



MONTANA  
**GHOST TOWN**  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

---

preserving history for the next generation

VOLUME 44

**NEWSLETTER**

SPRING 2016



The Wells hotel, Garnet, as seen from a miner's cabin.

Photo: TERRY HALDEN

## Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

The **Montana Ghost Town Quarterly** is published four times a year by the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society, P.O. Box 1861, Bozeman, Montana 59771. e-mail: mtghosttown@yahoo.com www.mtghosttown.org Copyright © 2016, all rights reserved.

Founded in 1970, the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public to the benefits of preserving the historic buildings, sites, and artifacts that make up the living history of Montana.

Opinions expressed in the bylined articles are the authors' and do not necessarily represent the views of the M. G. T. P. S.

### SPRING 2016

**President:** Terry Halden  
**Vice President:** Brad O'Grosky  
**Secretary / Treasurer:** Sally Griffin  
**Website Administrator:** Kathryn Manning  
**Facebook Administrator:** Kathryn Manning  
**Projects:** Darian Halden and Larry Hoffman  
**Membership:** Sally Griffin  
**Newsletter Editor:** Terry Halden  
**20156 Convention:** Terry Halden  
and Nonda Beardsley  
**Publicity:** Sue Howe  
**Immediate Past President:** John Ellingsen  
**Directors:** Tom Lowe and Gordon Tracy.

## The Prez Sez

TERRY HALDEN

As we are going to Missoula for our convention this year and will be visiting Garnet on the Sunday, I've made this issue of the newsletter, a complete Garnet newsletter. Starting on page 4 there is my contribution, a story about the initial discoveries of gold in the Garnet Mountains by a party led by George W. Morse that located the precious ore in virtually all the streams and freshets flowing out of the range. It led to the establishment of towns like Reynolds City, Yreka, Top O'Deep, Springtown, and of course, Beartown. All of which you'll have a hard time locating today.

The newsletter continues on page 6, with various photos, taken over the years, of how the ghost town Beartown disappeared. On page 7 are some photos taken at Garnet that I've taken on different visits to the ghost town. On page 8 you will find an interesting article from Rita Boettcher, who you will meet this September, about early residents of the Garnet Mountains. If you want to locate the ghost town of Springtown, ask Rita, as her husband owns a mine in the vicinity of the elusive ghost.

On page 11, you will find the program Nonda and I have put together for the convention this September. The two guest speakers we have confirmed, will be on the Friday, Bob Brown, who was the head honcho of Fort Missoula complex until his recent retirement. He will give a talk on early Hellgate and will appear in the costume of a Hellgate resident of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, C.P. Higgins. On Saturday, the speaker will be Kim Briggeman, a reporter with the Missoulian newspaper, who is also a historian and writes numerous historical articles for that paper's weekend edition. You may recall Mr. Briggeman's article "Winter Survivor" which he gave us permission to reprint in our winter 2013 newsletter. The cost has been maintained at \$75 per person, and in the next newsletter, there will be an insert for those of you intending to go, to return to us with your remittance and choice of main course at the banquet.

Sometime in May the Montana Woman Magazine will hit the stands. For those of you that subscribe to the magazine and those of you that are interested, it features an article about ghost towns along with some color photos in this issue. And M.G.T.P.S. gets a plug.

Finally, in my last month's rave, I asked if any of you had any pet historical projects that might require some financial assistance. I wasn't exactly overwhelmed by your response; in fact I was deafened by the silence. Surely, there must be someone out there that is interested in some local historical project that is strapped for money. Let us know, or even better, join our members of the board and help us run this Association.

Just as I was wrapping up this missive, I heard from Larry Hoffman, that the group trying to have the Alta headframe relocated to Butte Uptown was voted down by the council in a unanimous vote. Our project to have it relocated at the World Museum of Mining is therefore going ahead as planned. Updates will be posted in future newsletters.

Until the next time....

Terry

### New Members

Membership Chairperson Sally reports the following **New Members** have joined our Association since the last newsletter. **Please make them welcome.**

Shaun Pendrak, Airdrie, Alberta, Canada

Rita Boettcher, Missoula, MT

# M.G.T.P.S. BOARD MEETING

March 15, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 1:03PM by President Terry Halden. Other Board Members present were Brad O'Grosky, Sue Howe, Gordon Tracy, Kathryn Manning, Larry Hoffman, and Sally Griffin. A guest, Marilyn Murdock, was introduced.

