

SILVER BOW VILLAGE.

The Place Where the First Settlement Was Made in the County.

The first settlement in the county was at Silver Bow, which is now a small village situated seven miles southwest of Butte City upon the banks of the creek from which it takes its name, near the Butte and Deer Lodge junction of the Utah and Northern railway. The village is built upon the bend of the stream, which forms a perfect figure of a gracefully curved Indian bow, and from the mountain peaks which surround the beautiful valley, the glistening waters of the "silver bow" form a striking feature of the landscape. A troop of hardy and adventurous fortune-seekers, attracted by the fabulous reports of Fairweather's discovery, were not content, when they found themselves on the gold-yielding Alder, to accept the chances of wealth offered in a camp already discovered. The unopened gulch claims might contain, as they did indeed contain, millions of treasure; but the possibilities of the new Territory were depicted in such glowing tints in the imagination of the prospector, the charm of pushing out over the untrodden hills, and being the first to lead the way to golden treasures as yet undiscovered, proved so irresistible, that many of the more energetic turned aside from the certainty of moderate fortune to take chances on "striking it big" in some portion of the unexplored interior. And they were not disappointed in their expectations. Arguing from past experience, they maintained that no gold-producing country was ever known to contain but two streams where placers would pay for working, and this experience proved to be a safe guide in estimating the extent of the Montana mines. During the year 1863 strikes were made in quick succession, first in the neighborhood of Alder, or of the previously discovered mines of Grasshopper Creek, at Bannock, and then the more remote as the prospectors pushed out further and further from those points. Finally, in the summer of 1864, Budd Parker, P. Allison, Joseph and James Esler, pushed across the main range of the Rocky Mountains and struck promising placer mines a short distance below where the village of Silver Bow now stands. For about a month fortune-seekers remained in the vicinity, testing as far as they could in that short time, the character and extent of the new diggings, and then Allison returned to Virginia City for supplies. On returning he brought with him G. O. Humphrey. In those early days the movements of every prospector suspected of having "struck it" were watched. When Allison and his friend Humphrey set out for the new El Dorado, the sharp eyes of a plainsman tracked them through gulches, over prairies and across mountains, until finally their secret became his. This man was Denis Leary, later a member of the Silver Bow Mining and Milling Company of this city. In the summer of 1864, Mr. Leary, accompanied by Alexander Scott, arrived at Silver Bow, and they were soon followed by Geo. H. Newkirk, and H. H. Porter. Previous to their arrival Allison and Humphrey had discovered the placers adjacent to the present town site of Butte, and a general stampede in this direction set in. Like all camps supported by easily opened and productive placers, it sprang up with extraordinary rapidity. In 1866 the creek channel from Butte to Silver Bow was worked by a company of four or more men to every claim of 200 feet. These toilers in the stripping claims lived in tents or brush shanties, adjoining their work, labored faithfully six days in the week, and generally found it necessary to go to town and make it lively on the seventh. Sunday was the day of business for the whole week. On that day the merchant sold his goods; the gambler could count on a good game, and the keeper of the

dance-house on a richer return than was made by the best paying mine in the district. It was an era of prosperity, and there was work for all, wages being from \$6 to \$7 per day.

In October, 1864, a new district was formed in the lower part of the gulch, and designated Summit Mountain district, with W. K. Cogswell as Recorder. Silver Bow soon became a town. During the winter of 1864-65, it was a lively place and many lodes were recorded. In the spring of 1865, Summit Mountain district was divided, and claims Nos. 75 to 310 were formed into Independence district. During the winter of 1864-65, while stores were being started in Silver Bow, Ford & Dresser established a store at Butte. Governor Sidney Edgerton appointed G. O. Humphreys Recorder of the new district. He was succeeded by E. N. Lewis, with C. E. Irvine, Probate Judge; Fred. Burr, Sheriff; Louis McMurtry, County Treasurer.

