

Table listing agents of the Sun, including names like Thomas H. Brown, John W. Murray, and others.

SUN RIVER SUN.

VOL. 1.

SUN RIVER, MONTANA TERRITORY, FEBRUARY 14, 1884.

No. 1.

Job Printing a Specialty.

The material for this department has been selected with great care, and we are prepared to do any kind of Job Work with neatness and dispatch.

SUN RIVER. Its Past, Present and Future--Biographical Sketches of its Two First Settlers.

History of its Early Settlement--Original Locators of the Valley Ranches. Beautiful Homes--Immense Wheat Fields of the Future.

IRRIGATING SCHEMES.

The beautiful stream that flows through this valley is called by the Indians 'Natooc-wah', which according to Lewis & Clarke means Medicine or Sun river, hence the name with which those explorers christened it.

Mr. John Largent, Sun River's first settler, was born in Illinois and came to Montana in 1862, and entered the service of the American fur company.

Mr. Geo. Steell is a Canadian by birth and came to Montana in 1857, and was Mr. Largent's partner in the service of the American fur company.

Mr. John J. Healy was the first settler on the Choteau side of the river, and owned a ferry near the site of the present bridge.

Mr. Joseph Largent came to Sun River in 1867, and located on the Missouri at a place called Shogold, and which is perhaps the best hay ranch in Montana.

In 1867 Geo. Heath and Chas. Pennington built a log cabin on the ranch now owned by James Adams which was sold to the latter in 1868.

Strong located the ranch now owned by his son Mortimer. R. S. Ford drove the first stock onto this range in 1869, and in connection with Thos. Dunn drove in a second lot in 1871.

B. W. Murray, of the firm of Dyns & Murray, came to Sun River in 1869, and took charge of the Diamond R. blacksmith and wagon shop.

T. C. Burns located a ranch below the Leavings of Sun river about 1867, which he sold to the present owner, Robert Vaughn, in 1871.

In 1871 Geo. Wiegand bought from Hall & Hardeorn the place which is now owned by John Devine.

Fort Shaw was built by the 13th Infantry in 1868-9. These are as near as we have been able to learn all the original settlers and the dates of their settlement.

There are now about thirty improved farms between the crossing and Leavings of Sun river, and several below, among which are Robert Vaughn's horse ranch, the dairy and stock ranch of John Spencer, and the ranches of David Davis and Chas. Rowles.

Mr. Matt Farnell's homelike dwelling and spacious surrounding fields, and the ranch of B. W. Murray, almost opposite, attract the attention of travelers by their neat and thrifty appearance.

Passing these we come to the home of Wm. Mullenby, newly erected, and looking down across the field towards the river we see the cosy dwellings of Thomas Dunn and Wm. Berkenbule, the latter place having been recently purchased from O. H. Churchill.

The residence of Hon. R. S. Ford with its surrounding groves of shade trees presents a beautiful appearance at all seasons but especially in the summer. Montana does not possess many as tasteful homes as his.

Mr. Mortimer Strong who owns the next ranch is the boss farmer of the valley, having raised about 6,000 bushels of grain last season. This is the best ranch in the valley. Ellis & Steell's flouring mill looms up at the junction of the Teton road with the Benton and Helena road.

that it has become necessary to remove it and thereby destroy the old-time associations and pleasant remembrances surrounding it.

Main street is being rapidly built up with substantial business houses. Messrs. Dyns & Murray have recently erected a fine stone store, the second story of which they have converted into a hall and fitted up with stage and scenery.

Messrs. Blossom & Hastie have a two story brick building adjoining which is almost completed, and will be used as a billiard and pool room.

Gibson, Hall & Garrett have lately built a store and stocked it with hardware and hardware.

Thomas Rose will shortly open a news and book store in his new building.

The Ellis block is occupied by Craig & Robertson as a saloon, and Bourke & Miller, carpenters.

The building formerly used as a hotel is now occupied by I. S. Corson and used as a saloon and billiard hall. The Largent house is the chief hotel in this place, and under the able management of James Gibb the present lessee, is not excelled by any in the territory.

