-speaking Indians by the Catholic missionaries.

**Cultural Resources Summary**

The legacy of Christian missions in the Pacific Northwest was mixed. The denominational goals were concerned primarily with changing the religion and lifeways of native peoples. The Protestants largely failed in those objectives. The Catholics fared better, for a number of reasons. The priests were well-educated, sophisticated men who knew several languages. They were patient, indeed willing to work for decades to achieve their goals. They mastered native languages. They were not interested in developing farms and carving out personal land claims; they had taken vows of poverty. The Catholics had substantial, if distant, bases of support and reinforcement. They practiced rituals of ceremony and dress which attracted the attention of the natives. In the longer term, the Catholic imprint was substantial, though many Indians rejected Christianity and persisted in traditional practices or responded affirmatively to the rise of the Washat or Dreamer Religion which swept across the Plateau in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Walker and Sprague 1998: 142-148).

Despite their limited success in Christianizing the natives, the missions and missionairies of the Columbia Plateau played a wider role in promoting white settlement of the Oregon country. The 1836 overland journey of Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding demonstrated in a visible way the possibility of family emigration to the new frontier. Through their reports, letters, and journals from the field, the missionaries introduced a wider audience of American citizens to Oregon. During the decade of the 1840s, the missions themselves served as crucial points of refuge along the overland trail for thousands of Willamette Valley-bound emigrants (Schwantes 1989: 77, 84).
No cultural sites specifically associated with the mission era (1834-1848) exist in the vicinity of the Monument or within the larger John Day River basin. The nearest mission was Wascopam (operational from 1838 to 1847), the Methodist outpost at The Dalles. There is no documentary evidence of missionaries from this outpost, or any of the other missions on the Columbia Plateau, venturing into the heart of John Day country.
Chapter Four

SETTLEMENT

The decade of the 1840s unleashed forces that forever changed the Pacific Northwest. Within a seven-year period more than 10,000 emigrants traveled westward over the Oregon Trail. Their presence helped tilt the geopolitical direction of the region.

Euro-Americans brought with them an unquenchable thirst for ownership of land, and a determination to tame the landscape in ways inherently in conflict with indigenous cultures. In a series of halting steps, accompanied by much bloodshed throughout the territory, the U.S. Government moved to extinguish native title to the land. From the 1850s through the late 1860s, the Government pushed various tribes of the region to formalize treaties of cession, even as it enacted sweeping programs of land grants of the public domain.

The discovery of rich gold deposits and vast cattle ranges drew Willamette Valley settlers east across the Cascades in the 1860s. Population in the John Day basin swelled during that decade, but moderated thereafter in the face of a semi-arid climate, scant resource base, and difficult access to markets. Subsistence living on lands around the present-day units of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument remained a formidable challenge to settlers well into the twentieth century.

Oregon Fever

In 1846, under the leadership of President James K. Polk, an avowed expansionist, the United States gave notice to Great Britain that it wanted resolution of the question of national sovereignty in the Pacific Northwest.
negotiations were finished, the United States, through the Oregon Treaty of 1846, secured all of the region lying westward from the crest of the Rocky Mountains and south of the 49th Parallel of north latitude. In the stroke of a pen came closure on the operations of the Hudson’s Bay Company and major changes for the region’s native peoples.

Why did Americans (and others) contract the "Oregon Fever" in the mid-nineteenth century? The causes were multiple. Favorable publicity was one factor. The journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition, especially the two-volume edition of 1814 edited by Nicholas Biddle, were literally read to pieces by Americans hungry to learn about the Far West. Publication of Astoria (1836) and The Adventures of Captain Bonneville, U.S.A., in the Rocky Mountains and the Far West (1837) by Washington Irving captured the attention of a large public. Samuel Parker's Exploring Tour (1838), John Kirk Townsend's Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River (1839), Ross Cox's Adventures on the Columbia River (1831), and Gabriel Franchere's Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America (1819, first English edition 1854) – all provided specific information about the abundant fish, vast stands of timber, healthy and moderate climate, and agricultural potentials of the region. The scientific reports of the U.S. Exploring Expedition (Wilkes 1845), its subsequent technical reports and illustrated folios, and the journal narrative and maps of the 1843 John C. Fremont expedition, published in 1845, provided authority for the accounts of others.

"Pull" factors included adventure, the prospect of mounting missions to the Indians, and securing free land in the fabled Willamette Valley. Throughout the decade of the 1840s, Lewis Linn and Thomas Hart Benton, senators from Missouri, sponsored bills proposing up to as much as 1,000 acres of free land to those who emigrated to Oregon. Finally in 1850, Congress passed a Donation Land Act. As subsequently amended, it operated until 1855 and enabled 7,437

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
claimants to secure 2.5 million acres in Oregon (Johansen 1957: viii). Other "pull" factors were the presence of kinfolk in the West, who wrote letters home describing conditions and opportunities in Oregon and the possibility of the discovery of gold (confirmed with the strike in California in 1848 and a succession of placer and lode rushes in succeeding years) (Unruh 1979).

"Push" factors included escape from fevers and ill health, a respite from years of repeated flooding in the bottomlands along the Missouri, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers, and a break from creditors in the economic downturn which followed the Panic of 1837. Some felt pushed by the rapid settlement of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Many were motivated, however, by the possibility of selling out their improved farms for a profit and gaining free land in Oregon to start over again with a much larger base of potential capital (Unruh 1979: 90-117).

Fig. 8. Residents of upper John Day valley traveling by buckboard, ca. 1900 (OrHi 23, 213).
Disposition of the Land

Throughout the period of the land-based fur trade between 1811 and the mid-1840s, amicable relations had generally prevailed between the native inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest, and the Euro-Americans and Pacific Islanders who worked in that enterprise. When conflicts erupted they were resolved efficiently and without spread of tensions (McArthur 1974: 563-564). The era of overland emigration which commenced in 1843 was a different story. The potentials for conflict mounted steadily and were of discernible causes.

The pioneer generation included thousands of rough, uncouth people who, along with their parents and grandparents, had lived on the expanding western frontiers of the United States. Many carried a deep-seated distrust, if not hatred, of Indians. This had been nourished by family lore as well as the publication of over 300 "captivity narratives." A lurid, sub-literary genre of autobiographical and biographical accounts by those who had escaped from the clutches of "savages," these works created and helped perpetuate a negative image of and attitude toward native peoples (Berkhofer 1988: 534-537; Kestler 1990: xvii-xxxv). Although actual conflicts between Indians and emigrants along the Oregon Trail were few, many distrusted Indians, blamed them for losses of livestock, and considered killing these people an acceptable practice (Farragher 1979: 31-32).

Federal policy failed to respond adequately to the unfolding invasion of Indian lands in the 1840s. Although the United States secured sovereignty in the Pacific Northwest in 1846, Congress took no action to organize a territory and establish courts, military posts, or the activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Instead, congressmen like Lewis Linn and Thomas Hart Benton introduced bills promising grants of large acreages of free land to those who would emigrate to Oregon. When this legislation – the Oregon Donation Land Act of 1850 (9 Stat. 496, amended by 10 Stat. 158 (1853)) – finally passed, the federal government
had taken no action to secure cession of any Indian lands by treaty (Buan and Lewis 1991: 39-41).

The U.S. Army had, however, dispatched the Mounted Riflemen overland in 1849. These companies of dragoons established Cantonment Hall in eastern Idaho, occupied old Fort George, the fur trade post at Astoria, and laid out a garrison overlooking the former Hudson's Bay Company headquarters at Fort Vancouver in Washington. Their assignment was to guard the Oregon Trail and protect new settlements (Settle 1940: 265-272).

Other precipitating factors in the eruption of troubles were the parthenogenic consequences of a new population into that of people isolated from powerful, fatal diseases. While smallpox had broken out in the Columbia estuary in the 1790s, it had not killed a significant number. The impact of new diseases, however, unfolded with fury in 1831 and, over the next decade, decimated the Indians of the Columbia estuary and Willamette Valley. Probably as many as eighty percent died and many who remained were ill. Overland emigrants introduced measles and other maladies to the Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla and Nez Perce in the years 1843-47. The Oregon Trail bisected their lands (Boyd 1990: 137-143).

A number of the sick emigrants found succor and restoration of health under the care of Dr. Marcus Whitman. The Indians did not. They died in increasing number (Boyd 1990: 137-143). Some of the Cayuse were convinced that Whitman was an evil doctor or, at best, a failed doctor. In Indian society a healer who failed to cure was liable for malpractice and the penalty was death. On November 29, 1847, a Cayuse party attacked the Whitman Mission. They murdered Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and a dozen others. The survivors fled to the Willamette Valley (Thompson 1969: 92-103).

The incident at Waiilatpu confirmed the worst fears of settlers in the Willamette Valley. Many were convinced that an Indian uprising was underway
and that thousands of warriors would fall upon their isolated farms and small villages. The event brought an end to Protestant missionary efforts to the Indians on the Columbia Plateau for nearly twenty years, but it precipitated a new, armed invasion. Within days of receipt of news of the deaths at the Whitman Mission, companies of volunteer soldiers raised by the Oregon Provisional Government set out to teach the Cayuse a lesson. Thus unfolded in 1847-48 the Cayuse War. Hundreds of troops, rag-tailed, untrained, and determined to get back at the "savages" poured through the Columbia Gorge to punish the alleged murderers. Their campaigns proved frustrating; the enemy was elusive (Victor 1894: 194-263). Finally to get them to leave, the Cayuse leaders surrendered five men believed to have been involved in the attack at Waiilatpu. These men were tried and hanged in 1850 in Oregon City (Lansing 1993).

The Cayuse War shocked Congress into action. On August 14, 1848, it passed the Organic Act (9 Stat. 323) to create Oregon Territory. This legislation set the stage, at last, for the unfolding of federal Indian policy throughout the region. It extended the Ordinance of 1787 to all of the Pacific Northwest. The "utmost good faith" clause in that ordinance affirmed aboriginal land title. This meant the federal government would mount a treaty program and reduce Indian lands as provided by the Constitution while, at the same time, defining its relationships with the tribes and identifying their reserved lands, rights, and access to social, medical, and educational programs. Joseph Lane, a resident of Indiana and a military hero from the Mexican War, arrived in the region in March, 1849, to proclaim the creation of Oregon Territory, to assume his responsibilities as governor, and to act, as well, as ex-officio superintendent of Indian Affairs. Lane initiated the first collection of information about the numbers, locations, leaders, and lifeways of the region's native population (ARCIA 1850: 125-135).

The efforts to deal with the Indians faltered. Congress passed a law on June 5, 1850, (9 Stat. 437) to create the Willamette Valley Treaty Commission
and to extend the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834 to Oregon Territory. Although the Commission ultimately negotiated six treaties in councils, Congress abrogated its powers and the Senate never considered the agreements. The Trade and Intercourse Act provisions, however, were significant: they prohibited the sale of liquor to Indians, set standards for trade relations, and officially declared that all Indians lands, until ceded by ratified treaty, were "Indian Country." In "Indian Country" tribal law and custom prevailed (Strickland and Wilkinson 1982:27).

Not until June of 1855, did the respective superintendents of Indian Affairs in Oregon and Washington initiate treaty discussions with the natives of the Columbia Plateau. Driven by the Pacific Railroad Surveys and the prospect of securing a right-of-way for a line from St. Paul, Minnesota, to Puget Sound or the Columbia estuary, Governor Isaac I. Stevens of Washington Territory and Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Oregon Territory, assembled several thousand Indians at the great Walla Walla Treaty Council. In a succession of days of presentation, discussion, and persuasion, the negotiators secured treaties with the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Yakama. The agreements reserved large tracts of the aboriginal lands to the tribes.

Separately, on June 25, 1855, in a council at The Dalles, Palmer negotiated a treaty with the Warm Springs tribes. The agreement ceded lands throughout much of the Deschutes and John Day drainages but created a reservation of over 600,000 acres. Significantly, all of these treaties reserved hunting, gathering, grazing, and fishing rights for the tribes. Thus, dispossessed of large areas of their lands – including the John Day country – the tribes retained opportunities for basic subsistence activities they had exercised from time immemorial (Beckham 1998: 154-155).

The Indians of the John Day watershed in the latter part of the 1850s were expected by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to locate within the newly designated

49

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
reservations. To the east, the Umatilla Reservation lay along and into the Blue Mountains in a region bisected by the Umatilla River. To the west was the Warm Springs Reservation which lay along the west bank of the Deschutes. It included the lower Metolius River, the Warm Springs River, and ran west to the summit of the Cascade Range. It is likely that most of the Sahaptin-speaking peoples who had lived in the John Day watershed eventually relocated on the Warm Springs Reservation. There was a greater prospect of kinship and language affinity than with the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Nez Perce on the Umatilla Reservation (Hunn and French 1998: 389-391; Stern 1998: 414-416).

The treaty situation of the Northern Paiute remained unresolved for another nine years. On October 14, 1864, as cattle grazers were moving into the lush meadowlands of the lakes and rivers east of the Cascades, J. W. Perit Huntington, Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs, negotiated a treaty with the Klamath, Modoc, and the "Yahuskin Band of Snakes." This last group were Northern Paiutes whose homeland included Sycan Marsh and parts of the upper Deschutes watershed. On August 12, 1865, the United States in council at Sprague River in south-central Oregon secured a treaty with the Walpapi band of Northern Paiute under Chief Paulina. It is probable that signatories to this treaty included people who had regularly fished and lived in the upper John Day country. Their treaty ceded lands at Snow Peak in the Blue Mountains, "near the heads of the Grande Ronde River and north fork of John Day's River; then down said north fork of John Day's River to its junction with the south fork; thence due south to Crooked River . . . " and on to Harney Lake and east into the Malheur watershed (Kappler 1904[2]: 876; ARClA 1866: 5-6).

In this same period the Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs returned to the tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and on November 15, 1865, secured a second treaty ceding their off-reservation fishing rights. The tribes immediately claimed the treaty was fraudulent and that they had no intention of
surrendering these life-sustaining fisheries along the Columbia River. The arguments persisted for the next twenty-three years before the federal government acquiesced and henceforth ignored the 1865 agreement (Beckham 1984a: 110-113).

When the treaties of 1855 were under consideration by the Buchanan administration and the Senate, hostilities erupted on the Columbia Plateau. Generally known as the Yakima War of 1857-58, this conflict was the consequence of the western Plateau tribes sensing the same realities which had impinged upon the Cayuse in 1847: deaths, dislocations, losses of lands, and a mounting tide of Euro-American emigration. The U.S. Army was a central player in the conflicts. It had established Camp Drum, subsequently known as Fort Dalles, in 1850, at the eastern end of the Columbia Gorge on the Oregon Trail (Knuth 1966: 297). In 1855 it erected Fort Cascades at the lowest rapids on the Columbia in the western Gorge and stationed troops in nearby strategic blockhouses – Fort Raines and Fort Lugenbeel at the Middle and Upper Cascades (Beckham 1984b).

The conflicts of 1856-57 occurred in the Columbia River Gorge and in Washington Territory north of the river. As in so much of the early historic period in the Pacific Northwest, the John Day country remained "out back of beyond." It was neither a field of conflict nor of Army, volunteer, or Indian military movement. The Indians of the John Day watershed, as of August 1857, remained in their homeland. A. P. Denison, Agent for Northeast Oregon, wrote:

The John Day Rivers occupy the country in the immediate vicinity of the river bearing that name. Throughout the late war they were with the hostile party; since then they have been friendly and well disposed. They will require but little assistance from the department the present year. The resources of their country are such as to preclude the probability they will require much aid hereafter (ARCIA 1858: 373).
The Bureau of Indian Affairs estimated the population of the Indians of the John Day River as 120 people in 1859. Their leader was known as "House" (ARCIA 1859: 435).

The late 1850s were nonetheless a time of tension for the John Day people in their homeland, as well as for the Wasco, Warm Springs, and other bands who had removed to the Warm Springs Reservation. The Northern Paiute looked jealously at the resources of those tribes. Under the annuities provided by their treaty, the government had purchased clothing, tools, and livestock for them. These assets proved irresistible. The Northern Paiute, as had been their practices for several decades, launched a new series of raids northward. Their goals, in this instance, were plunder and women. The reports of the Indian agents at Warm Springs chronicled the problems which beset the people held there (ARCIA 1859: 801-802). Illustrative were the comments of Agent G. H. Abbott of July, 1860:

When I took charge of this reserve I found the Indians in great fear of their mortal enemies, the Snakes, and during the early spring they were greatly distressed by the depredatory incursions of those unconscionable thieves. It was necessary to herd all stock during the day and corral it at night, and to observe the greatest vigilance at all times (ARCIA 1860: 442).

In time, the Northern Paiute incursions abated. A number settled on the reservation and, eventually became one of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Indians (Wasco, Wishram, Warm Springs [or Tenino], and Northern Paiute).

**Settlement East of the Cascades**

Migration of newcomers into Oregon reversed itself after 1860, flowing eastward from the Willamette Valley, back across the Cascades Mountains and the Columbia Plateau along the route of the Oregon Trail. Many of the new settlers were the children of first-generation Oregon pioneers. After passage of
the Homestead Act in 1862, they filed upon free lands in the public domain. An increasingly generous federal land policy served as a major stimulus. Most significant of all, however, was the discovery of gold in the upper John Day watershed and in the Blue Mountains. The twin allurements of mining and raising cattle attracted thousands to stake their fortunes in central and eastern Oregon in the latter four decades of the nineteenth century.

The gold rush became the primary factor in drawing both Euro-American settlement and a transient Chinese population to the watershed of the John Day River. Almost overnight, towns and villages appeared after 1862. Some survived; a number vanished. Settlers moved in to raise foodstuffs to supply the miners and to take advantage of other resources. These included grasslands suitable for stock-raising, tillable lands where they could plant crops, and timberlands where they could fell trees to cut into lumber. The region, in spite of its isolation, possessed sufficient magnetism to attract and hold a new population. Estimates suggested a population of between 4,000 and 5,000 residents in the upper John Day watershed by the fall of 1862 (Anonymous 1902: 388).

The establishment of stage lines, operation of a mail route, and the death of Chief Paulina, a leader of the Northern Paiute, in 1867 laid the foundation for a more lasting stability in the region. An early historical account noted conditions by 1869:

On the main John Day river eighty claims had been taken, 9,064 acres were fenced, 3,608 acres were under cultivation. The largest claims fenced contained 400 and 250 acres respectively. Freight rates from The Dalles were from six to ten cents per pound" (Anonymous 1902: 392-393, 395).

Into the 1870s, settlers – the majority from the Ohio Valley and the upland south – spread along the bottomlands of the John Day and its tributary streams. These newcomers adapted to ranching and subsistence agriculture, establishing a
viable rural economy that outlived the excitement of the gold rush (Mark 1996: 19-20).

Placer deposits, nonetheless, continued to draw miners once depleted of the easy picking of nuggets and gold dust. Among the miners were hundreds of immigrant Chinese laborers, who poured into the area to engage in back-breaking toil moving massive amounts of rock and gravel, diverting water through ditches and flumes, and washing the paydirt to extract profits. Federal census schedules for Grant County's John Day Valley in 1870 and 1880 document a remarkable number of Chinese in the region. The Asian population probably peaked in the 1880s when nearly 1,000 Chinese, ninety-nine percent male, resided in the county. Most were engaged in mining, but some worked as laundrymen, cooks, store owners, and herbal doctors (Barlow and Richardson 1979, 1991; Bureau of the Census 1880).

The Chinese population of the John Day country was repeatedly subjected to persecution. Prejudice ran rampant. Illustrative of attitudes were articles in the *Grant County News* (John Day, OR.):

Three Chinamen were recently killed by an engine at Bonneville, and the railroad company has settled with the executor of their estates by the payment of $1,000, which establishes $333.33 1/3 as the price of a dead Mongol (Anonymous 1885a, February 19).

To every one it is apparent that the Chinese are a curse and a blight to this county, not only financially, but socially and morally . . . . What the Chinaman wears, he brings from China, and what he eats (except rats and lizards), he brings across the ocean, and thus American trade or production reaps no benefit from his presence (Anonymous 1885b, October 15).

Mr. Yong Bo died at his home in Dry Gulch last week, and was buried by his celestial comrades beneath upwards of six inches of mother earth. These heathen ought to be compelled to plant their diseased carrion deeper (Anonymous 1886, February 4).
The Chinese also wrote of their suffering in the stifling, hostile environment of Grant County. "I'm shocked by the message from Lung On that our friend, Mr. Lin, was shot and killed by a barbaric American. Grief come with that news. What a miserable act!," wrote Kwang-chi to Lung On of John Day on February 4, 18[??]. "We are all suffering from the barbarian's serious robbery; we Chinese suffered at the gold mine during several incidents and indirectly they took between $200 and $300," wrote a spokesman for Ton Yick Chuen Company to Lung On on May 18, 1904 (Applegate and O'Donnell 1994: 214-218).
Hostilities Erupt

The sudden rush of gold seekers to central and eastern Oregon exacerbated tensions and heightened the prospects for conflict with native inhabitants. This reality was driven by several factors, chief of which was the slow implementation of treaty policy in the region.

In July, 1862, J. M. Kirkpatrick secured appointment as Special Indian Agent to assess the situation in the country occupied by the Northern Paiutes. Unable to find an interpreter at either Warm Springs or the Umatilla reservations, Kirkpatrick nevertheless set out east over the Oregon Trail to the mines on the Powder River. Along the way, Kirkpatrick found ample evidence of gold rush. "For a distance of over one hundred and forty miles in length, extending from Burnt River basin southwest to the south fork of John Day's river, and from thirty to forty miles in width, a great many men are at work mining, and are making from five to fifty dollars per day each," he wrote. He further noted that lode deposits at the head of the John Day, Powder, and Burnt rivers held promise for more sustained mineral production (ARCIA 1863: 265-267).

During the Civil War years, the Oregon legislature took the initiative to mount military expeditions into Northern Paiute country. Volunteers and soldiers, newly recruited into the Oregon Infantry and Oregon Cavalry as token forces at western Army posts, took the place of Army regulars who had rushed east to serve in Union campaigns. The Oregon Infantry spent nearly seven months on the assignment.

In the spring and summer of 1864, Captains John M. Drake and George B. Curry and Lt.-Col. Charles Drew swept with troops through southeastern Oregon, northern Nevada, and southwestern Idaho. "These tribes can be gathered upon a reservation, controlled, subsisted for a short time, and afterwards be made to subsist themselves," wrote Indian Superintendent J. W. Perit Huntington, "for one-tenth the cost of supporting military force in
pursuit of them" (ARCIA 1864: 85). Drew, an avid Indian-hater and promoter of military action against the Northern Paiutes, had published a litany of alleged wrongs perpetrated by the Indians. He sought confrontation with them (ARCIA 1863: 56-60).

Captain Drake began the campaign with 160 enlisted men and seven officers from Fort Dalles, leading them into the Harney Basin in April of that year. His instructions were to protect the miners and explore the country not lying within the Indian reservations. The Northern Paiute had raided both the mining camps at Canyon City and the Warm Springs Reservation in the fall of 1863. Drake was to seek restoration of stolen property and drive the hostile Indians away from the settlements. Indian scouts from the Warm Springs Reservation joined the party when it passed their homes. The soldiers ascended the Deschutes and passed over the trail via the Crooked River. On May 18, while on the Crooked River, an advance patrol encountered hostile Indians. The Indians killed twenty-three soldiers and one of the Indian scouts; they wounded several other men. The Northern Paiutes slipped away before the main command converged on the battle site (Knuth 1964: 5-35).

As Drake's force moved on toward the Harney Basin, patrols of both regular soldiers and Indian scouts from Warm Springs made salients toward the South Fork of the John Day and into the upper river valley to try to locate members of Northern Paiute Chief Paulina's band. They failed. Paulina's people continued to harass travelers and packers on the trail to the mines at Canyon City (Knuth 1964: 50-63). In the Harney Basin the soldiers could find no Indians, but on July 7 learned of their actions to the north where they stole thirty or forty head of horses at Canyon City, killed one or two residents, and ran off stock on Bridge Creek. "They are, from all accounts," wrote Drake, "concealed in the mountains about the head of the South Fork of John Days River" (Knuth 1964: 71).
The 1864 campaign against the Northern Paiute then shifted north to the mountainous region lying between Harney Basin, the John Day River, and upper...
Crooked River. Except for a skirmish between the Warm Springs scouts and the hostile Paiutes on July 12, the Oregon Cavalry had little contact or sighting of the Indians. Capt. Drake occupied his days writing his journal and observing the region's geology. On July 16 he noted:

Some soldiers, during the absence of the main body of the troops on the Indian chase, discovered some very fine geological specimens on the crest of a low ridge jutting out from the main chain of the hill opposite our camp. Those specimens consisted of fossil shells imbedded in a hard sand stone. In most cases, the imprint of the shell only is left in the rock; this is very distinct and from appearances I judge the shells to be marine in their character, although I do not feel very confident of it. I went up to the ridge this morning and succeeded in gathering some fine specimens for Mr. [Thomas] Condon at the Dalles, and purpose sending them to him by the next wagon train. It is certainly a great curiosity, and a practical geologist would find a fine field for his profession in delving into the rocky hills of the camp (Knuth 1964: 74-75).

During their patrols in quest of the elusive Indians, the Oregon Cavalry established a number of camps, depots, and temporary forts in central and southeastern Oregon. These posts were established by the Oregon Volunteer Infantry and Oregon Volunteer Cavalry except for Fort Harney, a U.S. Army post. Most were occupied for only a few weeks or a few months (McArthur 1974).

Situated approximately fifteen miles west of the present town of Dayville, Camp Watson was established to protect the well-traveled but vulnerable road from The Dalles to the gold mines at Canyon City, soon to be surveyed as The Dalles-Boise Military Road. In June, 1864, Capt. Richard S. Caldwell, leading Company B of the First Oregon Cavalry and a detachment from Washington Territory, explored the South Fork of the John Day. By July, Caldwell had established Camp Watson at a site on Rock Creek. In the early fall, Caldwell was relieved by Capt. Henry C. Small who relocated Camp Watson to Fort Creek, four miles to the west (Knuth 1964: 103-104).
Table 1. Military Establishments in Central Oregon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camp Maury</td>
<td>May 18, 1864</td>
<td>T17S, R21E, Sec. 20, W.M., SE side of Maury Creek west of Rimrock Creek, Crook Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Gibbs</td>
<td>July 21, 1864</td>
<td>Drake Creek, Crook Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Dahlgren</td>
<td>August 22, 1864</td>
<td>Beaver Creek, Crook County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Watson</td>
<td>October 1, 1864</td>
<td>Five miles west of Antone, Wheeler Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Logan</td>
<td>Summer, 1865</td>
<td>Strawberry Creek, six miles south of Prairie City, Grant Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Currey</td>
<td>August, 1865</td>
<td>Silver Creek, Harney County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Harney</td>
<td>August 16, 1867</td>
<td>Rattlesnake Creek, Harney Co.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Camp Watson reached fairly respectable physical proportions, arranged around a central quadrangle. Twelve huts for soldiers were aligned on either side of the wagon road at the north end of the quad, with four offers' huts opposite. To the west were a small map house, a hospital, a guard hut and orderly room, and a commissary and quartermaster store. Corrals and stables bordered the east side. All buildings were constructed of logs and roofed with wood shingles. Camp Watson was occupied by the First Oregon Cavalry until May of 1866, and then turned over to the regular army unit its final abandonment in 1869. (Kenny 1957:4-16).

Tensions in the region did not abate with the military missions. Between September, 1865, and August, 1867, numerous incidents occurred which involved Northern Paiutes and residents of the upper John Day watershed. These ranged from armed encounters and killings to petty thieving, raids of isolated ranches and mining camps, and periodic sweeps by volunteer companies seeking the "enemy." Indian Superintendent Huntington summarized eight packed pages of these encounters in his report to the Commissioner of

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Indian Affairs in 1867 (ARCIA 1867: 95-103). Indians suffered numerous deaths; stock drivers lost their animals and cursed the Indians. Indians raided settlements and escaped. Troops rounded up Indians and killed them. The situation was nearly guerilla warfare.

Resolution of conflicts with the Northern Paiute, of a sort, came with the executive order of President Ulysses S. Grant on September 12, 1872, to create the Malheur Reservation. A vast tract sprawling across the meadows of the...
Harney Basin and encompassing Malheur Lake, Oregon’s largest lake, the reservation was designated as a permanent homeland for the Northern Paiute. It was enlarged on May 15, 1875, to 1.7 million acres, but pressures mounted rapidly for its termination. On January 28, 1876, the president virtually abolished the reservation. Cattle drovers such as Peter French and David Shirk had discerned the potentials for wealth if they controlled key water resources and grazing. The press was on to dismember the Malheur Reservation. For the Northern Paiute the decision was a disaster. They would survive, largely landless, until securing individual, public domain allotments in 1897 and in obtaining in 1935 the Burns Paiute Indian Colony, a tract of 760.32 acres near Burns, Oregon. They also retained ten acres at old Fort Harney (Ruby and Brown 1986: 9, 158-159).