Brad moved that we approve the minutes from the December 5, 2015 meeting as they were printed in the Winter 2016 Newsletter. Larry seconded and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Sally gave the Treasurer's Report. For the fiscal year starting July 1, 2015, through March 31, 2016, we had income of \$13,903.99 and expenses of \$9,348.95, for a net profit of \$3,745.04. The Federal and State Non-Profit Corp. have been timely filed and the receipts for these are on file. Larry moved and Gordon seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Motion passed.

Secretary's Report: Sally said that we have received a number of newsletters from other organizations. She then read a letter from the River and Plains Society in Fort Benton thanking us for our \$500 donation toward restoring old Fort Benton.

Membership Report: Sally said that we now have 230 memberships. Of those, 22 have not paid for 2015 and 2016. An additional 55 have not paid for 2016 only. Sally will send out reminders.

Facebook: Kathryn has not had much time to update it, but she will try to get this done soon.

Website: The ability to pay membership dues with Paypal has now been added. Details about the convention this year are on it, and the Spring newsletter will be added when it is ready.

Projects: Larry reported that the project to move the head frame from the Alta Mine from storage in the Stewart Mine yard to the Museum of Mining in Butte has had a delay. Some people feel that it should be moved to the north end of Main Street where the public would have unlimited access to it and there would not be a charge to see it. Others, including our Board, want to see it protected from vandalism and placed where there would not be a liability issue. We do not want to support the project if the head frame does not go to the Museum of Mining.

Sally then asked if there would be interest in assisting the Headwaters Historical Society in Three Forks with their project of moving a steam engine from a field in Virginia City to the depot which is being restored in Three Forks. The steam engine was originally based in Trident, so moving it to Three Forks would be an appropriate location. The Board felt that this would be an interesting, worthwhile project, so Sally will keep the Board updated as more details become available.

Brad wanted the Board to send a letter to the Gallatin County Commissioners in support of preserving the old Nixon Bridge, which is north of Manhattan. It will be torn down to make way for a new bridge unless something is done. The Board agreed. Brad will write the letter and get it to Terry for signature. Brad also asked for some membership brochures that he could distribute. But the brochures are being updated and are not printed yet, so we will get some to him when they are available.

Newsletters: The next one is due out on April 30, but Terry is still looking for articles to put in it. He has one on Garnet and is hoping to get one on Fort Parker. Any other articles would be greatly appreciated.

Convention 2016: Terry and Nonda Beardsley have finalized the plans, and they will appear in the newsletter. The dates are Sept 9 – Sept 11, 2016. The cost will be \$75 per person.

Convention 2017: Marilyn Murdock, who is on the committee for this convention, reported on progress so far. The convention is in Bozeman, and they plan to concentrate on things in just the Bozeman area. The high cost of renting a bus for the group to use for trips is a concern. The high cost and limited availability of hotel/motel accommodations in Bozeman is also a concern. They are continuing to meet and work on these plans.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Griffin  
Secretary/Treasurer

## WANTED

One or two good men or ladies to serve on our Board of Directors.

Qualifications: An avid interest in Montana history, along with a yen to run things right.

Duties: To meet in Bozeman, three or four times a year.

Remuneration: The same as the rest of the board members - you get to see your name on page two of the newsletter.

E-mail us at :mtghosttown@yahoo.com

We are an equal opportunity employer.



# LOOKING FOR GOLD IN THE GARNET MOUNTAINS

by TERRY HALDEN



George W. Morse.

Photo, MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Early in 1865, a prospecting group, led by George W. Morse, left the frenzied mining activity around Blackfoot City and headed west along the Little Blackfoot River. Following the Mullan Road, they continued west, along what, today is the Clark Fork River. Following a small almost dry stream bed to the north, that they named Bilk Gulch, because there was little water in it and they had to use melted snow, they tried their luck and did some panning. They found a little gold and this encouraged them to explore further up the freshet into the mountains. As it turned out, at a later date the biggest nugget to come out of the Garnets, weighing in at 32 ounces of pure gold was found in Bilk Gulch.

The explorers forged a path through the forest, crossed over onto the upper reaches of Deep Creek and then crested the mountains onto Elk Creek, flowing out of the mountains to the north. All the while they were prospecting and getting good results. By now summer was turning to fall and not wanting to be caught in the wilderness with no supplies, they started retracing their steps over the crest and down Deep Creek to where it joined Bear Gulch and eventually south to the Mullan Road. Prospecting all the way, they couldn't believe the results, as virtually all the streams bore evidence of gold. Where they spent the winter months, Deer Lodge or back in Blackfoot City is irrelevant as either way, stories about their streams of gold leaked out and the stampede was on.

