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The stories and poems in this anthology of Bonner are stolen -- they have been previously published, but permission to republish has not been sought or received.

All selections have something to do with Bonner and the lower Blackfoot. They include fiction excerpts, nonfiction, essays, poetry, newspaper features, a transcribed interview. Please let me know what's missing.

For no particular reason, the writings are in roughly chronological order. Several are from books that come highly praised: "A River Runs Through It and Other Stories" by Norman Maclean; Richard Hugo's poetry books; "Homestead" by Annick Smith; "The Baron, the Logger, the Miner, and Me" by John H. Toole; "John Medicinewolf" by Michael Moon.

I recommend "A Grass Roots Tribute: The Story of Bonner, Montana" which was published in 1976 in conjunction with the Bicentennial. It contains much insight in and historical information about the Bonner area and gets better with age. The Bonner School library has several copies and the Missoula County Public Library has at least one.

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## *Where Jennie Used to Swim*

The Blackfoot bends, pools deep around  
the cliff that bends it, and a brave man arcs down  
yelling 'hey.' He splits the river clean. Foam  
and his first wave die before they gain  
the opposite sand. His cry and his exploded plunge  
die in yellow tamarack high above her dream.  
When she swam here, boys threw pine cones  
at her bobbing hair. Tamarack was green  
and promise, both in current and the summer,  
hummed as warm as the plane she heard  
but couldn't find hummed to glamorous lands.

Promise. Glamor. These thin out after  
twenty-five hard winters. Jet engines make  
no hum. Not one rattlesnake remains  
for boys to nail on a weathered one-by-ten  
for a parade through Bonner where  
the girls applaud. Heavy August air  
compounds the waste, the black smoke pouring  
from the mill, the sunning girl reliving  
the phone call from the hospital.

The swimmer climbs out chattering. This river  
needs no calendar when tamarack turns gold  
and someone, loved so much her final day  
is rerun like a film each autumn  
on the silver pool. The Blackfoot says: you lose  
and rivers jump so honestly, even the rejected  
cannot call them smug. A woman arcs  
and arrows down the rock, her 'hey' gone ringing  
up the canyon, her first wave fighting flow.

*for Jennie Herndon*

— *Richard Hugo*

from "The Lady in Kicking Horse Reservoir"  
1973, W.W. Norton & Company

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## □ Arthur L. Stone

*Arthur L. Stone became editor of the Missoulian in 1907. From June of 1911 through the following April, he wrote a weekly Sunday feature "Following Old Trails," which provided "historical descriptions of Men, Places and Events of Montana." A few focused on the Bonner area. In 1913, the stories were collected into a volume by the same name. In 1996, Jack Weidenfeller of Fidelity Real Estate in Missoula commanded a reissue of the book, published by Pictorial Histories Publishing Co. of Missoula. In 1914 Stone became dean of the journalism school at the University of Montana and launched what is one of the oldest such programs in America. He retired in 1942 and died in 1945. The mountain on which south Missoula now climbs is named after "Dean Stone."*

### Following Old Trails

From "Local Names and History"

Missoulian, Aug. 26, 1911

It is the testimony of all writers who have told us of the characteristics of the Flathead Indians as they were originally, that the tribe was peaceable, gentle and of superior intelligence. They did not seek war but they were brave in the defense of their rights. Lewis and Clark, Father DeSmet, Cox and Major Ronan have all left records to this effect. But the robes and the meat of the buffalo were, they held, the gift of the Great Spirit, and they were not to be deprived of the privilege of hunting on the eastern range. For this right they fought for generations and the record is that, despite superior numbers of their foes, they always brought back meat and hides from the buffalo country.

Through the canyon east of Missoula was their natural route to the east side hunting grounds. Take a walk into the canyon some day. Walk around the end of Mount Jumbo to where the canyon widens into the basin which reaches almost to the mouth of the Big Blackfoot. Look around on the east side of Jumbo and see what a perfect place for an ambush it affords. Down the stream which bears their name, came the Blackfeet at the time when they knew the Flatheads would be likely to start for the buffalo hunt. Then the ambush. There in that natural amphitheater, the battle.

These canyon walls have flung back the sound of many a wacry; the clash of combat has resounded many times in this basin; the soil has frequently been drenched with the blood of the combatants. The Flatheads fought bravely; they battled for their rights and they struck as long as there was breath in their bodies. The later chapters

## Following Old Trails/Local Names and History

of this long warfare are filled with tales of glorious triumphs on the part of the west-side Indians;

their possession of rifles and ammunition placed them upon terms of equality and they proved themselves to be no mean warriors. There is a story of the almost complete extermination of a Blackfeet band on what is now Post creek, which avenged the defeats of many years.

But these sanguinary conflicts in this hill-locked battlefield gave the entrance to the canyon the reputation which furnished its name. Finally the Flatheads no longer entered the canyon through its gateway. Until the settlement of the Rattlesnake valley and the slope on the eastern side of Mount Jumbo which was the battlefield of ages, there was a trail which was plainly visible, leading over the north end of the mountain from the Rattlesnake side. This trail led, on the other side, into the "Place of Ambush" in such a way that the field was plainly visible all the way down and it was almost impossible for the Blackfeet to waylay their hereditary antagonists. Even yet there are places where this old trail may be traced. Its summit affords a fine outlook over the basin which was for so many years the scene of bloodshed. It is a fine view and worth the climb.

