



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

January - February 2002



The James H. Baugh Homestead
presented by
The Wheat Ridge Historical Society
(Presented November 28, 2001)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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Submissions for *The Roundup*

Jim Krebs (303) 321-1266
 1925 Xanthia St
 Denver, CO 80220

Book Reviews

Keith Fessenden (303) 321-6181
 3031 E 8th Ave
 Denver, CO 80206

Dues and Other Payments

Ted Krieger (303) 466-7737
 280 E. 11th Ave.
 Broomfield, CO 80020

Reservations for meetings

Dorothy Krieger (303) 466-7737
 280 E. 11th Ave.
 Broomfield, CO 80020

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*From top to bottom:
 Claudia Worth, President, Claudia Callas,
 V.P., and Lee Callas, a huge driving force
 in the restoration of the Baugh homestead.*

The James H. Baugh Homestead

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(Presented November 28, 2001)

“History”

by Claudia Worth, President of the
Wheat Ridge Historical Society

My friend James H. Baugh

How can I call James H. Baugh my friend when he died over one hundred years ago? When Linda Selders, who lived in the house with the last owner, first came to the Historical Society in 1981 to tell us what they had discovered in their home, I became interested in this man and did a little research at that time. Later, when Linda moved, I became afraid that Mr. Baugh's cabin would be destroyed, so I did even more research. Eventually after two years, I had enough to convince the Wheat Ridge City Council that this little cabin encased in a Victorian farm house was of significant historic value to the City of Wheat Ridge, the County of Jefferson, and the State of Colorado.

James Henry Baugh set out from St. Charles, MO, like many other young men in their twenties, in search of Gold in the great Rocky Mountains of Colorado Territory.

In June of 1859 he arrived in Denver, a town of a few buildings, some log cabins and tents. There were already about 5,000 inhabitants of the bustling community camped along Cherry Creek. It was not much of a town to look at--lots of saloons and rowdy's around. There were no trees or green grass, except for the willows and cottonwoods along the banks of Cherry Creek and the South Platte and little tributaries in the basin. It was a wild prairie trampled by all the hustle and bustle of miners, a few women and others seeking their fortune.

Baugh headed for the Rocky Mountains passing through the Clear Creek Valley, panning for gold along the way. Like

The Wheat Ridge Historical Society was founded in 1974 and has been meeting monthly from September to June ever since. They meet in the 1910 red-brick farmhouse in Wheat Ridge Historic Park, 1610 Robb St, the 2nd Tuesday in the above months, at 7: 30 P.M.

Wheat Ridge Historic Park is a one-acre park with 5 buildings; a pre-1860 sod house, an 1860s log cabin, the 1910 red-brick farmhouse, an equipment shed and the 1913 1st Wheat Ridge Post Office that took seven years to restore. They hold two special events, May Festival held the 2nd Saturday of May and Apple Cider Day the 2nd Saturday of October.

Claudia Worth is the President of the Wheat Ridge Historical Society, a position she has held for more than 20 years. Claudia Callas is the Vice-President and her daughter, Lee, is the Project Manager for the restoration of the Baugh House.

many other miners, he had no good fortune mining and not getting a good strike. He headed back for the lush green valley along the Clear Creek then known as Vasquez Creek. On August 15, 1859 he settled on 160 acres of land described in Peter Eskins Letter of September 27, 1864.

I, Peter Eskins, do solemnly swear that I am well aquatinted with James H. Baugh who is a single man of the age of 27 years and a citizen of the United States and an inhabitant of the NW ¼ of SW1/4 and W1/2 if NW1/4 section 21 and SW ¼ of section of SW1/4 section 16, Township 3 South Range 69 West. And that no other person resides on said land entitled to the right of Preemption under this act and the said Baugh entered upon and made a settlement in person on said land on the 15th day of August 1859 since which time he has erected therein a log house 1 ½ stories high with shingle roof, plank floor, 2 doors, and 2 windows and is a comfortable house to live in. Also 500 rods of fencing and 70 acres in cultivation on said land. The same

Baugh continued to reside therein since his first settlement. And is now residing in said house on said land where he makes his exclusive home. And he did not remove from his own land in the Territory of Colorado to make said settlement. And I further swear that the said James H. Baugh filed a deceleratory statement for said land in the Surveyor General office for the Territory of Colorado on the 19th day of November 1862.

Peter Eskins

James Baugh first tried to homestead the land but found out that it had already been given to Polenia Garcia y Paddila for his service to the United States in the Navajo Wars. Also, part of the land, which would be north of what is now I-70, had been set aside for public education under the Homestead Act and therefore could not be for private use.

James went to Mexico, found Padilla, and bought the land for \$500.00. He then filed for a preemption, which he



was granted in 1865. James continued to farm the land and make improvements, building barns, corrals, and cultivating the land. In 1868, *The Rocky Mountain News* reprinted an article from the *Golden City Transcript* on June the 5 entitled *The Farms along Clear Creek*.

In the article, James H. Baugh is listed as having "Wheat 20 Acres, Oats 35, Potatoes 7, Garden 2," for a total of 64 acres under cultivation. Jacob Brown and James Baugh hand-dug the Brown and Baugh ditch in 1865. This ditch is still in use and supplies water to the Historic Park of Wheat Ridge.

To cultivate this much land in the Clear Creek Valley had to have been back-breaking work as the land is riddled with stones and sets on 50 feet of gravel. But when it is plowed and fertilized it makes for some of the best growing in the area.

Baugh continued to farm, selling his produce to the miners in the mountains. By 1870, the Jefferson Census lists the value of his property at \$4,000, and his personal property as \$1,500 with three farm hands living on the property, James Norman age 35, from Indiana, Peter Bagley age 34, from Pennsylvania, and John Gilbert, age 21, from New York.

James Baugh was a member of the Farmers Club in Jefferson County. He also started a school with Abram Slater about where the Kaiser Permanente building on Ward Road is today. The school, however, later closed for lack of students and its number was given to Golden.

He helped start the first Ceres Grange in Colorado and was an active member of the Democratic Party. He joined other landowners in suing the railroad to keep them from taking his land and building a rail through it. The railroad is still in use today.



Photos by Editor

Baugh home in 2002 shows evidence of a rough life

In 1884 James Baugh began subdividing his land into ten 15-acre plots. On the June 1, 1885 census for Jefferson County, Mr. Samuel Longnecker, 56 years old, from Pennsylvania, is listed as living in the cabin. Longnecker, a widower, shared the cabin with his daughter, Alice Ella Snowberger, also born in Pennsylvania and her 5-year-old blind daughter Lillian. Mr. Longnecker rented first and then purchased the land in 1889 with Baugh himself carrying the note for the \$1300 purchase price. The addition of the Victorian farmhouse was added sometime between 1893 and 1901. We are accepting the date of 1901 because the Longnecker took out a loan for \$1500 at this time with the next Jefferson County tax assessment going up.

Also listed on the 1885 census was Longnecker's son Jacob, 29, born in Pennsylvania, a farmer married to Loretta, who is a housekeeper, and their two daughters.

Between 1884 and 1889, Baugh finished selling off the original 160-acre homestead and relocated in Longmont. In 1889, James H. Baugh married Mary J. Brown in Denver with Rev. H.H. Beach officiating.

Mary, who had been married before, had two daughters, Vera called Vernie Brown, and Bess "Bessie" Brown. They moved to Baugh's farm in Longmont.

Tragically just a short while later, Vera died of diphtheria on Jan. 11, 1890 and was buried in Longmont.

Then on March 24, 1890, Bess died of diphtheria and was also buried in Longmont. A year later on August 15, 1891 James Baugh died on his farm in Longmont. Two weeks later his only child, Hattie James Baugh, was born.

Later, Mary again married, to Mr. A. L. Gibson when Hattie was six yrs old. Mary died of a brain tumor in 1901.



Editor's wife, Susan, left, explores the Baugh interior by flashlight with Lee Callas

In 1889 Samuel Longnecker died and left the house and property to his daughter, now Ella Martin. She eventually sold it and then received it back. In 1929, Frank J. Bond bought five acres. In 1930, Bond sold the land to Minerva E. Barry and her son George. George used the property for chicken farming and built outbuildings for coops and barns. Unfortunately though, he was accidentally killed a few years later. On July 15, 1942 the property reverted back to the Bond children.

On November 16, 1942 Mr. and Mrs. Otis Sandusky bought the house and lived there for the next 34 years. Their son Kent and daughter Kay are still alive and are helping with the history and restoration of the house. We have met with Ken Sandusky several times. In 1976, the Godells purchased the property, which was now three acres of land surrounding the house. Mr. Godell died in 1994 and the day of his funeral the house was set on fire. Luckily, the house was not destroyed and the damage was mostly limited to roof structure members. Finally, in 1997, the City of Wheat Ridge was able to acquire the property from a Mr. Sloan, a New Yorker who had intended to develop the property for multiple housing.

“Site Use”

by Claudia Callas, Vice-President of the Wheat Ridge Historical Society

Claudia Worth has brought the image of James Baugh through the mists of time and you've journeyed his journey as he worked the land and prospered. His legacy isn't large but it will be

enough to show future generations a glimpse of the past. Now, with this little three-acre parcel remaining of the original homestead, before us lays the challenge—how to celebrate and share this reminder, this remnant of our once rural past. Interested Wheat Ridge citizens attended Parks Department meetings and the idea of a Living History Museum seemed to sum up their suggestions.

In September 2000, this isometric view and a “future use plan” were drawn up and brought before the Wheat Ridge City Council. They approved the plan and the vision began to take on a life of its own.

At winter's end, my daughter, granddaughter, and I walked these flyers to homes all around the neighborhood. “Plough and they will come,” we said to ourselves, and come they did.

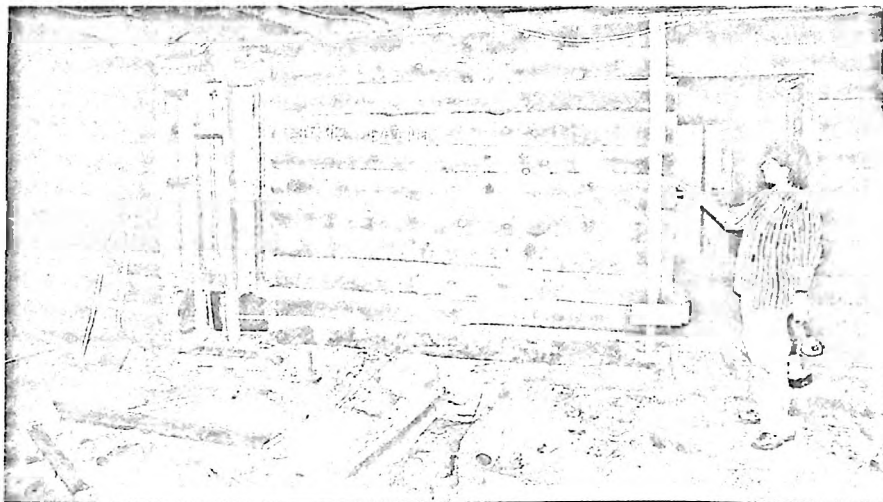
On a crisp Spring day, in turn-of-the-new-century, five teams of magnificent horses, no, I take that back, four teams of horses and 1 team of Jennies, gathered for Spring ploughing. Paul Muller furnished plows, discs, and harrows from his collection of restored farm equipment. It truly was a splendid sight and the neighbors came in droves. Before long, a pile of stones began to grow and children collected trash from the far corners. So there we were putting to good use these fallow fields and it somehow gave not only ourselves but also the neighbors hope that the forelorn land with a blackened house would be indeed brought back to life.

Where else is there an 1859 log cabin

within its turn-of-the-century wrapping. A vivid visual history lesson in itself. It is a virtual time line from 1904 back to 1859. What will you see when you come to visit the Baugh Homestead a few years from now? You should see a nostalgic Victorian house from the outside, a small flowerbed to view, and a plank walk to follow to the front door. You'll enter into the parlor, with a vintage table and chairs, already purchased, complete with original sales receipt and a parlor stove. In the bedroom will be changing exhibits of handwork of the period—perhaps a bed with trundle beneath. And then the surprise—in the heart of the house will be Baugh's 1½-story log cabin furnished with the trappings of a bachelor farmer. Here he mended his harnesses and greased his plowshares. In later years we know men gathered at Baugh's to talk about the 'hopper problem (which was an infestation of grasshoppers that blighted their crops in

the mid-1860s). As you head out the east door you see an expanse of field with garden and orchard beyond. Look in the cold storage room on the north side—most likely this room afforded a place to store and preserve his harvest of seasonal crops. The most northerly field has been replanted with tall prairie grasses. Take the path through this sea of grasses and you get a feel for the arduous passage the pioneers had to endure crossing the prairie. What have you missed – out of the corner of your eye you catch a glimpse of a small building down a well worn path—yes it's the outhouse—oh, the good old days.

One of the most exciting things about being involved with these "bulldog efforts" to save a bit of the past for future generations is—you never know what's going to turn up next or as my mom would say "You never know what's going to come down the pike."



A message scratched long ago by a transient, "have faith," speaks to Lee, supervising a monumental task. Airborne dirt reflects into camera lens

The most recent donation—a pump house with water tank above—will most probably be our landmark for the entrance to the Baugh Homestead. The water tower had been on a small farm in Wheat Ridge for almost a century, tucked away in a grove of trees and we never knew it existed.

“Restoration”

by Lee Callas, Wheat Ridge Historical Society

On behalf of restoration of the Baugh House, the City of Wheat Ridge has applied for grant monies from the State Historic Fund and has to-date been awarded three separate grants.

The first grant, which was awarded in January 1998, was for the “Historical Assessment of the Baugh House”. This work which was completed in September 1999 included a wonderful final report by Merrill Ann Wilson, Histori-

cal Architect. In the report Ms. Wilson outlines the significance of the Baugh House as measured for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

The second grant was awarded January 1999. This grant was given to produce the “Construction Documents for Restoration of the Baugh House.” Completed in May 2001, we brought a copy of those documents here tonight for anyone who would like to pour over the blueprints.

The third grant awarded in January of this year is ongoing. It is earmarked for the “Exterior Restoration of the Baugh House”. We’re quite excited about the work to be done under this grant as we finally jump off the paper to actual job at hand.

There are actually three main areas of immediate concern that are slated to be



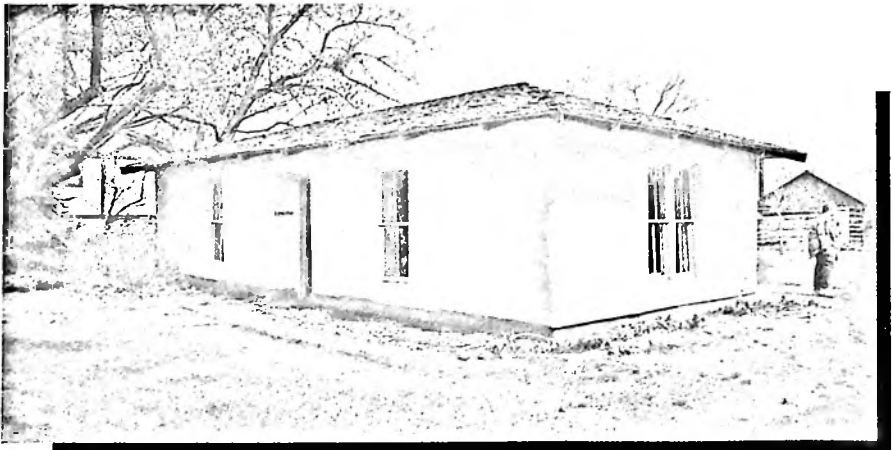
New support piers are corkscrew-shaped to “screw” into ground for solid footing

addressed in this grant. These are the foundation under the cabin and cold storage portions, interior structural

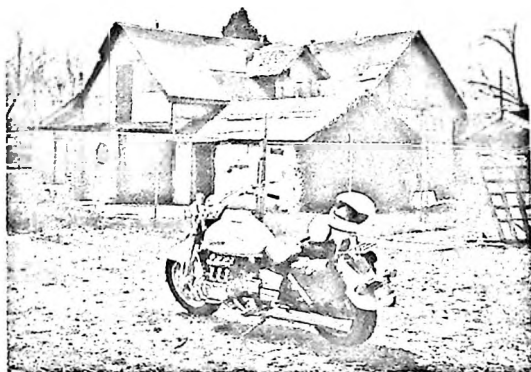
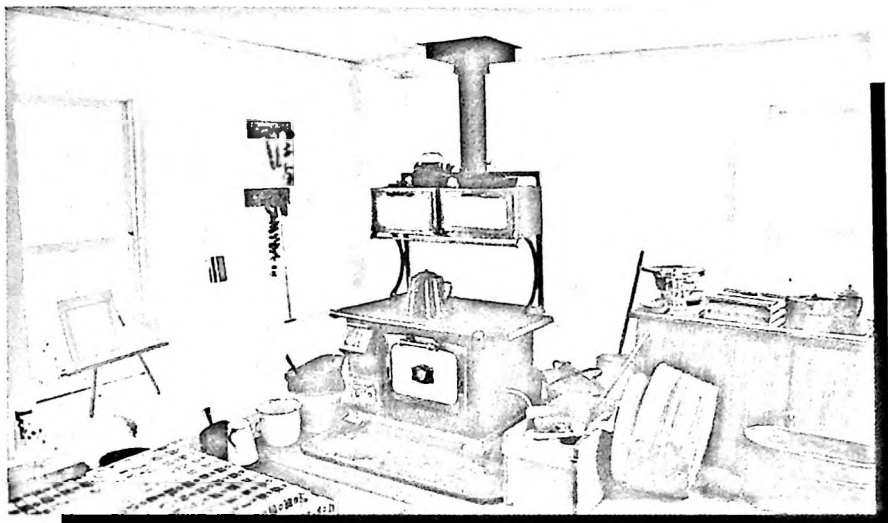
reinforcement of the cabin's second floor, and the roof system of the entire house.



Original historic Wheat Ridge Post Office was relocated to Historic Park



Claudia Worth, far right, gives Editor and wife a personal tour of the Wheat Ridge Historic Park sod house



Contrasts abound at Wheat Ridge Historic Park. Top photo is the kitchen on the sod house. Stove is pressed into service a few times a year for May Festival and Apple Cider Day. Center photo shows historic log home in a modern cul-de-sac. Left, 21st-Century machinery visits 19th-Century home.

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.

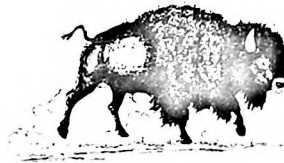
Casas Grandes, also called Paquimé, was a large settlement in the northern part of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In the late 1950s, the Amerind Foundation of Arizona, in cooperation with the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) of Mexico excavated separate parts of the Casas Grandes 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.

Whalen 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. Whalen 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.



Colorado, Photographs by David Muench and Marc Muench, Essays by Ann Zwinger. Published by Graphic Arts Center Publishing, July, 2001. 144 pages, 130 color photos. Cloth.

For many years, any photos by David Muench have brought forth "oh's" and "ah's." Now his son Marc joins him in a spectacular book on Colorado.

Ann Zwinger, a well-known Colorado writer, who gives what she describes as a "Spiral" look at the State, does the essay portion of the book. She travels up to mountaintops and into the depths of native grasslands. Her use of the English language is eloquent and straightforward.

Whether photographing wildflowers or breathtaking views of our glorious mountains, the photographers have done an outstanding work on their presentation of our state. This book would be a welcome addition to any home and is of special interest to Coloradans.

--Dolores A. Ebner, 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 newly found routes to markets at Shreveport, Louisiana and ports on down stream. 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.

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. Paper: \$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 author 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, kidnapping, 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 evict them later 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.

Kill the Cowboy, A Battle of Mythology in the New West, by Sharman Apt Russell. Published by University of Nebraska Press, 2001. 217 pages, bibliography, index. Paper: \$14.95

In a new Bison book the author says that over 70% of the land in the West is grazed land. However, she states, "... the uplands have improved steadily over the last five decades".

In 1912, the head of the early Forest Service wrote: "Grazing lands were stocked far beyond their capacity", thus leading to overgrazing of land. Statistics vary today between the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service of the USDA and the National Wildlife Federation. Habitat around streams and rivers is especially vulnerable. Loss of perennial grasses and overgrazing leave cheat grass, tumbleweed, sage and mesquite, the tough shrubs, to spread, leaving fewer plants for cattle to graze upon.

Environmentalists today believe half of the West belongs to the American public and have made this belief a priority. About 307 million acres are leased to ranchers in 16 Western states. Nearly 80% of land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management is grazed.

The author takes you through her personal experiences and family history in ranching. Many of her personal experiences are related in the book adding to the controversy of environmentalism versus ranching.

Both animal damage control and the reintroduction of the wolf are addressed. The impact of the Wilderness Act of 1964 is discussed at great length. Discussion of holistic, Christian and Jewish viewpoints and their relationship to the earth present an interesting outlook as well. Indian views and beliefs and their relationship to the earth present a poignant narrative in the chapter entitled, "The Green Woman".

The author touches on the Sonora Desert when Jim Corbett states, "A land ethic is not a preserve mentality". An environmentalist as well as rancher, he presents a viewpoint different from others. The author, in the final chapter feels there will be less grazing in 20 years and that these issues need to be addressed—place by place.

This provocative title takes a fair look at ranching and the environment.

--Dolores A. Ebner, P.M.

The Last Hurrah of the James-Younger Gang, by Robert Barr Smith, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 2001. 252 pages, foreward, 19 illustrations, notes, bibliography and index, Cloth: \$27.95.

This is an excellent book. It is a real contribution to the wealth of literature available on the Jameses and the Youngers. Readers familiar with the James saga may have to rethink their conclusions. First timers need read no further. I was fortunate last summer to attend a presentation by Smith at the annual Western Out Law Assoc. convention in Guthrie, OK, where he detailed the Daltons' ill-fated raid on the Coffeyville Banks. Smith, a retired Army Colonel and now a law professor at the University of Oklahoma, is an excellent speaker. In this very well researched and documented analysis of the famous raid on the Northfield Bank in Minnesota, he proves that he writes better than he speaks.

Smith obviously is not an admirer or apologist for the Jameses or the Youngers. He debunks many of the cliches and myths that have been written about these notorious raiders and gunmen. In *The Last Hurrah*, Smith provides the early history and background of the raiders' depredations and discusses their prior involvement in the Civil War guerilla operations. Contrary to many authors, Smith does not justify their lapse into the outlaw life as being caused by the actions of Yankee sympathizers. Some insight is even provided to their riding and raiding with such notorious men as William Quantrill and "Bloody Bill" Anderson. Their more important raids and robberies after the War are also set forth.

The town of Northfield and its citizens are described in detail, with short biographies of many of the men who become important to the story. The reader is drawn into a recognition and awareness of the people of this rather bucolic, pastoral, collegiate town. The gang's overconfidence in thinking that this town would be an easy mark is stressed and the awareness of the town is emphasized. Its actions before the raid do not appear to be very smart for the gang reputed to be the most feared in America at the time.

The raid itself is dissected in detail. The position of each member of the gang is discussed and the many competing theories of locations and shootings are presented. Smith's conclusions are almost inescapable. The valor and bravery of the townspeople is exemplary. As one reads this, one wonders why Hollywood (and the spaghetti Westerns) decided to always portray the townsfolk as helpless incompetents incapable of defending themselves or of even assisting a lawman (ala "*High Noon*"). This is especially true since similar bravery was demonstrated by the citizenry of Coffeyville, Kansas, in wiping out the Daltons; in Delta, Colorado in resisting the McCarty's; and elsewhere. Here, when their town was threatened, one bank cashier lost his life resisting the robbery; many others armed themselves and shot their shotguns at the gang (doing little damage); while two inexperienced but brave men armed with repeating rifles killed two of the gang, wounded several others and drove the gang out of town.

The thrilling escape of the robbers and the lengthy chase to locate them is described very well. The entire countryside was aroused and upwards of one

thousand men participated in the chase. The description of the split of the Jameses from the Youngers is even poignant. When the Youngers are then cornered and captured, the bravery of members of the posse is emphasized, as is the posse's humanity in not hanging the captured men on the spot.

One of the best features of Smith's book is that he tells what happened to each of the more important individuals in later life. Most of the Northfield men led productive lives. The subsequent histories of the Jameses and the Youngers are covered, of course. The disposition of the bodies of the three gang members who were killed is interesting. After being displayed and photographed in the nineteenth century tradition, their cadavers went to medical schools and doctors' offices.

Robert Smith has a pleasant, warm, comfortable writing style. His style is not militaristic or academic. He has obviously read most of the literature on the subject. He criticizes and disagrees with many of the prior writers on this subject, such as Carl W. Brieban, Homer Croy and Harry Drago, but he definitely persuades the reader with his facts. His footnotes are excellent. His research is very thorough. *The Last Hurrah of the James-Younger Gang* would be a welcome addition to anyone's bookshelf.

--Larry Reno C.M.

Recollections of Western Texas 1852-1855, By Two of the U.S. Mounted Rifles, Edited by Robert Wooster. Texas Tech University Press, 2001. 128pp. Illustrations, map, index. Paper.

William and John Wright joined the Army shortly after emigrating from Ireland. They ended up in the Mounted Rifles on the Texas frontier.

Original and contemporaneous, the book records their commentary on the country, flora and fauna, plus accounts of their adventures and battles. The structure and grammar are not archaic but one does get the flavor of the nineteenth century. For those interested in: life in the antebellum Army, the pre-Civil War Indian wars, or peacekeeping along the Rio Grande, this slender offering is full of information and interesting opinions and observations.

Purely from a sojourner's point of view, it lets the reader see the Southwest through eyes born and raised in rainy, verdant Ireland. This is a new and unexpected perspective to be gotten from a book about the Dragoons.

--Stan Moore P.M.

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.

Santa Fe - The Chief Way, by Robert Strein, John Vaughn and Fenton Richards. University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 132 pages, numerous color and black and white photographs. Hardcover: \$39.95

Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe: the very name envisions scenes of the Southwest. From its construction in the 1870s to the demise of railroad-owned passenger trains, the Santa Fe Railroad, as the more elaborate corporate name came to be known, featured the culture and images of the various Indian tribes and pueblos of the region it served.

This enchantment with the icons of the "Southwest" was brought to its highest level in the mid 1930s when the railroad industry entered the era of the diesel-powered streamliners, and the Santa Fe responded with its famous Chief, Super Chief, and El Capitan series of trains.

These new trains reflected the aura of the New Mexico-Arizona Indian cultures from the distinctive Warbonnet paint schemes of the locomotive, to the Indian names given to the passenger cars and whose interiors were a wonderful blend of desert colors and Indian art, especially Hopi Kachina and Navajo Yei figures, Navajo sand paintings and Mimbres designs on the diner china.

The streamliner-era advertising was the apex of the use of the "Southwest" theme. As a matter of fact, the little Indian boy "Chico" featured in many ads carried over into the freight-only period following the elimination of the railroad-owned passenger trains. This book makes no pretense of being a history of the Santa Fe Railroad, or to record all aspects of its passenger train history. Except for certain flash backs to the 1920's the thrust is on the era of the streamliner from the first streamlined Chief in 1937 to the end of the Santa Fe operated passenger service.

To complement this picture of the pinnacle of passenger travel there are chapters on the famed Santa Fe art collection, stations and hotels and silent film stars at the Albuquerque station.

