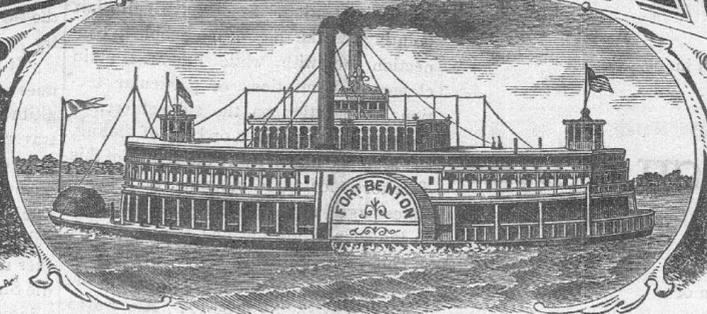


FORT BENTON RECORD



Vol. 1.

FORT BENTON, M. T., SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 1875.

No. 10

THE BENTON RECORD,

Fort Benton, M. T.,

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W. H. BUCK, - - - Editor & Proprietor.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION.

(IN ADVANCE.)

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SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS.

ADVERTISING RATES.

SPACE	1 w.	2 w.	3 w.	4 w.	13 w.	26 w.	52 w.
1 inch.	\$2 50	\$3 00	\$4 00	\$5 00	\$10 00	\$16 00	\$24 00
2 "	4 50	5 00	6 50	8 00	14 00	20 00	30 00
3 "	6 00	7 00	8 00	10 00	16 00	24 00	40 00
4 "	7 00	8 00	10 00	12 00	24 00	36 00	52 00
5 "	8 00	10 00	12 00	14 00	30 00	40 00	64 00
6 "	9 00	12 00	14 00	16 00	36 00	50 00	80 00
8 "	11 00	20 00	24 00	28 00	50 00	80 00	120 00
column	20 00	30 00	36 00	42 00	80 00	120 00	200 00

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EXTRADITION.

On the 21st instant Messrs Hale, Hardwick, Evans, Harper and Devaux were arrested by Deputy Marshals Hard and Beidler, assisted by the military, for the killing of Assinaboin Indians, at Cypress Mountains, British America, some two years ago. The warrant for the arrest of the men was issued at the instance of a special commissioner appointed to investigate the matter.

We are not as yet thoroughly conversant with the evidence that will be offered before Special Commissioner Cullen, at Helena, in support of the Canadian requisition to extradite the accused parties, but from such information as we have been able to obtain from reliable sources, we judge that no evidence can be produced that would convict the men in any United States Court.

As yet the public has but an imperfect idea of the circumstances attending this unfortunate occurrence, and the little information that has been furnished savors of prejudice and misrepresentation. We append the following statement written out by one of the men, which will convey a better idea of the affair than any words of our own could do:

"Our horses were stolen by Assinaboin Indians. We made application to the military commander at Fort Benton for an escort of soldiers to assist in recovering our property, but were refused. We took the trail ourselves, and in following it up, came within five miles of Farwell's trading post. Two of our party then went ahead for the purpose of reconnoitering. They discovered an Indian camp

with a few horses, but none of them were ours. One of the men returned to us, the other proceeded to Farwell's post and remained until we arrived there the following morning. Sick and disappointed at not having obtained our horses and tired after a long day's ride, we laid down to sleep after exchanging news, &c.

About four o'clock we were awakened by Farwell, who came to us with his gun in his hand, apparently greatly excited. He asked us to assist him in negotiating for the recovery of his horse which the Indians had stolen during the night. We consented to aid him, and following him proceeded to the Indian camp. On our arrival, the Indians at once assumed a hostile attitude and refused to give up the horses, saying that if we did not leave, they would wipe us out. To retreat under the circumstances would simply have been destruction to the whole party. If we had even displayed the least sign of fear, any one acquainted with the Indian nature will admit that our chances for escape would have been small. Farwell advised us to keep quiet, saying that he would endeavor to induce them to listen to reason. Knowing that we were not willing to have any difficulty with the Indians and that we were consulting on the best method of treating, if possible, Farwell strove hard to quiet the Indians. It was of no avail, and after several attempts were made to open fire on us, Farwell, under pretense of going for his interpreter, left us to our fate. When the Indians saw Farwell leave they became convinced that we were afraid, and could be easily overcome. The moment Farwell was out of sight they opened fire on us—against the wishes, as we afterwards learned, of a few of the older Indians—one of their bullets passing through the hat of one of our party. The result is known. We fought for our lives, as only men on the brink of eternity can fight, against fearful odds and without hope of success.

We now appeal to the people of America; we ask the frontier settlers, and the whole of Montana's population, is there one among you who would not, under the same circumstances, have done precisely as we did? The circumstances under which we came to be in that part of the country have been truthfully related; but we were not at the time aware that we were on

British soil. The establishment of the boundary line has since proved that the fight took place upon foreign ground, but it is doubtful whether any person could then have told whether the soil belonged to the United States or Canada. But had we been similarly situated in the heart of England itself, it is difficult to understand how we could have acted otherwise than we did. The law of self preservation is the same in all countries and under all flags.

We went to the camp for the purpose of assisting a neighbor in the peaceable recovery of his horse. We had no other object in going there, our own property was not in the camp, and we could have no motive in commencing the fight. Four or five shots were fired at us before we pulled a trigger, and then the odds were so much against us, that we acted only on the defensive, until one of our little party was killed, when through sheer desperation we changed from the defensive to the attack and routed the whole five or six hundred warriors, killing some thirty or forty. And for thus successfully defending our lives, we are charged with the crime of murder, to be brought before a tribunal, and perhaps handed over to the tender mercies of the Canadian government, who will gladly convict us upon the purchased evidence of a cowardly informer."

