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**The Anaconda Standard**, dated Friday Morning, 13 October 1905, page nine, column two

**ONE OF THE OLD TRAlL BLAZERS IN BUTTE**

**HE IS GOING TO ST. LOUIS TO HAVE HIS EYES TESTED**

**IS SEVENTY-NINE YEARS OLD**

**Was the first city Marshall of Virginia City and a deputy sheriff under Sheriff Andy Snyder, who succeeded notorious Plummer**.

Nelson Ptomey and his son, Henry C. Ptomey of Summit, a small town eight miles from Virginia City, are in the city, having come over from Madison county yesterday. They are going to St. Louis, where Mr. Ptomey, Sr., will have his eyes treated, he being totally blind as a result of an injury he received in a mine accident several years ago. Total blindness did not come upon him until last February, however, but his eyesight was never the same after the accident. He is now 79 years old.

**Sturdy Pioneer**

Mr. Ptomey is one of the pioneers of the west and has seen as much of the turbulence within its confines as any other living man. He was born in Ross county, Ohio but in 1840 went to Illinois, where he spent several years, part of which time he was in the employ of the Illinois Central Railroad company. He was in St. Louis during the prevalence of cholera there in 1844, and witnessed the burning of 27 steamboats at the wharf in that city.

**To Pike’s Peak**

In 1859 the Pike's Peak gold excitement broke out and Mr. Ptomey joined the stampede that followed. He arrived in Denver about May 1, 1859, but Denver was not much of a city then - it consisted of one house and the Kentucky corral. Mr. Ptomey turned his attention to prospecting in Colorado and made some discoveries in California gulch near where Leadville now is. He owned an Interest in the second stamp mill erected in Colorado.

**Exciting Adventures**

Mr. Ptomey tells some interesting experiments he had with Indians during his trips outside of the borderland of civilization. On several occasions he came near being killed by them. Once the Comanches chased him twelve miles and he escaped by running into a Waddle & Russell freighting outfit. He had trouble with the Comanches on the old Santa Fe Trail. He prospected with Kit Carson in the Navajo country, and Carson demonstrated that he was not a coward, although some others in that section supposed he would not light.

**Goes to Salt Lake**

Mr. Ptomey went to Salt Lake in 1863 and came to Montana in the same year, arriving in Alder gulch June 6. While going to Bannack he met the Fairweather party returning to Alder shortly after the discovery of gold there, and accompanied them to the gulch. In addition, to rich placer ground, Mr. Ptomey owned some quartz ground at the head of the gulch, which is believed to be the mother vein of that district. It is known as the Lucas. Mr. Ptomey sold it several years ago, but his son still owns 1,000 feet of the same vein and believes it is one of the best pieces of mining ground in Madison County. The Kearsarge is another quartz mine in which Mr. Ptomey owned an Interest. The interest was sold, however, to the company now operating it.

**Was an Officer in Virginia**

Mr. Ptomey was the first city marshal of Virginia City, and had some pretty tough customers to deal with during his term of office. That was in the winter of 1863-4. He served as a deputy under Andy Snyder, who succeeded the notorious Henry Plummer as sheriff, and was considered one of the best officers in that section: Plummer, it will be remembered, was hanged by the vigilance committee for participation in some of the many murders and robberies committed by the gang of cut-throats which then infested that part of Montana.

**Knows Them All**

Mr. Ptomey is a member of the Society of Montana Pioneers, and knows all of the other old members, including Barney Hughes, one of the original discoverers of gold in Alder gulch. In speaking of Mr. Hughes yesterday, he said he remembered the time when Hughes shot and killed a colt on the supposition that it was an elk.

Mr. Ptomey is now quite feeble, and it is doubtful if he lasts much longer. He looks fairly well, however, considering his age, and is quite hopeful that he will recover his eyesight and remain on earth until he crosses the century mark.