

# Maiden

## and the Judith Mountains



A Historical Sketch by Marjorie King

## PREFACE

I have written this history primarily for the family of George and Helen Wieglanda because George and Helen's lives were so closely tied to Maiden, the Judith Mountains and its mines.

Marjorie King

1927-1997



## *Death*

*Death stands above me, whispering low  
I know not what into my ear;  
Of his strange language all I know  
Is, there is not a word of fear.*

*Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864)*

**Maiden and the Judith Mountains**  
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Front Cover Original Drawing Unknown  
Weed and Piirson from the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Survey, 1896-97.



## GEORGE AND HELEN WIEGLENDIA

**G**eorge came to Maiden in April 1895, Helen came in June 1914 and except for brief periods neither of them lived elsewhere again. The two were married in Olympia, Washington on March 14, 1922 and they returned to Maiden to live in the "old log house". The couple raised three girls--Selma, Marjorie, and Montana—the mountains, and the property which "Wig" acquired still belongs to members of the family in 1995.

I have tried to write a history which is accurate and reliable. Whenever possible dates have been verified from primary sources. (By primary source, I mean a document, record or news clipping written at the time of the event rather than something written from memory.) Invaluable sources for the early years were Leeson's 1885 History of Montana published by Warner, Beers and Co., Weed and Pirssons's Geology and Mineral Resources of the Judith Mountains 1898, the Mineral Argus published in Maiden from 1883 to 1886 (and later the Lewistown Argus), the Rocky Mountain Husbandman published in White Sulphur Springs and the Ft. Benton River Press.

George was very interested in the history of Maiden and the Judith Mountain mines. He collected many records and documents concerning the area. Various personal letters and sporadic diaries have also been passed on to the family. It is of note that because George was a self-educated man he was very conscious of his grammar and spelling and he always tried to carefully check his personal writings for their accuracy. Many times he wrote letters in pencil on scraps of used paper and then re-wrote them with pen and ink on "good stationery." How fortunate the family is to have a number of his pencil copies. The introductory history of Maiden is such a copy.

One word of caution, dates are often very illusive. For example, post offices were legally designated by the U. S. Post Office Department and the date of the appointment of their first postmaster is officially of record. However, mail was often distributed and delivered (at stage stops or ranches, for example) as a matter of necessity and convenience before official designation was formalized from the post office department.

The dates of legal land transactions can also be deceiving. Often land changed hands and deeds were executed, but the deeds were not necessarily officially recorded until a later date. People often lived on a property for a number of years before a former mortgage was satisfied so legal transfer of the land was delayed.

Mining laws and patented and unpatented mining claims will be discussed under the section on mining.

I wish to thank my sisters for allowing me to and file all of the family pictures, papers and records. Their generosity has made this history possible.



Selma, Marjorie and Montana Wiegler

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and the Judith Mountains

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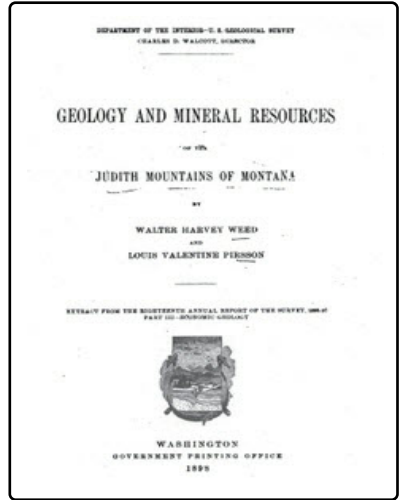
People

**Part I**  
**EARLY EXPLORERS**

Part I  
EARLY EXPLORERS

The Judith Mountains are located just north and east of the geographic center of Montana. They are "blister" mountains formed by volcanic pressure which lifted the surface of an ancient inland sea bed to a height of some 2,500 feet above the surrounding plain. The highest point in the mountains is Judith Peak at 6,386 feet.

In 1896-97 W. H. Weed and L. V. Pirsson submitted a report to the Secretary of Interior as a part of the Eighteenth Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey. Their report entitled GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES OF THE JUDITH MOUNTAINS OF MONTANA forms the basis for much of the early history of mining in the area. It is also a source of other historic information. Their topographic map of the Judith Mountains has solved many arguments concerning the name and location of various mountains and streams. (See accompanying reproduction.)



Eighteenth Annual Report of the Survey, 1896-97.  
Walter Harvey Weed and Louis Valentine Pirsson

... “Captain Clark who ascended this river much higher than I did has thought to call it Judieth’s River,”

So wrote Meriwether Lewis on May 29, 1805. Although the Lewis and Clark party agreed upon a name for the Judith River, they failed to name the Judith Mountains. Three days before, on May 26, 1805, Lewis had his first view of the mountain now known as the Little Rocky Mountains and the Judith Mountains when he ascended the hills on the north bank of the Missouri



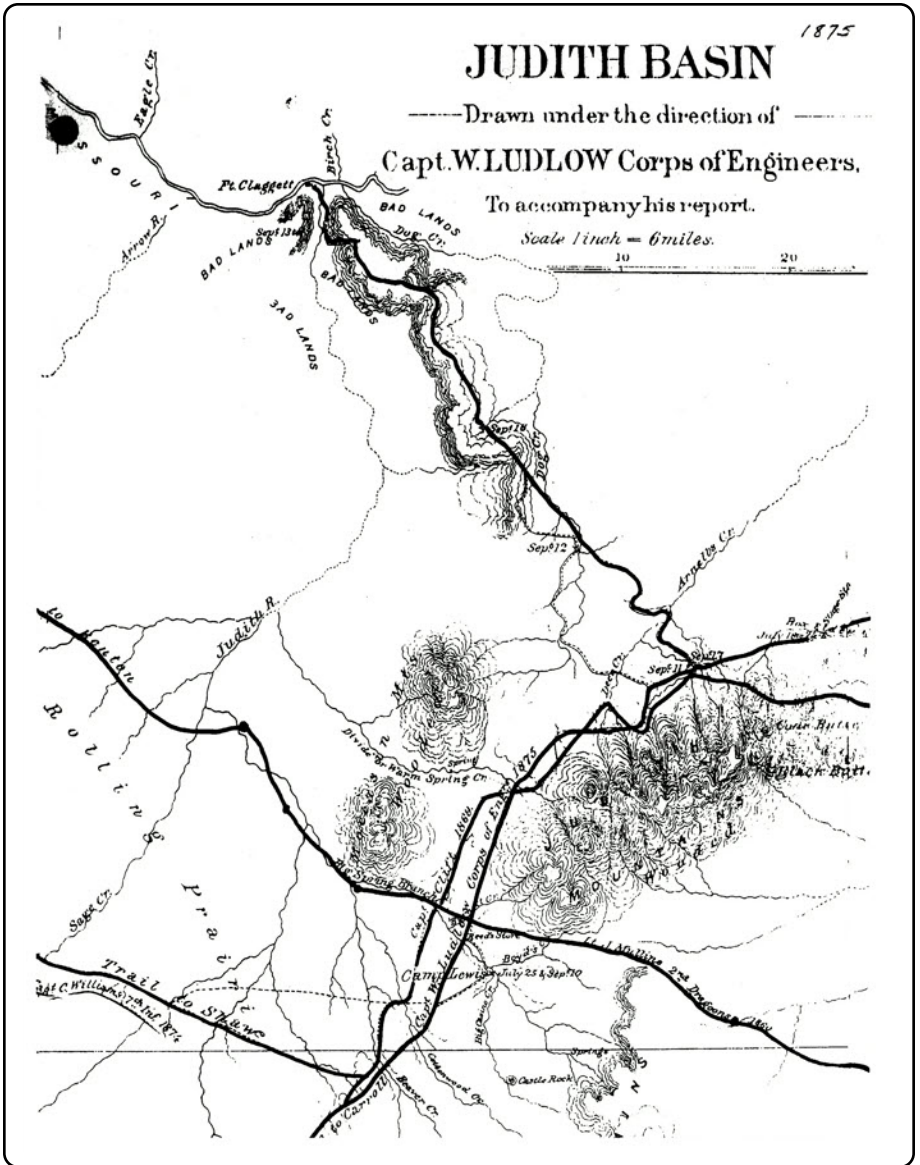


1875

# JUDITH BASIN

-----Drawn under the direction of -----  
**Capt. W. LUDLOW** Corps of Engineers,  
To accompany his report.

Scale 1 inch = 6 miles.



Capt. W. Ludlow Corps of Engineers  
18th Annual Report Map

During the early 1800's it was erroneously assumed that the Judith River headed in the Judith Mountains. Two major tributaries of the Judith River rise from the Judith Mountain area ---Warm Spring Creek and Big Spring Creek --- but the river itself heads in the Little Belt Mountains.



Father DeSmet 1843-1901

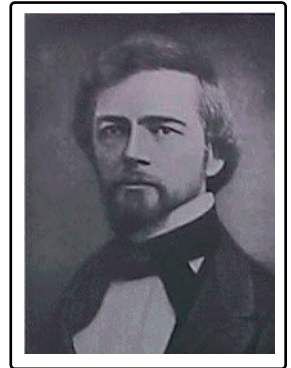
Maps which accompany the original Lewis and Clark journals show a creek or river which flows north from a range of unnamed mountains and is identified as South Mountain Creek.

This creek eventually became known as Armells Creek, and the mountains became known as the Judith Mountains. Another creek flowing south into the Missouri from what we now know as the

Little Rocky Mountains was named North Mountain Creek.

Father DeSmet traveled into the Judith Basin in 1846. He is credited with being the first white man to leave a written record of journeying into the Judith Basin. Father DeSmet marveled at the beauty of the country but his mission was to introduce Christianity to the Indians not to do extensive exploration. He held a large council in a cottonwood grove on Ross Fork Creek to which 2,000 Indians were alleged to have attended.

Seven years later, Isaac Stevens was commissioned by the U. S. Secretary of war to find a route for a railroad from the Upper Mississippi to the Pacific Coast.



Isaac Stevens 1843-1901

In September 1853 he was camped at Fort Benton and in need of a guide to take him across the mountains. He had reason to believe a hunting party of Flathead Indians was camped on the Mussellshell River 150 miles to the southeast and that he would be able to obtain a guide from them. He directed a young Lieutenant in his company, John Mullan, along

with five other men and a Piegan guide, to search out the Flathead camp.

The party left Fort Benton on September 9 and traveled via Shonkin and Square Butte into the Judith Basin. Mullan's diary gives an interesting account of his journey. On September 11, 1853, he wrote:

**“We came in sight of the Judith mountains, a high range of mountains running both west and southeast; these mountains lay about eight miles distant, and to our left, while the main chain of the Belt mountains lay to our right, and about thirty miles distant, having a general direction of north and south....**

**The main stream of the Judith river takes its rise in the Belt Mountains and empties into the Missouri near three thousand miles above its mouth. The eastern portion of the Belt mountains being called the Judith mountains, might lead one to suppose that the Judith river takes its rise in the Judith mountains, but such is not the case. On our road the so-called Judith mountains lay to our left, while the main chain of the Girdle or Belt mountains lay to our right. The low ranges might with propriety have no separate and distinct names as they are separated by a gap or pass fif-**

**teen or sixteen miles wide; but when taken together they form a belt or girdle, the concavity of which is turned towards the north. The name has been applied to them of the Girdle or Belt mountains.**

His diary continues the following day;

**"The Judith Mountains, as also the approaches to them, are well wooded--the pine tree abounding... Our camp of this night was at the foot of the largest peak of the main chain of the Judith Mountains. About 8 p.m. we were startled by the approach from the mountains of a large grizzly bear, that came running with full speed into our camp. The horses were frightened, and were preparing for a stampede, when their picket-ropes held them fast. Mr. Rose, who was on watch at the time, and our Indians, had secured their guns; but seeing them, he turned to the right, and soon was seen scampering away across the prairie. The night was exceedingly mild and beautiful, the moon shining clear and bright till after 12 p.m. Our campe was a scene of feasting and good cheer, having killed an abundance of buffalo**

during the day; the meat was served up boiled, baked, roasted, and fried. This was a grand season for the Indians; they sat up half the night around the camp-fires, cooking--our fuel consisting of the wood left by a Blackfoot camp.

"The Judith mountains are a great resort for the Blackfoot Indians during the summer season, as game of all kinds is found in abundance; and here , too, they procure poles for their travels and lodges, and everywhere were to be seen their old camping-grounds, one of which was chosen by our guide for our night's camp.

September 13,1853. ..Between the main chains of the Girdle and Judith mountains, and near the gap between them, is a large and beautiful prairie, well grassed, with numerous streams flowing through it, where the buffalo congregate in vast numbers; so that the traveller may be well assured to find an abundance of game both of the buffalo and antelope, as large bands of the latter were to-day seen along the margin of the western tributary of the Judith river, which are so tame and gentle as to allow the hunter to approach them with a very few yards."

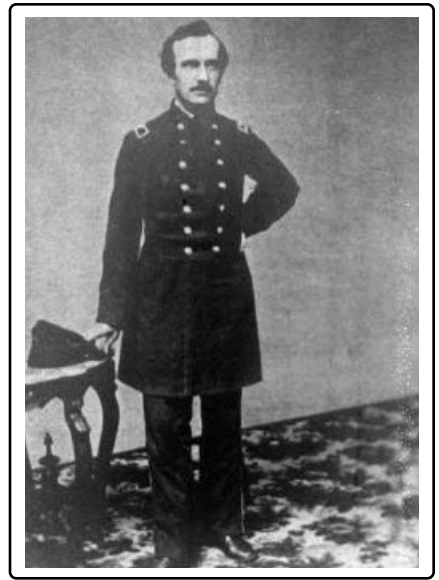
The accompanying map shows four additional major exploration and survey routes through Central Montana before 1880--that of Lt.. John Mullins (note spelling of name is different than the former John Mullan 1860; Captain Clift in 1869; Captain Williams in 1874 and Captain William Ludlow in 1875.



Capt. William Ludlow 1843-1901  
Corps. Of Engineers

The maps and journals of these men provide excellent early documentation of the period. It is of note, however, that none of these exploration parties actually traveled into the Judith Mountains. All of them skirted around the mountains since they were primarily interested in commercial or military transportation routes. In 1859 the War Department, Office of Exploration and Surveys, commissioned Brevet Brigadier Gen-

eral William F. Reynolds to explore the Yellowstone River and its tributaries. Jim Bridger acted as a guide for the expedition which wintered in 1859-60 south of the Wyoming-Montana border near Ft. Laramie. During the summer of 1860 exploration of the area began in earnest. By June 1860 they had reached the headwaters of the Missouri and they proceeded down the Missouri to Ft. Benton. At Ft. Benton General Reynolds assigned First Lieutenant John Mullins along with Jim Bridger as guide;



Brevet Brigadier General William F. Reynolds 1820-1894.