For the railfan and passenger train enthusiast the book is pure nostalgia. For the aficionado of things "Southwest" this is another facet of the lore. Nevertheless this book is a slice of transportation history.

--Bob Stull, P.M.

Standing Up to the Rock, by T-Louise Freeman-Toole. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001. 213 pages, 17 photographs. Cloth: \$26.00.

Accounts of first-hand experiences on a ranch on the Snake River in Idaho, affectionately written, are the heart of this book. These include accounts of the history of the ranch, an insight into the people of the ranch, the geology of this area and descriptions of the daily routines of the ranch.

Freeman-Toole describes her life's journey from Los Angeles, California, to Santa Cruz, Alaska, Idaho and Illinois. She grew up near the beach in Los

Angeles and moved to Santa Cruz after college. When she started raising a family, she looked for a more family-friendly place to live and decided on the Palouse in Western Washington. While there, she met and became friends with the Burns. After spending some time in Pullman, Washington, she moved on to Illinois, but left her heart in Idaho.

The Burns Ranch is on Snake River Canyon in Idaho, just across the border from Washington, and just north of the Oregon border. Located on one of the last free-flowing parts of the Snake River, it is a beautiful place as she describes every aspect of it. She and her son, Ambrose, spend a lot of time there.

Interestingly, Freeman-Toole describes parallels and differences between her 100 years of ancestry in the Los Angeles area and the Burns' 100 years of ancestors on the Burns Ranch. Also included is the contrast between growing up in Redondo Beach, California versus her friend Liz Burns' growing up on the ranch.

I found her opinions on the environment, including her views on the dams along the Snake River, logging, and the preservation of the wild, to be of interest. They were formed from a perspective that includes her belief in protecting the environment, but as seen by a friend of the ranchers. Since the Burns Ranch is on land formerly belonging to the Nez Perce Indians, there are also interesting insights here.

I particularly enjoyed her descriptions of the ranch including life on the ranch, animals, plants and species and the "wildness" of the area. The writing includes much about the Snake River as it flows by the ranch, describing it in the different seasons and in its changing moods and characteristics. In the end, she thinks about her future and the future of the ranch. Predictably, this is a little melancholy.

--Harvey Hoogstrate, C. M.

Congratulations to Jeff Broome,
winner of the 2001 Membership Drive Contest.
Jeff will have his dues paid for 2002 by the Denver Posse of
Westerners. The 2002 contest is underway: please bring in a
new member or two or three.



Westerners International

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The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

March -April 2002



Rockmount Ranch Wear

Three generations of classic American fashion
presented by

Steven Weil, C.M.

(Presented December 19, 2001)



Presenter Steve Weil. His information can be found woven in his story.



THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LVIII NO. 2



March - April 2002

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Keith Fessenden (303) 321-6181
 3031 E. 8th Ave.
 Denver, CO 80206

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 280 E. 11th Ave.
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Rockmount Ranch Wear

3 generations of classic American fashion presented by Steven Weil, C.M.

(Presented December 19, 2001)

My interest in the Westerners stems from the *Brand Books*. The first one I saw was at the Denver Library sale a few years ago. The book was \$200, which is what I paid for my 1st car. I did not purchase the book at that time, but began looking for more. I hit the mother lode when my wife's uncle, Tom Kagohara, from Greeley, gave a set to us. The set was collected by Pauline Pogue, a professor at U.N.C.

Now, permit me to digress as I want to mention a little about my wife Wendy's family, the Kagohara's. They are Japanese-Americans who farmed 100 years in the Greeley and Ft. Collins area. Some of you know them. They are mentioned in Michener's books. Wendy's other grandfather, Sato, farmed the San Luis area 100 years ago. Her grandmother was from Tierra Amarilla, in northern New Mexico. Wendy's dad, Will Kagohara, was on the staff of three Governors: Love, Vanderhoof and Lamm. I met him in 1975 while a high school intern. (Although he says he remembers the kid who parked his bike in the Governor's closet, I am not so sure.) When Wendy and I got married seven years ago, we found a *Rocky Mountain News* opinion piece I had written about Governor Lamm. I had forgotten that Will was mentioned three times. Life is full of coincidences.

The Rockmount Story

When Jack and Bea Weil drove their new '26 Chrysler Roadster across the Great Plains and first saw the Rocky Mountains looming in the distance, they were modern pioneers. They knew they had arrived, same as earlier pioneers. Jack from Indiana, Bea from Tennessee.

Jack represented the Paris Garter Co. of Chicago, and was sent to Denver to open a new Western sales office at 16th and Champa. In those days business was all downtown. In 1933 he joined Phil Miller and helped found Miller & Co, one of the first Western clothing companies (later Miller Stockman, now Corral West). They prospered despite the Depression. Western wear made people happy.

In 1946 he founded Rockmount Ranch Wear Mfg. Co. Jack A. introduced the first commercially made shirts with snaps and is responsible for helping popularize western fashion. He also made the first bolo ties. He is to Western wear what Henry Ford is to the car.

Interestingly, the evolution of the market for Western wear mirrors the three generations of Rockmount. When my grandfather started, there was no market. He first developed a regional market in the West for ranchers and



farmers. In the tradition of the cowboy, they sought identity through their clothing. Easterners, who visited dude ranches, took Western garb home as it was not available in stores there.

Then, Jack A's son—my father—Jack B., joined the company in 1954. He began in sales, and went on to head design which he handled for over 35 years. Jack B. was one of the first to introduce Western fashion east of the Mississippi.

His design innovations include the matching concept for adults and children. In the early 70s he introduced feather hatbands, which became popular nationally. So, he expanded the

market east, helping to popularize Western wear nationwide.

I joined the company in 1981, but had grown up in the business. I concentrated on our international sales and later took over design, introducing relaxed fit shirts, now an industry standard. The Weil family has seen the Western business evolve from regional, to national to international in three generations.

Today, Rockmount is a three-generation mostly domestic manufacturer of apparel, hats and accessories. Rockmount brand is sold by 2000 retailers world-wide from saddle shops in New Mexico to boutiques from New York to Tokyo.

Museums including the Smithsonian and the Autry have

Rockmount in their collections. The signature design with "Sawtooth" pockets and "Diamond" snaps is considered the longest continuously produced shirt in the USA.

Where can you find Rockmount locally? After nearly 60 years of only wholesale we now sell retail from our LODO location. Downtown we have Cry Baby Ranch in Larimer Square. In Cherry Creek, Sunneshine at 3rd and Steele. We also sell at Corral West and High Country. You can order direct from rockmount.com.

Rockmount shirts appear in many films including: Aidan Quinn in "Practical Magic," Robert Redford in "The Horse

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Whisperer,” Nicholas Cage in “Red Rock West,” Meg Ryan and Dennis Quaid in “Flesh and Bone,” Woody Harelson in “The Cowboy Way.”

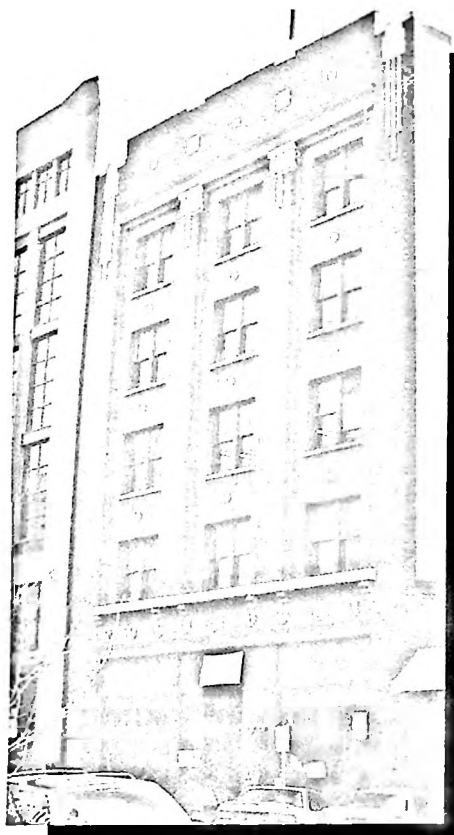
We have been featured in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Esquire*, *Vogue*, *GQ*, *Denver Post*, *Rocky Mountain News* and *Westword*. And, last week we were in *The National Enquirer*. You can see these articles at rockmount.com

Rockmount headquarters are a historic landmark building in lower downtown Denver, at 1626 Wazee. The building was designed by Fisher & Fisher, built in 1904. They were premier architects of their day, and known for Civic Center and many landmarks. The first company to occupy the building was Wolff Mfg. which supplied claw-foot tubs and pedestal sinks as we can see in

an early photo from the Colorado Historical Museum. It is one of Denver’s few non-Victorians from that age. Historic Denver considers it significant as an example of early modern commercial architecture. We have been in the building since 1946. Despite pressures to move, we prefer to stay there, until I am a grandfather...

How has our LODO neighborhood changed over the years? What we notice most is the bottles on the street. They used to be Thunderbird and now are fancy imports.

My grandfather has always been a great innovator. Aside from merchandising he began automating the office in the 60’s with early punch-tape computers. Later we went to mag cards, DOS and finally Windows which he can navigate at age 100.



mass market for the first time. Big-name designers “found it” and brought it from the country to the city. We could sell every hat we could make. We had to turn to new raw materials and sources as our existing ones were at full capacity and unable to satisfy the demand. We stopped taking orders from new customers so that we could satisfy the old ones. Interest rates were high so major department stores were slow in paying. My grandfather laid down the law and said: “no shipments to slow payers.” We even turned down orders from Bloomingdales.

We made a lot of wild styles for the new Westerners. We made flamboyant shirts in satin two-tones, including the one Travolta wore in the movie.

The “Urban Cowboy” was like any other economic cycle except for one thing. The industry had experienced steady growth for over 40 years and never seeing a downturn until 1981. It was boom and bust just like the gold rush. Just like the tech stocks, people thought the boom would never end.

Many companies went bankrupt. Some you never heard of. Some, like Stetson, you know. My grandfather’s mid-western sensibilities saved the ranch. While we made huge investments, it was not enough to bring us down. It took years to move the excess inventory.

Then a new boom hit in the early 90s: Line Dancing. New clubs sprouted across the country, later Europe and Asia. It lasted several years, but like the Urban Cowboy, it too, ended. That

The Western industry largely evolved in Denver, partly because of his having started in business here. The world’s largest Western wear and equipment tradeshow is held in Denver every January. Several thousand retailers from all over the world attend.

The Western business had relatively steady growth with no major changes from the 30’s to the 70’s. Then in 1978 it suddenly changed. What happened?

The “Urban Cowboy,” with John Travolta. Western went from niche to



Four generations of the Weil family

combined with a number of other factors caused an industry fallout, again.

The next great challenge for Rockmount was NAFTA which decimated the entire domestic textile and apparel manufacturing business. Today 5% or less of the textile industry remains. A few biggies, Burlington, JP Stevens and Malden went bankrupt in the last few weeks. The continuing loss of our sources is a serious problem. We always felt that Western clothing, as classic American fashion, should be made in America. Well, we fought the good fight against unfair imports from countries that pay per day what we pay per hour, but that is a moot point today. Rockmount, an exclusively domestic manufacturer for nearly 60 years, had to change. While we still make most of our products here, we now import

certain categories to be competitive.

This points to a terrible trend in retail: the cheapening of the American consumer. We have been conditioned to buy from the big boxes and only on sale. Rarely do we buy at full price. The market is saturated with cheap imports and the entire apparel business is struggling.

Rockmount faced another disaster. Our primary plant of 50 years in Ft. Smith, AR was destroyed by a tornado in April '96. It was a terrible blow. We were forced to make the decision not to rebuild. We found an existing plant with better labor supply in the south-east, which turned out to be advantageous in retrospect.

The speed of business has changed. It used to be that a Western shirt style

might remain popular for years. Now a season is all you can expect, longer is lucky. In the past we had more staple styles than ones that changed each season. Now the reverse is true.

I point to the fax machine as the watershed point when business cycles accelerated and the new global economy began to emerge. The fax came into use in the late 80s. It brought instant communication to correspondence. Now, of course, the World Wide Web has revolutionized mass communications. Most all my business correspondence is now by email. In the last five years it is a different world. Technology has changed everything. Cable and the internet have knocked down the walls. Where there were walls there are now Windows. Trends come and go much more frequently. We can no longer expect the old two-year cycle to start on the coasts, and make its way inland with a later ripple effect abroad. Now the cycle is shorter: it is realtime, now. What we sell in New York may be the same thing they buy in Texas or Tokyo.

Distribution has become the hurdle. Big boxes have killed many mom-and-pop stores. This is the whole retail trend for independent stores: pharmacies, sporting goods, toys and western stores. There remain many strong Western stores, an estimated 2,000 or so, but they face huge challenges. So, the internet is a perfect alternative means to insure we are out there.

What have we learned generally? As a niche business we were traditionally counter-cyclical to the general economy. The rural economy is somewhat immune to urban-macro issues. Our industry tends to be strong when the

general economy is weak and vice versa. However, today with a global economy we are not immune as in the past. It has diversified our market which is a good thing. We no longer have the regional vulnerability. If things go down in the Northwest because lumber is down we still have our export business.

At Rockmount we concentrate on classic Western design, not trendy stuff that embarrasses you down the road. I like nothing better to hear from people who have been wearing a Rockmount shirt for years. We have actually had people ask if the same fabric is still available so they could patch their favorite shirt bought 15 years ago. I wish we had 100 customers like them. Instead we have thousands and are lucky to still be in business! The Urban Cowboy died a sudden death because fashion had moved on. It was a costume and had no staying power. So our approach now has broadened. We think lifestyle. We are careful to use natural fabrics and classic makes that stand the test of time.

As for Papa Jack, men like him represent the passing of an era. He's seen us go from horses, to autos, to airplanes, to rockets, to the Moon and back. From WWI to Sept 11. He started in business by taking out ads in country newspapers. Now we do the same thing on the web. Along the way he has been a good corporate citizen, contributing to an American Identity and employing thousands of people.

Our joke is that my grandfather is waiting for my father and me to retire so he can take over.

The Denver Posse of Westerners' 2001 Lifetime Achievement in Western History

Henry W. Toll Jr., M.D.

"Hank" is the handle preferred by this physician, attorney, sportsman and descendant of prominent pioneer Colorado families. Born in Denver December 20, 1923, Dr. Toll is the third generation of a Colorado clan that included U. S. Senator Edward Wolcott, State Senator Henry W. Toll Sr., and Rocky Mountain National Park Superintendent Roger Toll.

Hank was educated in the Denver Public Schools at Corona (now Dora Moore) Elementary and Morey Junior High before heading east to Deerfield Academy and Williams College in Massachusetts. He joined the Navy for World War II as a gunnery officer in the allied invasion of North Borneo, and was with the occupation forces in China and Formosa. Lt. (Jg.) Toll returned in 1946 to Denver where he graduated from the University of Colorado Medical School in 1950. Following a fellowship in Internal Medicine at the Lahey Clinic in Boston and a residency in pathology at Denver General Hospital, he worked on the staff of Denver General and Presbyterian hospitals and as an assistant professor of pathology at CU.

As a Denver County Deputy Coroner during the early 1950s, Dr. Toll helped modernize coroners' office procedures. His medical colleagues elected Dr. Toll president of the Denver County Medical Society, a fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sci-



ence, and fellow of the Colorado Society of Clinical Pathologists, which gave him its 1997 Distinguished Pathologist Award.

Dr. Toll, who earned an LLB at the University of Denver Law School in 1956, is currently enjoying a legal career with the firm of Shafroth and Toll, a firm founded by H. W. Toll, Sr. and Morrison Shafroth in 1927.

A noted outdoorsman, he skied for Deerfield Academy and Williams College, then savored Colorado's pioneer areas from Aspen to Winter Park. Hank and his family were owner-operators of the Berthoud Pass Ski Area, along with the Grant and Shafroth families. Hank became notorious for skiing hard all day long, not even stopping for lunch—he ate a bag lunch on the ski tow riding uphill to get in as

many runs as possible.

A community activist, Dr. Toll since 1956 has been a member of the Denver Posse of Westerners, serving as Tallyman, Deputy Sheriff and Sheriff (1987). Westerners International awarded the 1996 Danielson Award for his article, *Letters of a Young Lawyer: Charles Hanson Toll*. Dr. Toll has served on the Boards of the Webb-Waring Lung Institute, The Belle Bonfils Blood Bank, the American Red Cross and the University of Colorado Medical School Alumni. He was founder of the Front Range Doctor's Ski Patrol and the Colorado Pathologist reference Labora-

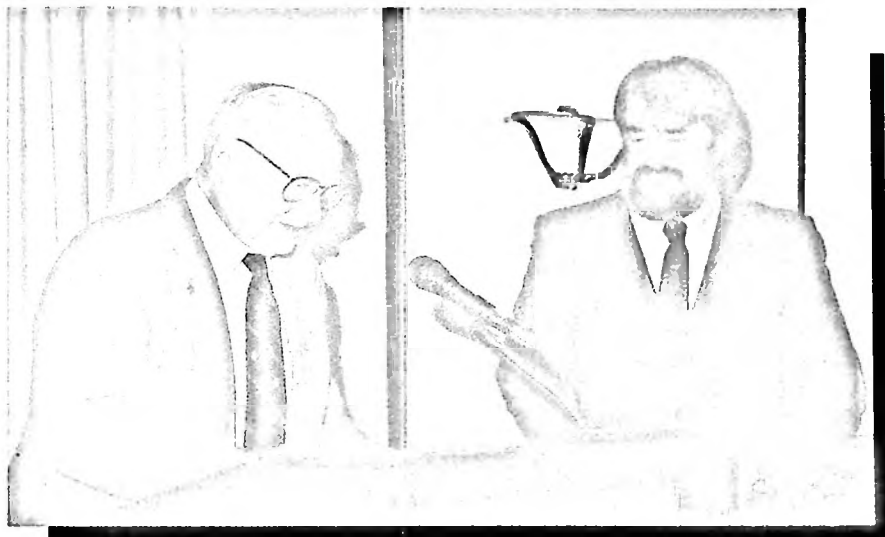
tory. He has served on the boards of the Denver Lacrosse Club, the Denver Public Schools Career Center Advisory Group, the Colorado Institute on Population Problems and the Acquisitions Committee of the Denver Public Library.

Few of the many who have seen Dr. Toll leading rafters down the Colorado River, camped under a white cocktail flag, would guess that he is a most illustrious physician, attorney, outdoorsman, philanthropist and Westerner, whose humility and humor hide tremendous, varied and selfless lifetime achievements.

--Dr. Thomas J. Noel



Dr. Henry Toll, Jr. receives his award from Eugene Rakosnik at the December 2001 Rendezvous



Dr. Henry Toll, Jr. presents the Fred A. Rosenstock Award to Tom Hendrix of the Nederland Area Historical Society at the December 2001 Rendezvous

The Nederland Area Historical Society (NAHS) organized around 1972 to preserve the Gillespie House, which was deeded to the town for preservation as a museum. Dr. Carbon Gillespie and his son, Dr. John Gillespie, who was born in the house, were both physicians serving Nederland and Boulder.

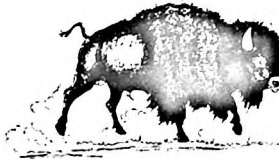
The NAHS restored this modest 1906 miner's cottage on its prominent hillside site at 200 N. Bridge Street, and provides free tours by appointment, (303-258-0416). The NAHS in 1997 leased the stone county highway department garage from Boulder County for \$100 a year to restore as the Nederland Mining Museum. Nederland cleaned up decades of motor oil, gas and diesel spills to convert this to a museum boasting 280,000 tons of mining equipment, including four operational 20-foot high, 30-ton rock shovels. The Society is also working with Boulder County and Historic Boulder, Inc. to restore and interpret the remains of Cardinal, which is two miles up Raccoon Track Creek and Caribou Road from Nederland. This fine well-preserved ghost town retains the Cardinal Mill (aka Boulder County Tunnel Mine and Mill) and ten other mining buildings.

The NAHS is fighting to preserve the Bryant House (c.1860) at West Jefferson Street, West 1st Street and Colorado 72, the town's oldest surviving structure, and to preserve Nederland's Wolf Tongue Mill, which processed ore for Nederland's silver, gold and tungsten booms. This tiny historical society of about 75 members has emerged as one of Colorado's giants in preserving, interpreting and celebrating Colorado History.

--Dr. Henry W. Toll, Jr. & Dr. Thomas J. Noel



Sheriff Bob Lane presents a gift of appreciation to Chuck Wrangler Dot Krieger at the December 2001 Rendezvous



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Over the Corral Rail

The Denver Posse of Westerners mourns the passing of longtime Posse member Lee Olson.

Born in Emerson, NE March 1, 1922, Lee grew up on farms in Nebraska and Iowa. He received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Colorado. He worked for the *Scottsbluff Star-Herald* and the *Greeley Tribune*. Olson joined *The Denver Post* in January, 1947, and worked on the state and city desks before beginning a 25-year run as an editorial writer.

Lee had an avid interest in western history. After retiring from *The Post* in 1987, he published *Marmalade & Whisky, British Remittance Men in the West*, in 1993.

He married Mary Kay Kennedy on Dec. 29, 1948 in Illinois. He is survived by her and their three children and seven grandchildren.

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The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

May -June 2002



New facts on the Battle of Milk Creek

September 20 - October 5, 1879

**Written by
Brad L. Edwards**

THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LVIII NO. 3



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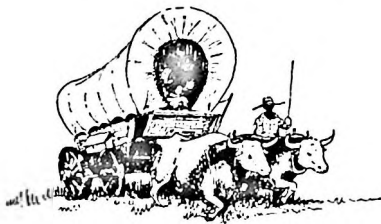
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This issue's paper by Brad L. Edwards has not been presented to the Denver Posse of Westerners.

The Denver Posse of Westerners warmly welcomes these new members:

Ray Jenkins of Loveland. Ray is a former member, past Sheriff and Book review Chairman. Gene Rakosnik takes credit for his return.

Rebecca Dorward of Aurora was referred by Heather Peterson. Rebecca has an M.A. in History and is a member of the Aurora Historical Society.



New facts on the Battle of Milk Creek

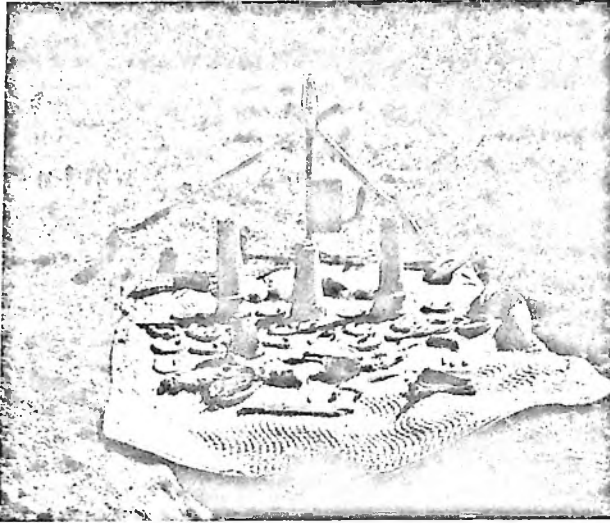
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Written by
Brad L. Edwards

The two advance companies of the White River Expedition first sighted the upper reaches of the Milk Creek valley near 10:00 a.m., September 29, 1879. The White River Expedition's commander, Major Thomas T. Thornburgh, 4th Infantry, was awed, in all likelihood, by the escarpment, which arose to his right. He did not know that within two hours he would be dead and those ominous mountains would someday bear his name. The White River Expedition's mission was to intervene in the sour relations between U.S. Indian Agent Nathan Meeker and the people of the White River Ute Indian tribe. But, Thornburgh's command, only twenty miles from the White River Ute Agency, would not complete their mission. This was as near as they would come to their objective. What Thornburgh and Meeker could not have known, was that the White River Utes were about to execute the simultaneous massacre of Indian Agent Meeker and his civilian employees, and ambush the White River Expedition in a narrow valley in an effort to wipe them out.

Major Thornburgh and his troopers were posted at Fort Fred Steele, located near present day Rawlins, Wyoming. Thornburgh's assembled command consisted of elements of the 3rd and 5th Cavalry; with a company of infantry in reserve on their back trail, camped at Fortification Creek. All told, Thornburgh had

150 soldiers and 30 civilians under the Army's employ. His officers and NCOs were, for the most part, solid and experienced. In particular, Capt. Joseph Lawson had seen lots of action fighting Indians.¹ Also among the officers was young Lieut. Samuel Cherry. Lieut. Cherry would distinguish himself in the coming battle by conducting a brave and stubborn rear guard action, which prevented this fight from becoming a disaster, akin to the Custer Battle three years earlier.² Major Thornburgh's senior officer was Capt. J. Scott Payne. Although in ill health and getting on in years, Capt. Payne would rise to the challenge and ably assume command upon Major Thornburgh's untimely death in the opening minutes of the battle. The fiery Joe Rankin provided scouting for the White River Expedition. Joe's cousin, M. Wilson Rankin, would publish the most important primary source account of the Battle of Milk Creek (also known as the Thornburgh Battle) in 1935. Rankin's book, *Reminiscences of Frontier Days*, contains a wealth of information about early northwest Colorado history and, of course, the Thornburgh Battle. The historical record shows that the expedition was not traveling light;³ Thornburgh had between sixteen to twenty wagons filled with a wide assortment of equipment and supplies. The thirty teamsters with the White River Expedition were kept busy driving this long wagon train.



Debris of battle found in a trench dug during the fight

By 10:30 a.m., September 29th, Thornburgh, Payne, Lawson, Cherry and Rankin, with two companies of mounted troopers, had crossed Milk Creek and were starting the ascent to Yellow Jacket Pass, some four miles to the southwest. Bringing up the rear, the wagon train, escorted by Lieut. Pad-dock and his company of troopers, was just beginning to enter the flat barren bench where they would arrange the wagons into a makeshift corral and defensive barricade for the coming six-day siege they were to endure. The old trail they followed on this eastern end of the Milk Creek valley is quite narrow. It was in this narrow funnel where the Army's wagons overtook the wagons of contract freighter John Gordon.⁴ Back in the van, Thornburgh instructed Lieut. Cherry to take five men and trail blaze a more direct route up the rolling ridges and hills to Yellow

Jacket Pass. This decision by Major Thornburgh probably saved his command from certain slaughter.

Less than one mile away, to the southwest, the Utes had concealed themselves on a narrow ridge, overlooking the old trail. This valley is narrow and devoid of cover. Had the Ute war chiefs' ambush gone undetected, the entire expedition may have been wiped out. Lieut. Cherry spotted the hiding Utes when he gained the crest of Confrontation Ridges

and had a clear view towards the southwest to the ridge where the Utes were concealed.⁶ Upon discovery of the hidden Utes, Lieut. Cherry returned to Major Thornburgh to appraise him of this intelligence. Major Thornburgh and his advance troopers were still in the flat, open valley of Milk Creek and highly vulnerable if the Utes should occupy the crest of Confrontation Ridge overlooking his position. Reacting quickly, Major Thornburgh ordered Capt. Payne's company up the slope to his left and Capt. Lawson's company up the slope to his right. This was done to occupy the northern end of Confrontation Ridge. These maneuvers were executed quickly. By 11:00 a.m., Major Thornburgh had positioned his troops in a "V" formation, facing the southwest.

Unknown to Major Thornburgh, some of the Utes were leaving their positions on Ambush



The Milk Creek Valley, looking Southwest

Ridge and attempting to outflank the cavalry on both flanks, while at least 30 to 50 Ute warriors advanced on Thornburgh's front, clearly getting the attention from the skirmishers on Confrontation Ridge.

