

(Civil War Days in Montana. Robert C. Athearn. Pacific Historical Review, February, 1960 Vol XXIX No. 1 p 19- 33.)

When gold was discovered along Grasshopper Creek in the Beaverhead Valley the nation's view was focused upon General George McClellan's withdrawal from his assault upon Richmond and his inability to strike a telling blow at the Confederacy (summer of 1862)

The big Alder Gulch strike, in May of 1863, was lost in the news of Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and the military turbulence of that climatic summer. The future territory of Montana and the entire trans-Mississippi West seemed unimportant because the vital events upon whose outcome the fate of the nation depended.

..p 20-- land they called America or the States was remote

..Until 1864 Montana was a distant wilderness, recently tied in a loose political fashion to the infant territory of Idaho, unknown and unheard of except in a most general way, and completely voiceless in national affairs.

A column in the Montana Post headed "News from America" exemplified the feeling of isolation.

Republicans..called themselves the Union party

territory overrun by fugitives from Missouri and Copperheads, southern Indiana and Southern Illinois (called Sinks of Treason).

"Montana's political agonies in many respects stemming from the hatreds arising out of the Civil War and a general animosity toward the Republican controlled federal government, did not subside until the 1870's.

Era of copper kings in the late 1880's managed to crowd out the passion of the Civil War."