A last scare of Indian hostilities swept through the John Day Valley in 1878 with the outbreak of the Bannock War. The troubles erupted in Idaho because of trespass by sheepherders onto Indian lands. The Bannock swept into eastern Oregon to rally the discontented Northern Paiute. The efforts to forge common cause against the Euro-Americans largely failed. Following a brisk battle at Silver Creek on June 23, the Bannock turned north toward the Columbia River to escape soldiers of the U.S. Army. They engaged in an abbreviated exchange near Canyon City, killing one man and wounding two others. The Bannocks moved from the South Fork of the John Day to the Long Creek Valley, stealing, burning cabins, and fleeing. The final conflicts occurred at Willow Springs and Birch Creek. The Umatilla Indians did not rally and, in fact, joined in opposing the Bannocks and killed Egan, a Northern Paiute leader who was with the hostile forces. The continued pursuit compelled some Bannocks to try to cross the Columbia. Their war was crushed with many deaths; the Bureau of Indian Affairs removed the survivors to the small reservation at Fort Hall, Idaho (Ruby and Brown 1986: 8-9; Brimlow 1938).
The Bannock War of 1878 contributed to considerable local lore about Indian hostilities in the John Day watershed. Because of settlement, many Euro-Americans had personal stories to tell. Families fled isolated homesteads and residences, forted up at defensible positions, and waited for the troubles to subside. The Dedman homestead near Twickenham was one of these locations. Built of hewn logs with heavily shuttered windows, the building had holes in its walls for rifle ports. A. S. MacAllister and Peasley owned the ranch in the 1870s. It subsequently passed to Zachary Keys in 1906. An account by Dickse Williams summarized the fate of most of the "forts" of the era of Indian hostilities: "As far as can be determined, the [Dedman] house was never under attack by Indians . . ." (Oregon Society Daughters of the American Revolution 1959: 28-29).

Settlement Patterns and Land Programs

Several federal land policies shaped the pattern and course of settlement in the John Day watershed. First was the removal of Indian title. This was ultimately accomplished through treaties of land cession with the tribes of the region: Treaty with the Walla-Walla and Cayuse (June 9, 1855, ratified March 8, 1859), Treaty with the Nez Perces (June 11, 1855, ratified March 8, 1859), Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon (June 25, 1855, ratified March 8, 1859), Treaty with the Nez Perces (June 9, 1863, ratified April 27, 1867), and Treaty with the Snake (August 12, 1865, ratified July 5, 1866). These agreements ceded millions of acres to the United States and provided for reservations or the removal of tribes to other existing reservations (Kappler 1904: 694-698, 702-706, 714-719, 843-848, 876-878).

Pivotal among the federal land programs in the John Day region was the massive government grant of hundreds of thousands of acres to The Dalles-Boise Military Wagon Road Company. In 1874, that firm and its successor
purchasers formally secured odd-numbered sections, three square miles to either side of each mile of road right-of-way. This cut a swath through the John Day region, including portions of present-day Monument lands. The company wanted to sell some lands and hold onto others. Its policies clearly impacted where and when people would settle, for it controlled the price, acreage, and date of sales.

Fig. 12. Fertile bottomlands near Prairie City secured by owners of grant to The Dalles-Boise Military Road, ca. 1910 (OrHi ODOT 2186H).

In general, the United States followed an increasingly generous land policy in the nineteenth century and, by mid-century, Congress engaged in outright give-aways of the public domain. The creation of military bounties was an old system that had emerged during the colonial period and continued. It was a means for the government to pay soldiers who had served the public interest in
time of war. The War of 1812 and the Mexican War both led to laws which promised lands to veterans. The Act of 1847 permitted the issue of warrants to individuals for 40 or for 160 acre parcels. These warrants, along with old ones outstanding from the War of 1812, were dumped onto the market and discounted, encouraging speculators as well as veterans to move west. The Bounty Land Act of 1850 granted 80 to 160 acres to officers and soldiers who had served four to nine months, or who had served in wars since 1790 but had not previously secured a land grant (Gates 1968: 173-174; 270-272).

The Homestead Act of 1862 entitled any person who was head of a family or twenty-one years old (citizens, or those who had made a declaration of citizenship intent) to file on 80 acres at $2.50/acre or 160 acres at $1.25/acre. The claimant had to pay a $10 filing fee and two subsequent fees each of $4. If this person met the terms of proof, namely that they resided on the land and it was surveyed by the General Land Office, between the fifth and seventh year they could secure title merely for the fees. If claimants wanted to expedite the patent, they could pay the acreage fee and, if the land was surveyed, obtain the deed. Paul Gates, historian of federal land laws, commented: "The Homestead Act breathed the spirit of the West, with its optimism, its courage, its generosity and its willingness to do hard work . . ." (Gates 1968: 394-395).

If a person wanted to speculate in land, or anticipated its immediate development and wanted to subdivide it, the General Land Office would sell public lands at $1.25 per acre to cash purchasers. In a sense then, the cash entry system, the Homestead Act, and grants to military wagon roads and railroads worked in competition. Wagon road companies had to set their land prices at affordable rates. Since their grants were part of a vast checkerboard of alternate sections, their routes opened to settlement government lands as well as their own. This proved a mixed blessing for those seeking profits (Gates 1968).
The largess of Congress continued. The General Land Office used another measure for settlers on the Columbia Plateau to obtain land. The Desert Land Act (1877) permitted filing on up to 640 acres of non-timbered, non-mineral land not producing grass. Claimants paid $.25 cents an acre on filing and, within three years, if they could prove they had irrigated the land, they could secure title by paying another $1.00 an acre. In time 159,704 claimants filed on 38.2 million acres under the law; the General Land Office issued deeds to 8.6 million acres under the law in Oregon and the other ten western states where it applied (Gates 1968: 401).

The Enlarged Homestead Act (1909) permitted settlers to file upon an additional 320 acres beyond their initial claim. The rationale was to help create farms in arid regions of sufficient size to sustain livestock operations (Gates 1968: 504-505).

The Stock Raising Homestead Act (1916) permitted filing on an additional 640 acres of the public domain. The argument driving this law was that most of the prime lands had already been taken but to survive and prosper, stock raisers needed a larger land base. The law permitted filing on land "chiefly valuable for grazing and raising forage crops" and not susceptible to irrigation from any known source. Within its first decade of operation in the American West, the law attracted 114,896 claimants who filed on 45.6 million acres (Gates 1968: 516-520).

Through its various land programs, Congress encouraged sustained Euro-American settlement in the John Day basin. It passed laws which facilitated the development of range industries, and it gave generously from the public domain to encourage raisers of cattle, sheep, and horses to try their fortunes in the John Day watershed. (Anonymous 1902: 394). Bureau of the Census records on the course of agricultural development in the John Day watershed document a steady build-up of farm acreages between 1870 and 1950. In the latter half of
the twentieth century, there were declines in the numbers of acres in farms because some owners abandoned farming as an activity and some reforested their lands and moved from grazing into timber production.

Table 2. Acreage in Farms, Grant and Wheeler Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>18,177</td>
<td>199,590</td>
<td>445,170</td>
<td>899,329</td>
<td>1,074,351</td>
<td>1,072,852</td>
<td>1,020,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeler</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>415,576</td>
<td>688,056</td>
<td>819,400</td>
<td>729,800</td>
<td>766,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bureau of the Census 1895, 1913, 1952)

The actual number of farms in Grant and Wheeler counties increased until 1910 and then began a generally downward trend. An important part of the trend was the consolidation of holdings. Persons with capital bought out owners of small farms and consolidated the acreage into larger management units.

Table 3. Number of Farms, Grant and Wheeler Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeler</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bureau of the Census 1872, 1895, 1913, 1932, 1952)

**Early Settlement in the Vicinity of the National Monument**

Records of the General Land Office and its successor, the Bureau of Land Management, confirm the significant impact of the Dalles-Boise Military Road land grant on settlement both within and in the vicinity of the present-day Monument. In 1874, the grant's alternate, odd-numbered sections removed from
public entry hundreds of thousands of acres. This was especially true in the Painted Hills Unit where the wagon road passed through the watershed of Bridge Creek. The early land records further confirm that when local settlers attempted to use the Homestead Act to secure lands within the bounds of what is now the National Monument, they often did not succeed. Many relinquished their claims or had them cancelled by the General Land Office.

Sheep Rock Unit

Bisected by the John Day River, the Sheep Rock Unit lies north of Picture Gorge in Grant County, with tracts in T10, 11, and 12S, R26E, W.M. It includes arid mountain slopes, and the rich bottomlands of Turtle Cove, including the secluded valleys of Big Basin and Butler Basin. Settlement came particularly late to this inaccessible area. The first Euro-American resident is said to have been Frank Butler, a one-armed rancher who built a cabin and gave his name to Butler Basin in 1877 (McArthur 1974: 98-99).

Early settlers used several congressional programs to secure lands here. For instance, Mathias Howe, used the cash entry system to purchase 160 acres in 1876 in Section 20, T12S, R26E, W.M. In 1898, Floyd Officer secured a homestead patent to 160 acres in Section 6 in the Butler Basin. Sylvia Officer obtained a patent to forty acres under the Desert Land Act in Section 18 of this township. The odd-numbered sections – 5, 7, and 17 – were part of the grant to The Dalles-Boise Military Wagon Road Company. Because these patents were not confirmed until 1900 and 1901, it is probable that the tracts remained unsettled (though probably used for grazing) until issue of the deeds (BLM n.d.a, n.d.b, n.d.c).

BLM Master Title Plats, Historical Index, and Control Data Inventory confirm grants and filings on lands within the Sheep Rock Unit, as given below. Claims filed under the Homestead Act which were later relinquished are not
identified by name in the Control Data Inventory; only the serial number and
dates of filing and relinquishment are preserved.

- **T10S, R26E, W.M.**

  Section 31 160 acres in NENW, SENW, NESW, SESW were filed upon 11/04/1893 under the Homestead Act; the claim was cancelled 4/29/1904.

  Section 31 Peter J. Morrison purchased 80 acres, NESW, SESW on April 11, 1910.

  (BLM n.d.p, n.d.q, n.d.r)

- **T11S, R26E, W.M.**

  Section 20 Ransom Glaze secured patent on 8/12/1901 under the Homestead Act to NESW, NWSW, and SWSW.

  Section 30 Ebon Officer secured patent on 12/01/1898 under the Homestead Act to SENW, NESW, SESW.

  Section 30 A claimant under the Desert Land Act sought the NWSW and the NWSE on 11/23/1898; the claim was cancelled on 7/17/1905.

  Section 31 Ebon Officer secured patent on 12/01/1898 under the Homestead Act to NENW.

  Section 31 Finlay Morrison secured patent on 1/27/1904 to 159.06 acres under the Homestead Act in SENW, NESW, SWSW, and SESW.

  Section 32 A claimant under the Homestead Act filed on the SENE on 2/14/1906; the claim was cancelled on 5/19/1913.

  (BLM n.d.s, n.d.t, n.d.u)

- **T12S, R26E, W.M.**

  Section 6 Floyd Officer secured patent on 1/30/1898 to 160 acres in NENW, SENW, NESW, and NWSE.

  Section 6 Floyd Officer secured patent as a Desert Land Entry on 8/16/1906 to 157.41 acres in SESW, SWSE.
Section 7  All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 12/03/1901.

Section 17  All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 12/03/1901.

Section 18  Sylvia Officer secured patent as a Desert Land Entry on 9/21/1908 to 40 acres in NENE.

Section 30  A claimant under the Homestead Act filed on the NENE, NWNE, SENW, NESW on 2/23/1895; the claim was cancelled on 7/6/1896.

Section 30  A claimant under the Homestead Act filed on 7/8/1893 on the NWNE, SWNE, SENW, and NESW under the Homestead Act; the claim was cancelled on 3/14/1900.
(BLM n.d.a, n.d.b, n.d.c)

The first family to establish ranching operations in Butler Basin was the Officer family. Eli Casey Officer was the son of first-generation Willamette Valley pioneers. In 1861, he had migrated with his brother back across the Cascades, bringing some of the first sheep to the John Day valley. Members of his large, extended family were instrumental in the organization and early development of Grant County. Eli Officer raised both cattle and sheep on his homestead near Dayville until 1881, when according to family tradition, he moved to Butler Basin (Murray 1984b: 1-4; Taylor and Gilbert 1996: 21). BLM records, presented above, do not indicate that Eli formally secured any land there, but son Floyd, and Ebon Officer did secure patents to lands in Butler Basin under the Homestead Act.
One of nine children of Eli and Martha (Thorpe) Officer, Floyd Lee Officer was born and raised in the Dayville area. From December of 1890, Floyd homesteaded his own land in Butler Basin. He worked the land, for seven years, and secured patent to the 160-acre Butler Basin homestead in January of 1898 (Murray 1984b: 4). That same year, he married Sylvia Fitzgerald Officer, and together they raised eight children, living a rudimentary, hardscrabble existence. Twice a year Floyd went to The Dalles for supplies. His journeys sometimes lasted up to six weeks. Sylvia Officer rode horseback to Dayville – a child in front
and child behind her on the horse—to sell eggs and butter or barter for groceries. The Officers finally sold out in 1910 and relocated to ranch property in Dayville where the children could more easily attend school. Floyd Officer died in Dayville in 1948. Because of his intimate knowledge of the Butler Basin region and interest in fossils, Officer several times served as local guide for Thomas Condon, pioneer paleontologist from The Dalles (Ashton n.d.; Murray 1984b).

After 1919, the Sheep Rock area became home to a sizable ethnic community of immigrants from Scotland. Reared in a country of limited land and resources, with a restless yearning for economic opportunity, several men and women immigrated from Scotland to the upper John Day country at the end of the nineteenth century. Family surnames—Finlayson, MacKay, MacBain, McRae, Cant, Murray, Munro, and Frazier—confirmed their Scottish origins. An estimated 130 families with Scottish origins settled in the district served by the crossroads community of Dayville. The brogue of their English, their knowledge of Gaelic, familiarity with sheep raising, willingness to engage in hard work, and love of dancing provided a unique character to their community (Murray 1984a: 15-16).

Arriving from Scotland in 1905, James Cant Sr. worked on ranches in the area and, over several years, built up his sheep holdings by taking half of the annual production of lambs in lieu of salary. Cant married Elizabeth Grant, also from Scotland, in 1908. With his partner Johnny Mason, Cant purchased the Floyd and Sylvia Officer place in 1910. For some six decades, the Cant family continued to improve and expand their property as their ranching operation grew and evolved from sheep to cattle. By the mid-1970s, when the property was acquired by the National Park Service, the Cant Ranch had long been known as one of the most extensive, long-lived operations in the vicinity of the Monument (Toothman 1983).
When the Cants acquired the Officer homestead, they used many of its existing structures and improvements. These included the corral, orchard, irrigation system, fields, and buildings. Between 1915 and 1918, the Cants hired workmen to construct a commodious new ranch house, based on designs from *The Radford American Homes*, a popular pattern book (1903).

The new Cant house became a familiar landmark to travelers with the building of the highway in the early 1920s through Picture Gorge. People on the

Fig. 14. Home of James and Elizabeth Cant, erected 1917-18; F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service).
road often stopped for food and drink and sometimes for a room. The ranch complex grew in the 1920s with construction of a garage, barn, sheep-shearing sheds, watchman's hut, and a shed to house the Kohler light-plant. By the 1930s, the Cant Ranch headquarters included some sixteen buildings, corrals, gardens, orchards, irrigation systems, and fields (Taylor and Gilbert 1996: 7, 27-51).

Clarno Unit

The Clarno Unit is located east of the John Day River and north of Pine Creek in T7S, R19E, W.M. Iron Mountain runs diagonally through the center of the township. The tract lies near the eastern border of Wheeler County, close to the Wasco County line.

Settlement in the vicinity of Clarno concentrated along the river corridor to the west and commenced in the late 1860s, with the arrival of the Andrew and Eleanor Clarno family. Cadastral surveyors subdivided the township in October, 1873. At that time they noted the farms of "Matier" [Mettur] and Joseph Huntley on Pine Creek in sections 33-34 and 35. Huntley also had a large, fenced field on the east bank of the John Day River in sections 28, 29, 32, and 33. A partially fenced field lay in the bottomland a mile downstream on the west bank (Perkins 1873).

The cadastral survey plat of 1873 indicates that the cabins of George Mettur or "Matier" and Joseph Huntley lay just outside of the lands now within the National Monument. Huntley's house was on the south bank of Pine Creek. In 1880, George J. Mettur (Matier) purchased 120 acres in Section 34, the first deed issued in the township. Joseph Huntley did not secure his homestead patent until 1891.
The BLM Master Title Plat, Historical Index, and Control Data Inventory confirm grants and filings on lands within the Clarno Unit, as given below. Claims filed under the Homestead Act which were later relinquished are not identified by name in the Control Data Inventory; only the serial number and dates of filing and relinquishment are preserved.

- **T7S, R19E, W.M.**

  Section 23 All of the SW 1/4 was filed upon 11/4/1901 under the Homestead Act; the claim was relinquished 11/02/1909.

  Section 34 George Mettur purchased 120 acres, SWSW, SESW, and SWSE on 6/1/1880.
Section 34  Joseph Huntley secured a Homestead patent to SESE on 10/21/1891.

Section 35  Joseph Huntley secured a Homestead patent to SWSW, SESW, SWSE on 10/21/1891.

Section 35  Edward Lee purchased 120 acres, NESE, NWSE, and SESE on 10/02/1891.

(BLM n.d.d, n.d.e, n.d.f)

The especially rugged nature of this township precluded extensive settlement. Between 1887 and 1912 the General Land Office logged twenty cancellations on claims and issued sixteen deeds. More than half who attempted to settle failed to meet the terms of proof under either the Homestead Act or the Desert Land Act (BLM n.d.d, n.d.e, n.d.f).

Although their lands lay outside the boundaries of the present-day Clarno Unit of the Monument, the Clarno family was among the most successful and long-lived of ranching families in the area. Andrew Clarno first examined the John Day country in 1866 and, the following year, moved his large family and 300 head of cattle from Eugene to land on the Wasco County side (west bank) of the John Day River, one-half mile downstream from the present-day crossing of SR 218. The Clarnos operated a ferry crossing where the bridge now stands, and gave their name to the locality where a school, post office, hotel, and grange hall were established at various times over the next several decades (Campbell 1976: 13-14).

The Clarno family lived in a log cabin for a year before constructing a permanent home. Son John Clarno, a skilled teamster at age eighteen, was dispatched to pick up a double wagon load of milled lumber at The Dalles and haul it to the homestead with a team of twenty-four oxen (Campbell 1976: 15-22). On a site near the river, they built a home of plank box construction, with wrought iron nails and a full-width front porch. Little is known of the physical development
of the ranch. The family put in a garden, maintained a fruit orchard, and raised fine horses. The Clarno cattle ranching operation was renowned, and financially prosperous. Clarno cattle were trailed to Union Pacific Railroad railheads in Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada. As many as fifteen cowhands were employed during round-ups, and over 100 saddle horses were raised for use on the ranch (Campbell 1976: 21-23).

Fig. 16. Clarno School, moved ca. 1893 from Sorefoot Creek to Andrew Clarno homestead, n.d. (OrHi 66175)

The family holdings grew as the children reached adulthood. In 1881, son John W. Clarno completed residency and proof to obtain a homestead patent to 160 acres in Section 32 on the Wheeler County side of the river. For reasons
uncertain, Andrew Clarno did not receive patent to his original homestead until 1889 (Campbell 1976: 14). Andrew and son Charles Clarno both purchased additional lands in this vicinity in 1889 and 1890. In 1912, John Clarno sold his parents’ original homestead, signaling the end of a colorful era in local history (Campbell 1967: 14, 88).

**Painted Hills Unit**

Situated in the watersheds of Bear and Bridge creeks northwest of Mitchell, this unit of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is in Wheeler County. A portion of the wagon road from The Dalles to Canyon City traversed Bridge Creek, thus opening its bottomlands to settlement at an early date.

In 1872, a cadastral surveyor found only two settlers in T10S, R20 E, W.M. These were Al Sutton and McConnell who lived on the "Dalles Military Wagon Road" in the Bridge Creek drainage. John S. Kincaid, the surveyor, wrote:

> There is a small quantity of good land in this township, chiefly situated along John Days River and Bridge creek, but without frequent irrigation it is comparatively worthless in an agricultural point of view. The general surface of the Township is very hilly. It is well watered by John Days River and its tributaries (Kincaid 1872).

He referred to Bridge Creek as a "small stream with a rapid current". Sutton secured appointment as postmaster of Bridge Creek post office on July 2, 1868; the station closed on January 20, 1882 (Fussner 1975: 23; Landis 1969: 9).

In 1873 John S. Kincaid subdivided T11S, R21E, W.M., an area bisected by Bridge Creek and through which passed The Dalles-Boise Military Road. Here Kincaid noted the presence of early settlers Christian A. Myers, James Curry, Mcgarth, and Thomas Caton. He noted an unidentified claim with a fenced field in Section 5, subsequently part of the National Monument.
Jesse L. Miner secured a homestead patent to this tract later, in 1899 (Kincaid 1873; BLM n.d.g, n.d.h, n.d.i).

In 1881 Fullerton, cadastral surveyor, found only one settler in T11S, R20E, W.M. This was S. A. Lawrence who resided in Section 25, more than three miles due south from subsequent National Monument lands. Fullerton noted: "There is but little land in this Township susceptible of cultivation, though it is totally well adapted to grazing purposes." Fullerton was aware of the fossil deposits. He continued: "This Township [is] composed of slate rock which bears the imprint of various kinds of leaves to a very perfect degree" (Fullerton 1881).

In 1880, surveyor Aaron F. York subdivided T10S, R21E, W.M. York found only one settler in the entire township: "Sam'l Carrol." The Carroll house stood east of The Dalles Military Road in the SE ¼ of Section 31, some distance east of Bridge Creek.

BLM Master Title Plat, Historical Index, and the Control Data Inventory confirm grants and filings on lands within the Painted Hills Unit, as given below. Claims filed under the Homestead Act which were later relinquished are not identified by name in the Control Data Inventory; only the serial number and dates of filing and relinquishment are preserved.

- T11S, R20E, W.M.

  Section 1 All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 12/03/1901.

  Section 2 All of this section was filed upon 11/15/1920 under the Stock Raising Homestead Act; it was relinquished on 11/30/1921.

  Section 2 All of this section was filed upon 1/6/1922 under the Stock Raising Homestead Act; it was relinquished on 8/22/1923.

  Section 11 All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 11/17/1900.

  (BLM n.d.j, n.d.k, n.d.l)
• T11S, R21E, W.M.

Section 5  All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 4/18/1900.

Section 6  160.74 acres in SENE, NESE, and SESE were patented as a Homestead to Jesse L. Miner on 2/25/1899.

Section 6  160.62 acres in SWNE, NWSE, SWSE were filed upon 9/20/1916 under the Homestead Act; the claim was relinquished 2/23/1917.

Section 7  All of this section was granted to The Dalles-Boise Wagon Road Company and patented 11/17/1900.

(BLM n.d.g, n.d.h, n.d.i)

• T10S, R20E, W.M.

Section 36  All of this section was a School Grant to the State of Oregon on 2/14/1859.

(BLM n.d.m, n.d.n, n.d.o)

• T10S, R21E. W.M.

Section 31  160 acres in the SSE, NWSE, and SWNE were patented as a Homestead to Samuel Carroll on 22/1/96.

(BLM n.d.v, n.d.w, n.d.x)

In 1868 Samuel Carroll and his family settled on Bridge Creek in view of the colorful formation now called Carroll Rim. Carroll lands occupied much of the area now within the present-day visitor center at Painted Hills. In 1971, grandson George Carroll reported, “I used to irrigate alfalfa where the Painted Hills state park ground is, on part of the Carroll place. On the Painted Hills I learned to ride my first bicycle – just took it up one of those steep, colored slopes, got on it and let it go” (Brogan 1972: 266).

Samuel Carrol and his wife reared twelve children on their ranch and grazed sheep in the nearby mountains. Like others in the region during the Bannock War scare of 1878, the Carrolls fortified their property. Phil Brogan,
historian of central Oregon, later wrote: "Fearing further Indian attacks, Samuel Carroll built a small fort, using blocks of limestone he had sawed from a quarry. In the 1880s, the Carrolls razed the fort and used the stones to build fireplaces and irrigation dams." With the opening of stage connections between The Dalles and Canyon City, the Carrolls served freighters and travelers, by maintaining the road, and charging tolls. A flashflood in 1884 tore down Bridge Creek and overtook the Carroll home. A daughter and three grandchildren of the Carrolls perished (Brogan 1972: 258-261).

The Carroll family of the Painted Hills lived like hundreds of other families in the John Day country in the last half of the nineteenth century. They eked out an existence. They secured meat by raising livestock and by hunting deer. They raised vegetables in a garden irrigated by Bridge Creek. They raised grain and harvested wheat for bread. They tanned hides and made moccasins and shoestrings. They set out orchards and raised fruit. Because of the alkaline water, they made cider vinegar and treated the water with it and sugar (Brogan 1972: 261-263).

In spite of isolation, the Carrolls and others living along Bridge Creek were connected to the outside world. In 1899, an expedition of students led by Prof. John Merriam from the University of California camped in the area to excavate for fossils. In 1902, the men in the family cut juniper poles and helped stretch the first telephone line up Bridge Creek. After 1900, family members began to leave the area, and the ranch was sold to the Hudspeth firm of Prineville after World War Two (Brogan 1972: 264, 267-268). None of the ranch buildings are extant.

Subsistence Living

For decades, those who settled in the John Day country, or those who were born into families residing in that region, shared basic elements of a recognizable lifestyle. Almost all, particularly those living in rural areas but even
those living in small towns, engaged in unceasing labors for survival. They lived close to the land, knew and used its potentials, and confronted numerous challenges. Weather – the heat of summer and bitter cold of winter – and flash floods, lightning strikes, falling rocks, forest and prairie fires, rattlesnakes, and rabid animals were realities they had to confront and endure. Illnesses and lack of professional medical care catapulted home doctoring and nursing to a higher significance than in other parts of the region. Life, for a long time and for some a lifetime, was a scramble and a test.

Isolation was a common feature for the scattered residents of Grant and Wheeler counties. Until the 1910s, most of the region was linked to the outside world only by a system of trails and rudimentary wagon roads. Lack of electricity and telephone lines perpetuated isolation far longer than in other areas. Residents used candles, kerosene lamps, carbide lamps, and their own electrical plants. Larger ranches such as that of James and Elizabeth Cant by the 1910s had their own generators to provide a few hours of electricity each day to run shearing equipment, operate electric lights or, by the 1920s, to power a radio. "Yeah, we spent lonely days," recalled Rhys Humphreys, "but we didn't know any better. It was lonely here; the only people that we ever visited was neighbors" (Humphreys 1984a: 4, 21). Isolation for some was a function of labor. The dozens of men who tended sheep and prospectors and miners frequently lived alone or far from society for days and weeks.
Daily labors in an era of subsistence living were often gender specific. Women customarily carried nearly total responsibility for maintaining the household and child-rearing. Their tasks – backbreaking and monotonous – involved cooking, washing, mending, making clothing, food preservation, and cleaning. They planted and weeded vegetable gardens, drove away birds and rabbits, picked foodstuffs, dried and parched foods, canned dozens of pints and quarts of home-grown fruit and vegetables, and recycled materials. Their fingers turned old clothing into quilts and rag rugs. They watered stove ashes in hoppers to make lye to process fat and bacon grease into soap. They raised chickens and collected eggs and milked cows and made butter. Any surpluses they carried to town to barter for dry goods and staples. They worked constantly and lived frugally (Jackson 1984: 24-25; Murray 1984a: 64).
Men shouldered other responsibilities. They cut, hauled, and stacked wood to fire cook stoves and heat dwellings. In winter they sawed blocks of ice and hauled them to insulated ice houses for use in subsequent months for food preservation and for cooling beverages. They dug cellars, lined them with stone, and filled bins with potatoes, turnips, and apples wrapped in newspapers. Hard labor duties for men included stock tending, sheep shearing, branding, fence construction and maintenance, building houses and barns, blacksmithing, moving herds to markets, and digging ditches. Irrigation was critical in an arid environment. Men hand-dug canals and ditches, planted willows, locust, and poplar along their courses to stabilize their banks, and worked each year to clean the ditches of slide debris and weeds and to repair washouts. Men repaired wagons, harness, mowing machines, plows, harrows, and tools. They hauled
foodstuffs in wagons, on pack teams, in touring cars, and in trucks. They changed oil and gaskets, repaired flat tires, and rebuilt engines (Cant and Cant 1984: 21-22; Jackson 1984: 22; Murray 1984a: 38, 60-66; Murray 1984b: 2).

