



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

January - February 2003



**Mule Trains of Marysville, California**  
**Clipperships of the Mountains**  
by Robert Lane, P.M.  
(presented May 22, 2002)



## About the Author

Bob Lane has been an integral and very active member of the Denver Westerners since 1986, and a Posse member since July 1989.

A Denver native and graduate of South High, this Rebel enlisted in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War. He served fifteen months of his tour on tiny Midway Island.

Bob has been our Denver Westerners' Keeper of the Possibles Bag for 10 years, and was both our Deputy Sheriff and Sheriff. During his term in 2001 as Sheriff, he initiated a membership drive resulting in 24 new members.

Bob has presented five previous papers to the Denver Westerners, beginning in May, 1989 with "Circuit Riders from the Alleghenies to the Rockies", followed by "Clenden/Muddy Creek Massacre of July 1763". Third was "A Mile-High Haunting" appropriately presented in October 1991. His fourth presentation in February 1998, Black History Month, was the still-talked-about "The U.S. Army 25th Infantry Bicycle Corps", followed by "Como and the Tenderfoot" in 1999.

This is a special person whose commitment and contributions to the Denver Westerners have been of great value.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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# Mule Trains of Marysville, California

## Clipperships of the Mountains

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The history of transportation with animals goes back thousands of years. Once man was able to domesticate certain wild animals his days of carrying a heavy load on his back ended. The mule is not native to the United States. It was introduced in 1493 by Christopher Columbus. General George Washington is credited with being the first mule breeder in America.

The mule is a cross between a donkey and a horse. He is about the size of a horse but has the ears of a jackass. It is considered to be the most successful hybrid ever developed. The mule has a heavy head and long ears, a donkey-like mane and a horse-like tail supported by fine-boned legs and small hooves. The mule's tougher feet may never need to be shod.

The proper term for a male mule is "horse mule", some times called a John mule. A female is properly called a "mare mule", and some times she is known as a Molly mule. Some other names are hardtails and knobheads. White mules are known as a gambler's ghosts. When transporting food they are called long-eared chuck wagons.

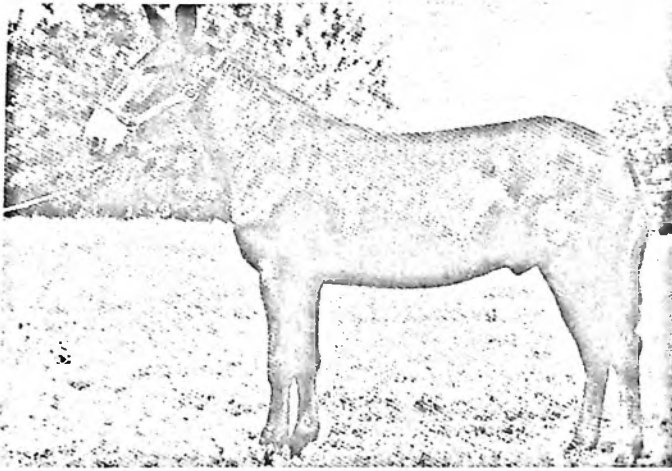
In the beginning the Anglo-Saxon American employed the mule, chiefly the Missouri mule, mainly for draft purposes. Meanwhile, the Spaniards chose the saddle mule for its strength and value. Buffalo Bill Cody

was mounted on a little Comanche mule when he met Custer, whom he hoped would hire him as a guide.

The majority of pack mules were imported from Mexico along with their drivers. The Missouri mule was too big and clumsy to negotiate steep narrow mountain trails and to cross creeks over two logs secured tightly together.

The Mexican mule is more suited for heavy loads and has a keen sense of balance on narrow trails. He is more sure-footed and less likely to panic and less susceptible to diseases. With a narrow body and almost flat withers the mule makes an ideal pack animal. It is said the mule has 25% more power than any other equine relative to its size. His voice is a variation of the bray of an ass, but it is uniquely his own. Conclusively the mule can travel farther, carry more, survive on less water and feed and recuperate rapidly. In desperate times he has been known to eat the bark off trees.

Many people have voiced their judgement about the mule. A New Englander once wrote in his letter back home, "They have neither pride in their ancestry or hope of posterity". Another person characterized the mule saying, "Mules are ill-begotten and illegitimate, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, and God never made them nor any law to govern them."



No one knows how old this beast of burden really is. Mules are known to live between thirty and thirty-five years. The editor of the *North San Juan Hydraulic Press* said "We saw one the other day branded on the left hip B.C."

The amount of weight a mule can carry is legendary. A devoted mule named Anita, in 1853, was required to carry a very heavy and fancy billiard table to a saloon in Althouse, Oregon. Anita's great efforts fell short by eight miles. Anita collapsed on the banks of the Illinois River, never to take another step. The driver, according to the story, went to the owner of the saloon asking for payment but the gentleman refused for non-delivery. The driver returned to the billiard table, and for lack of another strong mule put up a tent around the table and opened a billiard parlor. This was the beginning of Kerby, Oregon.

Another fascinating story comes out of Marysville, California. The strongest mule was picked to carry

a billiard table bound for Rich Bar on the North Fork of the Feather River. The mule had two fifty-pound sacks of flour on each side of him to flatten out the sort-of-pointed back bone. Two men acted as spotters to keep the table from getting scratched. The cost was \$450 in gold dust, payable on arrival. The operator of the table made back his freight cost and then some in twenty-four hours. In other stories some went to the extreme. For a Christmas surprise 365 pounds of sea bird eggs from the Farallon Islands were packed in lime and put on the back of a mule and shipped to Downieville. The cost was \$1 a pound. As towns grew, printing presses and even pianos for the newest saloon were shipped in. In 1853, a very large iron safe weighing three hundred fifty-two pounds was carried on the back of a mule, thirty-eight miles, from Shasta to Weaverville. Total weight, including aparejo, was three hundred eighty pounds. Of all the things mules carried there were three things you did not ship by mule: crockery, mirrors and

a loaf of bread. Bread, you say? Yes, mules have a rugged gait that would shake a loaf of bread into crumbs in about twelve to fourteen hours. Large mirrors and crockery soon broke into tiny pieces. Mirrors were not transported until the roads became wide enough for freight wagons and slightly smoother.

Shipping personal belongings was a very risky endeavor. Great-grandmother's prized china or rocking chair would arrive in several pieces.

Hutching's *California Magazine*, in 1856, reported the comments of a Ukranian emigrant on the arrival of his favorite rocking chair and once beautiful mirror. "I found that the chair back was broken, the rockers off, and one arm in two pieces; and the looking glass was much like a crate of broken crockery as anything I ever saw."

Up until 1848 California coastal cities were the hub of commerce. The discovery of gold at Sutters Mill in north central California set off a huge influx of fortune seekers migrating to the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada Range. This caused a big problem for California. In less than one year the population swelled to 100,000. There were so many people in and near the Sierra Nevada the government of California was ill-prepared to deliver any infrastructure to the booming mining camps.

The increase in traffic created rough narrow foot trails, in many areas no wider than eighteen inches across, hugging the edge of a steep precipice. The only way enough supplies could reach the young camps was by pack burros. With a shortage of pack burros this created a large backlog of supplies

setting at dock sides at Marysville and Sacramento.

In San Francisco the supplies had to be off-loaded and reloaded on to smaller whale boats, skiffs, small schooners and steamers navigating the Sacramento and Feather rivers. The cost of traveling by way of water (Sacramento River) on a launch carting freight and passengers from San Francisco to Sutter's Landing took two and a half to three days.

If you traveled by land the price for mules, horses, wagons and oxcart commanded an even higher price. Most chose the cheapest of all the transportation: approximately a one-hundred-fifty-mile walk to the mining district.

Before the 1850s it was easier to transport supplies from China to the West coast than it was to ship goods from New York to San Francisco. It was 5,000 miles from China to San Francisco by sea. It was a 3,000-mile trek from New York across the interior of the continent to the West coast. Most supplies were shipped by sea, a distance of 17,000 miles. This meant sailing around the southern tip of South America at Cape Horn then sailing north up the West coast until you reached San Francisco about one hundred days later.

Carrying heavy loads of supplies on the back of a mule was a problem until the pack saddle or aparejo was invented.

The aparejo was unique in its design. It looked like two cushions from a small sofa joined together by a large leather strap. They are small, only eight inches thick and filled with willow sticks and straw. The weight

was about 65 to 70 pounds. The aparejo was secured by a huge strap eight inches wide. There are no cross trees to tie your rope around.

Not knowing how to pack a mule properly usually ended up in a disaster. Packing a mule is an art. When packing a mule you have to be careful to distribute the weight evenly on both sides of the animal. It was believed a five-to-ten pound difference could prove fatal. This was enough to throw his center of gravity off when walking down a thirty or forty-degree grade compounded by walking on a narrow path.

When packing a mule correctly, it is wise to know the deception he will go through to delay his departure. I would like to read to you a description by one inexperienced packer preparing his mule for a trip. The gentleman knows how ornery and contentious the kniver is. One trick the mule will try is inflating his belly with as much air as he could possible hold. Once packed and strapped tightly he will exhale in a most contemptible way as to be saying, "I'm not ready to walk yet." This made the load loose and it had to be tightened again.

One gentleman describes how he packed his mule. "I packed my animals and put all the tinware on top. I gently adjusted the pack saddle as I didn't want to cinch him too tightly. Suddenly my mule shook himself with a vigor that originated with his nose and vibrated like an earthquake to his stiffened tail. He turned the entire saddle-load under his belly then jumping stiff-legged a few bounds, he commenced kicking and away went the battered pans amid clouds boxed out at

my head with his front hooves. The next day I tied the mule's head in a bag and hobbled both fore and hind feet in preparation for packing. But a Missourian took these off and put the saddle on the mule's back and put his foot against the mule's ribs, then threw his whole weight backwards and pulled until the cinch rings met. The mule raised his fore legs and quietly submitted".

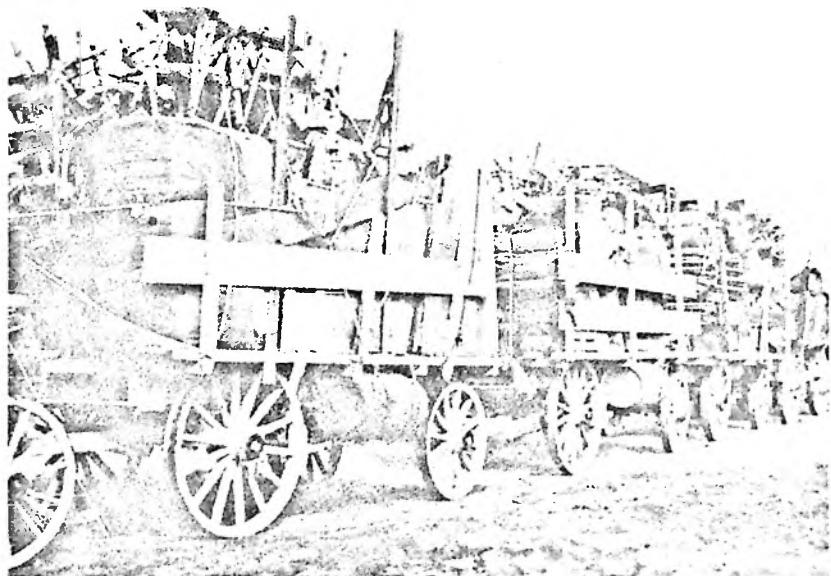
One Englishman had a somewhat different way to prepare his mule. He explains, "At each jerk, the wretched mule expels an agonized grunt and snaps at the men's shoulders. The men haul with a will squeezing the poor creature's diaphragm most terribly. Smaller and more wasp-like grows his waist. At last not another inch of line can be got in and the line is made fast. The unfortunate beast has assumed the appearance of an hourglass, large at each end and exceedingly small at the middle.

The apparent sufferings of that mule arising from undue compression of his digestive apparatus are pitiful to behold, but it is all a fake".

Not everyone could handle a mule train. It took a great deal of skill and knowledge. The colorful Spanish muleteer ranked high among such professionals as steamship captains and stage coach drivers. The muleteer knew all to well the thinking of the mule.

Mules are generally known to carry heavy loads for several days in all kinds of weather and terrain. But the most cruel thing one mule was required to do was at Fort Benton, Montana in 1864.

A group of commissioners from Washington D.C. wanted to impress a group of Indians with its



latest mountain howitzer. It is unclear why they thought it would be a good idea to mount the heavy howitzer on the back of a mule. By mid-morning a large crowd gathered down by the river bank. Half the spectators were Indians. Across the river a target had been marked out where the projectile was expected to land. An extra heavy load was put in. The enlisted man in charge of the mule grabbed hold of the rings on the bit in each hand to steady the nervous mule. Another soldier adjusted the cannon and took aim the best he could while a third soldier took a match and scratched it on the hip of his pants and ignited the fuse. The sound of the fuse hissing scared the mule. He dropped his ears and began to hump his back then whirled round and round trying to shake the cannon off. The

soldier was unable to steady the frightened mule before it went off.

By this time the spectators scrambled in all directions for their safety. Some plunged over the bank into the river. Others crawled on their hands and knees to get as far away as possible. Others were too scared to move and dropped to the ground receiving a face-full of prairie grass and dirt. The mule continued to buck and spin in circles trying to shake off the cannon. The cannon finally discharged making a tremendous boom shooting the cannon ball into the ground just behind the mule's back legs.

By 1850 there were five major freighting centers in operation: Crescent City, Shasta, Stockton, Sacramento and the one I will talk most about, Marysville. There were three routes out

of Marysville Plaza. One trail headed north to Oroville, Bidwell's Bar and on to Butte and Plumas County. The second trail headed northeast to such places as Browns Valley, Stanfield Hill, Bullards Bar, Challenge and La Porte. The third trail went to camps like Smartville, Nevada City, Camptonville, and Downieville. From these points smaller pack trains spread out like spider webs to smaller camps like Galena Hill, Rams Ranch and Weeds Point.

In the summer of 1850 Marysville became the largest pack mule freight center in California. Soon steamers were off loading two-hundred tons of supplies daily at the Lower Plaza. The increase in demand began to put a strain on the already over-worked mules. Many traders set up business and before long five trains of ten to thirty mules each were leaving daily. By the end of the year one thousand mules were leaving Marysville Plaza daily. It was estimated in April 1858 that fifty to one-hundred-fifty tons were moved out of the city daily.

A large pack train consisted of 25 to 40 mules. The exception was up to 100 mules. The larger trains needed one muleteer for each fifteen mules.

There was plenty of danger along the trails. A fast moving mule train could quickly turn into a disaster when two trains were heading towards each other around a blind corner. To prevent a disaster a bell mare led the train. Once the bell mare was in place this signaled the other mules to fall in line and prepare to move out. This madrina served two purposes. First it set the pace and it warned other mule trains that might be approaching. The

down hill train must pull over to make way for the approaching train to pass.

Other problems included inclement weather in the winter with deep snow and freezing temperatures. In the spring heavy rains made the trails muddy, causing heavy wagons to bog down and get stuck. Bandits in the summer rustled mules that were not watched. The Maidu Indians began to ambush the pack trains. Although the Maidu's didn't really care for mule meat, they had little choice in their selection of meat as the dwindling supply of deer and other wild game was being wiped out by the influx of the settlers. This resulted in the extinction of the Maidu tribe of north-central California.

There were so many mules in Marysville it was believed their population was greater than that of the humans. Being out-numbered by mules gave Marysville a distinct odor. With thousands of mules in one location it was hard to identify one mule from the other. A method called "Belling" was used where hunks of tail were clipped in a manner to form a stack of bells for quick identification.

By 1853, Marysville had twenty-five-hundred mule trains and five-hundred wagons operating out of the Plaza.

The Hale and Emory's Marysville City Directory for 1853 listed thirty-one mule companies. It was estimated the number of pack mules was above four thousand. The number of wagons was four hundred.

With so many mules in one area, there was a lucrative business in selling mules at the Lower Plaza. The price varied from \$100 to \$150 per



head. A good mule team fetched amazingly high prices. A smart bell mare was highly prized as well.

Freighters chose individual animals carefully for their position in the team. The strongest pair was chosen as wheelers. The nigh-(left-hand) leader was the smallest.

One of the largest mule train operators out of Marysville was Edward McIlhany. He describes one of his purchases of a pack train in 1852.

“We finally arrived and made out camp and found Marysville had grown to be quite a little town. Buildings had sprung up like mushrooms. Large stores were there with a bountiful supply of provisions, which were brought by steamboats from Sacramento City. I found a number of men who had started stores way up in the mountains and were looking for transportation to get goods to their stores. I found that they were willing to pay big prices. There were several trains of mules that had come in there from old Mexico. They had everything necessary for each mule to pack very heavy loads. I found one train of mules for sale. It contained about thirty head, with everything complete for packing. I paid the Mexican \$5,000.00 in gold for the train and kept several of his hands to help me.

During the winter of 1851 and 1852 some packers made as much as \$3,000 in a single trip to Downieville.

As traffic increased toll bridges

sprung up. Freight rates varied tremendously in direct relation to the conditions of the roads. The cost of freighting merchandise dropped dramatically by 1856 to four and five cents a pound. Winter rates were as high as seventy-five cents a pound. It was even higher going to such places as Downieville and Onion Valley in the winter.

In 1860 the toll road from Marysville to La Porte was exceedingly high, and yet the roads were in terrible condition. Tolls amounted to fourteen dollars. This was a heavy tax, which increased the cost of transporting supplies to merchants in that area.

Crossing toll bridges was costly for mule teams. The New Covered Bridge at Bridgeport could cost the owner up to \$6 for eight horses, mules or ox team. A person walking across the bridge was charged twenty-five cents. Loose stock were ten cents and hogs and sheep five cents.

As freight wagons became more common, teamers realized that the wagons built back East were inadequate. They soon broke down under the heavy loads and the rugged conditions along the roads.

In the summer of 1851 A. W. Cutt designed the first stronger, more reliable freight wagon. Mr. Cutt's first wagons were fabricated out of Sierra light pine and measured sixteen to twenty feet long with a forty-to-forty-eight-inch beam. The sides were painted either blue or red. The back rose at a ninety-five-degree angle four to eight feet above the bed. Side gates opened for easy loading and unloading. The end boards slanted at forty-five degrees. Rear wheels spanned a diameter of seven feet, which put the wagon

floor three-and-one-half feet above the ground. The high clearance was a must, the front wheels were smaller, three to four feet in diameter. Full height of the wagon towered between eleven and twelve feet. An empty wagon weighed between 2,200 to 3,800 pounds. A fully loaded wagon could weigh as much as five tons. The cost of these wagons was \$500. By 1853 the Black's and French were building wagons capable of carrying four tons drawn by a six-mule team.

Mules were hitched in such a way that facilitated negotiating curves. Protruding forward from the front wheels was a tongue in which the strongest team was hitched. They are called the wheelers. They steered the wagon and helped brake when going down steep grades. Directly ahead of them are the pointers. They help pull on the tongue with the wheelers. A chain is attached to the front axle and extended under the tongue to the lead span, a span being the pair of mules that worked as a team.

Each span in front of the pointers pulled on the swing chain by traces attached from their collars to double trees fastened crosswise to the chain. The teams between the pointers and leaders were known as swing teams. When the train approached a curve the inside pointer team had to step over the swing chain and pull straight ahead on the tongue while the leaders and other swing spans pulled diagonally to the wagon. The forward spans moved along the outer edge of the road. The mules pulled diagonally because they were rounding a curve the pointers and wheelers were just coming into. This was the only way to prevent

the wagon from scraping a bank or dropping over a cliff.

Turning a fully loaded wagon was managed by a jerk line. The driver rode the left wheeler or walked along the left side of the wagon. The jerk line passed along the left side of each span through a ring on their collars to the lead team. The line then ran from the bit of the left lead mule along a narrow wooden rod to the bit of its partner. This line was also fastened to the bits of the pointer team. A steady pull on the line meant left turn and a series of jerks meant a right turn. Later on it was possible for the driver to control the team from a seat perched high on the wagon. The jerk lines were connected to both sides of the lead team.

To help with the jerk line a teamster used a bullwhip and harsh tones sometimes ending with vile language. Another technique was the use of a whip cracking close to the mule's ear to get him to try harder. If a teamster beat his mules he soon found out that the mule would become a burden to the rest of the team and ended up being sold to someone else.

Operating such a behemoth took great skill. It was very difficult and dangerous to bring a fast-moving mule train to a sudden halt. Any person in their way was subject to getting pushed off the trail or tangled in the rigging. One should well mind the rules of the road when coming upon a fast-moving mule train. To bring such a heavy load to a stop, on the leading edge of the rear wheels were wooden brake shoes six inches in diameter and twenty-to-twenty-four inches long. The shoes are connected to a vertical pole fastened at the rear of the wagon in



such a manner that a teamster pulling on a rope fastened to the top of a pole could engage the brake shoes. Chock blocks were used to block the rear wheels to prevent the wagon from rolling backwards.

Heavy freight wagons had trailers attached to the front of the train. The tongue was generally twenty-five feet long, five feet wide, and eight feet high and equipped with the same-type braking system as wagons. Wagons pulled by six-to-eight-mule teams often measured over one-hundred feet from the lead team to the trailer's rear board. These large teams could pull between three and five tons. This included a half ton of barley or oats.

During the winter months trekking supplies to the mining camps was extremely dangerous for man and beast. In November 1850 Edward McIlhany and his Mexican muleteers loaded three-hundred mules to move badly needed supplies to Onion Valley. One morning as the team trudged along in snow two feet deep, the storm

quickly became a blizzard and cut visibility down to seventy-five feet. The bell mare lost the trail so McIlhany, took hold of the mare and guided the train through.

On his return trip he came across another mule team that got stuck near Bodley's Ranch, twelve miles from Little Grass Valley. The seven mules froze to death and the Mexican muleteer was found nearly frozen as well.

During that same season more unfortunate mishaps occurred. A pack train heading to La Porte never reached its destination. The men and their mules were found in early spring when the snow melted. It was a grim scene of eighteen men and between sixty and seventy mules frozen to death. Between Onion Valley and Grass Valley forty-two mules perished in snow drifts. Another large train was abandoned above Foster's Bar. After the snow retreated the bleached bones of the unfortunate mules were strewn along several mountain trails.

The winter of 1852-53 in the mountainous area along the Feather River had a tremendous snowfall earlier than usual. Many camps were ill prepared for the heavy snow storms. Most merchants were without a large stock of provision on hand. During that same winter a snow storm arrived at the end of the year. The snow storm continued for days. When the snow fall stopped a pack train was quickly dispatched. After several hours struggling to walk through the deep snow the pack train reached the crest of a mountain to find the wind had piled a huge snow drift along a high bluff. There was no turning back and the camp was at the bottom of the bluff. The muleteers pushed and pulled to no avail. Expletives echoing through the trees had no effect on them. The mules refused to go any farther. They sensed how dangerous it was. But they did not know how determined their owner was. There was only one thing left to do.

The Muleteer blindfolded the mules then pushed them over the edge one by one. There was quite a sight and sound of mules braying their displeasure as they tumbled down the mountain. No mules were harmed. The deep snow and supplies protected them from being injured. Such extreme measures were needed to save the starving miners.

At this point I would like to take you on an imaginary trip to La Porte sixty-five miles north-east with one of McIlhany's freight wagons, a trip lasting five days. Today this same trip takes less than one hour.

You start the day at the crack of dawn at the Lower Plaza. Your guide is Hector Fernandes, one of MacIlhany's

best muleteers. Hector is already preparing the mules for the trip. There is the sound of chains and rigging being connected to each mule, as the mules voice their displeasure by snorting, braying, somehow sensing they are about to begin a five day-trip.

If you are not an early bird, this is not a trip you should be taking. It is important to leave as early as possible so you can reach the first rest station at Stanfield Hill Roadhouse sixteen miles away. Your climb is a moderate one once you leave Yuba City. Mule teams leaving later ended up stopping at Seven Mile House.

Your mule team consists of four pairs of mules pulling a fully loaded freight wagon and trailer stretching one-hundred-twenty feet and standing eleven feet tall. Before you set off, your colorful Mexican muleteer Hector checks the swing chain and the traces while he talks to each mule. This gives him a chance to see which mule might need to be encouraged to shape up. The teamster signals to everyone that he is ready to move out. He mounts the left wheeler and indicates for you to mount the right wheeler. This places you and Hector on the team immediately ahead of the front wheels.

Hector takes hold of the jerk line and releases both brake lines, cracks his bullwhip just over the left ear of the lead mule. Hector shouts out, "Come up there, mules!" The train lurches forward under the strain of the mules collective effort. The back action jerks forward as you slowly rumble ahead.

The one-hundred-twenty-foot caravan slowly turns on to B street making your way to the edge of town.

Turning presented a huge problem for an inexperienced teamster. Hector gives a steady pull on the jerk line forcing the lead span to turn left. The train swings wide around the outside of the curve. The preceding span (the swingteam) follows suit. The next team (the pointers), however, pulls forward on the tongue at a diagonal to the lead team as the lead span rounds the curve, the left pointer steps over the swing chain that is now at a diagonal to the tongue since this chain stretches from the axle to the lead and swing spans. As the pointers come into the curve, they round the corner followed by the wheelers. The wagon and trailer then negotiate the curve until the whole caravan is again straight and heading north on B Street.

Before you leave the city

Hector stops on Sixth Street at a feed barn to stow half a ton of oats for the mules. This now brings the total weight to five tons. You are now ready to leave but Hector decides to wait a while to give the wagon ahead of you a chance to be well down the road so you won't have to chew the dust kicked up by the freight wagon.

Soon the mule train is well ahead and Hector decides it's safe to head out. Again Hector cracks his whip and shouts "come up there, mules."

The train jerks forward and you slowly lumber down B Street. As the wagon approaches Twelfth Street Hector yanks the jerk lines several times to start the mules into a complicated right turn. Off in the distant you can see the Sierra Nevada Range. In a matter of minutes the freight wagon is out of town and the bell mare can now set the pace at a rapid gait.

As the team begins to settle

into a rhythm you hear six jingling bells resounding in the clear cool spring air. The bells are dangling from a long metal arch secured to the hames of the lead team. The bells are to set the pace of the wagon and to alert approaching wagon trains that another wagon is approaching in a blind area.

The first few hours are uneventful. The road is smooth and has a gentle slope as you head towards Stanfield House. After six hours and sixteen miles you arrive at Stanfield House and Toll Road. You stop here for the night to allow the mules to eat and have a good night's rest. Tomorrow is expected to be a difficult trip. You and Hector unharness the mules to let them cool down before they can eat.

Now it's your turn to dust off the dirt and grime you have collected over the past six hours. At the house waiting on the front porch is a large common washbasin with fresh water. A comb hangs by a leather strap attached next to the cracked twelve-inch round mirror.

While waiting for supper to be served the two of you gather around the bar for a "dust cutter." Here fellow teamsters exchange tales about their experiences. Each tale comes forth with an increase in tonnage to prodigious weights and near-death experiences.

The call for supper is announced and everybody quickly enters the dining area. Placed before everyone is a large kettle of elk stew, salad, wild game, mashed potatoes, and to wash this down there are water, tea, coffee and fresh milk. All this is for fifty cents. The meal is served family style. Grace is disregarded and everyone quickly secures his portion of the

banquet. Plates are piled high. If you believe in etiquette you most certainly will end up with a very light meal. Table manners were left in the big cities. Several times a hand holding a fork flashed by your face. On the return a piece of meat or bread dangled from a fork.

There is no time for rest after the meal. The mules have cooled down now and it's time to water, feed and brush them down. After that there is still time to relax in the road house for a few more drinks and more tall tales. For fifty cents you can sleep in the road house. Your teamster does not recommend sleeping in the road house.

He informs you about the unwelcome critters keeping you up all night. It is safer to sleep near the team under the bright stars. There is plenty of hay for you make a bed. Soon you are engulfed in deep slumber until dawn. The following morning sunrise is spectacularly backed up with the sound of a rooster crowing and the mules beginning to stir. You enjoy a hardy breakfast of buttermilk pancakes stacked high, crisp bacon and eggs. Strong coffee and fresh milk are also served.

Your toughest day of the trip is about to begin. You will be walking. The mules are going to need all their strength. Any extra weight will only tire the mules sooner. The first three miles have a moderate incline. Hector notices his team is beginning to tire so he encourages the mules to move along with a few expressive words, calling each mule by name like a drill instructor shouting commands in their ears. If a mule becomes lax the rest of the team will sense it and the team will soon

break down and fall out of rhythm and soon give up.

The incline has become steeper and the mules are starting to slow down. Hector drops the chock block, located at the rear wheels of the wagon. It was not by accident Hector stops the team at this location. The next several hundred yards are very difficult and stressful on the mules. Hector disconnects the trailer from the wagon to lighten the load. All the mules are checked for panting or showing fatigue.

Hector notices his team is not trying hard enough. He shouts "mula, caramba, hippa, Dona Marie" and many others to get the team to try harder. Some swore, shouting and beating their mules into moving along. They soon found out the mules quickly wore out and were of little use to them sooner then expected. If all attempts failed they resorted to praying and meditation.

After a short rest the crack of the whip signals the team to start moving. The mule team lurches forward. Because the grade is so steep you proceed about forty to sixty feet then the chock block is dropped once again to let the team rest. It is important for all the mules to have a good foothold before starting. Every one squats down until the hair of his belly scrapes the ground. With a mighty collective effort the wagon slowly rolls forward. Again the chock blocks are dropped giving the mules another brief rest. After resting a few more times the wagon reaches the top and is unhitched. The trailer is then pulled up in the same manner.

Finally you arrive at the foot of Willow Glenn Grade. It is about 6 P.M. and everyone is tired and hungry. The

second night is much like the first night: no manners at the dinner table and lots of food. Mules are taken care of after the meal and you are soon asleep in your hay bed.

Dawn arrives with another beautiful sunrise on the third day. This day is just as slow as the previous day. Willow Glenn Grade begins another long steep three-mile climb. Using the same procedure as the previous day takes three hours to reach the summit and pay the first toll at the Knox Toll Station. This toll road actually begins at the foot of Stanfield Hill and extends to Buckeye House at the Plumas County line.

This is a good time to give everybody a short rest. The rest of the road is not as steep, yet every bit as dangerous. This portion of the road is narrow with only room for one caravan to pass at a time. Suddenly off in the distance the faint jingle of bells carries across the valley. It is determined another caravan is heading your way. The wagon can not back up. The only thing that can be done is to move the team to the turnout a few hundred feet ahead. The turnout is in a particularly dangerous location. It sits on the outside of the curve. The general rule is, a team pulling upgrade has the right of way, but loaded or not, the team closest to the turnout must pull into it. Here Hector showed his great skill, maneuvering the team and wagon onto the turnout just enough for the wagon and team to fit in. It is very important to keep the team steady so it doesn't bolt forward possibly getting tangled up with the other freight wagons' riggings.

The distant jingling becomes louder. A cloud of dust can be seen

around the next bend as the team plods into sight. The rig is similar to yours and the teamster is an old friend. There is no time to stop and exchange tales; you must continue on. While you wait Hector recounts a time when another team he was hauling met a similar team on a narrow road with a smaller turnout. Neither team could back up nor could it pass safely. It was decided the wagon with the lightest load would be unhitched. Heavy ropes were attached to the wagon and wound around tree trunks. The wagon was then lowered over the side of the road while the other freight wagon passed.

The other wagon has passed and you are back on the trail heading for Pike County House Hill. You arrive early in the evening and like the previous nights a hardy meal is served and then it's back out to take care of the mules. The fourth day you ascend a steep grade to Woodleaf where the second Knox Toll Road toll is paid. Soon a light rain begins to fall. The rain is a blessing. It helps to settle the dust but could increase the danger down the road. If the road becomes too muddy it's almost impossible to travel on.

At a low spot on the road water has collected. Soon the wheels begin sinking into the mud. Progress slows down and the wagon becomes hopelessly stuck in the mud up to the axles. The driver shouts and cracks his whip just over the mules' ears, backed up with a slew of blasphemous innuendoes. Hector realizes his team is stuck and there is nothing to do now except wait until another team comes along to help pull you out. Some teamers had little patience when their rig got stuck. One driver got stuck in mud and was so

mad he took out his pistol and shot each of his mules and then took out his own brains.

Shortly, the sounds of bells from an approaching caravan grow louder. The new arrival halts behind your rig. The two drivers unhitch all spans except the wheelers of the rear team and hitch them to your wagon. With fourteen mules hitched together they put forth a mighty effort straining against their collars. Slowly the rig begins to move. Whips snapping and teamsters shouting the mules continue to churn through the mud until reaching drier ground. Now the teams are hitched to the second wagon and it is pulled to drier ground. The same is done for the other driver's wagon.

After hitching the team up we are on our way. The road begins a rather steep climb for a few hundred yards reaching the brow of a knoll overlooking a deep, wooded valley. At this point Hector decides to rest the mules. The descent is steep with a sharp narrow curve halfway down with a deep chasm. Hector informs you he has taken this route many times and knows how dangerous this descent is. He unhitches the lead team and takes it in tow to the back of the wagon.

Hector pulls out two double edged axes. He explains the team has stopped to cut down a tree and attach it to the back of the wagon. "It is a good insurance policy", he said. He's not going to trust the brakes to hold the wagon back on this dangerous hill. On a similar trail he witnessed a mule team and wagon go over the side of a steep hill.

The mule team was close to the bend when the brake shoes broke. The

wagon shot down the road, the mules trying to get a foothold to keep from being pushed over the cliff. After stomping and digging in the weight of the wagon was too great for the mules to hold back. They ended up going over the cliff. Only one mule survived.

In no time at all the two of you have the tree cut down and ready to hook it up to the mules so they can drag the tree down to the back of the wagon and attach it to the axle with a long chain. The drag of the tree acts as a brake to keep the wagon from running out of control.

With the team hitched up you are ready to proceed. Hector takes the jerk line and calls out and releases the brake line and eases the caravan down the hill and around the corner with caution. Once the road evens out the tree is discarded. The team can now get back into a rhythm and begin to make good time. Your third and last toll station on the Knox Toll Road is in sight. You spend the night at the North Star House. On the fifth and final day you climb North Star Hill passing the Buckeye House and the American House. The rest of the road begins a gentle grade into La Porte following Rabbit Creek. The closer you get the more activity you see in and about the mining town of La Porte. You arrive mid-afternoon stopping at the Union Hotel and Stable. You thank Hector for letting you experience a brief moment in transportation history.

Over the following years the economy of the area changed and the iron horse made its way into the Sierra Nevadas, eliminating the need for mule teams. Not long after the iron horse arrived it too faded into history with the



newer form of transportation of the automobiles and trucks hauling freight to mountain towns.

