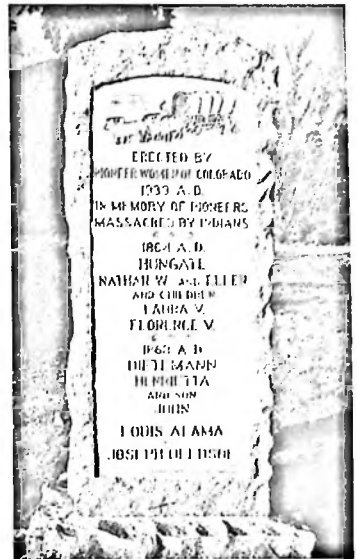




The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

January - February 2004



Indian Massacres in Elbert County, Colorado

New information on the 1864 Hungate and 1868

Dietemann Murders

by Dr. Jeff Broome, P.M.

(presented April 23, 2003)



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This is Jeff's third paper to the Westerners.

Cover: The Hungate homesite, monument to the Hungates, rifle stock found at the homesite. All article photos by the author.

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Indian Massacres in Elbert County, Colorado

New information on the 1864 Hungate and 1868 Dietemann Murders

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(presented April 23, 2003)

On June 11, 1864, Nathan Ward Hungate, his wife Ellen, and daughters Laura and Florence, were all killed by Indians and their house burned along Box Elder Creek about thirty miles southeast of Denver City. Nathan, originally from McDonough County, Illinois, was 29. His body was located about a mile from the burned home. Ellen Eliza Decker, originally from Pennsylvania, married Nathan in Cass County, Nebraska Territory on January 21, 1861. Born August 3, 1838, she was 25 when murdered. Daughter Laura, born in the fall of 1861, was not yet three when killed. Little Florence was a week shy of five months when she died with the rest of her family. Ellen and her daughters were found about 100 yards from the destroyed home.¹

Four summers later, on August 25, 1868, Apollinaris Dietemann, along with business partner and soon-to-be brother-in-law Anton Schindelholz, were returning to their adjoining cabins along Comanche Creek, located just south of where present Highway 86 crosses Comanche Creek about four miles southeast of present-day Kiowa, probably just south of and within visual distance to the highway.² When reaching the Stage Station known then as Running Creek, situated about nine miles south of where the Hungate

massacre occurred four years earlier and two miles north of present-day Elizabeth, they were informed that the Indians had raided homesteads along Comanche Creek and that a woman and her child had been killed. Apollinaris immediately knew this was probably his wife and one of his children, as his homestead on Comanche Creek was the only one at that time that included a family.³

Beyond these basic facts of who was murdered and when, there has been little information available to tell a more complete story. Of course, with the subsequent infamous event at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864, the Hungate murders are more commonly featured in history books as the motivation for retaliation at Sand Creek. There is more information, however, that can be learned regarding both of these family murders. This comes from an archeological survey done at the site of the Hungate murders, and from heretofore-untapped files housed in the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. These files come from long-neglected Indian Depredation Claims.

The Hungate Murders

The first written accounts informing the public of both family murders come

from newspapers. Because of a devastating flood in Denver shortly before the Hungate murders that destroyed the presses of *The Denver Rocky Mountain News*, their murders were reported in *The Denver Commonwealth* on June 15, under the title "Indian Depredations—Murder of an entire family:” On Saturday night [June 11] two Indians stampeded 49 mules belonging to Daniels & Brown, about 13 miles from this city, on the 'cut-off,' while the teamsters, four in number, were preparing supper. Two of the men pursued the Indians some 13 miles, until they came in sight of about 120 head of ponies, horses and mules, when they judiciously returned to the wagons, as the Indian camp was evidently near.... On Saturday afternoon, the buildings of the ranche of Mr. Van Wormer, of this city, on Living Creek, thirty miles southeast of Denver, were burned down by Indians, as were the buildings of the next ranche. Mr. Hungate and family, who occupied Mr. Van Wormer's ranche, were barbarously murdered by the Indians. The bodies of Mrs. H and two children were found near the house—they had been scalped, and their throats cut. A later report brings news of the discovery of Mr. Hungate's body, about a mile from the same place. Moccasins, arrows, and other Indian signs were found in the vicinity. The bodies of these will be brought to the city this afternoon, and will, at the ringing of the Seminary bell, be placed where our citizens can all see them.⁴

Military and government authorities were aware of these depredations shortly after they happened. In a letter dated 12 p.m. June 11, Territorial Governor John Evans wrote Col. John

M. Chivington, commanding the military district in Colorado, informing him of depredations occurring in the vicinity of Coal Creek and Box Elder Creek, the other name for Running Creek. Though the document is dated as 12 p.m., this is probably a mistake, and Evans really meant 12:00 a.m., June 12. Apparently the missive was not sent to Chivington until early June 12, for appended to the document with a June 12 date is this note:

P.S.— Since writing the above there has arrived a messenger from Mr. Van Wormer's ranch, 10 miles south of the cut-off road, on Box Elder. He says that yesterday afternoon the Indians drove off his stock, burned Mr. Van W.'s house, and murdered a man who was in Mr. Van W.'s employ, his wife, and two children, and burned his house also...⁵

Enclosed with this report and dated 10 p.m. June 11, is a statement signed by J. S. Brown and Thos. J. Darrah, informing Evans of the loss by theft to Indians of 49 mules and one horse, the incident noted above and reported in *The Denver Commonwealth* for June 15. Mr. Darrah was one of the three messengers that reported to Governor Evans of the Hungate murders, as will be shown later. In yet another report dated June 11, Evans orders Captain Joseph C. Davidson to pursue and punish the offending Indians. Davidson is there informed that Darrah will guide his detachment of 50 men to where it was believed the Indians were in camp.⁶ This report was probably written before the report sent to Col. Chivington with the appended announcement of the murder of the Hungate family.

The chronology of events as it was reported to Governor Evans probably went like this: Darrah had stock stolen along Running Creek. On his way to Denver to report the theft and seek military assistance in recovering the stolen stock he comes upon the Brown freighters and learns of their loss. He informs Brown in Denver of his loss thirteen miles away, and the two go to Governor Evans and make their report. Evans then writes his order to Davidson and Darrah volunteers to deliver the order. Meanwhile Brown gets his friend Corbin and together they go to where his freighters are stranded with their wagons. Learning that his wagon master had recovered enough stock to bring the wagons into Denver he then leaves with Corbin to search for his remaining stolen stock. They soon meet up with Darrah and a company of soldiers and later discover the Hungate massacre. It is at this time that Darrah learns that his cabin has been burned, which would have occurred while he was away reporting his loss of stock. The soldiers leave and the three freighters then find Nathan Hungate's body about a mile away from his house. They then go to Denver and report the murders to Governor Evans late in the day on June 11. Evans then appends his order to Chivington informing him of the murders. The affidavits in the Brown deprecation claim support this sequence of events.

On June 13, Brown, D. C. Corbin and Darrah submit a report to Captain Maynard regarding their observances of the Hungate killings. Speaking of a Mr. Johnson, who resided nearby at a lumber mill, the report notes that Johnson and others

from the mill had first discovered the bodies of Mrs. Hungate and her two children, and had removed them to the mill:

The party from the mill and himself [Johnson], upon reaching the place, had found it in ruins and the house burned to the ground. About 100 yards from the desolated ranch they discovered the body of the murdered woman and her two dead children, one of which was a little girl of four years and the other an infant. The woman had been stabbed in several places and scalped, and the body bore evidences of having been violated. The two children had their throats cut, their heads being nearly severed from their bodies. Up to this time the body of the man had not been found, but upon our return down the creek, on the opposite side, we found the body. It was horribly mutilated and the scalp torn off. The family are spoken of by their neighbors as having been very worthy and excellent people.⁷

More than three months after these accounts were produced, there is another report about the Hungate massacre. This comes from the Arapahoe Chief Neva, who participated in the Camp Weld Conference, held near Denver on September 28, 1864. In this conference Governor Evans asks the seven Indians present, who killed the Hungate family? Neva responds that it was a small party of four Arapahoes, led by "Medicine Man, or Roman Nose, and three others."⁸ This contradicted an earlier report given to Governor Evans just four days after the massacre. In this report, Robert North, a man who was married to an Arapahoe woman and had lived and traded among

the Indians for years, warned Evans the fall before that the Indians were only trading for arms and ammunition in anticipation of a general Indian war for the purpose of driving all white people from Colorado. He then identifies the Arapahoe Notnee as being with the party that killed the Hungates:

Robert North, the same who made statement last autumn, now on file, reports that John Notnee, an Arapaho Indian, who was here with him and Major Colley last fall, spent the winter on Box Elder. He was mad because he had to give up the stock that he stole from Mr. Van Wormer last fall. He thinks he was with the party who murdered the family on Mr. Van Wormer's ranch and stole the stock in the neighborhood last Saturday, but thinks that the most of the party were Cheyennes and Kiowas.⁹

As far as contemporary reports exist of the Hungate massacre, the newspaper accounts, military reports and Camp Weld Conference noted above are what contemporary historians use to depict the Hungate massacre. What come later are reminiscences from pioneers, and it is from these accounts that certain embellishments to the murders begin to develop. These embellishments, I believe, deter one from understanding the actual truth of what happened. Nevertheless, modern authors, culling from *all* of these sources, develop this scenario, which can be called the standard view. It is not correct: Nathan Hungate was away from his home, working the ranch with a ranch hand named Miller when the Indians surprised Ellen and her children. His family is soon killed, the house then looted and burned, and

Nathan then learns of the tragedy when he sees smoke coming from the direction of his home. While he goes to his now-burning home he is overtaken by the murderous Indians and killed before getting there. While Nathan races to his death the ranch hand, Miller, turns his tracks to Denver, where he soon reports the massacre to the authorities, and is thus the messenger noted in Evans' reports.¹⁰

There is, however, primary source material never before consulted that relates to the Hungate massacre. These documents present a clearer picture of what was happening at the time the Hungates were murdered. Further, modern archeological evidence points to an entirely different understanding of the massacre than the standard view noted above.

The heretofore-untapped primary source documents are found in the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, from individual Indian depredation claims housed in Record Group 123. Record Group 123 is not the only record group housing depredation claims. But it is the largest, housing about 10,000 separate claims, and it is from this record group that are found the claims of John S. Brown, one of the freighters noted in the report of June 12 by Governor Evans, and again in the report dated June 13, 1864. Philip Gomer also filed a claim for his losses at this time. Gomer owned the mill near the Hungate place where the bodies were first taken.

Before presenting this new information, a word of explanation is in order regarding Indian depredation claims. In 1796 Congress first passed laws allowing for compensation for



Hungate grave, Fairmount Cemetery

U.S. citizens who had property stolen by Indians in treaty with the United States. Compensation for a successful claim was to be taken from the annuities provided in the various Indian treaties. This law was tweaked and changed many times over the ensuing decades, but the driving thought behind it was twofold: to prevent settlers from seeking revenge against the depredating Indians (education), and to cause the Indian to refrain from committing depredations (civilization). The claims were processed through the "Civilization and Education" Division of the Office of the Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs.¹¹

The law worked both ways. If an Indian suffered property losses from an American citizen, then he could petition Congress to reimburse him for his loss, and compensation to

the grieving Indian would come from the U.S. Treasury Department.

The requirements for filing a successful claim for an Indian depredation included several components. First, the raiding Indians had to be in amity with the United States, which usually meant the Indian tribe and the United States had agreed to an existing treaty. Sworn affidavits had to be signed by victims of Indian assaults, including at least two witnesses who could testify to the merits of the losses and the truthful character of the victim. The Indian tribe responsible for the depredation had to be identified, and there had to be an investigation at which time the claim was presented to the tribe and the tribe's response was received. If the depredation occurred on Indian land, the claimant had to produce evidence showing his permission

to be in Indian Territory.¹² Only occasionally does the offending tribe admit to committing any depredations. A special agent with the Department of the Interior would then investigate the claim as to the validity of the losses and the amounts of the goods stolen or destroyed. Often the agent would not allow the entire dollar amount detailed in the claim to be accepted.

One requirement for a successful claim was that it had to be filed within three years of the loss; otherwise the claim was barred from compensation. However, so many claims were denied on this statute of limitation that Congress in 1885 removed the three-year time clause, effective back to 1873. Thus, several thousand claims were re-filed in the late 1880s.¹³ With this amended act of 1885, all Indian depredation cases were transferred from the Department of Interior to the United States Court of Claims for final adjudication. But it was the following requirement that today makes such claims a rich and useful research haven:

That all claims shall be presented to the court by petition setting forth in ordinary and concise language, without unnecessary repetition, the facts upon which such claims are based, the persons, classes of persons, tribe or tribes, or band of Indians by whom the alleged illegal acts were committed, as near as may be, the property lost or destroyed, and the value thereof, and any other facts connected with the transactions and material to the proper adjudication of the case involved. The petition shall be verified by the affidavit of the claimant, his agent, administrator, or

attorney, and shall be filed with the clerk of said court. It shall set forth the full name and residence of the claimant, the damages sought to be recovered, praying the court for a judgment upon the facts and the law.¹⁴

Philip Gomer filed a claim for the loss of six horses and a colt on June 11, 1864. Gomer was apparently the nearest neighbor to where the Hungates lived. While Gomer himself testified that he was away in Denver at the time of the raid, like Isaac Van Wormer, he had a ranch hand that lived at the ranch and took care of his stock. Gomer's main business was ranching and freighting. Mr. Ferguson and his wife, Catherine Calander Ferguson, were living at the ranch when the Indians raided it on June 11. Ferguson himself was away and Catherine was left alone. On March 26, 1866 Philip Gomer testified that the raiding Indians were Arapahoe and Cheyenne and "murdered one entire family, known as the Hungate family, driving off his stock and a large amount for Mr. Van Wormer and others...."¹⁵

Catherine Ferguson testified on March 9, 1865 that she was alone in the home when at about five o'clock in the afternoon a lone Arapahoe Indian approached her house and took the horses picketed and grazing nearby. Mrs. Ferguson quickly mounted another horse and followed the Indian for nearly two miles in an attempt to recover the horses. The Indian, though armed, did not try to molest her but rather kept the horses just out of her reach. Mrs. Ferguson finally went to a neighbor's house and enlisted a man to assist her in trying to recover the horses. By this time though,

the Indian was able to escape with the horses. She said, however, that it was subsequent to this that she learned of the deaths of the Hungates.¹⁶

The depredation claim of John Sydney and Junius F. Brown, brothers in the freighting business, contains dozens of pages of affidavits, of which more than 75 pages are relevant to the Indian raids occurring at the time of the Hungate murders. Included in the affidavits is one by Thomas J. Darrah, one of the freighters who wrote the report to Captain Maynard on June 13. Darrah was also in the freighting business, and had apparently suffered his loss of mules shortly before Brown, probably on June 9. It is Darrah who reports to John Brown, who was in Denver at the time, of the loss, probably on June 10, of several mules from Brown's freighting excursion to Denver.¹⁷ Junius Brown had overseen the loading of six wagons in Atchison, Kansas in early May. Younger brother John Brown was awaiting the goods to be delivered to Denver, 640 miles from Atchison. The Browns would usually average two trips per season, each round trip taking about 60 days. This was the first one for 1864. They had been in the freighting business since 1862.

The freighting excursion included two wagons pulled by six mules each, and an additional four wagons, each pulled by four mules, for a total of 26 mules and two horses. Six men drove the six wagons, with a seventh man serving as wagon master.¹⁸ When the party was just 13 miles from Denver, they had stopped on Coal Creek near a watering hole, to prepare dinner (the noon meal) and rest the

animals. They unharnessed the animals, placing them about 75 feet from the wagons, where the mules then began to roll on the ground. It was about twelve o'clock in the afternoon, June 10. The men were in the process of making a fire to cook their meal. Wagon master John Hammer, 22 at the time, testified what happened next: "At first I saw two Indians come dashing by the mules, flirting buffalo robes. It frightened the mules and drove them away. They were unharnessed, prepared to graze, and rolling near the wagons in the road."¹⁹

Only two or three of the seven men were armed with pistols, none having a rifle.²⁰ In the moment of the surprise and the boldness of the raid, the freighters had forgotten to use their pistols to prevent the theft. All 28 animals bolted. The Indians had placed themselves between the rolling animals and the freighters. When this happened Hammer ran to the nearest mule, but "just as I made an effort to catch a mule one of the Indians threw a dart fastened to a lariat rope, and in dodging it I fell to the ground and the mule got away from me."²¹ There was a seventh wagon with the wagon train, a lone man who met the freighters on the road about six days earlier and asked if he could join the train. His four mules, however, were wild, and when the other mules were unhitched the four wild mules had to be tied to the lone man's wagon, or else they would have run away.

Quickly Hammer asked to use the wild mules to pursue the fleeing Indians. The owner refused. Taking matters into his own hands, Hammer then informed the unidentified man that he was going to use the mules anyway, and he would be reimbursed later if the

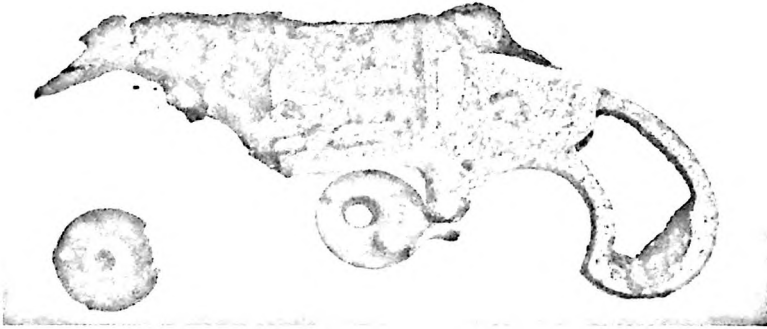
mules were hurt or lost. However, none of the mules had ever been ridden and only two could be successfully mounted. Hammer and another man, Joseph Ferguson, then went in pursuit of the scattering stock, while the man who initially refused the use of his mules, "broke down and cried like a child..."²²

The two men followed the Indians several miles, until dusk, when other Indians began to bring their stolen stock and join the Indians Hammer and Ferguson were pursuing. By this time eight other Indians had joined with the other two. All of the Indians were armed with rifles. During the chase and before the other Indians joined the two being pursued, the Indians "would drive the herd as fast as possible, and flirt robes at our wild mules to head us off when ever they could get a chance." When the herd would scatter the two pursuing freighters were able to "cut out those that were the slowest and fell behind."²³ In this way Hammer and Ferguson were able to recover eight mules before ending the recovery effort. With these recaptured mules they then returned to where the raid began. The next day John Brown, with his friend Corbin, arrived to where the wagons had been stopped prior to the raid. The eight mules were then used to slowly bring the wagons into Denver while Brown and Corbin went in the direction the Indians ran with the stolen stock, hoping to still recover them.²⁴ John Brown testified what happened then: There was a camp of U. S. soldiers camped on what was known as Cherry Creek, Capt. Maynard in command. The above Darrah, had before informing us of our loss, carried an order from

Capt. Maynard to have those troops [under command of Lt. Dunn] to go over to Running Creek, to march from Cherry Creek to Coal Creek and back in 48 hours. We went to Box Alder [sic] and traveled about 14 miles up Running Creek, where we found the soldiers in camp eating dinner, and was also joined by Thomas J. Darrah. After dinner the soldiers saddled up and traveled up the creek. we in company with them. A few miles up the creek we found Hungate's cabin pillaged and a note pinned on the cabin, signed by a party from Gomer's Mill, containing the information that Mrs. Hungate and two children were killed; a short distance from the cabin we left the soldiers as they had to return. We then started from the station at Box Alder [sic] and while on the way, we found Hungate killed and scalped. *We made a report of it in town* and the bodies of the Hungates' were brought into where is now Denver City, and buried.²⁵

Thomas Darrah's affidavit in Brown's depredation file supports Brown's testimony. After reporting his loss of stock and subsequently delivering a message from Captain Maynard to Lieutenant Dunn of the 1st Colorado Volunteers, Darrah stayed with the soldiers until the next day:

When we camped for dinner we were joined by J. S. Brown. In company with the soldiers we followed the trail of the Indians until we came to a cabin which had been pillaged on which we found a note signed by a party from Gomer's Mill, stating that Mrs. Hungate and her two children had been killed and were at the mill. We skirted around in the timber looking for Mr. Hungate but did not



Pistol recovered from the Hungate homesite

find him. At a short distance from the Hungate cabin we left the soldiers as they had orders to return. We then started for the station at Box Elder and on the way found Mr. Hungate killed and scalped. We reported it to the stage station *and at Denver* and the bodies were brought in to where the City of Denver now is and buried.²⁶

Darrah's statement is significant for a couple reasons. First, he indicates that the trail of stolen stock led them to the Hungate place, where they then learned of the murders. This implies that the same Indians they had been chasing were involved with the Indians that had killed the Hungates, with their murders occurring subsequent to the two freighters' pillaged stock. Second, Darrah identifies himself and Brown as then reporting the deaths in Denver, thus making them the "messenger" to Governor Evans noted in Evan's June 12 addendum to his earlier letter to Chivington of June 11.²⁷ This is further supported by yet another report from Governor Evans.

The Brown depredation file

includes this report of Evans, dated June 15, and addressed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The report makes it clear that the "messenger" reporting the Hungate murders was plural:

The last company left Denver for the Arkansas River on the 11th inst., and camped 15 miles up Cherry Creek under orders to join the regiment east of Fort Lyon. *On that night three messengers came in* from the settlements some ten or twenty miles east of this place, on Box Elder Creek, and reported an extensive stampede of stock, including some 50 or 60 head of mules, and the murder of an entire family, a man named Hungate, his wife and two children, and the *burning* of their house. The scalped and horribly mangled bodies were brought to the city yesterday.²⁸

The Hungates, then, were in all probability killed by the same party of Indians who had been involved in stealing stock in and around the area between Box Elder/Running Creek and Coal Creek for at least two days before the murders. How big was this party?

Elsewhere in the Brown depredation file it is noted that a total of 113 mules were stolen between June 9 and June 11.²⁹ In Evans' report dated June 11 he there notes 49 mules lost to Brown, Darrah and "others." We can assume that Darrah's loss is similar in numbers to Brown, but this still leaves unaccounted about fifty mules and horses taken from other persons, in order to account for the final number of 113 stock stolen. Nathan Hungate and Isaac Van Wormer lost some, but probably much less than what is still unaccounted for. So what does this signify regarding the Indians involved in this large raid that culminates in the murders at the Hungate home? The raiding warriors had to be a large party of Indians in order to be able to divide and commit their various sorties. It must have been at least twenty Indians at the fewest, and probably more, perhaps as many as fifty or sixty. It wasn't a haphazard raid conducted by a small number of Indians. It was a large raid, and large raids take planning and careful execution in order to achieve success.³⁰

While all of this information in the depredation files provides some answers about the Hungate massacre and gives us a more complete understanding of the number of Indians involved and what was happening at the time when the Hungates were killed, still unanswered is the question *why* they were murdered. Why were they killed when it is obvious from the testimony of Hammer in the Brown depredation claim and Catherine Ferguson in the Gomer claim that the Indians doing the raiding, while armed, were not interested in molesting

people? There had been no killing while the Indians were depredating for at least two days until the Hungates were murdered. So why were *they* killed?

Two possible answers emerge from the known documents. One is that Robert North correctly reported that the Indians were about to start a major war against encroaching white people residing in Colorado Territory and surrounding states and territories and thus the Hungates were the first in this new war. The other is that a vengeful Arapahoe, Notnee, retaliates against Van Wormer by killing his ranch hand and family. Neither of these hypotheses, however, holds water. To the first, if a general war were being commenced, then the armed Indians would have at least tried to kill those people encountered in stealing stock before and after the Hungates were killed. But in fact the opposite occurs. Thus North, even if reporting the truth of what he observed the preceding fall, is wrong, at least, for June 9-11, 1864. What happens later that summer along the immigration and freighting trails is another matter. If there is a direct road to Sand Creek from earlier events in 1864, it does not originate in the Hungate murders. Rather, it germinates from the many murders that occur on and near the Santa Fe and Platte River trails throughout the summer but *after* the Hungates were killed. The Hungate murders fuel the thirst for retaliation, but the Indian war of 1864 is really about the subsequent raids along the trails of immigration and freighting.

A new scenario buries the vengeful Notnee hypothesis. This

proposal is more consistent with what has been recently discovered at the Hungate homestead site via the use of metal detectors. This new evidence points to the hypothesis that the Hungates were burned out of their home *before* they were murdered, and only after they had made a staunch defense using as many as five weapons that were later burned because they were left inside the burned-out home. Had the Hungates been killed before the house was burned these weapons would have been stolen by the Indians before torching the house. In addition to the weapons, many personal items recently discovered at the original home site also would have been stolen rather than left and destroyed by fire. And if the house was burned during a siege, it is more likely that Nathan was present and not the standard view, which claims that he saw his house burning from a distance and died coming to his family's assistance. Further, a more likely motive for burning the house and then killing the Hungates would be that Nathan probably shot and killed one of the raiding Indians when the Indians first raided the ranch, either late in the day of June 10, or early in the morning of June 11.

It makes more sense that the Indians' original intent with the Hungates, as it was with all of the other thefts during this time, was simply to steal stock. If it was to start a general Indian war, then why wasn't Mrs. Ferguson killed, or the freighters associated with Brown and Darrah? And if there were 113 mules and horses stolen during this time, why weren't the other victims of theft also killed? Something had to have gone bad during

the raid at the Hungate place that would motivate such retaliation. And in order to take the time to burn the family out of its home, there must have been several Indians present, or else Nathan would have in all probability been able to keep them from torching the house. This fact is what makes the vengeful Notnee hypothesis unreasonable.

Since the Indians had stolen the stock from Brown's freighting outfit and then left in the direction of the Hungate home on the afternoon of June 10, then perhaps it all began in the early evening on that day when Nathan might have killed one of the marauding Indians. That would make their retaliation to begin in the early hours of June 11, the house finally being burned down a few hours later, and then the family killed when its only choices were to burn to death in the house or flee in terror from the engulfing flames.

This scenario fits well with their deaths being discovered in the afternoon of June 11 and Governor Evans learning of it from the freighters in the late evening that day. Further, this understanding makes more sense than the idea that a pouting and angry Notnee, with perhaps three other Indians, chastised by having to give back some stock he earlier stole, would then return and viciously kill two baby girls, violate and murder Mrs. Hungate, and surprise and kill a worried Nathan coming to check on the welfare of his family, all to "get even with Van Wormer." That is simply a senseless scenario, as is Neva's claim that Medicine Man and three other Indians killed the Hungates. No, it took more than four Indians to kill the Hungate

family, and the best motive for that would be to avenge another Indian's death, an Indian likely killed by Nathan as the warrior attempted to steal stock from near the home.

This does not mean that Nontee was therefore not involved with the Hungate tragedy. It is possible that he was with the larger party that killed the young family. It is even possible that Notnee was with the small raiding party when Nathan surprised and killed or seriously wounded one of the Indians. For that matter, perhaps Medicine Man was also involved. But what is not plausible is that the motive for killing Nathan and his family was anger at being chastised for an earlier theft at the Van Wormer site. Equally implausible is that it was only a few Indians who were responsible for the murders.

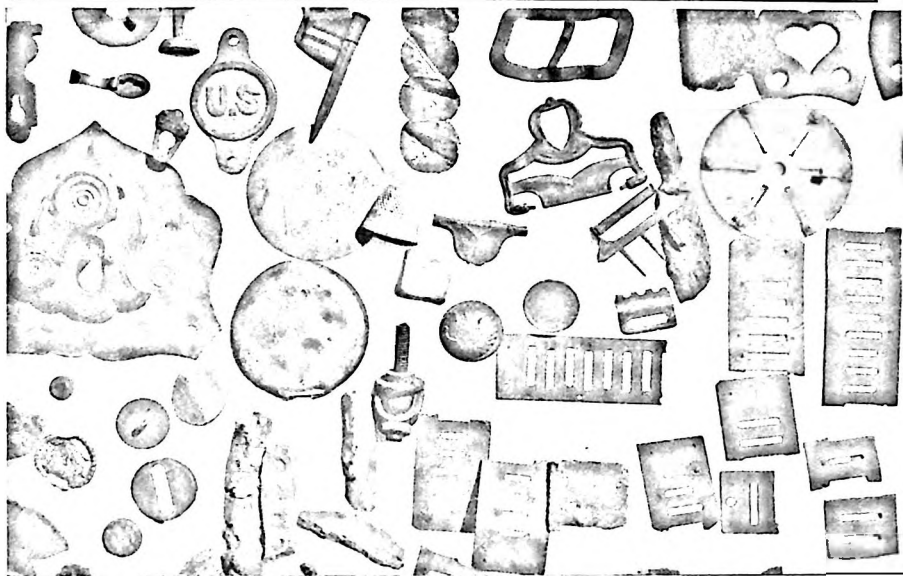
It is a fair question to ask what evidence is available to support this new hypothesis. Two sources are found in the past and one in the present. One is another newspaper account in *The Denver Commonwealth* of June 15. This article is infrequently mentioned in contemporary writings on the Hungate massacre. What is important in this article is that it places Nathan *at the home* when the Indians attacked his family. That it is recorded just three days after the murders adds credence to its reliability. After reporting on the murders, the article continues:

Since writing the above we have had a conversation with Mr. Follett, who has just arrived from Running Creek. Mr. F. is one of the party that went after the bodies. He says that the woman was found about four hundred yards from the house, with the

children both in her arms—one a babe three or four months, and one, a little girl about two years old. The bowels of the younger one were ripped open, and its entrails scattered by the sides of the mother and children. The body of the man was found about two miles from the house, but *his whip was found at the [burned] ruins, and some other marks seemed to indicate that he had first been attacked there, and finding himself overpowered, had made an effort to escape.*³¹

It is not clear what the "other marks" were that suggested Nathan was present at the home when the attack began, but what is important is the fact that it was believed at the time that he was present and tried to escape. The second primary source evidence is simply the knowledge how Indians retaliated when one of their tribe was killed. Brevet Major General C. C. Augur, commanding the military division of the Department of the Platte, noted in an order he sent that it "is a well known rule with Indians that when injured, they retaliate upon the first favorable occasion that offers."³² This first favorable retaliation often involved innocent people, but in the case of the Hungate family, Nathan in all likelihood provided the Indians their desire for retaliation by shooting one of the Indians raiding his ranch. It is already known from the other depredations that the raiding Indians were split up into small numbers, so it was probably just a few Indians who approached his ranch for the purpose of stealing stock. Nathan, seeing the theft, probably shot one of the Indians.