Sometime around 11:30 a.m., Thornburgh instructed Lt. Cherry to take fifteen men from Capt. Lawson's company and move to his right, closer to the Utes, to attempt to communicate. Meanwhile, Thornburgh and Capt. Payne signaled with handkerchiefs to a group of Utes who had occupied high ground on Thornburgh's left. Several of these Indians waved back. Lieut. Cherry's detachment advanced perhaps 300 to 400 yards until a small number of Utes advanced towards Lieut. Cherry, as if to parlay. Lieut. Cherry took off his hat and waved. It was this action by Lieut. Cherry that compelled a Ute to fire the first shot in the Battle of Milk Creek. The bullet missed Lieut.

Cherry, however, it wounded a trooper and killed a horse directly behind him. Upon hearing that first shot, all hell broke loose on both sides. The White River Utes were well armed with modern 44-caliber Winchester and Henry repeating rifles, of which they had an abundant supply of ammunition.⁷ The troopers were armed with the 1873, 45-caliber, Springfield carbine. The fighting quickly intensified all along Major Thornburgh's skirmish line. Before long, two of Capt. Payne's men were shot dead by the Utes who held the high ground on the left flank. The Utes skillfully used their knowledge of the terrain to outflank the troopers. A new threat emerged from a group of mounted Indians attempting to occupy a low knoll in Major Thornburgh's rear. This knoll overlooked the Milk Creek crossing and, thus, Thornburgh's route back to the remainder of his command. Seeing that

his current position was rapidly becoming untenable. Major Thornburgh ordered Capt. Payne to take twenty men and charge the Utes on the knoll. He also ordered the remainder of Capt. Payne's company to fall back into Capt. Lawson's company, who were also ordered to fall back towards the wagons. Lastly, Thornburgh instructed Lieut. Cherry's advance detachment to lay down suppressing fire long enough to cover this general withdrawal, until it was well underway, then fall back on Capt. Lawson's company.

It was at this point in the Battle of Milk Creek that selfless acts of bravery and gallantry began to occur among the troopers of the White River Expedition.⁸ One such act involved Capt. Payne and 15th Sgt. John Dolan. As Capt. Payne mounted his horse to charge the Utes on the knoll in his rear, the horse was shot and killed. Capt. Payne took a hard fall and several Utes began moving towards the dazed captain. Not seeing Capt. Payne in the charge, Sgt. Dolan looked back and discovered his plight. Immediately Sgt. Dolan wheeled his horse and galloped back to Payne's side. Dismounting, the Sergeant offered his mount to Capt. Payne. Payne declined his offer. Shortly thereafter, a young private came with a lead horse and the three made good their withdrawal.

It was now a little after 12:30 p.m. After issuing the final orders of his military career, Major Thornburgh began making his way back to the wagons alone. The Major could see that the wagons were under attack and his leadership was needed. Perhaps he was so engrossed pondering his tactical situation in this, his first engagement

with hostile Indians, that his personal safety never entered his thoughts. Whatever the unarmed Major Thomas T. Thornburgh may have been thinking, we shall never know. Shortly after he crossed back over Milk Creek, a Ute sniper, concealed in the brush, shot and killed the commander of the White River Expedition.⁹

Meanwhile, all was in turmoil at the wagons. Lieut. Paddock, in charge of the rear guard, was forced to circle the wagons in a totally exposed location. A large number of Utes had outflanked the forward skirmishers; they now occupied the ridge-tops on three sides of the wagons and were pouring a withering fire on the troopers below. The men worked frantically to position the wagons and unhitch the teams. While supervising the teamsters, wagon master William McKinstry was shot and killed. Wounded and dead horses and mules were scattered about the barricade. Some troopers took cover behind the carcasses while others sought cover beneath the wagons. A few men unloaded baggage from the wagons to construct breastworks. Those who could, returned the Utes' fire.

The situation at the skirmish line was deteriorating rapidly. The Utes were pouring a deadly fire on the retreating cavalry. Many men were wounded and, most alarming, ammunition was running dangerously low. Sgt. Edward Grimes volunteered to ride to the wagons for more cartridges. Mounting his horse, the Sergeant rode the gauntlet, firing his pistol on the way. He returned shortly with the cartridges in hand. For this act of bravery, Sgt. Grimes was awarded the Medal of Honor.



The death of Major Thornburgh somewhere
near the river crossing

Slowly but surely the skirmishes from Capt. Payne's and Capt. Lawson's companies were making their way to the wagon barricade. Reaching the wagons, they were informed of Major Thornburgh's demise. Capt. Payne, as senior captain, was now the commander of the White River Expedition. Wounded and dazed from the bruising fall he suffered at the beginning of the charge on the knoll, Capt. Payne suggested to Capt. Lawson that the troopers mount the remaining horses and retreat back to the north. Capt. Lawson knew this was not possible, owing to the large number of wounded men. He informed Capt. Payne he would stay where he was with his wounded. Capt. Payne, realizing his poor judgment, offered to relinquish command to Capt. Lawson, sighting his injuries as the reason. Capt. Lawson refused the suggestion, explaining that his injuries were slight and should not affect his ability to lead. From this point

on, until the end of the siege, Capt. Payne rallied the men and proved to be an able commander.

Meanwhile, Lieut. Cherry's rear guards continued their stubborn fighting withdrawal.¹⁰ They were still over 750 yards from the relative safety of the wagon corral, with the Utes pressing hard on their front and both flanks. By this time, most of the troopers in Lieut. Cherry's detachment were wounded but still fighting. The area they fought over was devoid of cover. In contrast to the Custer debacle three years prior, Lieut. Cherry's men displayed enormous cohesion and discipline in the face of the Utes' ferocious efforts to cut them off from the rest of the command. As a testament to Lieut. Cherry's leadership and personal bravery, Sgt. Edward Grimes, along with thirteen noncommissioned officers, drafted this most eloquent letter to Lieut. Cherry:

November 21, 1879
 2nd Lieut. Samuel A. Cherry, 5th
 Cavalry

Sir:

We, the undersigned Non-commissioned officers of Company E 3rd Cavalry and Companies "D" and "F", 5th Cavalry, desire to express to you our admiration of the gallant and praiseworthy conduct displayed by you in the recent engagement with the Ute Indians at Milk River on September 29th, 1879.

To a brave man, bravery needs no better or higher reward than the consciousness of duty well performed, but in order that you should fully understand the feeling of approbation that exists among the men who fought with you, we take this method of tendering to you our hearty approval.

You do not need this - you have already made yourself a page in the history of our country and endeared yourself to the men who witnessed your noble conduct, and who feel that to a great extent it is to your coolness and sagacity they owe their lives. The party that accompanied you on your dangerous mission to check the enemy and cover the retreat knew full well that the chances of life and death were unequally paired, and that one false move would turn the scale far down on the side of death. But, you did not make that move. With unflinching courage you held the Indians in check though their bullets were striking your men from every side, and by your bearing nerved even the wounded to fight to the last --

and when the retreat was safely made, and your services at that point no longer necessary - with seventeen of the twenty men composing your party, wounded, you accomplished your own retreat, fighting your way inch by inch, without leaving one of your wounded on the field.

Such conduct is beyond all praise. -
 --No words of ours can express to you the respect we feel for the man who displayed such courage, -- but if in the future it should be your lot to lead men on to some great feat of daring, as long as there remains a man who fought with you at Milk River you will find ready and willing hands to share your glory or your death.

But this is not all:--When the brunt of the fight was over--when each man looked about him, and saw the fearful destruction wrought--when each heart for the moment quailed at the thought of what the morrow might bring--when the excitement of the battle had passed and the reaction had brought despair in its stead, you infused a new spirit in the hearts of the despairing men, and by the force of your example led them to make still greater efforts leading toward their own preservation and defence.

In conclusion we have only to add that we express the sentiments of the companies we represent and are proud to be permitted to do honor to one whom honor is richly due, -- to a soldier among soldiers, a man among men.

Very Respectfully Your Obedt.

*Servants First Sergeant E.P.
Grimes, Co. F 5 Cavy."*

Capt. Payne, seeing how hard pressed Lieut. Cherry's troopers were, ordered Sgt. John A. Poppe, with ten men of Company F, 5th Cavalry, to move out from the barricade and link up with the skirmishers. Sgt. Poppe and the detachment rushed out and moved towards the fighting skirmishers. Along the banks of Milk Creek, Sgt. Poppe's men flushed out and probably killed several Ute warriors who were pouring a deadly fire into the skirmishers' rear. The link-up was quickly accomplished. The troopers then lay down a heavy cover fire and, before long, the tired, battle-weary troopers of Lieut. Cherry's command reached the relative safety of the wagon barricade.¹² Over twenty of Lieut. Cherry's troopers were wounded. Some were wounded seriously. However, not one wounded man was left on the field. Thus, the troopers of the White River Expedition were reunited, but their situation was far from stable.

The Utes continued a plunging fire into the wagon corral from their ridge-top positions overlooking the barricade. The officers and non-coms began to rally the men. Breastworks and trenches needed to be constructed. While ordering several troopers out from under a wagon, 1st Sgt. John Dolan was heard to yell, "If you don't get out and help, I will kill you myself."¹³ At that instant, a Ute bullet struck the Sergeant and he crumbled dead to the ground. Capt. Payne was deeply grieved by the loss of his friend. He wrote this epitaph in 1866: "He was the bravest and most loyal soldier to his officers I have ever known ... in his

long service of 37 years, he had met with many adventures; had been wounded twice, had innumerable horses killed under him, and had been a prisoner at Andersonville."¹⁴

For the next several hours, cavalry sharpshooters kept up a hot, suppressing fire on the Utes, allowing other troopers to strengthen the defenses in the barricade. Wagons were emptied of their contents to build the breastworks. Dead horses and mules were also used to afford the men cover. Three large trenches were dug in the center of the barricade to shelter the wounded. Sometime around 3:00 p.m., a new danger emerged from the southwest. With a strong wind at their backs, the Utes fired the dry sagebrush. Pushed by the wind, the fire spread quickly, and before long, approached the wagon corral. Capt. Lawson, commanding this southwest side of the barricade, ordered several men to set counter fires outside the wagons. Despite their efforts, the conflagration soon reached the wagons. The Battle of Milk Creek had now entered its most critical phase. The troopers were forced to combat the flames while exposed to the Utes' galling fire. Six men were killed and many more wounded in a short span of time. Civilian scout, C. Grafton Lowery, was killed for the first time with a bullet shot into his head. When Dr. Grimes, the expedition's surgeon, came to his aid, the scout muttered, "Never mind me, I am done for."¹⁵ Assuming he was dead, Lowery's body was placed in the breastworks, which contained other dead troopers, then covered with canvas and dirt. Meanwhile, on the northeast side of the barricade, Capt. Payne ordered Sgt.

Poppe to take some men and set counter fires in his front to deny the Utes cover. Alone, Sgt. Poppe jumped over the breastworks, started several fires, and then returned. Sadly for John Gordon, these counter fires quickly engulfed his wagon train, which was parked 50 yards to the northeast of the barricade.¹⁶ Sgt. Poppe's work was successful, in that the fires burnt all cover on the northeast side of the barricade. After the fires burned over the battlefield, the fighting slackened considerably.

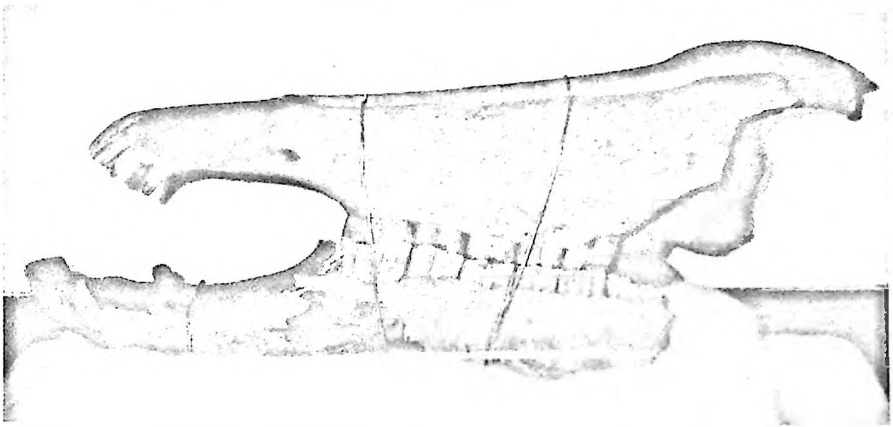
At this point, Capt. Payne and his troopers began to realize that the greatest danger to their survival had come and gone. Their makeshift barricade, while exposed on all sides, had afforded enough protection to withstand the Utes' concerted attacks. Likewise, the Utes understood that their ferocious attacks had failed to route the White River Expedition from the reservation boundaries. Utes and troopers alike began to prepare for the long siege that lay ahead. Work began in earnest on the 3000 square feet of trench-works the troopers would dig inside the wagon corral.¹⁷ The Utes began constructing rock forts with gun loops on the ridge tops overlooking the barricade. These rock forts provided protection and the gun loops allowed the Utes a steady platform to aim and fire their repeating rifles the long distances to the wagon corral.¹⁸

Near dusk on the 29th of September, the Utes mounted their final assault on the barricade. About ten Utes on horseback charged the northeast side of the barricade. The troopers easily repulsed this charge, however, the Utes managed to stampede twenty to thirty oxen that were milling around John

Gordon's burnt-out wagon train.¹⁹ The Utes drove these animals south about a mile to their main war camp. Several of these oxen would provide fresh meat for the Utes throughout the six-day battle. At dusk, the fighting tapered off to desultory sniping. Capt. Payne began to assess his situation. In addition to Major Thornburgh, nine enlisted men and three civilians had been killed in action. Over forty men were wounded, some seriously. Nearly all of the cavalry horses and mules were dead or wounded. Seeing that withdrawal from Milk Creek was not possible, owing to the number of wounded men and lack of transport, Capt. Payne began drafting a dispatch to inform the Army of their plight. His dispatch read:

*"Milk River, Colo., Sept. 29, 1879,
8:30 p.m.*

"This command, composed of three companies of cavalry, was met a mile south of Milk River by several hundred Ute Indians who attacked and drove us to wagon train, which had parked with great loss. It becomes my painful duty to announce the death of Major Thornburgh who fell in harness; the painful, but not serious wounding, of Lt. Paddock and Dr. Grimes, and killing of ten enlisted men and a wagon master, with the wounding of about 25 men and teamsters. I am now corralled near water with three-quarters of our animals killed after a desperate fight since 12:00 N. We hold our position at this hour. I shall strengthen it during the night and believe that we can hold out until reinforcements reach us, if they are hurried through.



Nearly complete horse skull found in the area below the barricade where the dead horses were dumped

Officers and men behaved with greatest gallantry. I am also wounded in two places."

*Payne (Comdg)*²⁰

Upon finishing the dispatch, Payne asked for volunteers to carry the message through the Ute line. Four men came forward, Joe Rankin, John Gordon, and troopers George Moquin and Edward F. Murphy. The four best surviving horses were chosen. The couriers left the barricade sometime around midnight. The besieged troopers kept busy digging trenches and praying for the couriers' safety. September the 30th dawned clear and cool. The troopers had made remarkable progress during the night in strengthening their position. Seventeen trenches, 2-1/2 feet wide by 2 feet long, had been dug and the excavated dirt was used as breast-works.²¹ The troopers now had adequate cover to protect themselves. No more troopers would die in the Battle of Milk

Creek after September 29th, which was largely due to the excellent cover afforded by the trenches. The Utes began firing at daybreak and continued their firing until darkness. The only easy targets left for the Ute marksmen were the remaining horses and mules, which they set about to wound, rather than kill. They did this in the hope that the wounded animals would cause havoc within the barricade. The White River Expedition surgeon, Dr. Robert Grimes, was forced to shoot several wounded horses that threatened to jump into the trenches where the wounded men lay.²² Several other primary source accounts convey what conditions were like in the barricade during the long siege. One account relates the story of a trooper who could not deliver the coup de grace on his horse. "Upon being wounded, this horse did not become panic-stricken like the others. Instead, the horse hobbled over to where its trooper was fighting in the trenches. The horse looked down to the trooper as



Coffee pot recovered from the barricade area

if to say 'for Christ's sakes help me.' Deciding he could not shoot his own horse, the trooper pleaded to his comrade, "I can't do it by God, Hank, I can't do it. You'll have to finish him." Hank waited for the horse to turn his head. When it turned, he pulled the trigger on his pistol, sending a ball crashing through its skull, behind his left ear. That night, the horse was dragged from the barricade and thrown down the ravine to the south with the other dead horses and mules."²³ There were also several pet dogs in the corral, among them a beautiful greyhound named Frank, belonging to Lieut. Cherry. The Lieutenant would let the dog go to the creek at night for water. One night, the dog came back with one of his paws shot off. The dog had been

mistaken for a crawling Indian. Lieut. Cherry said, "There was nothing to do but kill the poor old fellow to save him misery."²⁴

October the 1st dawned as the siege wore on. The Utes, as usual, promptly began shooting at dawn. Unknown to the besieged troopers, the couriers had safely made it through the Utes' line and relief was on the way. Towards evening, the Utes managed to infiltrate along the creek bed to within seventy-five yards of the barricade. These Utes made the nightly water detail work even more dangerous. As evidence of this danger, Private Esser was shot in the face while part of a water detail on the night of October 1st.

As October the 2nd came and the fourth day of battle was to begin, relief finally arrived.

Courier John Gordon had found Capt. Francis Dodge and his company of 9th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers and led them to the besieged troopers at Milk Creek. John Gordon approached the barricade in the dim light before dawn and identified himself. Capt. Payne bid them to enter the barricade amidst hardy cheers from the besieged troopers. As Capt. Dodge and his company entered the barricade, men leapt from the trenches to shake hands with their new comrades. Capt. Dodge's men quickly unsaddled their horses and took positions in the barricade. All the commotion had roused the Utes and daylight brought with it a deluge of gunfire into the barricade. As before, the newly arrived horses of Capt. Dodge's command provided easy targets for the Ute

sharpshooters. Within an hour or so, most of these horses were dead or wounded. This horrific slaughter of the Army's horses and mules marked a first in the Indian wars. The U.S. Army had adopted a doctrine to kill Indian ponies when and wherever found in order to deprive the enemy of transport and mobility. A good example of this doctrine was Custer's 7th Cavalry "Battle of the Washita," where a very large herd of Cheyenne ponies were killed. In the aftermath of the Thornburgh battle, over 300 Army horses and mules were confirmed killed during the fight, marking the battle as unique whereby the Ute Indians had turned the tables on the Cavalry and used an Army tactic against the troopers of the White River Expedition.²⁵

Another unique incident in the Battle of Milk Creek was the dialogue between combatants. Several of the Utes spoke English and were eager to taunt the troopers. One Ute was heard to say, "Come out you sons of bitches and fight like men." Another Ute dared the troopers to: "Lift up your hats and give us a mark."²⁶ A Buffalo soldier, most likely frustrated by the lack of good targets, climbed from his trench and shouted, "Show me a Ute." No Utes obliged, however, they did direct their firing at the soldier, which induced him to dive into his trench headfirst.²⁷ And, a poignant account of brotherhood among the troopers is chronicled in Dawson and Skiffs book, "The Ute War." Private Eugene Schickendonz suffered from a wound to his arm. The wound had made him sick, so he had not eaten for several days. The private shared a trench with a fellow trooper of Capt. Dodge's 9th Cavalry. This soldier

was full of fight and would readily fire at the Utes when a target presented itself. One morning (either Oct. 3rd or 4th), Private Schickendonz said to his trench-mate, "Here pard, stop shooting at them bluffs and, for the Lord's sake, make me a little coffee." The Buffalo soldier answered not a word but set to work. There was no coffee in the pit, but there was some in the next one, which was tossed over. But how to make a fire without wood, that was the question. The colored man calculated the chances, made a break for the settler's wagon, snatched a loose side of a provision box, and came back with a bullet hole in the board, which was meant for his own body. Then he made a fire in a corner of the pit and prepared the coffee for his patient."²⁸ One can only imagine how grateful the wounded trooper must have been for this tender mercy from his brother in arms.

Perhaps the greatest support Capt. Dodge and his troopers provided to the besieged men upon their arrival to the fight at Milk Creek was in the person of Sgt. Henry Johnson. Upon the death of 1st Sgt. John Dolan, the White River Expedition lost its most senior non-commissioned officer. By his steadfast courage under fire, Sgt. Johnson rose to the occasion and became the defacto Sergeant Major to the besieged troopers. "During the siege, Henry Johnson served as Sergeant of the Guard, and it was in that capacity that he left his fortified rifle pit and went to other pits to give necessary instruction to the members of the Guard. As he dashed from pit to pit, he was exposed to the fire from the Indians who were very near and at easy range of him. Johnson was also one of a party

who formed a skirmish line by order of Capt. F.S. Dodge and fought their way to the creek (Milk River) for water for the wounded and themselves." For his bravery, Sgt. Johnson was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1879.²⁹

Another day passed and the siege wore on into its fifth day. The historical record contains little mention of events on this day. Clearly, both warriors and troopers alike were nearing exhaustion and fatigue. Capt. Payne must have known that relief for the White River Expedition was nearly at hand for he knew his old commander and friend, Colonel Wesley Merritt, would make all haste to come to his aid. In the Union Cavalry, Col. Merritt had a distinguished Civil War record, almost equal to his famous brother officer, George A. Custer. When the courier, Joe Rankin, arrived in Rawlins, Wyoming Territory, with the news of the battle, Capt. Payne's message was immediately telegraphed to Army headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska. Early on October 1st, Col. Merritt, commander of Fort D.A. Russell, was ordered by his superiors in Omaha to proceed with all haste to the rescue of the troopers at Milk Creek. Rising from his sick bed, Col. Merritt set about organizing the relief force. He assembled a force of approximately 250 cavalry and infantrymen. The relief column boarded a train and arrived at Rawlins, Wyoming, early on the 2nd of October, where three companies of infantry met Col. Merritt. Now, with over 400 men, Col. Merritt embarked for Milk Creek. The journey to Milk Creek would prove to be one of the most successful forced marches in U.S. Army history. In Merritt's book

"Marching Cavalry", he describes the maneuver:

"One of the most successful marches of modern times was that made to the relief of the Thornburgh command by a battalion of the 5th Cavalry in the autumn of 1879... the distance accomplished was 170 measured miles. The time from 11:00 a.m., October the 2nd, to 5:30 a.m., October the 5th, this was at the rate of 60 miles per day for two and three-quarters days. This march is mentioned as being peculiarly successful for, in brief, the following reasons: 1) the distance accomplished in the time, 2) no horses were lost or disabled on the march and there were noticeably no sore back horses after its completion, 3) the command, men and horses, were in good condition for service at once after the march."

Merritt and his command reached Milk Creek in the gray of dawn October the 5th. Merritt ordered his bugler to sound the officer's call. This was done, and Capt. Payne's bugler promptly answered back. The wearied troopers in the trenches jumped for joy now that their final salvation was at hand. When Col. Merritt and Capt. Payne met, they embraced. Col. Merritt openly wept when he viewed the utter devastation inside the barricade.³⁰

The Utes, in their ridge-top position, overlooking the barricade, immediately began to withdraw now that the odds were clearly against them. Col. Merritt composed himself and began to issue orders. He sent skirmish-



The lost troopers of Milk Creek

ers out to clear any Utes in the immediate vicinity of the barricade area. Next, he directed his surgeon, Dr. A.J. Kimble, to assist Dr. Grimes with the wounded men. Because of the stench of decaying horses and lack of good water and forage, he instructed his officers to move everyone up Milk Creek one mile. He established a base camp there and awaited further reinforcements. When the dead troopers were removed from under their temporary grave in the breastworks, Scout C. Grafton Lowery awakened from his coma. He rose to his feet and muttered, "What's the matter boys," as Dr. Kimble probed for the bullet in his head. He died a second time, this time for good.³¹

Thus, the Thornburgh battle ended. In its aftermath, thirteen men of the White River Expedition lay dead,

with another forty-two wounded. When nearly a week later Col. Merritt reached the White River Agency, it was discovered that the Utes had massacred Agent Meeker and all eleven of his civilian employees. It was also revealed that the Utes had kidnapped four women and two children, who were relatives of the slain agency employees. After thirty days of rape and violent abuse by their captors, the women and children were released to envoys sent by Chief Ouray. In all, twenty-seven white men lost their lives in the Ute War of 1879. The White River Utes have given conflicting accounts of their dead. After lengthy legal proceedings, only one Ute Indian was convicted for his part in the massacre of the Agency employees. Chief Douglas became the Ute scapegoat. He served one year in Leavenworth Prison

and was released. Two years later, he was shot dead by a fellow Ute during a drunken spree in Meeker, Colorado.³² Of course, the real punishment, caused by a few, was meted out to the entire Ute nation in the form of abrogation of their treaty rights.

What stands out most about this little known, yet remarkably unique Indian War battle was the behavior and conduct of the frontier army of 1879. The officers, non-coms, enlisted men, civilian scouts, and employees of the White River Expedition exhibited great courage under fire and tremendous unit cohesion. The eleven Medals of Honor and eighteen lesser citations awarded to the troopers of the White River Expedition is a testament to the glory and professionalism of the United States Army.

Afterward

On May 8, 2000, I traveled to the Milk Creek battle site, twenty miles northeast of Meeker, Colorado. I had spent the prior six months researching and studying all the literature that could be found about the 1879 battle. The purpose of my visit was to investigate the site with a metal detector and prove or disprove various facts about the battle, which are unclear in the historical record. I was granted permission to access the private property where the battle occurred and over the next six months, I made sixteen trips, encompassing 44 days of research at the Milk Creek site. My research has revealed a number of new discoveries about the battle. In addition, I recovered over 800 artifacts from the site. Some of these artifacts are very unique and similar

artifacts, to my knowledge, have never been discovered on other Indian War battle sites. Currently, I am writing a book about my research at the Battle of Milk Creek, which will document the discoveries and artifacts for the historical record.

I write this afterward to announce in a published paper the most important discovery made during my work at the battle site. On October 22, 2000, I inadvertently discovered the skeletal remains of the two cavalry troopers pictured on the previous page. This inadvertent discovery solves the conflicting and confusing historical accounts concerning the gravesite of the twelve United States Army and civilian personnel killed in the Battle of Milk Creek. Much of the misinformation about the final resting place of the fallen troopers of Milk Creek originated from Marshall Sprague's 1957 book, "Massacre-Tragedy at White River." Sprague claimed that the dead troopers were taken with the wounded back to Fort Fred Steele, Wyoming Territory. Mark Miller, in his book, "Hollow Victory" debunked Sprague's claim about the troopers' status. My research has revealed the most accurate primary source account on the exact status and location of the troopers' graves. Joe Rankin's book, "Reminiscences of Frontier Days," page 82, states: "Because of the Indians quitting the fight and the stench about the trenches being unbearable, Merritt ordered the camp with the wounded men moved up Milk Creek one mile to the east where there was grass for the stock. Details of troops scouting the surrounding hills during the day. From this camp, Capt. Auger, with an escort of his cavalymen and a

detail of workers, was ordered to bury the dead. Of these, all were buried near the trenches except Major Thornburgh." Rankin's account is accurate, except Capt. Auger did not dig new graves near the trenches. In fact, Capt. Auger's burial detail utilized an existing trench, which was dug during the battle. This trench is located approximately in the center of the barricade area and may have been dug for the wounded during the battle. I believe this trench was dug during the battle because of the large amount of artifacts recovered from the thirty inches of soil directly over the soldiers' remains. Looking at the photo, it was the trooper on the left who I discovered first. He lies on his side. While excavating further, I discovered his comrade on the right. He lies on his back, with the legs of the soldier on the left resting across his mid-section. Because of the position of the remains and the reference in Rankin's book, I strongly believe that the other ten fallen troopers buried by Capt. Auger are either below or to the sides of the troopers pictured above. After examining the grave, I said a prayer for them and backfilled the trench.

