

MONTANA

A HISTORY OF OUR HOME





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BY MARTHA KOHL

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CHAPTER 1

THIS IS MONTANA

- What is Montana like?
- How does its climate, geography, and geology affect its people?



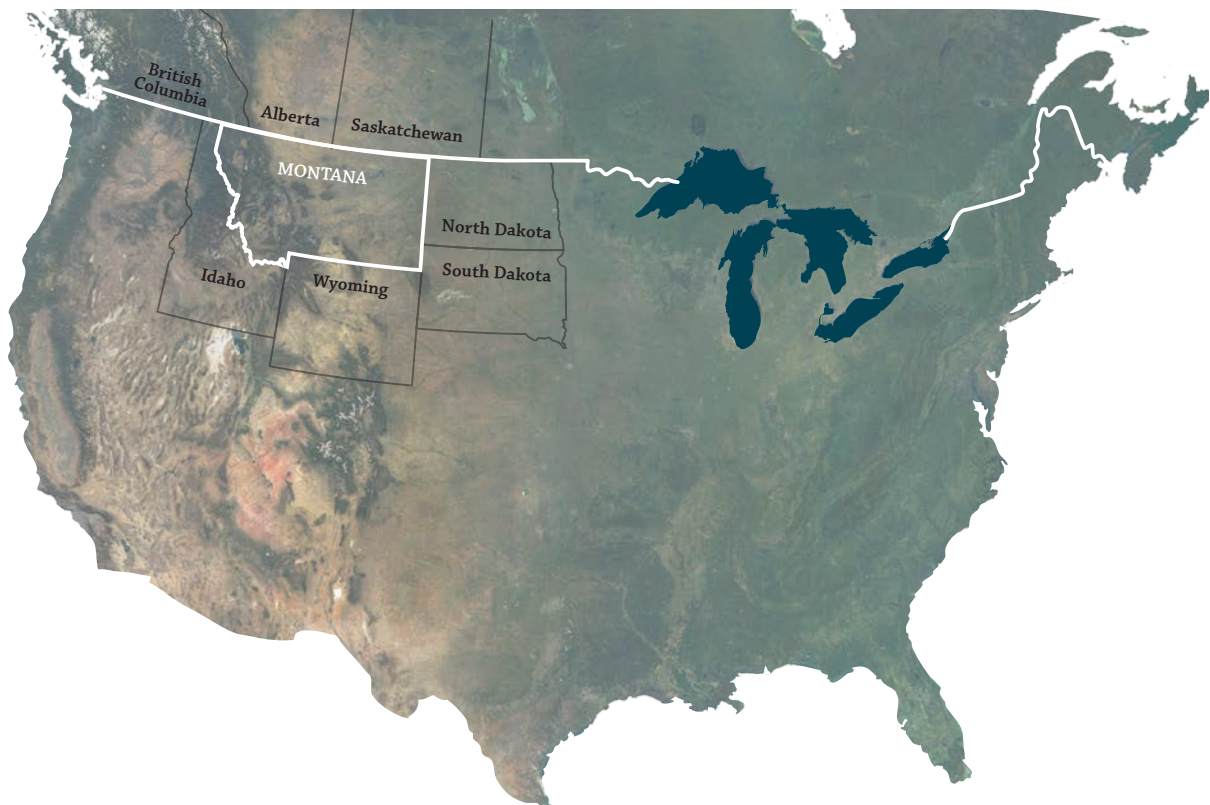
Montanans live in many different types of places. Some people live in the mountains while others live on the prairie.

Montana is known for its natural beauty and wildlife. If you drive across Montana, you will see mountains, **foothills** (hills at the edge of a mountain range), **badlands** (an area created by **erosion** of rocks and hills with little vegetation), and **prairies** (flat grasslands). It is hard to believe one state can contain so many different landscapes.

FAST FACTS

Montana is the fourth-largest state in the United States. It contains 147,042 square miles. Only Alaska, Texas, and California have more land. However, compared to most states, not very many people live here. In 2020, a little more than one million people lived in Montana. That sounds like a big number, but it isn't when you compare it with other places. For example, New York City has about 8.3 million people all living in 302 square miles.

Montana is in the northwestern region of the United States. It borders three Canadian provinces on the north. To the west, it borders Idaho. To the south, it borders Wyoming, and to the east it borders North and South Dakota.



THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

The **Continental Divide** (a mountain ridge that separates North America) runs through Montana. On the west side of the Continental Divide, rivers drain into the Pacific Ocean. On the east side of the divide, rivers drain into the Atlantic Ocean.

Montana is home to Triple Divide Peak. That's where the Continental Divide and the **Northern Divide** meet. (The Northern Divide separates waters that flow north from waters that flow south. Waters north of the Northern Divide flow into the Arctic Ocean.) A raindrop that falls on Triple Divide Peak, in Glacier National Park, can flow into either the Pacific, Atlantic, or Arctic Oceans.



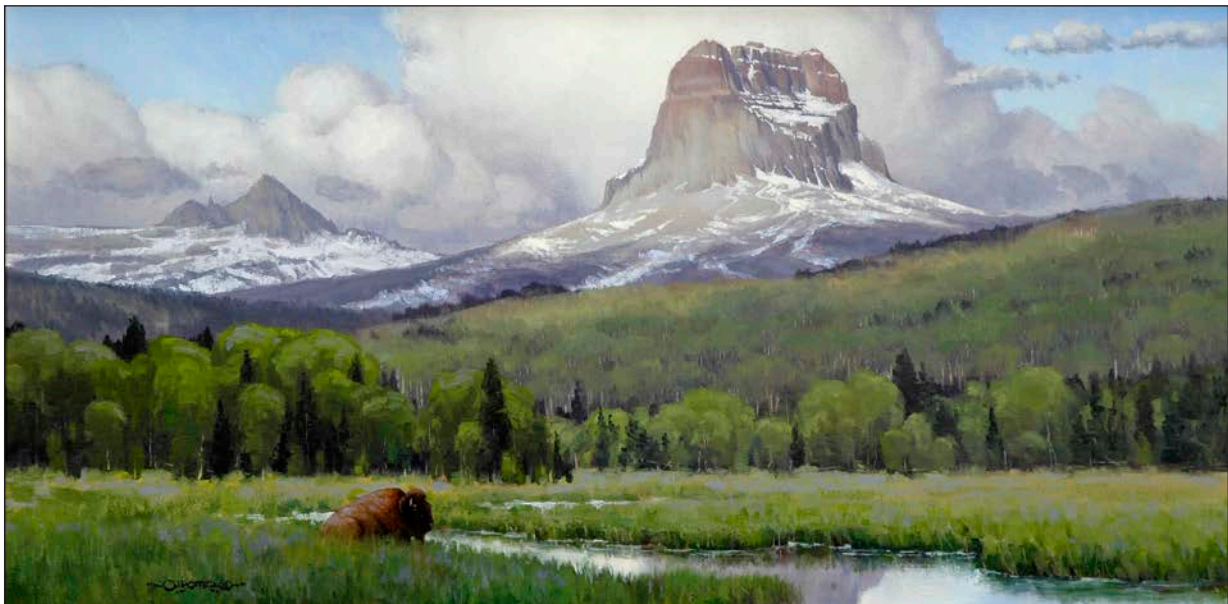
MONTANA'S THREE REGIONS

Montana has three **distinct** (separate) regions with very different **climates** (typical weather conditions) and **natural resources** (things found in nature and used by people). Because each region's geography is different, each region's history is also different.

Western Montana

Flathead Lake is the largest natural freshwater body west of the Great Lakes.

Western Montana has tall mountains, winding rivers, and thick forests. Western Montana sees more rain than any other part of the state. Between the mountains are wide, **fertile** (good for growing things) valleys. Western Montana's mountains are rich in gold, silver, and copper.



Chief Mountain near Glacier National Park in Western Montana is an important landmark to many Montanans.

Central Montana

Central Montana spreads east from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Its small, scattered mountain ranges rise above gently rolling **plains** (flat land). Both the Missouri River and the Yellowstone River begin in central Montana. These are Montana's two largest rivers.



The Missouri River flows through Central Montana. It is important not only to people, but to wildlife as well.

Eastern Montana

Eastern Montana is a land of rolling plains and endless sky. It is dry and windy. Temperatures here are often colder in winter and hotter in summer than in the rest of the state. It is rich in

coal and natural gas. The grass that grows here is very good for grazing animals, including buffalo, cattle, and sheep.



Winter weather can make life hard for people and animals living in Eastern Montana.

MONTANA'S CLIMATE

Montana is known as a “state of extremes.” It can get very cold. In the winter of 1954, on Rogers Pass, the temperature dropped to a record low: -79° F! It can get very hot, too. In the summer of 1893, in Glendive, temperatures rose to 117° F.

Montana’s mountains affect its climate. West of the Continental Divide, winters are generally milder and summers are cooler. There is also more **precipitation** (rain and snow).