This is a much more plausible motive for what had to be



Personal items become artifacts recovered from the Hungate home

several Indians coming back to the ranch and taking the necessary means and time to set Nathan's house on fire. They would have carefully assaulted the house from all sides, in order to get close enough to torch it. Three or four Indians couldn't have accomplished this with any success, as Nathan could have defended his family as long as he had ammunition. No, it had to be a larger party, and such a party needs a motive to retaliate. Notnee's motive of anger at Van Wormer is not enough, nor were he and two or three other Indians capable of flaming the house while the family was inside defending itself. Recovered artifacts from the Hungate home site support this new interpretation. Indeed, it is the artifacts themselves that produced this interpretation.

In the spring of 2001, no

less than twelve trips were made to the Hungate massacre site for the purpose of exploring what artifacts might be uncovered via metal-detecting.³³ What was recovered is remarkable. What is no doubt still in the ground must be equally significant. It clearly shows that a siege occurred at the Hungate place. The following items were recovered: **GLASS:** 326 pieces, representing bottles, windows and other glass objects. Sizes ranged from as small as a dime to as large as a palm of a hand. Five bottle stems and one bottle plug also found.

CERAMICS: 190 pieces, mostly white, representing dishes and pottery. Many pieces have evidence of lettering. Pieces varied in size from a dime to the hand of a child.

IRON RINGS: 24, mostly saddle tack, seven buckles, probably horse tack.

NAILS: 204, varying from one inch to five inches, all square nails of the era of 1864.³⁴

ANIMAL SHOES: 18 horse shoes, four mule shoes, three ox shoes.

FAMILY PERSONAL ITEMS: cast iron cooking lid; 20 pounds of various metal, most from a heating stove; 25 different harmonica reeds and one metal pitch pipe; silver back of a pocket watch; silver thimble, brass thimble; three brass boot heels; four suspender catches; three brass buttons for a woman's dress, two glass buttons, one ivory button; one spoon, one fork, one handle to a knife; several pieces of lanterns, from wicks to control knobs; one clothing iron; numerous pieces of lead for making bullets, many melted; an 1862 and 1863 Indian head penny, both with minimal circulation wear, one burned; one four-inch-square brass lock for wooden chest; twenty pounds of unidentified metal; one brass U.S. Major General Officer Staff button; one U.S. cavalry bridle buckle.

BULLETS: 18 unidentified because melted from fire; seven round lead pistol and rifle balls; two fired .44 caliber Henry; one fired .56 caliber Spencer; three unidentified fired .44 caliber; one impacted fired, unidentified .50 caliber; four unidentified fired .32 caliber.

SHELL CASINGS: 21 Henry .44 caliber casings; 20 Spencer casings (for Warner Carbine: see Weapons); nine nipple shaped .32 caliber pistol casings; five small Henry .44 caliber casings; eight .32 caliber casings; ten various other 1864 dated metallic casings.

WEAPONS: Brass firing plate of 1864 Warner Carbine, exploded while being fired, and burned; unidentified .32

caliber five-shot pistol, unloaded and burned in fire; burned barrel of pepper box pistol, probably .22 caliber; brass plate covering trigger for 1862 Colt pistol, Serial Number 27644 (1862); trigger mechanism for unidentified rifle; brass cover for muzzle loading powder case.³⁵

In addition to the excavations conducted in the spring of 2001, Robert L. Akerley in 1985 made three excursions to metal detect the Hungate massacre site. His finds corroborate the above noted finds, including, for example, a burned silver thimble, several harmonica reeds, buckles, horse and mule shoes, nails, stove fragments, several .44 caliber Henry and .56 caliber Spencer casings, impacted lead bullets, ceramic pieces and civilian buttons. These items were all donated to the Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society, as was his thirty-one-page report.³⁶

The most impressive artifacts recovered have to be the weapons, bullets and shell casings. The fact that these were burned in a fire supports the hypothesis that there was a siege at the Hungate place. The most impressive evidence for this has to be the breach of a Warner Carbine, one of the rarest carbines from the Old West. The carbine had exploded when it was fired. The best explanation for this is that it was fired repeatedly until it became so hot that the barrel separated from the stock and when fired the last time the inability for the bullet to pass into the barrel caused it to explode. The many recovered Spencer shell casings support this hypothesis.

What was not recovered at the site was the Henry rifle. The many

Henry shell casings support the hypothesis that this rifle was also fired many times. There is a plausible explanation why this rifle was not recovered. When the flames of the burning house finally forced the family to flee, this was the weapon Nathan probably carried when he left the inferno. Nathan's most effective weapon had exploded during the siege (the Warner carbine), and his most effective weapon remaining would have been the Henry. A Henry rifle in 1864 represented what would become one of the most popular rifles of that era. It was a repeating rifle, capable of maintaining sixteen rounds before being reloaded. The likelihood is this is the weapon Nathan took with him when he fled the burning house. Perhaps his hope was to make it to the stage station on Running Creek. That is the direction he fled, anyway. Probably his murdered family was found 100 yards from the burned house in this same direction Nathan fled, i.e., toward Box Elder Creek. They may have traveled that far before his family fell victim to their fate. Nathan knew the Indians would kill him. Perhaps he hoped they wouldn't do that to his wife and young daughters.³⁷ Regardless of his thinking, he was able to make it more than a mile before he ran out of ammunition and then fell victim to his murder.

Nathan had only been in Colorado about two months before he was killed, having come from Nebraska to work for Van Wormer in the spring of 1864.³⁸ He came well armed, but probably without much understanding of how to deal with Indians. The biggest mistake he ever made in his life, a mistake that his whole family consequently suffered from, was to take

the law into his own hands, so to speak, and shoot an Indian, whose purpose for encountering the Hungate family was not murder, but theft. By killing, or gravely wounding this unknown Indian, Nathan gave the raiding Indians their motive for retaliation. He and his family paid the ultimate price in their tragic, untimely and horrendous deaths. After their bodies were removed to Denver, they were placed in pine boxes and buried in what is today Cheesman Park. In 1892 they were removed from there to their final resting place at Fairmont Cemetery.

The Dietemann Murders

Little new information regarding the Dietemann massacre has emerged, than what was originally in the newspaper accounts of the time. Unlike the Hungate massacre, modern archeology does not provide us with any new interpretation. However, the depredation files of Apollinaris Dietemann and Anton Schindelholz provide much information that helps to give a more complete story of this sad massacre. It corrects errors found in the newspapers and later pioneer reminiscences.

The first report of Henrietta Dietemann and her young son, John, comes from the *Rocky Mountain News*, August 26, 1868. It doesn't report their deaths, but instead says they were captured, and places the emphasis of the raid upon the settlements in and around present-day Kiowa. The article notes that about forty settlers lived in the area, half of them at the "basin," which is where the creek ran. The same newspaper has a commentary about the

reported raid, and notes that it involves the same Indians who had two weeks earlier made a devastating and murderous raid along the Saline and Solomon Rivers in the vicinity of present-day Beloit and Lincoln, Kansas. It concludes that these acts point to "the serious intentions of the Arapahoes and Cheyennes to make war." Those who believed this were entirely correct in their fears, and it wasn't going to end until the action at Summit Springs eleven months later.³⁹

The August 27 edition of the *Rocky Mountain News* corrects the earlier misinformation of the capture of Henrietta and little John:

Last evening about seven o'clock a team came into town bringing the remains of Henrietta Dietermann [sic] and her boy, the persons spoken of yesterday as having been captured, the latter about five years old, killed by the Indians on Comanche Creek, Tuesday. The boy had been shot several times and his neck broken, the woman had been shot through the body, outraged, stabbed, and scalped. Decomposition had set in and the sight was horrible. They were killed near their house, Mr. Dietermann [sic] being absent. A man who was about to marry Mr. Dietermann's sister, his said sister, and a daughter of the Dietermanns considerably older than the murdered boy, were at the house at the time, but escaped. About thirty Indians came after the man who brought away the bodies Tuesday night, but he succeeded in getting into the station safely. The remains were taken to an empty house in front of the Tremont House, where for an hour or two people came and viewed them.⁴⁰

After the bodies were

brought to Denver, a Coroner's Inquest was soon held for the murdered thirty-one-year-old mother and five year old son. John Benkleman was one of the jurors. The newspaper reported his testimony. He first recounts a harrowing encounter with Indians near his cabin where three other persons were living. His cabin was near the Dietermann home. One of the men was rounding up stock about a quarter of a mile away when the Indians came upon him and tried to take the horses he had rounded up. The man was not armed and immediately raced back toward the cabin. Other Indians came out of a draw and tried to ambush him while he was retreating to the safety of the other men inside the cabin. The other men, hearing the gunfire from the Indians, came out and relieved him. Still, the Indians were able to steal about 25 horses. Shortly after this incident they were told of the Dietermann killings and asked to come to Kiowa Station and help with a search party to retrieve the bodies. They soon joined the gathering men. Benkleman testifies what happened next:

... so we joined in with two men who were present when the deceased were captured. They guided us to the place where it occurred, and we found the little boy about thirty yards from the place where first captured, dead. After making further search, we found the mother about fifteen yards from where the boy lay. We then sent four men after a wagon, to convey the bodies to Denver, where they now lay. These Indians are supposed to be Arapahoes. The deceased were both about four miles from their home, in company with some others, trying to



Headstone reads: Henrietta Dietemann-killed by Indians-Aug. 25, 1868-Aged 31 years-Also her child John-aged 5 years. Located at the Mount Olivet Cemetery in Golden, Colorado

make their escape to a neighbor's house, but from fatigue from traveling, were a little behind their comrades, when they were cut off by some Indians concealed under a bank. When we found the said bodies, they were horribly mutilated; the mother was shot (by a gun or pistol) in the front of the right shoulder, her face badly bruised as though she had been beaten with a revolver or club, bruises were also found nearly all over her body; she was also scalped. I think she must have been dead about five hours; she had, also, from evident signs, been ravished, which was the conclusion of myself, and those that were with me, signs of great struggle

were also visible where she lay.⁴¹

W. F. McClelland was sworn in as the surgeon for the Coroner's Inquest. He testified that the cause of death of the mother was a gunshot and other violent bruises. The boy had five arrow shots and many bruises. He concluded: "I give as my opinion professionally that the mother is pregnant about seven months gone."⁴²

How many Indians were involved in the raid that killed Henrietta and little John? One newspaper report said as many as 150 northern Arapahoes were the culprits. They were armed with weapons recently given them at Fort Laramie, and in addition

carried papers signed at Fort Laramie attesting to their peacefulness.⁴³ While this may be an accurate estimate of the total number of Indians entering Colorado Territory for the purpose of looting and murdering settlers, it was a much smaller party of Indians that raided in and near Comanche Creek.⁴⁴

Besides the newspaper accounts already noted, very little has been published regarding the Dietemann massacre, and few, if any accounts, note Henrietta's pregnancy. Indeed, the death of Henrietta and her son receive the scantiest attention when they are mentioned. Probably the earliest account comes from Irving Howbert, which was published in two books written in 1914 and 1925: On August 27 [sic], 1868, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes killed Mrs. Henrietta Dieterman [sic] and her five-year-old son on Comanche Creek, about twenty-five miles northeast of Colorado City, in a peculiarly atrocious manner. The Dieterman family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Dieterman, a daughter about twelve-years-old [sic], a son of five years, a sister of Mr. Dieterman's, and a hired man. The sister was soon to marry the hired man, and he and Mr. Dieterman had gone to Denver to buy furniture for the new household, leaving a German farmhand temporarily in charge. On the morning of the 27th [sic], something happened to alarm Mrs. Dieterman. She evidently believed the Indians were near, for she hurriedly started with her sister-in-law and the two children for a neighbor's house some distance away. After having gone a few hundred yards she remembered that she had left a considerable sum of money in the house, and

with her small son went back to get it. They reached the house, got the money, and started away again, but had gone only a short distance when they were overtaken by the Indians, who at once shot and killed both of them. The savages shot the boy repeatedly and finally broke his neck. The mother was shot through the body, stabbed, and scalped, and the bodies of both were dreadfully mutilated. Those who afterwards saw the victims said that it was one of the most horrible sights they had ever looked upon. Meanwhile, the sister-in-law and daughter ran to where the German was working in the field near by. He stood the Indians off by pointing the handle of his hoe at them, making them believe it was a gun.⁴⁵

Fortunately, the depredation files housed in the National Archives gives a more complete and accurate story of the Dietemann massacre. From these documents (the relevant affidavits are listed below), this story emerges: Two days before the raid, Henrietta's husband Apollinaris, and long-time business partner Anton Schindelholz, journey to Denver. Their purpose was two-fold, to procure furniture and supplies, and to obtain a marriage license so Anton can marry Apollinaris' sister, Maria Dietemann. Maria had only been in America for a few weeks. Her marriage might well have been arranged before she came over from Alsace, France.

While Anton and Apollinaris were returning from Denver, on the morning of August 25, Indians came upon the Dietemann premises along Comanche Creek. There were two ranch hands then living and working for Apollinaris and Anton.

Indeed, a second house had just been built next to the Dietemann house. This was for Anton and Maria once they were married. One of the ranch hands came running to the Dietemann house with Indians closely pursuing him. He had encountered them a short distance from the house when he went to round up some horses. The Indians boldly entered the area near the house and stole the horses.

Henrietta and the others felt it best to flee the house and travel down the creek and away from Kiowa to a neighbor's house, the opposite direction from which they earlier saw the Indians and where they felt they would find better protection. Before leaving the house, Henrietta took her valuables, which included several thousand dollars, about \$400.00 of it in gold pieces, which she hid in a money belt. The rest was rolled up and hidden inside the clothing over her bosom. When they had gone between three and four miles, one of the ranch hands saw some horses in a nearby draw and thought it wise to take one and ride over to the Kiowa settlement and report the raiding Indians. Before he got to the horses, however, several Indians suddenly came out of the draw, yelling and firing their weapons.

Henrietta was a little behind the rest of the party and thus fell into the Indians' hands. They quickly shot her. Maria and one of the men were protecting the two Dietemann children. The daughter, Henrietta, was barely three years old. She was carried on the back of the ranch hand, Benedict Marki. John, five years old, was apparently holding the hands of both Benedict and Maria.

When little John saw his mother fall to the Indians, he yanked his hands free and ran back to her. The Indians quickly killed him, first by grabbing him and violently breaking his neck and then shooting him with arrows. In the meantime, while this was happening, the two ranch hands and Maria and little Henrietta, turned from the south to the northwest and fled about six miles to the protective settlement on Kiowa Creek, called in 1868 Middle Kiowa.

Anton and Apollinaris soon heard of the murders at the Running Creek stage station. Quickly they unhitched their wagons, and raced their horses into Kiowa, where they met with the surviving members of the deadly raid. A party of about a dozen men then went in search of Henrietta and John. They soon found them where they had been killed. Apollinaris there learned that his money was missing. This money had been for payment of the sale of his business on Plum Creek in present-day Castle Rock, where he ran a hotel and sold provisions and stock to travelers on the road to Denver. Both his children were born there, John sometime between the fall of 1862 and summer of 1863 and Henrietta on July 18, 1865. He had moved to Comanche Creek after selling his business and property and most of his stock, just a few short weeks before his wife and son were murdered.

John Benkleman, the man testifying at the Coroner's Inquest of August 27, also lost stock at the time the Dietemanns were murdered, as did seven other settlers.⁴⁶ He testifies that he was part of the party that discovered the dead mother and son, and then

accompanied them in the wagon that brought them to Denver. His testimony matches pretty well with what was reported in the *Rocky Mountain News* August 28. He notes that after the years 1864 and 1865 there really had not been any Indian trouble until the raid when Mrs. Dietemann was killed. His principle residence at the time was a suburb of Central City called Bortonburg, where he was a butcher. But he had a ranch near Kiowa and was visiting his three employees there on August 25 when the Indians first struck near his cabin, rustling several horses.

The raid began about nine o'clock in the morning. As soon as the theft occurred, one of his ranch hands, Thomas Morrison, quickly mounted another horse and went after the Indians. Armed with a rifle and revolver, he took with him two Shepherd dogs and succeeded in retrieving most of the horses back from the Indians. But when the men then went over to the protection of the settlements at Kiowa the Indians returned, broke the corral and again stole the horses.

Once Benkleman and the other men reached the settlers in Kiowa, only about eleven horses could be mustered for the search party to find the Dietemann dead. Benkleman was a close neighbor of the Dietemanns. He noted that Henrietta was killed in the afternoon and her body found about six or seven o'clock that evening.⁴⁷

In 1892 Maria Schindelholz was no longer married to Anton. She was now Mrs. George Wortman, having married him in Boulder on May 21, 1885. From her testimony it is clear the Indians first appear at the Dietemann home before

attacking at the Benkleman ranch. Her memory remained vivid: During the summer of 1868 my brother and Mr. A. Schindelholz to whom I was going to be married, built a couple houses for both families to live in, on Comanche Creek, near together, and when they were completed my brother and Mr. Schindelholz went to Denver to get what was necessary to furnish the houses, to get a marriage license, and they left on Sunday morning, the 23rd of August, 1868, for Denver, and left us at home, his wife, two children, and two hired men, and myself, with the intention to come home about Tuesday evening. On Tuesday morning, about eight o'clock, the 25th of August, 1868, about twenty-five or thirty Indians came right near our house, with a herd of horses that they had stole all over the country; and one of the Indians came up to the house and took two horses that were picketed in front of the house, one of which was my brother's and the other A. Schindelholz's, and they took all the horses, about seven or eight in number, that were grazing near the house; and two mares and a colt, belonging to my brother, were taken at that time. I saw the Indians drive them off. I know that they were Indians, and the people told me that they were Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians. After they had the horses away we got frightened and thought it wasn't safe there, and my brother's wife wanted to go away to some neighbors, and those neighbors were ten miles away; so we took all the valuables along that we had in the house that we could carry, and my brother's wife and two children and the two hired men, Benedict Marki and Mr. Lawrence, and myself, and started

up the creek to the nearest neighbor, which was about ten miles. It must have been about nine o'clock when we started; but as we was about half the way we seen five or six horses grazing in a gulch. Before leaving the house we took all valuables along, which was of course this money, and I seen my brother's wife take the money along, and she counted it before going, and she put the paper money in her bosom, and she put the gold in a buckskin belt. She counted it before putting it on her person, and she said it was between seven and eight thousand dollars. She kept the money in the house, as they expected to go down to Arkansas to buy some cattle after our marriage, so I was positive that she had the money with her. She took the money along. I saw her put the money on her person before we left the house. She took her gold watch and chain, worth about \$100.00. Then all of us started up the creek and when we got about five miles we seen five or six horses grazing in a gulch, and one of the hired men (Lawrence) wanted to go and take one of those horses and ride over to Kiowa to tell the people we were in trouble, but as we neared the horses some Indians came out of the ravine and shot at us, about five or six in number; and they commenced to shoot at us and we commenced to run, and my brother's wife wasn't able to run, and the Indians overtook her and shot her, killed her and scalped her, and the little boy I had hold of with my hand, but he run toward his mother, as he thought he was safer with her, and they took a hold of him and killed him. She had the money on her person when the Indians killed her, and no one disturbed her on

the road going except the Indians. The balance of us turned our course and went to Middle Kiowa. All the white people in that neighborhood was together there at Middle Kiowa, as it was safer, and we stayed there until all the trouble was over and we knew that the Indians were gone. I saw them shoot my sister-in-law with a revolver, in the breast, and they shot the boy with arrows, and one of them took a hold of him and I saw them break his neck. I didn't know that his neck was broken at the time, but I saw them take a hold of him and twist his neck. This occurred about ten o'clock. After we was at Middle Kiowa about two or three hours, my brother came from Denver and A. Schindelholz, also, and about a half a dozen of the men went to hunt the remains, which they found at the same place we left them, and the next day they fetched them into Denver to be buried. I saw the remains when they were brought in to Middle Kiowa.⁴⁸

Benedick Marki, Mr.

Dietemann's principle ranch hand, also had a vivid memory of that fateful day in August 1868:

I was an ordinary hired man. The household goods were all destroyed and the dresses of the women were all torn up and distributed in the yard, and the dishes broken in the house, and the tables and chairs were thrown over and knocked to pieces, some of the bedding was destroyed; in fact, everything in the house was destroyed. All that we ever took from the house after the Indians were there that was of any value was a little bedding of but little value. A few days before the 25th of August, Mr. Dietemann and Mr. Schindelholz

went to Denver and left his wife, two children, his sister, and two hired hands, of which I was one. On the morning of the 25th of August I went about two miles north of where Dietemann lived, which was on Comanche Creek in Elbert County, about 45 miles, or a little more east and south of Denver, after three head of horses belonging to Dietemann, and I got home with them and picketed one, the Indians were chasing me, and I didn't have time to picket the other two horses; they cut the one loose that I had picked and drove it with the others off, and I never saw them afterward.... Immediately after the horses were taken, the family packed up what thing they could carry and we walked up the creek about four miles, and the Indians came after us. There was another party of Indians there in a washout. They came for us, and Mrs. Dietemann was a little behind. I was carrying the little girl on my back, and I had the little boy by the hand. I walked up the hill, and when I looked back the Indians had grabbed Mrs. Dietemann, and with a pistol shot her through the breast. The little boy was with me, and he wanted to run back to his mama, and he went back to her and got killed. From there we went on about six miles to Kiowa: Mr. Dietemann's sister, Mr. Lawrence, and myself, and the little girl went on to Kiowa. There we met the people of the whole neighborhood, were there, huddled together, on account of the Indians, and we told them what happened, that the Indians killed Mrs. Dietemann and her son. We organized a party at Kiowa and went back to hunt for them, and found

Mrs. Dietemann and her son both killed. Some of the settlers went with us, there was 16 or 18 in the party. I cannot name them all, but can name a few: Mr. Wood, Mr. Gleason, Mr. Dietemann, Mr. Schindelholz, and Mr. Lawrence and myself, and others. We did find the woman pretty naked, her dress was over her face and she was scalped. We found the boy, and he was shot by lances, as near as I could call it, and was stabbed all over.⁴⁹

Mr. Apollinaris Dietemann testified:

I heard on Running Creek, about fourteen miles from where I lived, that a family had been killed on Comanche Creek. I immediately feared it was my family, as my family was the only ones then living on Comanche Creek. I went on about five miles in the direction of my ranch to Middle Kiowa. At Middle Kiowa I found all the members of my family, except my wife and boy, and was informed by them that my wife and boy had been killed by the Indians. About a half a dozen of the men, and myself amongst the number, went to hunt for the remains of my wife and son. We went five or six miles in the direction of my ranch, and found the bodies about three or four miles south of my ranch.... I found my wife scalped and shot through the breast, and the boy with his neck broken, and with four or five arrow shots in his body.⁵⁰

Mrs. L. J. Fahrion, a young woman in 1868, who saw the bodies of Henrietta and John when they were brought into Kiowa, testified on April 8, 1916:

Bands of Indians raided the country in

this locality, then called Douglass County, now Elbert County. Comanche Creek, about six miles from Kiowa, was one of the streams raided. On that day [August 25, 1868] the bodies of a woman named Mrs. Dietemann and a boy, who had been killed by the Indians were brought to Kiowa. I saw the bodies. They were said at the time to be the bodies of the wife of Apollinaris Dietemann and their boy. This family had just located on Comanche Creek. They were the only persons killed in the raid of that day. I helped lay out the bodies and assisted the two women, both of whom are now dead, who prepared the bodies. I held the washbowl at the time. Her scalp was entirely taken off and her clothes were partially torn off. There was no belt or money on her body at the time.⁵¹

After the murder of his wife and young son, Apollinaris moved to Minnesota where he later married a second time. Sometime in 1875 he had another daughter. But tragedy again struck and by late May his wife Catherine died and then by August infant Mary had also died. He buried his second wife and child near Minnesota Lake, Minnesota. With his surviving daughter of the Colorado Indian raid, "Hattie," he then met Catherine Fitterer. He married her on July 11, 1876. They had a daughter, Ida, born in late November 1877. By 1885 Apollinaris was again living in Colorado, where he ran a saloon in Denver at 3023 Market Street. Daughter Hattie married Jake Weinman and eventually settled in Los Angeles. She died in 1950. Daughter Maria Ida married Rudolph Roesch and had ten children.

She died in Denver in 1952. Apollinaris died in Denver December 14, 1909. His first wife and son John are buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Golden, as is Apollinaris, though their graves are not together. John, however, is buried in the same grave with his mother. Marie Catherine Dietemann, Apollinaris' third wife, died in Denver in 1923.⁵²

Endnotes

¹ Ed. L. Miller, *Murder at the Hungate Place June 11, 1864* (unpublished manuscript, 2001), 49-60. *The Denver Commonwealth*, June 15, 1864, indicates the mother and daughters were found about 400 yards from the house. The report commonly called the Freighter's Report, dated June 13 (*Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series I, Vol. XXXIV, 354) indicates the bodies were found 100 yards from the house. As will be seen later, because of the proximity of the house with Running Creek, the 100-yard estimate makes more sense. Perhaps the newspaper article mistyped 400 for 100.

² The actual location of the homestead is presently unknown, and is placed by others on Comanche Creek anywhere from a few miles north of Highway 86 to a few miles south of Highway 86. I determined my location according to the affidavits in the Dietemann Indian Depredation claim, which is noted in the text.

³ Apollinaris Dietemann Indian Depredation Claim #4941. Indian Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

⁴ *The Denver Commonwealth*, June 15, 1864. Western History Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, CO.

⁵ *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: Govern-

ment Printing Office, 1891), Series I, Volume XXXIV, Part IV, 319-320. Hereafter cited as *Official Records*. Notice that in this appended note Evans says that the Hungate killings occurred in the afternoon. Thus it was impossible for him to be aware of it in Denver at 12:00 p.m., June 11, which is implied in the original missive. Also, the messenger is said to have had his house burned, too. It is possible that Thomas Darrah was a neighbor of the Hungates, suffered lost stock at about the time things went tragic for the Hungate family, went to Denver to report his loss and on the way discovered the Brown loss (which was on the road to Denver), informed Brown in Denver of his loss, then delivered the order to Davidson from Evans. It is after this that the Hungates are discovered murdered. Darrah, Corbin and Brown inform Governor Evans of the murders late in the evening of June 11. In other words, Darrah reports to Evans twice, once on June 10 (his stock is stolen plus Brown's stock is stolen), and again late in the day on June 11, this second time accompanied with the other freighters, and now with the news of the Hungate murders.⁶

⁶ *Official Records*, 320-321. From this report, compared to the report dated June 12 (endnote 5), the chronology is that Evans first hears of the stolen stock from Darrah, and after responding to this depredation, he later learns of the Hungate murders.

⁷ *Official Records*, 354-355.

⁸ John M. Carroll, *The Sand Creek Massacre: A Documentary History* (New York, NY: Sol Lewis, 1973), VI.

⁹ *Official Records*, 422. In a letter dated November 10, 1863, Evans gives North's statement: "The Comanches, Apaches, Kiowas, the northern band of Arapahoes, and all of the Cheyennes, with the Sioux, have pledged one another to go to war with the whites as soon as they can procure ammunition in the spring. I heard them

discuss the matter often and the few of them who opposed it were forced to be quiet and were really in danger of the loss of their lives ... the principal chiefs pledge to each other that they would shake hands and be friendly with the whites until they procured ammunition and guns, so as to be ready when they strike. Plundering to get means has already commenced, and the plan is to commence the war at several points in the sparse settlements early in the spring." (*Official Records*, 100, emphasis added).

¹⁰ See, for example, Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 58-59; Margaret Coel, *Chief Left Hand: Southern Arapaho* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 189-190; Gary Leland Roberts, *Sand Creek: Tragedy and Symbol* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services, 1984), 244-245; Ed. L. Miller, *Murder at the Hungate Place*, 97-100, 129-132. The ranch hand, Mr. Miller, gets added to the affair in 1892, when an unidentified man is there reported to have been with Nathan Hungate when they saw the ranch on fire. The unidentified man races to Denver while Nathan rushes to his death in a vain attempt to save his family. See *The Denver Republican*, May 27, 1892. Mr. Miller is named as the unidentified man in 1935, when Van Wormer's daughter has her account of the deaths recorded in *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. 12, 1935. On this standard view, the messenger reporting to Evans is mistaken as Miller.

¹¹ "Depredations" Report, Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Entry 96, Letters Sent, 1890, 20-21, Record Group 75, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

¹² It should be noted that the 10,000 depredation claims in Record Group 123 were nearly all ultimately rejected from compensation. The cause for rejection was

not that the claims were deceitful, but rather that there was some technicality in filing. The claims consulted for this article were not approved. Philip Gomer's claim was rejected because he was residing in Indian territory in 1864. The land was not turned over for settlement until October 14, 1865. Gomer was unable to prove he was lawfully residing in Indian territory at the time of his losses. No file exists for the Hungate family, but the likelihood is that claim would also have been denied for the same reason.

