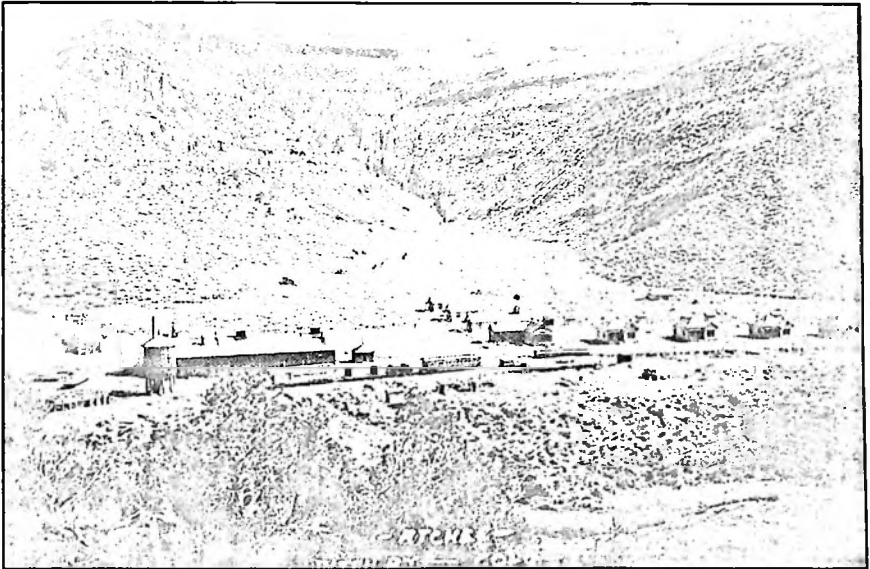




The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1998



F.A. Kennedy photo, Bathke Collection

Atchee, Colo., on the Uintah Railway.

The Uintah Railway:
The Gilsonite Route
by
Gordon C. Bassett, C.M.

About the author

Gordon C. Bassett, C.M., who presented "The Uintah Railway: The Gilsonite Route," to the Denver Posse on Nov. 26, 1997, became interested in railroads as a child when his grandfather would take him to the mainline tracks between Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn., to watch the evening parade of passenger trains.

Bassett's interest in Western history was kindled as a result of lectures by Professor Osgood at the University of Minnesota.

Bassett, an active model railroader, railroad photographer and collector of old railroad negatives, is a charter member of the Pikes Peak Posse of the Westerners and served as Tallyman 15 years. He is a corresponding member of the Denver Posse.

The author is a member and past president of the Colorado Midland Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, a member of the Santa Fe Railway Historical and Modeling Society, and past president of the predecessor Santa Fe Modelers Organization.

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The Uintah Railway:

The Gilsonite Route

by

Gordon C. Bassett, C.M.

(Presented Nov. 26, 1997)

The Uintah Railway is probably the least known of Colorado's narrow gauge railroads. The Uintah Railway crossed some of the most desolate country in the state, and 50 years after abandonment, little trace of it can be found. The Uintah Railway was not glamorous like the narrow gauge lines to the gold and silver camps, but it was an interesting road. It was built for just one job: to haul Gilsonite from the Uintah Basin to the nearest railroad. To do this, the Uintah operated the wildest stretch of mountain railroad in the United States, with 7.5 % grades and 66-degree curves.

The main source for this presentation was the book, *The Uintah Railway*, by Henry E. Bender, Jr. This is the most complete reference of which I know.

Uncommon material

The story of the Uintah Railway starts with the strange and uncommon mineral, Gilsonite. Gilsonite is an asphaltite, a distant relative of petroleum. It is a lustrous black hydrocarbon, resembling anthracite coal, except that it crumbles into brown dust. The only commercial deposits in the world are located in the Uintah Basin of Utah and Colorado. In the early days, it was mistaken for coal, but when set afire, it gave off heavy black smoke, and would melt and flow, flaming, out of the stove.

This tended to discourage its use as fuel.

About 1885, a man named Sam Gilson became interested in Uintahite, as it was known. His experiments led to its use in electrical insulation and wood preservatives. By 1900, it was an important ingredient of paint and varnish. The Model T Ford owed its shiny black finish to Gilsonite. Gilsonite is still used in a wide variety of industrial products.

In 1886, Sam Gilson joined with seven other men to file mining claims in the Uintah Basin. The only problem was that the claims were on the Ute Indian Reservation. By 1888, they convinced Congress to remove these lands from the reservation and pay the Utes \$20 an acre for 7,000 acres.

3,000 tons shipped

That year they shipped 3,000 tons of Gilsonite to the railroad at Price, Utah, where it sold for \$80 a ton. Unfortunately, the 100-mile wagon haul ate up the profits. In 1889, the Gilsonite Manufacturing Company was organized, with Charles A. Baxter as President. The story goes that, when a company name was discussed, Sam Gilson jokingly offered a silver dollar to name it after him. The offer was accepted, and they patented the trade name Gilsonite. The scientific name, Uintahite, was soon forgotten. Through

Baxter's tireless efforts, the market for Gilsonite expanded through the 1890s. The major obstacle to greater production was the wagon haul to a railroad. A wagon team took 10 days for a round trip. The cost was about \$12 a ton, which limited the demand.

In 1900, the Gilsonite Company was bought out by the Gilson Asphaltum Company of New Jersey, a newly formed subsidiary of the General Asphalt Company, better known as the Paving Trust. General Asphalt was a holding company set up by Lorenzo Barber, who made his fortune in the paving business.

Massive expansion

By 1903, the trust had acquired many acres of claims in the Uintah Basin and was planning massive expansion. They approached the Denver & Rio Grande RR about building a branch into the Basin, but the Rio Grande refused to consider it, fearing that the market for Gilsonite might dry up, leaving them with a worthless track to nowhere. They refused a guarantee of a minimum tonnage for so many years. So the Barber Asphalt Paving Company, another arm of the trust, was detailed to build a railroad. The Barber Company operated the road for its entire life. The first thought was to finance the road by public sale of stock, but financial advisors raised the same objection as the Rio Grande: a single commodity railroad was too big a risk. Therefore, the road would be built as a wholly owned subsidiary. The Uintah Railway was incorporated in Colorado, Nov. 4, 1903, to build a railroad from a connection with the D&RG west of Crevasse, Colo., by the "most feasible route" up

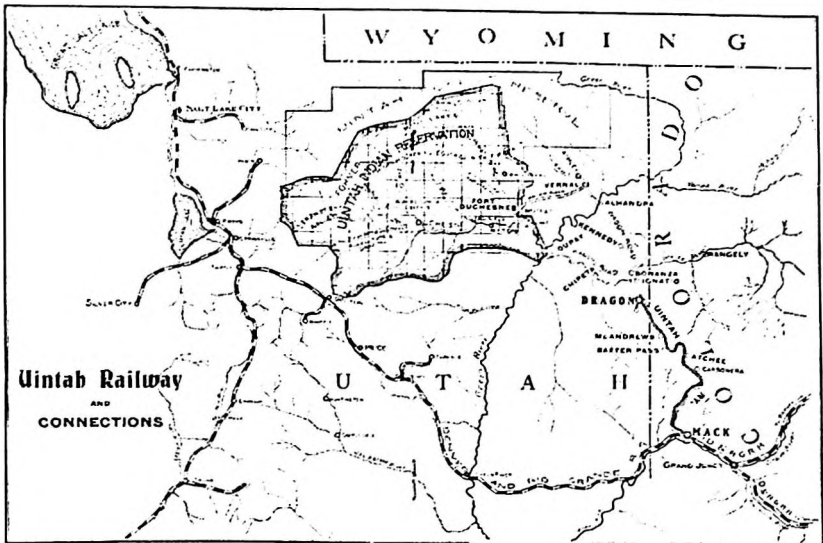
West Salt Creek, over the Book Cliffs and down Evacuation Creek to the Utah border.

The route had been determined by selecting the nearest Gilsonite vein and running the shortest line to the Rio Grande tracks. The vein was the Black Dragon Vein, just over in Utah, 18 miles south of the White River. It ran over four miles on the surface, six feet wide and was estimated to contain more than two million tons of high grade ore. Because of the rugged terrain, narrow gauge was selected, even though the Rio Grande had been standard gauge since 1890.

40 miles of track

The Black Dragon Mine went into full production in 1903. Some ore was hauled by wagon down to Fruita on the D&RG; more was stockpiled to await the railroad. Most location surveys had been completed before incorporation. On Nov. 13, 1903, a contract was awarded to the Utah Construction Company for 40 miles of narrow gauge track. The starting point was at MP 469 on the Rio Grande. Here, the town of Mack, Colo., was founded, named for John M. Mack, President of the new railway. It has been stated that John Mack was one of the Mack Truck brothers. However, there were two John M. Macks, not related. Mack, Colo., was named for the Mack railroad, not the Mack truck.

Mack started as a simple railroad junction; the first buildings were an office, hotel, water tank, and company houses. The Rio Grande soon built a small depot between the two tracks. Because the railroad was simply intended to haul ore to the



Bathke Collection

Two-page center map in *The Uintah Railway*, published by the Uintah Railroad.

outside, the connection was made at the nearest point on the Rio Grande, without publicity or thought of other traffic. This ruffled a few feathers in Grand Junction, where the editor of the *News* grumbled about starting a railroad out in the sand dunes, instead of doing the logical thing and running it into the thriving metropolis of Grand Junction.

Grading started at Mack in January, 1904. For three miles, the line followed the original D&RG narrow gauge grade, abandoned when the Rio Grande was converted to standard gauge. Then the rails crossed Salt Wash Creek on the first of 37 trestles between Mack and Baxter Pass. The first four miles were nearly level, but then the climb began.

Although the Uintah was notorious for the 7.5 % grade up Baxter Pass, the fact is that there was no more

than one-half mile of level track in the whole 63 miles! From MP 4 on, the grade was at least 1%. For 12 miles up Salt Wash, the land was open, barren and dry. The "Crow's Nest" marked the entrance to West Salt Wash Canyon, which penetrated the Book Cliffs.

Carbonera appears

At MP 20, the tiny settlement of Carbonera sprouted: population 24 in 1936. Carbonera was the site of company mines which supplied all the railroad's coal. Unfortunately, it was low grade coal and was never sold off line. The mines were located a few yards up the hillside, and a trestle allowed the mine trams to dump directly into gondolas, or even into locomotive tenders. A few miles further, at MP 28.3, the canyon widened at the junction of two creeks. Here,

shops were built and a small town emerged. The town was named after the Ute chief, Sam Atchee, brother-in-law of Chief Ouray. Atchee served as a division point and was, in fact, the real headquarters of the road.

Continuous curves

It was a strange spot for shops, except for two geological facts. First, it was the only source of water east of Baxter Pass. Every drop of water consumed between Mack and Baxter Pass came from Atchee. Secondly, just west of Atchee rose Baxter Pass. The climb to the summit is unbelievable, even today. In only 5.8 miles from Atchee, the rails climbed 2,012 feet! For the first mile the track was straight and the grade was an easy (?) 5 %. Then things got tough. The rest of the way was a steady 7.5 % grade, not compensated for the curves. The curves were almost continuous and ranged from 4 degrees up to 66 degrees. Twelve degrees is a sharp mainline curve, but a 66-degree curve like this one at Moro Castle is only 170 feet across. The curve was so sharp that if there were two passenger cars, they tried to put a freight car between them so the roofs wouldn't bind.

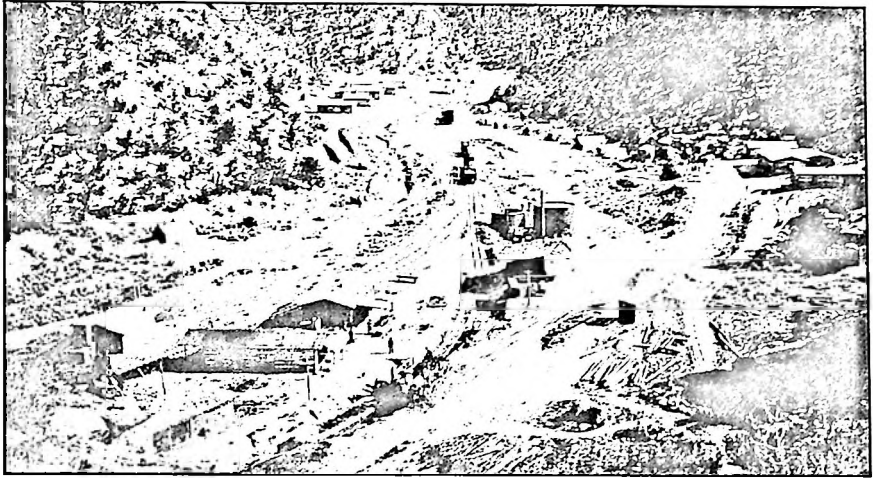
Obviously, Baxter Pass was a real headache for the motive power department. Little wonder, then, that the first locomotive ordered was a Shay. Number 1 was a two-truck Shay delivered by the Lima Locomotive Works in May 1904. At the same time, Baldwin delivered 2-8-0 Consolidation #10 for the "flat lands" south of Atchee. The road also bought a 20-year-old Consolidation from the Rio Grande, which they numbered 11. This had been D&RG No.

55, the "Tomichi." Lima soon built Shays numbers 2 and 3.

Two used Shays

A year later, two used Shays came from the Argentine Central RR at Silver Plume. The Shays were standard power on the pass for 21 years. They were rated to pull just 60 tons north over the pass. Fortunately, the return trip was a little easier, as the ore would come south. In 1905, the Uintah acquired two little 0-6-2 tank engines for passenger service; they could pull just one 35-ton combine up Baxter Pass!

The top of Baxter Pass was at 8,437 feet, 3,900 feet up from Mack. There was a wye, a siding, and a section house at the top. The pass was named jointly for Charles Baxter and his brother, Frank, a member of the Rio Grande engineering staff. Frank Baxter made the preliminary surveys for the Uintah during his summer vacation. Descending north from the summit, trains were held to a walk, with smoking brakes, on a 5 % grade. The rulebook required 50 minutes to descend seven miles to Wendella. The sharp overlooking curves were known as Lookout Point and Windy Point. At Deer Run was a short spur, originally a safety switch. Later, a car of coal was spotted there for emergency use. The spur climbed beside the mainline, so the gondola was high enough to shovel coal directly into a tender stopped on the main. A few miles further down was Columbine, a water stop and site of a popular picnic spot. Excursion trains brought miners and railroaders here several times each summer. For impromptu outings, there was an informal



Dragon Camp, Utah, circa 1908.

F.A. Kennedy photo, Bathke Collection

method: tie a handcar behind a train, load on the family and picnic basket, and get towed uphill to the spot. At the end of the day, simply put the handcar back on the track and coast home. Few, if any, casualties were recorded from this activity.

Hairpin curves

Columbine was located on a sharp horseshoe turn, and there was a cutoff track forming a reverse loop. Down grade about two miles, at MP 39, the track went around two 60-degree hairpin curves in succession. The first, overlooking Lake McAndrews, was called "The Hairpin," and the second, which reversed direction again a quarter mile on, was called "The Muleshoe." Leaving the Muleshoe, the tracks skirted Lake McAndrews, named for an early settler. The lake was formed by an earthen dam built by the railroad. Water was piped from the lake a mile down to the water tank at Wendella. Wendella was a helper station at the bottom of the

5 % grade, and had a wye and a coaling dock, in addition to the water tank. In normal operation, a Shay would help a train up from Atchee, drift down to Wendella, turn, and wait to help the next train back. From Wendella the grade eased off to only 3 % or less for 11 miles into Dragon. The line crossed into Utah at MP 50.8 and reached Dragon at Mile 53.3. Here the railroad built a depot, hotel, warehouses and company homes. Passengers boarded a Uintah stage to continue on to Vernal or Fort Duchesne. From Dragon, a 1.25-mile branch led up to the mines.

Stage/freight service

The Uintah operated a rather extensive stage and freight wagon service north from Dragon. A typical wagon would be drawn by six horses. Caterpillar tractors were tested in 1916, but lasted only about six months. There was much talk of extending the tracks to Vernal, but it may have been just talk to placate residents of the Uintah Basin.

About 1909, a recurring rumor arose, which said that the railroad would be widened to standard gauge and extended into Grand Junction to meet the Colorado Midland. Then a tunnel would be drilled under Baxter Pass and the Midland would build on to Salt Lake City. This rumor was revived when A.E. Carleton bought the Midland in 1917, but died with the Midland soon after. However, it is a fact that standard gauge ties were used as replacements during this period, as occurred at Carbonera. The only extension of the Uintah came in 1911, when rails were laid down Evacuation Creek, 9.6 miles to Watson, 63 miles from Mack. From Watson, a four-mile branch climbed a 5 % grade to new mines at Rainbow.

Now for a quick look at Gilsonite mining and transport. Ore was cut from veins which ran for miles across the hills. Miners would cut a deep gash the width of the vein. They would load about 200 pounds of ore in heavy burlap sacks. The sacks were hauled out of the vein on push cars on a tramway to a loading platform beside the track. Here they were slid down a plank onto flat cars. As many as 160 sacks went onto a car.

Mikado No. 30

A train might consist of 6-10 flat cars, an occasional boxcar of merchandise and a caboose. Most traffic on the north end was handled by Mikado No. 30, which took the train up the 'mild' 3% grade to Wendella. Here, two or three Shays took over for the climb over Baxter Pass to Atchee. Then a 2-8-0 Consolidation finished the run downhill to Mack. There, the flat cars would be spotted alongside standard gauge box

cars on the D&RG. The return trip with empties and incoming freight worked just the reverse.

The story of Mikado No. 30 is unusual. Because the Shays were so slow, it was desirable to restrict them to the really steep grades on Baxter Pass. So, No. 30 was ordered from Baldwin in 1912. She had outside frames and was supposed to be the largest narrow gauge 2-8-2 in the United States, and weighed nearly twice as much as the Consolidations. She came West from Philadelphia on flat cars and was unloaded at Mack. She was towed up to Atchee on her own wheels, but the long wheelbase prevented her from going further. So, No. 30 was jacked up, the side rods and drivers were removed and a freight car truck was put under each end. Several Shays pulled her over Baxter Pass and down to Dragon where she was reassembled and put in service. She never came back in 28 years. When repairs were needed, shopmen from Atchee went over to work on her. When she needed a new firebox, the boiler was shipped over to Atchee, where the firebox was replaced. When the road was abandoned, No. 30 was cut up and taken out as scrap.

Self-sufficient railway

The Uintah Railway was very self-sufficient. After buying the first freight cars to open the road, nearly all rolling stock was built at Atchee. Around 1912, they built 32 assorted freight cars. In 1918, they built seven water cars, and in the 1920s they added 43 flat cars.

An early passenger schedule shows a daily train left Mack at 8:15 a.m., arrived at Atchee at 9:30, took 55

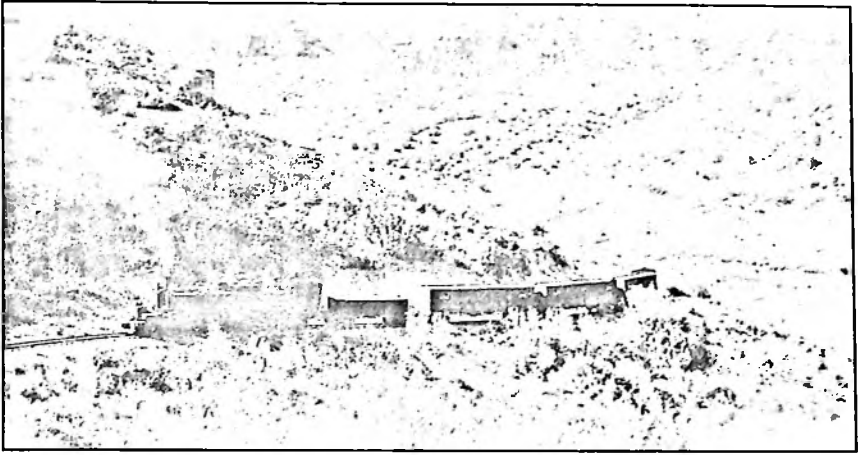


Photo courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Dept.

Engine #50 westbound up Baxter Pass, May 9, 1939.

minutes to climb six miles up Baxter Pass, and got into Watson at 12:30. The return trip left Watson at 1 p.m. and was back at Mack at 5 p.m. Passengers arriving in Watson could continue by Uintah stage to Vernal or Fort Duchesne. Returning in the morning, the stages arrived in Watson in time to catch the afternoon train to Mack. The normal passenger train was a single combine. A Consolidation usually pulled the train from Mack to Atchee, where the tank engines took over for the run up the Pass and on to Watson. A Shay was used if there was more than one car.

Because of the steep climb in the middle, the Uintah operated in three separate sections, which was a bit odd for a railroad only 63 miles long. Normally, the two Mikados worked trains 22 miles on the north end, six Shays worked over Baxter Pass 13 miles to Atchee, and three Consolidations worked 28 miles on the south end.

Traffic on the Uintah was about 90 % Gilsonite. Ore shipments peaked at 35,000 tons in 1911 and averaged a bit less into the '20s. The road tried to attract incoming freight to balance the traffic, but without much success. Merchandise for the few stores, some livestock, a few passengers, mail and express made up the balance of traffic. Plus, of course, coal and water were hauled for company use.

All water needed for locomotives and domestic use south of the pass had to be hauled from Atchee. The first water cars were simple flat cars with three wooden tanks mounted. In 1918, Atchee shops built seven steel cars which served to the end. Six of them were bought by the Rio Grande: three lasted into the 1960's on the D&RG. As may be expected for a road operating in such rugged country, the Uintah had its share of mishaps. Gilsonite is very flammable, and it was shipped in burlap bags on open cars. Sometimes a stray

spark from the engine would lodge in a bag and start a fire. The crew usually got the train stopped in time to control the fire but, occasionally, a fire consumed the better part of a car load.

Mine explosions

An explosion in the mine was a much worse calamity. In February 1908, a series of explosions ripped the Black Dragon Mine, hurling timbers 2,000 feet and killing two men. It was impossible to approach the intense fire for days, and the glow in the sky was seen 68 miles away in Vernal. The fire smoldered for two and one-half years. Mining was resumed by cutting into the vein two miles further west.

The railroad suffered from the usual perils of mountain operation. Snow plagued Baxter Pass annually and blocked the line for several days every few years. Heavy spring run-off softened the roadbed causing derailments. In February 1909, snow was the cause of the first fatality. Shay No. 3 was pushing a wedge plow down the pass when it hit a solid drift, derailed, and rolled down the mountainside, killing the engineer. Snow blockades meant no mail or newspaper delivery in the Uintah Basin, which brought howls of protest from residents and official rebuke from the Post Office.

There were other weather problems. In October 1911, the southbound passenger was running very late due to heavy rain. Sometime after midnight, engine No. 10 started across Bridge 2-A, near Mack. The trestle bents had been undermined by high water, and the bridge collapsed, dumping the engine into West Salt Creek, killing the fireman and a laborer. The

first car teetered on the brink, but stayed on the track, and the combo was safe.

Two runaways

It seems incredible, but there were only two bona fide runaways on Baxter Pass. In September 1918, the southbound passenger was descending in a heavy rain. The rails were slick, the sandpipes clogged, and the little tank engine ran away, rolling off at MP 31. The coach derailed but didn't roll down the hill. The conductor was killed. In 1923, a Shay ran away with a freight and piled up near Shale, being immediately buried in the splinters of eight flat cars and 1,200 bags of Gilsonite. The engineer was killed.

One of the more persistent natural problems faced was the big slide above Shale on the east side of Baxter Pass. In 1923, a section of mountainside began to slide down over the track. At the peak, the slide was 1,000 feet wide and extended 400 feet up the hill. It was necessary to continuously remove the dirt and realign the track. A self-propelled steam shovel purchased in 1924 helped, but it was a constant battle. In 1929, a massive movement closed the line for seven weeks and finally closed down the mines. Fortunately, during the cleanup, a spring was discovered above the track which had been saturating the area and causing the slide. When this was discovered, it was simple to pipe the water off, allowing the ground to dry out. The trouble ended within a few weeks.

Shipping by mail

On the lighter side, there was a rather humorous event in postal history

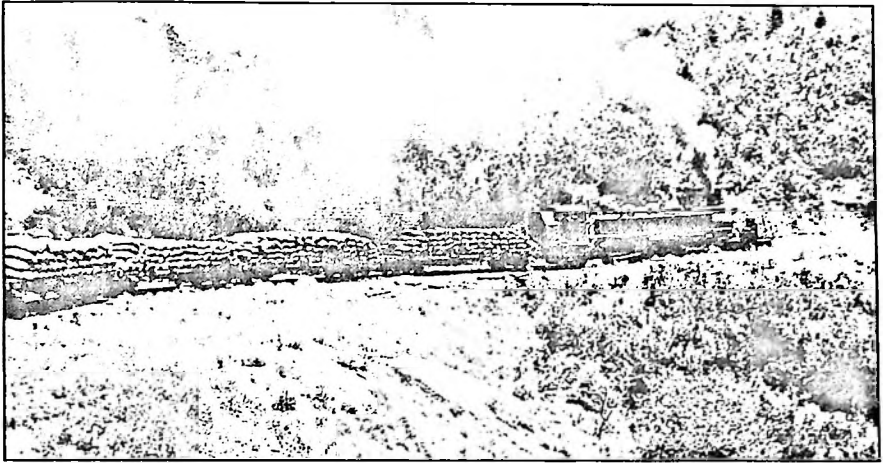


Photo courtesy Colorado Railroad Museum Collection

Engine #50 pulls loaded flat cars. The cars carry about 160 burlap bags, each filled with 200 lbs. of Gilsonite.

which involved the Uintah Railway. The Uintah Basin was a very isolated area in the 1900s. The railroad had lowered the cost of bringing goods into the area, but the cost of the last miles by wagon was still high. Besides, most goods came from Salt Lake City, 125 miles west of Vernal. But shipments had to come roundabout, 275 miles on the D&RG to Mack, 63 miles up the Uintah Railway and finally 60 miles by wagon, 400 miles in all. Of course, the rates were based on the 400 miles, not the direct distance. So, the U.S. Postal Service came to the rescue! In 1913, the postoffice began Parcel Post, which made it easy to ship small packages cheaply. Parcel Post was a bargain, because the postoffice made rates based on zones, based on a mileage circle drawn around the point of shipment. The rate for a package sent from Salt Lake City to Vernal was based on the "Crow's Flight" distance of 125 miles, even though the item actually went 400

miles around through Mack. Although at first, only small packages were accepted, Parcel Post was an instant success. Then, in 1914, the postoffice opened the floodgates by increasing the weight to 50 pounds per package. The result? In 1913, the Uintah hauled a record 36,000 pounds of U.S. mail to Vernal. In January 1914 alone, the Uintah doubled that record, to 75,000 pounds. Local merchants were quick to see a bargain and began to order stock by mail. A 50-pound package from Salt Lake City cost only 54 cents by Parcel Post, versus 70 cents by freight. Meanwhile, the postoffice had a fixed price contract with the railway to haul mail from Mack to Vernal for 4.5 cents a pound, reasonable enough for letter mail. But because the post office only charged 1 and 1/4 cents a pound from Salt Lake City, they lost 3 cents on the Uintah part of the haul. And they still had to pay the D&RG for their 275-mile haul!

Eggs by mail

Not only did merchandise pour into the basin by mail, but commodities were mailed out. One day in 1915, a Vernal farmer mailed 1,000 dozen eggs! Another sent 6,800 pounds of honey. A miner shipped 85 sacks of copper ore. Incoming items included 10,000 pounds of salt, 12,500 pounds of flour and 30,000 pounds of cement.

This state of affairs might have gone on for years, to the obvious detriment of the taxpayers' wallets. But in 1916, a building project was the straw that broke the camel's back. The Bank of Vernal built a fine new bank, with 24 offices upstairs. The material for this modern \$30,000 structure? Brick, of course. So 13,700 bricks were ordered from Salt Lake City, to be mailed to Vernal. The bricks were a bargain at \$90 a thousand, delivered in Vernal.

This episode got the bureaucrats' attention finally. Late in 1916, new Parcel Post instructions barred "large and unusual" shipments and limited shipments to 200 pounds per day for any addressee.

Shay-gear engines

Back to the railroad. The Uintah used Shay-gear engines on Baxter Pass. In the beginning, they bought five rather standard Shays. A sixth came from Lima in 1920. In 1933, they found so many spare parts on hand that they ordered a new boiler from Lima and built Shay No. 7 in the Atchee shops.

The road owned four 2-8-0 Consolidations. No. 10 came new from Baldwin when the line was under construction. Before No. 10 was

delivered, they leased, then bought No. 11 from the D&RG. It was scrapped in 1911, and they bought a new No. 11 from Baldwin. Consolidation No. 12 was originally Florence & Cripple Creek No. 10, then Cripple Creek Short Line No. 36, coming to the Uintah in 1917. It was sold to the Eureka-Nevada in 1937. The Eureka-Nevada was abandoned within a year, and the engine sat derelict several years. Then it was put on display at Las Vegas and finally went to "Fort Lucinda," a tourist attraction near Hoover Dam. At last report it was still there, the only surviving Uintah locomotive.

Sagebrush remains

Wandering through the sagebrush at Atchee, it is hard to imagine a fully equipped railroad shop in operation. But we saw that the Uintah built most of its freight cars here. It also rebuilt locomotives and even a new Shay from spare parts. So we know the shops were well-equipped and manned by a skilled work force. A project that deserves mentioning was the rebuilding of combine No. 50. This was originally a wooden car from the Colorado & Southern. In 1934, it was rebuilt with steel sides. This car was acquired by the Colorado Railroad Museum in 1979, after being used as a storage shed for 40 years at Grand Junction. Costs were rising

In 1923, Lucian C. Sprague was appointed general manager of the Uintah Railway. Sprague's first problem was rapidly rising operating costs. Wages had risen sharply during World War I, and locomotives were requiring too much time in the shop. The Shays were very slow; modern engines would

cut costs and speed traffic. So, Sprague and master mechanic Shafer sat down to design new engines. They drew up plans and specifications for a 2-6-6-2 high-pressure, articulated tank locomotive. The specs were sent to Baldwin Locomotive. Baldwin engineers didn't really believe the specs, and sent a man to see for himself the 7.5 % grade and 66-degree curve. Convinced, Baldwin went to work and built Engine No. 50, which arrived in July, 1926. After inspection, the engine was given a test run. To everyone's embarrassment, it derailed at Moro Castle. This was quickly remedied, but then a major problem arose. It was discovered that the boiler design left the crown sheet dry when descending the 7.5 grade. The senior engineer quit after his first trip down Baxter Pass with NO water showing in his gauges! The ICC boiler inspector quickly deadlined the engine until a solution was found. To cure the problem, the shop men added a second steam dome and lowered the crown sheet. Soon No. 50 was in service, doing a fine job. She worked freight trains between Atchee and Watson, replacing two Shays on the hill and one Mikado on the north end. No. 50 made the run in half the time and cost less to run and maintain than any one of the locomotives she replaced. In April 1928, Baldwin delivered No. 51, a similar engine with the modifications worked out on No. 50. No. 51 was five tons heavier; the world's largest and heaviest narrow gauge engine. The success of the big engines led to the scrapping of the first four Shays and the sale of No. 6.

Highway network

The 1920s brought change to

the Uintah Basin. The beginning of a highway network caused a decrease in passenger and general freight traffic. In 1922, the daily passenger train was reduced to three trips a week. When this was done, a bus line started service from Bernal to Craig, connecting with the Denver & Salt Lake RR. Now, a passenger could get to Denver via the bus and the Moffat Road train over Rollins Pass in only 36 hours. Taking the Uintah stage and train to Mack, then the D&RG via Pueblo, took 72 hours.

In the early 1930s, the Uintah became more and more a single commodity carrier. Gilsonite shipments averaged about 37,000 tons yearly, which kept the trains running steadily. With the new engines and other improvements, the Uintah showed a profit every year from 1928 to 1937.

Soon the road retrenched further. A mixed train replaced the passenger, and the company stopped soliciting general freight. Only company supplies and a little merchandise for places along the track filled the box cars now. Coal and water still had to be hauled, and some movement of sheep to and from winter grazing varied the routine.

Cheaper transport

The 1935 annual report noted that improved roads were making it cheaper to truck Gilsonite out. A contingency reserve was set up to cover abandonment in the future. During the next three years, mining was phased out at Rainbow, and operations were moved to Bonanza, 15 miles north of Watson. The Black Dragon Mine had operated only intermittently since 1917. Gilsonite from Bonanza could be

trucked to the Moffat Road at Craig for half the cost of the truck and rail haul to the Rio Grande at Mack. In July 1938, service was cut to two trips a week. In August the Uintah Railway filed for abandonment. The last Gilsonite was shipped in December 1938.

A last effort was made to sell the road to the Rio Grande, but it was obvious there was no use for the line. ICC hearings took months, so on Christmas Day 1938, the last timetable took effect. Now, there would be only one round trip a week, leaving Mack each Tuesday at 8:10 a.m. The train reached Watson at 1:15 p.m. and returned to Mack by 6:30 the same day. This schedule remained in effect until the last run. At the ICC hearing in January 1939, the greatest protest was raised by Mesa County, Colo., whose main concern was the loss of \$5,000 a year in school taxes. The ICC approved abandonment, noting that without Gilsonite there was no need for the road. They added the usual proviso that the line should be sold to anyone who would continue to run it, but there were no takers.

The last run was May 16, 1939. Engine 50 pulled one box car, two flats and the combo out of Mack. Picking up water cars at Atchee, they filled them at Wendella to give a last drink to the dying towns of Dragon and Watson. As the train prepared to leave Watson on the return trip, the operator unhooked his telegraph key, locked the depot and climbed aboard. At each stop a few inhabitants climbed on, leaving the settlements empty and boarded up.

The entire railroad was offered for scrap. On June 23, the bid of the

G&H Supply Company of Denver was accepted. By September, two wrecking trains were working south from Watson, a half-mile a day. By winter they cleared Baxter Pass. At the end of February 1940, only the yards at Mack remained. On Sept. 18, 1939, 23 cars in the Atchee yards committed a kind of suicide: 10 flats, 11 stock cars, a load of coal and a caboose had been left with brakes carelessly applied. They drifted out of the yard down the 2.9 % grade toward Mack. About three miles down they piled up on a curve, leaving a pile of kindling wood and scrap metal generously garnished with coal. The caboose door flew 50 feet and landed without cracking the window glass.

On Nov. 1, 1939, a brief legal announcement noted that the Uintah Railway was officially dissolved and all debts paid. By February 1940, more than 10,000 tons of scrap had been shipped to CF&I at Pueblo. The two articulated engines were sold to the Sumpter Valley RR in Oregon. Here they were renumbered 250 and 251 and traded their side water tanks for regular tenders. In 1947, they were re-sold to the International Railways of Central America and shipped to Guatemala, where they ran until about 1963.

The Uintah Railway is only a memory, but Gilsonite is still mined in the Uintah Basin. After World War II, a major research effort paid off in increased production and use. By 1957, hydraulic mining replaced the open vein method. A shaft is drilled several hundred feet down, high pressure water loosens the mineral and pumps it to the surface. There it is crushed and mixed into slurry, which is piped 72 miles to a refinery at Gilsonite, west of Grand

Junction. There it is refined into high octane gasoline, fuel oil and road oil. Gilsonite is also sold directly to customers for use in such products as: asphalt floor tile, building papers, roofing material, sound proofing compounds, insulating materials, battery boxes, brake and clutch lining, printing inks, military flares, oil drilling mud and fingerprinting powder. Today, Gilsonite production is more than 10 times better than the best years of the Uintah Railway.

It is interesting to note points of contrast between the Uintah and other Colorado narrow gauge lines. First, it was built later, and it was planned and built to do one specific job. It did that job as long as it was needed and then died quickly, rather than linger on in poverty. We note that the line showed a profit through 1937 and lost money only in the last 18 months when it was being phased out. And, finally, of course, it ran in a very isolated area, virtually undiscovered by railroad enthusiasts.

Empty land

In 1973, I explored Uintah country just enough to get interested. I got up Baxter Pass before I realized it was not smart to travel alone without emergency supplies. It's really lonely country up there! The land is empty. We saw just four cars in 80 miles and only two or three cabins. The area is criss-crossed with pipelines and faint tracks out through the sage, but not a soul in sight.

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Over the Corral Rail

Fred A. Rosenstock Award Winners for 1997

Posse Member Lee Olson and the Gilpin County Historical Society were the winners of the Denver Posse's 1997 Fred A. Rosenstock awards. Olson received the Lifetime Achievement Award, and the society received the prize for outstanding contributions to Western history. The awards were presented at the winter rendezvous in December.

Here are excerpts from the ceremony.

About Lee Olson:

In 1945, just two years after Palmer Hoyt arrived in Denver to revitalize the moribund *Denver Post*, Lee Olson joined the staff of the largest newspaper in the Rocky Mountain states.

Lee spent the next 40 years at *The Post*, working as city editor and state editor, but primarily as an editorial writer. In that capacity, he articulated *The Post's* vision for 25 years. Specializing in editorials on the environmental, energy, and rural issues, Lee helped shape the West for a generation.



Lee Olson accepts award at Dec. rendezvous

Lee traveled to the Mideast, India, Sweden, Germany, and Britain on fact-finding trips, but it was his solid knowledge of the West that was the basis of his hardest-hitting editorials. His endorsement of the 1965 Wilderness Bill incurred the wrath of Colorado Rep. Wayne Aspinall, an outspoken opponent. In a meeting with Hoyt and an incensed Aspinall, Lee stood his ground. On occasion, Lee wasn't always so certain of himself, however. Visiting the Coors Porcelain Co. once, he asked a fellow in dusty dungarees who he was and what he did. The man replied that he was Joe Coors, and that he ran the company.

The 1950s and 1960s were heady days at *The Post*, which styled itself "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" in 13 states. "We took Texas into the Empire," Lee recalls. "They never noticed." In that pre-politically correct time, virtually all reporters were men, and many kept whiskey and a number even guns in their desk drawers at the newspaper, and headed for bars as soon as the first edition went to press, at 10:30 a.m. For a time, Lee was a member of the Evil Companions Club, an informal clique of hard-drinking

newspaper men. He quit "because I couldn't keep up the pace," Lee says. "You think you can write wonderful editorials after three martinis, but when you get back to the office, they're gone."

Born March 1, 1922, in Emerson, Neb., Leon Dexter Olson graduated from the University of Colorado in 1945 with a degree in journalism. He went to work for the *Scottsbluff Star-Herald*, but within a few months was brought back to Colorado by the *Greeley Tribune*, where he worked until he joined *The Post*.

Lee has been interested in Western history since his early days at the paper. In 1958, he wrote much of the text of *Rush to the Rockies*, published by *The Post* to mark Colorado's centennial. After retiring in 1987, Lee wrote *Marmalade & Whiskey: British Remittance Men in the West*, published in 1993 by Fulcrum, Colorado's largest publishing house. In 1995, he served the Posse as one of the editors of the reincarnated *Brand Book*. Currently, Lee freelances for *The Denver Post*, the *Mesa (Ariz.) Tribune*, and the *Des Moines Register*, and is a popular speaker. For instance, next spring he'll give a talk at the Western Social Science Association about Britishers in the American West.

Lee married Mary Kennedy in 1948. They have three children, Steve, Kristin, and Elizabeth. Mary, who frequently attends our posse dinners, reports: "Lee is always opening doors and never closing them, be it the cupboard, the garage, the closet, or even the front door. This habit bothered me until I realized it was symbolic of him. Once Lee opens the door on a relationship, an event, or an experience, it is important to him to always keep that door, that connection, open." Lee opened the door on the Denver Posse of Westerners by joining it in 1989, and we're the richer for it.

—Tom Noel, P.M.. and Sandra Dallas, P.M.

About the Gilpin County Historical Society

The Gilpin County Historical Society (GCHS) was founded in 1970 to house postal records that were about to be destroyed. Within the year, GCHS bought the old Gilpin County High School and transformed this 1870 stone landmark into the Gilpin History Museum. Sited on a hill overlooking Central City, this handsome, two-story Italianate edifice serves as a large museum and the society headquarters.

GCHS in 1990 acquired the Thomas House, an 1874 frame, Classical Revival home, at 128 Eureka St. The society restored and opened Thomas House as a museum, whose interior furnishings, virtually unchanged since the 1890s, provide one of Colorado's finest peeks at turn-of-the-century domestic life. During the 1990s, the GCHS adopted the Coeur D'Alene Mine

Shaft House, long a tumble-down spectacle that invited tourists to prowl a dangerous ruin. It is being restored for public tours.

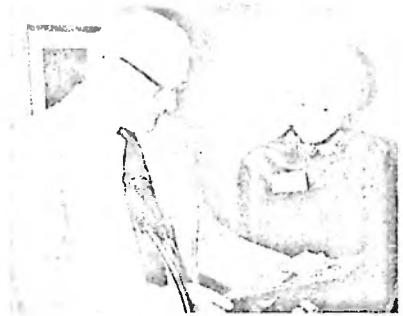
The GCHS has emerged as one of the most active county historical societies in Colorado. Since 1989, the society has sponsored the annual Gilpin Cemetery Crawl, the pace-setter among Colorado boneyard tours. Costumed characters present well-scripted and rehearsed vignettes at key tombstones. This September tombstone tour, which rotates among the county's 11 cemeteries, draws hundreds of spectators, inspiring the society to inaugurate Ghosts of Gilpin tours and tales on or near every Oct. 31.

