

The DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

January-February 1980

VOLUME XXXVI No. 1



THE HISTORY OF FITZSIMONS ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

by

Major General James A. Wier, P.M.

UNITED STATES RECUPERATION CAMP DENVER, COLORADO Contributor's Certificate

This Is to Certify, That - J. ISTRUM -

of Aurora, of Denver, Colorado

has contributed the sum of \$2.00 ----- toward the purchase of 600 acres, more or less, in Section 36, Township 3 South, Range 67 West, Adams County, Colorado; which said property is to be purchased by the citizens of Denver and deeded to The Denver Civic and Commercial Association, to be leased to the United States of America for an Army Recuperation Camp at an annual rental of one dollar per year.

The Denver Civic and Commercial Association is to be the sole owner of the said property and is charged with the management thereof; if the said United States of America discontinues said Recuperation Camp at any future time, and voluntarily relinquishes said lease, then the said property is to be sold in the manner, at the time or times, and at the discretion of said Association, as a whole, or in parcels, and the proceeds thereof, as received from time to time, divided ratably amongst the contributors toward the purchase of the same, their heirs or assigns, upon the surrender of this certificate.

ATTEST:

Arthur J. Wier Secretary.

James A. Wier President.

Denver, Colorado, this Fifteenth day of April A. D. 1918.

Contributor's certificate for contribution toward purchase of site for future Fitzsimons Hospital.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

On April 23, 1980, the Denver Posse of the Westerners will hear from Michael Koury, editor and publisher of the Old Army Press of Fort Collins. He will speak on "The Indian Fighting Army."

On May 28th Dr. Tom Noel, historian at the University of Colorado Denver Center, will speak on "The Saloons of Denver."

The June meeting, on the 25th, will hear "Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Denver Post" from Corresponding Member Elvon L. Howe. Prof. Howe was editor of the 1952 *Denver Westerners Brand Book*.

OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

Edwin O. Murray is the newest member of the Denver Posse. He is a cartographer with the topographic division of the U.S. Geological Survey. His special historical interests are: antique firearms, U.S. cavalry items, early western cattleman's gear, old maps and photographs by L. R. Huffman, mountain climbing, skiing, hunting and fishing. Welcome!

* * * * *

Merrill J. Mattes, ex-Sheriff of the Denver Posse, reports that as a result of laudatory reviews of his book, *The Great Platte River Road*, those who would like to purchase a copy should address the Nebraska State Historical Society, 1500 "R" Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508. The cost, for paperback is \$8.95 postpaid. N.S.H.S. does not advertise, so the book is not to be expected in bookstores. Merrill adds that since the manuscript of the book belongs to the N.S.H.S. he gets no royalties!

* * * * *

Merrill also reports that he is currently the recipient of a 3-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the N.S.H.S. (see above) to research and write a descriptive bibliography of central overland journals to 1866, which will also be published by the N.S.H.S. If he is absent from a few meetings we will at least know that he is worthily occupied!

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THE HISTORY OF FITZSIMONS ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

by

Major General James A. Wier, P.M.

(Presented to the Denver Posse of the Westerners,
on 23 January 1980)
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Army General Hospital #21 was the first major establishment located in or near Aurora, Colorado. Most of the writing about early Fitzsimons Hospital says little of Aurora and a lot about Denver. One report on General Hospital 21 said that it was located at Camp Miles due east of Denver and that a tramway connected Denver and Aurora, a small town two miles from the reservation. This report was written in 1920. In most records all the credit for getting the land for the hospital went to the Denver Civic and Commercial Association.

Prior to World War I the Army had one tuberculosis hospital at Fort Bayard, New Mexico, the Public Health Service had one at Fort Stanton, New Mexico. About 1906 the Navy established one at Fort Lyons, Colorado, then recognizing that it was improper to have a Navy establishment at an Army fort, renamed their unit the Navy Hospital at Las Animas.

With the onset of the war it was recognized that there would be a need for more beds for tuberculosis patients and that Fort Bayard could only be expanded to a limited degree because of a lack of water. The Army decided to place hospitals at several places around the country and Denver was one of the possible sites. According to Bruns¹ it was first planned to build tuberculosis hospitals at Otisville, N.Y., Oteen, N.C., and at Whipple Barracks, Arizona. In the fall of 1917 Colonel Bushnell, of the Army Surgeon General's Office, was sent west to look over the possibility of building a hospital in Colorado. About this time the citizens of Denver, proud of their Colorado sunshine and pure mountain air purchased by means of public subscription a square mile of land near Aurora nine miles from Denver. This land cost \$127,000 and was offered free to the Government as a hospital site.

There are several different versions of the story of the purchase of land. One appeared in the *Military Surgeon* in 1929² and went like this. On the beginning of the war in 1917 Cass Herrington and William G. Evans, a son of John Evans, decided that Denver needed an Army canton-

¹Lt. Col. E.H. Bruns, M.C. U.S. Army, "Medical History of Fitzsimons General Hospital." Read before Denver Sanitarium Assoc., February 25, 1930

²"Fitzsimons—The Story of a Hospital," by B.M.R., *Military Surgeon* 25:442, 1919.

ment or better a hospital. Knowing of strong southern influence in Washington they called on Carl S. Hinton for help. Mr. Hinton, a resident, was Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and had many influential southern friends in Washington. He also knew the Surgeon General of the Army, General Gorgas, who incidentally was also a son of a Confederate officer. Evans asked Hinton for an introduction to General Gorgas. According to this source Evans said to Hinton that the Surgeon General does not realize it now but the Government is going to have a pressing need for a great hospital for the treatment of tuberculosis arising out of the war. He added, "We want that hospital in Denver. It will be permanent. A cantonment is only temporary." Supposedly Surgeon General Gorgas answered that the Army accommodations were quite ample and in fact they were not in the least crowded. Six months later Gorgas told Hinton that Evans was most far sighted, that they must have a tuberculosis hospital for the soldiers. He added that it was an open battle but Denver was in it. The choice was narrowed down to Denver, Asheville, North Carolina backed by William Jennings Bryan, and Saranac Lake, New York, backed by Mary Roberts Rinehart.

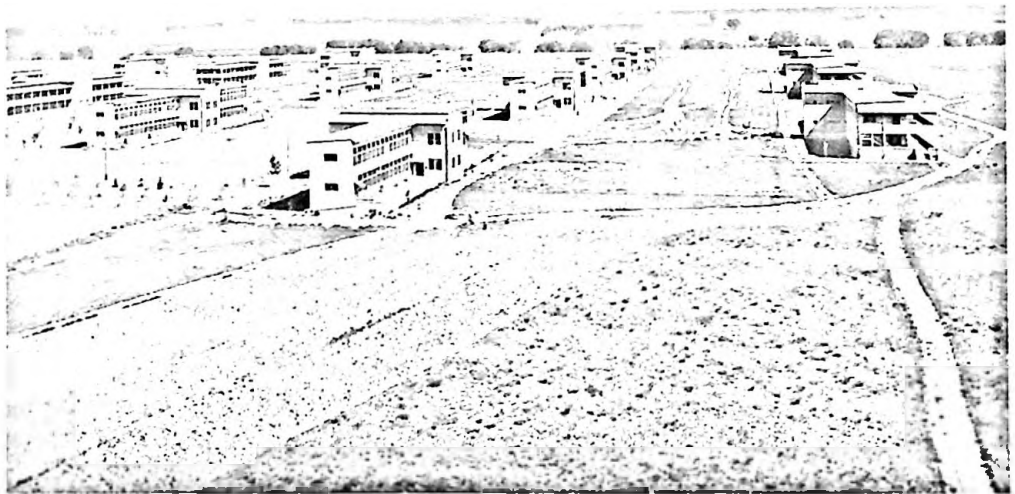
A slightly different version appeared in an article on Fitzsimons in the *Empire Magazine* of the *Denver Post* 30 July 1967. This said, "On October 1, 1917 just over three months after the first American troops landed in Europe to help win World War I a booklet was circulated in Denver calling attention to the high incidence in France of tuberculosis and other respiratory disease and urging establishment of an Army recuperation camp in Colorado. Copies were mailed to members of Congress and to War Department officials. The pamphlet was published by the Denver Civic and Commercial Association to gain support for a campaign endorsed by Colorado Governor Julius C. Gunter for a medical installation. The text was written by Frank D. Baldwin, Adjutant General of Colorado and a retired U.S. Army Major General."

The *Rocky Mountain News* on 27 March 1918 said that the site for the hospital had been affirmed and the fund drive would be launched. It said the directors of the Civic and Commercial Association had accorded an ovation to W. G. Evans who first thought of securing the recuperation camp for Denver and who served as chairman through the negotiations that ended in the final selection of Denver for the site. It added that it is now Denver's part to purchase the site selected in Gutheil Park on which options have been secured at \$131,712.50. A committee of several hundred men was named who would "tomorrow and Friday" canvass the city for the money needed.

The report of the committee, consisting of W. G. Evans, John C. Mitchell and Cass E. Herrington, supplemented by the report of Carl Hinton, just returned from Washington, impressed the directors with the magnitude of the proposed camp. The article stated that Hinton had remained in Washington for most of the time of the negotiations.

The committee raised the money for the hospital site and it was purchased. Apparently some 1500 citizens contributed and in fact became owners of the land with the Association. The certificates they purchased said that if the government ceased to use the land it would revert to the Association and would be sold with the proceeds to be divided among the certificate holders.

Apparently the government was unable to accept gifts of land so the property was leased for \$1 per year and plans were developed for a unit of 48 buildings. Construction was started on 2 May 1918, under the supervision of the Construction Quartermaster, W. J. Cameron. C.S. Labie Company of Denver was the general contractor. The first patients were admitted in mid-September before the formal dedication on 17 October 1918.



Newly constructed wards at Fitzsimons, 1919.

Colonel Brunns in his paper said, "The speed with which the site of this hospital was secured and the construction work carried through was truly remarkable, due largely to the Denver Civic and Commercial Association and the help of their representatives in Washington. Many hitches occurred in the building of other Army tuberculosis hospitals so that they were not ready when required, and three other tuberculosis hospitals had to be quickly put in operation by means of taking over sanitoria and hospitals already in operation and converting them rapidly for Army use. General

Hospital Number 21, now Fitzsimons General Hospital, however, was ready when needed and in less than no time was filled up with patients. Before the construction was completed an appropriation for an additional unit was obtained at the cost of \$844,000, the work upon which was completed April 1, 1919." This new unit consisted of 25 buildings. Bruns added that by this time 1700 patients had been admitted to the hospital.

Even though Colonel Bushnell felt that there would be a long-term need for tuberculosis hospitals and his hope that the one in Denver would be a permanent institution, during the war only emergency construction was approved and the hospital was built of hollow-tile-stucco temporary construction. Bruns said, "After the war although the hospital at Fort Bayard, New Mexico was noted for its healthful climate, having been the site of the Army's tuberculosis hospital for years, and having gained the reputation for many remarkable and lasting cures, it was recognized by the Surgeon General's Office that Denver was preferable for a permanent hospital especially when considered from an economic point of view. The advantage of being located near a large health city, where the families of patients could live and the patients themselves find employment when discharged as arrested cases, was also taken into account." Bruns added that to Colonel Roger Brooke, at that time in charge of hospitalization in the Surgeon General's Office, should largely be credited the decision to make Fitzsimons the tuberculosis hospital of the Army. There was much sentiment in favor of the older institution and Colonel Brooke had to advance strong reasons for the change.

When it was decided that the hospital in Denver would become the permanent tuberculosis hospital for the Army, General Hospital Number 21 was redesignated Fitzsimons General Hospital on 1 July 1920. It was named in memory of a medical officer, First Lieutenant William Thomas Fitzsimons, the first American officer to be killed in action during World War I, on September 4, 1917. Dr. Fitzsimons was Adjutant of U. S. Base Hospital #5, then operating General Hospital #11 of the British Expeditionary Forces at Dannes Camiers, France. The hospital was bombarded by a German airplane, the first two bombs instantly killed Lieutenant Fitzsimons and wounded Lieutenants McQuire, Whidden, and T. D. Smith of the Medical Reserve Corps. The bomb killed three and wounded four enlisted men of the hospital detachment, and killed or wounded twenty-two British patients in the hospital.

The first Commanding Officer of Fitzsimons hospital was Lt. Col. William P. Harlow, and the first Chief of Medicine was Major William H. Bergtold, both temporary officers, the former from Boulder, Colorado and the latter one of the leading internists and tuberculosis specialists of Denver.

Bruno praised both Harlow and Bergtold. "That they were able to keep order under conditions which might have been chaotic is proof of

their exceptional ability and resourcefulness. Patients started to arrive before the hospital was completed. Many of the wards were not yet equipped with windows. It was the end of October and there was no heat in the buildings. Medical supplies were scarce and many items of hospital equipment were wanting. No food carts were available and homemade affairs had to be quickly built. The roads between Aurora and Fitzsimons were adobe, and almost impassable during stormy weather. When the Commanding Officer asked the Chief of Medical Service what was most needed, the latter replied that he believed that their first efforts should be to see that the patients were well fed. This was done then. To procure heat for the wards, two large sugar boilers were set up under frame buildings and steam pipes laid on the ground and covered with a triangular boxing stuffed with straw to keep them from freezing. In this way, steam heat was secured by November 17, 1918 but the regular heating system was not ready until February 1919."

All of the problems were not with construction. Bruns said, "After the war a great feeling of gratitude had arisen for the disabled veterans, whether wounded or sick. The American people were hysterically sympathetic and many politicians were only too eager to champion the cause of the disabled and sick soldiers. Medical officers knew what was best for their tuberculosis patients but interferences and wrong influences were met with on every side. The Commanding Officer had to be extremely tactful, and frequently compromising, not always in the best interests of treatment. But one instance occurred when a definite stand had to be taken. Some members of the Christian Science Church had been visiting patients, to which there was no objection from a religious point of view; but when they insisted on treating patients and charging fees, the Commanding Officer had to call a halt. Major Bergtold, the Chief of Medicine at the time, explained to a committee of Christian Scientists who interviewed him that the United States Government did not interfere with the religion of the Philippine Moros, but when they went haramanta and killed people, something had to be done. This committee departed angrily, stating that they would get him and soon afterwards attacked the hospital administration through one of the leading Denver morning newspapers then owned by a Christian Scientist." The *Denver Times* brought things to a head on 27 September 1919 with a page one article headlined "Blame for Cruelty on Major Bergtold." During a series of articles attacking the hospital it had been brought out that, among other injustices, on one occasion a patient had been placed in a straight-jacket. This had all culminated in an investigation from Washington during which a Lieutenant testified that Dr. Bergtold had ordered him to restrain the patient. Needless to say the investigation cleared the hospital administration of any wrongdoing.

When Colonel Henry Page took over as commander in March 1920 he found that there were still problems with patient discipline but he also

found other pressing problems. He was depressed by the physical state of the hospital. He reported this in a "History of General Hospital Number 21," an official report in the summer of 1920. A few of his remarks follow. "With the exception of the main entrance road, roads can hardly be said to exist, and they would not be pointed to with pride by the loafers of a cross-road country store." Then, "It is not wise to obscure the disagreeable fact that this hospital cannot operate this winter at all unless the road to Denver is open." . . . "I have advocated the abandonment of this institution because of the endless expense of its care and upkeep." . . . "Not counting the farm, the hospital covers 100 acres of adobe prairie soil which is only less difficult to get in good condition than it is to maintain it. No trees can live in Colorado without irrigation and every plot of grass must be watered or else it will die." . . . "If the proposed reduction takes place this place will again be a wilderness within the year." Page commented on his trouble with patients in this way, "Handicapped by inexperienced assistance the first commanding officer had to contend with numerous difficulties. Complaints and active resistance from patients who with exalted ego believed themselves heroes, and as such above law and discipline. In this attitude they were encouraged by numerous well-meaning but misguided civilians and over patriotic volunteer workers."

In the *Times* of July 30, 1920 was a headline, "U.S. Hospital May be Taken From Denver" with a subhead, "Commandant of Army Sanitarium Advises Closing Unless Denver Builds Decent Road From Aurora." The article quoted Page that during the previous winter Colfax Avenue from Aurora east was closed to traffic and partly torn up and that it was impossible to get from the hospital except on foot or in extremely light motor cars. It would be the same that next winter unless something were done. He added that the extension of Montview Blvd. was the only road to the hospital. The next winter it would be necessary to build sleds and have food and supplies for the hospital brought overland unless better transportation facilities were provided. Page was unhappy with promises saying that unless the road was completed, and completed before September, it would not do any good. He threatened to close the hospital by September 15 unless something was done.

The *Denver Post* on 18 August 1920 headlined that work had started on the highway to Fitzsimons Hospital. A subheadline said that Contractor F. C. Dreher, after warning by the state that it would take over the job, got teams busy with loads of gravel and cement. Dreher said that the delays were due to a shortage of rail cars and an embargo on shipping cement. He apparently found the answer after the state threatened to forfeit his bond of \$20,000.

From this point things began to improve at Fitzsimons. Page was relieved in September due to his inability to handle the patients and Colonel Moncrief soon restored order. Bruns said that all of Page's in-

novations to govern by committee and to use patient cooperation failed, "... for this presupposed a fair viewpoint on the part of all concerned and a conscientious and cooperative attempt to meet the various situations. Unfortunately such an attitude did not exist with the majority of patients and some of the committee members were agitators, rather than representative citizens." He added that Colonel Moncrief replaced Page, "... and not being socialistically inclined abolished the 50-50 league and adopted the conservative and well established Army methods of handling patients."

During the period from 1919 to 1930 the patient load at Fitzsimons varied from 1000 to 1400 occupied beds with the majority being for tuberculosis. During this period Fitzsimons cared for Veterans Administration cases, and after the Navy closed its hospital at Las Animas provided treatment for tuberculous Navy officers and certain petty officers. Bruns concluded his 1930 article with the comment, "The hospital is now almost twelve years old, a long lifetime for temporary construction. Let us hope that it will be rebuilt some day to endure many years and establish traditions for having accomplished much, worthwhile and good."

In 1927, after it became apparent that there would be no permanent improvements on land the government did not own, the Denver Chamber of Commerce again tried to give the land to the government. The weekly publication of the Chamber on 13 October 1927 proudly announced that a deed had been executed transferring to the government the title to the hospital land with all water and ditch rights. "For ten dollars the government secures the 160 acre tract for which the people of Denver subscribed \$150,000 through the Chamber's predecessor, the Denver Civic and Commercial Association." The deed contained one clause that said, "... in protection of the subscribers that if the government at any time discontinue the use of said premises as an Army Recuperation Camp the title to the real estate and the water and ditch rights shall at once revert to the Denver Chamber." The government would not accept. The next year a new lease was accomplished for 99 years until 2018.

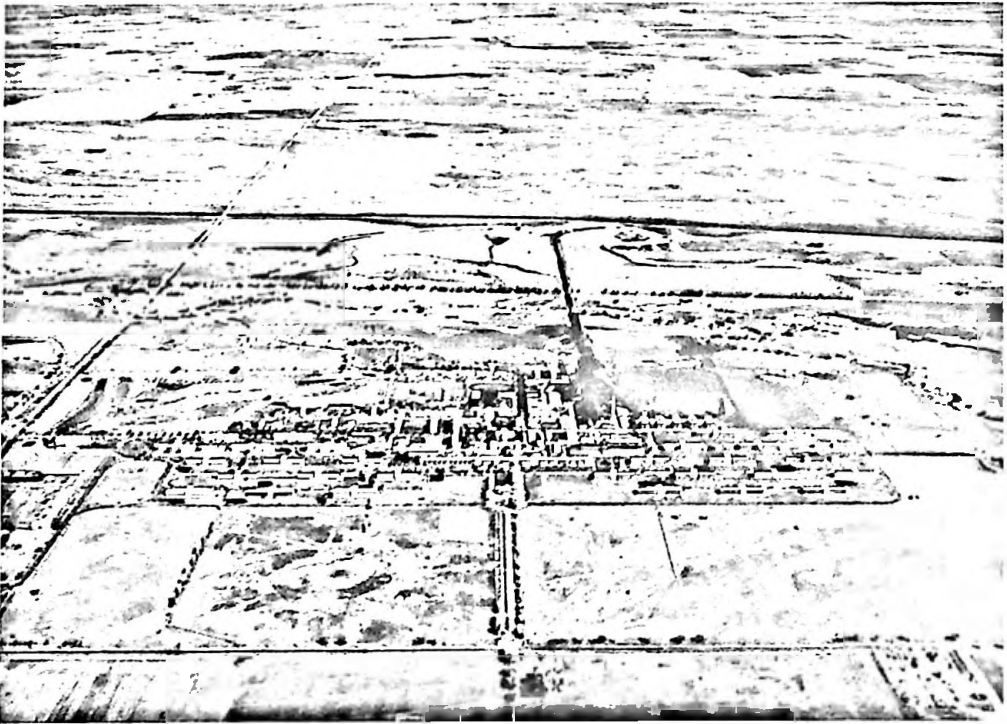
Soon the hospital again faced troubled years. The *Empire Magazine* article of 1967 started this way, "Back in August of 1929, two months before Wall Street's Black Friday the Denver Chamber of Commerce proudly estimated that the existence of Fitzsimons General Hospital benefitted the Denver economy by as much as \$2.5 million a year. Four years later with the great national depression beginning to look like everlasting despair, the city was thrown into an uproar when the *Denver Post* disclosed a Washington plan, pictured as a covert plot, to reduce the size of the hospital or even to close it."

On April 26, 1933 the *Rocky Mountain News* headlined, "U.S. to Abandon Army Hospital Here By June 30." The *Post* of April 27 said the decision was postponed by action led by Representative Lawrence Lewis of Denver. Still on May 11, the Denver Chamber of Commerce learned that

General Hines had ordered the transfer of all Veterans Administration patients from Fitzsimons. That same day the *Post* said that Army Surgeon General Patterson was unfriendly and that he was responsible for the order moving the V. A. patients. They said his motives were unknown but he was friendly with Senators who were trying to save hospitals in their own states.

The first contingent of patients were to leave 15 June 1933 and supposedly the train was on post with steam up to transfer the patients when the order was rescinded. The *Rocky Mountain News* said in an editorial that the move of patients to William Beaumont Hospital at El Paso merely meant that their opportunity to recover would be reduced.

On 7 September 1933 Adams County even dropped a plan to tax officers at Fitzsimons as such action might jeopardize keeping the hospital.



Aerial view of Fitzsimons Hospital looking north over Colfax Avenue, 1934.

The fight for the hospital continued. Though the patient load gradually increased, in March 1934 when Congress passed an appropriation bill for construction and maintenance it specified that none of the money was to be spent at Fitzsimons. However on March 8 Congressman Lewis after an aggressive fight obtained \$50,000 for the continued operation of Fitzsimons. On 8 March 1934 the *Post* headlined, "Fitzsimons to Remain in Operation. House Votes Ample Funds." In the article to follow the *Post*

added that the plot to close Fitzsimons was revealed to be one hatched by Texas and Arkansas representatives with the aid of Surgeon General Patterson in an effort to aid William Beaumont Hospital at El Paso and the Army and Navy Hospital at Hot Springs. "Army and Navy Hospital is Surgeon General Patterson's pet."

Things immediately improved, on March 10 the *Post* reported that \$25,000 yearly of V.A. funds had been restored, and by 1935 Congressman Lewis was asking for \$2¼ million for a new hospital. That year it was reported that the new Surgeon General Reynolds liked Fitzsimons, and on October 1935 the *Post* reported that a \$1,600,000 main building was planned for Denver.



New hospital under construction, January 1940.

The *Denver Post* on 29 June 1936 said that David Morris, the Deputy U.S. Attorney had begun preparing the necessary papers for turning over 600 acres of land on which Fitzsimons General Hospital is situated. The transfer would be effected through a condemnation procedure which would name as defendants the more than 300 persons who donated money to purchase the hospital site for the government in wartime. In 1927-29 it had been shown that these certificate holders had scattered over the country, some had died, the addresses of some were unknown, and that some certificates had been deeded to heirs of the original owners. Finally on 3 October 1937 the *Rocky Mountain News* said that after 20 years of trying to give Fitzsimons Hospital to the Federal Government, A.K. Barnes representing the Denver Chamber of Commerce presented to United States Attorney Morissey the title to the land.

A contract for the construction of foundations for the new hospital was awarded 12 October 1938 and work was completed 14 January 1939 at a cost of \$96,271.15. Contract for the superstructure was awarded to the Great Lakes Construction Co. of Chicago on 29 December 1938 and the building was dedicated 3 December 1941. The total cost of the new building was approximately \$3,600,000. An article in the *Rocky Mountain News* called the new Fitzsimons addition the state's biggest building.

The review article in *Empire Magazine* said that more than five hundred people attended the dedication ceremonies for the new building. Speakers included Maj. Gen. James C. Magee, the Surgeon General, who accepted the building for the Army, Colonel Frederick S. Wright, Commanding Officer, who told how Representative Lewis, "got the more than \$4 million for this building from where we were told there weren't any funds available." The *Rocky Mountain News* on the fourth of December in a dedication article by Jack Foster, quoted Representative Lewis as saying that Roosevelt saved the hospital in 1936 and that he on another occasion blocked an attempt to close the hospital by camping in an office at the War Department.

During the expansion period of World War II from 1940-45 numerous semi-permanent buildings and structures, such as ward buildings, nurses' quarters, bachelor officer quarters, family quarters, chapels, theater and



World War II prisoner of war camp at S.E. corner of Fitzsimons Hospital grounds.

sewerage plant facilities were constructed. In addition there was constructed a large number of mobilization type barracks, recreation halls, school buildings, and mess halls, as well as a complete theater of operations type prisoner of war camp. Most of these buildings are still in use except for the prisoner of war camp which was removed in 1947.

The presence of prisoners of war provided one bit of excitement in two separate episodes. The *Denver Post* of 30 October 1944 headlined, "Nips Start Mutiny and Riot Forcing Sentry To Shoot." The sub-head continued, "Enemy Patients Precipitated Row To Get Selves Shot After Previous Hari-Kari Attempt Was Foiled." These three Japanese Navy men had been captured in the Pacific and had been interned at Florence, Arizona. After it was found that they had tuberculosis they were transferred to Fitzsimons. All three had stabbed themselves in a suicide attempt but had been saved by prompt medical care. The next time they succeeded, and to quote the *Post*, "died under a salvo of shots from the guard's 30 caliber carbine." This occurred on ward B-1. The *Post* article said, ". . . that the upper floor of B1 houses about 70 Italian prisoners of war, who are hospital patients. The first floor was occupied by the three Japanese who were receiving treatment for tuberculosis, and several anti-Nazi German prisoners."

During World War II there were as many as 5000 patients on the rolls at Fitzsimons and during the Korean War 2500; during the Vietnam incident the patient load peaked at about 2000.

During the period of 1953 to 1961, Fitzsimons leased out five or six mobilization barracks and recreation buildings to the Adams-Arapahoe School District #28 for use as a grade school and junior high school. In 1955 approximately 2.066 acres of land located in the extreme southeast corner of the reservation was leased to the City of Aurora for a municipal information center. In the 1970's the railroad spur connecting the hospital to the Sable Junction of the Union Pacific lines was given to the city of Aurora under the Nixon policy to return unneeded government land to the civilian community; this consisted of nearly 25 acres. Previously in 1941 the Secretary of War had granted the State of Colorado a limited right of way to a strip of land 110 feet in width extending along the entire south boundary. This apparently was the right of way for Colfax Avenue and highway U.S. 40.

Approximately 40 or more of the temporary buildings have been sold and moved or torn down. In 1951 two hundred officer and non-commissioned officer quarters were completed under the Wherry housing plan. In 1959, four new permanent type buildings were completed for female officer quarters.

The U.S. Army Medical Optical and Maintenance Activity was moved to Fitzsimons in 1963 into three buildings modified for this purpose; a new building was completed for the optical activity in 1974. In 1964 the Office of Civilian Health and Medical Programs of the Uniformed Services was moved on post from Washington. Army Readiness Region VIII headquarters moved to Fitzsimons in the early 70's.

A new 235-man enlisted barracks was completed in 1964 and an enlisted womens' barracks about 1975. A new post exchange and shopping center was completed several years ago.

In late 1974 and early 1975 again the closing of Fitzsimons became a distinct possibility. Study groups from the Department of Defense actually recommended closure as Fitzsimons was not physically located on a large active troop base. Three things saved the hospital; the presence of Lowry Air Force Base, the active support of Surgeon General Taylor and the Secretary of the Army, and the concerted efforts of the representatives of the cities of Denver and Aurora. The *Aurora Advocate* in 1975 quoted Mayor Dominigues of Aurora in summarizing what Fitzsimons meant to that city. He said that 12% of Aurora's population depends on Fitzsimons General Hospital for its livelihood. Fitzsimons was responsible for \$26 million in sales in 1974, or 10% of the city's retail trade. It generated \$280,000 in tax revenue, and its workers and personnel provided \$384,000 in property taxes or about 15% of those collected.

In August 1955 Fitzsimons was annexed to the city of Aurora, but only in 1979 was the post office address changed from Denver to Aurora.



BY THE WAY . . .

Among those interested in American military history there is a persistent tendency to confuse, both in spelling and in pronunciation, the words 'cavalry' and 'calvary'.

