# Assessment Of The Florence Trail



Town of Florence. Courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society. Copyrighted by the Idaho State Historical Society.

## The Florence Trail

The Mapping And Location Of The Trail And Associated Sites In Idaho County

For

Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission

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Idaho State Historical Society

Assessment prepared by

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## INTRODUCTION

From 1867 to 1934 the General Land Office contracted with private land surveyors to survey and subdivid the Townships in Idaho County. These survey contracts also required that other features on the landscape be recorded. Over a century later, it is the *features* requirement that allows the researcher to locate position of such features as cabins, trails, wagon roads, fences and fields on the ground. This writer began plotting three historical routes on modern maps because of their historic contribution to the early development of Idaho County and the Camas Prairie, and in the hope that a visual record of the routes would become of interest to the public at large.

The first route to be plotted and assessed was the Lewiston-Mountain House Wagon Road. This assessment was completed in the spring of 2014, and can be found on the Idaho County web page.

The following assessment deals with what was known as the Florence Trail, and only covers, in detail, approximately 56 miles, which lie entirely in Idaho County. The Florence Trail originated in Lewiston, Idaho and ended at the town of Florence, Idaho some some 115 miles Southeast of Lewiston. The Trail was an important route linking the miners in the Florence Basin to the supply hub of Lewiston

During the early 1860s pack strings consisting of fifteen to twenty mules were used to pack supplies into Florence, with each mule carrying about 400 pounds. Pack trains could be made up of several strings and trains of 100 mules have be recorded. Pack strings could average 15 to20 miles a day and on rare occasions 30 miles was reported. Mail carriers and packers both brought gold back from the mining camps and were well armed because it was a rather lawless time. As winter set in snow closed the trail to pack trains, and "Boston jackasses" were hired to carry supplies into Florence. These men carried loads on their backs weighing sixty to seventy pounds and were paid forty cents a pound for their efforts. <sup>1</sup>

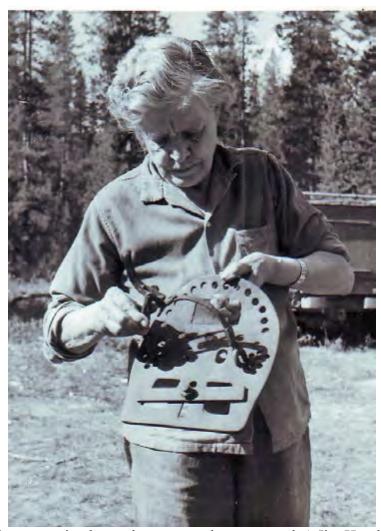
By 1867 wagons were beginning to use the Trail across the Camas Prairie, as noted by land surveyor Allen Thompson, when he recorded, in the vicinity of Tolo Lake, both the Trail and the Florence Wagon Road. By 1880 the Trail as far as Whitebird was being used by wagons to haul freight into the Salmon River country as ranchers, miners and merchants began to settle in the canyon and surrounding hills. During the long hard winter wagons were replaced with sleds which hauled mail and freight. Winter was the time that heavy equipment was hauled into the mining camps which were located through out the rugged Central Idaho mountains. <sup>2</sup> Winter freighting required horses to wear snowshoes, as illustrated on page #4.

It is estimated that from 1861 to 1939 between \$15,000,000 and \$30,000,000 in gold was mined and taken out of the Florence Basin. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #2, page 434.

<sup>2</sup> Gold for the taking: Historic Overview of the Florence Mining District, Kathryn McKay

<sup>3</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #1, pages 75 & 76.



Maude Pratt, demonstrating how a horse snowshoe was used. A Jim Huntley photograph.

## **METHODOLOGY**

These routes were noted and plotted as they crossed each section line, and are based on the notes of Allen and David Thompson 1867 & 1873, John B. David 1880, Edison Briggs 1893, James W. Shannon 1896, William Bush 1902, Thomas W. Bates 1928, Alex T. Harris 1930 & 1931. The route was plotted on contour maps by following the original notes of the surveyors. The plotting was done using a Terrain Navigator mapping program which allowed the recording of 1927 NADCON coordinates. The 1927 data was then converted to 1983 NADCON using North American Datum Conversion 2.11. Thus, in the future anyone wishing to locate these routes, or other recorded feature, can simply use a GPS unit to find any given position on the ground.

Accuracy of the coordinates are dependent on the map being used, as the township, range, and section lines shift slightly depending on the year the map was produced. However, an accuracy of less than ten feet should be attainable, on the ground, by starting at any given corner and following the original surveyed distances up or down the section lines. The transfer of the coordinates from maps to Google Earth appear to only have an accuracy of plus or minus 100 feet due to how the photos are spliced together.

Points of historic importance and interest were also located using the survey notes, descriptions found in historic texts and GLO homestead descriptions.

## PHYSICAL SETTING

The Florence Trail began in Lewis ton, Idaho and followed the same route as the Lewis ton-Mountain House Wagon Road until it reached a point some 2,200 feet southeast of Foster's Grave, where it turned in a more southerly direction. The Trail crossed twelve major streams in Idaho County before reaching the town of Florence, some 140 miles, from Lewiston.

