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When James Willard Schultz landed at Fort Benton in the early 70s, it was a wild and booming town. Keno Bill ran a saloon and gambling house and charged his patrons a dollar a drink. He was the only one who had any liquor, and his "likker" was alcohol diluted with water, four parts to one. The town had no bacon, flour, or sugar, but that didn't matter because there was plenty of game--buffalo and antelope.

The Overland hotel was then a good-sized log-cabin, with log-walled additions. The now-famous writer of Indian stories had, for his first dinner at the Overland, bacon and beans, boiled "boss" ribs of buffalo, "yeast powder" biscuit, strong coffee with sugar, stewed dried apples and molasses.

Schultz almost at once met a famous trapper and trader, a few years older than himself, by the name of Berry. They were to be friends all their lives. During the evening they attended a trappers' and traders' dance, and later went to call on an Indian friend of Berry's--the wife served them hot tea, with hot biscuits baked in a Dutch oven, broiled buffalo tongue and stewed bull (or buffalo) berries.

Schultz soon became friends with traders and trappers, Indians and merchants; he soon learned a great deal about the bill of fare to be found in the tepees and log cabins of those days. And all those old-timers, both Indian and white, loved to ear, drink and smoke.

Some of the food set before guests in those days included: boiled meat of all kinds, dried buffalo back fat, (o-saki) pemmican, fricassee of dog (old and puppies) pickled and dried buffalo tongues, jerked buffalo, deer and elk, jerked rabbit, the liver, heart, brains, tripe, and chitterlings of wild animals, wild geese and ducks, however the Indians cared very little for fish and fowl, saying that only the buffalo and other ruminants were ni-tap-i wak-sin (real food).

The squaws soon learned, after the white men began coming in, to make "yeast powder" bread, and some of them became excellent bakers of the white man's staff of life. After the post at Fort Benton was established in the early forties, they also learned to eat and like stewed dried apples.

The Crows were the dog-eaters, having a feast-time called the Dog Feast dance. When a dog was dressed out in preparation of this feast, its skin was shiny and white like that of a well fattened hog.

Most all tribes were fond of tea and it was used as a welcoming beverage to stranger and friend alike, served with buffalo tongue, or dried back fat, or roasted antelope ribs.

One of the favorite dishes of the Blackfeet was called by them, "Crow entrail," as it was from they Crows they learned to prepare this delectable dish. It is a certain entrail of the animal, which is very short compared to the other entrails. This section is always streaked or covered with a thick layer of snowy-white, soft fat, and in preparing the food, the entrail

is turned inside out, thus enclosing this delicious fat on the inside with the finely chopped tenderloin with which it is stuffed. Both ends of the gut are securely tied, and then the "Crow entrail" is placed on the coals to roast, all the while being carefully turned so as not to burn. After thoroughly browning the sausage it was then plunged into a kettle of boiling water and left for almost fifteen minutes; it was then ready to serve, with all the delicious juices and fat securely sealed in the gut.

Early Fort Bentonites (1840s) used a fireplace for cooking and roasting meat, and a Dutch oven for baking bread and for baking beans. A little later rude stoves began making their appearance.

Pemmican was the staple food for long journeys and for long keeping. It was made by pounding dried meat into tiny pieces and then adding grease and tallow and marrow from the animals' bones, and sometimes chokecherries were added. After it was finished it was packed into green hide, oblong bags called parfleches. The older it got the more the parfleche shrunk and the more the meat shrunk--it would keep indefinitely.

Father Prando, an early Jesuit "Black Robe," ate broiled badger when he found he had stripped his larder for some starving Indian, and had nothing left for himself.

At one time the Indians were so hungry that they only thing they could find was wild tea, which they brewed and drank.

The squaws used to hang a whole quarter of game over the lodge fire where it turned and slowly roasted for hours, under the watchful eye of the squaw. The fire was a small one, and the meat was hung from a tripod directly over the blaze.

There were certain tribes who ate nothing but fish--raw, cooked, dried and smoked, while other tribes would not touch fish saying they were unclean.

Other tribes ate only roots, bulbs, leaves and fruit--early day vegetarians. The arrowroot, camas, and pomme blanche (white root). The camas was a yellow root, sticky and sweet, which was dried and then roasted. The pomme blanche was a white root, a tuberous growth, something like a turnip. These tribes also ate the inner bark of the pine and cottonwood, which was very carefully scraped from the outer bark.

The Blackfeet gave the name, Ah-kwo to-kwu-si sak-om, to Helena and to the countryside around it. The name means, "much giving ground," and was applied because of the great abundance of wild game and berries.

When Indians were going on the hunt, they ate a hearty breakfast and did not eat again until they came back to camp. Eating during the day made their sight and hearing less keen, their flesh soft, and all desire for the hunt was given to laziness and sleep.[1]

1. James Willard Schultz, interview by Toomer at his Browning home, Aug. 1939, when his book "My Life as an Indian," was discussed, and from which part of the above is taken. Published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1935. "My Life as an Indian" appeared in Forest and Stream under title of "In the Lodges of the Blackfeet", - 1907, over the pen-name, W. B. Anderson. He gave me a copy of the book, beautifully autographed with a full page.

1832:

When Joseph L. Meek, mountain-man, trapper and trader, and Milton Sublette, with their fur-trading outfit made a trip in 1832, they encountered trials and tribulations of the worst. Starvation tagged their heels for weeks. At one time they caught and ate a beaver, and became sick unto death, because the beaver was also starving and had eaten of the wild parsnip.

In a barren country where nothing could be found but insects, they held their hands in anthills until they were covered with ants, and then licked them off greedily.

They took the soles from their moccasins, cooked them until they were crisp and ate them.

They came upon a multitude of black crickets, which they caught and threw into a kettleful of hot water, and when they had ceased kicking and fluttering, the traders ate them.

At other times they bled one of their poor mules, taking a pint at a time, and made a soup of it. The mules themselves were so poorly nourished they couldn't spare more than a pint at a time, and the traders didn't have enough in number to kill one for food; however, the time came when they had to kill the poorest one, because all other sources of food had been exhausted.

At the foot of the Rockies they came upon some Digger Indians. This tribe was the lowest and most abjectly poverty-stricken of all tribes. They ate roots, crickets, field mice, and grasshoppers These Indians prepared some food for the starving traders and, upon eating the meal, they thought it the most delicious concoct-

ion their teeth had ever sunk into. Upon investigation they found it to be a mixture of wild honey and grasshoppers.[2.]

The famous old scout and guide, Jim Bridger, piloted this party east of the Rockies in the Blackfeet country.[2.]

1855:

From the diary of James H. Chambers who kept a daily record for a number of years, the fifth diary being started on New Year's day, 1855, at Fort Sarpy, Montana.

He said that the Crows were loafers, cowards, and thieves. He declared that they were the worst of the begging tribes and he saw in them no virtues at all. In his diary of January 1, 1855 he says:

"Six (a Blackfeet Indian) asserts that a Crow can smell coffee five miles away."

Chambers then expressed indignation in his little book because the cook at the post (Fort Sarpy) had declined to start the noon meal until another party of visitors (Crows) which had departed had gotten six miles away from the camp.

"If the departing braves should smell the coffee," he wrote, "they would abandon their march to war and return to the fort."

2. Mrs. Frances Auretta (Fuller) Barrett Victor, in her "The River of the West," from the story of the mountain-man and pioneer, Joseph L. Meek in 1830-1832. Columbian Book company, Hartford, Connecticutt; Union Publishing company, Chicago, Illinois, 1870. Mrs. Arthur B. Maxwell (Edith Rolfe Maxwell) Great Falls, interview by Toomer, November, 1941.

Chambers frequently took to task, in his diary, the officer in charge of the fort because of his generous feeding of the begging Indian tribes.[3]

1830: When Fort Union was built in 1830 by the American Fur company, Major Alexander Culbertson was made chief agent. Their stores of sugar, flour, tobacco, guns and ammunition were plentiful at all times, as there were many tribes of Indians who brought their furs and peltries to the post to trade for these commodities, which were luxuries to them.

1832: In this year a complete distillery was shipped out to Fort Union because the American Fur felt that the distribution of liquor among the Indians was necessary for successful business relations with them. After this distillery had been assembled and was in operation, Capt. Nathaniel Wyeth, returning from Oregon via Fort Union, saw it in operation. He went back to Washington and reported it to the federal authorities and it was immediately torn down and shipped back to St. Louis. At that time whiskey was selling for three dollars a pint; tobacco three dollars a pound, and gunpowder at six dollars.

1836: Capt. Mitchell was in charge of Fort McKenzie, but was sent to serve in the Mexican war; during his temporary absence, Major

3. The Valerian, October 9, 1941, Vol. XXXI, No. 47. James H. Chambers "1855 Diary Tells how Men Lived in State's Forts." Research, Nov. 1941, Toomer.

Culbertson was left in charge. He and his men had a narrow escape from a deadly attack by the Crows, but they were warned in time to prepare for the attack by a Blood squaw who was an escaped prisoner from these Crows. The siege began in June of 1836; the fresh and dried meat lasted only ten days; then a period of starvation began. The water gave out and they dug a well ten feet deep inside the stockade. They ate dogs and boiled buffalo hides, which tasted like glue, but kept them from starving to death. As a last resort, Culbertson fired a cannon, loaded with solid shot, from the upper bastion and the Crows fled.

1843-1844:

An interesting event happened in the winter of 1843-1844. After Fort Lewis was finished, at the head of the first rapids above the present Fort Benton and five miles below Pablo's island, Forts Piegan and McKenzie were abandoned and burned.

Major Culbertson was in charge of the new post (Fort Lewis, named after Capt. Meriwether Lewis). Business was always good and when an unusually large trading party arrived there was always a celebration, sometimes large and sometimes small.

On this special night there was a large trading party at the highest peak of drunkenness with the factor, Culbertson, and his clerks not far behind the party. Charles Larpenteur arrived. Culbertson had been expecting him, and on seeing him remarked:

"Well, Larpenteur, I am mighty glad to see you. We are having a hot time and I'm tired of it. I suppose you are tired too and want to go to sleep."

Larpenteur said, "I am more hungry than tired or sleepy."

"There is plenty to eat," the Major replied, and Larpenteur fairly ran to the kitchen where the cook gave him a rousing supper. But he ate too much and next morning found himself so foundered he could scarcely move....

It was Charles Larpenteur who built Fort Alexander at the mouth of the Rosebud on the Yellowstone, in 1848, naming it after Major Alexander Culbertson. It was abandoned, however, in the spring of 1849.

1840:

For many years the illicit liquor traffic with the Indians had been going on. In 1840 word got about that a United States inspector would visit the company posts. At Fort Union there were 30 barrels of alcohol and Major Culbertson could not reconcile himself to destroying this. He decided to cache it; he carried it across the river to a lake, four miles away, intending to sink it under the water. In spite of all his efforts the barrels floated; he attached all sorts of things to them trying to keep them under, but still they would come to the top. He couldn't sink them, so decided to bury them instead. This was carefully done. After several months had passed, no inspector had as yet shown up, and the Major was congratulating himself that the precious stuff had been saved. He went to the cache and exhumed it; the hoops of iron had rusted and burst and nearly every drop was gone.

1850:

Ten years later Culbertson was to rename Fort Lewis at a Christmas party. A grand ball was given in the new adobe buildings--

traders, trappers, squaws, beads and buckskins reigned supreme. Fiddles wailed, feet stamped, dusky maidens swayed in strong men's arms; they danced all night; they drank and they feasted, celebrating the grand opening of Major Culbertson's new fort. In the midst of all this gaiety the Major held up his hand for quiet; then he suggested that the fort be named Fort Benton in honor of the senator from Missouri, the man who had so cleverly settled the United States government suit against the American Fur company for illicit liquor traffic for a fine of a mere $12,000--the Honorable Thomas H. Benton.

The name was unanimously accepted with wild whoops and yells, much drinking of toasts, and then--"On with the dance!"

1853, April 8:

On this date Governor Isaac I. Stevens was appointed commander of the survey party on the northern route to the Pacific, which was to explore a railroad route from St. Paul to Puget sound, and to explore the passes of the Cascade range and the Rockies. Gov. Stevens learned much about the Indians of Montana from Major Culbertons, because of the latter's marriage with Natawista.

In May 1853 Stevens appointed Culbertson as special agent among the Blackfeet.

On August 10, 1853 the party camped in a hollow on Milk river. A half mile away was a band of Gros Ventres--seven chiefs, five of whom were accompanied by thrie wives. They rode up to Stevens' camp and were friendly, inviting the survey party to visit them in their camp, 30 miles farther on. The Stevens party in turn asked them to sit around the campfire and smoke and visit; this they did, apparently

enjoying it very much. At dusk a lunch was served consisting of coffee, rice, and so on. This pleased the Indians very much; in fact, so much that they made a present of one horse to Governor Stevens and two horses to Major Culbertson. A large tent was put up for their accommodation, and a bountiful supper was served at 10 o'clock.[4.]

1856:

When William Braxton (Brack) Johnson's maternal grandfather, Major John Patrick, was married the first time, his wife was the granddaughter of a salty old seaman by the name of Yocum. He had sailed one of the first boats around the Horn, bringing supplies to Walla Walla, Washington territory. When Major Patrick married his granddaughter, he and Yocum hitched up a sort of partnership. Grand-daddy Yocum brought dried apples, sugar, bacon and other commodities to Walla Walla and the Major established a packtrain across the Rockies into Montana and later into Last Chance gulch. He was the first man to pack provisions over the mountains from Washington and Oregon.[5.]

4. Major Alexander Culbertson. Interview with his daughter, Fannie Culbertson Irvin, on her way home (Browning) from California, in January 1939, Toomer. She died on February 5, 1939, and never reached her home. pp. 115-122 Great Falls Yesterday.
5. William Braxton (Brack) Johnson, Cottonwood Row ranch, Upper Highwoods. Interview by Toomer, 1938. p. 149, Great Falls Yesterday..

1866:

Frank Stanley Putnam came to Montana in 1866 with his mother, brother and sister, in a train of 100 wagons and several hundred people. Capt. Holmes was in charge. Each wagon was equipped with food and utensils and ammunition to last three months. They had cows and horses; the horses were ridden and the cows were used to draw the wagons andto provide milk and butter for the emigrants. With the ingenuity that characterized the pioneer of that day, the milk taken from the cows in the morning was placed in kegs and tied under the wagons; the rough motion of the wagons churned it into soft butter for the travelers on their weary journey.

When they reached their new home, Virginia City, butter was selling at $1.50 per pound. The Putnam cows furnished a ready market for milk and butter to the miners.

One day as Mrs. Putnam had just finished churning and printing several pounds of butter, a big Indian appeared in the doorway attired in an army officer's uniform. She and young Frank were alone.

The Indian greeted her with "How! Heap hungry."

She placed a hearty meal and a pound of the fresh butter on the table before him. He very carefully removed his hat, coat and vest; turned the vest inside out and hung the articles of clothing on the back of a chair. He then proceeded to devour all that was set before him. After donning his coat, vest and hat he said, "Squaw heap sick; squaw like butter."

Mrs. Putnam gave him another pound and he went out. Like all children young Frank was curious and followed at a discreet distance. The Indian went behind a large woodpile, removed his uniform, and engaged in smearing the whole pound of butter through his hair.

When he had finished he put on his uniform and marched away with great dignity.[6]

1869:

In 1869 Sallie Austin came with her parents on a long journey from Virginia to Montana territory. They came by ox-train, with Radersburg as their destination. When they reached the pass over the mountains, the Austins camped at the foot of the divide for a number of days until their supplies were transported over. The provisions carried with them consisted of rice, flour, salt pork, dried apples, soda, sugar and salt.

The Austins' first acquaintance was the man for whom the town was named, Reuben Raders, a bachelor and a cattleman. His home was a long log building and in this the Austins had their first meal after their arrival. It was prepared by a Chinese cook.

When the Austins moved to Crow creek valley on the Missouri, in 1877, the family experienced the perils of frontier life, particularly during the flight of Chief Joseph through Montana in that same year.

There was no stove or range in their log cabin, but an open fireplace with cranes on which to hang the pots. The baking was done in Dutch ovens placed on the coals, and with coals heaped on top. They used a contrivance called a "tin kitchen" in which to roast meat and fowl; this was placed by the fire to receive the reflected heat. Potatoes were baked in the ashes and coffee was made in a pot on the hearth.[7]

6. Frank Stanley Putnam. Interview with Larissa Putnam Stewart, daughter of Sallie Austin and Frank Putnam, by Toomer, 1938. pp. 229-230, Great Falls Yesterday.
7. Mrs. Sallie Austin Putnam. Interview with her daughter Larissa Putnam Stewart, by Toomer, 1938. p. 233, Great Falls Yesterday.

1863:

Mrs. Martha Edgerton Plassmann tells of the Ox-team trip to Montana in 1863. There were sheet iron camp stoves, tacked to the side of the covered wagon; these were used over a camp fire, and Dutch ovens were also used. Wood was the principal fuel and when unobtainable buffalo chips were used.

The Edgertons had two wagons, each carrying two mess boxes in the rear. One box carried food and the other dishes, which were all of tin. There were no portable tables; instead, two end boards taken from the front of the wagon were inserted under the top of the mess box. This table was very uncertain and liable to fall at any minute, and there was no white cloth covering the table. There were no camp stools, but food was eaten standing, or sitting at an uncomfortable slope on the wagon tongue.

No canteens could be bought and the water carriers were made for the Edgerton party in Omaha. Each carrier held one gallon and was made of tin covered with flannel. The carriers were filled at night and hung under the wagons with the stoppers out; even lukewarm muddy river water became clear and cool by morning and stayed so all day.

At noon a stop of one hour was made when a cold lunch of bread and butter and cold meat left from breakfast was eaten. Happily unconscious of lurking danger, raw ham was often eaten accompanied by dried apples or other fruit sauce.

On special occasions Mrs. Sanders (Wilbur F.) brought forth the bag of gingersnaps her mother had given her when the party left Ohio. There was plenty of New Orleans molasses, almost unknown at this time.

Sometimes game was killed by one of the hunters or given to them by a military post which they passed on the trip.