Several prospectors not waiting for winter to abate rushed into the Garnets. The Montana Post in its issue of April 28, 1866 blared the truth about Elk Creek "From Dr. A.L. Justice, who has just returned from Elk Creek, we learn that the main gulch is about fourteen miles long, with well-defined pay streak running through it, about four feet deep, and from twelve to twenty-five feet wide, with an average of seven feet of stripping [silt]. Reynoldsville [Reynolds City] is within a mile of the head of the gulch and Yreka is about four miles lower down. At Bear Gulch, the bed-rock is much deeper, and it will require a season's work to develop the gulch thoroughly. The snow lies from three to five feet deep on hill and valley and the whole ground is covered with a dense growth of pine". With a write up like that, nothing was going to stop the stampede.

To facilitate access to Elk Creek, a road was cut up McClellan Gulch to Deep Creek under the supervision of Henry Mulkey (it is assumed that McClellan was renamed Mulkey after he got permission to charge a toll). After Mulkey left the area, a character by the name of J. W. Meyer squatted on the road and attempted to charge a toll, but because he did no maintenance on the road, he was ignored and eventually disappeared from the scene.

At Reynolds City, named after prospector Jack Reynolds, businesses opened up. No doubt the first was a rough saloon and then came other establishments such as restaurants and a hotel. Two of which advertised in the Montana Post in July of the year.

**LUNA HOUSE,**  
REYNOLDS CITY, MONTANA TERRITORY  
THE best House in the Mountains.  
[96-108] R. JOHNSON, Proprietor.

**STAR RESTAURANT.**  
W. A. FINNEY AND L. W. FOREMAN,  
Proprietors.  
MAIN ST., REYNOLDS CITY, M. T.  
THE best House of the kind in the Elk Creek  
country. [96-108]

Advertisements in the Montana Post July 21, 1866

With no roads to Elk Creek, freight coming from Walla Walla by wagon load had to be packed in the last ten miles by mules. Yreka wasn't to see three wagons roll into town until August 1882.



Gold, being the heaviest metal, when it is eroded over the millenniums and washed down a stream or freshet by melting snow, sinks down to bedrock, to be covered with other silt. As the Montana Post stated, the gold on Elk Creek was relatively easy to find, but on Bear Gulch it was a different matter. Bedrock was often between forty to fifty feet below the surface. This required a deep hole and a crude windlass, and once the bottom had been reached it was necessary to drift, i.e. tunnel along, just above bedrock extracting any gold that was found. Gold in the Bear was found in a narrow streak, the length of the gulch from where Deep Creek entered it to just above the mouth where the ground was too marshy and would have to wait for the 1930s and dredging to recover it. Obviously to operate this method of mining two men were required; one to do the digging and the other to operate the windlass. It was a toss-up which was the more dangerous the miner kneeling in muddy water, trying to tunnel with fear of the ground collapsing and burying him alive, or the man on top operating the windlass where a wrong move could cause the handle to spin with the velocity of a gunshot.

Claims on the Bear were only 200 feet in length and eventually it was stated that one could crawl the entire length of the gulch, underground.

Back on Elk Creek, it was mentioned in the Montana Post of May 25, 1867, that Reynold City had sustained its first shooting, three in fact. *"The first was one in which 'woman, lovely woman' was involved and will not bear repetition. One of the participants received a severe wound in the arm. The second shooting scrape occurred in the streets and one man was shot in the thigh. The third occurred in a restaurant between two partners from the effect of overdoses of 'forty rod'. Nothing too serious resulted"*.

Two months later, on July 18<sup>th</sup> at 3 a.m. a fire gutted most of the buildings in Reynolds City. The fire started in Sam Ritchie's butcher shop on Main Street in the center of town and when discovered the roof was ablaze. It quickly spread to the buildings on either side, the general store of Boswell and Jones on one and the saloon of Johnny Gordon on the other. The next to be consumed in the flames was a shoe store and eight or ten other buildings. It crossed Main Street and was starting to burn the State saloon, but by then the citizens were working to stem the blaze and the second saloon, along with other buildings on that side of Main Street were saved. Total damages were estimated at several thousand (1867) dollars, which would be approaching a million today.

