

THE MARKER

WHERE IS JAMESON STATION LOCATED?

by Don Buck

Part 1

There is enough evidence now available to seriously challenge the long held belief that the remains of Jameson Station are those stone ruins at the entrance to the Truckee River Canyon identified by Walt Mulcahy several decades ago. In a two-part article, beginning with this issue, the latest research based on new evidence will be reviewed and some conclusions reached on the probable location of Jameson's Station.

THE LONG HELD VIEW

Enough documentary evidence is now available to question the long held view that Jameson's trading post or station was located about a half-mile east of the present Reno-Sparks wastewater treatment facility at the entrance to the Truckee River Canyon. At this location there are some stone ruins where the Nevada Emigrant Trail Marker Committee (NETMC) placed a steel-rail marker (TRR-11) some time in the late 1960's or early 1970's. The descriptive brass plate on the top cross bar of this marker reads: "Jameson's Station. Emigrant Trading Post. Site of first Settlement in Truckee Meadows - 1852."

The well-known Sparks historian, Walt Mulcahy, announced in an article written for the *Nevada State Journal*, March 25, 1962, that he had located the ruins of Jameson's station, stating: "It was finally decided that point No. 2 on the map [in the newspaper article] was the location of the first permanent settlement in the valley, that made by the Mormon Jameson in 1852. The most conclusive proof of this is the fact that history tells us that his trading post was located on the river. The ruins found at point No. 2 are on the river and command a large acreage of rich fields. This would have been an ideal spot for station construction as it was located almost in the mouth of the canyon, directly upon the old trail, and allowed first contact with the emigrants, eager to buy provisions and trade worn and weary cattle for fresh and strong stock."

Later in the NETMC's *Overland Emigrant Trail to California: A Guide to Trail Markers Placed in Western Nevada and the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California* (first published in 1975), Mulcahy wrote that Jameson's station "was the first permanent settlement in the Truckee Meadows (Reno) built in 1852. The marker lies in a fenced enclosure containing the stone ruins of the station, close to the Truckee River and 0.5 mile east of the Reno-Sparks Sewage Plant."

Note the apparent reasoning that led Mulcahy to believe the stone ruins a half-mile east of the present wastewater treatment facility must have been Jameson's trading post. Earlier historical references (quoted below) stated that a Mormon from Carson Valley, by the name of Jameson or Jamison, established in 1852 a station on the Truckee River in the meadows to trade with emigrants. Mulcahy found some stone ruins at the mouth of the Truckee River Canyon on the south side of the river and assumed these ruins were the remains of Jameson's station.

Furthermore, in the same *Nevada State Journal* article, Mulcahy had determined that the meadows extending west of Steamboat Creek and south of Truckee River were too marshy for emigrant travel and camping. This forced emigrants, according to Mulcahy, to detour south through present Hidden Valley and then turn northwesterly along the base of Huffaker Hills to skirt this supposed marshy meadow area to the north. Because no trading post could have been situated in such a marshy environment, Mulcahy seems to have concluded that those stone ruins at the head of the river canyon would have been the only place in the meadows where Jameson could have located his trading post.

However, Reno historian Don Wiggins has shown that this supposed swampy area west of Steamboat Creek and south of the river was the actual way emigrants traveled in crossing the meadows and the place where they camped. By 1852 the center of these meadows next to the river had become the crossing for the beginning of the Beckwourth Trail and access to the new Henness Pass Trail. The proof for this lies in the General Land Office Plat for 1861-62 (Township 19 North & Range 20 East), where the surveyor clearly delineated the extent of the famous Truckee Meadows with trails running through these meadows both westerly and northerly. Interestingly, the surveyor showed no trail or road through Hidden Valley, but that will become the subject of another trail report.

MORE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE

Today, there is more evidence available to help answer the question of where Jamison Station or trading post was located. The first of this additional evidence is that contained in the *History of Nevada* published in 1881 by Thomas H. Thompson and Albert A. West of San Francisco. On page 623 is written: "The first permanent settlement in the Truckee Meadows was made by a Mormon named Jamison, who came up from Carson Valley in 1852, and established Jamison's Station, on the Truckee River, where he traded with the emigrants, buying their lean and exhausted stock, or trading good cattle for them." There is no source cited, so presumably Myron Angel, who was employed by Thompson and West, obtained this information locally and orally.