Now and then a half day's stop was made to do washing and baking, and in the latter part of the journey it was necessary to make tar to use on the worn feet of the cattle.[8]

1863: November 26:

On Thursday, November 26, 1863, Henry Plummer, debonair sheriff, gave the first formal dinner which was also the first Thanksgiving dinner at Bannack, Montana territory.

Among the guests were Sidney Edgerton, first territorial governor, Col. Wilbur F. Sanders, their wives, and a dozen other prominent citizens, most of whom were members of the Vigilantes. Martha Edgerton was only a child and not permitted to attend, but she remembers hearing her father and mother discuss the dinner with the Sanders and other friends.

There were no turkeys in Montana, so Plummer sent to Salt Lake City for two birds, for which he paid $40 each in gold dust. The table was lighted with a hundred candles. There were expensive and elegant wines, and many delicacies which, for the first time had graced a Montana table; all these delectables had been imported.

Plummer, who had sent his young wife east, was temporarily living with his sister, next door to Wilbur Sanders. The house was a log structure, but inside there was an easy flow of conversation, elegant manners, and the courteous and gracious attention of the host to his guests made it an occasion long to be remembered.

Plummer was the best dressed man in the territory, and he knew

8. See NEXT PAGE.

how to wear his finery. His voice was well modulated as he complimented the ladies and jested with the gentlemen. The delicate hands which carved the expensive birds so dexterously, had ruthlessly put to death countless victims, while that same well-modulated voice could thunder out the vilest invectives in his dual role as arch-demon of the trails.

It was hard to realize, yet every guest present that night knew that Plummer was doomed and soon would meet his death, and most of them present would be his executioners. It was in a sense a feast of Belshazzar; but although the hand of fate was written as plainly upon the walls of the cabin as it had been upon those of that Babylonian palace, the bandit sheriff did not know that his reign of terrible crime was about to end.

The moon rode full in the brilliant winter sky, as the night half passed, he stood in the doorway of the log cabin, silhouetted against the candlelight background and bade his guests goodnight. As the last guest departed he stood and looked at the stars and moon in the bright winter sky--the last full moon he was ever to look upon.[9]

8. Mrs. Edith Rolfe Maxwell, Great Falls. Interview, Nov. 1941, Toomer. Daughter of Mrs. Martha Edgerton Plassmann, writer. Research by Toomer, Nov. 1941, in Mrs. Maxwell's scrapbook of her mother's writings.
9. Ibid.
The Valerian, Oct. 10, 1940, Vol. XXX, No. 47. Research, Toomer.
Geraldine Review, January 22, 1941. Vol. 28, No. 22. Research, Toomer.

1863:

John X. Beidler, Wilbur F. Sanders, and others of the Vigilantes wanted turkey for Christmas dinner, 1863. The only ones to be found in the state were said to be on the old Baumgartner ranch at Hell Gate. Accordingly, X. Beidler, fearless and daring, rode on horseback from Virginia City to Hell Gate, a distance of 150 miles, bought two turkeys at $50 each, tied them to his saddle and returned in triumph with his birds.[10]

1865: September 20:

Erasmus L. Anthony tells his story:

"When I was nine years old, in 1865, I came from St. Joseph, Missouri with my mother, two brothers and two sisters, to join my father and oldest brother who had come to Montana the year before. Father had settled on a farm four miles northeast of Helena on the creek bottom of the Prickly Pear.

"We were five months on the road (emigrant train of 300 people) and the men shot game along the way. I remember there was a sheet iron stove which was nailed, or hanging on a nail, on the side of our wagon; sometimes mother used it for cooking and at other times only the camp fire was used and the Dutch oven. In all that trip I don't remember of once getting up for breakfast; the wagon was always moving when I awakened, and Mother had saved a

10. Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrapbook of her mother's writings (Mrs. Martha Edgerton Plassmann). Interview and research, November, 1941, Toomer.

"dough cake' (Mrs. Maxwell says these 'dough cakes' were known as 'dough gods' - Toomer) for me, sometimes sprinkled with sugar. This was ordinary bread dough, flattened out and made into small cakes about the size of a fruit sauce dish, and then fried in the bacon or salt pork grease in a very hot skillet. These cakes were very delicious. The coffee was boiled in a huge pot and it was always extra strong.

"Father had told us what to bring from Missouri and our wagons were loaded with flour, sugar, green coffee, salt, beans, salt pork, dried apples, and the simple spices (cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice). Flour was selling at $85 a hundred when we arrived and we were allowed only one biscuit at a meal, three biscuits each daily; grease was used instead of butter, and Mother spooned out the sugar to us.

"Father had an acre of potatoes ready for digging when we arrived. He had paid 85 cents a pound for the seed, a 100-pound sack bought in the Gallatin valley; he carefully extracted just enough of the eye to plant, and then sold the hearts to merchants in Helena for enough torpay for the original seed.

"Our furniture was made from willows which grew nearby.

"In 1866 I started to school. Several others who had come on the same wagon train, built their cabins close to Father's on the Prickly Pear; in fact, the cabins were only four feet apart, and there were eight or ten of them.

"Of course we all carried our lunches to school, in a tin bucket with a lid. Mother put in hard boiled eggs, homemade

cookies and bread, with buffalo, deer, elk, or antelope meat, and sometimes some cold prairie chicken. Of all meats I still like domestic beef the best because, I suppose, that we almost lived on wild game when I was a child.

"In 1868-1869 my oldest brother, Lewis C., ran a water mill in Prickly Pear valley for Sanford and Evans of Helena, and he owned a one-third interest. The mills had no rollers in those days but they used French burrs made of French granite with grooves in them, that had to be dressed about once a month. When the Hauser dam was put in it flooded out the Anthony mill. Lewis then put up a mill in Last Chance gulch, but there was little wheat around Helena so it was not a paying business, and he sold to Helena merchants who used it to grind feed.

"The winter of 1871-1872 was the hardest winter I ever experience in Montana. It was so cold that the family had to move into the root cellar to keep warm. The cellar was 30 or 40 feet long and we took wood in and stayed until the weather moderated. Root cellars were very necessary in the early days in Montana. They were either cut deep into the side of a hill, or were dug deep into the ground at a slanting angle, and then covered with heavy poles, straw and dirt to a great thickness. The inside was divided into compartments, or bins, each for a certain vegetable.

One bin held potatoes, one turnips, one rutabagas, while beets, onions, tomatoes, canned goods, jellies, jams, etc., were stored in another bin. Usually a deep pit was dug for the cabbage heads and it was lined with straw. The cabbage heads were carefully

picked over, taking off all outside leaves which showed the least bit of decay, and then placed in layers, without touching each other, with plenty of straw around and between the heads. When the last layer was put in, a very thick layer of straw was put over it, and over this the dirt was heaped high. When the pit was opened, perhaps several heads would be taken out at one time, and those not used at once, were placed in the root cellar for temporary storage. The temperature of the root cellar was cool and dry, but never freezing. Vegetables could be kept nicely from one season to another.

"Even today the ranches have their root cellars; all of the large ranches do, and there are very few of the smaller ranchers who do not have a root cellar.

"On the larger ranches one of the duties of the chore-boy is to get the cook's order each morning, then go to the root-cellar and get the vegetables; to the milk house or spring house and bring up the milk, cream and butter, and sometimes buttermilk for that day's meals; and then to the meat house where he cuts the roast, chops, or steaks for dinner only. He then goes to the commissary with the cook's list and gets a 100-pound sack each of flour and sugar, a 5-pound can of coffee, a 5-gallon milk can of home made lard, a 5-pound can of baking powder, cheese cut from a 100-pound round of cream cheese, fruit in gallon cans, cereals, crackers, macaroni, spaghetti and rice in bulk, dried fruits by the case, honey and syrup by the gallon bucket, tea by the box, flavorings in 16-ounce bottles, and sauerkraut (homemade) from a

barrel. Eggs are usually kept in a room of the main ranch house which is unheated, but never freezing. If there are a lot of chickens, and eggs are kept in cases, the oldest and irregular eggs are used first. At Christmas time the selects in cases bring good prices on the market as 'ranch eggs.'

"In 1878-1879 there was quite a bunch of young fellows in and around Helena. Every two weeks two of the boys went together and gave a dance on Friday night. We danced all night to the tune of Homer Hewing's fiddle and a portable organ. Homer brought the organ and its player out from Helena and charged the boys $30 for the night's music.

"Richard Lockey had opened a home bakery in Helena, and he usually put up the lunch for the boys to serve at the dance. The women and girls always made coffee on the stove, to go with the sandwiches and cookies which Lockey furnished. The boys left the selection of sandwich meat and the kind of cookies to his discretion. Once Lockey decided to make some cream puffs instead of cookies. There wasn't a soul at the dance who had ever heard of a cream puff, much less seen one.

"Everybody gulped their sandwiches and coffee in order to taste one of the queer looking puffs. When they were passed around one young fellow, who had a moustache, as most of the men had in those days, bit into his puff with gusto, and with greater gusto the cream filling squashed out, covering his moustache, the sides of his face, and his chin. With utter disgust he started 'fingering' it off of his face and said, 'Why, the damned thing's not even cooked.'

"By 1882 I had come to the Sand Coulee district, and in the early summer of that year I brought 2,000 sheep from there to Big Spring for summer camp. The sheep belonged to McGiffin, who came at the same time with a portable fence to use at the spring. The town of Giffin is named for him. My meals were cooked over a camp fire and consisted of the usual beans, bacon and sourdough biscuits. Four sides of bacon were bought at one time; they weighed 100 pounds and came in burlap sacks; the bacon was very greasy.

"In 1883 we went to Fort Shaw and bought salt pork, which was pickled in brine in barrels holding 200 pounds. This meat was eight or ten inches thick and was snow white. We bought it of the mess house out of the post's excess supplies. We bought shoes and tobacco at Fort Logan, also green coffee in 100 pound sacks, which we had to parch and grind ourselves; this coffee was bought at our own price, and sometimes we traded vegetables for it.

"In 1869 the first Christmas tree was held at the log Methodist church in Helena. Rev. Lathrop was the minister. His daughter sang 'Hang up the baby's stocking, Be sure you don't forget, For the dear little dimpled darling, Has never seen Christmas yet,' which was true of more than several of us 'dimpled darlings.' The tree was loaded with candy, apples and oranges for all who attended.

"In 1869 I have seen men come into Helena and pay one dollar each for pies just to eat the crust because they were so hungry for bread. The only yeast used at that time was brewers' yeast and it was pretty strong for baking purposes.

"1862-1863: The people in Virginia City were starving. George

Mann, who had a grocery store in Helena in 1865, told me this story.

"A freighter came into Virginia City from Salt Lake City, Utah, with a load of flour, asking $125 a sack for it. The people in Virginia City offered him $75, which he refused. Thereupon the citizens kidnapped him, while they took his flour, divided it into 25 pound sacks, and sold a sack to all who needed it, at the rate of $75 a hundred. Then they turned him loose, gave him his money, and told him to move on.

"While living in Helena we kids used to pick wild yellow currants and peddle them in Helena for 50 cents a quart.

"In 1871 I hauled wheat from our Duck creek ranch near Canton to the grist mill in Prickly Pear valley. I had to go through wild sage brush country, and had ten seamless sacks of it on one load.

"In 1875 I gave up ranching and went to work for a rancher peddling vegetables from Helena to Camp Baker. Everybody was eager to get vegetables, especially roasting ears. On my first trip to Camp Baker I sold four dozen ears to the colonel and started to carry them into the house. He said, 'Never mind, I'll call some of the soldiers,' whereupon he signalled several soldiers who came and carried in the corn.

"In 1876 Bill Bullard and I made two trips with a wagon of vegetables each trip, through the country and Sun river valley. We bought tomatoes from Curtis in Helena; we sold 50 boxes, 50 pounds to a box, for $10 a box, and people were glad to get them at any price. Bullard sold 4,000 pounds of cabbage at 10 cents

a pound. We left Helena with a slab of bacon, two tins of vegetables (canned), some bread and a frying pan; we stayed overnight in Wolf Creek canyon and cooked our evening meal over a campfire.

"John and Al Fisher sold apples at $10 a box along the way from Helena to Sun river valley, crossing at Fort Shaw. Johnnie Ellis, a wealthy cattleman who later built a home at 327 Fourth avenue north, in Great Falls, had a saloon at Sun River Crossing. He bought a box of these apples, and the gamblers played for them. By morning all the apples were eaten and there was $800 stacked on the table.

"In 1883 meat was cheap because there was still so much game. Very little beef was eaten except on the roundups."[11]

1865:

As told by Mrs. Martha Edgerton Plassmann, mother of Edith Rolfe Maxwell, Great Falls:

"We left in September, 1865, to make the long trip from Bannack, Montana territory, for our old home in Ohio.

"First of all the furniture had to be disposed of. Mother's (Mrs. Sidney Edgerton) cradle made of a shoe box was given to a friend, and later rocked other Bannack babies. Mother's chair, made of a barrel stuffed with hay and covered with blue cambric

11. Erasmus L. Anthony, Great Falls. Two interviews by Toomer, Nov. 1941. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 46-51, research by Toomer, Nov. 1941; interview, 1939.

and safely anchored to rockers, was also left behind to help pass the lonely hours more comfortably for some other woman in Bannack.

"As the season was late we couldn't depend on oxen to make the trip quickly enough, so Father purchased four spans of young and skittish mules, which drew our two canvas covered wagons.

"Our immediate family party included my parents, Sidney and Mary Edgerton, two brothers, two sisters, and me (Martha Edgerton) and a cousin Lucia Darling. Leonard Gridley and Henry Tilden, old friends, were in the party, and Alfred M. Esler, one of the very earliest miners.

"We went via Salt Lake City to spend a few days with the Pitts family, and then on to Ohio via the Oregon Trail.

"On the divide the weather was cold and stormy and we breakfasted in ice and snow. When we reached Salt Lake the Mormon peach orchards were laden with ripe peaches. We had seen no fresh fruit except wild berries for nearly three years and we almost died of ecstasy at the sight and smell of the luscious fruit.

"Mrs. Pitts had stewed fresh peaches for supper and later some right off the trees. How anybody would want to stew that delightful fruit, when it could be taken and drippingly eaten from the tree was more than we children could understand. We ate to repletion and for fear they might be gone by morning, we gathered peaches and stored them under our pillows in the wagon to eat next day. Mrs. Pitts was the wife of a Mormon missionary, and from that day to this, I have had a warm spot in my heart for Mormon mis-

12.

sionaries and their wives.

1868:

Samuel (Sam) Hughes said in Bannack in 1868 "when the water was running on the placer diggin's you could make eight dollars a day but, b'gosh you had to work hard for it. He says:

"We miners had our flour and bacon and frying pan. We could get plenty of fresh meat because there was lots of wild game. We could build a cabin in a day, and it cost $1.50 to buy grub and cook it ourselves."

1881:

Sam tells about Bob Casey, a stage driver, who got lost in one of the worst blizzards of the early days. Bob was driving stage between Fort Benton and Sun River Leavings and return. On this particular trip, which happened in February 1881, the blizzard struck while he was in the Benton lake country. He drove around and around but became more bewildered all the time. For 20 days he was lost, when finally Matt Dunn and Bill Rowe found him.

The first thing he said was, "Gimme a chaw o' terbaccer, boys, fer that's all I've had to eat, and it's all that saved my life."

During that time he had had no food and only snow to quench his thirst. Dunn and Rowe took him to Fort Benton where both of his feet had to be amputated because they were frozen hard.

12. "Trekking East in 1865 with 'States' as Goal no Trip for Weaklings," by Martha Edgerton Plassmann, daughter of Sidney Edgerton and mother of Edith Rolfe Maxwell, from whose scrapbook of her mother's writings the above was taken. Interview and research by Toomer, November, 1941.

1888:

When the first circus came to Great Falls in 1888 it was Ringling brothers' circus. Sam says:

"But it (the circus) was flying pretty light as it was just starting in the business. It was a great day for Great Falls, people coming two or three days ahead of time and camping along the Missouri river with their cook stoves, cooking utensils, and grub. They came in wagons, buckboards, on horseback and afoot. There were no hotdog stands then, no Club Cafeteria, or dozens of retaurants, no Dime-Store lunch counters, where you could take your choice of eating places, but you had to bring your own grub or pay a big price for meals at the Park hotel dining room. Most of 'em couldn't afford that so they packed their own grub and their own stoves, or cooked it over a campfire."[13.]

1868:

The Diamond R fast freight lines were then owned by Matt Carroll, George Steell, E. G. Maclay and Col. C. A. Broadwater. Gordon says:

"The menu rarely went beyond black coffee, sourdough bread and 'sowbelly' fried in a skillet in its own grease, thickened with flour. Of camp shelter there was none, for the men were too tired at night to arrange any but the most primitive protection, and

13. Samuel (Sam) Hughes, Ulm and Great Falls. Interviews at both places by Toomer, in 1938 and 1940 respectively. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 131-138. Research, Toomer.

they 'pulled' too early in the morning to do any 'breaking camp.'"[14]

1870s:

William Albert Bairpaugh (colored), pioneer rancher of Tiger Butte, came to Montana as a boy in the 1870s. He resided in what is now Cascade county for more than 50 years. At one time he operated one of the largest ranches in the state. Like most western men he loved to hunt and fish, and he often entertained his friends during the hunting and fishing seasons at his ranch home, where he cooked the game in unusual ways. True to the tradition of his race he was an excellent cook, as are most colored men and women.

For 25 years he operated the Tiger Butte ranch and then bought a roadhouse in the vicinity of what is not Choteau, but after a few years he tired of that and sold it. He then worked for a couple of years as bartender for D. C. Dulin, and the Bairpaugh family still retains a Haviland china punch bowl with a gold bottom, and one dozen large punch cups with gold handles, given to them by Mr. Dulin.

At the time he worked as bartender the pioneers threw away the pennies and nickels given them in change. The dime was the smallest piece of change they would keep, and if possible the change was made building up from a dime.[15]

14. "Days of the Freighter now are Forgotten but They Wrote History in Transporting Supplies," by Sam Gordon, pioneer editory of 1868. In The Valerian, May 29, 1941, Vol. XXXI, No. 28. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
15. William Albert Bairpaugh (colored) Great Falls. Interview with Mrs. Bairpaugh, 1938; Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 39-40. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1870: One of Jim Austin's early associates in Chestnut valley was Joe Kipp, a famous character, shrewd trader, and notorious smuggler of those days. Jim and Joe were the principal figures in an event which has since become historic.