From William Foster's Grave the trail traversed some 16 miles of the Camas Prairie before reaching the top of White Bird Hill. The Camas Prairie is part of the 1700 square mile Clearwater Plateau, and is characterized by the Columbia River Basalt flows. Approximately 34-40 million years ago, during the mid-Tertiary period, three basalt flows (*Imnaha, Grand Ronde, and Saddle Mountain*) extruded east from vents in Oregon and Washington resulting in a succession of faulted basalt layers. The soils along the trail vary with topographic and elevation changes The soils are described as gently sloping to hilly uplands, moderately sloping to steep canyons and nearly level bottom lands. (*Castelin, 1976*)

The topography and soils changed as the trail progressed south into the Salmon River Canyon, where the river is deeply entrench in the Columbia Plateau. The Canyon walls or "breaks" of the Salmon River are almost barren of vegetation other than drought resistant plants and coarse grasses. Lower slopes are steep but higher slopes become more gentle. Tributary streams along the river have cut steep V-shaped canyons. (Pamphlet 74, University of Idaho by Warren R. Wagner, 1944)

At Slate Creek the trail began climbing the hydrological divide between Slate Creek and John Day Creek. Approximately half way up the divide the soils and topography begin changing and after passing over the summit at Dead Point the trail entered the Florence Mining District. The oldest known rocks of this area are quartzite, which appear in only two small outcroppings. The prevailing bedrock is granitic and is part of the Idaho Batholith, which is probably of the upper Cretaceous age. Within the area the granite rock is almost exclusively quartz dolerite.

Parts of the Florence area are covered with gravel deposits that are believed to be remnants of a much more widespread deposit. The older gravel is probably Tertiary or very early Pleistocene. Valley floors are typically flat and wide. The unconsolidated materials in the valleys are largely Arkosic sand overlain with peat that ranges in thickness up to 20 feet. (*University of Idaho, Pamphlet #46, by John C. Reed, 1939*).

Elevation changes along the route are quite large; beginning in Lewiston at an elevation of 756 feet the trail climbed to 4200 feet at West Lake and then descended to 3200 feet near Tolo Lake. From Tolo Lake the trail climbed to 4581 feet as it crossed White Bird Ridge and descended into the Salmon River Canyon. At Whitebird the elevation is 1578 feet and as the trail followed the River upstream the elevation varied little until reaching Slate Creek. Here the Trail turned easterly and a long grueling climb of 5800 feet began. Upon reaching Dead Point at an elevation of 7365 feet the trail descended into the Florence Mining District, crossed Little Slate Creek at 5060 feet and climbed some 1000 feet ending in the town of Florence at 6120 feet

# Historic Overview/Chronological Time Line

The first known Euro-American to enter Idaho County was the Lewis & Clark expedition in 1805, and on the return trip in 1806, Lewis sent a party of three men from Kamiah to the Salmon River. <sup>4</sup> Byron Defenbach believed the men skirted the south side of Lawyers Canyon, crossed the prairie and possibly went down Rocky Canyon to the Salmon River.) (Defenbach was proven wrong in 2002. See Ordaway's Salmon River Fishing Expedition. HTR Technical Report No. 01A03, Steven F. Russell, PH,D.,P.E. Associate Professor, Iowa State University.)

1811: Donald McKenzie with nine men came down the south side of the Salmon River and crossed the river at the mouth of Rock Creek, traveled up the creek and crossed the prairie near Cottonwood. Traveling north they reached the Middle Fork of the Clearwater and camped at the place known today as Canoe Camp below Orofino. <sup>5</sup>

1831: John Urban and a group of Hudson Bay trappers followed Lewis & Clark's trail and passed through Idaho County at Kamiah. <sup>6</sup>

1832: Wm. Sublette, who owned the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, hired Joe Meek as a hunter and trapper in the spring of 1828. In 1832 Sublette and his trappers came up the Payette River and camped at Payette Lake. From there Joe Meek led a party of four men north to the Salmon River, Crossed the river and camped at the head of a small tributary stream in what is now known as the Florence Area. The party consisted of Joe Meek, Antoine Godin, Louis Leaugar, and a man named Small. This writer believes they were camped in the head waters of Little Slate Creek. <sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #1, page 3.

<sup>5</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #2, page 462

<sup>6</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #1, page 3

<sup>7</sup> River Of The West, Francis Fuller Victor, Volume #1, pages 129 & 130



Joe Meek Copied from the book, Illustrated History of North Idaho

1835: The Reverend Samuel Parker with a party of Nez Perce Indians came over the Southern Nez Perce Trail, and crossed the prairie near the old town of Winona in October of that year.<sup>8</sup>

1861: A group of prospectors came to the prairie and camped for a time on Whiskey Bill Creek, which flows through the eastern edge of Grangeville. After resting for an unknown amount of time they crossed the divide to the Salmon River and at Slate Creek prospected up the creek until they reached Florence, where they discovered a large gold field. In October of that year the town-site of Old Florence was laid out. <sup>9</sup> That fall Captain Francois came to the prairie and built a cabin on the Whitebird Divide. This apparently was a way station for the miners going into Florence.

1862: This year saw numerous miners and a few settlers coming into Idaho County via the Lewiston-Florence Trail. The trail split a short distance northwest of where Cottonwood is today, with the southern route going to Florence and the more eastern route going to what is now known as Mount Idaho. In the spring of this year Mr. Allen built a way station at Cottonwood and Moses Milner built a station at Mount Idaho. When Milner finished his structure he began cutting a new trail from Mount Idaho to Florence. Milner's trail eliminated the long climb out of the Salmon River Canyon and would soon be the preferred route taken by those traveling to Florence. Milner finished his trail in July of 1862. <sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Parker's Exploring Tour, Beyond the Rocky Mountains, Rev. Samuel Parker, A.M., pages 114-117.

<sup>9</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #1, pages 37 & 38.

<sup>10</sup> Illustrated History Of North Idaho, Western Historical Publishing Company, 1903, page 387.

