

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### SOUTH BOISE STAGE LINES

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The discovery of promising quartz lodes in 1863 and 1864 in the South Boise region created a need not only for roads but also for a stage and mail route. The road problem was partially solved when Julius C. Newberg opened his south Boise Toll Road to traffic on September 5, 1864. [See Reference Series Number 94] The road ran from Little Camas Prairie, where it split off from Goodale's Cutoff, to Rocky Bar. By the summer of 1865, F. McKay's Boise and Yuba Express and D. S. Campbell and Company's Express lines were making weekly trips between Boise and Rocky Bar. In May, John Mullan, proprietor of the newly formed Idaho Stage Company, attempted to send a stage into Rocky Bar, but it was stopped short of its destination when unable to cross the swollen south fork of the Boise River. (Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman [Boise], June 8, 1865, p. 2, c. 4) Mullan eventually got a stage through but soon abandoned the enterprise to devote his energies to establishing a stage line between Boise and Red Bluff, California.

A traveler in the summer of 1865 bemoaned the lack of adequate services along the route and remarked, "Cannot some of your enterprising emigrants who understand the cuisine department of 'keeping a hotel,' open an inn or two by the roadside, and give the weary traveler a little better fare? There are but two houses where a decent meal can be obtained for love or money--the Syrup Creek House and at Newberg's. Bacon, beans and bread, and bread, bacon and beans in every variety of style seems to be the favored dishes at the other houses; and when 'mine host' is induced to come out with his apple sauce (which your correspondent never eats) he wears a very saucy air. We were entertained by the fair hostess at Newberg's with unaffected courtesy and excellent music discoursed from a veritable piano, which seemed to be none the worse by having been hauled across the plains last season, and the lady is no amateur I can assure you." (Statesman, June 1, 1865, p. 3, c. 2)

Between 1865 and 1868 the route to the South Boise mines tested the patience of all concerned. Newberg's road fell into disrepair and the road from Little Camas Prairie to its junction with the Overland Road near Ditto Creek was a hard and slow pull. Express and passengers traveled by saddle trains, and supplies reached the camp faster by pack trains than by the preferred and more efficient wagon.

In 1868 the road dilemma improved greatly. E. P. Rice and B. F. Nichols purchased and improved the Newberg road, and the former joined forces with James A. Porter to open a toll road from the Overland to Little Camas Prairie. [See Reference Series Number 95] Depending on the season, wagons could now reach Rocky Bar in good time. Knowledgeable individuals, however, were reluctant to attempt a stage line until the road owners demonstrated their willingness to maintain the route. In 1870 Winfield C. Tatro thought the road improvements had reached an acceptable level and initiated a weekly stage line to the South Boise area. Since Tatro ran his

stage to Rattlesnake Station to accommodate Overland travelers, Porter extended his toll road five miles down Rattlesnake Creek to the station.

In the spring of 1871, Tatro commissioned Carlton's Carriage Shop in Boise to construct a stagecoach for his line. The Idaho Democrat believed this to be the first stagecoach ever manufactured in Idaho. (April 29, 1871, p. 3, c. 1, and May 17, 1871, p. 3, c. 3) By the end of May, Tatro's new coach was on the road, transporting passengers, mail, express, and freight to Rocky Bar. The trip took two days with a night's layover, coming and going, at Porter's Station.

In May 1872, Tatro made arrangements with the Northwestern Stage Company to carry passengers and freight from Boise to Rattlesnake Station, where he would connect with the company and run on to Rocky Bar. (Statesman, May 14, 1872, p. 3, c. 1)

He announced the following passenger fares and freight rates in the Statesman on June 24, 1872 [p. 3, c.3]: Boise City - Rattlesnake, \$10.00; Rattlesnake - Rocky Bar, \$10.00; whole distance, \$20.00 currency; and fast freight, whole distance, 10¢ per pound.

The following year, Tatro's mail contract called for a semi-weekly service and he increased his service accordingly. (Statesman, March 22, 1873, p. 3, c. 1) When the weather disrupted his stage service during the winter and spring, he transported passengers and mail on saddle trains. Sometimes, though, he would have to resort to snowshoes for the final few miles to Rocky Bar. His stages generally ran until about the first of December and would be able to start up again sometime in May.

In 1873 he reduced the fare from Boise to Rocky Bar to \$15.00 and charged 6¢ per pound for over one hundred pounds of freight, 10¢ per pound up to that amount. The stage left Boise every Monday morning at 4 a.m. and arrived in Rocky Bar on Tuesday evening. On the down trip, the stage left on Thursday morning and arrived in Boise the following evening. He also utilized a pony express that left Rattlesnake Station on Friday morning and arrived at Rocky Bar the same evening. The down express left every Monday morning and arrived at Rattlesnake Station that evening. The express allowed him to meet the semi-weekly stipulations of the mail contract. (Statesman, June 10, 1873, p.2, c. 4)

The next year, Tatro continued biweekly service and charged \$15.00 for a one-way ticket. The cost was divided in half for those desiring to travel between Boise and Rattlesnake Station, or from the latter place to Rocky Bar. He lowered freight charges to a straight 6¢ per pound for the whole distance or 3¢ per pound for halfway service. (Statesman, April 9, 1874, p. 2, c. 4)

On September 8, 1874, p. 2, c. 2, William A. Goulder, the traveling correspondent for the Statesman, wrote the following description of his trip on Tatro's line to Rocky Bar:

Week before last we took a seat by the side of W. C. Tatro, on his splendid four horse coach for Rocky Bar. Starting a little in advance of the Overland stage we escaped the dust, and in the early morning air had a delightful ride to Black's station, where we arrived in due time and partook of an excellent breakfast, with plenty of time to make Porter's station [half way] before night . . . .