The latter is derived from Calvary, the name of the hill near Jerusalem where Christ was crucified. The hill got its name from the Latin 'calvarium', a skull, which in turn is a translation of the Hebrew Golgotha, which in that language means 'a place of skulls.'

'Cavalry', meaning horsemen, comes from the Latin 'caballus', a horse (modern Italian, cavallo; Spanish, caballo) from which also come the related words cavalier, a horseman, cavalcade, a parade, and chivalry, the actions of a mounted knight.

H.G.R.

* * * * *

In *The New Yorker* magazine for January 21, 1980, in an article on the present state of history writing, as well as the prospects for

history graduates (grim), the author, Calvin Trillin, reports that a colleague ". . . told me that three of the doctoral dissertations he is now supervising have as their subjects the gay-liberation movement, the social history of venereal disease, and the effect of the Second World War on American Indians. His point was that historians these days concentrate less than they once did on the front-page news of the past. In the last decade, an increasing number of historians have specialized on what is known as the New Social History—what one historian at the meeting described as "the recovery of the story of those who have not left their marks, as Caesar has." They tend to study the family life of Western settlers rather than the territory's first governor, the seventeenth-century working man rather than the king. They sometimes use methods traditionally associated with political science or anthropology—meaning, I suppose, that they are no longer accused of counting the trees but of trespassing in the forest."

H.G.R.



GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



Hispanic Culture In the Southwest, by Arthur L. Campa. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1979. 316 pp. \$25.

Arthur L. Campa, onetime Sheriff of the Denver Westerners, died in 1978 so he did not see the final publication of his book, but he must have been extremely gratified that it was scheduled for publication for it would be the fruition of 50 years of his intensive research. There is a vast literature on various aspects of the history and culture of the Southwest, but this is not just "another book" in the usual mold for consumption by regional romantics. This is probably the most comprehensive work ever written on the subject of Southwestern history and culture, dealing with every imaginable area of life, including war, peace, politics, commerce, religion, superstition, attitudes, customs, language, dialects, folklore, folk singing and dancing, architecture, arts and crafts, and household arts. Here is, in sum, a brilliant evocation of the color and vitality of the region by a distinguished scholar with rare depth perception of the unique Hispanic world.

Professor Campa was Chairman of Modern Languages and Literature at Denver University from 1946 to 1972. He was born in Mexico of American parents. His father, a missionary, was killed by Pancho Villa in 1914. Instead of being antagonized by this episode to things Hispanic he made its study a lifelong passion. Raised in West Texas, he got his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and never ceased reading books, exploring archives, and becoming personally involved in the customs of Hispanic folk, recording and collecting their songs and poetry, absorbing their theater, and dance, and observing their traditional customs, from courting to folk healing. He rode in rodeos, sang with troubadours, and attended weddings, christenings, wakes, funerals, and fiestas. All of this rich experience is reflected in this, his masterpiece.

While the first half of the book is ostensibly a review of regional history, from Coronado's expedition to modern ethnic politics, this is not your usual dull rote recital

of big names and dates. Rather, it is pure "cultural history", that is, revealing the cumulative cultural results of successive historical episodes. These episodes are three in number: the several centuries of Spanish military and religious conquest, the relatively brief period of Mexican rule (1821-1848), and the 20th century with a new accent on Hispanic pride and Chicano activism. Within the broad region are district sub-cultures, roughly defined as New Mexico, Arizona, Southern California, Lower Colorado, and "El Paso to the Gulf." Throughout, however, the constant theme is "interaction"—primarily that between the Spanish-speaking conquerors and the aborigines, and that between the melded Hispanos and the Americanos.

The joy of the book is its comprehensiveness, touching on almost all conceivable facets of Southwestern cultural evolution. In the brief span allotted to this review we mention only four, of special fascination. First is the introductory "Problem of Nomenclature", which clarifies the confusing terminology that Hispanos (or Spanish Americans, or Mexicans, or Californios, or mestizos, etc.) use to categorize themselves. Second is Camp's revelation of the contrasting attitudes between Hispanos and Americanos toward the concept of time, especially the sharply divergent meanings implied in "mañana." Thirdly, there is an immense philosophical gulf between Anglo-American and the Hispano-American cultures, resulting in serious tensions. Finally, in "The Current Scene," the author peers into the future and sees a new stage that is "fractionated and controversial." Evidence of this is seen and heard almost daily in Denver newspapers and television.

There is a wealth of excellent photographs that provide flavor for this intellectual feast. There are also a number of original, well-drafted maps to keep the reader on an even geographical keel. On the other hand, blissfully, end-notes and a bibliography have been kept to a minimum. The handsomely bound volume is quarto or coffee table size. We recommend it to you unreservedly.

Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.

Telluride, From Pick To Powder, by Richard L. and Suzanne C. Fetter. Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, 1979. 194 pp. Paperback, \$4.95

The history of Telluride conforms to the usual mining town history—from lone prospector to conglomerate companies to economic disaster to tourists to skiing. (The “powder” in the title refers to snow.) But Telluride has some unique aspects. For instance, many Britishers invested in Colorado mines—Britishers who lived in Shanghai developed Telluride mines. A Telluride bank robbery is unique, not the one Butch Cassidy pulled, but the one C.D. Waggoner conceived to save the Bank of Telluride during the 1929 panic. He, “a seedy country banker,” “took” six New York banks for the sum of \$500,000.

This little town tucked away in a San Juan valley seems an unlikely place for a genius to discover alternating electric current, but L. L. Nunn did this, as well as establishing an institute for young engineers, who were called “Pinheads” by the locals.

Many towns had labor strikes, but surely Telluride is the only town in which the head of the mine owners’ association, a dashing fellow named Bulkeley Wells, was made captain of the militia sent in by the governor to settle the strike. Incidentally, the affair between Wells and Denver’s society queen, Mrs. Crawford Hill, would have created less gossip if Mrs. Hill had been a widow, as the authors state. Crawford Hill died in 1922, years after the blatant affair had exploded.

Finally, is not today’s Telluride an unlikely place for a successful international film festival?

The great lack in the book is the absence of details about the Idorado Mining Company that kept Telluride and Ouray alive for more than thirty years. The company is a subsidiary of the great Newmont Mining Company which is mentioned under the spelling of Maimont.

Other curious mistakes may be cited: a stagecoach does not store its luggage in a ‘booth,’ nor is poker played with ‘ships,’ nor is Parson C. M. Hoge a ‘Hogg.’

The authors seem to have spent more time in libraries than they have in the San Juans.

Otherwise they would not have perched Fort Peabody on top of Red Mountain Pass on p. 152. They moved it correctly to Imogene Pass on another page, (which is hard to cite because the book lacks an index). Then there is the picture on page 73, obviously of the Sneffels Range, with a curved railroad track in the foreground. The authors have titled it “. . . the line ran straight under the Sangre de Cristo Mountains over fifty miles.”

Anyone who knows Telluride at all will simmer—even boil—over the mistakes of omission and commission in this poorly bound paperback, but when he has cooled off he should be grateful that the Fetters have collected the written history and word-of-mouth tales of the town. Footnotes and a bibliography would have helped to distinguish between the two. The style makes for easy reading, and forty-five of the splendid photographs are from the Homer Reid collection, a tribute to the man who for many years was the town’s friendly greeter and guide to the jeep roads.

Louisa Arps, C.M.

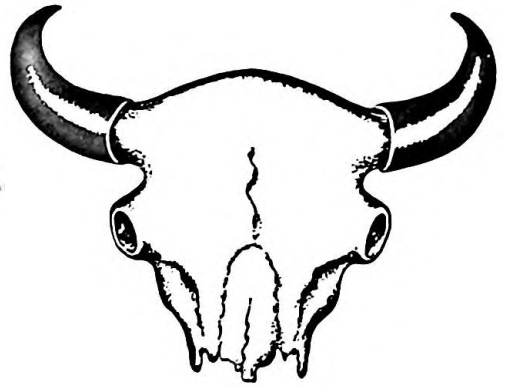


The DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

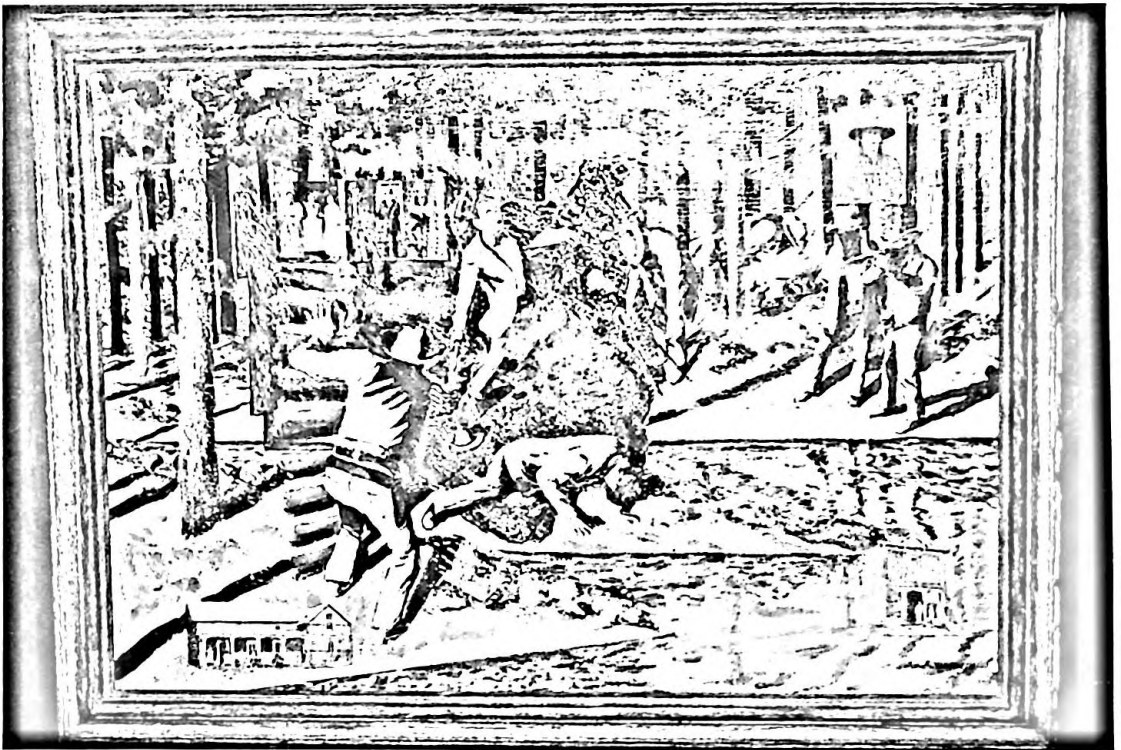
MARCH-APRIL 1980

VOLUME XXXVI No. 2



THE DAY GRAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIED A VIOLENT DEATH

Jack H. Dwyer, P.M.



Montage, 1975, by artist-historian William B. Chenoweth illustrating the event on the shore of Grand Lake on July 4, 1883.

Bernie Faingold Photo

OVER THE CORRAL RAIL IN MEMORIAM

Charles S. Ryland, one of our most faithful Westerners, died at his home in Golden, Colorado, on April 12, 1980.

Charles was the 17th Sheriff of the Denver Posse. During his tenure with the Posse he has been program chairman, membership chairman, has presented four papers, and was Roundup Foreman for the last four years. He was editor of the 17th number of the *Brand Book*.

With his Smoking Stack Press he printed many of our Christmas meeting tickets as well as other announcements. His collection of old photographs has been extensively employed for the *Roundup* and *Brand Books*.

The Denver Westerners and his many other friends both local and nation-wide will miss him greatly.

R. A. Ronzio, P. M.

* * *

The members of the Denver Westerners are urged to look over their holdings and bring excess or unwanted books, pictures, objects, or other items for the auctions held each meeting. What with one thing and another, including the fact that publication costs are zooming skyward, as well as the additional fact that too many of our members are woefully tardy in paying their dues, our financial situation is in a period of recession, and we need to use every means to replenish the treasury.

Another means by which we can all help is to introduce new Corresponding Members to the Posse. We have something to offer and should not be shy about going after new members for our mutual advantage. Put your shoulder to the wheel! Pay your dues!

* * *

Dabney Otis Collins, Charter Member of the Denver Posse of the Westerners, Denver Brand Book editor in 1948, Sheriff in 1949, has been honored by the Pioneer Museum of Colorado Springs by an exhibition featuring the 18 stories written by him which appeared in the *Empire Magazine* of the *Denver Post*. The exhibit features a picture of Dabney and offers a resume of his beautiful series on the West.

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THE DAY GRAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIED A VIOLENT DEATH

By
Jack H. Dwyer, P.M.

(Presented to the Denver Posse 28 November 1979)
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Murder, revenge and politics combine to create fascination and intrigue whenever found together, but never did they merge so sensation-ally to change the course of history than the morning of Independence Day, 1883, on the banks of Grand Lake, Colorado.

Perhaps the scene should be properly set by going back to January 2, 1883, when Wilson Waldron (also spelled: Waldern) was finishing his term as County Commissioner. The miners from the communities of Lulu, Teller City, Dutchtown, and Gaskill were welcomed to a New Years celebration in Grand Lake which had been the county seat of Grand County for a very short time due to the population shift from Hot Sulphur Springs. Hot Sulphur Springs has been the County seat since 1874, two years before Colorado was admitted to the Union.

Presumably, Wilson Waldron had been drinking off and on since New Year's Eve, thirty-six hours before the incident.

He picked up his wife and baby son, Roy, then less than three years old, between 8:00 and 9:00 a. m. There was food and dancing. Waldron was under the influence of alcohol. His wife turned to a popular young miner, Robert P. Plummer, to intercede to convince Waldron not to harass her and the baby. Waldron's temper flared and he became abusive to Plummer for coming between a man and his wife. Plummer left the hall and was just stepping up on the porch across the street when Waldron shot him in the back and killed him.

The perpetrator, land salesman, mine and claim broker, ice merchant and lame duck county commissioner was placed in the new jail. It cost \$1,000.00 to build the jail and only \$350.00 to build the new court house. The following day, January 3, 1883, Waldron was appointed "road overseer" for the county. This would indicate the remaining county commissioners treated the accused murderer with respect. What did this have to do with the subsequent violence? It was one more fracture in stable government in Grand County, Colorado.

Grand County is a mountainous area in north central Colorado with elevations between 7,000 and 13,550 feet above sea level. Sawtooth Peak is within the county where the Continental Divide extends to its most easterly point in the United States.

A temperature rise or fall of 50 degrees within a few hours is not uncommon. Middle Park traverses the county from east to west. The term "park" comes from the French term, *parc*, meaning "enclosure." It is a relatively flat area enclosed by mountains.

The headwaters of the mighty Colorado River, originally known as the Grand River, are within the county and it was from this that the county received its name. It is interesting to note that Grand Mesa, Grand Valley and the city of Grand Junction, where the Colorado River is joined by the Gunnison River in Mesa County, are all named for the now unused identity of the Colorado River.

There is much Indian lore in the area. The Utes, Arapahoes and Cheyennes came through the region to hunt and heal themselves in the medicinal waters of Hot Sulphur Springs. Grand Lake was known as Spirit Lake to the Utes after their women and children were drowned in a violent storm. According to the legend, they had been placed on rafts and put out into the water to protect them during a battle with another tribe on the shoreline. In another incident, near the town of Tabernash, a lesser chief named Tabernash was shot by a settler when the white man thought he recognized Tabernash as one of the Utes who had killed his father and brother. The Utes deeply resented this sudden killing in the absence of arrest and trial. That resentment was thought to be one of the contributing factors in the Meeker Massacre on September 29, 1879, at the White River Indian Agency. Many other Indian tribes had traveled through the area.

William N. Byers (1831-1903), founding editor and publisher of the *Rocky Mountain News* in 1859, came to the area in 1863. He established a residence and using Indian Half-Breed scrip from Minnesota acquired from Susan Boshman, he then surveyed the area around the Hot Sulphur Springs. Each scrip holder was entitled to 480 acres of any part of the public domain, without charge. No one had surveyed the area, so Byers who had experience as a surveyor, completed the job and used scrip to buy and control all the land around the springs. Byers Canyon, west of Hot Sulphur Springs, was named in his honor. Peculiarly, the newspaper man had no published accounts of the violence within the county. He was in the area and knew many of the participants.

When created by the Territorial legislature in 1874, the county extended from the Continental Divide on the east to what is now the Utah border and from the northern limits of Summit County to what is now the Wyoming border. This continued for three years when the State Legislature carved out the western portion to establish Routt County. After a century, the area is still isolated from the plains and from population

centers such as Estes Park on the east edge of Rocky Mountain National Parl. Grand Lake is on the southwestern terminus of Trail Ridge Road which traverses Rocky Mountain National Park and is also identified as U.S. Highway 34.

The resentments and antagonism between various county officials dates back about 1877, when Thomas J. "Cap" Dean, in his capacity as newly elected County Judge, fined W.C. Chamberlain and a Mr. Stokes \$50.00 for failure to turn over the County Court Registry, poll books, election ballots, etc. A *mittimus* (an order requiring immediate jailing) was entered by Dean to force compliance with delivery of the records and payment of fines. In the appellate process, the issue was nullified. The anguish laid seed to later events.

In 1880, 81 residents in the area of Grand Lake petitioned to change the county seat from Hot Sulphur Springs to Grand Lake. An election was held and Grand Lake was selected 114 to 83. The Board of County Commissioners appointed a Board of Canvassers who disallowed 62 votes in the Grand Lake area for not residing within the county for the residency period required by law. The outcome was not clear until much later when the District Court voided the finding of the Board of Canvassers and sustained the selection of Grand Lake as County Seat. (*See People ex. rel. Dean vs. Board of County Commissioners of Grand County* 6 Colorado 202 (Supreme Court of Colorado, April 1882). Dean? Thomas J. Dean. Who financed him? William N. Byers.

Before proceeding further, it is advisable to meet the principal characters in the later drama.

Thomas J. "Captain" or "Cap" Dean, born upper New York State May 22, 1826; died July 17, 1883, at age 57 years. Reared in Wayne County, Michigan. Lived in New Orleans, Louisiana, St. Louis, Missouri, and Louisville, Kentucky. Captain, 5th Michigan Cavalry in 1862, Army of the Potomac. Captured by the Confederacy and imprisoned at Libby Prison. Miner at Idaho Springs, Colorado, for ten years. Served as Superintendent of Schools for Clear Creek County. Moved to Hot Sulphur Springs in 1875 where he ran the Middle Park Hotel and kept a saloon. Active in politics. Served as County Judge and as Acting County Clerk on the fateful day. "Cap" Dean was accused of mutilating the County Court Records while he was the judge. He was the sole military pensioner in Grand County at the time of his death. Two libel actions were brought by "Cap" Dean and Barney Day against Bailey, Smart and C.H. Hook of Grand Lake. In the *Grand Lake Prospector* in an open letter to Dean and Day, the latter were accused of being thieves and perjurers. Justice T.W. Preston ordered Bailey and Smart held on bail at \$200.00 each to appear before the Grand Jury. County Judge Hoyt intervened with a writ of Habeas Corpus. Arresting Officer, M.G. McQueary failed to return the writ and left the County.

These libel suits were additional fuel to the fires of hate and doubt within the County of Grand. Our next focal person:

John Gillis Mills: born approximately 1849, in New Hampshire. Died, Grand Lake, Colorado, July 4, 1883, at age 34 years. Attended Dartmouth College. Practiced law in Mississippi where it was alleged he killed two defenseless "colored" men in October, 1875. Was run out of the Black Hills of the Dakotas for causing trouble. Cheyenne, Wyoming, resident briefly. Came to Teller, Colorado, where he attempted to establish his own slate of city officials. According to the North Park Miner after the incident, the *Laramie Times*, in 1880, carried the story of how he had set himself up as an assayer, but was not trusted. He repeatedly wrote the *Cheyenne Leader* defaming North Park and specifically the Vandalia Mining Company concerning a real or assumed slight in business practices.

He lost in his effort to control Teller in the election of 1882. He remained a resident of Teller, but moved the center of his business operations and practice of law to Grand Lake. There he received political support from Smart and Bailey who established and published the *Grand Lake Prospector* as Mills' political voice. He had served as County Commissioner since April, 1881, and was senior member at the time of the incident and leading advocate for Grand Lake.

He had powerful friends. William A. Hammill was an intimate advisor and man behind the scene for U.S. Senators Jerome B. Chaffee (1876-1879) and Edward O. Wolcott, (1889-1901). Mills conducted the Republican County Convention at Grand Lake on September 2, 1882. Weber tried to get in, but "the place was so filled with Democrats and bummers, no member of my delegation could enter." (The State Convention was scheduled for September 14, 1882, at Denver, Colorado.

Weber returned to Hot Sulphur Springs and was instrumental in conveying the news that Hammill, the arrogant Englishman, had said Grand County "is in my pocket." Hammill was referring to Mills and Charles F. Caswell who were the delegates elected at Grand Lake. Weber and Dean were elected at the Republican County Convention at Hot Sulphur Springs on September 5, 1882, and then convinced the Republican State Credentials Committee of the validity of their election, thereby excluding the seating of Mills and Caswell as delegates.

At that convention, Weber accused Mills of being a scoundrel and fugitive from justice. These former friends became bitter enemies and adversaries although they served together on the fateful Board of County Commissioners.

Edward P. Weber: born Galena, Illinois, approximately 1846. Died July 4, 1883 at 37 years of age. Served as Deputy District Attorney, Cook County, (Chicago) Illinois. Came to the area as Manager of the Wolverine Mine, near Teller. Offices and headquarters at Grand Lake. Residence on a ranch located on the Lower Fraser River in the county. Weber practiced law throughout the area.

There is a natural tendency to blacken the memory of Mills and brighten that of Weber. This tendency was not uniformly shared by their peers, part of which was due to community loyalty, even after the disaster. Another portion must be due to the personalities involved.

Weber was described by Jacob Fillius, attorney-at-law, Geortetown, Colorado, as follows:

"He made many enemies by reason of his efforts in trying to disturb titles of men who had located mines and land thereabout. Grand Lake was first settled in 1867, by "Judge" Joseph L. Wescott on the west side of the lake. Wescott was a trapper, hunter, fisherman, and prospector. He located 160 acres, some of which became a part of Grand Lake. Weber noticed a flaw in the title and took advantage of same."

There was a tremendous turnover of officials holding county offices during the years 1881 and 1882 while the battle for supremacy continued between Hot Sulphur Springs and Grand Lake. As an example of this, John Lafever, Justice of the Peace at Teller, was elected County Commissioner in an election in which Deputy Sheriff William Redmon was defeated in October, 1882. Lafever never served. There was a battle between the two factions of the Republican party and subsequently Lafever was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives from Grand County by a vote of 201 to 177 for Mills' candidate, Gregory. After being sworn in during January, 1883, Lafever promptly introduced a Bill establishing the "County of Teller" with the mining area north of Grand Lake as its hub. The House passed the Bill 34 to 1, while the Senate defeated it 15 to 8. If this Bill had passed, substantial area and votes would have been lost to Grand Lake. Hot Sulphur Springs and Teller would have become county seats and Grand Lake would no longer have been a force in political life.

Late in 1881, Charles F. Caswell, a pal of Mills, was appointed to investigate the Treasurer's office at \$75.00 per month. He was also given authority, or assumed it, to impose high licensing fees for new groceries and saloons.

County financing was by issuance of warrants. During 1882, there was continued increase in indebtedness without apparent means of taxation or revenue to pay same. The County had the second worst credit in Colorado, exceeded in its depth only by Rio Grande County. The tax rate was 20 mills and the County Commissioners would not raise the mill levy.

Caution should be exercised in not attributing the subsequent horror to a battle between the Democrats and Republicans. All the principals were Republicans on the County Commission.

In early 1882, Mills claimed control of the County. Wilson Waldern was his tool and John Kinsey of Hot Sulphur could be outvoted.

Mills had served as a County Commissioner since April, 1881; Barney Day began his service in December, 1882, and Governor James B. Grant

(1883-1884) appointed Edward P. Weber shortly after his inauguration in January, 1883, confirming an interim appointment by Acting Governor H.A.W. Tabor.

The winter of 1882-83 was one of the most severe on record. There were heavy rains after the late spring thaw. Travel was difficult and at times impossible.

After Weber's appointment to the Board of County Commissioners, Mills repeatedly requested the Democratic Governor to rescind the appointment, without success.

The *Rocky Mountain News* reported a census in Grand County of 417 people of which 342 were estimated to comprise the voting population.

Although there was a resolution made later that Waldern be transferred to the Jefferson County jail for safekeeping, nothing was ever done. On September 14, 1883, Waldern knocked down the jailer at Grand Lake and escaped. On October 18, 1883, the *Grand Lake Prospector* reported: "Mrs. Waldern and her children left Tuesday for Golden which place they will make their home." The family then disappeared.

Wilson Waldern was never tried for the murder of Robert P. Plummer.

After his appointment as County Commissioner, Weber attempted to gain access to the County Commissioners' records. The response from the Grand Lake County Officers was that the accused murderer Wilson Waldern had the records in jail. There was no action taken to force the turn-over of the records by resorting to court action.

The involvement of the two Byers, uncle and nephew, weaves a web through the early history of the county. Frank Byers married Josephine Elizabeth McQueary in 1877, the first known wedding in the county. She was the daughter of James A. "Polk" McQueary who settled in Grand County in 1874. In August, 1882, she filed suit for divorce through her attorney, Edward P. Weber. Byers was represented by L.B. France of Georgetown. William N. Byers appeared as a witness for his nephew's wife. It was believed to be the first divorce in the county. Women were scarce in the area.

What about the Law Officers?

Sheriff Charles Royer: born in Kentucky approximately 1850. Died July 14, 1883, at age 33. Very popular politician and generally considered to be unaffiliated with either faction of the dispute between the Commissioners, until the day of the slaughter.

Deputy Undersheriff William Redmon: born approximately 1854. Died age 29, if certain facts are accepted. Unrepatriated soldier and strongarm. He was in the party which shot at "Cap" Dean in 1877.

Redmon later had discovered and worked a promising mining claim. He entered into a contract to sell the claim for \$4,000.00 as soon as he

obtained a patent or receiver's receipt. He applied to the Land Office in Central City. Weber protested in writing against the issuance of the receipt of patent, claiming fraud upon the government since there were no minerals on the claim. The hearing was set in February, 1883. Weber failed to appear to substantiate his position. The receipt was issued, but in the meantime, due to the delay, the purchaser backed out. (Redmon's attorney was Jacob Fillius, attorney from Georgetown, who was shown earlier to be antagonistic to Weber, as shown above.) Upon returning through Georgetown on the way back to Grand County, Fillius reported that Redmon said: "Mr. Fillius, if that man Weber ever crosses my path again, I will kill him." This was not reported until about 1936, when Mr. Fillius was very elderly. The document was written by Mr. Fillius' daughter and is filed in the records of the Colorado Historical Library in the Heritage Center, Denver, Colorado.

The minutes of January 1, 1883, indicate Mills, Day and Waldern were present. Barney Day presented a certificate to certify his election as County Commissioner.

According to the minutes of the County Commissioners, on January 3, 1883, (one day after Waldern's murder of Plummer), the Commissioners approved the official bond of Wilson Waldern as Road Overseer. E.P. Weber served a short term as County Attorney after the term of Charles F. Caswell, who was a classmate of Mills at Dartmouth.

On January 6, 1883, the Commissioners approved the payment of \$5.00 for services as County Commissioner for one day to Wilson Waldern.

There are no official minutes in the County Clerk's office for the period from January 6, 1883, to March 12, 1883, but on February 26, 1883 there was a meeting with minutes published in the *North Park Miner* as follows:

Report of County Commissioners

Report of the proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of Grand County at the special meeting held at Grand Lake February 26th, 1883.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

First: That none of the county officers, viz: County Judge, County Treasurer or County Clerk have any official bonds on file as by law required.

Second; That the county monies have been embezzled or squandered.

Third: That county warrants to a large amount, as is currently rumored, have been fraudulently and illegally issued.

Fourth: That the county indebtedness is over \$20,000 and has been and now is continuing to increase at the rate of \$1,500 per month.

Fifth: That many officers are by reason of their not having good

and sufficient bonds, illegally and oppressively exercising and attempting to exercise powers and rights contrary to law.

Sixth: The county treasurer having failed to make this semi-annual report as by law required.

Seventh: The failure of the late board of commissioners doing and performing the duties by law required of them. Two members of the board are of the opinion that a special meeting should be held and joined in the following call:

TO: J.G. MILLS, E.P. WEBER, and BARNEY DAY:

You will please take notice that a special meeting of the board of commissioners of Grand County will be held at Grand Lake upon the 26th day of February, A.D., 1883, at 4 o'clock p.m. of said day.

E. P. WEBER
BARNEY DAY

Dated Feb. 22, 1883.

And it appeared that all of the members of the said Board had due notice of such special meeting.

The Board of County Commissioners of Grand County attempted to meet at the court house at Grand Lake pursuant to said call, but by reason of a drunken mob of from ten to fifteen armed men, led on and encouraged by the sheriff of Grand County, by and through his undersheriff, William Redman; W. S. Chamberlain, county treasurer; Len J. Pollard, county clerk; and one Charles F. Caswell, late county attorney, the board was unable to convene at said county court house and unable to have access to the county books and records. They thereupon repaired to the house of Mrs. S. W. Nickerson and there held their meeting of which the following is a true and correct record.

Barney Day called the meeting to order, and upon motion Thomas J. Dean was appointed county clerk pro tem.

