

Clyde Ball recalls early days in Meridian - MT Jan 15, 1948 9 (SEE BASEBALL TEAM) ~ p. 3

(Clyde Ball was the local baker for many years and always made large cakes for athletic banquets as well as being an active booster for youth.)

It was a cold, rainy day just forty years ago, January 8, 1908, that I landed in Meridian. Teddy Roosevelt was president of the United States and James H. Hawley was Governor of Idaho. There were no graveled streets in Meridian (just mud) and the old board walks were still here.

The city council was composed of J. M. Anderson (chairman,) Will Palmer, Ed Hartman, Elmer Sims and Charley Pickett,

There was just one automobile hereabouts them - an old right-hand drive with buggy wheels, owned by Joseph Doane, whom we affectionately called "Sockless Jerry."

#### Early School Teachers

To the best of my memory the grade school and high school were operated together, the first four grades were in an old dilapidated frame building where Keller's Market now stands.( East 2<sup>nd</sup>, between Idaho & Pine) The teachers were Hester M. Spackman (whom we often, and appropriately, called Spankman). Ethel Tolleth, Nellie Tolleth and Miss McGrew. Among the teachers over where the grade school now is (NW corner at Meridian and Pine) were J. J. Caldwell (principal), Neal Nash and A. W. Fuller, but don't think I ever knew any of the others. The school board consisted of Will Palmer (who later did a magnificent job of helping to get the new high school building), Dr. H. F. Neal, J. A. Watts, John Waggoner and W. W. Groves.

The law in Meridian was represented by Jeff Kyle (marshall) and L. K. Deck (constable) and George Whitlock (Justice of the peace).

#### Good Baseball Team

As I remember Meridian had one of the best baseball teams in the valley, among the players were Frank Anderson, Frank Long, Ed Hartman, "Tubb" Daly, Jim Waggoner, Oscar Zimmerman, Dee Herron; and Frank Matcham was water boy.

Dr. H. T. Nicter (a veterinarian) ran a livery barn just east of the Methodist church where the Davis, Raynor, Taylor and Kennedy families now live, and Will Palmer ran another where the creamery is now located. Construction had just started on the new Methodist church, William Crosby Ross was the minister, H. G. Powers was the christian minister. (Harvey Powers was an ordained Methodist Protestant minister from MO)(William Crosby Ross was not a pastor in Meridian, J. H. Ross was.)(Rev. H. E. McLeod was the pastor who "built" the church in 1908)

E. G. Duncan (Dunkin) had a general store, where John Petty's now stands. In a building just east of the Boise-Payette Lumber Co. S. H. Griffith and Charley Pickett made spray in the spring and cider in the fall.

J. A. Fenton had one lumber yard where the Boise-Payette now is and Henry Taylor had another just east of where the Meridian Market (Parkin Hall) is now located, and Elmer Sims and J. W. Harrell operated another in the building occupied by The Meridian Times.

#### Hotel on Bank Site

The hotel business was quite flourishing because it usually took two or more days to go anywhere. Rose Huber operated a hotel where the Broadway (Long's Hotel) apartments are now, and Mrs. Guymann managed another, where the new bank building is being erected. (Meridian Hotel & the First National Bank). There were two banks, one where the bank now is with J. J. Jones as president, and E. C. Pfaffle cashier. The other occupied the room where the Elite Cleaners are now, and to the best of my memory the personnel was Howard Davison and Thall Stevens.

The building now occupied by McFaddens Market was divided. Frank Long ran a pool hall in the east half. Next to this on the west was a butcher shop,. The two very efficient managers were Ed Hartman and Joe Daly.

#### Barber Bestenbostle

In the next room an old Dutchman by the name of Chriss Von Bestenbostle had a barber shop, Fred and John Adams also had a barber shop but I don't recall where it was located.

The room now occupied by W. A. Gano's plumbing shop, housed the same drug store now owned by J. J. Rice and it was managed by Sam Wilson, The drug store which is now Meridian Drug Center was where Arthur Frazier's office is now located, with M. W. A. Hayden as manager.

