

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF MONTANA
HELENA, MONTANA

HISTORICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL AND SCENIC DESCRIPTION OF PARK COUNTY.

ENTERPRISE SOUVENIR--1900

IN viewing the progress of any locality as a whole, the mind is reverted back to the time when civilization first planted her foot-prints on its primitive face; which in past ages has universally caused the cultivation of the soil, building of cities, and a marked improvement in the arts and sciences.

Knowing that history is a written narrative of past events—true as the fallibility of humanity will allow—we pass by the primitive and savage man as beings having no history; but, instead, consuming all their energies in the struggle for existence—consequently, having had neither time nor faculty to think of himself as a social being.

The first recorded exploration of the Yellowstone valley was that made by Captain William Clark, who was associated with Captain Meriwether Lewis, in command of the famous Lewis and Clark expedition, fitted out in 1804, under authority of President Jefferson, to explore the region west of the Mississippi river, and extending to the Pacific coast. This vast unbroken territory was known as "the Louisiana Purchase," and subsequently as the Province of Louisiana. It had been ceded to the United States by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1803 for the nominal sum of \$5,000,000, which to-day is not far in advance of what is being realized for a single mining proposition in said district.

This heroic band of explorers, numbering only thirty-two men, set out from St. Louis on the 14th of May, 1804, ascended the Missouri river a distance of 2,838 miles from its mouth, and striking across the Rocky mountains and other ranges westward, reached the mouth of the Columbia river on the 7th of November, 1805. On the 23rd of March in the following year, they entered upon their return journey, recrossing the Rocky mountains on the 3rd of July. The expedition now resolved itself into three parties, one of which followed the eastern base of the mountains northward to the mouth of the Marias river where it united with the second party under the command of Captain Lewis, who had gone directly down the Missouri. The third detachment under Captain Clark pushed eastward until it struck the Yellowstone river. On the night of the 15th of July, 1806, Captain Clark camped with his party in the timber which is now a part of Livingston, Montana. The next morning they passed a bold, deep stream which they named Shield's river, in honor of one of their party. Following the Yellowstone some 400 miles to its confluence with the Missouri, the three parties again united. After an absence of nearly two years and a half, the expedition arrived at St. Louis on the 23rd of September, 1806, having lost but a single man by

death. The result of the expedition was at once to open up the newly-acquired territory to the enterprise of the great fur companies, who established trading posts with the Indians at many points.

Tradition says that James Bridger with a party of Indian hunters camped at the first falls of Emigrant creek during the winter of 1844. This was the first winter spent by a white man in this upper Yellowstone region.

