

# MULLAN CHRONICLES

Volume Four

Fall 1993

Number Four



## This Sawbones Really Did!

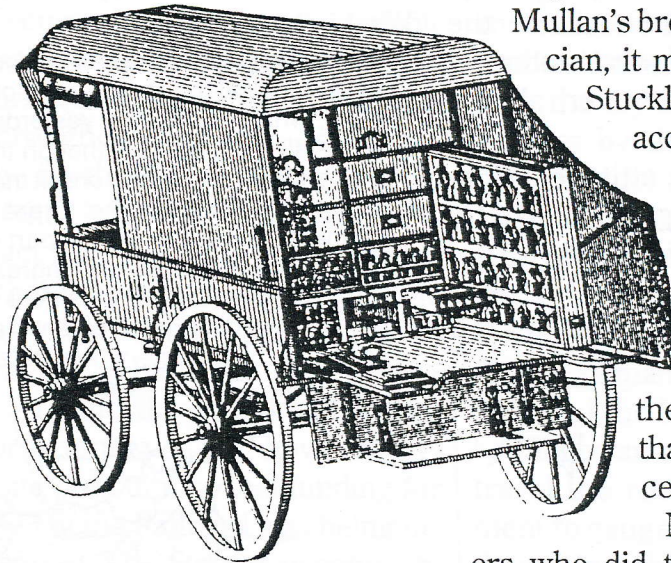
**M**edicine as practiced at the mid-century point of the 1800s was enough to make a person try very hard to stay well. Usual remedies for the frontier were whiskey and a hunting knife. It is said that Lewis & Clark carried an extensive supply of drugs on their trip to the Pacific. They never lost a man in the entire two years of the expedition.

While it was an improvement over what had been called "doctoring" in the past, it was still a primitive science at best. A contemporary of Dr. Mullan treated a rattlesnake bite with a concoction that included whiskey, brandy, ammonia water, flaxseed poultice, blue mass (a drug made by rubbing up

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*Mullan and the others who did the journals had a propensity for never mentioning peoples names except when absolutely necessary. So other than what is found in some reports, it is impossible to say what happened to whom and when as far as a medical history is concerned.*

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*The doctor's wagon was a traveling emergency care clinic. There were times, however, when the patient must have viewed the doctor's arrival with mixed emotions.*

metallic mercury with confection of roses until all the globules disappear; of this blue pills are made), extract of colocynth, Dover's Powders, potassium iodide, tincture of iodine, peppermint water, Seidlitz Powders and *magnesia cacli*. The patient recovered but at what price!

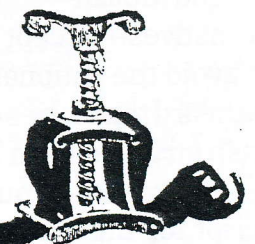
Military doctors accompanied all the expeditions that surveyed the hoped-for transcontinental routes for the railroads. Medical advisor George Stuckley served with Isaac Ingalls Stevens on his surveys to the present Montana in the 1850s. He certainly knew Lt. Mullan and had it not been for

Mullan's brother being a physician, it may well have been Stuckley who would have accompanied Mullan on the 1859-60 road building venture. As frugal as Mullan was, he probably did not want to spend the \$125. per month that civilian doctors received.

Mullan and the others who did the journals had a propensity for never mentioning peoples names except when absolutely necessary. So other than what is found in some reports, it is impossible to say what happened to whom and when as far as a medical history is concerned.

We know the story of Charles Schafft who had his legs amputated because of frost bite; another man also lost a leg. We also know that Dr. James Mullan treated 20 of the military men in the encampment for scurvy in March 1860 with an infusion of vinegar, veg-

*(see "Sawbones" on page 7)*

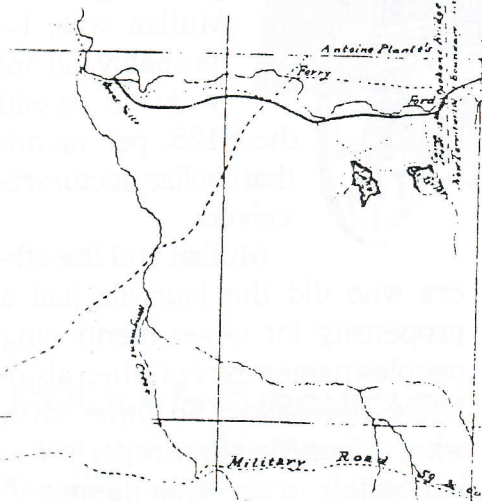


*Might this be a tourniquet? Add it to the instruments shown on page 7, and be glad for modern medicine.*

# Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman

We are often told how the Civil War in the United States served as a turning point in this country's history. Its impact on Montana and the other inland northwest states becomes clearer, however, as one studies history.