The sumptuary laws of 1870 brought a United States Marshal to prevent the transporation of liquor into Indian reservations. Kipp set out to defy him by taking a supply of liquor from Helena to Canada through the Blackfeet reservation. He loaded the stock onto a raft lying on the Missouri near Helena, bound for the mouth of Sun river (now Great Falls) where waiting wagons were to freight it through.

Close-pressed by the marshal, Kipp landed his cargo, six hogsheads of whiskey, and buried it on Jim Austin's ranch. Austin had nothing to do with the venture nor with the burying of the whiskey, but Kipp counted on him as a friend and he would not fail him. Presently the marshal rode up and asked Jim if he had seen Kipp pass the ranch. Austin replied in the negative. He always maintained he had told the marshal the truth because the liquor had been buried before the marshal reached the Austin ranch.

When danger was past, Kipp dug up the liquor cache and hastened on his way to Canada, only to be overtaken a short distance south of the unsurveyed boundary line of Canada, by the vigilant representative of the law. Kipp managed to convince the marshal he had already crossed the line; and, the trading post he established, prudently, some miles north of the spot was named Fort Standoff in

commemoration of his triumph over the marshal.

In 1878 Jim Austin planted the first orchard in Montana east of the Rockies, which he obtained from fruit growers in Cache valley, Utah. It consisted of apple and peach trees and grape vines; two black walnut trees from a nursery in Minnesota being added later. The orchard and vegetable garden were planted on the eastern slope of the mountains where the sun's rays did not strike until late enough in the day to thaw the frost first. They were irrigated by ditches of water brought from Sheep creek. The prize-winning fruits and vegetables exhibited at the fairs of Great Falls and Helena were a revelation to Montana settlers who, until then, believed eastern Montana lands incapable of sustaining any crop except the native grasses. One of the walnut trees attained a diameter of 12 inches.

Julia Austin was only nine years old when her mother died in 1889. She had to learn to cook and keep house and care for her two little step-brothers. She says:

"Christmas was a happy time. There was no money for expensive gits but my father, a very good cook, always made doughnuts for the holidays, and there were homemade presents and good cheer."

In 1897 Julia Austin married Herman F, Kling, whose ranch was three and one-half miles up the Missouri river from Hardy. There was no road to the ranch. All supplies were brought from the station at Hardy by means of wheelbarrow up the railroad tracks, then through the tunnel and across the river by boat. When she visited her friends down the river she pushed the baby carriage

over this same bumpy way. The Klings raised fine vegetables. One summer they sold $60 worth of fine ripe tomatoes to the Lindsay commission house in Great Falls.[16]

1870:

John X. Beidler, the fearless, was a close friend of "Liver Eating" Johnson, the original, who took part in an Indian battle at the mouth of the Musselshell river in 1870. The article by Beidler was written in the eighties and there were then many men living who knew "Liver Eating" Johnson personally.

Beidler says:

"Capt. Hawley kept a trading post at the mouth of the Musselshell and one hot day in July, 1870, Mrs. Hawley and a squaw were close to the post picking June berries when they were fired upon by a band of Sioux, who were hiding in the brush. Mrs. Hawley was shot through the neck and fell.

"John, George Grinnell (not George Bird Grinnell) Jim Deer, and seven other wolfers whose names have been forgotten went after the Indians. After chasing them some distance, several of the Indians were killed, while one was shot through the hip and fell. Jimmy Deer tried to kill him and failed. Johnson stepped up and claimed him as his Indian. Putting his rifle to the Indian's head he blew out his brains.

"The wolfers then quartered the dead Indians and piled them

16. Julia Austin Kling, Great Falls, daughter of James (Jim) Ward Austin. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 152-154. Research, Nov. 1941, Toomer.

up in one huge pile, reserving the heads, scalps and trinkets. Johnson picked up the liver of 'his Indian' and asked 'who will take his liver rare?' Several ran up and Johnson devoured half of the liver, the other boys backing down.

"The heads were taken to the post and the flesh boiled off, and the skulls were placed on a low platform and labeled. Afterwards they were set atop a row of stakes close to the river's edge and proved a great curiosity to the people aboard the steamboats plying between St. Louis and Fort Benton."

Peter Koch, the well known Bozeman pioneer, who died a few years ago gave a fine description of "Liver Eater" and his trophies. "Liver Eater" lived in Montana until about 1890 when he went to California where he died in a soldiers' home. He had served as a scout for Terry and Miles in some of the Indian fights of the seventies.[17]

1873:

When William Henry Monroe (now of Great Falls) was eight years old in 1873, he went with his father from Helena to Fort Benton on a business trip. They traveled by stage, going by way of what is now the Sieben Sheep ranch at the mouth of Prickly Pear canyon. At that time this was used as a stage station, where horses were changed and where the passengers partook of refreshment and sometimes spent the night. A man and his wife served meals or just coffee to any one who wanted refreshment, while the stable man

17. John X. Beidler article. The Valerian, December 26, 1940, Vol. XXXI, No. 6. Research, Nov. 1941, Toomer.

was changing the stage horses.

In 1881 Monroe joined up as a "chain carrier" for a government survey outfit which was sectionizing in the eastern part of the state. There were 25 men in the party. They lived in tents, four to a tent. There was an American cook, and a cook wagon. There was only one other wagon which was used for transporting bedding and supplies. The men traveled on horseback, and camp was usually changed once in two weeks. They worked hard but their food was very good, there being plenty of wild game and fresh meat. Glendive was their trading post.

In 1882, the second winter of the surveying party's stay, the soldiers of Fort Buford gathered up 5,000 renegade Indians from all tribes in that part of the country, and brought them to the Yellowstone river, 15 miles away from Fort Buford, and kept them there all winter. Every Saturday a company of soldiers would bring up a load of groceries from Fort Buford. They next caught 25 or 30 head of cattle and turned them loose at the fort. The braves then caught and butchered them, the squaws dressed them, wasting nothing, using even the entrails. These groceries and beeves would last one week, and then the same procedure was gone through again, week after week, all winter long.[18]

18. William Henry (Hank) Monroe, Great Falls. Interviews by Toomer in 1939-1940. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 155-157. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1873:

As told by Martha Edgerton Plassmann:

"In 1873 I was going down the Missouri on the boat of Capt. Joseph LaBarge. He was at Fort Peck. I shall always be thankful to Major Culbertson for the sack of buffalo tongues he confided to the care of his son Joseph. Joe permitted his sister Fanny (Fannie Culbertson Irvin) and me to sample them. They were extraordinarily fine as all will agree who have eaten buffalo tongue. I can readily understand why the Indians call buffalo meat 'real food'-- ni-tap-i wak-sin.

"At the Christmas dances, supper was served at midnight. Oyster soup came first, having been shipped 3,000 miles. Elegant salads, delicious jellies and jams, game of all kinds, candies manufactured into temples and monuments, all kinds of fruit, and every variety of sparkling wine."

After this description of an earlier day than the eighties, the first Christmas celebration at Great Falls as related by Paris Gibson in his reminiscences sounds rather tame.[19.]

1874:

M. A. Flanagan and Dr. William Turner, an army contract surgeon, opened a drug store in Fort Benton in 1875. In 1874 the Flanagans were living in the store section for the fur trade, of the old fort. The windows had small panes and three foot sills. Fort Benton as

19. "Christmas a Festive Day Celebrated by Traders in Early-Day Montana Territory", by Martha Edgerton Plassmann. Research in Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrap book of her mother's writings. Interview and research by Toomer, November, 1941.

a military post was very gay at times; there were band concerts, dress parades, and in the event of the arrival of a distinguished guest there would be a military ball, a dinner and dance on a steamboat, or a party of some sort in his honor.

Colonel Ilges was commander of the post. One year a Christmas tree was put up for the children in his quarters at the old Chouteau House. One of the first Christmas trees in the old fort was in the Flanagan home. Miss Flanagan still treasures the little walnut table on which the tree stood, as well as a funny little china dog that was on the tree.

Mrs. Flanagan and Mrs. T. C. Power (who were sisters) had the first Sunday school in the old river town. Many of their pupils were halfbreeds; some of them, now elderly men living in Browning still speak of that Sunday school. They served tea and cake; there were no lemons for lemonade in those days.

Lieut. Hardin, another friend of the Flanagans, was greatly admired by the children, partly because he had refused to eat the flesh of his pet horse which had to be killed for food, but instead ate some blood-stained crackers he had in his pocket.[20.]

20. M. A. Flanagan, by his daughter, Miss May Flanagan, Great Falls. Interview, 1938. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 287-289. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1874:

Territory of Montana,)
County of Lewis and Clark,) ss.

In Justice Court, before William P. Burcher, Justice of the Peace, in and for the County of Lewis and Clark, and Territory of Montana.

John E. Howard and)
Emma Howard) Plaintiffs.
)
vs.)
)
General John Gibbon.) Defendant.

The above is a transcript from an old record found at Sun River, which tells how General John Gibbon, the famous Indian fighter, won a bloodless battle by recourse to the law, and gives a glimpse of the problem of domestic hired help on the frontier, which appears to have been as pressing then as it is today. Incidentally, this old record describes how the doughty Gibbon dreaded domestic discord, and how this case caused him to remark that he "didn't mind fighting savages, but confound a battle in the kitchen."

According to the musty record of Justice of the Peace Burcher, it was one hot day in August, 1874, that John E. Howard and his wife, Emma, entered the log cabin that served for a justice court at the town of Sun River, and, in the language and spelling of Judge Burcher (who was a very poor speller), made complaint as follows:

"John E. Howard and Emma L. Howard, his wife, they being first duly sworn deposes and says that we are the plaintiffs in the above Entitled action and that said defendant, Gen. John Gibbon, is in-

depted to us respectively the sum of Sixty-eight dolers and 33 cence ($68.33) for servis rendered to the defendant as Cook and Chambermaid such servis commenct June 16th, A. D. 1874 being one month and 11 days at fifty dolers pr month. And fother the plaintiffs says that they was Respectively imployed by the defendant at or near the city of Philadelphia, Pa., on the 16th day of June, 1874 and was to serve them the defendant and wife for the sum of 50 dolers per month from the above-named date and furnish Bord and Lodgin and transportation to Fort Shaw, Montana territory. But was discharged on the 27th day of July at Montana territory by the defendant and refused to pay for survis rendred, and further more one Bill of Ladin for one box of goods and one trunk beloming to us plaintiffs in this action, shipped in our own name but in care of Gen. John Gibbon. Said box of goods and one trunk or Bil or ladin for the same is onlafferly (unlawfully - EET) with held from us plaintiffs. Said box of goods is our personal property and we do Pray and Ask Justice at the hand of the cort in given us our Pay for survis rendered and our goods and further more the plaintiffs saith not."

"Subscribed and sworn to before me this 31 day of August, A. D. 1874. (Signed) EMMA J. HOWARD,
WILLIAM P. BURCHER,
Justice of the Peace."

Summons was issued for the appearance of the defendant on the 5th day of September, on which date the hearing was held.

The record continues:

"The hour of court being called on the fift of September 1874 at 10 o'clock A. M., plaintiffs and defendant being present, proceeded to bisness reding of complaint there being no caul for a jury. Plaintiffs being sworin by request of defendat that plaintiffs and witnesses be examoned in the absance of other witnesses request granted John Howard could first to stand."

General Gibbon questioned Howard and his wife and the record of their answers shows that they answered an advertisement in a Philadelphia newspaper for a man and his wife to accompany General and Mrs. Gibbon to the far west. In the words of the woman, as transcribed by Judge Burcher:

"Last May I seen an advertisement for a man and wife so I come to town in a few days and went and saw Mrs. Gibbon. She liked me and I liked her and I asked what wages the General expected to pay. She said forty dolers to a colored man and wife, but as we were white we would get more, in the meantime given me a card to her husband telling him how that her and I agreed. General Gibbon telegraphed to General Gregg for reference."

Apparently the references were satisfactory, for they landed the job and started west with the general and his wife, but it seems that the liking the domestic and the general's wife had for each other was short-lived, as Howard replied to a question as to why his wife left Mrs. Gibbon's service:

"On account of some lively words with Mrs. Gibbon."

Mrs. Howard testified:

"I was discharged by General Gibbon because I and his wife

could not agree."

General Gibbon testified that the first day the party arrived at Fort Shaw, Mrs. Howard flew into a violent passion and used such coarse and abusive language that he had to interfere and order the woman from the house.

"I don't mind fighting savages," observed the general, "but confound a battle in the kitchen."

General Gibbon won the case, the verdict, after voluminous testimony had been taken, being rendered as follows:

"Judgment: It appearing from the evidence given by the plaintiffs and defendant that plaintiffs are not entitled to $68.33, but the bill of lading rightfully belongs to plaintiffs, judgment is given in favor of defendant but require defendant to deliver said bill of lading to plaintiffs within five days from this date, cost of suit to be paid by plaintiffs.

"Cost of sheriff, $6.

"Justice fees, $6. 21.

"WILLIAM J. BURCHER, J. P."

21. "Cook's Vocabulary Scorched General Who Didn't Like Warfare in Kitchen," from an old record at Sun River, Montana. Great Falls News, March 14, 1941, Vol. 10, No. 11. Research, Nov. 1941, Toomer.

NOTE: I have made no changes in the record whatsoever, carefully copying word for word, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization, and then rechecking to see if it is correct. Toomer.

1875:

Mary Adams, sister of Maria, had worked as cook in the household of General Custer, at Fort Lincoln, Dakota territory, since 1873. She sent for Maria to come as housemaid.

Fort Lincoln housed about 600 people. On one side of the main street were the officers' quarters and on the other side were the soldiers' barracks. The average home had about four or five rooms, and all the houses were painted gray and white. About a mile away the cavalry lived with the infantry, about 200 persons.

After his first home burned the General's new home had 14 rooms, including a billiard hall, reception room, and double parlor. All of the furnishings were beautiful, especially Mrs. Custer's table appointments. There was a solid silver tea pot, creamer and sugar bowl, solid silver salt and pepper shakers made in the shape of an egg resting on tiny gold feet, silver soup tureens and vegetable dishes; in fact, everything was silver except the Haviland china plates which were white with three pin stripes of pink and green; and one set was decorated with bands of red.

The Custers entertained twice a month for the officers and their wives. The music was furnished by the cavalry's brass band and a [illegible] string quartette. Waltzes were the favorite at these balls, while the lancers, polkas, gallop, and square dances came in for their share.

On the fateful day, as Mrs. Custer took leave of the general she said, "I'm kissing you for the last time."

Within 30 days after the battle, the widows who had not already left Fort Lincoln, did so then.

In 1881 the Adams sisters came to Fort Benton. The winter of 1886 was so cold and the snow so deep that coal could not be freighted from Belt. In Fort Benton it sold for $40 a ton and wood was $40 a cord. It was finally decided to turn down the jail and burn the logs for fuel; fences were also torn down and used for wood. Water was sold at $1 a barrel; it was so muddy it had to be cleared by putting stale bread or the whites of eggs into it.

Women wore high felt boots in winter and moccasins in summer. Foodstuffs were shipped in by boat; hunters and farmers supplied the rest. There were dried apples and peaches, onions, eggs at $1.50 a dozen, flour, sugar at $100 per 100 pounds, and butter at $1 a pound. All canned fruits sold for 50¢ a can. There were no oranges or bananas and when finally these fruits were brought up by boat they sold for $1.50 and $2 a dozen. Plums cost 25¢ for two.

Mr. and Mrs. Dutriueille moved to Great Falls in 1912.[22]

1878:

Worden P. Wren (late of Great Falls) gives the following:

"During the boating season in Fort Benton, the town hummed with excitement and activity; stores were open from five in the morning until midnight. After the river became unnavigable and shipping of inter-Montana supplies was over, business became stagnant and was carried on locally for robes, hides, pelts, pemmican, dried venison

22. Marie (Adams) Dutriueille, Great Falls (colored). Interviews 1938-1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 377-379. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

and buffalo. The Indians traded food for food. Pemmican, dried venison and dried buffalo were relished by the whites, while the Indians were extremely fond of sugar, tea, coffee, beans, tobacco and other things brought in by the white man.

"In 1881 while I was yet employed by the Murphy-Neel company at Fort Benton, two men came by stagecoach from Helena and bought a supply of mostly 'wet' goods. Theybuilt a boat and placed their purchases in it, including several cases of alcohol,, Perry Davis Pain Killer, Hostetter's Bitters, red ink, castile soap, and Blackstrap chewing tobacco. The red ink and Blackstrap were used for coloring drinks for the 'injun.' The 'wet' goods were covered with potatoes. My company sent me with these men to buy furs and collect outstanding bills for supplies furnished to woodchoppers the fall before. Wood was sold in large quantities to the boats plying the river.

"These two men and I left silently and early in the morning. All our meals were cooked over a small camp fire and watches were kept against a possible raid by the Indians. Beds were constructed near the boat and ropes from the boat were placed under the beds so as to awaken the sleepers if any one molested the boat. Each of us had a 44 calibre rifle which was kept at our side. I had $1,000 in gold which I invested in furs and robes at most of the camps along the river.

"The second night out we stopped at 'Old Man' Kountz's big wood camp. He had done a big business with the three steamboat lines between Bismarck and Benton.. We ate with the foreman who told us that Kountz had been killed by Indians the previous winter. The Indians had been hanging around the camp and Kountz had ordered them off. The next morning three of the redskins returned and fired at the camp from behind

a tree; Kountz went out and was shot and killed. He was buried in a rude grave under one end of the cabin. Word was sent to the various wood camps of the killing and the entire Indian camp was threatened with destruction unless the killers surrendered. They were returned t the Kountz cabin, hanged from a cottonwood tree, the bodies riddled with bullete and then thrown on the frozen Missouri.

"A few days later we stopped at the wood camp built by the Diamond R freight line near Carroll. Tables, chairs and all fixtures in the large cabin were constructed of cottonwood trees. Here we saw two deserters from Fort Keough--walking arsenals--each armed with a brace of Colt 45 calibre revolvers, 10-inch hunting knives, 45 calibre U. S. needle gunds, and two cartridge belts. The government had posted rewards for their arrest. They conducted themselves properly and ate the supper of boiled hominy and coffee with the rest of the party.