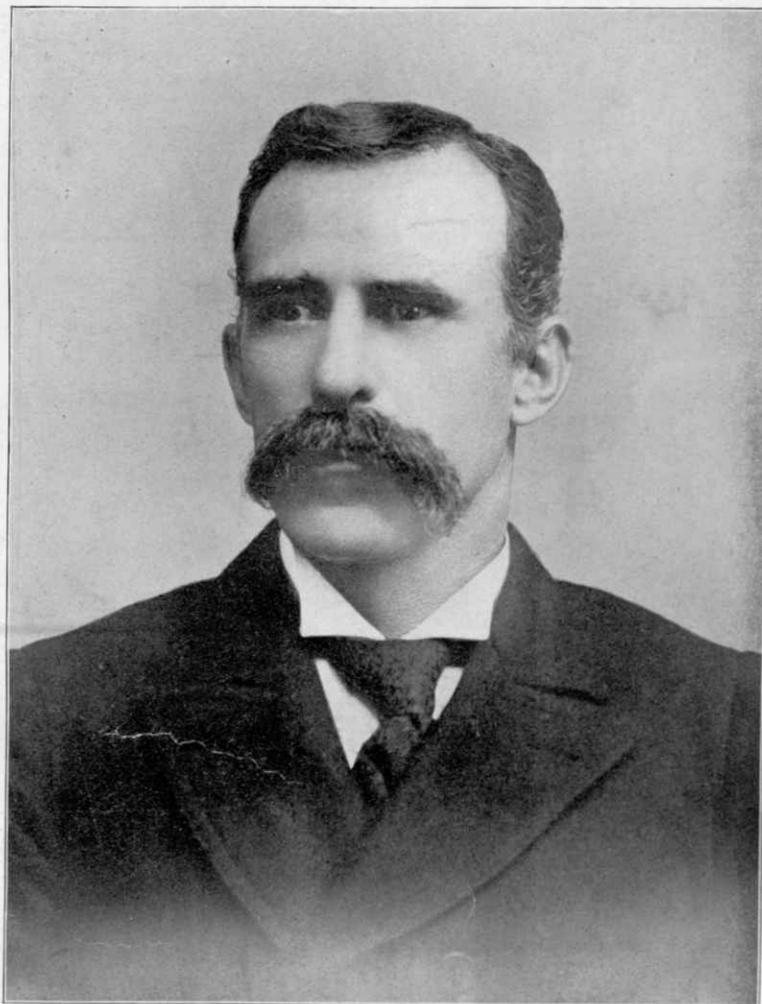
ing ore near the headwaters of the Stillwater creek were told by Anson Hubbell, a famous hunter and trapper of this region, who claimed the discovery of the lead in 1864; while one Luce Louis, a Mexican, living on the Crow reservation with his Indian wife, claimed its discovery in 1862. However true or untrue, these stories of mountains of wealth caused the advent of scores of prospectors whose discouragements were summed up in the familiar phrase—"All is not gold that glitters."

In the early part of 1864 Sam Word and N. P. Langford were given a charter for a stage and telegraph line from Virginia City to Emigrant Gulch, which was at that time the head of navigation on the Yellowstone. Near the close of 1866 immense placer mines were discovered at the mouth of Bear Gulch by Austin and a party of thirty men, naming it from a hairless cub that was found there. In the latter part of 1868, some wandering hunters discovered the rich silver deposits near the source of Clark's Fork—a tributary to the Yellowstone; but as has been most universally the case in the discovery of vast mineral deposits throughout this region, i. e., the Crow Indian reservation laid claim to them, consequently prospectors had no encouragement in any attempt at their development, much less, no chance to obtain mineral titles to their claims.

Early in July, 1870, Dr. A. J. Hunter and family settled at the now famous Hunter's Springs. Four miles below the present site of Livingston, Amos Benson built a fur-trading post in the spring of 1873. Here he undertook the conquests of a frontier life and continued to barter in furs and peltries with both Indians and whites, finally developing into the keeper of a small supply store, a stage station, and postoffice. In April of this year the first steamboat to navigate the Yellowstone came up the river with a load of supplies.

Up to this time it might be said that the differently located mineral finds had, at first, caused the temporary building of settlements, numbering often up to five hundred souls; while on the other

hand fur-trading posts were located in the more favorable localities. But these settlements were likened unto the tide in its ebb and flow, which from the lack of commercial advantages, protection from the encroachments of the Indians, and above all, lack of legal rights to hold their possessions resulted in no permanent settlements during this epoch of the white man's advent into these regions. Sometime in June, 1882, it was rumored throughout the floating population of this region that a supply store would be established somewhere along the proposed Northern Pacific Railroad for the benefit of their employes in the construction work. Believing that the site would



FRANK HENRY, JUDGE SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT.

These foot-prints of civilization were now left to be covered by the tread of savage life until the year 1853, when the government sent out an expedition under command of the late General J. J. Stevens, to explore the region lying between the forty-seventh and forty-ninth parallels, with a view of reporting upon the feasibility of the northern route for a railroad from Lake Superior to Puget Sound, thus again bringing the Yellowstone valley to public attention. In 1863 adventurous prospectors undertook the conquest of placer mining in the Emigrant district of the upper Yellowstone region. Fabulous stories of an immense deposit of mineral-bearing