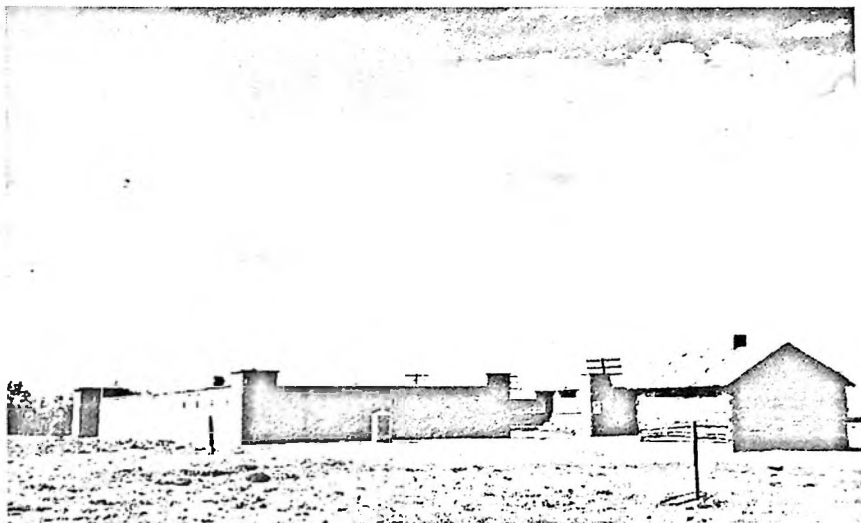




*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

January - February 2001



*courtesy Colorado Historical Society*

**First of Four Forts:  
Fort Vasquez on the South Platte**  
by  
**Susan Hoskinson, Director, Fort Vasquez Museum**  
(Presented January 24, 2001)

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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## About the Author

Susan Hoskinson is director of Fort Vasquez Museum, the only Colorado Historical Society regional property located north of Denver. She commutes to Platteville from her 1887 Fort Collins home, under restoration for the past 34 years. She says she agreed to take on this lifetime restoration project in 1967 because an early owner, W. H. "Billy" Patterson, had been William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody's boyhood friend. She was enticed by rumors that Buffalo Bill once visited the home.

Susan's interest in the history of the American West developed after she earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in European history from Colorado State University. Then, she co-founded and co-published for ten years the now defunct Fort Collins weekly newspaper, the *Triangle Review*. The newspaper published many local history articles, and proofreading these articles helped develop her knowledge of Colorado history.

A project with the Wyoming Recreation Commission twenty years ago introduced her to mountain man folklore. A four-year stint with Colorado State University public relations department as a writer and editor completed Susan's training as a publisher.

In addition to Fort Vasquez Museum duties, Susan is a freelance copy editor specializing in historical works.

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# First of Four Forts: Fort Vasquez on the South Platte

by

**Susan Hoskinson, Director, Fort Vasquez Museum**

(Presented January 24, 2001)

No other historian explored the fur-trade history of Fort Vasquez or the three other adobe trading posts along a 15-mile stretch of the South Platte River as thoroughly as LeRoy R. Hafen did. Shortly after he joined the State Historical Society of Colorado as curator of history in 1924, Hafen visited the ruins of forts Vasquez, Lupton, Jackson, and St. Vrain, all built between 1835 and 1837. A 1924 photograph records this tour with Hafen seated on a section of crumbling wall at the site of Fort Vasquez.

In 1928, Hafen published the first of a number of articles about the four forts, and their founders, in *Colorado Magazine*, a publication of the Colorado Historical Society. His first biography of Louis Vasquez appeared in *Colorado Magazine* in 1933. Another was included in *Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*, the 10-volume series Hafen edited. *Colorado Magazine* also published Hafen's history of Fort Vasquez in 1964.

Through these writings, Hafen kept the memory of Fort Vasquez and the other outposts alive. Historians of the four forts

continue to rely on his research.

## **Vasquez and Sublette**

The father of Pierre Louis Vasquez, Benito Vasquez, Sr., came to St. Louis from Spain in 1770 to serve the tiny outpost on the Mississippi River as captain of the Spanish militia. A native of Galicia, he married Julie Papin, daughter of a French-Canadian fur-trading family, in 1774. Louis, the couple's twelfth child, was born in St. Louis in 1798. He was age twelve when his father died. Little is known of his childhood, although his letters, often written in French, reveal he was an educated man who held deep affection for his family.

Louis Vasquez joined Gen. William Ashley's fur-trading company in 1822 and spent the next decade trapping and trading along the Platte River and in the Rocky Mountains. He respectfully addressed his correspondence to "Cher Parin," his brother, Benito, Jr., but these letters offer few details about a trapper's life in the Rockies. One of his letters dated December 30, 1834, in a collection at the Missouri Historical Society of St. Louis, places Vasquez and Andrew Sublette at Ft. Convenience on the

South Platte River opposite the mouth of Vasquez Fork (now known as Clear Creek). This was the beginning of their six-year partnership.

Ten years younger than Vasquez, Andrew Whitley Sublette was the third of eight Sublette Children. He was born in Somerset, Kentucky, in 1808, to Phillip and Isabella Whitley Sublette. Andrew's father was a direct descendant of Huguenot refugees who settled in colonial Virginia in 1700. In 1817, Phillip moved his family west to the French town of St. Charles near the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. It was here that the fur trade beckoned the Sublette brothers and produced two prominent fur-trade leaders, William and Milton Sublette.

Their brother, Andrew, first became active in the fur industry in 1830 when he accompanied William Sublette's annual trade caravan to the rendezvous at Wind River. The following year, William hired Andrew to help with a trading venture in Santa Fe, then part of Mexico. Andrew traveled to another mountain rendezvous in 1832, and spent the next year and a half as a field man for the new partnership of William Sublette and Robert Campbell. While on company business at Fort William (later known as Fort Laramie), he joined forces with Louis Vasquez.

The pair sought better opportunities and a milder winter on

the South Platte. As plans for their partnership developed, they met in St. Louis in the summer 1835 to secure financing from Sublette and Campbell, and to purchase trade goods. Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark issued their first trading license July 29, 1835, and the pair immediately left for the South Fork. In late September, they arrived at their chosen building site, downstream several miles from Fort Convenience. As it turned out, they selected a good location to build their adobe fur-trading post.

When they were in St. Louis, the First Regiment of U.S. Dragoons, led by Col. Henry Dodge, spent two days near this building site. The dragoons were on a 1,600-mile reconnaissance of the lands along the Platte, South Platte, and Arkansas rivers. The diaries of Capt. Lemuel Ford and Sgt. Hugh Evans noted the amenities this campsite offered.

Evans wrote on July 20, "Marched S S W 20 miles near the edge of the water the creek or river being verry [sic] small was lined on both sides with groves of timber halted and encamped in a beautiful situation for an encampment Buffalo running past us in great numbers during the day and when we halted to encamp we killed them in great numbers.

July 21, "Remain in camp for the purpose of killing and drying Buffalo meat and recruiting our horses —

for we expect a long and hazardous [sic] campaign before we get back to Fort Leavenworth during this day in camp we were verry [sic] particular with our horses in scecuring [sic] and grazing them.

Ford's diary entry on July 20 records that the,

“Rocky Mountains covered with Snow on our right presenting a most Magnificent appearance. The Buffalowe [sic] Still more abundant fat & fine we encamped [sic] on the Second Bank of the river fine timbered Bottom covered with good grass. . . .”

Vasquez and Sublette left no descriptions of the area or their fort, but they clearly chose excellent buffalo country, based on these descriptions. Construction of the new trading post also attracted the attention of their potential customers, the Cheyennes.

By November 1835, Campbell, one of their financiers, informed his partner, Sublette, that “Andrew and Vasquez on the South Platte all well.” Later, Campbell reported that “Vasquez & Sublette had about 50 lodges of Chiens at there [sic] fort on the South fork.” Although the post was the first of four forts built on the South Platte, the traders' advantage did not last long.

### Three more forts

By the mid-1830s, savvy entrepreneurs began to establish

permanent outposts at key locations throughout the West. Their presence eventually lessened the need for the annual rendezvous to supply trappers, traders, and travelers.

In 1833, William Bent and Ceran St. Vrain established Bent's Fort near the Arkansas River along the Santa Fe Trail. The following year, Sublette and Campbell built Fort William near the confluence of the Laramie and North Platte rivers. In November 1835, Fort Vasquez opened for business. It was strategically located midway between Bent's Fort and Fort William on the Trapper's Trail that paralleled the South Platte.

At this time, change was occurring on the plains and also within the fur-trade industry. Demand for beaver pelts in St. Louis was decreasing, so trade for buffalo robes figured heavily in the success or failure of any venture on the South Platte. Vasquez and Sublette intended to carry on trade with the Cheyennes, who offered buffalo robes in exchange for a wide variety of manufactured goods the partners hauled from Missouri. Within six months after they established Fort Vasquez, Lancaster Lupton, who first saw the area as a member of the 1835 Dodge Expedition, pulled in with his own supply of trade goods and plans to construct Fort Lupton, eight miles south. Establishment of Fort Jackson and Fort St. Vrain the following year further increased the competitive pressures on Fort

Vasquez. All were built within ten miles of each other.

Concerned about all the trading-post activity on the South Platte, Bent and St. Vrain, proprietors of Bent's Fort, built Fort Lookout six miles north of Fort Vasquez. They sent St. Vrain's brother, Marcellus, to operate the post, later known as Fort St. Vrain. By purchasing all the assets held by Fort Jackson from its proprietors, Peter Sarpy and Henry Fraeb, Bent and St. Vrain effectively eliminated one-fourth of the competition on the South Platte. Vasquez and Sublette were the next to withdraw from the area, but they did not fold as easily as Sarpy and Fraeb.

During the six years Vasquez and Sublette operated their fort, they employed as many as twenty-two men to hunt, trap, and trade. A successful trader would travel among the Plains Indians' camps and offer an array of trade goods in exchange for buffalo robes. James Beckwourth reported his successes in acquiring Cheyenne robes for Vasquez and Sublette between 1838 and 1840 in his autobiography dictated in 1856. He said that in 1838 Vasquez hired him to accompany the supply train from Independence, Missouri, to Fort Vasquez, where he was employed as a trader. Upon their arrival, Beckwourth remembered erecting buildings within the fort, including a barn later filled with hay. In 1840, Beckwourth left Fort Vasquez and

joined the traders at Fort St. Vrain.

Each summer, one or both of the partners traveled to St. Louis to sell the hides and robes they collected, purchase a new supply of trade goods, renew their trading license, and return to the South Fork.

E. Willard White recorded their 1839 return trip in his diary. Smith joined the caravan as a graduation gift from his parents. The traders' entourage left Independence, Missouri, August 6, 1839. Vasquez and Sublette's teamsters drove four wagons drawn by six mules each along the Santa Fe Trail. Smith's account records observations he made along the trail. He noted that the partners employed Baptiste Charbonneau as a hunter who supplied meat for the travelers. Baptiste, son of Toussaint Charbonneau and Sacajawea, was born during the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806.

Smith's account is valuable because it provides one of the few descriptions of Fort Vasquez during the years it operated as a fur-trade post. Smith recorded that the wagons pulled into Fort Vasquez in late afternoon September 13, 1839, and added

"Our arrival caused considerable stir among the inmates. A great many free trappers are here at present. The Fort is quite a nice place, situated on the South fork of the river Platte. It is built of daubies [adobes], or Spanish

bricks, made of clay baked in the sun. This is the Mexican plan of building houses, and, as the atmosphere is very dry, & there is very little rain, the buildings are quite durable. This Fort is opposite Long's Peak and about twenty miles distant. We slept all night at the Fort, and ate some very good meat. This is the first time I have slept under cover for thirty-seven days."

The next day, Smith moved a mile and a half from the fort to the campsite of trader Phillip Thompson in preparation for a trip to Fort Davy Crockett on the Green River. Still in camp on September 15, Smith offered his final comments about the activities at Fort Vasquez.

"Nothing remarkable has happened. The men at the Fort have been carousing, having got drunk on alcohol. There are about twelve lodges of Shians encamped at the Fort. They have been trading with the whites. They had a scalp-dance in the Fort to-day, dancing at the music of an instrument resembling the Tambourine. They were armed with short bows, about three feet long."

Smith's trip to Fort Davy Crockett was uneventful, but his group met with a variety of hardships on their return to Fort Vasquez the following spring. Faced with heavy snow, starvation, and Indian attack, they sent to Fort Vasquez for help. Louis Vasquez came to the

rescue and led the party safely to Fort Vasquez. After crossing the South Platte at flood stage on April 24, 1840, Smith arrived at the fort where he rested for two days before embarking on another adventure: navigation of the South Platte River.

He accompanied Vasquez and Sublette's men on a slow, muddy, arduous trip down the Platte in a "Mackinaw boat." They launched the eight-by-thirty-six-foot flat-bottomed boat from the riverbank near Fort Vasquez. The trip took sixty-nine days to reach St. Louis. They transported the traders' 700 buffalo robes, but he said the crew ate the 400 buffalo tongues. The trip marked the only known successful navigation of the South Platte from Fort Vasquez and one of the final shipments from Vasquez and Sublette.

Low prices received for their hides and pelts, strong competition, and the Panic of 1837 combined to encourage Vasquez and Sublette to consider selling the business. In 1841, they sold out to the firm of Locke and Randolph. The new owners were less able to meet the competition and abandoned the enterprise in 1842. (Some contend they were attacked and driven away.) The two remaining forts along the South Platte, Lupton and St. Vrain, continued operations until the mid-1840s.

With the sale of Fort Vasquez in 1841, Andrew Sublette returned to St. Charles, and worked

on his brother's farm until 1844, possibly to repay his debt. Andrew then acted as guide for Catholic missionaries headed for Fort Laramie. After his return to St. Louis, he raised a company of Missouri volunteers, known as the Sublette Rangers, and served as its captain during the Mexican War from 1846 to 1848. The company was assigned to Old Fort Kearny on the Missouri River and helped build New Fort Kearny on the Platte River.

After being discharged from military service in 1848, he accompanied Lt. Edward Beale to California to join brother, Solomon. After successive occupations as trapper, trader, guide, soldier, miner, peace officer, lumberman, investor, and hunter, Andrew found success as a contractor. In April 1853, he was employed by the Indian Superintendent for Southern California to supply meat for Fort Tejon Indian Reservation, north of Los Angeles. He died from injuries inflicted by a grizzly while hunting in December 1853.

One of the consequences of the new owners' abandonment of Fort Vasquez in 1842 was default on an \$800 note. They left Vasquez and Sublette to face the creditors. Sublette struggled to repay his share by working on his brother's farm, and Vasquez raised some cash by selling the acreage he owned in St. Louis County, Missouri. He hoped to earn more money by joining his

friend, Jim Bridger, in August 1842. They established Fort Bridger Trading Post (now in southwestern Wyoming) to supply emigrants traveling along the Oregon Trail.

During a fall trip to St. Louis in 1846, Vasquez married widow Narcissa Land Ashcraft. He then brought her and her children to live at Fort Bridger. In 1855, the partners sold Fort Bridger, and the Vasquez family returned to Missouri. They settled on a farm near Westport, where Vasquez reared his seven children and two stepchildren. Vasquez inspected the Colorado goldfields in the fall of 1858. He died ten years later at his Missouri home, and Narcissa died in Pueblo, Colorado, in 1899.

### **Noted landmark**

Shortly after abandonment of Fort Vasquez, passers-by, including Gen. John C. Fremont in 1843 and Francis Parkman in 1846, recorded seeing adobe ruins as they traveled along the South Platte. Somewhat later in 1858, Vasquez may have visited the site of his old trading post when he toured the Pikes Peak goldfields. In 1859, his nephew, A. Pike Vasquez, established a store and hotel in Denver with his uncle's financial assistance. In the same year, they registered two 160-acre claims for land along the South Platte. The parcel in Pike's name included the Fort Vasquez property where as a boy in 1836 he stayed with his uncle. Their claims were





courtesy Colorado Historical Society

### Dr. L.R. Hafen sits atop ruins during an archeological dig of Ft. Vasquez

registered in the St. Vrain County, Territory of Nebraska, Claims Club Book, precursor to Weld County, Colorado, records. It appears that neither man sold his claim since no transfers of title have been found. The first official owner of the property was John Paul, who filed his claim in 1864.

In the meantime, the ruins offered temporary shelter for travelers, such as D. C. Oakes, who was hauling a sawmill to Denver in anticipation of a building boom. Oakes and his men spent one cold, drizzly night camped in one of the rooms at Fort Vasquez before continuing to Denver in April 1859. His memoirs recount meeting two starving men who also had taken up temporary residence in the fort.

According to Hafen, the old fort was used at various times as a

military bivouac, pony express stop, and stage stop. Early South Platte Valley settlers reported using the fort as a temporary school, church, and post office.

Judge F. W. Hammitt, elected the first judge in Weld County, and his bride crossed the plains in 1860 and followed the South Platte Trail to Denver. In 1907, he provided information about three of the adobe forts to the *Greeley Tribune*. In discussing Fort Vasquez, Hammitt said,

“The original fort was about 100 ft. square with walls sixteen feet high and with a tower 36 ft. high in the northwest corner. This tower was used as living room by those in charge of the fort. The sections of adobe used in building the fort were made by Mexicans with long-horned oxen. The

beasts were driven around and around in a big mud hole, and the mud, when mixed to the mortar quality desired, was shaped into blocks 20 X 10 X 4". Some of these blocks were to the hardness of rock."

By the turn of the nineteenth century, the fort was in ruins although it continued to beckon curious travelers on their way to or from Denver. The roadway crowded dangerously close to the east wall of the ruins, but it was a convenient distance for the adventurous to make quick stops and imagine earlier times.

One of these visitors was historian Elliott Coues, who toured the ruins of the four forts with Colorado Gov. Alva Adams in 1898. *The Rocky Mountain News* covered their pilgrimage stating,

"Fort Vasquez is on the old stage line, now the principal wagon road, one and a half miles south of Platteville. The fort lies north and south on a level tract of land. . . Six portions of the walls are standing, the highest being ten feet above the ground. . . The fort is about 200 yards from the bottom of the cliff at the foot of which formerly flowed the river. The corners of this fort are all standing and convey an impression of solidity which is further strengthened by the commanding position of the structure."

In 1910, another historian, F. W. Cragin of Colorado Springs,

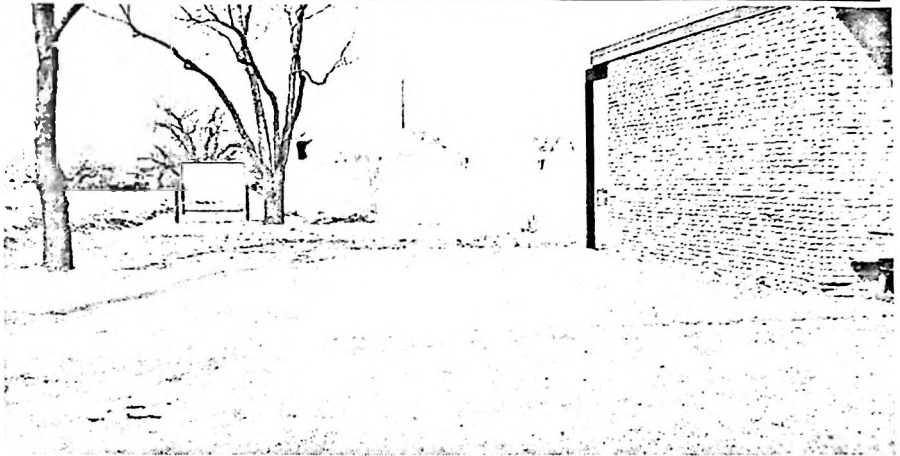
recorded the site by photographing the ruins. Then came LeRoy R. Hafen in 1924.

By this time, William and Pearl Hoffman Perdieu and Ethel Hoffman owned the land surrounding the site and named their property, Fort Vasquez Ranch. They began to express interest in preserving the history of Fort Vasquez.

Official recognition of the site's significance first came in 1932 when the State Historical Society cast a bronze plaque to mark the ruins. (Scholarship later determined that the plaque recorded an incorrect founding date of 1837. Trading license documentation proved the actual date was 1835, but the monument stands uncorrected.)

Beginning in 1934, the Platteville Community Club, an organization of local businessmen, spearheaded an effort to reconstruct Fort Vasquez and create a museum to interpret early days along the South Platte. They hoped the project would preserve the memory of the fur-trade era, provide employment for local workers during the Great Depression, and encourage travelers to spend more time in the Platteville area. As a first step in September 1934, Pearl Perdieu and her sister, Ethel Hoffman, deeded the site of Fort Vasquez to the Weld County Board of Commissioners.

At the urging of the Platteville Community Club, the commissioners then applied for project assistance through the



Present-day view of Fort and Museum

photo by Author

Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Reconstruction planning began under the National Recovery Administration program until 1935, when the U.S. Supreme Court declared NRA unconstitutional. The Works Progress Administration filled the void left by NRA and FERA.

Congressional legislation enabled the WPA to respond to the needs of the nation's unemployed and to boost local economies by underwriting projects, such as rebuilding Fort Vasquez. Weld County submitted a project application to the WPA in July 1935, and reported that under FERA, project planning had been completed and some materials had been purchased. To justify the reason for the work, the commissioners wrote: "Old Fort Vasquez is a point of great interest. This project proposes to rebuild Fort as nearly as possible to its original

construction. All necessary material including the forms for blocks and straw has been purchased by Sponsor under F.E.R.A." The application requested \$2,839 in federal funds with the sponsor contributing \$500 to provide employment for 59 workers. Financially, the project seems insignificant when compared with a federal expenditure of \$100 million for 5,000 projects completed in Colorado between 1935 and 1943, as reported by Stephen Leonard in *Trials and Triumphs: A Colorado Portrait of the Great Depression*.

In the eyes of the Platteville community, however, project completion was an important milestone. They moved a cabin, once used as a "courthouse" at the Town of St. Vrain, onto new foundations south of reconstructed Fort Vasquez. The Platteville Community Club intended to establish a museum there, but in 1937, the cabin pro-

vided additional housing for the caretaker's family. The museum project did not materialize. (After ownership transferred to the State Historical Society of Colorado, the log structure was moved to the parking area north of the fort to make way for museum construction. In the early 1970s, the cabin was moved to Centennial Village in Greeley.)

Dedication of the reconstructed fort on August 2, 1937, drew a crowd of 2,000 people to celebrate its completion and also to open the new alignment for U.S. Highway 85 west of the fort. Local historian Judge George H. Bradfield was the keynote speaker, and he recounted the early history of the fort and Weld County. George East, chairman of the Platteville Community Club, gave credit to George Burbridge, who had visited the fort as a boy in 1850 and 1859, and described its appearance to the WPA builders.

A caretaker family took up residence in the adobe rooms and cabin in September 1937. By April 1939, these accommodations proved less than adequate, and efforts were made to provide better housing. Apparently the caretaker moved on, because various local groups cared for the property during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

When the community learned of plans to convert U.S. 85 into a four-lane highway in the 1950s, key local individuals, includ-

ing Fern Miller, superintendent of the U.S. Mint in Denver, took steps to preserve and protect the historic site by leading an effort to repair the adobe walls. First, the Weld County Board of Commissioners transferred title to the Colorado Department of Highways on December 31, 1957, in anticipation of the road-building project. On February 10, 1958, the State Historical Society of Colorado received the property and initiated development plans. After the four-lane highway opened, a *Denver Post* article reported that within ten years "23 million Americans are expected to pass the old fort to be reminded of the mark Vasquez left on the Western frontier."

By this time, some people began to question whether this was the true site of Fort Vasquez. In order to verify local oral tradition, archaeological work began in November 1963 during construction of the museum building. Archaeological work continued through the 1960s. The final round of excavations, led by principal investigator James Judge, answered the crucial question. Was it the site of an early fur-trade fort? Yes. The archaeological site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

Without the work of student archaeologists enrolled in summer field schools at Colorado State University in 1969 and 1970, there would be no systematic documentation of the below-surface existence of Fort Vasquez. The teams were



photo by Author

### Everyone is welcome to visit the historic Fort and Museum

frustrated by the site-damaging construction work that took place in certain areas during the 1930s and 1950s, but they were still able to reveal foundations to rooms, locate entrances, and find evidence of fireplaces. Uses for the rooms were established through preliminary analysis of artifacts found. Artifacts attributed to the 1835-1842 fur-trade fort included beads, bone, buttons, ceramics, metal, nails, and clay pipes. Final analysis of these artifacts is a project anticipated for the future to improve interpretation of the site. The 1971 report also noted the lack of evidence to support claims by some authors that Locke and Randolph abandoned the fort under siege in 1842.

### The future

Since opening the museum doors in 1964, approximately a

quarter-million visitors have paid homage to Vasquez and Sublette, a fraction of the number who drive by. Yet, an adobe fort located in the median strip of a four-lane highway intrigues all passers-by.

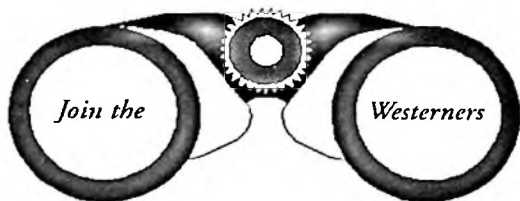
In 1999, the Colorado Historical Society completed the Fort Vasquez Museum Concept Development Plan to guide physical changes to the facility and direct interpretation of the site. Soon work will begin to improve the complex using funds made available through the Federal Highways Transportation Act administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation. The work will include further archaeological research, preservation of the adobe walls, museum building improvements, and reorientation of the museum entrance.

Only thirty-five miles from downtown Denver, Fort Vasquez is

in a position to serve not only the regional audience but also those from the metropolitan area who want to connect with Colorado's earliest exploration and settlement history. Now surrounded by the north and southbound lanes of U.S. 85, its location is quite understandable. Fort Vasquez lies within an historic transportation corridor first known as the Trappers' Trail.

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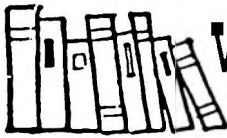
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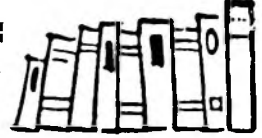
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## Westerners Bookshelf



**The Kiowas and the Legend of Kicking Bird**, by Stan Hoig. University Press of Colorado, Boulder, CO, 2000. 328 pp. 30 b&w photographs, 25 line drawings, 2 maps, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Until now, the mysterious death of Kicking Bird, one of the great leaders of the Kiowas, has overshadowed other significant events of his life. In *The Kiowas and the Legend of Kicking Bird*, Stan Hoig fills this void in scholarship by providing a more comprehensive account of this important tribal leader and the problems the Kiowas faced during his lifetime.

Originally a tribe of the northern mountain regions, the Kiowas migrated to the prairies of Colorado, Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma during the late eighteenth century to take up a buffalo-hunting existence. Like other Plains tribes, the Kiowas were caught squarely in the thrust of Anglo-American military power, forcing the critical decision between continued resistance or acculturation.

Kicking Bird strove to save his tribe by working peacefully with Quaker Indian officials and the military. In 1873 he managed to temporarily halt Kiowa raids against Texas settlements and attempted to negotiate peace with the whites. In doing these things, he risked losing all that was valuable to a Kiowa chief: his reputation as a war leader, his tribal following, and the wealth of his personal herd of horses. Kicking Bird made dangerous enemies among the hostile element of his tribe, who called him a "coffee chief," a traitor. Still the majority of his people continued to trust and follow him.

In what is sure to become the standard biography of Kicking Bird, Hoig provides scholars and general readers a detailed look at the life of this tribal leader against the background of Kiowa history and culture.

Stan Hoig is professor emeritus of journalism at University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond. He is the author of a number of award-winning books and articles on the American West, including *Westerners International* award winning *Jesse Chisholm: Ambassador of the Plains*, *Beyond the Frontier: Exploring the Indian Country*, (1998 Outstanding Book on Oklahoma History Award winner), and *Peace Chiefs of the Cheyennes* (Western Writers of America Golden Spur Award winner).

--Bob Terwilleger, P.M.

## Over the Corral Rail

You are invited to attend a book signing by our own Robert Larson. Robert will be at Barnes & Noble Booksellers on Friday, April 20, 2001, signing and discussing his book, now in paperback, *Red Cloud: Warrior as well as Leader*. The book store is located at 8136 W. Bowles Ave.



**Anasazi America: Seventeen Centuries on the Road from Center Place**, by David E. Stuart. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2000. 247 pp. Photos, maps, diagrams, cited references, index. Paper, \$15.95, cloth, \$29.95.

In this readable narrative composed by a professor of anthropology at the University of New Mexico, David Stuart raises issues which put this work in the category of a parable for modern society.

The Chaco Anasazi dominated a territory at the apex of their power in the late eleventh century larger than any European principality of the time! An alliance of thousands of farming hamlets, nearly 100 spectacular towns, and hundreds of miles of roads in the American Southwest connecting the whole economic and social system, took seven centuries to establish what we call the Chacoan civilization. Once established, that civilization lasted about 200 years...only to collapse in a mere forty years!

Stuart very effectively deals with the question, then, of why the collapse? Who survived and why? He argues, among several principles, that rapid growth and the inability to adapt to it, misuse of farmland, loss of community, malnutrition, and climatic catastrophe were factors combining to bring about the cultural demise.

Marc Simmons, another authority on southwest American culture, asserted that "the author's clear, unpretentious prose will delight the general reader and will be appreciated by specialists seeking a straightforward summary".

This reviewer is of the strong opinion that this work has an urgent appeal to anyone of us interested in the future of contemporary industrial society, especially one which has failed to learn history's lessons to date.

--Bob Terwilliger, P.M.

**Riverwalk, Explorations Along the Cache La Poudre River**, by William Wylie. University Press of Colorado, Niwot, Colorado, 2000. 72 pages, 49 duo-tone photographs, bibliography. Cloth, \$49.00.

With a foreword, *Exploration Along the Cache La Poudre River*, by Merrill Gilfillan that graphically describes the photographs, this book opens the mind and eyes to the beauty of this area. The photographer, William Wylie, spent four years taking pictures of this working river on the Front Range of Colorado. Threatened with overuse by agriculture and recreation, many pristine areas remain. They are shown in this book through Wylie's photographs. The photographer has an eye that has been compared to Ansel Adams. The photographs' texture and lighting depict many scenes of exceptional beauty. At the end of the book, a map shows the areas where the photographs were taken, along with an explanation titled, *About the Photographs*. This book is one to cherish and keep on the coffee table.

--Dolores A. Ebner, P. M.

**A Chinaman's Chance - The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier**, by Liping Zhu. University Press of Colorado, Boulder, 1997. 231 pp. Index, bibliography, notes, illustrations, maps, photographs, paperback, \$19.95.

*Chinaman's Chance* is the story of the small isolated Rocky Mountain mining community of Idaho City, Idaho. More than that, it is a look at the Chinese immigrant experience in nineteenth-century America that focuses on more than the difficult and racist experiences of this minority. Author Liping Zhu shows there were more than a few success stories within this immigrant community. Traditionally we view the Chinese immigrants of the late nineteenth century as workers who slaved over the building of the railroads, ran the laundries in the mining camps and remained on the edges of the communities. Living in run-down shacks and squalor, they never seemed to rise above the level of the abused and discriminated.

The majority of Chinese pioneers to the American West were free and migrated here by choice in spite of the "coolie stereotype" of forced labor. Following the rumors and confirmations of gold strikes, the Chinese first made it to the Boise Basin, the area of Zhu's study, in 1865. It is a relatively isolated spot surrounded by mountain ranges. "The arrival of the Chinese pioneers immediately worried the white miners, who were concerned about competition from the Asians." Most of the white miners came from California and quickly put

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...Zhu introduces readers to some of the more prominent, successful and colorful characters of the area...

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into place the same tactics used in California to thwart the Chinese from becoming successful in mining the area. They passed a tax law. "Aimed exclusively at the Chinese miners, the law prohibited 'any foreigner' from holding a mining claim without a license." It quickly went from \$4 per month to \$5. Although it did cause some roadblocks to the Chinese immigrants' success, it did not stop them. Fires, drought, and a declining population created buying opportunities for a number of Chinese arriving in the area in the 1860s. The merchants that remained in the area welcomed the Chinese as added customers to their declining market. The poor white miners objected to what they saw as a loss of job opportunities. By 1870, the US census showed that Idaho had 28.5% Chinese population. In Boise County, the percentage was 45.7%. Even after the economic recession in 1873, the Chinese population remained high in the Boise Basin. But in the 1880s with the easily extracted ore supply gone and the big mining companies starting to move in, opportunities began to dry up. That coupled with the passing of the 1882 Chinese exclusion act, the Chinese population in the Boise Basin began its ultimate decline. By 1910 there were only 88 Chinese—most of them old bachelors, remaining in the community.

The life these men lived was changed in many ways from the traditional experience they led in China. With so many young men on their own, their social

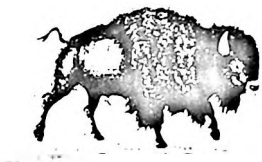
structure shifted from what they had known. In China, scholars and elders were the community leaders. In the Boise Basin Chinese community, others turned for help and advice to the merchants and businessmen. In the end the lack of family ties, roots and the inability to marry Chinese women spelled the decline of the Chinese population. But while in the Boise Basin, the Chinese used creative approaches to ownership of mining claims, joining in partnerships or leasing claims from whites. In all approaches, they seemed to have worked harder and been more frugal in their lifestyles than their white counterparts.

Even though they were not highly educated, they did bring creative talents and technological innovations in water management that help to improve the extraction rates with hydraulic mining methods. Soon they also made use of the more productive farming techniques in the shorter growing season of the Basin area. This resulted not only in better yields and produce for their own consumption, but also the growth of many produce sellers.

Zhu introduces readers to some of the more prominent, successful, and colorful characters of the area. There is the "quasi lawyer" Billy Wy, whose mastery of the English language made him an invaluable part of the Chinese use of the legal system. Then there was the more traditional story of the decades of hard work that Loke Kee put in to accumulate a fortune worth \$90,000. Many more did not fair as well. Their lineage ended with them, often a result of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that put an end to the possible addition of women to start families and extend their lines. The years of Chinese settlers in the Boise Basin did leave their mark on the remaining small community. Although now mostly "Euro-American" Idaho City still celebrates, the Chinese New Year and townspeople share stories about the town's Chinese heritage.

Zhu makes it clear that this was a story about a specific place that offered opportunities for the Chinese immigrants that probably were not the norm, but they did exist. They suffered both in the hard mining business as well as a minority treated less than equal. Through it all, they survived and often prospered. In the Boise Basin, a story emerges of a surprisingly successful integration of whites and Chinese that was not seen or heard of in many other parts of the Rocky Mountain West. It lends another view to the scholarship already out there that helps us balance the experiences of a small but important part of the growth of the American West.

*--Barbara Gibson, P.M.*



**The Journal of Navajo Oshley: An Autobiography and Life History**, edited by Robert S. McPherson. Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah, 2000. 236 pp. Paper \$19.95, cloth \$39.95.

Navajo Oshley never made claims about being rich, famous or powerful. Nobody else did either. Even he was uncertain about his year of birth (sometime in the 1880s). We do know that he died in 1988 with a lifetime of stories of interest to any serious student of the Southwest.

Both by his own account and by those whose lives he touched, Oshley bore witness to the Navajo world turned inside out. Always true to his heritage, he was a "hand trembler," several times a husband, a father and grandfather, a gambler, a sheepherder, a miner, a convert to Mormonism and an all-around nice guy.

His early years were marked by life in northwest New Mexico where poverty was a fact of life. Navajo learned techniques of survival, which served him well. He discovered he had a special gift, as a "hand trembler," to diagnose the nature of virtually anyone's physical ailments. Necessity forced him to scrap for food and money doing things requiring much work and sacrifice.

When he saw the Mormons across the border in Utah do well, he sought jobs from them rather than fight their advance. He found it easy to reconcile Mormon beliefs with his own native customs and values. Oshley in fact spent the last half of his life in Blanding, Utah, where he earned his keep by tending sheep, gathering wood, working on CCC projects during the depression and later mining uranium after World War II.

Robert S. McPherson, who edited hours of tape recordings of interviews with Oshley, found his human side on a full range of matters. When herding sheep, he was quite proud of his success in protecting them from their biggest enemies, wolves and coyotes. Particularly with wolves, he could read their eyes as they planned to attack and kill. His penchant for gambling usually found him on the losing side, and, as with so much that happened to him, he accepted his fate and moved on.

The reader would wish that McPherson had ordered Oshley's life in time to shine light on his growth and development. There was very little effort to analyze events historical and not of which the subject had first-hand knowledge. It would have been interesting to know why he entertained such a distrust of the Mexicans and Utes who crossed his path.

Even with these shortcomings, the "journal" of Navajo Oshley makes a rich contribution to understanding how this man came to terms with the good and the bad that came his way. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that a man is rich according to the things he can do without. Given that standard, it can be said that Oshley did quite well.

--David P. Nelson, C. M.

**Worldviews and the American West, The Life of the Place Itself.** Edited by Polly Stewart, Steve Siporin, C. W. Sullivan III and Suzi Jones. Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah, 2000. 236 pp. References, notes on contributors and editors. Cloth \$39.95, Paper \$19.95.

This book, referred to by the editors as an anthology, is a tribute to their teacher, Barre Toelkin. The book's theme is "Worldview", and is confined to the American West. Cultural tradition was often combined with social environmental changes. A mixture of authors points out their interpretations of contributions to the American West, through songs, poetry, animal relationships, as well as human contributions. This is an interesting, but highly sophisticated book.

In a chapter by James S. Griffith, the author addresses "unofficial" saints and shrines and then ties them into the folklore of the West. Even the Barbie doll is noted in this book, as is Forest Lawn Cemetery. Narratives, the ecology of story, diaries and reminiscences are all here.

Sales and merchandising techniques via postcards and their exaggerations are applied to folklore in one chapter. The effect of Mormonism, Catholicism and local Indian legends and their influences on the West are all covered effectively through various discussions. In other chapters, mining, treaties, landscapes all have their stories told in intensive chapters.

I found the last chapter by Kim Stafford to be the most intriguing as she relates to real people as local characters. All in all this is a very unusual book, the success of which should certainly please the four editors who devoted ten years to the concept, evolution, and publication of the book.

--Dolores A. Ebner, P. M.



**The Mountains We Have Crossed, Diaries and Letters of the Oregon Mission, 1838**, edited by Clifford M. Drury. Introduction by Bonnie Sue Lewis. University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln. Bison Books Edition, 1999. 336 pages. 14 Illustrations, index. Paper \$15.00.