It will be remembered that Silver Bow was still in Deer Lodge County. The first court in the county was held at Silver Bow, July 10, 1865, Hon. L. P. Williston presiding; C. E. Irvine, Clerk of the Court; E. B. Phelps, District Attorney; F. H. Burr, Sheriff, and George M. Pinney, U. S. Marshal. The first political convention in the county was Democratic, and was held at Silver Bow, the latter part of June, 1865, with James Stuart, Chairman, and Robert Wells, Secretary. The first election was held September 1, 1865, and by popular vote the county seat was removed to Deer Lodge. The decline of the mining interest in Silver Bow began in 1870. Even the revival of 1874-5 did not strike the pioneer village of the county, so that now the population is limited to so small a number that the enumerators for the U. S. census of 1880 make no mention of the village.

Under authority of an act passed by the first Legislature, approved February 6, 1865, R. Anderson, F. Ruff, R. H. Cogswell, J. Nelson, J. H. Brown, Jos. Clark, R. N. Hill, C. E. Irvine, E. P. Lewis and Granville Stuart, were empowered to lay out the town of Silver Bow. In those days it was growing and prosperous. Now its glory has departed; but for the sake of the important part it played in laying the foundation of Butte, the above history is essential.

To-day it has but few inhabitants, and its business is represented by L. W. Foster & Co., and Felix O'Neil, general merchandise; Chris. Nissler, brewery and saloon; James Pace, saloon; Wm. Stolte, hotel and saloon; Wm. Thompson, blacksmith; Tofeur & Mather, butchers, and the Powder Manufacturing Company. The village still boasts of a postoffice, and E. M. Radcliffe is the postmaster.

BUTTE CITY.

A View of the Silver City of Montana—Its Location.

Butte City proper is situated on a gently sloping hill side with southern aspect, and is surrounded with beautiful scenery. The name is derived from a mountain now known as the "Big Butte," which is located just north of the original town. The main range of the Rocky Mountains are only about ten miles away, and they make a curve from east to south and then west, leaving a circular basin, bordered by foot hills. Half a mile distant is the creek, and the town being located over one hundred feet above it, the people are freed from all miasmatic influences, and enjoy the bracing mountain air. The declivity of the hill side on which it is built make a natural drainage, and thus Butte is one of the healthiest cities in the world. The first settlers of Butte were G. O. Humphrey and William Allison, who located in 1864, and took up the Missoula lode and organized the Missoula Company. Dennis Leary and H. H. Porter soon followed. In 1864 Charles Murphy,

William Graham, Frank Madison and May, discovered the old Deer Lodge, (Black Chief,) and it is thought to be the first lead found in the Summit Valley District. At this period there were no stakes found nor no indications that any work had been done, except a hole four or five feet deep on what is known as the Original lode. Near by was a pair of elk horns, and judging from appearances the hole had been dug for years, but by whom has never been ascertained. Rich placers were discovered in the vicinity of Butte early in 1864, and in August of the same year the first mining district was formed with William Allison, president, and G. O. Humphreys, recorder. In the fall of 1864, the old Town of Butte was located on Town gulch and its name given as above stated. The first saw mill was soon after erected by Thomas H. O'Connor. In 1864 George W. Newkirk came in from Alder Gulch and at that time, he states, there was not a house on the present Butte townsite, and he, Dennis Leary, T. C. Porter and the Humphrey Brothers built one on Quartz street and it is still standing, being a portion of the Girton House. In 1869 becoming disgusted, they sold it to Mr. Girton for \$100, and threw in a lot that is now valued at \$12,000. In 1867 Joseph Ramsdell struck the Parrot, and in the fall of the same year a smelter of which all traces have disappeared was built to work the ore. David N. Upton, who arrived in September, 1866, says: "There were no buildings where the townsite is now, but in Buffalo Gulch, near Centerville, there were about forty men and five women, and they thought they had the biggest town in the mountains. They were placer mining there with rockers, and did pretty well. In the spring of 1867, the Butte townsite was laid out and at one time the population reached 500. Then the placers gave out and nearly everybody left, and the town did not get lively again until 1875, when Farlin struck the Travona. He has stayed with the camp, bought about twenty quartz claims and has enough placer ground to last for ten years. The past summer he cleaned up a good sum. John Noyes came to Butte in August, 1866, and has for many years been the partner of David Upton. Both men are now wealthy. In 1866 the Noyes & Upton mining ditch, twelve miles long, was built by Mr. Noyes at a cost of \$20,000. During the same year the lower mining ditch was built by Humphrey Brothers. Early in 1867, the upper ditch was brought in by the same firm. All of these are still in use.