Central Montana is known for its **chinooks**. Chinooks are warm winds that blow down the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. These winds melt the snow and bring warm weather in the middle of winter. However, soon the temperature drops again. On January 15, 1972, Loma, Montana, experienced a chinook. In one day, the temperature rose from -54°F to 48°F . How many degrees total is that?

Eastern Montana is drier and hotter than Western Montana, but it can get very cold there, too!

MONTANA'S RESERVATIONS AND TRIBAL NATIONS



Adam Sing in the Timber, 39
Apsáalooke
Mauwáake High School
BA in Art, 2008
S.A. Photography, 2010
University of Montana
Freelance Photojournalist,
Filmmaker

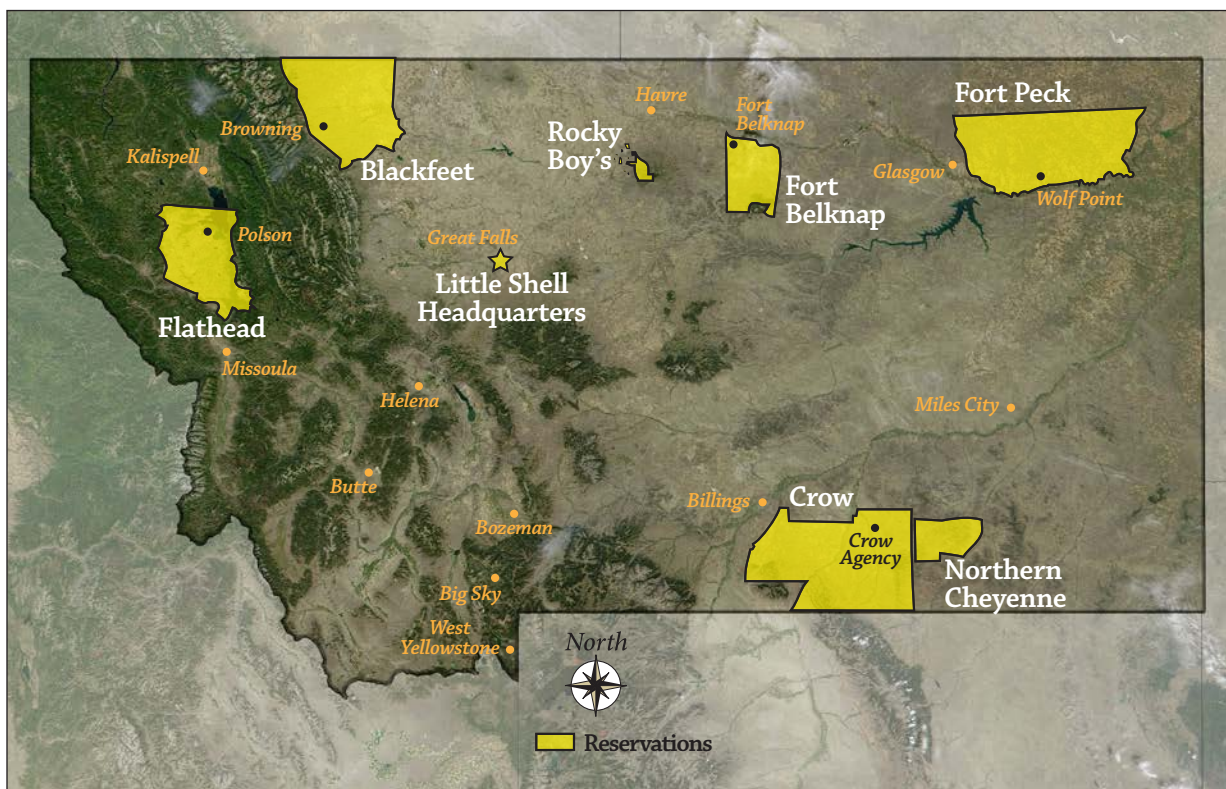
My success as a visual storyteller is the direct result of the guidance and inspiration of the many mentors I've had throughout my life. Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. Their unselfish desire to teach me inspires me to pass on my knowledge and passion. It is of vital importance that Indigenous people take back our own narrative; that we are the ones to tell our story.

Indian Education
Montana Office of Public Instruction

Making Montana PROUD

Photographer Adam Sing in the Timber (Apsáalooke) is one of many Montana tribal members “Making Montana Proud.”

Montana is home to seven reservations and twelve tribal nations. Tribal people were in Montana long before Europeans came to this **continent** (one of the main areas of land on earth). Today members of Montana Indian tribes live in every Montana city as well as on reservations. **Reservations** are tribal land that the tribes **reserved** (kept) for their own use when they made **treaties** (agreements between nations) with the U.S. government.



Here is a list of Montana's reservations and tribes:

Blackfeet Reservation: Home to the Blackfeet tribe, also known as the Amp Ska Pii Pii Kun Nii

Crow Reservation: Home to the Crow tribe, also known as the Apsáalooke

Flathead Reservation: Home to the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreille tribes, also known as the Séliš, Ksanka (Ktunaxa), and Qíispé

Fort Belknap Reservation: Home to the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre tribes, also known as the Nakoda and Aaniiihnen (White Clay)

Fort Peck Reservation: Home to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes, also known as the Nakoda, Dakota, and Lakota

Northern Cheyenne Reservation: Home to the Northern Cheyenne tribe, also known as the Tsetsêhesêstâhase/Sotaeo'ó

Rocky Boy's Reservation: Home to the Chippewa and Cree tribes, also known as the Annishinabe and Ne-i-yah-wahk

The Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana (Anishinabe and Métis) do not have a reservation. Its headquarters is in Great Falls.

MONTANA'S ECONOMY

Montana's **economy** (businesses and jobs) has a lot to do with its **geography** (where it is on a map) and its **geology** (minerals, rocks, and soil). Montana is a large, rural state, far from the ocean and major population centers. It does not have any huge factories because it would cost too much to get the things large factories make to the people who want to buy them. Instead of



Animals like cattle and sheep play an important role in Montana's economy. Even some dogs have a job to do!

working in factories, many Montanans work in service jobs. A service job is anything that helps other people. Service workers include doctors and nurses, cooks and teachers, store clerks and car mechanics. Many other Montanans work in construction, building everything from houses to hospitals.

Montana's size also means that many people work in transportation. It takes a lot of workers to keep the roads in good shape, to run the railroads, and to drive the trucks that carry things in and out of the state.

Some of the most important parts of Montana's economy are agriculture, tourism, and mining. All of these **industries** (types of businesses) rely on the state's natural resources. Tourists

visit Montana to enjoy its natural beauty, and you can't mine without rich deposits of coal, oil, gas, copper, silver, or gold. To raise cattle or grow crops, you need fertile soil and clean water.

Even though agriculture and mining are very important to our state, they are not as important as they were fifty or one hundred years ago. Unlike many states that rely on a few big industries to provide most of their jobs, Montana is home to many different types of businesses. Montanans work in banks and law offices, sell real estate, design software, conduct scientific experiments, clean up abandoned mines, create art, and build furniture. This **diversity** (variety) is one of Montana's greatest economic strengths.

MONTANA: LAND AND PEOPLE

Montana's climate, geology, and geography have shaped the state's history. They continue to shape the lives of Montanans today. How have these factors affected your life?



CHAPTER 2

MONTANA'S FIRST PEOPLE

- What was Montana like before the first non-Indians arrived?
- Who called Montana home and how did they live?

The very first people to live in this region were **resourceful**. They were good at figuring out how to find or make what they needed, and they used what the land had to offer. They hunted and gathered food. They made tools, homes, and clothing. They traded with one another. They created art. They studied the stars, and they held religious ceremonies. Members of Montana's tribal nations are the **descendants** (a person's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc.) of the very first people to live in this region.



Many of the animals that lived in Montana during the ice age are now **extinct** (gone).

12,000 TO 8,000 YEARS AGO (THE EARLY PERIOD)

No one knows exactly when people first came to Montana. We do know that people were living here over 12,000 years ago.

The land was very different then. It was the end of the last ice age. Ice covered much of Montana. The first people lived on the edge of the ice field. They hunted mastodons, mammoths, and ancient bison using short heavy spears.

These first peoples traveled in small groups. They knew where to find the things they needed. One place might have a special kind of stone, perfect for making hammers. Another place might have flint for making knives. They traveled to these places to gather the **resources** (useful things) they needed. They carried everything they owned with them. Do you think they owned a lot of things?



We don't have any pictures of ice age Montana. Here is what one artist thinks it might have looked like.

HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT WE KNOW?

There are no newspapers, photographs, or letters describing life during the ice age. So how do we know what it was like?

Archaeologists are scientists who study the past by analyzing **artifacts** (objects created by people) that people have left behind. If an archaeologist looked through your garbage can, what could she learn about you?

Archaeologists' close study of **ancient** (very old) artifacts is one way we can learn about the distant past.

Oral histories are important stories people pass down. When your grandparents tell you what life was like when they were young, they are sharing oral history. Oral histories are another way we can learn about the past. Montana Indians have oral histories that have been passed down for centuries. For example, the Salish and Pend d'Oreille oral histories describe giant animals. They also describe great floods, like ones that **geologists** (scientists who study the earth) believe happened 12,000 years ago.