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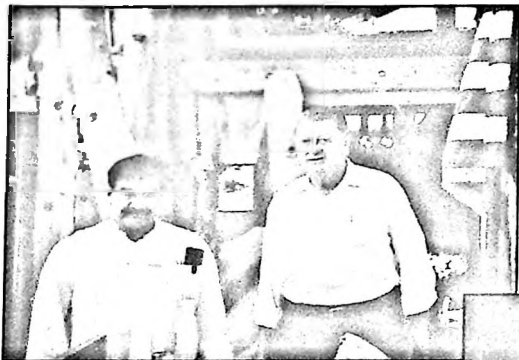
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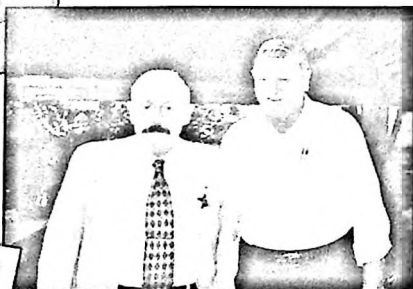
# A look back at 2002

August

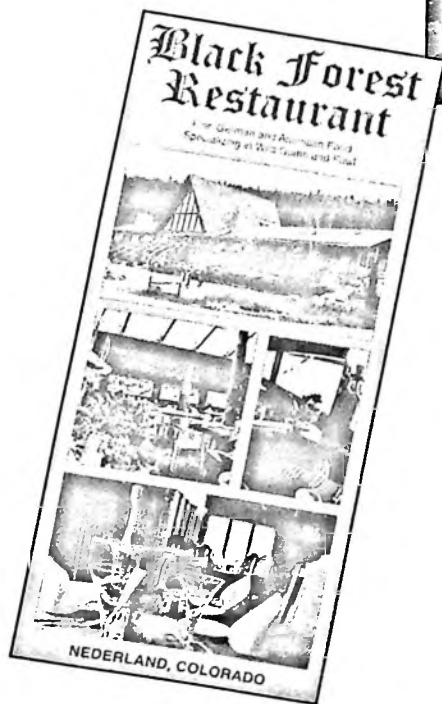
The Denver Posse of  
Westerners Summer  
Rondezvous at the  
Black Forest  
Restaurant in  
Nederland



Alfred Arias and Bill Lorenz



Bill Lorenz with Sheriff Singles



Bill Lorenz was born and raised in Mainz, Germany along the Rhine River some 250 miles east of Paris, France. From the age of 14 through 17 he served an apprenticeship there in cellar keeping, cooking and restaurantier, graduating with honors.

He moved to Switzerland and from there to Nice in southern France, practicing his craft, then returned to Mainz and eventually became the assistant manager from 1953 through 1956 for the American military commissary at Wiesbaden, West Germany.

Mr. Lorenz next move came in January 1957 when, as an emigrant, he left Germany to immigrate to the United States, settling in New York City to work variously at the Waldorf, Luchows, and at Webers Fish Restaurant. June 1957 found Bill at the Brown Palace in Denver, Colorado. Colorado has been his home from that time to the present. He is especially proud of the fact that he was responsible for the preparation and serving of the meal at the ceremony in 1960 when the Cheesman-Boettcher Mansion on Capitol Hill at 400 East Eighth Avenue was turned over to the State of Colorado for use as the Governor's Mansion. In 1962 Governor Stephen McNichols and his family moved in.

In March 1958, Bill Lorenz opened the Black Forest Inn in Black Hawk, Colorado with partner Jimmy Hogan; this effective working relationship extended to March 1961 when Bill bought out Hogan's interest. He continued to operate this well-known and highly regarded venue featuring German recipes to March 2000, a span of over 42 years. Bill attributes the advent of gambling in Central City and Black Hawk in the fall of 1991 as the beginning of the end of his tenure there.

Mr. Lorenz then joined with Alfred Arias, a chef of 35 years experience, in a partnership in Nederland, Colorado to open the Black Forest Restaurant where The Denver Westerners dined in August. As Bill put it "Mr. Arias had the money and I had the reputation and following to make this operation a success" beginning April 29, 2000.



# A look back at 2002

## September Meeting



**The Story of the Leanin' Tree Museum of Western Art of Boulder, Colorado,** by Sara Sheldon, Associate Museum Director

Sara Sheldon was born & raised in Oak Park, Illinois. She moved to Colorado Springs where she studied at Colorado College and the Fine Arts Center, taking her BA degree in studio art & art history. Sheldon attended CU/Boulder and the University of Denver graduate schools of international studies in the fields of Chinese political economy and socialist politics, concluding with a Masters and hours toward a doctorate in 1988. She

then worked as both a consultant and as a writer until she met Ed Trumble, founder of the internationally known greeting card company, Leanin' Tree.

Mr. Trumble had assembled an extraordinary post-1950 American West art collection which was needing an art curator in order to effectively share this collection with the public....enter Sara Sheldon. Mr. Trumble hired Sara in 1994...and the story of the Leanin' Tree Museum of Western Art in Boulder began a new chapter in its now 12,000 square feet of displays.





## The Story of the Leanin' Tree

The Leanin' Tree Museum of Western Art houses one of the nation's largest privately owned collections of Western art. Over 200 paintings and 80 bronzes depict the various themes of the genre: Indians, cowboys, desert and mountain landscapes, wildlife, scenes of pioneers and trappers, Indian guides, everyday ranch life and Western history. Ed Trumble, founder of Leanin' Tree, Inc., has sustained a close relationship over many years as friend and publisher with all the Western artists represented in the collection.

In the course of traveling the West in search of the best artwork to reproduce on Leanin' Tree greeting cards, Ed Trumble gradually acquired this magnificent private collection, which constitutes a unique cultural contribution to the community. The museum is open to the public free of charge.

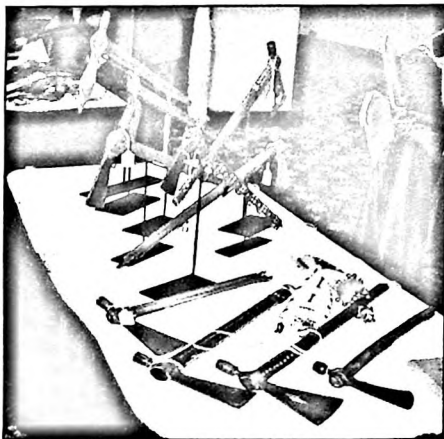
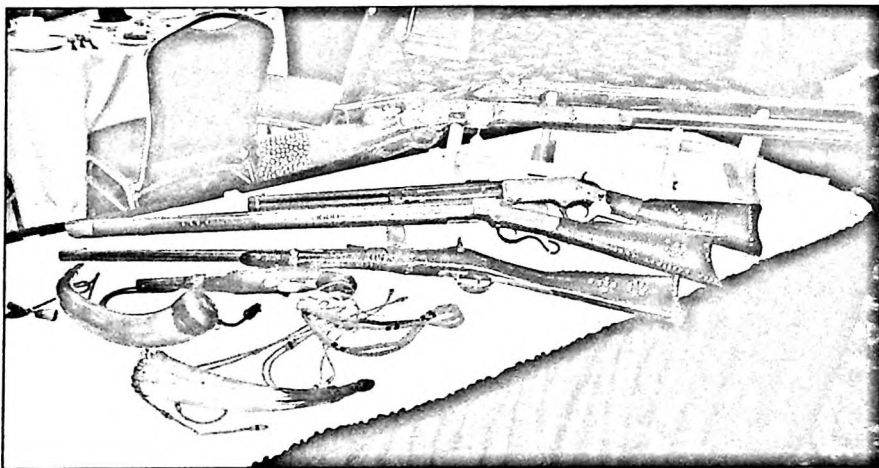
Ed had no intention of establishing a museum in those early days, but was buying art from his artist friends for his own enjoyment. Ed supplied the only exposure for many of these early Western artists by publishing their work and selling it nationwide at a time when there was little market and no galleries for this contemporary Western American art. The museum originated as a small part of a new manufacturing facility for Leanin' Tree cards built in 1974. Visitors to Boulder, stopping at Leanin' Tree to "see where the cards are made" discover this magnificent display of original art, many pieces of which have never been reproduced on greeting cards in the Leanin' Tree line. Today, the museum occupies 12,000 square feet on two floors.

# A look back at 2002

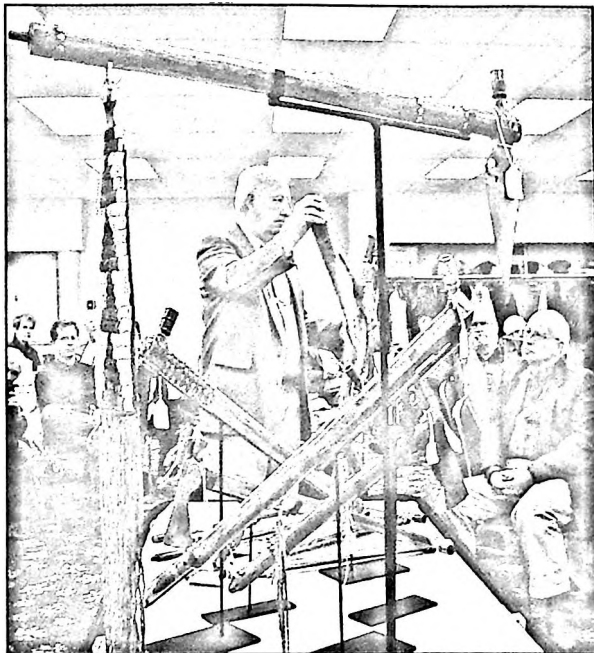


**November Meeting  
Indian artifacts**

A spirited discussion  
between Richard Cook  
and Steve Weil



A beautiful collection



Mr. Severen "Pete" Pedersen comes to us with a rich, varied background of life experiences. Born 1932 in Glenwood Springs, CO, he attended K-12 there. Then it was on to Regis College where he graduated in 1954 with a degree in philosophy and minors in history and in literature. That same year of graduation saw Pete recruited by U.S. Army Counterintelligence. He attended school in that association at Ft. Holibird and language school in Germany. It was in Germany where Pete worked through mid-1957 in counterintelligence.

Next on the agenda was enrollment in University of Denver law school in 1959, followed by marriage to Virginia, five children, and eventually retirement from Safeway stores in 1989. Mr. Pedersen enjoys reading, traveling,



hunting, fishing...and collecting! He is a member of Colorado Gun Collectors and of the American Society of Arms Collectors.

Pete showed and commented on some of his American Indian weapons, collected over 40 years, an important part of American history rarely, if ever, seen outside museums.

# A look back at 2002

## December holiday Rendezvous

### Soldier's Music, American Civil War 1861-1865

(A program of music and lecture by Kent Brandebery)



Kent was raised in northern Douglas County, CO and attended school K-12 in Littleton. He achieved bachelor & graduate degrees in music at UNC and CU, respectively. He then did post-graduate work in Western American History at the University of Wyoming-Laramie.

Kent taught elementary music for three years in the Douglas Co. Public Schools and has served in the capacity of music historian for the Civil War-era movie, *Glory* and in the movie *Geronimo* as well as in Ted Turner's *Crazy Horse* where he performed as the military band director.

Closer to home, he arranged and played the music for the Douglas County Channel 8 award-winning production video concerning the Stephen Long expedition in Colorado. Kent also performed other valuable services for Douglas County as an historian. He discovered, through careful research, what in fact led to the demise of the Reynolds gang of Confederate sympathizers and robbers near Russellville at the hands of Chivington's men and he recently finished his tenure as a member of the Douglas County Historic Preservation Board.

Kent did 4-years apprenticeship for post-graduate work at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyo. and is currently one of the national directors of CAMP, (Council on America's Military Past).

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## **Fred A. Rosenstock Award presented to the Wheat Ridge Historical Society**

Since its 1974 founding to save its cherished sod house, the Wheat Ridge Historical Society (WRHS) has been making history. Working with the Wheat Ridge Parks Department, the Society helped create the Wheat Ridge Historical Park at 4610 Robb Street in 1975. This one-acre park boasts the first Wheat Ridge Post Office, built in 1913 at W. 38th Avenue and Teller Street. In 1922, the post office also became the first Wheat Ridge Public Library. The WRHS rescued the post office and library from demolition in 1989 and in 1992 moved it to the historic park.

The park includes Wheat Ridge's Pioneer Sod house, a three-room circa-1890 marvel constructed of 5,000 square feet of native tall prairie grass sod cut into strips 24 inches thick and 4 to 6 inches high. The sod house was built on the Baugh Farm, whose farmhouse is thought to be the oldest surviving building in Jefferson County.

This relic is being restored at 11361 West 44 Avenue at the northeast corner of Robb Street. James H. Baugh built the original one-and-a-half story, one-room, hewn-log, and V-notched structure in 1859. Now the eastern part is a much larger clapboard house that the Samuel Longnecker family, the second owner, added between 1898 and 1903. On the surrounding 160 acres Baugh raised oats, potatoes, vegetables and some of the wheat that inspired the name Wheat Ridge.

By 1870, Baugh was worth \$5,500 and helped found Wheat Ridge's first school and the Wheat Ridge Grange Hall. The Baugh house, according to WRHS treasurer Bob Olsen, narrowly escaped destruction. In 1994 an arsonist tried to burn

it down. Next, a developer threatened to build a subdivision. To stop him, the Wheat Ridge City Council started to condemn the property, inspiring the developer to sell it to Jeffco Open Space in 1997 for \$277,000. The Baugh House and the Historical Park are owned by the City of Wheat Ridge and operated by the WRHS.

In 1892 Bert White bought 15 acres of the Baugh Farm and constructed a five-room classic cottage just south of the sod house. That cottage is now the headquarters and museum of the WRHS. The historical park also features the c.1863 A. Henry Stevens log cabin, thought to be the first homestead grant in Colorado. That one-and-a-half-round log cabin was moved to the park in 1985. Claudia Worth, president of the WRHS since 1984, reports "Come on out to the only place in Colorado where you can see a sod house, a post office-library, a classic cottage, a log cabin and a classic vernacular farm house, complete with a chicken coop.

Without the Colorado State Historical Fund, we never could have done all this. They have been wonderful, holding our hands all along the long and winding road into our past."

—Tom Noel

## Lifetime Achievement Award

### Clyde William Jones

The Cherokee and Choctaw genes flowing into the Scotch-Irish blood may explain his inability to settle down. Clyde Jones has been:

- 1) Eagle Scout
- 2) Tulsa Central High School All-State Quarterback
- 3) University of Tulsa quarterback and journalism major
- 4) Graduate of creative writing programs at Universities of Colorado, Denver and Instituto Allende, Mexico
- 5) Author of many articles, including ones published in *The Denver Post*, the *Douglas County New Press*, *Leisure Life*, *Oil and Gas Investor*, *Rocky Mountain News*, *Startling Detective* and *West Coast Writer's Conspiracy*. Clyde is now working on a book, *The Great Ranches of Douglas County*.
- 6) Hollywood first treatment scriptwriter for Hollywood's western outlaw movie, "The Last of the Daltons" (Republic Pictures, 1950s).
- 7) Oil Scout ("my best job—a company spy") for Exxon.
- 8) Landman for Sun Oil Company



- 9) President of Northstar Petroleum Company, Minneapolis, and Cherokee Oil Corporation, Bismarck and Denver
- 10) Amateur Archaeologist who helped put Lamb Springs Archaeological Preserve on the National Register and guides tours of that mammoth kill site for Roxborough State Park
- 11) Chairman of the Douglas County Historic Preservation Board since its inception in 1992
- 12) President of the Parker Area Historical Society
- 13) Starred on television programs on Douglas County growth and historic preservation on Channel 4 in Denver and Channel 12 in Tokyo
- 14) Received the Colorado Cares Centennial Award in 2001 from Governor Bill Owens
- 15) Member of the Denver Posse of Westerners since 1992
- 16) Historian and preservationist who has fought to save the rapidly fading past in the fastest growing county in America. Clyde and his sidekicks helped pass a Douglas County Preservation Ordinance to designate county landmarks and is trying to preserve Castle Rock's old Cantril School as the Douglas County Cultural Center and History Museum.

Clyde has been a ringleader in successful efforts to turn Sedalia's Cherokee Ranch into a National Register Historic District, museum and open space; to convert the old Castle Rock DRG Depot into the Castle Rock Museum, to preserve Castle Rock, Fonder, Spring Valley, St. Philip-in-the-Field and other pioneer cemeteries; to save Lone Tree School in Larkspur, to preserve and place on the National Register the village of Louviers, a Dupont company town; to excavate, preserve, landmark and interpret the history of Russellville. Clyde has also been among those working to save Bear Canyon, Pretty Woman, George Engi, Prairie Canyon and other ranches. He has reviewed more than 150 Douglas County land use development and demolition proposals for heritage impact. Before Clyde came along, developers worked out deals with local fire districts to practice on old buildings they would burn down to make way for new development.

At the Frank Kline Ranch, the developer of Province Center's 549-residence subdivision wanted to demolish the Kline's two-story stone house, barns, stable, springhouse, and windmill. When Clyde fussed and held up demolition for two years, the developer agreed to pay \$100,000 to build a mini-park and a monument dedicated to the Klimes. This park commemorating the homestead sits just off Colorado Boulevard near I-470 with an interpretive monument made from native stones and replicas of the keystones from the old 1880's homestead. The Douglas County Preservation Board was allowed to videotape the demolition. "When we play the video backwards," says Clyde, "they build it all back up again."

Clyde has worked on 45 historic site surveys, more than 50 oral history projects and helped obtain some \$2 million in State Historic Fund monies for preserving Douglas County's heritage.

What does this man really do?

Will the real Clyde Jones please stand up?

## The Denver Posse of Westerners would like to welcome the following people who joined in 2002:

“Buffalo Tom” Martens of Columbus, NE. Buffalo Tom was referred by Jeff Broome.

Reed Philip Weimer of Denver, who was referred by Steve Weil.

Debbie Theobald of Englewood referred by Ken Gaunt.

Sureua Towler of Lawrence, KS referred by Roy Hohn.

Louanna Opekar of Lakewood referred by Bob and Lynn Stull.

Glen Preble of Lakewood referred by Ken Gaunt.

Catherine Mencin of Lakewood referred by Bob and Lynn Stull.

Sylvia Miller of Lakewood referred by Lebrun Hutchinson.

Ray E. Jenkins of Loveland referred by Gene Rakosnik.

Alan Mencin of Lakewood referred by John and Winnie Burdan

Rebecca Dorward of Aurora referred by Heather Peterson.

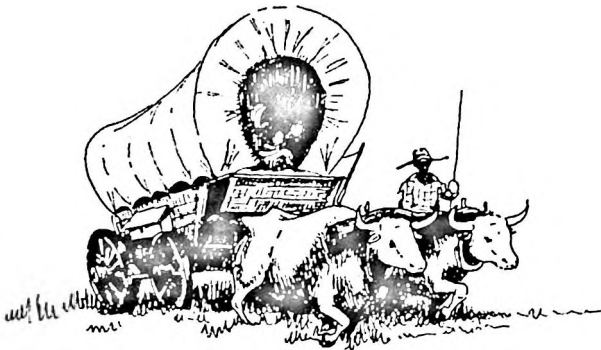
Mary Beth Jenkins of Denver referred by Frances Melrose and Tom Noel.

Carl Barna of Arvada referred by Bob Stull.

Sonia Caldwell of Greenwood Village referred by Vonnie Perkins.

Lloyd Anderson of Morrison referred by Tom Noel.

Steven Richard Alexander of Centennial referred by Ken Gaunt.



### 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

**Colorado Mining Stories: Hazzards, Heroics And Humor**, by Caroline Arlan Montrose. Western Reflections Publishing Company, 2002. 176 pp. 57 black and white photos, glossary. Softbound, \$12.95.

This interesting book is composed of interviews with thirty people, men and women, associated with the mining industry in Colorado's San Juan Mountains.

Being a reflection of oral history, the details provided vary from interview to interview. Despite the chronicled deaths and severe injuries, nearly all of the interviewees hated to see the end of mining.

In addition to the mayhem, there are fascinating stories of the less than quite legal exploits in "high-grading".

The mining community worked hard and played hard, yet all participants were considered family, for better or for worse. For the foreseeable future, mining in South Western Colorado has ended. This little book adds an interesting footnote to the end of the era.

--Bob Stull, P. M.

**John Clay, Jr.: Commissionman, Banker and Rancher**, by Lawrence M. Woods. The Arthur H. Clark Company, Spokane, Washington, 2001. 285 pages. Illustrated with black and white photographs. Index, selected bibliography. Hardback, \$34.50.

This volume is a credible biography of John Clay, one of those Scotsmen who came to Wyoming to run cattle ranches. Many Denver Westerners know Clay as the author of *My Life on the Range*, a volume that was privately published in 1924. The first edition of that classic now has an average asking price of at least \$300.

This biography of Clay will not become a classic, although it is a model of a well-researched biography. It also ought to be in any significant library on Western ranching. It is reminiscent of books such as Lester Sheffy's *Francklyn Land and Cattle Company* and Evetts Haley's *The XIT Ranch of Texas*, for, in telling about John Clay, it tells much about the mundane (but very important) workings of the cattle business. The book also tells about other aspects of Clay's long and successful life, including the Western banking business, the meat-packing industry, and more-than-we-really-ever-wanted-to-know about British and Scottish real property law and leaseholds.

As indicated by its title, the book certainly is not a "shoot-em-up." However, to many lowbrows (such as this reviewer), the most interesting parts will be those that discuss the Johnson County War, Tom Horn, and Kid Curry. Clay, the discreet Scotsman, did not talk or write much about such blood-and-thunder happenings and personalities. But the author has done a good job of tracking such topics down.

The volume is recommended and should be purchased before it goes out of print. But it will not be a light and easy read for most non-academics.

--John Hutchins, P.M.

**Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier**, by Robert M. Utley. University of Oklahoma, Red River Books, Norman, 2001. Revised Edition. 226 pages. Illustrated with black and white photographs, paintings and maps. Index, bibliography. Paperback, \$17.95.

If the reasonably mature and well-read Westerner were to read only one biography of George Armstrong Custer, this probably should be the one. The volume, subject to its relative brevity, is a well-reasoned and pretty detailed examination of the great American soldier's life, falling somewhere (about the 50 yard line) between the adulation of the Nineteenth Century and the revisionist diatribes of the Twentieth Century.

Both sides of the Custer controversy will find grist for their respective mills here. The book (acknowledging much to be unprovable rumor—some of which still may very well be true) contains diverse information ranging from sexual indiscretions to theories of military management and leadership.

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Both sides of the Custer controversy will find grist for their respective mills...

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This is a revised edition of the book, which originally was published in hardback in 1988. However, I am not sure to what extent it has been revised, having looked at the first edition only briefly a long time ago. This edition also came out just before a 2002 illustrated edition.

These books prove that, whether one loves the family or not, the Custer name still sells (as a recent biography of Tom Custer, which sold out almost immediately, attests).

Thus, the book will be most helpful to those who want to delve beneath the popular biographies and to "hear all about it."

The only fact in the volume which I would care to contest, is the statement that, at the 1976 centennial observation of the Little Big Horn, the audience was "nervous" about Russell Means and his sour-looking supporters. I recall no such nervousness. But then again, this reviewer has had to deal with lawyers most of his adult life. Now those are tough customers! I recall Westerner Hugo von Rodeck, who had to deal with college professors most of his life, also indicating that he wasn't scared at the gathering. He had a detached, academic interest.

The volume is, of course, recommended. The cover illustration is one of Thom Ross' modern impressionistic takes on the West. While Ross is neither Russell nor Remington, the cover seems to work with this volume and this era.

--John Hutchins, P.M.



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

March - April 2003



*Photo by the author*

**The Hole-in-the-Rock Trail**  
by Mitchell Barker  
(presented Sept 25, 2002)



# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LIX NO. 2



March - April 2003

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He attended the Univ. of New Mexico and then joined the federal civil service as a writer and public affairs specialist for the Defense Dept.

Mitch was public affairs officer at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Aurora for two years in the 1980s. He left to pursue a Masters Degree at the Univ. of Oklahoma and then joined the Federal Aviation Admin. in Texas. Mitch was the agency's prime media spokesperson concerning FAA's participation in construction of Denver Intl. Airport.

Mitch retired from the FAA in 2000 and now enjoys writing and travel.

*On the cover: After widening with dynamite, this slit in the Colorado River canyon allowed a party of Mormon pioneers to advance into the unknown and settle southeast Utah's San Juan region in 1879-80.*

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# The Hole-in-the-Rock Trail

by Mitchell Barker  
(presented Sept 25, 2002)

The winter of 1879-80 was the cruellest since white people had been in Utah. Even on Salt Lake Valley farms, established for three decades, people and animals suffered from the cold. On the Mormon frontier, cold and storms battered 250 people toiling through some of the most rugged terrain on the continent. Children went hungry, livestock collapsed in exhaustion and adults despaired of a land that seemed to delight in forcing them over broken mesas, up and down slick cliffs, through sandy creek bottoms and across endless, bare sandstone.

Their progress stalled when a promised shortcut proved to be an illusion. The month and a half of travel they had been told to expect turned into half a year of probing unexplored badlands. Their trek left Indians scoffing in disbelief. They traveled across such forbidding land that no towns ever sprang up along their path and scarcely any pavement has been laid along their trail.

Their story is one of misery redeemed through determination and remarkable feats of engineering. They widened a narrow groove in a sandstone cliff and passed through it with wagons and stock. Using mud and sticks, they hung a path for their wagons in the air, then crossed the Colorado River and made their way through a maze of canyons. They built a road down a clay-choked pass, cut a path across cedar-covered flats and down more sandstone

cliffs. They arrived to settle a country as unforgiving as the trail had been.

But no matter the hardships, they left a legacy of commitment and endurance that shines down the 125 years that have passed since then.

## The trek

The Hole-in-the-Rock Expedition, as it is usually called, was the final thrust in the Mormon settlement of the Intermountain West.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, to use its official name, was the largest group of believers in doctrines taught by Joseph Smith. Smith claimed to have been entrusted with golden plates buried in a New York hillside by former inhabitants of North America.

Following Smith's death, the church split apart. The largest segment followed Brigham Young's orders to leave the United States for the Salt Lake Valley. Here, in lands held only by Indians, they hoped the Church would be able to thrive unmolested by non-Mormons. Converts came to Utah from Europe and other mission fields and settlements spread to fill basin and range country increasingly distant from the Valley. Church members settled in today's Southern California, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico, and north into Idaho.

Even as Smith's band arrived in the Salt Lake country, the nation they had left behind fought with Mexico. One of

the results of the war was that the Church's prospective area of settlement, land they called "Deseret", became part of the United States. Soon Americans who were not believers, or were hostile to the Church, were competing with Mormons for land. As a group that had been driven from one place to another in its early days, believers did not relish losing potential farms and township sites to those who ridiculed and hated their faith and way of life.

Thirty years after the Mormons arrived in the Southwest, the area we call the Four Corners was still largely unsettled. Neither Mormons nor others had established a permanent toehold in the country where today's Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona join. Only Colorado was a state, the others still territories. This lack of settlement appeared likely to change soon. The triangular-shaped area between the Colorado and San Juan Rivers known as the San Juan Country had long been disputed between Indian tribes and was becoming a hiding ground for outlaws. Miners had set up unruly camps and towns in the nearby Rockies and stockmen had established a few scattered ranches. Clearly, non-Mormon settlement of the San Juan Country was at hand.

Brigham Young and the Church hierarchy had long looked forward to peopling the San Juan Country with believers. If a presence of strong Church members could be established in the San Juan Country there would be numerous benefits. The more land occupied by Church members the less they had to fear being put to flight again by hostile neighbors.

A Mormon population on the far frontier would also help pacify rival Indian tribes. If hostilities erupted between Indians and whites, the outlying settlements would take the first blows.

Besides defense, there was also a religious reason for having Church members as friends and neighbors to the Indians. Natives were a part of the Church's hope. Mormon doctrine said they were remnants of ancient Americans responsible for Smith's golden plates. The Indians, they believed, were destined to be converted to Mormon beliefs and become a "white and delightful people".

Another religious consideration was that settlement of the San Juan Country would be movement to the east. This had a symbolic importance because it might prove to be start of Mormon return to Missouri, the main stake of Zion. Thus, it was the first step in fulfilling Joseph Smith's prophecy that Independence would be an important center for the Church in days to come.

The settlers would also serve as an element of law and order in a country that was an ideal hiding place for those in trouble with authority. With an infinite number of canyons, the San Juan Country is still a baffling place to trail someone who doesn't want to be found. Settlers would bring courts and law officers to make robber and rustler at least somewhat more likely to think before preying on others.

These thoughts and dreams would come together in a settlement effort called the San Juan Mission, the official title of what we commonly call the Hole-in-the-Rock party. While the Four Corners was the general goal, for some

time after organization of the trek was underway the Church had no specific place for the Mission to settle. It might end up going to Arizona, perhaps to southeast Utah. No one knew at first. Even when church leaders decided on the San Juan Country, there were no exact town sites determined. These would be identified later. Vaguely, one leader expressed hope that Mormon settlement along the San Juan River would spread from the initial towns up the river's tributaries into Colorado and New Mexico.

### Organization

To obtain members for the San Juan Mission, the traditional and very direct Mormon method was used. From the Church's earliest days, faithful members were called to give up their livelihoods and leave their families to preach Joseph Smith's gospel among the unconverted. Their efforts had brought new believers into the fold from all over America, Britain and Scandinavia, adding to the population gathering in the valleys of Utah. The Church heavily depended on these self-sacrificing toilers but did not wait for them to volunteer. It sent out no letters inquiring about prospective missionaries' interest in going. Those assigned were bluntly informed they had been chosen.

For the trek to the San Juan, no change in this means was thought necessary. At local church conferences, a member's name would be announced as one "directed and set apart" to join the San Juan Mission. It was then up to the member to uproot his family, leave established farms and shops, dispose of property, say farewell to friends—

probably forever—and set out across trackless waste to settle among possibly hostile unbelievers and unfriendly Indians. It is said that many of the young men who knew they were likely to be chosen lived in dread of hearing their names called out. But once selected, they generally accepted the call as an honor to serve their faith. All were free to decline their assignment.

Eventually, after almost all members of the Mission had been announced in this manner, a notice was circulated inviting volunteers to join the trek. A few took advantage of the opportunity to relocate to the San Juan Country or beyond while traveling in the protection of a large group. There were even some non-Mormons in the Expedition.

Because it was nearest to the proposed area of new settlement, most members of the Mission were to come from southwest Utah. To scout for good places to establish towns and farms for the main party, a small advance party set out from there in the spring of 1879. It consisted of 36 people with twelve wagons, about 80 horses and 200 head of cattle. The group made its way into northern Arizona, crossed the Colorado River and continued south to a Mormon settlement today called Tuba City where the road ended. It was hard going. Waterholes were far apart and held by Indians resentful of sharing the precious resource with whites and their livestock. Several unpleasant confrontations occurred along the way. Continuing north into the extreme southeast corner of Utah, cutting their own trail through an expanse of dry flats broken by occasional flat-topped hills, they eventually reached the San Juan River.

Somewhere here the main party would settle in the coming winter. The advance party settled in to explore the area and begin farms so the main party would have food when it arrived.

At the junction of the San Juan River and Montezuma Creek they found a white settler. He is said to have had an interest in Mexican history and had named the creek for the last Aztec emperor. Here, at what the Mormons called Fort Montezuma, they built houses and started regular church services. They dug an irrigation system for crops but it failed when water level dropped too early in the season, leaving their young plants to die of thirst. (Had they but known it, this failure was just the first in a struggle with unpredictable water sources in the area.)

After a few months of farming, some of the advance party set out as planned to return to the established settlements. They left behind two families and a single man to raise crops for the main group's arrival. Some had seen all they wanted of the San Juan Country and would not come back. Most would join the main San Juan Mission with their families and return (they thought) in a few weeks for permanent settlement. Instead of going back the way they came, they took a northern course, through what would someday be the town of Moab. From there, they followed the Old Spanish Trail that had been used for trade by Mexico between its provinces of California and New Mexico. The party followed the Trail along roughly the route of Interstate 70 to the east, eventually turning south and arriving in the settlements of southwest Utah.

Having selected Montezuma as the

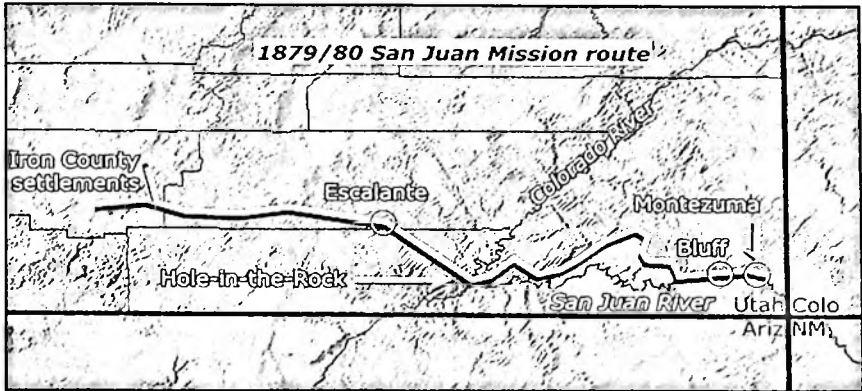
target for settlement and made provisions for food to be waiting for the main party when it arrived, the next important decision was determining how the Expedition would reach the San Juan Country.

Here was a dilemma. The southern route taken by the advance party was critically short of water and natives would certainly not welcome 250 settlers and hundreds of livestock using the few waterholes. Yet, the northern route taken by the returning advance party was a very long trail from southwest Utah. That route would require 450 miles of travel to reach the San Juan Country that was only 200 miles east of where most settlers lived. Surely, it must be possible to find a shorter and better way.

And it seemed there might be.

Such a direct route would begin somewhere near the new Mormon settlement of Escalante and run east and south. While stockmen from Escalante had explored southeast toward the Colorado River seeking rangeland for their livestock and prospectors had looked there for gold, no one had crossed the river and seen the far side. When the Mission was proposed, several Escalante settlers were asked to scout into the unknown country. They were to determine if it was feasible to get a wagon train down the high cliffs that lined the Colorado River, cross the water and then reach the San Juan Country. The way in which they did this would fix the destiny of the San Juan settlers and set the course of history in southeast Utah.

Two of the Escalante settlers made their way down the riverside cliffs dragging a rudely fashioned boat. They



crossed the Colorado and reported that from the other side they could see some distance to the east and a route for the pioneers seemed possible.

Another Escalante settler is said to have found a narrow cleft in the cliff tops that could be widened by the pioneers. This slight fissure, the "Hole-in-the-Rock", would ultimately give the expedition the name by which it is most widely known. While he did not descend and cross the river, he examined the country on other side from his vantage atop the cliffs and reported that while it would be "somewhat difficult" to get wagons down to the river, it appeared a simple matter to move them from there to the San Juan Country, about 60 miles away. (That was sixty miles in a straight line. The trail from this location would actually run about 150 miles.)

Anyone who has lived in high desert country knows that distances are hard to judge. The atmosphere fools the eye and makes things appear closer than they really are. Sometimes enticing pools of water are laid before the traveler where nothing really exists but

sand. Canyons can lie unseen in country that appears almost level. Perhaps something like this happened to the three scouts. One would like to think that it was some mistake of the senses rather than dereliction of duty that led to the almost laughably mistaken reports by those charged with such an important task. Whatever the reasons, it was because of one or both of these far too optimistic reports that the head of the San Juan Mission ordered his entire party to assemble near Escalante. From there, they would cross the wilderness to the San Juan Country.