The Rowles Bros. have recently opened their grand S. stables, and have some elegant rigs as well as good accommodations for horses.

The Sun River stables are the old-time stables of the town, and have accommodations for about forty head of horses and also keep some fine rigs.

Schrader & Christie have an elegant saunter room in Gibson & Garrett's new building. The Ford Bros. have recently purchased the Berley block, the second story of which is occupied by the "Sun River Sun."

E. T. Watson's new shop on Carroll street, and Dyns & Corson on Main street are the blacksmiths and wagon makers of the town.

Wm. Best has recently opened a saddle and harness shop adjoining Ford Bros.' store. Adams & Berkenbule run a meat market here as well as supplying the Fort Shaw garrison with beef.

Geo. Steell has laid off an addition to the original townsite on the north side, John Largent an addition on the east side and H. B. Strong one on the north side, in all of which a great many lots have already been sold.

Between the Sun river and the Missouri, a distance of fifteen miles, is some of the finest agricultural land to be found in Montana. A company has been organized that proposes to bring out a ditch next summer from Sun river at a point somewhere above Fort Shaw, that will irrigate all the best of this immense tract.

Another company will take out an immense ditch from the North Fork that will irrigate all that plain bounded on the north and east by the Teton, and on the south and west by the Sun and Missouri rivers. This great stretch of fertile land is destined to become the chief grain producing portion of Montana. Thousands of acres of this land has been located this winter, and as soon as the spring opens scores of land hunters will be there locating homes, so that in a few years we may expect to pass through a succession of wheat fields on our way from Sun River to the Teton or Fort Benton.

It will be the same between the Sun river and the Missouri--wheat fields on every side. Sun River will then be the natural trade center of all this agricultural wealth. Flouring mills will then be erected capable of doing as good work as is done in any portion of the United States. And with the wheat grower and miller will come the consumer. Factories of various kinds will be built along our river utilizing its immense water power.

TETON TALK.

Fertile Valleys--Irrigating Schemes--Willow, Muddy and Blackleaf Creeks.

Choteau, February 12, 1884.

When, after a three months' trip to the states and a lingering illness at Sun River Crossing, your correspondent again arrived at Priest's Butte and saw the glorious valley of the Teton spread out before his enraptured vision, he said: "This, after all, is God's country!" Here all the men are honest and all the women, bless 'em, attend strictly to their own business.

For fertility of soil, salubrity of climate and general natural advantages this place is unsurpassed in Montana. The Upper Teton valley from mouth of Muddy creek to the mountains is forty-five miles long, with an average width of six miles.

Substantial log houses, the residences of hardy cattle men and ranchers, dot the valley to within ten miles of the mountains. Stock raising has been the chief industry, but little attention having been paid to farming. All available land is, however, being fast taken up under the homestead and pre-emption laws, and within a very few years we expect to compare favorably in the matter of well improved farms with Sun river and the older valleys of the territory.

The first ranch to the right of the road after leaving Priest's Butte is that of Mr. Jesse Taylor, who, with his son Wallace, has charge of the immense herd of Sands & Taylor. The Messrs. Taylor are noted for their hospitality, and your correspondent had the felicity the other day of participating in one of their turkey dinners, at which were gathered many of the most substantial cattle men of the valley. The turkey was excellent, and Mr. Taylor's chef is bound to become famous.

Three miles below Taylor's is the ranch of Tom Henneberry, the retired pugilist, who offers to stand up before the notorious Sullivan for either money, marbles or chalk. Above Taylor's place Joe Howard, C. Chouquette, R. Morgan and John Wren have well improved farms. The latter is one of the proprietors of the Bellevue saw mills and our most vigorous "old timer."

Mr. Morgan also has charge of Geo. Steell's stud farm, and is a knight of the lash on the Sun River and Great Northern Stage line. Next come the ranches of our pioneer merchants A. B. Hamilton and I. N. Hazlett, with their neat and cozy cottages, and then we reach Choteau, one of Montana's promising young towns. Perhaps a few items about the town will be of interest. The townsite comprises seventy four acres, and is the property of I. N. Hazlett. Lots are selling readily. The last purchases were by Silverman & Cohen, of the Dearborn, and Jac. Schmidt, of South Fork. The former parties intend starting a store, and Mr. Schmidt has purchased an interest in Garrett & Gibson's place. As soon as lumber can be procured the latter parties will build a hotel and a large livery and feed stable.