Union by boat down the Missouri River.

Lt. Mullins left Ft. Benton on July 20, 1860 and from a high bluff on July 22 he sighted the Judith Mountains for the first time. Only July 25 he wrote in his journal; **"At a distance of 14 miles from camp we arrived at the summit of the "Judith Pass, " or the divide between the Mussellshell and Judith Rivers. We found this pass to be much lower than we had anticipated and the route was far better than we had anticipated .... the country over which we passed today, after leaving the divide, was beautifully diversified in its nature. All the higher hills were covered with dense groves of yellow pine, extending in some instances down the**



Jim Bridger 1804-1881.

Dr. F. V. Hayden, naturalist; A. Schonborn artist and meteorologist; and W. D. Stuart, topographer, the task of traveling overland from Ft. Benton to Ft. Union at the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. The balance of the expedition proceeded to Ft.

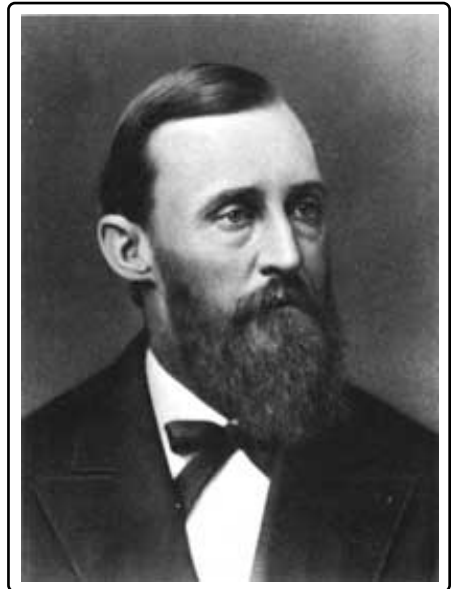
slopes to the rolling country beyond, with now and then intervals of two or three miles distance, clear streams of running water. The soil throughout this region is rich, and there is an excellent growth of grass. I think this neighborhood is admirably adapted for agricultural pursuits. "

Mullins was not nearly as complimentary in his remarks after he crossed the Mussellshell River in his easterly trek. On August 2, he wrote. "left camp this morning at 6 a.m. our general course was along the Missouri slope of the divide over a country that is entirely and emphatically worthless, being principally made up of "white bad land" hills and precipitous ravines , with occasional out cropping of the lignite or semi-coal beds. No wood nor grass. " Two days before he had written: "I estimated that one-third of the fluid that we dignified by the name of water was buffalo urine."

The noted naturalist and geologist Ferdinan Vandiveer Hayden accompanied Lt. Mullen across central Montana. Quoting from Montana's Explorers by Laity Thompson,

"Hayden's early work in Montana provided the foundation for all of the geological exploration

that was to follow. Hayden was the first to describe the isolated mountain ranges of eastern Montana — the Belts, Highlands, Judith, Bear Paw, and the Little Rockies— as igneous intrusions . . . . congealed "blisters" of magma, which were thrust by volcanic forces through the sedimentary strata of the Great Plains. Hayden also inferred that, since tropical plants are found in Montana fossils from the Tertiary Age, a tropical climate must have existed at that time, and that when these tertiary deposits were laid down "the lofty barrier of the Rocky Mountains did not exist." This was quite a bold assertion in a time when many scientific minds of the world were attack-



Ferdinan Vandiveer Hayden

**ing Darwin's newly published theory of evolution with fervor. Hayden deduced on the basis of the fossil species of mollusc he discovered that much of eastern Montana must have once been a huge inland sea, and that vast estuaries existed along its shore just east of the current Rocky Mountain front."**



## Part I

### DISCOVERY OF GOLD

By 1860 gold had been discovered in western Montana. James and Granville Stuart (the same Granville Stuart who established the DHS ranch just east of the Judith Mountains in 1880) are credited with the first recorded gold strike at Gold Creek in the spring of 1858. Grasshopper Creek (1862), Bannock (1862), Alder Gulch (1863) and Virginia City and Nevada City followed in quick succession. By 1866 Montana had become the second-place producer of gold in the United States. Last Chance Gulch (1864) and Confederate Gulch (1864-65) added their share to this production figure.

Suddenly transportation into the gold fields became vital, and the slow arduous overland trails which connected the newly developed areas to the Oregon Trail could not meet the needs of the on rush of miners and the supplies they needed. Steamboats had been plying the Missouri River during the fur trade as far up the river as Fort Union near the mouth of the Yellowstone River, Now there was added impetus to carry goods even further upstream to Fort Benton. A rough but passable trail linked Fort Benton to Helena and river traffic boomed. In 1867 it peaked with

thirty-nine boats reaching Fort Benton's docks.

In 1869 the government directed a survey for a military road from Ft. Ellis near Bozeman to the mouth of the Mussellshell River where a military reservation was proposed. Captain Clift, Thirteenth Infantry; was in charge of the expedition. According to a report by Peter Koch, a freight train accompanied Clift through the Judith Basin and, as shown on the accompanying map, north of the Judith Mountains easterly to the Mussellshell River.

Competition to supply the gold camps and low water in 1874 which made it impossible for steamboats to reach Ft. Benton prompted development of the Carroll Trail along approximately the same route through the Judith Basin to the Missouri River as Captain Clift had taken. According to its promoters, this trail would be accessible by steamboat for six months out of the year compared to the average three month period of Ft. Benton, It would shorten the delivery time to Helena by 12 to 14 days.

An Indian trading post called Fort Sherman had been established in

1873 just below the mouth of Big Casino Creek on the south bank of Big Spring Creek in anticipation of the Judith Basin becoming part of the Crow Indian reservation. The reservation never came about largely because the promoters of the Carroll Trail, the powerful Diamond R. freight line wanted the territory open for the development of the Carroll Trail.

Fort Sherman was purchased by Reed and Bowles and moved downstream to the newly established Carroll Trail in 1874 and became known as Reed's Fort. (A post office known as Reedsfort was designated in 1881 and operated until 1885.) A military post, Camp Lewis was established in 1874 near the site of the original Fort Sherman to protect the newly opened freight trail. Captain Constant Williams, 7th Infantry from Fort Shaw, came into the Judith Basin on the route shown on the accompanying map, and established the summer headquarters for the post. An interesting note concerns the name Capt. Lewis. The Lewis in question was not the famed Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark expedition as might be assumed, but was rather a Major W. H. Lewis of the 7th Infantry at Fort Shaw.

The Carroll Trail flourished for only a brief time. During the summer of 1874, due to low water

levels in the Missouri River, more steamboats docked at Carroll than at Fort Benton. The next year proved to be a hazardous one, however. The restless Sioux Indians harassed the freighters and troops from Camp Lewis found it almost impossible to guard against their hit and run tactics. In 1876 the troops did not return to Camp Lewis after spending the winter at Fort Shaw because of Indian conflicts elsewhere. Some of the men were assigned to General Custer's contingent and later lost their lives in the Battle of the Little Big Horn (1876). High water that year, coupled with the lack of military protection caused all of the steamboats to bypass Carroll and unload upriver at Fort Benton.

The fourth trail on the explorers' map is that of Captain William Ludlow. Capt. Ludlow was commissioned reconnoiter the Montana Territory with particular attention given to charting trails leading to existing forts and, if time permitted, to make a reconnaissance from Ft. Ellis into Yellowstone Park. He was authorized to take several "scientific gentlemen" with him to gather other pertinent information. He persuaded George Bird Grinnell and Edward Dana of Yale University to accompany him at their own expense!

Ludlow's party landed at Carroll in July 1876 and returned to Carroll

in September. The party journeyed via the Carroll Trail through central Montana to Camp Baker and from there on to Ft. Ellis near Bozeman and into Yellowstone Park. Captain Ludlow's report to the War Department contains a short zoological report by George Bird Grinnell with a list of 40 mammals and 139 bird species sighted during the period. The geological report prepared by Edward Dana and Grinnell was more extensive although they admitted their examination of the Judith Mountains was hasty and incomplete. They observed from Cone Butte:

**"The summit of Cone Butte commands an extensive view over the prairies to the north. The Little Rocky Mountains and the Bear's Paw mountains, though far in the distance, are the most conspicuous points to be noticed. Its commanding position is well appreciated by the Indians who use it as a lookout, for which it is most conveniently situated. A shelter which we found on the summit, fanned of large flat blocks of trachyte resting upon the branches of a stunted pine-tree, had doubtless been used as a resting place by many an Indian scout."**

Cone Butte is itself a conspicuous object from all the surrounding country, even as far

**north as the Little Rocky Mountains; its perfectly conical shape being very striking from any point on the Carroll Road . . . The slopes are covered with loose blocks of trachyte, and at some points are precipitous. The angle of the cone is about 40° or 41°; indeed it is so steep, and loose blocks of trachyte furnish so insecure a foot-hold, that, were it not for the trails made by the mountain sheep ascending and descending, it would be no easy task to climb it from the west side.**

The mineralogical character of this trachyte deserves to be described a little in detail, as it may be taken as a type of the variety which occurs most widely in these mountains. It is generally of uniform texture, hard and firm, though occasionally showing minute cavities containing quartz crystals as a secondary product. It breaks on weathering into the large thin slabs which cover the sides of Cone Butte. The main constituent of the rock is a triclinic feldspar, as revealed by a thin section under the microscope, though occasional crystals of orthoclase of greater size may be observed. Hornblende follows next in order, the crystals being very distinct; and, further than this, magnetite plays an important

**role -- this is distributed more generally than is common in similar rocks, and is seen by the microscope as extremely minute grains, whose metallic character is revealed only in reflected light. These particles of magnetite have suffered alteration to a considerable extent, and the feldspar is often stained red and yellow in a ring about them by the oxidized iron. It is to this alteration that the peculiar red color of the talus on the sides of the hills, as seen from a distance, is undoubtedly due. A critical examination shows that a little quartz, is also present; but as it was often otherwise noted in minute cavities, it may be questioned whether it is not merely a secondary product ....**

**The hills to the south and east, forming the eastern extremity of the Judith Mountains, are, as far as observed, trachyte. Black Butte, or Buffalo Heart Mountain, was not visited; but its position and similar appearance show that is also eruptive, probably exclusively so." ( Please note the use of the Indian name for Black Butte.)**

In 1877 the Nez Perce Indians fled through the Judith Basin on their ill-fated attempt to escape to Canada. Their route took them north from the basin to Cow Island where they crossed the Missouri

River. Some accounts indicate they skirmished with a band of Crow Indians not far from Reed's Fort.

During the summer of 1879 Francis A. Janeaux and about fifty Metis (people of French-Canadian and Indian extraction) came into the Judith Basin and settled on land now including the Lewistown business district. The settlement was commonly known as Lewistown and is shown by that name on several old maps. In 1883 a post office was officially designated as Lewistown.

After 1876 the Carroll Trail was never used again for freighting between Carroll and Helena but a major portion of the trail from the river to the Judith Mountains was utilized during the building of Fort Maginnis and for the gold mines as they developed. The following paragraphs are quoted from an article by Ralph Miracle entitled "Ghost Hunting on the Missouri." Ralph Miracle, incidentally, was a longtime executive secretary for the Montana Stockgrowers Association and a good friend of Joe and Hazel King and Joe and Marjorie King. He was a thorough and excellent amateur historian.

**"Six miles above Carroll there had long been a trading post and a wood yard to serve the steamers at Rocky Point. Early maps**

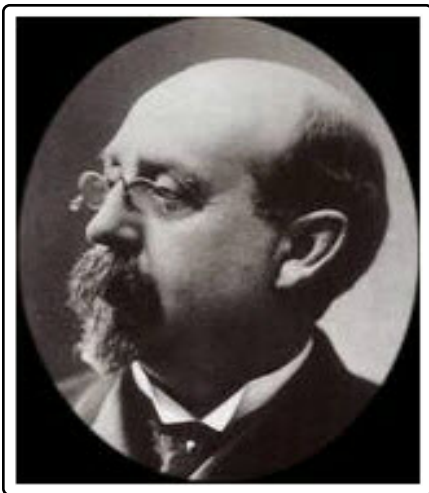
(1875) carried the name Little Belt Mountain City for this location on the south bank of the river across from the mouth of Little Rocky Creek later known as Rocky Creek. . . . When Fort Maginnis was authorized forty miles south of the Missouri, ostensibly to provide protection for the DHS ranch owner by influential A. J. Davis, Samuel T. Hauser and Granville Stuart, a road and landing was needed to handle the troops and supplies. Carroll was first considered, but it was soon found that the location at Rocky Point was preferable for unloading, and the road had a better grade.

"Consequently Col. C. A. Broadwater, one of the Diamond R partners and a strong participant in river area affairs, with A. H. Wilder, St. Paul financier,

as a partner, moved the landing facilities up to Rocky Point and established Wilder's landing. Previous to this time Rocky Point was an official voting precinct, starting in 1878. The old name remained with the new one added. Just across the river and a little upstream was Broadwater's Landing for freight headed north.

"About the same time that Fort Maginnis was built, a rich gold strike was made and the town of Maiden grew up along the slopes of the Judith Mountains not far from the fort, bringing additional business to the new river port of Rocky Point . The army officially created Cantonment Rocky Point and detached details guarding the government freight. Communications to Maginnis were completed by 1882 with a telegraph line from Fort Buford to Camp Poplar River and thus via Galpin on the Milk River to Rocky Point, crossing the river at Hawley Bend. Offices were maintained at each point. Even today the stubs of the old telegraph poles may be sighted along the way."

The gold strike mentioned by Ralph Miracle is, of course, the subject of George Wieglanda's opening report which is reprinted here in typed form for easier reading.