1863: A new treaty was signed by the Nez Perce Indians and it was this treaty that ceded the greater part of the Camas Prairie to the United States. However, it took several years for congress to confirm the treaty and title to the land could not be obtained for several years. The earliest title this writer has found was issued in 1872 on a quarter section of land one half mile north of Grangeville. In 1863 the Cottonwood Way Station was being run by Wheeler & Toothacher. The station would change ownership several times during the next fourteen years. Other owners were John Byron 1864-1865, Joe Moore & Peter Ready ran the station between 1865 and 1877, when the Nez Perce War broke out the station was being run by Benjamin Norton. <sup>11</sup>

1867: Allen Thompson surveyed a large part of the Camas Prairie dividing it into townships, ranges and sections. Thompson also noted the locations of wagon roads, Indian trails, cabins, and fields.<sup>12</sup>

1875: The Territorial Legislature moved the boundary of Idaho County north to Lawyers Creek which encompassed most of the Camas Prairie. <sup>13</sup> The boundary of the county would be adjusted three more times in the years 1885, 1889, and 1891. <sup>14</sup>

1877: June 13: Three Indians departed their encampment at Tolo Lake and took the trail to the Salmon River. They went up the river and camped some six miles above John Day Creek at a place occupied by one Richard Divine, an old retired English sailor. They killed Divine for his rifle, spent the night there and on the 14<sup>th</sup> went back down river where they slew several more settlers at several other locations. <sup>15</sup>

June 16: Colonel Perry, who had left Lapwai the day before arrived at Mount Idaho in the afternoon. After gathering up half a dozen citizen volunteers Perry started his troops to the Salmon River about 10 P.M. <sup>16</sup>

June 17: Perry's troops reached the head of Whitebird Canyon about 1:00 A.M; halted and rested until just before dawn. They then proceeded down the canyon as dawn broke, and the Indians attached. One half hour later, Perry was in full retreat, and Lt. W. R. Parnell, whose men were on Perry's left, began retreating up the trail they had entered the Canyon on. Two hours later Perry and Parnell regrouped on top of the divide and moved back down the trail to the Johnson Ranch. By 7A.M. Parnell was fighting a rear guard action through Tula Swamp. The Indians pursued the army to within a mile or two of Mount Idaho. <sup>17</sup>

June 18: The Salmon River settlers built a fort at Slate Creek and sent an Indian women called Too-La to Florence to warn the miners of the war. Too-La brought back twelve men to help defend the fortifications. This raised the number of defenders to sixty eight.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Illustrated History of North Idaho, Western Historic Publishing Company, 1903, Pages 388 & 389.

<sup>12</sup> This information can be found in the BLM-GLO land records and survey notes.

<sup>13</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Volume #1, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Pages 30 & 31.

<sup>14</sup> Illustrated History of North Idaho, Western Historic Publishing Company, 1903, Pages 399, 400, & 402.

<sup>15</sup> Illustrated History of North Idaho, Western Historic Publishing, 1903, Pages 52 & 53.

<sup>16</sup> Northwest Fights and Fighters, Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1928, Cyrus Townsend Brady, Page 99.

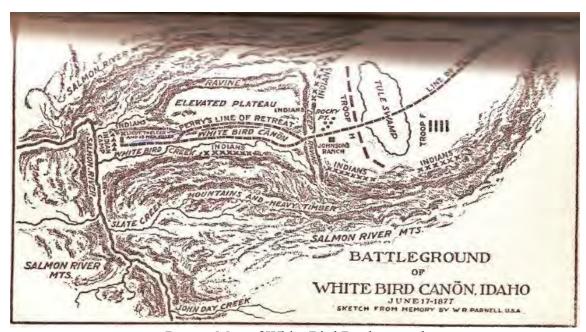
<sup>17</sup> Northwest Fights and Fighters, Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1928, Cyrus Townsend Brady, Pages 100 -111.

<sup>18</sup> Illustrated History of North Idaho, Western Historic Publishing Company, 1903, Page 60.



Too-La, The Nez Perce Woman Who Rode To Florence To Warn The Miners. Copied From The Book, Illustrated History Of North Idaho.

June 24: Lt. Parnell takes H Troop, First Calvary, to Florence via the Milner Trail to Florence. From Florence the Troop went on to Slate Creek by way of the Florence Trail. Parnell described the trail as "long abandon". It appears that the Florence trail from Slate Creek to Florence was abandon shortly after the Milner completed his trail, <sup>19</sup>



Retreat Map of White Bird Battleground Copied From the Book, Northwest Fights And Fighters.

1880: Surveyor, John B. David surveys a portion of T29N, R2E and describes the Florence Trail as the Wagon Road to Whitebird., Slate Creek the Salmon River. <sup>20</sup>

1893: Surveyor, Edwin Briggs finishes surveying T29N R2E and surveys T28N, R1E, and describes the Florence Trail as the Wagon Road to Grangeville. Briggs also calls the route south of Whitebird, the wagon road to Slate Creek. <sup>21</sup>

1896: Surveyor James W. Shannon records the route along the Salmon River in T27N, R1E as the Stage Road, and while surveying the the east boundary of the township he notes the location of the Florence Trail on the ridge southeast of Slate Creek. In addition Shannon also records the location of the school house at Freedom (Slate Creek) and the location of the "Old" Florence Trail. In this same year William Bush surveyed the west Half of T26N, R2E and records the "Old" Florence Trail between section 5 & 6.

1917: A survey of the North & South Highway was started at Whitebird and ended in Lewis County.

1919: A steam shovel building the North & South Highway uncovers the grave of a soldier killed during the battle of Whitebird in June of 1877. (See photograph on page 10.)