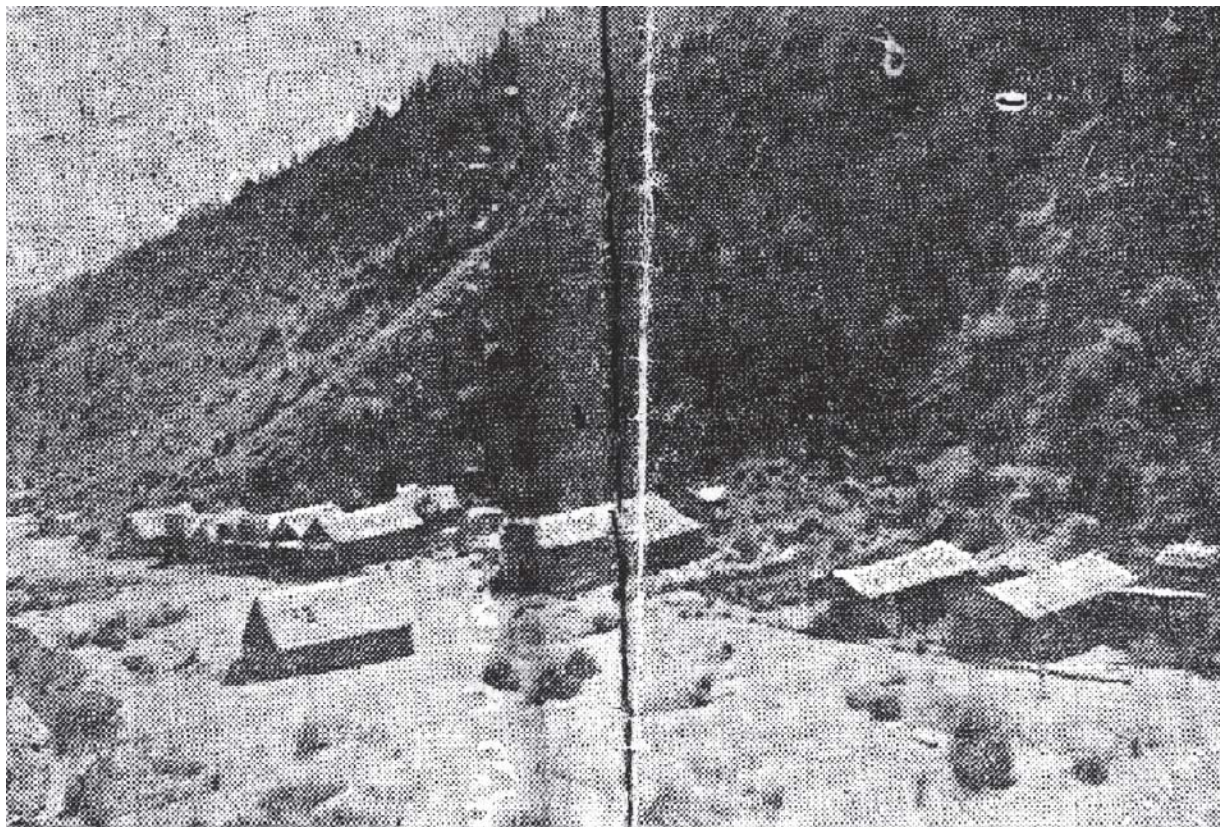
RIGHT:

Sam Ritchie.  
Photo: M.H.S.



BELOW:

Beartown, 1868  
Photo: Great Falls Tribune





Reynold's City was never rebuilt and was in the course of being depopulated as miners fled to more attractive diggin's elsewhere. As Reynold's City faded, Yreka was becoming the dominant town on Elk Creek, with the stream both above and below the town being worked by companies of men who were sluicing the ground. However in a final burst of wealth, in September 1868 it was reported that three miners were leaving the area above Reynold's City for their homes in the States carrying with them one hundred and thirteen pounds of gold. As Yreka, gained in importance, several businesses were moving there including James "Big Jim" Auchinvole who opened a general store for Ferguson & Co. supplying groceries, miner's supplies, liquor and cigars. His competition was a store owned by Dennis Menton whilst Morse and Wells operated a meat market, with Jack Wells soon to build and operate a boarding house.

In the area, towns came and went. besides the two on Elk Creek, Beartown came into being where Deep Creek

ran into Bear Gulch. It provided all the amenities, two general stores run by J. Abascal and Z. Brown, Mrs. Waterman's restaurant, a billiard hall, a hotel, a saloon run by Paul Peltier, and no doubt several saloons, along with numerous cabins. Halfway up Deep Creek there was Springtown, that came and went so fast it is hard to pinpoint where it was located today. At the head of Deep Creek, was Top O'Deep which really came into its own after the advent of load mining there.