"The next day our party stopped at Carroll where the cargo of liquor was soon disposed of to the many Indians there. John Goeway of Sioux City, Iowa, and J. A. Baker of Fort Benton had learned of my buying trip and had bought the prize lot of robes and furs at Carroll

"Food was scarce; the boats were late in arriving, and the camp was faced with a famine. Days came and went but no boats arrived. Men walked daily to a high cliff in the hope of seeing one; bets were made as to the time of their arrival. Musty bacon and sourdough bread made from flour the Indians had refused to nuy was the only food, and an outbreak of scurvy was feared. Goeway, Todd, Baker and another man whose name I've forgotten, and I equipped a small flatboat and went down the river to meet the steamboat. Along the river settlers

were living on venison and bear meat. We finally met the boat and found it had been delayed a month because the pilot house and stacks had been torn off at Bismarck in a hurricane.

"In 1878 Bill Skelton (still living at Stanford. Toomer) worked as porter in the Murphy-Neel store (Fort Benton) and in that same year I fitted him out with team, harness, food and whiskey for hunting and trapping with the Indians. Soon after that he settled in the Judith country. (Now in his late 80s. Came to the last cowboys' convention in Great Falls. Missed the boat as a young man andwalked into Montana. Got his start in cattle by rustling. Married a mixed-blood who was very well liked and respected by all who knew her. They raised a big family of boys, most of whom turned cattle rustlers and some of them served time in the penitentiary.. Toomer).

"When Bill came from the Judith to Fort Benton to marry the daughter of Peter Vann, he bought a case of beer, a gallon of whiskey, and a box of cigars, and invited me to the wedding.. It was a great rousing celebration with all sorts of food and plenty of drinks to wash it down. To this day, now more than 70 years ago, that wedding celebration is still remembered and talked about by the old people who lived in Fort Benton at the time, most of whom attended Bill Skelton's wedding.

"I left the celebration about one o'clock in the morning; at two Bill knocked at my door and wanted to buy more whiskey and cigars. It was quite an event.

"I distinctly remember the first formal dinner, which was a Christmas dinner, given in Great Falls. That was in 1885. There were no turkeys to be had, so I sent to Helena for 12 or more tins of oysters--New York counts.

"The thermometer registered 35 below zero and there was two feet of snow on the ground. The meal was served in one of the rooms of the Townsite company office, just opposite the Park hotel.

"Those present were: Bert Huy, who fried the oysters; J. W. Matkin who,, the next year (1886) aired and dried out the clothing of the Chinaman who ventured into the laundry game in Great Falls in 1886; George D. Buddington; H. O. Chowen, real estate agent; Del Chowen, his brother, and the dishwasher for the oyster party; Theodore Gibson; C. N. Dickinson, who opened the first meat market in Great Falls (and who is now (1941) buyer for the Great Falls Meat company, and is the only one living who attended the party, Mr. Wren having passed away early this spring. Toomer); George Parker, attorney; George Westerfelt; and Dr. J. H. Fairfield, famous fisherman of trout, and hunter of antelope, deer and prairie chicken; and accompanied by his dog, Kaiser.

"There were no highballs, cocktails or gin fizzes, but there was plenty of beer and it was used as a chaser for the oysters. Schlitz beer came packed with straw in a large barrel, six dozen bottles to a barrel. It was a dinner to be long remembered, good food and good beer. Plenty of hearty laughter and good jokes, honest friendship and much hilarity. Dinners like that have long since passed as have the other good things of those early days."[23.]

23. Worden P. Wren, early pioneer of Fort Benton and Great Falls. Interviews, 1938-1939-1940. Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday,, pp. 7-12. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1878:

On Christmas day, 1878, Robert (Bob) Vaughn of Sun River and his guest, Kenneth B. McIver, were ready to partake of a roasted duck dinner when a small band of Indians came and demanded something to eat. Bob did not have enough food for all so he invited the chief in to eat. When the Indian had finished he left, grunting his thanks and satisfaction.

When Kenneth B. McIver married Viola Vaughn, niece of Bob, in 1891, they moved to the bachelor homestead of McIver, near Great Falls Their food was much the same as now, except that they had no fresh fruit. Dried fruits were the only kind on the market. Wild berries were the only fresh fruit to be had and when they were ripe many quarts were picked and canned for future use.

There was little sickness in the McIver family, but when there was Mrs. McIver used simple home remedies. A freshly baked hotcake was used for earache; warmed bacon in a stocking was good for tonsilitis, and sulphur and molasses were administered as a spring tonic.[24]

1878:

Al Rowe came to Montana with his parents in 1878, making the trip on a Missouri river steamboat. They met with no great danger but the trip was long and tiresome. While coming up the river near Fort Buford they were met by hundreds of Indians on the warpath. The

24. Mrs. Viola (Vaughn) McIver, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 96-97. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Indians stopped the boat and demanded something to eat. The steamboat was well supplied with food and big slabs of bacon, unlike our bacon of today, but slabs of half a hog and very salty. These were given to the redskins because nobody on board liked it. The Indians carried it to shore and stacked it up on the bank like cordwood. They also took sugar and flour and lots of tobacco, and then went with their load of grub through the trees, and the boat continued on its way.[25]

1876:

In Virginia City on July 4, 1876 there was a big celebration and a very gay time. There was lots of drinking and eating, dancing and gambling, and firecrackers. Young James (Jimmy) Williams, son of the famous Capt. Jim Williams of the Vigilantes, had saved enough money to buy a new suit of clothes for the occasion. He was all dressed up for the fun and even bought a bunch of firecrackers to add to his day's festivity. Sticking them in his hip pocket he strolled around "seeing what he could see" when a mischievous boy espied the crackers sticking out of Jimmy's pocket and set a match to them. In about five minutes poor Jimmy's clothes were in rags and he was terror-stricken.

On that same day in Virginia City, "Cider" Nick made cider from dried apples which he sold to the thirsty public for 25 cents a glass. For those who were hungry and just wanted a "snack", dried apple pies were sold at 75 cents each.[26]

25. Albert H. Rowe, Great Falls. Interviews 1939-1941. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 111. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
26. Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrap book. Interview and research, Toomer. Nov. 1941.

1877:

When the Seventh cavalry started from Fort Shaw in pursuit of Chief Joseph, in 1877, it was far from well-provisioned. Their chief food was buffalo meat and bull berries. The men got so hungry they even tried horse meat.

The men became so dissatisfied and hungry that they told General Sturgis they would have to have something that would stick to the ribs. In reply to their complaints General Sturgis told them he had sent to Howard for supplies. To this the soldiers warned him that they expected something more than "wind pudding."

And still no supplies came; meanwhile, the soldiers' bellies were getting flatter and flatter and, again they went to Sturgis and told him if supplies didn't arrive by the next morning they were leaving him--all of them.

The next day supplies did come from Fort Peck, consisting of only spoiled salt pork and flour. A quart of flour was given to each man as daily ration. There was no way of cooking except to make flapjacks by stirring flour and water together and then cooking them on their trenching tools, trowels or even their tin plates of which there were but a few in camp.

Some of the soldiers cooked the "flour and water mess" in the tin cups in which it had been stirred together. There was no salt. The tin cup was set on the campfire to cook; after it was baked it was as hard as a brick, and the soldiers dug it out with a knife or saber point.

In marked contrast, Chief Joseph's fare for his warriors was plentiful and good. There was never a shortage of any kind, except in the

Bear's Paw mountains when the white soldiers tried to "water starve" Chief Joseph's men. Even then the squaws dug cisterns within their lines.[27]

1879:

Thomas Bush followed the Northern Pacific railway, he being an engineer and surveyor for the road. Mary Lenihan met and married him in Mandan. From Mandan they came to Glendive, and on the eve of their departure Mrs. Bush and two women friends were giving a big dinner. They had cooked all day, roasting chickens and pork, baking pies and cakes. Tables were set in a large room upstairs and everything was in readiness. To their ears came the sound of pounding hoofs and a man shouting, "The ice is jammed! A-flood! All to the hills!"

Quickly carrying everything upstairs they fled next door to a three-story hotel. They stood at the windows watching the water come rolling into the frontier town, a wall of snow and ice eight feet high.

Next day Mr. Bush put a plank from the hotel window across to their house; they all crawled across and ate the long-delayed banquet.

After leaving Glendive they went to live in a small three-room house on Bear creek, as Mr. Bush had been hired to survey the land around Gardiner. The house was made of logs and the cracks were filled with lime. The parlor and bedroom had board floors, but the kitchen floor was the good earth, well-packed, then water-soaked and packed again. The top became so hard and the surface so smooth it could be swept like any board floor. In this kitchen was a large fireplace and logs were placed within. This gave plenty of heat, and

27. Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrap book. Interview and research by Toomer, Nov. 1941.

it was here that the cooking was done.

One morning when Mr. Bush, with other men, was going to work especially early he invited his co-workers to have breakfast with him at four o'clock. Mrs. Bush, wishing to give them a good substantial meal, had put the ham of a bear, which had been killed by her husband, into a fireless cooker the night before. The cooker was a tin box which was covered with small coals, and ashes in front of the open fireplace. At three o'clock in the morning she awoke and put in the potatoes, peeled the night before, and in an hour all was ready. What a delicious meal it was, and the men praised her highly by hearty eating and many compliments.[28]

1879:

Mr. (white) and Mrs. (colored) J. K. Castner built the first log cabin at Belt. Mr. Castner cut the logs and built the cabin and with the aid of his wife the cabin was covered with brush and cemented with mud and buffalo chips. It was lined with preshrunk muslin and calcimined. Here Mrs. Castner (Mattie Bell (surname) began her real career as a hotel keeper and was known as "the Mother of Belt," even and Mr. Castner was known as "the Father of Belt."

Their cabin was a station for the Great Falls-Lewistown stage line. As traffic increased the Castners added log additions to the original cabin until it assumed the picturesque appearance of a southern plantation. So intricate was its sprawling arrangement that it was called the Chinese Puzzle, and it was easy to get lost in its meanderings. This was Belt's first hotel. The chicken dinners served by Mrs. Castner are still held in fond memory by the many old-timers who were guests of the hotel.

28. Mary (Lenihan) Bush, Great Falls. Died early this fall, 1941. Interviews 1938-1940. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 63. Research Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Mrs. Castner grew a beautiful garden and in the early summer hauled vegetables to Fort Benton, a distance of 40 miles. She loaded her vegetables after sundown and then drove all night in order to get there by sunrise. She received one dollar a bunch for carrots and the same for one head of cabbage.

Once she was accompanied by Maria Dutriueille (colored) and before reaching Fort Benton they were stopped by Indians who took all the vegetables and one of the horses. After the Indians had gone, Mrs. Castner rode the other horse back to Belt and got another horse with which to bring the wagon back home. She made three trips a week with her produce.[29.]

1880:

In 1879 Leslie H. Hamilton, pioneer sheepman, now living at 2901 Second avenue north, with two companions, Barney and Stoutenberg, trailed two bands of Rambouillet sheep for Hoppin brothers from Winnemucca, Nevada to Grasshopper creek near where Dillon, Montana now stands.

A French-Canadian by the name of Bazette bought the sheep and hired the three boys to herd them all that winter.

In the spring of 1880 the boys settled with Bazette and then bought a team of mules, a wagon and saddle horses. For the horses and mules they bought 300 pounds of oats at 75 cents a hundred pounds; and for themselves they bought groceries and 500 pounds of flour at $2.50 a hundred at the Story Flour mill in Bozeman, the first of its kind in the state.

29. Mrs. J. K. Castner. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 74. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

They followed the Beaverhead, then the Jefferson for several miles and turned off to the east. They went on northeast through Judith Gap. One night they camped on the Ross Fork of the Judith. In the morning they saw their first buffalo, a lean, scabby old bull, probably one of a thundering herd of 10,000 left behind because of his weakened condition. The mules became frightened, but Stoutenberg followed the bull, shooting at it with his Winchester. The animal soon dropped, but Stoutenberg, shouting with glee, pumped more bullets into it.

The three boys decided the bull was too lean for good eating but thought the tongue might be palatable if properly cooked. At every stop on the trip Barney, the cook for the outfit, stewed the tongue until they were ready to start on again.

Beaver creek, so named because of the abundance of beaver, abounded with the animals, and they killed one. Having heard that beaver tail soup was delectable, Hamilton suggested that they kill one. Stoutenberg, very proud of his previous kill, said, "But where is the buffalo tongue? We haven't had that yet."

Barney replied, "Well, the damn thing petrified with so much cooking that I threw it away."

They later traded two sacks of flour for two buffalo robes, and could easily have exchanged all of their flour for robes.

In 1885 Hamilton bought a herd of grade shorthorn two-year-old heifers shipped from Missouri to Billings, and trailed them overland to his ranch. These were the first milk cows in the Judith basin. From this herd for which he paid $22 a head he provided ranchers with milk cows at $50 a head. 30.

30. Leslie H. Hamilton, Great Falls. Interviews 1939-1940-1941. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 23-24-25. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1880:

Lou Stocking Stewart of Great Falls came back from her schooling in St. Louis on May 27, 1880. She came up on the Red Cloud to Fort Benton where her parents lived. Mrs. Stewart says:

"We traveled continuously for 77 days. The Red Cloud was one of the I. G. Baker line, one of the largest on the river and one of the most palatial. It was a stern-wheeler, measuring 225 feet in length with a 34-foot beam. It was heavily loaded with freight and there were more than 200 passengers aboard, most of them bound for Fort Benton. The boat drew 4-1/2 feet of water and was hard to manage in the narrows. There were pigs, chickens, horses, cattle, mules, ducks, turkeys, and even a big Newfoundland dog, besides the usual foodstuffs aboard. Capt. McGarry was in command and he and his staff were kind to all.

"The fare for the desirable upper deck cabins was considerably more than for the most modest cabins on the lower deck. The three meals a day were well cooked and served regularly; they consisted of salt pork, bacon, beans, and all kinds of dried fruits, which were a luxury. Several meals were served with antelope, deer or buffalo as the main dish.....

"In 1873 began the interchange of commerce between Fort Benton and Fort Macleod and Calgary and northward across the Canadian line. Fort Benton at this time was called 'The Chicago of the Plains;' through its door came humanity from the east, west and north. Gold hunters, speculators, traders, big game hunters, desperadoes, fugitives from justice, good and bad Indians, good and bad white men and women. There was not a law of God or man; might made right. Physicians had to batch on the prairie and make sourdough bread; lawyers had to know how to cinch a horse, cut cordwood and pack water; the banker would have had but little

place for his doctrine of finance unless he could hobble a horse and kill a buffalo for meat in camp.

"Up until 1875 there was no social life except for a few 'squaw dances,' in which the white man taught the Indian girls how to dance the white man's way.

"At one time Ira Griffin and Colonel Leaming got a big sheep wagon to take a party of us young people up on the Shonkin on a fishing trip. When I went out to crawl into the wagon I was dressed in a flowered mulle and a large picture hat; I had taken an old silk dress to fish in!

"There was a big cabin in a nice picnic ground spot on the Teton. This same crowd of young people used to go up there for lunches and dancing and a general good time."[31.]

1880:

Charles W. Black, Walter's father, brought his family from Helena to Belt creek in April, 1880.....

One day, in 1886, word came to the Blacks that a big dance was to be given at Newton Shepherd's, on Highwood creek, 12 miles away. The word was carried one to another, and it was in this way that they were able to get people together.

Early in the afternoon Walter put on his best clothes and made ready to go on horseback. The clouds were hanging low and even then the wind was coming up. It looked like an early storm. Walter arrived at Shepherd's before dark and soon many others from far and near had also arrived. Their host and hostess were glad to have them come at any hour.

31. Lou (Stocking) Stewart, Great Falls. Interviews 1938-1939, EET. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 205-209. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Mrs. Shepherd was a full-blood Indian and Mr. Shepherd was a white man; both were respected by all who knew them.

They had a large log house that Mrs. Shepherd kept immaculately clean, and she was a very good cook. A hearty meal was served at midnight, when we danced there, consisting of cold meats, cold chicken, cakes, cookies, pickles, homemade bread and butter, and coffee. Everybody danced or played cards until morning. Mr. Wood and his daughter, Maggie, furnished the music with fiddle and organ. It was gay music and the revelers danced the hoe-downs and schottisches with real enjoyment. The room was large enough to allow eight couples to dance at one time.

The snow came faster and faster,, thicker and thicker, but nobody worried about the roads, or how they would get home. They just danced the hours away to lively music. By morning the storm had almost subsided, and after breakfast they started home.[32]

1880:

Mrs. Laura Ferguson and her mother, Frances Ferguson, (Laura married a Ferguson. Toomer) came to Fort Maginnis in the early eighties. They next went to the mining town of Maiden, rented a cabin and went into the ice cream parlor business. They made their own ice cream; they went into the mountains and picked wild strawberries and raspberries, and Oregon grapes, to serve with it..

32. Walter E. Black, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 283-285. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Once they were invited to an Indian wedding. This was celebrated by much feasting and dancing. The dance went on for days and days, or until every one was completely exhausted. When the feasting began Laura noticed the roast on the table and on inquiry was told it was stuffed prairie dog. This was more than she could "stomach" and she did not stay for the feasting.[33]

1880: February 13:

The article is headed "My Partner" and is signed "S. M."

He writes of his experiences as a "squaw man" and later when he married the squaw, how he tried to educate her to a few of covilization's ways. A part of his story follows:

(Apparently he traded his pony for his squaw some time in the sixties)

"Her ways were very aboriginal, but I expected that in the course of time they would give way to the usuages of civilization, and that she would learn to wash her face regularly and keep her hands from interfering with the victuals in preparation in the camp kettle or frying pan. She stuck to me faithfully for several years.

".....However, I have become/so used to her ways that I don't mind her shortcomings very much any more, and I can relish a meal even if the food has been prepared and dished up in utensils which are usually washed by the dogs or cats. White strangers hardly ever visit us, and we never invite any of them to our fireside.

33. Mrs. Laura Ferguson (colored) Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 351. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

"My two boys left me about six months ago to join a party of Indians on a horse stealing expedition against the Sioux. I have not heard from them since but suppose they are all right."[34.]

