

# Pioneer Miner Purchased Alhambra Springs Tract for \$3,000 Gold Dust

## Will Redding, 90-Year-Old Pioneer, Retires to Prickly Pear Valley Home After Active Part in Montana Events

By W. W. MOSES.

In a little house on the road up the Prickly Pear valley between Clure and Alhambra Hot Springs lives Will Redding, a pioneer of Montana, who came to this part of the country when it was still within the confines of the territory of Idaho.

Redding, who was one of the early settlers of Alhambra springs and who gave them that name, was one of the men who made his way out of the scenes of conflict during the early days of the Civil war, and sought refuge in the then little known north-western mountains of Idaho.

Grand old and best remembered of the pioneer mark, his memory of early day events remains as fresh as today. He is still able to relate many of the stirring incidents of the days when he cast his lot with the adventurers and seekers of wealth among the valleys and foothills of the Rockies.

For many years Redding has made the Prickly Pear valley his place of abode, and has remained until his death and burial in the quiet of his times of Montana. He is a steady worker at the hotel maintained at the springs, which he once owned for several years, and here he puts in his time shifting the cards and playing solitaire, with an occasional game of poker when he can find others to play with.

Redding made his first step in what is now Montana at Hannack, when that place was one of the important towns of Idaho and before it took upon itself the importance of the capital of the territory of Montana.

He was born in Kentucky, Charleston county, Mo., January 21, 1836. During the opening days of the Civil war he was recruited, along in 1861, and served under General Price on the side of the south. He was taken prisoner by the Union forces, but in time was released and at the instance of Kentucky, he started for Idaho, which was then the scene of many of the followers of General Price.

**Overland Teamster**

At St. Joseph, Mo., he boarded a steamer owned by Mrs. J. Leonard bound for the upper Missouri but, he says, there were only a few men on board, he did not like the outfit and he got off at Omaha, where he obtained employment as a teamster on a Mercantile company's wagon train of about 200 wagons bound for Salt Lake City.

Redding says that on the way out through the country traversed by the Platte, his train was joined by the smaller wagon train of Sidney Edger-ton, first governor of the territory of Montana, and Wilber F. Sanders, former United States senator from Missouri. They were bound for Idaho, where Sanders Edger-ton, previously a member of congress from Ohio, had finished his service in congress early in 1861 and had then been appointed chief justice of the newly formed territory of Idaho. He was assigned to the eastern part of the territory, within which Hannack, then famous for its gold diggings, was located.

Edger-ton left his old home in Akron, Ohio, June 1, 1861, accompanied by his family, his nephew, Wilber F. Sanders, the latter's family and several gentlemen who wished to seek their fortune in the west. Arriving at St. Joseph they boarded a steamer up the Missouri to Omaha, where they outfit, and by the time they had reached the mouth of the Platte they had traveled overland to Hannack, via Keosauqua, Lawrence, the mouth of the Snake, Snake river ferry. They arrived safely at Hannack, September 17, 1861, and unpacked their tired ones on Yankee flats close to Grasshopper creek, but many hundreds of miles from Lewiston, the capital of Idaho. It is said that news of the gold discovery at Hannack reached the west with the fact that the season was well advanced in the party to go north from Snake river instead of continuing on to Lewiston.

In the diary of Harriet P. Sanders, wife of Wilber F. Sanders, giving a daily narrative of their journey from

Omaha to Hannack, Mrs. Sanders told of joining a train from St. Joseph on the Green river on August 29, which is probably the train with which Redding was traveling, as it is the only train mentioned by her in the diary.

**Montana Created**

At a meeting of citizens of Hannack and Virginia City several months following Edger-ton's arrival he was selected to go to Washington to bring about the creation of a new territory.

He left Hannack the middle of January, 1862, traveling via Salt Lake City, and arrived in Montana the first of February, 1862. The territory of Montana was created and he was appointed by President Lincoln the first governor of the territory.

Redding, after having served as a teamster of the Norman train for about two months and still having a long distance of his before Salt Lake City could be reached, developed a few gold diggings and he went to the fore-noon of the outfit and offered to relinquish his pay of \$20 per month, if the forenoon would let him off from the balance of the journey. His offer was accepted and he purchased a male mule, mounted with the wagon train and headed north for the gold diggings.

Redding does not now recall from whom he obtained the mule nor when he paid for it, but he does know that it was for a time thereafter more or less connected with several historic events.