<sup>20</sup> This information can be found in the BLM-GLO land records and survey notes

<sup>21</sup> This information can be found in the BLM-GLO land records and survey notes.

1920-1922: Highway from Whitebird to Grangeville completed. With the completion of this section of the North-South highway the wagon road to Grangeville (Florence Trail) through this section was abandoned.<sup>22</sup>

1928-1930: W. Bates and Alex T. Harris survey T25N, R3E and recorded the trails but did not attach any names to them, but they recorded and noted an old trail between sections 13 & 14.<sup>23</sup>

1931: Alex T. Harris ties into William Bush's survey and completes the east half of T26N, R2E, and surveys all of T26N, R3E. Harris does not name any trails but portions through the west half of T26N, R2E were recorded by this writer in the late 1980's.<sup>24</sup>



Soldier's monument east of old highway 95, Photographer unknown.

<sup>22</sup> Idaho County Free Press, 1920-1922

<sup>23</sup> Information from the BLM-GLO surveys and land records.

<sup>24</sup> Information from the BLM-GLO surveys and land records.

## Coordinates Of The Florence Trail By Township And Range.

T32N, R1E: North on range line between sections 31 & 36, at 3201 feet Lewis ton-Mountain House Wagon Road. At this point the Florence Trail forked in a more southerly direction.

NAD 27: 46\* 04' 20.09" North 116\* 23' 23.54" West

NAD 83: 46\* 04' 19.66360 North 116\* 23' 27.06312" West

UTM Zone 11 East 5471065 North 5102241.9

T31N, R1E: Allen Thompson, 1867. On north boundary of township, west between section 31 & section 6, at 2062.5 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 46\* 03' 48.74" North 116\* 22' 36.85 West.

NAD 83: 46\* 03' 48.74000 North 116\* 22' 40.37324" West

UTM Zone 11: East 548116.9 5101295.3 North.

South between section 5 & section 6, at 3630 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 46\* 03' 12.18" North 116\* 22' 07.57" West.

NAD 83: 46\* 03' 11.75197 North 116\* 22' 11.09353 West

UTM Zone 11: East 548755 5100158.6 North.

West between section 5 & section 8, at 3102 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 46\* 02' 55.57" North 116\* 21' 35.99" West.

Nad 83: 46\* 02' 55.14149" North 116\* 21' 57.51366" West

UTM Zone11: East 549050.9 5099648.3 North.



Chinese miners along Salmon River. Courtesy of Idaho State Historical Society Copyrighted by the Idaho State Historical Society.

- West between section 8 and section 17, at 627 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 46\* 02' 03.39" North 116\* 21' 00.33" West.

  NAD 83: 46\* 02.' 02.96011 North 116\* 21' 03.85409" West

  UTM Zone 11: East 550217.1 North 5098047.1.
- North between section 16 & section 17, at 4125 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 46\* 01' 51.89 North 116\* 20' 51.29" West.

  NAD 83: 46\* 01' 51.45976" North 116\* 20' 54.81420 West.

  UTM Zone 11: East 550414.4 North 5097693.8.
- West between section 16 & section 21, at 3564 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 46\* 01' 11.02" North 116\* 20' 27.52" West.

  NAD 83: 46\* 01' 10.58838" North 116\* 20' 31.04464" West.

  UTM Zone 11: East 550935.8 North 5096436.5.
- West between section 21 & section 28, at 330 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 46\* 00' 18.39" North 116\* 19' 41.62" West.

  NAD 83: 46\* 00' 17.95680 North 116\* 19' 45.14520 West.

  UTM Zone 11: East 551936.3 North 5094820.4.
- North between section 27 & section 28, at 3300 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 45\* 59' 58.43" North 116\* 19' 36.84" West.

  NAD 83: 45\* 59' 57.99611 North 116\* 19' 40.36541 West.

  UTM Zone 11: East 552044.3 North 5084205.2.
- West between section 27 & section 34, at 1452 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 45\* 59' 25.96 North 116 18' 43.71" West.

  NAD 83: 45\* 59' 25.52747 North 116\* 18' 47.23476 West.

  UTM Zone11: East 553195.5 North 5093212.9.
- North between section 34& section 35, at 3250.5 feet Florence Trail.

  NAD 27: 45\* 59' 06.26" North 116\* 18' 23.19 West

  NAD 83: 45\* 59' 05.82812" North 116\* 18' 26.71438 West

  UTM Zone 11: East 553642.5 North 5092608.8.

T30N, R1E, Surveyed by John B. David in 1880.

North between section 7 & section 12, at 1501.5 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 57' 03.80" North 116\* 15' 53.94" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 57' 03.37244" North 116\* 15' 57.46176" West

UTM Zone 11: East 556888.5 North 5088858.2.

West between section 1 & section 12, at 2995.74 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 57' 41.01" North 116\* 16' 36.05" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 57' 40.58119" North 116\* 16' 39.57258" West

UTM Zone 11: East 555971.5 North 5089998.3.

South between section 1 & section 2, at 3377.22 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 58' 00.03" North 116\* 17' 11.79" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 57' 59.60034" North 116\* 17' 15.31304" West

UTM Zone 11: East 555197 North 5080578.3.

On the north boundary of the township, west between section 2 & section 35.

NAD 27: 45\* 58' 33.68" North 116\* 17' 54.07" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 58' 33.24913" North 116\* 17' 57.59375. West.

UTM Zone 11: East 554353.6 North 5091622.7.

T30N, R2E survey by Allen Thompson in 1867.

East between section 7 & 18, at 1155 feet the Trail splits and Thompson notes the eastern route as the Florence Wagon Road and the western route as the original Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 56' 48.81" North 116\* 15' 37.44" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 56' 48.38294" North 116\* 15' 40.96142" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 557248 North 5088398.8.