It is clear today that the expedition should never have set out southeast from Escalante. The route taken by the first small group of settlers returning from the San Juan Country was longer but it would have been a far better choice for the San Juan Mission because it was already established. There would have been no need for the party to find its way across unknown territory. The pioneers would have been in the San Juan Country in plenty of time to plant crops for an autumn harvest. The toll in human suffering

would have been greatly diminished. However, basing their decision on sketchy and overly positive reports and feeling the pressure to make a choice, the expedition leaders laid the groundwork for their ordeal and near-disaster.

What was ahead was this:

The route from Escalante to the cliffs along the Colorado River would be of moderate difficulty. For a few miles out of Escalante, they would be following an established trail. When that ran out, they would cut their own road between the Escalante River and a long mountainous mesa, the eastern slope of the Kaiparowits Plateau, called 50 Mile Mountain. Like fingers on a giant hand, long hills extend from the heights down to the Escalante River, separated by intermittent watercourses running from the heights. They seldom carry water but when driven by summer thunderstorms, these watercourses run wild with brown torrents that have dug deep channels. The pioneers would find themselves repeatedly climbing up and down these fingers of land: descending to cross a wash, cresting a hill, descending to the next wash only to crest another hill for half a hundred miles.

As they neared the Colorado River, the pioneers would leave the washes and hills to find themselves atop a zone of bare, slick sandstone. It is called slickrock because the rocks unleash grains of sand under wheel rims and boots of climbers that act as tiny rollers and make progress a slippery thing. Jolting across this region a dozen miles or so, they would reach the top of sheer cliff walls restricting access to the river. At this point, they would face their first major challenge, finding a way down

the cliffs hundreds of feet to the river.

After getting their wagons and livestock down to river's edge and crossing the canyon of the Colorado, they must find their way out again to the top of a long, cedar-covered mesa. A long, slow descent would follow through a maze of confusing sandstone canyons. After that would come a trek of several miles at the end of which they would find themselves atop a plateau of sticky clay they must descend. Many miles more of cedar-covered mesa would follow, then a gradual slope toward the San Juan River.

This was their "shortcut" to the San Juan country. They were about to dig their way across a stretch of the most difficult terrain in the western United States. For sheer concentrated challenge to human and beast, nothing encountered in the migration from the Atlantic to the Pacific compares with the land facing the San Juan Mission.

Three other notable aspects of the expedition should be kept in mind: the manner in which it was led, the time of year and the absence of native people.

When we think of the western movement in this country, we usually visualize the independent pioneer, a man, a woman, their children and livestock. Their wagon moved westward in company with others for protection but as an independent unit that decides on its own what to take and what to leave behind, whether to join this group or another. This was not so with the San Juan Mission. These pioneers were part of a religious movement that had been group oriented from its earliest days. These were heirs of the tradition that looked to the

Church to determine where to move, when, and how. We find the members of the San Juan Mission requesting approval from Expedition leaders for the contents of their wagons before they leave the settlements. Later, they will take direction from the same men about whether or not to proceed into the wilderness. Dairies note Expedition members pray that the leaders will receive divine guidance in their decisions but repeatedly the directions that leaders give to the group are “sustained” or voted on with approval, by the pioneers. It is difficult to imagine a group of 21st-century Americans willingly taking such discipline unless motivated by a transcendent cause such as that in which the Mormons believed. To see the church’s destiny fulfilled was the aim of these pioneers and they were pleased to follow directions.

Another important matter to remember was that this was not to be a fair-weather trek. Unlike most westward journeys, these pioneers did not travel in warm weather months. Members of the San Juan Mission spent the summer of 1879 disposing of property in order to begin their journey to the San Juan Country in the early winter. This was because a summer trip would have been impossible. Here hot weather comes early and stays late. The heat is intense, water scarce and the sun’s reflection off red rocks makes the endless summer seem even more cruel.

So, winter would play a major role in determining their schedule. They hoped for a six-week journey that would allow them to arrive in the San Juan Country for spring planting. It would turn out to be as many months before they arrived. As they made their

way across the mountains to the assembly point at Escalante snow already lay across their trail. Soon the way back would close behind them as winter set in.

The pioneers were spared one hazard. There were no natives along their path to dispute the way. While Anasazi—now known as ancestral Puebloans because of the term’s belligerent connotations—had settled in the area, they had left long ago.

### **Assembly and the way forward**

The Expedition came together southeast of Escalante. Until members passed through the town and took their last opportunity to obtain supplies before moving into the wilderness, the Mission mainly consisted of scattered wagons making their way east without much organization. Some small groups of wagons organized themselves before arriving at Escalante but for most, it was not until passing the frontier settlement that leaders were appointed. After Escalante, the wagons collected at various points between town and the Colorado River, most of them at a small spring where the existing trail ended. They named it Forty Mile Spring for its distance from Escalante.

Here the first major crisis faced Mission members. Not one of them had seen the Hole-in-the-Rock or glimpsed the other side of the Colorado River. In addition to the work that would be needed at the Hole to get wagons and livestock through the cleft, down to the river and across it, a route was needed through the wilderness beyond. Mission leaders now sent out scouts to cross the river and explore much more extensively than the two cursory reports they

had gotten from the Escalante townsmen.

To the leaders' dismay, the scouts reported that after crossing the river they had been unsuccessful in locating a route. They had scouted the only two possible ways to proceed: by following the San Juan River or by cutting through the canyons immediately across the Colorado River from the Hole-in-the-Rock. Both seemed impossible. The San Juan, which joins the Colorado just downstream from the Hole-in-the-Rock, leads in the direction the Mission needed to go. However, the scouts found its canyon walls too narrow for a wagon trail. The country through the canyons was equally unpromising. The scouts reported barren rock knobs and a maze of sandy watercourses leading off in all directions. It was inconceivable to most of the scouts that a way could be found along either route.

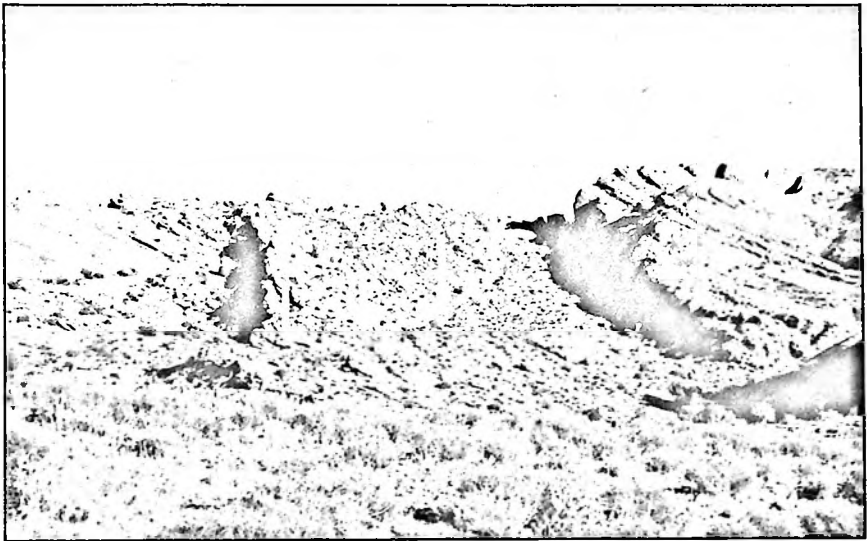
However, the Mission could not stay where it was. Their thousand cattle and 200 horses had depleted the sparse vegetation along the trail from Escalante to the Colorado. Winter had begun in earnest and snow was blocking trails over the mountains between them and the settlements of southwest Utah. While most of the scouts called for abandoning the effort, a few said the Mission should strike out across the river and somehow they would find a path through the unknown. There were hours of deliberation and several meetings. In addition, we can be sure that the leaders tried to determine through prayer the will of God in a matter they fervently believed was divinely directed. In the end, the Mission leader Silas Smith, decided to

go through the Hole and across trackless canyons to the San Juan Country. A meeting of the entire Mission was then called to discuss the decision and voice opinions. By allowing this meeting, which likely consisted solely of praise for the leaders' decision, the group members strengthened one another in their resolve to push forward. We have no indication that anyone left the Mission at this point.

Having made their decision, work was begun. Two construction camps were established to attack the problem of crossing the Colorado and getting to the other side. One group camped near the Hole-in-the-Rock, the other about ten miles away. An advantage of having separate camps was that it helped allocate their natural resources. Water from meager springs at both sites and the vegetation for the livestock were more evenly shared. Work was also divided. One camp was responsible for widening the cleft and constructing a way down to the riverbank, the other in building a road up the hills on the far side of the Colorado.

While this work was being done, another scouting party left to find a route the Mission would take to the San Juan Country once the party had managed to get across the river and up the mesas beyond. Belabored by blizzards and lack of food, the scouts groped their way many miles through canyons to the top of a pass and across a wide flat covered with cedar trees. On Christmas Day, after cooking their last flour and while thoroughly disoriented, they climbed a small hill and sighted a landmark, the Blue Mountains, near today's Blanding. Then they knew where they were. The grateful men





*Photo by the author*

*Unable to crest a long sandstone ridge or pass in or along the San Juan River, the pioneers were forced to build a road up this still remote slope they called San Juan Hill. It was the last obstacle most of them would endure*

called the hill "Salvation Knoll".

Setting off with renewed vigor, they soon reached the families waiting at Montezuma and found them suffering from hunger. Resting only a day, the scouts returned to tell the main party still cutting its way through the Hole, that with much toil a route did, after all, lie ahead for them.

### **Excavating at the Hole**

As winter advanced, work at the Hole-in-the-Rock, the trail to the river and the road up the other side of the canyon was slow. Getting food and water for the pioneers and their livestock was another problem. Most had bought supplies for only a month and a half of travel. The land was quickly denuded of plants by their grazing

animals. The few springs had only meager flows.

Construction however, consumed most of their thoughts. At the Hole it would be necessary to widen the narrow cleft. In its natural state, the slit was barely wide enough to allow a man through. Dynamite was needed to get wagons to fit. Fortunately, they had blasting power for this and most of the other excavation they would make in the months to come. In addition to widening the Hole, it was necessary to dig a ramp through the sandstone wall just past the Hole to reduce the slope. All this effort was required to reach the waters of the Colorado. They were camped just a few miles away but high above the river on sheer walls of rock.

Although nothing could be done to

increase their water or grass, ingenuity and resolve overcame the construction problems. Men were put in barrels sawn in half and lowered over the sandstone cliff while others searched the nearby plateaus for large tree branches. Those dangling in barrels cut a shelf along the rock wall and drilled numerous holes in it. The gathered branches were inserted into these holes. Finally, sticks, loose rocks and other fill were built up to form an artificial shelf or cribbing along the cliff. The wagons would be able to get downhill without dangerous sideways tipping. One side of the wagon's wheels would roll along the rock rim and the other side would pass over the artificial fill. It is still possible to find the holes in the sandstone walls that were used to tack the pioneers' road in space.

Finally, late in January 1880, the road builders reported that their work was finished and the wagons could roll.

### **Down the Hole**

"Rough locking" was the 19th century method of applying brakes. A chain was wrapped around wagon wheels in such a way that a large bulge formed around their rims. When carried around the circumference of the rim to the ground, this bulge would dig in the earth and act as a drag on the wagon's forward progress. With livestock, men, boys and sometimes women holding ropes behind, a wagon could be let slowly down a slope. In this way the San Juan pioneers got their wagons through the Hole-in-the-Rock, down their hanging roadway and the slightly gentler slopes below until, at the base of the bare sandstone cliffs, they encountered a patch of sand that

relieved the need for brakes.

Generally, only one person was aboard a wagon as it descended. Women and children walked through the cleft and down to the river. Elizabeth Morris Decker wrote a letter describing the descent:

*If you ever come this way it will scare you to death to look down it. It is about a mile from the top down to the river and is almost straight down, the cliffs on each side are five hundred feet high and there is just enough room for a wagon to go down. It nearly scared me to death. The first wagon I saw go down they put the brake on and rough locked the hind wheels and had a big rope fastened to the wagon and about ten men holding back on it and then they went down like they would smash everything. I'll never forget that day. When we was walking down Willie looked back and cried and asked me how we would get back home.*

One man who had been helping the others lower their wagons looked around at the end of the day by the riverside and failed to find his family or wagon. He had thought others working above would take them down for him. He climbed back up through the cleft to find his wife and children still at the rim with no one to help them down. In a display of the courage and tenacity of the entire party—and probably no little anger—he and his wife resolved to take their wagon down alone rather than go back to the river and seek aid. Putting the children aside to wait at the top, he rough locked the wagon, hitched his horse behind to act as an additional

brake and his wife took another line to help slow the wagon. As it inched down the slope, the horse was pulled off its legs, the wife fell and was dragged a considerable distance. When the wagon stopped, the husband ran to the bleeding woman and asked if she was all right. "Yes," she replied, "I just crow-hopped along."

### **Across the Colorado**

After the wagons were down, the cattle, horses and mules had to be herded through the slot and down the cliffs. They had been grazing on the mesas as far as 50 miles away. When rounded up they were formed into small groups and urged into the slot. To convince the reluctant animals to head down the narrow cleft, wagons were forced against them from the rear, pushing them forward. Once in motion, those behind shoved the ones in front into the slot.

After negotiating the Hole-in-the-Rock and getting down to the river, the next obstacle was to get across the Colorado. Wagons were ferried across on a small raft. While some wagons were forced to wait overnight on the shore, most got through the Hole-in-the-Rock and across the river the same day. Livestock swam the stream. It was late January and the river was freezing. For livestock and those herding them, crossing was an ordeal of cold. Horses and cattle were driven through the fast-flowing water in small groups. Current carried them as they swam so each bunch reached the opposite shore some distance downstream from where it had entered the water. Eventually all were on the other side safely but some of the herders had to cross and re-cross the

freezing river many times.

Amazingly, considering the danger involved, there was not one serious injury in getting all the people, wagons and stock down the Hole, to the river and across to the other side.

Just a year later, Charles Hall, the Escalante man credited with finding the Hole-in-the-Rock and building the pioneers' wagon ferry, moved his family about a dozen miles upstream from where the pioneers crossed. Using the knowledge he had gained in helping them, he established a river crossing that was used for many years. After Glen Canyon dam was built and the river began backing up, Hall's Crossing was moved to the new lakeshore and today is a major marina and supply point along Lake Powell. That a better crossing was established so soon after the San Juan Mission emphasizes how the pioneers were forced into making their shortcut decision by time and circumstance.

### **Through the canyons**

Today Hole-in-the-Rock is the most celebrated part of the Mission's trek. Trail historian David Miller said if the San Juan pioneers had just extended the road from Escalante to the rim of the Colorado Canyon, they would have made a significant contribution to the settlement of Utah. If they had done this and then managed to widen the cleft and make their way to the Colorado's shore and up the further slopes they would have accomplished a major feat of engineering. Having done both, they gave their name to a part of Western history, according to Miller. But these deeds were only the beginning of their story. Much pain, hardship

and accomplishment lay ahead.

Once on the eastern side of the Colorado, the wagons filed down a canyon the pioneers named "Cottonwood". Pausing at the canyon's entrance, several scratched their names in sandstone outcroppings later named "Register Rocks". Unfortunately, no one can read these inscriptions today as they are now under Lake Powell, the waters of the Colorado River impounded behind Glen Canyon dam. The Lake also covers the actual pioneer river crossing.

When Cottonwood Canyon ended at the bottom of a series of mesas, the pioneers dug a route to the top, maneuvered their way across the flats and then down into more canyons. It was in this area that the party grew by one member. Olivia Larson and her husband had joined the San Juan Mission to share its protection as they traveled to their new home in Snowflake, Arizona. They had expected to be comfortably settled there by the time she delivered. The delays caught up with them however, and in the midst of a snowstorm, Olivia delivered a boy. The parents wanted to name him for the nearby San Juan River but "Saint John" is a difficult name to live with, so they settled on calling him John Rio Larson.

One of the more remarkable landmarks that lay along the pioneers' trail was the next obstacle encountered. Lake Pagahrit (for "standing water") was a "J"-shaped reservoir that had formed behind a wall of drifted sand in one of the numerous canyons beyond the river. The wagons made their way across the top of this wall, much as automobile roads may run atop modern hydroelectric or flood control dams.

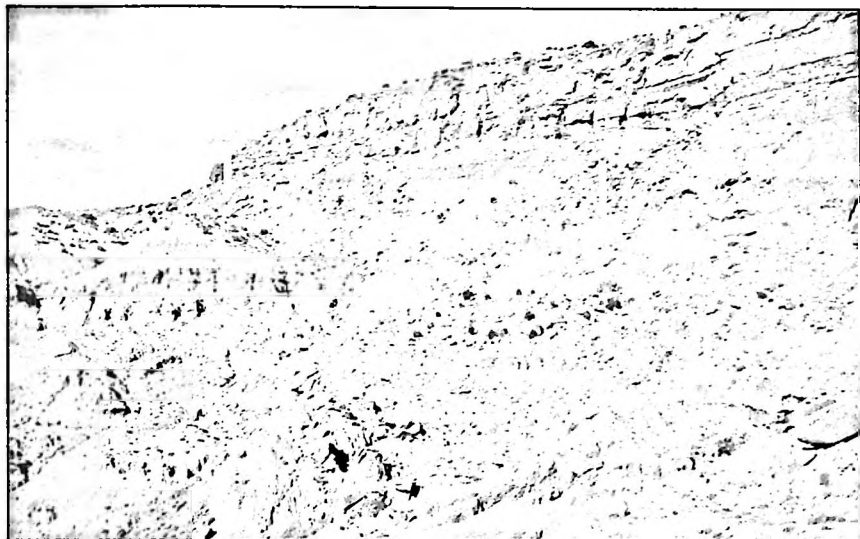
The lake must have been a remarkable sight in the midst of the dry, red rock canyons. Unfortunately, the dam washed out in 1915.

The pioneers wound their way through twisting canyons between high domes of bald sandstone. Some called these hills apple-shaped and others likened them to giant bales of hay. However they described them in letters back home, the pioneers must have felt the narrow canyons were eerily constricting. For many miles along the creek beds, they were unable to see more than a slight ribbon of sky above them and never a glimpse of horizon. This was a strange country indeed for people accustomed to having an expansive heaven overhead.

They eventually emerged onto a more open but still forbidding desert. Here the washes were shallow and there were fewer hills but travel was still difficult. Happily, their scouts had found an ancient trail left by the ancestral Pueblo people. The wagons advanced eastward until stopped by a great drop off. Their descent to the tree-covered flat below would be called Clay Hills Pass.

### **Clay Hills**

Today Utah highway 276 runs through the pass on its way from Natural Bridges National Monument to the shore of Lake Powell at Halls Crossing. It is one of the few places a paved road parallels the Hole-in-the-Rock route. In only a few minutes, cars descend several hundred feet from the top of the pass to the desert floor. Because it is so easy to travel today, it takes some imagination to picture how laborious it was for the pioneers to get



*Photo by the author*

*The route down slippery Clay Hills Pass constructed by Mormon pioneers is still evident just north of the modern highway, about 25 miles east of Hite Marina on Utah route 276*

down these slopes. It took five days for them to build the road 1,000 feet to Whirlwind Mesa below. The clay slopes had soaked in winter rain and snowfall, making the laborers' work difficult. Mud clung heavily to their boots and clothes and denied them footing. After the trail was finished, it took two more days to get all the wagons and livestock down to the mesa floor. The slippery road required each wagon be lowered very carefully to keep it from careening downslope. When they arrived on the plain below to rest a bit from their efforts, a snow-storm blew up that left them miserable, wet and cold. Several later described that night as the most uncomfortable they ever experienced.

East of Clay Hills lay another barrier, a deep fissure called Grand

Wash. Today most of the Wash is a federally protected primitive area. Backpackers hike the Wash on remote trails and archaeologists dig for better understanding of the ancient inhabitants who built shelters along its cliff walls. To the San Juan pioneers, in no mood to ponder its treasures or beauty, it was only an obstacle.

Following the path their scouts had found earlier, they picked their way around rather than across, the Wash. It was a semicircle route of some 25 miles but it kept them on level ground and avoided descending and then climbing out of the deep canyon. While they were making their way around Grand Wash, the pioneers encountered an old Ute Indian who stared in astonishment at their wagons. The man asked who they were. They told him they were

Mormons who had come from the other side of the Colorado River and described where they had crossed the water. The Indian thought their answer an attempt to make a fool of him and asked the same question of those on another wagon. When he received a similar response, he stalked away indignantly. "You lie", he snorted, "Such a crossing is impossible."

When the party reached the other side of Grand Wash, they turned eastward across a forest of scrub cedar trees called Snow Flat. They were required to cut their way through the small trees and down a trail of knobby bare sandstone called "The Twist" on relatively flat land between canyons. This travel was easy compared to what they had been through. Yet, as they drove their wagons, walked, or rode horses, they must all have glanced down the valley ahead with apprehension to their next trial. Looming ahead was a 90-mile-long ridge of sandstone called "Comb Ridge".

### **Comb Ridge and Bluff**

Ahead, as far as they could see north and south, the sandstone barrier blocked their path. When they arrived at its base, each person could see it was impossible to get wagons up and over the thousand-foot cliffs. It was heart-breaking knowing the San Juan Country and Montezuma lay just beyond the Ridge. No doubt groaning inwardly, the pioneers headed their teams south to where the San Juan River cuts through Comb Ridge.

They hoped to find a way to drive their wagons along the San Juan's edge and avoid constructing a road. But it was not to be. The river was full with

spring runoff from the San Juan Mountains in Colorado. The canyon walls were too close for a road beside the river. Nor could they follow the stream-bed itself. The current was too swift to allow horses to pull against it.

So one last time the men of the company had to build a roadway for the wagons. They chose a path near the river at the end of Comb Ridge and set to work. By now they had exhausted their blasting powder. To get up this last stretch they chiseled grooves in the sandstone with hand tools to hold the wagon wheels along the inner edge and piled loose rocks along the outer edge. This was one of the most formidable sections of road building accomplished by the pioneers.

When, after several days of work the road was ready, the accumulated wear on humans and animals was keenly felt. The people were infinitely tired and the animals had been fed no grain for weeks. Every member of the expedition was teetering on the edge of exhaustion. But they had to go on. So, once again, they did.

*...Some of the horses were on their knees, fighting to get up to find a foothold, the still erect horses could plunge forward against the sharp grade. On the worst slopes the men were forced to beat their jaded animals into giving all they had...many of the horses took to spasms and near-convulsions, so exhausted were they...the worst stretches could easily be identified by the dried blood and matted hair from the forelegs of the struggling teams.*

It took two days to get all 85

wagons to the top of the ridge. Years later one of the pioneers' children recalled that his father, normally reluctant to display emotion, would weep when reminded of the expedition and particularly the struggle to get over this last agony.

Only 30 miles remained from this point to Montezuma. Yet the next day the wagons rolled into a flat area under red sandstone bluffs and stopped. Here, June 6, 1880, along the San Juan River, they found a place they could establish a town and farm the flatlands with water from the nearby river. They viewed it with eyes that had seen too much travel. Even this scarcely promising land looked good to them. Putting one foot in front of the other required too much effort to exert for even a day longer. Here, at what would they called "Bluff" for the sandstone hills nearby, most would stay. The San Juan Mission's journey was all but over.

### Settling in

The trek was over but the suffering was not. At Bluff, the party surveyed the land and designated lots for a town site and farmsteads. They held a drawing that provided each family with one lot and a farm. Here, as in most Mormon towns, people would cluster their houses and walk or ride out into the country to farm their fields. Fifty-nine town and country plots were assigned at Bluff but there was not land enough for all. Those who drew blank slips in the lottery were forced to join the few who wanted to continue the final 15 miles and settle in Montezuma.

So two communities were established in the San Juan

Country: Bluff and Montezuma. At Bluff were 59 families. Eight families moved on to Montezuma and joined the two that had been waiting a year for the arrival of the main party.

Around Bluff, the pioneers planted fields, dug canals and constructed crude houses. Their first harvest was disappointing. Poor construction of the ditches resulted in flood damage to the fields. Beyond starvation, there were other threats nearby. A blockhouse fort was built to provide protection against Indian raids and unscrupulous whites. The Bluff families left their town site cabins and took up residence inside the fort from 1881 to 1884. The fort proved little security from the elements, however. Heavy rain caused the San Juan to flood and starting in 1885, families drifted away to escape the capricious river. Eventually the fort was abandoned.

At Montezuma, the two families waiting were bewildered to learn that the main expedition had decided to halt at Bluff. They had been living on cracked wheat bread and porridge for two months, eagerly waiting the day when the main party would join them. The eight families that traveled on from Bluff built their cabins upon arriving, canals were built and crops planted. As at Bluff, dams repeatedly washed out and the canals silted up. The harvests were meager, barely providing food and seed for the next year's planting. For three years, until 1884, the Montezuma farmers continued to struggle against insects and an unreliable river. In that year, the same torrential rain that flooded the fort at Bluff washed



out roads, crops, sod roofs, dikes and canals at Montezuma.

Finally, both communities appealed to Church headquarters to end their mission. What misgivings and sadness they must have felt. After all the endurance it had taken to get them there, how galling to concede defeat.

A delegation left Salt Lake City for the San Juan Country to rule on the request. After their survey, the officials were more optimistic than the settlers and urged them to stay, promising eventual success but expressing understanding of their discouragement. For those who had exhausted themselves and wished to move elsewhere, the delegation gave them an honorable release. Others took heart at the encouragement and stayed on at Montezuma a few years. It was no use. In a short time, all the original settlers had left. Today it is called Montezuma Creek and has an Indian school, stores and a few homes for oil field workers. It is not the farming settlement envisioned by the pioneers.

Bluff continued as an agricultural community and is today a patch of green on U.S. Highway 163.

The original settlers spread out to establish the nearby towns of Verdure and Blanding and begin many small farms along the canyons of southwest Utah that prosper peacefully today. Today the region's economy is based on tourism, farming, ranching and oil. Many of the area's residents claim Hole-in-the-Rock ancestors and are justifiably proud of the part they played in establishing farms and towns in the area.

And what became of the Hole-in-the-Rock trail? There are two opinions.

Historian David Miller says that for some time after the pioneers cut through the cleft, it continued as the major two-way communication and supply route between the old settlements of southwest Utah and the San Juan Country. As we have seen, Charles Hall built an easier crossing of the Colorado soon after the pioneers blasted their way down the cleft he reputedly discovered. Those who went that way avoided Cottonwood and the maze of other canyons that cover half the distance between Hole-in-the-Rock and Clay Hills Pass. Another writer, Lynn Lyman, a son of one of the pioneers disagreed with Miller, stating that if the pioneer trail was used as a major route it wasn't for very long.

### Summation

What importance does the San Juan Mission hold for us today, Mormon and non-Mormon alike? I like to think of Willa Cather's novel *Song of the Lark*. One of the novel's central characters, Ray Kennedy, explored cliff dwellings of the Southwest and drew inspiration from them. He says ...

*I've learned more down there about what makes history, than in all the books I've ever read. When you sit in the sun and let your heels hang out of a doorway that drops a thousand feet, ideas come to you. You begin to feel what the human race has been up against from the beginning... You feel it's up to you to do your best, on account of those fellows having it so hard. You feel like you owed them something.*

Similarly, the ordeal of the San



Juan Mission has a claim on us. If our difficulties in a crowded, busy world are many, we don't face the prospect of dragging all we own across the wilderness, building a road as we go. We may owe the San Juan pioneers something even if their religion and their land is not ours: doing our best as they did their best, under conditions harder than we are likely to ever see.

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*San Juan County, Utah: People, Resources, and History*, Allan Kent Powell, Utah State Historical Society, 1983. ISBN 0-913738-35-2 *Contains two articles on Hole-in-the-Rock Trail*

*4WD Adventures: Utah*, Peter Massey and Jeanne Wilson, Swagman Publishing, Castle Rock, Colorado 2000. ISBN

0-9665675-1-X *Contains description, pictures, maps and GPS coordinates for two sections of the pioneer trail that can still be traveled: Escalante to Hole-in-the-Rock and Snow Flat. The Hole-in-the-Rock section incorrectly states that the pioneers crossed the Colorado on a ferry built by Charles Hall "at what is now called Hall's Crossing". Today's Halls Crossing is several miles upstream from where the pioneers actually landed at Cottonwood Canyon.*

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## Westerners Bookshelf



**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. Cloth, \$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 sacrificers of the Aztecs excelled in investigations and in documenting those investigations.

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..the chonology of  
accusations reminds one  
that invasion and war are  
never pretty pictures...

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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 Colorado Almanac -- Facts About Colorado**, by Thomas J. Noel. Graphic Arts Center Publishing Co./West Winds Press, Portland, Oregon. 2001. 232 pp. Illustrations, photos, maps, lists, index. Paper, \$12.95

This handy, compact book contains more information about Colorado than one might expect. In addition to numerous lists, charts and maps, interesting historical and topical facts are inserted throughout the book. No matter how much one has studied this marvelous state, the sheer volume of material compiled within the 232 pages means that the reader can absorb only a portion at one time.

While the primary objective of the book is to serve as a reference source, this Almanac is much more than a compilation of statistical or historical facts. Open the book to any page and interesting tidbits about Colorado can be found -- so many facts that they are better taken over time so as not to overwhelm the reader. (Perhaps this reviewer took a bit more time than was needed, but this is the kind of book that one picks up again and again.)

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..this almanac is much more  
than a compilation of  
statistical or historical facts...

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Dr. Noel does not back away from topics others might choose to avoid. The Jackalope is discussed, as is the fur-bearing trout; but I suspect the rarest of all animals in Colorado is the borrowing owl. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book from cover to cover. I learned a great deal about the State of Colorado in addition to other related facts. Did you know that "Chinook" is an Indian word for "snow eater"? I recommend The Colorado Almanac as a useful reference book, and much more.

--Charles Moore, C.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

**Disaster at the Colorado: Beale's Wagon Road, and the First Immigrant Party,** by Charles W. Baley. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2002. 216 pages; photos of principals, artifacts, & landmarks; maps of routes & alternate trails, plus California destinations of settlers; bibliography: index; appendices A, B, & C; 23 pages of notes. Paperback, \$19.95.

Across north central New Mexico and Arizona, along the line of eventual highway 66, now Interstate 40, a rudimentary survey route called Beale's Wagon Road was plotted in 1857, intended to run from Ft. Smith, Arkansas, to San Bernardino, California. This survey became famous for employing camels over the desert. This book is the story of the first emigrants who tried to follow this route to California in the next year, but were driven back at the Colorado River by hostile Mojave Indians. The Beale survey was sponsored by the Army, which expected military posts and water supplies to be needed before the trail would be ready for travel. At the time the emigrants set out, none of the anticipated facilities were in place. Their tribulations with the Indians took place opposite from what is now Needles, California.

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**Their journey became a rolling disaster because the route was not clearly defined....**

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The need for this alternative route to the Pacific arose when the U.S. Army had set out to subdue Mormons in Utah, leaving the Oregon Trail an undesirable trail. A southern route, along the Butterfield Trail, ran through Apache territory at the bottom of Arizona.

This trail was extremely long for people

departing from the Midwest when compared to the original Oregon-California route.

The traveling party in this story had originated in Iowa and Missouri, following the Santa Fe Trail to Albuquerque, and they were encouraged to try Beale's survey route by the Army garrison in Albuquerque. Their journey became a rolling disaster because the route was not clearly defined, water sources were scarce, and feed was almost non-existent. Indians along the way were thought to be peaceful, but Hualapais persistently harassed the emigrants and shot their stock, and then the Mojaves ambushed them at the Colorado, confiscating many of their remaining cattle. Several of the emigrants were killed; some carried wounds for the remainder of their lives, and the remnants of the train were obliged to undergo a difficult retreat to Albuquerque. On the way back, they convinced other emigrant parties to join the increasingly distressed return journey.

Several factors of this sorry trek are fascinating. One is the original impetus for the seven extended families to move west. Several of the men with grown sons and daughters plus children were also along, who struck out across trackless New Mexico and Arizona in 1858, had been west earlier, seeking gold in California during the California gold rush. Their motivation was as much to live in the "paradise" of California as it was to uncover nuggets.

Another arresting feature was the untried route they took out of Alberquerque

que. Author Charles Baley has an interesting connection to this ill-fated party. He is the grandson of Gillum Baley, a 44-year-old leader of the emigrant train. Consequently, some of the details of the story were extracted from family lore. Baley had another bonus in terms of gathering precise information. A 62-year-old Baptist lay preacher named John Udell kept a meticulous journal of the whole excursion. Udell and his wife Emily were bent on going to California to join two of their sons, hoping to remain with the sons in their twilight years. Udell had hoped to publish his journal as a travelogue to entice additional travelers.

This was a substantial group heading west, some of whom met accidentally while moving from Iowa through Missouri. There were about 250 head of Red Durham cattle, 200 of which a wealthy young man named Leonard Rose (age 30) expected to sell in California for a tidy profit to secure himself a niche in business upon his arrival. Altogether there were about 100 people, the aforementioned seven extended families, in 20 or so wagons, with an erratic guide, bumping along in arid country, from one water hole to another, through the two future states along the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel.

Baley's account is compelling as it follows the group almost day by day. The emigrants reached the Colorado River, planning to swim their cattle across, only to be attacked by the supposedly peaceful Mojave. The group turned back after the skirmish, and they spent the winter months under the protection of the Army outpost in Albuquerque.

A further dimension to this exceptional account is Baley's tracing of the party's descendants in California. He interviewed many relatives whose stories recollected the trek's outstanding trials and Baley was also able to trace the lives of the leaders and offspring via newspaper obituaries and courthouse records. The follow-up is as interesting as the frightening misadventure itself.

--Jerry Grunski, *Guest reviewer*

**A Woman of the Century**, Frances Minerva Nunnery as told to Cecil Dawkins. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002. 151 pages, 23 photographs. Cloth, \$19.95.

When a man with robbery and perhaps rape on his mind broke into a Taos, New Mexico house late one night in 1988, he encountered Frances Nunnery, then 70 years old. The man raised a hand to strike her, and that was the last thing he remembered before he awoke to find himself tied up and sitting in an ice-cold lake with a large lump on his head. "He needed a little cooling off, so I obliged him" explained Frances, and closed the subject. That was Frances, long on action and short on words.

She was also short on experience when she went to work at age thirteen. Her first positions didn't work out well—too ladylike—until she got a job at Westinghouse making generators. Soon she was instructing men on how to do this work. During World War I she contracted tuberculosis. Westinghouse transferred

her from Pittsburgh to Denver. But single women didn't travel alone, so Frances's mother found a young Colorado preacher and insisted that the two of them get married. That was a mistake, and Frances left him shortly after their daughter was born. She drove away in a Model T Ford that she had purchased but her husband had never allowed her to drive.

Frances settled in Albuquerque and found a job driving a city bus. This was 1923 and she was the first woman in that city to become a bus driver. Unable to sit still and overflowing with ambition, she quit her bus driving job, rented a large house, and took in boarders. She roasted peanuts on the back porch and sold them to stores. For entertainment Frances sang the blues and played the saxophone with a local band. On weekends she repaired and sold used cars and worked at an auction house. During her spare time, Frances created a successful delivery service using a dozen motorcycles.