1881: After leaving Germany, Frederick P. Auerbach came to Wisconsin. He did not like the place and decided to go farther west. Joining a party of 25 young men and boys, including a cook, they left on March 19, 1881 for Livingston, Montana. Each one paid his pro rata share, which included their meals enroute. They traveled in a covered wagon, with a trailer attached, drawn by 18 oxen. In the trailer was their food supply. Often when the weather was adverse they were unable to eat out in the open, and the cook prepared the meal in the trailer. The men then formed a line, marched past the trailer, or mess wagon, to get their hand-out. Then they scrambled for a place of shelter in which to eat their food.

The food consisted of canned goods, mostly. For breakfast they had oatmeal or hominy, hot biscuits and coffee. For their midday meal they had cold biscuits with cold boiled salt pork or canned beans, and coffee. Their evening meal was a stew of some kind, canned tomatoes, hot biscuits, fried salt pork and coffee. Some times they would get dried apple sauce or prunes.

They paid but little attention to what they ate, if they got enough to satisfy their hunger, as they were so fascinated with the country and its scenery that they forgot all about eating. They would start traveling early in the morning and continue until they found good drinking water. Some times it would be around three o'clock in

34. The Valerian, April 3, 1941, Vol. XXXI, No. 20, reprinted from the Benton Weekly Record, published at Fort Benton on Fenruary 13, 1880. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

the afternoon before this was found and, in the meantime, if any of them got hungry they would jump off, run around to the trailer, get a sandwich and climb on again to eat it.. After the evening meal, they lost no time in finding a place to bunk. Traveling in the open made them sleepy and the bedrolls came out in a hurry.[35]

1881:

"In 1881 Frank Bain bought Bill Woods' sheep and moved them from the Highwoods to his ranch near Geyser. Bain hired two other men and me to put up hay and to herd these sheep. The food supplies ran low. We told Bain we must have more right away. He returned in a couple of days with a little box of groceries, hardly enough for two or three days.. When we complained he said he would bring plenty to last us through. We did not see him again for over two weeks. In the meantime we had to kill sheep for mutton which, with pancakes, was all the food we had. At the end of that time Bain came without any supplies! We told him to go to town for three other herders for we were quitting right then!

"In 1886-1887 I was carrying the mail from Cora Creek to Barker, a distance of about forty miles. I covered that route for about eight years on horseback. In the winter of 1886-1887 there were 22 people in Barker. Two of these, John Lilly and Jimmy Hudson, had their wives and four children each, living with them in one cabin. Barker was snowed in and every one was out of meat, so I got a beef from Mike Larkin at Kibbey and cut it in small pieces to carry in the mail sack to the people there.

35. Frederick P. Auerbach, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 65. Research, Toomer.

"One day when I was too tired to carry the usual supply of meat on to Barker I left it at Ellis's, who was married to a squaw and had four children. When I returned Ellis told me the meat was all gone. His wife and children had eaten it and were very sick. When I went in to see them the squaw was dead. We couldn't bury her in the ground, so George and I wrapped her body in a blanket and buried it in a snowbank to wait until the ground thawed.[36]

1881:

G. Calvin Bower, one of Montana's leading sheepmen, came up on the steamer, Helena, in May 1881. He tells his story by a number of letters written at that time to his sister, Annie, in New York. The first letter was written from the cabin, as were the following ones, with regard to his trip from Fort Benton, after landing, to his brothers' (Arthur and Edward, also leading sheepmen) ranch on Surprise creek.

G. Calvin Bower came from Fort Benton with a young sheepman by the name of Camel (correct). They drove in a lumber wagon drawn by two ponies; the wagon loaded with provisions. At six p. m. of the first day they stopped at a rancher's house on Highwood creek; his name was Woods. Calvin says:

"Of course his house was of logs. Everything had a homelike appearance. It had three small rooms and was occupied by Mr. Woods and his three sons. The wife of one of the sons had a nice supper for us. The bill of fare consisted of brook trout, fried bacon, boiled potatoes, stewed apples, hot biscuit, coffee and tea. Well, the way we went after that supper must have rather astonished even

36. Joseph S. Rioux, Great Falls. Interviews, 1939-1940. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 210-211. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

these hearty people. We had had nothing to eat since morning.

"The next morning we started for Camel's ranch. We stopped for dinner at a ranch on Little Belt creek. It belonged to a sheep outfit and was in charge of an old sea captain and a young man from New Hampshire. All they had was bacon and potatoes, coffee and sheep's milk. They were milking a sheep which gave one quart a day. Their sourdough bread had gone back on them and they had no baking powder. Well, it was a funny dinner.

"We went from there and fished along the stream, catching trout enough for supper. We reached Camel's ranch on Cora creek about dark. Our trout were very nice but Camel's dough was too sour, and we had biscuit for supper."

1885: April 25:

"I have been making yeast today. I can make the best of sourdough bread, but every now and then I hear some one say, 'such and such a one had such nice yeast bread.' I want you to give me particular directions for making yeast, and yeast bread. If you don't know how, then find out.

"I want directions also for making sponge cake. You are too good looking to make good sponge cake. One of the homeliest girls I ever saw made the best sponge cake I ever ate, but I would rather risk your recipe than risk writing to this homely girl.

"The cussed little lambs are coming at a deuce of a rate. But the weather is good so let them come.

"It is almost dinner time and I am watching my baking bread. Mr. Poole brought us a quarter of a bear yesterday. It killed

five sheep for him one night and a couple of nights later his men succeeded in shooting it. It weighed 500 pounds."

1885: August 16:

"All the ranch force is employed in haying and harvesting. I have to stay at the home ranch most of the time to feed the hungry.

"I have a larger and better garden than you ever saw for vegetables. Yesterday I dug 16 good sized potatoes from one hill, and other things in proportion. One of my cows gives 20 quarts of milk a day. I have 150 young chickens, 10 pigs, two cows, and some young stock. Arthur says I make the best butter he has ever eaten in the territory. I do my washing in a 45-gallon whiskey cask.

"I must thank you again for the very minute directions you sent me for making yeast and yeast bread. It works like a charm.

"I am glad you are pleased with the wolf skin. There are some more loose on the prairie which I would be pleased to have you pleased with."

1886: January:

G. Calvin Bower went east and was married. The couple came to Billings by railroad, and from there to the ranch they rode in a dead-ex wagon, camping at night.

When they stopped to eat, Mrs. Bower asked, sotto voce, "Cal, where is the butter?"

He replied, in a whisper, "There isn't any."

Pretty soon, Mrs. Bower asked again sotto voce, "Cal, where

is the cream for the coffee?"

Cal again replied in a whisper, "There isn't any."

Mrs. Bower asked for nothing more.

The Bowers freighted their wool to Fort Benton, and provisions for a year were hauled out on the return trip.

After reading the foregoing letters it is easily understood that necessity was the mother not only of invention, but also of good men cooks among the pioneers. It is easy to understand, too, why the western old-timer speaks of the food he used to cook rather than of that "Mother used to bake," as does the modern young man. 37.

1882:

Mrs. Margaret (Watson) Chamberlain came to Belt with her parents in 1882. That was a hard winter and fuel was hard to get, if at all. She remembers that a ton of coal cost $25 and the same price was asked for a load of willows. Once they were forced to burn part of their furniture in order to keep warm. Food prices also soared and Mrs. Chamberlain says that Mrs. Castner sold eggs for two dollars a dozen.

Great numbers of Indian tepees clustered at the edge of the little coal mining town, and the Indians were "too friendly" for comfort. They hung about the Watson house and peered into the windows, until Mrs. Watson became frightened and annoyed. She heated a large kettle of lard and made a big batch of doughnuts. She then called to the Indians, gave them the doughnuts and told

37. G. Calvin Bower. Through the courtesy of his oldest daughter Elsie, now Mrs. Morgan Embrey, Poughkeepsie, New York. Interview 1938. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 311-317. Research Toomer, Nov. 1941.

them to go home. She was sure she had gotten rid of them now. The Indians disappeared with the fried cakes only to return in a few minutes. She went to her husband and complained about their persistance in hanging around the house.

He said, "Now that you have fed them they will never leave."

With that she picked up the broom, waved it menacingly and said in a tone of command, "Go!" The Indians left but they were back the next day.

Christmas at the Watson house was celebrated by hanging up stockings to be filled with fruit and cake, and at noon the family enjoyed an extra good dinner. There were no stores at which gifts could be bought.

When roundup time came the little village of Belt was stirred to its depth. Cowboys rode at breakneck speed down Main street, whooping and firing their guns in the air to attract attention. At this time there was always a dance attended by all in their best clothes. The women wore bustles under their tight-waisted dresses, which boasted puffed sleeves and floor-length full-gathered skirts. Underneath were two petticoats, lace-trimmed.

No girl dared refuse to dance with a cowboy whether she knew him or not. It was considered a great insult. Dances were often held at Mann's big log house on their ranch on Otter creek about 12 miles from Belt. The music was furnished by Mr. Woods who played the fiddle, and his daughter Maggie who played the organ.

When midnight came they served a bountiful supper of cold meats, chicken, pies, cakes, bread, butter, pickles and coffee.

In the wintertime people went to the dances in open sleighs,

their feet wrapped in newspapers with plenty of blankets and quilts to protect themselves from the raw winds. Travel was slow because the roads were often drifted with snow. It was the custom to dance all night and leave after breakfast as it was dangerous to journey in the dark.

In the winter of 1889 a man named Jack, who lived at Barker, went out one fine day to hunt jack rabbits, taking his dog with him. Clouds began to gather and a storm was upon him before he realized it. After hours of wandering in the blinding snow he at last took shelter in a ravine with his dog at his side. The storm kept him prisoner for several days and, in his desperate hunger, he killed and ate his dog. When he was able to return to Barker, he told his friends of the terrible experience. Thereafter he was known as "Dog-Eating" Jack.[38]

1883:

When David Graham of Belt brought his Canadian wife home, they traveled as far as Billings by rail, and finished the trip by stage coach. At the first station out of Billings they were served a meal of hardtack, fat bacon and black coffee, which cost 75 cents. At the second station, Lavinia, they were served with a delicious chicken dinner, but some of the passengers cautioned the Grahams NOT to partake of the pie, as it had appeared on the table day after day for weeks.

Mrs. Graham found her new home to be a two-room log cabin

38. Mrs. Margaret (Watson) Chamberlain, Great Falls. Interviews, 1938-1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 217-221. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

with a flat dirt roof. The floor was of wide rough pine boards. Boxes were used for chairs, there was a homemade cupboard, a table and a bunk with a straw tick constituted the furnishings. The food supplies consisted of a case of Eagle brand milk, a sack of flour, a sack of sugar, coffee and a roll of spiced bacon. (In my interview with Edith Rolfe Maxwell I asked her about this spiced bacon. She said it was no unusual thing to find spiced bacon in the eighties. It was put down in spices, at the time of preparing, so that it would keep longer, and it really was very pleasing in taste, especially to those who liked highly seasoned food. Toomer).

Early one spring day she heard a noise in the creek nearby the house. Upon investigation she found it to be caused by white-fish jumping over the ripples on their way upstream. No doubt they were bound for their spawning beds some where above. She hurried to the house for a pitchfork and tub. The results of her unique way of fishing was a tubful of white-fish, some of which weighed four and five pounds. She waited for her husband's return to learn whether or not they were good to eat.

They had a fine garden and sold vegetables from it to Mrs. Castner for her first Fourth of July dinner at Belt.

In 1885, when their first child was less than a year old, one day Mrs. Graham was busy baking bread, when a group of Indians came to the house and two of the squaws entered. She was frightened and thought they had come to get her baby. She offered them the newly baked bread, which satisfied them and they soon left. Next morning the Grahams discovered that these same Indians had driven

off 40 head of their horses, some time in the night.

On the morning of July fourth, 1886, the Grahams drove to Great Falls for the celebration of the grand opening of the Park hotel. They had the honor of leading the grand march at the dance.

The winter of 1886-1887 was very severe and many people at Fort Benton had neither food nor fuel. Mr. Graham worried about his sister, Mrs. Pete McDonald (now the widow of Sandy Irvine here in Great Falls, born in 1863. Toomer) who lived there. He and his wife loaded a wagon with wood and potatoes and set out on the 40-mile trip. They spent one night at Lacy's crossing. At Fort Benton they sold one sack of potatoes to W. G. Conrad for $15 and took the rest of the load to Mrs. McDonald.[39]

1883:

When William Mulcahy, of Sun river valley, brought his bride home from the Dearborn in March, 1883, it was to a home he had built, furnished and stocked completely with everything necessary, and many things elegant.

There were two bedroom sets, one of black walnut, the other of bird's-eye maple trimmed with rosewood; a dining room set of black walnut; two black walnut tables with marble tops; a parlor set of black walnut upholstered in tapestry and trimmed with red plush; and other necessary pieces of furniture, all bought in Fort Benton.

39. Mrs. David Graham, Great Falls. (Mrs. Graham was buried on the afternoon of November 16, 1941. Toomer). Interviews, 1938-1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 78-79-80. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Dishes were in the "blue willow" pattern; silver was "Rogers 1847," and the linen from McCutcheon's in New York.[40]

1883:

In 1883 Mrs. Alexander Yule and her three children (Eliza one of them) came to Montana on the Big Horn steamboat. At Poplar Point the boat sank and the passengers were taken to the Indian agency there to wait for another boat. While there they say the ceremonies of three young Indians being made warriors of the tribe. During the buckskin "thong" dance one Indian fainted. The one of the three which stood the ordeal of this dance of torture was then made chief.

He was then laid on a buffalo skin and covered with a beautiful robe and the braves danced around him to the music of tom-toms. After that refreshments were served--dog soup served from a barrel standing nearby, while skulls were placed around the chief's robe for decoration. This continued for several days.

When the Big Horn struck a sandbar and sank at Poplar Point boats carried the passengers fo safety but all the freight broke out of the hold and floated downstream. Among the freight were Mrs. Yule's trunks and boxes containing woolen blankets and blankets of a quality which could not be bought in Montana. She had with her two bottles of fine imported brandy, a gift to her husband from her relatives. She said to the mate, "If you will get my boxes I will give you these," holding up the two bottles. She got her goods

40. Mr. and Mrs. William Mulcahy, Great Falls. Interviews, 1938-1939. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 267. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

without delay.

After reaching Cora creek in May, on their way to Mr. Yule's stage station at Summit, the first meal was served to them by a Chinaman with but one eye, and he was such a peculiar specimen of humanity that Mrs. Yule was unable to eat her breakfast or any other meal during their stay there.

When they reached their new home at Summit station, 12 miles from Barker, sugar and flour were selling at $10 a hundred, and potatoes were bringing the same price WHEN they could be bought at all. 41a.

1883:

Mr. Yule met his family in Fort Benton. He had left the stage station stock tender, a courtly Irishman named Fitzgerald, in charge of the station. Fitz had dinner all ready for the family, and was dressed for the occasion in an old broadcloth clawhammer coat, "biled" shirt, and overalls stuffed into rough cowhide boots. He served the dinner in style. Alex Jr. recalls an expression he used with great effect, rubbing his hands together and saying rapidly:

"Will you have black tea, green tea, or chocolaratee? Better take coffee, that's all we have today."

The primitive mode of life at the station was a trial to Mrs. Yule. The house was a double log cabin with a dirt roof, which leaked. The rough talk and ways of the freighters were foreign to

41a. Eliza (Yule) McCowan, Great Falls. Interview 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 337. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

her upbringing, and she could not use her nice silver and linens.

Alexander Sr. traded a 45-90 black powder Winchester rifle for a pre-emption claim on Belt creek and they moved there.

Fitzgerald, the Irishman, went to Great Falls to open the Axtell stables, the finest in town. He came one morning to the Yule ranch driving a fine team to a rubber-tired hack, and his passengers were Col. C. A. Broadwater and several other mining men on their way to Neihart.

Mrs. Yule had gone to the flat above the house to teach her husband how to plow, leaving the housework and the bread dough, which she had set to rise, for the children to manage. Childlike they became absorbed in play and forgot their tasks.

When Fitz came to the door he found the house in great disorder. Flour was everywhere. He made the children clean themselves up, sent Alex Jr. up the hill after his parents, while he returned to the hack to tell his "gentlemen" to examine the rock formation at the lower end of the garden, as they might find good indications there. He said he would take care of hishorses and when Mrs. Yule came down she would get them the finest meal in the country. He fed the horses, cleaned up the house, and started preparations for the meal. When the Yules came down, Mr. Yule slipped away to the creek and caught a fine mess of trout. By the time Col. Broadwater and his friends had finished their investigations there was an excellent meal for them and the house was in shining order.

After they had feasted, until they could hold no more, they

were stowed away for the night. How room enough was found for them in that little cabin it is hard to say, but that is the way it was done in the early days, no matter how many came to eat or to spend the night.

Alex Jr. recalls that Col. Broadwater, one of Montana's noted capitalists, wore a black broadcloth coat and vest and overalls. He had a huge gold chain fastened to a buckskin string. That is how they used to dress.

The garden near the Yule house had wonderful black loam soil and produced fine fruit and vegetables. Water for irrigation was brought by a ditch from Belt creek. After the railroad was built, the Great Northern shortline to Neihart, trainloads of people from Neihart used to come to Yule's for strawberry festivals. 41b.

1884:

One day when Ella Evans' mother was baking bread a man, evidently insane, walked into the house and announced that he was "hungered" With that he sat down and repeated that he was "hungered." Mrs. Evans was terribly frightened for she and the baby were alone. She told him that she had no bread, that she was just baking some. The stove started to smoke and filled the room until it became unbearable. Mrs. Evans picked up the baby (Ella) and went outside until the smoke cleared away, but the man still sat there.

41b. Alexander Yule Jr., Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 369-371. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

She cut a thick slice from a large ham, fried it, and gave it to the man with half a loaf of bread as soon as she took it from the oven. He ate the food ravenously, walked out without even a "thank you" and went to H. P. Rolfe's where he repeated his "hungered" appeal.[42]

1884:

Chris N. Dickinson came from Toma to Great Falls in 1884 and established a meat market, the first in town. He used to travel on horseback all over the country looking for beef cattle. At that time were were not more than five white women from Belt creek to Chestunut valley.