Col. C. A. Broadwater 1840-1892



George Weiglenda 1876-1957

**"In the summer of 1879 three adventurous spirits, frontiersmen all, "Skookum" Joe Anderson, Dave Jones and one other whose name I have forgotten, made their way up to the headwaters of Warm Spring Creek in the heart of the Judith Mountains and there found that which has lured old and young, strong and infirm, frontiersman and "pilgrim" (greenhorn), the good, bad and indifferent of both sexes, from all walks of life—Gold! shiny yellow and cold, cure there's none for it's lure, for it man will face any hardship and risk and danger—so with these three intrepid Argonauts.**

**Indians were bad, even bad white men were abroad, particularly horse thieves. Undaunted they set to work to exploit and explore their find, which is located on what is now known as the "Holter Placer" and just off the eastern outskirts of what later was to become the town of Maiden Metropolis of the "Maginnis Country" so called from the from the nearby fort of that name and erected in 1880-81. By strenuous effort and ever wary vigilance, two standing guard while the third with pick, shovel and pan garnered the tiny specks of yellow metal until the early blasts of winter warned them to depart for some haven where food and shelter were obtainable. Their cleanup consisted or a "medium-sized" mustard bottle two thirds full of dust and small nuggets" (several ounces at least).**

**Junction City on the Yellowstone River was then a favorite rendezvous for buffalo hunters, wolfers, trappers, prospectors, cow man, traders, etc., and last but not least, "Tin Horn" gamblers and their lady consorts.**

**Arriving at Junction City they told of their strike to only such friends as could be depended on to keep "mum" for fear of starting a stampede which they did not want, it being their inten-**

tions to get back with their picked party and locate the most favorable ground before news of the strike got out. Ten men finally comprised the party among whom were the original three discoverers, L Frank Sage, Charlie Bessie, C. C. Snow, "Pony" McParland, Eugene Irvine and two others whose names I do not recall. As time wafed heavy and being impatient to explore the New Eldorado (also fears that the news of the strike might leak out), it was decided not to wait until spring as was first planned but rather make the trip as soon as some pretense could be invented for so large a party to leave camp. This was accomplished through the ruse of a buffalo hunting and wolfing expedition supposedly headed for the Flatwillow country. The scheme worked, the party leaving Junction City late in January or early in February 1880 and arriving at what is now known as Gold Hill (midway between Maiden and the Spotted Horse Mine) in February where camp was made on its very crest.

Immediately below and to the west of them, a scant half mile away, lay the new promised land. Owing to the deep snows it was impossible, however, to travel farther. Upon reconnoitering a few days on foot, and

there being no feed for the horses, camp was moved down into the valley and foothills around the mouth of Collar Gulch (a name acquired later) where feed and water was abundant. Several attempts were made to get through into the Warm Spring and Alpine Creek country. None were successful, however, until late March or early April.

Thereafter, prospecting began in dead earnest. Claims were staked and work began on both open pit and shaft sinking—the ground upon which Maiden was later founded being among the most highly prized of all, it being Number 1. Claim below Discovery. Good pannings were gotten out of the loose gravels in the creek banks, "rich diggings" were expected on bedrock. Shaft sinking was attempted but water in great abundance made this impossible owing to lack of pumping machinery, and it was not until the spring of 1882 that a shaft to bedrock was completed and that only by the combined efforts of almost the entire community. A "home-made" wooden pump, manned by volunteers, was kept going continuously. Bedrock proved disappointing "pay" being about three cents to the pan and not as good as some of the near surface showings had been.

In the meantime various nearby towns had sprung up. Andersonville, three miles below, being the first. It was a saw mill town. The mill was owned by McAdow and Dexter and supplied lumber to points as far away as Fort Benton--more than 100 miles by wagon road. Later, Alpine, at the mouth of the creek by that name, one mile below, was started--one Pike Landusky being the first to build a wooden structure out of hewn logs in which he opened a restaurant.

The first attempts to start a town at Maiden late in 1880 or early 1881 were frustrated by the commanding officer of nearby Ft. Maginnis. There having as yet been no survey made of the Military Reservation (6 miles square), he claimed the district would come within that area. In spite of warnings, however, miners and "squatters" moved in and established residence, only to be removed by the commanding officer of the "Post". On at least one occasion a detail of soldiers removed all of the so called trespassers, including the miners, and prohibited them from working their claims.

Appeals were made to Washington, D. C., the War Department finally ordering a survey of the Military Reservation. This was done and the line was estab-

lished about one mile east of Maiden. Thereafter, Pike Landusky moved up from Alpine and is credited with building the first log cabin of the town.



Residence of Col. Pike near Maiden, Montana.

Others soon followed and despite the warnings and protests of the owners (Frank Sage, Charlie Bessie, et al) of Number 1. Placer Claim below Discovery, a town was established and the entire claim expropriated. Suit was started to dispossess all trespassers as their presence was held to be an infringement on the priority rights of the owners to the ground as a mineral claim. The defendants countered by claiming the land was more valuable for town site than for mining purposes. The case was never fully decided although it was carried to the Secretary of the Interior in Washington, D.C. Even the President of the United States, Chester A. Arthur, was appealed to in person by a delegation of those interested in the



case. The delegation consisted of Maiden residents meeting President Arthur at Livingston, Montana, while he was on a western tour in 1884. no concrete results being obtained, the case was continued.

In the meantime, quartz mines had been discovered--the Maggie on Gold Hill being the first, soon followed by the Cholar, Spotted Horse, Kentucky Favorite, Ora Cache, Montana (later known as Maginnis), War Eagle, Florence, Keystone, Comet, Black Bull, Alpine, Northern Pacific, Pilgrim, Junction, Snow Storm and many others. The town continued to grow. Cholar mill was built in 1883 as also was a smaller plant at the Spotted Horse. Hauser and Holter built a mill at the Maginnis Mines, Granville Stuart being at one time in charge of operations at this property.

Maiden became the largest town in central Montana by the latter part of the 80's, claiming a population of about 1500- the principal trading point in its section of the territory for miners, stockmen and ranchers alike. Supplies were freighted in by long string teams of both horses and oxen from such points as Big Timber, Billings and Junction City on the Northern Pacific railroad and Rocky Point, Clag-

get and Fort Benton on the Missouri River. Stage coach lines were established, there being at one time three different lines operating in as many directions. Thirst and other recreational places as well as merchandising stores were in abundance. It is said at one time there were 38 places in the town where hard liquors could be obtained. Grocery stores, saloons, hurdy-gurdy dance halls, and others specialized in this form of refreshments.

#### The Maiden Brewery.

H. Ritter returned last week from Miles City, and since his arrival he and his partner, Mr. L. Landt, have been busy making arrangements for the establishment of this new enterprise. These gentlemen have purchased the Landusky property, just below town and will commence building operations at once. Their brewing materials were ordered some three weeks ago when the project was decided upon, and will be here as soon as the gentlemen are ready to use them. They expect to be making beer by the first of July. May success attend them.

Mineral Argus May-1885

One of the first breweries of beer in the northwest was build here by Louie Landt, and but for transportation problems might have made Maiden equally famous with Milwaukee (from whence came Mr. Landt) as the product was claimed to be of a very superior quality owing to

the pureness of water from which it was made.

A smelter for ores was also erected, but failed owing to lack of proper fuels and fluxing materials, and the problems of transportation.

After Fergus County was cut off from Meagher County, Maiden was the only serious competitor with Lewistown for the county seat, and should have won the election but for a factional dispute among its own residents. This seems to be the real beginning of the end of Maiden, Lewistown became more and more the trading center of the county—a bank was established, more and larger stores built, while at Maiden business lagged more and more, revived only by spurts and when the mines took on new life at intervals sometimes years apart. The last mining of consequence was in 1917 and the final climax came a few years later when in 1921 even the post office was abandoned.

If one reads the numerous newspaper accounts of the discovery of gold in the Judith Mountains one finds most of the accounts date the discovery of gold in the spring of 1880 rather than in the summer of 1879 as George Wieglanda maintained. There may be an explanation for this.

George arrived in Maiden in 1895 just 15 years after Maiden's boom. It is hard to believe his account is not factual. Surely it was common knowledge in 1895 when and where the original gold strikes were made. If one looks at the official filing dates as recorded in the Meagher County courthouse, the filings were in truth made in 1880, These were "filing" dates, however, and would have been after the discoverers had had an opportunity to prospect for minerals and adequately describe the location of the claim. Since White Sulphur Springs, the county seat of Meagher County at the time, was almost 100 miles by horseback from the Judith Mountains it is highly unlikely that the trip would have been made until the prospectors were sure the claims justified being recorded.

Interestingly, an article in the Democrat News on December 17, 1912, concerning forgotten towns of Fergus County states

**"The first gold discovered in the Judith mountains was found in Virgin Gulch near Gilt Edge. As a result a flourishing tent town soon sprang up on what is called the Allen ranch at the mouth of Whiskey Gulch, just a short way southeast of Gilt Edge. Nelsonville was all tents, but promised to have houses and become a real permanent town until**

**"Skookum Joe" and Bill Pott and Davy Jones found more gold in Maiden Gulch near the present site of the Spotted Horse mine and that fixed the fate of Nelsonville. Everybody struck his tent and moved over to what is now Maiden. One can not be blamed for not knowing of Nelsonville, for it didn't live long enough to become known only to those who lived there. It was born in 1881 and died in the borning.** (One might question the credibility of the article since gold was discovered in Maiden before 1881.)

The existence of Nelsonville, however, can be verified by old maps of the Fort Maginnis Military Reservation. The maps show the existence of a settlement called Nelsonville on a branch of Chippawa Creek on the Benton Road approximately where the above article locates it.

In December 1881 John R. Nelson filed a Notice of Location of Coal Mine in White Sulphur Springs. He identifies the property as **"one hundred and sixty acres of coal land situated about 3/4 miles in a westerly direction from Nelsonville near Fort Maginnis"**. Nelsonville apparently never had a post office or a school.

## MAIDEN BOOM

There are few written records to rely upon for information concerning the first two years of existence for the town of Maiden. Even the name Maiden is illusive. We do know the town was known as Maidenville until a post office was established in March of 1882. There are some who maintain that a man by the name of Maden tried to stake a claim below present day Maiden and was told to move on because no open ground was left. He moved up the gulch and put out a sign saying Camp Maden, Everyone Welcome. There may be a glimmer of truth to this story since an early placer claim filed in March of 1882 states, ". . **having located the following placer mining ground situated on the left fork of Maden Gulch in Meagher County.**" The address of the locators is given as Maidenville. The handwriting in the document is clear and legible. Is this an oversight or a correct spelling? Was there a Maden Gulch?

A Mrs. Connely maintains that when she arrived in the settlement some of the prospectors asked her what she thought they should name the town and she suggested they name it Maiden after her daughter whom they called Little Maiden.

Some years later William Culver wrote a letter to the editor of the Democrat News which gave his version of the name Maiden.

The letter includes other interesting information about the site. Mr. Culver wrote:



William H. Culver

"As the origin of the name Maiden given to the early day mining camp, seems to be shrouded in mystery, I will submit my recollection of its christening.

I was on to ground first in the early part of May '81. It was then a labyrinth of forest and fallen timber which would have been impossible to have ridden through on a saddle horse except by the rail which ran up the

gulch. Several parties had just started to clear a way for buildings.

I left the camp in June (at this time the embryo city hadn't received its name) and settled on the Mussellshell ...returned to the mines later in the summer and worked the diggings for Pike Landusky on the ground where the Spotted Horse mill now stands. Here I again met a man by the name of Al Brundage, with whom I had hunted and trapped the previous winter, but who had remained in the camp, and he told me that he had suggested the name Maiden which seemed to appeal to the miners, perhaps because at the time there wasn't a real maiden in all of what is now Fergus County...

...soon after our arrival Brundage and I fell in with a man by the name of Herry, who gave us a one-half interest claim No. 1 above discovery in Alpine Gulch discovery, which was the cause of the stampede into the district. It was being worked by "Skookum Joe" Anderson and George Lenhart, who had been prospecting the ground during the winter prior.

After working about three weeks and cleaning some 30 or 40 feet square bedrock, we took

**out of our sluices about an ounce (\$20) in bright dust which showed up big in the pan but was flaky and consequently disappointing in weight.**

**The placers proved a big "frost" but quartz was soon discovered and Maiden became a flourishing little camp, '84 and '85 being its palmy days."**

And so how was Maiden named? Take your pick!

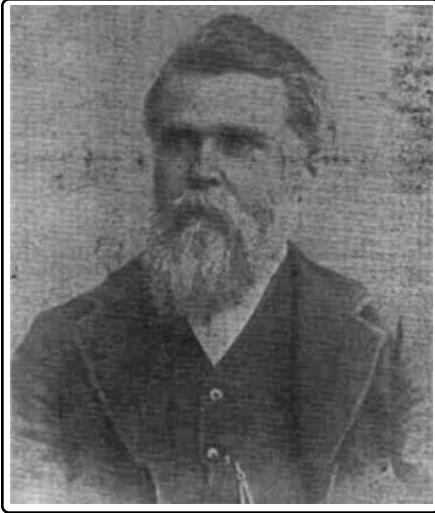
Until a newspaper was established in Maiden in 1883, almost the only written documentation of the period was from the Rocky Mountain Husbandman published in White Sulphur Springs. Even in its earliest days, Maiden's growth did not show a great deal of stability. Placer finds had been disappointing and development of quartz lodes was a more expensive proposition which demanded labor, machinery and capital. Placer mining could be done by one or two men working on their own with little capital outlay. The original discoverers did not have the resources to develop extensive hard rock mines. As early as May 25, 1882, the Rocky Mountain Husbandman reported, "The Maiden boom has busted. Men are leaving there in every direction." In July 1882, however, William Sutherlin of the Rocky Mountain Husbandman traveled on horseback through

central Montana and wrote a column entitled Jottings by Our Traveling Man. It gives a more optimistic view. Excerpts of his account of Andersonville, Maiden and the Maiden mines are quoted here.

July 27, 1882: "Turning aside from my tramp through the country to see the towns and mines of Warm Spring District, now commonly known as the "Maginnis Country", I found an easy road, and soon arrived at me village of Andersonville, which is located at the upper end of the bottom land of the creek, where the rough, timber-covered limestone mountains stand steep close together. The town has one main street, upon which there are buildings extending a quarter of a mile. It has two stores, one meat market, one saloon, one hotel, one restaurant, one blacksmith shop, one feed stable and a steam saw mill.

The saw mill is owned by Messrs. McAdow & Dexter, and has a capacity for cutting about eight thousand feet per day. It was located here last summer, and has been running regularly except when stopped for repairs. It has cut an immense amount of lumber, supplying the ranchmen in the vicinity and a large portion of lumber used at Fort Benton, eighty miles distant, besides

a great amount used at home and neighboring towns. McDow & Dexter have a store and stock of goods, and in fact, are the principal merchants in Andersonville.



P. W. McDow

Robert Mills, late of Benton is proprietor of the hotel which is commodious, and the sleeping apartments are excellent. The restaurant is kept by Henry Johnson who used to run a similar establishment in Fort Benton, and knows how to do it in a manner that suits his customers. He has christened it the "Great Northwestern."

Five miles of travel along a sparsely inhabited gulch road took me to Maiden. The town reminded me of Diamond in '66 when its expectations were

great. Its location is much the same as that old town. Main street follows along the creek, and upon each side steep mountains stand, leaving only room for the narrow street and a row of houses on each side of it. The principal part of the town is located in a steep, narrow gulch coming in from the north, giving it a triangular shape. There are some first-rate frame store buildings and billiard halls in town, but a majority of the houses are of logs and lumber finish. There are eight saloons, two clothing stores, five general merchandise stores, one dry goods store, one butcher shop, one blacksmith shop, two barber shops, with two chairs each, one feed stable, one lawyer's office, one doctor, one hotel and one restaurant. Of these houses I can only mention the principal ones.