In 1934 Frances' opinion about marriage mellowed and she married for a second time. Now she didn't have to hold down as many jobs. Then a banker offered her an opportunity to manage a 30,000-acre ranch. She immediately accepted and with her daughter and two stepdaughters, left Albuquerque for the ranch. During the short marriage, her husband came on weekends to help. Soon the ranch was turning a nice profit and Frances decided to add to the cash flow by making moonshine. She set up the still in the ranch house basement, but the darn thing made too much noise and visitors asked too many questions. So she put the still in the bunkhouse, but it got out of control and burned the place down. That was the end of the moonshine business.

After fourteen years on the ranch she sold out and used her money to build a roadside lodge. Business was good, and it became even better when she hired a dealer and ran an illegal game of poker. The local game warden was a steady customer at the poker table, and while he was engrossed in his cards, Frances would sneak out the back door, drive her truck along the road, and poach deer for the lodge. Some of these illegal activities had to stop when she became a deputy sheriff. Frances tried a variety of other occupations until she finally settled in Taos and became a real estate agent and land developer.

This book is a combination memoir and biography, and of particular value to those interested in western characters in general and the emerging roles of women during the twentieth century in particular. New roles for women didn't come easy, yet that never slowed Frances Minerva Nunnery down. She was a delightful, unpredictable person, unpretentious, unrefined, and undefeatable. I found myself cheering for her throughout the book and laughing at her exploits. I suspect that you will do the same.

--Richard C. Barth, P.M.

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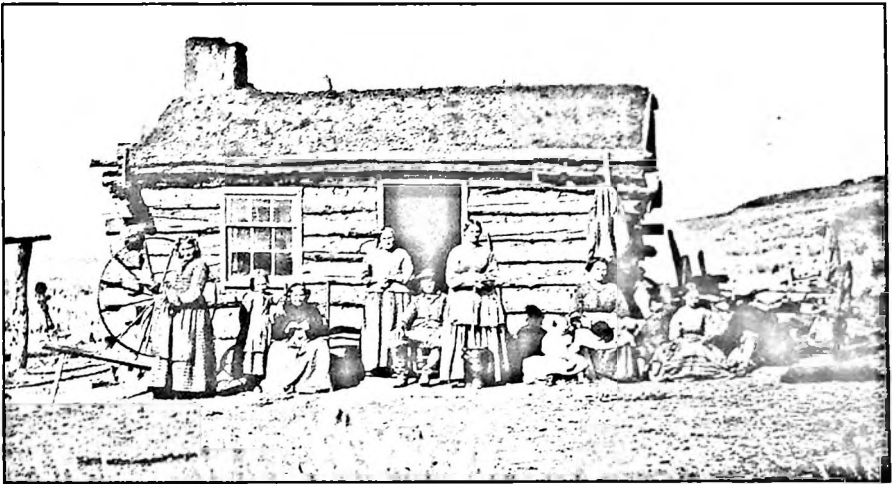
That was Frances, long on  
action and short on  
words...

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*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

May - June 2003



*Courtesy of Oakland Museum*

Western Pioneer Homestead, Photograph by A.J. Russell

## **Homesteading: The Free Land Idea**

on its 140th anniversary

by Robert Terwilleger

(presented January 22, 2003)



# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LIX NO. 3



May - June 2003

## About the Author

Within five years of his birth, Bob Terwilleger was surrounded by stories from his parents and extended family, which included 5 great grandparents. He was raised just a few miles northeast of the point where the Pony Express and the Oregon-California trails entered southeast Nebraska and just four miles from the Homestead National Monument.

During his formative years, he visited a variety of nearby historic locales. At the age of twelve, he traveled alone by train to Chicago for a weekend educational tour. In the early 1960s he was selected as one of a small experimental group from the U.S.A., to reside with a German family for three months in an area where no Americans had lived since WWII. These early influences charged him with a life-long passion for history and for cultural heritage.

After majoring in history and English with a minor in secondary education at Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska, Bob taught on the high school level for thirteen years, during which time he was English department chair at Douglas County High School in Castle Rock, Colorado. Bob served for five years on the board of the Douglas Public Library District. He presided as president of the Douglas County Historical Society, and as vice-president of the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce. He was also a charter member of the Castle Rock Historic Preservation Board.

Bob and his wife, Carol (married 1965), traveled the British Isles and the European continent in 1971 for three months in a rental car with camping gear, and established in 1979 their owner-operated service business, Bobcat Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning, which Bob operates on a daily basis. Their home base for the past 30 plus years is an historic house at the southwest base of Castle Rock. He was honored by the Posse when elected Deputy Sheriff for 2002 and Sheriff for 2003.

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# Homesteading: The Free Land Idea

on its 140th anniversary

by Robert Terwilliger

(presented January 22, 2003)

One of the most complex problems the federal government faced from the time of the first land law in President Washington's administration, was that of an equitable method of distributing public land to private owners. The Homestead Act of 1862 which became effective 140 years ago, January 1, 1863, was the ultimate resolution of this problem. Overstatement? Exaggeration? Consider the top ten legislative landmarks in U.S. history and observe where the Homestead Act ranks.

10) VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965  
This legislation guaranteed all Americans the most fundamental of all rights: the right to vote. Black voter registration increased by 50% between the 1964 and the 1968 presidential elections.

9) CIVIL RIGHTS ACTS OF 1964  
This legislation went a long way toward addressing the oppression of African-Americans and women by clearing the way for a black middle class and prohibiting gender discrimination.

8) FEDERAL HIGHWAY ACT OF 1956  
The Eisenhower administration's biggest achievement, the act allocated billions for a 41,000-mile nationwide interstate-highway system, giving birth to America's car culture and to roadside businesses.

7) TRUMAN DOCTRINE 1947  
Truman's rhetoric transformed the Cold War into a moral conflict in which any change in the international political climate was perceived as a threat to U.S. interest.

6) G.I. BILL OF RIGHTS 1944  
This law guaranteed one year of college or trade education plus \$500 a year for tuition, books and supplies as well as guaranteeing mortgages and low interest rates to buy suburban homes kicking off a development boom.

5) NATIONAL LABOR RELATION ACT 1935  
Declared that workers had a right to join unions and bargain collectively with employers for pay raises, improvement of plant conditions and protection from employer harassment.

4) SOCIAL SECURITY ACT 1935  
The act's best known measure is the social insurance system providing monthly checks to the elderly.

3) HOMESTEAD ACT 1862  
This Civil War-era legislation allowed any adult of 21 years to claim 160 acres/one quarter square mile of land for a registration/filing fee and a promise to live there continuously for 5 years. It opened up 83 million acres for immediate settlement. Between 1863 and 1880, over half of the 242,000 new farms in Minnesota, the Dakota Territory,

Nebraska and Kansas were homestead-ventures. After the Civil War, thousands of veterans took advantage of the Act, as did women, ex-slaves and thousand of immigrants from England, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Czechoslovakia.

## 2) KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT 1854

This act effectively repealed the 1820 Missouri Compromise (which had limited slavery to territories south of the southern border of Missouri). The Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed a northern state, Kansas, to enter the Union as a slave state if the people of the state so voted. The Act's concept of "popular sovereignty" threatened to make the West into a slave-holding region. A devoted believer in westward expansion based on free-soil principles, President Lincoln was appalled. North-South divisions hardened and made civil war inevitable, forcing the nation to address the legacy of one race enslaving another.

## 1) LOUISIANA PURCHASE 1803

830,000 square miles between the Mississippi and the Rockies purchased for \$15 million from France at President Thomas Jefferson's urging, doubling the nation's size with territory that would comprise 13 states.

### **Evolution of U.S. Land Laws**

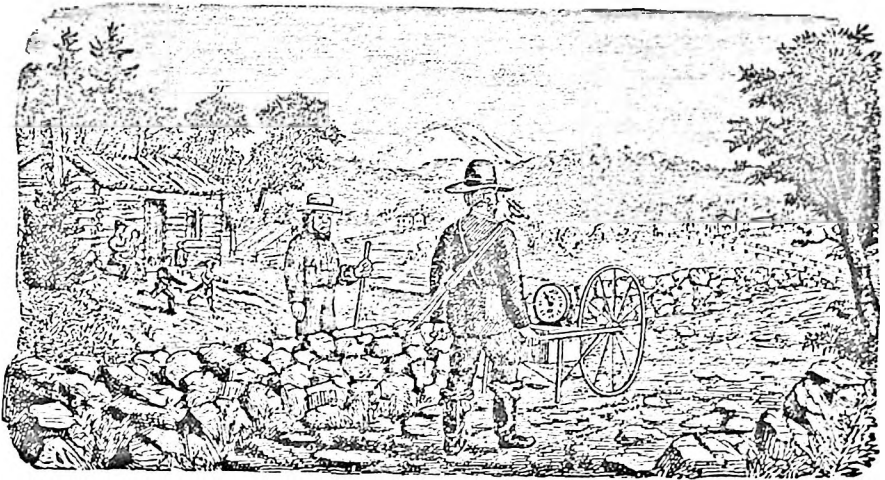
Thomas Jefferson often advocated the idea of yeoman farmers working their own small land plots. In Virginia in the 1700s one could achieve title to 50 or 100 acres with a small annual payment. While this democratic idea was attractive on the one hand, the fact that no systematic surveys were

made before the land was selected and settled created major problems on the other hand. To solve some of these problems the government passed the Land Ordinance of 1785, providing for sale of public lands to pay off the national debt. Three key elements set it apart from law agreed upon by humans up to that time: (a) It introduced the principle of "survey before settlement"; (b) It introduced the concept of a mathematically designed and nationally integrated survey. This differed vastly from the hodge-podge of small, odd-shaped fields common in most states south of New England. A uniformed system of large well-marked rectangular parcels would speed surveying of the vast frontier and insure fast orderly transfer of public lands to eager settlers eyeing the land stretching from eastern Ohio to the Mississippi River and from the Great Lakes and the Ohio River; (c) Finally, it created a standard US land unit, the six-mile-square township, containing 36-mile-square sections of 640 acres each. Every township boundary was to be physically marked on the ground ahead of settlement, as was the corner of each of the 36 sections within the township.

As a result of the Land Ordinance, the die was cast for the shape of all American land boundaries from 1785 to the present time in the U.S.

One side effect of the Land Ordinance of 1785 was the basis for the tradition of the 160-acre quarter-section family farm in much of the U. S.

Over 5 million farms were marked out on the public lands between 1800 and 1900. Today, adjoining townships laid out by the rectangular survey account for some 70% of all



land in the lower 48 states.

Robert Frost told us that good fences make good neighbors; he might also have told us that clean survey lines make for peaceful land settlement.

**Sale Laws**—The sale of public lands at auction was the first general means of disposing of the public lands. Under the Constitution the first sales act provided in the Land Ordinance of 1785 came in 1796 followed by four revisions culminating in lands offered at public sale to the highest bidder at a minimum price of \$1.25 an acre. There was no limitation on the acreage that could be purchased by an individual. There also were no residence or cultivation requirements.

**Pre-emption Law**—pre-emption allowed for settlers who had built a residence and improved public lands to purchase their claims at the minimum price for public lands prior to the lands offering at public sale. Congress continued to enact pre-emption laws of

temporary nature from time to time between 1799 and 1841, partly to combat continual fraud.

**Scrip**—By definition, scrip is a certificate and temporary substitute for money, allowing the holder to select a specified number of acres from the public domain. This was a method used especially when cash was in short supply.

**Military Bounty Land Laws**—since 1776 land warrants had been given as a reward to the nation's soldiers. These bounty warrants were assignable, and were often sold at a discount by the soldiers who disposed of their land rights for a pittance. In 1861 these warrants sold for as low as fifty cents an acre. Land warrants were often used more frequently than was cash. Land bounties enabled speculators to buy a large number of warrants and to trade this paper for blocks of country on the plains, which, after the Civil War, was sold to settlers for four to ten

dollars an acre. The government received nothing for land sold to such speculators and the soldier received less than half the face value of his pension or bounty. Additionally, forgeries also prevailed. At one time forged warrants in the amount of over a million acres were discovered.

Donation Laws—in an effort to encourage Anglo-American settlement of certain territorial acquisitions, Congress offered grants of lands to individuals who were already in possession of lands or were willing to immigrate to the areas of concern. Donation acts were passed for Florida in 1842 and 1844, Oregon and Washington in 1850 and 1853, and New Mexico in 1854. Most of the laws required residence and cultivation.

The Homestead Act of May 20, 1862—The 523 million acres acquired in 1803 through the Louisiana Purchase prompted Major Stephen H. Long to declare after examination in 1820 “we do not hesitate in giving the opinion that it is almost wholly unfit for cultivation, and of course, uninhabitable by a people depending upon agriculture for their subsistence”. Not everyone listened or agreed. The Purchase land was waiting to be occupied. The citizenry engaged in debate with the government about how to dispose of the land. Certainly the government did not embrace the idea of giving away public land.

The Homestead Act, approved and signed May 20, 1862, was a significant departure from the federal government’s previous land policies.

President Lincoln declared at the time “I am in favor of cutting the wild lands into parcels, so that every

poor man may have a home.”

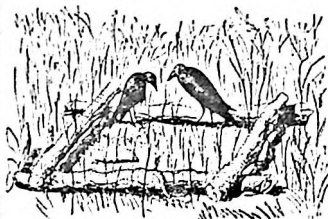
The Homestead Act allowed any citizen over 21 years old, who was head of a family, who was a citizen or intended to become one, and who had not borne arms against the country, to acquire 160 acres of surveyed land free of charge. The only required cash outlay was a filing fee ranging from \$6 to \$18. After filing an application, a person had up to 6 months to establish a residence on the land and was expected to live there for 5 years before obtaining title or patent free and clear.

The law applied to men and to unmarried, divorced or widowed women. Married women could obtain a homestead under special circumstances.

Congressman Galusha Grow, “father” of the Homestead Act, hoped it would forever consecrate the vast unoccupied trans-Missouri territory “in free homes for free men”. The homestead idea, declared Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, would nurture “a race of virtuous and independent farmers”. Six months after the Homestead Act went into effect settlers had claimed 224,500 acres in Kansas and Nebraska.

One of the first homesteads in the United States under the Homestead Act was taken by Daniel Freeman shortly after midnight January 1, 1863 when the Law first went into effect. Because he was a Civil War soldier on furlough and had to rejoin his regiment immediately, other claimants allowed him to file first. Business concluded at 5 minutes past 12, the land office at Brownville, Nebraska territory was closed and Freeman set out on his return journey.

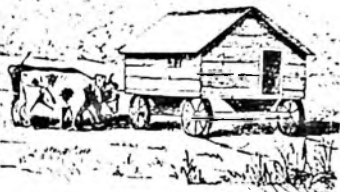
Freeman had previously chosen



A HABITABLE DWELLING



A HOUSE "TWELVE BY FOURTEEN"



A BONA FIDE RESIDENCE

TYPES OF PREEMPTION FRAUDS

Albert D. Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi*, 1867.

the parcel he wanted in Gage County, Nebraska, about 4 miles west of the newly founded town of Beatrice, Nebraska territory. It was Freeman's homestead that would become Homestead National Monument of America in 1936.

Freeman was born in Ohio in 1826, received a medical degree in Cincinnati, and set up a practice in

Illinois. He then moved to Iowa and from there to Nebraska. After making his homestead claim in 1863, he had a brief courtship through the mail with Agnes Suiter, a 22-year-old teacher in Iowa. She had been engaged to Daniel's brother, James, but James died in a Confederate prison camp. In February 1865, Daniel and Agnes were married in Iowa and immediately headed for the Nebraska homestead in time for spring planting.

After living in a log cabin, they built in 1876 a 2-story house of bricks made on site. Agnes bore 8 children, losing one to diphtheria.

Everett Dick in his excellent volume entitled *The Sod-House Frontier* wrote "After a man located his future home, made some sign of occupancy, and traveled from 40 to 60

miles to the land office, he found the office crowded. In 1871 when certain land in Gage County, Nebraska, was opened to settlement, 94 homesteads were taken on the first day".

Dick continues by observing that *The Beatrice Express*, on November 18, 1871 wrote, "the jam was terrible, and (a) poor woman was obliged to beg for more room for fear

## An Act—H. R. No. 125—To Secure Homesteads To Actual Settlers On The Public Domain

APPROVED AND SIGNED MAY 20, 1862

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, That any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of intention to become such, as required by the naturalization laws of the United States, and who has never borne arms against the United States Government or given aid and comfort to its enemies, shall, from and after the first January, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, be entitled to enter one quarter-section or a less quantity of unappropriated public lands, upon which said person may have filed a pre-emption claim, or which may, at the time the application is made, be subject to pre-emption at one dollar and twenty-five cents, or less, per acre; or eighty acres or less of such unappropriated lands, at two dollars and fifty cents per acre, to be located in a body, in conformity to the legal subdivision of the public lands, and after the same shall have been surveyed; Provided, That any person owning or residing on land may, under the provisions of this act, enter other land lying contiguous to his or her said land, which shall not, with the land so already owned and occupied, exceed in the aggregate one hundred and sixty acres.

of fainting. The applications poured in as fast as they could be taken care of all day, the crowd inside and out never growing smaller, for as fast as one applicant, with papers properly fixed up, would worm his way through the crowd to the door, and be cast out, panting and dripping with perspiration, another would squeeze in, and become a part of the solid surging mass within".

At Garden City, Kansas in 1885 land officials were forced to use a ladder to enter and leave the building via the second floor in order to escape the constant crowd which was always in front of the land office long before opening in the morning.

Promoters platted and designed imaginary metropolises and printed extravagant pamphlets describing wide, tree-lined avenues, flourishing commercial concerns and universities where there was in reality only grass.

Railroads promoted their lands with comparable hyperbole such as in this illustration headlined "Located in the Great Central Belt of Population, Commerce and Wealth, and adjoining the World's Highway from Ocean to Ocean. 12 million acres on the line of the Union Pacific Railroad."

Wide-eyed dreamers who

traveled to the territory found that their "commercial site" between the University campus and the Catholic Cathedral was a set of four stakes, lost in an endless sea of grass.

### Homestead life

Immigrants to the Great Plains adapted to the geographic supplies and demands of the new area. In the eastern quarter of Nebraska, for example, and up to the 98th meridian, there was timber and traditional log cabins were the result, sometimes even roofed with shake shingles.

Farther west, wood was in shorter supply and the few cottonwoods along the riverbanks were quickly used for cabins. Lumber and shingles shipped from wooded areas were too expensive for the farmer homesteader who could barely afford to pay filing fees for a claim. In those instances, "prairie marble" (sod) began to be utilized in applications including roofing and outbuildings and additions. West of the 98th meridian where short grass prairie predominated due to decreased annual moisture, there was absolutely nothing but sky and grass. The scene has all the makings of a science fiction story stranded in a



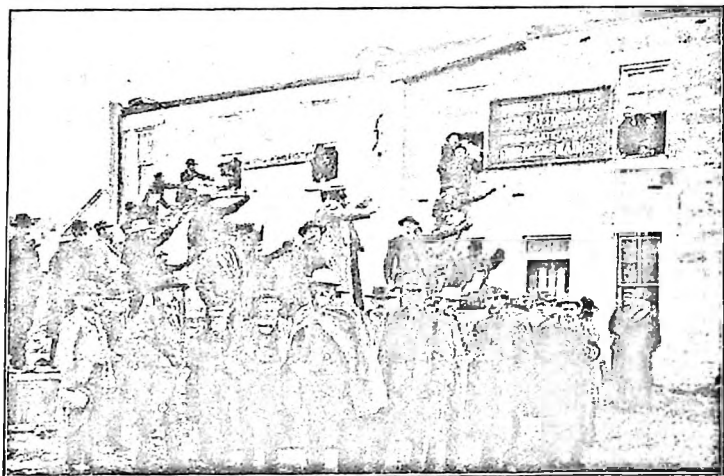
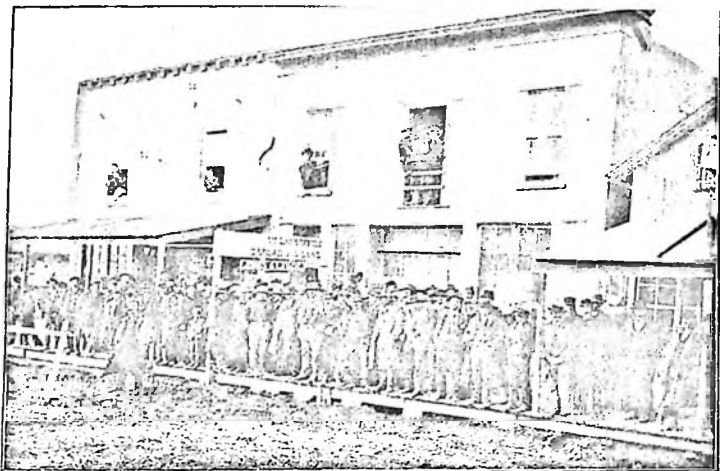
*Courtesy of the School of American Research Collection of the Museum of New Mexico*

### Mormon Settlers in Arizona

barren land with no available resources except physical strength and imagination. For some, their first living quarters had them living like prairie dogs in dugout caves in the side of a hill, a ravine, or occasionally a riverbank. It was customary for many homesteaders to arrange such a temporary shelter until the permanent dwelling was ready for occupancy. The dugout was more easily made than the sod house, so many pioneers, anxious to get settled and to plant crops, found this particular living arrangement to be essential. The front wall was made of square cut turf or logs if available. A roof sloping into the hill was made of poles covered with brush, a layer of prairie grass thick enough to hold dirt, and finally a layer of dirt over the grass.

The sod house, although more difficult to build, was more comfortable and lasted longer. It was cheap, cool in summer, and warm in winter. No highly trained structural engineer could have solved the problem of limited resources any better. The earliest sod houses in Nebraska, for example, were built by the Mormons at Winter Camp (on the north side of present Omaha), and were probably modeled from the Omaha Indians who lived in earth and timber lodges.

To build such a structure required plowing about a half acre of sod in strips between 14 and 18 inches wide. The turf was then cut into bricks to make up the walls. The best house site was considered to be one facing east or southeast, in a valley, near water



#### LAND OFFICE BUSINESS

Front and rear of the United States land office at Garden City, Kansas, in 1885. Fifty thousand acres were taken daily, and when the crowds blockaded the halls and stairway, the land attorneys accommodated their clients through the back windows. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society.



but above potential flooding, on level but well drained ground. It was best to prepare no more sod than could be laid in one day so the material would not dry out in the prairie winds before being put into position. The general outline of the soddie was a rectangle about 16 by 20 feet. A wall would then be built up grass side down with staggered laps as in bricklaying. A wooden frame provided for a window and wooden poles were incorporated above the door frame to support the sod above it. Dirt or mud was used to fill gaps and to make all surfaces as smooth as possible.

The ordinary sod house had grave faults. Its few openings permitted little light and air for ventilation. They were difficult to keep clean. A leaky roof was probably the most disagreeable feature; when the roof was saturated, it would drip for three days. After a heavy rain, if the well-soaked roof had not collapsed, it was necessary to hang all bedding and clothing outside to dry. Advantages in addition to being cool in summer and warm in winter included no danger of collapsing from high winds or destruction by prairie fire. Neither was there any danger of fire from the fireplace, which was safely built of sod. The average life of a sod house was six or seven years.

### Implements

While the average farm size in the eastern U.S. in the 1860s was 50 acres and a farmer working that land could feed his family well with a walking plow, a cradle scythe and a hand corn planter, the rich open expanse of 160 acres in the west invited improved methods. The plains and farm

machinery were made for each other. No longer adequate were the simple hoe, shovel, scythe and flail.

The McCormick reaper was invented in 1831 and had seen some use east of the Mississippi before the Homestead Act. Homesteading helped spread the use of such devices, along with a two-row corn planter, stalk cutters, feed grinders, and increasingly sophisticated machinery.

Windmills sprouted in a land of uncertain rainfall. One of the primary manufacturers of windmills and hand water pumps was Dempster Mill Manufacturing Co. located in Beatrice, Nebraska. Ten-foot-diameter windmills mounted on steel towers from 20 to 75 feet high were self regulating and capable of withstanding wind gusts and storms.

Barbed wire compensated for the lack of wood for fences as did massive plantings of osage orange hedgerows.

Ultimately, cash crop farming and implement industry grew hand in hand until farming itself became an industry, growing rapidly from these very rudimentary beginnings.

### Legacy of the Homestead Act

Thomas Jefferson predicted it would take one hundred generations to settle the country from the Appalachians to the Pacific, but it took only five. Of the slightly less than 3 million entries filed under the homestead laws between 1863 and 1960, some 64% were successful. Those succeeding were likely able to add to their initial quarter section, managed to save enough to buy new machinery, had easy access to a railhead for shipping their crops, and

had adequate water.

From 1863-1976, 270 million acres of land were transferred to private ownership, which is equal to over 10 percent of the total area of the United States, through the Homestead Act of 1862. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 in effect repealed the Homestead Law. The last homestead filing occurred in February 1974 in Alaska by Kenneth Dierdorff who emigrated from McGrath, Arkansas. There is no easy way to get to his homestead on an unmarked bend in the Stony River 30 river miles from the nearest Alaskan village. Access is by dogsled in the winter and by boat or water-landing plane in the summer. The 2-story log cabin, built entirely by the hands of one man, has direct ties as the last homestead with the first homestead under the Homestead Act of 1862. Note that the greatest number of entries by state occur in Montana (154,000), North Dakota (118,000), Nebraska (105,000) and Colorado (102,000).

The years when the greatest amount of land was claimed occurred between 1907 and 1922. Note that numbers of acres claimed dropped significantly during the disastrous years of the 1930s. By then, federal land policy was undergoing another great change. Efforts to dispose of the public domain were being replaced by efforts to retain and manage what was left of the domain. The legislative move which some historians claim effectively led to the repeal of the Homestead Act was the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 which referred to "final disposal" of the public domain. Simultaneously, another use of the public lands conservation was gaining ground. What was left of the

**2,600,000** FARMS of Fertile Prairie Lands to be had Free of Cost

**CENTRAL DAKOTA**

**30 Millions of Acres**

**YOU NEED A FARM!**

**CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN**

**HOW TO GET THERE**

**BEAR IN MIND**

**Chicago & North-Western R'y.**

*Above: A reproduction of a C&NW poster of 1870. Although each railroad differed in its approach, the bottom line was always the same: the promise of a new and fulfilling life.*

public domain in the West was set aside as national parks and national forests.

What was the price of "free land"? Even during good years, life for the homesteader was difficult. Doctors, goods and luxuries were scarce. Neighbors and communities were separated by miles of open country and life was very lonely. Droughts, fires, grasshoppers and crop failures disenchanted many. Payments were made in labor, sweat and personal sacrifice. Other costs for settlement of the plains were extracted from the land itself and its original inhabitants. The plant and animal ecosystems of the prairies which had survived for centuries covering thousands of square miles were, in a few short decades, almost completely

**RICH FARMING LANDS!**  
ON THE LINE OF THE  
**Union Pacific Railroad!**  
Located in the GREAT CENTRAL BELT of POPULATION, COMMERCE and WEALTH, and adjoining the WORLD'S HIGHWAY from OCEAN TO OCEAN.

**12,000,000 ACRES!**  
3,000,000 Acres in Central and Eastern Nebraska, in the Platte Valley, now for sale!

We invite the attention of all parties seeking a HOME, to the LANDS offered for sale by this Company.

The vast quantities of land for sale which are located in the Platte Valley and other sections of Nebraska, and which are being offered for sale by this Company, are of the highest quality, and are well adapted for the raising of stock and the growing of crops. The lands are well watered, and are in the most desirable location for the farmer and stock raiser.

plowed and replaced by cultivation. The fertile soil of the original grasslands "loose, windblown, glacial dust was put under the plow at a rapid rate. In the twenty years following the Civil War, more land was brought under cultivation than the previous 250 years. Corn took the place of tall grass; wheat substituted for nearly half the short grass".

For the Native Americans, the freedom of their traditional ways had been stripped from them with little or no regard. They lost most of their resources, the most significant being the great herds of bison. Finally, the Indian Nations were displaced entirely from their lands.

### Summary

- 1) The Homestead Act represented a significant departure from previous land policies.
- 2) The Homestead Act reflects the re-focus of government programs and policies from the East to the West.
- 3) The Homestead Act was successful in its intent to encourage settlement of the American West.
- 4) The Homestead Act was presented as

an opportunity to obtain the American Dream of owning land and determining one's own future.

- 5) European immigration to the United States was encouraged by the Homestead Act.
- 6) The Homestead Act changed the American social structure through its egalitarian nature, allowing women, African-Americans, non-citizens, and other disenfranchised individuals to establish homesteads and to own land.
- 7) Cultivation of the West significantly enhanced the development of our nation, yet resulted in the alteration of the existing prairie.
- 8) Human needs and circumstances of the land led to accelerated technological development for agriculture, transportation and communications.
- 9) The Homestead Act hastened the relocation and dissipation of Native American nations and permanently altered their way of life.

"Even as the people changed the prairie, it changed them. That prairie and the vastness beyond it were uniquely American. The men and women who settled there were also unique, or became so. They were new people in a new land and such people and land had not been known before."  
*John Madson, Where the Sky Began: Life of the Tallgrass Prairie (1982)*

Walter Prescott Webb eloquently wrote in his work *The Great Plains* "In the new region level, timberless, and semi-arid (settlers) were thrown by Mother Necessity into the clutch of new circumstances. East of the Mississippi civilization stood on three legs land, water, and timber; west of the Mississippi not one but two of

these legs were withdrawn,—water and timber—and civilization was left on one leg land.

We came here to this beautiful country, in those early days, young, strong, healthy, filled with hope, energy and ambition I do not know how large a bank account some of the old settlers may have today, I do not care, they will never be as rich as I felt, when I first settled on my homestead. I remember the time I did not have the money to buy a postage stamp. I remember the hard winter, the drought of 1894. The many obstacles to overcome. We came to win the battle, and we did. We were empire builders.”

The Homestead Act set into motion a period of rampantly advancing

change on the American frontier. It has been said that the Homestead Act breathed the spirit of the West, with its optimism, its courage, and its willingness to do hard work.

### Acknowledgments

The story of the pioneer homestead as the cultural glue of a civilization stretching across the sea of grass from the Missouri River to the Rockies obligates me to express gratitude and recognition to several. During the process of conducting some of my research on site at the Homestead National Monument outside my hometown of Beatrice, Nebraska, I met and worked with two outstanding people

## HOMESTEAD ENTRIES BY STATE

From 1863-1976 270 million acres of land were transferred to private ownership which is equal to over 10 percent of the total area of the United States through the Homestead Act of 1862. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 in effect repealed the Homestead Law.

A breakdown by number of entries filed by state:

Alabama	42,000	Mississippi	25,000
Alaska	32,000	Missouri	35,000
Arizona	22,000	Montana	154,000
Arkansas	75,000	Nebraska	105,000
California	68,000	Nevada	6,000
Colorado	102,000	New Mexico	89,000
Dakota Territory	32,000	North Dakota	118,000
Florida	28,000	Ohio	2,000
Idaho	62,000	Oklahoma	98,000
Illinois	4,000	Oregon	64,000
Indiana	3,000	South Dakota	98,000
Iowa	9,000	Utah	18,000
Kansas	90,000	Washington	58,000
Louisiana	23,000	Wisconsin	28,000
Michigan	18,000	Wyoming	68,000
Minnesota	85,000		

*Data courtesy of Homestead National Monument of America, Beatrice, NE*

doing laudable work on a daily basis preserving this critical era of our cultural and physical heritage. Susan Cook, a staff member at the National Monument, and Mark Engler, Homestead National Monument Superintendent, shared their time, files, and enthusiasm without reserve. That generous commitment is further demonstrated by Superintendent Engler and his staff who have sent each one of you a copy of the impressive official Homestead color brochure.

I also want to recognize the two special individuals who are trying, with the patience of Job, to help me make the transition into 21st century computer technology. Ed Bathke did the nuts and bolts work developing this Power Point presentation using photos, graphs, and drawings from my collection. My wife, Carol, spent long hours helping this old-timer generate, organize, and edit the text of my remarks onto a 3 1/2-inch-square piece of plastic diabolically, in my view, called a floppy disk!

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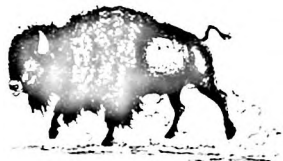
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# Over the corral rail

**The Denver Posse of Westerners would like to welcome the following people who have joined in 2003:**

Andy Parks of Highlands Ranch, Colorado who was referred by Ken Gaunt. Andy is interested in World War II aviation history.

Jason Staadt of Aurora, Colorado brought in by Don Staadt. Jason enjoys backpacking and mountain biking.

## **New quarter has link to Westerner**

The U.S. Mint's release day for the Maine quarter was June 2, 2003. They are minted in Philadelphia and Denver.

On the Maine quarter is the Victory Chimes Windjammer, out of Rockland, Maine. It was launched in 1900 from Bethel, Delaware and at that time was christened The Edwin & Maude. The Victory Chimes, an American National Historic Landmark, is illustrated sailing by the Pemaquid Lighthouse.

The Victory Chimes was built by George P. Phillips, the Great Grandfather of Westerner's Chuck Wrangler Dot Krieger!



### **Westerners International**

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



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Frontier Children**, by Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith. Forward by Elliot West. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999. 174 pp. Photos, acknowledgments, index. Paper \$19.95.

**Frontier Children** is an intimate account of the challenges, hardships, horrors, schooling, and fun experienced by the children of those hardy pioneers that chose to join the westward movement that came to be known as the trans-Mississippi West migration of the 1800s.

All children are represented in this book, not just those of pioneering adventurers of European stock, but the children of Indian tribes, Hispanics, Chinese, and Blacks; they all shared hardships and survival in their own way according to their individual culture and customs. Even if they survived the long arduous trip across the plains and mountains to their destination, for many of them the hardships were only beginning. Yet they worked through the hardships and years later looked back with fondness on their life on the frontier as a grand adventure filled with pleasant memories.

In tracing this migration west the authors begin with the first wagons headed to the Oregon Territory in the 1840s and lead to the era of the iron horse. It was the iron horse and the "Orphan Trains" that brought orphans from New York City to be taken in by childless settlers. For most of the orphans this endeavor by the Children's Aid Society provided the safety and parental love these children deserved. It saved many of them from the mean streets of eastern cities; for others it was a sentence to a life of hard labor at the hands of cruel step-parents.

The authors have made good use of personal letters and diaries, as well as memoirs to bring life to this historical account. The book is replete with photos and illustrations worth thousands of words in telling the story of these youthful pioneers.

While there are many books on the history of the westward movement there are few others that are dedicated solely to the children's point of view, those who were compelled to follow their adventurous parents into unknown dangers, as well as un-imagined adventures.

A few people who read this book may identify with some of the individual stories, especially if they were raised on a farm or ranch. For those interested in how the West was won, this book is a recommended read.

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..they all shared hardships  
and survival ...according to  
their culture and customs...

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--Ron Perkins, C. M.

**William Henry Holmes and the Rediscovery of the American West**, by Kevin J. Fernlund. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000. 300 pp., 39 illustrations, many of which are Holmes' detailed drawings that were published in various government documents. Extensive bibliography, endnotes and an excellent, detailed index. Cloth \$39.95.

For those who know of the four government surveys undertaken in the 1870s to explore, describe and map the West, this volume is a welcome addition to that reservoir of knowledge of the men involved and their accomplishments. Best known to Coloradans is the Hayden Survey which made the first detailed maps of the entire state and prepared the magnificent geological and geographical Atlas of Colorado published in 1881.