Hunters used these projectile points hundreds of years ago. It is one type of tool that archaeologists now study to learn about the past.

8,000 TO 1,500 YEARS AGO (THE MIDDLE PERIOD)

About 8,000 years ago, the place now known as Montana began to grow warmer and drier. Many of the giant, ancient animals became **extinct** (gone). Smaller animals, like deer, antelope, and rabbits, filled the **plains** (flat land). More plants appeared. The people learned how and where plants grew and how to use them to make food, medicines, rope, shelters, and baskets.



Early peoples relied on plants for food and medicine. These women are digging prairie turnips to help feed their families.

As the **environment** (land, water, climate) changed, the people **adapted** (changed to fit new conditions). The big heavy spears they used to hunt large animals did not work for fast-moving game, so they learned to make new tools like **atlatls** (spear throwers).

The number of people who lived here grew. People still lived in small family groups, or **bands**, but they were more likely to meet other groups as they traveled. When two bands met, they shared information and ideas. They also traded with one another.

1,500 TO 300 YEARS AGO (THE LATE PERIOD)

About 1,500 years ago, the **climate** (typical weather conditions) changed again. The region became a little wetter and cooler. **Bison** (buffalo) filled in the grasslands. Soon they became the most important source of food for the people who lived here.

The bison provided many other things people needed as well. People made tipi covers and clothing from the hides, pillows from the hair, waterproof bags from the bladders, drinking cups and spoons from the horns, and knives and other tools from the bones.

Sometimes people worked together to lure herds of bison over cliffs in large **communal** (group) hunts. Other times smaller groups of hunters trapped bison in deep snowbanks.

At some point, people tamed dogs. Dogs became an important part of everyday life. Before horses, people used dogs to help them carry their things when they moved camp.



Montana's first peoples depended on buffalo for food, clothing, and shelter, but bison hunting was not always easy.

THE EARLY CONTACT PERIOD, 1492-1850

Europeans first came to the Americas in the 1500s. They arrived far from Montana, but they still changed life here.

Horses

The Spanish brought horses to the Southwest. Tribes in the Southwest began trading horses to other tribes. By the mid-1700s horses had come to the **Great Plains** (the flat land region west of the Mississippi River and east of the Rocky Mountains).

Horses changed everything. Horses could carry more weight for



Horses were so important that tribal artists often included them in the pictures that they drew.

farther distances than dogs could, so people could travel farther to hunt. As tribes traveled farther, trade increased. Through trade, many items made in Europe or on the East Coast of the United States came to the plains: beads, iron pots, knives, cloth, metal arrowheads, and guns.

Horses became almost as important to tribal people as bison. Capturing horses from other tribes became a way to gain honor. People measured their wealth in horses and gave them as gifts.

Horses led to more conflict between tribes, but they also provided more **opportunities** (chances) to trade and share ideas.

Disease

Imagine what would happen if a strange new **disease** (sickness) came to your town. The disease is very painful—and deadly. Most of the people who catch this disease die. The doctors do their best to treat it, but nothing they do



When tribal members got sick from new diseases like smallpox, no doctor could help them. The right medicine had not been invented yet.

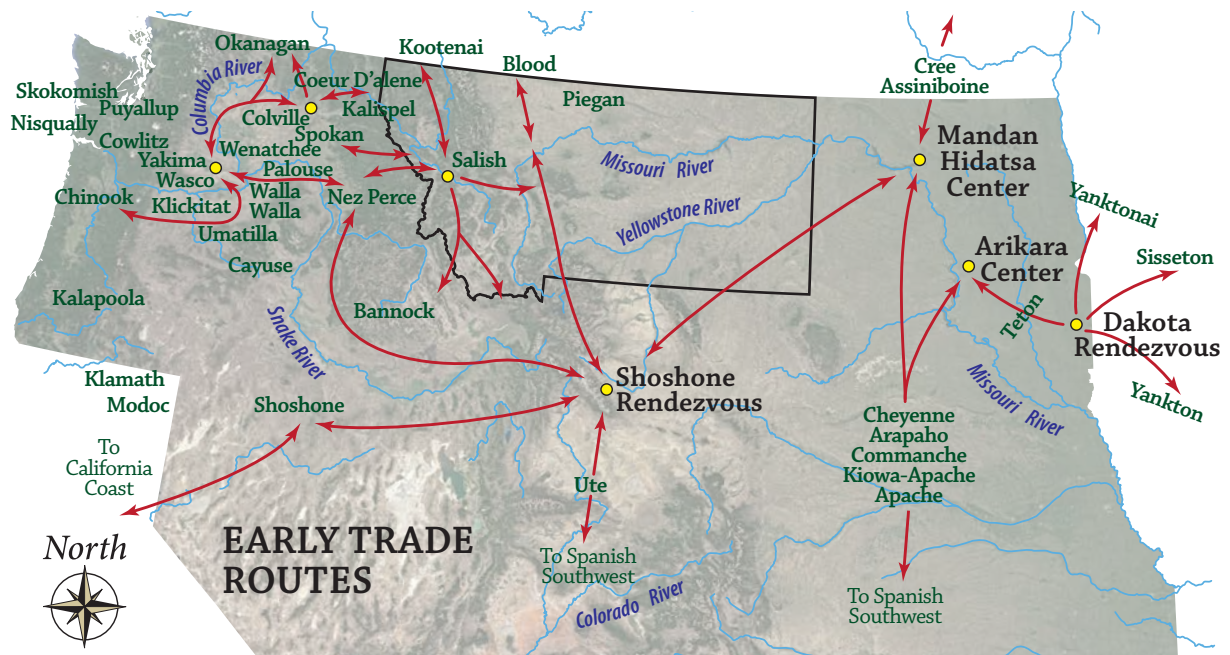
works. That's what happened to American Indian tribes when Europeans arrived in the Americas.

Europeans did not mean to bring new diseases, but they did. Native Americans had never been exposed to these diseases. Their bodies did not know how to fight them off. Disease spread when people met to trade. These deadly diseases may have come to our region by the mid-1500s. Fur traders wrote about a huge smallpox **epidemic** (rapid spread of disease) here in 1782. Some experts believe that many tribes lost between 50 to 90 percent of their people to these new diseases.

These diseases changed everything. Survivors were very sad. Some tribes became powerful (because more of their people survived). Others became weak (because so many people died). Some tribes combined to form new tribes.

TRIBES OF MONTANA

By about 1820, most of Montana's current Indian tribes were already here. Many had been here since **time immemorial** (as long as anyone could remember). Each tribe had its own language, history, and ways of doing things. Some tribes were close **allies** (friends). Others sometimes fought. Each tribe had its own homeland, where its tribal members spent most of their time. However, people often traveled outside their homeland to hunt, gather important resources, and trade with other tribes.

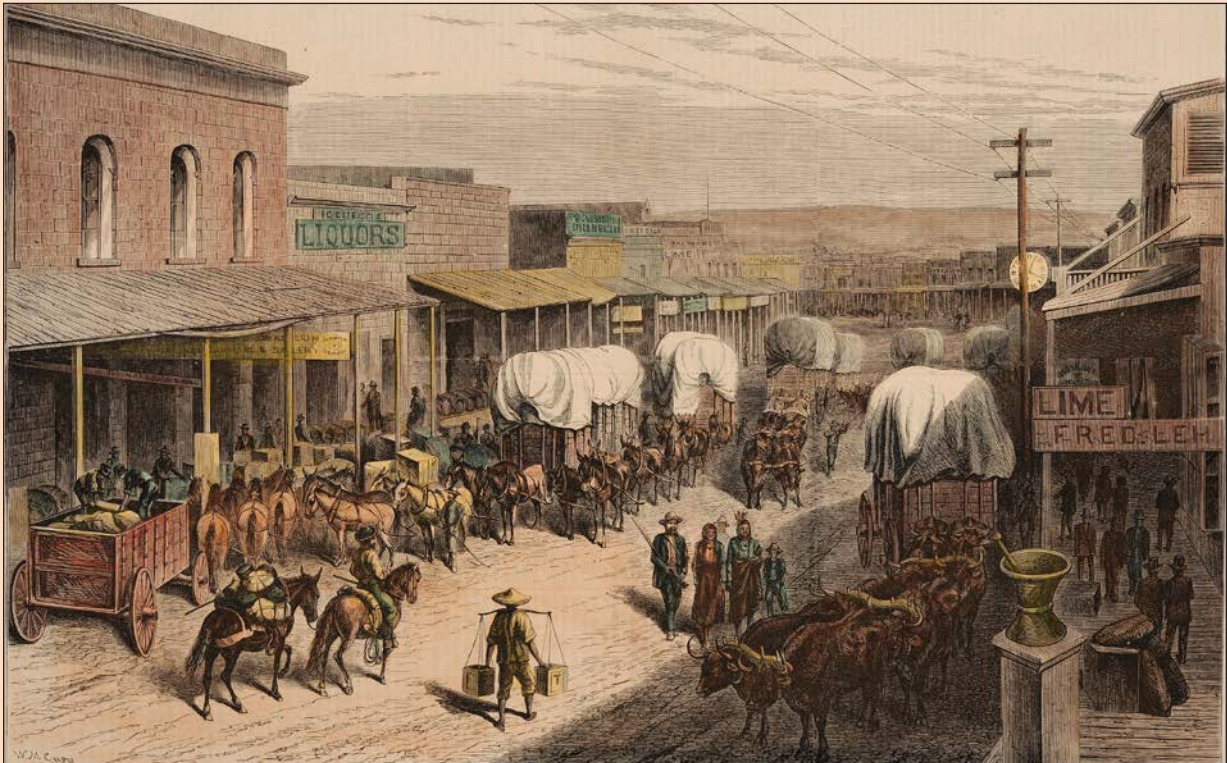




CHAPTER 3

COMING TO MONTANA

- Why did people move to Montana?
- How did they change the state?