Next, I informed the landowners about my discovery. They were shocked to learn that the battlefield contained a mass grave, yet sadly; they denied me further access to the entire battlefield, which has halted study of this important historical site. Most importantly, their denial of access to the site has halted U.S. Army efforts to properly disinter, identify, and re-inter, with full military honors, the hallowed remains of the forgotten troopers of Milk Creek. In the weeks after my

discovery of the troopers, I attempted to enlist the help of professional archeologists. For whatever reason, no guidance or assistance was offered. Then, by what I thought as mere coincidence, I came into contact with a U.S. Army officer. I met with Major General Kenneth R. Bowra in February 2001. After learning the facts about the Milk Creek troopers, General Bowra wholeheartedly agreed to help in the efforts to honor the fallen soldiers. Over the next several months, General Bowra offered invaluable guidance and assistance. I can assure you, the reader, that the time-honored U.S. Army tradition of "leave no man behind on the battlefield" even applies to soldiers lost for 123 years. General Bowra arranged and coordinated within the Army the aid of the Joint Task Force for Full Accounting. This multi-service group of archeologists and forensic experts were established in 1993 to recover our killed and missing-in-action from the Vietnam War. Their dedicated efforts have resulted in the recovery of over 600 of our fallen soldiers throughout southeast Asia. With the Joint Task Force for Full Accounting ready to conduct a professional disinterment, I asked General Bowra to appeal in writing to the landowners, requesting their cooperation and assistance in the recovery of the Milk Creek troopers. General Bowra wrote a most eloquent plea to the landowners in which he stated, "The U.S. Army has a proud history. You can help, not only to preserve that history, but also to have the soldiers who died at Milk Creek receive the honors so long overdue. The U.S. Army also has a tradition of recovering our dead from the battlefield. This too is long overdue,

but now possible." Sadly, the landowners refused the General's request to recover the soldiers' remains.

At this writing, the twelve lost troopers of Milk Creek still man the trenches in their lonely vigil upon that windswept battlefield. I remain determined to continue the efforts to honor these men. These soldiers gave the last full measure of devotion in the service of the United States of America and deserve an honored final resting place in one of our national cemeteries, rather than their current shallow, unmarked mass grave located on a cow pasture. These brave men who died in the fighting at Milk Creek, yet still remain there, must never be forgotten. Their names are:

Private John Burns, Co. F, 5th Cavalry

Private Dominick Cuff, Co. E, 3rd Cavalry

Sergeant John Dolan, Co. F, 5th Cavalry

Private Michael Firestone, Co. F, 5th Cavalry

Lowery C. Grafton, Civilian Guide

Private Michael Lynch, Co. D, 59 Cavalry

Private Samuel McKee, Co. F, 5th Cavalry

William McKinstry, Civilian Wagon Master

Thomas McQuire, Civilian Teamster
Waggoner Amos D. Miller, Co. F, 5th Cavalry

Private Thomas Mooney, Co. D, 5th Cavalry

Private Charles Wright, Co. D, 5th Cavalry

Endnotes

1. Mark E. Miller, "Hollow Victory," page 21.
2. Fred H. Werner, "The Meeker Massacre," page 125, Appendix B.
3. Author's Note: Among the many artifacts recovered while doing fieldwork in the spring and summer of 2000 was 44-paired spare horseshoes.
4. Author's Note: I recovered many artifacts still lying on the surface of the ground where John Gordon and his employees abandoned their wagons to seek shelter from the Utes who had outflanked the advance elements of Thornburgh's command.
5. Author's Note: I have named the first ridge the troopers climbed from the Milk Creek crossing Confrontation Ridge. The historical record and artifacts I recovered suggest that this ridge saw the initial fighting of the battle.
6. Author's Note: I have named the second ridge to the southwest of the Milk Creek crossing Ambush Ridge. I recovered two 45-caliber bullets fired by the troopers at the Utes who were hiding in ambush on this ridge.
7. Marshall Sprague, "Massacre: The Tragedy at White River," pages 196 and 197.
8. Mark E. Miller, "Hollow Victory," page 189, Table C-1.
9. Marshall Sprague, "Massacre: Tragedy at the White River, page IUY.
10. Author's Note: I recovered over a dozen Ute bullets and Springfield cartridge cases along the path used by Lieut. Cherry's detachment during their fighting withdrawal.
11. Fred H. Werner, "The Story of the Meeker Massacre and the Thornburgh

Battle," page 125, Appendix B.
 12. Mark E. Miller, "Hollow Victory," page 189.
 13. M. Wilson Rankin, "Reminisces of Frontier Days," page 70.
 14. Theo F. Rodenbough, "Uncle Sam's Medal of Honor," page 357-359.
 15. M. Wilson Rankin, "Reminisces of Frontier Days," page 70.
 16. Author's Note: Burnt surface evidence (nails, screws, glass, etc.) of Gordon's freight trains still litters the pasture.
 17. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 32.
 18. Fred H. Werner, "The Story of the Meeker Massacre," photo on rear cover.
 19. Author's Note: I recovered eight Henry cartridge cases on this northeast side of the barricade, suggesting the Utes did mount this charge.
 20. United States Continental Commands Records.
 21. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 32.
 22. Mark E. Miller, "Hollow Victory," page 98.
 23. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 39.
 24. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 39.
 25. Author's Note: I recovered over 150 horse/mule bones throughout the entire barricade area during the 2000 season.
 26. Cheyenne Daily Leader, October 26, 1879.
 27. M. Wilson Rankin, "Reminisces of Frontier Days," page 75.
 28. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 39 and 40.
 29. Preston E. Amos, "Above and Beyond in the West, Black Medal of Honor Winners 1870-1890," pages 14-17.

30. Dawson & Skiff, "The Ute War," page 42.
 31. Marshall Sprague, "Tragedy: The Massacre at White River," page 222.
 32. Smith, "Ouray, Chief of the Utes," page 175.

Anyone with comments or questions about my work at Milk Creek may contact me at:
 BradLEdwards@earthlink.net.

Over the Corral Rail

Bob Larson's biography of *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997) was translated into French this year by the French publisher Editions du Rocher. An earlier translation in Italian was published in 1999.

The Red Cloud book, which was adopted by the History Book Club five years ago, received second prize in the Westerners International Co-Founders Best Book Award for nonfiction in 1997.

Congratulations to Bob for this outstanding effort.

Over the Corral Rail

Jackson Thode: End of the Line

by Thomas J. Noel

Of 50 books and booklets on Denver's feisty little hometown narrow gauge railroads, try to find one without acknowledgments or material or photos from Jackson Thode, whose mission in life was to perpetuate the memory of Colorado's golden age of soot and cinders.

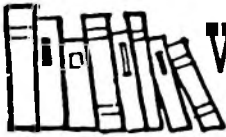
Born in Denver in 1916 and educated at East High and the University of Denver, Jackson died peacefully, surrounded by his family, Saturday afternoon, August 3, 2002.

Starting out with the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad as a freight claims checker and clerk in 1936, he served 20 different positions with the railroad, rising to become secretary to the president of the D&RG. Retiring as chief budget officer of what was then a profitable freight railroad, Jackson knew inside-out its freight operations and passenger service, especially the far famed California Zephyr—the Silver Lady—the stainless steel, streamlined, 100 mph marvel of comfort, service and fine food that has never been surpassed as the way to tour Colorado.

To pal around with Jackson was to glide into Colorado's golden railroad age. He was the master historian for historians, journalists and even the newest convert to railroading. He could tell you where books were wrong, and, ever so gently, when you were mistaken.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in his memory to your favorite charity or to the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden where the basement research library, a vast treasure house enriched by hundreds of manuscripts, photos and documents which he donated, is now the Jackson C. Thode Archive Room.

A 1938 charter member of the Rocky Mountain Rail Club and past Sheriff and *Brand Book* editor for the Denver Posse of Westerners, Jackson is now working on railroads up in the sky, back among his beloved steam trains. Think of him when you see those big white puffy clouds.



Westerners Bookshelf



Music In The Mountains: The First Fifty Years of the Aspen Music Festival, by Bruce Berger. Boulder:Johnson Books, 2001. 174 pp, 19 photographs. Cloth: \$14.00.

In 1949, Albert Schweitzer, invited by Elizabeth and Walter Paepcke, came to Aspen and the Aspen Music Festival was begun. With a prominent figure such as Schweitzer, the festival had a grand initiation. Among other noted celebrities in attendance at the 1949 events were pianist Arthur Rubinstein, novelist Thornton Wilder, and bass singer Jerome Hines. It was to be a blend of the arts in the mountains under the stars. And it grew. The festival changed slightly to become a teaching arena for the arts, with great performers, artists, and teachers together with young talented learners.

As with all organizations, there were growing pains, and disagreements about the structure and the type of festival it should be. The author described tent concerts in the rain, which showed the need for permanent buildings. Housing for pupils became a major undertaking.

In 1989, notes about the beginnings of the festival were written for inclusion in the programs. From those notes, the author added more stories, details, and updates in producing this book.

Aspen is a beautiful place to hold a music festival and the whole state should be very proud of this fact. This book is a wonderful addition in telling the story of the Aspen Music Festival: its foundation, its development, the conflicts, successes, and functions.

--Nancy Bathke, P. M.



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

One Side by Himself- The Life and Times of Lewis Barney: 1808 - 1894 by Ronald O.Barney. Logan: Utah University Press, 2001. 402 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$44.95, Paper, \$24.95,

The author is a descendant of Lewis Barney and is employed by the Family and Church History Department in Salt Lake City, UT. Ronald Barney began his research regarding the life of his ancestor while working on his Masters thesis over twenty-five years ago. The three major resources used by the author were the autobiographies of Lewis, the church records, and the records in the Family History Library in Salt Lake. Without these sources, "Barney would be ignored and largely forgotten. "

This book combines the history of the Mormon Church during this transitional period with the role of a minor participant in the Church. Lewis Barney believed that the high point in his life was his role in the vanguard expedition to Utah of 1847. But even in this event, the leaders of the movement treated him as a common laborer with no special role. He was a good hunter, and at one point, he saw several pronghorn and went after them, but Orrin Porter Rockwell, the "notorious body guard of Joseph Smith, " told him not to hunt and sent him back to his wagon.

In my study of the frontier movement, I have seen two types of individuals. One type moved to Western New York in the early 1800's, bought land, and stayed. His descendants still farm that land today. Conrad Richter wrote a classic story of this type of family. They settled in Ohio, cleared the land, and made a town. These were the successful pioneers. Barne represented the other type of pioneer. He was a mover who tried over and over again to develop success. At times, he owned a farm that was starting to produce a decent living for him, but then either the Church told him to move or he decided to move on for some personal reason. He usually received little or nothing for the improvements that he had made on his land.

After Luther Barney was rejected by the Primitive Baptists, he looked around for another church that would accept his membership, and he discovered the Mormon Church. His father and brothers followed him to this new religion, and Lewis became a strong believer and was loyal to the Mormon beliefs no matter how often he was shortchanged he was by the leadership.

He was a polygamist before arriving in Utah and lived with his two wives, Elizabeth and Betsy. Between the two wives, Lewis fathered fifteen children, but only eight survived to adulthood. Later on the two wives established separate households, and Lewis spent more time with Betsy and her children. There is very little information about relationships in the Barney family, but there are some indications that the relationship between the wives was not as good as it should have been. The fact that Lewis was often away from his family meant that the family was often destitute. It was interesting to read that the neighbors felt no responsibility to provide the family with food and clothing. Instead, the neighbors often took advantage of each other instead of sharing.

There was an attempt by Brigham Young to start a cooperative association,

"The Order of Enoch," and at age 66, Lewis signed up for it and served on the local board. He assigned his possessions to the association, but even the association often neglected the Barney family. For a number of reasons including disagreements among the leadership, the association failed.

Lewis had always maintained a strong belief in the tenets of the Church, and late in his life, he performed baptisms for 100 of his deceased ancestors. His plan to do this for additional 400 dead kin was prevented by his death at Mancos, Colorado, in 1894.

Lewis Barney never acquired much in material possessions and never rose to a position of leadership in the Church, but he seemed to lead the type of life that appealed to him. His family was very important to him, and he always wanted them to live near each other.

The book is a very interesting study of some of the history of the Mormon Church in Utah during this time period, as well as the life story of Lewis Barney as he tried to become economically successful on the frontier. I have read about the Mormon leaders and unique individuals such as Orrin Porter Rockwell, but this is the first book that I have read about the Mormons at the bottom of the social order in Utah.

--Ray Jenkins, C.M.

Great Ghost Towns of the West, photography by Tom Till, essay by Teresa Jordan. Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR. 2001. 127 pages. 130 color photographs, color map, index. Cloth: \$39.95.

This is essentially a beautiful "Coffee Table" book. The photographer, Tom Till, is an award-winning photographer, and one of the West's most published photographers. It is easy to see why: the images are artistically presented and the color reproduction is spectacular. Ghost towns all over the West are represented. In accompaniment, author Teresa Jordan has produced an essay, telling a bit of the history, background and status of these fascinating sites. But her essay is exactly what it is intended to be: short descriptions of the towns, and the mood they provide, and is not to be construed as any detailed historical research or information in depth. A list of basic books describing Western ghost towns is included. This is a very attractive book.

--Nancy Bathke, P. M.

Navajo Trading, The End of an Era by Willow Roberts Powers.

Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 6 x 9 inches, 307 pgs., map, illustrations, notes, list of interviews, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

For anyone who has ever visited a trading post in the past, this book will bring back memories of a bygone era. For those who have never been on the Navajo Reservation or to a trading post, this book will give you an inside look as to the inner workings of the trader-Navajo relationship. Anyone interested in learning about the Navajo and trading will need to read this book.

Beginning in the 1870s, peddlers began to travel by wagon onto the Navajo Reservation to barter their wares for wool, a few sheep, a rug, or a piece of silver jewelry. By the early years of the twentieth century, barter turned into an exchange of culture and services: in addition to serving as a place where Navajo jewelry and rugs changed hands, trading posts acted as grocery stores, banks, post offices, and railroad hiring offices. Traders were the link between Anglo-American culture and the Navajo people. At first they were agents of change, but by 1950 they had become maintainers of tradition and hence obstacles to modernization.

This book is an overview which examines trading in the last quarter of the twentieth century, when changes in both cultures led to the investigation of trading practices by the Federal Trade Commission, ultimately resulting in the demise of most traditional trading posts. Today, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the author states that "Trading posts are obsolete." My family and I observed through the 90s how the trading posts had changed. The old original traders were passing on and their children were not running the posts as their parents had. It was disappointing to me to observe this first hand. When the Wide Ruins trading post burned down several years ago it was never rebuilt & the site was bulldozed, so trading at one of the famous posts of the past is now only a memory. However thanks to the National Parks Service, a famous post from the past, the Hubbell Trading Post, will always exist at least in our lifetime as a historical monument to trading on the Navajo Reservation. It is preserving the architecture and furnishings of a period that changed little between 1900 and 1940. It is still a working trading post, selling groceries, buying rugs and baskets, jewelry and pottery, while tourists wander around the buildings and examine, and buy their crafts.

Powers has gone to great lengths to get interviews from the traders, the Navajos, & the lawyers who worked for the Navajo tribe. This book is a series of historical accounts interspersed with interviews that pertain to a particular episode. She writes about the difficulties and the delights of the life of a trader and shows the ethical and political reasons for the FTC hearings as well as the differences between good and bad traders. In the 60s and 70s my wife, two children, and I experienced first hand the workings at some of the posts mentioned in this book. The end story of this book can be summed up in the words of Evelyn Lee, the wife of Jack Lee who had traded with the Hopis and Navajos for thirty years at the Keams Canyon trading post. "You know, there's a cycle for everything, and the day of the trading post is over."

--Theodore P. Kreiger, P.M.

The Black Regulars 1866 - 1898, by William A. Dobak & Thomas D. Philips. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2001. 384 pp., illustrations, abbreviations, notes, 2 maps, bibliography, index of personal names, general index. Hardcover, \$34.95.

In the summer of 1866, Black soldiers first entered the regular army of the United States. Fewer than 20,000 served as regulars from the aftermath of the Civil War to the Spanish American War. This book is not about their campaign history, but is about their daily routine and discipline; religious services and education; and their pastimes, licit and illicit. There are some examples of language used by the military that some may find offensive, but it illustrates reality in military life that exists even today. The N - - - - word is used to show the attitudes towards the black man especially in the south and by some individuals. The black men did find a degree of equality in the service as the army treated them no worse than it did their white counterparts. Comparisons between the black soldier and the white soldier indicate that the black soldier could endure more harsh discipline than could the white soldier as there were more desertions among the white soldiers than among the black soldiers. This was attributed to the harsh treatment that some black soldiers had endured as slaves so they found military life not any more harsh.

In the beginning of the book the authors tell who labeled the black soldier "buffalo soldiers". It isn't until near the end of the book that they tell why they were called "buffalo soldiers".

The book starts out with matter of fact narrative using army correspondence, court martial transcripts, and pension applications to tell who these men were, often in their own words. Such as how they were recruited and how their officers were selected; how the black regiments survived hostile Congressional hearings and stringent budget cuts; and how regimental chaplains tried to promote literacy through the Army's schools.

The authors shed new light on the military justice system, relations between black troops and their mostly white civilian neighbors, their professional reputations, and what veterans faced when they left the army for civilian life.

As the reader continues on into the book he or she will find that the stories become more interesting as specific episodes are related by the participants in much detail such as chasing deserters or defending a Texas mail station against Indian attack. There are episodes which deal with the "ladies of the night" or "camp followers" as they were known. It is shown that the white and black soldiers were alike when it came to these temptations. The book also relates to the occasional trouble which occurred when some soldier's wives wound up in the company of other enlisted men.

The writers sum up their story of the Black Regulars by saying "The United States Army was one of the most impartial institutions of the day, and it attracted men whose ability and endurance assured their regiments' survival and a place, however small, for black Americans in the nation's public life."

--Theodore P. Krieger, P.M.

The Origins of a Pacific Coast Chiefdom - The Chumash of the Channel Islands. Edited by Jeanne E. Arnold, University of Utah Press, 2001. 296 pages, 136 illustrations, Cloth: \$60.00.

The northern Channel Islands lie some 40-50 kilometers south of and parallel to the California coast from Pt. Conception to Ventura. They contain some of the best-preserved landscape and archeological sites of an unusually complex maritime hunter-gatherer society in the western United States. This has been due to their remoteness and the private ownership of the islands. The several Chumash groups occupied some 25,000 square kilometers from Malibu to San Luis Obispo extending easterly into the more and region of southern California as well as the Channel Islands.

What makes the Chumash Indians so interesting to ethnographers and archeologists is the fact that they were the most political and economic complex group in California. They emphasized occupational specializations, particularly quarrying chert to mass produce micro-blade drill points associated with shell-bead making, developing a 6-7 meter "sea-worthy" canoe used in their extensive regional exchange system for transporting trade goods along the coastal waterways, and manufacturing and using currency. They did all of this without metal tools or beasts of burden. Arnold's team explores the how, when and why of the Chumash in their developing status and wealth differentials, hereditary elites, and broad, integrated political units. Based on information available in the 1980s her scenario places the expansion of regional trade exchange and related developments somewhere between the mid-first millennium and AD 1300.

In summary, to quote the author, "This volume reports much of the primary archeological and ethnohistoric information germane to these issues recovered during the past decade or so on the northern Channel Islands and presents analyses and interpretations of these data in an explicitly theoretical framework. Thus, the volume may serve as a comprehensive source of accessible material for interested specialists and students focused on hunter-gatherer issues, western North America, shell working, specialized craft production, faunal and ethnobotanical studies, colonial era studies, and the like. It may also be useful to scholars interested in the evolution of societies at intermediate levels of complexity around the world. We employ several current methodological and theoretical approaches that have proven very helpful in understanding the origins and organization of complex hunter-gatherer polities."

One must consider this as "The Authority" on the Chumash Indians of the Channel Islands. But, also, it may well serve as a standard and guide for Eke studies of comparable periods in the development of other cultures worldwide. A mug for colleges and libraries involved with archeology.

--S. Lebrun Hutchison, P.M.

(Personal note: In the late 1970s I was project manager for the planning of the Channel Islands National Monument [now National Park] headquarters and visitor center facility at San Bana Ventura to support and interpret the out-lying islands. I visited several of the islands just as the archeological studies began. The marine biosphere is extraordinary.)

Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains by Theodore Binnema. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 288 pp. 11 illustrations, 15 maps, chapter notes, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$29.95.)

Sow Belly, a Crow Indian, once stated that this "is a good country. The Great Spirit has put it exactly in the right place: while you are in it you fare well; whenever you go out of it, whichever way you travel you fare worse." He was speaking of the northwestern plains, now part of Montana and southern Canada. This was contested ground and those who lived there survived through a complex combination of trade, warfare, and diplomacy with neighbors who were often very unlike themselves. Just as important, the inhabitants understood and exploited their environment. Theodore Binnema writes a scholarly, yet readable book that examines the details of cultural and environmental interactions in this area during the pedestrian and equestrian eras prior to the arrival of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

One of the main issues examined by the author is the critical role of buffalo. A unique combination of precipitation, wind, temperature, vegetation, topography, and fire supported a large population of these animals. This reliable source of food attracted culturally diverse and contesting groups into the area. In order to understand these human interactions, the author presents an in-depth account of the annual cycle of the bison and how the indigenous hunters responded. Indians understood the seasonal migration of buffalo and how events such as fire and weather affected their movements. In addition, there were strict regulations governing hunting to minimize stampedes and maximize the harvest. But even the best organized hunts were not always successful, so these people developed pemmican about five thousand years ago and it became an important source of nourishment during lean times.

Warfare was as much of their culture as were the buffalo. Yet, war was a dangerous and costly endeavor that brought few tangible gains. If there was an alternative, such as burning the prairie around a camp and thereby driving the intruders away, the less risky option was often favored over armed conflict. Common interests and mutual threats encouraged the Indians to develop two coalitions. The Northern Coalition was dominated by Blackfeet, Cree, Gros Venture, and Assiniboine tribes while the Southern Coalition tribes included Shoshone, Crow, Flathead, and Kutenais. These coalitions were dynamic units that formed and unraveled as allegiances and social conditions changed.

A revolution took place when the tribes living in the northwestern plains acquired horses in the early 1700s. Southern Coalition tribes, especially the Shoshone, had better access to and a more favorable climate for horses than the northern tribes, and they soon dominated the plains. But being horse-rich had its perils, concluded the author. Owning large herds of horses only encouraged other tribes to steal them. Even worse, these raiding tribes, especially the Blackfeet, had more and better guns because of their trading contacts with the British and French. The pecking order on the plains changed again and this time the Blackfeet were on top.

The final defining event before the Lewis and Clark expedition was the arrival of smallpox. A particularly virulent strain of the disease emerged in Mexico City in 1779 and hit the northwestern plains two years later. About two-thirds of the native population died, usually within a few days after symptoms occurred. The death toll was higher than it might have been because the disease attacked entire communities simultaneously, leaving no healthy members to care for the sick. Many that might have survived the disease instead died of starvation, exposure, and dehydration. Communities ceased to exist as autonomous units and the decimated bands looked inward for help and turned from war to subsistence. Many tribes withdrew from contested lands and returned to their traditional areas where there was a better hope for survival.

When Lewis and Clark arrived in 1805, they found a native population skilled in diplomacy, knowledgeable about European goods, superbly adapted to their environment, and rebounding from the devastation of smallpox. The author does an excellent job in setting the stage for yet another revolution for the Native Americans of the northwestern plains.

Folks interested in western history already have a basic understanding of most of the events discussed by the author. The value of this book is the integration of these events with the life, culture, and environment of the Native Americans who lived in the northwestern plains.

--Richard C. Barth, C.M.





The DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

July - August 2002



No Man's Land and Cimarron Territory

**The Oklahoma Panhandle
by V. Pauline Hodges, Ph.D.
(presented March 27, 2002)**



About the Author

Dr. V. Pauline (Paula) Hodges has been a rural teacher for 18 years in the panhandle of Oklahoma, having returned to her roots there following a teaching career in Colorado at Douglas County High School, ten years as a professor at Colorado State University and Language Arts Coordinator for Jefferson County.

Dr. Hodges has been both an author and consultant for two different publishers: Harcourt Brace and Prentice Hall publishers. In 1993 she received the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence in Teaching award for her work in rural schools. She has edited three different books of history concerning Beaver County and the Panhandle of Oklahoma and is on the Board of Directors of both the Beaver County Historical Society and No Man's Land Historical Society.

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 Denver, CO 80206

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Ted Krieger (303) 466-7737
 280 E. 11th Ave.
 Broomfield, CO 80020

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Dorothy Krieger (303) 466-7737
 280 E. 11th Ave.
 Broomfield, CO 80020

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No Man's Land and Cimarron Territory

The Oklahoma Panhandle

by V. Pauline Hodges, Ph.D.

(presented March 27, 2002)

Although I was born in Liberal, Kansas, three miles north of the Oklahoma Panhandle and No Man's Land, I consider myself a native of that strip of land that is attached to Oklahoma but is little akin to it culturally, geographically, or historically.

The rest of the state has one of three views about us: (a) It is part of the frozen north with such comments as, "Oh, yes, where it snows all the time." (b) We are desperately poor. (3) We are totally illiterate. Of course, all of these views are far from the truth. We also hear such comments from downstaters who deign to drive to the Panhandle for business reasons such as, "Oh, it is SO far out here." Yes, actually, it is the same distance as when we drive to the capital city. When I chose to return to the area in 1989 from Colorado where I had lived for 20 years, my friends and colleagues thought me mad. However, I like this unique area for its barren beauty, and its warm, outgoing, and kind people, and for its unique history. And we are survivors.

First, let me clarify the area by the names to which I shall refer: No Man's Land because from 1845 until 1890 the area belonged to no recognized state or nation; the Neutral Strip because it did not enter into the Civil War since it did not belong to either the North or South; Cimarron Terri-

tory which described the attempt to become a territory and state unto itself; Beaver County or the Seventh County which describes the area when it was part of Oklahoma Territory; the Public Strip because in 1885 Secretary of the Interior L. C. O. Lamar ruled the Strip was public domain, and today the Oklahoma Panhandle since it sticks out there all by itself and is now 3 counties, Cimarron, Texas, and Beaver. In the words of one of the early white pioneers Maude O. Thomas, "It has been owned and disowned, an orphan among the nations, no man's land, finally obtaining a permanent home as an appendage to the Territory of Oklahoma."

Since the area is really a desert with no native trees except for a few along the two rivers that run through the area, with scarce rainfall and strong prevailing winds, it was not kindly to settlers. There were few trees from which to build a log house or to provide shelter. There was not the rainfall or the humidity to provide crops without proper cultivation. Distances were great and markets were far away. It was a land that Congress forgot and that was truly "No Man's Land" with Beaver City as the capital.