It is, however, the trail through the gateway of the canyon which won for this place the name, Missoula. Here were enacted the scenes which have been perpetuated in the nomenclature of the red man. "Missoula" tells it all if you only know what it means. And we came near to being known as "Hell Gate" for all time. This valley was called "Hell Gate ronde" for a long time and its town was Hell Gate for many years. Then Captain Higgins founded Missoula with Major McCormick and Hell Gate moved bodily up toward the mouth of the canyon. It was a good move, even if it had done nothing more than to change the name of the town. But the old name sticks to the canyon and the upper river. Recently the geographical board has told us that the name of the river is to be Clark's Fork from now on. I think there should be a protest against that action. Missoula is a much finer name and it should be retained all the way down the stream. It is a name with a significance and it has a sweet sound.

Standing the other day on the old trail through the canyon and thinking over the matters that suggested this chapter in the Old Trails series, it occurred to me that, after all, the significance of the name, Missoula, can be made as pleasing as its sound. The "Place of Fright" has a good meaning or a sinister one, according to whether or not it is the right kind of fright which is created. Missoula might be made a place where evil things and evil doers would be afraid to appear; it might be made a place which would merit the literal interpretation of its name and that would be something worth while. . . .



## Following Old Trails/Local Names and History

The name which the Indians gave, applied to the entrance of the canyon. That is why, probably, the voyageurs dubbed it "The Gate of Hell." Custom extended the application of the name to the entire length of the canyon and to the river and the trail which course between its walls. This is a canyon which has played an important and interesting part in Montana's history; many of the most notable incidents in the state's development were enacted in this canyon. It will require a good many trips and a good many meanderings to follow them all.

But it is always refreshing to recall that, just beyond Hellgate, lies Paradise. That is pleasing and it is even more so when we consider that Missoula is on the Paradise side of the gate. Some years ago, the Northern Pacific undertook to simplify the names of some of its stations in western Montana. E.J. Pearson was then the local superintendent of the road and one day he showed me a letter that he had received, in which his correspondent wrote as follows:

"I see you have taken the 'Horse' from Plains and have removed the 'Falls' from Thompson. Will you be good enough to advise me early of any intention you may have of taking the 'Gate' from Hell?"

The "Gate" still hangs on its hinges. Unlike its prototype, however, it does not bid all who pass its portals to surrender hope. For this gate swings out – not in. It opens toward Paradise and Elysian fields and all who pass through the entrance-way gain new strength and new hope from the things which are upon our side of it. It is a queer name unless you know about it. When you understand it, it is the simplest proposition in the whole list of names. Just take the easy walk over this trail, look over the ground and you will understand this bit of old-time history.

## □ Meriwether Lewis

*On July 3, 1806, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, on their homeward journey east, parted ways at Traveler's Rest, near present-day Lolo. Clark proceeded up the Bitterroot Valley and on to the Yellowstone River valley. Lewis, with nine men and five Nez Perce scouts, went downstream to the Missoula Valley, with the intent of exploring the northernmost headwaters of the Missouri. His party crossed the Clark Fork a couple of miles below its confluence with the Bitterroot, a crossing that took roughly six hours. Forging rivers, then, was no easy feat. The party camped that night on Grant Creek before bidding their Indian guides farewell and proceeding up the north side of the Clark Fork, through what's now Missoula and up Hellgate Canyon. In the party with Lewis were George Droulliard, Joseph and Rueben Field, Robert Frazier, Patrick Gass, Silas Goodrich, Hugh McNeal, John B. Thompson and William Werner. All rode horses. Crossing Bonner valley that Fourth of July too was Seaman, Lewis's large black Newfoundland dog. Because there seems to be no reference to another major crossing, it appears the well-worn "Trail to the Buffalo" ran roughly through West Riverside and started up the Blackfoot on the opposite side of the river from the town of Bonner and Highway 200. It stayed on that side of the river all the way to the headwaters.*

*This selection from Lewis' journal comes from the third of three volumes of "The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition," edited by Elliott Coues and published by Dover Publications of New York. It is an unabridged republication of the four-volume edition published by Francis P. Harper in 1893. Instead of explanatory footnotes, interpretations are included in italics and parentheses.*

### From "The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition"

**F**riday, July 4th. The hunters accordingly set out; but returned unsuccessful about eleven o'clock. In the meantime we were joined by a young man of the Palloatpallah tribe (*from the Palouse country in eastern Washington*), who had set out a few days after us, and had followed us alone across the mountains – the same who had attempted to pass the mountains in June, while we were on the Koos-koos-kee (*Clearwater River in Idaho*), but had been obliged to return.

We now smoked a farewell pipe with our estimable companions (*five Nez Perce guides*), who expressed every emotion of regret at parting with us; which they



From "The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition"

felt the more, because they did not conceal their fears of our being cut off by the Pahkees (*either Blackfeet or a generic term for enemy*). We also gave them a shirt, a handkerchief, and a small quantity of ammunition. The meat which they received from us was dried and left at this place, as a store during the homeward journey. This circumstance confirms our belief that there is no route along Clark's river to the Columbian plains so near or so good as that by which we came; for, though these people mean to go for several day's journey down that river, to look for the Shalees (*Flatheads*), yet they intend returning home by the same pass of the mountains (*Lolo Pass*) through which they have conducted us. This route is also used by all the nations whom we know west of the mountains who are in the habit of visiting the plains of the Missouri; while on the other side all the war-paths of the Pahkees which fall into this valley of Clark's river center at Traveler's-rest (*Lolo*), beyond which these people have never ventured to the west.