People came to Montana from all over the world after gold was discovered. This print shows a crowded street in Helena in 1874.

Today, most Montanans were born in the United States. It wasn't always that way. In 1900, one in four Montanans was born outside the United States and over half had at least one foreign-born parent.

It is hard to decide to pull up roots and move to a new land.

People needed good reasons—both to leave their homes and to go to a **specific** (exact) place. Historians call these reasons “**push-pull factors.**” Push factors include war or not being able to find a job. These bad things push people to leave their homes. Pull factors are the good things that attract people to move to a new place—like peace, jobs, and freedom.

MONTANA’S FIRST PEOPLES

People have lived in the place we now know as Montana for at least 12,000 years. The pull factors that brought them here



This painting, by Montana’s “Cowboy Artist” Charlie Russell, imagines successful hunters returning to camp on a cold winter day.

included good hunting. Early **residents** (people who live in a place) of this region included the **ancestors** (family members who lived long ago) of several modern-day Montana tribes.

When Europeans started settling the eastern United States, they pushed even more tribes from their homes. Some of those tribes, like the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne, came to Montana.

Each tribe that came to Montana had (and still has) a fully developed **culture** (a shared system of behavior, attitudes, and understandings). They had (and have) **distinct** (separate) languages, clothing, celebrations, ceremonies, and family structures. The Indian tribes who still live in Montana include the Chippewa, Cree, Sioux, Salish, Pend d'Oreille, Kootenai, Blackfeet, Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, Northern Cheyenne, Crow, and Little Shell Chippewa.

THE FUR TRADE

French, Scottish, Irish, and English fur traders started coming to this area in the mid-1700s. They came looking for beaver furs. Beaver hats were so popular in Europe that there were almost no beavers left there, so fur traders moved to America.

Like all newcomers to the country, the traders and trappers **adapted** (changed to fit new conditions) to the land and learned new ways of doing things from those people who were already



*Métis men often wore **capotes**—coats made from thick, wool, Hudson’s Bay blankets—tied with a colorful handwoven sash. They wore colorful leggings and their moccasins often were beaded with elegant designs.*



At one time, Montana was home to many more bison than people. Today, you can only see them at a few places like the National Bison Range near Moiese.

here. Indians and European-American fur trappers and traders shared many survival techniques. Many trappers established very close relationships with Indian tribes, and many married Indian women. A new culture of people was created through intermarriages. They called (and still call) themselves the Métis, a French word meaning “mixed blood.”

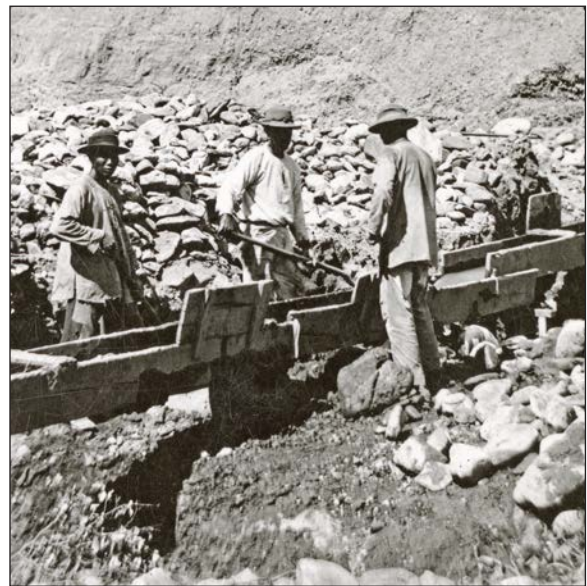
By the late 1830s, beaver hats were no longer in style. Fur companies began to want **bison** (buffalo) hides instead of beaver **pelts** (skins). They shipped the bison hides to the East Coast. There, the bison hides were made into heavy belts, which were used to run machines in factories. In 1860, 13 million bison lived on the **plains** (flat land). By 1883, only around 200 bison still survived.

Some U.S. government leaders

opposed the mass killing of bison. Others, like General Philip H. Sheridan, encouraged it. General Sheridan wanted Plains Indian tribes to give up their land and their **traditional** (old) ways of life. He knew how important bison were to Plains tribes. He also knew that without the bison, tribal members would be forced to find other ways to live.

MINING

In 1862, **prospectors** (people looking for gold) found gold on Grasshopper Creek in southwest Montana. It wasn't the first gold **strike** (discovery) in the region, but it was the biggest. Within weeks, four hundred people flocked to the creek, building the town of Bannack. The next year, prospectors found more gold in Alder Gulch. Thousands of people soon arrived to build the town of Virginia City. In 1864, there was another rich strike. This one created the town of Helena. Between 1862 and 1865, Montana mines produced more than \$90 million worth of gold.



Working together in 1871, these Chinese miners used a sluice box to help them separate gold from the dirt and rocks.

People came to Montana's mining camps from all over the United States and the world. One push factor during the gold rush was the Civil War, which was fought between the North and South from 1861 to 1865 over slavery. Many people did not want to fight. Some of them fled to the Montana goldfields, far from the war.

Other miners came to Montana from mining communities in California (gold had been discovered there in 1848). Still others came from Germany or Ireland. In addition, many Chinese came to the Montana gold frontier. Civil war and other problems in China provided the push factors. The discovery of gold provided the pull factor.

SETTLERS USED THE LAND IN A NEW WAY

The gold camps didn't just attract miners. Miners needed stores where they could buy supplies, and places to have fun. They needed restaurants, laundries, doctors, and barbershops. By the late 1870s, there were over five hundred towns in Montana Territory.

The gold rush changed the way people used land in Montana. Because Indian people did not build buildings, settlers thought the land was up for grabs. Towns, ranches, farms, and mines cut Indians off from their traditional hunting grounds, and the settlers' horses and cattle ate the grass that bison depended on.

THE WORLD NEEDS BUTTE COPPER

Gold wasn't Montana's only valuable metal. Montana was also rich in silver and copper. Copper is used for telegraph, telephone, and electrical wires. Demand for copper grew in the 1880s and 1890s as telephones became common and people began to use electricity to light their homes, schools, and businesses. Butte, Montana, had some of the richest copper mines in the world. Because of its mines, the city got the nickname the "Richest Hill on Earth."



Underground mining was dirty, difficult, and dangerous work.

Miners came from over thirty-five different countries to work in Butte's mines. In 1910, one out of every three people living in Butte was born outside the United States. One in twelve was born in Ireland.

RANCHING

Montana's rich grasslands made the state perfect for raising cattle and sheep. Mining towns created a local market for beef in the 1860s. In 1883, the Northern Pacific Railroad completed its **transcontinental** (all the way across the continent) line. After that, ranchers could easily ship their cattle to the East Coast, where people were hungry for beef.



Shepherders relied on their dogs to help them take care of their flocks.

Sheep ranchers came to Montana about the same time that cattle ranchers did. Many times, the same ranch raised both sheep and cattle. Both sheep and cattle ranchers relied on the free grass of the open range.

LOGGING

Montana has lots of trees. Trees are very important. They provide homes for animals and keep soil from washing into streams. They also provide wood for building (called **timber** or **lumber**). A quarter of Montana is forest.

In early Montana, there was a huge demand for lumber.



*It took a lot of work, manpower, and horsepower to **fell** (cut) trees and haul them out of the forest.*

Railroads needed it to lay railroad tracks. Mines needed it to prevent cave-ins. Carpenters needed it to build barns, stores, and houses.

All that building took a lot of trees. It also took a lot of people to cut down the trees, move the logs out of the forest, and then saw the logs into boards.

SHRINKING RESERVATIONS

Miners and ranchers who came to Montana wanted to own land. Farmers and business owners also wanted land. The railroads needed land, too. However, Indian nations had lived in Montana for thousands of years. The tribes wanted to keep their land and **resources** (useful things) for their own people.

The U.S. government supported the newcomers. To get land for them, they **negotiated** (discussed to come to an agreement) with the different Indian tribes to make **treaties** (agreements between nations). Sometimes the government took land away from the tribes without negotiating. Sometimes the two sides fought with one another over the land.

Three of the seven Indian **reservations** in Montana today are lands that the tribes **reserved** (kept) for themselves during these negotiations. All of the reservations are much smaller than the tribes' traditional homelands.

