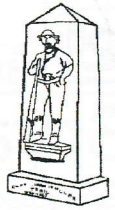


MULLAN CHRONICLES

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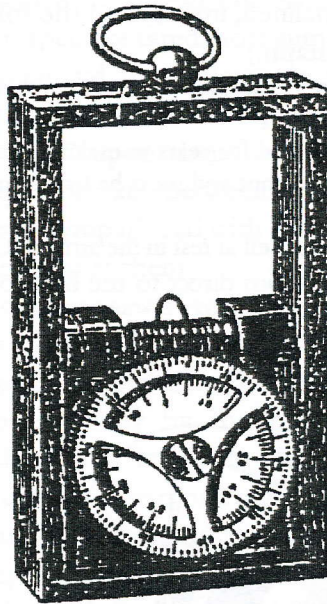
Two speakers wow Mullan Day

Two great speakers enlivened the annual John Mullan Day in Alberton on Saturday, May 9th.

Dr. Raymond Borchers made the trip from Lincoln, NE to join us and show his video of the trek he has made over the years tracing the road.

In the presentation he gave some new information not previously mentioned. For example, "Pompey" Charboneau, son of Sacagawea and Charboneau, died 18 May 1866 on a stage owned by Mullan while he was passenger while passing through Oregon. There is a nice monument at the place.

Dr. Borchers also had many views of the eastern part of the road and described how to get to many of the areas. Well done and a pleasure to watch. Thank you, Dr. Borchers!



Odometer similar to the instruments used by Captain Mullan's crew to measure distances.

The Mineral County Museum has a copy of the video and will be happy to loan to anyone.

Instruments that made the road possible

Seeing the instruments of the road builders of the day, 1850-1860, made the presentation of Bill Weikel of Missoula especially notable. He gave us the methods and how the instruments were used and how really accurate they were.

Bill was nervous as two of his professors from UM (Drs. Malouf and Hampton) were in the audience. He outdid himself in the entire presentation. A handout of tables were given

(Continued on page five)

Saving Mead's Section A Little Closer

A report has been heard that finally Chuck Mead may be able to get a land trade through with the state, Forest Service and himself that would enable him to deed a two mile section of the original road to the historical society.

A meeting with the land board, Gov. Racicot and others, has been very positive. Public hearings in Alberton and Missoula resulted in a couple of dozen speakers supporting the swap and only two objecting.

Chuck has been trying to put this together for about ten years. Good luck, Chuck.

John Henry Bryant's 1879 trip (continued)

Henry Bryant wrote to his family in New York of his journey to the area of Walla Walla in 1870. This is the second half of that letter, which is being reprinted with the permission of the family and the Seattle Genealogical Society, which printed the letter in the Seattle Genealogical Society Bulletin, Vol 39, No. 1, Autumn 1989. The first installment ran in the previous issue of the Mullan Chronicles.

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The Deer Lodge River is a rapid mountain stream passable at only a few points—accidents frequently occur when life is lost. At one ford we met with a mishap which caused our blood to run cold, when about three fourths the way across the stream we were caught in a quicksand; the horses at one time were entirely submerged in the water. The strong current carried us down the stream at a fearful rate, the horses swimming and plunging,

(Continued on page three)

Bryant's harrowing trip...

(Continued from page one)

while our carriage floated like a skiff. One we went at times whirling around in a whirlpool. Expecting momentarily to be capsized, I kept the reins, guiding the horses as best I could and serving to keep their heads above water. We were carried in this manner full one mile. Our horses gained a footing on a ledge of rocks, which wound up our aquatic journeying. After reaching terra firma, we termed it a good joke and passed the night as best we could in wet blankets.

The general landscape of the Deer

by dint of perseverance & the essential qualities of nerve and "elbow grease" may manufacture a ranch (farm) just in time to lay his wearied frame therein (my companion poetically inclined, improvised the following epitaph:)

"Here lies an honest ranchman beneath this stone

Who toiled for years to make a home
Amid stumps and roots he first turned to sod

plant himself at rest in the arms of God."

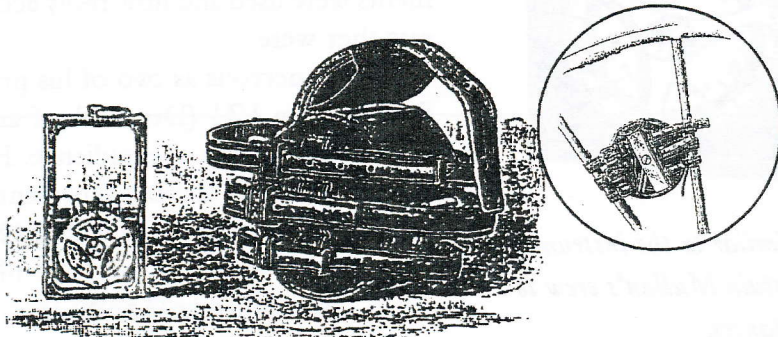
(I sent him direct to the head of the class.)