With that war, attitudes, families and technology changed. The issue of slavery divided the



country. People came west to avoid it and the conflict. Others raced to try to insure that it be included in the western expansion. After the war, the angry and war-weary Southerners and Northerners arrived in the west with their personal and mental baggage. Politics in the northwestern territories was rife with it.

Did Mullan—son of Irish Catholic natives—accept western duty to avoid the national muddle? Had he heard the stories of the frustrating Irish struggle from his parents and recognize that it could provide the script for this nation's future? Or did he feel that the western expansion was not only inevitable, but a

desirable option that provided hope to the war-torn country? He wrote to the *Washington Statesman* in Walla Walla on Feb. 5, 1863 from Washington City (D.C.):

"I have delayed writing to you since my arrival until the meeting of Congress, which took place yesterday under fair auspices; but though the session may be a stormy one, it may yet prove an effective one. There is a general disposition on the part of persons both in and out of Congress to give to the President a cordial endorsement in all his acts, when limited to the execu-

people are aroused to such a pitch of desperation that the proportions of the rebellion, instead of being on the wane, are on the increase. Under such circumstances as these—disputations and jarrings in our own army—displacements of men high in position, who have had the manipulations of the army, and a disposition on the part of the government towards arbitrary arrests and imprisonments, together with the belief on the part of many that the war is waged for the negro, have had an effect which the friends of a democratic government tremble to see. The hope of all conservative, though determined, Union men is that the winter will not close without Congress having placed upon the statute books the true causes

and objects of the contest, and

tion of all laws on the statute book and to such disposition as may be right, proper and constitutional—as have a tendency to quiet our political troubles and restore the country to the constitutional status enjoyed by it two years since.

"That the president has been to a great extent biased in his acts and course during the past three months, by radical thinking and acting men, few here doubt; but the voice heard from the west, northwest and north in the late elections speaks so significantly that our hope is that things stern, yet moderate and constitutional, will guide the future.

"The South has in the field a large and well appointed army. Her generals are active and untiring, and the

the manner in which the executive is to carry out such enactments as the law-making power shall deem needful and necessary to pass. I believe the President to be honest in his intentions, and disposed to do right-fully those things that will once more restore us to peace and prosperity. Could he banish from his presence evil counselors, all would be well."

So he spoke what he heard like a mirror reflecting what appeared in it, but did not speak for himself.

Whatever he may have believed about the war and the causes that divided the two sides, he surely believed most in the destiny of the country and the West. It was this zeal that drove him to be a thor-

# Inspected the Mullan Road in 1877

ough perfectionist as he and his men gathered topographical, astronomical and meteorological information on, first, the Stevens expedition to find a feasible northwest railroad route and, later, his military road. His mission to aid

***"I believe the President to be honest in his intentions, and disposed to do rightfully those things that will once more restore us to peace and prosperity. Could he banish from his presence evil counselors, all would be well."***

the westward movement to the northwest was probably only exceeded by his own personal ambitions to become a successful 19th-century figure.

tury figure.

His road was initially used by settlers, freighters and gold-seekers but as the years passed it became used less and less. Travelers went south on the more established routes and the railroads that were being built through that less rugged terrain.

But during the 1870s, the early Montana settlers became more concerned with Indian raids and reprisals against those who had slowly taken more and more of

their hunting and sacred grounds. What had happened elsewhere began to happen in Montana. General of the Army William Tecumseh Sherman—the notable Union officer who led the Union forces in the crushing campaigns throughout the South—predicted the northwest would see a repeat of the Union Pacific Railroad's impact on Nebraska and Kansas where settlers drove off the buffalo, fenced the land and made traditional Indian life impossible.

