



MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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November 17, 1980

Sandra P. Collins
Co-Chairman,
Oral History committee
Western Heritage Center
316 Transportation Building
Billings, Montana 59101

Dear Sandra:

You missed a good conference but I am **well** aware how hectic some weekends can become.

I can't give you much help with information on Emily Brown. The information which Connie gave you probably did come from me. All I knew about the portrait came from Ella Greene. I assume you have discussed it with her.

As for your **cemetary** project, it would seem to me that the Western Heritage Center Newsletter reaches most of the same Yellowstone County audiences as the Montana Post. Why don't you see if June would be willing to include something for you.

I have referred your reference questions to **the** Historical Society Library and you will be hearing from **them** soon.

Please make a point of stopping in when you come this way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Archibald".

Robert Archibald
Director

RA/dlb

(Billings) THE POST (w)

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DATE 11-17-80

The Passing of a Once Noted Place

Jean F. Decker

(Printed in The Eastern Slope Sept. 1909, Vol. 1.No.3, Billings, Montana.
R.G.Linebarger, Manager, Jean P. Decker, Editor.)

A single line announcing the departure of the last person, a man, from what was formerly a thriving bustling little town, published in a local newspaper a few months ago, constituted the obituary of Junction, a once important point on the Yellowstone, sixty miles east of Billings. It was probably because he could no longer stand the solitude and lonesomeness of life in a deserted town that caused the lone survivor to also pack his belongings and move across the river to Custer, or it might have been the inconvenience of crossing over whenever he felt the need of something to eat or drink. At any rate the newspaper deemed the event of so little importance that it dismissed it with a line. Yet what a history could be written and the many stirring events that could be related were the chronicler to delve into the past of Junction and preserve for future perusal the story of the town, Tragedy and comedy would be blended in that tale and names now forgotten but prominent in their time, would stand forth in the history of the state. Names of men still alive and identified with orderly progress of the commonwealth are linked with the story of Junction and its brief life, reckoning time as it applies to cities and towns. Some of these men are now residents of Billings, others are scattered over widely separate part of the state, while still others returned to the east or went still further west.

The first attempt to establish a settlement at Junction, a name derived from the confluence of the Big Horn and Yellowstone on the opposite shore, was somewhere in 1875, when a few of the more hardy and venturesome men on the east side of the Rockies occasionally stopped there to barter with the Indians. But it was not until the spring of 1877 that anything like a permanent settlement was accomplished. It was then that Paul McCormick, now of Billings, but then living in Miles City, in company with Major Pease, landed there with a small stock of merchandise and opened a store which the major conducted, Mr. McCormick remaining at Miles City, where he had another store.

The battle of the Little Big-Born, where Custer and his troopers of the Seventh Cavalry fell the year before, had determined the war department to build posts in this part of Montana. One was located at the mouth of the Tongue, Fort Keogh, and the other, named after Gen. Custer, within a few miles of the battlefield where he was killed.

This caused great activity on the Yellowstone and steamboats were common, used in forwarding troops and supplies for the new posts. General Terry was in command of this department and he established a landing place for Fort Custer opposite Junction. For a long time this was known as Terry's Landing, but when the Northern Pacific railroad was projected west from Bismarck the place was renamed Custer, a name it now bears. Buildings for shelter for men and stores were erected and a considerable number of soldiers were maintained there in cantonment to guard the supplies and protect the few whites who were living along the river. Although it would seem that Terry's Landing had it over Junction, the latter continued to grow slowly until the spring of '78 when it had become famous as an outfitting place for the country to the north and northwest. McCormick closed out his business at Miles City and removed to Junction and the little store soon became a large concern.

Being the head of navigation on the Yellowstone, Junction became the headquarters for the freighting outfits that hauled merchandise and supplies to Fort Maginnis and Laiden on the north and Fort McKinney on the south. Often hundreds of men and teams could be seen there and the town was characteristic of the times and the people. It was a "wide-open" town with little law, save what the people made for themselves, yet it was not a wholly bad place. "Gun plays" were common but only one actual killing stands to its credit.

The last steamboat to arrive was the Bachelor, which ran its nose against the bank in '82, steamboating having seen its finish upon the arrival of the railroad. While

it had been said that the Bachelor arrived at Junction the truth is, the steamboat got no further than Pease bottom, twelve miles below, where it wintered and returned down the river in the following spring. Its departure was celebrated with a dance which was attended by almost everybody from Junction and the surrounding country.

In 1883 Junction boasted of a population of no fewer than 500. It had fourteen saloons, three dance houses, several stores and other business houses. Among the thriving but not recognized industries of those times was horse stealing. A large band of well-organized horsethieves was operating between the northern boundary of Wyoming and the Canadian line. Junction was on the trail followed by the band and it came in for its share of the business of its members. Being "neutral" ground the ~~numbers~~ were not molested. In turn they respected the property of the people of the town and spent their money freely with the saloons and merchants. Unfortunately for their peculiar line of traffic. Granville Stuart and his followers got busy during the winter of 83-4 and horse stealing became highly dangerous. A short thrift and a long rope was the motto of Stuart and his men, a motto that was lived up to earnestly and zealously. "Barb Wire" George, "Curley" and "Felix" are some of the men now recalled whose careers ended suddenly when Stuart's "regulators" got busy.

April 5, 1883, a fire occurred that destroyed three or four saloons and one store. Being without appliances to fight the fire the citizens formed a bucket line, to the river. By dint of hard work this fire was gotten under control, something the men at the river end of the line observed speedily. About every third bucket of water was followed by a jug of whiskey; then came three jugs to one bucket until at last only jugs came. A veracious and highly respected wit of Billings declares that when the fire was out only five sober men remained in town.

The one killing already mentioned occurred in '78, when a soldier killed a man named House. The latter was a bully and was continually hunting trouble. During the trouble between the two a shot fired by the soldier hit a saloon keeper named Smith in the shoulder. Smith recovered though seriously wounded. The soldier was tried and acquitted, the shooting having been held justifiable. "Big Frenchy" and one Willis took a notion one day that only the shedding of gore could wipe out the trouble existing between them. Accordingly they went gunning for each other but before they could do any harm Paul McCormick and Charley Spear disarmed them and the row ended.

