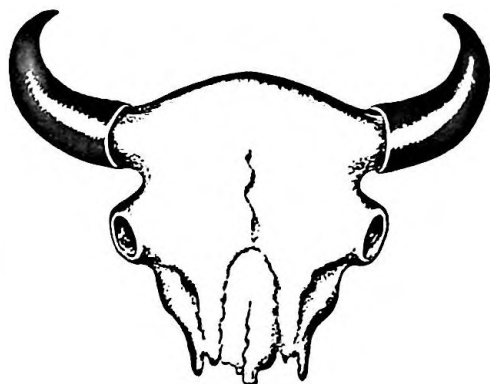


*The* DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

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by

**JAMES BOWERS**

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by

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## COMING ATTRACTIONS

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 Speaker: David Hartman  
 Subject: Colorado Cliff Dwellers Assn.

## NEW POSSE MEMBER

Ken Geddes  
 1536 Wood Ave.  
 Colorado Springs

## OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

It is with great sadness that I inform the Corral of the death of one of our past Sheriffs Robert L. Perkin. Bob Perkin was Sheriff in 1963 and was always an active and dedicated member. He will be deeply missed by all.

The Posse wishes to inform all members that 1978 dues are due and payable. Corresponding members \$10.00 Posse \$15.00. Mail your checks to Dr. Toll.

**RESERVE YOUR BRAND BOOK WITH A CHECK** for \$23.50 and you won't get left out on the trail in the cold. Hurry! Only a few left.

Much has been said and debated over and about some of the past publications of the Denver Westerners. Some have been on time, others have gathered a layer or two of trail dust, but one thing if for sure, all of us owe a big thank you and a round of gratitude to Jerry Johnson of Johnson Publishing in Boulder for putting up with a change of editors every year and training each of us to put that comma in the right place. Thanks Jerry.

The last article in this issue was not a member of this Posse but was by all means a real "Westerner."

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

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**PLEASE RETURN YOUR CARDS FOR YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THE CHUCK WRANGLER CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE DENVER PRESS CLUB.**

# THE BOZEMAN TRAIL

by James Bowers, P.M.

*Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners on  
January 25, 1978*

Gold was discovered in what is now southwestern Montana in 1862. The strike at Bannock got it all started and the strike at Virginia City in 1863 provided the lure to turn men in that direction. A major problem in reaching the area was the lack of roads or trails in the large tract of land drained by the Powder, Tongue, and Big Horn Rivers and their tributaries in Wyoming and Montana which was called the Powder River Country. (3) With the Black Hills of South Dakota, this was the last great hunting grounds of the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Crow Indians. A miner had one of two choices at first: He could ascend the Missouri River to Fort Benton and then go overland, or the other way was to follow the Oregon Trail to Fort Bridger, Wyoming and Fort Hall, Idaho and be forced to cross the Continental Divide a second time.

Three additional routes to the gold fields were pioneered during 1863-1865. In 1865, one liked by Sioux City, Iowa and Yankton, South Dakota was the "Niobrara Trail which ascended the Missouri River to the mouth of the Niobrara, then turned westward up the latter, parallel to the Platte, to intercept the old trader's trail to the Yellowstone." (18) The second trail was mapped and improved in 1864 when Jim Bridger turned northwest off the Oregon Trail at Red Buttes about twenty-five miles west of Casper. It stayed to the west side of the Big Horn Mountains in Shoshoni country where it had been pioneered or traversed by Edward Shelly, nephew of the poet, who had headed a sporting party through the same area in 1862. (18) McIntyre (27) cites the trail being used in 1864, not used in 1865, and little if any in 1866-1868. Nelson Story says, ". . . the road was not used after 1868 . . ." (7) I'm sure he means until the Indian threat has passed because I know of a couple of Montana residents who worked on the trail heading cattle. (30) (31) The third trail was located on the east side of the Big Horn Mountains and cut right through the heart of the powder River Country; good grass, water, and beautiful scenery. It was rediscovered and opened by John M. Bozeman with the help of John M. Jacobs. The Road, called a variety of names: Yellowstone, Virginia City, Montana, and more—became as known today: The Bozeman Trail. The road's credits were fine, but it had one debit: INDIANS—almost the entire Sioux Nation, and a large number of Cheyenne and some Arapahoos. They were

all of one mind: These are our lands, our game, and our home, and if you come in, *we will kill you.*

I used the term "rediscovery" because selections of the trail had been used by the fur traders and ten miles east of Kaycee, Wyoming stands a marker which locates a trading post established in 1834 by Antonio Montero. Titled the Portuguese House Monument, remains were visible when Father Jean DeSmet passed in 1851 and Jim Bridger guided Captain W. F. Raynolds on the Yellowstone Exploration in 1858. (24) (14)

Who are these two men, John M. Bozeman and John M. Jacobs? Jacobs was a squaw man ". . . described as 'a red-bearded Italian, . . .'" (7) (18) a mature veteran of the mountains. One source implies that he came west in 1842, but a better one dates it 1849, time of the California gold rush. If he reached those mines, he did not long remain, for he was trading on the immigrant road when in 1850-51 he was in Montana settling a debt at Fort Owen in the Bitter Root Valley, by bringing in emigrant cattle. There are references to his trading on the road in summer and running cattle in Montana in the winter every year from 1857 through 1861. In July, 1862 he conducted an emigrant train . . . to Walla Walla. When the new gold strike at Bannock in the fall of 1862 began drawing off the miners from the Deer Lodge diggings, Jacobs went along. It is suspected that he had his seven- or eight-year-old half-bred daughter with him because she went along the next spring when he teamed with Bozeman to find a trail (road) from the diggings to the Oregon Trail somewhere near the Deer Creek Station in the vicinity of Douglas, Wyoming. During the winter of 1863-1864 he was in Denver trying to form a train, but alienated a lot of people when he tried to go to Montana over the Bozeman Trail in 1863 by calling them "chicken hearted." In the summer of 1864, he shows up guiding a train to Montana following behind the Bridger train, which was blazing a new trail for wagons. "It was no triumph, however, for Jacobs; he had not only forsaken his own route, but had once again alienated his charges. He faded into complete obscurity for we have found no further record of him." (18)

John Merin "Bozeman, a native of Georgia, was in his vigorous twenty-sixth year, large of stature and commanding in presence. In 1860 he had left his family in Georgia to join the Colorado gold rush." (18) Like Father, like Son—in 1849 his father left his wife and five children to go to California and was never to be heard from again. (7) Ms. Johnson says, ". . . he was tall and good looking, with a tinge of red in his cheeks . . . he wore a fine suit of fringed buckskin." John Bozeman, being almost illiterate, probably did not write to his family, and for certain, he never saw them again. In company with one Tom Cover, he started for Fort C. F. Smith to open trade, and he was the epitome of a man of the West. During his lifetime in the West (1860-1867) he stood very tall. "Finding no fortune there (Colorado,) he left Denver on April 1, 1862, with the first party drawn to the Idaho mines." (18) They followed the Cherokee Trail, touching base

at Fort Bridger, Wyoming on May 28, and arriving at the Deer Lodge diggings on June 24, 1862, where he mined for awhile and then joined the flow of men to Bannock, the newest strike. Appreciating John S. Gray's research (18), "It is more significant that Jacobs, Bozeman, and (William) Orcutt (who was with Shelley) all spent the winter in Bannock where the latter was extolling Shelley's route. The idea of exploring it in reverse and then guiding pilgrims back at so much per wagon appealed more to the veteran Jacobs and fledgling Bozeman than the long-short, back-breaking labor of mining. Before spring of 1863, they headed for a take-off base at over-promoted Gallatin City."

During the summer of 1862, men from California were headed to Oregon Territory (later Montana) to check the Deer Lodge area for rumors of gold; turned back, they began planning as they went along and on July 28, 1862, they struck color and the rush was on. 500 people came in 1862 and another 500 in 1863. (15) Bozeman and Jacobs were in the 1862 groups. I have often wondered why Bozeman and Jacobs went down the east side of the Big Horns (it was the most direct route) while listening to William Orcutt promoting the Shelley Route on the west side of the Big Horn Mountains. Again Gray (18) quotes, "... Emery reveals that rumors were circulating of an alternative short cut along the eastern skirts of the Big Horns, a trail familiar only to old fur traders plying between Fort Laramie and the Yellowstone." And Jacobs just may have come west early enough to have talked with some fur traders for his Indian wife's relative may have told him enough to take the chance. Be it as it may, John Bozeman, John Jacobs, and Jacobs's seven- or eight-year-old half-breed daughter took off early in 1863 to back-track the Shelley route. Fifty-two days from Gallatin City, the three had covered only about 260 of the 400 odd miles to Fort Laramie, which some say may be explained by the fact that they were checking routes, river crossings, and the general lay of the land. However, they were on the east side of the Big Horn Mountains, whereas Shelley had gone up the west side. Seen by what they thought was a "war party" at Rotten Grass Creek on May 11, 1863, the three fled up a ravine and escaped. It was not a "war party" but the James Stuart party out prospecting from Gallatin City. (7) A couple of days later they actually did run into a party of braves, who were probably Crows, and had everything stolen except Jacob's gun and pouch containing just five bullets. They high-tailed it to Deer Creek Station and weren't able to kill any game and were pretty hungry and tired when they got there on May 27.

At the end of June, Bozeman and Jacobs were still at Deer Creek trying to get wagons to divert from the Oregon Trail and go with them up the Bozeman Trail. Thanks to the efforts of diarists, Samuel Word, George Irvin, and others (9) (18) we know that forty-six wagons, eighty-nine men, and some women and children started up; the Bozeman Trail on July 6, 1863. Averaging less than ten miles a day they were near present Buffalo,

Wyoming when confronted by about 150 mounted Sioux and Cheyenne warriors. After feasting and stealing a few items, the Indians told the train to turn back to the Platte Road and that if they didn't, there would be reprisals. Another source quotes the Indians as saying, "Go back or we'll wipe you out." (7) Asking for time to talk it over, the train moved slowly back down the trail. Three men, Gallegos (who was serving as guide through this stretch to the Big Horn River crossing since Bozeman and Jacobs hadn't been able to check out the cuntry on their way down,) George Irvin, and one unidentified man, volunteered to go back and request a military escort. They arrived at the Deer Creek Station and telegraphed Fort Laramie for a military escort. The request was forwarded to Omaha, headquarters of the military District of Nebraska. No escort was to be provided by order of Gen. T. J. McKean in Omaha and with Lt. Col. Collins off recruiting in Ohio, T. L. Mackey, commanding Fort Laramie, did not feel he should send an escort. Instead, he sent John Boyer to bring them back to the Trail. You get the inference in reading that this was Indian land and these people weren't supposed to be there in the first place. Also, you get the feeling that Boyer was sent *not* to guide them to Montana, but to be sure they did come back. Getting impatient, John Bozeman, George Irvin, Mike J. Knochn, and six other unnamed men slipped away to go on up the Bozeman Trail. They had an accident and lost the pack horse carrying all their supplies, but they did strike Shelley's trail after pushing through the Big Horn Mountains without running into any more Indians. Continuing, they reached relative safety at Clark's Fort of the Yellowstone. (18) "On this journey Bozeman proved himself a born leader. he inspired the famished men to their best and most cheerful efforts, and guided them so true in the darkness that either he and Jacobs had indeed explored the area, or he possessed a keen instinct for country." Gray goes on to excerpt George Irvin's record of the trip by saying, "Bozeman was six feet two inches high, weighing two hundred pounds, supple, active, tireless, and of handsome, stalwart presence. He was genial, kindly, and as innocent as a child in the ways of the world. He had no conception of fear, he would come with a rifle in his hand. He never knew what fatigue was, and was a good judge of all distance and when you saw his rifle level, you knew that you were not to go supperless to bed." Later on in 1863, John Bozeman is seen in Salt Lake City as a packer, and then goes to Omaha.

Prior to the summer of 1864, almost all of those heading for the gold fields had to go by way of the previously mentioned Fort Bridger, Wyoming and Fort Hall, Idaho, or the Missouri and Fort Benton. Jim Bridger opened his trail in the early summer of 1864 and came back down and guided a second group to the fields in September. Bridger had "an uncanny knowledge of the land."(7)

McIntyre reports that Bozeman had a large caravan at Julesburg in July of 1864 and they took off to join the Oregon Trail and follow it to

the LaBonte Ford (Douglas) where they would cross over the North Platte River. (27) Grace Hebard's map of the trail also starts at Julesburg or Fort Sedgwick. I think it is more logical to start the Bozeman Trail where they crossed the river. Only three trains traversed the Trail in the summer of 1864: First, Bozeman; second, Townsend; and third, Coffinburg. Bozeman got through without any Indian trouble but the others ran into mad Indians that repeatedly harrassed and attacked whenever possible. "We can fix the date of Bozeman's departure as on or about July 18, 1864 . . . reminiscences of John T. Smith" who had been hired on to assist in "trail prospecting." (18) about thirty to forty miles along the trail from Fort Fetterman, they paused at a spring, later known as Brown's Spring, on the Dry Fork of the Cheyenne River. The spring was named for Lt. John R. Brown, Co. E, 11th Ohio Cavalry, who was shot nearby by Indians. He was hit on July 19, 1864, was left there all night, and when they went out to recover the body the next morning he was still alive and didn't die until the next day.(14)

Bozeman and his train paused at the Powder River crossing, future site of Fort Connor that was renamed Fort Reno after Gen. Jesse Reno who was killed at the battle of South Mountain September 14, 1862. Bozeman's train paused to give Mitch Boyer, Custer's chief scout, and others a chance to catch up, which they did, and then the trains ran tandem to each other for 154 miles passing the site of the future Fort Phil Kearny, another General who was killed at the second Battle of Bull Run. The Fourth of July was spent at the future site of Fort C. F. Smith (Gen. Charles Ferguson Smith, who fought in the Mexican War and died April 26, 1862) on the Big Horn River near the present site of the Yellowtail Dam at Fort Smith, Montana. Going on, they are in more friendly Crow country than not-so-friendly Sioux and Cheyenne Indian country. Pointing northwest, they come to the Yellowstone, follow it to the mouth of Charles Fork. Finding Bridger's Trail, some followed that and others went over what is now known as Bozeman Pass. Some sixty years earlier, Lewis and Clark uses this same pass. (18)

I turn one last time to Mr. Gray and others to fill us in on the two trains following Bozeman. The second train was a large one, guided by John Boyer, and had some members of the train that had been turned back during the summer of 1863. They did not have the luck of Bozeman and as they prepared to move out about ten miles short of the site of Fort Reno, a party of Indians came and John Boyer went ahead to talk with them. They were the Cheyenne under Spotted Cow who had forced the 1863 train to go back. Fearing for a Mr. Mills who had gone to find a lost cow, six men backtracked about two miles and were attacked. Fighting their way back to the train, one man caught an arrow

but recovered. However, the fight continued for several hours; Mr. Warren was shot in the abdomen and died in the night, Mr. Mills was killed, Frank Huddlemeyer who was hunting was found with eleven arrows in him and butchered, and a prospector was never seen again. They buried the dead and moved on toward Montana. The third train over the Bozeman, consisting of miners and prospectors, found poor Mr. Mills's scalp, and the graves torn open. Wolves were known to do this but they didn't wear clothes and the bodies had been stripped. (7) (14) (18)

As 1864 faded into winter and 1865 entered the scene, it probably is the understatement of the year to say that the Indians were restless. They had killed in 1864 and they were to close down the entire region and kill some more in '65. Gen. Patrick Edward Connor was chosen to lead an expedition into the area and as Gen. Greenville M. Dodge said to him, "that we would settle the Indian problem this season." (7) I think not; it would be nearly three more years and the Indians would win this war. They put a clamp on the area that stopped anything but heavily escorted military trains. Gen Connors, who had fought in the Mexican War and subjugated a force of Bannock and Shoshoni Indians along the Utah and Idaho border in 1863 (7) (13) spent the summer tramping around the area trying to find and save some of his other columns. He did build Camp Connor (which later was enlarged and called Fort Reno) and stocked it with supplies. Located on the Dry Creek of the Cheyenne River, this post was where the Indians said, "stay south of this point, do not go north." Red Cloud, who was roaming the land, told how ". . . he and his warriors would kill every white man found on that trail. That was what he said—that was what he meant—and that is what he (damn well) did." (27) He didn't quite kill them all, but he did kill enough to have the Government pull out and back in the summer of 1868. (27) Two other short highlights: James A. Sawyer's attempt to open the Niobrara Trail, which didn't happen, and who got into a losing fight on the Bozeman Trail where it crosses the Tongue River. There were seven Swedish miners who recovered \$7,000.00 in placer gold from a claim near Crazy Woman Creek. The Sioux attacked, killed five of the miners, and the survivors never returned. (16)

"Yielding to pressure from Montana's miners, Congress, in March, 1865, authorized improvement to and protecton for the road through central Wyoming . . ." (13) There had been some blood let in the fur trappers' time, more recently as men tried to find a shorter route to Montana, but with the announcement that forts were to be established on the Bozeman Trail, the name is going to take on a new dimension; as Hebard and Brininstool, Herb Hart, Ms. Johnson, Merrill Mattes, and I'll bet many others, have stated, it's now going to become the BLOODY Bozeman. As cited above, Bozeman himself was to die at



the hands of the Blackfeet Indians on the "safe part of the trail," that from C. F. Smith northwest to the gold fields. I think that in this era, the Indian can be compared to our native rattlesnakes: They gave repeated rattles to get out of their country and they finally struck and struck again to emphasize their determination to retain their land.

Col. Henry Beebe Carrington was selected by the Army to assemble the Eighteenth Regiment of Infantry, Third Battalion and Companies from the First and Second Battalions, out of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas at Fort Kearny, Nebraska (Stephen Watts Kearny) in the spring of 1866. He had served during the Civil War, but had not been exposed to combat and this was to cause considerable "comment" while serving on the trail. Having assembled about 2,000 troops and literally hundreds of tons of equipment and supplies necessary to establish and man new forts, the column left Fort Kearny on May 19, 1866. Gen. Henry W. Wessells, Commanding Officer at Fort Kearny, was left extremely shorthanded and would soon be commanding Fort Reno and would replace Col. Carrington as commander of Forts Reno, Phil Kearny, and C. F. Smith when Carrington is recalled. (9) Be reminded that all of the troops could not be used at just the new forts. A contingent went to Fort Bridger (8), and less than a thousand were left after relieving the Volunteers along the "Emigrant Trail," and Fort Connors. Two companies of about eighty men each will man Forts Reno and C. F. Smith; there were a large number of civilian employees in the train going up the trail.

A sidelight to our story, but one which might just be of more impact to the Indians' future, was the activity of Nelson Story (Story, Wyoming.) The significance didn't appear to me until I had read about his activities in many publications. He was a placer miner at the diggings and in the spring of 1866, he had \$10,000.00 sewn into the lining of his clothes. He went to Texas where he bought a herd of longhorns, hired twenty-six cowboys, and headed them out for the gold fields of Montana to feed the miners. At Fort Laramie, he was warned of the dangers ahead and bought new repeater rifles. Disdaining the advice to wait, he headed into the Powder River country. The Indians attacked, wounding two cowboys and ran off the beef herd; pursuing them, the cowboys caught up, killed every Indian and proceeded up the trail. At Fort Phil Kearny, the military tried to hold Story, but he pushed on and had no further trouble from the Indians. I think they had had enough of him and his cowboys. He brought a second herd through in a following year.

While the Army was outfitting Col. Carrington's troops at Fort Kearny, Nebraska, the government had appointed a commission to settle the issue of a trail to the gold fields. The more militant had refused to be a part of the discussions. However, Red Cloud and his sub-chiefs

were in the vicinity but refused to attend the discussion. Apparently, the Indians had their "doves" (Spotted Tail, for one) and their "hawks" (Red Cloud and Crazy Horse); the United States had theirs: "doves" (Peace Commission and Indian Bureau) and "hawks" (Army and in some cases settlers, miners, etc.) On June 13, 1866, we are told that Red Cloud said, "You say you are going to pass through but you came to stay—Great White Father sends gifts but sends Army also before Indians say yes or no for passage." (7) When Carrington reached Fort Connors (Reno), there were quite a number of wagons being held for an escort. More came up the trail later in the season as the "doves" (the Peace Commission) had signed a treaty of sorts with the Indian "doves" allowing more trains to go up the trail. Yet here was Red Cloud sending a message to Col. Farrington to "GET OUT." (7)

On June 17, 1866, the command left Fort Laramie for the LaBonte or Bridger's Crossing of the North Platte River and the Bozeman Trail beyond to establish the forts. His chief guide was the famous Jim Bridger. They arrived at Fort Connors on June 28, 1866, where they found a rundown, dilapidated structure which was to be replaced. Col. Carrington, after assessing the area and the great amount of supplies which had been stored there, decided to rebuild the structures and it was renamed Fort Reno on November 11, 1866. This decision may have been made after Carrington saw the Sutler's horse and mule herd run off by the hostiles and after a long search only to come back with one pony laden with gifts handed out at Fort Laramie to the doves who signed a "peace treaty." (4) (13) Being the first established, it was the last abandoned on August 18, 1868 (4) and obliterated by time and elements through the years.

Arriving at the site of Fort Phil Kearny on July 13, 1866, Carrington began immediate preparation—mow the parade ground, set up tents, get the sawmill in operation, get out the dress uniform because some Cheyennes had agreed to a parley on July 16 and he wanted to put forth a great show. The attacks began immediately when it was quite clear to the Indians that he was not passing through, was not going out but was to stay and fortify. The resolve of the Indians is made evident by the message they sent—"get out." (7) The siege was on and would not be lifted until the soldiers left the trail in August, 1868. No one would be safe from the close harassment by the Indians. Almost immediately two wood choppers were killed on July 20 (just four days after the parley failed); five officers, women, and ten escorts were attacked at the crossing of Crazy Woman Creek; Lt. and Mrs. George W. Grummond arrived with the body of a dead soldier in the ambulance; a soldier got too far ahead of a hay party and was cut off and killed, scalped, and hacked; a reporter for Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, only a few minutes from the Fort, was killed, scalped, and his

back cleaved with an ax. In his acceptance of the flagpole, built and donated by the band, Col. Carrington mentions the deaths of eleven people by Indians in just a few short months. Captain William J. Fetterman, Brevet Lt. Col., U.S.A., arrived for duty in November, 1866. (5) (7) From these excerpts, I presume you have gotten a glimpse of life along the Bozeman Trail for two years; attacks almost daily, sometimes every hour, and no one truly safe even when escorted. One slip and the Indians were there in the gullies and ravines, in the woods, and ready to swoop down on the unwary. All three of the forts were under constant surveillance.

Although four Forts were authorized for the Bozeman Trail, Carrington chose to establish only three. Two others, Fort Fetterman near Douglas, Wyoming and Fort Ellis near Bozeman, Montana, were founded in 1867 on each end of the trail, but they are another story. On August 3, 1866 Captain (Brevet Lt.-Col.) N. C. Kinney was ordered to the Big Horn Crossing with two companies of troops ninety-one miles north, where Fort C. F. Smith would be established, the most isolated post in the west at the time. I picked up an idea or two from Ms. Johnson (7) but the authority on Fort C. F. Smith is our own Merrill Mattes (8) and hereafter, except for one episode, the material came from a Burt family as edited and then written by Merrill.

C. F. Smith was so isolated that the post went from about November 30, 1866 to June, 1867 with only one communication from Phil Kearny. Supplies ran extremely low and it was at this time that Tom Cover and John Bozeman, trying to open a line of communication and commerce, were both shot by Blackfoot Indians; Cover was able to return to Bozeman, Montana but John was killed and buried nearby. Some writers have advanced the theory that from Fort C. F. Smith to Bozeman, Montana was the safe part of the trip. Not so! The area from C. F. Smith to Phil Kearny was teeming with Indians; several accounts say there were 1,500 lodges around Phil Kearny and we certainly can correctly surmise that all were not there because Forts Reno and C. F. Smith had their fair share of troubles.

There are many excerpts to show the danger at Fort C. F. Smith: Preacher William K. Thomas, his eight-year-old son, and his driver became impatient at the Big Horn Crossing and decided to move ahead on August 24, 1866; they were killed and mutilated a few miles away. A contractor Grull, and two of his men, were killed, two soldiers killed and one injured in September, 1866; the Indians cut off all travel except two sergeants who volunteered to go to the isolated fort from Phil Kearny. They made it there O.K. but on the way back, they ran into Indians and lost everything and just barely made it to Phil Kearny. Jim Bridger, who guided them to the Big Horn Crossing and Mitch Boyer were there in the winter of 1866-67. Jim Beckwourth was there and visited his adoptive

Crows, where he became ill and died. Jim Brannan and Surgeon McCleery were with the Bradley party returning from escorting Gen. Hazen to Fort Benton after inspecting C. F. Smith; Brannan is killed and McCleery wounded; when the Sioux couldn't catch Captain Templeton and Jim Beckwourth as they came up the trail the Indians exerted the vengeance and killed a miner camped nearby.

As soon as the Indians realized that the people and the three forts were here to stay, they put the clamp on the length of the Bozeman Trail. In addition to the 1,500 lodges in the fall of 1866 around Fort Phil Kearny, Capt. Borrowes reported some 4,000 warriors in the vicinity of Fort C. F. Smith in the early summer of 1867. He had only about sixty effective soldiers and felt the situation so desperate that he separately sent two men to Phil Kearny for help, one being Mitch Boyer. (8) However, the clamp would be tightened first on Fort Phil Kearny.

On December 6, 1866, a lookout on Pilot Hill signaled that a wood train was under attack and surrounded. Carrington ordered relief with Capt. Fetterman in command and Lt. H. S. Bingham supporting. With Lt. Grummond, Carrington will lead the other half of a pincher to drive the Indians off Lodge Trail Ridge where they were watching the actions of the troops. Somehow Bingham pushes ahead and around a knoll; Grummond had followed him and not understanding why Bingham was not with Fetterman where he belonged, Carrington pushes on and hears cries for help. Lt. Grummond and three soldiers are about to be put to death by seven Indians. It took an hour before they found Bingham's body and, still alive with a split skull, Sgt. C. R. Bowers. Needless to say, he died before any medical help could arrive. Grummond is saved for another day. Daily thereafter, the post and its activities were under constant surveillance, with the Indians ever ready to run off a herd, attack the work details, or butcher an unwary person. Jim Bridger reported to Col. Carrington that the number of Indians was building each day. On December 19, another wood train had to corral and was threatened by a large force of Indians. Relief was sent immediately upon word from Pilot Hill under the command of Maj. James W. Powell. Driving the Indians off and over Lodge Trail Road, he did not follow them over the ridge on explicit orders from Col. Carrington. Powell reported that he saw large numbers of Indians and that he would never have come back had he crossed the ridge. (2) (5) (14)

December 21, 1866 dawned clear and cold with snow in the timber and on the hills, but the open ground was clear. The wood train was held back for a while but having seen no sign of Indians on the twentieth when Col. Carrington scouted to the west and constructed a bridge over Piney Creek, he sent the train with an extra heavy guard. The wood train hadn't gone but about one and one-half miles when the lookout on Pilot Hill signaled that the train was corralled and under active attack. Third time is

a charm—for the Indians. Carrington immediately organized a relief train consisting of infantry under two officers, cavalry under one officer, and two civilians. My sources do not agree; forty-nine or fifty infantry, twenty-six or twenty-seven cavalry, three officers and two civilians. (2) (5) (7) Maj. Powell was given the command of the relief column but Capt. William J. Fetterman requested the command based on his Brevet seniority rank. Given the command and orders *not to go over Lodge Trail Ridge* but to relieve the wood train and come back. He commanded the infantry and Lt. Grummond the cavalry. Impetuous Capt. Frederick H. Brown, who was soon to be returned to the states, attached himself to the relief column with Col. Carrington being unaware that he was gone. Coincidentally, Fetterman had exactly eighty men under his command; just the number he had previously said that he could march through the Sioux Nation. Brown wanted Red Cloud's scalp, but instead he gave up his own. Grinnell (2) gives us an insight into the Indians side of the battle. Egged on by Capt. Brown and the antics of the Indians, Feterman goes over the Ridge and his entire command is wiped out to the man—no survivors. Capt. Tenedore Ten Eyck was placed in command of as many men as could be spared—at one time in the late afternoon, there was a bare 119 men to defend the fort (5)—and there was a total of less than 400 men, including everyone. He moved out within about twelve minutes. Reaching the Ridge, Ten Eyck could see nothing of Fetterman's Command and the mass of Indians taunted him to come down and fight. Had he done so, in all probability another command would have been wiped out. Moving slowly and cautiously—as the Indians dispersed and carried off their dead and wounded—he came upon the battle site and found Fetterman and Brown and forty-seven other bodies. These were brought back to the fort and the next day, Col. Carrington led a column to recover all the remaining bodies. Before leaving, he armed the powder magazine so that one match would blow up the whole thing and those inside. Moving over the ridge, Carrington's group came upon the battlefield. No report I studied could fully express the humiliation and indignities heaped upon the dead. Most were shot full of arrows, the Assistant Post Surgeon reported that only six had been killed by balls—the rest by arrows or beaten to death; (14) Wheatly (one of the civilians) had 105 arrows in his body. Grinnell (2) says there were some women along and this may explain the mutilation because they were the most vindictive. Vaughn, (14) after much study of the battleground, feels that the December 6 fight was west of the road and the December 21 fight was on the east side of the road. He also quotes Grinnel (2) as saying that four Indians came out into view and called out to the garrison, "You sons of bitches, come out and fight us." I can't confirm that or some other actions on the part of the Indians. Brininstool (1) has a lengthy reminiscence from Sgt. Samuel Gibson, who helped to bring in the frozen dead and his participation in the Wagon Box Fight.

Back to December 22, 1866. All of the men killed yesterday have been accounted for and now, they must be clothed and buried and, the security of the fort must be arranged. Outnumbered maybe 20-30 to 1, Carrington has to get help. He needs a minimum of four companies of infantry and two of cavalry, and a volunteer who will try to get through to the telegraph and Fort Laramie. (What would the outcome have been, had the hostiles attacked Fort C. F. Smith with less than 200 men and then descended on Fort Phil Kearny???) John "Portugee" Phillips, a civilian working at the fort, ex-miner from California and possibly from the Montana gold fields, steps forward and tells Col. Carrington that he will get the dispatches through providing he may have the best horse on the post—the Colonel's own. He takes some hardtack for himself and a little grain for the horse; banking on the weather (which was jumping around 20-30 below) and the Indians staying in their camps celebrating the victory, he leaves under cover of darkness on the eve of December 22. Traveling at night and hiding out in the daytime, he reaches Fort Reno late on the night of December 23. He tells the story, has a bit to eat, cares for his horse, and leaves again for the Horseshoe telegraph station. Arriving there Christmas morning, he files his dispatches and leaves for Fort Laramie to report to the Commanding Officer in person. He started in a blizzard and now another strikes. Ironically, the Horseshoe Station is burned by the Indians just after the message is sent to Omaha. "Portugee" arrived at Fort Laramie on Christmas night about 11:00 p.m. while a "grand ball" was being held in "Old Bedlam," the first building constructed in 1849 when Fort John was purchased by the government. Blurting his report to the startled partiers, he was taken to the hospital for food and rest.

Immediately, Fort Laramie dispatched four companies of infantry and two troops of cavalry to the relief of Fort Phil Kearny. This is exactly what Col. Carrington had requested from headquarters earlier in the year. Col. Carrington was officially relieved of his command at Fort Phil Kearny on December 21, 1866. There was no way that anyone could foresee the action and results which took place that day and the following weeks; yet Gen. Phillip St. George Cooke, Department Commander at Omaha, did nothing to clear the record of Col. Carrington. In fact, it took Col. Carrington nearly twenty years to have his name cleared of any misconduct of command. He was ordered out of Fort Kearny to Platte River Station and replaced by Gen. Wessels who had been commanding Fort Reno.

The Indians did not follow up on their advantage. The weather was bitterly cold and they stayed in their camps celebrating their victory over Fetterman and his command. As the weather improved the tactics of running off herds, watching the forts, hurting the unwary, and attacking the trains on the trail were increased.

With the advent of spring (1867) the lines of communication with Fort Laramie were again opened. A large freight train came up the trail bringing rations, forage, mail, and several hundred new breech-loading Springfield rifles. Escort duty, wood trains, and hay trains to protect, all were part of the daily routine. Prior to the first of August, the Indians held a Sun Dance. "After their Sun Dance, the Sioux under Red Cloud and the Cheyennes had a powwow but could not agree on which post to attack first, Fort Phil Kearny or Fort C. F. Smith. Finally several hundred warriors, mainly Cheyennes, started for the latter post, where they made their attack on August 1, while Red Cloud with about 1,000 men, set out for Fort Phil Kearny and his ill-starred collision the next day with the wood-cutting detail under Captain Powell." (8) The Hayfield Fight about three miles downriver from Fort C. F. Smith and the Wagon Box Fight about six miles west of Fort Phil Kearny have many similarities. At the Hayfield, a crude corral had been built of green brush; at the Wagon Box, the beds of wagons had been taken off the running gear and placed on the ground in an oval. These crude corrals would serve for a place to stay at night and in case of an Indian attack, would serve as a fort and be defensible. Each place had about thirty men to defend the area. The equalizer was the new guns which had been issued very recently. The Indians in all probability assumed that the soldiers would fire and then have to ram another shot into the gun. At this point the Indians could rush forward and overwhelm them. It didn't work that way because all that had to be done was throw open the breech which ejected the casing and dropped in another shell. With this rapid-type of fire, the Indians couldn't sustain an attack and literally hundreds were killed and wounded. Three soldiers were killed in each fight. Both groups were relieved in the afternoon by the respective fort garrisons. The Indians did not raise the pressure but their spirits had been dampened.

The forts, all three, were manned through the winter of 1867-1868. In March of 1868 General Grant wrote to General Sherman to close the forts. In May, Major Andrew S. Burt, Commanding Officer of Fort C. F. Smith, was told to sell off the government's property and pack what they could. I suggest that you may wish to read Mrs. Burt's account of the packing and abandoning of Fort C. F. Smith and the trip to Fort D. A. Russell. As the train and troops moved down the trail, they added the garrisons of Fort Phil Kearny and Fort Reno. Burning the forts as the troops marched away, the Indians had won their war. The Powder River Country would belong to the Indians until General Crook marched in for the battles of 1876.

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# THE HUNDRED-YEAR MYSTERY OF BENT'S FORT

by Gene Lindberg, P.M.

*Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners on  
February 22, 1978*

The history of Bent's famous outpost on the Arkansas has been researched so well, and with such fruitful results that, as you well know, a faithfully built replica of the old place stands now on the original site, 10 miles north of La Junta, Colo., on the north bank of the Arkansas. And what still fascinates me, is the *MYSTERY* that's all a part of the historical facts. How did it come about that the exact dimensions and ground plan of the old place, although recorded in 1846 by a remarkable young artist determined to do his duty as a U.S. army lieutenant—how was it that his measurements and ground map got lost and stayed lost for more than a century? And how come our western history owes the finding of those vital statistics to two former sheriffs of this very posse of the Westerners?

