

Jean Baptiste Charbonneau



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1805-1866

Charbonneau was the child of Sacajawea and Toussaint Charbonneau interpreters and guides for the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He was born in 1805. By 1813, Capt. William Clark was Jean's guardian. As a young man he traveled throughout Europe and Northern Africa with Duke Friedrich Paul Wilhelm of Wurttemberg where he learned to read and write several languages. Upon returning to American he was a fur trapper in the Rocky Mountains. He was an expert guide and led the famed Mormon Battalion to California in 1847.

He came to the Auburn area in 1848 for the Gold Rush with famed trailblazer Jim Beckwourth. He mined at Murderer's Bar and ran a ferry at Manhattan Bar. He spent many years mining at Secret Ravine outside Auburn. In his later years he became a clerk at the Orleans Hotel in Auburn. The lure of gold called him once again in 1866. He and two companions set off for the gold fields of Montana territory. Charbonneau would die in Danner, Oregon on May 16, 1866.

Placer Herald July 7, 1866, ancestry.com, Wikipedia, 1861 Auburn Directory