An amusing account is related of an encounter between a ~~bracket~~ typically bad-man and an old German violinist, Professor Glab, employed in one of the saloons as leader of the orchestra, composed of a fiddle and a piano. The terror had undertaken to run the town that day and appeared on the street armed with a Winchester rifle and revolver. He commanded every one whom he met to take a drink with him, Glab did not care for anything until the bad man had shot a hole through his hat. After taking the enforced drink the professor left, but declared he would get even with his tormentor. Securing a shotgun the German hid in a convenient place and when he saw the revolving cataclysm approaching, he waited until he had passed, when he turned both barrels of his gun loose and shot the fellow in the back. With howls and yells the terror threw himself on the ground and begged for mercy. By actual count 190 fine bird shot were picked from the fellow's flesh where they had lodged under the skin.

Charley Spear, whose advent in the camp dated in '83, was postmaster. One day he received a heavy wooden box with directions to forward it to Buffalo, Wyo. The instructions also informed him that the box contained silver coin. Shipping valuables those days was risky business. After pondering a long time Mr. Spear finally decided to turn the box over to Frank Whitney, whose freighting outfit was loading for Fort McKinney. Mr. Whitney placed the box in the bottom of one of his wagons and marked it as containing bolts. In this manner it reached its destination in safety, but not without causing intense worry and disturbance of mind to the big freighter until at last he had turned it over to its consignee, a bank.

It was at Junction that Paul McCormick who had played many a part in his long eventful life, assumed the role of an attorney at law. On one of the toughs of the place had beaten up an inoffensive fellow without cause or provocation. Frank Whitney was justice of the peace. Mr. McCormick was persuaded to help the prisoner and appeared as his counsel. Only a short time had elapsed since Yellowstone County had been created from a portion of Custer county and all the blanks were according to the old form. This Paul noticed and took advantage of the fact as any good lawyer would have done. He promptly objected to any proceedings endangering the safety of his client. With all the display of eloquence of which he was capable the defendant's Attorney argued that while the alleged offense was committed in Yellowstone county, the complaint and warrant both charged its commission to have been in Custer County. He defied the court to proceed and threatened all sorts of dire consequences to the learned gentleman on the bench if the trial went any farther.

The bluff worked. The prisoner was acquitted on a technicality and immediately vanquished before new proceedings could be instituted.

Another instance of primitive court procedure occurred when Billy McCormick, no kin to Paul, was arrested for striking Frank Campbell with an ax. The defendant only a short time before had been involved in a shooting scrape with Jim Lane, a saloon man. As neither one had been injured the citizens paid no attention to the matter beyond disarming them before hostilities could assume fatal results. Billy was a mail carrier and on the strength of this presumed a great deal. Upon his arrest for assaulting Campbell he claimed immunity because of his official position. But the court, one Yurr ruled otherwise and ordered the prisoner held for trial in the sum of \$50, giving his reason for so small a bond that an ax "was not a deadly weapon: but an instrument to chop wood with."

Judge Goss was county attorney and following his vigorous protest against the insufficiency of the bond exacted, the court increased the amount to \$256. This was forfeited and McCormick, who sought safety in flight was never brought to trial.

Gone is Junction. The few crazy shacks that mark the place where it once was will soon disappear and only the name will linger until the present generation will have passed away, when it will be forgotten, but in the words of the old-timer, "she was a daisy while she lasted."

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JUNCTION CITY, HAVEN OF BULLWHACKERS, TRAPPERS
AND SOLDIERS, WITNESSED MANY DRAMATIC EPISODES

Yellowstone "Ghost City was long
Rendezvous of Adventurers

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By W. H. Banfill

Montana has had an abundance of "ghost cities," mostly mining camps which flourished while the diggings were profitable and faded away when the lodes or pay dirt ran out. Junction City, on the north side of the Yellowstone river, from the present town of Custer had a different and a longer career, although with the exception of three deserted log structures, a graveyard and a road grade, all evidences of the once bustling cowtown have vanished.

For nearly a score of years, Junction was the trading point for a wide area. Goods were freighted from it to the military post at Fort Maginnis and the nearby mining camp of Maiden on the north and with Fort Custer and Fort McKinney on the south. It lingered on for nearly a decade more before it was finally abandoned when the opening up of the last "ceded strip" of the Crow lands took away the last excuse for its being.

More frontier history gathers about the junction of the Big Horn and the Yellowstone river than any other point in eastern Montana with the possible exception of the similar junction of the Yellowstone and Missouri. The first trading post within the confines of Montana was erected by Manuel Lisa, Spanish trader of St. Louis, on the south side of the Yellowstone and the east side of the Big Horn, in 1807, within a year after Capt. William Clark had passed by the mouth of the Big Horn on the return trip of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It was to Fort Lisa that John Colter came after his terrible experiences in escaping the Blackfeet.

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JUNCTION OF RIVER & POPULAR RENDEZVOUS.

A quarter of a century later, Fort Van Buren was erected as an outpost in the furtrade, a few miles east of Fort Lisa's site. The junction of the two rivers remained a rendezvous for trappers, army expeditions, surveying parties and other ventures into the wilds, even after Van Buren was abandoned.

Then in 1875 an ambitious group of Bozeman citizens undertook the colonization of the Big Horn country, laid out Big Horn city and under the leadership of Maj. F. D. Pease, former Crow agent, and Capt. Paul McCormick established Fort Pease on the north side of the Yellowstone about 10 miles below Junction City. Hostility of the Sioux, who besieged the fort for months, ambushing parties who ventured from the post to trap and hunt, killing in all seven or eight men, finally led to the abandonment of the fort the following spring, soldiers from Fort Ellis coming down to the rescue of the little band of fighting civilians.

Then, after the wars with the Sioux and Cheyennes in 1876, the government, in erecting Fort Custer at the junction of the Big Horn and Little Big Horn, established a supply point a few miles west of the river's junction which was called Cantonment Terry. Here two companies of infantry were maintained while the fort was building and for many years afterward a small detachment was kept there as a forwarding point for Fort Custer.