Harry Tolleth and Harry Champlin operated a grocery store in the room now occupied by Mr. Leninger's harness shop. There were two saloons, one operated by Hugh Rohrbaugh where the Meridian Cigar Store now is, and "Dad" Bayzer (Bazor) had another just east of the site of the creamery but I don't recall the exact location. There were more buildings along there but as to just what was in them my memory fails me.

#### First I.O.O.F. Hall

The Odd Fellows hall was where the Western Auto Store now is (Broadway & East First, later Chriswissers, currently the Broken Bucket saloon), but I don't remember what was down stairs in the building. Just east of there was a picture-show and Geo. E. Atwater had his real estate and insurance office in the same building. Homer Champlin

and his mother operated a bakery and restaurant in the same room where our bakery is located and Clem Hedges and some of his boys had a general store in the other side of the building.

The Post Office, was where Drs. Jewell and Brunn have their offices. Dr. S. M. C. Reynolds was the postmaster and "Uncle" Jim McIntosh and S. W. Hutcheson were mail carriers. There were two telephone companies. Martin Burns operated the Bell Co. In a room at the end of a hall between the Dr's. offices and the Meridian Pastime, and the office of the Meridian Independent owned by Homer Tolleth was up stairs over where Arthur Frazier's office now is.

The building now occupied by the Meridian Pastime was divided, Herman Barz having a grocery store in the east half and Harry Madden a harness and shoe shop on the west side. Dr. H. F. Neal's office was over where the bank now is and Dr. C. L. Dutton's office in the building now occupied by the Rice Pharmacy.

#### Hand Printing Press

The Meridian Times was published on an old hand printing press by Tommie Wilson's father (I don't remember his first name) and was located on the site of the new furniture store now being erected. (East First & Idaho, Gambles store originally the Robison furniture store - later Western Auto, now a restaurant)

Frank Slater did hauling with a team of horses. There were two blacksmith shops. A Mr. Russell operated one on that lot where the Veltex service station now is and P. H. Snow operated the other where Fuhrman and Neitzel garage is located. Incidentally, my father, a horseshoer by trade, came to work for Mr. Snow and that is how we happened to settle in Meridian.

J. M. Anderson divided his time between a furniture store and an undertaking establishment on the present site of the Legion Hall.

#### Horse-drawn Fire Engine

There was no city water system and the only means of fighting fire was a small pump drawn by a team of horses and to the best of my memory Jake Eames was fire chief.

The only people who come to my immediate attention as living in the same house today as they did them are Yale Thurman, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Taylor, Mrs. Dr. Neal, Mrs. Harry Tolleth and Grandma Peer.

A friend asked me the other day what I remembered the best about early Meridian and without the slightest hesitation I replied that the fondest memories that I will ever have about Meridian or anything else are the games of baseball that I and the other boys used to play where the Cash Bazaar, Funeral Home, Idaho Power office and Variety Store now stands. But alas! One day a man named Ed. Mathews built a blacksmith

shop, the horseshoe prints are still in the cement walk in front of the Idaho Power office, and away went our play-house forever.

### Tribute to a Pioneer

Of the people I have known all these forty years I wish to say that as for a dear old soul who has given her all for Meridian and dedicated her life to doing kind things for others and lending a hand to those in distress and who today probably has more friends than anyone else who is or ever was in Meridian I don't think I well get too many dissenting votes when I say Grandma Peer. There are perhaps some of you other old-timers whose memories may serve them better than mine. I'm sure the Times will welcome any corrections you may wish to make in this article, or further stories about early Meridian.