Bellanger and Boissonneault have the largest store on Main Street and exhibit decidedly the largest stock of general merchandise in the town.

Etting & Company, on Montana street, have an immense stock. They have not yet undertaken the work of building a store but have a very large canvass house in which their goods are displayed to advantage.

Lee Isingberg has a very pretty store consisting of general merchandise dry goods, and notions.

**LOUIS BELANGER,**

Wholesale and Retail Dealer in

**— DRY GOODS, —**

Notions, Drugs, Jewelry, Clothing,

Hats and Caps, Boots and Shoes,

GENTS FURNISHING GOODS,

FURNITURE AND CARPETS,

**Fancy and Staple Groceries.**

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**Wines, Liquors, Beer, Ale, Cigars and Bar Goods.**

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Our goods are brought from FIRST hands and in large quantities, and  
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**Low Prices / First-class Goods**

Call and Examine my Stock and ask Prices. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Advertisement Mineral Argus

S. Caskill and D. Goldberg to the clothing trade of the town and the camp, Mr. Caskill gets a large amount of his supplies from Hershberg and Nathan of Benton, and keeps a full stock. Mr. Goldberg is an old time Montanian, having spent a number of years in business in Helena. He is here to stay this time and has a good stock.

The billiard saloons are owned by J. W. Beck, G. W. Hunter, R. M. Dryden The last named gentleman has a large two story house containing several apartments with which there is a stock of drugs connected. Mr. Beck

and Mr Hunter have buildings which would be creditable to cities of large pretentions.

The hotel kept by Joe Dennison, which, by the way, is located at the forks of Montana and Main streets, is one of the best stands in the place. A portion of the first floor of the same building is occupied by Charles Atchison who carries a stock of groceries.

The only attorney is S. C. Edger-ton, a son of Montana's ex-Governor. He is a genial fellow, and is here at the right time to grow up with the town, camp and business.

While in town I had the pleasure of meeting J. W. Caldwell late of the East who has established an assay office and is kept busy in testing the value of rock from the veins found in the Maiden mining region. Mr. Caldwell expressed himself as being highly pleased with the outlook of the camp. He seldom ever finds any ore that does not run high enough in silver or gold to pay handsomely for working, and he finds that a majority of the ore is high grade.

Dr. W. E. Turner of Benton was also met at Maiden. He is engaged in buying a considerable quantity of ore which is being taken from the surface of a number of ledges. He ships the ore to

the Omaha Smelter Company, paying the charges himself and giving the owner of the lead one-half the gross assay value of the same. Of course he only buys the best rock but it is indeed quite a compliment to the camp to have ore lying on its surface worthy of being transported so far, and at so handsome a profit to the owners of the leads. It should stimulate them toward an early development of the veins on their own account.

The town was built in the excitement of an influx of people who spent their cash liberally while here, but failing to find employment or the promised reward (jumping onto a claim where from twenty to fifty dollars a day could be picked up with ease), they left and the tide of people ceased to move, and of course it is dull and must remain so until capital comes to employ laborers for it is the laborers after all who give promise, life and business to the town, yet they must be backed by capital before much can be expected of any camp.

Mr. Sutherlin continued with these observations about the mines in July 1882:

"The Maiden mines are upon the summit of the mountains, one and a half-miles from town. The Cholar (note this spelling of

the mine--when the Mineral Argus began printing a year later, the mine name is spelled "Collar.") which it was my good fortune to visit, is one of the first and is, so far as developed, probably the best in the camp. Its depth is eighty feet. The shaft begins near the top of the high mountain lying between Maiden and Ford creeks, above their head waters. At the bottom of the shaft a crosscut has been made 21 feet at which length the west wall was found. A drift was then started along the which is completed along the wall to the west 38 feet. At the shaft a similar drift has been commenced and completed 45 feet east. Along the whole route of these drifts and through the cross-cut there is a complete body of ore. As the ledge is uniform in width from the surface down to the bottom of the drift, there is not less than 22,640 tons so far which may be counted upon as being in sight. Allowing that it is or will be worth \$13 per ton to take the ore out and work it, and this I believe is the estimated cost of delivering it to the Omaha Smelter, and estimating the value of the ore at \$133 per ton (this being, as I am informed, the lowest assay of rock from that mine) there is now in sight \$1,234,240, a showing which I think is amply sufficient to be an



inducement to capitalists to invest.

The ore is of a white color, though which there is a great quantity of black sulphates. It crushes easy, but will have to be chloridized. I went down in the mine and was truly pleased to think I could walk in wait in safety between and under such a great mass of wealth. Lately the mine has been put into a stock company of \$600,000 capital, and one-half of the capital is to be expended, if needed, in development and the erection of machinery. The shares are valued at \$10 each, the shares representing 50 per cent of their face value. The subscription is 40 per cent cash, 20 per cent every 30 days until the full 50 per cent of the share is paid, at which time the certificate is to be issued. C. C. Snow, Eugene Ervine and Mr. McPartland, who were among the discovery party, and the second white persons to arrive in the camp, are the principal owners of the mine.

I regret having misplaced my notes giving the names of the officers. I remember, however, that Tbeo. Vos Burgh is Financial Agent of the company. At the time of my visit, the owners above named were engaged in running a tunnel which was then something over 150 in the hill. It

is designed to tap the ledge at a depth of 300 feet below the levels, and the length of the tunnel when completed will be about 550 feet. Two shifts of men were working making about 16 feet every week. I am especially indebted to Mr. E. Ervine, foreman of the Cholar, for his personal assistance and guidance through the great levels and tunnel.

The Montana lead is within a half mile of the Cholar and appears to run parallel with it. It is a gold lead and has a shaft about sixty feet on the vein. I was somewhat disappointed in my visit to the shaft. Not finding anyone there, I was unable to go into the mine or obtain the information desired. I learned, however, that there has been a temporary suspension of work but that the ledge has been traced some distance on either side of the shaft. Enough developments having been made to satisfy Messrs. Hauser, Hotter & Co., the owners, of its great value and promise and that the company have decided to erect a five-stamp mill for the working of the ores this season.

The Florence lode, which I visited, has a very promising appearance though the developments are hardly sufficient to warrant it being called a mine. It has a

drift on the vein about 20 feet and the lead matter is about four feet in width. A considerable lot of high grade one has been taken out and sacked ready for shipment. It may prove the richest mine in the camp. At all events, its ore now sacked assays, I am told, about \$200 to \$350 per ton. The lucky owners are L R. Kemper, C. C. Snow, F. T. McPartland, C H. Bessie, E. Ervine and C. Dual.

This being the extent of my visit among the quartz mines, I will here close my letter. I could, of course, write much more of interest about other lodes, but it would not be from my own observations and therefore more liable to mistakes. Signed, Wil.

One year later, in 1883, Mr. Sutherlin returned to the Maiden area and wrote this update:

"Andersonville holds its own. Robert Mills is still proprietor of the hotel and he is doing a good business. His accommodations, as well as the table he sets, are excellent.

The saw mill is running and Ben. Dexter, the proprietor, is as jovial as ever. Mr. Thompson is in charge of P. W. McAdow's store and lumber interests and is doing a fair trade. As Mr. Dexter expects to go to the Pacific slope this fall, it is probable that the

saw mill and freighting outfit will become the property of Mr. McAdow.

Between the hills of a side stream just below Andersonville is the home of R. H. Harris. He has as pretty a location as I have seen for gardening and dairying, It is so close to the mines that it will always be profitable to cultivate and is a valuable property to possess. There are two or three other ranches near by, but none struck me so favorably as Mr. Harris'. Perhaps this was on account of the excellent crops growing thereon.

Maiden appeared to be on the eve of a great boom. In fact, it seems to have set in about right. There are, of course, some vacant houses but there are quite a number of new ones building, and the character of them is so much better than those built last year that the prospect of a good permanent town looks much better than it did a year ago. A number of mercantile houses started by pilgrims gave up last season but the best remain and from all appearances are doing a first-rate business.

Lewis Bellanger is the principal grocery man and he carries a large stock. Ettin & Pompony are also merchandising but I understand that Mr. Ettin designs

closing out with a view to taking charge in part of the mining operations in which he and his father are extensively interested.

J. W. Beck is in the hardware store and post office. G. W. Hunter is still proprietor of the fine large billiard hall and saloon and is doubtless prospering. Ed Bush is also a prosperous saloon keeper of the town. I believe he is one of the first residents. C. H. Walcott has a cozy saloon and along side of him is located S. L. Sharpless whose store is the news depot of the town.

Snell and Coohan are proprietors of the popular restaurant at which business they are experienced men and from appearances they are thriving as well.

Messrs. Fell & Vrooman, proprietors of the Mineral Argus, on the day of my visit were setting the first galley of their new paper. They are genial and industrious and have my best wishes for prosperity.

When here a little over a year ago but little had been done in the way of prospecting the mines and little could be said of them since their extent was not known. Now considerable developments have been made and in nearly every instance the showing is good. The Cholar tunnel

has now reached the vein 180 feet from the surface, the length of the tunnel being 400 feet. The vein is 21 feet wide--fully as wide as at discovery on the surface. A connection shaft has been sunk from the levels, which were between 70 and 80 feet below the surface, to the face of the tunnel. The mill of the Cholar Company is being built and will be in running order within 60 days. It is located a few hundred yards below the tunnel. A tramway is being built to carry ore uninterrupted from the tunnel to the mill. Building the mill in the rough, narrow gulch is, of course, an expensive undertaking but the convenience to the mine will more than pay for the outlay in a short space of time. C. C. Snow, one of the original discoverers, is still superintendent of the mine and works.

Work on the Montana Mine is progressing favorably. James Mitchell, foreman of the works, informed me that the more work he did the better showing the mine presents. Recently a new shaft had opened up a deposit of immensely rich ore. He is confident the mine will, when opened deeper, prove to be richest in silver, and he thinks without doubt it is the best mine in the country. He would not talk so if he did not think it for I have

known him a long time and know that he has mines of his own that he prizes highly.

Of the other leads that promise to become good mines, I will name the Comet and Keystone. They have wide veins and several shafts, one of which is thirty feet deep.

The Spotted Horse with an 8 foot vein has a shaft down 50 feet deep. The Kentucky Favorite is pretty well developed by drifts running in from the surface showing a good ore and plenty of it.

The Alice and the Day Star are new finds that show very rich ore. The shaft on the latter is fifty feet deep.

The War Eagle has a cut run in 60 feet on the vein which shows it to be a fine wide lead carrying good ore.

The Northern Pacific is about the same width as the War Eagle, eighteen feet.

The Maggie, an extension of the Montana, is much prized by its owners. It has a shaft down forty feet.

The Terry is also a favorite. It has two shafts, one 25 feet and the other 50 feet. It is close to the Cholar.

The Mother Green is another of the much prized leads. Its vein is ten feet wide at the bottom of a shaft 24 feet deep.

In the Cone Butte District, which lies north east of Maiden, the Ellina is one of the prominent leads. It has a shaft down 80 feet. The Silver Reef has a 30 foot shaft and shows good ore. The ores of the Cone Butte mines are represented to assay on an average above most of those of the Maiden District.

Up to this writing only 350 pounds of bullion has been shipped from the Maiden mines. It was reduced in a small smelter erected last fall by Messrs. Brown, Davis and McPartland. There was considerable copper in the ore worked and it interfered somewhat with the smelting. Iron ore for fluxing, it seems, could not be had and they were troubled with the smelter freezing up. They are now erecting two smelters of one ton capacity each per day. The bullion above mentioned had an assay value of \$300 per ton--by far the richest bullion ever shipped from Meagher County mines.

Leeson's History of Montana, copyright 1885, contains a pen and ink sketch of the town of Maiden dated 1883 which is the date of the above article. The sketch, (as all of



Maiden, Montana Territory

the pictures in the book appear to be) is apparently copied from a photograph because a photograph of the exact view is still in existence. Three pictures seem to have been taken at approximately the same time--one looking northeast up Main Street as copied in Leeson and two looking southwest down the same street. One of the southwest exposures shows two oxen teams with wagons in the middle of the street. The almost identical view has only a couple of stray animals in the street area. It is interesting to note that a number of the buildings in the pictures are built from sawed lumber, not just logs.

Leeson's history also contains a pen and ink sketch of Andersonville. Though no original photograph seems to exist for this picture, it is done in the same style as the Maiden picture. Andersonville was located about three miles below (west) of Maiden. A pencil note of George Wieglanda's indicates Andersonville was

**"strung out along the south side of the road from the school house to opposite the Tadewald barn."**

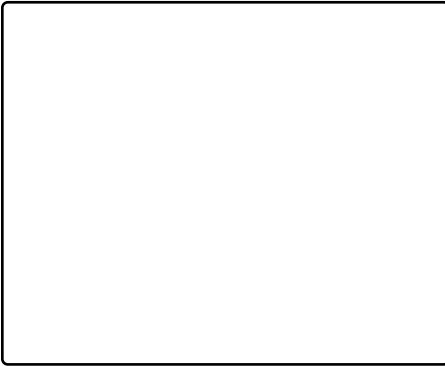
Several sources indicate the town was first known as Georgetown but renamed Andersonville after "Skookum" Joe Anderson. One of the first discoverers of gold in the Judiths.



Andersonville, Montana Territory

Andersonville had the first official post office in the valley. It was established in June 1881. It operated until November 1881 (with Benjamin Dexter at the post master) when it closed for the winter. It reopened in March 1882 and it operated until June 1885. Maiden's first post office opened in March 1882 with Fred P. Dunton as post master. (Reedsfort was designated a post office in January 1881--Lewistown in March 1884).

On August 9, 1883 the first copy of the Mineral Argus was printed in Maiden by Charles S. Fell and John M. Vrooman. For the next three years (until July 29, 1886) this little newspaper covered all the news of the mining camp and the surrounding area. The Montana Historical Society and the Lewistown Public Library have microfilmed copies of the papers available for research or pleasure. The first edition of the newspaper contains a lengthy article entitled



Andersonville, Montana Territory

**"MAIDEN, THE RICHEST MINING CAMP IN EASTERN MONTANA--ITS PAST HISTORY, PRESENT CONDITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS."**

The article points out that at least 150 mining claims had been recorded in the Warm Springs District with such colorful names as Baby Mine, Golconda, Sun Dance,

Gem, Yankee Blade, Little Rhoda, Snow Shoe, Excelsior, Jessie Trim, Collar, Kentucky Favorite, Montana, Maggie, C. Weeden, North Star, Florence, Pilgrim, Hailstorm, Lone Star, Last Chance, Sucker State, War Eagle, Black Bull, Tom Thumb, Keystone, Comet, Alpine, Nevada, Spotted Horse, Alice, Bamboo Chief, Mother Green, Consolidated Kentucky, Great Eastern, Monte Cristo, Bullion, Treasure Box, Silver Cloud, Judith, Spencer, Northern Pacific, Mountain Lion, Big Collar, Dolly Varden, Wolverine, Day Star and African Lyon.