Having taken leave of the Indians, we mounted our horses and proceeded up the eastern branch of Clark's river through the level plain in which we were camped. At the distance of five miles we crossed a small creek (*Rattlesnake*) 15 yards wide, and entered the mountains. The river is here closely confined within the hills for two miles, when the bottom widens into an extensive prairie and the river is 110 yards in width. We went three miles further, over a high plain (*Marshall Grade?*) succeeded by a low and level prairie, to the entrance of the Cokalahishkit (*the Blackfoot*). This river empties from the northeast, is deep, rapid and about 60 yards wide, with banks which, though not high, are sufficiently bold to prevent the water from overflowing. The eastern branch of Clark's river is 90 yards wide above the junction, but below it spreads to 100. The waters of both are turbid, though the Cokalahishkit is the clearer of the two; the beds of both are composed of sand and gravel, but neither of them is navigable on account of the rapids and shoals which obstruct their currents.

Before the junction of these streams, the country had been bare of trees; but as we turned up the north side of Cokalahishkit, we found a woody country, though the hills were high and the low grounds narrow and poor. At the distance of eight miles in a due east course we camped in a bottom, where there was an abundance of excellent grass. The evening proved fine and pleasant, and we were no longer annoyed by mosquitoes. Our only game were two squirrels, one of the kind common to the Rocky mountains, the second a ground-squirrel of a species we had not seen before. Near the place where we crossed Clark's river, we saw at a distance some wild horses; which are said, indeed, to be very numerous on this river, as well as on the heads of the Yellowstone.



## □ Patrick Gass

*Like Lewis and Clark, Sergeant Patrick Gass kept a continuous log of the Corps of Discovery's experiences in 1804-06. Gass was 35 when he passed through Missoula with Lewis in July, 1806. He died in 1870, a couple of months short of his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. Gass called the Blackfoot River "Isquet-co-qual-la," reversing the word "ishkit" or "Isquet" from Lewis' version. Both refer to the Nez Perce term for "Road to the Buffalo."*

### From "The Journals of Patrick Gass: Member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition"

Edited and Annotated by Carol Lynn MacGregor, 1997

*Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> (July 1806).* We had again a fine morning, collected our horses and set out. Captain Lewis and his party went down Clarke's river (*the Bitterroot*), and Captain Clarke with the rest of the party went up ti. All the natives accompanied Captain Lewis. We proceeded on down Clarke's river about 12 miles, and we came to the forks; and made three rafts to carry ourselves and baggage over. The river here is about 150 yards wide, and very beautiful. We had to make three trips with our rafts, and in the evening got all over safe; when we moved on up the north branch, which is our way over the falls of the Missouri, and after travelling a mile and an half encamped for the night. Two hunters went out and killed three deer. The musketoes are worse here than I have known them at any place, since we left the old Maha village on the Missouri. This north branch of the river is called by the natives Isquet-co-qual-la, which means, the road to the buffaloe.

*Friday 4<sup>th</sup>.* We had a beautiful morning and waited here some time in order to have a morning hunt, as our guides intend to return, and we wish to give them a plentiful supply of provisions to carry them back over the mountains. While our hunters were out a young Indian came to our camp, who had crossed the mountains after us. At 10 o'clock our hunters came in, but had not killed any thing. We were, however, able to furnish them with two deer and an half, from those that were killed yesterday. We then gave them some presents and took a friendly leave of them: and it is but justice to say, that the whole nation to which they belong, are the most friendly, honest and ingenuous people that we have seen in the course of our voyage and travels. After taking farewell of these good, hospitable and obliging sons of the west, we proceeded on up Isquet-co-qual-la through a handsome prairie of about 10 miles, after which the hills come close on the river, on both sides, and we had a rough road to pass. Having made 18 miles we encamped for the night; where the country is very mountainous on both sides of the river, which runs nearly east and west, and is deep rapid stream about 80 yards wide.



## □ Addison Howard

*On his first road-building excursion from Walla Walla to Fort Benton, John Mullan didn't linger long in the Bonner area. The crew resumed work from winter camp near St. Regis in the spring of 1860 and reached Hell Gate in June. Little road was built up the Clark Fork from there, though a line of survey was run from the mouth of the Blackfoot to present-day Garrison, up the Little Blackfoot, across Mullan Pass into the Prickly Pear Valley and on up to the Missouri via Bird Tail Rock and the Sun River.*

*Mullan was apparently in the Bonner area in the dead winter of 1860. In "A Grass Roots Tribute: The Story of Bonner, Montana" Mildred Dufresne said Mullan wrote of his first crossing of the Big Blackfoot at its mouth on Jan. 8, 1860: "There were no difficulties for wagons to get in and out of the river; the depth of the water was two feet in the channel."*

*In 1861, even as the Civil War brewed in the East, Congress appropriated another \$100,000 to continue improvements on the Mullan Road. That year the crew celebrated the Fourth of July at a pass east of Coeur d'Alene by exploding fireworks to the extent that Indians who had been harassing them thought they'd gone crazy. From then on, the road-builders weren't hassled by natives, who considered the white men "bad medicine." Mullan's crew reached the junction of the Blackfoot and Clark Fork Rivers in time to winter there in December, 1861.*

*Addison Howard wrote of the life and works of John Mullan in the July, 1934, issue of "The Washington Historical Quarterly," published in Seattle by the Washington University State Historical Society. Howard said even as Mullan was building the wagon road he was dreaming of the day railroads would link the continent, something that happened in his lifetime.*