In the first place the mule was placed in a herd which was being run by George Love, the notorious desperado by the hands of whom Magruder was slain.

At Virginia City, to which place Redding soon drifted after his arrival at Hannack, Redding sold the mule to Lloyd Magruder, and it was in the herd which was afterwards destroyed by the bandits who murdered Magruder.

**Wealthy Merchant**

Magruder was a wealthy merchant of Salt Lake City, who late in 1860 loaded a pack train with merchandise and drove it, 5,000 miles over Indian trails to Hannack. Arriving at the latter place he found that the scene of activity had shifted to Alder Gulch and he continued on to those diggings with his stock of goods which he specially sold, receiving in return about \$24,000 in gold dust.

On his way to the gold diggings Magruder's outfit had been joined by "Doc" Howard, Chris Lowry and Jim Bennett, who were given employment by Magruder in Virginia City and when he had disposed of his stock of goods were engaged to return with him to Elk river and to assist in the handling of a drove of 70 head of fine mules which he had acquired in addition to his \$24,000 in gold dust from the sale of the merchandise.

These three conceived the idea of killing Magruder for the sake of the mules on the trail back to Elk river. They left Virginia City in October and while passing through the River Bend mountains headed for Lewiston, Magruder and four others of his party were foully murdered by the trio, and three taken over a high cliff.

It was only sufficient horses for the party to return to Salt Lake in Virginia City in 1866 and later to return to Hannack, where they were killed by the bandits who were hunting for the mules following waiting to avoid some of the drove of mules taken in a canyon where they had been slaughtered, among them the time which Redding had brought to Virginia City.

The three murderers accompanied by a fourth member of the party whom they had intimidated, finally showed up at Lewiston at the Luna House, of which the landlord was Bill Beatty, a warm friend of the murdered Magruder. Beatty was also the owner of the stage line between Lewiston and



Will Redding, overland teamster, pioneer of Alder gulch and Last Chance gulch, residing on the steps of the hotel at Alhambra Hot Springs, of which resort he was the owner in the states.

Walls Walla, Beatty, who had seen the mule before, immediately conceived the idea that they had killed his friends. Beatty's alarm was caused mainly upon a dream he had experienced some time before, even before Magruder had left Virginia City, in which he had a vision of Lowry striking out Magruder's brains with an ax.

After the departure of the stage for Walls Walla, Beatty started out on his investigation and in the course of a few days made discoveries which confirmed his suspicions of the murder and robbery of Magruder. He then went on the trail of the trio and never rested until he had crossed their tracks in San Francisco. They were returned to the territory, tried and executed for their crime.

Coming back to Redding, the principal of this sketch, after reaching Alder Gulch, that young man tried his hand at the diggings, but found he was not strong enough for that character of work and he then obtained a job clerking in a store operated by John A. Creighton.

Creighton had come into the gold territory with a train of 25 wagons, each having four teams of oxen, and carrying a large stock of merchandise. He shortly disposed of most of his stock which brought him in \$20,000 and he then secured a store in Alder Gulch and subsequently conducted a store in Virginia City until 1868, when he disposed of his interests and returned to Omaha. It was Creighton who built the first telegraph line into the territory, bringing it from Salt Lake to Virginia City in 1866 and later extending it to Hanna.

It was while in the employ of Creighton at Virginia City that Redding witnessed the execution at that place of the outlaws, Frank Parish, Homer P. Helm, "Chalmer" George, Jack East,agher and Harvey Logan, at the hands of the vigilantes, January 14, 1867.

Redding states that while located at Virginia City he was a fellow boarder with the late Senator Mr. A. Clark at a place run by Andy Gilson. Gilson had come out from Missouri, also, and Redding says, his wife "set a pretty good meal." Gilson afterward lived till

(Continued on Page Two)

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### ORPHANS' HOME TAG DAY DRIVE FIXED MARCH 17

(Continued from Page One)

may continue their education. The girls are kept until they complete the eighth grade and then are placed in suitable homes where it is possible for them to attend high school if they so desire. An effort is made by the sisters to keep in touch with all the children thus placed and see that they are properly cared for.