After all this activity, centering around the discovery of gold and placer mining, there was a lull in the 1880's as load mining hadn't really started in the area, mainly due to the lack of roads to get heavy equipment into where the load mines were located, and to get the ore out to the smelters. In addition, easier silver mining in the Flint Hills to the south drew the attention of the prospectors. The story of Garnet will have to wait for another issue, although one other mining town in the Garnet Mountains, Coloma, was covered in the Fall 1014 issue of the Newsletter.



Beartown, 1890

Photo: Great Falls Tribune

Beartown, 1910.

Photo: Mining World



Beartown, 2008.

Photo: Terry Halden





PHOTOS of *Garnet*

The Wells hotel, boarded up for the winter. 1997



The Wells hotel, before renovations were made, to:

ABOVE: Dining room.

RIGHT: Kitchen



LEFT: Miner's cabin.

ABOVE: View from the post-office door.

RIGHT: Livery Barn



ABOVE: The last word in comfort

# EARLY RESIDENTS of the GARNET MOUNTAINS

by RITA BOETTCHER

## AH MOON

BORN: About 1824  
PLACE: Probably KwangTung Province, China  
DIED: March 1906  
PLACE: Yreka, MT

OCCUPATION: Gold placer miner

Ah Moon (a common Chinese name) was one of the thousands of Chinese immigrants who entered the United States from 1848 to 1900, following unrest in China. Ah Moon probably arrived at Garnet between 1885 and 1900. He was the last resident of Yreka.

Chinese were not well liked in the United States and were never allowed to integrate into American culture. The Chinese preferred to live by the culture and religion of their native land. Jobs in America were hard to come by following the economic depression of 1873 and the Chinese population was especially singled out. The Chinese generally mined placer gold or claims that the white population had quit as because the land was thought to be no longer producing any valuable ore.

The Scott Act of 1888 prohibited Chinese workers from returning to America after a visit to China unless they had relatives in this country, or they owned land worth \$1000 or more. The Exclusion Act was renewed in 1892 and again in 1902. In 1924, the Johnson Reed Act or National Origins Act placed strict limitations on the immigration of any persons "ineligible" for citizenship. The Chinese population fell within that classification.

When the Chinese community began to decline, Ah Moon decided to stay in Montana, thereby contributing to the history and heritage of the state. Ah Moon died alone, without citizenship during the winter of 1906.

A Powell County Call article reads, "Ah Moon, a Chinaman and old timer who worked the old placer diggings at Eureka, was found dead about 20 yards from his cabin. Although he was 82 years old, he walked to Garnet weeks ago to get a sack of flour. As usual, he split it into four parts. He evidently had become sick close to home, and froze to death in the deep snow. He had one small sack of flour in his hands, while the three other ones were found hanging in trees, where the old man had placed them according to his customs. Mr. James Boler buried Ah Moon the next day."

### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

**Daley, Dennis and Jim Mohler**, 1973. Historical Resources Identification and Location Study, Resources Development Internship Program, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, unpublished, page 45.  
**Perrin, Linda**, 1980. Coming to America: Immigrants from the Far East., Dell Publishing Company, New York, New York.  
**Powell County Call, The**, 1906. Article, April 28, page 5.

## JAMES & LILLIAN BOLES

BORN: James Moody Boles in 1854  
PLACE: Illinois  
DIED: September 6, 1936 in Missoula, MT  
OCCUPATION: Miner at Beartown (1880) Sunset, Yreka and Garnet area mines.

MARRIED: June 20, 1888 in Butte, Silver Bow, Montana  
BORN: Lillian Lincoln Ware in 1865  
PLACE: Auburn, Fayette, Iowa  
DIED: Oct 16, 1936 in Missoula, Montana (71)  
PARENTS: Lemuel J Ware and Mary T. (Stockwell) Ware  
CHILDREN: Kate Irene, 1892 to 1954;  
Alice Margaret 1894 to 1961; Mary Aurella 1899 to 1988

According to the Granite County mining records, James Boles filed eight claims for his strikes in the Garnet region. They are as follows:

DATE	MINE	PARTNER
1/5/1886	"The Atlanta"	None
1/16/1891	"The Spokane"	None
1/16/1891	"Axtel"	None
5/16/1891	"The Blanket"	None
1/1/1893	"Free Coinage"	None
1/1/1893	"Nancy Hanks"	None
1/2/1893	"Idaho"	F. A. Potter
8/26/1901	"Idaho Amended"	F. A. Potter

In 1906, the Powell County Call stated in an article that, James Boles found the elderly Chinese miner, Ah Moon, frozen to death near his cabin. James Boles buried him the next day.