The word Cimarron comes from the Spanish word "cimarrones" meaning wild cattle and also refers to

the river which begins in northern New Mexico, to the area, and to the illegal territory formed from No Man's Land.

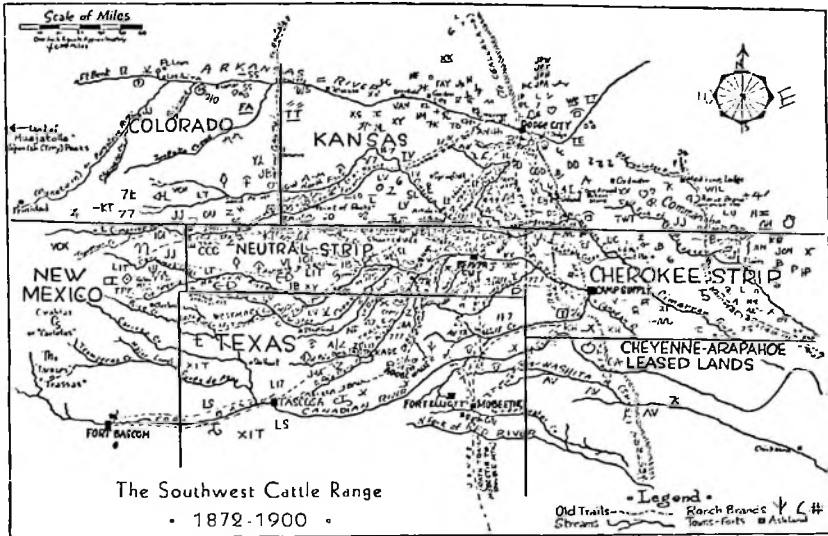
Folk in the area known as No Man's Land tend to refer to its being inhabited first when the cattle trails from Texas began in the 1870s, or when the Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail first crossed the area. However, this is far from reality. That strip of land that lies between the 36°30' and 37 degrees latitude and between the 100th and 103rd meridians is only 34 ½ miles wide and 167 miles long, but it is packed with unique geology, archeology, and history. And its history did not begin, as is commonly thought, when Anglos and cattle came into the scene, but, rather, some millions of years ago during the Jurassic geologic period when dinosaurs roamed the area. Dinosaur tracks are evident in the rocks in western Cimarron County, the farthest point west in the area. They are most obvious in sites found near Kenton, a village just eight miles east of Folsom, New Mexico. Other later fossils from the Permian, Pennsylvanian, Mississippian, and Cambrian layers have been excavated by archeologists from the University of Oklahoma and from West Texas State University in Canyon.

The area is rich in oil and gas, and most finds are from the Morrow epoch in the Pennsylvanian Period, as well as the Permian Period. The Permian basin ranges in depth from 1,000 to 6,500 feet and is evidence of the sediment laid down in shallow seas. The area before the formation

of the Rocky Mountains was a sea that covered land as far as the Pacific. At two later periods, after the upheaval of the Rockies, seas covered the area to the south as far as the present Gulf of Mexico. In addition to the evidence of oil and gas, marine fossils abound in the drilling cores from oil and gas wells, as well as being found in the layers of sandstone and shales. On a ranch in northern Beaver County my rancher friend and I dug down about 18 inches to find a layer of ancient sea shells at least a foot deep. They were so ancient that they crumbled at the touch. The sand dunes which cover an area nearly 150 miles long and 2 to 5 miles in width run from western Texas County to about 120 miles east of Beaver County. These dunes were part of that early sea era and the prevailing south winds have formed the sand into large dunes resembling those near Alamosa, Colorado, or the Oregon Coast.

Early Inhabitants

The oldest evidence of humans in the area dates to the period 10,000 to 6,000 B.C. The main Paleo-Indian artifacts that are found in abundance are at the Nall Site in Cimarron County, a sand dune blowout, the only site that has produced a full range of projectile point types such as Clovis, Folsom, Meserve, Milnesand, Midland, Scottsbluff, and Plainview. Presumably the latter 5 represent the hunting and foraging activities of small migratory bands, while the Clovis and Folsom points are so abundant that one has to assume that the area was widely and



often used for these purposes. These were made of alibate and Ogallala quartzite for the most part.

More recent and permanent habitation is evident by the vertically set stone slabs as wall foundations in house structures that were used from A. D. 1000 to 1500. Since stone slab wall foundations are clearly visible in the short-grass steppe region, these Panhandle Aspect sites are easy to locate. These slab houses were first excavated in 1919-1920 and run throughout the three counties of the area, as well as into the Northern Texas Panhandle. One such site is south of the YL Ranch in eastern Beaver County. Some of these structures have also been found in Colorado Apishapa area, although the architecture lacks the central post focus and some other features of the slab people of the Panhandle Aspect. Other evidence of early culture can

be found in the petroglyphs near Kenton, Oklahoma. Pit houses were uncovered at the Carrizozo Creek Site near the Black Mesa region. Six caves located near the town of Kenton are also known as Basketmaker caves since artifacts from this culture as well as a mummified child were found there. This mummy, as well as projectile points from this site, are on display at the No Man's Land Historical Museum in Goodwell, Oklahoma. Prehistoric irrigation ditches are quite prominent in eastern Beaver County. Distinctive traces of these prehistoric settlers abound along the Beaver River and are considered a part of the culture labeled the Panhandle Aspect. Some sites worth visiting are the Kenton or Basketmaker Caves, the Kenton Bison Kill Site, and The Two Sisters' Site in Texas County near the Stumper, Nash, and McGrath sites.

In addition, north of the Beaver County town of Gate, huge deposits of volcanic ash can be found. A large silica plant operated there for a number of years, making use of that deposit. Other volcanic lava deposits are quite prominent in Cimarron County where it joins Colorado and New Mexico. These are from a relatively recent active volcano (about 10,000 years ago) called Capulin. However, there is much evidence of many older volcanoes in the area.

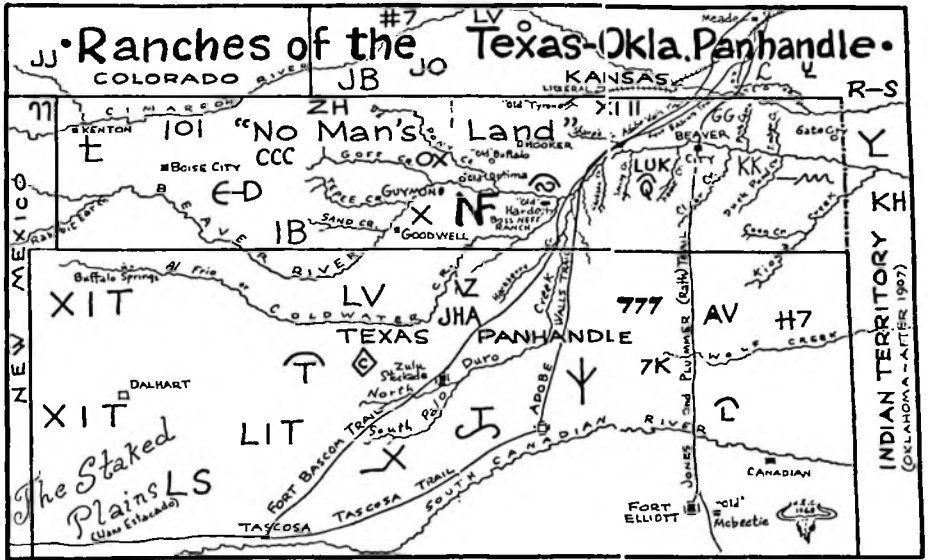
So what does this have to do with Western history? Everything. The geological formation of the land determined the history to a large extent. Because the land was arid in recent times, because it was rich in volcanic soil, because it had been a sea, all affected how the land was viewed, acquired or abandoned, settled, or ruined and resulting in the Dust Bowl in the 1930s.

Spanish Influence

The Historic Stage from A. D. 1541 to the present begins with Coronado's expedition to find the Seven Cities of Cibola. On the journey north Coronado passed a place he called Tiguex near what is now Bernalillo, New Mexico. His party then traveled east to the Pecos River and to a point east of the 100th meridian. From there they went north to near present-day Wichita, Kansas. However, on the return trip the expedition turned southwest and traveled through most of what is today the Panhandle. At a site seven miles south of Beaver City, the prevailing winds during the Dust

Bowl uncovered the skeleton of a man in Spanish armor of the 1500s, as well as the skeleton of a horse in full regalia of the time with Spanish bit and bridle. These artifacts are at the University of Oklahoma Museum and are thought to be of Coronado's group. Other evidence of his journey has been found in the other two counties. We know that he spent the winter of 1541-42 at Tiguex before returning to Mexico.

Although the Panhandle area was under the jurisdiction of two monarchies (Spain and France) and three republics (Mexico, Texas, and the United States), the attempt to settle the area did not occur until after 1850. By the 1500s the Panhandle Aspect villagers had long abandoned the plains. Coronado met with tribes whom he thought to be Apache and who were called Querechos and Teyas. In fact, only the Querechos were Apache. The Teyas were most likely one of the Caddoan-speaking Wichita tribes, long-time residents of the area and of western Oklahoma. Their artifacts have been found throughout both the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles. In addition, in the last five years a site south of the town of Beaver reveals what looks to be an Anasazi site, certainly a Puebloan one, of that same era. The end of the Anasazi period coincided with the coming of Coronado to the area, although they probably did not encounter each other. Of course, the Comanches were on the plains of Texas hundreds of years before the Spaniards, as early as the 900s A. D. The first recorded Comanche was Bigote', who made the mistake of



approaching Coronado and, as a result, was held in chains for a year before being released. Two other Comanche chiefs, who left behind place names, were Nocona and Santana. If you wear cowboy boots or visit Southwest Kansas, you will recognize these names. The name of the county and town (Beaver) in which I live has a Comanche name, Corrupma, meaning Beaver Creek or River. Approximately 100,000 Comanches occupied an area of 1,500 miles, but there is no evidence of permanent locations in No Man's Land, probably because of lack of water and the fact that they were a nomadic tribe.

Relative newcomers to the area were the Apaches, Cheyennes, and Kiowas who also used the area as hunting grounds. Again, none of these tribes had permanent sites and

left behind a wealth of projectile points but little else. In fact, between the end of the Panhandle Aspect at about the 1400s until the coming of cattle trails, few folk inhabited the area. The lack of water was probably the major factor, as well as lack of trees for shelter. In the late 1500s the western end of the area belonged to two different Spanish Land Grants and descendants of those two families still live in the area. Other Spanish settlers from New Mexico settled in the area to raise sheep. In 1863 Juan and Vicenta Baca trailed over a thousand sheep across the trackless prairie and wild foothill region from Las Vegas and San Miguel County, New Mexico Territory, to the Cimarron Valley. Camps were established by the Bacas near the present site of Kenton, Oklahoma, as well as just across the line in New

Mexico Territory. The Bernal family also came to raise sheep. Their nearest trading post was Trinidad, Colorado, 150 miles away. However, the outlaw gang led by a man named Coe raided their sheep until the gang was broken up by U. S. soldiers led by Col. William H. Penrose. These two families continued to ranch until 1870 when the incoming cattle ranchers paid Don Jose Baca \$25,000 to remove his sheep to the mountain country of north central New Mexico Territory. However, the Lujan brothers, Juan, Francisco, Lorenzo, and Alejandro bought sheep from the Bacas and continued to ranch on Corrupa Creek. They were responsible for building one of the first chapels in the area and on their land. The Bernals did leave, realizing that the cattlemen were rapidly extending their range toward the Cimarron Valley. However, these early settlers left behind their legacy in place names of Carrizo, near Kenton, and Carrizozo and Corrupa Creeks, as well as Baca County, Colorado.

Outlaws, Cattle Trails, and Ranchers

It was not until these sheep raids and the Dry Route of the Santa Fe Trail passed the area that the United States paid any attention to the area, and then only because of outlaw attacks on the sheep ranchers and Indian attacks on the freighters and travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. This alternate shorter route of the Trail ran diagonally across Cimarron County from the northeast to the southwest. There was a stretch of seventy miles

in which there was no water. At least three days were needed to cross it from the cutoff to the Cimarron River. The trail can be followed as the ruts are still evident in various places. They are especially evident today on the Corrupa at McNees's Crossing northeast of Rabbit Ear Mountain but inside the Oklahoma line. In 1865 Kit Carson was ordered to establish a fort on Cold Springs or Cedar Buttes to protect travelers on the Santa Fe Trail from raids by the Comanches, Kiowas, and Cheyennes. It was short-lived, however, as Carson abandoned it in September 1865. In June of that year, he had written to headquarters in Santa Fe from what he called Fort Nichols, New Mexico, even though the fort was located five miles east of the New Mexico line in No Man's Land. He was ordered to Santa Fe in the fall to meet with a Congressional delegation who were to investigate Indian matters. The fort was abandoned that fall. The site has been designated as a Historic Landmark and from it one can view the Sierra Grande Mountains fifty miles away; the Rabbit Ear Mountains at the foot of which sits Clayton, New Mexico; and to the north the beautiful valley of the Cimarron River twelve miles away. Fort Nichols was on a prong of South Carrizo Creek, a tributary of the Cimarron River.

English and American settlements

The earliest permanent settlements by English or American settlers were in what is today Cimarron County. In 1863-68 William Coe, the leader of the outlaws,



occupied Stone Mountain, a settlement of half a dozen cabins, and Robbers Roost, both within ideal trailing-distance to the Santa Fe Trail, some 35 miles east of Willowbar Crossing of the Cimarron River and 15 miles south of Fort Nichols. These sites are at the confluence of the Carrizo Creek with the Cimarron River and where the 103rd meridian meets the 37th parallel. As long as Coe and his gang remained in No Man's Land, no one could arrest them. Coe had escaped twice from prison in Ft. Lyons, Colorado. However, he was captured by soldiers, with the aid of a woman rancher, just across the line into Colorado, and was hanged by vigilantes near Pueblo.

In the meantime trails had begun crossing No Man's Land. The Fort

Bascom Trail began in New Mexico Territory and crossed into present-day western Beaver County and crossed Fulton Creek, Palo Duro Creek, and on to Sharp's Creek Crossing of the Beaver River. It continued on to meet up with the Santa Fe Trail, then continued on to Abilene, Kansas, where the cattle were sold. Although little is known about the Arizona Trail, there is evidence that it served as a military route over which supplies and equipment came to a more or less important military post near the old Company M Ranch headquarters south of the present day town of Boise City, then on to Fort Nichols, meeting up with the Santa Fe Trail, and thence eventually on to Arizona. In the 1860s the Rath Trail was established to freight whiskey, kegs of gun

powder, and provisions to buffalo hunters. In 1870 it was considered an unique trail and at the height of its business. However, with the killing off of all the buffalo, its purpose ended and only a few ruts mark its use.

Better known than these trails was the Tascosa Trail that served from 1870-1887 for trail herds from Texas to Dodge City. Tascosa in Oldham County, Texas, served as a re-stocking place for cattle drives from South Texas, as well as for the surrounding area. The trail followed the old Fort Bascom Trail closely, and at Sharp's Creek in Beaver County took a turn northeast to Dodge City. In 1872 C. E. Jones, better known as Ed, hired to a Wisconsin company to hunt buffalo and ship the hides for a princely sum of \$50 a month. He shortly thereafter severed his ties with the Wisconsin firm and went into business with Joe Plummer, settling on the north bank of Wolf Creek in Ochiltree County, Texas, just immediately south of No Man's Land, and just east of where the present Highway 83 crosses Wolf Creek. They built a stockade and a three-room house with a cellar. Here they bought buffalo hides and sold supplies to the hunters and ranchers. However, they decided it was a long way to ship hides to market at Dodge City, Kansas, via either the Tascosa Trail to the west or the Military Road through Camp Supply to the east. In 1874 Mr. Jones decided to try a new route by traveling north, veering slightly northeast. His plan proved to be a good one as he found plenty of water and good camping places

along the route. The freighters would tie three or four wagons together and hitch twelve to twenty horses, tandem, depending on the load, to haul freight from town to town. The trail passed on the west side of Gillalou Lake at the present townsite of Booker, Texas, which is 3 miles south of the Texas line. (Of course, this town did not exist until the coming of the railroad in 1918.) When Jones reached the Beaver River, he turned east for about a mile, probably thinking the crossing would be easier than going directly north across the highest sand hills. Again he was right. His next watering place was at Crooked Creek just across the line in Kansas. He then followed the east bank of Crooked Creek until coming to Mulberry Creek, then the Arkansas River, and finally to Dodge City. From 1872 to 1874 the Santa Fe Railroad carried a half-million buffalo hides out of Dodge City. It has been estimated that from 1871 to 1878 approximately six million hides were shipped from the Dodge City gathering point alone.

The buffalo were gone by 1879, but the Jones & Plummer Trail carried crucial supplies to General Nelson Miles and General Philip Sheridan during their famous 1874 Indian campaign. Materials for building Fort Elliott at Mobeetie, Texas, came over the Trail. Fort Elliott became the south terminus for the Trail, with Dodge City the northern. Ranchers south of the Jones & Plummer station heard of the shorter route and began using it for themselves, bringing their herds from Mobeetie to Dodge City. Herd after



herd, from fifteen hundred to three thousand cattle in each, crossed No Man's Land on their way to market. The ranchers could buy thin yearlings for one dollar a head, two dollars for two-year-olds, and three dollars for three-year-olds. By the time these cattle had grazed for three months on the thick buffalo grass in No Man's Land, they had gained a lot of weight and they made money for the ranchers.

The half-way stopping place on this trail was on the Beaver River in No Man's Land. Early in March 1880 Jim Lane came to the Beaver River. He had crossed it on the Trail but this time he brought his family. He established a station for the accommodation of the freighters and cowboys, and, of course, for his own profit.

The house he built, which served as general store, saloon, hotel, and restaurant, still stands. It was built of prairie sod and the original part is 14

x 36 feet. The rafters were poles cut from the few trees along the Beaver River. Brush served in place of ordinary sheeting and layers of sod took the place of shingles. The walls within were plastered with a mixture of sand and gypsum dug from the hills south of the river. It was heated by a wood stove. The house is a designated historic landmark.

Beside the house, Lane built a corral about 75 feet square with sod walls four feet high and with a roofed shed on one side. This shed furnished shelter for the horses, mules, and cattle during a blizzard. This was the beginning of the town of Beaver City that became the capital of Cimarron Territory, the county seat of the Seventh County, and that serves as the seat of Beaver County today. Incidentally, I now live on land adjacent to where the trail approached the Beaver River and where it followed the present-day Main Street of Beaver. However, the name

Main Street is not the MAIN street of the town today, but instead has cattle pens for the weekly sale, the sale barn, elevators, storage sheds, and a service station, as well as a few houses and an apartment complex. For as the town grew, residents realized that on the few occasions when the Beaver River flooded, it would cover the original Main Street.

In 1879 the Tuttle Trail was started by John F. Tuttle and John Chapman as an alternate route to the Jones & Plummer since it better served those in the far eastern sections of the Texas Panhandle and in eastern No Man's Land. Like the other trails, it began in the Texas Panhandle and crossed into No Man's Land two miles across the border from Indian Territory near Soddy Town (whose name was later changed to Ivanhoe in 1887). Since there was no law or order in No Man's Land nor any government, the behavior of the cowboys was often unruly, and calves straggling along the trail were often picked up by ranchers or cowboys and claimed as their own. The trail drivers were careful to keep watch for a butte called Flat Top as this was their landmark at the eastern edge of No Man's Land.

Another little known trail from Texas in the 1880s was the Liberal, Hardesty, and Hansford wagon trail. When the Rock Island Railroad surveyed land for the new railroad, the little town of Hardesty was included. Ranchers thought the town would grow as a result, but the railroad bypassed them to the north and the original town was moved to a

different site so as to be on a major highway.

Until 1885 cattle were driven to Dodge City over these routes. However, because of tick fever, Kansas passed laws prohibiting Texas cattle from entering Kansas. Therefore, the National Trail, or sometimes called the Texas-Montana Trail, crossed No Man's Land and was designated by the government to turn west at Camp Supply and cross No Man's Land until it passed the Kansas border, then turn north into Colorado, crossing the Arkansas River at Trail City.

Several of the cowboys who helped drive cattle north later returned to the area as ranchers since they had liked the looks of the abundant buffalo graze and lack of settlers in No Man's Land. Cattlemen, thinking where the buffalo had thrived cattle would do well, began taking over the range lands and stocking them with cattle. These early ranchers were the first of the pioneers. They, to some degree, drove out the outlaws and set up their own code of laws and during the 1880s established their own form of government. Great ranches covered the area by 1880, and since no one owned the land the one getting there first claimed it. There was an unwritten law as to which range was theirs. Each rancher had his own definite cattle brand, and some ranchers were better known by their brands than by their actual names. Cowboys were identified by the brand for which they worked. However, brands could not actually be recorded as legal property until Oklahoma statehood in 1907. One of the oldest brands in the

area was that of the Anchor-D, originating about 1878 when an old whaler, E. C. Dudley of Boston chose to represent his former trade and the D for this name. The Anchor-D ran upwards of 30,000 head of cattle during its best years. It extended for 1500 acres from Kansas to Texas across No Man's Land, with the Beaver River its principal source of water. Men made fortunes and lost fortunes long before they could own an acre of the land they claimed for their ranches.

The 101 Ranch was established in 1877, the same year the OX came into existence. Another ranch known as the Box H and still another known as the ZH were founded northwest of present-day Boise City about the same time. The CCC Ranch had its headquarters just near the Texas line and spread over area that is in both Texas and Cimarron Counties today. The Prairie Cattle company was the biggest ranch company in the nation in the 1870s and 1880s, with offices in Trinidad, Colorado. It covered all of Cimarron County and was owned by an English Corporation, as many early ranches in the West were. Seventeen brands were listed in its ownership. As early as 1877 the 101 Ranch had a telephone to Trinidad, Colorado, consisting of a single wire. It also served the OX Ranch. Cattle raising was big business, and consequently, kept pace with the development of the rest of the nation in many respects.

The ranches of the area were, of course, established along the two rivers, with the majority of them being in the areas of the settlements

of Kenton, Hardesty, Gate City, and Beaver City. In addition to those mentioned previously, the best known were the Taintor Ranch established in 1879 by Sam Bullard, and purchased from him in 1881 by Fred Taintor. The ranch with 1,500 head of cattle was on Hackberry Creek in the eastern end of the area. A crude dugout was soon replaced by a two-room house made of rock laid up in gypsum and sand. Later other rooms were added, and the remains of that sturdy house are found today. Mr. Taintor was the first to bring in registered Hereford cattle in 1884. He, like others in the area, had begun shipping his cattle out of Englewood, Kansas, much closer after the railroad built there. Squatters began to settle on land around the Taintor Ranch, and after the blizzard of 1886-87 Mr. Taintor made an agreement with these folk for him to furnish wire to fence off their fields in return for his cattle running the range. This agreement seemed satisfactory. In later years he established the Home State Bank in Englewood and the ranch was sold.

Otto Barby came to Kansas as a young man where he worked for the Pierce-Brown Cattle Company northwest of Ashland, Kansas. In 1883 as a young cowboy he assisted in a two-month roundup of cattle that extended from the Cantonment Indian Agency northwest through No Man's Land to the mouth of Sharp's Creek south of the present town of Liberal, Kansas. This roundup passed through the town of Beaver. He later worked for the Taintor Ranch and spent the night at the John Beebe

ranch thirteen miles east of Beaver. There he met his future wife May Beebe, and in 1886 he bought 160 acres which was a relinquishment. The Barbys lived in a dugout, later moving a two-room house from the little town of Alpine that was across the Beaver River south of the dugout. These two rooms are still a portion of the headquarters of what became one of the largest ranches of the area. In the Dust Bowl years Mr. Barby was able to buy up land from Dust Bowl farmers who could no longer make their mortgage payments, thus acquiring hundreds of acres of land for ranching operations with his children who later joined in the family business and remained there as partners in the operation.

In 1879 William H. Healy established one of the very first ranches in No Man's Land near the town of Alpine and on land later owned by the Barbys. This ranch became known as the KK Ranch. His son Frank Dale Healy remained on the ranch and he and his wife Frank Belle have written their memoirs about that time of hardship in the middle of a new country for them and a new experience.

In July 1879 the Hardesty Brothers moved their herd of cattle from the Arkansas River and located on the Beaver River. This ranch later had a town named Hardesty on their land. It is also near the location of the Hitch-Westmoreland ranches on Coldwater Creek. J. K. Hitch had come to No Man's Land in 1884. The Indians had been controlled, the railroads were pushing west, and the long cattle drives were ending. By

the early 1890s J. K. Hitch was established and well-known in the area. He could no longer rely on an unsettled public domain for grazing purposes. From the mid-1890s to 1910 he purchased select tracts along the Coldwater, as well as land along Hackberry Creek in Texas, and a sizable holding in Seward County, Kansas. Since No Man's Land had become a part of Oklahoma Territory in 1890, a land office was opened in 1891 in Beaver City, and J. K. Hitch received a patent in 1893 after proving up his claim. He paid a fee of fourteen dollars. His brother Charles Hitch had joined him and staked a claim nearby and started his own ranch. In the later 1890s J. K. Hitch ran 5,000 head of cows, and Charles ran 2,000 head on the same range. By 1890 these two men were shipping as many as 10,000 steers and heifers per year to market in Kansas City by way of Old Tyrone, a town that had sprung up not far from Shade's Well, a watering hole for the cattle trails just south of the Kansas line. In 1888 the Rock Island Railroad had built southwestward across Seward County, Kansas, and through Liberal. Tyrone sprang up near the Kansas line and became the new major shipping point for the Neutral Strip or No Man's Land. Loading pens were built on the side of the Neutral Strip because of the cattle quarantine law enacted in Kansas prohibiting any Texas cattle from being shipped out of Kansas. Tick fever had been carried by Texas longhorns, and the Hitch land crossed over into Texas.

Henry Charles Hitch was the son

of J. K. Hitch and was born in 1884. He was a great admirer of both his father and his grandfather Henry Westmoreland. He worked as a cowboy and later managed the ranch in Seward County. He finished high school at Liberal, Kansas, while working on the ranch. He later attended business college in Winfield, Kansas. However, he considered his home to be on the Coldwater Creek. When he married Christine Walker, a school teacher, the region was still young and there was much opportunity for an enterprising young man. This was the end of an era and a new one was just beginning. It was the end of the open range, the coming of the railroad, and there were automobiles on the streets of the new town of Guymon. Henry C. Hitch's son "Ladd" later carried on the family business, expanding into feed yards, hog farms, and many other Hitch Enterprises that carry the family name. He became a long-time member and supporter of the No Man's Land Historical Society in order to preserve the unique history of the area. He held the position of President of that Society when he died recently.

Boss Neff was one of the best-known ranchers in No Man's Land and a neighbor of the Hitches. He had worked as a cowboy, trail driver, and freight driver on the Jones & Plummer Trail. In March 1888 he purchased his first herd of cattle consisting of 83 head for approximately \$900. He put the brand NF on them. In 1890 he purchased a two-room sod house, a sod barn big enough for six horses, and forty tons

of hay for \$100. In 1893 he married the daughter of an early-day family, Ida Eubank, in Old Hardesty. Part of his ranch is within site of the old Texas-Montana Trail. He was a man of many interests: cattle, farming, banking, businessman, clerking sales, and writing. He was one of the founders of the No Man's Land Historical Society and recorded much of the early history of the area.