Beginnings of civilizing and Christianizing the Native Americans by highly idealized men and women missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in Oregon, was at best not an easy journey. In 1838 four newlywed couples and a single man were sent out by the board to reinforce the two-year-old mission established by Marcus Whitman, Henry Spalding, and their wives. Seven previously written volumes on the history of the Oregon Mission are now joined by the recent discovery of the diary of Sarah White Smith and one hundred letters of her husband, Asa Bowen Smith. The long-lost diaries were found housed in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library. From the Asa Smith letters we are able to know more about his early life and student days than is known about any other member of the Oregon Mission of the American Board.

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...this volume comes as a climax to the series already published....

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We see the motivation that led Asa Smith and his new wife to go to a "heathen land" as missionaries as well as examining the personality traits which contributed much to the difficulties that disturbed the life of the Oregon Mission. After his dismissal from this Mission, these traits marred his 1845 service in Hawaii. Although she was called "the crying one" by Oregon's Natives, Sarah said these were the happiest days in her life of forty-one years. Imagine the six women who left their homes of comfort traveling nineteen-hundred miles riding horses sidesaddle. Sarah had rarely, if ever, been on a horse. In preparation for the journey, the women were provided fabric for them to sew into tents to be shared between two couples along the trail. Asa B. Smith was best in a study and not cut out to be a pioneer in the wilderness. He was a stiff-necked man feeling "God's call" with little compassion for the people he would be living with and ministering to.

This volume comes as a climax to the series already published, as it completes and rounds out certain aspects of the previously told history. More light is shed upon the hardships endured on their overland travels and the difficulties and trials of their daily lives in their respective stations when surrounded by Indians who knew life without the white man's law. This valuable document will be read by historians along with those who hunger to learn of the thirteen men and women who, inspired by the high ideal of civilizing and "Christianizing the Natives", ventured to Oregon where they built homes, schools, and churches.

--Dorothy Lowe Krieger, P.M.

**Apache Voices: Their Story of Survival As Told To Eve Ball.** by Sherry Robinson. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2000. 6x9 inches XV. 272 pages. 128 half tones, map, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$32.95.

In 1942, Eve Ball, a teacher, moved to Ruidoso, New Mexico. Her home was near the edge of the Mescalero Apache Reservation and on the dusty walk into Ruidoso. Timid requests for water, by passing Apache women and children, grew into regular visits and soon included visits by men. These visits soon turned to interviews of ultimately sixty-seven people, all taken down verbatim in Gregg shorthand by Ms. Ball. Soon Eve began to realize she was talking to the children and grandchildren of Apache notables such as Geronimo, Cochise, Victorio, and their prominent warriors.

From her shorthand notes Eve ultimately published two books, *In the Days of Victorio*, and *Indeh: An Apache Odyssey*, plus numerous articles for *True West* and *Frontier Times* magazines.

While collecting material about Victorio's sister Lozen, Sherry Robinson, tracked Eve's papers to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. There she found seventeen boxes of unorganized stuff (to quote the author). Plowing through the pages of this trove of information, Sherry began to realize that much of the material had never been used by Eve Ball.

From this material, Sherry Robinson has been able to develop this very readable book. The book is broken into four parts, Part I, The Warm Springs, Chiricahuas, and the Nednhis; Part II, The Mescaleros and Lipans; Part III, The Apache Way; and Part IV, Eve Ball.

Besides the trials and tribulations suffered by the Apaches following their wars with the United States and Mexico, other interesting tidbits of history evolve, such as the divided opinion within the Apache community regarding the leadership and bravery of Geronimo. Even the Lincoln County wars affected the Apaches, with Billy the Kid's depredations against their horse herds.

Particularly fascinating to this reviewer is Part II, The Apache Way. Here we have detailed descriptions of the plants and herbs that provided food and medicine to the Apache people. These grew on lands that appear to be hopeless and worthless to the average person of European and African descent who regularly fought these people.

Unlike when Eve Ball began to write, oral history is now, and luckily so, an evolving and accepted part of the total fabric of historical recording. In keeping with the recognized limitations that can occur with personal recollections, this book adds to the body of knowledge available about the Apache people.

--Bob Stull, P.M.

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...these grew on lands  
that appear to be  
hopeless and worthless...

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**Canyons of the Southwest.** by John Annerino. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 2000. 160 pages. 83 color plates, 1 map. Paper, \$17.95.

The subtitle of this 8 1/2" by 11" book is *A Tour of the Great Canyon Country from Colorado to Northern Mexico*. Originally published in 1993 by Sierra Club Books, this new edition is much more than a collection of superb photos of a stunning part of the world. Each of the eleven chapters is approximately 10 pages of pictures and text. I was quite moved by Annerino's obvious passion for the subject as reflected in his choice of pictures, and more by his essays, about these mystical and magic locales.

Too often, we tend to regard special places in everyday terms and attitudes. This approach is reinforced by the governmental agencies charged with "managing" these "parks" in a way that accommodates modern technology. As one reads a description of the geological and human history of the region in the context of modern impact, the lament is as much for what is being lost as for how the unique and sacred places are being "preserved." Annerino conveys a whole new perspective to the reader, which results in a deep and abiding respect for these natural and

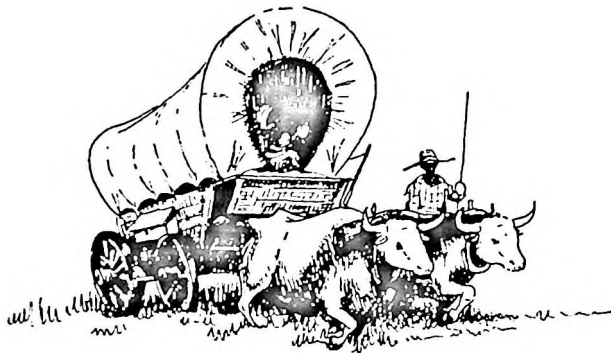
...results in a deep  
respect for these natural  
and historic regions...

historic regions.

When thinking about the canyons of the Southwest, it is natural for most of those living north of the Rio Grande River (known as Rio Bravo del Norte by millions who live near it) to think of the Black Canyon, Zion, the Canyonlands, maybe Glen Canyon, and definitely the Grand Canyon; but generally we

stop when we get to the border. We thereby fail to consider some really spectacular canyons in Mexico—an oversight that this book corrects. I highly recommend it.

--Charles Moore, C. M.







*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

March - April 2001



*courtesy Colorado Historical Society*

**Chief Little Raven of the Southern Arapahos**

by

**Donald L. Walker Jr., C.M.**

(Presented February 28, 2001)

## About the Author

Donald Walker Jr. was born and raised in Noblesville, Indiana. In 1994 he graduated from Indiana University at Bloomington with a B.A. in Political Science. He also received a Second Lieutenant's commission and the Indiana University President's Award as a distinguished military graduate.

Don served on active duty for four years in the United States Army in a variety of leadership and staff positions. In 1998 he moved to Littleton with his wife Christina and completed an M.A. in American History at the University of Colorado under the direction of Professor Thomas J. Noel. Don has won academic scholarships from the Vestal Coulter Foundation, the National Society of Colonial Dames and the CU-Denver history department.

Donald has been a member of the Denver Posse for one year. He has served as a history instructor at Arapahoe Community College, and is currently engaged in independent research and writing.



# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LVII NO. 2



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# Chief Little Raven of the Southern Arapahos

by

Donald L. Walker Jr., C.M.

(Presented February 28, 2001)

Around the time that Lewis and Clark started their exploration of the Louisiana Territory in 1804, a Southern Arapaho woman gave birth to a male infant and named him Little Raven.<sup>1</sup> Unknown by his family at the time, Little Raven would experience the nomadic life of the horse and bison culture, greet whites moving into Colorado during the Pikes Peak Gold Rush, fight Utes and Pawnees, and lead his people to the reservation in Oklahoma. Incredibly, not a single biography has been written about Little Raven. Like many peace chiefs, the famous war leaders such as Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and Geronimo have overshadowed him. Many books and movies have been devoted to the war leaders but in Denver only a small mural in Larimer Square and a street sign commemorate Chief Little Raven.

Little Raven probably took his name after a relative or some peculiar, meaningful sight. In keeping with Arapaho tradition, Little Raven's father held a feast and boasted to his comrades about the new addition to his family. Like many infants, Little Raven spent his first years wrapped in soft deerskin. Ground buffalo chips were packed around his lower body to keep him clean and prevent rashes. As a child, Little Raven was probably never punished or forced to perform daily chores. Much of his time was occupied by playing games that involved throwing a spear, arrow or dart, through a rolling hoop. These

games were important since they developed hand-eye coordination, a necessity for killing buffalo.<sup>2</sup>

However, his entire time was not spent playing games since education began at an early age. Little Raven's extended family taught him how to ride a horse, identify the local edible plants and how to hunt. Like most Arapaho boys he looked forward to accompanying the men on buffalo hunts. Young Little Raven helped butcher the meat, skin the hides, and load these trophies onto horses for transport back to the village.<sup>3</sup> And similar to fishing stories, we can imagine the Arapaho men exaggerating their hunting tales to anyone who would listen.

As he grew older, Little Raven's responsibilities increased. He guarded the tribe's immense pony herd against theft by Ute and Pawnee raiding parties and by the time he reached thirteen years of age, Little Raven took his place in the war parties. Little Raven wanted to count coup on a dangerous enemy warrior in front of his peers. Counting coup was done by striking an enemy warrior with a staff and usually the adversary was killed in the hand-to-hand fighting. These tribal battles usually lasted a few hours and less than ten warriors typically died. But Little Raven learned important lessons during these raids. He learned that leadership in battle depended on personal influence.

As he matured into a young



*courtesy Colorado Historical Society*

**Little Raven, (left) holding his daughter at Ft. Dodge, KS, 1869**

adult,<sup>4</sup> Little Raven also learned leadership skills from his father. Little Raven's father was a chief and his son listened to the discussion whether to follow the buffalo into enemy territory, or move the camp, make war, or when to send out horse stealing expeditions. Inside his father's lodge, Little Raven learned that in every decision, a chief considered the welfare of his immediate band, and the interests of the entire tribe.

### **The Fur Trade**

Little Raven was about twenty years old when he first saw white men on the Missouri River.<sup>4</sup> Like many Indians Little Raven traded beaver pelts and buffalo robes for the manufactured goods from the East such as flour, sugar, coffee, cloth, muskets, knives, and tobacco. Little Raven also visited four

important trading posts on the South Platte River. From Forts Vasquez, Lupton, and St. Vrain he watched millions of dollars worth of furs and skins loaded on flatboats for delivery to New York, Boston, Paris, and Berlin.

### **Intertribal war and white conflict**

Throughout most of 1830s Little Raven fought in several retaliatory raids against the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches. So many warriors died in the fighting that in 1840 the tribes gathered near Bent's Fort to make peace. To end the fighting, both sides exchanged horses and trade goods. Little Raven played a major role during the negotiations and married a Kiowa woman to conclude the peace ceremony.<sup>5</sup>

By this time in his life, Little Raven had passed through the ranks of

the war societies and proved himself a capable combat leader. But his skill at negotiating began to separate him from his peers. Soon, his diplomatic skills would be tested with a new challenge from the East.

In 1841, Little Raven witnessed increasing numbers of white emigrants crossing the Southern Arapaho tribal hunting grounds. The traffic became so heavy that the stock animals eventually devoured the prairie in a wide strip along each side of the Oregon and Santa Fe trails. Eventually, the buffalo refused to cross the barren areas.<sup>6</sup>

The increasing waves of white settlers were in search of cheap or free land to start farming or ranching. Although most emigrants crossed the plains unmolested, not all were so lucky. On the Santa Fe Trail, angry bands of Arapaho warriors sometimes demanded tribute from white emigrants in the form of whiskey and horses. Violence escalated when Arapaho warriors descended on wagon trains or settlers fired wildly without cause at peaceful groups of Indians.

#### **The Treaty of Fort Laramie, 1851**

In order to put a stop to the harassment of the wagon trains, in 1851 the United States proposed a treaty with the Plains Indians. The government offered the tribes fifty-thousand dollars in annuities for fifty years. Interestingly, they also promised to protect the Indians from United States citizens. The commissioners wrote descriptions of the Southern Arapaho and Cheyenne territory as located between the North Platte and Arkansas River and from the Continental Divide into central Kansas.<sup>7</sup>

Satisfied with the tribal boundaries and the government's offer of

annuities, the chiefs gave the government permission to establish roads, military posts, and similar buildings on Indian lands. They also agreed to keep the peace among themselves and to remain at peace with the whites. The chiefs celebrated by joyously sharing in the mountain of presents that lay enticingly near as a temptation to quickly conclude the deliberations.

Like many of the leaders present, Little Raven probably did not understand the treaty in its entirety. However, the concentration of 10,000 Indians from several tribes must have been an exciting occasion. From the Indian Bureau records, Little Raven made no speeches, which indicates that the Southern Arapahos were considered less of a concern than the belligerent Sioux.

After signing his first treaty with the government, Little Raven expected to receive annuities, cash payments dispensed in installments over a period of years. He quickly learned that the annuity system was abused by some Indian agents, traders and army officers who sat at disbursing tables to collect fictional debts run up during the previous year. Aggravating this abuse was the custom of making lump sum payments to a chief for distribution to his people, especially when a chief formed a corrupt alliance with dishonest whites. Finally, cash annuities lubricated the growing commerce in liquor. Many Indians used their annuity payments to stock up on whiskey.

The Treaty of Fort Laramie did nothing to reduce the vast number of emigrants killing the game that Little Raven's people depended on for food and chopping down the cottonwoods that

they used for fuel and shelter. In 1857 Indian Agent Robert C. Miller found three hundred lodges of Little Raven's Southern Arapahos starving. Instead of demanding that the chief proceed to the usual point of distribution for rations, Agent Miller issued food immediately to the starving Indians. Miller noted that Little Raven was very grateful and wanted his people to become farmers since he knew that the buffalo would disappear from the prairie in a few years.<sup>8</sup>

By this time, Little Raven had developed a skillful strategy of appeasement with the whites. After spending many years mingling with Indian agents, army officers, and traders, Little Raven understood that the whites expected his people to become civilized, Protestant, farmers.

### **The Colorado Gold Rush, 1858**

Just a year later, in the fall of 1858, William Green Russell and his party discovered gold at the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek. On Little Raven's favorite campgrounds, hundreds of miners built log houses and canvas tents that became the twin towns of Denver and Auraria.<sup>9</sup> Little Raven treated the white settlers as friends. During that Christmas season, they traded and gambled on horse racing, and the new settlement of Auraria hosted a huge feast of roast oxen, bread, coffee, and dried apples for some five hundred Southern Arapahos. The miners listened to Little Raven's friend, Chief Left Hand, speak English, and watched Little Raven eat with a knife and fork, and smoke cigars like a civilized man.<sup>10</sup>

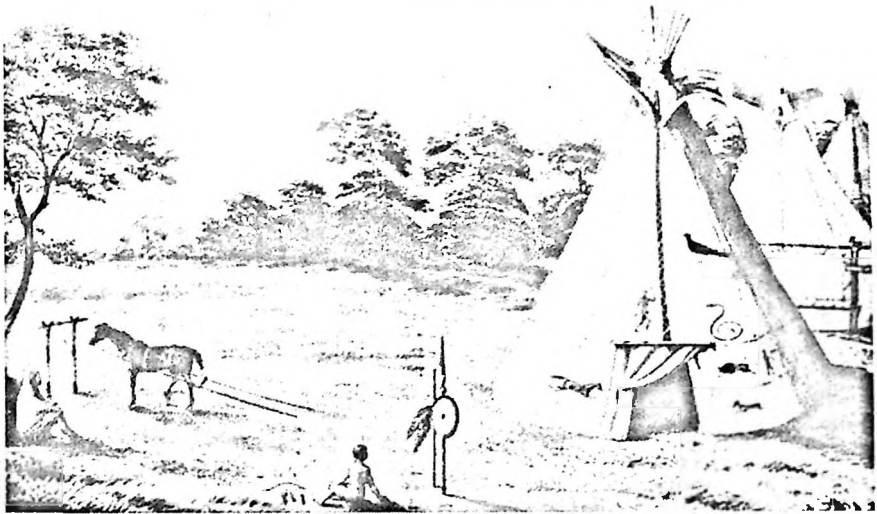
According to traveling reporter Albert Richardson, Little Raven broke the "savage" stereotype and was the nearest approximation he ever met to the

ideal Indian. During one particular visit, with Little Raven, Richardson delighted the chief with stories about the "wonders of civilization." But soon, questions turned to personal matters when Little Raven asked how many wives and children the reporter had and when Richardson replied "none," the chief bragged about his seven wives and ten children. Questions turned to material wealth when Little Raven asked how many horses Richardson owned.

The reporter did not own a single horse and Little Raven pointed at his thirty sleek ponies grazing on the adjacent prairie. Since one's wealth and position in Arapaho eyes depended solely upon the number of wives and horses owned, Richardson felt that "Little Raven was becoming directly personal and abusive. So I placed him in the witness box and became questioner myself."

Richardson asked how many revolvers Little Raven possessed. The chief shrugged his shoulders and Richardson produced Colt's new patent, which Little Raven handled cautiously, "as if it were an infernal machine, and showed a childish satisfaction not unmingled with terror, as I discharged five barrels in rapid succession." Little Raven asked how much the pistol cost and the "fabulous sum" that Richardson cited elicited visible respect for the white man. Richardson remarked, "Even the Indian is moved by the almighty dollar..."<sup>11</sup>

Remembering the question of horse transportation, Richardson asked how many locomotives Little Raven owned. The chief shook his head and the reporter tried to convey "crude ideas of the fiery, untiring monster" which



courtesy Colorado Historical Society

**Little Raven and his tent, from lithograph by Vincent Brooks Day & Son**

carried him “further in one sleep than Little Raven’s fleetest horse can bear him in ten...” Little Raven had heard stories of the trains before, but had never seen one. Richardson gave the impression that he owned several trains and Little Raven treated him with profound deference.<sup>12</sup>

Soon after Richardson’s visit, Denver became a permanent settlement and the Arapahos were slowly pushed to the outer edge of white society and eventually excluded. The trade in buffalo robes could never compete with eastern money that brought freight goods, mining companies and, eventually, the railroads to town. Denverites quickly forgot their early friendship with the Arapahos. By June 1860, the *Rocky Mountain News* declared that when dealing with the local Indians, “it was best to get the first shot off.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Treaties and War on the Plains**

With the heavy influx of settlers, politicians wanted to impress their constituents with a land cession from the Indians. On February 18, 1861, Daniel Boone’s grandson, Albert, negotiated the Fort Wise Treaty. Little Raven joined the four Arapaho and six Cheyenne chiefs who made their marks on the agreement. Under the terms of the treaty, Little Raven and the other chiefs officially became reservation Indians.

The reservation itself was located in Colorado territory south of the Arkansas River and consisted of nothing but dry, sandy, barren, almost gameless land, so desolate that whites would not even consider taking it.

The most important part of the Fort Wise treaty was that it relinquished all the lands between the North Platte and Arkansas River that had been guaranteed in the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie. Why

did Little Raven give up such a huge amount of his people's land? Perhaps he wanted to stay in the government's good graces or he hoped a reservation would protect the limited game that his people depended on. Politically, the Treaty of Fort Wise confirmed Little Raven's reputation as a peace chief with the whites, but alienated him from the warring bands of the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahos.

However, by April 1861, when the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, the government had more pressing problems than negotiating treaties. After complaining for years about the presence of the cavalry and military forts, Little Raven witnessed the unique sight of the army moving eastward. Since the Army left only a token force to man the frontier forts, some of the Indians began raiding wagon trains, farms, and ranches. The most prominent of the Cheyenne war societies, the Dog Soldiers, who had refused to abide by the Fort Wise Treaty, increased in popularity and were joined by young warriors who refused to accept the white man's way of life.<sup>14</sup>

#### **The Sand Creek Massacre, 1864**

In order to stop the war on the plains against white settlers, Governor John Evans recruited the Third Colorado Regiment under the command of Colonel John M. Chivington. Evans chafed under political pressure from the residents of the territory who resented the annuities that supported the Indians during the winter and enabled them to plunder the rest of the year. Governor Evans ordered the Cheyennes and Arapahos to return to their reservation or be treated as "hostiles." Through October and the first weeks of November 1864, Colonel Chivington bore mounting

abuse from the Denver press, which ridiculed him and the "Bloodless Third" for their inactivity. Finally, on November 19, 1864, the 900 volunteers of the Third Colorado Regiment departed for Fort Lyon searching for an Indian target before their one hundred-day enlistment expired.<sup>15</sup>

Starving and suffering from disease, the Little Raven's Southern Arapahos and Black Kettle's Cheyennes camped outside Fort Lyon and waited for their annuities. That winter they were lucky if they could field a hunting party to ride out onto the plains in search of buffalo.<sup>16</sup> At Fort Lyon, Major Scott Anthony was moved by the destitute condition of Little Raven's people and issued rations to them if they gave up their weapons and all horses and mules that belonged to white citizens. Little Raven complied and gave up three rifles, one pistol, and about sixty bows, four horses, and ten mules.<sup>17</sup>

Since Fort Lyon did not have enough rations to feed all the Indians, Black Kettle had the assurance of Major Anthony that they would be perfectly safe at Sand Creek to hunt buffalo. Black Kettle settled at the Smoky Hill crossing of Sand Creek while Little Raven moved his Southern Arapahos down the Arkansas River.

On November 29, 1864, Colonel Chivington attacked Black Kettle's sleeping camp. By the time the attack ended, over one hundred and sixty Southern Cheyennes and Arapahos were dead; two thirds included women and children.<sup>18</sup>

On December 1, Chivington marched southward toward the Arkansas River where Little Raven's band had remained during the massacre. The next



day the troops marched all night and traveled forty-two miles to reach Little Raven's abandoned campsite.<sup>19</sup> Discouraged, Chivington called a meeting of his officers and decided to end the pursuit of the wily chief.

Instead of stopping the Indian raids, the Sand Creek massacre intensified the violence on the plains. Little Raven and others who escaped Chivington's attack joined the Dog Soldiers and other warring bands on the Smoky Hills. Early in February 1865, while the Army investigated Chivington's actions in Denver, Little Raven's men joined more than a thousand warriors who attacked Julesburg in northern Colorado and raided along the Platte road, killing travelers, burning wagons and taking whatever goods they could carry. The raids along the Platte cut off communications and caused severe food shortages in Denver and many other communities.

#### **Treaty of Little Arkansas, 1865**

In an effort to end the raiding, another peace commission started negotiations near present-day Wichita, Kansas. The government assigned General John Sanborn the mission to remove the Southern Arapahos and Cheyennes from Colorado Territory. Sanborn promised Little Raven a "reservation so large that you can subsist by hunting for many years." During the deliberations, Little Raven resisted leaving the country on the Arkansas River where his people had buried many of their ancestors. General Sanborn persisted, declaring that "We have all got to submit to the tide of emigration and civilization." Once again, Little Raven stressed his peoples' desire to settle down and plant corn.<sup>20</sup>

On October 14, 1865, Little Raven signed the Treaty of the Little Arkansas. The Southern Cheyennes and Arapahos gave up their marginal lands in Colorado Territory in exchange for the panhandle region of Indian Territory. Perhaps worst of all, the Indians needed the written consent of the agent before leaving the reservation. This provision made them totally dependent on the government since they could no longer supplement their meager, often rotting rations with game. In the end, the treaty did not have its intended effect. The raiding continued on the plains.

Since treaties had failed to keep the peace the government turned from a diplomatic solution to a military one. In the summer of 1867 the hero of Gettysburg, General Winfield Scott Hancock and the popular Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer were dispatched to stop the Indian raids. After a fruitless summer of chasing the Oglala Sioux over the prairies, Hancock received orders from Washington to halt all offensive operations and negotiate.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Medicine Lodge Treaty, 1867**

In July 1867, Congress established an Indian peace commission for the purpose of relocating the tribes to Indian territory, the same objective as the previous treaty.<sup>22</sup> In September Little Raven met Indian Agent Thomas Murphy and furnished him with a guard of warriors who escorted the whites.

During the treaty negotiations, the Cheyennes passed the honor of speaking first to Little Raven. This indicated that Little Raven still had considerable influence. But, instead of speaking for the Cheyennes and negotiating in the interest of his allies, Little Raven attempted to secure a

separate treaty and reservation for his people in Colorado, which he still considered his rightful home.<sup>23</sup>

The newspaper reporters present did not pay as much attention to Little Raven's words as they did his appearance. They described the chief in his dotage, as a "fat, tiresome old man."<sup>24</sup> Lieutenant Colonel George Custer considered Little Raven too old to be an active leader.<sup>25</sup> Although Little Raven remained the principal chief among the Southern Arapahos and influential with the Cheyennes, the whites were partially correct. By 1867 Little Raven no longer led warriors on raids against his traditional enemies, the Utes and Pawnees. His diplomatic skills and wisdom were values that went unnoticed by the white men who concentrated on dealing with the younger war leaders.

After signing the Medicine Lodge Treaty, the Indians left the overland routes and army posts undisturbed for ten months. But the tribes still fought among themselves. Little Raven sent a large war party against the Osages in retaliation for stealing his horses. These raids upset the Indian Bureau officials who feared it might spark another Indian war.<sup>26</sup>

Agent Murphy warned Little Raven that white settlers wanted an end to the large raiding parties that crossed the plains. Ironically, the whites resented the Indian trespassers. In response to Murphy's complaints, Little Raven promised to refrain from sending out war parties and wished to remain at peace with the whites.<sup>27</sup> Pleased with Little Raven's compliance, Murphy issued the Southern Arapahos one hundred pistols, eighty Lancaster rifles, twelve kegs of powder, one and one half kegs of lead,

and fifteen thousand percussion caps.<sup>28</sup>

Two days after the council a combined party of Sioux, Cheyennes and Arapahos, numbering over two hundred warriors, and armed with the weapons issued by Murphy, raided settlements in Kansas. Among the warriors included Little Raven's son.<sup>29</sup> Irritated, Thomas Murphy reflected that at the very time that Little Raven made professions of friendship and received weapons and ammunition, he planned to go on the warpath. Murphy no longer had any confidence in what Little Raven said or promised.<sup>30</sup>

General Philip Sheridan received similar treatment from Little Raven. He offered to feed the Indians during the winter if they would surrender and live on the reservation. Little Raven agreed to his proposal but did not come in.<sup>31</sup>

Little Raven's refusal to surrender and immediately move to the reservation was a bold, if not reckless decision. Using government weapons, his son and other Southern Arapaho warriors had been identified as killing settlers and raping white women. Not only could he be held responsible for such acts, his entire band could be attacked for the actions of a few.

Frustrated by the refusal of the Indians to surrender and move on their assigned reservations, General Sheridan decided to apply force.

### **Battle of the Washita, 1868**

On November 27, 1868 the Battle of the Washita began with Custer's musicians playing "Garry Owen" as four columns of cavalry charged Black Kettle's Cheyenne camp. During the attack, the women and children fled down the Washita River toward Little Raven's band, camped



A VISIT FROM LITTLE RAVEN.

courtesy Colorado Historical Society

### Little Raven from *Beyond the Mississippi* by Richardson

seven miles away.<sup>32</sup> When the sound of the fighting echoed down the valley, large parties of Cheyenne, Kiowa and Arapaho warriors rode to the rescue. Little Raven's warriors helped cut off, surround, and overwhelm Major Joel Elliott's fifteen-man detachment.<sup>33</sup>

Custer destroyed fifty-one lodges, captured a herd of nearly nine hundred ponies, and seized lodges, arms, food, and other equipment.<sup>34</sup> When the shooting stopped, twenty-nine Cheyennes lay dead: eleven men, twelve women, and six children.<sup>35</sup>

On December 7, Custer returned to the battlefield and recovered the naked and horribly mutilated bodies of Major Elliott and his men. Custer noticed a

portion of a Lancaster rifle protruding from the side of one of the men. He identified the rifles as the same ones issued by Agent Murphy to Little Raven's Southern Arapahos.

After the Battle of the Washita, Little Raven avoided contact with the white settlers, warring Cheyenne bands, and the cavalry. During the first week of February 1869, Custer found Little Raven at the west end of the Wichita Mountains and ordered him to move to the reservation. Little Raven stalled and explained that his horses were too weak for a long trip, but that he wanted to talk later. The next day Custer left his rifle and pistol with his forty men and entered Little Raven's lodge:

*I found Little Raven surrounded by all his principal chiefs, a place reserved by his side for me. After the usual smoke and the preliminary moments of silence,... Little Raven began a speech...that his people were highly pleased to see white men among them as friends, and that the idea of complying with my demand had been discussed with great favor by all of his people, who were delighted with this opportunity of terminating the war.<sup>36</sup>*

For the first time, Little Raven honored his promise and moved to the reservation near Camp Supply. During the summer and fall of 1869, Little Raven's three thousand people received 18,270 pounds of bacon and 195,710 pounds of shelled corn, which Little Raven complained was so bad that even his horses refused to eat it. Reflecting on the poor rations, the chief said it "seemed as though the government was ranking them with animals..."<sup>37</sup>

Little Raven complained to the reservation agents that since the government was giving his people terrible food, and had failed to provide farming equipment or instruction to his people, he wanted a new reservation to hunt on. When the officials ignored his pleas, Little Raven wandered off the reservation and blamed the government for making him break his word in search of food and shelter.

The government partially answered Little Raven's complaints when he returned from an extended hunting expedition. Captain Seth Bonney attempted to build a shelter to house farm supplies and asked Little Raven if he could hire some Arapaho men to help cut timber and haul logs. The captain soon

learned an interesting fact about the chief's attitude, "Indians don't know how to work," Little Raven told him, "[They] get tired too quick."<sup>38</sup>

#### **Little Raven visits the East 1871**

In May of 1871, Little Raven was invited to Washington D.C. with four other Arapaho and Cheyenne chiefs. By this time in his life Little Raven was a large, heavy man and it was difficult for him to travel. The Arapaho chief who spent much of his life on horseback could no longer ride across the plains but had to be transported by wagon.<sup>39</sup>

The government's objective was to let the Indians see for themselves the vast power of the United States and to impress them with the sincerity of the government in fulfilling its treaty promises. The chiefs had come to discuss changes to their reservation boundaries.<sup>40</sup>

Commissioner Ely S. Parker reminded the chiefs that the government's goal was to establish a permanent peace between the Indians and the United States. Parker complained that the government agreed to put up agency buildings, and schools, but the Indians refused to occupy the reservation land. Agent Brinton Darlington told Parker that the Indians wanted to go on the warpath and continue to steal horses and other property from white settlers.

When the commissioner ended his list of complaints, a few moments of silence followed and Little Raven, said that he was honored by the invitation to Washington and that his people were "anxious to have a dividing line between the white and Indian blood."<sup>41</sup> But Little Raven had some complaints of his own. He reminded the government officials that soon after the Treaty of Fort Laramie was signed in 1851, gold was discovered

in the mountains and his people were forced out of their own country.<sup>42</sup> Since the government had benefited by the gold taken from Arapaho lands, Little Raven wanted to know if the government planned to reimburse his people.

When Little Raven finished his remarks, an invitation was extended to the Cheyennes to speak, but they declined since Little Raven had thoroughly spoken for the Cheyennes as well.<sup>43</sup> On May 23, 1871 Little Raven visited President Ulysses S. Grant. The chiefs received the customary peace medallions and promises that the administration would consider changing the reservation boundaries.

On the first day of June the delegation traveled to New York. Little Raven and the chiefs stood at New York harbor where they watched thousands of immigrants arriving. The image served as a reminder that more room would be needed out West.

#### **Little Raven's Speech, New York**

That night Little Raven spoke at the Cooper Institute. The large hall was completely filled by an anxious audience waiting to hear what the chiefs had to say. The platform Little Raven spoke from was decorated with national flags, and streamers of red, white and blue hung from the ceiling. Little Raven summarized history from the Arapaho perspective. As he uttered each sentence in measured cadence, his interpreter quickly translated the Arapaho language into English.

*Long ago the Arapahos had a fine country of their own. The white man came to see them and the Indians gave him buffalo meat and a horse to ride on and told him the country was big enough for the white man and the Arapahos too. After a while the white*

*men found gold in our country. They took the gold and pushed the Indian from his home. I thought Washington would make it right. I am an old man now. I have been waiting many years for Washington to give us our rights. The government sent agents and soldiers and both have driven us from our lands. We do not want to fight. The white man has taken away everything...I think the Great Spirit is looking at all that is said here, and for that reason I am talking the truth. I want my people to live like the white people, and have the same chance.<sup>44</sup>*

After visiting New York City, the delegation moved to Boston where the chiefs toured the city in three open carriages. Little Raven commented that he thought the white man's houses surpassed the Indians' skin lodges. He believed it would be "a good thing to go to school and learn trades if it would bring them (the Arapaho) such pleasant homes to live in."<sup>45</sup>

In a reception at Tremont Temple, sponsored by the Massachusetts Indian Commissioner, four thousand people greeted the chiefs with loud and continuous cheers. Once again, Little Raven spoke first. He reassured the audience that he had listened when General Sheridan told the Southern Arapahos to fight no more. Little Raven emphasized that he had "never fought with the white man" and that he "wanted to have peace with the white man and be let alone."<sup>46</sup> Departing from speaking of the Great Spirit, Little Raven said,

*I believe God is going to pity the Indians...Once the Arapahos had a fine country in the west, but the white man has driven us from there. I hope*

*some day the white man will do justice to the Arapahos. I am growing old, and I may die, but my children will live, and I hope justice will be done to my children... God gave this country to the Indian and gold sent the white man here, but I don't think God sent the white man to do injustice to the Indian.*<sup>47</sup>

Little Raven's comments to the whites reflected a conciliatory tone. He learned quickly to speak of God instead of the Great Spirit to the Easterners. His speeches concentrated on the themes of human rights and justice, concepts which the whites understood, but were alien to the Arapaho culture where social relations depended on tribal strength, not the democratic, social compact.

Little Raven returned to the reservation in a carriage with his name painted on each side and wore a peace medal bearing President Grant's likeness. The trip east changed his perspective considerably. From this time forward, Little Raven persistently stated to the Indian agents on the reservation that "it is not the intention of the Department for Indians to work, but that the white men (department employees) are sent here for the purpose of raising corn for the Indians."<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, he decided that he no longer cared to live in a little tipi. He wanted a "big, strong building" like the President's mansion. When the agents tried to explain that there was not enough money in the reservation budget, Little Raven scoffed at the idea since he witnessed the government making money at the Treasury. Little Raven understood that if the government had enough wealth to build the large cities and railroads of the East, they could easily build homes on the reservation, and raise corn for his

people.<sup>49</sup>

### Reservation life

No matter how frustrated Little Raven made the Indian agents, the Southern Arapaho people remained peaceful and tried to adapt to their new situation. In his annual report for 1871, the agent for the Upper Arkansas declared: "It is impossible for me to speak too highly of the conduct of these peoples under the most trying circumstances; always peaceful and well disposed, they have done all in their power to conform to the wishes of the department concerning them."<sup>50</sup> However, in the typically condescending attitude of some Indian agents, he also noted that "having been born in ignorance and heathenism, much vice prevails among them...thieving is their most besetting sin."<sup>51</sup>

Life on the reservation, combined with clothing and rations of poor quality, the encroachment of white cattlemen, whiskey peddlers, and horse thieves demoralized Little Raven's people. Particularly distressing to the Indians were the white hunters who slaughtered the buffalo for their hides and left carcasses by the hundreds of thousands rotting on the prairies.

On October 2, 1882, the government abandoned twenty-five buildings on the Darlington reservation that included two brick structures, a hospital and a bakery. The hospital, built at a cost of \$12,000 was given to Little Raven for his faithful service to the cause of peace.<sup>52</sup> The stone building measured 114 feet in length and included a separate wing. The old chief enjoyed his new home, even though it lacked the luxury of the Great Father's mansion. It proved to be an excellent place to keep his horses



courtesy Colorado Historical Society

while he lounged in the yard. With his people consumed daily by malaria, syphilis, and alcoholism, Little Raven's family dressed in their best clothing and showed off their new home. The disconcerted Southern Cheyennes no longer sought his advice and the Southern Arapahos informally stripped him of power. In the future, a second chief, Left Hand, led the Southern Arapaho nation. The exact reasons for Little Raven's removal from power are unclear, but his age was certainly a major factor.

Little Raven died at Canton, Oklahoma in 1889. According to oral history, he had a scroll that forecast the arrival of the white man. Tradition maintains that the scroll was buried with him, but when his body was disinterred and moved from its original grave along the river to higher ground, no trace of the document could be found. The Arapahos

had presumed that it disintegrated in the moist soil.<sup>53</sup> The same year Little Raven died, a government edict declared a solution to the problem of assimilating the Indians: "The tribal relations should be broken up, socialism destroyed, and the family and the autonomy of the individual substituted."<sup>54</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, May 23, 1871, p. 3. During Little Raven's visit to Washington, D.C., New York and Boston, he said he was sixty-seven years old, which makes his year of birth 1804. His mother, father and other details remain unknown.

<sup>2</sup> James Whiteside, *Colorado: A Sports History* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1999), 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> George Bent to George Hyde. December 4, 1904, January 18, 1906. George Bent Letters, Books and Manuscripts Department, Colorado Historical

Society, Denver, Colorado.

<sup>4</sup> William P. Clark, *Indian Sign Language* (Philadelphia, L.R. Hammersly, 1885), 40.

<sup>5</sup> Donald J. Berthrong, *Southern Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 82-83; Margaret Coel, *Chief Left Hand*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 13; Virginia Shaw, "The End of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Alliance," *Red River Valley Historical Review* 5, no. 1 (1980) 59.

<sup>6</sup> Henrietta Mann, *Cheyenne-Arapaho Education 1871-1982* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997), 7-8.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1851* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1857) 288-290.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1857* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1857) 141-148.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas J. Noel and Stephen Leonard, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> Stan Hoig, *The Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1974), 114-115. LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado Gold Rush Contemporary Letters and Reports, 1858-1859* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1941), 202, 219, 364.

<sup>11</sup> Albert D. Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1867), 191-192.

<sup>12</sup> Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi*, 192.

<sup>13</sup> *Rocky Mountain Weekly News*,

June 27, 1860, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> See Jean Afton, David F. Halaas, and Andrew E. Masich, *Cheyenne Dog Soldiers* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Robert M. Utley, *Indian Frontier of the American West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 87-88. See also Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).

<sup>16</sup> Wilbur S. Nye, *Plains Indians Raiders* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968) 19; Berthrong, *Southern Cheyennes*, 170.

<sup>17</sup> Congress, Senate, "Massacre of the Cheyenne Indians," *Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War*, 38<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 1865, S. Report 142, 70-71; Coel, *Chief Left Hand*, 258-259.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* Edward W. Wynkoop Papers, manuscript 695, box 1, file folder 2, Books and Manuscripts Department, Colorado State Historical Society, Denver, Colorado, 35; Stone, *History of Colorado*, 336-356; Coel, *Chief Left Hand*, 286-287.