Taking our departure from Black's after an hour or so of leisure, partly for our horse talk, we arrived at Ditto's in good time for dinner, not forgetting, however, to call on O. B. Corder, at Indian Creek, and inquire all about the little Corder's . . . . There is no use in praising Mrs. Ditto for an excellent hostess.

Everything that heart could wish was prepared for dinner, and in the neatest order; those who stop there once will always stop again if they love a good meal.

With a fresh team we sped '20 miles away' to Porter's where we arrive[d] sometime before sundown. No better accommodations can be found anywhere than at Porter's. Mr. Porter owns the toll road from the Overland to Little Camas, and keeps it in splendid condition . . . . After a good night's rest and the usual hour for breakfast we drove to Dixie, where Lockman & Robison are ranching a large band of cattle and making butter.

With another good team we soon sped our way over Little Camas Prairie, down Wood Creek Hill and up the Boise river to Ethel & Goldden's place at Pine Grove. Here, after partaking of an excellent dinner, with another new team, we made our last drive and reached Rocky Bar about dusk. J. B. Nichols keeps the upper toll road and has it in good repair. He has done a large amount of work on the road this year, and is now building a new bridge over the Boise. With the exception of Wood Creek and Red Warrior hills, it is as good a mountain road as there is in the Territory. They can be improved and will be as soon as the travel will warrant it, which is sure to come within another year.

Mr. Tatro is certainly entitled to great credit for the safe and comfortable manner which he runs stages. No better coach, teams, conveniences, regularity and safety can be found in any stage line in the Territory. (September 8, 1874, p. 2, c. 1)

Tatro withdrew his saddle train and began running his stage on May 1, 1874. The fares for passengers and freight remained the same as the previous year, and he announced in a Statesman advertisement: "We have run this line for the past four years, carrying the United States Mails, Express, Passengers, Fast Freight; packing on snow shoes in the Winter, and running our four horse coaches in Summer. We have added a Fine New Coach, And improved the Line this Spring in Stock, Stations, and everything for the comfort, speed and convenience of travel, and shall continue to make regular trips all Summer, and solicit the patronage of the Public. Particular attention paid to orders and the purchasing of articles at the lowest cash rates." (April 9, 1874, p. 2, c. 4) He also cancelled his agreement with the Northwestern Stage Company and ran his stages once again from Boise. In July he received a four-year extension on his mail contract for carrying the mail between Rattlesnake Station and Rocky Bar. (Statesman, July 21, 1874, p. 2, c. 2)

In 1875, Tatro once again made arrangements with the Northwestern Stage Company to transport his passengers and freight between Boise and Rattlesnake Station. He intended to spend most of the summer in Boise conducting his business and appointed James Clyde to act as his agent at Rattlesnake Station. In addition, he raised the one-way fare to \$20.00 and charged 25¢ to 50¢ for packages five pounds and under and 6¢ per pound for those over five pounds. (Statesman, May 6, 1875, p. 2, c. 4) He also changed his overnight stop from Porter's to Rattlesnake Station to better meet the needs of Overland travelers desiring to take his stage to South Boise.

Rattlesnake Station was situated on Commodore William Jackson's ranch along Rattlesnake Creek and had been a home station on the Overland Road since 1864. Jackson had purchased the property in 1872 and ran the station until it became an overnight stop on the Rocky

Bar line. At that time, the Northwestern Stage Company hired Mr. and Mrs. Marion Daniels to oversee the business.

In October 1875, a correspondent for the Owyhee Avalanche spent the night at Rattlesnake Station on his way to South Boise and found the facilities less than charming. "I leave this morning by buckboard train for Rocky Bar. I have changed the name of this station, where I have been sojourning since noon yesterday, from 'Rattlesnake Station' to 'Bedbug Station.' There are no rattlesnakes here, but an abundance of the other animals, and hence the necessity for the change, which will be appreciated and understood by all who have had occasion to sojourn here one night. I can now understand why my friend Judge Whitson advised me to walk five miles further [Porter's Station] and take repose. I will certainly do it next time Judge." (October 16, 1875 p. 4 c. 2) The correspondent also found fault with the proprietor. "Owing to the fact that the newly christened 'Bedbug Station,' at the nearest point on the Overland is not kept in such condition as to warrant public patronage, travelers in this direction frequently walk to Porter's for the purpose of sojourning overnight and luxurating in a comfortable bed. Besides the man who keeps the 'Bedbug' inn is totally unfitted for his business and deserving the contempt of all decent men. Mr. Morris or Mr. Boomer [Northwestern Stage Company] would do well to make inquiry about this establishment and see if they cannot find a man to take charge of it who is destitute of hoggish propensities and will treat travelers with some degree of courtesy." In the same article, the writer includes the following description of two other stations on the Rocky Bar line and a comment on Tatro's operation:

Willard's Ranch. Eight miles below rocky Bar is a stage station and ranch kept by J. Willard. Mr. W. carries on farming here and has demonstrated the truth of the statement that farming can be made a profitable business in this country. He had fifteen acres planted with potatoes this season and raised there some 80,000 pounds, which has been disposing of at three cents. He cut about 30 tons of hay here and 100 tons at a ranch on Big Bend in which he is interested. He has a ditch about two miles long on his ranch here which combines splendid facilities for irrigation . . . Pine Grove. D. B. Ethell, Esq., one of the County Commissioners, has a pleasant place on South Boise River which combines charming natural attractions. He has about 100 acres of cultivated land here . . . Mr. Tatro, the enterprising and accommodating proprietor of the stage line running between the Overland Road and Rocky Bar, resides in Boise City, but has an efficient representative here in the person of Jimmy Clyde, who will after the 17th instant, make three trips a week to and from the Bar. Mr. Tatro has done much towards developing and advancing the interests of Rocky Bar and Atlanta, and his line is deserving of, and receives a liberal support. He keeps good stock on the road, makes regular trips, and, from a brief interview with him on my way up here from Boise, I should be inclined to pronounce him a very clever and accommodating gentleman. (Ibid., October 23, 1875, p. 2, c. 1-2)

The Statesman, on October 21, 1875, refuted the attack on Rattlesnake Station and its proprietor and reported, "The article of the Owyhee Daily Avalanche of last week in regard to

'Rattlesnake Station,' on the Overland road and the point of departure for Rocky Bar, Alturas county, and which is now kept by Mr. Daniels, is pronounced a gross misstatement by all parties coming from Rocky Bar and all who visit or call upon Mr. Daniels and receive the courtesies of himself and his most amiable lady. The name or designation of 'Bedbug Station' given to it by the Avalanche, we are authorized to say by numerous gentlemen who have put at this house is a fabrication out of whole cloth, and that no house in the Territory is furnished with better beds or is more neatly kept than this station by its present proprietors, Mr. and Mrs. Daniels. (p. 2, c.2)

On a trip from Rocky Bar to Boise in September 1876, William A. Goulder described the route, the scenery, and the changes that the stage company had instituted at Rattlesnake Station:

The road leading from Rocky Bar to Rattlesnake Station, on the Overland Stage route, gets very easily and quietly out of the higher timbered mountains by following the course of the streams, passing from one stream to another over the low depressions which divide them. I was agreeably surprised at finding the grades so light after my experience with the other roads in the Alturas mountains. Eight miles from Rocky Bar the open country is reached at a point called Junction Bar on the south branch of the Boise. The road then follows down the right bank of the river to Pine Grove, a distance of twelve miles, a little below which point it crosses the stream and passes over low hills and across some small tributaries of the Boise. The only hill so far of any considerable length or steepness is at the point where the road leaves Wood creek and ascends to the plateau known as Little Camas Prairie. This plateau is about seven miles wide where the road crosses and extends from the hills on the left to the river on the right about an equal distance. It is covered with a fine growth of grass affording excellent pasturage. Mr. B. J. Nichols, who keeps the tool-gate house between Junction Bar and Pine Grove, is a genial, hospitable gentleman. The view from his door of the valley, the river and the surrounding hills is one of the finest in Idaho. At Pine Grove Mr. D. B. Ethell and Mr. Robertson keeps a good house and excellent accommodations. The groves of pine and other evergreens give this place an attractive appearance at any season of the year, but during the leafy magnificence of summer, when the hills and plains are covered with a wealth of verdure, it is most delightful and inviting resting place . . . .

We passed the night at Mr. Lockman's place, in the little valley called Dixie's Land, after a most fatiguing ride of forty miles on horseback. Mr. Lockman is in the cattle business; and this is his summer home. He was married about five weeks ago, to the youngest daughter of Mr. Daniels, of Canyon creek.

On Monday, the 18th, I came to Rattlesnake Station in company with Mr. [A. L.] Meyer; reaching that place just in time for dinner. The station has been changed from Jackson's place, and new buildings erected at a point about one-half mile distant from the old road. The house was not yet completed, the carpenters were busy at work, and there was the unavoidable confusion of moving into an unfinished house, but Mrs. Lemon gave us a pleasant welcome and an excellent dinner. The house, when finished, will be commodious and comfortable; and with

Mr. and Mrs. Lemon as host and hostess, travelers will forget all the fatigue of their long stage ride from Kelton or Boise City.

Rattlesnake Station is destined to be quite an important point on the Overland road. It is distant from Rocky Bar fifty-five miles, from Boise City fifty miles, and from Kelton, on the C. P. Railroad, two hundred miles. The stages of the Northwestern Stage Company, which leave Boise City daily, arrive here for dinner; leaving Kelton, they arrive here in thirty-six hours, or two days with a night sandwiched between them. The stages of Tatro's line make tri-weekly trips between this point and Rocky Bar, going through in one day. From Rocky Bar to Atlanta a tri-weekly mail is carried on horseback. . . .

A lonely ride of twelve miles brought me to Mr. Daniels' pleasant home on Canyon Creek, where I passed the night. Trout, fresh from the stream, crisp and delicious, graced the table for supper and breakfast. With good coffee, milk and fish, all other things harmonized, or became indifferent and pass out of sight, but here I found all these and many other good things to match, with big red-hearted watermelons thrown in. Bedtime, and a good bed, brought me the sleep known only to the good and innocent-or to those worn out with fatigue.