For Gregory Days every May, the society sponsors historical plays in its museum. The May 1-2, 1998, offering will be "Sherlock Holmes Comes to Black Hawk," presented as "Desert Theater" in the Gilpin History Museum. Next year, in 1998, the society is inaugurating a "Miner's Music Concert" at Central City's new Chase Gulch Reservoir Park.

An astonishing variety of programs is offered by the GCHS. They range from a 1997 commemoration of the assassination of President Lincoln to vintage baseball games of the Central City All Starts, from casino openings to Central City Opera promotions, and a summer series of tours and events that includes daily walking tours of Central City, led by costumed guides. On April 4, 1998, the GCHS is doing a special program on Gov. John L. Rott.

Linda Jones, GCHS president since 1990, reports: "Gilpin County has a lot more than just casinos. We have not lost any of our museums or major historic structures. Our society now has 171 members and welcomes more. Membership is only \$15 a year. We keep trying new events. And we like to work with other historical groups, such as the Grand County Historical Society, the Colorado Historical Society, and the Colorado History Group. Come on up! All your old favorite sites are still here, plus a lot of new ones!"

—Tom Noel, P.M.



Westerner Hank Toll presents award to Linda Jones at December rendezvous.

Member Passing

Corresponding Member Orian "Sally" Lewis-Rodeck passed away April 4, 1998. She is survived by husband Hugo Rodeck, an Honorary Member of the Denver Westerners.



Westerners Bookshelf



Tom Horn: Last of the Bad Men by Jay Monaghan (Univ. of Nebraska Press 1997), 267 Pages, Exclusive of Introduction, Acknowledgments, Bibliography, and Index, 21 Pictures, Paper, \$14.95.

Tom Horn. For those steeped in Western lore, the name evokes numerous images: miner, fearless Apache tracker, rodeo champion, determined Pinkerton sleuth, Spanish-American War vet, turn-of-the-century stock detective, hired gun, braggart, drygulcher, assassin. Just as certainly, the name evokes great controversy, even now, 94 years after Horn was hanged for murdering a 14-year-old boy 40 miles northwest of Cheyenne.

There have been plenty of books and articles written about Horn's life and the role he may have played in the 1901 murder of 14-year-old Willie Nickel. Horn, himself, while awaiting execution, wrote a self-inflating autobiography largely dealing with his youthful days in Missouri, the time he spent chasing Apaches in Arizona and Mexico, and his detective work for the Pinkertons.

Other accounts reference his killing ways (e.g., Leland J. Hanchett, Jr., *The Crooked Trail to Holbrook* (Arrowhead Press, Phoenix, Ariz. 1993) and Grace McClure, *The Bassett Women* (Ohio University Press 1985), or focus on his life and his trial in connection with the Nickel murder (e.g., Eugene Cunningham, *Triggernometry* (Caxton Printers, Ltd. 1941), Dean Krakel, *The Saga of Tom Horn*, (1954), and Chip Carlson, *Tom Horn: Killing Men is My Specialty* (Beartooth Corral, Cheyenne, Wyo 1991). But, overall, the best book on Horn may still be Jay Monaghan's *Tom Horn: Last of the Bad Men*.

Originally published in 1946, Monaghan's book reads like a novel. It is not footnoted and, at times, the reader is left wondering how much of what is reported is fact and how much is fiction; hence, its original 1946 title (*The Legend of Tom Horn: Last of the Bad Men*). The book contains mounds of first-time recorded information (some of which is not repeated elsewhere).

We learn, for instance, that Horn spent time as a teen-ager cowboying cattle herds in and out of Texas; that his first homicides may have been a mother and child found in, or near, a Texas outhouse he and his friends had been using for target practice; and that he may have received knife wounds to his shoulder and chin, not as he said, after pursuing train robbers, but as a result of coming up against a better man in a bar in Baggs, Wyo.

There are, to be sure, inaccuracies in the telling. But, credible historians

...the reader is left
wondering how much...
is fact and how much is
fiction...

studying Horn's career (for example, Doyce Nunis, *The Life of Tom Horn Revisited* (Los Angeles Corral—Westerners 1002)) have always taken Monaghan's information seriously. And, with good reason: besides being a noted historian, Monaghan had first-hand experience cowboying in Colorado and Wyoming, and he talked directly with members of Horn's family and with Horn's range colleagues and numerous old-timers who either knew Horn, knew of Horn, or knew a Horn story having some basis in fact.

Monaghan, in my view, stretched himself somewhat in psychoanalyzing Horn's motives for various acts and he placed too much emphasis on the theory that the Horn's Wyoming cattle baron employers lulled him into believing that they would rescue him from the hangman's noose when they actually intended otherwise. Also, Monaghan, writing in a different era, used quotes and jargon referencing the race or nationality of individuals which today would be wholly unacceptable. Otherwise, however, his work is delightful, not only for the skill in which he tells Horn's story, but also for the manner in which he paints the landscapes of Horn's life—civil war-torn Missouri, mining town Leadville, the scorched deserts and mountainous terrain of Arizona and Mexico, the rugged Brown's Hole country, and the Wyoming plains.

It is, indeed, easy for the reader to imagine himself at the scenes of events reported in Monaghan's book.

The University of Nebraska has adorned the front cover of this reprint with the attractive illustration, "The Narrows," by H.W. Hansen, and it has included an introduction by Arkansas State University history professor Larry D. Ball, who canvasses Horn's life and reports (with footnotes) seldom-recorded facts about Horn's role in Arizona's 1887-88 Pleasant Valley War, Horn's return to, and activities in, Arizona in 1896, and Horn's supposed killing in 1900 of two horse and cattle thieves when, he said, he was pursuing train robbers.

If you're interested in Horn, the Apache wars, the Wyoming range wars, or the controversy over the Nickel killing, room must be found in your library for this edition of Monaghan's book.

—John Daniel Dailey, P.M.

Inventing the Southwest: The Fred Harvey Company and Native American Art, by Kathleen L. Howard and Diana F. Pardue, in cooperation with the Heard Museum. Foreward by Martin Sullivan. 169 Pages, 90 Color Photos, 50 B&W Photos, Index, Bibliography. Flagstaff: Northland Publishing, 1996. Paperback \$17.95.

To most people, the Fred Harvey Company brings to mind visions of comfortable hostelries alongside the railroad tracks and neat, starched Harvey girls serving meals. However, the company also conducted an extensive trade in Indian artworks, such as rugs, pottery, jewelry, and kachinas. They had a field collector, Herman Schweizer, who sought out both private collections and the works of living native artists to sell in the company's many shops.

This book tells the story of this trade, the people who directed it, and the well-known native artists whose works became widely distributed through it. The authors point out clearly that this is a prime example of thoughtful marketing which succeeded because of a fortunate set of circumstances.

First, in the late 19th century, there was a popular movement toward the appreciation of indigenous American arts, moving away from European models. This was the "Arts and Crafts Movement" championed by Gustave Stickley and Elbert Hubbard in their publication, "The American Craftsman." Native American art fit perfectly into the quasi-rustic architecture and interiors Stickley and others designed.

Second, while affluent Americans still went to Europe for the Grand Tour, middle-class people could better afford to board the train and visit the Southwest.

Third, the native people themselves discovered the possibilities of making their traditional works for sale and were quick to profit from the growing throngs of strangers eager to buy their wares.

The book is well-written and carefully documented. In some sections, the design is apparently based upon a 1930s graphic style which shows off the period photos to best advantage. If there is any quibble about the content, one might suggest that there may have been a bit of "sugar-coating" of some of those persons involved. For example, the Mennonite missionary, H.R. Voth, who served as a field collector among the Hopi, has been sharply criticized by those people for his brusqueness and lack of respect for their traditional religion. However, such gentrifying does not detract from the basic merit of the book. This is recommended reading for anyone interested in the Southwest and its history.

...the native people themselves discovered the possibilities of making their works for sale...

—Richard Conn, P.M.

Buckskin, Bullets, and Beans: Good Eats and Good Reads From the Western Writers of America, edited by Bob Wiseman. Northland Publishing Company, Flagstaff, Ariz. 160 Pages, 14 Color Photos, Wire Bound, \$14.95.

This book of recipes has been compiled from 70 members of the famed Western Writers of America. Many recipes presented in the volume played parts in scenes from the different authors' various novels and screenplays.

Colorado is represented by a recipe from Sam Arnold of the famed Fort Restaurant.

Included are recipes for just about anything you want to cook, from jerky to sandwiches. I found the book interesting and intend to try some of the recipes, especially, the Egg Gravy for breakfast some morning.

To satisfy my husband's craving for pozole, I will certainly have to try the Snake Killers Pozole.

This book is a must for lovers of wild West cooking and stories.

—Lynn Stull, C.M.

Mark Twain Made Me Do It & Other Plains Adventures Bryan L. Jones, Univ. of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1997. 25 Business Advertisements, 208 Pages. Paper, \$15.

Mark Twain Made Me Do It is a story that will bring back boyhood memories to many, especially to those who grew up in a small town.

This is the tale of a young preacher's son and some of his adventures and antics as he grew up and moved to several small communities in western Nebraska. You can pick up the book and open it to any spot and read and enjoy one of the short vignettes. The stories show the good imagination and doings of a young boy as he floats the Platte River, plays baseball, or hunts with his Daisy B.B. gun.

Did I like the book? Yes and no. It has the makings of an enjoyable book. Its stories brought back memories that I enjoyed, but the crude language throughout, and one or two crude stories, made it a book that I find difficult to like.

—Ken Gaunt, P.M.

Wide Ruins—Memories from a Navajo Trading Post, by Sallie Wagner, Foreword by Edward T. Hall, Univ. of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1997, 152 Pages, 62 Halftones, Paperback, \$16.95.

...a love story of the
author's enchantment
with the desert country...

This is an account of the author's experiences at the Wide Ruins Trading Post in the years immediately preceding and following World War II. Wide Ruins is an Indian trading post located south of Ganado, Ariz. The recently married author and her husband, Bill Lippincott, purchased the post in 1938 and ran it until her husband's call to military service in 1942. They re-purchased the post

after the war and ran it until 1950.

It is a love story of the author's enchantment with the desert country and affection for the Navajos she served. It is an historically interesting account of reservation life before World War II and of the cataclysmic changes which World War II brought to the area.

Posse members who frequent the reservation will enjoy this very readable story of a trader's life and transactions with the natives.

Of particular interest to this reviewer was Sallie Wagner's role in encouraging the native weavers to the use of vegetable dyes and weaving patterns seen in the Wide Ruins Navajo weaving today. Also of particular interest to me was her

involvement in the development of Beatien Yazz, from a child of great promise to a well-known Navajo artist. Those familiar with earlier books about Beatien Yazz (Spin at Silver Dollars and Paint the Wind) will be interested in this book as well.

The book reads well, and the author has a light touch. The interspersed pictures supplement the text well.

—Henry W. Toll, Jr., P.M.

The Powder River Expedition Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, edited by Wayne R. Kime, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1997. 206 Pages, Illustrations and a Map, Index, Bibliography, Dust Jacket, Hardback, \$28.95.

This volume follows close on the heels of *The Black Hills Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge*, also edited by Wayne R. Kime, published last year by the University of Oklahoma. That volume was recommended by this reviewer. These journals, which deal with the Great Sioux War of 1876-1877 are, if anything, even more important than those found in the Black Hills book.

This volume, once again, presents the rather intimate and personal observations of Dodge. Thus, it is more candid, and perhaps more honest, than some of the writing found in Dodge's books. However, this book also deals with the excitement of a real military campaign in time of war. For example, Dodge's comments about General Crook, about General Mackenzie, and about such events as Mackenzie's winter fight with Dull Knife, will prove indispensable to students of the Indian Wars.

...brings to life the daily life of the U.S. Army on the frontier....

Additionally, this publication, as did the previous book from Dodge's journals, brings to life the daily life of the U.S. Army on the frontier. For example, infantry on the march would sing "Marching Through Georgia." Officers would make merry with brandy on Christmas Eve. Infantry would, indeed, be called "doughboys" during the Indian wars. Such tidbits as these make the volume as colorful as a novel.

Finally, Kime's bibliography is impressive.

In summary, this volume is more than a "keeper." Its publication is cause for excitement. It is highly recommended.

—John M. Hutchins, P.M.

Making Peace With Cochise: The 1872 Journal of Captain Joseph Alton Sladen. Edited by Edwin R. Sweeney. Foreward by Frank J. Sladen, Jr. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1997, 179 Pages, Illustrated with Photographs and a Map, Index, Cloth, Dust Jacket, \$24.95.

One of the late Jimmy Stewart's Western movies was "Broken Arrow," in

which he played Tom Jeffords and Jeff Chandler played Cochise. This volume, more of a memoir than a journal, tells much of that story.

Capt. Joseph Sladen was the aide to Gen. O.O. Howard, who accompanied Howard, Jeffords, and two Apaches into Cochise's camp in a courageous effort to make peace with the Chiricahua Indians. Sladen's account, which obviously was written some years after the events, is a wonderful, firsthand account of this expedition. Indeed, since Sladen was left behind in the camp (as an apparent hostage) with Jeffords while Gen. Howard organized a truce; his description of what he learned about the Chiricahua is reminiscent of Stewart's portrayal of Jeffords in "Broken Arrow."

The book is a definite "keeper" and will be sought after in years to come after this hardback printing. It complements such other books that discuss the Apache wars during the 1870s such as O.O. Howard's *Famous Indian Chiefs I have Known* (Bison, 1989), Kenneth Randall's *Only the Echoes: The Life of Howard*

This volume, more of a memoir than a journal, tells much of that story.

Bass Cushing (Yucca Tree Press, 1995), and Capt. John Bourke, *With General Crook in the Indian Wars* (Lewis Osborne, 1968). The jacket has a handsome and appropriate painting (though portraying the 1880s) by Howard Terpning.

The foreword by Frank J. Sladen, Jr., the captain's grandson, is a refreshing addition.

Sladen's contribution likely has helped to prevent the usual anti-military bias and editing found today in such books as this.

As for Sweeney's introduction and editing, they generally are excellent. They avoid a lot of political-correctness sermonizing, although he apologizes for comments that the Apache were "savage" and "blood-thirsty" and he seems undecided as to whether Mangas Coloradas was "murdered" or "executed."

What I found particularly offensive was the typical (for today) misunderstanding of O.O. Howard's Christianity. While that faith made Howard risk his life in being a peace-maker, Sweeney dismisses him as self-righteous and condescending." I have read a recent reprint of the autobiography of Howard, and this was not my impression of this amazing "Christian Soldier." Somewhat related to this, I found Sladen's comments in his journal about the scruffy and frozen Apache boys supportive of Jason Betzinez' experiences in *I Fought With Geronimo*. Christianity and civilization can be uplifting and saving. Academics try hard to understand pagan cultures, yet they can't even understand the dominant culture in America.

—John M. Hutchins, P.M.





The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

MARCH-APRIL 1998



Photo courtesy William K. Ross Toole Archives

The 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps

The U.S. Army 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps

by

Robert Lane, P.M.

(Presented Feb. 25, 1998)



Staff Sgt. Bob next to a modern bike with 140 years of bicycle technology

About the author

Bob Lane has been a Posse member since July 1989. He has presented three previous papers. The first was May 24, 1989, "Circuit Riders from the Allegheny to the Rocky Mountains." His second was about the "Clendenin/Muddy Creek Massacre of July 15, 1763", and was presented Sept. 26, 1990. His third presentation was "A Mile High Haunting", on Oct. 23, 1991.

Bob, a native of Denver, is a graduate of South High. He served in the Navy in the South Pacific during the end of the Vietnam War.

His historical interests include preserving historical trails in the Rocky Mountains. He is a long-time member of the Colorado Association of 4-Wheel Drive Clubs. One of his projects was to help restore the Needles Eye Tunnel project on Rollins Pass.

Bob's latest presentation, "The U. S. Army 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps", was quite appropriate: His latest paper was presented during Colorado Black History Month.

THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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The U.S. Army 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps

by

Robert Lane, P.M.

(Presented Feb. 25, 1998)

The bicycle is a lightweight, two-wheeled vehicle designed for propulsion by the feet and steered by the hands. The discovery of the wheel was an enormous step technically, economically, and socially. The wheel first appeared in the Kingdom of the Sumerians between the 4th and 3rd millennia BC.

The wheel existed for more than 5,000 years before someone thought of designing a handy two-wheeler. German superintendent of forest, Freiherr Karl Friedrich Drais von Sauerbronn, designed his famous "running machine" in 1816, a steerable bicycle propelled by kicking, taking out a patent in 1818 content with his invention.

About 1840, the axle of the front wheel was extended to form cranks driven by the feet. The first bicycle in the true sense of the word was made in France by Pierre Michaux and his son Erenst for the 1867 World Exhibition in Paris. The velocipede had a modern appearance with wooden wheels, iron-shod and propelled by pedals, which directly drove the front wheel. Its nickname was the "bone-shaker".

In 1870, bicycles were still crude and not very well built. They were clumsy, rigid, heavy and tended to fall apart in rough terrain. The difficult thing about the bicycle was the chain drive. You had to push start the monster.

Five years later the Italian Army started conducting experiments with delivering messages and reconnaissance operations with limited success. Soon

after, Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Spain and Switzerland armies used bicycle battalions to transport tools, ammo and guns as well as construction material.

The medical units saw the benefits of using bicycles to carry supplies to the injured. Stretchers were connected between two bicycles to carry the traumatized back to the safety of the rear. The Japanese used the bicycle in various campaigns against the Chinese.

In 1876 H. J. Lawson in England developed the chain and sprockets thereby transferring the power to the rear wheel. This machine became known as the "safety" bicycle. Over the next few decades improvements came, such as tubular frames made of steel. Chain breakage at this time was the most frequent problem. Bicycle manufacturers and metallurgists cooperated in finding a stronger material able to withstand the stress. Iron-shod wheels were replaced with tangentially spoked wheels with ball bearings, and in 1888 came the introduction of the pneumatic rubber tire, which was invented by the Scottish veterinary surgeon John B. Dunlop.

The perfection of the bicycle came in the 1890s, when the free wheel, brake and gears were introduced by Swedish inventor Birger Ljungstrom. His invention helped sell the bikes to the American public.

With many successful operations in Europe the U.S. Army in the 1890s began its own small-scale bicycle

experiments such as Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to Fort San Marcos, Texas; Fort Omaha, Neb., to Chicago, Ill; Fort Mead, S.D. to Fort Yates, N.D.; and Chicago to Washington, D.C.

In 1891 Gen. Nelson Andrew Miles, commanding officer of the Department of Missouri, stationed at Chicago, had an interest in bicycles and had studied reports on their use in combat. While stationed at Fort Sheridan, he watched some soldier cyclists exercising on the grounds. He also attended a six-day bicycle race at Madison Square Gardens in New York City. He was interested in the speed and quietness of the bicycle as well as its sturdiness.

On Nov. 25, 1891, Gen. Miles instructed Col. R.E.A. Crofton, commander of the 15th Infantry stationed at Fort Sheridan, Ill., to organize a small detachment consisting of one officer and nine non-commissioned soldiers. Their objective was to conduct several experiments using the latest bicycles provided by the Pope Bicycle Company, at no expense to the Army.

The Pope Manufacturing Co. was no stranger to donating bicycles to the government. In 1891 the Connecticut National Guardsmen trained on Columbia bicycles throughout the summer. The men traveled the hilly terrain around Niantic, Conn., collecting valuable information for the existence of a bicycle corps in the future.

Meanwhile, Lt. Willis (William) T. May was placed in charge of the experimental detachment. Only two men in the group had any prior experience riding a bicycle. But it was not long before all the men became proficient in riding and close-order drills. Lt. May gathered enough information to write a

manual about the care and maintenance of the bike and close-order drills. In his book he explained the duties of a soldier in "the rapid conveyance of orders or dispatches, scouting or patrolling and signaling... [and acting] in considerable bodies in support of advanced cavalry, or independently of it."

Training was indoors because the grounds were covered with snow. By January 1892 the experimental bicycle corps was executing close-order drills and sharp turns without locking handle bars or pedals to one another. It was in January that Gen. Miles received orders from the Adjutant General's office of the Department of the Army directing that the experiment be disbanded because Gen. Miles had not received prior approval from the Secretary of War.

Miles was convinced that the Army needed to at least conduct a thorough study on the merits of the bicycle and demonstrate its uses. He sent a message from his headquarters to New York City by several bicycle relays. Riders from the League of American Wheelmen, a private bicycle sportsman organization, donated time and bicycles.

Even though the bicycle training was discontinued, Col. Crofton sent a report on Feb. 4, 1892, stating although the experiment was conducted indoors it was a success. One month later Gen. Miles' request was approved by the acting Secretary of War.

Over a one-year period Col. Burdett, President of the League of American Wheelmen, studied all the reports on the use of the bicycle as an extension to the infantry and wrote: *"..Careful estimates have been made of the relative expense of maintaining a*

cyclist and a cavalryman for one year. Expenses have been stated as \$15 per year for the cyclist, against \$225 per year for the cavalryman. In combat the wheelmen could make an extremely short turn, and so quickly as to cause the advancing horseman to run by, so that if the wheelman had escaped a saber stroke he had the cavalryman at a disadvantage by the use of the revolver with which each wheelman was armed. The best thing of all was the bicycle did not need a stable."

On May 30 the first long-distance ride of a bicycle detachment was conducted from Pullman, Ill., to Chicago. Each rider carried a full military pack. Fifteen miles were covered in one hour and 15 minutes under deplorable conditions. The roads were in such terrible shape riding was almost impossible.

Soon after, the most ambitious undertaking in military bicycle experiments would be assigned to a young U. S. Military Academy officer graduating at the bottom of his class. Second Lt. James A. Moss, a white Southerner from Lafayette, La., reported for duty at Fort Missoula, Mont., a predominantly black fort, in June 1894, located on the east bank of the Bitterroot River four miles from Missoula. Most officers viewed his assignment as unfavorable. But Lt. Moss saw this as a great assignment. He believed in the use of bicycles in the military and so did Col. Andrew S. Burt, commanding officer of the 25th Infantry. A strong advocate for athletic sports, he believed that the bicycle could be an important piece of equipment for the infantry.

In October 1895, Gen. Miles' aide-de-camp, Capt. Francis Michler, conducted a survey of the number of

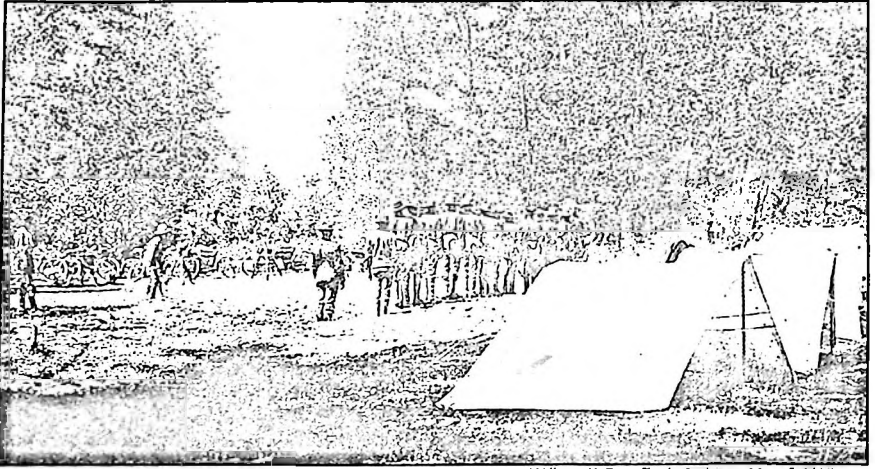
officers and enlisted men in the various departments who could ride a bicycle. Col. Burt reported that only three officers and 78 enlisted men could ride.

A few years later Gen. Miles was promoted to major general. In his first report to the Secretary of War in 1896, he stressed the importance of expanding the experiment of using bicycles in a full regiment. He ordered a careful study of the countryside, surveying the topographical features and conditions of the roads. The reports were dismal. In some places the road disappeared into thick mud holes, impossible to ride through. In other places the road just disappeared into a field. The report helped convince the military brass that indeed further testing was needed.

Lt. Moss's elite team of eight volunteer riders was chosen from Companies G, H, I and K. Private John Finley from F Company was chosen because prior to enlistment he worked for the Imperial Bicycle Works in Chicago. This was the first all-black volunteer experimental bicycle corps.

Ten new bicycles were delivered by the Spalding Bicycle Company of Chicopee Falls, Mass. Before the men were allowed to ride the bikes they were instructed on the proper care and use of the bike, according to the "Cyclist Drill Regulations" written in 1892 by Willis T. May, 1st Lt. and Adjutant of the 15th Infantry.

The men began practicing exercises in July, riding in formation and column turning left or right. Other drills consisted of traversing fences or fording streams. Climbing a nine-foot fence in 20 seconds became standard. At the command "jump fence", the front rank man leaned his bicycle against the



William K. Ross-Toole Archives, Mansfield Library

The 25th Infantry at camp, 1897

wire fence then pulled himself over. The next soldier in line passed his bicycle over, then followed in the same manner. And so on. While waiting for the rest of the men, the other soldiers would assume the position "Stand to bicycle".

When crossing streams the soldier dismounted his bike and rolled it across. If the stream was too deep, two soldiers in a single file would hang their bicycles on a long pole resting on their shoulder as they crossed.

While pedaling down the road a cadence was called. The bugler would trumpet either slow, easy, quick or double time. At double time the revolutions per minute are 94, equaling 16 miles per hour. Other cadences such as circle to the right or left, to the rear, lie down, rise and commence firing were quickly mastered.

A Cyclist Infantry consists of two commissioned officers, two sergeants, three corporals, one musician, and twenty-one privates. One private was the repairman.

To build up endurance, their trip

started out later each day to get them used to the afternoon heat and increase rides between 15 and 45 miles. To insure they stayed healthy, the men took walks to keep leg muscles loose.

By early August 1896, Lt. Moss felt his bicycle infantry was ready to take an extensive road trip. He selected a three day trip to Lake McDonald approximately 64 miles north of Fort Missoula, tucked in the beautiful Mission Mountains.

For their first trip the men carried 30-40 pounds of military equipment and food in a knapsack strapped to their back. A haversack was strapped underneath the horizontal bar. One cup in a cloth sack was suspended underneath the seat. The rifle was strapped horizontally on the left side of the frame. Thirty rounds of ammo were carried across the shoulders. The Spalding military bike was equipped with 80-inch gears.

The men were up bright and early. As the morning sun rose, distant lofty mountain peaks were shrouded in

thick clouds. They left the fort at 6:20 a.m. The road leading out of the fort was muddy from previous rains. Soon steep grades mixed with deep muddy holes, and strong winds gave way to rough rocky roads frequently covered by downed trees. This meant dismounting and carrying bikes over the trees, only to have another one blocking the trail a short distance ahead. This occurred 20 times in six miles. Forty-four miles later and rainsoaked, the men reached Ravalli. They took a short rest, then continued on to reach the Mission Valley before nightfall. By 7:30 that night, the men had traveled 51 miles, yet were still full of excitement and high spirits. Lt. Moss wrote in his daily log, "The soldiers did not seem to be very tired, as they stayed up until 11 o'clock talking and getting off jokes."

The next day the soldiers had a much less strenuous ride. Lake McDonald was only 12 miles ahead. They reached the lake in one-and-one-half days. That afternoon the men relaxed while catching fresh fish to complement their military rations. That evening everyone feasted on a camp fire fish fry.

During the night a rainstorm began and continued until the middle of the following day. The return to Fort Missoula was much slower. Lt. Moss was frustrated with the poor weather conditions and made it known in his daily log, "Had the Devil himself conspired against us we would have had but little more to contend with."

The soldiers were forced to push their bikes through the muck. Several times they had to stop and remove the mud from the wooden spokes. Finally Lt. Moss ordered the men to use a railroad right-of-way. This

turned out to be just as difficult because many railroad ties were unevenly ballasted. During the trip two chains broke after crossing a stream. The glue holding the tires to the wooden rims dissolved, causing them to wobble. Twelve loose tires had to be re-cemented as soon as they were dried off. Other problems included frequent punctures and broken pedals.

At 1:30 p.m. Aug. 9 and 126 miles later, the soldiers reached Fort Missoula, dirty and exhausted. Lt. Moss wrote, "It was impossible to keep any kind of formation while traveling through the country, every cyclist very naturally picked the best way".

The lieutenant began preparing for his next trip. This one would be over six times the distance to Lake McDonald and back. His sites were fixed on Fort Yellowstone and the beautiful Yellowstone National Park and back. Lt. Moss estimated the distance to be about 1,000 miles.

Approximately every 150 miles or so, rations would be waiting for them at railroad stations and military forts along the route. To reduce weight each man, was to carry rations to last four days. The additional supply of food along with extra spare parts would have added about 40 pounds. Because there were so many punctured tires on the Lake McDonald trip, Lt. Moss secured an additional nine puncture-proof tires from the Advance Tire Company.

The morning of Aug. 15, 1896, the sound of the fort's cannon echoed through the valley as the 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps pedaled in formation through the outer gate enroute to Yellowstone National Park.

The first day out the men made good time despite strong head winds, 42

miles in eight hours of actual riding. Part of the day they bicycled along the Union Pacific Railroad tracks to avoid the steep grades and terrible road conditions as well as tollkeepers.

The second day the men had five punctured tires and two previous repairs that failed. Poor tires continued to be a major problem. All the non-resilient puncture-proof tires had gone flat, and the men were forced to go back to the conventional tires the rest of the trip. Moss noted in his daily log that tire problems delayed the corps seven hours one day. He soon realized a better puncture-proof tire must be developed if the bicycle was going to be of any use to the infantry.

On Aug. 25, in spite of all the delays and difficult terrain, the Infantry Bicycle Corps pedaled through Paradise Valley, following the west bank of the Yellowstone River through Yankee Jim's Canyon and tollgate. On Sept. 1 the men started pedaling back to Fort Missoula, a distance of 790 miles. The ride was going well until one man's front wheels crumpled completely when the rim splintered. Instead of continuing, the men stopped for the night, resting in a barn. The following day, Lt. Moss got a civilian cyclist to take the broken wheel into Bozeman to have it repaired. The return trip to Fort Missoula was made in eight days. Arriving Sept. 8 at 7:45 p.m., they had traveled the 790 miles in 126 hours of pedaling time, averaging a speed of 6.25 mph.

After a three-day rest, Lt. Moss set up a relay of bicycles between Col. Burt and himself. The famous Western artist Frederic Remington, who was accompanying the 10th Calvary, said; "It is heavy wheeling and pretty bumpy on the grass, the Bicycle Corps managed

far better than one would anticipate."

With the Yellowstone trip over, Lt. Moss prepared a complete report of the two trips, detailing the terrible road conditions. The report also mentioned the extreme difference in weather and how it affected the mobility of the men as well as their bicycles. Lt. Moss' department commander, Brig. Gen. John R. Brooke, was not impressed with the report and believed a bicycle corps of any size would be spread out so much in a mountainous range that it would probably be cut down. Or, numerous delays would cause the corps to be ineffective in combat. However, he was well aware that his superior, Maj. Gen. Miles, was interested in the bicycle experiments and wrote a positive note saying, "In some sections to good advantage for courier service and reconnoitering". The report was sent to the Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in November, and Miles received a copy.

Lt. Moss decided to take a leave of absence, to visit Washington, D.C. In January he received a letter from Gen. Miles requesting he begin planning for a more extensive trip for the coming summer. On Jan. 22, 1897, Moss sent a letter back to Gen. Miles asking permission to remain in Washington so he could study all the available literature on bicycles at the Bureau of Information and visit leading bicycle and tire manufacturers in the area.

Moss visited the Spalding Bicycle Company at Chicopee Falls to see if it would again be willing to donate 22 military bicycles specially equipped for the trip. Lt. Moss asked for the latest development in puncture-proof tires along with a stronger frame, steel wheel rims instead of wooden ones, extra

heavy side forks and crowns, tandem spokes and a luggage carrier mounted in the diamond. A specially designed Christy saddle would be provided for extra comfort. The gears and chains must be protected from harsh elements such as loose gravel and dust as well as mud clogging the gears.

After Maj. Gen. Miles studied the information from Lt. Moss, he sent another letter to the Secretary of War explaining there would be no cost to the Army for the use of the bicycles with all the improvements. On May 4 the Secretary of War gave the go-ahead to prepare for the longest bicycle trip in U.S. Army history. Upon hearing the request had been approved Lt. Moss returned to Fort Missoula to start selecting his Infantry Bicycle Corps.

Although the men had signed on as foot soldiers, the 25th Infantry rode bicycles with balloon tires, coaster brakes and chain-driven devices where there were no trails or the roads were rough wagon roads. Lt. Moss' selection of men was unusual; of the 40 volunteers, only five veterans from the Yellowstone trip were picked. The remainder were chosen for reliability and good physical condition.

Each soldier carried a Krag-Jorgenson rifle and bayonet weighing 10 pounds. A belt with 50 rounds of ammunition was slung over his shoulders. One carried a shotgun. Lt. Moss carried a revolver and 20 rounds of ammunition. Luggage and various personal effects were mounted on the front handlebars with one blanket, one yard mosquito netting, one bicycle wiping cloth, one half-shelter tent and poles each. Cooking utensils consisted of one knife, tin cup, plate, spoon and fork, toothbrush, powder—and the most

important thing—toilet paper. Every other soldier carried a cake of soap and one towel. Lance Corporals Martin and Haynes carried one comb and brush and one box of matches. Every second soldier carried an oil can for the bikes.

Meals consisted of field and travel rations. Travel rations were hard bread, ship biscuits, baked beans, canned beef, sugar and ground coffee. Field rations consisted of black pepper, salt, baking powder, flour, ground coffee, bacon, soap, dried beans and canned beef.

Uniforms were blue gingham shirts and regular blouse, leggings, shoes, campaign hat, knickerbockers and canvas trousers. Also included were; one hat, one pair of skin gloves, one pair of bicycle shoes, one pair of drawers, one handkerchief, two pairs of socks and one undershirt. By the time the men were ready the added supplies weighed 70 to 75 pounds. The heaviest soldier weighed 177 pounds; the lightest 125 1/2 pounds. The oldest soldier was 39, the youngest 27.

The Infantry Bicycle Corps consisted of 22 military men. Lt. James M. Kennedy, assistant post surgeon, was second in command. Moss and Kennedy were the only two white men of the corps. The enlisted men were divided into two squads, headed by Lance Corporals Abram Martin and William Haynes. Acting 1st sergeant was Mingo Saunders. Privates were Travis Bridges, Francis Button, John Cook, William Haines (Haynes), John Findley, Frank L. Johnson, Sam Johnson, Eugene Jones, Elwood Foreman, Sam Williamson and William Williamson. Others included Corp. John H. Wilson, William Proctor, George Scott, Hiram L. B. Dingman, Samuel Reed and Richard Rout. Musi-

cian Elias Johnson was the bugler. Because of its historic nature, Lt. Moss selected civilian Edward H. Boos from the Daily Missoulian as reporter and photographer.

Moss made arrangements with the Quartermasters Department to station rations along the route approximately 100 miles apart, making 19 stations.

On Monday, June 14, 1897, the men were anxious to begin their historic trip. Many townsfolk rode out to the fort to give their young soldiers a hearty farewell. Before leaving, the men posed in the firing position for a group picture. The sound of the cannon announced the start of the trip at 5:30 a.m. Lt. Moss had his share of critics who said it could not be done. He was out to prove them wrong.

The men rode double file as they passed the outer gate. Fifteen miles east of the fort they rode into a driving rain. Soaking wet and muddy from the thick mud clogging the wheels, the men were forced to walk.

At 11:30 a.m. they stopped for lunch at a ranch 28 miles from the fort. The clouds parted for a short time, but by 2:30 a threatening storm cloud appeared and strong winds began to pick up, followed by heavy rain and lightning. The storm was short-lived, and the men quickly mounted and rode on. However, it was not long before another cloud burst occurred, turning the road into a thick gumbo, impossible to pedal through. The order to "dismount and walk" was called.

Struggling to push their bikes though the gumbo, the men had to stop every so often and scrap the thick mud off the tires and spokes. The best tool to use for this chore was their meat knife.

Thirty minutes later the rain stopped, and the men took off down the road. At 3 o'clock they rested for one hour. Not wanting to stop anymore, the men passed by the Clear Water Post Office around dusk and continued till 8 p.m., camping that first night at Cottonwood, Mont. Under such trying conditions the men still traveled 54.5 miles. The next night the men camped at Avon, Mont., during a heavy rainfall that continued into morning. The men decided to wait until the rain let up. By 10:30 a.m. it had slowed to a drizzle, giving the men the opportunity to continue their ride down the hogwallow road. But the road was so bad the men decided to ride the shoulder of the Northern Pacific railroad tracks till they reached Elliston, Montana at 1 p.m. Soaking wet and exhausted, Lt. Moss decided it would be better to camp here until 10 a.m. The previous day had been so exhausting they only traveled 9.25 miles.

June 17 was no better. The road was so bad from the previous rains the men decided to continue skirting the Northern Pacific railroad tracks east of Elliston for three miles, then part to the left, picking up the Old Mullan Stage Road until it became little more than muddy ruts broken only by dilapidated corduroy bridges. By noon the men reached the summit of the main divide of the Rocky Mountains to experience a sleet storm backed up with a two-inch snowfall. The men were so cold they had to stop several times to warm their hands and ears. The descent towards the Atlantic proved to be as tiring as the ascent. With frozen hands and numb faces, everyone had to exert a great deal of strength to prevent his bike from running out of control. The slower they walked the more quickly the snow



*F. J. Haynes, Photographer, Haynes Foundation Collection,
Montana Historical Society*

Bicycles on top of terraces, Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone National Park, Oct. 7, 1896

turned to slush. In some places it was ankle deep. It was 4:30 p.m. when they reached Fort Harrison, Mont. After a much-needed day's rest, the men continued pedaling along the Northern Pacific railroad tracks.

A fresh supply of rations was waiting for them when they reached Helena. Their strength was soon tested on the road out of town on a long ascending hill that quickly became so bad the order was given to keep to the railroad. This went on for several miles until conditions improved, but the men still had to walk their bikes up steep inclines. Downhill was easier, but it was still difficult holding their bikes back. They soon reached the bottom of the hill and peddled across Beaver Creek on a good bridge. The road out of Beaver Creek was not any better but was still rideable.

As the road worsened Moss

decided to cross a field covered in prickly pears, ending at the Missouri River, now in front of them. Crossing the river they reached the small town of Townsend, where they stopped to take on water.

The following day it threatened to rain again. Lt. Moss inquired about road conditions and found it would be better to follow the railroad right-of-way to the town of Three Forks. The men traveled 73.5 miles that day.

On June 19, five miles before Recap, the corps was informed that the road was in much better shape and they could ride with ease. This was not the case, however, as this led them through an old marshy field infested with vicious mosquitoes.

That evening it was decided to make camp at a temporary station called Recap, Mont., a small construction camp between the Northern Pacific

Railroad tracks and the Gallatin River. One had to be careful pitching his tent over the many prickly pears.

With a high bluff on one side of the river and the men on the other, they were compelled to follow the Northern Pacific railroad tracks for five more miles. This turned out to be worse than the road. New cross ties had been laid but not filled in yet. This became very painful for the men. Their hands were numb, and their shoulders were in great pain. Lt. Moss described the tracks as being a constant "jar numbing."

Sunday morning, June 20, 6:30 a.m. after a quick inspection of all equipment and finding not one bolt missing or anything else loose, they were on their way. As they pedaled through the Gallatin Valley the road improved, and they were able to make good time passing the little towns of Manhattan and Central Park, where they stopped for lunch.

Before reaching Bozeman, they rested, then rode in formation as they approached the town. Again, many people turned out to see this unusual sight of black soldiers riding bicycles through their town. At this point the men were running short of rations, so Lt. Moss stopped and purchased some bread, then pushed on to Chestnut to camp for the night. Fifty miles were traveled that day.

A couple of days later the road turned to a slimy mess from a previous rain, causing several men to "take heads" over the handlebars twisting them, causing delays. After the repairs the men reached Bozeman, June 22, at 5:55 p.m. It was a very difficult 50-mile trek. It was noted that the spills could have been avoided if the riders had been paying attention.

The next morning the men woke to a "gray-eyed-morning." They soon crossed a watershed separating the Yellowstone River and Missouri River through a rocky canyon to Livingston, where a fresh supply of rations was waiting.

About four miles west of Big Timber, several members of the "Big Timber Wheelmen Club" rode out to greet the corps and inform them of the upcoming road conditions. One veteran insisted the men stop and have a drink at the neighborhood bar. Lt. Moss thanked the gentleman but it was late in the day and the men still needed to push on at least eight more miles before stopping for the day. Leaving Big Timber, behind the men came upon a small pond where some aquatic birds were feeding. Five long neck curlews were shot for the evening meal. It was not long before they crossed the Boulder River and a thunderstorm quickly approached them. They decided to recross the river, set up camp and weather out the storm. In spite of the delays they traveled 57 miles that day.

When the corps stopped at Livingston to receive its rations, people lined the road giving them a warm welcome while looking intently, wondering what was going on. The men mounted up and peddled out of town. They were making good time until one of the soldiers suddenly broke a front axle, causing a one-hour delay.

Mile after mile the men pushed up and down through the thick mud, stopping time after time to scrape it off the rims. As they ascended a summit the soldiers were in six to eight inches of water. After crossing Pryor Creek the men came to a deserted Indian cabin and spent the night. Lt. Moss noted in his

daily log they covered 146.5 miles, and 116 miles of that was wet muddy roads.