Although we have no debating lyceum here as yet, and in other respects have not assumed all the metropolitan airs of Sun River, still we are improving rapidly. We have an Historical society, a Temperance society whose members are fined \$150 if "caught" in the net, a Sleighing association and a 24 o'clock Quadrille club. The latter club is composed of all the youth and beauty of the valley, and has weekly hops in Garrett hall to the inspiring strains of Chouquette's orchestra. Sheriff Jim McDevitt, of Benton, attended one of our dances, and is of the opinion that for sociability and jollity the people of the Teton "take the cake."

The people of Benton are striving for a direct mail route up the Teton to this point, and a largely signed petition to that effect has lately been sent to Washington. Bob Stewart, Jack Reese and Chas. Bowen left here two weeks ago on a fishing expedition to Birch creek lake. The only intelligence as yet received from them is that on the first night out Jack's eyebrows turned yellow from fright at breaking the dam in which contained the fishbait.

If they never return the good people of Sun River will have to release the writer from his promise of providing for them a feast of fish.

B. Bjenson, Choteau's champion poker player, while out prospecting the other day for Joe Howard's gold mine, discovered a cave near the summit of Priest's Butte, containing many fossil remains, some of which will be sent to the Smithsonian Institute for identification.

The sale of the effects of the Grant estate will take place here shortly. Wm. H. Lyon, of Lyon Bros., left for the states yesterday. It is rumored he will not come back again.

In your correspondent's opinion the one thing our town needs now is for some of our estimable young men to start the "marriage boom." They are however all rather diffident. It might enhance the reputation of your paper if you offered a year's subscription free to the first couple married at Choteau. A colony of say fifty good hard-working, accomplished Boston girls might do well here. We are sure nearly all of our well-to-do cattle men would "loosen up" much more for a good wife than did the early settlers of Virginia.

But we digress. Adjoining the townsite are the ranches of our bachelor friends Frank Farmer and Dr. Smith, (the latter will soon have an addition to the townsite surveyed,) and across the river Sam C. Burl, our future mayor, and A. Fellers have well improved ranches. Three miles north of Choteau is the Old Agency place, now occupied by Sam Mitchell, of Higgins & Mitchell, which parties, together with O. G. Cooper, lately purchased the Old Agency reserve of 610 acres. In the vicinity of this place are the homes of Ed. Dennis, Frank Truhot, Jas. Hughes, Nat. Collins and Fred. Sowers. The county surveyor, John Marsh, has also a homestead here.

Crossing the Teton and going up the valley five miles we come to John A. Kennedy's place. Mr. Kennedy raised a fine crop of oats here last year. He informs us that one kernel of the White Russian variety increased seven hundred fold. A mile further on is the dairy ranch of Hunt & Cram, who supply the valley with butter. Next we come to Emerson Bros.' sheep ranch, and then to Steell's, the last ranch this side the mountains. Across the river from the last named place, in what is known as the "Gap," are the ranches of J. W. Armstrong, Wm. R. Ralston and Geo. L. Harvey.

About the middle of April Burnett & Wren will move their saw mill from the mountains to a point on the river about a mile this side of the canyon, and will then commence sawing to supply the demands at Choteau. They have now logs enough out for 300,000 feet of lumber. In the mountains Dan McKay has fifteen men chopping cordwood which they will float down to Benton when the river opens.

At the crossing of the Muddy twelve miles north of here, on the regular mail road, S. Bynum has built a commodious stopping place, where the best of entertainment for man and beast can always be found. Mr. Bynum and sons have taken up several fine ranches here. Above Mr. Bynum's place at the junction of Muddy and Blackleaf creeks Smiley & Cowell have two ranches, with extensive corrals and sheds, where they keep 3,000 of O. G. Cooper's sheep on shares. Close by, on the Muddy, Austin & Black have 2,700 sheep in charge of Mr. Black. Four miles above, on the Blackleaf, Elliot, McMaster & Bunnatyne have taken ranches. They have 2,000 sheep and raised last year good crops of oats, potatoes and other vegetables. Five miles further up the Blackleaf Wm. Fargo has an excellent ranch. He has resided here for the past six years, and raises wheat, oats and barley and almost every species of vegetables with the greatest success. Flynn Bros., Joe Arnold and Geo. Fry have also taken up ranches in this neighborhood.