If it hadn't been for Fred Rosenstock, and Leroy R. Hafen, now of Utah and former Colorado State Historian, that fort couldn't have been rebuilt as a fascinating unit of the U.S. National Parks Service.

You could say the mystery began in the fall of 1845, when Lieut. James W. Abert, West Pointer on a duty tour, first visited Bent's Fort during a fact-gathering tour of our then little-known western frontier region.

Abert, still in his 20's, was an artist and cartographer of no mean ability. He sketched and studied the life of the region in many aspects. Plants, animals, climate, natives, trappers—the works. One of his sketches on that first Bents visit showed a Cheyenne Indian, Chief Yellow Hand, apparently a popular native character around the fort. Other Indians friendly to the garrison watched Abert do the portrait. He also pictured the fort itself. Perspective drawings showing it with flags flying appears in the official U.S. publication, "The Report of Lieut. J. W. Abert of his Examination of New Mexico in the Years 1846-47."

In the spring of 1846, the U.S. declared war on Mexico. Soon afterward Lieutenant Abert arrived at Bent's Fort again—this time flat on his back in the bed of an army wagon. He was delirious, and stricken with high fever. He may have been the victim of "bad water", or possible sunstroke, or both. History doesn't say, but it was very hot in the west in July of that year.

Because Abert already knew the country, he was assigned to the Army of the West as the Mexican War began, and directed to accompany General Stephen Watts Kearny from Fort Leavenworth up the Arkansas River and into New Mexico to take the City of Santa Fe.

On the march Abert was to observe, explorer-fashion, the country they passed through, the plants, animals, natives, minerals, water, climate—anything and everything noteworthy about his no-Colorado and New Mexico area. He started out well, as his diary, kept meticulously up-to-date at the end of each day's march, well showed.

Fred Rosenstock, on a buying trip east, thirty year ago or more, had the good fortune to buy the original Abert diary and sketchbook from a longtime friend and fellow dealer in rare books and manuscripts—in Abert's home state, Ohio. But unfortunately the dimensions of Fort Bent were not among them, as might have been expected.

Dr. Hafen, as a keen student of early western history in 1925 first notices that in Abert's published papers and records, those detailed dimensions of the fort were missing. Hafen for 28 years, according to his own reckoning, kept looking for them in the dusty old corners of western Americana. But he had no luck. He'd frequently asked Fred Rosenstock to do likewise, and Fred did.

Then, in 1953, Hafen renewed his quest when the La Junta Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, D.A.R., turned over the Bent's Fort site to the Colorado State Historical Society. As then state historian, Hafen writes in the historical society's Colorado Magazine for July, 1956:

"With plans being considered for its (the fort's) ultimate construction, the matter of the precise dimensions . . . has become a pressing problem."

Hafen called Rosenstock again, knowing he had the original diary and sketchbooks and planned to publish a book on them.

Some 10 years after he'd bought the diary and sketches from the Cincinnati dealer, Rosenstock now recalled buying two old western sketches from another Ohio dealer, the Midland Rare Book Co. in Mansfield. On Hafen's urgent request made Fred Rosenstock recall seeing something odd about one of those sketches. He got it out and studied it.

Hafen's Colorado Magazine report tells how Rosenstock "noticed for the first time some unlabeled lines and figures on the back of a watercolor portrait of the Cheyenne Indian, 'Ah-Mah-Nah-Co', meaning The Bear

Above. Close inspection of the lines and figures brought the welcome revelation that here was Abert's ground plan of Bent's Fort with detailed measurements of walls, rooms, etc. Now at last we got the important information necessary for an accurate reconstruction. The walls as measured on Sept. 8, 1846 were 14 feet high, the bastions (towers) 18 feet," etc.

Dr. Hafen was bubbling over with jubilation when he telephoned me at The Denver post to tell me the long-lost story. He knew my interest in such things, and this certainly was a ripsnortin', hell-for-leather western mystery yarn from away back!

I went up to see him at the Colorado State Museum, and he filled me in on the details. He gave me a copy of a restoration they'd made from Abert's freehand map on the back of his sketch of that old Indian. At Hafen's suggestion, I went to Rosenstock's Bargain Book Store, then on Fifteenth Street not far from The Post, and was given the privilege of looking the original Abert diary over first-hand.

There were the daily entries just as Abert had written them into the pages, after Kearny's forces left Fort Leavenworth and pressed on up the Arkansas. After each long day in the saddle, Abert made notations in big, bold, vigorous script.

But then, a change set in. As I followed those day's-end entries, I found myself watching the writer's mounting illness take its toll. His handwriting grew shaky, and whatever the young officer was trying to say grew vague. As the fever mounted, the handwriting grew small & spidery, the way a very old man whose mind was wandering might write.

Soon the entries stopped altogether—From July 24 to Aug. 26, 1846. And then Abert was just able to write, "Arrived Bent's Fort July 29." But in September the reports came back in bold young script again.

So there, more than a century later, I'd been seeing a man get sick, grow delirious and finally pass out—then watch him come back to life again. And Dr. Hafen, reading those same original entries, was certain that a fellow of Abert's caliber had recorded those measurements, and carefully preserved them for later use. On Sept. 8, Abert tells us:

"This morning with the assistance of Dr. Hempstead (Dr. E. L. Hempstead, the fort physician) I took the dimensions of Fort William or Bent's Fort as it is more commonly called. It took some time to complete all the measurements as the structure is quite complex; they may, however, be useful in giving one an idea of the forts that can be built in this country."

Next morning, the diary reports, Abert set out for Santa Fe, hoping to rejoin Kearny, and he did. Kearny had taken that even-then-ancient city without firing a shot. And without benefit of camera, Abert, with his intimate sketches, has left a detailed first-hand record of what the city was like, 130-odd years ago, before the Civil War. In his officially published

report on New Mexico 1846-47 appears a perspective drawing of Bent's Fort with flags flying—but no ground plan, no dimensions.

Evidently General Kearny, pressing on from Bent's Fort, left the fever-racked young lieutenant in good hands. Dr. Hempstead got him back on the mend again, and as soon as he was able, he resumed his work of observing and sketching. A hanger-on around the fort at the time was that Cheyenne Indian chief, The Bear Above. He knew Abert had done a watercolor of Chief Yellow Hand seated on a blanket and demanded the same treatment. Wasn't he a chief, too, who wanted his likeness preserved for posterity?

Trying to tie up loose ends at the fort before hitting the trail again, Abert reluctantly consented, and made the portrait. And when he got Dr. Hempstead to help him with those measurements, he used the portrait borders, and the back of the paper, as sketch and note paper, obviously not thinking too highly of the watercolor. Or perhaps he was trying to economize on white paper, not knowing how much work lay ahead, or when a new supply might be had.

Hafen, in his Colorado Magazine, 1956 report, says:

"Close inspection of the lines and figures brought the welcome revelation that here was Abert's ground plan of Bent's Fort with the important information necessary for an accurate reconstruction.

"The walls as measured on Sept. 8, 1846 were 14 feet high. The bastions (towers) 18 feet. The front gate was 7 feet high and 6½ feet wide. The east wall measured 137 feet, the north wall 178."

With all this information from Hafen, and my notes taken during my reading of the diary fresh in mind, I went back to the office fairly busting with the triumphant feeling a reporter gets when he knows he's got a whale of a good story to write. And write it I did, as fully as I could within the strict limitations of newspaper space.

But that story never saw print. As often happens, unavoidably in the hurried business of getting out a newspaper, my Bent's Fort mystery yarn got left in the overset. In plain English, that means the lead type, ready to print, is shelved in a long brass tray for later use. How much later?

I waited. Nothing happened. Finally, when the bloom of spot-news freshness was long gone, I learned the type tray has been spilled all over the composing room floor! Those things do happen. I felt as if there were some sort of historical jinks about the Abert mystery. But I did save my notes along with photographs and Hafen's drawing-to-scale of Abert's ground plan of the fort.

Not till I'd officially retired from clock-punching in 1971 did I dig up my notes, etc. from my messy files and do a brief resume of the story for Empire Magazine, published Dec. 12, 1971.

And now, thanks to Hafen and Fred Rosenstock and their true Westerners spirit, Bent's Fort has been rebuilt for posterity to see—as

nearly as possible—just as Abert saw it. The site is part of the National Parks Service installations.

And what of Abert's original diary, and his Mexican War time sketches of the fort, and Santa Fe, etc? Fred Rosenstock's intention first was to publish them, giving them the full treatment they deserved. But that sort of thing takes an enormous amount of time and effort if it's to be done right.

Rosenstock eventually sold his Abert collection to John Howell of San Francisco. Howell in turn sold the material to John Galvin, a wealthy Irish collector, who financed the publishing, under Howell's direction of a huge rare book, richly illustrated with reproductions of Abert's sketches—including the one of *The Bear Above*, showing the notations on the margin and the ground plan on the back. The book, now out of print, is a collector's item, too.

But alas, the mystery still persists. Fred tells me John Galvin never got the original material to Ireland after publication here. The report is the original diary, the sketches were lost somehow in transit. Maybe there is a jinx on the stuff, after all!



## THE MAD WOLF

A Tale of the Rocky Mountains

by John S. Robb

in *Graham's Magazine*, December 1846

In the month of October, 1833, I was on my return from a trapping tour on Green River, the Grand Colorado of the West, in company with three companions, one named Alexandre, a half-breed, Verboncœur, a Frenchman, and an American named Worthington. After a long day's tramp, we halted in a neck of timber, upon a tributary of the Colorado, immediately bordering upon a wide spreading prairie; and, having here pitched our tent, and tied the animals, we started out to reconnoitre the neighborhood surrounding the camp-ground. The country we had been traveling over all day lay immediately in the path of the roving bands of *Arapaho* and *Crow* Indians, and the former tribe was the white man's inveterate foe. Caution, therefore, counseled us to examine the tracks imprinted around us before we resigned ourselves to security and repose. Having mounted a willow-covered ridge, near the encampment, I descended into a small valley on our right, and had not proceeded far before I descried smoke issuing from the covert. Carefully approaching the spot I soon discovered a numerous war party encampment of

Crows, and, as they were friendly to the company I belonged to, without hesitation I entered the circle seated around the fire. All seized their weapons with a general exclamation of "howl" when, informing them, in their own language, that I was *Little Wolf*—a name conferred upon me by an old chief of the tribe while I was sojourning at their village—they immediately remembered me, and all signs of hostilities were stayed between us. After a friendly shaking of hands, and a short smoke of the calumet, I obtained all the information I needed relative to the Arapahoes, and with pleasure learned that the war parties of the Crows had driven them far from the southern hunting grounds. The chief of the party, and a number of his braves, accompanied me a short distance on my return, and, when we parted, it was with mutual expressions of friendship. On arriving at camp, I found my companions awaiting my coming. Each reported his observations, and the information which I imparted was received with general satisfaction. It also confirmed their several reports, all declaring their search yielding no sign of hostile footsteps.

Every preparation was now made for a night of uninterrupted repose, and every thing promised the luxury. Our wearied march, with the uneasing watchfulness necessary for safety, had worn us down, until a night of unbroken sleep was looked forward to as the greatest boon circumstances could confer upon us. A foe would not approach us in the position we occupied, with our friends the Crows posted in such close proximity—they were nearly within hail—certainly within sound of our guns. A final examination was made of the *lariat* ropes which confined our animals, and then a short smoke—the trapper's greatest luxury—was indulged in; after which, spreading the buffalo robes, we dropped off into a slumber that needed no artificial aids to prolong its soundness.

How long we had lain in sleep I know not; but, all at once, with a suddenness which started repose into flight, I felt myself jerked from the robe on which I was resting. My first thought was that Indians had attacked us, but the light of the fire disclosed my antagonist to be a *wolf*, who had seized and till held me fast by the left hand. I had no weapon within my reach, so, without hesitation, I struck him with my shut fist, and, delivering the blow upon his grinning muzzle with all my force, I broke his hold, but in doing so lacerated my thumb against his tusk. The whole was but the work of a moment. Alexandre, who lay nearest to me, aroused himself, and, no sooner was I released from the infuriated beast, than it seized him by the cheek. He choked it off, when, by this time, Verboncoeur and Worthington having secured their knives, they rushed upon the animal. Each inflicted wounds upon him—but both were bitten. With a howl which curdled the hearer's blood, our assailant fled, and disappeared in the darkness. This sudden and violent interruption to our slumbers was not endured with Christian meekness, nor commented on in those choice epithets which bespeak a delightful surprise. On the contrary, we all indulged in a few bitter expletives against this

nocturnal visitor, and, having thus in a measure appeased the wrath within us, we hastily bound up the wounds we had received, and once more forgot our dangers in the oblivion of sleep.

When morning broke, all sallied forth, in different directions, filled with revengeful purposes against the wolf, believing that he would lurk in our neighborhood. But, after an extended search, we were forced to forego the promised revenge, and vent our anger in declarations of what we would have done if chance had only placed him within gun-shot. On my return, I again encountered the Crow party, the chief of which informed me that a *mad wolf* had visited their camp the night previous. He had been driven off, however, before he had bitten any of their party. This intelligence chilled my blood with a horrid apprehension; and when he added that the animal fled in the direction of our camp, I felt assured he had been our fierce visitor. With gloomy forebodings of coming ill, I returned to my companions, who were preparing for a start.

Every thing being in readiness, we departed from the camp-ground, and, holding our way down the valley, came upon the great Crow *trace*, where, discovering the tracks of a large party of white men, we followed it up and fell in with a trapping party of the North American Fur Company. From them I obtained some whiskey and salt, which I applied to my wounds, and advising my companions to use the same precaution, I intimated that the animal which bit us might be rabid. They laughed at my fears; but after, as I thought, sufficiency amusing themselves about my "womanish" dread of a wolf bite, I checked their mirth by imparting to them the intelligence I had gained from the Crows. Having, however, commenced amusing themselves at the expense of my fears, in a spirit of bravado they continued. I was awed by a presentiment of coming evil, and exhibited it, no doubt, in my countenance. Moreover, between dread of the wounds I had received, and chagrin at their ill-timed merriment, I was influenced to drink freely of the liquor. My stolid air of indifference, together with my continued libations, alarmed them, for I was habitually temperate as regarded drink—but the reverse in passion. An outburst on my part would have been natural, and have amused them—but my troubled countenance, coupled with the quiet despair of my actions, made them uneasy, and they watched me with interest. The liquor first made keen my sensibilities, then imparted a reckless indifference, which was followed by the stupor of deep intoxication; and, wrapped in its attendant robe of oblivion, I forgot the previous night's encounter. The songs and adventures related around the camp-fire on that night were unheard by me—and both companies were prepared to separate in the morning before they aroused me from my deep sleep. All the painful feelings of intoxication awoke with me, and, stupid and sick, I made my way to a brook beside the halting-ground, and laved my fevered head and body in its cool waters. Here Worthington, one of my companions, separated from us and joined the other company. Bidding him and the party adieu, we turned our horses' heads, and again took up the line of

march for the Laramie river. We were in a region where danger lurked in every bush, and where the footsteps of human being brought hostility almost as surely as the clouds betoken rain. Thus far through the whole season of trapping we had escaped unhurt, and were returning, richly laden with spoils.

But while successfully avoiding the savage foe, a hidden one was at work in our midst more terrible than the painted warriors of the western desert—more appalling in its promised fatality than the torturing knife of the ruthless red man. *Hydrophobia*, in all its horrid panoply of terrors, looked out from the eyes that surrounded me, and I thought the madness was reflected back from my own.

On the day we crossed *Câche-à-la-Poudre* river, a colt on which we had strapped some light articles, betrayed symptoms of the malady, and for the first time we found out he had been bitten. Alexandre and Verboncœur had fastened their guns upon his pack, to relieve themselves of the burthen while climbing the river banks, and now with dismay they observed him break loose from the mule to which he was tied, and with a yell of terror fly from the stream we had just crossed, the foam gathering around his mouth, indicating with certainty the cause of his frantic actions. The arms he bore away were necessary for our protection. I, therefore, started in pursuit—but the ~~mad~~ animal being lightly laden soon left my jaded mule far behind, and, ~~dashing~~ over a ledge to our left, ere I reached the promontory he was entirely lost to view. Misfortune appeared to have thrown her mantle over us, and, to a dread of the disease which threatened us, was now added the loss of the weapons. Continuing our course down the borders of the Laramie, which became frozen over by the continued cold weather, we approached the North Fork of the Platte, and, while in its immediate neighborhood, fancied we observed the colt quietly grazing in a plain before us. Leaving Alexandre, who complained of being ill, in the tent, Verboncœur and myself started in pursuit. A flicker of hope stole about our hearts that this might indeed be the runaway animal, free from hydrophobia, which had fled, startled by the close proximity of a beast of prey, or had been only stung to momentary madness by some venomous insect. As we neared the animal all hopes fled—distance and our ardent wishes had converted the hump of a buffalo into the semblance of a pack, which on nearer approach resolved itself into its real character, and cast us back again into a state of despondency. At this moment a cry from my companion, who was pointing toward camp, directed my attention thitherward, and the next moment I beheld our tent on fire, and the half-breed flourishing around his head a burning faggot. We instantly turned our horses' heads and rode with all speed toward him—as we approached he started off the pack-mules with his brand, and when we reached the spot all our worst fears were confirmed—he was a howling *madman!*

After a violent struggle, in which he inflicted severe blows upon us both, we succeeded in securing his arms, and having bound him upon a pallet of skins, we drove stakes into the frozen ground and there tied him. While he



raved and howled, all the savage in his nature made predominant by his malady, Verboncœur and myself sat weighed down with horrid dread, and were contemplating each other with fear. I fancied I beheld a wild expression in his eyes, and no doubt he observed the same in mine. Alexandre, in the mean time, recovered from his convulsion, and in tones of earnest supplication besought us to end his torture, by sending a bullet through his brain. His supplications but echoed the thoughts which were coursing through my mind—I was meditating suicide with all the coolness of a wretch whose cup of despair is to the full, and the tide of which but lingers on the brim. Another, and another convulsion followed the progress of the disease upon our poor Alexandre; in his terrible paroxysms he tore one arm loose from the cords, and with a howl began to rend it with his teeth; when we secured the limb he tried to seize his shoulder, this we prevented by placing a strap across his forehead, and fastening it on each side with stakes—he now bit his lips with fury, and the blood and foam gathered about them in his agony, while the pupil of his dark eye shot fire, and the ball, which a few days previous was white as the snow upon the hills, assumed a hue as red as blood. All other dangers vanished before this one—the savage foe no longer inspired fear, indeed he would have been welcomed to a conflict which promised for us certain death. As the sun of that day of sorrow went down, the half-breed's paroxysms became more violent, and seating ourselves beside his rude mountain couch, we watched him through the gloom of night. Morning at length dawned, and we were rejoiced that with its first blush the spirit of our comrade fled, leaving his tortured body to its long sleep.

Alexandre's knife had been carried off by the colt, with the guns, and the amount of arms between Verboncœur and myself was one rifle, two knives, and a pistol; of these my companion had but a knife as his share, and I felt selfishly glad, for he was an athletic man, who, armed, in madness, would slay me in a moment; I therefore clutched the weapons I possessed with an eager grip, and watched my comrade's motions with painful vigilance. We could not bury Alexandre's body, the earth being so frozen it was impossible to dig it with our knives, we therefore started down the river, with the intention of cutting a hole through the ice and depositing it in the stream, out of reach of the wolves. Verboncœur first commenced cutting, but he had not succeeded in making a crevice before he snapped his knife blade off about midway. This accident, at any time while in the mountains, would have been looked upon as a great misfortune—in our situation it was viewed as a frightful calamity—a loss which rendered us weak and helpless in defence, and which it was impossible to replace; and yet, paradox as it may seem, while I grieved I rejoiced, for, while it diminished the number of our weapons, it robbed my companion of the only dangerous one he had left, and one I had looked upon with dread. I represented to him the necessity of carefully preserving the other knife, and he assented; we therefore concluded not to risk it in the ice, but folding up the remains of our dead companion in a buffalo-robe left it upon the prairie without

sepulture, with the winds alone to murmur his dirge. So perished the first victim of the *Mad Wolf*.

When we again started, my companion asked me for the pistol in my belt, and the knife in my sheath, which he argued would be a fair division of the weapons, and I had no good reason for refusing him, other than my wakeful fears, but I put him off with an excuse that I wished to place them in proper order before I resigned them. He smiled, and we journeyed on. After observing his countenance for some time, I began to grow reassured—it looked calm and undisturbed, and his step displayed a firmness and decision which I believed could only belong to health in body and mind. While thus growing in hope and confidence, and when on the very eve of yielding up a weapon to him, a wolf howled in our immediate neighborhood, and I could see him shudder, the muscles of his face contract, and his eye assume an unusual lustre, while a low groan broke from his heaving chest. I hugged the weapons in my possession with increased eagerness, and clung to them with a tenacity founded on absolute fear, for I conjectured, and rightly, that the seeds of the dread malady which carried off our half-breed companion were making themselves manifest in Verboncœur. In crossing a small branch which emptied into the Laramie, I again watched his features, and all the symptoms of hydrophobia burst forth in a paroxysm, unmistakable in its character. He instantly rushed upon me, when with the heavy barrel of my rifle I felled him senseless—my fears had made me a Hercules in strength—and then leaping upon his insensible body I bound him with a *lariat* rope so tightly that in vain he struggled for freedom. I sat down beside him with my teeth clenched, and listened unmoved to his ravings and prayers for death—he, like Alexandre, besought me to despatch him—but finding his supplications move me not, he broke into horrid imprecations and threats, in which he swore that he would kill me—that he would tear me with his teeth, and, bound as he was, he rolled his body toward me. I held him down to the earth, and he again relapsed into dreadful convulsions. My despair had now no lower depth. I looked upon my remaining comrade and shared in his agony, for I expected that inevitable as fate my turn would come next; and yet, with this belief preying at my heart, some unknown power of the human will held back my hand when I would have yielded to my comrade's entreaties for death.

At times the resolution to despatch him, and follow it up with my own death, was on the very eve of being consummated, when a whisper of hope would bid me to firmly suffer on. Worn out nature could bear up no longer without response, and so wearied was I in mind and body, that almost unconsciously I sunk into slumber. While the fire at my feet grew more and more dim, my senses wandered away in a delightful dream to the fire-side of my old home, and the wildness of the trapper life, its many perils and hardships, melted away in the soft sunlight of an autumn sky, which appeared to throw its golden beams over my far-off home. There the settler smoked his pipe in security, his household slumbered in peace, and the morning sun

awoke him to enjoyment instead of fear. My dream had taken the hue of my hopes and wishes.

While my senses were thus wrapt, the report of fire-arms dispelled the vision, and not knowing for a moment whether it was a dream or reality, I sprung to my feet and felt for my pistol—it was *gone!* I stood for a moment collecting my thoughts, and partly waiting to feel the effects of a wound, but no sensation of pain manifested itself, I seized a brand from the smouldering fire and held it over my bound companion; all was solved at a glance—he had in his struggles released one arm, and a lucid fit intervening, poor Verboncœur had drawn the pistol from my belt, while I slept, and ended his agony by his own hand.

I was now *alone*—far in the wilderness—a dreadful apprehension of the poison being in my veins ever present in my thoughts—and thus seated in darkness by my dead companion, my heart bowed down, and my mind cheerless as the gloom surrounding me, I yielded to the feelings which were preying on my manhood, and wept like a child. Morning at length dawned, and folding my dead companion up, as we together had previously bestowed the first victim, I mounted a mule, and with the pack animals pursued my solitary way. My march was now one of indifference, and with a kind of foolish daring I plunged through every stream impeding my progress, and drank freely of their waters, inviting, as it were, the madness I was sure would come. My progress was tedious, difficult, laborious and full of hardships, but at length, almost worn down, I arrived at our trading post on the North Fork of the Platte. When I presented myself to the commander of the post he did not recognize my gaunt form and seared visage. Suffering, both of body and mind, had so stamped my features, that I looked like some escaped maniac, and the uneasy appearance of my sunken eye made old friends look upon me with suspicion—they thought I was crazed. When I told my story, and showed the wounds upon my hands, inflicted by the rabid wolf, and related the death of my comrades, they shook their heads with doubt, and I could hear it whispered among them that some dreadful affray had occurred between us, resulting in their death. Others suggested that the savages had slain my companions, and that through suffering, alone in the wilderness, I had become insane. All these doubts worked upon my troubled mind until reason did indeed begin to totter upon its throne. A few days after my arrival at the North Fork post, an express rider arrived, who had passed a night in the camp of the American trapping party our companion, Worthington, had joined, and he not only had heard our encounter with the mad wolf related, but the fact of his having the malady being dreadfully confirmed in the death of Worthington, who perished in their camp under all the certain symptoms of hydrophobia. My story being thus confirmed, and painful suspicions removed, I felt a change in the tone of my mind; fears which had harbored there began to diminish in intensity, and no symptom of the much dreaded malady appearing, hope grew strong within me. This produced a corresponding improvement in health,

until gradually the marks of my dreadful march disappeared from both form and feature.

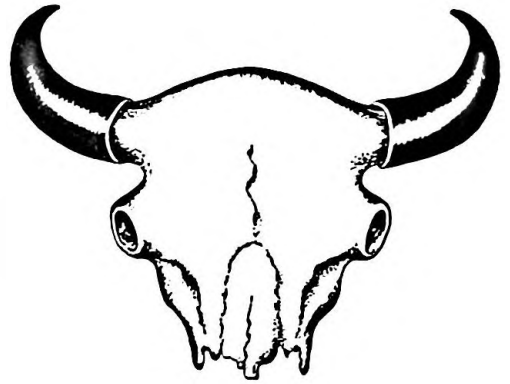
I have often since endeavored to assign a cause for my escape, and have as frequently been led to attribute it to my free use of liquor and salt, at our meeting with the northwestern trappers—combined, they nullified the poison. Fifteen years have passed since the adventure, and with a thankful heart I chronicle the fact that no vestige of its effects remains, except the vivid recollection of our night encounter with the *Mad Wolf* of the Prairies!

*The* DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

MARCH-APRIL 1978

VOLUME XXXIV No. 2



*In This Issue*

**BROOKS OF ALASKA**

by

**MEL GRIFFITHS**

**ANTIQUE CAMERAS—RECORDERS  
OF HISTORY**

by

**BERNIE S. FAINGOLD**

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

JUNE 28 meeting

Speaker: David Hartman

Subject: Colorado's Cliff Dwellers Assn.

JULY: No Regular Meeting

AUGUST 23—Annual Summer Rendezvous (Ladies Nite).

"We Lived At Fort Laramie" Interviews with the Old Timers by David L. Hieb, former superintendent Fort Laramie Historical Site. Reservation details to follow.

## IN MEMORIAM

Morris W. Abbott: A long-time CM (30) years, author of "Pikes Peak Cog Road" and contributor in the 1968 and 1972 Denver Brand Book.

Arthur L. Campa: PM, Sheriff 1967, Brand Book Editor 1965, author, noted historian of the southwest, gentleman and good friend of the posse.

Much could be written of the accomplishments of the two above mentioned posse members but space here is limited. Their saddles are empty . . . they will be missed.

## OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

It seems that many members are still lacking the latest volume of the "Denver Brand Book" in their collection. A check for \$23.50 mailed to Dr. Henry Toll will get you a copy post haste. It's well worth the money and a vital addition to any western history collection.

Members might also be interested to know that the "Old Joe" Westerner lapel pins are now available in three beautiful finishes. Bronze \$2.75, silver \$3.00, and gold \$3.50. Get several and you don't have to change your pins each time you change suits.

The summer rendezvous is announced under "Coming Attractions." The date is firm and space is limited so mark your calendar and be prepared to hit the trail for the Fort come August. The food is good, the speeches short and the company . . . the best . . . Westerners and their ladies.

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

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**PLEASE RETURN YOUR CARDS FOR YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THE CHUCK WRANGLER CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE DENVER PRESS CLUB.**

# Brooks of Alaska

by

Mel Griffiths, P.M.

Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners on March 22, 1978

The College of Earth Science and Mineral Industry at the University of Alaska, College, Alaska, is housed in the Brooks Memorial Mines Building. About 15 miles to the northeast of Mt. McKinley, North America's highest peak, stands 11,940-foot Mt. Brooks. Its east flank is buttressed by Brooks Glacier. The Brooks Range is the northwestern terminus of the Rocky Mountain system lying across the whole northern width of Alaska, shutting off the Arctic Coastal Plain from the interior lowlands. A total of ten Alaskan natural features, running the gamut from mountain ranges to streams and lakes bear the name Brooks. [Orth - 1967 - pp. 161-2.]

The man commemorated by this proliferation of place names was Alfred Hulse Brooks. During the 30 short years of his professional career, 25 of which were spent with the Alaskan Branch of the United States Geological Survey, he did more to describe, explain, and justify Alaska to the outside world than any other scientist of his time.

At Sitka, when the ceremony which transferred Russia's Alaskan territory to the United States took place on 18 October, 1867, the official U.S. knowledge of what the \$7,200,000 purchase price was buying was as vague as was official Washington's knowledge of the labyrinthine, and sometimes devious, negotiations which had eventuated in the transfer of sovereignty. [See Chevigny - 1965 - pp. 257 ff.] Some said that the United States was buying a "pig-in-a-poke;" others were enthusiastic. The street was not sufficiently informed, usually, to have an [Welch - 1958] So far as was known, the fur trade was the only which had been profitable to the Russian American Company c many years of monopoly. It was noted much later by Alfred Brooks Russian company had lost out on all commercial enterprises except Failures included gold, coal, fish, farming, cattle raising, and even shipping of ice to California. "During the eighty years of Russian occupation the land had yielded furs to the value of \$450,000,000 but nothing else. The five hundred unhappy colonists had even to be supplied with food from central Siberia. [Brooks - 1925 - p. 25.]

The popular American view of "Seward's Icebox" or "Seward's Folly" had ample grounds for gaining currency during the 30 years between the

purchase date and the Klondike gold rush of 1898. The only current scientific work on Alaska's interior—William Healey Dall's account of the joint American-Russian Telegraph Survey of 1864, '65, '66—was not published until 1870 as *Alaska and Its Resources*. [Dall - 1870.]

During the next 30 years the slow trickle northward of settlers, entrepreneurs, and civil servants (not necessarily in that order) did little to swell the population or enlarge the economic base. Even this trickle was often stemmed by the practice of seasonal employment common to such activities as salmon fishing, fur seal harvesting and mining, which could only be carried on during the summer months.

This overly-slow growth was whipped abruptly into a frenzy of activity in 1898, when over 50,000 stampeding gold seekers rushed through the southeastern corner of the territory on their way to the Klondike. [Brooks - 1925 - p. 26.]

Prospectors had already given some attention to Alaskan territory, but their quests had generally been confined to the coastal areas or along the tributaries of the great rivers such as Yukon and Kuskokwim—routes to the interior since Russian days—or the larger coastal rivers such as the Susitna and Copper. The bonanza on the Klondike kindled hope that a similar strike would be made somewhere on American soil. Inevitably, some of the Klondike gold-seekers who had been unsuccessful in the Yukon Territory, or who didn't even get that far, stopped to prospect in Alaskan territory as they drifted down the Yukon River on their way back "outside." Few could resist the temptation to dip a shovel or pan into the gravels along the streams as they went. This expansion of mineral exploration in Alaska soon made demands upon the scientific and technical services of the still-young United States Geological Survey, which since the late 1870's had stood ready to map and investigate any frontier region which gave promise of mineral wealth.

Alfred H. Brooks first worked for the U.S.G.S. as a seasonal field assistant on a topographic mapping survey in southern Vermont during the summer of 1888. He was 17 years old at the time. He may have gotten the summer job through the influence of his father, Major T. B. Brooks, a mining engineer who had been associated with the development of the iron ore deposits of Michigan's upper peninsula. A business partner of the elder Brooks was Raphael Pumpelly, whose adventurous geologizing in such far-away places as Mexico, China, and inner Asia may have influenced the younger Brooks in his choice of a career.

In 1889 Brooks spent another field season as an assistant to a topographic party near Marquette, Michigan. This field work was followed by study at the Polytechnik Institutes at Stuttgart and Munich, Germany during 1889-'90-'91. Next came a field season of geologic mapping in the iron lands of northern Michigan, from which the 20-year-old Brooks entered Harvard in the fall of 1891. There he fell under the spell of Professor



N. S. Shaler. He graduated from Harvard with a B.S. degree with the class of 1894, having had to leave school from March of 1893 to September of that same year to recuperate from what was then called "broken health."

Brooks spent much of his life in delicate health, although he was able to drive himself to prodigies of field work and was always punctual in turning the results of that field work into professional papers, bulletins, reports and articles for both the expert and the layman. P. S. Smith described Brooks as follows: "He was of medium height, stockily built, of ruddy complexion, his hair and beard sandy until somewhat bleached and thinned by advancing years." [Smith - 1926 - p. 40.] He was, throughout his professional life, a "Field Man" and was recognized as one by the men of the Alaskan Branch of the U.S.G.S., which he headed for 20 active years.

Brooks received his first permanent appointment to the U.S. Geological Survey immediately upon his graduation from Harvard in June of 1894. For the next three years he worked in the southern Appalachians, New Jersey, and West Virginia. In August of 1897 he attended the Seventh International Geologic Congress at St. Petersburg, following the Congress with field trip visits to the Urals, the Donetz Basin, Baku, the Crimea, Turkey and Greece. On his way home he stayed over from September to December for study at the Sorbonne in Paris. While there he received a cable offering him field work in Alaska the next summer.

From 1898 until his death in 1924, Brook's professional life was spent with the United States Geological Survey and in its Alaska Branch. In 1902 he was placed in charge of the geologic work of the Alaska Branch, and in 1903 in charge of all of the Survey's Alaska work, both geologic and topographic. His career was marked by an extreme loyalty to his chosen arena of work. In 1911, when Dr. C. W. Hayes resigned as Chief Geologist of the U.S.G.S., Brooks was nominated to the position by Director George Otis Smith and Secretary of the Interior Walter L. Fisher. Brooks declined the offer, wishing to continue his Alaska work. The public notice which the Survey sent out upon his refusal contains the following words, ". . . he (Brooks) believes that his field of greatest usefulness lies in the continuation of administration of the Geological Survey work in Alaska, work which he believes has in reality hardly begun." [Smith - 1926 - p. 30.]

An examination of Brooks's published work shows that he envisioned his mission as two-fold. One part was the acquisition and publication of basic scientific knowledge about the Alaskan environment. The second was the interpretation of Alaska and its potential to the rest of the world. In his bibliography of 112 citations are found articles which sought to reach the layman through publication in general journals such as *Popular Science* and *The National Geographic*. [Smith - 1926 - pp. 43-48.] One gets the impression that he felt Alaska was being "picked on" by its detractors and it was his duty to dispel the pall of ignorance which was fostered by those in opposition to the orderly development of the Territory. He made 24

separate trips to Alaska during his tenure in the Survey, some being of several month's duration. Phillip Smith said, "He tramped and canoed more miles through the northern wilderness than perhaps any other Alaskan explorer. [Smith - 1925 - p. 159.] In addition, during his times at headquarters in Washington, D.C., he was in daily contact with other field geologists and topographers who were amassing environmental information under his direction. He had visited more parts of Alaska and understood its environment and people better than any scientist of his time. Small wonder that he felt obliged to set right the misconceptions which were constantly finding their way into print.