A few of the mines will be heard of again and again because they became big producers and were patented mining claims which still exist today. Many more of the names slipped into oblivion with little or no trace of their original location.

Fell and Vrooman lauded the beauty and fertility of the Judith Basin with Maiden as the hub of not only the mining interests but of the fast growing livestock and fanning industries. James Stuart had located the DHS ranch on the east side of the Judith Mountains in 1880 and was reported to have 12,000 head of cattle on the range in 1883. James Fergus, 8 miles north east of Maiden came in 1880 and had 3,000 head of sheep and 200 horses plus seed stock of cat-

tle. Henry Brooks was established on Warm Springs Creek by 1880 and had 3,000 head of cattle. In addition a number of large cattle and sheep companies were established on the prairies east of the Judith Mountains. Several fertile farms in the Warm Springs valley supplied garden produce and oats for horses.

Joseph King, grandfather of Joe C. King, III, wrote in his autobiography of taking foodstuffs to Maiden for sale from the King ranch on Little Rock Creek--west of Lewistown (the present King Hutterite Colony). He wrote:

"We were making butter--and in the early spring, having heard of Maiden as being a lively mining camp, Mother and I started to go there with something like ninety pounds of butter. It was a long drive with our slow horses but in due time we arrived there. Everyone in this busy little town wanted to buy butter and in a very short time we sold all we had at the price of a dollar a pound! Imagine how well pleased we were over the results! We then bought the groceries we needed--Mother doing the buying at the store of Mr. Belanger, a very nice and pleasing merchant. We started for home late in the afternoon--driving across that long stretch of 30 miles of prairie arriving home about

midnight. When we arrived home we had a good warm dinner and reviewed the occurrences of the day. We retired a happy family.

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 Rigs and Saddle Horses.

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All Story and Sporting Papers, Novels  
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 Etc., Etc.

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POST OFFICE, - MAIDEN.

Advertisement-Mineral Argus

"From that day on we were greatly encouraged and I made regular trips to Maiden with butter, eggs, and as soon as we had them, vegetables. This foodstuff brought prices to our asking and our garden was a great success. Having no competition, people often set their own prices and paid more for the stuff than

**I would have dared to ask. Money seemed plentiful and the people that were in Maiden were certainly money-spenders. I often received silver coins up to one hundred dollars or more. I would put it into a dirty potato sack and lay it under the seal of the wagon with a lot of other sacks on top of it, keeping but a few dollars in my pocket as I feared I might be held up on the road. Luckily I never met with any such mishap."**



## Part I

### GROWTH of MAIDEN and the SURROUNDING AREAS

The August 23, 1883 edition of the Mineral Argus contained a description of the buildings in the townsite.

"At the present time there are 134 buildings completed and mostly occupied. Of this number 70 are frame resident structures; 16 business houses; 48 log buildings; and of the 20 in the course of erection 9 are frame and 11 log buildings, making a total of 154 now in camp. This, bear in mind is only the buildings in Maiden proper and does not include the buildings and residents at the Montana mine, nor the mining shacks that dot the surrounding area."

Beginning at the head of main street, as we enter the town from Cambric Gulch the first house of importance is that of C. L. EATON. A large stock of clothing, hats and caps, canned goods dry goods, etc., is kept constantly on hand, and the house is doing a deservedly good business.

Just across Main street from the above house is the business establishment of HAMILTON & WETHERALL, who carry a

**LOUIS LANDT,**  
Wholesale and Retail Dealers in  
**Wines, Liquors and Cigars**  
Blatz Beer, Cards and Bar Glassware,  
MAIN STREET, MAIDEN, M. T.

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**R. PFAENDTNER,**  
Manufacturer of and Dealer in  
**Cigars, Tobacco, Pipes,**  
Cigar and Cigarette Holders.  
MAIN STREET, - MAIDEN.

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**MINERS'**  
**Club Room**  
Main Street, next to M. T. Dinsmore's.  
CHAS. WELLMAN, - Proprietor.  
None but the Finest Whiskies,  
Wines, Beer and Cigars kept in stock.  
**Maiden, - - Montana.**

Advertisement-Mineral Argus

good and well selected stock of wines, liquors and cigars.

BAILEY & O'BRIEN, two doors down the street, have a good restaurant and cater to the wants of their customers to the satisfaction of all. They have in

connection a fine sample room, also a good livery stable where guests can procure a good rig o my description.

The next business house, coming down town, is the MAIDEN DRUG STORE, Dr. J. W. Rawn, proprietor. The doctor carries a selected line of goods, enjoys a good trade and as a physician has the confidence and patronage of all who may require medical attention.

Next door to the drug store is the MONARCH BILLIARD Hall, the property of Willard Dunton. Here can be found as fine a Monarch billiard table as is to be found in the territory as well as a pool table of the make. The house enjoys a good trade and carries nothing but A No. 1 goods.

Across the street is the JEWELRY STORE of W. H. Bailey. Mr. B is an old timer in the territory having been here over eighteen years and is a thoroughly competent man in his line.

Opposite the jeweler's is the neat little BARBER SHOP of Billy Jenkins where all branches of the tonsorial art are daily executed by the genial proprietor. Good bath rooms in connection.

Across the street we find S. G. SHARPLESS, also a manipula-

tor of the comb, brush and "razor", and keeps also all the latest newspapers, monthlies, periodicals, etc., on sale at his NEWS DEPOT.

Next door to the news depot J. WASHBURN & CO. have a fine sample room with a club room in the rear and they take pride in the quality of goods that they handle. The boys are enjoying a liberal support.

Crossing the street once more to the north side we find J. MASON & CO. installed in a fine large hall and two good billiard and pool tables for the lovers of the game to gratify their desire to try skill. This firm carry a nice line of goods and deserve their share of patronage.

Down the street two doors we find the CITY BAKERY, Vincent Gies, proprietor. Good bread, pies, cakes, etc., are here the rule not the exception. Vincent speaks encouragingly of his prospects and judging from the run that his lunch counter is having, we are confident he is enjoying a good return for his investment.

The next business house on the north side of the street m fa of LOUIS LANDT, wholesale and retail liquor dealer. Mr. Landt aims to carry none but the best in his line and is working up a

neat business. He has been engaged in the liquor trade ten years and knows every detail of the business.

**C. BOISSONNEAULT**, opposite the post office has just completed a large structure where in he proposes to carry on a general merchandise business. A small portion of his stock has arrived from the markets; when all are here he will have as fine a selection as can be seen in the territory.

In the post office building we find the wholesale and retail firm of **BRAINERD, GARDNER & CO.**, dealers in hardware, stoves, tinware, etc. The stock is complete and the house is doing a large and constantly growing business.

At the foot of Main street, on the south side, the establishment of **LANDUSKY & HAMILTON** is located. This place is always found to be among the best, carrying a fine stock, and providing amusement for that give them a call. Every evening its patrons are greeted with the sweet strains of music that Chas. Ball has proven himself so competent to produce on his violin. The firm are enjoying a good trade.

The livery stable of **LANDUSKY & HAMILTON** in the rear of the post office have a

good selection of horses and vehicles, and supply customers at very reasonable rates.

Turning the corner eastward a few doors the establishment of **J. C. JOHNSON** is reached. **J. C.** is a fine old gentleman, understands his business and has a neat little custom.

Returning to Main street, next door to the Pacific House we find the firm of **C. L. STAMMER & CO.** This establishment carries a fine of liquors, cigars, etc., and are ever attentive to the wants of their customers.

**Dan Kuhnenn**, the genial host of the **PACIFIC HOUSE**, at the foot of Main knows how to run a hotel to give general satisfaction. He always sets a good table, and none need want that partakes of his board. **J. H. Snell** is the clerk in charge and does a great deal towards the popularity of the house.

**MAIDEN MEAT MARKET**, located opposite the foot of Main street, is the property of **B. Trainor**. Meat, butter, poultry, cheese, etc., are always to be had at this market and at reasonable prices. **Mr. Trainor** gives the best of satisfaction as a butcher. He delivers orders to customers and does a large and justly merited business.

**LOUIS BELANGER**, on north Montana Street, does a large wholesale and retail general merchandise business; he carries a complete stock of everything in his line, and takes pleasure in waiting on his many customers ; he is expecting a large invoice of goods from Chicago in a few days and when received will be stocked for the winter. In connection with the store; Mr. B. has two fine stone store-houses fitted to overflowing with all kinds of goods.

One block north from the foot of Main on Montana Street, is the lodging house of **C. F. SCHAFER** containing eight rooms furnished with nice beds, etc., where the weary can find rest after a day's journey through the mountains.

Two door north of lodging house, **PETERSON & JENSEN**, have a saloon where a good brand of liquors and cigars can be found at all times.

On the opposite side of the street, **SAUNDER'S** livery stable is located where a saddle horse or double rig can be had on short notice.

The **MAIDEN BLACKSMITH** is no other than **A. G. McGuire**. His shop is on north Montana street and although business is a

little quiet in that line at the present time, when the work is to be done the Maiden Blacksmith can "get there."

**JAMES E. MILLIKIN** AND **T. B. MARTIN** are the principal contractors and builders and are kept busily engaged building and repairing.

**J. E. WASSON** AND **T. M. TRUDELL** are the two ex-pounders of the law.

**Mr. F. M. MUNN** wields the paint brush and is considered a first class artist in all branches of the business.

**CHARLES DROSCH**, the shoemaker, has the field to himself, does good work, and deserves the patronage of all.

Businesses in the Judith Mountains were not limited to the town of Maiden alone As William Sutherlin described for the Rocky Mountain Husbandman, **ANDERSONVILLE** had two stores, a meat market, saloon, hotel restaurant, livery stable and blacksmith shop in addition to a fine saw mill. The Mineral Argus stated there were some fifty log and frame buildings in the townsite.

Because saw mills were of such critical importance to development in those days, Fell and Vrooman

saw fit to describe in some detail the Andersonville sawmill:

**"This mill is situated in the town site about 500 feet from the post office and on the banks of the North Fork from which stream the water for supplying the engine and running off the saw dust is drawn. The mill has a capacity of 10,000 feet every 10 hours and furnishes constant employment to thirty-five men. The saw in use is the Hoe Patent, the teeth of which can be removed and replaced at will, the advantage over the old style of saws being the fact that it always cuts one size, and the savings in files in a short time win pay for it, as the Hoe patent require no Sting whatever.**

**The shingle department is capable of turning out 20,000 every 10 hours and nearly all of the shingles in use here have been made in the night as the mill is crowded beyond its capacity. This department contains two circular saws and an Evert's patent self-feeder made by C S. & Burt, Dunlap, III, and will turn 10,000 an hour. The edger is made out of a circular saw and rigged up by Mr. Dexter. It shows originality and does the work required of it in good shape. The motive power is furnished by a Gear, Scott & Co.'s 20 horse power engine.**

**A large blacksmith shop in connection with the mill is under the management of Robert McKinzie. Mr. Dexter is building a snug little office close to the mill and will soon be comfortably quartered therein and receive his customers in as neat a room as is to be found in the territory.**

Although several businesses were established at the confluence of Alpine and Warm Springs creek, a post office was not situated there. Through the years confusion has existed as to the location of the Alpine post office and a number of writers have assumed it was at this juncture.

A post office with the official name of ALPINE was established in 1885 on the stage route between Fort Maginnis and Grass Range at Coder's Crossing on Ford Creek. It is hard to imagine why the name Alpine was chosen for a location six miles away from the mountains on the prairie! Anna Coder was the post master and a store and saloon were also maintained at the stage stop. The post office operated for almost 20 years and Alpine is shown on several old maps as being about 6 miles due east of Gilt Edge.

In August 1883 the Mineral Argus said of the "mountain" ALPINE: **"This thriving hamlet is situated in Warm Springs Gulch about**

one and one-half miles west of Maiden. Here we find a number of log and frame buildings, the majority however, at the present time, are vacant. As soon as capital is invested in the claims in that vicinity it is bound to make a lively little camp. Cbas. Holmes is located here and has a neat little "wayside inn." Later another Mineral Argus article reported that Charlie "has a cozy little sample room known as the Alpine, and when the town boys want something nice and a little pedestrian exercise they always call on "Little Holmes."

In January 1884 disaster struck. The Mineral Argus headlined an article, " **Reduced to Ashes-Last Friday morning at 4:30 a.m. the Alpine Saloon, located in Warm Spring gulch midway between Maiden and Andersonville was burned to the ground. On the night of the fire, the proprietor, Charley Homes, John Peck, Ira Gilman and Ed. Toy were occupants of the building and came very near losing their fives. They retired after midnight and were awakened by a piece of flaming lining dropping on Mr. Gilman's hand, who gave the alarm. By this time the ceiling and walls were aflame and the bewildered occupants rushed to the doors for escape only to find them securely locked. The heat was in-**

**tense and with no time to be fast, and exit being impossible through the doors, Mr. Pock made a dash at the front window carrying the frame sash and all with him but reaching the outside with slight cuts and bruises. All the occupants were more or less burnt but none severely. Everything in the building was consumed, including pistols, guns, a large stock of wet goods and cigars and nearly all the clothing of the occupants. No insurance.**

Another settlement near Maiden which did not have a post office was that of RUSTLE.

The Mineral Argus described it as follows:

**"This little hamlet is located in Maiden Gulch midway between the Collar Mine and the town of Maiden. At tins point the gulch widens out from a narrow pass through the mountains to a level, fertile valley, embodying some eighty acres of available land for building purposes, giving the town plenty of room to spread, and making a beautiful site for a goodly sized village.**

**There are now built and occupied as residents or business houses, eight or ten good, substantial buildings. SMITH & CADWELL, have a good saloon and a first class stock of goods; MCDONALD A WILLIAMS**

keep a restaurant and sample room and a few steps up the street the well known Prof. W. AC WYMANS residence and place of business is reached. The "Prof." is known throughout the U. S and Canada as one of the best ventriloquists and ledger-main experts, and one wanting to spend a pleasant hour and be most enjoyably entertained will do well to stop on their way through town and have a chat with him. From Rustle we pass through Cambric Gulch, and a walk of fifteen minutes brings us to the town of Maiden.

Several months later the Mineral Argus reported that Prof. Wyman had been making great improvements on his property. He had built a fine root house or cellar 11 x 16 . In addition, because he intended to go into the chicken business, he had built a new bam and hen house 16 x 32. Reportedly he

had 84 hens, 22 of which were laying.