Across the river from Cantonment Terry there sprang up a little set-

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tlement known as Terrv's Landing. Settlers there were free from the restrictions which the government maintained at a military post and on an Indian reservation. Soldiers on leave and others connected with the military establishment found there way there. As the place grow the name was changed to Junction City. The Indians are said to have also know the place by a word meaning the junciton. The territory surrounding Junction was known as Sagebrush flat to the early settlers, while the valley widens out some five or six miles east into what is known as Pease bottom.

HUNTERS, TRAPPERS STAY AT FORT PEASE PASSES.

After the abandonment of Fort Pease some of the trappers and hunters stayed on in the vicinity. The first permanent settler in Pease bottom was John C. Cuy of Bozeman, an early sheriff of Gallitin county, who took up a ranch of 160 acres in the fall of 1876 or early 1877. About the same time a trapper for Durfee and Peck, Missouri river fur traders, had a cabin near the present Custer.

Guy established a steamboat landing and woodyard on the river near his ranch. He also had a general mercantile store, a stage station, saloon and postoffice called Eschetah, the Crow word for horse. As late as 1882, the steamboat F. I. Bachellor took on wood there, according to Mrs. M. I. Draper of Fort Pease ranch, whose first husband was Capt. C. P. Woolfolk, the boat's captain.

How Junction City stole the postoffice bodily from Eschetah and then was forced to bring it back is an incident of early day history which Mrs. Draper relates. The enterprising citizens of Junciton City secured the appointment of Joe Allen as postmaster, but he did not have the necessar y supplies and furniture for a postoffice. With the aid of T. Wiley King, the stage driver, the Eschetah postoffice was loaded on the stage while Guy was away and it was taken into Junction.

When Guy discovered the loss of his postoffice, he went to Junction city and laid before his enterprising competitors the likely consequences of the theft of a United States post office. He told them that there wa a deputy marshal across the river at Custer station and that he intended to reprot the matter to him. The Junction citizens, impressed with his version of their offense, loaded up the postoffice again and returned-it to him.

According to Tooping's Chronicles of the Yellowstone, written by one of the frontier hunters who himself took a prominent part in the adventures which are there related, Junction was started in June. 1877. by William Taoppr, who opened a little trading store osite the cantonment. He did a good business with river men, soldiers and miners of the Maginnis district. T. C. and J. H. Graham located the same year at Junction and engaged in freighting Co Fort Maginnis.

PAUL M^cCORMICK WAS LONG LEADING CITIZEN.

In January, 1878, Paul McCormick, one of the leaders in the Fort Pease episode, came in from Miles City and established a branch house of J. Ellis & Co. of that city. The Paul McCormick Mercantile company soon succeeded.

For many years Paul McCormick was the leading citizen of Junction, being engaged in extensive freight operations as well as in general merchandise, and holding important government freighting contracts. Later with T. C. Power, he pruchased the Nelson Story cattle business on the Crow reservation, forming the Custer Cattle company.

The census of 1880 gave the population of Junction and the Sage brush community at 41. There was probably not much difference in its size and that of a string of little settlements along the Yellowstone starting with Benson Landing near the present Livingston and including Reed Point, Canyon settlement on Canyon creek, Coulson and Huntley. With the development of the cattle country and the coming of the railroad, the town grew rapidly and for a time had a population of around 300 persons.

The site of Junction is a small flat of bottom land surrounded by some low bluffs. Much of the original site has of recent years washed into the river. It is located a short distance to the right after crossing the river bridge from Custer, almost directly below a neglected graveyard which is intersected by the road. The main street of Junction faced the river, a wide thoroughfare, in its thriving days filled with bull teams and wagons. A row of cottonwood trees was between the street and the river. The old road grade may still be seen coming down at right angles to the main street from the north. Originally the road had wound in further to the east but a part of a hill had been cut away to make a direct grade into town.

The main road ran along the north side of the river during the years before the railroad was built. Little work was done on the road even after it became a stage route and there were steep pitches and bad gullies to cross. The mail for Fort Custer was taken across by ferry at Junction City. A poney express had been ruh by Huntley and Clark along the Yellowstone for a brief period before Gilmore and Salsbury started the stage with horses.

FERRY IS BUILT ACROSS YELLOWSTONE RIVER

The ferry across the river was built by Brown & Davis, who also ran a saloon, in 1878. It was at first a swing ferry with an anchor up the river on the south side where there was a bend, the boat being let down from one bank to the other. Later a regular ferry was put in. There was a ford in the river which was used when the water was not too high.

A government telegraph wire was built through from Fort Ellis near Bozeman to Fort Keogh with a line also to Fort Custer. There was one wire which was placed on cottonwood poles. The line was built in the winter of 1879, with Captain Kinenbury in command of the soldiers who did the-work. Kinenbury later perished in the fatal Greeley expedition to the north pole;

The first stage station at Junction City was kept by "Muggins" Taylor, who had been at Fort Pease and afterwards was a scout with Gibbons, taking the message of Custer's disaster to Bozeman and Helena. Taylor came to Coulson where he was killed while acting as deputy sheriff and is burried in Boothill cemetery. A stream through Pease bottom is known as Muggins creek.

* Note
7 miles after
and I guess he
like to play

Billings

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T. Wiley King, who figured in the postoffice stealing episode, drove the stage line, the winter that the telegraph line was built, running from Cold Springs to Junction. He carried mail for Captain Kärenbury and his men. Mr. King is still a resident of the Pease bottom section. (1931)

Junction City long had a reputation as a "wide open" town. In 1883 there was 14 saloons and three dance halls in the village. During the building of the Northern Pacific railway, however, it escaped some of the flood of undesirable citizens that made construction town along the line, places of bloodshed. About 10 miles east Kurtzville had the reputation during its brief existence of being the worst town in the territory. When the railway built on beyond the Big Horn river, Kurtzville was, however, soon abandoned.

Some years ago Jean P. Decker, former editor of the Billigs Gazette, published an account of the passing of Junction City, in a local publicity magazine, The Eastern Slope, which he published for a short time, about 1904 with R. G. Linebarger. A number of episodes which he had culled from various old-timers give some of the western flavor that belonged to the little cowtown which kept its frontier characteristics long after the towns situated on the railway had almost forgotten what a cowboy looked like.