In this respect, Brooks's career bears more than a superficial resemblance to that of John Wesley Powell: a significant feat of pioneering exploration, followed by a steadily increasing burden of administration, and culminating with the reasoned advocacy of a regional development program. With Powell it was the canyons of the Colorado, followed by the creation and administration of the United States Geological Survey, [Bartlett - 1962 - p. 328.] crowned as the keystone of a life's work by the *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States* in 1878. [Powell - 1878] With Brooks it was the circuit of Mt. McKinley and the Alaska Range in 1902, the administration of the Alaska Branch of the U.S.G.S. throughout the remainder of his professional career, culminating in the *Value of Alaska*, published in 1925, a year after Brooks's death. [Brooks - 1925]

We can best understand what gave scope and breadth to Brooks's total Alaska mission by examining the 1902 expedition. It is an ideal example of the scientific exploration of a little-known region: there were few "adventures," the planning was more than adequate, and the party returned with its mission accomplished. More than 50 years later *The Mount McKinley Region, Alaska* [Brooks - 1911], which resulted from this expedition was known as the most complete and reliable single work on the McKinley region. Bradford Washburn has noted: "This extraordinary 105-day expedition contributed more to knowledge of the McKinley region than any other single exploit, before or since, and produced a map which was the bible of explorers, prospectors, miners and climbers for fully half a century." [Washburn - 1971 - pp. 55-56.] Only in the last 30 to 40 years has the advent of the air-borne geologist and the introduction of aerial mapping techniques added significantly to what Brooks and his party had already put on record.

At the time of the 1902 expedition, so far as was known, no white man had set foot closer to North America's highest peak than about 40 miles.

Near the apex of the Gulf of Alaska's northward arch against the Alaska mainland, Cook Inlet reaches 200 miles into the land. One hundred miles to the north and west a great crescentic range divides the Cook Inlet drainage from the interior drainage of the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers.

In the 1860's, from a point near the junction of the Tanana and Yukon, Dall had seen and sketched this great interior range. [Dall - 1870 - p. 101 & p. 286.] On his map it bears the name Alaskan Range, which has been shortened more recently to Alaska Range. Near the center of this massive mountain arc rises the great bulk of our continent's highest peak: Mt. McKinley.

Perhaps because of cloudy weather, Captain James Cook, the great English navigator, does not mention seeing distant inland mountains when in 1778 he explored the shores of the inlet which bears his name. [Cook - 1784 - Vol. II, pp. 382-403.] After Cook's untimely death in the Hawaiian Islands, it remained for one of Cook's lieutenant's, Captain George Vancouver, on a later charting expedition to report from Knik Arm, near present-day Anchorage, on 6 May 1794, that he could see on the horizon to the northwest, "distant stupendous mountains covered with snow, and apparently detached from one another." [Vancouver - 1798 - Vol. III, p. 124.]

The traders and trappers of the Russian American Company who had seen it from the Cook Inlet side and from the headwaters of the Kuskokwim and the Yukon on the north called it *Bulshaita Gora* (Great Mountain). [Moore - 1967 - p. 9.]

As American prospectors pressed landward from tide water and moved up the tributaries of the inland rivers, they became increasingly aware of the great white peak which dominated the watershed range north of Cook Inlet. A Princeton-educated prospector, William A. Dickey, who took part in the Susitna gold rush of 1896, realized its great height (he estimated it to be more than 20,000 feet high) and gave it its present name, Mt. McKinley. This information was published in his dispatch of January 24, 1897, to the *New York Sun*. His statement, "The largest unexplored region in the United States is the district north of Cook's Inlet, Alaska, . . .," caught the fancy of adventure-eager laymen, and the interest of official mapping agencies of the U.S. Government. [Dickey - 1897.]

In 1898 the U.S. Geological Survey began a broadly-based program of reconnaissance surveys which by 1902 were to cover the territory with a network outlining the larger physiographic features. Alfred Brooks took part in these early U.S.G.S. surveys. 1898 saw him participating in a reconnaissance of the Tanana and White River basins. In 1899 he worked with a party in the Chandalar-Koyukuk region. In 1900 Brooks and his crew mapped 6,000 square miles in the western half of the Seward Peninsula near Nome. The season of 1901 was spent in southeastern Alaska in the Ketchikan region. Here with a small crew and a motor launch Brooks covered 1,200 miles of waterway during two months of late summer and early fall.

At the same time that Brooks was being seasoned for the 1902 expedition, some of the other reconnaissance surveys were scouting out the

approaches to the Alaska Range. Two U.S.G.S. efforts and one U.S. Army expedition were to be most helpful.

In 1898 George H. Eldridge conducted a U.S.G.S. survey by boat up the Susitna River. The topographer of this expedition, Robert Muldrow, made the first instrumental determination of the location and height of Mt. McKinley. Muldrow's figure for the height was 20,464 feet, which showed Dickey's unsupported guess to be a remarkably prescient one, and which was only 144 feet higher than the most accurate modern figure—20,320 feet. [Eldridge—1900]

In 1898 Josiah E. Spurr led a U.S.G.S. party across the Alaska Range, just north of Rainy Pass, which Brooks was to cross four years later. [Spurr - 1900]

In 1899 First Lieutenant Joseph S. Herron led a U.S. Army party of six men across the Alaska Range at Simpson's Pass to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim, thence eventually to Fort Gibbon on the Tanana at present-day Tanana. This party was abandoned by its Indian guides and nearly starved before it reached the Yukon in early December, providing one of the early "adventure" stories of Alaskan exploration. [Herron - 1901]

The U.S.G.S. could not have chosen a better leader for the 1902 expedition. He had just spent the four previous summers in Alaskan field work—running the gamut from the bleak tundra of the Seward Peninsula to the lush forest and underbrush of the southeast panhandle. His education had been perhaps a little exotic for the average Alaskan taste—Munich, Stuttgart, Harvard and the Sarbonne—and he had experienced a little too much foreign travel. But from the start of his field career Brooks had never let his background interfere in any way with his day-to-day communication with his field associates. In both his official and unofficial reports he was as lavish in his praise of the cook and horse wranglers as he was of his professional colleagues. The reports of his explorations show an unusual grasp of the intricacies of frontier living and travel. One feels sure that he was as much at home in a "Siwash" camp as in the rarified atmosphere of a Washington salon. Brooks always was able to kindle a sense of mission among his associates. Later, under his direction the Alaska Branch of the Survey developed an excellent *esprit de corps* which became the envy of other branches.

The field orders for the 1902 expedition contained the following:

"You [Brooks] are hereby assigned to take charge of a party which is to make a geologic and topographic reconnaissance on the western side of the Alaska Range. The proposed route of survey is to extend from Tyonek, Cook Inlet, through the Skwentna Pass, and then along the foothills of the western slope of the Alaska Range to the Cantwell River [now called the Nenana River]. From the Cantwell River it will extend by such routes as seem feasible to the Tanana. After reaching the Tanana you will choose such route to the Yukon as time and circumstances will permit.

Should your party meet with any accident or delays, it is possible that you may have to abandon your outfit on Kuskokwim or Tanana waters and proceed to the mouths of these rivers by boat or raft. . . . It will be the purpose of your expedition to obtain all possible information regarding the geography, geology, topography, and mineral resources along the route of travel." [Brooks - 1911 - p. 11.]

For the scientific field work Brooks called upon the services of D. L. Reaburn as topographer, and L. M. Prindle as assistant geologist. The other, but no less important, members of the party were Odell Reaburn, recorder; Fred Printz and W. W. Von Canon, packers; and George Revine, cook. In April, while Brooks was still detained in Washington, D.C., D. L. Reaburn and Fred Printz went to North Yakima, Washington, where they procured 20 pack horses for the expedition. They carefully chose "short, heavily built animals weighing from 800 to 1,200 pounds" and avoided white animals, who from past experience seemed to suffer most from mosquitoes "and were the first to give out." [Brooks - 1911 - p. 13.] The remainder of the outfit was assembled in Seattle.

The four pages on equipment in *Professional Paper No. 70* contain a distillation of all of the Survey's experience on outfitting for Alaskan exploration garnered up to that time. It covers everything from food to horse-shoe nails, and was still being used as a standard reference as late as the 1950's. [Brooks - 1911 - pp. 12-16.]

The account of an expedition which has been superior in planning, execution, and in the quality of its results can be anticlimactic in the telling. To spare you a surplus of detail, permit us to choose a few significant incidents and observations which will highlight the nature of Alaskan field work before the advent of the airplane in the 1920's. The most difficult parts of the journey for both horses and men lay at the beginning and end of the 800-mile route. The first 150 miles from the shores of Cook Inlet to the crest of the Alaska Range at Rainy Pass was through a swampy, heavily forested, mosquito-infested lowland crossed by swift and deep glacier-fed streams. The 150 miles at the end of the trip from the headwaters of the Nenana to the Tanana and thence to Rampart on the Yukon were equally mosquito-infested and swampy, but the timber was stunted interior *taiga*, and it was past mosquito and fly time. The intervening 500 miles along the northwest edge of the Alaska Range was relatively easy going for the horses, except for permafrost areas and dangerous crossings of swift glacier-fed streams.

At the outset the party established a routine which assured that the day's travel would be accomplished and that the surveying and geologic work would be done. The entire party was roused out at 5:00 a.m. While the packers rounded up the horses and the cook prepared breakfast, the scientific contingent struck the tents and assembled the packs. After breakfast all hands assisted in packing the horses, which by then had been

saddled by the packers. Everyone in the party could throw an acceptable diamond hitch after the first week. Each day the pack outfit struck out with Fred Printz in the lead and George Revine, the cook, bringing up the rear with the cook gear on a little brown mare. In the heavy timber on the Cook Inlet side of the range, two or three axmen preceded the train. In open country this wasn't necessary. Camp was made by three or four in the afternoon, after which the geologists and topographers climbed some nearby hill to spy out the lay of the land, measure outcrops or make observations. In more open country they could range further afield.

The pack outfit left Tyonek on Cook Inlet June 2nd. On May 27th the horses had been put ashore by a small scow after they were hoisted from the hold of the vessel which had brought the party from Seattle. The intervening five days were spent in assembling the outfit and breaking the fractious horses to pack, an undertaking which furnished the Indians, the children and the dogs with a free rodeo, much to their noisy delight. Even for a week after the departure from Tyonek some of the horses were still scattering their packs along the trail; but the hard work, flies, and mosquitoes soon sapped them so heavily that they settled down. The party crossed Rainy Pass on July 15, leaving the Cook Inlet drainage behind. By this time Brooks had noted, with some alarm, that over one-third of their allotted time had passed, over one-third of their food was eaten, and they had covered barely one-sixth of the projected distance.

During this first third of the trip they had encountered their first bear, had made a spectacular crossing of the Skwentna River, and had endured the maddening attention of what must have seemed the greatest assemblage of flies and mosquitoes on the whole continent.

While scouting ahead of the pack outfit one day, Fred Printz came upon a she-bear and cub. Immediately the sow charged:

"Hemmed in by alder thickets, with an axe as his only weapon, he [Printz] faced his assailant with what seemed, even to an old hunter like himself, hardly a fighting chance for life. Fortunately, however, the Kodiak grizzly, though larger, is not so ferocious as his Rocky Mountain brother, and Fred made his escape, though the animal approached within a few feet of him." [Brooks - 1903 - p. 450.]

The crossing of the Skwentna was made just above its junction with the Yentna, a major western tributary of the Susitna. The stream at this point had an eight-mile-per-hour current and was too deep for the horses to touch bottom. Fortunately, this was a place of rendezvous with a boat which was carrying some of their supplies upstream. It took all of June 22nd to get the horses and outfit to the other side. "The horses were towed across the river behind the boat, one by one; but so swift was the current that even with four men at the oars a quarter of a mile or more was lost in gaining the other bank." [Brooks - 1911 - p. 17.]

Anyone who has suffered the terrible ravages of Alaskan mosquitoes and flies at the height of their season is certain to break into hyperbole when describing the experience to the uninitiated. Brooks's account of their difficulties during June and early July was remarkably restrained. He describes the suffering of the horses and the efforts to shield them from their maddening tormentors with blankets and smudge fires. He tells of seeing horses, goaded beyond reason, "blindly charge through the forest, oblivious to the trees and branches . . . until they wore themselves out: then in utter hopelessness, drop their heads and patiently endure the suffering. I have seen strong men . . . when they were too weary to offer further resistance to their relentless foes, weep with vexation." In conclusion he gives the opinion that

"While every other hardship of Alaskan travel is often grossly exaggerated, it is hardly possible to do this one justice. Men capable of enduring heat and cold, hunger and fatigue without murmuring, will become almost savage under the torture. However, the story told me by an old prospector of the old days on 'Fortymile,' when he could wave a pint cup over his head and catch a quart of mosquitoes, did seem somewhat beyond the bounds of probability." [Brooks - 1903 - pp. 452-453.]

Once across Rainy Pass and away from the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River, the party set a northeasterly course, "N 20° E" directly toward Mt. McKinley. Before they left the timber of the upper Kuskokwim valley, they were startled to find a blazed trail. From the nature of the axe marks it was deduced they had probably been made by a white man, possibly one of

". . . that class of Alaskan prospectors who have traversed the territory from the almost tropical jungles of its southern coast to the barren grounds which skirt the frozen sea on the north. . . . Often these pioneers make journeys that would put to shame the widely-advertised explorations of many a well-equipped government expedition." [Brooks adds wistfully.] "Were the results of their efforts commensurate with the toil, danger, and suffering involved, geographical science would be much enriched thereby." [Brooks - 1903 - pp. 456-457.]

On the piedmont plateau which extends outward from the foot of the range, the going was easier. Brooks called these the happiest days of the summer. Most of the time their route lay above timberline on the open tundra. They learned to cross the numerous braided glacial streams early in the morning, when the melt water volume was lowest. The cook complained about having nothing but stunted willows to feed his stove—he was of the North Woods tradition who disdain firewood which did not need splitting with an axe—but he continued to turn out wonderful meals. Brooks offers the following menu as proof:

"Pea Soup  
 Mountain Sheep a la George  
 Rice                      Potatoes  
 Mince Pie      Stewed Apricots  
                     Johnny Cake  
 Tea                              Cocoa"  
    [Brooks - 1903 - p. 459]

Since crossing Rainy Pass the larder had been regularly supplemented by Dall mountain sheep moose and caribou, which could be taken any time they were needed.

Now that they were relieved of pack-string duty, the geologists and topographer widened the scope of their side trips, with the result that they often arrived at the next camp late at night. However, this was not a great inconvenience, since at that latitude (63° North), at the beginning of August, the sun is up at 3:00 a.m. and sets at 9:00 p.m. with an hour of lingering twilight at each end of the day.

Camp was made near the head of Slippery Creek on August 4th. This was their nearest approach to Mt. McKinley—about 15 miles. The next day, while the other geologist and the topographer added to their maps and notes, Brooks went up Slippery Creek and climbed a spur of the slope at its head. He was stopped by a tumbled ice fall at about 6,500 feet elevation. At this point he estimated that he was about nine miles from the summit of Mt. McKinley, and he claimed the distinction of being the first man to set foot on its slopes. Before returning to camp he built a cairn at the north end of a huge erratic granite boulder and deposited in it a message rolled into a cartridge case, sealed with clay and wrapped in a cloth tobacco sack. This cairn, with its cartridge-encapsulated message and inch-thick coating of moss, was found by John C. Reed, Jr., and Grant Pierson on July 8, 1954, after having been flown by helicopter to a small glacier to the west of the ridge. The message and its cartridge case now repose in the museum at Mt. McKinley National Park headquarters. [Reed - 1955 - p. 82]

At no time during the planning or execution of the expedition had Brooks entertained the thought of attempting to climb McKinley. Nevertheless, he turned back from his solitary foray with regret. To set foot on the slopes of one of the world's great mountains is to be invited onward, but he saw wisely that it was too late to harbor such ideas with the means at his disposal. He was later to present a plan for climbing the peak from the north side, which was more practical than any proposed for a decade. [Brooks and Reaburn - 1903.].

The party struck off again to the northeast, carefully extending their survey work as they went. They now followed a route through the northern foothills of the Alaska Range, a route which later was to be followed by the Denali Highway which carries the modern-day tourist out some 85 miles



from McKinley Park headquarters to the Wonder Lake ranger cabin. From near there, on a clear day, one is rewarded with one of America's superb mountain views.

Time and lateness of the season now began to plague the party. By the middle of August an early frost had nipped the grass, destroying much of its food value for the horses. They began to weaken just as their strength was most needed to traverse the bogs, permafrost, and down timber of the stunted interior *taiga*.

On August 15th the party reached the main valley of the Nenana. They worked their way upstream to the main fork, where they crossed to the east side—one of the most difficult crossings of the trip with water to the shoulders of all of the animals. At this place they had reached the most northerly point of the Eldridge survey of 1898, which had measured the height of Mt. McKinley. To avoid the swampy ground along the river floodplain, they climbed up the Yanert Fork of the Nenana to near its source and then struck northwestward along the line of low hills between the Nenana and Tanana Rivers. They found numerous old Indian camps along the way, marking this as a much-used route between the headwaters of the Susitana River and the Tanana—a route from Cook Inlet to the interior.

On August 24th they encountered the first human beings they had seen in nearly three months—a white man, accompanied by his two large pack dogs and a band of Indians. Brooks does not say anywhere who the white man was, although he characterized him as being on “one of those wild goose chases after gold which are so common in Alaska. [Brooks - 1903 - p. 466.]

Five days later, making use of some helpful directions supplied by the prospector and his Indian companions, Brooks, a few hours ahead of the horses and the remainder of the party, walked into the village of Tortella on the Tanana at the site of present-day Nenana. This lone stranger, materializing out of the forest, burdened with field glasses, geologists's pick, revolver and notebook caused consternation among the locals, who were accustomed to village entrances from the Tanana at their front door—in the interior most itinerants were river travelers.

The party lost no time in bargaining for a boat with which they towed one horse to the north side of the Tanana. The rest of the horses were then driven into the water and swam across. At this juncture the Tortella Indians pleaded with the party to not attempt the last 100 miles overland to Rampart. The one boy who knew some English expressed the concern of all, “Plenty water (swamp). Plenty stick (thick timber). No good! No good! . . . By and by come back. May-be-so.” [Brooks - 1903 - p. 467.]

The party had reached Tortella with 18 of the 20 horses with which they left Tyonek. The hundred miles or so to Rampart were covered in 16 days at a cost of seven more horses and incredible toil. All but the most

necessary parts of the outfit were abandoned. Loads were cut to about 50 pounds per horse. Rather than detour around the lowland of the Tolovana River, at the cost of 50 additional miles, they struck straight across it. It took eight days to cover the 30 miles of swamp, sluggish streams, and thick timber:

"It was a route beset with difficulties: now we were chopping our way through a dense tangle of small growth; now building corduroy over swamps and streams; now rafting rivers too wide to bridge. All worked with energy born of the consciousness that our provisions were getting low and it was only a matter of days before our horses would begin to play out. In one week we succeeded in rafting five rivers and built bridges over six more. More than once our temporary bridge gave way and then we had the heart-rending toil of dragging the poor weak animals up on the bank." [Brooks - 1903 - p. 468.]

Once across the Tolovana lowland they entered the low hill country which separated them from the Yukon River at Rampart. Now:

"The poor horses, even under the lightened loads, began to fail. Overtaking the pack train one day, I found Prindle and George laboring with Rabbit, who refused to take another step. Both were very fond of the little mare—always a pet with the party—and wanted to save her life. We worked with her awhile, but it was no use—her heart was broken; and drawing my revolver, I sent a bullet through the brain of the poor beast who had served us so well. After this a horse was shot nearly every day." [Brooks - 1903 - p. 468.]

On the morning of September 15 they packed for the last time. They abandoned the bulk of the outfit and fed the remaining flour to the horses. That night they camped in Rampart. The next morning, while they were cooking breakfast, the final river steamer before freeze-up whistled; and they scrambled aboard with their notes and specimens, leaving their uneaten breakfast on the fire.

With becoming brevity Brooks summarized the expedition as follows: "In 105 days the expedition had covered about 800 miles. During this time 94 camps had been made; between June 1 and September 15 the party had travelled every day except nine. Eleven out of the 20 horses reached Rampart." [Brooks - 1911 - p. 20.]

At this juncture Brooks should have added that the party had completed 6,000 square miles of actual topographic surveys and had thrown additional light on the geography, geology, and topography of about 20,000 square miles of the wildest terrain on the North American continent—a most fitting beginning for the indefatigable scientist who was to become known internationally as Brooks of Alaska.

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# Antique Cameras— Recorders of History

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If you were to ask a professional photographer something about the history of his chosen profession, he would probably answer by telling you about his first camera. He would know very little about photography before that time. My father was one of those old-time photographers, and working for him gave me a slight advantage. But I, too, knew nothing about the early and eventful years when the camera was capturing the attention of the world and, for the first time, history was being recorded by means of photographs.

In 1829, when Colorado was more noted for Mountain Men and Trappers, two Frenchmen by the names of Niepce and Daguerre signed a contract for a joint working arrangement to develop a photographic process. Limited success was already being achieved by others in England and France, and there was a general feeling that it was only a matter of time until a picture could be reproduced through some mechanical means. Much the same thing held true at Kitty Hawk, when the Wright brothers gave the world something that had been anticipated, and it likewise holds true in our present time with the development of solar energy.

Although his partner died in 1833, Daguerre at last achieved success in 1837, and promptly named the new process after himself by calling it "Daguerreotype." However, it was not announced to the public for another two years so that commercial exploitation of this remarkable invention could be arranged. In 1839, at a joint session of the Academies of Sciences and Fine Arts at the Institute de France, the announcement was made, and a grateful French government gave Daguerre, and the son of Niepce, lifetime pensions so that their photographic process could be given to the world.

At that time it took an ocean-going vessel thirty days to make the Atlantic crossing, and it is interesting to note that within 60 days of the announcement in France, an enterprising photographer was turning out Daguerreotypes in this country. This means that in 30 days he had built his own camera and processing equipment, trained himself, and set himself up in business.

The basic principle and design of the camera have not changed since that time. All cameras have two things in common—a lens, and a light-tight box that holds the lens. Hundreds of thousands of innovations and modifications have been introduced to make it a more efficient and specialized tool, but nothing has changed the basic concept.

It is the early days that have captured my interest. Those first cameras were greatly enhanced by the fine cabinetry of the day. French Provincial furniture was reaching its peak, and a generally fine quality of workmanship was to be found throughout Europe and England. It was a time when being an apprentice meant working from three to five years to learn a trade—without pay. Workmanship was never finer, and I often wonder if there isn't a lesson there somewhere.

The blending of wood, leather, brass and glass is a beautiful combination. No wonder it struck the imagination of so many "would-be" photographers. With this beautiful contraption one could express himself in many, many ways. Landscapes, still lifes, portraits, architecture—the possibilities were endless.

The Daguerreotype first came to Colorado in 1853—only fourteen years after introduction of the process. The photographer's name was Solomon N. Carvalho—a member of Fremont's expedition. It was his job to make photographic records as the explorers crossed the country. The Colorado gold rush soon followed in 1859, and within a year Central City boasted its own full-fledged photographer. Despite the exquisite beauty of the finished picture, however, the Daguerreotype suffered a serious disadvantage. Since no negative was involved, it could not be reproduced. If you wanted an extra copy you had to make an extra picture. Thus, when the wet plate process was introduced in the early 1850's, it offered great commercial potential. By working from a negative it was possible to make endless duplicate copies. It was the first Xerox process of the day.

The Daguerreotype reflects a kind of silvery image—sometimes you can see the picture, sometimes you cannot. It was made on a sheet of copper, silver plated and polished to a high degree, and then sensitized.

A young man by the name of William Henry Jackson settled in Denver in 1879. He had served more than a decade as an apprentice and active photographer, and was blessed with that rare combination of artistic background, natural talent, and energy. His keen eye recorded the most beautiful scenes to be found in Colorado. Many of these pictures would be impossible to recapture today because of what man, in his pursuit of advancement, has done to the landscape.

Being a scenic photographer in those days was a job for only the most dedicated. He had to transport such items as one or two cameras, tripods, a darkroom tent, collodion, silver nitrate, alcohol, developer, fixer, yards of flannel cloth, a box of glass cleaner, negative boxes, nitric acid, varnish, assorted bottles, developing and fixing trays and tanks, a scale, and many

sheets of glass. If he were fortunate enough to have easy access to the terrain, perhaps a horse-drawn wagon would do, but more often than not Jackson depended upon a couple of back-packed mules. Many of his glass plate negatives are now in custody of the Colorado State Historical Society, and a Jackson print today is considered a real collector's item.

No history of photography would be complete without a generous reference to the man who convinced many that "Camera" and "Kodak" were one and the same. Rochester, New York, was already a center of photographic manufacturing where, as a young man, George Eastman was working in a bank and moonlighting on the side by manufacturing his own brand of dry plates. He defied the phrase, "I never had a break." He MADE his breaks. He was a genius at selecting the cream of ideas from his employees, as well as from competitors, and applying them to his own products. He was ruthless in this pursuit, and many patent rights were purchased by him. In fact, to eliminate competition, whole companies were taken over by Kodak. A case in point was the little red window on the back of box and folding cameras. This simple feature permitted the user to set the film for the next exposure. After being turned down on purchasing the patent right, Eastman bought the factory.

His first box camera, manufactured in 1888, was an instant success, and incorporated his ideas of a small picture-taker that anyone could operate. It used flexible roll film and the Eastman-Walker roll holder to transport the film. It took 100 round pictures, 2½ inches in diameter. The camera full of exposed film was returned to Eastman for processing, the pictures were developed and printed, and the camera was reloaded and returned to the customer for a total price of \$10.00. The Eastman slogan, which was popular for many years, proclaimed, "You press the button, we do the rest." This was the simple kind of camera that appealed to the average person, and Kodak has never lost sight of that fact. They have always been after the mass market.

The original camera came in a hand-tooled leather case, beautifully done, and is referred to as the "Stringset Kodak," the reason being that you pulled a string, which cocked the shutter, and then snapped it by pressing a button on the side. It had a winding key for transporting the film (this was before the little red window). The round pictures, developed at the factory, came back mounted on a card; the \$10.00 cost in those days (we are talking about 1888-1889) was still a lot of money. Later Eastman came out with a Model 2, which took pictures 3½ inches in diameter.

Another milestone that was a little noted event took place in 1913, when two Germans—Oskar Barnack and Dr. Max Berek—joined forces to make the first of over one hundred prototype Leicas. These highly qualified men had been working at the Leitz factory, which at that time was involved with the manufacture of optical instruments. Because it was readily available, they decided on the use of 35-mm. motion picture film

with its perforated edges. Thus, the motion picture camera and projector became the parents of 35-mm. still photography. Little did they realize the impact their design would have on the world.

The first Leicas were sold starting in 1924. No other camera up to that time had so many innovations or such standards of quality. It was only natural that it would receive such universal acclaim. Today, the Leica is still the Rolls Royce of cameras, and is responsible for numerous collections and photographs that will forever remain a part of history. One little known anecdote was recently told to me by a Leica authority—our Posse Member Fred Mazzulla. The Leica served as a German secret weapon during World War I; through the use of aircraft, enemy movements were recorded.

The first Leica "A" models did not provide for interchangeable lenses; it had a shutter that went up to 1/500th of a second. It did not have a built-in rangefinder—you had to have a separate rangefinder as an accessory.

The entrance of the Leica marked the end of the old and the beginning of a new era. It proved, for many types of photography, that the large format camera was not essential. It couldn't begin to compete with the small "35's" for compactness and mobility. Hundreds of imitations of the Leica were short-lived, and today only a handful of quality manufacturers exist.

Now—how did all this come about? Let's examine some of the instruments and "contraptions" that have highlighted the development and history of photography. First, we have the:

*Camera Lucida.* It is actually no camera at all, but is an optical instrument with great significance in the history and use of the word "Camera." It was invented in 1807, and had a simple prism which could be mounted on a table. The artist could thereby view and copy whatever he saw, with some accuracy. The reason for including it in the discussion tonight is because of its name, "Camera Lucida," the word "Camera" being Latin, meaning a room, and for "Camera Obscura," a darkroom.

The *Camera Obscura* preceded the Camera Lucida as the first copying instrument to be used. I am still searching for an early one of these for my collection. It looked very much like a modern day camera. However, it was without a place for a plate holder, and had only a place to view on a ground glass, over which the image could be traced. The Camera Obscura was very popular; some were used right up to the early 1900's.

The *Nadar* is another very interesting and historically important camera that I have with me tonight. This box camera was made in France about 1888. It shows beautiful workmanship—everything is handmade, including the brass fittings, but they did have to depend upon a German lens for this camera. It has an intricate shutter system. The father of the manufacturer of this camera was a very, very prominent photographer in his day—during the Daguerreotype era and then later into the wet plate



era. He was noted also as having been the first to go up in a balloon and do aerial photography—back in 1858.

*Field and View Camera.* For the period up to the 1890's we have been talking about the fine quality of workmanship—something we just cannot seem to get any more. This beautiful old German view camera, made by Plauel in Dresden about 1890, has to be examined to see the way in which the brass trim and reinforcements are fitted and set into the woodwork. There is nothing slovenly about it—the screwheads all match, the bellows look and feel as if they had come out of the factory just yesterday. It certainly is a work of art, as well as a fine tool. It has a very unique shutter—a piece of complicated machinery which slips onto the barrel in front of the lens. It is a guillotine type. When you want to focus you open the shutter half way; then with another twist, and a squeeze of the rubber bulb, the thing snaps to make the exposure. The plate holders—for glass sheets 6½ by 8½ inches in size, by the way—also are works of art. The pride of workmanship they had in those days is something that is just beautiful to behold.

Here is another lovely view camera, built of wood. It never gained great popularity, but I want to show it to you because it is American made, dating from about 1900. It is a Korona triple extension, also for 6½- by 8½-inch size plates. It has a quality of delicate work that I have never seen before; to reproduce it today it would have to be done in metal. This intricate woodwork is fitted together so carefully you can go out with the extensions and bellows to quite a length. For a camera of such size it is really a featherweight, and it is truly remarkable that you could build such strength with such delicate workmanship.

*Tropical Camera.* By way of comparison, here is a 1926 German Tropical, made of teakwood. Much smaller in size than the view camera, this was made for climates where leather would normally mildew. In those hot, wet and humid tropical areas the outer leather coverings on cameras just wouldn't hold up; they would peel off the camera body. Granted, this is beautifully made, but you can see the decline in workmanship, which does not compare in quality with that of 25 or 30 years before. Tropicals are quite rare, and are considered highly collectible. Did the quality of workmanship in cameras decline after the turn of the century? As far as the woodwork—yes, but the metal work improved as techniques were refined.

*Detective or Spy Camera.* In the early days, when personal photography was beginning to achieve popularity, there was a phobia about cameras being inconspicuous. They called them, for that reason, Detective cameras, although Heaven only knows how they could keep them inconspicuous when many of them were so large. They were made in all shapes and sizes. The small ones were made to go in the head of a walking cane, in a lady's purse, concealed in a cravat, or hidden inside a hat. Even in the form of a revolver, but I don't know how you could be inconspicuous holding a revolver for taking a picture!

Detective cameras were really popular for the two decades of time between 1885 and 1905. They worked in devious ways. Let me unbutton my vest here. Now what you see is an 1886 Stirn Vest camera—suspended from a strap around the neck, with the lens peeping out through a buttonhole of my vest. It took a round glass plate. Each time you took a picture you turned it up a notch so that you were ready for the next shot.

Another spy camera, made in 1894, was the Pocket Watch Camera—with the size, shape and appearance of a large pocket watch. It took a glass plateholder which snapped into the back. After you took one exposure, you turned the holder around and snapped the other side.

*Non-functional Cameras.* There were all kinds of things made that were called “cameras,” and they came in all shapes and forms. These might appeal to those of you who have little interest in real cameras, or in the history of photography, for they are not for photographers. This one, though, could well be called “Photographer’s Relief.” Its appearance in the form of a typical collapsed folding camera, with which we are all so familiar, belies its real utility—it has a cork at the top, and it holds liquid! Very helpful in stress situations. And if you don’t like your liquor in bulk, here’s one that has a little shot glass that goes with it. Another one I have here, in the form of a miniature camera, actually is a cigarette lighter. And this box camera, of such familiar appearance, is a Bee Bee. But when you snap the shutter it doesn’t take a picture—it spits out beebie shot, one at a time. Non-functional cameras of this sort are a specialty of some collectors today.

*Magazine Camera.* In those days of long ago there were all kinds and means of taking pictures. As I said earlier, there were so many gadgets built into cameras that they were almost endless. This one is nothing more than a simple box camera, but it has a light-tight sleeve attached to the back where you can insert your hand, grab one plate, and put it in front of the next one. It carries a dozen plates and, unusual for a box camera, you can actually focus it. It has a limited focussing device here, and you can still take pictures on glass plates with this old style box camera. The vintage of this one dates around 1894-1896.

*Stereograph - Stereoscope.* Stereo in photography was a very big thing. The first stereo camera was made way back in 1856. However, stereo didn’t become really popular in the United States until about 1875 or so. Here is a No. 2 Kodak Box Stereo camera—very rare. We must remember that in the early days before the turn of the century—before radio and television—there was hardly any home parlor that didn’t have some kind of a stereo to show tissue-paper transparencies or photographs. It was the way people travelled in those days, in their imagination. They bought many, many stereo cards. Even if they didn’t take pictures themselves, they had something to show in their own home. Stereo cannot be overemphasized in the history of photography itself.

*Magic Lantern.* They had entertainment for the kiddies in those days,

too. They made childrens' lantern slides—their own little entertainment devices—for their own shows. Here is a beautiful example of one of these little magic lantern projection outfits—housed in a folding carrying box with a complete set of small, transparent glass slides mounted in holders along the sides. They even provided theater tickets so that admission could be charged to their home entertainments. The source of light? . A kerosene burner.

*Panoramic Camera.* Another camera that died a natural death was the Panoramic. This is a box camera that has a swinging lens; the picture covered an arc of almost half a circle. I don't believe they have been made since about 1928. They took amazingly good pictures, these panoramics. Now this is different than the Cirkut view camera, which used a tripod head with a circular gear meshed with integral clockwork gearing in the camera, thus allowing the whole camera to revolve. In this little box panoramic the camera is stationary and the lens turns.

A good many of the box panoramics used a "butterfly" shutter. You could control the speed of the lens sweep with any one of several fans, inserted in a receptacle on top. I'll be glad to show you how this works. The fans came in different sizes and weights so you could get any exposure you wanted with this camera. It used roll film which followed a curved surface in the back of the camera—the focal plane is always the same distance from the lens, providing edge-to-edge sharpness. A mask about a half inch wide at either end prevented exposure of the film until the lens started to turn.