Last fall the Eldorado Ditch company took a ditch out of the Teton to irrigate the immense stretch of bench lands lying between the Muddy and Teton. Large tracts of land have already been taken up along the course of the ditch by Helen parties, and a scheme is on foot to settle a colony from Wisconsin along the ditch. Better wheat land is hard to find anywhere. Other ditch schemes are also in progress in the vicinity of Choteau, and it will not be long before a first class flouring mill will be required.

Eight miles to the west of Choteau is the valley of Willow creek, where Lyon Bros., C. W. Gray and Haas Bros. have large bands of sheep. The C. & C. a band of horses and Geo. E. Miller, dairy ranch. The

Lyon Bros. last fall finished the erection of a large and handsome residence, and have the honor of introducing the pioneer piano into this part of the great northwest.

So far the winter has been mild and very favorable for stock. Few losses in either cattle or sheep are reported. About 2,000 cattle have strayed across Birch creek, and a few of them have been killed by Indians. Parties have gone out to bring them back. The Indians are not much to be blamed for the depredations they commit on the white man's cattle, as they are but half fed and half clothed, and are literally in a starving condition. With the accession of the new Indian agent, Mr. Heben A. Allen of Ohio, we hope for a better state of affairs. O. X. Y.

SOUTH FORK SUN RIVER.

its Prosperity, Stock and Agricultural Interests--Beautiful Mountain Scenery--Unlocated Land.

FLORENCE, Feb. 10, 1884.

Lying between the forks of Sun river and the mountains is the settlement known as South Fork. At the lower part of the valley is the junction of several lines of travel, and at the point of intersection of the roads running north and south is situated the postoffice of Florence, of which Edward Lippincott is postmaster. Mr. Lippincott also keeps a blacksmith shop at this point, and entertains the traveling public.

Five miles to the southwest we reach the embryo city of Augusta, which shows even at this stage of its existence the pushing energy characteristic of all western towns. Typical of western life, the store of Phil A. Manix supplies the wants of the community from a stock that would not shame the shelves, counters and warehouses of any merchant in some of our more populous neighboring towns. A good blacksmith and wagon repairing shop is also located at this place, and a saloon with billiard, pool and card tables, kept by Ezra Craig, who is ever ready to "set 'em up" for the boys.

The school house stands on a beautiful spot half a mile further up the valley, where A. R. VanEman teaches the young ideas how to expand into the future statesmen of our land. He is also the judicial head of our settlement, guiding the adults of our community in the way they should go, with the strong arm of the law assisted by the imposing baton of Eugene Lippincott, high constable and factotum of his honor's court.

A. C. Fleming, M. D., has permanently located here, and is building up a reputation as a skillful surgeon and expert medical practitioner. He contemplates building an office and putting in a stock of drugs and medicines which will fill a want long felt in this settlement.

Ten miles up the valley from Augusta is the new postoffice and village of Cecil. DeWitt C. Holbrook is the postmaster of this office. Mr. Glasgow teaches the youth in the school house newly erected.

Some eight miles beyond is the saw mill of David Pattie, who keeps constantly on hand a large stock of lumber and building material, and in order to keep up with the increased demand is preparing to have both steam and water power, thus guaranteeing to all a constant supply of all kinds of building material at reasonable prices.

Our population is made up of fifty-four families, with about 250 single men, making a total of about 500 people engaged in farming and stock raising. All kinds of grain and vegetables grow luxuriously, and the water supply is almost inexhaustible for stock and irrigating purposes. Almost every ranch has a number of fine springs furnishing pure water for stock all the year round. Ditches can be taken out to irrigate the highest of the bench land at a small outlay, a fact regarded by capitalists who are now engaged in taking out two monster ditches, one from the upper part of South Fork, and the other from the North Fork to irrigate the vast benches along the north side of Sun river, where we predict immense fields of grain will be reaped in the near future.