The northwest railroad was not forthcoming as yet, however, despite predictions that funding for the Pacific Railroad was being organized. The *Statesman* optimistically predicted on July 12, 1863: "The Pacific Railroad bill will invite and receive the attention of capitalists at home and abroad and when

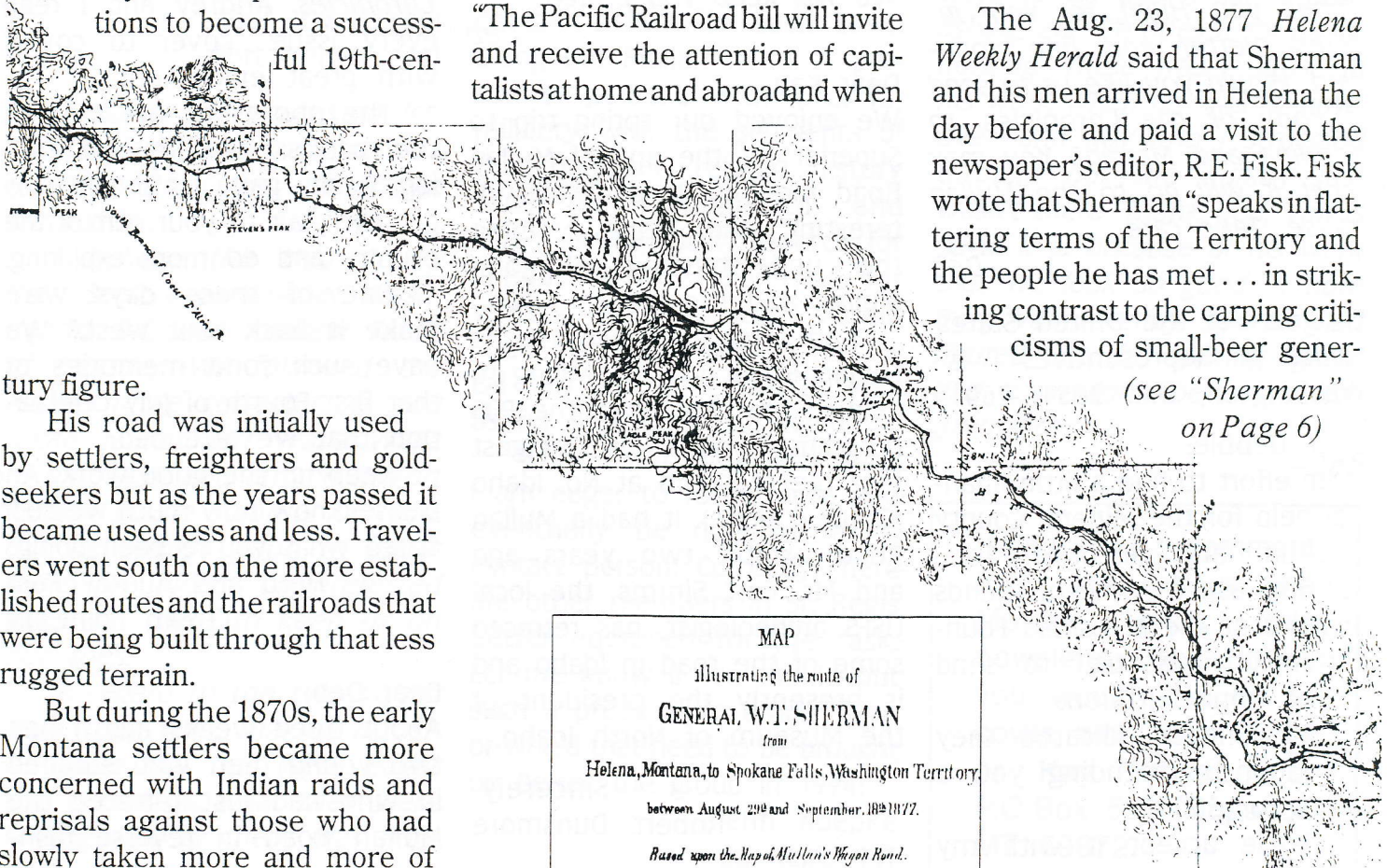
the war is over and the troubles settled, we believe active measures will be taken for its construction."