*Rangefinder Camera.* One of the big milestones in cameras was this one. It looks like any ordinary Autographic folding Kodak that you have all seen at one time or another. Actually, though, it is a little more than that—it is called the "Autographic Special," and was introduced in 1916. It was the first camera that Kodak ever made, or that anyone ever made, that had a coupled rangefinder built into it so that you could focus with a greater degree of accuracy. That's what makes this one 'Special.' On a comparative basis, I would guess that for every 1,000 of the regular, conventional Autographic models made, only one of these was produced.

*Miniature Camera.* One of the smallest of the little box cameras was this one produced in the early 1900's by Premo, which was eventually taken over by Eastman, too. It's a solid little box, single shutter. Instead of a viewfinder it has two angled lines on top to aim the camera in the general direction of the subject for taking pictures.

*Flash Illumination.* Here is an early type of flashbulb that was quite reliable. Does anyone have a match? With this little magnesium ribbon holder you could pull out a strip of the metal, light it, wave it around while making a time exposure, and get a very good picture.

\*\*\*\*\*

Now it is time to bring this to a close. Collecting old photographic

items and bits of information connected with them is like hitching a ride on history. For me it has been a huge jigsaw puzzle that is piecing itself together little by little. However, mine is only a small part of the story. How about the Ghost Towns, the Trappers, the Indians, Scouts, Traders, Old Trails? I could go on and on. To know only one small bit of history is to know nothing. It is only through the loom of events that we get the true picture.

### *Addendum*

While the introductory material for this paper was prepared beforehand, the comments and information about the various cameras displayed by Bernie at our April meeting were given extemporaneously, and were tape recorded. The recording was transcribed by Posse Member Jackson Thode and is presented here essentially as dictated, but with some editing.

During the question and answer period after his talk, Bernie reminisced a bit regarding his early acquaintance with photography while working with his father:

"Way back in the '20's, when I was a kid in school, I used to follow my father around the studio helping out in my off time, and I know some of the sweat those old-time photographers went through. Emulsions were not uniform the way they are today, temperatures were anything but constant, and not even the chemistry was consistent. There were many, many reasons—there could have been a thousand reasons for it, believe me. My Dad started in 1914. In those days he might produce a whole batch of work one day, only to see the work turn color the next, or get spots on the emulsion.

"Kodak had their technical representatives out on the road all the time. You would call them in and they would stay with you as much as three or four days. They were as concerned about the problems and difficulties as you were, and wanted to get the emulsion number of that batch of sensitized material and wire it into the factory so that it could all be called back. They had all kinds of headaches!

"Today, the quality control of materials is unbelievable. It isn't enough that they have exacting measuring devices; they even go at it from the standpoint of structure, examining it through a microscope to make sure the structure is the same from one batch to the next."



## GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



**A Political History of the Cherokee Nation 1838-1907**, by Morris L. Wardell, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, Copyright 1938, 1977. \$12.50.

Dr. Wardell's book was first published in 1938 and has now been reissued so that its contents may be placed in the hands of more of us who are interested in the American Indian.

This book is Volume 17 in the *Civilization of the American Indian Series* and tells the story of the Cherokees' endeavor to create a new government—that of the Cherokee Nation.

In detail, and with documentation, the account of the Cherokee Civil War of the 1840's is told. The reader is able to follow the moves and thinking of both the John Ross and the Major Ridge factions. Wardell shows how both groups introduced material, that was not only prejudicial but highly biased, into the "official records."

For those interested in the Civil War and Reconstruction there is a wealth of fascinating information. The schism within the Cherokee Nation was similar in so many ways with that which occurred in the rest of the nation. A majority of the Cherokees sympathized with the Union, but this fact was not taken cognizance of until the war was well under way.

Stand Watie, chief of the Confederate Cherokees, was the most highly respected and aggressive of all the Indian leaders of the Civil War. He served as leader, both civilly and militarily, of the Confederate Cherokees.

Reconstruction in the Cherokee Nation was in many ways similar to that in any of the seceded states. The fact that freed slaves and free Negroes were declared citizens and given the franchise by the Treaty of 1866 was termed by Southern Cherokees as the "Dark Treaty."

It appears that nothing could be done by the Indians that would stop the steady, though gradual, dissolution of their tribal government. For nearly 75 years the Cherokee Nation had fought divisions within; wars, both within and without and political struggles locally and nationally. Finally

they succumbed to the inevitable advance of a larger Union of American states.

Ross V. Miller, P.M.



**The Katy Railroad and the Last Frontier** by V. V. Masterson, foreword by Donovan L. Hofsommer, published by the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, First Edition, Third Printing 1978, 312 pp., 32 illustrations, 13 maps, hardbound, \$9.95.

This railroad historical volume had its first edition in 1952: this is its third printing (1978).

The Katy Railroad, originally incorporated as the Union Pacific Railway, Southern Branch had its beginning on September 20, 1865. The Union Pacific, Eastern Division and the Union Pacific of Nebraska were other railroads of this period. The Union Pacific, Eastern Division, later known as the Kansas Pacific, was a competitor of the Katy Railroad for part of Kansas railroad building lands. The Katy Railroad, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, was shortened to the K and T Railroad and finally to the Katy Railroad.

This is the story of building this railroad from Missouri to the Gulf. The exciting race to Indian territory against the Border Tier Railroad to the Indian territory border for a government promised prize of 3,100,000 acre land grant, which was never paid because it belonged to the Indians, was one of the high-lights of this saga.

The writing of the history of the Katy's 3,200 mile building of first class railroad with all of its intrigue, battles, hardships and the manipulations of Robber Baron Jay Gould is truly a fascinating story in great detail.

Masterson had all of the intimate records of the company files to use as a starter. He finally scrutinized 32 newspapers and 60 books to obtain material for this *extraordinary* volume of a western railroad, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad.

I readily understand why this is the book's third printing. It is a must for railroad enthusiasts, historical societies, libraries, and anyone interested in history. I really enjoy reading it!

Richard R. Ronzio, PM

**Dust to Dust: Obituaries of the Gun-fighters**, compiled by Jerry J. Gaddy, Presidio Press, San Rafael, and Old Army Press, Fort Collins, 1977, 160 pages. \$11.95.

If you are hooked on outlaw lore you gotta get a copy of this book, which is admirable in its stark simplicity. It consists entirely of contemporary newspaper accounts of the deaths of about 20 bad men and one bad woman, whether by lead poisoning, hanging, or just plain old age. Significantly, the only two in the latter category are Doc Holliday, who died peacefully of pneumonia at Glenwood Springs, and Cole Younger, survivor of the Northfield, Minnesota bank robbery shoot-out, who lived to be 72. Younger, like the legendary James boys, thought of himself as a Robin Hood, his homicidal career justified by civil injustices suffered by his pa and ma.

There is no introduction, no foot-notes, and no effort to fill in the voids in the flamboyant news columns. It seems, for example, that the brazen Belle Starr, who "could knock a bumble bee off a thistle at thirty yards," was herself murdered, but when, how, and by whom we are not informed.

Since the book is dedicated to the compiler's father, name of Jesse James Gaddy, we are left to infer that the Gaddys may have been descendants of the immortal Jesse. At any rate the compiler went to a lot of pains to gather his material. This is a smorgasbord of violence and retribution which has the piquant flavor of period journalism, and the ambivalent public attitudes toward outlaws, who were perceived as half heroes and half vicious scum.

The most prolific contributor is the editor of the *Fort Smith Weekly Elevator*, who graphically describes the execution of Cherokee Bill and the infamous Buck gang, likewise the undoing of Bill Doolin by a posse led by Heck Thomas. ("They did a praiseworthy act when they put out his lights.") The *Great County Herald* fills us in on just how Pat Garrett terminated the career of that "young monster," Billy the Kid. The *Galveston Daily News* tells us that 4,000 citizens observed the elongation by hanging of one Bill Longley. An El Paso reporter covers the shooting of John Wesley

Hardin by Constable John Sellman in a classic duel.

While the *Tombstone Epitaph's* account of the fight at the OK Corral may be the most famous job of reporting in this collection, surely the most poignant is to be found in the *Coffeyville Journal*, re events of 1892, "one of the most remarkable occasions of the age," when the extermination of 4 members of the Dalton gang was equalized by the simultaneous demise of 4 brave citizens, with a grand funeral for all.

Merill J. Mattes, P.M.



**Bugles, Banners and War Bonnets**, from Fort Riley to the Little Big Horn. A study of Lt. Col. George A. Custer's 7th Cavalry, the soldiers, their weapons and equipment. By Earnest L. Reedstrom. Edited by Don Russell. The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho, 1977. \$17.95.

What? Not another book about Custer? Afraid so, and it is a beauty! And it isn't just about Custer—it is about the 7th Cavalry, from the time it was organized in 1866 through the next ten years—less than half of the 348 pages. The rest is devoted to Civil War Uniforms, Army Morale and Frontier Life, Cavalry Tactical Manuals, Rhyming Rules of Horsemanship, Accouterments and Basic Weapons, a Uniform Change-over, and The Red Man. There are hundreds of photographs and illustrations, charts, etc.

Bound in the sky-blue of cavalry pants, the book contains the contributions of numbers of Westerners—Don Russell, Dr. Frost, and others. Author-artist Reedstrom has readily put it all together in this big, beautiful volume—everything from a photograph of a nude Kiowa girl to instructions in Indian sign language. Careful readers will even learn who succeeded Custer as Lieutenant Colonel of the 7th Cavalry after June 25, 1876. Give up? Elmer Otis, of course.

Large, easy-to-read type, and double columned pages combine with the contents to make this an outstanding book to own, to read, refer to, and enjoy.

W. H. Van Duzer, P.M.

**Indian Life: Transforming an American Myth**, Edited and with an Introduction by William W. Savage, Jr., 286 pages, University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, hardback, \$9.95.

This book belongs to the body of work which, during the past few decades, has been systematically examining the white man's "perception" of the environment and non-white culture. It focuses here on the period of western exploration and settlement. This school of historical interpretation holds that what the white man thought the West was like, what he "perceived" it to be, became more important in setting policy, trends, and channels of social, political, and economic development, than did the unvarnished actuality. James's, Long's, and Pike's promulgation of the myth of the "Great American Desert" did more to shape settlement patterns in the Great Plains, than did all of the weather reporting since. Later, the equally false myth that "moisture follows the plow" had a comparably strong but opposite effect on the farming settlement of the same region.

Savage, in a 13 page editor's introduction, traces the evolution of the image which the Indian conjured up in the popular mind during most of American history. It begins with the first European response of Columbus—an ambiguous one—and ends with the modern "perception" of Indians who are unasimilated, still misunderstood, still non-utilitarian.

The body of the book consists of thirteen excerpts from the writings of thirteen different authors, dated between 1877 and 1914. The writings are as diverse as are their authors, most of whom enjoyed a wide readership as well as being opinion-makers. Each author had acquired a knowledge of Indian life from one or more of a number of differing encounters: from brief journalistic contact, as had, for example, Richard Harding Davis; through long academic and artistic association, as with Helen Hunt Jackson; marrying into the tribe, as James Willard Schultz did among the Blackfoot; from long military and official governmental association, as did Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, once aide-de-camp to General William Tecumseh Sherman; or the perceptive observations of a cowboy on a trail drive, as recorded by Andy Adams.

cowboy on a trail drive, as recorded by Andy Adams.

Each excerpt is introduced by the editor with a thumbnail sketch of the author and a quote from the piece which characterizes the author's perception of Indian character.

The book loses some breadth of scope by confining the articles and the photographic illustrations, which are from the collections of the Western history archives of the University of Oklahoma, to Indians of the Great Plains.

In sum, this book examines the white man's "perception" of Plains Indian culture during the half century or so that the settlement process was pushing aside the Indian to make way for transportation routes, the range cattle industry, the plow, and barbed wire fencing. It steers an even-handed course between the Wild West Show and Hollywood on one side and *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* on the other. It is *must* reading for anyone who aspires to understand the cultural impact which distinguished the settling of the West, engendering many problems which are still unresolved.

Mel Griffiths, P.M.



**Goodbye To a River**, by John Graves, 306 pages, Illustrated, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln & London, paperback, \$3.50

This book is a narrative about a three-week trip down a two-hundred-mile stretch of the Brazos River in Texas and celebrates the author's nostalgic return to scenes of his boyhood expeditions. He weaves Comanche and Pioneer Lore into observations on a changing modern landscape and its animal and human dwellers.

His only passenger is a six-month old dachshund named oddly enough Passenger. At times this book is so dull it's all you can do to keep reading and turning the pages. At other times when he is relating the Brazos history of the Comanches and the early day settlers along the river one finds it hard to lay the book down.

The book is reminiscent of Thoreau's "A Week on the Concord & Merrimack Rivers," but is wholly modern in style and completely in flavor Texan.

Donald C. Chamberlin, P.M.

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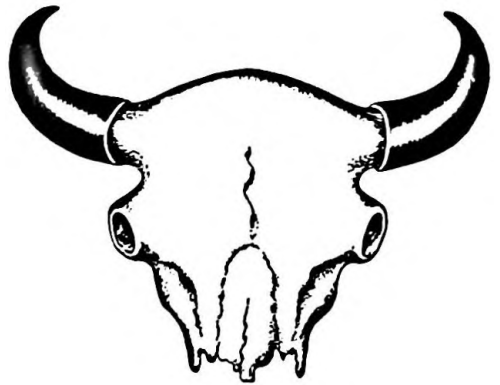


*The* DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

MAY-JUNE 1978

VOLUME XXXIV No. 3



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by

**Erwin N. Thompson**

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DENVER CORRAL  
OF WESTERNERS  
1978**

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## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

Vol. XXXIV

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## OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

In nearly every issue of the Roundup it is my sad duty to inform the posse of the passing of a fellow Westerner; this issue is no exception. This past June former posse member Ed Bemis passed on to the endless trail. Ed Bemis was one of the founders and charter members of this posse. As a community leader, publisher, editor and gentleman his stature was unsurpassed. It was the pleasure of this editor to know Mr. Bemis and to hear his talk, at length, without notes, on early Littleton and Denver.

Contributions of Mr. Bemis, to this Posse and western history will long be remembered.

There have been many requests for a published list of the members of the Denver Westerners Corral. Herein you will find a list of all the current cowpokes, wranglers, ranrods, drifters, saddle tramps, sheriffs, in-laws and out-laws. Keep this list for your reference and bring a friend into the posse at the next meeting.

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR CARDS FOR YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THE CHUCK WRANGLER CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE DENVER PRESS CLUB.**

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# FORT YELLOWSTONE

by Erwin Thompson, C.M.

Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners  
May 24, 1978

On March 1, 1872, President U.S. Grant signed the bill that created America's, indeed the world's, first national park—the Yellowstone. This new park was placed under the control of the Secretary of the Interior. However, in its wisdom, the U.S. Congress failed to pass any appropriation for the management of the area.

Two months later, Nathaniel P. Langford accepted the first superintendency of the park, without salary. During the five years he held this position, Langford visited the park on a couple of occasions. One of these occurred in 1872, when he visited Mammoth Hot Springs. There he found James McCartney running his hotel, which was a one-story log cabin measuring 25 by 35 feet, and having an earthen roof. The Hot Springs had about 300 visitors that year, many of them coming because of their rheumatism and other aches and pains.

Of course, being without funds, Langford was powerless to either develop or protect the park and its resources. It is also possible that he was not much interested either. At any rate, visitors kept themselves busy by chopping off mineral deposits from the hot springs, shot at animals and birds indiscriminately for sport, and set forest fires. An army engineer, Capt. William Ludow, visited the park in 1875 and became so alarmed at the lack of protection of its resources that he recommended the stationing of army troops there and the transfer of the park to the War Department. But the captain was a little ahead of the times.

In 1877 Langford was replaced as superintendent by a colorful character, Philetus W. Norris. The next year, Yellowstone got its first appropriation—\$10,000, and Norris set out with a will to improve matters. In addition to constructing roads, if they may be called that, he erected the park's first government buildings. On Capitol Hill at Mammoth Hot Springs, Norris constructed a rather romantic blockhouse.

Perhaps mindful that the Nez Perces had marched through the Yellowstone country only two years earlier, Norris built his headquarters in a substantial manner. The two-story log building measured 40 by 18 feet. Leantos stood on three sides. On top of the roof stood an 8-foot-high

turret, or gunroom, with rifle loopholes on all of its eight sides. Through the middle of the entire structure there arose a 53-foot high flagstaff from which flew the Stars and Stripes in Mammoth's brisk breezes. Historic preservation not being highly developed at the time, this first national park structure was demolished in 1915. But traces of its existence still remain atop Capitol Hill, including the base of that glorious flagstaff.

If Norris was anything, he was energetic. And such measures as he tried to carry out to keep Yellowstone as a national park, made him many enemies. He was replaced as superintendent in 1882. Before leaving Norris, and his dramatic buckskins, another of his characteristics might be noted. He loved his name and he loved attaching it to things. One early visitor recorded this bit of egotism.

Take the Norris wagon road and follow down the Norris fork of the Firehold River to the Norris Canyon of the Norris Obsidian Mountain; then go on to Mount Norris, on the summit of which you will find Monument Park, the Norris Blowout, and at its northerly base the Norris Basin and Park. Further on you will come to the Norris Geyser plateau, and must not fail to see Geyser Norris. The Norris Falls of the Gibbon are worth a visit. The next point of interest is the Gibbon half a day's ride from the Norris Hot Springs.

Bad times fell upon the Yellowstone after Norris was forced from office. Succeeding superintendents were political hacks. The first of these, Patrick Henry Conger, brother to a U.S. Senator from Iowa, was a weak, inefficient, and cowardly man. During his regime, monopolies gained control of the park's growing facilities. His successor, Robert Carpenter, was even more unfit for the position. Also the brother of an Iowan politician, Carpenter looked upon Yellowstone as an instrument of profit for those who were shrewd enough to grasp the opportunity.

The fifth and last pre-army superintendent of Yellowstone was David Wear from Missouri. Although capable and honest, he came to the Yellowstone too late to undo the evil of his predecessors. An angry Congress settled the matter in 1886 by refusing to authorize any money for the park. The Secretary of the Interior was forced to ask the Army for troops for Yellowstone's continued protection. The War Department agreed. For the next 30 years, army officers assigned to the park wore two hats: that of commanding officer of the post and that of acting superintendent of Yellowstone.

On August 17, 1886, Capt. Moses Harris and his Troop M, 1st Cavalry, arrived at Mammoth Hot Springs from Fort Custer, Montana Territory. The cavalrymen immediately pitched camp at the foot of the hot springs terraces.

Forest fires, deliberately and innocently set by enemies and visitors, greeted Harris. The captain promptly issued orders to his command for the management of the park. These rules included a prohibition on cutting timber, damaging the mineral deposits, hunting and trapping, and the sale of liquor except at the hotels. This was strange work for soldiers and Harris directed them to be civil while enforcing the regulations: "They will in the enforcement of their orders conduct themselves in a courteous and polite, but firm and decided manner."

Almost immediately the soldiers came under criticism; but most of these charges were made by people whose illegal activities in the park were now being threatened.

By September, Camp Sheridan, a temporary post, was taking shape at the bottom of Capitol Hill and east of the hot springs. The buildings were typical of any frontier post: barracks, storehouse, stables, guardhouse, headquarters, hospital, and officers' quarters. All were frame and completed at the least possible expense. The detachments in the different parts of the park returned to Mammoth for the winter of 1886-87, one of the worst in the northern plains for many a year.

During that winter Lt. Frederick Schwatka, U.S. Cavalry, already well known for his adventures in Alaska and the Yukon Territory, undertook a ski expedition through the park. After reaching Norris, Schwatka took ill and was forced to give up. The expedition continued, under great difficulties, and reached the Grand Canyon, then back to Mammoth, more dead than alive. With the party was the pioneer photographer, Frank Haynes, who photographed the majesty of a Yellowstone winter.

In the late winter, 1887, Captain Harris dispatched a patrol to Norris Geyser Basin, where it apprehended and arrested a poacher, William James. Harris had only the authority to expel James from the park, which he did. But the proof was now evident that poachers were no longer secure in the back country winters to do their wont. The Army soon developed a system of winter patrols throughout the park, a practice that is still carried out today.

Like so many other temporary posts, Camp Sheridan far outlived what might be considered a normal life span. Even when Fort Yellowstone was founded in 1891, the camp lived on. From 1892 to 1897 it housed the additional cavalry troop that had been assigned to the park. Also, the U.S. Engineer Officer assigned to Yellowstone made use of a number of its buildings until he got his own in 1902. Still later the quartermaster pack train was established there. Not until 1915 were the dilapidated structures removed. The commanding officer then writing, "thereby greatly improving the appearance of the landscape at that point."

While Camp Sheridan was still park and post headquarters, two other commanders followed Captain Harris, Capt. F.A. Boutelle, and Capt. George S. Anderson. Boutelle, who as a young lieutenant had fired the first

shot of the Modoc War in the Lava Beds of northern California, had a rather short tour of duty at Yellowstone. Always outspoken and somewhat vain, he did not hesitate to criticize the Interior Department for any deficiencies he noted. The Secretary of the Interior soon let it be known that a replacement for Boutelle would be welcome.

Before he departed, Captain Boutelle had a number of cabins constructed in the remote sections of the park to provide shelter to the winter patrols. Some of these Snowshoe Cabins, as they came to be called, remain standing. Others have been added over the years.

Also, several Soldier Stations were constructed in critical areas of the park. Here, a detachment of soldiers, usually under a junior officer or a sergeant, would make its headquarters during the summer season. From here it would daily patrol the geyser basins, protect visitors, answer questions, fight forest fires, and carry out all the mundane duties assigned to today's ranger. One of the first of these Soldier Stations is that at Norris Geyser Basin today. Designed by the same architect who planned Old Faithful Inn, Robert Reamer, it has recently been restored by the NPS. It should be noted that this handsome structure came to be because two dissatisfied privates had set fire to an earlier soldier station at the same site.

In February 1890, the Secretary of War, having concluded that the troops assigned duty at Yellowstone required a permanent post, submitted to Congress an estimate of \$50,000 for the work. Construction of Fort Yellowstone, as it was named, began in April 1891. Troop I of the 6th Cavalry moved into the handsome frame quarters in November of that year. Located on the eastern side of the great and ancient terrace of Mammoth Hot Springs, the first buildings consisted of two duplex officers' quarters, a barracks, guardhouse, administrative building, commissary storehouse, quartermaster storehouse, granary, bakery, stables, noncommissioned staff officers' quarters, and a root house.

In 1897, Fort Yellowstone was doubled in size to become a two-company post. The commanding officer at this time was Col. Samuel B. M. Young, whom we will note again. For now, he let the contracts for two more double officers' quarters, a barracks, a stable and two more NCO quarters. The new buildings were generally of the same style of architecture as those of 1891.

The Spanish-American War caused a rapid turnover in troop units and commanding officers. No one spent enough time in the huge park to become well acquainted with its management problems. Stability returned in 1901 with the arrival of Capt. John Pitcher, 1st Cavalry. He would be acting superintendent for six years.

Fort Yellowstone during these years was known throughout the Army as a comfortable place to be assigned. It was much more pleasant than duty on the hot, dusty plains or in the deserts of the Southwest despite its snowbound winters.

Pitcher set out to improve the appearance of the post. The open area between officers' row and the hot springs, which was considered to be the parade ground, was a dusty, white, level of sand, formed by the mineral springs. Pitcher had the area covered with manure from the cavalry stables, installed a system of irrigation ditches, and seeded the ground, transforming it into the grassy meadow that it still is.

Lt. Hiram M. Chittenden, U.S. Corps of Engineers, was first assigned to Yellowstone in 1891. He was responsible for the development of roads and bridges within the park and was completely independent of the commanding officer. While Chittenden possessed a strong personality and was highly skilled in his profession, he believed in cooperating with the local authorities. On this first assignment he spent two summers in the park, 1891 and 1892, and took an interest in the construction of the new fort.

Chittenden, now a captain, returned to Yellowstone in 1899. He supervised the construction of a fine new reservoir near old Camp Sheridan that provided the power for a hydroelectric plant. Street lights soon appeared at the fort.

Not being a part of the Fort Yellowstone staff, Chittenden could claim neither quarters nor an office as a matter of right. In 1902 he sought and obtained appropriations for his own buildings. He located these north of the fort and still standing is the handsome, stone U.S. Engineer's Office, known locally as the Pagoda, for its distinctive architectural style.

On the eve of President Theodore Roosevelt's visit to Yellowstone in 1903, Chittenden constructed a stone arch at the Gardiner entrance to the park, a short distance north of the fort. At the conclusion of his visit, Roosevelt laid the cornerstone for the arch, which still stands and is often called the Roosevelt Arch.

By the early 1900s, Fort Yellowstone had taken on the appearance of a busy but pleasant village. Its rougher edges had been softened by the grass that now grew on the plateau and the shade trees that framed the well-kept structures. All who lived there or visited were favorably impressed. Pitcher wrote, "this is one of the most neatly built and attractive-looking posts in the country."

In 1907, Samuel Young returned to Yellowstone. Much had happened to him since he had last been at the park. He was now a lieutenant general, U.S. Army, retired, and had recently been the first modern Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. Young remained at Yellowstone for seventeen months. He had returned at the behest of President Roosevelt who had asked him to investigate the matter of returning the park to civil control. He came up with a plan for establishing a Park Guard with himself as civilian superintendent. However, his scheme was premature by nine years.

Because of his peculiar status, Young, like Chittenden, was not entitled to quarters at the fort. Consequently he rented rooms at the nearby Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel. On the other hand, he did not cost the Army

any money. His salary was his retirement pay. As he put it: "My work is simply a labor of love." Love was indeed on Widower Young's mind. At this time he met and married the widow of Silas S. Huntley, the late general manager of the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company.

With the completion of a railroad to the very entrance to the park, at Gardiner, in 1902, visitation increased greatly. Soon the commanding officers were requesting a doubling of the garrison of the fort from two to four companies. Finally, in 1908, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of War, and the U.S. Congress agreed to the increase.

The new buildings at the fort would be handsome structures built of stone. Captain Pitcher had argued that the new construction be most substantial. "This post," he said, "is seen and visited by many distinguished people from all over the world, and for this reason if for none other it should be a model post in every way." An inspector general agreed: "It is respectfully submitted that at this station, the one which is probably seen by more foreigners than any other, save, perhaps, West Point, a more dignified shelter for the troops . . . would be in better keeping."

The 1908 plans called for substantial, masonry structures. They included a residence for a field-grade officer, a duplex officers' quarters for captains, a huge three-story double barracks for two troops, a bachelor officers' quarters having a club, and a long "double" stable. By September over 200 civilian workmen were employed in the construction.

In the next few years, further improvements were made at the four-company post. Included in these were a new hospital (1909), a new guardhouse (1911) and a handsome stone chapel (1913). All these structures, new and old, safely survived the earthquake of 1959.

Park visitors were truly impressed, just as Pitcher had foreseen: A young lady wrote:

As one enters the Springs it seems like going into a little city. There are well cared for streets and lawns, a number of pretty bungalows, and several more pretentious houses; most of them are the residences of officers, for this is known as Fort Yellowstone, in army circles. I am told that there are about two hundred cavalymen located here. The commanding officer is the superintendent of the Park but is under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior.

The headquarters of the U.S. Commissioner is also here, as also are the Weather Bureau and the Engineer's Office . . . a handsome hospital and church are in construction.

The conduct of the soldiers as guardians of a national park was a matter of endless discussion over the years. Rudyard Kipling, on a visit to Yel-



lowstone, thought their uniforms definitely lacked spit and polish. He admitted, however, that American officers valued their men, whereas English officers set store on their horses.

Aubrey Haines tells the story of how one soldier enforced the rules when the culprit was an Englishman from the nobility:

The soldier on duty had warned him once. Even a second time the soldier asked him to desist. The third time, he collared the Englishman and started for the guardhouse. "I'll say old boy, you can't do this to me," objected the Englishman, "I'm a Count, I'm a Count." "I don't give a damn," said the soldier, "you only count one here."

Frederic Remington discovered that the troopers liked their rough life in the backcountry of the Yellowstone and that they willingly volunteered for outpost duty.

General Young was not impressed with the Army's role as park guardian. He wrote that the officers' assignments to Yellowstone were too short for them to get well acquainted with the park. As for the enlisted men, "assignment to Fort Yellowstone means only a change of posts; he soon learns the grand tour and how to cut a dash on the parkways and finished drives; he is a fine figure in a fine setting, but he neither knows or cares where the changing chances of his soldiery may take him any day."

In many ways Fort Yellowstone was a typical army post. Founded when the Indian wars had at last come to a close, it witnessed the transitions that occurred as the Army emerged from its frontier isolation to fight the Spanish-American War in Cuba and the Philippines, to be sent overseas in increasing numbers as the United States enlarged its role as a world power, and, at the end of the post's existence, to fight in France in World War I. When the Army came to Yellowstone, the most advanced means of transportation was the cavalry horse. Before the Army left the park, a soldier printed in large letters in the headquarters register that AUTOMOBILES were allowed (1915).

The troops pulled guard duty, kitchen police, target practice, and patrols (both mounted and skiiis). Reveille and retreat, stable call and inspections, all followed one another in the same sequence as at other posts.

In other ways, Fort Yellowstone was not at all typical. Its basic function was to administer and protect a national park, a far cry from a cavalry charge. Soldiers found themselves pursuing poachers, fighting forest fires, and interpreting the wonders of nature to pretty maidens. Those officers assigned to the dual positions of post commander and acting superintendent found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. The nature of the responsibilities forbade the training of their men in the arts of war. Dispersed over the park in small detachments during the summer and

snowbound at Mammoth during the winter, the troops could only rarely partake in drill, maneuvers, target practice, and the training marches of their profession. This situation caused constant worry to the officers whose *raison d' etre* was to soldier and to lead soldiers.

Nonetheless, the officers and men selected for duty at Fort Yellowstone did, to a remarkable degree, perform their strange duties with dedication and perseverance. They forged many of the guidelines that the National Park Service was to carry on in later years. They learned by trial and error when there were few waysigns to follow.

In 1916, the Secretary of War returned the administration of Yellowstone National Park to the Secretary of the Interior. That same year the National Park Service was created.

The commander of Fort Yellowstone, Maj. Lloyd M. Brett, 1st Cavalry, made his last entry in the Post Returns: "Post Officially abandoned October 26, 1916." It may have been Brett who wrote in a report to the Interior Department that the Army's "duties have been well and creditably performed, and the 30 years of military control will be memorable ones in the history of the Yellowstone National Park."

#### *Bibliographical Note*

This paper on Fort Yellowstone is based primarily on two studies: my own research as it appears in David G. Battle and Erwin N. Thompson, *Fort Yellowstone, Yellowstone National Park, Historic Structure Report*, National Park Service, 1972; and Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story*, 2 vols., Colorado Associated University Press, 1977. Grateful acknowledgement is made to Mr. Haine's work, which is the definitive history of the Yellowstone.

## APPENDIX

### Commanding Officers and Units at Fort Yellowstone

#### *Post Commanders and Acting Superintendents*

(This list does not include officers who acted in these positions when the commanding officer was absent from the post.)

Capt. Moses Harris, 5th Cavalry, Aug. 20, 1886-May 31, 1889.

Capt. Frazier A. Boutelle, 1st Cavalry, June 1, 1889-Feb. 14, 1890.  
(Boutelle actually left Dec. 19, 1889. During the interim an infantry officer, 1st Lt. John McMartin, 25th Infantry, was in charge for two weeks—the only infantryman to do so.)

Capt. George S. Anderson, 6th Cavalry, Feb. 15, 1891-ca. June 22, 1897.  
 Col. S.B.M. Young, 3d Cavalry, June 23, 1897-May 18, 1898. (Actually left park in Nov. 1897.)  
 Capt. James B. Erwin, 4th Cavalry, May 19, 1898-May 27, 1899.  
 Capt. Wilbur E. Wilder, 4th Cavalry, May 28, 1899-June 22, 1899.  
 Capt. Oscar J. Brown, 1st Cavalry, June 23, 2899-July 23, 1900.  
 Capt. George W. Goode, 1st Cavalry, July 24, 1900-May 7, 1901.  
 Capt. John Pitcher, 1st Cavalry, May 8, 1901-May 13, 1907. (Pitcher promoted to major, Jan. 1902.)

*Acting Superintendent (only)*

Lt. Gen. S.B.M. Young, Retired, May 14, 1907-Oct. 27, 1908

*Post Commander (only)*

Maj. John Pitcher, 1st Cavalry, May 14, 1907- July 1907.  
 Maj. Henry T. Allen, 8th Cavalry, July 1907-Oct. 27, 1908.

*Post Commander and Acting Superintendent*

Maj. Henry T. Allen, 8th Cavalry, Oct. 28, 1908-Nov. 20, 1908.  
 Maj. Harry C. Benson, 5th Cavalry, Nov. 21, 1908-Sept. 29, 1910.  
 Maj. Lloyd M. Brett, 1st Cavalry, Sept. 30, 1910-Oct. 26, 1916.

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Maj. Edmund M. Leary, 7th Cavalry, July 1, 1917-1918.

*Army Units Stationed in Park*

(Permanently or on summer duty. List does not include units that passed through park on training marches.)

1st Cavalry—Troops A, E, F, G, H, K, and M, and Machine Gun Platoon of Second Squadron.  
 3d Cavalry—Troops A, B, C, D, and F.  
 4th Cavalry—Troops D and H.  
 5th Cavalry—Troops E, F, and G.  
 6th Cavalry—Troops D, I, and K.  
 7th Cavalry—Troops unknown.  
 8th Cavalry—Troops E, F, G, and H.  
 13th Cavalry—Troops A and C.  
 Cavalry Troop 1 (provisional)  
 Cavalry Troop 2 (Provisional)  
 22d Infantry—Detachment from several companies.

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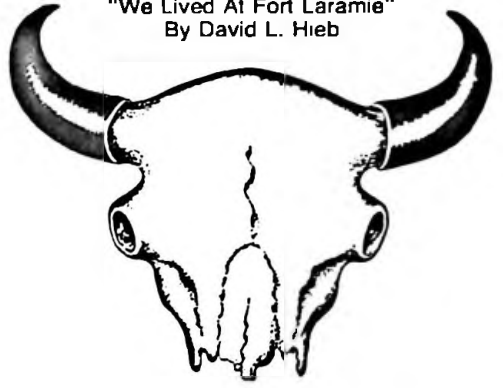
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Dwellings Association  
By David Hartman  
"We Lived At Fort Laramie"  
By David L. Hieb



The old trapper.

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

- NOV. 22 Crestone Colorado,  
by Ralph Livingston  
DEC. 13 Mountain Man's Christmas  
by Wm. (Bill) Rodgers  
— Ladies Nite —

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

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## OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

The publications committee has brought the following message to my attention: Brand Books make excellent gifts for Christmas or any other time. We have the following volumes for sale at \$15.00. Vol. 21, Editor: Arthur Campa; Vol. 27, Editor: David Hicks; Vol. 28, Editor: Ed Bathke; Vol. 29, Editor: Bob Mutchler, and at \$23.50 The combined Vols. of 30-31 edited by Alan Stewart and L. Coulson Hageman.

