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For more information about the history of Morgan County and historic trails go to www.morganhistoricalsociety.com www.nps.gov/mopi • www.nps.gov/poex

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Hastings Cutoff

Early travelers throughout Utah Territory and the Wasatch Mountains were the Native Americans, frontiersmen and mountain men/trappers. In 1846 a young lawyer/promoter Lansford W. Hastings with Frontiersmen James Clyman and James M. Hudspeth, and a small party mounted on horses and mules, blazed a trail from the Great Salt Lake to Fort Bridger. This section became known as Hastings Cutoff. Prior to this time wagon trains going west followed the established Oregon Trail via Fort Hall, Idaho.

Donner-Reed

The first group to take this unproven section of the cutoff trail from Henefer was the Donner-Reed Party. Hastings convinced these travelers, with families and covered wagons, to take his new cutoff route from Fort Bridger, supposedly a shorter route to California. Their journey proved to be somewhat easy until August 6th 1846, when they reached the present site of Henefer, Utah. There was some confusion; were they to proceed down Weber Canyon or follow Spring Creek Canyon (Main Canyon)? They camped at Henefer several days waiting for further instructions from Hastings. Several days later, following the advice Hastings gave Reed, the group decided against taking the treacherous route through the narrows of Weber Canyon and Devil's Gate. Two previous groups of wagons had used Weber Canyon just days earlier and had experienced grave difficulties. Once the Donner group turned south traveling up Main Canyon, their trek became more difficult than they anticipated. It was 11 days after reaching Henefer until they crossed over Big Mountain on August 18th. Four days were spent camped at Henefer. Seven days were expended blazing the trail through the most difficult section of the entire trek thus far, an exhausting task for both teams and travelers. However, the time spent carving this section of the trail was very beneficial for the first Mormon pioneers a year later.

Mormon Vanguard Company

In 1847 the Mormon Vanguard Wagon Company made its way West. The Mormons were seeking an isolated, uninhabited territory where they could settle permanently and practice their religion without persecution. This was the first of hundreds of Mormon emigrant wagon trains and handcart companies that would follow the trail from Henefer carved by the Donner group in 1846. The Vanguard Company had been divided into three smaller wagon trains. The advance Vanguard Company of Orson



Pratt and a dozen other men with 23 wagons, were sent ahead to improve the trail. The main Vanguard Company of pioneers had 40 wagons. They were followed by the small "Sick-Group," including Brigham Young who was suffering with Mountain Fever. The last of the Vanguard Company entered the Salt Lake Valley July 24, 1847.

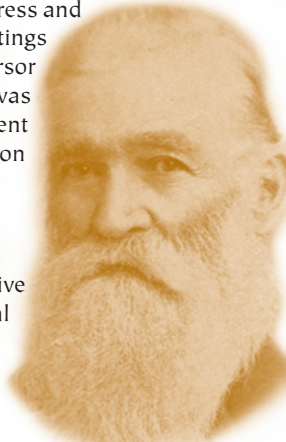
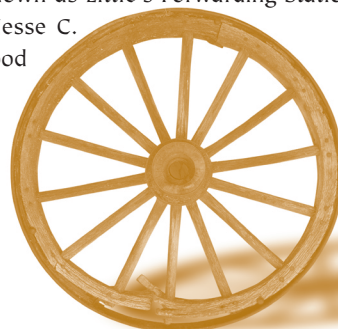
The YX Company

During a brief six month period in 1857 The YX Company (The Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company) used much of Hastings Cutoff east of Salt Lake City. This precursor to the Pony Express and stage lines was brought to a halt when the U.S. Government canceled their mail contract in anticipation of the Utah War.