Holmes (1843-1933) went to work for geologist F. V. Hayden in 1872 as a field artist and topographic illustrator, but soon became a competent geologist and archeologist, having as mentors, men who were leaders in their fields. His drawings and diagrams are incredibly accurate and beautiful. Holmes had a wonderful way of presenting an overview of the topography with his panoramic drawings. No wonder he was in charge of the design and layout of the *Atlas of Colorado*.

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...the Hayden Survey  
made the first detailed  
maps of the entire state...

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One half of the book documents Holmes' work with the Hayden Survey. But by 1880 the government explorations ended and a transition to preservation of archeological

sites began. Holmes resigned as a geologist and illustrator for the USGS in 1889 and went to work for the new Bureau of American Ethnology, thus starting a new career doing archeological and ethnological studies in North America and Mexico. In 1909 he resigned from the Bureau to become curator at the National Museum and later assumed the position of director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. until his death.

The latter half of the book has very few illustrations, which was a disappointment, as many of Holmes' projects included making scale models of Mesa Verde Cliff Dwellings (prepared by Holmes and W. H. Jackson for the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia) would have been most interesting, as would photos of the models Holmes prepared for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 of the buildings and ruins he had studied in Mexico. As a museum curator, he was years ahead of his time.

The other disappointment in an otherwise well-written and detailed story of Holmes professional life was the lack of information about the Holmes family. The first chapter describes his childhood and education but only two or three pages at the very end of the book mentioned his wife and children. There are only three photographs of this distinguished gentleman in the entire book, and only one is a formal portrait taken at the age of 32 years.

--Doris B. Osterwald, C.M.



**Perilous Pursuit, The U.S. Cavalry and the Northern Cheyenne**, by Stan Hoig  
Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002. 292 pp. Illustrations, maps, 31 pages  
of notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$34.95.

This seems to be the latest account written on the flight of the Northern Cheyenne from the Darlington Agency, Indian Territory, Oklahoma to their homeland on the northern plains, culminating with the tragedy of Dull Knife's band at Fort Robinson, Nebraska in January 1879. The author, whom I've had the pleasure of meeting, is a well-known writer concentrating on the Indian Wars. Somehow, his more famous books are about the tragedies that happened during this time on our frontier. For example, two such works are "The Sand Creek Massacre" and "The Battle of the Washita". He is an outstanding Western historian, and his latest is no different from the superb quality of his past efforts.

At the beginning, the author states that this work takes exception with previous authors over-relying on the memory of some of those whom took part in the affair. In this case, he points out Little Wolf, one of the leaders of the two bands (the other being Dull Knife) interviewed in 1897 and 1898, and scout George W. Brown. The author goes on to say that on some occasions, their memory was bad, and this can be proved. These errors have been repeated often by numerous authors, are now known as facts. To find out which "facts" he's talking about, you'll have to read the book.

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...the author states that this work takes exception with previous authors...

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Rather than trying to give a balanced account of both sides, the Indian trek and the cavalry pursuit the author mainly sticks to the factual account from Army reports and the like, which are noted in the extensive bibliography. He does a marvelous job of telling the story of Army units on the trail of the Cheyenne. Mixed in with the pursuit is the tale of civilian deprivations and other civilians (cowboys) assisting the Army in trying to catch the pursued. It's all about frustration on the part of the cavalry in failing to catch their quarry, and when they did, with too little resources, were unable to defeat them, or in the least, stop their flight.

Of course, the climax of this book is the surrender of Dull Knife's band, and it's decimation at the hands of the Army, when they refused to return to Oklahoma in January 1879. This is a story often told with the same unfortunate results; however, the author's ample research makes it much more realistic than it has usually been previously portrayed. For a good read to those interested in this tragic event, this book is highly recommended.

--Richard A. Cook, P.M.

**Railroads of Colorado**, by Claude Wiatrowski. Voyageur Press, Stillwater, MN, 2002. 153 pages, color photographs, 1 map, index. Cloth: \$29.95.

The book's subtitle, "Your Guide to Colorado's Historic Trains and Railway Sites", describes its primary focus. But this book is so much more, in that it provides a rather comprehensive review of the many fascinating railroads of Colorado. The author provides the reader with both historical background as well as a current description of what one looking for the railroads might expect to find today. The accompanying photos consist of a nice selection of old-time images, coupled with very attractive present-day illustrations. The railroad specialist may overlook this book, thinking that it is too general for his detailed taste, but that would be a mistake.

The author is to be complimented for being able to provide excellent coverage of Colorado's railroads, including both their history as well as what exists today, bringing it all together compactly in this very attractively illustrated volume. The enthusiasm of the author, an avid life-long rail buff, shows in his presentation, and makes it a joy to read. This book is recommended for both casual and seasoned railroad fans.

--*Edwin A. Bathke, P. M.*

**Uncommon Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law**, by David F. Wilkins and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 2002. 326 pp. Paperback, \$19.95.

The title of this book foretells a sorry story of the application of law, which defined, limited, and ultimately ended Indians' special relation to the land. As the authors assert throughout, the original inhabitants were unlike any other minority. They were here long before Christopher Columbus sailed westward in 1492, after which Europeans ran roughshod over their claims to large expanses of North America.

The authors seek high moral and legal ground, making it known all along that principles involving justice and fair play played little part in the equation. First, the Spanish came with their mission of "Gold, Glory, and God." More sanctimonious, the French brought accommodation and shared interests (i.e. the fur trade) to their dealings with Indians; but the result was still exploitation. Then the English sent many more people across the Atlantic than their counterparts who would soon settle and fight for space where natives had long made claims. It was the English of course, who set the stage for the United States upon its independence.

The chapters break down with analyses of six doctrines that, as practiced, provided direction for Indian policies at all levels. In particular, the authors lament how often the doctrine of discovery was used to over rule claims dating from before the time of Columbus. While there were occasions when the United States (through

treaties and laws) did recognize sovereign rights normally associated with nationhood, the Indian tribes were for the most part relegated to inferior status. The "Trail of Tears" in the 1830s, the introduction of the reservation system, and the efforts to get natives to assimilate into white man's culture all testify to a long-term disposition to deny Indians their lands and their heritage.

Throughout the book, the point is made that the U.S. Constitution, as drafted, if followed, would have been more than sufficient in resolving issues to the best interest of the Indian tribes. The Founding Fathers recognized the special status of natives, directing Congress to work on outstanding issues (particularly with regard to land transfers). So where did the best laid plan go awry? The authors liken the breakdown of the Constitution to actions by "the Devil who can quote Scriptures to suit his own purpose." When gold was found in the Black Hills of South Dakota or when railroad magnates sought routes heading west, the prevailing powers in Washington D.C. resorted to breaking treaties deemed to be inconvenient.

The greatest strength of **Uneven Ground** is found in the undeniable evidence of the legal and constitutional inconsistencies of actions taken both by individual and governmental entities. Laws and court decisions are never totally rational acts; but the authors show in many cases the plight of the Indians was shaped by maneuvers of many people who while engaged in their narrow self-interest found government officials willing to do their bidding. There is a litany of stories in this regard, going back to the time of George Washington and forward to the present.

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...the authors make a compelling case for review and reform...

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The reader can gain much appreciation for the analyses of problems any society has in dealing with the matter of sovereignty (the right to make authoritative decisions). The United States does have overlapping jurisdictions; the Constitution does impose limits on the national, state, and local governments, as well making provisions for separation of power. There are cultural differences, which are bound to challenge any efforts to forge a fair and reasonable solution to issues in a country now 3,700,000 square miles in size. Not everybody (sometimes very few) is satisfied with the results of actions of the powers that be.

The primary weakness of the book is in its organization. Sometimes there is a notable effort to lay out the path to the present in order. At times, issues come to the forefront and make it difficult to pursue a chronological approach. This leads the authors to rove forward and then backward in time. The result is confusion and loss of focus.

Any shortcomings aside, **Uneven Ground** deserves to be read by serious students of politics and law. American Indians have been victims, as much at the hands of some presidents, members of Congress, judges, and bureaucrats as on the battlefield. As such, the authors make a compelling case for review and reform from this point forward.

--David P. Nelson, C. M.

**The Definitive Journals of Lewis & Clark**, edited by Gary E. Moulton. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 6 x 9 inches, seven-volume set of the Nebraska Edition containing the journals written by Lewis and Clark, and three individual volumes written by four enlisted men who were members of the expedition. Pages vary per volume from 300 to 612, Editorial Procedures, Common Abbreviations and Special Symbols of Lewis and Clark, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, sources cited, index. Trade Paperback \$149.95. Books sold individually for \$24.95

Note: The 13-Volume Hardcover edition is still available at \$910.00 from the University of Nebraska Press.

These volumes are part of the paperback reprint of the hardcover 13-volume edition that was published from 1983 to 2001. The seven-volume paperback set (volumes 2 through 8) consists the journals of Lewis and Clark. Volumes 9 through 11 are the journals of four enlisted men accompanying the expedition. Three volumes of the 13-volume hardcover set published from 1983 to 2001 were not republished in paperback form. [Volume 1 (**Atlas of the Lewis & Clark Expedition**), volume 12 (**Herbarium of the Lewis & Clark Expedition**), and volume 13 (**Comprehensive Index**).] These sets were published to satisfy a need for information about the expedition, which was scattered around in multiple published editions of the journals, some hard to find. A standardized edition was needed so that a person would not have to look up information about the expedition from multiple sources. Many people have contributed their information and talents to publish these volumes. The result has been to produce one of the finest sources of Lewis and Clark material available. This review will give the prospective reader a thumbnail sketch as to what is found in the various volumes of the paperback set. The journals are published just as Lewis and Clark and the enlisted men wrote them. Their spelling of words is very unique: as an example "Sioux" is spelled Souex and Soaux.

Volume 2 (**From the Ohio to the Vermillion**) is the first book in the reprinted seven-volume set and includes Lewis' and Clark's journals beginning in August 1803, when Lewis left Pittsburgh to join Clark farther down the Ohio River. The two men and several recruits camped near the mouth of the Missouri River for five months of training, acquiring supplies and equipment, and gathering information from travelers about the trip up river. This volume ends in August, when the Corps of Discovery camped near the Vermillion River in present-day South Dakota.

Volume 3 (**Up the Missouri to Fort Mandan**) is the second book in the seven volume set and consists of journals, primarily by Clark, that cover the expedition's route up the Missouri River to Fort Mandan in present-day North Dakota and its frigid winter encampment there. It describes the party's encounters with and observations of area Indian tribes. Lewis and Clark collected critical information about traveling westward from Native Americans during this winter. This volume also contains material from the Corps of Discovery's first year.

Volume 4 (**From Fort Mandan to Three Forks**) is the third book in the

seven-volume set. It recounts Lewis and Clark's travels through country never before explored by white people. In April 1805 the Corps of Discovery set out from Fort Mandan following the Missouri River westward. It was during this time that Sacagawea, her husband Toussaint Charbonneau, and their baby, nicknamed Pomp, joined the expedition. The party spent the rest of the spring and early summer toiling up the Missouri. Along the way they portaged the difficult Great Falls, encountered grizzly bears, and mapped rivers and streams.

Volume 5 (**Through the Rockies to the Cascades**), the fourth book in the seven-volume set, details the late summer and fall months of 1805 which were the most difficult periods of Lewis and Clark's journey. This volume documents their travels from the Three Forks of the Missouri River in present-day Montana to the Cascades of the Columbia River on today's Washington-Oregon border, including the expedition's progress over the rugged Bitterroot Mountains, along the nearly impenetrable Lolo Trail. Along the way, the explorers encounter Shoshones, Flatheads, Nez Perces, and other Indian tribes, some of whom had never met white people.

Volume 6 (**Down the Columbia to Fort Clatsop**) is the fifth book in the seven-volume set and covers the last leg of the party's route from the Cascades of the Columbia River west to the Pacific Coast, and their stay at Fort Clatsop, until the spring of 1806. Travel and exploration were hampered by miserable weather. While in winter quarters Lewis wrote detailed reports on natural phenomena and Indian life. Sketches of plants and animals as well as of Indians and their canoes, tools, and clothing accompanied these descriptions. (In the preface of this volume the editor states that three special friends of this project have died since the publication of the last volume and that others have had to step in to continue the work).

Volume 7 (**From the Pacific to the Rockies**) is the sixth book in the seven-volume set. It begins with the Corps of Discovery turning homeward in March 1806 from Fort Clatsop after a rainy winter. Detained by winter snows they camped among the friendly Nez Perces in modern west-central Idaho. Lewis and Clark attended to sick Indians and continued their scientific observations while others in the party hunted and socialized with Native peoples.

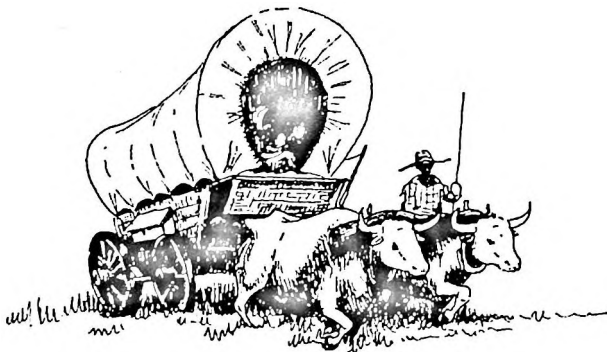
Volume 8 (**Over the Rockies to St. Louis**) is the seventh and final book in the seven-volume set written by Lewis and Clark. (Once again the editor states that another special friend of the project has died since publication of the last volume). This Lewis and Clark volume recounts the expedition's experiences as they continued their journey homeward from present-day Idaho and the party divided for separate exploration. Lewis probed the northern extent of the Louisiana Purchase on the Marias River, while Clark traveled southeast toward the Yellowstone to explore the river and make contact with local Indians. Lewis party suffered from bad luck: they encountered grizzlies, horse thieves, and the expedition's only violent encounter with native inhabitants, the Piegan Blackfeet. Lewis was also wounded in a hunting accident. The two parties eventually reunited below the mouth of the Yellowstone and arrived back in St Louis to a triumphal welcome in September 1806.

Volume 9 (**The Journals of John Ordway & Charles Floyd**) Sergeant Ordway recorded information not found elsewhere. He was the most faithful journalist on the expedition as he made an entry for every day during the expedition. He was most fascinated by the peoples and places he encountered. Sergeant Floyd was the only man to die on the expedition. The entries in his notebook were brief and factual. He reported the desertion of Private Moses Reed in detail not found elsewhere. Floyd had an eye for details, which makes us all regret that he did not live to complete a record of the entire journey.

Volume 10 (**The Journal of Patrick Gass**) This journal was involved in controversy as Sergeant Gass decided to publish his notes as a rival to Lewis' journal. Gass's original has long been lost, but since his publisher, David McKeehan, had by 1814 published six editions of Gass's journal we have these to fall back on. There is no reason to believe that the bookseller substantially altered the facts as Gass had presented them, even though he himself acknowledged that "I have arranged & transcribed it for the press, supplying such geographical notes & other observations as I supposed would render it more useful & satisfactory to the reader." Gass is the only one to give any of the dimensions of Fort Mandan. He is also the only journal keeper to describe how the Mandan and Hidatsa built their earth lodges. Gass was the last survivor of the Corps of Discovery.

Volume 11 (**The Journal of Joseph Whitehouse**) Very little is known about Private Joseph Whitehouse. At one time he either wanted to quit the expedition or was expelled for misconduct. As he expressed repentance he was allowed to return. He produced an account that stands as the only surviving record by any army private in the Corps of Discovery expedition. Whitehouse's journal is published here for the first time in its entirety. Even though he disappeared after 1817, his vivid eyewitness account will long be remembered.

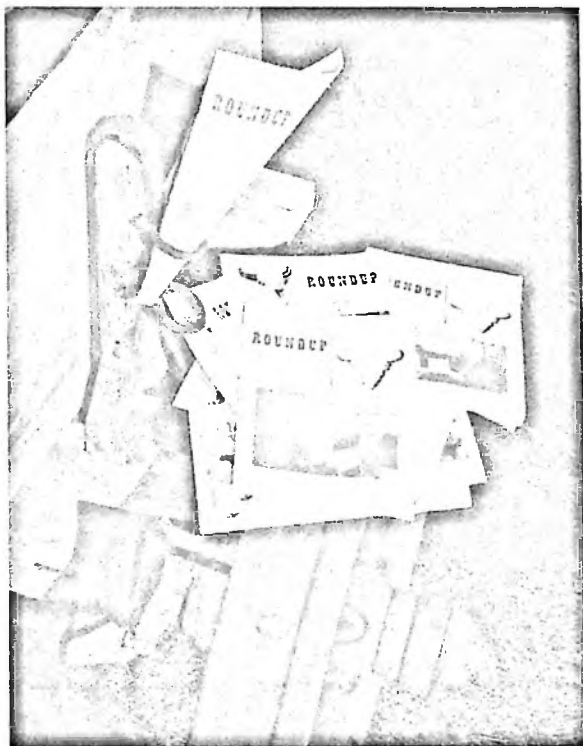
-- Theodore P. Krieger P.M.





# An Index

July - August 2003



of

The Denver Posse of Westerners'

# Roundups & Brand Books

## The Index Edition

This edition of the Westerners *Roundup* is an index of all the *Roundups* and *Brand Books* to date.

The *Roundup* information is presented twice. The first presentation is sorted by title of the work, the second is presented sorted by the author of the work.

Several Westerners contributed to this edition. Initial data entry was done by Bob Lane, compiling about 90% of the *Roundup* information into a database. Jim Krebs edited and exported the database after multiple sortings of the data, merged several non-compatible file formats, worked through the layout and did typographical corrections. Ken Gaunt organized the *Brand Book* information. Additional data acquisition and proofing was done by Ed and Nancy Bathke, who went through their entire collection of Westerners *Roundups* to check accuracy, and spent many hours proof reading and identifying types.

Please keep in mind that many of the articles that appear in the *Brand Books* also appear in the *Roundup*. Many *Brand Books* are compilations of papers first presented in the *Roundup*.

This was a huge task, accomplished by several fine people. There is no warranty as to accuracy and completeness. But we gave it a good shot.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LIX NO. 4



July - August 2003

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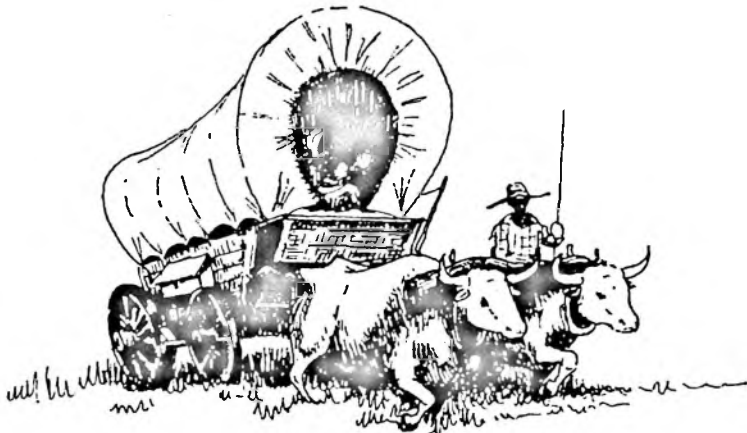
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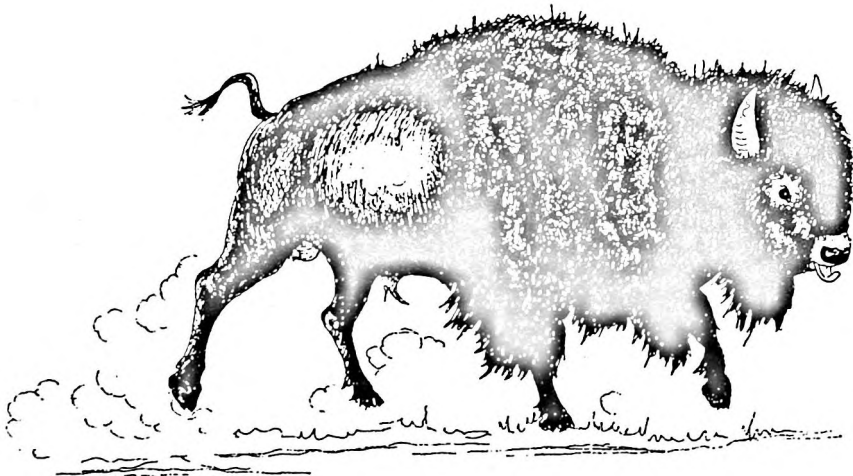
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Letterhead till 1982



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Early Cowboy Days in Wyoming	Russell Thorp	1945
Early Days in Garfield County	Len Shoemaker	1965
Early Denver Business	Alonzo E. Ellsworth	1950
Early Journalism in Colorado	Edwin A. Bemis	1946
Early Mining Camps of South Park	Norma L. Flynn	1951
Early Postmarks of Colorado	Daniel A. Stone	1955
Early Transportation in Colorado	Henry Swan	1958
El Morro - The Stone Autograph Album	George P. Godfrey	1973
El Pueblo and Its River of Destiny	Ralph C. Taylor	1958
Energetic Captain Berthoud	Charles S. Ryland	1965
Enterprise at Fraser	Frank A. Eastom	1954
Escalante's Trail or Plunder Road of West	Dabney Otis Collins	1965
Estes Park Land Grab	Davison Hicks	1974
Eugene Manlove Rhodes, American	William MacLeod Raine	1945
Exaggerated West of the Beadle and Adams Dime Novels	Bob Cormack	1963
Fake That Rocked the World	Martin Rist	1970
Fall of Fort Fillmore, 1861	Herbert O. Brayer	1951
Father Kehler's Denver, 1860 to 1876	Louisa Arps	1973
Female Wagon Master	Stanley W. Zamonski	1963
Fight for the Stratton Millions	David P. Strickler	1962
First Forest Ranger	Len Shoemaker	1951
Five Days of Battle	Philip J. Rasch	1955
Flickerama for Denver	Don Bloch	1948
Flying V of the Matador	Lewis A. Nordyke	1952
Forgotten Novelist of the Frontier	Jack D. Filpiak	1966
Forgotten War in the West	William J. Barker	1948
Fort Crawford on the Uncompahgre	Richard A. Ronzio	1963
Fort Osage & George Champlin Sibley	Fred L. Lee & John Edward Hicks	1963
Fort Union: End of the Santa Fe Trail	Henry Wood	1947
Fortification on The Plains, Fort Dodge, Kansas -1864-1882	Leo E. Oliva	1960
Foster's Place	Hugh & Evelyn Burnett	1964
Founding Fathers and Their Friends	Rhoda Davis Wilcox	1971
Four Fold Heritage of New Mexico Records	Harold H. Dunham	1967
Fourth of July in Cripple Creek	Raymond G. Colwell	1952
Fraser - Caribou Gold Rush	Robert L. Brown	1974
Fremont vs. The San Juans	LeRoy R. Hafen	1960
From Infantry to Air Corps: A History of Fort Logan	Earl McCoy	1995
Full Stop for Bowerman	Francis B. Rizzari	1949
Fur Traders and Their Forts	Francis B. Rizzari	1974
Gem Locations in the Western States	D. M. Bassler	1965
Gentleman of Fortune	Wilson Rockwell	1966
George Alexander Forsyth	Colorado State Historical Society	1969
George Eibert Burr - Etcher of The Southwest	Philip W. Whiteley	1963
George Peck - Forgotten Pioneer	Le Roy Boyd	1966
George W. Kassler, Pioneer	Robert S. Pulcifer	1974
George West: Some of His Accomplishments	Charles S. Ryland	1969
Gerard Curtis Delano-Master Painter of the West	Richard G. Bowman	1995
Ghost-town-itis	Raymond G. Colwell	1961
Glimpses of Early Denver	Edward W. Milligan	1946
Golden's Resourceful Merchant, W.A.H. Loveland	Charles S. Ryland	1972
Governor Charles Bent: Pioneer and Martyr	Harold H. Dunam	1951
Grace Greenwood	M. Talmadge & Iris Gilmore	1955
Grand Encampment, Wyoming	Velma Linford	1947

Gravity Tram of Gilpin County	Louisa Ward Arps	1968
Great Adventure	Fred M. Mazulla	1951
Great Pueblo Flood of 1921	Bernard Kelly	1995
Grit in His Gizzard	Bernice Martin	1954
Group Weddings in Old Texas	Walter Hart Blumenthal	1963
Gun Play at Old Burlington	B.L. "Billy" Boyles	1963
Gunnison Ext. of the South Park and Historical Alpine Tunnel	Dow Helmers	1964
Hanging of Tom Horn	John Charles Thompson	1945
Hayden's 1854 Missouri River Expedition	F. Martin Brown	1971
He Drove the Wild West Wild	Forbes Parkhill	1958
Healer in Denver	Larry Cantwell	1971
Healers in Pikes Peak History	Marshal Sprague	1967
Heavy Holstered Men	Lamont Johnson	1948
Heraldry of the Range	Agnes Wright Spring	1951
Here They Killed Jed Smith	Harry E. Chrisman	1962
Hermit of the Gunnison	Lewis Cass Carpenter	1972
Hero Makers of the West	Dabney Otis Collins	1964
Heroes of the Bon Air	Nancy & Edwin Bathke	1970
Hides, Hams, and Tongues	William H. Hutchinson	1950
Hispanic Customs of the Southwest from the Cradle to the Grave	Arthur L. Campa	1965
Historian Looks at Custer	James F. Bowers	1966
Historian versus the Historical Novelist	R. G. Carey & M. Straight	1963
Historical Background of Fort Logan, Colorado	Evan Edwards	1962
History of National Parks in Colorado	Edmond B. Rogers	1965
History of the Volunteer Fire Dept. of Colo. Springs 1872-1894	Lester L. Williams	1969
History of the Denver Mint	Alma K. Schneider	1958
History of the Famous Mosquito Pass	Norma L. Flynn	1958
Hoag Family of Pueblo	Ralph C. Taylor	1961
Hogmaster Poet of the Rockies	Nolie Mumey	1961
Holy Men of the San Juans	Guy M. Herstrom	1964
Homesteading - Cattle Kate's Capital Crime	William R. Kelly	1963
Horace Greeley, the Man Who Took His Own Advice	Mrs. Elmo Scott Watson	1962
Horse Drawn Days of the Colorado Springs Fire Department	Lester L. Williams	1974
Horseback Through the West - 1903	Letter by unknown author	1971
How and Why the Railroads Came to Colorado	Robert A. LeMassena	1995
How Come, Why, How I Wrote "Denver South Park & Pacific"	Mac C. Poor	1965
How Far Westward the Civil War?	Bert M. Fireman	1963
How Hagerman Sold the Midland	John J. Lipsey	1956
How "Little Man With Big Voice" Saved Crow Dog	Agnes Wright Spring	1973
How Tabor Lost His Millions	Forbes Parkhill	1953
Hunting History on Colorado's Old Railroad Grades	Robert M. Ormes	1973
I. P. (Print) Olive, Cowman	Harry E. Chrisman	1961
Incline Railways at Manitou Springs	Morris W. Abbott	1970
Incomparable Red Rocks, from Dinosaurs to Rock 'n Roll	Milton E. Benet	1972
Incubator Doctor in Denver: A Medical Missing Link	L. Joseph Butterfield	1970
Independence Pass & Twin Lakes Toll Road	Don and Jean Griswold	1959
Index to Brand Books	Virginia Lee Wilcox	1954
Indian Atrocities on the Texas Frontier	Walter Gann	1950
Indian: Stereotype or Human Being?	Frederic H. Douglas	1947
Indians in Colorado	Robert P. Emmitt	1974
Insurance Against the Hazards of Western Life	Herbert O. Brayer	1945
Ira E. Leonard - The Would-be Judge	Philip J. Rasch	1964
Isadore Bolten, Cobbler to Cattle King	Herbert P. White	1970
It Can't Happen Here	Francis B. Rizzari	1959
J. J. Hagerman, Building of the Colorado Midland	John J. Lipsey	1954
J. Ross Browne Looks at Western Enterprise	Paul Ton	1966
James Pourtales - Fifteen Western Years	William S. Jackson	1949
Jay Gould, the Great Railroad Financier	Richard A. Ronzio	1972
Jefferson Territory and Its Competitors	LeRoy R. Hafen	1945
Jerome B. Chaffee and Colorado	Ross V. Miller, Jr.	1972
Jesuit Treasure of Bamao	Arthur L. Campa	1959
John James Audubon	Nolie Mumey	1968
John Milton Chivington, The Misunderstood Man	Nolie Mumey	1956
John Otto, Fantastic Father of The Colorado National Monument	Al Look	1960

John Plumber, Prime Precursor of a Railroad to Pacific	Don Bloch	1965
John Wesley Iliff	Edward W. Milligan	1950
Joseph Addison Sewall	Nolie Mumeey	1966
Journey to Old St. Elmo	Everett Bair	1958
Julesburg - Camp Rankin & Fort Sedgwick	Byron Hooper	1963
Julesburg Indian Attacks, January 7 & February 2, 1865	Mark E. Hutchins	1995
Justice Comes to Denver	Edward V. Dunklee	1947
Justice, If Any, in the Twenties and Thirties	O. Otto Moore	1969
Ku Klux Klan in Denver and Colorado Springs	James Davis	1967
Kansans in Estes Park - 1889	Dave Hicks	1971
Killing of Pat McWeeney	M. I. McCreight	1951
Killing of Wild Bill Hickok	Earl Scott	1965
Kipling, Caroline, and Colorado	Lowell E. Mooney	1970
La Veta Pass and Garland City	Henry A. Clausen	1973
Ladies of Bent's Fort	Enid T. Thompson	1974
Lake City	Raymond G. Colwell	1950
Laramie's Bill Nye	T. A. Larson	1952
Last Indian Raid in Kansas, Sept. 1978	L. M. Foster	1963
Legend of Colter's Hell	Merrill J. Mattes	1947
Legends of the Wa-To-Yah	Nolie Mumeey	1957
Letter to Antoine Janis	Dean Krakel	1961
Letters of Kirby Benedict, 1854 - 1865	Charles Warren Vander Hill	1961
Letters of William N. Byers	Levette J. Davidson	1952
Life and Death of Kit Joy - Train Robber & Joel Fowler	Philip J. Rasch	1965
Life and Times of Frank Canton-Gunman on at Least Four Fron.	John M. Hutchins	1995
Life in Montezuma, Chihuahua, and Saints John	Elizabeth Roller	1964
Little London and the Bell Memoirs	Marshall Sprague	1960
Littleton, Dynamic Town of Colorado	Edwin A. Bemis	1964
Lives of Two Great Scouts	Kit Carson III	1946
Lo! The Rich Indian	Vincil S. Lester	1961
Long Rifles and Raw Meat	Arthur H. Carhart	1945
Lost Currency Mine on Turkey Creek Mesa	John B. Marshall	1964
Lost Towns of the Homesteaders	Hugh B. Burnett	1974
Lucien B. Maxwell: Frontiersman and Businessman	Harold H. Dunham	1949
Lucifer & Crucifer: The Enigma of Penitentes	George Mills & Richard Grove	1955
Marryin' and The Buryin'	Inez Hunt	1970
Marville Mills Craig in Territorial Colorado	John R. Marshall (ed)	1959
Mecker Massacre and Thornburgh Battle	Forbes Parkhill	1945
Mementos of the Dave Day Family	George Vest Day	1961
Memories of Old Alturas County, Idaho	Lucille Hathaway Hall	1955
Merchandising Struggles in Early Utah, The Success of Z.C.M.I.	Arden B. Olsen	1950
Merchant Colonists of New Mexico	Milton W. Callon	1965
Methodist Beginnings in New Mexico	Martin Rist	1966
Midas Touch	Muriel Sibell Wolle	1968
Milling All Around	Lorene & Kenneth Englert	1960
Mining Camp Architecture	Muriel Sibell Wolle	1953
Monarch of Grand County	Frank H. Wolcott	1954
Montezuma Hot Springs Hotel	Milton W. Callon	1959
Moral Geography in Denver; Streetcars, Suburbs & Saloons	Thomas J. Noel	1995
Mormon in Politics	Jan Shippis	1963
Most Energetic Man in the Whole World	Francis B. Rizzari	1973
Mountain Hostleries Early Twin Lake Style	Don & Jean Griswold	1955
Mrs. Jane Wilson - Comanche Captive	Numa L. James	1968
Mustang and the West	Charles B. Roth	1945
Mutiny of the 15th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry	William E. Carraway	1961
Myth of the Two-Gun Man and the Fast-draw Artist	Charles B. Roth	1962
Naming the Streets of Denver	J. Nevin Carson	1964
Native American Church and the Law...Peyote Religious Service	Omer C. Stewart	1961
New Mexico - Conquistadors and Its Interpreters	Armand W. Reeder	1960
News Butchers on Western Railroads	Ralph B. Mayo	1949
Nez Perce Delegation of 1831	Paul M. Timothy	1972
Nez Perce War of 1877	Richard A. Cook	1995
No Monument to Mark It	Abby L. Kernochan	1953
No Windy Promises	Barron B. Beshoar	1961