<sup>19</sup> Congress, Senate, "Massacre of the Cheyenne Indians," *Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War*, 38<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 1865, S. Report, 49.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 519; William H. Leckie, *The Military Conquest of the Southern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 25; Virginia Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 211.

<sup>21</sup> Utley, *Indian Frontier of the American West*, 132.

<sup>22</sup> Hoig, *The Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith*, 182. LeRoy R.



Hafen, *Reports From Colorado: The Wildman Letters, 1859-1865, The Far West and the Rockies Historical Series*, vol. 13 (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clarke Company, 1961), 67, 210; Douglas C. Jones, *The Treaty of Medicine Lodge: The Story of the Great Treaty Council as Told by Eyewitnesses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), 50, 91.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, *The Treaty of Medicine Lodge*, 172-173, 175.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

<sup>25</sup> George A. Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 379.

<sup>26</sup> Jones, *The Treaty of Medicine Lodge*, 94.

<sup>27</sup> Leckie, *The Military Conquest of the Southern Plains*, 70.

<sup>28</sup> Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 152-153; Extract of letter dated Fort Larned, August 1, 1868, from Thomas Murphy, superintendent of Indian Affairs to N. G. Taylor, commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington D.C.; Stan Hoig, *The Battle of the Washita: The Sheridan-Custer Indian Campaign of 1867-1869* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1976), 45.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1868* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868), 71-72. Custer, *My Life on the Plains*, 153. Hoig, *Battle of the Washita*, 52.

<sup>30</sup> Murphy to Mix, August 22, 1868, Upper Arkansas Agency, microfilm publication M234, microfilm roll 880, RG 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>31</sup> Nye, *Plains Indians Raiders*, 122-123.

<sup>32</sup> Custer, *My Life on the Plains*, 289; Hoig, *The Battle of the Washita*, 93-94, 136; George Hyde, *The Life of George Bent* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), 316.

<sup>33</sup> Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*, 227; Wilbur S. Nye, *Carbine and Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 71.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>35</sup> Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 322.

<sup>36</sup> Custer, *My Life on the Plains*, 330; Nye, *Plains Indians Raiders*, 144-145. Robert M. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 73.

<sup>37</sup> Hoig, *Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith*, 218.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1869* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1869), 11-15; Hoig, *Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith*, 219.

<sup>39</sup> *New York Times*, May 23, 1871, p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1871* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), 30; Hoig, *Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith*, 223.

<sup>41</sup> *New York Times*, May 23, 1871, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Department of the

Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1871* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1871), 32-33.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 35. Little Raven's speech at Tremont Temple is taken from the *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1871* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1871), 470.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid; Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*, 241.

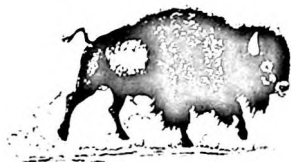
<sup>50</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1871* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), 469.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*, 266; Interview by Trenholm with Gus Yellow Hair, Little Raven's great-grandson at Greary, Oklahoma, 1965-1966.

<sup>53</sup> Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*, 276.

<sup>54</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1889*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), 3-19.



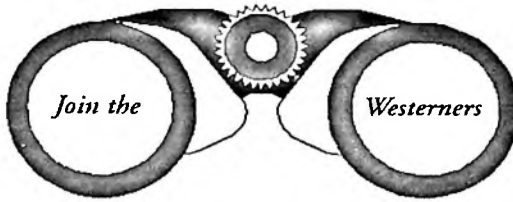
## Over the Corral Rail

### Last Chance...

This is your last opportunity to purchase one of the few remaining copies of the 1999 Denver Westerners' Brand Book. This special Merrill Mattes Commemorative Edition features the work of Lee Whitely on the Cherokee Trail. If you don't want to miss out, contact the Tallyman, Ted Kreiger, contact information on page 2 of this edition.

## August rendezvous...

is Saturday, August 25th. The meeting place will be at the Executive Towers, our normal meeting place. Please note that the July meeting is for Posse members only.



## REWARD

*We're looking for a few new members*

**The big 2001 membership contest is on NOW! 3 members have two or more applicants. Don't let these early birds beat you!**

Sponsor the most new members this year (2001), by having them place your name on the Westerners membership application, and your dues will be paid for you for 2002.

This contest is open to all Westerners members, both Posse and Corresponding. Make sure your name is on the membership application, to prove you are recruiting this member. Totals will be tallied on Dec. 31, 2001.

If you need lots more membership applications, please contact the tallyman, Ted Krieger.

*We welcome the following new members into the Westerners, and thank the sponsors for their support of the contest and the Posse:*

*Barry Sweeny by Norm Meyer, Roger Hanson and Pam Milavec by Jeff Broome, Marian Meisopoulos by Delbert Bishop, Jim Kroll and Lawrence Reno by Bob Pulcifer, Pam Holtman by Tom Noel, Heather Peterson by Barbara Gibson, James Poole by Gene Rakosnik, Ed leet by Wick Downing, Liz Walker by Vonnie Perkins, Dennis Hagen by Roger Hanson and Don Staadt by Bob Staadt .*



### **Westerners International**

Corresponding Membership in the Denver Posse does not include membership in the Westerners International. If you wish to receive the *Buckskin Bulletin*, you may purchase a subscription for \$5.00/year. Contact Westerners International, c/o National Cowboy Hall of Fame, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111. 800-541-4650



## Westerners Bookshelf



**The Indian Territory Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge**, edited by Wayne R. Kime. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2000, 436 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, bibliography and index. Hardcover, \$55.00.

This work is not the first, but third edited by Wayne Kime of papers written by Colonel Dodge. The first, for those interested, was *The Black Hills Journals*, and the second was *The Powder River Expedition Journals*, both also published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

*The Journals*, in this book, are written from September 1878 until December 1880, a little over a two-year period. Editor Kime does an outstanding job of first explaining his editorial policy so the reader will understand how he has put the various journals together. After that, he discusses each journal as the reader comes to it so there is continuity as Dodge made his entries. At the end of the book, there is an "Afterward", which explains what Dodge did toward the end of the period involved, and where he was then assigned.

At first, this reviewer was somewhat disappointed as there were no Indians to fight. Dodge and his command left Fort Hayes, Kansas on campaign to intercept Dull Knife's band of Northern Cheyenne when they fled the Oklahoma reservation to go back to their homeland. Dodge could not find them and gave up the chase. However, there was no disappointment as Dodge described his activities on how the campaign was conducted. This is one of the first first-hand accounts I've seen of a Commanding Officer, and it fascinated me as to what his thoughts were, why he did what he did, and the problems encountered, including poor communication. In December, Dodge was ordered to proceed to Indian Territory and select a site for a military cantonment. His journals reflect that mission and the hardships endured. Before proceeding any further, it becomes necessary to note that Dodge was "preoccupied" in all his journals with hunting and fishing. He not only relates how he hunted, where he hunted, but how many he saw, shot, bagged, or that got away. Knowing that there wasn't much entertainment on the trail, in camp, or back at the fort, this was one way to pass the time. But, at times, this reviewer felt that he was reading articles out of *Field & Stream Magazine*. Later that winter, Dodge was picked to establish a military post at the site he had selected in Indian Territory near the Cheyenne-Arapahoe Agency. Most of his journals in this book pertain to this task. This includes the trek to that location, the problems of logistics in building such a cantonment and his everyday activities there, along with the inherent hardships. The journals again reflect his attitude, enthusiasm to get the job done and his relations with the local Indians as well as their Indian Agent.

In the spring of 1880, Dodge was assigned to a military column under the

command of Colonel Ronald S. Mackenzie because of hostilities with the Utes resulting from the Meeker Massacre. This should interest Colorado readers as Dodge took part of his command to Fort Garland, Colorado to join up with Mackenzie. He then received the mission of building a cantonment on the Uncompahgre River near Ouray, and the command of the infantry under Mackenzie. Those final journals are involved with these activities and with his thoughts, some which are not too flattering to his superior officer. After the Ute problem was settled, Dodge was relieved of his duties and sent back to his post in Indian Territory. Throughout his journals, he continues to comment on his family relationships and letters written to them and those received by him. On several occasions, Dodge managed to meet with his wife and son, who was an aspiring actor. In the closing months of 1880, there wasn't much going on at his cantonment, and Dodge took the opportunity to work on his book, which he entitled "Wild Indians". In it, he took up the cause to enlighten the public concerning the plight of the Indians and suggestions on how to alleviate the situation. In the end Dodge is reassigned as Senior Aide-de-Camp to General Sherman, Commanding General of the U. S. Army, on the recommendation of his Department Commander, General John Pope.

For an insight into the daily life, thoughts and activity of an army mid-level commander during the late 1870s, this work is very worth the time to read, and is highly recommended as it is valuable primary source material.

--Richard A. Cook P.M.

**A History of Utah's Indians**, edited by Forest S. Cuch. Utah State Division of Indian Affairs/Utah State Division of History, Salt Lake City, 2000. Distributed by Utah State University Press, Logan, Utah. 394 pages. 139 photos, 1 map, introduction, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth \$24.95.

Utah has six Indian tribes recognized as official entities by the government. These six tribes are the Northwestern Shoshone, the Goshute, the Paiute, the Northern Utes, the White Mesa Utes, and the Navajo. Each of these tribes had extreme difficulty in its past dealings with the settlers as its native domain was lost. The transitional period after settlement was even worse for some tribes.

This one-volume history grew out of a commemorative project for the Utah Centennial proposed by Utah's American Indian leaders. Its intent was to "be a collaborative effort between Indians and non-Indians, but it ultimately would recount how Utah's American Indians have celebrated and interpreted their past from the earliest days to the present."

The contributing authors, David Begay (Navajo), Dennis Defa, Clifford Duncan (Northern Ute), Ronald Holt, Nancy Maryboy (Cherokee and Navajo), Robert McPherson, Mae Perry (Northwestern Shoshone), Gary Tom (Paiute), and Mary Jane Yazzie (Ute Mountain Ute) have succeeded in presenting both an excellent history and historical perspective of Utah's American Indians. The book's introduction has much of the tone of "We Talk, You Listen" to it; possibly it is

needed to set the stage for the interesting chapters that follow.

This reviewer learned more about the Goshutes, the Paiutes and the White Mountain Utes as separate tribes by reading this book than in any of the others he has read. The chapters on each of the six individual tribes are recommended as an excellent overview and introduction to each tribe. Finally, the concluding chapter on the contemporary status of Utah's Indians is both informative and enlightening as it addresses contemporary times through the viewpoint of both urban and reservation Indians. *A History of Utah's Indians* is a well-written, extremely readable history and commentary that provides an excellent perspective of the problems and concerns of both past and present Indians in Utah.

--Keith Fessenden, P. M.

**Blown to Bits in the Mine**, by Eric Twitty, Western Reflections Publishing, 2001. 207pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Hardcover.

"A few old time coal miners still preferred railroad powder because it was very cheap and performed well, but after the 1910s many miners, mine officials, and engineers frowned on it because it was one of the worst explosives for producing foul gases."

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...the author clearly  
knows and enjoys his  
subject....

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"The [double jacking] crew consisted of a shaker who held the drill steel, and a hammer swinger who struck the steel's butt end with a nine pound hammer. Imagine swinging a heavy hammer for hours trying to hit the end of a one inch diameter steel, no matter its orientation, with no more than the light of two candles, all without missing a swing and

maiming your partner!"

"The performance expected of an explosive consisted of being able to fracture the rock without shattering it, which is why most quarrymen prior to the 1920's preferred blasting powder."

These passages are representative of this book. It is deeply researched, well documented, technically detailed yet explained to the layman. Profusely illustrated, and chock full of mining trivia and arcana. The author clearly knows and enjoys the subject.

While this book presents a variety of technical subjects as clearly as one could expect; it does not offer easy going. Nevertheless, it is a work which students of the mining industry—past and present—will find interesting and informative.

--Stan Moore C. M.

**Mormon Healer & Folk Poet: Mary Susannah Fowler's Life of 'Unselfish Usefulness**, by Margaret K. Brady. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000. 198 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Price not included.

At the outset, author Margaret K. Brady explains that she brings "a thoroughly eclectic interdisciplinary approach" to piecing together Mary Susannah Fowler's life. So it should not surprise readers that *Mormon Healer & Folk Poet: Mary Susannah Fowler's Life of 'Unselfish Usefulness*, is soft biography. In fact, this book is part history, part folklore (Brady's training), part first-person odyssey by the author, part Mormon Sunday-school tract, and as such, it will leave critical readers dissatisfied.

That is not to say that the book doesn't have value. It is an inspirational story of a polygamous wife who worked hard to meet her responsibilities and live her religion. And there are some wonderful details, about raising silkworms, for instance, and dying fabric.

Mary Susannah Fowler was born in 1862 in Utah and raised in polygamy. She was a first wife, and her husband, Henry Ammon, took as his second wife, Eliza, whom he met when she nursed Mary Susannah through childbirth. Mary Susannah made a heroic effort to live the "principal," as Mormons called polygamy. She divided all her possessions, even her underwear, with Eliza. And she stood in as proxy for Henry's dead girlfriend when he decided to marry her in a church ceremony that would bring them together in eternity.

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...this book is part  
history, part folklore,  
part first person odyssey...

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Brady has pieced together the story of Mary Susannah Fowler through family records and stories, as well as Mary Susannah's diary, which the polygamous wife kept for less than a year. Only a few diary excerpts are included, but general readers won't miss much if the following, written just after Henry left on a mission, is an example:

*I am thankful for the privelege [sic] of parting with my husband for a little while to spread the glorious gospel which is dearer than anything on earth to me. And I believe our Heavenly Father will take care of him & us.*

Actually, nobody appears to have taken care of Mary Susannah. During Henry's mission, Mary Susannah was expected to work to underwrite her husband's living expenses. When Eliza, the sister-wife took ill during Henry's absence, Mary Susannah cared for her and her family. And when Henry returned, he wasn't such a great provider. In fact, there's a lengthy excerpt from Henry about Mary Susannah taking care of him when he had an attack of gallstones.

Brady fleshes out the book with contemporary accounts and family documents, along with Mary Susannah's poetry—of which the less said the better. One interesting tidbit is the recipe for Mary Susannah's Stomach Powder:  
*2 tsp. Golden seal, 2 tsp. Bayberry, 1 tp. Gizzard peel, 1 tsp. egg shell, 7 tsp. powdered sugar. Blend thoroughly--Keep in air-tight container. Use for gas. More as laxative.*

--Sandra Dallas, P.M.

**Smoke Wars Anaconda Copper, Montana Air Pollution, and The Courts, 1890-1920**, by Donald Macmillan. Introduction by William L. Lang. Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2000. 304 pp. Illustrations, photographs, drawings, and maps, notes, index. Cloth, \$40.00, paper, \$18.95.

This book regards the struggles of the citizen, small local farmer and business against the giant Copper consortium controlled by Anaconda Copper Mining Company. "This bare-knuckled environmental and political history is alive, just as surely as the arsenic and sulfur compounds it describes still poison the Deer Lodge Valley's soils and water behind Milltown Dam," declares the review release. From the authors prospective in environmental politics, he would be most at home on the Board of the Sierra Club.

A reader will pick up the continuing story of Corporate Evil and Government ineptitude, just as surely as if the book substituted the word copper for "hazardous waste". What is described is the "superfund" of the 1890-1920 period; where there are many documented cases of industries such as mining, farming, water projects or oil that also polluted or destroyed lands. The book is well noted from various Anaconda mining and U.S. Government sources, as well as numerous articles from newspapers of the day. But the reading is dry and falls short of capturing "the drama and legal intrigue" aspect the reader is lead to expect.

...this book is a  
testament to the hand-  
wringing of the day...

Without much elaboration, it is clear in this case that corporate and environmental responsibility were those of mining interests. It was also very easy to overcome local, regional and finally Federal government interests. The author seems unable to grasp that very deep and well connected

pockets are able to manipulate events. From the onset, the reader can quickly understand the corporate interests at work, what with 20% of the population and 25% of the taxes of the entire state of Montana, depending on a single industry. Furthermore, this one smelter produced 20% of the nations and 11.5% of the worlds copper supply. At a critical time in the industrial revolution when copper was of primary importance, it is also not hard to understand Government foot dragging.

We now live in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with 20-20 hindsight; this book is a testament to the hand-wringing of the day. There existed few solutions to pollution emissions. If the reader were placed in the position of Anaconda Copper Mining Company it would be easy to reach an identical conclusion that investing large sums in unproved technology was ridiculous. As it ended up the matter was basically "compromise" by buying out the concerned parties and ultimately trading the U.S. Government pristine forest land for the destruction of other forests. Indeed this solution continues to this day, as the U.S. Government trades pollution rights.

While this book discusses what is certainly an ecological nightmare, it is difficult to read. Overall, it could have been much more concise. Unless you are really into "pollution", or the mining consortiums of the day, I would not get involved in the politics.

--Stan Penton C. M.





THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

May - June 2001



**Helen Marie Black**

by

**Eva Hodges Watt., C.M.**

(Presented June 27, 2001)

**THE DENVER WESTERNERS****ROUNDUP**

VOL. LVII NO. 3



May - June 2001

**About the Author**

Eva Hodges Watt was born in Silver City, N.M., the daughter of a lawyer-politician.

Following her graduation from Colorado College in 1943, she worked for a year and one half for the El Paso Times before joining The Denver Post as a reporter. She retired in 1985 after serving as a reporter, religion editor, fashion editor and, finally, society editor.

She was married in 1953 to Thompson R. Watt, former news director of KOA-TV and Radio. Mr. Watt died in 1972. She has two sons, Joe, an assistant city editor at The Post, and Rob, an artist and employee of the Jefferson County Sentinel.

Eva has been a corresponding member since 1996.

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# Helen Marie Black

by  
Eva Hodges Watt., C.M.  
(Presented June 27, 2001)

If there was anything that ruffled Helen Black's plumage it was hearing Denver referred to as a "cow town." As you know, such denigrating remarks usually came from know-nothing Easterners.

Helen could give you ample evidence—and she often did, in conversations and in interviews—of just how wondrous and cosmopolitan a city Denver was from her early years here in the 1920s.

For instance, Denver was a marvelous theater town with half a dozen legitimate stage venues, including the Broadway, the Denham Stock Company, the old Tabor Grand, the Orpheum Vaudevillian on Welton Street, the Auditorium Theater and Schwartz Shakespearean Theater in North Denver. As a result, she said, the true giants of the theater, the Barrymores, the Lunts, Otis Skinner and the Drews passed through Denver regularly. In the summer, Elitch's attracted Fredric March and his wife Florence Eldredge and Douglas Fairbanks among other film and stage notables. Denver's visitors included everyone from the Queen of Roumania to Charles Lindbergh.

The city had a lively art colony. There was Allen True, whose murals graced the rotunda of the State Capitol and the lobby of the Brown Palace Hotel, and whose reputation was international. There were the distin-

guished architects, Allen Fisher and Burnam Hoyt. Fisher's wife was the noted sculptor, Gladys Fisher; her mountain lions guard an entrance of the U.S. Post Office.

Denver also had a sophisticated and well-to-do cultural community that supported the arts, women like Anne Evans, for example, who was a prime mover in the re-opening of the Central City Opera House in 1932.

Denver's writers included Lee Taylor Casey, the erudite *Rocky Mountain News* columnist, and Thomas Hornsby Ferril and Mary Coyle Chase, two not-so-humble scribes at the *Rocky* who would win national repute. Helen was at home in all of these Bohemian and social realms. Helen felt protective about pretty, mischievous Mary Coyle when she joined the *News* as a young reporter.

But, despite the city's superior charms, Helen would have to admit Denver lacked a first class symphony orchestra. And, so, we can imagine, it was with a sense of anticipation she hurried from her job as assistant publicity director of the Daniels & Fisher's Store to a meeting at the George Cranmer mansion overlooking Cranmer Park one afternoon in 1934. Mrs. Cranmer had called the meeting to discuss the future of the failing Denver Civic Orchestra, a 20-year-old body of amateur and professional musicians led by Howard Tureman.

As a result of the discussion, Jean Cranmer, Helen and Lucile Wilkin, a consultant from the Juilliard School of Music, went on to found the Denver Symphony, an all-professional orchestra. Helen became the symphony's business manager, a job she would perform—in addition to her duties at Daniels & Fisher's—for the next 10 years without pay.

Helen had left her job as entertainment editor at the *Rocky Mountain News* for a position in retailing a few years earlier because she said she wanted to learn more about the world of big business. She would need that knowledge, along with the skills she had acquired as a journalist, in the years to come in her new undertaking.

But let's turn back a moment to Helen's beginnings. She was born June 2, 1896 in Washington, D.C. to Mortimer Black, a mining engineer, and Palma Lanier Black, a daughter of southern gentry. Palma was the first woman graduate of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, though she never used her diploma. Helen had two siblings, Blanche and William, who, in later years, became a Denver district judge. Helen's early years were spent in New York. Palma, who had lived abroad with her family, immersed all of her children in the arts. The family later lived in Chicago where Helen studied French and fencing.

In 1907 the Blacks moved to Salt Lake City where Helen's father, Mortimer, had invested in a mineral wax mine. Mortimer proclaimed the property "better than a gold mine" in an interview with a Salt Lake City newspaper, and he hoped to make a bundle from it. Mineral wax was in demand for

use in the manufacture of phonograph records among other things. Unfortunately, Mortimer lost both his and Palma's money in the venture.

### Entered Manual High School

The family, minus Mortimer (who is not heard of again), came to Denver. Palma and the children settled in North Denver and, in time, Helen entered Manual High School which she chose to attend because of its superior art program. Her instructor there suggested that she ask at the *Rocky Mountain News* about pursuing a job as a newspaper artist.

Helen called at the News in 1912, wearing earrings and a veiled hat in an effort to look older than her 16 years. There must have been something about the long-legged, big-eyed teenager, because managing editor Roy Colvin hired her as assistant to the society editor, Margaret Harvey. Her small salary, probably not more than \$3 a week, was a welcome addition to the family's finances.

She interviewed many of the celebrities of the day, from Harry Houdini to Helen Keller, and she learned never to take "no" for an answer.

She was undeterred, for instance, when Mrs. Warren G. Harding declined to grant her an interview.

The president returned to his suite at the Brown Palace Hotel that afternoon to find Helen sitting outside its door.

Learning the reason for her presence there, the president told her, "Mrs. Harding doesn't like to be interviewed."

"I know," Helen sighed. But she had been sent to get an interview,



she said, and that she must do.

The president promised to introduce her to his wife the next morning, and he did so. "Mrs. Harding refused to answer any questions, but I made a story out of the episode, of how she looked, and what was in the hotel room and so on," Helen remembered with satisfaction.

Helen never married, but it was not for lack of opportunities, according to Sol Fielding, who worked with her on the *News* in those days.

"It is impossible to describe how beautiful she was," he wrote to Helen's friend, Delores Plested, in later years from Los Angeles. "She was electrifying. Many men were in love with her."

One of her beaux was Norman Fuller, a *Rocky Mountain News* artist.

Fuller wanted to marry Helen but she refused his proposal because she said she had to support her mother. Fuller offered to have Mrs. Black live with them, but Helen did not think that would be fair to her husband, Sol Fielding wrote Delores.

But those were happy years in Helen's life. "It was an exciting time to be working on a newspaper," she said in a later interview. "They paid me \$5 a week and I was delighted. Other staffers were making \$3. We had no union rules and we'd sometimes work 48 hours at a stretch—as on election night or when Lindbergh flew the Atlantic. But we loved it. I was the only woman on the staff other than the society editor but all the men were very helpful. And the editors opened doors of opportunity for me that proved to be very helpful later. I discovered that after you'd worked on a newspaper you could do just about anything."

In the relatively few hours they had off on week-ends, Helen and her young friends liked to motor up to the nearby mountains in the new-fangled motor cars, fitted with bags of water on the sides to keep the motors from overheating. One of their favorite destinations was Troutdale in the Pines.

One of Helen's Rocky Mountain News interviews in 1930 led to the creation of the Central City Opera Festival. Her subject, Walter Sinclair, director of the New Orleans Little Theater, mentioned that he would like to spend some time in the mountains. Helen recommended a chalet near Central City and added that he should take a look at the historic opera house while he was in the vicinity.

Sinclair was enchanted by the

picturesque old structure. He was in a Central City cafe voicing his admiration for the opera house when he was overheard by Ida Kruse McFarlane. Mrs. McFarlane's husband was one of the heirs to the opera house property and she offered to give him a tour. The interior of the opera house was in ruins, but Sinclair could still see the grandeur that underlay the piles of rubbish and walls of moldy plaster.

Sinclair's vision of creating a "Salzburg in the Rockies" around a refurbished opera house enchanted a number of prominent Denverites and the University of Denver. To make a long story short, the Central City Opera Festival was launched in 1932 with actress Lillian Gish playing the role of Camille. Helen handled the publicity for the festival then and for years to come, and put the festival on the world map.

### **Symphony's Business Manager**

In 1934, Howard Tureman asked to be relieved of his duties as conductor of the now 10-year-old Denver Symphony Orchestra. Helen embarked on a nationwide search for a successor and settled on Saul Caston, associate conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra and protege of the legendary conductor Leopold Stokowski and of Eugene Ormandy.

Now Helen became the symphony's full-time business manager, the only woman holding that position in the United States.

The nation's all-male corps of business managers regarded her with some condescension at first, but that soon changed when they discovered how adept she was at booking artists for—literally—a song. When Helen

was told her peers were complaining she was "a pirate," she was flattered. Helen was a cheerful - and formidable - competitor.

"The symphony office was wherever I was," Helen remembered. "The office boys and photographers at the Post and News (where she often worked after hours) used to say I carried the office in my head and in my purse."

She never knew an eight-hour day. She helped the musicians negotiate contracts. She negotiated contracts with the Denver Auditorium for the symphony season. She booked tours for the orchestra, and when visiting artists (whom she also booked) came into town, she met them at the airport or Union Station. She made arrangements for their hotels, made sure there were flowers in their rooms, escorted them to parties and to the newspaper, radio and television interviews she had set up for them.

She conducted fund drives and handled ticket sales. To help raise funds for the orchestra, she originated the Symphony Debutante Ball in the Brown Palace Hotel during the Christmas season. The ball was copied all over the nation, and is still much beloved by Denver society in the 21st century. She helped found the Symphony Guild. All this she did with the help of a secretary.

Helen lent a sympathetic ear to musicians and often counseled those who were undergoing financial or marital problems. She helped find them housing; she even bailed them out of jail.

In Saul Caston, she found a worthy partner. Both Helen and Caston saw the importance of offering concerts



for young people as a means of building future audiences. In time, Helen estimated that the DSO appeared before 60,000 school children annually.

Within a few years, membership in the Denver Symphony Association reached 6,000, double the 1945 figure.

The DSO was the first major symphony in the country to hire a black musician, Charles Burrell, the talented bass violin player.

Helen and Saul originated the enormously popular Red Rocks Concert Series which ran from 1947 to 1961. At these, thousands of Denverites picnicked, then listened under the stars to such international artists as Lily Pons, Lauritz Melchior and a young Van

Cliburn. They even heard a Wagner opera.

Time Magazine called the DSO "the happy symphony," reflecting the youth and verve of its musicians. In 1953, after eight years of polishing the orchestra, Caston believed the DSO was ready to fulfill his long held dream—a tour of mid-western towns and cities, ending in Chicago.

In many of the towns, residents heard their first concert by a symphony orchestra. And the DSO did not play down to them; its repertoire included Beethoven's Seventh, Brahms' Fourth and Franck's Symphony in D Minor. Reviews relayed back to Denver were full of praise. Then the orchestra played two concerts in Chicago with disastrous results. Audiences were enthusiastic, even tendering standing ovations, but Chicago's critics were another matter. It was as though they had heard two altogether different concerts.

Claudia Cassidy of the *Chicago Tribune* who was said "to eat visiting orchestras for breakfast," was perhaps the cruelest. But other criticism ranged from patronizing to punishing.

The hurtful words came as a cruel shock; for most of a decade, the DSO had been accustomed to receiving paeans of praise from the local press and prominent visiting artists.

Pianist Rudolf Serkin called the orchestra "the finest accompaniment I've ever had." Igor Stravinsky termed it "one of the finest orchestras in America, and my favorite." Conductors Leopold Stokowski and Dimitry Mitropoulos chimed in with their accolades..

By 1961, however, not everyone in Denver agreed with these

flattering evaluations. A group calling itself the Better Music Associates began a campaign to get rid of Caston and of his staunchest supporter, Helen Black.

That year, twenty of the orchestra's musicians, including many first chair players, called at *The Denver Post* to tell the newspaper's music critic, Wayne Johnson, that while they liked Caston as a man, they had lost respect for him as a conductor.

### **Dissent in the Orchestra**

Caston, who was in New York interviewing musicians, was told by Johnson by telephone that the dissident musicians complained that he "provided no leadership and that, consequently, the orchestra's concerts were dull and uninteresting."

The maestro was stung, but he responded proudly, "I have too much confidence in myself to be bothered about what a handful of critics say. I have a job to do and I am going to do it."

But the number of dissident musicians grew to 37—more than half of the orchestra—and the shouts of the Better Music Associates grew in volume as well.

What had happened to bring the once "happy" orchestra to this dismal state?

The symphony was being torn asunder as a result of the painful reviews of the Chicago critics, David Abosch, the orchestra's principal oboist, explained.

Caston was a sensitive man, and Claudia Cassidy's scorn for him as "a rigid conductor with little talent for making music," festered in his mind. *The Chicago American's* dismissal of

the DSO as "a fledgling drum and oboe corps from Rocky Mountainland" kept re-echoing in his brain, along with the other painful put-downs of the Chicago critics.

Now, some eight years after the Chicago concerts, the DSO's unhappy musicians complained to Denver newspapers, "We are losing our self respect and have no pride in the orchestra... We are not able to play good music. We are not being asked to give our best."

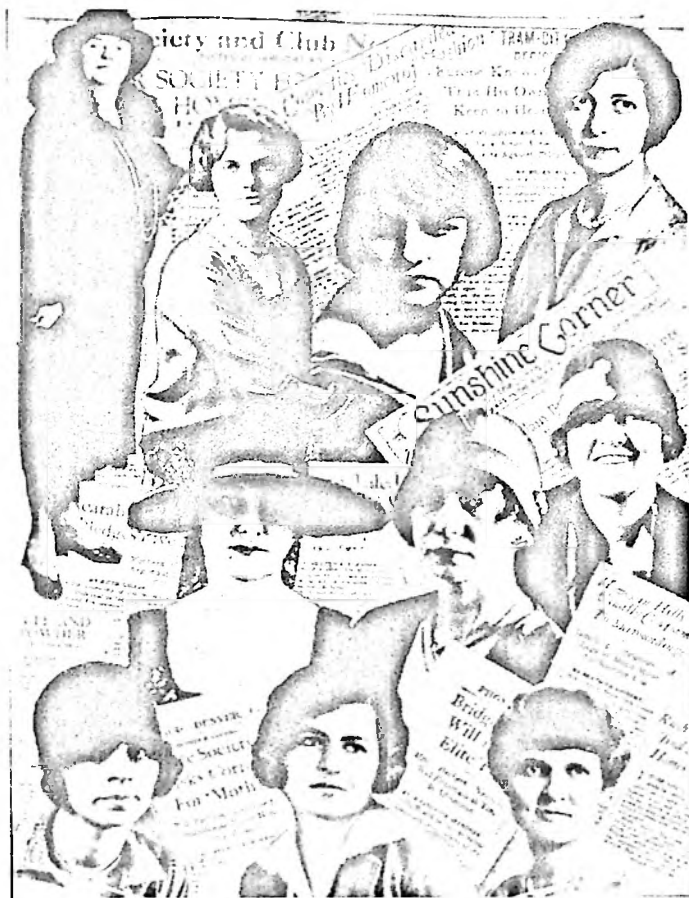
Supporters of Helen and Caston tried to diffuse the dissension by urging Denverites to back Caston with a show of confidence. Finally, however, the anti-Caston and Black forces prevailed and on January 29, 1963, Caston announced his resignation, to take place sixteen months later. Helen remained with the orchestra until a successor, Vladimir Golschmann, former conductor of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, could be found

Caston had been 44 when he came to the Denver Symphony. He was 67 when he conducted his last concert on March 24, 1964. Helen was 68. Both were of retirement age, but no provisions had been made for them. To make Caston's situation more dire, he had recently undergone radiation treatments in Philadelphia for cancer of the vocal chords.

When Helen presented the resigning manager's report on April 21, 1964 to the Symphony's Board of Trustees, she was given a string of pearls, actually the gift of Charles Sterne, president of the board, and his wife, Dorothy.

Atwill Gilman, board chairman, was among those appalled at the the





apartment to tell her of the annuity. "I had never seen her weep," he said. That day she did.

Helen, as we have seen, had never married. The Symphony, Saul and Selma Caston and their daughter, Marise, had been her family for 30 years.

In answer to a question from a Rocky Mountain News reporter in 1983, she said, "Look, I had plenty of beaux, but I also had family responsibilities. If I had married, my husband would have had to handle my responsibilities,

circumstances of Helen's departure.

"She didn't have any insurance," Atwill explained. "She had cashed in her insurance policy to help finance the Midwestern tour, and the Symphony Board let her do it."

Gilman worked with two well-to-do supporters of the DSO, Charles Sterne and Allan Phipps, to set up an annuity for Helen.

Atwill said he had never seen Helen as emotional as she was the day he went out to her Josephine Street

financial ones, and I never did think that was fair. Besides, I was too busy to worry about marriage. I was always having such a good time doing what I was doing."

Helen could never have accomplished what she did if she *had* opted for a husband and children. Her decision to devote herself to the Denver Symphony was Denver's gain then and still today...

So, in 1964 an enormous void opened up in Helen's life, but it was not

in her nature to let it engulf her.

She volunteered her time and expertise as a consultant to the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity and worked for equal opportunities for women. She devoted her energies to the Arthur Mitchell (historic) museum in Trinidad. She continued to seek out and encourage young performers, mainly through the Denver Lyric Opera Guild. And she was active in her beloved Denver Woman's Press Club of which she was a past president.

Then, in 1983, the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Denver Symphony Orchestra, Helen was rediscovered as a local treasure.

### **Helen honored**

There was an outpouring of appreciation and affection for the orchestra's longtime business manager and Helen was hailed as Denver's Grande Dame of the Arts.

She was honored at a Symphony concert and by the Symphony Guild, which she had helped found many years before. Tributes appeared in newspapers and sounded from the air waves on radio and television stations.

The crowning event of the celebration of the Symphony's anniversary and Helen's achievements was a gala dinner on September 26, 1983 in the Brown Palace Hotel.

Helen was the first recipient of the Helen Black Arts & Letters Award given at the dinner and sponsored by the *Rocky Mountain News*, where she had begun her career, and the Denver Woman's Press Club.

Her long time friend and admirer, violinist Isaac Stern, was the guest speaker. He referred to Helen as "an elegant, gentle dreadnaught," and

an "irrepressible force" who accomplished whatever she set out to do.

Typically, Helen donated the \$10,000 she received that night to five musical organizations, including the Denver Symphony and Central City Opera House Association.

The Helen Black Arts & Letters Award Dinner continued for four more years.

In the final year of the event, Helen was 90 and still giving interviews. She attributed her longevity to "luck, I think, and keeping busy. My doctor says God and my willpower are what keep me going. Anyway, he will tell me I have something wrong, and I just don't agree, I say I *won't* have it and he says I do, so we argue and I keep on doing. Doing, I guess that's what I do."

Helen died January 31, 1988 in St. Luke's Hospital at the age of 91. No one knew her age until it was disclosed on the death certificate.

But, happily, her good works for the symphony and the cause of classical music in Denver were not finished. Some funds remained from the Arts and Letters dinners, and these were presented to the Colorado Symphony Orchestra to establish the Helen Marie Black Music Education Fund.

Penny Shoemaker, a longtime supporter of music education for children, offered to match the funds so that Helen's achievements could receive the recognition they deserve. The fund provides in-school concerts for Denver area school children—presented by members of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra --and pays for transportation of youngsters to children's concerts by the Colorado



Symphony in Boettcher Hall.

Proceeds from my book, "A Woman for All Seasons - Helen Marie Black - Heart of the Denver Symphony Orchestra," will help fund this work.

Saul Caston died at age 68 July 29, 1970. The Denver dispute "killed him" Helen said at the time. "He was very sensitive, not a battler," she said. At the time of his retirement, he said he planned to continue in symphonic music on a limited scale in Philadelphia. In 1966 and 1967 Caston was director of the orchestral department at the North Carolina School of the Arts at Winston Salem.

Helen was survived only by a niece, living in California, where her sister Blanche had made her home.

Writer's note: An anecdote which I did not include in my talk to the

Denver Posse of Westerners illustrates Helen Black's strong and *insouciant* spirit. I regret that oversight, so I will repeat it now:

The threat of rain was the most implacable foe Helen and the Denver Symphony Orchestra faced during the summer Red Rocks series. On one occasion when "the wonderful Russian folk ballet (the ballet *Russe*) was ready to go on stage, it began to sprinkle," Helen recalled in an interview in later years.

"The two ballet agents panicked and exclaimed, 'We must cancel!'"

"No, no," Helen sought to reassure them. "The rain will stop in five or ten minutes."

"No! They cannot dance in the rain!" the agents insisted. "We'll telephone New York and tell them we have to cancel."

Helen led the agents below the stage to the first aid station and, presumably, a telephone. "To the obvious surprise of the nurse on duty, I locked them in a back room and told her not to let them out until I told her to," she said.

"Back on stage, the rain stopped and everyone, even the dancers, helped mop the stage and the show went on. The two agents, then released, were first irate, then sheepish, to see the show in progress."

One of the pleasures of the signings for my book about Helen was shared reminiscences from the audiences. At the Tattered Cover, Denver theater impresario Henry Lowenstein recalled that when the Denver Symphony presented Wagner's "Die Walkure," at the Red Rocks a horse

crossing the stage let loose with a sudden shower. Unfortunately, its water landed on the electrical power grid. There was fierce debate between the stage hands and the electricians as to which union was responsible for cleaning up. Helen, as usual, was called upon to negotiate a quick settlement, Lowenstein said. She did, and the results have been lost in the mists of time.

At the Denver Woman's Press Club, DSO bassist Charles Burrell remembered that when the symphony reached Roswell, New Mexico on a tour of western towns, the hotel manager said Burrell, who is black, could not sleep in a guest room. He would have to sleep in the kitchen.

"We'll cancel the concert!" Helen and Saul Caston protested in near unison.