FIFTY YEARS OF CHANGES

Montana in 1900 was a very different place than it was in 1850. By 1900, Indian people could no longer rely on the buffalo for food. They also now lived on reservations that were much smaller than their traditional homelands.

Mining, ranching, and logging attracted many new people to Montana. Only about 20,000 non-Indians lived in Montana in 1870. Thirty years later, in 1900, that number was over 243,000.

The newcomers brought new ways of thinking and doing things. They wanted Montana to become a state with its own government and elected officials. In 1889, Montana became the forty-first state in the United States. (Today there are fifty states.)

The twentieth century would bring even more changes and even more people to Montana.



This banner, carried during the Spanish-American War, became the model for the Montana state flag.



CHAPTER 4

MONTANA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

- Why did homesteaders come to Montana?
- What is assimilation and how did the push for assimilation affect Montana Indians?
- Who immigrated to Montana after 1920?



Machines like this steam-powered thresher helped farmers harvest wheat faster than they had been able to with horse-drawn machinery.

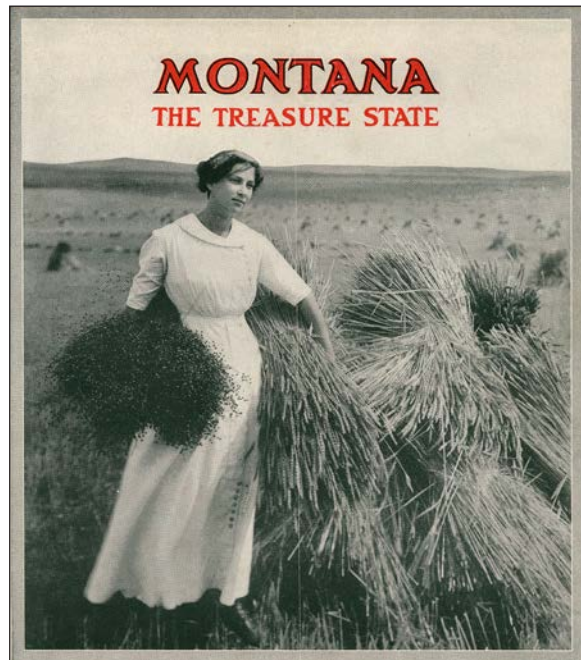
When people think of settlers moving west, they mostly imagine families crossing the **plains** (flat land) in covered wagons. Most Montanans, though, came to the state in the twentieth century. They came by train, car, or even airplane.

HOMESTEADING

No single movement affected Montana history more than homesteading. Between 1909 and 1917, thousands of people from all over the world rushed to Montana to fulfill the dream of owning their own farm.

In 1862, the government wanted to fill the United States up with farmers, so it passed a law that gave people 160 acres of land if they would live on their farms and grow crops. At first, **homesteaders** (people who received land from the U.S. government in exchange for farming that land) went to the rich farmlands of the Midwest, where there was enough rain and good soil. When that land was all taken, they started looking farther west. Most homesteaders came to Montana after 1909 when the Homestead Act was changed to allow settlers to **claim** (take for their own) more land (320 acres, or the size of 242 football fields).

Some homesteaders found out about **opportunities** (chances for something better) in Montana from friends and



Advertisements like this one from 1915 made it seem easy to farm in Montana.

family members who were already here. Most learned about opportunities from advertisements. Railroad companies **published** (printed) many of these ads. They wanted farmers to move to Montana so the railroads could have more customers. To get people to come to Montana, they published advertisements in many different languages. They also hired speakers to travel across Europe to encourage people to **immigrate** (move from one country to another).

Push factors (things that make people want to leave their homes) played a role, too. War, **poverty** (being poor), and **discrimination** (treating a group of people unfairly) led many



Many homesteaders lived in small "homestead shacks" until they had the time and money to build something bigger.

Swedes, Norwegians, and Germans to leave their homes and take out homesteads in Montana. By the end of the homestead **boom** (time of great prosperity or rapid growth), newcomers had claimed almost twenty-five million acres of land in Montana under the Homestead Act.

HARD TIMES

Farmers need rain to grow crops. When homesteaders first started coming to Montana, the weather was unusually wet. **Drought** (lack of rain) hit Montana in 1917, and the next few years were even worse.

Prairie (grassland) fires burned houses, barns, and fields.

Insects ate everything green in sight. Topsoil blew off the fields, creating giant dust storms. By 1925, many of the **immigrants** (people who move to a new country) who had come to Montana to homestead had left the state.



Hordes of crickets invaded eastern Montana between 1936 and 1941. Farmers defended their crops by building “cricket traps” like this one.

The drought taught farmers and ranchers that they needed much more than 320 acres to make a living. Farmers and ranchers who stayed bought the land **abandoned** (left) by their neighbors.

By 1950, the average Montana farm was 1,689 acres. In 2019, the average size of a Montana farm or ranch was 2,156 acres. How much bigger is that than a 320-acre homestead?

EVEN HARDER TIMES FOR MONTANA INDIANS

The immigrants who came to Montana were looking for better lives for themselves and their families. Unfortunately, their arrival made life worse for the people who were already here.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were horrible times for Montana Indians. The federal government pushed tribes to give up most of their land. Buffalo had been hunted almost to **extinction** (death of a species). To survive, Indian people began to farm and raise cattle. The land on many **reservations** (lands tribes **reserved**—kept—for their own use) was not very good for farming. Many people went hungry.

The federal government wanted Indians to give up their own **cultures** (languages, customs, and ideas) and adopt European ways. This is called **assimilation**. Even though the **Indian agents** (non-Indians the government put in charge of reservations)



Indian agents encouraged tribal members to adopt non-Indian methods of survival, including growing and canning fruits and vegetables.

made it hard, Indians worked to keep their cultures alive. They continued to speak their own languages and practice many of their **traditional** (old) ways. They also continued to educate their children. Before Europeans came, Indian children did not go to school. Instead, their families taught them about the natural world (science) as well as about their history and how they should behave (social studies). They learned to make art. They also learned how to hunt, gather food and medicine, and make tools. They learned other skills they needed to help themselves and their families once they grew up, too.

To force Indians to **assimilate** (become absorbed into the majority culture), the government funded boarding schools. At these schools, children as young as six lived apart from their families. The government wanted to separate the children from their families so they could control everything they learned and

destroy the connections children had to their own cultures. Parents were punished if they refused to send their children to boarding schools. At boarding schools, children were punished if they spoke their native languages or tried to practice any of their traditional ways.

Life at many of the boarding schools was very hard. Students studied for half the day and worked the other half. Students did the school's laundry. They worked in the school's dairies or fields to produce their own food. They worked in the school kitchen, and they sewed most of their own clothing.



Look at the faces of the boys in this 1910 picture from the St. Labre boarding school on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. How do you think they felt about their short haircuts, scratchy wool suits, and giant bow ties?

There was not enough money for good food, and children lived in very crowded dormitories. Many students got sick at boarding school and some died. Sometimes, when children returned to their reservations after attending school, they discovered that they had forgotten their native languages and only knew how to speak English. Sometimes that meant they could no longer talk with their parents or grandparents.

Montana Indian parents and tribal leaders knew that their children needed to learn new skills. They did not like the boarding schools, but they did like some of the things (like math, reading, and writing) that students learned there. They fought for the right to send their children to day schools, so they could learn while living with their own families. Tribal leaders knew that education was important. They believed that, at day schools, young people could learn the things they needed to be successful in the changing world while keeping their connections to their own cultures.

IMMIGRATION AFTER 1920

Large-scale immigration to Montana ended with the end of the homestead boom, but the state has continued to attract some new immigrants. The Mexican Revolution was a push factor that sent many people from Mexico north looking for work. Farmers needed people to work in the sugar beet fields in eastern

Montana, and many Mexicans found jobs there.

German-speaking Hutterites came from Europe seeking religious freedom. Hutterites live on large farms called colonies. The first colony in Montana was established in 1911, but most Hutterites came to Montana after World War II (1939–1945).

Mining and logging attracted many immigrants during the nineteenth century because they were a big part of Montana’s **economy** (businesses and jobs). However, after the 1920s, these **industries** (types of businesses) no longer drew many newcomers. Big machines did much of the work originally done by people. People still worked as miners and loggers in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, but the industries did not need as many workers as they did before World War II.

In the late 1970s, many Hmong settled in Montana, particularly in the Missoula area. The Hmong, or “hill people” of Southeast Asia, fought on the same side as U.S. troops during the Vietnam War. After the war, they were chased from their homes in Laos and Vietnam. Now many make Montana their home.



Nou Yang, a Hmong refugee who moved to Missoula in 1985, made this embroidered “story cloth.” It shows scenes from village life in her native country of Laos.



CHAPTER 5

MONTANA'S GOVERNMENT AND TRIBAL NATIONS

- What are the things all Montanans should know about Montana Indians?
- What does it mean to be sovereign?

One thing that makes Montana so special is the number of American Indians who live here. In 2020, about one out of twelve Montanans was a tribal member. Indians have lived in this region since long before Montana became a state. They are an important part of our history and an important part of our present, too.