The YL Ranch in eastern Beaver County remains today as one of the landmark ranches of the area. The original ranch ran as far east as Camp Supply, and when Bob Maple bought part of the ranch, he retained the brand name. Bob Maple had come to Beaver County with his grandfather and worked as a cowboy on the T6 Ranch before he married Pearl Judy, daughter of an early day rancher. After his untimely death at the hands of his son-in-law, his widow carried on with the management of the ranch. Upon her death, her grandson Mark Mayo inherited the ranch and made it one of the most successful in the area. Mark was a fine Western artist and did the painting for the end sheets for the book Memoirs of Fred Tracy, the original of which hangs in the Jones & Plummer Trail Museum in Beaver City.

Cimarron Territory

During the early days of cattle trails and establishment of ranching, no formal laws or government existed in No Man's Land. This gave rise to cattle rustling, staking of land without any legal authority, and the coming of those from Kansas and

Texas who were running from the law. Since the early ranches had been established around the towns of Beaver City, Gate City, Hardesty, and Kenton, several other towns or villages had sprung up but no formal organization of government had been made. The first post office in No Man's Land was a Star Route established from Dodge City, Kansas, to Tascosa, Texas. The post office for the area was located at Crawford's Ranch on Sharp's Creek with Bartholomew Crawford as postmaster. Since it was not legally a part of the United States, the post office was listed as being in Texas so was called Tarbox, Texas, even though its physical presence was in No Man's Land. In 1881 another Star Route ran from Camp Supply, Indian Territory, to Springer, New Mexico. It covered all of No Man's Land with a very few stops on the way. In fact, the behavior of the carrier for loafing at various ranches for days on end led to quite a scandal and probably contributed to the defeat of James G. Blaine for President in 1884 since he was charged with profiting from this route.

On April 8, 1883, the first post office for Beaver City was established on the north side of the river. However, in 1884 Jim Lane became postmaster and moved the post office to his store on the south side. A post office was established at Gate City on April 15, 1886, and both the postmarks for Gate City and Beaver City carried N.S.I.T for Neutral Strip of Indian Territory. However, this was a misnomer since the Strip had never been part of Indian Territory. From

establishment of that first post office until 1908 there were 59 post offices established in what later became Beaver County; 47 were established in the area that is now Texas County; and 37 were established in Cimarron County, making a total of 143 in No Man's Land. Today only six remain in Beaver County; nine remain in Texas County; and only four in Cimarron County.

The area was organized illegally in 1886 in an attempt to bring some law and order to No Man's Land and to curb the action of a Vigilante Committee who had taken into their own hands the trial and punishment of men whom they saw as not doing as they thought they should. After the Committee had held a number of hangings, a group of fifty men decided to try to curtail their actions and they, consequently, met twice during the year to form a claims board and set up elections in the respective areas. In March 1887 these elected officials met to form a legislative council. In November 1887 nine councilors and fourteen delegates to the Territorial Council were elected. Dr. Owen G. Chase was elected as Territorial Delegate to go to Washington during the Congressional session to petition for recognition and eventually for statehood. Another group dissatisfied with the elections had met at the new town of Rothwell in July 1887 and selected John Dale as their delegate. Neither man was able to achieve recognition of the territory. This attempt at government continued until May 2, 1890, when Congress tacked Cimarron Territory onto Oklahoma Territory. In the

meantime, the Presbyterians in Beaver built their small frame church that still stands and was the first church in what became Oklahoma Territory, creating some semblance of civilization out of all the chaos of the time.

Colorful Characters of No Man's Land and Cimarron Territory

Space does not allow for all the interesting and colorful inhabitants of the region. However, some must be mentioned for they brought color and action to this sparsely inhabited area. First, Jim Herron was the elected Sheriff of Cimarron Territory. He had left home at the age of 14 to ride the Jones & Plummer Trail. He then worked on the YL Ranch near Camp Supply, for the Healy Brothers, and eventually settled near Benton east of Beaver City. There he married Alice Groves, the daughter of a hotel owner. He and Alice bought the Beaver City Hotel. His wife died in 1892. In 1894 he was sentenced to be hanged in Meade, Kansas, probably as a result of his quarrel with the Cattle Growers Association. In 1893 after his term as Sheriff had expired, he and Jack Rhodes had been financed by a livestock commission to buy 900 big steers. Herron made a deal with a contractor in South Dakota to buy the steers to feed people on an Indian reservation. Herron and Rhodes openly rounded up the cattle and shipped them from Meade, Kansas. Whether they intentionally included some 100 cattle that were not theirs is not known, but they were charged, tried, and sentenced to be hanged in Meade. They were

remanded to the Sheriff of that town who turned them over to a deputy. The deputy managed to let them escape after he had wounded Rhodes who died as a result. Herron escaped to Arizona where for 50 years he ranched and ran a butcher shop on both sides of the border with Mexico. He returned to Beaver later and tried unsuccessfully to get the charges dropped. Healy was sheriff of Beaver County by that time, but he made no attempt to arrest Jim. Herron did return again some years later and wrote his memoirs, with the help of a local attorney. However, they were not published until 1969 when Denver author Harry E. Chrisman found, by accident, the manuscript and turned it into the book Fifty Years on the Owl Hoot Trail. After the flood of 1965 in Colorado, electrical repairmen from all over the country were sent to Denver to fix large appliances damaged by the flood. Mrs. Chrisman invited the wife of one of the repairman into their Lakewood house for coffee while he worked on their appliances in their basement. In visiting with her, the young woman revealed that her grandfather had come from very near the place Mr. and Mrs. Chrisman had been newspaper reporters, Liberal, Kansas, and that she had typed a manuscript for him about his life in No Man's Land! Harry had searched for a copy of that manuscript for nearly ten years!

One of the important settlers of Beaver County, Oklahoma Territory, was Fred C. Tracy. As a young man he traveled with his father from Rochester, Illinois, to Englewood,

Kansas. There he and his father set up a general store. From there they moved to the original town of Gate City and set up a store there. His father in 1891 then moved to the new town of Beaver City to set up a general store, hardware, and post office. He was joined later that year by Fred C. Tracy. The Tracy family played an important part in the development of Beaver City. Fred was active in politics both locally and on the state level, serving as a member of the State Constitutional Convention. He served on six committees at the convention, one of which was the all-important Boundaries Committee that determined county boundaries. Since it was possible to do so as the new state certified various professionals to practice, Tracy applied to be certified as both a lawyer and as a pharmacist since his store sold patent medicine and he was serving in a legal capacity at the convention. Never mind that he had not studied law or pharmacy! He went on to become the County Attorney for Beaver County, as well as serving in various other offices.

One of the most colorful, if not the most honest, characters who helped begin Beaver City was George Scranage. This fellow sold lots in town sites for land he did not own. He and his fellow promoters traded two lots where Lane had his store and post office in return for his squatters rights. They then platted the town site of 640 acres for Beaver City, completing the survey on April 8, 1886. They then returned to Wichita where they advertised widely for the sale of these ideal lots. The

town was planned to spread out along the river bottom, and the group platted two streets 100 feet wide for which they planned the business section. They then went to Washington to obtain title for their town, only to find that the Government General Land Office had no jurisdiction in No Man's Land to grant such titles. Congress had never placed this area under any jurisdiction since it did not belong to the United States, and, therefore, no crime, even murder, could be prosecuted by the courts. However, this did not deter Scranage who continued to sell lots. He had been denounced in Congress for swindling many residents of Indiana from whence he came for collecting large fees for re-locating them on lots in No Man's Land which he did not own and for which they could not obtain a title. Scranage claimed squatter's rights as his homestead to 160 acres adjoining Beaver, 80 acres being a part of the platted town site. He also had two or more town sites located west of Beaver City where he pretended to convey titles to lots. In fact, the land which I now legally own was a part of one of his schemes, and until I had a title search and surveys made, it had been illegally sold all these 112 years to various upstanding and important city citizens. Furthermore, I was most surprised to find when I returned to Beaver after a 25-year absence that a housing development section of the town was now called the "Scranage Addition"! The attempt at organization of Cimarron Territory was, in fact, an effort to control such unscrupulous folk as Scranage. Although

the area did not fit with the rest of Oklahoma Territory, the tacking of it onto the larger area by Congress brought some advantages. The first was that law and order was established, and then title to the town site could be obtained. However, first, the elected officials must prove there were 200 citizens living here. In order to do that, a census was taken on July 1, 1892, when the Normal Institute for school teachers in the entire area was being held in town. The census, therefore, showed 210 folk, when, in reality, there were only 184 residents. Even though this census was illegal, the inspector general ruled that the school teachers had not informed the census takers that they were not legal residents of the town and therefore the census would stand. Never mind that the census takers were likely local folk who knew most people who lived in Beaver City at the time! Lots were then legally sold at the sums of \$3.50 to \$5.00 for business lots and 50 cents to \$1.25 for residence lots. Beaver City, therefore, became a legal town and the county seat of the Seventh County, Oklahoma Territory.

Pumpkin Rollers

Although a number of settlers came to the area in the 1880s and 90s to farm the land, not many stayed since there was such a lack of rainfall, with a scarcity of neighbors, fences, schools, and churches. The coming of the Rock Island Railroad as far west as Liberal, Kansas, in 1888 helped encourage settlers to move with it. It also led to the establishment of Beer City, a den of

iniquity just south of the new town of Liberal and across the line into No Man's Land. Unlike other towns in the Neutral Strip, it was not planned or platted but just grew. However, when the area was added to Oklahoma Territory, Beer City was short-lived since it could not meet the standards of the new government. Its main inhabitants were gamblers, dance hall girls, bootleggers, and people running from the law.

By 1902 and 1903 settlers came in a tide so that within three years practically every acre of tillable land was claimed by this new group. Farmers from Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Illinois came to claim this land. Mennonites from Germany and Russia, came, too, for religious freedom. Farming methods and seed quality had improved so that these farmers did not starve out as their predecessors had once. Their major crop was broomcorn at first, followed later in the 1920s by wheat. Other railroads came through the Panhandle between 1910 and 1926 to carry crops to market, and new towns sprang up or old ones were moved to the railheads. These pumpkin rollers prospered in dry land farming until the years of their using the mold-board plow to break out the dry soil made it ready for the drought and prevailing winds of the 1930s.

Today farming and ranching are still the major industries, but the discovery of oil and natural gas made it economically possible for people to survive by providing jobs in the petroleum industry or by royalty checks to see them through the drought and hard times.

This story reflects the ingenuity of the hardy people who came to the area for a new beginning, along with those who came for less worthy purposes. This quality of endurance, ingenuity, and inventiveness helped them survive drought, the Dust Bowl, and hard times, as well as helping them build a good life in the desert prairie.

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Over the Corral Rail

Ida Ubert Uchill
795 S. Jersey St
Denver, CO 80224-1414
(303) 355-9829

Dear Editor, The Roundup

More than forty years ago I was a member of the "Westerners." The speech I delivered at an annual meeting is in the 1957 Brand Book.

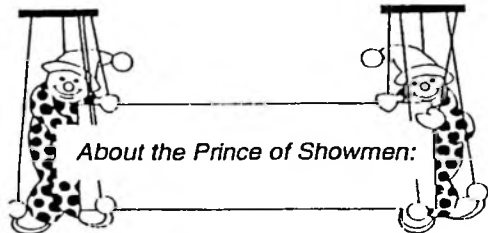
Most recently I self-published, Howdy, Sucker? What P.T. Barnum did in Colorado. I am peddling the book mostly to libraries as I have only 175 copies left, but I do believe that your membership should have an opportunity to acquire it. I enjoyed my years as a member, albeit as an associate. Some of your members may remember me.

In November 2000, the University Press of Colorado published the third edition of my book Alan Swallow published in 1957, Pioneers, Peddlers and Tsadikim. It's available in bookstores and through me. I will appreciate any mention you care to make about it in the Round-up. I may investigate talking to the posse some time.

Yours very truly,

Ida Uchill

Please see next page for additional information.....



In the four trips Barnum made to Colorado he invested in Greeley property, opened a sanitarium in Denver, bought a horse ranch in Douglas County, invested in a cattle ranch on the Huerfano River, and planted a petrification of a giant (The Solid Muldoon) near Buelain.

While he was making speeches on the evils of alcohol, at his secret beer garden on the Platte River, the two leading tippy madams engaged in a sensational duel.

At the same time he established his daughter in Colorado to get her away from the scandal of her divorce-- which unexpectedly resulted in her brother-in-law saving the University of Denver.

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In Colorado

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Westerners Bookshelf



Mining Frontiers Of The Far West 1848-1880, by Rodman Wilson Paul, A Revised Expanded Edition by Elliott West. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 288 pages, 30 half tones, 7 maps, notes, note on statistics, Essay on Bibliography, index. Paperback: \$21.95.

While books have been written on the various mining districts almost from their beginnings, it was Rodman W. Paul who recognized these various districts represented different frontiers as opposed to the popular concept of the frontier being a steady movement from the settled east to the undeveloped west. He chose to limit his study to the period of 1848-1880 when mining communities and booms were islands in a vast sea of wilderness.

As to be expected, the first mining frontier identified was the California gold rush covering the period of 1848-1858. This excitement was the "first to really ignite the public to the possibility of quick riches, spreading not only to the settled East coast but to Mexico, South and Central America and to the Pacific Rim." The resulting commerce and industry forever changed California.

From the period of 1858 to 1868, the excess of miners and energy spread North, South, and East from California making discoveries throughout the Far West. Because of the distances and lack of adequate transportation these finds amounted to not much more than local excitement.

The next significant mining frontier was the Comstock Lode find at what was to become Virginia City, Nevada covering the period of 1859 to 1880. The Comstock rush was identified by one source as the "Child of California." This is quite true as California staffed, supplied, and ultimately bled it. Nevertheless, the two rushes developed contrasts starting with the fact Nevada was new while California was relatively old further complicated with differences in geology and weather.

Professor Paul considers Colorado to be a frontier unto itself, covering the period of 1859 to 1880. At about the same time as California learned of the Comstock, the Missouri frontier heard of rumors of gold in what would become Colorado. This rush to Colorado is credited to be second only to California in the number of participants. For the most part the East and Midwest supplied the necessary men, materials, and money. Colorado represents a series of booms involving both gold and silver.

Northwest and Southwest from 1860-1880, initially rich, but short-lived, gold placers drew prospectors and miners into the Northwest. As with the various finds in the Southwest, isolation curtailed any significant growth.

When success came it was because of the arrival of railroads. The ultimate booms for the most part involved silver, copper, and lead.

Professor Paul concludes his discussion of the various mining frontiers with the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota. In 1874 General Custer confirmed the rumors of gold in this region. While this find was outside the geographical area of previous booms, it was attended by all the usual features of previous booms and was thus the final mining frontier. While just north of Denver, California interests lead by the Homestake syndicate insisted on California-developed mining techniques and equipment. This was an unusual turn of events considering the regions proximity to Denver and the Midwest.

Because mining settlements were islands in the wilderness there was no viable connection to traditional forms of government. To solve this problem it became the practice to formally identify and name districts governed by their

**Professor Paul considers
Colorado a frontier unto
itself...**

own specific rules as to claim identification, size and other rules of governance. The resulting obvious variety led to the Congressional Mining Act of 1872. Time had shown that actions appropriate to pioneer frontier times were no longer acceptable in later years, although disputes based on old

district rules plagued the courts to modern times.

The final chapters of this reprint by Elliott West addressed the now popular attention given to the social consequences of the development of mining. Topics covered include the disastrous effects on the Native Americans, life in mining camps, the need for community in the face of racial and ethnic tensions, and the transition of the mining industry to being the same as any other industrial enterprise.

While very readable and pertinent, the reviewer believes West's work should be a volume standing on its own merits not piggy-backed on the pioneering work of Rodman W. Paul which sorts out and arranges the history of mining, the activity and technology.

For the student of mining history Paul's work is the Genesis from which further study can be made of equipment, technique, personalities, specific locales, and the attendant social consequences in limitless variety depending on one's interests.

--Bob Stull, P.M.



When Montana and I Were Young, by Margaret Bell. With introduction by Editor Mary Clearman Blew. Afterword by Lee Rostad. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London, 2002. 250 pages. Cloth, \$24.95.

Margaret Olsen Bell (1888-1982) with a minimum of formal education, but a graduate 'Magna Cum Laude' of the school of hard knocks, had an all-consuming desire to tell her story. Words failed her at her darkest hours. How, she wondered, could she speak of the unspeakable, a stepfather and his brother who used her any hour, day and night.

The bruises were easy, her body was covered with signs of the whippings, anyone could see how clothes to shield her from the elements were needed, and certainly her body required food. There were opportunities but she never could bring herself to speak of the act that would have saved her.

She scribbled her pain on scraps of paper and tossed them in a trunk. Late in life she attempted to write and publish her story. Her efforts rested in a box in a garage for years, eventually arriving at Mary Clearman Blew's home. Margaret's writing needed assistance, but her voice needed to be retained and Mary Clearman Blew was the right person to preserve that quality.

She scribbled her pain
on scraps of paper and
tossed them in a trunk

Throughout the book I found myself saying run, run and finally she ran all the way from Canada to Montana and the safety of her grandmother's home. After her mother died, her stepfather refused contact with her grandmother and uncle, who had given her loving care.

Margaret eventually became numb to the unbelievable beatings, sexual abuse, and drudgery. Her salvation was the expertise she developed with horses.

This is a powerful account of child abuse by the very people children trust. It is also a story of survival and is clearly Margaret Bell's life, researched for authenticity and edited for clarity.

Margaret Bell died at the age of ninety-four without seeing her book in print.

I highly recommend it as a worthwhile read.

--LaVonne Perkins, P.M.

America's National Scenic Trails, by Kathleen Ann Cordes. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 306 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. Paper: \$19.95.

This is a guidebook for eight scenic trails. With maps for points of interest and abundant background on what one is seeing, it is an interesting effort. One could, if hardy with plenty of time, use this alone to hike the Appalachian Trail and perhaps some others.

The AT is old, well trod, and well established. However some of the trails described simply don't exist, at least not wholly. The Continental Divide Trail is one. Parts of the Continental Divide in Colorado have a marked and maintained trail. Most of the "ridgepole of the continent" does not, whether in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, or Montana.

**Eight trails are described
and mapped with points
of interest**

Eight trails are described and mapped with points of interest. Florida, the north-eastern United States, the upper Midwest, the Pacific Crest, Natchez Trace, and the Potomac River are included. Just how much of these trails are contiguous and marked is open to debate, and no doubt changes yearly.

In any case, this book would be a good one to check out of the library as a starting point to research a trip on one of these National Scenic Trails. The appendices give much good information on the overseeing agencies, rights of way, etc. The point-of-interest descriptions are interesting and informative.

--Stan Moore P.M.



Standing in the Gap, Army Outposts, Picket Stations, and the Pacification of the Texas Frontier 1866-1886, by Loyd M. Uglow. Texas Christian University Press, 2001. 234 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Hardcover.

The United States Army either abandoned or was pushed out of its Texas forts at the onset of the Civil War. The region fell first to Confederate rule, then to lawlessness, Indian depredations and border raids. Many of the forts fell into disrepair.

In 1865, the US Government sent troops back into Texas. Aside from re-establishing Federal sovereignty, it had other purposes. First was to pacify the Indians, then to discourage cross border raiding, check French adventuring in the region, safeguard the telegraph lines, and make safe the mails and stage coach travel.

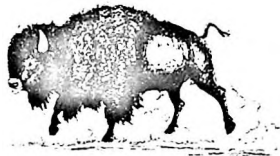
This book gives the history of every fort, sub-fort, and picket station. The differences among these were the size of their garrison and the duration of the Army's occupancy. Most prewar forts were reopened but some were abandoned and others had new forts built nearby in more advantageous locations.

All sorts of actions are portrayed, from squad patrols to regimental campaigns. This book sorts out and describes the roles of the army in Texas during the period: law enforcement, Indian pacification, border guarding, vote judging, telegraph installation and maintenance, road building, protecting Indians from settlers. It is interesting to run across names from the Civil War, including Grierson of raiding fame, Wesley Merritt, and others. Buffalo soldiers and Indian scouts figure prominently in many of the stories.

The book well fills a niche in the history of the Indian Wars and the settlement of the Southwest.

This book sorts out...the
roles of the Army in
Texas..

--Stan Moore P.M.



Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law, David E. Wilkins and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 2001. 326 pages. Index; bibliography; endnotes; dust jacket. Cloth: \$39.95.

This book, by Professors Wilkins and Lomawaima, wades into the very muddy waters of "American Indian" constitutional law (and, since the United States Constitution refers to Indians, rather than employing a more politically-correct usage, that is the terminology used by practitioners). However, the volume rather than discussing such technical issues as sovereignty, reservation reserved rights, and treaty-making (and breaking) authority in a balanced manner, is more a polemic (or lengthy brief) advocating the expansionist view of Indian rights.

It is quite clear, as Melissa Meyer recently wrote in a review of another book, that David Wilkins is "clearly an advocate for native rights." And, not mentioned in the biographical note, Mr. Wilkins apparently is a member of the Lumbee tribe. This, ironically, is the tribe sometimes (probably erroneously) named as the ultimate refuge of the lost colonists of Roanoke. His membership in a group, which probably benefits from his arguments, also might affect his independent judgment. Apparently neither author is formally trained in the law.

As an example of the unbalanced treatment in the book, the authors easily dismiss the supposed inconsistency of a recent United States Supreme Court case resolving rights over methane gas (and which went against the Southern Ute Tribe). However, the other side could justifiably believe that the result merely involved the simple application of recognized mineral rights in a uniform and principled manner (ignoring the ethnicity of claimants). Yet the authors would have every debatable legal issue resolved the way they wish. The role of the courts in preventing injustice and applying equity to all citizens seems to be ignored.

In addition, the authors, while complaining about legal fictions with which they do not agree, simply do not recognize that there are many legal fictions involving the unfair treatment of the American Indians. For example, the legal fiction of the independent nature of Indian tribes as nations within a nation (which the authors celebrate) was used to justify the right of conquest and taking of lands. It was not right, but neither were the various French-German seizures of the Rhineland areas right. On the other hand, the recent use of gambling by tribes to redistribute American wealth seems, if not moral, at least a well-deserved comeuppance for non-Indians, Indian law for that comeuppance which uses American.

The book would only interest legal practitioners in this very controversial area. If one wants to get the thrust of this book without reading the whole thing, the final chapter is a good summary of the arguments.

--John Hutchins, P. M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
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September - October 2002



The Civil War according to me
A collection of trivia, stories and ironies
by Everett Brailey, C.M.
(presented January 23, 2002)

The Civil War according to me

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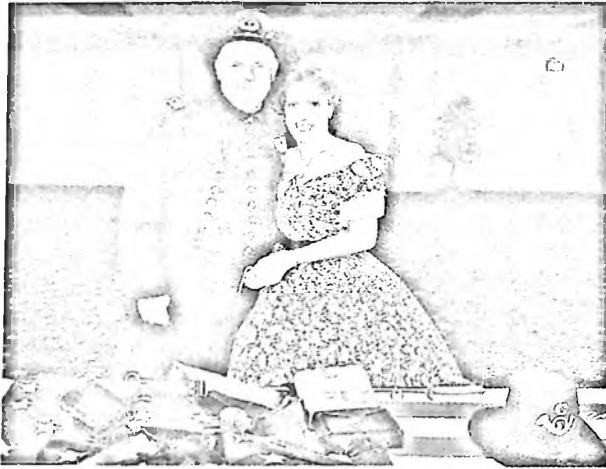
The American Civil War involved over 10,000 battles, skirmishes, and engagements, according to the television documentary *The Civil War* by film maker Ken Burns. Here are a few statistics.

The average height of a civil war soldier was approximately five foot seven inches tall, depending upon your sources. You can see why President Abraham Lincoln was considered a 'giant' at his height of six feet four inches. That same average soldier weighed approximately one hundred and sixty pounds, depending upon your sources, and he averaged 25 years of age. At the beginning of the war, most of the soldiers were from rural, small towns and farms. By the end of the war, most were from the large cities. That same fact reflected a major change in the country as a whole. The 1860 census was the last time our United States census showed a majority rural population. Today, it's something like 2% of the U S population is considered to be rural.

October 17, 1859, John Brown began his raid at Harper's Ferry. Among the five captives of Brown was the great grand nephew of George Washington, Lewis Washington. The U.S. troops were sent to put down the raid were led by a Colonel on leave from a western cavalry post. Colonel

Robert E. Lee was the son of revolutionary war hero Lighthorse Harry Lee. Lee's second in command that day was also on leave from a western cavalry post, and later became widely known for his Confederate cavalry exploits, James Ewell Brown Stuart, better known as JEB Stuart. The American Civil War began with the bombardment of Ft. Sumter at Charleston, South Carolina. The bombardment began at 4 A.M. on April 12, 1861. Thirty-four hours, and over 3,000 shells later, Ft. Sumter's commanding officer, Major Robert Anderson, surrendered the fort. Major Anderson was a young Lt. in 1832 when he accepted the enlistment of a young A. Lincoln. Yes the same A. Lincoln who was to become his Commander-in-Chief.

Major Anderson had served as an instructor of artillery at West Point. One of his best students was Pierre G. T. Beauregard. Beauregard served as the commander of the Confederate forces opposing Major Anderson at Ft. Sumter. The first shot fired was done so by a civilian, Edmund Ruffin, of Virginia, and the first Union shot fired in return was by an officer named Abner Doubleday, long time believed as the inventor of baseball. The real irony was that through all the 34 hours of bombardment, no one was killed, prompting the statement from Burns *The Civil War*, "It was a bloodless



Everett and Gena Brailey presented their paper in costume and displayed many Civil War artifacts

beginning of the bloodiest war in American history." On Sunday, April 14, Major Anderson hauled down his flag and surrendered the fort. When firing a Union canon salute as the flag was being taken down, one of the canons fired prematurely, killing one gunner and mortally wounding another. On April 14, 1865, four years to the day of the surrender, then Major General Robert Anderson returned to Ft. Sumter. Anderson raised the same flag over Ft. Sumter that he had taken down four years earlier.

We now move to the story of Wilmer McLean. Wilmer owned a pleasant little farm along the banks of Virginia's Bull Run River. On July 18, 1861 during preliminary skirmishes to the First Battle of Bull Run (known as Manassas Junction by the Confederates), Wilmer was entertaining some of the Confederate soldiers when a Union canon ball came down the chimney of

the kitchen and exploded in a kettle of stew, spreading stew all over the kitchen. During the battle, troops moved all over his farm. Like many others caught in this type of a position, Wilmer became upset over the effects of war on his home. He decided to move his family west, moving to a small, farming community in western Virginia. On Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865, the war came to Wilmer. Confederate General Robert E Lee and Union General U S Grant and their staffs met in Wilmer's home to discuss the surrender of Lee's army and the 'end' of the war. According to Burn's *The Civil War*, Wilmer was quoted as saying: "War began in my front yard, and ended in my front parlor."