With their food supplies almost exhausted the men had a scant breakfast consisting of weak coffee and a piece of burnt bread. After breakfast the men were up and on the road by 5:15 a.m. This road was seldom used, and it was decided to ride the railroad tracks because they were in better shape. A sectional house and water tank were spotted. Here the men stopped for lunch. The sectional people were surprised to see the Army soldiers, and on bicycles at that! The sectional chief kindly allowed the men to use their stove to prepare a warm meal. Lt. Moss purchased some groceries from the sectional men and topped off their canteens with fresh water. It was 3:30 p.m. when they were back on the road heading to Columbus, Mont.

The following morning the men broke camp early. Road conditions had improved considerably, and the men broke a previous speed record. Wild game was plentiful, and the soldiers took advantage of this. Five curlews were bagged again for another fresh meal.

Shortly after passing through Reedpoint, the men crossed the Yellowstone River over a railroad bridge connecting with the county road leading to Columbus. The terrain quickly turned to a steep hill forcing the men to dismount and walk. The weather had been sunny and hot, but before the men could reach the summit the sky turned cloudy and cool. Rain made the road slippery and difficult. As soon as they reached the summit the men made haste for cover under a thick covering of trees and waited for the rain to stop.

Slippery roads made for tense

moments. One soldier lost control on a curve as his rear tire slipped out from under him, causing a terrible spill. The rear tire being too damaged to ride anymore, he was forced to walk his bike the rest of the way till he reached camp later that evening. A local farmer allowed the men to camp on his property. The evening meal was another feast—fresh curlews, fried rabbit, boiled eggs, milk and fresh coffee made for a grand supper even though it was midnight before they ate.

While everyone else got some sack time, Pvt. John Finley stayed up most of the night repairing the broken bicycles. With all the problems the corps had dealt with in the past 24 hours, the men still traveled over 58 miles.

Wednesday morning the men were on the road by 5:30 a.m. The road was in pretty good shape as they passed through the little towns of Park City and Laurel. This day was met with few delays. Most were due to farmers irrigating their fields, covering all the low lying areas including roads.

One unexpected delay was caused by three old ladies refusing to let the soldiers pedal by. Their team of horses took up the entire road. The ladies let the horses trot just fast enough to keep the men from passing and yet too slow for their usual speed. Lt. Moss tried to reason with the ladies but all he received was laughter. Soon an opportunity opened to leave these three contemptible women in their dust. The call for double time was made, and the soldiers picked up the pace and quickly overtook the ladies, startling the horses and causing the women to lose control. The men rode on into Billings, arriving June 23, at 9:55 a.m.

With an early start for Fort

Custer, the men once again crossed the Yellowstone River over a railroad bridge. The road started to climb six miles out of Billings and again it began to rain. The order to dismount and walk was given. The clay was so thick the men used their meat knives to scrap it off the spokes. They found it was easier to carry the bikes over a mile until the road was dry enough to ride again, and had little difficulty pedaling on for 37 more miles before stopping for lunch on the banks of the Yellowstone River. When the men started to cross the Crow Indian Reservation, they were met by a strong head wind backed up by a thunderstorm as they began to leave the Valley of the Yellowstone. The rain fell incessantly until the following morning.

Because of the muddy terrain, the men only reached Prior Creek and decided to camp at a deserted Indian cabin. This was by far the worst day so far as everyone was cold, wet, muddy, exhausted and hungry. The cyclometers were choked with mud, but the distance traveled was estimated to be 50 miles.

The unexpected delays the previous day caused the rations to run dangerously low; breakfast was burnt bread and weak coffee. Still wet, they broke camp at 6:40 a.m. The road was no better than the previous day. After leaving this wasteland the soldiers began to make better time. Stopping at Spring Creek to fill up on fresh water, the corps was soon back on the road heading to Fort Custer. But conditions were so poor it took them about three hours to travel the first six miles. They arrived at Fort Custer at 3:30 p.m. June 25. In Boos' report, he said the men were in good condition and their spirits were still high. While at the Fort, the men decided to discard one-half their blankets to

lighten their load, hoping the night temperatures would stay warm. After a day's rest they left Fort Custer on June 26 at 5:30 a.m. for a 15.5 mile trip to Custer National Cemetery.

The ride from Custer Battlefield to Sheridan, Wyo., approximately 90 miles, was the hardest pedaling so far. The road was very rough and hilly. Approximately every seven miles, the men had to dismount and rest before the next big hill. Several times the men crossed the Little Big Horn River, soaking everyone.

After a restful night the men were back on the road heading towards the Montana-Wyoming border, crossing the Little Big Horn River again. The only marker showing the border between Montana and Wyoming was some barbed wire. The inclement weather in Montana seemed to lighten up as they approached the border. This weather did not last too long. The men quickly pedaled to Parkman for the night, sleeping in a barn to stay dry.

The first few days in Wyoming proved to be another test of endurance. The road was a mixture of good and deplorable conditions. At one point the temperature reached 111 degrees. The men rode 50 miles without water, causing their lips to parch and their tongues to swell.

One night Boos reported the corps was compelled to ride in the dark because of a superstition and fear the men had:

"...One of the men discovered a few graves and heard that rattlesnakes were near the camp; that settled it; no sleeping around there that night so it was decided to push on our way during the night."

This turned out to be a grueling



2nd Lt.
James
A. Moss,
USMA -
1893

Westpoint Archives

45-hour test of endurance. During the night the men rode silently through the towns of Arno, Regis, Kendrick and Croton. They finally stopped in Felix, Wyo., to rest and have breakfast. Lt. Moss noted the men traveled almost 25 miles that night.

The cool morning sun soon turned to hot and blazing as they traveled uphill to reach Gillette. On June 29 at 2 p.m. the men stopped for lunch, so exhausted some fell asleep while eating. Lt. Moss decided to let the men rest for two hours and wait till it cooled down.

The road out of Gillette was in pretty good shape, and the corps made good time until one of the men broke a front axle. Not having any extras the unfortunate soldier had to walk his bike the rest of the day.

It was getting late in the evening and Lt. Moss turned the corps over to Acting 1st Sgt. Mingo Saunders, while he and two others with flour, bacon and coffee in their luggage cases started out ahead. The plan was to reach Moorcroft ahead of the others to have supper ready when they arrived. That plan was quickly foiled when they were forced to dismount and walk their bikes in the

dark on the muddy road. By midnight they struck the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks. Lt. Moss tried to strike a fire, but there was no wood to be found. A half-hour later the sound of gunfire was heard in the darkness. Lt. Moss had returned fire. Shortly after, three soldiers appeared. The five men resumed their walk for another hour. At 1 o'clock one of the men, exhausted from fatigue, said, "My God, I can't go any further," and stopped. The rest of the men continued on.

Thirty miles ahead were Moorcroft and fresh water. With good road conditions, the men were able to make better time for the first 20 miles. As luck would have it, rain began to fall, and once again the road turned to a sticky mire. The men began to spread out so much, Boos reported they nearly walked off a cliff, yet they pushed on through the night. Not only were they exhausted, but their water supply was very low. The water in Wyoming along their route was too alkaline to drink. At one point, Lt. Moss began to hallucinate.

On Monday, June 30, the men stopped at Newcastle, Wyo., for a refreshing two-hour swim break. After riding through the towns of Spencer, Clifton and Dewey the men crossed the Wyoming border into the southwestern tip of South Dakota around 6 or 7 p.m. At this point they followed the Burlington Railroad tracks southeast, crossing the south fork of the Cheyenne River into Nebraska, stopping for the night at Fort Robinson. They had traveled thirty-seven miles in five hours under scorching heat. The men took frequent rests from the hot temperatures without fresh drinking water for the last four days. The corps arrived at Crawford, Neb., Saturday afternoon,

July 3, as the town was starting to celebrate Independence Day. One of the high points was when the corps rode down 2nd Street in formation at a gait. The men were greeted with lively music from Professor Gungl's Ninth Cavalry Band as several thousand people cheered them on. With no time to stop, the men peddled east heading for Alliance through such towns as Rutland, Dooley and Hemingford. Between these towns the road was in great shape. The best conditions the men had had yet. Not wasting any time, Lt. Moss ordered "double time," and the pace picked up. They completed nine miles in 35 minutes.

It was not long before they were in Alliance, where Lt. Moss purchased fresh meat, bread and other supplies. By 8 o'clock the men were eating supper with the townfolk. When the corps entered the Sand Hills, nine miles east of Alliance, the road began to disappear under shifting sands. Ankle-deep sand made it impossible to travel, so the men left the road to follow a set of railroad tracks for the next 170 miles. In four and one-half days they averaged 37.7 miles in 110-degree temperature in the shade. Two men blistered their feet from the hot sand. With the combination of high temperatures, poor water and deep sand, several of the men took ill. Lt. Moss was so sick an engine crew took him back to Alliance to recover. Surgeon Kennedy was placed in command until Lt. Moss returned, but Kennedy became ill also, and Edward Boos was asked to take command.

It was decided the men would travel as far as possible before the afternoon heat set in. One by one the men fell ill, and a "sick brigade" was formed. The corps traveled through 13

more towns before Lt. Moss caught up with them between Halsey and Anselmo, Neb. Between Alliance and Anselmo the men covered 170 miles in four and one-half days under difficult conditions. Today this route is State Highway 2. Once the corps reached Lincoln it turned south, heading towards Table Rock, Neb. By July 17, they had reached Rulo, Neb. The slowest day of the trip was a few miles west of Rulo, just before crossing the Platte River; heavy rains made the road impassable, forcing the men to walk, covering a dismal nine miles the whole day.

The next two large towns the men passed through were Aurora and Lincoln. At Lincoln the corps turned southeast, heading toward St. Joseph, Mo., following the Missouri River.

The next day the men crossed the Missouri River, pedaling down what is today U.S. Highway 36 through Hamilton, Brookfield, and Hannibal, then turning south for the last few miles, following the Mississippi River to reach St. Louis, Missouri. A driving rain forced the men to stop in St. Charles, where a group of bicycle enthusiasts had gathered to escort them into Forest Park. This was to be their last difficult four miles as the road was covered with a deep layer of wet sand. Pedaling in formation the men approached the outskirts of St. Louis as a huge crowd of citizens cheered them on. No Army officers were present to greet them at Forest Park. Lt. Moss looked at his pocket watch; it was 6 p.m. July 24, 1897.

The following morning a big celebration was given in their honor. At 10 a.m. the Associated Cycling Clubs and the L. A. W. (League of American Wheelmen) held a reception at the

Cottage Hotel in Forest Park. At 11 a.m. a parade led by the Bicycle Corps pedaled out of the park east on Clayton Road to Kings Highway, heading north to Lindell Boulevard, and proceeding east to Grand Avenue. From there the men pedaled one block south to Pine Street, then turned west heading to Taylor Avenue, pedaling south to Clayton Road and back to camp. Several mounted police escorted the men along the parade route. Ten thousand spectators visited the camp as the men viewed the sights in the following few days.

Lt. Moss was very proud of his men for surviving a 1,900.2-mile bicycle ride. In his official military report, he said:

"Some of our experiences, especially while in the sand hills of Nebraska, tested to the utmost not only their physical endurance, but also their moral courage and disposition; and I wish to commend them for the spirit, pluck and fine soldierly qualities they displayed."

After the trip, Lt. Moss requested permission from the War Department to continue cycling with the men to St. Paul, Minn., via Chicago to continue testing the bicycles over more level terrain. Gen. Miles was out of the country, and the reply from Army headquarters was a denial. Shortly after reaching Fort Missoula the bicycles were shipped back to the Spalding Bicycle Company.

When the Bicycle Corps left Fort Missoula, the *Daily Missoulian* carried a lengthy article describing their departure. Upon its return only three lines were devoted to its homecoming.

Of the 22 soldiers who left Fort Missoula, 19 reached St. Louis in good health.

During the winter of 1898, Lt.

Moss studied French and British books on military cycling. In February he submitted a proposal to the Adjutant General of the Army requesting permission to conduct another bicycle test. This time the trip would be from Fort Missoula to San Francisco and back. Despite several endorsements, his request was turned down by the War Department saying, "Sufficient experiments, to meet all knowledge of its merits, have been made with the bicycle at present." This denial was probably due to the sinking of the U.S.S. *Maine* on Feb. 15, 1898. War was imminent, and time and money could not be spent sending soldiers on such a trip. Even so, the men had accomplished 2,800 miles in 451 hours of travel.

For a young lieutenant who graduated at the bottom of his class, Moss went on to write a number of books on army record-keeping and organization. He also originated American Flag Week. He retired as a colonel.

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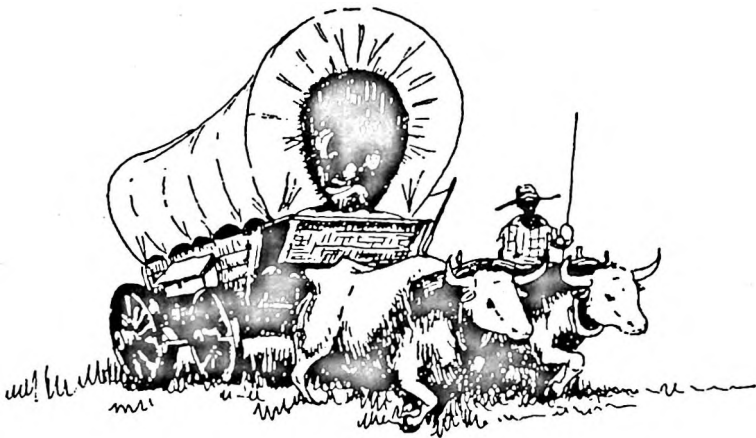
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Over the Corral Rail

Contributors

The Denver Posse of the Westerners would like to thank the following people for their generous contributions in 1997 to the Rosenstock Memorial Fund: **Johanna Harden, Marilyn Weiker, Bruce Gillis, George Krieger DDS, Robert Shikes MD, Jay Siegel, Ken Gaunt, Earl Mc Coy, Jon Almgren.**

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Welcome New Members

We're playing catch-up!

Space precludes printing the customary bio of all of our new members. However, the Denver Posse of the Westerners would like to welcome the following new members to our family:

from 1997: **Scotty Wilkins, Wilbur Swart, Nolan Winsett, Harry Grant, Clark Secrest, Robert Lewis, Paul La Cour, George Gill;**

from 1998: **John Burdan, Winnie Burdan, Barbara Gibson, Scott Smith, Steve Driftmier, Jim Wilkins, James Jones, Lorena Donahue, Robert Voit, Lloyd Gebow, Dolores Ebner, LaVonne Perkins, Jeanne Jo Parker.**

Thanks for joining us!

Posse Member on Oscar winning team

David Emrich, Posse Member from Denver, recently had the honor of attending the Academy Awards program in Los Angeles, California. David was the editor of the Oscar winning short documentary, *A Story of Healing*. Produced by Denver's Dewey Obenchain Films, the film documents a medical team's trip to South Vietnam in 1997. These volunteer doctors, nurses, and support staff work with the non-profit organization Interplast to provide plastic surgery training for doctors and treatment for young patients in developing countries. During this team's one week in a small town in the Vietnam Delta, 110 children had surgery done on cleft palates, webbed fingers and burns. While an Oscar does not sit on his mantle, David is proud to be associated with this award and this wonderful organization of doctors. (And he's asked for visitation rights with Oscar.)



Westerners Bookshelf



The Important Things of Life, Women, Work, and Family in Sweetwater County, Wyoming, 1880-1929, by Dee Garceau, University of Nebraska, Lincoln and London, 1997. 10 photos, 3 maps, appendix, bibliography, notes, index; 216 pages. Clothbound, \$45.00.

Remember the song that went "Faster horses, younger women, older whiskey and more money." Unlike this country song *The Important Things of Life, Women, Work, and Family* may truly touch on the important ingredients of life as it was in south central Wyoming in the late 1900s and the first thirty of the twentieth century. This volume touches upon many of the constants of the American West—cowboys, company towns, work, ranch work, mining, miners, company stores, courtship, the sense of community, you name it and if it was present in the West I think it is mentioned here.

The Important Things of Life is not limited to being just a book on women; it is a history of how life was seventy plus years ago. Found is information on such disparate issues as how sufficient land for ranching in the semidesert regions was obtained, ethnic clusters of immigrants to the West, homesteading, the mining frontier, the growth and decline of company towns. The author recognizes the differences in life and life styles between rural and town women and addresses them throughout the book. Even such twentieth century topics as "support networks" are covered. The title, *The Important Things of Life, Women, Work, and Family*, is somewhat deceptive because this is a well-written history of interest to all, not just to those studying women or family history. This history of Sweetwater County, Wyoming is well presented in a readable manner.

The Selected Bibliography is a starting point if the reader is interested in pursuing the topic further. *The Important Things of Life* illustrates how oral histories, such as the ones of the Sweetwater County residents that were drawn upon for much of this book, can be used as the basis of a study. The use of these oral histories is what makes this book stand out. *The Important Things of Life, Women, Work, and Family in Sweetwater County, Wyoming, 1880-1929* is a book all historians of the American West should read and some should emulate, both for writing style and for an example of the well integrated use of oral interviews.

--Keith Fessenden, P.M.

Shavetails and Bell Sharps, The History of the U.S. Army Mule, by Emmett M. Essin, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1997. 21 illustrations, appendix: Manual of Pack Transportation, notes, bibliographic essay, index; xvii, 245 pages. Clothbound, \$37.50.

Beginning in the 1830s Mr. Essin leads the reader through more mule talk than the average reader has ever been exposed to. Here is found the mule's gallant support of the G.I. through the Seminole War, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, the Great War, World War II, the Korean War and even the Vietnam War. In fact it appears the mule has attended every war the American soldier has, but perhaps not as willingly.

Of special interest to Colorado historians is the story of the Tenth Mountain Division and it's through use of the mule. On a sadder note, it was in Colorado on December 15, 1956 when the last two operational units with mules, the Thirty-fifth Quartermaster Pack Company and Battery A of the Fourth Field Artillery Pack Battalion were deactivated at Fort Carson, Colorado. The era of the mule was officially over. But the U. S. Army Special Forces and others found a need and a way to use mules in Vietnam. The army issued studies on the use of the mule in warfare during the 1960s and was planning on reactivating at least one mule unit in the 1980s until the newspapers started quipping about it and the generals became sensitive.

...leads the reader through more mule talk than the average reader has ever been exposed to....

Both the animal lover and historian will find assembled in this book information not readily available elsewhere. The chapters on the use of the mule in the twentieth century are interesting. Of ironic interest are the discussions of the use of the mule side by side with modern technology, such as tanks, jeeps, helicopters and airplanes. Even with this new technology mules were critical to the success of operations in North Africa, Italy and the China/Burma/India Theater during World War II.

Although dry in spots, *Shavetails & Bell Sharps* is a significant contribution to the story of the U.S. Army. It is a highly readable study of a topic seldom mentioned or thought of. As the author states, "Mules were the ideal work animals for the U.S. Army". This book should be included in any complete bibliography of books on the U.S. Army and its supply, transportation and Quartermaster Corps as informative, not to be missed.

--Keith Fessenden, P.M.

Death's Deceiver: The Life of Joseph P. Machebeuf by Lynn Bridgers. Univ. of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1997. 280 pages. Paper, \$21.95.

Joseph P. Machebeuf can truly be called "Death's Deceiver". He was born in France in 1812, educated for the priesthood in France and then came to America to impart the teachings of his faith. His numerous brushes with death include diseases, accidents, Indian attacks, and feuds among the religious leaders on the Western Frontier. Although frail in appearance, he survived and left a healthy legacy of schools and parish churches.

The arrangement of this book follows the life of Machebeuf from his childhood and education in France, to his first assignment in Ohio to his close working relationship with Bishop Lamy in Santa Fe and finally his Denver and Colorado successes. He died in Denver in 1889. The author drew

...follows the life of Machebeuf from his childhood.....and his Denve and Colorado successes...

her interest in Machebeuf from earlier books about him: first, Rev. W. J. Howlett's 1908 biography, *Life of the Right Reverend Joseph P. Machebeuf, D. D.* and Willa Cather's novel *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. Lynn Bridgers' book is thoroughly researched, containing detailed notes for every

chapter and an extensive bibliography.

In *Death's Deceiver*, the author expressed her views on the Sand Creek Massacre and women's rights. Sand Creek being included in this book is a stretch as Machebeuf was not involved in the affair. His opinions of a women's place, typical of the times, should be told, but it should not distract from the abundance of his good works.

One other small point of contention is the author listing Manitou Springs as a "mining community" of "hastily constructed shacks". Manitou, at the foot of Ute Pass, was never a mining area. Often called the Saratoga of the West, it was a spa and an area of tourism.

Death's Deceiver, an excellent biography of Machebeuf, provides us with a wonderful resource on the beginnings of the Catholic church in Colorado. This book reads very well, and is recommended as the very interesting story of one of the West's important religious pioneers.

--Nancy Bathke, P. M.

Buildings of Colorado, by Dr. Thomas J. Noel, Oxford University Press, 1997. Cloth, 669 pages, illustrated. \$59.95.

The Buildings of Colorado is one of a series of books on American

architecture, compiled for each state, under the auspices of the Society of Architectural Historians. It is reminiscent of the WPA books on each state done in the 1930s: in a way here is a modern updated version of that series—but it is much more.

The book is divided into four sections, each a geographical area of Colorado. Within each section a chapter is devoted to each county, and a short county history is provided. Major cities and towns in each county are featured with a short history. The meat of the treatise follows: architecturally significant structures in each locality are described, in a judicious melding of history and architectural description. The reader is provided with a wealth of architectural information, in adequate detail for the trained architect, while, at the same time, not overwhelming the uninitiated, but rather educating him in the richness of the descriptions.

This book becomes a valuable research tool while one is traveling the state. At one's fingertips will be historical sketches of the localities, backgrounds on these structural landmarks, and vivid descriptions of each. A number of excellent maps provide relative locations of the sites, and a good representation of photographs is provided. *Buildings of Colorado* should be considered a keystone tome for the Colorado history buff.

At one's fingertips will be
historical sketches of the
localities...and vivid
descriptions of each....

--Nancy E. Bathke, P. M.

--Edwin A. Bathke, P. M.

Rough Rider Buckey O'Neill Of Arizona, by Dale L. Walker. Univ. Of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London. Originally published 1975 as **Death Was The Black Horse**, by Madrona Press, Austin, TX. Illustrated, 200 Pages, Paperback, \$12.95.

"Killed July 1, 1898, at San Juan Hill, Cuba. 'Who Would Not Die for a New Star in the Flag.'" This inscription is found on the Arlington grave of William Owen "Buckey" O'Neill, a man also memorialized by a dramatic bronze of a horse and Rough Rider in front of the Yavapai County Courthouse in Prescott, Arizona. This book is of the life and times of this adventurer so rudely cut down in the 38th year of a full and meaningful career that promised so much more.

In the preparation of this book the author was able to find and interview the only three still living Rough Riders (as of 1970) who gained fame in the 1898 Cuban campaign against Spain. This campaign of course made the

carcer of one Theodore Roosevelt who had this to say about O'Neill later: "...he was himself a born soldier, a born leader of men. He was a wild, reckless fellow, soft-spoken, and of dauntless courage and boundless ambition..."

This is quite a fascinating book about an intriguing gentleman who earned his nickname from a fearless style of gambling he practiced known as "bucking the tiger" or going for broke. He came to Arizona in 1879 looking for a job and found it in Phoenix, then Tombstone and later Prescott, with various newspapers.

The author cleverly turns a descriptive phrase which especially makes this a fun read. "To Buckey, Tombstone epitomized the 'real West' as only an Eastern tenderfoot could visualize it; to most others, the town was a boil on the territorial backside, an evil eruption growing bigger and more uncontrollable...with each passing day."

O'Neill had the drive to try his hand in the courts and as a politician. "Buckey's natural conviviality, his 'take-my-bet-and-the-hell-with-it' attitude, his youthful vigor, exuberance, and wit, made him a star attraction along Whiskey Row. This natural affinity for the horny-handed scrabbling miner and workman, the grassroots, salt-of-the-earth types who found in the saloon some of the few pleasures in a life of sweat and back aches, was to give Buckey a dimension not found in the average politician and public man of the day." How can you not want to read more?

O'Neill embraced the Populist credo of the time "that land held the source of all wealth and was the heritage of the people." They worked to break industrial monopoly and eliminate the favorable status enjoyed by the railroads. While this movement failed when McKinley defeated William Jennings Bryan for the 1896 Presidency, this book relates the fights that O'Neill waded into during his lifetime to better the common man. He was a natural scrapper and when the fight in Cuba broke out, he left his job as mayor and his wife to lead a contingent of Arizona fighters to Tampa. These men mixed not without conflict with an Eastern contingent of "dudes". "In ultimate contrast stood the Westerners....to a man born adventurers, in the old sense of the word...'Cherokee Bill,' 'Happy Jack', 'Smokey Moore', 'Rattlesnake Pete', 'Tough Ike'..."

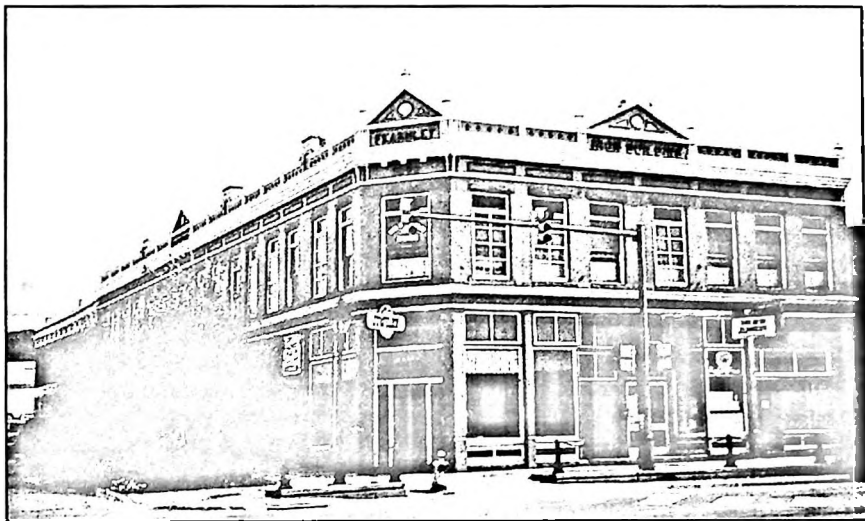
Once in Cuba, O'Neill showed no fear which proved to be foolhardy. It is with a feeling of incompleteness that just before the glorious Rough Rider charge (whose authenticity has often been debated), O'Neill is cut down in the middle of a conversation by a stray bullet fired by an unseen enemy trooper. It is a cruel ending to a fascinating book.

--George W. Krieger, PM



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

MAY-JUNE 1998



James O. Donohue photo

The Fearnley Block in Leadville, a building project from 1893

Leadville 1893 - A Year in Transition

by

James O. Donohue

(Presented Jan. 28, 1998)



The Westerners go High Tech. Mr. Donohue's "slides" were projected computer images.

About the author

Jim Donohue is a native of Colorado. He has a B.A. in Economics from the University of Colorado, a B.S. in Computer Science from Metro State, and a M.A. in Special Education from the University of Northern Colorado. After serving six years in the U.S. Army, Mr. Donohue began his career teaching High School Special Education and Mathematics in Cherry Creek School District #5, where he has taught for the past twenty-three years. He has also taught at the Universidad De Colima in Colima, Mexico.

Jim would like to thank Dr. Tom Noel for the inspiration and encouragement to write this paper.

Mr. Donohue's interest in Colorado and its history is a lifelong interest. Jim's other interests include playing the classical guitar, stained glass, drawing, and southwest literature. He met his wife Lorena Orvañanos Donohue in a "History class," (Saloon Class) taught by Dr. Noel.

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Leadville 1893 - A Year in Transition

by

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(Presented Jan. 28, 1998)

The impact of the collapse of the silver market in 1893 on the town of Leadville is variously reported as the beginning of financial wreck, bankruptcy, ruin, depression and panic on every front. Some authors go so far as to deem the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act close, on the heels of the closing of the India Mints, as a mortal blow from which Leadville never recovered. It is reported by at least one Leadville historian that "the only redeeming feature at that point was that gold had been discovered at Cripple Creek, and there was a great exodus to that camp." It is further stated that "the miners of Leadville hurried to take their houses down, plank by plank, and move them to the new camp." Writers in the WPA Writer's program stated that "the death knell of . . . [Leadville], the riotous, gay and opulent city, was sounded in those days of hysterical panic and despair . . ."

Many contemporary authors tie the events of Leadville to the life of Horace Austin Warner Tabor and, emphasize the severity of the overall impact. This point of view is highlighted by a writer in the WPA Writer's Project: "Horace Austin Warner Tabor was the living symbol of Leadville. Like the town, he rose from poverty and obscurity to spectacular prominence, and he went down to ruin with his beloved Leadville in the tragic panic of 1893."

Without question, Leadville suffered severely when its major

industry was staggered by the collapse of the silver market; however, a review of summary data from the year brings to question the degree of "panic and despair." The year 1893 saw more ore mined in Lake County (351,794 short tons) than any year since 1891, at a value exceeding the previous two years. School enrollment continued to increase during a time when the people of Leadville are reported by some to have been leaving as fast as possible. More claims were located during the last six months after the closing of the India Mints than during the first six months of the year. A review of death, birth and marriage announcements do not indicate a dramatic decline in population in the city of Leadville during 1893.

A review of the newspapers and other primary source documents of the day indicate a severe impact on Leadville; however, not the "mortal blow" that some believe. In the following pages the reaction of Leadville to the crisis will be reviewed with an eye to evaluating the true impact of the decline of the silver market on the city and its people during the year of 1893.

Leadville experienced a wide range of economic conditions and its citizens reacted to each phase in a unique way. The year of 1893 saw Leadville beginning and ending with unbridled optimism. In the months between January and December, however, Leadville saw some of its darkest moments and demonstrated unique resiliency.

Decline of Prosperity

The decade of the 1890's ushered in a new perspective in the mining industry in Leadville. The increasing freight rates, water problems, low grade sulphide ores, competition from Mexican mines and smelters, and increased operating costs were already driving the marginal mines out of business. The collapse of the older and smaller mines was imminent and was only hastened by the collapse of the silver market. Frank Hall in writing about Leadville in 1891, stated: "The old excitements, the exaggerated froth and fustian that made it notorious in the first years, had given place to elements founded upon legitimate industry [and] better methods in all departments . . ." In the early years, ores with less than fifty to sixty ounces of silver per ton were left standing in mines or thrown into waste dumps. In the 1890's miners had to be content with many ores with only three to five ounces of silver and good lead content to make ends meet. The hit and miss "devil take the hindmost" methods were gone. Not only were the ores less rich, but miners were required to bring them from shafts that sometimes exceeded 900 feet in depth, adding tremendously to the cost of mining. The application of more powerful pumps to deal with the ever present water problem and new methods used in treating the more complex and difficult to smelt ores required the outlay of large amounts of capital, which ushered in the corporate mine owner. The price received by miners for the silver they mined had been sliding continually from the high of \$1.34 per ounce in the 1860's to a low of 87 cents per ounce in 1892. The decline of the

price of silver had been slowed by the passage of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act in 1890, authorizing the government to bolster the market by purchasing silver through the issuance of paper money. However, 1892 saw the election of Grover Cleveland, who believed the country's economic woes were directly attributable to the government's purchase of silver.

Panic had been festering internationally for almost three years prior to 1892, resulting in significant drains on the gold reserves of the United States. Failures of large American businesses, panic selling on the stock exchanges, the closing of many banks, and the fear of government bankruptcy was blamed by many of the eastern businessmen on the overproduction of silver in the west. Agitation in the east for the repeal of the Sherman Act was at a high point by the end of 1892.

The problems of the east, however, had not reached the town of Leadville by May of 1893. The editor of Leadville's *Herald Democrat* reported a very optimistic future for the town. He stated that "indications are that more substantial and costly improvements will be undertaken within the next thirty days than during any similar period in the history of the city." Three new business blocks were planned and there had not been an idle carpenter or mason in town since "the season opened." The Hotel Vendome, which had taken over the old Hotel Kitchen in January, was contemplating expansion if business continued to increase. The Fearnley Buildings at 6th and Harrison, which had been destroyed by fire in early April, were to be

Business in Leadville

| | 1891 | 1892 | 1894 | 1895 |
|------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Churches | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Barbers | 21 | 23 | 24 | 26 |
| Blacksmiths | 11 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| Boarding Houses | 17 | 17 | 15 | 18 |
| Clothing Stores | 12 | 13 | 14 | 12 |
| Grocery Stores | 49 | 48 | 49 | 52 |
| Mines and Mining | 66 | 74 | 66 | 82 |
| Saloons | 3 | 92 | 80 | 84 |

Leadville City Directories (No Directory published in 1893 due to "stringent times.")

replaced by a two-story brick Fearnley Block. It and other major planned projects were expected to bring a considerable number of builders to town. In addition to new construction, many business houses and residences were "undergoing enlargement, improvement and repair." It was said that painters, paper hangers and decorators were kept busy morning until night. The prosperity of Leadville was further demonstrated by employment. The city boasted six smelters and reduction works employing more than eleven hundred men. It was estimated that as many as three thousand or more men were employed in the mining industry, and that fewer than one hundred families were "indigent" due to death, illness or unemployment of the father. The outlook, at the beginning of 1893, for the future of mining in the district was one of "marvelous promise." The known mineral bearing zone had been enlarged, concentration and smelting processes had been brought "to the highest state of perfection," and mines were being operated on a larger and more economical scale. By the early 1890's, ten new shafts had been sunk in the new downtown district and four

impressive strikes were reported. A consortium of mines, which included the Morning Star, Big Chief, Henriett and Maid of Erin, reported net profits of \$1,545,644.24 as late as 1889. With the price of silver at 90 cents per ounce and lead at \$40.00 per ton in 1889, the A. Y. Minnie reported profits exceeding 78 percent, and undeveloped reserves valued at \$11,828,835.88.

Disbelief and shock

On Monday, June 26, 1893, the British government announced the closing of the India Mints to the coinage of silver. The silver market immediately collapsed, with the price of silver plummeting from 82 cents per ounce to 73 cents overnight. Many large mines closed immediately, while others looked for ways to stay open. David Moffat, in an interview with an A.P. reporter on June 27, stated that it would be impossible for him to make a profit in his mines with the price of silver at 73 cents and his men paid \$3.00 per day. He planned to propose to the men in his employ that they take a two-thirds cut in pay until such time silver returned to a "reasonable price." He further stated that if "they do not accept

such a proposition, I shall be obliged to shut down all my properties." He estimated that if he closed his properties throughout Colorado, two thousand men would be thrown out of employment and that five times as many would be directly affected. He, along with the other major mine owners in the state, wired all their managers to come to Denver at once for a meeting.

On Thursday, June 29, 1893, a meeting was held at the Brown Palace Hotel which included men associated with mining from all over Colorado. *The Rocky Mountain News* reported this meeting to be the most important meeting since the Constitutional Convention, while others saw it as the first step in forming a new western empire. A majority of the business of the meeting was conducted in a secret meeting chaired by former Governor James B. Grant; however, a set of resolutions were drawn and "unanimously endorsed by the group at large." The resolutions called for the "immediate and complete" cessation of all silver mining, milling and smelting operations in the state of Colorado. The participants of the meeting were convinced that the "monometallist element" would appreciate that the world could not transact its business without silver money, that the actual cost and value of silver was in excess of their incorrect views and that the "enormous sums of money invested in railroads, loans and other properties [would] so depreciate in value that monometallist [would] be convinced that action must be taken with silver to restore it to its legitimate use."

By the end of June, all the major mines of Leadville were closed

Miners Budget 1896

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Groceries | \$30.00 |
| Rent | 10.00 |
| Clothing | 10.00 |
| Fuel | 6.00 |
| Water | 4.00 |
| Milk | 3.00 |
| Insurance | <u>2.00</u> |
| Total | \$65.00 |

Griswold, Don and Jean, *The Carbonate Camp Called Leadville*, p. 183.

and the smelters which remained open were only cleaning up the ore on hand. A few miners were retained to keep the pumps working, to do limited exploratory work and to take out fluxing ores for use in smelting, but for all intents and purposes, the mining industry in Leadville came to a stop. In a district which reported between 70 and 90 mines operating in 1890, only 18 continued to produce. The properties which were leased or which were owner operated continued to be worked on the belief that it was better to stack the ores and hope for higher prices than to sit at home and do nothing. It was estimated that fewer than 300 men continued to work in the mines. Both the shipping of ore by rail and hauling by wagon quickly declined and the subsequent laying off of several railroad switching crews and almost all the bullwackers was soon to follow. The *Leadville Herald Democrat* reported that "... the avenue was crowded with idle men, who however, seemed to be quiet and orderly, and the saloons did less than the usual amount of business. The gambling tables were almost deserted." Throughout the city, mine owners were lamenting the price of silver. August

Meyers, a major owner, stated that at 80 cents per ounce the mines returned only \$10.00 per ton and that after expenses the owner could expect no more than \$1.00 per ton. At a price of 73 or 72 cents, the prospects of most miners were dim. A widely circulated story stated that at a price of 68 ½ cents per ounce for silver (the price for low grade silver), the value of the silver dollar was 35 cents as bullion.

Merchants reacted by canceling orders and cutting down expenses and work forces wherever possible, thus throwing more men out of work. Although the streets thronged with the unemployed, the discussion was reported as cheerful, as everyone saw the situation as temporary and expected things to return to normal in a few days. The banks reported that the mercantile situation was good, since a majority of the large dealers were doing business on their own capital and that few were in debt "any considerable amount." Most businesses, the banks said, had bought prudently and few had outstanding obligations. An entire absence of any sort of "panicky feeling" was noted. It was reported by the *Herald Democrat* on June 28, "A consensus of opinion, as expressed on the avenue and in the resorts . . . was that the best thing for most people here to do [was] to remain, and get along the best they can until the relief [comes], which [was] certain to come sooner or later . . ."

Mr. James Powell, a local real estate dealer, stated that there were fewer vacant houses in the city than at any time for the past 12 to 13 years and that there were not "three unfurnished houses of from three to five rooms for rent, east of Harrison Avenue . . ."

stated that an exceptionally large percent of Leadville citizens owned their own homes and that few of them had any encumbrances. He said in summary that "the universality of confidence in the ultimate favorable outcome of the silver problem is evidenced in the fact that values remain wholly unchanged, and it would be impossible to buy a foot of real estate for a dollar less than was asked for it six months or a year ago." While the outlook was bad, the conviction generally expressed was that conditions were better in Leadville than elsewhere, and little talk was heard in those last weeks of June of abandoning the city. Most citizens when questioned by a *Herald Democrat* reporter about leaving answered flippantly. Humor remained the principal way of dealing with the situation. Cy Allen was "considering a flattering offer to shovel fog off the scenery at Colorado Springs," Postmaster Old thought he "could moisten postage stamps for a wealthy firm of New York bankers," Judge Kennedy, "just heard of a rich gold discovery at Fulford... But supposed that if they got to producing large amounts of gold they would demonetize that." Mr. Worcester was "promised a job of beating the brass drum in the Salvation Army," Coroner Nelson thought "he would herd elk back in Kansas," A.D. Searl was "favorably disposed toward starting a whale fishery at Uneva Lake," and Mark Carr "placed a letter on file giving him an option on a job in a Salt Lake barbershop keeping flies off the heads of bald-headed customers."

Retrenchment

As the summer continued,

Gold, silver, copper, lead, and zinc produced in Lake County

| Year | Ore <i>Short Tons</i> | Value |
|------|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1890 | 342,163 | \$8,121,497 |
| 1891 | 403,135 | \$7,980,796 |
| 1892 | 323,187 | \$7,856,561 |
| 1893 | 351,794 | \$8,114,270 |
| 1894 | 347,143 | \$8,238,421 |
| 1895 | 394,710 | \$9,110,419 |

Henderson, Charles, *Mining in Colorado*, p.176

unemployment increased and business failures were the result. Although some work continued on leased property, Fryer Hill and Carbonate Hill, the center of the mining activity in camp was "deserted and forlorn in appearance." In the first days of July silver dropped to 72 cents and Dr. Crook, the County Physician and Superintendent of Schools, diagnosed that "the country was suffering from Gold Fever. He was confident, however, that it would ultimately recover through the administration of the silver cure." Businessmen interviewed continued to show optimism. Mr. Cary of the Cary Hardware Company stated that business was "practically suspended;" however, he said that "in the main the working class of Leadville were reasonable well provided for, and capable of standing a siege of possibly a couple months," and that they were in no immediate danger. The *Herald Democrat* reported that "the falling off of business of the city . . . has been largely in things of personal indulgence." It was further reported that there had been "little curtailment in beef and bread and cigars and beer and cocktails and other absolute necessities of life." The reporter was convinced

that the falling off in the saloon trade had been in the poorer, "more reckless classes of customer." Though the streets remained crowded by the idle workers, many of the miners were married and stayed at home "repairing their habitations and painting their fences, and getting thoroughly acquainted with their families." Many of the single men were keeping to their rooms "out of temptation." There had been no recourse to "the awful comfort of drink," nor had there been any signs of violence or no show of ill feelings, according to one reporter.

The single Austrians were reported as faring best. They had banded together in "clubs" of 10 to 15 with one married man to join them in renting and furnishing a house. The expenses were shared equally and the wife of the one married man was paid by each man \$2 to \$4 per month as compensation for mending, washing and cleaning of the bedrooms. The families were reported to be forming groups of two to three families to share a house and save rent and to buy food in quantity at wholesale prices.