Billy Mulcahy had a place at the mouth of Deep creek; he had hauled lumber from Prickly Pear and built a house there in 1878.

Mr. Dickinson was short of beef and was riding around to buy when he overtook Mr. Mulcahy near Sand Coulee. He told Mulcahy who he was and said he was short of beef. Men didn't like to sell their brands and often beef was hard to buy.

Mr. Dickinson told Mulcahy he understood he had some good dry cows and it would be an accommodation if he (Dickinson) could buy them. Mulcahy hesitated, but finally said he would sell for $35 a head--a big price at that time. Dickinson said he would take six head. Mulcahy asked if he had any money and Dickinson replied that he had an account in the Benton bank, but had no blank checks with

42. Ella (Evans) Anthony (Mrs. Erasmus L. Anthony, Great Falls). Interviews, 1939-1940-1941, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 44. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

him. They saw a piece of brown wrapping paper by the roadside; on this was written the check for $210. When the canceled check was returned it bore the endorsement of every government agency and every saloon in the Sun River district.

There was no petty larceny in thos days; there were no locks on the doors and the latch-string was always out to friend and stranger alike. If one came to a house and the owner was away, he was supposed to make himself at home, fed and bed his horse, cook his own meal and sleep in the bed--but there was one unwritten law, however--the dishes must be washed--and that law was seldom broken. The old-timer was offended if you passed that way and didn't stop for a visit and a meal, and stay all night if you could be talked into it.[43]

1884:

When "Nigger" Mary Fields came to Montana in 1884 to be with her beloved Mother Amadeus at St. Peter's mission (near Cascade in Sullivan valley), she came to spend her whole colorful life in this state. After leaving the mission she took up residence in Cascade, where she opened a restaurant which lasted only about ten months because she gave away too many free meals to cowboys who were broke, or pretended to have empty pockets.

She was often hired by residents to care for their children when the parents were out. Regularly she charged $1.50 for her services and then spent the money for fruit to give to the children

43. Chris N. Dickinson, Great Falls. (Now buyer for the Great Falls Meat company). Interviews 1939-1941. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 271-274. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

in her charge. She did not know her birthdate, so selected two anniversaries each year for celebrating it, providing feasts for school children. her only stipulation being that they come to her home for the goodies.

Mary had a fondness for drink rivaled only by her capacity to absorb it. In those days, remarkably straight-laced in some respects and equally tolerant in others, women were not permitted in saloons. D. W. Munroe (correct) then mayor of Cascade gave her permission to enter the saloons at any time they were open; this to her great satisfaction.

Her dress was characteristic of her. It consisted of a man's coat and shoes, a dress and an apron, under which was strapped a holster carrying a Smith & Wesson which she could use with most men. She was seldom seen without a huge cigar in her mouth.[44]

1884: January:

In January, 1884, Mother Amadeus and five nuns came to Miles City. The bishop and Father Lindesmith (correct) took the nuns to "the house of one Widow McCanna". This house was built of logs hauled from the mountains at five dollars a log; it was neither clean nor warm. The beds were unclean and cold.

The nuns were hungry yet could not eat "the herring bones swimming in dubious water."

A house was procured for the nuns, which cost $30 a month for rent. Mother St. Francis cooked their frugal meals of coffee and

44. "Nigger" Mary Fields. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 376. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

potatoes with an extremely limited supply of coal. Each article, including food was limited to ten cents.

How to obtain food was indeed a problem; their rations were short rations of cornmeal and half a dozen oranges which a dealer brought because "they were rotten and he could not sell them."

Father Lindesmith one day stopped a little girl who was running at breakneck speed down the street. He asked her why her haste.

She said, "I am going to the butcher shop to buy ten cents worth of liver for the nuns."

He took that sentence for his next Sunday's text and raised enough money to tide them over.

1885: March:

In March, 1885, Mother Amadeus and three nuns were sent to the Tongue River reservation, 80 miles north of Miles City. The trip was made in a government ambulance. The nuns carried no lunch with them. At one place a basket of eggs was given them, and Bishop Brondel taught them how to break the shells on the ambulance wheels and swallow the raw contents.

They forded the Tongue river nine times which, the Indians say, "is as crooked as a white man's tongue."

At the reservation they endured many privations; they slept on buffalo robes spread on the floor.[45]

45. "How Ursuline Order made start in Treasure State," by Martha Edgerton Plassmann. Interview and research in Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrap book of her mother's writings. Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1885:

Our own Indians ate raw meat. They tore the liver from the slain buffalo and ate it raw.

It will be remembered that Rain-in-the-Face was accused of eating the heart of Tom Custer with no preliminary cooking.

There were few vegetables available to the Indians--wild turnip, camas, bitter root, dried and generally added to pounded meat.

Nothing other than mother's milk was ever included in the diet of Indian children. There was no Fletcherizing done by the redskins, in fact, they did then and have always gulped their food.[46]

"In the early days stage stations were built of logs and contsined only two or three rooms. The furniture was homemade and consisted only of tables and benches. I never saw a tablecloth at a station.

"The Apostle's admonition 'Whatever is set before you, eat, asking no questions for conscience sake,' was unnecessary for the traveler of stage coach was always ravenously hungry.

"There was always an abundance of food, but very little variety either at a meal or at different stations.

46. "Our Women," by Martha Edgerton Plassmann. Interview and research, Toomer. Scrap book of her mother's writings, Edith Rolfe Maxwell. Nov. 1941.

"There was bacon, ham or beef, baking powder biscuits and butter. The cooks were mostly men, not of the neatest. I saw one cutting beef for frying, and every now and then he wiped the butcher knife on his grimy pants. But that didn't stop me from eating a hearty dinner.

"There was always a tin wash basin and a common towel. There was dingy, gray looking comb tied to a string which dangled from a nail, for fear somebody might get away with the thing."[47.]

In the early days Helena was noted for its lavish hospitality and good cooks. There were no caterers then, so all cakes were homemade but they were works of art, both inside and out.

Hostesses used their best china and silver. Plates were heaped with rolls and many different kinds of cake, wine, coffee, and many other delicacies, most of which were imported.

The ladies dressed in beautiful gowns and all day long they feasted, drank and danced and far into the night. The feast ended only for the lack of supplies to carry on.[48.]

1885:

The first Fourth of July celebration held in the vicinity of Great Falls was a dance at Gehring's, in 1885; this place was later called "the Old Yost ranch." It was located near what is now

47. "Rapid Transit; Trials attended an Overland Trip in Pioneer Days," by Martha Edgerton Plassmann. Research and interview Edith Rolfe Maxwell, in scrap book of her mother's writings. Toomer, Nov. 1941.

48. Edith Rolfe Maxwell's scrap book of her mother's writings. Research and interview, Toomer, Nov. 1941. Billings Times, January 1938,

Gerber, a little coal loading station ten miles southeast of Great Falls.

Some of those attending were: James Thomas Lee and his wife, Ella Bell; Lee was a half-brother of J. L. Perkins, very early Chestnut valley stockman; Lee came in 1878; Dick Wilson; Dave Wilbur George Bickett; Silas Beachley (1877 pioneer and the only man to spend the winter of 1883 where Great Falls now stands) and his wife, Lelia; the Coons and their four children; Mr. Walker; Reed Bywater; Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Junkin and baby; Gus Erickson; Major and Mrs. Fields; Mrs. Clark; and the Swerdfegers from beyond Belt.

On her honeymoon from LaMar, Missouri (1884) Mrs. Lee had brought three Plymouth Rock chickens. For this celebration she baked her first cake. She said:

"I had just one egg. The cake broke in pieces and I cried. I pieced it together with frosting and cocoanut and took it to the dance. Everyone praised it. Dick Wilson said he was going home and make one just like it."

On special occasion such as this one the men wore overalls and long German socks and boots. The women wore calico or wool dresses.

In those days a box of apples shipped from Helena cost ten dollars. Mrs. Lee made her own butter and sold some of it. From her three Plymouth Rock chickens she raised a large flock and sold eggs to other women who had no chickens, but greatly prized these fresh eggs to use in their cooking. Mrs. Lee received 50 cents a pound for her butter and thought it a very high price, but people

were glad to get it at any price.

A negro couple had been sent to them from Tennessee--Ephram and Lizzie. They had their own cabin. Lizzie helped Mrs. Lee with the cooking and baking and housework, and Ephram helped Mr. Lee around the ranch. Colored help in Montana in those days was something to be talked about. Ephram and Lizzie stayed with the Lees for many years.[49]

1885: December 25:

The first community Christmas tree and program in Great Falls were held in a little schoolhouse at Third avenue south and Fifth street on December 25, 1885.

W. F. Junkin and Mrs. Junkin brought their organ in from the ranch, five miles out, and contributed the music. There was neither tinsel nor lights, but the tree was trimmed with ornages and apples tied to the branches with sting and thread. There were only 25 or 30 persons in Great Falls, and not more than six children, but they were all at the Christmas tree; so were all the people for miles around.

Professor O. C. Mortson was Santa Claus. Wm. P. Beachley (1884 pioneer, who had a store and living quarters where Goodman's Smoke House now stands at Third street north and Central avenue. It was the first confectionery and stationery store in Great Falls, and the first postoffice was in his store. Toomer) had had a barrel

49. James Thomas Lee, Great Falls. Interviews, 1938-1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 2-3. Research, Toomer.

of apples sent down from Helena and each person received an apple.

Mrs. Beachley made a doll out of a pillow slip and Bert Huy painted a face on it, and this was given to Worden P. Wren, one of the single men present. Among those at the gathering were:

Tom Lee, Chris Dickinson, Ed Canary, Mrs. H. P. Rolfe, Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Jones, and the Beachleys.

Of those who attended the first Christmas tree, the only ones living are Chris N. Dickinson, who lives in Great Falls at 327 Fourth avenue north; and, Mrs. Kate Beachley, who lives with her daughter, Mrs. Ed. Smock, on a ranch located on Hardy creek, between Cascade and Craig.

One day when Mr. Beachley was away from home and Mrs. Beachley was alone, a drunken sheepherder came into the house, waving a piece of meat and demanded that she cook a meal for him. She refused and he cussed her. Just then Phil Gibson ran in and said, "Don't cross him or he'll kill you," but when the sheepherder saw Gibson he ran out and down the road.[50.]

1885:

Mrs. Loretta Pettengill came to Montana in 1885, via Fort Benton and then to Great Falls. They lived for awhile in a tent on the west side, where the higher land was covered with tepees. The lower part was covered with water and looked like a lake. Where the Montana brewery now stand there was a grove of trees, where the wild

50. William P. and Kate Beachley, Great Falls. Interview with Mrs. Beachley 1939-1940. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 32-33. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

animals had worn a path through the green underbrush to the water's edge. The buffalo used to rub their shaggy sides against the trunks.

The Pettengills used wooden handled knives and forks, tin spoons tin cups and plates, and cooking utensils. They brought a stove with them from Helena and in this they burned driftwood and buffalo chips.

There was a Blackfeet chief, One Chief, who used to keep them in game, wild turkeys, geese and ducks, which were hung on the branches of trees, or from the rafters of the stable after they had built their new home and outbuildings. Normal winter weather then was around 50 and 60 below.

The Pettengills also ate curlews and prairie chicken.

There were elaborate dinners in those days where the wines served included claret, sherry, Port, English ale and Burgundy. The usual dinner consisted of six courses, and New York counts were shipped in in barrels of sawdust.

The Stockholm Beer hall served beer and hard liquor, and the Volk Beer gardens were where Dempsey Inn now stands. Caviar was served, but you had to pay for it; limberger cheese, crackers, cold meats, and rye bread were set out on the bar, free to the beer drinkers.

Mrs. Pettengill has paid as much as one dollar a pound for butter, one dollar a dozen for eggs, five dollars for a 100 pound sack of potatoes, and ten dollars for a 100 pound sack of sugar.

All coffee was shipped in in 100 pound sacks in the green state; you parched it and ground it yourself in a funny little boxlike grinder with a hopper on the top, and as the kernels were ground they fell into a cute little wooden drawer, which when full made enough for the ordinary family's coffeepot. All coffee was boiled and strong enough to swim an ox.

Lots of salt mackerel and codfish were eaten, and it was not until 1900 that the refined smoked bacon made its appearance.

On Sundays the ferry durnished amusement for any who cared to take the trip. They went as far as the first island (Behring) where they fished, picked berries and wild flowers, and ate their picnic lunch. By paying a quarter you could stay on the ferry all day amd dance as they went up and down the Missouri. The only way of getting across to the business section was by way of the ferry, which cost 50 cents each way.[51]

1886:

Frances Amelia Macdonald came to Great Falls with her parents in 1886. Her father, Pete Macdonald, played the big bass fiddle and called all the dances. If dances were held in a hotel, it always furnished a room in which to put the babies and tiny tots to bed. Lots of times dances were held at the different homes, and then down came the stoves, up came the tugs, and out went the furniture to make

51. Mrs. Loretta Pettengill, West Great Falls. Interviews, 1939-1940-1941, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 123-126. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

room for the fun--and what fun it was! Everybody danced, and at m midnight the ladies brought out the big lunch, but it was more than lucnh, it was a big supper.

1875: As told by Mrs. Frances (Macdonald) Babcock:

"After the slaughter of 1874 of Indian men, women and children near the Cypress Hills, it was found that the massacre had taken place on Canadian soil. In March, 1875, a party of five (Mounties) under the leadership of Col. J. F. Macleod, founder of Fort Macleod, was sent to Montana to meet Col. Irvine at Helena to investigate the massacre.

"Since six of my uncles served as Mounties for three years; three others served for a lesser time, and my father, Pete Macdonald, served for six years, I must tell you about the Macleod party.

"They left Fort Macleod with saddle horses and two pack ponies for blankets and grub, which consisted of bacon, tea and hardtack. At Fort Whoop-Up they were warned against a 'spell o' weather' by old Dave Akers, the trader in charge. It was indicated he said by two bright sun-dogs, but the officers were not familiar with the old frontiersman's weather signs, and paid no attention to the warning.

"They went on and before dark came one of the worst blizzards in history had swooped down of them. Snow blinded and stung them, and the trail was completely wiped out. Jerry Potts was a wonderful guide and pushed on hoping to reach Milk river; there were no trees on the river but there were cutbanks in which to camp; there was not a living soul between them and Fort Shaw, 75 miles south from Milk river. They reached the river about dark, and with knives cut a hole

in the snow bank and crawled in to keep warm; they took turns standing outside and holding the lariats of the horses which, had they gotten away, would have meant certain death to the officers. Here they crowded together for one day and two nights, eating raw bacon, for no fire could be built, and their hands were partly freezing.

"The second morning they had to go on or starve and freeze to death. The famous guide found directions by pure instinst and that night they spent at Rocky Coulee, huddled together, covered with a crust of ice and snow and another supper of raw bacon.

"Theu finally reached Fort Shaw, where some of their horses died, and the rest could go no farther. Some of the soldiers had to be treated for frozen feet and snow blindness."

1886:

"When the original Park hotel opened on July 4, 1886 they had a big celebration. My father was to call the dances. There were people from everywhere. They danced all night and served a delicious supper at midnight."

1897:

"I have an 1897 Christmas dinner menu card of the dinner served at the Park hotel that day. These cards were daintily water-colored by Charles Russell and no two of them were alike; each lady who was a dinner guest at the Park that Christmas day received one of these cards as a souvenir. Some of the present holders of them have been offered as much as $25 each for them. It is the only work of Russell's that he didn't sign, and until

after his death, nobody thought of asking him to do so.

DINNER

New York Counts

Celery

Puree of Pheasant Consomme, en Tasse

Chow Chow Queen Olives

Salted Almonds Russian Caviar, En Canape

Stuffed Mangoes

Broiled Fresh Lobster, Drawn Butter

Small Patties, a la Montglas

Prime Beef, au Jus

Mashed Potatoes French Green Peas

Young Turkey, Stuffed with Chestnuts, Cranberry Sauce

Candied Sweet Potatoes Asparagus Tips

Pate de foi Gras, a la Strasburg

Rum Omelet

Roast Quail, Bisque

PARK HOTEL PUNCH

Chicken Salad, en Mayonnaise

English Plum Pudding, Hard and Brandy Sauce

Hot Mince Pie Neopolitan Ice Cream

Vanilla Cream Pie Layer Raisins Champagne Jelly

Chocolate Eclairs Mixed Nuts Confectionery

Water Crackers

Swiss, American, Cream and Edam Cheese

French Coffee

PARK HOTEL
GREAT FALLS
MONTANA

CHRISTMAS, 1897.

"People carried lanterns in those days, and kerosene lamps were used in the house. Our ice-boxes were made of a large dry-goods box, with a smaller box inside, and between the two was a thick wall of sawdust, and the whole was covered with a wooden lid. Since they leaked they had to be kept outside, and ice was delivered by the ice-man who put up his ice from the river in the winter time.

"Mother used to buy honey by the five-gallon can; a man came from California each year and took orders and then would deliver later. This can would last out family for two years, besides what Mother gave away to friends and neighbors."[52.]

1887: Mary Macdonald Irvine (mother of Frances Babcock of footnote 52 above sketch).

She came to Great Falls from Fort Benton in 1887. Her home was a two-room shack at 315 Third avenue south. There was a kitchen built onto the rest of the house, but there was no door between; to get from one part of the house to the other you had to go outside. But, in spite of all this, Mrs. Macdonald considered herself lucky to have even a shack.

Behind each house in town there stood a water barrel and an

52. Frances Amelia (Macdonald) Babcock, Great Falls. Interviews, 1939-1940, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 298-307. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

ice-box, one on either side of the kitchen door.

One of the parties she attended was given at the R. S. Ball sheep ranch on Box Elder creek. People came from all over the surrounding country; they were having a grand time, but when it came time to serve the big midnight supper, lo, and behold! some body had gotten away with every bite of it. There was nothing to serve except cold water, and they never learned who snitched the eats.

Mrs. Irvine said that folks had a grand time in those days--picnics, dances, plays, church socials, and school purposes.

She was a guest at the first Caledonian celebration in Great Falls. It was held in the Cascade hotel and the big event of the evening was the marriage of the Sandy Gordons.

When the grist mill was finished in Great Falls, a big dance was given to celebrate the occasion. Mrs. Irvine came all the way from Belt with her brother, David Graham, and his wife, in a big wagon drawn by four horses.

