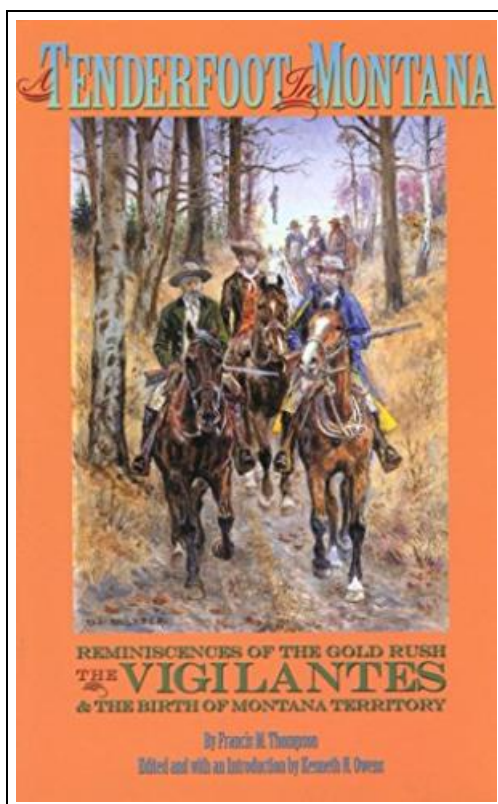


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Montana Historical Society Press, United States, 2004. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Frank Thompson s lively memoir details his experiences in the upper Missouri country at the beginning of the Montana gold rush. A young man at the outset of the Civil War, Thompson supported the Union cause but realized that military life was not for him after a day spent watching the operations of the federal gunboats on the lower Mississippi River. Turning to the frontier, he headed west from St. Louis in 1862, arriving aboard the first steamboat ever to reach Fort Benton, in what would later become Montana Territory. Thompson s sojourn was relatively brief—he returned east after only two and a half years. But in that time he hunted for gold, ran a Bannack City mercantile business, traveled to the Pacific Coast and back, served in Montana s first territorial legislature, and became a speculator in mining properties. Thompson also formed a relationship with controversial sheriff Henry Plummer. No impartial bystander, Thompson knew the sheriff well, eating his meals at the same table and attending Plummer s wedding. Even so, he early stated his dark suspicions about the gold camp lawman. He was close by when the Bannack City vigilantes hanged Plummer as the leader of a criminal gang, and it was Thompson who attended to the sheriff s burial. Drawing from his intimate knowledge of the circumstances and players involved, Thompson vividly describes one of the deadliest incidents of vigilante justice in U.S. history. A self-styled tenderfoot, Frank Thompson recalls his days on the mining frontier with clarity and insight, making him an unmatched eyewitness for Montana s formative era.



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