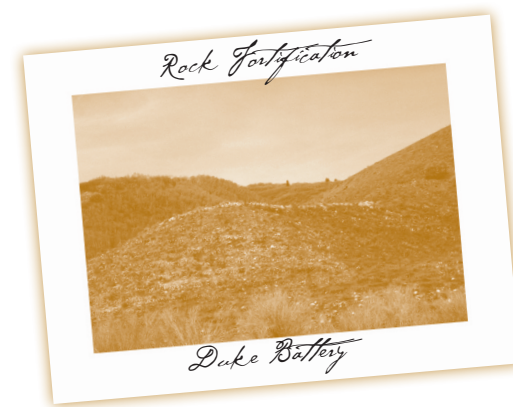
The Utah War

U.S. President Buchanan received negative reports of Utah Territorial governmental affairs that the Mormons and Governor Brigham Young were in a state of rebellion. In 1857 President Buchanan issued orders for 2500 troops to escort newly appointed territorial Governor Alfred Cummings to Salt Lake City. The troops were then to act as a posse to aid the new governor in discharging his duties in the territory. Many of the military contingents thought that they were coming to Utah Territory to destroy Mormonism, but that was not the intended purpose. Following negotiations a possible hostile situation was alleviated. In 1858, after spending the winter with the troops at Camp Scott, Wyoming, Governor Cummings was escorted to Salt Lake City, without incident, to assume his office and establish civil authority. After arriving, the troops established Camp Floyd where they were stationed to assist the governor. They remained there until the outbreak of the Civil War.

During the threat of the Utah War, Spring Creek Station became a Utah Militia Commissary known as Little's Forwarding Station, under the command of Col. Jesse C. Little. Military supplies, food and other necessities were forwarded to the Mormon Militia at Echo Station. Following the discharge of militia members in the area (May 1858) the commissary was no longer needed.