The tourist will be rewarded for his trouble in visiting us, as there are many points of interest in this vicinity. Haystack Butte is a peculiar mountain formation, and from its summit a grand view of the surrounding country may be obtained. The Hot Springs of North Fork will well repay a visit, especially to those suffering from chronic diseases of any kind, as has been proved by the relief afforded to those who have tested their virtues. In the spring summer and fall our streams swarm with fish, for

finishing good sport to those who love to wield the rod and cast the fly. Lovers of sport with gun and dog can find in their season ample employment bagging chickens, grouse and ducks that breed among the reeds of the margins of the numerous lakes of this region.

The stock interests are as they promise ever to be the leading industry. Sheep thrive well here without any feed except the nutritious bunch grass of the plain and foothills. Many flocks were wintered through what is known as the "hard winter" without any loss.

Cattle do well here, as they are in the world, situated as they are in the very heart of the winter grazing region. And owing to the removal of the larger herds to newer ranges, smaller holders are having a much better chance than heretofore to increase their herds, and look for better returns as the range recuperates.

Horsemen have recognized the fact that this range is peculiarly suited to horse raising, as the number of horses driven here during the last season proves.

To the west of Florence about nine miles is the thriving settlement of Willow creek. Soon we predict to have a school, store, postoffice, blacksmith shop and all the adjuncts of a live settlement. Mr. Will Clark has a large horse ranch and sale farm for blooded stock, and Mr. John Laird and others are extensively engaged in the cattle business.

Coal is abundant and of a good quality. Rock suitable for building purposes is everywhere in the hills that surround us. Excellent lime is burned from the limestone that abounds everywhere.

A. Kellogg has an excellent brick machine, and the firm of Sherman & Kellogg expect to make and burn brick the coming summer. Olmuth & Lang, carpenters and builders, with Auchard & Carpenter in the same business, are prepared to erect buildings on the shortest notice.

A tri-weekly passenger and express line carrying the U. S. mail connects with the Helena and Benton stage line at Fort Shaw, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, leaving Shaw at 2 p. m. Settlers wanting land to engage in farming or stock raising can do better than to look over this favored region before locating elsewhere, being only a short day's drive from the rapidly growing city of Sun River, whose prosperity is identical with ours.

Soon the tidal wave of immigration will flow over Dakota and eastern Montana, and then we bespeak for Sun river valley a future that will not be rivaled by any valley in the northwest where future generations will grow up "neath the shadows of the grand old Rockies and be imbued with thoughts and aspirations that will lead them in mature life to acts and deeds that will be the pride of the nation, the ennobling of themselves and wonder of the world. G. T. W.

Fort Shaw.

Fort Shaw was built in 1868 by the 13th Infantry. It is beautifully located on the south bank of the Sun river, and five miles above the town of Sun River. It is composed of good substantial buildings. A great many ornamental trees have been planted in and about it, and are watered by stone-paved ditches which ripple along in every direction, shaded in summer by the green unobscured cottonwoods which together add greatly to the beauty of the Fort.

There are four companies of the 34th Infantry stationed there at present under the command of Gen. Brook. The company quarters are extremely neat and commodious, and everything in and about the Fort is in perfect order.

J. H. McKnight & Co., post traders, have a large and well stocked store near the Fort, and Alex. Lox is the urban landlord of the Fort restaurant. A. T. Matthews manipulates the electricity for the U. S. telegraph, and is signal officer at this point for the U. S. signal service.

Leaving the Fort we journey leisurely along up the river, passing on our way the ranch and extensive corrals of Snyder & Jones, and see over against the bluff on the other side of the river Flowrie's horse ranch on which he has recently erected a mammoth stone horse barn. We pass further along by the ranches of Stewart, Shaffer and Alex. Pembine, and then on to the Hotel de Smith, kept by John M. Smith and his entertaining flock, where the weary traveler may find an excellent meal and comfortable bed.