Upon motion of E. P. Weber, the board proceeded to the election of chairman. E. P. Weber receiving two votes was declared elected chairman of the board of county commissioners of Grand County for the year A.D. 1883.

Upon motion of Mr. Day, the following resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, it is currently rumored, and we, from the resistance made and encouraged by the county officers of this county, believe the facts to be that the funds of Grand County have been embezzled and stolen and warrants illegally and fraudulently issued and the officers of Grand County, especially the county treasurer and county clerk seeing no other way open to avoid the exposure consequent upon an investigation, have resorted to and encouraged an armed resistance to

the peaceable convening of the board of commissioners for the performing of their duty. Now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the board of county commissioners do hereby advise and request all the taxpayers within said county to cease paying all taxes to said W. S. Chamberlain, claiming to be county treasurer, or to any person until further action of this board; and also advise and request all persons to cease paying all taxes to said W. S. Chamberlain, claiming to be county treasurer, or to any person until further action of this board; and also advise and request all persons to cease buying or dealing in the county warrants of Grand county until further notice from this board. And be it further

RESOLVED, that we pledge ourselves to remit any and all penalties that might by operation of law attach to the failure to pay taxes by reason of this resolution; and we further advise the taxpayers to resist forcibly if necessary any attempted collection of taxes by said W. S. Chamberlain, as county treasurer, he not having upon file any official bond that this board can approve of.

The petition of H. B. Rogerson and others relative to the laying out of a road from Gaskill to Cozen's ranch was ordered filed and made the special order of business at the next ensuing meeting.

The action of E. P. Weber and Barney Day, county commissioners, discharging Messes. Morrison and Fillius and retaining C. C. Post in lieu of them, was in all things noted and confirmed.

Upon motion, it was ordered that the sheriff be requested to make application to some justice of the peace for an order requiring the removal of Wilson Waldron charged with the murder of Robert Plummer, to the Jefferson County Jail, on account of their being no sufficient jail in the county of Grand.

The chairman, upon motion, was requested to make and enter into negotiations with the NORTH PARK MINER to publish the proceedings of the board and do the county printing for the present year, and report same at next meeting for action.

Upon motion of Mr. Day, the following resolutions and orders were adopted:

WHEREAS, By reason of conflict in the establishing and creating of the commissioner districts at a general and special meeting of the board of commissioners great confusion and doubt exists in reference thereto, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That all orders, resolutions or motions of any and every kind by the board of county commissioners in Grand county heretofore made creating and establishing commissioner district, be and the same hereby are repealed and annulled. And be it further

RESOLVED, That all the territory in the county of Grand lying and being North of the center of the line above the Continental Divide

commonly known and described as North Park, be and the same thereby is established and shall be known as Commissioner District No. One (1).

And that all that territory being part of Middle Park lying South of the centre of the line along the Continental Divide and east of a line running due north and south from the thread of the stream of Corral Creek at the point where the same empties into the Grand river, be and the same hereby is established and constituted and shall be known as Commissioner District No. Two (2).

And that all the Territory being part of Middle Park lying south of the centre of the line along the Continental Divide and west of line running due north and south from the thread of the stream of Corral creek at the point where the same empties into the Grand river, be and the same hereby is established and constitutes and shall be known as Commissioner District No. Three (3).

It was moved and carried that the clerk furnish the NORTH PARK MINER with a copy of these proceedings for publication.

The board not having access to its papers or records by reason of a mob could do and transact no further business, thereupon motion of the board adjourned.

I hereby certify the above and foregoing to be a true and correct transcript of the minutes of the proceedings of the board of county commissioners of Grand County at their special meeting held at Grand Lake February 26, 1883.

THOS. J. DEAN
County Clerk, Pro Tem."

Mills was in Teller representing a woman in a divorce case on February 26, 1883. He had no notice of the Special Meeting. Redmon accused Weber of being a "God Damn Son of a Bitch" that day.

Treasurer, W. S. Chamberlain, the approximately 60-year-old Democrat, appointed Gilman Martin as his deputy without apparent authority to do so. Martin then attempted to collect taxes on "Cap" Dean's saloon and Barney Day's sheep during the Spring of 1883. (It is doubtful there was ever any major armed conflict between the cattle and sheep interests in Grand County.) Day, counseled by Weber, swore out a warrant against Chamberlain, Martin and Caswell charging them with illegal taxation before Justice of the Peace Eugene Marker at Hot Sulphur Springs. Marker was Dean's son-in-law. Bond was set for \$600.00 each. They were jailed at Grand Lake and later at Golden, Colorado. District Judge Carpenter sitting at Georgetown released them on a writ of habeas corpus presented by attorneys Morrison and Fillius. Weber was in the courtroom at the time the order was issued.

On March 12, 1883, Mills met without Weber or Day being present, and since there was no quorum the meeting was adjourned. The same thing happened on the first Monday in April, 1883.

Once the voters of Grand Lake became aware of the minutes published in the *North Park Miner*, Weber and Day were reluctant to return to Grand Lake for fear of their lives.

A regular meeting of the Commissioners was held July 2, 1883, at Grand Lake. The minutes disclose Mills, Day and Weber were present:

“Resolution”: Resolved that the minutes of the proceedings of the Special Meeting held at Mrs. S. W. Nickerson’s house upon the 26th day of February, A.D. 1883, and reported in the *North Park Miner* be in all things ratified and confirmed.

Barney Day, Aye
J. C. Mills, Nay
E. P. Weber, Aye

“Adjourned to 9:00 a.m., July 3, 1883.”

On July 3, 1883, Charles F. Caswell, former County Attorney and now Deputy County Clerk, refused to recognize the validity of Weber acting as a County Commissioner. The record does not disclose whether Weber was elected or appointed to fill a vacancy. The three commissioners apparently met and then Mills excused himself as he had another divorce client to represent outside of Grand Lake. The understanding was that no controversial action would be taken in his absence. Then Caswell was excused or forced to leave. There are no records of what happened that day. Some of the surviving county officials insisted that there was friendly rapport on July 3, 1883, until Mills and Caswell were out of sight and hearing. We can only surmise what happened from what was later discovered in Sheriff Royer’s pocket.

Upon his return that night, on the eve of the massacre, Mills seemed in good spirits and friendly to some of his friends, including Charles Royer, Judge Hoyt, Mr. Coffin, and Charles F. Caswell, along the trail near the Fairview Hotel. He was particularly solicitous to inquire when the other commissioners would meet him on Independence Day morning.

The Fourth of July dawned with bright blue sky and barely a ripple on Grand Lake. Day, Weber and Dean had finished a leisurely breakfast at the Fairview Hotel which was located on the west shore of Grand Lake near the outlet to the Grand River, now known as the Colorado. Young boys were out along the north shore line near town shooting off their fireworks and skipping rocks on the lake.

Weber had an armload of papers and records, but was unarmed. He had just turned to talk with one of his companions when a shot rang out from behind three boulders to the left of the trail. There was a cabin used as an ice house known as the Anderson Cabin to the right of the path and very near the shoreline, as one faced toward the town of Grand Lake. The ball from the first shot hit Weber in his back below the right shoulder and passed through his lungs and he hemorrhaged badly. He lived fourteen

hours, but was too weak to make a statement. It was presumed Mills fired the fatal shot.

It was estimated there were three to six men in hiding behind the rocks and in the evergreens and the aspens. Later reconstruction of the events gives credibility to the story that Mills had told companions the previous night he wanted to frighten Day and Dean, but especially Weber, to force them out of the county. The plan did not work since Day and Dean were armed with .45 calibre six-shot revolvers. Mills was shot and instantly killed by Barney Day. He was shot in the head from a distance close enough to leave powder burns in the hair. Mills companions commenced a heavy barrage of firing. Day ran behind the cabin. Two men closed in from either side. Day fired 4 of the 6 available shots at his pursuers and wounded one later thought to be William Redmon. Day was shot through the heart. He was found lying face down in Grand Lake 4 feet from the cabin.

T. J. Dean was shot twice in the face. One ball penetrated between the eye and the bridge of the nose and passed circuitously to the rear of his skull. It did not penetrate the skull and was not necessarily fatal. The other shot was through the nose. There was also a ghastly hole in his right hip; a bullet or ball had shattered the neck and head of the thigh bone.

Dean gave a statement but was unable to identify any of the assailants. He indicated he received a severe whipping from a revolver as he was lying wounded on the trail to town.

The Fairview Hotel was about one-half mile from town. The incident occurred about 150 yards north-east of the Fairview. If this had happened on any other day, the shots would have been noticed and acted upon. The noise of the Fourth of July delayed realization of what had happened.

While the townspeople came running, the others in Mills' party carried or dragged the wounded William Redmon to his horse where he had to be assisted into his saddle. The entire party disappeared through the trees.

Mills' identity was discovered as his mask was torn from his dead face. A Sharp's Repeating .40 calibre rifle was found near the body. It had been fired only once. A knife and a revolver were found on Mills' Body.

Redmon disappeared. His brother, Mann Redmon, was not available and was suspected of being a part of Mills' raiding party.

An inquest was held before Justice of the Peace George W. Bailey (This is the same Bailey who, with Smart, operated the *Grand Lake Prospector*, Mills' political voice in print).

The jury rendered its verdict: "The deceaseds had come to their deaths at the hands of unknown persons in a felonious manner."

This is particularly shocking because they killed each other. Mills had some unidentified assistance.

Dean made his statement. He then conveyed his property to his son, Fred. On the 9th, he suffered a chill. On the 13th, he lapsed into unconsciousness. He died at 9:00 p. m., July 17, 1883.

The diaries of William N. Byers clearly disclose his continued involvement with Weber and Day during the late spring and early summer of 1883. There were several personal financial transactions with both commissioners. He repeatedly visited Barney and Sophronia Day, including one July 16, 1883, to pay his respects to the widow.

A footprint was found behind the cabin used as the Fairview Ice House, also known as Anderson's Cabin near the scene where Day's body was found. No comparison prints were available, so the only evidence forthcoming was to substantiate the deathbed statement of Dean that other parties were present. William Redmon was suspected of committing the vicious beating of the wounded Dean as he lay on the ground near the trail. Day got off four shots and, according to William B. Chenoweth, in the text found with a montage presently located in Grand County Court House at Hot Sulphur Springs, Day wounded William Redmon's brother, Mann Redmon. The authorities are divided as to whether it was Mann or William Redmon who was wounded. Sheriff Royer shot and killed Barney Day.

William Redmon disappeared and was variously rumored to be in the North Park near Walden, in Western Wyoming, and in what are now the states of New Mexico and Arizona. The most publicized and generally accepted conclusion to the William Redmon story appeared in the *Denver Tribune* September 4, 1883, exactly two months after the incident. Cattlemen Hank Golden and Andy Strong found a badly decomposed body on the trail of an isolated area of the Uncompahgre Reservation 6 miles from Cotton Creek and 4 miles west of the Colorado border in Utah. The body was found on its back with "I am William Redmon" written in the sand and the name was freshly cut into the pack found near the body. He had used a pistol to commit suicide. There was a wound above the left eye according to one account and in the right temple in another. Indian Agent Minniss identified the deceased. An Indian scout or tracker determined the deceased had been to Ouray, Colorado sometime before his death. There has been a controversy as to whether the body was that of William Redmon. The deceased had very large feet. The condition of the body made verification of the size of the feet impossible. The body was evidently buried near where it was found, shortly after the initial investigation. Now, back to the Fourth of July.

Sheriff Charles Royer arrived at Hot Sulphur Springs about two hours after the incident, and about 25 miles from the scene. His horse was lathered from a hard ride. When news of the massacre reached Hot Sulphur Springs, he expressed surprise and fear.

Both Hot Sulphur Springs and Grand Lake feared an armed invasion from the other community. None materialized. Perhaps the swollen streams discouraged traveling.

Mills' body was buried without much ceremony in the first cemetery at Grand Lake, on Sagebrush Flat, looking northwest across Columbine

Creek and with Mount Baker of the Never Summer Range in the background. Dora Mills remained at Teller for one season and then disappeared.

Barney Day was buried at Hot Sulphur Springs. He and his wife, Sophronia Neff Day, were the parents of the first white child known to have been born in Grand County, in 1876, the year Colorado was admitted to the Union. Sophronia Day (1839-1907) had an honored position as a pioneer in the Grand County Museum at Hot Sulphur Springs.

Edward P. Weber was buried on July 6, 1883, on his ranch on the Frazer River 17 miles below Grand Lake. His body was to have been temporarily interred, but his wife sold the land for a very small amount and left the county. There was no evidence it was ever removed to Wisconsin as Mrs. Weber first intended.

Democratic Governor James B. Grant offered a \$500.00 reward for the capture of the "murderers", but there was no record of any payment. There were rumors the Governor would send in the militia and that he would call a special session of the legislature to wipe Grand County off the map.

C. H. Hook, former partner of Charles Royer in the freighting business, poured abuse on the memory of Edward P. Weber, Barney Day, and "Cap" Dean which was picked up by the press. Hook tried to gain the attention of the Governor in Denver, without success.

The day before July 15, 1883, Sheriff Charles Royer checked into a room in the Annex of the Ennis House on Taos Street in Georgetown. On that date, his body was found sprawled near a .38 caliber Colt revolver on the floor. He had been dead for several hours. On his body was a letter from Hook in Denver warning him of the necessity to protect himself, and the following citation:

"To C. W. Royer, Sheriff:

You will please take notice that, pursuant to a certain resolution by the Board of County Commissioners upon the third day of July, A. D., duly passed, you are summoned to be and appear before the Board of County Commissioners of Grand County, at their office in the village of Grand Lake in the County of Grand, State of Colorado, upon the fifth day of July, S. D., 1883, at 10:00 o'clock A. M. of said day, then and there to show cause why you should not be required to give a new bond with a sufficient security.

E. P. Weber

Ch'm Board Com'ers, Grand County

(Seal)

Attest: Everett M. Harmon
Clerk, Pro Tem"

It was stated Royer grieved over the act of killing Barney Day who was a close friend. Royer left a statement which showed remorse at the death of his friend at his hands.

The *Denver Tribune*, July 9, 1883, carried the story of Royer's interment at the Riverside Cemetery in Denver in a vault. The body was to be taken back to Indiana after cooler weather arrived. He evidently was unmarried. He was survived by his mother in Louisville, Kentucky, a sister in Washington, D.C., and a brother, Harry of Leadville, Lake County, Colorado.

Not only was Waldren never tried for the murder of Plummer, but also there was never any conviction of anyone as a conspirator on July 4, 1883, in the horrible act of wiping out Grand County government. The then current three county commissioners were dead. The former county commissioner involved in the January incident had disappeared in disgrace. The sheriff was dead. His deputy was probably dead.

Governor Grant was careful to appoint three new commissioners not affiliated with either faction of the dispute.

The following is found in the County Clerk's record on Page 205:

"Aug. 7, 9 o'clock, A.M.

Full Board met—

Ordered that minutes of Com meeting of Feby 26 last past and published in N^o Park Miner be spread upon the records the same being as follows: (The newspaper account of the minutes of February 26, 1883, have been clipped and pasted into the records)

"On September 3, 1883, 9:00 A.M.

Full Board present.

On the 3rd day of July the Clerk was excused from acting and all minutes, action, and proceedings of the Board (if any) had on that day were lost, from the Clerk's office or destroyed and never came to the hands of the Clerk for entry upon the records.

Len J. Pollard, Clerk

On the Fourth Day of July the County Commissioners E.P. Weber, Barney Day and John G. Mills were deprived of their lives by the Grand Lake tragedy. The July meeting not having been adjourned.

Len J. Pollard, Clerk"

It is the duty of every historian to delve into the consequences of such traumatic events. Certainly, the shock of the events substantially altered the course of Grand County history.

Minerals had already started playing out and no further investments were available to maintain Lulu, Gaskill, or Teller, and the mines were abandoned. The towns died.

The newspapers throughout the State and nation had a field day editorializing within the news stories about Grand County.

The rail head reached Georgetown northeast of Loveland Pass in 1877. Telephone and telegraph lines immediately followed. The telephone, telegraph and railroads did not reach Middle Park and Grand County until 1904, twenty-seven years later. Granted there were engineering problems in crossing over Rollins Pass or any alternative, but who can measure the discouraging effect of the violence in Grand County in promoting financing?

One of the obvious effects was to discourage tourism, which even then was a key to the economic well-being of the area. The adverse publicity kept the northwest corner of the state isolated, proud and alone. It was only after Rocky Mountain National Park was created by Congress in 1915, that Grand Lake again was accepted as a tourist center. The county seat was returned to Hot Sulphur Springs in 1888, where it has remained to this day.

Life went on, but rarely has a threat of running a person or persons out of the county had such violent consequences. Dreams, ambitions, wealth and community pride were never quite the same in Grand County after Independence Day, 1883.



Ferry Boats in Idaho, by James L. Huntley. The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho. 1979. 275 pp. \$7.95

The rivers were the highways for the explorers, but for the overland traveler the rivers often proved to be long detours. This was very true of the Snake River of Idaho, with its long southward sickle curve which meant many extra long miles for those going to the Oregon Territory by wagon. The ferry boat was the "child of necessity" which allowed the traveler to save time and miles, and often made possible the continued trip instead of a long detour or a complete turn-around.

In *Ferry Boats in Idaho*, Huntley, a native of Idaho, has documented the 70 years of the river ferries which were made necessary by the Snake and other rivers of Idaho. The book begins with a short history of ferries, but quickly moves to the particular problems of the Snake River. It tells the personal stories of the people as they lived and operated the ferries, including some of the accidents, Indian troubles, and amusing incidents relating to them. The final chapter describes the post offices at the ferry sites and the decline of the ferry boats due to the advent of bridges.

Huntley's research covers all of the printed sources, plus many personal communications with the ferrymen, owners and families, and others directly connected to the many ferries. He discusses the major river ferries, and many of the other public and private crossings, as well as some of the ferries of the other river systems used by the miners to get into the northern mining country. His own family and personal experiences are also a part of this book, which undoubtedly took many years to compile into a source which will be a valuable research document for future writers of Idaho's history.

Of major interest are the many pictures relating to the stories. The book also contains excerpts of the laws, fee schedules, and individual detailed maps. For me, the book did not come alive until I began to plot the location of each crossing on a state map to see how history moved across the state. This is my only criticism of the book, that Mr. Huntley did not provide a large full map for an overall view of the individual crossings.

Ferry Boats in Idaho is an enjoyable book offering an unusual slice of the history of the west.

Ken Gaunt, C.M.

Bat Masterson, The Man and the Legend, by Robert K. DeArment, Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1979, pp. 399. Price \$14.95.

When one thinks of the American frontier, one of the first names that comes to mind, along with Buffalo Bill, Wyatt Earp and George Armstrong Custer, is that of Bat Masterson. Some years ago, a popular television series, in which he was the main character, called him "a legend in his own time." In this latest, and most likely not the last, of many volumes depicting the life and times of Bat Masterson, author DeArment, after twenty years of research, attempts to "debunk" a number of invented stories of Masterson's many and varied adventures as a buffalo hunter, army scout, peace officer, gambler and sports promoter. His object, of course, is to show him as he really was. The dust cover of the book claims that this rendition is "the most complete biography of Bat Masterson ever written," and to begin with, I concur with that statement due to the fact that I have read much on the life of Bat Masterson simply because he was one of my grandfather's best friends during his Dodge City days. The book, itself, is well-written in an easy-to-read manner and well documented with fourteen pages of footnotes and an eight page bibliography.

One of the most interesting subjects "debunked" by the author is the derivation of Masterson's nickname "Bat." According to DeArment, and he makes a strong case, Masterson received the nickname for his baptismal name of Bartholomew, or Bart, shortened to "Bat," instead of for his shooting prowess, or his effective use of a cane as a club that so many previous historians have believed. Another legend the author attacks is the number of persons killed by the "deadly gunfighter." Some accounts claim as many as twenty-six died before his guns, but DeArment methodically proves a possibility of one death, one definitely wounded, with two other maybes. This figure does not take into account Indian deaths during the early days. The author goes on to say that Masterson himself probably let the stories of his gun expertise circulate because it helped his reputation in his most enduring profession; that of a gambler. There is no doubt that Masterson

frequently demonstrated nerves of steel in the face of danger, and this, in all probability, aided in exaggeration of the legend, as most individuals did not like to admit that they had been bluffed into submission but preferred to build their antagonist up in order to justify the end result.

The author also points out that Masterson had four brothers, two of whom were well-known peace officers in their own right, and who contributed to the Masterson fame. Ed Masterson was eventually killed in the line of duty, and the many escapades of Jim Masterson no doubt gave Bat a reputation he did not earn except for the fact that he was the most famous of the peace officer trio.

There are some statements within the book however, that the author could have expanded upon to give more depth to his treatment of the western frontier. In one example, he refers to a new army cantonment established on the Sweetwater in 1876, known as Ft. Elliott. No doubt this post was named after Major Joel Elliott of the 7th Cavalry, who died at the Battle of the Washita in 1868 when he and his men were abandoned by Custer, but this wasn't mentioned. In another example Bill Thompson is introduced early on but the reader has to wait a while before he learns that Bill is the younger brother of the infamous Ben Thompson.

DeArment, however, is at his best when accounting for two of the more famous incidents in which Bat Masterson was involved, one being the saloon shooting death of Sergeant King, and the other when Masterson was supposedly "hiding" from the most famous of the Texas cowboys, Clay Allison. The author dissects previous accounts and presents in a scholarly manner his own version which is extremely difficult not to believe. Since Wyatt Earp and Masterson were particularly close, the author also digs into the Earp legend somewhat, and not really taking anything away from Earp, calls a spade a spade. The special relationship between Earp and "Doc" Holliday also is examined, and the author makes it clear that Masterson did not like Holliday but put up with him because of his friendship for the famous lawman.

I found one minor error in the work which involved the Dora Hand murder. Newspaper accounts I have read refer to "Fannie

Keenan" as the real name of the victim, while DeArment states that it was the reverse.

One of the most enlightening portions of the book describes Masterson's life in detail after he left Dodge City, and this is what many early accounts of his life only gloss over. During the end of the nineteenth century Masterson lived for the most part in Trinidad, Colorado, back to Dodge City, and then to the Denver locale, whence he left for New York in 1902. It was during this part of his life that he became extremely interested in sports promotion, which mainly consisted of prize fighting.

It is known that author DeArment concentrated most of his research at the Denver Public Library, and one wonders how he, himself, was impressed by the city due to his explicit descriptive narrative when expounding how Masterson hated Denver with a passion and was only too happy to leave.

The remainder of the book deals with Masterson's life as a reporter for the *New York Morning Telegraph*. The author gives one particular insight to Bat Masterson not generally known, which was his ever increasing ability with the pen. Toward the last stage of his life, Masterson, writing in his own column three times a week, took jabs at American life in general, and in the same folksy manner that gained popularity for the well known American humorist, Will Rogers. The end of an era passed away when Masterson died working at his desk thirty-two days before his 68th birthday in 1921.

In summary, this book is well worth reading and a must for all students and western history buffs of the American frontier west. The author has painstakingly researched and written one of the best accounts to date of a famous frontier personality. His scholarly investigations are well organized and the facts objectively presented for the reader's perspective. Not only does the work cover the wild and exciting era of the taming of the west, but delves into the personality of its subject and his insight into life on the frontier during a period of rapid change and ever-advancing civilization at the turn of the century. Bat Masterson was truly a man of the West and a "legend in his own time."

R. A. Cook, C.M.

Sweet Medicine by Peter J. Powell, University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, Oklahoma. First Edition 1969; Second Printing 1979. 935 pages, 2 volumes, boxed. \$39.50.

These two volumes, profusely illustrated with color drawings and excellent photographs, record the roles of the Sun Dance, the Sacred Arrows and the Sacred Buffalo Hat ceremonies in the history of the Northern Cheyennes.

The author records in words and photographs a composite of the Sun Dance ceremonies from 1959 to 1964. Rituals surrounding the Sacred Arrows (symbols of male power) and the Sacred Buffalo Hat (symbol and source of the female renewing powers) are traced from about 1830 to the present. These ceremonies are also illustrated with fine black and white photographs.

An Anglo Catholic priest, Peter J. Powell has served as director of American Indian work for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago. He lived with the Cheyenne people, observing and taking part in Cheyenne ceremonies, for more than ten years. A profound respect for the sacredness of the Cheyenne beliefs is revealed in his writings.

While Volume I contains material on the Indian Wars, both volumes have something of interest to the historian as well as to the anthropologist. There is a good bibliography and index.

All royalties from the sale of the book are returned to the "Old Ones" of the Northern and Southern Cheyenne people.

Robert L. Akerley, P.M.

1980 Colorado Books in Print, compiled and published by the Jende-Hagan Bookcorp, Box 177, Frederick, CO 80530. \$4.95 plus tax.

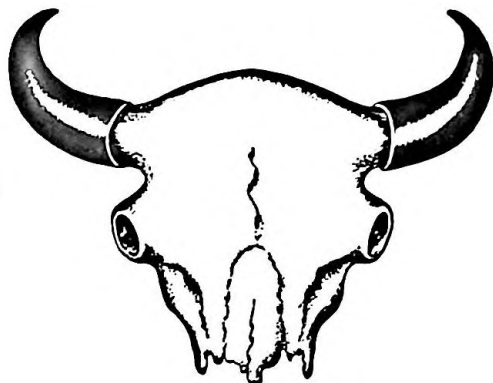
This booklet lists 473 books about Colorado, practically all historical in character, and separately lists the names and addresses of the 538 authors of the books (some books have more than one author.) Also there is a breakdown of the titles into 16 subject-matter lists, as well as a list of the publishers with addresses.

Erl H. Ellis, P.M.

The DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

MAY-JUNE 1980



A GLIMPSE INTO INDIAN PREHISTORY

Hugo G. Rodeck, P.M.



Human Beheading Scene. Painted in a Mimbres, New Mexico, prehistoric pottery bowl. This is one of two known versions of this activity, the other of which has been lost. Beheading is not known to have been practiced in the New Mexico area, consequently this is presumed to be a picture of a legend from central Mexico where similar activities are to be seen carved on stone stelae, with a similarly masked priestly figure.

OVER THE CORRAL RAIL SUMMER RENDEZVOUS AUGUST 15th

The 1980 Summer Rendezvous/Ladies' Night will take place at the historic Denver Union Station on Friday 15 August. Because of the logistic problems arising from the size of this event, your check will be your reservation, for you and your lady.

Mel Griffiths, Deputy Sheriff, will present the program.

WHEN EAST MET WEST AT THE FJORD

having to do with the Eskimos who came to North America via the Bering Strait, moved across the High Arctic to Greenland, and there met the Vikings at the Fjord. We happen to know that the lecture will be elaborately and beautifully illustrated.

Get your reservations in early; reservations are not unlimited so don't be left holding the bag!

* * *

Deputy Sheriff Mel Griffiths was guest of honor at *Mountainfilm 80* in Telluride, Colorado, June 6-7-8, 1980. This was the Second Annual Film Festival, capitalizing on the natural affinity of mountains and cinema photography. Sponsors are the American Alpine Club, the Telluride Council for the Arts and Humanities, and the National Film Preserve.

Awards of Honor were presented in 5 categories, as well as a Grand Prize for the best film of the Festival. A jury of 5 judged the presentations and Mel awarded the prizes.

* * *

NEW POSSE MEMBER

At the June 25th Posse meeting Richard A. Cook, 10321 Newcombe Court, Westminster, CO 80020, was voted a Posse Member of the Denver Posse. He is a retired member of our military forces with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Armor. He has a Master's Degree from Old Dominion University at Norfolk, Virginia, and is a

(continued on page 9)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

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A GLIMPSE INTO INDIAN PREHISTORY

By
Dr. Hugo G. Rodeck, P.M.

Presented with slides to the Denver Posse of the Westerners,
on 27 February 1980

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The prehistoric North American Indian culture known as Mimbres, from the Spanish word 'willow' applied to the stream which waters part of its area, has left its ruins and its remains in an area in extreme southwestern New Mexico roughly bounded on the east by low mountains and the Rio Grande, on the north and west by mountains, while to the south it opens into an inhospitable (at present) desert region extending indefinitely toward an inland basin in northern Mexico into which the Mimbres River would flow if it had sufficient water.

The Mimbrenos seem to have been a more or less conventional prehistoric Southwestern pueblid people, dating from about 900 to 1200 AD, with the usual agriculture of corn, beans, and squash, combined with the usual hunting and gathering of available wild foods, and with the construction of the usual 'pueblos'—permanent stone and mortar villages. But in one outstanding respect they differed from any other culture in the entire American prehistoric Southwest—they decorated their pottery with unusually fine geometric designs and with most remarkable and distinctive realistic pictures, of people and their activities and of the things which they used in



Hunters Pursuing a Deer. The leader (right) carries a crook staff, possibly to bring luck in the chase. All carry bow and arrows. The deer has cannily doubled back, perhaps merely to stay within the bowl.



