

FOUR OF ARTIST PAXSON'S PAINTINGS HAVE BEEN PLACED IN STATE CAPITOL

R. Clark Fisk, writing for the Helena Record, thus describes the four paintings by Artist E. S. Paxson of this city, which have just been placed in the new wings of the state capitol at Helena.

Four of the six panels done by E. S. Paxson as a part of the mural decoration for the new capitol wings have just been placed and are now ready to be viewed by art lovers and sight-seers. The panels, two of which are very large, occupy the wall space in the long, narrow lobby of the new house quarters in the west wing. The lighting comes from a west window and from dome globes in the low ceiling. The room decoration is classic and the color scheme throughout has been carried to a soft and complete harmony, making a finished setting for the scenes which Paxson, with his inimitable wealth of color has depicted. The work itself was done at the artist's studio home in Missoula, his son and daughter posing for the figures. The theme of each is big with historic moment and rich in the romance that clothes the first out-reaching effort made here in Montana for the settlement of the west.

To realize the motive that inspired Paxson's brush to creative beauty, it is primarily necessary that one must understand not only something of the history of those times of a century, and a century and a half ago, but must as well assimilate something of the viewpoint of those leading actors who not only forsook homes, safety and comfort, and often gave their lives, fighting always, for their desire for discovery and their belief in the richness of the then known country and the ultimate evolution with greatness and power.

Verendrye, the Discoverer.

Sieur Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Verendrye was a discoverer. Of high French lineage, like so many of those others of large ability who helped to build the superstructure of the then rich and afterwards still more fabulous fur trade in the far northern provinces, the life of the woods runner, the song of the voyager, appealed to the adventure in his blood. Nor was he satisfied with trade. From far out toward the land of the setting sun came vague rumors of a salt water that moved in tide. The hardest navigators reported its presence but not its breadth nor contour. The western sea. To find his way to this, the narrow strip of water separating the unknown west land from the little better known coasts of Asia—this was his dream, his passion, his desire.

The French king denied assistance. Pure concessions were, however, granted him in all the land he might bring to the crown by right of discovery and on this indefinite retroactive endowment Verendrye gathered together several rather unwilling merchants at the trading post and fort where Montreal now stands, who agreed to furnish him with goods for trade—they in return to handle and receive the major profits from gathered peltries.

Verendrye, with his four sons, and a party of 50 hunters left Montreal in June, 1731, and during the next 10 years he established and maintained a string of trading posts, first along Lake Superior from Michilimackinac and finally reaching to Fort Maurepas on Lake Winnipeg. His sons had ascended the Saskatchewan to its forks and visits had been made up the Red river and across from its headwaters to the Missouri river and trading relations established with the Mandan Indians. But the progress of discovery through the medium of trading posts was slow. The farthest travel westward had failed to show a river flowing toward the sunset and the western sea was still an unsolved mystery. Even the Shining mountains that, according to Indian story must first be crossed, were unplaced and unknown. In April, 1742, two of the brothers, Pierre and Francois Verendrye, left one of their posts on the Assiniboine and traveling southward for several weeks came to the Mandan village on the Missouri. It was late in the summer, however, before guides could be secured to pilot them toward the land of their desire, for the Mandans were in great fear of the warlike Sioux and practical Minnetarees. At last two natives agreed to take the brothers west to a tribe that could conduct them to the Shining mountains. Traversing the Little Missouri to the Black hills the little party

crossed thence west into the Powder river country and for a month searched and waited for the tribe that would lead their farther westward. At last, finding a party of Crows who conducted them to their village, the Mandans returned and the brothers joined a Crow party that was to march west on a war trail after their enemies the Shakes.

