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FORT BENTON

EXPRESS,

GEO. HOUK, Proprietor.

Parties desiring my services will please leave their orders at E. BRADLEY'S CARPENTER SHOP.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Helena Journals and the Diamond R—The Herald's Ridicule of an Unfortunate Freighter—Sioux Depredations Smoothed Over.

To the Editor of the Record:

Since the first war-whoop of the Sioux was heard on the Musselshell, the journals of Helena have been persistent in showing to the world the unprotected situation of Montana, and in demanding the interference of the government in the advancement of the Diamond R project. This may be proper, but why wait until the eleventh hour? Why wait until the Diamond R property was subjected to the depredations of the Indians? Other freighters of Helena have suffered from the same cause while transporting Carroll freight. One instance in particular cannot have escaped the notice or recollection of the Helena newspapers. Doc Friel's train was attacked by Sioux Indians, this spring, while transporting Carroll freight. What did our Helena friends have to say about that occurrence? One journal, in its usual way of treating questions wherein the lives or property of the people are involved, published a few lines quizzing the unfortunate freighter, who had narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Sioux. The other journal remained silent. Now, why was this occurrence made the subject of one paper and ignored by the other? Why, simply because Friel's was hauling freight which should have been delivered at Helena at least half a year previous. This train was transporting last year's late Carroll freight by way of Benton, the shortest route, to be delivered at Helena as the first freight of this season. This the Diamond R company did not wish to have known to the public, and the folly of not striving to prevent a repetition of the depredation, of not enforcing the demands which have lately been entered, can now be plainly seen. They might have known that the Sioux are no respecters of persons, nor could they be subsidized by any particular transportation route. It was rumored, though, at the time, that the train was attacked because the Sioux thought it belonged to a Benton freighter, and that consequently their actions would be smoothed over and that punishment would not be meted out to them for the murder of Benton freighters. So much for the Carroll route depredations, for the result of which I am

ANXIOUS.

False Statements of the Champions of the Carroll Route—Moralizing on the Probable Fate of "XXX"—The Herald's False Prophet—The Carroll Route Challenged to Show Proof of its Pretended Superiority—A few Facts and Figures Showing the Advantages of Heavy Freight Over Packet Transportation.

To the Editor of the Record:

Since I have had the pleasure of entering the field in defense of Benton, against the accusations and false presumptions of the champions of the Carroll route, events of such a nature have transpired, that the hardest heart must soften when dwelling thereon. My sympathies extend to the unfortunate dupes of rash newspaper prophecies. I yearn to hear the piteous appeal of "XXX" for a "square deal." Alas! noble knight of an unworthy crusade, thy days, perhaps, are passed; thy scalp-lock, for aught I know, may be entwined in the girdle of some Sioux warrior. Whatever be thy fate, thy sin of striving to rob Benton of its birthright is forgiven, as thou wert only criminal in intent. But other champions have arisen, the contest is again forced, and the clouds of sorrow through which I view the prostrate condition of the Carroll route must pass away, my moralizing must end at the stern command of duty.

In the midst of the Musselshell depredations, and while relating a melancholy account of murder and rapine on the Carroll road, the Helena Herald adds an advertisement of that route predicting that no further trouble would ensue. Subsequent events proved the Herald a false prophet, and its remarks reprehensible to the public welfare, for Indian depredations have not, up to this date, ceased in that locality. In other issues of that journal the Carroll route is represented as the cheapest, most reliable, and quickest transportation route for freight to this Territory. I deny it. The Carroll route is not reli-

ble, it is not a fast freight road, and by no means has it reduced the rates of transportation; and I defy the production of any proof that would give a basis for this claim of supremacy as made by the Herald on behalf of the Carroll route. If any data exists, now is the time to advance it. Do not hide a light under a bushel, for the public have no grounds upon which they could endorse the assumption of the Herald in this particular, nor have our Carroll friends any proof on which they can properly establish their claims.

The Independent, in a late article on the Coulson Line, says:

This popular line of steamers plying between Bismarck and Carroll in connection with the Diamond R freight line and the N. P. Stage Company, have successfully demonstrated that the navigation of the Upper Missouri is not a question of uncertainty regarding time, but on the contrary, reliable boats can accomplish trips between the points named with the same regularity and dependance that has made popular the packet trade on the lower rivers."