Not So Rugged At All	Dolores Calahan Renze	1952
Note on Buckskin Frank Leslie	Phil Rasch	1954
Note on Rush Mills	Francis B. Rizzari	1956
Notes and Documents on Fort Lewis, Colorado	Robert W. Delaney	1965
Notes on a Few Early Day Photographers of Colorado	Francis B. Rizzari	1955
Notes on Colorado's First Years & the Sand Creek Massacre	Robert H. Sayre	1955
Notes On a Few Early Towns of Jefferson County	Francis B. Rizzari	1965
Notes on Mountaineering in the Elk Mountains of Colorado	Percy Hagerman	1955
O. W. Daggett and The Holy Cross Trail	Robert L. Brown	1970
Old Caribou and Central City	Agnes Wright Spring	1958
Old Mose, the Great Grizzly	Lester L. Williams	1995
On the Oregon Trail to Zion in 1853: Stephen Fosdick Memoirs	Fletcher W. Birney, Jr. (ed.)	1953
On the Trail of the Ghost Dancers	Dabney Otis Collins	1963
On the Trail of the Legendary Dave Day	J. Joseph Leonard	1953
Operation Wildcat	Philip W. Whiteley	1957
Ordeal in Cheyenne	Dean Krakel	1957
Orth H. Stein, Crusader Story-Teller for <u>The Leadville Chronical</u>	Don & Jean Griswold	1958
Our Spanish-American Heritage	D. D. Monro	1957
Out Jesse-ing the James Boys	Velma Linford	1951
Out of the Original Rock	J. Frank Dobie	1962
Outlaws of the South West, 1895-1905	Larry D. Ball	1964
Padre Kino's Missions	Robert H. Rose	1963
Painting the Land of the Lost Souls	Otto Kuhler	1964
Parrott City and John Moss	Robert L. Brown	1963
Passes Over the Blood of Christ	Arthur H. Carthart	1957
Peg Leg Foster, Outlaw from Outlaw Mesa	Al Look	1963
Penitentes of New Mexico in the 1807's	Thomas & Emily Harwood	1969
Permutations in Paradox Valley	Dolores Calahan Renze	1949
Photographs by Roach	Otto Roach	1960
Pike Centennial Celebration, 1906	Nancy & Edwin Bathke	1972
Pine Ridge, 1890 - 1891	Elmo Scott Watson	1945
Pioneer Denver Mint Robbery	Forbes Parkhill	1957
Pioneer Heroes in the Age of Aviation	Lee Scamehom	1964
Pioneer Mormon Currency	Richard G. Bowman	1973
Pioneer Story in Western Cover	Philip W. Whiteley	1956
Pioneering on the Divide	Carl F. Mathews	1959
Plainsman from Parnassus	Maurice Fink	1952
Poker, Politics and Gold	Ralph E. Ellithorpe	1971
Portrait in the Gallery, Otto Mears Pathfinder of the San Juans	Wilson Rockwell	1967
Pothooks Over the Plain	Dabney Otis Collins	1946
Powder River Cattle Baroness	Ernest M. Richardson	1957
Prehistoric Man in Colorado	D.C. Hurst	1946
Primary Exploration of the Wind River Range, 1924	Carl A. Blanrock	1973
Prince Hal Rides the Rockies	Elvon L. Howe	1952
Problems of the Frontier Soldier, 1866 - 1883	H. D. Hampton	1963
Prominent Pioneer Ancestors in Montana's History	Barbara & Robert Mutchter	1970
Pueblo Indian Dances in New Mexico	Muriel Sibell Wolfe	1973
Pygmy Among the Giants	Guy M. Herstrom	1959
Quick-on-the-Trigger Men	Mary Lyons Cairns	1955
Raids by Reynolds	Kenneth E. Englert	1956
Railroads of the Crystal River Valley	Francis B. Rizzari	1964
Raising the Gold-Plated Dome	Martin A. Wenger	1952
Range Country Troubles—1885	Herbert O. Brayer	1952
Range Stockmen Meet the Government	Farrington R. Carpenter	1967
Recollections of North Park	John Stevens Payne	1967
Record vs. Reminiscence	William S. Jackson	1945
Rediscovery of Colter's Hell and other Research Adventures	Merrill J. Mates	1973
Redstone on the Crystal	Vaughn Mechau	1948
Rev. John L. Dyer, the Snowshoe Itinerant	Robert L. Brown	1995
Richard Throssel, Photographer of the Crows	Henry W. Hough	1954
Ride on the Wild Side - 1904	Alexander Summers	1971
Rise and Fall of the Half Way House	Morris W. Abbott	1968
Rise of the House of Murphy	Philip J. Rasch	1956
Roaring Fork Pioneers	Len Shoemaker	1962

Robert B. Bradford, Pioneer Denver Merchant	Raymond W. Settle	1954
Rocky Mountain Burro Tales	Levette J. Davidson	1950
Rocky Mountain Hermits	Levette J. Davidson	1949
Roll Out, Roll Out, The Bulls are Coming	Clarence S. Jackson	1954
Rough Justice on the Missouri	Dabney Otis Collins	1960
Roundups	Larmer Moore	1954
Rougher Than Hell	Stanley W. Zamonski	1957
Royal Gorge Railroad War	Wilbur T. Little	1957
Rustlers and Recluses	Raymond G. Colwell	1956
Sacajawea, The Great American Indian Heroine	Nolie Mumey	1958
Saga of a Wandering Swede	Don Bloch	1954
Saints and Santos	Nolie Mumey	1953
Saloons of the American West	Robert L. Brown	1973
Sand Creek, a Novelist's View	Michael Straight	1963
Sand Creek, and Eyewitness Account	George Bent	1963
Sand Creek, as Reported by Four Others	A., S. & C. Wynkoop	1963
Sand Creek, Centennial Remarks	Bob Cormack	1963
Sangre De Cristo Grant-1843 to 1880	Guy M. Herstrom	1960
Sangre de Cristo Land Grant	Ralph Carr	1947
Sangre de Cristo: Colorado's Forgotten Pass	Edward S. Helmuth	1995
Santa Fe's "Original Old Curio Store"	Gene F. Doyle	1968
Scarlet Sister Mattie	Forbes Parkhill	1948
Scott United Methodist Church	Fred M. Mazzuila	1969
Scotts Bluff: Gibraltar of the Plains	Merrill J. Mattes	1949
Seeing the Elephant	Merrill J. Mattes	1995
Stephen W. Dorsey - Soldier, Statesman	Francis B. Rizzari	1969
Shadow Catcher on an Army Mule	Christian Bartheimess	1953
Shadow Catchers of the Red Man	Elmo Scott Watson	1950
She Wore Pants	Earl Scott	1963
Sheep Wars of the Nineties in Northwest Colorado	Edward N. Wentworth	1946
Short Cut to the San Juan	Charles E. Redd	1949
Short History of the Evans Chapel	Leslie W. Scofield	1969
Sidelights on Santa Fe Traders, 1839 - 1846	Harold H. Dunham	1950
Silver Coquette - The San Juans 1860-1875	Duane Allan Smith	1969
Singing Spaniards of the Old Southwest	Arthur L. Campa	1953
Sioux Indians	Royal B. Hassick	1961
Sioux Sun Dance	John Carson	1965
Sketches of the Mexican War	George Frederick Ruxton	1947
Small Miracles in My Life as a Book Hunter	Fred A. Rosenstock	1966
Some Handguns of the Mountain Men	Carl P. Russell	1962
Some Notes on Newton Earp	Gary L. Roberts	1962
Some Oddities of the American Indain	Mari Sandoz	1954
Something New at San Carlos	Lee Stohlbrost	1953
Stage House Toward the Hills	Ruth Beckwith	1954
Star of David in Colorado	Ida Libert Uchill	1957
Statehood Aspirzitions and Constitutions of Early Colorado	Donald W. Hensel	1958
Stephen W. Dorsey-Soldier, Statesman and Empire Builder	Francis B. Rizzari	1959
Story of Judge Ben B. Lindsey	Phillip B. Gilliam	1969
Story of King Park and Como	Allison Chandler	1963
Story of the San Miguel Development Co. & Merc. Co.	William W. Wardell	1958
Stuffy Subject	Carrie Scott Ellis	1960
Summit Springs	C. Jefferson Cox	1969
Superstition & Witchcraft along Rio Grande	Arthur L. Campa	1949
Survey of the Exploration of the Colorado River	Dwight L. Smith	1962
Sylvia T. Smith: Her Day in Court	John F. Bennett	1970
Tall Tales of the Rockies	Levette J. Davidson	1945
Theatre in Denver, 1859 - 1881	James Osborn	1995
These Were Thy Charms	Abby L. Kemochan	1956
They Had No Alamo	Arthur H. Carhart	1968
Thomas Hornsby Ferril as a Journalist	Robert F. Richards	1961
To Aspen and Beyond	Jackson C. Thode	1967
To Live Off the Land	Dabney Otis Collins	1968
To the Gold Fields: Personal Recollections	William Lee Scroggs	1955
Toll-roads in Colorado	Paul D. Harrison	1962

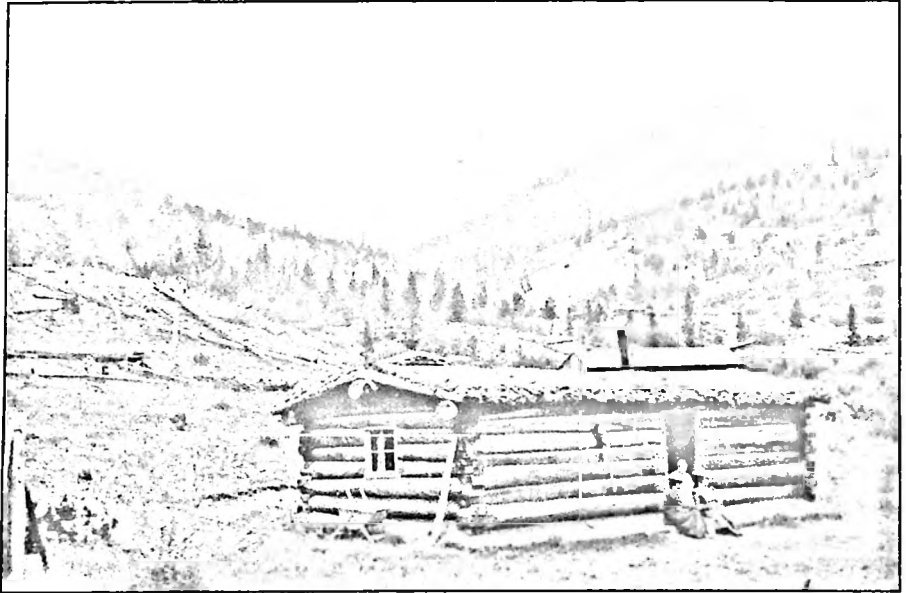
Tom "Pegleg" Smith	Frederic E. Voelker	1963
Tornado—With a Broken Neck	John J. Lipsey	1952
Trade Beads Among the American Indians	Philip W. Whitely	1951
Traders and Tokens	Philip W. Whitely	1953
Tragedy at White Horse Creek—Military Account	Barry C. Johnson	1963
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Tragedy of Fort Philip Kearny	Charles D. Schreiberis	1951
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Tragic Death of Captain Crawford	E. Miles Fusco	1963
Trail City, Cattle Town	William Powell	1964
Trail Driving a Hundred Years Ago	J. Frank Dobie	1952
Trails of Ulibarri & Villasur	Henry W. Hough	1948
Train Robber Confesses	Bill Carlisle	1946
Trouble in Serene	Perry Eberhart	1973
True or False...Which?	Ralph B. Mayo	1945
Twelve Colorado Characters	Philip W. Whiteley	1967
Twenty Years of Westmectring	Don Russell	1963
Twenty-Five Years on the Range	Martin Rist	1969
Two-gun Man and the Fast-drawArtist	Charles B. Roth	1962
Typing theWestern Gunman	Chesmore Eastlake	1948
Utah Railway: The Gilsonite Road	Richard A. Ronzio	1959
Undue Process of Law, Here and There	Fred M. Mazzulla	1964
Union Printers Home	Dowell E. Patterson	1962
United States Dragoons,1833 - 1861	Gordon Chappell	1974
Unsolved Crimes of the Pikes Peak Region	Carl F. Mathews	1962
Visit From "Baby Doe"	Numa L. James	1969
Voices From the Deep	Davidson F. Hicks	1973
Wagonmaster	Edwin A. Bemis	1952
Walkers of Grand Junction	Alan Pritchard	1961
War Beyond the River, Our Civil War and the Uncivil West	E. B. Long	1974
War Club & Parasol - Frontier Army Officers' Wives	Merrill J. Mattes	1995
Was Heap's Journal Plagiarized?	William Swilling Wallace	1968
Way They Killed the Buffalo	Charles B. Roth	1951
We Lived at Fort Laramie - Interviews with Old Timers	David L. Hieb	1995
Weapons of the Civil War	Ross V. Miller, Jr	1968
Wee Waifs in the Wild West	Davidson (Dave) Hicks	1972
Wells Fargo - for the Collector	Richard G. Bowman	1971
West by Water	Dabney Otis Collins	1951
Western Brushstrokes—A Symposium	Arthur H. Carhart, et al	1946
Western Fields of Honor	William MacLeod Raine	1952
Western Necessity Coinage	Philip W. Whitely	1948
Western Sheep Drive, 1882: the Diary of Lavincia Bent	Lavincia Bent	1950
Western Trails to Calvary	Barron B. Beshoar	1949
Western Women as Will James Saw Them	Robert B. Cormack	1963
Westerners in the West	Robert B. Cormack	1963
Westward the Press	Robert I. Perkin	1957
What "Little Lunnon" Would Like to Remember- or Forget	Lorene & Kenneth Englert	1961
What Most People Don't Know About New Mexico	Milton W. Callon	1966
What We Know-and Do Not Know-About the Union Station	Robert A. LeMassena	1972
Wheeler Geologic Area-and the Passes of the Elk Mtn. Range	Len Shoemaker	1967
When Colorado Springs and Chase Mellen Were Young	John J. Lipsey	1959
When Dukes went West	Herbert O. Brayer	1948
When Hastings, Colorado Counted Their Dead	Francis B. Rizzari	1968
Who Dropped the Lemon Extract?	Fred M. Mazzulla	1959
Who Dry-Gulched the Hoc Ranch Foreman?	J. Elmer Brock	1953
Who Stole Tabor's Gold?	Agnes Wright Spring	1966
Who Was the Virginian?	Agnes Wright Spring	1969
Wild Meat for the Mines	Charles B. Roth	1961
Wild West or Beadle's Dime Novels	Colin B. Goodykoontz	1945
Will C. Ferril, Newspaperman & Historian	Henry S. Fellerman	1961
Will Fiction, Folklore & Fakelore Bury History?	Nyle H. Miller	1968
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William Henry Jackson, Pioneer Photographer	Carl A. Blaurock	1974

William Henry Jackson. A Tribute	Nolie Mumcy	1947
Wilson Waddingham in Idaho	Merle W. Wells	1968
Wit and Humor of the American Indian	L. T. Sigstad	1960
With Faith They Came	Sara E. Robbins	1957
With Hayden on the Yellowstone	Sidford Hamp	1948
With Our Rocking Chair Historians	Ramon F. Adams	1952
Word From the West: John J. Vandemoer, reporting from his Diaries	Don Bloch	1959
World's Largest Producer of Advertising Films, the Alexander Film Co.	Leland Feitz	1972
Wrestling in Colorado and Other 49 States	Henry A. Clausen	1974
Writing the Western Story	Ramon F. Adams	1950
Yellowstone National Park	Edmund B. Rogers	1946
Yellowstone Stage Holdups	Jack Ellis Haynes	1952





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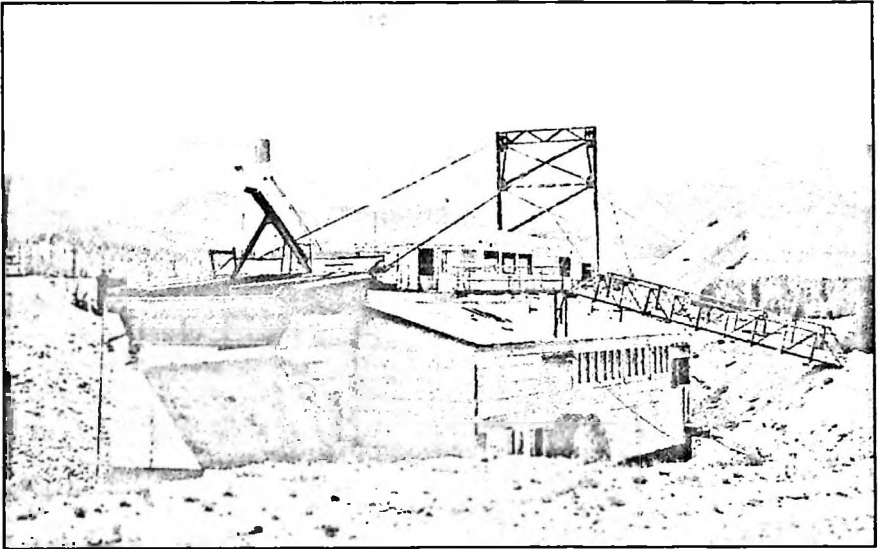


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*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

September - October 2003



*Photo by Gary Higgins*

Snowstorm Dredge, 1999

## **Saving Colorado's Last Mining Dredge**

**by John Stewart**

**(presented August 24, 2002)**

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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September - October 2003

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Form 2858, October 1999



# Saving Colorado's Last Mining Dredge

by John Stewart

(presented August 24, 2002)

Imagine, if you will, a machine described as leaving "the kind of furrow that an enormous un-house-broken worm might leave," or more charitably, one that "chewed the ground like a boy extracting juice from an apple and then spat out the pulp, turning up the soil over the gold bearing area."<sup>1</sup> When operating, the dredge produced a dull roar heard all over a nearby town, and also dimmed all the lights. It was deafening to actually stand on its structure.<sup>2</sup> Then, consider that we are speaking of an enormous structure greatly welcomed in the areas where it was introduced, as the harbinger of local prosperity. While seeming to depict an unacceptable visual, audible, and environmental nightmare by today's standards, the described technology in fact

represented the most efficient means of recovering gold from streambed, or placer, deposits which existed during its heyday, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Never before had there been a "gold machine" which could, within the same structure, dig out and perform every step of the ore-to-metal process except the final refining or retorting. The gold mining industry had found new vitality, and Western mining locales such as Breckenridge and Fairplay, Colorado; Virginia City, Montana; and Yuba City, California, came back to life.<sup>3</sup> What steps brought about this development? How did it flourish, and then decline? Most importantly, why is it important today?

Many forces, and all of them related in one way or another to volcanic activity, brought the metallic element gold from deep within the earth to its surface. Once arrived at its destination, gold needed to wait millions of years to be appreciated. At some point in the very distant past, human beings found the brilliant yet soft and malleable material to their liking. Ornamental use probably came first, followed by its paramount use through most of human history, as a means of exchange whose value and economic stability exceeded all others. The first gold finders may have noticed it embedded in rock, in what would become known as vein or lode deposits. Here the internal forces, which brought

## About the Author

John Stewart is a Denver lawyer who recently received the degree of Master of Arts, History, from the University of Colorado at Denver. He is the project manager of the Committee to Preserve the Snowstorm Dredge, under the auspices of the Park County Historical Society. John is also the president of the Park County Mining Association. His master's thesis, a biography of Colorado mining magnate Thomas F. Walsh, is to be published as a book.

it to the surface, had left it. However, when the great external forces of water and ice had sufficient time to wash and scrape upon the rocks holding the veins, the gold began to travel. It was natural that it would follow the beds of mountain streams, for gold is heavier than any other material found in the stream, and sinks to the bottom. These gold deposits acquired the name of placers. Sometimes, despite their weight, the minute particles of placer gold could journey great distances. The city of Denver, located many miles from any gold deposits of economic value, still got its start from shiny specks found in gold pans dipped into the South Platte and its nearby tributaries. A short time later, when the early miners discovered the veins and richer placers of the Colorado mountains, Denver dropped its meager mining industry and prospered as the great "jumping-off point."<sup>4</sup>

Ever since they were first observed, placer deposits have taxed human creativity for a means of working them efficiently and economically. Around 1000 B.C., Jason and his Argonauts braved the dangers of the ancient world, real and mythical, to journey to the land of Colchis (modern-day European Georgia). Here they stole the local method of placer mining, a sheepskin that had been stretched across a stream. Homer fails to tell us if, upon returning to Greece and giving the Golden Fleece a thorough shaking, enough riches fell out to make the trip worthwhile.<sup>5</sup> By the time the first miners reached the American West, the gold pan had been perfected as a way to make short-term

profits from streams. A hard day of panning might bring enough gold dust (the accepted local currency) to buy dinner and a good shot of whiskey, but not much else. The early Colorado camp of Tarryall even had a "welfare placer." Located in the middle of town, and barred from being staked as a claim by any individual or group, this gravel deposit existed so any miner down on his luck might at least buy a meal. Placer mining did advance beyond the mere pan. First came the sluice, diverting stream water and contents through a wooden trough and over riffles designed to trap the heavy gold. Sometimes mercury was added to the riffles, due to its affinity for gold. Later, with the new ability to direct water through hoses at a tremendous force, came hydraulic mining. Whole hillsides were blasted away in hopes that waterpower would separate gold from gravel. The introduction of each of these innovations brought short-lived booms to the great placer areas such as Breckenridge, Colorado. A boom lasted only until the gravels most easily mined by the particular method were used up, which often did not take long.<sup>6</sup>

In the late 1860s, the processing of the lode deposits was undergoing a revolution. Nathaniel Hill, a chemistry professor from Rhode Island, brought his advanced smelting methods to Colorado. These, combined with improvements in the step of milling the ores, which preceded the smelting, meant that gold hammered from veins could be processed in a much more efficient manner. It also meant that Colorado metals could be smelted locally in Colorado, not in far-

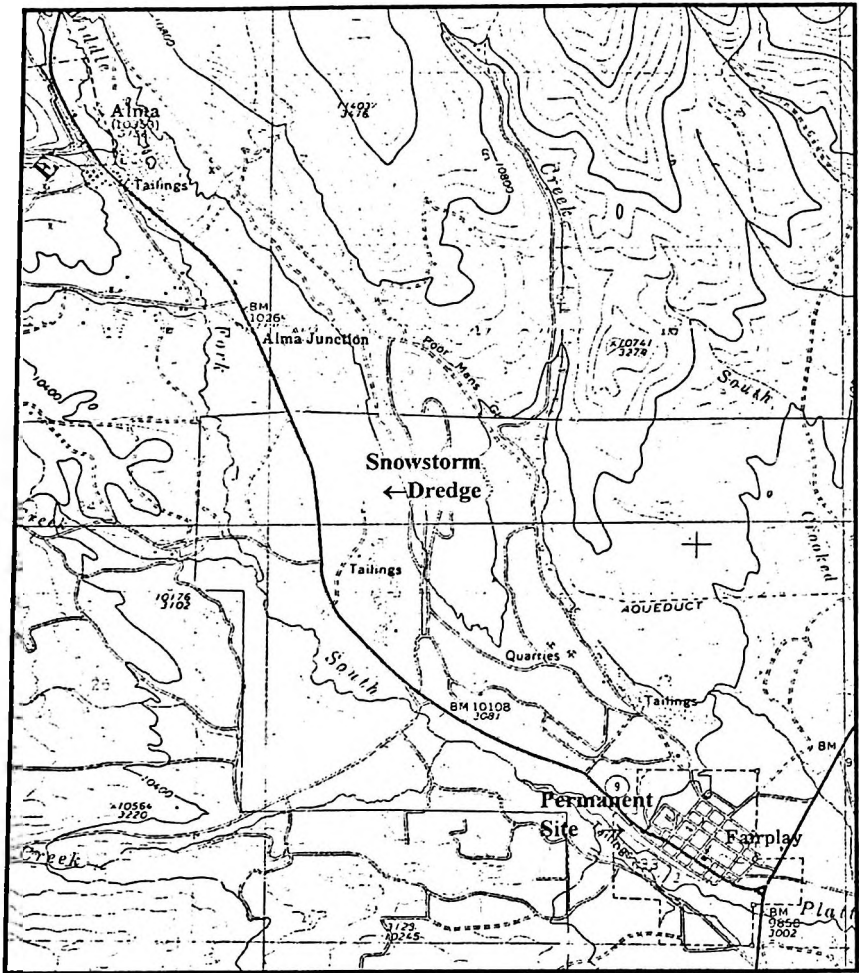
off places like Wales. This was so even though the gold mining boom meant the most valuable of ores, in lodes near the surface, were rapidly being exhausted. The new methods worked on low-grade ores as well. These developments spread quickly throughout the West, and soon local smelters were everywhere.<sup>7</sup> However, the tiny flakes of gold from even the richest of placers were so small in relation to surrounding waste rock, and so difficult to scrape from the streambed by any of the known methods, that the advances in technology of the latter stages of the processing chain had little effect on placer profitability.<sup>8</sup> Nathaniel Hill had resurrected lode mining. Placer mining needed its own savior.

The 1849 gold rush in the Sacramento region of California has long held the American public's imagination as the birth of gold mining. (Actually, the first American gold rush was in Georgia more than twenty years earlier, and gold had been mined elsewhere in the world for hundreds if not thousands of years). Central California held vast placer deposits, and therefore it might seem a logical place for an innovation in their development. In the 1850s, capitalists from Boston hit upon the idea of outfitting a riverboat so it might dig for and process the stream's placer gold. They chose the steamer *Phoenix* for their experiment, but, to one observer, only succeeded in dredging more money from the pockets of their investors than gold from the bottom of the Yuba. More schemes were hatched in this area of the world, ranging from

diving bells with an "Ingurgitator Dredge," to a huge, vacuum-operated "tube boat." All were dismal failures, bringing considerable disrespect upon the local industry before its demise in the 1880s. Therefore, it fell to a far-away place to earn fame as the land of the world's first practical mining dredge.<sup>9</sup>

### **New Spoon method**

Europeans were rather late in colonizing New Zealand, but once established, they soon found gold in many parts of the two main islands. Knowledge of the precious metal there goes back to about 1857, and by 1861 a serious search was on. It centered on roaring mountain rivers of the South Island, with the colorful names of Clutha, Kawarau and Shotover. The gold was largely found in placers, and therefore the problem of discovering a new method of getting it out and making a profit was particularly acute. A man named Brown, working the Clutha in the early 1860s, is said to have built a huge "spoon." It was really an ox-hide bag attached to a big iron ring at the end of a long pole. Brown connected the spoon, by a long hauling rope, to a hand-winch on shore. The operator would take the spoon out into the river in a small boat, drop it to the bottom, and press down very hard while the winch hauled the apparatus toward shore. The strain on the hide must have been tremendous, and many oxen must have given their lives in the name of placer gold mining. Two men named Knight and Halliday decided to improve the spoon. In so doing, they needed to improve the boat as well. Now the spoon had a cutting edge, and



the boat grew to become a 26-foot-long, 12-foot-wide, 3 feet deep "punt," big enough to carry the winch and a crew of five or six men. The punt was moored in the river by use of a rope, an anchor, and a pole on each side, not unlike to moorings for later, much larger dredges. Processing of the gold from the gravels still did not take place

on the boat. This was done by means of a "cradle," a type of sluice, located on shore.<sup>10</sup>

The spoon method was still none too efficient, and worked best in quiet waters. As the area held mostly raging rivers, the New Zealanders invented a more advanced machine, the

current wheel dredge. This is considered the forerunner of the modern dredge. It borrowed many features from existing harbor dredges, and used an all-metal bucket attached to a ladder. Paddle wheels supplied the power, harnessing the seven-to-eight mile-an-hour current of the Clutha. Next, steam power replaced the current wheel, so the dredges could be used everywhere. pontoons were added to support the increasing weight. By 1882, Mr. Charles McQueen of the Dunedin Dredging Company could boast of his new invention, a 70-foot-long boat with two bucket ladders, one on each end, and gold processing right on the boat by means of revolving screens and sluice boxes. By the turn of the century, New Zealand had 236 gold dredges in operation, most of them in the southwestern Otago province. Its technology was also being exported. Russia wanted at least two of the boats, and inquiries came from Australia, New Guinea, Borneo, Canada, England, and of course, California. The latter place also imported a prominent New Zealand engineer, Robert H. Postlethwaite.<sup>11</sup>

The Californians now had a chance to redeem themselves, and in time would, but the title of first state with a successful dredge went to Montana. Gold was first found in the southwestern part of the state, then territory, in 1862. The precious metal made the town of Bannack, on Grasshopper Creek, the first territorial capital. It also brought road agents, desperados and vigilantes. By the 1890s all had calmed down, including

the enthusiasm for gold mining. Samuel S. Harper saw the need for change. The Denver businessman (deemed "a man of money and vision" by at least one source) held options to Bannack properties.<sup>12</sup> One day he watched some dredges working on a Chicago canal. The Bucyrus Company, a leader in river and canal dredging had manufactured them in Ohio. Bucyrus dredges employed a continuous bucket line. They were called "elevator" dredges because the bucket line was attached to a long ladder, which took it down to scour the canal bottom, and then back up to dump the muck in a scow located alongside. Might this idea work in the placers of Bannack? Harper first discussed the matter with a young engineer working the Bannack area, and then took it to some Chicago business leaders. The plan went over well, and was presented to Bucyrus. The company's engineers set to work, first building the hull for the boat at the site in Bannack. The hull alone was launched in champagne-christening ceremony held May 15, 1895. It was named the Fielding L. Graves, after the Bannack citizen providing the champagne. Soon the dredge was equipped with its buckets, ladders, electrical equipment, and a grizzly and trommel arrangement for rejecting all but the finest gravel. Sluices were at first floated alongside the dredge, but the arrangement did not work. After some refinements, the end product consisted of a ladder 75 feet long with buckets each having a capacity of 5 cubic feet. The dredging could reach as deep as 35 feet, and the fine, separated gravel was eventually raised to 16 feet above the deck, where it was dropped

into a series of trailing sluices. From May 1, 1896, America's first successful bucket-line gold dredge commenced production, which "met the fondest hopes of its promoters." Soon Grasshopper Creek sported five dredges, and the industry moved on to other parts of Montana as well.<sup>13</sup>

California was not to be outdone, and with the lead of Robert H. Postlethwaite, its dredging industry commenced in earnest. On his arrival in America, the New Zealand engineer had found employment with San Francisco's Risdon Iron Works, a company very much interested in building mining dredges. In 1897, Postlethwaite filed for the first of many patents. This time he was seeking protection for his winch, gold-dredging apparatus, drive mechanism for "rotory" grizzlies or separators, gold-saving apparatus, and elevator for gold-dredgers. His first attempt seemed to forebode more ill luck for his adoptive state. After only a few weeks, the new dredge sank beneath the turbulent waters of the Yuba. However, a second Risdon dredge turned the tide. Captain Thomas Couch purchased the big machine for a venture on the Feather River near Oroville. California's first successful mining dredge commenced work on March 1, 1898. By 1908, 35 dredges plied the Oroville District. Serious industrial competition had arrived to supply the growing need for the machinery. The Union Iron Works, also of San Francisco, soon joined Risdon, the forerunner. The first

American dredge manufacturer, Bucyrus, placed two of its products in California by 1899. They featured close-connected buckets, one for each chain link, and the first use of electric power and variable speed motors. When Bucyrus decided to install a trommel screen to separate gravel from larger rocks, it faced a patent-infringement battle with Risdon, won by Bucyrus.<sup>14</sup>

Colorado, a state with vast placer deposits, seemed another logical home for dredge mining. An English engineer, Ben Stanley Revett, had been working these placers since 1885, using the sluice and hydraulic methods. As he became more knowledgeable, Revett read about the dredges of New Zealand, and also became acquainted with Harper. After first working in the Twin Lakes area, south of Leadville, by 1894 Revett had centered his interests around Breckenridge. The Swan River, to the north and east of the mining town had, from the beginning of the Colorado mining days, been noted for its rich and deep gold-bearing gravels. Revett became convinced that dredges would work on the Swan. He began buying up placers, and then incorporated a new company, the North American Gold Dredging Company. The company was incorporated in Maine, and backed by Eastern capital. In November 1897, the company contracted with the Risdon company to build two New Zealand-type boats for the Swan. At the time there was still a great

deal of risk involved, for the first Risdon boat had sunk, and the second under Captain Couch was only starting out. Risdon noted its third and fourth dredges as "Breckenridge No. 1" and "Breckenridge No. 2." Each boat was 96 feet long and 30 feet wide, employing 100 horsepower. They commenced operations in May 1898. By June 4, a reporter for a newspaper could state that he observed the boats working night and day for two weeks with astonishing success, moving 2000 cu. yards of gravel a day. Soon Robert Postlethwaite came for a visit. Whether he or anyone else with engineering expertise made a report is not known, for none has survived. However, it soon became apparent that the design was not working well in Colorado. The boats, for all their size and other impressive physical attributes, were simply too small and lightweight for the heavy materials of the Swan. Many rocks brought into the stackers simply fell back into the water, and could not be processed. Further use was abandoned at the end of the season. Undaunted, Revett ordered two new boats from Risdon. He had considerable faith in the eventual success of the venture, and had even built a fabulous home overlooking it, which he named "Swan's Nest."<sup>15</sup>

### **Develops own design**

Revett needed all the faith and tenacity he could muster, for his two new dredges performed only a little better than the first. Still, he

continued to pour his own money (as well as that of his investors) into the project, and also buy up additional placer ground in French Gulch east of Breckenridge. He made a switch to a Bucyrus dredge, which also failed to turn a profit. A competitor emerged in 1899 in the form of the Blue River Gold Excavating Company, which ran two boats, both failures. Finally, in 1905, Revett gave up on products manufactured by others far from the scene. He designed and built his own dredge, the steam-powered *Reliance*. Launched on July 14, it featured a line of 44 buckets designed for deep digging, and a hull built of "iron-like" Oregon timber, eminently more capable than the local wood to withstand the stresses of dredge work. The 500-ton boat cost \$90,000, and soon it could dredge 3,000 cubic yards of materials in 24 hours. It netted \$50,000 in its first seven months of operation, making it Colorado's first successful dredge. Revett, termed the "ultimate promoter," and an honest one as well, became very popular in the Breckenridge area. His machines made a deafening racket and chewed up considerable real estate, but they also brought paychecks and tax dollars to an area which had been in a depression after the demise of traditional mining methods. Eventually, he developed an international reputation, consulting in such far-away locales as Alaska, Siberia, Mexico and Ivory Coast.<sup>16</sup>

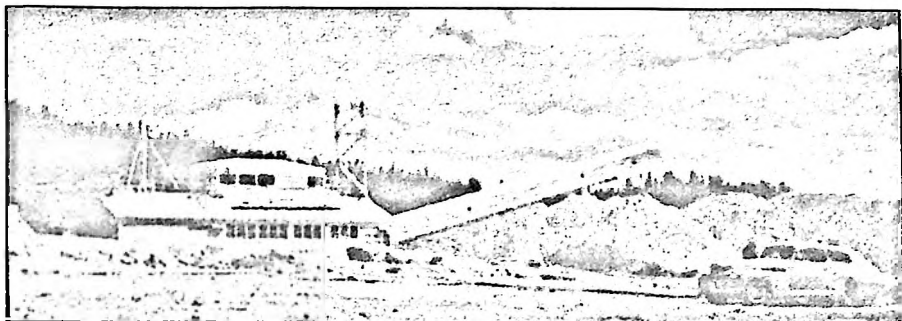
Breckenridge and nearby Summit County hosted a total of nine dredge boats, including the early failures, in the time period from Revett's early work until World War II. This made it Colorado's most active dredging area.<sup>17</sup> Nationally, dredging was enjoying its heyday from 1905 – 1920. In 1914, on the eve of World War I, America was home to 120 working dredges – 60 in California, 42 in Alaska, 5 each in Colorado and Montana, 4 in Idaho, and 4 elsewhere in the West. Together they produced more than \$12 million worth of gold. Dredging was a global industry with American manufacturers in the lead. Bucyrus dredges found homes in Malaya and Nigeria, while other manufacturers placed them overseas as well. Few could surpass the record of California's Yuba Manufacturing Company, which by 1927 could boast that it had designed and built dredges for use in the states of Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho and Oregon, as well as the foreign locales of Bolivia, China, Columbia, Malaya, the Philippines, Russia, Siberia, Dutch Guiana, and the tin regions of Portugal.<sup>18</sup>

Even Harvard University got into the act. Nathaniel S. Shaler, renowned geologist and Harvard professor, became involved with placer development in the famous Alder Gulch area, near the historic town of Virginia City, Montana. He courted a Boston millionaire named McKay to make the major

investment in the venture. When McKay died in 1903, Harvard received the bulk of his estate, including the Montana interests, now operating as the Conrey Placer Mining Company. Running until 1922, the Conrey company benefited from the expertise of Harvard engineers and geologists in running an operation which was both innovative and conservative. A total of four dredges worked the placer gravels. New ideas included the "orange peel" bucket and the radial cableway. The former employed a bucket with triangular blades, which closed on the excavated materials to trap them in a bowl. The latter involved two towers, one stationary and the other traveling on rails in a semi-circle, which facilitated digging. With a major university holding a large position, operations were probably less speculative than those of other western operations. Still, it is estimated that Harvard received profits of between \$1.5 and \$2 million through the project's life. The venture became Montana's premier placer operation, surpassing the early Grasshopper Creek dredging activity in both output and longevity. The Conrey company was eventually liquidated, largely because the profitable gold deposits had all been worked out.<sup>19</sup>

Using up of some of the best placer gold deposits was one reason for the passing of the dredge boat in the lower 48 states. Another was World War II and the imposition of war orders declaring that gold





Snowstorm Dredge, 1940s

mining should cease, as it was a non-essential industry. In Breckenridge, two major placer mining companies which employed the last remaining dredges had been forced into bankruptcy just prior to the war. The pressures of operating in the Depression with dwindling resources had brought them to their knees. Dredging did not return to the area, which at first suffered, and then found new “gold” in the form of skiers and other tourists.<sup>20</sup>

After the war, dredging did return elsewhere, but with greatly reduced operations. Colorado’s last dredge operation was found just over the mountains to the south from Breckenridge. The historic Snowstorm Placer, located between the Park County towns of Fairplay and Alma, was discovered in 1870.<sup>21</sup> It witnessed nearly continuous operations after 1902, and was one of the last locations in Colorado to be worked by hydraulic mining.<sup>22</sup> In 1941, the Timberline Dredging Company installed a new dredge which had

been produced by a San Francisco concern, the Bodinson Manufacturing Company. The dredge was a newer variety, which did not include a bucket wheel for digging. Instead, an adjacent dragline crane fed the placer deposits into the machine. This type of dredge is known as a “floating gold washing machine,” and the particular model, over time, acquired the name of “the Snowstorm Dredge.” It weighs 483 tons, and is 50 feet wide by 86 feet long. Once received, the materials were passed down a trommel, washed and crushed, and run over riffles, using mercury to attract the gold. Waste was ejected by means of a conveyor belt, similar to those used in other types of dredges.<sup>23</sup> No sooner had the Snowstorm commenced operations, than World War II commenced with its shutdown orders.<sup>24</sup> Following the war, the dredge resumed operations, and continued to work sporadically until 1976. This marked the last attempt to use a dredge in Colorado, no doubt

sparked by a rise in gold prices.<sup>25</sup> Today the Snowstorm is the only intact dredge remaining in the state of Colorado, while a few of its predecessors exist only as rotting hulks.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps the greatest of all reasons for the demise of the dredge is increased emphasis on protecting the environment. Dredging left in its wake an environmental nightmare of broken rocks and waste, no longer profitable for mining yet nearly impossible to reclaim into any other use. Most dredges also used mercury to enhance gold recovery. Mercury use is now banned in all mining. In all other respects, mining is very closely regulated with the environment and public health in mind. Federal, state, county, and local authorities control mining activity. Consider, for example, the laws and regulations of the State of Colorado. Within recent years the state has enacted amendments to its mining laws, which include enhanced controls over "designated mining operations." This category is largely concerned with the use, or exposure, of toxic or acidic chemicals. If a mining operation qualifies, it must undergo stringent inspection and bonding requirements before mining may be permitted.<sup>27</sup> The main target is the use of cyanide. A chemical used for many years in mining, cyanide is now placed in leaching pads, thus providing an economical means for recovering gold from low-grade

deposits. Done properly, in a pad lined with strong layers of plastic and clay, no cyanide can escape. The tragedy of Colorado's Summitville mine was an example of improper use of a leach pad and the resulting environmental damage.<sup>28</sup> The new amendments to the Colorado law followed.