1910:

When Mrs. Mary Macdonald married Alexander (Sandy) Irvine in 1910 he had been in America for 43 years. When he died on July 11, 1937 he had been here more than 70 years.

Sandy was one of the colorful characters of Montana. He wore a square-cut beard, a bright scarf, and was very popular with every body. Never in his life had a razor touched his face, and his beard was as fine and soft as silk. He was a great fisherman and a great hunter, and his fame as a trapshooter was statewide.

Sandy was one of the founders and first presidents of the Caledonian society and at all times was a very active member.

1937:

In January, 1937, there was a Scotch party given at the Park hotel in honor of the Irvines (Sandy and Mary) and Mrs. Arthur Lewis was in charge.

Pipers playing and pipers marching to the tunes of bagpipes, and carrying huge platters of haggis, were colorful and romantic. The haggis was placed before Sandy, and he did the honors in serving his guests with this famous Scotch dish.

Haggis is a dish for festivity and gaiety. It is made of the heart and liver and lights of a calf or sheep (some people called these parts of the animal, the "pluck"); plenty of oatmeal is used to form the body, and into this is put a generous amount of suet and onions. The whole is highly seasoned, stirred well, put into a bag like an English plum pudding, and boiled for a long time. 53. It is then transferred to a sheep's paunch and baked in the oven.

1888-1895:

William J. Crismas (correct) lived on a ranch near White Sulphur Springs, operating a cattle outfit and a sawmill with his brother-in-law, Frank J. Pickering.

Living was cheap here; they raised no grains and but few vegetables. But there was an abundance of wild geese, wild ducks, fish,

53. Mrs. Mary Macdonald Irvine, Great Falls. Interviews 1939-1940, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 143-144. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

deer, elk and bear for meat.

With the opening up of the Crow Indian reservation, in what is now Carbon county, Wm. J. Crismas, Frank Pickering, and others bought Indian allotments on the former reservation on Rocky creek.

Roy M. Crismas, born at White Sulphur Springs in 1889, is the son of Wm. J. Crismas; he lives at 2309 Second avenue north and for many years has been extensively engaged in the activities of the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers, and helped with the organization of the society.

His father's farm was near the reservation which gave him a thorough knowledge of the manners and customs of the Crow Indians. Many of them visited in their home as his father was honored and trusted by them. They came to him for advice and also for help in measuring hay when making a sale to the whites.

Oftentimes Mrs. Crismas had 10 or 12 hungry Indians at her table. If no stranger was present they were very sociable, but otherwise sat in silence.

One day a young squaw came wrapped in her greasy and ragged blanket. She stayed for dinner with the other Indians and left without speaking. No one knew from whence she came or where she was going. However, she betrayed her secret knowledge of English and the white man's culture, probably having acquired it in some mission school. She dropped a morsel of food on her dirty and greasy blanket; instead of picking it up and eating it as a non-mission Indian would have done, she laid it carefully untouched on the side of her

plate. Their most frequent visitors were: Big Hail, Push, Smoky (a negro living with the Indians), Pretty, Alphonse, and Hairy Moccasin.

Pretty was anything but what his name signified, being a big ugly, but honest, Indian. Hairy Mocassin stopped to have dinner with the Crismas's one day on his way to the agency. After eating two generous helpings of meat, vegetables, dessert, and every variety of food on the table he leaned back with a sigh, stretched, and said, "Me go Pryor (the sub-agency). Maybe one moon, maybe two moon, maybe three moon! No ketchum glub! Heap hungry! Possum, potatoes!" Then duplicating his former meal he leaned back and said, "Heap full. He-e-a-p full!" passing his hand across the lower part of his chin to indicate the completeness of his repletion.[54]

1888:

In 1888 Dr. Carroll went to the Indian agency at Fort Belknap as physician where he remained until September, 1895.

Cooks in those days were of various colors, sizes, and temperments. Major Kelly at this post, who succeeded Major Simmons, had a negro cook, "Black Mary", who went on periodical drunks. Before these sprees she always seasoned the food with tobasco sauce and red pepper. She was usually placed in the guard house to sober up.

Another cook, Brandt, an old Indian woman, assisted in the Carroll household for a time. One day they were having a big roast

54. Roy M. Crismas, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 36-37. Research, Toomer.

for dinner. Mrs. Carroll went to the kitchen during the afternoon to see how things were progressing, to find the oven door open, the roast and the cook both gone. She saw Brandt just disappearing over the top of a hill, going toward camp, with the hot roast in her apron.[55]

Mrs. Mary LaRoque says:

"The Indians roamed with the buffalo herds becasue the buffaloes were their food supplies. The Indian laws provided that no buffalo be killed unless needed and that there should be no waste.

"Then the Americans came along and ruthlessly killed the buffalo for its fur, leaving the carcasses behind.

"I remember one time going with my father and brother to the Big Dry (in the vicinity of Fort Peck) and how all of us almost wept at the sight. Hundreds of them had been killed and their meat left behind.

"Fresh meat was our chief food in the winter, but often we had dried meat. The meat was dried and then carefully sealed in a specially prepared buffalo skin.

"In those days there was no cancer, appendicitis or gall stones. Indian doctors prepared their medicine from herbs.

"When the Indians were forced on the reservations they were given ample rations; large quantities of beef, beans, homing, and other things.

55. Dr. John V. Carroll. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 327. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

but he did not like beef, he wanted buffalo.

"There was no money. Father exchanged furs for flour and other necessities."[56.]

1884:

Mrs. Hosea L. Fisher came as a bride to Stanford in 1884. Mr. Fisher was in the horse raising business. For his bride he built a seven-room house, from stones gathered along Running Wolf creek which ran through the ranch. They had shipped household goods for this western home from Washington, Iowa. There were curtains, drapes, rugs, bedding, dishes, sofa, and a parlor organ.

Shortly after her arrival, Mr. Fisher made a trip to Fort Benton for supplies, and Mrs. Fisher accompanied him. Once a year, when the boats came in, they made their pilgrimage to the river town for food and other necessities. Making this list of needed supplies for a whole year in advance was no small task for the housekeeper. The perishable goods were taken home in the spring wagon and the other purchases were sent overland by ox-team freight--a 10-ox team, or five yoke.

Mrs. Fisher discharged the man cook and his wife shortly after her arrival and then did the housework and cooking herself. She made 20 loaves of bread at a time, and this was a welcome change from the sourdough bread then made and used by most of the ranchers.[57.]

56. Article by Mrs. Mary LaRoque, Wolf Point; daughter of the late David Mitchell, famous Indian trader who was the son of D. D. Mitchell, first Indian agent in the Missouri river Ty. Research in Edith R. Maxwell's scrap book of her mother's writings. Int. and Res. Toomer.

57. Mrs. George Edwards, Great Falls. (Formerly Mrs. Hosea L. Fisher, nee Marjorie Work). Interview, Toomer, 1939-1940. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 269. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1890:

Mrs. Louise (Howard) Guyette was a little girl when her parents lived in a log cabin just 18 miles south of Great Falls. For 14 months they saw no one. It was extremely lonely and they were in constant fear of an Indian attack. Mountain rats three or four times larger than an ordinary rat came in packs to steal what they could not eat. They often carried off silver spoons; in fact, they left nothing that could be lugged away. All food had to be placed in crocks and securely covered.

In 1893 Mr. Howard traded his ranch for one on Sun river and m moved his family to Great Falls. There was no water in town, and it was bought by the barrel from the water wagon which came to the door; kerosene for lamps and lanterns was obtained from "Coal Oil" Johnnie a famous early character of Great Falls.[58]

1890:

As late as 1890 there were no pennies used in Great Falls, but the nickel had come into use by that time. When Marshall Larsen came to town he had ten pennies in his pocket. He was candy-hungry and decided to buy some. He went into a little store back of the Maverick saloon and laid his pennies on the counter, and asked for candy. The clerk gave him the sweet, picked up the pennies, went to the door and tossed all of them into the street.[59]

58. Mrs. Louise (Howard) Guyette, Great Falls. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 56. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
59. Marshall Larsen, Great Falls. Interview, 1938. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 84-85. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1890:

William P. Harrison, city clerk of Great Falls, tells of the time his father and family lived in Neihart. The citizens of the mining town had established a summer camp in the mountains, six or seven miles this side of the present Cook sheep ranch, just below the first dam, on the road to White Sulphur Springs. When convenient, whoever could would go by wagon, buggy, or on horseback to this camp and some times stay as long as a month.

They fished and hunted and rested; some times there would be as many as 35 for each meal; they lived in tents and had a good time.

His father was William Henry Harrison, a pioneer miner and merchant of Neihart. His grandfather was Peter Harrison, who invented and installed the first treasure boxes on the Deadwood stage coaches; they were build of iron and could not be opened; and they were too heavy to be carried on horseback by the hold-up men.[60]

1890:

Harry Harnett came to Havre in 1890, where he got work with Ferry and Lowery as a cowboy at $40 a month and board. The outfit has a Chinese cook who served good food and plenty of it.

Later on he went to Butte and found work in a bakery. He liked baking and decided to learn the business. After finishing his apprenticeship he went to Anaconda as cook for the A.C.M. camp. Not liking so much smoke he left for Bozeman to work as pastry cook at

60. William P. Harrison, City Clerk of Great Falls. Interviews, 1938-1939, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 139-142. Research Toomer, Nov. 1941.

three dollars a day in the Bozeman hotel. He describes it as a "handy little town in a beautiful valley surrounded by snow-capped mountains."

Barley was the principal crop there at that time, and it was shipped to Germany to be used in the manufacture of beer.

In 1898 he got a job as sheepherder for Charles Cook, whose large ranch is located 12 miles from White Sulphur Springs. A stream ran through the valley and on the banks grew many wild strawberries. Harnett used to catch trout for his noonday lunch, topped off with fresh wild strawberries.

"What a meal for a sheepherder!" he says.

Mr. Cook was careful to give his herders the food they liked. On many ranches the herders got little besides beans, coffee and bacon, and in consequence did not tarry long at that place.

In 1910 he worked as a sheepherder for Charles Bair in the Crow country. When Bair shipped his sheep that fall he received a check fpr $250,000. With his herders in tow he made the rounds of the saloons, at each place offering his check in payment for the drinks. The bartender would be unable to cash it, so they would go on to the next saloon where the performance was repeated. Bair would say, "Come on, boys," and away they would go leaving the bill unpaid, until they had visited every saloon, dance hall, and restaurant in Billings. When the banks opened next morning, Bair cashed his check and paid his account at each place.[61]

61. Harry Harnett, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 199-203. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1890:

In 1890 Claus Stuefen and his wife, Mary, with their three children came to Great Falls. They set up a tent on the river bank where they lived for awhile. Much of the winter supply of food was prepared by Anna's mother; she dried and salted meat and put up vegetables from her garden. She made salt-rising bread, a favorite in the early days. (Do you want Mrs. Durran's recipe? Toomer.) Luxuries were scarce in those days, and one of their best friends was "Stand by the Flag" Kelly sho used to bring the children gifts of fruit and candy.[62]

1891:

When John Goldie and his bride came from Scotland in 1891 their ticket read "Montana." They came to Billings by train and from there to Ubet by stage, where they had breakfast with Mrs. Barrows; they ate supper at Philbrook where they tasted their first sourdough bread and did not particularly relish it.

Horses were changed at Stanford and they had breakfast at the Utica stage station the following morning. The food at the rancher's cabin was so badly burned they couldn't tell just exactly what it was, but the chickens ate it. Chickens were on the table, the chairs, and had complete possession of the place.[63]

62. Mrs. Anna (Stuefen) Durran, Great Falls. Interview, 1938. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 337. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
63. John Goldie, Great Falls. Interview, 1938. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 59. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1893:

In 1893 Rev. J. A. Martin was sent to the Bozeman Methodist circuit. At that time there were many infidels in the state, and the Sourdough club of Bozeman was made up entirely of infidels.

In 1896 Mr. and Mrs. Martin took a ten-day trip with buggy and horses. In the buggy they carried their suitcases, their own food, horse feed, tent, and camp stove.[64]

94 1894:

In 1894 while William Kirchen was working at the smelter, he made the last trip up the river, above the falls, by steamboat. The distance by water was 87 miles. This was during the A.R.U. strike. When they arrived at Cascade half of the people from the little town were on the bridge to meet them as they thought it carried a load of beer.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. Kirchen went to Glacier park to live. Mr. Kirchen set up machinery for the Butte Oil company for the saw mill. Mrs. Kirchen was the first white woman to come to this part of the country. She cooked for a cew of 12 men. They were located near Kintla lake. This lake was well-stocked with fish. One day when the men were not working, one man fished while two men cleaned the fish, and Mrs. Kirchen cooked them--all the fish that 16 men could eat. At this time Mrs. Kirchen caught one that weighed 12 pounds.[65]

64. Rev. J. A. Martin, Great Falls. Interviews, 1939-1940-1941, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 73. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
65. Wm. and Mary Kirchen, Great Falls. Interview, 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, p. 42. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1894:

"I met Hank (W. H.) Monroe at a country dance at Soldier creek. It was held in the school house on the main road to Adel; the music was furnished by Jamison, an old fiddler. There was an ancient organ in the school house and the girls who could play would some times help out for awhile. Somebody else had a guitar and this was used to fill in and keep things lively. We danced all night, stopping only at midnight when a sumptuous supper was served. Each one brought a large basket of food which was spread on a table; coffee was made on the school house stove.

"I wore a pink silk dress with puffed sleeves, and the dress trimming was wide fragile black silk lace. The girls then wore their hair dressed high and elaborately, but there wasn't a bit of rouge, powder or lipstick at the dance. Our skin was naturally pink and white and we tried to keep it so as it was considered unladylike to be tanned the least bit.

"One of my favorite old-time recipes is that for sourdough pancakes. I mixed a thin batter of flour, water or milk, a little salt, and bacon grease or other shortening. I let this mixture set over night to get sour; next morning I added one teaspoon of soda and let the batter get quite sour. Out of this I took a cupful for the next batch. It was much improved by using cream for shortening. Just befor
66.
frying the pancakes I added one egg, a little sugar and baking powder.

66. Martha (Billups) Monroe. (Mrs. W. H. Monroe. See pp. 31-32 this material.) Interviews, 1939-1940, Toomer. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 163-165. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1895:

In 1895 the Neihart family took an interesting summer vacation trip through Yellowstone park, which was quite different from the trips made today.. There were eight of the Neihart family and their closest friends, besides some others who took the trip with the party.

Mr. and Mrs. Neihart drove a surry drawn by the finest team of horses he could buy, and the others rode on horseback. The cook followed in a covered wagon with provisions and the camp outfit. The trip required six weeks.[67]

1900:

In 1900 Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Lange (pronounced Langey-hard G) started their famous eating place near Sun River town, known as Lange's Corner. They served the public with chicken dinners and Mr. Lange entertained the guests with his mouth harp and singing--a forerunner of today's floor show.

The Langes operated their chicken dinner place for 28 years and then moved to Great Falls, where Mr. Lange for many years played the role of Santa Claus for the merchants..

He was short and stout with long grey whiskers and long snow-white hair--the perfect image of old Saint Nicholas.. He used to take toys to the children in the hospitals and helped the sick youngsters have a merrier Christmas. Mrs. Lange was known to all as Mrs. Santa Claus.[68]

67. James L. Neihart, founder of Neihart. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 294-297. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
68. Rudolph Lange of Lange's Corner, and later of Great Falls. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 213-214. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

1900:

At a whist party given by Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Green in Fort Benton, Gus Senieur carried home a large nutmeg grater as a trophy of his skill at whist.[69]

1921:

Five hundred cars, or about 20,000 tons, of ice have been shipped from Minnesota to the Havre and Butte divisions of the Great Northern this winter, to make up for the lack of ice due to the mild winter.[70]

1928:

One of the famous social events of the Flint creek valley area, the annual fish fry which in days gone by has attracted as many as 1,500 diners, is about to be revived after a suspension of 12 years,/ (1928) it was stated by H. A. Murphy of Philipsburg, a prominent member of the Flint Creek Valley Sportsmen's club.

"The fry," Murphy said, "will be held on July 11 at Gillis's bridge on Lower Rock creek, about 14 miles west of Philipsburg. Serving will start at five p. m. A fish fry consists of bacon, mountain trout, fried potatoes, pickles, cabbage salad, ice cream and cookies. There is usually an orchestra on hand to provide dance music, and after the banquet everybody is expected to join in the whirl."

The size of the crowd that is anticipated is indicated by the fact that a staff of fishermen, 50 in number, recently started fishing the waters of east fork, middle fork, and Ross' fork of Rock creek, to accumulate an adequate supply of fish. These fish, almost as soon as

69. River Press, Fort Benton, February 19, 1900. February 19, 1941, Vol LXI, No. 18. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
70. River Press, Fort Benton, February 26, 1921. February 26, 1941, Vol LXI, No. 19. Report of the General Supt. of the Great Northern at Great Falls, W. R. Smith. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

caught, are clapped into the freezing plant at Kelly's market at Hall. This is an "instant-freezing" plant, a method of preservation that is widely practiced and which has the endorsement of the federal government. It is not only safe but it also preserves the flavor of fish, flesh, fowl, fruit or vegetable that is frozen instantly.

"Bring cup, knife, fork and spoon," Murphy said. "We expect to have the happiest, jolliest crowd of Montanans that ever assembled out of doors at our fish fry. It is an interesting sight to watch the cooks as they maneuver their pans of fish across the lengthy cooking range. The fish start at the warm spot. When they reach the hot spot they are done. It takes judgment and skill. Every fisherman knows that the flavor of Rock creek fish in unequalled in the mountains of the west."[71.]

1935:

".....Unless some authentic record has been kept of these individuals (Northwest pioneers born in the sixties) and their activities, coming generations will know less of their having lived than than they will of the uncountable herds of buffalo whose lives were spent on this same terrain, but whose skulls were more enduring. They will have joined the great majority who have gone 'to that bourne from which no (cowboy) returns.' It is a 'Consummation devoutly to be wished' that, all there, we will again hear the welcome cry of the

71. Great Falls News, July 5, 1940, Vol. 9, No. 27. "Old Fish Fry Fete Revived--Famous Flint Creek Valley Social Event to be Held after Twelve year Interval." (in 1928) by H. A. Murphy of Philipsburg, prominent member of Flint Creek Valley Sportsmen's club. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

roundup cook at 3:30 a. m.--'Ro-o-oll out,' 'Grub pile,' 'Come 'n get it,'--that we will again saddle and mount our knowing steeds and go together on circle."[72.]