On New Year's day, 1743, this tribal war party came to what are now called the Big Horn mountains. The women and children were left here in a sheltered valley, the warriors alone advancing. Francois de la Verendrye remained with the former and his brother Pierre pushed on with the scalp hunters. It was winter. For two weeks the way led west and south and then the travelers stood at the base of the main range of the Rockies. The "Shining mountains" rose high against the sky and formed an impassable barrier. The western sea? It must be



ARTIST E. S. PAXSON

just beyond. Verendrye wanted to climb to the top and look down upon those elusive waters, little dreaming that even after the interminable distance he had come another thousand wilderness miles must be traversed before a salt water would rise in tides. And the Indians, not finding the Shakes, returned to their camp in the Big Horn mountains, taking Verendrye with them. Pierre de la Verendrye is the man Paxson has chosen in his picture by that title to show the artist's idea of the first white man who came to Montana.

Lewis and Clark.

Better known to all Montanians two scenes depicting incidents of the exploration of Lewis and Clark now hold, as they always will, much interest for all who look upon them.

Taken chronologically the first of these is "Lewis at Black Eagle Falls." It will be remembered that on their tedious way up the Missouri the little party of hardy explorers with their boats came to what they afterward named Maria's river, June 3, 1805. All of the party except the two leaders thought this north branch was the stream they should follow. Exploring parties up both streams failed to discover the great falls which the Indians told them were on the Missouri, the stream that ran far back into the mountains. In their indecision the reason of both Lewis and Clark, based as it then was upon the meagerest of rumor and much garbled repeated tribal story, was wonderful in its logic and marvelous in its exactitude. Against the better judgment of all their men they chose the southern route and proceeded on their way. Lewis, with four men, traveled far out on the north side of the stream, keeping to the better going of the unbroken

on prairie levels, abated back to the river from time to time with loads of buffalo, elk and deer meat, or to leave a note for Captain Clark, coming with the boats. At noon, June 15, Lewis came to the great falls of the Missouri. Here the party spent the night. Next morning one man was sent down stream to report the discovery to Captain Clark, the men were sent out to bring in the meat of some buffalo killed the evening before, and Captain Lewis started up the river to ascertain if there were other falls above. His diary tells of each rapid and fall he found and of his coming at last to the drop at what is now called the Black Eagle falls.

He writes: "A beautiful level plain on the south side only a few feet above the level of the pitch. On the north side where I am, the country is more broken and immediately behind me near the river is a high hill." (The big stack of the Amalgamated smelter now rises from this eminence.) "Below this fall at a little distance a beautiful little island, well timbered, is situated about the middle of the river. On this island, in a cottonwood tree, an eagle has placed her nest. A more inaccessible spot I believe she could not have found, for neither man nor beast dare pass those gulfs which

clad figures traversing a forest path. They are all Indians and, as the story goes, are starting on their long journey from the Flathead country to St. Louis in search of "The White Man's Book." The story tells that at one of the religious festivals of the Indians an American Fur company trapper, who by the way must have been something of a man himself, told the assembled tribe that the gods they worshipped were no good and that the white man's God was the only one to receive their prayers. The big men of the tribe wanted fact. The trapper told them the word of the white man's God was in a book and that they could get it by going to St. Louis, then the world center for the western fur empire.

The Indians decided they must have this "book." Because it was an important task the best men must be chosen. Because the way was long only the ablest could undertake the journey. Three of the tribe's most noted warriors, and who were also wise in council, were dispatched to bring the volume. This start is what Paxson has shown. Rich in color the trail the three are following comes through the shadowy defiles of a surrounding forest. Far back glimmers softly a snow-crest of the "Shining mountains" summit. It is estimated that two of them shall never see again. For, making their long way to the white man's city, where they are greeted by no less a personage than Captain Clark himself, misfortune overtakes the pilgrims in the shape of yellow fever. Two succumb. The third returns, ragged, hungry, and heart sick, and he, alas, without "The White Man's Book."

Paxson has two other spaces to fill in the lobby of the house. One of these will be "The Surrender of Chief Joseph," and the other, the last of the six he is to do, the artist calls "The Border Land." Both of these are well under way and will be in place in a few weeks.