By the mid-seventies, however, the railroad funding was still in limbo. And, as the troubles continued, the cry for protection of the settlers by the Army increased. The need for the Mullan Road as the military route across which the Army could travel to quell the Indians troubles—its original purpose—became apparent. Enter Gen. Sherman, whose jurisdiction included the Mullan Road.

Sherman made his decision to travel the road with his complement to gauge its condition and to determine what was needed to upgrade the route.

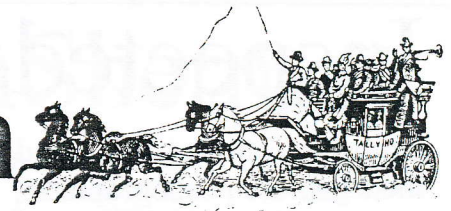
The Aug. 23, 1877 *Helena Weekly Herald* said that Sherman and his men arrived in Helena the day before and paid a visit to the newspaper's editor, R.E. Fisk. Fisk wrote that Sherman "speaks in flattering terms of the Territory and the people he has met . . . in striking contrast to the carping criticisms of small-beer gener-

(see "Sherman" on Page 6)



MAP  
 illustrating the route of  
**GENERAL W.T. SHERMAN**  
 from  
 Helena, Montana, to Spokane Falls, Washington Territory,  
 between August 22<sup>nd</sup> and September 18<sup>th</sup>, 1877.  
 Based upon the Map of Mullan's Oregon Road.

# from the mail pouch



From the desk of  
Hugh Mullan, M.D.

Dear Deb,  
Thank you for the *Chronicles*  
and your continuing interest  
and activity on behalf of Capt.  
John Mullan.

We are well here in Wash-  
ington (D.C.). In Boston there  
are two more great, great  
nieces: Catalina Baker and  
Mariah Mullan Baker.

I hope you are well—with  
affection.

Hugh Mullan

*Thank you, Hugh, for your in-  
terest, letter and fine dona-  
tion. Would you like us to send  
a copy of the Chronicles to  
Catalina and Mariah? You may  
trust it will go to the Mullan  
cause. Take care*

-Deb

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-2601

Dear Debbie:

In an effort to find a little finan-  
cial help for the Mineral County  
Museum and Historical Soci-  
ety, I've asked some of friends  
of mine at the Mansfield Founda-  
tion (in Missoula) to send  
you a contribution.

They have indicated they  
will soon be sending you a  
check for \$500.

Please accept it with my

best wishes for the success of  
your good efforts.

Best regards,

Pat Williams  
(Montana Representative)

*Pat, although I have written  
you personally to thank you  
for this wonderful donation, I  
wanted our other Mullanites to  
share in the elation that we  
feel. Again, the board felt this  
money should go toward  
Mullan projects and is holding it  
until a specific area is addressed.  
We will keep you posted.*

Deb

Dear Kay,

We enjoyed our spring trip to  
Superior for the annual Mullan  
Road meeting. It is always in-  
teresting and helps broaden  
the understanding of John  
Mullan and the Mullan Road.

I am a relative novice on the  
Mullan Road but am willing to  
help in any way with the PBS  
program. I might also suggest  
that the museum at No. Idaho  
(Coeur d'Alene). It had a Mullan  
Road exhibit two years ago  
and Mr. Cort Simms, the local  
USFS archeologist, has retraced  
some of the road in Idaho and  
is presently the president of  
the Museum of North Idaho.

Sincerely,  
Robert Dunsmore

Osburn, ID

*Bob, we can always count on  
you and your party to attend  
our annual conference and  
thank you for that.*

*We hooked up with Cort  
Simms several years ago when  
he was working on the Mullan  
project for Idaho's centennial.  
I believe he is still a fellow  
Mullanite, right Kay?*

Dear Kay and Deb,

Just a short note to renew my  
subscription to the *Mullan  
Chronicles*. Audrey and I read  
every issue "cover to cover"  
with great enjoyment.

The photos of the road in  
the last issue were outstand-  
ing. Really gave us the itch to  
get back out to your part of the  
country and do more exploring.