MAIL CARRIER IS HELD FOR MAKING AX ASSULT

Billy McCormick, according to one of these stories, was arrested for striking Frank Campbell with an ax. Billy, who was not a relative of Paul McCormick, was the mail carrier, and on his arrest claimed immunity, but Burr, the justice, held him for trial. He placed the bonds at \$50 and when Judge J. R. Goss, who was county attorney, protested at the smallness of the bail, Burr replied that an ax was not a deadly weapon but an instrument to cut wood with. The bond was raised to \$250, however, but McCormick left the country after placing the bond.

There was at Junction a German violinist, known as professor Glab. who was employed in a saloon as an orchestra leader. A bully, who was the terror of the town, appeared in the street with a Winchester and revolver and ordered everyone to come in the saloon and drink with him. The professor said that he did not drink. But when the town terror shot a hole in his hat he took the enforced drink. The professor then quietly borrowed a shotgun and concealed himself until the bully passed, when he let him have both barrels at once. With howls and yells the bully fell on the ground and begged for mercy. A physician later picked about 200 fine bird shot from his back.

During the time when horse stealing was rampant in central Montana, Junction City was on the trail of a large band of thieves operating between Wyoming and the Canadian line and Junction City merchants got a good share of business from the passing bandits, particularly the saloons and dance halls. There was an unwritten agreement by which the property of the townspeople was unmolested while the Junction City folks did not interfere with the rustlers' movements. But Granville Stuart and his "regulators" shortly afterward cut off this source of revenue.

DISASTROUS FIRE VISITS JUNCTION CITY IN 1883

On April 5, 1883, Junction was visited by a destructive fire that, starting in the Brown & Jarvis saloon and burning through, destroyed several adjoining buildings at a loss of \$10,000. According to Mr. Decker's account, the townspeople formed a bucket line to the river. As most of the places threatened were saloons, jugs of whiskey were sent down the line, each third bucket of water being followed by a jug. At the time the fire was out there was only five sober men left in the town. According to another story of the fire,

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a prominent citizen, who lost considerably in the fire, had just previously become the father of a fine boy. "This morning I became a papa and tonight I am a pauper," he is said to have remarked.

Charles Spear, while postmaster in 1863, received a heavy wooden box to forward to Buffalo, Wyo., with the information that it contained silver. He turned the box over to Frank Whitney, whose frieghting outfit was loading for Fort McKinney. Whitney put the box at the bottom of the wagon, marked it "Bolts" and got it through with it safely, although it was with considerable relief that he turned it over.

Before the railroad was built, steamboats came up the river regularly, In 1868, nine steamers made 15 trips up the Yellowstone. Most of them came as far as Junction City, but some went to Camp Bertie near Pompeys Pillar, while under favorable conditions, they got as far as Huntley or Coulson. The arrival of the boats made bus ness for the freighters who hauled the goods on as far as Bozeman, and for the stage lines,

Mrs. Draper, then the wife of Captain Woolfolk, during the years 1882 and 1883, was on the last boats to ply on the Yellowstone, the F. I. Bachellor and the Northern Pacific No. 2, which was a tender for the bridge crew of the railway and took cars across the Big Horn while the bridge was building. During 1882 the Bachellor made two trips to Fort Custer from Myers. Once a week supplies were taken up to Coulson, where Heman Clark was building a waterworks system for the use of the Northern Pacific at Billings. Supplies were also taken for Winston company of St. Paul, which was laying track. Later in the summer, the army supplies were carried to points designated by the officers who were guarding the building of the railway.

BOAT BROUGHT UP RAILS FOR BILLINGS CAR LINE.

The boat carried up the rails that were used in building the street car line between Coulson and Billings. According to Mrs. Draper, the late Senator W. A. Clark came up the river on the boat with them and told them he was interested in the Billings street railway. Some lots which she bought in Billings and then gave up as valueless are now occupied by Yegen's store, They also brought up some registered bulls, which Granville Stuart was obtaining for his Fort Maginnis ranches. The boats stayed so long in the fall that they were unable to get down the river and they tied up for the winter in the channel which ran by the site of old Fort Pease, where Mrs. Draper now lives.

(1930)

Early in the spring of 1883, Captain and Mrs. Woolfolk gave a dance on the boat, which was one of the big social events of early Junction City, everyone from miles around being invited. The day of the dance, the breaking up of the ice in the channel gave everyone on the boat more excitement than they had bargained for. The quarters were on the Northern Pacific but because the cabin was low Mrs. Woolfolk and a friend, Miss Rene Vander Power, were over on the Bachellor, fixing tables and making arrangements for the dance which was being held there.

Suddenly, there was a grinding and roaring of the ice which started moving out, turning the Bachellor square around broadside against the ice. The boats were anchored to a cottonwood "dead man" on the bank but as the boat strained at its cables and the ice pounded against the sides, disaster seemed imminent. The men on the Northern Pacific hastily got a rope which was fastened to its place alongside the other boat, greatly to the relief of the women, who had looked every second for the cable to part and the boat overturn or carried downstream.

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The first dance in Pease bottom had been given several years before at Guy's landing. "Brocky" Tom Berkthwaite, a noted character among river captains, had loaned a tarpaulin to Robert Guv and Wiley King, who were giving the dance, while his boat was tied up at the landing. When the tarpaulin was taken back, it had been cut into holes by the spurs and nails in the men's boots. They offered to pay for the damage. The captain looked over the damaged tarp and with an explosion of oaths for which he was noted, exclaims, "No, I don't want pay. But I'll be damned if I'll loan you another one."

The two boats, which then belonged to the Northern Pacific railway, were taken to Dismarck in May and June 1883, and were the last steamboats on either the Yellowstone or Big Horn rivers. Captain Woolfolk was in command of the Josephine which had gone with the Far West commanded by Grant Marsh, up the Big Horn in 1876 to assist the troops under Terry and Gibbon in the campaign which ended in Custer's defeat.

CAPTAIN MARSH RUNS CRAFT INTO SLOUGH.

Captain Marsh, while he had a larger part in some of the spectacular events on the upper rivers, was not considered by rivermen as the superior of several other pilots and captains, according to Mrs. Draper. She recalls that one time when they were going up the river above Junction, they came to a place where there was an island with a slough on one side and the main river channel on the other. Marsh had blown his whistle as he passed them but he took the wrong channel and soon they had to stop while Woolfolk's boat greeted him with a triumphant blast as they passed the stalled steamboat. Marsh, who was standing on deck, pulled down his cap as they went by.