Two other business locations deserve mention. The first was at the forks of the Maiden canyon below the Spotted Horse mine. It was known as CANYON.

It is seldom mentioned in any writings concerning the mountains but an advertisement in the Mineral Argus stated that Pott & Hayden had a **"Fine Line of Wines, Liquors and Cigars Constantly"** at the CANON SALOON in Maiden Gulch..



Canon, Montana

**Canon Saloon.**

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POTT & HAYDEN, Props.

---

Maiden Gulch, one and one-half miles  
from Town.

---

Fine line of Wines, Liquors and Cigars  
Constantly on Hand.

Advertisement Mineral Argus

Thirteen years later a picture of the settlement was printed by Weed and Pirssons their geological survey of the Judith Mountains. The picture is identified as being "Spotted Horse Gulch." An occasional reference to "Canyon" has been made by old- time writers such as Maybelle Long.

The other business location was just east of the Collar Mill and it was known as the CRYSTAL

MOUNTAIN SALOON, O. A. Seely, Proprietor. Since the sale of liquor was prohibited on the military reservation of Ft. Maginnis, this location must have seemed ideal to gamer the business of both miners and soldiers since it was located very near the west boundary of the reservation.

Another would-be settlement may have existed in the early 1880's in the Cone Butte area.. A letter to the Mineral Argus on December 1, 1883 is headed "BATCHELOR, M.T." and signed by "Mineral Bill of 1672 Gulch Street, Batchelor." The letter mentions a number of miners and mining claims in the area but may well have been written in a facetious manner.

A January news item says, Several of **"the boys" from Maiden attended the dance on Tuesday evening at James Abram's residence. Cone Butte. They reported a bang up time. Mr. Abrams, though an "old batch" set up a feast "fit for the gods" and one which the dainty hands of the fair sex could not have improved upon. About 30 couples were present and danced til the breakin' of the moon"**.

No doubt several cabins may have been clustered together on various mine sites throughout the entire mountain area and remained occupied as long as their was mine

activity at the site. A large (35x65) boarding house was erected at the Collar Mine, and later boarding houses existed at the Maginnis, Spotted Horse and New Year's mines.

Two new businesses opening in late 1883 in the midst of downtown Maiden. The reader may be interested in the rather detailed accounts of the interiors of these two establishments which were printed in the Mineral Argus.

**The International Hotel Opened to the Public on Thanksgiving--Those Present Enthusiastic--An Honor to our Camp. Having received an invitation from mine host of the International Hotel, Mr. Jos. H. Wolfe, to call and make an inspection of the house as opened to the public, a reporter of the Argus availed himself of the opportunity and, accompanied by Mr. Wolfe, made a general and careful inspection of every department, and it is with no small degree of pride that we publish for the benefit of our readers (many of whom win be personally benefited by the establishment of such a house in Maiden) a general description of the interior and the complete arrangements made for the comfort and accommodation of guests.**



The house is centrally located on Montana street at the foot of Main, facing the town and a full view of the main business street can be obtained from the office.

Entering the house we find ourselves in a neat art spacious office, 15x23 feet On the left of the entrance is the business desk, counters and all necessary office furniture. In the center is a large beating stove, so arranged as to furnish sufficient warmth to both office and dining room. On the right will be found a table supplied with all the late papers, a lounge for the weary traveler to repose upon, and in fact all the equipment of use in a first-class hotel-office.

In leaving the office for the dining room (the two departments being separated by a partition seven feet high, the door in which is surmounted by a neatly formed arch from which drop lace curtains, giving a beautiful and tasty appearance to both office and dining room) we found ourselves in a hall as finely adapted to the purpose as we have seen in the territory. It is 23x24 feet in dimensions containing four dining tables, capable of seating 32 guests. At the further end is a sideboard containing a full assortment of new table linen, napkins, etc., while the top is filled with glassware.

In the middle of the hall is a beautiful little center table for receiving trays, and immediately over this will be seen an elegant 4-lamp chandelier, furnishing sufficient light for all parts of the room.

The walls of both office and dining room are papered with a beautiful mauve-tinted paper, trimmed with eight inch boarder resembling marble pillars that extend from ceiling to floor.

On the right side and center of the dining hall is the entrance to the culinary department It is supplied with all the equipment known in the shape of cooking utensils.

Immediately over the office on the second floor is the reception room and parlor. It is 15x18 feet, neatly carpeted and furnished and ought to give satisfaction to the most fastidious.

There are six bed chambers on the second floor, all fitted up with entirely new furniture, and the beds provided with woven-wire and wool mattresses, thus furnishing as fine a bed as can be found any where and assuring a good nights rest.

At the right of the office door is the entrance to the European Cafe where everything is furnished to order in the best man-

ner. Such an addition was greatly needed in our town and reflects credit on the business ability of the genial proprietor.

The entrance to this department is from the office. Everything desirable can be obtained and the gentleman in charge, Mr. McFerrin, has the reputation of being an expert in his line for all kind of beverages.

The hotel, as opened to the public, is not only a credit to the proprietor but an honor to our town, and Mr. Wolfe deserves the thanks and patronage of the entire community. He intends to run a strictly first-class house, and is determined to keep pace with the growth and advancement of the town. We trust he will achieve the success he so richly deserves."

Messrs. Munn & Dwinnelle executed the kalsomining and papering of the International, and it reflects credit upon their skill in this line.

Ferry & McQuirc finished the woodwork in the International. It speaks for itself.

Brainerd, Gardner & Co. furnished a big order to Mr. Wolfe, in the line of sash, doors, paints etc.

Several months later Mr. Wolfe remodeled to provide a "parlor sit-

ting-room" on the first floor opening directly into the dining room, thus furnishing access for ladies without having to pass through the office.

Half -page advertisements announcing the opening of the Bullion Sample Room and Billiard Hall appeared in the early December 1883 Mineral Argus.

A detailed account of the facility stated:

"A little less than a month ago the projectors of this enterprise

**THE BULLION!**

Maiden Music Hall,  
Brown & Davis, Prop's.

The Finest Billiard Room and Music  
Hall in Eastern Montana.

— Our Bar is Stocked with the Finest Brands of —

**WINES, LIQUORS AND CIGARS,**

And in fact Everything to be found in a Metropolitan House.

**Music Day and Night.**

**Cor. Montana and Main Sts. MAIDEN.**

Advertisement-Mineral Argus

decided on erecting and fully equipping the most complete sample room in the territory, and from the moment plans and specifications were made and approved an army of mechanics have been busily employed in the construction of the building located at the corner of Main and Montana streets.

The edifice, 24x85 feet with a 14 foot ceiling, when completed will cost over \$ . It has an entire glass front, the window pane being 36x50 inches, thus giving sufficient light for bar, office and gaming tables, while the lower end of the room will be lighted by the window located on the Montana street side.

To the left of the door, enclosed by a 4 foot railing, will be found the office, neatly carpeted, containing a set of elegant office furniture and 1000 pound safe. A few feet down the hall, at the end of the office railing, is the bar. This piece of furniture is 12 feet long, of the most modern design and will be found to contain everything that one can desire or expect to find in an establishment of this kind.

The bar fixtures for this house will be the very best obtainable, not only for use but as ornaments, and arranged in a pleasing and artistic manner. The stock case behind the bar will be filled with the best of goods and the top will be occupied by two beautiful 3 foot bronze lights, the best ever brought into Montana, and various other ornaments. Over the bar on each side of the large 6x10 foot mirror, will be seen two large oil paintings, both by masters, and over this a large

eight day time piece that cost \$100 at the factory,

At the end of the bar a platform has been erected for the exclusive use of the band. This is enclosed by a rail, finely carpeted and containing a \$300 grand piano, and the musicians seats.

On the right as you enter will be two faro and two card tables, all of the best manufacture, which will be instantly at the service of those desiring the various games indulged in for pleasure or profit.

The hall from the center to the rear will be occupied by the billiard and pool tables. These tables are of the finest make and design, and by the nature of these games will be greatly appreciated. Suspended from the ceiling will be three superb eight-light chandeliers, making the light as bright at night as the sun by day.

Our band is unquestionably one of the best in the territory. It consists of three pieces, and will furnish the sweetest music day and night to the satisfaction of all music lovers. The walls and ceiling will be finished in the most artistic manner, beautifully frescoed and ornamented with floral designs, wreaths, etc., making in all, as beautiful a hall as one cares to see .

**A large gasoline light will be erected in front of the hall that will light up the town for blocks.**

**This house will be opened with a \$?? stock of goods, consisting of everything that can be imagined, from the mildest drink to the finest decoctions known to the business. We carry nothing but the best of every variety, and all goods passed over our bar will be the finest the market affords. Our brands are warranted to be the best manufactured.**

**The house will be opened day and night from the date of opening. Three bartenders will be on watch to accommodate customers at all hours.**

**Several four-horse teams will be provided on the night of opening to convey those desiring to attend from the Fort, Andersonville and Collar Mine. Everyone is invited. Exact date will be announced in due time. Brown & Davis, Proprietors."**

## **FIRE HAZARDS**

With all of the wooden structures in the new town it is easy to see why the danger of fire was always a threat. Even before the fire which consumed Charlie Holmes' Alpine Saloon, the Mineral Argus had printed an editorial suggesting the citizens of the town petition the

county commissioners to appoint a fire warden. The article pointed out that not a single building in the entire town had a brick chimney and that without some type of organized fire department, insurance was absolutely prohibitive.

About a month later Joe Herring's barn burned, as well as about ten tons of hay. The Mineral Argus reported:

**"The boys fought bravely to suppress the fire but it was to no avail. There is great necessity for immediate steps toward providing better protection against this element of destruction."**

Not long after a disaster was narrowly avoided when Hamilton & Wetherall's building caught fire. **"The roof became ignited around the pipe, and but for the timely discovery by passers by, would have burnt the structure to the ground. However, a miss is as good as a mile and we must trust will prove as effective a warning to all citizens to exercise the greatest of care, as well as arouse them to the need of a fire organization at once."**

Every building in the town was heated by some sort of wood or coal stove with only a metal stovepipe. A stovepipe will accumulate soot, especially if pitch wood is used for fuel, and a hot fire can ignite the soot causing a raging

out-of-control fire in the stove-pipe. Under those circumstances the pipe will actually become red hot and the intense heat can easily set fire to a wall or ceiling-particularly at the point where the pipe goes through the roof. This was an ever present problem. In dry weather it was possible for sparks from a stovepipe to set fire to a shingle roof. In addition, kerosene lamps and lanterns or candles were the only source of light during the long winter evenings. Left unattended they were a dangerous source of fire. Add to this the danger from cigar and cigarette smoking and the use of wooden matches and it is easy to appreciate the hazards.

Once a fire started it was often impossible to control it because of the lack of water. The town's water supply consisted of a small stream which ran through the heart of the town and of shallow dug wells. Not every house or business had its own well and some of the wells were poor producers. People normally kept a bucket or two of water in their houses for drinking and domestic use, and it was also common practice to have a rain barrel which filled from runoff from the roof. However, this certainly did not provide adequate water for an emergency. Fires were to take their toll in Maiden through the years.

One should not forget when reading of all the building activity in the town of Maiden and surrounding area that all of the supplies and materials used, with the exception of local lumber, had to be hauled by bull or horse team from either the Missouri or the Yellowstone river. Even when the railroad reached Billings in 1882, the hauling distance did not decrease. Anyone who has driven up out of the Missouri breaks even on a well-surfaced road knows that it is treacherous and steep. Small wonder that Mr. Brown and Mr. Davis bragged of the 6x10 foot mirror in the Bullion Saloon!

## FREIGHT AND STAGE LINES

Freight roads in common use in



Maiden, Montana Territory 1884

1883 were from Fort Benton via Arrow Creek and Spring Creek to Maiden; Judith Landing at old Fort Clagett (at the mouth of the Judith River) to Warm Springs Creek and Maiden; Rocky Point to Box Elder

operated out of the town with a total of 52 stages per week!)

In October 1883, John Davis, after a brief visit to the Yellowstone was quoted as saying in the Mineral Argus:

**"Junction is lively and fast becoming a great shipping point There is a string of bull teams fifty miles long between this point and Junction, This may undergo some shrinkage, but not while this dam-p weath-er continues!"**



**MONTANA STAGE COMPANY**  
---BUSINESS BETWEEN---  
**Billings, Grt. Falls, Ubet and Maiden,  
LEWISTOWN AND BENTON.**

Convenient Coaches,  
on the entire line to the North  
on the Pacific Railroad.

Quick Time!  
Good Roads!  
Easy Grade!

Thirty-Six Hours Between Lewistown and Benton, Con-  
necting with Manitoba Railroad.

Best of Accommodation along all the lines. **T. J. VIVIAN, Agent.**  
Lewistown, Mont.

Advertisement-Mineral Argus

Three regular stage lines served Maiden in 1883. They were the Junction City and Maiden Line; the Benton Southern Stage and Express Line; and the Billings and Benton Stage Line. The Junction City stage left Junction City at 6 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and departed from Maiden on corresponding days. The Benton Southern stage left Martinsdale at 7 a.m. on Tuesday,

Thursday and Saturday. This stage connected at Ubet for service to Billings or Benton. The Billings and Benton Stage line left Billings at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and arrived at Benton on Thursday, Saturdays and Tuesday. It connected at Ubet with the stage to Maiden, Fort Maginnis or Martinsdale. (After Maiden faded, Lewistown became the transportation hub for the Judith Basin. In 1902, the year before the railroad arrived in Lewistown, nine lines Creek, Fort Maginnis or Maiden; Junction City on the Yellowstone to Mussellshell, Flat Willow, Grass Range and Fort Maginnis or Maiden. Travel through Maiden Canyon was limited to light rigs and heavy freight between Fort Maginnis and Maiden went via the north end of the mountains past the Fergus ranch on Armells Creek to Warm Springs Creek, Andersonville and Maiden or from Fort Maginnis through Overland (near present-day Gilt Edge to Reedsfort (Lewistown), Warm Springs, Andersonville and Maiden.

## SCHOOLS

In 1883 Meagher County encompassed all of central Montana east to the Mussellshell River. According to the earliest records available, six school districts in central Montana were apportioned \$11.08 per census child in that year. The districts were: District #12, Big Spring Creek, 160 children; District #14, Philbrook, 54 children; District #15, Maiden, 72 children; District #16, Cottonwood, 72 children; District #19, Fort Maginnis, 123 children; and District #21, Ubet, 23 children. Maiden received \$775.60. (After Fergus County began official operation in 1886, the Maiden District became Fergus County District #3.)