Men also contributed to the family diet by hunting, fishing, planting, and pruning fruit trees as well as butchering cattle, sheep, and hogs. They constructed smokehouses and tended fires to preserve meat as jerky and hams. Some worked with their wives to stuff intestines with ground meat fragments and spices to make sausage or head cheese. They hauled wheat to grist mills and brought home flour and corn meal. They tilled the vegetable patch and helped guard the plantings from hungry deer and rabbits. They tanned hides and bartered with Indians from the Warm Springs Reservation for gloves and

Fig. 19. Men at work on the Bob Wright on the Parrish Creek Ranch, n.d. (Courtesy Fossil Museum).

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
moccasins. When they lacked cash, a common occurrence, they bartered labor, goods, and livestock for necessary commodities, tools, or food (Cant and Cant 1984: 28; Humphreys 1984b: 25; Murray 1984a: 29-30).

John Murray, a lifetime resident of the area, described the common barter system:

Well, if it was convenient you traded with your neighbor, yes. If your neighbor had a work horse, and you needed a work horse, and he wanted to sell that work horse, and you had the money, you could buy the work horse, or vice versa, or whatever. Or if you had an extra piece of machinery, or you wanted to buy a piece of machinery, and he happened to have it, and if you could buy it cheaper than you could buy it new, why you bought it because you didn't have any money anyhow (Murray 1984a: 29).

The residents of the upper John Day region were perhaps less affected by the impact of the Great Depression. Most lived frugally and had the means to survive through their own hard work. Many raised or procured large amounts of their own foodstuffs. None had high expectations. In several instances young adults remained at home a few years longer, securing housing from their parents and helping work the ranch. The Grant County Bank in John Day, a central point of deposit and loans for many, was shored up by the Oliver family and others and remained solvent, closing only for the national Bank Holiday. Its stability provided a security for the residents of the region not experienced by millions of Americans in other parts of the country (Humphreys 1984a: 26; Murray 1984a: 37).

Subsistence living demanded hard work but it engendered satisfaction. Through the first half of the twentieth century, the rural population of Grant County and Wheeler County remained sparse but relatively constant (Mark 1996: 28). Those who stayed were satisfied with their lot, and considered living in the region with its stark beauty and personal freedom a sufficient reward for confronting its daily challenges.
Cultural Resources Summary

Because of its isolation, some corners of the John Day basin witnessed a period of subsistence-level settlement that lasted from the early 1860s to the turn of the century and beyond. Early ranching and farming activities altered the landscape, and left a pattern of physical imprints on the land different from that imposed by native peoples. Cultural resources associated with settlement in the area are not limited to buildings and structures, but will likely include more ephemeral remnants such as ornamental vegetation, irrigation system features, and abandoned farming equipment.

Homesteads in the vicinity of the Monument clung to the bottomlands of the river and its tributary streams where water was available for domestic and agricultural purposes. On individual homesteads, rudimentary wood structures and corrals clustered near natural springs and native groves of black cottonwoods. The farmsteads were oriented for maximum protection from sun and winter storms.

Arable land was limited to the narrow river plain. Settlers broke the land for cultivation, first in a limited way with gardens, orchards, and shade trees, and later with fields of grain or hay to supplement the feeding of livestock. Irrigation was a necessity in the semi-arid climate. Settlers built hand-dug ditches – main lines and laterals – providing gravity feed systems that served the long, linear fields along the river corridor. The early settlers of John Day primarily ran cattle and sheep operations, so the physical impact of each family’s presence extended to range lands miles from the homestead’s headquarters. By 1900, native bunch grasses had largely disappeared due to overgrazing, and cheatgrass and other weeds grew in its place. Increasingly, fencing segmented the open range (Strong 1940: 274).
Only one cultural resource within the boundaries of the Monument (or within all of Grant and Wheeler counties) associated with the theme of settlement is listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

- The Cant Ranch, established as the Officer Homestead ca. 1890.

Oregon State Inventory of Historic Places listings from Grant and Wheeler counties (encompassing listings in both Umatilla and Malheur National Forests) include the following examples of rural settlement:

- The Oliver Ranch, established 1880 in the Canyon City area
- Mountain Creek School, built 1910 in the vicinity of Mitchell
- Chess Wooden Homestead Cabin, ca. 1880, Mitchell vicinity
- “Mountain Ranch” House and Barn, built ca. 1870s, 1880s, in the Mitchell area
- Howard-McGee House, built ca. 1890 in the Mitchell area
• Lower Pine Creek School, built ca. 1900 in the Clarno area, now moved into the town of Fossil
• Joaquin Miller Cabin, dating from 1865, now part of the Grant County Historic Museum complex at Canyon City
• Henry H. Wheeler Landmark, erected in the 1920s in the Mitchell vicinity
• Lovlett Corral, from ca. 1900, in the Umatilla National Forest in northeastern Grant County
• Princess Cabin, Buck Bulch Cabin, Rapp Cabin, dating from 1902 – 1920s, all in Umatilla National Forest
• Lyons Ranch, dating from the 1920s, Malheur National Forest in southeastern Grant County
• Kight Cabin, Snow Cabin, Still Cabin, Blue Bird Cabin, and Brown Bear Cabin, dating from 1900 – 1926, all in the Malheur National Forest

Area tourism literature listings for places associated with early settlement, in addition to places identified above, include:
• Old Red Barn, built 1883, on U.S. Hwy. 26 outside Mt. Vernon
• Julia Henderson Pioneer Park, site of the annual Eastern Oregon Pioneer Picnic (dating from 1899), on SR 19 between Fossil and Service Creek

The Cant Ranch remains the most intact example of homestead settlement followed by sustained sheep and cattle ranching, inside the boundaries of the Monument. The National Park Service purchased 878 acres of the ranch in 1975 to expand the Sheep Rock Unit (Cant and Cant 1984; Steber 1984). Recognizing the significance of the property to the Monument's cultural history, the Park Service nominated the 200-acre Cant Ranch Historic District to the National Register in 1983 (Toothman 1983). The district has since been more broadly assessed as a cultural landscape, and encompasses twenty-four
contributing resources – eleven buildings, five structures, and eight sites, including agricultural fields along the river (Taylor and Gilbert 1996). Now serving as headquarters for the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, the Cant Ranch is also the focal point of the Monument’s cultural resource interpretive program.

BLM records indicate that a handful of other homesteaders settled, if only temporarily, within the present-day boundaries of Sheep Rock, Painted Hills, and Clarno. Yet no evidence has arisen to suggest that any other significant homesteads survive on National Park Service-owned lands within the Monument. Probable locations for settlement along the river and streams are well-known and well-traveled. Park Service staff interviewed early in this project knew of no other standing homestead-era structures on Monument land (Hammett, Cahill, Fremd 1996). Burtchard, Cheung, and Gleason’s archaeological reconnaissance of 1993 located nothing of significance in terms of homestead remnants. An identified historic enclosure in Sheep Rock turned out to be a part of the Cant Ranch. Sheepherder Springs Site, which includes a cabin, was identified in the survey on private land north of the Clarno (Burtchard, Cheung and Gleason 1998).

No comprehensive field survey of extant historic resources has ever been conducted in Grant or Wheeler counties. And yet, secondary sources are replete with names of early pioneers who settled in the nooks and crannies of the John Day country. There are likely to be extant historic properties associated with settlement in the larger area around the Monument, and there are undoubtedly historic archaeological sites and scatters to mark the locations of failed homesteads.

Some ranchers succeeded and remained on the land, reusing, adapting, moving, and remodeling early homestead structures over the years. Such “evolutionary” ranches may not have the obvious integrity of the Cant Ranch, but
will reflect layers of continued use over time. An example is the Mascall Ranch, at the head of Picture Gorge in Sheep Rock, where successive generations of the Mascall family have raised sheep and cattle since 1874 (Mascall 1939). Another is Burnt Ranch, five miles north of the Painted Hills at the mouth of Bridge Creek, homestead of James N. Clark, stage stop on The Dalles Military Road, and site of a well-known raid by Pauite Indians in 1865 (Fussner 1975: 23-24).

Other property types in addition to homesteads reflect the era of early settlement. The site of Camp Watson relates to government efforts to wrest the land from native inhabitants, opening the door to settlement. Situated near the former village of Antone on an old, unimproved stretch of The Dalles Military Road southeast of Mitchell, its precise location on the ground has been lost in recent decades. In 1932, local American Legion posts sponsored a dedication and placements of marble grave markers at the camp cemetery. In 1957, historian Judith Keyes Kenney easily located the site:

Today, the site of Camp Watson, about five miles west of Anatone [sic], is easily accessible from the Mitchell-John Day highway. Fort Creek still flows, though nothing else remains to be seen but marble markers in the cemetery, overgrown with pine. It lays on the western hill, with the markers placed in a row...(Kenney 1957: 15-16).

In November of 1958, the National Park Service entered the site of Camp Watson on the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, under the theme of Westward Migration (Military and Indian Affairs). At that time, the field surveyor was unsuccessful in re-locating the site (Everhart 1958).

Family cemeteries such as the Clarno and Carroll family plots are mentioned in secondary literature. There are likely to be more of these on remote knolls and hillsides. This is affirmed by entries in the Oregon Cemetery Survey (conducted 1978) for fifteen pioneer cemeteries in Wheeler County and thirty-five cemeteries in Grant County (OR DOT 1978). Other rural crossroads

91
structures associated with early settlement, such as the grange hall at Clarno, have yet to be inventoried by the State of Oregon or by the respective counties.

Fig. 21. The Clarno Grange, adjacent to the SR 218 bridge at Clarno. F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service)

Several suggestions are made for further investigation of cultural resources associated with the context of Settlement:

1. Conduct a historic resource survey/inventory of ranch inholdings within the Monument. Not specified within the scope of this historic resource study, a comprehensive, property by property field survey of inholdings would provide a stronger comparative basis for the interpretation of the Cant Ranch. Permission to access private lands, and the cooperation of private owners would be required. Such a survey could yield information about “evolutionary”
ranches in the era, where the continued use and adaptation of the ranch complex to the present time has made historic character less visible.

2. Expand the excellent oral history program conducted in the Sheep Rock Unit to the Painted Hills and Clarno units.

3. Update the November, 1958 National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings listing of Camp Watson, through field verification of the fort site and cemetery.

4. Ascertain locations of any pioneer cemeteries (beginning with the Clarno and Carroll family plots) in the vicinity of the Clarno, Painted Hills, or Sheep Rock units. Work with property owners adjacent to and/or within the bounds of the Monument to ensure the preservation and security of pioneer cemeteries in the area.

5. Encourage and/or partner with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office to conduct professional survey/inventory of historic properties in Grant and Wheeler counties. Current survey data is out-of-date, unsubstantiated, and terribly incomplete. Updated survey would provide much-needed site-specific data to enliven the broad themes outlined in this report, thus increasing the interpretive knowledge base at the Monument.
Chapter Five

TRANSPORTATION
Chapter Five

TRANSPORTATION

For Euro-Americans, the upper John Day watershed remained an inaccessible pocket of north-central Oregon through the decade of the 1850s. Its rough terrain and unnavigable stream left it off the beaten track of early explorers, missionaries, and military men. Visitation by non-natives was almost non-existent until the early 1860s when gold was discovered in the vicinity of Canyon Creek on the upper John Day, at the present site of Canyon City. What first took shape as a well-traveled supply route from The Dalles to the mines at Canyon City was formalized as The Dalles-Boise Military Road by the late 1860s. For roughly fifty years, this wagon road provided primary access into the upper John Day country. Although nearby railroad stub lines did shorten the region's connections to markets after the turn of the nineteenth century, no major lines ever penetrated the upper basin. Easy access to the area now surrounding John Day Fossil Beds National Monument did not become a reality until the advent of the automobile, and the construction of state-supported roads and bridges in the 1910s and 1920s.

Oregon Trail Crossing

In the 1840s and 1850s, Willamette Valley-bound emigrants on the Oregon Trail encountered the John Day River in their route across the Columbia Plateau, between the Blue Mountains and the eastern entrance of the Columbia Gorge. Because of the dangers of travel in canoes and bateaux on the Columbia and the rugged basalt flows along its shores, the emigrants dropped south to follow a sandy, almost desolate trace through bunchgrass and sagebrush. Their
route lay some seventeen miles south of the Columbia and brought thousands to a well-traveled ford on the John Day River, later known as McDonald’s Ford/Ferry.

The crossing provided little challenge. At mile 1,770 west of Independence, Missouri, the emigrants were experienced in crossing streams. The John Day was relatively shallow but rocky, especially in August and
September when the majority arrived at the ford. Some took advantage of the region to send their worn and hungry livestock to graze on the bunchgrass of the Plateau. This type of grass was far more abundant in the 1840s and 1850s than in subsequent decades when cattle raising and tilling dramatically diminished its presence and gave rise to a spread of sagebrush. Emigrant comments about crossing the John Day River are numerous but often terse:

- Jacob Hammer, 1844
  [October] 17th. We traveled ten miles and camped on John Day's river (Hammer 1990: 165).

- Edward Evans Parrish, 1844
  Tuesday, Nov. 12. Came to a long, steep hill, doubled teams, got up and drove on two and a half miles to John Day's River and camped (Parrish 1888: 118).

- Joel Palmer, 1845
  September 26. This day we traveled three miles. The road ascends the bluff; is very difficult in ascent from the steepness, requiring twice the force to impel the wagons usually employed; after affecting the ascent, the sinuosity of the road led us among the rocks to the bluff on John Day's river; here we had another obstacle to surmount, that of going down a hill very precipitous in its descent, but we accomplished this without loss or injury to our teams. This stream comes tumbling through kanyons and rolling over rocks at a violent rate (Palmer 1847: 60).

- Loren B. Hastings, 1847
  October 16. Saturday. This day moved down to creek to John Days river (saw some Indians here). We crossed the river, found 26 wagons, camped; we passed and ascended a rocky ravine; we found three wagons that had been robbed by the Indians and 12 head of oxen driven off. Tears stood in the eyes of the women and children and the men were down in the mouth (Hastings 1926: 23).
• Elizabeth Dixon Smith, 1847
  Oct 21 made 12 miles camped on John Days river scarce feed willows to burn here we put a guard for fear of indians which we have not done for 3 months before (Smith 1983: 138-139).

• Riley Root, 1848
  [August] 28th 7 miles to crossing of John Day's river. Way down Beaver fork, very rocky, and road crosses it 4 times.
  [August] 29th Down John Day's river, half a mile. Then ascended the bluff, about one mile, up a narrow, winding, rocky ravine, the worst we have travel[e]d. On the top of this bluff, the road divides, one leading to the Columbia river. The other, to the left, is the one we took (Root 1955: 29-30).

• William Wright Anderson, 1848
  August the 28th we traveled 8 miles we pursued a verry narrow rough and rocky canyon for 7 miles where it empties into John days river we crossed this river and traveled one mile down it and camped here the road turns to the left and goes up a steep hill in a narrow canyon at the mouth of this canyon we were camped (Anderson 1848: 42-43).

• Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, 1848
  19th September. As we were unable to find water anywhere we made preparations for travelling throughout the night. During the day I was able to help a poor woman who thought she was going to die. I delivered her baby. We left later on, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and traveled all night without the slightest mishap.
  About midnight we went through a little valley where the cold was intense. At 5 o'clock in the morning we reached a creek. We took advantage of this by getting our horses to drink a little water but as there was no fodder we carried on for another seven miles and camped on the banks of the John Day River (Lempfrit 1984: 144-145).

• Harriet Talcott Buckingham, 1851
  [August 13] Traveled 12 miles over verry hilly road, ascended a mountain which we had to double team, and could hardly get up at that, Camp to night on John Days river a pleasant stream, upon the mountain just before
we crossed the river we saw Mt. Hood towering high above the Cascades, A beautiful snow capt Mt (Buckingham 1984: 93-94).

- John S. Zieber, 1851
  Tuesday, September 30 — We made an early start and had not proceeded over 1 1/2 miles when we passed those who had yesterday gone ahead. In 8 1/2 miles we came to a spring, affording water for cooking but not enough to water many cattle, and we were obliged to drive on to John Day River before we could get water for the afternoon. Camped after crossing the river. The valley of the river is narrow and without timber. A few small willows afforded scanty supply of fuel and we shall have to travel 36 miles before we get to wood. Fish appear to be plenty in the river (Zieber 1921: 332).

- Esther Belle (McMillan) Hanna, 1852
  September 1st, Wednesday: Travelled about 12 or 14 miles today until noon over a good road, which brought us to John Day River. We had a very steep hill to descend in coming to it. We had all rejoiced to see water once more as our poor beasts had had none since yesterday noon. We have encamped on the river bottom, which is large and very level (Allen 1946: 100).

- E. W. Conyers, 1852
  September 9. We ascended a very long hill about two miles to the table lands, and traveled on three miles further and descended a very steep hill. Here we forded John Day River and traveled down the river one-half mile and camped. There has been good grass in this valley, but the ground is now barren, the grass having been eaten off. We drove our cattle to the table lands back of our camp, where we found bunch grass. Wood tonight is very scarce . . ." (Conyers 1906: 498).

These diary entries confirm that the early overland emigrants gave the John Day River little attention. Their goal upon reaching it was to find water for cooking and for their thirsty livestock. They forded it, camped on its banks, and took their livestock to graze on the bunchgrass on the tablelands above. None turned up the river to explore its course. The John Day was just one more
stream to cross during a long journey to a destination west of the Cascade Mountains.

The established crossing would change in time, reflecting a growing pattern of settlement east of the Cascades. In 1858, newcomer Tom Scott put in a ferry about a half-mile north of the emigrant ford. In October, 1864, Elizabeth Lee Porter forded the shallow stream and wrote: "Came over a nice road to Mud Springs. A nice day. A ranch house here just put up. 30 miles to The Dalles" (Porter 1990: 32). In 1866 Dan Leonard is said to have built a bridge at the site. Leonard’s Bridge reportedly collapsed in 1896 with a rancher from Condon and his heavily loaded wagon teams on it. Around 1904, W.G. “Billy” McDonald and his wife Mattie began operation of a ferry service at the crossing. It remained operational until 1922 when the Columbia River Highway opened (Gilliam County Historical Society, n.d.).

Supplies to the Gold Mines

The first improvements in transportation into the remote John Day country were triggered by the discovery of gold. Gold strikes on Canyon Creek in 1862 opened the gates to settlement of the valley. In the early 1860s, prospectors had made a series of important discoveries in eastern Oregon and far-flung Washington Territory (which then included Idaho). These included the placer deposits at Orofino, Pierce City, and Florence in north-central Idaho, as well as mines in the Boise Basin. In northeastern Oregon, miners found gold along streams in the Blue Mountains at Auburn and Sumpter. Miners also struck placer gold on the western flanks of the Blue Mountains in the upper John Day watershed in 1861 (Nedry 1952: 237-243).

In June, 1862, miners from Yreka, California, were traveling through central and eastern Oregon toward the new diggings at Florence, Idaho, on the Salmon River. When the party reached Auburn and the mines of the
Powder River, the men learned that others had filed on most of the claims at Florence. William C. Aldred, a member of the group, then turned back to prospect Canyon Creek in the upper John Day region. He persuaded eighteen others to join him. When they returned to the place where they had camped but a few days before, they found several miners busily exploiting the placers. Aldred's group thus took claims at what they called Prairie Diggings four miles upriver and reportedly each soon secured a return of $10,000 for his efforts. Word spread like wildfire. Miners continued to pour in, swelling the population of the region almost overnight to more than five thousand (Oliver 1961: 17-20).

In a matter of weeks, newcomers rushed to claims they staked along the banks of Canyon Creek. Others spied out deposits along the North Fork of the John Day and still others tunneled into the gravels in the valley near John Day to find rich but difficult-to-reach scatters of dust and nuggets along the bedrock. They lacked a technology to help them get to these riches, but, for the moment, the rush to the easy claims was sufficient to lead to the laying out of towns.

Mining communities arose at Independence on Granite Creek; Susanville on Elk Creek; Marysville on Little Pine Creek; Dixie Creek, a mining site a dozen miles east of Prairie City; Canyon City on Canyon Creek; and John Day, or Lower Town. Canyon City was the focal point of this activity – by September of 1862 some 500 to 600 miners had reportedly converged in the narrow gulch (Nedry 1952: 243). As a result of such rapid population increase in the John Day valley, the Oregon legislature carved Grant County out of Wasco County on October 14, 1864, less than two years after the gold strikes. The new administrative region sprawled south toward Nevada and included present-day Harney as well as Wheeler counties, both later cut out of Grant (Corning 1956: 102).
Much-needed supplies to these communities moved by difficult trail southeast from The Dalles, the head of shipping on the Columbia River. Documentation for the existence of this particular trail prior to the gold rush decade of the 1860s is scant. The route was to some degree determined by existing ferries and bridge crossings over the Deschutes River. A ferry crossing at the mouth of the Deschutes had been in operation since 1853. Cattleman John Y. Todd built a bridge in 1860 (later know as Sherar’s Bridge) at the strategic military crossing identified by Major Enock Steen along Wallen’s 1859 route up the Deschutes. Another bridge, situated just four miles south of the river’s confluence at the Columbia, was completed in 1862 by William Nix.

From these crossings, several trails traversed the high plateau in what is now Sherman County to the east, and dropped down into the deep valley of the John Day between Pine Creek and Bridge Creek. From there the trail followed
Bridge Creek south past the Painted Hills to the vicinity of present-day Mitchell, then veered east over the hills into the valley of the upper John Day, and on to Canyon City. Quickly this general route saw heavy usage by those headed for the gold fields, and became commonly known as The Dalles to Canyon City Road (Neilsen 1985: 36-37).

Fig. 24. General route of The Dalles to Canyon City Road through the Bridge Creek drainage, northwest of Painted Hills Unit; F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service).

By April of 1863, 150 miners left The Dalles each day headed for the diggings at Canyon City, along with 200 pack animals, and ten to twelve freight wagons loaded down with payloads of 3,000 to 5,000 pounds apiece. The business of packing boomed between 1862 to 1885. Long strings of twenty to forty mules carried all the provisions necessary to sustain the burgeoning new population of the mining districts. These packers hauled picks, shovels, clothing, food, nails, rope, bolts, and dynamite. J.J. Cozart and Joseph Sherar are two of
the more colorful packers mentioned in the record (Oliver 1961: 84-85; Neilsen 1985: 36-37).

![An eight-horse team pulling a steam boiler, stopped in front of the Fossil Hotel, ca. 1900 (City of Fossil Museum).](image)

Other enterprising men were quick to take advantage of the volume of passenger traffic headed to the mining interior. The Canyon City Stage Line began in the early 1860s, running three stages a week over the 180-mile road. Henry Wheeler, for whom Wheeler County is named, secured the mail contract in 1864 and was hired by Wells Fargo to carry out shipments of gold. Wheeler operated a four-horse stage between Canyon City and The Dalles for four years, risking life and limb in repeated confrontations with highwaymen and Indians. Stage stops became established along the route at Sherar’s Bridge, Bakeoven, Cross Hollows or Shaniko, Antelope, Burnt Ranch, Bridge Creek, Antone, and...
Dayville, among others. Here, horses were changed, or fed and watered, and travelers could lay over to recover from the rigors of the trip. Most early stage stops consisted of a barn, corrals, and a farmhouse, where hearty, home-cooked meals were offered (Oliver 1961: 22-23, 86-87).

As The Dalles to Canyon City Road improved, pack outfits were replaced with commercial freight wagons capable of hauling larger items such as machinery, fencing, pianos, bricks, pipes, and handcarts. Freight teams consisted of from six to twelve horses, and two to four wagons. Freighting outfits continued to supply the John Day region, its ranches and towns, well into the twentieth century (Oliver 1961: 87-89).

As the John Day country opened up to settlement, cattlemen and farmers filtered into the river valley. Their presence along the bottomlands led to locally-
strategic river crossings. The shallow stream of the John Day could be readily forded eight months of the year. During times of normal high water in the late winter and early spring, cable ferries were operated by settlers at key locations, including the small settlements at Clarno, Twickenham, Service Creek, Spray, Kimberly, and Dayville. These ferries served as connecting links on stage and mail routes established in the 1870s and 1880s. With the advent of motorized transport after 1900, bridges were built at many of the old ferry crossings (Campbell 1976: 41-44).

Although navigable only by canoe and raft, the John Day River witnessed a brief period of colorful "steamboat" travel. The John Day Queen I was a miniature flat-bottomed sternwheeler built in 1892 by Charlie Clarno, son of pioneer Andrew Clarno of Wheeler County. Used as a pleasure craft and substitute ferry, the fifty-foot vessel operated during high water along a ten-mile stretch of the river above Clarno Rapids. In a flood of 1899, the well-loved little boat was lost, later to be rebuilt by Charlie Clarno in 1905 as the John Day Queen II (Campbell 1976: 52-61).

The Dalles-Boise Military Road

At about the same time that prospectors struck gold on Canyon Creek in central Oregon, the U.S. Congress, under the control of the Republican Party, was entertaining proposals to stimulate private enterprise in the American West. Unlike earlier programs where the Topographical Engineers of the U.S. Army surveyed and contracted for the construction of wagon roads west of the Cascades in the 1850s, the Republicans embraced a new model. They granted millions of acres of the public domain to private companies as an inducement to borrow money, hire surveyors, lay out, construct, and operate railroads and wagon roads across the West. Through an unparalleled "give away" of the nation's lands, Congress encouraged the private sector to create a transportation
infrastructure which would meet the needs of miners, settlers, and townsite developers (Jackson 1952).

Oregon, which became a state in 1859, was the target of a series of land grant wagon roads. Ostensibly these were intended to stimulate private building of roads which could be used for military purposes. They were thus identified as "military wagon roads" and were laid out, at least, with terminal points to give credence to that designation. The Oregon routes included the following, in order of their establishment:

- Oregon Central Military Wagon Road (Springfield to Fort Boise, Idaho), July 2, 1865 (13 Stat. 355).
- Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Military Wagon Road (Corvallis to Yaquina City), July 4, 1866.
- Willamette Valley and Cascade Mountain Military Wagon Road (Albany to Fort Boise, Idaho), July 5, 1866 (14 Stat. 89).
- The Dalles-Boise Military Road, February 25, 1867 (14 Stat. 409).
- Coos Bay Military Wagon Road (Roseburg to Coos Bay), March 3, 1869 (15 Stat. 340) (Beckham 1997: 2).

In each instance eager men of business and daring, which often far exceeded their capital and experience in locating and constructing wagon roads, formed companies and harangued the Oregon legislature to get the right to build the route and qualify for the land grant. Under the terms of the program, Congress passed the land grants to the state. When a section of the road was completed, the company could petition the governor to certify to its worthiness as a route of travel. With the governor's approval, the acreage was then transferred to the company which was free to sell or lease the tracts. The enabling legislation provided for three sections, each odd-numbered, for every mile of road built.
Lands of rich potentials were involved in these grants. In order to assure that would be the case, the road surveyors laid out routes which, wherever possible, passed through major stream courses and lush lake bottomlands. The Oregon Central Military Wagon Road, for example, when it reached the summit of the Cascade Range, did not head due east toward Boise. Instead, its surveyors turned it south into the Klamath Basin to carve out a huge section of the Klamath Indian Reservation as potential grant land. It then meandered into the valley of Goose Lake and into the Warner Valley and the Harney Basin, securing a bounty of lands eventually prized for their grazing.

So, in accord with what other companies were doing, the investors in The Dalles-Fort Boise Military Road examined a route into the John Day watershed to follow the stream east to the Blue Mountains. They found a trace well-established by mule teams and Wheeler's wagons, the existing Dalles to Canyon City Road. A regional history subsequently commented:

This route entered the territory now embraced by Wheeler county near where Burnt Ranch post-office now stands and followed the John Day river to Bridge creek, thence up Bridge creek to where Mitchell now stands, thence up the east branch of Bridge creek to the north branch of Badger creek, thence down Badger creek to where Caleb now stands and thence east along Mountain creek until it reached the border of what is now Grant county, about three miles west from the John Day river (Shaver et al. 1905: 636).

Under the terms of its grant of 1867, the company was to receive a bounty of public lands.

On October 20, 1868, the legislature approved the franchise of The Dalles Military Wagon Road Company to "build" the route. The terms of the federal grant provided that as soon as the company had constructed ten contiguous miles, it would seek up to thirty sections of land (19,200 acres) and, selling its grant, could then finance further construction and, in turn, secure more land. On June 23, 1869, Governor George L. Woods stated he had "made a careful
examination of said road" and commenced the certification process. There followed a second certification on January 12, 1870, attesting to completion of the entire road.

Fig. 27. Land grant corridor of The Dalles-Boise Military Road in John Day watershed (General Land Office 1876).
On June 18, 1874, Congress authorized transfer of lands to the State of Oregon and on December 18, 1874, the Commissioner of the General Land Office withdrew from public entry all odd-numbered sections within three miles of either side of the road. The road company then selected its grant (or lieu lands if any of the odd-numbered sections had already passed into private ownership). The incorporators, mostly businessmen from The Dalles, then sold the grant for $125,000 to Edward Martin of San Francisco, California, on May 31, 1876 (Shaver et al. 1906: 439-440).