A "goodly number" of men banded together into prospecting parties

and, after laying in sufficient supplies of staples and quicksilver, had started out. Many predicted a major gold find before spring. There is also a report of a 35 percent increase in passenger travel on the railroads. Some estimate that as many as 800 men had left town permanently by the middle of July. Although some men were answering ads to work in the lead and zinc mines of Missouri and Illinois, few were willing to take jobs offered in the coal mines of Tennessee. A *Herald Democrat* newspaper reporter stated that "as a rule the silver miner does not take kindly to digging for coal." The release from steady work provided others with the opportunity to go fishing, hunting and to visit their original homes which many had not seen for between five and 15 years.

Early July saw the bankruptcy of several businesses, including the Holden Smelting Company. The American National Bank suspended business for "a few days" after promising depositors that all deposits would be "paid in full." The newspapers reported that "some dealers stand in front of their customer-less stores smiling as brightly as though silver was selling for \$1.29 an ounce. Others look as glum as though nobody would ever buy anything again." Many stores were advertising reduced prices that followed the line of the VanCamp store at 609 Harrison, which advertised that "silver has gone to H---- and groceries may as well." Many proprietors offered cash prizes as inducements to buy. Dr. Crook recommended that all the doctors reduce their prices for "the welfare of the working people."

The July meeting of the County

Commissioners offered the first hint of any request for relief by the citizens of Leadville. During the meeting a "Mrs. Smith" requested aid since her husband had deserted her. Reverend Father Brown predicted that 50 families in the city would "want" before week end. In addition to providing aid to individuals, the County Commissioners resolved to relieve the taxpayers by extending the time of payment of all taxes for 30 days. This was later withdrawn since there could not be found a law which allowed such a resolution, and the county treasurer could not be required by law to carry it out.

Relief

The months of August, September and the last weeks of July, saw increasingly difficult times for the town of Leadville. City leaders such as Major Shadrack K. Hooper of the Rio Grande Railroad were still espousing a view that the "depression" would not last long and that it could be characterized as a the kind of thing that is a "temporary embarrassment [to] which every industry is subject." A. V. Bohn, a manager of several mines in the district continued to advise optimism. He predicted that Leadville was "going to be poor for a time, very poor, but the people will not get down to absolute squalor and wretchedness." He felt that the town would weather the storm and come out of the hole "with banners flying and quite as prosperous as she ever was in her palmiest days." However, by the end of July, the report of a major gold discovery in Phoenix, Arizona led to an outbreak of "Gold Fever" and the subsequent departure by train of "large numbers" of miners. Mr.

Satter of the Union Pacific estimated that the number of men leaving town during the previous twenty days by rail in "the regular way since the drop in silver at 1,500." He pointed out that several hundred had left in "irregular ways," such as those who "stow away on box cars, work the conductors, and take passage on bumpers or under the car." The *Herald Democrat* reported that it had "been found by ticket agents about as much as their lives are worth to in any case suggest the purchase of return tickets." The reporter stated that the purchasers had but one idea, and that was to get away. Estimates on the increase of passenger traffic out of Leadville for all parts of the country ranged from an increase of 45% on the Midland to a 90% increase on the Union Pacific.

The newspapers of the time reported that actual suffering in the city was comparatively small. The county superintendent of the poor reported to the commissioners that he had received only a limited number of requests for aid. Societies of various churches reportedly were looking after "some cases of destitution." As for the plight of the working class, however, there were "occasional hints that the mysteries of boarding house and restaurant hash [were] becoming a little darker and more impenetrable than usual . . . There is also," stated one report, "a little more suspicion of canine flavor in the sausage."

As the situation worsened at the end of July, grocers, being the first to "receive applications for aid," discussed the opening of a large warehouse to aid in the systematic administration of relief and to prevent the possibility of

fraud or imposture on the part of the applicants. Although no evidence of this effort could be found, many of the prominent citizens of Leadville, including John F. Campion and T. S. Wood, discussed organizing a relief committee to "carry relief to those whose pride would cause them to suffer, or even allow their children to suffer, before they would apply to the county for aid . . ." The county had been besieged with requests by persons "feeling the fingers of want at their throats." Quite a number of applicants had come from "the vicinity of Front and Elm" streets and the east side since the middle of July. However, as the summer progressed, the commissioners had to dedicate more and more time to the requests coming from all parts of the city.

By mid July the county commissioners were obliged to forego their typical bimonthly meeting in favor of weekly, and sometimes biweekly, meeting to deal with the crisis. During August, September and the first part of October, the commissioners received between 75 and 100 requests for aid at each of their meetings. Dr. Rose, the chairman of the county commissioners, stated in August that although "nearly every family has been living better by far than the average eastern family, want has reached the door of some of our most sturdy citizens." A limit had been placed at \$20.00 worth of provisions per month per family, yet this was badly straining an already stretched county budget. During the month of July, \$800 had been expended from the poor fund and Dr. Rose estimated that \$1300 would be needed for the month of August. In the long run, Dr. Rose felt

Population in Leadville

| | |
|------|--------|
| 1880 | 14,820 |
| 1890 | 10,384 |
| 1900 | 2,455 |

U.S. Census Records

that a total outlay of not more than \$5000 would be needed in the county, unless the "stringent times" continued into the fall and winter. The commissioners were constantly accosted by people wanting to mortgage furniture for money to feed their families. Stories of widows with children with nothing in the house to live on except bread and water for a week were constant reminders of the continuing crisis. By the end of August the *Herald Democrat* reported "the condition of the poor in the city is beginning to excite grave apprehension . . ." Numerous boys and girls were reportedly seen in the streets in their bare feet and several children make their way by collecting coal along the tracks. Conversations reported from the street held that "if the men [were] not given work the whole town would be in flames." The per capita circulation of money was estimated at \$2.00 of which a great part was tied up in closed banks.

In October the county commissioners were being besieged by an increasing number of applicants for aid. In an effort to curtail the unprecedented drain on county funds in a time of seriously declining revenues, the commissioners devised a plan whereby the husbands of women who applied for aid would be ordered to perform three days work on county roads. On October

6, it was reported in the county commissioner's minutes, that during the first week of that early public works policy, 40 men had worked three days each on a road crew. In addition to the public works program, the commissioners threatened to begin publishing the names of applicants for aid after October 1. There is no evidence of this having happened; however, a dramatic decline in applicants was noted during the following week's meeting. This was, however, only a short-lived breather, for applications reached their high point soon after.

By mid October, the time of county aid was coming to an end. On October 10, a resolution was passed unanimously which asserted that after that week no aid would be available except to widows or poor women who were alone and "badly in need of the assistance." Although the efforts of direct aid were ending, the county continued to attempt to pass resolutions relieving taxpayer by postponing tax due dates and refunding penalties. Most of these attempts were found to be based on limited authority and were rescinded as rapidly as they were passed. The efforts of the county to provide aid were further hampered by the discovery of a \$2,000 "clerical error" in the county books. It was reported in the *Herald Democrat* that "the lack of funds compelled the board to turn away a roomful of applicants for aid." Although it remained largely the responsibility of the churches and civic groups to maintain the efforts of providing direct relief to the destitute, individual members of the county government were able to exercise the

power of their office to provide aid. A noted example is highlighted by a letter written by the Lake County treasurer in November of 1893. Bela S. Buell wrote: "Owing to the financial stringency I have determined not to advertise or sell any property for delinquent taxes of 1892; hence this matter will rest entirely with my successor, Mr. Jos. F. Hearnshaw who qualifies Jan. 1, 1894. As to when he will sell I of course am unable to say." Without question, this move on the part of County Treasurer Buell saved the property of a large number of Leadville property owners from the auction block, as a significant number of back taxes are recorded as paid during the early part of 1894.

Many authors report a marked increase in the crime rate during this period of difficulty. Although this is what one might expect, no dramatic increase can be found. A slight increase was noted in June; however, the succeeding months saw a stabilization of the crime rate.

A major debate by city council members points out the lack of a significant change in the crime rate. In July during a meeting devoted to cost cutting in city government, a recommendation was made to cut the police force to save money. A number of council members argued successfully to retain the police during these "dangerous times" on the premise that there was more danger of holdups and "every man was needed." Later these same council members argued for increased patrols on the east side; however, the additional policemen were relieved after citizens reportedly complained about the increased police presence. The mayor argued at the end of July that the

city had two thousand fewer in population and that the police were not overworked. Additional police only added to the expense of the city and he said "times now are no worse that they ever were." A reporter from the *Herald Democrat* wrote that several of the holdups reported by those "coming to the police with harrowing tales of how they have been met at some lonesome spot on a side street, and relieved of their cash by armed and masked bandits," in actuality were "very rank fakes which have been invented by certain parties to serve their own purposes." The reporter went on to outline two such happenings. In one, an old man described as a "chair warmer" at the local saloon, had lost track of his money after a "spree." In a second story, a young man was relieved of a week's wages. The "holdup" occurred on State Street and the "robbers" were described by the reporter as "short skirted and curly haired fairies who dispense beer on that thoroughfare." The money, it was reported, was removed in a perfectly businesslike manner, "sweet tutti frutti smiles and chocolate and cream glances, with sundry sponge cake squeezes of the hand produced the dollars that brought the beer." Upon arrival home the "somewhat fragile brained" men found their pockets empty and evolved the tales which the police found "decidedly gauzy."

Labor

No discussion of the events of 1893 would be complete without the consideration of the role of labor organizations in the ultimate character of the "depression." The labor unrest of

Revenue Collections and Dispersements, City of Leadville

| | 1892 | 1892 | 1893 | 1893 |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Collections | Dispersements | Collections | Dispersements |
| May | \$19,202.01 | \$ 7,978.39 | \$9,283.50 | \$3,201.93 |
| June | 6,505.01 | 2,112.58 | 6,733.75 | 4,770.75 |
| July | 3,950.00 | 8,635.97 | 2,421.75 | 8,734.75 |
| August | 3,885.00 | 6,748.19 | 2,308.80 | 5,535.36 |
| September | 5,677.50 | 5,658.18 | 4,059.70 | 2,323.07 |
| October | 8,412.50 | 8,277.33 | 4,074.50 | ----- |
| November | 8,530.00 | 5,082.56 | ----- | ----- |
| December | 7,382.50 | 5,179.65 | 4,378.25 | ----- |

Herald Democrat, 1892, 1893

1880 laid the framework for the way workers would respond to labor negotiations during 1893. The "old problems became more crucial. Long hours, drudgery, relatively low pay, poor working conditions, and increasing impersonal corporation control laid the groundwork for a decade of labor unrest." While the Miner's Union which had unsuccessfully argued for increased wages and reduced work hours in 1880 had faded, another organization, the Knights of Labor, rose to take its place. The Knights of Labor, a nationwide union founded in Philadelphia in 1869, grew rapidly during the later 1880's and became what some describe as a "good citizen" in the community. Annual charity balls and 4th of July picnics highlighted the Knights community service during this period. The Knights prided itself in not restricting itself to mine workers. Their objectives included helping all the workingmen achieve "a fair share of the wealth which labor created, abrogation of laws not applying equally to capital and labor, securing laws governing child labor in mines, workshops and factories and dedication to striving for the substitution of arbitration in place of

strikes." The dawning of the 1890's saw a shift toward a more militant organization. National lecturers such as Lenora M. Barry-Lake visited Leadville, enjoining the Knights to "free the laboring classes from the shackles of society." The Knights actively sponsored a successful Colorado House Bill which brought to Leadville its first mine safety inspector in July of 1889. In the early 1890's the Knights gave up their opulent parties on Labor Day and substituted "educational meetings," where the workers were told that "we know that evil exists, and we vainly strive to fight against it."

The community was, as a result of the increasing activism on the part of the Knights, not surprised by the organization of the Knights in July 1893, "for the purpose of preventing a reduction of wages when the mines start again . . ." A number of owners had predicted that wages would be reduced; however, the miners regarded the \$3.00 per day scale as "almost sacred in its fixity." A review of a typical miner's budget published in 1896 outlines the importance of the \$3.00 wage to the miner's family. It was estimated that by working every day at \$2.50 (at the

proposed reduced wage) a miner could expect to earn between \$75 and \$77.50 per month, of which \$65.00 was needed to exist.

On July 18, 1893, when it was reported that a few men were working for a reduced wage, the Knights organized a meeting of one thousand to fifteen hundred men to discuss this development. It was unanimously resolved that it was detrimental to "the future interests of the whole community" to work for a lower wage. They further resolved that the community "should exercise all the moral force in its power to prevent the few from working for less wages." Some of the men were willing to work for less wages; however, they were concerned that once silver was restored, their wages would not be returned to their former level. The owners, on the other hand, felt that it would be impossible to reopen their properties unless the men were willing to accept a lower wage. Franklin Bailou of the Bimetallic Smelter said that his operation could continue only if workers accepted a 33 1/3 percent reduction. In August when Superintendent Rhodes of the Arkansas Valley Smelter posted a notice of a 10 percent reduction of wages, a small riot broke out as 400 men gathered around the smelter and drove away the men at work. At a meeting held in Stringtown workers expressed disbelief at reports that the smelter could not continue operation at the current wage schedule. They demanded to see the company books. However, the "strike" was ended on August 11, when August R. Meyer, the president of the company, sent word to close the smelter indefinitely, throwing more than 400 men out of work. In

mid August the Bimetallic smelter announced plans to reopen. Upon hearing this, about 200 men confronted Superintendent Nuting about his proposed "sliding wage scale." The men refused to return to work unless they were paid the old wage. By August 19 an agreement was reached and the Bimetallic reopened with the old wage scale.

In the months of July and August there was a partial resumption of work in the mines; however, the larger mines held out pending a reduction of the wage scale. On July 18 the *Herald Democrat* reported that the Maid of Erin Mines had been abandoned due to wage problems. Eben Smith, the general manager, was quoted as saying that he would have put about fifty men to work in a few days, but the men had been unwilling to accept a \$2.50 wage. As a result he was forced to pull the pumps and abandon the mine. The large mine owners asked the Knights of Labor to appoint a committee to confer with the owners on a new wage scale. Through a series of discussions, an agreement was reached on September 14 whereby the miners would return to work at a wage of \$2.50 per day ("panic wages") for all calendar months during which silver was quoted at less than 83 1/2 cents, and \$3.00 per day for all months during which silver was quoted above that rate. It was also agreed that men working in wet areas would receive 50 cents more than the going rate. On September 16, it was reported in the *Herald Democrat* that 700 men were to go to work in the mines immediately. Within two months 1250 men were back at work. By year end almost all the downtown mines

were in full production. David Moffat was quoted as saying "mine owners have held out the offer of \$2.50 a day to the men ever since they were first compelled to close down." Many of the returning miners were "rankled" by the agreement. It was felt by many that the agreement had been made by many members of the Knights of Labor whose wages were not directly affected by the agreement, (i.e. non-miners), but whose employment was insured by the resumption of production. Many attribute the decline of the Knights of Labor in Leadville to the dissatisfaction of the miners with this agreement.

Recovery

The undaunted optimism of the citizens of Leadville carried them through the dark days of August and September. The newspapers continued to carry stories of hope and expectation. Although the price of silver continued its decline, the demand for iron and lead continued to grow. In July the news reported "quite an amount" of strictly lead mining. It was predicted that if the price for lead continued to improve, the problems of Leadville could be forgotten. In addition to lead, manganese, copper and gold were major factors in the recovery of the mining industry in Leadville. By October several gold strikes of "considerable magnitude" had been reported at Taylor Hill, Granite, Red Mountain, Sugar Loaf and Twin Lakes. The Little Johnny and Fanny Rawlings were reporting gold strikes assaying at \$25.00 per ton. By the end of October the various operating mines in the district were producing 965 tons per day and by December the production had increased to 1300 tons per day.

A review of the smelters shows four smelters operating or planning to begin operation by the beginning of January. The degree of improved conditions is reflected by a report of increased freight business on the Denver and Rio Grande and the Colorado Midland railroads. It was reported in December that the shipment of holiday goods and winter clothing to Leadville merchants had increased significantly. In addition, ore shipments were "keeping all their power at this point in use." Confidence in continued improvement was further demonstrated in October by a rush to buy reduced round trip railroad tickets (\$27.00) to the World's Fair.

Seven weeks after the suspension of business, the American National Bank resumed operation on August 18. The expected run on the bank did not materialize as only fourteen people "presented themselves," some reportedly to make deposits. While Leadville's complete recovery was far from accomplished, the recuperation was touted daily. Although as many as 70 families were requesting aid each week, the outlook for the economy was described in December as "solid, enduring and substantial . . ." Leadville had, according to the City Directory in 1894, weathered a financial crisis and transformed itself from "the greatest silver mining camp on earth, into the largest gold producer in the state." The *Herald Democrat* espoused the view that "the sun of gold appears to be rising over the eastern horizon, and is certainly shining very brightly on Breece Hill." By January 1894 this new prosperity was beginning to be felt in the real estate market of Leadville. James Powell, a local real estate dealer,

reported that "the tide is turning." In comparing his records for the first twenty days of January 1894 with September 1893 he saw the collection of \$290.00 in rent, while in September he had seen only \$1.00. In January he rented several stores which had been closed in September and he was elated to report that he had also made nine sales during the first twenty days of January, while the previous September he had not made one real estate transfer. He also reported that people were starting to pay up their debts.

Production continued

Despite the predictions made before congress by Senator Henry M. Teller, that the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 would drive the silver mining industry in Colorado into the "valley and the shadow of death," production continued at a very high level. While the price of silver remained low (averaging 62.5 cents per ounce), except for 1897, production exceeded 23 million ounces of silver per year during the years 1893-1899. Mining operations in Colorado were and continued to be extremely profitable. In 1889 the cost of production not including depreciation was 41 cents per dollar of metal produced. In some mines the cost of production was reported to be as low as 24.5 cents per ounce. Some mines reported profit margins as high as 600% prior to 1893 and after the drop of silver prices, these profits still were reported to be close to 370%. However, there were a large number of mines that were marginal and were closed or absorbed by larger operations. Forty percent of the total silver production in the state and 58%

of the nation's total was produced by 21 mines (three in Aspen and 18 in Leadville).

The closing of the mines was, "... a *tour de force* by the men who controlled the silver industry to counteract the swelling national demand for the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, force marginal operators out of business, and ram through a reduction in the daily wages of the men employed by the mines and smelters. The ultimate goal was to reverse the downward trend in the price of silver and to increase profit margins..." Nathaniel Wetherell, vice president of the Consolidated Kansas City Smelting and Refining Company, explained the 1893 shutdown: "In the early days it was so profitable that strong competition sprang up. This has resulted in reducing profits to a very narrow margin. The present depression will weed out the weak concerns leaving the stronger in possession of a broad field. While this will naturally result in higher prices charged producers for smelting it will benefit them by weeding out the mines that cannot produce silver at less than, say, 80 cents an ounce. This, in turn, will have a tendency to reduce the exorbitantly high wages which now rule. Labor at Kansas City which is worth \$1.50 per day costs \$3.00 in Denver, where living expenses are not more than 10 to 15 percent higher. Values of all kinds, except labor, have been sacrificed. Labor must bear its share of the burden." As Mr Wetherell predicted, fewer operations remained in control between 1893 and 1900 and mineral production in Colorado increased nearly 50% from \$27.7 million \$41.3 million.

A long way from ruin

In retrospect, 1893 was referred to as the "most promising period in . . . history, darkened by adverse legislation." On December 31, the *Herald Democrat* summarized the year in these words: "The year 1893 will go down in history as a memorable one in the annals of the Leadville mining district. It has been a year pregnant with events. There have been surprises; there have been disappointments; there have been seasons when the city appeared on the verge of collapse and ruin, when men lost heart and courage, seeing nothing in the future but the very blackness of darkness. The dawn of a new year, however brings with it the hope of better things, and the lesson of the year is one that will be long remembered." The paper went on to point out that the city was "a long way from ruin," and that the "disaster of demonetization" was more than compensated for by the "widening of the horizon" of gold. John Campion reported that the depression served only to "turn a new page in Leadville's history, and to usher in the third and golden era . . ." He went on to say that the Leadville district was, in his opinion, the most productive and extensive mining region yet discovered.

The years after 1893 saw the fulfillment of Campion's prognosis. Leadville's gold region continued to grow and exceed his expectations. The continued development of gold, copper, lead, iron and zinc provided the new prosperity. The names associated with Leadville changed from Tabor to Campion, Brown, Smith and Moffat, and the focus of mining moved away from the silver regions to the gold belt, but the town and its people remained.

The *Herald Democrat* best described the overall impact of the "stringent times" on the citizens. "The result of the attack upon the silver industry was not to send our citizens elsewhere throughout the country, seeking profitable investment or employment, but most of them stayed right here and sought, by developing the resources of the district still further, to secure the future."

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Over the Corral Rail

RICHARD GEORGE CONN (1928-1998) P.M.

The last time I visited with Dick in his Lafayette Street apartment, we sat out on his deck garden as he straightened me out on the Arapaho. Were they really as dirty, immoral and slovenly as the Utes claimed? Dick laughed, "Each tribe had few compliments for its enemies. The Arapaho said the same thing about the Utes. A favorite Arapaho story called the Utes the ugliest tribe of all and claimed they kept kidnapping Arapaho women so they could improve their looks."

Then Dick talked about something he wanted to do. As the incoming 1999 Sheriff of the Denver Posse of the Westerners, he wanted to bring in new blood to this group of western history buffs. Dick wanted to recruit graduate student speakers to share their research. The students were thrilled and the Denver Posse heard fresh, thoroughly researched presentations. Dick, characteristically, was reaching out to broaden, brighten and rejuvenate.

Like many others, I relied on Dick regularly for information, manuscript reviews, and his fabulous museum tours. He never said no to anyone wanting his help. Because he focused on others, it was easy to overlook the insight, wit, and generosity with which Dick Conn shared his vast, incomparable knowledge of American Indians. He devoted his life to preserving, exhibiting and interpreting Native American life and art.

Dick never forgot there was a human, contemporary side to the American Indian. One of his favorite stories was about the big Indian who showed up at his Denver Art Museum (DAM) exhibitions wearing a tee shirt labeled: "Hey man, we're still here."

Dick is still here too. Thanks to his wonderful collections, his publications, his teaching and tours, and his concern for American Indians today. He worked closely to make Denver more liveable for Native Americans. As he wrote for *Colorado Heritage Magazine* (Autumn, 1995):

"In the 1950s, the United States government initiated its American Indian Relocation Program, whose purpose was to bring Indians from the reservations to several designated cities, including Denver, where they would be given work and assistance in relocating. Since reservations offered few economic opportunities, Indians hoped that the move into the urban world would offer better chances for the Good Life. The government, however, failed to consider the emotional hardship and traumas which the relocation would inflict. Although the program was voluntary, Native Americans were in fact pressed not too subtly into trying a city lifestyle for which they were totally unprepared. Routine tasks such as paying electric bills or maneuvering the big city by bus were completely foreign to the reservation-bred people. The friends and family who had been their support at home would be replaced in the cities by indifferent strangers."

Dick worked with the Rosebud Sioux leader, Marvin Prue, and other Indian people who had lived in Denver and knew just what the newcomers would face and how to help them deal with it. In 1955 they formed the White Buffalo Council of American Indians to help newcomers by referring them to social service agencies, teaching them how to catch a bus or get a driver's license, or organizing social functions such as parties and dances.

Native Americans gave Dick their highest honor, a golden eagle feather, for his 1993 DAM exhibit, "Into the Forefront: Native American Art in the 20th Century," which also won the 1994 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. As the DAM's Curator of Indian and Native Art since 1955, Dick has produced exhibits and publications that traveled across North America and on to Asia and Europe. He has enriched the DAM's world class Native American art collection, which during his DAM stint grew to more than 20,000 objects.

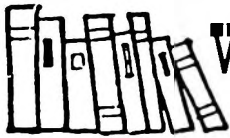
Dick was born in 1928 to a pioneer family in the rural outreaches of Puget Sound. As a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Washington, he focused on Northwest Coast Indians, and later helped add to the DAM's collection of northwest coast materials to complement their outstanding Plains and Southwestern materials.

Dick also served as chief curator (1966-69) at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature in Winnipeg, then as director (1970-71) of the Heard Museum in Phoenix. Dick has complemented his exhibits with his beautiful color catalogs, such as *Circles of the World: Traditional Art of the Plains Indians* (1984) and *A Persistent Vision: Art of the Reservation Period* (1986). Dick retired in 1994, but still had an office at the DAM, where he was consulting and teaching popular anthropology and Indian history courses at the University of Colorado at Denver.

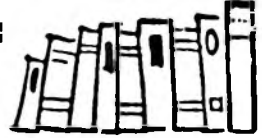
Nancy Blomberg, who followed Dick as DAM Curator of Native Arts, put it well, "Dick was a meticulous scholar and prolific writer who spent his entire career educating people about the artistic achievements of American Indians. His innovative installation of the DAM's collection has been emulated by museums around the country. His many books are basic references in the field today."

Dick died of natural causes on Monday, July 13, 1998 in New Orleans, where he was putting together one of his famous exhibitions on Indian life and art. Among many who will miss him are the Denver Posse of Westerners, who in 1994 honored him with the Rosenstock Award for Lifetime Contributions to Western History. As Sheriff elect of the Denver Westerners for 1999, Dick aspired to do what he always did—improve and enrich western history and celebrate the positive, on-going contributions of American Indians.

Thomas J. Noel, P.M. CU-Denver history professor and author, has been a friend and colleague of Dick Conn's since 1974. They collaborated on museum, saloon and Civic Center tours.



Westerners Bookshelf



Tales Of An Endishodi Father Berard Haile And The Navajos, 1900-1961, transcribed and edited by Fr. Murray Bodo, O.F.M., University Of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1998. 16 Photos, 1 Map; 263 Pages. Clothbound, \$45. Paperback, \$24.95.

"This book presents a transcription of a series of tapes made by Fr. Berard Haile, O.F.M., the renowned Navajo ethnologist and linguist, while he was a bedridden hemiplegic in St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The tapes, recorded some sixty years after Fr. Berard first arrived at the Navajo Reservation in Arizona in 1900, contain reminiscences of his early years among the Navajo people. . . .when the first Franciscans came to St. Michaels at the turn of the century, the Navajo people called them 'Endishodi' or 'E'nishodi,' Those-Who-Drag-Their-Gowns."

In 1998, the Franciscans will have served the Navajo 100 years which perhaps explains the timing of this book, the transcription of a series of tapes made near the end of Fr. Berard Haile's life about his ministry to the Navajo peoples of Arizona and New Mexico. Jacob Haile was born in June of 1874 in Canton, Ohio and was orphaned at an early age. At the age of 17, he took the name Friar Berard to devote his life to Catholicism. In 1900, he was posted to Arizona as an assistant to Fr. Anselm Weber to minister to the Navajo (note that in the book, the spelling tends to be Navaho to reflect the spelling at the time the events took place). Fr. Anselm was studying the customs, legends and language of the Navajo which became Fr. Haile's life's work.

In the introduction Fr. Berard is described as "arguably the world's leading expert on Navajo linguistics, publishing four major works between 1910 and 1951". "During Fr. Berard's years of service among the Navajo people, he published, or collaborated in publishing, at least twenty-two books, beginning with editing and contributing most of the articles to *An Ethnologic Dictionary of the Navaho Language*". "He believed that the indigenous culture had to be understood as well as possible before missionaries could know how to preach, how to explain the Christian message, and he did not believe that the Christian faith should be imposed upon the Dineh."

OK, his credentials were impeccable and his cause noble, but the bigger question becomes if the book is worthwhile. That is problematical. The book feels very much like a conversation with a beloved grandfather on his deathbed. In that circumstance, the listener would be willing to forgive needless repetition of stories, confusion of facts, odd digressions and statements of the obvious. As a reader, however, most of the stories in this book seem pointless and overly repetitive. "Also in appreciation of Manuelito's efforts on behalf of the railroad, the Santa Fe Railway

named its first and last station in New Mexico 'Manuelito,' and that station, eighteen miles west of Gallup, is still there today. It's still called Manuelito in honor of the old Navaho chief." Often the statements are obvious: "Wild animals naturally have a strong sense of scent. They can smell a human being a distance away if the wind carries the odor of a person their way. " Or: "They have different ceremonials in Navaho, and the conductor of those ceremonials is called a singer because he accompanies this performance and ceremony with singing."

A few of the stories are interesting, however, as when Fr. Berard describes how the Friars assembled their first book in 1910 *An Ethnologic Dictionary of the Navaho Language*. "The difficulties of self-printing and binding a book make for fascinating reading as does a description of a Hopi Snake Dance. There aren't enough of those stories, however.

For a 236 page book, only 120 pages are actually devoted to the tape transcriptions with the rest given over to articles and clippings by and about Fr. Berard. Interestingly, a very different person emerges from this part of the book; a bright articulate man with much to offer: "It is not surprising then, that the Navaho is a restless roamer whose home is rather

'between points,' than at any specified place. His home is at best a semi-domicile that lasts as long as the farming season is on, or the exigencies of his herds, such as lambing, shearing, salting or grazing require." While this information added could be seen as attempt to flesh out a book short on material, it is actually the best part of the whole. It is too bad that book wasn't switched around to focus on these earlier writings with the taped material added to the end and perhaps edited more heavily. Also, the photos are all of people (mainly the Friars) which is too bad as it would have been nice to see the locales mentioned.

This book, then, offers no major insights, though it may appeal as a pleasant remembrance of a gentle man in a still rough-hewn world.

--George W. Krieger, PM

Wyoming's Territorial Sheriffs by Ann Gorzalka. High Plains Press, Glendo, Wyoming, 1998. 336 pages. Illustrated with photographs and maps, index, bibliography. Each chapter has a discussion of sources. Paperback. \$14.95.

This book is a worthwhile and useful book. It contains short biographies of all of the county sheriffs of Wyoming Territory, as well as biographies or listings of the Dakota Territorial sheriffs who had jurisdiction in geographic Wyoming before it became a territory. There are some well-known names, like Jeff Carr, Nicholas O'Brien (of Seventh Iowa Cavalry fame), Frank Canton, and Malcolm Campbell. Additionally, of course, there are many lesser known men profiled and some of their stories are almost as fascinating. Harvey Booth was murdered in 1895 (and his

...it may appeal as a pleasant remembrance of a gentle man in a still rough-hewn world....

alleged killer was acquitted at a second trial). W.W. Jaycox just disappeared, apparently fleeing from a difficult wife. Joseph Young was accused of not doing enough to stop the anti-Chinese riot in Rock Springs. James Rankin was the brother of Joe Rankin, of the Thornburg Fight fame.

...there are many lesser known men profiled and some of their stories are just as fascinating...

Ms. Gorzalka has done a good job in researching so many persons. She has used published sources such as books, historical society magazines, and contemporary newspapers, as well as personal reminiscences of descendants. However, she is no Robert DeArment when it comes to total, exhaustive research. In fact, were it not for her including

a letter from Mr. DeArment in the chapter on Frank Canton, much of the information in that sketch would be a mere rehashing of Canton's *Frontier Trails*. Neither is this a scholarly work in the nature of Professor Larry Ball's works on peace officers.

Nevertheless, the book is highly recommended for those who enjoy items on gunfighters and lawmen. Like Bill O'Neal's *Encyclopedia of Gunfighters*, this book will be required reading for those who are more than casually interested and who will want a good jumping-off place for further research.

--John Hutchins, P.M.

Canyoneering 3: Loop Hikes in Utah's Escalante by Steve Allen. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 1997. 368 pages, 40 halftones, 46 maps. Paper, \$21.95.

This book will be of particular interest to those Posse members who frequent the canyon country of southern Utah. Desert country hikers and climbers visiting the Escalante region will find this book informative and useful. The introduction notes that Steve Allen has written two previous books on the subject and has devoted more than a quarter of a century to the exploration of the area.

Using the town of Escalante as a base, the author outlines thirty-seven possible "loop hikes." These range from simple one-day excursions requiring no special skills or equipment, to major seven-day or more incursions into the inaccessible backcountry which should not be attempted without specialized climbing equipment and skills. The book contains 46 maps showing topographic detail for the various loops. An introduction on how to reach various trailheads is included for those not familiar with the area. This information alone can save many hours of time and exasperating search.

Other chapters include regional geology, regional history, equipment, the art of desert travel, access, and technical canyoneering. The remainder of the text covers the various loops and possible route variations of these loops.

The text notes that Frederick Dellenbaugh was the first to use the term "Canyoneer" and that "Dock" Marston used it to designate those who completed the Grand Canyon traverse. That definition has now been prostituted by the thousands who pass through the Grand Canyon annually. The author now defines a

“canyoneer” as one who “hikes in canyons” and “technical canyoneering” as the act of traveling through canyons, using technical rock climbing techniques. A number of the hikes outlined traverse “slot canyons” which are defined as those whose walls are generally no farther apart than the distance of outstretched arms. A caveat for some hikers includes the information that a stout person may not be able to negotiate a given slot! An additional caveat to all is the advice not to so extend yourself in a canyon that you cannot get back out. This should be emphasized in the Escalante country, although the reviewer notes its application to life in general.

The author outlines
thirty-seven possible
loop hikes....

This is hungry country and many of the men who first explored it are legendary figures. Those who settled it were a breed apart from ordinary mortals.

The book starts with a chapter on wilderness, the Grand Staircase, Escalante National Monument, and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. It has sections on history, geology, the art of travel and technical canyoneering, and low impact camping.

Scattered through the text are vignettes of history such as the Thompson-Dellenbaugh excursion of 1871, the saga of the “hole in the rock” and the Everett Ruess legend. One medical note of interest to this reviewer was the death of John Barr on the Burr Trail who was found dead in the desert apparently having died while trying to relieve a urinary tract blockage with a piece of wire! This region should not be entered lightly or unadvisedly, but the book will be an invaluable aid for those who elect to do so.

The book’s many photographs vividly portray the spectacular scenery, the plethora of arches, and the many striking slot canyons. The photos illustrate the spectacular beauty of the country which is deceptive as to how harsh it can be.

--Henry W. Toll, Jr.

In Search of Kinship, Modern Pioneering on the Western Landscape, Pulitzer Prize Nominated Book, by Page Lambert, Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, Colorado, 1996, Table of Contents, Notes, 241 Pages. Clothbound, \$23.95.

Chapter 36, “The Act of Healing” tells us what Lambert’s sister, Brooke, who lives thousands of miles away in Hawaii, has given Page an incredible gift for her 40th birthday. “She has offered me (because of generous spirit, not abundant wealth) the equivalent of one year’s salary from my job at the bank to enable me to quit work, stay home, finish my book, and be with Matt & Sarah during summer vacation. My sister offers me a chance at life - a year to pivot inward, a year to radiate outward. She is offering me a chance to walk the sacred path; she is offering me KINSHIP.”

So is written in a poetic, earthy, flowering style the history of a young

family, their ancestors and the land they call home. There is much beauty in the flow of words, as stories are told of a squirrel named Sassy; Romie, a horse of 26 years; Simon the Siamese, and ever-faithful dog Hondo, whose death is well-recorded. Building their small ranch with animals and a log house lets us share a glimpse of life west of Sundance, Wyoming.

I was a bit put off by her constant mention of brand names and the book, which seems slanted to the nature, or spiritual reader. Her stories have appeared in such publications as *Christian Science Monitor*, *Parabola*, and *Cow Country*. It made me pause to reflect on my own history, both in England and Delaware, and of the wooden sailing vessels built and sailed.

Page tells of learning about her deaf grandmother, Effie, a young wife pioneering in the Mojave Desert and generations of other earth-linked ancestors. "Reconnect with the animals. Reconnect with the earth. Reconnect with your creator."

She writes "I am a woman - of French, Dutch, Scotch, Irish, English, and a small amount of Cherokee ancestry. Born in the suburbs of Denver in the foothills of the Rockies, I now live on a small ranch near Sundance, Wyoming, with my husband, Mark, and our two children, Matt and Sarah. We have lived here since the mid-1980's with a few sheep, cows, horses, many white-tailed deer, porcupines, coyotes, and an occasional curious red fox. Our home sits at the base of the Bear

...is written in a poetic,
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family...

Lodge Mountains part of the Wyoming Black Hills. The history that is part of this land has slowly been permeating my spirit, molding it, awakening it—these stories are linked to the land—rooted in the old and ancient; these stories are about loss of tradition and the quest to find new traditions. The heritage bequeathed to Mark by five generations of

ranchers who reared their families beneath the shadows of Colorado's Wildcat Mountain tie him firmly to the soil. I eagerly adopted his traditions from the moment we began our Courtship—Kinship stories, about this Wyoming land and the animals with whom we share it, have been influenced by people who walked the deer paths and held the same rocks in their bronzed hands centuries ago."

--Dorothy Lowe Krieger, P.M.

On the Prairie of Palo Alto: Historical Archaeology of the U.S. Mexican War Battlefield, by Charles M. Haecker and Jeffrey G. Mauck. Texas A. & M. University Press, College Station, 1997. 227 pages, photographs, maps, line drawings, index, bibliography, endnotes, glossary, dust jacket. Hardback, \$39.95.

Twenty years ago, it seemed that most books dealing with a mixture of site history and on-site archaeology typically were written by local historical societies, were sponsored by government agencies, or were produced in response to government requirements, necessitating the protection of historical resources. Those books,

often paperback and sometimes amateurish, were aimed at somewhat limited audiences.

Times have changed. This book, expanded from a Park Service report, is one of those now-popular books that uses recent archaeology work to elaborate on a particular battle in an effort to penetrate the fog of war and the mists of history.

Unlike some items produced for the Custer battlefield, however, this is not a book that tries to establish the primacy of archaeology over history, or vice versa. Just as the writers are from two separate disciplines, this book is a more successful merging of the work of the musty researcher and the professional pot-hunter. It covers the historical record in describing this first battle of the Mexican War.

The book is a worthwhile endeavor. The authors have done a good job of attempting to merge the disciplines and of being aware of the varied nuances of ordnance, strategy, human frailty, and military conduct. However, just as Noel Hume discussed in his book, *Martin's Hundred*, archaeologists must be aware of the limitations of their observations and interpretations and cautious in their initial conclusions. That problem is illustrated in this volume, where the meaning of lead bullets with teeth marks is discussed. The authors mention the typical interpretation that such marks indicate that someone (a flogging victim or a casualty) caused the bite-marks due to pain. However, well-informed military historians would know that "chewed bullets" have been around at least since the 17th century, and that they also

often were associated with unsporting attempts to create dum-dum type projectiles. Additionally, bullets probably sometimes were kept in the mouth to produce saliva to combat the stressful effects of battlefield "cotton-mouth." While a pebble might do this as well, a bullet in the mouth (in a time when lead poisoning was not understood) also would be at hand, if needed, to be sent over to eliminate (completely) the stress of one's opponent.

The book is recommended. One wonderful selling point of the book should be the several excellent line drawings of combat action, reminiscent of old-time steel engravings in sharpness and quality. These drawings, by Gary Zaboly (who has done many illustrations portraying the South in the Civil War), are superb.

--John M. Hutchins, P.M.

From Fort Laramie to Wounded Knee by Charles W. Allen. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1997. 286 pages, cloth, \$30.

Charles Wesley Allen was on the Western plains at a time when many developments, seemingly unconnected at the time, combined to shape the "winning" of this part of the West. From 1871 to 1891, Allen's work in a number of enterprises took him to places where, by coincidence, big things unfolded.

Reminiscing about his life as a young man some 50 years later, Allen drew upon a host of notes and memories which shine much light on the times. After brief

...this book is a more successful merging of the work of the musty researcher and the professional pot-hunter...

stints as a cowboy and soldier at Fort Robinson, he set up his own business as a freighter in and around Fort Laramie. He used the network of railroads in Wyoming to move goods to forts and other areas opening up to settlement.

The author recalled the fears he had about an Indian attack when he took a shipment of onions to Deadwood, S.D., just weeks after Custer's Battle of the Little Bighorn. He stuck strictly to business, making sure to avoid any of the vile entertainment associated with life at this place where Calamity Jane and Wild Bill

...Allen drew upon a host
of notes and memories
which shine much light
on the times...

Hickok spent some of their time.

In 1879, with his freighting business on the decline, Allen and his Indian wife moved to Pine Ridge to help build an agency for the Ogalala Sioux. While there, he helped construct a school located just two miles from the site of the Battle of Wounded Knee, some 11 years later. Much of the last third of his book

is an account of what proved to be one of the last attempts of the Indians to ward off the advance of the white man.

For a while he worked as a blacksmith in Valentine, Neb., where he also became interested in the newspaper business. Moving on to nearby Chadron, he collaborated with the editor of the paper there. He recalled that the highlight of this part of his life was the Fourth of July celebration of 1889 featuring Chief Red Cloud and more than 100 of his fellow Sioux.

By now, Allen was serving as a correspondent of the New York Herald. For more than a year and one-half, he followed the story of the escalating tensions pitting the Indians at Pine Ridge against incoming white settlers and government officials. Indeed, he was an eyewitness to the fight at Wounded Knee where more than 200 Indians and 30 soldiers met their deaths. Allen barely escaped with his life when U.S. troops fired upon him by mistake.

Allen, to his credit, strays from the overly romantic view that runs rampant in some Western literature. Many rich anecdotes came to Allen's mind when he visited his old haunts by automobile years later. Throughout, he was not so much an historian of record as he was a newspaperman who astutely reported what he saw and experienced.

--Todd Nelson, C.M.

The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott, Edited and annotated by Mark L. Gardner and Marc Simmons, University of Oklahoma Press, 1997, 292 pp., Cloth \$29.95

Richard Smith Elliott was an officer in the army which took Santa Fe in the Mexican War. He then spent a year on occupation duty in Santa Fe, returning to St. Louis in July, 1847.