The committee is also attempting to publish three additional volumes within the next fourteen months. If you have material suitable for publication please sent it to Eugene Rokasnik, Roundup Editor, 3434 South Ouray Way, Aurora, Colorado, 80013.

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# THE COLORADO CLIFF DWELLINGS ASSOCIATION

by David L. Hartman, P.M.

Presented to The Denver Posse of Westerners, June 28, 1978

The Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association was a group active from 1900 to 1930 which lobbied very actively for the commissioning of Montezuma Reserve, also known as Cliff Dweller Park, and, for a few years now, as Mesa Verde National Park. The story of the CCDA centers around one woman, Mary Virginia Donaghe McClurg.

Under the guidance of Mrs. McClurg the CCDA supported a lobbying campaign of letter-writing, speeches, publications, stereo-opticon presentations and on-site protection for the ruins of the Mesa Verde by leasing the land from the Utes on which the ruins stood in 1901. The initial goal of the CCDA was to gain a park status to protect the ruins found there.

How Mrs. McClurg came to know of the Indian ruins of the Mesa Verde is unknown to me, but she did journey there in 1882, taking the train to Durango from Colorado Springs through Alamosa and then riding a freight wagon to Mancos, paying for freighter passage by weight. She could not have known of the major ruins high in the Canons of the Mesa, they were yet to be discovered by Al and Richard Wetherill and Charles Mason in 1888, '89 and '90. One ruin they did not discover was the Brown Stone Front, or Balcony Front, known today as Balcony House. The discovery was made by Cassius Viets, a member of an exploring party organized by Mrs. McClurg in October, 1886. Obviously the purpose of this trip was to collect "relics". An interesting note here is the stated purpose of the Cliff Dwellings Association, to protect and preserve the Ruins and their Artifacts! But that came about a few years later.

Mrs. McClurg was the principal behind much of the interest in the ruins, creating interest that brought relic-hunters whom she so despised. For instance, H. Jay Smith, a flamboyant entrepreneur of the day, learned of the ruins from Mrs. McClurg. She was enough of a radical to seek unusual causes—lecturing for Women's Suffrage at the Unity Church in Denver in 1894. In 1893 she lectured at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago on Anthropology, most certainly based on her familiarity with the Mesa Verde ruins as she had no formal training in the Social Sciences or field Archaeology. In 1900 she was invited to address the Ethnological Congress at the Paris Exposition on the Cliff Dwellings. She was awarded the Gold Palm of the Order of Officier del' Instruction Pub~lique.

Both Mary Virginia Donaghe and Gilbert McClurg came west for their health in the late 1870's. They met in Colorado Springs and married in 1889. She was a prolific writer, writing for the *Valley Virginian* and the *New York Daily Graphic* as a correspondent. Later she worked for the *Daily Republic* in Colorado Springs for five years as a writer-editor. Together they wrote a *Quarto Centennial of Statehood*. She wrote a history of El Paso County; he wrote a history of Pueblo County. They published a magazine called *Mountain Sunshine*, highlighting the economic development of the Pikes Peak region, especially in heavy industry. She was recognized as a poet, winning a prize for an *Ode on Irrigation* presented at the 11th National Irrigation Congress in Ogden, Utah, in 1903.

Mrs. McClurg's involvement in the CCDA started from the first moment that a committee was established by the Colorado Federation of Woman's Clubs at their annual meeting, October, 1897, in Pueblo, Colorado, concerning itself with the preservation of the Mesa Verde Ruins. The following year the General Federation of Women's Clubs held their Biennial Meeting in Denver. The Committee established by the State



Mrs. Virginia Donaghe McClurg  
-Tutt Library



Baron Gustav Nordenskiöld  
-Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde

Federation was recognized as a Standing Committee of the National group. It was this committee which ultimately incorporated, in Colorado, as the Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association in 1900 with Mrs. McClurg as the Regent General. She held this post until her death April 29, 1931.

People were interested in the Cliff Dwellings primarily due to the "relics" to be found there. The buildings were recognized as Puebloan structures, Indian-made and very old. Ruins in the Dolores and Mancos Valleys were reported as early as 1859 by a government exploring party led by Captain J. N. Macomb. A geologist in the party, Professor J. S. Newberry, climbed the Mesa to report of its mineral wealth. W. H. Jackson photographed some of the minor ruins of the region while part of the Hayden Survey in 1874. A geologist in the Hayden party wrote an extensive report about the ruins.

The most famous explorer of the Mesa would probably be Baron Gustav Nordenskiold, who made the first extensive report and analysis of the ruins in his book *Cliff Dwellings of the Mesa Verde*, published in Stockholm in 1893. He collected with the Wetherill brothers, Al and Richard, in 1890. Nordenskiold did as much for encouraging the restriction of "relic-hunters" as any could by the fact that he was a Norwegian. The thought that something truly American was being removed from the area and the country was simply untenable to most people the least bit interested in the ruins, and even many who did not know them at all! He was characterized as stealing a National Resource. Of course he was not stealing anything that was not being removed by the local citizenry for sale to the highest bidder. The primary complaint was that he was a Foreigner and he was taking something American out of America. The fact that his work was the first attempt to perform actual Archaeologic study in the ruins is handily overlooked.

Many collections of "relics" were made. Mrs. McClurg made at least two, consisting of pottery and woven goods, the first in 1886, the second sometime after "the Danes and Norwegians took many of the best speci-



Cliff Palace—from *Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde*

mens of pottery and other things." She considered hers fully justified however.

The Wetherill brothers, Richard, Alfred, Clayton and John and their brother-in-law Charles Mason, are accused of removing hundreds of "relics". To my knowledge they made four major collections on the Mesa: the first went to the State Historical and Natural History Society in Denver, the second was for the H. Jay Smith Exploring Company for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892 and eventually went to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, the third was for Baron Nordenskiöld and the fourth was made for the State of Colorado for the Columbian Exposition. This last collection also went to the State Historical Society. Mrs. McClurg sanctioned the State's collection but she criticized the H. Jay Smith collection because he used it as a side-show. It was said that Smith dug up a Hopi not three weeks dead and exhibited him as a Cliff Dweller Mummy.

Archaeology in America was still a budding science in the late 19th century. A great many people were aware of the value of artifacts left in-situ, but the wealth of material available encouraged removal of objects for sale. Even the Smithsonian had a representative, a Professor J. Herkomer Prentice, come to Denver in 1899 to buy "relics" of the Cliff Dwellers. This encouraged the removal of objects of course. A few scholars visited the Mesa, in 1891 a Dr. W. R. Birdsall, also in '91 Baron Nordenskiöld, in 1901 J. W. Fewkes was the guest of the CCDA and in 1904 J. A. Jeancon worked on the Mesa. Fewkes would become the first official Archaeologist under the Department of the Interior in 1908.

The first intent of the CCDA was to protect the ruins. They accomplished this in two ways, first by discouraging the collection and sale of "relics" and second by leasing the land from the Ute Indians in 1901 and hiring a man to watch over the area. Mrs. McClurg received authorization from the Department of the Interior to act as an agent to the Utes for the CCDA. The lease nearly died of Bureaucracy as the Interior Department *rewrote* the lease after it had been signed. The copy of the lease in the Pioneers Museum of Colorado Springs has a Joseph O. Smith recorded as the agent acting for the Utes. But on the CCDA copy, Joseph O. Smith *never signed*. I assume he signed the one that went to the Interior Department. Once the CCDA had a legal hold on the land they proceeded to build a wagon road up to the Mesa. The ranchers in the Mancos Valley all wanted the road to pass their property. It was the CCDA which funded the first major stabilization and restoration of a ruin in the proposed park by contracting with the Interior Department for J. W. Fewkes to do the work on Balcony House in 1901.

The consensus of opinion regarding protecting the ruins was that the only practical way to keep them accessible to the public over a long period of time was to make the area a State or Federal Park. As early as 1894

Senator E. O. Wolcott carried a petition signed at the dedication of Coburn Library in Colorado Springs to Washington encouraging the commissioning of the area as a National Park. Colorado Governor Charles S. Thomas was charged by the State Historical and Natural History Society to write Senators Wolcott and Teller and Representatives Shafroth and Bell in 1900 suggesting that the Park be held under Federal control to keep it out of local politics. A minor point was alluded to regarding the cost of developing and maintaining the area. Senator H. M. Teller was against the Park idea supposedly because he did not wish to see arable land tied up in Government hands. A negative hint was there about placing state lands under Federal control. Generally, most opinions favored a Federal Park.

Representative John F. Shafroth attempted to write a bill creating a Park in 1899, but the lack of a legal description prevented this. A map had been obtained from Civil Engineer Harper in Durango but it was not based on an actual survey. A better description was provided by the CCDA to Representative Shafroth, including a map, who wrote a House Bill entitled *Creating the Colorado Cliff Dwellings National Park*. It was never acted upon.

There was a growing awareness in the Federal Government about the considerable number of natural wonders and prehistoric artifacts that needed government protection. C. C. Goodale of the Interior Department wrote to Mrs. McClurg January 30, 1900, seeking information about the Mesa Verde. The letter requested information about "tracts of land on the Public domain, which, for their scenic beauty, natural wonders or curiosities, ancient ruins or relics, or other objects of scientific or historic interest, or springs of medicinal or other properties, should be protected and utilized in the interest of the public, recommending that the same should be set apart and reserved". Goodale went on to inquire about the ruins in southwestern Colorado and about "some organization" that had an interest in the area. This letter was only a hint of the forthcoming legislation introduced by Congressman Lacey of Iowa that is known today as the Federal Antiquities Act of 1906. The Antiquities Act does reserve, protect and restrain any activity that would disturb a historic site until a proper survey has been made. But the Mesa Verde National Park was not initiated by this act.

Prior to the Lacey Conservation Bills, a Representative Hogg introduced a bill in the House creating the new National Park. Realizing that this was initiated at the same moment that the Antiquities Act was being legislated it is no surprise that both Mrs. McClurg and Representative Francis E. Leupp, a former Commissioner of Indian Affairs, were rather negative towards the Hogg Bill. Representative Leupp stated his view of the Hogg Bill calling it "a perfectly unnecessary bit of legislation".

Nevertheless, the Hogg Bill came up for a final vote. When it was discovered that the boundaries contained in the description of the area

were of the Mesa but did *not* include any of the major ruins, an amendment was attached, the Brooks-Leupp Amendment, which corrected the boundaries to be set aside. So it came about that on June 29, 1906, the Mesa Verde National Park was commissioned by an Act of Congress.

The CCDA and Mrs. McClurg's involvement did not end with the commissioning of the Park, she continued to encourage interest and generate support, voicing her complaints about government "red tape" slowing development of the Park and lecturing about the Cliff Dwellings. She continued to be active in a number of organizations including the CCDA, the DAR, the Society of Mayflower Descendants, Descendants of Colonial governors and several others. In September, 1917, she staged an Indian Legend at Spruce Tree House, the *Pageant of the Marriage of the Dawn and the Moon*. "She dramatized, set to music, costumed and personally conducted with 24 actors. . ." this "Cliff Dwelling Legend". How Mrs. McClurg learned of, or recognized this as a cliff dwelling legend I don't know. It was claimed to have been performed for "several hundred spectators".

Mrs. McClurg died April 29, 1931, and was interred at Stonington, Connecticut where she and Gilbert had a second home. The Colorado Springs Chapter of the CCDA had grown old also and only survived her 4½ months, disbanding September 18, 1931.

#### Postscript

The demise of the parent group notwithstanding, the California Chapter of the CCDA was still active in 1944.

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# “WE LIVED AT FORT LARAMIE”; INTERVIEWS WITH OLD-TIMERS

By  
David L. Hieb, C.M.

Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners on August 23, 1978

While serving as Superintendent of the then Fort Laramie National Monument from May 1947 to June 1958 both my office and our living quarters were in the only partially rehabilitated Cavalry Barracks built in 1875. From that vantage point we not only learned to appreciate the conditions which the military and other earlier occupants of the Fort had endured, but also found a unique opportunity to interview on the ground former military period residents of the Fort and its environs. These we called Old-Timers.

Since the major rolls of Fort Laramie in the pageant of the west from 1834 to 1890 are well documented and have been the subjects of thousands of pages by historians from Parkman to Hebard to Hafer and Mattes, the products of Old-Timer interviews are largely sidelights on history. They are sidelights, however, which deepen our perspective and wet our appetites to more fully appreciate that history. In this case they also provided information essential to accurate restoration of military buildings at the Fort.

Aside from some Old timers who were still local residents and will be mentioned later the most productive of our interviews was among the first. We will never forget the portly, but still active gentleman who arrived at the Fort in a red Buick convertible on July 24, 1948 and introduced himself as Col. Louis Brechemin, Jr., U.S. Army retired. Colonel Brechemin had lived at Fort Laramie as a boy of 8 to 12, from 1885 to 1889 while his father, then Capt. Louis Brechemin, 7th Infantry, was Assistant Surgeon, the ranking Post and Regimental medical officer of that period. Moreover, the Colonel was blessed with an almost photographic memory of the scenes and events of his happy boyhood years at the Fort. Having duplicated his father's career as an Army Medical Officer he had had lifelong contact with the families of the then tiny officer corp which no doubt added to his retention of facts and stories about Fort Laramie.

Colonel Brechemin had come back to the scenes of his boyhood and he was in no hurry. Nearly every day for ten days he returned to the Fort and we had time to go over every building and ruin on the grounds together, discussing details of each structure and its usage. He helped us work out a complete floor plan of the ruined hospital, noting specifically as a doctor, that no special operating room was provided. He indicated that surgery, such as it was, was performed in his father's office or on one of the beds in a ward. He corrected some current misinformation and provided other data about the Sutler's Store and the Officer's Club therein which was later followed almost to the letter in the structural restoration and refurbishing of that interesting multi-purpose structure.

The colonel soon became practically a member of our family. He amazed us by naming virtually every man, woman, child, horse and dog in group pictures from the 1880s in our collection. Later, as we corresponded with him at his homes in Deer Harbor, Washington and Belfast, Maine he sent us many more fine photographs to copy. One of these depicts a group of three officer's daughters (one being his teen age sister) and two handsome young Lieutenants and a young rancher who he said were around together all the time and were nicknamed "The Kindergarten."

During our conversations Colonel Brechemin often alluded to stories he remembered from his years at the Fort and which he said he would write up and send to us. Finally, over two years later, two batches of them arrived and with a minimum of editing here are the best.

#### "Barney, or Horse Racing at Fort Laramie in 1885"

There was no circular race track at the Post. The races that year were straight, on the flat, about a quarter of a mile, with the start at the Stage Barn and the finish in front of the Rustic Hotel. One day that fall there were a number of scrub races there. It was pay day and soldiers and cowboys were down there betting. Suddenly a queer looking man drove up in a rickety wagon with a horse tied behind. It was a woe begone skate covered with mud and long hair.

This man got to arguing around the crowd and wanted to enter the horse in the next race. He was laughed at, but he bet that his horse would not come in last. He was taken up on that and then went around again betting that his horse would come in second. Finally he went around betting that his horse would come in first. He was taken up on many bets and put up his money. After the betting was completed he went to his wagon and gave the horse a bath and grooming. This revealed a beautiful chestnut sorrel race horse and a jockey saddle and bridle. He himself appeared in jockey silks of brilliant colors. The crowd was astonished and of course the stranger cleaned up in the race, winning all bets.

Mr. Eli Hall, manager of the Post Trader's interests, was among those

who lost on the race, but he agreed to let the man quarter the horse 'Barney' in Mr. London's stable in the back yard of the Post Trader's house. Mr. Hall lived in that yard in a small house. About midnight Mr. Hall was awakened by the stranger who said he had lost all his money in a poker game with some soldiers and wanted to borrow \$500 leaving the horse 'Barney' as security. Mr. Hall loaned the man the money and never saw him again. However, he had the horse and soon put him up in a raffle. Lt. Tommy Tompkins won the raffle and in a month or so put 'Barney' up for another raffle and Mr. Hall won him back. My father also put up his horse 'Larry' in a raffle and Mr. Hall won him too. By that time the Post was somewhat suspicious but nothing was proved. 'Barney' won every race except one at Fort Laramie. The exception was losing to a cowpuncher named Poak from the 4P RAnch on a roan horse. Each owner rode his own horse and Mr. Hall rode 'Barney.' The whole Post blamed Mr. Hall for not picking a real jockey.

Around the Fort 'Barney' was frequently ridden by Neeley Williams, the daughter of Capt. Constant Williams, who married Louis Kittson, son of Commodore Kittson of St. Paul. They were married in the Burt house next to the Post Trader's Store by Dr. Rafter the Episcopal Minister from Cheyenne. Mrs. Kittson then laid siege to Mr. Hall to buy 'Barney' and he was finally shipped to St. Paul.

Colonel Brechemin's next story he dates November 1885 and titles:

"The Lachlin-Flannery Fight."

I was 8 years old and walking from the London house towards the Store and saw two soldiers and a huge cowpuncher standing by the back yard gate. They were quarreling violently and the cowpuncher drew his Colt revolver and threatened one of the soldiers. Just then Mr. London came up the walk from his house and stepped into the road. He called to them "boys, stop that quarreling". Al Lachlin, the cowpuncher, walked towards Mr. London putting his revolver back in its holster. As he continued towards the Store, Flannery, one of the soldiers called after him, "I'm not afraid of your so and so revolver" and continued cursing him. Lachlin said nothing and went into the Store. Flannery and the other soldier Clements, both of H Company followed to the steps of the Post Office talking loudly.

Lieutenant Tompkins came by, heard the men talking and ordered Flannery to "Go to his quarters." Flannery started for his quarters and disappeared until Lieutenant Tompkins walked on. Then Flannery returned to the Post Office steps and was storming with Clements when Al Lachlin came out of the Store with a package of sugar. He stopped in front of the Post Office and Flannery insulted him again. Then Lachlin pulled out his revolver and struck Flannery over the head with it. Flannery

jumped on him and they both fell over the dirt from a small ditch. Flannery captured the revolver and beat Lachlin over the head with it. Clements told Flannery to take the revolver to the Commanding Officer and they started up the Officer's walk, but met Lieutenant Kendrick and gave the gun to him. Flannery came back and found Lachlin standing on the Store steps and started cussing him out again when Lachlin reached down and smashed him in the face. Flannery was up like a flash and after Lachlin, but the Sergeant of the Guard stopped him and Kendrick ordered Lachlin taken to the Guardhouse.

My father was called to the Guardhouse and he took Lachlin to the Hospital and stitched up his scalp for the man was in pretty bad shape. Father also had to stitch up Flannery's scalp. We boys were horrified at the fight and so much bloodshed.

The next morning Lachlin's revolver was returned to him and he left the Post. My father sent a cowboy after him about 10 days later to tell him to come back and get the stitches taken out. Then father heard that Al had an infected wound and concussion and had nearly died. However, we saw him many times later at the Post and he was all right.

Many years later in 1900 at Corregidor Hospital in Manila I was making Ward Rounds one morning and came to a new admission, Ordnance Sergeant Flannery standing at his bunk. I told him to turn his head around and said to him, "There are the old Al Lachlin scars, Sergeant." Needless to say Flannery was somewhat astonished.

### "The Tramp Sprinter."

In the summer and fall of 1887 the Post went wild about footraces. They were 100 yard dashes in front of the Rustic Hotel.

One day two men showed up dressed as awkward looking tramps. They talked around the Rustic Hotel and found out that our best sprinter was Duffy of the Band; the snare drummer and also the Post Barber. One of the tramps went to the Barber Shop to see Duffy and arranged a foot race between the two for the next morning. Everyone went to the Rustic and Duffy appeared in trunks and spiked shoes but the tramp wore his overalls and ran in stocking feet. From the start the tramp ran awkwardly and quit after a few steps claiming it was not a fair start and that he had hurt his foot. He was overruled and Duffy won the money.

Then the tramp challenged our next best sprinter, Corporal Long and his confederate circulated around the crowd making bets. After the money was put up the tramp peeled off his clothes and appeared in running trunks and spiked shoes. At the starting gun the tramp jumped in front of Long and kept a yard ahead down the course winning by exactly one yard. Long couldn't pass him without running into his spike shoes. Of course the soldiers yelled foul and there was one of the hottest arguments you ever

heard. Finally, Lieutenant D.L. Howell our best umpire came down and heard all sides. He ruled against Long and the tramp got all the money. Of course both the tramps made a hasty exit from the Post and were never seen again.

Here Colonel Brechemin added this comment:—"You might think the soldiers would have learned to look with suspicion on all sporting strangers in that old western time but they never did. Every summer some gambler appeared and took them in."

Our final story from Colonel Brechemin is quite different in that it details a documented historic event.

#### "The Saw Mill Fire of 1887."

The Fort Laramie Fire Department was organized as follows with the following equipment:—7th Infantry Band—Axes; Co. A 7th Infantry—Hose Cart; Co. H 7th Infantry—Hose Cart. These units were quartered in the upper garrison. In the Cavalry Barracks were:—Co. D 7th Infantry—Hook and Ladder; Co. F 7th Infantry—Buckets. That was the entire garrison that year. The two hose carts were stored at the northeast corner of the parade and covered with tarpaulins. There was no hook and ladder truck so D Company carried the ladders on their shoulders.

On this memorable evening in May 1887 the entire battalion stood Dress Parade. The men in complete full dress, helmets, white gloves, etc. were all in formation. The Band was trooping down the center of the formation in helmets with white plumes. There were the usual spectators in the officers row; ladies, children and housemaids. On the porch of the wooden Barracks east of the parade ground were a number of cowpunchers, ranchers and other civilians watching the parade. Fire alarms at the Post consisted of a big locomotive bell at the Sawmill, Trumpeter of the Guard sounding fire call and Corporal of the Guard firing the evening gun.

I was on the porch of the house we lived in at that time—the old magazine now in ruins. Everybody was watching the parade when suddenly the Sawmill bell began to ring. Little Eddie Rain the Commissary Sergeants son came running up wild with excitement yelling, "The Sawmill is on fire!" The cowpunchers started to run in front of the Trader's Store and turned into the road leading to the Sawmill and the Rustic Hotel. Then 'Keno' the C. Company dog and 'Shep', Mr. Eli Hall's dog took it into their heads to stage the biggest dog fight I ever saw in the midst of the running crowd. As we turned the corner by the Trader's Store we saw the Sawmill, an old wooden building, blazing from the roof with huge flames high up. Major Freeman was commanding the parade and was a long time understanding what was up. Then the Trumpeter blew Fire Call and he came to life. He dismissed the battalion and the men came off the parade ground whooping and hollering. They tore into the Barracks and tried to change

from full dress to overalls. They got the hose carts under way, but had hitched on to the hydrant at the corner and that cart's hose didn't reach and the second cart's hose was not the same size. They tried to couple the two hoses in the road in front of the saloon but no go! When the men got down to the Sawmill they were ordered away until Sergeant Wilson opened the steam valves. A boiler explosion was feared. The building burned to the ground destroying the pumps for our water supply and for some time afterwards the water wagon went around filling barrels until the new Mill was built of concrete and made fireproof.

We boys had the wildest excitement and the best time you ever saw and I cannot forget any detail of that wild scene, the rush, the dog fight and the fire. Mr. Sanderock was our Post Engineer until his death and he was the only man at the Post that was of the modern age or understood machinery or plumbing either. There was a soldier helper who lived at the Mill but was standing parade that evening and the fire got started from saw dust."

Colonel Brechemins mention of Mr. Sanderock introduces the next of our interviewees: actually a family rather than one individual. When Thomas B. Sanderock, at the age of 42, he left a widow and eight children ranging in age from four months to 18 years. Widowed and with only two or three of her children old enough to work, Harriet Sanderock managed to live on at the Fort until its abandonment by the army in 1890. At the auction of the Fort buildings in April of that year the other bidders saw to it that she should acquire a twelve room officer's quarters duplex for about \$50. Later, she and her oldest son, George, were able to homestead the sites of that house and the Old Guardhouse and a sizeable tract extending from the Fort grounds across the Laramie River and up Deer Creek. Also, the widow soon became Postmistress, the post office fixtures being moved to a room in her home from the Sutler's Store. There, at the south end of the old parade ground the Sanderock family grew up; the boys becoming cowboys or ranchers; the girls to marry and move away.

Harriet Sanderock lived at the Fort until her death in 1934 at the age of 88. She was preceded in death by George, and another son died in 1943. All the rest of the Sanderock children were well known to us and contributed varying amounts of historical information during the years.

Mrs. Maime Robertson, the oldest daughter, had worked for several officer's families following her father's death and provided considerable insight into the make up of life of their households. She always recalled vividly the removal of the soldiers bodies to Fort McPherson National Cemetery from the Fort Laramie Cemetery and the Gratton Massacre mass burial; probably because one of the contractors workmen had given her a bent iron arrowhead from the skull of one of Gratton's men.

Stella, the youngest daughter, married Emery Bright, who as a young cowboy had helped bring one of the last big trail herds from Texas to the

Powder River valley and later settled in London Flats, east of Fort Laramie and near the Gratton Massacre site. Emery had seen the last years of the Fort only as a cowboy on the outside, but Stella was able to provide helpful information about her old home, Officer's Quarters 'A', before we began its restoration.

Oddly, it may seem to you, it was Mead, the youngest of the Sanderocks who was to provide the most helpful information about the Fort. Born in 1886, only a few months before his father's death, he had grown up in Officer's Quarters 'A' and then moved to his ranch two miles south. Thus he had seen all the changes in the Fort following its abandonment. He became a close friend and frequent companion on fishing and hunting trips, and to community activities of varying kinds. He was blessed with an excellent memory and was always willing to stop in and help us determine the originality of a feature of any building we were restoring or planning to restore. A unique and amusing example relates to Officer's Quarters 'A' which we restored in 1956 to 1958. The original long, straight, double stairway had been torn out and replaced with one winding stairway, for his mother, about 1916. But, from physical remains we had been able to duplicate the originals excepting one detail—newel posts. Mead stopped by and I posed the question to him. His response was quick and positive. "That side (west) had a plain ball-top post, but this side (east) had no post at all—just a nice smooth end on the rail. I remember that because we boys always slid down the rail on this side but couldn't on the other." To prove his point he proceeded to demonstrate stair rail sliding at age 70. Just to be sure, I checked Mead's story with two of his sisters who confirmed it with the comment that their brothers "never walked down stairs in that house."

Occasionally, the chance to interview an Old Timer took me away from the Fort and on December 8, 1949 I drove some 45 miles to 'Dutch Flats' near Mitchell, Nebraska. There I located and talked at length with one Jacob Gompert, 87 years young, and one of the original 'Dutchmen' for whom the flats were named.

Jacom Gompert came to America in 1887 after having served for three years in a Westphalian Hussar Regiment of the Imperial German Army. After a few months in San Antonio, Texas he came to Alliance, Nebraska, then the railhead, and in the spring of 1888 homesteaded in 'Dutch Flats' and found intermittent employment as a cowboy on the PF (Pratt & Ferris) Ranch which included most of the valley land north of the North Platte river from the site of Henry, Nebraska to Torrington, Wyoming with an upper ranch or feed farm where Lingle, Wyoming now stands.

In the spring of 1890, Jacob Gompert and his brother, Gerhardt, who had followed him over from Germany, attended the sale of buildings at Fort Laramie. They purchased one building for \$75. There followed many trips to the Fort to remove lumber from this building and haul it, one wagon load at a time, over the 40 miles of sandy road to 'Dutch Flats'.

There it was used to improve their dug-out homes and for fuel. Mr. Gompert emphasized the great importance of fuel to the homesteaders of the North Platte valley and the difficulty which they had in getting it prior to the coming of the railroad about 1900. Cow chips and wood hauled from the hills northwest of Lingle were their sole supplies for many years.

On one of the first trips with lumber from the Fort, a wardrobe from the house they were dismantling was placed on top of the load. In crossing Rawhide Creek where the banks were very steep the wardrobe fell into the creek. Mr. Gompert being alone had to walk about a mile to the homestead shack of Tom Powers to get his aid in reloading it. I hauled that wardrobe back to Fort Laramie in my pickup; a donation to the Fort from the Gompert family. The Tom Powers just mentioned was an oft quoted Old Timer who had died before my years at Fort Laramie. It developed that Mr. Gompert had worked with him on the PF and he told of having drawn the short straw during a card game with Powers and one Al Kelly and having to ride from the upper ranch to Fort Laramie in the middle of the night after two bottles of whiskey.

During his many trips to the Fort in 1890 and 1891, Jacob Gompert became well acquainted with some other Germans. Joe Wilde, the ex-bull whacker, road ranch operator and peerless rough and tumble fighter had acquired the old Cavalry Barracks and converted it into a combination hotel, tavern and dance hall. There the Gompert brothers often stayed and ate during their lumber salvaging trips and there they met Miss Elizabeth Haubruk, a German girl who lived with the Wildes as a member of their family. In 1892 she became Mr. Jacob Gompert.

The Gompert brothers hauled one load of heavy planks from Fort Laramie to the river bank north of Gering, Nebraska. There they were used on a bridge over the north Platte built cooperatively to give the settlers north of the river access to Gering. Before that, difficulty in crossing the river had forced the homesteaders to trade at Alliance, Nebraska, a five day round trip according to Mr. Gompert. He recalled that one outfit had tried to raft timbers from the Fort down the river to Gering, but had so much trouble that no one else tried it.

Mr. Gompert repeatedly mentioned that by fencing the bottom lands north of the river from near Lingle to the Nebraska line the PF Ranch had closed the old Mormon Trail and forced the road up onto the sandhills adding greatly to the difficulty of hauling their lumber from the Fort to 'Dutch Flats'.

On August 19, 1950 Mr. Gompert and several members of his family came to Fort Laramie and toured the grounds with us. Mr. Gompert seemed confused by all the changes that had taken place since his early visits, but he was able to identify the building he had bought and dismantled as the ruin of Officers' Quarters 'B', the former Commanding Officer's Quarters and one time home of such notables as Brevet major Generals



Wesley Merrit and John Gibbon. Mr. Gompert indicated that all fixtures, good doors and window sash had been removed from the building before the auction at which he bought it for \$75.

The long porches of the Cavalry Barracks caused him to recall walking over or around numerous drunken or sleeping cowboys in walking to Joe Wilde's hotel dining room at the north end of the building. He thought that Joe Wilde had a "gold mine" in his tavern operations in the 1890s in spite of having to act as his own bouncer.

Sometimes Old Timers arrived at the Fort in batches and a notable example was the visit to the Fort in September 1950 of George O. Reid of High River, Alberta and Jacob J. Tomamichel of Medora, North Dakota.

George Reid was known to us through his long letter of December 20, 1945 to Merrill Mattes which was published in *Annals of Wyoming* in July 1946. We will not repeat Reid's many interesting comments on Fort Laramie in that letter but his credentials as an Old Timer are impressive. He was born in 1872 at Fort McPherson, Nebraska where his father was corral boss. He lived at Fort Laramie from 1875 to 1880, where his father was similarly employed until fired for knifing a gambler, (self defense according to George) and then on nearby ranches, notably that at Register Cliff, until 1892. The Reids then moved north to the Little Missouri River country near Medora, North Dakota. There George was to serve as Sheriff of Billings County for four years before moving to Canada. In Canada he served 23 years in the Royal North West Police (sic) and four years as Chief Guard at a Royal Canadian Air Force Base.

Jake Tomamichel we recognized as the son of Hospital Steward John Tomamichel who had served at Fort Laramie from 1878 to 1889. Born in 1873, Jake had lived with his parents at the Fort only part of that time, leaving home to live with the Reids at Register Cliff and become a cowboy. He too moved to Medora with the Reids and acquired a small ranch. Later, we learned from several sources that Jake was known for many years as one of the best ropers on the northern plains.

These two Old Timers both well past 75, lead us on a merry chase around the Fort area. They were intent on seeing all their old haunts and pointed out things they remembered and answered questions as we went.

They remembered the rifle range and pointed out its location north of the Fort Builders with eight target butts against the hills and firing points at distances up to 1000 yards. This range is not shown on any of the old Army ground plans of the Fort. They also claimed that at one time the range officer had permitted them to pick up lead slugs and brass shells from the range to sell at 15¢ and 17¢ a pound.

George Reid remembered a big cottonwood tree full of Indian burials across the river south of the old corral, but said it was cut down when he was very small. Probably late in 1876. He also remembered seeing squaws scavenging in the fort dump for condemned bacon, etc.

Jake Tomamichel remembered eating in the Cavalry Barracks with his future brother-in-law Sergeant William Kelley and that the soldiers were issued individual jars of oleomargarine at that time.

Both men remembered going to school in various buildings and both left school at an early age to avoid rough treatment by soldier teachers who often got drunk trying to avoid teaching duty. They also remembered seeing the hay contractors wagons stopping by the river to throw sand in the hay to increase the weight before checking in over the Quartermasters scales.

Ordnance Sergeant Leodegar Snyder who served at Fort Laramie from 1849 to 1886 was remembered by both men. Reid stated that in 1876, while most of the troops were in the field, Indians raided close to the fort and that Snyder cleaned up and loaded some of the obsolete cannon. When Indians appeared on the hills near the fort a few shells from those cannon scattered them. He also recalled that at that time civilians living near the fort were encouraged to come in at night. The Reids did so one night, but when George and his brother found bed bugs in their bed their mother packed them all off home with the remark that she would rather fight Indians than bed bugs!

As noted earlier, not all our Old Timers were men and on August 20, 1953 we were pleased to visit at length with Mrs. John Oliger of Denver who was brought to Fort Laramie by a friend from Cheyenne. Mrs. Oliger first came to Fort Laramie in 1887 as Ingrid Carlson, a domestic servant in the household of Col. Henry C. Merriam, Commanding Officer of Fort Laramie and the 7th Infantry. On October 10, 1889 she was married to Pvt. John Oliger, 'H' Company, 7th Infantry. The wedding was held in the Rustic Hotel with B.A. Hart, Justice of the Peace, officiating. In this connection, Mrs. Oliger stated that during the years she was at Fort Laramie there was no chapel or chaplain, but that occasionally Colonel Merriam had an Episcopalian Minister from Cheyenne come up and conduct services in his home.

While looking at photographs from the 1880s Mrs. Oliger was able to confirm many of the identifications made by Colonel Brechemin and others. On visiting the Fort buildings she was only able to provide new information in the case of the Commanding Officer's house. There she was the first person able to provide a reasonable ground plan of the missing kitchen wing. She confirmed statements by Maime Sanderock Robertson and others that the C.O.'s house was the only one with inside plumbing, having a full bathroom upstairs and water piped into the kitchen. All others had only hydrants at the back doors. She questioned our identification of a small building behind this house as a Stable. She stated that Colonel Merriam had a stable farther back in which he usually kept four personal horses. She felt that our 'Stable' was part of the chickenhouse which was closer and frequently raided by skunks.