We of course took the cue and talked railroad to him ...until he was blind, until he actually thought we belonged to the N.P.R.R. survey party.

strongest. At one place the collector of revenue for a "one horse" bridge scarcely 10 feet wide demanded \$8.00 but on observation he discovered a brass feruled fishing tackle suspended inside our carriage mistook the same for a surveyors instrument and judging from our aristocratic equipage inferred at least surmised we belonged to some government party—and interrogated us accordingly—by asking if that was a surveyors instrument in the carriage. We of course took the cue and talked railroad to him as one of the boys afterwards remarked until he was blind, until he actually thought we belonged to the N.P.R.R. survey party. Whereupon we informed the gentleman that we surveyors never paid toll and accordingly we went on our way rejoicing to the tune of \$8#.

After leaving Mullans ferry and the Hellgate or Deer Lodge River we passed one habitation in the distance of 100 miles. This place was called Packins Ranch. After the manners of transporting goods over the mountains on the backs of mules—such men are called Packins and this house was considered a sort of rendezvous. The house stood amid the thick timber on about one fourth of an acre of ground—a small habitation built of logs with a dirt roof a fit place to deal out

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No. 366. Price, \$15.00.

The odometer could be enclosed in a leather case, center, then attached to a wagon wheel, as shown in the inset, to count revolutions of the wagon wheel. Distance was calculated by multiplying the number of revolutions by the circumference of the wagon wheel; Bill Weikel pointed out, however, that this was an imprecise measure, varying with the nature of the terrain over which the wagon traveled, resulting in a number of erroneous measures in Mullan's reports.

Lodge Valley after leaving the mouth of Cedar Creek, the locality of the noted gold mines and the last habitation in Montana, is that of a narrow canyon with high mountains on either side—steep and precipitous, covered with dense forest almost excluding the sun's rays for at least the greater part of the day. Occasionally they are bottom lands all of which are heavily timbered and no doubt will be appropriated some day by ye honest pioneer who

During two hundred and forty miles travel we passed over eleven tollroads and bridges—the mania for toll roads is immense—persons take advantage of narrow passages through the mountains & small mountain torrents that an individual could almost leap across to exact money from travelers. We paid \$59# toll altogether. These men having no authority to collect toll we were not conscientious in avoiding payment if we thought our party the

... the mania for toll roads is immense—persons take advantage of narrow passages through the mountains & small mountain torrents that an individual could almost leap across to exact money from travelers.

“Red Eye” (whiskey). At this place we camped for the night. Our supper consisted of Bacon, Bread, and Salmon trout which I caught from a small stream and which weighed a full 15 pounds—we were obliged to pay \$10.00 per pound for bacon, 50 cents per pound for beans, 20 cents per pd for oats for the horses, also \$3.00 to feed each horse to hay over night. In speaking of our journey we now term it the robbers roost.

We commenced the ascent of the Cour-de-leane Mountains. Passing Mullans winter quarters (U.S. Officer who constructed the government road) nothing remaining however to establish the fact except the debris of stone chimneys; the camp having been destroyed by the heavy fires which frequently occur in the forest—set fire by the indians.

The roads are indescribable, passing through dense forest with small undergrowth—over fallen trees, roots, stumps, stones and swamps, crossing innumerable streams, the trail being merely wide enough with skillful driving to admit of the passage of wagons, notches being cut in the trees at vari-

ous places to admit the hubs of wheels. So we journeyed on from 10 to 12 miles per day with a scarcity of horse feed, camping whenever night overtook us, making beds of spruce boughs upon which we spread our blankets. In this respect we fared more sumptuously than did the pedestrians with which the road was lined, packing their “grub” upon their backs with scarcely a blanket between them. I pitied and sympathized with them but could not assist them.

Although we saw a great many bear, wolves and mountain lions, our slumbers were seldom disturbed except semi-occasionally by the prowling around of wild beasts in shape of chipmunks in search of a night lunch. They are impudent and bold enough to creep into our beds. With my head located on my “cotton trunk” (flour sack containing my worldly effects) I dreamed of “friends so far and yet so near.”

