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**BEN HOLLADAY'S OVERLAND STAGE LINE IN IDAHO**

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With over a hundred Concord coaches and 6,000 horses and mules in regular service, Ben Holladay's operation (2,700 miles) greatly surpassed other western competitors. Supported by two new postal service contracts that an Oregon senator—B. F. Harding—got Congress to approve in 1864, he extended his service from Salt Lake north across Idaho to Virginia City, Montana, July 1. He ran a little over a month late in another contract to have a connecting line from Fort Hall (on his Montana route) to Boise and Walla Walla, to which his service commenced August 8. His own company terminated its line from Atchison, Kansas in Boise, using a connecting carrier to deliver United States mail to Walla Walla and The Dalles. Although postal authorities saved money by having him haul mail from Fort Hall to Boise and points farther west, he actually used a cutoff from Rock Creek Station (between later Twin Falls and Burley) via City of Rocks to a junction on Bear River with his Montana line near later Tremonton in northern Utah. That way he could reach Boise in four days, rather than seven. Heavy passenger traffic made his service profitable.

Even though he actually used a more direct route from Utah to Boise, Holladay still retained his Boise-Fort Hall line in order to deliver passengers from Boise to Virginia City, Montana, and return. That connection ran between Rock Creek Station and Fort Hall. So he met his postal contract terms even though he dispatched most of his United States mail over a shorter route. Then in November 1864, deep winter snow around City of Rocks blockaded his direct Boise-Utah line. So service was suspended that way until June, because his station via Lyman Pass all had to be restocked late in May 1865. His Idaho operations continued until November 1, 1866, when he sold his entire company to Wells Fargo in order to avoid heavy losses when transcontinental rail service gradually replaced his overland service between Kansas and Salt Lake.

References: *Deseret News* (Salt Lake), May 18, 1864; *Boise News* (Idaho City), June 24, 1864, p. 2, c. 2; *Washington Statesman* (Walla Walla), July 29, 1864, p. 3, c. 2; October 7, 1864, p. 3, c. 3; October 21, 1864, p. 2, c. 1; December 9, 1864, p. 3, c. 1; *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), August 2, 1864, p. 3, c. 3; May 30, 1865, p. 2, c. 1.

**(This information has not been edited.)**