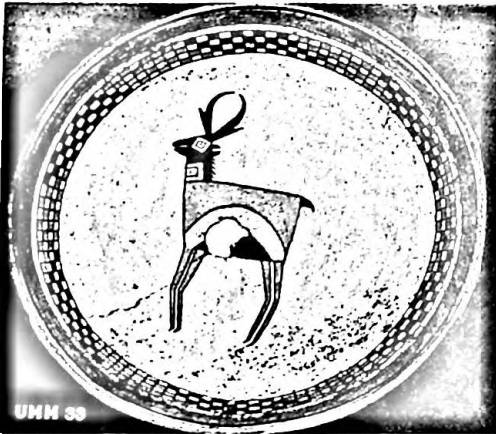
Hunter Robbing Bird's Nest. The hunter with bow, arrows, crook staff, and game pouch left on the ground, has climbed the tree to gather the nestlings. Almost obscured at the top is the mother bird, scolding the marauder.

those activities. The Mimbres pictures give us the clearest insight into a prehistoric American culture anywhere north of the Aztec region of central Mexico. Their representational graphic skill was almost unparalleled and enables us, in a sense, to look at them centuries later as if we were there.

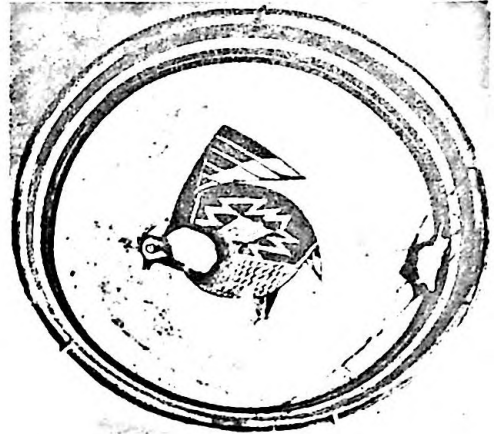
The Mimbres pictures (entirely excluding the non-representational geometric designs) seem to fall into a relatively few categories:

Story Pictures

This kind of picture appears to show some event which presumably happened exactly as it is represented; an example of this is the birds-nest robbing scene on RTB 1 and perhaps the deer-hunting incident on MAI 24. There are numerous others characterized by occurring only once among the examples studied. If they should be found repeated by another artist the presumption would be that the incident had a broader meaning and might represent a legend or fable widely understood among the people.



Pronghorn (American Antelope). This motif occurs so frequently, usually without accompaniment, as to suggest that it may represent an Antelope Clan among the Mimbres people.



Top-Knot Quail. Another possible clan emblem, isolated in the bowl bottom. The geometric embellishment is not uncommon on Mimbres animals.

Totemic (Personal or Group) Emblems

There are some subjects which occur so very frequently, such as pronghorns, turtles, rabbits, fishes, etc., as to suggest they may be clan or extended family totems. Characteristically they are presented simply, usually not involved in an event. Conceivably, in the absence of other inspiration upon the completion of a new bowl, there might be the same tendency to draw the personal clan animal as there is to write one's own name when trying out a new pen. The fact that there are a relatively few such often-repeated subjects correlates with the relatively few such clans or groups in most simple societies.

Traditional or Legendary Situations or Persons

Perhaps the maximum of abstraction or the broadest of meaning among the Mimbres pictures are those which appear to represent a generalized historical or ceremonial situation. Examples of these may be the common representation of a woman with carrying basket and staff, the scene in which men are dragging a giant fish, or the oft-repeated female kachina-like figure in elaborate costume. These suggest that they may have been illustrations of traditional stories, situations, or personalities which need only the picture to conjure up the entire fable, story, or tradition, or to recall the moral lesson to be drawn, much as in our own culture a picture of two children falling down a hill and spilling a pail of water or a fox jumping up to reach grapes leads us to recall not only the story itself but the principle it is intended to emphasize.



Female Figure with Carrying Basket. The woman with carrying basket and crook staff are frequently figured, possibly representing abundance. The two figures on the basket are possibly the twin war gods.



Fabulous Fishing Scene. Two males have captured (?) a giant fish which, however, may be more than a mere fish, as witness the human arm and leg.

Transmutation of Human Into Animal or Reverse

Many of the pictures seem to indicate a Mimbres belief in the supernatural transmutation of human beings, perhaps priests, into animals, or the reverse. Many of these seem to show the process, or show humans with animal features or animals with human heads, feet, hands, etc. This may have been an intrinsic element in their religious ceremonialism or in their belief in the magical influence of certain animals on human welfare or on the success of the hunt. Our own European cultures, as well as recent American Indian traditions, reflect similar beliefs, such as werewolves and vampires. Masks are commonly thought to allow the wearer to assume the powers of the creature simulated.

One of the major difficulties in the interpretation of American prehistory is the lack of written languages. There can be no American Rosetta Stone by which we may



Human-Rabbit Figure. Probably a masked dancer representing a rabbit clan, or embodying ceremonially the properties of a rabbit.



Transmutation? Possibly showing the stages in the transformation of a male dancer to an animal, or possibly the reverse. Note the ceremonial wands and rattles.

hope to be able at a stroke to decipher the graphic records left by our North American aborigines. Even if pictographs and petroglyphs were actually a written ideographic language (which they probably are not in the ordinary sense), when one considers the multiplicity of Indian languages and dialects and their mutual unintelligibility it becomes evident that if any merest beginning of a true written language had ever arisen in America north of the Aztec area of Mexico it is forever lost in the linguistic maze which was prehistoric America.

We have a fair idea, from archeological finds of what our prehistoric aborigines had and made, how they built their homes and how they did a great many things. It is in the realm of non-material culture that we most often find ourselves unable to see back through the veil of time, except occasionally when we may infer what the people probably did or thought by a consideration of the material equipment or trappings involved in the activity.

Like a small illuminated area amid this almost universal obscurity, the Mimbres pictures emerge, fresh and vital as the day they were made. They are not written language, but they are in some ways more revealing than language in that they, to a considerable degree, may be interpreted even without an understanding of the spoken language of the people who made them. They are ideographs, though with perhaps a minimum of implication which is not directly represented.

In this discussion the so-called realistic pictures on Mimbres pottery are taken out of the context of a total ceramic-artistic culture complex, and are deliberately separated from their purely decorative accompaniments. They are presented as historical documents—as the pictorial record by the Mimbres people themselves of those cultural items which they considered important or significant enough to be perpetuated by being painted on their pottery, and are discussed as pictures, not as pottery decoration. The task is to discover *what* is represented in the drawings and to try to find out *why* it was considered worthy of presentation.

Certainly the Mimbres criterion for selection of subjects for painted pottery was



Parrot Training Session. One of the most informative of the Mimbres pictures. A human male and female (note the anatomy) are handling tame macaws from Mexico. Each person is holding a crook staff, one decorated with feathers. A bow and two arrows lie on the ground near a typical Mimbres carrying basket which is propped upright (view from center of bowl), with another parrot perched thereon.

This bowl illustrates the dress of Mimbres men and women. The male, left, wears a girdle with the ends hanging down in front. The woman's girdle has a long fringe hanging down in back. Both have painted marks on the cheeks. The male has a head ornament, the female is wearing footgear.

not whether the inclusion of any given picture contributed to a well-rounded description of Mimbres life and ways. Most certainly, from the evidence of the pictures themselves, there was no attempt to record the details of ordinary life. The inescapable conclusion is that the pictures represent the extra-ordinary, specially significant, culturally meaningful, non-utilitarian concerns which we ordinarily classify as religious, ceremonial, ritual, moral, and/or ethical.

One author cites an amusing example of the dangers inherent in the interpretation of a prehistoric cultural art, especially by anyone from an entirely different cultural background, by an instance in which he asked two native American Indians to interpret a mural painting in a prehistoric ceremonial chamber. A Navaho thought they represented gourds while a Hopi identified them as clasping hands. The Anglo archeologist had called them turkeys!

One approach to this problem is, first, to look at as nearly as possible *all* the known Mimbres pictures. While one representation of a subject may because of graphic inability of the painter be obscure and hard to interpret, by examining other similar pictures one may learn to recognize the subject through the whole range of clumsy drawing, symbolic variations, and other confusing features. All of this may of course still not make the subject entirely clear, but it may be the best we can do.

At least we may assume that any subject painted in a bowl was of interest and probably of significance to the painter. Any subject painted by more than one artist must have been of wider interest or significance. Any subject painted numerous times by different artists must have had special cultural significance. In the Mimbres painted pottery pictures we have a sensitive, documentary source of information about a prehistoric people.

But the popular appeal of Mimbres pictorial pottery has all but destroyed the possibility of an ultimately complete study of this prehistoric culture. Careless amateur digging methods, limited archeological background and training, and short-sighted personal objectives have led to a looting of Mimbres sites until it is practically guaranteed that some aspects of the culture have been irretrievably lost. Moreover, the dispersal of so much of the art into private hands, rather than its assembly into museums and other concentrations makes it unlikely that the comprehensive study needed for sound interpretation will ever be possible. Still further, collections in private hands are subject to loss, breakage, and discarding by irresponsible owners. Grandpa's treasures are too frequently daughter's dustcatchers, and grand-daughter's junk.

Seeing and handling these souvenirs of the remote past and an alien culture seems to bring us closer to the people who made them and brings a feeling that the meanings which are intrinsic in them may be close to our comprehension. The painters of the Mimbres wares were masters, or rather perhaps mistresses, of the decorative and graphic arts. Reinforced by often almost perfect technique their infinite inventiveness is unmatched in New World prehistoric ceramic art. Moreover, there is every reason for believing that the Mimbres culture itself exercised a ruling influence on the selection of subject matter and that the resulting pictures are a cultural reflection of great fidelity.

(continued from page 2)

member of CAMP and the Western History Association.

With his background of a grandfather who was a Judge in Dodge City in the 1870's and in Trinidad, Colorado in the 1890's, we shall look forward eagerly to his program(s) before the Posse.

* * *

NEW SADDLE HANDS

The following are new corresponding members of the Denver Posse:

Gary M. Bone, 6875 S. Cook Way, Littleton, CO 80122; exploration and settlement of the West and the influence of minerals.

Charles O. Counts, 16347 E. Brunswick Place, Aurora, CO 80013; member 1st Col. Reg. U.S. Vols., Civil War period living history group; herpetology.

Wayne R. Fischer, 5675 W. Plymouth Drive, Littleton, CO 80123; Chief Pilot Continental Airlines; breeds Appaloosa horses.

Donna L. Hudgel, 8012 Fox Ridge Court, Boulder, CO 80301; books; art relics of the Old West.

Ronald Johns, 2085 Westwind Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89102; experimental theatre; fishing; antique sport cars; 78 rpm records.

Earl McCully, 4674 S. Garland Way, Littleton, CO 80123; modern and old guns; camping; fishing.

John Glenn Miles, 8726 E. Kettle Place, Englewood, CO 80112; hunting and fishing; reading; guns; tennis & golf.

James R. Paulson, 2384 Dennison Lane, Boulder, CO 80303; books; photography; travel; early Denver history.

Col. K. D. Pulcifer, 13601 E. Marina Drive, Aurora, CO 80010; research; tales of the West; Indians.

Arthur B. Shearer, 185 Cedar Drive, Durango West, CO 81301; Colorado history; railroad history, esp. narrow gauge.

Thomas J. Sickler, 1141 S. Birch #104, Glendale, CO 80222; early mining towns and trappers; botany & zoology.

* * *

On Monday, May 19th, Denver Posse 1974 Sheriff Jackson Thode presented a program before the Westerners' Number One Corral in Chicago at their evening dinner meeting in the Illinois Athletic Club. The 53 members and guests in attendance heard Thode speak on "Dining Cars and Silver Service," concerning the history and operation of dining cars during the past 80 years by Colorado and Utah's most prominent railroad—the Denver & Rio Grande Western.

As the last and only railroad in the United States now operating its own dining car in regular scheduled service, the Rio Grande provided the focus around which the program was built. A display of some 25 items of rare dining car silver service pieces—Sugar Bowls, Creamers, Syrup Pitchers, French Coffee Pots, Ice Tubs—was specially assembled for the program, which was supplemented also by a brief showing of slides illustrating many of the matters discussed.

* * *

Word has been received that George R. Eichler, former Denver Post reporter, Posse Member of the Denver Posse, and Tallyman for a period, has died, and left uncompleted his projected gazetteer of Colorado place names.

His previously published *Colorado Place Names*, with some 650 entries, was the starting point of an expansion which at the time of his death had reached 3,500 entries, covering all inhabited places, towns, cities, and counties which have ever existed in the state, with latitude and longitude, topographic location, a brief description of their founding and their main characteristics, and the origins and pronunciations of their names.

The project has been supported by Fort Lewis College in Durango, Mesa College in Grand Junction, and Western State College in Gunnison. A federal grant was imminent under which Eichler was to be housed at the Colorado School of Mines library as chief researcher.

A researcher of comparable qualifications is being sought to continue the project.



GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



The Gunfighter: Man or Myth?, by Joseph G. Rosa. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1969; Fourth Printing 1979, \$5.95 paper.

The provocative question in this engaging title is answered in the text—the answer is, “both.” But somehow the question carries a mistaken expectation about the book. Actually this is a sound historical monograph, exhaustively documented, about a period roughly from 1870 to the turn of the century. That it should have been written by an Englishman is a matter of special interest.

The scene is the High Plains including western Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and eastern Colorado, with excursions into Arizona, New Mexico, and other adjacent areas. The plot grows out of the interrelations between Texas cattle (which needed transport to the Eastern markets), their Texan drovers (mostly ex-Confederates), the Plains grasslands (natural cattle pasture), the actively extending railroads (which were eager to transport beef to the East), the settlers in the early railroad towns (mostly Union sympathizers), and the inevitable social complications resulting therefrom. What fertile material for a drama!

The cowboys came into the railroad towns tired from the long cattle drives, bored to death from their long deprivation from liquor and female company, newly paid, and ‘loaded for bear.’ They met hard-working citizens and businessmen whose ideal was law and order—especially order. What better combination could one devise to strike fire?

Both the cowboys and the businessmen were tough, rugged, and determined kinds of people—they had to be to have come to where they met. Both groups were heavily armed—they had to be to have survived in Indian country. Ergo, when they fell out as they inevitably must with their built-in differences, the shooting began.

The emergence from this warfare of a relatively few cool and skillful technicians who survived their first few encounters furnished the concept of the gunfighter

(gunman, shootist) whose exploits are, to this day and around the world, recounted in history, in fiction, and on the stage, screen, and television tube, as characteristic of that rather brief period, to the neglect of the many more important developments of the times.

The historical scene, the leading actors, their firearms and their exploits are the stuff of this eminently readable account. Do not let the blatant yellow cover mislead you into thinking that this is ‘yellow’ reporting: it is soundly factual and eminently readable.

Hugo Rodeck, P.M.

* * *

Comparative Frontiers: A Proposal for Studying the American West, by Jerome O. Steffen. The University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1980. 139 pp. \$10.95.

This little book is probably not for the average western history buff—the sort of amateur who fishes in historical backwaters for the origin of High Plains place names, the distribution of Cousin Jacks on the Colorado mining frontier, or the weapon preferences of 30 arbitrarily-chosen gunfighters.

This book is a thesis in historiography, written by a historian for other historians. Historiography is a cumbersome word and an equally cumbersome concept. It has to do with the whole bag of tricks which the historian brings to the study and writing of history.

If we have frightened you away from this little tract, we are sorry. We haven’t meant to; it contains a number of ideas which are worth examining if one hopes to understand the ebb and flow of the technological and social change which took place on the western North American frontier. Steffen has thrown out these ideas for his fellow historians to chew at, argue over, reject, or agree with. Even an amateur historian will benefit from this sort of speculation.

Steffen’s central theme is simple: 1. The frontier society which was most cut off from its parent culture—the most insular, having the fewest interactions with the culture of its origin—was most likely to respond strongly

to and be influenced by the environment in which it found itself. 2. conversely, that frontier culture which maintained the strongest ties and interchanges with its parent culture—through exchanges of technology, commerce, transportation, banking, etc.—was least likely to have undergone fundamental change by the frontier experience.

Steffen draws examples from four pioneer frontiers: "Cis-Mississippi Agricultural Settlement; the Fur-trading Frontier; the Ranching Frontier; and the Mining Frontier. [May we be forgiven for using Steffen's term for the "Trans-Alegheny—short of the Mississippi" Agricultural Frontier. Shades of *Caesar's Commentaries*! Historians, of late, have been borrowing from Caesar and Tacitus, sometimes more often than is good for the profession. "Cis-Mississippi" smacks of Caesar's Cis-Alpine Gaul, which tends to confirm our earlier observation that this work is by a historian for historians.]

The non-professional reader will enjoy most of the examples which are drawn out of each of the four frontier situations to support the author's major thesis; he may even be sometimes surprised—the reader, not the author.

The 18 pages of footnotes have been placed at the end of the text, accessible to the scholar, yet mercifully out of the way where they can easily be ignored by the casual reader. The bibliography lists 51 journal articles, 174 books, 2 theses and dissertations, and 14 collections of archival material.

We are pleased to recommend this little treatise to both the professional and the casual reader. It contains challenging concepts for the former, and for the latter a helpful guide to the complex cultural exchanges which characterized the American Frontier.

Mel Griffiths, P. M.

* * *

Colorado—A Selected Bibliography of Its Literature, 1858-1952 by Virginia L. Wilcox, Asst. Librarian Colorado School of Mines. Sage Books, Denver, 1954.

Attempts to include all printed and published works relating to the exploration, history and development of Colorado, as

well as the fiction, poetry, essays and dramas which are historical in nature. Much information from the card files of the libraries of the region as well as from the catalogues and check-lists of State publications.

* * *

The Court-Martial of General George Armstrong Custer, by Lawrence A. Frost; University of Oklahoma Press (1968), \$6.95.

This interesting volume, now reissued, is another "last word" on General Custer's controversial career—the story of his second court martial during the campaign against the Plains Indians. In 1867 there was little doubt of Custer's ability as a commander but he had the misfortune to serve under an incompetent and it is quite likely that he was the scapegoat for those who were responsible for a disastrous campaign.

In the court martial Custer was charged with absenting himself from his command at a time when it was expected to be actively employed against the Indians; that he ordered officers of his command to pursue deserters, shoot them down and bring none in alive and that he thereafter prevented the surgeon attached to his command from treating three wounded deserters while they were hauled eighteen miles in a government wagon. It is clear that he was guilty of the first two offenses and that he was innocent of mistreatment of the wounded deserters. Despite mitigating circumstances he was convicted of all charges and suspended from rank and command for one year and loss of pay for the same period.

The complete record of the court martial, which is included here, shows that when Custer left his command at Ft. Wallace his men and their horses were exhausted, and there was no possibility that he could take to the field again in less than two weeks—while men, horses and supplies were assembled. He, ostensibly at least, left his troops in an effort to locate his commanding office to whom he had been directed to report. He traveled, with an escort of seventy-five officers and men, due east 275 miles to Fort Harker where he reported to the commanding officer of that post, not to General Hancock his commanding officer, and from

there he traveled about seventy miles by passenger train to Ft. Riley where his devoted wife was awaiting word to come west to join him. Within a few hours after his arrival at Ft. Riley he was ordered back to his command by the same officer who had allowed him to go to Fort Riley.

To understand Custer's offenses it must be recognized that as a dedicated military man he probably did not realize that he was vulnerable to charges by various persons with personal axes to grind. The fact remains that he did order the shooting of deserters without trial but it was a common practice of the army at that time. As a general officer he no doubt assumed that he could take some leave without specific advance authority at a time when he and his command were immobilized at Fort Wallace. He mistakenly assumed that such minor transgressions would not be noticed or, if they were, they would be forgiven. That the offenses were somewhat trivial is shown by his recall to active duty before the end of his suspension to again lead the Seventh Cavalry—this time down the road that led to the Little Big Horn.

This is an interesting book, not just for dyed-in-the-wool Custer fans but for anyone interested in the day-to-day life of troops who were trying to defeat a foe that just wouldn't stand still and fight. It was a tough and almost primitive life and the high rate of desertions is not surprising. The transcript of the court martial gives many shocking insights into military justice as it was practiced at the time.

Al Nutt, C.M.

* * *

Fort Gibson—Terminal on the Trail of Tears, by Brad Agnew. University of Oklahoma Press (1939). 211 pages, notes, bibliography, index, illustrations and maps. \$14.95.

Fort Gibson was established in present day Oklahoma in 1824 as one of the earliest western forts and author Agnew details its history until General Mathew Arbuckle left the Fort in 1841, transferred to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This period, Arbuckle's term of

tenure at the Fort, marked its most active days.

As a western Army fort, Gibson was unique in that it functioned to protect Indians from other Indians, and during its active days, no soldier killed any Indian, and only one soldier died at the hands of Indians. The main purpose of the Fort was to aid in the relocation and settlement of the Eastern Indians, primarily Creeks, Cherokees and Choctaws, and to protect them from the "wild" Indians of the Plains.

The author details the day-by-day activities of the Fort and its mission, but never bores the reader. The Dragoon expeditions of 1834 add a particularly interesting episode.

This reviewer has visited the reconstructed Fort Gibson and recommends a visit to anyone who is in that part of the country. The proximity of Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma makes a visit to both historic sites a pleasant and interesting trip.

The index, notes and bibliography make this a particularly valuable addition to a Westerner's library, and the University of Oklahoma is to be congratulated in making this 1939 publication again available.

W.H. Van Duzer, P.M.

* * *

Dallas Stoudenmire, El Paso Marshal, by Leon C. Metz, University of Oklahoma (reissued as Volume 53 of the Western Frontier Library), 1979, 162 pages, \$6.95.

This small volume (4¾ inches x 7½ inches) is unusual in that the text is completed in 127 pages, while there are 16 pages of footnotes, 4 pages of bibliography, 3 pages of acknowledgements, 5½ pages of index.

The question is, what is its value? The character and personality of the subject remain obscure. Certainly, his motivation is not revealed in this book.

Details of minor characters, victims and politicians affecting Stoudenmire are carefully documented. The choreography of the gun fight death scenes take you there. Little is known of his wife and children.

The print is exceedingly small and difficult to read, but the book is a handy size.

The subject of this book remains a quick-tempered, hard-drinking, shadowy character

who could not get along with the city council which appointed him. His life story is one which remains a small piece in the tapestry of western history.

By Jack H. Dwyer, P.M.

* * *

The Quarter Running Horse, by Robert Moorman Denhardt; Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1979, pp. 294 + index, \$20.00.

"Much of the popularity of horse racing lies in the thrilling stretch run for the finish. Even among the long horse devotees, who think a race should be a mile or more, it is not until the horses near the wire that they jump to their feet and roar for their favorites. The early jockeying for position is interesting to the knowledgeable horseman, but the final stretch run is the thriller. Quarter racing has distilled the essence of racing and bottled it all to explode in about twenty seconds of ecstatic emotion."

As the quarter mile is horseracing distilled and condensed, so is this volume on the history and philosophy of 'short horse' racing the essence of the subject. This history, from AD 1607 to the 1930's, all in the United States, is recounted from the Colonial period to the present, with special reference to the western U.S. where the form has had its ultimate development.

The 'short horse' is a distinctive American breed with parentage and bloodlines as long and honorable as those of the American Thoroughbred 'long horse'. Bred for "blazing speed," quickly attained, it is "the only American contribution to the running horses of the world."

There is little one might want to know about quarter horses, their breeding, running, or significance for horseracing which is not treated here. Special features are a 3½-page bibliography and a 7½-page index in small type, apparently complete.

Hugo Rodeck, P.M.



BUNKHOUSE BANTER



An account by the wife of a civil engineer in Fargo, North Dakota in the 1870's, and said to have been published in the *Denver Republican*, relates an event involving the Sioux Chief Sitting Bull, and illustrates the problems which can arise between members of different cultures, not out of malice but purely from lack of understanding.

At a dinner party at which she and her husband entertained Sitting Bull, among others, she relates:

"Among our guests that day was a young Eastern clergyman, making his first trip over the prairies. He was a very zealous youth, strongly imbued with the missionary spirit, albeit sadly lacking in experience. I soon saw he looked upon the meeting with these Indians as a special providence, and burned with a desire to turn it to account in their behalf spiritually. Still no opportunity seemed to offer, and we took our places at the table. Now, clergymen were rare visitors in those regions at

that date, and we had become lamentably thoughtless as regarded many of the religious observances of civilization. No sooner had we seated ourselves than the dreadful consciousness came over me that my husband was oblivious of the fact that when a minister of the gospel was present grace was a customary preliminary to a meal. He prepared to carve the substantial roast of venison, and there was no lull in the conversation of the gentlemen. In vain I fixed my gaze upon his face and strove to send him a mental telegram. In desperation I thrust my foot across, seeking his beneath the table, hoping in this way to give him an intimation of what should be done. But, alas! when I did succeed in touching him, he, with that depraved obtuseness seen only in man, looked up with a cheerful 'pardon me,' as though he had trespassed beyond his boundaries beneath the table.

"The poor young clergyman had given one or two loud 'ahems' in vain, and now in

despair rose in his seat, and, with arms extended over the table, loudly invoked a blessing upon our feast. Despairing of any other chance, I suppose, he dexterously interwove a petition for the conversion of the grim old savage before him, making in all a rather lengthy preamble. Sitting Bull's eyes had been fixed eagerly upon the venison, wandering only to the motions of the carving knife in the hands of my husband, who, finding his hospitable efforts suddenly suspended by the unexpected prayer, sat with the carving implements in his hands, gazing helplessly at me with an air of mild reproach as if to say, 'Why didn't you warn me?.'

"The old warrior evidently regarded this devout exercise as some sort of incantation by a medicine man of the pale-faces, designed to affect food, for as our minister, in his eagerness to offer a suitable petition, wildly waved his hands over the various dishes, Sitting Bull glanced suspiciously from one article of food to another, then to the faces of the white men, and finally sank sullenly back in the unaccustomed chair.

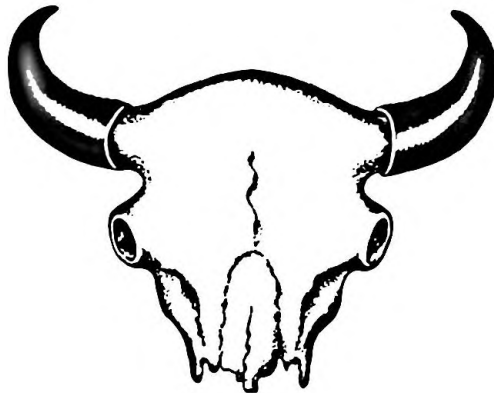
"When at length his plate was filled and sent round to him, he glowered over it, muttered and grunted, but made no attempt to eat. In distress I beckoned to the half-breed who served as interpreter, and who hung about the tent awaiting his turn to eat. After a series of grunts exchanged

with the savage, the half-breed informed us; 'Great chief say white medicine man put bad spirit in meat and potatoes. If chief eat, maybe he be weak and never travel to see the Great Father.'

"A long explanation ensued, and at last our grim guest fell upon his long-delayed dinner with fierce appetite. I regret to say, however, that in the training of his childhood table manners must have been sadly neglected. The only possible use he could see for a fork was to reach forth with his grimy hands and spear various articles of food which appeared to him desirable.

"At the close of the meal the persevering little minister was on the watch for his opportunity, and, as we were now better prepared, a decent silence ensued, and we bowed our heads with due reverence for the return of thanks. The poor man opened his mouth and had uttered but a word or two of adjuration when Sitting Bull arose and with one stride reached him, placed his hand over the parson's mouth, and with an emphatic, 'No, no; once enough; no more call down the Great Spirit to crush the chief,' he marched out."

From *Life of Sitting Bull and History of the Indian War of 1890-91*, by W. Fletcher Johnson, 1891.



The DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

JULY-AUGUST 1980



WHEN EAST MET WEST AT THE FJORD

Mel Griffiths, P.M.



A Young Modern Day Greenlander. Apparently the product of a mixed marriage between a Danish father and an Eskimo mother. He sits on the back of a small Iceland pony.

COMING UP

The October meeting of the Denver Posse will hear from Bob Stull, Director of the Division of Administration of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, whose title is "Fading Rails and Shining Mines," a commentary on railroading and mining in the Clear Creek Mining District. The meeting is planned for 22 October.

The November speaker for the Denver Westerners will be Glen Berry of Grand Junction, who will speak on a subject he previously presented to the Chicago Posse, "Mining on the Western Slope". The meeting will be at the Union Depot, unless you are otherwise notified, on Wednesday 26 November.

The December Christmas Party will hear Jack Thode, Posse Member, who will also present a paper previously given at the Chicago Posse, "Dining Cars and Silver Service". This meeting will possibly be on Wednesday 17 December, but the date and place are not yet solidly determined, so stay flexible!

OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

Dabney Otis Collins' *Land of Tall Skies*, published in 1977 by the Century One Press in Colorado Springs, a comprehensive history of Eastern Colorado, has recently been chosen by the Library of Congress to be recorded for the blind.

"The Denver writer, who has lived in Colorado since 1916, has a special feeling for the boundless reach of the uncrowded land and a lively interest in its past. His writing shows it and critics have applauded it."

HELP WANTED

Aug. 10, 1980
Denver Posse of Westerners
Gentlemen:

I am writing to inquire whether you might have any information on an incident that occurred in Colorado, sometime between Oc-

(Continued on page 13)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

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WHEN EAST MET WEST AT THE FJORD

By
Mel Griffiths, P.M.

Presented with slides to the Denver Posse of the Westerners,
on 15 August 1980
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“The time has come,” the Walrus said,
“To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages and kings—”

Lewis Carroll

Our list of things to be talked about in this paper is almost as diverse, and certainly longer, than Lewis Carroll's. We shall also talk about great distances stretching from East Africa to Byzantium, on Russia's Black Sea, to the Brooks Range of Alaska, with special attention for a fjord named Kagssiarssuk, which penetrates the south coast of Greenland.

