

Short and Curious Stories from Old Montana Newspapers

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Local News (1882)

Source: The Helena Daily Herald (Montana), May 09, 1882. <<https://mthspublic.newspapers.com/article/the-montana-record-herald/209034347/>>

Children are sometimes philosophers and just as able to draw an inference as older people. "Now, Willie," said a coaxing, old school mother, "I don't like to take medicine any more than you do, but I just make up my mind to do it, and then do it. The scion of genius looked up through his tears and replied: "And, mother, I just make up my mind that I won't, and then I don't." ...

—Chow Gir, a Chinese maiden, was several years ago purchased by Ah Sam, of Virginia City for \$600. Ah Sam was brutal to his almond-eyed wife, and she eloped to Silver City recently with Ah Hoy. A charge of larceny was preferred, and Deputy Sheriff Al. Davis took the trail. The officer brought kick a Chinese maiden valued at \$50, which Ah Sam discovered to be the wrong woman. Sheriff Platner went to Butte, secured the elopers, and brought them back to Virginia City. The recreant pair got ahead of all parties J>y an immediate marriage, and Ah Satu yet revels in single blessedness.

Home of Ned Buntline, of Blood and Thunder Notoriety (1883)

Source: The Semi-Weekly Miner, December 05, 1883. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

The wildwood home of Col. E. Z. C. Judson, better known as "Ned Buntline," in the Adirondacks, is one of the attractions in that famous region. The house, if it may be dignified by that name, is constructed of logs in the most primitive style, and contains but two rooms. It stands near Eagle Lake, at the foot of Blue Mountain. As far back as 1836 "Ned Buntline" invaded the wilderness and built his little log cabin in the heart of the woods. At that time he was a slave to intemperance, and recognized the fact that his safe ty lay in flight from the busy haunts of men. He succeeded in clearing a little farm, and when the cabin attained the appearance of a home he presented it with a mistress in the form of a young and handsome wife. The furniture was of the simplest description, and the pair were dependent upon their labor for the necessities of life, but notwithstanding these drawbacks they lived happily, and "Ned Buntline" produced volume after volume of thrilling back-woods stories.

The war of the rebellion called the author from his wildwood haunt and he did not return until long and arduous service had elevated him to the rank of colonel. In the

meantime his wife and only child died, and they were laid to rest near the catin. Four cedar trees mark their lonely graves. “Ned Buntline” is now lecturidg on temperance down among the Catskill mountains, and the Adirondack home has passed into the bands of strangers. It has many visitors each year, who look upon the graves beneath the cedars and try to imagine the sort of life the little family led. The thought of the brave wife who willingly abandoned home and friends to help her husband in his battle against bis appetite is invariably a source of sadness.

Burned to Death (1885)

Source: The Daily Town Talk (Montana), Sep 30, 1885, vol. 1, no. 97, Page 1. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

Three inmates of the Warm Springs asylum named B. Maze, Hiram Belcher and Hector McLean, were burned to death there late yesterday afternoon. The three above named were violent patients, and were confined in a log cabin separate from the main building. The. origin of the fire is unknown, but was probably set by some of the inmates. Every effort was made to rescue them, but without avail. The loss of the building is trifling, probably \$800 or \$400.

Chinese Oppose Opium (1908)

Source: Great Falls Daily Tribune, June 10, 1908, Page 3. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

Victoria, B. C., June 9. — Victoria Chinese have formed an anti-opium league and have subscribed \$150 toward the cost of treating the local opium smokers. Certain herbs used in this connection have been sent for from China.