In 1878, Mrs. Draper, then Mrs. Woolfolk went up the Missouri as far as Fort Benton on her husband's boat. They spent the summer carrying supplies from Coal Bank to Cow Island. She believes that she can lay claim to being the only woman who ever piloted a steamboat in Montana. She had taken some lessons from an old captain named Anderson who was pilot on the boat. When they tied up at the I. G. Baker landing at Fort Benton, it was discovered the goods were so arranged that these to be unloaded at the T. C. Power landing should come off first. The pilot had left the boat. The engineer asked her if she could take the boat to Power landing, and she brought it around in approved style.

Junction City was on the route frequently used by the Piegan Indians in making horse stealing raids on the Crows. Then a band of Crows usually trailed them back, so that war parties were no uncommon sight. Often a band of Crows would camp across the river from Junction and if they were on the war-path against Piegans or Sioux they made the night hideous with their war dances and medicine ceremonies as they whipped up their courage to meet the enemy.

LIVEREATING JOHNSON HELPS CHASE INDIANS.

More than once bands of settlers, exasperated at the raids which took toll of their cattle and horses also, followed the Piegans. On one such occasion the redoubtable "Liver-eating" Johnson and several others caught up with the Piegans in the null mountains and took a few scalps on their own account.

About 1884 there was some Indian trouble and there were reports of the Sioux and Cheyennes coming to fight the Crows, according to Mrs. Draper. One day she was out in the yard when a signal glass flashed in her face. She recognized what it was, for once chief Gall had given her one which he carried when they met the Sioux chief on the upper Missouri. Directly, the air was filled with whooping Indians, but they did not come near the house. Soldiers were soon patrolling the road from Junction City east., an escort going up one day

and down the next. The Indians did not make any further appearance; however,

The accidental death of an Indian boy of 14 or 15 brought on one of the most exciting episodes in the history of Junction City. A housewife noticing an Indian dog skulking about her henhouse fired a shot at it with a small caliber rifle. It struck the boy, whom she did not see, in the temple but it was not until the Indians missing the boy, discovered his body, that the tragedy was made clear.

The boy was the son of Big Ox, who had been a great friend of the whites. He was with a band of about 100 families of Crows who were camped across from Custer. The death, coupled with the fact that several Crows had just been placed in jail at Billings for horse stealing, aroused the bitterest feelings among the Crows.

Day and night, the Indian camp resounded with blood-curdling howls and shrieks of lamentation, while the relatives cut their fingers and wept through their customary manifestations of grief. The hostile flare first showed itself when a young Indian threatened the woman, who had unintentionally shot the boy, with a knife. Her friends took measures for her protection while at the same time every effort was made to quiet the Indians.

Paul McCormick loaded up a great wagon with flour, meat and other provisions and took it to the Indian camp, with several other citizens as escorts and they endeavored to explain the accidental nature of the death. Those who remained in town were warned to be on their guard night and day. The boy was offered a whiteman's burial and his family was given all manner of gifts for an atonement. It is said that but for the labors of Father Prando of the Catholic mission that even then the efforts to placate the Indians would have been in vain. The father, in spite of the death of the boy, remained a friend of the whites. the Indian boy is among those buried in the cemetery above Junction.

TRAGEDIES WERE MANY DURING EARLY DAYS

There were many tragedies at Junction City and in the surrounding districts in the early day, although the number of murders was small, considering the unrestrained opportunities to obtain whisky in the community. Many of the victims of these tragedies are buried on the bare hills above Junction City, There is, however, a little graveyard in the hills, just off the road at the west end of Pease bottom, where some of the earliest burials took place, and here also probably lie a number of th men who were killed at Fort Pease.,

In Topping's Chronicles it is asserted that Mr. Guy took up the bodies of four or five men burried at Fort Pease and removed them to the little graveyard at the upper end of the Pease valley. According to the book, which was published in 1888, the Fort Pease survivors were planning on putting a suitable monument there to their memory, but this was never done.

Guy Cemetery Pease Bottom

Perhaps the first white man to be buried in the Junction-Fort Pease section was a Sergeant King, who was killed by a stray bullet from the Sioux on one of the military expeditions through the country, and was buried under a tree in the Guv field in 1873, according to Mrs. Draper, to whom the writer is indebted for much of the information in regard to early settlers in that section.

A Major Thompson committed suicide on account of ill health and was buried in the Guy cemetery. There also was a man buried there by the name of Bill Hart, who was shot by a man named Strong. Strong's residence was burned by some of the settlers.

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* The first person buried in the Junction graveyard was a buffalo hunter, Bob Adair, who was packing in meat to a restaurant when he was attacked by a raiding party of Sioux Indians. The Indians went on west and killed another hunter named Johnson, and at the same time shot Jim Stearns in the hand. Johns & also is probably hurried at Junction. The raid caused considerable alarm through the Yellowstone valley, but the Indians disappeared before they could be attacked.

NUMBER OF SUICIDES FIGURE IN CASUALTIES.

There were a number of suicides who are buried there, a young gambler named Gillman, a woman called "Tex" and a Chinese who took strychnine because his squaw left him and went back to the tribe. In 1878 a young soldier, J. C. McCullough, shot himself on an island, below Junction. He had several thousand dollars and was to be discharged soon. Sergeant Wessner came down the night before with \$30,000 to pay the men stationed at the cantonment. McCullough, who had planned to go home, lost all his money in a poker game that night. He was buried beside two large sandstone rocks on the Ben Green ranch in Pease bottom.

A Neero called Andy, whose feet were frozen off and who was interpreter for Paul McCormick with the Crows, was killed by a man named Sam James Reed, who was killed by James Carpenter at Wolf Springs in a quarrel over Reeds Indian wife, was buried at Junction, where his brother, Joseph Reed lived, David Conklin, who died under suspicious circumstances of poison, was buried the same evening that he died on the Junction bluffs.