In 1972, Montanans decided to write a new state **constitution** (a document that sets the



Artist Ben Pease painted this portrait of his aunt, Dr. Janine Pease, to honor the **resilience** (strength) of many Indian women.

rules for government). The people writing the constitution recognized how important Indians were to Montana. They wrote: “The state recognizes the **distinct** (separate) and **unique** (not the same) cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.”

What does that mean? It means that the State of Montana understands that American Indians have special traditions and beliefs and that the state is committed to protecting these traditions. Montana is the only state out of all fifty states that recognizes the importance of American Indians in its constitution.

INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL

The constitution sets out big ideas, or principles. The state legislature and governor decide how to make those big ideas a reality. In 1999, the legislature passed a law they called Indian Education for All (IEFA). This law supports the 1972 Constitution by requiring that every Montana school teach about Montana Indian history and **culture** (language, customs, and ideas).

After the legislature passed Indian Education for All, the state asked each Montana tribal nation to choose a representative to help decide the best way to teach students about Montana

Indian history and culture. There are so many things to know! However, the state asked these representatives to come up with a list of the most important (or **essential**) ideas that they wanted all Montanans to understand. They chose seven things. They called these the Seven Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 1

The first thing that the tribes want everyone to know is that Montana has twelve tribes. Each tribe is **unique** (not the same as any other). They have their own history, culture, and language, and they all contribute to modern Montana.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 2

The second thing that the tribes want people to know is that not all Indians are the same, even if they are members of the same tribe. Some Indians may speak their tribal language. Others may speak only English. Some Indians may participate in tribal celebrations or **traditional** (old) ceremonies. Others do not. Every individual Indian person is different, and the way they understand what it means to be a tribal member is unique.



Every Indian person has his or her own likes and dislikes. Victor had his portrait painted in 1964 wearing a black cowboy hat and red bandana; in 1956, Judy Larsen chose a beaded dress and eagle-feather fan for her portrait.



ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 3

The third thing that the tribes want people to know is that traditional tribal beliefs are still important. Some of these traditions **predate** (come before) the arrival of Europeans on this **continent** (one of the earth's main areas of land). Tribes passed down important traditions and information from one generation to the next. Every tribe has **oral histories** (important stories that people pass down) that are older and are as good as written histories.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 4

The fourth thing that the tribes want people to know is that the U.S. government did not give them land. Indians lived here long before Europeans arrived. They gave up most of their lands to the U.S. government, but they kept some of it for their own use. The lands they **reserved** (kept) are called reservations.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 5

The fifth thing that the tribes want people to know is that the U.S. government treated Indian tribes and Indian people differently at different times. Sometimes the U.S. government respected tribal **sovereignty** (self-rule). Other times the U.S. government tried to erase tribes altogether. The ways the U.S. government acted toward Indians continues to affect Indian people today.



Painted by Assiniboine artist William Standing, this picture shows some of the ways life changed on the Fort Peck Reservation in the 1920s and 1930s. When you look at it, what do you notice?

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 6

The sixth thing that the tribes want people to know is that a person's point of view shapes the way they understand and explain history. Indian historians often see things differently than non-Indian historians.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 7

The seventh thing they want people to know is that tribes are **sovereign** (self-governing). They make their own laws and are in charge of governing themselves. However, the U.S. government sometimes limits what tribes can do.



The U.S. and tribal flags in front of the Montana state capitol symbolize sovereignty.

AN ONGOING LEARNING JOURNEY

The Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians are just a starting point. These are the big ideas you need to understand before you can start to learn more about the different cultures and histories of Montana tribes. What are some of the things you would like to learn about Montana tribes and tribal members, from their earliest history to today?



Dora Rides Horse teaches a traditional Crow song to students at Crow Agency School.



CHAPTER 6

MONTANA: LAND AND PEOPLE

- What makes Montana special?
- Who are some great Montanans?



Artist Charlie Russell loved Montana better than any place else. He painted this picture of buffalo crossing the Missouri River and called it When the Land Belonged to God.

Have you ever sung the song "America the Beautiful"? It starts with these words:

"O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!"

The person who wrote “America the Beautiful” was trying to express the greatness of the United States, but she could have been talking about Montana. Montana is known for its **spacious** (large) skies. That’s why one of our nicknames is “Big Sky Country.” Drive through the “Golden Triangle” area north of Great Falls in August, and you will see “**amber** (yellow) waves of grain.” Look at Montana’s mountains at sunset, and you will see “purple mountain majesties.”

The land and sky make Montana special. Montana’s people do, too. Montanans are artists and farmers, ranchers and scientists. Here are just a few of the people whose stories are interwoven with the story of our state.

CHIEF DULL KNIFE/MORNING STAR, LEADER (CA. 1810–1883)

Dull Knife was also called Morning Star. He was a Northern Cheyenne chief who signed the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. A few years later, the U.S. government broke the **treaty** (agreement between nations). Dull Knife and his people tried to live and hunt as they always had, but in 1877, the U.S. Army forced them to move one thousand miles away to Indian Country (which is now Oklahoma).

The Northern Cheyennes suffered in Indian Country, where it was very hot. There was not enough food. Many got sick and died.

Chief Dull Knife and Chief Little Wolf risked their lives to bring their people back to Montana. The journey was long and dangerous, and many people died. A year after Chief Dull Knife died, the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in southern Montana was established.

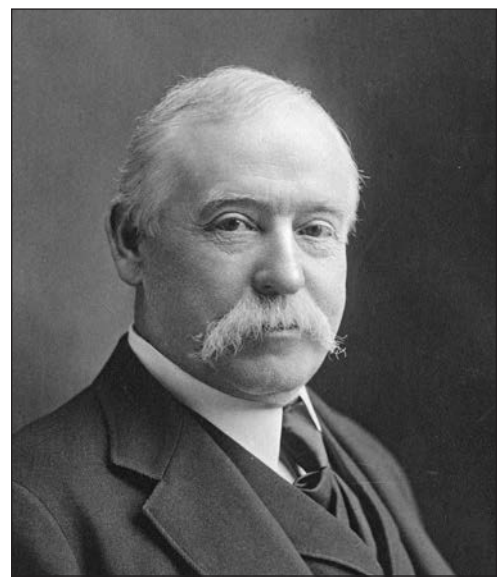
Dull Knife believed strongly in education. That is why Chief Dull Knife College on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation is named in his honor.



Chief Dull Knife

MARCUS DALY, “COPPER KING” (BUTTE, 1841-1900)

Born to a poor family in Ireland, Marcus Daly came to America at age fifteen. He became a miner in California, and then moved to Nevada. In Nevada, he learned how to recognize rich veins of ore. Daly went to work for the Walker Brothers, who sent him to Butte, Montana, in 1876 to help them decide if they should buy a silver mine there.



Marcus Daly

Daly soon realized that Butte had more copper than silver. He also realized that copper was going to become valuable. Copper wires are used to **transport** (move) electricity, and people living in cities were just starting to use electric lights. To bring electricity to everyone's house required a lot of copper wire. Daly quietly bought up copper mines. He soon founded the town of Anaconda and built the world's largest copper smelter. By the time of his death, he was one of Montana's richest men.

EVELYN CAMERON, PHOTOGRAPHER (1868-1928)

Evelyn Cameron and her husband Ewen first came to Montana on a hunting trip they took for their honeymoon. They loved it so much that they decided to move to Terry, Montana, to ranch.

Ewen was a scientist who studied birds. He was not interested in ranching, so Evelyn had to do most of the work herself. Even though it was hard, she loved it. She wrote in her diary: "I like to break colts, brand calves, cut down trees, ride & work in a garden."



Evelyn Cameron with her camera and tripod, September 4, 1921.

She also liked to take photographs. In 1894, Evelyn Cameron

got her first camera. She took beautiful pictures of the people, animals, and landscapes of southeastern Montana. Her photographs have been **published** (printed) in several books and are also in the Montana Historical Society's collection.

CHARLES M. RUSSELL, ARTIST (1864-1926)

A sculptor, painter, and storyteller, Charlie Russell is Montana's best-loved artist. He was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and grew up hearing stories about the Old West, which fascinated him. His parents thought he would get tired of the West once he tried living there, so they found him a job on a Montana sheep ranch when he was sixteen. Charlie hated sheep, but he loved Montana. He worked as a trapper and a cowboy, and all the time he drew, painted, and made sculptures.

Charlie loved painting cowboys. He also loved painting Indians as he imagined they had lived in the days before white settlement. In 1896, Charlie married Nancy Cooper, who became his business manager. Nancy shared Charlie's work with the world and made him famous. Today his artwork can be seen in museums across the United States, including in Helena and Great Falls, Montana.



Charles M. Russell in his studio painting The Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1918.

JEANNETTE RANKIN, POLITICIAN (1880–1973)

Jeannette Rankin was born in Missoula, Montana. After graduating from college, she worked as a social worker. She soon decided that politicians needed to do more to help the poor. At the time, women could not vote, so Jeannette Rankin became a full-time **suffrage activist** (someone working to win women the right to vote). Once Montana women could vote, Rankin ran for office. She won and became the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress.