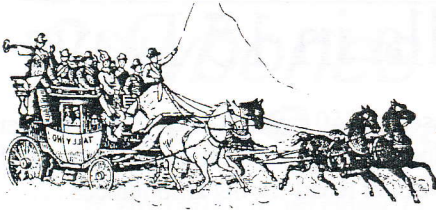
One of these days we'll  
make it back "out west." We  
have such fond memories of  
that first Fourth of July celebra-  
tion that we attended.

Keep up the good work. And,  
please, know how much we appre-  
ciated what you've been doing.

Herb and Audrey Post  
Crown Point, IN

Dear Deb,

About three weeks ago, I had  
two young men who stopped  
in who had just retraced the  
Mullan Road in reverse fash-



# from the mail pouch

ion, from west to east, and stopped in, talked with them for some time. They left me two separate addresses, as they lived in different sections, all nicely verified for my records.

Oddly, the same day they were here and after they left, a Dr. G.B. Clancy, an optometrist of Goderich, Ontario, wrote that he intended to retrace the Mullan Road this fall. The day I received that letter he called me and talked for about 15 minutes. I did tell him to go by way of Superior.

Joel Overholser  
Fort Benton, MT

*Joel, thanks for your kind letter. We are looking forward to meeting Dr. Clancy when he comes by.*

*I believe the two young men—Scott DeSimone of Washington, D.C. and Andrew Tarcia of Seattle, WA—followed the Mullan route correctly. As you recall, Mullan left Walla Walla in mid-1859 and arrived in Fort Benton in the summer of 1860. But its always good to know there are plenty of interested folks out there to keep us on our toes.*

*In regard to the two young men, they were making a rush retracing trip but were eager and excited at what they were finding. One of them was hop-*

*ing to sell the story to a newspaper and Kay asked him to send a copy if it was published.*

*—Deb*

Friends,

The May newsletter (received just today—6-29-93) was excellent! I thought the new typesetting was a good idea altho the spacing between words was too close on some lines.

It has occured to me that a possible means of networking our contacts and efforts, while hopefully building membership, may be to have a key contact person in each town along the Mullan Road. A person or persons with local familiarity with the segments of the road and related history could be "volunteered" and listed as the local resource for conduction of field trips for visitors. These contact people could avail themselves for local info and directions as well as for spreading the word.

While I am fairly new here, I am eager to learn more and eventually be qualified as a contact person. Currently there are other members in St. Regis better equipped for the task. Let me know if we should put such a proposal in article form or would that need to be brought up before the group in 1994?

Glenn Koepke  
St. Regis, MT

*Glenn, your idea is definitely worth considering. We sure would like to hear from other Mullanites\_ especially those along the road\_about the idea. If we get a good response, maybe we can consider it at the 1994 conference.*

*In regard to the typesetting, Van Wolverton has done our typesetting for about three years now. He is a fellow Mullanite who is also the author of computer-use books and has all the hard and software to do this desktop publishing, and he does it for us for nothing. There was a lapse in his work when he was ill, however, and Kay and I struggled through but the quality just wasn't there. Thank God, Van is back. It is because of his work that we look so good. A note from Van recently said he had figured out the spacing "glitch" and it wouldn't be a problem anymore.*

*—Deb*

If you have a comment to make about the Mullan Road, this newsletter or a topic you would like us to cover, write Deb Davis or Kay Strombo at P.O.Box 533, Superior, MT 59872.

# Sherman: Missoula to Walla Walla in 15 Days

(Continued from page 3)

als and sidewalk savage annihilators, of which we have had so much of late."

During his Helena stay, Fisk continued, the general was to pay visits to Forts Shaw and Benton.

On Aug. 30, the *Herald* reported that "General Sherman left this morning for Missoula accompanied by his staff, Col. Poe, Gen. Bacon, T.E. Sherman, his son, and Delegate Martin Maginnis. Gen. Sherman and party will proceed from Missoula to Walla Walla."

A week later, it carried a *Missoulian* article dated September 6 which said: "An escort of fifty men from the command of Major Green in Northern Idaho arrived over Lo-Lo trail last Sunday in charge of Capt. William Winters and Lieut. Albert G. Forse and Edwin H. Shelton; to act as an escort to Gen. Sherman over the Mullan Road."



Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman

R. Brooke, whom the General complimented as one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the service, would be stationed near Missoula, with regimental headquarters at the Missoula Post; that he proposed to make this a permanent five-company post, leaving Capt. Rawn's company with four companies of the 3rd. He said the balance of the regiment would be assigned to duty—two companies somewhere between Bannack and Virginia City, two companies at Shaw, one at Benton and one at Baker. After this very satisfactory statement of the General's plan, the delegation thanked the General for the interest he had taken in our welfare, and said they would not intrude further on his time, but would be glad to extend to him the hospitality of the extreme frontier town of the country; to which the General jocularly replied that his pay went on whether he worked or loafed, but that he proposed to take to the road early the next morning, and must put his affairs in order for the intended move." In the same edition, the paper reported that

"General Sherman arrived in Missoula about 9 o'clock Monday morning, under an

escort of 50 cavalry, under Capt. Winters, and a force of pioneers to clear out the Mullan Road for his ambulances . . .

"His sagacious and far-reaching ideas in reference to keeping open and protecting the constant communication across the continent thereby inducing settlement and relieving government of expensive military movements and transportation charges . . .

"The party made camp Monday night at Six Mile, and expected to reach Walla Walla in 14 or 15 days. Thence the General will proceed to San Francisco and directly to Washington. There is considerable timber in the Mullan Road, but the clearing of this away is not expected to delay the party any great length of time."

The final report carried in the *Deer Lodge New-Northwest* was in the form of a letter that Sherman wrote to Montana Governor Potts on Sept. 19 from Walla Walla:

"I arrived here yesterday, in 15 days from Missoula bringing our wagons through in all good order. The road was only passable by hard work on the part of our escort. It is the best road between Montana and this part of the country, and I will endeavor to have troops pass over it annually so as to renew travels. To facilitate this end, I shall endeavor to have a good military post like Missoula established where Coeur d'Alene Lake discharges its surplus water by the Spokane River, or thereabouts. The road thence to Walla Walla is good, and the country is settling up."

[Kay and I are trying to obtain Sherman's 1877 *Report to Congress* which discusses his travels over the Mullan Road. If we receive it in time, it will appear in the next *Mullan Chronicles*, at least in condensed form. —Deb]

[*Note from Kay:* R.F. Fisk was Robert F. Fisk, a Sergeant in the New York Infantry, so he may have served under "Cump" Sherman.]

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*"He said he intended to establish at Missoula the finest post in Montana and would give us plenty of troops"*

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The *Missoulian*, speaking of Gen. Sherman's purposes with regard to the better protection of Western Montana and the assignment of the Third Regiment of Infantry, enroute here from the railroad, remarks:

"He said he intended to establish at Missoula the finest post in Montana and would give us plenty of troops; that he had ordered the 3rd Infantry to Montana; that four companies of the regiment, under command of Lt. Col. John

# Sawbones in mid-1800s Used Saws and Ether

(Continued from page 1)

While there were probably many accidents ranging from scrapes to major injuries, most seem to be minor. The exceptions were the loss of an eye by Fred Sheridan, a premature explosion at Big Mountain (Nemote Creek) that stunned Robert P. Booth, and Conway Howard had swelling in his limbs. Two men were cut with axes, one man shot himself in the knee. The more seriously injured were fortunate to have ether as an anesthesia which had come into

general use about 1846. The instruments pictured below are those used in amputations. You don't want to see the pictures of how to use them.

Henry Zunowester and Henry Lehman seem to be the only men who lost their lives from 1859 to 1862, a remarkable achievement. Both were drowned, Zunowester July 2, 1859 and Lehman, May 1862 in the Hellgate River.