Leaving the valley of Canyon creek, closely shut in by its basaltic walls, and seemingly lost in the wide expanse of the sage plain, I was again on the road towards home. Looking back, I could still see the detached promontory or fragment [later named Teapot Dome] of the mountain called Rattlesnake Butte. This is one of the grand features of the great Snake River plain, and can be seen from the neighborhood of Rock Creek Station, one hundred miles distant. It looks like an enormous turtle, which has crawled from under the mountain and was looking across Snake river, at Owyhee's cloud-like banks, of blue, as if watching for the oncoming of his mate . . . .

I reached Black's Station at 2 p.m. . . . Mr. Black's place is fifteen miles from Boise City, and is the breakfast station for the stages going east, and the dinner station for those coming west. The table is always supplied with the best the country affords, presided over and attended to by one of the most amiable and attractive of landladies, assisted by her three charming and interesting daughters . . . .

Five miles out from Black's the road touches the brow of the plain, and then Boise City and a large section of the valley comes into view. The church spires pointing heavenward reveal the presence of the city--almost hidden by the dense groves of shade and fruit trees. I reached the city about noon, and found the flowers still blooming, the fruit trees bending and breaking down under their burden of luscious fruits, and the streets thronged with crazy politicians.

(Statesman, September 26, 1876, p. 2, c. 2-4)

As noted by Goulder, Tatro had begun a tri-weekly service, new facilities were erected on a new site along Rattlesnake Creek, and Mr. and Mrs. Daniels had returned to their ranch on Canyon Creek.

In 1877 Tatro continued to run a tri-weekly service. The stage left Rattlesnake Station every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8 a.m. and arrived at Rattlesnake the same day. He reduced the through fare to \$10 and charged 8¢ per pound for freight between Boise and Rocky Bar, 4¢ per pound from Rattlesnake Station (Statesman, May 15, 1877, p. 2, c.3)

William A. Goulder provided the following description of the route and elaborated on the changes at Rattlesnake Station while heading east on a trip in February 1877:

Leaving Boise City at 3 o'clock Sunday morning, January 21st, on one of the coaches of the Northwestern Stage Company, a drive of fifteen miles through the dark and cold ending of the night brought us at early dawn to the Black's Station, where a breakfast that would have drawn a prize at any exhibition awaited us, with the genial smiles of mine host and the polite attentions of Mrs. Black, assisted by her beautiful and interesting daughter, Miss Lizzie Black, who had the most important part of the field to herself, as her two elder sisters were absent . . . .

From Black's to Rattlesnake the road passes over rolling hills, covered with excellent bunch grass and through an extensive region of the finest pasturage; sufficient for a hundred fold more stock than is likely to occupy it for years to come.

As the coach rolled along, I looked across the Snake River Valley to the right, where the higher elevations of the Owyhee range were alone visible, as were the intervening plain and lower heights were covered with a dense fog, whose wavy surface caused the snowy mountain tops to appear like pearly isles in a purple sea. A few miles out from Black's, we passed Slater's Creek, where there are good buildings and a good body of fertile bottom land. A little further on we came to Indian Creek, where Mr. Jas. Corder, familiarly known as "Obe Corder," lives. Mr. Corder has kept house here for several years and has always done a thriving business. He had here a home, which I am sure he would not exchange for any one east of the Rocky Mountains--a good business stand on the principal thoroughfare of the Great west, connecting the transcontinental railway with the Columbia river, and in the midst of a region unsurpassed and inexhaustible pastoral resources, where cattle and horses keep fat the year round upon the native grasses, requiring only sufficient attention to maintain ownership. Near him on the same creek, lives Mr. Frederick Dunagan, who shares with his neighbor in all the advantages of this charming location . . . .

Passing Indian creek, we next came to Bowns' Station, the home of Mr. Joseph Bowns. Here is another of the beautiful homes of Idaho, where everything indicates peace, contentment and plenty.

Forty miles out from Boise City, the road crosses Canyon creek at the residence of Mr. Daniel. Here the creek has cut down through the lava of basalt, making one of the most charming little valleys, and furnishing the site for one of the snuggest and cosiest homes to be found anywhere. And now we passed Mr. Ditto's place again; one of the most interesting and most romantic spots on the Overland road, possessing equal advantages with any of the rest. The mountains

to the North have sent down a long narrow ridge, which is crowned and embellished with blocks and columns and pinnacles of granite, arranged in the most fantastic picturesque forms; the result of the wildest but most beautifying freaks of the Plutonic forces. Upon the faces of the blocks of granite, a worthy ambition and laudable craving after immortality, has caused many names to be painted with tar and axle grease.

With a fresh relay of horses the third change since leaving Boise City, we leave Canyon creek, ascend to the plain and speed forward to the good dinner that we know will be awaiting us at the first home station, kept by Mr. John Lemons, the ubiquitous and wide-awake Division agent. The station formerly kept at this point, was called Rattle Snake and was and is yet, the property of Mr. Wm. Jackson, who owns a beautiful home and a fertile farm near the road, but a difference of opinion arose between Mr. Jackson and the stage company, with regard to duties, prerogatives, etc., which resulted in the removal of the stage station, to a point higher up the creek to the left of the old road. Comfortable and commodious buildings have been erected at the new station where the accommodations are first class--the very best of everything attainable in the interior; indeed, this is the character of all the houses on the road, as the Northwestern Stage Company, of which Mr. Lemons forms a part, would not tolerate any half way performance on the part of any connected with it. A post office has been established here with the name of "Mountain Home," but as yet there is no service, as no one is willing to serve the county in the capacity of postmaster. (Statesman, February 13, 1877, p. 2, c. 2-5)