## Baseball Extractions in 1908 – from the Idaho Statesman & the Evening Capital News –

May 12 – Meridian's First Trader's Day Sale –The feature of the day which aroused most interest and enthusiasm was the baseball game between the single and the married men for a purse contributed by Meridian business men. Some of the married men's best players were out of town, but they were reinforced by an imported pitcher, Frank Long of the Boise team. The young men showed their mettle and put up a rattling good game against odds. A large number of spectators sat on the bleachers through an unpleasant drizzle of rain until the game was completed and the score keeper announced the score 10 to 3(8 ?) in favor of the married men. C. c. Tobias umpired the game and the lineup was as follows – Benedict: Downey c, Long p, Clendenning 1<sup>st</sup>, Badley 2, Pickett 3<sup>rd</sup>, Waggoner ss, Neal lf, Nixon cf, Williamson rf. Bachelors: Frazier c, Anderson p, Champlin 1st, Badley 2nd, Chapman 3<sup>rd</sup>, Madden ss, Craig lf, Gilbert cf, Woods rf. The winners very generously donated the prize to the single men, who form Meridian's regular baseball team.

May 16-The Meridian baseball team will cross bats with the boys from Eagle on the home diamond Sunday afternoon. The account of the game between Meridian and Maple Grove was inadvertently omitted from Tuesday's issue. Suffice it now to say that the meridian boys covered themselves with glory and their opponents with defeat, with a score of 11 to 3. The victory was especially gratifying to the meridian boys, as they had gone down before the onslaught of the married men the day before in a game in which both sides did themselves credit.

May 19 – The Eagle baseball club was unable to meet the meridian boys on the home diamond Sunday as announced. Having a day off the Meridian boys went over to Star and wiped up the earth with the Star club, coming home with a score of 11 to 1. The loosing team (Star) put Snow out of the box in the last half of the eighth inning and Anderson took his place.

May 26 – The local baseball team beat Nampa's Fisher Boys.

June 2 – The manager and captain of the Boise Athletic Club were in town Sunday making arrangements with the Meridian Baseball Club to enter a league consisting of four or possibly six teams, including the Athletic Club of Boise, Meridian, Nampa and Caldwell baseball teams. A meeting will be held in Nampa Friday night of the managers and captains of the different teams to organize the league and draw up a schedule of the games to be played. The first game on the schedule for Meridian will be with the Boise Athletic Club on next Sunday and promises to be a fast one as the Boise boys have an extra swift bunch of ball tossers. There will be a large crowd of rooters come down from Boise, and the Meridian fans should turn out in force to help win the game for the home boys, and also to help them financially as much as possible. While it does not take much to run an amateur team, still it takes some and the boys need the money to start out right.

June 8 – The Boise Athletic Club will cross bats with the Meridian team on the home

June 27 – For the Fourth of July celebration ----In the afternoon the Boise Athletic Club will play the Meridian Baseball Club for a purse of \$100 of which \$60 goes to the winners and \$40 to the losers..... Later – same issue – The baseball game between Middleton and Meridian of the Boise Valley League, which was scheduled to be pulled off on the local grounds next Sunday afternoon has been called off. Middleton insists of putting Maloney, of the College of Idaho team, in the box. Meridian objected because the rules of the league bar professionals under which head they class Maloney as he signed this spring with the now defunct Payette Club of the southern Idaho League. Arrangements have been made to have the Carlson-Lusk team here from Boise for the Sunday game. As this team have an enviable record this year the Meridian fans are banking on a lively game.

June 30 – Plans for the Fourth – At 3 o'clock the ball game between the Boise Athletics and the home team will be called and it is expected that this will be quite the sporting event of the day. In the evening the baseball team will round out a happy day with a grand ball. Same paper – The Carlson-Lusk team from Boise lined up against the meridian boys on the local field Sunday afternoon and won the laurels by a score of 3-2. The bunch of fans who witnessed the game from the grand stand pronounced it one of the best games of the season. The Meridian boys lost through errors. Frazier, who has done such fine work as catcher for the Meridian team, was not in good form on this occasion and played under some disadvantage.

July 2 – The Boise Valley (Interurban) cars gaily decked in the national colors ran through Broadway to Third Street for the first time Friday afternoon.