¹³ "Depredations," 19-24.

¹⁴ "Public Act No. 139, for the adjudication of claims arising from Indian depredations." The Carl Albert Center, The University of Oklahoma, Sidney Clarke Collection, Box 6, Folder 32, Norman, Oklahoma.

¹⁵ Philip P. Gomer Indian Depredation Claim #693. Indian Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

¹⁶ Gomer Indian Depredation Claim. Gomer's depredation claim includes, in a later filing, an affidavit from Gomer's sister, Martha Quinlan, who states that she was at the home, alone, and witnessed the lone Indian steal the stock. She further states that it was shortly after the noon meal that "a man rode by and said the Hungate family had all been murdered by Indians." This contradicts what Catherine Ferguson said in her 1865 affidavit that it was only after returning from trying to recover the stolen stock that she was informed of the Hungate murders. Obviously if she knew of the Hungate murders before the lone Indian stole the horses she would have been very reluctant to follow him for two miles in an attempt to recover the horses. It is possible that there were two adjoining homes, with one woman in each home, and thus both women report what they remember. While this could explain the discrepancy in testimony, the

fact that neither affidavit mentions the other woman being present, coupled with the fact that Quinlan's affidavit is taken August 27, 1886, more than twenty years after Catherine's testimony, it is more likely that Martha Quinlan was not present on the ranch June 11, 1864.

¹⁷ The depredation file officially states that the Brown loss occurred June 9 or 10 (in more than one place June 10 is overwritten as June 9 or 10), 1864, and Darrah's testimony simply states that his loss was suffered at the same time of Brown's loss. Studying the file, however, shows the more likely scenario that Darrah suffered his loss and then discovers the Brown depredation and informs Brown of such (in Denver). For that time sequence to occur, it appears more likely that their losses occurred at least a day before the Hungates were murdered.

¹⁸ John Sidney Brown Indian Depredation Claim #2196. Indian Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

¹⁹ Brown Indian Depredation Claim.

²⁰ It seems odd at first glance that a freighting outfit would be so poorly armed, but until this time there had been little molestation on the trails to and from Denver, hence there was little need to be well armed, a fact noted in the affidavits of the depredation file several times. The purpose of freighting was to deliver the goods to their destination, so there was not time to hunt near the trail, and thus little need for rifles and having each teamster armed. Of course, this changed after June 11, 1864.

²¹ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Statement of Loss, 15.

²² Brown Indian Depredation Claim. In another affidavit Hammer gives more detailed testimony: "The Indians came over the hill yelling and flirting buffalo robes. There were two Indians then; they were 20 or 25 feet of the mules when I first saw

them. The Indians dashed in between the wagons and men and where the mules were. The Indians rode between the mules and the wagons. When this dash was made the men were in front of the train from 5 to 20 feet of it, varying. When the dash was made we rushed out to do all we could to get hold of the stock, but they were frightened by the buffalo robes and this prevented us from getting them. We had small fire arms, two or three in the train. All the men did not have arms. To the best of my knowledge only three wore arms. In the excitement the fire arms were not thought of until the stampede was thoroughly started and the horses and mules were taken. There were horses and mules in the train besides those belonging to claimants. There were four tied to a wagon. The wagon was joining ours in the corral of wagons. I do not remember the name of the owner. It was one wagon and one man; he asked to travel with us. He was with our men when the attack was made. There were 8 men in all, 7 of Brown Brothers' men and one unknown man. The man who owned the four mules tied to the wagon refused to let us have them and declined to join in the pursuit himself. I asked him for the use of the mules. He positively refused and broke down and cried like a child when I had temporarily taken them by force, guaranteeing to pay for the mules if lost. He did not join in the pursuit. The man was about 35 years of age. He had been traveling with us five or six days. He did not finish the trip with us. He went ahead of us. We used two of his mules in pursuit of the Indians. The other two were so wild we could not get on them. We followed the Indians from about noon until dusk." Statement of Loss, 13.

²³ Brown Indian Depredation Claim

²⁴ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Statement of Loss, 2.

²⁵ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Statement of Loss, 2, emphasis added.

There is a minor discrepancy in the Brown depredation file regarding the Hungate home. In what appears to be the earliest affidavit, dated February 9, 1888, the typed deposition says the Hungate home was burned, but the word "burned" is crossed out and the word "pillaged" is placed in its stead. The earliest documents about the Hungate murders all state that the cabin was burned to the ground, and indeed, the evidence from modern archeology reinforces that fact. It appears the later report was amended because of the further statement that a note was pinned on the cabin. Perhaps the note was simply pinned on some wooden object that somehow escaped the burning.

²⁶ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Claimants' Request For Findings of Fact, 9, emphasis added.

²⁷ *Official Records*, 319-320.

²⁸ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Claimants' Reply Brief, 4, emphasis added.

²⁹ Brown Indian Depredation Claim, Statement of Loss, 12.

³⁰ Jeff Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice: The Ordeal of Susanna Alderdice in the Kansas Indian War* (Lincoln, KS: Lincoln County Historical Society, 2003), 76, 118.

³¹ *The Denver Commonwealth*, June 15, 1864, emphasis added.

³² C. C. Augur, General Orders No. 14, Headquarters Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska, March 2, 1867. Part 1, Department of the Platte, Letters Sent, 1867, Record Group 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

³³ Royal and Becky Moore are the property owners of this historic site and from the arrangements of Dr. Ed. L. Miller of the University of Colorado at Boulder, the chair of my dissertation committee in 1998, the Moores gave me permission to metal detect the site, which is today a pasture. The site is about 100 yards to the south of County Line Road and about 150 yards east

of Running Creek and about 200 yards west of the junction of County Line Road (Rd 50 for Arapahoe County and Rd 194 for Elbert County) with Rd 29. The precise location is identified as the N. E. quarter of Section 3, T6S, R64W, 6th p.m.

³⁴ The numerous nails show that the Hungate home was constructed mostly of wood and not sod, thus supporting the hypothesis of the house burning.

³⁵ These items were examined in Lincoln, Nebraska on August 17, 2001, by Dr. Doug Scott, Chief of the Rocky Mountain Research Division, Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service, and Richard Harmon, noted Indian wars archeologist and weapons expert, respectively. Nearly all of the items were dated from the era of 1864. The most remarkable item was the exploded Warner carbine. The Spencer shell casings were established as being fired from the Warner. The Warner carbine had exploded when it was fired, not because of the house fire. This indicates it was fired repeatedly until it became too hot and the barrel then slightly separated from the stock, thus causing it to explode when fired. It was then burned. What is remarkable about this weapon is that it was brand new in manufacture in 1864 and is today a rare weapon to collect. That it is linked to the Hungate site shows that Nathan was well armed in weapons, and further, he had the money to acquire such a weapon. The analysis of this weapon alone solidified for me the belief that there was a siege at the Hungate place. The other weapons would have been stolen by the Indians, and there would not have been an exploded Warner if Nathan Hungate was away when the Indians attacked his family, killed them, pillaged the house and then burned it, thus alerting Nathan from the ensuing smoke that his family was in grave danger, which is the standard view of the Hungate tragedy. It is false.

³⁶ Robert L. Akerley, "Cultural Resources

Inventory of Ward Hungate Family Massacre Site." In an unpublished article "An Overview of the Ward Hungate Family Massacre," Akerley repeats the standard interpretation of what befell the Hungate family. Both articles are unpublished but available at the Aurora History Museum, Aurora, CO.

³⁷ This hypothesis regarding what happened to the Hungate family is exactly what happened in other recorded instances involving Cheyenne and Arapahoe warriors. In 1865 a similar tragedy befell the William Morris family near present-day Merino, Colorado. See Nell Brown Propst, *Forgotten People: A History of the South Platte Trail* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1979), 90-92.

³⁸ Ed. L. Miller, *Murder at the Hungate Place*, 57.

³⁹ For a thorough and detailed account of these devastating raids in north-central Kansas see Jeff Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, 7-34.

⁴⁰ *The Rocky Mountain News*, August 28, 1868.

⁴¹ *The Rocky Mountain News*, August 28, 1868. It is interesting to note that residents of Denver were given the opportunity to view the mutilated remains of both the Hungate family and Henrietta and John Diemann when their remains were brought to town.

⁴² *The Rocky Mountain News*, August 28, 1868.

⁴³ *The Rocky Mountain News*, August 31, 1868.

⁴⁴ Little has been written on the Colorado Indian war of 1868. Perhaps the best source that shows the extent of the war is found in Irving Howbert, *Memories of a Lifetime in the Pike's Peak Region* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1925), 177-214.

⁴⁵ Irving Howbert, *The Indians of the Pike's Peak Region* (New York: The

Knickerbocker Press, 1914), 195-196; *Memories of a Lifetime*, 183-184. There are other obscure accounts of the Dietemann massacre, which can be found as follows: *The Denver Republican*, December 21, 1892; *The Field and Farm* (Frontier Tales), October 28, 1893; *Genealogy and Biography, A Portrait and Biographical Record of Denver and Vicinity* (1898).

⁴⁶ Others filing claims for losses are Wendling, Spencer, Neff, Smith, Coplen, Williams, Butters and Dunham. John Belkeman Indian Depredation Claim #4936. Indian Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

⁴⁷ Benkleman Indian Depredation Claim, Stipulation, 5.6.

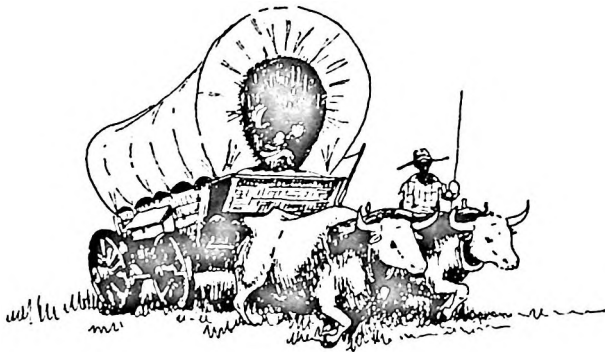
⁴⁸ Apollinaris Dietemann Indian Depredation Claim #4941. Record Group 123, National Archives Building, Washington, DC, 22-24.

⁴⁹ Apollinaris Dietemann Indian Depredation Claim, 29-31.

⁵⁰ Apollinaris Dietemann Indian Depredation Claim, 12-13.

⁵¹ Apollinaris Dietemann Indian Depredation Claim. Mrs. L. J. Deposition.

⁵² Biographical information regarding Apollinaris Dietemann and his family were graciously provided to me by a descendant of Theodore Fitterer, a brother of Apollinaris' third wife, Judy Penhiter of Duluth, Minnesota has accumulated a rich array of genealogy on her ancestors. A special "thank you" is in order to her for her assistance and enthusiasm in this project.



Over the corral rail

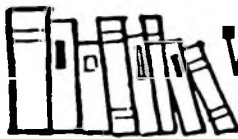
Welcome new members

The Denver Posse of Westerners welcomes **Nanette Simonds** of Denver, interested in Western women's history. Nanette was referred by Cathy Mencin. **Clifton Dougal** of Denver joined us in September of 2003 and is interested in Western culture and history. **John Sells** of Denver was referred by Jeff Broome and has authored two Western history books. **Georgia Sweeney** of Evergreen was referred by her husband, Corresponding Member Barry Sweeney. Her interests are Western history, puppetry, children and exercise for the aging. She performs puppet shows with a Western theme.

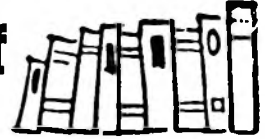


Westerners International

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



Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War, The Army National Guard, 1636 – 2000, by Michael D. Dubler. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 2003.

Having served in the National Guard two years before and four years during World War II, and writing the history of the 168th Artillery Regiment of the Colorado National Guard from its inception in 1862 to 1957, I know intimately many of the problems and accounts of *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*.

Michael D. Dubler, has done a remarkable job of writing many of the little known facts of individuals and units as they moved through the processes of being civilians and unappreciated, to being the first line reserve for the standing Army, then finding themselves fighting in the front lines of combat beside Regular Army personnel, but always under the shadow of doubt by the Regular Army that the officers were not competent for leadership, the units were not well trained nor combat ready, and usually equipped with outdated equipment.

...Dubler has done a remarkable job of writing of the little known facts of individuals and units...

Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War documents the use of civilians as soldiers from 1636, the first years of settlement in America, through the many wars and conflicts that the nation has faced. The official birth date of the U.S. National Guard is December 13, 1775. Since then it has gone through many ups and downs and revisions to become the First Line Reserve that it is today. This book documents and identifies many of the units and gives many of the numbers and other data of those units. It also has short biographies of many of the men who were in the National Guard and were responsible for some of the important decisions through the years. Each chapter is well footnoted, there are several appendixes, and the bibliography is extensive.

Any one who has ever been a member of a National Guard unit will find *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, an interesting walk down memory lane. For any military historian it is a must to have in their library.

The events that have occurred in the years since 2000 have been many and frightening, and the National Guard has again proved its true worth. I look forward to seeing an addendum to the *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War, The Army National Guard, 1636 - 2000*.

--Ken Gaunt 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.

...this is a book that will
please those of us who are
interested in the Rangers...

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.

General Crook and the Western Frontier, by Charles M. Robinson III. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 386pp. Illustrations (photos), maps, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$39.95.

Whenever the Indian Wars of the Western Great Plains are discussed, one name that will always come to mind, as part of the military's campaigns and strategy, is General George Crook. To many he was one of the finest soldiers in the Indian-fighting army. It was an image that Crook carefully formed himself. Crook can list numerous successes against hostile Apaches and Plains Indians. According to the author his pattern and style of strategy brought more positive results than any other general officer on the frontier.

With the exception of his four years as an officer in the Union Army during the Civil War, George Crook spent his military career on the Western frontier. He was born on September 8, 1828 in Ohio, the ninth child in a family of ten children. In 1848 George entered the United States Military Academy at West Point. It was while at West Point that he came in contact with a fellow Ohioan, Philip Henry

Sheridan. As the years went by the relationship of these two men would go from friendship to hatred.

...an outstanding
biography of one of the
military's best-known
Indian fighters...

Upon graduation from West Point in 1852, Crook saw service in the Pacific Northwest where he began to formulate tactics against and opinions of Native Americans. Following the Civil War, Crook once again returned to

the Western frontier. At times he would show himself as a commander in the field who could bring about spectacular results. There were times also that he could be stubborn and unbending and unable to see his own mistakes.

Perhaps the best example that shows his shortcomings is the battle at the Rosebud and the pursuit of the Indians that followed. As Crook's military career moved along and he rose in rank, he became an advocate of Indian self-sufficiency. He would continue in this cause right up to his death on March 21, 1890.

This is an outstanding biography of one of the military's best-known Indian fighters and campaigners who was also a humanitarian. This book, as well as the author's *Bad Hand: A Biography of General Ronald S. Mackenzie* and *A Good Year to Die: The Story of the Great Sioux War*, is a must for any student of the Indian fighting army or Plains Indian wars.

--Mark E. Hutchins, P.M.



Boundaries Between the Southern Paiutes, 1775-1995, by Martha C. Knack. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE, 2001. 471 pages. Illustrated with photographs and maps; index; bibliography; extensive endnotes; dust jacket. Cloth, \$50.00.

This book appeared rather daunting, for both its limited subject matter and its bulk (almost 500 pages). It is not daunting. It is wonderful book about a tribe of American Indians who have been largely ignored by Western historians of both the right and the left. Even the Northern Paiutes have gotten more attention, probably because of their nearness to the California gold fields and their violent involvement with the Pony Express.

The Southern Paiutes, of course, as this book points out (but apparently without using the term), were despised by many Americans as "digger" Indians who had a hardscrabble existence in a rugged land. Yet, like the Aborigines of Australia, they had successfully adapted to their environment. For that alone they should be admired by humanity.

This volume, written by an anthropologist, does an outstanding job of describing the Southern Paiutes in anthropological terms, in historical terms, and in contemporary political terms. Probably most Westerners will best enjoy the parts about the Paiutes and their interaction with historical figures.

These include the likes of Friars Escalante and Dominguez, Kit Carson, Lieutenant Gunnison, and Brigham Young. For example, the book has a short, but helpful, section on the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

The book is very dispassionate, almost detached in its discussion of controversial subjects (such as the impact, on these native people, of the Mormons, of government bureaucracy, and of gambling and tourism). This seems to add to the appeal of the book. Professor Knack, like Sergeant Joe Friday, wants to present "just the facts."

In addition, only two-thirds of the pages of the book are narrative in nature. The rest of the volume is devoted to notes, bibliography, and index. Therefore, the book itself is only slightly more than 300 pages of well-paced discussion.

This book is not colorful. It is not a shoot-'em-up. It is just well-written, well-researched, well-balanced, and well . . . just a fine book that, in this reviewer's opinion, outdoes many of the excellent tribal studies put out (over many years) by the University of Oklahoma. It is highly recommended and a necessary addition to any library dealing with American Indian Peoples.

...does an outstanding job
of describing...in
anthropological, historic
and political terms...

--John Hutchins, P.M.

Talking Birds, Plumed Serpents and Painted Women: Ceramics of Casas Grandes, edited by Joanne Stuhr. Tucson: Tucson Museum of Art; Distributed by The University of Arizona Press, 2002. 90 pages, 75 color photos and map of the region, bibliographies. Paper, \$35.

Casas Grandes (not to be confused with the ruins at Casa Grandes near Chandler, Arizona) is located in the northern part of the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, and was an important center of culture from 1200 to 1450 A.D. The adobe structures in Paquimo, the central settlement, were built with running water and sewers, and adobe pens held Macaws whose feathers were valued for use in ceremonial activities. Recent books (e.g., Schaafsma and Riley, eds, *The Casas Grandes World* and Whalen and Minws, *Casas Grandes and its Hinterland*) present varied views of the significance of Casas Grandes in relation to nearby communities in Mexico and in the Southwestern United States.

The book *Talking Birds, Plumed Serpents and Painted Women* was prepared to accompany an exhibition of ceramics from Casas Grandes which was presented at the Tucson Museum of Art from December 2002 to February 2003. The publication is more than a catalogue of the ceramics in the exhibit, although the more than 70 color photos of the pottery are outstanding, with the text clearly describing the different types of ceramics. (In addition to the "Painted Women", there are figures of "painted men" in the collection.) Ollas and effigy bowls and figures make up the exhibit items.

Joanne Stuhr, curator at the Tucson Museum of Art, presents the initial essay, which gives an overview of the Casas Grandes culture and the geographic region as it is today, along with a history of explorations in the ruins of the earlier structures. Other essays are by Eduardo Gamboa Cartera, the director of the Paquimo project in Mexico. John Ware, the director of the Amerind Foundation, whose first director (Charles DiPeso) was active in excavations and interpretations at Casas Grandes from the 1940s. Christine S. VanPool and Todd L. VanPool of the Department of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico present analyses of the designs and decoration of the ceramics. All four essays are presented in English and Spanish. The essays are well written and give a comprehensive history and understanding of the Casas Grandes culture.

Brief mention is made of the pottery made in Mata Ortiz, a village not far from Paquimo, where many residents have developed skills in making pottery that originally was based on Casas Grandes pottery designs. Now many of the Mata Ortiz potters are developing new designs and extremely well-made ceramics that are avidly sought by collectors, especially since the real Casa Grandes pottery from the years 1200 to 1450 are scarce.

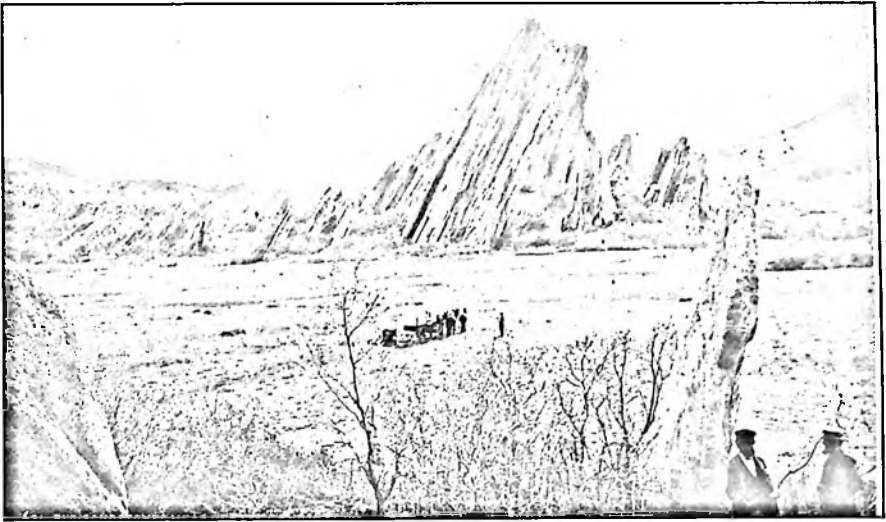
Talking Birds, Plumed Serpents and Painted Women: The Ceramics of Casas Grandes belongs in the collection of anyone interested in the arts and culture of the Southwestern United States and northern Mexico region.

--Earl McCoy, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

March - April 2004



*William H. Jackson photo,
from the collection of Ed Bathke*

A Brief History of Roxborough Park

by Ed & Nancy Bathke, P.M.

(presented August 27, 2003)



The Bathkes have been Colorado residents for 44 years, and after living in Manitou Springs for 33 years, they are now residents of Douglas County. Their interest in Colorado and the West is indicated by their hobbies of traveling, hiking, and collecting Colorado artifacts. Nancy is a collector of antique souvenir spoons, sheet music, and souvenir glass of Colorado, and Ed collects old photographs and stereoviews of Colorado, and books of Colorado. They are members of the Ghost Town Club of Colorado, the Ghost Town Club of Colorado Springs, and the Pikes Peak Posse of the Westerners. Both Ed and Nancy are past presidents of the Ghost Town Club of Colorado and the Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region, and past sheriffs of the Pikes Peak Posse of the Westerners.

Ed joined the Denver Westerners as a corresponding member in 1965, and became a Posse Member in 1970. He served as sheriff in 1972. Nancy was the second woman elected to membership in the Denver Posse (1993), and in 2000 she was the second woman to serve as sheriff of the Denver Westerners. They are co-authors of The West in Postage Stamps, have had articles published in the Brand Books and the Roundup magazine, and Ed edited Volume 28 of the Denver Westerners Brand Books.

Ed Bathke is a mathematician, and retired as a computer analyst at Kaman Sciences, in Colorado Springs. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees, in mathematics, from the University of Wisconsin, and an M.S. in applied mathematics from the University of Colorado. Nancy is a retired elementary school teacher. Her last assignment was teaching computer skills to kindergarten through fifth grade at Woodmen-Roberts Elementary, Air Academy District 20, in El Paso County. She has a B.S. in education from the University of Wisconsin, and an M.A. in education from the University of Colorado. Nancy is listed in Who's Who of American Women, and Who's Who in the West, and both Ed and Nancy are listed in Contemporary Authors.

THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LX NO. 2



March - April 2004

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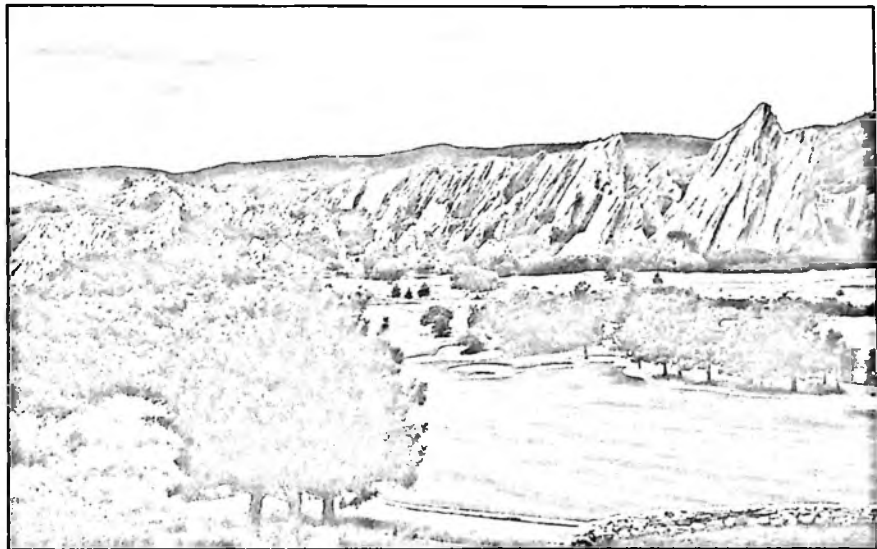
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A Brief History of Roxborough Park

by Ed & Nancy Bathke, P.M.
(presented August 27, 2003)



A history of Roxborough Park must necessarily feature the most significant characteristic of this area: the majestic rock formations. These spectacular monoliths lay to the east of the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, consisting of Pikes Peak granite. The foothills form the western portion of the Roxborough area and of the Roxborough State Park, the anchor point being 7200-foot-high Carpenter Peak, located on its south-western corner. Roxborough Park encompasses, from west to east, the granite and gneiss of the Rockies, and then the Fountain, Lyons, Morrison, and Dakota formations. The distance between Carpenter Peak and the Dakota Hogback is just a mile, but in geologic time, this represents nearly 1.5 billion years.

The evolution of Roxborough's tilted sandstones began some 300 million years ago with the gradual erosion of the Ancestral Rocky Mountains. Those earlier Rockies stood where the Front Range stands today. The Park's red rocks are part of an apron of sediment carried down the slopes of the ancient mountains and deposited in deep basins. During the millions of years that followed, successive layers of other sedimentary rock, such as limestone, shale, and siltstone, were added. About 65 million years ago a major geological upheaval resulted in the uplifting process from which today's Rocky Mountains emerged. The layers of sedimentary rocks arched upward, tilted steeply by the emerging peaks of the

Front Range. In the millions of years following, the exposed layers of siltstone, shale, and other softer sedimentary strata were eroded away. The layered sandstones, rising at a sixty-degree angle from the valley floor, are known as the Fountain Formation, the Lyons Formation, and the Dakota Hogback. The Fountain and Lyons are of course named after their respective Colorado towns. The term "hogback" may sound rather colloquial, but it is a proper geologic term, meaning "a sharp ridge produced by erosion of highly tilted rocky layers, one of which is more resistant than the others." The unique red color of the Fountain Formation is due to oxidized iron, and actually all three ridges are true "hogbacks".

Evidence of the geologic evolution of our Colorado surroundings manifests itself dramatically along the Front Range. Starting from the north, the Flatirons are an impressive backdrop for the city of Boulder. Early-day photographers featured this scenery, as indicated by one such, "Rocky Mountain Joe" Sturtevant, in his signature fringed buckskins. The next set of prominent rock outcroppings lay just west of Denver, the Garden of the Angels. Another photo of this popular area, just north of Morrison, refers to the formations as the Garden of the Titans. However, as fellow Westerners Dr. Tom Noel and Dr. George Krieger can inform us, via their recent book, this is a Denver city park, Red Rocks. Continuing southerly along the Front Range, formations at Pleasant Park attracted early Colorado pioneers. Today this area is Perry Park, named

for early settlers, and it is a residential development, complete with scenic golf course. Today's crown jewel of Front Range geologic settings is the Garden of the Gods, a Colorado Springs city park, that is a very popular national tourist destination. But I have skipped over one member of this rocky coterie, Roxborough Park. Even though its formations are some of the most spectacular (perhaps some personal bias is injected!), it is least known. Private ownership and unfulfilled plans contribute to this situation, as we examine the historical background of Roxborough Park.

When the Dakota and Morrison, a softer layer immediately west of the Dakota, were being formed, 100 to 150 million years ago, dinosaurs roamed the area. Paleontologists have found dinosaur footprints in the rocky ripples of the ancient sandy beaches forming the rocks of the Dakota layer.

The earliest evidence of man in the Roxborough area is found at an archeological "kill" site, Lamb Springs, located between Roxborough and Chatfield State Park to the north. Here the bones of camels, and of 24 prehistoric mammoths have been unearthed, as well as possible human artifacts dating from 9,500 B. C. to 12,000 B. C., the Clovis or Pre-Clovis periods. Lamb Springs is considered to be one of the most significant archeological sites in Colorado. The site was discovered in 1960 when rancher Charles Lamb was digging a stock pond, and discovered some mammoth tusks. Smithsonian Institution and U. S. Geological Survey researchers exam-

ined the site. They discovered a mammoth skull in 1981. It is now at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science; a University of Colorado team is shown excavating the rare fully intact skull. The site, just southeast of the intersection of Titan Road and Rampart Range Road (most of you drove past it coming here tonight), is undeveloped, but plans call for an extensive modern museum and exhibit hall. At Roxborough State Park one can view a program offered monthly during the summer. Included is a visit to the site, led by Douglas County Preservation Board member, and fellow Westerner, Clyde Jones.

An archeological survey of Roxborough State Park has discovered evidence of early human presence, numbering 44 sites, some from the Archaic and Ceramic periods, and others of later origin. These prehistoric campsites are believed to have been used seasonally rather than as permanent habitation. Fire pits dating about 1,000 B. C. have been found, and quarrying and chipping sites along the Dakota slopes have also been noted.

Prior to exploration by the white man, the plains Apaches were dominant in the vicinity until the early 1700s, when they were driven south by the aggressive expansion of the Comanches and their Ute allies. They, in turn, were displaced by the Cheyennes and Arapahoes who were the last tribes on Colorado's high plains.

