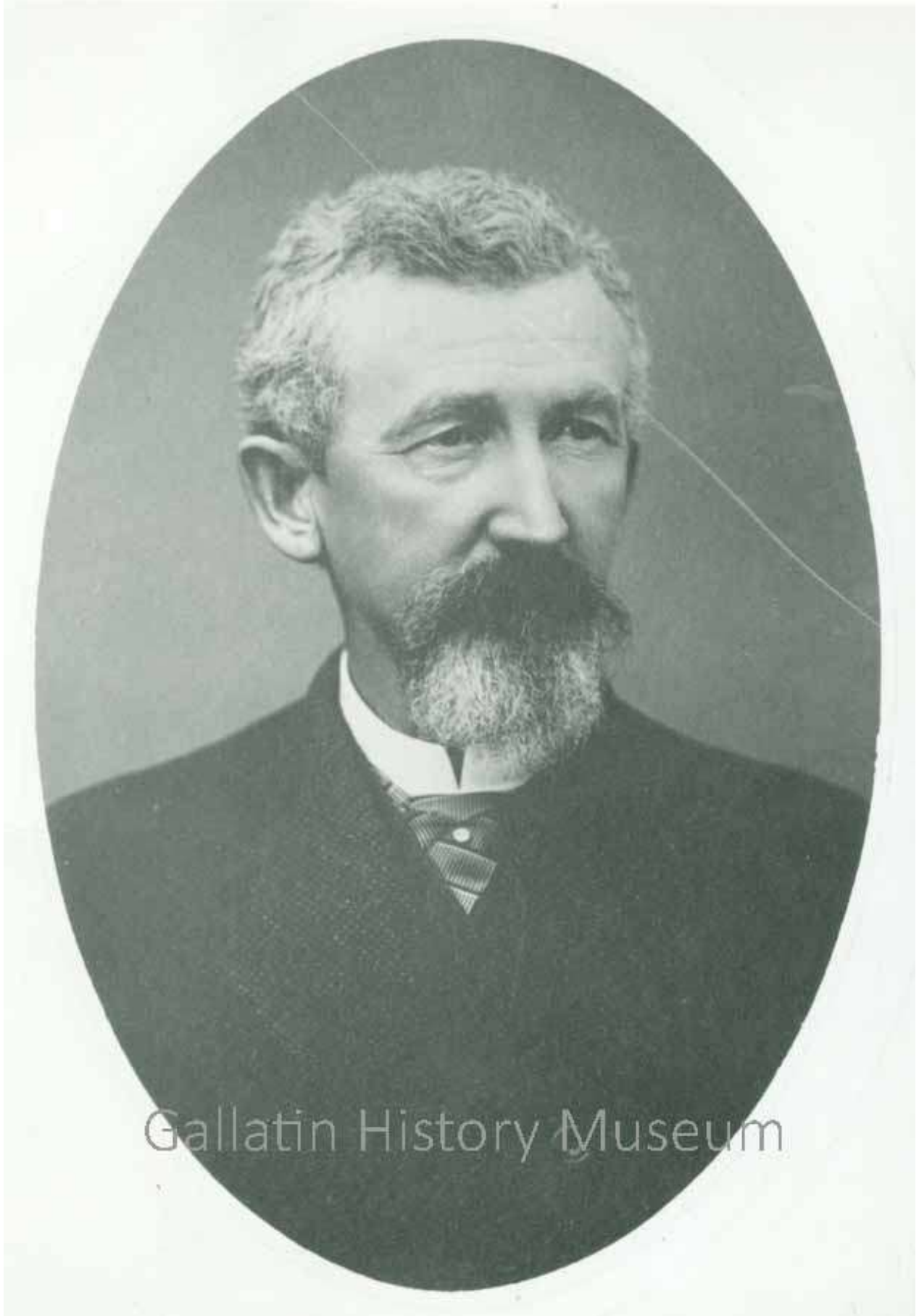


John Mendenhall



Gallatin History Museum

JARY 6, 1896. *H. M.*

Death of John S. Mendenhall.