"Aw, you folks just cool it," Burrell said. "I have my car, so I can just drive back to Denver." And that is what he did, and played jazz in an East Colfax Avenue lounge with a group that Saturday night while his fellow musicians went ahead with the Roswell concert.

At the signing at the Denver Woman's Press Club, Zoe Von Ende Lappin, a former woman's page editor of *The Denver Post*, recalled Helen as a stalwart champion of women's rights long before they were a concern of other segments of society.

Then, because Helen had been presented as an almost impossibly perfect woman, Zoe asked, "Did Helen have any warts (faults)?"

Silence prevailed for a moment, and then, "no," said a member of the audience. And that seemed to be the consensus.

## Acknowledgments

With appreciation for help from John Sunderland of the Denver Post Photo Department; Post staff photographer Lyn Alweis and retired Post photographer Duane Howell; Judi Acre, Denver Post librarian; Lori Swingle and staff members of the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library; the Denver Woman's Press Club; Dorothy Garlington, Delores Plested, Nora Robinson, education director, the Denver Symphony Orchestra; E. Atwill Gilman, Henry Lowenstein, David Abosch, Dorothy Mauk, Penny Shoemaker, Ruth McEwen, Rob Watt, Laura Watt.

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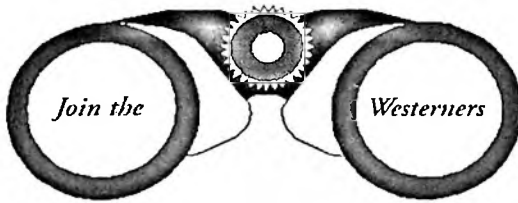
## Over the Corral Rail



It's auction time!

September is auction month. The above lovely unframed oil painting of William J. Cates, Pony Express rider, was painted by Denver artist Juan Menchaca. It is the last painting in a series of 4 portraits.

This painting, along with many other items, will be available to the highest bidder at the September meeting.



## **REWARD**

*We're looking for a few new members*

### **The big 2001 membership contest in on NOW!**

Sponsor the most new members this year (2001), by having them place your name on the Westerners membership application, and your dues will be paid for you for 2002.

This contest is open to all Westerners members, both Posse and Corresponding. Make sure your name is on the membership application, to prove you are recruiting this member. Totals will be tallied on Dec. 31, 2001.

If you need lots more membership applications, please contact the tallyman, Ted Krieger.

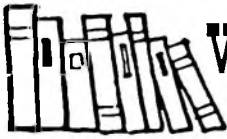
*We welcome the following new members into the Westerners, and thank the sponsors for their support of the contest and the Posse:*

*Steve Weil of Denver, Dennis Hagen of Aurora, Patricia Kent Gilmore of Denver and Liz Walker of Bailey.*



### **Westerners International**

Corresponding Membership in the Denver Posse does not include membership in the Westerners International. If you wish to receive the *Buckskin Bulletin*, you may purchase a subscription for \$5.00/year. Contact Westerners International, c/o National Cowboy Hall of Fame, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111. 800-541-4650



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Shot Down!**, by Charlotte Babcock. High Plains Press, 2000. 160 pages. Bibliography, index, illustrations. Paper, \$13.95, limited edition hard cover, \$29.95.

The author, Charlotte Babcock, was honored during Casper College's 50th anniversary. She is an award winning author, published in many areas.

This book is the result of personal interviews and research about Casper, Wyoming's frontier crimes. The first murder revolves around a notorious lady named Lou Polk, who ran a dance hall. Her story is one of the more interesting stories in this book.

Other prominent citizens of Casper provide insights into life in the city and how social status effected some crimes as well. Her stories are colorful and well depicted. Many name changes were noted and one can wonder about the meaning of those changes.

The history of posses formed and husbands shooting lovers give voice to the justice of the times. Prominent citizens such as Alex and Elma Butler are well documented.

An unusual and interesting book of special interest to people from Wyoming.

--Dolores A. Ebner, P.M.

**THE LONG DEATH: The Last Days of the Plains Indians**, by Ralph K. Andrist. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 416 pp, 26 black & white illustrations, 21 maps, bibliography, index. Paper: \$19.95

For the person who loves the total fabric of western history, but who doesn't concentrate on plains Indian history per se, this book is highly recommended. Originally released in 1964, copies have become hard to find now. The University of Oklahoma Press has filled this void with this 2001 reprinting.

The author starts with an overview of relations between the Indians and the United States government from before 1840 when the great plains were pledged to the Indians, "to have and to hold forever". From this beginning he proceeds with the salient details of every major encounter between the Indians and the advancing European culture from the Sioux rebellion and massacre of settlers in Minnesota to the conclusion of the struggle at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1890.

It is quite remarkable that this author has been able to summarize the cause and effect of this struggle into one readable book when one thinks of the thousands of volumes written on this same period which delve into the endless detail of personalities and sites of conflict.

Unfortunately, it is the tale of endless betrayals of the Indians as the flood of European descendants moved west wanting more space and resources.

--Bob Stull, P.M.

**The Photography Of Alfred Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keefe's Enduring Legacy**, edited by Therese Mulligan, Essays by Eugenia Parry, Laura Downey, and Therese Mulligan. Published by The George Eastman House, Rochester, New York 2000. 120 pages. 40 Prints. Cloth, \$25.95.

The 1951 acquisition of work by the esteemed photographer Alfred Stieglitz, from his widow Georgia O'Keefe, the executrix of the photographer's estate, proved integral to the formation of George Eastman House's collections and its mission. Opened in 1949 in the home of George Eastman, founder of Eastman Kodak, the museum was the first American institution whose specific objectives were to preserve, interpret and exhibit photography and motion pictures.

The book only has 120 pages in it, and is divided into 3 sections, The Essay, The Prints, and The Catalogue section. Each one different and complete in itself.

The Essay section of the book describes how the Eastman museum acquired the collection from Georgia O'Keefe. In her negotiations with The Eastman Mu-

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...the print section covers  
the period from 1893 up  
through 1935....

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seum she included a 2-page document with the prints entitled "Conditions for the Care of the Alfred Stieglitz Collection". This document is part of O'Keefe's greater legacy. It is not generally known that this document did much to further the preservation of photo-

graphs in the museum context, not only Stieglitz's work but other photographers work as well. At a time when few art museums collected or displayed photographs, O'Keefe's conditions contained the essential building blocks of preservation care, with an astute understanding of the particularly sensitive nature of photographic materials.

The Print section covers the period from 1893 up through 1935. It includes black and white prints, along with what I call sepia prints, although these may be this color because of the age of the negatives. They show his development as a photographer. His former cook said, "He never would have become the photographer he became if he hadn't met Georgia. He did wonderful street scenes, portraits, railroad tracks and all that before Georgia came. But after Georgia came, he made the clouds, the moon, and he even made lightening. He never photographed things like that before".

The Catalogue section holds the complete holdings of the Alfred Stieglitz collection preserved in the photography and technology collections at George Eastman House. Each picture lists, published title, date, when it was printed, and how it was photographed, Gelatin silver print, transparency, gelatin on glass, etc.

This publication illuminates for the first time the George Eastman House Museum's Stieglitz collection with essays that reflect on the development of the collection, significance of the images themselves and their future preservation. This publication would make a wonderful addition to the library of both the amateur and professional photographer.

--Winnie Burdan, P.M.



**Fort Union and the Upper Missouri Fur Trade**, by Barton H Barbour. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 320 pp. 24 black and white illustrations, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$34.95

This is the story of Pierre Chateau, Jr.'s Upper Missouri Outfit (UMO) and its principal trading fort near the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers.

From the 1820s to 1865, Fort Union was occupied and saw a thriving Indian trade. During most of this time it was one of the UMO's most profitable forts. Being located in the heart of the "pays d'en haut" or up river country, decisions and actions taken there had great influence on fur trade and on U.S. Indian policy.

In a well researched work, Barbour shows that during its prime, Fort Union was the center of a mutually advantageous trade network: Native Americans and Europeans traded, intermarried, coexisted, and pretty well got along. Managing the import of manufactured goods and the export of various pelts and furs and the staffing of numerous posts and diverse jobs was in itself quite an achievement.

Barbour makes the point that the organization devised by UMO and its competitors was the model for the modern business organization.

In addition, visitors to the fort were subsidized and encouraged in scientific research and exploration. Later in the fort's life,

government appointed Indian Agents lived there. They were pretty much dependent for quarters and communications on the largesse of the factor.

The author also shows how the managers in the fur trade were de facto agents of the government in implementing Indian policy. In those days the attention of the U.S. Government was in many ways focused east of the Mississippi, indeed east of the Alleghenies. In the west and northwest, the army was so small as not to be a player until the 1850's. In fact, the only ones in the west with a day to day presence, the reach to distribute annuity goods, to treat credibly with Indian chiefs, and to have reliable communications with far flung posts and tribes were the fur trading companies. The UMO was among the most profitable, best connected, well managed of those.

The story of Fort Union; its birth, guests, inhabitants, competitors, its fires and battles, its decline and ultimate destruction has a parallel: the birth of the American fur trade as business, the profits made, the political connections and favors given and called in (to the advantage of the government as well as to traders), the good enjoyed by the trade participants, and its finally becoming outmoded as Europeans swarmed west. The swindling and near extinction of the Native American is described, but tangentially.

If one is interested in the fur trade and/or nineteenth century domestic politics, this is a book to read. The map is adequate, the illustrations good, and the research and documentation excellent.

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...Ft. Union was the center of a mutually advantageous trade network...

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**A Woman For All Seasons: Helen Marie Black, Heart of the Denver Symphony Orchestra**, by Eva Hodges Watt. Englewood: Cottrell Printing Co., 2001. 97 pp. Illustrations, bibliography. \$10.00

My favorite Helen Black story is the one she told about covering Aimee Semple McPherson in 1921. Seated in a big chair at the Denver Woman's Press Club, dressed in black with pearls, a black veil covering her silver sculptured hair, the slender Black regaled us younger members of the club with stories of Denver journalism in the old days. A "girl" reporter at the *Rocky Mountain News*, she'd been sent to a rundown tabernacle in downtown Denver, where the female evangelist was drawing the faithful. Black's front-page story attracted even bigger crowds, and McPherson moved to the City Auditorium.

Then Black had a better idea. Why not go up to the top of Lookout Mountain and preach a Sermon on the Mount? McPherson agreed, and Black's stories brought the evangelist national attention. Every day, Black rode the mountain to cover the story in a chauffeur-driven limousine, provided not by the *News*, but by Harry H. Tammen, co-owner of the rival *Denver Post*, who was trying to lure her away. Tammen also plied her with boxes of chocolates from Baur's. But Black stayed at the *News*. Loyalty was one of her strongest virtues. And, as the Sermon on the Mount idea illustrates, she had a genius for promotion. She drew on both qualities in her most demanding role, business manager of the Denver Symphony Orchestra.

Black has been dead nearly 10 years, gone from the symphony for almost 40, but she has had a lasting impact on Denver, maintains Eva Hodges Watt in *A Woman For All Seasons*. Watt, a retired *Post* reporter and editor and former Denver Woman's Press Club president (as was Black), knew her well. Born into a cultured family that lost its money when she was a girl, Black quit high school for a job on the *News*, which Colorado historian Caroline Bancroft, whose life took a similar turn, once said was considered at about the same level as joining a Market Street whorehouse. Black quickly moved out of woman's features and began snatching big stories from male colleagues. She once spent a week interviewing Helen Keller and said it was like "spending a week in church."

At the same time, Black was active in the arts, volunteering her promotional skills to any worthy cause. She suggested to the director of the New Orleans Little Theater that while in Central City, he ought to tour the boarded-up opera house. That visit led to the 1932 reopening of the opera house.

Black's greatest challenge came during the Depression when she was asked to run the fledgling Denver Symphony. She did so as a volunteer for a decade, then stayed on another 20 years at a meager salary, until both she and her hand-picked director, Saul Caston, were forced out. Unfairly, Watt maintains. During those years, Black came up with extraordinary ideas to promote the symphony. She started children's concerts, threw performances at Red Rocks and booked appearances all across the country. (There would have been more, but funds

were not available.) She came up with the idea for a Debutante Ball, still held, to raise money for the orchestra. Under Black and Caston, the orchestra was the first major symphony to hire African-American musicians.

Black made the orchestra famous all over the world, through stories in national publications such as *Life*, exposure on national television, even getting the State Department to make a film of a family concert at Red Rocks, that was shown in 88 countries. The cost to the symphony: \$14 worth of box lunches.

In Watt's detailed but warm and frankly partisan account, Black gets her due. She was indeed a remarkable woman. As Watt points out, Black did most of her work as a staff of one. Today's successor orchestra, the Colorado Symphony, has an executive staff of 23.

--Sandra Dallas, *P.M.*

**RELIGION in the Modern American West**, by Ferenc Morton Szasz. Arizona, University of Arizona Press, 2000. 270 pp. 17 half tones, cloth: \$35.00

A good book has been written.....no actually, it's a great book. This book is like no other on "history" I have read. It is a very interesting confluence of history and the role of many different religions in formation of the modern American West from the 1890's to the present day.

This study treats us to some very interesting and thought provoking ideas, while driving home a central point, that the American West has not evolved into a secular society as some have claimed, but is a grand human experience on many levels of Western society.

Some may think that such a book can only have a political agenda. I feel the author has fairly and with an eye for detail discussed mainstream religions as Catholic and old Protestant as equally in balance with Jewish, Mormon, Evangelic and bizarre "New" religions. Such a mix of religions could probably only co-exist in our great land. Religion is the focus, and the point is well made in the book that without the "ethnic glue" religion provided to a nation of immigrants; we could have well ended up fighting conflicts as the Bosnians and Serbs.

Of special interest to Denver Westerners are the portions on the "Glue" of various religions that led to the great social programs of the day, such as the United Way that was started in Denver. Also for those not familiar with Mormonism, I found the book fascinating in its description of the ideals and social programs of this Church. Striving to be self sufficient, the Mormon church has created and administered a program that makes far more sense than our current Government programs.

From east to west, north to south, this book covers more religious territory than I imagined possible or that even existed. This is a great book, one that can really lead to the "ah-haw" discovery of why as the most religious nation in the world, we are not just a melting pot, but more a fine fondue of religious practices and ideals.

--Stan Penton C. M.

**Nez Perce Summer 1877: The U.S. Army and the Nee-Mee-Poo Crisis**, by Jerome A. Greene. Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2000, 576 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, 125 pp. of notes alone. Cloth: \$49.95.

This book is, and will be for sometime to come, the definitive work regarding the Nez Perce War of 1877. Author Greene has outdone himself in accomplishing this task. To this point in time, this reviewer has considered Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. the most knowledgeable historian of the Nez Perce War. By the way, Josephy wrote the forward to this work, and praises Greene for providing us "with just about every relevant detail pertaining to the Nez Perce War". Of course, Josephy's classic, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* will forever be the one basic source for the complete story of the Nez Perce from the very beginning of their existence. Greene devotes his focus on the 1877 war. In fact, when this reviewer queried the author on why there wasn't more about Governor Issac Stevens' (the Washington Territorial Governor) part in leading up to the conflict, he responded that he had been anxious to get to the conduct of the war rather than elaborate on it's causes. Nevertheless, the author leads off his effort with a whole chapter dwelling on why the war occurred.

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...Green's research  
delted into many  
primary resources  
untouched before...

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The narrative then takes the reader on a three and a half month journey across the territories of Idaho and Montana and through Yellowstone National Park detailing every skirmish and battle along the way until the course of the war reaches the final surrender at the Bear's Paw Mountains so close to their objective of the Canadian border and Sitting Bull's Sioux village. Greene discusses the

strategies, mistakes and results on both sides and further describes in detail the terrain as each antagonist progresses on their route. While there are excellent maps furnished for the battles, this reviewer was wishing for more maps of the various terrain features depicted in the narrative. At times it became confusing as to which (terrain feature) was what. One of Greene's strong points is his ability to give a short and concise biographical sketch of each leading character introduced as the account progressed. Colonels Gibbon and Sturgis were excellent examples of this. The author also uses quotes of the participants as well to illustrate a point. One such quote attributed to Dr. Fitzgerald of General Howard's command was, "Poor Nez Perces ... I am actually beginning to admire their bravery and endurance in the face of so many well-equipped enemies".

Greene's research delved into many primary resources untouched before. He is to be commended for the difficult and arduous labors expended in obtaining his material. The final statement in his chapter entitled "Consequences" reflects the mastery he has for his subject, which is "Irrefutably, they had just cause, and in the end, the Nez Perce carried through with dignity and forbearance, an apotheosis of being and of the human spirit".

This is a remarkable book, and is very readable for those who would take it up. The two appendices at the end list the Army and Indian casualties by unit, date injured or killed, and location where it took place. As a specialist interested in the Nez Perce War, this reviewer will prize this work above all others on the subject and recommends it to all Indian War aficionados. It will become the most important source for information on the 1877 Nez Perce War, and therefore, will be an Indian Wars classic!

--Richard A. Cook, P.M.



THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

July - August 2001



*1909 Pioneer Monument, Lincoln, KS. Author's Collection.*

**Libbie Custer's encounter with Tom  
Alderdice...the rest of the story**

by

**Jeff Broome, C.M.**

**(Presented August 25, 2001)**

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS

## ROUNDUP

VOL. LVII NO. 4



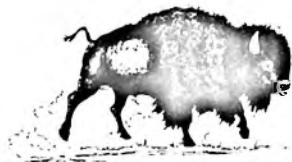
July - August 2001

**About the Author**

Dr. Jeff Broome, Ph.D., has been a professor in Arapahoe Community College's Dept. of Philosophy since 1985. Prior to teaching, he was a detention counselor with the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Dept. and Treatment Director for the Salvation Army Adult Rehab. Center.

Jeff holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Colorado-Boulder, and an M.A. from Baylor University, all in philosophy. He has recently been awarded the Lawrence A. Frost Literary Award from the Little Big Horn Associates.

This is Jeff's second paper to the Westerners. He is a Corresponding Member.

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# Libbie Custer's encounter with Tom Alderdice...the rest of the story

by

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(Presented August 25, 2001)

June 25, 1876 marked the first day of what would turn out to be fifty-seven years of widowhood for Elizabeth Bacon Custer. It was on that fateful day that her husband, George Armstrong Custer, died in his final fight against Indians at the Little Bighorn River in present day Montana. In a span of five short years, from 1885 to 1890, Libbie Custer published three books detailing life with her famous husband. *Boots and Saddles*, her first book (1885) concentrated on her last three years before widowhood, at Fort Abraham Lincoln in Dakota Territory. *Tenting on the Plains* followed in 1887. It presented to the reader her experiences with General Custer in 1866-1867. This book, Libbie's longest, detailed life in Texas following the Civil War, and her first year in Kansas. Libbie's third book, published in 1890, was the last book she wrote about her life with her famous husband. This book, *Following the Guidon*, picked up where *Tenting on the Plains* left off, mostly focusing on their years together in Kansas from 1868-1869.

Libbie mentions a little known incident in *Following the Guidon* that leads to this study. There Libbie speaks of meeting a man who had come to Ft. Leavenworth to plead with the military for help in finding his wife, who had for several weeks been held captive by the Indians. Custer, motivated partly by his

desire to see Libbie more cautious in Indian country, asked his wife to visit with this man and hear his tale of woe. Writes Libbie:

*He [Custer] came to me ... while we were stopped in Leavenworth, to ask me to see a distracted man with whom he had been talking. When I found that the man was almost wild with grief over the capture of his wife by Indians, and the murder of his children, I begged to be spared witnessing such a painful sight when I could do no good. The reply was that sympathy was something everyone needed, and I made no further resistance.<sup>1</sup> The man was as nearly a madman as can be. His eyes wild, frenzied, and sunken with grief, his voice weak with suffering, his tear-stained, haggard face – all told a terrible tale of what he had been and was enduring. He wildly waved his arms as he paced the floor like some caged thing, and implored General Custer to use his influence to organize an expedition to secure the release of his wife. He turned to me with trembling tones, describing the return to his desolate cabin... .*

Libbie then goes on to describe the scene this man faced when discovering his dead children upon returning home the day after the raid. She is probably inaccurate at some points, but this is to be understood as she is writing this account more than twenty years after the fact. Libbie continues:

*The silence in the cabin told its awful tale, and he knew, without entering, that the mother of the little ones had met with the horrible fate which every woman in those days considered worse than death. General Custer was so moved by this story that he could not speak, and I became so unnerved that it was many a night before I could shut my eyes without seeing the little yellow heads of those innocent children clotted with blood, and their sightless blue eyes turned to heaven as if for redress. The lesson was effectual for a time, for not only was I moved to deepest pity for the bereaved man, but I became so terrified that I could not even ride out of camp with an escort without inward quakings, and every strange or unaccountable speck on the horizon meant to me a lurking foe.<sup>2</sup>*

Who might this person be that met with Libbie and General Custer at Ft. Leavenworth? The clue to the answer comes in analyzing individual female captive incidents in and around Kansas during Custer's cavalry command tenure in that state, that is, during the years 1867-1870. There were only four mar-

ried women captured during the time Custer could have been at Leavenworth and who would have been in captivity long enough for a husband to appeal for military aid at Ft. Leavenworth. Mrs. Clara Blinn was captured near Kansas in southeastern Colorado on October 8, 1868. Separated in a wagon from her husband during an Indian attack, she and her young two-year old son Willie remained captives until killed by Indians some time during Custer's attack upon Black Kettle's village along the Washita River on November 27, 1868.<sup>3</sup> They were not discovered until December 10, when Custer's command returned to the Washita battlefield and there found them, frozen to the ground and violently murdered. Clara's husband, Richard Blinn, can be eliminated as the person visiting with the Custers at Ft. Leavenworth simply because the Blinns had no other children who would have been killed during his wife's capture. Further, Mrs. Blinn's captivity did not occur at or near their home, nor was Mr. Blinn away during the attack, all of which would contradict what Libbie recounted in her conversation with the "distracted man."

A second married female captive during Custer's Kansas tenure was Mrs. Anna Morgan. She had been captured on October 13, 1868, along the Solomon River Valley in Ottawa County. Mrs. Morgan soon found herself in company with another female captive, eighteen-year-old Sarah White, who had been captured two months earlier in Cloud County.<sup>4</sup> In addition to these two captives, the raiding Dog Soldiers at the time of Sarah White's capture also killed thirteen other pioneers.<sup>5</sup> But Mrs. Morgan, newly married, had





Author's Collection

### Willis Daily as a young man

no children, and her husband was severely wounded at her capture and would have been unable to travel to Ft. Leavenworth. Further, the Custers were not at Leavenworth at this time. On the day of Mrs. Morgan's capture Custer had just recently returned to his command, having served a nearly year-long suspension from the service, incurred at the end of the unsuccessful Hancock Expedition the year before.<sup>6</sup> Custer had left Monroe, Michigan September 25, when he boarded a train to return to his command. Libbie remained in Monroe. He arrived at Fort Hays on September 30. He does write a letter to Libbie from Ft. Leavenworth on October 2 but shortly after that Custer rejoined his command near Fort Dodge, where preparations were under way for a winter campaign.<sup>7</sup> This campaign led to the already mentioned attack on Black Kettle's village along the Washita, and

finally culminated in the release of Mrs. Morgan and Sarah White along the Sweetwater on March 18 in present day Oklahoma. Thus Mr. Morgan is definitively eliminated at the "distraught man" whom Libbie met at Fort Leavenworth.

Cheyenne Dog Soldiers, under the leadership of Tall Bull, also took the third and fourth married female captives that Libbie might be referring to in her recorded conversation in *Following the Guidon*. They were both captured on May 30, 1869, as part of the Spillman Creek Raid in Lincoln County, Kansas, a small new settlement near the Saline River, roughly thirty miles west of Salina and north of Fort Harker, respectively.<sup>8</sup> Maria Weichel, recently arrived immigrant from Hanover, Germany, had been in America less than two months before her capture. Her husband, George Weichel, was killed during the raid. They did not have children. Thus, the Weichels are also eliminated as the family Libbie wrote about.

The other captive of the Spillman Creek raid was Mrs. Susanna Alderdice. Susanna is the only captive who fits the story shared in Libbie's writings. As will be shown later, Susanna was alone with her children when she was captured. Forced to witness the brutal and violent attack upon her small boys, ranging in age from two to five, Susanna was carried away along with her fourth child, eight-month old Alice Alderdice. Her husband Tom, away from his family at the time of the raid, was witness to the remains of his brutally murdered children the next day.

But it is more than the mere fact

that Libbie relates her story in *Following the Guidon* that assures us that it is the Alderdice family she is referring to. There is irrefutable evidence from Tom Alderdice himself. This comes in a detailed story reported June 20 in the *Leavenworth Times and Conservative* of his visit to Fort Leavenworth, the very place of Libbie's encounter, to plead with the military for assistance in locating his captive wife and daughter. Custer and his wife were visiting Leavenworth at that time because of Custer's involvement with the National Horse Fair.<sup>9</sup> The reporter interviewing Tom Alderdice told the story of Tom's family tragedy. It tells of Tom returning from Salina:

*On arriving at his home he found it deserted, and was almost paralyzed with grief at finding one of his children ... dead on the ground with four bullets in his body, and another of his children dead, shot with five arrows. A third child had five arrow wounds in his body, one entering his back to the depth of five inches... . Mrs. Alderdice and her babe, aged eight months, were carried away captive by the Indians.*

The article then goes on to describe the other murders the Indians committed that day. It ends by telling why Tom was at Leavenworth.

*Mr. Alderdice is here to make his complaints to the military, and see if any assistance can be rendered him in looking for his wife and child. He has scouted the country for a considerable distance around the scenes of*

*the outrages and gives it as his opinion that the savages have not left this section of the country, but are still prowling around in bands of from four to eight.<sup>10</sup>*

No doubt lost in Libbie's memory when she wrote her book, Tom's eight-month old captive daughter was already murdered. Following the Indian trail in hopes of assisting his wife's escape Tom had discovered an abandoned Indian camp and there, to his horror, found little Alice dead.<sup>11</sup> Three days after her capture, the Indians killed little Alice Alderdice, strangling and dumping her lifeless body near a creek. At the time of Tom's interview with the Custers, Susanna herself had but three more weeks to live, surviving a total of forty-two days in Indian captivity until shot above the eye and tomahawked to death at the moment of her rescue on July 11, 1869 at the Battle of Summit Springs in northeastern Colorado.<sup>12</sup>

Who was this man Tom Alderdice? Born in Philadelphia on March 11, 1841, the son of Scottish immigrants, Tom's journey to Kansas was somewhat unique in that he came by way of Confederate service in the 44<sup>th</sup> Mississippi Infantry, where he served in Company E. This is something that he apparently kept secret from his family and friends throughout the remainder of his life, perhaps a prudent decision given the general Union sympathies of the typical Central Kansas settler at that time. Captured at the Chickamauga battle, September 19-20, 1863, Tom was transferred to the Rock Island, Illinois, Prisoner of War camp, where he remained for slightly more than a year,



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**Willis Daily Family. From left; Rhoda "Anna" Daily, Willis, James, wife Mary Twibell Daily and Elsie Daily.**

at which time he took the Oath of Allegiance and served for one year as a Union soldier. Enlisting on October 17, 1864, Tom was placed as a musician in Company E, 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Infantry Volunteers and sent to the Kansas frontier, away from any Confederate threat where such "galvanized" Yankees might be tempted to desert their Union brethren to rejoin their Confederate comrades. Having a fair complexion, with light hair and blue eyes, the five-foot, seven-inch Tom was typical in height and weight for a soldier at that time. Serving most of his Union enlistment around the Solomon River near Salina, Tom remained in that area after his discharge, meeting and then marrying the widow Susanna Zeigler Daily in 1866, in Salina, Kansas.<sup>13</sup>

After Tom's interview with the Custers at Fort Leavenworth, Custer apparently placed Tom in some sort of

civilian capacity, perhaps as a scout, with 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry soldiers who had been stationed in the vicinity of Spillman Creek. Company K Farrier William McConnell, who had enlisted in the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry January 3, 1867, in a short diary he kept for most of the year 1869, writes in his July 23 entry from camp on the Saline River near Spillman Creek:

*The Morning cool. Reveille at four o'clock. Started at five. Got into camp of L Troop at about 10 a.m. Got some bad news; the 5<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry had a big fight on the Platte River and captured both of the women back from them by killing one and wounding one; also capturing some prisoners. Mrs. Alderdise [sic.] was killed and her little babe also. Her husband is with us.<sup>14</sup>*

Later learning the sad fate of his wife Susanna, Tom eventually remarried on August 17, 1873, to Mary Lepper. He had eight more children with Mary. He died in Conway Springs, Kansas in 1925. A veteran of the Beecher Island fight in 1868, Tom outlived all but two other survivors of that fight.<sup>15</sup>

Susanna, born in the first half of 1840, was twenty-nine when murdered at Summit Springs. She was in the latter stages of pregnancy with her fifth child when her life was violently ended on the wind swept prairie of eastern Colorado at what was at the time called the Battle at Susanna Springs.<sup>16</sup> Susanna Alderdice's misfortune is a heart-wrenching story of tragedy, yet within this awful tragedy is an amazing story of human triumph, mostly unknown to people interested in western history today.

To fully appreciate the story of Susanna Alderdice, one must first understand the Kansas frontier of the 1860s, the frontier General Custer's 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry was detached in order to protect. This era marked the most tumultuous and violent decade in Kansas history. Beginning with the issues of statehood and the clashes of the Civil War in eastern Kansas, including the violent engagements in and around Lawrence, central and western Kansas had its own conflicts with ongoing Indian depredations. Indeed, various Indian tribes in Kansas and Nebraska alone between 1866-1867 killed more than four hundred men, women and children.<sup>17</sup> Following the Civil War, the government did attempt to address this problem. What became known as the Hancock Expedition in the spring and summer of

1867, however, failed to accomplish its mission of removing marauding bands of Indians in and around Kansas.

The year 1868 was in effect a repeat of what occurred in 1867, even though the Medicine Lodge Treaty had been signed at the close of 1867 by most of the principle chiefs of the Plains Indian tribes. This treaty called for the removal of all bands of Indians from the Kansas frontier onto reservation life in present day Oklahoma. Cheyenne Dog Soldier Chief Tall Bull also signed this treaty, but only after he had been assured that his people could continue to hunt along the Smoky Hill and Republican Rivers in western Kansas.<sup>18</sup> However, not all Indians complied with this treaty, including Tall Bull. The military had problems locating the non-complying Indians during this time. Further, the late added hunting clause basically assured ongoing conflict between advancing settlers and roving Indians.<sup>19</sup>

Near the end of the summer of 1868, following Indian depredations against settlers along the Solomon and Saline valleys in central Kansas, where Mrs. Morgan and Sarah White were captured and would remain in captivity through the winter until freed by Custer in early spring, 1869, General Sheridan approved the formation of civilian scouts familiar with the Kansas frontier. In September these fifty-one scouts who referred to themselves as the Solomon Avengers, sixteen of whom lived in the Saline valley,<sup>20</sup> led by Major George A. Forsyth and a staff of four, were surprised by a band of several hundred warriors representing Sioux, Arapahoe and Cheyenne Dog Soldiers. What became known as the



Author's Collection

Willis Daily and granddaughter  
Leta. Circa 1918

Battle of Beecher Island lasted from September 17<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup>.

One of these scouts, already mentioned, was none other than Tom Alderdice. His wife Susanna, at the time of Beecher Island in 1868, was in the last stages of pregnancy with her fourth child, her second with Tom.<sup>21</sup> Another scout, the youngest at barely seventeen years of age, was Susanna's brother, Eli Zeigler.<sup>22</sup> In terms of a military expedition Beecher Island accomplished nothing, as did another expedition operating out of Fort Dodge under Lt. Col. Alfred Sully.<sup>23</sup> Together these failed expeditions motivated General Sheridan to alter his military tactics in locating and confronting the enemy.

Thus began a winter campaign to find the enemy. Believing it would be better to attack the Indians in their winter quarters, Sheridan composed three different forces to approach the Indians in their winter camps. One column operated from a supply depot on Monument Creek, coming from Fort Bascom in New Mexico, scouting in and around the Texas Panhandle. Major Carr led a second force, also operating in the same vicinity, having come there from Fort Lyon in southeastern Colorado. Sheridan entrusted the third force to Custer, after recalling him from his court martial at the end of the Hancock Expedition the year before. Custer's command included eleven companies of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, in addition to five companies of infantry and twelve companies of the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. With the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry segment of this command, Custer achieved success, capturing Black Kettle's village along the banks of the Washita River on November 27, 1868.<sup>24</sup> Fifty-one lodges and their contents were destroyed, one hundred-three Indians killed, and fifty-three female Indians and three children were captured. In addition, nearly nine hundred ponies were also destroyed, an act judged by Custer as necessary to prevent their returning into the hands of the Indians.<sup>25</sup>

This did not end Sheridan's campaign, however, for there were other bands of non-complying Indians to locate and remove to reservation life. In addition there were the earlier mentioned two captives, Miss White and Mrs. Morgan, still being held in captivity by Cheyenne Indians. Hence Custer continued his campaign, eventually cul-

minating in the March release of both captive Kansas women.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, Major Carr and his 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry troops had returned to Fort Lyon, then left there north for Fort McPherson in late April.<sup>27</sup> On his way north, near Beaver Creek in northwestern Kansas, Carr discovered Tall Bull's Indians. Tall Bull had slipped back to Kansas from the Panhandle country after the Washita battle, heading north into the Republican River country in northwestern Kansas and southwestern Nebraska. On May 13, in the battle at Elephant Rock, a sharp engagement ensued, with Carr achieving success, killing as many as twenty-five Indians and wounding another twenty. Carr's losses were four soldiers killed and three wounded. Another encounter occurred on May 16, which resulted in three more wounded enlisted men.<sup>28</sup> Indian casualties in this second engagement were unknown. Needing to replenish supplies, Carr then returned to Fort McPherson, temporarily abandoning pursuit of the Indians.

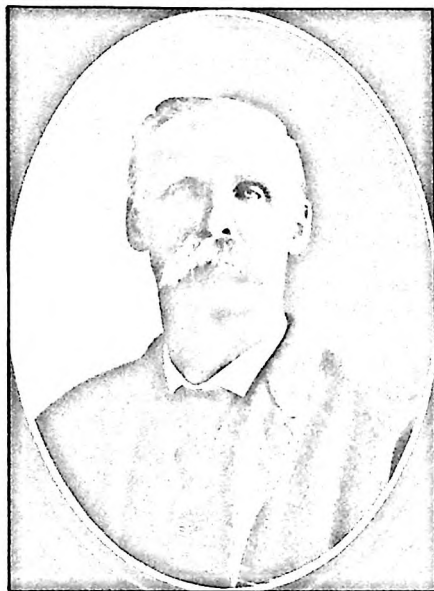
With Carr at Fort McPherson, Tall Bull was now left unmolested, which allowed him to engage in retaliatory strikes upon unsuspecting civilian settlements in central Kansas, north of the Smoky Hill Trail and south of the Platte River. In the week prior to May 30, Indian raids in north central Kansas resulted in the deaths of fourteen civilians.<sup>29</sup> These retaliatory raids were not because of anger over Sand Creek five years earlier, or even the Washita six months earlier, as is often supposed by some historians. Rather, these retaliatory raids were motivated because of Carr's May 13th and 16th attack upon Tall Bull near Beaver Creek. Carr's re-

turn to Fort McPherson left the settlers in north central Kansas minimal means of military protection. This was all the opportunity Tall Bull needed.

Sunday, May 30, marked the beginning of the end for Susanna Alderdice and other settlers along Spillman Creek, a small creek with deep banks that eventually joins the Saline River three miles west of present Lincoln, Kansas. Including Susanna's death at Summit Springs, a total of eleven civilians were killed on this May 30 raid, three of them Susanna's own children, each child brutally murdered before her eyes.

For Susanna and the other settlers, the day began as a beautiful late spring Kansas day. Earlier that morning Susanna's husband Tom, along with several other men, had left their homesteads to journey to Salina for the purpose of obtaining supplies.<sup>30</sup> There was the additional claim, made later, that they had earlier traveled to Junction City to protest a land claim that had been incorrectly filed by a minor.<sup>31</sup> If the latter claim is correct then Tom and the others must have left a few days earlier, as the trip to and from Junction City would have taken more than one day and all reports agree that they had returned home the day after the raid. This could not have been if they left on their trip the morning of the raid. At any rate, with many of the men away, the small settlement was more vulnerable than normal to Indian attack. Some historians have speculated that Indian scouts observed a lack of men in the settlement and that this awareness thus opened the door for an opportunistic raid.<sup>32</sup>

Susanna's younger brother Eli Zeigler, and brother-in-law John



*Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society*

### Eli Zeigler, Susanna's brother

Alverson (John was married to Susanna's sister, Mary Zeigler), stopped to visit with Susanna that Sunday morning before the raid and enjoyed a noon meal with her and her four children. This meal must have occurred at the home of Michael Healy, where Susanna was staying with her children while Tom was away. Other persons staying there included thirty-four year old Bridget Kine and her two-month old daughter Katherine, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Noon and Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Whalen. Michael Healy and his family had left his home earlier out of concern for the safety of his family because of reports that Indians were committing depredations not far away near the Solomon River. They had temporarily moved to Ellsworth, which was near the protection of Fort Harker. He had left

his larger house for use by other settlers, including Susanna's family, who had remained behind.<sup>33</sup>

Susanna's young family included five-and-a-half year-old old John Daily, four-and-a-half year-old Willis Daily, two year-old Frank Alderdice, and eight-month-old Alice Alderdice. Five years earlier Susanna had been married to James Daily and had lived in Salina. Susanna and James were married in Clay County, Missouri on October 28, 1860. Both Susanna and James were twenty-one years of age when married. James was slightly taller than the average male at that time. Having blue eyes and black hair, he stood five-feet, nine-inches tall. After their marriage in Missouri they moved to Salina, Kansas. Their first son, John, was born in Salina on July 1, 1863. Willis Daily was born October 5, 1864. Less than two months before Susanna gave birth to Willis, James enlisted for service in the Civil War, joining many of his neighbors along with his brother-in-law John Alverson in Company D of the 17<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteer Infantry. James's enlistment was the only one in the company that was for one hundred days. This may have been because of his hardship with a new family and a second child on the way. At any rate, James was detached from his company and stationed at Fort Scott near the Missouri border. James faithfully served his one hundred day enlistment there.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately for James his military service proved deadly. Two days before the expiration of his service commitment James entered the general hospital at Fort Scott and eleven days later, on November 25, he died of ty-

phoid fever. Records are unclear whether he died at Fort Leavenworth or Fort Scott.<sup>35</sup> He did not get to see his second son, and indeed, had he learned of Willis's birth by way of a letter from Susanna, he would have received it at about the time he entered the hospital with his fatal illness. Now widowed, the young Susanna moved back home with her parents, Michael and Mary Zeigler, who also lived in Salina at that time.<sup>36</sup>

Not long after moving back with her parents, Susanna met Tom Alderdice. On June 28, 1866, Susanna married Tom and then moved with him to their homestead along Spillman Creek, about thirty miles west of Salina.<sup>37</sup> Her parents soon followed Susanna, settling a few miles away from her and Tom near present day Beverly, Kansas. As earlier mentioned, Susanna's married life was interrupted with the enlistment of Tom and her seventeen-year-old brother Eli as scouts under Major Forsyth. And as it was with James Daily, Susanna was again pregnant and alone when her husband was away from home in military service. Both Tom and Eli survived the battle of Beecher Island, and by year's end had returned to the Saline valley, where they remained through the winter. It was shortly after Tom's return that Susanna became pregnant with her fifth child. This would have made her about five months pregnant when the May 30 raid occurred.

