



A letter from Henry Bryant

As promised some time ago, we reprint, with permission of the family and the Seattle Genealogical Society, a letter from Henry Bryant dated 1870. The letter, which discusses traveling on the Mullan Road, was printed in the Seattle Genealogical Society Bulletin, Vol 39, No. 1, Autumn 1989. We will reprint it in two sections.

Walla Walla, Washington Territory
February 25, 1871

My Dear Cousin Mattie:

It came last evening to Walla Walla, a delicate, white envelope missive, modest in superscription, betokening the trace of woman's hand—Was I surprised? Yes! Indeed! for it was something unusual for me to receive a letter from a lady and I wondered who would dare! However a glance sufficed; the initial seal gave me the welcome answer, it was a letter from my esteemed and ever remembered cousin Mattie. I perused your letter with interest and kindly thank you. I went to my room and then sitting alone retrospecting over the past; I took from my traveling bag a package of letters and selected one almost a facsimile to the one I received last evening with the exception the date line read January 24, 1867 versus February 24, 1871, four long years, and I wondered why it was and how it was, that our correspondence had terminated so abruptly; an awakened conscience however chided

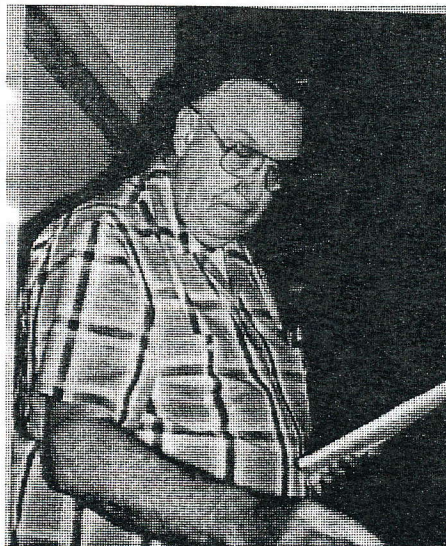
your humble servant for his remissness while perusing that letter as if it were but yesterday that I had the pleasure of receiving the same and when I read that portion where you asserted (that's the word) that I could make excuses better than anyone you ever knew I laughed outright;

and with the gentle reminder before me that arrived last evening I determined then and there to present my respects, and here I am today with a fresh batch of excuses, never so willing in all my life to be forgiven. It is now seven years since I wandered

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May 10th Mullan Day Very Well Attended

Our friend and good Mullanite, Robert Dunsmore, of Osborn, ID, presented a slide show and spoke on the section of the road that passes through North Idaho at the St. Regis Visitor Center get together. He showed what is the most plausible route through Shoshone Park westward to Coeur d'Alene. Using maps



Robert Dunsmore at the podium during Mullan Day May 10th

and "on the trail" photographs he was able to describe that part of the road. After his presentation he gave a copy of his material to the museum for any other researchers to use. Robert has been a wealth of information and shared whatever he has found with us. Through his efforts we now have many articles that were unknown before that. Thanks, Robert!

The second presentation was an audio tape of Professor Paul McDermott. He outlined early map making and historical materials relating to Mullan and Sohon. On Saturday, June 7th, Dr. McDermott gave a presentation at the museum. He had slides of hitherto unseen Sohon prints. They were so exciting. They will be included in his book that hopefully will be out by next year.

Sunday, the 8th, he went with Chuck Mead, Bill Weikel, Jackie Robb and others on a trek up be-

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Bryant's harrowing trip...

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far away from the center of refinement over the plain and mountain to the extreme outposts of civilization; enduring hardships; encountering dangers; surrounded by the worst phases of society; deprived of the ennobling influence of good woman. Thousands of miles from friends; and the excitement of a mining camp (which only experience can realize). Sleeping in the open air; often without blankets—living

... surrounded by the worst phases of society, deprived of the ennobling influence of good woman.

for weeks on meat alone without salt—at times two or three days without even that much—ragged, cold, without the facilities of communication—\$5.00 in gold prepaid being the consideration as postage on letters (Nary Red" had I) are you surprised that I should neglect my social duties and become estranged from home and friends? But—as you say I am now differently situated in fact—"things are not as they "use to was" some twenty, yea: seven years ago, and I shall hereafter endeavor

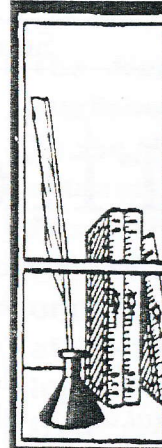
to pay my dues to my friends and Society. In your letter you expressed a wish to know of Henry. I thank you for the kind thought—therefore you will deem my letter egotistical. Life in the mountains in the early days was far from pleasant, and to give in detail my experiences, tribulations, etc. would serve only to annoy the happiness of friends at home. On this subject I have ever been reticent. Suffice it to say that I have been blessed with health and in days gone by with fortune yet "gold will melt and silver will fly". I enclose a printed account of the calamity that changed my fortune. Two years ago I was worth eleven thousand dollars and prospects were flattering, and I even contemplated a visit to America to share the same with loved ones in adversity—"Fate intervened its hand" yet it causes me to smile to say that I would feel rich today to possess as many "mills". Thus I answer your question as to the cause of my exodus from Montana. In writing home I often speak of dropping in upon them—but to tell you the truth—sad as it is I never expect to realize that pleasure, yet I long to see you all—and shall ever be grateful for the kindness shown me while in New York. I arrived in Walla Walla on the 4th day of last