John S. Mendenhall, known to his intimate associates and pioneer companions as "Jack," died on Saturday evening about half past five o'clock, as he had lived, peacefully and calmly.

Mr. Mendenhall had been ill with kidney troubles for several months, being utterly unable to attend to business during this time; but persistently refusing to seek a prolongation of life elsewhere. Wrapped up in his business, it was his chief joy to be in close touch with it, and to advise with his son, who has had it in charge.

Briefly Mr. Mendenhall's history is as follows: He was born in Vevay, Ind., Oct. 18, 1835. In 1855 he went to Leavenworth, Kas., and there loaded freight for Gelbert & Gerrish, and went with it to Salt Lake. He worked as clerk for the same firm until 1857. It was he who sold to the victims of the Mountain Meadow massacre the provisions they bought at Salt Lake before pursuing their fateful journey. Mr. Mendenhall's life in Utah was fraught with danger and he occasionally gave some very interesting accounts of it. He returned to the states in 1857, but returned to Salt Lake and remained there until 1862, when he went to Ft. Lemhi, Idaho. At this point the party were obliged to leave their wagons, and the deceased proceeded to the Deer Lodge valley. In 1862-3, Mr. Mendenhall brought goods from Salt Lake to Bannock. He prospected during the year 1863, and in 1864 went to British Columbia, returning to Montana and locating in this valley the same year. Here, he farmed successfully until 1868, finally opening a general store with A. Lamme, which at his death he entirely owned.

He was elected county commissioner in 1873, serving three years. This was the only official position he would hold, although time and again urged to do so. With his wide popularity, Mr. Mendenhall could have been elected to any office in the gift of the people of this county; but he steadfastly refused to neglect his business.

Mr. Mendenhall was an honored member of Gallatin Lodge, A. F. & A. M. He was married in 1870 to Mrs. M. S. Smith, who, with a son by her former husband, and Samuel A., Mr. Mendenhall's son, survive the beloved head of the family.

The funeral was one of the largest ever seen in Bozeman, the Episcopal church was not half large enough to hold all who wished to enter.

Both Masonic blue lodges marched in a body to the residence, accompanied by the pioneer's association and firemen in uniform.

From the residence the body was taken, under escort, to the Episcopal church, where Rev. Frank Lewis delivered a short but earnest tribute to the memory of the deceased, whom he said needed no extended eulogy. "Around the fire sides and on the streets, the attendance at this time to pay him reverence, is a more eloquent tribute than I can offer."

After a short prayer at the grave, W. M., W. R. C. Stewart, read the impressive funeral service of the dead, after which the brothers deposited the sprig of evergreen in the open grave, and joined in the grand honors. Each and everyone then deposited a spade full of dirt upon the coffin.

The scenes at the funeral, the long line of friends afoot and in carriages, attested, in a measure, the esteem in which the deceased was held. There are few men who have lived in this busy west, who have received the same honors.

Besides all this the schools and every business house and office was closed for half a day, and flags placed at half mast.

Mendenhall, John S., pioneer (Oct. 18, 1835-Feb. 1, 1896). B. at Vevay, Switzerland County, Indiana, he went to Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1855 and joined a freight outfit to Salt Lake City, where he remained two years before going on to California. He took a ship to New York City, but returned overland to Salt Lake City once more, working there until 1862. In May of that year he and Robert P. Menefee took a party of about 25 men equipped with ox wagons northward intending to go to the Florence, Idaho, gold fields, about 40 miles southeast of Grangeville. They reached Fort Lemhi where they learned the intervening country was impassable for wagons. They then turned east via Lemhi Pass, reaching Gold Creek, Montana, July 15. On August 26, 1862, Mendenhall stood only 15 feet away while C. W. Spillman was hanged for horse stealing, the first vigilante victim in Montana. Mendenhall returned to Salt Lake City and brought a cargo of merchandise to the new mining camp of Bannack where he made considerable profit on the goods. He prospected in the Virginia City, Montana, region in 1863 and in the Kootenai region of British Columbia in 1864, then moved to the Gallatin Valley of Montana, settling in the new community of Bozeman. He farmed with Menefee until 1868 when he entered the grocery business at Bozeman, remaining with that pursuit the rest of his life. He held various public positions. Mendenhall was married and fathered a son who survived him, as did his widow.

