



DANIEL J. HEYFRON

- **16th Missoula County Sheriff.**
 - **Born.** May 3, 1845 in Black Rock, Ireland. He came to the United States when he was five years old and was raised by his grandmother in Iowa.
 - **Nickname.** 'Father Heyfron'.
 - **Married.** Josephine Thomas in Cheyenne, Wyoming on November 8, 1870. Daniel was 25 and Josephine was 15 years old. Josephine was from Burlington, Vermont. They had ten children; five of those died in infancy.
 - **Died.** August 29, 1934 of leukemia in Missoula, Montana.
- **Civil War.** Daniel was in the Iowa regiment during the Civil War. After the war, he traveled west to engage in the cattle business.
 - **1867 – 1869.** Daniel followed the building of the Northern Pacific Railroad and established meat markets in all the towns along its route, finally ending up in Corinne, Utah.
 - **1871.** After attempting a stint at mining in southern California, Daniel resumed his butcher business at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Here he became a prominent dealer in horses and cattle. When the Utah Northern road was built through Montana, he continued opening shops in each of those towns.
 - **1882.** Daniel located his butcher business in Missoula at the same location where the Missoula Mercantile sat. He set up his family residence on Front Street. Their furniture was brought by team from Dillon to Missoula. A piano narrowly escaped going over a grade during the trip.
 - **1886.** Elected as the 16th Missoula County Sheriff. He was so well known for his efficiency in capturing and bringing to justice the criminals who ravaged the area that he remained in office for four years. A majority of these 'criminals' were area Indians who were lawless and troublesome to the prospectors in the mountains. The sale of whiskey to the 'redskins' also produced regular disturbances. Sheriff Heyfron 'frowned' on all whiskey sales or trades to the Indians.
 - **Jail house history.** The existing jail in 1866 was built using 10" square hewn timbers for the walls, ceiling, and floors. There was one window made of iron bars and a 'good substantial' door well secured with a good lock. The building was well pinned or spiked together and covered with dirt. The Sheriff was allowed \$4 per day for 'dieting prisoners'. The Sheriff was ordered to find a place for a cripple to stay at the County's expense – this was the first welfare case on record. The County paid \$8 per week for this man's board and room. The Sheriff was also allowed to employ prisoners as labor if suitably guarded. A new jail was approved in 1870 and was built with 10' high cells, heavy timbers on top and covered with shingles and to be kept separate from the courthouse. The cells were 9 x 9 or 7 x 9 and had barred openings in iron doors for heat and light. The hall had one iron grated window with a shutter, the walls were 30 inches thick of stones and the floor was 3" thick planks with stones between joists. In 1872, the Grand Jury ordered more ventilation 'to destroy the stench'. This led to the condemning of the water closet and providing individual chamber pots for inmates, of which they had to clean themselves. Finally, in 1888, a new jailhouse was built on the north corner of the courthouse square and was constructed of brick with a furnace for heat. The new jail was to be a combination jail and Sheriff's house with four steel cells on each of the two floors.
 - **1887.** County Commissioners lowered the annual salary of the Sheriff from \$1500 to \$1200 citing 'the Sheriff and his deputies are not busy enough to render the higher wage.'
 - **1888.** Sheriff Heyfron lost AND won the election for Sheriff after taking his case to the Montana Supreme Court. It seems the ballots consisted of various versions of his name such as 'Daniel Heyfron' or 'Dan Heyfron' instead of his legal filing name of 'Daniel J. Heyfron'. The official 'recorders' only counted the exact legal filing name and disregarded the other write-ins. It was

also noted that the official 'recorders' moved the election to a home where whiskey consumption contributed to the outcome of the election. Of course, the County Commissioners knew nothing about these events until after the fact.

- Daniel owned a large quarry on the south side of the Missoula River. Most of the prominent buildings in Missoula including the University of Montana campus were built using the stone from his quarry. His company did the excavating for the original Missoula commercial buildings including the First National Bank block, the Hammond building, and the Florence Hotel.
- Daniel was the driving force in building the big irrigation ditch on the south side of the Missoula River. The ditch stretched seven miles, from the Bandmann Ranch into Missoula.
- Daniel was deeply invested in teaming and freighting. He employed a large number of men.
- Politically, Daniel was a lifelong Democrat. Socially, he was a member of the Oddfellows and Masonic Lodges. In 1897, his son, Daniel Jr., scored the first touchdown for newly organized University of Montana Grizzly football team.
- **1900.** Daniel invested in mining in the Blackfoot Valley. He maintained this investment until a few years before his death.
- **1902.** Elected County Treasurer.
- **1930.** A 60th wedding anniversary celebration was held at the Heyfron home on East Front Street. This was the original home they built when first arriving in Missoula in 1882. Additions were added over the years but the home was their only residence in Missoula.
- **Horse Breeding.** Daniel was a great lover of horses and was known as one of the greatest breeders of thoroughbreds in Montana. One horse name 'Diablo' was never defeated.



Grave 1 – Lot 6 – Block 26

Daniel J. Heyfron was buried in the Heyfron family plots alongside his wife Josephine and two of his children: Albert and Josie. A headstone was never placed for Daniel or for the other family members. This is quite odd as they were such an affluent and prominent Missoula family. Above shows Daniel's temporary cement marker. This was recovered under layers of sod on the gravesite.

The following are from research at the library or submitted by Heyfron family members:



*Left: 60th Wedding Anniversary photo from Missoulian.
Below Right: Heyfron family house on Front Street in 1895*