North between section 17 & section 18, at 264 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 59.20" North 116\* 14' 38.68" West

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 58.77491 North 116\* 14' 42.20014" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558527.6 North 5086879.7.

AND AT 2623.5 FEET FLORENCE WAGON ROAD.

NAD 27: 45\* 56' 22.21" North 116\* 14' 38.68" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 56' 21.78451" North 116\* 14' 42. 20057" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558520.8 North 5087589.8.

West between section 17 & section 20, at 2178 feet Florence Wagon Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 56.98" North 116\* 13' 54.78" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 56.55612" North 116\* 13' 58.29968" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 559473.6 North 5086820.2

AND AT 5230.5 FEET, FLORENCE TRAIL.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 56.61 North 116\* 14' 38.14" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 56.18497" North 116\* 14' 41.66009" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558540 North 5086799.8

West between section 20 & 29, at 1551 feet Florence Wagon Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 04.03" North 116\* 13' 46.12" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 04.03000 North 116\* 13' 49.63861

UTM Zone 11: East 559675.8 North 5085200.9

## AND AT 4950 FEET FLORENCE TRAIL.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 04.90" North 116\* 14' 34.25" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 04.47957 North 116\* 14' 37.76908" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558638.9 North 5085204.8.

North between section 29 & section 30, at 2970 feet Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 54' 41.02" North 116\* 14' 38.49" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 54' 40.59627" North 116\* 14' 42.00868" West

UTM Zone 11. Eat 558554.4 North 5084466.9

East between section 30 & section 31, at 3993 feet, Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 54' 12.20" North 116\* 14' 56.53" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 54' 11.77630" North 116\* 15' 0.04831" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558174.3 North 5083573.8.

West between section 29 & section 32, at 4719 feet Florence Wagon Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 54' 12.20" North 116\* 14' 29.47" West

NAD 83: 45\* 54' 11.77701" North 116\* 14' 32.98805" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558757.3 North 5083579.3.

North between section 31 & section 32, at 3300 feet Florence Wagon Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 53' 52.65" North 116\* 14' 39.37" West.

NAD 83: 45\*53 52.22709 North 116\* 14' 42.88778" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558549.7 North 5082973.9

From the corner of T29 & 30 E, R1 & 2E, on the South Boundary of T30N, R2E, East between section 31 & section 6, at 3481.5 feet the Florence Wagon Road and Trail join.

NAD 27: 45\* 53' 19.75" North 116\* 15' 04.12" West.

Nad 83: 45\* 53' 19.32706 North 116\* 15' 07.63738" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558025.9 North 5081953.5

T29N, R2E: John B. David 1880. David runs East between section 6 & section 7, at 1280.4 feet Wagon Road to Whitebird North and South.

NAD 27: 45\* 52' 26.45" North 116\* 15' 35.13" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 52' 26.02757 North 116\*15' 38.64658" West

UTM Zone 11 East 557372.8 North 5080302.4

East between section 19 & section 30, at 594 feet Wagon Road to Whitebird and Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 49' 48.75" North 116\* 15' 44.65 West.

NAD 83: 45\* 49' 48.33021" North 116\* 15' 48.16375" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 557212.6 North 5075433.6

East between section 18 & section 19, at 1991.2 feet Wagon Road to Whitebird.

NAD 27: 45\* 50' 41.36" North 116\* 15' 25.23" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 50' 40.93954" North 116\* 15' 28.74457 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 557616.5 North 5077061.1.

1893: Edsin Briggs surveys the remaining portions of the Township. He runs North between Sections 31& 36 on the Township line between Ranges 1 & 2 East., at 4884 feet Wagon Road to Grangeville runs Northeast and Southwest.

NAD27: 45\* 48' 51.80" North 116\* 15' 52.58" West

NAD 83: 45\* 48' 51.38110" North 116\* 15' 56.09278" West.

UTM, Zone 11: East 557057.7 North 5073674.5. Note the original trail was recorded as being 200feet south of this point.

## T28N, R1E Surveyed by Edsin Briggs, 1893.

On the North boundary of T28N, R1E, beginning at the corner of section 1, on the East boundary of T28N, R2E, at, 1600 feet West the Wagon Road to Slate Creek and Florence.

NAD 27: 45\* 48' 03.97" North 116\* 16' 15.20" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 48' 03.97000 North 116\* 16' 18.71211 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 556582.9 North 5072206.8.

West between section 1 & section 12, at 1864.5 feet Wagon Road from Grangeville.

NAD 27: 45\* 47' 11.62" North 116\* 16' 19.08" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 47' 11.20252" North 116\* 16' 22.59120" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 556513.9 North 5070577.5

North between section 11 & section 12, at 2046 feet, Wagon Road from Grangeville.

NAD 27: 45\* 46' 39.82" North 116\* 17' 08.12" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 46' 39.40245 North 116\* 17' 11.63111 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555463.6 North 5069586.6.

West Between section 11 & section 14, at 1369.5 feet Wagon Road from Grangeville.

NAD 27: 45\* 46' 19.77" North 116\* 17' 26.10 West.

NAD 83: 45\* 46' 19.35257 North 116\* 17' 29.61094" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555081.1 North 5068964.4.

West between section 14 & section 23, at 4646 feet Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 45' 27.17" North 116\* 18' 12.83" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 45' 26.75292" North 116\* 18' 16.34053" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 554086 North 5067332.2.

North between section 22 & section 23, at 2854.5 feet, Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 45' 03.64 North 116\* 18' 22.93" West

NAD 83: 45\* 45' 03.22321 North 116\* 18' 26.44024" West

UTM Zone 11: East 553874.1 North 5066604.1.