July 7 – After dinner, which was variously enjoyed at the different stands of spread picnic fashion in the cool shade, the majority of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July audience adjourned to the base ball grounds to witness a fine game between the Boise athletic Club and the home boys – (same paper) Meridian fans enjoyed two games last week. In the first, which was between the Boise Athletic club of Boise and the home team on the fourth, the Meridian boys scooped their opponents by a score of 3 to 0. The game was closely contested and was pronounced one of the best of the season. The Meridian boys pronounced the boise Athletic boys the best of good fellows, who play good clean ball and put up a good if they are playing in hard luck this season. Anderson, for Meridian, struck out nine men while Dodds, of the visitors, struck out but five. The lineup was as follows – Peacock B, Frazier M catchers; Hunt B, Champlin M 1<sup>st</sup>, Hager B. C; Frazier M 2<sup>nd</sup>; Foster B, Chapman M 3<sup>rd</sup>; Dodds B, Anderson M pitchers; Case B, Waggoner M ss; Kurts B, Downey M, rf; Rogers B, Woods M, lf; Cole V, Tolleth M, df. Sunday afternoon's game was pulled off between the shamrocks of boise and the Meridian boys and as in their previous lineup the Shamrocks carried off the honors with a score of 5-4. The game was hotly contested and was very close until the last half of the ninth inning when Anderson went in the box for Meridian and lost out to the visitors. The Lineup: catcher Peters V – Frazier M; first base Christensen B – Champlin M; second base Helfrich B – Anderson N; third base Stottler V-Chapman M; Pitchers Luttrell V – C. frazier M; ss Wyman B – Waggoner M; rf Wetter V – Adams M; lf Dees B – woods M; CF Brasted V – Tolleth M.

diamond Sunday afternoon. The Meridian team has a number of scalp locks dangling at its belt and confidently expects to add another at the coming game. In the Boise athletic Club they will meet, "foremen worthy of their steed," and a fast and furious game is confidently expected. Admission will be charged to the grand stand and the boys should receive the encouragement best expressed in the jingle of coins.

June 9 – There will be a meeting in Meridian this evening to perfect plans for the organization of a six-team baseball league which will include the teams of Middleton, Star, Nampa, Meridian and the Boise Athletic and Shamrock Athletic Clubs of Boise. Manager Fisher of the Nampa Club, Murphy of the Middle Club, Button of the Star Club, Davis of the Boise Athletic and the manager of the Shamrock Club will be in attendance. At this meeting a schedule of games will be arranged. - Athletic and Shamrock Athletic Clubs ----later in the days news – The ball game between the Boise Athletic Club and the Meridian team on the home diamond on Sunday afternoon was witnessed by a large and enthusiastic crowd who pronounced it by far the finest game ever played on the local grounds. The first inning Boise ran in 3 scores to meridian's goose egg. The close of the second inning found Boise to the good and Meridian looking blue. When the home team went to bat in the last half of the third inning the score stood 7 to nothing in favor of the visitors, but before the close of the inning Meridian made 6 runs and the game began to get interesting. At the close of the eighth inning the score stood 8-8 and the contest waxes fast and furious until the close of the twelfth when Adams ran in the winning score for Meridian. Anderson for the home team pitched a marvelous game and added to the laurels which he had previously won. The Meridian team regret the loss their second baseman, Bert Badley, who left for Spokane yesterday for an indefinite stay. He is one o their best players and his place will be hard to fill. A large crowd of Boise rooters came down with the Athletic Club. Anderson of the Meridian team, struck out 20 and Dodds, of the Boise team, 10.

June 16 – The first game here of the boise Valley League between the Shamrocks of Boise and the Meridian Club on the diamond here Sunday resulted in a victory for the Shamrocks by a score of 10 to 7. This is the first defeat that the Meridian Club has suffered this year and they were sadly handicapped by the absence of three of their best players, Frazier c, Badley 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Chapman 3<sup>rd</sup>. the game was pronounced rather tame throughout and neither club was in good form. There were three umpires for the nine innings.

June 23 – The second game of the 6-team league was pulled off at Meridian Sunday afternoon between the boys from Star and the home club. With Frazier back at his place as catcher the Meridian boys went into the fray with confidence renewed after their defeat by the Boise Shamrocks last Sunday. In a short but hotly contested game the Meridian boys won the laurels by a score of 4-0, but the jolly bys from Star bore their goose egg trophy home in great good nature. A large crowd of rooters came over with the Star boys to spur them on to victory but with such reinforcements as Waggoner, who played a fine game for Meridian, the Star team was simply outclassed. Six-team schedule for the next two weeks is as follows: Sunday, June 28 Shamrocks vs Star at Boise; Boise Athletics vs Nampa at Nampa; Shamrocks vs Meridian at Meridian.