We are not aiming to establish a packet trade. We are striving to transport heavy shipments of freight at the lowest rates and in the shortest time. The traffic of the Upper Missouri precludes the possibility of establishing a packet trade. We require steamers that will bring at least three, if possible five, hundred tons of freight to our markets at nominal rates, and not packets that can only transport fifty tons at most exorbitant rates. With us it is not so much a question of time and regularity as of cheap rates and large shipments and rapid transit of the same, which alone can aid in giving the people the great advantage of cheap markets. Did the interests of Montana require demonstration of the navigability of the Upper Missouri in regard to the packet trade, freight could be delivered on our levee more than one month earlier than usual. But this is not the case, for the rates on the large amounts destined for the Montana markets, and which have been and will be transported by way of Benton, would be so enormous that no benefit whatever could accrue therefrom; in fact our market prices would be increased twenty fold. Had we but a few tons of freight to come this way, like the Carroll route, a railroad company to give us special rates, and a line of packets working to break down the reputation of an enemy's line of steamers, then we might entertain the project of packeting. But what has been done by the Fort Benton Transportation Company? They have successfully demonstrated that more freight can be transported to Montana via Benton in the same time than all your fast sailing packets can unload at Carroll, although Fort Benton is a few hundred miles further up the river. It has been shown that the very boats that the Carroll people say were their ruin last year can be utilized to our advantage on this route. It has been found that freight shipped by way of Benton in heavily laden steamers can be delivered at Helena before the Carroll freight which was pushed through in sixty-ton packets.

The Independent says: "The Key West, the trip preceding the Josephine, made Bismarck to Carroll in seven days." Yes, but what was her cargo? Sixty tons of freight and two hundred unarmed soldiers. Why, the slowest craft on the Upper Missouri could make that time with the same amount of freight. And that is not the only instance of light freight boating between Bismarck and Carroll. The average cargo of the line of steamers plying in connection with the Carroll route will not exceed seventy tons per trip for each steamer. It is claimed that up to July 7th over one thousand tons of Montana freight was unloaded at Carroll. To do this, the cargoes of fifteen steamers should be delivered there. This we know did not happen, and thus one claim falls to the ground. On the Benton route, up to July 15th, only two weeks later than when the Carroll folks figured, one steamer alone—the Benton—landed over six hundred and fifty-five tons of her own freight, and seventy tons from the K. Kountz, a total of over seven hundred and twenty-five of Montana freight. Now how is your packet trade, when two steamers can transport more freight in the same time to Benton than your popular packets can transport to Carroll?

If, as claimed, the Carroll route is a success, and by it the transportation question is solved, I desire to have the public know the ground upon which the statement is made; otherwise, and on the strength of the data which I have furnished, I repeat that Benton is the rapid transit and cheap freight centre of Montana. T.

Letter from British America—Couldn't Blind the Benton Merchants—New Governor General.

To the Editor of the Record.

It does not require much space to relate the news from this place. Still, as this is an important in the fur traffic, and as your town holds supremacy as a market for robes, furs, etc., the smallest items may be worth gathering. The prospects of a heavy trade this coming season are improving with the approach of buffalo. It is surmised that the next season's shipments of furs and peltries to Benton from this place will be much larger than those of the present year, notwithstanding the fact that some of our sharp (?) traders could not blind the Benton merchants into bad bargains. There will also be more competition here this season than ever before. Several new trading posts are in course of erection and others are contemplated; among the latter is one by the Hudson Bay Company on Big Bow River. Your American traders will have an opportunity to test the difference between American and English goods as articles of Indian trade.

The intended police fort is still only a matter of talk. Nothing will be done until Col. McLeod arrives from Helena. Now, would it not be a shame if your good and gracious government would hold the Col. for imprisoning your citizens on what we call manufactured evidence? For in that event the police boys would not erect their new house this fall, and if next winter is very severe, they will freeze out sure in their old quarters.

You have heard, no doubt, of our new Governor General, Laird. He is a representative of the English Liberals, so they say. Well, he will not pine for want of opportunity to distinguish himself here in a Liberal sense, for a country that needs a sprinkling of liberal ideas more than does this Northwest Territory, would be a hard place to find.

Among the prisoners still in confinement at Fort McLeod, are four who hail from the United States. If they were English subjects confined in a foreign jail, the reason why would have been answered ere this. Yours, &c., N. W.

From the East Side of the Missouri.

The stock owners completed the round up last week. The admirable condition of the cattle justifies the claim already made on behalf of this section of the Territory as a stock range.

After the round up was over, some of the boys, while camped on Hound creek, instituted a horse race. The contestants were John Ming's Pinto and Seborn's bay horse Baldy. The distance was three hundred yards, which the Pinto cleared three feet ahead of Baldy. The race caused two fine bulls and several other head of cattle to change owners.

Nearly all the resident farmers on the east side of the Missouri have suffered more or less from the grasshoppers. Mr. Shemmick, of Bird Creek, loses his entire crop of oats and potatoes. Mr. Harris's loss amounts to about one-fourth of his oat crop and half of his potatoes. Mr. Austin's grain crop is entirely destroyed; his potatoes are uninjured.

Messrs Sweet, Seborn, and Kreutzer are building comfortable dwellings.

Messrs Reed and Spurlock have taken up ranches.

Folsome Bros. have located a cattle ranch.

Hank Jennings has opened a store and is doing a lively trade.

New Agency.

Bids for the new agency at Badger Creek will be opened on Monday. There are in all thirty-five buildings to be estimated for. When completed, the agency will be the largest work of the kind in the Territory.