In the stroke of a single transaction, Edward Martin became one of the largest landowners in the Pacific Northwest. Born in Ennescorthy, Ireland, in 1819, Martin settled in California in 1848 and entered the real estate business. In 1859 Martin was an incorporator of the Hibernia Savings and Loan Society. By 1863 he also owned E. Martin & Company, a wholesale liquor business. At his death, Martin's Eastern Oregon Land Company held a reported 450,000 acres in Oregon (Bancroft 1890[7]: 184-185).

Public dissatisfaction with the military wagon roads mounted steadily. Unable to sell the acres patented to them and obligated to pay taxes on the grants, the wagon road companies were pushed toward bankruptcy. Having built, at best, only rudimentary traces through rugged terrain, the companies were sharply criticized by aggrieved travelers and shippers who confronted mud holes, washouts, fords rather than bridges, landslides, and interminable delays.

The Grant County Express in March, 1876, printed a scathing denunciation of the road:

There are places on the Dalles Military Road where the bottom has dropped out. If the Road Company should follow their road to where it ought to go they would find a warmer climate than Grant County. Like a great serpent it has dragged itself through the John Day valley, poisoning the whole country. The road is an illegitimate child of one ex-Governor Woods – after a carpetbagger in Utah. It was and is a great swindle (Mosgrove 1980: 49).
Local settlers screamed unfair when the companies held out at "ransom prices" lush farmlands they desired to acquire. They charged, perhaps with
justice, that the companies had obtained the land from the public but were not serving the public. When the companies erected gates and dared to charge tolls for using their rights-of-way, residents along the route were ready to mutiny. Some refused to pay; some drove around the gates; some tore them down and threatened to kill the toll keepers.

Public outcry grew steadily about the unfinished road through the John Day watershed and its lack of maintenance. In 1885 the Oregon legislature passed a memorial requesting Congress to look into possible fraud. On March 2, 1889, Congress authorized the Attorney-General to sue for foreclosure on all lands granted to The Dalles-Boise Military Wagon Road Company and to cancel all patents issued by the United States. Louis L. McArthur represented the United States; James K. Kelley and the law firm of Dolph, Bellinger, Mallory and Simpson represented the defendants. The lawyers argued the case in 1890. Judge Sawyer ruled for the defendants and dismissed the case. In 1891-92 the matter worked its way through the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and to the Supreme Court. On March 6, 1893, the highest court affirmed the validity of the land grant as sustained in the district court and court of appeals. The defendants had stressed throughout that the only proof of construction was the certificate of the governor. Once that had been issued the title to the land was absolute. To the dismay of thousands of disgruntled residents of Eastern Oregon, the courts agreed (Shaver et al. 1906: 440-441).

An early history of Sherman County confirmed the intensity of feeling about The Dalles-Boise Military Road:

The government was in full possession of all facts necessary to lay bare this scandalous conspiracy and convict the conspirators. There was a voluminous oral and written testimony in the shape of affidavits and written testimony of such an action. But the federal supreme court virtually said that two wrongs would make a right; that because congress had passed an unwise and ill-digested act, which imprudence was taken advantage of by an unscrupulous executive, the honest, homeseking pioneers must
suffer the penalty of combined pernicious legislation and executive truculency (Shaver et al. 1906: 441).

Fig. 29. Burnt Ranch, ca. 1890, stage stop on The Dalles-Boise Military Road, on the southern bank of the John Day River. (OrHi 4626-a).

The total grant secured by the Eastern Oregon Land Company was approximately 562,000 acres. Waller S. Martin, President of the company in 1904, offered to sell quarter section lots in Sherman County to the federal
government in units of not less than 10,000 acres at the rate of $60 per acre. Martin claimed that the company had made extensive improvements, including fencing, and the price was therefore justifiable (Shaver et al. 1906: 442).

The general alignment of The Dalles-Boise Military Road persisted on maps of central Oregon into the 1910s. It remained the primary overland route into the John Day valley, and offered the quickest access to the Columbia Basin and the commerce of Portland until the close of World War One. Remnants of the route are overlaid today by portions of U.S. 26, and segments of graveled roads in Wheeler and Grant counties.

The Advent of Railroads

The advent of railroads in the Pacific Northwest had little direct effect upon settlers in the John Day country until after the turn of the nineteenth century. Although none of the major lines ever entered Grant or Wheeler counties, nearby railheads stimulated horse-drawn stage and freight connections throughout the region. The developing sheep industry particularly profited from the construction of feeder lines running south from the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company's primary railroad. Located along the south bank of the Columbia River, that railroad was completed in 1882 (Fussner 1975: 108; Elliott 1914: 170).

First among the "stub lines," built in 1889, was a connection between Heppner Junction on the Columbia to Heppner, some forty-five miles to the south. Separated by a western spur of the Blue Mountains from the John Day basin, Heppner was especially difficult to access. Nonetheless, some stock from valley ranches was driven over the rough terrain to railhead (Fussner 1975: 108).

Of greater import to John Day settlers was the completion in 1900 of the Columbia Southern Railroad line, which ran for seventy miles from Biggs on the Columbia south to Shaniko on the high plateau. Developers planned for the line to extend all the way to Prineville, but the plans failed to achieve fruition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. 2 Daily Passenger</th>
<th>STATIONS</th>
<th>No. 1 Daily Passenger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leave P.M.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:34</td>
<td>BIGGS</td>
<td>11:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:59</td>
<td>Gibsons</td>
<td>11:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:14</td>
<td>Wasco</td>
<td>10:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:27</td>
<td>Klondyke</td>
<td>10:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:33</td>
<td>Summit</td>
<td>10:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45</td>
<td>Hay Canyon Junction</td>
<td>10:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:48</td>
<td>McDonalds</td>
<td>10:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>DeMoss</td>
<td>10:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:09</td>
<td>Moro</td>
<td>9:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10</td>
<td>Erskinville</td>
<td>9:39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:44</td>
<td>Grass Valley</td>
<td>9:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:06</td>
<td>Bourbon</td>
<td>8:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>8:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:40</td>
<td>Wilcox</td>
<td>8:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:20</td>
<td>SHANIKO</td>
<td>8:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Daily Stage Line Connections**

--- TO ---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTELOPE</th>
<th>CROSS KEYS</th>
<th>HAY CREEK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRIZLLY</td>
<td>PRINEVILLE</td>
<td>CLARNO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOSSIL</td>
<td>ASHWOOD</td>
<td>GRADE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MITCHELL</td>
<td>PAULINA</td>
<td>MOWRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RILEY</td>
<td>PRICK</td>
<td>BURNS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SISTERS</td>
<td>PASLEY</td>
<td>SILVER LAKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAKEVIEW</td>
<td>LAMONTA</td>
<td>WARM SPRINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTONE</td>
<td>DAYVILLE</td>
<td>JOHN DAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CANYON CITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 30. Columbia Southern Railway time table – Biggs to Shaniko – noting stage connections to towns in the John Day valley (Culp 1972).
Shaniko was strategically situated on The Dalles-Boise Military Road, and it boomed as the terminus of the line. The town briefly claimed distinction as the busiest wool shipping center in the world. Freighters from the John Day country hauled in wagons filled with heavy sacks of wool for export to scouring plants and mills. Connecting stages ran daily from Shaniko east to Mitchell, Dayville, and Canyon City. (Culp 1972: 100-102; Brogan 1977; 129).

The Union Pacific (formerly the Oregon Railway & Navigation Co.) extended another feeder line south from Arlington on the Columbia River to Condon in Gilliam County in 1905. Its arrival prompted a small building boom. There was much excitement about the prospect of the railroad being continued south another twenty miles to Fossil, the county seat of Wheeler County, but this did not occur (Gilliam County Historical Society n.d.).

One of the most colorful railroad building episodes in central Oregon – one which ultimately spelled the demise of Shaniko as an important terminus – was the race up the Deschutes Gorge. W. F. Nelson, R. A. Ballinger, and L. I. Gregory on February 24, 1906, incorporated a company which came to be known as the Oregon Trunk Railroad (Gaertner 1992: 97-121). Crews initiated surveys along the banks of the Deschutes River and began preliminary grading during the summer of 1906. The plan was to build a line from Wishram, Washington, across the Columbia River and up the Deschutes River to tap the vast pine forests of the eastern flank of the Cascades and the forests on the upper Crooked River and Ochoco Creek in central Oregon. Capital shortages curtailed construction after laying one and a half miles of track. In August, 1908, unable to meet the continuing financial burdens facing the Oregon Trunk, Nelson, the company president, sold out to V. D. Williamson.

A competing line, the Deschutes Railroad (a subsidiary of the Union Pacific), began grading its right-of-way up the river in July, 1909, when the Oregon Trunk resumed construction. On February 15, 1911, the Oregon Trunk
track crew reached Madras with the Deschutes Railroad only six weeks out of the town. Finally, investors in both the lines – James J. Hill and E. H. Harriman – gave up the battle and merged their efforts at Madras. The Oregon Trunk reached Bend on September 30, 1911; the first passengers arrived on October 30 (Gaertner 1992: 97-121).

Settlers in the upper John Day basin were especially well-served a few years later by a more easily accessed railhead at Prairie City, thirteen miles east of the town of John Day in eastern Grant County. The Sumpter Valley Railroad, a narrow gauge line, was built from Baker City to Sumpter between 1890 and 1897, and completed west in 1909 to Prairie City. The little train was slow, but much appreciated by locals who dubbed it the “puddle jumper,” “teakettle,” and “stump dodger.” The Sumpter Valley Railroad hauled cattle, logs, gold ore, sheep, passengers and supplies from Prairie City to the main line of the Union Pacific at Baker City until 1933 (Culp 1972: 91-94; Oliver 1961: 194-195).

In later decades, Wheeler County acquired its own small passenger line. Built in 1929 by the Kinzua Pine Mills Co., the Kinzua & Southern Railroad operated from Condon thirty miles south to the sawmill community of Kinzua. Passengers and mail were delivered via a Mack rail bus. (Culp 1972: 97).

Motorization

The advent of motorized transportation in the early twentieth century finally opened the John Day region to a larger world. At first, sparsely populated Grant and Wheeler counties lacked the tax base to effect any significant improvement of its network of horse-drawn freight and stage roads. The situation began to improve in 1913 when the Oregon State Legislature created the State Highway Commission and appropriated $1.7 million to assist in road construction statewide. In 1917, the legislature approved funds for work on two highways in
the upper John Day basin, the John Day River Highway, and the Pendleton-John Day Highway (Corning 1956: 113; Mark 1996: 29).

By 1914, an improved road was built from Biggs on the Columbia River via Condon into Fossil – the same year the first gasoline pump was installed at Fossil’s General Mercantile. Over the next few years, with state funds, this road was continued south down Service Creek, along the north bank of the John Day River through Spray and Kimberly, south along the east bank (bridging over at the Humphrey Ranch), and into Butler Basin along the west bank past the Cant Ranch, now headquarters of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.
A narrow winding stretch of the road was reportedly pushed through Picture Gorge around 1917 (Fussner 1975: 131; Mark 1996; 29, 36).

Fig. 32. Picture Canyon, John Day, 1939 (OHS – CN 023724).
This entire segment, from Kimberly to the Mascall Ranch just southeast of Picture Gorge, was clearly in place in 1925 when the U.S. Geological Survey mapped the topography of the Picture Gorge quadrangle. South and east of Picture Gorge, the new highway joined the route of the old Dalles-Boise Military Road, continuing east through Dayville and on to John Day, all the way east to the town of Ontario on the Idaho border.

![Image of Dayville, Oregon, near Fossil Gorge on the John Day Highway](OrHi 15142)

The John Day Highway (now S.R. 19), laid open the long-secluded country north of Picture Gorge to travelers and tourists alike. The highway also directly linked the still-remote communities of the valley with Columbia River
markets. The Oregon State Highway Commission was entirely aware of the commercial value and tourist potential of the new highway when it reported on its progress in the Sixth Biennial Report to the Governor:

The opening of the John Day Highway by completing the gap between Olix and Gwendolen, north of Condon, and surfacing between Spray and the North Fork, has made possible all-year travel into the John Day Valley, with resulting saving to the residents of that region in decreased hauling costs of wheat, wool, etc. The extension of the forest project from Prairie City through Austin to Unity, all of which has been graded and part surfaced, will be the means of opening this entire highway to through travel from Ontario, via the wonderful Picture Gorge and fossil beds, to Arlington, as an alternate route to the Old Oregon Trail (Oregon State Highway Commission 1923-1924: 10).

Oregon’s Market Road Act of 1920 apportioned state and county taxes for local routes, allowing the construction of short new road segments and the upgrading of older ones throughout Grant and Wheeler counties. In 1921-22, workmen began limited improvements along the old military road from Antelope to Mitchell, affording travelers better access to the Painted Hills area along Bridge Creek. The north Wheeler County towns of Fossil and Clarno were linked in 1926 with a new market road, later to be designated as part of S.R. 218 (Mark 1996: 29-30).

In the early 1920s, a road from Redmond via Prineville to Mitchell was renamed the Ochoco Highway. Four miles northwest of Mitchell, the road spanned Bridge Creek with a covered, ninety-foot Howe Truss bridge built in 1917. The picturesque bridge remained in place until the early 1950s (Stinchfield 1983: 10). The Ochoco Highway was designated as part of U.S. 28 (now U.S. 26) and was improved through the early 1930s.
Rerouting of the Mitchell to Dayville segment of the Ochoco Highway—away from old military road alignment through Antone, and north to its present alignment above Picture Gorge—appears to have taken place between 1932 and 1936. The U.S. Geological Survey’s 1932 topographic map of the Dayville quadrangle shows the “Mitchell Road” veering off to the west just southeast of the Mascall Ranch, in the approximate location of today’s Grant Co. 40. In 1936, however, an American Automobile Association road map shows the new paved segment from Mitchell to Picture Gorge.
By 1936, most of today's existing state and county roads in the upper John Day basin were in place. With the exception of short paved segments between Mitchell and Picture Gorge, and between Fossil and Condon, roads mapped for motorized travel in Grant and Wheeler counties were "improved" with gravel or sand, and considered "all-weather" in quality. The historic trace from Antelope to Mitchell, along the once heavily traveled military route to Canyon City, soon declined in use and faded from memory.

Cultural Resources Summary

Transportation played a pivotal role in the development of the upper John Day basin and, from an early date, fostered two types of cultural resources which have left traces on the landscape today: transportation infrastructure; and commercial establishments that catered to the traveler.
The 1860s gold rush to the Canyon Creek district triggered the overnight opening of a busy supply route from The Dalles to the mines along a largely unimproved dirt wagon road. Before the close of that decade, the route was surveyed, mapped, and partially improved, as The Dalles-Boise Military Road. It remained in heavy use for over fifty years. Remnant sections of both roads – sometimes divergent but more often overlaying one another – have been found in Wasco, Sherman, Wheeler and Grant counties (Nielsen et al. 1985). All along this major route every fifteen to twenty miles arose stage stops, such as Burnt Ranch at the mouth of Bridge Creek, offering basic services to travelers. Settlement in small valleys tributary to the John Day in the 1870s and 1880s
stimulated the construction of secondary mail and stage roads, cable ferries — such as that operated at Clarno — and rudimentary bridges. In 1905, nearly every tiny community in Wheeler County — including Mitchell, Fossil, Twickenham, Richmond, Waterman, and Caleb — boasted one if not two hotels (Shaver et al. 1905: 648-656).

![Sidewalk Café (c.1945) in Mitchell; F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).](image)

Railroads left a more limited but enduring mark on the land in Grant and Wheeler counties; both the Kinzua and the Sumpter Valley Railroad operated for only a few decades (Culp 1972: 97; Oliver 1961: 193). Motorization ushered in the construction of multiple graded roads, paved highways and bridges. Motor car travel spawned roadside services offering gas, food, and lodging. Most services, such as the Sidewalk Café in Mitchell, hugged the highway at the center of small towns. Others, such as Scotty’s Gas Station and Store at the
junction of the John Day Highway and the Ochoco Highway, sprang up at rural crossroads.

A few surviving cultural resources associated with transportation in the Grant and Wheeler area are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These include:

- The Sumpter Valley Railway Passenger Station, built in 1910, now home to the Dewitt Museum in Prairie City.
- The Sumpter Valley Railway Historic District, restored and operational, in the vicinity of Sumpter and Whitney in neighboring Baker County.

Oregon State Inventory of Historic Places listings from Grant and Wheeler County in the category of transportation include:

- The Prairie City Hotel, 1910, in Prairie City.
- The Kimberly Road Segment of the Spray-Long Creek Wagon Road, ca. 1890.
- The Central Hotel, ca. 1880, in Mitchell.

Area tourism literature listings, in addition to places identified above, include:

- The Shaniko Hotel, at Shaniko, the terminus of the Columbia Southern Railroad.
- Stage Stop Site, ca. 1918, at Service Creek.
- Ferry Crossing Site, ca. 1900, at Spray.
- The Union Pacific Depot, built 1906, in Condon, now the Gilliam County Depot Museum.
- The Oregon Trail John Day River Crossing at McDonald’s Ford, east of Wasco in Sherman County.
The most significant transportation resource located within the Monument and in very close proximity to its boundaries is the alignment of The Dalles-Boise Military Road. From John Day, the road followed the general route of what is now U.S. 26 to Dayville, branching off to the west on what is now Grant Co. 40, past the Mascall Overlook, through the former village of Antone, continuing over the hills and dropping down into Mitchell. From Mitchell, the old road ran northwest down Bridge Creek along the general alignment of what is now Bridge Creek Road (Wheeler Co.), passing through the south-easternmost corner of the Painted Hills Unit, and continuing to the mouth of Bridge Creek at the John Day and on to Antelope. The location of the military road (and its antecedent The Dalles to Canyon City Road) was field inspected, but not mapped, by Neilson, Newman, and McCart in 1985.

Fig. 38. Grant Co. 40, following the old alignment of The Dalles-Boise Military Road – view to the west off U.S. 26 near Picture Gorge; F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service).
Key recommendations for further investigation of cultural resources associated with the context of Transportation are:

1. Further document the establishment, routing, construction, and maintenance of The Dalles-Boise Military Road. Models for such studies are those mounted for the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road (Beckham 1981) and the Coos Bay Wagon Road (1997).

2. In addition to a thorough literature search, undertake a field survey to ground-verify, photo-record, and map surviving remnants of the road. Such a study, if sponsored jointly with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and the Bureau of Land Management, has the potential to identify intact segments along the length of the route that may be eligible for National Register listing.

3. Intact segments in Grant and Wheeler counties in the vicinity of the Monument should be proposed for nomination to the National Register.
Chapter Six
Economic Development
Chapter Six

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economy of the upper John Day basin is grounded in the rich natural resources of the region. Since the early 1860s, minerals, grasslands, meadowlands, and forests have provided the basis of human livelihood. The first wave of economic development to sweep the John Day country was gold mining. Ultimately, gold mining would have far-reaching effects on the landscape, altering the banks of rivers and streams, and ushering in early forms of agriculture and town-building. Cattle ranching and sheep ranching soon surpassed mining as an economic pursuit and a way of life. These occupations held sway through the first three decades of the twentieth century. After 1940, harvesting and processing the vast stands of timber in the private forests and national forests of Grant and Wheeler counties emerged as the mainstay of the local economy. In all of these industries, small operators and large commercial concerns alike had their hands.

Mining

The fevered rush of miners prospecting streams throughout the interior of the Pacific Northwest was initially driven by the gold strikes of 1858 in the Fraser River region in British Columbia. The riches were sufficiently attractive to draw miners from southern Oregon and California (Reinhart 1962: 108-135). In succeeding years, gold seekers repeatedly trespassed on Indian reservations and unceded lands throughout the Columbia Plateau in their search for the precious metal. R. H. Lansdale, Indian Agent at Fort Simcoe on the Yakima Reservation in Washington Territory, noted on August 15, 1860, the great
numbers of white men passing through the region. "Many of these men," he wrote, "are miners from California, and I record with great pleasure, that, as far as has come to my knowledge, they have always respected the rights and feelings of the helpless Indians" (ARCI 1860: 205).

Gold seekers repeatedly attempted to re-find the legendary "Blue Bucket Nuggets," a rich strike allegedly made in 1845 during the transit of overland emigrants following the hapless Stephen H. L. Meek. These travelers attempted to blaze a new emigrant route west from Fort Boise through central Oregon to the Cascades with the intent to enter the upper Willamette Valley. The route proved difficult, indeed deadly for some, and took them through the northern Harney Basin and across the High Desert toward the Deschutes River. Unable to find a pass in the Cascades, they descended the rugged banks of the Deschutes and rejoined the Oregon Trail at The Dalles. Serious attempts to relocate the mine continued for over a century after the initial discovery (Clark and Tiller 1966; Brogan 1977: 40-41).

Several accounts suggest that golden potentials lurked in the Blue and Strawberry mountains. Members of Capt. Wallen's military exploring party brought in reports of gold on the Malheur River. In the spring of 1861, J. L. Adams recounted in Portland that he had found gold in the "upper country." Adams then led an exploring party to the John Day River, found prospects, returned to Portland, and in the early fall of 1861 set out again for the North Fork of the John Day. W. S. Failing and E. Lewis, both members of the initial exploring group, set out in November with thirty-two men and fifty-six animals loaded with supplies for six months of residency. By January, 1862, they had erected cabins at Otter Bar, a site somewhere on the upper John Day River. Hostile encounters with Indians caused the men to flee in February to The Dalles, but they soon returned (Nedry 1952: 238-240).
In June of 1862, a strike on Canyon Creek drew thousands to the John Day basin. The rush to Canyon City and other mountainous areas in what is now eastern Grant County triggered far-reaching change in the region — permanent settlement, the advent of ranching and agriculture, and the beginnings of large-scale resource extraction. Although the rush was over by 1870, the pursuit of gold remained an important factor in the economy of Grant County well into the twentieth century, often through well-capitalized industrial operations. One source has estimated that, by 1972, as much as $30,000,000 in gold had been mined from the gravel beds of Canyon Creek and the John Day River (Thayer 1972: 4).

Fig. 39. Miners with pack mules on the streets of Canyon City, ca. 1920 (OrHi 57533).
In December, 1862, miners drafted the regulations of the John Day Mining District, a region extending up the river to its summit with the Malheur watershed and the ridge west of Canyon Creek. They set creek claims at seventy-five running feet on the stream from one high water mark to the other. Bank claims were fixed at seventy-five running feet on a stream back 300 feet from creek claims. Shaft claims were set at seventy-five feet on the front and extended to the center of the hill. Gulch claims were set at 150 running feet in the gulch and fifty feet to either side of the channel. Each miner was allowed two claims, but each had to be of a different type. Significantly, the racism of the miners surfaced in these initial agreements: "No Asiatic shall be allowed to mine in this district," read the ordinance (Oliver 1961: 21-22). Miners from other diggings who had encountered the hardy Chinese attempted to block their presence.

Chinese miners did, nonetheless, enter the area. Dozens lived at remote placer and lode mines. Two large concentrations of Chinese residents occurred at Canyon City and John Day. John Day's "Chinatown" was a substantial settlement on the banks of Canyon Creek. Although the Chinese population had sharply declined by 1900, two notable figures remained their entire lives and became an integral part of the John Day community – the herbal doctor Ing Hay and his friend and business partner Lung On. The two men operated the Kam Wah Chung & Company store, which served as a doctor's office, trading post, pharmacy, social club, bank, assay office, and a shrine. Doc Hay was a legendary figure in central Oregon, and his herbal remedies were popular with Chinese and Euro-Americans alike. The Kam Wah Chung Company Building (built ca. 1867, with later additions) still survives today, a reminder of the Chinese experience in the gold mines of eastern Oregon (Hartwig 1973).
Miners brought considerable energy and new technology to central Oregon. Chief among their projects was construction of ditches and flumes to divert water to the diggings. Early in 1862 the claimants at Prairie Diggings formed a joint stock company to build a ditch for two miles. They completed it by early summer. Miners at Marysville and Canyon City built a ditch to divert large amounts of water from Indian and Big Pine creeks through twelve miles of hand-dug canal. This ditch, constructed in 1862, continued in operation into the early twentieth century. The early miners also felled trees, sawed lumber, constructed flumes, and, as demand dictated, built sawmills to help construct the towns where they settled (Anonymous 1902: 386-387).
Development of lode deposits, for a time, brought a new optimism about gold mining in the region, even as the excitement of the initial rush faded. During the summer of 1867, J. A. Porter & Company erected an eight-stamp, two-battery quartz mill with a capacity of crushing eight to ten tons of ore per day. Financed by $5,000 in sale of stock, the mill was promising but failed to turn a profit (Anonymous 1902: 393). Optimism still ran high some thirty years later, in a special issue on “The Gold Fields of Eastern Oregon,” the *Morning Democrat* of Baker City described many active mines in Grant County in the Canyon, Green Horn, Red Boy, Granite Districts, and noted:

Quartz mines are being developed in the old placer districts that are simply astonishing in their richness.... At Quartzburg, near the town of Prairie City, are a number of gold bearing ledges, some of which have been worked by arrastras and stamp mills for several years with good results.... One prospect in particular, a mile and a half from town [Canyon City], gives much encouragement to its discover, Mr. Isaac Guker... Lately Mr. Guker has found nuggets or flat chunks of gold, varying in value from forty to over one-hundred dollars (Anonymous 1898: 25, 33).

Hydraulic mining was another method employed in Grant County. Water in a ditch at a higher elevation was sent down a hose through a narrowing nozzle. The high pressure stream was directed at a hill side or cut bank, washing tons of ore into a sluice where the gold was separated out. The Humboldt Mining Company, among others, ran a large hydraulic operation near Canyon City, using an eight and one-half mile ditch, and 2,600 feet of hydraulic pipe (Anonymous 1898: 35). Remnants of this ditch may still be discernable on the west side of Canyon Creek, just south of Canyon City.

Dredging was a third method of mining employed along the John Day River in the early twentieth century. A technique particularly destructive to bottomland meadows, dredging tore up former channels of the river, washing away soil, and spitting out acres of telltale mounds of gravel. The dredge would create and float on its own pond, using water diverted from a nearby stream.
Dredging operations were established by the Empire Gold Dredging & Mining. Long-time rancher Herman Oliver summed up the impact of dredging on the landscape:

After a beautiful meadow had been dredged, it was turned into a worthless, unsightly, formless pile of rocks. The good soil washed away with the water... The meadows furnished the hay for winter feeding, so some ranchers, their meadowlands gone, no longer had a year-around business, and had to sell their grazing land or else go somewhere else to get more hay land.... The dredge was usually owned by outsiders, and the profits went to San Francisco or someplace outside of Grant County. So the county lost all around (Oliver 1961: 29-30).

Although Wheeler County lacked the concentration of rich gold deposits of Grant County, the Clarno area witnessed brief excitement over oil. In 1927, the Clarno Basin Oil Company sunk one well on the Hilton Ranch at the mouth of
Pine Creek. The company sold shares to hopeful investors at $10 a share, and spent an estimated $300,000, drilling to a depth of 4,800 feet. Promotional literature proclaimed, “One Good speculation is Worth a Lifetime of Saving!” and promised that the Clarno basin was proven to contain oil and gas. Eager visitors from all over the state congregated at the field on Sunday afternoons, in the hopes of seeing oil come gushing forth. In the end, the prospect yielded natural gas but no oil (McNeil 1953: 273; Fussner 1975: 29).

![Fig. 42. Detail from promotional literature for the Clarno Basin Development Company, ca. 1927; F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).](image)

**Cattle Ranching**

In the years 1862-1922, settlers steadily pushed into Grant and Wheeler counties. While the initial lure was gold, grasslands provided the more enduring attraction. The rugged upper John Day watershed possessed both fertile
bottomlands along the river and its tributary streams as well as upland areas of abundant bluebunch wheatgrass. The nutritious grass proved an irresistible draw to raisers of cattle, horses, and sheep. As stockmen realized the potentials of the interior of the Pacific Northwest, they rushed in to secure lands and place their herds. J. Orin Oliphant, historian of the "Rise of Transcascadia," described a grazing province of some 16,000 square miles in central and eastern Oregon. "Here, on uplands and lowlands, on grasslands and sagelands," wrote Oliphant, "cattle in large numbers roamed freely the year round in scattered districts of a cattlemen's kingdom which flourished during the 1870's and much of the 1880's" (Oliphant 1968: 75-76).

Initially, cattle to feed hungry miners were brought from west of the Cascade Mountains. In 1862 alone, 46,000 head were imported from west of the mountains, as compared to an estimated 7,000 head of cattle entering the region with overland emigrants from the east. This build up of herds was in direct response to the local mining market, the seemingly inexhaustible grasslands, and the opportunity to use the Homestead Act (1862) or the cash entry purchase system secure to key range lands and water sources (Oliphant 1968: 79).