In 1867, Butte was at its height as a placer camp, and in 1868 it began to decline. In 1869 the comparative failure of the water supply caused many to leave, and in leaving they sold their claims to those who remained and thus the placers fell into the hands of a few. From 1869 to 1874, there was a steady decrease in population and there was a general fear that it would be virtually abandoned.

There were, however, some who had faith. They knew that there were quartz veins here. The Original, located two years previously, had been sunk seventy-five feet, the Parrot and locations had been represented faithfully in the belief that a process would be discovered by which their property would be made valuable. After a time even the most hopeful became despondent. Repeated efforts to work lodes, since famous, were made and failed. In 1868, Dennis Leary and T. C. Porter erected a copper smelter in Town gulch, but it was a failure, as was one erected two years earlier by Joseph Ramsdell and William Parks. In 1868 the Hendrie mill, now the Lexington, was built for the reduction of gold bearing ores, but it was a failure like its predecessors, and many attempts that followed it. During all this time population was decreasing until in the later part of 1874, it reached its lowest point.

The law of Congress that all quartz claims unrepresented for one year should revert to the United States was about to go into effect. Under the same statute the 1st of January, 1875, was the date under which unrepresented claims could be re-located. In the fall of 1874, W. L. Farlin, one of Butte's earliest residents, who had been absent for some time suddenly returned. During his absence he had been in Idaho and while there he had learned the value of the ores of the black ledges, specimens of which he had taken with him. On his return Mr. Farlin visited the hill for the supposed purpose of prospecting, but he said nothing, but on the last night of the year he quietly placed his re-location notice on the Travona and several other mines, that have since proved valuable. The news that the black ledges of Butte were rich in silver spread with wonderful rapidity and people began to flock in from all quarters. Old claims were re-located and new ones made, among the latter being the La Plata, Burlington, Late Acquisition, the Alice, Great Republic and many other producers. The result was inevitable. The town began to populate rapidly. In 1867 Butte had a population of 350, at the end of 1875, it had 4,000; in 1880, 9,000, and the present population is estimated at 21,000.

In the summer of 1875 John Howe & Co. began the erection of the Centennial mill, the first one, the Dexter mill of ten stamps, having been completed, and these were followed in rapid succession by the splendid mills and smelters of the Parrot, the Colorado, the Alice, the Lexington, the Moulton, the Montana, Bell, Clark, and others, to say nothing of the magnificent Anaconda.

Walkerville.

Just two miles north of Butte and almost immediately adjoining the Lexington, Alice and Moulton mines is the Village of Walkerville, which boasts of a population of 3,000, composed almost entirely of the employes of the mines. It was only a few years ago composed of a few straggling cabins, but it now boasts of a number of fine business houses, and numerous tasty and well appointed dwellings. There is a good hotel kept by Joseph Annear, and large general merchandise houses under proprietorship of Caplice & McCune, Dennis Driscoll, L. W. Foster and Joseph Broughton, large boarding houses kept by Mrs. King, Mrs. Stack and E. D. Sullivan, several saloons, a large butcher shop and market, shoe store, barber shop, smith's shop and other industries. There is also a branch post office under the charge of Daniel O'Grady.

Phillips Gulch.

This point was discovered by John Phillips September, 1869, and is located two and one-half miles west of Butte. Forty claims were entered by the Recorder William Haynes. The Humphrey Brothers began work on the cut and tunnel of the water ditch immediately after the claims were made.

Peterson Gulch.

The placers here were discovered in 1866, by Joseph Cowan, and almost immediately thereafter the construction of ditches was begun. The first mining companies were Adriance & Co., Joseph Cowan & Co., Kelly DeWitt & Co., Philip McGovern and John McDermott. In the year 1869, the Stewart Brothers and Keyser & Cowan purchased the Lucas, and Lawson & Allport ditches.

South Butte.

The town of South Butte occupies the basin at the southern slope of the city proper and is about one mile distant from the main street. Thus far it is accessible by two roads but the progressive people of the new settlement are clamoring for more facilities and demanding that the streets of Butte shall be continued and cut through until they reach the depot. South Butte sprang into ex-