*"Night after night," Howard quoted Captain Mullan as saying in after years, "I have laid out in the unbeaten forests, or on the pathless prairies with no bed but a few pine leaves (needles), with no pillow but my saddle, and in my imagination heard the whistle of the engine, the whirr of the machinery, the paddle of the steamboat wheels, as they plowed the waters of the sound. In my enthusiasm I saw the country thickly populated, thousands pouring over the borders to make homes in this far western land."*

## From "Captain John Mullan"

### Washington Historical Quarterly

July, 1934

Lieutenant Mullan went into winter quarters at the confluence of the Blackfoot and Clark's Fork Rivers, seven miles east of the present site of Missoula, Montana. The location of this camp, called Cantonment Wright in honor of General George Wright, was on a bluff forming the east bank of the Big Blackfoot. The winter schedule included the building of a bridge across this river and the construction of the heavy grades in Hell Gate Canyon.

The weather played a trick on Lieutenant Mullan that year, for the winter of '61-62 was unusually severe. Snow fell in November and lay on the ground until mid-April. For days the weather was too cold for the crew to work. While half of them cut and hauled wood the others, awaiting their turn at the chores, would sit huddled around the fires.



Brig. Gen.  
George Wright  
(1801-1865),  
Commander of  
the Department  
of California  
during the Civil  
War. Buried at  
Sacramento, CA.

In January, one of the men, Charles Shaft, volunteered to take the mail to Salt Lake City for the reward of \$500 offered by Mullan. Having no horse he started on foot for the Deer Lodge Valley to get one. While walking on a log across a frozen slough he slipped and broke through the ice, wetting his feet. At first he gave little heed to such a minor accident. When, shortly, his moccasins froze to his feet, he became alarmed and returned to the camp of the military escort on the Clark's Fork River, about eighteen miles east of the cantonment. Before he could reach the soldiers' winter quarters the frost had penetrated to his bones, causing him excruciating pain.

An Indian brought word of Shaft's misfortune to Mullan. He dispatched two men, Bill Hengan and Dave O'Keefe, who covered the distance on foot in a day, nearly exhausting themselves breasting the deep snow. A day they rested, then, placing Shaft on a hand sledge, the pair trekked along the ice on the river and reached the cantonment on the afternoon of the second day, to receive a big drink of whiskey for their arduous labors.

Dr. George Hammond, the army surgeon attached to the expedition, examined Shaft's mortifying feet and found it necessary to amputate both his legs above the knees. The road workers raised a purse of several hundred dollars for him, and he was left in the care of the Jesuit fathers at the Pend d'Oreille mission.

A chinook in February broke the steady cold. Then, with the snow in a melting state, a sudden freeze formed a solid crust of ice, making it impossible for



## Capt. John Mullan

the stock to paw for food. As a result, many of Mullan's and the settlers' animals died the lingering death of starvation.

But the work of road building had to go on. Replacing his losses from the horse herds of the Indians, Mullan pushed on in the spring to Fort Benton, putting the finishing touches to the road. At its eastern terminus he paid off part of his crew, and the rest returned with him to Walla Walla. There, in August, the expedition was disbanded for the last time. Many of the road builders remained in the Northwest, some to farm and others to prospect. In recognition of Lieutenant Mullan's meritorious service he was promoted to the rank of captain on August 11 of '62.

## □ Arthur L. Stone

*For some reason, Stone's first two columns of "Following Old Trails" (see Page 1) weren't included in the book that resulted in 1913. They were written in June of 1911. The first covered the road from Missoula to Stevensville. The next was this selection.*

# Following Old Trails

## II – To Bonner

Missoulian, June 24, 1911

One does not fully comprehend the changes that have taken place about Missoula unless he pauses and lets his memory run back to the time which he first saw the town or first traveled along some of its highways. The changes have been so gradual in the making that those of us who have been here all the while do not realize how great they have been or how many of them. There are a good many roads leading out of Missoula and each of them leads back this way when you face about. Lately I have been tramping or riding over some of these old trails and involuntarily I have fallen into the habit of contrasting these trails as they are now with their condition when I began to travel them, almost 20 years ago. It has been interesting to me. Last week I set down some of my impressions as I had traversed the road to Stevensville. This week the jaunt to which I refer is not as long, but in some respects it is quite interesting.

Last Tuesday I rode up to Bonner and back. I went in a trolley car and had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. The first time I rode from Missoula to Bonner was a bright summer morning and I was the guest of E.L. Bonner, the distinguished Montana pioneer merchant whose name the town bears. I had never seen a big sawmill then, and that summer I was getting my first impressions of Missoula's territory, so Mr. Bonner asked me to go up and look over the plant.

We drove out over the old road around the south end of Jumbo and then swung off the county road. The county highway had just been built over Marshall grade, the old level road around the base of the cliff having been appropriated by the Northern Pacific for its route. That old switchback over Marshall grade was a terror. Nobody ever took it unless he was ignorant of its dangers or was broke and couldn't pay toll over the Bandmann road, which was built on the original Northern Pacific roadbed, abandoned because of the two bridges – they had only wooden bridges then and nobody liked them.



So it was that the old trail to Bonner had many devious changes. But when Bandmann developed his toll road across the big bend in the Missoula river, through the broad acres of his famous ranch, it became the popular route to the lively mill town at the mouth of the Blackfoot. It was a splendid road and it was over this trail that I traveled on the occasion of my first visit to Bonner. It was the popular way to Bonner until some miscreant who had a grudge against Bandmann – and there were so many who bore that grudge that it was never possible to fix the responsibility for this act – destroyed the bridge at the west end of the road and sent the travel around over the perilous Marshall grade. That bridge was never rebuilt – a ferry takes its place now but is not much used. The county was compelled to give attention to the grade and the result was the comparatively good highway which winds in horseshoe loops around the hill.