M. A. Leeson, *History of Montana, 1739-1885*. Chicago, Warner, Beers and Co., 1885; *Bozeman Courier*, Feb. 8, 1896; Virginia City, Mont., *Madisonian*, Sept. 1, 1899; Bozeman, *Gallatin County Tribune*, June 24, 1971.

Mendoza, Juan Domínguez de: see Domínguez de Mendoza, Juan

Menefee, Robert Philip, pioneer (Apr. 13, 1833-July 18, 1906). B. in Marion County, Missouri, he went to Kansas at 22 and took part in the border struggles from 1855-58 when he drove an ox team to Salt Lake City where he became clerk for a government contracting firm. On May 7 or 8, 1862, he and John S. Mendenhall left Salt Lake City with a party of 25 bound for the gold diggings at Florence, Idaho, about 40 miles by road southeast of Grangeville. They crossed the

Snake River at present arrived June 9 at Fort their attempt to reach difficult country inter Lemhi Pass, reaching Montana. June 20 a wandering, Gold Cre Menefee became assis ginia City, Montana, to Bozeman where he dent. He was a parti ranching undertaking the grocery business. administration Mene Bozeman. He never Bozeman and was bu Bancroft, *History of Montana*; Virginia City, 1, 1899; *Register*; Helen July 18, 1906.

Menéndez de Aviles, general (Feb. 15, 151 Aviles, Asturias, Spa By 30 he was fighting became under Charl the Indies fleet, makin the Atlantic beside Europe. In the Indi amass vast riches." I some disgrace, howe Indies had him arres fined on charges wh Philip reduced his presumption of hi Parkman: Menéndez to conquer and set expense and within could leave Spain w the rival attempt by peninsula. Menén adelantado of Florid any means colonists illegally within its re June 1565; he founde and confronted with fleet at the St. Joh withdrawing then to had brought reinforc colony of Laudonnie dez resolved to destr Spain were nominall brothers, according pledged to treat wel who might be Cathol



John Mendenhall

born 1835 in Indiana
died 1896

John Mendenhall came to Bozeman in 1864. He farmed, owned the first saloon in town, and was the first Territorial Sheriff of Gallatin County. In 1869, he became a business partner with Dr. Achilles Lamme and they opened a store which was the first store in the area. John met and married Lamme's sister-in-law, Mary. Their son, Sam, was Bozeman's first city manager.

MENDENHALL, JOHN S

Stone

Street _____

Born ?

Arrived Gallatin Co ?

" Bozeman ?

Elected Sheriff of Gallatin Co 1865

Engaged in mercantile business in Bozeman

Helped finance first Methodist Church

Served on Bozeman Board of Trade (forerunner of Chamber of Commerce)

Participated in "Yellowstone Expedition" 1874

Built first ^{with wood & hand force} Saloon in Bozeman in 1864. Probably sold whiskey from the distillery built & sprung for in fall of 65 by Henry Monfaster and L.M. Howell.

(Mendenhall home now occupied by Malcolm Stone)

John Mendenhall was county's first law enforcement officer

By Phyllis Smith

The man who was elected the first territorial county sheriff had traveled to many parts of the continent before he settled down in the Gallatin Valley at the age of thirty.

Born in Vevay, Indiana, in 1835, John S. Mendenhall, known to his friends as Jack, left home when he was twenty to join an ox-driven freight train bound for Salt Lake City. There he clerked in a store for two years but left to try his luck in the gold fields of California. He didn't strike it rich but earned enough for a ticket to sail around the Horn to visit New York City.