SALMON CITY NOTES

Salmon City, June 16.—It is confidently believed that the coming excursion of the Butte Chamber of Commerce will shed some light upon the persistent talk about the Butte-Boise railroad project. The Northwestern railroad, which is said to be behind the Gilmore and Pittsburgh road, will extend its line from Salmon, up the river to Challis, from which place it will cross a low divide and go down the south fork of the Payette river, and down the main Payette river to a point near Horseshoe Bend. About four miles southwest of Horseshoe Bend a tunnel will be cut, and thence an easy grade will be followed into Boise. It is alleged that the new road will form a connecting link in J. J. Hill's plan of putting the Northwestern into San Francisco by way of Salmon, Challis, Boise and Winnemucca.

W. J. Morgan, who died in Butte from injuries received in a boiler explosion at the Pennsylvania mine, was buried here this week. The funeral services were conducted by the Rev. James Roberts, of the Presbyterian church, and were attended by a large number of persons. The Salmon City band, of which the deceased had been a member, took part in the ceremonies. He is survived by a wife and two infant children.

Frank Haug has been appointed deputy sheriff at Gilmore, and will direct the building of a jail at that leading mining camp.

Superintendent E. B. Darnelle of the Salmon Creamery company, reports that farmers are milking about four hundred cows for this institution. The weekly output of butter is about 1,400 pounds, which is slightly in excess of the local demand. The surplus is put into cans directly from the churn and placed in cold storage, and some of this will be marketed in the Big-hole country as was done last year.

Some members of the eighth grade graduate class of the Salmon schools had a dangerous experience last week while trying to cross the swollen waters of Carmen creek to their picnic ground. The current carried the waders away, landing it bottom upwards and broken in pieces. The horses broke loose and swam to shore. Gallons of ice cream and stacks of luscious cakes and pies provided a feast for the trout and salmon. Fortunately, all the picnickers managed to rescue themselves, although the pretty frocks of some of the sweet girl graduates lost much of their frilly attractiveness.

C. J. Poppleton, who was indicted by the grand jury for illicit selling of intoxicating liquors, has filed affidavits looking towards the quashing of the indictments on various grounds. At the session of the district court this week, with Judge Stevens presiding, members of the recent grand jury have been specifically questioned by Messrs. Cowen and Holden, attorneys for Poppleton. The result of this case will have an important bearing upon many of the indictments (of which there were seventy-one) returned by that grand jury.

Mrs. A. T. Brewer, a pioneer of California, Nevada, Idaho and Montana, died here this week, in her seventy-fourth year. In 1868 she called around Cape Horn to the California gold fields. She was a native of Davis county, Kentucky, where her father, Judge Triplett, served for 20 years as district judge. Mrs. Brewer was in Virginia City during the Comstock boom, and saw the golden days of many western mining camps. During the past twenty years she has lived in this district. Five of her ten children survive here.

PUTER PINCHED.

Portland, Ore., June 16.—Stephen A. D. Puter, a timber operator and one of the best known of the defendants in the so-called Oregon-land-fraud cases of 1906, was arrested here late today on a telegraphic warrant from Minneapolis. The warrant charges forgery and further than that the detectives are unable to give any information.

Puter stated tonight that his arrest was either the result of mistaken identity or that he was a victim of

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French Calbriggan shirts and drawers, 50c. Keep Cool "spray knit" shirts and drawers, 50c. Keep Cool union suits, \$1.00. Nainsook separate or combination garments, suit, \$1. Fine mercerized athlete union suits, \$1.50. Roxford Balbriggan union suits, \$1.50.

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Minneapolis lumber interests, with whom he claims to have had differences of several years standing.

NIPPER IS KILLED.

Wallace, June 14.—(Special).—Shortly before daybreak this morning W. E. Cobb, a nipper in the Standard mine at Mace, was electrocuted, when a piece of drill he was carrying over his shoulder struck a highly-charged wire overhead. His body was burned frightfully. Fellow workmen rushed to his aid and were also shocked and burned. Cobb was a resident of Kellogg.

RATHER WEAK.

(From Judge.) Diner—"Waiter, bring me a glass of water."

Waiter—"Certainly, sir, but you already have one glass." Diner—"One is not enough. Get me another. I want to strengthen this soup."

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