After the outbreak of the Bannock War in 1878, Tatro found it necessary to increase security at his stations and provide his stages with an armed escort of four men for protection. (The Idahoan, [Boise] June 9, 1878, p. 3, c. 3)

In September, Goulder made another trip to Rocky Bar and reported on the route, Indian activities, and Tatro's problems with the outbreak of Indian hostilities:

After suffering two years remorse of conscience for remissness of duty in patronizing the stage lines, four o'clock this morning found me comfortably seated by the side of Mr. Wm. Hise, a veteran knight of the ribbons, on board of one of Salisbury, Hailey & Co.'s stage coaches, bound for a ride to Rattlesnake, Rocky Bar, and Atlanta, and to Bonanza City, if I find the road open and the stages running so far. The departure of the stages from Boise City at this early morning hour creates for a few minutes a busy and animated scene as the different coaches roll through the streets always prompt to the minute and in regular order, each stopping for a moment, first at the Postoffice and then at the hotel and express and stage office for mails, passengers, express, freight, etc. With the new Stage Company, as was the case with the old, everything connected with the institution moves like clock-work. On this occasion the Winnemucca coach was the first to roll out with Billy Howard as driver, and Billy Paxton as express messenger. We quickly

followed them out of town and across the two long sections of bridge which span the Boise river and the "old channel." On the south bank the roads diverge; ours, the "Overland," taking us to the left and eastward along the river bottom, across the Morris canal, which is carrying a fertilizing stream broad and deep to the naturally fertile but thirsty sage lands below. Leaving the river bottom the road ascends the regularly terraced hill-side for a distance of five or six miles to the level of the great Snake river plain, and then gradually to the little valley where Black's Station affords the first resting place. Here we found an excellent breakfast awaiting us, for which the ride through the keen morning air had given to our appetites the requisite sharpness. The breakfast, the memory of which excludes all other ideas just now, consisted of tender young prairie chickens fried to a turn, brown and crisp, coffee that could not be excelled and genuine two storied biscuit, after the old Virginia pattern, with good butter, nice fruits and other delicacies. The presence of the amiable hostess, Mrs. Black, her charming daughter Miss Lizzie and another beautiful and interesting young lady, Miss Ida Morris, made the few minutes devoted to breakfast pass swiftly and pleasantly . . . . On the road this side of Black's station we met several freight teams and one train of emigrant wagons and further on near Ditto's ranch we met the transportation which had been with Major Egbert's command returning from Kelton in charge of Joe Jones.

The grass near the ford has been eaten off by the passage of the numerous trains of all kinds, but towards the hills the range is excellent. Not much stock was in sight as it has been mostly driven to sections of greater safety from Indian raids.

We arrived at this place a little past 1 o'clock p.m. and found Mr. Lemmon as usual, absent on stage duty. Mrs. Lemmon is at home and fully equal to the task of providing the best prepared meals and comfortable rooms for the weary travelers. The "Mountain Home" is really a very pleasant home near the mountains. A few years more when the trees have had time to attain a fuller growth it will be one of the coziest little spots on the road.

There are no reports of Indians in this section. Everything is quiet. The feeling seems to be that it will not be safe hereafter for Indians to be found roaming through the country. (Statesman, September 12, 1878, p. 3, c. 4)

The ride from Mountain Home to this place [Rocky Bar] was a trifle tedious, owing to the condition in which the recent Indian raids have left Mr. Tatro's stage line. When the outbreak commenced he furnished horses to the Alturas volunteers and to some of the scouts. Some of these horses were lost during the war, and others--the best of his stock were stolen by the Indians. The scarcity of horses in the country and the want of time have prevented him from repairing damages as yet, but he is a man of indomitable courage and energy and will soon make everything as good as new. I have conversed with Capt. Parsons and others of the Volunteers and citizens here, and all agree in saying that Mr. Tatro is entitled to much credit for the valuable aid he rendered in placing his horses and stations at the disposal of those who volunteered to go in search of the Indians. As

there has been some question and controversy about a certain matter, I wish to say that no one here now blames him for anything that he did. During the entire time of the trouble he made every trip on schedule time without the loss of a single mail, driving over the route always by himself and often at imminent risk, sometimes narrowly escaping contact with the hostiles.

A Daily Mail On the First of November. No one need fear but that it will be carried regularly and on time, as he will soon have all his arrangements perfected and has had too many years experience on the route to leave anything unprovided for.

I would gladly linger by the way and say something about the beautiful scenery along the route and note the many improvements made by Mr. Tatro and the settlers, but my correspondence has been too long delayed and I must defer this pleasing topic for another time.

At Dixie ranch I passed for the ground where Secretary Sidebotham had that narrow escape from the Indians.

