

Then and Now: Or, Thirty-six Years in the Rockies: Personal Reminiscences of Some of the First Pioneers of the State of Montana, Indians and Indian Wars, ... Past and Present of the Rocky Mountain ...

Robert Vaughn

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One of the best first-person accounts of 19th-century frontier life in Montana. First published in 1900, Vaughan's account is a series of letters to his daughter. Robert Vaughn is the quintessential Montana pioneer. By his own definition, he had arrived in Montana Territory in the 1860s, worked hard, took risks, involved himself in civic affairs, and prospered. Most important, he had remained on the Montana scene--long enough for his stories of "the early days" to hold credence. The energetic Robert built a solid ranching operation near the present-day town of Vaughn, Montana, his namesake, west of Great Falls. During the 1870s and 1880s the ranch sat relatively close to the Blackfeet reservation, and Vaughn experienced repeated encounters with local Indians and with other bands moving through the area. By the turn of the century, Robert Vaughn's personal kindness and honest public dealings had gained him widespread in Montana. Great Falls residents called him "Uncle Bob."

CONTENTS.

From Home to the State of Illinois,

Crossing the Plains,

On a Stampede to the Yellowstone,

The Discovery of Alder Creek, the Richest Gold Gulch on the Globe,

The James Stuart Prospecting Party,

From Alder Gulch to Last Chance,

From the Mines to the Farm,

A Letter to My Little Babe

From the Farm to the City of Great Falls Montana Pioneers,

The Dark Side of the Life of the Pioneer,

The Indian Praying,

Indians Stealing my Horses,

The Great Sun River Stampede,

A Trip from Virginia City to the Head of Navigation on the Missouri River in 1866,

My First Buffalo Hunt,

Tom Campbell Running the Gauntlet,

Edward A. Lewis' Early Days in Montana,

A Brave Piegan War Chief,

Bloody Battles and Tragedies in the Sun River Valley,

Charles Choquette Coming to Montana in 1843,

A Trip to the Twenty-eight Mile Spring Station,

John Largent's Early Days in Montana

A Visit to Fort Benton,

John D. Brown, a Narrative of his Early Experiences in the West

A Pioneer Minister,

An old Letter

Warren C. Gillette's Early Experiences in Montana,

A Meal in an Indian Camp,

The First Settlement of What is now Montana

Montana Then and Now

A Sample of the Pioneers of Montana,

The Indian

The Sioux War,

General Sherman's Letters

The Nez Perces War

An English Tribute to the American Scout,

Returning- of Sitting Bull from Canada,

The Indian Messiah and the Ghost Dance,

An Indian Legend,

The Roundup,

Traveling "Then" and Traveling "Now,"

Yellowstone National Park

From the Prospector's Hole to the Greatest Mining Camp on Earth,

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