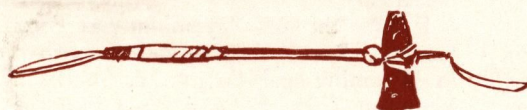




HISTORIC MONTANA TRAILS



For the first time the major trails of Montana are shown on a single map.

Both the map and the accompanying article were verified by Dr. Paul C. Phillips, eminent historian at Montana State University. Our sincere thanks to that able authority.

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"MARKING TRAIL" IN MONTANA

Indians, Weather, Wilderness Fail to Halt Hardy Pioneers

The state of Montana is only 65 years old and yet, oddly enough, it was just 29 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed that Lewis and Clark were exploring the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers in Montana.

They left St. Louis on a Monday morning May 14, 1804. Before they returned, they had spanned and explored half a continent; crossed nine states in two directions on foot and in boats; laid out trails our modern highways still follow today.

Their 40-man party returned to St. Louis 800 days later—more than two years to travel three thousand miles. And, they did it all with an appropriation from Congress of \$2,500!

Other Pioneers Follow

Hard on the heels of trail-breakers Lewis and Clark came trappers, hunters, miners, traders and settlers. Some marched up the Oregon Trail which had many by-roads leading north to the Yellowstone Valley and the Bighole country. Others came by steamboat the same route Lewis and Clark had taken—up the River Missouri—to Fort Benton, head of navigation.

Fort Benton was now the world's farthest inland port and some years, as many as 60 steamboats were unloaded at the wharves.

Military Road Planned

Then came demands for a railroad across the continent. Congress authorized five surveys. General Isaac Ingalls Stevens, who was appointed the first governor of Territorial Washington, was sent in 1853 to make one such survey for a railroad from St. Paul, Minnesota to the Pacific Coast.

Governor Stevens soon saw it would be many years before this railroad would be built. He and Lt. John Mullan then sought money from Congress to build a military road from Fort Benton to Walla Walla. Congress would appropriate only small sums from time to time.

Not until 1862 did Lt. Mullan finish his 600-mile road. It had taken him five hard years and cost the government \$250,000. But the new road attracted many settlers into Montana territory because now there was a safe, "comfortable" route from the East into the new and rich gold fields of the Northwest, with little danger from Indian attack. For those days it was like a super highway.

Bozeman Finds a Way

Still, travel up the Missouri by boat was expensive and men sought a way to Montana overland via Wyoming. Wagons had scarcely begun to roll over Mullan's road before a famous scout, John Bozeman, discovered such a trail for the pioneers.

It came through Wyoming, past Forts Laramie, Reno, Kearny and Fetterman in Wyoming and Fort C. F. Smith in Montana. Then the trail came into the Yellowstone valley at Big Timber and continued west through Bozeman and the Bozeman pass into Virginia City where it ended.

But now, the Indians, already angry at the inroads of the white man on their hunting grounds, declared war. Twelve companies of soldiers were stationed at Fort Laramie to protect the whites using the trail. Seven other companies were scattered at Reno, Kearny, Fetterman and Smith. Still the Indians struck and struck again.

Fetterman, near the Montana-Wyoming border, was the scene of a massacre which wiped out an entire patrol of 80 men under the command of Col. Fetterman.

Indians Beleaguer Fort

The fort itself was under siege for days. The situation was grim indeed. The commander's quarters were "mined" with black powder so that the women and children could be blown up, in case the fort fell. They, at least, could be spared savage torture.

Three times riders were sent to Fort

Laramie for reinforcements. Three times riderless horses with empty saddles returned to the fort.

Then, John "Portugee" Phillips, famed frontiersman was told "Name your price but get the message through." Phillips refused all pay, asking only the pick of the horses in the Fort. Choosing a thoroughbred, he set out on his dangerous journey when the bitter weather was 40 below.

Four days and four nights later, he got the message through to Laramie in one of the most heroic rides in history.

Less than a year later just outside Fort C. F. Smith, not far from today's site of Billings, a party of 19 soldiers were feeding horses at a corral. Logs had been banked around the corral for protection and willow was woven into the wire

fence to provide further cover. Suddenly the men were attacked by more than 2,000 Sioux. Hour after hour, the battle continued.

It was a day Red Cloud would always remember with a heavy heart. The soldiers were armed with a new 50-caliber, breech-loading rifle which permitted rapid fire, something brand new in Montana. So the flower of Red Cloud's warriors fell by the score, more than 150 of them being killed by one soldier alone. They were sorely beaten.