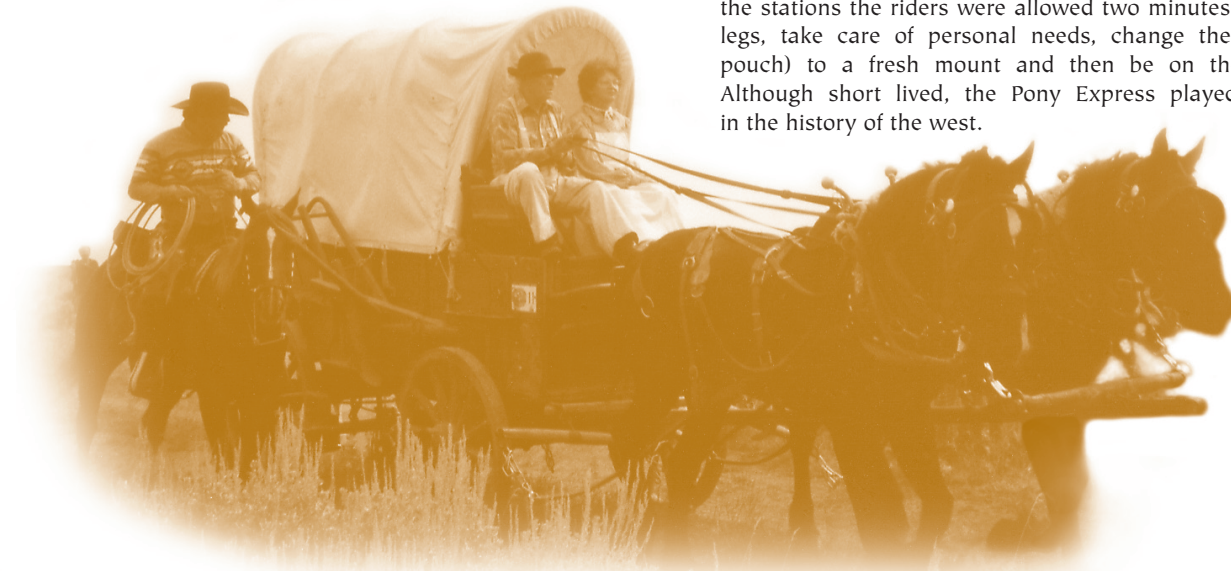


Jesse C. Little



East Canyon Fortifications

Mormon militiamen from Utah County constructed fortifications or defenses in the East Canyon area. These were built in the event the U.S. Army made it past the militia's defenses in Echo Canyon. The East Canyon fortifications included batteries or breastworks, dams, rock piles and trenches at five strategic locations. The last line of defense against the troops was located at Fort Wells and consisted of two dams and two major breastworks. These fortifications became known as Fort Wells in honor of Mormon Commander Lt. Gen. Daniel H. Wells, and are located between Large Springs and Mormon Flat. The two batteries were named Duke and Hyde Batteries for militiamen involved in their construction. These breastworks are on the north and south ridges of Little Emigration Canyon. They would provide protection for the Mormon Militia as they fired at the government troops. If necessary the militia could retreat up Little Emigration Canyon which would provide them protection on the north and south sides.



Hastings Cutoff continued to be a major route to the west until the Transcontinental Railroad and Pratt's Golden Pass Road were completed. A road was also constructed in Weber Canyon providing another alternate route for travelers.

The 49er's

Most of those seeking their fortunes in the gold fields of California followed Hastings Cutoff to Salt Lake City. During the Gold Rush an increase of 10,000 to 15,000 travelers used this section of the cutoff. These Argonauts suffered the same trials and hardships of other pioneers who traveled the trails west. However, with the increased use of the trail it became less perilous to travel and took less time than it did for the first groups who blazed the trail from Henefer to Mormon Flat.



Pony Express

In the spring of 1860 the Pony Express was established and operated for a short 18-month period, using the Dixie Station and East Canyon Station (also called Bauchmann's Station or The Carson House). The 60-80 young riders were employed at an average monthly salary of between \$50 and \$150 in addition to food and lodging. They rode horses selected for their speed and endurance. Horses were purchased for \$150 to \$200, three to four times the amount paid for ordinary saddle horses. At the stations the riders were allowed two minutes to stretch their legs, take care of personal needs, change the mochile (mail pouch) to a fresh mount and then be on their way again. Although short lived, the Pony Express played a major role in the history of the west.

MORGAN COUNTY

Emigrant Travel Guide

Self-Guided Auto Tour

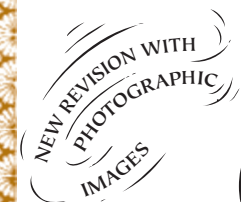
WITH A
TABLE OF DISTANCES

DETAILING
**SPRINGS, CREEKS,
MOUNTAINS, CAMP SITES AND
OTHER NOTABLE PLACES**

THE ENTIRE ROUTE HAVING BEEN CAREFULLY MEASURED BY A ROADMETER, WITH GPS COORDINATES, AND THE DISTANCE FROM POINT TO POINT, IN ENGLISH MILES, ACCURATELY SHOWN.

HASTINGS CUTOFF HENEFER TO MORMON FLAT

∞ 2009 ∞



Prominent Points and Remarks

Many of the actual trail sites are located on private land. Please do not trespass; respect private property by staying in public areas.