John Dunton, Pike Landusky and L. Belanger were the first trustees of the district and the first Maiden School opened with 23 students on January 7, 1884 with Seth B. Stevens as the teacher. An interesting editorial appeared in the January 24, 1884 Mineral Argus:

**"There are several children whose parents have failed to provide them with books used in our public school. It is a source of annoyance not only to the teacher but scholars as well to be asked to borrow or study with another. Complaints that,**

**"every time one moves, new books must be bought," is an old**

**but a poor argument Suppose all families sent their children to school with different books, which series should the teacher adopt? These books are not very costly and children should be sent to school with proper ones. If parents are too poor then the county should provide books."**

According to Teddy Blue Abbott, in his book We Pointed Them North. Granville Stuart always had a school teacher for the children at his ranch and the other children in the neighborhood. Abbott said that in 1881 Granville built a schoolhouse and presented it to the district. Stuart wrote in his book Pioneering in Montana.

**"The large companies encouraged schools and their taxes largely supported them. On our range whenever as many as six children could be assembled I provided them a good log school house and a six months' term of school each year. The cowboys on the range saw to it that the teacher, if a young woman, was provided with a good saddle horse and not allowed to become lonely."**

**"At the ranch I had a library of three thousand volumes and we subscribed for the leading newspapers and magazines" At the James Fergus' ranch on Armells Creek there was another splen-**

**did library and leading periodicals. These books were at the disposal of everybody."**

School records are very sketchy until about 1900. We do know that the school census in 1883 showed 123 children in Meagher County District #19, Fort Maginnis. This was a huge district which extended all the way from the base of the Judith Mountains to the Musselshell River. (It must be remembered that "school census" and "school attendance" figures are quite different. School census figures counted all of the children in a district up to age 18, regardless of whether they were attending school; school attendance speaks for itself.) After Fergus County was established in 1886, the Fort Maginnis district became District #5. Apparently there were at least three school houses in the district at that time-it is believe they were Fort Maginnis, Overland and Alpine.

Overland was a stage stop on the old Fort Maginnis-Lewistown road which went north of Flat Mountain. It was located near the southwest corner of the military reservation boundary according to a deed recorded in 1881 by John Atchison. A post office was established there in September 1881 with J. S. Atchison as postmaster. It operated until September 1885. He also maintained a store and

saloon and according to an article in the Heritage Book of the Original Fergus County Area (page 539) the store and post office and school were all in the same building. In June 1884 the Mineral Argus reported that Jos. Herring had leased the Atchison property at Overland and that he intended to furnish the school trustees with a school room free of charge for five months. After several other moves, eventually this school was moved and it became the Cheadle school.

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**"The school house was close by the store. It had been called the Overland School and had a history of being moved where it would serve conveniently, but soon the school became the Cheadle School and this name stayed."**



**Part II**  
Mines of the Warm Spring District

## Part II

### Mines of the Warm Spring District

#### MINES

By 1883 it had become obvious that placer gold was not going to be found in quantities sufficient to sustain the growth in the Judith Mountains. Although gold and silver were being found in the lode claims, the extraction of the precious metals presented serious problems. In November 1883, Mr. Esler, manager of the Maginnis Mining Company was quoted as saying,

**"With the pan and chemical system for treating these ores properly, we would have been able to show a savings of the enormous sum of over \$26,000 last month. As there is now over \$80,000 in the tailings, it is suicidal to run the mill with such a loss. We have closed down with the intention of introducing pans in the spring."**

In general there were three common processes for extracting gold at that time-1) placer or the use of water, 2) amalgamation or the use of mercury (quick silver), and 3) smelting or the use of heat. The cyanide process was to come a few years later and was to become the

most efficient and widely used process in hard rock mining.

There is frequent reference to the term "arrastra" in the 1883-84 Mineral Argus. The 1893 Encyclopedia Britannic defines the word as follows:

**"A rude mill for grinding and amalgamating gold and silver ores, used in Spain and Mexico, and less extensively in the United States, h consists of a basin hollowed into hard rock, having a vertical axis with horizontal arms, to which large stones are attached by chains and dragged over the ore by the revolution of the shaft."**

David Jones and J. E. Davis put an arrastra into operation in Alpine Gulch in June 1884. They contracted with various mines to crush and reduce their ores. Frank Sage also had an arrastra on the North Fork of Warm Springs Creek. Both operations soon installed stamp mills for crushing the ore, however.

The Collar Mining Company spent nine months and approximately \$116,000 building a "state-of-the-art" 20 stamp mill in Ford's Gulch

at the base of Crystal Mountain in 1883. The original owners of the Collar, C. C. Snow, E. A. Erwin, Chas. Bessey, C. Young, J. R. Kemper and F. T. McPartlin, sent C. C. Snow east in 1882 to secure financing to develop the mine. Through his solicitation, General Meade of Omaha and S. S. Eaton of St. Paul invested in the enterprise. The mill was to have the capacity of reducing sixty tons of ore daily and Maiden waited anxiously for the day the mill would begin operation. (An excellent picture and a detailed description of the mill can be found in the mining section of this narrative.)

Finally on November 10, with the major investors and officers of the company present, the 20-stamp mill began crushing ore. Within ten days, however, it was forced to close because of cold weather. Although it was first reported the miners would be kept employed all winter developing the mine and taking out ore, this did not materialize. Things quickly went from bad to worse when it became apparent that the mining company did not intend to stand behind its obligations in the community -either to businesses or former employees-many of whom had not been paid for three months. Before the winter was over, the commanding officer at Fort Maginnis volunteered food and supplies to

the needy miners who held worthless script from the mine in lieu of wages. The Collar Mine under the Meade-Eaton ownership never reopened and the following Sheriffs Sale announcement appeared in the Mineral Argus on May 25, 1884:



Collar Mill

**"To be sold at Sheriff's sale on the 18th of June, 1884 . ... the following described property: One (1) 20-stamp, wet crushing silver mill, with the Continuous or Boss pan process; One (1) Corlose engine; two (2) tubular boilers; one (1) No. 4 Knowles pump; one (1) sampling mill, complete; one (1) furnace with two large retorts, complete; one boarding house, about 25x60 feet, together with the Collar mill site, containing five (5) acres more or less."**

During the late winter of 1884 some of the influential miners and businessmen in the town of Maiden came up with a plan to organize and build a smelting company fi-

nanced by selling shares of stock. In May the Maiden Reduction Company came into being with capitol stock fixed at \$10,000 (later increased to \$20,000) with a par value of \$5 per share. The first board of trustees consisted of W. P. Brainerd, J. E. Davis, A. M. Thompson, C. W. Gardner, J. J. Campbell, H. W. Higley and C. Boissonneault. In June 1884 it was reported that 629 shares of stock had been subscribed. A 10 ton water jacket smelter was ordered from Frazer & Chalmers at a cost of \$3,100 at the factory and delivery was made in July. The smelter was erected at what became known as Smelter Gulch about one-half mile below the town of Maiden. The company was plagued with problems from the beginning and only operated for a year. It closed leaving unpaid bills in Maiden and elsewhere. Today memories of the smelter are kept alive by the meteorite-like pieces of slag which have been used by local residents for fire pits and decorative purposes.

The Montana and Ora Cache Lodes were promising quartz lodes located less than one-half mile east of the town. The Montana had been located by J. R. Kemper in 1880 and relocated by John Bourke and Barney Hill in 1881. They also located the Ora Cache in 1881 and then sold their

holdings to Hauser and Holter of Helena, Montana who organized the Maginnis Mining Company. Hauser and Holter built a 10 ton, 5-stamp amalgamation mill in 1882 (see McCourt, Carroll College thesis) which operated until



Samuel T Hauser

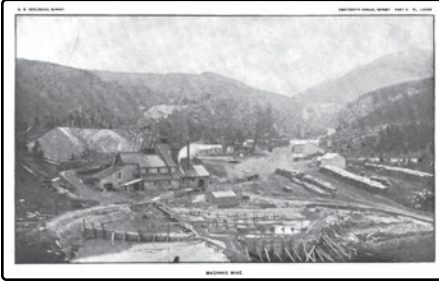
1884 when a new 10 stamp mill was constructed. (Details and pictures can be found under the Maginnis Mine portion of this report.) This activity did much to keep up the spirits of the Maidenites during the Collar Mine fiasco and the failure of the Maiden Reduction Company.

The Spotted Horse and adjoining Kentucky Favorite which were also to become major producers were also in production during this

early 1880 period. The Spotted Horse was located in September 1880 by J. F. Herring, David Jones and J. R. Anderson. The original owners became heavily indebted

to pay the freight bill to get the equipment into the country--and moved most of the mill and equipment to the Spotted Horse site.

The Kentucky Favorite was located in September 1880 by Charles Young, C. C. Snow, J. R. Kemper and F. T. McPartlan. In January



Maginnis Mine

to McAdow and Dexter for lumber from their Andersonville sawmill and McAdow acquired the mine and began developing it. He bought the defunct Collar mill reportedly for \$1500--an amount that would not have been enough



Spotted Horse Mine

1884 the original owners sold their interest to Brainerd and Gardner.



A. M. Holter

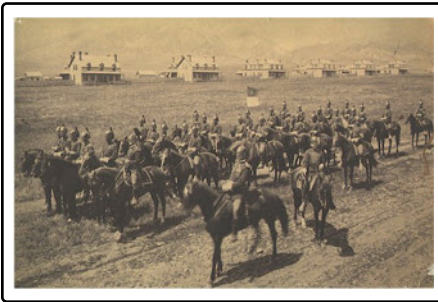
## OTHER ACTIVITIES

A number of other activities in and around the Judith Mountains were having their impact upon the region. Custer's defeat on the Little Big Horn in 1876 and Chief Joseph's attempt to escape through central Montana to Canada in 1877 focused attention on the potential Indian hazards in eastern Montana and pressures were brought to bear on the War Department to establish a U. S. military fort to protect the trade routes and newly established cattle interests in central and eastern Montana. Even though In-

dian reservations had been set aside for all of the Indian tribes in Montana by 1880, marauding bands of restless Indians were feared by the freighters and stockmen.

## FORT MAGINNIS

Political cronies of Martin Maginnis (territorial delegate to the U. S. Congress 1872-1885) appealed to him to get Congressional approval



Troops at Fort Maginnis

for a military fort in central Montana. When approval was granted, a site was chosen just east of the Judith Mountains and the fort was named in Maginnis' honor.

Among those people who were influential friends of Maginnis were S. T. Hauser, Helena banker and financier, ( who was a partner in the DHS ranch operated by Granville Stuart on Ford Creek and later a part owner of the Maginnis Mine) and C. A. Broadwater another Helena financier and businessman. Broadwater was a part owner of the Diamond R freight

lines which had long-time interests in central Montana. (Although Broadwater was not a partner at the time, it was the Diamond R Company which had promoted the Carroll Trail in the mid 1870's.)

Both Hauser and Broadwater stood to gain financially from Fort Maginnis--Hauser because of his ranching and mining interests and Broadwater because he was given the contract to haul much of the construction material from Rocky Point to the new fort . In addition Broadwater and one of his partners, Charles McNamara, were designated the sutlers for the new fort. They established a general store which profited not only from the military but which served ranchers as far away as the Mussellshell River. The Teigen family near Winnett still have copies of invoices for supplies purchased from Broadwater and McNamara. One invoice shows they bought 100 cartridges, 45-70 caliber, for \$3.75; 100 pounds of coffee for \$23; 3000 pounds of tobacco for \$330. This was a lot of tobacco but it was boiled and used in dipping vats to treat scab on sheep.

In September 1881, Charles McNamara was named postmaster of Fort Maginnis. During the construction stage of the fort, from September 1880 to September 1881, a post office named Parker served the area. Amelia Parker

was the postmaster. She was the wife of the Fort commander and the man in charge of construction, Captain Dangerfield Parker, Company K, 3rd Infantry .

Confusion sometimes has arisen from the fact that there was an earlier Fort Maginnis post office in Montana. The first Fort Maginnis post office was established in 1875 at an Indian trading post on Birch Creek in Blackfoot Indian country 60 miles northwest of Fort Shaw in what was then Choteau County. According to Helen West in an article on Blackfoot Country in the Autumn 1960 issue of the Montana Magazine of Western History, this post office was named for Tom Maginnis who built the trading post sometime before 1870 for the purpose of trading for buffalo robes . The post office was abandoned in 1879.

One should remember that the terms "fort" and "post" were often used interchangeably to designate trading or military establishment. Many trading posts were called forts and military forts were called posts. The first Fort Maginnis was a trading post, the second a military post.

Fort Logan, or the old Camp Baker, near White Sulphur Springs was abandoned in May 1880 at the time legislation was passed creating Fort Maginnis. Some accounts

would lead one to believe Fort Logan literally was moved to Fort Maginnis but closer study reveals that Fort Logan was rather crudely built as compared to the fine plans for Fort Maginnis. (See accompanying blueprint and pictures.) Fort Logan had largely log or stucco buildings, many with dirt floors . According to one report, the stucco deteriorated in every hard rain-storm. In contrast Fort Maginnis had seven fine officer's quarters built of planed lumber with solid wood floors, dormered windows and sashes, metal hardware, and finished interior woodwork. One of these two story houses still stands on the northwest corner of Seventh and Broadway in Lewistown where it was moved when the fort was abandoned in 1890.

According to the legend on the blueprints for Fort Maginnis the following buildings were to be built in addition to the officers quarters mentioned above: 3 barracks (designed for two companies each, with a kitchen and dining room in the rear of each building); a hospital and "dead" house (mortuary?); a school room and library; chapel; adjutant's office; bakery; guard house; 3 storehouses; quartermaster shop; civilian employee quarters; 4 non-commissioned staff quarters; saw mill; watch-man's and harness house; 3 stables; 2 "M" stables (Ed. mule?);

magazine; ice house; oil house; wagon shed; root house; and engineers quarters . In addition there was provision for a trade store and trade stable. According to Frederick Moodry six cottages were provided for laundresses. (Frederick Moodry wrote a thesis on Fort Maginnis while a student at Carroll College in 1958.)

Most of the finished materials were shipped up the Missouri River to Rocky Point and freighted by oxen or horse teams to the construction site over the old Carroll Trail to a point known as Doyle's Ranch (east of present day Roy) where a new route was established to the south east side of the Judith Mountains. The original Carroll Trail had skirted the mountains on the north and west sides. Occasionally one will hear it argued or see it written that the Carroll Trail was on the east side of the Judiths. This is somewhat of a half truth since a wagon road soon connected Fort Maginnis with Lewistown along the east and south side of the mountains and met the old Carroll Trail at that point. It was never a major trade route to Helena, however, as the first trail had been.

A local sawmill is shown on a map of the military reservation near the Pott's ranch not far from the mouth of Maiden Canyon. Fort Maginnis was the last military fort built in Montana and certainly one of the

finest although Fort Assiniboine near present day Havre (built the year before in 1879 ) was probably the grandest of all. It boasted brick buildings with mansard roofs, 35 sets of officers' quarters, one dozen sets of barracks, a chapel, a theatre, hospital and school. The Fort Assiniboine historic site is well worth a visit today.