One of the early killings was the shooting by Burns Smith, a saloon keeper for many years prominent at Junction, of Sam Ferris, a tall, whiskered bullwhacker, who, from his constant hallooing, was known as "Whispering Sam." Ferris had been in Smith's saloon and had had some words with him. Ferris left and was entering the McCormick store when Smith shot him through the hips with a buffalo gun.

One of the early restaurants at Junction City was kept by Mrs. Tom Ramer. Her husband was drowned in the Yellowstone west of Junction while getting out logs. His body was found the next winter on a bar near the lower end of Pease bottom. The body was probably buried there, however, not at Junction.

Frank Stump was killed in a drunken brawl in a saloon by Buttons Mount, a saloon keeper. Stump had been trying to pick a fight with a sheepherder. There was a mix-up between friends of the two. In endeavoring to put Stump out, Mount was drawn into the quarrel which ended in his shooting Stump.

MINE ROACH LAY DOWN FOR A REAL LONG REST.

Another man who is buried above Junction is Mike Roach. He was working in a saloon. One day he remarked "I am going to lay down and take a long rest," and stretched out on the couch. An hour or two later he was found there dead.

The early settlement at Junction City was in advance of the surveys. Through a court action started Feb. 17, 1883, in Custer county, claims to improved property were presented to the territorial court to procure title under an act of 1879. A record of these is among the documents of Yellowstone county. The general petition is signed by Paul McCormick, J. B. Braden, E. D. Brown, T. J. Chase, Jerry Crimmins, William Bracken, H. L. Williams and McCormick & Carlile.

There are about 20 different claims filed, showing the character of buildings and estimated value of property. A petition for the setting aside

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of a block for school purposes is contained among the others. Among the claimants are Wong Cue, who ran anlaundry; Jerry Crimmins, who had a blacksmith shop and saloon, and Joseph Heed, whose hotel building was valued at \$800.

The most extensive property values were those of Paul McCormick and McCormick & Carlile, Brown & Davis, with a ferry and saloon. H. L. Williams and Borup & Co., Successors to Borup & Kesser, early store owners, William Borup and Henry Keiser had both come into the country at an early day. Borup was sutler for a number of years at Fort Custer. Keiser, who had married an Indian woman, has his name perpetuated in a creek near Columbus, During the world war, because of its Teutonic connotations, the creek was rechristened Pershing creek but the early name proved the more enduring.

H. L. Williams was an early justice of the peace at Junction City, who was known to everyone as "Buckskin" Williams. He had the reputation of being a man of considerable learning but, fascinated with Indian life, he had lived among them for many years and had also acquired a Crow wife. He was engaged in various undertakings, including at one time the saloon business at Junction.

Among the Junction men was Mr. Gidley, who drove the government stage to Fort Custer. Mr. Gidley was one of the last men to be burried in the Junction graveyard. John shipp, an old Arkansas fiddler, was also among the last men to be buried there.

SALOON WAS LAST BUSINESS HOUSE IN JUNCTION CITY

Of the buildings which still remain in Junction, the largest is one which was owned by Enoch Griffin, A smaller building nearer the bluff was occupied by John Dawitt, one of the early blacksmiths:

Another cabin still standing was known as the Hollister house. John Hollister ran a saloon there, which was the last business house in Junction City. It had originally been occupied and owned by a Negro woman who was known as Madame Heath. She had one son who was so black that he was nick-named "Showball."

All the saloons in the district were not confined to Junction City. A short distance from the Draper home in Pease bottom is a long cabin which once served that purpose. Two brothers, Frank and Tom Murray, freighted during the winter of 1881 between Miles City and Bozeman with two 10-mule teams and with three wagons to each team. They stopped in the Pease bottom to winter and Tom took up 160 acres of land and built the log house. He started a saloon in it which was still running through 1883 when Mrs. Draper, then Mrs. Woalfolk, purchased the relinquishment of the Fort Pease ranch from William Houcke, after the winter on the boats.

According to Mrs. Draper, at that time the fifle pits about the old fort were very distinct. The logs in the fort, however, had been mostly hauled off to build cabins by the settlers. She planted a row of cottonwood trees along the channel bank hut none of them grew except one which was planted in an exavated spot which the old settlers afterward told her had been one of the graves of the men killed at the fort, until the bodies were removed by Mr. Guy.

On the other side of the Yellowstone river is a long hill with a few pine trees on top. From this hill the Sioux kept up a long distance fire on the fort. and it is a Pease bottom tradition that one of the men was killed by a long distance shot from this hill.

FIRST JUNCTION SCHOOL TAUGHT BY MR. HALE

The first school in Junction City was taught by a Mr. Hale, in a log shack near the bridge over the creek at the back of the town, on the road going up the hill. There were five pupils. Mr. Withington and Mr. Lyon, had had children in the school, paid the teacher, who taught for two months. The next year another two month's term was taught by the same teacher. A Mr. King taught a three months' term in part of the house belonging to Joe Graham, the next year. Miss Maud Green, the next year, taught in a log shack that had been used as a stable.

A frame building was later erected and was used until Junction was abandoned. The building was afterward moved a few years ago to Custer where it was used as a community hall and was later purchased by the Congregational Church at Custer and is being used now for Church purposes.

The first school in Pease bottom was conducted by Miss Alice Higgins in a small log shack which was built in 1878 by Ed Daniels and Matt Black of Bozeman, who ran a small store there, later selling their stock to Mr. Guy. The building was later moved between the Guy and Draper places and was known as Eschetah school. Another school was built in the lower part of Pease bottom, the men of the community turing out and building it in one day. It was the first, Rancher district school.

During the balmy days of Junction City, Custer station, which had originally been called Blakely station, was quite an important railroad point and signal station, because it was the stopping place for all passengers and freight going to Fort Custer and further south. Government mail and freight, however, was handled at the cantonment a few miles east where a small detachment of soldiers were kept until the Burlington railway was built in 1894. Endroachment's on the river have taken away most of the cantonment site. A number of years ago the dining room and officers' quarters building was purchased and taken over to the Draper ranch. One corner of it then was hanging over the river bank.

At custer station) a hotel which was built in 1883, the year the golden spike was driven by the Northern Pacific, was conducted for many years by Fred Server, an ex-army sergeant from Fort Custer. During its day this hotel housed many celebrities, going and coming from Fort Custer.