As near as the anthropologists can tell us, mankind had its origins in northeast Africa, or in some part of sub-tropical Asia. All of the evidence is not in yet so we still must indulge an educated guess. These ancestral humans migrated across the Mediterranean basin, northward from Africa, perhaps as early as a million years ago. At almost that same time, great climatic changes in the northern hemisphere created huge ice caps around the rim of the Arctic basin. Four times during this period, which the geologist calls the Pleistocene, great ice sheets moved southward as far as the Alps in Europe, into north central Asia, and in North America as far south as Kansas and Nebraska on the Great Plains

During this time, in Europe and Asia, the humans who had crossed from North Africa earlier, hunted game animals that thronged the steppes and the grasslands which rimmed the ice cap's southern edges. As the ice cap retreated northward when the climate warmed, the game moved north with the advancing grasslands; as the ice cap advanced southward, the animals retreated south and the humans retreated with them. Eventually by the time of the fourth Ice Age, which began perhaps 50,000 to 40,000 years ago, humans had migrated into most parts of Europe, into central Asia, and eventually, during the open period which followed the last ice advance, man found his way into northwest Europe—what we now know as Scandinavia. At the same time other humans had found their way into northeastern Asia, and eventually reached the uttermost northeast end of the Asiatic continent. These wanderers discovered that during the last ice advance so much of the water in the oceans had been tied up in ice on land that sea level had been lowered from 150 to 200 feet below its present level,

making a land bridge between Asia and North America at Bering Strait. It was possible to cross to the New World dry-shod. Finding that the hunting was as good on the eastern side of the Strait as it had been on the Asiatic side, they began to move southward in North America and eventually into South America, until they had peopled every nook and cranny of the Western Hemisphere.

At the very end of these outward migrations from the cradle of mankind, about 2,000 years ago, the people who were to become the ancestors of the Eskimos moved across the North American high Arctic as far as east Greenland. At about this same time, another group of people, who had gained a foothold on the deeply indented coast of the Scandinavian Peninsula, were venturing out into the north Atlantic. These two groups of people, whose ancestors had traveled in opposite directions from the cradle of human kind, eventually made contact, after having traveled entirely around the earth. The meeting took place in south Greenland.

This original contact was to set a pattern of confrontations between 'native' Americans and Europeans which was to be played out in hundreds of ways during the next 1,000 years of North American history—between Viking and Skraelings in Greenland and Newfoundland, between Columbus and Carib, between Pilgrim father and Narragansett Indian, between Daniel Boone and Shawnee, between Cortez and Montezuma, between conquistador and Apache, between plains sod-busters and Comanche, between Colonel Chivington and Cheyenne and Arapahoe at Sand Creek, between Custer's 7th Cavalry and the Sioux on the Little Bighorn, and a final hopeless flickering flare-up at Wounded Knee. By this time, a Missouri Senator had cried, in the 1850's, that it was the "manifest destiny" of Americans to cross the entire North American continent and establish a foothold on the western seaboard. In carrying out this mandate, American settlers convinced themselves that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian" and supplied role models for dozens of dime novel authors.

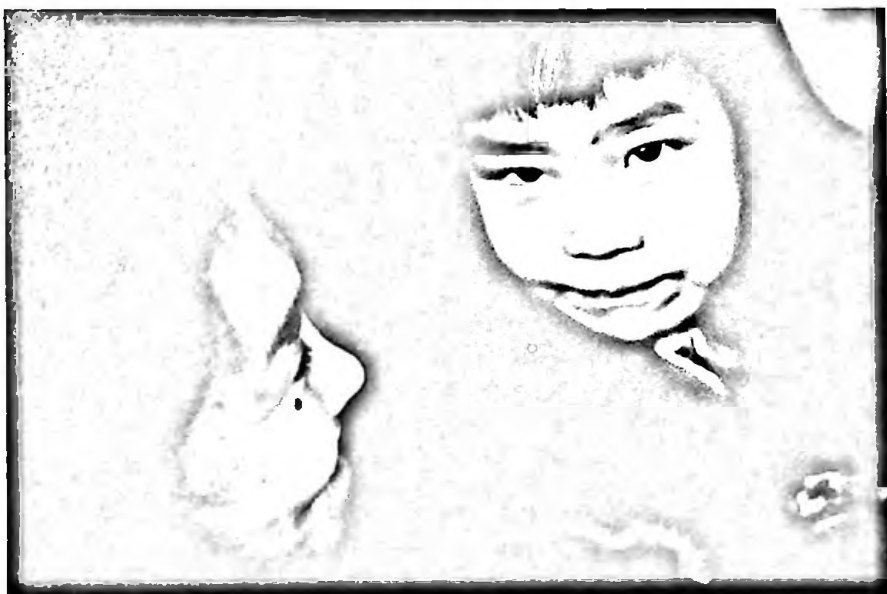
But we are not here to trace the sorry and sometimes heroic confrontations which are the very life blood of Western history, without which the Westerners would have a weak excuse for existence. Rather, we will try to set the environmental scene for the first confrontation between European and North American native, and look briefly at the culture of the two antagonists.

The border of the Arctic Basin in North America consists of a complex group of islands. To the north, across the pole to Siberian shores on the opposite side of the basin, stretches a frozen Arctic Ocean. Where land meets polar sea, the pack ice of the sea is frozen hard to the land for nine or ten months, and opens only a narrow open water lead in late August and early September. The land of the islands and the mainland is forbidding; none of the islands or the mainland bears timber. The natural vegetation is tundra, like the area above timberline in Colorado.

In this barren, frozen, hard land, eternally dark in winter and lighted by a low-lying midnight sun in the summer, the Eskimo, a late comer in North America, learned to wrest a precarious living from a grudging environment. He turned to the sea for food—seal, walrus, whale, narwhal, sea birds, eggs, musk ox, hare, and an occasional caribou who wandered north from the tree line. Anthropologists are almost unanimous in declaring that the Eskimo has made one of the best adaptations of any primitive people to one of the harshest environments in the world.

Recent Europeans made their first contact with the Eskimo culture as a result of the expeditions which the British and others sent out in an attempt to discover a Northwest Passage. Frobisher, Baffin, Hudson, Ross, Franklin, Back, McClintock are some of the names associated with attempts to sail around the north side of North America. Sailing ships were ill-equipped to cope with pack ice, storms, an inoperative magnetic compass, and the lack of anti-scorbutics. The tales of hardship and tragedy which came out of the search were legion. The Europeans and Americans never learned to base their survival in the Arctic on the Eskimo way of life until such comparatively recent explorers as Amundsen, Peary, Rasmussen, and Steffanson led the way—after 1900.

In the late 1930's to early 1940's a small group of Eskimos moved inland from Barrow, the northernmost settlement in U.S. territory, to Chandler Lake in a glacial valley on the north side of the Brooks Range. This is some two hundred miles inland from Barrow. They took their sleds, tents, dogs, hunting gear, and even a kayak or skin canoe with them. Although the Eskimo is essentially a sea-dwelling creature, this group adapted quickly to their mountain environment.



Eskimo Mother and Daughter at Barrow, Alaska

As you look at these people closely, you see a very strong resemblance to Chinese or central Asiatic (Shan, Thai, Tibetan) features. Their skin and canvas tents are remarkably similar to the yurt, which the Mongols have used from before the time of Marco Polo as a shelter on the steppes of central Asia. An old woman may show facial features common to the Eskimos of a century ago. Her lower lip and chin may bear a blue-black tattoo down their center. Married women were tattooed thus at the time of their marriage. They don't do it any longer—woman's lib has even reached the shores of the Arctic Ocean. She may look to be eighty or ninety years of age, although one suspects it is a reflection of the hard life she has lived. Forty or fifty might be a better



Eskimo Women and Children at Chandler Lake, Alaska. The dome-shaped tent on the left, which is stretched over a willow framework, is shaped very much like the yurt which is used as shelter by the Mongolians of central Asia.

guess of her age. The same old woman chops stunted willows for firewood; there are no real trees north of the Brooks Range. She uses her *ooloo*—"woman's knife"—for this rough work which would be better done with a hand axe. This type of knife is found throughout the Eskimo culture area. It is shaped like a fan, with the handle in the middle and the cutting edge out on the perimeter of the fan. An Eskimo woman can skin an animal with such a knife quicker than you can say "Jack Robinson."

Nearby an Eskimo man lights his pipe with flint and steel. The steel is part of a broken file. He holds a small piece of flint between his thumb and forefinger and places, on top of the flint and his thumb nail, a small dry piece of Arctic cotton grass for tinder. He strikes a blow downward with the edge of the file across the piece of flint, sending a shower of sparks upward into the cotton grass, setting it smoldering. He then picks it gingerly off his thumb nail and places it next to the material which he wishes to light. His pipe itself is homemade. The stem is a hollowed willow branch and the bowl is an alder root which has been carved into an appropriate shape. The blessings of tobacco made their way into the Arctic many years ago, probably before the white man came to these shores. Near the camp is a willow rack on which caribou meat is drying. The Plains Indians jerked meat in this way long before the white man came to North America, and the Eskimos followed suit. It is one sure way of preserving meat in a dry and uncertain climate.

The head man at the Chandler Lake camp at that time was Simon Paneak. He was the proud owner of a kayak, which had been transported inland by sled from the ocean when the group moved. He uses it to set nets to catch lake trout the size of steelheads, which come up the Colville and the Killik into Chandler Lake. The kayak has a seal skin

cover stretched tightly over a frame contrived of bits of wood and bone. The seams between the numerous seal skins which make up the cover have been sewed with sinew so tightly that they are water proof.

The modern Eskimos living at Barrow, Wainwright, Kotzebue, or Point Lay are still walrus, seal, and whale hunters with a modern touch. They use high-power rifles, outboard motors, and snowmobiles. They live in modular or pre-fab houses, with oil heating and electricity. They enjoy the wonders of branch banking, air travel, and telecommunications. Even forty years ago the natives at Chandler Lake could send a grocery and hardware list to Fairbanks with any itinerant bush pilot who happened to stop at their camp and have the goods delivered the next time he came by, the order having been filled by the grocer and the hardware merchant and the payment deducted from the native's account in the Miner's and Merchants Bank in Fairbanks.

The environment in which the other of our antagonists chose to cast their lot is in many ways similar to the land of the Eskimos on the western side of the Atlantic. The winters are long and dark, and the midnight sun shines at North Cape on midsummer day. However, the climate is not so harsh as the dry polar desert of the northern Canadian islands. This amelioration is a result of the mild north Atlantic Drift which pumps warm Caribbean and Gulf water up out of the sub-tropics to bathe the western shore of Norway. This is a mountainous land, occupied by an ice cap during each of the four ice advances of the Pleistocene. The discharge glaciers which forced a passage to the sea scoured great U-shaped valleys with drowned seaward mouths. These sea-drowned valleys provided sheltered water highways into the heart of the land, protected from North Atlantic storms and sea rovers prowling the coast.

In these harsh but sheltered waters the Viking culture put down its roots. The putting down of roots is probably not the most apt metaphor, since the Vikings soon became sea rovers and plunderers, not being content to remain in their sheltered fjords to cultivate their meagre crops and take fish from the cold waters.

In A. D. 793 Vikings plundered the monastery on the island of Lindesfarne, off the northeast coast of England, putting the monks to the sword and carrying away what wealth of gold and silver religious relics, illuminated manuscripts, and jewels they could find. The next year the Vikings struck another monastery fifty miles south down the Northumbrian coast, and the next year they raided the coast of Scotland. These onslaughts were so fierce and pagan that all of England soon stood in awe and fear of these shaggy pirates from the north. Before long it was said that the monasteries and churches of the ravaged countryside resounded to the prayer: *A furore Normannorum libera nos, Domine*. "From the fury of the Northmen deliver us, O Lord." Many saw the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophet, Jeremiah's cry—"out of the north evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land."

This was only the beginning of a 300-year Viking reign of terror which reached all the coasts of Europe. They even plundered and traded along the rivers of European Russia, reaching as far as the Black and Caspian Seas. They freebooted along the rivers of Germany and France, established Viking kingdoms in the Mediterranean Sea in Sicily and southern Italy, and indulged their love of fighting by joining the mercenary troops who protected the Byzantine Empire—the Varangian Guard.

In point of fact, the Vikings were so fond of fighting that they carried on endless feuds between the factions and families of their own people, wasting energy and precious lives in internecine strife.

All the while that the Vikings were plundering and pillaging the known coasts of Europe, they maintained their base of operations in Scandinavia, cultivated their small farms on the shores of deep fjords, fished the adjacent waters, and learned to build some of the most seaworthy ships ever devised.

Through their early history the Vikings did not leave written records. Theirs was an oral history, passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth. The record which we have of their earlier periods, other than from the archaeological record, comes from the ancient Icelandic and Norse sagas, which were only converted to writing after about A. D. 1,200. Even then the writing was rudimentary, often carved on memorial stones erected to praise some fallen warrior. The characters, known as runes, consisted of an alphabet of sixteen letters which were used to construct words, while at the same time each character had an individual meaning expressing the name of an object or a concept.

The Vikings were great artisans in wood. After Christianity came to Scandinavia, they produced distinctive wooden churches known as "Stavanger churches," from their prevalence in that southern province. Some of these ornate wooden churches still stand after three or four centuries. The decorative carvings found on old wooden buildings, even farm buildings, are outstanding examples of decorative architectural art.

The epitome of Viking designs in wood, are the great long ships, "dragon ships", in which they carried out their European raids and in which they explored the North Atlantic. The largest of these vessels were more than 150 feet long, and 25 feet in beam. They had a single mast upon which a square woolen sail was rigged for open ocean sailing. The outer hull was of clinker or lap-strake construction, caulked with wool and pitch, the planking sewn together with spruce root cordage. The outer hull was shaped and constructed first after which oak ribs were fitted inside the shell of the hull and the small keel attached to the stem and stern posts, which were surmounted by the decorative dragon head at the stem and tail at the stern. Instead of a center line rudder, the ship was steered by a broad steering oar let vertically over the starboard gunwale near the stern. These ships carried as many as 72 16- to 19-foot oars for maneuvering close to shore or in battle. They sometimes carried a complement of 300 warriors. By about A. D. 1,000 Viking ship designs had been standardized to about four basic types running from the great *drakar* fighting ships, 150 feet in length, to the *knarr*, a deep-hulled merchant ship, 50 feet in length, with a deep keel, used for trading and supply voyages overseas.

What we know today of the design and structure of these old Viking ships has been learned from the well-preserved remains of ships which served as burial chambers for their owners. Several of these have been recovered from burial mounds in southern Norway and have been preserved in museums. The occupant of such a burial mound was sent on his last voyage with a great accumulation of worldly goods, food, animals, and supplies, and was usually provided with a servant girl or two buried with her master.

The Bayeux Tapestry, which depicts the Norman Conquest of England in A.D. 1,066, is the only complete piece of narrative needlework to survive the Middle Ages. One of the most interesting things about the epic, bloody struggle depicted on the tapestry comes from the fact that the contestants on both sides were descendents of Viking conquests in England and Normandy in earlier centuries. The Saxon King Harold Godwinson, descendant of Danish and Swedish kings, was pitted against Duke William of Normandy who could trace his ancestry to the great Norwegian chieftain Rollo. No matter who won the battle, the effects of Viking influence seemed sure to make themselves felt in subsequent English history. But not so, actually Duke William, who prevailed, set about immediately to block further Scandinavian influence in England. introducing medieval French systems of government, land ownership, economics and thought, thus helping to bring to an end the Viking Age in Europe.

While some Vikings were plundering and trading throughout Europe, others were acting the part of explorers reaching farther and farther out into the Atlantic. By about A.D. 860 a Viking named Naddod, probably banished from Norway for lives taken in a local feud, set sail for the Faroe Islands to the west, a haven for banished Vikings. In the great age of Viking expansion, it was customary that the guilty murderer in a local feud would be banished from his homeland for two or three years, after which he was free to return. Some particularly troublesome individuals served out several banishments during their lifetimes without suffering any other reprisals from the law, although they were always likely to be ambushed by relatives, friends, or henchman of the family or individual whom they had injured or murdered. It was a wild and cruel age.

Because of a fierce storm Naddod missed his intended landfall in the Faroes and fetched up on the east coast of Iceland, 240 miles to the west.

During the next 100 years Iceland became a haven for *vikingr mikill*, "a Viking of note", a euphemism for a banished Viking. From this base were launched the great wayfarings which discovered Greenland and the North American mainland half a millennium before Columbus set foot on San Salvador.

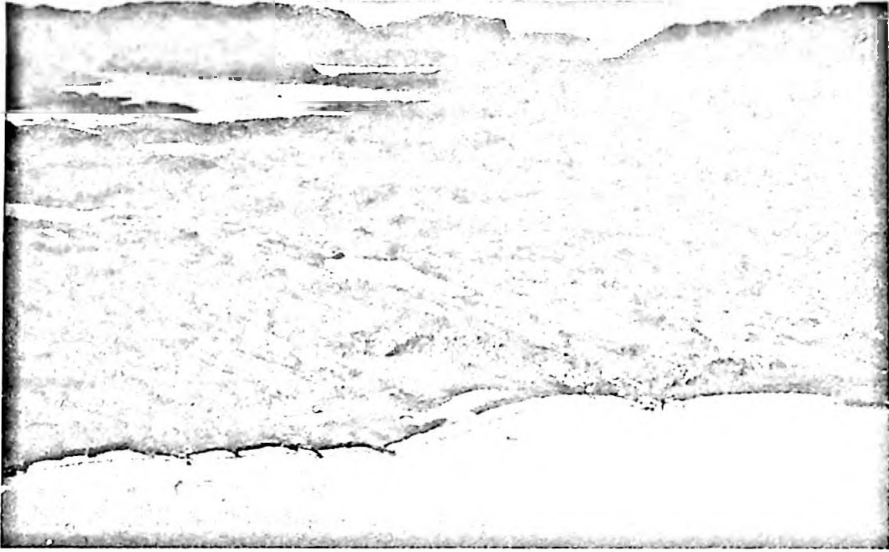
It was in Iceland that Eric the Red and his father settled when they were banished from Norway for murders committed during a feud. A latter day historian has said of Eric: "Eric Thorvalden Ruiedi—Eric the Red was red of hair and red of beard, bloody of heart and bloody of hand, he was a murderously bad neighbor, a scoundrel on the grand scale, a heathen to the core, and to the very end he remained unregenerate."

When the father and son reached Iceland, all of the best land had been taken up, so they were forced to settle in the northwest corner of the island. There Eric managed to marry into one of the better families, acquiring a rich wife in the bargain. When his servants rolled some stones down a hillside onto some other servants and started another feud, he moved farther south on the Breda Fjord. There he or his henchmen started another feud. Killings resulted, and this time he was banished from Iceland for three years. It was then, in the early A.D. 980's, that he set out for land which was rumored to lie to the west.

Greenland, the world's largest island, is about 1,600 miles long from north to south and about 800 miles wide at the widest. The entire center of the island is

occupied by an ice cap, in some places more than 12,000 feet thick, contained by a mountain rim around the island's edge. Glacial ice from the interior discharges along fjords through the mountains to the sea. At a few places in the south the land is unglaciated in a narrow zone between the mountains and the sea.

Denmark Strait lies between the west coast of Iceland and the east coast of Greenland. It is a little more than 200 miles wide at its narrowest, but a ship sailing directly westward from Iceland would have to cross almost 400 miles of ice-choked water because the Greenland coast trends southwestward at that latitude. A strong



On the narrow beach at the center of the photograph, at the side of Kagssiarssuk Fjord, Eric the Red made his first settlement in Greenland about A.D. 983. He returned in A.D. 986 to build a permanent settlement which he called Brattahlid.

current sets southward down the east coast of Greenland (the East Greenland Current) carrying southward great masses of sea ice and icebergs calved from glaciers up the coast. The current rounds Cape Farewell, at the south tip of Greenland, moves northward up the west coast of Greenland into Baffin Bay, crosses the north end of Baffin Bay to the west side, then moves southward along the east coast of Baffin Island, through Davis Strait, along the Labrador coast, and crosses the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, there called the Labrador Current, and finally spends itself on the Grand Banks, south of Newfoundland. It is quite possible that the iceberg which sank the Titanic in 1912 was calved from an East Greenland glacier and was carried by the currents just described to its rendezvous with destiny.

At the time of his first Iceland banishment, Eric and his small group of pioneers made their way through the ice-clogged waters of Denmark Strait, drifting southward with the East Greenland Current, around the south tip of the island and northwestward along the coast until he found a sheltered fjord which offered some

hope of scratching out a subsistence for several years. This first settlement was made at the side of Kagssiarssuk Fjord, about 100 miles northwest of Cape Farewell.

Perhaps Eric had looked upon this first settlement as a haven during his initial banishment from Iceland, but when he returned to Iceland in about A. D. 985 he saw it as a potential site for permanent settlement. He named the new land Greenland and set about promoting it with the zeal of a real estate subdivider. He recruited new colonists, gathered supplies, livestock, building materials, and returned in A. D. 986 with several *knarrs*, or merchant ships, to establish a permanent colony. The new settlement, at the site of the temporary, original one, was called Brattahlid. Crops of hardy grain were planted, shelters for humans and livestock were constructed, and an active fishery established.

The pioneer colony at Brattahlid soon served as a base for a new colony farther west along the coast several hundred miles farther from Cape Farewell. This was called the Western Settlement, while Brattahlid was known as the Eastern Settlement. Ships began to make regular trips between the Greenland colonies and Iceland and Norway.

From Brattahlid Eric's son, Leif Eiriksson, sailed across Davis Strait to Baffin Island, then southward down the Labrador coast to the northern tip of Newfoundland, where he established a temporary settlement in what he called Vinland. On this voyage, made about A. D. 1,001, the Vikings made their first contacts with the native inhabitants of the New World, which they called *Skraelings*.

From the time of their original establishment, the Greenland colonies became more difficult to maintain with each passing year. The voyage across Denmark Strait was always a difficult one because of ice and storms—it still is. The East Greenland Current made the return voyage to Iceland or Norway even more difficult than the westward voyage. Some years the supply ships couldn't make it either way.

In about A. D. 1,200 a gradual change in the climate of the north Atlantic Basin began. Glaciologists call this the Little Ice Age. Glaciers expanded, water and air temperatures grew colder. Increased numbers of icebergs began to calve each year into Greenland waters. This was a gradual change, the Greenland colonies were progressively cut off from the mother country.

At the time the original Norse settlements were made, the Greenland Eskimos were settled in the far northwest corner of the island, near the head of Baffin Bay. With the onset of the Little Ice Age the seals, whales, and walrus began to move southward. In pursuit of their food supply, the Eskimos followed. By the early 1300's the two peoples, Viking and Eskimo, were brought into violent confrontation.

The Eskimo was on his home ground—he had made a delicate and completely successful adaptation to a harsh environment; the Viking was cut off from his home base, and was trying to survive in a hostile environment with tools and weapons unsuited to their tasks. The outcome was not difficult to foresee. By about A. D. 1,500, by slow attrition from the environment and attacks from nomadic Eskimos, the Viking settlements had been wiped out.

Today one can visit the site of Eric's settlement at Brattahlid on the shores of Kagssiarssuk Fjord. The stones of the farmhouses, the stables, and the church have



The ruins of the farmhouse at Brattahlid, on Kagssiarssuk Fjord, South Greenland. These stones are from the original farmhouse walls, and have been protected by the Danish National Museum.

been excavated and protected by the Danish National Museum. It takes little imagination to people the settlement with the robust Viking men and women who once served as guardians of European culture's most remote outpost for 500 years. It is equally easy to envision the struggle which took place there between an alien group who held a tenuous foothold on a new land and the native inhabitants who exercised their right of ownership through a thousand years of adaptation and continuous possession.

This first colonization was eventually unsuccessful and did not serve as the model for the late comers such as Pizzaro, Cortez, Coronado, De Anza, Daniel Boone, Sam Houston, and the legion of settlers who eventually won the West from the Skraelings.

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(Continued from page 2)

tober 1880 and October 1881. This was the shooting of William Addison Bronaugh, sheriff of Saguache County, at Wagon Wheel Gap in the San Juans. Bronaugh and his deputy were both wounded by two prisoners in their custody. One prisoner was Bill Miner, a notorious California stage robber. I am doing research on Miner's life. In Colorado, Miner was an accomplice of the famous Arthur Pond, alias Billy LeRoy. Together they robbed stages at Ohio City, Sept. 23, 1880, and Slumgullion, Oct. 7, 1881, and Del Norte, Oct. 14, 1880. They split up some time before the LeRoy brothers were caught and lynched, May 22, 1881, at Del Norte.

I am interested in finding out the date of Sheriff Bronaugh's shooting; if I can get this I can research the rest of the story in news files. Recently I visited the Colorado Historical Society in Denver; they had no information. I wrote a letter to the Saguache County Museum months ago but received no reply. I checked one Saguache weekly paper, a partial file, for the year 1881 but could find nothing about Bronaugh.

If you have any information on this, or can advise me of someone who does, I would be greatly appreciative.

Sincerely,

John Boessenecker

1300 Palso Verdes, Apt. #11

San Mateo, CA. 94403

HELP OFFERED

The *Local Assistance Program* of the Colorado Historical Society provides financial and technical assistance to local historical societies and museums.

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Applications should be submitted to *Local Assistance Program, Colorado Historical Society*, Denver, phone (303) 8392136.

WESTERNERS' BREAKFAST

The 101st Annual Meeting of the Colorado Historical Society will be Friday and Saturday 7 and 8 November 1980. The theme of the meetings will be "The Cowboy." Details from the CHS, 1300 Broadway, Denver 80203.

On Saturday 8 November, at 8:30-10:00, is scheduled the *Westerners Breakfast*, at which you are invited to "come and join Trail Boss Red Fenwick in the traditional early morning breakfast of the Westerners' posses and corrals! There will be a 'vintage raffle' and Jeffrey Waters will dazzle all on the keyboard. The maximum capacity is 250 and the deadline for reservations is 24 October 1980. Cost is \$5.00 per person." For information call (303) 839-3677.



GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



Fifty Years on the Old Frontier, by James H. Cook. University of Oklahoma Press, Third Printing, 1980. Foreword by J. Frank Dobie and introduction by Charles King. Illustrations, index, 241 pages. \$14.95.

This classic of true Western reminiscences was first published in 1923 and the University of Oklahoma is to be congratulated in putting out a third printing in an excellently produced hard-bound volume.

Born in Michigan in 1857, Cook as a young lad migrated to Kansas and on to Texas, where he worked as a cowboy, rounding up wild cattle and herding them north. His descriptions of driving cattle, fending off Indian

attacks, etc., make colorful reading. After one of his trips north he stayed in Wyoming and Nebraska and worked as a game hunter and guide. Thereafter, he moved to New Mexico to engage in ranching and in scouting for the Army in the Apache wars.

Cook scouted for the Army in Nebraska and Wyoming, and eventually settled down on his Agate Springs ranch in Nebraska.

Obviously shrewd, personable and able, Cook met and knew many of the famous figures of the era, from Big Foot Wallace to Red Cloud. This book provides interesting and factual reading and belongs in every Westerner's library.

W. H. Van Duzer, P.M.

The Central City Opera House by Charlie H. Johnson, Jr.; Little London Press, Colorado Springs, (1980).

In seventy small pages of text and pictures the author says about all that could be said about the old opera house from its construction in 1877-78 to the present. Peter McFarlane and his brother managed construction of the opera house for the Gilpin County Opera House Association which raised \$21,000 to build it. When the association fell upon hard times, Peter assumed much of the expense of maintaining the building until about 1902 when he had acquired almost full ownership. Upon his death in 1929, his son, Frederick McFarlane, was about to sell the property when his wife, Ida Kruse McFarlane and Anne Evans (daughter of Colorado's second territorial governor), intervened and persuaded the University of Denver to take it over as a gift from the McFarlane family. Its history since it became the darling of Denver society is well known and it should suffice to say that the list of headliners who have appeared there during that time has ranged from Mae West to Helen Hayes and from Walter Houston to Don Ameche. The wide range of musical fare finally, in 1978, included Michael William Balle's *BOHEMIAN GIRL*—the work whose production in 1877 by a community group sparked the desire for an opera house worthy of such talent. All of which leaves one wondering just what Peter McFarlane and his pals would have thought of the annual festivals.

Al Nutt, C.M.

Cowboys and Indians, Characters in Oil and Bronze by Joe Beeler; University of Oklahoma Press (\$8.95, paperback)

This edition of the work originally published in 1967 is a bargain in every respect. Joe Beeler may be a man of few words but with his talent he needs no more than those used for the captions of the illustrations that fill this book. The old west speaks out in his paintings and bronzes as it does in those of his mentor, Charles M. Russell. The resemblance between the two artists is striking—in both subject matter and technique. The printing and typography are of high quality and the artist's comments a

delight to read. If you haven't seen this one yet, you're missing something fine and good.

Al Nutt, C.M.

Custer's Luck, by Edgar I. Stewart. University of Oklahoma Press, Seventh Printing, 1980. Illustrations, maps, and index. 495 pages. \$12.00.