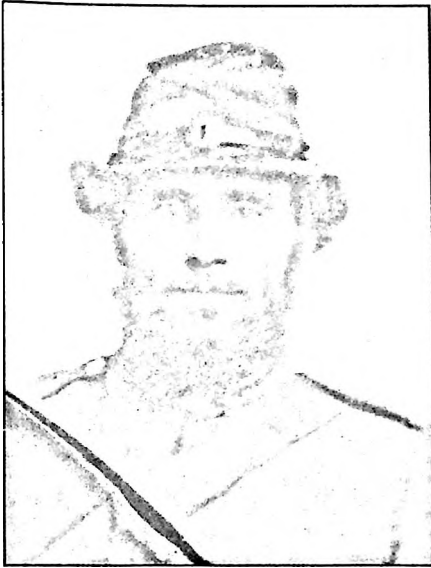
On that fateful Sunday in May, Eli Zeigler and John Alverson were on their way to spend several days tending to an abandoned farmstead several miles north of the settlements along Spillman Creek. During their lunch

with Susanna, she warned them to be careful, as there had been recent reports, which of course Michael Healy heeded, that the Indians were once again committing depredations north along the Solomon River homesteads.<sup>38</sup>

The raid in Lincoln County began in the afternoon, with Eli and John likely being the first victims. Shortly after leaving Susanna, Eli and John noticed a man on horseback riding very fast to the west, from the vicinity of Lost Creek, probably not much more than a mile or so from the Michael Healy homestead. This mystery rider was traveling in the same direction as their intended destination, which was at least eight more miles to the northwest, crossing both Little Timber and Trail Creek before coming to Bacon Creek, where the abandoned claim was. According to Eli, between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., but probably closer to 3 p.m. because of the distance traveled in a wagon since leaving Susanna, they finally crossed Trail Creek and were about half a mile north of its junction with Spillman Creek, where a small Danish settlement was located in what is now Denmark. Eli looked to the southwest across Spillman Creek and saw a party of between forty-five and sixty Indians marching on horseback, giving to him the appearance of being soldiers.

Spotting Eli and John in their wagon, the Indians turned the ponies in the direction of the wagon and rapidly advanced upon them, quickly overcoming the half-mile to mile distance between them. Realizing finally that the "soldiers" were actually Indians, Eli and John turned their wagon back towards Trail Creek, reaching the creek at





*Author's Collection*

Pvt. James Daily, Susanna's first husband, 1864

about the same time the Indians reached them. Fleeing their wagon, Eli and John saw their only hope for survival in seeking shelter along the banks of Trail Creek. Thus secured, the Indians fired at the young men for only a few moments when the Indians decided instead to occupy themselves with the contents of the captured wagon.<sup>39</sup>

At the time the men saw the Indians turn towards them from across Spillman Creek, Eli also saw about fifteen other Indians turn to where Trail Creek joins Spillman Creek, and where the Danish settlement was located. The Indians who stayed for a bit where Eli and John were entrenched soon left and joined the other Indians to the south. Eli and John had survived the beginning of the raid, but did not reach safety until the next morning.<sup>40</sup> It appears the rest of the

raid occurred with these principal Indians at the start, but split up into small groups of from four to nine.

It was at the Danish settlement at present day Denmark where the first citizens were killed. Eskild Lauritzen and his wife Stine were quickly overcome by the Indians. They had been out tending their garden and apparently did not realize the Indians were in the vicinity until too late to return to the safety of their home where they could have made a defense with any weapons they might have been armed with. Because Mrs. Lauritzen was also killed and not captured, some have speculated that Eskild killed his wife Stine rather than see her fall into Indian captivity.<sup>41</sup> If this is so then they must have been armed when confronted by the Indians. The Lauritzens were discovered dead the next day, stripped of their clothing and scalped. Their twelve-year old son had earlier visited at the Christensen home, which housed the families of brothers Petr and Lorentz Christensen, and their wives and Petr's three children.<sup>42</sup> A son of Petr, Hans, was the boy that the Lauritzen child was visiting at the time of the raid.<sup>43</sup> Eskild and Stine Lauritzen were apparently on their way to retrieve their son at the Christensen home when they were surprised by the Indians and killed. A houseguest of the Lauritzens, Otto Peterson, was also killed at this time. When found two days later some distance from where the Lauritzens were found the day before and perhaps on the other side of Spillman Creek,<sup>44</sup> Peterson had been scalped and horribly mutilated about the face.

The Indians next approached the Christensen family. The Christensens

were armed and, apparently hearing the attack upon the Lauritzens, had taken refuge in their home. The Indians tried to set the homestead on fire, but, after considerable effort and time, were unable to do so. They then traveled further south along Spillman Creek to continue their depredations. It is not known whether the Indians separated into smaller groups at the beginning of the raid, or if they all stayed together. It is possible they had separated into smaller groups of from four to nine. Regardless, shortly thereafter and in the same vicinity, about a dozen Indians came upon Fred Meigheroff and George and Maria Weichel.<sup>45</sup> Maria was described as being a beautiful woman twenty years of age. They were either a German or a Swiss family and had been in America just a few weeks when surprised by the Indians.<sup>46</sup> The Weichels, along with Fred, were also temporarily living with the Lauritzens.<sup>47</sup> The Weichels had been encouraged to take a homestead south of the Saline River near Bullfoot Creek, but had met the Lauritzens while visiting at the Schermerhorn ranch and were persuaded by them to move up Spillman Creek, taking their homestead there right before the deadly raid. Had they settled on Bullfoot Creek they likely would have survived the raid.<sup>48</sup> It is possible the Weichels were at their farmstead when the Indians surprised them. This would have been about one mile south of the Lauritzen homestead, along Spillman Creek as it flows towards the Saline. At any rate, being armed, Fred and George fought with the Indians as they apparently tried to flee to the south, probably for the Schermerhorn Ranch, a fortified settlement often occupied by soldiers, and about equal distance further south and

east from the Lauritzen homestead and where the Weichels were finally overtaken by the Indians. They were able to advance more than two and perhaps as far as three miles as they fought off the Indians. Finally, however, they ran out of ammunition and their hope for safety vanished. George and Fred were quickly killed and Maria taken captive.<sup>49</sup>

Where the Weichel's chase came to an end was less than a half a mile north and west of where Susanna, with her four children along with Mr. and Mrs. Noon, Mr. and Mrs. Whalen, and Bridget Kine and her daughter, had been staying at the Michael Healey homestead, as mentioned earlier. However, it was not the gunfire from the northwest where Maria Weichel was captured and her husband and family friend killed that alerted the four families staying at the Healy house that Indians were in the vicinity. Rather, it was Bridget Kine looking towards her house, which was visible from the Healy house, when she heard her husband's black mare and young colt making noise.<sup>50</sup> When she looked to see why they were acting up she was startled to see a large force of Indians stealing the two horses. She momentarily lost awareness of her precarious danger within sight of the Dog Indians. Indeed, when she recovered her senses in a few moments she quickly discovered that she was without protection in the house, as the Whalens and Noons had already forged their escape from the Indians. Both families had left on horseback, quickly making their escape in the opposite direction from that of the Indians.<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, however, this left Susanna and Mrs. Kine alone with their children and without any

means of defense.<sup>52</sup> Safety had vanished by staying in the house. Believing their only hope for escape was to hide in the thick brush and trees alongside the Saline River, Bridget and Susanna with their children quickly left the Healy house and fled the quarter mile to where the Saline River flowed. About forty or sixty yards from the river Susanna realized the Indians had discovered her, and in a mournful plea to Mrs. Kine, asked for help for her and her children. Mrs. Kine replied that she could not help her and that she must save her own child.

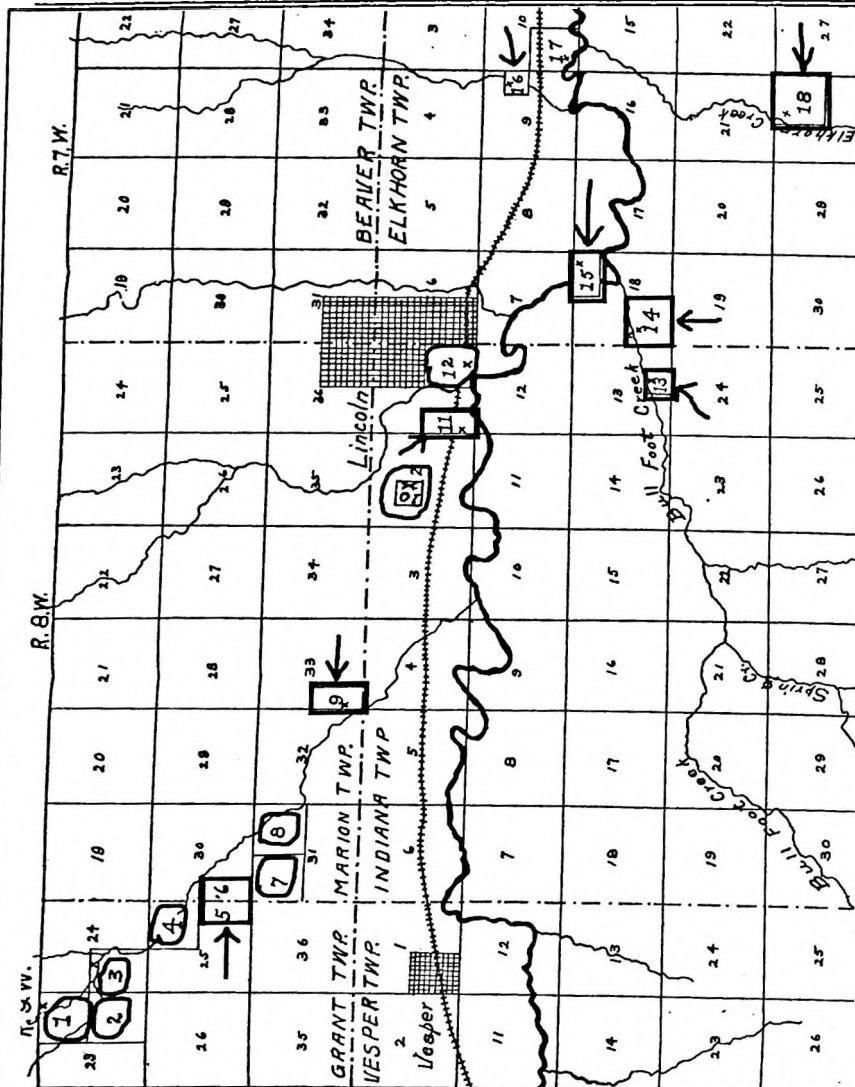
At the last possible moment of escape Bridget reached the banks of the Saline, quickly waded through the water and hid herself on the other side in a clump of dogwood, holding her smiling two-month old baby in her arms.<sup>53</sup> Indians looked for her but were unable to find her. Mrs. Kine remained hidden near the river throughout the night and the next day was reunited with her husband at the Schermerhorn ranch.<sup>54</sup> It was reported years later that Mrs. Kine, while hiding, had heard the Indians speak fluent English while searching for her, saying that there should be two women instead of one. This led some people to say that perhaps some of the perpetrators were white horse thieves disguised as Indians, motivated to influence the Kansas settlers into another war against the Indians by having them blamed for the Spillman Creek outrage.<sup>55</sup>

Susanna, meantime, unable to reach the banks of the Saline with her children, no doubt carrying her two youngest in her arms, sat down on the ground and in sheer terror awaited the Indians to overtake her. Upon reaching her, the Indians were absolutely brutal to

Susanna and her children. They shot and killed five year-old John, putting four bullets in his body. They put five arrows into two year-old Frank, then grabbed him by his heels and bashed his brains out on the ground. Four year-old Willis was hit with five arrows in his back, shot twice and also speared in the back. Somehow, amidst her screams the Indians permitted Susanna to keep eight month-old Alice. While tying her feet to a pony, other Indians stripped the three boys of their clothing and covered them in thick brush.<sup>56</sup>

The Indians were not through with their raid. They continued east along the Saline for about another mile when they turned to the south. It is not clear whether this last part of the raid occurred simultaneous to Susanna's capture or after, or whether it was the same party that committed the depredations against Susanna's family or another party of Tall Bull's Dog soldiers. Indeed, some time sequences have this next depredation occurring at about the same time as when the raid began in mid-afternoon.<sup>57</sup> Regardless, two Indians approached two boys, John Strange and Arthur Schmutz, both about fourteen years old. The Indians then said they were good Pawnee Indians, causing the boys to relax their stance. Suddenly, one of the Indians, a boy of about the same age as the young settlers, took his war club and struck the Strange boy in the head, killing him instantly while thus breaking his war club. Strange only had time to utter the words "Oh Lordy" as he was struck. An arrow was then put into his head.

Arthur Schmutz then began to run but was struck by an arrow in his side. Though wounded, he continued to run and somehow managed to pull the shaft



1. Where Zeigler and Alverson were overtaken and horses stolen.
2. Lorentz Christiansen's farm.
3. Petr Christiansen's farm where E. Lauritzen and wife, Stine and Otto Petersen were killed and buried.
4. Where Petersen, Lauritzen, Meigherhoff, Weichell and wives lived.
- 5-6. O. Petersen's farm, he had no house.
- 7-8. Meigherhoff and Weichell's farm, they had no house.
9. Soldier's camp.
10. Where Meigherhoff and Weichell were killed and buried, and Mrs. Weichell taken prisoner.
11. Where Mrs. Alderdice was taken prisoner and her children killed.
12. Soldier's camp and Indian burial ground.
13. Stone cave and Indian camp where skulls were found.
14. F. Erhardt's farm where soldiers were camped May 30th, 1869.
15. Where the Strange boy was killed and the Schmutz boy wounded.
16. Where the Moffitt brothers, Houston and Tyler were killed and buried.
17. The Moffitt farm.
18. The Schermerhorn farm and store.

out, but leaving the metal arrow point stuck in his lung. After a short flight his two younger brothers, aged twelve and nine, hearing the commotion, came to his aid with a rifle and ammunition. The Indian boy then retreated. Young Schmutz was soon taken to Fort Harker, where he died ten and a half weeks later. Unable to extract the arrow point from his lung, the metal eventually acted as a poison to him, slowly killing him.<sup>58</sup>

After these final killings, the Indians were said to have camped on the south side of the Saline River, along Bullfoot Creek, probably within a mile south and west of where Susanna was captured, which was about a quarter mile east of where Spillman Creek joins the Saline River.<sup>59</sup> The raiding was over around 6 p.m. The great irony here is that at about the same time the raid ended, G company of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, out of Fort Harker and under the command of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Edward Law, had arrived and set up camp on the north side of the Saline River near the mouth of Bullfoot Creek, between two and three miles southwest from where Susanna was captured.<sup>60</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. T. J. March quickly learned of the raid along Spillman Creek and went with a detail of thirty men to pursue the Indians. George Green, a former Beecher Island scout who lived within a mile of Timothy Kine but was tending to business a few miles from his home when the raid occurred, was with the soldiers, having been one of the first settlers to report the raid to the cavalry. He noted that the soldiers, after a chase of several miles, came upon several Indians in possession of the Kine mare and foal, along with four other horses belonging to Frank Schermerhorn.<sup>61</sup> The soldiers had

searched a distance of fifteen miles, back over the area of the raid and then southwest, where they then came upon a few Indians resting these ponies.

The Indians fled, however, when fired upon, taking with them the stolen horses. Darkness finally forced the cavalry to return to camp, where they arrived around midnight.<sup>62</sup> It appears from this fact, then, that the whole of the raiding Indians did not camp near the raided settlement, though it is possible a small party of Dog Soldiers did indeed camp near the soldier camp, as Eli Zeigler later said.<sup>63</sup>

Though the raid was now over, for Susanna, her sufferings were only beginning. As already noted, on the third day of her captivity, the Indians, annoyed with young Alice's crying, and probably also motivated with their malice towards Susanna, killed little Alice. Accounts from Maria Weichell, after her rescue at Summit Springs, say Alice was strangled and her limp body hung in a tree, or beheaded and her body parts thrown into a creek.<sup>64</sup> Major Carr indicated in his official report of the fight at Summit Springs that Alice was strangled on the third day of her captivity.<sup>65</sup> Hercules Price, who was at Summit Springs, years later said that Henry Voss, trumpeter of G Company, who was to later die next to Custer at the Little Bighorn,<sup>66</sup> acted as Maria's interpreter, as she could not speak English. Voss, then, would have informed Carr of the account given in Carr's report. It seems likely then, that Alice did live for three days in captivity before she was killed. Regardless, either manner of murder was sufficiently horrible for Susanna to endure, even more so when one factors in what it must have taken for Susanna to have prevented Alice's

murder when her boys were murdered at her capture.

Susanna and Maria remained captives for six weeks, until July 11, when Major Carr, with seven companies of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and one hundred-fifty Pawnee scouts and Buffalo Bill acting as Chief of Scouts, relentlessly searching for the Indians responsible for the Spillman Creek raid, finally located them at Summit Springs, in northeastern Colorado. Between 2 and 3 p.m., Carr made his surprise charge into the village. He did not have available for duty all of his command, due to exhaustion of the horses. Carr was however, able to muster for the attack two hundred forty-four officers and soldiers and fifty Pawnee Indians. Though there is doubt by some historians, in all probability Buffalo Bill was present at the beginning of the charge and participated in the fight.<sup>67</sup>

Tall Bull's village of eighty-four teepees was completely surprised. The Indians had been pursued several days from the southeast and were not expecting Carr to be able to flank and surprise them, which he did when his attack originated from the northwest. Indeed, Tall Bull's plan was to rest at Summit Springs until the next day, when he would then cross the South Platte River about twelve miles to the north of his Summit Springs camp. Had he done this he would have been able to escape into the vast regions of Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas, making it much less likely that he could have been found. It was because of hard marching without the benefit of water for the horses that only about half of Carr's force was able to participate in the opening of the fight. Leaving his camp on Frenchman's Fork at 5:30 a.m. that

morning, by the time of the attack Carr had already marched his men a distance of thirty-five miles.<sup>68</sup>

Tall Bull's Dog Soldier village was comprised of at least five hundred Indians, of which anywhere from two hundred to four hundred-fifty were warriors.<sup>69</sup> Carr's memoirs mention a village of four hundred warriors and at least seven hundred women and children.<sup>70</sup> The Indians were totally surprised by the attack. Carr had placed the three leading companies into two parallel columns and then charged a distance of over a mile, mostly in concealment behind two hills. Coming over the second hill the lead column of soldiers and Pawnee Indians were but about one hundred yards away from the village. The soldiers were so quickly upon the Indian village that the Dog Soldiers for the most part fled and put up little resistance. Tall Bull, along with nineteen other warriors, did make a final stand about a half-mile south and east from the village, where there was a deep set of bluffs or ravines. All died there after a short resistance.

Carr's report notes that a total of fifty-two warriors were killed. Seventeen women and children were captured. Indian accounts reveal several dead women and children, most if not all of them killed by Pawnees.<sup>71</sup> Susanna was found at the southwest end of the village, near Tall Bull's teepee. She had been tomahawked and shot above the eye.<sup>72</sup> Maria was nearby, wounded with a bullet that had passed through her body and lodged in the flesh of her left breast. The fight was over by 6 p.m.

Shortly after the fight ended and the Indian camp was secured by the military, a terrific hail and lightning storm

*Author's Collection*

*Susanna's capture by Indians* artwork by James Davis Nelson, Lincoln, KS

proceeded to pound upon the village, forcing the soldiers to seek shelter in the captured lodges. The storm was so fierce that lightning struck and killed a horse while a soldier was sitting upon it. The soldier was unharmed. That night, while the storm was raging,

Susanna was prepared for burial by surgeon Louis Tesson. Her captivity, along with Maria's, had been a period of horrible brutality. According to Carr, both women had been repeatedly beaten and outraged, Maria becoming impregnated by the Indians.<sup>73</sup> One primary source

account describes their condition as "pitiful beyond any power of mind to portray."<sup>74</sup>

At 8 a.m. the next morning, July 12, amid clear skies, Susanna was buried "in the midst of the village" near where she had been found dying the day before.<sup>75</sup> Wrapped in a buffalo robe and two lodge skins, a burial service was read over her grave and she was given a formal military salute. A deep grave had been dug in which she was buried. Carr's report says "A headboard marks the grave with an inscription stating that we knew of her."<sup>76</sup> Her grave today is unmarked.

The goods discovered in the village were enormous. Among things inventoried were the following: dozens of rifles and revolvers, seventeen sabers, six hundred ninety buffalo robes, three hundred sixty-one saddles, sixty-seven brass/iron camp kettles, ten tons of various Indian property, and numerous articles stolen from pioneers during the vicious Indian raids. Gruesome among the Indian goods was a necklace made of white human fingers. When Maria was captured she witnessed the Indians cutting off her husband's finger. She believed it was to take the ring from his finger. Perhaps his finger was cut to add to a necklace. The ring was found in the village and given back to Maria at her rescue.<sup>77</sup> Carr ordered the village to be destroyed. The next morning no less than one hundred-sixty fires were simultaneously burning, necessary in order to destroy the captured property to keep it from falling back into Indian hands.

Susanna's sad murder at Susanna Springs is not, however, the end of her story. Within this horrible family trag-

edy, there is an amazing, nearly unbelievable story of human triumph. For the day after the raid on Spillman Creek, May 31, some citizens, accompanying soldiers of Company G of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, retracing the path of the raid, came upon where Susanna had been captured and her boys killed.<sup>78</sup> A soldier moving about thick brush, discovered the hidden dead boys, each covered in the brush and stripped naked.<sup>79</sup> Four year-old Willis, however, lying next to his dead brothers, was unconscious but still alive! Four of the metal arrow points, lodged in various places in his back, were easily removed. One arrow, however, struck him with such force that it would have inevitably traveled through his little body except that it struck the gristle of his breastbone (i.e., the sternum), where it was lodged, fully five inches deep.<sup>80</sup> Citizens were unable to remove it until they applied a bullet mold used in the form of pliers.<sup>81</sup> Willis survived and was raised by Susanna's parents, Michael and Mary Zeigler.

As of 1910, when Christian Bernhardt published his *Indian Raids in Lincoln County, Kansas, 1864 and 1869*, all that was known of Willis Daily was that he had recovered and was living in Blue Rapids, Kansas, north of Manhattan. Now, however, the rest of the Willis Daily story can be told. Willis received a pension from his father's military service until he reached sixteen years of age.<sup>82</sup> He walked with a limp in his left leg the remainder of his life.<sup>83</sup> On March 25, 1886 he married Mary Twibell. Together they had three children, James, Anna and Elsie. In 1893 he moved with his family to Marshall County, four



miles east of Blue Rapids, where Willis remained until he died in his home on June 16, 1920. For the last three years of his life he suffered greatly from a sarcoma tumor.<sup>84</sup> After his death Willis was brought back to Lincoln County and buried in the Spillman Cemetery in Ash Grove, next to the graves of his wife's parents. His family believed his cancer might have been related to his Indian wounds of 1869.<sup>85</sup>

Willis's son, James Alfred Daily, who was named after Willis's father, died in Denver in 1954. Willis's daughter Anna married Bill Waters and eventually moved to California. Elsie married Jake Horton and had a daughter, Bernice, and a son, Gene. Bernice grew up and wed Wilbert Henry Graepler. They raised their family of five children in Arizona.

When Willis died in 1920, seven cemetery plots were purchased at the Spillman Cemetery for Willis's family. When Mary Daily died in 1948, she was buried in the plot next to where Willis rests. The other five plots have remained unused. If Susanna's unmarked grave can be located at Summit Springs it would be possible for Susanna to be brought out of her Indian captivity and reburied next to her son Willis. Willis's two brothers killed when he was himself wounded were later buried on their grandfather's section of land near Lincoln. There is the further possibility that these unmarked graves can also be located and removed to rest next to Willis and their mother at Spillman Cemetery.

Libbie Custer's account of her anguishing interview with an unknown "distracted man" during a brief visit to Ft. Leavenworth has now been filled in.

That sad June day in Libbie's life in 1869 was marked by a heart-wrenching conversation with Tom Alderdice, an encounter that haunted Libbie and remained in her memory, no doubt, the rest of her life. Susanna's sad story, though, has an amazing story of survival in the life of her young son, Willis. Today, one hundred thirty-three years later, Susanna's blood continues to flow and remains warm in the descendants of Willis Daily.

<sup>1</sup> The motive for this no doubt came from Custer's education at West Point. In his classes on classical philosophy Custer would have learned of Aristotle's theory of ethics. Aristotle wrote in the *Nicomachean Ethics* on the good life, describing it as a life filled with virtue. The virtues, according to Aristotle, are acquired by way of practice until finally entrenched as habit. Sympathy, then, is developed when one is around situations where sympathy is meant to flourish. Hence the need for Libbie to listen to the story Custer had just heard.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth B. Custer, *Following the Guidon* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1890), 224-225.

<sup>3</sup> Judith P. Justus, "The Saga of Clara Blinn at the Battle of the Washita," *Research Review: The Journal of the Little Big Horn Associates*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Winter, 2000, 11-20.

<sup>4</sup> Lonnie J. White, "White Women Captives of Southern Plains Indians, 1866-1875," *Journal of the West*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 335-338.

<sup>5</sup> David Dixon, "Custer and the Sweetwater Hostages," in *Custer and His Times, Book Three*, edited by Gregory J. W. Urwin (University of Central Arkansas Press and the Little Big Horn Associates, Inc., 1987), 82.

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence A. Frost, *The Court-Martial of General George Armstrong Custer* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), 265-266.

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence A. Frost, *General Custer's Libbie* (Seattle: Superior Publishing Company, 1976), 174.

<sup>8</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 3, 1869.

<sup>9</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 22 & 24, 1869.

<sup>10</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 20, 1869. Blaine Burkey, in *Custer. Come at Once!* (Hays, KS: Society of Friends of Historic Fort Hays, 1991, 81) as far as I can tell, is the first author to make the connection between Tom Alderdice's interview and Elizabeth Custer's account of her conversation with a "distracted man" in *Following the Guidon*.

<sup>11</sup> Eugene A. Carr, *Personal Memoirs*, unpublished manuscript on microfilm file, MS2688, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE, 220.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Alderdice, Pension File, Record Group 94, National Archives.

<sup>14</sup> William McConnell Diary, Bates Collection, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument Library Collections, emphasis added. Copy also on file at the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS. LBBNM Historian John Doerner identifies the author as William McConnell.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Lynam, editor, *The Beecher Island Annual: Sixty-Second Anniversary of the Battle of Beecher Island September 17, 18, 1868* (Wray, CO: The Beecher Island Battle Memorial Association, 1930), 105.

<sup>16</sup> Muster Roll, June/August, 1869, Companies A and M, 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Cavalry, Record Group 94, National Archives.

<sup>17</sup> Marvin H. Crawford, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier 1866-1867," *The Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4, August 1932, 344.

<sup>18</sup> Stan Hoig, *Tribal Wars of the Southern Plains* (Norman, OK: Oklahoma University Press, 1993), 239-240.

<sup>19</sup> Gary Leland Roberts, *Sand Creek: Tragedy and Symbol* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI University Dissertation Services, 1984), 596-597.

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth N. Barr, *A Souvenir History of Lincoln County, Kansas* (Lincoln, KS: self-published, 1908), 33.

<sup>21</sup> This child would have been Alice Alderdice. Tom's service with the Forsyth scouts was for four months, from August 28 to December 31, 1868 (U. S. Senate Report, Calendar No. 303, 63<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Report No. 356, National Archives, 24). If Alice was eight months old when killed by the Indians, as indicated in the *Leavenworth Times and Conservative* interview with Tom, she would have been born around October 1, while Tom was in service under Forsyth. This also helps to point out how far along in pregnancy Susanna was with her fifth child when she was murdered on July 11. She would not have been pregnant prior to January 1, 1869. She was likely pregnant within her first menstrual cycle after Tom returned in early January, thus making her no more than 6 month's pregnant when she was murdered.

<sup>22</sup> Eli Zeigler's pension file application, dated March 22, 1915, and signed by Eli, states his birthday as June 12, 1852. This would make him barely sixteen years old when engaged at Beecher Island. His pension file however, contains an earlier statement, also signed by Eli, which states that he was seventeen at the time of Beecher Island. Eli Zeigler Pension File, National Archives, Record Group 94.

<sup>23</sup> John Monnett, *The Battle of Beecher Island and the Indian War of 1867-1869* (Niwtot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1992), 181.

<sup>24</sup> Stan Hoig, *The Battle of the Washita* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1976), 74.

<sup>25</sup> John M. Carroll, edited, *General Custer and the Battle of the Washita: The Federal View* (Byron, TX: Guidon Press, 1978), 38-42.

<sup>26</sup> David Dixon, "Custer and the Sweetwater Hostages," 82-108.

<sup>27</sup> James T. King, *War Eagle: A Life of Eugene A. Carr* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 95.

<sup>28</sup> *Chronological List of Actions, Etc., With Indians From January 15, 1837 to January, 1891* (Old Army Press, 1979), 40.

<sup>29</sup> Blaine Burkey, *Custer, Come at Once!*, 78.

<sup>30</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 20 and June 30, 1869.

<sup>31</sup> Christian Bernhardt, *Indian Raids in Lincoln County Kansas, 1864 & 1869* (Lincoln, KS: The Lincoln Sentinel Print, 1910), 30. See also Timothy Kine Indian Depredation Claim 7455, Affidavit to Indian Agent Michael Piggot, August 27, 1890, National Archives, Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Timothy Kine Depredations Claim.

<sup>34</sup> Muster Roll, Company D, 17<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Kansas Infantry, copy on file at the Kansas Room of the Salina Public Library.

<sup>35</sup> James A. Daily Military Service Record and Pension Record, National Archives, Record Group 94.

<sup>36</sup> 1865 Kansas State Census Roll, Kansas Room, Salina Public Library.

<sup>37</sup> Copy of marriage Certificate for Susanna and Tom Alderdice, in the possession of Tom's great granddaughter, Janie Trotter. See also Judy Magnuson Lilly, "Susan's Story," *Kanhistique*, April, 1986, 11.

<sup>38</sup> Adolph Roenigk, *Pioneer History of Kansas*, (Self-published, 1933), 215.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 215-217.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 217-220.

<sup>41</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 34.

<sup>42</sup> Dorothe Tarrence Homan, *Lincoln - That County In Kansas* (Lindsborg, KS: Bardos' Printing, 1979), 42.

<sup>43</sup> Conversation with Virgil Christensen, grandson to Hans Christensen, November 2000.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 28, 29, 40.

<sup>45</sup> Carr, *Personal Memoirs*, 220.

<sup>46</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 27, indicates rather definitively that Weichel and Meigerhoff were from Switzerland and not Hanover. However, Major Carr, in his official report summarizing the fight at Summit

Springs where Maria was rescued, reports from his translator, Henry Voss (Maria could only speak German), that she was from Hanover, Germany. Perhaps Maria was from Germany and her husband and Meigerhoff from Switzerland. See Carr, Republican River Expedition Report, National Archives, Record Group 94.

<sup>47</sup> Homan, *Lincoln*, 44.

<sup>48</sup> Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 113.

<sup>49</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 29; Elizabeth Barr, *Souvenir History*, 38; Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 212.

<sup>50</sup> Timothy Kine Indian Depredation Claim.

<sup>51</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 31.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Ruby Ahring, of the Lincoln County Historical Society, informed the author of the proper spelling for Mrs. Kyne, as opposed to the most common spelling found in the literature as Mrs. Kine, or Kline. However, I found the spelling as Kine in the Indian Depredations File of Timothy Kine, which was signed that way by Timothy. Mrs. Kine could not read or write and her testimony was signed with an 'X.' Because of this I have chosen to maintain the "Kine" spelling.

<sup>53</sup> Barr, *Souvenir History*, 39. See also account in Kine Depredation File.

<sup>54</sup> Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 213; Nell Brown Propst, *Forgotten People: A History of the South Platte Trail* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing CO, 1979), 115.

Bernhardt makes a different claim. He says that sometime during the night or early the next morning Mrs. Kine made it to the Ferdinand Erhardt home (Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 31). If this is correct, then shortly after that Mrs. Kine, perhaps accompanying the Erhardt family, arrived at the Schermerhorn ranch. The Kine Depredation File is definitive that Timothy met his wife the next day at the Schermerhorn ranch.

<sup>55</sup> Thelma J. McMullin, "Hats Off to the Builders of Lincoln County," *The Lincoln County Sentinel-Republican*, Lincoln, Kansas, Thursday, November 23, 1939. The *New York Times*, June 2, 1869, copying an

earlier report from St. Louis, did note the belief that some of the depredators at the Fossil Creek attack on May 28, two days before the Spillman Creek raid, were believed to be white men. But these were not men who wanted to start an Indian war for their own gain, rather, these white men, if indeed present with the raiding Indians, were themselves members of the Dog society. The *Junction City Weekly Union*, November 28, 1868, explains the make-up of the Dog Soldier society as "Indians driven out of various tribes for cowardice and other crimes, who have banded themselves together until they have become a dangerous tribe. They are called the Dog Soldiers because the vilest word an Indian can use is to call a man a dog, hence these outcasts and freebooters are thus designated, and by reason of their excellent drill they are called soldiers. Among these, as among all other tribes are many *white men, who live with the Indians and are the very worst of their class* - nein who are not allowed to live with us (emphasis added)."

<sup>56</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 20, 1869. Conversation with Willis Daily's granddaughter, Bernice Horton Graepler, Nov. 19, 2000. See also *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 1, 2 & 3, 1869; *Junction City Weekly Union*, June 5, 1869; Col. Ray G. Sparks, *Reckoning at Summit Springs* (Kansas City, MO: Lowell Press, 1969), 34.

<sup>57</sup> Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 220.

<sup>58</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 20, 1869. 1870 Mortality Schedule of Kansas shows Schmutz dying August 12, 1869. Denver Public Library (This document was kindly shared with me by Delores Young). Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 220, believes this last killing was done by another party of Indians, and before Susanna was captured.

<sup>59</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 30.

<sup>60</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, July 3, 1869, reports that some of the soldiers actually heard the shots being fired from the direction of the Spillman Creek

junction with the Saline, which would have been where Susanna was attacked, but did not think the shots they heard had been fired by Indians.

<sup>61</sup> Timothy Kine Indian Depredation File.

<sup>62</sup> Sparks, *Reckoning*, 38-40.

<sup>63</sup> Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 219.

<sup>64</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 30. Barr, *Souvenir History*, 39. Roenigk, *Pioneer History*, 213.

<sup>65</sup> Carr to Ruggles, July 25, 1869. National Archives.

<sup>66</sup> Henry Voss's third enlistment was with the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. On June 25, 1876 Voss was Chief Trumpeter with Custer. Some accounts list his body as being discovered at or near Deep Ravine, and other accounts have him found dead near the body of Custer. See Kenneth Hammer, edited, *Custer in '76: Walter Camp's Notes on the Custer Fight* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 136, 139. See also Ron H. Nichols, *Men With Custer: Biographies of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry June 25, 1876*, Revised Edition (Hardin, MT: Custer Battlefield Historical & Museum Association, Inc., 2000), 341.

<sup>67</sup> The best source analyzing Cody's involvement with Summit Springs can be found in Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1960), 129-148.

<sup>68</sup> Lt. William J. Volkmar, Journal of the March, Republican River Expedition, Journal entry for July 11, 1869, Record Group 98, National Archives.

<sup>69</sup> James T. King, *War Eagle*, 116.

<sup>70</sup> Carr, *Personal Memoirs*, 36, 220.

<sup>71</sup> George Bird Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (Williamstown, MA: Corner House Publishers, 1976), 302-304. Originally published in 1915.

<sup>72</sup> Carr, *Personal Memoirs*, 220.

<sup>73</sup> A claim was made by Hercules Price, at the time of the fight at Susanna Springs an enlisted man assigned to Carr's Signal Corps, that Maria was well gone in pregnancy ("heavy in the family way") when

rescued. (Price Letters, Kansas State Historical Society, letter dated January 19, 1908.) If Price is correct then Maria was pregnant by marriage, not captivity. At any rate she gave birth to a baby girl in 1869 at an Omaha hospital, naming her Minnie Weichel. Minnie later married and lived in San Francisco under the name of Mrs. B. Worthman. See letter, dated 1902 at the Kansas State Historical Society where Mrs. Worthman writes the Kansas Adjutant General for information regarding her mother's capture, rescue, and Minnie's subsequent birth in Omaha, where Maria made an affidavit regarding her captivity.

<sup>74</sup> Cyrus Townsend Brady, *Indian Fights and Fighters* (New York, NY: McClure, Phillips & CO, 1904), 178.

<sup>75</sup> Lt. William J. Volkmar, "Journal of the March of the Republican River Expedition, July 12, 1869."

<sup>76</sup> Information on the battle taken from Major Carr's July 20, 1869 letter to General Ruggles. National Archives.

<sup>77</sup> Price, *Letters*, letter dated January 19, 1908.

<sup>78</sup> Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, 29. Barr, *Souvenir History*, 39.

<sup>79</sup> Conversation with Bernice Horton Graepler, Willis Daily's granddaughter, Nov. 19, 2000.

<sup>80</sup> *Leavenworth Times and Conservative*, June 20, 1869.

<sup>81</sup> Barr, *Souvenir History*, 39.

<sup>82</sup> James A. Daily Military and Pension Record.

<sup>83</sup> Conversation with granddaughter Bernice Horton Graepler, Nov. 19, 2000.

<sup>84</sup> Obituary, *Blue Rapids Times*, June, 1920.

<sup>85</sup> Conversation and correspondence with Bernice Horton Graepler and son Hank, November, 2000.

## Over the Corral Rail

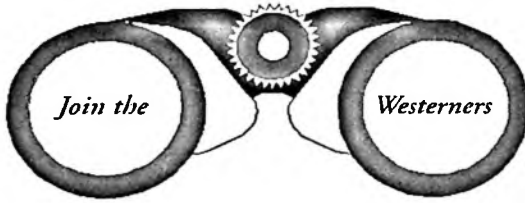


The Westerners mourn the passing of longtime friend, Bob Staadt.