CUSTER HOTEL HOUSED MANY CELEBRITIES

Nearly all the generals and army officers of any prominence in the last 50 years have stopped at this building, which is still standing to the north of the tracks at Custer, Other visitors to the west who stopped there included Theodore Roosevelt, on hunting trips, Henry Ward Beecher, Clara Louise Kellogg, John Sherman, and many other noted men and women.

There was a large government warehouse at Custer in charge of Thaddues Grower, as quartermaster clerk, Lieutenant Aylshire, who afterward became quartermaster general of the army, was at one time stationed there.

Early days at Custer are recalled by Dennis O'Brien, local insurance man and bandmaster, whose father, Henry O'Brien, was station agent at Custer, while Mrs. server was his grandmother. He particularly recalls one day when he and his mother were going across the prairie when they attracted the attention, of a bunch of range cattle. The animals chased them and they got to the house just in time to escape their horns

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A ledger and daybook of the Paul McCormick & Co., kept in 1878 and 1879 was in the possession of Charles Spear of this city until his death a few years ago. Mr. Spear, who was related by marriage to Mr. McCormick, was in the store for several years and in the later days of Junction the firm of Donovan & Spear, of Billings, bought the business.

Accounts in the book contain many names well known in frontier history: "Yellowstone" Kelly, George Herendee, scout with Reno; Tom Irvine and "Jack" Johnson, early Custer sheriffs; Major Logan, Lucius J. Whitney, first postmaster at Billings; Hoskins & McGirl, of Huntley; Scout John Smith, who ran a saloon at Junction, and later at Billings; P. W. McAdow & Eros., of Coulson; George W. Miles, W. A. Burleigh & Co., at Miles City, and Broadwater Hubbell & Co., the famous Diamond R. Freighting outfit.

Some of the names of customers reflected the pioneer custom of not inquiring too closely as to a man's name. There was ~~envelope~~ Charley, Jeff Davis, Red ~~Star~~ Flick, California Rogers, Miss Nellie, Montana Jim, Missouri Jim, Bismarck, Cayuse George, Gros Ventre Johnny, and Whipple, hunter; Andy, driver; Van, drum major, Fifth Infantry; Frank, barkeeper, and Jessup, wolfer.

Prices listed are interesting. Thus six pounds of sugar cost \$2; a gallon of coal oil, \$2; can of fresh oysters, \$1.50; pound of tea, \$2; collar button, \$1; box of figs, \$1; half sack of flour, \$5; three pounds of onions, 90 cents; 22 pounds of potatoes, \$3.30; four pounds of butter, \$2; box of yeast powder, 50 cents; plug of Cable Twist, 75 cents; package of Lone Jack, 25 cents; bottle of Jamaica ginger, 75 cents; quart of port or sherry, \$1.50; four bottles of Champagne, \$5; pair of boots, \$8; pair of overalls, \$2; eight yards of denim, \$2.80; suit of underclothes, \$2.50; shawl, \$14.50.

There were about 20 permanent families in Junction, according to Mrs. Frank McCormick, who came there as a bride about 50 years ago. Mr. McCormick who was a brother of Paul McCormick, was engaged in the stock business and in other projects at Junction end on the Crow reservation where he had important contracts at Fort Custer. He was for some time deputy sheriff at the Junction.

JUNCTION CITIZENS WERE CLOSELY KNIT GROUP

The Junction citizens were a closely knit group, always ready to help each other in troubles and sorrows and to share with each in good fortune. there were great social affairs which were conducted with almost as much formality as in an eastern city. There were eucere parties, masquerades and dances.

Every time a new building was put up, a dance was held, with a banquet at one of the hotels. The men were in dark suits, the women beautifully gowned. It was not uncommon to see milk pails filled with oysters in the kitchens at such events.

The R L boys of the Ryan Brothers cattle ranch were always among the favored gallants of social affairs. Many of them were relatives of the owners, most of them were educated and all of them accustomed to the forms of good society. Their advent into town was always an occasion for euchre and dancing parties among the younger set.

When the town was filled with freighters or when the men were paid off after round-up, the main street was likely to be filled with a roistering crowd of men, celebrating by firing off guns until it was hardly safe to be out of doors. Mrs. McCormick recalls walking across the ice from Custer where they were living at the time in one end of the government warehouse, when they would see bullets ricochet on the ice only a short distance from them. At the McCormick building,

bullet holes could be seen scattered over the pillars and the front of the building.

Once a crowd of cowboys had determined to go to Miles City to spend their money and to prevent this the saloon keepers of the town got the ferry boat on the other side of the river and refused to answer the hales for the boat until the train had gone. That night the cowboys shot up the town and there was scarcely a mirror left in any backbar when they were through.

During the time that the railway was being built, the nightly pandemonium on the main street was still more intensified. According to I. D. O'Donnell, who walked across from Junction to the Fort Maginnis country after being on a tie drive for the Northern Pacific on the Tongue river, the street, was crowded with drunken men and half a dozen fights were doing on at the same time. For a cowboy to ride his horse into a saloon was not uncommon sight.

The town was more orderly four or five years later when Frank McCormick was deputy sheriff, and yet it must have been no small accomplishment for him to perform his duties without a gun, which he refused to carry for fear that his quick temper would lead him to kill some one. Without a gun, he trailed two horse thieves to the Canadian border, brought them back and put them in jail at Billings. One of them, a desperate character, threatened to kill McCormick as soon as he got out of prison. He did escape one winter but was found dead frozen.

One of the vividly remembered incidents of Junction days was the breaking of the ferry cable, when ice was going out. This had been anticipated, in a measure, and the men on the boat had a yawl ready in which they got to safety. The mail team was on the boat and the men cut their traces before the left. When the boat dipped the horses swam in the water and got into an eddy. One of them, a bay horse, managed to reach the short, Seeing its partner still struggling in the water, the bay plunged in again and pushed the other horses until both got to safety.

This was during the wool days and with the ferry out, wool was piled along the short waiting for transportation across the river until it was impossible to see the houses in Junction from across the river, according to Mrs. McCormick. When the ferry was finally repaired it was run night and day until the wool was taken over.