Using the pseudonym of John Brown, Elliott wrote regular dispatches to the St. Louis Reveille. These articles ran the gamut—from battle descriptions to social

scenes, tactics and strategy, to the diet of native New Mexicans, and most any subject in between.

The book consists of Elliott's collected articles. It provides interesting and authentic observations of the mustering of the largely volunteer army, preparations at Ft. Leavenworth, the Army's transit of the plains and the seizing, and holding, of Santa Fe. He shrewdly sizes up Colonels Kearny, Price and Doniphan, all of whom made names of one sort or another for themselves then and 15 years later on both sides of the Civil War.

The writings give the flavor of day to day life in a primitive, marginally supplied, isolated army camp surrounded by a less than friendly populace. There was a lot of boredom broken by small events and big ones. Perhaps the biggest was the conspiracy to evict the "norteamericanos" in February; among others. Territorial Governor Bent was a casualty. The ensuing battles, killings, trials, and executions certainly kept the Americans busy and focused for the balance of the winter and spring.

This book provides contemporaneous details and insight from a participant. It gives a fresh view of a somewhat forgotten theater of the Mexican War. Students of the Santa Fe Trail and trade, and the Mexican War will enjoy it.

—Stan Moore C.M.

Indian Pottery by Toni Roller. Sunstone Press, Santa Fe, 1997. 42 color photographs, References. Paperback, \$12.95

Toni Roller is an award-winning potter who lives at Santa Clara Pueblo, north of Santa Fe. She is the daughter of Margaret Tafoya, whom she calls "the best traditional potter ever." This small book explains, step by step, the process by which Toni Roller produces the black pottery, an art which was developed at Santa Clara Pueblo.

Forty-two color photographs, by her husband, show clearly how the clay is dug, crushed, soaked, sifted, mixed with sand for strength and smoothness—all in preparation for shaping and decorating the bowls and vases. The artist emphasizes the traditional methods which she and others use to produce the pottery, including firing the pieces outdoors. She contrasts these processes with the shortcuts used by others, beginning with commercial clay or cast "greenware" ceramic pots, not hand-formed, and firing in electrically controlled kilns.

Toni Roller's *Indian Pottery* is a good illustrated explanation of "the age old art of authentic traditional Santa Clara Pueblo pottery making." It is an introduction to the work of one skilled artist with clay. It is also a detailed explanation of the painstaking and time consuming labors which, in the hands of a practiced and creative potter, produce things of beauty.

—Earl McCoy, PM

...it gives a fresh view of
a somewhat forgotten
theater of the Mexican
War...

Plain Anne Ellis *More about the Life of an Ordinary Woman*, by Anne Ellis with introduction by Catherine J. Lavender, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Neb., 1997, 265 pages, paper, \$12.00.

This autobiography, first published in 1939, is one of three volumes Ellis wrote of her life in Colorado as a miner's wife, seamstress, cook for ranchers, farmers and construction crews building telephone lines in western Colorado, and finally of her unexpected election as treasurer of Saguache County. This new edition has an excellent introduction and biographical sketch by Catherine Lavender. Ellis's first memoir, *The Life of an Ordinary Woman*, was published in 1929. *Plain Anne Ellis* in 1931 and *Sunshine Preferred*, appeared in 1933. Forced to move from Saguache because of poor health, Ellis lived in New Mexico and California where she wrote her last book, *A White Bread Time* in early 1938. She returned to Colorado in 1938 and was awarded an honorary degree at the University of Colorado. She died in Denver in late summer of 1938 at the age of sixty-three.

In writing her books, with only a fifth grade education, she developed her own rules for writing "I will use a form of punctuation of my own, which will be something like this—when one is beginning he takes a long breath, for this I use a capital. When he stops for breath, a comma, and when it is all gone, a period. Don't know the use of a semicolon, but expect it is when one thinks he is out of breath and isn't."

Needless to say, this makes for interesting reading and interpretations. But each sentence is written with honesty and a forthrightness that is refreshing. Ellis described the work of constructing a telephone line in the mountains, "there is much more to it than you think." Several paragraphs later, one has a rather detailed understanding of how telephones poles were installed and wire hung on the cross-arms using only manual labor.

One of the most interesting sections is about her adventures while campaigning for treasurer of Saguache County. She won and served three two-years terms even though she did not know the multiplication tables or how to write a check. Her comments on campaigning included, "Never did I say anything harmful of my opponents. I found that it was a poor policy; because the moment you start to criticize your opponent, the person you are talking to naturally commences to look for your glass house; so on the contrary, I always praised whoever was running against me."

This memoir will appeal to all who are interested in Colorado history, especially in the early 1900s. Ellis tells of the busy, yet rewarding lives of western women whose lives were not always easy. According to Lavender, "one of the especially valuable historical insights of the book is Ellis's close attention to social interactions between differing groups—between rich and poor, between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans, and between men and women."

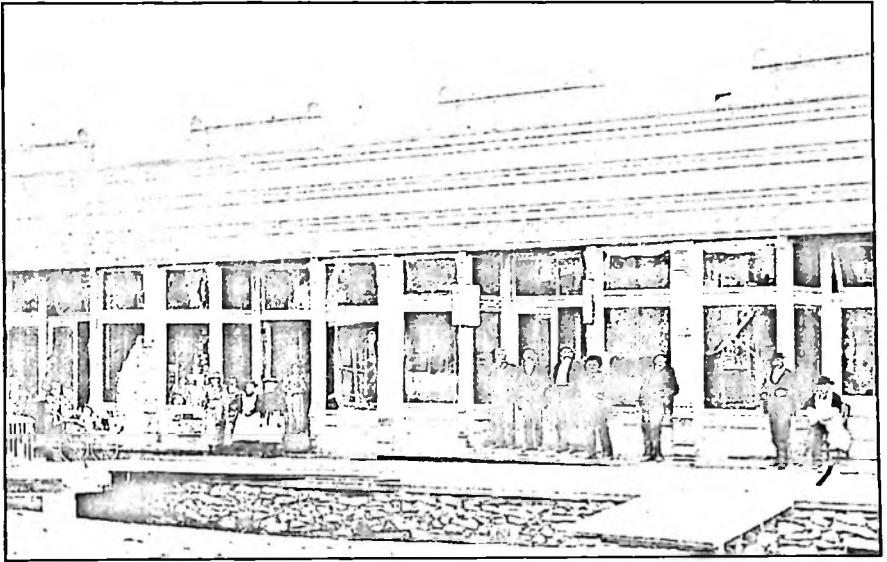
The University of Nebraska Press is to be commended for publishing this new edition.

--Doris B. Osterwald, C.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

JULY - AUGUST 1998



Denver Public Library, Western History Department

Joe Block in front of meat market, Crested Butte, Colorado, 1891

The Jews of Colorado's Mining Towns

by

Owen Chariton, C.M.

(Presented April 22, 1998)



Owen Chariton presents his paper to the Denver Posse

About the author

Owen Chariton was born and raised in New York, but developed an interest in Western history at an early age. He moved to Colorado in 1979. After initial studies at the State University of New York at Albany, Owen received his undergraduate degree from Metropolitan State College of Denver. He is currently a Master's degree candidate in American History at the University of Colorado-Denver, where he earned a Coulter Foundation scholarship.

Owen's focus has been the Jewish history of Colorado. His enthusiasm and love for the mountains prompted him to look into the approximately ten percent of Colorado Jewry that has historically lived outside the Denver area.

Owen has been a guest lecturer at the Denver Jewish Community Center, Red Rocks Community College and Arapahoe Community College. The Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society, based at the University of Denver, has published two of his articles on this subject. His current project is a biography of the late Max Goldberg of Denver, an advertising man, editor and publisher, and one of Denver's early media personalities. It is scheduled for publication in 1999.

Owen lives in Denver with his wife Jeanne and his daughter Rachel. He wishes to thank them for their ongoing support and inspiration.

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The Jews of Colorado's Mining Towns

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Jews have helped shape life in Colorado since before statehood. The study of their presence in the state, however, cannot be done in isolation. As with all aspects of history, the Jewish history of Colorado is inherently tied to national and international events. Following the fortunes of one particular family will illustrate the point.

Emigrating to America

The Crimean War was fought between Great Britain and Russia in present-day Ukraine from 1853-1856. One of the combatants was Alexander Rittmaster, a young Jew from Russian-occupied Poland who had been drafted into the Czar's army. Rittmaster was captured and taken to England as a prisoner of war. When the war ended, Rittmaster chose to emigrate to America rather than return to Poland. He made his way to Colorado, where he opened a clothing store in booming Central City. After several prosperous years he wrote to his sister in Poland and asked that his nephew, Abraham Rachofsky, join him to help run the growing business.

Abe Rachofsky landed in New York on April 15, 1865, to find the city in an uproar—word had just arrived of the assassination of President Lincoln the night before. Rachofsky rode a train to Iowa, where he took a job as a guard for a wagon train heading west. With a rifle at his side, he walked to Cheyenne, Wyoming, then went south to Pueblo

and worked for a season as a ranch hand before finally joining his uncle in Central City. Within a few years, Rittmaster retired and left the store to his nephew. Rachofsky soon wrote to his sister and brother-in-law, Miriam and Samuel Kobesky. They had emigrated from Poland to England, and Rachofsky invited them and their six children to Colorado, an invitation which they accepted in 1877.

The Kobeskys, who had changed their name to Kobey while in England, were among approximately seventy Jewish residents in town. Strictly Orthodox in their observance, they would send to Denver for kosher meat but found that it spoiled before it could reach them—so their household became vegetarian. No synagogue was ever erected in Central City, nor was there a resident rabbi. Instead, services were led by the more learned Jewish citizens, in whose homes and stores they were held.

Business was good, and Abe Rachofsky opened new stores in Black Hawk, Georgetown, and Caribou. In 1888, he sent his nephews David and Harris Kobey to open a store in Aspen. The store thrived, as Aspen had recently celebrated the arrival of the railroad and was in the midst of its brief heyday. Benjamin and Mark Kobey soon joined their brothers, and the Kobey family was an integral part of Aspen for the next fifty years.

A 1982 family history enumer-

ated 321 descendants of Samuel and Miriam Kobey. Their impact on Colorado through the years has been considerable, and it can all be traced back to Alexander Rittmaster's service in the Crimean War.

Colorado business begins

Harris Kobey and his wife Leah raised seven children in Aspen. Two of their sons, Leon and Silas, founded Kobey's Famous Shoestring Potatoes, distributed internationally and made from San Luis Valley potatoes. Mark Kobey's son, Ted, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy. During World War II he was an officer on the U.S.S. Salt Lake City, and played a key role in helping it repel a Japanese attempt to invade North America through the Aleutian Islands. Rachel Kobey, daughter of Samuel and Miriam, married Isaac Shwayder, and together they raised eleven children. Their five sons founded the Samsonite Corporation, renowned luggage maker and for decades one of Colorado's most important businesses. Miriam and Samuel Kobey eventually moved to Denver, where Miriam became a midwife. She was known as the "angel of West Colfax" for the hundreds, possibly thousands, of Jewish children she helped deliver in the West Colfax neighborhood.

Aspen, meanwhile, had several dozen Jewish families. Unlike most of them, the Kobey's remained after the silver crash of 1893. Their store was even something of a community gathering place during the Spanish-American War, as they posted the latest *Aspen Daily Times* war bulletins for all to read. They were located at 428 East

Hyman Avenue, a building still standing and currently the home of The Sportstalker, an upscale sportswear store.

The Kobey's were the first merchants in Aspen to close on Jewish holidays, and others soon followed their precedent. Dave Kobey often took out large ads in the *Aspen Daily Times* announcing such closures, and the paper would sometimes explain the significance of a holiday to its readers. During the spring Passover holiday, the Jewish families sent to Denver for matzohs, the unleavened bread traditionally eaten at that time. Religious services were held in private homes, as there was no synagogue or other formal gathering place. Jewish weddings also took place in their homes. One of the social highlights of 1898, attended by over fifty guests, was the Oct. 4 marriage of Morris Rosenberg, a clothing salesman, to Adeline Shoenberg. The bride's family owned a local cigar store, and had previously been in business with David May in Leadville. The ceremony at the Shoenberg home was performed not by a rabbi, but by a judge.

Harris and Leah Kobey strongly believed in religious training, but had no access to Jewish education for their family. Their daughter Dorothy explained their answer to this dilemma:

"We all went to the Episcopalian Sunday school. Everybody went to the Young People's meeting at the Methodist church on Sunday night. It didn't matter what religion you were. Now my Aunt Dora went to the Christian Science Church. She called herself a 'Jewish Scientist'."

Despite this unconventional

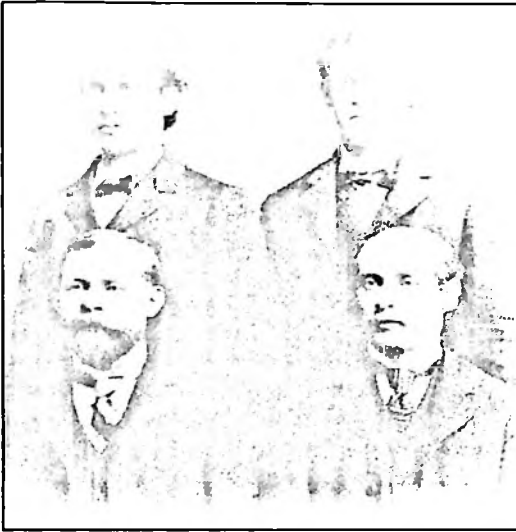


photo courtesy Dorothy Kobey Berry

The Kobey brothers pose in an Aspen studio, 1890s. (Clockwise from top left: Harris, Benjamin, David, Mark)

upbringing, the Kobey children all grew up secure and proud of their Jewish heritage.

Aspen may have been devoid of anti-Semitism but other forms of bigotry were common, as evidenced in the local Indian, African-American, Chinese and Italian populations, who all faced blatant discrimination. About the Indian it was said that "He is an inhuman savage at best." And when a young Chinese man, born in Denver and raised a Christian, tried to settle in Aspen, a committee led by the mayor promptly put him on the next stage out of town. They explained their action by saying, "He is objected to on principle, he is a Chinaman."

Treatment of Jews differed dramatically. Even international events

received favorable local coverage. When Czar Alexander III of Russia imposed the repressive May Laws in 1882, one newspaper railed at "the renewal of outrages to the Jews." The treason trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus in 1899 received continuous front page coverage in Aspen for weeks, nearly all sympathetic to the beleaguered Dreyfus. One headline read "Some Very Flimsy Evidence Against Dreyfus Exploded." Another called his conviction "the disgrace of France." Aspenites seemed to base their hatred on appearances. They befriended the Jews, who were white, while reserving their bigotry for those who looked different.

Another explanation for the acceptance of Jews was their contributions to the growth of their communities. They were town founders and builders, valued for their business expertise that helped towns thrive. They served as mayors, on volunteer fire departments, on school boards and numerous other positions of civic responsibility. The majority of them were Reform German Jews, well assimilated into American life and culture.

Among them was David M. Hyman, for whom the street on which the Kobey store in Aspen was named. Of all the Jews in Aspen, none had more impact than Hyman. Born in Bavaria, he emigrated as a teenager and became a successful attorney in Cincinnati. When his friend and confidant Charles A. Hallam journeyed to Colo-

rado in 1879, Hyman proffered to invest up to \$5000 in any profitable ventures Hallam might find, trusting completely in his friend's judgment. By January 1880, Hyman had pledged to invest \$165,000 in mining properties in the Roaring Fork district. His first personal inspection of his investments came in July of that year. After taking the railroad as far as Buena Vista, Hyman and several others embarked for Aspen on foot and horseback, arriving three days later. There he began his new career in mining.

Despite his legal training, Hyman soon found himself caught up in an extraordinarily convoluted maze of property rights and mining claims. He had title to 320 acres along the Roaring Fork River that was destined to become the site of Aspen. When he subdivided this property and sold lots for ten dollars each, he surely had no idea that within a few years these same lots would bring as much as \$10,000 each! He also owned the Smuggler, Durant, Monarch and Iron claims, though he later admitted:

"I knew absolutely nothing about mines or anything connected with mines; I was entirely ignorant of even the mining laws, and as I had never studied geology, I knew little, if anything, about formations."

He soon learned. Conflicting claims on many of his properties forced him to spend much of his time in court. So difficult was the legal wrangling that, for the sake of simplification, Hyman had divested himself of all but

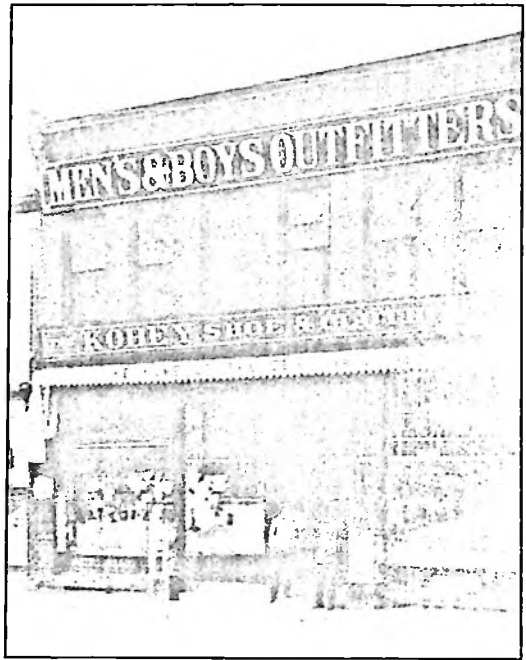


photo courtesy Dorothy Kobey Berry

Kobey Bros. store, Aspen, CO.(Unidentified persons)

the Smuggler and Durant claims by the end of 1884. He then entered into the longest and most costly legal fight of his career, the apex-sideline case.

Hyman attempted to explain briefly the crux of the federal statute upon which this case rested: *"...the owner of a claim that has the top or apex of a lode or vein within its side-lines, has the right to follow said vein or lode in its descent into the earth to any depth that he can trace the same although said vein or lode so far departs from a perpendicular as to take it outside of its side lines and into the lines of other claims adjoining it and below it..."*

The three-year struggle pitted

Hyman against Jerome B. Wheeler, the popular New Yorker whom many Aspenites regarded as their town's savior. While Wheeler may have had public opinion on his side, Hyman had the law. Both men expended enormous sums on legal fees (Hyman estimated his costs at \$600,000). The Aspen, Durant, Emma and Spar claims on Aspen Mountain were placed in receivership and produced no ore during this time. When a federal court jury ruled in Hyman's favor to enforce the apex principle, Wheeler and his attorneys immediately announced plans to appeal. The likelihood of yet more litigation promised not only to keep the mines closed but to delay the arrival of the railroad, circumstances which threatened Aspen's very survival. It fell to James J. Hagerman, president of the Colorado Midland Railroad, to overcome the lingering bitterness and effect a resolution to the problem. Hyman and Wheeler agreed to form the aptly named Compromise Mining Company. With the legal logjam finally broken, production resumed. The Aspen mine alone produced \$11 million in silver over the next five years, and the future of the town was assured.

The Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 mandated that the Treasury Department purchase several million ounces of silver per month. Its repeal in 1893 put a sudden end to the boom times for Aspen. Silver crashed from \$1.19 per ounce to \$0.59, and nearly every silver mine and smelter in the state shut down. For Hyman, it was five years before he recovered financially. While investors, merchants and miners left by the thousands, Hyman stayed and reopened his mines. Profits were

minimal, he stated, but "I had the satisfaction of keeping the town fairly active and alive."

In 1910 Hyman again helped save a struggling Aspen. The Free Silver shaft, a joint effort of Hyman and several other mine owners, had filled with water and could no longer produce. The manager of Hyman's properties at that time was Elias Cohn, also Jewish and an Aspen resident since at least 1891. Cohn proposed that they hire deep-sea divers to repair their pumps in the shaft, which were one hundred feet under water. The entire town followed the progress of this bold but risky project. After two months of concerted effort, the divers got the pumps working and the de-watered mine was back in production. One editor noted the significance of this event in his Christmas message, saying, "An occasion for general rejoicing lies in the fact that the recovery of this great mineral area will mean much to the hundreds of little homes already established in Aspen."

Elias Cohn spent more than twenty years in Aspen. After he died in 1912, the only Jewish families left were those of Mark, Harris and Ben Kobey and their in-laws, the Kays. They prospered in spite of the overall decline in Aspen. With help from his brother-in-law Harris, Marcus Kay (whose wife Dora was the self-proclaimed "Jewish scientist" mentioned earlier) opened the Kay Dry Goods Company on Hyman Avenue in 1906. In 1910 Harris and Leah Kobey moved their growing family from a modest home at 220 West Hopkins into a much larger one a block away. Many considered the new house a mansion, as it was one of the few in

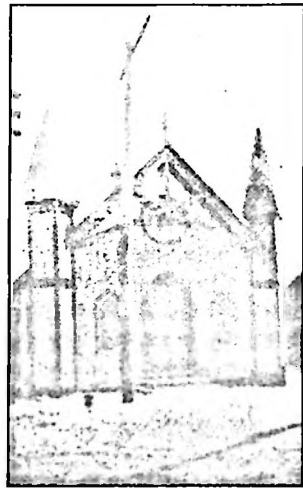
town equipped with a furnace and indoor plumbing.

Abruptly Harris Kobey's fortunes began to change. He had sold his interest in the store, and several new business ventures, including a sawmill, a grocery store and mining investments, all failed. His wife Leah died in 1920 at the age of forty-six, and his parents, Samuel and Miriam Kobey, died the following year. He and his children moved to Denver in 1924 while brother Ben continued to run the store until the early 1930s. For nearly fifty years the Kobey's were a factor in Aspen, and for over twenty of those years they were the only Jewish presence.

Although Aspen today differs markedly from the town of a century ago, Jews are once again a constituent element of its population. Some 150 to 200 live in the vicinity. Many belong to the Aspen Jewish Center, which shares a building with the Aspen Community Church. There is no resident rabbi, but Jewish citizens conduct regular services and are valued members of the community.

Jews were present in virtually every mining camp that sprouted in Colorado. Like others who flocked to the mountains, some stayed and put down roots. Others were more mobile, following the booms from town to town.

In Black Hawk, for instance, One Price Clothiers was owned by three Jewish brothers from Poland—Charles, Benjamin and Jacob Sandelowsky. Jacob Americanized his name to Jake Sands, and in 1880 he opened a store in Leadville. As the boom there receded, he moved to Aspen in 1888, then on to Victor in 1899. Despite his transience,



Temple Israel, c. 1890

he was active in civic affairs, as evidenced by the six years he spent as treasurer of the fund-raising drive for the first hospital in Aspen.

Jake Sands is also remembered for his torrid affair with the famed Baby Doe Tabor. Living in Black Hawk and unhappily married to Harvey Doe, Baby Doe tried to console herself by window shopping in the town's finer stores, including One Price Clothiers. The acquaintance she struck up with Jake Sands blossomed into more than mere friendship, and she soon found herself carrying Jake's child. Sadly, this pregnancy ended in a stillbirth.

Throughout the San Juans and the Gunnison country, Jews were an integral part of life in the mining towns. Otto Mears began doing business in Colorado shortly after being mustered out of the Army at the end of the Civil

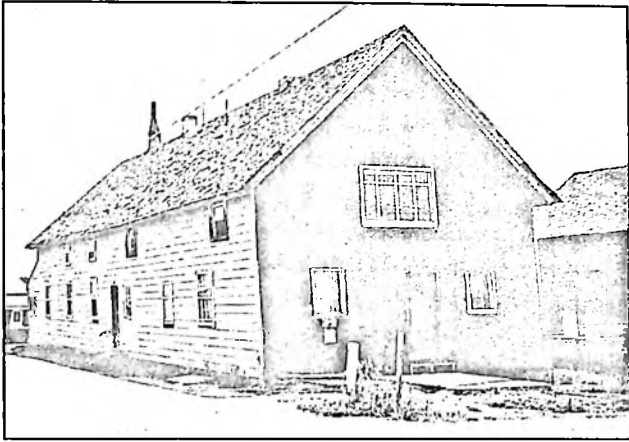


photo by Owen Chariton

201 W. 4th St. Leadville. Formerly Temple Israel, now a four unit apartment house.

War. The influence of this Latvian-born Jew in western Colorado cannot be overstated. Among other ventures he built wagon roads and railroads, founded towns, published newspapers and operated retail stores. So well known was he that newspapers had no need to mention his name, but referred simply to, "the Hebrew pathfinder of the Rockies."

Nor was Mears the only Jew in the rugged San Juans. October 7, 1878 was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement and the most solemn day of the Jewish calendar. At the house of Charles Weinberg, a liquor dealer and saloon keeper in Lake City, religious services were held, reportedly the first ever in the region. The local newspaper report of the services was highly respectful of the occasion "celebrated by our fellow Jewish citizens." Weinberg and his brother Louis oper-

ated in Lake City until 1885, when new opportunities in the growing town of Aspen beckoned.

The liquor and saloon business was a profitable one in the mining towns, and it attracted a number of other Jews. Isadore Bernstein emigrated from Poland and came to Ouray with his wife and seven children. He ran his "gin dive" there for seven years. One year after his departure Samuel Newhouse arrived in town. Although better known for his later activities, Newhouse spent two years in Ouray. Previously he had run a freight business in Leadville, where he struck up a friendship with Chauncey Nichols, manager of the Clarendon Hotel. When Nichols took a similar position at the elegant new Beaumont Hotel in Ouray, Newhouse accepted his offer to become the head clerk. Newhouse made some profitable mining investments, particu-

larly in the Wheel of Fortune Consolidated Mining Company. He and his wife Ida also made a contact which served them well years later. Frank Hargreaves, a wealthy English hotel guest, was stricken with pneumonia, and Mrs. Newhouse nursed him back to health. In 1891, when Newhouse needed financing to implement his plans for a four-mile-long tunnel in Gilpin County, Hargreaves provided it. The Newhouses went on to great wealth and social prominence in Denver, Salt Lake City and London, where Mrs. Newhouse became "one of the reigning favorites in London society and a woman who, it is said, has captivated the entire royal set".

Many business owners

In Durango, Abe Rachofsky opened another clothing store in 1892 under the managership of his nephew David. Their competition was Isaac Kruschke, a German-born Jew who had already been in business there for ten years. Kruschke spent nearly forty years in Durango, dispelling the notion that Jewish merchants were all transient. Other Jews present were W.G. White, owner of a grocery business, and Jim Veitch, who ran the Durango Corral, a stable and feed store. Despite their small number, the Jews of Durango were able to maintain their religious identity. They were, in fact, encouraged to do so and were sometimes admonished by the local press when they did not. The *Durango Democrat* printed the following reproach on September 15, 1899:

"Yesterday was a peculiar day: it was Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of days. The real good Hebrews closed

their places of business and sought solace in prayer, while Lazarus "Billy" White, Kruschke and Jim Veitch kept open and the good God kept it raining all day so they could not do business. He doeth all things well."

Another member of the omnipresent Rachofsky clan was Julia Rayor, grandniece of Abe Rachofsky. Julia was a deaf-mute who married Samuel Wittow. Like so many Jewish merchants, Wittow went into the dry goods and clothing business. He opened his store in Silverton in 1905 and ran it for seventeen years. During this time other Jews in town practiced a less traditional occupation.

Serving the demand created by the many single miners, Fanny Wright and Pearl Eastman were prostitutes. Wright was especially kind hearted, and was even known to lower her rates on special occasions. Some local school boys once wanted to "treat" a friend, but were unable to raise the full \$2.00 needed. Wright agreed to accept only \$1.60 even though she was "losing money on the deal." Known as "Jew Fanny" and "Sheeny Pearl," these two women also served the community in another way. Silverton was hard hit by the influenza epidemic of 1918, and both Wright and Eastman served as nurses to ailing miners. Eastman eventually succumbed to the disease herself, while Wright died in Salida in the early 1950s.

The Gunnison country was home to a considerable number of Jews in the late 1800s. The town of Virginia City was incorporated in 1880. Solomon Harris was among the eighty-six people who gathered at Pettengill's Drug Store to vote on the issue, and he

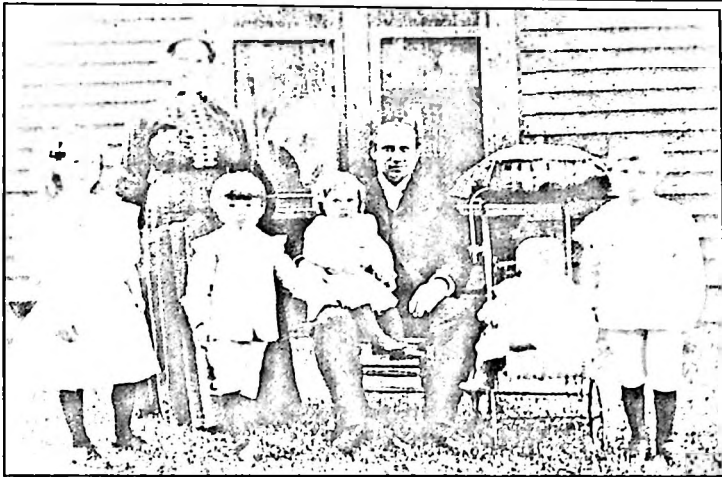


photo courtesy Dorothy Kobey Berry

Harris and Leah Kobey with children, Rebecca, Leon, Silas, Dorothy, Phillip at 220 West Hopkins, Aspen, CO. c. 1906

was elected the town's first treasurer, a position he held for over two years. He also voted in 1882 to change the name to Tin Cup. The Harris brothers, Solomon, Isaac and Eli, owned the Rocky Mountain Bee Hive, another in the long litany of dry goods and clothing stores owned by Jews. Opening in 1881, the Harrises clearly knew their clientele. While they carried a "full assortment of ladies' and gents' furnishing goods and children's wear," they made it a point to note "Miners' boots a specialty." Business was good in the thriving camp, and the next year they relocated to a new building more than twice the size of their first store. At the corner of Washington and Grand, on the same block as the original Rocky Mountain Bee Hive, stood S.J. Klauber's New York Liquor Store.

Klauber had preceded the Harris brothers, arriving in the district with his family in 1879, and served as postmaster in Hillerton, a short-lived camp some two miles north of Tin Cup.

The Tin Cup cemetery sits on the southeast edge of town on four separate knolls. These are labeled Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Boot Hill, for those who met a violent end or whose faith was unknown. The burials there reflect the harshness of life in that rugged time and place. Isaac and his wife buried an unnamed son on the Jewish knoll November 10, 1882, one month to the day after his birth. The following autumn they repeated this tragic scene, this time with a child of only eleven days. Incredibly, their sorrows did not end there. In November, 1884, they buried twin sons who

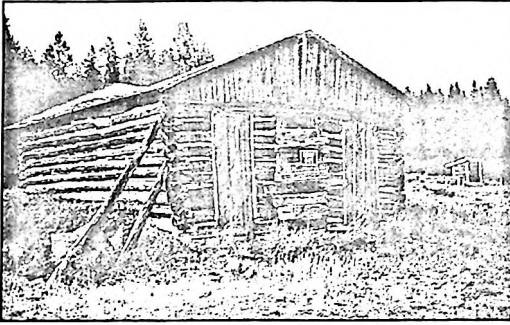


photo by Owen Chariton

Lawrence Winsheimer's cabin, Grand Ave., Tincup, CO

had survived for just seven weeks. Neither were the Klaubers strangers to such tragedies. They buried two young sons on the Jewish knoll, five-year-old Sidney in 1886 and two-year-old J.J. in 1888. In Tin Cup, death made little distinction between Jew and Gentile.

Lawrence Winsheimer, an English Jew, arrived in the Tin Cup district in the late 1880s and lived the rest of his life there engaging in a variety of occupations. His first enterprise was growing hay in a large meadow some ten miles northwest of Tin Cup, an area now submerged beneath Taylor Park Reservoir. Soon he embarked on a new venture as proprietor of a feed and meat market, and later still he turned to the lucrative freighting business, in which he remained engaged until his death in 1905. Winsheimer was an anomaly. While so many Jewish merchants moved from town to town with their commerce, he stayed in Tin Cup and changed not the location, but the nature of his business.

Some thirty-five miles west of

Tin Cup is the ghost town of Irwin, whose fall was mercurial even by mining camp standards. Born in 1879, "It died so fast in late 1883 and 1884, that many of its cabins still had dishes on tables and beds unmade." David May, who went on to build a retail empire, opened his Irwin store in a tent in the summer of 1880. Within a year he had built a substantial 20'x40' wooden structure to house his growing business. Like most of Irwin, it was closed down by 1884.

Among the more colorful characters of Irwin was Joseph Selig, a German-born Jew. Arriving in the Gunnison country in the spring of 1880, he was widely recognized by the end of the year. It was said that "He is engaged extensively in mining and other speculations. In fact, Joe will put money in anything that promises a safe and profitable return." One such investment was a liquor and cigar business, a field in which many Jews were involved. His motto was a refrain still popular today: "In God We Trust—All Others Are

Expected to Pay Cash." Liquor being a highly profitable business in the booming town, it soon attracted many newcomers. When Selig opened he briefly had a monopoly on the market. From November 1881 to March 1882, however, Irwin issued twenty new saloon licenses, and three new liquor dealers quickly appeared. Seeking to avoid the competition, Selig went into real estate before moving west and founding the town of Montrose. There he met with success in a variety of businesses which included real estate, irrigation, a sawmill and as a loanbroker to local ranchers. His personal life apparently was far less successful. One newspaper reported that "Joe Selig, the woman-hater of the Uncompahgre, has returned from California single and wretched."

French-born Joseph Block had over ten years' experience in the meat business in Denver when, in 1881, he followed the rush to Irwin and set up shop there. While he was not a religious man (his wife was Catholic), his Jewish background was well known. One nearby resident was clearly aware of it when he told the story of a lynx that had raided his father's henhouse and killed over fifty chickens:

"Not one of them was bitten or scratched in any way except one bite in the neck through which the blood had been sucked. It was some satisfaction to Father to shoot the lynx and the chickens were sold to the butcher, being really killed in the best Kosher fashion."

Just as he had followed the rush into Irwin, Block followed the exodus out in 1885. Moving on to nearby Crested Butte, where he eventually

retired, he fortuitously located his new shop next door to the bank. A Star of David prominently displayed by the entrance attested to his pride in his heritage.

The largest and most famous mining camp in Colorado was Leadville. It was, for a time, the state's second largest city and had its second largest Jewish population, peaking at approximately 400 in the mid-1880s. Numerous Jews who later attained prominence started there. David May's first store was in Leadville. Wolfe Londoner, who in 1889 became the first and only Jewish mayor of Denver, started in the grocery business in Leadville. And the Guggenheim family fortune was born in the silver camps and smelters of the Cloud City.

Temple erected

In other mining towns Jews worshiped together in their homes or stores. In Leadville, on the corner of 4th and Pine, they erected Temple Israel in 1884 on land donated by Horace Tabor. They also had a B'nai B'rith lodge, a Hebrew Burial Society and a religious school attended by forty Jewish children.

In 1892, the congregation split. Many Orthodox east European Jews had joined, and they balked at the Reform practices of Temple Israel. Services conducted in English, participation of women and the use of a choir were all anathema to the Orthodox. They established their own congregation, Knesseth Israel, and in 1898 moved into a former Presbyterian church at 119 West 5th Street. Although this building was razed in 1937, the

former Temple Israel still stands.

Owned by William Korn, it is currently an apartment house. Korn is probably the most knowledgeable historian of Leadville Jewry, and plans ultimately to restore the building to its original condition. He would like it to serve as a functioning synagogue for the several dozen current Jewish residents of the area and as a museum commemorating the Jewish heritage in the Colorado mountains. He estimates that \$300,000 is needed for this, of which the State Historical Fund can provide half. Korn is trying to raise the additional \$150,000 in private donations to his Temple Israel Foundation, a non-profit and tax-exempt corporation.

The Evergreen Cemetery just west of town is the other significant reminder of Leadville's Jewish history. The Jewish section has 133 sites mapped, of which approximately 30-35 are identified. Nearly a quarter of the burials are young children. The Temple Israel Foundation works to maintain the landscaping through volunteer efforts and occasionally with the labor of those sentenced to community service in Lake County.

A relatively rare instance of public anti-Semitism occurred after a fire destroyed the Palace of Fashion shop on Chestnut Street and killed one man in May 1882. Five Jewish men, four of them employees of the store, were accused of arson. In a highly publicized trial, all were acquitted despite the fact that "some of the witnesses had shown a definite dislike for the Jewish people in their testimony." Leadville's Jewish population soon declined with the overall fortunes of the city. By 1937, there were fewer

than ten Jewish residents.

The existing evidence shows the early Jewish pioneers in Colorado primarily were business owners. But many, such as Hungarian-born Sam Butcher of Leadville, sought their fortunes as working miners and left little or no record of their passing. Historically, the vast majority of Colorado's Jews have resided in Denver and along the Front Range, but they have always been active and influential in the mountain communities as well. As the twentieth century draws to a close, there is every reason to believe that they will continue to do so.

Sources and references

The author is indebted to two of Harris Kobey's children, Silas Kobey and Dorothy Kobey Berry, for much of the information on their family and on early Aspen. Silas Kobey, now deceased, was interviewed in 1983; an audio tape is available at the Colorado Historical Society. Dorothy Kobey Berry, who also made personal memorabilia available, was interviewed by the author in April 1996.

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Over the Corral Rail

Please send items of interest to Jim Krebs, Publications Chairman. Jim's contact information is on page 2.

Posse Member honored

Dr. Thomas J. Noel, Posse Member of the Westerners and Professor of History at the University of Colorado at Denver, was the recipient of the 1998 Dana Crawford award presented by Colorado Preservation, Inc. A banquet was held in his honor where he was "roasted" by Mayor Wellington Webb, Councilman Dennis Gallagher, Attorney Walter Gerash and others.

Celebrity cowboy hats at Buffalo Bill's museum

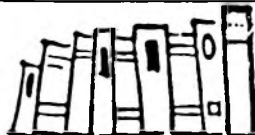
Famous hats will be featured in a new exhibit at the Buffalo Bill Museum. Entitled "Celebrity Cowboy Hats: 1883-1998", it includes hats from the many celebrities who have helped establish and maintain the cowboy hat as an American symbol. Buffalo Bill was one of the first celebrity endorsers of the cowboy hat back in the late 19th and early 20th century when he helped make Stetson famous. The exhibit will include hats from Buffalo Bill and his show business contemporaries all the way through hats from today's personalities like Larry Mahan, Tom Selleck, and Ronald Reagan. The exhibit will feature over 30 hats gathered from all over the United States from celebrities past and present. The hats will be supplemented by movie posters, photographs, sound bites, and videos. The exhibit opens on September 27, 1998 and will close on September 12, 1999.

"Celebrity Cowboy Hats" features cowboy hats worn by celebrities in many walks of life. They range from hats worn by celluloid cowboys like Hopalong Cassidy, Tim McCoy, and Harry Carey, Jr. to cowboy artists like Fred Harmon (creator of "Red Ryder") and Charlie Russell. The written and spoken word will be represented by hats from cowboy poet Baxter Black and humorist Will Rogers. A hat from contemporary rodeo legend Larry Mahan will be joined by hats from Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, and "Cowboy Sweetheart" Patsy Montana.

The Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum was started in 1921, just four years after Buffalo Bill was buried on Lookout Mountain. The Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave are located on Lookout Mountain, just 30 minutes from downtown Denver. Museum admission is \$3.00 for adults, \$1.00 for children, ages 6 to 15, and \$2.00 for seniors over 65. The Museum is open from 9 am to 5 pm, seven days a week, between May 1 and October 31. It is open from 9 am to 4 pm and closed Mondays between November 1 and April 30. Further information about ongoing events and activities at the Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum and Grave can be obtained by calling (303) 526-0744; writing Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum, 987 Lookout Mtn. Road, Golden, CO 80401; or visiting www.buffalobill.org.



Westerners Bookshelf



Cowboy Justice: Tale of a Texas Lawman: Jim Gober, edited by James R. Gober and B. Byron Price. Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, 1997. 237 pages, photographs, maps and drawings by Harold Bugbee, endnotes, index, dust jacket. Hardback. \$28.95.

As recent books on such topics as Wyatt Earp, Frank Canton, the Texas Rangers, and the Gunfight at Ingalls have demonstrated, there still is a lot of important, undiscovered material out there. This book is one of those hidden gems, published by Texas Tech for the first time.

Although, according to James R. Gober, the original manuscript that was written by his grandfather, Jim Gober, 60-70 years ago, did not survive intact, a massive amount of scribbled notes did survive. The grandson spent years putting these in a readable and, he assures us, reliable format. It emerges as an amazing story of 19th century range life in Texas and Oklahoma. While it almost contains too much material for the casual student, the book certainly is not boring.

Jim Gober was, at various times, a cowboy, a ne'er-do-well drunkard, a mavericking user of a running iron, a lawman, an accused murderer, and a private detective. Jim Gober, just like such other tough men as Bill Tilghman and Chris Madsen, was no plaster-sainted lawman.

Poor Gober was very unlucky in life and saw more than his share of tragedy. He could not get ahead financially (sometimes, according to him, due to thieving associates). His wife died (while Jim was out of town, apparently drinking). A young daughter died. Other children of his were dispersed, thus, his life was not one of romance. However, Jim Gober did see a lot of action that makes the book a gold mine of historical tidbits. Gober saw Sam Bass in a horse race before that Indiana cowboy went bad. Gober cowboied around Old Tascosa during the Cowboy Strike. Gober participated in a County Seat War and was in Woodward, Okla., during the time of Temple Houston and Al Jennings.