In publishing new issues of books that have become Western classics, the University of Oklahoma provides a genuine service to Westerners who may have missed earlier editions. The softbound Seventh Edition of "Custer's Luck" is no exception. Considered one of the great standard works on the Custer battle, Stewart's volume is a true historian's masterpiece, giving a comprehensive account of the national affairs, both Indian and White, which led to the confrontation at the Little Big Horn.

For pro-Custer readers, Stewart may seem over-critical of Custer, and too pro-Indian. He does use largely Indian accounts, which have often been criticized as unreliable. However, any balanced study of the Battle needs all views.

This is a book to own and re-read occasionally as new articles and books continue to appear on Custer and his last battle.

W. H. Van Duzer, P.M.

Ruxton of the Rockies, Collected by Clyde and Mae Reed Porter, Edited by LeRoy R. Hafen, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. Second Printing, 1979, 325 pp., 17 illustrations. \$7.95

This is a soft cover edition of the hard-back first edition issued by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1950.

The Denver Posse of the Westerners should take pride in their connection with both the first and the second editions of this work. In her introduction, Mae Reed Porter acknowledges: "Mr. Wright Howes of Chicago and Mr. Fred Rosenstock of Denver, dealers in rare books on American history, helped gather our collection of Ruxton editions, and Mr. LeRoy Hafen, Mr. Herbert Brayer, and Mr. Fred Rosenstock, through their affiliation with Denver Westerners, have been instrumental in bringing the book to publication, for which we shall forever be indebted to them."

During his short lifetime—27 years—George Augustus Frederick Ruxton experienced a fantastic series of adventures and produced two books which have been classics of Western history for the past century and a quarter. However, save for these two books, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* and *Life in the Far West*, very little was known of Ruxton's life and origins, other than appeared in the books themselves. Apparently there was no known picture of Ruxton until 1947. In that year, Clyde and Mae Reed Porter, who had already begun inquiries into Ruxton's background, had the good fortune to examine and eventually acquire by purchase papers, letters, notebooks, and other records of the Ruxton family from sources in rural Kent, southeast of London, England. Mrs. Porter recounts in the introduction to this volume the fortuitous circumstances through which she visited the ancestral haunts of the Ruxton family and eventually acquired the new material which included a miniature portrait, painted on ivory, of the youthful adventurer.

Ruxton was expelled from the Royal Military Academy of Sandhurst at the age of 15, having served two years there from 1835. He plunged almost immediately into the Carlist civil war in Spain, where he spent 1837-39. He then saw military service with the British Army in Ireland and Canada from 1840-43. During the winter of 1843-44, after discharge in Canada from his military appointment, he spent his time hunting with Chipewas in what is now northern Ontario. From his extreme youth Ruxton was an avid hunter.

He made two trips to Africa in 1844-45, the first to Morocco where he was almost a victim of Moslem antipathy toward Christians. A note in his journal says: "A Jew swears I am a Frenchman and nearly causes me to lose my ears." One of his first acquaintances in Morocco had already warned him that, "Christians and caliphs were made to pave the way to the believer's paradise." He was soon back in England, and a few months later aboard the guano freighter *Royalist* bound for the island of Ichabo, off the Namib Desert coast of what is now Southwest Africa. This time he proposed to make his way

from west to east across southern Africa along the Tropic of Capricorn. He evidently financed the trip himself, with the lofty purpose of geographic discovery. Although it did not contribute to the cost of the expedition, the Royal Geographical Society of London bid him "God-speed" and may have lent him its name in making arrangements in the field. The president of that august body mentioned Ruxton's undertaking in his anniversary address of 1845.

His dream of crossing Africa from west to east along the Tropic of Capricorn was balked before it got started. Traders from South Africa and missionaries who had established contact with inland tribes advised their native contacts not to receive him or give him transport, since his was not an official government-sanctioned expedition. Frustrated at every turn, Ruxton returned to England.

The remaining 200 pages of the book are taken up with Ruxton's journeys and experiences in Mexico and the western United States. He reached Mexico at Vera Cruz. He followed in Cortez's footsteps to Mexico, thence up the central plateau to El Paso, up the Rio Grande to Santa Fe, by La Veta Pass to the Arkansas valley, then up Fountain Pass to South Pass, where he spent several weeks hunting alone, and finally back to the Arkansas and to the "States" at Saint Louis. The creek which joins Fountain Creek in the center of the Manitou business district has been named Ruxton Creek.

To have had so many adventures by the time he reached the age of 27 is remarkable of itself, but to have been able to write about them in such a lively and perceptive fashion almost defies belief. Ruxton was a keen observer of men and animals; he was also a born hunter. His descriptions of the many hunting experiences which led him from the path of his journeys are some of the earliest and best found in the literature of the West. It is evident that many of these personal experiences moved him very deeply, otherwise he would not have been able to describe them so vividly. But at the same time he has interlarded these personal observations with knowledgeable little essays and vignettes on the government, the mores, economy, and social customs of the locals—even a little

essay on the Mexican *mula de carga* (pack mule) and his *cargador* (packer) which is an invitation to try one's hand at throwing a diamond hitch as well as being more detailed than a modern owner's manual for a new complicated camera.

Ruxton had an instinct to call a spade a spade even though doing so might offend his host or the people among whom he tarried. He was equally lavish with praise. He realized, of course, that he was not likely to come that way again, or at least to cross paths a second time with someone he had inadvertently maligned. Most of this can be attributed to youthful exuberance. For example, after describing the cathedral in the city of Chihuahua in rather derogatory terms, he continues:

"Opposite the principal entrance, over the portals which form one side of the square, were dangling the grim scalps of one hundred and seventy Apaches, who had lately been most treacherously and inhumanly butchered by the Indian hunters in the pay of the state. The scalps of men, women, and children were brought into the town in procession, and hung as trophies, in this conspicuous situation, of Mexican valour and humanity!"

He continues by describing the unfinished convent of San Francisco as "a conspicuous mass of masonry and bad taste."

Ruxton's description and characterization of the Rocky Mountain trapper is the finest I know from a contemporary observer:

"The trappers of the Rocky Mountains belong to a "genus" more approximating to the primitive savage than perhaps any other class of civilized men. Their lives being spent in the remote wilderness of the mountains, with no other companion than Nature herself, their habits and character assume a most singular cast of simplicity mingled with ferocity, appearing to take their colouring from the scenes and objects which surround them. Knowing no wants save those of nature, their sole care is to procure sufficient food to support life, and the necessary clothing to protect them from the rigorous climate. This, with the assistance of their trusty rifles, they are generally able to effect, but sometimes at the expense of great peril and hardship. When engaged in their avocation, the natural instinct of primitive

man is ever alive, for the purpose of guarding against danger and the provision of necessary food.

"Keen observers of nature, they rival the beasts of prey in discovering the haunts and habits of game, and in their skill and cunning in capturing it. Constantly exposed to perils of all kinds, they become callous to any feeling of danger, and destroy human as well as animal life with as little scruple and as freely as they expose their own. Of laws, human or divine, they neither know nor care to know. Their wish is their law, and to attain it they do not scruple as to ways and means. Firm friends and bitter enemies, with them it is "a word and a blow," and the blow often first. They may have good qualities, but they are those of the animal; and the people fond of giving hard names call them revengeful, bloodthirsty, drunkards (when the wherewithal is to be had), gamblers, regardless of the laws of *meum* and *tuum*—in fact, "White Indians."

Later he softens the description slightly by admitting that there are some exceptions, "and I have met honest mountain men."

Ruxton arrived back in England in the middle of August, 1847. He worked feverishly on the manuscripts of *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* and *Life in the Far West*, both of which were finished before the following winter had passed. Both works were scheduled for publication as soon as they were completed.

Meanwhile the call of the mountains was too much for him. In early August, 1848, Ruxton was in Buffalo, N.Y., and by August 15, in St. Louis. Here he succumbed almost immediately to the epidemic dysentery rampant in the city, complicated by the effects of a back injury received in the mountains the previous year.

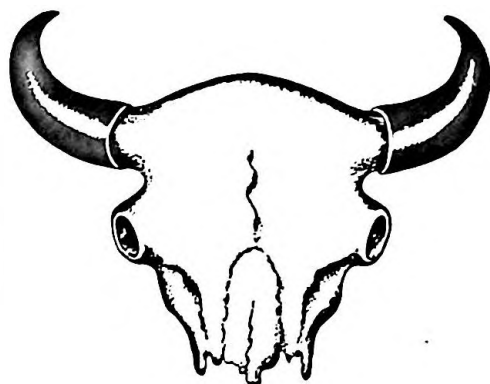
George Augustus Frederick Ruxton died in St. Louis on 29 August 1848, aged 27, without seeing his beloved mountains again, but having crowded more "adventures" into his brief life than many a stay-at-home is able to experience in a lifetime of three score and ten. We should be grateful that he had the industry and skill to describe it in one of the earliest and best personal histories of life in the Rocky Mountain West.

Mel Grilliths, P.M.

The DENVER WESTERNERS

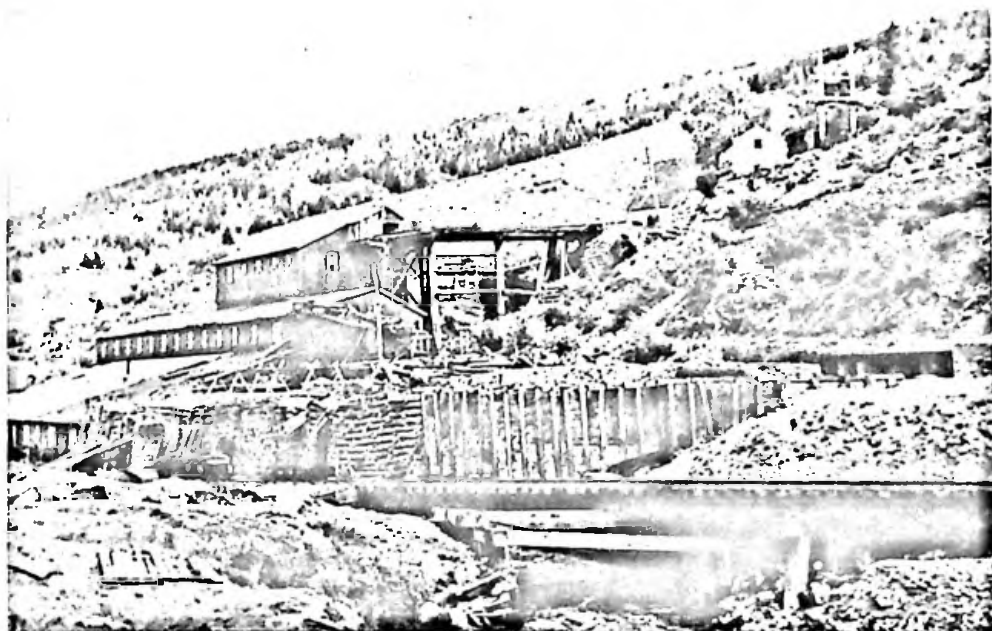
ROUNDUP

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1980



FADING RAILS AND SHINING MINES

Robert D. Stull, P.M.



The Bob Tail Mill at Black Hawk in 1935, served by the Colorado and Southern narrow gauge, symbolized the mining industry rising again.

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Richard Ronzio
P.O. Box 344
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OUR AUTHOR

The author of this issue's lead article, Bob Stull, is Director of the Division of Administrative Services of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, with which he has been associated for 11 of his 21 years with the State.

He has been in Colorado since 1949, having been born in Iowa, and now lives at 8206 Adams Way, Denver 80221. He earned his B.S. and Master of Business Administration degrees at Denver University.

He comes from a "railroad family" for four generations and is a model railroad buff and model builder himself. He belongs to the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Ghost Town Club of Colorado.

OVER THE CORRAL RAIL

Our latest Posse Member is William C. Henderson of 1229 North Union Blvd., Colorado Springs, who has been a corresponding Member since 1960. Following his attendance at The Colorado College he has engaged in business in the Springs, and is now retired. In addition to an interest in western history he is a numismatics expert, and has addressed the Denver Posse on that subject. We hope to hear more about that from him.

We are late in recording here the addition of Richard C. Cook to the Posse. Bill is retired from the armed forces and continues his interest in military history. We hope to hear from him, too, in the area of his expertise.

(Continued on page 12)

1980 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

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FADING RAILS AND SHINING MINES

Mining and Railroading in the Clear Creek Country in the Mid 30's

By
Robert D. Stull, P.M.

Presented with slides to the Denver Posse of the Westerners,
on 22 October 1980
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Jubilation swept the town of Black Hawk on December 11, 1872, as the first train of Loveland and Teller's Colorado Central arrived in the City of Mills causing an euphoria which was to climax with the Grand Railroad Ball of December 27th.

Similar excitement was to progress through Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties as the railroad reached westward to Idaho Springs, Georgetown, Central City and last but not least Silver Plume.

The arrival of rails meant lode mining could now be profitably pursued with its greater demands for fuel and machinery and thereby reverse the depression created by the depletion of the rich placers and the easily mined surface oxidized ores.

Now fifty-three years after the last hurrah the nation was in the seventh year of the greatest and most severe of the many panics and depressions to sweep its economy.

Loveland and Teller's Colorado Central, never really free of the hold of the railroad barons, had, after a series of corporate tossings and turnings, become merely the Clear Creek Branch of the Colorado and Southern Railroad whose manifest destiny was tied to rails 4' 8½" apart, not those of a mere three feet.

The great depression saw the fall of hordes of the nation's railroads both great and small into the maw of bankruptcy and receivership. The Colorado and Southern did not choose to join their desperate ranks and began again to pursue the effort to rid itself of the unprofitable narrow gauge lines.

While it is not the purpose of this paper to duplicate several excellent volumes on the specifics of these narrow gauge lines some reference to their later history is required to mark their fading from the scene.

Many commentators on the decade of the 70's, both social and economic, lay many dire consequences to the years of abundant, cheap and plentiful gasoline. Not the least of these was the loss of public transportation due to lack of use. From this list of woes we can add specifically the winding down and ultimate loss of the Clear Creek narrow gauge lines. Private cars and private and commercial trucks and buses were just too cheap and convenient.

From 1910, the apparent highwater mark of operating revenues for the Clear Creek lines in this century, there was a decline to the point of deficit in 1921 from which they were never to rise again.

Mr. John D. Mackenzie, a trucker of Nederland testifying for the railroad, pretty much summed up the story for the Clear Creek country too, "A truck is loaded in Boulder and delivered right to the mine or wherever they want it with one handling; instead of trucking from mine to railroad car, or to a mill and then to the railroad, there is now just one handling; we all know that the less handling, the cheaper it is to handle; it costs more every time you touch it."

A survey of the merchants of Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties seemed to bear this out, as they all trucked, bussed or used private cars except for a handful of lignite coal users, ore shippers and bulk gas dealers.

While better highways were penetrating the area and eyes were being cast upon the railroad's very right-of-way for potential use, the railroad tried to hold on.

Sixty-one reductions in freight rates were made from 1928 to 1936. Meetings were held in the various communities including shippers and receivers to discuss declining business and the resultant necessity to curtail freight service. The promises to use the railroad for all freight which could be reasonably shipped if the railroad rebuilt after the disastrous 1933 floods were not honored. Prophetically in 1927 on January 14, the *Clear Creek Mining Journal* in an article "How to Keep the Railroad" had the quote, "If every man in business in the two counties, no matter what business, mining, mercantile or otherwise, would agree to ship everything by rail, there would probably never again be an attempt to junk the railroad."

To maintain service in the face of declining revenues and loss of traffic to the internal combustion engine the railroad resorted to other strategies. The first of these was the reduction in train service.

Prior to 1918 when the automobile began to make itself felt there were two regularly scheduled passenger trains a day with a third during the tourist season which often was supplemented with extras.

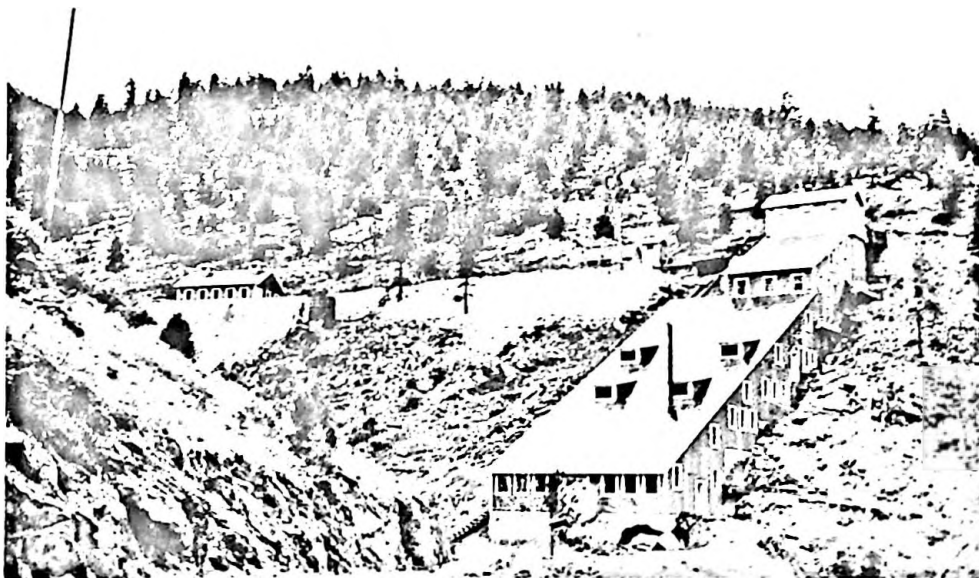
Up to February 1926, there were two mixed trains daily from Forks Creek to Central City making connections with the through passenger trains to Georgetown & Silver Plume.

Until 1921 there were daily freights from Golden to Silver Plume with extras as necessary.

As the glory days of full service began to fade the first to go was the tourist passenger train in 1918. Then in 1921 the second regular passenger train was cut although in the period of 1922-26 a second train was run during the tourist season. The arrival of the Denver Cab Company and the Rocky Mountain Motor Company bus service effectively killed all rail passenger service in 1927 including the mixed trains from Forks Creek to Black Hawk and Central City.

Declining freight traffic reduced the daily freight to three trips a week in 1921 and eliminated Golden as a terminal. Henceforth everything operated from Denver.

By 1932 freight service was reduced to two trips a week terminating at Idaho Springs and one trip per week terminating at Georgetown with trips to Silver Plume only as required. Later in the year service was cut to two trips weekly, one terminating at Idaho Springs and one at Georgetown with service to Silver Plume only as required. In all cases each train made a side trip to Black Hawk.



While the nearby rails deteriorated the mining industry was building anew, as exemplified by the new Bruce Mill near Idaho Springs, with a daily capacity of 150 tons.

The reduced service changed the crews pay from a guarantee of six days to a system of time worked based on a round trip in a single day.

During this same period consideration was given to articulated locomotives such as used on the Uintah in Western Colorado to eliminate helpers and crews but purchase price, upkeep, and rebuilding of the line made the proposal too expensive.

It was found an oil burning locomotive could make the round trip from Denver to Silver Plume and back including the side trip to Black Hawk. Coal fired helpers turned at Forks Creek and returned light.

Maintenance of the right-of-way was reduced in a number of ways. First the number of section gangs was reduced from eleven to two. The "supervisor system" was initiated whereby inspection was assigned a single man, and the track foreman and his men worked strictly on maintenance. The assistant roadmaster for these lines was dropped with the duties being added to those of the Denver to Wendover, Wyoming position.

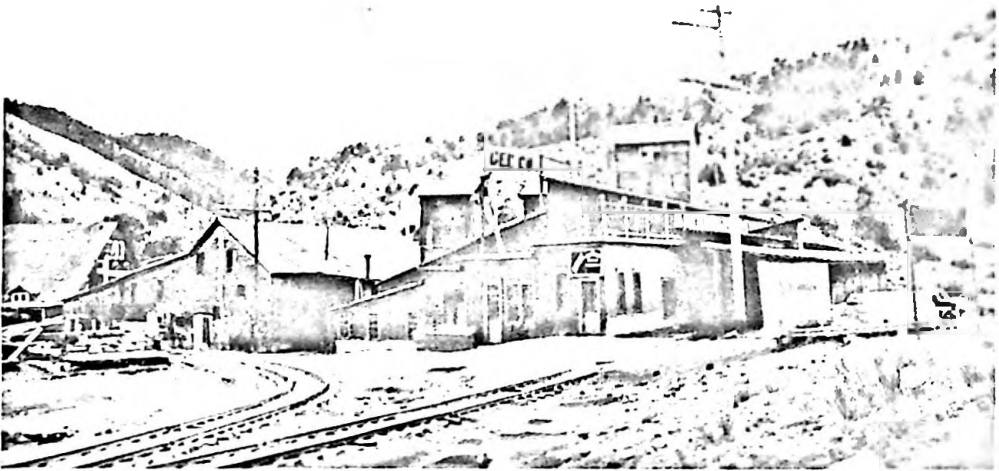
Cross ties were reduced in length from seven to five and a half feet and their spacing was reduced from 2800 to 2630 a mile. This was offset by the installation of tie plates on 50 percent of the line including all curves. Further costs were eliminated by removing nearly three miles of sidetrack after 1931.

Even with this, no new rail had been laid since 1907 except for that necessitated by washouts. Ties were left in place several years beyond normal life. Track drainage ditches became filled in, many cracked rails were spliced by angle bars, and all buildings needed repair and paint.

Corresponding mechanical work forces were reduced. The Golden roundhouse was closed, the coal heaver at Forks Creek was terminated as were engine watchmen at Silver Plume and Black Hawk.

Supervision was simplified. The Clear Creek lines ceased to be a division and thus eliminated the Superintendent, three clerks, two dispatchers and the road foreman of engines. As with the track and mechanical needs all services were supplied by the Northern Division of Denver to Wendover, Wyoming.

Prior to 1920 there were salaried agents at every major town in the district. By the mid thirties there were agents only at Black Hawk and Idaho Springs with only a custodian at Georgetown making \$8.00 per month.



Idaho Springs once was a city of mills all of which were served by the Colorado and Southern narrow gauge. The Gem Mill shown here was one of the large shippers with a capacity of 100 tons per day.

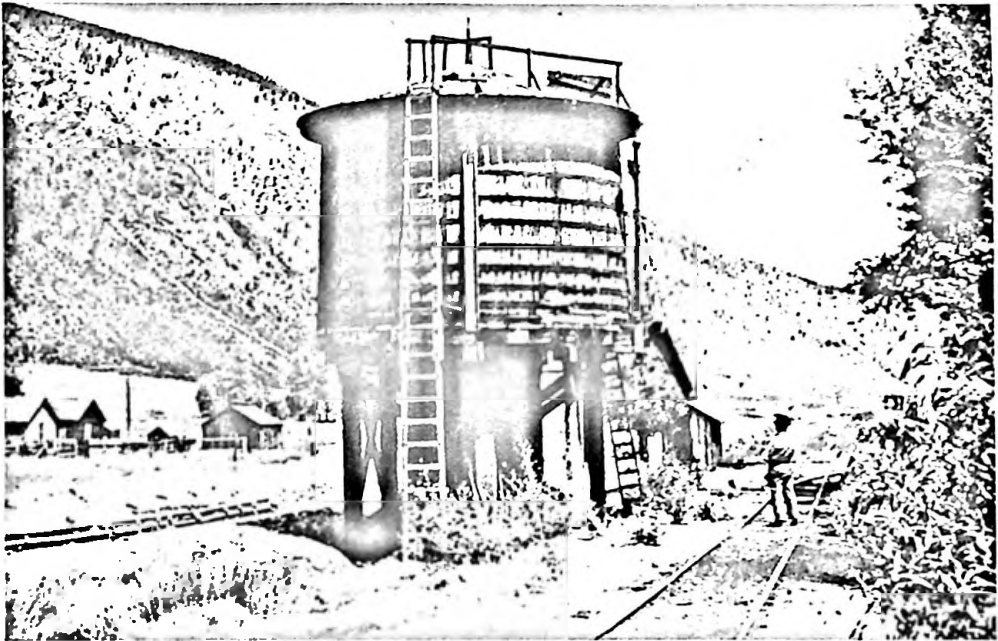
In the face of the permitted deterioration of the railroad itself the company maintained its rolling stock in good repair and had equipment with appliances superior to other narrow gauge lines lasting decades longer. This was demonstrated by the use of cast steel trucks as opposed to arch bar units. 100% of the refrigerator cars, 82% of the box cars, 63% of the stock cars and 47% of the coal cars were so equipped. The fleet was widely fitted with steel under frames, eliminating the need for truss rods and turnbuckles. In this case 100% of the refrigerator cars, 62% of the box cars, 46% of the stock cars and 26% of the coal cars had the improved frame.

The locomotives, while old, were kept in excellent condition. Some had new boilers but in no case had the allowed original boiler pressure been reduced.

There we have it, a railroad born of the mining boom, serving an area which never developed alternate industry, succumbing to economics and newer technology.

But, what happened to the mining industry in the first place, why did it cease to provide the support for the railroad? The decline in the fortunes of the Gilpin and Clear Creek mining districts had a number of root causes. Silver mining in Clear Creek county was more or less destroyed by the Silver Act of 1894, and the mines closed as reserves were exhausted because development work had been neglected. Gold mining in both counties had a number of problems, compounded and climaxed by the drop in production caused by World War I and the subsequent inflation which reduced the purchasing power of gold fixed at a rate of \$20.67 per ounce (23.22 grains of pure gold to the dollar).

The output of gold had begun to drop in 1910 as a result of the gradual increase in the cost of labor and commodities which had started to rise about 1895.



The Georgetown water tank and its attendant track shows the sad state of the once proud carrier of mining riches in its last years.

Peculiarities of the development of the Gilpin district mines added to the overall economic woe. Reports of mining engineers as early as the 1870's and 80's point out that disaster would result if mines were not consolidated, because in proportion to depth the individual mines owned insufficient territory. Nevertheless, conflicting ambitions and unrealistic prices for claims on major veins thwarted the necessary agreements. The famed Gregory-Bobtail mine was the only significant consolidation until modern times.

Misunderstanding of the "lay of the land" further added to the failure of many enterprises. It was not widely understood that to the east side of the district, veins have an easterly slope and to the west a westerly slope. Because of this some mines which by the luck of the draw started on a vein, lost it with depth as the vein sloped away into someone else's claim. Conversely, persistent souls who started on more or less barren ground, but who kept at it, often hit a sloping vein at depth. Consolidation and wider use of cross cuts would have permitted sounder, healthier mines.



The replacing of a washed-out culvert at the lower end of Chase Gulch in Black Hawk by the simple expedient of a bed of rails is an example of make-do at minimal expense.

Besides not understanding the lay of the vein structure, the rapid depletion of the rich surface oxide deposits gave credence to a school of thought that the veins grew poorer with depth and consequently some mines began to close needlessly. Subsequent studies by professional engineers and geologists have shown Gilpin ores to be consistent in value regardless of depth.

Besides the failure to consolidate, the fact that many mines were not so much rich as cheaply worked made subsequent increases in costs hard to bear. The Gunnell for example, over its effective life produced 2.6 million, half of which was profit.

The Gilpin ores are very complex and vary widely from one area to another, even when quite close. All contain pyrite. Many are free milling, yielding up to 80% gold by amalgamation, yet others will not amalgamate at all. Some ores give high yields by gravity concentration. There are tellurides in the district which submit only to

cyanidation and chlorination after roasting. All Gilpin ores contain silver, some are lead-zinc ores, and in others copper predominates.



The Colorado and Southern did not give up the Clear Creek lines without a struggle to survive in the face of declining revenues. The strengthening of the wood truss bridge at milepost 39.01 by the addition of truss rods is a classic example of making do with little expenditure.

Obviously then this complexity of ore required a variety of recovery methods which often required changes in process at the mills as mine production brought in new ores. For example the Argo Mill started as a gravity concentration-cyanide plant but was later changed to flotation and concentration systems. It closed in 1919 for lack of tonnage for its particular systems, not for lack of quality of ore.

The net peculiarities is that in all probability only $\frac{1}{5}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the available Gilpin ore bodies had been worked up to the mid 1930s. With the low percentage of ores having actually been worked it was estimated that millions of tons of low grade ore remained, needing only better development and better prices.

The price problem was addressed when in 1933 gold was revalued to \$35.00 an ounce. Thus, with the stroke of a pen in faraway Washington, D.C., that old bonanza fever was rekindled to sweep the hills of Colorado. The gold miners opportunity had come again and surely Gilpin County would return to the best of days. In fact it was generally felt that Gilpin and Clear Creek counties had more ore mineable at \$35.00 per ounce than anywhere else in the United States.

There was plenty of room for improvement because by 1930 there were only five mines operating in the whole area, many business houses were closed and one half to two-thirds of the residences were unoccupied. Then with the enthusiasm of old, things

literally exploded. The population of the district increased by 100%. Businesses reopened, a housing shortage developed, bank deposits increased three-fold, school enrollment increased, the use of electricity increased 450%, postal receipts were up 300% and last but not least ninety-seven mines were in operation.

Illustrative of the new bonanza the United Gilpin Corporation had a mill handling in excess of 1,500 tons per day and had shipped 100 cars of concentrate the first six months of 1936. It earned \$37,187.45 net profit in 1935.

Up at the old town of Alice the American Smelting and Refining Company was completing a 200-ton-a-day mill.

The Capital Prize Mine at Georgetown had spent \$100,000 in rehabilitation and development and was ready to ship ore.