The next reference to Jameson Station came in *The History of Nevada*, edited by Sam P. Davis, and published in 1913. In volume 1, there is an article by Robert Lewers, "Early Emigrants." On page 227, Lewers wrote: "On the Truckee Meadows, a Mormon named Jameson established a trading station, but the exact location of this place seems to be unknown." Then, in the *Nevada State Historical Society Papers*, volume 4 (1923-24), published by the Nevada State Historical Society in Reno, is an article by Annie E. Prouty, "Development of Reno in Relation to its Topography" (her Master's Degree thesis). On page 60, Prouty wrote: "For several years the only settlement on the Truckee was that of Jameson. He was a Mormon who came from Carson Valley in 1852 and established a station where Glendale is now."

In tracking down this information, Dave Hollecker of Reno came across another reference to the location of Jameson Station, again in the *Nevada State Historical Society Papers*, this time in volume 5, 1925-26. In an article by F. B. Kingsbury, "Pioneer Days in Sparks and Vicinity; Early Settlers and Points of Interest," Kingsbury wrote on page 291: "According to one man's story (name not given), when he passed through here in the year 1854 there was only one person living in this valley and that was a trader who dwelt in a tent some distance northward from what later became Glendale." (In a footnote, the editor of the *Papers* suggested this trader may have been "Jamison.") Kingsbury pointed out that the location of the 1854 trading post was near the later "Stone and Gates" trading post and crossing of the Truckee River in the Truckee Meadows.

These four references to a Jameson's trading post (and note there are two spellings of Jameson's name) indicate it was located in the Truckee Meadows, next to the river. At least one of the three sources points to the location at future Glendale where present East McCarran Blvd. crosses to the north side of the river (at the beginning of the Beckwourth Trail). Another of these sources indicates that the trading post in the Truckee Meadows at later Glendale was a tent, not a stone structure.

In the second part of this two-part article, additional evidence will be presented to show where Jameson Station most likely was located and what the stone ruins at the entrance to Truckee River Canyon might have been.

ANNUAL BANQUET

Those of you planning to attend the annual banquet in Reno on April 6, 2002 should plan to make reservations for lodgings early. A new bowling tournament called the *\$1,000,000 Stadium Classic* has been established in Reno. It will run from February 11 through April 28, 2002. It can be expected that rooms in the Reno area will be difficult to get during that period.

MARK YOUR CALENDER

We will work on the Carson Trail starting at the Humboldt Bar during our two field trips next summer. So, plan to join us on:

June 14, 15, & 16, 2002
and
September 13, 14, & 15, 2002

Further details will be provided in the next newsletter and by the usual separate announcement.

SEPTEMBER ON THE TRUCKEE

A lot of driving and work on nine markers characterized the Trails West September 8 & 9, 2001 outing along the Truckee Trail. We started at the Gilpin Rest Stop near Wadsworth on Saturday, spent Saturday night in our favorite back-country campsite, and ended up near Devil's Peak southwest of the I-80 Kingvale Exit.

Our first task was the planting of a new marker (T-15) at "Red Bluff" located at the end of a two-mile long drive over a winding gravel road north of I-80. From there, we traveled to Glendale Park and stabilized a marker that had been planted last year. Apparently, we had not used enough concrete last year and the marker was leaning to one side.

After Glendale Park we drove to Mogul and replated the marker located there. We could tell that the marker had not been renovated for a long time for it was still painted yellow. Another drive along I-80 through Donner Memorial State Park to Coldstream Canyon to replat another marker. So far, the outing had required a lot of driving, but the work required had been fairly easy. But then came Roller Pass where we replated another marker. Roller Pass is located west of Coldstream Valley and Emigrant Canyon in a 7,875 foot saddle between Mt. Judah and Mt. Lincoln. It is not identified by name on the map but is referred to as "Roller Pass" because the emigrants had to use log rollers to aid in pulling their wagons up the east side of the pass. After making it to the top, the emigrants dropped down into what is now the Sugar Bowl Ski Area.

