

Parvin Butte nestles at the edge of Lost Valley, and the homes of the community of Dexter are scattered around its once forested slopes. The butte has been silent witness to 30 million years of natural change, its rocky crest sculpted by wind, rain and ice. The Kalapuya camped along the flanks of the butte for over ten thousand years, their presence marked by stone bowls and obsidian points still nudged from earth each year when plows turn the soil. Lost Creek tumbles past the butte. It rages in the winter, runs turbulent in spring and gurgles peacefully through the warm months of summer. This is the last free-flowing spawning ground for Spring Chinook and cutthroat trout before the Middle Fork of the Willamette River meets the dams.

The names of roads and landmarks around Dexter are the legacy of settlers that came to the valley as part of the Lost Wagon Train of 1853. The butte is named after James Parvin, who built his cabin overlooking the floodplain. The first covered bridge across Lost Creek and an early road into Lost Valley also bear his name. Parvin bought the general store in 1883 and served as postmaster while his wife Selena worked the counter. The cast iron woodstove that warmed the store carried the brand name "O. Dexter" across its door. The name of the stove became the name of the town. Parvin Butte is as significant to Dexter as Skinner Butte is to Eugene.

Parvin Butte was acquired by the railroad in about 1952. Twenty small farms surrounded the butte in 1973 when Lane County zoned the land for quarry mining. The railroad recently

sold the land to Greg Demers and the McDougal Brothers under the name of Lost Creek Rock Products. In 2010 the state agency Department of Geology and Mining Industry (DOGAMI) issued them a permit to remove Parvin Butte from the Lane County landscape.



Selena and James Parvin