Henefer Park... Historical Marker — Nice place for a picnic — Join the pioneer trail — At stop sign before entering SR65 SET YOUR VEHICLE ODOMETER TO ZERO. Turn left on to road.			
Vehicle Odometers May Vary	HNFR to M. Flat	M. Flat to HNFR	GPS
"Pratt's Pass, to avoid the kanyon. To Fort Bridger 74 miles" Wm Clayton	0	16.3	N 41° 01.013' W 111° 30.553'
Entering Main Canyon, 5 Mile Hill, or Spring Creek Canyon... 1858 Johnston's Army camped in this area.	0.1 +	16.2	N 41° 00.943' W 111° 30.721'
Ascending the canyon was rough and hazardous to wagons — The creek was crossed several times — Six springs below and six above Spring Creek Station			
Spring Creek Station... Historical Marker. "Bridge over creek] Not a bad place to camp." Wm Clayton 1847 (Few travelers actually camped here)	2.7 +	13.6	N 40° 59.142' W 111° 32.173'
Springs, thick brush, willows and extremely narrow canyon bottom made continuing to follow the creek impossible... From here pioneer trail leaves canyon bottom and ascends to sage brush bench. Two carsonite trail markers are on trail just beyond the historical marker.			
Actual Trail/Wagon Ruts... White carsonite trail marker seen in the distance on the right. (tan swale area)	4.8	11.5	N 40° 57.518' W 111° 32.895'
Traces of Trail... Trail marker in swale approximately 50 yards to right of the paved road.	5	11.3	N 40° 57.341' W 111° 32.960'
80 Miles to Ft. Bridger... Historical Marker — Pioneers had first good view of the formidable Wasatch Mountains to cross on their journey.	5.1	11.2	N 40° 57.230' W 111° 32.985'
Dixie Hollow... Grove of trees on far right of road — site of Dixie Springs. Favorite campsite... Trail follows the bottom of hollow. "The descent is not pleasant being mostly on the side hill. Many wagons overturned on this section of the trail." Wm Clayton	5.6	10.7	N 40° 56.876' W 111° 33.136'
Dixie Pony Express Way-Station... In the bottom of Dixie hollow, near the junction of Dixie Hollow ridge and a small ravine from the north (metal pole marker on site) Caution: road very narrow here.	6.2	10.1	N 40° 56.441' W 111° 33.543'
Dixie Hollow Camp—Donner-Reed (1846)—Orson Pratt advance group (1847) "Martin Cove of Utah" [LaMar Berrett] Some members of the handcart company traveling in rescue wagons were snowed in for three days and nights at this camp until help arrived (1856). (No area to stop. View from Broad Hollow Marker)	6.7	9.6	N 40° 56.170' W 111° 33.888'
Broad Hollow Trail Marker... Because of thick brush and no space for a road in the bottom of the hollow. "The road turns north a quarter of a mile, then west and ascends a steep hill." Wm Clayton 1847	6.8	9.5	N 40° 56.108' W 111° 34.039'

Road Junction —keep left on SR65	7.5	8.8	N 40° 55.600' W 111° 34.364'
Kanyon Creek — camp sites of Donners 1846; Mormons 1847... Under the waters of East Canyon Reservoir. Trail to here had been so rough that the LDS Group made a coal pit so blacksmith B. Frost could repair wagons. Kanyon Creek had to be crossed 13 times before reaching Mormon Flats.	8.7	8.6	N 40° 54.867' W 111° 35.131'
Taylor Hollow... Sawmill operated in the canyon by John Taylor (1880's)	10	6.3	N 40° 53.851' W 111° 35.257'
Rock Fortifications... Rivers Edge Campground road — remnants of fortification on east ridge of Dead Ox Canyon (LaMar Berrett research) Private Land do not trespass	11.6	4.7	N 40° 52.560' W 111° 34.858'
SR 65 Road Bridge... Trail crosses creek on the right side of the bridge	12.5	3.8	N 40° 51.811' W 111° 35.182'
Mormon Flat Dirt Road... Leave SR65 — Militia trench fortifications on both ridges at entrance to Little Dutch Hollow (SR65 paved road)	13.0	3.3	N 40° 51.398' W 111° 35.366'
Kanyon Creek trail crossed to the east side of creek.	13.1	3.2	N 40° 51.313' W 111° 35.382'
Bauchmann's Pony Express Station Also stage station. Restored and moved 100 yds from the east.	13.3	3	N 40° 51.199' W 111° 35.343'
90 Miles to Fort Bridger... 1847 Sign	13.5	2.8	N 40° 51.010' W 111° 35.275'
Historical Marker... Pioneer trail information	15.5	0.8	N 40° 49.436' W 111° 35.027'
Carsonite Trail Marker on right	15.7	0.6	N 40° 49.308' W 111° 34.961'
Pristine trail site... Public access in fence-carsonite markers 25 yds on right...can walk on trail to Lg Springs	15.8	0.5	N 40° 49.268' W 111° 34.957'
Large Spring Camp... "...very large Spring of Cold Water but tolerable grass." T. Bullock 1847	15.9	0.4	N 40° 49.159' W 111° 34.979'
Mormon Flat... Mormon Militia Rock Fortifications. Fort Wells, Hyde and Duke Batteries. "Here you turn right and begin to ascend the highest mountain you cross in the whole journey. You travel through timber some on side hills, and cross the creek a number of times." Wm Clayton (Little Emigration Canyon — 5 Mile Canyon)	16.3	0	N 40° 48.943' W 111° 35.089'
Trail to Reed's Gap (Big Mountain) Springs along trail... "You will probably find water in several places, but it is uncertain where, as it runs but a little way in a place and then sinks in the earth." Wm Clayton, 1847	4.3 mile trail hike to Big MTN summit		