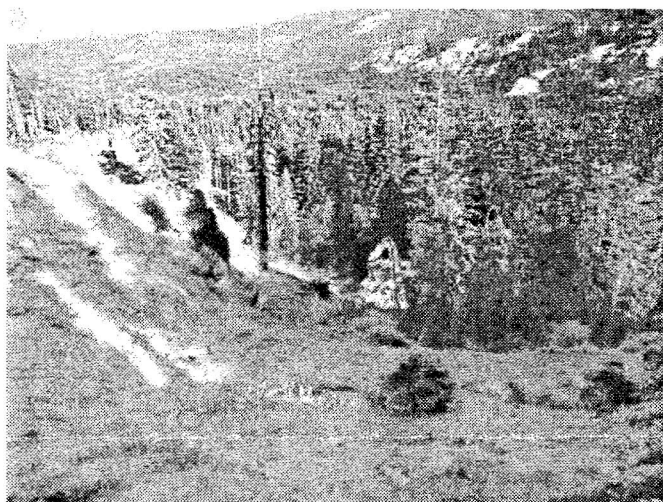
Getting to the marker located at Roller Pass and looking down the east side of the pass was the highlight of our work on Saturday. To get to the pass, we had to drive about a mile and one-half past the main Sugar Bowl Ski Area (7,400') over their access roads to an area where a new ski run complex is being constructed (7,800'). After we drove as far as we could go up the mountain, we had to hike about half a mile along the Pacific Crest Trail to where the marker was located. The hike was fairly easy, but we had to carry all of the equipment necessary to replat the marker (that included our heavy generator). While a few of the more dedicated worker replated the marker, the rest of us walked over to where we could look down the very steep east side of the pass. This is where the emigrants had to use log rollers to help pull their wagons up the slope.

After our fun at Roller Pass, we drove back through Truckee and along Stampede Reservoir to our favorite back-country campsite in Hoke Valley. This is a primitive camping area that was found and used last year. That evening we enjoyed our usual potluck dinner and after-dinner conversation.

Sunday found us again heading west on I-80 to install three new markers and relocate one marker. One of these new

markers was planted in what the emigrants called the "boulder field" east of Kidd Lake (west of the Van Norden Ski Area). We could empathize with the emigrants who traveled through this area because we had a very difficult time finding a place to plant the new marker. The area had been scraped down to bedrock (granite) by an ice-age glacier and many large boulders had been deposited there by the glacier moraine. We tried digging some six or seven holes before we found a place where we could dig down over a foot.

After we finished our work in the boulder field, a small group pulled the marker located near Cascade Lakes (it was located on a post-emigrant period wagon road) and replanted it near the south side of Devil's Peak. To get to

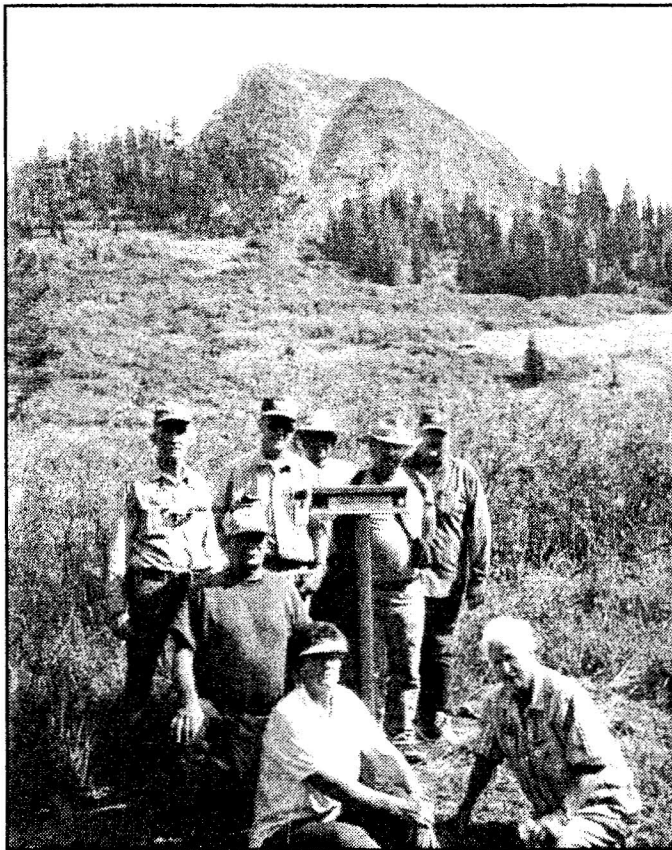


ROLLER PASS (7875')