The first recorded Euro-Americans to visit the Roxborough area were members of the Major Stephen Long expedition in 1820. On July 6, members

camped at the entrance to the Platte Canyon, near present-day Waterton. Dr. Edwin James of the Long party wrote: "We arrived at the boundary of that vast plain across which we had journeyed for a distance of one thousand miles.... The woodless plain is terminated by a range of naked and almost perpendicular rocks, visible at a distance of several miles, and resembling a vast wall parallel to the base of the mountain...with interesting views of singular color and formation, the whole scenery truly picturesque and romantic."

During the early 1800s fur trappers and traders traveled along the Rockies, but their trails generally followed Cherry Creek or Plum Creek, both to the east, and whether some of the travelers along Plum Creek left the trail to explore these hogbacks and an unexpected view of majestic sandstones is a possibility, although unrecorded. In 1843 John C. Fremont's second Western expedition passed through Douglas County land, probably along Cherry Creek. If excursions included a view of the rock formations, expedition journals fail to mention it.

Following the Cherry Creek gold rush in 1858, gold seekers no doubt looked along Willow Creek and Little Willow Creek, the streams in this area, but without any success. On the western slopes of Carpenter Peak, on the South Platte River drainage, small amounts of gold were found in later years.

Following the early exploratory expeditions, such as Major Long's in 1820, the U. S. government regularly fielded

expeditions to explore, map, find routes, and develop its expansive Western territories. The U. S. Geological and Geographical Survey, led by Dr. Ferdinand Hayden, made many, mostly in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1870 the Hayden expedition left Cheyenne about August 1, and finished in Colorado City November 10, covering Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado Territories. Their route in Colorado followed from Virginia Dale, near the Wyoming border, down the Front Range. William Henry Jackson, employed as a Survey photographer, recorded scenes with 8x10-inch and 6x8-inch cameras, as well a stereoscopic view camera. Between Virginia Dale and Colorado City he shot just three 6x8-inch images. One was taken only a few miles north of the Roxborough area, looking up the canyon of the South Platte River as it exited from the mountains. Another was of the rock formations of Pleasant Park, now known as Perry Park, and approximately ten miles south of the Roxborough area. The third was titled "'Red Sandstones near Platte Canyon'". It displayed the majestic monoliths of Roxborough Park. In the foreground was Jackson's photography wagon. About 125 years later Colorado nature photographer John Fielder would match this image, now part of the Arrowhead Golf Course, and replacing Jackson's wagon would be John's golf cart (see pages 22 and 23 of the Fielder book). Jackson also made stereoscopic views of Roxborough Park. These were listed in his catalog as No. 357, "Mouth of Platte Canyon", and No. 358, "Rocks near Platte Canyon". The latter view was nearly a duplicate of the larger "cabinet-sized" photo.

Relatively few early photographs of the Roxborough area are known. We have four other stereoviews of Roxborough, and these were taken in the 1870s by William Chamberlain, one of Denver's most prominent photographers during the 1860s to the end of the century. Roxborough Park is one of five major Front Range geologic areas of impressive and picturesque exposed Fountain formation sandstone monumental rocks. Roxborough is surely as awesome in appearance as the other more well known areas. But Roxborough has been primarily in private control for so many years, that it has not been exposed to the public, and is therefore comparatively unknown.

Douglas County was one of the original seventeen counties at the formation of the State of Colorado. Its eastern border stretched to Kansas. Ranches and homesteads developed slowly in the 1860s, the first decade after the gold discoveries on Cherry Creek, and in the Rockies. By 1868, there were only as many as 21 farms along Cherry Creek, from Denver to Spring Valley in southern Douglas County. Its relative isolation was diminished by the development of the railroad, the Denver & Rio Grande building from Denver to Colorado Springs in 1871. Most of the communities of today's Douglas County got their start in the 1870s.

The first recorded homestead claim among the red rocks was filed by Denis Cooper in 1871. He built a small log cabin on the homestead, located at the northern end of present-day Roxborough State Park. Anton and John Helmer were early Roxborough

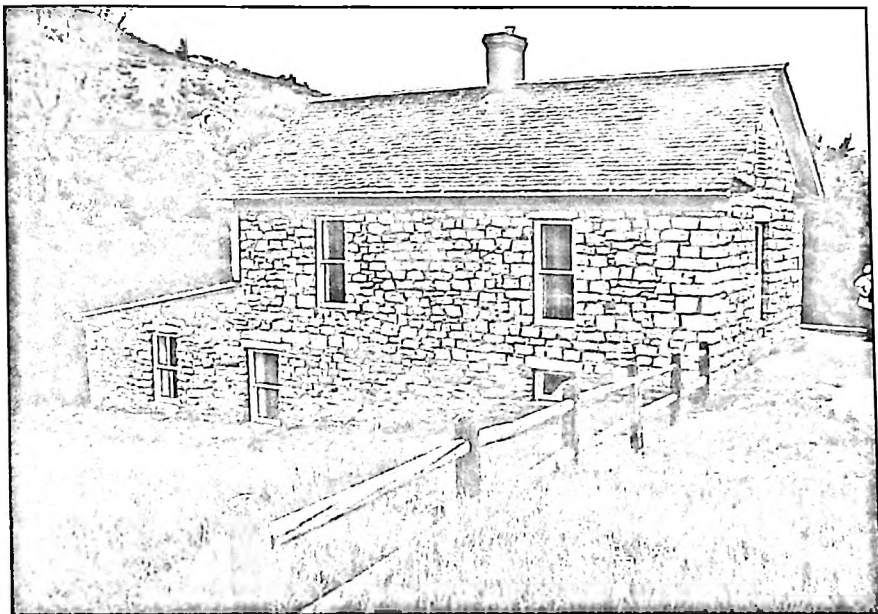


photo by Ed Bathke

Perse house today

homesteaders. In 1870 Anton claimed land east of the hogback near today's Roxborough Village. John Helmer homesteaded a few miles to the north. Over the years the Helmers bought out many early homesteaders and acquired much of the land held by the Roxborough Land Company. By 1921 Anton Helmer owned all but a small portion of the park, and remaining portions were purchased in later years by his sons, George and Toney. In 1971, when the Helmers sold their Roxborough land holdings, they held over 3,600 acres, and had been land-owners in the area for a full century.

Even though Colorado became a state in 1876, settlement in Roxborough was slow to develop. In 1878 John Smiles

claimed the land where the Visitor Center of Roxborough State Park sits. Albert Epperson filed a homestead application in 1887, stating that he had cleared land in 1886, as well as building a log house valued at \$450, and a stable. Four partners, William E. Gray, Julius C. Carpenter, William R. Everett, and Edward M. Griffith, bought out Epperson's claim. According to some accounts, Griffith may have earlier homesteaded in the area in the late 1860s. Griffith's share is of particular interest because in 1889 Henry S. Perse took over Griffith's share in the partnership formed to construct reservoirs, dig irrigation ditches, and develop land in the Roxborough area.

Today Henry Persse would be labeled an “entrepreneur”. At various times he was a wool dealer, partner in a brewery, farmer, and real estate promoter. His connection with the Roxborough area began in 1889 when he took over Edward Griffith’s quarter-share in the partnership. During the next several years Persse acquired additional properties and in 1902 bought out the remaining partners, making him sole owner of much of the land that would eventually become Roxborough State Park.

Until the 1900s, Roxborough Park was actually known as Washington Park, a name derived from a large sandstone in the Fountain Formation that resembles a profile of George Washington. Certainly the name sounds better than “hogback country”, but it caused frequent confusion with the City of Denver’s Washington Park (still a popular city park today). According to Toney Helmer (of the prominent Roxborough family) sometimes mail went to the wrong location, and even scheduled outing parties would arrive at the wrong park. So, in 1902 Henry Persse suggested the name Roxborough Park, after the Persse family estate in Galway, Ireland.

That same year Persse, John J. Weicher, and William E. Gray, as partners, formed the Roxborough Land Company, intending to acquire and sell land, lay out townsites, and lease, sell and develop land for manufacturing, mining, transportation, etc. In addition, they intended to conduct “places of resort and residence; and to that end, erect, hold, own, conduct, manage,

equip, lease, sell and dispose of hotels, cottages, stores,” and so on.

Five years later, a Denver newspaper published a glowing report of the grand plans for Roxborough: “By August first of this year (1907), electric cars will be running from Denver to an all-year-round resort south of the city that promises to rival in attractiveness anything else the state can boast. A first-class 200-room hotel, golf links, a club house, a well stocked lake, charming driveways, and comfortable cottages all placed in surroundings said to be the most beautiful, these will form the attractions of Roxborough park, a natural beauty spot located in the hills near Plum Creek, 16 miles southwest of Littleton.”

Though the dream was never fully realized, Roxborough Park became a favorite “outing place” for Denver’s elite. Between 1905 and 1913, such names as Denver Mayor Robert Speer, Crawford Hill, Lawrence Phipps, John F. Champion, and former Governor James B. Grant signed their names in Henry Persse’s guest book. In 1910 Speer noted that the park “should be owned by the city for the free use of the people”.

Roxborough Park was not only enjoyed by the elite, but was a very popular picnic spot, for the “automobilists” from the city, travelers by horse and buggy, and residents of nearby towns and ranches. The rocks attracted would-be rock climbers, and former resident Marshall Benn recalled on Sundays he would often have to rescue those who couldn’t or wouldn’t climb back down.



Lime kiln

photo by Ed Bathke

During Prohibition, Roxborough's remoteness and the many hiding places among the rocks made it a prime location for stills.

In 1904 the Roxborough Land Company granted a land and mineral lease to the Silicated Brick Company of Denver, for a brickmaking plant and mines to support the operation. The company located the plant at the point where Little Willow Creek cuts through the hogback, near today's Roxborough

Fire Station. The feldspar deposits on the eastern face of the hogback contained calcium silicates, which produced a decorative, durable brick of an unusual white shade. These bricks had a great demand for home construction. A small town, Silica, developed beside the brickworks and mine quarries. The formula for making the white bricks, which were steamed by high-pressure steam rather than baked, was a secret of the brickmaker, Mr. Gedges. Unfortunately Mr. Gedges divulged his formula



photo by Ed Bathke

Amos Whetstone homestead, of white brick from Silica

to no one, and when he died in 1910, the brickmaking business died with him. Brickmaking operations ceased completely by about 1918, and Silica became a ghost town. Today all that remains of Silica is the decaying tower of a lime kiln, beside the fire station, at the gateway to the Roxborough Park residences.

In 1909, the Colorado and Southern Railway built a 3.89-mile spur from Waterton to Silica. The railroad hauled finished bricks as well as feldspar from the mines, for other brickmakers. Fire clay and limestone were also transported by the railroad. The tracks also served the Fraunhoff mine a mile north of Silica. The C&S maintained this spur until 1941.

In 1912 Joe and Hattie Benn homesteaded 640 acres at what was described as one-fourth mile west of Roxborough Park. Joe, a former Denver fireman, was employed at the brick works. He built a nice four-room house of the white brick from the Silicated Brick Co. Its location is described as on the northeastern slope of Carpenter Peak, and ruins existed until recently.

The Roxborough Land Company became less active after about 1910. Henry Persse had constructed a stone house, of sandstone from the Lyons Formation, about 1903. During the early years other log buildings were added. Two small log buildings on the Persse Place, which are still standing, may even have been erected by Denis

Cooper in the 1870s. Despite their extensive land holdings in Roxborough, the Persse family's main residence remained in Denver. Henry Persse died in 1918 when struck by a Denver Tramway streetcar while crossing Colfax Avenue at Madison Street. The Roxborough Land Company, with the Persse family as owners, was dissolved in 1920. Actual family occupancy of the log cabin and stone house know as the "Persse Place" may have been seasonal, except for the Persse's oldest son, John. He was a Denver policemen, and left that department in 1907. Then John lived on the Persse Place until his death in 1937. The two Persse daughters, Amelia and Mary Anna, lived in Denver until their deaths. Horace, the youngest Persse son, built a small silica brick house at the south end of their property, but lived there only a few years. That property, a ten-acre enclave within the state park, is known as the Sundance Ranch. The state park has recently completed acquisition of the property.

A little further south of the Sundance Ranch, Amos Whetstone built a small home in the early 1900s. It was constructed of silica brick, and today is probably the finest remaining example of the fine white building material.

In 1970 the Woodmoor Corporation acquired 3,200 acres from the Helmer family. Its plans envisioned as many as 6,400 houses on the 3,200 acres. A spectacular golf course in the valleys between the rocks was planned, and the Arrowhead Golf Course was completed in 1973. Woodmoor's financing was based upon sales of individual lots with

long-term monthly purchases, somewhat like Florida resort land, and by 1974 some 800 individual lots had been sold. Twelve homes were under construction in the park, along with foundation work for multi-family housing.

Woodmoor's ambitious management quickly led to over-extension and the company began defaulting on the loans used to get projects started. In 1974 the metropolitan district declared bankruptcy, the first special district ever to do so in Colorado. This was not particularly good for Roxborough Park's image.

The bankruptcy court restructured the bonded indebtedness of the district, to insure continued operation and adequate return to the bondholders. The court also insured the installation of phone, electricity, and roads, protecting investment values and marketability of residential lots. In 1979 a new company, the Roxborough Development Corporation, stepped in to complete much-needed community improvements, revitalizing the Arrowhead Golf Course, completing streets, and initiating construction and sale of 1,000 homes. The Roxborough Park Metropolitan District provides municipal services, water, sewer, and fire protection. The fire station is No. 18, of the West Metro Fire District, which services all of the western suburban area of the Denver Metropolitan area. Water, for example, is provided by long-term contract (currently through 2017) with the City of Aurora.

Meanwhile, the ambitious Woodmoor

plans were downsized, and of the original 3,200 acres, only 900 acres remain, all west of the hogback. The total number of residences was changed to 1,000. Land east of the hogback was sold to another developer, and that has culminated in the community of Roxborough Village. That is the cluster of homes that one passes through, on Rampart Range Road, on his way to Roxborough Park.

Meanwhile, let's examine what happened to the idea of a state or city park. Mayor Speer favored the idea in 1910, and in 1915 he tried to purchase land for a city park. The Colorado Mountain Club tried to persuade Denver city officials to include Roxborough in the new Denver Mountain Parks system being proposed as part of Denver's City Beautiful movement. This was a pet project of Mayor Speer. But Denver officials, as a whole, never seriously considered the idea.

Roxborough Park continued to be a picnic destination. A booklet, "One-Day Automobile Trips Out of Denver", published by the Denver Chamber of Commerce in the teens (it contained a 1912 auto road map), listed last among its 12 routes, explicit driving details, by tenths of miles, from 16th and Champa, downtown Denver. The closing directions for the route read: mile "...20.1, steep hill; 21.7, cross R. R.; 22.0, white frame school house on left; 22.6, go slow, bad hill; 22.7, pass brick works and turn to right; 22.8, public telephone can be found in small house close to road; 22.9, turn to left through gate onto private road. Close the gate after

you on account of cattle. (Mile) 23.5, entrance to Roxborough Park. The entrance to the park is at the stone house and cottages." Then, in the booklet "In and Out of Denver", published in the early '20s by the Denver Tourist Bureau, in the section "Automobile Trips to be Taken in your own Car", the route to Roxborough Park was either 32 miles via Sedalia and Lehigh Gulch, or 24 miles through Waterton. The park was listed as "Privately Owned. Entrance fee 50 cents."

In 1925 the City of Denver offered landowner Toney Helmer \$21,000 for the heart of the park, where most of the vertical rock formations were found. Unfortunately, this was \$2,000 less than Helmer's asking price, and the negotiations ended in a stalemate. Over three quarters of a century later, with our advantage of 20-20 hindsight, how we rue this case of coming so close!

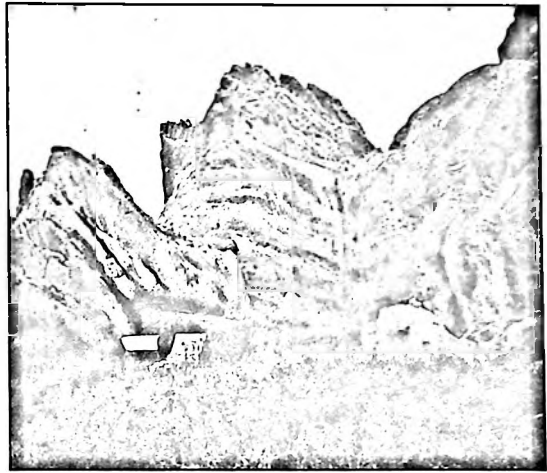
In 1957 the newly created Colorado State Parks and Recreation Board once again brought the issue of state purchase of Roxborough Park to the forefront. It would be the first major park of a statewide system. They invited Gov. Steve McNichols to tour the site. Owner Toney Helmer claimed to be anxious to see his home become a state park, but he was coy about setting a price. Nevertheless, negotiations between state officials and Helmer continued until 1961, when disagreements between the state parks board and the legislature's joint budget committee ended efforts. Frustrated, in 1967 Helmer sold a ten-year option on 3,200 acres for \$2.5 million, to the

Eagle County Development Corporation.

In February 1970 park department officials cheered the decision of the joint budget committee to appropriate \$1 million to buy the park, and made plans to apply to the U. S. Department of the Interior for matching funds. However, the effort ended when the joint budget committee informed them that the state had approved only \$1 million for the entire purchase, and that it would be illegal to spend \$2 million without further consent of the legislature -- no matter whose money it was.

Amidst this wrangling, the Eagle County Development Corporation sold its option to the Woodmoor Corporation. Although things looked hopeless, Woodmoor claimed it was sensitive to the need to preserve the park's most notable rock formations, and offered the state 1,000 acres, including the park's heartland, for \$2 million. That left Woodmoor with 2,200 acres for residential and commercial development. More squabbling resulted, including trying to buy 400 acres for \$1 million, but that was considered too small for real park use. Finally, after Woodmoor's financial problems forced it into negotiations, the State of Colorado obtained 500 acres for \$1 million in 1975.

In 1976, the State of Colorado approved a \$350,000 purchase of 330 acres to the south and west of the park's



Ed Bathke collection

An 1870s stereoview by Denver photographer William Chamberlain, showing his tent and wagon

boundaries. Additional acres were later purchased from developers and private landowners, bringing the total acreage of the park to 1,620. Since then funds from the Colorado State Lottery, the Douglas County Open Lands Fund, the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund, the generosity of private donors, and the Friends of Roxborough have enable Roxborough State Park to continue to grow to over 3,000 acres. A grand opening of Roxborough State Park, including the dedication of the newly constructed visitor center, was held on May 15, 1987. Thus it has become a jewel in the crown of Colorado state parks, and a popular and very scenic hiking destination for Coloradans.

Acknowledgments

We are indebted to Dave and Nancy Goodwin of Roxborough Park, and to Archivist Johanna Harden, Philip S. Miller Library, Castle Rock, for information that they so generously provided.

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Over the corral rail

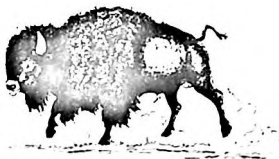
New Members

The Denver Posse of Westerners would like to welcome the following new members:

Mr. Bob De Witt of Colorado Springs was brought to us through Ed Bathke. Bob is interested in Western artifacts and is a member of the Pike Peak Posse.

Ms. Juliette Hidahl of Denver was referred by Tom Noel. She is interested in Opera Houses, the Gilded Age and Railroad Post offices. She is pursuing her M.A. in History.

Mr. Bob Easterly of Littleton was also referred by Tom Noel. He is interested in Gunnison country.



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



Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indian Project in the Field, edited and with introduction by Mick Gidley. University of Nebraska Press, 2003. 200 pages, 25 photographs, index. Cloth, \$49.95.

The Posse members who attended the June 25, 2003 meeting will recall viewing the many outstanding sepia tone reproductions of Curtis' work and learning of the history salvaged from oblivion by speaker Paul Unks. Gidley's work is 'the rest of the story' of Curtis' epic quest to document through word and picture the traditional cultures of Native Americans in the western United States. Cultures Curtis believed were inevitably doomed. Curtis' project became the largest anthropological enterprise in this country documenting Native American life as it had been for centuries before the white man's intrusion. His writings and photographs from 1907 until 1930 yielded a monumental amount of information on the western American Indian that, in turn, inspired the first full-length documentary film, magazine articles, books, lectures and photographic exhibitions to whet America's appetite about this "vanishing race." Edward Curtis' work was both influential and controversial.

Mick Gidley, a professor of American literature at the University of Leeds, draws on a wide array of predominantly unpublished and uncollected reminiscences, reports, letters, field notes and newspaper articles to afford an unprecedented look at the practice of anthropological fieldwork at that time. The stories of the negotiations and tactics used with the various Indian Chiefs and others from whom Curtis sought permission to photograph or learn about their secret ceremonies are most intriguing.

The writings of Curtis and his associates reveal many sad stories of neglect and harassment by the Federal Government and others who were responsible for and in control of the Native Americans during this period. The book also sheds light on how Curtis and his Contemporaries perceived the enterprise and the Native peoples that they worked with and what main stream America as well as the Indians thought of the project.

The 25 black and white illustrations included are mostly unpublished works of Curtis. The author grouped the tribes into four categories: the Southwest, the Plains, the Northwest and the West Coast. The book contains a final chapter that includes documents of a more general nature, all of which feature Curtis as their main source. The book also contains biographical references and an index that comprise some 29 pages.

--S. Lebrun Hutchison, P.M.

Forster vs. Pico: The Struggle for the Rancho Santa Margarita, by Paul Bryan Gray. The Arthur H. Clark Company, Spokane, Washington, 2002. 256 pages. Illustrated with photographs and a map; footnotes; bibliography; index. Cloth, \$29.50.

This a book about how the Pico family, who were prominent Californians at the time of the conquest of California during the Mexican War, came to lose their southern California ranch. The ranch contained about 200 square miles of territory. Ironically, losing the ranch may have contributed to it having been more-or-less preserved, as the Camp Pendleton U.S. Marine Corps Base.

The issue of the real estate rights of the new, Spanish-speaking citizens is an important one in the history of the American southwest. For example, there were real estate scams based on Mexican land grants claims, such as portrayed in the motion picture, *The Baron of Arizona* (1950). And, here in Colorado, the residual rights of Mexican-Americans in Costilla County regarding "The Taylor Ranch" have been litigated recently.

The author is a California attorney who has been involved in at least one prominent case defending the rights of Hispanic Americans. However, in this excellent work of scholarship, Mr. Gray has not used it as a legal brief for any particular cause. He tells a straight-forward, honest, and logical story, both of the early history of southern California and of the complicated white-collar litigation over the ranch in 1873. His balance and presentation is refreshing in these times of strident extremes.

Mr. Gray also describes the main characters, brothers Pio Pico and Andres Pico, as real persons. This includes facts both favorable and unfavorable to them. Also described is the process of how the Mexican land grants started, for like Henry VIII, the Mexican government, for good or bad, confiscated church lands. Thus, in this book, as in much of life, there are no real heroes and no real villains.

While **Forster vs. Pico** would be a useful training tool for white-collar prosecutors on how to (or how not to) present a case, much of the book contains a succinct discussion of important history of the Los Angeles region. The book touches on such topics as the early colonization of California by the Spanish, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. The volume, while not for everyone, is highly recommended.

...much of the book
contains a succinct
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history of L.A....

--John Hutchins, P. M.

Myth and History in the Creation of Yellowstone National Park, by Paul Schullery and Lee Whittlesey. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 2003. 125 pp., 6x9 inches, 28 photographs, appendix, notes, index. Cloth, \$22.00.

"On the evening of September 19, 1870, members of the WASHBURN-LANGFORD-DOANE expedition gathered around a campfire at the junction of the Gibbon and Firehole rivers, called Madison Junction. They had completed a tour of many of Yellowstone's remarkable wonders and rather than lay claim to the region for personal gain, they had the idea of setting aside the geyser basins and surrounding country as a national park."

This is the Madison campfire story. How much of the story is historical record and how much is "myth?" This is the dialogue and debate of this book. The book documents the story, its evolution, its controversy, and the work and role of park historian Aubrey Haines, in its reconsideration. The authors have skillfully presented their debate.

The questions raised include: Was there a campfire talk that night? Where?

...The authors present us
with documentary evidence
and ask us to be
responsible...

Did the characters express the noble ideas they are credited with? Was the National Park idea born here?

To many of these questions the answer may be "no." Yet, the Madison campfire story embodies the idea of preserving pristine examples of the American landscape for the

benefit and enjoyment of all people. As such, the authors conclude, it is a myth that is alive and well that has captured "the spirit of the parks." As historians, following a documentary trail, they acknowledge that the story is not history.

Schullery and Whittlesey are longtime students of Yellowstone National Park. They are not trying to destroy this myth, for myths have a life of their own, and often serve society well. The Yellowstone "creation myth" has become the ideal for all National Parks and for the conservation movement throughout the world. Yet, it is the historian's responsibility to make sure that people who enjoy using the story know what they are doing. The authors present us, as readers, with documentary evidence and they ask us to be responsible for knowing the facts even as we pass on "this national myth" for people to enjoy.

As the authors state, "the campfire story is here to stay, for some as historical fact, for others as heroic metaphor."

Readers will enjoy this tussle with the historic and epic past.

--Jane Whiteley, P.M.

Henry M. Teller, Colorado's Grand Old Man, by Duane A. Smith. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2002. 264 pp. 35 black & white photos, 1 map, index. Cloth, \$29.95.

As a representative of pioneer Colorado men who played prominent roles in the development of the state, the choice of Henry M. Teller at the top of the list is readily demonstrated. Born in western New York in 1830, he typified so many young men of his time, by being a truly self-made man. He expanded his education as he supported himself by teaching school. He read law, developing into a successful lawyer. Taking an active part in community affairs was not only for the social aspects, but also involved him in business affairs, and developed and nurtured an interest in politics as a daily component of life. The small towns of 19th-century America grew, and their citizens grew with them.

Teller, in advancing himself, realized as so many did that the chances for success lay to the west. In 1858 Teller began a legal career in Morrison, Illinois. Here he grew in both business-wise and politically. But a general business depression limited his prosperity, and in 1861 he headed for the Pikes Peak gold fields, arriving in Central City.

Henry Teller was to be a staunch leader of Central City and Gilpin County from that time forward. He carried the banner of Central City in political confrontations with the "Denver Crowd". He was involved in the Colorado campaigns for statehood, at times on one side and then the other, as he interpreted the best course for Colorado.

Teller was a man of principles, and his course of action was determined by what was best for Colorado. Eastern interests held the power in the latter half of the 19th Century, and nurturing and defending the Western interests was a continual political struggle. Yet, Teller did his job well, being a Colorado senator for 30 years, longer than any other Coloradan. He was the first Coloradan to serve in a presidential cabinet, where, as Secretary of the Interior, who could champion Colorado interests. Teller was raised as Democrat, but the majority of his political career was as a Republican. Then, again as a man of principles and as a Coloradan, he broke with the Republicans in 1896 over the silver issue.

The life of Teller, has been a little publicized story. In 1941 Elmer Ellis wrote a detailed biography, *Henry Moore Teller, Defender of the West*. But the Ellis book is not well known among today's readers of Colorado history. Duane Smith is well known to Denver Westerners. At the Westerners' 199 Christmas Rendezvous, he was presented with the Memorial Scholarship Award for winning our third annual history competition. He has presented programs to our posse, and is a prolific author of books on Colorado and the West. His proficient style makes reading about the life of Henry Teller a pleasure. This book is highly recommended to everyone with an interest in Colorado history.

--Edwin A. Bathke, P. M.

Remember the Alamo! The Runaway Scrape Diary of Belle Wood, Austin's Colony, Texas 1835 -1836, by Lisa Waller Rogers. Texas Tech University Press, 2003. 199 pp, pictures. Hardcover, \$15.95.

Book three in the Lone Star Journals is appropriate for young adults. It is set at the time before the slaves were freed and before Texas was part of the United States in the 1830s during the Texas Revolution. It is set in the old west also known as Austin's Colony Texas. It is a dazzling story about a girl's life and her family written from her perspective. This book starts in the time of 1835 when the state we know as Texas was still a part of Mexico and ends when they are finally granted independence. These people that lived there were called Texians. "The army will cross and we will meet the enemy. Some of us may be killed and must be killed; but, soldiers, remember the Alamo, the Alamo! The Alamo!" General Sam Houston addressing his Texan army before the Battle of San Jacinto. April 19, 1836. To find out more about this amazing book you will just have to read it for yourself.

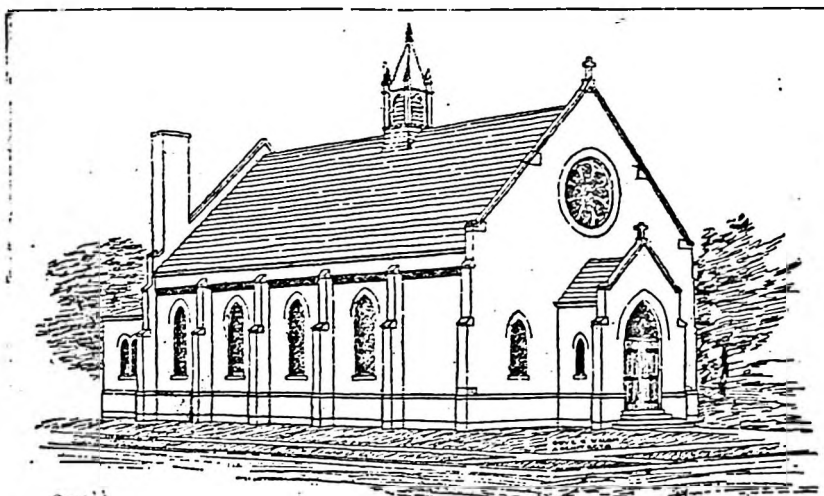
--Hilary Krieger, 12, daughter of George Krieger P.M.