There is the story of Manning M. Kimmel. Kimmel was in the 2nd U. S. Cavalry when the war started. Shortly after the First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas Junction, Virginia),

Kimmel went south and became an assistant to Gen. Earl Van Dorn. You may not recognize Manning, but he had a son, Husband. Do you recognize the Husband Kimmel? Husband was also a military officer, except in the US Navy. Admiral Husband E. Kimmel was the commander at the U.S. Navy base at Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. And there was James Butler, a captain of scouts for General Samuel Curtis, commander of US forces at Pea Ridge (Elkhorn's Tavern according to Confederate sources) in Arkansas. James Butler had long hair and a formidable mustache. He and 8 other scouts dressed as confederates, and moved freely within the Southern lines to gain valuable information. James Butler quit the war soon after the engagement and moved west. We don't remember him as James Butler, but I'm sure you would recognize his nickname, 'Wild Bill'. James Butler was his real first and middle name. We know him as 'Wild Bill' Hickok. He was a Louisiana school teacher prior to the war. Because he was a West Point graduate, he was given the rank of Brig. General, and appointed commander of Central and Eastern Kentucky for the US Army on Oct. 8, 1861. He said the war was not going to be a 90 day war as many people believed, and that it would require at least 200,000 men. (At war's end, over two and one half million men served the Union blue.) As commander, he requested lots of reinforcements and supplies, requested to the point that he was considered crazy. He was relieved of command for that reason on Nov. 4, 1861. In December of that month, he even considered suicide. Shortly he was brought back to command, rising to

serve as a Division Commander for U. S. Grant in the West, and eventually to serve as Commander of all Armies in the West. Yet in late 1861, William Tecumseh Sherman was considered crazy. Speaking of U.S. Grant, everyone knows his name was Ulysses Simpson Grant. Yet that was not his actual name. He was Hiram Ulysses Grant, but a mistake was made when he entered West Point, where he was entered as Ulysses Simpson. Rather than going through the hassle of correcting everything, Grant continued to go by Ulysses Simpson. Illinois Governor Richard Yates appointed 'Hiram' Colonel of Volunteers in June, 1861. He quickly rose to the rank of Brig. General of Volunteers and Ulysses Simpson was on his way to military fame.

But the letters U. S. served in another way. At Ft. Donelson the Confederate commander was Gen. Simon B. Buckner, a West Point classmate of Grant's. When Gen. Buckner asked for terms of the surrender of Ft Donelson, Grant replied the terms of surrender as unconditional, and quickly U S Grant became known as "Unconditional Surrender" Grant..

Oddly, Gen. Buckner, foe at Ft. Donelson, served as a pallbearer at Grant's funeral. And Buckner was not the only Confederate General to serve as pallbearer. Gen. Joseph Johnston, also a Confederate General, served as a Grant pallbearer.

And speaking of General Johnston, he was also a pallbearer at General William Tecumseh Sherman's

funeral. Johnston surrendered his army to Sherman in the Carolinas after Appomattox. During the Sherman's funeral, Johnston stood, hatless, in a rain. People encouraged Johnston to put on his hat but Johnston replied, "If Sherman was here instead of me, he would not put his hat on." Johnston caught a cold, then pneumonia, and died shortly thereafter on March 21, 1891. Union General Lew Wallace had fought at Ft. Donelson, at Shiloh, and in the Shenandoah Valley. He served on the military court that tried the 'Lincoln Conspirators' and after the war he was appointed Territorial Governor of the New Mexico Territory following the Lincoln County wars of Billy the Kid Fame. Yet Wallace was best known not for his Civil War exploits, but as a author. He wrote novels, including "The Fair God" and "The Prince of India", and a book about the middle east during the time of Jesus, called "Ben Hur".

There was a Confederate deserter, who joined the Union army under the name of John Rowlands, only to desert again. He dropped out of sight for a while only to turn up again exploring Africa. He reportedly uttered the famous question, "Dr. Livingston, I presume." His real name... Henry M. Stanley.

Exactly one full year following Ft. Sumter, April 12, 1862, a daring raid on the railroad connecting Big Shanty, GA (near Atlanta) with Chattanooga, TN. was attempted. It was led by a civilian named James Andrews. Andrews raiders stole a Western & Atlantic Railroad train at Big Shanty,

Georgia, near Atlanta. The train was being pulled by an engine called the "General". The raiders then headed north towards Chattanooga Tennessee, intending to destroy track and bridges along the way. The conductor of the train, William A. Fuller, was not on board when the train was hijacked. Fuller mounted another locomotive in the train yards at Big Shanty. Fuller and the "Texas" and went off in hot pursuit. So quickly, in fact, that Fuller did not have time to turn the "Texas" around. The "Texas", going backwards, followed the "General", as the "Texas" crew countered every move the Union men attempted, thus saving the route from destruction. The "General" finally ran out of fuel in northern Georgia and all the raiders abandoned the train, only to be captured and imprisoned. Later, eight of the raiders were hung as spies in Atlanta, including Andrews. Eight others escaped successfully, and six others were released in prisoner Exchanges in March, 1863. The raid ended in failure, but the survivors were rewarded with a new medal. The men of the failed Andrews raid in 1862were the first recipients of the Medal of Honor. Then there was the spinster, from Concord Mass. She was a sheltered woman who had witnessed very little death and suffering. She volunteered to assist the army during the Battle of Fredericksburg. On her first day there she watched a soldier die, and comforted another with a bullet wound through his lungs. Within weeks she became ill, diagnosis with typhoid pneumonia, and was sent home to die. But she lived and later wrote a book about her experiences called 'Hospital Sketches'. She became better

known for some other volumes she wrote, like "Little Men" and "Little Women". Her name was Louisa May Alcott.

Now there was 'Fighting Joe'. He commanded a wing of Grant's army at Chattanooga Term. during the "Battle Above the Clouds". But Fighting Joe was responsible for a slang term which started while Joe was the commander of the Army of the Potomac in Virginia. Because the army spent so much time in camp, Joe decided to allow many civilian followers to camp along side his military encampments. So many followers that these "ladies" were given a special name after Fighting Joe. Fighting Joe was General Joseph Hooker.

Remember the John Wayne movie "The Horse Soldiers"? The raid of Colonel Marlow into Mississippi and Louisiana to disrupt communications of the Confederate army at Vicksburg? Well that concept was more than just a movie idea. It actually happened. Union Colonel Benjamin Grierson actually did lead such a raid from April 17 to May 2, 1863. The raid prevented the Confederates from sending reinforcements to Vicksburg, which under siege during that time. Vicksburg, surrendered on July 4, 1863. After the surrender, the town of Vicksburg would not celebrate the 4th of July for 81 years (1944).

Colonel Arthur received the Medal of Honor for bravery at the Battle of Missionary Ridge at Chattanooga, TN. He became Lt. General in the regular army and later served in the Philippines and in Japan at the turn of

the 20th century. Arthur's son, also a Medal of Honor winner, returned to the Philippines some years later. And that return became quite famous when, in 1944, Colonel Arthur Macarthur's son, Douglas, Commander of all World War II U S forces in the Pacific made good his earlier pledge, "I shall return."

Friday, April 22, 1864, by Act of Congress, the motto "In God We Trust" was put on U S coins. During 1864, Confederate General Jubal Early threatened the defenses of Washington D C. On July 11, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln visited the front lines of the defenses. While Lincoln was standing on the defense walls, a sniper shot rang out and a young man near Lincoln fell wounded. A young captain grabbed the President and through him to the ground yelling: "Get down you damn fool, or you'll be killed." Lincoln picked himself up off the ground and dusted himself off. He turned to the captain and said: "Well, Captain. I see you have already learned how to address a civilian." The young captain made a decision to act that day. He later became known for decisions. You see, he became the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Captain Todd Carter ran off to join the Confederate army and for three years he did not return home. On November 30, 1864, Todd and his confederate comrades closed in on Todd's hometown of Franklin, Tenn. A large battle broke out. The next morning, Franklin native Captain Todd Carter's family found him wounded on the local battlefield. They took him home..... to die. Then there's the West Point graduate of

1861, who served at the First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas Junction). He was a member of the first air force being one of the team on board an observation balloon during the Seven Days Battles in Virginia in 1862. He led a valiant cavalry charge at Gettysburg preventing Jeb Stuart's cavalry from making a difference during Pickett's Charge on Day three. He served under General Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley and he received Lee's flag of truce at Appomattox Court House in 1865. But this constant winner of Civil War battles is best known today for defeat; on a Sunday afternoon in 1876, in Montana Territory, at a place called the Little Big-horn..... boy-general George Armstrong Custer.

Remember Robert Todd Lincoln, the eldest son of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln? By wars end, Robert was a Captain on Gen. Grant's staff. He was 24 years old on April 14, 1865, the day his father was assassinated at Ford's Theatre. He became involved in politics and was appointed Secretary of War to President James A. Garfield. Robert was present at the railroad station when Garfield was assassinated. Robert left public office and went to work for the Pullman railroad car company. He was then to meet the President at the Buffalo Pan American Exposition on Sept. 7, 1901. The day after, President McKinley was assassinated.

After Lincoln's assassination, his funeral processional came down New York's Broadway Street. That procession on April 25, 1865 was

witnessed by two small boys from a second story window on 14th Street. Presidential influence? You might say that. The boys were Elliott Roosevelt who was to be the father-in-law of President Franklin Roosevelt (his daughter was Eleanor Roosevelt). The other boy was Elliott's older brother, Teddy.. who would become President Theodore Roosevelt. Lincoln's funeral train passed through Lancaster, PA where an old man watched it pass from a carriage. This was not just any old man. It was James Buchanan..... former President James Buchanan, the man Lincoln replaced in the White House.

What popular Presidential trend began with the presidency of Abraham Lincoln? The trend was so popular that 8 of the next 10 Presidents after Lincoln continued the trend. FACIAL HAIR. Only William McKinley and Andrew Johnson were clean shaven. (Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, T. Roosevelt, Taft)

We remember the influence of World War II on American politics, the sweeping elections of Ike in the 50s, and JFK's narrow win in 1960, yet WW II influence is no where near the Civil War influence on the political scene. After Lincoln's election in 1860, nine out of the next ten elections involved a Civil War Union general. Six of the those Union generals were elected president, and all six were Republicans. Three losers in the Presidential races were also Union officers. The American Civil War was the price paid by our country for unity.

Historian and novelist Shelby Foote, stated during Burn's "The Civil War" documentary, that the Civil War "defined us" as a country. He stated that the war "opened us up to what we became. It was a crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads."

The cost in blood was unbelievable. Depending upon how you compile the statistics, and whose statistics you use, more Americans died during our American Civil War than all the other wars American has been engaged, up to and including the Gulf War. Keep in mind that we are counting all Americans, North and South. More U S soldiers fell in WW II than the Civil War, but when we add the Southern troops, the cost of the war on the whole country becomes apparent. The numbers, depending upon your resources, are somewhere between 618,000 and 626,000 Americans died. That amounted to 2% of the total 1860 population. For the four year war, that number averages to 430 men dying every day. The irony of these statistics is that only one-third of the dead actually died from wounds inflicted by the enemy. Diarrhea, dysentery, pneumonia, measles, small pox, gangrene, chicken pox and typhoid fever and other diseases claimed 388,580 soldiers.

After watching over 12,000 Union soldiers fall during six failed Union assaults on Confederate fortified positions on top of a hill at Marye's Heights overlooking Fredericksburg Virginia, Robert E Lee is quoted as saying, "It is well war is so terrible, lest

we should grow fond of it." At the capture of Atlanta Georgia, General William Tecumseh Sherman was quoted: "War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it." Shortly thereafter, Sherman proceeded on his "March to the Sea" and the ultimate destruction of the Carolinas.

Yet from all the blood something else emerged. Burn's "The Civil War" provides us the following statement. "The war began as a bitter dispute over States Rights" (preserving the Union) "and it ended as a struggle over the meaning of freedom in this country."

Though the war was not finished in November, 1863 when Abraham Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln sensed the greatest outcome of our Civil War. He talked about a "new birth of freedom", freedom with a great cost in blood. A freedom not defined just in terms of slavery and its ending. A freedom not finished when the war was done, or finished even today, but a freedom defined during a war one hundred and forty years ago, a freedom that allows you and me to be what we are, with the opportunity to be better.





Westerners Bookshelf

Standing in the Gap, Army Outposts, Picket Stations, and the Pacification of the Texas Frontier 1866-1886, by Loyd M. Uglow. Texas Christian University Press, 2001. 234 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Hardcover.

The United States Army either abandoned or was pushed out of its Texas forts at the onset of the Civil War. The region fell first to Confederate rule, then to lawlessness. Indian depredations and border raids. Many of the forts fell into disrepair.

In 1865, the U.S. Government sent troops back into the State. Aside from re-establishing Federal sovereignty, it had other purposes. First was to pacify the Indians, then to discourage cross border raiding, check French adventuring in the region, safeguard the telegraph lines, and make safe the mails and stage coach travel.

This book gives the history of every fort, sub fort, and picket station. The differences among these was the size of their garrison and the duration of the Army's occupancy. Most prewar forts were reopened but some were abandoned and others had new forts built nearby in more advantageous locations.

All sorts of actions are portrayed, from squad patrols to regimental campaigns. This book sorts out and describes the roles of the army in Texas during the period: law enforcement, Indian pacification, border guarding, vote judging, telegraph installation and maintenance, road building, protecting Indians from settlers. It is interesting to run across names from the Civil war, including Grierson of raiding fame, Wesley Merritt, and others. Buffalo soldiers and Indian scouts figure prominently in many of the stories.

The book well fills a niche in the history of the Indian Wars and the settlement of the Southwest.

--Stan Moore P.M.



Westerners International

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Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law, David E. Wilkins and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 2001. 326 pages. Index; bibliography; endnotes; dust jacket. Cloth: \$39.95.

This book, by Professors Wilkins and Lomawaima, wades into the very muddy waters of "American Indian" constitutional law (and, since the United States Constitution refers to Indians, rather than employing a more politically-correct usage, that is the terminology used by practitioners). However, the volume rather than discussing such technical issues as sovereignty, reservation reserved rights, and treaty-making (and breaking) authority in a balanced manner, is more a polemic (or lengthy brief) advocating the expansionist view of Indian rights.

It is quite clear, as Melissa Meyer recently wrote in a review of another book, that David Wilkins is "clearly an advocate for native rights." And, not mentioned in the biographical note, Mr. Wilkins apparently is a member of the Lumbee tribe. This, ironically, is the tribe sometimes (probably erroneously) named as the ultimate refuge of the lost colonists of Roanoke. His membership in a group, which probably benefits from his arguments, also might affect his independent judgment. Apparently neither author is formally trained in the law.

The book would only
interest legal practitioners in
this verycontroversial area...

As an example of the unbalanced treatment in the book, the authors easily dismiss the supposed inconsistency of a recent United States Supreme Court case resolving rights over methane gas (and which went against the Southern Ute Tribe). However, the other side could justifiably believe that the result merely involved the simple application of recognized mineral rights in a uniform and principled manner (ignoring the ethnicity of claimants). Yet the authors would have every debatable legal issue resolved the way they wish. The role of the courts in preventing injustice and applying equity to all citizens seems to be ignored.

In addition, the authors, while complaining about legal fictions with which they do not agree, simply do not recognize that there are many legal fictions involving the unfair treatment of the American Indians. For example, the legal fiction of the independent nature of Indian tribes as nations within a nation (which the authors celebrate) was used to justify the right of conquest and taking of lands. It was not right, but neither were the various French-German seizures of the Rhineland areas right. On the other hand, the recent use of gambling by tribes to redistribute American wealth seems, if not moral, at least a well-deserved comeuppance for non-Indians, Indian law for that comeuppance which uses American.

The book would only interest legal practitioners in this very controversial area. If one wants to get the thrust of this book without reading the whole thing, the final chapter is a good summary of the arguments.

--John Hutchins, P. M.

America's National Scenic Trails, by Kathleen Ann Cordes. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 306 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. Paper: \$19.95.

This is a guidebook for eight scenic trails. With maps for points of interest and abundant background on what one is seeing, it is an interesting effort. One could, if hardy with plenty of time, use this alone to hike the Appalachian Trail and perhaps some others.

The AT is old, well trod, and well established. However some of the traits described simply don't exist, at least not wholly. The Continental Divide Trail is one. Parts of the Continental Divide in Colorado have a marked and maintained trail. Most of the "ridgepole of the continent" does not, whether in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, or Montana.

Eight trails are described and mapped with points of interest. Florida, the northeastern United States, the upper Midwest, the Pacific Crest, Natchez Trace, and the Potomac River are included. Just how much of these trails are contiguous and marked is open to debate, and no doubt changes yearly.

In any case, this book would be a good one to check out of the library as a starting point to research a trip on one of these National Scenic Trails. The appendices give much good information on the overseeing agencies, rights of way, etc. The point of interest descriptions are interesting and informative.

--Stan Moore P.M.



Mining Frontiers Of The Far West 1848-1880, by Rodman Wilson Paul, A Revised Expanded Edition by Elliott West. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 288 pages, 30 half tones, 7 maps, notes, note on statistics, Essay on Bibliography, index. Paperback: \$21.95.

While books have been written on the various mining districts almost from their beginnings, it was Rodman W. Paul who recognized these various districts represented different frontiers as opposed to the popular concept of the frontier being a steady movement from the settled east to the undeveloped west. He chose to limit his study to the period of 1848 to 1880 when mining communities and booms were islands in a vast sea of wilderness.

As to be expected, the first mining frontier identified was the California gold rush covering the period of 1848 to 1858. This excitement was the "first to really ignite the public to the possibility of quick riches, spreading not only to the settled East coast but to Mexico, South and Central America and to the Pacific Rim." The resulting commerce and industry forever changed California.

From the period of 1858 to 1868, the excess of miners and energy spread North, South, and East from California making discoveries throughout the Far West. Because of the distances and lack of adequate transportation these finds amounted to not much more than local excitement.

The next significant mining frontier was the Comstock Lode find at what was to become Virginia City, Nevada covering the period of 1859 to 1880. The Comstock rush was identified by one source as the "Child of California." This is quite true as California staffed, supplied, and ultimately bled it. Never the less, the two rushes developed contrasts starting with the fact Nevada was now while California was relatively old further complicated with differences in geology and weather.

Professor Paul considers Colorado to be a frontier unto itself, covering the period of 1859 to 1880. At about the same time as California learned of the Comstock, the Missouri frontier heard of rumors of gold in what would become Colorado. This rush to Colorado is credited to be second only to California in the number of participants. For the most part the East and Middle West supplied the necessary men, materials, and money. Colorado represents a series of booms involving both gold and silver.

Northwest and Southwest from 1860 to 1880, initially rich, but short lived. gold placers drew prospectors and miners into the Northwest. As with the various finds in the Southwest, isolation curtailed any significant growth. When success came it was because of the arrival of railroads. The ultimate booms for the most part involved silver, copper, and lead.

Professor Paul concludes his discussion of the various mining frontiers with the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota. In 1874 General Custer confirmed the rumors of gold in this region. While this find was outside the geographical area of previous booms, it was attended by all the usual features of

previous booms and was thus the final mining frontier. While just north of Denver, California interests lead by the Homestake syndicate insisted on California developed mining techniques and equipment. This was an unusual turn of events considering the regions proximity to Denver and the Midwest.

Because mining settlements were islands in the wilderness there was no viable connection to traditional forms of government. To solve this problem it became the practice to formally identify and name districts governed by their own specific rules as to claim identification, size and other rules of governance. The resulting obvious variety led to the Congressional Mining Act of 1872. Time had shown that actions appropriate to pioneer frontier times were no longer acceptable in later years, although disputes based on old district rules plagued the courts to modern times.

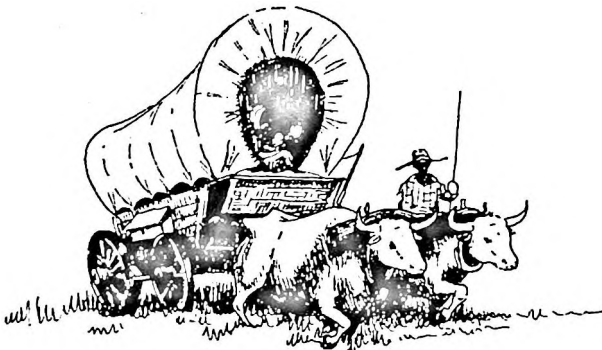
The final chapters of this reprint by Elliott West addressed the now popular attention given to the social consequences of the development of mining. Topics covered include the disastrous effects on the Native Americans, life in mining camps, the need for community in the face of racial and ethnic tensions, and the transition of the mining industry to being the same as any other industrial enterprise.

Professor Paul considers
Colorado to be a frontier
unto itself...

While very readable and pertinent, the reviewer believes West's work should be a volume standing on it's own merits not piggy backed on the pioneering work of Rodman W. Paul which sorts out and arranges the history of mining, the activity and technology.

For the student of mining history Paul's work is the Genesis from which further study can be made of equipment, technique, personalities, specific locales, and the attendant social consequences in limitless variety depending on one's interests.

--Bob Stull, P.M.



When Montana and I Were Young, by Margaret Bell. With introduction by Editor Mary Clearman Blew. Afterword by Lee Rostad. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London, 2002. 250 pages. Cloth, \$24.95.

Margaret Olsen Bell (1888-1982) with a minimum of formal education, but a graduate 'Magna Cum Laude' of the school of hard knocks, had an all consuming desire to tell her story. Words failed her at her darkest hours. How, she wondered, could she speak of the unspeakable, a stepfather and his brother who used her any hour, day and night.

The bruises were easy, her body was covered with signs of the whippings, anyone could see how clothes to shield her from the elements were needed, and certainly her body required food. There were opportunities, but she never could bring herself to speak of the act that would have saved her.

She scribbled her pain on scraps of paper and tossed them in a trunk. Late in life she attempted to write and publish her story. Her efforts rested in a box in a garage for years, eventually arriving at Mary Clearman Blew's home. Margaret's writing needed assistance, but her voice needed to be retained and Mary Clearman Blew was the right person to preserve that quality.

Throughout the book I found myself saying run, run! Finally she ran all the way from Canada to Montana and the safety of her grandmother's home. After her mother died, her stepfather refused contact with her grandmother and uncle, who had given her loving care.

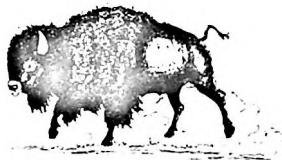
Margaret eventually became numb to the unbelievable beatings, sexual abuse, and drudgery. Her salvation was the expertise she developed with horses.

This is a powerful account of child abuse by the very people children trust. It is also a story of survival and is clearly Margaret Bell's life, researched for authenticity and edited for clarity.

Margaret Bell died at the age of ninety-four, without seeing her book in print.

I highly recommend it as a worthwhile read.

--LaVonne Perkins, P.M.



Great Cruelties Have Been Reported: The 1544 Investigation of the Coronado Expedition by Richard Flint. Southern Methodist University Press, Dallas, Texas, 2002. 647 pages. Illustrated with line drawings and maps; index; endnotes; bibliography; appendices. Hardback with dust jacket, \$45.00.

Thank goodness for lawyers, politicians, and bureaucrats. While, as pointed out in a current book by Catherine Crier, such folk may have messed up a lot of daily American life, they also have provided much primary source material for the historian. This includes priceless information on the conflict between the American Indians and the European and American invaders. For example, what would the Denver Westerners do without such investigations as the Congressional examination into Sand Creek or the Reno inquiry into the Little Big Horn?

This is no recent phenomenon. The Spanish, especially during the days of Conquistadors and Inquisitors, were a people obsessed with legal form. The same Spanish who were the bulwark against the Muslim invasion of Europe and the terror both of the heretics of the low countries and the human sacrifices of the Aztecs excelled in investigations and in documenting those investigations.

...will provide ammunition
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Readers of Herbert Bolton's classic volume, *Coronado, Knight of Pueblos and Plains*, would be vaguely aware that the return of the expedition brought with it legal action involving the conduct of the campaign. This volume contains translations (as well as transcriptions in the original Spanish) of the inquiry held to determine whether Coronado was responsible for certain excesses committed during the expedition into the Southwest in 1540-1542. Those excesses included the slaughter of Pueblo Indians during fighting, assaults against native women, and the execution of prisoners who had surrendered. The chronology of accusations here reminds one that invasion and war, from the Old Testament to Vietnam, are never pretty pictures.

The volume, in addition to witness statements, includes the final report of the investigation and much supplementary material. While the volume cannot but help to analyze events in a modern (and academic) context, Dr. Flint has done about as fair job in presentation as can be done today. In addition, one should also recall that some contemporaries, such as Father Bartolomeo de las Casas, also condemned much of the treatment of the Indians of the New World.

The book will be most helpful to those who want to delve beneath the popular histories (such as Bolton's) and to use the translations as source material. It also will provide ammunition for those who want selectively to pick and choose information and to portray the conquest of the Americas as a one-sided conflict.

The volume is recommended. One nice feature is that the jacket photo of Dr. Flint and his brief biography is reproduced on the last page of the book. Dust jackets do disappear sometimes, to the dismay of serious book collectors.

—John Hutchins, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

November - December 2002



Soapy Smith-the last of his story
Skaguay 1897-1898
by Ken Gaunt, P.M.
(presented February 27, 2002)



Ken Gaunt is a fourth-generation Coloradan, with three children, and one grandchild.

Ken was born in Colorado Springs "at an early age." He grew up in Yuma, Colorado during the dust bowl and the depression.

After graduating from high school, Ken spent six years with the 168th Field Artillery, (Colorado National Guard Unit), which included two years in the South Pacific during World War II.

Ken has been licensed in Colorado Pharmacy for over 64 years, and has worked in several pharmacies and hospitals, retiring as the Chief Pharmacist of St. Luke's Hospital in 1980. He is the oldest practicing pharmacist in Denver.

His hobbies are many and varied. He loves to ice skate and is a director of the Llama Division of the National Western Stock Show. Photography is a major vice along with Colorado history. Other interests are a collection of ancient coins which includes all the coins of the Bible, history of pioneer churches, cemeteries, con men, magic, and travel.

He was Sheriff of the Posse in 1996 and has been a member since 1955.

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Book Reviews

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 3031 E. 8th Ave
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Dues and Other Payments

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 Broomfield, CO 80020

Reservations for meetings

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 Broomfield, CO 80020

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by Ken Gaunt, P.M.

(presented February 27, 2002)

Jefferson Randolph Smith, Jr. was known by many names, such as King of Con, Master of Misrule, the Scalawag of Skaguay and Bad Man of the West. But through the years he is known best as "Soapy Smith." Jeff Smith, as he preferred to be called, was born in Newman, Georgia in 1860. His father was a successful lawyer, but the family lost everything as a result of the Civil War. His father became an alcoholic and in 1876 the family moved to west Texas. It was here that Jeff began his life as a "con man". He first learned the shell game from a man named Club Foot Hall. By joining a circus he could travel with Hall and learn other con games, such as Three Card Monte and how to manipulate a deck of cards.

It was in 1883 that Jeff arrived in Leadville, Colorado and where he met a man called "Old Man Taylor" from whom he could learn the real secrets of the life of a Con Man. They became partners and did very well as a team. Taylor had one game that Jeff had never seen, called the Soap Game. In this game the con man would give a spiel about the many medical virtues of a bar of soap, then wrap a bar in a piece of paper and offer it for sale for only \$5.00. As an inducement to buy a bar of soap, he would wrap a \$50 bill and some \$20 bills in with some of the bars of soap. A shill or partner of Jeff's would immediately find the bar with the big bill in it and would show it to

the crowd and exclaim how easy it was to make \$50 with only a \$5.00 investment. Immediately the crowd began buying the soap bars, and to their dismay they seldom found a bill.

