

# Devil's Gate & Sweetwater River

A few miles west of Independence Rock, emigrants came upon another major trail landmark: Devil's Gate. The Sweetwater River winds its way through a narrow canyon called Devils Gate. The wagons never passed through the chasm; they wisely detoured around.



Devil's Gate was 70 feet deep and 1500 feet long. The cleft is 30 feet wide at the base but nearly 300 feet at its top.

Although wagons were forced around the cleft, emigrants frequently stopped to hike around this feature and carve their names. Emigrants frequently noticed bighorn sheep climbing the hills.

In 1846, Oregon-bound emigrant James Mathers said *"...encamped above the pass of the river, between high rocks. This is the most interesting sight we have met with on our journey."*

It is thought that nearly 20 emigrants are buried near here, although only one known grave remains.

In the early 1860s, four women, members of a wagon train, camped at this point, and climbed to the top of the ridge above the gorge. One of them, 18-years-old, ventured too close to the edge, fell and was killed. She was buried in the gorge and her grave board was inscribed with this epitaph:

*"Here lies the body of Caroline Todd  
Whose soul has lately gone to God;  
Ere redemption was too late,  
She was redeemed at Devil's Gate.*