The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

May - June 2004



NEW CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, THE EVANGELIST, IN HARMAN,
Which Was Dedicated Yesterday.

When two became one
The story of two East Denver Parishes,
and a Monsignor or two
by Keith Fessenden, P.M.
(presented January 28, 2004)



THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LX NO. 3



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Keith is married to Marge and they have two daughters. Keith collects stamps and other object d'art. He has fostered a lifelong interest in history, genealogy and archaeology.

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When two became one

The story of two East Denver Parishes, and a Monsignor or two by Keith Fessenden, P.M. (presented January 28, 2004)

Lost to antiquity somewhere in the missing records of the Spanish conquistadors are the beginnings of Catholic history in Colorado. The historian Bandelier, believed that the Franciscan friar, Juan de Padilla, crossed the southeastern corner of Colorado with the expedition of Francisco Vasquez de Coronado. Other historians doubt he did. Jesuit historian, Father Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., placed the first missionary visit to Colorado in the year 1604 when three Franciscans, Fray Estevan de Perea, Fray Barolome Romero, and Fray Francisco Munoz accompanied an expedition to Colorado.

More than a hundred years went by before another recorded visit is found in 1706 when Fray Domingo de Anza visited eastern Colorado with Juan de Ulibarri's expedition. Some believe Fray Anza established the first mission in Colorado a little east of Pueblo at El Quartejejo.¹ After that visits were more frequent. The first mass was held in Colorado no later than 1719 when Fray Juan del Pino offered a mass near Trinidad on September 19. Although arguments can be made that the first mass was made on August 4, 1706, by Fray de Aranz at El Quartejejo.

The first recorded baptism was in Conejos on January 8, 1860, by Father Jose Miguel Vigil. Father P. Montano had arrived in Conejos in late 1857 or early 1858, as the first resident priest in

Colorado so it is probable he performed baptisms earlier and the records have been lost.

As the 59ers arrived and the camps along Cherry Creek grew in importance the Most Rev. John B. Mieke, Vicar Apostolic of the territory east of the Rocky Mountains visited the mining camps at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, celebrating mass on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 1860. He visited Denver, Gregory Gulch (Central City) and California Gulch (Leadville).

In the fall of 1860 with all of Colorado now part of the Diocese of New Mexico and Arizona, Bishop John B. Lamy sent his trusted friend, Father Machebeuf, to Denver with Father John B. Raverdy. Soon Father Machebeuf was known in many of the mining camps of Colorado and Utah. He purchased church sites and built churches in Denver, Central City, and Golden City, with missions in another dozen or so towns. Catholic education also began in Colorado when the Sisters of Loretto established St. Mary's Academy in Denver in 1864.

On March 8, 1868, the Vicariate Apostolic of Colorado and Utah was established with Father Machebeuf as Titular Bishop and Vicar Apostolic². At this time there were three priests in Colorado besides Father Machebauf, Father Raverdy in Central City, Father P. J. Munnecom in Trinidad, and Father

Michael Rolly in Conejos. Father Machebeuf would become Bishop of Denver in 1887, with Father Nicholas C. Matz as Coadjutor Bishop.

By 1878 there were three parishes in Denver, St. Mary's Cathedral (now know as the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception), St. Elizabeth's, and Sacred Heart. They would soon be joined by three more parishes, St. Patrick's (1881), St. Joseph's (1883), and St. Anne's (now Annunciation, 1883).

Meanwhile, in 1882, an attorney, Edwin Harmon, and his wife, Lou, acquired a half section of land east of Denver just north of Cherry Creek. This half section was incorporated as the Town of Harmon with 200 residents on November 17, 1886. The Town of Harmon consisted of the area bordered by York Street (now University), Cherry Street (now Colorado Boulevard), Carson Street (now 6th Avenue), and a line about 400 feet south of Sumner Street (now 2nd Avenue).

By 1889 there were eight parishes in Denver, the six mentioned earlier having been joined by Holy Family (1889), and St. Dominic's (1889), and a small town east of Denver was ready for a parish. The Parish of St. John the Evangelist, commonly referred to as St. John's, began with a mass being celebrated by Franciscan Father Francis in the residence of James Motley, the Mayor of Harmon, on August 4, 1889. We know of this mass as it was recorded for posterity in the *Denver Republican* of August 5, 1889. According to the article, "A very strong movement is on foot to organize a church, and it is expected that wealthy property owners of the town will contribute liberally. The

saloon kept by James Arthur was closed from 9 o'clock to 1 p.m. out of respect to the services. With Protestant service already established and the prospective Catholic services, Harmon's spiritual welfare will be well looked after."³ The already established Protestant services referred to is a Congregationalist congregation now known as the Sixth Avenue United Church located at Adams and 6th Avenue. For those who are familiar with the area the name has just recently been changed from Sixth Avenue Community Church.

For three years the St. John's congregation held services in rented locations, the Harmon school at Fourth and Columbine, in at least one vacant store, in the Harmon Town Hall at Fourth and St. Paul (this building is still there as the Cherry Creek Grange), and in various homes. St. John's use of the Harmon School was brief as they were asked to discontinue using the school for services within several weeks.

Father Smith in his 1934 parish history put this invitation to stop down to anti-Catholic feelings, but the Congregationalists were also invited to leave, ...objections were made about holding a church in a school house, so we received a letter from the school board stating that we could not hold our Services there any longer."⁴

Services were usually either held by Father William O'Brien of St. Mary's Cathedral or Father Thomas Malone, the Pastor of St. Joseph's church, (West Sixth Avenue and Galapego Street). Then in 1891 the parish was assigned to the eastern end of St. Joseph's.

In 1892 the Rev. William Morrin became both the first permanent pastor of St. Johns and the first to reside within

the boundaries of the parish as he rented a house on Columbine Street between 3rd and 4th Avenues. The Panic of 1893 caused his transfer to Georgetown after only six months, leaving St. Johns without a pastor until the Rev. Patrick J. Kelly became a non-resident pastor in August 1893. When Father Kelly left in June 1896, the parish was again without a permanent pastor for several months. The Rev. Timothy O'Brien, the resident chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital, was appointed to the parish in October 1896.

While pastors were being shuffled, the parish met in a little wooden church approximately 25 by 40 feet located on the rear of a lot at the southwest corner of Fillmore Street and Third Avenue. The parish built this church for \$1,000 in late 1892 on land donated by James Motley. As Denver grew, it annexed the Town of Harmon in 1895. Much of Denver's growth, in areas such as the Country Club, along Seventh Avenue Parkway, Circle Drive, and the Speer Boulevard-Cherry Creek project occurred within St. John's parish. St. John's boundaries at this time extended from Clarkson Street on the west, Jasmine Street on the east, Eighth Avenue on the north, and Cherry Creek on the south.

The parish quickly outgrew the small church on Third Avenue and soon the congregation was thinking of a larger building. *The Denver Times* declared in 1899, "Harmon Catholics to Hold a Fair, Congregation of St. John's Church Out to Raise Some Cash. The congregation of St. John's Catholic Church in Harmon are making preparations for a big fair which will be held in the Harmon town hall, and for the purpose of raising funds with which to

build a \$10,000 church."⁵ Land was purchased at the northeast corner of Fifth and Josephine and architects Gove and Walsh designed the church building at no cost to the parish.

The cornerstone of the church was laid on November 2, 1902, by Bishop Nicholas Matz. It had unusual wording for a church reading,

The Church of St. John the Evangelist
This is a Terrible Place

Genesis 28-17

Erected by

Rev. T. J. O'Brien

MCMIL

Before one arrives with a wrong impression an explanation is needed as the original Latin, 'Terribilis est Iste locus', the literal translation is "This is a Terrible Place," but if the meaning is translated also, the quote means not a terrible place, but an awe-inspiring one.

Bishop Matz dedicated the new church on May 10, 1903. In his comments he noted it would prove to be too small for the congregation.

Time would prove him correct, but it would take 50 years.

In August 1907 the years of constantly changing pastors came to a close when the Rev. Charles J. Carr was appointed the pastor of St. Johns. Rev. Carr immediately supervised the erection of a rectory just east of the church



REV. CHARLES J. CARR

Rev. Charles J. Carr



Rev. Michael W. Donovan,
Pastor, 1912-22

Rev. Michael W.
Donovan

York Street on the west, Colorado Boulevard on the east, Seventeenth Avenue on the north and Eighth Avenue on the south was separated from Cathedral Parish effective June 21, 1911. The pastor at Ouray, Colorado, the Rev. Michael W. Donovan, became the first pastor of the new parish, which he named St. Philomena.

The parishioners of St. Philomena's had been attending mass either in the small chapel at St. Joseph's Hospital or at the Cathedral. The Sisters of Mercy were holding catechism classes for the children at St. Joseph's hospital. The immediate need of the new parish was for a church. Father Donovan immediately set to work and within nine months the construction of St. Philomena's church was begun at the southeast corner of Fourteenth Avenue and Detroit Street on March 12, 1912. Work proceeded quickly and on September 15, 1912, the church was dedicated at a mass celebrated by Bishop Matz. A rectory would be completed just north of

on Fifth Avenue.

Meanwhile, Denver was also growing just north of St. Johns Parish, and in 1911 it was decided there were sufficient families living east of Cathedral Parish to establish another parish. The area bounded by

the church along Fourteenth Avenue three years later on October 9, 1915.

In July of 1914, "Some person or persons unknown to the police entered St. Philomena's church, Fourteenth Avenue and Detroit Street, broke open the sanctuary, took from it the golden chalice bearing the blessed sacrament, smashed the chalice in a hundred pieces on the altar, and threw the sacred communion wafers about the church."⁶ A mass of reparation was held that same week, and Pastor Donovan "asked his congregation to follow the advice of the Christ who created them and 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.'"⁷

When America became involved in the Great War in 1917 Father Donovan was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Chaplain, with the Second Regiment of the Colorado National Guard. Father B.E. Naughton, the pastor of St. Mary's in Central City, served as pastor of St. Philomena's while Father Donovan was in France.

Captain Donovan returned to St. Philomena's in September 1919. Shortly after his return he purchased six lots behind the church on Fillmore Street with the stated intention of building a new church and converting the current church into a school. However, nothing beyond the purchase had been done by the time he died three years later on May 4, 1922, as the plan had not proven to be feasible. A new era was to begin in St. Philomena's Parish.

Father William M. Higgins, an assistant pastor at the Cathedral, was appointed pastor of St. Philomena's on May 5, 1922. It is reported he was reluctant to accept the appointment because St. Philomena's did not have a school. However, Father Higgins

accepted the posting and immediately set about rectifying the situation. "The wall between the two parlors on the north and east sides of the rectory was removed, making one long room on the first floor. A similar arrangement was made on the second floor providing another classroom directly above the first; while a room having western exposure was enlarged to accommodate a third class."⁸ The work was completed and classroom essentials were added by September 5, 1922, when school was opened. A playground was established on the southeast corner of East Fourteenth Avenue and Fillmore Street. A basement room was prepared with hooks for coats and tables for lunches. At one time the rectory held the pastor, two assistant pastors, four teachers, a housekeeper, a secretary, a janitor, and 135 children. "Proximity problems there were, but no casualties (were) reported"⁹ Father John Patrick Moran (whom you will meet again later) was one of these assistant pastors, for three years from 1921 until 1924.

The September 14, 1922, Denver Catholic Register reported "St. Philomena's school opened on Tuesday of last week, and the pastor has already had to refuse applicants for the first and second grades as every seat is occupied."

St. Philomena's Parish's search for land to build a permanent school ended with the purchase of lots on Tenth Avenue between Fillmore and Milwaukee Streets. Plans called for a high school, eight classrooms on the first floor, and eight on the second floor, with an auditorium in a separate building south of the main classroom building. In the basement were to be lavatories,

furnace rooms, storerooms, and a chapel.

Meanwhile, about 1920, in St. John's Parish, plans to build a school were organized, and land was purchased for a school at the northeast corner of Elizabeth Street and Sixth Avenue. Property was also purchased directly across Elizabeth Street in anticipation of building a church and rectory sometime in the future.

Competition seemed to exist between the parishes even in these early years for in an April 10, 1924, letter to Bishop Tihen, Father Higgins opposed the proposed establishment of a school in St. John's Parish. He stated it would be too close to the school St. Philomena's was building at Tenth Avenue and Fillmore Street. He stated the two schools would find themselves competing for the same children and reminded the Bishop he had just laid the cornerstone for St. Philomena's school on March 2nd with 1,500 people present.¹⁰

Apparently nothing came of the letter as St. John's new school building was completed on time in the fall of 1924. "A social opening of St. John the Evangelist's new school at Sixth Avenue and Elizabeth has been announced by the Rev. Charles J. Carr, pastor, for August 28. A social and card party will be held for the benefit of the school, in the new hall, that evening, under the direction of the ladies of the parish."¹¹ St. John's School opened the school year simultaneously with the city public schools on September 3, 1924, with 56 students in six grades, and three Sisters of Loretto as teachers. The total number of students in the 1924-25 school year was 79.



St. John's teachers, 1934

In the same week "St. Philomena's school was formally opened on Sunday, August 31, with a beautifully-appointed reception which was attended by nearly every member of the parish and by many friends throughout the city. Pink gladioli were used in decorating the school rooms . . . Receiving with Father Higgins and the sisters were Father Moran and Father Flanagan..."¹² St. Philomena's new school opened with 143 students in eight grades and five Sisters of Loretto as teachers. *The Denver Catholic Register* reported the ladies of St. Philomena's Parish Altar Society had "generously and courageously assumed the obligation of paying the interest on the church and school debt in order that the parish funds may be applied exclusively to the reduction of the principal."¹³

The Sisters of Loretto who taught at

both schools commuted from St. Mary's Academy at 1370 Pennsylvania Street in central Denver until each parish was able to purchase housing. In February 1932, St. Philomena's purchased a house at 1361 Detroit for use by the sisters as a convent. It was conveniently located directly across the street from the church. It wouldn't be until 1944 that St. John's would purchase a residence at 2830 East Seventh Avenue for use as a convent by the sisters teaching at St. John's school. The sisters had commuted for twenty years to St. John's.

St. John's school building was built in the conventional fashion with the basement, a first floor with four classrooms and a second floor also with four classrooms, built at the same time. St. Philomena's new school building was built in an unusual fashion with the first



St. Philomena's church

completed section in 1925 being "...a sub structure having lavatories, furnace room, and a temporary auditorium. First floor west side : Five class rooms and a full length corridor. Large substantial clothes-racks were placed down the center of the corridor and opposite the rooms they were meant to serve."¹⁴

In the summer of 1926 the first floor of St. Philomena's school was completed. The classrooms on the east side of the hallway were built and the temporary walls between three of the five west classrooms were removed. Permanent walls were erected which included cloak rooms and supply closets. An office, music room, and lavatories above the basement were added. Trees were planted around the large playground. The 1926 school year would also be the first year St. Philomena's organized gym classes. In 1926 misfortune struck St. Philomena's church again when a fire that gutted the upper part of the house at 1650 Detroit spread to the church on one side and the residence at 1346 Detroit on the other. *The Denver Post* reported that "Father Joseph McDonnell, assistant pastor of the

church, who discovered the fire, removed the blessed sacrament and the precious vestments from the church."¹⁵ The fire destroyed part of the church's roof and ate its way to just over the organ causing \$1,500 in damage to the church.

In 1932 on the Silver Jubilee of the founding of St. Philomena Parish various memorials were presented to the church. A main altar executed in composition and trimmed in marble was donated in memory of the deceased members of parish families. A new statute of St. Philomena was placed between the first and second Stations of the Cross. The St. Philomena Memorial Altar Society financed \$5,200 worth of improvements.¹⁶

During the depression years St. Philomena's school population continued to grow, increasing from 203 students in 1930 to 269 students in 1939. In 1934, Father Higgins would report there were 1,100 parishioners in the parish with an average Sunday Mass attendance of 1,000.

In 1937, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the St. Philomena's Parish occurred. Father Higgins reviewed the

spiritual accomplishments of the parish, and stated that "Within a quarter of a century there were 855 baptisms, 430 marriages, 355 deaths, 15,370 masses, 100,000 confessions, and three-fourths of a million communions. 'In giving a resume of the material stewardship of St. Philomena's church, Father Higgins showed cash receipts for the 25 years were \$525,247.70. The value of the church property is estimated to be \$185,250. The parish debt totals \$33,654, leaving the material assets of the parish at \$151,596.'"17

Helen Bonfils Somnes donated \$5,000 to St. Philomena's for the replacement of the old church organ. A new Aeolian-skinner organ was installed as the result of her generosity in 1940. Cushioned kneelers were installed in 1946.

South of Eighth Avenue progress continued also. By June 1926 the school had expanded to eight grades and the first graduating class of five students received Eighth Grade Certificates. The second term of the school year had 111 students. Each year the number of students grew as did the teaching staff. By 1934 seven Sisters and one lay person were teaching 221 students with assistance from the priests of St. John's Parish.

On August 13, 1932, six days after celebrating his twenty-fifth year as pastor of St. John's Father Carr died. He was succeeded by Rev. F. Gregory Smith, who was the pastor of St. Mary's, Littleton.

St. John's Church also acquired a new organ, installing a Moeller pipe organ in 1933.

In 1940, Father Smith moved to St. Francis de Sales Parish and Father John

Patrick Moran who had been the Pastor of St. Joseph's in Golden assumed the pastorship of St. John's. He would prove to be the right man in the right place at the right time. Under his leadership the physical plant of the parish was expanded and enhanced. He retired parish debt of \$20,000 within two years of his appointment. In 1944 "The first of the objectives planned for the development of St. John's parish, Denver, by the pastor, the Rev. John P. Moran, was realized this week with the purchase of a large attractive home for a sisters' convent.'"18

St. John's Parish boundaries were realigned in the 1940s. On the parish's eastern edge, the area between Jasmine Street and Colorado Boulevard, became part of Christ the King Parish in 1947. Nor did St. John's western border remain the same, as Mother of God Parish was created on the parish's western boundary in 1949 and St. John's Parish lost the area between Clarkson and Downing Streets.

Up north St. Philomena's added a second story to the school at a cost of \$150,000. Archbishop Vehr dedicated the school on Palm Sunday, April 2, 1950. The archbishop addressed the nearly 1,000 parishioners gathered in the school halls and classrooms over the school's new intercommunication system. In June, 21 students would receive eighth grade diplomas from St. Philomena's school. "The graduates in maroon caps and gowns will be preceded into the church by 20 small girls in white. Each graduate will be accompanied by a tiny tot bearing the diploma.'"19

With the additional space added, a kindergarten was added to the school in



St. Philomena's Band-1937

1951. To make room for the additional teaching sisters needed at the school the convent was enlarged and modernized in 1953 and a small chapel was added to the south side of the convent.

At graduation ceremonies on Monday, June 5, 1950, St. John's graduation class numbered 47 students. It was a special occasion as the day began with a morning mass celebrated by the Rev. Thomas McMahon, a former student of St. John's. The school's PTA then rewarded the students with a luncheon at the Olin Hotel prior to the graduation ceremonies. Following the graduation, a reception was held for the students and their families. Eight of the graduating students won scholarships to St. Mary's Academy, and St. Francis de Sales, Regis, St. Joseph's, and Cathedral high schools. As a side note on Sunday, June 4 the Rev. McMahon had celebrated his first Solemn Mass. His two priest brothers, the Rev. Robert McMahon and

the Rev. Donald McMahon, assisted him.

June 1950 continued to be a busy month for St. John's Parish as Father Moran bestowed the Papal Blessing on parishioners at all masses on Sunday, June 11. The unusual honor was granted him during an audience with Pope Pius XII in May.

As predicted by Bishop Matz 50 years before, St. John's did outgrow the church on Fifth Avenue. Half a year after the ground breaking occurred, Archbishop Vehr officiated at cornerstone laying ceremonies for a new church on July 13, 1952. The dedication occurred on Wednesday, December 2, 1953, it having taken nearly two years to complete the church. The completed pink brick church was trimmed with white Texas limestone with a red tile roof. It is 145 feet long and 50 feet wide with a seating capacity of 630. The Moeller pipe organ acquired in 1933 was moved to the new church where

there was now enough room for all of the organ's pipes to be used. The architectural refinements were described by the *Denver Catholic Register* as including a "cry room" at the rear of the church, panel heating from the floor and snow melting devices under the front sidewalk. The total cost of the church, including furnishings, was \$425,000.

The December 3, 1953, *Denver Catholic Register* announced the "Receipt of a Papal Blessing for St. John the Evangelist's Parish, Denver, fittingly climaxed the ceremonies in connection with the dedication of the parish's magnificent new church at E. Seventh Avenue Parkway and Elizabeth Street Wednesday."

The school on Elizabeth was becoming too crowded for the number of students so the old church building on East 5th Avenue three blocks away was partitioned into classrooms. Two years later construction of a new rectory on Seventh Avenue across the alley from the church started.

"Parochial School Hit By Blaze" the March 15, 1954, *Denver Post* announced. "A \$5,000 fire Sunday night gutted the basement auditorium at St. Philomena's school at 940 Fillmore Street. ... Because of smoke damage throughout the building all classes were canceled Monday for the 500 students of the parochial elementary school. Rescued in the fire were two parakeets 'Frosty' and 'Pretty Boy' and a hamster 'Happy'."

In 1959 Father Higgins heard a rumor that St. John's Parish was planning to build a high school. He immediately advised Archbishop Vehr offering to help financially with the project. In a few days he learned his

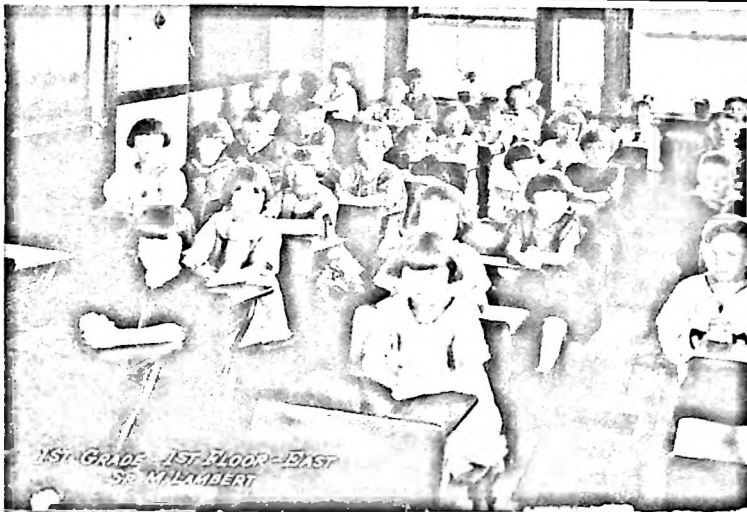
sources were wrong and what was being planned was an expansion of St. John's elementary school. He immediately sent another letter to the Archbishop withdrawing his offer of support. "Communication between the two parishes never was good."²⁰

Finally in 1961, St. John's school acquired more space. An addition containing six classrooms and a gymnasium-auditorium was built on the south side of the school. The new construction, which included renovation of the original school building, cost the parish \$280,000.

In April 1961 St. Philomena Parish's misfortune continued. "The Roman Catholic Church has stricken the name of Saint Philomena from its liturgical calendar, it was reported Wednesday."²¹ "Denver's St. Philomena's Catholic Church - one of a number in the United States must be renamed as a result of the action this week by the Sacred Congregation of Rites. But whatever action is taken won't be hasty, a spokesman at the chancery office of the Denver archdiocese said Friday. Archbishop Urban J. Vehr will await official notification from Vatican City before selecting a new name for St. Philomena's"²²

Apparently the "official notification" was never received, as in the remaining twenty years of her existence St. Philomena Parish never changed her name.

Despite the devastating news the parish continued to grow. The front porch of the rectory was enclosed to provide a conference-meeting room. In early 1962 crowding at St. Philomena's school encouraged the construction of an addition on the north side of the



St. Philomena's 1st grade, 1924

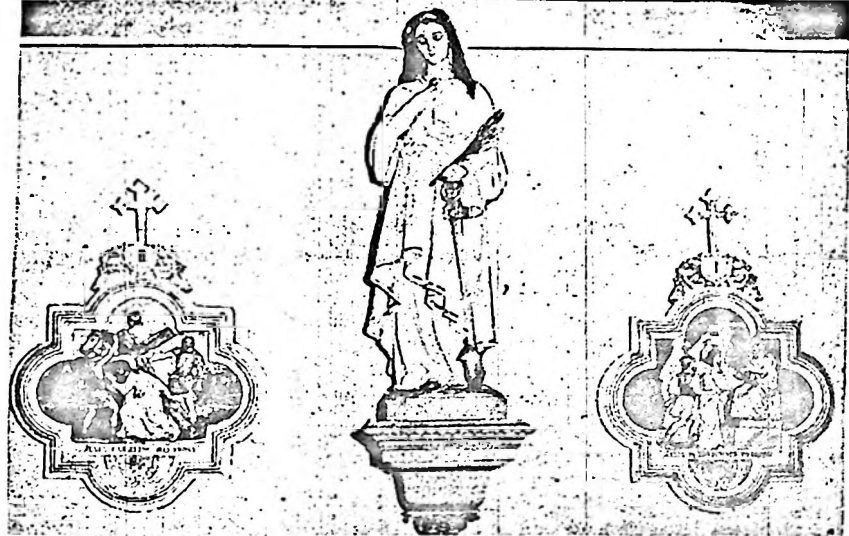
school. This addition consisting of Ricketson Hall in the basement, three classrooms and a hall on the main floor, and three classrooms and a hall on the second floor, was dedicated in early 1963. Two houses south of the church were purchased for parking space in 1965 and a new side entrance on the south side of the church was completed.

A headline in the September 13, 1962, *Denver Catholic Register* declared "St. Philomena's Parish to Note 50th Anniversary on Sept. 16." A Solemn Mass commemorating the 50th anniversary of the dedication of St. Philomena's church, Denver, will be offered on Sunday, Sept. 16, at 9:30 a.m. ... Beginning with the 7 a.m. mass a reception will be held on the church grounds following each Mass. In May 1967 "Monsignor (Higgins) was honored on the 45th anniversary of his pastorate of the parish which coincided with his golden jubilee as a priest.

Nearly 2,000 people filed through a six-hour reception line to honor a friend, a gentleman, and a priest's priest."²³ He was battling cancer and on December 31, 1967, Father Higgins died in his own room in St. Philomena's rectory.

In the next three years he would be followed by a rotating door of priests. Monsignor Kolka was assigned to the parish in early 1968 and when he died in January 1969 Father Frank Morfield was assigned as pastor of both St. John's and St. Philomena's. Later in 1969 Father Leo Horrigan became pastor. Finally a little continuity arrived at St. Philomena's with the arrival of Father Raymond Jones who became pastor in June of 1970. He would prove to be a popular choice, when he was transferred in March 1977 many members of the parish protested to Archbishop Casey.

Death struck St. John's Parish also in January 1969 when Monsignor



Statue at St. Philomena

Moran died at the age of 74. He had been at St. John's for 29 years. As noted above Father Frank Morfield followed him. He would remain as pastor until June 1978.

In 1960 the combined school attendance for St. Philomena's and St. John's was 1,014 students; by 1970 attendance was down to 582 students. In 1969 a study team headed by George V. Kelly recommended the two parishes be combined in a February 1969 letter to Archbishop Casey. It would take 12 years before the Archdiocese would act. In 1980 the combined school attendance had dropped to 321 students.

Fire, vandalism, and unanticipated circumstances weren't just limited to St. Philomena's Parish. On Easter Sunday 1972 at St. John's 10:30 Mass associate pastor Rev. Bernard O'Hayre asked Bishop Colin Winter, who had been recently exiled from South Africa for his

outspoken stance against the racist apartheid laws in his diocese, to speak. "...and then, in a spontaneous gesture, invited him to help distribute communion... This amounted to concelebration of the Mass..."²⁴ This violation of church law was reported to the Archdiocese who invited Father O'Hayre for a visit with Archbishop Casey's office where he was given three options, resign, be suspended, or make a public apology. Father O'Hayre chose a fourth, offering to take a leave of absence instead. This was accepted by the Chancery. However, the turmoil did not end here. The "10:30 Catholic Community", comprised of those who attend the 10:30 mass Sundays at St. Johns, felt Father O'Hayre was not given proper "Due Process" and organized. They attempted to meet with Archbishop Casey, who after consenting stated he would meet with elected members of the

Pastoral Council instead. The "10:30 Catholic Community" picketed the Archdiocese of Denver's Chancery at 938 Bannock to no avail. The Archbishop's response in the *Denver Post* was, "Authority is the backbone of the Roman Catholic Church. And those who don't accept this might as well be Congregationalists, says Denver Archbishop James V. Casey."²⁵ The discontent spread as the "10:30 Catholic Community" asked "if Father Morfield cannot serve the needs of all of St. John's, he resign as pastor."²⁶ By June members of the "10:30 Catholic Community" were meeting in Congress Park each Sunday for a 10:30 mass.²⁷ A "nongeographic" parish was considered. Currently, 31 years later, the "10:30 Catholic Community" is meeting in the Capitol Heights Presbyterian Church located at the northeast corner of Eleventh Avenue and Fillmore Street. The Archdiocese provides a priest for the mass.