Trails West has now planted markers on both of the two passes over the crest of the Sierra that the emigrants could cross when following the Truckee Trail. This pass, which Trails West calls "Roller Pass" because log rollers had to be used to help draw wagons up to the top of the pass. The elevation gain from Marker T-38 located in Coldstream Valley (about 3.2 miles to the east) is about 1,700 feet. The climb in the last half mile or so is about 670 feet. Trails West Marker T-39 is located a short distance to the west of where this photo was taken. The pass is located between Mt. Judah and Mt. Lincoln. Photo by Dick Brock

this new location, the group had to detour back through Soda Springs and then drive west on old Highway 40 past the Kingvale Exit to a private dirt road that goes south along side the west side of Devil's peak. The number of people that helped with this work was kept small because the property owner did not want a large number of vehicles driving over his dirt road.

We finished our work early that afternoon. At this time, most of the people who went on this trip went home. A few remained for a meeting of the TW Board of Directors held in a private park located next to Ice Lakes (Serene Lakes).



MARKER T-44, DEVIL'S PEAK

A new marker was planted near Devil's Peak during the September, 2001 outing. Pictured are (left to right) Don Buck, Dick Hallford, Terry Hardwicke, Harold Black, & Tom Dougherty. Kneeling are Jim Allison, Jeaninne Dougherty, & Pat Loomis. The other Trails West people on this outing could not help with this planting due to property-owner restrictions. Photo by Mary Mueller.

BANQUET PROGRAM

David E. Palmer, photographer and historic trails buff from Reno will be our guest speaker at the Annual Banquet on April 6, 2002. His slide show presentation will feature *Donner Pass, The Grande Dame of Historic Passes*.

Mr. Palmer says that he does not pretend to be a trail expert but is a person who loves historic old trails of many kinds and loves to photograph them. He believes that the more people know about these old trails the more they will value and help to protect them (sounds familiar, doesn't it). His banquet presentation featuring Donner Pass is also the subject of an article he wrote for the Fall, 2000 issue of the *Lincoln Highway Forum*.

We are looking forward to Mr. Palmer's presentation since we recently completed renovation of the TW markers located in that area. This gave many of us an appreciation of the difficulties the emigrants experienced crossing Donner Summit. Hearing Mr. Palmer's presentation and seeing his slides will definitely increase this appreciation.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

We had a busy 2001.

In June we completed the reattachment of the removed NETMC plates. Our September Field Trip was devoted to the Truckee Trail starting at the Gilpin Rest Stop and finishing at Devil's Peak.

We now have a "Quartermaster" to organize the transportation of markers, plates, tools, paint, generator, drills, shovels, and concrete to the worksite. The kind and dedicated person who has taken on the Quartermaster position for 2002 is Dick Hallford. Bless you Dick!

The Directors have approved the production of a publicity brochure to be inserted in our guidebooks and to be placed in trail interpretive centers and history museums. It will have information on Trails West and an application for membership as part of the brochure. The Board of Directors decided to no longer require attending an annual banquet and a work trip to qualify for membership.

Trails West will be advertising the Guide in the OCTA publications, News From The Plains and Overland Journal. There will be many trail buffs traveling to the OCTA 2002 Convention in Reno this summer. Our Guide would be an asset to those wanting to follow the trail on the drive west.

The annual banquet will be held April 6 at the Sundowner in Reno. The cost will be \$18.00 per person. Dave Palmer will give a presentation on the California Emigrant Trail, the Donner Trail and their relation to later routes followed by the Lincoln Highway and Highway 40. I hope to see a large crowd at our banquet. Be sure to note the information about the new bowling tournament in Reno on page 2. Because our banquet is scheduled during the run of this tournament, finding a place to stay in Reno could again be a problem. So, make your reservations early.

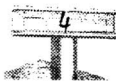
Eighteen new members joined us in 2001. Welcome to Jim Allison, Mike and Dell Rose Banks, Bill Bishell, Robert Black, Farrell and Susan Bolick, Anne Carter, Joyce Everett, Don and Gloria Herman, Steve and Cheryl Larmore, Dan and Susan Miller, Andy and Sharon Quinn, and Robert Zimmerman.