On making the decent of the west slope of the Cour-de-leane Mountains, we encountered the worst obstacles of the road. The Cour-de-leane River takes its rise in the main range and increases very rapidly in size. We passed down a grade some six miles in length barely wide enough to hold the carriage and so steep that it was necessary to secure all the wheels with ropes and attach a rope to the hind axeltree which we wound around the trees and stumps, thereby preventing a to rapid decent. As it was, one wheel went over the embankment but was saved from destruction by a tree that grew at the edge of the precipice. We went the entire day making the decent and night overtook us while we were floundering through mud and water. Finding

we could not proceed on account of the darkness, we camped where we were building a large fire, a safe-guard from the side opposite of wild animals. Tying our horses to the carriage, we gathered around the fire and passed the night as comfortable as could be expected with a pelting rain and in mud to our ankles. Sleep was out of the question, so we sang, whistled, and laughed the dull hours away and a jolly trio we were.

During 60 miles travel, we crossed the St. Regis Borgia River 91 times and the Cour-de-leane River 46 times, on average of once every 1/2 mile and to use the expression of one of the party, we seemed to always be on the same side of the stream.

It was ludicrous to see the pedestrians wend their way through the above mentioned roads and although unchristian like, I laughed until the tears rolled down my cheeks as large as chestnuts. Some poor fellow, not aware of the obstacles he had to surmount,

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Post Falls, Idaho Rededicates Statue

The Post Falls Historical Society had a Mullan Statue Rededication Ceremony on July 1, 1998 when the statue was renovated and returned to a new location at Post Falls just south of City Hall. The ceremony came 80 years after the statue was originally placed in Post Falls, one of several paid for by W.A. Clark, Jr. of Montana.

It was originally part of the Post Falls School yard and later part of the library yard. Renovation included giving John a new nose and patching a few places.

Bryant . . .

(continued from page two)

would at the first few crossings ramble up and down the stream in search of a foot log, always coming out the worst for wear with clothes torn by the brush. Eventually footlogs were at a premium and they began to divest themselves of their boots, roll up their pants and to wade the ice cold torrent and having reached the other shore would again replace their boots only to divest themselves again in a few moments. Each succeeding time, they crossed the fords, they found it deeper and in the same ratio their pants of necessity must needs be rolled higher. Even this plan ceased to be a virtue. At last a German tired of shifting boots and pants exclaimed "Poys, id ish all blayed out. I don't doz him no more" and in he plunged pants, boots and all. The rest followed suit and so it was that they crossed the Rubicon.

We actually navigated the stream for full two miles, following the bed of the river. Sometimes our horses fairly swimming and the carriage would float like a boat, winding our way through a forest of vast cedar trees wonderful to behold. One tree we measured with our lariat rope sixty feet in length and it would not span the circumference. Some of the trees were over 200 feet in height and stood so closely together that their base joined one another.

We reached the Cour-de-leane mission without accident, notwithstanding the roughness of the roads. It was a great relief to the monotony of over two hundred miles journeying through a pass of mountains when we came in sight of the Jesuit mission, the first appearance of civilization. The Mission has been established 40 years and supports about two hundred "noble

reds" (indians).

The chapel is situated on elevated ground, dome shaped some 75 feet above the prairie which surrounds it. The hill is the only portion of the valley where it is safe to build a habitation. The spring freshets from the mountains overflows the entire river bottom for miles, The buildings are erected on the above mentioned hill. The chapel in the center which give rather a picturesque appearance.

We drove up to the summit and was cordially received by the venerable Father who seeing as how it was us, condescended through Christian charity to sell us one bushel of oats for the sum of seven (7) dollars.

Our ambulance was surrounded by indians. One Old Indian said he was 119 years old. I think his story would compare well with that of the man who asserted that he had killed 999 quails at one shot. When asked by he did not make it one thousand, said he would not lie for one quail. It would have been an old story to have said 120 years old.

We passed a thorough inspection and our outfit was pronounced "Hyas Scoocum" (good and strong). One fellow got his eye located on our vinegar key and exclaimed "Boston Man", "Hiyu whiskey". (all white men are called Boston man; Hiyu means great plenty.) The smacking of his lips were, however, cut short by the chapel bell indicating high noon and the indians all dropped down to their knees like a shot, around our carriage and murmured their Ave Marias. We waited through their devotion and then shoved on the reins and went at a tearing pace down the hill to the Alkali bottom below.

We have had the misfortune to capsize our carriage on almost level

ground, in an unguarded moment, ignoring for a moment the rough roads we had come over, in contemplating the good roads to come. The entire party came out unscathed but lo all is vanity. The entire upper rigging of "ye Ambulance" was carried away with minor breaks and scratches below decks. Having cleared away the debris and righted what remained intact, we resumed our journey looking for the world like a mountebank show going to a country fair. Our protection from the sun and rain was among the things that were and now we all realized the fact as we moved on through the dust and sweltering heat.