Early cattle ranchers in Grant and Wheeler counties took advantage of the luxurious, stirrup-high bunch grasses. Their rangy herds grazed uncontrolled throughout the year on the vast, unfenced ranges of the public domain, on rocky hillsides and in mountain forests. Large cattle holdings in Wheeler County in the early years included those of the Gilman & French Company with 38,120 acres; the Sophiana Ranch with 10,095 acres; and the Butte Creek Land, Livestock & Lumber Company with 8,634 acres. The Gilman & French holdings included Henry Wheeler's homestead, the Corn Cob Ranch, six miles north and west of Spray. From 1872 through 1902, the Gilman brothers and the French brothers also acquired the Prairie Ranch, the Hoyt Ranch, the Sutton Ranch, the O.K. Ranch, and various Wheeler County parcels needed to control most of the land
in between. All of these places were well capitalized and famous for their large barns, extensive fences, early indoor plumbing and electrical systems, and productive hay and grain fields (Shaver et al. 1905: 657; Stinchfield 1983: 28-30).

In Grant County in 1885, vast cattle ranches included Todhunter & Devine's White Horse Ranch with 40,000 cattle, and French & Glenn's "P" Ranch, with 30,000 cattle. The Bear Valley, Silvies Valley, Juniper, Crane Creek, Otis, Murderer's Creek, and Paulina valleys were all monopolized by cattlemen. This stranglehold over some of the best meadowlands and water sources was decried by the region's champions of economic development. The periodical West Shore proclaimed in 1885:

When ...these numerous valleys are wrested from the grip of the cattle kings and divided up into homesteads for actual settlers; when they are made to yield the diversified products of which they are capable; when the numerous farmers shall utilize the adjacent hills for the grazing of as many cattle, sheep, etc. as each can properly care for; then the school house shall replace the cowboy's nut and the settler's cabin shall be seen in every nook and corner of these vacant valleys, then the country will multiply its population and wealth, and the era of its real prosperity will dawn (Anonymous 1902: 399).

In the early 1880s, many of the larger cattle operations in northern and central Oregon did in fact begin moving or selling their herds into the Harney Basin to the south. There they discovered the lush, wide-open meadows of that watershed, and began to push for the closure of the Malheur Indian Reservation. In Grant and Wheeler counties, sheep raising gained a firm foothold in the local economy, in the same decade (Anonymous 1902: 394).

By 1890, after a five-year drop in cattle prices from a peak in 1885, and an especially severe winter in which ranchers suffered heavy losses, cattlemen began gradually to consider the advisability of providing their herds with winter feed (Strong 1940: 262). Alfalfa hay and grains to supplement winter feed could be successfully grown on irrigated bottomlands of the John Day and its tributary
creeks. The harvested fields made excellent fall pasture for the herds. This combination of livestock raising and limited agriculture created a healthy economic mix that persisted in both Grant and Wheeler counties into the twentieth century (Fussner 1975: 86).

Fig. 43. Hay stacking in eastern Oregon (Photograph by Asahel Curtis) (OrHi 54200).

Several factors, nonetheless, worked to further erode the survival of the cattle industry in Grant and Wheeler counties in the later years of the nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth. Overgrazing of the range, the competition of the sheep industry, and homesteading were its chief challenges. As these challenges were met, the open range cattle business was transformed into the modern fenced range industry that persists today (Strong 1940: 258)
As early as the 1880s, the range was beginning to show signs of lower production due to overgrazing. Grant County recognized the effect this was having on its cattle industry in 1902:

Stock raising has been in the past and must continue to be a leading pursuit. At one time the stockman's investments were almost entirely in cattle, but in recent years the range has not furnished grass in quantity and quality suited to the highest development of this industry, and the cattle herds have given way to sheep (Anonymous 1902: 728).

In a questionnaire sent out by the Department of Agriculture in ca. 1905, cattlemen who responded overwhelmingly agreed that overstocking was the primary reason for this decline. Excessive sheep grazing, and methods of handling ran second and third. Oregon cattlemen went on record in 1903 in favor of some form of government control of the range under reasonable regulations (Strong 1940: 272, 276).

Sheep had a notably more destructive effect on range grass than cattle, because of the plants they ate, their close cropping of forage, and the damage of their restless hooves as they stood close together in the heat of the day (Strong 1940: 275). As available range land diminished, the competition for access to it pitted cattle families against sheep families, and ranchers against homesteaders in what became commonly known as the "range wars." There was violence in Grant and Wheeler counties, although it was mostly against animals and property. In 1895, the *Fossil Journal* reported that "a sheep-hater burns 600 tons of hay on three farms near Mitchell." The *Wheeler County News* ran an account on May 27, 1904:

Poison was deposited in the range 8 miles east from town a short distance from the Canyon city road and the result of this cowardly act is that 12 head of range cattle belonging to Sigfrit Brothers dies last week....Following the poisoning episode came the news to town early Monday morning that about 3 a.m. five men attacked the band of yearling sheep in the corral on the place belonging to Butler Brothers of Richmond. 106 sheep were killed and a great number were so wounded as to either
die or have to be killed. These sheep were being grazed on leased land, and no motive can be found why this should occur.... (Fussner 1975: 93-94).

General homesteading and the fencing of the land – sometimes illegally on the public domain – also reduced the acreage available for running range cattle. The Oregonian noted in 1903:

Wheeler County differs from many other counties in Eastern Oregon where stock raising is the chief industry in having but little public range. Hills and valleys on every hand are generally fenced into great private pastures, and in these large herds are kept the year round, although the feeding of hay becomes necessary in the wintertime. In earlier times, the range was used largely for cattle, but now the range that is not enclosed with fences is more generally used by sheepmen (Fussner 1975: 94-95).

The Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 encouraged further settlement in the area. A 1914 Department of Agriculture survey noted that 20 percent of range land in central, south-central, and southeastern Oregon had been homesteaded since 1910. The narrow, watered valleys of Grant and Wheeler counties offered conditions conducive to agriculture. As a result, Grant County witnessed a 33 1/2 percent decrease in cattle because of homesteading in the decade from 1904 to 1914, and Wheeler County saw a 60 percent decrease in cattle during that same period (Strong 1940: 261). Passage of the Stock Raising Homestead Act (1916), which allowed filing on up to one square mile of land, and the return of veterans following World War I who filed under that law, sped up the pace of homesteading on lands around the Monument, and put still more range lands under fence (Humphreys 1984a: 2).
The first steps taken to regulate the use of range lands came about indirectly through the establishment of national forest reserves. In Oregon, the earliest of these was the Cascade Forest Reserve, created by executive proclamation in 1893, comprising 4,490,800 acres and running from the Columbia River almost to the California line. The Blue Mountain Forest Reserve was created in 1906. Later it was subdivided into National Forests that now include Malheur, Umatilla, and Ochoco, part of each of these lying in Grant and Wheeler counties. Grazing by both cattle and sheep was allowed but controlled within the bounds of the forest reserves, where the region's high summer ranges were found. In the year 1900, permits for grazing became required, and starting in January of 1906, fees per head were charged. The fees were low at first – 18
cents per animal per season in 1911 – but increased in increments over the years. In return for the fees, cattlemen had access to carefully controlled summer ranges, parceled out through an allotment system, and scientifically managed to prevent depletion from overgrazing. Although cattlemen had initially opposed the creation of the forest reserves, by 1924 there was a general feeling that the Forest Service was successfully increasing the carrying capacity of the summer ranges (Strong 267-269).

A second important step toward regulation of range lands and a critical one in sustaining the cattle industry in Oregon, was passage of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1935. This piece of legislation affected 80,000,000 acres of the public domain in the West, eliminating all uncontrolled grazing. Thousands of acres of spring and fall range lands in Grant and Wheeler counties became subject to annual permits and fees. The Act specified that a high percentage of fees collected would be funneled back into communities for range improvements through local grazing districts (Strong 1940: 276-277).

The Depression and World War Two combined to swing the economic pendulum from sheep back to cattle ranching in central Oregon. The influx of homesteaders in the inter-war years, increased competition for range lands, falling prices, and labor shortages combined to make sheep ranching less profitable than cattle ranching. Many local ranchers, like the James Cant family and the Rhys Humphreys family, sold their sheep and switched to cattle in the years just before and just after World War Two (Taylor and Gilbert 1996: 39-40; Humphreys 1984a: 2-3).

Managing a cattle ranch in the middle years of the twentieth century was an increasingly complex enterprise. Herman Oliver wrote of his highly successful cattle operations near the town of John Day:

There isn’t any system of ranch management, such as systems of bookkeeping. You can’t say, “now do this and this and this and you will succeed.” Management is thousands of little things, all tied together.
Grass, hay, cows, water, weather, fences, calves, bulls, steers, markets, breeding, health, corrals – all these things must fit together like a machine. Any one of them, out of kilter, can cause the owner to lose his shirt (Oliver 1961: 108).

Like the Cant Ranch, the Oliver Ranch required constant upkeep and repair. The Olivers routinely ended each year with planning for the next. They classified and inventoried all livestock, measured the hay and grain to determine if they had enough, estimated next year’s sales, laid out the year’s fencing and ditching program, inspected corrals and gates, mended fences, and repaired buildings. The Oliver’s home ranch had thirteen buildings, “all exactly square with each other and all in good repair. We thought this helped in giving buyers a
good first impression.” Herman Oliver, like most cattle ranchers, was jack of all trades – a rough carpenter, blacksmith, machine repairman, and harness worker (Oliver 1961: 120)

Sheep Ranching

Introduced into central Oregon by pioneer ranchers in the early 1860s, sheep herds multiplied rapidly. Expansive grasslands with nearby stream courses for water and, by the mid-1880s, the advent of railroads, created an ideal setting for the new industry. Typically, sheep ranching involved the establishment of a home ranch or base, and location of a series of permanent, sheltered "sheep camps" adjacent to good grazing and water. Herdsmen were commonly responsible for between 1,000 and 2,000 head. Judith Keyes Kenny, whose family engaged in sheep raising for decades in Wheeler County, has commented: "Sheep are peculiar in the fact that they inspire strong emotions, either of affection or decided distaste. There is nothing romantic about the industry and all satisfaction must come from the work with the animals and the monetary gains" (Kenny 1963: 104-105).

From the 1870s to the late 1930s, the production and management of sheep became one of the most important economic activities to develop in the upper John Day country. The build up of flocks, their management, shearing of wool, hauling of wool sacks, or driving of wethers and ewes to market were important occupations for decades. Local sheepman John Murray recalled in 1983 the impact of this enterprise in the vicinity of Dayville. He noted that there were forty-five or fifty thousand head of sheep within a radius of twenty miles. For every 1200 head of sheep, or band, there was a man with the sheep out in the hills at all the times, and there was a packer going back and forth for supplies at all the times (Murray 1984a: 18-19).
Many learned the sheep business as boys and moved directly into the work through accumulated experience. Sheep Rock area rancher Rhys Humphreys remembered:

Well, there was a lot of us kids started out at 12, 14 years old. The first year or two we would pack for a herder – take a pack string and stay with the herder all summer, learn his habits. After we did that a couple of years then we'd take a band. And you would start out at lambing time generally – go out about the first of April, or March, to lamb. Then you'd go to the timber with the sheep, and stay with them every day for a year or two, and you would have a little money.

In time, by saving, a young man could purchase his own flock and with careful management build it up (Humphreys 1984a: 3). James Cant, one of the more successful sheep ranchers of the early twentieth century in the region, started out with a $5,000 loan and a rented band of sheep, and from that built up his business. In the course of his lifetime, Cant secured 6500 acres of deeded land, and leased another 4500 acres of forest grazing allotments from the Bureau of Land Management (Murray 1984a: 14; Taylor and Gilbert 1996: 46).

Sheep production was time-intensive and all-consuming. Rhys Humphreys recalled that the job never ended, that someone had to be with the sheep twenty-four hours a day. He commented, “Your whole mind and concentration was on them sheep – everything. You had no outside interests whatever. If you did, then you wasn't a good hand” (Humphreys 1984a: 41-42).

Itinerant crews worked the countryside at shearing time. They traveled by buggy, saddle horse, or later automobile, working from ranch to ranch or establishing a base where herders brought in the flocks. John Murray described vividly the course of a day:

You sat down to your breakfast at six o'clock in the morning. You were ready to start the shearing machines at seven o'clock in the morning. You sheared until 11:30 a.m. and you went right back to work at one o'clock and you sheared until 5:30 p.m. and then you'd have your evening meal. You usually had ten men on your shearing crew and one man to grind the
tools for you--to sharpen your tools. An old-time crew like that would shear, oh, an average maybe . . . 200 sheep in a day with the hand blades.

With the advent of shearing machines, a crew might shear as many as 900 sheep per day. "That was a pretty good day's work for a crew of ten men," he concluded (Murray 1984a: 30-31).

The shearers were served by a man who tied the wool, usually one man for an entire shearing crew. Another employee of the shearing crew grabbed the tied fleeces and jammed them one after another into a large sack fastened into a round frame. From time-to-time he tromped on the fleeces to pack them,
eventually building up a sack weighing about 320 pounds. The men then loaded the sacks into wagons to haul to the railheads (Murray 1984a: 32). Larger ranches developed modern technology to speed up shearing. Rhys Humphreys recalled the Cant Ranch modernization:

They originally started with an old one-cylinder engine, powered with a big power wheel and a belt drive. You had a drive shaft that run belts, and it was all belt driven. Then Cants finally got an old Fordston tractor that had a big power wheel, and they run their plant off that old Fordston tractor for years. It run a drive shaft and geared up so's they could run the tractor real slow, and the pulleys were geared to run the machinery real fast. We never got electricity until 1956 (Humphreys 1984a: 21).

One element that did not change much over time was castrating or "marking" lambs. Rhys Humphreys described the procedure: "There used to be 3000 lambs down at the W-4 [Ranch], 1500 here at the Munros', we'd have maybe 1500, and Cants would have 1200-1500. The wether lambs are all marked with your teeth, and I had good teeth. So some years I would help mark all these lambs right here." Humphreys recounted: "I had pretty good teeth. A lot of the others had false teeth or something and couldn't do it. Some years I'd mark as high as 15,000 lambs." His record was 1,200 in one day (Humphreys 1984a: 46).

The short-line railroads permitted herders to drive their flocks or their lumbering wagon laden with sacks of wool directly to the warehouses at railheads in Heppner and Shaniko. A vivid account described wool shipments at Grade, a stopping point and particularly steep slope on The Dalles Military Road in Wheeler County:

In good weather there were often ten, twelve, or even twenty freighters camping along the road from the house far up past the blacksmith shop. It was a sight to remember to see the Grade at starting time, lined with freight teams pulling out toward The Dalles, loaded with huge sacks of wool. Not a few outfits had as many as three wagons and ten or twelve horses (McArthur 1974).
The construction of The Dalles Scouring Mills, which operated from 1900 to 1920, was a further stimulus to the industry. This facility washed local wool prior to its export to weaving factories (Lomax 1950: 43-47).

The markets for wool from eastern Oregon were defined, in part, by the construction of woolen mills in the Willamette Valley and the extension in the 1880s of the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company line along the south bank of the Columbia River. Ambitious investors erected a plant in 1867 for the Wasco Woolen Manufacturing Company to knit stockings, pants, shirts, skirts, blankets, and cassimeres. The facility endured repeated misfortunes: a washed-out reservoir, a boiler explosion, legal troubles, and a fire. It closed in 1869.
Lomax 1941: 287-296. In 1909 Charles P. Bishop and his sons purchased and expanded the Pendleton Woolen Mills for the manufacture of the famous Pendleton Indian blankets. The Bishops also had mills at Washougal and Vancouver, Washington, and Sellwood, Oregon. All these factories required wool and offered a potential market for the flocks of the upper John Day region (Carey 1922[2]: 503-504).

Statistical records chart the rise and fall of sheep production in the John Day watershed. The figures are incomplete – some agricultural census schedules did not enumerate all figures – but the overall trend for wool and sheep is clear, particularly the dramatic drops after 1930.

Table 4. Wool Production (lbs.), Grant and Wheeler Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>1,140,779</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>900,427</td>
<td>48,356</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeler</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>973,689</td>
<td>97,311</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bureau of the Census 1872, 1895, 1913, 1932, 1952, 1987)
NA = Not Applicable (data not collected)

Table 5. Numbers of Sheep, Grant and Wheeler Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>237,346</td>
<td>202,073</td>
<td>120,437</td>
<td>4,715</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>2,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeler</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>165,446</td>
<td>103,909</td>
<td>18,009</td>
<td>6,448</td>
<td>2,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bureau of the Census 1872, 1895, 1913, 1932, 1952, 1987)

The decline of sheep ranching in central Oregon had much to do with the influx of new homesteaders in the 1910s and 1920s. Many of these new settlers
entered the sheep business, only to find they were unable to secure grazing allotments in the nearby national forests, and their production, along with that of older established ranches, diminished prices. These economic realities and the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 hastened the shift from sheep to back to cattle ranching (Humphreys 1984a: 2-3).

**Lumbering**

Ponderosa pine, fir, and mixed conifers grew in abundance in the higher elevations of Grant and Wheeler counties. In the southern portion of Wheeler County around Camp Watson were stands of the especially valuable ponderosa, or yellow pine. The Strawberry Mountains of Malheur National Forest contained 90% ponderosa pine. Because of rugged terrain and the relatively late arrival of railroad and highway access, the John Day country saw little in the way of large-scale commercial lumbering activity in the nineteenth century. Early sawmills, water and steam-powered, easily supplied all local needs for building at mining camps and towns. At least one large cattle company – the Butte Creek Land, Livestock & Lumber Company – with holdings of 8,634 acres in Wheeler County, had timber interests in the area at a relatively early date (Anonymous 1902: 728; Shaver et al. 1905: 657; Southworth n.d.: 17).

By 1902, area citizens had entered into the debate on the creation of the Blue Mountain Forest Reserve. Boosters of local economic development saw the set-aside as a threat to the future of the region:

Citizens of Grant County are now petitioning the president in opposition to a proposed forest reserve which would include over half of its territory and all of its timbered areas. The future development of the county will depend largely upon the settlement of the forest reserve question, which is now pending (Anonymous 1902: 728).

Despite the public outcry, the Blue Mountain Forest Reserve was established in 1906. For ease of management, the reserve was divided into four national...
forests by 1908: Umatilla, Whitman, Deshutes, and Malheur. Settling "range wars" and fighting forest wildfires was the first order of business on the Malheur Forest, but commercial logging was not far in the distance. In 1922, the Malheur forest put up 890 million board feet of timber around Bear Valley for sale to the lowest bidder. It was the largest timber sale ever offered in the Pacific Northwest, and would involve the construction of hundreds of miles of railroad, lumber camps, and sawmills. Lumberman Fred Herrick made the low bid. Soon, accusations of fraud triggered a government investigation. The sale was offered for bid once again, and this time it went to Edward Hines (Mosgrove 1980).

The Edward Hines Lumber Company of Chicago came into southern Grant County in 1926. Through the Malheur Forest sale, the company gained an early monopoly on the virgin pine forest south of the Strawberry Mountains. The operation chose the little hamlet of Senaca in Bear Valley south of John Day as its corporate headquarters, where the company hotel still stands. A private railroad brought timber down to the enormous new mill at Hines in Harney County (Southworth, n.d.: 17-18).

The Chee Lumber Company acquired over 5,800 acres of timberland in Wheeler County and had holdings in the vicinity of the Clarno, Painted Hills and Sheep Rock units of the Monument. J.D. Welch, W.F. Slaughter, and Glenn E. Husted of Portland, established the company in 1923. Its stated purpose was to engage in sawmill operations, transport logs, and manage wharves. To that end, the company applied for and received a franchise to drive, catch, boom, sort, raft, and hold logs and lumber on the John Day River and its tributaries, from the junction of the North and Middle forks at Kimberly, all the way to the Columbia River. According to the franchise application, there were no existing "improvements" on those stretches of the river at that time. Chee Lumber built several booms and several splash dams. The uppermost dam – complete with a fish ladder protected by a game warden employee during spring salmon runs –
was erected just above the town of Spray. By the end of 1925, Chee had taken out 200,000 board feet of forest products (Beckham 2000a, b).

Pennsylvania lumberman E.D. Wetmore first began acquiring timberland east of Fossil in 1909. In 1927, he established a sawmill in the ponderosa pine forest in an area he named Kinzua. The following year, the Kinzua Pine Mills co. built an extensive company town around the mill site. The community included 125 homes, a church, recreation hall with restaurant, barber shop, library, post office, tavern, company general store, and school. The community also boasted trout lakes for fishing, a scout camp and scout-house, and a common-carrier railroad that hauled passengers, mail, and sheep to Condon. At one time,
Kinzua was the most populous town in Wheeler County, and employed some 330 workers in the mill (Stinchfield 1983: 12-13, 256).

The Kinzua Pine Mills Co. ran their own logging operation using a network of railroads into the forest, and later logging roads and trucks. As the operations pushed further from the mill, Kinzua built six logging camps, one of which survived into the 1960s as the town of Wetmore. Kinzua moved their mill operation to Heppner in 1953, and the town and mill were sold to new owners. The little railroad made its last run in 1976, and the sawmill, planing mill, and logging operations continued there until 1978. When the business finally closed its doors as the Eastern Oregon Logging Company, the town site was re-seeded by the Kinzua Corporation with 40,000 ponderosa pine trees (Stinchfield 1983: 12-13, 30, 256).

By the 1940s, there were several large companies operating in the area. Over the course of that decade, young men turned from ranching to higher paying jobs in the sawmills. Women filled in for men at the mills during World War Two, and many remained on the job beyond the War. By 1950, the timber industry had surpassed agriculture and ranching in the economy of Grant County. In Wheeler County, the Kinzua operation remained the mainstay of the economy until its final closure in the late 1970s (Taylor and Gilbert 1996: 40; Stinchfield 1983: 32, 256; Southworth n.d.: 18).
Cultural Resources Summary

Economic pursuits have left a most pervasive mark on the physical development of Grant and Wheeler counties. From the 1860s to the present day, mining, ranching, and lumbering have transformed the rural landscape with cultural imprints. Evidences of cattle and sheep ranching are perhaps the most visible today, spread across the valley of the John Day River and along high tributary valleys, where early settlement persisted and evolved into twentieth century operations. As is true in the context of early settlement, ranching resources encompass not only extant buildings and structures, but also smaller scale features such as fences, sheep bridges, corrals, cable crossings, and
irrigation ditches. Landscape components shaped by people engaged in ranching, such as orchards, fields, hay stack yards, and clusters of ornamental plant materials remain as testimony to an evolving way of life.

Visible evidence of mining activity can be found in the mountainous corners of eastern Grant County, at placer and lode mine sites, in hillside ditches and tailings along the river banks, in ghost towns and remnant scatters. The timber industry is illustrated by sawmills, planing mills, logging camps, logging roads and railroads, scattered across the two-county region. Some are still operational, others reduced to surface artifacts. Hundreds of historic archaeological sites associated particularly with late nineteenth and early twentieth century mining and logging are located within the boundaries of the Malheur, Ochoco, and Umatilla forests. In twenty years of research and field work, Malheur Forest alone has identified some 3000 archaeological sites, including pre-historic sites.

A secondary effect of economic development in the region was town-building. Town layout, infrastructure, and historic buildings and structures reflect patterns of growth experienced throughout central Oregon. Towns took shape for economic reasons – they served as mining camps (Canyon City, Susanville, Granite), as company lumber towns (Bates, Senaca), or ranching service centers (Fossil, Dayville). Some gained standing as a stage stop by virtue of their location on a main arterial (Mitchell, Spray, Kimberly). Where primary economic activities continued or diversified, towns survived. Where primary economic activities died, hamlets quickly became ghost towns (Richmond, Antone). Within all of these communities, whether fleeting or permanent in character, are resources that illustrate ethnic diversity, social and political life, and commercial enterprise. Churches, mercantiles, hotels, schools, courthouses, and permanent homes are examples of these property types. Together they form clusters, or
concentrated pockets of cultural resources that reflect certain periods of economic stability.

Fig. 50. Postcard view of Mitchell, n.d. (Courtesy Fossil Museum)

Only one historic resource within the boundaries of the Monument associated with the theme of economic development is listed in the National Register of Historic Places:
- The Cant Ranch, 1910-1976

Seven properties associated with economic development in the larger Grant and Wheeler county area are currently listed in the National Register:
- The Kam Wah Chung & Company Building, built ca. 1867 with later additions, in John Day
• The Thomas Benton Hoover House, built 1882, in Fossil, as the second, permanent home of the town’s founder – the only designated property in Wheeler County
• St. Thomas Episcopal Church, built 1876 in Canyon City, in the carpenter gothic style
• Advent Christian Church, built 1898 in John Day
• Fremont Powerhouse Historic District in the vicinity of Granite
• Malheur National Forest Supervisor’s House, constructed 1938 in John Day
• John Day Supervisor’s Warehouse Compound, dating from 1941

Fig. 51. Kam Wah Chung & Co. Building, John Day. F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service)

Many more resources associated with economic development are listed in the Oregon State Inventory of Historic Places for Grant and Wheeler counties (including some listings from both Umatilla and Malheur National Forests). A few
of these sites are equally linked to transportation or settlement, and are thus also listed as inventoried resources in Chapter Four or Five:

In rural Grant County:
- The Oliver Ranch – barns no. 1-3, granary, bunkhouse, and farmhouse, all ca. 1910
- The Hines Lumber Company Railroad, 1940s
- The Shangri-La (Ophir) Millsite – house, barn, and bunkhouse, ca. 1927

In Austin, Grant County – a stage stop on the road between John Day and Baker City:
- The Linda Austin House – barn, store, rooming house, and outbuilding, from 1885-1909
- The W.O. Meador Store, ca.1900

In Bates, Grant County – a company town built in 1909 by the Sumpter Valley Railroad and the Oregon Lumber Company:
- The Oregon Lumber Company Hotel, Sawmill, and Company Store – all ca. 1909-1910

In Canyon City, Grant County – founded in 1862, the earliest gold mining camp in John Day country, and briefly the largest city in Oregon, now the county seat:
- Canyon City Brewery, 1870
- Methodist Church, 1898
- C.G. Guernsey Building, 1899
- Jim’s Antique Building, 1900
- Greenhorn Jail, 1910
- Fraternal Lodge Building, 1938
• Herman Putzien House, ca. 1880
• J. Durkheimer Building, ca. 1885
• Waldenberg-Schmidt House, ca. 1895
• George Hazeltine House, ca. 1895
• Canyon City Grade School, ca. 1900

In Dayville, Grant County – a stage stop on The Dalles Military Road, a ranching service center, and the venue for turn-of-the-century horse races:
• Dayville General Store, ca. 1890

In Granite, Grant County – a mining town on the North Fork:
• Doctor’s House, 1880
• Granite Country Store, 1883
• Granite Meat Market, 1902
• Granite Drug Store, ca. 1880
• Wells Fargo Office, ca. 1880
• General Store, ca. 1880
• Granite Dance Hall

In Greenhorn vicinity, Grant County – now a mining ghost town:
• Rabbit Mine District, ca. 1920

In John Day, Grant County – an early mining camp below Canyon City, remembered for its sizeable China Town, sustained by ranching and its central location on The Dalles Military Road:
• Clarence and William H. Johnson Building, 1902
• John Day Bank, 1904
• John Day Opera House, 1914
On the Malheur National Forest in Grant County (note: hundreds of sites have been inventoried by the Forest, but are not included in the Oregon SHPO listings):

- The Susanville Historic Mining District
- Sunshine Guard Station, 1931
- Stalter Mine Complex, 1935
- Raddue Guard station, ca.1930
- Wray Lode Mine Complex, ca1940

In Mount Vernon, Grant County – a ranching service center on The Dalles Military Road and the John Day-Pendleton Highway:

- David W. Jenkins Barn, ca.1875
- Ed Damon House, ca.1890
- Eastern Oregon Trading Post, ca.1900
- Mount Vernon Blacksmith Shop, ca.1900
- George Aldrich House, ca.1910

In Prairie City, Grant County – an early mining town and ranching service center, railhead for the Sumpter Valley Railroad:

- Methodist Church, 1885
- IOOF Hall, 1902
- Frank Kight Butcher Shop and Carriage House, 1902, ca.1900
- Prairie Hotel, 1901
- Prairie City School and Gymnasium, 1939, 1931
- Masonic Temple, 1911
- Frank Flageollet House, ca.1885
- Moses Durkheimer General Store, 1901
- Alex M. Kirchheiner Building, ca.1901
• Solomon Taylor Grocery, ca.1902
• Louis Parsons Store, ca.1905

In Seneca, Grant County – a ranching hamlet at the head of Bear Valley, chosen as headquarters for the Hines Lumber Company in the late 1920s:
• The Edward Hines Lumber Company Hotel, ca.1940

On Umatilla National Forest in Grant County (note: other sites may have been inventoried by the Forest but not listed with the Oregon SHPO):
• The Ruby Dugout Mining Site
• Southeast Fourteen Mining Site
• Ruby Bend Mining Site
• Southwest Thirteen Mining Site
• Ruby-Clear Creeks Confluence Mining Site
• Clear Creek Strip Mine
• Alamo Neighbor Mining Site
• Keeney Mine
• Ruby Creek Mining Cabins, 1930s
• Forks Guard Station

In Fossil, Wheeler County – founded in 1876 as a ranching service center and stage stop, became the county seat in 1900:
• Fossil Baptist Church, 1893
• Fossil Mercantile Co. Building No. 1, 1896
• Bank of Fossil, 1903
• Fossil Mercantile Co. Building #2
• IOOF Lodge #110, ca.1905 – now houses the City of Fossil Museum
In Mitchell, Wheeler County – formally founded in 1873 as a stage stop and watering hole, in the Bridge Creek Canyon on The Dalles Military Road:

- First Baptist Church, 1895
- Mitchell State Bank, 1918
- Mitchell School, 1922
- Central Hotel, ca.1879
- Wheeler County Trading Co. Store, ca.1890
- Misener & Magee Saloon, ca.1895
- Diana Reed House, ca.1895
- Henry H. Wheeler House, ca.1900
- Abdell Ramses Campbell house, ca.1905
In Spray, Wheeler County – established in 1900 as a stage stop and ferry crossing:

- Union High School #1, 1920
- Spray Post Office, c.1900
- Community Church, ca.1900
- Baxter & Osborne General Store, ca.1915

Area tourism literature listings for places associated with economic development, in addition to places listed above, include:

- Stone Barn for Mt. Vernon, a local race horse, built 1877 along John Day River near Mt. Vernon
- Richmond, a range hamlet in the Shoo-fly District, now a ghost town off SR 207
- Wheeler County Courthouse, built 1901, in Fossil

Fig. 53. Ghost town at Richmond. F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).
Several recommendations are made with regard to cultural resources associated with the context of Economic Development:

1. As proposed in Chapter Four, encourage and/or partner with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office to conduct professional survey/inventory of historic properties in Grant and Wheeler counties. Current survey data is out-of-date, unsubstantiated, and terribly incomplete. An updated survey on ranching, mining, and logging would provide more solid site-specific data to better illustrate the contexts presented in this report, thus expanding the interpretive knowledge base at the Monument.