Later in the same year there was another mention of James Boles in the Powell County Call. It stated that James Boles of Sunset was kicked in the face by a colt with four white feet and a white nose. His wife took him to Garnet for treatment. But it seems that poor James got more treatment than he wanted. After ascertaining that there were no broken bones, the doctor sewed the wounds up with six stitches, all the while humming,

"Four white feet and a white nose. Take his hide and feed the crows."

After the Boles retired from mining to the city of Missoula, the 'Missoulian' mentioned their names frequently in the society news pages.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Granite County Clerk and Recorder's Office, Lode Books  
Powell County Call, article dated July 28, 1906  
U.S. Census record



# JAMES & JOHN AUCHINVOL

**BORN:** James ("Big Jim") was born, Nov. 1, 1832;  
John was born November 27, 1838

**PLACE:** They were French Canadian from British Columbia, Canada.

**JAMES' OCCUPATION:** Saloon Keeper / Store Owner / Miner. Died: Apr. 16, 1902, Kingston, Ontario.

**JOHN'S OCCUPATION:** Miner / Farmer Died: Aug. 26, 1902, Granger, Id

**JOHN MARRIED:** Delia born about 1858, in Granger, ID.

Jim and John were brothers who moved to the Garnet Mountains, from the Caribou Mines in British Columbia, shortly after the discovery of placer gold in Elk Creek and Bear Gulch, in the mid 1860's. James and John were two of the many eager men who came prospecting early in the days of the territory, when much gold was yet to be discovered. In the 1870 U.S. census for Beartown, James was listed as a Saloon Keeper, aged 37. But there was no mention of John, which would indicate that he had already moved on to parts unknown.

By 1873, James was running (and may have had an interest in) a general store for Ferguson and Co, in Top O'Deep, whilst Ferguson himself ran a similar store in Edwardsville. In September, that year it was reported in the Helena Herald, that Mr. Auchinvole, of the firm of Ferguson and Co, has moved his store from Top O'Deep to Yreka and is doing a good business. He soon had competition, when a second store opened up in the small mining town, along with a meat market, of Morse and Wells (the latter was eventually to build and own the Wells Hotel in Garnet).

W.R. Ferguson and Co was forced into bankruptcy late in 1875, with liabilities of over \$10,000. The main cause, according to the New North-West newspaper, was an overly generous credit system to it's customers and Ferguson's investments in properties that proved un-remunerative

In December 1875, James S. Auchinvole went before a District Court Judge in Deer Lodge and became a U.S. citizen. Shortly thereafter his friend Pat Brogan nominated him and he joined the Republican Party, and along with Brogan were the representatives from Yreka at the State Republican convention.

At about this time, John K. Wells, alongside his butcher's shop, opened up a boarding house / hotel in Yreka, Morse took on a new partner, a local wealthy mine owner, Pat Brogan, bought out Ferguson & Co local store and stock, and got 'Big Jim' to run it.

By 1877, "Big Jim" was called the "chief businessman," of Yreka according to an article in the Helena Independent in July of that year. But Yreka as a mining community was slowly dying. Pat Brogan sold out and bought a 320 acre ranch south of New Chicago. By the early 1880s there were over 300 Chinese working the claims in and around Yreka. 'Big Jim' moved to the growing mining town of Coloma where he built a cabin near the Mammoth mine, according to a news article in 1894. From there he went into partnership with Sam Ritchie, and became part owner of the Nancy Hanks mine in Garnet.

In the meantime, his brother, John had been unsuccessful in mining ventures and had finally settled down to ranching near Grangeville, Idaho. There he had married and started raising a family. Being comfortably well off, he started wondering about his brother and in late 1898, after farm chores had been done, he set out to see if he could find him.