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Mullan statue returns to Bonner

We report that one of the Mullan statues in Missoula that was located at Front and Orange Streets was moved back to its original location in Bonner, October of 1996. All the original monuments were donated by Sen. W.A. Clark. It now rests

across from the new Town Pump. Seven communities were given commemorative monuments in 1916, St. Regis being one of them. The Missoula cenotaph stands near the north end of Higgins Ave.



*New
on the
bookshelf*

Following Old Trails is a great volume on Montana history. Published in 1996, it is a collection of newspaper articles from the *Missoulian* July 1, 1911 through April 1912, by Arthur L. Stone, *Missoulian* editor. The articles are illustrated by Edgar S. Paxson. This book is available for \$19.95 from most bookstores that have a local history section. The last segment in the book is a letter from Captain Mullan, dated 1883, on his road building efforts. Lots of pieces on the mining on Cedar Creek too.

Following
Old
Trails

Arthur L. Stone

Illustrations by
E. S. Paxson



Bryant . . .

(continued from page two)

October 1870 having left Helena on Sep. 10. I shall give you a few disconnected sketches of our trip verbatim from my Journal. The inelegant phrases which you will notice in my description will no doubt strike you as being incompatible with refinement. Such indeed is the case. But I venture to quote thereby giving you an idea of the characteristic of a mountaineer in general conversation. Mountaineers as you are aware are most of them unrefined and uncouth in their manners and expressions—To commence—The “outfit” that I “followed off” consisted of a top carriage that might have been elegant in bygone years; but alas, its beauty had fled having experienced more prosperous day and I having a fellow feeling for the poor old wreck (wrecked financially as I was) mounted the vehicle and away we sped to the “time and time” of an “out and out” “Kins team” (Indian Horais (?). So it was dual—six years to the day from the time I “landed” in Salt Lake, the Zion city of the Saints of Mormonism, via Prairie Schooner (ox wagons) across the plains, did I venture still farther toward the Pacific, but not without many regrets. . . We had an exceedingly pleasant trip baring the roughest roads imaginable, the weather was most auspicious for traveling, which together with good health “backed” by an appetite that would promote a government mule. We reached Walla Walla in twenty five day . . . We followed down the Deer Lodge River proper full 200 miles in which distance it partakes of the names “Deer Lodge”, Missoula and Hellgate. Our route was through

from the mail pouch

We asked Bill Weikel for more information on the term “hachures.” He replied that it refers to a series of short dashes to simulate slope as shown on a copy enclosed. “I haven’t researched a lot about it but I have noticed that some of the hachures may have been made with stamps.” He also enclosed some information on the type of odometers that may have been used by the engineers. Bill asks that anyone running across any references to such to let him know.

*Bill Weikel
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heavily timbered bottom land consisting of pine, spruce, and fir which are evergreen over heavy and steep grades along the mountain sides at places full 1000 perpendicular above the river. Scarcely wide enough to admit of passage.

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April 28, 1997

Dear Deb,

It's always great to get our edition of the *Mullan Chronicles* and the notification about the annual meeting. My son, Andy, gave his history day presentation on Capt. Mullan three years ago and we have been unable to make a meeting since. You see, Andy is a little league baseball player and, as the catcher, is a big part of his team. He's a great team leader. I too, as the coach, try to make a small contribution. Anyway, we have always been busy in May—such is life. We have never forgotten that day and remember all those fine Mullanites who gave Andy such a warm reception. Keep up the good work—maybe we'll see you next year.

Tom Benson

May 10th Mullan Day . . .

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hind Chuck's place. We understand the ticks made an appearance. The following day, he returned to the museum with his friend Roland Grant from Billings and finished going through our materials, finding several papers that he had been looking for for some time. We are looking forward to getting copies of the pictures and other materials he obtained from the Sohon family.

We have started a new system to tell you when your membership is due. Note the number below your address. If it is a + followed by a number, it shows the number of issues you have coming; if it's a -, you are behind. Be patient with us, please, for there is HOPE.

Cathryn Strombo and
Deb Davis, Editors.

The *Mullan Chronicles* is published four times a year by the Mineral County museum and Historical Society, Post Office Box 533, Superior, MT 59872, a non-profit organization. Subscriptions are \$5 per year to cover printing and mailing. Computerized typesetting by Van Wolverton.

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Deb Davis, Editors.

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