

[J. W. (Jim) King]

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Interview with J. W. (Jim) King, Lozeau, Montana.

(Mr. King's anecdotes are apt to be a bit touched up to give them interest. However, his memory is keen.)

Just over the hill from Verde Creek is Sunrise. I recall a lucky strike made there in the early days. The discovery brought 3,000 miners. [Each?] locator was allowed but 200 feet in length for his claim. They took out about \$1,600 a day, using only pick and shovel. That was about in 1885 or 1886. Laborers got \$18 a day wages. But there were a hundred men looking, to one man working.

Supplies were brought from Virginia City, Montana, packed on the backs of the miners. Some made a business of packing in that way, and got \$100 for a sack of flour. The first store was at A. P. Johnston's, and he has told me he often got a dollar a pound for it.

Alfred Lozeau and his breed wife came from Walla Walla, Washington. They stayed in Superior over-night when they came here, and in the morning bought supplies for all their money but one dollar. When they were all ready to go, Old Man Lozeau said, "Well, we got one dollar left; you can't buy anything with that."

His wife chuckled and said, "Yes, we can: one drink of whiskey apiece."

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So they had their drink, and started East. They got to the place called the Milwaukee Ranch now, about seven miles east of Superior, and Lozeau, struck by its beauty, 2 said, "We stop here."

They settled there, with just squatter's rights, of course. Lozeau killed two or three deer for his wife, then set out afoot to make a living packing, at first on his back, from Virginia City to camps on Cedar Creek. He swam the flour over the Missoula River, using horses for that. The next year he bought horses for his packing.

At that time there were only trails through this part of the country. The road came in 1890. The Northern Pacific steel was laid that year, too, but there were no trains through until the following year.

Henry [Reslin?] was running a butcher shop, William McBride was a carpenter, and Mrs. William McBride had a bakery. Frank Gareau and Dan (Diudonne) Lajeunesse each had a saloon in Iron Mountain.

The Amador railway was laid 43 years ago (1896). I worked on it. They bought a passenger engine from the Northern Pacific and ran it every day, with a crew of five men. They spent a million dollars on the Amador property, though the books show that two million dollars worth of stock was sold. I don't know what became of the difference, though probably J. T. McKinnon, the general manager and promoter of the mine, would.

When the Amador road was ready for operation, the Northern Pacific organized a free observation trip, to interest Easterners. They picked up a train-load of 3 passengers in New York and Chicago. When these people got to Iron Mountain as many as could piled into the car waiting for them on the siding which the Amador kept in Iron Mountain for its own use, and puffed up Cedar Creek. Those who couldn't find room in the train went by any means they could secure, riding some on horse-back, some in wagons, and some

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even walking the eleven and some-tenths miles traveled by the train. It was a rare sight for these city folks.

Up [Moose?] Creek there were a number of Chinamen. Six of them, I remember, died of scurvy, after living on fish all winter; they didn't realize the need of vegetables. They stayed to themselves, the Chinamen, and could get along with less necessities than the whites. In their mining, they were slow, but made every move count.

One time, up Cedar Creek, five Italians caught an owl and made a mulligan of him. They began to get sick, and "Doc" Bowers came to look them over. They told him, "Kill big-eyed chick; we get sick." Bowers was more of a lawyer than a doctor, as I recall him. (He was a real doctor, but drink got the best of him.)

This incident gives an insight into the early miner's reaction to good fortune:

Two partners had made a big stake. One of them had remarked that if he ever made good, he was going to blow five dollars on a "crack-up" meal; he was tired of living on bacon and beans. When the two got into the restaurant, they argued 3 hotly as to a menu fitting to celebrate the occasion. Finally, one of them said, "Bring on five dollar's worth of beans and bacon."

'dolphe Lozeau used to play for the dances in the Thomas (Ordean) Hotel, and Pete Harmon would clog. Harmon was pretty handy with his feet.