There is just one advantage possessed by this road over the Marshall hill. The view from its crest is one of the most delightful bits of scenery in all Montana and to see it is to be repaid for the stiff climb. The Missoula river winds through the widened canyon at this point in devious course; there are broad fields, fine gardens, rich orchards and snug homes set in the basin which nestles here amidst the pine-clad hills. It's a picture worth seeing – and it's close to home.

But to return to the Bandmann trail. The eminent tragedian had recently become the somewhat notorious farmer when I took this first ride over his toll road. He was a dreamer, but his dreams, had he been able to bring them all to realities, would have made of that basin one of the loveliest farms in the world. He had planted his orchard then and along the three miles of his level road had planted double rows of shade trees; it would have been a delightful drive if the trees had been cared for and had lived. Some of them are yet growing along the deserted road, but most of them died for lack of water. But all of them were growing that morning when Mr. Bonner took me over the road; they were small, but they looked thrifty and they gave promise of much beauty.

And, as we drove over this road, Mr. Bonner talked to me of Bandmann. He told me many things about this brilliant but eccentric man whom I did not know then but whom I came to treasure, later, as one of my good friends. Mr. Bonner's view was that of the thoroughly practical man. There were some of Bandmann's ideals that he could not comprehend, but he expressed admiration for the impulsive actor who had, after knowing all the world, selected this spot near Missoula as his permanent home. "If he can hold out, he will have a model place here," said Mr. Bonner. Bandmann "held out" almost long enough to realize his expectations regarding the farm in the canyon – almost but not quite. He had hard luck with his imported Holsteins, but he developed a splendid orchard. His enthusiasm had much to do with



## Following Old Trails: To Bonner

the introduction on a large scale of the McIntosh Red as the ideal apple for this locality. It was too bad that Bandmann could not live long enough to share in the triumph of this apple. It would have been a proud hour for him.

But for the Bandmann ranch and the smaller farms along the north side of the river there was not much ground broken in the canyon then. It is different now. There are cozy farms all along the road – and they are profitable farms.

Apart from the Bandmann toll road the old trail to Bonner was a rocky road. Across the flat from the east end of the Bandmann road to the Big Blackfoot river, the cobblestones were so thick as to suggest an amateur and unsuccessful attempt at paving. In this respect, too, there has been a big change in the years that have passed since I made my first hike over this trail. It is a good wagon road that leads up the canyon now. There has been some excellent work done here in highway building. This is one of the great changes that two decades have brought.

There was nothing, 20 years ago, between the Bandmann ranch and the mouth of the Big Blackfoot. The old road dipped down over a steep bank when it reached the river and it climbed up the east bank over a narrow dug road that was literally covered with rolling stones. It was the toughest piece of road I ever saw. Between those two banks, however, nestled the beautiful McCormick ranch, where the sturdy pioneer held the fort and commanded the strategic position which the confluence of the Blackfoot and the Missoula afforded.

Now that ranch is under 10 or 20 feet of water. The big power dam of the Missoula Light & Power company backs up its vast volume of water over the old ranch, over the old road and far up the river. The road has shifted up the stream to a more comfortable crossing and the big flat which was then a waste, now furnishes the sites for the great power plant, for the new mills of the Western Lumber company, for the delightful Riverside park and for some mighty fine ranches. Since that time there have been some snug fortunes made from the little farms which lie close under the north hills and which have furnished Bonner with its garden truck and its small fruits.

All along the line there have been changes. From the Missoula end to the Bonner terminus and at each of these places there have been wonderful transformations. Missoula has multiplied herself by four since then. Bonner has duplicated herself many times. Each has become beautiful, and, between there has been the same splendid development. The transformation has been great but it is only an indication of what may come; it just outlines the possibilities.

There is much to be done – more, in fact, to be done than has been done already. It makes me tired to hear complaint that the possibilities which the earlier residents had exist no more. There is just as good a chance now as there ever was. All that is needed is the foresight and the nerve to take advantage of it. Twenty years ago



there were men who grieved because the chance had passed and there were others who saw the chance that had not passed. Now the men of the first class are just where they were then and the men of the second class are riding in automobiles. Follow the trail to Bonner and you'll see plenty of evidence along this line. There are some mighty good opportunities, right now, along this trail.

There is a great brick industry being developed now along this trail and the clay and the opportunity were right there a long time ago. There are other opportunities just as good, if a man can see them and grasp them, and, having grasped, hang on. There's a beautiful ranch home at the foot of the eastern slope of Jumbo, where nobody but one man ever thought that a farm was possible until that one man proved not only that it was possible but that it was profitable, too.

Bonner had just begun to emerge from the uncouthness of a camp into the charm of a model mill town when I first visited it with its namesake that morning. The beautiful little hotel Margaret had just been finished and the trees and shrubbery in its ideal park were being planted that week. The logs had been cut from the lower canyon and they were driving the river then. Now the last drive has been made and a railway is pushing its line up the river to bring down the timber for two great plants instead of one. Bandsaws have replaced the old circulars; the mills have increased their capacity; the town has grown amazingly – grown larger and grown beautiful. It has been a wonderful change.