Coming west again to Utah, he followed prospectors into British Columbia but returned to Salt Lake City, leaving almost immediately for Gold Creek in June 1862, then in Idaho Territory. There he joined Granville and James Stuart, future Bozeman miller P. W. McA Dow, and others to form the first mining camp in what would become Montana Territory. Mendenhall didn't stay for long but was on

hand to participate in a miners' court which ordered a number of assorted horse thieves and robbers to die by the rope.

A young fellow from Georgia named John Bozeman came up from Denver to look for gold near the camp on Gold Creek but didn't stay for long either.

Both men traveled south to look over the diggings at Barnack and, disappointed, joined others who were the first to file claims for farming land in the Gallatin Valley. John Bozeman left for the east to lead his first emigrant train past the little settlement which would bear his name. And Jack Mendenhall established a modest saloon which also dispensed canned peaches and sundries.

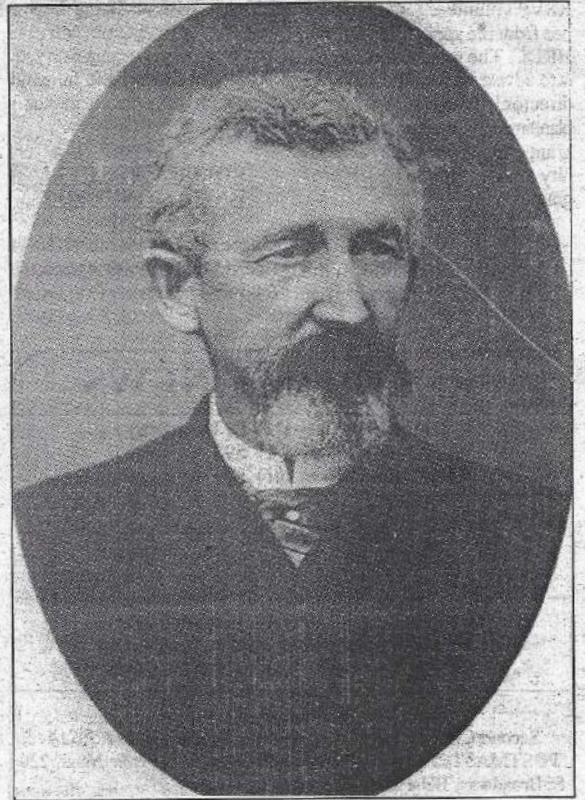
In 1865 Mendenhall was elected as county sheriff, a two-year stint. At that time, there was no jail in the area; criminals were either fined or firmly told to leave the county at their earliest convenience. And Jack Mendenhall saw that they did.

By 1870, Mendenhall had married Mary Susan Smith and established a general store at 27

East Main Street with her brother-in-law Dr. Achilles Lamme, who decided not to continue his medical practice but enter business instead. Mendenhall sold his farmland and moved into town to build a pattern-book Queen Anne residence on the northwest corner of South Willson Avenue and Dickerson Street; the house is still a featured stop for summer house tours.

Mendenhall continued his public service as county commissioner, cemetery board member, and secretary to the Bozeman Fire Company. As vice president of the Bozeman Board of Trade, he was on Main Street in 1883 to salute the first train to enter the valley. The former sheriff's son, Samuel, also participated in civil affairs and became Bozeman's city manager in 1922.

Phyllis Smith is photo archivist for the Gallatin County Historical Society. She has published three titles on western history and is currently seeking a publisher for her completed manuscript on the history of the Gallatin Valley.



John S. Mendenhall was one of many who came west to search for gold, but ended up as farmer, sheriff and Bozeman businessman. Photo provided by the Gallatin County Historical Society.