Mr. Oliger described the Colonel's household as usually consisting of Col. & Mrs. Merriam, their five children; Miss Kitty Boyd, the Colonel's neice; his cousin, Charles Merriam, a civilian engineer; a governess and four servants. Quite a housefull, even with seven bedrooms available!

She remembered most of the barracks as having bunks, not cots, and that the soldiers used straw ticks which they were required to refill monthly. A Private's pay was \$25. each two months, but with 50¢ deducted in Washington her husband only got \$12.25 per month. He retired from the army in 1914 as a sergeant.

Our next Old Timer had no connections with the military at Fort Laramie but we had looked forward to interviewing him for a number of years. Louis Wilde was born in 1884 on a ranch eight miles up the Laramie river from the Fort. His father was the Joe Wilde remembered by Jacob Gompert, George Reid and others as a bull whacker, peerless rough and tumble fighter and one of the major bidders of the Army's sale of fortbuildings in 1890. At that sale he purchased the Cavalry Barracks and several other buildings. Moreover, he soon acquired at least 320 acres of the best land in the former military reservation. In addition to converting the barracks into a hotel, dance hall and saloon, the Wildes also irrigated and farmed the bottom lands east of the Fort until about 1917. Louis Wilde had lived with his parents at the Fort until about 1915, hence, he was able to point out and explain changes made in the Cavalry Barracks and the Commissary Storehouse during those years. Information which was very valuable in our on-going structural restoration program.

Louis Wilde advised us that a tornadic wind had destroyed about one third of the Barracks veranda roof in about 1910 necessitating reroofing and some structural changes we had deduced from photographs and physical evidence. He also stated that when purchased by his father the barracks was without window sash, but that he had bought some back from the Army and obtained some from other buildings. This tends to confirm a statement made by Jacob Gompert about the condition of the building he purchased.

We asked Mr. Wilde about a missing 'elevator' in the Commissary Storehouse and he stated that it had never been an elevator, just a hoist. He then described a large wooden wheel built up of boards with 2" x 6" spokes on an 8 to 10 inch shaft on which wound the hoist rope with an iron hook on the end. An endless rope making a full turn around the large wheel extended through the existing holes in the floor into the basement so the hoist could be operated from there or upstairs. We later reconstructed this hoist from his description and much to the surprise of some of our workmen it functioned quite well.

Now the source of our last Fort Laramie story can hardly be considered an Old Timer since he had never been to the Fort before, but his story so impressed me at the time that I recorded it in detail as follows:

On May 23, 1951 we were pleased to have a visit from Colonel P. W.

Allison, U.S. Army retired, of Salem, Oregon. Colonel Allison's interest in Fort Laramie stemmed from the fact that his father had been stationed here in 1872 as a Second Lieutenant of the 2nd Cavalry, soon after graduating from West Point. Colonel Allison related a number of tales of Army life which his father had told him about Fort Laramie, but only one we found sufficiently different and interesting to set down here.

In June of 1872 Lieutenant James Nicholas Allison of 'K' Company, 2nd U.S. Cavalry arrived at Fort Laramie equipped with a fine thoroughbred horse and a large hunting dog which was half Russian Wolfhound.

Soon after his arrival he joined a small party of young officers on a wolf hunt along the hills east of the fort. The dogs soon sighted a wolf and Allison being better mounted than his companions out distanced and lost them in the ensuing chase.

Later, as he picked his way down from the hills toward the Oregon Trail to return to the fort his horse went lame and he stopped, removed a stone from one of her shoes, and turning to remount he saw a lone horeman riding rapidly eastward on the trail. Allison's path intersected that of the lone rider who he took at first to be on Indian with a flapping blanket, but as he came nearer, saw was a young woman in an old fashioned long riding habit and feathery hat. Thinking that she was a newly arrived visitor at the fort, he sought to stop her to warn her against riding so far out alone, but she raised her quirt which glittered in the sun and whipped her great black horse to dash past him and out of sight over a rise of ground. Dashing in pursuit, Allison was amazed on topping the rise to find no one in sight, and his amazement grew as he examined the little used trail and found no tracks, while his great wolf-hound cowered against him in an unprecedented show of fear.

As he looked about in astonishment, a shout from a ridge to the south appraised him of the fact that one of his officer friends was at hand. Soon another Lieutenant was beside him, first chaffing him about the lady who had given him the go-by, and then sharing his perplexity at the lack of any tracks or trace of her.

Returned to the Fort and dining with the assembled officers, their ladies and guests, Allison assured himself that no lady present could have been the mysterious rider. Then fully aware that he might be made the butt of many jokes, he told the group of his queer adventure. Before any jocular comments could be made the Commanding Officer(probably Bvt. Maj. Gen. John E. Smith, 14th Inf.) spoke up with "Well Allison, you have just seen the 'Laramie Ghost,' " and told the following story.

Back in the days when Fort Laramie was a fur trading post a factor of the post brought with him his beautiful daughter who had been educated in eastern schools and was an accomplished horse woman. The factor warned his daughter never to ride out alone and ordered his assistants to see that

she did not leave the fort alone at any time. However, there came a day when the factor was away and his daughter mounted her favorite horse, a beautiful black, and despite the protests of the people in the fort rode eastward down the Oregon Trail and was never seen again. Her father returned and searched for her for weeks but no trace was found. Then in the years that followed a legend grew among the Indians and traders of the valley that every seven years the ghost of the factor's daughter would be seen riding down the old trail.

Still incredulous, Lieutenant Allison inquired about until he found an old Indian squaw who had been at the fort when the factor's daughter rode out never to return. He asked the old squaw how the girl had been dressed and his amazement grew as she chanted out a description of a girl in a long dark green riding habit with a feathered hat and a jeweled handled quirt such as he had seen as the mysterious lady had whipped her mount to dash away from him on the trail. So, Allison was convinced that he had seen the 'Laramie Ghost' and buried the incident in his memory until years later. Then as he rode the train through Wyoming he heard cowboys on a depot platform talking about how a rancher had just seen the 'Laramie Ghost' but his train started up so he could question them for details of the incident.

Now you may not believe in ghosts and in our eleven years at the old Fort we did not see the ghost just described. However, if any place in the West deserves a few ghosts I am sure you will agree that it is Fort Laramie. So, if and when you recall any of the stories you have heard tonight, remember that you heard them from a certified, 180 proof, Fort Laramie ghost.

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Oct. 5, 1950
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Some names and dates were obtained from stones in the Fort Laramie Cemetery. Other names and dates, etc. were obtained or corrected by reference to the "Post Returns" and other Fort Laramie records.



## GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



**Bonanza, a Pictorial History of Colorado's Kerber Creek Country**, by Helen Ashley Anderson Kempner. (Little London Press, Colorado Springs, 1978) 48pp. Photographs. \$2.50.

The author, "Sagebrush Annie," writes newspaper items for San Luis Valley people, and now this pamphlet of her work will have a wider public, deservedly. It is tantalizingly short—couldn't she have told more about the turquoise mine than the captions under two pictures? She does tell of empressite, a rather rare mineral named after the local Empress Josephine Mine, and the green and rose rhodochrosite from the Eagle Mine, a mine not named for the bird but for Mr. Eagle of Villa Grove.

The pictures must have come from the author's family albums. They are splendid, and unusual. Beside the usual mule train loaded with dragging timbers, and the big ore wagons, a picture of vintage trucks carrying machinery to the Rawley Min in its 1921 boom is rare, but the prize picture is on p.27, of John E. Ashley on a four-wheel mine bike. (The Ashley family deserves a genealogy to help straighten out the many references and Ashley homes pictured. Is John E. Ashley the author's father or grandfather?)

The only map in the book is a puzzle. It must be old because the spelling is so quaint—Mt. Antoro, Sangre de Christo Range, the Cliff Grope of Mines, Manitan Mine, and Sedwick, spelled two other ways in the text. The map should be identified, and a modern map added, showing places the author refers to which are not on the map—Claytonia, Parkville, U.S. Gulch, and Schoolhouse Gulch. The pamphlet deserves this.

Graduates of the School of Mines will be interested in the picture of their long-time Dean, Jesse Morgan, with shovel in hand. The shot of "Annie Ellis, the girl with the honey-colored hair" will fascinate admirers of Anne Ellis's two books. And tell us more about Dr. Scott E. Kortright.

The Little London Press should concentrate on this kind of first hand material. The

whole pamphlet is shot through with wire silver.

Louisa Arps, CM



**A MOTIF INDEX for lost mines and treasures applied to redaction of Arizona legends, and to lost mine and treasure legends exterior to Arizona**, by Byrd Howell Granger. (University of Arizona Press, 1977) No price shown.

In the sense used in this book, a motif is the smallest element in a tale having the power to persist in tradition. The author has extended this to include beliefs about searching for, finding, and losing lost mines and treasures, whether such beliefs have been encountered in legends or elsewhere.

The motif index as it exists in this volume is used in analyzing three hundred and thirty-nine legends and legend-fragments of Arizona lost mines and treasures.

Separated into four categories, Spanish, Early American, Lost Dutchman and modern, most of the tales, as is to be expected, refer to lost mines. There are some sixty-two motifs listed for the Lost Dutchman Mine alone, covering every aspect of the story, whether real or imaginary. Other lost mines are handled in the same way.

Evidently the basis for this book was a PHD Thesis Dr. Granger prepared at UCLA and, as is true of so many PhD theses, the work is dry and confusing. A case in point, quoting from the book: "Although Geronimo died without revealing (K1.18) exactly where the Lost Apache (C 5.2.1) gold (d 1.1) mine was, it is said (f 2) to be close to Jerome (a 10.1)." and so on, ad infinitum. Now, who wants to wade through a maze like that?

We would advise anyone interested in lost mines and buried treasures to stick to the books of J. Frank Dobie, John D. Mitchell, Harold O. Weight and others who can present these Lost Mines and Buried Treasure stories in an interesting, entertaining and informative manner without becoming bogged down in technicalities.

Armand W. Reeder, P.M.

**Land of the Spotted Eagle**, by Luther Standing Bear. Foreward by Richard N. Ellis. (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1978) 259 pp., 4 illus., Price \$3.75, p. b. only

First published in 1933, and now added to the admirable list of popular-priced "Bison Books," *Land of the Spotted Eagle* is a durable classic among source materials on the American Indian. The author was one of the very few full-blood Sioux born during the Plains Indian Wars who managed to get sufficient education—he was in the first class at Carlisle, 1879—to write and publish his own story. The book is notable for its blunt honesty, its insight on the nomadic life, and its impassioned plea to the white man to correct his wrong judgement of the aboriginal character and culture.

Approximately 80 percent of the book is ethnographic, with fascinating chapters on "Cradle Days", "Boyhood", "Hunter, Scout and Warrior", "Home and Family", "Civil Arrangements", "Social Customs", and "Indian Wisdom." This is a remarkable articulation of the culture of the Lakotas, or western department of the Sioux Nation, by an insider. The author was evidently born into the Brule band of the Rosebud Reservation, but later became affiliated with the Ogalala at Pine Ridge. He tends to over-idealize the Sioux life style—even to the absurd extent of asserting that Sioux warriors never fought for conquest, but only in self-defense! Except for this serious distortion, the work is a valuable primer of authentic Indian lore.

Spotted Eagle lived in the East for a time, became a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and learned the devious ways of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., as well as on the reservations. When he returned home in 1931 he was shocked to find the degradation of his people, "the picture of lost hope." He vividly expresses his indignation: "This loss of faith has left a void in Indian life . . . that civilization cannot fill . . . The old life was attuned to nature's rhythms . . . The white man had better grasp some of the Indians' spiritual strength . . . How can the Indian, sharing all the virtues of the white man, be justly called a savage? *The white man today is but half*

*civilized and unable to order his own life into ways of peace and righteousness."*

Forty-five years later, with Indians again on the warpath—of political protest, if not by arms—who can quarrel with that sage assessment?

Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.,  
for the Denver Westerners Roundup  
submitted July, 1978



**Trial and Triumph, a Quick History of Denver**, by Gayle Turk. Little London Press, Colorado Springs, 1978. 56pp. Photographs. \$2.50.

The author of this pamphlet writes in her postscript, "A history of Denver in less than sixty pages? Impossible? Yes!" Nevertheless she has done a commendable job. She has evidently read most the the books she lists as her sources—a page and a half of them. And she has collected good pictures from unusual places, like the private collections of Jackson Thode and Henry Broadhurst. The pictures are well printed.

Granted she had to omit details that make history live, some of the whole subjects she has omitted are surprising. Water, for instance. No water—no Denver. A grievous omission of an interesting story. Her history of public education in Denver is limited to Prof. Goldrick. She makes no mention of the University of Denver. She devotes 3½ lines to Denver churches. Her Denver had little peace and few amenities.

An odd omission in a tale of Denver is the reference to Denver as "cowtown." It was the center of the large regional livestock industry, and until very recently its stockyards were extensive (as was the smell from them when the wind was from the north). The National Western Stockshow was not a rodeo, but a showplace for purebred cattle, blooded horses, society equestriennes, and who will forget the cavalry and artillery drill teams from Fort D.A. Russell (now Fort Warren)?

Mrs. Turk dwells on minorities, but almost totally ignores the powerful minority of 17th Street, the corporation lords who ran the state and Denver for so many years. Odd



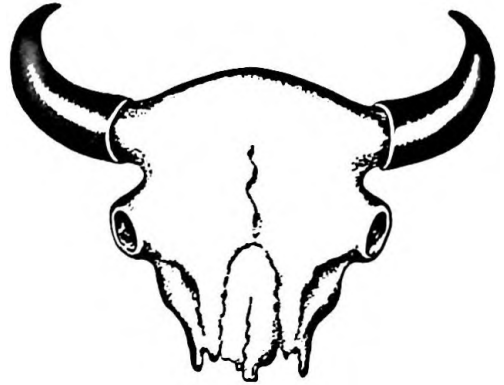


*The* DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

SEPT.-OCT. 1978

VOLUME XXXIV No. 5



*In This Issue*

## THE WEST OF CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR

by

Eugene Rakosnik

and

## COLORADO BOUNDARIES AND THEIR ORIGINAL SURVEYS

by

Erl H. Ellis

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Dues for the next calendar year are now being accepted, \$10.00 for corresponding and \$15.00 for active posse and reserve members. A dues return envelope is included in this issue of the *Roundup*. Mail it in today with your check.

The past months have again taken members of the Posse over the Great Divide.

Herb O'Hannoln, an active Posse member in good standing, Active in teaching in the Aurora School System and active in historical research. Herb's cheerful face and attitude will be missed by all.

Arthur Carhart, recently living in California, remained a reserve member in the Denver Corral. Art was a charter member of this posse and was one of the many published professional writers in the Westerners. As a conversationalist, he was ahead of his time in many ways. As a Westerner, his loyalty was unsurpassed.

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# THE WEST OF CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR

By Eugene Rakosnik

*Presented to The Denver Posse of the Westerners  
September 27, 1978*

In the woods of northern Vermont near the Canadian border, Chester Alan Arthur was born October 5, 1830, the fifth child of a Baptist preacher in the village of Fairfield. Destined to become the twenty-first president of the United States of America, not by choice, but at the hand of an assassin's gun.

Young Arthur moved often with his parents and grasped his education wherever he could. In September, 1845, he entered Union College (Schenectady, N.Y.) undertaking "a classical curriculum."

Arthur was elected Phi Beta Kappa as a senior and graduated in July 1848 at the age of 17. Following his years at Union College he taught school and began to study law in his spare time. In May 1854 he was admitted to the bar and made a partner in what was now called Culver, Parker and Arthur.<sup>1</sup>

The years 1829 to 1854 saw twenty-five years of western expansion, mountain men, fur traders, Indian wars, and steel rails penetrating the wilderness ever westward. These stories and dreams of "El Dorado" touched Arthur in 1857. He and his friend Henry D. Gardiner, with whom a new law partnership was formed only a year before, traveled westward "for the purpose of making investments and establishing a permanent settlement if a fitting locality could be selected." . . . "the travels of the two extended over some four months."<sup>2</sup> Stopping in Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, on to St. Louis and St. Joseph, Missouri.

St. Joseph evidently held some fascination for the pair as indications are that they stayed here for about a month. "While in St. Joseph, Arthur wrote two letters to a young lady who had recently become his fiancée, telling her of plans to visit Leavenworth, Lawrence and Le Compton and of his eagerness "to learn as much as I can about the affairs and conditions of Kansas."<sup>1</sup>

From St. Joseph they continued upriver to Omaha, their length of stay here is unknown. Then, on to Leavenworth, Kansas Territory.

The method of transport is unclear, was it by steamer down the Missouri or cross-country by stage coach?

In 1856 Kansas Territory was boiling with violence, following the Kansas-Nebraska Act. But rumor had it that great fortunes could be made in the area that new towns would spring up and "There was no want of speculators or settlers in the territory and Arthur and Gardiner were among many who chose to brave the danger for the possibility of wealth."<sup>1</sup> Arriving in Leavenworth, the tense atmosphere became evident, as a political meeting the two men attended was broken up by gunfire.

Arthur and his friend "remained in Leavenworth for some days, and purchased a good deal of property there."<sup>2</sup> A "good deal" amounted to 200-300 lots in all. Remember these were purchased for investment. As "speculation in real estate ran wild, great sales of property were being made with a view to the building of new 'cities'."

When the depression of 1857 struck the country, the bottom fell out with a crash. Real estate was a drug on the market for years to come."<sup>2</sup> The investments in Kansas property proved virtually worthless to Arthur and his friend Gardiner. They disposed of their property from time to time, many lots as presents to their friends. Today, perhaps, these same lots are the sites of homes and businesses.

From Leavenworth Arthur proceeded eastward to Lawrence by stage coach through the Delaware Indian Reservation over "smooth natural road."

At Lawrence, Arthur stopped at the American House which was later destroyed by Quantrell in his raid of 1868. Here he met General James H. Lane and Sheriff Sam Walker (claimed to be the bravest sheriff in the Kansas Territory) and set out on horseback for Le Compton, here he talked with Governor Robert J. Walker who explained the many complex difficulties that clouded the territory's future.

It may have been Governor Walker's discouraging comments and the growing economic plight caused by the Depression of 1857 or news of the tragic death of his fiancée's father that spurred Arthur to return eastward, not however, before the stage crossed the Missouri River bottoms where the "stage tipped over more than once, but the travelers being on the outside had a timely notice of the catastrophe and managed to alight in a safe, though generally soft place. Then there was the usual prying up of the vehicle with fence rails and long muddy walks in mercy to the struggling horses."<sup>2</sup>

In the relative calm of big city law practice, Arthur took a bride, Helen Lewis Herndon, October 25, 1859.

During the Civil War, Arthur was appointed Quartermaster General and served until Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

In and out of politics in New York, he made friends with many Republican leaders and was elected to the office of the Vice President.

Upon the assassination of President Garfield, Arthur became the 21st President of the United States. A supreme example of the political boss. "It was a common saying of that time among those who know him best, 'Chet' Arthur President of the United States, Good God."<sup>1</sup>

In his first annual message (December 5, 1881) Arthur "called for legislation to prevent intrusion upon land set apart for Indians and outlined measures for helping them to become full citizens, for the success of the efforts now making to introduce among the Indians the customs and pursuits of civilized life, and gradually to absorb them into the mass of our citizens, sharing their rights and holden to their responsibilities, there is the imperative need for legislative action."<sup>1</sup>

President Arthur also asked for the creation of a government for the people of Alaska and repeated earlier appeals for laws suppressing polygamy in western territories.

By mid 1882 President Arthur's health began to deteriorate, newspapers across the country carried an Associated Press dispatch stating the President was suffering from Brights disease. The White House ruled the A.P. dispatch as "pure fiction."<sup>1</sup>

The President's cousin, "Dr. Brodie Herndon stayed in the White House from early May through the summer of that year and described Arthur as discouraged, irritable and often physically ill."<sup>1</sup>

Arthur's administration had shown a lively interest in the west, and he was personally interested in preserving the forests on the public domain and in 1882 wrote "The conditions of the forests of the country and the wasteful manner in which their destruction is taking place give a cause for serious apprehension."<sup>3</sup>

He opposed the fencing of public land by cattlemen and publicly advised homesteaders to cut such barriers when they were encountered."<sup>1</sup>

As early as January 22, 1883, Senator George Vest of Missouri had suggested that he and General Sheridan conduct a tour through Yellowstone for a party of dignitaries, including President Arthur.

Since 1870, when the area was explored extensively, Yellowstone had welcomed many travelers, and now with the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Bozeman, and the area opened to the world with relative easy access, the future of the nation's first national park was the cause of widespread concern.

Senator Vest campaigned to preserve the park and successfully defended amendments to the Sundry Civil Appropriation Bill which increased funds for the park's protection and improvement, and sharply restricted leasing rights. Suspicions of incompetence and corruption within the park's administration were still at issue.

In July 1883, newspapers were full of stories of an unprecedented

presidential visit to Yellowstone Park. Non-followers of Arthur blasted the trip and looked at it as an extravagant vacation and fishing trip.

Plans for the trip to Yellowstone were drawn up almost entirely by General Sheridan (Philip H.) and were designed to provide the President with a maximum of rest and relaxation.

It was agreed that a party of ten would leave Chicago on August 1, travel to Rawlins, Wyoming and from there go by spring wagons to Fort Washakie, on the Shoshone Reservation and from there, 350 miles on horseback.

"The distance to the Upper Geyser Basin," wrote Sheridan, "will be made in easy marches and we will encamp on a trout stream everyday, and those who want to hunt, after two or three days out, will find plenty of game. This will probably be the most interesting part of the trip. From the Upper Geyser Basin we will go to the Lower Geyser Basin, and then to Fort Ellis, returning home by the Northern Pacific Railroad."<sup>1</sup>

The party consisted of President Arthur and old friend, Daniel G. Rollins of New York, General Philip Sheridan and his brother, Lieutenant Colonel Michael V. Sheridan, Lieutenant Colonel James F. Gregory, Captain Philo Clark of the Second Cavalry, Brigadier General Anson Stager, Secretary of War Robert Lincoln, Montana Territorial Governor Crosby, Senator Vest, physician, Major W. H. Forwood, and a photographer, Frank Jay Haynes.

No newspaper reporters were allowed at the request of the President. Most of the Associated Press accounts of the trip were written by Lieutenant Colonels Sheridan and Gregory, and all were said to be approved by Arthur before being released.

Seventy-five men from Troop G Fifth Cavalry and 175 pack animals from Cheyenne Depot, Wyoming were ordered to Fort Washakie. Hiram Chittenden called it "one of the most complete pack trains ever organized in this or any other country."<sup>4</sup>

Arthur left Washington, in the luxury of George Pullman's private car on July 30 traveling to Louisville, Kentucky.

Here in Louisville the President was presented a "No. 4 Short" fishing reel of solid German silver. Slides and keyhead are of real gold and the pivots are jeweled. Handle of agate and the left end is engraved "President Arthur from the Anglers of Louisville, Kentucky, August 1, 1883." The right hand side carries the words "The Kentucky Reel." Encased in a handsome box of alligator skin lined with satin and velvet."<sup>5</sup>

Across Indiana and into Chicago, the run from Chicago to Omaha was made without stops, other than for water and coal, via the Northwestern Railroad. At Omaha the switch was made to the Union Pacific tracks and on to Cheyenne, Wyoming, arriving August 4.

"The special train containing the President and party drew up at the station at Cheyenne about 9:15 p. m. A large crowd had been waiting and at

once gathered about the rear car, which was believed to be the President's."<sup>6</sup>

"The crowd outside cheered and called for the President—the President appeared presently on the rear platform and without introduction addressed the assemblage "I am glad to see you and thank you for your warm welcome."<sup>6</sup>

President Arthur chatted with a writer for the Cheyenne Daily Leader and stated "he had no idea that it was anything of a city, but had thought he was far out on the frontier. Several of the President's remarks indicated that it was an unexpected thing to see so much of advanced civilization so far away out upon the plains."<sup>6</sup>

After about twenty-five minutes the train pulled out of Cheyenne proceeding westward across the Black Hills of Wyoming and into Green River on Sunday morning, August 5.

"Tomorrow morning at 7 o'clock we take the spring wagons for Washakie and will encamp on the Sweetwater, 101 miles north of this place. The next day we will drive into Fort Washakie, fifty-five miles. There are three of these spring wagons, the President, Secretary Lincoln and General Sheridan will ride in number one."<sup>7</sup>

"Word had been telegraphed north from Rawlins that the Presidential party was enroute and with a military escort from Green River City. Two cowpunchers near Rongis had heard of the party coming and being disirous of seeing the President had ridden out to meet it. At a point near South Pass they met, the cowboys having since been joined by a few others.

Sheridan and Arthur were in a Concord coach and the first thought that the President had upon seeing the cowpunchers was that he was the victim of a holdup. Upon being told the visitor's mission, Sheridan, who was in civilian clothes, at once dismounted from the coach and introduced all hands to the President. Then they decided to camp and have a sociable time. A regular banquet was held and all formality was thrown to the winds.

A shooting match was held; hats thrown up and shot at and likewise cards. Since the President had never seen a real bucking horse one of the men gave a splendid exhibition in riding.

Later, on entering the mountains to the north, the President offered a prize of twenty-five dollars to the soldier catching the largest trout. Several tried for the prize but with no success. The fish were all too uniform and there was not enough disparity in their size to make the contest exciting.

One of the men whose first name was Paddy thought that he needed the twenty-five, and moreover, he was going to have it.

Shortly after making this resolution he was very successful and presented the cook with a fish which weighed a fraction less than twenty-five pounds. But the strange part of the whole thing was that the fish was little, if any larger than the general run. "True enough" said Paddy, "he

was little larger as far as appearance was concerned but never the less he was well-built and solid—very muscular. Just heft of him and seel". A post mortem of the fish was held a short time later which disclosed the fact that it had either eaten, or absorbed in some strange way, a large quantity of leaden bullets. Needless to say, he was given the Presidential prize."<sup>8</sup>

During the last forty-five miles of the trip the President rode outside the coach next to the driver. The first days drive was made by relays of Missouri mules for a distance of 101 miles to Camp Lord on the Sweetwater. Newspaper reports state an "elegant dinner had been prepared under the direction of Captain Lord, department Quartermaster at Cheyenne."

On the morning of the 7th the party left Camp Lord for Fort Washakie a distant fifty-four miles. The President rode with the driver of the front wagon during the first stage of thirty-one miles. At Miners Delight the party stopped to watch the operations of gold washing.

After lunch the party proceeded to Fort Washakie arriving there at 5:30 p.m.,<sup>9</sup> a 10½ hour day.

The New York Times of August 8 reports the following, "to prevent intrusion, prior to the arrival of the Presidential party, all civilians were ordered off the reservation. All stage coaches were stopped at the line, travelers were put off and only the U.S. Mail was permitted entrance.

A line of Indian scouts has been run around the fort, camp, and outpost with orders to arrest all persons without a pass from General Sheridan, and put them off the reservation.

The hotel is ordered to be closed to outsiders. The telegraph has been seized and the Western Union operators put under constant watch.

There is great secrecy, the ultimate motive of which is yet to be developed."

175 pack animals, twenty days rations and twenty days supply of grain, plus an additional 6,000 pounds of grain were ordered at the supply camp.

Two courier lines were created, the first from Fort Washakie to Shoshone Lake by Troop A, Fifth Cavalry. Troop G of the Second Cavalry was responsible for the line between Shoshone Lake and Fort Ellis, Montana Territory. Troops were lodged at twenty mile intervals."

On the morning of August 9, the party on horseback, the escort and the pack mules led by Charlie Campbell, Custer's scout who was the last man to leave his column to carry word to Major Reno,<sup>12</sup> rode for 21 miles in a northwesterly direction into the Wind River Valley, to the first of 18 camps, "Camp Rollins."

General Sheridan's policy was to start the march at 6:00 a. m. and stop at 12:00 noon. So we might expect the arrival at "Camp Rollins" to be about midday. The A.P. Dispatch of August 9 states "immediately after our arrival at this place, which is near a beautiful trout stream, the President took his rod and soon landed the first trout, keeping up his old reputation of



being a fine fisherman. He enjoys camp life very much and is up and out of his tent, among the first at 5 o'clock each morning and with flannel shirt and large hat roughs it with the rest."

The third camp, "Camp Vest" located on Spring Creek, about six miles west of Crowheart Butte. Date, August 10.

Fourteen miles to "Camp Crosby" on the 11th of August. As the tents were pitched the party experienced a sudden outburst of rain and hail, very little fishing that day.

August 12, past Red Buttes to Torrey Lakes, a ride of 12 miles to "Camp Stager."

August 14, the party camped at the forks of Wind River, "Camp Bishop" where supplies for the rest of the trip were stored. 19 miles from Camp Stager, hunters brought in "three antelope, a bear, several grouse and a rabbit. <sup>11</sup>

August 15, 17 miles up the Continental Divide by 11 o'clock and "Camp Robert Lincoln" was established. "Hunting was excellent and the scenery the talk of the camp."<sup>11</sup>

At 6:30 a.m. on August 16, the President and his party left Camp Lincoln for the rugged 19 miles to "Camp Isham." "The descent down the mountains to the valley of the Gros Ventre is rugged, but was accomplished by the President and party without accident, they only dismounted at one steep and difficult place."<sup>13</sup>

On August 17 the party rode down the Gros Ventre Valley for about 10 miles then crossed to the north side, "through canyons and over mountains of considerable elevation."<sup>14</sup> This day's march fifteen miles, and in honor of the President, General Sheridan called the camp "Camp Arthur."<sup>14</sup>

"— — — rods and reels were gotten in shape and the entire party went fishing. General Stager made the largest catch, Senator Vest next and the President third."<sup>14</sup>

August 18, westward along the Gros Ventre River, an easy march compared to those of recent days.

After approximately five miles the full grandeur of the Tetons was witnessed by the entire group. "It was the voice of every member of the party that the sight alone fully repaid all the toils and perils of the march."<sup>14</sup>

The party remained here at "Camp Teton" on the 19th and set out again on the 20th.

At "Camp Hampton" the weather must have been quite disagreeable as "the temper of all the party was severely tried by the extremes of weather experienced. Hot weather in the middle of the day. A severe gale of wind was experienced during the day and night accompanied with a blinding cloud of dust. Ice formed one inch thick in the water buckets before the tents by morning."<sup>15</sup>

August 21st saw the party arrive at "Camp Strong" after a hot dusty ride of thirty miles, one of the longest marches of the trip.

Camp Strong was located about two miles south of Yellowstone National Park boundry along the Snake River. The party remained here through the 22nd.

The temperature dropped to 20 degrees on the morning of the 23rd and after a 17 mile march the party stopped at "Camp Logan" which was located on the northeast shore of Lake Lewis.

Here at Camp Logan the President and Senator Vest caught 105 pounds of fish!<sup>11</sup>

Another long march of 26 miles brought the party to "Camp Upper Geyser" in Upper Geyser Basin, about a quarter mile from Old Faithful Geyser on August 24th and the party remained here through the 25th.

It was on August 24 that the Wood River Times of Hailey, Idaho printed "A Startling Report." A band of outlaws said to be on the way to capture President Arthur and his party.

"During the past week a number of strangers, all provided with good riding animals and firearms, and resembling a party of regulators or cowboys, have been camped on Willow Creek, and considerable curiosity has been expressed as to the intentions of the party. Some asserting that the party had organized to go up in the Indian country on a prospecting trip, while others believed them to be a gang of Arizona rustlers. During several days past some of the party have ridden through town in a defiant manner and mysteriously disappeared. From a man who came in today it is learned that the party (who induced him to join them and made him take certain pledges of secrecy) was organized to proceed to the Yellowstone Park. They left last night, going on stage road, and he escaped during the night.

The object of the expedition is to corral and capture President Arthur and party and to spirit them away into mountain fastnesses and caves, where they will be fed but kept prisoners while the members of the party act as pickets to prevent being surprised and captured, while negotiations for ransom are conducted. The captain or leader of the party has an idea that a heavy ransom will be offered by the United States and personal friends of the President, after search for the Presidential party shall be given up and that half a million dollars or more can be extorted from the Secret Service Fund and divided among the party on the principal adopted by the Italian Banditti.

The escaped member of the party says there are 65 men in the outfit, and some of them were guerrillas in the late war and five wild Shoshone and Bannock Indians go along as guide-scouts, who are armed with repeating rifles and scalping knives.

The leader is a Texas desperado, on whose head a price has been set and with the exception of two Italians, who left the railroad grade, the rest are cowboys.

A grand council was held night before last on the prairie, when every

man was sworn with his dagger in the firelight to do his duty."<sup>16</sup>

Was this perhaps a reason for the increased security at Fort Washakie a few days earlier or was the whole thing a hoax perpetrated by an unfriendly press? It seems that the "military were sufficiently impressed to add another troop of calvary to the President's escort."<sup>17</sup>

The Wood River Times report was never mentioned in the A.P. Dispatches originating from Yellowstone Park but many national and local newspapers published an account nearly verbatim of the Times report.

The presidential party did move its camp from "Camp Upper Geysers" on Sunday the 26th twenty miles to the east and crossing the Continental Divide twice during that march. "Insufficient forage for the animals" was the official report for the move. This placed the party at West Thumb Bay where "Camp Sackett" was established.

The presidential party arrived at "Camp Campbell" August 27 on the northwest shore of Yellowstone Lake some 22 miles from "Camp Sackett" the previous stop. The President again went fishing and caught thirty-five fish weighing forty-five pounds.<sup>18</sup>

On August 28th after a march of 18 miles along the west side of Yellowstone River, "Camp Allison" was established near the canyon's rim, midway between upper and lower falls of the Yellowstone and the group remained here through the 29th.

"Camp Cameron" was established on the 30th of August one and one half miles northwest of Tower Falls after a 21 mile ride."<sup>11</sup>

On the last day of the ride the party traveled to Mammoth Hot Springs and "made camp on a prominent bench about one-half mile to the north."<sup>17</sup> That evening the President attended an informal reception in his honor at the National Hotel.

On September 1, President Arthur traveled by coach to the end of track at Cinnabar, a distance of about seven miles to the train that would take him to Livingston, and on to Minneapolis via the Northwest Pacific Railroad to drive the golden spike September 3, 1883, celebrating the completion of the Northern Pacific east-west hookup.

This ended the 350 mile march through wilderness and an area never before seen by a U.S. President.

Although Arthur was not known or remembered for his conservation measures nor is he remembered as a sportsman, he must have thoroughly enjoyed the unspoiled, magnificent beauty of the west in 1883, ninety-five years ago.