Jeannette Rankin

Jeannette Rankin stood up for what she believed in, even when it was unpopular. She was a **pacifist** (someone who believes that problems cannot be solved by fighting). She would say, "You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake." She served in Congress at the beginning of World War I and again at the beginning of World War II. Both times she voted against going to war.

TAYLOR GORDON, SINGER (1893–1971)

Taylor Gordon grew up in White Sulphur Springs, Montana. His family was the only African American family in the town. When he was seventeen, he got a job with rancher and circus owner John Ringling. He traveled across the United States with Ringling and ended up in New York City in the 1920s.

Taylor Gordon went to Harlem, an all-Black neighborhood in New York City. He became part of the “Harlem Renaissance.” (**Renaissance** means rebirth.) The Harlem Renaissance was a time when Black artists, musicians, and writers celebrated their **culture** (shared customs and ideas) and heritage. Taylor Gordon began performing a **traditional** (old) type of African American music called spirituals. He became a hugely popular singer who performed across the United States and in Europe.



Taylor Gordon

HARRIETTE CUSHMAN, SCIENTIST (1890-1978)

Harriette Cushman was born in Alabama. She went to college in New York and earned degrees in chemistry and **bacteriology** (the study of bacteria). She went on to study **poultry** (birds raised on farms, like chickens and turkeys). In 1922, she took a job in Bozeman as Montana's first poultry specialist. She was one of the first women to work as a poultry specialist.



Harriette Cushman

Harriette Cushman traveled throughout Montana, teaching farmers everything they needed to know to raise healthy poultry. She started many 4-H groups, so that kids could learn how to raise poultry, too.

Cushman's work was especially important during the Great Depression, when many farmers were struggling to make a living. She helped farmers find buyers and get good prices for their eggs and turkeys. Many people said that they would not have made it through the Depression without Harriette Cushman's help.

SUSIE WALKING BEAR YELLOWTAIL, NURSE (1903-1981)

Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail was born in Pryor, Montana. Like many other American Indians, she went to boarding school. Her teachers wanted her to give up her Crow language and culture, but Susie loved her culture. All her life, she helped other people learn about the Crow people and their culture.

In 1923, Susie graduated from a nursing school in Boston. She was the first Crow tribal member to become a registered nurse. Working as a nurse, she often saw things that were unfair, and she always tried to make them better. She worked her entire life to improve Indian health care on the Crow Reservation and beyond.

Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail also encouraged other tribal members to become nurses. She received many awards for her work, but her favorite was from the American Indian Nurses Association, a group she founded. The association named her “Grandmother of American Indian Nurses.”



Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, with her husband Thomas

GEORGE OIYE, SOLDIER (1922-2006)

George Oiye grew up near Three Forks, Montana, where his dad worked at the cement plant. In high school he was co-captain of the six-man football team and the starting quarterback.

Oiye's life changed dramatically on December 7, 1941, when the United States declared war against Germany, Italy, and Japan. People started treating anyone who looked Japanese as "the enemy." George's parents were both born in Japan, and George's father lost his job. George tried to enlist in the army, and at first, the army refused to take him because of his family background.

In 1943, the United States set up a special unit for Japanese American soldiers. Oiye joined and became a staff sergeant. His unit won more medals than any other fighting unit of its size in American history. George Oiye himself was awarded a Bronze Star for his bravery on the battlefield.



Sergeant George Oiye

ANNA BOE DAHL, PRESIDENT OF THE SHERIDAN COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (1892-1986)

Anna Boe Dahl moved to northeastern Montana in 1917. After teaching school for two years in Dagmar, she married farmer Andrew Dahl. Anna and Andrew's farm did not have electricity, which made life very hard. According to Anna, all the work had to be done by "muscle-power."

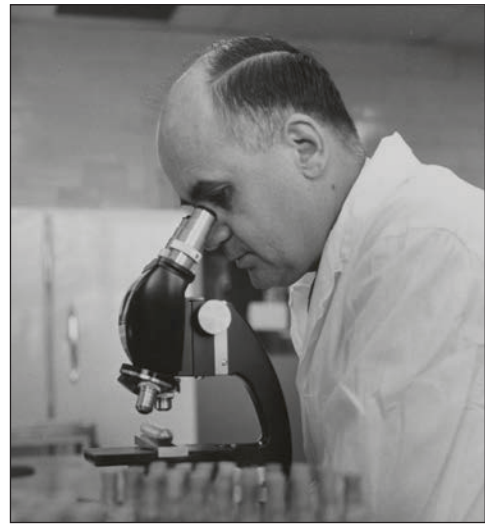
Power companies would not build the power lines needed to bring electricity to isolated farms like the Dahls'. It cost too much money. So, Anna Dahl worked with her neighbors to set up the Sheridan County Electric Cooperative (called the co-op). When it started providing power in 1948, the co-op brought electricity to over six hundred families in Sheridan County. It soon expanded to serve parts of Roosevelt and Daniels counties, too. Dahl continued to work with the co-op to help farm families like hers until she retired at age seventy-five.



Anna Boe Dahl and children

MAURICE HILLEMAN, SCIENTIST (1919–2005)

Not every great Montanan stayed in the state. Maurice Hilleman was born on a farm outside of Miles City, Montana. He credited the lessons he learned as a child on the farm and his education at Montana State University for his success. He became one of the most important scientists in the United States.



Maurice Hilleman

Hilleman was a microbiologist. **Micro** means small. **Biology** is the study of life. Microbiologists study tiny living creatures like bacteria and viruses. As a microbiologist, Hilleman specialized in creating vaccines to fight against **diseases** (sickness), like measles and mumps, that are caused by viruses. During his career, he developed over forty vaccines that are estimated to save nearly eight million lives a year.

JIM MURRY, LABOR LEADER (1935–2020)

Jim Murry grew up in Laurel, Montana. After high school, he went to work in the oil refinery there. Jim was active in the oil refinery workers' labor union. (A **union** is an organization that stands up for workers' rights and fights for better pay.) He went on to lead the Montana AFL-CIO. The AFL-CIO brought together many unions—

from oil workers to teachers—so they could work together to try to improve the workers' lives.

Jim Murry worked for the Montana AFL-CIO from 1966 to 1981. This was a hard time for Montana workers. Increasing **mechanization** (using machines to do the work that people once did) meant that it took fewer miners to dig copper in Butte or cut **timber** (wood for building) in Libby. There was also less copper to dig. To help the workers who lost their jobs, Jim brought training programs to Montana. These programs helped people learn new skills, so they could find new ways to make a living.



Jim Murry

ELOUISE PEPION COBELL, BANKER-ACTIVIST (1945-2011)

Elouise Cobell grew up on the Blackfeet Reservation in a home without electricity or plumbing. She studied business in college and started the Blackfeet National Bank. It was the first national bank owned by an Indian tribe. She also became tribal **treasurer** (the person who keeps track of money).

Cobell discovered a problem. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA),

a part of the U.S. government, controlled a lot of Indian land. The BIA **leased** (rented) that land to ranchers or mining companies. The BIA was supposed to pay Indian landowners the money it made from leasing their land, but it had not kept good records.



Elouise Cobell with President Barack Obama

When the BIA refused to fix things, Elouise Cobell sued them in court. After thirteen years and several trials, Cobell and her team proved that the BIA owed many Indian landowners money. To settle the lawsuit, the U.S. government agreed to pay these landowners \$3.4 billion.

WHAT WILL YOUR CONTRIBUTION BE?

How will you contribute to our state, nation, or world when you grow up? Will you become an artist like Charlie Russell, a businessman like Marcus Daly, or a nurse like Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail? Will you stay in Montana and work to make your community a better place to live, like Anna Dahl? Or will you be like Maurice Hilleman, and use what you learn growing up in Montana to help the world?

GLOSSARY

Abandon leave

Adapted changed to fit new conditions

Allies friends

Allotment portion

Allotment policy dividing Indian reservations into separate farms for each family

Amber yellow

Ancestors family members who lived long ago

Ancient very old

Archaeologists scientists who study the past by analyzing objects people have left behind

Artifacts objects created by people

Assimilate/assimilation to be absorbed into the majority culture, in this case, the white American culture

Atlatl a spear thrower

Bacteriology the study of bacteria

Badlands an area created by erosion of rocks and hills with little vegetation

Band group

Bison buffalo

Boom time of great prosperity or rapid growth

Capotes coats made from thick wool blankets

Chinook a warm wind that blows down the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains

Claim take for their own

Climate typical weather condition

Communal group

Constitution document that sets the rules for government

Continent one of the main areas of land on earth

Continental Divide a mountain ridge that separates North America and determines whether water flows east to the Atlantic Ocean or west to the Pacific Ocean

Culture a shared system of behavior, attitudes, and understandings; language, customs, and ideas

Descendants a person's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc.