It used to be a slow hour's trip to Bonner. Tuesday afternoon I stepped into a trolley car at the Masonic temple corner and, all too soon – too soon because the trip was so thoroughly pleasant – the car stopped at the pretty little station in Bonner. We whisked through the pleasant east end of Missoula, out past the truck gardens and around Jumbo, through East Missoula and along the river, past the Riverside park and the Clark mills – almost completed – across the Big Blackfoot river, and around the big lumber yards into Bonner, where the car halts in the shade of the park that surrounds the Hotel Margaret. It was a marked contrast with that first ride to Bonner, when I sat behind the sleek, jogging steed over which Mr. Bonner held reins. And the contrast in the transportation conditions was not the most striking of all the contrasts, great as it was. It was the making-over of the country that is most impressive.

While we waited for the car to start back, we walked about in Bonner a bit. There are many beautiful cottage homes there. They have well-kept lawns and beautiful flowers about them. At one of them a woman was pushing a lawnmower. As we passed she looked up and smiled. "This is good exercise," she said, "and it makes the place look better."

Following Old Trails: To Bonner

That is the spirit of the city beautiful. It is a spirit which makes a town better and which accounts in great measure for the splendid progress which Missoula and western Montana are making. For there are many accessories to the city – beautiful work; they make for betterment along many lines.

*A.L.S.*



## □ Daniel E. Bandmann

*I grew up across the Clark Fork River from Bandmann Flats, but never once in my first 35 years or so wondered where the name came from. So much for intellectual curiosity. An abbreviated form of the following article appeared in Bonner Development Group's Two River News in 1996. KB*

### **When Thy Summons Come: Daniel Bandmann, Bonner eccentric**

**By Kim Briggeman**

**T**he Clark Fork River makes a reverse question mark of itself before pouring through the Hellgate Canyon into Missoula. Bandmann Flats, a sweeping ox-bow of pastureland, hangs from the inner lip of the question mark.

A hundred years ago, Daniel E. Bandmann owned, ranched and lived on these flats with wife Mary and three children. Bandmann bought the flats in 1888. A few months before he died in 1905, he sold an option on 20 acres encompassing the junction of the Blackfoot and Missoula (Clark Fork) rivers to William A. Clark, of Copper King fame, for construction of the Milltown Dam. Passionate, eccentric and a man given to outrageous dreams, Bandmann was far from your average turn-of-the-century rancher.

An eminent Shakespeare tragedian, he came to America in 1863 at age 24 from his native Germany. Bandmann played the part of Hamlet at some of the United States' most renowned playhouses on the East Coast, and made much-publicized appearances on London stages as well.

In 1888, the same year he bought a ranch in Montana, Bandmann played the dual role of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde at both the Amphion Academy in New York and Opera Comique in London. The play was based on Robert Louis Stevenson's novel published two years earlier. It was adapted for stage in 1887. A modern historian said Bandmann, as Mr. Hyde, was "credited as portraying the most grotesque seen on the stage."

That same year, telephone pioneer Alexander Graham Bell wrote to his father from London:

## Daniel Bandmann

*Dear Papa:*

*Mr. Bandman has come out in a piece by Lord Lytton "The Rightful Heir." A pretty good notice in Times. Cut up in Daily News. Bandman brought Miss Milly Palmer here a short time ago as his betrothed!! They desired to be remembered to you.*

A.L. Clarke, a modern researcher, said Bandmann divorced his wife Milly (Melissa) on June 24, 1892, and married Mary Kelly, an actress, in Missoula County. Clarke said Bandmann's nephew, Lincoln Eichberg of St. Paul, Minn., purchased a patent on 160 acres in Missoula Count in 1891, two years after Bandmann did.

Bandmann was in his early 50s when he moved west to Montana, but he hardly retired from theater. He gave readings from Shakespeare in Missoula and in the elegant Hotel Margaret in Bonner. He performed regularly at his own ranch, on the top floor of a remodeled livery stable. At one such production, Hamlet's ghost departed down a trap door and landed in a manure pile. The ghost wasn't eager to repeat the performance. Missoulian accounts reflected Bandmann's constant theater endeavors: traveling, acting, directing, teaching. Students at the new university in Missoula embraced him, and Bandmann started the first drama groups in Missoula. But his interests went beyond the stage. He developed orchards of apple trees and sought to establish the Bonner area as the McIntosh capital of Montana. He imported Holstein cattle and French Percheron horses, America's favorite breed in the 1880s. Bandmann represented Missoula on the seven-member state board of horticulture.

"Probably no man in the state had a more thorough knowledge of horticulture and he had always taken a most active and prominent part in the deliberations of the state meetings and has done much for the promotion of the cause of the farmer," said the Daily Missoulian, upon Bandmann's death in 1905.

"He was a dreamer," wrote Missoulian editor Arthur L. Stone six years later. "But his dreams, had he been able to bring them all to realities, would have made of that basin one of the loveliest farms in the world."

Bandmann established a toll bridge in the vicinity of the current Bandmann bridge, which spans the Clark Fork east of East Missoula. He offered a road across his flats as an alternative to a treacherous, winding trail over Marshall Grade.

Ambitious as he was, however, Bandmann was a notoriously poor businessman. His importation of Percherons coincided with the Panic of 1893, when the Percheron Horse Association of America was among thousands of businesses to go broke. Virtually no horses of the breed were shipped from France from 1894 to 1898, and the flood of importations from across the Atlantic didn't resume until 1906, scant



months after Bandmann's death.