The Honorable Secretary on this occasion was a solitary horseman, who might have been seen wending his way down the little stream, shut in by hills on either side and skirted with willows and quaking aspens. He had passed the state station a short distance to a point where the ravine opened out into a narrow valley, where he saw an Indian on a low hill before him about a quarter of a mile off and near the road. The Indian was chasing horses and swung a lasso. The Secretary saw the savage but very innocently supposed him to be a tame Indian and rode serenely on, musing upon affairs territorial and the perplexing "Resolutions" of the next Legislature. The tame Indian happened to be unarmed at the moment, but seeing the Secretary approaching he vanished over a ridge, singing a psalm he had learned somewhere. When the Secretary had arrived near the house formerly occupied by Mr. Lockman he passed a clump of willows and was in full view from the door of the house, which was only a rod or two distant. At this moment about fifteen armed warriors rushed out of the house and commenced firing at him. That he escaped instant death was nothing less than a first class miracle. But for the special Providence which always watches over and protects a certain class of beings, Idaho at that moment would have lost her secretary and the Territory would have been deprived of any executive head except the one lamb who was on guard at the Stone Jug. Being somewhat surprised at this reception and the tame Indian being nowhere in sight nor coming to the rescue the Secretary hesitated for a moment, but at length allowed his black Rosinante to turn and trot away from the scene. The Indians mounted their ponies in hot haste and pursued him a short distance, but were obliged to stop to admire the splendid trotting of the black steed and to pick up one of my guns, which some careless teamster had dropped in the road. They afterwards came up to the stage station where a lad of fourteen years was alone and acting as hostler. The Secretary had warned the lad as he passed by the station that the Indians were coming, and the young man made his escape into the brush above the house. The Indians stopped at the station long enough to strip

the stables of the horses and demolish the furniture in the house, and then returned the way they came.

Mr. Tatro was, at the time on his way with the stage from this place, and reached Lockman's house just as the party of Indians passed out of sight, and could see their rear guard advancing on a hill about a mile distant. Thus these three persons all had a very narrow escape on the same day.

Besides the station at Dixie Mr. Tatro had two others, one at Wood Creek, where he has a neat and comfortable house, and another at Dog creek.

Approaching Junction Bar on the South Boise, we passed Mr. Willard's farm on the river bottom, where he has a field enclosed with a fence, two rods of which cost \$26,000.

Some nine or ten years ago some enterprising miners found a blank ledge of pure quartz, which they christened the "Lucy Phillips." They "salted" the ledge and sold it to some wealthy eastern capitalists, who sent out boilers and machinery--everything complete for the erection of a first-class twenty stamp quartz mill. While the machinery was on the way the company had experts engaged in examining the mine. By the time the machinery had reached Junction flat the experts had demonstrated the worthlessness of the mine, and as it was useless to bring the machinery any nearer, property which cost in the aggregate, for purchase money and transportation \$120,000, was left scattered on the road where the teams happened to be met by the others from the Superintendent. As there was no better use for it, Mr. Willard rolled the boilers and some other portions of the machinery into position as part of his fence, and there it has quietly reposed ever since.

Professor Winn, of the Bonaparte mine has had this machinery examined by competent engineers, who report it as not having sustained any material injury and as good for his purpose as new machinery. The professor has recently purchased the machinery from the limbs of the law into whose hands it had fallen, and will have it conveyed to the Bonaparte mine where it will be placed in position and set to work crushing rich ore in a rich and valuable mine. (Statesman, September 7, 1878, p. 2, c. 2-3)

Years after selling his stage line, Tatro was still attempting to recover damages for losses incurred during the war. "W. C. (Con) Tatro is now before Mr. DeWitt, the Attorney sent out from Washington to take evidence in Idaho Indian Depredation claim cases. Mr. Tatro's claim is for \$4,300, which he alleges he lost while operating the Rocky Bar Stage Line. The Indians made frequent raids on Mr. Tatro's stations, killing the stock and burning the buildings." (Wood River Times [Hailey], June 21, 1894, p. 4, c. 4)

In 1879 the Rocky Bar Line went on a daily schedule. The coaches left Rattlesnake and Rocky Bar at 6 each morning. Fare was \$18 from Boise; \$10 from Rattlesnake; and \$14 from Rattlesnake to Atlanta. Each passenger was allowed forty pounds of baggage. G. W. Brown and Charles Spencer were two of the drivers hired to handle the increased business. (Statesman, May 1, 1879, p. 3, c. 4, and May 8, 1879, p. 2. C. 3)

When John Hailey changed his stage line to the Glens Ferry route in the fall of 1878, Mr. and Mrs. Allan V. Webster left the abandoned Malad Station and took over the management of Rattlesnake Station. They resided at the station until John Hailey's Utah, Idaho and Oregon Stage Company was forced out of business in 1886 by the railroad. At that time, they moved to Boise and purchased the Thurman Mill, which they operated until 1912. (Statesman, February 6, 1916, Section 2, p. 10, c. 1-2)

In September of 1879 Goulder made yet another trip to the South Boise area and sent back the following reports on the route and the country:

Mountain Home, September 9th, 1879

Leaving Boise City at 3 o'clock this morning on board one of the Utah, Idaho & Oregon Stage Company's comfortable coaches, with Mr. Wm. Howard as driver, our passenger list consisted of the genial and always happy Fred Dangle, now on his way to visit his old home and friends in New York City; Mr. P. D. Rothwell, who we fear is going to Ann Arbor, Michigan, to spoil a good school teacher by enlisting in the already too formidable host of the licensed to kill; Mr. Charles Black, the accommodating and popular host at Black's Station, and the writer of these few desultory notes.