Discrimination treating a group of people unfairly

Disease sickness

Distinct separate

Diversity variety

Drought lack of rain

Economy businesses and jobs

Environment land, water, climate

Epidemic rapid spread of disease

Erosion the process by which rock or soil is gradually taken away by wind, rain, or water

Essential most important

Extinct gone

Extinction death of a species

Fell cut down trees

Fertile good for growing things

Foothills hills at the edge of a mountain range

Geography where things are, the study of particular places

Geologists scientists who study the earth

Geology minerals, rocks, and soil and the study of these things

Great Plains the flat land region west of the Mississippi River and east of the Rocky Mountains

Homesteader someone who received land from the U.S. government in exchange for farming that land

Immigrant someone who moves to a new country to live

Immigrate move from one country to another

Indian agent a person (usually non-Indian) who the government put in charge of a reservation

Industries types of businesses

Leased rented

Lumber wood for building

Mechanization using machines to do the work that people once did

Natural resources things found in nature and used by people

Negotiate discuss to come to an agreement

Northern Divide landform that separates water that flows north from water that flows south

Opportunities chances for something better

Oral histories important stories people pass down

Pacifist someone who believes that problems cannot be solved by fighting

Pelts skins

Plains flat land

Poultry birds raised on farms, like chickens and turkeys

Poverty being poor

Prairies flat grasslands

Precipitation rain and snow

Predate come before

Prospectors people looking for gold or other precious metals

Published printed

Pull factors things that make people want to move to a new place

Push factors things that make people want to leave their homes

Push-pull factors things that influence immigration (that push you out of your home country and pull you to another place)

Reservation an area of land that a tribe or tribes reserved (kept) for their own use

Reserved kept

Residents people who live in a place

Resilience strength

Resourceful good at figuring things out

Resources useful things

Sovereign self-governing

Sovereignty self-rule

Spacious large

Specific exact

Strike gold discovery

Suffrage vote

Suffrage activist someone working to win women the right to vote

Surplus extra

Taxes money people pay the government so the government can provide services

Timber wood for building

Time immemorial as long as anyone can remember

Toxic poisonous

Traditional old

Transcontinental all the way across the continent

Transport move

Treasurer the person who keeps track of an organization's money

Treaty agreement between nations

Union an organization that stands up for workers' rights and fights for better pay

Unique not the same as any other

TIMELINE

13,000 years ago (or more): People are living in Montana.

1492 Columbus reaches North America.

1720 (approximately): Horses arrive in Montana.

1775 Smallpox epidemic kills many Montana Indians.

1776 The United States declares independence from Great Britain.



1804–1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition

1807 First fur trading post in Montana

1830s Montana fur traders turn from beaver to bison.

1833–1834 Artist Karl Bodmer travels up the Missouri River painting portraits of American Indians.



1837 Smallpox epidemic kills many Montana Indians.

1841 Father DeSmet builds St. Mary's Mission.

1847 Sheep arrive in Montana.

1850s Cattle ranching begins in Montana.



1851 First Fort Laramie Treaty

1855 Lame Bull and Hell Gate Treaties



1862 Montana gold rush begins; Congress passes the Homestead Act.

1864 Montana becomes a territory.



1866 A typical miner's cabin

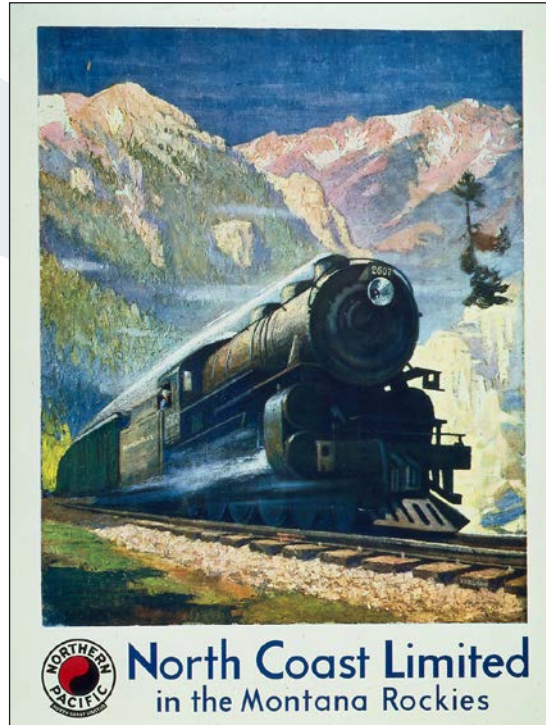
1868 Second Fort Laramie Treaty

1870 20,438 non-Indians live in Montana.

1872 Yellowstone National Park established

1876 Battle of the Greasy Grass (Battle of the Little Bighorn)

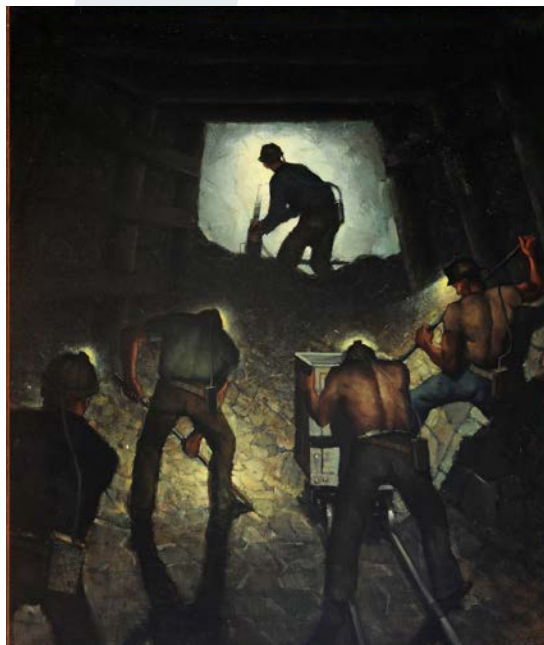
1877 Nez Perce War



1880 First train arrives in Montana; beginning of the Indian boarding school era

1882 Crow Reservation reduced by 1.5 million acres.

1883 Northern Pacific Railroad completes transcontinental line; fewer than 200 bison remain on the plains; copper boom begins in Butte.



1886–87 Hard Winter (end of the open-range cattle boom)

1889 Montana becomes a state.



1896 Twenty-fifth Infantry troops test bicycle technology by riding through Yellowstone National Park.

1900 243,000 non-Indians live in Montana.



1904 First Crow Fair held

1905 Creation of the U.S. Forest Service

1907 Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroad arrives in Montana.

1909 Enlarged Homestead Act

1911 First Hutterite colony is established; pilot Cromwell Dixon becomes the first person to fly across the Continental Divide.



1914–1918 World War I



1916 Creation of the National Park Service

1917 Drought begins.

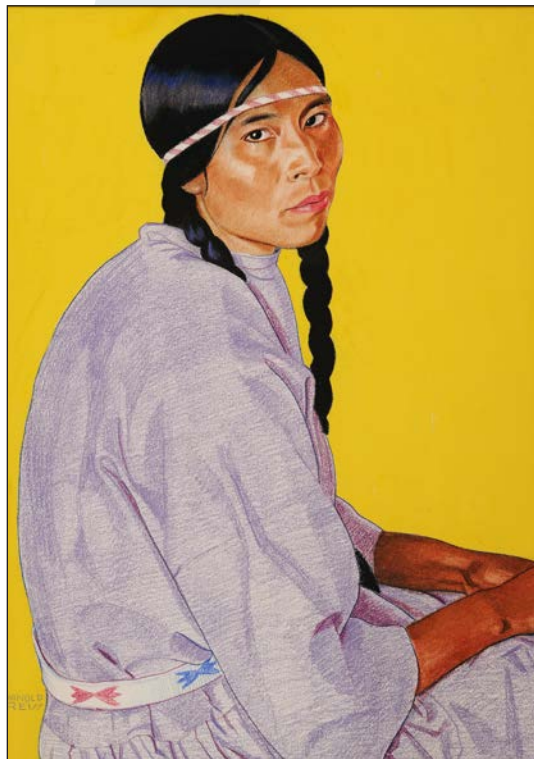
1918 "Spanish flu" pandemic



1920 Population of Montana is 548,889 (one-quarter of the population is foreign born); first commercial production of oil in Montana

1921 Sugar companies begin to recruit Mexican farmworkers.

1924 Indian
Citizenship Act



1928 Montana has approximately 50 miles of paved highway.



1929 Beginning of the Great Depression



1933-1940 Fort Peck Dam built by the Public Works Administration (PWA)

1939 Montana has approximately 7,200 miles of paved highway.

1939-1945 World War II

1942–1944 The U.S. Army trains sled dogs for military service at Camp Rimini west of Helena.



1950 Population of Montana is 593,000.

1951 Williston Basin oil field discovered



1955 Open-pit mining begins in Butte.

1954–1975 Vietnam War

1964 The U.S. Congress passes the Wilderness Act.



1972 Montana adopts a new state constitution.

1979 Hmong refugees arrive in Montana.

1980 Population of Montana is 795,317.

2005 Judith Gap Wind Farm opens; the Montana legislature funds Indian Education for All.



2010 Agriculture remains Montana's number one industry.

2020 Population of Montana is 1,084,225.

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