The story was told of his attempt to sell apples in Missoula one day. The Missoula Mercantile wouldn't bite because he had covered a basket of bad apples with a few good ones. On July 19, 1900, Bandmann had two cases pending in Missoula court. John Larault was suing him to collect \$12.65 for labor performed on Bandmann's ranch, and Bandmann was seeking payment from George F. Brooks for spraying Brooks' apple trees in south Missoula.

The bank took Bandmann's horses and cattle when he couldn't make payments on them. His orchards and the double row of shade trees he planted along both sides of the road across his flats by and large failed, although some remnants are still visible.

"It would have been a delightful drive if the trees had been cared for and had lived," Stone said.

Sometime around the turn of the century, Bandmann lost his toll bridge. As Stone put it, "some miscreant who had a grudge against Bandmann – and there were so many who bore that grudge that it was never possible to fix the responsibility for this act – destroyed the bridge at the west end of the road." For a time, a seldom-used ferry took the place of a bridge, but the road over Marshall Grade was improved and became an accepted alternative. Eventually, a highway following the old railroad bed along the north side of the river took its place.

**D**aniel Bandmann's first appearance on an American stage was at Niblo's Garden in New York City on Sept. 29, 1863. He played an English-speaking Hamlet. Niblo's, at Broadway and Prince Street, was a gathering place with a European feel, and included food, fireworks and outdoor entertainment.

Though Bandmann's star would rise in America, it never approached that of contemporary John Wilkes Booth, five months Bandmann's junior. Booth was another Shakespearean aficionado, and an established star of the stage. Though never viewed as possessing the technical skills as his brother Edwin, John Wilkes Booth's popularity and fame as an actor far surpassed that of his brother.

In his book "The Matinee Idols" author David Carroll said John Wilkes Booth was "the recipient of a hundred love letters a week, was followed home by women, was carried off the stage by them, and was the first actor on record to have his clothes shredded by a gang of zealous fans."

At the same time Booth, a Maryland native and staunch backer of the Confederacy, stewed in the aftermath of Gettysburg and Sherman's ravage through

## Daniel Bandmann

the south.

"Something great and decisive had to be done," Wilkes wrote in his diary.

Six weeks after Bandmann played at Niblo's, Booth played the part of Raphael in *The Marble Heart* in the Ford Theater in Washington, D.C. President Abraham Lincoln watched from the same seat in which he would be assassinated by Booth 18 months later.

In his 1911 book "Shakespeare on the Stage," William Winter reviewed the performances of dozens of leading Shakespearean actors of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in the United States. Winter devoted two pages to Bandmann in the Hamlet section, calling him "one of the most talented actors of foreign origin and style who have appeared in America."

But, Winters added, Bandmann was "a performer whose youth promised much but whose maturity achieved little." In Winters' opinion, Bandmann as an actor "lacked repose, self-command, and mental concentration." As Hamlet, "no spectre haunted his thought; no tinge of madness colored his melancholy ... In short, he did not possess either the mind or the temperament of Hamlet, and his performance stopped short at professional utility."

Still, Bandmann was widely embraced by the public. Theatrical producer David Belasco said, "As an actor, he didn't approach Edwin Booth, Daniel Bandmann didn't; nor was he another Charles Keen. But he was a player from the tip of his toes to the crown of his head. And after he'd shaken the rafters in the small towns they never wanted anyone else."

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*"Bandmann was a stalwart, muscular person, having an Hebraic, aquiline face, sanguine complexion, small eyes, and abundant long, dark hair, curled and brushed back from the brow. His manner was animated, ostentatious, ebullient, and he possessed much vitality and enthusiasm. His voice was strong, neither deep nor sympathetic. In nature he was selfish, crafty, and insincere." – William Winter, 1911, Shakespeare on the Stage*

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Bandmann's death came as a shock. He was less than two weeks short of his 68<sup>th</sup> birthday on the afternoon of Nov. 23, 1905, when what was called a severe case of indigestion seized him at his ranch. He died shortly after 8 o'clock that night of heart failure. Survivors included his young widow and five children, four of whom lived with him. The youngest was but four months old. Daniel Edward Bandmann Jr. died in Spokane in April of 1994. The oldest



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surviving child, a grown-up daughter by previous wife Millie, lived in the East.

University of Montana president Oscar Craig eulogized Bandmann at his funeral on Nov. 25, 1905, at the Elks Hall in Missoula. Among the pallbearers were Missoula mayor Fredrick Webster and C.H. McLeod, who became president of the Missoula Mercantile the following year and held the position for 35 years.

Bandmann was remembered by the Missoulian with a quote from one of his favorite recitations – “Thanatopsis” by William Cullen Bryant. Bandmann, said the paper, often said his purpose was to *“so live that when thy summons come to join that innumerable caravan, fold the draperies of thy couch about thee and lie down to pleasant dreams.”*

He was buried in the Missoula Valley Cemetery.