We are not going to describe the Morris bridge which has so bravely stood the freshets of the past two seasons, and which occupies the precise spot where the old bridge stood, which was the scene of so many stage robberies three years ago, and before Boise City had five churches, a Capital brass band, and a Steam Fire engine. These eccentricities (the stage robberies we mean) are things of the past which are not likely to happen anymore. We shall pass right along without a word about the Morris mill, which is running at its full capacity day and night converting the golden grain of the present harvest into the staff of life; and move across the Morris canal, without a word writing a line about the reclamation of the "Idaho sage desert" which this canal has proven to be the best grain producing land on the Pacific coast; because, the broad area harvested and the thousands of bushels of wheat piled up in mill and warehouse sufficiently demonstrate it; neither shall we stop to mention very particularly the variations of grades in the road which climbs terrace after terrace, passing over intervals of underiating [undulating] table land until the summit is reached, ten miles from the city, whence the descent is made into the charming little valley where stands the hospitable resting place known as Black's Station . . . Breakfast was soon ready, and a genuine hungry traveler's breakfast it was. There was the preacher's favorite, yellow legged chickens, fried to a delicate crisp, with good biscuits and butter, and coffee that was A No. 1, and "way up." Though we had all just been feasting on the huge sunrise at the summit we were none the less ready with good appetites for the excellent breakfast before us. Miss Lizzie Black presided at the table; and she is one of the young ladies who knows just how to look, what to do, and what to say. If we had a hundred sons and were seeking fortunes for them all she would be our first choice for a

daughter-in-law.

We found the road very badly cut up by the freight teams and the great amount of travel that has been on the road this summer. Besides the wheeled travel there have been driven over this route the present season not less than 100,000 head of cattle and about 50,000 head of sheep. The consequence has been that a broad belt of country along the road has been stripped of grass, so that now stock has to be driven a long distance from the road for pasture. We saw O. P. Johnson, whose herd of 2,150 cattle are now between Canyon and Indian creeks. He finds it very difficult to find sufficient water and grass for his herd, and will not be able to drive further than Wood river this season where he proposes to remain with his stock over winter. . . . (Statesman, September 13, 1878, p. 2, c. 1-2)

Rocky Bar, Sept. 11, 1879

After a good nights rest and a hearty breakfast at the hospitable Mountain Home we left for Rocky Bar Wednesday morning [Sept. 10] on one of Tatro's fine new coaches, which were built and finished by Tom. Maupin, of Boise City, last spring. With an excellent team and Mr. Brown for driver, the trip would have been very pleasant from the start, but for the fact that the weather was rather colder that morning than what we had recently experienced in the valley.

A morning's drive of five miles brought us to Mr. Porter's place where we noticed some important changes and improvements since our former visit. Mr. Porter has a good location on the route of the daily stage line between Mountain Home and Rocky Bar, surrounded by the finest stock range in the country, with many fertile spots along the little creek that flows past his house, which he has fenced and where he raises grain, hay and vegetables.

Leaving Porter's the road winds among a range of low hills to Dixie Station, where we changed horses for the first time. The spots occupied by this station and by the old Dixie ranch a mile farther on, were the scenes of exciting and romantic incidents during the Bannock Indian War of 1878, but we have not time to more than allude to them now.

From Dixie we passed on to Little Camas Prairie, crossed the line of the future railroad and descended to Wood creek where we got a good dinner and again changed horses.

Wood creek and Lime creek are tributaries of the South Boise river, which drain the high table land at the western end of Big Camas prairie, and flow into the Boise through considerable canyons. The stage road crossing these canyons encounters four pretty steep hills, the descent to Wood creek being the largest.

At Wood creek Station Mr. Tatro keeps several extra horses for the purpose of doubling the teams over these hills, thus making this hilly part of the route without delay or discomfort to passengers. The entire road from Mountain Home to this place has been kept during the present season in splendid condition, and is now one of the best and most pleasant stage roads in Idaho. The stage leaves Mountain Home daily at 5:30 a.m., arriving here at 6 o'clock the same evening.

There is an excellent wagon road from here to Atlanta, but the mail is still carried between these points on horse back, there not being sufficient travel to pay for running the coaches . . . .

Along the valley of the South Boise there are several good farms and stock ranches, among which that of Mr. Julius Friend, at the Warm Springs, and that of Mr. D. B. Ethell, at Pine Grove, are perhaps the most valuable and productive.

At the toll gate we were joined by Mr. B. J. Nichols, the energetic and enterprising proprietor of the toll road, over which we were passing. Mr. W. C. Tatro, the proprietor of the stage line, has had the contract of keeping the road in order, and he has performed his task so successfully that this is now one of the best roads in the country . . . . (Statesman, September 16, 1879, p. 2, c. 2-3)

In 1880 Tatro extended his stage line to Atlanta (he had previously serviced the area with a pony express line), where he connected with Scott and Hutchin's saddle train to the Yankee Fork region. (Yankee Fork Herald [Bonanza], June 12, 1880, p. 2, c. 1) The following year he ran the same schedule and charged the same rates as those in 1878. On November 19, 1881, his station at Wood Creek burned down and he reported a loss of about \$800. (Statesman, November 22, 1881, p. 3, c. 1)

In the summer of 1882, Tatro sold his stage line to John Hailey. He moved to Hailey following the sale and served as village marshal for eight years. He then relocated to Boise and occupied the position of night custodian at the Statehouse until his death on August 17, 1908. He was born in Saranac, New York, in 1838 and emigrated to Idaho in 1863. He had many friends and his funeral was well attended. (Statesman, August 18, 1908, p. 5, c. 5)