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# Colorado Boundaries and Their Original Surveys

By Erl H. Ellis

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A necessary introduction to the discussion of the boundaries of Colorado— a few comments about:

## LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

Man had to devise some method of describing points on the surface of the earth in order to communicate about them and to enable the drawing of maps. The earliest system adopted to depict a theoretical grid on the surface of the earth was what may be called the "natural" system. Mother Nature gave us a revolving earth, so we had an axis of rotation with ends that we named the poles; and the idea of directions resulting in our using north, east, west and south. Then came the conception of a plane at right angles to and through the center of the axis, cutting the earth in a unique great circle, which we called the equator. From any point on the equator we could think of another great circle passing through the poles, and these north-south lines we named meridians. Also we could think of planes parallel to the plane of the equator that would cut small circles on the earth, so we referred to these small circles as parallels. Thus we had conceived a grid, and for the description of any point on the surface of the earth we could use the intersection of the meridian and the parallel through that point. Of course we then had to invent some system of measurement, and an angular system was adopted, and degrees, minutes and seconds of arc came into use. As to the distances from the equator we adopted the latitude, both north and south, as a term for describing that distance.<sup>1</sup>

These elementary statements made here are excused as they lead to the next invention, the naming and numbering of the meridians. The one thing lacking to complete our system was some unique meridian from which we might start our measurements east and west, and define the other line that would go through a point to be described at right angles to the parallel through that point. The east-west distances we called longitude, but

Mother Nature furnished no special meridian as the zero one for our system, so arbitrary choices were open. At first many a nation simply assumed that the meridian that ran through some part of its capital city should be used as the zero meridian for that nation, and used for the maps produced in that country. For instance, the English adopted as their starting point for the measurement of longitude the meridian through the center of the telescope at the Royal Observatory, which was then in a London suburb called Greenwich. This Greenwich Meridian was destined in time to be accepted world wide so that all maps would have the same sort of grid measurements wherever produced. So today any use of the word "longitude" implies a measurement either east or west of this standard Greenwich Meridian.<sup>2</sup>

But this, as suggested, was not always so. For a while our patriotic Congress decreed that new territories in the West should be defined by meridians measured west from the Washington Meridian; a meridian that passed through the center of the dome of the Naval Observatory at 24th street and Constitution Avnue; same being  $77^{\circ} 03' 2.3''$  west of Greenwich.

This long introduction brings us to the legal definition of the outer boundaries of the Territory and State of Colorado, both the same.<sup>3</sup> Two parallels of latitude, north, were used,  $37^{\circ}$  for the south line and  $41^{\circ}$  for the north line. These you will find so labelled on most maps of Colorado. Then also two meridians were used, the  $25^{\circ}$  meridian west of Washington for the east line and the  $32^{\circ}$  meridian west from Washington for the west line. These figures do not appear on maps of Colorado. The map makers draw the meridians from  $102^{\circ}$  to  $109^{\circ}$  (west from Greenwich) on the maps of Colorado and then set the side lines of Colorado to the west of the  $102^{\circ}$  and the  $109^{\circ}$  meridians at a distance determined by the 3 minutes and 2.3 seconds of arc or angular measure. But on the maps usually there is no statement as to what fixes these east and west lines of Colorado.

### THE SEVEN CORNERS AND THE OWNERS OF THE FUTURE COLORADO

The land that was to become Colorado had a part of it, too complicated for detailing here, owned by the Republic and later State of Texas.<sup>4</sup> But all the area that lay north and west of the present State of Texas was sold to the United States by the State of Texas in 1840, and this allowed the creation of the Territories of Utah, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. The area to become Colorado was first divided between the Territories of Utah, New Mexico, Kansas, and Nebraska.<sup>5</sup>

It is convenient, at least for this discussion, to think of Colorado as having seven "corners." The intersection of the two parallels and the two meridians named by Congress in creating Colorado form the four usual

corners, the NE, SE, SW, and NW corners. But there are three other points on the boundaries of Colorado to be considered. On the north line of the State is the tri-state corner, common to Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado, this point being at the intersection of parallel 41° with the 27° meridian west from Washington; in other words, this tri-state point is two-sevenths of the way from the northeast corner of Colorado toward the northwest corner of the State.

Where the east line of Colorado (on the 25° meridian—Washington) meets the Fortieth parallel is another tri-state corner, common to Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado. This northwest corner of Kansas is closely one-fourth of the way south from the NE corner to the SE corner of Colorado.

On the south line of Colorado, along the 37th parallel, where that parallel is intersected by the meridian 103° west of Greenwich, is the third tri-state corner, common to Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Colorado.

The earliest of our first neighbors was the Territory of Utah, established September 9, 1850, about three years after the Mormons had settled in that area. Utah had then, and has retained, the 37° line as its south boundary, but its original north line was the south line of the original Oregon, the 42° parallel. The east line of Utah was the Continental Divide, so Utah included all of the future west slope of Colorado. Here originated the western part of the present south line of our State, from the Continental Divide west to the SW corner of Colorado.<sup>6</sup>

It was the terms of the purchase by the United States from the State of Texas in early 1850 that fixed the east line of the later Territory of New Mexico as lying along the meridian of 103° west of Greenwich.<sup>7</sup> This is the only one of the meridians discussed herein as a boundary that is measured from Greenwich. The common line between Texas and New Mexico on said 103° meridian (Greenwich) had to be extended a half degree of latitude north from the northwest corner of Texas to reach the 37th parallel and form the northeast corner of New Mexico.<sup>8</sup> But the 1850 New Mexico extended one degree of latitude north into future Colorado, from its said east line on 103°, then along the 38th parallel to the Continental Divide, and then back south along the Divide to the 37th parallel. This northern knob of New Mexico protruding north into the future Colorado recognized the early Spanish settlements in the San Luis Valley.<sup>9</sup>

Then in 1854, on May 30, the rest of the lands to become, later, the Territory of Colorado, were created into the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska. Kansas had its main south line along the same 37° parallel, running from a meridian that was the west line of Missouri and passed through the middle of the mouth of the Kansas River on west to the east line of New Mexico at the 103° meridian (Greenwich). From that intersection, the present NE corner of New Mexico, the Kansas line went north one degree of latitude to the 38th parallel, then west on that parallel to the

Continental Divide, and then northerly on the Divide to the 40th parallel, which parallel the Kansas line followed east to the Missouri River.<sup>9</sup> At the same time the Territory of Nebraska was created and included all of the future Colorado north of the 40° parallel and east of the Divide.<sup>10</sup>

### SURVEY OF SOUTH LINE OF KANSAS

In starting to discuss the surveys that established the various parts of the boundaries of Colorado, it is well to stress that the State has two kinds of boundaries. One is the theoretical boundary as described in the federal statutes, the two parallels and the two meridians; nice, simple, whole-numbered lines. The other kind of boundary is the actual one, the legal one, the one marked on the ground, the line established by the monuments set out by the first official survey of the line, irrespective of its departures, through surveying inaccuracies, from the line stated in the statutes.

Also it is submitted that the early surveyors into unknown regions occupied by Indians were a breed of explorers who have had no fair share of acclaim by the writers of history.

Congress, on July 8, 1856, authorized the President to cause the south line of Kansas Territory to be "surveyed and distinctly marked." Evidently the President gave sufficient orders concerning the survey to result in Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, First Cavalry, going into the field and officially heading the expedition. He had under his command four companies of the First Cavalry, two companies of the Sixth Infantry, two astronomers, J. H. Clark and Hagler Campbell, one surveyor, J. E. Weyss, and other persons assisting the astronomers and the surveyor. It is to be recalled that this plan entailed going through much land occupied by hostile Indians.<sup>11</sup>

There seems to have been in reality three separate parties and operations. Mr. Weyss and his party did the actual surveying and placing of the mile markers along the line from Missouri and New Mexico, the work occupying 85 days and covering 463 miles as Weyss measured it. Mr. Campbell had a separate astronomical party and established eleven stations, utilized to make sure that Weyss kept his survey work on the 37° parallel. The "army" under Johnston had the job of studying the country, sizing up the area for possible railroad lines, and protecting the other parties from any interference by the Indians. The fact that Weyss lost two ambulance drivers indicates that Johnston did not keep too closely in touch with the surveying party.

This survey ended at what the astronomers decided was the location of the 103° meridian west from Greenwich, and there was erected the first of the several monuments marking the northeast corner of the later New Mexico. This 1856 monument has always been called the "Johnston Monument." It is submitted by the author that it should have been known



as the "Weyss Monument" in keeping with practice of naming such markers for the surveyor who actually set the same. It was later determined that this Johnston Monument was 4.36 miles too far west. The astronomers in those early days, lacking nearby telegraphic service for the determination of accurate time, did not and could not do the most accurate work in finding the longitude of points, and determining how far west they were from Greenwich.

This survey by Weyss, unofficial as far as Colorado was to be concerned, did place markers along the east 57 miles of the future south line of Colorado. Of course Weyss had no reason to fix the southeast corner of Colorado, but his line did cross over that point that was to be of importance later. The official survey of this east part of the south line of Colorado, adjacent to Oklahoma, was made by John J. Major in 1874 and at that time he set a monument for the southeast corner of Colorado.<sup>12</sup> At present there is a wide graded road along the line between the States, and there seems to be no surface marker to indicate the exact location of this SE corner of Colorado.

### THE MACOMB MONUMENT

As just explained, the first monument that was set at what was to become the northeast corner of New Mexico (after 1861) was erected by surveyor Weyss, but was called the Johnston Monument. When the records of the observations made by the astronomers in 1856 were studied in Washington, it was decided that the calculations made by the astronomers in the field based on those observations were in error and resulted in an incorrect fixing of the 103° meridian. Based upon the same field observations, Captain J. M. Macomb deduced a new location for the west end of the main south Kansas line on the 37th parallel. His calculations determined that the point should be 2.507 miles east of the Johnston Monument. So in 1859 Macomb was sent to the area, made the calculated measurement east from the Johnston Monument and set a new monument that became rather famous under the name of the "Macomb Monument." It was still nearly two miles too far west, as later determined.<sup>13</sup>

When the Territory of Colorado was established in 1861 the knob of New Mexico north of the 37th parallel was cut off from New Mexico, became part of Colorado, and the present NE corner of New Mexico came into existence.<sup>14</sup> Thus the 37th parallel, from the meridian 103° west of Greenwich on west to the meridian of 32° west from Washington, became the common boundary between Colorado and New Mexico, and this line was destined to become the most interesting part of the bounds of Colorado, because of the several surveys made or attempted, and as its

history was to be recited in an elaborate decision by the Supreme Court of the United States. Today that line is marked with caps carrying the name of the U.S. Supreme Court, a unique situation as far as the author knows.

### THE DARLING SURVEY

In 1867 Congress became interested in the northern boundary of New Mexico and made an appropriation for its survey. The Commissioner of the General Land Office employed Ehud N. Darling, a surveyor and astronomer, to make this survey, which he did in 1868. His instructions were to start at the Macomb Monument, supposedly the NE corner of New Mexico, and to then run west along the 37° parallel of latitude until he reached the meridian of 109° from Greenwich; although this was not quite the NW corner of New Mexico. Darling did as directed and en route erected ten astronomical monuments with his eleventh at the terminus of his line. He placed fairly substantial markers for every mile of the line. His final point was never accepted for the Four Corners location. He was too far west anyway as it turned out.<sup>15</sup>

The first official marking of the northwest corner of New Mexico, at the "Four Corners," was by Chandler Robbins in 1875. He made a new determination of longitude and fixed the four-state corner on the Darling line 51.96 chains (about 64/100 of a mile) east of Darlings final marker. Robbins then used his point for the NW corner of New Mexico to run south and establish the common line between New Mexico and Arizona.<sup>16</sup>

### THE CHANEY-SMITH MONUMENT

In 1881 it was decided by the General Land Office that it was time to have a more accurate determination of the whereabouts of the 103° meridian west from Greenwich. Richard O. Chaney and Wilbur W. Smith, U.S. surveyors and astronomers, were employed to establish this line anew. They started near Las Animas, Colorado, and by astronomical observations and the telegraphic exchange of time signals they were able to make a much more accurate determination of a point on the 103° meridian. They also found the latitude of this point, calculated how far it was to the 37th parallel, measured that distance south from their established point, and then erected a monument for the northeast corner of New Mexico. This of course became known as the "Chaney-Smith Monument."<sup>17</sup> These men also carried their 103° line on south fro the 37th parallel for half a degree of latitude, on the common line of New Mexico and Oklahoma, to the NW corner of Texas. Later this same meridian came into use in the U.S. rectangular system as the "Cimmaron Meridian."<sup>18</sup>

### THE PRESTON MONUMENT

The final and official determination of the location of the NE corner of New Mexico was accomplished in 1900 by Levi S. Preston. He was employed to re-trace and re-establish the 1874 line run by Major from the Macomb Monument east to the 103° meridian as established by Chaney and Smith in 1881, but was not to be bound by their assumption of the location of the 37th parallel. Chaney and Smith had not attempted to locate the Major line, which first established the 37th meridian in that locality, but had made their own calculations. Preston did make a redetermination of the old Major line along the 37th parallel, found its intersection with the 103° meridian as fixed by Chaney and Smith, made the final determination of the NE corner of New Mexico, and erected a rather ornate and good-looking monument there, that is known as the Preston Monument and is seen easily by tourists as it is close to a well travelled road.<sup>19</sup> The Chaney-Smith Monument is only a little bit north but is hidden from the road by a bit of a hill, so is usually ignored. The Macomb Monument is found only by a climb up a mesa on west.

### THE BURWELL PARTIAL SURVEY

Going back for a few moments to the 1868 first survey of the New Mexico and Colorado common line by Darling, it is a fact that Darling, in running west of the 37th parallel, somewhere in the vicinity on the south line of Archuleta County, Colorado, became apprehensive that he was getting off course since his last astronomical monument had been set and after he had crossed some very rugged country. Whatever gave him pause, he set a marker on the southwest facing slope of Elwell canon, then ran a "blind" line more or less west, and arrived at some fairly level areas west of the Navajo river. Here he established his seventh astronomical monument, got himself back onto the 37th parallel and confirmed his hunch that he had wandered south from it on his survey. He ran east from the astronomical monument setting new mile markers until he reached Elwell canon. On the same slope of that canon he set a new marker. This second marker in Elwell canon was 53.19 chains (say about 7/10ths of a mile) N 38° 02' W of the marker that had first been set when he had earlier discontinued his survey line.<sup>20</sup> If one looks at any fairly large scale map of Colorado this jog in the south line of the State, a little southeast of Edith, Archuleta county, will appear.

That this error was made and that the jog existed was no secret at the time. It would appear from an article in the newspaper at the time that the inhabitants of Edith were voting for Republicans. The Democrats of Archuleta county thought that if they could shove Edith over into New Mexico they might carry Archuleta county for their candidates, which had not been possible when the Edith votes were counted.<sup>21</sup> The Colorado

Legislature was induced to pass a bill in April 1901, to bring about a resurvey of the Darling line between his astronomical stations 8 and 10.<sup>22</sup> The Act contemplated the appointment of three commissioners, one to be chosen by Colorado, one by New Mexico and one by the United States. This "invitation" to New Mexico and the United States received no acceptances. But Governor Orman of Colorado appointed Charles A. Johnston as "Commissioner, Southern State Boundary."<sup>23</sup> Johnston employed Blair Burwell, a well known and able civil engineer, to do the field work and make this new survey. Burwell worked from July 15 to November 10, 1901, and then stopped, due to inclement weather.<sup>24</sup> By the next summer there were indications that there would be a federal resurvey of the Darling line, so nothing more was done by Johnson or Burwell.

### THE CARPENTER LINE

In 1902 the General Land Office was able to induce Congress to make an appropriation for a resurvey and reestablishment of the entire north line of New Mexico. This contemplated a new, independent, survey coupled with a decreed destruction of all the Darling monuments that could be found. Whatever the background might have been that induced Congress to pass such an Act, Howard B. Carpenter was employed to make this new and "independent" survey, and he completed same in 1903. Carpenter began his survey at the point on the 109° meridian (Greenwich) where Darling has terminated his survey. But Carpenter, even in his first mile going east, found himself north of the old Darling line, and was north of it for most of the way, though he managed to get back to that line and reach the Macomb Monument to finish his survey. The Carpenter line transferred to New Mexico the most of one town, two villages, and five postoffices that lay north of the Darling line. Then Congress in 1908 passed a Joint Resolution accepting the Carpenter line as the official marking of the north line of New Mexico and as the correct location of the 37th parallel. But the President vetoed this Resolution and that was the end of any real meaning of the Carpenter line. The Land Office, accepting for a while the Carpenter line, had to go back and use the Darling line as the official one.<sup>25</sup>

### THE JOG FIXED BY PERKINS

Evidently the partial survey by Burwell in 1901 had either destroyed the two Darling markers in Elwell canon or had placed new monuments so that the situation was confused. Anyway, in 1917, the General Land Office employed Wm. C. Perkins to retrace and to restore about 40 miles of the Darling line east from his 8th astronomical monument. Perkins did this resurvey and reestablished the Darling monuments along this section which was a southerly deviation from the 37th parallel. Especially he

renewed the two Darling monuments on the slope of Elwell canon and determined the distance and bearing of the line connecting same and creating the jog. Thus became again official the old Darling line with its crook near Edith, but now all re-monumented, in that area.<sup>26</sup>

### THE NEW MEXICO LAW SUIT AGAINST COLORADO

New Mexico was not happy with the abandonment of the Carpenter line and the re-acceptance of the original Darling line, so decided to seek help from the United States Supreme Court. In 1919 New Mexico filed direct with the Supreme Court its bill of complaint and in effect asked that the Court find that the Carpenter line was indeed the correct line fixing the north line of New Mexico. The federal laws provided that the Supreme Court could receive such a suit between States without same being considered by any lower federal court. Colorado filed a cross-bill with the Supreme Court asking that the Darling Line be proclaimed the official boundary. New Mexico was not unaware of the basic law that the first survey always governed, but New Mexico hoped to convince the Supreme Court that the Darling survey was so bad, so erroneous, that the Court should decree an exception to the usual rule when the line first run was so full of faults that it should be ignored. The Edith jog loomed large in the New Mexico arguments.

The United States Supreme Court was not impressed by this New Mexico attempt to completely discredit the Darling line and in 1925 the Court held against New Mexico. The Court's opinion went into great detail in reciting the history of this boundary and its surveys and monuments,<sup>27</sup> and later issued an elaborate order to implement its decision.<sup>28</sup> The main substance of the order was that the bill of New Mexico was dismissed, that the true and lawful boundary between the two States consisted of the Major line from the Preston Monument to the Macomb Monument (around 2½ miles) and then the Darling line on west, with the acceptance of the Perkin's restoration of the Darling line from Darling's 203-mile corner to his astronomical monument No. Eight; that Arthur D. Kidder was designated "Commissioner" to run, locate, and mark the decreed boundary, using impartiality, diligence, and dispatch; that all the Darling monuments destroyed by Carpenter should be restored and that all the Carpenter monuments should be destroyed; and finally that the costs of such a survey by Kidder and his report should be shared equally by the two States.

It may be assumed that New Mexico had not contemplated this sort of an order coming out of its filing of the suit. New Mexico could have thought it might not accomplish its object, but would hardly foresee being saddled with the pretty expensive costs of half of the expenditures for the survey and the report thereof. New Mexico was very slow in advancing money for

the survey and report and Colorado was not much better, inclined to await payment first by New Mexico. This caused delays of years in the surveys and the Report was not filed with the Court until 1960. The Court's final order approving the survey is dated October 24, 1960, some 35 years after the Court first ordered the survey to be made "with dispatch."<sup>29</sup>

Kidder did most of the field work, but died in June of 1958. The Supreme Court appointed Joseph C. Thoma to complete the field work and prepare the final report.<sup>30</sup> The three-volume "Report of the Boundary Commission" is most interesting and valuable. It contains an itemization of each step of the survey and detailed maps of the entire boundary in sheets that cover from 6 to 12 miles of the line (averaging 8 miles) in each instance.

The monuments erected by Kidder, at each "Darling" mile and at other points where crossing a road or for other reasons, were of concrete, moulded in galvanized metal forms at each station, of various sizes, with a bronze tablet or cap set into the top surface. These caps bear the name of "The Supreme Court of the United States" show Colorado on one side and New Mexico on the other, mention penalties for disturbance, and then in the field the mile distance was added.<sup>31</sup>

### THE FOUR CORNERS

Little need be said about the southwest corner of Colorado, the common corner for four States, at the intersection of the 37th parallel and the 32nd meridian west of Washington. It is a well known point with a large concrete circle about it, with some advertising, as a tourist attraction. But it may well be mentioned that in the Kidder report the concluding part includes a historical sketch of the monumenting and use of that corner in surveying, and he describes eleven occasions from 1868 to 1934. His last words give the U.S.G.S. 1934 determinations of the geographic position of this corner as:

Latitude 36° 59' 56.3'' N.  
Longitude 109° 02' 40.24'' W.<sup>32</sup>

### THE NORTHEAST CORNER

Turning now to surveys of parts of the Colorado boundaries other than the storied south line, it is convenient to look at those portions centering about the NE corner of the State, which lies a few miles northeasterly of Julesburg.

It happened that under one early contract, Oliver N. Chaffee in 1869 set three of the seven Colorado "corners."<sup>33</sup>

Chaffee started at the astronomical station that had already been established at Julesburg at latitude 40° 59' 1.56'' and longitude 25° 18' 30.9'' west from Washington. Chaffee had available tables from which he could figure exactly how far north it was to the 41st parallel, the north line

of the State, and then the distance east to reach the NE corner of Colorado. Having these distances calculated, Chaffee ran a line north from Julesburg and located a point on the 41st parallel, and then he ran on that parallel east to the 25° meridian (from Washington) and set a monument for the NE corner of Colorado. From that corner he then surveyed a line west on the 41st parallel for two degrees of longitude and set another monument for the southeast corner of Wyoming, this being one of the tri-state corners of Colorado. Next Chaffee went back to the NE corner of the State and measured a random line south the distance he figured should bring him to the 40th parallel. He looked about for evidence of the earlier survey that had been made of the 40th parallel from near the center of the Kansas-Nebraska line to the Continental Divide, marking what you all know as the Base Line through Boulder, Colorado. Chaffee could find no markers and so had to make his own determination of the location of the intersection of the 40th parallel with the 25° meridian, and at this point he set his third monument, again indicating a tri-state corner. Finally he surveyed back up north to the NE corner, setting monuments.

One interesting feature of Chaffee's field notes is that in reporting on the running of the line west along the 41st parallel he notes for each mile how much of an offset he made north from a due west line from his last mile-post, a procedure necessary for the establishing of any parallel, same being a curved line and not a due east-west straight line.

The stone at the tri-state corner on the north line of Colorado is easily found and was in good condition when last seen by the author. The stone at the NE corner of the State luckily is a little east of the road along the 25° meridian, but its upper half has been broken off. The author has been able to arouse some local interest and there may soon be a pavement built about this stone, with tablets from each of the four counties cornering there (one from Colorado, three from Nebraska) and some marker supplied by the Colorado State Historical Society telling something of the original setting of the stone in 1869.

The stone at the tri-state corner on the east line of Colorado is now hardly more than a remnant and is not too easy to find, not being very near any road. One has to do a little searching afoot in a rolling country to find this rather hidden site.

### THE KANSAS-COLORADO LINE

The line common to Colorado and Kansas is that part of the 25° meridian (from Washington) between the fortieth parallel and the 37th parallel. This was surveyed and marked in 1872 by John J. Major.<sup>34</sup> He found the stone set by Chaffee at the northwest corner of Kansas. It had been levelled and covered with dirt and he had to reset it. He ran south and set the southeast corner of Colorado. The southern 27 miles of this line was

reestablished by Kidder in 1908. As has been earlier said, no present surface indication of the whereabouts of the corner exists.

### THE WYOMING-COLORADO LINE

The first survey along the south line of Wyoming was made in 1873 (about five years after the Territory was created) by A. V. Richards,<sup>35</sup> whose contract provided for marking the line of the 41st parallel for seven degrees of latitude from the 27° to the 34° meridians west of Washington.

Richards started on June 5, 1873, at the 1869 Chaffee monument at the tri-state corner that was the southeast corner of Wyoming and ran west, setting posts or markers for every mile. He marked his posts with the word "Wyoming" on one side and the word "Colorado" on the other or south side; this being the usage until he thought he had crossed over the northwest corner of Colorado, and from then on he marked the south side of his posts with the word "Utah." Richards had no reason to identify the northwest corner of Colorado but he figured that it lay somewhere between his mile-posts 261 and 262. He established astronomical monuments at frequent intervals. His field notes are quite readable. He tells a lot about the geology of the areas he was crossing and mentions rivers, roads, and summits. About a quarter of a mile west of his 252 mile-post he reached a canon with vertical walls and noted in the vicinity the stakes of many mining claims set by the victims of the "Great Diamond Hoax" of 1872-1873.

### THE UTAH-COLORADO LINE

This resumé of the initial surveys that officially fixed the location of the boundaries of Colorado can now be closed with comments about the west line of the State on the 32nd meridian west from Washington.

Rollin J. Reeves received a contract dated July 26, 1878, to survey this line, starting at its south end, the "Four Corners." Reeves' field notes contain quite a story.<sup>36</sup> He went first to Fort Leavenworth and there General Pope promised him a military escort from Fort Wingate, N.M. Reeves next stopped at Fort Garland, where General Hatch suggested that he could arrange for an escort from a military camp on the La Plata. So about 30 soldiers under Captain Charles Parke, Company D, 9th Cavalry, reported at about the time Reeves had managed to reach the Four Corners area. Reeves then left Alamosa, the end of the railroad, on August 15, 1878 and went to Tierra Amarilla, N.M. where he bought some burros, and he then spent several days at Animas, Colorado, arranging for supplies. Reeves's party reached the north fork of the San Juan river and found it swollen by rains and practically impassible. A small raft was built and



launched, but it only reached the same side of the stream, about two miles below.

Thereupon one Peter Shirts, aged 70, was recruited as a guide and Indian interpreter, and he assisted the party for a few weeks. Four days were spent on a trip to borrow a boat from the son-in-law of Shirts, but that owner needed the boat himself. The water somewhat receded and the men built a new raft, 14 feet long and 8 feet wide. Using this the party finally crossed the river on September 10, 1878. Many of the group waded and swam along side the raft to guide it, and two islands were utilized as intermediate points on this crossing.

Next they had to make a bargain with an Indian to show them the marker for the SE corner of Colorado. The survey work started on September 11, 1878, and continued until November 10, when the 150 mile-post had been set. Here Reeves noted an immense sandstone pyramid known as Solomon's Steeple, lying about three-fourths of a mile southeast, with the Salt Lake wagon road, built by U.S. troops, running near the steeple.

In 1879 Reeves resumed his survey and finished it by locating and monumenting the northwest corner of Colorado, same falling 61 chains northwest of Richard's mile-post 262. Reeve's marker at the corner was a rather elaborate stone.

Large scale maps of Colorado show that Reeves meridian line was not a true N-S line, but contained a westward bulge.

Some concluding comments about this NW corner of the State are made. To get to this corner from Denver one uses Highway 40 to Maybell, and there one takes the road to Brown's Park, in Utah. Then one goes further west into Utah, then north into Wyoming, then east and back into Utah, and finally finds the area containing the corner. There is a fence about the small park at the corner, and a large billboard has been erected there about 9 feet high, with quite a legend fixed thereon, the wording covering about 5 feet by 8 feet and it tells the story of the establishment of the corner. The promoters of this sign were the Kiwanis Clubs of Rock Springs, Wyoming, and of Craig, Colorado, and also of the Lions Club of Daggett County, Utah. The sign was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management at Cheyenne.

When the author first visited this corner in 1969, the sign announced that the longitude of the corner was  $102^{\circ} 02' 57.633''$  W. This would be close to the northeast corner of the State, so the author corresponded with the Bureau and the longitude statement on the sign was corrected in the summer of 1972 to read  $109^{\circ} 02' 57.633''$  W. The noted latitude of the corner is  $41^{\circ} 00' 42.611''$  N. These figures are the most recent astronomical determinations of the location of this corner. So the actual, legal corner is 263 feet too far north and 379 feet too far east from the theoretical correct location.

## THE COLORADO-OKLAHOMA LINE

After telling about the 1856 survey of the south line of Kansas, nothing more has been said above about the part of that line, about 55 miles long, that is now the common line of Oklahoma and Colorado.

The first official survey of this part was by John J. Major in 1874. He monumented the line from the established southeast corner of Colorado west to the Macomb Monument. Actually Major began his line too far south, about ten chains, and after running about 25 miles he had to edge a bit north to reach the Macomb Monument. See Vol. 501, Denver Survey Office)

In 1908 Arthur D. Kidder and Jay P. Hester re-established the line over the east 163 miles of the south line of Colorado, this being Major's line for the last approximate 55 miles.

In conclusion, the following latest astronomical determinations of the north latitude and the west of Greenwich longitude of some of the other corners are given:

The north-east corner of Colorado: Latitude  $41^{\circ} 00' 08.478''$ ; Longitude  $102^{\circ} 03' 04.005''$ . This translates into 858 feet too far north and 138 feet too far west from its theoretical place.

The Four-Corners monument: 'Latitude  $36^{\circ} 59' 56.30''$ ; Longitude  $109^{\circ} 02' 40.24''$ . So this famous monument is 375 feet too far south and 1787 feet too far east if the theoretical position could have been determined with the greatest accuracy.

## NOTES

1. Most encyclopedias have some treatment of latitude and longitude. On page 791 of Vol. 13 of the 1965 edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica is a brief statement. See also pp. 44-48 of "The Round Earth on Flat Paper," National Geographic Society, 1947. Also pp. 10-15 of "Elements of Map Projection," Special Publication No. 68, Fifth Edition, 1945, Coast and Geodetic Survey.

2. See Note 1. France has not fully accepted the use of the Greenwich Meridian.

3. Colorado was organized as a Territory on February 28, 1861 (12 Stat. L. 172), with the same outer boundaries as at present; see p. 141 of "Boundaries of the United States and the several States," Geological Survey Professional Paper 909, 1976; (hereafter "P.P. 909). The Colorado boundaries are set forth in 13 Stat. L. 33, approved March 21, 1861, and appear in the "Enabling Act" as published in Vol. I of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

4. On p. 11 of P.O. 909 (Note 3) is a colored picture of the original Texas. A diagram appears on p. 121.

5. See p. 122 of P.P. 909 (Note 3) dealing with the 1850 purchase by the United States from Texas; and see 9 Stat. L. 446.

6. For Utah boundaries see pp. 159-160 of P.P. 909 (Note 3)

7. See Texas diagram, p. 121, P.P. 909 (Note 3)

8. See Oklahoma diagram, p. 140, P.P. 909 (Note 3)

9. See pp. 138-139, P.P. 909 (Note 3)

10. See pp. 136-137, P.P. 909 (Note 3)
11. Nyle H. Miller wrote an introduction to and then quoted the diary of Col. Joseph E. Johnston; see Vol. I, No. 2, of *The Kansas Historical Quarterly*. Martha B. Caldwell made some preliminary comments and then set forth the diary of Hugh Campbell; see Vol. VI, No. 4, of the same *Quarterly*. See also page 12 of "Report of the Boundary Commissioner," a three-volume document filed with the United States Supreme Court in Case No. 1, *The State of New Mexico vs. The State of Colorado*, 1925, 267 U.S. 30 (hereafter "Boundary Report")
12. Major's field notes are in an old volume, now labeled No. 501, in the Denver Survey Office of the Bureau of Land Management (hereafter "Survey Office") See also p. 13 of Boundary Report (note 11)
13. See p. 14 of Boundary Report (Note 11, devoted to a history of the Macomb Monument.
14. See Figure 47, p. 162, P.P. 909 (note 3)
15. See 267 U.S. 334-35. Also Boundary Report p. 13 (Note 11)
16. See Boundary Report p. 192 (Note 11)
17. See Boundary Report p. 13 (Note 11)
18. Same as Note 17.
19. See Boundary Report, pp. 13 and 15 (Note 11)
20. See map between pp. 48 and 49 in Boundary Report (Note 11)
21. See the Denver *TIMES* for April 12, 1901.
22. Colorado Session Laws. 1901, p. 78.
23. See Book 2, Misc. Documents, Office of Colorado Secretary of State.
24. See report in Book 97 of the records of the Colorado Secretary of State, in the archives. Also see Book 2, Note 23.
25. See 267 U.S. pp. 36-37.
26. See 267 U.S. 30. Also see Perkins' field notes in Vol. 404, p. 657, Survey Office (Note 12)
27. The opinion is reported in *New Mexico vs. Colorado*, 267 U.S. 30.
28. The Order in the case of *New Mexico vs. Colorado* appears in 268 U.S. 108.
29. See 364 U.S. 296.
30. See p. 3 of the Boundary Report (Note 11)
31. See p. 5 of the Boundary Report (Note 11)
32. See pp. 192-193 of the Boundary Report (Note 11)
33. Chaffee's field notes are in Book 348, p. 287, Survey Office (Note 12)
34. See p. 139 of P.P. 909 (Note 3). Major's filed notes are in Book 504, Survey Office (Note 12)
35. The astronomical observations made by Richards are reported in Book 499 and his regular field notes are in Book 500, Survey Office (Note 12)
36. The field notes of Reeves are in Book 505, Survey Office (Note 12)



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## GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



**A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West in 1883**, by Rose Pender. Foreword by A. B. Guthrie, Jr. (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1978) Cloth. \$8.50

Rose Pender, the British lady in question, is not a household name among western history buffs, and 1883 does not have the same romantic zing as, say, 1849 or 1876. But it would be a mistake to assume, therefore, that her impressions are of only marginal interest. Although the Sioux had been subdued by that date, the West was still rough and raw enough for anyone seeking adventure. This London aristocrat found all she wanted while in company with her investment-minded husband on a grand American tour. Her experience is especially valuable for the light it throws on the grim state of passenger transportation of the period, whether by rail, stage, hack, buckboard, carriage, or whatever primitive conveyance. She also rode side-saddle, roughing it through the Northern Plains. When occasion required she could hike like a trooper—including a clamber through snow drifts to the summit of Pike's Peak.

Rose makes the reader cringe with her vivid accounts of various forms of torture by travel, including flies, fleas, heat, cold, hard beds, bad food, jolting rides, dust, dirt and diarrhea. She has a uniformly low opinion of Indians, blacks, Mexicans, Irishmen, Mormons, hotel waiters, and New York cab drivers. While she might be accused of snobbery, we can't help but admire her gameness, her sharply etched vignettes of American scenery and American behaviour, and her rich vein of humor.

AT one railroad town she observes four Indian "braves" playing croquet, and she exclaims, "shades of Uncas!", referring to the glamorized hero of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Not all Indians were yet so civilized. Apaches, still on the loose in Arizona, scared the daylight out of our heroine. But her best characterizations are the taciturn cowboys, stage-drivers and station-keepers, irascible train-conductors, pathetic prostitutes—a gallery of the rough, anonymous frontiersmen and women of the transitional frontier.

The bruised but unbeaten Mrs. Pender covered a lot of territory, and manages to

describe such diversities as a New York Ball, a fire brigade exercise in St. Louis, the tabernacle in Salt Lake City, and the wonders of Yosemite Valley. But of greatest interest to this reviewer are her impressions of Cheyenne and lesser jerk-water towns, Wyoming trailside ranches, Fort Laramie and—enroute to Miles City, Montana—a great cattle round-up.

This is a must for any fancier of western Americana, in particular the rare female impressions thereof.

Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.