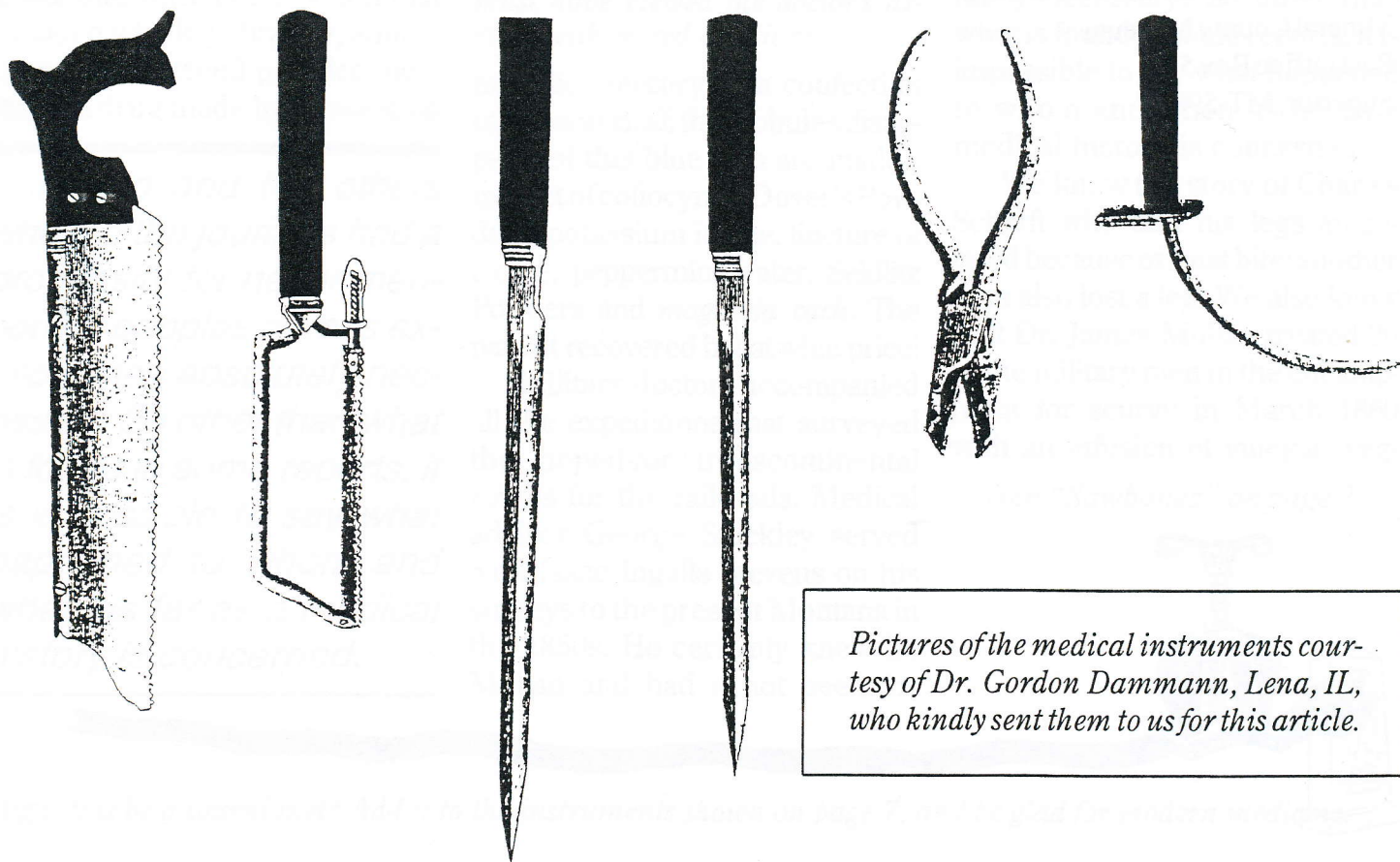
Many modern construction projects would count themselves fortunate to have as few medical problems as the Mullan expedition seems to have had. Perhaps they knew the cure was worse than the injury so tried to stay as healthy as possible!

Gift subscriptions by Glenn Koepke of St. Regis were sent to D.T. LaMont of Logan, UT and Jim West, Post Falls, ID. We hope they will enjoy receiving the *Chronicles* and will be able to join us next May.

## New Members

As mentioned in Joel's letter, two young men stopped in Superior that are interested in "our road." Scott DeSimone of Washington, D.C. and Andrew Tarcia of Seattle dropped by the museum July 29. Andrew is putting together a piece on the road and we look forward to its publication.

A lady who was born in Superior a few years ago stopped in with her husband to do family research for her and geology for him. They both were enthusiastic about becoming members of the *Chronicles*. Kris and Lee Scroggins, Las Vegas, NV are among our newest Mullanites.



*Pictures of the medical instruments courtesy of Dr. Gordon Dammann, Lena, IL, who kindly sent them to us for this article.*

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Cathryn Strombo and  
Deb Davis, Editors.

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