Bob was born in 1918 near Ottawa, KS, and attended local public schools. He married Florence in 1941. Bob served in the army during World War II.

After moving to Denver in the 1950s, Bob worked for Stearns Rogers Engineering, where he designed the doors for NORAD under Cheyenne Mountain, and the 32-wheel support system for movable launch system for the Titan missile.

Bob was a pioneer member of the Aurora Historical Society, a member of the Ghost Town Club and the Front Range Antique Power Assoc. He was a Posse member of the Denver Westerners, and he and wife Flo were the 1999 recipients of the Rosenstock Lifetime Achievement Award.



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## Westerners Bookshelf



**General William S. Harney: Prince of Dragoons** by George R. Adams. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001. 389 pp. 10 photographs, 10 maps, bibliography, index. Hardcover:\$50.00.

The dust jacket photograph of this book shows the face of a kindly gentleman with handsome features, white hair, and a neatly trimmed beard and mustache. Not evident are his penetrating blue eyes and six foot three inch height. He looks like the type of person who would be a welcomed guest in any 1850s parlor, but think again. The photograph is of William S. Harney, a violent, foul-mouthed, impulsive, quick-tempered general who had a special gift for getting into and out of trouble.

He joined the army in 1818 when he was seventeen years old; within two years he had been court martialled twice and then promoted. He had considerable capacity for contentious behavior and often argued with senior officers. A military trial was the outcome, but the penalty was only a reprimand or suspended sentence. These problems made no lasting impression on Harney, other than to confirm that he could defy authority and get away with it. His ability, enthusiasm, and political connections consistently saved his career and allowed him to advance rapidly.

Harney excelled as a fighter. He led dragoons in the Black Hawk War of 1832 and in the Seminole War that started in 1835. Harney was a capable, inspiring leader, composed under fire, had a good eye for defense, and had excellent wilderness survival ability. From these wars, he emerged as one of the army's most skilled and best-known Indian fighters, and also as the most brutal and vindictive.

Inactivity was his worst enemy. When there was little to do he sometimes became irrational when provoked and his violent temper usually erupted. During one such eruption, he beat a female slave to death. He was tried for murder but acquitted. Harney learned nothing from the experience and he often beat the men serving under him. Officers could get away with this, but Harney carried it too far. He was arrested, charges were filed, and in the end, he was promoted.

General Harney is best remembered for his campaign against the Plains Indians that started in 1855. He waged total war where little concern was given for the safety of noncombatants and all property found was destroyed. He never expressed remorse when innocent men, women, and children were killed in battle. The end justified the means.

But Harney wasn't all villain. Following the Civil War, he was recalled from retirement and placed in charge of the Indians in the Dakota Territory. He sympathized with the native people in their difficult circumstances. General Harney supplied them with food, housing, farming implements, and education, and made sure that white traders did not cheat them. He carried out all of the terms in the treaty and in doing so overspent his budget. This he justified by stating that the money was necessary to "end the perfidy and outrages" which characterized pervasive dealings with Native Americans.

This book is a long, detailed biography that reads like a novel. The author has done a commendable job of weaving together information contained in thousands of documents to produce a fascinating story of a general that was half hero and more than half rascal.

--Richard C. Barth C.M.

**Art and Faith in Mexico: The Nineteenth-Century Retablo Tradition.** Edited by Elizabeth Netto Calil Zarur and Charles Muir Lovell. University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 360 pages, 125 color plates, 64 halftones. Cloth: \$50.00/paper: \$29.95.

With the political turmoil of nineteenth-century Mexico, many religious practices moved from the church to the home. Sacred paintings on tin (retablos) flourished during this time along the Camino Real between Mexico City and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

This book includes essays, plus restoration philosophy and conservation methods, a glossary, chronology, maps and a comprehensive section on the art and iconography of these extraordinary objects from the New Mexico State University Art Gallery collection. The abundance of color plates and halftones make for a delightful journey through the complex society that it represents.

The concise, but informative text, is double spaced and very easy to read. The first part of the book is in essay form with the catalogue raisonné in numerical order with the text in the second half of the book. An excellent, researched, organized format. If you would take advantage of the list of references it could make one an 'expert' on the subject. A virtual course in appreciating the history of the peoples of Mexico, their art, devotions and beliefs of the nineteenth-century time period.

Ms. Zarur teaches art at New Mexico State University and Mr. Lovell is director of the Art Gallery at New Mexico State University. Their combined efforts in editing this book is academic, informative, but most of all enjoyable. A must for those interested in art history, folk art, religious art and history of the influences of that time and place.

--Max Smith P.M.



**Under Army Orders: The Army National Guard during the Korean War**, by William M. Donnelly. Texas A & M University Press, College Station, 2001. 271 pages. Text, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$34.95.

The Korean War is known as the War no one remembers, but to the over 138,000 National Guardsmen who were called into active service it is indeed a time and a war to remember. This book documents their trials and tribulations as citizen-soldiers.

*Under Army Orders* starts by telling the status of the National Guard during the years 1945 to 1950. It tells of indecision and infighting between the Regular Army and the National Guard Organization (NGO). The NGO defended the National Guard troops who had fought honorably during World War II, but had come home to be demobilized. Just to start all over as a unit of civilians, who were entrusted with being a well organized trained reserve to the Regular Army. The Regular Army, as it had all through World War II, did not trust nor believe the National Guard Units were a capable fighting force. There was infighting between the officer corps of the two groups as to who was to be promoted, who was to be retained in the service, and who was to be in command positions.

As the mobilization began in July 1950, the same problems that occurred in 1940 with mobilization of the National Guard were present. There was not enough equipment, much of what there was, was outdated. Units were under staffed, both non-commissioned officers and officers were untrained and inexperienced, and unit training was not up to standard in most instances.

Military historian, William M. Donnelly gives a minute by minute description of National Guard units trying to get ready for combat in the Korean conflict and in an overseas location. He follows the 45th Division and their problems as they were mobilized, went to Korea, and their combat history in detail. He also follows several other units through mobilization.

Other National Guard units that were sent to Europe as buffer units in case the war escalated to include Europe are documented. One chapter is devoted to the problems, which were many, of the units that were mobilized but did not leave the continental United States. The last chapter tells individual stories of some of the hardships, problems, etc., of individuals within the National Guard units.

*Under Army Orders* has several appendixes that are of interest, the notes are extensive and if followed closely while reading the book they prove very interesting.

If the reader was involved in a National Guard Unit at any time, or especially during the Korean War, this book will prove very interesting reading. As a former National Guardsman, it was like reading my own National Guard units history, which took place from 1940 through 1945.

--Ken Gaunt, P.M.

**NO ONE AILING EXCEPT A PHYSICIAN**, *Medicine in the Mining West*, by Duane Smith and Ronald C. Brown. University of Colorado Press, 2001. 184 pages, 28 black and white photographs, map, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$50.00

I am indebted to Keith for assigning this book to me for review. This is not a book for the casual reader, but it is a book for the physician seriously interested in the ills associated with mining or for the student of mining history studying the medical problems of various mining communities. It begins with the placer mining communities of the California Gold Rush of 1849 and ends with the travail of corporation dominated mining of the two decades from 1900 to the end of World War I.

Along the way are essays on the Colorado Gold Rush and its changes from placer to hard rock mining, the hard rock mining of Nevada, and the Alaskan Gold Rush of '98. Multiple communities of the mining states of California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, and Idaho are described. There is a dismaying, but necessary, repetition of the common ills, which afflicted all the camps. Superimposed on these were the special problems of specific localities such as altitude, climate, and 150 degree working temperatures found in very deep shafts such as in the Comstock.

Medically, the book notes that in the remote camps, with the rule of folk medicine, things had not advanced beyond 13<sup>th</sup> century European medicine and perhaps not that far. One remedy of a poultice of fresh cow manure is cited! As mining practices advanced, the medical practices did not.

The utter absence of safety precautions in the early days and the proliferation of accidents due to deep shafts and heavy equipment is traced to the developing safety considerations of the World War I era.

Each chapter is extensively annotated and a bibliographic essay concludes the book. In short, the medicine of the mining camps ranges from primeval to primitive. This reviewer notes that the admonition from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Salerno Regimen, "May God grant medicine you may never need," could aptly be applied to western mining over the years.\*

As a physician who has lived on the periphery of mining communities, I found this book instructive as to the evolution of mining procedures. Its correlation of problems with technical developments in mining techniques was instructive. The overall background of the abysmal state of medical practice over the 70 years involved is raw history. This book is a graphic illustration of the statement "if more gold rush participants had understood mining, they never would have gone West."

‘...And here I cease to write, but will not cease  
To wish you live in health, and die in peace:  
And ye our Physic rules that friendly read,  
Gold grant that Physic you may never need.’

Regimen Sanitatos Salernitanum  
From "A History of Medicine"  
Guthrie, Douglas  
J. B. Lippincott Company, 1946,  
Page 110

--Henry W. Toll, Jr., M.D., J.D., P.M.

**Sarah Winnemucca** by Sally Zanjani University of Nebraska Press, 2001. Features: xiv, 369 pp, 20 photographs, 2 maps, index. Cloth, \$29.95

In this fascinating work, we are treated to details of the life of one of the most famous of Paiute "leaders". As a female Native American, Sarah Winnemucca appears to be on a par with or exceeding the influence of Sakajewa, Pocahontas or other noteworthy Native American women. Beginning as a varied band of tribes, we see a Native race frightened to death of whites. However, by 1845, after becoming "horse Indians", the various bands of Paiutes, with firm leadership, evolved to respect and acknowledge that the ways of the new settlers must be learned to insure survival.

Sarah was Granddaughter of the famous leader Truckee, and daughter to "Chief" Winnemucca. During her life she was always, seeking a place at the white mans table, not for herself but for the Paiute people. Truckee and the Wummuccas were always believers in the promises of the "white brothers", and strongly advocated peaceful relations with whites.

Those interested in the early San Joaquin Valley of California, and Upper Nevada towns will like this book. Paiutes, as early as 1857 were described as "peacefully disposed and industrious". Despite this, we see a people that seemly suffered more than most other "tribes", and we share in the painful displacements of a Native people. It is remarkable that Sarah never advocated warfare, rather attempting to change policy while working within white society.

With strong English language skills including a high reading and writing level, Sarah was set apart from many of her people. She became one of the most vocal critics of the Indian Reservation System. She is portrayed as a spokesperson, prolific public speaker, interpreter and educator. All valuable in the world of the white man. Her book "Life Amongst the Paiutes", published in 1883, was the first written by a female Indian West of the Mississippi. Perhaps a drinker and gambler, she had failed relationships and marriages to a succession of white men. She none-the-less addressed the United States Congress and several Presidents with her "sharp tongue" always dedicated to the cause of "her people".

An Indian woman always going "against the grain" of popular wisdom, she never believed in eradication of Native language or culture; and even began a Paiute school with these principles. She also served in highly unusual roles (for a woman), such as Indian Scout for the Army. Many acts of service and bravery are detailed in the book, as well her almost Savior like quality to her people. By the time of her death in 1891 at 47, she felt herself a failure. However, it appears through this well researched book, that she did more for her people than anyone could. It is indeed amazing she accomplished so much, with such a wide array of forces against her. I found the book to be well written, poignant, and certainly worth the reading.

--Stan Penton C. M.

**Penrose...A Pikes Peak Partnership: the Penroses and The Tutts**, by Thomas J. Noel and Cathleen M. Norman. The University Press of Colorado, Boulder, CO. 164 pages, nearly 200 B&W photos and a dozen color plates. Index and bibliography. \$34.95.

Colorado is so Denver-oriented that it often takes a jolt between the eyes to realize the importance of other areas of the state. A current example is this fine book on Spencer Penrose and the Tutt family. Together these migrating Philadelphians put the polish on Colorado Springs as a major U.S. business and cultural center. Denverites may treat the state's second city patronizingly but they must secretly suspect that "the Springs" is "big time."

They should now be envious. Tom Noel and Cathleen Norman have given us a literary "haymaker"—a comprehensive look at the Broadmoor and its impact. Practically every major Colorado Springs development was launched—or augmented—by Penrose and his incredible Broadmoor.

It all started at Cripple Creek, when Charles L. Tutt, who had grown up four blocks from the Penrose family in Philadelphia, started real estate firm in the gold camp southwest of Colorado Springs. After losing \$2,000 given him upon graduation from Harvard, Penrose needed help and Tutt offered him a partnership. From real estate the pair became owners of Colorado gold mines and, ultimately, the Bingham Canyon copper mine in Utah—the largest open pit mine in the world.

For the rest of their lives the mines poured wealth into their ventures, fueling the fantastic expansion of the Broadmoor Hotel and underwriting related projects, almost all of them enriching Colorado Springs. Much of the city's business expansion owes its success to Spencer Penrose, who also founded El Pomar, the wealthiest philanthropic foundation in Colorado.

Much of the book is devoted to the quixotic nature of Penrose and his wife, Julie. They traveled incessantly and, because they had no children, the Tutts stepped in with three generations of offspring to provide wise leadership of the venture.

But Penrose's personal impact was tremendous until his death in 1939. Such ventures as the Cheyenne Mountain zoo, the Pikes Peak inclined railroad, the Will Rogers Shrine, the rodeo and ice arenas, and superb golf facilities all owe their existence to the farsighted partners. They even found time to build a beet sugar industry across the line at Garden City, Kansas.

Noel and Norman worked with the financial support of the powerful El Pomar Foundation and were provided family resources in terms of records and documents. The authors have used these resources to create a volume a bit smaller than coffee-table size but one that will stand on Colorado history shelves for decades to come. The old photos tend to be muddy—the price, one assumes, of seeking historical legitimacy.

The authors have found up near 200 black and white photos and a dozen color plates to supplement the text, making the book a powerful statement of western history. Index and bibliography are voluminous.

--Lee Olson, P.M.



THE DENVER WESTERNERS

# ROUNDUP

September - October 2001



*Courtesy of the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, #20604. Reproduced from the book, tell them we are going home*

Little Wolf and his wife in old age on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Montana. Photo by George B. Grinnell.

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## **A Portrait in Leadership: Little Wolf and the Northern Cheyenne Odyssey, 1878-1879**

by

**John H. Monnett**

(Presented September 26, 2001)

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LVII NO. 5



Sept. - October 2001

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# A Portrait in Leadership: Little Wolf and the Northern Cheyenne Odyssey, 1878-1879

by

John H. Monnett

(Presented September 26, 2001)

On a grassy hillside where the sky is always blue, or so it seems, just off Route 212 in Lame Deer, Montana, lies an unpretentious cemetery, its perimeter surrounded by a simple wooden fence. After a cooling summer storm the air is rich with the scent of sage and if one listens very carefully you can hear ghostly voices carried on the wind:

“Father, paint the earth on me.

Father; paint the earth on me.

Father; paint the earth on me.

A nation I will make over.

A two-legged nation I will make holy.

Father, paint the earth on me.”

Almost unnoticed are two simple graves, not more than plain stone markers with brass plaques identifying them. A few flowers, bundles of sweet-grass and other sacred offerings might be laid beside the graves by descendants. Usually, a small American flag can be found in front of the stones, whipped by the ubiquitous wind. These are the final resting places of two American heroes who happen to be Northern Cheyennes. Their names are Little Wolf and Dull Knife. In 1917 the ethnologist George Bird Grinnell brought their remains to this place from secret locations in the mountains over the objections of Little Wolf's daughter so that all persons passing that way might honor them.<sup>1</sup>

This is the story of one of these American heroes, Little Wolf, Sweet

Medicine Chief of the Cheyennes.

In 1877, shortly after the surrender of the Northern Cheyenne bands that had participated in the Great Sioux War, the Indian Bureau decided that these *Ohmeseheso* bands, as they called themselves, should be punished by being concentrated with their southern kinsman on the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian Reservation at Darlington Agency in Indian Territory, which was protected by nearby Fort Reno. Originally the Cheyennes had been one tribe, the *Tsis tis tas*, meaning “the people.” They lived near the Black Hills and the sacred mountain, *Noahavose*, where their prophet Sweet Medicine had instructed them in their modern ways and given to them the symbols of their two spiritual covenants *Maahotse*, the sacred arrows, which kept the people prosperous and *Esevone*, the sacred buffalo hat, which kept them virtuous.

With the advent of the fur trade in the 1830s, bands of the people migrated southward to Bent's Fort in modern day Colorado where they were attracted by the Arkansas trade. Others remained in the north. With the capture of *Maahotse* by Pawnees in the 1830s and the desecration of *Esevone*, in a fit of rage, by a disgruntled Cheyenne woman shortly thereafter, the Cheyenne world began to disintegrate. The southern people suffered the most during the 1860s in wars with advancing

white civilization onto the central/southern plains. The *Ohmeseheso* of the north, because they allied with the Lakotas, suffered the ravages of the Great Sioux War in the following decade.

Shortly after they arrived in the humid climate of Indian Territory the Northerners began to sicken. Malarial diseases and other infections unknown to them on Montana's high plains began to take a toll. Of the nearly one thousand Northern Cheyennes registered at Darlington Agency almost two-thirds became ill within two months after their arrival. Most lodges held at least one sick person.<sup>2</sup> Forty-one died of disease during the winter of 1877-1878.<sup>3</sup>

Medical supplies did not arrive until the middle of winter and beef ration allotments were insufficient to meet the needs of the increased population of Darlington Agency. The stringy agency beef was no substitute for a diet of wild buffalo meat the Northerners had known in Montana. But in 1877 the buffalo were all but exterminated on the southern plains. Hunger augmented disease that cold winter. By the spring of 1878 many of the Northern Cheyennes found their new lives in Indian Territory intolerable. Sick and dying, it was natural for them to formally request to be taken back to the high dry country of Montana, Dakota, and Nebraska, the lands they called home.

Sometime around the Fourth of July, 1878 Little Wolf asked agent John D. Miles that he be allowed to take his people home. Miles and the government refused repeated pleas from the Northerners to relocate in the north. So during the early morning hours of September 10, 1878, a group of men, women, and

children, including the families of Little Wolf, Dull Knife, and Wild Hog slipped away from Darlington Agency. Of the 353 Cheyennes who left Darlington Agency that day only about sixty or seventy were fighting men.<sup>4</sup>

### **Journey northward**

Immediately the army marshaled the technological resources of a modern nation against them. The result was one of the most epic odysseys in American history as well as one of the most important episodes in Cheyenne memory. The journey northward of 1,500 miles from Indian Territory during the fall and winter of 1878-1879 brought the Cheyennes through Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota, and eventually Montana. The march was equaled only by the more widely publicized exodus of Chief Joseph's Nez Perce' the previous year.

Unlike Joseph's 1877 trek through deep sheltering mountain wilderness, the Cheyenne exodus traversed open plains, and settled country in recently organized counties of Kansas. They had to cross the Santa Fe, Kansas Pacific, and Union Pacific railroads where converging troops and resources from two Federal military departments speedily could be amassed against them. When troops caught up with them the Indians stopped and fought and suffered and then continued their march north.<sup>5</sup>

After crossing the Platte River the band separated. Little Wolf continued north toward Montana where he and his followers were halted by troops under Lieutenant W.P. Clark near the Yellowstone River. Dull Knife's group of about 150 headed straight for the site of the old Red Cloud Agency in Ne-



braska, not knowing that during their time spent on the southern reservation the Indians at Red Cloud had been relocated to Pine Ridge and the old agency grounds closed. Troops from Fort Robinson cut them off and captured them.

Dull Knife's band has undoubtedly received the most attention in this American odyssey because of his peoples' dramatic escape from Fort Robinson in the January snow and their determination to sell their lives or gain their freedom in the grim fighting in the Hat Creek Bluffs which culminated in the bloody last stand on Antelope Creek, January 22, 1879. As such earlier historians have falsely anointed Dull Knife as the overall leader of the Northern Cheyennes throughout the entire northern odyssey.

In fact, it was the younger Little Wolf, who led the people north from Indian Territory. If it were not for his leadership and determination, the Northern Cheyennes likely would never have realized their dream of being able to remain in their ancestral Montana lands after 1879.

Little Wolf was a middle-aged man at the time of the great exodus north. He had a long record of fighting the *Vehoe* (spiders), the Cheyenne name for their white enemies. The renowned Lakota physician, *Ohiysea*, Charles Eastman, knew the Cheyenne leader well in his later years. In his memoirs Eastman told of Little Wolf's life-long compassion that gave him the qualities to become a chief. One of his stories related how Little Wolf, when only a small boy, was promised a piece of meat by his mother in return for his good behavior. But it was meager times

and a dog ran off with the meat. When his mother tried to punish the dog Little Wolf intervened. "Don't hurt him mother," the son cried, "he took the meat because he was hungrier than I am."<sup>6</sup> As a young warrior he saved the life of another man when his hunting party was caught in a fierce blizzard. Little Wolf gave the man his buffalo robe while he "took the other's thin blanket."<sup>7</sup>

Little Wolf rose to become a headman or little chief of the Elk Horn Scrapper military society. After the northern bands established themselves in the comparative isolation of the Powder and Tongue river valleys, by the time of the Red Cloud War, Little Wolf's people were strongly allied with the Lakotas in the struggle to resist white encroachment of their homelands corresponding with the opening of the Bozeman Trail. Little Wolf led Cheyennes in the Red Cloud war. He participated in the Fetterman fight in 1866, and the eventual burning of Fort Phil Kearny following its abandonment. During this time Little Wolf was chosen one of the four "Old Man" chiefs, a high honor, among the traditional Council of Forty-four.<sup>8</sup>

Because of his ability as an organizer and his apparent self-control, Little Wolf, even before the Fetterman fight, about 1864 or 1865, was chosen Sweet Medicine Chief, bearer of the Chiefs' Bundle, which contained the holy presence, the very incarnation of Sweet Medicine, the culture hero of the Cheyennes. As such Little Wolf was expected to be above anger, think only of his people and not of himself, as Sweet Medicine had taught the Cheyennes from the instructions of *Maheo*,

the creator. Now Little Wolf sat at the head of the Council of Forty-four in their deliberations, the seat of highest honor and esteem among all Cheyennes. "Only danger that threatens my people can anger me now," Little Wolf pledged as he took the oath. "If a dog lifts its leg to my lodge I will not see it."<sup>9</sup>

At first Little Wolf opposed the war with the whites that came in 1876. But in the spring he and a small band of followers moved to join their Lakota brethren in the unceded Montana lands. Although he did not participate in the Battle of Little Big Horn some members of Little Wolf's party were discovered by soldiers of the 7th Cavalry while looking for lost quartermaster supplies on June 25, 1876. This was the event that persuaded Colonel George Armstrong Custer to attack the great village on the Greasy Grass River (Little Big Horn River) on June 25, 1876 rather than strike at dawn on the 26<sup>th</sup>, a fateful decision that proved catastrophic for the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Even so some Cheyennes criticized Little Wolf for not reaching the fighting in time. Lame White Man instead led the Elk Horn Scrapers in the battle and was killed in action.<sup>10</sup>

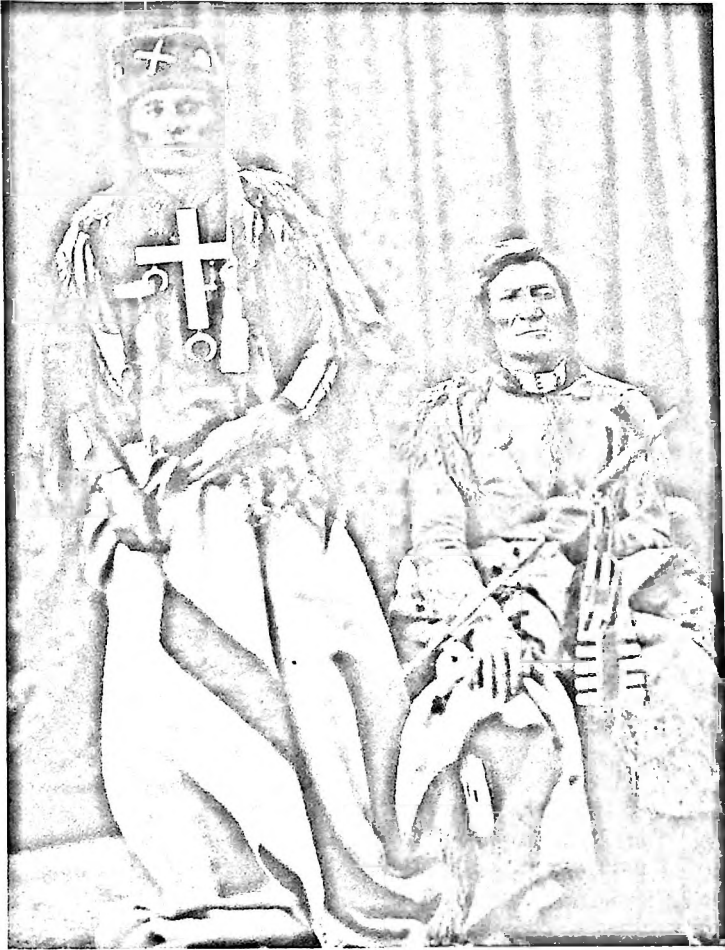
But Little Wolf would try never again to fail the Cheyennes. He was in the winter village in the Big Horn Mountains in November 1876 when Ranald Mackenzie's troops attacked. Suffering several wounds, Little Wolf successfully directed the withdrawal of the women and children from the beleaguered village.<sup>11</sup>

By late summer, 1878 Little Wolf was determined to escape the disease and hunger of Darlington

Agency. His determined deliberations with Agent John D. Miles are well documented from his interviews with George B. Grinnell and reproduced in substance in Grinnell's numerous field notebooks. His words of September 9, 1878 are the most widely quoted. "Listen now to what I say to you," he told Miles. "I am going to leave here; I am going north to my own country."<sup>12</sup> During the late hours of September 9, 1878 three hundred fifty three of the followers of Little Wolf left Darlington Agency for home. There were 92 men, 120 women, 69 boys, and 72 girls. By the Spring of 1879 one half of them had perished.<sup>13</sup>

The story of the fighting north through Indian Territory and Kansas is extensively documented in my book, *Tell Them We are Going Home*. The details are too numerous to recount in a paper of this short duration.

Suffice it to say that by the end of September 1878 Little Wolf's people miraculously had made their way through two-thirds of western Kansas in less than three weeks after their departure from Darlington Agency. During this time their camps were never taken by surprise by the pursuing troops. They fought four pitched battles with the U.S. Army and armed civilians, engaging them from fortified defensive positions of tactical advantage, and repelling mostly dismounted troops skirmishing in textbook formations. Indeed, the military engagements of the Cheyenne odyssey in Indian Territory and in Kansas during September 1878, were anomalies in the record of army-Indian warfare on the plains. Not only were these engagements vastly diver-



*Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society. Reproduced from the book, tell them we are going home*

**Little Wolf (standing) and Dull Knife, circa 1877, about the time of the odyssey.**

gent from the surprise offensive actions against Indian villages executed by the army from the 1850s through the 1870s, but the familiar style of individualized warfare practiced by the Cheyennes seems to have given way in large measure, to the collective survival of the group, through the organized and

disciplined leadership of Little Wolf.

In southwest Kansas during September, the Cheyennes inflicted a larger number of casualties on soldiers and civilians than was inflicted upon them. By early October, 1878, military authorities around the country justifiably began criticizing the largely fruitless

operations against the Northern Cheyennes conducted by troops from the Department of the Missouri.

At the Battle of Turkey Springs in Indian Territory, fought on September 13, Little Wolf soundly whipped a larger command of 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry under Captain Joseph Rendlebrock from Fort Reno. Realizing Rendlebrock's presence, Little Wolf doubled back on his line of flight to secure familiar defensible ground of his own choosing upon which to fight. He commanded the water, cutting the soldiers off from that vital resource. Outnumbered, Little Wolf nevertheless controlled the field. He out maneuvered and out fought a battalion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry forcing them to abandon their position due to lack of water. He then got in their rear and harassed their line of retreat, and inflicted an embarrassing defeat upon them in a running fight. The condemnation of Rendlebrock at this engagement became another example like the scrutiny following Little Big Horn which assumed white commanders must have failed in their duties for no group of Indians could achieve decisive victory over the U.S. Army on their own merits. At Turkey Springs the U.S. Army lost simply because the Cheyennes won not by sheer numbers but by virtue of superior tactical leadership of Little Wolf. The defeat resulted in Rendlebrock's court-martial and dismissal from the army.

Again, at the Battle of Punished Woman's Fork near Scott City, Kansas on September 27, Little Wolf drew a larger force of cavalry under Col. William H. Lewis into a small box canyon and finally defeated them in a fierce fight that resulted in Lewis' death. While directing his men from

their defensive positions on the heights above the stream the warrior Tangle Hair, recalled years later that: "Little Wolf did not seem like a human being; he seemed like an animal—a bear. He seemed without Fear."<sup>14</sup>

### Foraging

The Battle of Punished Woman's Fork was the Achilles heel of the Northern Cheyennes. During the battle army scouts discovered the hidden Ramada of Indian horses concealed in a side canyon. As many as 85 were destroyed along with most of the Cheyennes' food and provisions. As the Indians continued their quest northward they ran into the fringes of the advancing agricultural frontier in northwestern Kansas. Desperate for fresh mounts and renewed provisions they had lost at Punished Woman's Fork, and desperate to stay ahead of the pursuing troops, Cheyenne foragers, mostly young warriors, raided homesteads in Decatur and Rawlins Counties. When the Indians exited Kansas into Nebraska during the first week of October around 40 civilians were dead. Although many of these citizens defended their property to the extent that they lost their lives, and although Little Wolf and Dull Knife profoundly condemned the killing of civilians by the young warriors, the Kansas raids temporarily turned public opinion in the East against the Northern Cheyenne quest.

Although sympathy for their cause was eventually restored somewhat following the outbreak of Dull Knife's contingent from Fort Robinson in January 1879 these raids may have originally influenced Little Wolf and Dull Knife to divide their people into two

groups while in Nebraska so that if one contingent might befall disaster the other might continue the quest for the north country. Although Dull Knife's followers surrendered on Chadron Creek and later suffered the consequences Little Wolf's maneuvers during the winter months of 1878-1879 are less known.

During the fall and winter of 1878-1879 Little Wolf and about 100 followers backtracked into the rugged Sand Hills where they remained unmolested until mid-February subsisting off wild game and stolen cattle. With a break in the weather in late February Little Wolf's people headed northwest toward the Black Hills and the Sacred Mountain. When they left Nebraska they entered the Military Department of Dakota. Despite unsubstantiated newspaper reports that Little Wolf, like Chief Joseph the year previous, was headed for the international border Little Wolf probably never entertained serious thoughts of joining Sitting Bull and his Lakotas in Canada. Given his line of march the Northern Cheyennes were by the end of winter 1879 headed toward the old Tongue River Cantonment located on the Yellowstone River just west of Miles City, Montana and two miles above the mouth of the Tongue River. Here Little Wolf had been a scout briefly for the army. Here was where Two Moon's Cheyennes still lived. Undoubtedly, Little Wolf figured he could talk the government into staying if he and his warriors joined the Indian scouts once again. Little Wolf did not know that the name of Tongue River Cantonment had been changed on November 8, 1878 to Fort Keogh.<sup>15</sup>

Elements of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry were now stationed at Fort Keogh. When the word spread that Little Wolf's people had broken out of the Sand Hills and were headed northwest the Department of Dakota mobilized. On February 22, 1879 Brigadier General Alfred H. Terry ordered Lieutenant William P. "Philo" Clark to move down and intercept the Northern Cheyennes. Clark had organized the company of Indian scouts in 1877 and thus knew and respected Little Wolf from the time they had spent together at Fort Robinson before the removal south. The Cheyennes too respected Clark, who they called "White Hat," as an officer of honesty and integrity.

Picking up a hot trail near O'Fallon's Bluff, Clark and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry shadowed Little Wolf down the Yellowstone. By the first week of March Clark brought in Lakota scouts as well as Cheyennes of Two Moon's band still living at Ft. Keogh to persuade Little Wolf to surrender. After several unsuccessful attempts it was Young Two Moon who finally persuaded Little Wolf to surrender on the Yellowstone on March 25. Most sources agree that Little Wolf intended to persuade Clark to help his people remain at Fort Keogh with Two Moon's band and enlist as scouts. At the last of two meetings with Clark at his final camp on the Yellowstone Little Wolf made his surrender speech:

"You are the only one who has offered to talk before fighting," he told Clark, "and it looks as though the wind, which has made our hearts flutter for so long, would now go down. I am glad we did not fight, and that none of my people or yours have been killed. My young

men are brave, and would be glad to go with you to fight the [Sitting Bull] Sioux."<sup>16</sup>

Of the 353 Northern Cheyennes who had started out from Darlington Agency 114 now surrendered with Little Wolf. Fifty-eight remained of Dull Knife's band. Most of these were allowed to go to Pine Ridge. But twenty were returned from Ft. Robinson to Kansas where seven would stand trial for the murders there. They all would be acquitted. With Little Wolf were 33 men, 43 women, and 38 small children. When Clark rode into the fort the "troops were all out," wrote one reporter, "the cannon thundered, the band played 'Hail to the Chief,' and men, women, and children crowded around him with their hearty congratulations."<sup>17</sup>

In the weeks following the surrender, Little Wolf's greatest ally became his captor, Lieutenant W. P. Clark. Although the State of Kansas argued for Little Wolf's extradition to stand trial for atrocities committed in their state, and others urged the Indians be returned to Darlington Agency as an object lesson, Clark maintained the right of the *Ohmeseheso* to a home in the north. "They are weary with constant fighting and watching," Clark asserted. "They want peace, rest, and a home somewhere in this country where they were born and reared."<sup>18</sup>

Clark's arguments were heard only because he made them at the opportune time. By the spring of 1879, after eight months of pursuing the Indians twelve hundred miles through three military departments the army was embarrassed and weary of the Cheyenne war. The departmental

commander, General Alfred H. Terry, endorsed Clark's report and that of Clark's commanding officer Major George Gibson. Terry advised Washington, "I think that, for the present at least, these Cheyenne prisoners should be left at Fort Keogh. I have no doubt that we shall be able to make great use of them in case active hostilities with the Sioux should be renewed."<sup>19</sup>

The army and the Indian bureau concurred and shortly thereafter Little Wolf enlisted as a sergeant in Lieutenant Clark's Indian scouts. They became friends and Little Wolf aided Clark in his research for a book on Indian sign language. Wrote one reporter shortly after the surrender, "Little Wolf is happier at [Ft.] Keogh than he has been in a long time."<sup>20</sup> Although Little Wolf knew the arrangement made with the whites that spring was only temporary and tenuous, never again would his followers be pressured to return to the hated Indian Territory. Public opinion was changing once again in the Army, the Indian Bureau, and most importantly, in the estimation of the Secretary of the Interior Carl Shurz toward allowing the Northern Cheyennes to remain in their northern homelands.

Little Wolf's people stayed at Fort Keogh until 1882 when Congress approved a small reservation along Rosebud Creek and the Tongue River. From there the tribe endeavored to expand their lands and win approval for all Northern Cheyennes who wished to do so to settle in the north. Soon they were joined by the survivors at Fort Robinson who did not wish to remain with Lakota relatives at Pine Ridge. By 1900 the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation expanded and had been

joined by many more northerners who gained permission to relocate from Indian Territory.

### **New life on reservation**

For many of the old long hairs the new life on the reservation resulted in alienation and despair. Little Wolf's later life was marred by classic tragedy. After 1879, rivalry and political friction arose between the followers of Two Moon and those of Little Wolf and consequently between their two respective warrior societies the Kit Foxes and the Elk Horn Scrapers. Not yet as well known as Dull Knife due to the publicity of the fighting at Fort Robinson, the soldiers at Fort Keogh bypassed Little Wolf and elevated Two Moon, the Kit Fox headman, to a position of "head chief" at the fort, an honor not accorded legitimacy by Cheyenne custom. Perhaps remembering his people's past visions, Little Wolf grew increasingly moody and alienated.

As such, a warrior named Starving Elk would suffer the effects of Little Wolf's psychological depression. Many years previous, Little Wolf had suspected Starving Elk of having kindled more than a passing interest in one of his wives. By the time of the exodus north Starving Elk apparently struck up a close friendship with Little Wolf's daughter, Pretty Walker. Others thought Starving Elk was still enamored of Little Wolf's wife. As Sweet Medicine Chief, Little Wolf could not show anger over such gossip.

But only a short time living near Fort Keogh had changed Little Wolf. Although he continued a friendship with Lieutenant W. P. Clark, Little Wolf, like so many others on the reservation, acquired an addiction to whiskey. On

the cold night of December 12, 1880, he stumbled drunk into the trading post of Eugene Lamphere on Two Moon Creek where many of the Indians had set up winter camp. He spotted a group of men and women in the store gambling for candy. Among them was his daughter Pretty Walker. With her in the group of gamblers was Starving Elk. Little Wolf went into a rage although Lamphere and some of the embarrassed Cheyennes tried to calm Little Wolf and remove him gently from the trading post. "I will kill you," Little Wolf screamed at Starving Elk as the latter tried gently to take him by the arm and escort him out the door.

Little Wolf stumbled out the front door and the customers thought the matter was over. But shortly Little Wolf returned with a rifle. He entered the store, shouldered the weapon and opened fire at point blank range, killing Starving Elk instantly. The acrid smell of gunpowder, the loud report of the rifle, combined with the sight of the murdered Starving Elk lying on the floor, sobered Little Wolf almost immediately. "I am going up on that hill by the bend of the creek," he said methodically in anticipation of revenge by Starving Elk's family. "If anybody wants me I'll be there." With his wife he kept up a lonely vigil on the hill for two days.<sup>21</sup>

Suddenly realizing Little Wolf's importance from the inquiries made with tribal members and consequently fearing trouble, the army whitewashed the entire murder. When Captain G.N. Whistler at Fort Keogh wired General Alfred H. Terry as to what course of action to take, Terry, although having no objection to turning Little Wolf over to civilian authorities if they so demanded,

replied succinctly: "The difficulties surrounding the disposition of Little Wolf, if caught, are so great, [we] better not find him."<sup>22</sup> When Little Wolf turned himself in to Captain Whistler on December 15, Whistler simply told him, "You are no longer chief of the Cheyennes."