Still the war continued. The government was forced to close the Bozeman Trail due to the harassment of Red Cloud and Crazy Horse.

One man, however, defied the Indians and the government.

Nelson Story, who had helped bury

John Bozeman after he was killed on his own trail by Indians, had made a stake in placer mining. He hated mining and longed for cattle. He knew the miners needed meat. So he went to Texas.

1866 found Story in Fort Worth and Dallas, buying Longhorns at \$10 a head. He got together a herd of 1,000 head.

Then he proceeded to drive them from Texas to Montana (that's almost from Mexico to Canada) through storms, across rivers and in the very face of Indian attack. Indians actually stole the herd from him once but he tracked down the red thieves, killing thirty of them to regain his cattle. Eventually, he arrived at the present day site of Livingston, Montana with his Longhorns.

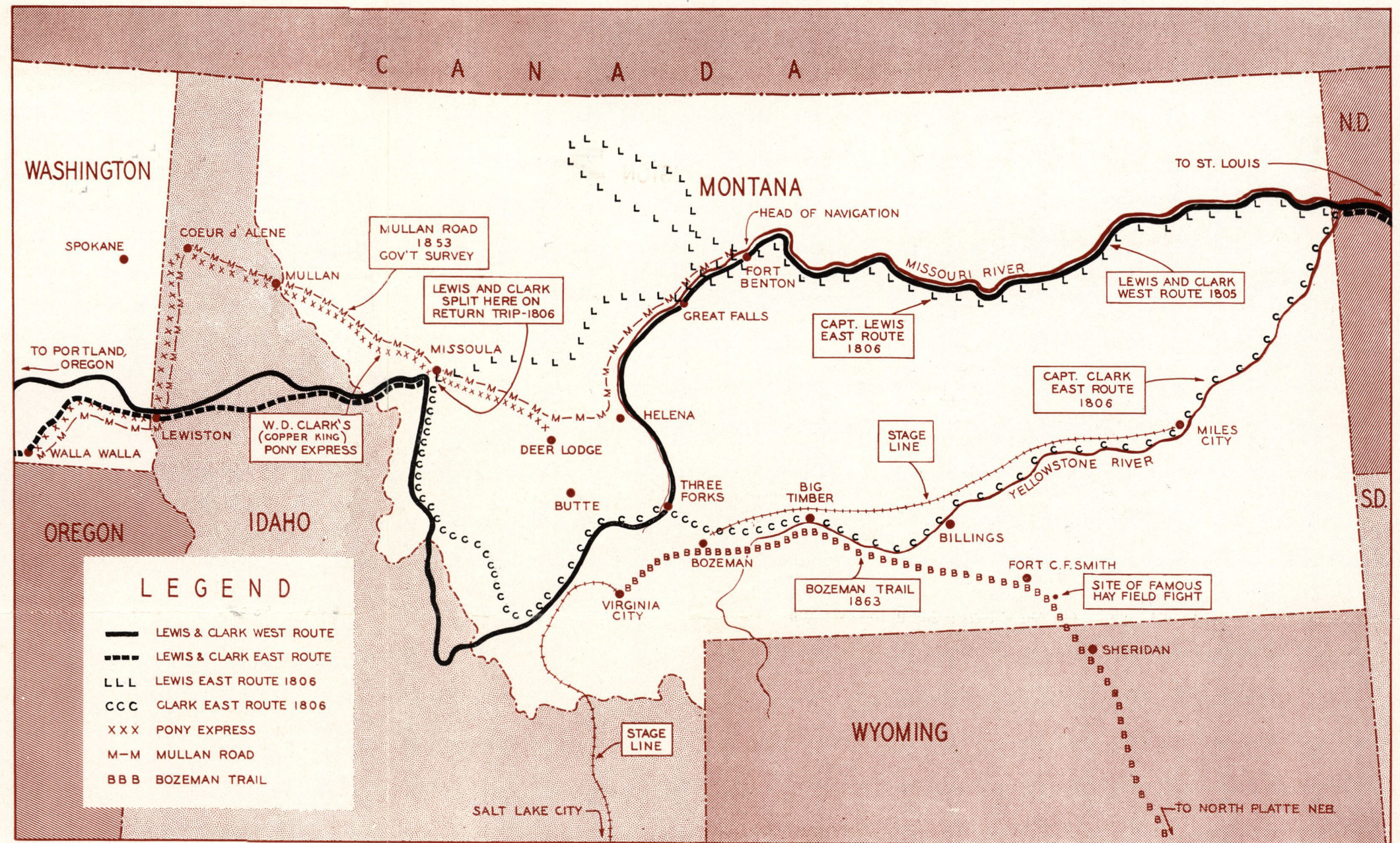
What a feat this was, especially when it is remembered that this was the same

year Fetterman and his command were wiped out to the last man by the Indians who had attacked Story. His boldness paid off, too, because his 1,000 head had become a huge herd of 17,000 twenty years later.