"The horse and mule live thirty years
And nothing know of wines or beers.
The goat and sheep at twenty die
And never tasted Scotch or Rye.
The cow drinks water by the ton
And at eighteen is mostly done.
The dog at fifteen cashes in
Without any aid from rum or gin.
The cat in milk and water soaks
And then in twelve short years it croaks.
The modest, sober, bone-dry hen
Lays eggs for nogs, then dies at ten.
All animals are strictly dry
They sinless live and swiftly die.
But sinful, ginful, rum-soaked men,
Survive for three score years and ten.
And some of us, the mighty few,
Stay pickled 'till we're ninety-two."[73.]

72, From an autobiographical sketch by E. L. Dana, prominet stockman of Adel, entitled "The Spirit of the Unconquerable West," written at the request of John Clay & company of Chicago, for "Live Stock Markets." Interview 1939. Great Falls Yesterday, pp. 187-188. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

73. Great Falls News, January 31, 1941, Vol. 10, No. 4. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.

Charles Bauer, of Great Falls, says the foregoing poem is "all wet." Charles is a good friend of Jimmy Angel, of Dupuyer, who has the attractive little eating place on the right hand side of the highway, the last building, going north. The place where the cages of wild animals amuse those who stop for refreshment at Jimmy's.

Jimmy has beer also, and each time a glass is drawn the foam and overflow is carefully caught in a bucket, instead of letting it go down through the drain as is usually done. One day Charles asked Jimmy why all this extra work, and Jimmy said:

"Well, Charles, if you'd stick around until between five o'clock and six this evening, you would see for yourself. But since you won't be here I'll tell you. We have a very fine milk cow and she is a pet as well. Late in the evening, before our supper time, she comes to the back porch and with her front foot knocks on the porch floor until we answer her. Our answer is this bucket of beer, and if there is but little in the bucket I draw some more, so she will have a good drink. It is a daily habit of hers, winter and summer. Boy, she sure likes her beer. So far as I can see it has never hurt her in the least." 74.

"In 1886 to 1888 I was riding with the DT outfit (Day's outfit). The only spices our roundup cook had to do with were salt, pepper and cinnamon. We had no beef; just smoked bacon. There was no tea, but plenty of strong black coffee boiled in a big pot over the camp fire. Iron bars were put across the camp fire, very much like the grill of

74. Jimmy Angel, Dupuyer. By Charles Bauer, Great Falls. Interview, by Toomer, Nov. 1941.

today. Breakfast on roundup is very early, and by nine or ten the cook, with the help of the cavvy herder, is ready to move on to the next camp, where the midday meal, supper and camp for that night are made. The cook's job was anything but easy, when you stop to think he had to cook breakfast for between 30 and 40 lean, hungry cowboys, then wash his dishes and pack up and move on to the next place to have dinner ready by noon.

"The coffee was the famous old brand, Arbuckles'; we had plenty of beans and sourdough biscuits, all cooked in Dutch ovens, on our 'grill'. The Dutch ovens had flat lids with an upstanding rim around them which kept the hot coals from rolling off the top of the oven.

"We had tin plates, cups, spoons, and wooden handled knives. All cooking utensils, outside the Dutch ovens, were of the famous Neidringhaus galvanized ware, called German galvanized ware.

"We had no camp stools, or chairs, or benches. We grabbed our eating tools, marched by the mess pots and took what we wanted; we then squatted on our heels and ate, or stood up.

"Our sweets were stewed prunes or dried apples, sweetened with black, coarse, brown sugar.

"One of our favorite messes was 'Bitch in the Sack.' The cook took stale bread, raisins, rice and hot water and stirred it all together. This was then put into a bag, tied shut, and plunged into a pot of boiling water where it cooked until it looked like the damn bag would burst. It was mighty fine eating and we were always glad to hear that the cook was cooking 'Bitch in the Sack.'

"Some times we had the good fortune to stay in one camp for two days. Then the cavvy herder and perhaps a cowboy dug a deep pit close by the cook wagon. A deep bed of coals was then prepared, while two other cowboys killed a critter. The head was severed and put into the pit on top of the deep bed of red hot coals; hot coals were heaped over and around the head and it was left there all night. Next day we had the critter's head for our dinner.

"Sounds like it might be pretty messy, but it was delicious. The all-night cooking over the hot coals caused the skin to crack open; the tongue was easily peeled, the brains were thoroughly cooked, and every morsel of meat on the head was greedily eaten. We were glad of a change of menu.

"Meanwhile the critter had been dressed out, cooled, and then rolled in big canvas and carried in the mess wagon; it didn't last very long however. If trees were close by, the carcass was suspended from the limbs, and then wrapped in the canvas again when the outfit moved on."[75.]

(Verbatim):

America consumes more potatoes than it raises and thousands and thousands of bushels are imported each year. Most of these are "new" potatoes from Cuba, the Bahama Silands, Puerto Rico and Bermuda. These potatoes come into our markets in late winter and early spring. Oddly enough these potatoes appear quite different from those raised in

75. Sid Willis, The Mint, Great Falls. Interview by Toomer,, Nov. 1941.

our northern and central states, yet they are grown from the same seed. The size, character and flavor vary greatly according to climate and soil; seed potatoes from one district may produce tubers of a very different sort when planted in another district.

A good example of this are the famous Idaho potatoes,, which possess qualities not found in potatoes from any other section. Grown in certain volcanic ash soils of Idaho and Montana, they frequently weigh several pounds each and are especially suited for baking. No other potatoes in the world equal them in this respect.[76]

Mrs. Maxwell says that "Bitch in the Sack" is very much like "Plum Duff" which was made of raisins and boiled in a sack in the early days in the homes. When young bulls and lambs were castrated,, the "fries" were considered one of the greatest of delicacies; as were the chitterlings.[77]

SEE "My Life on the Range," by John Clay. pp. 351-352. Interesting items about stockmen's food.[78]

SEE Yellowstone Kelly's book, where he tells of "buffalo ribs."[79]

SEE "America Cooks," pp. 485-504 inclusive. Excellent material.[80]

76. "Foods America Gave the World," by A. Hyatt Verrill. Appendices in collaboration with Otis W. Barrett, D. Sc. L. C. Page & Co., Inc., Boston, Publishers, 1937. Printed by The Colonial Press Inc., Clinton, Mass. pp. 30-31. Only place in this excellent book where Montana is mentioned Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
77. Edith Rolfe Maxwell, Great Falls. Interview, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
78. "My Life on the Range," by John Clay, 1924. Privately printed, Chicago. pp. 351-352. Research, Toomer, Nov. 1941.
79. Yellowstone Kelly's book.
80. "America Cooks," by the Browns, Cora, Rose and Bob, 1940. Publishers, W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 70 Fifth avenue, N. Y. Printed in the U.S.A. for the publishers by Quinn & Boden company, Inc., Clinton, Mass. See Chapter on Montana, pp. 485-504. Research, Toomer. Nov. 1941.

In the middle and eastern states very little is known about the operation of big sheep and cattle ranches. I think, perhaps, more is known about the "outside" activities, than the heart of a big outfit--the cook, in her kitchen and dining room domain. As far as I can find there is no printed article on the subject.

Several years ago, when first coming to the Treasure State, I had occasion to live for awhile on one of the biggest sheep ranches in Montana. It was the first of February, the snow was more than waist-deep, and the thermometer had gone so far down it couldn't get back up--56 below on this ranch.

The chore boy had thirteen fires to build each morning, which included the big kitchen range, the dining room stove, and eleven others strung around on the ranch. He milked eleven cows, fed 100 pigs, took care of 350 young hens, and a flock of turkeys; he cooked a hot mash for the pigs, chickens and turkeys during this extremely subnormal weather. He made more than sixty pounds of butter each week, and averaged close to 300 eggs daily. He had a cart which was drawn back and forth from the barn to the milk house, twice a day; in it were the huge milk cans; in the milk house were the cream separator, the butter making things, a milk trough through which ice-cold spring water always flowed. Here he kept the delicious ice-cold buttermilk, the whole milk for the table, the skim milk, and the thick yellow cream.

Immediately after breakfast he took the cook's order for the day's meals; excepting of course, the meat, which was ordered for only one meal at a time, and immediately following each meal the order for the next was taken.

got up around at 3:30 a. m. In the winter fires were to be built and in the summer, other things occupied his time. His was a life to be envied by no one in the world.

The garage, which held three cars and a truck, the ranch hands' shower bath, and the blacksmith shop, occupied a long building next to the big bunkhouse. The ranch house was on the west side of a square, the bunkhouse on the south, and the garage building on the east, while occupying the center of this court was the woodpile. It was so big and so high it was impossible to see over it from any of the buildings.

In the basement of the "big house" was the electric light plant, and the cellar for canned goods. Directly south of the kitchen door was the commissary, the cold storage plant for fresh and cured meats, the butcher shop, the ice house and the Boss's office.

In the butcher shop the chore-boy cut the roasts, chops, stews and steaks according to the cook's orders; there the bacon and ham were sliced for breakfast; there the ice was gotten in summer time for the iced tea and iced coffee and homemade ice cream; there the 100 pound sack of flour, or sugar, the cereals, coffee, tea, macaroni, spaghetti, rice, hominy, dried fruits, honey, flavoring extracts, salt, and other spices, soap, etc. were brought to the kitchen on cook's orders by the chore-boy.

The lard, hams, and bacon were brought from the smoke house which sat high on a rise north of the "big house." Not far from it was the immense root cellar, housing tons of potatoes, turnips, parsnips, carrots, onions, garlic, and rutabagas. Close by was the great cabbage pit, which held a thousand heads. In the root cellar also was

the luscious homemade sauerkraut, two 50-gallon barrels of it. In the smoke house were the barrels of pickled pigs' feet, 80 or 90 paunches of head cheese,, and as many pig tails, to be eaten on some cold day with some of the sauerkraut. Here, too, was kept the tier upon tier of home-made lard in great 50-gallon crocks, long milk cans, and smaller buckets to be distributed to the sheepherders caring for the 20,000 sheep.

I will give you the cook's duties for one day during lambing time. She arose at four a. m. The fire was going good in the kitchen range. She put the coffee in two huge pots holding 30 cups each; next she stirred up the first bowl of hot cake batter--two gallons of it. The next step was to break 60 or 70 eggs onto two immense granite platters; then two large griddles were put on the stove to heat--each one holding 16 pancakes. Then the high platter of bacon was laid in large dripping pans, to be slid into a hot oven at the last minute.

Next she took another two-gallon bowl and made her second batch of hot cake batter; she used one egg to each man in mixing up her batter, with plenty of sour cream and melted butter--it was no wonder she had to make four gallons of the stuff.

Then she put the plates of butter, the pitchers of syrup, which had been heated in the warming oven of the big range, plates of cookies, or coffee cake (all homemade) glasses of jelly, great bowls of stewed fruit, and packages of eight or ten different kinds of dry cereal, and several half-gallon pitchers of pure cream on the two long tables, which had been set with plates, cups, saucers, silver, cereal bowls, and sauce dishes, the night before. Many times there would be stacks of plain and sugared doughnuts and sponge cake instead of the cookies and coffee cake.

Back to the kitchen then, where the oatmeal was stirred, the coff coffee pushed back, and two immense Dutch ovens set in their place. Into these went a thin layer of melted butter. Now she started frying hotcakes, and very carefully they were piled into the Dutch ovens. After one oven was full it was time to ring the first breakfast bell at 5:45. Things began to really hum in the "big house" kitchen then. One griddle was removed, to make way for two enormous iron skillets in which to fry the eggs--in pure butter. After the first two skillets of eggs came out, the bacon was slipped into the hot oven, and then things happened so fast it would be hard to tell about it. The second bell pealed out into the clear frosty air and 25 men came tumbling pell-mell out of the bunkhouse into the big dining room. The food which had taken two hours to prepare and perfect was eaten in just exactly eleven minutes.

As each one finished he brought his "set-up" to the kitchen, scraped his plate and emptied his cup into a bucket, then he filed out, without so much as a"Good-morning" to the cook.

There would be lunches to put up for the "bunch-herders" and the "camp tenders."

Then a hurried breakfast for herself, eaten perhaps as she cleared the dining table, or standing at the kitchen table. Then orders to the chore-boy for the day's supplies, and the meat for the noon meal only. Then to stack the dishes.

The next thing was to make nine big pies, a daily task, and a different kind each day. Dried apple, dried peach, dried apricot, prune, custard, blackberry, chocolate or lemon. While these baked, she washed the dishes; she had no help of any sort.

After the pies came out, the 30-pound roast went into the oven. Some times it was beef, some times pork, some times veal or mutton. At two killings in the coldest weather, 120 or 130 hogs were killed, which supplied spareribs, backbone, chops, steaks, cutlets, and fresh roasts for awhile; but soon "all but the squeal" was worked up into all the goodies that only a Hollander knows how to prepare. He and his helper would be busy for more than a month at each killing, "working" up the hogs.

More than 30 sheep were consumed on this ranch each year, and at least six or eight beeves and as many veal critters, to saynothing of the chickens, turkeys and fish, caught in the streams running through the place.

With the roast for dinner, went great quantities of potatoes; string beans or creamed peas; buttered carrots; or baked parsnips; candied sweet potatoes; macaroni and cheese; or macaroni, tomatoes and onions; or creamed onions; or stuffed onions; brown gravy; hot muffins or hot biscuits, or cornbread; as well as stacks of homemade white and whole wheat bread; apple sauce; stewed prunes; steamed rice; pickles; jelly; pie; coffee, buttermilk and whole milk (two pitchers of each on each table) and perhaps a platter of deviled eggs and another platter of cold sliced head cheese, or a bowl of cottage cheese.

However much was put on the table it disappeared like a snowball in August. Those Swedes, Norwegians, Hollanders, and Americans, with a sprinkling of Scotch, were hollow to the toes all the time.

After dinner was over, the meat order for the evening meal was given to the chore-boy; this consisted usually of steaks or chops or fried ham; one large steak, two chops, or one large slice of ham per

person. Potatoes, previously cooked with the jackets on and cooled (the small ones which could not be used otherwise) were sliced and fried, either plain or lyonnaise; sometimes a large pan of escalloped potatoes were made for supper; a cabbage salad, or cole slaw with sour cream dressing; buttered beets; or French toast and honey; fruit sauce and cake or cookies; raisin cream muffins, or oatmeal muffins, or Johnny cake, with the usual tall stacks of homemade bread; jelly or jam; and the usual drinks.

After supper was over the routine of clearing and washing the dishes, and the breakfast meat order given; the eggs brought in in a huge bowl; the pancake ingredients set out on the kitchen table, and twice a week the sponge for baking bread was set, 12 and 15 large loaves made at a baking, with five dozen Parkerhouse rolls at each baking.

Once aweek, during the cook's spare time in the afternoon, when she should have been grabbing a little rest, she made from 100 to 150 doughnuts; or the same number of cookies; every other day there were two cakes to be "whipped up in a jiffy"; besides making a quart or two of marmalade from the orange peels left from the breakfast, when they were served.

On Saturday afternoon she crumbled tons of stale white bread and cornbread to be used as stuffing in the Sunday birds. The birds had to be cleaned and special cakes made for the "unexpected guests" who were usually "just dropping in on their way some place" on Sunday, about 11:45 a. m.

Homemade noodles, or dumplings accompanied the stewed chicken, and gravy, with an au gratin dish and a buttered vegetable and a salad accompanied the roast or fried chicken.

In the summer time there were wagon loads of spinach, green beans, green peas, lettuce, onions, radishes, beets, new potatoes, and carrots to be washed, shelled and scraped in the evening on the back porch, after the day's work was done, in preparation of next day's meals.

Gallons and gallons and gallons of fresh strawberries were hulled after supper; they were served in pies, shortcakes, or just with loads of cream and sugar. Every Sunday during the summer a three-gallon freezer of ice cream (two-thirds pure cream) was made for dinner and supper. A plain icingless cake usually accompanied this.

In the fall the cook made 25 pounds of fruit cake which was used at Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's day. It was one of the most delicious I ever tasted, and was made entirely of dried fruits. Peaches, apricots, apples, prunes, raisins, fresh apples, homemade orange peel, eggs, spices, canned cherries (dried and rolled in sugar) dry oatmeal, brown and white sugar, honey, and New Orleans molasses.

It is amazing how much can be done towards making a delectable fruit cake, when glazed fruits, orange, lemon and citron peels and nuts are unobtainable. It was allowed to age for several weeks before it went to table where it disappeared at a bewildering rate.

Once aweek the cook shaved innumerable bars of soap into a five-gallon milk can and let it simmer on the stove for hours. This was her liquid soap dipped out with a cup.

At Christmas time a tree was brought in from the mountains, and through the holidays it graced the center of the table and added cheer to

an otherwise monotonous and uneventful existence. A suet pudding was made for holiday use, served with hard sauce; homemade mincemeat for pies; and home grown pumpkin pies, rich with cream and butter. Rich coffee cakes, cookies, and butter cakes; gingerbread piled high with whipped cream; cheese omelettes, stuffed pork chops, and other extras were squeezed into the holiday menu.

There was running spring water for household use, and an immense hot water tank which furnished plenty for general and personal uses. There were many electric lights all over the place, and everything in the world to use in the kitchen and dining room except the most necessary of all--a cook's helper.

They were long, hard days at all seasons of the year for that least appreciated of all ranch help--the heart of the house--the cook. 81.

SEE "Overland Stage to California" by Roote for accounts of food served at stage stations. 82.

SEE "Army Letters of an Officer's Wife," by Mrs. Rae of Fort Shaw to see how the officers lived in the early days at the posts. 83.

SEE Lewis and Clark Journals for an account of their feasts. 84.

81. Edith E. Toomer.
82. "Overland Stage to California," by Roote.
83. "Army Letters of an Officer's Wife," by Mrs. Rae (Wife of Lieut. Rae
84. "Lewis and Clark Journals."

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