In December 1898, after many years of separation, a reunion took place in Garnet and the story was told in the Garnet Mining News. "*Last Saturday's stage brought to Garnet a large-framed man with shaggy eyebrows, and a general well-to-do appearance and at the Garnet Hotel he inquired of Neal McDonald if he knew a man named James Auchinvole. 'Yes,' said Neal, who at once detected a striking resemblance, 'and you are his brother.'*"

*Mr. McDonald kindly consented to go with him in search of Jim, whom they found at the Nancy Hanks hoist. Jim looked his brother over critically, shoot his head and said, 'You are not John; you are not half big enough for him.' John slowly bared his wrist, showing a scar, and commenced detailing the circumstances when he received it in their boyhood days, Jim became convinced, somewhat excitedly interrupted the story and grabbing him by both hands, rapidly began asking questions. James Auchinvole is part owner in the Nancy Hanks group of mines and is now considered a wealthy man, while John is also well off, and as both are on the down-hill side of life, but yet are young enough to enjoy it, they will, it is hoped by their friends, have the health to pass the remainder of their lives in joy and contentment."*

W. R. FERGUSON. J. S. AUCHINVOLE.

**W. R. FERGUSON & CO.,**

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL

**General Merchants,**

**Yreka and Edwardsville.**

Deer Lodge County, Montana.

GROCERIES, LIQUORS, TOBACCOS.

BOOTS, SHOES, HATS, CAPS.

MINERS' AND RANCHERS' TOOLS.

**FULL STOCK OF STAPLE GOODS.**

FOR SALE AT EITHER STORE AT

*Prices as Low as any House in Montana.*

☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞

We Carry Heavy Stocks of Goods Selected Especially for Miners' and Ranchers' Supplies.

And especially solicit the

PURCHASERS OF FLINT, HELL GATE AND NEVADA VALLEYS, MINERS OF BEAR, ELK, DEEP, AND VICINITY.

To give us a call and examine goods and prices for Winter.

**HEAVY STOCK at EDWARDSVILLE.**

224 W. R. FERGUSON & CO.

An ad. that appeared in the New North-West newspaper, Feb. 28, 1874

Shortly afterwards, while working at the Nancy Hanks, "Big Jim" almost lost his life in what would have been one of the most bizarre accidents of all time. Three men, "Big Jim", Sam Ritchie and Foreman Charly Thompson, were being hauled to the surface and were within thirty feet of the collar. They had extinguished their candles when in some manner the bell rope became wrapped around Auchinvole's neck. Unable to cry out, he was being dragged head downward from the bucket. His companions managed to grab him by the legs. This in turn might have dumped them all down the shaft; but Jim's struggles set off a furious clanging of the bell. An alert engineer leaped to the lever and disengaged the power. Stopped at last, tilted over the abyss, Ritchey managed to cut the rope with his clasp knife. It was in a half-hitch, so it had to be cut twice before the badly shaken man could breathe again. Perhaps to Auchinvole it seemed a portent and within days he signed over power of attorney, leaving his share for

sale as his partner wished.

What happened after is anyone's guess as "Big Jim" never made the news again. It would be nice to think that he went to join his brother in Idaho and there they lived out their lives.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Cushman, Dan, 1964. Article, "Montana's Last Booming Gold Camp", Montana the Magazine of Western History.  
Hammond, Helen, 1983. Garnet-Montana's Last Gold Camp, Acme Press, Missoula, MT.  
Granite County Clerk and Recorder's Office, 1893, Lode Book 3, pg. 56.  
Newspapers: Helena Herald; Helena Independent; New North-West, Deer Lodge; Garnet Mining News  
US Census records for Beartown, 1870.

Unfortunately, there is no known photographs of the Auchinvole brothers. - Editor

**MINING MATTERS.**

BEARTOWN.

DEAR POST: This little mining camp holds its own remarkably well, if it can be judged by the number of business houses open and the crowds of miners jostling one another on Saturday evening and during Sunday, either laying in their next week's supply of groceries, paying off the past week's bills, or fitting themselves to new cheap clothing at the numerous shops. Others are less profitably employed in patronizing the host of bar-rooms, whence emanates a babel of voices, now and then interlarded with a "rough-and-tumble." As a whole, Beartown, if Helena and Virginia are excepted, is the liveliest camp of the Territory. The town consists of but one street, is built on a flat at the junction of Deep gulch with Bear, and lays no claim to architectural beauty or regularity of streets. A huge pile of headings and tailings on each side of a string of sluices runs up and down the centre of the main street. The richest part of Bear gulch is in this flat, and not nearly worked out yet, paying from \$200 to \$400 per day to the sluice. The depth of pay necessitates drifting and the bed rock lies 44 feet deep. It was on this flat one of the early settlers of Madison county, W. W. Bullard, made his pile, got smitten with the ripe charms of a gay and dashing widow from Flint, and left a few weeks ago, happy in her possession, and the satisfaction of having plenty of dust to winter in Hoosierdom.

The lower part of Bear, which, last spring, was entirely inundated and the miners driven out therefrom, has been re-opened in many claims and pays well. The upper part, being above the town, with all its tributaries—First Chance, Melhorn, Grizzly and others—gives employment to about 300 miners.

