



IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
REFERENCE SERIES

B.L.E. BONNEVILLE AND BONNEVILLE POINT

Number 1026

September 1993

Indians, trappers, emigrants, and later Oregon Trail travelers all reacted strongly to their view of Boise Valley when they reached their initial viewpoint upon crossing a high ridge and they finally could see it below. Bonneville, who came originally from France, was a United States Army officer who led a force of beaver trappers across western mountain country to learn about that domain. When he got through, he extolled Boise Valley and its surroundings "as the most enchanting he had seen in the Far West, presenting the mingled grandeur and beauty of mountain and plain, of bright running streams and vast grassy meadows waving to the breeze." A Bureau of Land Management interpretive center at Bonneville Point above here explains Oregon Trail features of this remarkable area.

In his *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, Washington Irving, a noted early nineteenth century author, enlarged and published his journals and accounts of all that western travel. Bonneville emerged with a well-deserved reputation for creating national interest in a vast western domain. He never enjoyed much success as a fur hunter, but his remarkable career as a travel reporter made him a prominent figure of his era. Bonneville Dam above Portland and prehistoric Lake Bonneville, that covered much of Utah until about 12,000 years ago, as well as Bonneville Salt Flats west of Salt Lake, are memorials to his career.

(This information has not been edited.)