AND

Briggs Continued North, between section 22 & section 23, at 4424 feet Wagon Road to Slate Cr.

NAD 27: 45\* 45' 18.99 North 116\* 18' 22.93" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 45' 18.57294" North 116\* 18' 26.44050: West

UTM Zone 11: East 553870 North 5067077.8.

West between section 22 & section 27, at 1155 feet Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 44' 35.67" North 116\* 18' 39.87" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 44' 35.25350" North 116\* 18' 43.37976" West

UTM Zone 11: East 553515.5 North 50657376.

North between section 26 & section 27, at 2491.5 Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 44' 07.81" North 116\* 18' 23.80" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 44" 07.39420 North 116\* 18' 27.30889" West

UTM Zone 11: East 553870.2 North 5064881.

West between section 26 & section 35, at 3960 feet Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 43' 43.30" North 116\* 18' 04.72" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 43' 42.88489" North 116\* 18' 08.22805" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 554289.2 North 5064128.2.

North between section 34 & section 35, at 3135 feet, Wagon Road to Slate Creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 43' 22.25" North 116\* 18' 23.79" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 43' 21.83502" North 116\* 18' 27.29776" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 553882.6 North 5063475.

T27N, R1E, Surveyed by James W. Shannon 1896.

West between section 10 & section 15, at 165 feet Shannon calls the trail as the Salmon River Stage Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 41' 06.83" North 116\* 18' 26.10" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 41' 06.4174.1 North 116\* 18' 29.60443" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 553868.9 North 5059295.4.

West between section 3 & section 10, at 2475 feet Salmon River Stage Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 41' 58.82" North 116\* 18' 59.12" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 41' 58.40604" North 1168 19' 02.62616" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 553140.9 North 5060893.7.

On the East line of township, South between section 36 & section 31, at 4250.4 feet Florence Trail bears Northwest and Southeast.

NAD 27: 45\* 37' 48.62" North 116\* 15' 54.42 West.

NAD 83: 45\* 37' 48.21313 North 116\* 15' 57.91687 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 557206 North 5053207.8.

Along South boundary of township 27 North, East between section 36 & section 1, at 3016 feet Salmon River Stage Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 37' 37.61" North 116\* 16' 26.14" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 37' 37.20288" North 116\* 16' 29.63193" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 556522.2 North 5052861.7.

West between section 25 & section 26, at 4418.7 feet Salmon River Stage Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 38' 39.98" North 116\* 17' 09.35 West.

NAD 83: 45\* 38' 29.57131" North 116\* 17' 12.84925 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555572.2 North 5054469.5.

North between section 25 & section 26, at 712.8 feet Salmon River Stage Road Bears NW & SE

NAD 27: 45\* 39' 13.55" North 116\* 16' 56.64" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 39' 13.14069" North 116\* 17' 0.14018" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555835.3 North 5055816.5.

AND

North between section 25& section 26,at 5134.8 feet Salmon River Stage Road bears NE & SW

NAD 27: 45\* 39' 21.60" North 116\* 17' 09.53West.

NAD 83: 45\* 39' 21.19037" North 116\* 17' 13.03059" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555554.1 North 5056062.5.

West between section 13 & section 24,at 4592.94 feet Salmon River Stage Road NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 40' 15.57" North 116\*16' 58.76" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 40' 15.15953 North 116\* 17' 02.26183" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 555772.3 North 50577301.

West between section 14 section 23, at 1498.2 feet, Salmon River Stage Road, NE & SW.

NAD 27: 45\* 40' 15.45" North 116\* 17' 31.23" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 40' 15.03909" North 116\* 17' 34. 34.73232 West.

**AND** 

West between section 14 & section 23, at 4138.2 feet, Salmon River Stage Road N & S.

NAD 27: 45\* 40' 15.32" North 116\* 18' 08.11" West.

NAD 83" 45\* 40' 14.90858 North 1168 18' 11.61287 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 554271.8 North 5057709.1.

South between section 14 section 15, at 4138.2 feet, Salmon River Stage Road

NAD 27: 45\* 40' 26.63" North 116\* 18' 21.01" West

NAD 83: 45\* 40' 26.21820" North 116 18' 24.51335" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 553989.7 5058055.7 North.

North between section 23 & section 24, at 424 feet, Salmon River Stage Road.

NAD 27: 45\* 39' 27.30" North 116\* 17' 09.35 West.

NAD 83: 45\* 39' 26.89026" North 116\* 17' 12.85074" West.

UTM Zone 11 East555556.4 North 5056238.4.

T 27N, R 2 E, Surveyed by Edsin Briggs, 1902.

From the corner of sections 36 & 31 on the South boundary of T27N, R2E, East between section 31 & section 6, at 2890 feet, Old Florence Trail bears N 75\* W and S 75\* E.

NAD 27: 45\* 37' 38.12" North 116\* 15' 13.57" West.

NAD 83 45\* 37' 37.71391" North 116\* 15' 17.06587" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558093.5 North 5052891.9.



Whitebird Post Office About 1890, Courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society. Copyrighted by the Idaho State Historical Society.

West ½ of T26N, R2E, Surveyed by William Bush 1902.

South between section 5 & section 6, at 2597.1 feet, Old Florence Trail.

NAD 27: 45\* 37' 12.19" North 116\* 14' 39.34" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 37' 11.78509" North 116\* 14' 42.83473" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 558842.3 North 5052098.7.

East ½ of T26N, R 2E, Surveyed by Alex T. Harris, 1931.Note: Harris did not name any of the trails in this survey. However, this writer has walked and recorded the Florence Trail and various scatter sites through this section, and is familiar with its location.