Up at the Santiago Mine above Waldorf a new mill was completed in 1935 which handled 40 to 45 tons per day. In fact only twenty days after the spring start-up they shipped 5 cars of ore.

The Silver Leaf Mill at Silver Plume was engaged in custom milling for small operators.



The weed-grown trackage at the Fall River sectionhouse shows the neglected maintenance of the right-of-way, especially the lack of track drainage.

Pending the rise of the price of lead and zinc the Consolidated Smelting and Metals Corporation, the Blue Bell Mine, the Gold Belt and Hammel Tunnels were ready to go.

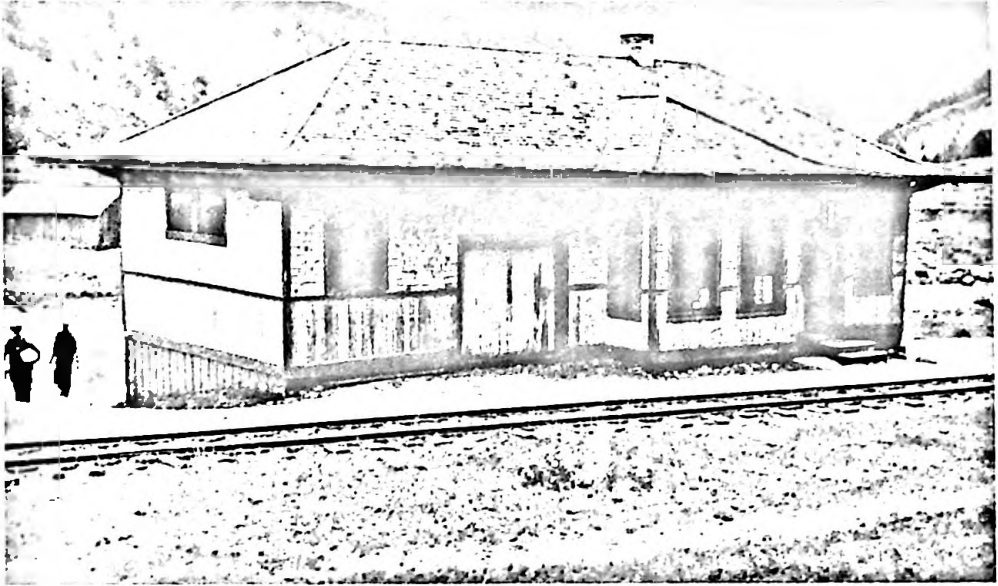
At Idaho Springs, the Clear Creek Gilpin Company operated a sampler to serve the small operators. It had just sold its mill to the Humbolt Consolidated Mines.

The Consolidated Smelting and Metals Corporation had just finished a 70 ton mill near Idaho Springs. Between their mining and milling they employed forty men.

The Alma Lincoln Mining Company shipped 117 cars of concentrate in 1935. It had just completed a 100 ton mill and paid a 20% dividend on its earnings.

At Dumont the Phoenix Trail Mining Company was just completing a new mill.

The Mattie Consolidated Mine near Idaho Springs was one of the few mines to operate from the 1920's and it continued to do so.



The seldom-seen track side of the station at Dumont, which by the mid 1930s had ceased to be an active agency and shows signs of neglect.

Up at the now ghost town of North Empire the Viking Gold Mines Corporation was operating the Conqueror Group including the 50 ton mill.

In Gilpin County the Diamond K Mining Company operated the Federal Group, the Becky Sharp and Russell Gulch. They shipped 68 cars of ore from Black Hawk to Colorado Springs and Leadville.

In Willis Gulch the Willis Gulch Mining Company had a new mill and was operating on the Saratoga dump and handled about 80 tons a day.

The Russell Gulch Mining Company operated the Pittsburgh Mines milling 300 tons a day. In 1935 they shipped 145 cars.

While the foregoing mining operations were but a few of the profitable concerns they were illustrative of the character again assumed by the Clear Creek-Gilpin mining districts.

With the return of mining as a viable industry and with the concern for efficient shipment of the potentially vast reserves of low grade ore, the mining industry

vigorously fought the attempted abandonment of the Clear Creek narrow gauge line. The petition and counter petition of the Interstate Commerce Commission process saved the trackage beyond Idaho Springs until January of 1939 with the balance of the line lasting until the spring of 1941.

The decade of the 30's then, saw the curtain fall on a railroad born of the fever and excitement of the pioneer mining bonanza which withered because of the local mining industry's own peculiar problems, inflation, artificial prices, and the competition of a new, cheaper, more flexible transportation technology. Yet while this segment of the transportation industry faded, the miners with their eternal optimism, buoyed by better prices, were on the crest of a new boom. But in retrospect we know it dissolved into another world war, more inflation and the fixed \$35.00 an ounce for gold, once heralded to be an adequate price for decades to come, proved again to be a death lock on the mining economy.

Source. This paper was developed from the fourteen briefs, abstracts, and associated supporting papers and pictures of Interstate Commerce Commission Finance Document 11114, which covers the application of the Colorado and Southern Railroad to abandon the narrow gauge lines serving Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties in Colorado.

I should like to acknowledge the help of Ralph Knull of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, and Norman R. Blake, retired Director of the Colorado Bureau of Mines, for their help in filling out the missing pieces of the Interstate Commerce Commission's files.



MYSTERY RESOLVED

The Posse recently recovered the dues checks which were lost in 1963-64. Listed below are the names of the signers, which are printed here as a matter of public record. The checks will be destroyed after a reasonable period.

Luther E. Bain, Warren L. Boughten Jr., Howard Brayton, John W. Buchanan, L. E. Butler, Arthur Campa, Camillus Conway, L. E. Butler, Benedict S. Covey Sr., Everett DeGallyer Jr., Bruce E. Dines, Paul Gantt, Kenneth L. Gaunier, LeRoy Hafen, — O. Hayes, Raymond J. Heath, J. W. Hickman, Mrs. Abe Hoffman, George P. Isbell, Louis R. Koeppe, Frank C. Lee, Fred L. Lee, Joe Lipman, J. J. Lipsey, John C. Louzader, A. E. McClymonds, Thomas S. McNeill, Ralph B. Mayo, Lou Miller, Ray L. Newburn, Leota F. Pekrul, M. C. Poor, C. C. Powell, A. G. Rippey, Elmer Schwieder, H. T. See-ly, Dorothy Koch Shaw (2), Erika R. Skibbe, Michael Straight, L. E. Taylor, J. Nelson Truitt, Thomas Teakle, Ralph C. Taylor, Edwina Unfug, Herbert W. Vandeman, Robert T. Wylde.

NEW HANDS (from page 2)

Recently John B. Marshall, 3040 Oneida St., Pasadena, California, 91107 has rejoined us as a Corresponding Member.

HELP WANTED

Your editor (Hugo Rodeck, that is) is trying to reconstruct the history, in Denver, of "*G. L. Taylor & Co's. Free Museum.*" It seems to have originated about 1881 when it was advertised in *Croftutt's Grip-Sack Guide* as "Denver's Leading Museum," at 286 16th Street, "The Tribune Block." Later, 1882, it was 436 Larimer Street, "proprietor George Eastman."

In 1887 it moved to 1716 Larimer, and in 1888 it expanded next door to 1716-1718, where it again moved, this time to 1700-1702 Larimer. In 1904 it again moved, to 431 17th Street, there to remain until its "disappearance" in 1907.

The Adams County Historical Society has a photograph of the interior at one of these times, but without date or location. Does anyone have any more specific information?



GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



Early Days Among the Cheyenne & Arapahoe Indians by John H. Seger, edited by Stanley Vestal; University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, \$4.95. (This work was first published as a University of Oklahoma Bulletin in March 1924; reissued with an appendix in the *Civilization of the American Indian* series in March 1934; reset and reissued in new format in March 1956; and reissued with index and additional illustrations in 1979.)

Highly readable, contemporary accounts of the Indian way of life are uncommon, and this little volume—145 pages, complete with some 20 maps, early-day photos, and an index—must be included in that select listing.

John Homer Seger (1846-1928) worked with the Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes in Oklahoma most of his life. Born in Ohio of British and Dutch stock, Seger's people were pioneers. When he was still a child his parents moved to Illinois where they lived until after the Civil War.

At 17, Seger enlisted in the 57th Illinois Volunteers, fighting in the Atlanta campaign. Later, he settled at New Malden, Atchison County, Kansas, where he lived until being employed by the Indian Agent at Darlington, in what is now Oklahoma. A few years later, Seger founded the Indian school and the town at Colony, Okla., where he resided until his death in 1928.

During his 50 years among the Indians there was probably no white man who had such closely maintained contact with the Plains tribes. Seger, a born story teller, had what has been described in American literature as a "frontier" sense of humor. Much of his early-day writing has been lost, but it is fortunate that the segments in this book have been retained. While the account is not a complete and formal history, the anecdotes have a sense of immediacy, with bark-on authenticity. Some of the descriptions might be offensive to the sensibilities, taken out of the context of the times. But Seger presents his anecdotal material without reservation or embellishment, with warm frankness and honesty. He reveals much about himself and

his contemporaries, their views, beliefs and attitudes.

The Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes had known only nomadic freedom. Seger makes it clear that adjustment to the reservation and to the white man's ways was nearly impossible for the Indian. He vividly and sometimes bluntly describes the difficulties, the lack of understanding, and the frailties of human character, as well as courage, honesty, and compassion on both sides.

Seger's own native abilities as a yarn-spinner are heightened by the capable organizing and editing of W. S. Campbell (Stanley Vestal), himself a Western author and historian of repute, first Rhodes Scholar from the newly created State of Oklahoma, and long-time teacher at the University of Oklahoma. (Vestal's works published by the University of Oklahoma Press include *Sitting Bull*, *The Book Lover's Southwest*, and *Happy Hunting Grounds*.)

At twice the price this work would be worth adding to any collection of Americana for the valuable insight presented on the Plains Indians.

Alan J. Stewart, PM

Colorado and the American Renaissance, 1876-1917, by Carl Dickinson, Carl Abbott, Carolyn and Don Etter, Imelda deGraw, and others. Denver, 1980, 48 pages, 59 illustrations. \$1.20 postpaid from Education Department, Denver Art Museum, 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy., Denver, CO 80204.

This is a catalog of an exhibition (Sept. 24-Nov. 9, 1980) at the Denver Art Museum, but it has lasting value as a summary of the history of Denver and the Colorado area in its industrial and social development, its architecture both public and private, painting, sculpture, the decorative arts, with a brief resume of costume and fashion of the period.

The illustrations, mostly photos, alone are a contribution to nostalgia, and many of them are not readily available elsewhere.

This is a worthwhile addition to anyone's historical library.

Hugo Rodeck, P.M.

William H. Ashley, Enterprise and Politics in the Trans-Mississippi West by Richard M. Clokey, University of Oklahoma Press, 305 pp. \$18.00

This highly researched and well documented biography of William Ashley is a welcome addition, and a true must for the serious collector and the fur trade scholar.

Systematically presented, we find that although known primarily for his organization of the fur trade, Ashley had a full and noteworthy life as a promoter, speculator, and politician.

Generously supplied with illustrations and maps and a fine bibliography, this volume will become a classic and a standard for future historians.

For this reviewer, the first half of the book was the most readable as it pertained to the fur trade and its development. Most of the last half of the book deals with Ashley's political life, of which this reviewer was totally unaware.

"This biography—the first devoted to his entire life—reveals Ashley as a more versatile and significant personality than appeared in earlier studies limited to his decade as a fur trader."

Eugene Rakosnik, P.M.

Shotgun for Hire, The Story of "Deacon" Jim Miller, Killer of Pat Garrett, by Glenn Shirely. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma 1970, 116 pages, plus bibliography and index attached. \$3.95.

This is a very well written book about a cold-blooded killer who would kill anyone for a price. He killed his grandparents when he was eight years old. He claimed 57 persons died by his guns, although the author could confirm only 18, including Pat Garrett who had killed Billy the Kid.

This rather dapper, almost handsome man was widely accepted and inspired great loyalty. He would go to church and was extremely polite to women. No one would recognize him as a killer by his manners or appearance. He traveled widely through the Oklahoma and New Mexico Territories as well as the State of Texas. He had many friends and relatives who would defend him and hide him, when necessary, including

some law enforcement officers. The author presents the many characters in the life of "Deacon" Jim Miller in an interesting fashion. It is very readable and can be completed in one evening.

There are pictures of important persons in the life of the subject. One criticism is the absence of maps and/or diagrams to show the relative locations of sites involved in the life of Miller. The subject's favorite weapon was a shot gun which he used in ambushing individuals at night, but he was handy with a six shooter and a rifle as well.

This short, but comprehensive presentation clearly shows Miller to be far more deadly than John Wesley Hardin or Billy the Kid. He was an enigma. He directed the participants to proceed with his hanging. "I'm ready now. You couldn't kill me otherwise. Let'er rip," and the mob proceeded with the hanging.

His is an interesting yet somewhat unbelievable story of a very real person who would do *anything* for a price. He paid the full penalty for a very self-indulgent life which ended at age forty three. There are no footnotes. The subject matter is all in the text and footnotes are unnecessary.

This is rather an inexpensive book, and would be excellent as a gift or as the beginning of a western history collection on violence and law enforcement and/or the absence thereof.

Jack H. Dwyer, P.M.

Life In The Far West, by George Frederick Ruxton. Edited by Leroy R. Hafen, with a Foreword by Mae Reed Porter, with many illustrations by Alfred Jacob Miller. A 252 page paperback published by the University of Oklahoma Press. \$4.95.

Although this edition is the fifth printing of this University of Oklahoma Press, publishing division of the University's copyright of 1951, the story was originally prepared during the winter of 1847-1848 and ran serially in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, June to November 1848. It was published in book form the next year and since then has been reissued many times. There were English editions of 1849, 1850, 1861, and 1867, American editions in 1849, 1859, and 1915, and a German edition in 1852.

Hafen tells us that Ruxton was the first among writers to use the mountain man as literary material. Having lived with them in their own unique environment he could describe the fascinating life of the fur men and express their thoughts in their own distinctive jargon. Killbuck and La Bonte are the heroes of this fictionalized history. What they saw, felt, and spoke was true and expressed in their own vernacular—a style which has been imitated and copied by many authors since Ruxton. I was reminded of one of our current authors, Allan W. Eckert who, in his preface to *Wilderness Empire* published in 1969, declared that every incident he described, every character, regardless of how major or minor, actually had lived.

This book is more than a story of adventure, it is a portrayal of the fascinating life of a picturesque period as it was during the fur trade days in Colorado and west to California. Although it was planned for the general reader, the historian will enjoy the text, the western illustrator will enjoy the accuracy of some two dozen renderings by Miller, and all of us Westerners would appreciate that for \$4.95 we would have all that, plus a source for an enlarged western library through the copious notes added by Leroy Hafen.

L. Coulson Hageman, P.M.

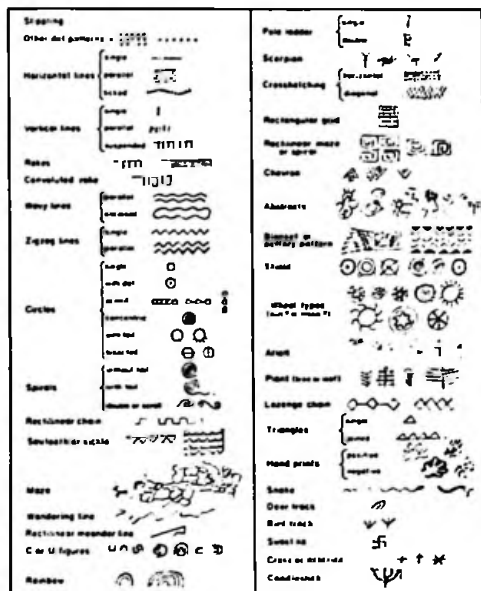
Petroglyphs and Pictographs of Utah, by Kenneth B. Castleton, M.D, Utah Museum of Natural History, Salt Lake City. Vol. 1—The East and Northeast, pp xxiii + 215, 1978. Vol. 2—The South, Central, West and Northwest, pp xxx + 341, 1979. \$7.50 each volume, paper. Copiously illustrated, with lists of references and indices of sites.

Canyon Graphics and Graffiti. Utah Museum of Natural History, Salt Lake City, 32 pp, copiously illustrated.

Probably no one has ever come upon Indian inscriptions on the rocks in some out-of-the-way place without a feeling of communication—as if someone looked you in the face and spoke to you in a completely strange language. We may never know what these long-gone people were saying, but we strongly believe they were saying something meaningful, at least to them.

It seems there is no use asking the present-day Indians—they seem to know no more about it than the rest of us. The probable reason for this is that Indian picture writing is not a language at all, in the sense that the characters probably had little or no symbolic or generalized meaning.

Perhaps some day someone will gain some glimmering of universal meaning from these signs. Their random scattering over the surface suggests that they are to be contemplated individually. There are only rare suggestions of consecutive interrelations between adjacent characters, except when two or more pictures are obviously part of a single image, such as a hunter shooting at a deer. Moreover there is no chance of a Rosetta Stone on which pictographs and some modern language are inscribed in parallel.



If any translation is ever achieved it will emerge from some massive analysis of a vast bulk of pictures, and the only way in which such an assemblage can ever be studied is through such collections as the Castleton volumes listed above. There is the faint hope that, because the minds of people are more alike than are their languages, some sophisticated analysis, perhaps computerized, will derive more meaning than the pictures have

for us at present. Up to now the best we seem to be able to do is to try to agree upon commonly accepted descriptive terms to be used for the markings, such as the "Glossary" shown here, from the Castleton volumes.

Canyon Graphics and Graffiti is a catalog of a museum exhibition assembled by the Utah Museum of Natural History with the cooperation of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. In addition to a generously illustrated history of petroglyph (markings carved in the rock) and pictograph (drawn or painted) exploration in the Utah-Arizona area from ancient times to the present, it includes a thoughtful resume of the whole subject, including a plea that we today not deface and vandalize them out of existence.

Hugo G. Rodeck, P.M.



Tour Guide to Old Western Forts. (The Posts and Camps of the Army, Navy and Marines on the Western Frontier, 1804-1916), Herbert M. Hart. 206 pages. Profusely illustrated with photographs, maps, and sketches. Pruett Publishing Co., 3235 Prairie Avenue, Boulder, Colo. 80301. \$22.50.

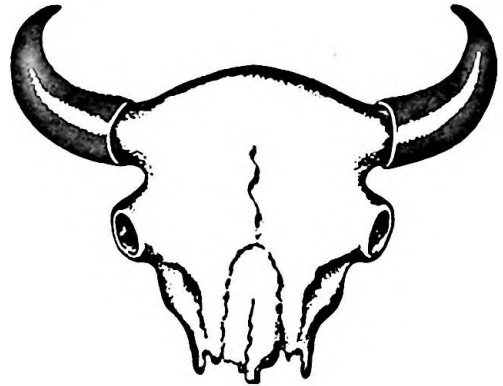
This book covers some 1000 forts in 17 western states. Trappers' forts and civilian forts are also included. Mr. Hart does not attempt to write a complete history of each one but has a thumb-nail sketch of each. He also has cross-referenced other names by which they were known.

This reviewer wonders how the author missed Fort Latham, Weld County; Fort Junction at the junction of St. Vrain and Boulder Creeks; and Fort Gerry, the last Indian trading post in Colorado. However, one has to draw the line somewhere.

Of immense value are the precise directions as to how to reach what ruins remain, or if completely obliterated, the actual site. Hopefully, when reprinted, the book will be broken down into three or four paperbacks, each containing a block of four or five adjoining states.

Five and a half pages entitled "Further Reading" give the reader a most comprehensive bibliography. What stepping stones, as well as the book, for further research! This is one fine book.

F. B. Rizzari, P.M.

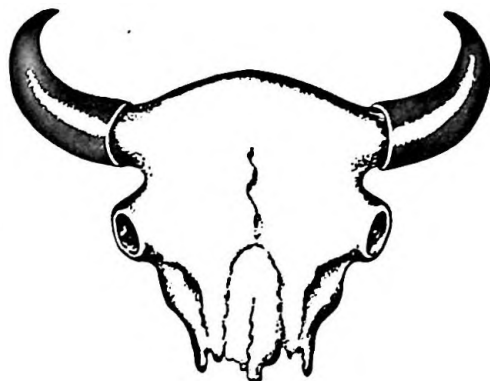


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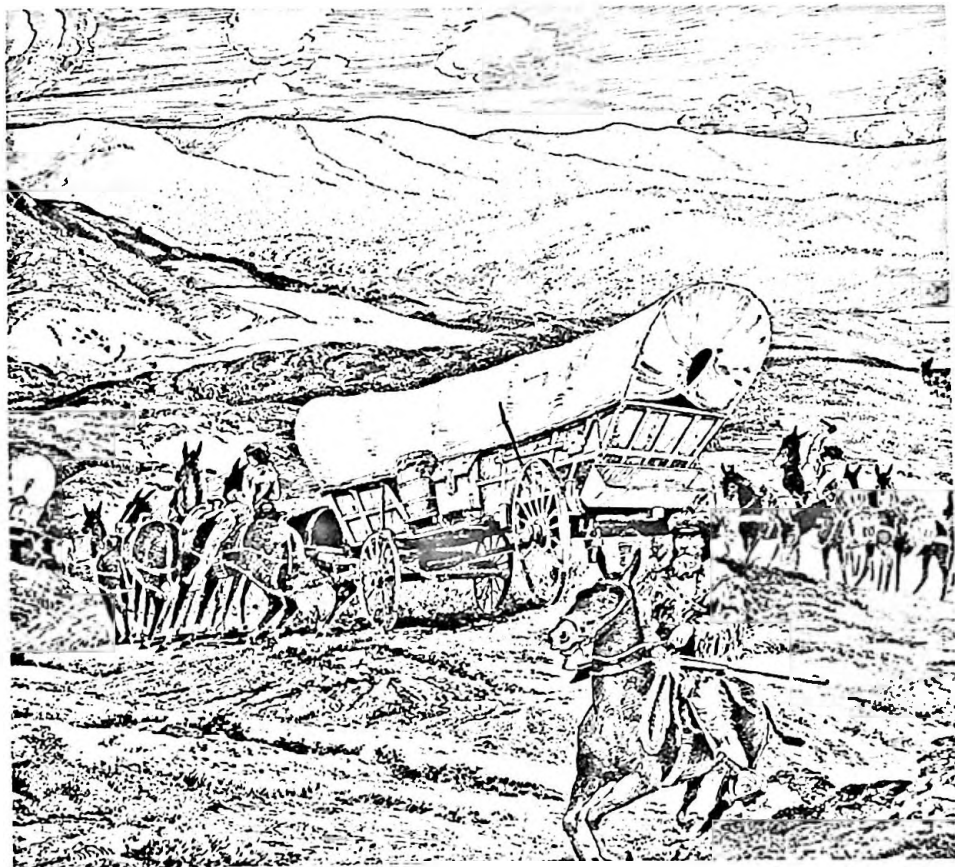
ROUNDUP

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1980



SEEING THE ELEPHANT

Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.



Emigrants Approaching South Pass

(Sketch by Western Museum Laboratory, National Park Service)

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Our February speaker will be C. R. (Bob) Stnadt, who will speak and conduct a Show-and-Tell demonstration of old-timey wood-working tools.

In March Possemember Henry Toll Jr. will relate his stream-exploration experiences in Alaska.

ANENT THE RANGE HANDS

Welcome to our latest addition to the Posse, Dr. Loren Blaney, nominated by Robert K. Brown and elected 22 October 1980. He is a long-time Corresponding Member with a record of frequent attendance as well as a strong interest in Western history.

He is an active participating member of the Council on Abandoned Military Posts and the Colorado Archaeological Society. He has promised to get off the dime and give us a contribution from his interests in the near future.

A new Corresponding Member is Henry W. Gaffney, of Dumont, Colorado, who has been a Corresponding Member of the Chicago Corral since 1968. He has worked with the Episcopal Church on the Navajo reservation in athletics and entertainment. His interests are early mining history in Colorado and collecting Buffalo Bill and 101 Ranch Wild West Show memorabilia.

Dabney Collins, P. M., sends the following: "Here's a news item that should interest our older possemen.

"Jim Davis, a splendid Westerner, left Denver for a position with the Idaho Historical Society. His letter, in answer to my Christmas card, came as a complete surprise."

Dear Doc

I am starting a new life—to see if it is God's will to become a Benedictine monk.

The adjustment to the austere life at age 51 is not easy. However I am working on the Abbey archives and the familiar kind of historical materials there helps make the place seem more like home.

Are you still writing? What is going on in the Westerners? Please write.

Jim Davis

Mt. Angel Abbey

St. Benedict, Ore. 97373

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

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SEEING THE ELEPHANT*

by
Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.

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The elephant we are talking about tonight is not the Indian elephant of your favorite zoo, or the rampaging African elephant which is becoming an endangered species. Neither is it the enormous but long-extinct mastodon or mammoth which roamed Nebraska in Pleistocene times. We are talking about a mythical Elephant which loomed very large in the minds of men and women who crossed the continent in covered wagons over 100 years ago. Those who "saw the elephant," to use their own expression, were those who had been eye-witnesses to the hardships, dangers, and disasters of this 2,000 mile crossing and survived the rigors of the Nebraska-Wyoming-Utah-Nevada wilderness to become the exclusive fraternity of California pioneers.

I have yet to find a satisfactory explanation for the origin of the elephant metaphor which is so entangled with the great epic of the Gold Rush. Elephants appeared first in circuses in America in the 1840s and proved to be, along with flame-swallowers, leopard ladies, and dancing bears, one of the marvels of the Age. Presumably because this strange giant was also conceived as deceptively sinister, capable of rampage, in frontier newspapers and gold rush diaries "seeing the elephant" became synonymous with the perilous crossing of the continent. Make note of the fact that this fantastic Elephant was not your everyday chained, placid, swaying behemoth pleading for peanuts. The scourge of the California Gold Rush was a fierce threatening beast of Gargantuan proportions who was apt to materialize every time danger threatened or disaster pounced. Thus we find expressions like, "I think I saw the tracks of the big elephant," or "the elephant must be in the neighborhood." One emigrant said that he "had seen the elephant and eaten its ears." Others felt "the brush of the elephant's tail" or "had a peep at his proboscis."

The trick was, having seen him or felt his hot breath, to get safely past him to the golden land where, promoters promised, nuggets lay on the ground in profusion to be had for the taking.

The main habitat of the Elephant in question was Nebraska where he haunted the Old Oregon Trail which in 1849 became the California Road, following both sides of the Platte River from Fort Kearny after the several strands of migration came together from Kansas City, St. Joe, and Council Bluffs. In 1854 Omaha first appeared on the map, the result of opening Indian Territory to settlement, as the geographic twin of Council Bluffs, and thus figured belatedly in the Gold Rush. Fort Laramie on the North Platte, referred to often in this paper, was the great way-station of the Trail, about 300 miles west of Fort Kearny, and about 30 miles inside the present State of Wyoming.

*Speech given October 6, 1978 at a banquet of radiologists in convention at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska.



Pioneers ferrying "Old Muddy" near present Council Bluffs (Old Kaneshville), Iowa.
(W. H. Jackson sketch, Scott's Bluff National Monument)

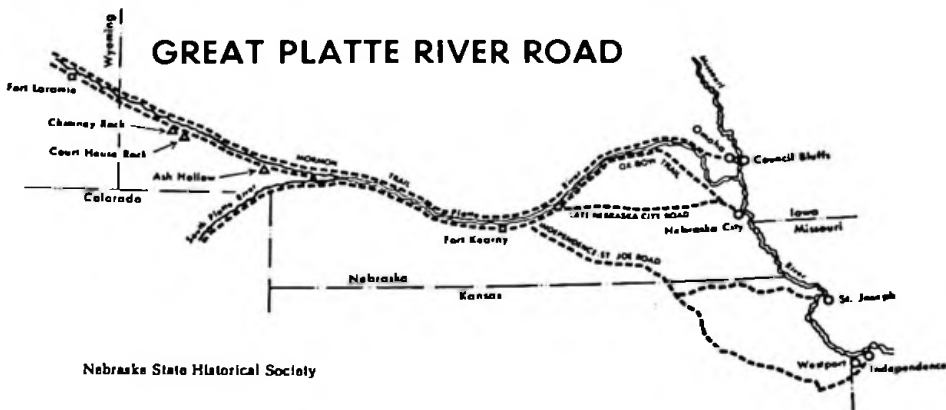
In 1969, one hundred years after the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad which marked the demise of the overland wagon trails, the Nebraska State Historical Society published my book, *THE GREAT PLATTE RIVER ROAD*, which was intended to contribute to the literature of the migration in two important ways. First, as the title suggests, it attempted to alleviate the confusion about all the various trails that at various times followed the Platte River westward, by lumping them all together, geographically and chronologically under one inclusive term. That this effort has succeeded is apparent from the widespread use of this term today in signs, maps, and new publications.

Secondly, this was the first time any effort had been made to assemble all known overland journals and to collate them so that the data they revealed could be used comparatively—both horizontally, so to speak, along the trail, and vertically, in an effort to construct a social history of the covered wagon migrations. The success of this effort has been demonstrated by the considerable number of half-baked imitations of this book that have been published by others since 1969.