Such were the men of Montana.

Stage coaches were a familiar sight in Montana by now. One ran from Salt Lake City to Virginia City. Another ran from Bozeman to Huntley (just outside Billings) and to Miles City.

There was even a Pony Express, more colorful in at least one respect than the original. W. D. Clark, the Copper King, started it when he got a sub-contract to carry the mail from Deer Lodge to Walla Walla. He rode the route himself to set up way-stations. When the trail reached Lake Couer D'Alene the mail was turned





over to Indians who carried it by canoe for 65 miles before it was picked up by another rider.

And then, there were the camels. Yes, camels. The government, you'll remember, bought these animals primarily for duty in Texas and Arizona. Some of them, eventually wound up hauling heavy mining machinery from Walla Walla to Virginia City and Bannock.

One of the best hunters in Montana at this time was James McNear. Late one afternoon, McNear, after hitting the "red-eye," suddenly came upon the grazing camels while on his way back to camp. Carefully moving downwind, he stalked his prey, leveled on one, fired, and bagged his "moose." He was aiming at the second when the irate owner stopped him. Thereafter, he was fondly known as "Camel" McNear.

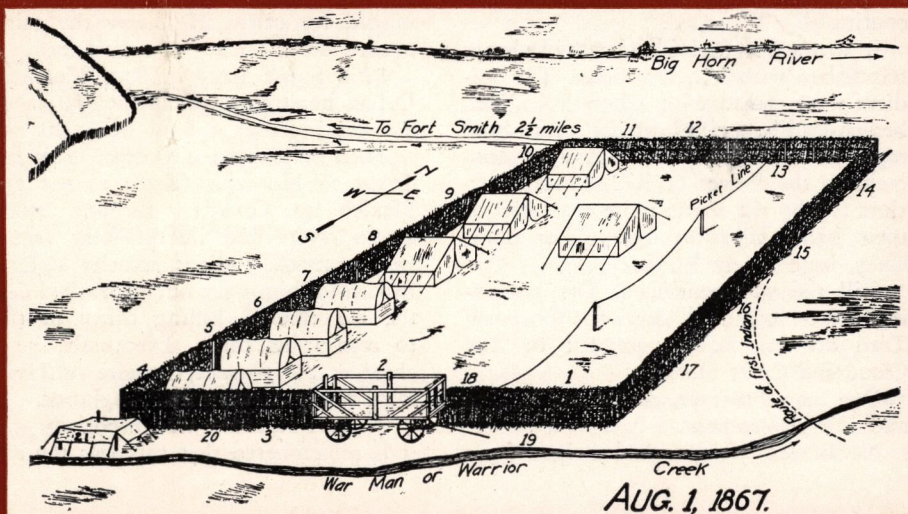
Such stories, historically accurate, abound in Montana's chronicles. The feats of her sons, the grandeur of her country and the skill of her Indian warriors will live on forever in the saga of the "Treasure State"—as will the names of the Trail Blazers: Lewis and Clark, John Mullan, and John Bozeman.

Modern highways, traveled by sleek streamlined automobiles, now mark the same paths they laboriously mapped out for a grateful people.

WAGONS WESTWARD! Typical "train" with water barrels on wagon sides. State Historical Society of Colorado supplied photograph, location and date unknown.



HERO OF MONTANA, John "Portugee" Phillips made daring ride in 40 below weather to Fort Laramie to get reinforcement for Fort Fetterman. Three riders failed to get through.



HAY FIELD FIGHT of 1867 matched 21 men of Fort C. F. Smith in Montana against 2,000 Sioux. New rapid-fire rifles evened huge odds. Fighter No. 4, F. G. Burnett, made this sketch furnished by Denver Public Library Western Collection. The numerals show the positions of the soldiers around the corral during the fight.