Starting at the ¼ corner between section 16 & section 15; North for 2131.8 feet, Trail NW &SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 35' 47.42" North 116\* 12' 11.81" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 35' 47.02027" North 116\* 12' 15.30107" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 562063.2 North 5049513.7 North.

North between section 14 & section 13, at 528 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 35' 04.11' North 116\* 09' 45.08" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 35' 03.71466" North 116\* 09' 48.56856" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 565256 North 5048209.6.

T26N, R3E, Surveyed by Alex T. Harris 1930 & 1931.

East between section 19 & section 30, at 3432 feet Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 34' 06.47" North 116\* 07' 41.52" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 34' 06.07875" North 116\* 07' 45.00582" West

UTM Zone 11: East 567952.9 North 5046459.4.

**AND** 

At 4276.8 feet, Trail NE & SW.

NAD 27: 45\* 34' 06.35" North 116\* 07' 29.22" West

NAD 83: 45\* 34' 05.95905" North 116\* 07' 32. 70571 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 568219.5 North 5046458.6.

AND

At 5184.3 feet Trail NE & SW.

NAD 27: 45\* 34' 06.22" North 116\* 07' 16.39" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 34' 05.82937F" North 116\* 07' 19.87559 West

UTM Zone 11: East 568497.7 North 5046457.6.

West between section 20 & section 29, at 3234 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 34' 06.35" North 116\* 06' 46.34" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 34' 05.96009 North 116\* 06' 49.82533" West.

UTM Zone 11. East 569149 North 5046468.8.

North between section 28 & section 29, at 85.8 feet Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 33' 14.95" North 116\* 06' 00.65" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 33' 14.56217" North 116\* 06' 04.13345" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 570157.2 North 5044893.7.

West between section 28 & section 33, at 5138.1 feet Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 33' 13.96" North 116\* 05' 59.06" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 33' 13.57223" North 116\* 06' 02.54340 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 570192 North 5044863.5.

T25 N, R3E, Surveyed by Thomas W. Bates & Alex T. Harris, 1928 & 1930.

West from the corner of section 4 & section 3 on North boundary, at 1000 feet Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27:45\* 32' 21.55" North 116\* 05' 20.07" West

NAD 83: 45\* 32' 21.16147" North 116\* 05' 23.55155" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 571055.7 North 5043255.7

North between section 3 & section 4, at 699.6 feet Trail NE & SW.

NAD 27: 45\* 31' 49.71" North 116\* 05' 05.49" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 31' 49.32512" North 116\* 05' 08.97050" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 571383.1 North 5042276.7.

#### AND

At 2145 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 32' 03.96" North 116\* 05' 05.84" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 32' 03.57484" North 116\* 05' 09.32091" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 571370.5 North 5042716.4.

#### AND

At 2626.8 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 32' 08.67" North 116\* 05' 05.66" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 32' 08.28476" North 116\* 05' 09.14104 West.

UTM Zone 11: East 571372.7 North 5042861.8.

North between section 9 & section 10, at 4788.3 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 31' 37.69" North 116\* 05' 05.84" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 31' 37.31204 North 116\* 05' 09.32015.

UTM Zone11: East 571379.7 North 5041905.9.

North between section 10 & section 11, at 1089 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 31' 01.14" North 116\* 03' 51.73" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 31' 00.75783" North 116\* 03' 55.20842" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 573000.5 5040796.3.

West between section 11 & section 14, at 442.2 feet, Trail NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 30' 50.61" North 116\* 02' 43.42" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 30' 50.22969" North 116\* 02' 46.89749" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 574486.3 North 5040488.9.

North between section 14 & section 13, at 3003 feet Old Trail, NW & SE.

NAD 27: 45\* 30' 28.32" North 116\* 02' 37.46" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 30' 27.94026" North 116\* 02' 40.93679" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 574623.9 North 5039802.5.



Freedom (Slate Creek) Post Office in the far left behind rock wall. Courtesy of Idaho Historical Society. Copyrighted by the Idaho Historical Society.

## COORDIANTES FOR OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST ALONG FLORENCE TRAIL.

Approximate point where Perry and Parnell regrouped after retreating from Whitebird battle.

NAD 27: 45\* 50' 19.98" North 116\* 15' 17.61" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 53' 19.56802" North 116\* 15' 21.12412" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 557787 North 5076403.1

Johnson Ranch where rearguard action started, house and barn were east of creek.

NAD 27: 45\* 53' 28.09" North 116\* 15' 10.16" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 53' 27.66683 North 116\* 15' 13.67757" West.

UTM Zone 11" East 557893.3 North 5082209.7

Tule Swamp where rearguard skirmish continued.

NAD 27: 45\* 55' 04.08" North 116\* 13' 06.94" West

NAD 83: 45\* 55' 03.65830" North 116\* 13' 10.45824" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 560519.9 North 5085022.1

AND

NAD 27 45\* 54' 58.51" North 116\* 13' 24.11" West.

NAD 83: 45\* 54' 58.08794" North 116\* 13' 27.62830" West

UTM Zone 11: East 560151.7 North 5085022.1

## Soldier's Grave

NAD 27: 45\* 47' 34.89" North 116\* 16' 18.01" West; Florence Trail 200 feet West.

NAD 83: 45\* 47' 34.47212 North 116\* 16' 21.52161" West

UTM Zone 11: East 556530.5 North 5071295.9.

## Location of Florence Hotel

NAD 27: 45\* 29' 59.18" North 116\* 01' 40.51" West.

NAD 83L 45\* 29 58.82019" North 116\* 01' 43.98541" West.