Hailey restocked the line and continued to serve the upper country until his company was forced out of business by the railroad in 1886. That same year, O. J. Salisbury, proprietor of the Idaho Stage Company, purchased the Rocky Bar branch from Hailey. He continued the line on a daily schedule, except Sunday, and charged \$10 for a one-way ticket and \$15 round trip fare between Mountain Home and Rocky Bar. His stages left both places at 6 a.m. and arrived at their destination the same day at 6 p.m. The line also carried Pacific Express. (Mountain Home Bulletin, August 6, 1886, p. 2, c. 3) In 1889 the Bulletin commented on the efficiency of the line and praised the cuisine at the Lime Creek Station. (May 11, 1889, p. 3, c. 1)

On September 28, 1889, the driver of the up stage was stopped by a lone gunman at Devil's Dive and ordered to throw down the express box and the mail sack. After going through the contents, the robber returned the box and sack to the driver and ordered him to proceed. The superintendent of the line later reported the loss to be no more than \$20 as the express box contained no valuables. A party was organized to pursue the robber, but he managed to elude their efforts. (Elmore Bulletin, October 5, 1889, p. 3, c. 2 and 4)

In the spring of 1891, Hopkins and Howard started a tri-weekly stage line between Glens Ferry and Rocky Bar. By the end of June, the line was increased to a daily and made the trip in ten hours. (Ibid., May 30, 1891, p. 3, c. 3) The owners had high expectations but a lack of business caused the company to cease operations after one season.

In June 1892, the Idaho Stage Company removed its eating station from Lime Creek to the head of Wood Creek. (Ibid., June 4, 1892, p. 3, c. 1) The following month Greene White

purchased the line and started the Mountain Home and Rocky Bar U.S. Mail and Stage Line. His coaches ran on the same schedule as the previous company and carried Pacific Express. (*Ibid.*, July 10, 1892, p. 3, c. 5) That same month, Sullaway and Johnson initiated a competitive line on a tri-weekly schedule. By the end of July, however, they had discontinued their line (*Ibid.*, July 10, 1892, p. 2, c. 6, and July 24, 1892, p. 3, c. 1)

In December 1892, Robert and Benjamin Gray purchased the Rocky Bar line from White and called their operation the Mountain Home, Dixie Diggings and Rocky Bar U.S. Mail and Stage Line. They maintained a daily schedule, except Sunday, and made the run in twelve hours. (*Ibid.*, December 24, 1892, p. 2, c. 5) The following summer the company leased the Pine-to-Rocky Bar section of the line to Joe Sullaway. (*Ibid.*, June 3, 1893, p. 2, c. 2)

During the summer of 1894, the Gray brothers reduced the fare to \$6 one way and \$10 round trip. The next year they dissolved their operation, and in October W. W. Burns started a daily U.S. Mail and Stage line. Burns made the run in twelve hours and extended a branch line into Atlanta. (*Ibid.*, October 2, 1895, p. 3, c. 1) Judge Nichol森 soon purchased the Atlanta branch and in turn sold out to Will and John Tate in April 1896. (*Ibid.*, April 22, 1896, p. 3, c. 1) In May Joe Sullaway took over the Rocky Bar line and ran a tri-weekly line of passenger and fast-freight coaches. (*Ibid.*, May 6, 1896, p. 3, c. 1)

In 1899 the *Bulletin* reported that John P. Bryant, keeper of the Louse Creek Stage Station, had expended \$200 in making a new road from his hotel to the top of the hill and had changed the name of his place from Louse Creek Store to Louse Creek Hotel and Store. (June 15, 1899, p. 3, c. 3, and June 29, p. 3, c. 4)

The following year the Dixie and Lime Creek stage stations were sold at a public auction by the Elmore County Commissioners, who had purchased the properties from the Gray brothers in 1896. (Elmore County Commissioners Minute Book 1, July 24, 1900, p. 610)

On July 4, 1910, the *Mountain Home Maverick*, p. 4, c. 5, noted, "Robert Morrison who came to Mountain Home from Challis to operate the Stage Line between this city and Atlanta took over the business on July 1, 1910. Mrs. Morrison will run the business at this end of the route. Mr. Morrison will put on two of the old fashioned easy riding Concord coaches for this end of the line and for the upper country will use the Studebaker wagons. Stock to be kept in first class shape. Every effort will be made to give the public first class transportation facilities into Pine, Rocky Bar and Atlanta." Morrison again inaugurated a daily line, except Sunday, and made the trip in twelve hours. His line was known as the Mountain Home, Rocky Bar and Atlanta Stage Company (*Ibid.*, September 15, 1910, p. 4, c. 5) He spent over two months restocking and supplying the line and finally had the coaches ready to roll in September. "On Monday morning [September 12] Robert Morrison manager of the Mountain Home, Rocky Bar and Atlanta Stage Company started out his new coaches to be used between Mountain Home and Pine. They are the Concord type swung on long leather springs which give the stage a greater comfort than steel springs and makes riding more pleasant. He has also improved equipment all along the line in the nature of horses and harnesses. Each horse will have its individual harness and each harness will be thoroughly cleansed and oiled everyday and kept in the finest condition. This equipment will make the trip to the upper country a pleasure rather than a hard and monotonous [sic] trip. Pleasure seekers and campers will now find the mountains to the north a popular resort. (*Ibid.*, September 15, 1910, p. 1, c. 2) Stages continued to run over the route for a few more years before finally

giving way to the automobile.

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