Upon Father Morfield's departure in 1978 Monsignor William H. Jones who had been residing in the rectory and assisting in the parish for five years while acting as Vicar General of the Archdiocese was named pastor. This would prove to be an interim appointment as three months later Father John V. Anderson succeeded him in September. A new study was performed and in March 1980 a definite proposal for combining the two parishes was forwarded to the Archbishop. Ten months later the proposal was approved when Archbishop Casey announced on January 9, 1981, the two parishes would be consolidated into one parish, The Church of the Good Shepherd.

The physical plants of both the

former parishes continued to be used. Both schools were consolidated into Good Shepherds School located in the old St. Philomena's School at Tenth Avenue and Fillmore Streets. St. John's school building was used as parish offices and a portion was leased to a Montessori school. Services were held in both the new Church of Good Shepherd Church, the old St. John Church, and Higgins Chapel, the old St. Philomena Church. But with dwindling attendance more dissension was on the horizon.

The May 27, 1984, *Denver Post* reported, "Like two neighboring towns, St. Philomena and St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Churches have a history of fierce competitiveness. The parochial grade schools have fought in sports and scholastics and the adults sometimes set East Eighth Avenue as the 'railroad tracks' separating the middle class congregation of St. Philomena from the 'country club' parish of St. John, once Denver's most affluent Catholic Parish.

Each congregation, observing 'territorial jealousy' has had deep parish loyalty and some deep hostility toward the other congregation only nine blocks away. Some members in each parish never did and never will attend services at the 'other church'. The division has even split families on occasion.

The decades of rivalry came to a boil in 1980 when the two congregations were merged into the Church of the Good Shepherd, with headquarters at St. John's building, 2626 E. Seventh Ave. Services, however, continued at both locations. The antagonism is bubbling once again because St. Philomena's, at East 14th Avenue and Detroit St. is

about to face the wrecking ball.

The deep-seated rivalry between the parishes dates to the days when each had beloved, strong willed, 'grand old man' priests who fostered competitiveness to build loyalty. Msgr. John P. Moran served St. John's from 1940 to 1969 and Msgr. William Higgins was at St. Philomena's from 1922 to 1967. Loyalty was easy to foster. St. Philomena's had a middle-class and blue collar parish with close knit, church-minded families. Their church was their community and their social life.

St. John's, which had 500 families in 1979, was composed mostly of doctors, lawyers and other professionals.

Kids at St. Phil's learned to swim at Congress Park," said a one young Denver businesswoman who grew up in both parishes. "Kids at St. John's learned how to swim at the Denver Athletic Club."

The Rev. John Anderson, pastor of the combined parish, acknowledges that the merger has been difficult. "It's the first merger we've ever had in the Archdiocese of Denver," Anderson pointed out. Old-time parish loyalties, always common in Catholic congregations, have been the biggest stumbling block, Anderson said, 'but some people didn't give it much of a try. The Eighth Avenue barrier is still there in the minds of many.'²⁸

The article quoted above was written as the result of a decision made by the Archdiocese to demolish the old St. Philomena's church. They proposed to erect a 15-story high rise for wealthy elderly people. Rallies were held and protests of many kinds occurred. But on June 11, 1984, demolition of Higgins

Chapel began with the dismantling of the interior. Construction of the high rise was to begin in early 1985 but the Archdiocese canceled plans to build the high rise for the wealthy when it became apparent it would have to be subsidized. Later, Higgins Plaza, a retirement home operated by the Archdiocese, was constructed on the site of St. Philomena's. It is a fitting tribute to Monsignor Higgins. The children attending Good Shepherd Elementary School visit the elderly during December and at other times during the year.

By the late 1980s both of the school buildings were again in use for the purpose for which they were built. The school building at Tenth Avenue and Fillmore Street contained the preschool and grades one through five. The preschool and first through fourth grades were split into two tracts, Traditional and Montessori. After preschool there was one class in each grade in the traditional tract while the Montessori tract combined first and second in one room and third and fourth in one room. The two tracts merged into two fifth grade classes equally split between students from each tract.

The school building at Elizabeth Street and Sixth Avenue became a Middle School with two classes of each grade, sixth, seventh, and eighth. The parish offices remained in this building. Good Shepherd Parish became the first parish in the metro area to offer the return of a beloved ritual by offering a Tridentine Mass on Wednesdays beginning in 1989. In October 1990 the mass became a regular Sunday event.

In the late 1990s the Montessori tract was changed to follow the conventional Montessori practice of using

three-year segments. The first, second, and third grades were combined and a split fourth-fifth grade traditional class was instituted.

The inconvenience and cost of operating two campuses six blocks apart, the declining physical plant, and the need for a parish hall that was accessible by disabled individuals had lead to discussions in Good Shepherd Parish for years on combining the two schools. Finally in the late twentieth century, plans were made to combine the two schools at the Elizabeth Street location. Construction began on an addition on the north side of the original school building at Elizabeth Street. Included in the six-plus million-dollar expansion were a complete renovation of the old school, both the 1926 and the 1962 sections, a cafeteria-parish hall, and air conditioning for the church.

Part of the cost of the project was paid for by the sale of the Tenth Avenue and Fillmore Street property to the Denver Waldorf School for \$3,000,000 in the fall of 2002. The Denver Waldorf School took possession the property in June 2003 and opened on its new campus that fall.

Good Shepherd School's new facility was completed in time for the 2003-04 school year. It opened to rave reviews by parishioners and the Good Shepherd School Building was dedicated on Sunday, October 26, 2003, with a morning of celebration and thanksgiving including a pancake breakfast and ministry fair.

The Church of the Good Shepherd Parish is different from the parishes of St. Philomena and St. John the Evangelist in many ways yet it continues the strong tradition of the two parishes that

became one.

There were many notable, fine, and interesting individuals who have been associated with the parishes of St. Philomena, St. John the Evangelist, and Good Shepherd. I would like to tell you more about two of these exceptional individuals.



Rt. Rev. John P. Moran

The Right Reverend Monsignor Moran

Father John P. Moran was born in Denver on February 19, 1894, the son of Kieran and Mary Moran. His brother Thomas J. Moran was an official of the U.S. Internal Revenue department in Denver. He was a member of St. Patrick's Parish and attended the parish school and Regis College. He moved on to St. Thomas Seminary and was ordained by the Most Rev. Bishop Tihen on June 13, 1920.

He was appointed an assistant

pastor at Annunciation Parish in Leadville and a year later was transferred to St. Joseph's in Grand Junction. Then in October 1921 he became an assistant pastor of St. Philomena Parish in Denver. He left St. Philomena's in September 1924 to become pastor of St. Joseph's Parish in Golden. While here he built the mountain chapel of Christ the King at Evergreen, at that time a mission served from Golden.

While pastor in Golden he was chaplain of the Boys Training School in Golden and the Morrison Home for Girls in Morrison. He became a nationally recognized authority on child welfare, serving as chairman of the Child Placement Service of Catholic Charities for years. He presided as chairman of various sectional discussions on child problems and behavior at National Conferences of Catholic Charities. He contributed articles to various periodicals on remedial procedures, youth and rehabilitation.

Then in May he was assigned to St. John the Evangelist Parish in Denver. He became a Rt. Rev. Monsignor sometime between 1950 and October 1953. He was an exceptional individual.

The Right Reverend Monsignor Higgins

Monsignor William Higgins was born February 8, 1890, in New York City, one of nine children of William A. Higgins and Sarah Cassley. The family moved to Denver in 1905 where his father was a mail carrier. He attended Grant and Edison Schools in Denver. He dropped out of school in the eighth grade to help support the family. He worked as a bellhop with the Brown

Palace and Metropole hotels. He returned to school, attending Regis High School and College graduating with honors. He was the baccalaureate speaker at graduation in 1912.

He proceeded to enter St. Thomas Seminary in the fall of 1913 and was ordained to the priesthood in Kearney, Nebraska, on June 17, 1917. His first assignment was as assistant pastor at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Denver. Then five years later he moved on to his final assignment as pastor of St. Philomena's. He became a Domestic Prelate in December 1942 and thereafter could be referred to as the Rt. Rev. Higgins.

It was said that Father Higgins kept a close eye on his parishioners. He had a form letter he would send to any with an unexplained absence from Sunday mass, reminding them of their obligations for both mass attendance and to support the church both financially and physically. Supposedly the letter came into use about 1924. How long its use continued is uncertain. He was a remarkable man.



Endnotes

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⁴ Lamont Lily, The Story of the Sixth Avenue Community Church.

⁵ *The Denver Times*, October 29, 1899, page 5.

⁶ *The Denver Post*, July 11, 1914, page 2.

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⁸ Sister Mary Lambert Goff, S.L., Brief History of St. Philomena School, page 2.

⁹ *The Denver Catholic Register*, September 13, 1962, page 2.

¹⁰ Henry Johns, A History of the Parish of St. Philomena, manuscript.

¹¹ *The Denver Catholic Register*, August 21, 1924, page 1.

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¹³ *The Denver Catholic Register*, September 18, 1924.

¹⁴ Goff, page 5.

¹⁵ *The Denver Post*, October 26, 1926, page 1.

¹⁶ *The Denver Post*, August 26, 1932, page 11.

¹⁷ *The Denver Catholic Register*, September 23, 1937, page 1.

¹⁸ *The Denver Catholic Register*, April 13, 1944.

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of St. Philomena, manuscript.

²¹ *The Denver Post*, April 19, 1961, page 3.

²² *The Denver Post*, April 22, 1961, page 5.

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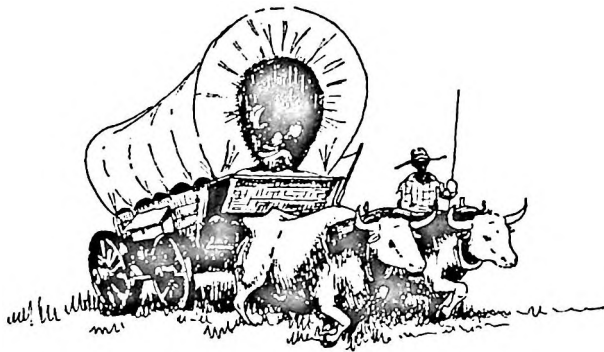
²⁵ *The Denver Post*, April 30, 1972, page 62.

²⁶ *The Denver Post*, May 25, 1972, page 3.

²⁷ *The Denver Post*, August 2, 1972, Religion Section, page 1.

²⁸ *The Denver Post*, May 27, 1984, page 1-E.

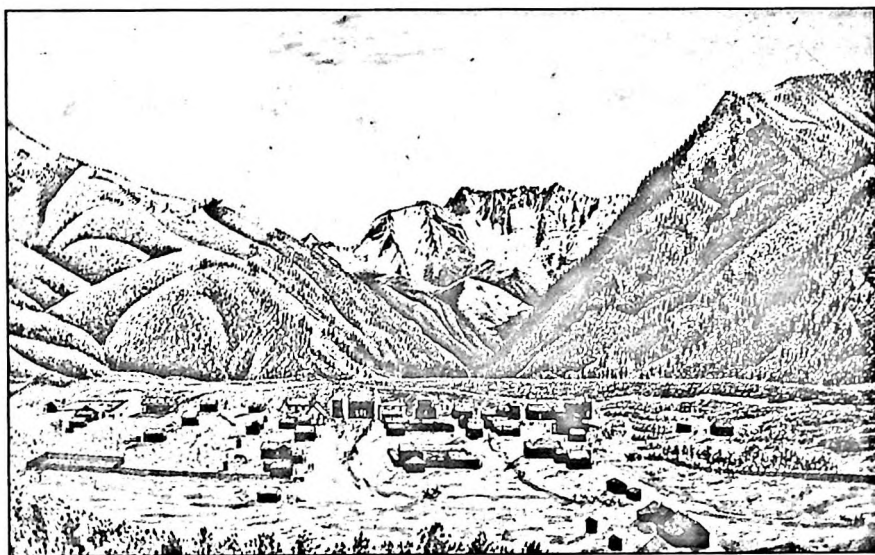




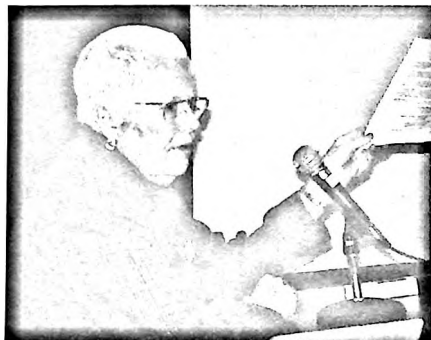


The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

July - August 2004



Parrott City
Colorado's boom-to-dust mining camp
by Doris Osterwald, C.M.
(presented February 25, 2004)



Our Author

Doris Osterwald, a Denver native, is a graduate of East High and majored in journalism at the University of Denver until she discovered geology. This change led her to the University of Wyoming where she acquired a Master's degree in geology and her husband, a geologist, Frank Osterwald. She made another career change after Frank convinced the family that riding and chasing trains was a fascinating avocation.

As a result, Doris has written six books on Colorado's railroads, four of which include her well-known *Mile by Mile Guides, Cinders & Smoke, Ticket to Toltec*, and her latest book, *Rails Thru the Gorge*, a guide for the Canon City & Royal Gorge Railroad. More than 800,000 copies of her guides have been sold. She also co-authored *Wyoming Mineral Resources* with Frank and wrote a guide for Rocky Mountain National Park, *Rocky Mountain Splendor*. Other titles include *Narrow Gauge to Cumbres* and *Beyond the Third Rail*.

Along with other professional positions, Doris taught geology in the Jefferson County Public Schools outdoor education program. She is a member of the Colorado Scientific Society, the Denver Posse of Westerners, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, National Association of American Pen Women and the Denver Women's Press Club.

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Parrott City

Colorado's boom-to-dust mining camp

by Doris Osterwald, C.M.

(presented February 25, 2004)

Long before the first prospectors dipped their gold pans into the icy waters of the La Plata River along the southern base of the La Plata Mountains, the area had acquired a fascinating history that went back many centuries. The site of Parrott City probably was a campsite for Native Americans who roamed throughout the area thousands of years before the first Spanish explorers arrived in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The first documented trip into the region by the Spanish was in 1540. By the 1700s several well-established Spanish trails passed along the base of the mountains and explorers probed the high peaks for silver and gold. In 1765 Don Juan Rivera led a major expedition from Mexico north along the Rio Grande, northwest along the Rio Chama, across the Continental Divide near the present New Mexico-Colorado state line and continued north to present-day Gunnison, Colorado. At a number of sites in the San Juan mountains remains of old prospect holes, tunnels, crude smelting and reduction works, arrastras¹ and placer mining operations have been found that date back to Spanish expeditions. The site of Parrott City

is believed to be one location where Spanish prospectors found some placer gold.

During 1860 and 1861 gold seeker Captain Charles Baker led two auspicious expeditions into the San Juan Mountains. These trips were widely reported in regional and national newspapers. Soon other prospectors began to venture into the rugged vastness of the San Juans. When news reached the West that the Civil War had started would-be miners packed up and headed home. After the war many penniless, battle-weary veterans headed West in search of new lives: prospecting seemed one way to make a quick fortune even though the territory still belonged to the Ute Indians and miners were not welcomed.

Sometime after the Baker party reported its success in the San Juan Mountains, Captain John Thomas Moss, a well-known prospector and entrepreneur, decided to see for himself if the reported gold strikes along the La Plata River at the base of the La Plata Mountains were worthy of his time and investment.

John Moss was born March 4, 1838 at Utica, N.Y. In 1854,

16 years old, his father, John Moss, moved his family and children to Delaware County, Iowa. Two years later, the Scotch-Irish family relocated to Mitchell County, eastern Iowa near Mason City. John Moss is known of John Moss' education, but he had a rare talent for learning languages including English, Spanish and French. Moss' multilingual experience began during the fall of 1856 when a group of Winnebago Indians had a winter camp about two miles from the Moss homestead. John often visited the Indians, made friends with Chief White Deer, gradually became fluent in the Winnebago language and gained the confidence of the tribe. He also became fascinated with the Indians' nomadic life style.

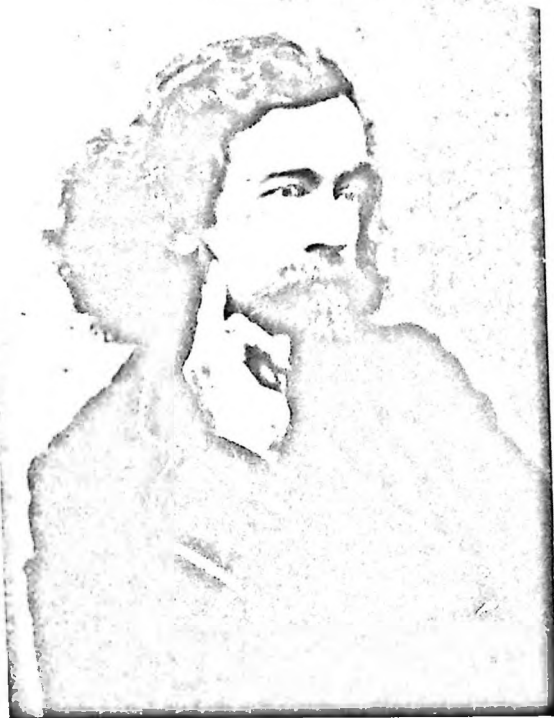
John Moss left home in the fall of 1857 and headed west in search of adventure. During the next two years he worked as a pony express rider mainly between Nebraska and Colorado. Along the way he became acquainted with members of the Plains Indian tribes and learned their dialects and customs also.

In 1860 or 1861 he worked his way to California; San Francisco became his "home base," so to speak. His future of prospecting had a strong attraction to a young man and

New Mexico. Everywhere he went he made friends with the Indians he met, learned their dialects and gained their acceptance and friendship. It was reported (*The Trail*, March 1920) that Moss could sit and talk with a Spaniard, a Frenchman and an Indian all at the same time, addressing each in his own tongue.

His wanderlust and solo prospecting eventually took him to the Black Mountains that extend from present-day Lake Mead south to I-40 on the east side of the Colorado River and west of Flagstaff, Arizona. He also prospected in the Cerbat and Hualapai Mountains staking claims in many locations throughout what became Mojave County, Arizona.

Moss became friends with the Mojave (sometimes spelled Mohave) Indians and with the tribe's leader, Chief Irataba². In 1862 the chief reputedly showed Moss where shiny, yellow metal was lying on the ground. This became the Moss Lode in the El Dorado Canyon Mining district. John Moss hired helpers (probably the Indians) to dig out a reported \$250,000 of gold from a small pocket, called a glory hole, about 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Moss sold this claim for \$500 cash but believed the site was discovered by an unknown prospector who gave samples of the ore to have assayed. After the ore was valued, the site was reported the ore was valuable.



Collection of Grace Sossaman, Bayfield, CO

Capt. John Moss, taken while living in Colorado

man left the area, Moss filed a claim. No one knows which story is correct!

In the territorial book of deeds and claims for the years 1862 through 1864 there are many listings of mines that were bought and sold by Moss. His first attempt to establish a townsite and start a ranch was in the vicinity of Fort Mojave. Between April 1 and July 23, 1863, John Moss held 11 discovery claims of the 300 claims recorded. When he sold a claim it was always for

newspaper a...
Moss began to refer to him as Captain, not because of any military service, but because he was a natural leader able to make friends with everyone he met. His niece, Mrs. Marguerite Moss Granger, described her uncle as a strikingly handsome man, fully six feet in height and very straight of figure. He had dark blue eyes and beautiful brown curly hair, which he wore to his shoulders, as was the fashion in those days. He also sported a mustache and beard. His Indian name was Narraguanep, which meant "never die or live forever." An

affable promoter, Moss probably never worked a day digging into bedrock. He was described as a jovial prankster who was inclined to tell of his daring adventures. His exaggerated speech helped in his consumption of a prodigious amount of whisky.

Some of his tales account of being the first to go through the Grand Canyon on a raft. Although his name somehow connected to Captain Meadow massacre



Courtesy Colorado Historical Society
**Mojave Chief Arataba taken in
 Washington, D.C. in 1865**

was still living in Iowa at that time. When the first diamond finds were announced at vague locations rumored to be in the Arizona and New Mexico territories, Moss undoubtedly heard of these exciting discoveries, but there is no solid evidence to connect him with what became the great diamond hoax. The fraud was exposed in 1872 when incredible deposits of dia-

monds, rubies, garnets and emeralds reported in a secret location in Wyoming turned out to be salted.

After Moss sold all his claims and mines he had money to burn and was generous almost to a fault. Because of his friendship with the Mojave Indians he was appointed an agent for the tribe. The government had not kept its promises to the Mojaves and they were on the verge of starting a war with the United States because food, clothing and blankets sent to the tribe were diverted by a previous dishonest Indian agent who sold the supplies and pocketed the money. Agent Moss believed that if he could convince Chief Arataba to accompany him to Washington to speak to the "Great White Father, Lincoln," this revolt could be stopped.

In 1864 Moss offered to take Irataba to Washington as his guest, pay all expenses and return the chief home safely. He spent more than \$10,000 on this trip. The following account is quoted from Robert L. Brown's book *An Empire of Silver*.

"Moss and his companion went from lower California to San Francisco in a steamer. East of the Rockies, they boarded what



Courtesy Colorado Historical Society

John T. Moss, portrait taken in Washington, D.C. in 1865

proved to be the chief's first train. Irataba was terrified. When the speed got down to thirty or forty miles per hour, the old man tried to throw himself out the window. During the remainder of the first day of their journey, it took two men to prevent him from breaking his neck. He finally got used to

railroad travel, however, and actually said that he liked it toward the last. The more he saw of city life, the more his amazement grew. Moss and his friend lived at one of the best New York hotels for a week, faring sumptuously. During the night run south from Jersey City, Moss repeatedly made the chief get up and look out the window at the gaslights—the object being to make the Indian think that he was still riding through New York City. They arrived in Philadelphia before daybreak and remained there until night. When the journey to Baltimore was resumed, Moss still practiced his deception by waking the chief at every town to convince him that they were still riding under the New York gaslights. The game was continually played upon the unsuspecting and bewildered Indian until the trip ended in Washington.”

Some accounts indicate that Moss left the Indian chief in New York City while he made a trip to Iowa to see his family. Irataba had a

great time in the city, spent Moss' money freely and was treated to a ride in a carriage through the streets with Mayor Goodfrey (Malach).

With Moss acting as interpreter, President Lincoln spent an hour talking with Chief Irataba. He learned much about Mojave tribal life and the problems which brought the two men to Washington. Irataba could not understand the number of soldiers in the city until Lincoln explained that the country was at war. The trip was planned to take about three months, but it was six months before the two men returned. By then, members of his tribe had begun to fear for their leader's life. When Irataba returned home he spoke to his tribe of the trip and his observations while parading in his new general's suit, belt and sword. When asked how many soldiers the United States had, Irataba replied by picking up a handful of sand and saying, "Mojaves." Then he pointed to a nearby sandbar and said, "Americans."

After Capt. Moss and Chief Irataba returned from Washington Moss left his Mojave friends and moved to San Bernadino County, California where he made discoveries at White Pine and Yellow Pine. San Francisco probably remained his home base and undoubtedly he knew the city's bankers.

During 1867 while prospecting in Mexico, Capt. Moss met Gen.

William J. Palmer at La Paz, Baja California. Palmer was in charge of a railroad survey to the Pacific coast and the two men enjoyed a Christmas feast together. In 1869 Palmer's *Report of Surveys Across the Continent* was published.

As a result of the publicity about Baker's 1860 and 1861 expeditions to the San Juans, in 1873 the audacious Moss led a ragtag group of 10 California prospectors to the La Plata mountains via Arizona and Utah, an area he knew from previous travels. The party crossed the San Juan River and decreed the wide valley through which they traveled be called Montezuma in honor of a long-dead emperor of Mexico. At the entrance to La Plata Canyon the men found placer gold and named the area the California Mining District and the small tent settlement California Bar. A hundred years earlier the Spanish had found enough silver in the area to justify calling the nearby mountains, La Plata, which means silver, but Moss and his men were only interested in gold.

While the group was in the area the fast-talking Moss, who wore his hair long and dressed like an Indian, made friends with the Southern Utes and managed to convince Chief Ignacio to sign a private treaty with him. For a hundred ponies and blankets Moss and his men were granted the right to farm and mine on a 36-square-

mile tract centered at the mouth of La Plata Canyon. This private treaty was signed before the national Brunot Treaty was finally passed by Congress in 1874. With the new treaty in effect farmers and ranchers could legally settle in Montezuma and surrounding valleys and miners could dig for gold in the San Juans without constantly worrying about Indian attacks.

After prospecting during the spring and summer Moss returned to California in the fall of 1873, taking along choice samples of placer gold and the signed treaty with the Indians to convince prospective investors that the area offered fabulous opportunities. He returned to Colorado the following spring as the agent for Tiburcio Parrott, patriarch of the family-owned Parrott & Co., a San Francisco bank. Overwhelmed by his benefactor's generosity Moss used funds to start building a flume to bring water to the gold-bearing gravels along the La Plata River at California Bar, to do further prospecting in the mountains and also lay out a townsite. A flume was started but was not completed because it was too difficult to separate the placer gold from the coarse glacial gravels.

On the northern edge of the land Moss acquired from the Utes, along the base of a small rounded hill of glacial debris left by the La Plata glacier, Moss laid out Parrott City, named in honor of his benefac-

tors. This site was on a gravel-covered terrace above the western bank of the La Plata River and south of the older California Bar campsite. Parrott City, elevation 8,600 feet, was located in a lovely open meadow through which Parrott Creek, a small intermittent stream meandered southward to join the La Plata River. Two prominent mountains, Parrott Peak, elevation 11,876 feet, to the northwest and Baldy Peak, elevation 10,866, east-northeast of the town stand like sentinels at the entrance to La Plata Canyon. In addition to laying out and naming the streets in his new town Moss also planned to sell lots for ranching and farming.

In 1871 Andrew R. Lewis (always referred to as A.R.) and family, along with his brother Julius C. Lewis, moved to Colorado. Julius Lewis settled in Denver and became a prominent businessman and eventually president of the Denver Lumbermen's Association. The two brothers remained in contact throughout their lives.

Sometime in 1872 the A.R. Lewis family, along with a small party of prospectors, made their way to the La Plata Mountains. Reports of gold strikes in the San Juan region were probably the impetus for their move to this remote, isolated part of the West although no records have been found to explain why they picked this area for their new life in the wilderness.

Lewis was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio September 17, 1820. As a young man he worked on the family farm near Flint, Michigan until the 1850s when he ventured west to the gold fields of California and spent several years prospecting. He returned to Michigan in 1864 and married Carolyn Cushman, who was born February 23, 1829 in Earlville, New York. Andrew and Carolyn were married in Bay City, Michigan. The couple adopted a baby girl they named Julia Elizabeth who had been born in Bay City on May 22, 1865.

Lewis and Capt. Moss met along the banks of La Plata Creek and became good friends almost immediately. Soon A.R. was swept up in Moss' plans for a new town. During 1874 the first cabins, shacks and temporary tent cabins were built at the townsite. The Lewises were among the first families to build in the new town. A.R. began prospecting and mining on claims he filed soon after his arrival. Lewis Mountain and Lewis Creek were later named in his honor. Probably the Bay City mine was named by Lewis for his family's Michigan roots.

A.R. became involved in the new town's activities and was elected to office many times during his years in Democratic politics. Julia Lewis related in later years that her parents served meals in the small dining room of their cabin to the overflow crowds in town for

trials and legal business after Parrott City became the La Plata County seat. Because the hotel's dining room could not handle all the increased business, the Lewises helped feed the hungry visitors.

There was no bank in Parrott City so when the county treasurer, A.R. Lewis, collected taxes or made other monetary transactions, he hid the money in empty lard buckets buried in the cellar of their cabin until it could be safely transported to Animas City, or, later, to Durango banks. Mrs. Lewis sewed large pockets into her petticoats where money was concealed before being transferred to the lard buckets.

During the summer of 1874 the Hayden Survey sent several surveying parties to the San Juans to map the topographic features and assess the minerals resources in the area opened up for prospecting after the Brunot Treaty was ratified by Congress. This treaty negated the one John Moss had signed with Chief Ignacio the previous year.

The Hayden expedition, led by photographer William H. Jackson, and including recorder Ernest Ingersoll and two packers named Stevens and Mitchell, met Edward H. Cooper, a prospector who told the group of some Indian ruins along the Mancos River and on Mesa Verde. During August 1874 the Jackson party set out from Baker's Park to find and photograph the Indian ruins described by Co-

per. Near the La Plata River the Jackson party met John Moss who had seen the cliff dwellings possibly in 1869. Jackson was eager to photograph the area so Moss offered to lead the men to the ruins where Jackson made the first known images. Several photographs of Moss at the ruins and at his California Bar campsite are in the W.H. Jackson collection at the U.S. Geological Survey. It is no wonder that when Moss laid out the streets of his new town, Hayden Street was the main thoroughfare at the north end of town. Lewis Street was named for Andrew R. Lewis and Baker Street was named for Capt. Charles Baker. The source of Putnam Street is not known. A sawmill was one of the first businesses in Parrott City, followed by the usual assortment of bars, an assay office, a general store and the headquarters for Parrott & Co.

Colorado Territory was established in 1861. One of the primary jobs of the first Territorial Legislature was to divide the vast new area into counties. Because little was really known about the southwestern portion of the state the legislature arbitrarily decided that all the land west of the Rio Grande, which flows south through the San Luis Valley, was the eastern boundary; the southern boundary was the Colorado-New Mexico border; the western boundary was along the Utah territory border; and the

northern boundary was along the ridge between the Rio Grande and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison and between the drainages of the Animas and Dolores Rivers. This large area was named Conejos County, with the seat of government at the town of Conejos located in the southern San Luis Valley.