UTM Zone 11: East 575938.1 North 5039451.4.

Bearing only, no distance was given to the hotel. Assumed it was near the section line.



Chief Joseph, Source and Photographer unknown

## **INTEGRITY**

The Florence Trail across the Camas Prairie from Northwest of Cotonwood to the head of Rock Creek Canyon has been obliterated by farming and has succumbed to the plow. There may still be evidence of the Trail, where it crossed Johns Creek and Telcher Creek in T30N, R2E, Section 20 and Section 29. In addition, there may still be evidence of the route in T29N, R2E beginning in Section 6 and going South to Section 30. This appears to be mostly pasture land and it is possible that jeep trails in the area may follow sections of the original route.

From Section 30, T29N, R2E, the route through the town of Whitebird, and along the Salmon River to Slate Creek has been destroyed by development and construction of U.S. Highway 95. The Trail from Slate Creek to Florence is approximately17 miles in length, 5 miles of which are on private holdings, and 8 miles that use portions of Forest Trails # 303, #307 & # 308. There are four miles of existing trail that are on the National Forest, but are not on the Forest trail system. Sections of the Trail on federal land show some impact from road construction and logging.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

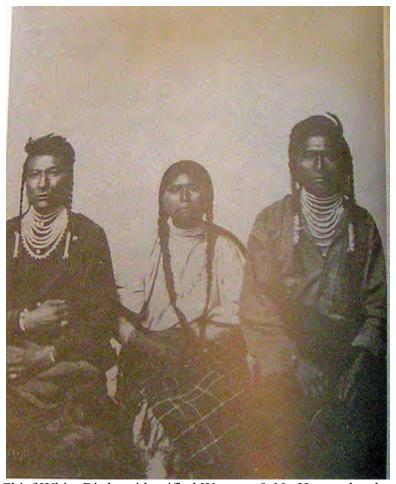
The Florence Trail is significant for its contribution to early Central Idaho and Idaho County history. The trail contributed to the settlement of North Central Idaho and was an important route during the Nez Perce War of 1877. The trail was on the first of the first mail route established into Central Idaho serving Mount Idaho, Whitebird, Slate Creek and Florence. It was used by the army, settlers, freighters and miners, and a portion of the \$30,000,000 in gold that was mined in the Florence Basin came out over the trail.

The portion of the trail from Tolo Lake to Slate Creek became a wagon and/or stage road and was used for six decades. It is unknown how long the portion of the trail from Slate Creek to Florence was used by the early miners, but apparently had a relatively short life. After the National Forests were created, sections of the trail became part of the Forest System and are still in use today.

## RECOMENDATIONS

- (A) Those segments of the trail that still exist should be surveyed to determine the remaining values of setting, location, association and other values. There are large sections of the trail that could be eligible for NRHP consideration.
- (B) The Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission should determine if any or all of the noted "associated sites" are important enough to be of historic value and/or interest to the citizens of Idaho County and the public at large.

<sup>25</sup> Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, Volume #2, Pages 438 & 439.



From left to right: Chief White Bird, unidentified Woman, & No Hunter, brother of Looking Glass. Picture taken at Fort MacLeod, Alberta, Canada 1879. Courtesy of Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta Canada. Albert George Kush Collection.

## REFERENCES

The following books and materials were used to produce this assessment.

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# DeVoto, Bernard

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## Brady, Cyrus Townsend

1907 Northwest Fights And Fighters, reprinted 1928, Doubleday, Doran & Company, Garden City, New York.

## Painter, Bob

White Bird, (The last great warrior chief of the Nez Perce) *Ye Galleon Press, Fairfield, Washington.* 

## Elsensohn, Sister M. Alfreda

1947 Pioneer Days In Idaho County, Volume #1 & #2 *The Caxton Printers, LTD. Caldwell, Idaho.* 

# Idaho County Free Press

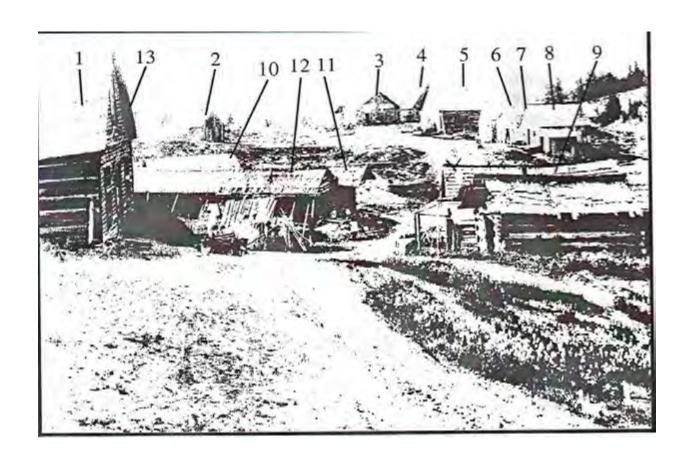
1900 through 1924 editions.

## **BLM-GLO**

Land Patent Records & Land survey Records and Plats.



Slate Creek Ranger Station, 1962 Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service.



# **Legend for Photo Sites:**

- #1 Masonic Hall, later Idaho County Courthouse and still later a hotel.
- #2 Benefield's Cabin
- #3 Cherokee Bob's Saloon
- #4 Redheaded Cynthia's House
- #5 McKenzie's General Store
- #6 Restaurant
- #7 Barber Shop, later John Clark's General Store
- #8 Mulkey's Butcher Shop
- #9 Where the first court in Idaho County was held
- #10 Warren's Cabin
- #11 Romaris' Cabin
- #12 Stage and Livery Barn
- #13 Dance Hall