July 21 – The Idaho vitrified Brick Company baseball club of Boise came down Sunday afternoon to cross bats with the meridian boys on their excellent diamond. They returned home with an elaborate coat of whitewash and a tired feeling caused by a goose egg trophy. The visitors failed to run in a score, while the home boys bunched up 6. The game was not especially thrilling and the fans failed to work up any particular enthusiasm but sat on the bleachers and grandstand and tolerated the game through the sweltering hours of the afternoon. Anderson, for the locals made 15 strikeouts and Weese of the visitors made 10. Following this game the Maple Grove boys went to combat with the Meridian "Kid" nine, and the visitors did things to them to the tune of a score which reads 8-1.

July 27 – Meridian administered a decisive defeat to the Boise Athletic Club in a baseball game played yesterday afternoon to a large sized Sunday crowd of fans at Riverside Park. Score 9-4, purse to the winning team of \$25.

July 28 – A special excursion train on the Boise Valley railway left Meridian at one o'clock Sunday afternoon having on board in addition to the Meridian baseball club, fifty-seven local fans who went along to root for Meridian in their game with the Boise athletics. Each individual in the jolly bunch proved to be a Meridian enthusiast and rooted so well that the boys came marching home bearing the banner of victory inscribed with the gratifying score of 9-4. The boys were stepping high all day Monday and telling how it happened. If anything was needed to add to their complete satisfaction it was the fine write up of the game in the Monday Evening Capital News. Several of the local players took occasion to express to the Capital News representative their appreciation of the credit given the Meridian team in the article mentioned. The club is proud of the 13 strikeouts by their pitcher, Anderson as against 8 by wells for the city team.

August 4 – Meridian certainly holds the record for baseball enthusiasm over any other town in the state. Sunday the homes and the streets were deserted and the one o'clock special excursion cars over the Boise Valley were crowded to their utmost capacity by the fans who went up to Boise to root for Meridian in their game with the Shamrocks. In addition many took advantage of the delightfully cool day to drive to Boise and every available rig was out of town. The result of the contest with the invincible sons of Erin while not wholly unexpected was the source of some humiliation to the local fans as the game seems to have been lost largely from causes which might have been avoided with the exercise of a little wholesome self restraint. At any rate some of the home clubs warmest champions do not hesitate to say that they put up a fumbling game on this occasion and in spite of professional aid played the worst game of the season. The score stood 6-2.

August 8 – It is somewhat indefinitely planned that the Boise athletics will play baseball with the Meridian team on the local grounds next Sunday afternoon. The Meridian boys are somewhat loath to go into the game with a crippled team, as one of their star players is ill and three of the old reliable are out of town.

Aug. 25 - About 60 Meridian people went to Boise on the electric car Sunday afternoon to attend the baseball game between the Meridian boys and the Idaho Vitrified Brick Company team. The boys came home shouting victory over the Boise boys on a score of 4-2 in a seven-inning game. The spectators report a fine game. Hartman, who played second base for the first time, taking the lion's share of the laurels. The Meridian boys purchased the baseball suits originally purchased by the Boise senators and which have occupied a place in the lime light during most of the summer. The purchase price was \$100 about \$130 less than the original cost, and Meridian business men contributed the amount. The Nampa boys will come to Meridian to play the home boys next Sunday.

Aug. 29 - The Nampa Colts will meet the Meridian Baseball team on the local grounds Sunday afternoon. This promises to be one of the most exciting games of a lively season as the Nampa boys are said to have secured the assistance of three semi-professionals of Caldwell and are coming "loaded for bear." The Meridian boys are preparing to put up a game defense.

No report of this game in the extractions -

Seasons over - Now what will we do on Sunday afternoons?