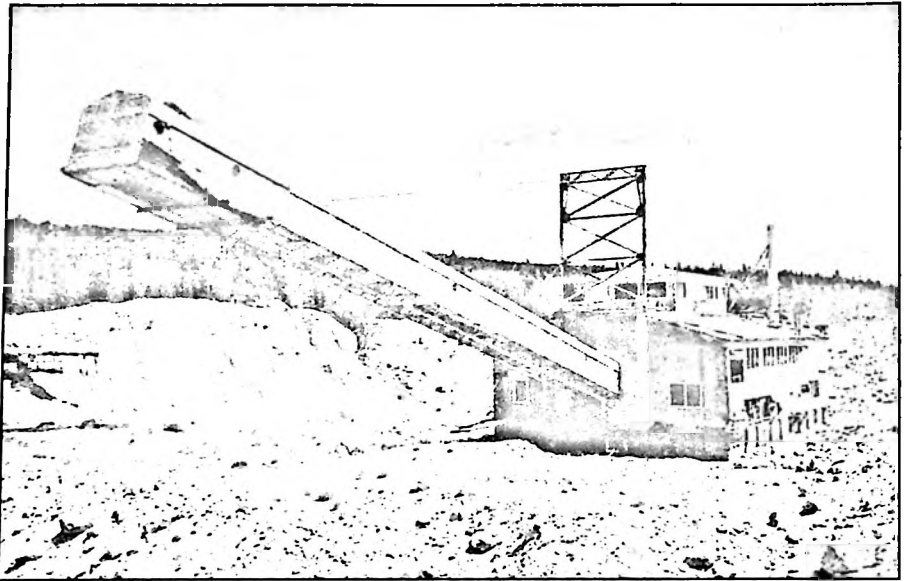
American dredging has existed recently only in Alaska. It too operates at the mercy of environmental and many other types of laws and regulations, in a land of low population and traditional tolerance of mining. The technology has continued to progress, witness the 1987 introduction of a 12,000-ton dredge at Nome. In its first year, the crew of 124 took out nearly 36,000 ounces of gold, worth more than \$15 million. However, the dredge was working beaches, and like many predecessors, soon went broke. In 1987 a federal court ruled that all dredging projects, like all other mining projects, require environmental assessments. As environment awareness continues, the hazardous materials found in old dredging sites have been found to be creating disturbances more than thirty-five years after operations ceased. Also in 1987, the EPA levied its largest fine ever in the state, and the Alaska Gold Company soon agreed to pay \$100,000 for having discharged mercury, arsenic and other pollutants from its dredges. In 1990, after strong pressure from environmentalists, a "Wild and

Scenic River" designation stopped a proposed "New Zealand Dredge" from working the Fortymile River. Alaska's dredges seem to have a very tenuous hold and may follow the path of their "cousins" in the lower 48 states.<sup>29</sup> The use of dredges continues in the third world. In fact, many former American dredges have been dismantled and sent there.

Colorado's last dredge may yet see another day of operation, as a vital tool in educating the public. The Snowstorm Dredge is now the subject of a historic preservation campaign, which hopes to see it reconditioned and then placed on public display, hopefully at the South Park City exhibit in Fairplay. There it can take its place among many other well-preserved homes, businesses and machinery from the era when mining was virtually the sole reason for the area's human existence. The price tag for the project is steep, possibly \$1.0 million or more. When completed, the public will have a three-dimensional remnant of the past, which it can touch and observe, as opposed to a mere abstraction contained in books or other written record. This is perhaps the most important reason for such preservation.<sup>30</sup> One needs to stand on any part of the dredge to fully appreciate its awesome size, and to imagine its awesome power and noise. At the same time, the small attributes of this structure merit examination by the human eye as well. The riffles for catching the

minute flakes of gold are themselves quite small. Different varieties of riffle are present as well, including those used with and without mercury. A guide could explain the variations, why the dredge owners seem to have experimented with them, and which proved best at gold-catching. The same guide could explain the role of the captain, who is said to have charged around the pilot house, barking orders while at the same time pulling the levers which kept the huge machine perfectly in place.

The interpretation for this exhibit holds many possibilities, in conjunction with the existing South Park City Museum. It should start with the technological developments which brought the massive structure into place, but by no means end there. What sort of men (or women) worked the area's mines and dredges, and what sort of dangers did they face? For example, the area's miners were ethnically diverse, even including Chinese who were forced to live in their own section of Fairplay across the Platte River.<sup>31</sup> What sort of lives did these people lead? Who were the owners and operators of the area's mines and machines, and why were large capital expenditures from far-away sources often required? Finally where does the dredge stand in mining history? What is the importance of gold mining, and has that importance continued to this day? Will gold mining ever return to its prior role



Snowstorm Dredge, 1999

*Photo by Gary Higgins*

in this area, and if so, what would be the cause or causes, and what might we expect the effects to be?

For the foreseeable future, it is safe to say that gold mining will continue on a worldwide basis because of high world demand. High tech uses for gold as a super-conductor have been added to traditional uses for jewelry and currency. It will be necessary to extract it from the ground to meet these demands while degrading the environment to the least possible extent. This may be the ultimate challenge faced in the thousands of years of gold mining. Mankind must find a way to face it, and in so doing, continue the evolution of mining technology, and improve

the public's perception and understanding of it. Where will safe technology look in the future? For all we know, it might be to a new "super dredge" (its shape and design well beyond our comprehension, but hopefully smaller), which performs every step imagined by men like Postlethwaite and Revett, and then reclaims the environment as well. Regardless of whether this comes to pass, the mining dredge stands in its place in history as one more attempt by mankind to live with and control the resources the earth has provided.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Spence, Clark C., *The Conroy Placer Mining Company*, Montana Historical Society Press, Helena, 1989,

(hereafter "Spence, *Conrey*"), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Neufeld, David and Habiluk, Patrick, "Make It Pay! Gold Dredge #4," *Parks Canada, Pictorial Histories Publishing Co.*, Missoula, MT, p. 1; Wolle, Muriel Sibbell, *Stampede to Timberline*, Sage Books, Chicago, 12<sup>th</sup> ed. 1969 (hereafter "Wolle"), p. 64.

<sup>3</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 3-5; Ellis, Erl H., *The Gold Dredging Boats Around Breckenridge, Colorado*, Johnson Publishing Co., Boulder, Colorado, 1967, (hereafter "Ellis"), pp. 9-16.

<sup>4</sup>Benson, Maxine; Smith, Duane A., and Ubbelohde, Carl, *A Colorado History*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., Pruett Pub. Co., Boulder, CO, 1995 (hereafter "Benson"), pp. 56-67.

<sup>5</sup>Greek myth usually attributed to philosopher and author Homer this version as reported by Severin, Timothy, "Sailing in Jason's Wake," *National Geographic Magazine*, September 1985. Actually, rather than wealth, Jason was more interested in answering a challenge to bring back the fleece and reclaim the throne of his region from the usurper, his Uncle Pelias. In this he was successful.

<sup>6</sup>Ellis, p. 10; Simmons, Virginia McConnell, *Bayou Salado*, Sage Books, Denver, 1966 (hereafter "Simmons"), p. 158.

<sup>7</sup>Fell, James E., Jr., *Ores to Metals*, Univ. of Nebr. Press, Lincoln, 1979, pp. 1-165.

<sup>8</sup>Ellis, pp. 10-11.

<sup>9</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 5-6; Ellis, p. 17; Cutten, W.H., "Dredging in South New Zealand," Paper read August 23, 1898, Extract from the Transactions of the New Zealand

Institute of Mining Engineers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, vol. 2. ; Ellis, pp. 17-18.

<sup>11</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 5-7; Ellis, pp. 18-19.

<sup>12</sup>Ellis, p. 20; Spence, *Conrey*, p. 8. Quote about Harper is taken from Van Jon, John, "There's Gold in That Gravel," *Excavating Engineer*, December 1938, pp. 606-607.

<sup>13</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 8-9; Ellis, pp. 20-21.

<sup>14</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 10-11; Ellis, pp. 21-23.

<sup>15</sup>Ellis, pp. 28-33; Gilliland, Mary Ellen, *Summit, a Gold Rush History of Summit County, Colorado*, Alpenrose Press, Silverthorne, Colorado, 1999 (hereafter "Gilliland"), pp. 289-295, which also notes that Swan's Nest has been restored by the Campbell family of Tiger Run, Colorado with the help of Revett's daughter Frances.

<sup>16</sup>Gilliland, pp. 289-298.

<sup>17</sup>Ellis, pp. 105-134.

<sup>18</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 9-12; Johnston, Samuel P., *Gold Dredges, The Part Played by the Yuba Manufacturing Company in the Great Romance of Dredging for Placer Gold, Platinum and Tin*, Yuba Manuf. Co. of Marysville & San Francisco, 1927.

<sup>19</sup>Spence, *Conrey*, pp. 29-37, 113-125.

<sup>20</sup>Ellis, pp. 150-152; Gilliland, pp. 106-108, 128-130.

<sup>21</sup>*Fairplay Flume*, April 2, 1907.

<sup>22</sup>Parker, Ben H. Jr., "The Geology of the Gold Placers of Colorado," Thesis at Colorado School of Mines, submitted December 12, 1960.

<sup>22</sup> *Mining Yearbook*, 1942.

<sup>23</sup> *Fairplay Flume*, October 22, 1942.

<sup>24</sup> Neuschler, Roger C., "Snowstorm Placer Evaluation," 1984, records of the Snowstorm Mining Company. Singewald, Quentin D., "Gold Placers and Their Geological Environment in Northwestern Park County, Colorado," U.S.G.S. Bulletin 955-D, 1947.

<sup>25</sup> The author's investigations reveal only two other remains of Colorado dredges, one in French Gulch near Breckenridge, the other at Tincup in Gunnison County. Others may exist

as well.

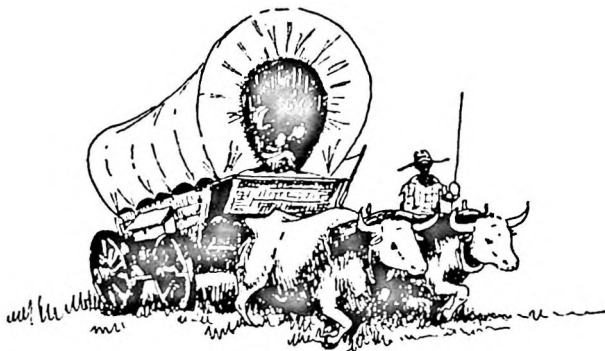
<sup>26</sup> Colorado Revised Statutes, secs. 34-32-101 et. Seq., 1973 as amended.

<sup>27</sup> Benson, p. 375.

<sup>28</sup> Spence, Clark C., *The Northern Gold Fleet, Twentieth Century Gold Dredging in Alaska*, Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1996

<sup>29</sup> Hindle, Brooke, "What is a Piece of the True Cross Worth?" *Material Culture and the Study of American Life*, W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1978.

<sup>30</sup> Simmons, p. 108.



### 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

# Over the corral rail

We welcome the following new Corresponding members to the Posse, and thank the members who referred them:

Joan O'Hara and Garry O'Hara of Denver joined us in April. They were brought to us by Lee Whiteley. They enjoy "everything on Colorado history," and are members of six local historical societies.

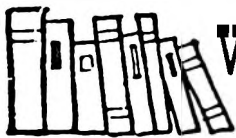
William J. (Bill) Leeper of Littleton joined in June and enjoys "genealogy and U.S. history in general," and was referred by Max Smith. Caroline Capoot of Englewood joined in May and was referred by Gene Rakosnik. She enjoys "all history of the American west."

Gregory Michno of Longmont was referred by Jeff Broome and is interested in "Western Indian wars." He became a Corresponding member in July. In August, Ed Sobota of Conifer joined and was referred by Norm Meyer.

After being contacted by the Membership Chairperson, the following long-time Posse members have transferred to Reserve status: Bob Mutchler of San Antonio, TX and Alan Stewart, (former *Roundup* Editor) of Sierra Vista, AZ.

We congratulate the following individuals who have gone from Corresponding members to Posse members during the last year: Jim Wilkins, Carey (Scotty) Wilkins, Heather Peterson and Laurence (Larry) Reno. Thank you all!





## Westerners Bookshelf



**Hell or High Water, James White's Disputed Passage Through the Grand Canyon, 1867**, by Eilean Adams. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2001. 233 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, appendices, \$19.95 paper, \$39.95 cloth.

Over the past 30 years, as I have floated through the Grand Canyon several times, I have read and heard a great deal of lore and fact about this magical place. Before I read the above-captioned book, I knew very little about James White's disputed passage through the Grand Canyon except that most people did not believe it happened.

A brief resume of the controversy: In 1867, James White and two companions were prospecting along the San Juan River and as they neared the Colorado River, they were attacked by Indians. One man was killed, White and the other fled to the river where they fashioned a raft with logs and rope and floated away. After some time on the water, White's companion drowned in a rapid.

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...the reader has a choice...

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White floated on for days, finally arriving at Callville, Nevada, in very miserable condition. In May 1868, Major John Wesley Powell, in company with 10 men, launched four stout (oak) boats on the Green River in Wyoming. By September, after an incredible journey, the remains of his party exited the Grand Canyon at Grand Wash Cliffs.

The reader has a choice. They can choose to believe that White passed through the Grand Canyon before Powell. On the other hand, they can choose Powell's expedition as the first recorded passage through the Grand Canyon. Either way it is a truism that in 1870 it was known to any who cared that it was possible to float through the Grand Canyon on the Colorado River.

*Hell or High Water* was written by the granddaughter of James White. It represents an impressive collection of material in a very readable form. This book is understandably clear in its position on the controversy; the author makes a good effort to present a balanced overview of the various positions taken during the past 130 years. We know that it's possible to float through the Grand Canyon; therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the motives (to the extent they can be discovered) of those who assert a position on the matter. Even if James White unintentionally passed through the Grand Canyon as he fled for his life; does that detract from the significant accomplishment of Major Powell, who bravely chose to explore this mysterious and scary place? Should you care to look into this controversy, this book supplies indispensable material for the reader. It is highly recommended.

--Charles Moore, C.M.



**Hard Time: Voices from a State Prison: 1849-1914**, edited by Ted Genoways. Foreword by Ted Conover. Introduction by James Taylor Dunn. Minnesota Historical Society Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 2002. 146 pages. photographs; index; endnotes. Illustrated with black and white photographs. Cloth, \$34.95; paper, \$22.95.

This slim volume is about the famous State prison at Stillwater, Minnesota. The first part of the book contains a history of the prison, from territorial days to 1914. The second part has information, mostly from first-person accounts, of daily prison life. It covers everything from the prison library to some of the more violent and less acceptable prison occurrences. The photographs, including those of inmates of both genders, are poignant and haunting.

This book will interest three groups of historical readers. The first group is that which reads and collects books and booklets on prisons, including prisons in the old west. Thus, this book can be added to a collection that covers such prisons as Yuma Territorial Prison, Alcatraz, the Wyoming Territorial Prison, and, of course, our own Canon City.

The second group to which this volume would appeal is the group that reads outlaw titles. The confinement of such notable no-goods as Emmett Dalton, Chris Evans, and Butch Cassidy has, from the early days, spawned volumes about prison life that include at least some information on the famous and infamous inmates. Stillwater had, as residents, the Younger Brothers, who were captured after the abortive 1876 Northfield Bank Raid. Naturally, there are a couple of pages devoted to those inmates.

The third group is that group that likes reading about prison life. Some historians are fascinated by accounts of military prisons. Some are interested in civilian penitentiaries. This volume will appeal to the latter. The book is recommended to each of those three groups of specialists. For the average reader, the volume will remind him or her that prison is a place that should be avoided.

*--John Hutchins, P. M.*

**Riding the High Wire - Aerial Mine Tramways in the West**, by Robert A Trennert University of Colorado Press, 2001. 140pp. Illustrations. maps, bibliography. Hardcover, \$45.00. Paperback, \$19.95.

Being a mining engineer in the 1870s-1920s must have been like being a software or biotech engineer today: working at the center of the action. The author imparts some of the excitement of what it must have been like to develop new ways to help tap the earth's mineral wealth, competing, innovating, and building ever more efficient and better machines.

This book reviews the development, flourishing, and virtual disappearance of aerial mine tramways. It details the history of the machinery, how the designs

evolved, and where and how they were put to use. This technology allowed the moving of ore, people and supplies over steep mountains, across deep canyons, and for great distances.

The first tramways were installed in the US after the Civil War. By 1900, the continent had literally hundreds of them. The Depression, WW II, and high-volume open pit mining, put paid to most of the smaller mines that had use for tramways. Most of the tram systems were dismantled with little or no record of use and history.

Few mine tramway installations have been made in the US since the 1950s. However the technology and construction techniques devised to haul ore have been adapted to haul people—skiers and tourists.

This is an interesting book, exploring a relatively unknown aspect of western mining. The photos are good, as are the local maps of several tramway intensive mining settlements. A map of the western United States and Canada would be useful to the reader. Nonetheless, if you like mining history you will enjoy the information and the presentation.

--Stan Moore, P.M.

**Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West.** By David M. Wrobel. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. xi + 322p. index, bibliography, endnotes, photos, drawings. \$34.95, hardback.

An important and memorable early 21<sup>st</sup> century book on the U.S. West is this highly original re-examination of how Westerners see themselves. As everybody knows by now, the West is a product of the imagination—a place where well-armed Americans rough it out in king-size ranch houses and SUVs, wallowing in frontier fantasies while living in the most heavily urbanized region of America.

David M. Wrobel, a history professor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, impressed scholars with his earlier book, *The End of American Exceptionalism: Frontier Anxiety from the Old West to the New Deal*. This book to add to Wrobel's stature as one of the up-and-coming historians focused on the American West.

In "Promised Lands," Wrobel focuses on two genres of literature usually scorned by scholars—booster promotional tracts and the reminiscences of old timers. Promoters puffed the West as the Promised Land, downplaying problems of climate, terrain, and troublesome indigenous peoples. Pioneers, on the other hand, emphasized the problems and the obstacles that they heroically overcame.

Wrobel notes that gold rush pioneers did not dwell on their materialistic motivations, on what Mark Twain called the "get rich quick disease." Rather, gold grubbers in later years claimed more noble motivations of civilizing and Christianizing the wilderness. In their fading years, the pioneers began organizing societies and issuing publications for the edification of future generations whose attention and respect they hoped to capture. The Society of Colorado Pioneers (1872), the

Territorial Daughters of Colorado (1876), the Colorado Historical Society (1879), and the Sons of Colorado (1905) celebrated and glorified Colorado's founding (white) mothers and fathers. Certainly, they saw Indians differently than we do now. "It is impossible for rising generations," Luella Shaw wrote in her 1909 *True History of some of the Pioneers of Colorado*, "to conceive but a remote idea of the privations and dangers from hostile Indians, early settlers... endured the hardships... for the sake of paving the way to our present civilization, where towns, cities and railroads have sprung into existence as if by magic." (preface) Pioneers, as epitomized by the Madonna of the Trail statues and Denver's Pioneer monument at Colfax and Broadway, were placed on pedestals as the center of the moral universe, as role models for the communities they founded. The Indian figure originally proposed by the sculptor for the top of the Pioneer Fountain was vetoed by Denverites who insisted that Kit Carson be put on top instead.

Pioneers turned Indians into the villains and whites into the victims. The Indian raids, slaughters, scalping, raping, and kidnapping of whites was played up with no mention that the whites were the aggressors dispossessing indigenous peoples.

White settlers appropriating "Native" bumper stickers and license plates drive through the poor urban neighborhoods where the real natives—Indians and Hispanics—congregate, heading out onto the freeway looking for the "old West" on weekends or as their suburban retreat at the end of the work day.

"If Western mythology does not develop beyond its defining characteristics of white-centeredness and rural-centeredness (p. 191)," as Wrobel puts it, it will be increasingly irrelevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century West which is mostly urban and increasingly non-white.

--Thomas J. Noel, P.M.

**A Calendar Of The Letters Of Willa Cather**, edited by Janis P. Stout. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 334 pp. Biographical directory, three indexes. Cloth, \$60.00.

A long-time admirer of author Cather, I was quickly drawn to this volume when I saw the editor's name, Janis Stout. A professor of English at Texas A & M University, Stout's name is recognizable as the author of, among many books, *Willa Cather: The Writer and Her World*.

The very first page and then the introduction to a *Calendar of the Letters of Willa Cather* made it clear that both the contents and the format of this work are like nothing most of us have ever encountered. Specifically, when Cather died April 24, 1947, her Last Will and Testament contained the stipulation prohibiting the publishing of her letters, in whole or in part. This proviso has been enforced for the past fifty-five years, both by a respect for the author's wishes as well as by the most recent 1998 Copyright Extension Act which extended the protection term for unpublished material to seventy years beyond death, meaning that Cather's letters will not become part of the public domain until 2017.

As Stout wrote in the introduction, "What is to be done in the meantime to satisfy the demand for knowledge generated by the flourishing state of Cather scholarship? The usual answer is paraphrase, which is both permissible under the law and customary according to normal standards of scholarly ethics."

Several years were spent in simply finding Cather's letters since there is no single collection (a search greatly aided by use of a laptop computer). Then came the challenges of reading Cather's nearly illegible penmanship, followed by chronologically arranging letters with only partial dates or none at all. These problems were even over-shadowed by that of "how to make an accurate paraphrase without coming too close."

The resulting resource for Cather scholars (as opposed to lay-readers) is that over 1,800 of Willa Cather's letters—all those known—are listed chronologically in a 1, 2, 3, etc. briefly summarized order. This volume certainly fills a vital need in Cather studies, but it is not for the casual reader.

*--Bob Terwilleger, P.M.*

**Mythmakers of the West: Shaping America's Imagination**, by John A. Murray. Northland Publishing Company, 2001. 184 pp. Illustrations, index, bibliography, chronology. \$21.95 paperback.

Denver author John A. Murray has written a most delightful book that covers the West from the explorations of Lewis and Clark to the epic Westerns of John Ford. He gives us a unique overview of the legends and dreamers who shaped America's imagination of Western history. Mr. Murray states that he has written about the mythological West ... past, present, and future ... and some of its most influential mythmakers. It is entertaining and well organized. The five chapters provide discussions of the West in art, film, literature, music, and popular culture.

I would recommend this book for anyone interested in this genre and especially to those who are interested in starting young adults on the subject. It makes a great course outline. The chronology and bibliography are a great help in pursuing the subject matter. The book is inviting to look at and the illustrations are very well done with sharp vivid colors. The writing style is easy to read and shows the intelligence and sense of humor of the author. I have shared this book with some family members and it has received excellent ratings from all.

*--Max Smith, P.M.*

**The Arthur H. Clark Company, An Americana Century, 1902 - 2002**, by Robert A. Clark and Patrick J. Brunet. Arthur H. Clark Company, Spokane, Washington, 2002. 32 illustrations, bibliography, appendixes, index, 303 pages. Centennial Edition: \$350.00 / Clothbound \$75.00.

When browsing in a bookstore there are some publishers whose books are automatically picked up by someone interested in the history of the American West. The Arthur H. Clark Company is always at or very close to the top of such a list. This book is an update, revision and expansion of the authors' 1993 volume, *The Arthur H. Clark Company: a Bibliography and History, 1902-1992*. The first part of the book is a thirty-six page "Bookselling Odyssey" wherein is told the story of the company (from Cleveland, Ohio, to Glendale, California, to Spokane, Washington) and its founder, Arthur H. Clark.

The heart of the book is an extremely well-researched and written bibliography section on the publications of the company. Listed alphabetically by author, then book title, the information contained here is priceless if one is a collector of books on Western Americana or just a routine, run-of-the-mill biblioholic. The heading in each selection contains information comparable to the identifying information at the beginning of this review. The next portion describes each Arthur H. Clark Company edition of the book and includes identifying information such as number of pages, dust jacket, paper type, edge, number of copies, issuance price, etc. Then follows a listing of other publisher's editions of the books by year. Finally each selection contains a discussion of the author and the book which often includes the travails of getting the book to print.

There follows a similar, shorter section, containing information (although not nearly as complete) on books produced under contract by the Arthur H. Clark Company for others. This section also includes information on alternative imprints of the company, Prosperity Press and Millwood Publishing. The appendices provide even more information on Arthur H. Clark's publications. The first appendix covers multi-volume series, such as the popular *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far* series edited by Westerner LeRoy R. Hafen or the *American Trails Series*. The second appendix lists those books which through the years were either distributed by the company for others or otherwise mistakenly attributed to being published by the Arthur H. Clark Company. It also includes books that were identified as being published by the Arthur H. Clark Company because of what the authors refer to as "a rather antiquated practice no longer seen in the booktrade". The authors describe it as the practice of placing cancels in books purchased on remainder from the original publisher. This list of about two hundred books includes two of interest to Denver Westerners, Nolie Mumey's books, *History of the Early Settlements of Denver* and *Life of Jim Baker*.

This book is a treasure to those interested in the book trade, and small publishers. But even those who just enjoy reading good books will find the discussion about the books and their authors absorbing for it is much more than just a list of books.

--Keith Fessenden, P. M.

**From Fort Laramie to Wounded Knee, In the West That Was**, by Charles W. Allen, edited and with an introduction by Richard E. Jensen. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, in association with the Nebraska State Historical Society, 1997, first Bison Books printing: 2001. 324 pp. 12 photographs, 3 maps, bibliography, Index. Paper \$22.00.

Author Charles W. Allen's friend since 1888, Addison Sheldon, wrote in the foreward that Allen "had rare opportunities to know the western frontier: soldier, freighter, rancher, clerk, blacksmith, editor, war correspondent, Pine Ridge Postmaster ... married into the Oglala Sioux tribe ... a keen observer (who) wrote the first account of ... Wounded Knee (which occurred December 29, 1890) to reach the world public through the daily press".

In this well-written book Allen relates incidents that begin when he was a nineteen-year-old on a cattle drive going to a ranch near Fort Laramie, Wyoming, in 1871, to his eyewitness account of the Wounded Knee Creek massacre in 1890 (which constitutes about one-third of this

volume). He interprets these incidents through his background of being part owner and editor of the *Chadron Democrat* newspaper, as well as being a corresponding reporter for the *New York Herald*. This 20-year retrospective is

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...the book is divided into  
twenty-seven diary-like  
vignettes...

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both an unassailably superlative primary source of objective Western history and one of the most readable personal accounts you will encounter.

Charles Allen's reminiscences also include interesting anecdotes about a wide range of frontier people, about Deadwood at the height of the Black Hills gold rush (to which he hauled freight during its historic hey-day), and about the stories told him by his Lakota friends. As editor Richard Jensen wrote in his superb introduction "... (these memoirs are) an attempt by an observant and intelligent man to record a turbulent and complex time" in northern Plains history.

Structurally, the book is divided into twenty-seven diary-like vignettes giving both pleasure readers and serious, scholarly readers a truth-based immersion into the historical environment, people, and events of northwestern Nebraska, eastern Wyoming, and southwestern South Dakota in the closing years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

--Bob Terwilliger, P.M.



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

November - December 2003



Westerners discuss Indian pipes at the meeting

**Indian pipes-history and types**  
by Ken Gaunt, P.M.  
(presented February 26, 2003)



## About the Author

Ken Gaunt joined the Denver Westerners in 1955 and served as Sheriff of the Posse in 1996.

A fourth-generation Coloradan, he was born in Colorado Springs and grew up in Yuma, Colorado. After starting his work career as a "soda jerk," Ken received his pharmacy license, which he has had for over 64 years. He is Colorado's oldest practicing pharmacist.

Ken was the Denver Bronco's team pharmacist for 15 years, and the Olympic team pharmacist for 3 different Olympics. He is Fairmount Cemetery's official historian, and conducts tours there and at Golden's Cemetery. He has written the history of both cemeteries. Ken was Denver's "Magician of the Year" in 1964.

Ken has written a number of histories, include the history of the Colorado Artillery, 1862-1957. He has put together a study of Colorado men who have won the Medal of Honor.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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November - December 2003

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# Indian Pipes-history and types

by Ken Gaunt, P.M.

(presented February 26, 2003)

Smoking is a pleasure almost as world-wide as music and dancing, yet only five hundred years ago it was quite unknown to the majority of the world's inhabitants. The rapidity with which the new habit spread is remarkable, and neither the edicts, nor violent tirades of self-styled moralists, nor threats made of physical damage could stem the rising tide of devotees to tobacco.

It is surmised that the procedure of smoking was an adaption of the practice of inhaling the smoke rising from the fire of various shrubs and herbs. Then, to some inventive mind, it occurred that the more economical and effective process of drawing the smoke into the lungs was through a tube.

Evidence of early day smoking is found through-out the world. Pipes have been found with the Eskimos, hill tribes of central India, and in tribes of Central Africa, Papua, and China. There are base-relief slabs from a temple in the south part of Mexico, which date to about 114 A.D., that show Chac, a Mayan god smoking a tube-pipe. There is evidence of the use of tobacco, probably in connection with their worship, more than two thousand years ago. I will call whatever the material smoked "tobacco" even though it might be one of many materials used in the practice of smoking.

The first written word of smoking appeared in the late 1500s. Las Casas, the chronicler of Columbus, reports that the Indians of Hispaniola

(visited in 1492) always had "a fire brand in their hand, of certain herbs for smoking." An English dialogue dated 1599 asks, "Have you a pipe of good tobacco?" In Wafer's "Travels" dated 1681 the author states "These Indians have tobacco among them. When it is dried and cured they lay two or three leaves one upon another and roll them into a long roll, light one end, wet the rest of it to keep it from burning too fast".

Let us look at the evolution of the pipe before we concentrate on the pipes of the North American Indians. At first tobacco was the rolled-up leaves of the various plants and herbs used for smoking as mentioned above. In some parts of the world the tobacco was put on the ground and clay or mud was shaped over it, the tobacco was then lit and the smoker would insert a hollow tube into the mound and inhale the smoke. The next step was to place the tobacco in a hollow tube and smoke it; this was called a Tube Pipe. The tube was made out of whatever was available to the smoker, such as reeds, hollow bones, bamboo or clay. The tube often was reinforced by wrapping it with sinew, making the pipe less likely to crack and when hot, easier to hold. A large area was next made in the end of the tube to allow more of the smoking material to be used. Then it became the practice to bend the end of the tube upwards or to put a hole in the top of the tube to better contain the tobacco. Next a bowl was put on top of

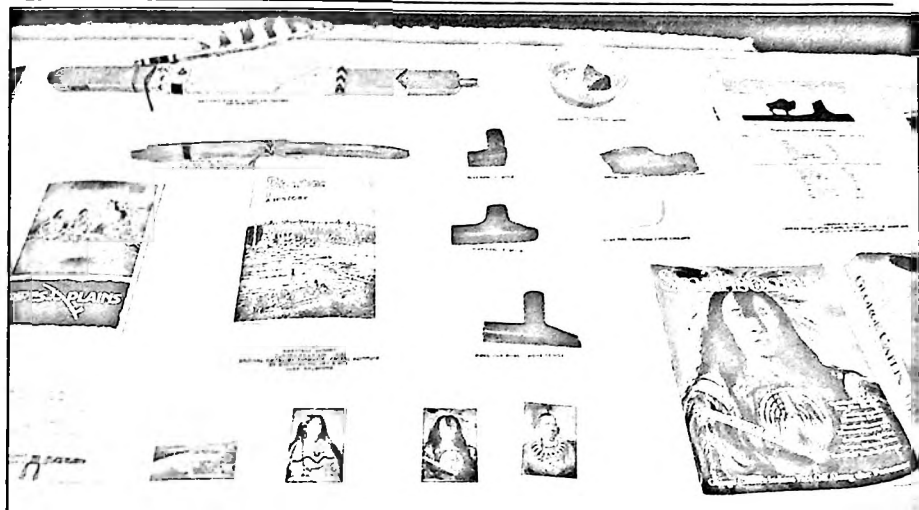
the tube. This type became known as the elbow pipe, a pipe with an L-shaped bowl. A separate wood stem and bowl became popular among the Plains Indians. Another style widely used was an inverted "T" shaped bowl, called the Plains or Sioux style, and was similar to the elbow pipe, but with a projecting point in back of the bowl. It was especially used on the large (36 to 60 inches long) ceremonial pipes to enable the point to rest on the ground while being smoked. Many of this type of pipes were quite heavy and were limited to use for ceremonial pipes only; these were called Calumets (sacred pipe). The stem and the bowl when joined symbolized the merger of earth and the smoker, and the smoke carried the message to the Great Spirit.