On February 10, 1874 the Colorado Territorial Legislature created La Plata County out of the western half of the huge Conejos County. Howardsville, a mining camp high in the mountains north of Parrott City and a few miles east of Silverton, was the first La Plata County seat. A few months later it was moved to Silverton, a larger, fast-growing town. On September 6, 1874 the first La Plata County election was held to vote on a slate of county officers. John Moss probably was elected Constable or Justice of the Peace. Voting precincts were at Howardsville, Eureka, Silverton, Elbert and Parrott City. Election judges at Parrott City were A. Chubbuck, M. White and A.R. Lewis.

Because of the growing number of ranchers and miners in the southern part of La Plata County and the difficulty of addressing the needs of citizens from far-away Silverton, Moss, ever the enterprising promoter, proposed that La Plata County be divided into two counties with San Juan County on the north and La Plata County on the south

and, of course, La Plata County seat should be at Parrott City. On January 31, 1876, San Juan County was created by the new Territorial Legislature with the county seat in Silverton.

The earliest saloon in Parrott City was in the office of Parrott Enterprises, which was also where Moss lived. Robert L. Brown, in his excellent book, *An Empire of Silver* described Moss' largesse:

"With the first wagonload of furniture, the largest barrel of whiskey available also arrived. It was set up in the office, tapped, a faucet set in, and several tin dippers were hung along the wall near it. Every visitor was invited to take a dipper and put it under the faucet and fill it to the limit of its capacity. There was no restriction on the number of times each day a visitor might call and none as to the size of the drink. At the Parrott City office there was always a barrel on tap and another on the way."

Maybe Moss' extravagant generosity is the reason Parrott City did not grow. By 1881 the Colorado Business Directory listed four saloons but by 1883 only one was left and the following year there were none.

In its heyday between 1875 and 1879 Parrott City consisted of

numerous small shacks, cabins, tent houses, one hotel, two sawmills, several mercantile stores, saloons, a blacksmith shop, a livery and feed store, a school, a post office and the La Plata County Courthouse and jail. The main east-west street, located at the northern end of town at the base of a small hill, officially named Hayden Street, was also called Main Street. The other east-west streets, in addition to Hayden were Lewis, Baker and Putman. The principal north-south avenues were named Cima, Montezuma and La Plata. At the southeastern corner of Hayden and Montezuma streets stood the two-story La Plata County courthouse and jail. The blacksmith shop was on Hayden Street across from the courthouse. Side streets were laid out in a more or less orderly fashion. The only hotel, the Barbierre House (also known as the Barbee Hotel) is believed to have stood at the southwest corner of Hayden Street and La Plata Avenue.

An account of life in Parrott City during the latter half of the 1870s described dances which were held in the courtroom on the second floor of the courthouse. Sometimes these social events were interrupted when a jury deliberated beyond the time the dance was to start. At one murder trial, when the jury was late rendering its verdict, the dancers were asked by the judge to be silent while the verdict was read. After the guilty finding was announced the



W.H. Jackson photo, U.S. Geological Survey library

Miners at California Bar camp. Moss may be man laying in foreground

prisoner was led away to the jail and the dancing resumed.

A description of Parrott City was related to Helen M. Searcy in a 1925 interview with William Valliant. Valliant stated that during the summer he and other workers set up a sawmill along the La Plata River and "we built the town of Parrott City, the courthouse, jail, a good two-story hotel, stores and a number of houses. I made all the doors and windows for that town. There were thirty or forty people there including the Shaw family; Charley Naegelin, the blacksmith; Barbierre, a Frenchman (who ran the hotel); Hans Aspaas, a Norwe-

gian and family and others." Valliant also recalled that in 1876 Moss hired him to build the flume to bring water from Parrott Creek to the placer diggings. This job was never completed because "Moss never knew the value of money; he spent it like water. I still have \$700 of this company's bad checks."

The first general election after Colorado became a state on August 1, 1876 was held October 3, 1876. Moss lobbied voters in La Plata County to keep Parrott City the county

seat. This was accomplished with a 40-vote majority. There wasn't a ballot box in Parrott City so the completed ballots were dropped into an empty oyster can at the lean-to polling place. The ubiquitous A.R. Lewis was elected county clerk and John Moss was picked to represent La Plata County at the first Colorado General Assembly.

On October 20, 1876 one of the first weddings in Parrott City took place when the lovely Alida Olson married the charming, flamboyant Capt. John Moss. A.R. Lewis, the new La Plata county clerk, officiated. Alida had come to La Plata Country with her parents

and at the time of the wedding was the postmistress of Parrott City, the office having opened May 5, 1876. One daughter, Lameta Rose, was born July 4, 1879 in California. According to Nossaman, "The number of Moss marriages and children is subject to some debate, in part because of the mystery with which he surrounded himself." Moss' first marriage may have been in California to a Jenny Ann Brown. A second, possibly to Ann Leak in 1866, was an unhappy, short relationship. After Moss' "brief" tenure as a member of the Colorado State Legislature, the newlyweds moved to California. Mrs. Moss and her daughter eventually moved to New York City.

According to the February 15, 1877 *Rocky Mountain News*, John Moss hardly made a favorable impression on the members of the legislature:

"Among the democrats sent to the lower house of the Colorado legislature was Colonel (Usually Moss was referred to as Captain.) John Moss of La Plata County. The colonel is convivial, not to say bibulous in habit and distinguished his entrance into politics by making himself hail-fellow-well-met with all the men about town. His worst sin was drinking. He kept a big supply on hand at all times and was under the influence much of the time. While in

the legislature at Denver, Charlie Leichsenring's saloon held more attraction for him than the assembly."

Moss' absence gained him the name, "The Great Absentee." He finally appeared at one of the last sessions of the legislature, sat in his seat for a half-day, drew his pay, then with his wife took the first train out of town to San Francisco. He never returned to Colorado. Knowing that San Francisco banker Tiburcio Parrott sold the entire family interest in Parrott City to a New York firm probably made Moss' exit much easier. All placer mining operations shut down in August 1877.

Forty-one year-old John Moss died in San Francisco April 18, 1880, of mountain fever and pneumonia contracted while prospecting, and complications from a gunshot wound he received some years earlier in his left lung when he stepped between an infuriated Indian and a fellow member of the Masonic Order. His action saved the man's life.

At no time did the population of Parrott City ever exceed about 200 residents. The post office lasted until November 12, 1885, when it was closed but reopened between January 6, 1887, and October 31, 1898. The town was not listed in the Colorado State Business Directory after 1884.

Parrott City managed to hang on as the La Plata County seat until November 1881, when returns from the county election gave Durango 895 votes, Animas City three votes and Parrott City 129 votes. Even before the election families and businesses began moving to Durango, knowing that the Denver & Rio Grande Railway was frantically building toward Durango and the mining town of Silverton in the mountains. Railroad officials located their new company town two miles south of the much older Animas City on land they owned. Selling land and lots was one more way to finance construction of the railroad. The first construction train arrived in Durango July 27, 1881 and passenger service between Durango and Denver began in August. With the arrival of the railroad in Durango residents of Parrott City and other areas nearby began to move to the new metropolis along the Animas River.

After the November 1881 La Plata County election when voters approved relocating the county seat in Durango, A.R. Lewis, the county clerk, knew he too would need to move. The family picked out a lot "on the boulevard," and construction of a house started immediately. The first Thanksgiving dinner in Durango was held in the hall above the the post office and attended by many of the prominent members of the community including the Lewis

family.

Their new home was completed in the fall of 1882 on Third Avenue, a planned, tree-lined, divided street between E and F Streets (today's 7th and 8th Streets). On October 15, 1882 the social event of the season took place at the Lewis home when guests were invited to witness A.R. and Carolyn repeat their wedding vows for their 18th wedding anniversary. Before that ceremony took place, guests were surprised to see the Lewis's daughter Julia and Dr. W.R. Winters of Parrott City married by the rector of the new St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Dr. Winters opened his practice in Durango soon after the wedding.

Throughout the rest of his life, A.R. divided his time between his mining interests and politics. He served one term in the state legislature (1888-1890) and several terms as county commissioner. Lewis and his wife were often mentioned on the society pages of the *Durango Herald*. Items included A.R.'s mining ventures and trips to Denver to visit his brother and family. By the early 1900s A.R. and Carolyn were in poor health and spent several months each winter in California. A.R. celebrated his 84th birthday at his Third Avenue home in September 1914 but died the following year in Denver on March 10, 1915. Burial was in Durango at Evergreen cemetery. Carolyn died

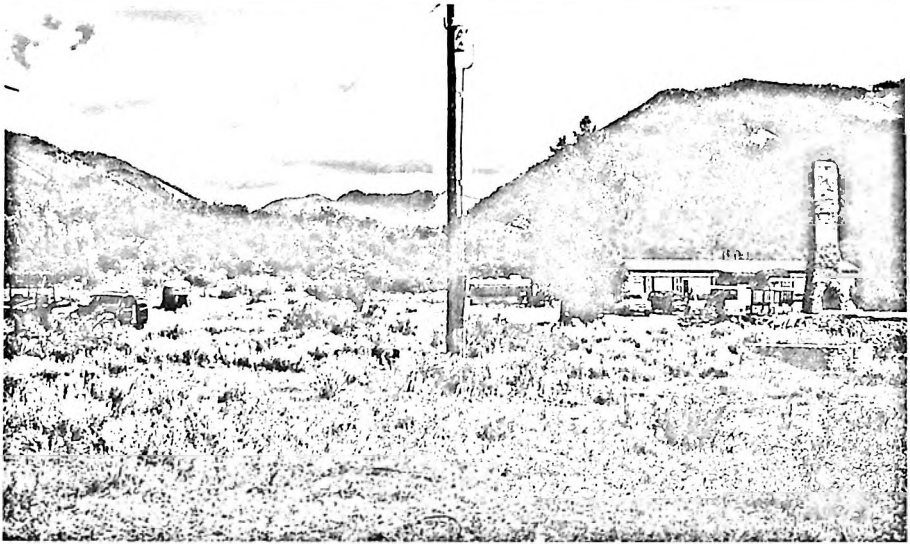


Photo by Doris Osterwald

Looking north at Parrott City site in 2000

in Durango in November, 1927 at the age of 88 and was buried beside her husband. Parrott City and La Plata County lost two of their oldest and most respected residents.

Even after the county offices and many citizens moved to Durango, Parrott City's population remained between 100 and 200 citizens, according to the State Business Directories for 1883 and 1884. Among those left in town were a notary public, a justice of the peace, two assayers, a crushing and concentrating works, a builder and Dr. M.R. Tewksbury, who arrived in 1883 and was gone the following year.

In 1882 several promising strikes were made at higher eleva-

tions in the La Plata Mountains and a new settlement, La Plata (also called La Plata City), located four miles north of Parrott City above the entrance to La Plata Canyon, began to attract miners. This camp had postal service from July 1882 to December 1885 and also from April 1894 to July 1934 with a brief closure in 1918. Daily stagecoach service connected Animas City, Durango and Parrott City with La Plata City. Today little remains of the mining camp.

The small community of May Day was located about a mile north of Parrott City at the site of the May Day mill built in 1906 to process ore from the May Day and other mines in the La Platas. The

Rio Grande Southern Railroad (RGS) built a 1.87-mile branch from Cima to the mill. A few miners lived in the area but postal service was available for only a short time between September 1913 and January 1914. Today the U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps show May Day and the location of the abandoned RGS track but not the site of Parrott City. The May Day townsite is now a private ranch owned by Charlie and Lorrain Taylor. The old school house is a private residence.

Gradually Parrott City faded away. Sometime in the late 1880s the townsite reverted to La Plata County. On May 7, 1894, William T. Vailes had the townsite resurveyed and made some attempt to sell lots. That same year a similar resurvey was made at May Day but nothing came of these promotions. During the early to mid 1900s Cyrus W. Fisherdick acquired the entire Parrott City site. It is not known if he purchased the property from William Vailes or from the county. The Fisherdick family moved west from Maine and settled in La Plata, New Mexico where they began raising sheep and hogs. After they acquired the Parrott City property they ran sheep on the land and built a lovely two-story summer home on the foundation and remains of the Barbierre Hotel. They traveled widely and the rocks in their fireplace were brought from all over the

world. The couple wintered in New Mexico but died of asphyxiation caused by a faulty stove in their cabin at Hot Springs Resort. After their deaths, John Shaw acquired the property and his family still raise cattle on the land. San Juan historian Allen Nossaman photographed the barn and house in 1962. On July 9, 1963, the house was struck by lightning and destroyed. Although the timbers in the floors of the hotel were a foot thick and slow to burn, the chimney is all that remains of that building today.

Gradually ranchers and farmers settled on the open meadows and wide valleys south and west of Parrott City and a few miners continued to search for mineral veins in the remote, high mountain valleys. Some strikes were made but the La Platas never lived up to expectations or produced the rich ores found around Silverton, Ouray or even Rico, a smaller mining town along the Dolores River north of Parrott City. The U.S. Geological Survey compiled a list of 35 producing mines located in the La Platas between 1895 and 1927. The May Day, Comstock, Bay City, Idaho and Columbus were among the largest producers.

Today the Shaw family maintains several storage buildings and a mobile home for the resident manager. Only a few boulders outline the vague remains of once dusty streets. Scrub oak, rabbit-

brush, sagebrush, grasses and flowers continue to reclaim this lovely valley. Even the small cemetery is completely overgrown.

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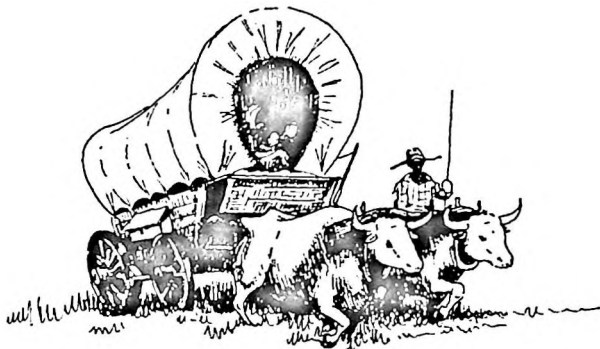
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¹*An arrastra is a large, crude stone mortar for grinding and crushing ores containing free gold. Heavy rocks are dragged by horses or mules around a circular bed of stones.*

²*Other spellings for the chief's name include Ahrata, Aratoba, Irratoba and Aratopa.*



Over the corral rail

Welcome

We welcome the following new corresponding members to the Westerners:

William A. Jones of Denton, TX.

Bob Easterly of Littleton, CO and Juliette Hidahl of Denver were referrals of Tom Noel.

Alan Culpin of Denver, CO.

Richard Dieter of Monona, WI.



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when John was 16 years old, his father, Nathaniel Moss, moved his wife and seven children to Delaware County in eastern Iowa. Two years later the Scotch-Irish family relocated permanently in Mitchell County in eastern Iowa near Mason City. Nothing is known of John Moss's education, but he had a rare gift for learning languages including Indian dialects, Spanish and French. Moss' multilingual experience began during the fall of 1856 when a group of Winnebago Indians had a winter camp about two miles from the Moss homestead. John often visited the Indians, made friends with Chief White Deer, gradually became fluent in the Winnebago language and gained the confidence of the tribe. He also became fascinated with the Indians' nomadic life style.

John Moss left home in the fall of 1857 and headed west in search of adventure. During the next two years he worked as a pony express rider mainly between Nebraska and Colorado. Along the way he became acquainted with members of the Plains Indian tribes and learned their dialects and customs also.

In 1860 or 1861 he worked his way to California; San Francisco became his "home base," so to speak. The lure of prospecting had a firm hold on the young man and Moss wandered south and east throughout what is now Arizona and

New Mexico. Everywhere he went he made friends with the Indians he met, learned their dialects and gained their acceptance and friendship. It was reported (*The Trail*, March 1920) that Moss could sit and talk with a Spaniard, a Frenchman and an Indian all at the same time, addressing each in his own tongue.

His wanderlust and solo prospecting eventually took him to the Black Mountains that extend from present-day Lake Mead south to I-40 on the east side of the Colorado River and west of Flagstaff, Arizona. He also prospected in the Cerbat and Hualapai Mountains staking claims in many locations throughout what became Mojave County, Arizona.

Moss became friends with the Mojave (sometimes spelled Mohave) Indians and with the tribe's leader, Chief Irataba². In 1862 the chief reputedly showed Moss where shiny, yellow metal was lying on the ground. This became the Moss Lode in the El Dorado Canyon Mining district. John Moss hired helpers (probably the Indians) to dig out a reported \$250,000 worth of gold from a small pocket, also called a glory hole, about 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Malach states Moss sold this claim for \$90,000 cash but believed the site was likely discovered by an unknown prospector who gave samples of ore to Moss to have assayed. After Moss reported the ore was valueless and the



Collection of Grace Sossaman, Bayfield, CO

Capt. John Moss, taken while living in Colorado

man left the area, Moss filed a claim. No one knows which story is correct!

In the territorial book of deeds and claims for the years 1862 through 1864 there are many listings of mines that were bought and sold by Moss. His first attempt to establish a townsite and start a ranch was in the vicinity of Fort Mojave. Between April 1 and July 23, 1863, John Moss held 11 discovery claims of the 300 claims recorded. When he sold a claim it was always for

cash.

During this time newspaper articles about Moss began to refer to him as Captain, not because of any military service, but because he was a natural leader able to make friends with everyone he met. His niece, Mrs. Marguerite Moss Granger, described her uncle as a strikingly handsome man, fully six feet in height and very straight of figure. He had dark blue eyes and beautiful brown curly hair, which he wore to his shoulders, as was the fashion in those days. He also sported a mustache and beard. His Indian name was Narraguanep, which meant "never die, or live forever." An

affable promoter, Moss probably never worked a day digging into bedrock. He was described as a jovial prankster who was inclined to tell of his daring adventures with exaggerated speech helped along by his consumption of a prodigious amount of whisky.

Some of his tales included an account of being the first white man to go through the Grand Canyon on a raft. Although his name was somehow connected to the Mountain Meadow massacre of 1857 he



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

September - October 2004



Courtesy, Denver Police Museum

William H. Reno - Detective

by Lawrence R. Reno, P.M.

(presented September 24, 2003)



Our Author

Larry R. Reno, Denver Westerners Posse member, is a third-generation Coloradan. He has a degree in Industrial Engineering from Yale University, where he excelled in varsity track and football.

His military career included two years in Germany as a field artillery captain. After working four years for the Martin Company, he obtained a degree from the University of Colorado Law School. He then practiced law for 40 years and is now semi-retired.

Larry was past president of the board of Children's Hospital and current board member of the Trout and Salmon Foundation and the Western Outlaw and Lawman Association. His knowledge of military and Western American history is extensive.

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by Lawrence R. Reno, P.M.
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My grandfather, William H. Reno, died when I was two years old and I have no recollection of him. My father told me a little bit about him, but only the part of his life involved with chasing Tom "Black Jack" Ketchum in New Mexico. When my father died in 1965, he left me my grandfather's battered briefcase; Tom Ketchum's brother Sam Ketchum's pistol; the other Colt .38 caliber pistol I have here tonight that my grandfather carried later in life; a family Bible from the 1850s; and, my grandfather's Denver police badge displayed on the table. Inside the briefcase were a few old newspaper clippings related to a few cases he had worked on; some old photographs and memorabilia; plus a manuscript of about twenty-five pages, typewritten by my grandfather in the 1920s. Also, in the 1960s I purchased a copy of Father Stanley's *No Tears For Black Jack Ketchum*, thinking at the time that it would no doubt mention my grandfather. It is very derogatory about my grandfather and differs considerably from the events my father had described to me. So I determined at some point to investigate my grandfather's life further. A few years ago, my friend Bob Pulcifer introduced me to the Western Outlaw-Lawman History Association (WOLA). I highly recommend membership in WOLA to any of you who are seriously into writing or

reading about Western frontier outlaws or lawmen. In that organization I have met many of the outstanding authors in this field. I have also learned of several excellent research sources for locating books and magazines mentioning my grandfather, or dealing with the events and men he encountered. My bibliography now lists more than five hundred books, manuscripts and magazine articles. In addition, I have reviewed most of the Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona newspapers during the period of his career.

This has turned into a labor of love, involving not only the history of my grandfather and the events in which he was involved, but also the genealogy of the Reno family. Briefly, my great-uncle Marshall Reno, brother of my grandfather was the first family genealogist, publishing *The Reno Family Tree* in 1915. A father and son team in Rockford, Illinois; a professor now at CSU; several others, and I have expanded that work. Our family were French Huguenots from the Dauphin area of France, where the family name was originally "Reynaud". My ancestors were active in the Huguenot army of Henry of Navarre that overthrew the French monarchy in the late 1500s. When persecutions of the Protestants resumed after revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, my ancestors fled France in 1687 (along with some

500,000 other Huguenots) obtained English citizenship and arrived in Virginia about 1688. Here they adopted or "Anglicized" the name to "Reno". Part of the family's original property in Virginia is now a part of the Quantico Marine Base. I have found no record that the family ever owned slaves.

Each generation of my family seemed to have at least seven or eight sons, so the family spread out very quickly. My direct line moved to the Patterson Creek area, near Harper's Ferry, by 1765 and then to Chartier's Creek, six miles south of Fort Pitt by 1776. This was the part of western Pennsylvania claimed by both Virginia and Pennsylvania, a dispute finally resolved in favor of Pennsylvania in 1785. My great-great-great-grandfather Francis and his older brother Benjamin remained at Chartier's and fought in the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolution. Their father and the rest of their ten siblings went south, where most of them changed the name back to the more French-sounding name of "Reneau".

After the Revolutionary War, Francis married his brother Benjamin's stepdaughter and studied for the Episcopalian ministry. He was sponsored by General John Neville, a neighbor and was ordained in 1792 by the famous Bishop White in Philadelphia. General Neville's good friend, George Washington, appointed Neville tax collector for Western Pennsylvania, and most of the events of the "Whiskey Rebellion" took place on the Neville property, which was destroyed. After that, Reverend Francis Reno was sent into the "wilderness" north and west of Pittsburgh, where he founded the town

of Rochester, Beaver County, Pennsylvania, and performed his ministry there and in the nearby towns for forty years. His sons and grandsons branched into the steamboat trade as builders, owners and captains, on the Ohio and Beaver Rivers.

We claim several famous ancestors. Major General Jesse Lee Reno, killed at the Battle of South Mountain before Antietam, is the man for whom most of the cities, towns, forts and counties in the West are named. Major Marcus Reno is famous as the commander of the other part of the Seventh Cavalry that survived the Little Big Horn Battle. The Reno Brothers gang of Seymour, Indiana is given credit for accomplishing the world's first train robbery and are distant relatives. I have no idea whether or not my grandfather knew of those relationships. Janet Reno is not related to our family as her grandfather adopted the name when he came through Ellis Island.

Early Years

William Hiram Reno was born in Rochester, PA on Nov. 11, 1862. He was the middle child, with an older sister, Nettie, born in 1860, and a younger brother Marshall, born in 1866. Their parents were Francis Asbury Reno and Mary Becking, a recent German immigrant. Her father and brother-in-law were excellent artists and I have photographs of a couple of their paintings displayed. William's father was a steamboat engineer on the Ohio. He probably contracted a lung disease and died in 1869, when William was only seven. William's mother then married a Hall

Hogan and had two more children by him. When she died in 1876, William was fourteen, but the family was apparently split up. I'm not sure where Nettie went, but she had married a John Garrison in Ohio by 1880. William lived with an uncle in Beaver County who was a steamboat captain. Marshall lived in Pittsburgh with his mother's brother who was an attorney.

One undated clipping in my grandfather's files indicated that my grandfather was a professional roller skater and put on exhibitions in Pittsburgh and the surrounding area. Probably due to their attorney-uncle, William and Marshall were both trained as court reporters and both were proficient in shorthand. Marshall was the long-time court reporter for Allegheny County courts and also established Reno College in Pittsburgh, basically a business school similar to Parks or Barnes here in Denver. I have been unable to discover William's movements during most of the 1880s, but he arrived in Denver by late 1887 or early 1888.

William's first employment in Denver was with the new railroad in town, the Ft. Worth & Denver City Railroad, one of the predecessor names of the line that eventually became the Colorado & Southern Railway. It was always known as "The Gulf Road" and William was hired as the secretary to the manager. A few months later he left that position and became secretary to John Parley at the Thiel Detective Agency, where William was also a private detective. In the spring of 1889, John Parley was appointed Chief of Police in Denver and, a short time later, William became a Denver police

detective, but he was also the secretary to Chief Parley and handled the public relations for the Department. It was at this time that he met and became very good friends with Sam Howe, holder of the longest tenure in history with the Denver Police Department, being approximately fifty years.

Denver Police Detective

About the time that I embarked upon this writing project, Clark Secrest, then the editor of the *Colorado Heritage* magazine of the Historical Society, published his "Hell's Belles" volume, the history not only of prostitution in Denver, but also a short biography of Sam Howe and a history of the early Denver Police Department. I met Clark at a book signing and was relieved when he told me that my grandfather was one of the "honest ones" on the force. As many of you know, the Denver Police Department was riddled with graft in its early days and John Parley was brought in by Mayor Wolfe Londoner to clean up the department. Shortly after joining the police force. *The Colorado Graphic*, a weekly paper, ran an excellent article on the Denver police force, with a photo and short description of each man. Reno was listed as being five feet, six inches tall and weighing 126 pounds, the smallest man on the force. The rest of the eleven detectives averaged over six feet tall, even though Sam Howe was only one-half inch taller than my grandfather.

Most important to my research and to me was learning from Clark Secrest of the existence of the Sam Howe scrapbooks at the Colorado Historical Society. These are basically a compilation of all of the crimes in

purchased with the money Frane had taken from her, so my grandfather's title investigation in Michigan and Ohio was very beneficial to her.

In the spring of 1893, the Populists were elected to power in Denver. That August, Sam Howe, Will Reno and the rest of the Republican detectives were fired. This was before the days of civil service and the summary action reduced the number of detectives in Denver from thirteen to four. The crime rate soared. This discharge from a promising career must have been quite a shock to my grandfather and his young bride. He promptly became an Arapahoe County detective in September, 1893. This was before Denver was a city and county, so there were two separate police departments in the city. Then, in early 1894, my grandfather returned to the Gulf Road as a special agent, even though it was in bankruptcy. On March 1, 1895, he, Howe and a few other Republican detectives were rehired and were back on the Denver police force. I would imagine that all of these moves put quite a strain on my grandparents' marriage.

Special Agent for the Railroad

In late 1895, Will left the Police Department and was again hired by the Gulf Road. It was still being reorganized in bankruptcy as the Union Pacific, Denver & Ft. Worth. Immediately, he was set to work solving cases of thefts of property from the railroad. In one newspaper artist's sketch he and the sheriff of Jefferson County were pictured waiting outside a cave along the North Fork of the South Platte River, near Bailey, hoping to capture a

gang of thieves. In another case, he broke up a gang of thieves that had been stealing property from the railroad in the vicinity of Two Forks, on the South Fork of the South Platte.

On Sept. 3, 1897, Will Reno received word that the railroad's Texas Flyer had been held up at Twin Mountain, about five miles south of Folsom, New Mexico. The robbers had gotten away with a reported \$5,000. Will immediately went to Trinidad to interview the witnesses, the train crew and the lawmen from the various posses. Although none of the train robbers were caught, Will determined that the heist had been carried out by the Ketchum Gang. By this time all of the Western train-robbing gangs had adopted the methods first used by the Reno brothers in Indiana. In this case, two men boarded the coal car at Folsom and then commandeered the engine crew outside of Folsom. The train was run to a convenient spot where accomplices waited and also held horses. The express car was then attacked and the express messenger overpowered. The safe was blasted open with dynamite and looted of its contents. The robbers then slipped away in the night. The Ketchums never bothered attempting to rob the passengers. In 1999, Bob Pulcifer and I went to the Twin Mountain site and drove along the rail bed that still exists and is used, much as it was in 1899.

In this first Folsom train robbery, the train was under the control of Conductor Frank Harrington. Lawmen that Will Reno worked with were Las Animas County Sheriff Louis Kreeger, and Deputies George Titsworth, Hugo Pfallmer and Willson

Elliott, all from Trinidad and the Sheriffs of Union and Colfax Counties, New Mexico, with their deputies. Most of these men remained his friends for the rest of his life.

The Ketchum Gang at the time consisted primarily of Tom and Sam Ketchum, Will Carver and Dave Atkins. All four men were cowboys raised on ranches around Knickerbocker, Texas, a small town near San Angelo. Later, they were joined at various times by other men, such as Elzy Lay, Harvey "Kid Curry" Logan, Ben "The Tall Texan" Kilpatrick, Bronco Bill Walters, "Flat Nose" George Currie, "Deaf Charlie" Hanks and others. Carver, Logan and Kilpatrick are three of the men in the famous photograph of the Wild Bunch, taken in Fort Worth, Texas in 1901. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid are the other two men.

Elzy Lay, who will be important in this story, was using the alias of "William McGinnis", a name he borrowed from a boyhood friend in Colorado. The real William McGinnis later became a bank president in northeast Colorado and even became our State Treasurer. Although the Ketchums never rode with Butch and Sundance, they were considered to be part of the Wild Bunch, a loose association of some 50 or 60 outlaws. All of these men were excellent cowboys and thus worked for most of the large cattle companies and were very familiar with the Southwest, where they could always avail themselves of ready horseflesh, meals and a place to rest.