The biggest wool outfit in those days near Junction was that of Oscar Gruwell, who was at one time state senator from Yellowstone county. He had come to Junction City with the Spears brothers, who were leaders in the cattle industry in the early days, Willis M. Spear being still an extensive stockman near Sheridan, Wyo.

One of the most striking sights on the main street of Junction in the early days was the great ox teams of the freighting outfit of Frank Whitney. He used only longhorn cattle for his outfits and their great sweeping horns as they swung along the street made a picture long to be remembered.

From the Billings Gazette
Feb. 1, 1931

MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

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Helena, Montana 59601

Telephone 406-449-2681

DATE November 17, 1980

SUBJECT Junction City materials

Ms. Sandra P. Collins

316 Transwestern Building

Billings, Montana 59101

Dear Ms. Collins:

> Dr. Archibald forwarded your letter to the Library for answers to a couple of your questions.

Please find enclosed a copy of our listing-for the (Coulson and Billings) POST. I think that the entire reel of microfilm should be of interest to you, although the papers published in Coulson only from January to June of 1882. You can obtain the microfilm reel from us through your local public library and the Inter-Library Loan System.

The Library holds only numbers one and four of the EASTERN SLOPE. However, the piece by Jean F. Decker on Junction City to which you refer we do hold in typescript form. A copy is enclosed, complete with typing errors and corrections. We also hold about five newspaper articles concerning various aspects of the history of Junction City, and we could copy those if they would be of assistance; the cost for copying them should not exceed three dollars.

The filing of plats on this property is the responsibility of the county assessor/treasurer/surveyor. However, you might also check with the Bureau of Land Management office in Billings regarding this property. If you provide them with a section/township/range description, they ought to be able to tell you what materials they hold concerning filings on the property.

Would you please remit, at your convenience, the amount of \$1.00 to cover our copying costs. Thank you.

SIGNED

Dave Walter
Dave Walter, Reference

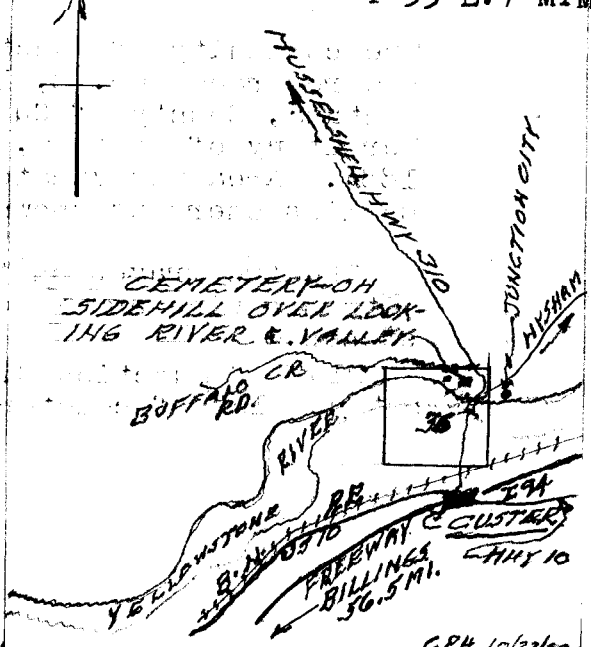
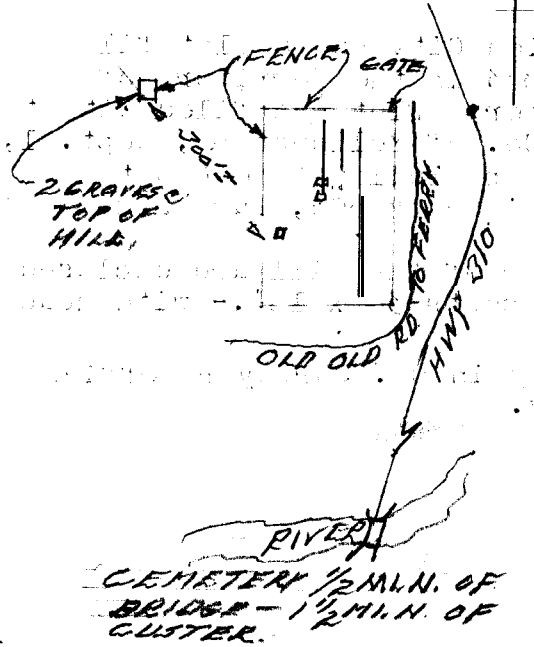
JUNCTION CITY CEMETERY (BOOTHILL)

Old Junction City

JUNCTION CITY CEMETERY

JUNCTION CITY CEMETERY

NE 1/4 SEC. 36, R 5 N., T 33 E., MPM



The **Community** of Junction City ha a plot filed
and **remorded** Mar. 8, 1883 in the **Territory** of
Montana, County of **Custer**. **Plot was** filed-with the
Territory of **Montana**, Co. of Yellowatone, Sept. 1,
1884. Area was vacated by Yellow&one County
Commissioners a8 shown in Book 603, **Page 288**.

The two graves on top of the hill are **enclosed**
with hog wire **and** wood **posts-30X18'**. -with head stones.
Plot of Junction City **inCo.** Surveyors Office
but no plot **of** cemetery.

DAILY HERALD
Billings, Montana
October 15, 1883 .

JUNCTION CITY TOWNSITE

At the recent session of the district court for this county the grand jury recommended that the probate judge take steps to have the administration of the Junction City townsite transferred from the probate court of Custer county to that of Yellowstone county. A considerable number of lots remain unsold, and it is but proper that they be disposed of under the supervision of the probate judge of this county, in whom the people have every confidence. There is no more reason now why the probate judge of Beaverhead or Madison county, or any other county in Montana should have a finger in it. So far there is no evidence that there has been any particular mismanagement in the matter, but we have heard more than one complaint regarding the apparently enormous expense connected with the survey of the townsite and the sale of the lots. Quite possibly there may not be a substantial foundation for such complaints, but it would be highly satisfactory to the people of Yellowstone to have a full, itemized statement published of the disbursements and receipts in connection with the townsite business published, so that the public could see just how the matter stands. Such a course too, would be only just to the gentleman who has charge of the matter. There need be no expense by reason of such publication. We shall be happy to publish such a statement without charge and hereby tender the Columns of the HERALD for that purpose.