Without commenting upon the right of about a dozen men—whom an officer of high rank in the U. S. Army designated in his account of the affair to an Eastern journal as the "thirteen Kit Carsons"—to defend their lives against half a thousand blood thirsty brutes, we would ask, what effect would the punishment of these men have upon the Indians themselves? The affair at Cypress Mountains taught the Assinaboins the same lesson that the Piegans received from Col. Baker, and the method of instruction was far more creditable to the teachers. The tribe has since remained in mortal terror of the whites, never daring to meet them in open conflict, no matter what advantages they might have; and their depredations, compared with those of former years have been few and confined to pilfering and the murder of unarmed men. But should these accused men—these American citizens, to whose bravery every settler in this region is indebted for peaceable possession

of his home, perhaps for his own life and that of his family—are to be given up to the British authorities to receive that punishment which should be meted out to the red cut throats who have so long made this country almost uninhabitable, will not these Indians be justified in believing that their outrages are countenanced by our own and the Canadian governments? For years they have been clothed and fed on this side of the line, and afforded a safe asylum on the other. And now if the whites are to be punished for protecting their lives against them, will they not at once renew the hostilities of former years, under the impression that no matter what depredations they commit, their victims alone will be the sufferers?

With these few remarks we are compelled to leave the subject for the present, but will give it due attention in the next issue of the RECORD.

An exchange informs us that there are "twelve Indian students in Drury College, at Springfield, Mo." That's nothing. If we accept the reports of Indian agents, there are over twelve hundred Indian students in Montana, and, without a doubt, will graduate with high honors. Last year's class did not come up to the expectations of their daddies; they have not yet got beyond the first lesson in horse stealing.

"Some of the English-speaking Nez Perces report that, as they were leaving Bozeman, some white men followed them with three kegs of whisky, which getting into the Indians, a fight was organized among themselves in which four noble reds and one squaw departed for the happy hunting grounds."—N. N. West.

We present the above extract for the reflection of those who are laboring under the erroneous impression that in the vicinity of Benton alone are our red brothers entertained with draughts from the flowing bowl. Could the above occurrence be laid on the shoulders of the people of this section, as many similar occurrences have been laid without any reason whatever, how glad would be the hearts of those who are opposed—and who never neglect an opportunity to show their opposition—to the prosperity of Benton and vicinity.

There are five pairs in the present Senate—the Camerons, Joneses, Ferrys, Johnsons, and Shewells. How would Schenck play them?

There are young men who cannot hold a skein of yarn for their mothers without wincing, but will hold 125 pounds of a neighboring family for the best part of the night with a patience and docility that are certainly phenomenal.

THE PEN AND THE PRESS.

Young Genius walked out by the mountains and streams
Entranced by the power of his own pleasant dreams,
Till the silent, the wayward, the wandering thing
Found a plume that had fallen from a passing bird's wing:

Exulting and proud like a boy at his play,
He bore the new prize to his dwelling away;
He gazed for awhile on its beauties, and then
He cut it, and shaped it, and called it a Pen.

But its magical use he discovered not yet,
Till he dipped its bright lips in a fountain of jet;
And, oh! what a glorious thing it became!
For it spoke to the world in a language of flame:
While its master wrote on like a being inspired,
Till the hearts of the million were melted or fired:
It came as a boon and a blessing to men,—
The peaceful, the pure, the victorious Pen.

Young Genius went forth on his rambles once more,
The vast, sunless caverns of earth to explore;
He searched the rude rock, and with rapture he found
A substance unknown, which he brought from the
ground;

He fused it with fire, and rejoiced at the change,
As he moulded the ore into characters strange,
Till his thoughts and his efforts were crowned with
success;

For an engine uprose, and he called it the Press.

The Pen and the Press, blest alliance! combined
To soften the heart and enlighten the mind;
For that to the treasures of knowledge gave birth,
And this sent them forth to the ends of the earth:
Their battles for truth were triumphant indeed,
And the rod of the tyrant was snapped like a reed;
They were made to exalt us, to teach us, to bless,
Those invincible brothers,—the Pen and the Press.

Under the Spell.

Spelling matches continue to take down the pride not only of pedagogues, but of printers, authors, and "schoolmarms," all thrice armed in the paucity of a bosom friend intimacy with Webster, Worcester, Sheridan, Walker, and Dr. Johnson. As no two of our English and American lexicographers spell certain words alike, and as time itself makes extraordinary changes in the orthography of our language, the most learned men and women are quite as likely to be caught napping, as the most superficially taught miss or master. And that is precisely where the laugh comes in; for the learned pundit cannot come to grief without delighting an irreverent world, and no amount of study or preparation could avert an occasional failure, even if any one dictionary compiler himself were placed upon the anxious seat. If any good system of spelling were accepted as the American, all writers in the United States might be in accord, and errors would become the errors of ignorance; but as it stands we have no national system, and the general rule of accuracy in spelling as in pronunciation rests with the custom of good writers and the educated classes—a rule extremely vague and subject to misinterpretation. New England at present manufactures most of our school books; but the spelling and pronunciation of many words, as established in New England, are openly repudiated among the educated classes of other sections of the Union. And yet, at these spelling matches, only general custom is accepted as authority for the recognized system of spelling, and the general custom we may be sure, will always largely depend upon the character of the elementary class-books employed in the local schools. Hence it follows that a failure to spell with accuracy no more implies defective instruction than a failure to exhibit a neat and legible handwriting; and we all know that some of the proudest intellects in the land have gloried in a caligraphy as undecipherable as the Assyrian inscriptions to all but the initiated.