With all this information, it is fortunate that the book is believable. John McCarty, in his *Maverick Town: The Story of Old Tascosa*, briefly mentions having seen a written document by Gober about "The Big Fight" of 1886 (which was Tascosa's equivalent to the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral). However, whether this was something in the possession of Harold Bugbee (who knew Gober) or some other manuscript is, at this late date, unknown. The provenance provided by his grandson, as well as the notes provided by Mr. Price, adds credibility to the book.

While I was most happy to find the additional information on "The Big Fight" and also was interested in the negative view of Tascosa's Sheriff Jim East, the book is recommended for much more than that. It adds much to our knowledge of this period and of this frontier.

--John M. Hutchins, P.M.

SCOTTISH HIGHLANDERS, INDIAN PEOPLES, Thirty Generations of a Montana Family by James Hunter. Montana Historical Society Press, Helena, Montana, 1996. Originally published in the U.K. as *Glencoe and the Indians*, Mainstream Pub. Co Ltd., 1996, Edinburgh, U.K., 195 Pages, extensive bibliographical references and index. Two maps. Paperback, \$18.95.

James Hunter has produced a biographical sketch of members of the McDonald family and in justifying the title, started at least "in principal" in 835 A.D. with continuing documentation around 1100 A.D., then to the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, the Massacre at Glencoe in 1692, and the Battle of Culloden in 1746. More recently, Angus McDonald was born in Scotland in 1816, emigrated to Canada, and his sons, Duncan and Joseph McDonald, and grandson, Charles Duncan McDonald, to whom the book is dedicated, were born on the Flathead Reservation, Montana on November 17, 1897.

The McDonald clan and family as well as many other Scotsmen, were predominant in the Hudson's Bay Company whose operations spanned the continent. Some of the details of the Company's operations provide a fascinating look at the early fur trade and the problems involved in the maintaining of trading posts in the new world.

...it is easy to identify with the family members and to have appreciation of their tribulations....

The McDonald's were unique in that day in that they married women from Indian tribes, principally the Nez Perce. Rather than fathering children and leaving, they maintained continuing family relations—educa-

tion and community building and contributed very substantially to what would seem to be an ideal accommodation of the expanding settlements and existing Indian tribes.

In Chapters entitled *Nez Perce outriders!*, *Put all to the sword under seventy*, *A parcel of upstart Scotchmen*, *The old Glencoe Chieftain*, *We had only asked to be left in our own homes*, and *As long as our songs are sung*, Hunter portrays a parallel between problems and fate of the Scottish Highlanders and the various Indian tribes in their ways of life, language, and very existence, as they were affected by government action, changing economies and burgeoning settlement on their lands.

Particularly compelling is the parallel drawn between the infamous treachery of the Massacre of Glencoe of 1692 in Scotland and almost two centuries later, in 1877 at the Battle of the Big Hole and subsequent pursuit of the Nez Perce into Canada. The infamy of the Massacre of Glencoe is still remembered recently, as in the *Highlander, the Magazine of Scottish Heritage*, Vol. 36, No 1, Jan/Feb 1998, pp 32-35.

Turner writes in a readable manner, getting his point across very under-

standably. While the McDonald's suffered much less than most Indians, apparently because of their efforts to insure their families were educated. Hunter supplies additional background documenting the very substantial decline of the Indian populations, analogous to the suffering of the Scottish Highlanders with whom he draws a parallel, though suffering massive extermination is hard to quantify on a relative basis.

The narrative here of the history of the McDonald family and its members provide a more personal view. It is easy to identify with the family members and to have an appreciation of their tribulations through a wide variety of adverse actions.

Once past the ancestral history of primary interest to Scottish descendants, the book is a good read, entertaining, and informative.

--W. Bruce Gillis Jr., P.M.

The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers and the Rush to Colorado by Elliott West. (University Press of Kansas, 1998), 442 p., index, bib., endnotes, illus., maps., cloth, \$34.95.

This major reinterpretation of the Colorado Gold Rush and Indian wars will reshape the historiography of the highest state. While most historians have focused on what was rushed to, West focuses on what was rushed over—the High Plains. And while most historians decry the conquest of the natives, West contends that they had nearly exhausted their natural resources anyway.

While traditional historians celebrated the “frontier” and recent revisionists criticized it as the sordid zone of white male oppression, a more thoughtful, original and dispassionate view is offered by Elliott West. A Texan by birth but Coloradan by education, West completed his Ph.D at CU-Boulder with the late, great Western historian Robert G. Athearn. West has become one of the brightest stars among new Western historians, with widespread acclaim and prizes for his previous books, *The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier*, *Growing Up With the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier* and *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains*. *The Contested Plains* is a history Book of the Month Club selection headed for a barrage of awards, prizes and critical acclaim.

Taking a long-term, environmental view, West finds that both Indians and whites abused one of the world's great grasslands. Indians, generally portrayed as environmentalists, actually overgrazed watering holes and allowed their horses to eat young cottonwoods, thus reducing sheltered, lush grazing places even before palefaces arrived to exacerbate the damage. In 1806 Zebulon Pike found that the Big

Timbers on the Arkansas stretched some 60 miles from Kansas to the Purgatoire River. By the time of the 1858 gold rush, Indians had greatly reduced this once vast cottonwood grove. A similar fate devastated the “orchard” John C. Fremont found along the South Platte River in northeastern Colorado.

After acquiring the horse, Plains Indians found they needed vast amounts of grass and, in winter, cottonwood bark and branches to keep their horses alive. Droughts and hard winters pushed the Indians into dwindling cottonwood groves along the Platte, Arkansas and lesser streams. During fierce prairie winters, Indians hunkered down and prepared for the worst. Both horses and humans grew bonier and sometimes starved to death. Indeed, if you want a villain with your western history you will find a new one here—the harsh, dry, violent High Plains environment.

West’s vivid and poignant recreations of Indians battles are worthy of Larry McMurtry and the best western novelists. Someday, West may produce a superb Western novel. This book, however, is a model of historical research. Although re-exploring ground heavily prospected by historians for more than a century, West unearths new material and provocative new insights. His Herculean research ranges from obscure diaries to land office records, from Indian agency reports to heretofore neglected gold rush guidebooks.

After the Cheyenne, Arapaho and Sioux were pushed westward onto the

...West finds that both
Indians and whites
abused one of the
world’s great grasslands...

High Plains around 1800, they fought with the Utes and other indigenous tribes for the watering holes and cottonwood groves. The 1858-59 Colorado Gold Rush brought a much more intense struggle for the same territory as some 100,000 more people—and their livestock—flooded the plains. White camps, forts, and towns, Denver is a prime example,

occupied the same sheltered, watered river valleys preferred by the Indians.

This is the most interesting rethinking of the Great Plains history since Walter Prescott Webb’s 1931 classic *The Great Plains* first inspired scholars to focus on this peculiar region. This book is filled with surprises. West, for instance, calculates the total amount of supplies sent to Colorado and compares it with total gold production between 1858 and 1866. Two to three times as much money was sunk into the Gold Rush as was taken out. Whereas most have suggested that the West was a plundered, colonialized province, West shows that, in at least one episode, it swallowed far more capital than it coughed up.

By putting both Indians and whites into a broad environmental perspective, West helps to show parallels, especially the comparable aspirations and failures of both peoples. He has elevated Colorado—and Western History—to a higher, brighter ground.

--Tom Noel, P.M.

Gambler's Wife: the life of Malinda Jenkins, by Malinda Jenkins As Told In Conversations To Jesse Lilienthal, Introduction by Paula Mitchell Marks. University of Nebraska Press. Paperback 295 pages. \$14.00. Jesse Lilienthal recorded his conversations with Malinda in the early 1930's.

Malinda Jenkins was born in 1848, the daughter of a subsistence farmer in Kentucky. Her independence was shown when she refused to attend school unless she had the right textbooks. Furthermore her large family was "too religious" so she escaped as soon as possible.

In 1865 when she was 17 years old she married Willie Page from a prosperous local farming family. A son was born a year later followed by a daughter and another son. In 1875 she became exasperated with Willie and his laziness and left him and the children. After leaving Willie she began a series of business enterprises: boardinghouse keeper, and a millinery store owner to name a few. Her success was hampered only by periodic bouts of typhoid fever. Meanwhile Willie divorced her.

In her late twenties she met and married a man in his fifties. He was a cotton broker and commission merchant. She called him Mr. Chase. Her new husband offered funds to help her try to get her children back, she succeeded in getting only her daughter May. Mr. Chase and Malinda launched a grocery store business in Wichita Falls, Texas, and it boomed. Unfortunately Mr. Chase died on a trip to Galveston to visit relatives.

In 1883 she met and married William Graham Jenkins, 14 years her junior and a restless "sporting man". They had a number of ups and downs but they stayed married for 43 years even though they often lived apart.

Jenky, as she called him, gambled and Malinda pursued a variety of business ventures, from running a boardinghouse, operating a beauty shop, cooking in a lumber camp, providing whiskey to miners, providing finery for dance hall girls, and conducting seances while living in the Klondike.

Malinda and Jenky gravitated to the West Coast where Malinda began buying property to have "something for Jenky to come to". They went to the Klondike during the gold rush, traveling separately, where Malinda climbed the Chilkoot Trail. In the early part of the century they owned race horses which was an apparently successful venture as she was still in this business when she was interviewed.

I enjoyed reading this book. It kept me wondering what kind of business she was getting into next.

...Malinda pursued a variety of business ventures, beauty shop...conducting seances...

--Lynn Stull, C.M.

Portraits of Clay: Potters of Mata Ortiz, by Sandra S. Smith. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997. 64 pages, 35 duotone pictures. Paper, \$10.95.

In recent years there has been much interest in pottery from Mata Ortiz, a village in northern Mexican state of Chihuahua. The handmade pots are based on designs found on shards from the nearby ruins of Casas Grandes, or Paquime in the Pima language, and are often known as "Casas Grandes pottery." A woodcutter from the village, Juan Quesada, through trial and error developed a method of making similar pottery items including polychrome and black-on-black designs. Quesada taught his methodology to others in the village, and some other residents developed their own styles of pottery-making, so that now about four hundred potters live and work in Mata Ortiz or in nearby towns such as Casas Grandes and Nuevo Casas Grandes.

This small book—5 1/2 by 6 1/2 inches—presents duotone photos of people in Mata Ortiz, with brief quotations, (in English and Spanish), by the persons pictured relating to their work. The photographs have been displayed in Tucson, San Diego and Chicago. *Portraits of Clay* would be useful as a souvenir of the photo

...neither the pictures or
the quotations tell much
about the potters or
their craft...

exhibit. In the book, the largest photos are three inches square, which make them too small to really see the pots or the designs that make them distinctive; neither the pictures or the quotations tell much about the potters or their craft.

To learn about the pottery and the people of Mata Ortiz, *The Miracle of Mata Ortiz* by Walter P. Parks (1993) and the fall 1994 issue of the journal *Kiva* with articles on "The Pottery and Potters of Mata Ortiz, Chihuahua" give much better information on the subject. Both of these publications include black-and-white and color photos of the pottery. From an excellent exhibit at the University of New Mexico Art Museum in 1995, the catalog titled "The Potters of Mata Ortiz" includes photos of works exhibited and detailed information about the potters.

--Earl McCoy, PM

Mile High City: An Illustrated History of Denver, by Thomas J. Noel. Heritage Media Corporation, Denver, CO. Illustrated, 519 Pages, Clothbound, \$49.95.

Who is Henry Perky and what did he invent? Who introduced dandelions to Denver? What is the oldest structure in Denver? Who built the "mousetrap"? When did Norwest Bank begin in Denver? What was the predecessor to the Denver Bakery of Keebler Company? Who was the Roberts Tunnel named for? How many nuns arrived in Denver in 1884 to staff a hospital built by the Union Pacific Railroad? What company did Mose Iacino begin in 1918?

These are a few questions that *Mile High City* can answer, thereby providing a

resource for obscure facts about Denver. Perhaps a more-detailed, fully documented book about the history of Denver can be found, but this book is a wonderful coffee-table tome that is a cross between a photo history and a compilation of places, facts, businesses and organizations, that often do not have historical coverage.

The first half of this book provides representations of Denver utilizing stock certificates, post cards, photos, brochures, maps and more. From the Indians on horseback to the jets at DIA, these mementos tell a powerful story of Denver.

The second part of the book covers businesses in Denver today: buildings, businesses, finance, manufacturing, mining, professions, technology and the marketplace. The quality of life in Denver is illustrated by educational institutions, hospitals, historical groups and sports groups.

...a wonderful coffee table
tome that is a cross
between a photo history
and a compilation of
places, facts...

Mile High City is a valuable reference book. Also included is an excellent annotated bibliography to help readers find more information on a particular subject. Do you know the answers to the questions posed above? If not, you will enjoy looking them up in this informative book, discovering these answers and much more.

--Nancy E. Bathke, P.M.

Hollow Victory: The White River Expedition of 1879 and the Battle of Milk Creek by Mark E. Miller. University Press of Colorado, Niwot, 1997, 249 pages. Illustrated with photographs, a map, endnotes, index, bibliography, cloth, dustjacket. \$27.50.

This book demonstrates that the University of Colorado is making great strides in the publishing world. While Oklahoma and Nebraska still probably are the top two in Western history, there are many other universities, such as Colorado, that are telling those two not to be complacent.

Mr. Miller is the Wyoming State Archaeologist, and has written about a subject dear to my heart, as I presented a paper on this subject to the Westerners in March 1997. Mr. Miller has used virtually all of the important sources (and then some) and has written a credible account of this main part of the Ute War of 1879. I say main part, because the account ends almost exactly at the arrival of Merritt's relief column. The volume does not discuss the other skirmishes and does not discuss the frustration of the Army in that it was unable to "teach the Utes a lesson they would not forget." Mr. Miller also discusses much of the contradictory information from various sources, although this reviewer thought some of that should have been in endnotes.

But this volume was somewhat of a disappointment. I thought that it would

sympathetically discuss the Army side of the dispute and recognize the problem making discretionary decisions in the field. I believe that Thornburgh made his best guesses in the expedition that cost him his life. Thornburgh was flexible in his actions, trying to tip-toe between starting a war and enforcing Federal authority. Similar expeditions had ended peacefully. If this one had ended peacefully, Thornburgh would have been a live hero, but would have been forgotten by history. This expedition, to the sorrow of the troopers who died and to the benefit of arm-chair historians, did not end peacefully. Similarly, if this had been an Army expedition in the South during reconstruction, attempting to enforce Federal authority against Ku Klux Klanners, who were harassing Federal agents of the Freedman's Bureau, there would be none of this "balancing" of which side was right. I would submit that the Utes were not always fairly treated, but that they murdered those men at the agency and started a war just like those Rebels/Patriots at Concord Bridge. But, on the other hand, the soldiers with Thornburgh were not British lobsterbacks and Washington, D.C., was not George III's London.

I must admit that I recently read Lowell Thomas' book, *Old Gimlet Eyes*, which was a collaboration with Marine General Smedley Butler about Butler's wars, fights, and activities. In comparison, that 60-year-old book was written when military writing was meant to "tell it like it was" and to get the heart going, not to lecture college freshmen. Mr. Miller, however, writes this book as a professional academic, with politically correct jargon aimed at dispute resolution. Some of Mr. Miller's tidbits would make a Government bureaucrat proud and read like one of John Kenneth Galbraith's economic treatises. "History shows that policy disputes cannot be resolved amicably unless an open dialog exists between factions." "But instead of pursuing new avenues of arbitration, Meeker sought coercion through a show of strength from the War Department." "The soldiers didn't like killing wounded animals any more than the Indians enjoyed wounding them." "When tempers at the agency reached the boiling point in early September 1879, Meeker either misinterpreted or exaggerated the magnitude of the physical threat directed at him and at his family." I think Smedley Butler would guffaw at that last sentence as he buried the agent's body.

Somewhat similarly, Mr. Miller seems frightened to conclude that, according to sworn testimony, rebutted by mere unsworn testimony, the Utes fired the first shot. The author notes that Lieutenant Cherry "claimed" the Utes fired that shot. Later, Mr. Miller states that this supposed shot killed a horse behind Cherry. Oh, how I yearn for writing that is accurate but is not equivocal!

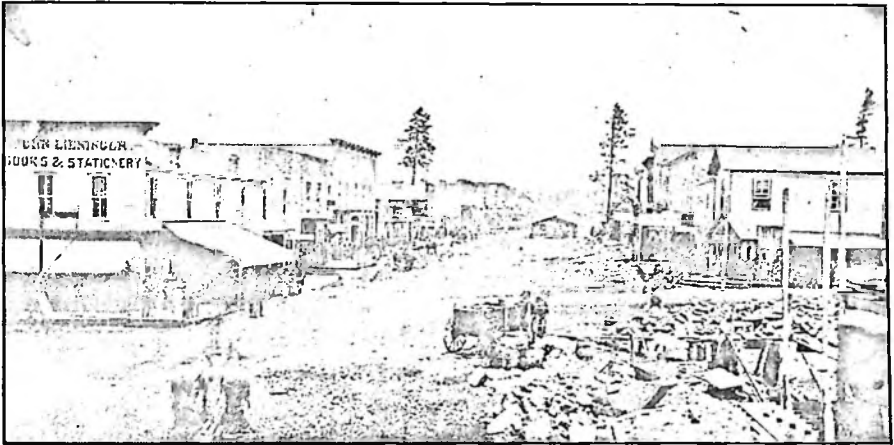
Marshall Sprague's *Massacre*, published 40 years ago, I found to be wonderfully written but sometimes inaccurate or exaggerated for effect. Mr. Miller's book is often concise and is accurate, but, except for his discussion of some of the fight (where he seems to get excited) is not so entertaining. Nevertheless, since it has a lot of history in it, I would recommend it for all Westerners in Colorado.

--John Hutchins, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1998



*Colorado Historical Society
courtesy Tom Noel Collection*

Leadville streets, Harrison Ave. 1879

**Gallagher's Ghost:
The Irish in Leadville, Colorado, 1880**

by

William J. Convery III, C.M.

(Presented June 25, 1998)

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"About the Author" can be found on page 15.

Correction: There was a typographical error in the May-June issue. On page 11 of J. Donohue's "Leadville 1893" the graphic for the 1900 population should read 12,455.

Gallagher's Ghost: The Irish in Leadville, Colorado, 1880

by

William J. Convery III, C.M.

(Presented June 25, 1998)

In the early 1880s, the respected former state Senator, the Honorable John L. Gallagher, returned to prospecting at the end of his term. He had made one fortune out of Leadville's silver boom, and successfully converted it into a political career. Penniless after a few years of high living in Denver, he proposed to dig out a second one. On what proved to be his last day on earth, several miners witnessed him descend on a ramshackle bucket-and-cable apparatus into the shaft of the Moyer mine, pick in hand. To the onlookers horror, the cable snapped, sending Senator Gallagher plummeting down the shaft and into Leadville folklore. The horrible accident did not prevent the deceased Senator from returning to work each day. After long, incredulous, but credible witnesses reported seeing a ghoulish Gallagher trudge to the headframe, climb into the bucket, and drop into the shaft, sometimes admonishing a chilling "Beware!" back up to the hackle-bound observers. Over time, the spectral senator must have tunneled the length of Iron Hill, for miners in the Mikado—directly opposite the Moyer—began to feel disembodied clasps upon their shoulder, and see shimmering figures in the murky corners of abandoned stopes.

The story of Gallagher's Ghost is a fitting symbol of the Irish in Leadville. Inseparable from legend, the

phantom of Sen. Gallagher represents the rising and—forgive me—the plummeting fortunes of the Leadville Irish. He symbolizes their larger-than-life spectacle, their persistence, their visibility, and their labor. Even today, Leadville maintains a distinct Celtic flavor. Festooned as it is with shamrocks on the outside, and reminiscent of the 1870s-era saloons of Leadville's boom time on the inside, the Silver Dollar Saloon on Harrison Street is a prominent symbol of Leadville's Irish heritage. Each year Leadville residents celebrate their Hibernian heritage with the St. Patrick's Day Practice Parade—in August to avoid the four and five feet deep snow drifts of March. Longtime residents still refer to Leadville's east side as an Irish neighborhood because of its population of Irish descendants. Even Father Tom Kileen, pastor of the East-Side Annunciation Catholic Church, sports an Irish moniker.

The Irish represented the largest foreign-born group in boomtown Leadville of the 1880s. Although they represented a minority when compared to Leadville's native-born population, they nevertheless created their own distinctive community, promoted their cultural institutions, and established their unique legacy in Colorado's Cloud City. Exiles flooded from across the sea and across the country to Leadville, there to take advantage of economic opportunity.

Once established, the Irish simultaneously preserved their own cultural heritage, while willingly participating in the American cultural exchange. On the larger stage of ethnic tension and class conflict, the Irish experience in Leadville represented the middle leg of a large-scale transformation of the Irish work force in America. Veterans of inter-ethnic guerrilla warfare in the Pennsylvania coal fields, Irish miners learned valuable lessons in labor conflict and industrial unionism in Leadville, which they later applied in the "Gibraltar of Unionism," Butte, Montana, during the formation of the Western Federation of Miners.

Boom Town

Springing nearly full grown from the wilderness, the two-mile-high, instant city of Leadville was, in the words of historian Duane A. Smith, "the wealthiest, biggest, and wildest mining community of the era." Leadville's rich concentrations of silver-bearing carbonate of lead made overnight millionaires of, among others, David May, Meyer Guggenheim, Charles Boettcher, and Horace Augustus Warner Tabor, as well as second-generation Irish-Americans such as John F. Campion and John J. and Molly Brown. Thousands of miners, prospectors, roustabouts, and hangers-on poured into the upper Arkansas valley between 1877 and 1884, transforming Colorado's Magic City from a sleepy pine forest into Colorado's second largest urban center by 1880. Leadville's riches attracted large numbers of American, German, British, Cornish, Canadian, Austrian, Finnish, Swedish, Czech,

Scottish, Swiss, and Irish fortune hunters. As a polylingual, polyethnic community, the Cloud City rivaled America's Atlantic seaboard cities for cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Leadville's rootin', tootin' image did not fail to escape the notice of Irish literary lion Oscar Wilde when he visited the camp on the lecture circuit in 1884. Although the combination of altitude and excessive alcohol consumption overcame the author, he still recorded his impressions of the woolly mining camp:

"One travels over the great plains of Colorado and up the Rocky Mountains; on the top of which is Leadville, the richest city in the world. It has also got the reputation of being the roughest, and every man carries a revolver. I was told that if I went there they would be sure to shoot me or my traveling manager. I wrote and told them that nothing that they could do to my traveling manager would intimidate me. They are miners--men working in metals, so I lectured them on the Ethics of Art. I read them passages from the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, and they seemed much delighted. I was reproved by my hearers for not having brought him with me. I explained that he had been dead for some little time which elicited the enquiry "Who shot him?" They afterwards took me to a dancing saloon where I saw the only rational method of art criticism I have ever come across. Over the piano was printed a notice:

"PLEASE DO NOT SHOOT THE PIANIST. HE IS DOING HIS BEST."

Immigration

The United States census of

1880, from which I drew much of my statistical research, reveals a rich ethnic mixture. Four out of every ten residents of Lake County who appeared on the 1880 census were born in foreign countries. Of these, the Irish made up the largest concentration of immigrants. Leadville's 1,095 Irish-born immigrants represented 7 percent of the city's 14,280 officially counted residents. Men and women who counted their parents as Irish-born made up another 8 percent, or a combined 2,246 of the civic total.

Most of Leadville's Irish traced their immigration to the mid-1860s when a second series of crop failures forced the largest Irish exodus since the Great Famine of 1843-1856. Hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women fled the island every year until 1870, and no less than 53,000 emigrated in any year before 1875. Flooding into New York, Boston, and Pennsylvania, the peasant Irish filled unskilled or semi-skilled labor positions in America's burgeoning industrial revolution. Skilled Irish miners from west Cork or the English Midlands, on the other hand, found jobs in the anthracite mines of western Pennsylvania. While slightly more remunerative than the competitive factory jobs of American cities, the undesirability of coal mine labor was illustrated in ballad form, as this passage from *The Lament of the Molly Maguires* indicates:

*Sucking up coal dust into your lungs
Underneath the hills where there is no sun*

Try to make your living on a dollar a day,

Digging bloody coal in Pennsylvania.

When ethnic workers were

thrown out of work during the American depression of 1873, the Irish received their first taste of labor strife in the bloody coal fields of Pennsylvania. Irish miners clashed with English and Cornish managers—hereditary enemies from across the sea—on a new battleground and over new labor conditions. Following ancient patterns of agrarian terrorism, the Irish struck at their bosses, killing nine managers between 1874 and 1875. Reprising Pinkerton agents captured ten Irishmen who were allegedly associated with the terrorist Molly Maguire organization, an offshoot of the Ancient Order of Hibernians benevolent and immigrant assistance society. The accused Mollies were hung in June, 1877, while black-listed Irish miners and their families were sent packing from the Pennsylvania hills. Ethnic strife, hangings, displacement, and exile were political events that struck deep chords in the Irish psyche. The difference in America was that the Irish shared their dissatisfaction with other displaced ethnic groups. The Irish work force joined other immigrants in sharp labor conflicts in rail yards, factories, and mines in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and San Francisco. From Pennsylvania, the dispossessed Irish headed west to other mining sites—to coal and copper mines in Joplin, Missouri, to copper and lead mines in western Michigan, and to Leadville, Colorado.

Fortune-hunters of all sorts flooded the Arkansas valley in 1878 after long-time gold miners realized that the annoying blue gunk which clogged up their sluice boxes contained a rich mixture of silver and lead. Leadville brought wealth and therefore

respectability to several native and second-generation Celts, including John F. Campion, a Canadian-born descendant of Irish parents—whose superstition led him to name his mines after members of the deer family and who later financed the Great Western Sugar Company. Another Hibernian who earned fame and fortune in the Carbonate Camp was Margaret Tobin “Molly” Brown. Born in Missouri to Irish parents, Maggie moved to Leadville, where she married Campion’s mining superintendent, James J. Brown. Following her husband’s gold strike at the Little Johnny Mine, the couple moved to Denver. Molly’s attempts to breach Denver society were quashed in part by the disdain of Denver’s social elite for her Irish background. Her immigrant mother scandalized their posh Capitol Hill neighbors by sitting on the Brown family porch, smoking her corn-cob pipe.

Carbonite Hill mines

As Molly’s mother indicates, Leadville’s Irish population could be as colorful as one would expect from the Magic City legend mill. Of the earliest Irish bonanza hunters, few could outmatch the notorious Gallagher brothers for eccentricity. John, Charles, and Patrick Gallagher arrived in Adelaide Park, at the head of Stray Horse Gulch, in the fall of 1876 and plunged into the hills. The brothers quickly earned a reputation for hard work, but to later myth-makers, they also represented the common stereotype of Leadville’s Irish-- “for the most part a good-natured people, hard working, unschooled, hard drinkers, and good for a joke.”

During the winter of 1877, the brothers uncovered the Camp Bird Mine, the first major discovery on Carbonate Hill. Old-timers told a story about their strike—One Will Stevens enjoyed a good working claim on Iron Hill. As the story goes, the Gallaghers conspired to flatter Stephens into inviting them to work near his claim. They approached Stephens, praising his ability to sniff out silver. The three brothers complimented the workmanship of Stephens’ shaft, beams, and tunnels and hinted broadly that they would like to join his diggings. Not wanting the brothers to work anywhere near his claim, Stephens recommended that they begin digging near a tree on the distant Carbonate Hill, across the valley from his claim. There, the Gallaghers dug, and to Steven’s chagrin, struck the Camp Bird lode.

Howsoever it was found, the Camp Bird strike created a mini-sensation in the sensation-prone district. A curious reporter from the Leadville *Daily Chronicle* climbed up Stray Horse Gulch in order to interview Mrs. Patrick Gallagher. Mrs. Gallagher, he reported, denied her husband’s Celtic background. “Och, Pat isn’t Irish at all. He is a Englishman, but comin’ over to Ameriky in a shteamer he got in wid a log o’ Irish, and got their damned brogue; and faith, he can’t git over it.” Eventually, the Gallaghers sold out to the St. Louis Smelting and Refining Company for \$225,000. Splitting the money, the brothers went their separate ways, living it up, as legend would have it, until the money ran out.

Another Leadville Irishman straight out of legend was the terse, individualistic, occasionally homicidal

town marshal, Martin Duggan. Appointed in 1879, Duggan replaced Leadville's second town marshal in three weeks—another Irishman named George O'Connor. O'Connor, in turn, had replaced T. H. Harris, who was "driven out of town" after one week, "by the lawless element." O'Connor lasted two more weeks before he was gunned down by his own disgruntled deputy, James Bloodsworth. Bloodsworth escaped into the night, never to be seen again. The next morning, according to O'Connor's dying request, Duggan was sworn in by Mayor Horace Tabor.

A *Leadville Chronicle* article described the new marshal as a short, stockily built man with fair hair and blue eyes. "Credible" witnesses described him as the physical personification of Ireland, with a black thorn shillelagh birthmark on his hand, and a "mashannock potato" mark on his underlip. Born in Limerick on Nov. 10, 1848, he emigrated with his parents to Floyd's Bluff, Nebraska. Like many Irish immigrants, the footloose Duggan moved from place to place as opportunity beckoned. He toured the mining circuit, visiting Denver, Virginia City, Salt Lake City, Custer City, Del Norte, Ouray, Central City, Nevada City, San Miguel, Dolores, and Cheyenne. Along the way, if the account can be believed, he took work as a rancher, "buccarro," bullwhacker, thief and deadbeat, drifter, singer, dancer, "pedal artist of no mean pretensions," star of the mining camp theatrical, bartender, faro dealer, lumberjack, prospector, gunman, and Indian fighter. Before reaching Leadville he only understood the law from the wrong side.

In fact, Leadville's elite did not quite know how to handle their new marshal. A legend persists that he once jailed Horace Tabor's partner, August Rische, on the charge of drunkenness and resisting arrest. Soon enough, Duggan's boss, Mayor Tabor arrived and ordered Rische freed. Duggan replied that "he didn't presume to tell His Honor how to run his business, and he was damned if His Honor would tell Duggan how to run his". Thereupon, he ordered the mayor to "shut up and get out before Tabor found himself enjoying the view from behind bars".

In fact, Leadville's city and county police force reinforced the old adage that the Irish tended to gravitate to the three P's—priests, policemen, and politicians. In 1880, half of the twenty city policemen, including one sergeant were first- or second- generation Irish. Three of the six deputy county sheriffs were also of Irish descent. Celts enjoyed the excitement and authority in this job, but evidence indicates that patrolmen were not as well paid as the average miner. For \$100 per week, the boys in blue worked 8 to 12 hour shifts, walking six hour beats. During the 1880 season the Leadville police force racked up 4,320 arrests, primarily for intoxication and disturbance of the peace. It is an illuminating fact that the census taker counted five of the city constables not at the city jail, or walking their beat, but patronizing local saloons, perhaps searching for intoxicated miscreants.

Politics

The Irish dominated city politics in the early years of Leadville's existence, as well. The Carbonate Camp

elected four first- or second-generation Irishmen to the six-seat city council in its first city election, April 1, 1879, including the two-hundred-pound Edward C. Kavanaugh (a man of "aldermanic proportions," quipped the *Chronicle*), John P. Kelly, Martin J. Murphy, and Jack McCombe. All four accumulated modest fortunes in mining. Murphy and Kelly kept saloons. Kavanaugh was a prominent expressman. The next year saw five of twelve Irish aldermen, before reaching a lower, more stable level. The board of aldermen always maintained significant Irish representation, boasting no less than two Irishmen over the next twenty years. Nevertheless, the Irish community would never again achieve the nearly complete level of civic control that it enjoyed in the early elections.

As far as other occupations are concerned, Leadville's census enumerators listed Irish roustabouts, paupers, rag pickers, prisoners, peddlers, gamblers, actors, musicians, prostitutes, speculators, mine owners, and even one "pugilist." "Yet nearly 65 percent of Leadville's 1,367 employed male Irishmen were either skilled miners and unskilled laborers. (The number of miners may be higher—the enumeration period was from May 1 to June 1, 1880—and census takers sometimes dallied until the fifteenth of June. The 1880 mining strike occurred between May 26 and June 15.) The lure of steady wages enticed many disappointed fortune-hunters to remain as wage laborers. As mines opened by the score and as smelters began belching thick, black smoke into the high Rocky Mountain air, skilled laborers became worth their weight in silver. Leadville

offered the highest wages in the state. Knowledgeable and experienced miners commanded \$4 per day. Even unskilled laborers could earn a daily wage of \$2.50, and the average daily wage hovered at about \$3. Although Leadville's remote location and lack of railroad access meant astronomically high freight costs, mining nevertheless presented a relatively decent living. The main drawback was that very few laboring miners made enough to invest heavily themselves in the large scale, increasingly capital-intensive mining industry.

Among the Cloud City's employed first- and second-generation men, 87 percent of them held working-class jobs such as miner, laborer, cook, carpenter, or teamster. Four percent held white collar wage earning jobs such as clerk, bookkeeper, or policeman. Three percent held professional jobs such as engineer, lawyer, or physician. Six percent listed themselves as independent businessmen or entrepreneurs. The American-born Irish experienced a slightly higher chance at upward mobility. Seventeen percent of second-generation Irish men occupied white-collar wage earner, professional, and entrepreneurial positions compared to 9 percent of the Irish-born.

Among Leadville's 334 occupied Irish women, 50 percent listed housekeeper, followed by servant (20%), laundress (16%), boarding-house keeper (6%), and nun (3%). At St. Vincent's Hospital on East Tenth Street, Sister Superior Mary Bridget Pendergast supervised a nursing staff of twelve Sisters of Charity. These extraordinarily dedicated nurses provided free care to stricken miners. Pneumonia

and the various miners' conditions—tuberculosis, silicosis, or “miner’s con,” and mangled or blasted limbs plagued the camp. In response, Father Henry Robinson, the Catholic pastor of the Church of the Annunciation parish, petitioned the Leavenworth, Kansas-based Sisters of Charity for able health-care workers.

Sisters Bernard Mary Pendergast, Mary Crescentia Fisher, and Francis Xavier Davy arrived in December, 1878, after a three-day stage journey over “hazardous roads and bitter cold weather.” Unable to make the final leg over snow-bound Mosquito Pass, the intrepid nuns chartered a sleigh to take them from South Park into Leadville. In Leadville, the sisters solicited a land donation and public subscriptions to fund the construction of a new clapboard hospital. The sisters began accepting patients even before the hospital was completed. Someone simply dropped the first patient, Thomas Krating, in front of the unfinished building. Krating had been trapped in a blizzard out on Mosquito Pass. Krating was too frozen to survive—the sisters could only provide physical and spiritual comfort. When the hospital opened officially March 1, 1879, the Sisters rapidly achieved a much higher success rate. In fact, the hospital generally contained 50 percent more patients than capacity until the annex was built later that first year.

By 1901, the hospital had served 11,918 patients, of whom 960 had not pulled through. Catholics comprised 8,238 of them. Only 15 percent of the patients paid their debts in full. An amazing 23 percent were treated for free. St. Vincent’s was an

Irish institution as much as a Catholic one. Sister Mary Bridget and ten of twelve other nuns on her 1880 staff were of Irish descent. The 1901 figures showed that after the U.S.-born (3,885), most of the patients were Irish (3,537). Patients from Scandinavia made up 932 of the total, Germany, Holland, and Belgium-847; Austria, Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary-713, England-432; Canada-422; Scotland-340; France, and Switzerland-238; Russia-64; Wales-53; Ethnically Jewish-42; African-American-22; everyone else 8.

One job that Irish women rarely occupied was that of prostitute. None of the twenty six “soiled doves” on State Street and Tiger Alley who chose to be counted as such were Irish-born. Nor were their parents Irish. (Although it should be noted that enumerators did a less-than-thorough or perhaps a commendably thorough job in Leadville’s red-light district. One child and a handful of male roustabouts were classified as “prostitutes” by the census taker). On West Fifth Street, however, it was not unheard of to find a few cribs that were operated by first-generation Irish girls. Mollie and Della Price’s crib at 124 W. Fifth Street was one. Irish-born Jennie Mahoney and Katie Maron ran another at 105 W. Fifth. According to the census, none of these four girls was more than twenty three years old. Both “households” had a resident non-Irish man on the premises, but in both cases, they were not classified as the head of household. Rather, the senior resident prostitute claimed that distinction.

Far and away the two most fashionable houses on West Fifth Street were run by the rival madams Mollie May and Sallie Purple. At the risk of

being labeled an historical fuss-budget, it is necessary to point out that the 1880 census refutes the basis for one of the most colorful legends rising from these plumed rivals' careers. In *Colorado's Magic City*, Leadville historian Edward Blair reports an argument which supposedly took place between Mollie and Ms. Purple over "the merits of Connaught and Tipperary as birth-places." The tiff spread as both the staff and clientele of the two proximate houses took sides. Shouts became insults. Insults begot a rush for guns and ammunition. Finally, shooting erupted, both sides defending the honor of their madams. "The girls and guests in both houses joined in the fray," Blair asserts, "pumping lead into the two houses." Although the battle lasted over an hour, no law officers intervened, and no one was even injured. Finally, the combatants retired for more sensual pleasures, and order, such as it was, was restored.

Believe what you want. But let the record show that no truly Irish prostitute was involved in this incident. Sallie Purple, age twenty, appears on the census manuscript as the head of an eight-girl operation. The Purple girls ranged from nineteen to twenty eight, and hailed from Indiana, Virginia, and even from Mexico. Sallie Purple was born in Illinois. Her father was born in Illinois. Her mother was born in Illinois. No Tipperary or Connaught, Illinois, exists, to the knowledge of this author.

Likewise, Mollie May claimed her age as thirty years in 1880. Her mother was born in Ireland, 'tis true. And her father was born in Germany and Mollie was born in Virginia. Mollie

presided over a house of seven girls. (Although the enumerator, the quite possibly frazzled Frank W. Hopkins counted three-year-old Estella Cunningham, a demimonde's daughter, and a male resident of Italian extraction as prostitutes anyway. He also began to mark Mollie down as the head of household, then for some reason thought better of it and stopped.) Most hailed from southern states. One was from England, to be sure. Yet Mollie, Sallie, and their fifteen gunslinging prostitutes shared but one Irish parent between them. These girls had many virtues. Being Irish-born was not one of them.

The Irish who traveled to timberline in 1878 and 1879 established several institutions in place designed to facilitate their entry into the largely non-Irish mining camp. Foremost among these institutions was the Irish saloon. The saloon was more than a staple of Irish commerce. It also served as a centerpiece of Irish community life representing, in the words of Tom Noel, "a haven for Old World culture and an introduction to their new home." The saloon provided a friendly, familiar atmosphere where the Irish could discuss issues of importance in both Leadville and Ireland, read letters from home, listen to news about friends and relatives, sing songs, and organize their politics. According to the 1880 census, twenty four of the Magic City's 106 saloons were owned by men with Irish surnames. Similarly, twenty-one Irish or Irish-American saloonkeepers appeared on the census rolls. One in four saloons served Leadville's thirstiest fifteen percent.

A second prominent Irish

institution was the Leadville chapter of the Robert Emmett Literary Society. Known locally as the Knights of Robert Emmett (KRE), this quasi-secret society was named after the martyr of the stillborn Irish revolution of 1803. Emmett, in the assessment of Irish historian Lawrence McCaffrey, was a failure as a revolutionary. Nevertheless, his eloquence in the courtroom dock at his trial for treason ignited the Irish-American imagination with the romance of the lost cause.

It was common knowledge that the literary aspirations of the Knights were largely a facade. The real purpose of the working-class oriented was to support the activities of the radical Clan-na-Gael, which, as successor of the revolutionary Fenian movement, worked clandestinely for the eventual uprising against British rule in Ireland. Almost paranoid in their fear of betrayal by British agents, the Emmetts were obsessed with secrecy. They assigned each of their members a number in place of a name, destroyed their minutes, and indulged in an arcane array of secret passwords and codes. A reporter for the *Evening Chronicle*, charting the histories and agendas of the Cloud City's various organizations in 1883 reported that,

"This organization is the most strictly secret of the secret societies known to exist in the city. Of course it is composed of Irishmen, and from its title it may be presumed that its objects are such as are dictated by Irish patriotism. It is not the purpose of this article to pry into the secrets of anybody, and those who have the right to know anything of its workings probably know where to learn what they want. The

reporter succeeded only in eliciting the information that the branch here was organized in 1878, and is in a flourishing condition."

Ironically, the Emmetts represented a visible manifestation of Irish power in the Carbonate Camp. Soon after their inception in the fall of 1878, these secretive and self-described "unabashed revolutionary conspirators" sponsored the first of what would turn out to be forty annual high-profile balls in Leadville.

The Emmett balls were smashing affairs. Everyone who mattered was invited. The Leadville *Evening Chronicle* of Oct. 22, 1879 ran a two-column notice of the second annual gala. One reporter called the event "one of the gayest assemblages ever called together" in Leadville's short life. Fashionably-dressed guests arrived at a hall festooned with the Stars and Stripes and the orange-white-and-green Irish national flag. A portrait of Robert Emmett himself, flanked by engravings illustrating his life, death, and passionate courtroom oration, adorned the southern wall. The grand procession occurred at 9:30 p. m., with a break for supper at one o'clock in the morning. The "gay throng" proceeded to a nearby restaurant for a "gorgeous" banquet, then returned to the hall to dance "until an early hour."

Social functions such as these earned the ostensibly clandestine conspirators the epithet: "One of the most popular and liberal-spirited organizations in Leadville." No thought was given to security in these finest hours. Perhaps the contradiction can be explained by the celebrants' distance from the true crisis of Irish nationalism

as well as the need to express Irish pride in the remote mining camp, whatever the actual circumstances.