2. Consider sponsoring continuing scholarly research, perhaps in partnership with universities in eastern Oregon, on cattle and sheep ranch history in the area. Ranching, rather than mining and logging, is the historic theme most closely tied to Monument lands. Extant ranches along the John Day River north of Picture Gorge down to Clarno are of particular interest, as are large historic ranches, now broken up, of early cattle companies such as Gilman & French.

3. Little has been written of a substantive nature on the physical history of the communities of Grant and Wheeler counties. Consider working with the Grant County Historical Society and the Fossil Museum to sponsor a series of short but well-researched pictorial histories of the mining, ranching, and logging communities of the area.
Chapter Seven

PALEONTOLOGICAL EXPLORATION
Chapter Seven

PALEONTOLOGICAL EXPLORATION

The John Day Fossil Beds have attracted the serious attention of scientists for nearly 140 years. The flora and fauna of past geological epochs, so remarkably preserved in the scattered sites of the upper John Day basin, have helped to chart the complex story of the earth's deep past. Prominent nineteenth and twentieth-century scholars have made pivotal discoveries in the John Day beds, leading to dozens of published reports, scientific articles, and scholarly papers. Specimens from the John Day deposits are held in paleontological collections around the world. Today, ongoing paleontological research at the Monument continues to build upon the pioneering work of the early scientists, and is best understood within the context of those efforts.

Thomas Condon, Pioneer Geologist

Thomas Condon, Congregational minister and amateur geologist, settled in The Dalles in 1861. Fascinated by fossil plants and vertebrates, Condon established a "cabinet" wherein he displayed the curiosities of nature. His interest encouraged others in the region to bring him their discoveries to see if he could identify the specimens. Condon's reputation grew rapidly. He read journals and books to expand his scientific knowledge, delivered public lectures in The Dalles, and eagerly greeted learned travelers when he knew they were in the city, inviting them to visit his home, view his collections, and share what they knew about geology and fossils. His keen collecting, avid research, good mind, and generous spirit helped generate local interest in the region's paleontology.
and, in turn, soon connected Condon with a national network of scholars and collectors (Clark 1989).

![View of Sheep Rock in the "Turtle Cove," Sheep Rock Unit (OrHi 86089).](image)

Condon's expeditions to the John Day country commenced in the fall of 1865 when he secured permission to travel with the U.S. Cavalry from Fort Dalles on a reconnaissance of the region. Condon collected fossils and rock specimens, including items from along Bridge Creek and from the locale around Sheep Rock which he christened "Turtle Cove." Following the expedition, Condon delivered lectures in The Dalles and Portland to share his discoveries (Clark 1989: 175-176). Whenever Condon could secure permission to travel with the military, he set out for the John Day country. In the fall of 1867, the editor of
the *Mountaineer* (The Dalles, Oregon) reported on Condon's growing collection and that he had returned from the field with "new and beautiful geological specimens," several of which were "entirely new to the scientific world" (Clark 1989: 197).

Condon's reputation and knowledge of fossil deposits drew others to the region. In the late 1860s he had several visitors eager to see his collections. These included Clarence King and Arnold Hague, both engaged in work on the survey of the fortieth parallel for the U.S. Geological Survey. Graduates of the Sheffield School of Science, the preeminent program in geology at Yale University, King and Hague encouraged Condon in his work and reported his discoveries to others. William P. Blake, state mineralogist of California and a university professor, also met Condon and examined his fossil collection. Blake volunteered to take some of the fossils to colleagues in the East for identification (Clark 1989: 197). Blake shared the fossils with Dr. John S. Newberry, a scholar who had worked in Oregon during the Pacific Railroad Surveys in the 1850s, and James Dwight Dana of Yale. Newberry was so impressed that he solicited specimens from Condon for the Smithsonian Institution. Condon gathered items on the John Day, Bridge Creek, near The Dalles, and in the Columbia Gorge and, in February 1869, shipped them east (Clark 1989: 205-207).

Condon commenced formal sharing of information about the region in "Geological Notes From Oregon," an essay published in 1869 in the *Overland Monthly and Outwest Magazine*. The focus of this report was the great landslide which nearly dammed the Columbia River in the Cascades region of the Columbia Gorge. To assist his collecting further, Condon hired a rancher, probably Sam Snook who lived at Cottonwood on the John Day River, to assist in the fieldwork. In 1870 Condon sent additional specimens from Currant Creek, Bridge Creek, and McBee's Canyon – all sites in the upper John Day basin.
Condon's observations and writing led to publication in 1871 of "The Rocks of the John Day Valley," also in the *Overland Monthly*.

Word of the fossil beds spread. In 1871 amateur geologist William de Gracey (Lord Walsingham) passed through the upper John Day while on a hunting expedition. De Gracey collected specimens at Turtle Cove and Bridge Creek, some of which were noticed in the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London* (Bettany 1876: 259).

In 1871 Othneil C. Marsh, professor of paleontology at Yale, led the first university-sponsored scientific expedition to the John Day Fossil Beds. Condon had corresponded regularly with Marsh and shipped specimens to him. Marsh arrived in October with a dozen Yale students, all weary after weeks in the field in Kansas and Wyoming. The Yale party traveled 600 miles by lurching stagecoach from Salt Lake City to Canyon City, arriving on October 17. A military escort from Fort Harney accompanied them to the John Day deposits, where they were met and guided by Thomas Condon. In spite of their fatigue and deteriorating weather conditions, the students and their professors, accompanied by Condon, collected eleven boxes of material between October 31 and November 8. The group then moved on to The Dalles where Marsh studied Condon's collection for three days. Marsh was particularly intrigued with the bones of a three-toed horse and tried to purchase the specimen; Condon declined to sell it. Subsequently Marsh published on the specimens viewed or collected during the 1871 expedition. The species included two rhinoceros and one oreodon, the latter a specimen presented by Condon to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University (Clark 1989: 236-237; Schuchert and LeVene 1940: 124-126).

Condon's circle of contacts continued to grow. His connection with Marsh led to correspondence in 1871 from Edward Drinker Cope of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. Cope, a rival and at times a bitter foe of Marsh, wanted specimens. Next came a request from Professor C. D. Voy of the
University of California, Berkeley, volunteering to exchange fossils from California for those Condon was finding in Oregon. At almost the same time, Joseph Le Conte of the University of California announced a trip to Oregon and proposed that Condon join him in the field (Clark 1989: 230-235).

In less than five years, Condon's pioneering geological work had attracted major American scholars. He had linked them through correspondence and specimens to the unique deposits of the John Day region. Governor Lafayette Grover in 1872 named Thomas Condon Oregon's first State Geologist, a position which ultimately led to his leaving the ministry and assuming professorial responsibilities at the new University of Oregon in Eugene (Clark 1989: 252-254).

**Scientific Expeditions in the Late Nineteenth Century**

The interest of scientists, students, and scholars in the John Day region deepened during the latter part of the nineteenth century. O. C. Marsh and Oscar Harger of Yale University mounted a second expedition to the fossil beds in the fall of 1873. Marsh thereafter arranged for local residents Leander S. Davis, Sam Snook, and William S. Day to continue collecting for him in the John Day country. Between 1873 and 1877, they forwarded him boxes of vertebrate remains from the fossil beds (Schuchert and LeVene 1940: 181). The results of Marsh’s two expeditions to Oregon and work with the Condon collection led to an article "New Equine Mammals from the Tertiary" published in 1874 in the *American Journal of Science*. In it Marsh discussed five genera of horses. Three – *Miohippus*, *Parahippus*, and *Merychippus* – were specimens collected by Condon (Clark 1989: 256-257).

Edward Drinker Cope, paleontologist for the U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories, began fieldwork in the American West in 1872 in Wyoming. To expand his operations into Oregon he sent Charles H. Sternberg, who had labored on surveys in Kansas, to the upper John Day region in 1877. Cope's
subsequent effort to identify, assess, and publicize the fauna of the upper John Day region was prodigious. Between 1878 and 1889 he submitted over thirty papers to professional journals.


Many of the assessments supplied details on the source of the remains. Writing about *Galecynus latidens*, Cope noted: "The typical specimen described was obtained by Mr. J. L. Wortman in the cove of the John Day valley, Oregon, in the John Day Miocene formation. One of the mandibles was found by Mr. C. H. Sternberg" (Cope 1884[1]: 931). Cope's commentary was often vivid. Writing about the panther *Nemravus gomphodus*, he commented:

Nevertheless, this species did not probably, attack the large Merycochoeri of the Oregon herbivores, for their superior size and powerful tusks would generally enable them to resist an enemy of the size of this species. They were left for the two species of Pogonodon, who doubtless held the field in Oregon against all rivals" (Cope 1884[1]: 972).

Cope's handsomely illustrated volumes elevated the fossil beds of the John Day country to national status. Scientists in the United States, indeed in other countries, could now see the wide range and quality of fossils preserved in the deposits. Cope's illustrators dutifully captured the remains, showing details of dentition, skull structure, arm and leg bones, ribs and vertebrae, and other features. The vivid writing and cross-references to similar species in other locations and citations to scientific publications gave the Cope reports utility. Their publication by the Government Printing Office made them affordable and available to libraries and scholars.
Fig. 55. Canidae from the John Day epoch of Oregon (Cope 1884[2]: Pl. LXVIII).
Charles H. Sternberg, Cope's able associate, journeyed to the John Day Fossil Beds in the spring of 1878. Sternberg had camped during the winter of 1877-78 on Pine Creek in Washington Territory. In April he visited Fort Walla Walla where his brother, Dr. George M. Sternberg, was serving as post surgeon. From there Sternberg traveled by wagon to the John Day watershed with his two assistants, Joe Huff and Jacob Wortman. The men crossed from the Powder River country over the Blue Mountains to the John Day in the vicinity of Canyon City where, in May, 1878, they observed extensive placer mining still underway (Sternberg 1931: 170-171).

The party stopped first to collect fossil leaves on the Van Horn Ranch, about seven miles east of Dayville. "I collected two hundred specimens," wrote Sternberg, "and Mr. Wortman eighty-five. They were all very fine, and represented the oak, the maple, and other species. I secured some fish vertebrae also." In mid-May the men were at Dayville where they hired Bill Day and Mr. Warfield, local residents who had collected for Professor Marsh. The party arrived at Picture Gorge. Sternberg later wrote of Turtle Cove:

At the foot of this canyon, the mountains swing away from the river in a great horseshoe bend, closing in upon it again several miles below. The brilliantly colored clays and volcanic ash-beds of the Miocene of the John Day horizon paint the landscape with green and yellow and orange and other glowing shades, while the background, towering upward for two thousand feet, rise rows upon rows of mighty basaltic columns, eight-sided prisms, each row standing a little back of the one just below, and the last crowned with evergreen forests of pine and fir and spruce. But no pen can picture the glorious panorama" (Sternberg 1931: 173-174).

Sternberg and Wortman maintained an informal base of operations at the Mascall Ranch south of Picture Gorge – at the present south boundary of Sheep Rock Unit – making collecting forays of several weeks duration into Turtle Cove. Mascall allowed the scientists to make use of an extra log cabin behind his own
for the storage of their supplies and specimens. Sternberg later remembered the generosity of the Mascall family that summer:

This Mr. Mascall had a wife and daughter, and when we came in from the fossil beds, after several weeks of camping out, it seemed almost like coming home to be able to put our feet under a table, eat off stone dishes, and drink our coffee out of a china cup, and to sleep on a feather bed instead of a hard mattress and roll of blankets....Mascall was a good gardener, and always had fresh vegetables, a most enjoyable change from hot bread, bacon, and coffee. I shall not soon forget his hospitality (Sternberg 1931: 178-179).

Sternberg and Wortman reached the fossil beds in Turtle Cove by packing their gear over the top of Picture Gorge on an old horse trail, dropping down steep slopes to "Uncle Johnnie Kirk's hospitable cabin, a 12 x 14 structure of rough logs with a shake roof. He kept a bachelor's hall and lived all alone except when some cowman or fossil hunter came along. We pitched our tent near his house."

Sternberg's field strategy was to climb to the inaccessible heights, a "perilous enterprise" as he phrased it, to put his searching above the reach of previous fossil collectors. "I could tell of a hundred narrow escapes from death," he later recalled when assessing the perilous work. "What is it that urges a man to risk his life in these precipitous fossil beds? I can only answer for myself," he later wrote, "but with me there were two motives, the desire to add to human knowledge, which has been the great motive of my life, and the hunting instinct, which is deeply planted in my heart" (Sternberg 1931: 173-200).

The following year, Jacob L. Wortman had charge of Cope's exploring party in central Oregon which made "extensive and valuable collections of the fossils of the John Day . . ." (Cope 1884[1]: xxvi-xxvii). Wortman, subsequently professor of paleontology at Yale University, was the son of Jacob and Eliza Ann (Stumbo) Wortman, overland emigrants to Oregon in 1852. Wortman was a partner with his father and three brothers in Jacob Wortman & Sons, with
mercantile stores in Junction City and Monroe, Oregon. With the dissolution of
the firm in 1883, Jacob L. Wortman founded the First National Bank of
McMinnville and his son, Henry, invested in Olds, Wortman, and King, a major
retail store in Portland. Wortman committed his life to teaching, research, and
writing (Anonymous 1903: 589-590).

Leander S. Davis, an experienced local collector, served as a guide for
every major expedition to the John Day Fossil Beds into the early twentieth
century. Davis accompanied Wortman and Sternberg in 1878-79. He guided
Captain Charles Bendire, of the U.S. Army garrison at Fort Walla Walla, in the
collection of fossil plants in 1880. Davis again collected in 1882 for the U.S.
Geological Survey under the direction of Othneil Marsh (Shotwell 1967: 12).

William Berryman Scott of Princeton University made a large collection in
the John Day region in 1889 with the help of Leander Davis. "The success of the
expedition," recalled Scott, "was very largely due to Davis whose knowledge of
the country and of the fossil beds was very exact." The Scott party camped at a
pine grove in the "Cove" and from there made daily expeditions to seek fossils.
The men found the country "sheeped off," virtually denuded of grass through
overgrazing. Philip Ashton Rollins served as photographer. He had to cope with
curtains of smoke pouring through the region from distant fires in the Cascade
Range. Scott estimated that the work yielded a ton and a half of specimens.
These were shipped to Princeton University and stored in the basement of
Nassau Hall. The cleaning, mounting, and study of the collection was deferred
and, before it could be done, pipe fitters installing a heating system in the
building pillaged the boxes. Scott subsequently observed: "it is maddening to
think of what was lost through the brutality of ignorance after all our trouble in
gathering it" (Scott 1939: 173-177).

By the close of the nineteenth century, news of the John Day Fossil Beds
had spread through the scientific community to far corners of the world.
J. Arnold Shotwell, University of Oregon geologist at the Museum of Natural History, has commented: "By 1900 over 100 papers had been published on the geology and paleontology of the John Day Basin and nearly every major museum in the world had collections from there." Most of these studies focused upon the naming of new species or genera (Shotwell 1967: 12).

**Early Twentieth Century Research**

In the twentieth century a new generation of collectors and writers worked with the specimens of the upper John Day region, expanding knowledge of the relationships between vertebrate faunas and the basin’s stratigraphic sequence. John Campbell Merriam of the University of California, subsequently president of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D. C., began his fieldwork in 1899. The first University of California expedition included Merriam, its director, Loye H. Miller, a naturalist, F. C. Calkins, geologist, Leander Davis, local guide and (by then) sawmill operator out of Baker City, and George B. Hatch, a hunter and fisherman. The party traveled via The Dalles Military Road into the Bridge Creek area. The men established a base camp at Allen's Ranch, noted as six miles south of the mouth of Bridge Creek and two and one-half miles southeast of the wagon road. The group made at least two more camps in Turtle Cove to work the John Day Formation (Anonymous 1899). Merriam's work concerned the relationship of fauna to geology. His discerning observations led to descriptions of several salient features of the deposit areas: river terraces, Columbia lava, John Day Series, and the Clarno, Mascall, and Rattlesnake formations.

Merriam's integration of fauna and geology influenced his students, Eustace Furlong, Chester Stock, and Ralph Chaney who mounted additional expeditions in 1900, 1901 and 1916. They published a collaborative work, "The Pliocene Rattlesnake Formation and the Fauna of Eastern Oregon" (Merriam, Stock and Moody 1925). Erling Dorf of Princeton University recalled in 1979 that
he had served as an assistant for Ralph W. Chaney in the Mascall and Clarno formations, "probably in 1926 or 1927," (Dorf 1979).

Geologist Ralph Chaney devoted much of his field time and research to the flora of the lower John Day Formation found in the Bridge Creek region. "It soon became clear," noted J. Arnold Shotwell, "that this basin provided an ideal set of circumstances for sequencial [sic] floristic studies and in the next forty years Chaney took advantage of these to produce a series of highly significant papers providing the basis for much of modern paleobotany" (Shotwell 1967: 13). Chaney's works included "Quantitative Studies of the Bridge Creek Flora" (1924),
"Geology and Paleobotany of the Crooked River Basin" (1927), and "The Ancient Forests of Oregon" (1948).

In 1906 the University of Kansas sponsored an expedition to the John Day region. C. E. McClung, Martin, Baumgartner, and Hoskins – members of the Zoology Department – crossed the Blue Mountains to the John Day on July 1 and established a base camp at Turtle Cove. "Almost all colors of the rainbow may be seen, but the prevailing ones are chocolate red and pea-green," wrote McClung. The Kansas contingent worked diligently. "It is a very difficult matter to remove the bones in good condition because of the lack of homogeneity in the matrix," observed McClung, but he hastened to add that the bones were "in an excellent state of preservation and make beautiful specimens." The specimens went to the holdings at the University of Kansas (McClung 1906: 67-70).

During the summers of 1925, 1930, and 1934 the California Institute of Technology mounted expeditions to the John Day region. In 1940 its students and professors joined an expedition with the Carnegie Institute of Washington, D.C. The specimens were transferred in 1959 to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (Whistler 1979).

Deposits near Clarno, Oregon, provided important paleobotanical information. The deposits were first discerned about 1890 and led to the publication of "Fossil Flora of the John Day Basin" (Knowlton 1902), a monograph discussing twenty-two forms of leaves. In 1942 Thomas J. Bones commenced his paleobotanical work in the Clarno deposits. Bones later stated that over fifty different genera had been identified but that "many hundreds of species are now extinct, rendering identification to modern genera difficult to impossible" (Bones 1979: 5). In 1942, dedicated amateur geologist Lon Hancock found a fossil tooth in the Clarno "nut beds" along Pine Creek. R.A. Stirton of the University of California soon identified the tooth as from the rhinoceros Hyrachyus in the first account of animal remains from the Clarno beds.
(Shotwell 1967: 14). In 1956, Hancock discovered mammal fossils about one mile from the nut beds, and subsequently excavated a large site now known as the Hancock Mammal Quarry. Investigations at the mammal quarry continued into the 1980s, yielding a highly diversified fauna (Fremd, Bestland, and Retallack 1994).

Fig. 57. View of eroded rock palisades at Clarno Unit (OrHi 101197)
Recognizing Educational Values

By mid-century, the tremendous potential of the John Day fossil beds as an educational resource for the general public was widely acknowledged. Beginning in 1931 and continuing through 1965, the State of Oregon made careful purchases of key parcels of land with high interpretive potential. The result was the creation of three roadside parks with unique paleontological resource values: Picture Gorge, Painted Hills, and Clarno state parks (Mark 1996: 41-82).

J. C. Merriam, whose interest in the John Day region endured for more than four decades, organized the John Day Associates in 1943. In addition to coordinating scientific research projects in the upper basin, this group was committed to conservation and to “developing public interest in the geological story so clearly told by the rocks and fossils of the region." The "Associates" thus advised Samuel Boardman, superintendent of the Oregon State Parks system, on which tracts to acquire for park purposes (Shotwell 1967: 23).

In 1951, the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry established a field school on public lands in the vicinity of Clarno. Camp Hancock, named for pioneer Clarno fossil collector Lon Hancock, served (and continues to serve) as a summer educational facility for young scientists from elementary to graduate school levels. The camp originally operated with a forty-acre lease from the Bureau of Land Management, but the acreage was reduced to ten in 1969 (Mark 1996: 115).

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument was established in 1975, following a campaign of nearly ten years. Its stated purpose was set forth in the Monument's strategic plan:

To protect the paleontological resources of the John Day Basin and provide for, and promote, the scientific and public understanding of those resources (Mark 1996: 9).
A detailed administrative history of the Monument, and its formation from three predecessor state parks, are thoroughly documented in *Floating in the Stream of Time: An Administrative History of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument* (Mark 1996). The impetus for creation of the Monument clearly lay in the nationally recognized significance of its paleontological resources and their educational potential.

Fig. 58. Early view of Camp Hancock, on display at Berrie Hall; F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).

The John Day Fossil Beds remain the focus of worldwide scientific research even today. Much of that outside research is directly facilitated by the
Monument's own paleontology program. Internally, management of paleontology resources continues to be the Monument's top priority, in accordance with the park's primary mission. The paleontology program has greatly expanded over the years to encompass field prospecting, fossil recovery, curation of specimens, research, interpretation, survey of other collections, past and present literature reviews, coordination of field investigations by outside institutions, and cooperative agreements for management of paleo-resources on federal lands outside Monument boundaries (Mark 1996: 217-227).

Fig. 59. Headquarters, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Sheep Rock Unit, F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).
Cultural Resources Summary

Paleontological explorations constitute an exceptionally important theme in the human history of the John Day basin. Belatedly explored and sparsely settled due to its difficult access, the region was bypassed by some of the larger events of Pacific Northwest history. Other themes of the area’s economic development—mining, ranching, and logging—have played a sustained but less visible role. None constitute the region’s claim to fame in the wider world. By contrast, the fossil beds and their exploration have placed Grant and Wheeler counties in the limelight for more than a century. As a destination for scientific exploration and inquiry, the fossil beds gained national renown as early as the 1870s. Later, as efforts took shape to explain the area’s rich geological history to the general public, visitation to the remote region increased, and the foundations of a local tourism industry were laid.

From the first documented wanderings of Thomas Condon in the mid-1860s, through the mid-twentieth century and beyond, visiting scientists and scholars have camped, prospected, and labored in the vicinity of the Monument. Some of their field journals and subsequent articles mention the places where they camped or searched for fossils. But most of these references are frustratingly vague, describing only general localities and nearby geographic features. Such broad references are made in the literature to Condon’s explorations in the vicinity of Bridge Creek and around Sheep Rock in Turtle Cove, and to J.C. Merriam’s forays into the Blue Basin. Somewhat more specific are references to particular places which served as base camps or prospecting sites. These include Sternberg and Wortman’s 1878 collections at the Van Horn Ranch, and their base camp at the Mascall Ranch south of Picture Gorge, as well as J.C. Merriam’s 1899 base camp at Allen’s Ranch on Bridge Creek and prospecting on the Loup Fork (Mascall) beds on Cottonwood Creek.
The presence of these visiting scientists and their interactions with local ranchers was nonetheless transitory, most lasting no longer than a few days or a single season at most. In their travels through the upper John Day basin, small parties of fossil hunters left no visible marks on the land. Because of this transient use and lack of location specificity, sites associated with fossil hunting are problematic in terms of identification and evaluation for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The level of detail required to ground-verify locations of camps and collecting sites has not been uncovered in this study. Thus, no sites of this category within the Monument or its general vicinity have thus far been identified as eligible for listing in the National Register.

Fig. 60. Berrie Hall at Hancock Field Station; F.K. Lentz 1996 (National Park Service).

Within the boundaries of the Monument one site does appear to have clear potential for listing in the National Register in the near future. Camp Hancock (now called the Hancock Field Station) is a ten-acre inholding within the
Clarno Unit, owned and operated by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Now nearly fifty years of age, Hancock Field Station is a specific locale that has played a continuing role in paleontological research since 1951. Even more critical has been its role in science education for the general public. The camp complex includes Berrie Hall, a board and batten-clad dining and assembly hall, the oldest structure on site. Arranged around Berrie Hall in a narrow canyon are various laboratories, display sheds, and housing in the form of clusters of small A-frame cabins. The camp's simple wood-frame buildings were added over time, the most recent additions being A-frames brought in from Rajneeshpuram, the failed religious commune at Antelope.

Recommendations for further investigation of cultural resources associated with the context of Paleontological Explorations include:

1. Encourage and/or assist Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in documenting the historical development of Hancock Field Station for possible nomination to the National Register, when the facility reaches fifty years of age in 2001. Consider potential inclusion of nut beds and mammal quarry as associated paleontological features.

2. Provide closure to the question as to whether sufficient site-specific information exists for National Register determinations of eligibility, by documenting all locales associated with the movements of pivotal early-day fossil-hunters in the vicinity of the Monument. Using expedition journals and historic field photographs, revisit base camps, field camps, prospecting locales, and important discovery sites. Wherever possible, verify, map, and photographically record precise locations. Assess for significance within overall context of paleontological explorations in the John Day basin.
Chapter Eight

Tourism and Recreation
Chapter Eight

TOURISM AND RECREATION

While steamboats, railroads, stagecoaches, and sternwheelers fostered early-day tourism in many parts of the state, leisure-time travel into central and eastern Oregon was constrained by the lack of easy access. In the rugged John Day basin, overland travel remained challenging until World War One and beyond. Early recreational and social activities among the residents of Grant and Wheeler counties were simple, local in nature, and often outdoor-oriented. With the advent of improved roads and motorized travel, tourists first began to enter the basin to view and enjoy its unusual natural landscape. The development of state parks in the fossil beds area in the 1940s, and the subsequent establishment of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument introduced the unique attractions of the region to a wider world.

Early Recreation

On foot, horseback, or horse-drawn wagon, the early inhabitants of the John Day basin meandered slowly to their destinations, fording streams, including the John Day River itself, climbing ridges, and avoiding chasms. Few traveled solely for the pleasure of the trip. Sojourners were generally limited to local residents going to and from town and the courthouses at Canyon City or Fossil, peddlers, wool buyers, and freighters (Munro 1984: 7, 26). Traveler services were almost non-existent, limited to stage stops at local ranches and, by the turn of the century, modest commercial hotels in small towns.

Because isolation was a common aspect of life for settlers in the John Day basin, people were especially eager to congregate for recreational purposes.
Picnics, holidays, and overnight dances occasionally brought families together from scattered ranches for camaraderie and social interaction (Campbell 1976: 37-39). For example, in 1899 – the year Wheeler County was established – long-time residents gathered at a Fourth of July celebration at Kelsay’s Grove outside the town of Fossil and formed the Wheeler County Pioneer Association. Typical of the period, the day’s events included patriotic speeches, entertainment by the Fossil Brass Band, and a grand dinner at the Donaldson Hotel. In 1901, the annual event was held in what is now the ghost town of Richmond and the following year at Mitchell. The organization evolved to become the Eastern Oregon Pioneer Association. In 1903, the group selected forty acres at a centrally located site on Sarvis Creek. From that time on, the traditional picnic was held at what is now known as Julia Henderson Pioneer Park on SR 19 between Fossil and Service Creek (Shaver et al., 1905: 647-648; Fussner 1975: 31, 53).