Please help protect our national heritage by leaving trail resources undisturbed.



Orson Pratt



To Salt Lake City

Trail to Big Mountain: On this section of the trail you can see rocks that still have rust marks made by the slipping of wagon wheels more than 160 years ago. You will enter a beautiful undeveloped country that emulates the condition the pioneers found in this area. "If you have a sound heart, good wind, strong legs, and a couple of hours to spare you may decide to follow the trail, an exercise guaranteed to invoke a healthy respect for the men [and women] who took wagons and handcarts up these rugged slopes."
William B. Smart, Oct. 1957

"We had to double teams to get up, that is, take all the teams in camp and put them all on two or three wagons, take them up to the top, then go back for others."
Rachel Emma Woolley (Simmons) 1848, Age 11

To Jeremy Ranch

19 July 1847
"A fresh track of a buffalo was discovered in this ravine. He had rubbed off some of his hair upon the bush in his path, probably the only one within hundreds of miles."
Orson Pratt

22 July 1847
Along East Kanyon Creek, "...are numerous remains of Indian lodges, hastily constructed of willow boughs."
Horace K. Whitney journal



John Fisher

"Road is awful" Willows 20 feet tall entangled with bushes and trees.
William Clayton, 1847

Taylor Hollow

24 July 1850
"Today we had squally times, passing over some of the worst roads imaginable, some times passed over mountains covered with rocks, and at other times we wound our way through long groves of beautiful cottonwood trees interspersed with pine and cedar, and all day we traveled"
John Wood 49'er California bound

Junction

1856 John Bond (12 years old) "...when the train had gone on the way half a mile the snow was breast deep to the oxen and it was impossible to go farther; and as a consequence, the captain ordered all to return to camp again, and wait until the storm abated and for more help. This is a sad blow for all, and may not be able to cross the snow caped mts. Which could be seen in the distance."