Irish institutions

The existence of yet another institution suggests the lengths to which some of the Leadville Irish were willing to go in the cause of Irish nationalism. The Irish formed their own civic militia unit in Leadville—the Wolfe Tone Guards. Named after another martyr of Irish independence, Theobald Wolfe Tone, the Guards were founded in 1879 as a civic militia loosely associated with the Colorado National Guard. In fact, the Wolfe Tones assembled soon after the formation of the Scottish Tabor Highland Guards, presumably as a gesture of civic pride and good-natured ethnic rivalry. The company drilled for the protection of the city against the perceived threat of Ute raids and vigilante uprisings. But they also displayed a keen awareness of Irish nationalist questions by sponsoring debates and lectures over that particular issue. In their secondary role as the Irish Glee Club, the Wolfe Tones shouldered the responsibility for promoting Irish culture, music, and literature in the rugged camp. Membership between the Knights of Robert Emmett and the Wolfe Tones frequently crossed over, suggesting that many Irish immigrants expected to one day fight in the coming war for Irish independence—a goal of debatable realism.

Another prominent Irish organization in Leadville was the local chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). Sporting the motto, “Friendship, Unity and True Christian Charity--we visit our sick and bury our

dead,” the Hibernians were founded in the eastern United States in the 1820s to assist Irish immigrants with their accommodation to America. In Leadville, the order made sure that members in good standing did not die alone and unmourned in a land far from home. The organization provided an extra boon to miners by paying only death or injury benefits forthcoming before the advent of strong unions. Additionally, the AOH served as the Irish ambassadors to the surrounding community. They sponsored that annual symbol of Irish visibility and strength, the St. Patrick’s Day parade, as well as several balls of their own. The AOH also campaigned against negative Irish stereotypes, such as “Pat and Mike” burlesque shows. The Hibernians and the KRE occasionally rivaled one another—with its radical agenda, the KRE tended to attract working-class immigrants. The membership of the AOH tended to pursue middle-class, conservative issues. More commonly, they shared mutual goals, meeting places, members, and interests.

In addition to their specific functions, each of the above institutions eased the accommodation of Irish immigrants into Leadville. Each served as vital networking associations where Irish workers of good character could meet Irish employers. Each also promoted Irish visibility and gave the Irish a prominence in civic affairs which for a time, exceeded that of any other ethnic rival.

In early 1880, the Irish institutions of Leadville combined to promote a cause which successfully occupied the Cloud City’s attention through the slow winter months and into the spring.

The American Land League Movement and the Irish Relief Fund Drive were country-wide manifestations of Irish nationalism in America. Leadville's Irish community successfully focused the efforts of the entire city into this reform-minded campaign. Their success would have repercussions in the Leadville strike of the following summer.

As self-proclaimed exiles, the Leadville Irish remained aware of current developments in their native land. Massive crop failures in Ireland during the growing season of 1879 summoned the specter of the Great Famine to Irish tenant farmers. The radical nationalist, Michael Davitt, harnessed grassroots agrarian protest in Ireland and transformed it into a national movement. Initially calling for a reduction in rents, Davitt's movement ultimately agitated for complete land ownership reform. The call for land redistribution was a new and radical solution to the Irish crisis. Ireland's foremost politician of the period, Charles Stuart Parnell, adopted the movement. In 1880, he toured the United States in an effort to mobilize Irish-American capital for land redistribution. Success followed Parnell wherever he went. Not only were Irish-Americans prepared to receive him enthusiastically but his presence also helped gentrify the heretofore working-class cause of Irish nationalist protest, which had been so damaged by the Molly Maguires and others.

The Irish Land League movement took Leadville by storm in January, 1880. The Wolfe Town Guards and the Knights of Robert Emmett led a parade to a Land League

rally at the Tabor Opera House. Presided over by Lt. Gov. Tabor, Leadville's most prominent Irish merchants, bankers, doctors, and lawyers spoke on behalf of the Irish relief fund. T. C. McDavitt, esq., one of the prominent Irish attorneys of Leadville, expressed the feelings of exile retained by many Irish immigrants when he proclaimed, *"Yes, even here in the very heart of the American continent I see hundreds of exiles from their native land--thousands of miles from the section and associations of their earliest childhood--rudely torn from the land they love, from the home of their birth...Is it because you love America better than you love Ireland; that you leave the land of your birth to try your fortunes on foreign and untried shores?...No! It is the assured, infernal, and diabolical policy of Great Britain that is driving the sons and daughters of Ireland from their paternal roots and firesides, and from the soil that rightfully belongs to them, both by the laws of man, and the laws of the Immaculate God."*

Fueled by popular support of the Irish, drive popular momentum in the Cloud City. Newspapers provided free space to print the names of private contributors. Saloons donated their daily take on particular days. The Grand Central Theater staged a benefit performance regaling the travails of Ireland. The Tabor Opera House staged the great patriotic Irish drama of "Trodden Down Under Two Flags" for the same purpose. Even the German Turnverein Society held a special fundraising ball for the oppressed Irish peasants.

By capturing the good-will of

the city, the Irish retained sympathy among Leadville's non-Irish majority. Bolstered by the Land League rhetoric, which resonated well with the rhetoric of industrial unionism, the Irish lent their considerable talents at agitation to the Leadville mining strike of 1880.

Mining labor strike

The strike which paralyzed Leadville during the summer of 1880 was dominated by Irish themes and personalities. The spark which ignited the strike had anti-Irish connotations. Managers of the Tabor-owned Chrysolite mines ordered the Irish shift bosses to enforce a no-smoking, no-talking ordinance. When the shift bosses resigned, the rest of the labor force walked out in protest. As historian David Emmons has pointed out, through preferential hiring of their countrymen, Irish shift bosses represented a tier of job security for Irish miners. Leadership of the strike, moreover, came from Knights of Labor organizer, Michael J. Mooney, an Irish immigrant and veteran of the Pennsylvania coal field wars. Mooney and other organizers rallied the miners by appropriating rhetoric from the Land League movement. In an address made at the head of Harrison Street, Mooney argued that everyone agreed that "landlordism in Ireland is a blighting curse upon her people and a barrier to her property and advancement." How was the curtailment of the miner's rights to receive fair wages, he asked, any different?

The strike began peacefully and brass bands assembled during the initial walkout march lent a festive air. Nevertheless, the good will soon

stagnated. Miners ignored Mooney's orders to avoid trouble by shunning saloons. Isolated incidents of violence, scattered barroom brawls, and gun-fights undermined the striker's discipline. Mine managers whispered that Mooney was a fugitive of the Molly Maguire movement and spread rumors that the organizer was planning to restage the Pennsylvania coal field war in Leadville. G. G. White, an Irish-American lawyer lectured the strikers, "When you say that no man shall work, you become rioters, and the government is offended, and the boys in blue will be sent to disperse you. Molly Maguireism consists in but three steps, and those are strike, riot, and murder." Although Mooney vociferously denied the accusations, alarmed business leaders rumbled against the strike in Leadville.

Fearing "strike, riot, and murder," Leadville's businessmen called on Governor Frederick W. Pitkin to intervene. After the vigilante Citizen's Executive Committee nearly provoked a riot during their June 13 parade to support public order the committee called on Governor Frederick W. Pitkin to send the state militia. Mayor Horace Tabor mobilized the Tabor Highland Guards but, doubting the loyalty if the Hibernian militia, disarmed the Wolfe Tone Guards. The Irish militia disbanded in protest. Goaded by the near-riot and the endless cries of panic, Governor Pitkin declared martial law in Leadville on June 13, 1880. The declaration of martial law finished the strike. After receiving death threats from the Citizens' Executive Committee, Mooney and the other strike organizers went into hiding. All

other miners on the streets were declared "vagabonds," arrested, and thrown out of town. A reporter commented that the approaches to the Cloud City were black with fleeing miners and the woods filled with ex-strikers, who hunted and fished to get through the summer. The Miner's Cooperative Union disbanded.

Although the strike was a nearly total defeat for the mining union, the strikers who participated derived lessons from the strike which they used to form an even more powerful labor organization. Former Leadville strikers swelled the ranks of the Butte, Montana, Workingman's Association. Reinforced by these contentious veterans of labor conflict, the Workingman's Association changed its name to the Miners' Union of Butte City the following year. Butte and its surrounding copper mines became the center of Irish hegemony in western America. Led by Irish mining veterans from Leadville and elsewhere, the Butte Miners' Union became the "Gibraltar of Unionism"—the most powerful union between 1885 and 1900. The Gibraltar of Unionism owed its strength in part to the lessons learned in defeat by the Irish in Leadville.

The Irish played a key role in developing the flavor of early Leadville. Although Irish men, women, and children represented a minority of the total boomtime population, their status as the largest ethnic group, their saturation of Leadville's working class occupations, their roles in civic government, their institutions, their celebrations, and their influence in highly publicized labor strife all combined to create a visibility beyond proportion.

Visibility, character, and color, in turn, created a niche for the Irish in Leadville folklore. Extroverted, omnipresent, and celebratory, the Irish were a ready match for the Cloud City legend mill. That Gallagher's ghost still haunts the headwaters of the Arkansas today should come as little surprise.

Bibliography



About the Author

Bill Convery is a third-generation Colorado native of Irish descent. He graduated in May, 1998 with a M.A. in American History from CU-Denver. Bill's received a combined grant of \$19,000 from the J.K. Mullen Foundation, the Eleanore Mullen Weckbaugh Foundation, and Peter Grant for his master's thesis, a biography of the Irish-American philanthropist, John Kernan Mullen. Additionally, he received two consecutive awards from the Michael Collins Chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians for outstanding historical research in Irish history in Colorado in 1997 and 1998.

Currently, Bill teaches Colorado and American history at Metropolitan State College of Denver and Arapahoe Community College. When not serving on the Colorado's Most Endangered Places steering committee or writing scripts for the Colorado Historical Moment's segment of the television program Colorado Getaways, he is revising his master's thesis for publication by the University Press of Colorado.

Bill is married, with no children. He thanks his wife, Cara, for her longstanding patience and encouragement.

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Over the Corral Rail

Please send items of interest to Jim Krebs, Publications Chairman. Jim's contact information is on page 2.

Westerners International honors Denver Posse members

On October 17, 1998, Posse Members John Hutchins and Bob Larson were recognized at the Westerners International breakfast. John Hutchins won first prize for "Excellence in Historical Presentations for 1997", for his presentation on the Ute Indian Wars. He also received the "Philip A. Danielson Award".

Bob Larson won second prize for the "Best Non-Fiction Book Published in 1997" with his submission, "Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux", and received the "Westerners International Co-Founder Book Award".

Bob comments, "At the last three breakfasts, I've been picking up awards for members of the Denver Posse with remarkable regularity. Our Corral has led the way in this regard."



Congratulations to these two and to the Denver Posse of the Westerners.

New organization

A new voice and forum for people interested in history—professors, students, history buffs—was recently formed. It was established particularly for those who are disenchanted with current emphases in history and/or the two major national historical organizations. This third national organization, called simply the Historical Society, was founded by Eugene D. Genovese, historian and author. Genovese reportedly says that the group will focus "on the study of plain-spoken history, not jargon-laden, esoteric theory, and not only the matters of race, class, and gender." (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 8, 1998.)

In its publications and meetings, the Historical Society promises not to focus on contests with its critics. Marc Trachtenberg, executive director and historian at the University of Pennsylvania, introduces the society's web site by stating, "We have no interest in endless controversies and 'cultural wars' with those who are satisfied with the status quo. We seek neither a restoration of the Good Old Days, which never existed, nor the perpetuation of the irrationalities of recent years." The society's publications and meetings will aim for discussions and sharp and frank debate "in an atmosphere of civility, mutual respect and common courtesy. All we require is that participants lay down plausible premises, reason according to the canons of logic, appeal to evidence, and prepare to exchange criticism with those who hold different points of view."

The Society has set \$20 as its charter membership fee (\$10 for students). Its addresses are: The Historical Society, P.O. Box 382602, Cambridge, MA 02238-2602; and home.nycap.rr.com/history/

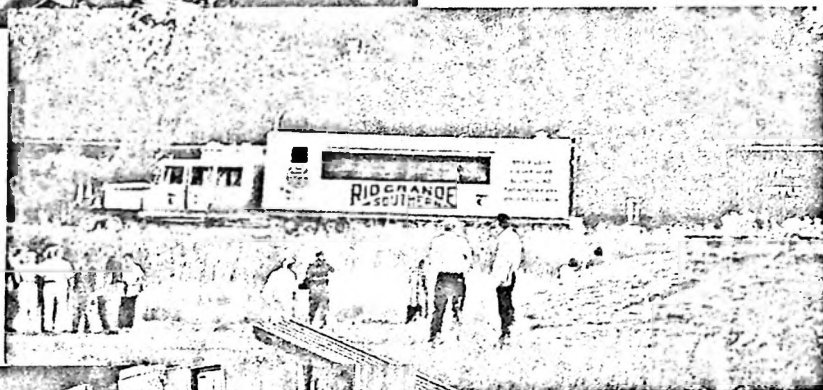
For comments pro and con, from members of both the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians and from others, see the "Colloquy" section on the *Chronicle's* web page, chronicle.com/colloquy

Westerners' summer fun...



Left: Rocket scientists prepare to erect the tent at the August Rendezvous.

Below: Westerners' wait their turn while others ride on the Galloping Goose at the Colorado Railroad Museum.



Above: Chuck Wrangler (aka Roger Michels), enjoys a ride through the museum.

Right: Westerner Jackson Thode dons the proper headwear for dinner at the Colorado Railroad Museum.

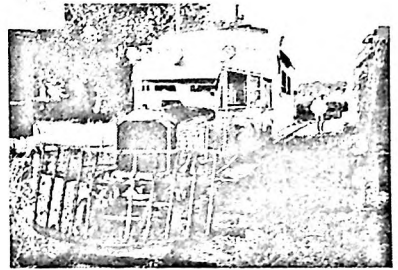




Above: Pat & Bob Lane, Ed & Nancy Bathke and Susan Krebs enjoy a "Goose" ride.

Right: Keith Fessenden examines the historic hardware.

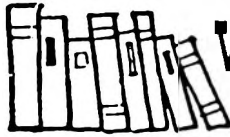
Below: A beautiful August evening provided summer fun for the Westerners.



And back in July...

Sherriff Max Smith presents a small token of the Posse members' appreciation, for continued contributions and for hosting the July Posse meeting, to Bob and Florence Stadt.





Westerners Bookshelf



Lawman: The Life and Times of Harry Morse, 1835-1912 by John Boessenecker. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1998. 366 pages. Illustrated with photographs, a diagram, and a map, endnotes, index, bibliography, cloth. \$29.95

This book is the third by California attorney John Boessenecker, a notable gunfight historian and collector. His previous books were *Badge and Buckshot* (which received, in the Roundup, a favorable review by "yours truly") and *The Grey Fox* with Mark Dugan, (which received, in the Roundup, a favorable review by the brother of "yours truly".) This volume, which is the history of a noted lawman and detective Harry Morse, is somewhat of a mixed bag, however.

The story of Harry Morse is one that ought to be told. Many Westerners have read of him, although they likely don't recall his name. Morse had a lengthy history in California law enforcement. For example, he was the surviving major participant in a noted gunfight with Juan Soto, of the Tibercio Vasquez gang, in 1871. According to Joseph Henry Jackson, in his 1949 book, *Bad Company*, Morse almost single-handedly ended the reign of the Mexican outlaw gangs in California. Additionally, Morse, as a detective, was the one who tracked down Black Bart through a laundry mark. Finally, among his other notable cases,

...Morse was involved in the case of the gruesome murder of two members of an adult Sunday School class...

Morse was involved in the gruesome murder of two female members of an adult Sunday school class, an 1895 case which San Francisco Police Officer Pete Fanning dubbed "The Crime of the Century." Thus, there is no question that Mr. Boessenecker was correct in that the full story of Morse ought to be told.

However, it is the telling of the story which is the problem. Mr. Boessenecker, who has collected the diaries of Morse and supposedly unique copies of magazine articles written by Morse, jumps back and forth in his narrative, with too-lengthy excerpts from the reminiscences of Morse. These digressions written by the subject, (but not the author) of the book, in italicized type, are far too long. Mr. Boessenecker usually is an excellent writer: his description of the gunfight with Soto is much better than that of Joseph Henry Jackson. However, the quotations of Morse should have been much more limited or Mr. Boessenecker should have done an annotated edition of the Morse reminiscences. I believe "Outlaw/Lawman" author Bob DeArment would have made that difficult choice, one way or the other.

The other criticisms I have involve the author's expression of personal/professional opinions. There is the occasional interjection of "politically correct" discussions likely to prevent the writer from getting into trouble with associates in

the California bar. An example of this is where the author goes into a discussion, at page 192, of the inherent unreliability of "snitch" witnesses, complete with modern legal journal articles as authority. The other related problem is the interjection of blatantly-biased legal conclusions. For example, based upon the defense-bar theme that no defendant would confess to a crime, Mr. Boessenecker, at page 177, accuses his subject of "almost certainly" perjuring himself. By page 225, Mr. Boessenecker has extended this conclusion to one that Morse "undoubtedly committed perjury." Finally, on page 276, the attorney-author attacks the evidence used to get a warrant, not reminding the readers that warrants are issued on mere probable cause.

The book is recommended. It is an important contribution to Western history by someone who will soon stand in the mixed company of Breihan, Croy, Drago, DeArment, Shirley and others. However, the manner of writing in the author's two previous books was more consistent and more effective.

--John Hutchins, P.M.

American Indians in World War I by Thomas A. Britten. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1997. 187 pages of text and 57 pages of references, hardbound, \$34.95.

Britten teaches history at Briar Cliff College in Iowa and is a specialist on twentieth-century Indian history. Sources include the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University, the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collections at the University of Oklahoma and University of South Dakota in addition to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Eleven pages of photographs from the Joseph K. Dixon Collection and Wanamaker Expeditions, William Hammond Mathers Museum in Bloomington, Indiana provide illustrations of their drive for a memorial to the American Indian. Individuals and many of the tribes are mentioned but not all tribes are represented.

The author addresses the lack of published history of the major contributions made by Native Americans serving in the military and on the home front during World War I. The influence those veterans had when they returned to the reservations is essential to understand the evolution of Indian societies, cultures and federal Indian policy in the early twentieth century. Those servicemen were the catalysts for change in the diverse and complex Indian society that had been overrun by the expanding young nation. Britten reminds us, "...one must remember that Native Americans are not a homogenous people but hundreds of separate nations with unique languages, customs, and traditions."

The book begins with contributions made to the United States by Indian soldiers and scouts from the Colonial era up to World War I. The main story of the 1870-1890s period was the heated philosophical fighting within the military and the different administrations for "regulars" versus "temporary" career status and "assimilated" versus "separate" companies for the Native Americans. Names of Calvary officers, units and engagements mentioned in the book will be familiar to

many of the Denver Westerner Corral—Crook, Miles, Sheridan.

The Army waged a struggle to get control of the responsibility for administering the federal programs for Native Americans from the Bureau of Indian Affairs even until after the end of the war. Interesting reading.

...addresses the lack of published history of the major contributions by Native Americans in the military...

The contributions of American Indian Dough Boys in the American Expeditionary Force ranged from the Choctaw Telephone Squad—predecessors of the World War II “code talkers”— medics, scouts, guides to being fearsome fighters. The Germans were especially terrified when they learned that

they were facing American Indians. Britten relates many stories of their bravery during the trench warfare of Western Europe. Of the 12,000 Native Americans in service 5% suffered casualties compared to 1% non-Indian troops with some units reaching 10-15%.

The contributions and sacrifices of people back home, though not unanimous, is inspiring, while the ambiguous actions by the government on promises made is most disturbing. For example, there was the contradiction in the government’s policy which encouraged Native Americans to enlist in World War I but, at the same time, refrained from giving them citizenship. *American Indians In World War I* is a wide-ranging treatise on the government’s involvement in Native American life and the key role that the returning WWI Native American Dough Boys made in helping their people assimilate into this century’s society.

The reader will find this book well written and researched. It is arranged both topically and chronologically.

—S. Lebrun Hutchison, C.M.

Rain or Shine by Cyra McFadden. Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1998, 176 Pages, 30 photos. Paperback, \$10.00.

The life of an early-day rodeo announcer was only slightly better than being a carnival barker. You lived in cheap hotels, kept your worldly goods in the trunk of your car, drank hard whiskey, chased women and perfected your spiel to the grandstand.

In the hard-sell world of rodeo announcing, realities were simple. Bucking horses just loved to buck, the strap squeezing the genitals of a Brahma bull didn’t hurt the animal and a cowboy was a hero. When a rider failed the announcer boomed out, “Give that lad a big hand, ladies and gentlemen. His only reward will come from you. He’ll get no prize money and no second chance in this go-round.”

Rain or Shine isn’t an expose. It’s too personal for that. It’s the hard life experienced by the author, a girl growing up with her father, Cy Taillon, one of best of the brass-lunged rodeo announcers on the circuit at mid-century. Taillon was a vain, small man from North Dakota whose commanding voice echoed from arena

rafters with the timbre and diction of a Broadway star. The crowd was in the hands of a master.

Young Cyra lived in the backseat of many a Cadillac and Buick Roadmasters. She listened to her father's alcoholic tirades as her parents fought across long Western miles between engagements. Yet she loved rodeo and worshiped her father even though she realized he'd wanted a son, not a daughter.

With Cyra reaching school age, her mother divorced Taillon and settled down in Missoula, MT., with a reliable second husband. Cyra continued to see her wandering father and tried to mend their friendship. Her narrative, full of turmoil, becomes a fine portrait of the rodeo business.

The author details her contacts with Cy until his death in 1980, at which time Cyra had established herself as a successful California writer. Her small book, *The Serial*, (1977) drew wide readership as a savage satire on the social and environmental misfits in the Bay Area's Marin County. It's a far cry from the rodeo arena but there are plenty of misfits in both fields. Cyra McFadden is an expert at finding them.

--Lee Olson, P.M.

Black Pioneers: Images of the Black Experience on the North American Frontier by John W. Ravage. University of Utah Press, 1997. 224 pages, nearly 100 photographs. Cloth, \$24.95.

This book paints with a broad brush the varied, wide and often overlooked African Americans who helped make western North America what it is today. The entire European era is considered, as is all of North America west of the Mississippi River.

One wishes the author had not tried to cover such a vast subject. The photographs are extensive and well documented. The accompanying text often whets the appetite or spurs the curiosity, but then moves on to another photo or subject. Black cowboys, miners, doctors, or politicians, to name just a few of the topics Ravage touches on, could each be the subject of a book.

Among the items brought out by this book: Black Americans accompanied the Hayden Survey (job: provisioner), prospected in Alaska, and contributed a mayor of Los Angeles in the 1880's; one Isaiah Dorman, a guide and Indian interpreter, was killed along with Custer at Little Bighorn; George Bush, a freeman from Pennsylvania, settled and became a leader in The Dalles, Oregon in the 1850's; his son, William Bush, was elected to Washington's first legislature. This is a smattering of items brought out by the book. Good and bad, talented, wise, foolish, the people described were in almost all ways a cross section of all frontier people.

Granted, African American settlers, pioneers, and explorers are only

In the hard-sell world of
rodeo announcing,
realities were simple.

recently being widely recognized. But some of these people, described as “mulattoes”, could justifiably also be called “Irish Americans”, or “Native Americans”, or “German Americans”. Even so, this book illustrates the pervasive and widespread presence, work and contributions made all over the US and Canada by people of African extraction.

...the people described
were in almost all ways
a cross section of all
frontier people...

One flaw is the lack of maps. All in all this is a good survey of the subject. The extensive bibliography would facilitate further reading and research on topics of interest.

--Stan Moore C.M.

Anasazi Architecture and American Design, edited by Baker H. Morrow and V.B. Price, University of New Mexico Press, 1997. 49 illustrations, contributors index; 241 pages. Paperback, \$29.95, Cloth \$70.00.

From May 17th through the 19th, 1991, an interdisciplinary symposium, composed of some twenty-two thinkers and scholars was held at Mesa Verde National Park. The participants were drawn from archaeologists, art and cultural historians, architects and landscape architects, artists, poets, urban planners and critics—Euroamerican and Native Americans.

This book which summarized the ideas and concepts of the symposium consists of sixteen essays by twenty-two authors. The discussions are organized under four broad categories: Part One: Archaeology, Architecture and the Anasazi; Part Two: The Patterns of Settlement; Part Three: Stone and Mortar In The Service Of The Imagination; and Part Four: Regional Tradition and Architectural Meaning.

The reviewer recommends this book to any serious lay aficionado or student of the Anasazi. The sixteen essays as well as the preface start with the known artifacts and primary structures and expands upon “popular” knowledge, generally readily available. An example is the fascinating discussion of the apparent placement of the known Anasazi structures to various lunar points of rising and setting. A further example is the discussion of architecture with unknown function.

The first three sections of the book are more “hands on” while part four is more philosophical. These latter essays must be weighed against the warning in the summary of the first essay to the dangers of misinterpretation that arise when trying to apply the lessons to be learned from ancient civilizations, “Cultures of the past are subject to distortion when seen through the lens of social idealism”.

--Robert D. Stull. P.M.



Frontier Cavalryman: Lieutenant John Bigelow with the Buffalo Soldiers in Texas by Macos E. Kinevan. Texas Western Press, El Paso, Texas, 1998. 338 pages. Illustrated with photographs and maps; appendices; index; bibliography; extensive endnotes; dustjacket. Cloth, \$35.00.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about this impressive book is its beautiful binding. "They just don't make bindings like this anymore," is a true phrase. However, in this case, it is inaccurate. While the color dustjacket with appropriate portrait is nice, the binding is wonderful.

This volume is based upon the 1877-1879 journals of West Point graduate John Bigelow, Jr., who, during this period, served with the Tenth Cavalry. Bigelow was a progressive, yet critical, observer and his journal comments run from the caustic to the gallant, from the petty to the important. From the tone of his words, one would assume that Bigelow never intended the journals to be published. However, since his reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign, published in 1899, about his later Tenth Cavalry service in Cuba, contain similar-type discussions (including a probably snide comment about Teddy Roosevelt), it is likely that Bigelow would not be too embarrassed about this volume.

Yet this is not merely an edited version of Bigelow's journals. Brigadier General Kinevan (USAF, retired) has done an exhaustive job of annotating the journal entries and in filling the rest of the book with aspects of Nineteenth Century military life and life in Texas. Some of the notations are a little too much. For example, at one point, Kinevan provides a "[sic]" for Bigelow's appropriate (for the era) spelling of "practising." Such is the extent of the notations that I was surprised when Kinevan failed to note that a "Mexican quarter of a dollar cut in two for small change" (Bigelow's entry) was how we got "two bits." Nevertheless, the notes and digressions are well written and necessary for those unfamiliar with the references and with military life.

Bigelow discussed mundane, yet personally and professionally important, items as professional advancement, lack-of-female-society problems, disciplinary problems, court-martial duty, bad officer problems, and personnel problems regarding the men. While I might disagree with some of the comments by General Kinevan (also a lawyer) about Bigelow's many entries regarding court martial duty, many of the entries reminded me of my own Judge Advocate experiences. In summary, this book is not a "Hell-for-leather-shoot-'em'up," but it is a gold mine if one wants to know what military service can be like for a young man with a commission.

While I would hope that, someday, John Bigelow's complete journals are published, with all of the good, the bad, and the ugly, exposed to the world, this book is one that will soon become well-known in military history circles. It is very highly recommended, and not just for the binding.

...from the tone of his words, one would assume that Bigelow never intended the journals to be published...

--John Hutchins, P.M.

BURNTWATER, by Scott Thybony, The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1997, 117 pages, Table of Contents and Map. Clothbound \$29.95, Paperback \$15.95.

The author writes about his backroads journeys into the Four Corners Country, in a series of episodes that blend together joining past experiences with those of the present, and his quest to find a place that no longer exists except on a few old maps: Burntwater.

Many of the well written chapters touch on his personal experiences with the Navajo and Hopi Indians and their culture and beliefs. He talks about life in Colorado City, Arizona and the Mormons Polygamous life there.

There is a chapter on the Penitentes of New Mexico, their self imposed suffering and his personal contact with them.

...makes for interesting
reading but one
questions his
judgement...

As one continues reading the various travel accounts one begins to question Scott Thybony's judgement. He disregards advice from others, and warning signs ("4 wheel drive only", and he forges ahead in a 2 wheel drive pickup) as he gets himself into predicaments on roads that border on the impassable. He seemed to embark on backcountry adventures

when the weather was at its worst—whether it was rain or snow. This makes for interesting reading but questionable judgement.

Thybony's lack of preparation for a hike alone into the Grand Canyon in the middle of August without an adequate supply of water and with no sun protection leaves one to wonder what drove him to do this. Because this could have led to his death, one has many unanswered questions. His destination was the spot in the Grand Canyon where earlier his brother had died in a midair collision. Thybony mentions that he had flown over this spot with his brother in his airplane. By his own statements, Thybony was an experienced Grand Canyon guide. So he should have known better than to attempt this hike with little or no preparation. "Conserving every trace of moisture became essential; I kept my mouth shut, breathing through my nose to reduce the loss. I lay still, resisting the impulse to take any action. At the same time I was afraid that by doing nothing, I would die."

The final chapter tells how Burntwater got its name, and why Thybony never reached his goal. Thybony says "For us Burntwater has turned into pure direction. I pass the turnoff and keep driving. The storm has wiped the slate clean covering the desert with snow as far as the eye can see."

--Theodore P. Krieger, P.M.

Barone in an Earth Lodge, by Barry C. Johnson; *The Life of Sir St. George Gore and his "Singular Adventures" in the Great West*. London: The English Westerners' Society; 1997. Ten black and white Illustrations, 96 pages, paper. Available at \$15 US (post free) from the English Westerners' Society Secretary, 83, Top Rd, Calow, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S44 5TD, U. K.

One of Colorado's most beautiful mountain ranges is named for him and yet this English gentleman, with so much potential, contributed so little to Western history.

St. George Gore was a sportsman who spent three years in the West, mostly along the upper Missouri, killing thousands of bison and other big game. Intelligent and well educated, his lavish safaris penetrated the wilderness just before the American Civil War. Thus, he was among the early explorers of the West. He saw so much, and recorded so little.

This important research project delves deeply into the mystery of St. George Gore.

Among the conundrums:

-No portrait or photo of him exists.

He never married.

-He was Irish only in the way many Englishmen were "Irish": they used the wealth of inherited lands in Ireland to live in luxury and indulge passions for hunting and fishing.

-He recorded little of his American adventure because he felt no social conscience, no sense of the historical importance of things which, when witnessed by Lewis and Clark, loomed as a priceless picture of the frontier.

Barry Johnson's paperback is well done but maddening in its honest admission that so little is known about St. George Gore that only the observers he met—and wrote about *him*—save him from being a complete historical cypher.

--Lee Olson, P.M.

...He recorded little of his
American adventure
because he felt no social
conscience...

The Fist in the Wilderness, by David Lavender, 490 pages. Bison Books, 1988. University of Nebraska Press, Paper, \$22.00 (Originally printed by Doubleday, 1964)

Lavender gives a background of the North American fur trade with its Montreal and Mackinac Island hubs. He sets the stage for the American Fur Company's domination of the central US fur trade the first third of the nineteenth century.

The story is told through the prism of Ramsay Crooks' life. Crooks was a central figure in the North American fur trade from about 1808 to the early 1840's. Scottish born, Crooks emigrated to Canada at age 16. He first appears in 1803 as a drone in a Montreal trading house. Soon he is a clerk based on Mackinac Island, the hub of the trade. Crooks' story is interwoven with that of the fur industry as it expanded westward, which is inextricable with the American Fur Company. Crooks

worked (and married: his father-in-law was a Chouteau of the St Louis Chouteaus) his way to the top. He ran the field operations (i.e. was CEO) of John Jacob Astor's fur trading behemoth, the American Fur Company. Along the way he became an American citizen, periodically worked himself to exhaustion, had a squaw and halfbreed family, and traveled: to New York to consult with Astor, Montreal to hire crews of voyageurs, Washington to lobby Congress, to and from Astoria in the overland parties, from Mackinac to St Louis and return via the Green Bay-Wisconsin River portage or the Illinois River-Chicago-Lake Michigan route.

This book describes in detail a myriad of topics: The minutia of seasonal hiring practices of the Montreal, Albany and St Louis trading houses; the travails of the overland and sea parties which founded Astoria; that outpost's abandonment to a British rival; the European discovery of South Pass, its sinking into oblivion and rediscovery; the War of 1812 (fought in large part over control of the fur trade); the use and abuse of liquor supplied to voyagers and Indians, and deceit in its shipment and

...The story is told
through the prism of
Ramsay Crooks' life...

licensing; the politics of Indian administration and management, as it appeared from Washington DC and in the wilderness; commercial politics - Astor's company was reviled as anti-competitive, and Crooks sometimes pictured as the devil incarnate; who the Important People were in Washington; John Jacob Astor's commercial genius but abominable spelling; the nascent Santa Fe trade; the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies; Tecumseh; the Erie Canal; steamboats on the Mississippi; the gradual displacement of Indians as trappers of bartered furs by Europeans as trappers, and so on.

Each of these topics deserve (and most have) a book or books. Lavender weaves these subjects into a fascinating tale of people, relationships, exploration, hardship, violence, riches, manipulation, success and ultimate failure.

The maps are good and the annotation is impressive. This is a book anyone interested in the fur trade or early 19th century politics will want to read.

--Stan Moore, C.M.

Precious Dust: The Saga Of The Western Gold Rushes, by Paula Mitchell Marks, Univ. of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1998. Reprinted from 1994 William Morrow & Co. edition, New York. 448 Pages, Notes, Bibliography, Index, Photos. Paper, \$17.95.

"The American myth of abundance for all stood in contrast to the reality of wealth for the few." So says the author in her introduction to this fine volume discussing all aspects of the gold rushes of the 1880s, mainly to California, Colorado and Alaska. An emphasis is placed on the first California rush as a template for the rushes that followed, however no detail is left unexplored at least anecdotally.

"The gold lay waiting. It dotted the river bars and dry riverbeds along the western fringe of the Sierra Nevada, hid in Rocky Mountain canyons and gulches...

Wherever the land was most challenging and remote, the gold waited.”

Getting to the site is first explored giving vivid accounts of how the travel must have been. “Men found coordinating the movements of large groups and locating enough grass for the livestock to be exhausting.” While the overland route is what one most often thinks of, the author also gives details about sailing to California. “They faced fifteen thousand or more miles of travel between the East Coast and San Francisco, depending on how far their vessels had to swing into the Atlantic and Pacific.” “In contrast to this elongated journey, the Panama route could be accomplished...in eight weeks or less...”

The section on Alaska feels a bit tedious recounting all the stories of hardship, however that must certainly have been the way the experience was and certainly the writing is at times gripping. “On a typical steamer, the horses were jammed so tightly that they could not lie down, the head of some ‘so close to the engines that they were in a state of continual panic, rearing, biting, kicking, and throwing themselves on their halters at the throb of the machinery and the blast of the whistle.”

While every aspect of the gold rush experience is covered clearly, there is not much exposition of character with only quick mentions made of even notorious folk. “The Chilkoot, White Pass, and Stikine trails were haunted by a well-oiled criminal network that had its origins in the American frontier West. Its leader, Jefferson Randolph ‘Soapy’ Smith had perfected his strategies in the western mining boom towns. Ultimately, this book is a worthwhile read due to the fine analysis of the whole mining experience. “Californians in the diggings paid as much as two dollars per letter and fifty cents per paper just to get their mail delivered from San Francisco.” This would make a fine introductory text for a school course on the gold rush era.

...Ultimately, this book is a worthwhile read due to the fine analysis of the whole mining experience...

--George W. Krieger DDS, P.M.

Across The Northern Frontier: Spanish Explorations in Colorado, by Phil Carson. Johnson Books, Boulder, CO., 1998. Illustrated with b&w photographs, maps; glossary, chronology, notes, bibliography and index; 254 pages. Paperback, \$18.00.

Historian Phil Carson defines the Spanish term *entrada* as “a journey of exploration into unknown lands”. In his new book, *Across the Northern Frontier*, Carson gives the reader an excellent introductory history of early European visits to the plains and mountains. This well written and researched account covers the colonial period (1598-1821) when New Mexico was Spain’s northernmost province in the new world. The vast expanse of land that made up the frontiers of the “Kingdom and Province of New Mexico” included all or part of the modern-day states of New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, and Texas. How-

ever it was the region to the north of the province with its high mountains and plains to the east that brought many Spanish *entradas* to venture into or pass through what is now Colorado. It is these explorations and expeditions that spanned four centuries that are the subject of Carson's book.

With its founding in 1598, New Mexico became a starting point and base from which to launch expeditions further north and west into as yet unknown regions. At first, Spaniards were drawn northward in the hope of finding vast riches and fabled cities of gold. As time past, this obsession slowly faded and was replaced by finding new routes to other provinces as well as increasing trade, and protecting the frontiers from both Indian and European incursions. These expedi-

...gives the reader an excellent introductory history of early European visits to the plains...

tions, especially those that had official government sanction from the Spanish Crown, were required to keep journals of their travels by the leaders. The journals that have survived have allowed historians to trace the routes of several Spanish explorations and give vivid descriptions of encounters with native peoples as well as plants, animals, and climate found

along the way. The author describes the *entradas* of Governor Don Diego de Vargas, Captain Juan de Ulibarri, Atanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante, and Governor Juan Bautista de Anza. All these explorers and their expeditions passed through parts of Colorado. Also mentioned is the ill-fated journey of Don Pedro de Villasur.

Phil Carson presents a very readable and informative history of Spanish explorations that have become an important part of Colorado's past and a part of the state's legacy and culture. *Across The Northern Frontier* left this reviewer wanting more, and for that he recommends David J. Weber's *The Spanish Frontier in North America*.

--Mark E. Hutchins, P.M.

Early Days On The Western Slope Of Colorado, Sydney Jocknick, Reprint by Western Reflections, Inc., Ouray, Colorado, 1998, 337 pages, 25 Illustrations, 43 pages of Appendix and 6 pages of Index. Paperback \$24.95.

"*Early Days On The Western Slope Of Colorado and Campfire Chats With Otto Mears, The Pathfinder, From 1870 to 1883, Inclusive*," is the complete title Jocknick gave this group of some thirty-nine stories. Jocknick's work is considered perhaps the primary source of information of the pioneer days of that period. According to the Publishers Introduction, "Jocknick was present when most Western Colorado towns were founded and wrote of the early history of Silverton, Lake City, Ridgeway, Ouray, Rico, Delta and other settlements—many of which no longer exist. He was there at the founding of Montrose and Grand Junction and at the opening of the Gunnison Tunnel. . . turning the Uncompahgre and Gunnison valleys into fields of vegetables and fruit trees." He recorded evidence of the Spanish explorers being in the area hundreds of years earlier, the remains of their

cabins and graves. Also, "the original copies of the book published in 1913 are very scarce and currently sell for up to \$250. The 1968 reprint (itself out of print for almost ten years) sometimes commands a price of \$100." Check your bookcase.

(In the introduction of the 1968 edition the publishers reproduced the State Historical Society of Colorado's letter of May 3, 1968 with information about Jocknick. Volume 28 #2, April 1951, page 112ff and Volume 8 #4, July 1931 of the Colorado Magazine were referenced and that he died in Ouray County on 23 October, 1930. "Otto Mears, James P. Kelly, Alonzo Hartman and others owe their immortality to his record of those days.")

Sydney Jocknick arrived in Denver in 1870, hired on as a cook for the Ute Indian Agency when it was moved to actual Ute territory. He lived on the Western Slope of Colorado at a time when other white men were not allowed on the reservation. Later he became a prospector, rancher and farmer. Jocknick traveled widely and became good friends with Chief Ouray, Chipeta, Otto Mears and several men who became governors of Colorado. His was a time that saw treaties being made and broken as prospectors and settlers came into Western Slope lands promised to the Indians as "forever inviolate, for as long as the rivers shall run and the grass shall grow." His observations were unbiased. The text of several treaties is included in the Appendix. One chapter describes the removal of the Utes to Utah.

His account of the Alfred Packer saga, the Meeker Massacre, Chief Ouray's leadership as a peacemaker, Otto Mears' contributions and the many other individuals and incidents that Westerners will readily recognize are told in the first person. Sydney Jocknick lived it. His book was published not many years later and is a most interesting resource. His prose rings true of that era so be ready to reread some passages for clarity.

Chapter XXVIII- "In The Sunny San Juan," was written by Helen Marsh Wixson, former superintendent of public instruction for the State of Colorado. She tells the true story of the funeral of a most unsavory character named Riley Lambert, gambler and saloon proprietor in Silverton. The funeral was held in the Durango Methodist Church because the church had a bell and the family wanted to give old Riley "a hell of a funeral," bell tolling and all. The choir, of which she was the soloist, and the "hell fire and Brimstone" preacher, uninitiated to the frontier mining town, were confronted by Lambert's kin, all well-known outlaws, staring them down from just a few feet away as they awaited good words for the deceased. This gem alone is almost worth the price of the book.

While reading the book I was in the Uncompahgre Historical Trading Post at Delta listening to its living history and traveling along the Gunnison and through the fertile Grand Valley. The stories took on a new life for me in that setting because so little has changed when you look beyond civilization. And it can be experienced today. As you read, Jocknick mentions places and, with a good map in hand, you can follow the route each venture takes you. You will marvel at how such journeys were made by foot or horseback within the time and under conditions described.