Fig. 61. Pioneer Picnic at Richmond, ca. 1901 (City of Fossil Museum).
In the year 1900, Scottish immigrants in the vicinity of Fossil organized the Caledonia Club. The group boasted 100 members, and met regularly at various locations – in 1903 they traveled all the way to the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland. Scottish sports and entertainment brought in from outside cities were enjoyed by all (Shaver et al., 1905: 651). Grant County ranchers gathered for Scot-American dances at Dayville and Canyon City. Bagpipes, fiddles, accordions, and a piano provided musical accompaniment. Couples danced; men went outside to drink Scotch and home brew, exchange lies, discuss the merits of a racehorse or a young woman, and throw a few punches. Long-time resident Rhys Humphreys recalled how important it was for people just to get together, "from dark until daylight, and then come home with a headache the next day." Non-drinkers and non-dancers went to church or attended "Skip-to-My-Lou" parties, chaste events where no one danced (they skipped) but gained an opportunity to socialize (Humphreys 1984a: 9, 14, 18, 36-37; Humphreys 1984b: 9; Munro 1984: 9-11).

Community events in the upper John Day basin included the Chautauqua Circuit in the early 1920s. It brought speakers to audiences eager for continuing education and social contact. In 1928, traveling movie shows replaced the lecture programs and became an increasingly popular form of entertainment. Rodeos, especially when connected with county fairs, drew crowds who wanted to watch brave if reckless men risk their lives to ride bucking horses and Brahma bulls. In the twentieth century sports became an important magnet. Baseball and basketball games associated with schools or community teams attracted players and audiences. Sports events became a useful means for gathering socially and competing to enhance school or community pride. Personal pursuits filled rare spare hours for others. These included reading books, newspapers, and magazines, whittling, and chasing wild horses. "I knew one herder that built

Outdoor recreation remained ever popular among the rural population. In winter, children had entertainment options of sledding and ice-skating. On occasion the residents of Dayville diverted the South Fork of the John Day River into a field and converted it into a large ice rink. In summer children and young

Fig. 63. Fishing on the John Day River near the town of John Day, n.d. (OrHi 16011).

As early as 1902, Grant County was noted for its mineral and warm springs. These places became the first destination tourist sites in the region. Soda Springs, at the upper end of Bear Valley south of Canyon City was well-known. Blue Mountain Hot Springs was another:

In the mountains on the north side of the county are several hot springs, all possessing, to a greater or less degree, medicinal properties. The most noted warm springs are near Reynold creek, a tributary of the John Day, about twenty-five miles east of Canyon City. The location has become the summer resort of the county. Bath houses have been constructed for the use of visitors. It is an ideal camping ground, the
surroundings are picturesque, the streams afford good fishing and the mountains on the south abound in game (Anonymous 1902, 728).

Another popular, and long-lived mineral springs resort took shape at Ritter on the Middle Fork of the John Day. The family resort developed intensively after 1896 when the existing ranch was purchased by the Charles Davis family. A cabin was built over the springs, and more of the 110-degree water was carried by trough to a bathhouse with three wooden tubs. A hotel, store, cabins, dancehall, and large stable for guests’ horses went up in the early years of the century. Ritter Hot Springs stayed open year around, and guests came from
Baker, Heppner, and Portland, some staying for weeks at a time. Hearty meals, served family style, gained fame. The Davis family kept cows, chickens, and pigs, supplying their own meat and dairy products. A large garden and an orchard irrigated with the warm mineral water are said to have grown luxuriantly, providing fresh fruit and vegetables (Secord 1973: 133-136).

Large dances were held in the resort dance hall every two weeks or so. These events drew dancers from Monument and Heppner after automobiles made access into Ritter easier. In the 1920s, the owners added a swimming pool and dressing rooms at the upper hot springs, one mile up the river. Reportedly, many a moonlight swimming party took place at the pool during Prohibition. In 1956 the widow Davis retired and sold the resort to new owners. In the 1970s, the resort was still operational although much altered, with a new swimming pool, duplexes, and camper and trailer sites (Secord 1973: 133-136).

Tourism in the Motor Age

The construction of roads for motorized travel was key to bringing leisure-time travelers into central and eastern Oregon. After 1914, the automobile inspired rapid improvements to roads in the rugged John Day country, to an extent unimaginable even ten years prior. The John Day River Highway, in place as a gravel road through Big Basin, Butler Basin, and Picture Gorge by 1918, gave visitors access from Portland via the Columbia River. The Pendleton-John Day Highway, funded in 1917, opened a route in through the Blue Mountains from Pendleton and points north. In the 1920s, completion of the Ochoco Highway from Prineville to Mitchell and on to John Day, opened up the region to east-west travel (Mark 1996: 29-30, 36).

The tourism potential of Grant and Wheeler counties was not lost on its early-day citizens. From the turn of the century, local boosters were aware not only of the attraction of the hot springs resorts for outside visitors, but also of the
growing fame of the fossil deposits. Turn-of-the-century descriptive writings do not fail to mention the geological and paleontological wonders of the area:

In 1890 the University of Princeton sent an exploring expedition into this region and many scientists have explored it besides and much is written concerning it. Surely Wheeler County is not only rich in possibilities at the present, but also is distinguished by the great wealth of lore that speaks like a book of the times that have been (Shaver et al., 1905: 658).

To improve both local and through access, Wheeler and Grant county residents participated in the Good Roads Movement. A photograph at the Fossil Museum shows a work party of local men improving an old wagon road for automobile use on a “Good Road Days” project. Adventuresome motorists did in fact make their way into the area as early as the 1910s, as soon as the condition of roads allowed. Another photograph of a caravan of auto-tourists in the John Day country depicts travel through a landscape of range land and cultivated field, on a graded and graveled road.

Fig. 65. Caravan of auto-tourists in the John Day country, n.d. (OrHi 83670).
The motoring public required services at intervals along the way. Those communities situated along early routes – Mitchell, Fossil, Dayville, Prairie City and others – already boasted sizeable hotels and stage stop facilities. By the 1930s, roadside auto camps – municipal and private – offered a popular form of alternative lodging that was especially attractive to traveling families. Typically, local livery stables expanded their services to include auto repairs, and quickly converted exclusively to automotive servicing. Local mercantiles added curbside pumps, such as the one installed at the Fossil General Mercantile in 1914. Gas pumps also appeared at key rural crossroads, first as independents and often in conjunction with small grocery and traveler supply stores. For example, Scotty’s Gas Station and Store at the mouth of Picture Gorge was operated by the Cant and Mascall families in the 1940s. Within a few short decades of the first graded roads, gas stations with modern corporate designs
such as the Texaco station in Mitchell penetrated the area. For roadside dining, motorists increasingly preferred quick-stop lunch stands or cafes to hotel dining rooms (Stinchfield 1983: 32; Mascall/Kocis-Mascall n.d.: 1; Lentz 1995).

Three State Parks and a National Monument

In 1921, the Oregon legislature authorized the Highway Commission to acquire rights-of-way to 300 feet on either side of the centerline of Oregon roads. Under this authority the Commission began acquiring small parks and waysides. From this modest beginning, gifts of land and purchases of property led to a network of roadside parks. In 1925, the Oregon legislature expanded the authority of the Highway Commission to acquire larger areas for the preservation of trees and scenic places for "parks, parking places, camp sites, public squares and recreation grounds." The Commission was empowered to improve, maintain, and supervise these properties (Armstrong 1965: 13-14; Merriam and Talbot 1992: 17-20).

Samuel H. Boardman became Superintendent of Oregon State Parks in 1929. Long impressed and inspired by lands in the John Day watershed, Boardman began the acquisition of scenic and paleontological areas there, but the project was slowed by the onset of the Depression. In 1942, the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, responding to the impetus of paleontologist John C. Merriam, created an Advisory Committee on State Parks. The aim of Merriam and the Advisory Committee was to secure key acreage in Grant and Wheeler counties. Although the committee did not endure, its purposes were attained when, in 1947, the State of Oregon had assembled sufficient lands to create the two new state parks – Painted Hills State Park, and Thomas Condon-John Day Fossil Beds State Park (Merriam and Talbot 1992: 264).
The following table identifies initial tracts acquired by the Oregon Highway Commission as it built up acreage in the vicinity of the Fossil Beds. Acquisition was by both gifted deed and purchase. Boardman himself recommended a number of the properties. Some parcels were selected based upon scenic values; others were selected because of their geological or paleontological importance (Langille 1948a: 2). By 1965, the State opened for public use a third new park in the area – Clarno State Park.
Table 6. Some Lands Acquired for State Parks at John Day Fossil Beds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milepost</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS CONDON-JOHN DAY FOSSIL BEDS STATE PARK:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 106</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>T9S, R26E, Sec. 31</td>
<td>Griffin Tract</td>
<td>6/18/1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 116</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>T11S, R26E, Sec. 7</td>
<td>The Cathedral</td>
<td>6/20/1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 118</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>T22S, R26E, Secs. 28-29</td>
<td>Turtle Cove</td>
<td>1/5/1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 120</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>T11S, R26E, Sec. 32</td>
<td>Kennedy Tract</td>
<td>7/17/1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 121</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>T12S, R26E, Sec. 6</td>
<td>Cant Wayside</td>
<td>9/14/1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 122-123</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sheep Rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 124</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Rock Creek Tract</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 125</td>
<td>1602</td>
<td>T12S, R25E, Secs. 1, 2</td>
<td>Picture Gorge</td>
<td>5/20/1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T12S, R26E, Secs. 5, 8, 18, 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 126.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>T12S, R26E, Sec. 29</td>
<td>William Mascall</td>
<td>9/14/1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overlook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP 136</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>T13S, R29E, Sec. 7</td>
<td>Van Horn Ranch</td>
<td>1/31/1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAINTED HILLS STATE PARK:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>T10S, R21E, Sec. 31, SE 1/4</td>
<td>Allen Ranch</td>
<td>6/23/1947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Erigero 1995; Langille 1948b: 1-2).

Overall, the investments of Oregon Highway Commission in the John Day Fossil Beds parks were modest. They included a textboard, tables, benches, stoves, and an entrance road at Painted Hills State Park and at Thomas Condon-John Day Fossil Beds State Park; an entrance road and parking area at Mascall Overlook; limited camping facilities at Turtle Cove; and a wayside with a textboard two miles north of the junction of Highways 26 and 19. Visitation was not carefully tracked. In 1962, Painted Hills State Park drew 5,703 visitors; no
record was kept in 1963. For the Thomas Condon-John Day Fossil Beds State Park, no visitor count was made (Armstrong 1965: 171, 206-207, 254, 257).

Fig. 68. Hikers on John Day River at Sheep Rock, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (OrHi 86137).

David G. Talbot, retired Superintendent of Oregon State Parks, recalled the sustained efforts of Gordon Glass, a resident of John Day, to lift up public attention and use of the fossil beds area: "Let's do something magnificent with the Painted Hills and Fossil Beds in the John Day River country because people come from miles around to see these scenic formations and it will help local business," he said. Talbot continued:
I could see right away that here was an opportunity to upgrade the presentation of those features. Because they are of national significance scientifically, maybe we could get the National Park Service to take them on. For a variety of reasons, we were not doing a very good job with the areas as a state park. We protected the holdings, but we didn't tell visitors much about them. We didn't interpret the park. I thought the Feds could invest more money, do a better job and attract enough people to help the local economy. And, that is exactly what happened" (Merriam and Talbot 1992: 138).

In 1967, the National Park Service, at the request of Oregon Congressman Al Ullman, conducted a regional study to evaluate the feasibility of including Oregon State Parks lands within the National Park System.

Table 7. Units Studied by National Park Service, 1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep Rock</td>
<td>3,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtle Cove</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foree</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cathedral</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mascall Overlook</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis Dike</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarno State Park</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Hills State Park</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(National Park Service 1967: 6-11)

The 1967 National Park Service assessment found colorful, scenic resources, limited recreation facilities, incomplete archaeological information, and historic resources "primarily of State or local significance." The Park Service determined that the areas examined were suitable for establishment as a national monument, but not for inclusion in the National Park System. The study

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
concluded: "Of the natural, scientific, and recreational resources within the area of study, those of paramount importance are scientific." (National Park Service 1967: 24-28).

Cultural Resources Summary

Owing to late settlement and difficult travel, tourism and recreation in Grant and Wheeler counties was slow to begin and limited in scale. To date, recreation and tourism has left a far less visible imprint on the landscape of the area. Surviving cultural resources associated with this theme are less prevalent than those linked to ranching, mining, and lumbering, and for the most part are more recent in date. Buildings and structures related to traveler services especially tend to be clustered in towns.

Fig. 69. Julia A. Henderson Pioneer Park. F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service)
Early residents and a small number of visitors from outlying parts of Oregon quietly enjoyed the handful of mineral and hot springs resorts tucked into high valleys. Some of these facilities continued in operation into the middle years of the century and may still retain extant features. State parks at the John Day Fossil Beds, and other small private camps, county parks, forest camps, and state park waysides took shape along stretches of improved roads from the 1930s through the 1970s. The earliest of these was Pioneer Park, established in 1903. The land for Shelton Wayside State Park on SR 19 was donated in the 1930s by Kinzua owner E.D. Wetmore in honor of his timber cruiser Shelton (Stinchfield 1983: 256).

![Fig. 70. Independent gas station in Canyon City, c.1925. F. K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service)](image)

In the early decades of auto tourism, gas, food, and lodging services sprang up at many small crossroads hamlets. In more recent decades, overnight
facilities for travelers have concentrated in the incorporated communities of Fossil, Mitchell, and John Day, with limited gas and food available in the smaller towns like Dayville and Kimberly. Period gas stations and garages; hotels, motels and tourist cabins; cafes and restaurants dating from the 1920s through the 1960s can be found scattered along the main streets of most of the larger communities in the two-county area.

Today, tourist interest in and around the National Monument continues to depend on its paleontological and scenic values. Within a wider circle, however, outdoor recreation and cultural tourism are increasingly important draws as well. Grant County's promotion of its early gold mining and cattle ranching history has helped to elevate heritage tourism to an important element of the local economy. The federal designation of the John Day River as a National Wild and Scenic River in the late 1970s has spawned a local river rafting industry, and boosted Wheeler County's share of the recreational tourism dollar.

In 1997, local governments and chambers of commerce, funded by a USDA Rural Development Grant, pooled information and energies to develop an interpretive driving tour called Journey Through Time: Tour 50 Million Years of Oregon's Past, Points of Interest. The program is promoted as a 286-mile-long loop tour through the Oregon Department of Transportation's Scenic Byways Program. The tour route enters the Monument area at Fossil, and follows SR 19 and US 26 past Sheep Rock, the Cant Ranch, and Picture Gorge, and on to John Day. Distinctive interpretive signage along the route identifies some forty-four natural and cultural attractions, including the units and features of the Monument.
Fig. 71. Advent Christian Church, built in 1898, now a tourist attraction in the town of John Day. F.K. Lentz, 1996 (National Park Service)

No cultural resources specifically associated with the history of tourism and recreation in Grant or Wheeler Counties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

No cultural resources associated with the history of tourism and recreation, other than several turn-of-the-century hotels presented in previous chapters, are listed in the Oregon State Inventory of Historic Places for Grant and Wheeler counties.
Area tourism literature for places associated with the history of recreation and tourism (in addition to scenic overlooks within the Monument, and various picnic and campgrounds of uncertain date) list only two sites:

- Shelton Wayside State Park, dating from the 1930s
- Julia Henderson Pioneer Park, established 1903

Two suggestions are made with regard to cultural resources associated with the context of Tourism and Recreation:

1. Consider working with the Grant County Historical Society to support research into the early mineral and hot spring resorts in Grant County. A field survey of known locations and a recording of extant features would be an important first step in this process. As a final product, a well-documented, pictorial booklet would add much to visitor understanding of early recreation in this remote setting.

2. Develop an inventory of any early State Parks era features such as landscaping, signage, camping and/or picnic structures in the units of the Monument. Over time, retaining such features whenever possible will help to preserve the tangible history of the human origins of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.
Conclusion
Conclusion

Despite its isolation, the John Day country possesses a richly textured human history. Although some of the familiar themes of western history – fur trading, exploratory expeditions, missionary activity – appear to have bypassed the rugged canyons and secluded basins of the John Day Fossil Beds, other more universal themes of the arid West did not. People coped under widely differing circumstances with the same pervasive challenges, issues, and joys: searing summers and bone-chilling winter winds; flash floods and dust storms; torturous terrain and lack of water; bitter conflict over land; struggles for water rights and grazing rights; ethnic diversity and ethnic conflict; far-away war and economic fluctuations; community and family.

For a variety of reasons, the John Day basin, specifically Grant and Wheeler counties, have a high potential for extant historic resources not yet identified. From the first rush of gold seekers bent on penetrating the region in search of riches to the present day, is a very short span, even in terms of human history. “History” lingered late in this area, where homesteading continued into the 1910s and 1920s, colliding headlong with the auto age and the construction of improved roads. Logging got a late start and gold mining persisted into the 1940s. The earliest phase of settlement and its attendant economic activities are in some instances still evident on the land. Places which flourished within living memory – some now ghost towns, remnant stretches of wagon road, or abandoned mining sites – still exist.

Lack of modern development explains this to a large degree. For the old reasons of rugged terrain, distance from markets, and a tenuous economic base, intensive growth and development have missed this corner of Oregon. The new
has not yet erased the old. Here as elsewhere, limited financial resources often result in historic preservation by default – property owners simply get by for longer, maintaining, but making fewer changes to the physical fabric of ranches and towns. Once abandoned, structures and features survive longer here in the arid climate than they would on the rainy, western side of the Cascades. Lack of development has also allowed the ranching landscape to persist. Range lands, cultivated bottomlands along the rivers and streams, and forested mountains seem to fairly closely reflect the setting that prevailed in the John Day Valley one hundred years ago. In other words, the larger cultural landscape is surprisingly intact.

Despite the high potential for extant historic resources, no systematic survey of private lands has taken place in Grant or Wheeler counties. For site-specific information, this study relied upon available SHPO inventory data that are spotty at best, as well as secondary and anecdotal sources. A comprehensive inventory of rural areas in Grant and Wheeler counties is badly needed. Like other SHPO offices around the country today, the Oregon Office of Historic Preservation is short on funding for such intensive survey efforts. Incremental survey/inventory projects may be the answer, focused on single themes.

Since these areas lie outside the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, this report suggests encouraging, sponsoring, and/or partnering with appropriate universities, the Oregon SHPO, the Grant County Historical Society, and/or the Fossil Museum to undertake thematic studies on topics where research gaps appear to exist. Suggested topics, as set forth in previous chapters, include ranching in the John Day Valley, the hot springs resort industry in Grant County, and the physical development of towns and hamlets in the vicinity of the Monument.
A summary of recommendations presented in previous chapters for active involvement of the National Park Service in continued cultural resource investigations is as follows:

1. Conducting a field survey of ranch in-holdings within the Monument, to provide a stronger comparative basis for the interpretation of the Cant Ranch.
2. Expanding the oral history program to the Painted Hills and Clarno units.
3. Updating the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings listing of Camp Watson, through field verification of the fort and cemetery sites.
4. Ascertaining the locations of the Clarno and Carroll family cemeteries, and any other family plots in the vicinity of Clarno, Painted Hills and Sheep Rock units.
5. Documenting, field surveying, photographing, and mapping extant remnants of The Dalles-Boise Military Road, in collaboration with BLM and/or the Oregon SHPO.
6. Assisting the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in documenting and assessing the Hancock Field Station for possible nomination to the National Register in 2001 or later.
7. Verifying, mapping and photo-recording the campsites of early-day paleontologists within the Monument.

The brief course of human history in this region pales in comparison to the geologic time scale embedded in the exposed strata of the John Day Fossil Beds. Generations of people have lived their entire lives in the daily company of these magnificent formations. We wonder what inspiration they may have
drawn from this landscape. Perhaps small projects such as these that explore
the inclination of humans to understand and shape their surroundings, will help
us to know the answer to that question.
Bibliography

Public and private repositories throughout Oregon and Washington were visited in the preparation of this Historic Resources Study. Cultural Resource files, Lands Division files, and regional library holdings at the National Park Service, Columbia Cascades Support Office, served as a starting point. Library and museum collections at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument provided a foundation of invaluable background material.

Also explored were the Bureau of Land Management (Public Room, Oregon State Office), the Oregon Historical Society Library, the Lewis & Clark College Libraries, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, the University of Washington Libraries (Special Collections Division), the Grant County Historical Museum, the City of Fossil Museum, and the Sherman County Historical Museum. Much material was made available through the private collection of Stephen Dow Beckham.

The following sources were consulted and cited in the preparation of the Historic Resources study. The annotations speak to the utility of the source, occasionally noting its special strengths or deficiencies.
Allen, Eleanor, ed.

The Hanna diary of 1852 provides an excellent narrative of travel on the Oregon Trail. It includes impressions and commentary as well as description.

Alvord, Benjamin

Penned at Fort Dalles by the post commander, this is one of the earliest ethnographic accounts of Indians of the western Plateau.

Anderson, William Wright
1848 Diary. MS, Lilly Library, University of Indiana, Bloomington, IN.

Anderson was barely literate, yet he struggled to find words to describe his overland travel, life in the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound, and his sojourn in the California mines.

Anonymous
1885a [Article on Chinese], Grant County News (Canyon City, OR), February 19.

The article and the two that follow confirms the rampant anti-Chinese racism in Grant County in the late nineteenth century.

1885b [Article on Chinese], Grant County News (Canyon City, OR), October 15.
1886 [Article on Chinese], Grant County News (Canyon City, OR.), February 4.

1898 Eastern Oregon Gold Fields: Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur and Union Counties. Morning Democrat (Baker City, OR.), May 20

A special edition of the local newspaper, focusing on mining prospects and businessmen of the surrounding counties.


This narrative describes the expedition of scientists from the University of California, Berkeley, to the John Day fossil beds in 1898.


Written by anonymous local informants, the volume is one of several "mug" books with detailed overview histories of counties produced as a for-profit venture. The book covers the lives of dozens of people mentioned in no other historical accounts.

1903 Portrait and Biographical Record of the Willamette Valley, Oregon. Chapman Publishing Company, Chicago, IL.

This is a volume of biographies of pioneer settlers who paid to be included and who dictated their memoirs.


This report of 29 pages was developed at the beginning of NPS administration of the national monument to summarize its primary features: natural history, geology, history, archaeology, and recreation.

The notes were gleaned from interviews with knowledgeable persons who worked at, were descended from, or knew the Cant family.

Applegate, Shannon and Terrence O'Donnell, eds.

Volume six in the Oregon Literature Series, this anthology included translations of letters written by Chinese residing in the upper John Day region in the latter nineteenth century. Each selection has an introductory note.

ARCTIA (see Bureau of Indian Affairs)

Armstrong, Chester

The volume provides a history of state parks and background information on the acquisition and development of many parks with the state system.

Ashton, Vera Officer
n.d.  A Short Resume of Floyd Lee Officer's Early Life in the Basin and the Famous Fossil Beds Area. MS typescript, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, OR.

Vera Ashton provided biographical information about her father, a homesteader in what became the national monument.

Bancroft, Hubert Howe

This is the last of an ambitious, fully documented set of volumes providing an overview of California history through the Spanish, Mexican, and American periods to 1890.
Barlow, Jeffrey G. and Christine A. Richardson
1979 China Doctor of John Day. Binford and Mort, Portland, OR.

Barlow and Richardson worked with the collections in Doc Hay's apothecary store and wove in a background history of the Chinese in Grant County.

1991 Gum San, Land of the Golden Mountain: An Exhibit on Chinese Life and Labor in the West. The High Desert Museum, Bend, OR.

Prepared as an exhibit catalog, this handsomely illustrated volume provides background information on Chinese immigration to the United States and life in the American West.

Beckham, Stephen Dow

Prof. Beckham analyzed all Pacific Northwest treaties unratified and ratified—for the enumeration of reserved rights and the identities of probable user groups. The analysis included both Indians as well as "citizens of the territory" and "citizens of the United States."

1984b 'This Place is Romantic and Wild': An Historical Overview of the Cascades Area, Fort Cascades, and the Cascades Townsite, Washington Territory. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, Portland, OR.

The volume is a history of the early development of federal government activities and civilian investments at the key portage of the Columbia River. The focal period is 1805-1896.
1997  Coos Bay Wagon Road: Historical Investigations and Identification of Interpretive Options. Report submitted to Coos Bay BLM District, U.S. Department of Interior, North Bend, OR.

This is a history of one of five land-grant, military wagon roads in Oregon and discusses the Coos Bay Wagon Road in the context of others, including The Dalles-Boise Military Wagon Road.


Prof. Beckham assessed the last 150 years of U.S. and Canadian Indian policy across the interior of the Pacific Northwest to create a major synthesis of applications of programs and their impacts on the region's tribes.

2000a  John Day River, Oregon: An Examination of Navigable Uses and Navigability Potentials. Report submitted to the Oregon Department of Justice and to the Oregon State Land Board, Salem, OR.

2000b  John Day River, Oregon: An Examination of Navigable Uses and Navigability Potentials. Supplemental report submitted to the Oregon Department of Justice and to the Oregon State Land Board, Salem, OR.

Expert witness reports with data derived from the records of the Oregon Utility Commission and title records of Wheeler County.

Berkhofer, Robert J., Jr.


Prof. Berkhofer dealt with images of "nobility" and "savagery" associated with American Indians and, in particular, discussed the role of "captivity narratives" in shaping Euro-American perceptions.
Bestland, Erick A. and Gregory J. Retallack


This is a monographic report based upon research into geology and prehistoric environmental conditions in the Painted Hills.

Bettany, G. T.


This short article assesses Merycohoerous, a specimen from the John Day fossil beds.

Bones, Thomas J.


The atlas covers fossil fruits and seeds found in North Central Oregon.

Boyd, Robert


Boyd addressed the pathenogenic consequences of the Euro-American incursion into the Northwest Coast Culture Area. He discussed waves of population declines.

Brimlow, George F.

1938 The Bannock Indian War of 1878. Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID.

Prof. Brimlow's history covers the causes and course of the Bannock War of 1878 in southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon.
Brogan, Phil

Brogan, a newspaper writer in Bend, discussed the history of the Carroll family which lived in the Bridge Creek area a century ago.

1977 *East of the Cascades*. Binford & Mort, Portland, OR.

A general history of central Oregon, with a focus on Bend and the Deschutes River country.

Brosnan, Cornelius

The biography of Lee saw him as a heroic figure, not as a failed missionary dismissed from his position in 1843. Lee was assessed as a harbinger of American civilization.

Buan, Carolyn M. and Richard Lewis, eds.

This volume written by several scholars and tribal representatives provided an excellent overview of culture and history of Oregon tribes.

Buckingham, Harriet Talcott

Buckingham's diary discussed her 1851 overland trek to Oregon. The account is sometimes interesting because of the stories the author recorded.

Bureau of the Census

The decennial census included statistics on dozens of economic matters. The compendium summarized the findings by subject, by state, by county. The same is true for all census records cited.

1880 *Tenth Census of the United States, Microcopy T-9, Roll 1081, Grant County, Oregon, National Archives, Washington, DC.*


1913 Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC.


**Bureau of Indian Affairs (ARCIA)**

The Annual Report included both the Commissioner’s overview of Indian affairs and also letters from the Oregon Superintendent and Indian agents for the year previous. The reports and letters are an invaluable compendium of primary information. The same is true for all volumes cited.

1850 *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* Printed for the Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, DC.
1858 *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* William A. Harris, Printer, Washington, DC.


**Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

The Master Title Plat is a record of lands which have left federal ownership and lands remaining in federal jurisdiction or reacquired. The Historical Index is a chronology of lands leaving federal ownership and includes precise locations, serial number, type of action, and date of action. The Control Data Inventory is a set of aperture cards of the transactions documents for disposition or reacquisition of federal lands.

n.d.a. Master Title Plat, T12S, R26E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

n.d.b. Historical Index, T12S, R26E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

220

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds

Burtchard, Greg C., Jacqueline Y. Cheung, and Eric B. Gleason

This report, based upon both literature search and ground survey, inventories archaeological resources discovered in the three units of the National Monument.
Campbell, Arthur H.

This is a rambling, undocumented but generally useful history of the Clarno family and some of its activities upon settlement near Clarno, Oregon. It is illustrated with historic photographs.

1980 John Day River: Drift and Historical Guide. Frank Amato Publications, Portland, OR.

A mile by mile rafting guide covering the stretch from Service Creek Bridge to Cottonwood Bridge, this anecdotal history is well sprinkled with photographs of local landmarks along the way.

Cant, James, Jr., and Freda Cant

The document is based upon an oral history taken in 1982 and 1983 from James Cant and Freda (Erikson) Cant about family history and ranching in the upper John Day region.

Carey, Charles

The second volume of Carey's history is a compilation of biographies of white male notables who paid to have their life stories told in this series.

Chaney, R. W.