"It is true and just," Little Wolf replied.<sup>23</sup> Civilian authorities likewise did not request justice for Little Wolf in civil courts. Friends persuaded Starving Elk's family not to seek revenge on the Sweet Medicine Chief, although they did burn his lodge and his wagon. But tensions subsided over time. Many years later, Starving Elk's brother, Bald Eagle said, "Little Wolf did not kill my brother. It was the white man whiskey that did it."<sup>24</sup>

But Little Wolf never forgave himself. Although he was not formally banished by his people he exiled himself along the wilds of Rosebud Creek. In later times he told close friends that he had loved Starving Elk as a brother. Few, except for whites, would smoke with him. Occasionally he did odd jobs while his wives washed clothes for settlers. Although other Cheyennes moved near to him after the expansion of the reservation in 1884, he remained quiet and aloof among his people. Settlers remembered him as a gentle and dignified old man who loved children, a familiar figure in southern Montana by the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup>

Little Wolf's time and his vision for his people had ended with his surrender and the upheaval and alienation to the ways of the reservation. In 1892 the renewal of the chiefs' council was long overdue, interrupted by the

northern odyssey and re-ordering of life on the reservation. Ashamed and embarrassed, Little Wolf did not attend the ceremonies to name his successor and pass on the chief's bundle containing the holy symbols of the prophet Sweet Medicine. The council sent a runner for Little Wolf for only he could name a successor.

"I've done wrong," Little Wolf told the runner. "I killed a man, and I don't think I ought to sit with the chiefs."

"We need you," the council replied. "We can't proceed without you." After a day Little Wolf came to the council for the last time to take his place as Sweet Medicine Chief. Although he could not smoke the pipe with others he named Sun Road as his successor. But Sun Road accepted the office without taking the actual Sweet Medicine bundle from Little Wolf. "I didn't want to say it," Sun Road later confessed, "but he wears that medicine over his shoulder slung under his left arm. I think it has begun to smell." Although there was talk in the council of doing away with the Sweet Medicine bundle, a council chief named Grasshopper blocked the action by accepting the bundle from Little Wolf. Years later when Grasshopper died the bundle was gone. Some suspected he had buried it long before his death.<sup>26</sup>

Little Wolf died in relative obscurity in 1904, ironically the same year, as did *Hin-mah-tooyah-lat-kekt*, Young Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce. Little Wolf, in later life, was never accorded as much adoration by the whites as Chief Joseph for the other great odyssey of Indian peoples in the 1870s. But Joseph died at Colville,



Washington, not in his homeland of the Wallowa Valley. Little Wolf died in his beloved Tongue River country albeit reimagined according to the Euro-American vision of geographical borders. Unlike Joseph, Little Wolf had led his people directly in both council *and* in battle against the whites during his long trek--and *he* had brought *his* people home.

For years into the twentieth century however, Little Wolf was not especially held in high regard by many of the Cheyennes, mostly the younger generations that did not remember the odyssey of 1878-1879. As such, and because of the publicity received by the fighting around Fort Robinson, the name of Dull Knife ubiquitously found its way into the early literature of the Cheyenne odyssey while Little Wolf remained a shadowy figure. During his later years the interest generated by only a few whites over Little Wolf's life kept his reputation as an important chief alive. Undoubtedly much of this credit must be given ethno-historian George B. Grinnell. Little Wolf and Grinnell met often, smoked together, and told stories. Little Wolf became one of Grinnell's sources for his work on the Cheyennes, and Grinnell more than any contemporary, made Americans aware that Little Wolf, not Dull Knife, was the principal leader of the *Ohmeseheso* on the trek north.

The significance of this essay has been to re-illuminate Little Wolf as the principal leader of the Cheyenne Odyssey of 1878-1879 after years of neglect, and to ponder the age old question; do events shape men or do men shape events? Ultimately, Little Wolf is a tragic hero, the brilliant story

of his leadership abilities juxtaposed against societal alienation, chronic depression and murder. These complexities are for us to consider.

In a letter to a friend in 1925 Grinnell paid Little Wolf an ultimate tribute. "I knew old Little Wolf almost intimately," he wrote. "Toward the end of his life...I disregarded the tribal feeling about him and used to pass him my pipe to smoke. I consider him,...the greatest Indian I have ever known."<sup>27</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Paul Hedren, *Traveler's Guide to the Great Sioux War*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1996), 118. See also, John D. McDermott, *A Guide to the Indian Wars of the West*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 175-176. The poem is from the "Horse Dance," a vision by the Lakota holy man Black Elk appropriate to all visionary leaders. See Nicolas Black Elk as told to John G. Neihardt (*Flaming Rainbow*), *Black Elk Speaks*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, Twenty-first Century Edition, 2000), 175.

<sup>2</sup> George B. Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915).400.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas B. Marquis, *Wooden Leg: A Warrior Who Fought Custer* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Bison Book edition reprinted by permission from the Midwest Company edition, 1931), 320.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 399.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Some of the biographies including Little Wolf and Dull Knife, written by Eastman in his classic, Charles Eastman, *Heroes and Great Chieftains* (Boston: Little, Brown Co., 1918) are readily available on the fine Cheyenne Tribe Genealogy web site. See Timothy D. Cook, owner and Glenn Welker, compiler, <http://www.mcn.net/~hmscook/roots/Cheyenne.html>. Eastman claims that Little Wolf was about thirty-five at the time of the Cheyenne odyssey in 1878-1879. In a biography written in 1978, however, historian Gary Roberts asserts that Little Wolf was past thirty when he had his first encounter with the whites in 1856. This would have made him over fifty in 1878. See, Gary L. Roberts, "The Shame of Little Wolf," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* (v.27, #3, Jul. 1978): 38. Powell states that Little Wolf was born in 1830. See Peter John Powell, *People of the Sacred Mountain: A History of the Northern Cheyenne Chiefs and Warrior Societies, 1830-1879, With an Epilogue, 1969-1974*, II. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 1419. For short biographies of both Dull Knife and Little Wolf see Stan Hoig, *The Peace Chiefs of the Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 123-137.

<sup>7</sup> Eastman at <http://www.mcn.net/~hmscook/roots/cheyenne.html>

<sup>8</sup> Roberts, "The Shame of Little Wolf," 38.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 39.

<sup>10</sup> Little Wolf's nephew, Young Little Wolf claims that Little Wolf was headed to the village on the Greasy Grass to persuade the Indians there not to fight, an action that angered some of the Lakotas who later threatened Little Wolf's life. See Walter Mason Camp, Interview with [Young] Little Wolf, Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Walter M. Camp Manuscript Collection (Bloomington: Indiana University Library, 1918). Transcript in: Kenneth Hammer, Ed. *Custer in '76: Walter Camp's Notes on the Custer Fight* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 632-633.

<sup>11</sup> Roberts, "The Shame of Little Wolf," 38.

<sup>12</sup> Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes*, 402-403.

<sup>13</sup> *Senate Report 708*, 278.

<sup>14</sup> Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes*, 409.

<sup>15</sup> Frazer, *Forts of the West*, 82.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 249.

<sup>17</sup> *Army and Navy Journal*, May 3, 1879.

<sup>18</sup> W.P. Clark to Adjutant General, Department of Dakota (RG 393, NARA), Special Files: Little Wolf Papers, April 6, 1879.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Bismarck Tribune*, April 19, 1879.

<sup>21</sup> Marquis, *Wooden Leg*, 331-332. For an excellent survey of Little Wolf's crime see Roberts, "The Shame of Little Wolf," 43-48. See also John Stands In Timber and Liberty, *Cheyenne Memories*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972). 47-48.

<sup>22</sup> Letters Received, Office of the Adjutant General, Department of Dakota. (R.G. 393, N.A.R.A.), Dec. 14, 1880.

<sup>23</sup> Marquis, *Wooden Leg*, 332.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Roberts, "The Shame of Little Wolf," 45-46.

<sup>26</sup> This information regarding the chiefs' renewal of 1992 was given by a man named High Forehead, who was present at the killing of Starving Elk, in K.N. Llewellyn and E. Adamson Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way: Conflict and Case Law in Primitive Jurisprudence* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 85-86. See also, *Stands In Timber and Liberty, Cheyenne Memories*, 47-48.

<sup>27</sup> George Bird Grinnell to R.S. Ellison, October 1, 1925, Robert S. Ellison Collection, Papers of George B. Grinnell, Denver Public Library, Doc.29.



### About the Author

Arguably Dr. John H. Monnett is the most eminent historian to graduate from Mrs. Powell's 1st grade class at Antioch School in Overland Park, Kansas for the year 1950.

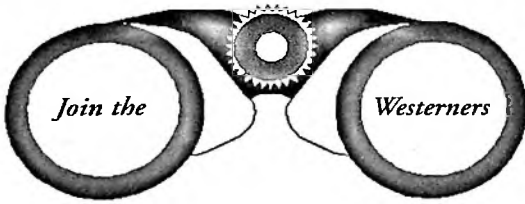
He was a professor of history at Cochise College in Arizona from 1971-1978 where he served as academic advisor to Native American students.

A former Dean at Community College of Denver, he now teaches Colorado and Native American History at Metropolitan State College of Denver. He is past Sheriff of the Boulder Corral of Westerners.

A proponent of well balanced history, he is the author of numerous articles and seven books on the history of the American West including *The Battle of Beecher Island and the Indian War of 1868-1869*, which was the runner up for the Western Writers' of America Golden Spur award in 1993.

His latest contribution, *Tell Them We are Going Home: The Odyssey of the Northern Cheyennes*, (University of Oklahoma Press, 2001) is the first non-fiction scholarly book to detail the complete story of Little Wolf's and Dull Knife's courageous thousand mile journey from Indian Territory in 1878-1879 to their homelands in Montana.





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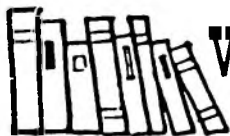
If you need lots more membership applications, please contact the tallyman, Ted Krieger.

We welcome the following new members into the Westerners; Kris Christensen of Denver, sponsored by Don & Dolores Ebner; John Monnett of Lafayette, (featured author in this month's edition) sponsored by Jeff Broome.



### Westerners International

Corresponding Membership in the Denver Posse does not include membership in the Westerners International. If you wish to receive the *Buckskin Bulletin*, you may purchase a subscription for \$5.00/year. Contact Westerners International, c/o National Cowboy Hall of Fame, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111. 800-541-4650



## Westerners Bookshelf



**A Private in the Texas Rangers** by John Miller Morris. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001. 384 pp. 24 photographs, 4 maps, bibliography, index. \$24.95.

When Abner Theophilus Miller left North Carolina in 1887 to join his brother in northern Texas, he had no plans to join the Texas Rangers. Yet, less than two months after his arrival in the prairie town of Margaret he enlisted as a private in the Frontier Battalion of the Texas Rangers. He promised that "I will try and do the best I can."

Perhaps keeping a diary was part of doing his best. Whatever the reason, the diary of Private Miller forms the basis of this book. Every day he made entries, usually about six to eight sentences. He first mentions where he was at the time of the entry—a saloon, around the campfire, in a dugout, setting on the new spring grass—and then tells about the weather. These daily weather reports provide a subtle measure of time passing as seasons come and go. Then Private Miller gives the condensed news of the day in a frank, familiar style that we would use if it were our diary. These daily notes tell us about Ranger life that involved quite a bit of routine chores such as hauling water and wood, watching the horses, fixing equipment, guarding prisoners, walking the streets, attending a court session, serving warrants, and keeping a semblance of civilized behavior in a rowdy saloon. It is these mundane matters that make this book unique. Everyone remembers the unusual and exciting events, but few people write about the ordinary events that dominate our lives. Miller's diary is a window into the forgotten details of daily life in a rapidly fading frontier.

Society's ills are chronicled in Miller's diary. He writes about murder, theft, drunkenness, drug abuse, sexual misconduct, suicide, and police brutality. The railroad was advancing into the Texas frontier and crime flourished as people tried to cope with technological change. He could have been writing about today.

Private Miller and his fellow Rangers also struggled to cope with promiscuous gun ownership. Local laws prohibiting the carrying of firearms were common in the 1880s, but enforcement was difficult. Rangers became experts at disarming citizens, an often-dicey task if the owner was drunk and belligerent. Just to be consistent, the Rangers even disarmed a young boy carrying a toy pistol.

Miller did all of this for \$30 dollars a month. He even had to buy and maintain his own equipment that included firearms, a horse, and a saddle. Texas was notoriously stingy when it came to its state police force. Food and living accommodations were supplied, but neither were particularly good. Winter was the worst time; the lousy weather kept both crooks and cops inside, so Miller had little to do

except shiver in a drafty dugout. He stayed with the Rangers for eighteen months, then resigned and became a Texas farmer.

As with all people, who keep a diary, Miller was not writing for publication but writing to himself. Therefore, quite a bit of important information is missing. John Morris, author of this book, fills in these gaps by providing background information and "the rest of the story." The author also decided to retain Miller's phonetic spelling of many words and the improper grammar. This gives the diary an intimate feeling as if you were looking over Miller's shoulder as he penned the daily entry.

If you would like to open a window into the daily life of a Texas Ranger in the 1880s, this book is recommended. The author has done a fine job at tying together all the people, events, and details that Miller mentions in his diary and in the process he has created an unusual and interesting book.

--Richard C. Barth C. M.

**Noble, Wretched, and Redeemable, Protestant Missionaries to the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900**, by C. L. Higham. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 320 pp. 13 illustrations, 2 maps, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$39.95.

Indian policy in the United States was complicated, inconsistent, unfair, and controversial. This book examines in detail one aspect of this policy—the role played by protestant missionaries serving the Native Americans. The missionaries were interested in the Indians because they regarded them as an endangered race that must be transformed from unproductive natives to ambitious Christians.

These devoted, well-educated, and tireless missionaries regarded themselves as the only ones who could save the "noble savage." Their plan was to translate the Bible into English (or teach the natives English), then establish schools and teach them how to read the Bible. Finally, they would change the Indians into farmers who could provide themselves with sustenance and financial support.

Throughout most of the 1800s, thousands of missionaries carried out this plan. Interestingly, sixty percent of these missionaries were ladies, and over half of them were single women. Female missionaries were very effective in converting native women, they usually had a calming influence on frontier life, and they often provided a better example of Christian living than their male counterparts.

Invariably, all missionaries experienced shock and dismay that the natives failed to meet their preconceptions of the noble savage; Christianizing the natives was going to be harder than they thought. Not only did they have to convert the Indians, they now had to convert the frontier white population, mainly trappers and traders, who they blamed for the fall of the noble savage.

Missionaries also realized that English was not working. Teaching in the native language was much more effective, so they started the slow process of translating Christian works. This usually involved developing an alphabet, then a dictionary. For the first time, Native American languages appeared in a written form, and this was probably the most important tangible result of the missionary program.

This program was supported by the missionary societies within the respective dominations. But when they discovered that converting Indians was not very productive and quite expensive, they became discouraged and funding decreased. So, in the 1850s, these societies started petitioning the federal government for financial support. They argued that while their missionary efforts may not have converted many Indians, they were very effective at pacification and education. Federal officials agreed and missionaries, sometimes to their dismay, found themselves under the political and financial control of the government.

This arrangement seemed to work until the close of the Civil War. At that time Indian issues were increasingly dealt with by the military where policy was one of conquest, not conversion. Even more important, hypocritical government actions alienated the Indians from the whites, including the missionaries.

This scholarly, well-researched book provides valuable information to those interested in the details of American Indian policy in the 1800s. It is well organized and easy to read despite its technical nature.

--Richard C. Barth, C.M.

**Let No Guilty Man Escape: A Judicial Biography of "Hanging Judge" Isaac C. Parker**, by Rodger H. Tuller. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 224 pp. Illustrations, photos, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$27.95. This is Volume 5 in the Legal History of North America Series.

Thanks to the entertainment media, Judge Parker has been portrayed as a man who sentenced any and all, regardless of the crime, to hanging and then in sizeable multiples. Actually, Judge Parker was a man of interesting background and experience.

The Judge was born in a log cabin on October 15, 1838, near Barnesville, Belmont County, Ohio. His education was typical of an agricultural area of the time, wherein primary school and work on the farm co-existed. His education continued at Barnesville Classical Institute. In this latter institution, education was financed by alternate terms of teaching in a country primary school. At seventeen, Parker now decided to pursue law with legal training typical of the era, he "read law", a combination of apprenticeship and self-directed study of the legal classics.

In 1859, at age 21, Parker passed the bar examination and moved to St. Joseph, Missouri. After two years of general legal work, he entered politics by running for and winning the position of City Attorney on the Democratic ticket. After three terms as City Attorney, Parker bolted to the Republicans and won election to County Prosecutor of the Ninth Judicial Circuit. Parker's first experience as a judge began in 1868 when he won a six year term as Judge of the Twelfth Missouri Circuit.

Political ambition again beckoned Judge Parker. This time he was drawn to Congress and won a seat in the U. S. House of Representatives for the Seventh Congressional District. It should be noted there were some interesting political shenanigans with this win. By 1874 the Seventh District had been so gerrymandered

that no Republican could win any future elections, therefore any future governmental service could be only by presidential appointment.

Thus, in March 1875, President Grant appointed Parker to be the federal judge of the Western District of Arkansas with confirmation by the U. S. Senate.

For the next twenty-one years, the Judge held sway over a territory of what was initially 74,000 square miles covering eighteen counties and the entire Indian Territory. During his tenure, 12,800 cases were docketed, of which 8791 resulted in convictions. Of the cases, tried Parker ordered 161 people to the gallows, however, only 79 of these sentences were carried out. Some of the legend grew from the fact that early in his tenure on September 3, 1875, six men were hung at one time before a crowd of five thousand. Further, many of his executions were public during a time when executions elsewhere were behind prison walls.

As time progressed his district was reduced as the area developed and his decisions were increasingly reviewed and appealed, ultimately to the Supreme Court of the United States. In the end, Parker's less sophisticated legal training fell victim to lawyers and senior judges who were professionally trained.

While interesting, this book was written for lawyers, as it is filled with legal trivia, which for the trained attorney will be more enlightening than to the layman.

--Bob Stull, P. M.

### **The Griffith Family and the Founding of Georgetown** by Liston E.

Leyendecker. University Press of Colorado, Boulder, CO, 2001. 120 pp, 10 photographs, 5 line drawings, 3 maps, bibliography, glossary, index.. Cloth, \$35.00.

Where did Griffith Mountain get its name? When first visiting Georgetown and seeing a monument on Griffith Mountain I wondered who provided the name. Liston E. Leyendecker in this small book describes two years in the lives of members of the Griffith family. Those years (1859-1861) were the beginnings for Georgetown, which received its name from one of the Griffith family members.

Research on this family was extremely difficult, as this was a family who came to Colorado, left a valuable legacy, and then they all left the state. People who stay in Colorado, have descendants, and create a long history, are much easier to write about.

The Griffiths came to make a fortune. They began a small town and wrote a set of laws to govern mining in the region. Women of the Griffith family exerted their influence: the laws written allowed women to own property, not always a right given to women at that time.

The fortune did not materialize. So some members of the family drifted back home, to the East, and others went further west to seek their goals. What remained were Griffith Mountain, Georgetown and a set of mining laws. This was author Liston E. Leyendecker's last book, and the valuable transcriptions of the laws by the author are included in the appendix. Although small in size, this is a great book of early mining and of an exceptional family for the Colorado historian to read.

--Nancy E. Bathke, P. M.



**The Plains Indian Photographs of Edward S. Curtis** by Martha H. Kennedy et al. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE, 2001. 186 pp, 91 photographs. Cloth, \$50.00.

Edward S. Curtis, America's greatest photographer of the Indian, undertook a massive project, lasting over twenty years, and culminating in a production of 20 portfolios, with photos from his collection of 40,000 images, and a million words of text. This book features 91 outstanding photographs of just Indians of the Plains (which represented less than one-third of his work). These are mainly portraits, but also include scenes of daily life. But this book is much more, as the introduction by Martha Kennedy explains. Three essays analyze this most massive anthropological study undertaken, providing the reader with much insight and background for Curtis' photos.

First, Martha Sandweiss, Assoc. Prof. of American Studies, Amherst, examines the style and tradition in which Curtis conducts his photography. In tune with others of the nineteenth century, Curtis considered the North American Indian a vanishing race, and he set out to record the life and traditions of these peoples. He succeeded in obtaining the financial backing of J. Pierpont Morgan, and headed a large business of many researchers and writers. The massive work consisted of records in many media, and image and text are inseparable. Curtis was trying to follow an ideological tradition in recording the Indian, but of necessity was also following a commercial tradition in that the photos were not taken for the subjects being photographed, but for a market.

In the second essay, Mick Gidley, Prof. of American Literature, University of Leeds, England, points out how Curtis' attempt to provide a truthful, historically accurate record of the Indians is not really possible, in that much of the photographing was of representations or reconstructions, or of posings with props. Merely the act of recording the life of the Indians affects its authenticity.

Thirdly, Duane Niatum, Western Washington University, looks at the aesthetic dimension of Curtis' work. Edward Curtis was definitely a very artistic photographer, and in a way his skill as a pictorialist adds to, and can modify, the photo history being recorded.

The 91 fine photos are accompanied with explanatory captions, although they are necessarily only brief excerpts from the extensive writings of the Curtis organization. As one admires the photos following the reading of the essays, this book certainly does provide the reader with a greater appreciation for the great accomplishments of Curtis as a photographer and a historian, and, as well, gives one a more critical insight into these images and some questions to ponder while considering the great Indian photos.

--Edwin A. Bathke, P. M.

**American Character**, by Mark Thompson. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001. 372 pp. 26 illustrations, bibliography, index. Cloth:\$29.95.

Charles Fletcher Lummis was a fascinating 1880s eccentric who offended many but was too busy to notice. He wasn't the least bit concerned with his appearance and usually appeared "picturesquely crumpled and dirty." Yet he had successful careers as a poet, journalist, photographer, editor, promoter of Spanish heritage, and Indian rights advocate. He wrote sixteen books ranging from several volumes of poems to a collection of Pueblo Indian folk tales. Unfortunately, his professional achievements did not carry over into his personal life.

Lummis had a shaky start in professional life. He attended Harvard, was an excellent student, and spent most of his time as an incorrigible prankster. His seditious behavior in college was likely a form of rebellion from life as the son of a Methodist preacher. Lummis quit Harvard during his senior year and did nothing of note for three years other than to get married. Then he talked his way into a job with the Los Angeles Times. To make a favorable impression and to get plenty of attention, he declined the proffered train ticket and decided to walk from Cincinnati to Los Angeles and write about his journey. He did just that, often walking 40 miles a day and writing several articles a week. He stopped in Colorado long enough to climb Pike's Peak.

His first impression of Spanish culture was obtained in Alamosa. He wrote that the people were dirty, lazy, and lived in mud huts. He quickly forgot his venomous first impression and became fond of these happy, generous people and their unique culture. He also started to pick up the language and soon could handle the words "with the easy grace of a cow shinnying up an apple tree tail first." About six months later this brash, adventurer walked into California and started working as a reporter.

Lummis was a restless employee that soon became bored with city crime and politics. The editor tried to appease the talented reporter by sending him to cover the capture of Geronimo, but the wily Indian refused to cooperate. So he did a series of interviews with General George Crook. Lummis liked the feisty, unorthodox commander and wrote articles complimentary to the now unpopular Indian fighter.

Back in Los Angeles he was appointed city editor and rarely got more than a few hours of sleep at night. After a year of this he suffered a stroke in 1887 that paralyzed his left arm and leg. He traveled to a New Mexico ranch to recover and became immersed in Spanish culture. His paralysis improved to the point where he decided to become one of the first photojournalist. This suited his eclectic interests and itinerant lifestyle. But he was soon in trouble. He decided to forget about his camera and try investigative reporting. His target was a corrupt, prominent family that calmly murdered opponents. Lummis and his articles caused quite a stir, but the family had too much power and the only result was that he was shot by a hired assassin.

Lummis's next crusade was a bit tamer. He attacked the government policy of forced removal of Indian children to distant schools for "education." Using his pen

and the courts, Lummis was eventually successful in changing the policy. Less successful ventures followed until he took a job editing a magazine promoting southern California. He found plenty of room in each issue to advocate women's rights, to solicit money to save decaying Spanish missions, and to insist on better treatment of Native Americans.

As the years passed, Lummis continued to write and promote causes important to the southwest well into the 1920s. On the domestic side, he was an unfaithful husband and domineering father that insisted that his children not wear shoes, not cut their hair, and not attend school. Personal relationships always ended in disaster, probably because he was too caught up with himself to consider the feelings of others.

Charles Lummis was a character who made significant contributions to the American West. I am glad not to have known this irrepressibly eccentric, iconoclastic, egotistical man, but it was fun to read about him.

--Richard C. Barth

## Over the Corral Rail



Jack Morison, P.M., right, receives a plaque of appreciation from Sheriff Bob Lane. Jack is the longest-standing active member of the Denver Posse. Our wonderful plaques are hand-made by Dale Smith, P.M.

**Fluid Arguments, Five Centuries of Western Water Conflict**, Edited by Char Miller. University of Arizona Press, 2001. 354 pp, Maps, index. Cloth, \$45.00.

As the saying goes, "Water flows to money." This book explores how it has long done so, and before money, how it flowed to political power. There is also information on communitarian use by pre-Columbian Indians.

The book's descriptions of how Spanish water custom and law evolved and cover New Spain, the Gila River basin in Arizona, and the Chama River basin in northern New Mexico.

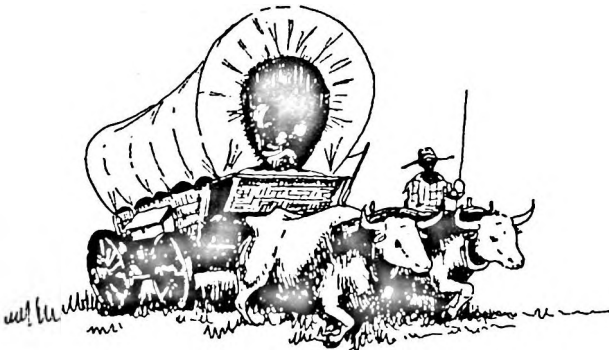
Treaty granted water rights of native Americans are also examined. The book discusses how they were stolen or manipulated out of the owners' control. Also how they have been judicially upheld, and in some cases have pretty much worked as designed and intended. The Winters doctrine and its implications are explained and reviewed at length.

Agriculture, dams, and the service economy are all viewed through the prism of water usage, custom, law, and dispute. Much is made of how 80% of water goes to agricultural use, and of the old BuRec damming or trying to dam most every river west of the 104th parallel. Floyd Dominy is not a folk hero to the author of that chapter!

There is a discussion of the benefits of the tourist economy with its relatively stingy use of water. It was clearly written with the expectation of a burgeoning dot com world with increasingly unimpeded air travel and booming tourism. The merits of that argument are unclear, now that terrorism is loose in the world.

For "water wonks" this book offers an interesting and varied selection of papers and studies on the wet history of the West. It gives insight into historical issues and offers tantalizing hints of alternative futures. However, for the generalist amateur historian, it is slow going.

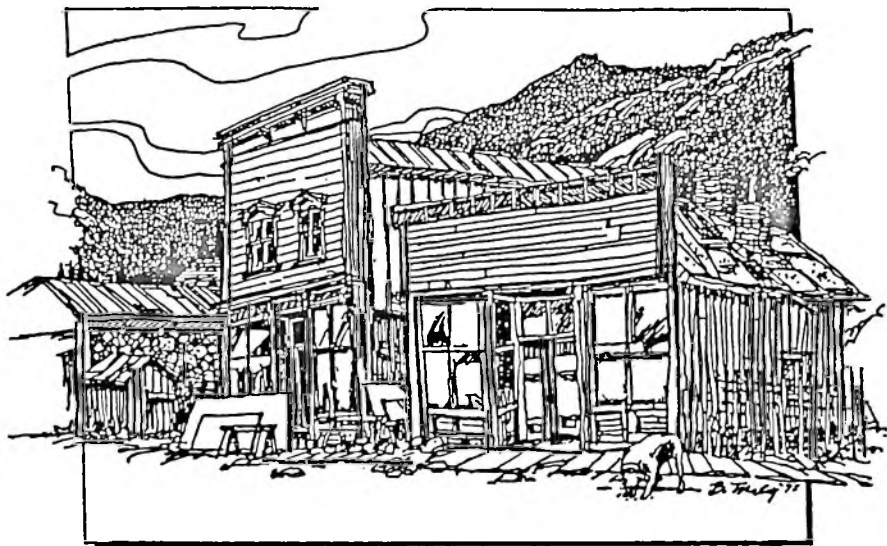
*--Stan Moore P.M.*





*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

November - December 2001



**Characters along the Arkansas**  
by  
**Richard C. Barth, C.M.**  
(Presented October 24, 2001)

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LVII NO. 6



November - December 2001



## About the Author

Richard C. Barth is professor of chemistry and environmental science at Front Range Community College. Science is rooted in history, and Rick had expanded his interest in the history of science to include western history in general, and nineteenth century Colorado history in particular. He is a corresponding member of the Denver Posse of the Westerners, secretary of the Board of Trustees of the South Park City Museum, and a member of several historical societies. Rick has published one book on Colorado history, completed another, and is currently working on a biography.

He is married with two grown children, and assists in the management of a family ranch in the Uinta mountains of Utah.



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# Characters along the Arkansas

by

**Richard C. Barth, C.M.**

(Presented October 24, 2001)

I have often thought that if old trees could talk, they would tell us wonderful stories about all that had happened beneath their canopies. But like the mountains and plains that make up Colorado, trees are silent. Silence, luckily, is not a characteristic of the long forgotten documents in libraries, court houses, and personal collections. The words in these documents speak to us about fascinating people that came to Colorado more than a century ago. I love to find and read these stories, to visit the locations where they took place, to reconstruct what happened, and to bring the participants back to life. The Arkansas Valley of Colorado is a wonderful place to find forgotten people. I wrote the following three stories for my own enjoyment and edification, and I hope they will bring the same to you.

## THE OFFICERS' WIVES

"There was not one object to be seen on the vast rolling plains—not a tree nor a house except the wretched ranch and stockade where we got fresh horses and a perfectly uneatable dinner."

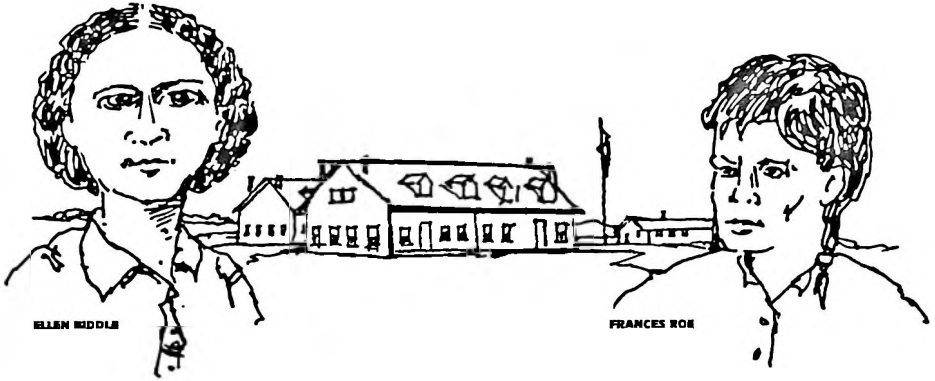
*Frances Roe, an officer's wife, 1871*

"Nothing can be more monotonous and drear than the aspect of these prairies; nothing meets the eye but the expanse of arid waste, not a tree or shrub to be seen except on the little streams where the cottonwood grows."

*Ellen Biddle, an officer's wife, 1873*

Neither woman was impressed with the scenery on the way to Fort Lyon, but the place itself was a different matter. Ellen considered it "an ideal post." The post first became a military establishment when the army leased Bent's New Fort in 1860. The military authorities renamed the place Fort Fauntleroy, but soon regretted that decision. When a colonel named Fauntleroy joined the Confederate cause at the start of the Civil War, the army scrambled to find another name. The military thought it would be fitting to honor Henry Wise, governor of Virginia, and the post was designated Fort Wise. Of course this name proved to be unwise when the governor became an officer in the Confederate army. Finally, someone in the military decided to name the stone fort after General Nathaniel Lyon. They were confident that General Lyon would not join the Southern cause—he was dead.

Although the name was finally secure, the fort was not. The buildings were perched on a bluff overlooking the Arkansas, and the river insisted on undermining the bank beneath them. To avoid losing Fort Lyon to the river, the army relocated it—shortly after the close of the Civil War—about twenty miles upstream and near what soon became Las Animas. When the fort was inventoried in 1872, its main features included quarters for three hundred twenty men, a headquarters building,



hospital, guard house, magazine, chapel, bakery, granary, storehouses, workshops, and corrals. Most of the buildings were constructed of sandstone or adobe. Frances Roe, a lieutenant's wife, thought the fort looked like "a prim little village built around a square, in the center of which was a high flagpole and a big cannon."

Ellen was delighted with the accommodations at Fort Lyon. Her husband, Colonel Biddle, was the new commander of the fort, so Ellen had the best quarters. "It was an adobe house with a wide porch; there were two rooms, sixteen feet square, on each side of a wide hall; the kitchen and pantry in the back; also four very good rooms on the second floor." The furniture was plain and simple. The bedrooms had wardrobes, dressing tables, and bedsteads and the dining room was furnished with a sideboard. "But with some coats of paint and canopies of white muslin over the bedsteads and dressing tables, clean white curtains at the windows, the rooms were soon made to look dainty and pretty."

Accommodations for Frances and Lieutenant Roe were modest. The fort commander seems "to have the best of everything," observed Frances, "and lieutenants are expected to get along with smaller houses, much less pay, and much less of everything else, and at the same time perform all of the disagreeable duties." But her quarters were not disagreeable; in fact, they were much nicer than she expected. Her home was brand new and had "a hall with a pretty stairway, three rooms and a large shed downstairs, and two rooms and a very large hall closet on the second floor."

Fort Lyon was the first military home for Frances, and she soon realized that she had a lot to learn. Recognizing the rank of each officer was a critical part of her military education. At first she relied on the insignias displayed on the uniform to separate the ranks. But that did not work. Many officers were brevets, a temporary rank usually given during a war. Once the war was over these officers returned to their original rank, but most were still called by the brevet rank. Knowing how important it



was to address an officer by his proper rank and unable to sort through the brevet confusion, Frances solved the problem by calling everyone general. "If I make a mistake," Frances wrote, "it will be on the right side, at least."

There were other customs that Frances had to learn. Her first morning at the fort she was awakened "by the sounds of fife and drum that became louder and louder, until I thought the whole Army must be marching to the house." She stumbled to a window to see what the fuss was all about, but it was too dark to see. Once back in bed she noted with a sigh of relief that the noise had finally stopped. But then the cannon fired, and it "must have wasted any amount of powder, for it shook the house and made all the windows rattle." Then three or four bugles played but she heard little of it because of the "howling and crying of dogs—such howls or misery you never heard—they made me shiver." It was quiet for a moment; then lights flashed in the distance and "dozens of men seemed to be talking all at the same time, some of them shouting, "Here! Here!" I began to think that perhaps Indians had come upon us." So Frances woke up her husband who sleepily told her that it was just morning roll call. That answer didn't satisfy her, so later that day she asked a general "why soldiers required such a beating of drums and deafening racket to awaken them in the morning." He simply replied that it was "an old army custom."

Ellen thoroughly enjoyed her first summer at Fort Lyon. Relatives, military dignitaries, and wealthy ranchers came to visit and to enjoy the good food and social amenities. "There

were horseback rides and drives, dances, card parties, charades, and every kind of entertainment that we all could devise. The weather was perfect and there was nothing to disturb our pleasure."

Of particular pleasure for Ellen was a dance given at the Boggs' ranch. Thomas Boggs and his wife, Rumalda, established a ranch along the Purgatory River in 1866. When Fort Lyon moved into the vicinity a year later, they expanded their farming and livestock business to meet the hungry demands of the soldiers. Thomas specialized in sheep, and at the time of the dance he owned almost seventeen thousand head. The Boggs were kind-hearted, generous people, and when Kit Carson and his wife died and left seven children, Rumalda and Thomas adopted the orphans. The dance that Ellen and others from the fort attended was in honor of the marriage of the oldest Carson child, and Ellen later wrote:

*I shall never forget it, nor my dance with the Dutch baker. The dance I believe was the schottische. He was short and very fat. After a slide, in which we bent low (for I did just as he did), we hopped again; then such a swing around as he gave me—it nearly took me off my feet; he was delighted that I had learned his dance, much to the amusement of many present.*

Following the dance the guests enjoyed a supper of turkey, chicken, beef, mutton, and "all kinds of wine and spirits." Perhaps it was the alcohol that inspired some "mischief-loving young

people” to pull a common frontier prank. Ellen remembered that there was a large bedstead in one room, and “on each side of the bed, lying close together well wrapped up, were babies belonging to the different Mexican women who were at the ball.” Late that night someone changed places of the babies, “those at the top being put at the bottom and those at the bottom put in the middle and so on. What was the after effect I never heard.”

Dances were also held at the fort, and both Ellen and Frances wrote about the masked ball held in the fall of 1873. The two women obtained permission to use the new, unopened hospital for their elaborate party. “The large ward made a grand ballroom, the corridors were charming for promenading and, yes, flirting, the dining room and kitchen perfect for the supper,” wrote Frances. The women gave the hospital “an air of warmth and cheeriness” by using furniture from their homes, flags, rifles, and other accoutrements for decorations. Fort Riley (more than five hundred miles away) sent its regimental band to provide music.

The officers’ wives wore fancy dresses and came as milkmaids, queens, and flower girls. Frances dressed as a Spanish lady, but Ellen failed to mention what she wore. Yet the most striking costume at the dance was that worn by a tall, slender lieutenant: a skintight suit of heavy black cloth painted with white bones and a mask made to resemble a skull. “The illusion was a great success, but it made one shiver to see the awful thing walking about, the grinning skull towering over the heads of the tallest,” claimed Frances. Ellen remembered another

lieutenant “who was sewn up in red and painted with white and phosphorus” to look like the devil. Other men disguised themselves as sailors, and a captain was dressed in black and had just one evil eye. “The dancing commenced at nine o’clock,” wrote Frances, “and at twelve supper was served, when we unmasked, and after supper we danced again and kept on dancing until five o’clock.”

Social life also included outings when Indians were not near the fort. One such outing included Ellen, Mrs. Page, Dr. Happersett (the post surgeon), and his wife. The doctor had a light wagon and a pair of spirited black horses. They spent an enjoyable afternoon driving along the old Santa Fe trail. Ellen loved the sunset—“great streaks of gold and red, heliotrope, orange and blue”—and begged Dr. Happersett to drive back to the fort slowly so that she would not miss any of the gorgeous sunset. Just as it began to get dark the left front wagon wheel would not revolve. The surgeon discovered that the man who had greased the wheels that day had put the front one on incorrectly. He tried to remove the frozen wheel, but to no avail. It was four miles to the fort, and he decided that it was too far for the women to walk. So he told them to stay with the wagon while he rode one of the horses to the fort. He would arrange for a wagon to be sent out for the stranded women. Everyone agreed, so the doctor rode for help.