The first contingent of Army infantry arrived at the Fort Maginnis site in the late fall of 1880. Among those soldiers was Owen Dunn. Owen, his wife Susan and three young sons arrived at Fort Maginnis in October. There was no place for them to live so the soldiers built a floor with four foot high walls and erected a tent on the platform for the family. They lived in this tent for the winter even though the youngest son, William, was a tiny baby born on October 2, 1880. (Almost 30 years later, William married Kate Wiegler—see Dunn/Wiegler in section on people.)

The army was housed in temporary quarters while it watched 200 laborers construct the grand and spacious buildings which were completed in December of 1881 according to John Foster who wrote a fine article on Fort Maginnis for the Christmas edition of the News Argus in December 1984. Mr. Foster comments,



**"It is interesting to note that in issue after issue, the Mineral Argus made mention of the teamsters bringing the gold camp freight from Junction City (near present day Billings) and not over the Carroll Trail via Diamond R. wagons as government contracted freight to Maginnis, and Broadwater and McNamara goods came."**

According to Mr. Moodry, the original military reservation was two miles square but when the army found there was not adequate hay land to supply horse feed, the reservation was increased to approximately 7 miles by 9 miles.. This then encroached upon the hay meadows of the newly established DHS Ranch where Granville Stuart had chosen to build the ranch headquarters earlier the same year. Stuart successfully brought political pressure to bear to have his headquarters and most of his hay meadows excluded from the reservation.

Much to the despair of the Maid-enites, the town of Maiden and the adjoining gold mines were also included in the military reservation and on August 8, 1883 the Army issued General Order No. 134 which ordered all the towns-people and miners to leave the reservation within 60 days together with "all property they brought with them." The Mineral Argus

headlined the order and a subscrip-tion committee was immediately named to raise money to defray the expenses of sending a representa-tive to speak against the order. The Argus reported,

**"In seven hours time, Tuesday last, and in an area of territory not over three and one-half miles square, \$491.50 was subscribed and the cash put up, all express-ing themselves willing and ready to double the amount they gave should it prove necessary to do so."**

C. W. Gardner was the delegate named to represent their cause.

Within a month the original order was suspended until July 1, 1884 and eventually Maiden and its mines were all excluded from the reservation.

## SCHOOLS

According to Teddy Blue Abbott, in his book We Pointed Them North. Granville Stuart always had a school teacher for the children at his ranch and the other children in the neighborhood. Abbott said that in 1881 Granville built a school-house and presented it to the district. Stuart wrote in his book Pioneering in Montana.

**"The large companies encour-aged schools and their taxes largely supported them. On our range whenever as many as six**

**children could be assembled I provided them a good log school house and a six months' term of school each year. The cowboys on the range saw to it that the teacher, if a young woman, was provided with a good saddle horse and not allowed to become lonely."**

**"At the ranch I had a library of three thousand volumes and we subscribed for the leading newspapers and magazines" At the James Fergus' ranch on Armells Creek there was another splendid library and leading periodicals. These books were at the disposal of everybody."**

School records are very sketchy until about 1900. We do know that the school census in 1883 showed 123 children in Meagher County District #19, Fort Maginnis. This was a huge district which extended all the way from the base of the Judith Mountains to the Musselshell River. (It must be remembered that "school census" and "school attendance" figures are quite different. School census figures counted all of the children in a district up to age 18, regardless of whether they were attending school; school attendance speaks for itself.) After Fergus County was established in 1886, the Fort Maginnis district became District #5. Apparently there were at least three school houses in the district

at that time-it is believe they were Fort Maginnis, Overland and Alpine.

Overland was a stage stop on the old Fort Maginnis-Lewistown road which went north of Flat Mountain. It was located near the southwest corner of the military reservation boundary according to a deed recorded in 1881 by John Atchison.. A post office was established there in September 1881 with J. S. Atchison as postmaster. It operated until September 1885. He also maintained a store and saloon and according to an article in the Heritage Book of the Original Fergus County Area (page 539) the store and post office and school were all in the same building. In June 1884 the Mineral Argus reported that Jos. Herring had leased the Atchison property at Overland and that he intended to furnish the school trustees with a school room free of charge for five months. After several other moves, eventually this school was moved and it became the Cheadle school.

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### CATTLE RANCHING

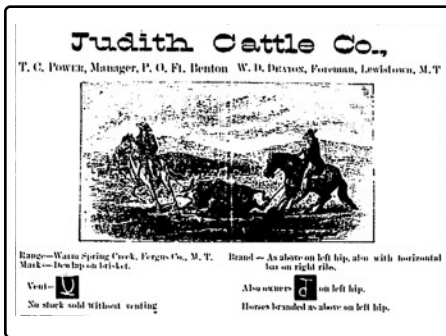
It is hard to imagine how quickly the vast prairies surrounding the Judith Mountains changed from a grassland thick with buffalo and other wild game to an rangeland

tana documents the change when he writes:

**"It would be impossible to make persons not present on the Montana cattle ranges realize the rapid change that took place on the range in two years. In 1880 the country was practically uninhabited. One could travel for miles without seeing so much as a trapper's bivouac. Thousands of buffalo darkened the rolling plains. There were deer, antelope, elk, wolves, and coyotes on every hill and in every ravine and thicket. In the whole territory of Montana there were but two hundred and fifty thousand head of cattle, including dairy cattle and work oxen..**

**In the fall of 1883 there was not one buffalo remaining on the range and antelope, elk, and deer were indeed scarce, In 1880 no one had heard tell of a cowboy .... but in the fall of 1883 there were six hundred thousand head of cattle on the range."**

Stuart goes on to say, **"During the summer of 1885 more than one hundred thousand head of cattle were brought into Montana, most of them trailed up from the South. There were also many bands of sheep driven in and these together with the natural rapid increase (under the most favorable conditions) tre-**



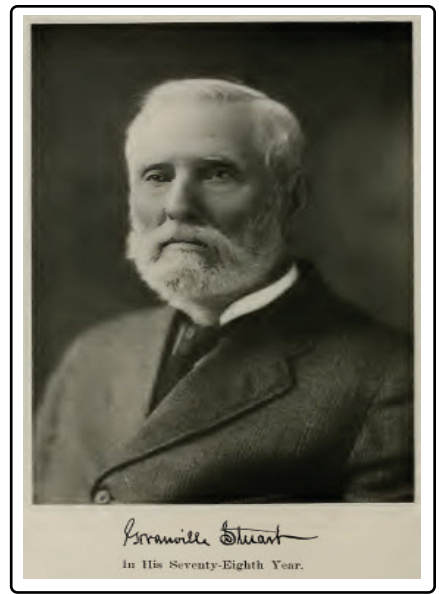
Advertisement—Mineral Argus

overstocked with cattle. We tend to think of the Texas cattle drives and the colorful cowboys tales as covering an entire era. Granville Stuart's book Pioneering in Mon-

bled the number of sheep in the territory and by the fall of 1885 the Montana ranges were crowded. A hard winter or a dry summer would certainly bring disaster. There was no way of preventing the over-stocking of the ranges as they were free to all." (The drought and the hard winter both came in 1886-87!)

Stuart said there were 12 outfits on the Fort Maginnis range ( which extended to Flatwillow and the Musselshell River) in 1883 and another 12 outfits on the Cone Butte-Moccasin range. The DHS had increased its herd to 12,000 head by that time. (Incidentally the DHS changed its brand to D-S about this time because they found the "H" blotted too easily when it was applied. Cattle with this brand still roam the range east of the Judiths today. They are owned by the Abbots, descendents of Granville Stuart.)

The cattlemen and the miners did not always agree politically. One of the points of contention was that of taxation. The stockmen felt they bore the brunt of property taxes and the miners felt if they were forced to pay property taxes, this would limit exploration and put prospectors out of business. This issue had subtle implications when the new county of Fergus was established and more divisive impli-



Granville Stuart

cations when the territory of Montana became a state.

## FERGUS COUNTY

By 1884 there were rumblings about the formation of a new county in eastern Meagher County. Neither the stockmen nor the miners liked having to go to White Sulphur Springs for official business, for legal protection, road requests, etc. During the 1885 Territorial Legislature, James Fergus introduced a bill, which passed, creating a new county from the eastern portion of Meagher County. The original bill would have named the county Judith but the legislature amended the bill and named it Fergus County to honor James Fergus. Parts of Fergus County were later to be carved

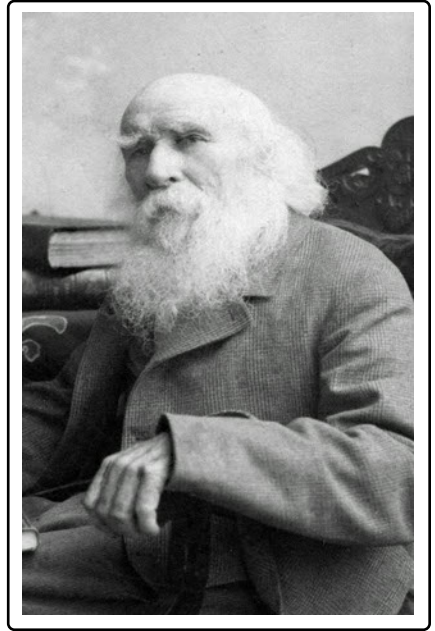
into several other counties-Mus-selshell (1911), Wheatland (1917), Judith Basin (1920), Golden Valley (1920), and Petroleum (1925).

Maidenites had mistakenly assumed that even though the creation bill named Lewistown as the county seat, this was only a temporary measure and that the voters would be given an opportunity when the county was official formed to select the site of the new county seat. The Mineral Argus stated the case in an April 23, 1885 editorial:

**"If Mr. Fergus will reflect he will remember that it was his opinion that the county-seat question should not be broached until after division had been secured, as petitions for its location from various points would tend to lessen the chances of division, and, in fact, give our members of the house a sufficient excuse to oppose the division bill. Such was also the view of the majority of residents of the territory to boundaries of the future county of Fergus, consequently--division and NOT county-seat being the question of moment--no reference was made thereto, it being generally supposed that the bill creating the county would provide for a temporary county-seat leaving the permanent location thereof to popular suffrage at the first**

**general election. The fact that a permanent location was made--necessitating an act of the legislature to allow this American right is our only cause for fault finding."**

Maiden would have vied with Lewistown and Cottonwood for the honor of being the county seat. Cottonwood was a thriving com-



James Fergus

munity located about 6 miles southwest of Lewistown. It was a stage stop on an extension of the Benton and Southern Stage Company and boasted 27 buildings and a post office which was established in 1883. Lewistown was a growing community with a popu-

lation of approximately 300 in 1885.

It is very difficult to ascertain the population of Maiden at its peak and sources can be quoted with estimates of from 600 to 6,000. There seems to be little doubt, however, that the lower figure is probably closer to being accurate. Anna Zellick in her History of Fergus County assembled some figures based on electoral returns. She found 1884 to be the peak year in the voting records (although no records were available for 1886) with a total of 260 votes being cast. In 1882, 186 votes had been cast; in 1888, 213 votes; in 1890, 130 and a lesser figure each year beyond that.

The Mineral Argus stated on January 7, 1886,

**"Today it (Maiden) is a village of 500 souls."**

School attendance figures taken from the Mineral Argus show 23 students in 1884, 24 students in 1886 and 32 students in 1888.

If one approaches the population issue from another standpoint, it is possible to count approximately 140 buildings in the excellent Maiden photograph taken by William Culver in 1887. Assuming perhaps 30 or 40 small houses might be located outside the view of the camera, the total number of

buildings still only reaches about 180. There would have had to be 8 people housed per establishment to make a total population of 1500 or almost 35 per building to make 6,000! However, it is certainly possible that over 1000 people used Maiden as their post office address since there were very few post offices nearby before 1890. (See post office listing in appendix.)

### **PROSPERITY vs DEPRESSION**

During the last half of the 1880-1890 decade, Maiden seems always to have been on the verge of prosperity. Time and time again real economic growth was predicted only to have intervening factors bring disappointment.

Losing the county-seat to Lewistown probably contributed to losing the Mineral Argus newspaper to Lewistown as well. Counties were required to publish certain public and legal documents (the minutes of county commissioners' meeting, for example) and since Lewistown did not have an established newspaper, this business must have looked lucrative to editors Fell and Vrooman. The growing importance and stability of ranching and agriculture in the Judith Basin and the natural resources which were so readily available for community development were,

of course, other factors which promised growth for Lewistown. On July 29, 1886 the last issue of the Mineral Argus was published in Maiden and without missing an issue the Fergus County Argus was published for the first time on August 5, 1886 in Lewistown. The next issue contained this commentary by the Maiden correspondent regarding the loss of the paper: "...

**while deeply regretting the business considerations which led to the change, yet our poor old camp has stood many a hard lick and can stand this, feeling confident that we will yet come to the front"**

Scan M. McCourt wrote a fine thesis in 1980 for the history department at Carroll College entitled: MAIDEN. A MINING CAMP'S STRUGGLE FOR PERMANENCE ON THE MONTANA FRONTIER. His commentary on Maiden's economic swings in the late 1880's very aptly tells the story.

**"In the summer of 1885, the camp appeared to be experiencing an economic recovery. The Maginnis 10-stamp mill finally reached completion and employment picked up. Yet throughout 1885-87 the company was plagued with numerous problems that impeded progress. Developmental costs had soared**

**due to a water shortage. Thus, the company was forced to expend large amounts of time and money building flumes and a reservoir, installing a tramway, and putting in pumps. This lack of water plagued the entire area, dictating when mills operated and when they did not. Water scarcity had forced the company to pump the slum from the slum tanks back into the battery and pans. Consequently, the plates became coated with foreign particles which interfered with the saving of flour gold. The entire mill was then overhauled and some machinery remodeled. Extensive flume building followed in order to flush fresh water into the system. Labor costs complicated operations as well. Experienced miners were scarce and novices demanded the same high wages. Inexperience led to errors in mill and mine operations, often resulting in increased expenditures.**

**Moreover, transportation facilities were poor and mill operations suffered further. Freight outfits from Junction City had to contend with steep grades, lack of bridges, and a grueling two-day journey traversible only in the dry season. Freight rates were high and depended upon various factors: local demand, season, and**

availability of equipment, men and animals. All these problems led to sporadic mining activities in the Maginnis Company's mines. The company pondered abandoning the entire operation. Managerial weakness had caused much of the problem; thus H. J. Brothers, the general manager, was replaced immediately and the mill fired up later that summer."



**Part III**  
**People**

## Part III

### People



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Back Cover Original sketch by Jerry Hanley



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