Chaney was one of the first to publish on the ancient botany of the Bridge Creek area.

Chaney's study provided an overview of the geology and paleontology of the Crooked River region of Central Oregon.


Late in his career, Prof. Chaney shared with students and faculty of the University of Oregon his assessments of the prehistoric forests of Central Oregon. The lectures summarized more than twenty years of studies based on work in Central Oregon.

Clark, Keith and Lowell Tiller

1966  *Terrible Trail: the Meek Cutoff, 1845*.  The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID.

This team-written monograph provided an overview of the ill-fated wagon train which followed Stephen H. L. Meek in 1845 on his alleged short-cut to the Willamette Valley. The account includes biographical notes on travelers.

Clark, Robert D.


Prof. Clark wrote an excellent biography of the various careers of Thomas Condon, immigrant, missionary, and avid geologist. The work is fully documented.

Conyers, Enoch W.


Based on up Conyers' 1852 diary, this is the expanded narrative which he wrote late in life. It is filled with detail about Oregon Trail conditions and emigrant life.
Cope, Edward D.

Cope compiled a massive, handsomely illustrated report of the paleontological specimens he had collected during various expeditions in the American West. His findings included a number of fossils from the upper John Day region.

Corning, Howard McKinley, ed.

Long out of date but useful, the dictionary included biographical sketches and brief entries on subjects of Oregon history.

Cox, Ross
1831 *Adventures on the Columbia River Including the Narrative of a Residence of Six Years on the West Side of the Rocky Mountains Among Various Tribes of Indians Hereto Unknown, Together With a Journey Across the American Continent*. H. Colburn and R. Bentley, London.

This primary account was penned by a participant in the Pacific Fur Company and recounted his adventures in the far West, including Oregon.

Cross, Osborne

Cross was a commander of the Mounted Riflemen who crossed the Oregon Trail in 1849 to establish a military presence in Oregon. His journal was filled with description and illustrated with plates, probably executed from the drawings of civilians George Gibbs and William Henry Tappan.

Culp, Edwin D.
1972 *Stations West: The Story of the Oregon Railways*. The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID.

Strong on its use of historic photographs and time tables, this history of Oregon railroads covers many of the short line routes which carried passengers.
Dorf, Erling  
Letter of March 8 to Benjamin F. Ladd. MS, Files, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, John Day, OR.

Dorf's letter, from Princeton University's Department of Geological and Geophysical Sciences, responds to a request from the Monument on the whereabouts of Ralph Chaney's records of work in the John Day area.

Drury, Clifford Merrill  
1936 *Henry Harmon Spalding: Pioneer of Old Oregon.* The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID.

Ambitiously researched, this is the standard, apologetic biography of Spalding, missionary to the Nez Perce.

1937 *Marcus Whitman, M.D.: Pioneer and Martyr.* The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, ID.

The title confirmed the author's slant. Whitman was the bringer of "civilization" to the Indians. When they murdered him, he was a martyr. The book failed to see the Indian point of view about the consequences of Whitman's ministry or assistance to emigrants.

Due, John F. and Giles French  

The authors wrote a history of short-line railroads south from the OR & N primary route along the south shore of the Columbia River.

Eakin, S. B., Jr.  
1970 *A Short Sketch of a Trip Across the Plains by S. B. Eakin & Family, 1866.* Typescript, Lane County Historical Society, Eugene, OR.

Eakin's narrative covered his family's emigration overland to Oregon. It was not a particularly noteworthy trip.
Elliott, T. C.

Work was among the first Euro-Americans to penetrate the upper John Day country while in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. His journal was concerned with his travels and labors.


Elliott assessed the significance of the control by the Plateau Indians of the transit around Celilo Falls and Five Miles Rapids. He saw the portage challenges as significant in the region's early history.


Elliott assessed the meager historical traces left by the fur trapper, John Day.

Erigero, Patricia.

Erigero assembled useful, detailed chronologies by decade and theme from a wide variety of sources.

Everhart, William C.

This document contains an early assessment of the significance of Camp Watson, although the National Park Service surveyor was unable to verify the location of the site on the ground.
Farragher, John Mack
1979 *Women and Men on the Overland Trail.* Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

Prof. Farragher discussed gender roles and expectations of overland emigrants, both to Oregon as well as to California.

Fremd, Theodore, Erick Bestland, and Gregory J. Retallack
1994 *John Day Basin Paleontology Field Trip Guide and Road Log.* Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA.

John Day Fossil Beds paleontologist Fremd and others prepared this informal, casual guide as an overview for participants in the Society’s annual meeting in Seattle.

Fowler, Catherine S. and Sven Liljeblad

The team-written article is an excellent assessment of traditional lifeways of the Northern Paiute. Like most Handbook articles, it is light on historical assessment.

Franchere, Gabriel

This is the first edition of the narrative of Franchere, an employee of the Pacific Fur Company about his labors for John Jacob Astor in the Oregon country.

1854 *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America in the Years 1811, 1812, 1813, and 1814; Or, the First American Settlement on the Pacific.* Redfield, New York, NY.

This is the first English edition of the narrative of Franchere, an employee of the Pacific Fur Company about his labors for John Jacob Astor in the Oregon country.
Fremont, John Charles

Volume 1 covered Fremont’s overland expedition on the Oregon Trail in 1842 and 1843, including his transit of the Columbia Plateau and journey south into the Great Basin. This edition, based on the original of 1845, is usefully edited and introduced.

Fullerton, Mark A.
1881 Plat of Survey, T11S, R20E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

This is Fullerton’s survey plat based upon his subdivisions in the township in 1881.

Fussner, F. Smith, ed.
1975 *Glimpses of Wheeler County’s Past: An Early History of North Central Oregon*. Wheeler County Historical Commission, Portland, OR.

Prof. Fussner pulled together the accounts by local writers for this Bicentennial history of Wheeler County. It is written without documentation but by individuals who generally knew the history.

Gates, Paul W.

Prof. Gates wrote a classic in this volume. He assessed the long, convoluted history of federal land law.

Gaertner, John T.
1992 *The North Bank Road: The Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad*. Washington State University, Pullman, WA.

The volume covered the building of the SP &S Railroad along the north bank of the Columbia and discussed some of its short-line connections.
General Land Office

The 1876 map showed towns and travel routes.

Habersham, Robert A.

This map showed sites of military interest in Oregon through 1878.

Haines, Francis E., Jr.

Prof. Haines edited and introduced the diary of John Work on his expedition into the Snake Country and Central Oregon in 1830-31. Work was an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Hammer, Jacob

Hammer was one of the few diarists of the Oregon Trail route to Oregon in 1844. His account, while not especially literate, provided details of that year's emigration.

Hartwig, Paul
1973  Kam Wah Chung Co. Building, National Register nomination. Copy, National Park Service, Seattle, WA.

This nomination was prepared by assistant park historian Hartwig out of the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.
Hastings, Loren Brown

Hastings vividly expressed his opinions and observations in his journal of the 1847 emigration. He met Whitman at the Umatilla River and subsequently learned about his murder.

Hilty, Ivy E., Jean H. Peters, Eva M. Benson, Margaret A. Edwards and Lorraine T. Miller

The monograph identifies popular, scientific, and Indian names of edible foods and assessed their caloric value.

House of Representatives
House Executive Document No. 65, 36 Cong., 1 Sess.

This document contains the report of Captain D.H. Wallen’s road-reconnaissance from The Dalles to the head of Crooked River.

Humason, Orlando
1869 Map of The Dalles Military Road from Dalles City, on Columbia river, to Fort Boise, on Snake river--330 1/2 Miles. M-934, RG 77, Records of the Chief of Engineers, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Humason was one of the primary owners of the wagon road company gaining the lucrative land grant from the state under the federal grant program. He mapped the route as it was proposed in 1869.

Humphreys, Dollina

Dollina (Stewart) Humphreys was interviewed in 1982 and 1983 about life and history in the upper John Day region. She discussed the Scottish sub-culture and sheep ranching.
Humphreys, Rhys
1984a  *Cant Ranch Oral History Program, Monograph 1.* John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, John Day, OR.

Rys Humphreys was interviewed in 1982 about sheep ranching, the Cant family, transportation, and social conditions in the upper John Day region.

Hunn, Eugene S.
1990  *Nch’i-Wana: 'The Big River,' Mid Columbia Indians and Their Land.* University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA.

Hunn worked with the Selam family of the Yakama Nation to write this ethnographic assessment of a major tribe living on the Columbia Plateau. It is especially strong in its assessment of the seasonal round and traditional technology.

Hunn, Eugene S. and David H. French

Profs. Hunn and French wrote the ethnographic overview of the Sahaptins who occupied the lower John Day and other nearby regions on the Columbia Plateau.

Irving, Washington
1836  *Astoria; Or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains.* Carey, Lea & Blanchard, Philadelphia, PA.

Irving wrote a history based on primary sources about the labors of the Pacific Fur Company in Oregon 1810-1813. The book has remained in print for more than 160 years.

1837  *The Rocky Mountains; or, Sciences, Incidents, and Adventures in the Far West Digested from the Journal of Captain B. L. E. Bonneville.* Carey, Lea & Blanchard, Philadelphia, PA.

Irving used the life and adventures of B. L. E. Bonneville to write a popular account of the Rocky Mountain fur trade. The book fostered popular interest in Oregon.

232
Jackson, Kathleen (Bales)
1984 *Cant Ranch Oral History Program, Monograph No. 4.* John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, National Park Service, John Day, OR.

Kathleen (Bales) Jackson grew up on a ranch near Dayville. This interview was made in 1983 and covered ranching, teaching, and family life in the upper John Day region.

Jackson, W. Turrentine

Prof. Jackson wrote a definitive history of labors of the Topographical Engineers in surveying and building wagon roads in the American West.

Johansen, Dorothy O.

This introductory essay assessed the primary federal land acts which shaped settlement in Oregon. Johansen put special emphasis on the Donation Land Act of 1850.

Kappler, Charles J., ed.

Kappler compiled in this volume the ratified Indian treaties of the United States. The entries include date of negotiation, date of ratification, statute citation, and names of signatories.

Kelly, Isabel T.

Kelly collected oral literature of the Northern Paiute. These tales recounted cultural values and history of the Indians of south-central and southeastern Oregon.
Kenny, Judith Keyes
1957 The Founding of Camp Watson, Oregon Historical Quarterly 58:4-16.

Kenny wrote the history of the military post, Camp Watson, 1864-1869. The Oregon Infantry used this site in its campaigns against the Northern Paiute.


Kenny interviewed family members and neighbors to craft this history of the emergence of sheep ranching on the southern Columbia Plateau.

Kestler, Frances Roe

Prof. Kestler assessed through gendered analysis the role of the captivity narrative in shaping popular perceptions of American Indians.

Kincaid, John
1872 Plat of Survey, T10S, R20E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

1873 Plat of Survey, T11S, R21E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

Knowlton, Frank

Knowlton analyzed specimens from the upper John Day country and wrote a descriptive account of prehistory flora.
Capt. John M. Drake's diary of 1864 is a chronicle of military frustration in the pursuit of Northern Paiute Indians in central and southeastern Oregon.

Based on a rigorous review of manuscript military sources, this article is a fine history of Fort Dalles, particularly its architecture.

Landis published a summary of post offices by name, date of establishment, and date of closure. The volume has no analysis but is illustrated with early postmarks.

State Parks Historian Langille wrote a history to justify holding acreage in the upper John Day region for its paleontological significance and utility for state park development.

Langille wrote a history the the Bridge Creek area, describing its paleontological significance and making recommendations for its development as a state park.
Lansing, Ronald B.

Prof. Lansing, using the original transcript of the trial of the alleged Cayuse murderers of the Whitmans, has assessed the trial and its consequences.

Lee, Daniel and John H. Frost
1844 *Ten Years in Oregon*. J. Collord, Printer, New York, NY.

This primary account by two members of the Methodist Mission described Oregon and its resources.

Lempfrit, Honore-Timothee

Father Lempfrit was an articulate observer and literally a gourmet on the Oregon Trail. His narrative is filled with fascinating accounts of the 1848 migration.

Lentz, Florence K.

In conjunction with a statewide survey, Lentz documented the rise and evolution of roadside architecture in the Pacific Northwest, with a focus on property types applicable throughout the region.

1998 *Cant Ranch Historic District: Amended National Register Nomination Form*. National Park Service, Seattle, WA.

This amended nomination draws from work mounted in 1983, 1986, 1988, and 1996. It makes an exhaustive identification and assessment of the setting, periods of history, and the existing structures. It is supported by detailed maps showing spatial relationships of the features identified.
Lomax, Alfred L.

Prof. Lomax wrote a history of early efforts to develop the woolens industry in Oregon. This is a business history based on primary sources.

1950 *Oregon Wool-Scouring Plants of the Early 1900s*, *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 51:43-52.

Prof. Lomax wrote a history of wool-scouring plants, including the ill-fated first plant at The Dalles, OR.

McArthur, Lewis L.
1974 *Oregon Geographic Names*. Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR.

McArthur compiled histories of place names based upon interviews, letters, and historical accounts. The volume is organized alphabetically and is periodically updated.

McClung, C. E.

This is McClung's brief narrative about the paleontological investigations of the crew from the University of Kansas in the John Day Fossil Beds.

McKelvey, Susan Delano
1991 *Botanical Exploration of the Trans-Mississippi West, 1790-1850*. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR.

Introduced by Prof. Beckham and heralded as a classic work, McKelvey's study of 1,144 pages is reprinted from the original edition. The book is a history of labors of botanists throughout the American West to 1850.
McNeil, William H.
1953 History of Wasco County, Oregon. MS Typescript, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR.

A typescript of nearly 400 single-spaced pages, this rambling but informative history covers pioneer days in Wasco County. It has no style, is discursive, but is useful.

Manchester, Steven R.

Manchester assessed nut beds flora.

Mark, Stephen R.

This ably written and well-researched history covers the founding and administration of the National Monument.

Mascall, Billy.

This article consists of a short talk given by Mascall, a second-generation pioneer in the Dayville area, to a meeting of the Woolgrowers' Auxiliary.

Mascall, Lillian Cant and Francis Kocis
n.d. Typed interview transcript, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, OR.

This short transcript records an informal conversation at the Mascall Ranch between Lillian Mascall and Kocis, Chief Ranger at the Monument, sometime between 1978 and 1984.
Menefee, Leah Collins and Lowell Tiller  
Part six of an article that "would not stop," this is the history of the efforts in 1853 to open the Free Emigrant Route from Fort Boise to the upper Willamette Valley by way of Central Oregon. It is well researched but too much of the information is buried in footnotes.

Merriam J. C., C. Stock and C. L. Moody  
This monograph assesses faunal collections and geology of the Rattlesnake and Mascall deposits in the upper John Day region. Merriam collected in the John Day Fossil Beds starting in 1899. He then taught at the University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Merriam, Lawrence C., Jr. and David G. Talbot  
This volume provides a history of state park development in Oregon, special programs and initiatives taken in the years 1962-89, a parks directory, and several useful appendices.

Mosgrove, Jerry L.  
This is primarily a history of the lands within or immediately adjacent to the Malheur National Forest. It contains little ethnography. The volume is illustrated.
Moulton, Gary E., ed.  

Prof. Moulton has prepared the latest, definitive edition of the journals of Lewis & Clark and other members of their expedition. The project is not completed.

Munnick, Harriet Duncan  

Munnick at age ninety-two wrote this biography of Fr. Blanchet who founded the Catholic missions of Oregon and Washington.

Munnick, Harriet Duncan and Adrian R. Munnick  

Munnick and her son, Adrian, translated into English, edited, and prepared biographical notes on key figures in the parish registers of these Columbia Plateau Catholic missions. The volume has biographical information on Indians, metis, and early settlers.

Munro, Stella  

Interviewed in 1982, Munro recounted teaching at Cant School in 1919, living with the Cant family, marriage, and events of social and economic affairs in the upper John Day region in the first half of the twentieth century.
Murray, Eva
1984b *Cant Ranch Oral History Program, Monograph No. 5.* John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, John Day, OR.

Eva (Officer) Murray was interviewed in 1982 about her family’s history and its role in the development of Grant County. She described life, ranching, work, and the Cant and Officer families, in particular.

Murray, John
1984a *Cant Ranch Oral History Program, Monograph No. 3.* John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, John Day, OR.

Interviewed in 1982 and 1983, John Murray recounted life near Dayville where he was born in 1904. His oral history assessed ranching and sheep raising in particular.

National Park Service

This report first assessed the potential of the fossil beds for national monument status.

1976 *John Day Fossil Beds: Park Resource Maps.* National Park Service John Day Fossil Beds Planning Team, Denver Service Center and Cooperative Park Studies Unit, Oregon State University, Denver, CO.

This comb-bound volume reproduced topographic maps of the National Monument units and noted primary trails, quarries, grades, springs, impoundments, and other features.

Nedry, H. S.

Nedry compiled an historical overview of settlement, mining, and institutional development in Grant County in the nineteenth century.
Nielsen, Lawrence E., Doug Newman, and George McCart
1985 *Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon*. Maverick Publications, Bend, OR.

The authors provide information on fifteen, major roads in Central Oregon and include maps and photographs based upon ground visits to several of the routes.

Oliphant, J. Orin

Prof. Oliphant worked for nearly forty years to craft this history of the cattle industry and, most particularly, the "Rise of Trans-Cascadia," the interior of the Pacific Northwest. The volume is fully documented and is focussed on the nineteenth century.

Oliver, Herman

A lifetime resident of Grant County, Herman Oliver wrote a history of the region, concentrating particularly on his family’s ranching enterprises east of John Day, OR.

Oregon Department of Transportation
1978 *Oregon Cemetery Survey*. OR DOT, Salem, OR.

A statewide survey of small town cemeteries and family plots, now updated and accessible on the Internet.

Oregon Society Daughters of the American Revolution

This pamphlet identified a dozen historic sites, each illustrated with a photograph or drawing and each having a short history.

Oregon State Highway Commission
1922 *Fifth Biennial Report of the State Highway Commission to the Governor, 1921-1922*. Salem, OR.
1922  Sixth Biennial Report of the State Highway Commission to the Governor, 1923-1924. Salem, OR.

These annual reports describe some of the many highway projects underway across the state in these years.

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
1999  Grant and Wheeler Counties National Register by City. Grant and Wheeler Counties Inventory by City. Salem, OR.

Current listings for the National Register and Oregon Inventory of Historic Places are indexed by locale.

Palmer, Joel
1847  Journal of Travels Over the Rocky Mountains to the Mouth of the Columbia River. . . . J. A. and U. P. James, Cincinnati, OH.

Palmer came to Oregon in 1845 and traveled widely. His journal described both the Oregon Trail and conditions in the region. Subsequent emigrants used it as a guidebook.

Parker, Samuel

Parker traveled overland to Oregon and wrote expansively about the region and its resources. While searching for mission sites, Parker did much to promote interest in Oregon and its resources.

Parrish, Edward Evans
1888  Crossing the Plains in 1844. Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions, 16th Reunion, 1888, pp. 82-122.

The Parrish journal covered emigration from Platte City, MO., to the Whitman Mission. This article was based on his daily diary and reminiscences of overland travel.

243

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Perkins, Henry C.
1873 Plat of Survey, T7S, R19E, W.M. BLM Archives, Portland, OR.

Porter, Elizabeth Lee

Porter's brief journal covered her overland travel, death of a child, birth of a child, and arrival in western Oregon in October, 1864.

Ray, Verne F., et al.

This team-written monograph wrestled with conflicting information and contentions among anthropologists about tribal distribution east of the Cascades.

Reinhart, Herman Francis

Reinhart saw much of the American West during eighteen years of travel and labor. His reminiscences covered conditions and expectations in the diggings.


Rich and Johnson edited with extensive introduction and explanatory notes the explorations of Peter Skene Ogden who passed through the upper John Day country during his labors for the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1820s.
Root, Riley
1955  *Journal of Travels from St. Josephs to Oregon with Observations of That Country Together With a Description of California, Its Agricultural Interests, and a Full Description of Its Gold Mines*. Biobooks, Oakland, CA.

Root intended to write a book based on his overland journey of 1848. He observed both the Oregon Trail as well as conditions and Indians in Oregon and California. He published his account in 1850.

Ruby, Robert H. and John A. Brown

This is an alphabetical compendium with brief histories of tribes in the Pacific Northwest. It is a useful, secondary source.

Sampson, William R.

Sampson was one of several contributing biographers to this ten volume set. He wrote about the labors of Wyeth who trapped in the Deschutes watershed in the mid-1830s.

Sapir, Edward

Prof. Sapir, a famous linguist, worked with Columbia Plateau Chinookan informants at the turn of the century. This is a collection of their oral tales as dictated to Sapir.

Schlick, Mary Dodds

Elegantly designed and illustrated with color plates, this volume assesses materials, styles, motifs, and the history of Plateau basketry.
Schuchert, Charles and Clare Mae LeVene  
1940  *O. C. Marsh: Pioneer in Paleontology*.  Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

These authors wrote a biography of O. C. Marsh, famed paleontologist and sometime collector of fossils in the American West.

Schwantes, Carlos  
1989  *The Pacific Northwest: an Interpretive History*.  University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln NB.

Scott, William Berryman  

Scott, who came to the John Day Fossil Beds in 1889, recounted his adventures in Oregon and elsewhere in this autobiography. Scott worked with Sam Snook, a local rancher, and employed Leader Davis as his guide.

Secord, Jeanne, comp.  
1973  *Yesterday in Grant County*.  MS typescript, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

Secord compiled more than seventy stories and first hand accounts of people and places in Grant County.

Settle, Raymond W., ed.  
1940  *The March of the Mounted Riflemen, First United States Military Expedition to Travel the Full Length of the Oregon Trail from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Vancouver, May to October, 1849*.  . . . . Arthur H. Clark Company, Cleveland, OH.

This volume contains the diaries of William Wing Loring and George Gibbs, a military officer and civilian, who traveled the Oregon Trail with the Mounted Riflemen in 1849.

These authors wrote overview county histories and compiled biographical sketches of prominent citizens who paid to be included in the volume.

Shotwell, J. Arnold  

Prof. Shotwell, a geologist at the University of Oregon, wrote a report on the significance and potentials of the John Day Fossil Beds area for the National Park Service. He provided a history of scientific investigations and noted that over 200 articles had been published on specimens from the area.

Sikoryak, Jane and Kim and Norm Steggell  
1981 *Blue Basin Trail Cultural Resource Inventory Survey in the Sheep Rock Unit, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Grant County, Oregon.* National Park Service, Seattle, WA.

The report was based upon a field reconnaissance for cultural resources for a proposed scenic trail in Blue Basin in the Sheep Rock Unit.

Smith, Elizabeth Dixon  

Smith wrote one of the most poignant and compelling diaries of the Oregon Trail. She recounted her crossing in 1847 and the sad circumstances which she met at the end of her journey.
Southworth, Jack, ed.  
*n.d.* *Grant County: in the Beginning.* Oliver Historical Museum, Canyon City, OR.

This is a modest but well-researched little booklet that brings the reader into the 1940s.

Steber, Rick and Kristi  
1984 *Frozen in Time,* Ruralite, August.

The Stebers are local feature writers who wrote this interest article on the Cant house and family.

Stern, Theodore  
1993 *Chiefs and Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Perces, 1818-1855.*  

1996 *Chiefs and Traders in the Oregon Country: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Perces, 1818-1855.*  
Vol. 2. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR.

Prof. Stern worked for decades collecting information and interviewing members of the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla. In these two volumes he was concerned with the early history of relations during the fur trade, especially the operations at Fort Nez Perces (Walla Walla).


Prof. Stern wrote the overview article on the traditional culture of the three primary tribes in the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla.

Sternberg, Charles H.  

Sternberg began collecting fossils in Central Oregon in the 1870s. His autobiography confirmed his passion for his life's calling, an interest he passed to his three sons.
Stinchfield, Janet L. and McLaren E.
1983  *The History of Wheeler County Oregon.* Taylor Publishing Company, Dallas, TX.

A massive 250-page compilation of details on the history of people and places in Wheeler County, a good portion of the early material is taken directly from the 1905 tome, *An Illustrated History of Central Oregon* by Shaver et al.

Strickland, Rennard and Charles F. Wilkinson, eds.

Strickland and Wilkinson, specialists in Indian law, revised and expanded this classic work on federal Indian law.

Strong, Dexter K.
1940  *Beef Cattle Industry in Oregon 1890-1938,* *Oregon Historical Quarterly,* 41: 251-287.

This is an excellent, thoroughly documented treatment of the critical middle years of the cattle industry and the ways in which it adapted to changes conditions in eastern Oregon.

Taylor, Terri and Cathy Gilbert

Thayer, Thomas

This booklet presents a short geological history and road log of the John Day “Loop.”
Thompson, Erwin N.  
1969 *Shallow Grave at Waiilatpu: The Sagers' West.* Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR.

Thompson worked with reminiscences and contemporaneous accounts of the tragedy in 1847 at the Whitman Mission. This is an illustrated volume providing that history, especially through the recollections of the Sager sisters who were present.

Toepel, Kathryn Anne et al.  
*Cultural Resource Overview of BLM Lands in North-Central Oregon.* University of Oregon, Department of Anthropology, Eugene, OR.

Toepel et al. prepared a well-researched overview of the public domain and its indigenous peoples, important to a complete understanding of the region.

Toothman, Stephanie  
1983 *James Cant Ranch Historic District, National Register Nomination.* National Park Service, Seattle, WA.

Toothman wrote the nomination to the National Register of the Cant Ranch Historic District. The documented narrative mentioned the structures, particularly the Cant house, and spatial arrangements of the ranch, but did not include features of the cultural landscape.

Tourism Industry Literature  
n.d. *Journey Through Time: Tour 50 Million Years of Oregon's Past, Points of Interest.*

One-page flyer with map and list of sites of interest on a 286-mile-long loop through northcentral Oregon.

Townsend, John Kirk  
1839 *Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River.* H. Perkins, Philadelphia, PA.

Townsend, a naturalist, described his adventures in crossing the continent in 1834 with Nathaniel Wyeth. His book helped create interest in Oregon.
Unruh, John D., Jr.
1979 *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60.* University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL.

Prof. Unruh published the finest secondary history of overland travel in this expansive monograph. He assessed motives, experiences, Indian relations, and several other subjects. The work is a classic.

Victor, Frances Fuller
1894 *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon Compiled from the Oregon Archives and Other Original Sources.* Frank C. Baker, State Printer, Salem, OR.

Victor, a contract writer for Hubert H. Bancroft, compiled extensive primary sources and also wrote an overview of the mid-nineteenth century Indian wars in Oregon.

Walker, Deward E., Jr., and Roderick Sprague

Profs. Walker and Sprague wrote a history of early relations with Plateau Indians. They concentrated primarily on the impact of the fur trade and more lightly on missions.

Whistler, David P.
Letter of March 7 to Benjamin F. Ladd. MS, Files, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, John Day, OR.

Whistler, Senior Curator at the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum, responded to an inquiry regarding California Institute of Technology expeditions in the 1920s and '30s.

Wilkes, Charles
1845 *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During the Years 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842.* Vol. 4. Lea & Blanchard, Philadelphia, PA.

Lt. Charles Wilkes was commander of a multi-year expedition which, in 1841, visited the Pacific Northwest. One detachment explored the Columbia River east to Fort Walla Walla and mapped their route. Wilkes reported expansively on conditions in the region.

Historic Resources Study
John Day Fossil Beds
Williams, Glyndwr, David E. Miller and David H. Miller, eds.  

Williams and the Millers prepared a lengthy introduction, editorial notes, and maps in this presentation of Ogden's explorations into the John Day watershed for the Hudson's Bay Company.

Young, Frederick George, ed.  
1899  *The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-6: A Record of Two Expeditions for the Occupation of the Oregon Country, with Maps, Introduction and Index*. University [of Oregon] Press, Eugene, OR.

Prof. Young lightly edited and published the Wyeth journals and letters about his efforts to establish a fur trading company in Oregon in the 1830s.

Zieber, John  

Zieber's journal of 1851 documented his family's journey overland to Oregon. The account opened in April in Illinois and concluded with arrival in the Willamette Valley.
Personal Communications with Staff, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

      Hammett, James F. – Park Manager
      Tanski, Henry M. – Park Ranger.

1994  Cahill, Kelly E. - Museum Technician.
      Hammett, James F. – Park Manager

Miscellaneous Tourism Literature

1970s – 1997

• City of Fossil Museum, a Glimpse of Wheeler County’s Past
• Discover More than Just Fossils in Fossil
• Eastern Oregon’s Grant County
• Grant County Historical Museum
• A Guide to Oregon Trails in Sherman County Oregon
• Historic Sites and Driving Tours, Gilliam County Oregon
• John Day Fossil Beds
• Journey through Time Oregon Tour Route
• Kam Wah Chung & Co. Museum
• Sherman County, The Land Between the Rivers
• Sherman County Historical Museum
• Then and Now, the Oregon Trail in Oregon
• Wheeler County
• Wheeler County Driving Tours