*For it's break the rollways out, my boys,  
and let the big sticks slide!  
And file your calks and grease your boots  
and start upon the drive.  
A hundred miles of water is the nearest  
way to town;  
So tie into the tail of her  
and keep her hustling down.*

*There's some poor lads will never lift  
a peavey hook again.  
Nor hear the trees crack with frost,  
nor feel a warm spring rain.  
'Twas falling timber, rolling logs,  
that handed them their time;  
It was their luck to get it so,  
it may be yours or mine.*

*But break the rollways out, my lads,  
and let the big sticks slide.  
For one man killed within the woods,  
ten drowned on the drive.  
So make your peace before you take  
the nearest way to town,  
While lads that are in heaven,  
watch the drive go down.*

**Old ballad**

**Cited in "The Baron, The Logger, The Miner & Me"**

**By John H. Toole, 1984**



## □ John H. Toole

*In his 1984 book "The Baron, The Logger, The Miner, and Me," former Missoula mayor John H. Toole chronicled the lives of his great-grandfather Cornelius C. "Baron" O'Keefe, who came to Montana with Captain John Mullan's road-building party in 1859; of his grandfather Kenneth Ross, the logger who became head of the Anaconda Company's timber operation at Bonner, and of his other grandfather, John R. Toole, adviser to Copper King Marcus Daly and Daly's surrogate in the Montana political arena.*

### **From "The Baron, The Logger, The Miner, and Me"**

**S**pring of 1907 brought the melting of snow and the cracking of ice to Seeley Lake. The river pigs punched and pulled the great logs to the outlet of the lake and down to the pool behind the first splash dam. Sometimes, they had to lash a butt-heavy tamarack log to a buoyant pine log; then both would float.

The dam was a primitive affair built of logs and timber. When the pool back of the dam was plumb full of logs, high explosives blew out the dam with a terrific explosion.

A horrendous mass of ice, water and logs poured through the breach and roared down the Clearwater to the next splash dam. Behind the logs swarmed dozens of river pigs in narrow, high-prowed mackinaw boats. Some hopped on the flat surface of the big split tamarack logs. The men were doomed to be wet for the next thirty days, but they all yelled lustily as they went bobbing down the stream. They yelled because they were going to town – going to town after six months of unremitting toil, bitter cold, and isolation from the world.

When they encountered a log jam, they would pile out into two feet, four feet, or six feet of water and attack the logs with peavies. And there were many jams of the big logs on the small Clearwater.

Of all the dangerous enterprises in the old West, none was so dramatic, colorful, or exciting as "bringing in the drive."

As he had done so many times before, Kenneth Ross surveyed the scene from a small hill. This time he didn't like what he saw. Hundreds of big tamarack logs lay stranded, some as far away from the stream bed as 100 yards.

He set his jaw and called to Brian: "Get a dozen teams down here and skid them logs to the stream bed. Next year's drive will take 'em down."

## Log Drive: The Baron, The Logger, The Miner, and Me"

"The horses are in bad shape, Mr. Ross, after workin' all winter."

Ross gave Brian a steely look: "I said, get a dozen teams down here! I'll send some more when I get back to Bonner!"

He turned and mounted his big black horse. He rode back to camp thinking about splash dams, extra teams, extra lumberjacks, long-butting and shoveling snow, and calculating the devastating cost.

Brian did his work well. By May 1, 40 million feet of logs lay floating in Salmon Lake. This lake is a narrow, six-mile body of slack water. The river pigs could do little here because the lake was 100 feet deep with an abrupt drop-off. An effort was made to punch and pole the logs from the boats, but every day the wind blew up the lake and the logs floated back to the lake's north end.

Kenneth Ross arrived, took one look across the lake at the mass of quietly floating logs and yelled to Brian: "All right, Brian, you've got to winch 'em through by hand!"

"Winch 'em through?"

"You bet; I've done it before in Wisconsin. Here's how to do it."

Ross knelt down and drew a diagram in the dirt. Brian shook his head – then got going.

A giant, hand-turned winch was placed on a flat-bottomed boat called a "bateau." A long string of logs was chained together to form a boom partly enclosing the floating logs. One end of the boom was tied to a tree on one side of the lake, the other to a cable running to the winch on the bateau, which was positioned at the south end of the lake. Rotating the drum winch drew the logs down the lake, but it was so tiring that relays of men had to take turns on the handles.

Gradually the great masses of logs moved southward through the lake and entered a canyon where the Clearwater forced its way with tumbling speed and foaming white water. As the logs burst into the rapids and raced down with bucking violence, the river pigs once again raised their primitive yells and launched their mackinaw boats into the torrent. After building two more splash dams, the men got the logs to the confluence of the Clearwater and the Big Blackfoot rivers. They yelled again when the first logs poured into the heaving rapids of the big river. Now they were home free.

The mill at Bonner had been idle since November for lack of logs. Now Kenneth Ross stood on the dam he had helped build in 1884 and watched as the first logs from Seeley Lake rounded the bend and were hoisted into the mill. Suddenly came the explosive report of the steam "dog" that turned the logs – suddenly came the high-pitched whine of the band saws – then came the thumping of planks on rollers – and the bang of mine timbers falling on the conveyors that raced them to the waiting



## Log Drive: The Baron, The Logger, The Miner, and Me"

freight cars. Ross turned and walked back to the office. This was his life.

At the end of four years, the Seeley timber was cut out. They were years of herculean effort and runaway expenses. An old logger said, "Ross almost lost his job over that Seeley Lake deal."

And many of the river pigs needed medical attention. Their feet had absorbed so much water that they had contracted "squeak heel": when they walked across the floor barefooted, their feet squeaked with an audible, slushy sound. There was no cure.

The flood of 1908 helped greatly in getting the logs to Bonner, but it caused a huge strain on the dam. The logs all arrived at once, and an enormous pile choked the mouth of the Blackfoot Canyon. Logs blocked the county road, floated around the office and into the yards. Everyone held his breath about the dam. The forty million feet of logs had nothing between them and the Pacific Ocean, but the old dam held.

The lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service was filed and tried. Anaconda got a small settlement. The camps moved to Potomac and a railroad was used for the first time. The logs were dumped into the Blackfoot at McNamara's Landing. The drive was short and easy.