The remaining distance of two hundred and fifty miles is high rolling prairie covered with a luxurious growth of bunch grass where thousands of indian horses and cattle graze year around. A great many amazing incidents occurred on our trip which I have not the talent to present. Please be charitable and not criticize by descriptive powers accept all as from a Mountaineer.

I have only returned from a trip to the head waters of the Yakima River, a tributary to the Mighty Columbia during which I slept on the ground until Christmas Eve. Quite a comparison the the Holiday of "62 and 63" in York.

Please write Uncle Mark and family. I hardly dare ask personally as regards my many friends not knowing the changes that time may have wrought. Remember me to all inquiring friends and direct to Walla Walla, care Ross and Stanley. With love to you all, I remain your affectionate cousin.

Henry N. Bryant

Mullan Day presentation on tools was fascinating

(continued from page one)

showing the mileage and accuracy of the instruments being used. According to W.W. DeLacy, a key member of the road builders, the difference in the revolutions over three types of ground was shown. An example is that on level ground it took 823.71 revolutions to the mile. Rolling ground it was 840.20 revolutions to the mile and on rough ground it was 867.05 revolutions to make a mile.

Included were schedules that gave minutes traveled and speed so it could be used to compute distance traveled in any given amount of time and speed.

Charts accompanied the expedition to show what allowances to make for each type of terrain. Included were schedules that gave minutes traveled and speed so it could be used to compute distance traveled in any given amount of time and speed.

The speed was gauged by an odometer from two-and-a-half mph to five-and-a-half mph up sixty minutes. The odometer table shows the reading and how many feet and inches. In 100 revolutions of the odometer you would travel 1091'8". A reading of 9700 on the odometer would equal 20 miles.

Bill has all the figures for those interested in getting more complete data on the instruments used and the mileage taken from them. He found some discrepancies in the maps we have using the charts and tables now available. In the area of Osburn, ID,

blowing up a Forest Service map to matching scale he feels there is a mile missing between 3 1/2 miles west of Osburn and one and one-half miles east of Osburn.

Anyone know where Rebecca Mullan's Memoirs are?

Dan McDermott, who was here last year and shared slides of materials previously unseen has asked if anyone has any information of the whereabouts of memoirs written by Rebecca Mullan in 1892 six years before her death in September 1898. These memoirs are mentioned in the article by Addison Howard.

Dan sent copies of maps from national collections. In our quest to obtain some other maps we had to deal with a branch of National Archives. Mostly great people. They answer the questions put to them alright, the problem is sometimes you don't know the right question.

Our good friend Robert Dunsmore finds more materials

At the May 9th meeting, Robert Dunsmore, of Osborn, ID, gave us more copies of materials he has located in various publications. Included is a July 1934 article in the *Washington Historical Quarterly* by Addison Howard; *Oregon Historical Quarterly* of March, 1945; and *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* of October, 1954. So much good "stuff" that we can continue for quite a while. Keep up the great work, Bob. MC

The Forest Service map shows approximately five miles and the Mullan map about four miles. Something for all the cartographers out there to ponder.

MC

WPA records have a little on Mullan

A year or so ago the Mineral County Museum sent to the Montana Historical Society for copies of Works Progress Administration—WPA—records in their files. They have a great deal on the mining in Mineral County and a mention or two on the Mullan Road. These interviews were taken in 1939 and 1940 by two local women.

An interview with Mrs. Laura Riefflin tells of early days in Superior and included this as part of the notes:

About four years ago, my husband and I had an interesting visitor. I can't remember his name. He was 88 then. He told of going through here with Captain John Mullan when the Mullan trail was being built. They came in covered wagons. (I figure he must be about twelve at the time.)

He asked us if we had seen a little mound on the Jim Harmon ranch west of Superior. We had, and wondered about it. He explained that a little girl in the caravan had taken sick and died. Her parents used boards from their wagon to build her coffin, and had buried her there, not far from the trail.

Other times the road is mentioned are usually using it as a reference to something else.

MC

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.

Still more friends visit

Cliff (Carl Cliff) and Bill (Trublood) stopped in to get some wood a week or so ago. Both were ill at the time of the get-together but promise to stay healthy next year. A few days later I received a call from Dr. Richard Buswell of Helena, a cousin of Cliff's, and he asked about the *Chronicles* (like where are they!). He said there had been an article in the Helena paper on Mullan and would send us a copy, which he kindly did.

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