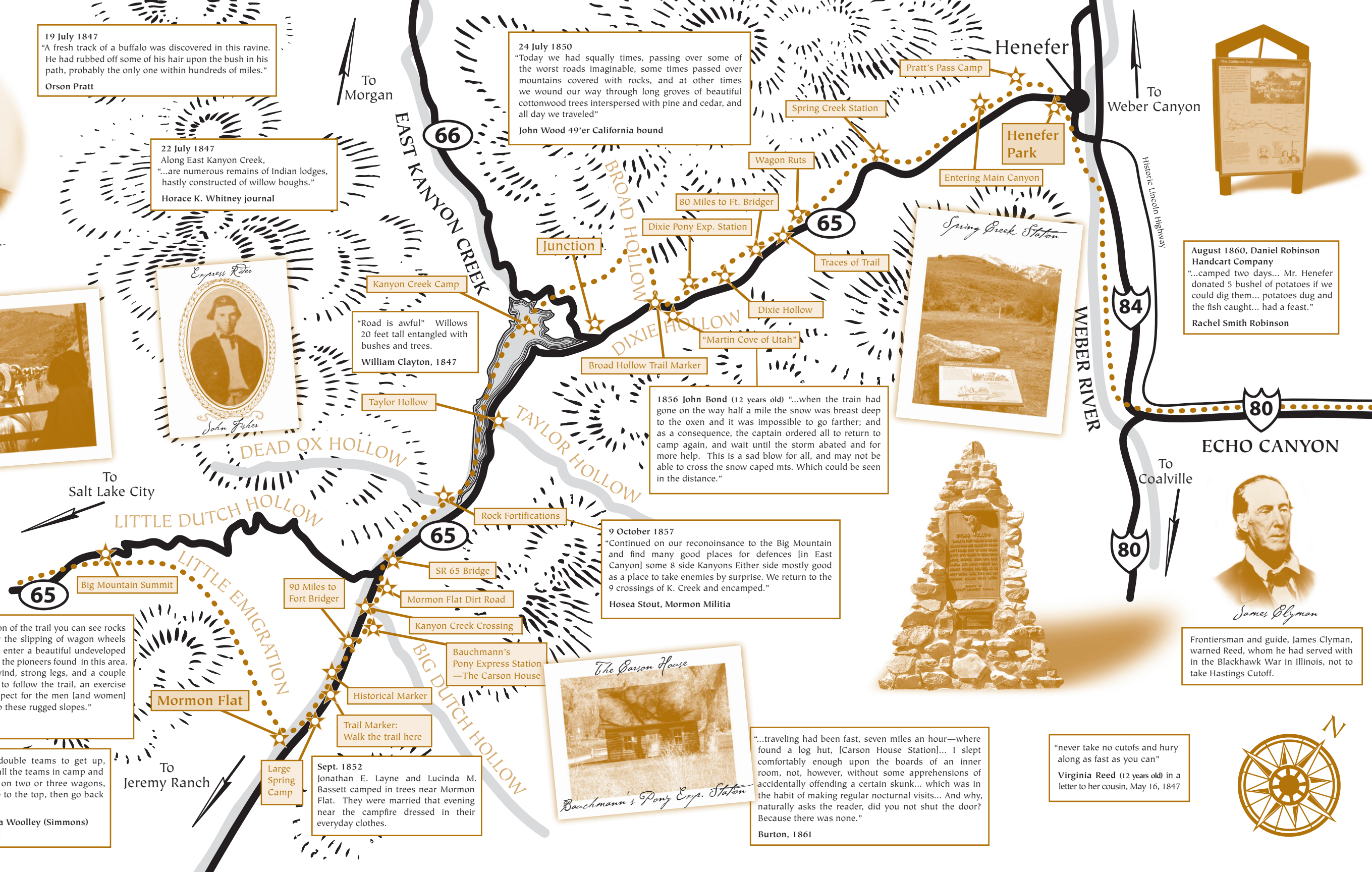
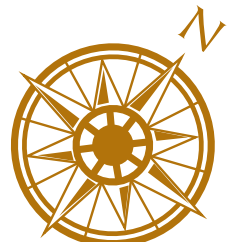
9 October 1857
"Continued on our reconisance to the Big Mountain and find many good places for defences [in East Canyon] some 8 side Kanyons Either side mostly good as a place to take enemies by surprise. We return to the 9 crossings of K. Creek and encamped."
Hosea Stout, Mormon Militia



Bauchmann's Pony Exp. Station —The Carson House

"...traveling had been fast, seven miles an hour—where found a log hut, [Carson House Station]... I slept comfortably enough upon the boards of an inner room, not, however, without some apprehensions of accidentally offending a certain skunk... which was in the habit of making regular nocturnal visits... And why, naturally asks the reader, did you not shut the door? Because there was none."
Burton, 1861

"never take no cutoffs and hurry along as fast as you can"
Virginia Reed (12 years old) in a letter to her cousin, May 16, 1847



August 1860, Daniel Robinson Handcart Company
"...camped two days... Mr. Henefer donated 5 bushel of potatoes if we could dig them... potatoes dug and the fish caught... had a feast."
Rachel Smith Robinson



Frontierman and guide, James Clyman, warned Reed, whom he had served with in the Blackhawk War in Illinois, not to take Hastings Cutoff.



To Coalville