HISTORY OF THE FLATHEAD VALLEY

1806 - Meriwether Lewis came up the Marias and looked southeastward toward Marias Pass where Highway 2 now runs.

1810 - David Thompson of the Hudson Bay company, wintered at Thompson Falls and explored some of the Flathead River area in Sanders and Lincoln County.

1810-1811 - Joseph Howe, also with Hudson Bay Co., probably saw Flathead Lake.

1812 - Thompson made a note in his diary about observing a large lake, undoubtedly Flathead. (I had a rare copy of Thompson's diaries.)

1813 - Ross Cox, British teenage employee of the American Fur Trading Company, came from Spokane House and arrived at the confluence of the Clarks Fork and Flathead rivers on Christmas day, stopped the Flathead from torturing some captured Blackfeet, and helped establish a trading post that did not last.

1829-1830 - Joshua Pilcher and eight men of the Missouri Fur Trading Co. camped for the winter on the west shore of the Flathead Lake. Pilcher compared the area to Switzerland and predicted "roads soon."

1833 - Warren Ferris, a free trapper, wintered in the Thompson River and hired two Indians who told him of a big draw leading to a large lake west of there.

1836 - The Flatheads and the Nez Perce sent a delegation to St. Louis to talk to the white men. All were killed by the Sioux.

1837 - The Flatheads sent six more warriors to St. Louis. All killed by the Sioux.

1839 - Six more Flathead made it to St. Louis, leading to the coming of Father DeSmet to the Bitterroot Valley in 1841. First church service drew 700 Flathead and Nez Perce Indians.

1839 - Jedediah Smith met Dave Jackson at Flathead Lake on way to Mountain Man Rendezvous at Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

1846 - Fort Connah was built by Hudson Bay Company in the Mission Valley and run by Angus McDonald. (Later bought by the U.S. government for a half-million dollars in 1871.)

1850 - Explorer Robert Greenhouse published a map showing Marias Pass.

1853 - Isaac Stevens sent Tinkham to find a "northern pass," and indications are Tinkham got lost. Stevens then sent Captain Mullan who probably wound up at Cutbank Pass. These men did not know about Greenhouse's map.

1857 - Joe Ashley built a cabin and store at what is now the southwest corner of Kalispell.

1860 - A few settlers arrived from the south, but had a difficult time getting around the west shore of Flathead Lake.

1872 - The upper Flathead's first post office was established at Scribner on the river just above the lake.

1883 - The Northern Pacific railroad reached Missoula and pushed toward Ravalli.

1885 - A wide "trail type" road was built from Ravalli to the foot of Flathead Lake. First steamboat, "The U.S. Grant," began runs up the lake. More boat construction began.

1886 - Head of navigation on the upper Flathead was set at Greggsville, later to be named for a merchant, Demersville.

1870 - Any remaining threat from Blackfeet Indians was ended with the needless slaughter of Chief Heavy Runner and his starving band of people on the Marias River.

1890 - Jim Hill's railroad was approaching Browning and an 18-year-old scout named Duncan McCarthy found a construction townsite on Bear Creek west of Marias Pass.

1891 - Great Northern tracks crossed Marias and headed toward the Middle Fork River and the Flathead Valley.

1892 - A silver spike was driven at Kalispell in January to commemorate the arrival of the tracks. The first passenger train came in on April 17, 1892.

1893 - A 23-room mansion was built by C. E. Conrad on his 72-acre estate in the Kalispell townsite.

1905 - The first automobile arrived in the valley and Kalispell soon made a 15 mph speed limit. C. I. O'Neil drove to Hot Springs and back in 1906, a major accomplishment.

1910 - Flathead Indian Reservation was opened to limited homesteading by non-Indian settlers.

1911 - The first airplane flew into the valley with the first seaplane flying in two years later.

1914 - A road along the east shore of Flathead Lake was completed using state prison convicts for labor.