The Indians were a very religious people, everything they owned and every act of their life related to their religion and the Great Spirit. The pipe had a part of each phase of the Indian's life. It was used during any ceremony, council, tribal council, war or peace conference, and each movement had meaning. Catlin wrote, "The Indians have an idea that this red stone is a part of their flesh, that they were created from it and that it would be sacrilegious and unpious (sic), to convert it to any other use but the pipe, which is used for peace-making and conciliating to the Great Spirit." The transformation of the pipe and its use in ceremonies began when the totem object (raven, eagle, bear, etc) of the clan was carved in the round on one side of the tube. Once the totem figure appeared on the tube pipe, it was a natural modification for the figure to serve sometimes as a bowl for the

tobacco.

Wherever the belief in a future life was strong among the people, the custom prevailed of burying with the dead the possessions they might require in the Land of Spirits. This was the custom among many of the Indians of North America, and therefore many pipes of antique patterns have been recovered from grave sites. Many of these extremely ornate pipe bowls may be seen in museums. Most of those from the Plains area were made after the tribes obtained metal tools through trade and many of them show European design influences.

The stems of the pipes were straight, made of wood and were considered to be a connecting link with the supernatural. Ash, sumac, or other similar woods were selected for their soft, pithy core, which could be easily removed. Most of the stems were made thin and flat and masterfully carved and highly decorated with braided porcupine quills, horsehair, feathers, beads, and other colorful materials. A method used in the earliest days to make the smoke channel through the stem was to drill a small hole in the pith at one end of the stick into which a wood-boring grub was inserted and the end was then sealed and the stick heated over a fire. The grub following the line of least resistance would bore its way through the pith to make its escape. Thin lengths of warm hard wood were also used as a drill, but when the traders came to the West with metal wire the Indians soon changed to using a hot wire as a drill. For long stems (as much as 60 inches long) the method of making the stem was to split a straight tree limb, remove the pith. The two



Artifacts displayed at the meeting

pieces were then carefully glued back together, made into a flat stem, bound together, often with wet leather which when dry held the two pieces tightly together.

The length of an average pipe including the bowl was about 30 inches long, although the great ceremonial pipes or "Calumets" were much longer. The decoration of these ceremonial pipes were always unusual. The stem would be decorated with eagle feathers, fur, hair, leather, beads and some used the entire skin of different birds and animals as well as many individual designs. When not in use they were carefully wrapped together with rattles, paint, medicine, and other sacred items in trade cloth and waterproof hides. The medicine bundle was then hung in a place of honor from a pole high in the tipi. During good weather the bundle might be hung outside the tipi to identify the importance of the owner. The bundle was opened only for

ceremonial purposes, such as a healing ceremony, council meetings, and peace treaty negotiations, thus giving them the well-known name of "Peace Pipe".

The pipe bowls were made from many kinds of materials. The most popular were those that were soft enough to readily carved, but would not easily be damaged by heat. Steatite, Catlinite, Argillite, shale, soapstone and limestone were the most common materials, although bowls were occasionally made of wood and in the eastern part of the continent, clay was used. Catlinite and limestone are about the consistency of pine wood when first quarried, then when exposed to air and heat harden and become quite durable.

The prized ceremonial bowl was made from the stone Catlinite also known as pipestone. This material is obtained only from a quarry which is now the Pipestone National Monument in southwestern Minnesota.

The first quarrying here was

probably done about 1600 to 1650 A.D. by the Iowa and Oto tribes. The Sioux (or Dakota) tribes began moving west and southwest and being better armed than the Iowa and Oto began controlling the area from about 1700 A.D., until the end of tribal days about 150 years later. The myths had directed that the war-club and scalping knife must not be raised on this ground, so the quarries and the route into the quarries were regarded as neutral ground by all the tribes, and any tribe could come to the quarry for the purpose of obtaining the valued pipestone.

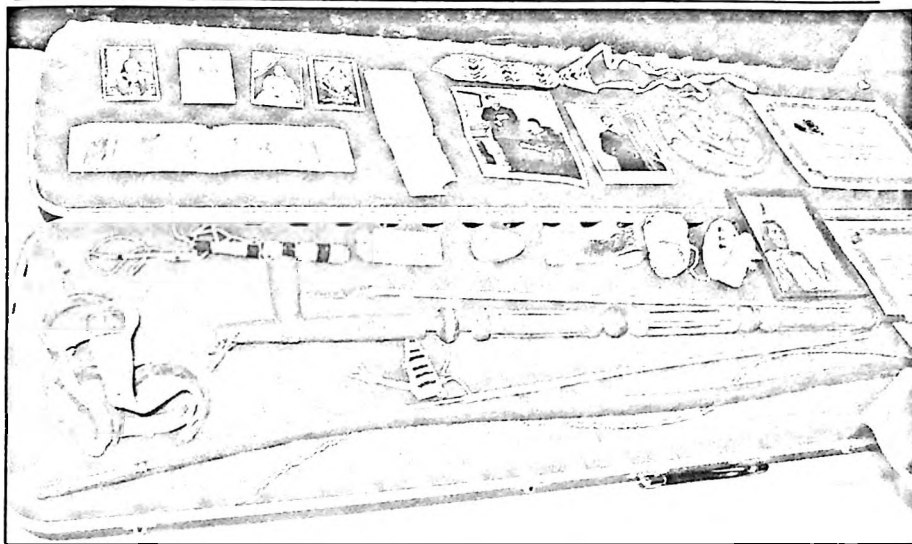
The myths about the origin of the quarry vary with each tribe. The Sioux (or Dakota), who ruled the area for so long, tell of the gift of a sacred pipe from a supernatural being. The myth tells of two young men who were hunting. They saw something white and shining coming toward them from a distance. Their first thought was that it was a white buffalo calf. As it drew nearer they saw it change into a beautiful young girl, dressed in white buckskin. In her hands she was carrying a beautiful highly decorated pipe. One of the men's thought were only of desire for the maiden. Because these thoughts offended the powers above, his flesh withered away and his bones fell in a heap on the ground. The other man, whose thoughts were respect and awe for the maiden, was given the Buffalo Calf Pipe with instructions for its care and use. The young maiden then walked away, finally changing into a white buffalo and disappeared over the horizon. The pipe was very strong medicine, and the instructions included the phrase, "Anyone who does bad deeds and uses this pipe will be rubbed

out. If people quarrel, then they should make peace using the pipe". The man returned to his camp and lived his life as a greatly respected keeper of the sacred peace pipe. A pipe, closely guarded and cared for and said to be the original pipe, is still preserved by one tribe of the Sioux.

Another myth is that long ago the Great Spirit sent a runner and called the Indian nations together at the "Red Pipe." He stood on top of a red pipe-stone rock. He then broke a piece from the rock and made a huge pipe with his hands. The Great Spirit then smoked it over them, to the north, the south, the east, and the west and told them that this red stone was of their flesh, and that they must use it for their pipes of peace.

Further, that the war-club and scalping knife must not be raised on this ground. At the last whiff of his pipe, his head went into a large cloud, and the surface of the area for several miles around was melted and glazed. Two great ovens opened and two women who are the guardian spirits of the place entered them in a blaze of fire. They are still heard answering to the invocations of the medicine-men or high priests when they visit this sacred place. Other legends relate that a sacred white bison's hooves turned the rocks red. Yet another tells the people that the red rock is their flesh.

The first white men visiting to the quarries were probably French traders and trappers, in the late 1700s. The quarry is shown on an early French map. An American trader, Philander Prescott, twice visited the quarry in 1832 in company with Sioux stone quarriers. Widely publicized and long



Artifacts displayed at the meeting

believed to be “the first white visitor” was George Catlin, who visited the quarry in September 1836. Catlin was a self-taught painter who set out to record by painting the disappearing Indian culture. On his first trip he made a pencil sketch of the quarry and was the first quarry visitor to “break into print” with his popular writings and lectures. He gave Dr. Charles T. Jackson, a well known mineralogist of Boston, samples of the red quarry stone. Jackson analyzed the stone and found that it was a new mineral substance which he named “Catlinite” in honor of George Catlin. Two years later Catlin and a guide, LaFramboise, made the first truly scientific expedition to the pipestone quarry. His “Account of a Journey to the Coteau des Prairies” was published in 1839 in *The American Journal of Science and Arts*.

The pipestone when it is first removed from the quarry is rather soft,

much like pine wood. With nothing but a knife for carving, the pipes were made with many different shapes, such as animals or human figures. A T-shaped pipe bowl was the type most commonly used, often with a figure or totem in front of the smoke bowl. The smoke hole was carefully drilled and the tobacco bowl was made by twirling a hard wood drill, with a mixture of sand and water in the bowl, between the palms of one’s hands or with a bow drill. After the carving was finished the pipe was allowed to dry and then highly polished with beeswax.

The sacred pipe was used in the following manner. At the start of the council the medicine man or host would first light the pipe with a coal from the fire. Then blowing a puff of smoke toward the sky, he would extend the stem heavenward as a prayer to the Great Spirit. Next he would point the stem toward Mother Earth, and then to

each of the "Four Old Men," or directions: south, west, north, and east. After this he passed the pipe "with the sun" to the man on his left, who then smoked in the same manner. The pipe went around until it reached the man next to the entrance. This man, when he had smoked, passed it back around the circle until it reached the man on the other side of the entrance, for it was a tradition not to pass the pipe door across a doorway. That man then smoked it and passed it to his left, each man smoking it until it again reached the medicine man. This way the pipe was repeating the path of the wisdom-dispensing sun. The pipe smoke was the bearer of a heaven-sent voice to the Great Spirit.

The male Indians enjoyed smoking personal pipes when they could, but tobacco was in short supply and was saved to be used in the religious ceremonies. The tobacco used by the Plains tribes was obtained by trading with some of the sedentary tribes, such as the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa, who cultivated large amounts of tobacco for trading with the more freely roving tribes. The tribes mixed tobacco with some other material before being smoked; some of the favorite additives were the inner bark of willow, dogwood, sumac, barberry, or alder. Economy and better flavor were the two most common reasons for this practice. The bark was scraped off in long shavings, dried on a piece of hide, then with hands greased with animal fat, the bark would be crushed in small particles. The grease helped make it burn freely. The mixtures produced was called kinni-kinnick. At times, the term applied to the

mixture meant "mixed" or "mixed by hand."

To protect their valuable pipes and smoking materials, the owner carried them in special bags, made from deer skin, sheep skin, or any other soft leather, about 8 inches wide and 24 inches long, with a compartment for the stem and one for the bowl and tobacco. It usually had a fringe on the bottom and was beautifully decorated with bead or quill work. Another type of bag was made by carefully removing the carcass of a bird or small animal from the outer skin and curing the inside. Other accessories included boards of wood or stone on which smoking materials were cut or mixed, sticks for cleaning and tamping pipes, and equipment for lighting the pipe. In early times, the pipe was lighted by a burning coal, with dried buffalo dung used as a starter. Later flint and steel became the standard lighter for the Indian smoker.

As the Europeans became more prevalent in the plains a new type of pipe emerged. These were known as Tomahawk Pipes which were both a tomahawk and a brass pipe. These brass tomahawks and pipes were made in different countries and shipped to the traders in large numbers. Each nation that produced tomahawk pipes used its own pattern and markings. The English blade resembled a straight ax, the French was shaped with a fleur-de-lis, and the Spanish was the shape of a broad ax. However, it was the Indian artisan who gave the tomahawk its crowning beauty with its beads, brass tacks, wire, bright red cloth, animal skins, and often an eagle feather on the shaft. Eventually these tomahawk pipes became a symbol of both war and

peace. A meeting where the head of the tomahawk was buried in ground was to show a peaceful intent, or if decorated in red it became a war symbol, and any man who smoked it was vowing that he would participate in the war or raid, or hunt.

Another class of pipes which is unique in character, differing completely from anywhere else on the continent are those carved among the Indian fishing tribes of the Northwest coast, a land different from the plains and mountains. The mountains are covered with giant red cedars down to the very edge of the ocean. The shore is a mixture of quiet fiords, sounds, islands, and islets. The rivers and ocean are full of fish and the Indians get their livelihood from the sea. Wood carving is an art that is highly developed as evidenced by the great totem poles set up before the burial sites, lodges and council chambers. Besides carving in wood, the Indians of the Hiada and Tlinget tribes obtain a black, soft shale material known as Argillite from the Queen Charlotte Island. It is usually chosen as the material for carving; however, the pipes could not be smoked because they are a shale and would burn. The carvings are in low relief instead of in the round, with designs often elaborately interlocked and human figures. The animals depicted are the killer whale, the eagle, the hawk, the beaver, and the fish. They also make other carvings such as face masks, plates, and bowls from the Argillite. These carvings even when carved in a pure Indian style, date from the period of contact with Europe-

in Sitka has a fine collection of these carvings, many that are inlaid with lead, ivory and other materials.

George Catlin collected many pipes and Indian artifacts, as well as doing over 600 paintings of the twenty eight tribes he visited. In 1837, Catlin opened an exhibit featuring his paintings and artifacts in New York City. After three months, he took the exhibit along the East Coast, but after a year, the show attendance began to dwindle. About 1838 Catlin tried to sell his entire Indian Gallery to the United States for \$65,000. Congress was not interested in buying it even when he lowered the price to \$25,000. He packed up his entire collection and took it to Europe, displaying it in London and Paris. There he went deeply into debt and was forced to sell some of the peace pipes and other items, 150 of the paintings, and some Argillite carvings to the British Museum. A small part of them were put on display. A wealthy American offered to pay off Catlin's debts in return for taking over the remaining collection. Joseph Harrison, the buyer, shipped the collection to Philadelphia where it was placed in storage. Catlin never was able to redeem his collection, but seven years after his death the widow of Joseph Harrison gave the collection to the Smithsonian Museum who placed the collection on display, from 1883 to 1890. In the latter part of 2002 the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery placed a large part of Catlin's collection on display for the first time in over 100 years.

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# Over the corral rail

Some events from 2003.....



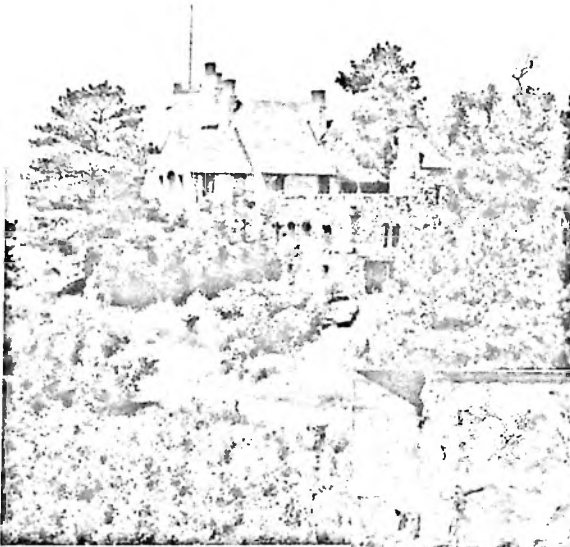
**In May**, Lee Whiteley presented a paper on the National Park to Park Highway, using excerpts from his new book



**In June**, Paul Unks presented a paper and artwork on Native American images by Ed Sheriff Curtis

**July** was the Annual Posse Meeting. A special tour was arranged at the Cherokee Ranch and Castle, followed by the dinner meeting at Wayne Smith's residence

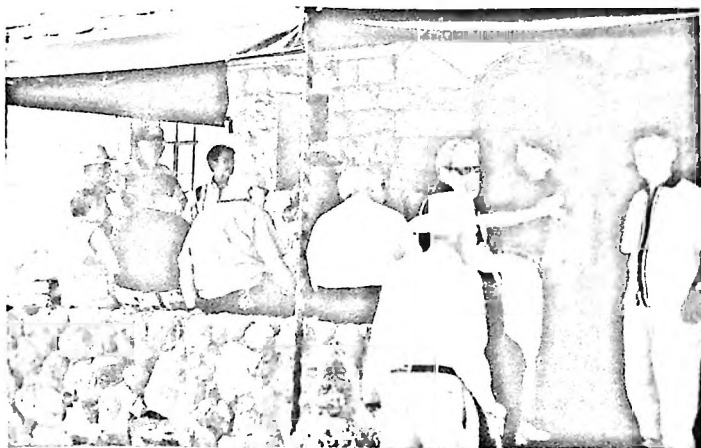
Below, inner-courtyard gate of petrified stone from the property and 1000 B.C. vases from Crete



*Photos by Sheriff Bob Terwilliger*



Westerners enjoy a barbeque at Wayne Smith's



Westerners gather for a tour of the Cherokee Castle in Douglas County in July



### Westerners International

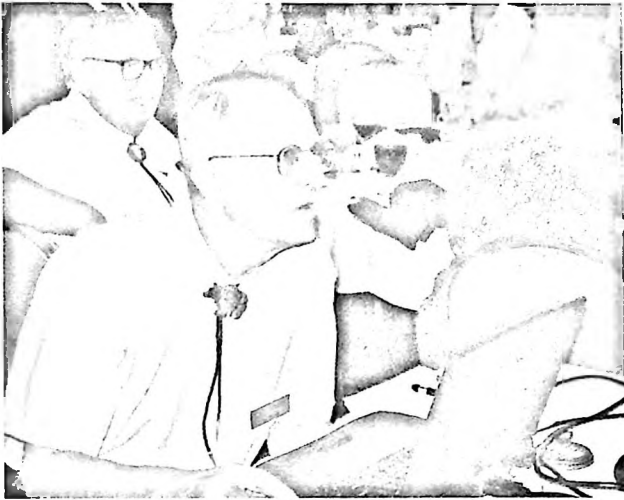
Corresponding Membership in the Denver Posse does not include membership in the Westerners International. If you wish to receive the *Buckskin Bulletin*, you may purchase a subscription for \$5.00/year. Contact Westerners International, c/o National Cowboy Hall of Fame, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City,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





**In August**, the Westerners enjoyed a fine meal at Roxborough Park, and a fine electronic presentation on its history by Edwin and Nancy Bathke

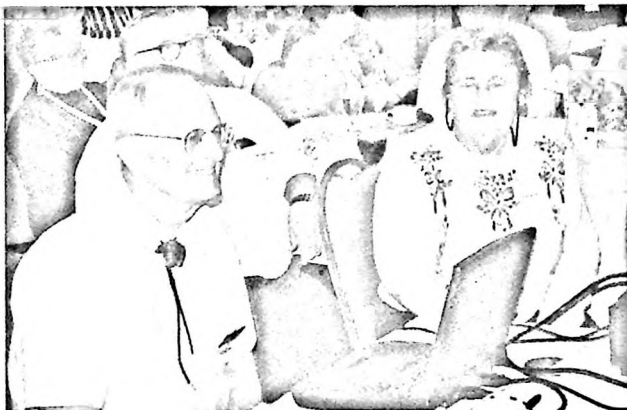




"Mr. High Tech" as we like to call him, Ed Bathke wonders just what happened to those images that were on the screen a few minutes ago



"They were just there," thinks Ed as the initial panic sets in



Bytes recovered, all's well for an outstanding paper, "A Brief History of Roxborough Park"



**In October**, Chef Pierre Wolfe gave the Westerners a presentation on food and Denver restaurant history



**Awards presented at the Annual Christmas Rendezvous in December**



Mr. Rakosnik presents the Rosenstock Award for Outstanding Contributions to Colorado History to Kathy Johnson of **Four Mile Historic**



Posse Member Eugene Rakosnik (right) presents the 2003 Fred A. Rosenstock Award for Lifetime Achievement in Western History to '04 Sheriff **Lee Whiteley**



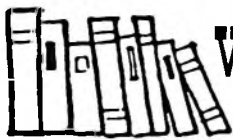


Posse Member Jeff Broome provided pre-dinner entertainment at the Christmas Rendezvous



The topic for the evening was, "Survivors: Unconventional Women of the West," presented by **The Shady Ladies of Central City**. The Shady Ladies is a not-for-profit, self-supporting group of 14 women of all ages, existing to promote the history of women who settled the West. They perform one weekend per month, volunteering their time for research, costume creation and performing





## Westerners Bookshelf



**An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887** by Kevin J. Hayes. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 200 pp., 1 map, indexed. \$27.95.

In the spring of 1887, George Nellis decided to head west—on a bicycle. He planned a coast-to-coast trip, starting in Herkimer, New York, and ending in San Francisco. Nellis didn't want to be the first one to ride a bicycle across America; several young men had already accomplished that, he wanted to be the fastest. Nellis financed his trip by sending entertaining articles to his hometown newspaper and informative articles to a national cycling magazine. Author Kevin Hayes combines these two sources and adds his own historical facts and interpretations. The result is a readable, interesting narrative about a journey across America when the country was still young.

For his bicycle, he chose a "Columbia Expert" with a tubular steel frame, hard rubber tires, and a 52-inch front wheel. It was not anything unusual, yet vastly improved over earlier models that were made of wood and weighed 150 pounds. Because of these advances, biking had become a very popular sport in the 1880s and even the smallest town had bicycling enthusiasts.

Nellis also chose not to carry any food with him, reasoning that hunger would be "a great incentive to hard riding when nearing a settlement in the evening." Most of the time this worked, and he often commented on the culinary hospitality of the people along his route.

Nellis followed a rigorous schedule of riding ten hours a day and usually covering 50 miles. However, he did break from this schedule to watch a baseball game in Detroit, to see the sights in Chicago, to participate in a bicycle race in Omaha, and to sail on Lake Tahoe. Rain and impassible roads often forced him to modify his schedule, but he consistently made better progress than expected. Only slightly worse for the wear, Nellis arrived in San Francisco 72 days after leaving New York, breaking the previous record by 33 days and traveling 3369 miles in the process.

As you travel with Nellis across America, you get a feeling for the times. Although the book offers few new historical facts, it is filled with anecdotes ranging from the history of New York's penal system to major league baseball. Less interesting are the descriptions of the organizational structure of a wheelman's protective league and the lyrics of songs penned by dedicated bikers. The book gives critiques of the towns that Nellis passes through, cultural insights (mostly through Nellis'



stomach), road conditions, and scenery.

Interest in cross-country chronicles evaporated with the demise of the covered wagon. This book picks up the subject 20 years after the railroad made crossing the continent a nonevent. It is a far different narrative than the earlier version of wagons and oxen, and is filled with interesting insights into America. This makes the book informative to historians and readers of all types. Obviously, it would be of particular interest to historians seated on a mountain bike.

*--Richard Barth, P.M.*

**Lynching in Colorado, 1859-1919**, by Stephen J. Leonard. Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2002. 232 pp., illustrations, drawings, tables, map, chapter notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$24.95.

Hanging around Colorado could be bad for your health. It was deadly for 175 people lynched or otherwise illegally executed, between 1859 and 1919. Author Stephen Leonard has written a detailed and extensively researched book about this form of impulse justice in Colorado and analyzes the practice from several angles.

Although most of those who met an untimely demise by way of a short rope and a long drop were guilty of a crime, usually murder, but also robbery, rustling, and rape, they were still denied their constitutional rights to a fair trial. Colorado was rather aggressive in this mode of justice, as lynchings on a per capita basis were higher than most other states. Colorado was part of a "lynching belt" that also included Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Arizona.

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...the subject is  
gruesome...the author  
does a tactful job...

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The author contends that "many Western historians were either blind to the evils of lynching or unwilling to embarrass the West." These historians considered lynching as a "reasonable response" in the absence of a functioning legal system and that the victims "got what they deserved." Obviously, the author disagrees, and in his analysis of Colorado lynchings endeavors to answer such questions as why the practice flourished in Colorado, how it got a good name, and who were the victims.

These questions are addressed in a social and psychological context. For example, Colorado lynchings reached a peak in the 1880s when the state legally executed thirteen people and citizens lynched more than four times that number. Perhaps citizens embraced lynching because of the increase of women and children in Colorado communities and the desire for law and order. In addition, many towns did not have the funds for jailing, trying, executing, and burying criminals. Lynching cost nothing other than the expense of burial. Once towns could raise sufficient revenue for a functioning judicial system, lynching was no longer acceptable.

The author stated in the introduction that he hopes the book is "interesting, albeit disturbing." He is correct, and I found the book difficult to read for entertainment, but interesting in terms of frontier justice in Colorado. The subject is gruesome and unappealing, yet the author does a tactful job in documenting Colorado lynchings, and informing us of the circumstances that precipitated the extreme event. This book would be of interest, both for reading and for reference, to those studying outlaws and lawmen. This book is also recommended to those wanting to know more about the history of judicial intervention by frustrated citizens desiring law and order, yet choosing to disregard the law in their quest for order.

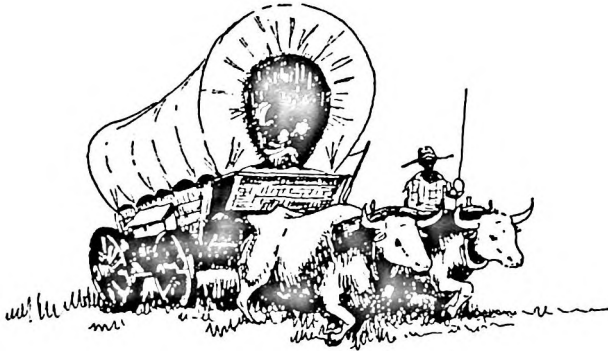
--Richard Barth, P.M.

**Enos Mills, Citizen of Nature**, by Alexander Drummond. University Press of Colorado, 2002. 432pp. Illustrations, footnotes, index. Softcover.

The title pretty well says it. Mills was among the foremost conservationists to have lived and plied their craft in Colorado. His childhood in Kansas, his coming of age and prominence in Colorado, his naturalist studies, his place in conservationist history, all are told, examined, and critiqued.

This is an extensively researched, thorough, and well-illustrated book. The author gives a balanced account of the man, his strengths, foibles, and legacy. It is not for the generalist. But, if one's interest is in Rocky Mountain National Park, or the detailed history and roots of Colorado conservation politics, this is a book to read.

--Stan Moore, P.M.



**Cather's Kitchens, Foodways in Literature and Life**, by Roger L. Welsch and Linda K. Welsch. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 199 pp, 7 photographs, index. \$14.95.

The aroma from the bread-making machine wafted through our house. Those delicious smells evoked pleasant memories from my past. The machine takes away the old fashioned delight of kneading and feeling the bread dough, but the taste of homemade bread puts store-bought bread to shame. So one returns to thoughts of his childhood and contemplates how one's mother cooked.

From this perspective I read *Cather's Kitchens*. The authors, Roger and Linda Welsch, wrote a book merging Willa Cather's writing into a cookbook. First they used quotes from Cather's books, especially about food, gardens and kitchens. Then they dug through the Cather family recipe files, period cookbooks, and they interviewed old-time ethnic cooks in producing this book. This book is not to be used as most cookbooks of today. The recipes the authors found often were incomplete, unclear and illegible. So one is to use this book as a guide and cook with "a little to this", "some of that" and "just enough" to make it tasty. In various areas of the world and in past times, recipes were not rigid formulas but rather they were a list of ingredients with proportions left to the cook. One's knowledge of food, cooking and baking is needed to make it all work. And remember in the period about which Cather wrote the ingredients were whatever was nearby.

If one enjoys the writings of Willa Cather and also loves to cook, eat or just enjoy food, this delicious "stew" makes an appetizing book for you.

--Nancy Bathke, P. M.

**Willa Cather and the American Southwest**, edited by John N. Swift and Joseph R. Urgo. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 180 pp, 11 illustrations, index. \$40.00.

When I chose this book, *Willa Cather and the American Southwest*, to review, I thought I had found a book that tied two of my "delights" together. I have enjoyed Willa Cather's novels, especially *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, and I enjoy the Southwestern areas of the United States. So I started reading this book from my preconceived prejudices. I rapidly found out that this book was not what I had expected.

This is a book of essays that were given at the "Willa Cather in Mesa Verde Symposium" in October 1999. There are 13 noted contributors from Academia, primarily from literary fields, whose papers were selected and included in this book. Two were of particular interest to me. The first one, *From Mesa Verde to Germany*, showed Cather's knowledge of the American Indian artifacts that were leaving this country and how it affected her subsequent writings. The other article that interested me was *Twain and Cather, Once Again*. It is always fascinating to read about authors who were contemporaries and who knew each other.

If you enjoy the dissecting of literature and the personal interpretations of authors' works relating to a central theme, then this is an excellent book for you.

--Nancy Bathke, P. M.

**The Lost Journals Of Charles S. Armstrong, from Arkport, New York to Aspen, Colorado**, by Christian J. Buys. Western Reflections Publishing Co., Montrose, CO, 2002. 258 pages, illustrations and maps, index. Paper \$16.95.

That the "Lost Journals" of Charles Armstrong were ever published is a marvel; such a record could so easily been overlooked or lost. First of all, Charles Armstrong was a relatively ordinary man. Born in 1847 in Arkport, NY, he began keeping a dairy in 1867. His writings provide a window into the daily life of small-town America in the 1860s. Charles was an active young man, and in addition to recording his ordinary daily events, and finances, he also took part in the social life of the community, and commented on national and international events. As he struggled to develop a career, he taught school, headed West, worked as a hotel clerk in Leavenworth, Kansas, and eventually settled in Aspen, Colorado. Surveying was his primary occupation, but he prospected, worked at mine development, boarded a few people at his cabin near Aspen, hunted and fished, and generally did what he had to do to get by. At times he traveled to Leadville and Denver. In the 1890s he visited his family in Arkport, toured New York City and Washington, D.

C., and had a great time at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

...he provides a fascinating opportunity to compare and contrast life then and now...

It is fortunate that Leo Stambaugh of Georgetown, Colorado, discovered the journals and realized their historical value.

Christian Buys copied all 19 of the small

journals, a transcription of over 1,100 pages. Buys, who is a professor of psychology, as well as an author of several books on early Colorado, combines these talents in editing the journals, and writing insightful summaries for the various sections of the *Lost Journals*. The Armstrong journals from 1867 through 1894 are presented in this book. Armstrong continued his recording through 1926, and died in 1928 at the age of 81. He lived in humble cabins, and in later years in a small home in Aspen. At the time of his death he had been the Pitkin County surveyor for several years. His Aspen journals almost entirely concentrated on his daily activities: the weather, fishing, working, regularly borrowing and loaning a few dollars as an integral part of the financial procedures of that era, spending some time (sometimes too much time) in the Aspen saloons—all in all a rather ordinary life. He did not comment on world happenings to the extent that he did as a young man. But he provides a fascinating opportunity to compare and contrast life then and now, and allows us to share in his experiences in the mining days of developing Aspen in the 1880s and 1890s. Christian Buy's commentary, editing, and photos, maps and illustrations produce a well-presented book, which Colorado history buffs will find reads easily and enjoyably.

--Edwin Bathke, P. M.

**The Sherman Tour Journals of Richard Irving Dodge**, edited by Wayne R. Kime. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002, 190 pp. Illustrated, maps, bibliography, and index. Hardcover\$35.00.

This work is the fourth and last of Dodge's journals edited by Wayne Kime. The first was *The Black Hills Journals*, the second, *The Powder River Expedition Journals*, and the third, which I reviewed for the Denver Westerners, was *The Indian Territory Journals*.

This volume, as the title suggests, concerns the inspection tour in 1883 by General William Tecumseh Sherman, then Commanding General of the U. S. Army, just prior to his retirement on Nov. 1, 1883. Col. Dodge was selected as an aide to Gen. Sherman for the tour even though he was at that time, Commanding Officer of the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and stationed at Fort Sully, Dakota Territory. Dodge joined the tour at Fort Snelling, Minn. on June 25, 1883.

The book is comprised of three parts. The introduction, which gives the background and sets the stage, takes up 85 pages of the book's entire 190 pages. The journals themselves include the time frame up to when Dodge leaves Sherman's company at the end of the tour in St. Louis on September 3, 1883, and take up 70 pages. The last journal entry is dated September 26, 1883, at Denver, Colorado. The final portion of the book is the aftermath and consists of 29 pages.

Dodge's journal gives some personal insight to the personalities of both Gen. Sherman and Dodge himself. The tour began at Fort Snelling, traveled mostly by train, sometimes by wagon, to the Pacific Northwest, including a part of Canada, then on to Portland and San Francisco by boat, and to Los Angeles by train. The tour then continued on to Albuquerque, Pueblo, Fort Lewis, Leadville, Denver, and St. Louis.

It is interesting reading, and is good primary source material for seeing what life was actually like in the Army during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

This work is a good short read for those interested in Army life at the close of the Western frontier.

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...Dodge's journal gives some insight to the personalities of Sherman and Dodge himself...

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--Richard Cook, P.M.



**Captain John H. Rogers, Texas Ranger**, by Paul N. Spellman. The University of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas, 2003. 270 pages. Illustrated with black and white photographs; index; endnotes, bibliography. Cloth with dust jacket, \$29.95.

There are several constants in American Western history circles, especially those circles dominated by non-academicians who simply love Western history.

Those constants are: there are going to be books about Custer's Last Stand; there are going to be books about Buffalo Bill; there are going to be books about Jesse James and Billy the Kid; and there are going to be books about the Texas Rangers.

This is a book that will please those of us who are interested in the Rangers. This volume is a biography of one of the constants of the Texas Rangers during the 1882-1918 period, Captain John H. Rogers.

Rogers, along with John Hughs, Bill McDonald, and John O. Brooks, was a ranger and dominant figure during the period that immediately followed the era of Indian raids, the Frontier Battalion, and the Bass Gang. It was a time when Texas was maturing. But it also was a time that still featured much excitement and much violence. There were fence-cutting gangs, lynch mobs, border raids, Judge Roy Bean, World War I, and many, many gunfights.

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...Professor Spellman makes the story an unusually inspiring one...

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As a Texas Ranger, U.S. Marshal, and Austin Police Chief, Rogers survived (sometimes just barely) into the era of the wild oil fields, prohibition, narcotics enforcement, and the Ku Klux Klan.

However, this biography is not a typical one, largely because of its atypical subject. Rogers was one of the "praying Rangers," a stalwart of the old-time Presbyterian Church who carried his Bible along with his firearms.

Professor Spellman makes the story an unusually inspiring one because it indicates that Rogers survived, with honor and courage, all of the problems facing Texas for almost a half century. He apparently was untainted by the Canales investigation into racism against Tejanos, by the power of the Ku Klux Klan, and by the corruption of Ma and Pa Ferguson, two governors who hated the Rangers. The personal Christian faith of Rogers also sustained him through personal family tragedies.

The book is not perfect. Sometimes the author seems not to select the best word or slips into language that is too informal. Certainly, there should be a map to help most readers. Nonetheless, the book is highly recommended. It should be in every library featuring the Texas Rangers.

--John Hutchins, P.M.