**Review: Americanizing the American Indians**, Francis Paul Prucha.

Historians as a rule not only revel in the past but refuse to leave its cozy confines to confront the contemporary situation. To discover, then, a historian who is boldly proceeding to outline the events and personalities of the closing decades of the nineteenth century is a delight since it indicates that before the close of this century we will have some definite word on the opening decades of it.

Francis Paul Prucha has recently abandoned the comfortable Jacksonian decades and ventured into the post-Civil War era in search of an understanding of the critical decades in United States-American Indian confrontations. *Americanizing the American Indians*, an anthology of writings and speeches made by the reformers active in the field of Indian affairs from 1880 to 1900 is one of the first of such genre to attempt to outline the beliefs and attitudes of the group of well-wishers who dominated federal Indian policy as the last century closed and whose ideological universe has sheltered several generations of bureaucrats who inherited their traditions and attitudes.

The book is obviously a by-product of Prucha's recent masterpiece, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, a study of policy from 1865 to 1900. No matter, the selections are good, well-balanced, and demonstrate the breadth and depth of feeling that characterized the era, and the book gives a fascinating look at minds who thought that private property rights could extinguish cultures which had survived any millenia.

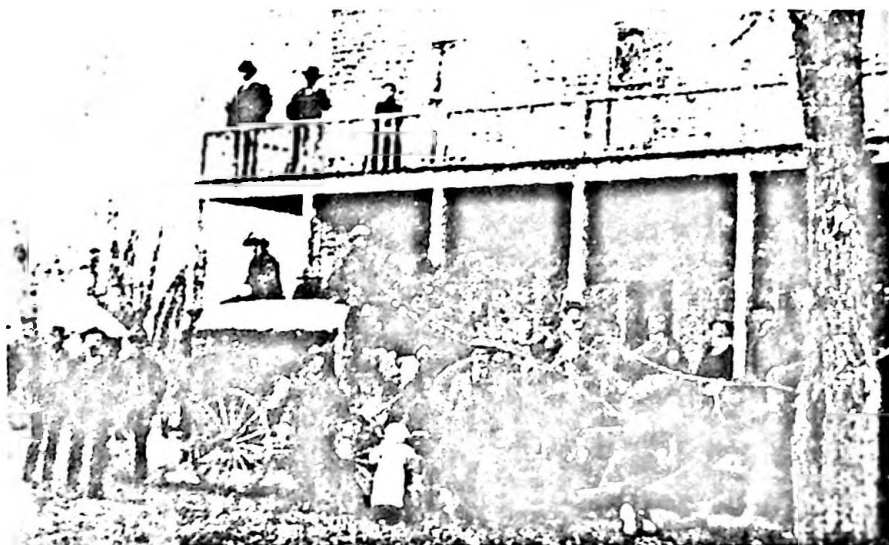
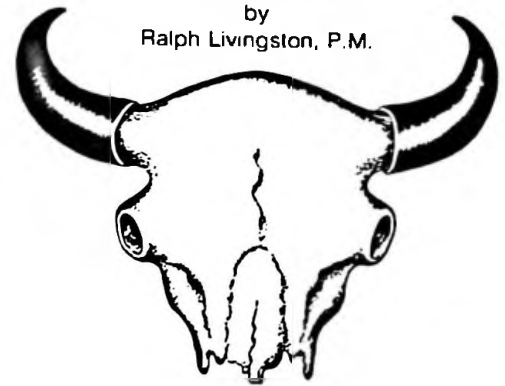
Vine Deloria, Jr.

*The* DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER  
1978  
Volume XXXIV  
Number 6

IN THIS ISSUE  
CRESTONE  
by  
Ralph Livingston, P.M.



Hotel Crestone  
Photo courtesy Colorado Historical Society

## OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

It has been this editor's pleasure to serve the Posse this past year. These past twelve months have enlightened me in the field of editing and publishing. My apologies to those who submitted articles and material that didn't make it into the *Roundup*, space and economic conditions often do strange things to limit a larger, more complete issue. Book reviewers: your unpublished reviews have been turned over to your new editor and will be published as soon as space permits.

Those who missed the Christmas ladies night meeting, missed one of the best and most unusual presentations of recent years.

Bil Rodgers, C.M. in narrative form, and in excellent mountain-man dress, gave his impression of "A Christmas at Old Fort Lyon." The performance and delivery was such that one could feel the cold of the mountain winter and the warmth of the inner spiritual fire that every mountain man possessed during those early years of our west.

Bil, we hope to see and hear more from you in the months to come.



**PLEASE RETURN YOUR CARDS FOR YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THE CHUCK WRANGLER CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE DENVER PRESS CLUB.**

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

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# CRESTONE

By Ralph E. Livingston, P.M.

Presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners  
November 22, 1978

Eighty years before the settlement of Jamestown, Spanish explorers were crossing the hostile, wild and barren territory, that later became known as the Great American Southwest. Within one hundred years the French made their appearance in force along the Mississippi River as far north as St. Louis. The Spanish were in search of gold, silver and precious stones, while the French were in quest of valuable furs.

Probably centuries before Europeans entered the San Luis Valley the vicinity of Crestone had been a favorite habitat and camping ground for the several tribes of Indians. The Comanches and the Utes were constantly engaged in warfare with each other in the northern end of the Valley, and often in the Crestone area. The Comanches were no doubt the finest light cavalry the world has ever known, but in the mountains, canons and passes were no match for the Utes, who were superior mountain warriors. However, the Utes seemed to be the tribe that dominated and occupied the area consistently for the longest period of time.

A quarry was found near the head of Pole Creek. Here the various tribes had quarried rock and made arrow heads. It is worthy to note that many arrow heads were found at this location. Among those found were a number of small arrow heads with workmanship far superior to all others.

There is an ancient Ute legend of a little people who once lived near Crestone and many Ute tales of early times would make reference to a period "before the little people went away." If the little people really existed, who they were, where they came from, or where they went is a mystery. They left but a few artifacts. If they really existed, they are lost to history.

About the year of 1807 Zebulon Pike led a small expedition to the Valley. Several years later he was followed by Fremont and later Gunnison. Both Kit Carson and Jim Bridger spent time in the Valley, also.

The history of Crestone must necessarily include the history of its surroundings, as well as its present location.

On May 29, 1822, Don Luis Maria Cabeza de Vaca was awarded the land known as the Las Vegas Grande Grant. It was approved by the Spanish crown shortly before the revolution. His sole ownership was recognized by the New Mexican government on October 17, 1823. This Grant contained 496,446.96 acres. Vaca built the ranch home nearly in the center of the Grant near the present location of Las Vegas, New Mexico.

However, the Indians finally drove Vaca and his family from the Grant, but not before they stole his herd of six hundred horses and mules and burned most of the out buildings at the Vaca Ranch. He returned to southern New Mexico and settled in the village of Pena Blanca.

It was during this period of time that American trappers and American fur companies began to invade the Mexican territory in quest of furs. The Mexican government imposed a tax on all non-Mexican trappers. Each fur was required to have a license attached thereto. One of the Vaca sons was employed by one of these American fur companies. This company was storing unlicensed or illegal furs in the Vaca home. During the year of 1827, a troop of Mexican soldiers attempted to search the Vaca premises. Don Luis Vaca resisted the search and was shot to death by the Mexican soldiers, and the furs confiscated for the Mexican government. The Vacas were Spanish and had a very low regard for all Mexicans, whom they considered uncouth renegades.

Juan Antonio Vaca, the eldest son, took over his father's affairs; however, he was killed by Indians shortly thereafter. Nothing is known of the Vaca family until 1835, when Juan Maese, Antonio Casedas, Miguel Archuleta, and Manuel Duran filed a petition with the Mexican Governor at Santa Fe for a grant with identical boundaries of the Las Vegas Grant. Their petition was granted. They moved on the Grant and despite Indian raids and other hardships, they clung to the Grant until the close of the Mexican-American war. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed guaranteeing the property rights of the citizens of the conquered territory, which included New Mexico. It appears that about this time the family name of Vaca began to appear as Baca.

In the year of 1859 John S. Watts, a prominent attorney, appeared before a congressional committee to argue for the equities of the Baca family. A synthetic Congress agreed to a compromise. Many felt that no one state or territory should have such a large land grant within its boundaries. Two were located in Arizona; two in New Mexico; and one in Colorado.

Colorado's Luis Maria Baca Grande Grant #4, located in eastern Saguache County was neither Spanish nor Mexican by origin, but the offspring of an American compromise. The Baca heirs never actually owned the Grant; they sold it to their lawyer, John S. Watts, for \$3,000.00 and services rendered, three days before the Grant was finalized. The Grant is twelve and one-half miles square, and contains slightly over one



hundred thousand acres. It lies on the Western Slope of the Sangre de Cristo range, extending from Crestone Peak on the north, to the Great Sand Dunes on the south. Eight mountain streams cross the Grant's beautiful terrain—they are: North Creston Creek, South Crestone Creek, Willow Creek, Spanish Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Deadman Creek, Pole Creek, and Sand Creek. It is worthy to note that the Luis Maria de Baca Grande Grant # is the only one of the five original Grants to remain intact for over one hundred years to the present. The Grant was to play such a prominent role in the history of Crestone that it became interwoven in its past and its future.

Shortly after the close of the Civil War, Anglo immigrants began settling near the vicinity of the present location of Crestone. The oldest building in the area just outside the town limits of Crestone, was built in 1868 by Harry Hopkins, a former Confederate soldier. The first official homestead was filed in 1874. School was held in private homes until a makeshift school was established in the year of 1881.

The first farm tractor in the State's history arrived in Alamosa by rail on March 5, 1879. It was the pride and joy of George H. Adams of Crestone, and was purchased for \$10,000.00. On the same day of its arrival, they started for Crestone with the steam monster. It traveled twenty-four miles the first four hours. The steam machine ran low on water, and they sidled it up to the San Luis Lakes for a drink. When it was filled with water, it settled into the soft earth and could not move. A call for help was dispatched to the ranch of Virgil Trujillo at the foot of Mosco Pass. Twelve yoke of oxen pulled the tractor free and it started on the way to Crestone, but this was not the last time the tractor would be mired down. It took days of cussing, and six weeks for the tractor to travel the fifty miles from Alamosa to Crestone.

As a farm machine, the tractor was a dismal failure. Because of its weight, it was not adapted to the soft loamy soil of the San Luis Valley.

At last it was sold to a saw mill operator who successfully used it to freight hay to Leadville. Several years later the tractor was shipped to Missouri.

In the year of 1866, while Colorado was still a territory Saguache County was carved from the northern end of Costilla County. In 1875 the first gold discovery of importance was made in the vicinity of Crestone. It touched off the search that increased in intensity until after the turn of the century.

All of the veins in the Sangre de Cristo Range were mere pockets as the veins were cut by ordinary fisher faults. None of the veins lasted more than sixteen months.

Crestone had its first major mining boom in the year 1886. Numerous strikes were made, and almost everyone felt the camp would be greater

than any that had been discovered. However, the boom leveled off about 1890, and was almost dormant for about five years.

John S. Watts, the sole owner of the Baca Grande Grant #4, sold the Grant to Alexander C. Hunt, a former Governor, in the year of 1870. In the year of 1877, taxes were delinquent on the property, and it was purchased by William Gilpin, another former Governor. A legal battle was waged in the Arapahoe District Court in Littleton before he secured the deed to the Grant.

During the month of November, 1880, E. A. Reser and George Adams purchased a tract of land consisting of about twenty acres outside the boundaries of the Grant, located on the northeast corner of the Grant, nestled in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Range, thirty-five miles due east of Saguache. They filed the plat for the town of Crestone. The town of Crestone was not incorporated until the year of 1901. P. G. Quinn was the first elected Mayor.

George Adams, who had been leasing the Grant from William Gilpin, for the purpose of raising cattle, purchased the Grant in 1885 to continue his endeavor in the live stock enterprise.

Beginning in the year of 1886, numerous strikes of rich gold were made in the Crestone area, and most of them on the Baca Grande Grant. Almost all of the prospectors who made these strikes believed that this land was all public domain, and their claims were valid against the world. Some of them had been working these claims since the late 70's. These claims were their lives, as well as their homes. George Adams began to wage a battle to secure the claims on the Grant as his own. Violence begets violence, and it is to be marveled that a Civil War did not erupt in the Crestone area.

There were numerous locations made within the boundary lines of the Grant by men who were firm in their belief that it was public land, although claimed by the Grant people. A federal action was filed in the U. S. District Court in Denver. Adams won, and writs of ejection were issued and served on the prospectors by U. S. Marshalls. Many of the men who held on with bulldog tenacity had been on their claims for twenty years. These prospectors staked their all on the outcome of the great litigation. When they lost, they finally gave up the struggle with reluctance. There were others who, notwithstanding the Court decision, refused to leave their claims, vowing when and if they did it would be feet first. There were some senseless and meaningless shots fired, and three cabins were blown up on Deadman's Creek. But in general, violence was avoided.

When the eviction notices were issued, they had a devastating effect on the population of the towns of Cottonwood, Crestonie and Sangre de Cristo. Most of the male inhabitants of these towns were prospectors whose claims were on the Grant or merely employed on those claims. Most of these evicted persons moved to Crestone, but many others left the district forever.

The year of 1898 saw the town of Crestone begin a boom that was to last until the year of 1903.

Town lots or building sites were selling from four to six hundred dollars each and the town became a boom town, as rich strikes were made almost daily, and a feeling of prosperity and security engulfed the town. Business was flourishing—it was truly a boom town.

Alexander Major opened a general store in Crestone in the year of 1880, the same year he became the first Postmaster for the town of Crestone. The Major grocery store was a partnership between Major and George Adams. The store had freight wagons to haul supplies for the store from Alamosa to Crestone. In January of 1881, one of his teamsters became lost in a blizzard between Alamosa and Crestone. When he realized he was lost, night was approaching. He unhitched the team of horses from the wagon, and gave them free reins and grasped a breech strap in each hand and held on. His hands froze to the breech straps, but the horses reached the Taylor ranch in the middle of the night, dragging the unconscious teamster behind them. The horses awakened the ranch hands and the teamsters' life was saved. The Taylor ranch, and the Steve Kinney Ranch were the only two ranches on this route between Alamosa and Crestone. During the blizzard the teamster had wandered six miles from the usual road. The wagon and supplies were retrieved two days later.

Prospectors searched for gold, both summer and winter. They were far more successful in summer than winter, but there were several strikes made during the winter months.

Late November of 1898 found the ground covered with snow and winter had arrived in earnest. Two prospectors climbed the mountains in search of gold. They were wearing snow shoes which enabled them to climb to near timberline by midday. It was bitter cold at this elevation, and the two prospectors had decided to return to the valley below, when without warning, a furious mountain blizzard engulfed them. They began a slow and tedious descent, when somehow, somewhere, they came to a cave which offered protection from the biting wind and snow. They kindled a fire from some dry twigs within the cave. To their amazement the light from the fire revealed five skulls in a circle on the cave floor near the fire. Even to their untrained eyes the skulls revealed they were bleached and aged. Near the skulls in a corner were three bars of gold. Since Indians never mined gold, the theory that the skulls were probably early Spanish or Anglos is well-founded. No other human bones were found in the cave, which causes speculation that the skulls may have been taken into the cave after they had been decapitated. No one disputes the fact that the prospectors returned to Duncan with three bars of refined gold. The cave has never been found again. No doubt the skulls were Spanish in origin, whether they were soldiers, miners or missionaries will no doubt remain unsolved forever. The Cave of the Five Skulls—its history and its whereabouts remains one of the mysteries of the Sangre de Cristo range.

In January of 1901 Crestone had a substantial and thriving business district consisting of:

Five general stores	Two livery stables
Two lumber yards	Four restaurants
Seven saloons	Two drug stores
One assay office	One milinery store
Two meat markets	One hay and grain store
One bakery	One press maker
One barber	One laundry
One bank	Two lawyers
Three doctors	Two real estate offices
One sign painter	Two blacksmiths
Four pool halls	

In February, 1901, a two-story hotel, 37 feet by 80 feet was started by A. G. Sloan and G. W. Jones. It was located on the southeast corner of Cottonwood Street and Silver Avenue. It was known as the Hotel Crestone.

Another enterprise worthy of note, east of town on a hill, was a neat frame one-story bungalow. Here Crestone's "ladies of the lamp light" entertained the lonely miners and prospectors of the district. After the bungalow was abandoned for this purpose, it was moved into the town of Crestone, where it served as a family residence.

Crestone also had a golf course, which was considered the finest in the State, and many of the State's leading golfers of that period journeyed to Crestone to play on the course.

The natural amphitheater known as the San Luis Valley in the beginning, was served by stage coaches and freight wagons until the late 1780's. The Railroad was built from Walsenburg to La Veta in 1877, and extended westward across the mountain range in 1878 to Alamosa.

The rich mineral resources located in the northern end of the Valley, such as gold, silver, copper, marble and iron, were an incentive to the railroad to run a branch line into that territory. The Orient Iron Mines, five miles northeast of Villa Grove, had a large body of rich iron ore, which was in demand by the steel mills in Pueblo. The most feasible method of tapping this natural resource was to build a line from Meers Junction, a switch five miles west of Salida on the Gunnison line, over Poncha Pass to Villa Grove, and then to the Orient Mine. The branch line from Meers Junction to Villa Grove was completed on September 25, 1881, and completed to the Orient mine on October 28, 1881. Strangely enough, the line was not extended to Alamosa until nine years later. The railroad to Alamosa was completed on September 10, 1890. The following year the need for a railroad to the Crestone mining district became apparent to everyone. Without hesitation, the decision was made to build a branch line from Moffat to the promising Crestone mining district.

On January 29, 1901, contractors, Chapman and Wonton, were given the contract to grade the railroad bed for the Rio Grande, Sangre de Cristo railroad from Moffat to Duncan, via Crestone and Cottonwood. The contract called for the completion of the bed to Crestone by May 25, 1901, and to Cottonwood by June 15, 1901. Further terms required the contractors to have not less than one hundred teams of horses on the construction site by February 15th. On June 15th the railroad was complete to Crestone. On that day the last spike was driven. The earth movers and graders were moving toward Cottonwood and Duncan. It took ten hours by rail from Crestone to Denver. The labor force on the construction of the railroad was almost entirely Italian and Chinese.

H. B. Davis, the General Manager of the San Luis Land and Mining Company, had said, "We wish to construct and operate the railroad ourselves, but the officials of the Denver and Rio Grande have the same desire." Needless to say, the railroad prevailed, and the Rio Grande Sangre de Cristo became a branch of the Rio Grande system.

On July 20, 1901, John McDonald, of the Sunbeam Mine, shipped the first carload of ore over the railroad. The net return was \$42.00 a ton. On August 22, 1901, the first passenger train made the trip from Moffat to Crestone.

The Independence Mine was showing great promise in the year 1899. The following year, January, 1900, George Adams sold the Baca Grande Grant #4 to the San Luis Valley Land and Mining Company for the sum of \$1,400,000. The San Luis Valley Land and Mining Company was a subsidiary of the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Samuel T. Bordine was the President.

On July 7, 1900, *The Denver Times* published this article:

"The stupendous work undertaken by the San Luis Valley Land and Mining Co. is just beginning to shape itself. Even the most skeptical admit the scheme has emerged from the sphere of mere talk into the domain of active substantial beginning. This is the company that purchased the Baca Land Grant a few months ago, upon which is located the Independence Mine, which has been the spoils battled for so many years."

The Independence Mine was approximately five miles south of Crestone. A one hundred stamp mill was built on the site of the mine. The boiler room was 40 x 90 feet and the concentrate room was 42 x 215 feet. It was the largest mill of its kind in the world. Water to operate the mill was drawn from Cottonwood Creek. Nothing is more fabulous than the fact that the Independence vein was from twenty to thirty feet wide. During its heyday, the Independence mill shipped Eighty Thousand Dollars worth of gold bullion to the mint each month.

The Baca Grande Grant had thirty-one mining properties located

within its boundaries. The principal property being the Independence Mine and mill. Late in the year of 1900, H. B. Davis, Manager of the San Luis Valley Land and Mining Company, announced that the company was going to lease claims on the Baca Grande Grant and that the company would process and ship all ores and charge those who worked such claims the following fees:

- \$10.00 ore would be 5% charge;
- \$30.00 to \$60.00 ore would be 25% charge;
- \$70.00 to \$100.00 ore would be 35% charge; and
- \$150.00 ore and over would be 50% charge.

The company would reserve and grant no leases in the area bounded by Davis Gulch on the south, and Spanish Creek on the north, and that area between Deadman Creek and Pole Creek on the south end of the grant. Outside of the boundaries of the Grant, the mineral deposits covered a large area of the west side of the Sangre de Cristo Range. The main and principal diggings were between Crestone and Duncan. Many of these strikes were near Crestone in the area known as Burnt Gulch. There was an ore processing mill built on the outskirts of Crestone about 1887. Many of the finds or strikes not on the Grant showed great promise for the future and the year of 1901 brought a feeling of security and prosperity to Crestone as this report indicates:

- The London group showed \$15.00 ore on the surface;
- The St. Louis group had ore that assayed \$75.00 per ton and rejected a \$50,000.00 offer to purchase by an eastern buyer.

The Cleveland mine was sold to eastern capitalists for \$30,000.00, and was equipped with the latest machinery and a depth of two hundred and twenty feet was soon accomplished. The Cleveland had a record of shipping four hundred tons of \$70.00 ore and has lately developed an extensive ore body which will give values reaching the \$100.00 mark. The Crestone Eagle reported on March 7, 1901 that the Banner Property had sold for \$40,000.00.

Ex-Governor Smith and three others leased the Terrible Hill group, with the stipulation and agreement that they would drive a one thousand foot tunnel of a designate location. The work was to start within twenty days of the signing of the lease. Terrible Hill was noted for its high class-float.

The Consordia has shipped \$50.00 ore and now has a five ton stamp mill. Seven assays taken at different times have ranged from \$30.00 to \$240.00 per ton. August 26, 1901, free gold in an 18-inch vein of Brown Hematite and quartz was found in the Consordia mine.

The three hundred foot Garfield Tunnel had a thirty-inch vein of \$35.00 ore.

The Golden Dirt has opened with thirty-three hundred feet of tunnels and shafts. The ore on this development was running \$40.00 per ton. This property was owned by New York and Cleveland, Ohio capitalists, under the firm name of the Standard Gold Mining and Tunnel Company.

The San Isabel mine and mill has become mainly a copper concentrating plant. The mill had a capacity of about sixty tons per day. The mine was equipped with the latest steam driver drills.

Late in the year of 1901, the Cleveland mill was running on Garfield ore, from the Garfield Tunnel. On August 1st, 1901, there were about three hundred and fifty miners employed on the Baca Grant, or a total of about one thousand men, in the Crestone district. The Crestone mining district presented the most complete aggregate of profitable tunnels to be found on the American Continent.

In December of 1901, one of the saloons in Crestone installed girls in the bar room. Their duties were to assist in serving drinks, and furnish entertainment to any lonesome patron.

One evening, the ladies of Crestone held a meeting. At its conclusion, they burned the saloon to the ground and formally served notice on the rest to close their doors or suffer the same fate. No doubt many must have felt that this action was the signing of Crestone's death warrant.

Crestone was not a violent town as Western mining towns were inclined to be. True, at one time there were seven major saloons, and upon the hill east of town was the neat bungalow which housed five girls who were more than willing to furnish bedroom companionship for a price. Generally speaking, however, the citizens of Crestone were a peaceful lot.

One night the town Marshall, Bill Cox, had arrested a bully for fighting. As he attempted to incarcerate the prisoner, the prisoner suddenly knocked him down and ran. The Marshall fired at the fleeting man and the bullet struck him in the shoulder, completely subduing him. The wound was not fatal, and the incident soon forgotten.

On February 21, 1901, the Crestone Eagle, a local paper, insisted that Saguache County had it in for Crestone because the County Commissioners would not pay for the misdemeanor cases filed in the Crestone Municipal Courts; the Commissioners' argument being that Crestone had an extremely heavy load of such cases, and each camp should pay for its own justice.

On March 21, 1901, W. J. Keim, a recluse prospector, was in jail for sixty days for contempt of court. The facts of the case appear this way. Keim had built a dam and was diverting almost all of the water in North Crestone Creek. Panic had seized the almost waterless town of Crestone, and Keim guarded his diversion project day and night with a 30-30 Winchester. The niceties of the law being as they are, Keim was charged and prosecuted for killing thousands of fish when he diverted the water into the stream. He was found guilty and fined \$25.00, whereupon he cursed the

Court, the town and everyone present. He was promptly jailed.

Crestone reached its peak in the year of 1902. This year was the summit of its activity. This year was the apex of the boom. No mining town ever enjoyed its success more than Crestone. It had a certain friendly kindness found nowhere else on earth. The tragedy was that no one realized that time was running out. No one saw the final curtain rapidly descending on Crestone's last act. More than adequate warning was given, but Crestone refused to read the handwriting on the wall. On July 7, 1901, the following article appeared in the *Denver Times*:

"Remarkable movement in Crestone District. The Salida record says people are leaving the camp by the dozens, and business is terrible overdone. The cause is a mystery, but it is a fact the camp has shut down, the mill has closed indefinitely. That this should come just as the railroad is about to open seems very strange, that the whole grand scheme is a gigantic bubble and the bubble has burst seems scarcely creditable. One reason given for the Independence mills closing is the need for more ore. It is a hundred stamp mill, but only forty stamps are working."

By August of 1902 Crestone was considered a gold and copper district. Like most gold districts, the principal formation was nearly pure white Quartz. Free gold was often found in veins of brown or nearly black Hematite.

Crestone's demise and change from a boom-town to a peaceful and quiet, isolated mountain hamlet was not a rapid or overnight change, but within a decade after its peak year, the change was evident to everyone.

On September 24, 1903, the Independence mine made a rich strike by driving an upraise 260 feet from the 500 foot level. Miners with excellent experience were becoming readily available, because of the bloody mine strike in the Cripple Creek district.

The year of 1903 found Crestone with but one doctor and one minister.

During the following two years, Percy McGeorge, the Manager of the San Luis Valley Land and Mining Company, conducted Sunday services in Crestone's Presbyterian Church.

During this period many independent mines such as the San Isabel, Sunbeam, Cleveland Banner, Garfield, North Star, Kinny, and the Grant were in full operation.

On December 17, 1903, the Saguache Crescent made the following observation about Crestone:

"The town levy of five mills will not bring in enough revenue to support the town government, since the principal source of revenue has been shut off by closing the only saloon in town."

During the night of January 3, 1904, thieves entered the Denver and



Rio Grande Depot at Crestone and stole three cases of whiskey one case of scotch and two cases of bourbon. The whiskey, was never recovered, not even a smell, and the culprits were never apprehended.

South of Crestone near the town of Liberty, a crime of a more serious nature was perpetrated. During the night of April 19, 1904, the cabin of a mining man by the name of Jim Goinitzer was blown up with dynamite. His arm, nose and an ankle were broken. He managed to crawl from the burning wreckage before he was too badly burned. He crawled to another cabin three quarters of a mile away before he lapsed into unconsciousness. Sheriff Eugene Williams arrested a miner by the name of Clyde "Teddy" Archer, and charged him with the crime. The evidence being that shoe prints similar to Archer's shoes were found at the scene. On May 8, 1904, a District Court jury in Saguache found Archer "not guilty."

Since its completion the Denver and Rio Grande San de Cristo Railroad ran trains on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, weather permitting. During the winter months of 1903 and 1905, winter snows often prohibited the normal operation of train service. However, the train from Moffat to Crestone was never a consistent and reliable mail carrier.

The Independence mine and mill was by now almost inactive. On May 16, 1907, three car loads of heavy machinery were removed from the Independence mill and shipped to an unknown destination.

The Concordia mine now owned by Clark and Hopkins, was sold on August 8, 1907 to a Kansas City company. The Concordia mine was one of the few mines in the nation that had double track in the main tunnel. The new buyers struck a pocket of ore that assayed \$200.00 per ton on September 26, 1907. Like so many other finds in the district, it was short in duration.

From 1910 to 1914, Crestone waged a battle with Saguache County for a decent year-round road from Crestone to the main highway—a battle that Crestone eventually won. During these years the only thing in Crestone that was growing was its Rito Alto Cemetery.

During the years of its existence, the elements were often harsh to Crestone. On numerous occasions during the Spring and early Summer, north Crestone Creek carried flood waters that inflicted devastating and irreparable destruction to the town.

On January 6, 1901, a carload of railroad ties broke loose at the Independence mine, striking six ore cars as it made its exit from the mine. The carload of ties went through Crestone at an estimated ninety miles per hour. It did not stop until it was within three miles of Moffat. Meanwhile, back at the mine, two of the damaged ore cars made a run down the grade toward Crestone. The rear car was derailed and tore up about a mile of track before they came to a stop.

Crestone, known officially as the El Dorado District, had a typical western mining camp population pattern. In the year of 1883, 318 persons;

1900, 375 persons, 1901, 2,000 persons, 1902, 2,400 persons, 1905, 700 persons; 1930, 86 persons lived in Crestone. The Rio Grande Sangre de Cristo Railroad was abandoned in 1926 and the track removed in 1929. The road discontinued active operation in 1921, while passenger service was discontinued in 1913. In 1949, Alfred and Helen Collins remodeled their cabin in Crestone into a small but beautiful church. It was named Little Shepherd in the Hills.

During the late 1920's, and through the 1930's, many of Crestone's residents were employed on the nearby Baca Grande Grant. Each depended on the other.

Most of the area covered by the Baca Grande Land Grant had been the battlefield of the Utes and the Comanches long before the appearance of the White Man. The White man came and established the Grant, and then waged a legal battle for over a quarter of a century for the possession of the Grant and its lush land and rich mineral resources. The year of 1912 found the Grant starting a decline that was to last until about 1930. Still owned by the San Luis Valley Land and Mining Company which had changed its corporate name to the San Luis Valley Land and Cattle Company. In the year of 1930 Alfred M. Collins, a major stockholder in the company, realized that to continue on the course of the proceeding twenty years could only lead to disaster and bankruptcy. He decided to move on the Grant and take over active management of the operation. Mr. Collins, a world traveler, past middle age, had only two assets—a strong character and great intelligence. His main efforts were directed toward the development of a superior strain of cattle. By the year of 1940, his efforts were beginning to bear fruit. In 1949, he was named "Cattleman of the Year," now an old but successful man. His success was certainly a major achievement. In 1950 he sold the Grant to the Newhall Land and Farming Company, and retired from the scene.

The Baca Grande Grant was purchased by the Arizona, Colorado Land and Cattle Company in 1962 for the purpose of raising pure-bred cattle. In 1971, this Company formed a subsidiary known as the Baca Grande. This subsidiary company built a beautiful Spanish type inn, with a lake and golf course adjoining the Grant on the north, on land that was the former homestead of a pioneer by the name of Tooker, who brought his family to the Crestone area shortly after the turn of the century in a covered wagon.

The Baca Grande Company subdivided a strip of the Grant on the east side, in and near the foothills of the Sangre de Cristos, into building sites. Many beautiful homes have been built on a number of these sites.

It is certainly worthy to mention that the Baca Grande Company, unlike many land developers, is keenly aware of this region's long and colorful history. This company has shown a deep and genuine concern by preserving and in many instances, restoring and rebuilding anything that was a part of that rugged and fascinating past.

The history of Crestone is a sharp contrast to the histories of most

Western mining camps. One reason may have been its sojourn in the lime light was brief, its years as a boomtown were few. Another reason could have been that all of the strikes in the Crestone district were mere pockets left by pinched veins, which were spasmodic in nature, and brief in duration. Or could it have been that Crestone was inhabited by a majority of persons who were meek, conscientious, and law abiding. Crestone never had a gay, gaudy, evil, and wicked night life that was the trademark of almost every Western mining town.

But unlike so many boom mining camps that later became ghost towns, Crestone came close to extinction, but never died. Through all the adversities, misfortunes, and its lonely journey through the long lean years, Crestone fought for survival and survived. Unlike so many of its gaudy, evil and flamboyant counterparts, that are now nothing but names on the pages of history, Crestone has a future, only because of its tenacious and persistent courage. There is a large group of modern geologists and mining engineers that are convinced that the main mother lode or vein in the Crestone district has never been found. Someday Crestone may rise, flourish and boom again.

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## GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



**The Black Rock Desert**, by Sessions S. Wheeler, and illustrated by Nevada's desert artist, J. Craig Sheppard, 187 pages. The Caxton Printers, Ltd. Caldwell, Idaho, 1978. Softbound—\$4.95.

The Black Rock Desert, which occupies two arms of a playa about sixty-five miles due west of Winnemucca, Nevada, has earned, over the years, a sinister reputation. Fremont crossed it in 1843 on his way from the Dalles on the Columbia River to northern California, encountering only a modicum of difficulty. On this occasion Kit Carson was his guide. During the California gold rush the side route across the Black Rock Desert, which had been pioneered three years earlier by the Applegate party, going east from Oregon in 1846, became known as the Lassen cut-off and was to become known still later as the "death route" lured many unsuspecting gold seekers to deprivation and death.

Wheeler tells the complete story of the Black Rock Desert from its geologic past to modern day environmental awareness. The author introduces the earliest human inhabitants, who occupied caves on the Lahontan shoreline 7,000 years ago; the period of American exploration; the period of "The Death Route"; the Paiute Indian uprisings of the 1860's; a minor mining boom; cattle ranching; and the modern era of the rock hound and the desert rat. Only a few years ago the Black Rock Desert was saved in the nick of time from serious consideration as a dumping ground for San Francisco's garbage and trash.

Craig Sheppard's paintings enliven the historical narrative. Unfortunately they are reproduced only in black and white. The paintings are supported by a fine collection of contemporary photographs. Two fold-out maps, one taken from the cultural sheet of the northwestern portion of the U.S.G.S. map of Nevada show the relationships between the various cut-off and exploration routes, the California immigrant trail, and

the modern highways and railroad lines in the region.

The book and its illustrations go a long way to dispell the current ignorance about this little-known corner of the Nevada environment. In doing so it illuminates a significant link in the history of the westward movement.

Mel Griffiths, P.M.



**The Horse Soldier, 1776-1943. The United States Cavalry: his Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipments. Volume III, The Last of the Indian Wars, the Spanish American War, the Brink of the Great War, 1881-1916.** By Randy Steffen, Illustrations by Randy Steffen, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma. \$25.00.

The third volume of this four-part series maintains the high quality of the preceding volumes, and the complete set will provide cavalry buffs with reference material from now on. Randy Steffen's text and illustrations provide exact descriptions of what the horse soldiers wore and used. If you have inherited or picked up any odd-looking objects that you think were used by the cavalry, you can identify them in Steffen's books, and probably place them in time. The changes in uniforms and equipment are carefully described, usually with the exact Army specifications reproduced. Why some changes were made, and then changed back, is lost in some bureaucratic decision. I have not yet learned why chevrons were changed from point down to points up. I happen to believe they look better points down.

Although expensive, this book is invaluable for its purpose, and the paper and binding prove it is a high-quality production.

W. H. Van Duzer, P.M.