Now let's get back to the "Elephants of the Platte," to borrow a chapter title from the book. What were the various kinds of hazards which confronted the argonauts who collectively induced the frightening apparition of a gigantic beast on the horizon, which sometimes, indeed did destroy the frightened beholder? Countless graves along the Platte River testify to the fact that the overland crossing was in fact not a light-hearted adventure, but a grim running battle for survival. I conceive "the elephant" as a psychological phenomenon, a focal image of collective troubles seen and unseen which enabled the traveler to confront the fears engendered by a strange hostile environment. If he could give his fears a tangible identity, he could somehow cope—with bravado, with humor, or at least with resignation.

We can't review the whole catalog of emigrant adversity, but we can look briefly at some of the more common experiences, distilled from first-hand eye-witness reports of over 800 travelers who wrote letters or diaries, or left reminiscences of their epic journeys. If I were required to categorize these misadventures—the Elephant's bag of dirty tricks—I would list Indians, Exhaustion, Antagonisms, Accidents, and Disease in ascending order of statistical severity.

Indians! We can imagine only faintly the fear that literary propaganda about the aborigines inspired in the covered wagon communities. At the outset of the journey, at the jumping-off places, the emigrants visualized them as their Number One menace. Now it is true that an occasional straggler was victimized by a band of renegade Sioux or Pawnee braves. We have the dubious tradition that Rawhide Creek got its name from a white man being skinned alive by natives in revenge for having wronged a tribal maiden. Actual attacks on emigrant trains in Hollywood-style corral formation were not unheard of but proven instances of such happenings are rare. The typical emigrant probably saw a few bedraggled Indians hanging around Fort Kearny or Fort Laramie or sometimes begging for handouts along the Trail. There are at least two instances of a chief offering to swap horses for an intriguingly blonde wife or daughter. Sometimes emigrants witnessed Indian bands stalking or fighting each other but their fear for their own scalps was largely misplaced. The Elephant had other forms of mischief in mind.

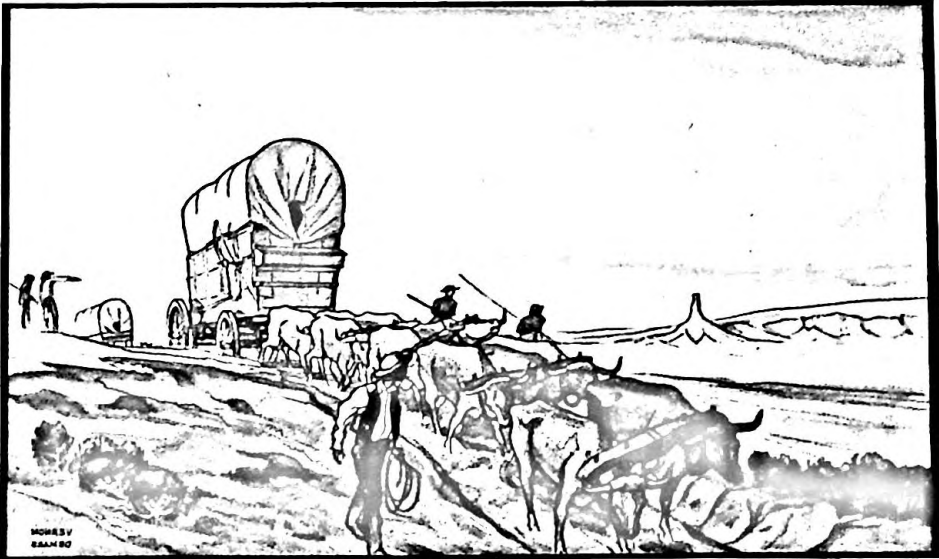


A more deadly though less romantic danger was simple physical and mental exhaustion, something difficult to appreciate by us who can fly from Omaha to San Francisco in 3 hours, or drive comfortably in 3 days in contrast to the 4 or 5 months it took to escort stubborn or fractious oxen or mules drawing a clumsy wagon over virgin terrain—prairie rutted with buffalo tracks, draggy sandy soil, all uphill to the Continental Divide, then mountains, canyons, and burning deserts.

Much of the curse of primitive travel was the result of over-optimistic planning. Anticipated grass for the animals rapidly disappeared through drouth and over-grazing. Game, scattered by the advancing hordes, was much scarcer than advertised. The teams couldn't pull the ridiculously overloaded wagons and the Trail was strewn with jettisoned furniture, heirlooms, tools, anvils, mining machinery, and even precious food supplies. There were reports of flour, bacon, and sugar in great quantities

abandoned to the wolves or to the grateful Pawnee. At Fort Laramie it was commonplace to reduce wagons to handier size, or abandon wheels altogether in favor of pack trains, but too often these radical adjustments came too late, starving animals sickened and died and more physical labor was heaped upon human survivors. The Mormons with their famous handcarts were the only companies who started out deliberately with the idea of human beings propelling their own freight; but others later fell in with the practice out of sheer brutal necessity.

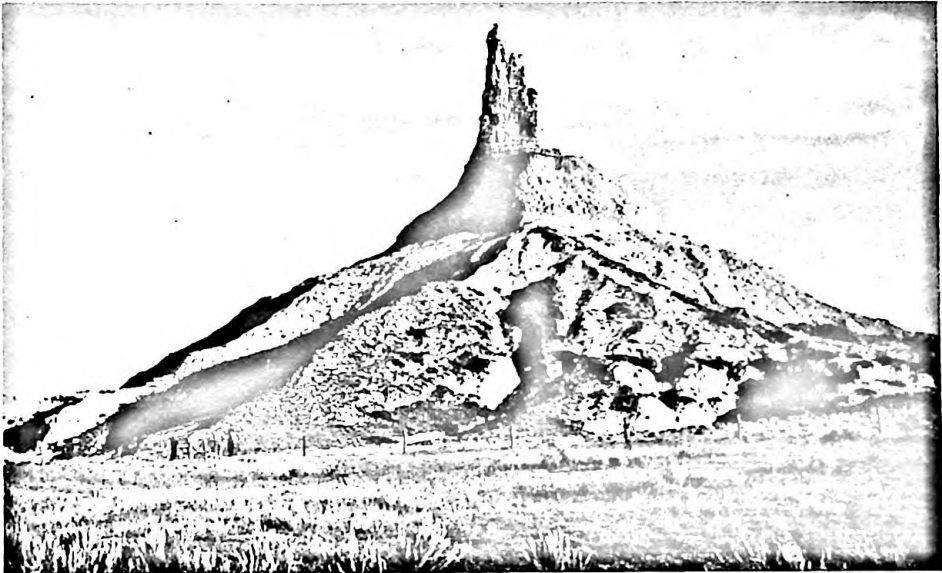
Exhaustion led to frayed nerves and "wagon fever," that is, cabin fever on wheels. People who normally got along famously would quarrel over trivia. Husbands and wives, though circumstances prevented their legal separation, might not speak to each other clear across the continent. Sworn buddies would get mad, split their stock and provisions, and sometimes cut their wagon in half to make two carts, to avoid each other's company. Often peaceful co-existence was impossible and the result was assault and murder. I was amazed to learn about the number of homicides along the trail, sometimes followed by drumhead courts-martial and judicial lynchings. A few miles west of Omaha a chance teen-ager was hanged for an axe-murder committed by others. Near Green River a man was hanged from a gallows formed by two upturned wagon tongues for shooting another for molesting his wife. Near Chimney Rock a duel inspired by Demon Rum led to the knife killing of both antagonists and a common grave.



Emigrants across the river from Chimney Rock, western Nebraska.
(*Scott's Bluff National Monument*)

The Elephant thus assumed forms of hostility undreamed of by the emigrants when they first assembled their trains at the Missouri River. But his stock in trade took more predictable forms—accident and disease.

The safety record of the Great Migration was atrocious. The thousands of cripplings and deaths that resulted from simple violations of common sense is appalling. The most common cause of fatal accidents was the misuse of firearms, brought along in the first place to hunt buffalo, which were in decreasing supply after 1849, or to ward off the redskins who proved to be relatively peaceful. The arsenal of muskets, derringers, and pistols that was standard equipment for every train had few safety devices and evidently many amateur frontiersmen didn't know how to use them. Carelessness in handling the weapons, while in target practice or just showing off, resulted in a statistical massacre. More gravestone inscriptions told a sad story of companions, relatives or other innocent by-standers getting blasted by misfired guns than by any cause other than disease. Even trained soldiers heading west were not immune to this epidemic. At Scotts Bluff one Private Roby was buried after enduring nameless agonies from a gunshot wound accidentally inflicted upon himself instead of upon the antelope he had in mind.



Chimney Rock, western Nebraska, A landmark for prairie schooner navigation.

(Mattes Photo)

Probably next in order of accidental death was drownings. This factor is understandable enough. Since there were no roads there were no bridges, and every stream, whether the merest trickle, or medium-sized stream like the Blue River, or an implacable torrent like the Platte itself in spring flood, had to be crossed "cold turkey," that is, by the simple expedient of plunging in and getting wet and cold and exhausted in the process of swimming your family, your stock, your wagons, and all your earthly possessions across to the other side. How often when I have zipped over the Platte on Interstate 80 have I marvelled at the feat of our ancestors in achieving a miracle—that so many did cross safely under such shattering circumstances. Those who survived

were revived, as often as not, with a jug of corn liquor. Those who did not, floated out of sight or were retrieved and buried on the melancholy shore.

There were, of course, other ways of committing self-destruction. Among favorite methods of record were falling under and getting crushed by the big ponderous wagon wheels, getting stomped by ornery horses or mules, or gored by oxen, or trampled by stampeding buffalo. When you were out in the open for several months on end you were subject to vicissitudes of the weather, which included howling winds that upset wagons, blinding duststorms, deluges of rain that spoiled provisions and mired wagons, and hail that could kill and maim.

But the Elephant's secret weapon was Disease. This champion killer of them all was as relentless as it was invisible. For every accident or homicide victim ten were laid low by organisms which had not yet been exposed by microscope or challenged by effective medicine. From all causes, but mainly from disease, I calculate that during the 25-year migration period—1841 to 1866—there were some 20,000 deaths out of an estimated 350,000 emigrants up the Platte, or a ratio of one out of 17. Thus across the continent graves would average 10 to a mile, but in western Nebraska where the epidemics reached their climax the ratio would have been greater. It is possible that more than 5,000, or one-fourth of the total, may have died between Fort Kearny and Fort Laramie in the three principal migration years, 1849-1852.



Emigrants in camp at Chimney Rock, western Nebraska.
(Scott's Bluff National Monument)

Dr. Tompkins, an emigrant of 1850, attributed the widespread contagion to camp food, "indigestible filth too crude even for the stomach of an ostrich, chilly night watches, sleeping on cold, wet ground, and the constant hard and exhausting toil." As

early as 1846 an Oregon traveler said he was "unwell since coming upon the waters of the Nebraska, owing to mixed salts, alum, and magnesia." Among other villains most often accused were boiled beans, rancid bacon, buffalo meat eaten right after a chase, lack of vegetables, and the all-pervasive lung-choking dust.

During the Gold Rush vaccination was not unknown but it was rarely practiced. The normal precaution was to take along a medicine chest with an assortment of trusted home remedies for everything from baldness to bubonic plague. Elizabeth Geer's inventory included "a box of physicing pills, a box of castor oil, a quart of best rum, and a vial of peppermint essence." The latter ingredient, combined with a glass of brandy, would, according to John King, cure most ills. Another emigrant lady's portable apothecary included quinine for malaria, hartshorn for snakebite, citric acid for scurvy, and opium and whiskey for everything else. Laudanum, morphine, calomel, and tincture of camphor were other potent drugs mentioned in the journals which, doubtless, would do wonders for the symptoms if not for the malady!

If you were a consumptive it seems that Fate offered no middle ground: either you died before you reached the Platte or your stroll across the continent was so invigorating that you recovered and reached California in mint condition. Among other identifiable afflictions were whooping cough, measles, mumps, smallpox and malaria, usually called "fever and ague." So-called lung fever was presumably another name for pneumonia. "Bilious complaint" and "summer complaint" were evidently pseudonyms for diarrhea, the commonplace result of drinking the turbid waters of the Platte, or from shallow wells dug along its margin. "Mountain sickness," to judge from its symptoms, was probably scurvy resulting from badly unbalanced diet.

Other routine complaints included rheumatism and toothache, the latter sometimes relieved by opium or amateur extractions. We encounter reports also of exotic illnesses, like delirium tremens, hydrophobia, bloody flux, and vertigo. But all of these ailments pale into insignificance beside the Asiatic cholera which raged along the Platte during the climax years of the Gold Rush. Brought to the seaport of New Orleans by ship rats, the epidemic arrived at the jumping-off places via Mississippi and Missouri River steamboats. It was the prime killer of emigrants; in the estimate of one journalist, "the Gold Rush caused more bereaved than the late Mexican War." Wrote another of the 1849 exodus, "The road from Independence to Fort Laramie was a graveyard." In 1850 there are instances of children orphaned or entire families wiped out, leaving their prairie schooners adrift like derelict ships on the ocean.

In 1849 and 1850 the plague was evidently more severe on the south side of the Platte—the main California Road—and many escaped it by making early crossings. In 1852, however, it jumped to the north side. Ezra Meeker, who started from Omaha, found the north side healthful enough until opposite Fort Kearny. Here he writes, "the epidemic struck our moving column where the throngs from the south side began crossing." From that point on, Meeker continues, it looked like a battlefield, with the dead laid out in rows.

A respectable number of medical doctors joined the Gold Rush. Many large trains made a point of having a doctor or surgeon along, and many of these kept journals. My favorite Gold Rush doctors are Dr. Israel Lord of New York and Dr. Reuben Knox of

North Carolina, both of the 1850 migration, who not only kept meticulous diaries, but were tireless in their efforts to relieve the afflicted, including those of companies other than their own. Some like Dr. Caldwell themselves succumbed to the plague. While some doctors were saints and others were martyrs, there were also a few quacks. Two lady emigrants complained about a practice they deemed unethical; physicians painting signs on rocks or grave stones to advertise their services. Evidently for them the Gold Rush began *before* reaching California!

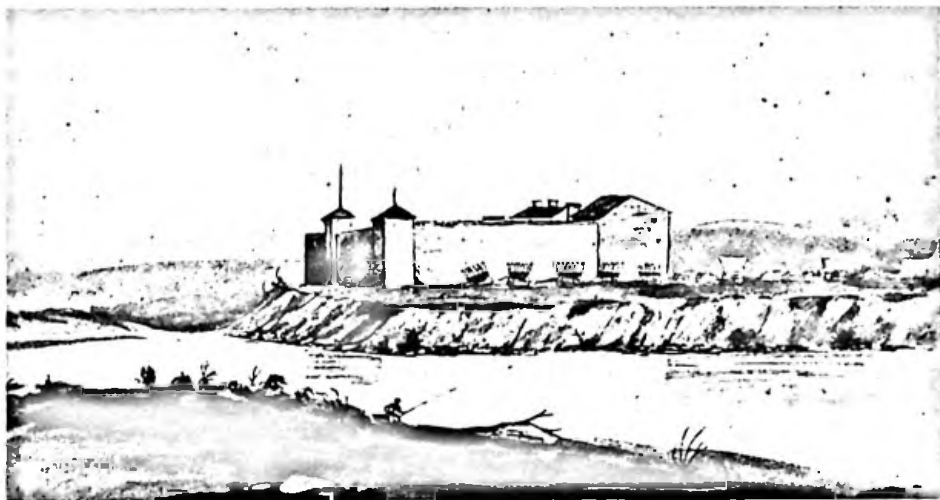


Emigrants in "Black Hills," Wyoming.
(Scott's Bluff National Monument)

For the deceased funeral services, if any, were a matter of chance. If you were fortunate enough to die during the first few weeks out, there might be trees available to construct a coffin and the observances would be well attended with all the ceremonial trimmings. However, as the migration moved along the Platte and emigrants began to die in wholesale lots, the spirit of gloom gave way to panic with the realization that laggard trains might starve or freeze to death in the Sierra Nevadas, like the Donner party did in 1846, or the handcart people did in 1856, with overtones of cannibalism. So burials and services came to be performed perfunctorily, sometimes with indecent haste. Sometimes a company would encamp waiting for a stricken member to die; more often he or she would be carried along in the wagon, suffering with every jolt until death mercifully intervened. Some trains moved on but left "watchers" to wait for the end and provide burial; but others simply abandoned hopeless cases by the roadside. According to one observer, "some were buried before life was extinct." Thus the emigration reached a numbing process of dehumanization, and the evil pachyderm which haunted the pilgrims must have bellowed in triumph.

If 5,000 died between Fort Kearny and Laramie and grave stones became the highway markers of the Great Platte River Road, how come so few emigrant graves can be identified today? Well, with scarce trees so precious for firewood or spare wagon parts, coffins were quite out of the question, the dear departed were hastily buried in shallow graves, and these were then promptly ravished by wolves and coyotes, who displayed scant respect for the mortal remains. So prevalent were these ghoulish scavengers that one emigrant reported the disruption of a funeral service by converging coyotes, howling dismally as they impatiently waited for the train to move on. Counter-measures to protect one's loved ones with enclosing rock slabs proved of little avail. The ravenous prairie creatures simply tunneled their way to their objective.

Knowing that the Indians also robbed graves, survivors sometimes made efforts to conceal rather than mark them, by driving back and forth over the spot and replacing vegetation. When this ruse succeeded the deceased may have been preserved but his last resting place was forever lost to posterity. One emigrant also understood that some compatriots dug graves which were actually caches of goods, including casks of rum and brandy, for future reference! With most graves too shallow and destroyed by animals, some deliberately concealed, and some faked—not to mention those obliterated by cultivation and road construction—it is small wonder that only a few identifiable emigrant graves survive today to remind us of this Gold Rush calamity. It seems that the rampaging Elephant is guilty not only of death and destruction on an epic scale, but of covering his tracks, disappearing into the historical woodwork like a Nazi war criminal.



Fort John, the Second Fort Laramie; adobe structure of the American Fur Company, built in 1841; sketched in 1849 by emigrant James F. Wilkins.

(From Wisconsin Historical Society)

Lest this recital of emigrant woes seems unduly morbid I would like to end on a cheerful note. Consider that if one out of 17 emigrants died, and perhaps 10 percent of all who started changed their minds and returned home, then at least 85 percent made

it to their destination. This could be a somewhat better survival rate than our own if we get around to playing global ping-pong with nuclear warheads.

The cholera was a sometime thing, which skipped around like lightning, and suddenly disappeared. Children were orphaned, but they themselves often seemed immune. West of Fort Laramie the epidemic, for reasons unknown, seemed to disappear.

Despite the hazards life went on. People got married along the Trail, though rarely enough, since men heavily outnumbered women during the gold rush. I think of two teen-agers, at the Forks of the Platte in 1842, hitched by Parson Ezekiel Williams for the purpose—as he phrases it—of saving their immortal souls. And I think also of the young clerk at the Sutlers Store at Fort Laramie who, in 1852, eloped with a girl from a Mormon train, escaping the wrath of relatives by blending into the landscape with friendly Indians.

People died, but people also had babies on the Trail, which means there were a lot of pregnant women among the optimists jumping off from the Missouri River. There were turnarounds, those of faint heart, but if there were any suicides among the emigrants because of their hard lot I have yet to find a clear-cut documented case.

Most emigrants proved to be as tough-minded as they were hard-muscled. At Ash Hollow one wrote of his company that, despite the afflictions of Job, "we were a jolly crowd and laughed heartily at each other's experiences." The biggest ally of morale perhaps was innate good health, often improved by the rugged life. Many discovered new horizons within themselves, and wrote in their diaries inspired paeans of prose. If there was grief, there could also be the exhilaration of high animal spirits, which expressed itself vividly in the ability of the emigrants to entertain themselves or to celebrate despite fatigue. Dancing and merry-making around campfires are recorded, as well as more sombre occasions. The Fourth of July, which for most emigrants occurred between Chimney Rock and South Pass, was almost certain to produce joyous patriotic festivity—oratory, marching, feasting and, if any whiskey was left after extensive use for alleged medical purposes, drinking patriotic toasts until, as one journalist confided, "all hands got gentlemanly tite," climaxing their observances by rolling a wagon off the top of a high bluff.

Another positive force or antidote to Elephant fever, perhaps as important as good health, certainly for some as potent as medicinal spirits, was religion. The great majority of emigrants were devout Bible-readers and Sabbath-observers. Who can deny that their simple Christian faith played a powerful role in sustaining them during their long ordeal? Consider that it was this healthy majority of gold rush emigrants, plus those who survived the sea voyage around Cape Horn, who became the first to settle the Far West. Their gold fever was transmuted into the energy and vision that spanned the continent and laid the foundations of modern America.

Today we face new and frightening frontiers our forbears never dreamed of, dangers far more lethal and devastating than "the arrow that flieth by night, or the pestilence that wasteth at noon day." We would scoff at the mythical Elephant and imagine that we have achieved a level of scientific sophistication that makes such childish symbolism unnecessary. But what of the courage, the resilient spirit, the

perseverance under mortal stress, faith in God and reliance on themselves rather than Government to attain their goals? These attributes of the covered wagon pioneers we *must* revive, cherish, and emulate. If we do not, our civilization, like those of ancient Babylon, Carthage, and Rome, will surely collapse, its ruins swept into the trash-heap of history!



In Memoriam

David L. Hieb, corresponding member, died suddenly of a heart attack at his Estes Park home on December 29, 1980. Denver Westerners will remember him as the speaker at the 1978 Summer Rendezvous at the Fort Restaurant. He told us then about old-timers he had met and interviewed at Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming, while he was Superintendent there from 1946 to 1958. These were men and women who had actually lived as children at Fort Laramie prior to its abandonment as a military post in 1890, or descendants of officers or others who had served there during the Indian Wars. Dave's fascinating account will be one of the original articles in our BRAND BOOK now being edited for publication.

Dave was a legend in his own right, for as Fort Laramie Superintendent he was responsible for most of the splendid restoration work accomplished there. He started his National Park Service career as a seasonal ranger at Rocky Mountain National park in 1930, and later served as a ranger at Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Blue Ridge Parkway. After Fort Laramie he became Regional Chief of Boundary Studies in Omaha, then Superintendent of George Washington Carver and Herbert Hoover Birthplaces before retiring to his beautiful home with a panoramic view of Long's Peak.

For 50 years Dave was one of my best friends. We met on Long's Peak in 1929 when I was a guide for the Boulderfield Hotel concessionaire, and he was a guide for the YMCA Camp. We both had lengthy careers with the National Park Service, and as Regional Historian it was my privilege to work closely with him in the Fort Laramie restoration program. Jim Bowers, PM, worked for Dave as Fort Laramie's first

ranger. He and other Westerners join with me in extending to Dave's wife Gertrude and others of his family our heartfelt sympathy for their great loss.

Merrill J. Mattes, P.M.



ANOTHER EMPTY SADDLE

Fred Milo Mazzula, a long-time Westerner, died in a hospital in Reno, Nevada, on January 28, 1981. He was 77 years old.

He was born in Trinidad, Colorado, but spent most of his youth in Salida. He also lived for a while in Breckenridge.

He worked as a mail carrier in Salida; then attended Harvard where he received his A.B. degree. Returning to Denver, he received his law degree from the University of Denver. While his vocation was law, at which he was most successful, his avocation was history, especially of Colorado, and he was probably best known in this field.

He was an avid photographer as well as a collector of historical photographs and negatives of the West. It is estimated that he accumulated more than 240,000 of these. His collection was sold to the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth.

Fred became a member of the Westerners in 1952. Besides giving several papers, he was active as an officer. He was our Sheriff in 1959, and his longest term was as Tallyman from 1967 to 1972. It will be a long time before we fill his saddle

Francis B. Rizzari, P.M.



GOOD READING FOR WRANGLERS



John Selman, Gunfighter, by Leon Claire Metz. University of Oklahoma Press, (1960) 1980; 254 pages, numerous illustrations; Hardbound, \$9.95.

This is quite a book about one of the West's most infamous gunmen, about whom very little has been written. Mr. Metz has done a workmanlike job. His research was extensive and there are thirty-six pages of notes, a bibliography, and records of personal interviews.

Unlike many other killers, Selman was not an exhibitionist. He did not want to become well known. From the time he deserted from the Confederate army in 1863 until his death in El Paso in 1896 he demonstrated little respect for the law, a fondness for hard liquor—and hard women—and absolutely no feeling about killing a man or two if they stood in his way. He ambushed a few, killed some in the "High Noon" type of confrontation, and accounted for others by shooting from their blind side before they knew he was near.

He is most famous for killing John Wesley Hardin, whose credentials as a gunman were even more impressive than his own. Hardin was looking the other way when Selman shot him from the doorway of the Acme saloon. Selman thought Hardin had not given him his cut from an enterprise in which they and one George Scarborough, then a U.S. Marshal, had waylaid and killed Martin Marose, a cattle rustler, in El Paso to get \$4000 Marose was carrying. Seven months later Scarborough and Selman walked amiably into a dark alley where Scarborough, apparently without warning, shot the old gunman four times. He died two days later. For some months before his death Selman had been a constable in El Paso and, except for the Marose and Hardin affrays, his conduct was above reproach. Through the pages of this book stalk about as rare a collection of scoundrels as the West ever saw.

The author's work is well done and it is unfortunate that the proofreading was not what one would expect of this publisher.

Al Nutt, C.M.

Uncompahgre, by Muriel Marshall; The Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, 1981, pp. 211, 67 illustrations, Paperback, \$6.95.

While reading this book memories come back to me of the Uncompahgre Valley, for I was reared there.

This is a fascinating account of the Uncompahgre Valley, Plateau, Mountain, and its people, those who lived there and their descendants.

Muriel researched the history of the Uncompahgre from interviews with the old timers still living and their offspring.

In reading this book we are taken on a journey along the Uncompahgre Plateau. In doing so we learn how and why some of the landmarks were named, where the murders took place, episodes of the sheep and cattle conflicts, the Ute Indians, the Delta bank robbery, and the Dave Wood road, to name only a very few.

This is a very interesting, absorbing history of the Uncompahgre. The author's style and composition are excellent and make very interesting reading. Her sixty-seven illustrations are beautiful. I only wish they could have been produced on slick paper which would have brought out more detail and contrast. Perhaps she should have included a map of the Uncompahgre Plateau with place names she relates along the way.

I recommend this historical account of a segment of the Western Slope of Colorado.

R.A. Ronzio, P.M.



Bill Doolin, Outlaw O. T. by Colonel Bailey C. Hanes. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1968. Second Printing, 1980. 216 pp. \$4.95.

Marshal Bill Tilghman called Bill Doolin the "King of the Oklahoma Outlaws," a rogue with a Robin Hood quirk. Colonel Hanes in his little book attempts to correct such myths that surround the life of Bill Doolin during his days in the Oklahoma Territory until his death. The book is more than

a biography of a man; it is the story of a territory and the times. It is a story of a gang of "outside the law" boys in the frontier society of the 1880's and 1890's.

Colonel Hanes in his attempt to place Doolin in his true historical perspective and destroy the mythology that surrounded his life makes a very good case for environmental determinism. Doolin seems to be a product of a frontier society and a time in which crime was a way of life on the frontier. Hanes takes the position that had Doolin been in another section of the country and not employed at the Halsell ranch where he came in contact with the Daltons his life might have been different. There is some evidence that he did try to break away from the outlaw life but was killed the night he was moving his family to New Mexico.

One of the main myths exposed in the book is the tale that Doolin was with the Daltons at the time of the Coffeyville raid. According to legend Doolin's horse had gone lame and by the time he secured another mount he would receive the news of the death and failure of the raid. This story has been perpetuated in western history and literature, but Colonel Hanes claims that the true story is that Doolin had quit the Daltons prior to the raid.

Although he was not with the Daltons at Coffeyville, it was from this gang that Doolin learned his trade as an outlaw. Colonel Hanes points out that Doolin's natural gift for leadership plus this exposure to the Daltons made him even more successful than his mentors. This seems to be borne out by the fact that the Dalton gang lasted only fifteen months while the Doolin gang lasted four years.

Doolin's gang seems to have been involved in more sensational and bloody escapades than any other outlaw band before them in the Oklahoma territory. While dispelling many of the legends about the gang and giving the reader a more accurate account of the gang and Bill Doolin, Colonel Hanes at times does bog the reader down with characterizations and data that make the reading very technical. In spite of this minor fault the detailed research and interviews give the reader an appreciation for the

period that only a native Oklahoman and son of a territorial peace officer could bring to such a subject.

John G. Miles, C.M.



UPDATE ON FORTS GUIDE

In my review of *Tour Guide to Old Western Forts* in the September-October ROUNDUP I suggested that the book, when reprinted, be broken down into three or four paperbacks, each covering a block of several adjoining states. Pruitt Publishing Company informs me that they are way ahead of me, and there will be four paperbacks, each covering a block of states.

The first volume has appeared and covers the states of Montana, Wyoming, and North and South Dakota. The second will include Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona and will appear this Spring. Number three, covering California, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington, and number four, including Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska will follow soon after.

The price will be \$3.95 per volume.

F. B. Rizzari, P.M.



EDITOR'S NOTE

Elephant; "2. Figuratively, a burdensome or perplexing possession or charge: something that one does not know what to do with or how to get rid of; as, to have an *elephant* on one's hands; he found his great house very much of an *elephant*." "4. *To see or to show the elephant*, to see or exhibit something strange or wonderful; especially to see for the first time. . . ." (Slang, U.S.)

From Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, 1902.

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