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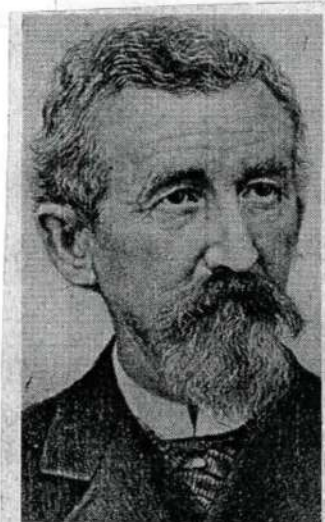
Bozeman Byways Thursday June 24-71

Mendenhall's Story is Exciting Page in History



John S. Mendenhall is standing in the door of his grocery store at 27 East Main, the present location of Gambles. His delivery wagon is parked outside. Mendenhall

became associated with Achilles Lamme in 1869 and the name was changed.



John Mendenhall

By Roxa Crowe

Vigilantes and lawmen played a vital and exciting part in developing the Old West.

Mendenhall Street, a main artery of Bozeman, was named after one of these pioneers of Gallatin County, John S. Mendenhall.

Besides being the first territorial sheriff of Gallatin County in 1865, Mendenhall was a member of the

vigilantes in Gold Creek, points out Mrs. Robert O. Smith.

Coming overland from Salt Lake City in 1862, Mendenhall and a party of 20 to 30 men including James and Granville Stewart, Sameul T. Hauser, and Walter B. Dance arrived in Gold Creek with the help of an Indian guide.

They organized the first mining camp in Montana.

Organized Vigilantes

According to *Vigilante Days and Ways* by Nathaniel Pitt Langford (1890), they "were determined that it

would not have the bloody rule of assassins, robbers and wholesale murderers that typified mining camps in other parts of the west."

Believing in fair trial by the miners, these men kept order by vigilante justice. John Mendenhall, a member of this group, was standing 15 feet from the first horse thief in Gold Creek when he was hung.

Then, Mendenhall worked his way up to Bozeman via Emigrant Gulch through the Bozeman Pass with John Bozeman.

In 1964, six buildings were completed during the summer and fall in Bozeman and trade began.

Became a Grocer

One of these buildings was a general store established by Mendenhall. It was located on the site of the present day Gambles Store.

Dr. Achilles Lamme became associated with Mendenhall in the store in '869.

Mendenhall was born in Vevay, Indiana, On October

18, 1835. In 1855 he went to Leavenworth, Kansas and joined a freight train for Salt Lake City where he worked in a store for two years.

From Salt Lake City he moved to California, then sailed to New York City. Later he returned overland to Salt Lake City where he remained until 1862, "being well traveled for his time," Mrs. Smith comments.

Active in Bozeman civic affairs, Mendenhall served as county sheriff, county commissioner, member of the board of directors of the cemetery, secretary for Bozeman Fire Company, and



Susan Mendenhall

a member of the Bozeman Board of Trade, cites Laura A. Coffman in *Streets and Names* (1950).

Married Mrs. Smith

On October 16, 1870, Mendenhall married Mrs. Mary Susan Oliver Smith, sister of Mrs. Achilles Lamme. She and her son, Harry L. Smith, came overland with the Lammes after Mrs. Smith's husband was killed in the Civil War.

"The Mendenhalls had one son, Samuel A., who was a civil engineer," says Roy M. Keister, attorney. "He practiced in Bozeman and in

1922 became the first city manager of Bozeman."

Samuel Mendenhall was married twice. The first marriage was to Leila Reid, a nurse in the first hospital in Bozeman. She died shortly after they were married.

Then he married Mary Lea Morris, daughter of W. W. Morris, a mine owner of Virginia City and Pony. There were no children from either marriage.

Harry Smith married Pearl Orton, and they had two children: Robert Orton Smith, who lives with his family in Bozeman today,

and Mrs. Susan Smith Anderson, Pocatello, Idaho.

"Mrs. Mendenhall lived in the family home at 521 South Willson (where Malcolm Story now lives) until her death April 6, 1933," says Mrs. Smith. John S. Mendenhall died February 1, 1896.

Mrs. Smith has "Grandma Mendenhall's scrapbook" of early newspaper clippings about the Mendenhall family which was very helpful in constructing this sketch of the life of Mendenhall — another famous builder of the Gallatin country.