It is my hope that Trails West and all its members have a peaceful 2002.

Allison Portello

NO LONGER A MEMBER

On October 27, 2001 Bill Mueller resigned his membership in Trails West. Many of us were saddened by his death because we appreciated his determination to help out on our field trips. He often came with his wife, Mary, even though it was difficult for him to do so. Fortunately, Mary will continue going out on the trail with us.



TRAILS WEST BOARD MEMBERS

The people who currently serve TW as members of the Board of Directors, their home phone number, their E-mail address, and when their term of office expires include:

Dorothy Amos, 530-342-7908, DTrailRuts@aol.com
[2002]

Anne-Louise Bennett, 757-348-8750, abennett@tmcc.edu
[2003]

Terry Hardwicke, 757-851-0227, thardwicke@gateway.net
[2003]

Dave Hollecker, 757-322-2969, MTGRIZZ@aol.com
[2003]

Dee McKenzie, 916-966-1006 [2002]

Alison Portello, 530-756-0842, portello@dcn.davis.ca.us
[2003] [President]

Ralph Theiss, 424-2613 [2002]

Sandy Theiss, 775-424-2613, is the Treasurer, an appointed position. The Board Secretary, an appointed position, is Kay Kelso, 916-446-3888, kay@water.ca.gov.

December Board Meeting

The TW Board of Directors met in Reno on Saturday, December 8, 2001 to discuss a number of issues. The announcements and decisions made at this meeting include:

1. It was announced that Dave Palmer will be our guest speaker at the Annual Banquet and Meeting. His presentation will be on the Lincoln Highway and the emigrant trail over Donner Summit.

2. It was announced that numerous delays have pushed out completion of the Applegate Trail Guidebook until late in 2002. No decision was made regarding inclusion of the additional segment of trail to be marked by the NW OCTA Chapter during the summer of 2002.

It was decided that Dave Hollecker will investigate to determine if some or all phases of our Guidebook publishing could be contracted out to make the program more robust.

3. Anne-Louise volunteered to work with Don Buck to produce a new membership brochure.

4. A review and discussion of the TW Bylaws resulted in the decision to eliminate the requirement for prospective members to attend the Annual Banquet and at least one trail outing before being considered for membership.

5. Efforts to locate and archive permission documents for both NETMC and TW markers continues. Some have

recently been found in the Nevada Historical Society archives.

6. The nominating committee reported that five TW members have agreed to run for Board Member election. These include: Dorothy Amos, Dee McKenzie, Mary Mueller, Ralph Theiss, and Sandy Theiss. The election by mail ballot will be conducted during January, 2002.

7. An audit committee charged with "inspecting" TW's financial records and then reporting to the Board annually will be formed. The President will appoint people to this committee.

8. The issue of painting markers or leaving them unpainted to rust was discussed. The only decision that was made was to investigate the feasibility of leaving the markers unpainted.

9. Don Buck presented his plans for marking some of the Carson Trail during the summer of 2002. Field trips on June 15, 16, & 17 and September 14, 15, & 16 were approved. [Note these dates have been changed already; see elsewhere in this newsletter for the actual dates]

9. It was decided to charge \$18.50 for the dinner at the 2002 Annual Meeting and Banquet. Sales tax does not have to be paid on this amount.

10. The following people were accepted as members in TW: Jim Allison, Robert Black, Bill Bishell, Joyce Everett, Don and Gloria Herman, and Robert Zimmerman.

Ephriam, that wise ol' 49'er, recently observed that "Casting one's vote is commendable. Throwing it away by not voting is another matter."

[Ballots for new Board members will be mailed shortly. Dorothy Amos, Dee McKenzie, Mary Mueller, Ralph Theiss, and Sandy Theiss have all agreed to serve if elected. *Please vote.*]

DUES - A REMINDER

It is time to pay your annual dues. If you wish, you could pay them by mail or in person at the Banquet. As you know, dues are \$15.00 for a personal membership and \$25.00 for a family membership.

The other day, that wise ol' 49'er, Ephriam, commented that "People who can hold their tongues rarely have any trouble holding their friends."