One of the “Old Timers” (1919)

Source: Republished in the Sanders County Ledger, December 8, 1994. <mthspub-lic.newspapers.com>

Date: Dec. 18. 1919

James Freeman was here this week from Noxon looking after his business interests. Jim, as his friends call him, is an old prospector of the old school. In the Yukon

country in Alaska he went by the name of “Honest Jim,” He packed out of the “diggings” thousands of dollars of gold dust entrusted to his care with the full assurance to the owners that it would reach its destination if Jim did. He is one of the types of the “old West” — few remain. Many have fallen asleep, others tiring of the privation and uncertainty incident to a miner’s life are pursuing other vocations, while many have become prosperous ranch and cattle men and may now be found in almost any western valley. In Sanders County one may still occasionally see a veteran prospector of the old school living the life of a hermit in his log cabin, situated in some picturesque gulch near his sometimes valuable, but more frequently worthless, mining location. There he lives winter and summer, the ambition of his life still unrealized, but at seventy still hopeful and expectant. After one overcomes the reticence of those who have long dwelt in solitude, and engage him in conversation, to ones surprise they discover that he can converse entertainingly on most any subject. There is something pathetic about his loneliness. One leaves him with the feeling that society has lost by his voluntary banishment and are reminded of Gray’s immortal lines:

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its fragrance in the desert air.”

But his life has not been barren of results. He has been a contributory factor in the upbuilding of our great state for it in his class who laid the foundation of western prosperity.

Trapper’s Tomb a Log Cabin (1920)

Source: The Winifred, February 13, 1920, page 5. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

A humble lost cabin which stands in a trackless? forest near Lake Athabasca, in western Canada, was once the home of a fur trapper, its builder. Now it is a tomb, sheltering the frozen body of its former occupant, who died there, alone and unaided, nearly two years ago. To investigate the cause of the trapper’s death, a fearless member of the royal northwest mounted police journeyed to the desolate scene in midwinter, braving the terrors of the wilderness for months before reaching his objective, situated miles from railroads and civilization. The corpse was in a perfect state of preservation, due to the cold, dry air, and was not moved from the bunk on which the trapper passed away.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Two Travelers Came Back (1920)

Source: The Whitefish Pilot, February 10, 1920. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

According to Army Captain, Mules Returned From That Dim and Undiscovered Shore.

The regimental morning report is a fearsome document. On it appear all the changes in status of men and animals for each preceding 24 hours. It happened in an Ohio regiment once that two mules fell ill one night. The veterinarian gave his verdict of hopeless, and the captain of the supply company accordingly made the proper entry on the morning report: "Two mules, from duty to dead."

But under the care of the grizzled old stable sergeant the mules recovered and next morning the captain found them alive and kicking. Now, entries made on the morning report can never be erased, which made the situation embarrassing for the captain. However, he was a man of resource, and the next day's report carried the startling entry: "Two mules, from dead to duty."

Stone Spearhead Found by Youth (1932)

Source: The Melstone Messenger, 15 Sept 1932. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

When young Bob Hammond of Casper, Wyo., recently picked up a stone to chase away a bear, he did not realize that he held a missile which Indians used in the distant past as ammunition.

Before he threw the stone he looked it over to note its peculiar shape. Then rather than use it on the bear, he took it to the ranger station at West Thumb in Yellowstone National park, and there it was identified as an old Indian spearhead. Beautifully formed, the four-inch weapon has been placed in the Mammoth museum.

Old Timer Writes of Walk He Took to State in 1874 (1934)

The Sanders County Independent-Ledger, September 21, 1934. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

James P. McClosky, 82 years old, of Germantown, Pa., lately wrote Governor Frank H. Cooney that in 1874 he walked from Blackrock or Snake River, Idaho, to Benson's Landing on the Yellowstone river near Billings, and that he walked 42 miles one day. He named some cronies he knew in Montana in 1874 and asked for information about them.

The letter was turned over to David Hilger, state historical library chief, by the governor. Among the men McClosky knew 50 years ago were Sheriff Erwin, Buckskin Williams and Johnny Clark, the letter said.

An incident of the time recalled by the letter was the murder of two soldiers by Indians, five of whom were condemned to be hanged, and who hanged themselves, after singing all night the death chant in the jail, two going first and three following.

The Ted K Archive

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