St. Thomas Home was built at an expense of \$150,000, exclusive of furniture, of which there still remains a debt of \$40,000. The monthly running expenses of the home approximates nearly \$2,000, all of which is spent in Great Falls. These expenses do not include salaries for the sisters as all of their services are given gratis. During the last year repairs on the heating plant cost \$2,500 in addition to other necessary repairs on the building. The tuition asked for each child is \$15 per month and even at that rate only about one-third of the children are being paid for. Consequently, if assistance were not received from the friends of the home on tag day and at other times during the year, it would be impossible for the sisters to meet the expenses.

The sisters always welcome contributions of clothing and shoes for the children. The old clothes are made over into suitable garments for those children whose relatives have abandoned them and as a result are dependent upon the home.

During the years that the Home has been open the sisters have had a number of children brought in from homes where they have been undernourished and half clothed. Some came from homes where the mother died of starvation and neglect, having denied herself that the children might have whatever good there was. Others have been taken from homes where the drunken step-father had been mistreating the children from the time of the mother's death. In one case the mother had deserted five children and they were brought to the home in 20 heavy zero weather with mittens on their feet for stockings and their legs wrapped in burlap. The rest of their clothing was in rags, so that their little bodies were suffering severely from the cold when they reached the home.

Residents of Great Falls and surrounding community are extended an invitation to visit the home on any day of the week throughout the year between 9 and 11 a. m. and 1 and 5 p. m. In speaking of the approaching tag day Saturday, the mother superior at St. Thomas said:

"The people of Great Falls and eastern Montana, irrespective of religious denomination, have always been, more or less, in sympathy with the needs of the home and have generously responded to all appeals for assistance, and we feel confident that the coming St. Patrick's Tag Day will bring excellent results."

### PIONEER MINER

(Continued from Page One)

gate between Montana City and Clancy for King & Gillette, who built the toll road through the Frisky Four valley.

**Opened Grocery**

In 1865 Redding followed the exodus of the gold hunters to Last Chance gulch, and he states that he opened his first grocery store in Helena that year. For his store building he hauled, with four teams of oxen, lumber from Jefferson City where it had been whipsawed. While operating this store he acted as agent for the A. J. Oliver & Company stage line, this concern running stages from Virginia City to the various camps about the territory. Oliver went to Washington to seek a mail contract and while he was absent Redding acted as superintendent of the line. The following year Redding disposed

of his store in Helena and came to the springs which he bought from Sylvester Dustin, the first settler there, who had a squatter's right upon the springs and 160 acres of land. For this right Redding paid Dustin \$5,000 in gold dust. It was then that he improved the place and gave it the name it bears today.

In 1904, the springs then belonged to Mrs. W. R. Logan, a daughter of Redding, the resort was purchased by M. J. Sullivan, present owner.

Redding was justice of the peace at Clancy for many years up to four or five years ago. Soon after his arrival in the territory he was married in Virginia City to a step-daughter of Dr. G. E. Stein. He is the father of Mrs. Logan, widow of Major W. R. Logan, now residing in Washington, D. C., of Furness Redding, a Great Northern engineer now residing in Great Falls; Arthur Redding, a stationary engineer with whom the old man lives near Albion Springs; a son in Helena, and a daughter, Mrs. C. W. Cramer, of Missoula. One son was killed in the Legal Tender mine near Clancy about 25 years ago.

In 1912 Redding aided in the election of M. J. Sullivan as representative in the 12th legislative assembly from Jefferson county and Sullivan succeeded in having him appointed doorkeeper in the house of representatives during that session.

### BEANS AND CORN STAPLE FOODS OF MOUND BUILDERS

Cleveland, Ohio.—(AP)—The modern scientific dietitian would have had a great opportunity to practice his vocation among the mound builders of prehistoric times. Beans and corn were the only things about which they knew much. Habits of the prehistoric peoples are described at length in a new history compiled by Harold I. Madison, curator of education of the Cleveland museum of natural history. Mr. Madison said there is little doubt but that the mound builders were a race of American Indians.

## John M. I One of the of Mo

John M. Bozeman, one of the native of Georgia, spring of 1862 with eleven the Colorado mines, on t Stuart's report of gold. A Bozeman became keenly interested in a cross country route

His goal was a route which on the distance then traversed mining camps just springing

After many unsuccessful and courage won out. This Bridger who claimed that of the Big Horn mountain river, was the shorter. T was later named, proved easily travelled. It ran t and west, along the east side tains, through Fort Kearny, Big Horn river. At that pe crossing Clark's Fork of t the city now named after J.

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