

Appendix 1

This report, in *The Montana Post* of Virginia City, Montana, 16 December 1865, contains a description of the home ranch house at Deer Lodge and also gives a glimpse of the social life of Deer Lodge City and the Johnny Grant Ranch.

Microfilm, Montana Historical Society.

"(From our Special Correspondent.)

LETTER FROM BLACKFOOT

Blackfoot, December 2d, 1865.

"EDITORS POST - Gentlemen: In commencing my letter to you, on this occasion I feel like a fashionable lady whose rigid spouse persists in barbarously limiting her means of transportation to six trunks and half a dozen bandboxes-'Where shall I pack my things,' but reflecting that I have already covered the bottom of one of my literary hand-boxes, with what even my own liberal criticism cannot call news, I commence where I left off, like a store clerk whose dinner has been interrupted by a customer.

COTTONWOOD ALIAS DEER LODGE-THE BALL.

"After thawing out-the first duty of a winter traveler-I found that I was snugly ensconced in Peter Martin & Co.'s Hotel, an institution creditable to the proprietor and satisfactory to its numerous and liberal supporters. A year ago six log cabins, some peacefully ruminating cows, a stray vaquero, and a lot of half-breed papposes, engaged in making mud pies were the most startling features of the landscape. The most salient point of its history was the hanging of Bill Bunton by a scouting party of the Vigilantes. 'Mous avons change tout cela;' for the Cottonwood of yore is now a thriving town of perhaps one hundred and twenty-five houses, and doing a large business in the staples required by a population, professional, mechanical, agricultural, mining and miscellaneous, apparently well to do, and certainly, destined to do well-weather permitting. Surrounded by the 'Happy Valley' we have described, and being the natural metropolis of a district one hundred and thirty miles long by about twenty broad; and being the base of supply to the new mines of the Hell Gate country, comprising Big Bear, Elk Creek, Dave's, Deep, Rock and Douglas gulches-Deer Lodge cannot 'play out.' Its prospects are not as brilliant as those of a new mining city; but they are solid and satisfactory. When rats are the only tenants of many a now flourishing camp, Deer Lodge will be a CITY. As there are not more than seven dances a week in Cottonwood-I humbly crave pardon-in Deer Lodge City-the hospitable folks got one up for my special benefit, and as turn about is fair play, I write this for theirs. Johnny Grant-the great medicine man of the mixed French-Indian race who ranch round Deer Lodge-had opened a fine Hall for dancing, and, on entering, my ears were saluted by the familiar music of Bullard's band, which institution-the glory of Nevada-I found was starring it in the provinces. On the principle of a Methodist class-meeting, all the sisters (and the babies, not exceeding thirteen in number) were on the right; the lords of creation were on the left, with exception of one or two daring innovators, who had ensconced themselves among the ladies, white, brown and red. This startling proceeding was evidently considered as indicative of want of breeding. A small pappoose, with glittering black eyes, looked daggers at the principal intruder, and then shaking his head and his mouth, betook himself to the maternal fount of nourishment, with immense vigor and evident success. As an excellent friend of mine, from Sligo, once observed of a Roscommon assize ball, the ladies 'embraced' twenty individuals, twelve were either half-breeds or full blooded

squaws, and eight were white ladies. The demeanor of the aboriginal danseuses was as correct and becoming as could be seen in the most polished assembly; and as a rule, they danced very well, and most courteous in gesture, and one or two, who had partners, were so far advanced in the study of the mother tongue of Shakspeare as to be able to inform candidates for the honor of their hand for a dance, that they were 'Canaged.' The old rancheros-Canadian-French, principally-behaved as people of their race always do, in public assemblies; that is, with affability and courtesy. The white ladies and gentlemen were, of course, similar to those you are accustomed to meet in Virginia or Nevada. One specially fine dancer had been lately married to the sound of music and the beat of measured foot-falls. The quadrille was set; the bride and groom stepped forward-were married; and the chain being welded with the usual chaste salute, off they started, 'First four, right and left!'

"Near Deer Lodge City, on Cottonwood Creek, is Dance & Stuart's saw-mill. The fifty-four inch 'Circular' is driven by a forty-horse power portable engine, and has a capacity of fifteen thousand feet of lumber per diem.

"Johnny Grant has the machinery for a grist-mill, and his threshing machine works well. The dwelling house, which is large and two storied, is by long odds the finest in Montana. It appears as if it had been lifted by the chimneys from the bank of the St. Lawrence, and dropped down in Deer Lodge Valley. It has twenty-eight windows, with green-painted shutters, and looks very pretty. Here I saw some fine barley threshed out. Mounted on the top rail of a log corral, I also witnessed the skillful use of the lasso, by the vaqueros, who were branding a lot of wild Spanish cattle. Over the horns and the hind-legs flew the nooses, and the bellowing beeve was thrown and branded 'G' by Johnny himself. The agility with which the operators cleared the fence, or jumped on to the low roof of a shed, when the 'Toro' charged, was highly amusing. I performed a little in the acrobatic line, myself, after declining a 'horn.'