



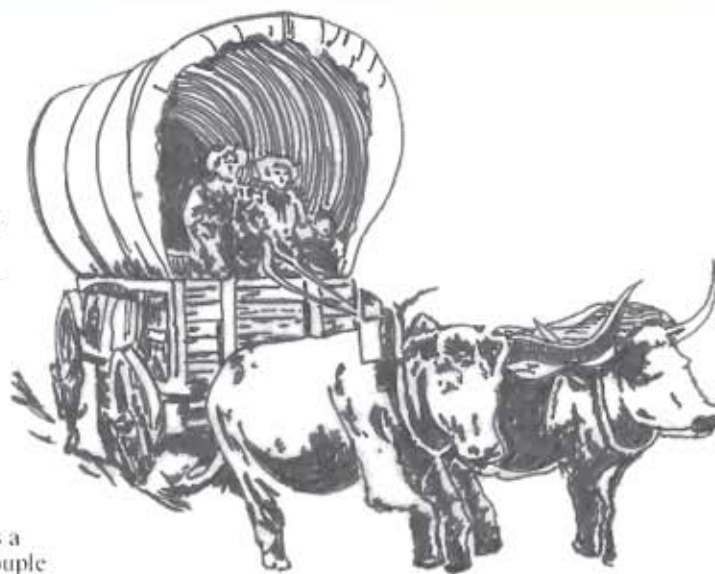
Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass Emigrant Wagon Route

History

After the emigrants had successfully negotiated Donner Pass, they rested in Summit Valley (Van Norden now). They grazed the stock, drank their fill of the pure water and rested. The trip had been exhausting and dangerous but now they were in California and ready to undertake the final part of their trek. It was all downhill now (well almost all downhill). They had made it to California.

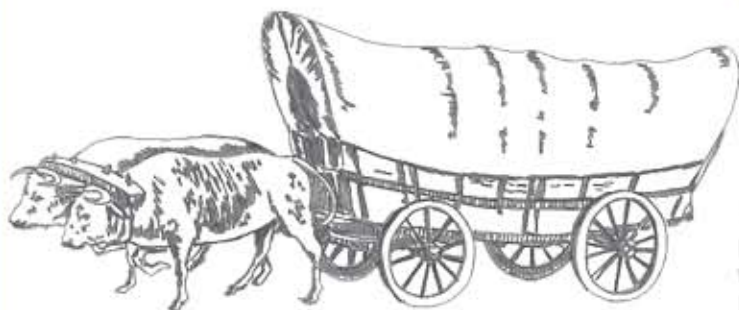
Emigrants headed up from Summit Valley and right here they turned right, or west. The wagons rolled along what is now Pahatsi Rd, past Kidd Lake, Cascade Lake, and others until they got almost to Devil's Peak. There they turned north and headed downhill to the Yuba River, Hampshire Rocks, and Big Bend, their next resting spot.

Just over the lip of Soda Springs Rd, on the east side there is a monument to the Emigrant Trail. This route only lasted a couple of decades from 1844 when the first train went through. Wagons moved to the Dutch Flat Rd, which was used to help build the railroad in the 1860's (approximately what Highway 40 is today). Just imagine what this emigrant road saw and the stories it could tell.



A Good Story

There are as many stories as there were wagons on the wagon trains. Each carried a family that had left behind belongings and family in the U.S.A. Many left behind more things in the Nevada desert. The museum in Fallon, Nevada, is worth the visit to see what was left behind. Some emigrants lost family members and friends on the journey. Each wagon carried a family heading for opportunities in California, Golden California. What risks they took. What hardships they endured. What hope they had. How strong they were.



Things to do right here

You can take this road for some miles west, passing Kidd Lake and Cascade Lake all the way to Long Lake. You can park near Cascade Lake and follow the sign to Long Lake which is a popular swimming spot and from where there is access to the North Fork of the American River and Heath Springs. There are also a couple of summer camps and schools camps on other lakes in this direction as well as a P.G.&E. campground at Kidd Lake. There is plenty to explore on the public road. At Cascade Lake there is a monument to a member of the party that came to rescue the Donners. Hike around on the north side of the road and over the hill at Cascade and you will find the old telegraph line paralleling the railroad.

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