If you will permit another personal note. In Chapter XXIII Otto Mears, a

chief actor in the history of Colorado and whose portrait is in the dome of the state capitol, immigrated from Russia, then left home for California as a boy. "After the war (War Between The States) broke out he joined the First Regiment of California Volunteers, Company H, in the spring of 1861. He served in the army over three years, part of the time under Kit Carson in the Navajo war, and was discharged in 1864 in the Misilla Valley, New Mexico."

In 1960 while investigating sources for a water supply for the Hopi Indian Agency and village at Keams Canyon, Arizona, I was shown the following inscription on a boulder in

Keams Canyon up-stream from the agency. (See photograph) It read simply: 1st Regt. N.M. Vol's, CO K 13TH, AUG 13TH, 1863, COL. C. CARSON, COMN.



Could Otto Mears have been in this contingent in 1863?

Early Days would be an excellent choice for your Colorado history collection. Also, *Western Reflections*, the publisher, promises that this is the first of many reprints of Colorado classics that it intends to publish.

--S. Lebrun Hutchison, C.M.

Storm and Stampede on the Chisholm Trail, by Hubert E. Collins, Forward by Hamlin Garland and Introduction to the Bison Books Edition by Robert R. Dykstra. Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1998. Originally published 1928. 295 pages, map, 10 illustrations, Paperback \$14.95

To quote the introduction, this recounts the experiences of the Old West "up close and personal". This book represents the recollections of the author as an eleven and twelve year old boy over a fifteen month period during 1883-84. His experiences centered around the Red Fork Ranch in Oklahoma, on the original Chisholm Trail.

Joining his older brother, the author experienced cowboys, freighters and stage coach drivers along with the panorama of the passing trail herds. Probably the highlight of his stay was his acceptance by Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians at both the ranch and the nearby Darlington Agency.

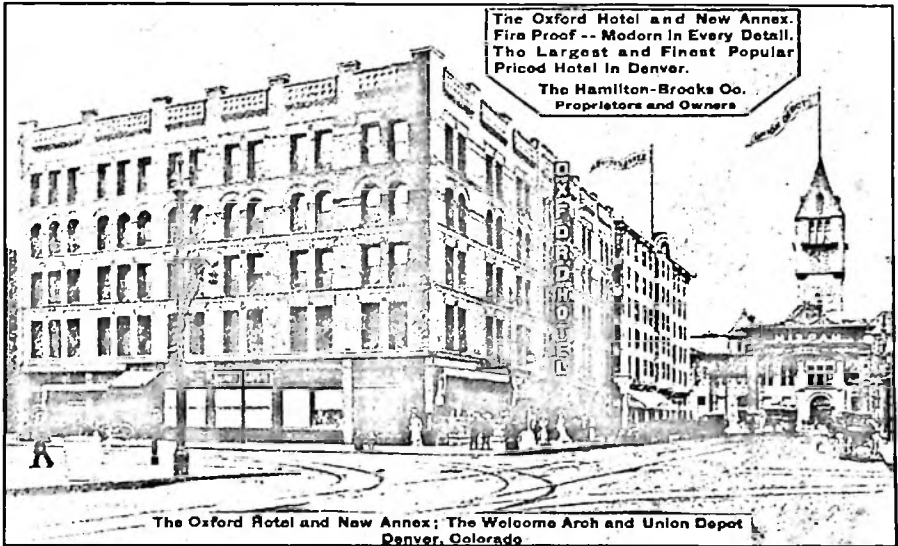
While this book should not nor cannot serve as a strict historical source because of the time gap between the happenings and the writing, and because certain information was hearsay, verified years later, the reviewer, none-the-less recommends it highly. It is not fiction and it is one more brush stroke in painting that vast picture of the Old West during the great cattle drives and the final taming of the Southern Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes.

--Bob Stull, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1998



Ken Gaunt Collection

**The Oxford
Denver's "Little Grande" Hotel**

by

Ken Gaunt, P.M.

(Presented September 23, 1998)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LIV NO. 6



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About the Author

Ken was born in Colorado Springs "at an early age" he says, however, he grew up in eastern Colorado (Yuma), during the Dust Bowl and the Depression. After graduating from high school, Ken spent six years with the Colorado National Guard, 168th Field Artillery Battalion touring the South Pacific during World War II. Ken retired as Chief Pharmacist of St. Luke's Hospital in 1980.

Ken has been a member of the Denver Posse for over 40 years. Ken was Sheriff in 1996, and this is his fourth paper presented to the Posse. "Colorado Hospitals of the 1800's" was published as part of the *Golden Anniversary Brand Book* of the Denver Posse of Westerners published in August 1995.

Ken's interests are varied. He is a director of the llama division of the National Western Stock Show and a serious back-packer. He enjoys, "photography, Colorado History, coins of the Bible, history of churches, cemetery prowling, con men, magic, skiing, travel, or any other thing that I run into and find interesting. I still do Soapy Smith—King of the Con Men several times a month."

Ken is a fourth-generation Coloradan, and has three children, and one grandson.

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The Oxford Denver's "Little Grande" Hotel

by
Ken Gaunt, P.M.
(Presented September 23, 1998)

The Oxford Hotel, built in 1891 at the corner of 17th Ave and Wazee Streets, is sometimes called "The Little Grande Hotel". With its 81 deluxe guest rooms or suites, its many original paintings, stained glass panels, antiques, art deco pieces, and the top-rated McCormick's Restaurant, it is indeed a "Grande Hotel". However, that was not the initial goal of its builders. It was built by men of moderate means for the middle classes, who wanted comfortable lodgings and adequate food.

Let us follow the wheeling and dealing of some of the owners of the land before the building of the hotel, as written by James X. Kroll, in his paper *The Oxford, A Research Paper About a Denver Hotel, 1891 to 1924*.

It was in 1859 that General William H. Larimer platted the lots for the Denver City Town Company. Block 15, of the East Denver Subdivision was on the fringe of the settlement. The Denver City Town Company was selling lots which were 25 feet by 100 feet for 75 cents each. The Oxford Hotel was built on lots 28 thru 32 of Block 15, of the East Denver Subdivision.

On April 12, 1860, Thomas J. Bayaud, a lumberman, received 250 lots and \$750.00 for the construction of a wooden bridge across the South Platte

River, at the foot of Fifteenth Street. Included were all thirty-two lots of block 15.

June 13, 1863, Thomas Bayaud agreed to sell Lots 1 thru 8 and lots 23 thru 32 of Block 15 through Louis A. Maurice, as attorney for Charles C. Heidsieck of Reims, France. A year and a half later, Thomas Bayaud died on January 18, 1865. The deal with Heidsieck had not been finalized but in November of 1880 Bayaud's descendants signed a quit claim deed to give clear title to Heidsieck.

In 1888, J. Stanford Betts, an employee of the real estate brokerage firm of John M. Berkey and Co., entered into an agreement with Heidsieck to purchase the Lots 23 thru 32 of Block 15. Betts gave Heidsieck \$5,000 as a down payment, with a balance of \$90,000 due in ninety days. Each lot was therefore selling for about \$10,000. The construction of the Union Depot in 1881 at the foot of Seventeenth Street and the over 100 daily trains that used the depot were responsible for the boost in land-values. Betts failed to pay the balance of the sales price, and in a lawsuit eight months later Heidsieck's attorney retrieved the property for his client. Betts was a representative of many unsuccessful speculators during the years 1888 to 1893.

| BLOCK 15 | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------|----------|--------|-------------------|
| EAST DENVER SUBDIVISION | | | | | |
| 17TH AVENUE | | | | | |
| 53.1 FEET | | | 100 FEET | | |
| S | E | ANNEX 1 | A | OXFORD | 32 |
| T | S | ANNEX 2 | L | OXFORD | 31 |
| R | T | ANNEX 3 | L | OXFORD | 30 |
| W | U | A | ANNEX 4 | E | OXFORD 29 |
| Y | B | B | | 5 | Y OXFORD 28 |
| N | Y | R | | 6 | ADDITION 27 |
| K | O | | | 7 | NEW CONFERENCE 26 |
| O | O | | | 8 | ROOMS 25 |
| O | K | | | 9 | 24 |
| P | | | | 10 | 23 |
| | | | | 11 | 22 |
| | | | | 12 | 21 |
| | | | | 13 | 20 |
| | | | | 14 | 19 |
| | | | | 15 | 18 |
| | | | | 16 | 17 |
| 16TH STREET | | | | | |

In July, 1888, Joseph Johnson, an employee of the banking firm of McIntosh and Mygatt, bought an option to purchase the eight lots. Joseph Johnson was unable to fulfill the agreement, so he sold his purchase option for \$10,000 to William R. Mygatt, Daniel D. Streeter, and Philip Feldhauser on March 27, 1889. Mygatt, Streeter and Felhauser then paid \$90,000 for Lots 23 thru 32, Block 15.

Philip Zang, a brewer and immigrant from Bavaria, moved to Denver in 1869. His only son was Adolph J. Zang. Philip Zang became the owner of the Rocky Mountain Brewery and, in 1873, named the

brewery after himself. His son Adolph was the manager. Zang's brewery was the largest pre-prohibition brewery in the Rockies. In July 1889, Philip sold the brewery to an English syndicate, but Adolph remained as manager of the brewery.

In October 1889, Adolph Zang purchased one-half interest in Lots 23 thru 32 for \$75,000 from Mygatt, Streeter and Felhauser.

The National Bank of Commerce was organized in the summer of 1890. The board of directors included Charles Boettcher, Philip Feldhauser, D. D. Streeter, and Governor Job Cooper, who was elected president of

the bank.

Zang and his partners sold lots 28 thru 32 to Joseph Johnson for one dollar. On July 25, 1890, Johnson pledged these five lots as collateral for an \$80,000 loan from the National Bank of Commerce. Five days later he sold the lots back to Zang and his partners Philip Feldhauser and William Mygatt for one dollar, and the assumption of the loan. The loan was paid off in 1900.

Building permit records of July 30, 1890, show an entry for a proposed structure described as being five stories, 67 feet high, 100 x 125 feet in size, and costing \$100,000 on these lots. The purpose of the building was listed as a "Brick Business Block." Edbrooke and Co. were listed as the architectural firm for the project.

The architect was Frank E. Edbrooke, who was a pupil of the public schools of Chicago, but his education was largely acquired through private study. He started as an apprentice in order to learn the building business, and eventually became a mechanical and structural engineer. He fought in the Civil War and was recognized for his bravery in the Union Army.

After the war he worked with a prominent contractor building hotels and stations along the Union Pacific rail line. Frank Edbrooke and his brother came to Denver in 1879 to supervise construction of the Tabor Block and Grand Opera House. Frank stayed in Denver. His buildings beside the Oxford Hotel include the Navarre, Loretto Heights Academy, Central Presbyterian Church, the Brown Palace Hotel, and many other prominent

buildings of Denver. He also worked on the State Capitol Building and was responsible for getting the dome covered with gold to reflect Colorado's gold interests.

Edbrooke's design of the Oxford may have been the city's first steel-skeleton building. This was two years before his masterpiece, the Brown Palace Hotel.

Building structure

The steel skeleton of the building is interesting. The ground floor has 12-inch beams, the second floor has 7-inch beams, the third, fourth, and fifth floor beams are again 12 inches, and the attic has 8-inch beams. The outside wall is laid red pressed brick with terracotta decorations.

The ceiling of the first floor is 15 feet high, the second floor is 11 feet high, the third, fourth, and fifth floors are 10 feet high, and the attic is 8 feet high. The basement is 8 feet deep, and runs under all of the building. The foundation walls or outside walls are poured cement, or flagstone and mortar, rocks and cement, or laid bricks.

There is a variety of kinds of piers under the steel beams, some are poured cement, some are large granite ashlars laid like brick, others are rocks and cement, and others are steel pipe covered with cement. Of special interest are the ones made by the laying of bricks, when the tier of brick got out of line a piece of hard wood would be placed in the row to bring the tier back into line. These boards are still in the piers and the wood is in good condition. In one room there is a large hewn log about 18 inches in diameter standing upright to support the steel beam.

Located in the basement was the steam plant that was used for heating, and producing electricity. Both electricity and gas lighting were used throughout the building, because they didn't believe electricity was going to "catch on".

Early Denver was a labyrinth of underground tunnels. The Oxford had a tunnel, large enough for a pony cart, which connected the hotel to the Union Depot. There is still evidence of this tunnel: it goes under the alley about 10 feet, and then is bricked up.

The work area of the basement is a warren of rooms. The walls of these rooms are of a variety of materials, some laid brick, flagstone, stone and cement, and carpenter construction.

In the public area of the basement was a large restroom for men. It had six individual stalls with stools, two large individual urinals about 48 inches high, and three large marble wash basins. The restroom is still the same as it was originally built except it has been made handicap accessible. The floor was white tile with a red "Acorn" design at intervals and marble wainscoting on the walls in the public area. These are still in place. The "Acorn" design is a good luck emblem for the hotel industry and is used in the tile floors and in the carpeting. There were no ladies restrooms in the public area.

The Oxford Hotel was opened on October 3, 1891. The golden brick structure trimmed with terra cotta was built on a "U" plan. The "U" shape allowed each of the rooms to have outside light and ventilation.

The original blueprints of the Brick Business block show a store

room on the east half of the first floor. The west half of the first floor shows a vestibule at the entrance, a lobby with the hotel desk and office in about the same location as today. At the south end of the lobby is a restroom for men only. Behind the office is a coat room, and another room labeled "cloak room" with a porter's desk. A serving room with a store room inside is next to a large kitchen. The dining room is "L" shaped around a splendid bar room. The dining room's Haviland china, glassware, and sterling silverware were all inscribed with word "Oxford". There is a large reading room just to the right of the entrance, with stairs to the upper floors and a single elevator. There is also a stairway in the kitchen area. The floor is labeled as "tile", with small tile used in some areas and larger marble squares in other places.

The Fairbanks, Morse, and Company, a machinery supply company, occupied the east half of the first floor.

No closets or facilities

On floors two through five there were 32 guest rooms on each floor. The hotel bragged that each floor had two lavatories: one for "Gents" and one for "Ladies". Each lavatory had two stools and one wash basin, with a small separate room with a bathtub. There were no clothes closets, toilet or wash facilities in the guests' room. Four of the front rooms on each floor had a fireplace, and two of the front rooms with fireplaces of the second floor had a full bathroom. The building was furnished with marble and carpeted floors, frescoed walls, sterling silver chandeliers and beveled and stained

glass glistening throughout. The oak furniture was specially made for the Oxford.

The Oxford Hotel Company was incorporated on November 25, 1892 by William R. Mygatt, E. W. Schubert, D. C. West and Philip Feldhauser. At the beginning, the ownership of the building and the management of the hotel business were kept separate. Zang, Feldhauser, and Mygatt possessed the building and the land. The proprietorship or management of the hotel belonged to the E. W. Schubert and Company.

Addition planned

On January 18, 1902, Feldhauser and Zang purchased lot 27 for \$7,000. In December 1902 they sold the lot to their Oxford Building Company for \$10,000, (a profit of \$3,000 from the company to themselves). In October of that year a building permit was issued to Feldhauser and Zang for a five-story addition on lot 27, which is behind the hotel and faces Wazee Street. The permit was for a five-story addition which would have added 50 rooms to the hotel. *The Denver Times* and *The Denver Post* reported that the owners were planning on spending \$75,000 for a five-story addition. The article also stated that the Morse Scale Company would occupy the ground floor of the new wing, a small Dutch room would be annexed to the hotel dining room, and new elevators would be placed in the hotel.

However, in January 1903, the *Daily News* reported that only a two-story addition was being made at the cost of \$10,000. Charles B. Hamilton and James L. Brooks became the

proprietors of the Oxford in 1906. They formed the Hamilton-Brooks Hotel Company, and spent \$20,000 to remodel the Oxford.

The Denver Republican carried a long article on the refurbishing of the Oxford:

“The guest will pass through an elaborate iron grill work entrance lighted by a large wrought iron lamp. A new marble counter is at the far end of the room. The entire office will be wainscoted in white Italian marble, trimmed with the same stone in a delicate shade of green, all railings and fixture to be of electrobronze. A striking feature will be a mezzanine floor directly over the counter, extending the full width of the room. The railing will be fine iron work, embossed with large monogram plates bearing the initials ‘O.H.’”

The present barber shop and toilet rooms to the rear of the desk will be taken out completely and replaced by a handsome cafe, wainscoted in oak and ornamented to produce a most decorative effect. High priced artists will carry out a color scheme which promises to make this cafe one of the most beautiful in the city.

The toilet rooms and barber shop will be removed to the basement, with all the cleanliness that marble and porcelain can lend them. The barber shop will have an exterior stairway.

The rooms in the upper floors of the hotel will all be furnished with stationary porcelain wash bowls, and other equipment. This other equipment was a mirror 18" x 24".

Fairbanks, Morse, and Company, the original tenants of the corner



Oxford Hotel after 1933 remodeling to include the large sign on roof of hotel. Oxford Hotel sign in front is about the same as the sign in 1910, except reversed with dark lettering on light background.

store front, moved to another location in 1907. The Oxford Drug Company took over that space in 1908.

During 1912, Hamilton and Brooks began an energetic project to add a five story annex on 17th Street, to the west of the hotel. They purchased the rear 53.1 feet of Lots 1 thru 5 of Block 15 for the price of \$75,000 from the Struby Estabrook Mercantile Company .

Montana Fallis, a Denver architect who had worked as a draftsman for Edbrooke in 1891, designed the annex with the white porcelain front. Fallis being the architect would explain why the bridge between the annex and

the original 1891 hotel matches the original building.

The blue prints of the annex are very interesting to study. You will remember that the original Oxford Hotel had 32 rooms on each floor and only one bathtub, two stools, and one wash basin for ladies and the same for men, and no closets or storage shelves in any of the rooms.

In contrast, the annex had 21 rooms on floors 2 through 5, and each room had a tub, stool, and wash basin, a full-length beveled plate mirror as well as a closet and shelf. Each room continued to have a window for light and ventilation and a 14-inch transom

above the door.

The Annex has a small atrium from the first floor up through the fifth floor. Some people remark about this resembling the Brown Palace Hotel's atrium. However, the original blue prints had the following notation, "Open light shaft. This space to be framed for future elevators. 11' 8" x 6'". These elevators were never added in this space. On the front of the building are the letters "HB" overlaid, This stands for the firm of Hamilton-Brooks, the owners, and not for Henrie and Bolthoff a nearby well-known machinery company. The Annex now houses a health club, beauty salon, and some beautiful business offices.

During 1914 the hotel offered sight-seeing trips in omnibuses, carriages or automobiles, to Lookout Mountain, Estes Park, the Mountain Parks or city trips.

Brooks becomes sole owner

In 1915, Charles Hamilton sold his shares in the Hamilton-Brooks Hotel Company to his partner James L. Brooks. Brooks became the sole owner of the Annex and the proprietor of the Oxford, and in 1924 Brooks became the sole owner of the Oxford Hotel Company which possessed the land, the building and the proprietorship.

In 1930 architect Charles Jaka remodeled the Oxford once again. He introduced an art deco motif to the lobby, barroom, restaurant and exterior of the hotel. To celebrate repeal of Prohibition in 1933, Jaka designed a streamline modern cocktail lounge, the Cruise Room, which was modeled after a bar on the Queen Mary. Its flowing lines shape the front bar, booths, and even the ceiling.

During the 1960s and 1970s, The Oxford became a center for jazz, folk music and melodrama. Hundreds jammed the hotel at night to see The Oxford Players stumble through "Ten Nights in a Bar-room", and to hear the Queen City Jazz Band.

In 1979 Charles Callaway purchased The Oxford and closed it for restoration. In 1980 Dana Crawford joined Callaway in the restoration project. William Muchow & Associates, a Denver architectural firm, was selected to oversee the restoration. The interiors were designed by Kattman Associates.

The hotel was rewired, re-plumbed, reheated, and air-conditioned. Many of the original outstanding features such as beautiful stained glass panels were found above false ceilings. Much of the work was done from the original blueprint drawings. The plans to place a complete bathroom in each of the guest rooms meant that the bathrooms had to be built 8 inches above the original floor to allow room for the plumbing. Carpets were woven to match the last layer of hallway carpet that was uncovered under 12 layers. The sterling silver chandeliers were stripped of their enamel paint. French and American antique furnishings were purchased in Europe for 70 rooms. Hallways and lobby and imported French art deco pieces were placed in 12 bedrooms. The Sage Room was built in place of the sometimes restaurant, or coffee shop. The Cruise Room was returned to its art deco style. On June 19, 1983, after three years of work and at the cost of \$12 million, the Oxford reopened.

There are a total of 81 guest

rooms, varying in style and size. They include: 2 Presidential Suites, 8 Junior Suites, 2 Deluxe Kings, 5 Canopied Queens, 32 Deluxe Queens, 25 Standard Queens, and 7 Deluxe Doubles.

The lobby is beautifully furnished. The marble floor was formerly the old Daniel and Fishers Tower floor. On the walls are many beautiful western paintings by well-known artists. The "OH" stairway and mezzanine banister are prominent, and the Tabor Grand Opera House's piano is on display as are other antiques. The plaster and lathe ceiling is a beautiful design outlined with gold. The art deco Cruise Room, which is separately listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was restored. The 12 vertical carved panels that depict the international "Toasts", each of a different country, done by the Denver artist Alley Henson, were refurbished. During WWII, the German toast with Hitler was removed. Henson also did the vertical panels around the top of the Corner Room (the bar room), which are representative of different events and places, such as the National Western Stock Show.

Portraits of pioneers

The Sage Room is a large meeting room which is used for catered meals and meetings. On one of the walls is a panel of seven portraits which was painted by Herndon Davis for the Windsor Hotel restoration in 1937. These portraits are of well-known Colorado pioneers, such as Eugene Field, Frederick Bonfils, Casimiro Barela, and Otto Mears. These panels were purchased by the Oxford when the Windsor Hotel was demolished in 1959. In the corner to the right of the door is

the barber pole that was used when the barbershop was in the basement and had an outside entrance. Throughout the hotel are many more beautiful paintings, pieces of antique furniture, and art deco pieces.

McCormick's Fish and Oyster House occupies the east half of the ground floor. Lunch and dinner is served in the Corner Room (bar), and the restaurant. There are several outstanding paintings in the restaurant, leaded and stained glass panels, as well as the sterling silver chandeliers mentioned earlier. The Crystal Room is a small dining room available for private parties. It features three large stained and leaded glass panels that comprise a Dutch landscape scene. These beautiful panels were from the Dutch Room of the 1902 building project. Each panel measures approximately 93 inches x 105 inches. The panels were appraised at \$20,700 each in 1983. These panels also form the back bar of the Corner Room's antique service bar. The art deco panels that were done by Alley Henson in the 1930s are around the room just below the original impressed tin ceiling.

The Governor's Room, originally the "Oxford Club" dining room for gentlemen only, is available for small groups. It has a magnificent stained and leaded glass skylight that was discovered in 1983, above a false ceiling. This 12 x 7 foot skylight was appraised at \$25,200.00 in 1983. There is also a large Victorian stained and leaded glass side window. The walls of the room are wooden panels behind which the governors hid their bootleg alcohol during prohibition, thus the name "Governors Room". The Plum

Room is a small dining room for overflow and private parties.

In the near future there will be a grand ballroom and more meeting and conference rooms in the newly acquired building next to the Addition building on Wazee Street.

The Oxford Hotel is now Denver's oldest hotel, and indeed one of its grandest. It deserves its listings on the National Register of Historic Places, the Landmark Preservation Commission, City & County of Denver, and Lower Downtown District award.

My Thanks

The author wishes to thank several people who helped complete this paper. They are: General Manager of the Oxford Hotel, Ms. Jane Hugo, and all of her staff, especially the maintenance supervisor, Mike Michna, who turned me loose in the old pictures, records, and blueprints; Heather, his assistant, took me on tours throughout the building; Mr. James X. Knoll gave me a copy of his paper that followed the paper trail of early ownership; two members of the Westerners' Denver Posse: Tom Noel, who encouraged me and helped me in some research, and Jim Krebs for his photographic excellence in doing some of the slides; my editor and daughter, Jayne, smoothed out my many writing mistakes.

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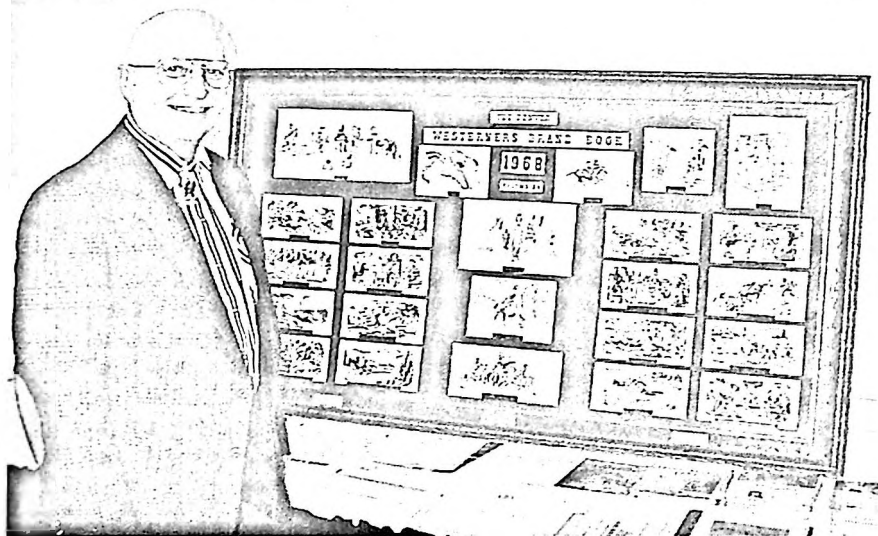
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Over the Corral Rail

Please send items of interest to Jim Krebs, Publications Chairman. Jim's contact information is on page 2.



Eugene Rakosnik displays the artwork for the 1968 Brand Book.

Editor's note: Mr. Rakosnik was awarded the Westerner's "Lifetime Achievement Award" at the Dec. 1998 Rendezvous. Congratulations Gene!

When I came to Denver in August, 1962, Milt Callon was among the first people I met, especially those associated with the Westerners.

Milt, his wife Lois, and I had become good friends, even beyond the realm of Westerners. Milt accompanied me on several trips to Las Vegas, NM. His commentary on the topography, local history of the towns we traveled through and stories of Las Vegas are still fond memories.

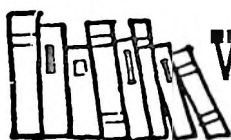
In 1968 Milt and Jim Davis co-edited the 1968 Brand Book, and after publication, Milt had the original drawings of the book mounted in a 3x5-ft. frame and it hung in his office from then until this past summer when it was given to me by his widow, Lois.

After enjoying the drawings for several weeks, I felt that they really belong to the Denver Posse of Westerners. My wife and I had decided to present them to the group and this was done on October 28, 1998. They are now part of the Denver Posse archives.

Eugene Rakosnik



From left to right; Kenton Forest, Chuck Albi (Director) and Jim Ozment of the Colorado Railroad Museum accept the "1998 Fred A. Rosenstock Award" at the December Rendezvous. (Photo by Omar Quade)



Westerners Bookshelf



Storm and Stampede on the Chisholm Trail, by Hubert E. Collins, foreword by Hamlin Garland and Introduction to the Bison Books Edition by Robert R. Dykstra. Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1998. Originally published 1928. 295 pages, map, 10 illustrations. Paperback \$14.95.

To quote the introduction, this recounts the experiences of the Old West "up close and personal". This book represents the recollections of the author as an eleven- and twelve-year-old boy over a fifteen-month-period during 1883-84. His experiences centered around the Red Fork Ranch in Oklahoma, on the original Chisholm Trail.

Joining his older brother, the author experienced cowboys, freighters and stage coach drivers along with the panorama of the passing trail herds. Probably the highlight of his stay was his acceptance by Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians at both the ranch and the nearby Darlington Agency.

While this book should not nor cannot serve as a strict historical source because of the time gap between the happenings and the writing, and because certain information was hearsay, verified years later, the reviewer, nonetheless recommends it highly. It is not fiction and it is one more brush stroke in painting that vast picture of the Old West during the great cattle drives and the final taming of the Southern Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes.

--Bob Stull, P.M.

Massacre On the Lordsburg Road: A Tragedy of the Apache Wars, by Marc Simmons. College Station: Texas A & M University Press. November, 1997. 256 pages, 24 B&W photos, map, notes, bibliography, index. Hard Cover \$27.95.

Most books and articles on the Apache wars make some mention of the death of Judge H.C. McComas, his wife Juanita and the abduction of their six-year old son Charlie. Apache raiders lead by Chato were the culprits. This volume expands into a fuller story the incident which had a significant impact on the

ultimate fate of the Apache people.

The author does a masterful job of developing the life history of Judge McComas and his wife and how the course of their lives led to that fateful March 28, 1883 when they were murdered on the road from Silver City to Lordsburg, New Mexico.

Similarly, the author reviews the progress of the later years of the Apache Wars as they were drawing to a close and why Chato and his band happened to cross the Lordsburg road as the McComas party was having lunch.

...The Author does a masterful job of developing the life history of Judge McComas...

The events following the deaths are well covered. These include the general indignation of the public, pursuit with the questionable efficiency of the Army, and the attempts to find Charlie. The identification of when, where and how he died is still a matter of conjecture.

The book concludes with how this incident and attendant public outcry supported the ultimate draconian punishment of the Apache people both friend and foe, and the ultimate effects upon the surviving members of the families of the Judge and his wife.

This is a very readable book which adds to the vast panorama of Southwest history and I recommend it highly.

--Bob Stull, P.M.

Western Treasure Tales, by Choral Pepper. University Press of Colorado, Niwot. Paperback, \$14.95.

For those of you still looking for that missing treasure, Choral Pepper has assembled several stories about riches found and lost. Whether the stories are true or legend, they are still interesting to read, knowing many or the treasures could still be tucked away in a secret place just waiting to be discovered.

The book gives in detail how such riches came about through stories such as the Brazelton Connection, Montezuma's Treasure Trek in Utah and the famous Pegleg's Enigmatic Sage of California.

The silent desert of the Southwest does not reveal its hidden riches easily. Time has changed the landscape which makes it all the more difficult to follow the paths leading to the treasure.

Bill Brazelton was one of Arizona's most notorious robbers. He found his niche in holding up stage coach wagons for the money and jewels. He was polite enough to leave the mail behind.

Western Treasure Tales is a wonderful book for anyone interested in further researching lost treasures.

--Robert Lane P.M.

Doc Holliday, A Family Portrait, by Karen Holliday Tanner. Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1998. 223 pages, cloth, \$28.95.

This biography is just what it purports to be, the story of a family ancestor who happened to become a legend in his own time. In fact, the only difficulty this reviewer had with the work was that so many relatives are mentioned that it was confusing trying to keep track of who was who, and the exact relationships. The author, cousin of John H. Holliday and a personal acquaintance of this reviewer, has done exemplary work in "debunking" many of the tales and myths surrounding "Doc" Holliday, the gambler and gunfighter. Ms. Tanner has used a number of personal interviews with family members, and also has done extensive research as evidenced by the voluminous notes in the appendix. To put the reader at ease, she calls him "John Henry" just as his contemporary relatives did. By the end, the reader is quite familiar with this notorious character out of the old West. In addition, her private collection of photographs and memorabilia adds much to the account.

Holliday's story is told from the days of his youth until his death in Glenwood Springs, Colorado in November, 1889. Ms. Tanner weaves a true story that is as enthralling as a good novel, as she follows John Henry to dental school, back to Georgia, and then to Texas and his destiny. This includes the change of his lifestyle from a professional dentist, and a good one at that, to a professional gambler. Dodge City; Denver; Cheyenne; Deadwood, Las Vegas, New Mexico; Prescott and Tombstone, Arizona; and Leadville, Colorado were stops on his way to an early grave at 36 years of age from tuberculosis. His involvement with the Earp brothers is also discussed in a thorough manner to include how he became a "shirt-tail lawman" and a personal friend of Wyatt Earp. His on-and-off relationship with paramour "Big Nosed Kate" is well covered. Of course, the climax, as was expected, is his participation in the events leading up to the gunfight and the aftermath of the incident at the "OK Corral" in November 1881.

Above all others that have been written, this biography of a family member, in which circumstances sometimes beyond his control led John H. "Doc" Holliday down the path to notoriety and into legend, will most likely be the final chapter on his life. This work is extremely well written, easy to read, fascinating and well researched. It is highly recommended for those interested in the actual truth concerning such a man, the western frontier of the 1870-80s, and the bigger-than-life personalities it occasionally created.

...Ms. Tanner weaves a true story that is as enthralling as a good novel...

--Richard A. Cook, PM

The Battle of Glorieta Pass; A Gettysburg in the West, March 26-28, 1862, by Thomas S. Edrington and John Taylor, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1998. 176 pages. Hardback \$29.95.

What was it like to experience warfare in the unsettled territories of the West in the early 1860s, especially between two warring factions that were in rebellion over issues that were more clearly defined in the eastern states? Did the fact that the colonel in charge of Rebel Forces could clearly see the backs of blue uniforms leaving the battlefield located on a small pass on the Sante Fe Trail, mean another victory for the marauding Texans? Or were reports correct that Union troops were able to circumvent this battlefield and destroy the necessary supply wagons with all provisions required for continuing the march northward? How many Texans had died in that day of conflict? How many Federal soldiers had been critically injured? Could support be counted on from the local Mexicans and Anglos? If he proceeded north what would he be able to accomplish? How significant was this battle for the outcome of the Civil War?

Authors Thomas S. Edrington and John Taylor provide a very interesting and engaging account of the battle of Glorieta Pass. In their description of the events, the authors very aptly convey the experiences of the soldiers that fought there. This is a difficult task to do. Many historical depictions of war are simply sequences of dates, troop movements over geographical points, and the descriptions of the succession of leaders.

...the authors very aptly convey the experiences of the soldiers that fought there...

However, parts of this book convey the feelings of the participants, especially that of the lack of immediate and accurate knowledge of what was truly happening at any particular time within the area of conflict.

The authors describe the events leading up to the Glorieta Pass conflict with a great deal of information about the significant leaders of both sides. They describe, in a traditional approach, previous skirmishes in which the troops had participated in New Mexico, including the battle at Valverde. The encounter at Apache Canyon, the Battle at Pigeon's Ranch, and the destruction of Confederate supply wagons at Johnson's ranch are the most important aspects of the book.

This text is well illustrated with many photographs of officers significant in this conflict and of illustrations of troop locations at various times throughout the various skirmishes. The many maps of battle positions are very clear, uncluttered and easy to interpret. They enhance the text immensely. This is a very readable book that explains the most significant events in a very interesting manner.

--Ken Pitman, PM

The Battle of Glorieta: Union Victory in the West, by Don E. Alberts, Foreword by Donald S. Frazier. Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1998. 226 pages, 17 B&W photos, 6 Maps. Hardback \$29.95.

Much has been previously written about the battle between the small bands of Rebel and Federal forces that occurred in northern New Mexico in March of 1862, in a region known as Glorieta. However, Don E. Alberts has written a new text on this subject that has greatly extended the body of knowledge of this conflict. His account of the struggle that occurred in this region is much more complete, detailed, and accurate than most other depictions. Alberts did extensive research in all aspects of this event. He clearly described: the Confederate troops and where they were initially mobilized, their officers and where they had previously fought, and what the objectives of this northern invasion were. He explained: how the Federals were organized and the impact of the Colorado Volunteers on the contingent of troops, the background of Federal Officers and how they were perceived by their own troops, and how their volunteers were deployed in New Mexico to thwart the intentions of the Rebels.

Alberts' research disclosed many facts about this conflict that had not been published in previous accounts. The fact that the wife of Colonel Canby, a Union commanding officer, helped reduce the suffering of the Confederate sick and wounded in Santa Fe is described. The murder of John Slough at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, years later, is an interesting epilogue. Throughout this text, such stories enhance the knowledge of the events at that time.

...Alberts did extensive research in all aspects of this event...

One of the most significant parts of this history is the more accurate description of places where various skirmishes occurred. Through his own research, both with text and on site, Alberts was able to more precisely select the locations of battles. He also used new highways such as Interstate 25 as landmarks for the reader to more accurately relate where the conflicts took place.

Using logic and research, Alberts refuted several alleged events within this conflict. Did the Federals kill the animals at Johnson's ranch when they destroyed the Rebel's supply wagons? Convincingly, Alberts rejected that belief. Who actually led Chivington and his troops over the Galisteo trail and, then, onto Johnson's ranch? Alberts has found the answer.

We must give credit to the early writers of this battle such as Alfred Peticolas, Ovando Hollister, and, somewhat latter, William Whitford. For without their writing about the events that occurred, much of the history would have been lost. But, I believe Don Alberts has presented a most thorough understanding of this conflict and has researched, compiled, and conveyed information of much historical importance.

--Ken Pitman, PM

The Nebraska Indian Wars Reader: 1865-1877, Edited by R. Eli Paul. University of Nebraska Bison Books, Lincoln, Nebraska. 245 pages, photographs and maps, index, bibliography, endnotes. Paper, \$15.00.

In an apparent effort to make historical society articles and other essays more available (and, with the added benefit of producing books for a secondary market), there have been produced, in recent years, a number of "readers" or anthologies dealing with the Indian wars. For example, there were Paul Hutton's *The Custer Reader* and Paul Hedren's *The Great Sioux War, 1876-77*. Similarly, some twenty-five years ago, there was Lonnie White's excellent collection of *Hostiles and Horse Soldiers*, a volume with papers from various authors dealing with battles and campaigns on the plains. This volume is in that genre and it, in my opinion, even surpasses the selections in Hutton's and Hedren's volumes.

Mr. Paul, an historian with the Nebraska State Historical Society, has done

...a volume worth having especially for those who cannot afford to subscribe to all the state historical journals...

a good job of collecting papers (all save one are from *Nebraska History* of the Nebraska State Historical Society) to include in this volume. Included are papers covering such topics as frontier posts, Indian agencies, the Republican River Expedition (which ended in the battle of Summit Springs in Colorado), Crazy Horse, the Pawnee Scouts, Medal of

Honor winners, and the "Battle" of Massacre Canyon (where the Sioux slaughtered many Pawnee, including women and children). One of the best chapters was produced by Paul Hedren and includes the 1876 diary of James Frew, a Fifth Cavalryman who witnessed Buffalo Bill Cody's fight with Yellow Hand at Hat Creek or War Bonnet Gorge.

This is a volume worth having, especially for those of us who cannot afford to subscribe to all the state historical journals or to buy all of the out-of-print copies. While I have made copies of older articles or reminiscences from *Nebraska History* from the holdings at the Denver Public Library's Western History Division, this was a new collection for me. And, as I was able to tell Mr. Paul at the recent Association meeting in Sacramento, as soon as I confirmed that the book contained an account of "The Battle of the Blowout," a skirmish which occurred near Fort Hartsuff in 1876, I knew that it was a book that merited a solid recommendation.

--John M. Hutchins, PM

My Life in the Old Army: The Reminiscences of Abner Doubleday, Edited by Joseph E. Chance. Texas Christian University Press, Fort Worth, Texas, 403 pages, drawings by Wil Martin, one map, index, bibliography, endnotes. Cloth, \$27.95.

The Old Army has always been with every war and to be extolled to every new generation by the old timers. At West Point thirty years ago, they said, "The Old Corps has [gone to Blazes]." On duty during and after Vietnam, they opined about the simpler days in the "Brown Shoe Army." Even the term, "The Old Army," is recycled every so often. There was an Old [Regular] Army remembered during the Spanish-American War. There was an Old [Peacetime] Army spoken of during World War II. And, of course, there was that Old Army before the Great American Civil War. It is of this last Old Army that is discussed in Abner Doubleday's memoir.

Abner Doubleday is remembered chiefly for his presence at Fort Sumter in April, 1861, and for being one of the original promoters of American Baseball. Doubleday published his recollections of Fort Sumter in 1876 (which have been reprinted). As for his connection with baseball, Professor Chance, in his introduction, has done an excellent job of defending Doubleday's pioneering efforts on behalf of the sport. This defense is necessary, for it has become fashionable to ridicule those who think Doubleday was instrumental and to promote the theory that baseball is a variation of the English game of Rounders.

However, this volume is comprised of the previously unpublished writings of Doubleday, which are housed in the collections of the New York Historical Society. These writings, which Professor Chance has put together in an organized manner, include Doubleday's recollections of the Mexican War and his career in the United States Army of the 1850s. While the length of these reminiscences is somewhat exhausting, Doubleday's writing style usually paints a colorful impression of the events described. One can almost hear, feel, and smell the occurrences and situations that Doubleday experienced.

The book is important, especially with the recent interest in the Mexican War. However, it is also important because it is another book that greatly expands our knowledge of the Old Army of the 1850s. For example, Doubleday discusses

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of the soldiers that
fought there...

his part in the Billy Bowlegs Seminole War in Florida during 1855-1858, expanding our knowledge of a little-noted conflict. Coincidentally, also this year, Jerry Thompson has published *Fifty Miles and a Fight*, the journal of General Heintzelman during the Cortina War of 1859-1860. It is with such books as these that one realizes that there is still more original material out there to be published and to be used by historians.

The book has nice ink illustrations by Wil Martin. However, the drawing showing a severed leg (and which is used to illustrate Doubleday's description of the aftermath of the Battle of Buena Vista) was a little excessive, even in these days of gory photo-journalism and gruesome horror "flicks." In that case, Doubleday's words were quite sufficient.

The book is highly recommended.

--John Hutchins, PM