Page one of the Virginia City, Montana Post newspaper, September 28, 1867



# CONVENTION 2016, MISSOULA

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 9<sup>TH</sup> - SUNDAY, SEPT. 11<sup>TH</sup>**

Base Hotel: GuestHouse Inn\*\*\*, 3803 Brooks Street, Missoula 59804. (406) 251-2665

E-mail: [guesthousemissoula@gmail.com](mailto:guesthousemissoula@gmail.com)

We have arranged for the hotel to put aside 20 rooms for our members at the business rate of \$62.00/night, for either queen size bed or 2 queen size beds. Please mention Montana Ghost Towns convention when booking.

PROGRAM (Subject to last minute changes)

Friday Sept 9,

5.00p.m. Conference room, Guesthouse Inn . Registration

6.00p.m. Hors d'ouvers and coffee

7.00p.m. Guest Speaker: Bob Brown, appearing as C.P.Higgins, first resident of Hellgate

Dinner on your own (there are many fine restaurants nearby)

Saturday, Sept 10,

9:00a.m. A Tucker Transport bus (remember them from Butte and Anaconda) will be at the front door of the GuestHouse to take us to:

1)Traveler's Rest State Park (where Lewis & Clark camped going west and returning)  
Their actual camp site can be visited along with an interesting museum.

2) St. Mary's Mission, where the original church, built by Father deSmet, in 1841  
finished & decorated by Father Ravalli who is buried in the cemetery.

12:30p.m. Lunch (Chicken strips & fries) Eagles Club, #32 Missoula

2:00p.m. Bus takes us to Fort Missoula for guided tours.

6.00 p.m. Conference Room, GuestHouse, meet

Please note: the GuestHouse is unlicensed, but you are welcome to bring your own bottle of wine (all rooms have a cooler for chilling)

7.00p.m. Buffet Dinner: Baked Ham, Roasted New York Strips & Vegetarian,

Mango Moose & Chocolate Moose Cream Puffs, Coffee / Tea

8.00p.m. Annual General Meeting

8.30p.m. Guest Speaker: Kim Briggeman, Historian/Reporter with the Missoulian

Sunday, Sept. 11,

9.00a.m. Convoy leaves for Garnet Ghost Town (direction at convention)

12.00p.m. Packed lunch at Garnet picnic tables

1.00p.m. For those that want to: a side trip to Coloma ghost town.

Registration cost will remain at \$75.00 per person

\*\*\* Please note, as off June 2016, GuestHouse Inn will change its name to Fairbridge Inn



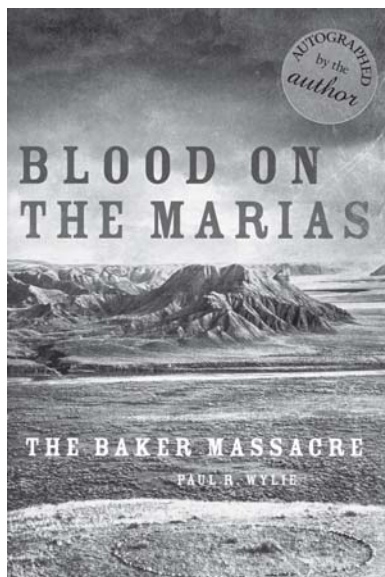
P.O. BOX 1861, BOZEMAN, MT, 59771-1861

REVIEW:

## BLOOD on the MARIAS

The Baker Massacre

by PAUL R. WYLIE



On the morning of January 23, 1870, an intoxicated Major Eugene Baker, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Cavalry attacked a Piegan Indian village on the Marias River, south-east of present day Shelby, killing far more than the 173 'hostiles' that went into the official army record book. The men of the camp were away on a buffalo hunt, trying to feed the victims that were mainly women, children and old men. The camp was afflicted by smallpox and even worse, it was the wrong camp. Baker had been dispatched to find the renegade band of Mountain Chief. Despite Baker's guides telling him he had located the camp of friendly chief Heavy Runner, he ordered the attack anyway.

Author Paul R. Wylie, a retired lawyer from Bozeman, has written a masterful well researched account of the massacre and as a lead up to the debacle gives a history of the Southern Piegans (Blackfeet) a member of Blackfoot Confederacy, and their dealings with Americans from the time that Meriwether Lewis shot a Piegan in 1806 to when they were finally settled on their reserve around Browning, Montana.

Terry Halden