The women stayed put for a while, but then decided to start walking to the garrison. Although they talked among themselves, they were all “a good bit scared, wondering if there were any straggling Indians about.”

Suddenly they heard a noise that "seemed to come out of the earth, and some one spoke to us." They could not understand the words and in a moment the voice spoke again. That was enough for Mrs. Happersett; she gave a terrifying scream and bolted. The two other women followed, and so did the owner of the voice. "We kept on the grass off the road and made no sound," wrote Ellen, and the "blackness of the night saved us." After running a long distance and hearing no sounds behind them, the women sat and waited. Soon they saw a man on a horse coming toward them. "He held a lantern in one hand which he raised from time to time looking about." It was a soldier, and shortly after a wagon arrived and took the women to the fort, all of them "utterly exhausted with fright and fatigue." Colonel Biddle immediately sent out soldiers to look for the person behind the voice, but found no one. A band of horse thieves had escaped from the guardhouse earlier that day and the Colonel thought that one of these men was trying to get help from the women.

Frances had adventures of a different type. While at Fort Lyon she became an excellent rider. With her husband and Lieutenant Baldwin as teachers, she learned to "ride the army way, tight in the saddle." She also learned how to shoot, and soon Frances was following the hounds as they raced over the prairie, chasing rabbits and coyotes.

Yet the adventure that Frances remembered best was a buffalo hunt. The soldiers decided they wanted buffalo for Thanksgiving dinner, so Lieutenant Baldwin organized a hunting expedition. Frances was invited, and on

a cold, windy morning they left. "We rode for twelve miles without seeing one living thing, and then we came to a little adobe ranch where we dismounted to rest a while." Lieutenant Roe urged his wife to stay at the ranch, but Frances refused. A few miles from the ranch the hunters found a buffalo herd and Lieutenant Baldwin prepared the horses for the hunt and issued orders. Frances had no interest in killing a buffalo, so she and her husband rode up a nearby hill "where we could command a good view of the valley and watch the run." When the buffalo spotted the hunters they stampeded, heading straight for Frances like a "steam engine." But they veered away as she watched in fascination. Soon enough animals were on the ground for Thanksgiving dinner and the hard work of butchering began. When she returned to the fort later that night, Frances considered the hunt as a "grand sight, and something that probably I will never have a chance to seeing again—and, to be honest, I do not want to see another, for the sight of one of those splendid animals running for his life is not a pleasant one."

Dust storms were also unpleasant, but impossible to avoid in eastern Colorado. Ellen discovered this fact the hard way when she accepted an invitation to camp with the soldiers during their first night on a scouting expedition. They started early one morning, and after "a very good ride," stopped for lunch. During the afternoon the wind picked up, and "it was not so pleasant riding." By the time they stopped for the night, "a hurricane was blowing great clouds of dust." For a while it looked as if the soldiers would

not be able to put up their tent, but they eventually managed to peg it down and Ellen and five other ladies on the outing went inside. Most of their carefully prepared food went to waste because as soon as they removed it from the hamper it was coated with dust. The women spent the night huddled in the tent while four soldiers gave up their sleep to hold down the tent corners. In the morning they had a cup of good coffee and a light breakfast. To everyone's relief, the wind had subsided, so Ellen and her friends had no difficulty following the trail back to the fort.

The prairie wind also gave Frances something to worry about while on an outing to the Purgatory River. Her husband was busy at the fort, so she rode with Lieutenants Baldwin and Alden. The January day was warm and clear, and both the horses and riders were in unusually fine spirits. On the way back Lieutenant Baldwin noticed a streak of gray, low on the horizon and to the west. The gray streak soon turned into a large, fast-moving cloud. When they were about two miles from the post, Baldwin ordered them to put their horses into a full run. But within a few minutes the sun was obscured and they "heard a loud, continuous roar, resembling that of a heavy waterfall. The wind was terrific and going at hurricane speed, and the air so thick with sand and dirt we could not see the ears of our own horses." Lieutenant Baldwin pulled the horses to a stop, but the frantic animals "whirled around each other, rearing and pulling" to escape the storm. Fearing that Frances would be trampled or lost if she dismounted, he sternly gave her a

direct order: "Sit tight in your saddle and do not jump!"

They stayed in the same place for about twenty minutes. Then there was a temporary lull in the storm and Frances glimpsed a picket fence. Without either soldier seeing her, she jumped from her horse, ran to the fence, and joyously threw her arms around the solid pickets. The storm continued for some time before moving on. Then out of the thinning dust loomed Baldwin, obviously looking for Frances. When he found her, he had a scowl on his face and promptly reminded her of his order to stay put. Frances knew she was in trouble,

*but I could not admit my mistake at that time without breaking down and making a scene. I was nervous and exhausted, and in no condition to be scolded by anyone, so I said: "If you were not an old bachelor you would have known better than to have told a woman not to do a thing—you would have known that, in all probability, that would be the very thing she would do first!"*

Even the worst critic of women in the military would have to admit that females added a unique element to the otherwise dull life at frontier posts.

## OVER THE WALL

"One hundred and twenty-five dollars each will be paid for the capture, dead or alive, of the following convicts, who escaped from the Colorado State Penitentiary [on] January 22, 1900."



*Cañon City Times*, January 25, 1900

C. E. Wagoner was one of four men who went over the wall that January. The thirty-four-year-old convict had about two more years to serve on a five-year sentence for robbing saloons in Denver. Wagoner was tall with a light build, black hair, sleepy-looking hazel eyes, and a small mustache. Penitentiary guards considered Wagoner a hardened criminal who had the habit of getting into trouble even while in prison. He had first escaped less than a year earlier, but he was on the loose for only a short time before the authorities found him. Now he was gone again.

Frank ("Kid") Wallace left with Wagoner. Just into his twenties, Wallace was endowed with brown hair, sunken blue eyes set wide apart, and a light mustache. In 1895 the Kid had ambushed and robbed a Wells Fargo express wagon of several thousand dollars; he went over the wall with less than a year remaining on his sentence. He was a bad man, asserted the prison guards. Kid Wallace had "several times assaulted convicts in the prison and had long been classed as one of the most unruly and hardened criminals in the

penitentiary," claimed one guard.

The third member of the escape committee was Thomas ("Slim") Reynolds. He was tall and thin with a long face, squinty hazel eyes, Roman nose, and drooping mouth. At one time Reynolds led of a gang of thieves that looted homes and stores in the Grand Junction area. He now had six months remaining on his five-year term. Of the three men, some considered Reynolds to be the worst. Although he had caused no trouble while in prison, the robber was a three-time convict and a "desperate character."

The January escape had been well planned, and the authorities thought that Reynolds was the brains behind the operation. The three men repeatedly volunteered to work in the boiler room at night. In this room they had access to equipment and tools necessary for the escape. However, they needed more help, so Reynolds reluctantly enlisted Antone ("Toney") Woode. He had a slim build, gray eyes, blond hair, a prominent nose, and large ears that stuck out at right angles from his head. Woode was behind bars for murder. At the tender age of eleven, he

had killed a friend with a shot through the back, then robbed the body and calmly returned home. When he confessed to the crime, he was sentenced to twenty-five years of incarceration, but where? There was no reformatory, and a child with a murder record would not be welcomed at the industrial school. The only choice was the penitentiary at Cañon City, so in 1893 Woode became Colorado's youngest inmate.

Prison officials expressed surprise when the "boy murderer" went over the wall. Woode had been assigned to work in the library where he had little contact with the hardened criminals. The "boy exhibited a trustworthy demeanor and had been a general favorite" of Warden Hoyt and the guards, the *Cañon City Times* noted. During his six years in prison he "had become quite an artist in watercolor works, and a portrait of William Jennings Bryan which he painted attracted much attention."

But Woode, now seventeen years old, forgot all about painting when Reynolds asked for help. The aspiring escapees probably brought Wood into the fold because he was on good terms with the guards and had special privileges which allowed him into restricted areas. More important, he knew every detail of the prison routine. But they told him little about their plans. They did not fully trust the kid and were afraid he "would give the whole thing away."

At ten o'clock on January 22, engineer Zell Humphrey followed the prison routine by unlocking the guard's dining room door and allowing the boiler crew—now numbering four

because of Woode—to enter and eat their lunch. Night captain William Rooney was also in the room. Although not yet thirty years old, Rooney had worked his way up to a responsible position at the prison. "His bravery and unflinching devotion to duty as an officer, and his sterling qualities as a man had won for him an enviable reputation." This capable officer was well liked by the guards, but prisoners had an entirely different opinion of the captain.

When the inmates finished eating they signaled to the captain that they were ready to return to work. Rooney walked to the door and called for C. F. Maloney, the assistant captain, to unlock it. Just as the door swung open, Wagoner pulled out a knife and grabbed Rooney from behind. Reynolds joined in the attack and, according to some accounts, pressed a long knife to Rooney's throat and snarled, "Now don't you move, \_\_\_ you, or I'll kill you." Captain Rooney wasn't the type to stand still during an attempted escape. He struggled, and the inmates used their knives. The captain was stabbed seven times, once through the heart.

As Rooney lay dying, the convicts grabbed the unarmed Maloney and Humphrey, tied their hands with wire, and threw them into the barber-shop. Just then the lights went out. As instructed, Woode had dumped "a bucket of soft soap on the belting which ran the electric lighting dynamo. This threw the belt and left the place in entire darkness." Just to make sure the place stayed dark as long as possible, Reynolds and Wagoner shut down the boilers. Meanwhile, Woode helped

Wallace assemble a pipe ladder they had made for scaling the wall. When everything was ready, they ran for the wall. The blackout had created the confusion the convicts wanted and they escaped over the high stone wall without being challenged.

When the lights went out the guards knew something was wrong. They fired their guns, rang the fire bell, and blew the prison whistle. That poked the hornet's nest, but the running guards had no idea what was going on. Rooney was in charge and had the only set of keys, yet no one could find the captain. As chaos enveloped the prison, someone thought that a general break was taking place and that convicts would soon pour out of the cell block and rush for the walls. More guards ran to the walls. With the help of several hundred well-armed citizens who had responded to the alarm, order was eventually restored and the prison secured. But many hours passed before the prison officials knew what had happened and who had escaped.

At daybreak the next morning a large force of prison officers, police, and citizens combed the outskirts of Cañon City for the fugitives. Bloodhounds arrived from Pueblo and joined in the search. Meanwhile, a debate broke out over how to manage the pen. A local newspaper complained that political manipulation had replaced the experienced guards with "little precinct politicians," shepherders, and disabled men. Such politically appointed guards would have a hard time spotting anything smaller than a horse going over the wall. Their incompetence was obvious: the escaping convicts had scaled the prison wall within fifty feet

of the guards, yet not one saw them. Others complained about the treatment of the prisoners. "Feeding convicts on cake won't do," opined one guard. A Denver detective, Sam Howe, griped that the "Sunday school method of handling a lot of murderers and thugs can have only one result."

Many wanted the death penalty reinstated. The murder of Rooney "is striking evidence of the necessity of restoration of capital punishment," printed the *Trinidad Chronicle News*. The *Colorado Springs Gazette* complained that under Colorado law

*there is no further penalty for murder, however atrocious, than incarceration for life in comfortable quarters, with food, clothing, medical care, and a reasonable amount of amusement furnished at state expense.*

As the debates continued, so did the manhunt. Two days after the escape Charles Canterbury, a gatekeeper on the Cañon City and Cripple Creek toll road, saw two men walking along the road. It was a cold night, yet neither man wore a coat. Canterbury thought that the men might be two of the convicts, so he followed at a safe distance. Around midnight he found them by a campfire; one watched while the other slept. Thinking he would need help, Canterbury worked his way around the men, walked the remaining five miles to Victor, and found William Higgins, gatekeeper at the upper end of the road. Together they returned and captured Wallace and Woode without a fight. Both fugitives were "badly tired out and footsore,"

reported the *Denver Times*. "They had [had] nothing to eat for two days except an ear of corn which they parched at the campfire. . . Neither seemed to feel bad about their capture, knowing they [could not] be punished further for their crime.

That was not the case for Reynolds. After scaling the wall, he and Wagoner had taken an old horse from a stable and rode it double to the outskirts of Cañon City. This was a clever move because they left no scent for the bloodhounds to follow. Four days later Reynolds and Wagoner cased a board- inghouse in Florence to make sure no men were around. When the coast was clear, they entered the house and requested a meal. As the lady prepared the food, she overheard one of them remark that he was going to take the coat and hat hanging on the wall. She immediately suspected that they were more than petty thieves and sent her son to get the marshal. Marshal Thomas arrived just after the two men left. He gave chase and cornered Reynolds near the train depot.

When a telegram to Cañon City notified Warden Hoyt of the capture, he immediately dispatched Deputy Warden Sargent, three guards, and a buggy to Florence. A few hours later Reynolds was within sight of the penitentiary walls. But just as the buggy passed the corner of First and Main Streets, *forms emerged from the darkness . . . closing in rapidly and silently. Before the guards could act, even before they comprehended what was intended, they were overpowered and disarmed. Not a sound broke the stillness, not a shot*

*was fired. . . . There were several hundred men in the crowd, but not one had a rifle, shotgun, or revolver. What they did was done by main strength and with no show of ruffianism.*

Reynolds' feet had no more than hit the ground when a noose was slipped around his neck. He was led to the nearest telephone pole. A man quickly climbed the pole and threw the rope over the cross arm. "Reynolds seemed to be supremely indifferent to his surroundings," reported the *Cañon City Times*.

*As he stood with the rope around his neck someone asked him if he had anything to say. "Give me a cigarette," he replied, "and let me smoke." "You can smoke in hell," was the reply.*

Perhaps he did just that, for he was yanked off the ground and quickly strangled by the tightened rope. The next morning Warden Hoyt cut down the body and buried it without services in the penitentiary grounds. The coroner duly considered the case and concluded that an "inquest would be a useless expense to the county."

Newspapers throughout the state reported the lynching. For official consumption they lamented the event, saying that it was a blot on Colorado's reputation and a step backward. However, most conceded that the lynching could not have happened to a more deserving person. The *Salida Mail* conceded nothing; instead, its editor bluntly stated what everyone thought: *We simply state a fact when we*



*say that there was no sorrow and scarce a feeble protest at the lynching of Reynolds. . . . On the contrary, the practically universal sentiment was that the fellow got what he deserved. The character of the people of Cañon City and the quiet—we may say humane—manner in which the lynching was conducted goes to show that the work was done by cool heads and sober minds and not by a frenzied mob.*

Wagoner was still on the loose and many in Cañon City looked forward to another short trial and swift punishment. But when Wagoner was eventually captured, he was held at the Pueblo jail until the lynching spirit had subsided in Cañon City.

With the surviving escapees safely behind bars, Warden Hoyt conducted his own investigation. His interrogation revealed no new information, except to confirm that Woode had little involvement in planning and carrying out the escape. Wallace said that “Woode just stood there scared to death the whole time.” Woode even seemed unwilling to scale the wall, so Wallace had to pull him up.

Wallace and Wagoner received extra prison time for their part in the escape and murder. In contrast, Woode received a pardon in 1905. He had been in prison for twelve years and was considered a “splendid pen man and could do almost anything of a mechanical character.” Upon his release he went to work for a New York book-binder who promised to “utilize his artistic instincts.”

## BURIED ALIVE

“Charles Reuss and Albert F. Frey are buried alive in the Bon Air mine, without light, without food, without tools, and without a single ray of hope to comfort them in their awful predicament. Two horrors stare them in the face, death by starvation or death by drowning. There is the one alternative, which to the unfortunate men must be the best of evils, and that is death by asphyxiation.”

*Herald Democrat*, March 10, 1899

The winter of 1899 was a bitch. A two-month series of blizzards dumped more than ten feet of snow on the mountains, closed the railroads, and isolated Leadville. Then a March thaw turned the city into a quagmire and threatened to flood the mines.

Trouble at the Bon Air began Wednesday morning, March 8, when water seeped into the shaft. However, the ground seemed solid enough when pump men Charles Reuss and Albert Frey, together with foreman H. M. Shepard, rode the bucket down the shaft late Wednesday night. They got off at Level 430—that many feet below the surface—and looked after the pumps that removed one thousand gallons of water a minute from the mine. The men worked all night without a problem, but around seven o'clock Thursday morning a shower of dirt and rock fell down the shaft.

Shepard concluded that it was time to get out. Less than a year earlier he fractured his skull during a cave-in, so the foreman was now rather cautious about unstable conditions. But Reuss, a “sturdy German” who had been mining



ALBERT FREY

CHARLES REUSS

for most of his forty-five years, argued that if the shaft was unstable, they stood a greater chance of getting clobbered by rocks going up in the open bucket than if they stayed down in the tunnel. Frey, just twenty-five years old but a seasoned miner, agreed with Reuss. Shepard insisted on getting out, so he left the two men and climbed into the bucket. On the way up he was pelted with a shower of dirt and pebbles. Just before he reached the top, a rock slammed into his shoulder, but did no serious damage.

Shepard had been on the surface only a few minutes when he heard a tremendous crash as tons of rock and dirt thundered down the shaft. A knot of miners quickly gathered around the plugged cavity and speculated about the fate of the two workers still in the mine. If Frey and Reuss had not been in the shaft when it caved, they should be all right, concluded the men.

Someone thought of trying to contact Reuss and Frey using a four-inch water pipe that ran from the surface to Level 430. So a miner with a loud, penetrating voice shouted down the pipe and intently listened for an answer. "It was a faint cry, a plaintive

voice from the black and dismal depths, but it gave the rescuers fresh hope," reported the local newspaper. The trapped men "could scarcely be heard, but managed to make it understood that they were uninjured and that they would like a light." Miners attempted to lower a head lamp, but bends in the pipe doomed the effort.

Once contact had been made, Superintendent James Nimon launched a full-scale rescue effort; hundreds of miners immediately volunteered to help. One crew under Foreman Shadbolt entered the adjacent Starr Mine and started digging out an abandoned tunnel—one thousand feet in length—that connected the two mines. Another group of men, directed by J. W. Newell, started digging out the caved shaft and retimbering as they descended. Newell estimated that about five hundred tons of rock and debris clogged the cavity. This material had fallen only partway down the hole before it was stopped by platforms. So a third crew, working under Foreman McLean, started digging a new shaft about twenty feet from the old one. "It is believed that the new shaft need not be more than seventy-five feet in depth." Once at this level, the crew

would tunnel over to the old shaft and enter it below the blockage.

Meanwhile, Manager Sherwin tried to reestablish communication with the trapped men. The four-inch pipe was too small and bent to be of much use. A ten-inch water pipe and a six-inch steam line ran down to Level 430. Sherwin tied a rope to a lantern and lowered the light down the water pipe. The lantern came back dry, so the pipe had no water in it. But then he remembered that there was no opening in the pipe and that the men had no tools to cut a hole. So Sherwin tried a steam pipe. He sent down a light, note, and matches, then whacked the pipe with a steel bar to get the miners' attention. He banged the pipe for hours, but there was no response. Sherwin feared that the miners had been killed while trying to find a way out of the mine.

Sherwin was getting desperate when the manager from an adjacent mine voiced a conclusion that no one wanted to hear. "We must shoot out a section of that ten-inch pipe and if they are alive they will hear it and answer." But if the two men were standing near the pipe when it blew, they would be killed. Superintendent Nimon reluctantly approved the risky venture. Late Thursday night six sticks of dynamite with a time fuse were lowered down the pipe and detonated at Level 430. Minutes passed without a sound, and then cheering drifted up the pipe. Reuss and Frey were alive and unhurt! They had been on a higher level when the dynamite blew a four-foot section from the pipe. An electric light, torches, tools, several pails of lunch, and blankets slid down the pipe and into the hands of the anxious miners.

Although the situation for the men had certainly improved, the future was not "altogether pleasant." Water was within forty-five feet of the men and now that the pumps were shut off, the water level was rising about ten feet a day.

By Saturday morning McLean and his men had penetrated thirty-four feet with their new rescue shaft. The miners worked "like demons," digging in the soft rock at a rate of almost one foot per hour. McLean accomplished this by dividing his men into three shifts of eight hours each. During each shift, one crew dug for twenty minutes, then rested for the same amount of time as the second crew dug. The *Herald Democrat* predicted that the men would be released by Wednesday, at the latest.

The two other rescue efforts were not going well. Shadbolt found that the Starr tunnel was so filled with dirt and old timbers that it would require several weeks to break through. In the old Bon Air shaft, Newell made little progress in removing the tangle of rock and timbers that "completely and securely" blocked the hole.

Meanwhile, the prisoners remained cheerful. Because of the rising water, they climbed up about sixty feet to the Smith and Valle pump station, cut a hole in the pipe to receive supplies, and made themselves at home. A local newspaper happily reported that the entombed men "have food in plenty, a change of clothing, enough artificial light, newspapers to read, [and] some remedies in case of accident or sickness." Both men had a host of friends who wanted to see that they lacked nothing other than sunlight. "It is probable that beds and chairs and a

stove would have been sent [down] if a suggestion had been made, but even a ten-inch pipe has its limitations.”

Little had changed by the next day, Sunday. A young lady arrived with a huge cake and was greatly disappointed when it would not fit down the pipe. Instead, the men received tobacco and a deck of cards. Mrs. Frey talked with her son and “spoke words of tender love.” She “prepared her son’s meals regularly and they were sent below as soon as she brought them to the shaft.” The only complaint made by Reuss and Frey concerned the cold. As much warm clothing as possible was sent to them, but their small, cold, and damp prison provided no warmth.

By Monday little progress had been made on digging out the old shaft. Crews spent most of their time replacing broken timbers and removed only five feet of wreckage. Newell feared that the shaft might cave-in again, so digging was slow and cautious. By the end of the day the shaft was “timbered to a depth of twenty-five feet, fourteen-inch timbers being used for cribbing and twelve-inch timbers for the bracing between the compartments.” Newell wasn’t taking any chances.

Neither were Shadbolt and his crew in the Starr Mine. Cleaning out a caved tunnel was more dangerous than digging a new one, so progress was discouragingly slow. The only good news came from McLean. Although the rock in the new shaft had turned to hard clay, which was difficult to pick out, the shaft was down fifty-five feet and the “rate of progress is said to be a record-breaker for the camp.”

Both prisoners remained in good spirits. During Monday a miner

found a small stove that he disassembled and sent down the pipe. Right behind it descended eggs and beef steaks. Reuss and Frey had made beds from mining timbers and with the delivery of more blankets they could now enjoy a good night’s sleep. But the men above had a party in mind, for the “purpose of saying a few encouraging words to Reuss and Frey.” A special guest had arrived—Frey’s brother from Idaho—and their exchange was “warm and affectionate.” Other relatives, a lady from Colorado Springs, and a host of friends arrived to cheer up the miners. Reuss expressed amazement at all the attention caused by their plight. “I never was written up in the papers so much before.” said the old miner. “It’s like being down in the grave and reading about yourself.”

Crews worked for the next two days to make sure that the mine did not become a grave. McLean thought that the rescue shaft was now deep enough and started tunneling over to the old shaft that was about twenty feet away. Rescuers predicted that the two men would be out by Wednesday. But when the crew reached the old shaft, they found that the supporting timbers bent and twisted out of shape. To make matters worse, rock and debris from the initial collapse were just overhead. “Fearful that work here might bring down another cave, the drift was abandoned and sinking on the rescue shaft was resumed,” reported the *Rocky Mountain News*. McLean estimated that about forty feet more of depth was needed, and that would take at least two days.

All the news that day wasn’t bad. A strong draft started moving

through the mine on Wednesday and blew out the prisoner's torches. The crew digging out the Starr tunnel had apparently removed enough debris that air was getting through. Another bit of good news was the cold weather outside. Snow was no longer melting, so the threat of flooding the mine diminished. With drowning and asphyxiation ruled out for the present, the miners felt more secure in their underground world.

Entombed for a full week, Frey and Reuss had adapted to dungeon life. Reuss had a touch of rheumatism in his ankle and could not wear a shoe, but this did not worry him. "When the time comes for me to climb the shaft," assured Reuss, "I'll be on hand, rheumatism or no rheumatism." Frey had plenty of entertainment via the pipe. A series of young ladies, "solicitous for his welfare," sent down their encouraging words. One especially pretty lady delivered a delicious selection of fruit, cakes, and sweet meats. Being buried alive had certain advantages for a handsome, very eligible bachelor.

Conditions changed little during Thursday and Friday. Frey made a daring trip up the shaft. He climbed the ladder until he was within one hundred and thirty feet of the surface; there a tangle of timbers stopped him. Frey concluded that the rescue shaft, now eighty-five feet deep, could enter at that point. Meanwhile, Reuss was experimenting with a large quantity of curative preparations for his rheumatism. One of them must have worked, for his ankle no longer hurt. He sent an urgent message up the pipe to stop the flow of external and internal medication. The mine didn't have unlimited

space, and he was running out of storage room.

At press time on Sunday, the *Herald Democrat* announced that rescue was eminent. The new shaft was now below the blockage, and the tunnel to the old shaft was within one foot of breaking through. A crowd had gathered at the Bon Air Mine to welcome Frey and Reuss. Both miners claimed they felt all right, but were "very weary and worn out." Once the rescue workers broke through, they found the main shaft wedged so tightly with broken timbers that it was hopelessly blocked. When Frey had climbed up the shaft several days earlier he apparently miscounted the number of steps. Now he repeated the process and found that he had been off by thirty-five feet. McLean and his crew immediately returned to the rescue shaft and started digging once more.

Mrs. Frey, who had been waiting at the mine mouth for her son, expressed her disappointment to a reporter. "I know my boy is safe and is not suffering, and it will only be a few days before I shall see him again. But how I would love to have him at the breakfast table this morning." As for the trapped men, they greeted the news philosophically and then took a nap.

After cleaning out about fifty feet of the old Bon Air shaft, Superintendent Nimon suspended work because of the slow progress. Shadbolt's crew in the Starr mine had cleared about fifty feet of tunnel a day, but work had been slowed by bad air. Fans were brought in and they helped, but rescuers could still only work six-hour shifts. Meanwhile, Reuss and Frey completed a comparative study of underground diets. They

concluded that meals of soup, bread, meat, and vegetables were better in the long run than those of pie and cake. However, mothers and old ladies brought the soup and vegetables while attractive young ladies arrived with sweets. Bachelor Frey realized that life underground was more than a good diet.

By Wednesday morning the rescue shaft had reached a depth of one hundred and forty feet, but the miners decided to dig just a bit deeper before tunneling over to the old shaft. The newspaper predicted that rescue was only a few hours away. Both men eagerly awaited release from their living tomb. Reuss hoped that the weatherman would have a good supply of sunshine for him. Frey's "heart was beating anxiously" to see a certain young lady who had been a daily visitor at the shaft.

Later on Wednesday McLean decided that the rescue shaft was deep enough and directed his crew to start the tunnel toward the old shaft. Digging was extremely difficult because of large boulders embedded in cemented earth. The crew finally broke into the old shaft. Just above them was a jagged mass of broken timbers, but thankfully the shaft below was clear. McLean ordered that the heaviest timbers available be sent below. His men built a "substantial" platform just in case the old shaft collapsed again.

Meanwhile, Superintendent Nimon told Reuss and Frey to "pack their trunks and settle their bill at the hotel." The men did just that, sending up several buckets filled with bric-a-brac accumulated during their enforced sojourn. When these treasures reached

the surface, they were "eagerly snapped up as valued souvenirs of the event."

However, the event was not yet over. The rescue party started down the shaft, using the same ladder that Frey had climbed earlier. Portions of the ladder had to be replaced, and in some spots dirt was shoveled away. After all their time and work, no one was going to slip climbing out of the mine.

Finally convinced that the shaft was as safe as possible, the rescue crew started down for the miners. Following what seemed like an eternity to those anxiously waiting at the surface, word came up that Reuss and Frey, each flanked by rescue workers, were climbing out. Hundreds of spectators had assembled to witness the event, and "in spite of the squads of police, forced their way to the edge of the shaft." When at last the heads of Reuss and Frey emerged from the shaft, the crowd "set up a shout and cheer which told of long suspense happily ended." Then the steam whistle at the Bon Air blew long and hard. Neighboring mines heard the signal and sounded their whistles, and soon the entire valley was treated to a cacophony of celebrating whistles.

After a hot bath, shave, and a good night's sleep, Reuss and Frey felt as good as new and soon "appeared on the avenue." People immediately surrounded the pair, shaking their hands and telling them how happy they felt about the rescue. The men were very modest and accepted the good wishes of everyone with evident pleasure, the very sight of human faces and the warm presence of human hands being a source of delight to them. "You have no idea," said Frey, "how good it seems just to be in the daylight again, and to

see people. One has to be buried alive to appreciate light and pure air."

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## Over the Corral Rail

*Time's up!* Thank you to everyone who brought new members into the Denver Posse of Westerners. We will let you know in the Jan/Feb 2002 issue of the *Roundup* who won the membership drive contest, and gets his or her dues paid for 2002. *That doesn't mean we don't still want new members!* We encourage all members to keep inviting those who share the joy of Western history.

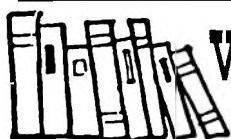
We welcome the following new members: *Brad Edwards* of Littleton, (no sponsor listed). Brad is interested in Colorado Indian battles, and spent 44 days doing on-site research at the Milk Creek site. *Joseph Cleary* of Centennial comes to us sponsored by Lebrun Hutchison.



### Westerners International

Corresponding Membership in the Denver Posse does not include membership in the Westerners International. If you wish to receive the *Buckskin Bulletin*, you may purchase a subscription for \$5.00/year. Contact Westerners International, c/o National Cowboy Hall of Fame, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111. 800-541-4650





## Westerners Bookshelf



**Ruins and Rivals: The Making of Southwest Archaeology** by James E. Snead. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. 290 pp. 19 illustrations, chapter citations, bibliography, index. Cloth \$35.00.

James Snead did not write a book about the rich and fascinating ancient culture of the Southwest. Instead, he wrote about the process of archaeological discovery and study in the Southwest. When explorers and military expeditions wrote about ruins belonging to a long forgotten people, relic hunters, collectors, and exploiters rushed to Arizona and New Mexico, intent on collecting as much loot as possible. The author traces this early history (1890s to 1920s) and explains how it became dominated by two schools of thought—one school supported by Eastern museums and universities and a second one promoted by archaeological societies in the Southwest.

Eastern archaeologists wanted to fill museum shelves with colorful and unique Native American artifacts for the world to admire. Southwestern archaeologists resented this export of priceless treasures to distant institutions. They wanted the antiquities preserved for the local population and placed where their cultural context could be appreciated. The author presents a detailed examination of these conflicting objectives and explains how they impacted archaeological research and policy.

This conflict wasn't limited to archaeologists themselves or to the removable artifacts. Conflicts arose when tourists considered the structural antiquities, usually called "ruins," as an unique background for a photograph, when the developer thought of the ruins as annoying impediments, when the rancher wanted to use the ancient ruins as shelter for his livestock, and when the Native American failed to see ruins and instead saw a live, active and sacred culture about to be desecrated.

A central theme in Snead's book is the development of a Western idea of archaeology. Promoters of this idea saw "antiquities as a central component of an emerging Southwestern identity." This cultural nationalism promoted the primacy of local resources and tradition, and promoted archaeology that was different from the scientific model espoused by Eastern archaeologists. However, these early Southwest archaeologists were a fractious, egotistical lot. They weakened their position by clashing over the issues of moral imperatives of classical studies and the local demand for tangible relevance.

According to the author, these East-West differences were never resolved. Even today "differences in perspectives between locally based archaeologists and their colleagues from elsewhere in the United States" are still evident and form "one of the social realities of Southwest archeology."

Those interested in the historic personalities and philosophies of Southwestern archaeology should find this book quite interesting. Others will likely do what I did—fall asleep in the middle of the first chapter.

--Richard C. Barth, C.M.

**Finding the West, Explorations with Lewis and Clark** by James P. Ronda. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 138 pp. 7 maps, chapter notes, index. Cloth \$22.95

Hundreds of books have been written about the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but the recent book by James Ronda presents a very different view of this epic American adventure. Writing a series of short, introspective essays, the authors takes the reader beyond the events of the expedition and into the motives behind the adventure and their far-reaching implications.

The book starts with a discussion of the explorer tradition that, at the start of the nineteenth century, focused on navigable rivers, comprehensive planning, organization, and good publicity. The author was particularly impressed with the planning part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and stated, "The most important journeys are the ones made before leaving home." Thomas Jefferson, Meriwether Lewis, and to a lesser extent William Clark, planned every detail of the expedition and its subsequent success was due, in large part, to this careful planning.

Despite the thorough planning there were surprises, especially at the start. Contrary to expectation, the Corps of Discovery started their journey in a remarkable urban, thickly settled West. Large, well-established towns of Native Americans were frequent along the Missouri River. They displayed rich cultural diversity and a surprisingly complex regional trading network. So Lewis and Clark first studied business and economic geography, two areas not normally associated with a wilderness adventure. But the Native American economic system was hard to understand because it was laced with ill-concealed aggression, theft, kidnaping, raid and counter raid, all wrapped into a "business as usual" attitude.

Ronda writes about the political intrigue surrounding the Louisiana Purchase. Spain considered the purchase to include present-day Louisiana, Arkansas, and eastern Missouri. France and the United States envisioned a much larger piece of real estate, probably to keep Spain in its place. Spain sent out a military force to intercept Lewis and Clark, but they were too late and missed the expedition. Added to this political disagreement were the conveniently ignored land claims by England and Russia in the northwest and a conspiracy by Aaron Burr and James Wilkinson to form a western republic linked to Spain.

For the most part this book does not deal with nineteenth century economics or politics, but with past and present attitudes. The essays in the book are intended to remind the reader about the enduring consequences of the expedition. For example, Lewis described the Clatsop Indians as "low and illy formed" and, according to the author, this critical attitude made it easier to later evict them from their homeland. The author states that the "garden" stories from the expedition shaped the federal homestead policy and that tales of triumph fostered the attitude of Manifest Destiny. Finally, the author claims that considering the expedition as one of heroic courage strips the participants of both their humanity and their fallibility. Perhaps. But I am never comfortable reading too much meaning into a single event.

The book is abstract and academic, thus taking the excitement and sense of

discovery out of the expedition. It is serious, speculative history that takes events, attitudes, and motives of the expedition and ties them into subsequent events. The author's conclusions are certainly debatable and could form the basis of almost endless ethical and philosophical discussions about the impact of past events on our present attitudes and actions.

--Richard C. Barth, C.M.

**Trailblazers: Twenty Amazing Western Women** by Karen Surina Mulford. Northland Publishing 2001. 178 pp. 20 black and white photographs, 46 illustrations, bibliography, index. Paper:\$14.95

Twenty years ago colleges and Universities began offering classes in Women's Studies, and a deluge of material appeared out of libraries, diaries, newspaper accounts and oral histories about the wonderful accomplishments of women from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. These women moved west, on foot, horseback, covered wagon or boat. And in their quiet and not so quiet ways they became the movers and shakers in a new land where they found the inspiration, strength and courage to follow their dreams.

In this book, which covers two centuries, beginning in 1805 with Sacagawea you will meet a varied and diverse group of women. You will find many determined women featured here, a miner, an ex-slave (who amassed a fortune), a Mormon physician (in a polygamous marriage), an intelligent and witty native American, a writer, a governor, a Senator, a painter, a photographer, union organizers, suffragists, and a Supreme Court Justice. All of these women were pioneers and opened doors in many fields for other women to follow. Their stories are varied and inspiring. All the women showed their determination when they began casting off the old confining roles that men had placed them in, roles that no longer fit their new life in the West. When their stories are told, their spirits guide and inspire women everywhere to reach beyond themselves and know that the sky is the limit.

--Winnie Burdan, P.M.

**A History of Navigation on Cypress Bayou and the Lakes** by Jacques D. Bayur. University of North Texas Press, 2000. 822 pp. 136 photos, 73 illustrations and maps, index. Appendix A: Steamboats at work, Appendix B: Steamboats by year. Appendix C: Alphabetical listing, bibliographical essay. Cloth:\$67.95.

This book is an outstanding work of research and dedication. When man developed the West and cleared the trees, he set up a new pattern for flooding that created problems. Large dams or rafts were created during flood stages that backed up the water creating large bayous and lakes. These bodies of water in the pre-railroad days became avenues of navigation. Steamboats were able to ply their waters. Crops had a newly found route to markets at Shreveport, Louisiana and ports on downstream. Until the railroad came, steamboats had a heyday on the

bayous and the lakes. By 1850s, it was over and yet for the present day boater, there is still much to see and explore.

The area covered in this book is less than one half of one percent of the United States. The book would not have much meaning for a boater from New York, Minnesota, Colorado or California. However, for a person living in Louisiana or East Texas it would be of a great help and interest. The history is well documented, the steamboats are named, the waterways are charted, and individual happenings are well told.

--*Jack Morison, P.M.*

**Casas Grandes and its Hinterland**, by Michael E. Whalen and Paul E. Minnis  
Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2001. 250 pages, 9 halftones and 52 line illustrations, bibliography, index. Cloth \$45.00.

Casas Grandes, also called Paquimé, was a large settlement in the northern part of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In the late 1950s, the Amerind Foundation of Arizona, in cooperation with the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) of Mexico excavated separate parts of the Casas Grandes ruins. Charles C. Di Peso, director of the Amerind Foundation, produced a report in several volumes describing the community, which flourished, with running water in the central part of the community. Di Peso also wrote of Casas Grandes as the center of a regional system of pueblos dependent on the larger central town for direction and control.

Halen and Minnis review many studies of the area done before and after the Joint Casas Grandes Project of the 1950s, along with results reported from that important project. While giving great credit to Di Peso and colleagues for their work, the authors of this book come to very different conclusions on many issues. They assert that the central community flourished from 1200 to 1450 AD, not earlier as Di Peso reported. Casas Grandes was an important center, but did not control the outlying villages to any major extent. Other students of the area had stated that the Mogollon and other pueblo cultures from what is now the southwestern United States had been influential in the development of the Casas Grandes culture. Halen and Minnis indicate that trade between the northern pueblos and Casas Grandes existed but the more important influence had been from further south in Mexico.

The descriptions of studies which the authors reviewed, with their interpretations of the significance of the studies, is detailed and enlightening. In their conclusion the authors state that "the interpretations presented herein are suggestive rather than conclusive . . ." with much more to be learned about the development and decline of Casas Grandes.

This book makes a major contribution to understanding regional development in the Casas Grandes area, with implications for further study of nearby cultures. The photographs, maps and charts are helpful in understanding the text. Unfortunately, the small type used in the text makes reading more difficult.

--*Earl McCoy, P.M.*