When Taylor wanted to retire Jeff took the soap game and departed for Denver, set up his stand on the corner of 17th and Larimer streets, and immediately began to make money. He also started collecting a gang of associates and branching out into other cons. The police of course had to be paid for protection, but one day a rookie policeman who was not yet on the payroll, arrested Jeff and booked him into jail. On the jail's police blotter he wrote "Smith---Soap" as the identification. When the police higher-ups saw this they immediately began calling Jeff, "Soapy Smith" and this name continued to identify Jefferson Randolph Smith Jr. throughout his life and into history.

Soapy and his associates began to rule the underground of Denver. Soapy liked to work the soap game for a couple of hours daily. Meanwhile the gang worked other cons, such as working with the barbers who became known as the Bandit Barbers. They had an office that became a stock market for bogus gold mine shares and gold bricks, and sold bogus train tickets to any place in the U.S. for only \$5.00. They fixed fights and at election time they sold votes that controlled the elections. They ran the Tivoli Saloon which had the sign "Caveat Emptor"

above the door, for the gambling hall was filled with crooked faro games and gaming tables. All these schemes paid 50 percent of their take to Soapy.

Despite all this Soapy was still considered a good-hearted con man and was not hated, but rather well-liked because of his generosity to all causes. He supported Pastor Tom Uzzell and his Denver Tabernacle, collected money to build a church for Uzzell in Creede, gave generously to the poor, and supported the police and fire commissioners. Soapy was seldom criticized for his conduct as a con man for he ran his games on the newcomers and not the citizens of Denver, thus he was also known as the "Robin Hood of the West."

Silver was discovered in Creede in 1892 and Soapy and his gang went to Creede, took over the gambling and became the rulers of Creede until the Sherman Silver Act was repealed and Creede became another down-and-out mining town.

Soapy and his gang returned to Denver and led the armed opposition to Gov. Waite who was trying to remove the police and fire commissioners from their offices in the city hall.

Two brothers by the name of Blonger came to Denver about 1895 and proceeded to take over Denver's underground activities. The Blonger brothers demanded 50 percent of Soapy's take and killed two of his gang. Had Soapy not changed his mind one night about going into a certain saloon he probably would have been gunned down also.

Gold had been discovered in the Klondike during the summer of 1897. When the steamer Excelsior arrived in San Francisco with \$750,000

of gold, the stampede to the Klondike began. A few days later the steamer Portland docked in Seattle with a ton of Klondike gold. Within hours from every part of the world untold thousands of adventurers took their first steps to make their way to the Klondike and this gold rush was to surpass any other in history. Soapy and his gang were in low spirits and very low in cash so when the news of the gold strike reached Denver, Soapy was immediately stirred with new ambition. George Wilder, the hoarder of the gang, announced that he would finance himself, Soapy, "Doc" Baggs, "Reverend" Bowers, and one other to start them on their way to the gold fields.

The first stop was San Francisco where the five hoped to replenish their funds, but opposition was strong and on October 1, 1897, Soapy was served with a notice to move on. In Seattle they were met with the same ultimatum, so in a few days the five sailed for Skaguay.

A retired sailor, Captain William Moore, had staked out a homestead at the head of Lynn Canal in the 1880s. He obtained possession of the town site and a mill site that gave him title to an area of one-half mile of waterfront and a mile deep. But when the rush to the Klondike started, the gold seekers took over all of his land except for a small site on which his house stood. A committee was formed to set up a local government and they laid out the town of Skaguay. Frank Reid, a surveyor, staked out 3600 lots, 50 by 100 feet in size. The lots were then sold and resold again and again as newcomers arrived in Skaguay. Moore, the original owner after a long and bitter appeal to the courts, received

about 25 percent of the value of his land.

Skaguay and the settlement called Dyea were just four miles apart at the end of Lynn Canal. These two ports were located many miles from the gold fields but they were the jumping-off places of the trails that went to the Klondike. Skaguay emerged as the best port because of its better boat docking facilities. From Dyea the gold seekers would travel over the dreaded Chilkoot Pass to Lake Linderman and then to the Yukon River, down the mighty Yukon to Dawson City and the gold fields. The Chilkoot Pass route was open year around, but had the dreaded stairway, a slope of 45 degrees. This had to be negotiated many times in order to get the ton of supplies the Northwest Mounted Police demanded a man have before being allowed to enter Canada.

The White Pass (it was also known as Dead Horse Pass, because of the many horses that died on it), the route north from Skaguay, was easier to negotiate as it was 70 miles shorter and not as high. However, the trail was very narrow, very windy, and a rough climb; also it was closed much of the time during winter.

The situation in Skaguay was literally made to order for such a twisted genius as Soapy Smith. There was no machinery for law enforcement: Federal law prohibited traffic in liquor, but the law was totally disregarded. There were more than seventy saloons, and most of them had gaming tables and dance halls attached. Strong arm robberies, robbery of supplies, sale of town lots, many other "scams" and ruthless murder in the city and on the trails were unpunished and unchecked.

Soapy and his partners arrived

in Skaguay late in January 1898. He followed his regular formula by starting with his street corner con games, quickly made friends and began building his organization. A few days after his arrival Lady Luck smiled on him, there was a double murder of United States Marshall Rowan, and Andy McGrath in the Place Theater and the lynching of the slayer was in progress. Immediately Soapy went into action, recruited his own men and a score of other toughs each armed with Winchesters. They hastened to the scene and crashed their way through the crowd. Soapy's men quickly surrounded the man, a bartender named John E. Fay, faced the crowd and Soapy announced that anyone who tried to put a rope on the man's neck would get a bullet through his head. The man was to be given a fair trial, the crowd backed off and Soapy took Fay to jail and Fay was then taken to Sitka, where he was acquitted on the plea of self-defense.

The slaying of United States Marshal Rowan proved to be particularly tragic. He was slain about ten o'clock in the morning and at one o'clock in the afternoon, Mrs. Rowan became a mother. The crowd began again to get aroused over the brutal killing, but Soapy was busy making the rounds with a subscription paper with his name at the top of the list on behalf of the widow and her baby. By nightfall he had raised more than \$700 and had won the acclaim of the decent citizens of Skaguay. In the days that followed he raised an additional \$1500 which he turned over to the two widows. The lawless element admitted his dictatorship and he had won favor in the eyes of the ragged pit. 11



Ken does the 'shell game' for the Posse...

joined forces with a popular man named John Clancy, with whom he opened a combination saloon and gambling hall known as Jeff's Place. From his office Soapy issued his edicts through his own circle and people soon discovered that he was prepared to enforce his rules.

One of the things Soapy did to curry favor from the respectful people of Skaguay was to build the only church in Skaguay. He bought the fire hose for the volunteer fire company, and this enabled them to keep the town from having any major devastating fires. He was constantly giving large sums of money to down-and-outers. He gave money to many of the widows of the town and bought boat tickets for the widows and other broke gold seekers who wanted to return home. It was said that he never turned down a request for

help of one kind or another. He bought large amounts of dog meat to feed the hundreds of dogs that had been shipped to Skaguay to be used as sled dogs; the majority of them were utterly useless, untrained, weak, and ran wild. He started an "Adopt a Dog" campaign, and led the way by adopting six of them.

On April 24, 1898, war was declared between Spain and the United States. When the news reached Skaguay, Soapy called his gang together and after a fiery patriotic speech, it was decided that Skaguay should not be unrepresented in the nation's armed forces. Soapy issued a call for volunteers for service in Skaguay's own military unit "the "Skaguay Guards". The ranks were soon filled, many were disappointed cheechacos who saw a chance to get a



...any takers?

free ride back to the States at the government's expense. Captain Soapy started a period of intense drill in military movements, traditions, and training. He sent word to Secretary of War Russell A. Alger in Washington, D. C., that his company was ready to move against Spain as soon as transportation could be arranged. Secretary Alger replied immediately, thanked Smith for his patriotic action, but said it was impossible and impractical to put the Guards into active service immediately. However, Soapy kept the Guards organized and trained for eventual service. Some of the less honorable activities of Soapy and his gang of outlaws and toughs was gambling of all sorts: poker and the favorite faro game were much in evidence. Most were crooked games, and all paid a portion of their winnings to Soapy. In all of the saloons were scales where the gold of

the returning miners could be exchanged for coin of the realm. Of course the scales weighed in favor of the saloon. Robbery and the murder of men coming back down the trail from the gold fields with a gold-filled poke was common.

Due to lack of docks and wharfs much of the freight on board the ships had to be dropped over the side of the ship and floated into land. Horses were also put overboard to swim ashore. This was a perfect chance for the gang to steal supplies and horses. At a telegraph office one could send a message home for only \$5.00 telling of the sender's safe arrival; the next day he would receive a COD reply to his wire. The wire for this enterprising telegraph office ran out into Lynn Canal several hundred feet before it ended in the mud on the bottom of the canal. Other "businesses" of the same

ilk were: the "Cut Rate Ticket Office" that sold low-priced steamship tickets to anywhere the person wanted to sail and of course the steamships did not honor these bogus tickets. To hire "The Reliable Packers" was a sure way to have many of your supplies disappear and the "Information Bureau" sold poor maps of the trails, maps of the "poison water" springs, and sold and resold the town lots among their business activities. The stealing of a man's billfold was done in many ways, from outright robbery, to grabbing the billfold when it was brought out in payment of a item, then grabbed by another member of the gang, then a melee over the billfold and the eventual disappearance of it.

On one of the trips aboard a ship Soapy had sided with the owner and captain of the ship when his crew decided to take over the ship. Soapy prevented the takeover by the crew and from then on he had a friend who would allow members of the gang to travel back and forth and work their cons on the passengers returning from the gold fields with their fortunes, or the passengers going to the gold fields. He also controlled the Skaguay *Alaskan* newspaper by having the editor on his payroll.

The action that eventually led to his demise was an old bald eagle which was kept in a back room of Jeff's Place. When a man showed a roll of bills or a heavy poke containing gold in Jeff's Place, he would be invited to "see the eagle". In the back room he would then be hit over the head, robbed of his riches, taken out the back door through a hole in the fence, to be deserted in some alley where he would awake

much poorer and wiser.

The general public in Skaguay, which was the majority, was not ready to accept these activities or Soapy's authority. A Vigilance Committee of 101 members was organized. The committee was organized around Frank Reid, Major J. M. "Si" Tanner, and Captain J. L. Sperry. Reid was one of the first arrivals in Skaguay, had gone to the University of Michigan, fought the Indians in Oregon, was a school teacher in the Willamette Valley of Washington, a good surveyor and construction engineer, and a fine outdoorsman who feared nobody. Tanner and Sperry were former police officers and Indian fighters. The vigilante committee petitioned Washington for federal troops and asked that the town be placed under martial law. The troops arrived on February 8, 1898 and the Infantry officers posted notices closing the gaming rooms. Most of the confidence men and gamblers seemed to melt away, and soon the troops left Skaguay and were stationed in Dyea.

Smith was not asked to leave for some of the committee thought him harmless. He was a good fellow, generous, public-spirited, his gang was gone and he could do no harm. Others were afraid to put a finger on him for fear of their life. However, the gang had been sent out on the trails to continue its activities. Robberies and murder continued on the White Pass and Chilkoot Trails.

The most repulsive action of Soapy was on Palm Sunday, April 4, 1898. The stairway steps on the Chilkoot Pass trail were chopped in ice and filled with packers moving their loads up the 45-percent slope. A large

avalanche broke loose and knocked hundreds of the packers off the stairway. Many of the packers were able to save themselves, but about 60 of them lost their lives. Smith immediately announced himself as the coroner, and with his men he moved in to rob the bodies of their money and equipment as they carried the bodies back to Dyea. The bodies were buried in "Slide" cemetery in Dyea. However, they weren't buried deep enough and when the spring thaw set in the bloated bodies began to float to the surface making it necessary to rebury the bodies in another place at the proper depth.

The Fourth of July was approaching, and Smith's patriotic zeal reached its highest point. He wanted to mollify the growing discontent of the respectable citizens of Skaguay so he went blindly ahead with his plans for a grand and glorious Independence Day celebration. He induced no less than Governor Brady of the Alaskan Territory to come and deliver the Independence Day address. The town then fell into line behind his plans. The dictator of Skaguay had vast quantities of firecrackers, rockets, colored lights, blank cartridges, flags, and miles of bunting imported from Seattle. He planned a grand parade including a brass band with himself as the Grand Marshal. The Skaguay Guards marched in all their splendor, carriages and buggies carried the mothers, wives and daughters of the town and the ladies each received a bouquet of fresh flowers. The children set off quantities of firecrackers, while the men shot their guns, and miners set off dynamite charges around the outskirts of the town

and a large fireworks display followed that evening.

Soapy sat on the podium with the Governor and other dignitaries, and it was truly his finest hour. For three days he enjoyed the congratulations of the community, but on the fourth day, July 8, the clock was ticking down on the last day of his life.

On July 3, 1898, returning from the Klondike, was J. D. Stewart, homeward bound and in his moose hide poke was gold dust worth \$2,700. Though he looked meek and mild he was really a tough, canny Scot. He rented a room at the hotel, then set out to exchange his heavy poke for greenbacks and met up with a friendly "Doc" Bowers, who was willing to take him to meet a gold exchanger in Jeff's Place. He soon was invited to go into the back room to see the "old eagle". Immediately he was seized by a strong arm thug and relieved of his poke, and left in an alley. When he finally realized that the gang was not playing a joke on him, he went to the town marshal, who paid little attention to his sorrowful story. Next he told his troubles to a number of citizens who greeted the story with righteous indignation. The leaders of the vigilante "Committee of One Hundred and One" rose up against this bold and reckless crime. A summons for immediate action was circulated. Frank H. Reid, city engineer, addressed the crowd: "Soapy Smith and his crowd must go. We must settle this situation once and for all. No honest man is safe here." The large and fast-growing crowd wanted immediate drastic action, but cool heads finally settled the angry crowd down. A warning was published:

WARNING

A Word to the Wise should be sufficient. All confidence men, bunco and sure-thing men and all other objectionable characters are notified to leave Skaguay and the White Pass Road immediately and remain away. Failure to comply with this warning will be followed by prompt action. 101 Skaguay Alaska Mrch (sp) 8, 1898

Smith now confused the issue so completely that no one knew who represented law and order in Skaguay. He formed his own vigilante committee, which he entitled "The Committee of Law and Order," and posters were immediately put up all over the town.

ANSWER TO WARNING

The body of men styling themselves the Committee of 101 are hereby notified that any overt act committed by them will be promptly met by the law-abiding citizens of Skaguay and each member and HIS PROPERTY will be held responsible for any unlawful act on their part, and the Law and Order Society, consisting of 317 citizens, will see that Justice is dealt out to its fullest extent as no Blackmailers or Vigilantes will be tolerated. The Committee

Soapy called for another meeting. From this meeting came another flyer which was posted throughout the town.

PUBLIC WARNING

The business interests of Skaguay propose to put a stop to the lawless acts of many newcomers. We hereby summon all good citizens to a meeting

at which these matters will be discussed. Come one, come all!! Immediate action will be taken for relief. Let this be a warning to those cheechakos who are disgracing our city. The meeting will be held at Sylvester Hall at 8 P.M. sharp.
(Signed) Jefferson R. Smith, Chairman

The next move of the crowd was to go Jeff's Place and demand the return of Stewart's poke of gold. Smith stalled for time but in the end the crowd had but one thought, to settle the existing situation. Fearing that things were getting out of hand, the officials of Skaguay sent a hasty message to United States Judge Sehlbrede at Dyea, urging him to come at once. After hearing the crowd's appeal, the Judge decided to talk to Smith, who was summoned to appear, but he took an aggressive attitude before the Judge who then ruled that: "We will give you one chance. If the gold is not turned back today, to its rightful owner, I will issue warrants and bring in your gang alive, if possible, but dead, if necessary." At four o'clock, the zero hour, no gold had appeared, so Judge Sehlbrede swore in Captain J. M. Tanner as Deputy United States Marshal. When again confronted about the gold Soapy came through the door of Jeff's Place, and instead of the gold poke, he held in his hands a high-powered rifle. He stated that he and five hundred of his armed men were behind him and ready to stop the crowd. As he started down the street it was clear that he had misplaced his loyalty in his criminal friends for many were scurrying to cover.

A meeting was called by the

Committee of One Hundred and One for the citizens to meet, but many of Soapy's gang were present and ready to disrupt the meeting. It was then proposed to adjourn to Juneau Wharf where the attendees could be screened, and there was no chance of eavesdropping. Chairman Thomas Whitten, of the Golden North Hotel, announced that no known crooks would be admitted to the wharf and a committee of four reliable citizens would stand guard at the approach. Thereupon, he named Deputy United States Marshal J. M. Tanner as Captain, Frank H. Reid, Jesse Murphy, and John Landers to stand guard. Meanwhile, Soapy, still packing his Winchester, was dropping into different bars attempting to bolster the faint-hearted former followers he found inside. He announced he was going down to Juneau Wharf and talk at the meeting. His cronies tried to talk him out of such a plan but Soapy was adamant. As he drew near the wharf the challenge, "Halt! Throw up your hands!" rang out. Soapy recognized his challenger as Frank H. Reid and instead of raising his hands he swung his Winchester to his shoulder. To Reid it was clear that Soapy had not only failed to comply with his command but made an apparently aggressive move. Reid raised his six gun swiftly and threateningly. "My God, don't shoot!", shouted Soapy, the last words he ever spoke. His cry was too late. Reid, knowing well the menace of Smith and his rifle, pulled the trigger of his Colt. Luck was against him for the hammer snapped on a defective cartridge and as he hastily cocked his sixshooter again, Soapy had the chance to swing down his rifle. Reid pulled the trigger of his gun again

and two reports roared out, sounding almost as one, and both men sank to the ground. As he fell Reid fired again, but there was no need, for his first shot had pierced Soapy Smith's heart.

Mrs. Harriet Pullen, a dray-person, and later Skaguay's historian, was an eyewitness to the tragedy. She later obtained Soapy's gun from his estate. A crowd of raging men from the wharf came running. Smith was dead and the engineer was gravely wounded with a shot through the groin. Reid was moved to the Bishop Rowe Hospital where he lingered for twelve days before dying.

The armed vigilantes from the wharf and the long-suffering citizens raised a savage hue and began gathering the gangsters who had overrun the city for so long. Tough saloons were raided, thugs were slugged, confidence men, burglars, robbers, and sneaks were clubbed and shot, many of them were wounded as they beat a panic-stricken retreat. Forty criminals and suspects were captured and lodged in the Skaguay jail. The yelling crowd howled for a lynching bee, ropes were stretched and guns were prepared for a bloody raid upon the jail. But word of the Skaguay revolt had already reached Dyea, and the United States Infantry stationed there came on the double just in time to block the slaughter of the prisoners.

In the meantime, unwept and unhonored, and almost forgotten, the body of Soapy Smith lay where it had fallen. People were afraid they would be thought of as associates of Soapy, so they left his body alone. Shortly before dawn the next day, a widow whom he had befriended found the body and had

it removed to the morgue.

The vigilantes continued their work, saloons were closed, gambling was stopped, and eventually Stewart's poke was found, in Soapy's office. It was \$500 short of its original worth, but Stewart was happy to recover what remained.

An inquest was held and the decision was made to deport all prisoners except those accused of a felony. The offenders were escorted to Juneau Wharf and forced to board the steamer Tartar. The vigilantes in order to keep their own record clear compelled each deportee to remove his hat and state that he was leaving Skaguay of his own free will. Eleven of the gang were sent to Sitka to face the Alaskan Grand Jury where they were sentenced to serve from one to ten years in prison.

Smith's funeral was held in the church which he had helped to found. Rev. John Sinclair delivered a sermon to the five attendees. His text was, "The way of transgressors is hard." His pay for conducting the funeral was Soapy's derringer. Reid lingered for twelve days before dying of his wound. The former agnostic was given the final rites of the Episcopal Church before he died, and his funeral was attended by hundreds of Skaguay citizens. Both were buried in the Gold Hill Cemetery just north of town. A small marker was placed on Soapy's grave. It read, "Jefferson R. Smith, Aged 38, Died July 8, 1898." It still has to be continually replaced because souvenir hunters keep cutting and breaking off small pieces of the marker. Reid was buried about 50 feet away, but the citizens of Skaguay marked his grave with a large monument which stated, "He gave his life for

the honor of Skaguay."

Soapy had said upon coming to Skaguay that this was his last chance to make his fortune and that was his goal. Probate of his estate showed that his estate was valued at \$250 and Reid's estate was worth a little over \$1,000.

Several months later a woman arrived in Skaguay to claim Soapy's body and take it back to the states. She claimed to be his wife but could offer no prove of such a marriage, so the authorities refused her request.

The Brotherhood of Alaska Union, on a hill above the waters of the bay, had a large replica of a human skull carved and painted on the rocks as a warning to others of what could happen to anyone who might have some idea of trying some evil scheme on Skaguay.

Some things that I found relating to the end of these events were the death certificates of both Soapy and Reid. The dates don't match those printed in other places. An oldtimer in Skaguay told me of a article with a different story about Frank Reid. I found the article in the State of Washington archives that stated Frank Reid was an agnostic, had been a school teacher, but had gotten into trouble with the school board for teaching his agnostic views. He was fired from his position as a teacher, but he refused to quit teaching and went to the school every day, even though there were no students, and he demanded that his salary be paid in full. Frank was also a surveyor who did quite a bit of this work for little or no pay. He moved to a second school but soon got into trouble with a man named James Simons, a storekeeper in Sweet Home, Washing-

ton. Reid had taken Simon's niece to a dance that Simon did not approve. One morning as Reid and another man were leaving town on a hunting trip they met Simons and Reid said "Good Morning", but Simons refused to speak. A quarrel started and Simon hit Reid with a club of wood, then Reid shot and killed Simon. A jury found that the killing was "Justifiable Homicide" and Reid was released but was advised to leave the country. A short time later he showed up in Skaguay where he was one of those who laid out the town of Skaguay. On later trips to Alaska I have heard more of this article, and people do not idolize Frank Reid as they did in the old days. With the help of the curator of the "Museum of '98" in Skaguay, I found in some old papers the following item:

BILL OF SALE

July 8, 1898

Sold this date to Jeff Smith the boat "Janu" for value received in hand.
(Signed) J. H. Brown

What was Soapy planning?

Was he planning on leaving Skaguay or was this boat a last attempt to escape? No one knows, I have never found anything more of this transaction, and I can find no record of such a boat in any of the shipping records. If you journey to Skaguay today, you will find Soapy is well remembered, and the town's citizens are now doing to the tourist exactly the same thing, in a more refined way, that Soapy was doing to the citizens of Skaguay in 1898.

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SKAGUAY

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DENVER

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WASHINGTON

State of Washington Archives.

Over the Corral Rail

Dr. Wilbur Richie

Corresponding member Dr. Wilbur Richie past away in October. Services were held at Crown Hill Chapel.

Dr. Richie was a nationally known forensic odontologist. He was also a lifelong motorcyclist, photographer and sailor. He once graded barley for Coors Brewery.

He was best known for his work identifying the 14 firefighters who died on Storm King Mountain near Glenwood Springs in 1997, and the 28 victims of the Continental Airlines crash of 1987.

Dr. Richie was born Feb. 19, 1927 in Danville, IL and was an instructor in cryptography for the U.S. Army in World War II.

Much Thanks

The Denver Posse of Westerners would like to thank new members Mary Beth and Bill Jenkins of the Laramie Realty Co., Denver, for the generous donation of an almost-new Kodak Carousel slide projector for use at our monthly meetings. Thanks also to Past Sheriff Ray Jenkins of Loveland for the donation of several Carousel slide trays to use with the projector.





Westerners Bookshelf

Eye of the Blackbird: a Story of Gold in the American West, by Holly Skinner.
Boulder: Johnson Books, division of Johnson Publishing Co., 2001. 304pp. Chapter-by-chapter notes on sources, bibliography, index. \$17.50, paperback..

In this primarily chronological approach detailing the multitude of gold rushes that occurred throughout the West, author Holly Skinner has composed both an informative and enjoyable read. Not only does this work explore every major (and many minor events) from Spanish conquests for gold in Mexico and the southwestern U.S. through California, Colorado, Nevada, South Dakota, Alaska, and Wyoming to discoveries along obscure and unlikely creeks, but it also offers intriguing glimpses of men and women, via a number of intimate portraits, who share the common characteristic of being driven by illusions of grandeur, searching for something better, something more.

“They were gamblers, all of them,” writes Skinner of the characters illuminated by the letters and journals they left behind, “with luck that soared and plummeted as if their lives were bet on a turn of the card. A few of them were obsessed with gold, others simply got swept into the tide. Some were lucky, others were not, and one or two made their own luck. Their lives were small patterns in a larger tapestry, and the whole cloth runs out of their century and into our own.”

Modern-day prospector Holly Skinner is a Phi Beta Kappa scholar with a bachelor's degree in anthropology, history and journalism and a master's degree in English/nonfiction writing. Having worked as a survival instructor, wilderness ranger, forest fire fighter, rough rider in a wild West show, and wrangler, she lives outside Lander, Wyoming with her dog, Kit Carson. Her background training and experiences all blend to produce a work well worth the time of any reader wanting more than the usual tired re-hash of following a trail of gold across the nineteenth-century American West. *Eye of the Blackbird* is a glowing treasure.

...worth the time of any
reader wanting more than
the usual tired re-hash...

--Bob Terwilleger, P.M.

Ute Indian Arts & Culture; from Prehistory to the New Millennium, Edited by William Wroth. Published by the Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center; distributed by University of New Mexico Press, 2000. 248 pp. Illustrations, map. index. Cloth, \$85.00, paper, \$45.00.

William Wroth, the editor of this handsome volume, is the former curator of the Taylor Museum at Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. As a specialist in Hispanic and Indian cultural history and art of the Southwest his credentials certainly qualify Wroth in this impressive culmination of seven years' research and collaboration.

In honor of the first families to live in the land now called Colorado and to assist current residents in learning about the Utes, the Colorado Arts center mounted a far-reaching exhibition entitled "Mountain, Family, Spirit: the Arts and Culture of the Ute Indians," which premiered from July 21 through December 31, 2000.

Subsequent sites for this exhibition included the Anasazi Heritage Center (Dolores, Colorado), the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles, and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. This book was the official catalog for all the mentioned exhibition locales.

...impressive culmination of
seven years research and
collaboration...

Ute Indian Arts & Culture is illustrated with color photographs (185 such illustrations!) including 139 historic artifacts as well as over 40 contemporary works, to say nothing of numerous historic duotone photographs of Ute life.

This reviewer, who attended the Colorado Springs exhibition in October 2000, finds the numerous essays, however, to be an equal asset. The essays collected here are contributed by Ute cultural leaders and by other non-Ute-nation scholars. They reveal the richness of Ute material culture, heretofore almost unknown in groundbreaking studies of Ute prehistory, history, world view, culture and art. Not only is this inclusion an immeasurably valuable educational tool for contemporary non-Utes, but equally important is that the essays make available to a younger generation of Utes visual and written information about their heritage.

High credit must be given to William Wroth and to Cathy Wright, CSFAC chief curator, who worked with Ute elders, statesmen and artists of western Colorado not only to assemble the Ute exhibition, but to present the Ute history and culture accurately and appropriately. This most excellent work, printed in high-grade stock, is available for purchase at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center museum shop located at the northwest corner of Cascade Avenue and Dale Street. Phone 719-634-5581.

--Bob Terwilliger, P.M