By the time of the first Folsom train robbery, the Ketchums had committed murders, robberies and

depredateions in west Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and probably Colorado. It is important to emphasize here that at this time, Tom Ketchum did not refer to himself as "Black Jack", nor did the men who rode with him. The first "Black Jack" was an outlaw named Will Christian, leader of the "High Fives" or "Black Jack Gang". Will and his brother Bob were outlaws from the Oklahoma Territory. Again, they worked for the various large cattle outfits in southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico where they met other cowboys who wanted to join them on the outlaw trail.

The High Fives were apparently gregarious and were well-liked by the other cowboys, but the take from their crimes was usually very paltry. They robbed stagecoaches, general stores, saloons, post offices and the like, but they were foiled when they attempted larger crimes, such as an attempt to rob the International Bank in Nogales, Arizona and later when they first tried to rob a train in New Mexico. By contrast, where they overlapped, the Ketchum Gang tended to keep themselves apart from the other cowboys and were not well liked or trusted. Some referred to them as the "Snaky Four". After several botched jobs, "Black Jack" Christian was ambushed and killed by a posse in April, 1897. Unfortunately, the body of the dead outlaw was identified initially as that of Tom Ketchum and, as the two men somewhat resembled each other, Ketchum was frequently called "Black Jack" by reporters and lawmen thereafter. As a postscript, it should be mentioned that after the death of their leader, the remainder of the High Fives

pulled off one of the most successful train robberies in the history of the Santa Fe Railroad when they robbed a train of about \$90,000 in November 1897 and made a clean getaway.

After the 1897 Folsom robbery, the Ketchums went to southwest New Mexico Territory, in December, they attempted to rob a Santa Fe train at Stein's Pass along the Arizona border. The railroad had put extra guards on the train, so the Ketchum Gang was repulsed with the loss of one of their men. The Ketchums then returned to Texas where they pulled off a couple of successful train robberies during 1898.

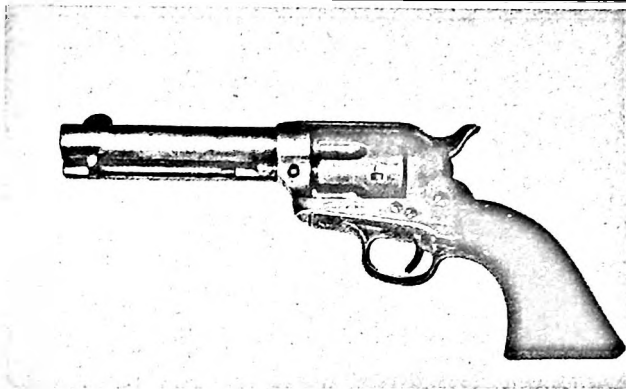
In January 1899, the Gulf Road came out of bankruptcy and was renamed the "Colorado & Southern Railroad". Will Reno was appointed as the Chief Special Agent for all lines of the railroad, which at that time stretched from Wyoming to Fort Worth and included the mountain route we have known as the Denver South Park & Pacific.

In early 1899 the Ketchums were back in Arizona where Sam and Tom Ketchum had relatives in the area of Kingman. By this time, the members of the gang had become disenchanted with the erratic behavior of Tom, so the gang split away from him in May. Sam, Will Carver and Elzy Lay rode off to their familiar hideout between Cimarron and Elizabethtown (known as "E'town") in New Mexico, leaving Tom alone in Arizona. The three men were very familiar figures in Cimarron and E'town, where they visited the local saloons and general stores, and even dealt cards at some of the local establishments.

On July 11, 1899, Will Reno

received news in Denver that the Texas Flyer had again been robbed at Twin Mountain, virtually in the same place as where the first robbery occurred. Once again. Conductor Harrington was in charge of the train. The robbers were estimated to have gotten away with between \$40,000 and \$70,000. This time, Reno was told to spare no expense or trouble in catching the outlaws and bringing them to justice. Accordingly, he immediately joined a posse sent from Trinidad which again had Deputies Titsworth and Pfallmer along. Heavy rains had obliterated the trail of the outlaws, but the posse did find one campsite where the remains of an envelope were found. That envelope was pieced together and was addressed to a "G. W. Franks, Cimarron, N.M.T." Will and the posse returned to Trinidad where Will enlisted the aid of Huerfano County Sheriff Ed Farr, of Walsenburg, an experienced tracker of outlaws. Will also sent messages to U.S. Marshal Creighton Foraker in Santa Fe, seeking his assistance in seeking to capture the outlaws.

Farr and Reno went to Cimarron on July 16, where they were met by Marshal Foraker and Willson Elliott, who had been on the futile chase after the train robbers in 1897. Foraker "deputized" Reno, Elliott, Farr and five local men. Word was received that three men and four horses, answering the description of the wanted men, had been seen entering one of the canyons outside Cimarron, so the chase was on. The posse left Cimarron about two o'clock in the afternoon and for some reason one of the men left the posse and returned to town, reducing the number in the posse to seven.



Courtesy, Denver Police Museum

Colt SAA .45 cal. pistol taken by Reno from Sam Ketchum on July 18, 1899.

About five o'clock, as a slight rain began to fall, smoke from a campfire was spotted in Turkey Creek Canyon. The posse dismounted and split up. Farr, Reno and a young dude from the East named Smith went to the left. Smith had volunteered for the posse, as he wanted to see a little action on his Western trip. The other members of the posse, all from New Mexico, Elliott, Morgan, Cordova and Love stayed on the right of a gulch along the small creek. One of the suspects walked down from the camp, which was below a large rock cave, to fill his canteen at a spring. Farr identified himself and called to the man to surrender and the fight was on.

The fight lasted about an hour and many shots were exchanged. Farr, Reno and Smith received the worst of the battle. Smith and Farr were firing from behind the same tree. Evidently, Smith was firing a rifle using regular black powder, while the rest of the posse and the outlaws were firing smokeless powder. Thus, the position

of Smith and Farr was revealed to the outlaws. Smith was wounded in the hip. Then, Farr, who probably did the most damage for the posse, was killed, falling down on top of Smith. The steel-jacketed bullet that killed Farr went through about six inches of the tree trunk and left a clean hole in the tree. Reno was behind another tree about fifteen feet away

and had a few holes in his coat, being slightly nicked when a rifle shot exploded one of the shells in his coat pocket. In the other part of the posse, Love received a wound in the thigh that ordinarily would not have been serious. However, he had been skinning cattle diseased with "blackleg" and the shot drove his dirty infected knife into his leg. He died a very painful death from the disease two days later. Reno and Elliott said that they may have shot at the outlaws' horses but neither claimed to have hit any men. Morgan and Cordova did not claim to have shot any animal or man. The outlaws had fared a little better. Franks, the addressee on the envelope the posse had found, was actually Will Carver. He had done most of the shooting and was unscathed. Elzy Lay had several painful but not fatal wounds. Sam Ketchum had a serious wound in his left shoulder, probably fired by Farr. The three outlaws made their escape, evidently on two horses, under the cover of darkness and the heavy rain. In 1998 and 1999, 1

persuaded the Philmont Scout Ranch people to go to the site of the gun battle. We did and found the general location and what is called "Black Jack's Cave." The area has been logged at least once, so the terrain and vegetation have changed considerably, but it is still a remote, precipitous location and difficult to reach even with modern four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Will Reno told reporters at the time and also wrote in his manuscript that after it was dark and he was sure that the outlaws had left, he went over to Smith and Farr. He removed the body of Farr from Smith and asked Smith if he wanted to try to get back to Cimarron. Smith said that he couldn't, so Will left his rifle with Smith and struck off for the town, probably going over a very difficult route. I believe that by this time Will Reno was already hard of hearing, even though he was only 37 years old. As a result, he probably thought that he would be shot if he attempted to find the rest of the posse. Strangely, the other part of the posse did not move from their relative position of safety to check on Smith, Reno and Farr until after midnight, when the weather cleared and the moon came out.

Reno reached Cimarron about seven o'clock in the morning and gave the news of the gunfight. Immediately, a controversy arose about his actions that I attribute to the rivalry and animosity between the New Mexico and Colorado parts of the posse. Foraker, as U.S. Marshal, was criticized for not leading the posse and he attempted to make my grandfather the scapegoat, alleging that he had fled the canyon at the first shot. Foraker did lead a group

of men to Turkey Creek Canyon, where they encountered the remainder of the posse returning to Cimarron. Meanwhile, Reno refused to go along with that group, as he had to file his reports with his superiors. At the time, Cimarron had only telephone service to Springer, which had a telegraph. So Will must have had to phone the telegraph operator in Springer on a party line to relay his message by telegraph to the C&S office in Denver. As a result, the messages were garbled and various people who listened in gave very conflicting reports to the newspapers. Disturbed by the allegations brought by Marshal Foraker against my grandfather, David Farr, the brother of the murdered sheriff, went to Cimarron to inspect the site of the battle and to interview the witnesses. He talked to each surviving member of the posse and then gave an affidavit to the *Trinidad Chronicle-News*, completely exonerating my grandfather. Apparently, David Farr was the only man that talked to Smith and Smith verified that my grandfather had stayed throughout the fight and did not go for help until after the fight was over. David Farr's affidavit appeared in both Trinidad papers, in the *Post, News and Republican* here in Denver, and in the *Santa Fe Daily New Mexican*. Curiously, it has never yet been cited in any of the many books or articles covering this famous gunfight. It should also be noted that at the time of the gunfight, Will no doubt knew that his wife was pregnant with their first child. My father was born six months later in January 1900 and was their only child.

Reno's boss, Superintendent Webb arrived the afternoon of the 17th.

That evening, two cowboys from the McBride ranch at Ute Park reported that a wounded man had been found there. The next morning, Will and the two cowboys went to the ranch where they, with the assistance of the ranch owner, accomplished the capture of Sam Ketchum and took Sam's Colt pistol from him. Will brought Sam back to Cimarron and turned him over to the law. Will's manuscript indicates that he liked Sam. Also, he indicated that Sam claimed to have shot and killed Ed Farr, which is probably not true, and may just have been bravado on Sam's part or an effort to deflect the blame from the guilty party. Those of us who have researched this, think that Elzy Lay probably fired the fatal shot and, if not him, it was Will Carver. Sam was taken to the penitentiary at Santa Fe where he refused medical treatment and, as a result, died because of the gangrene from his wound. Two interesting events happened on August 16, 1899, which one newspaper headlined as a "Bad Day For Train Robbers". In Eddy County, N.M.T., near Carlsbad, a rancher named V.H. Lusk tired of the constant rustling and exchanging of his horses by the outlaws riding through. When he suspected two men who had asked about two mystery horses that had been exchanged a few months before, Lusk reported their presence to the Eddy County Sheriff Cicero Stewart. Stewart arranged an ambush at the ranch the next morning. Only one of the outlaws rode in for breakfast, while the other was some distance away gathering horses. The man who rode in was overpowered after a struggle. The other outlaw, undoubtedly "Franks," the alias of Will Carver,

waved his hat at the lawmen and rode away. It was discovered that the prisoner had recent gunshot wounds, and he was quickly identified as William McGinnis, the alias of Elzy Lay. As he was connected to the Turkey Creek Canyon gunfight, he was then transported by rail to Trinidad.

On the evening of the 16th, a lone bandit attempted to once again hold up the Texas Flyer at Twin Mountain, near Folsom. The conductor on the train was again the redoubtable Frank Harrington, but this time he was more prepared. The bandit made the mistake of stopping the train on a curve and the trainmen were unable to uncouple the passenger cars from the express car and engine. While swearing loudly at the engineer and fireman, the bandit also took one shot at the express messenger who looked out to see what was going on. Harrington heard the commotion and the rifle shot and suspected the reason. He armed himself with a shotgun and crept forward to where the bandit and the trainmen were engaged. Opening the door of the car, Harrington was able to fire just a split second before the bandit fired at him, slightly grazing his arm. The bandit was more seriously wounded and ducked away from the train. Harrington then restarted the train and went on to Clayton. The next morning, a north-bound train loaded with the Union County Sheriff and a posse picked up the wounded man who gave his name as George Stevens. His right shoulder was so badly mangled that he had been unable to mount his horse.

Stevens was taken to Folsom where his wounds were treated, then on to the hospital at Trinidad. He was soon



Photos courtesy of Museum of New Mexico

Tom Ketchum left, Sam Ketchum right

identified as Tom Ketchum and of course the papers labeled him "Black Jack". It was also discovered that he was wanted for murder in Arizona. After the gang had split up in June, Tom had stayed in the area of Camp Verde. On July 2, he entered the general store at closing and unceremoniously murdered the unarmed storekeepers, Wingfield and Rodgers, and wounded an onlooker. Tom then evaded the posses that trailed him around Arizona for several weeks. At the Trinidad hospital, Ketchum refused amputation. When he was told that his brother had died from a similar wound, Tom said that he didn't know that Sam had died, or that Sam and the others had robbed the train at the same spot in July. Tom did try to hang himself in the Trinidad hospital but was prevented by Officer George Titsworth. Titsworth also took the famous photos of Tom in

the hospital with a camera loaned by the local photographer, Mr. Aultman. That photograph led witnesses of several murders to identify Ketchum as the murderer, including the Camp Verde murders.

Mr. Aultman missed a fantastic photo-op a few days later when both Tom Ketchum and Will McGinnis were driven in wagons to the Santa Fe Depot in Trinidad for transportation to the Santa Fe Penitentiary. Aultman was evidently not present, although a crowd estimated to exceed 500 people witnessed the event. Tom kept his head covered, but offered to remove his hat if someone would pay him five dollars for a photograph. No one took him up on the offer. The officers who accompanied the two outlaws remarked that Ketchum and McGinnis acted as though they didn't know each other. In the penitentiary, Tom relented and

permitted the amputation of his arm. He did make several attempts to break out, but none were successful. Justice moved very swiftly for McGinnis. Arrested in August, his trial for the murder of Sheriff Farr was held in early October. He was convicted of second degree murder and received a life sentence. I have never understood why they tried him for only the murder, as much of the trial testimony identified him as one of the train robbers and, in New Mexico, conviction for robbing a train carried with it a mandatory death penalty. In December 1905, Governor Otero commuted McGinnis' sentence, so he served just six years. He was prosecuted, tried, convicted and incarcerated as "William McGinnis", with his true name never surfacing. I have the transcript of his trial and am very impressed with the proficiency of both the prosecution and defense. After his release, he resumed using his real name. Supposedly he retrieved the loot from the second Folsom robbery of about \$50,000 and used that to lead a law-abiding life in Wyoming and later in California. In addition to delay caused by Tom Ketchum's wounds, his attorneys filed a number of preliminary motions, all of which were overruled or denied. He was charged with the crime of attempting to holdup a train, which, as I said, was a capital offense. He was finally tried in September 1900 and convicted. His attorneys filed several appeals which were denied but delayed the date of his execution until April 26, 1901, at Clayton, N.M.T. A month before the execution, the law finally caught up with Will Carver, alias "Franks," at Sonora, Texas. He was riddled by bullets from the local sheriff

and deputies as he and a partner entered a store to buy supplies. It is unknown as to whether or not they were also casing the local bank, or even working their way to Clayton to save Tom.

Prior to his execution, Ketchum was transported under heavy guard from Santa Fe to Clayton via Trinidad. My grandfather was part of the escort from Trinidad to Clayton and saved Ketchum's rail pass. Sheriff Garcia of Union County had built an enclosure around the scaffold in Clayton and issued tickets to get inside to his friends and invited guests. The day of the execution was probably the biggest day ever in Clayton. Around 500 people were there. Ketchum was interviewed extensively and made several statements, before he mounted the scaffold. Even there, he bantered with the sheriff and the other men up there. As most of you probably know, Ketchum was decapitated by the hanging and several theories have been advanced for that. I subscribe to the theory that the new rope had been stretched for too long a time, losing its elasticity and becoming more like a wire. Also, that the drop was too long for Ketchum's weight.

In one of his final statements, Ketchum said that my grandfather, Harrington, and the two prosecuting attorneys were marked for death and would not live out the year. Supposedly he had sent a letter "to the boys" to murder them. All lived long, productive lives after that. I don't think that Tom Ketchum had any friends left by that time. So, his execution put an end to the Ketchum Gang.

In 1999, I met the grandson of Elzy Lay at a WOLA convention in Buffalo, Wyoming where he gave one

bloodhounds for tracking. Pfalmer brought one of his hounds to Denver and the dog trailed the criminals for six miles before losing the scent. At times, the papers reported that 2,000 spectators accompanied the procession. Unfortunately, the assassins were not found, but information to my grandfather and the police was to the effect that the WFM was behind the killing. It was also reported that my grandfather was on the WFM's hit list and the *Post* noted that it shouldn't be too hard to sneak up on Reno, as he was so hard of hearing. This is the first solid evidence I have of my grandfather's hearing problem.

The crime was not solved at the time. Then, in 1907, the leaders of the WFM, Big Bill Haywood, John Adams and others were implicated in the dynamite bombing of former Governor Frank Steunenberg, of Idaho. The main hit man Harry Orchard had done the killing. While in jail, Orchard got religion and confessed to the murders he had done for the WFM. The list named about 32 men killed, including Lyte Gregory, and another 60 or so that Orchard attempted to kill but missed for one reason or another. The trial was sensational, as Clarence Darrow represented the defendants. Darrow was successful in winning acquittals for the leaders, but Orchard receive a life sentence, which he served out, dying in prison in the 1950s. By 1905, C.F. & I. assigned Will to Trinidad. His wife apparently did not want to leave Denver. I am sure that she must have feared for the safety of her son and herself after the several death threats upon the life of my grandfather. She not only remained in Denver in a

downtown apartment, but changed her name slightly, to Bertha Pearl Reno. She also placed her son with Will's sister, Nettie Garrison, whose husband had died in 1901. So, for the next thirty years, the family lived apart, but got together frequently when grandfather came to Denver, or when the three of them took trips together. I have many, many, photographs of the three of them in Pennsylvania, California, Colorado, Yellowstone, etc.

In September 1913, the very worst coal strike in Colorado history broke out. I believe that a lot of the violence in this strike is attributable to the vitriolic nature of Mother Jones, a fiery UMW organizer. Frequently referred to reverently by the miners as the "Miners' Angel", one author referred to her as "the most dangerous woman in America." Jones had come to Colorado during the strike of 1903-04. In September 1913, she inflamed the strikers in the camps around Trinidad and Walsenburg to strike with cries of "Blood" and "Fight to the death", etc. A general vote was held in mid-September and most, but not all, of the southern coal camps voted to strike and went out.

The first act of violence was the murder of one of the camp supervisors, Bob Lee, by six striking miners, on September 23rd. One of the problems is that most of the books on this subject have been written by pro-union writers whose only sources are the union publications. The local newspapers in Trinidad and Walsenburg paint a less biased picture, though frequently they tended to favor the companies. Thus Bob Lee was vilified as a brute by the union, but the summary of his

career was very respectful in the Trinidad newspapers. Similarly, the accounts of my grandfather in the union press are derogatory, but I have not found any mention of any of those events in the papers.

To date, I have not found any specific mention of my grandfather in the Trinidad, Walsenburg or Denver papers during the 1913-14 period, so I do not have the specifics of his involvement at the time. Mother Jones's autobiography does mention that on one occasion she was on a train from Denver to Trinidad and "Rockefeller's detective Reno" sat across the aisle from her for the entire trip. I do know that my grandfather became a good friend with Phil Van Cise, one of the captains in the National Guard at the time. When my father later went to CU, Van Cise made sure that my dad joined his fraternity, Delta Tau Delta, and the two of them later attended all Delt functions together for the rest of their lives. My grandfather also got to know John D. Rockefeller, Jr. very well and had his name, address and telephone number in his last address book in 1935.

Another murder occurred on the street in Trinidad in November 1913. A UMW hired assassin walked up behind a Baldwin-Felts detective, George Belcher, and shot him in the back of the head as he walked out of an ice cream shop. My grandfather was not with Belcher, but was not too far away from him on the street. The assassin, who had been paid \$25 and given a rusty pistol with two or three bullets, was promptly arrested. He confessed and was convicted of the crime.

About once a month, the

Trinidad *Chronicle-News* published a score card showing the deaths and injuries from the strike, as well as the cost of the strike. As late as February 1914, quite a few more company men and non-strikers and their wives and children had been killed and injured than those of the strikers. That was eye opening to me, as I had never seen mention of those incidents in the Ludlow accounts.

I will not go into an account of the Ludlow disaster here, as it is well covered by other authors and I do not know specifically that my grandfather was involved. Despite the bad press he received in the UMW papers, he remained in Trinidad until his death in 1935 and never appeared to have been threatened by the union or its miners. In fact, my father, also with the name of William Reno, worked in the C.F. & I. mines for at least two years. He lived in a Trinidad boarding house with other miners without incident.

In 1917, Will Reno joined with a few other men in an independent coal-mining venture and formed the Liberty Coal Mining Company. At least one of the Thatchers from Pueblo was involved. The mine was in the vicinity of Aguilar and my father and one other man were the employees. The coal produced from the mine was not sufficient to make the mine productive and the venture folded. So, my grandfather stayed in Trinidad working for the secret service of the C.F. & I. Most of the time he lived at the Columbian Hotel. He was also a regular at the Elks Club, where he was an excellent billiards player. At some point, he was transferred to a position as special agent for the Colorado & Wyoming Railroad,

a wholly-owned subsidiary of the C.F. & I. About 1970, I received a letter from Fred Pfalmer, a son of the Hugo Pfalmer of Trinidad I have mentioned above. Fred had been a Deputy Sheriff in Trinidad during the 1920s and wrote about one case in 1923 where he assisted my grandfather in solving a case where thieves had stolen over \$2,000-worth of linen from the railroad. The thieves were caught and the linens retrieved. For his help, my grandfather had the railroad reward Pfalmer with a fine Colt revolver, suitably engraved, that Pfalmer treasured. My father was working for GMAC by then, and he and his mother and father took several trips together.

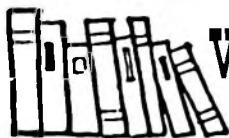
Will Reno retired from the company in 1924 and received a pension of \$75 per month. He also continued in some kind of a consultant capacity where he was paid a small monthly fee. The C.F. & I. declared bankruptcy in 1929, which ended the consulting arrangement. In a succession of letters from the receiver, Will's pension was cut progressively down to a low of \$18.75, per month in 1933. As

a result, he was forced to find cheaper lodging in a rooming house.

Pearl Reno died in Denver in February 1935, at the age of 59. In the last years of her life, she lived at the St. Francis and West End Hotels, near the City & County Building. They were both still extant when I started practicing law and I used to walk through their lobbies, admiring the Victorian style and decor. Unfortunately, I never asked to see their registers, which would have been interesting. This is the last picture I have of my grandmother.

Will Reno also died in Denver in October 1935 at the age of 73. He had been in poor health for about four months. At the time of his death, he still held an appointment as a deputy sheriff in Las Animas County, but I imagine that the position was more honorary than actual. My father was with both of his parents when they died. There were fairly long obituaries about my grandfather in the Denver papers, but the Trinidad paper gave extensive coverage to his death, with a good summary of his life.





Westerners Bookshelf



Waiting for the earth to turn over, Identity and the Late-Twentieth-Century American West, Garrison, Philip. University of Utah Press, 1996. 150pp, paper, cloth.

This collection of personal essays on the American West by Philip Garrison is an accumulation of graceful and articulate essays which also provides a window upon the creative act of writing. His essays enlighten us with a fresh perspective on well-known elements of the mythic West. From childhood stories set on the banks of the Mississippi to adult experiences in such places as Honduras, Mexico City, and Pacific Northwest, Philip Garrison reveals how history, memory and identity are intertwined with the incredible landscape of our American West.

This is one of those non-linear books that you can open up to any page and begin reading with pleasure and intellectual stimulation, that is, this book of essays isn't a quick 'beach-read' and, certainly deserves a place on the Westerners' bookshelf.

--Michael F. Crowe, C.M.

Civil War and Revolution on the Rio Grande Frontier, A Narrative and Photographic History, by Jerry Thompson and Lawrence T. Jones III. Texas State Historical Association, Austin, 2004. 174 pp. Photos, map footnotes, bibliography, index. Hardback:\$39.95

American Civil War, Mexican Civil War, foreign armies, cotton smuggling, arms trade, Reconstruction, hurricanes, Buffalo Soldiers, cross border raids the lower Rio Grande from Laredo to its mouth experienced all these and more from 1861-1867.

Towns on both sides of the lower river changed hands many times. Among those giving and taking: Confederate and Union forces; Mexican Imperialistas and Liberals; French and Austrian troops; and some groups we recognize today as gangs. The US Civil War never overtly spilled over the border. That said, more than once sympathizers fought and maneuvered on Mexican soil.

The cotton and arms trade flourished: the former crossed south to Bagdad (a town on Gulf of Mexico), and the latter crossed north into Texas and thence on to the Confederacy. Some of the cotton ended up in Europe and England, some in New England

With detailed narratives and fine contemporary photographs, the authors have shed light on a little-known theater of the American Civil War with the region's many personalities, complications and ramifications. Many of the photographs have never been published, and they are worth the wait. The only map, small and local, is a disappointment. Otherwise this is an informative and detailed work on an interesting and oft ignored part of Southwestern history.

--Stan Moore, P. M.

Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid as I Knew Them: Reminiscences of John P. Meadows, edited by John P. Wilson. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2004. 192 pp. Endnotes, references, index, 22 photographs, 2 maps. Cloth, \$21.95.

"The time ain't long enough to tell all I know about Billy the Kid," stated John Meadows. His remarks were in response to a 1930 movie about the notorious outlaw. Meadows' recollections and Hollywood's version were at odds, whenever someone would listen newspaper reporters, historians, and audiences large and small. Meadows told his story of William Bonney, Pat Garrett, and other Western characters. While he never recorded his reminiscences, others did and John P. Wilson compiled Meadows's event-oriented stories into a book.

Although only two chapters are devoted exclusively to Billy the Kid, they cover all the important events of his short life from the viewpoint of a friend. Meadows liked the Kid from the start and chose to concentrate on his good traits. "I didn't know then he had killed any men . . . and I don't care even to this day." Later on in the book he added, "He done some things that nobody could endorse, and I

...easy flowing narrative
from John Meadows is
fun to read...

certainly do not." Meadows provides a personal account of his relationship with Bonney and describes his friend's role in the Lincoln County War. He also liked Garrett and stated "that I never met in my life a man who was any more truthful, any more honorable, or any better citizen than he." Meadows

held that Garrett killed Billy the Kid in self-defense. While telling these stories Meadows gets a few of the facts mixed up. Wilson untangles the errors and provides additional information in a well-researched endnote section.

Meadows spent most of his life in the southeastern corner of New Mexico traveling from one job to another. He never made much money during his checkered career as a farmer, cowboy, hunter, bartender, guide, and deputy sheriff under Pat Garrett. But he remembered the people he met and recalled their troubles. Rustlers, feuds, battles over water, Indian conflicts, murders, and thefts are chronicled by Meadows. His reminiscences are insightful, positive in tone, and best of all, a first-hand account of Western characters in the later part of the nineteenth century. Meadows was a skilled narrator and, with a few exceptions, an accurate one. Although he had 50 years to work on the dialogue and details, his stories ring true and give the reader a somewhat different view than is found in the history books. Editor Wilson had done an excellent job in weaving together the 39 newspaper articles and a 78 page manuscript that recorded the reminiscences of Meadows.

The easy-flowing narrative from John Meadows is fun to read, information, and a significant addition to the history of New Mexico. I think you would enjoy reading it.

--Richard Barth, P. M.

Wild Bill Hickok, Gunfighter, by Joseph G. Rosa. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 2003. 216 pages. Index; bibliography; chapter notes; illustrations, photos. Paper, \$17.95.

This book is by that gentlemanly Englishman who is the leading scholar (worldwide) on James Butler Hickok, Joseph Rosa. Since 1964, Rosa, who also has been a dedicated Westerner, has written many volumes on American gunfighters, particularly on the real "Wild Bill." This volume, which primarily (but not exclusively) details the various gunfights of Hickok, is typical of the scholarly work by Rosa.

As a reader of Rosa's books knows, Rosa's journeys into history are voyages of discovery, both for the writer and the reader. Rosa typically discusses his conclusions and sets out his proof; he never lectures. Thus, although his first book on Wild Bill appeared in 1964, Rosa kept searching and, in 1974, published a second edition which corrected conclusions he made (often tentatively) in the first edition. Unlike the all-too-typical Western history fanatic, who conducts search-and-destroy missions (searching for trivia *ad infinitum* and destroying opposing views), Rosa's forte has been to write rationally and with a certain gentility.

In the book, the author discusses what is known about Hickok's life, death, and burials. It also introduces the reader to the particular weaponry employed and to the art of gunfighting. However, the bulk of the volume sets out the facts (and the legends) regarding the shootouts involving Hickok, exclusive of the ones which occurred against Confederate rebels or Plains Indians. Thus, there is a detailed discussion of the Springfield, Missouri, fight with Dave Tutt, which probably is one of the few times a gunfight was anything like a face-to-face duel. The other legendary encounters, with Seventh Cavalrymen, with John Wesley Hardin, and with Jack McCall, are similarly discussed in non-tedious detail.

For a true biography of Hickok, I would recommend the 1974 edition of Rosa's *They Called Him Wild Bill*. But for an easy way to learn about Hickok (and more accurate than watching Gary Cooper in *The Plainsman*), this would be the way to go.

The book is highly recommended. I would hesitate to say, however, that this is the last word on Wild Bill. I want Mr. Rosa to keep looking for more.

--John Hutchins P. M.

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 Author's Appendix: [None provided]
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The Life of the Marlows: A True Story of Frontier Life of Early Days, by William Rathmell, edited by Robert K. DeArment. University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, 2004. 206 pp. Introduction (by DeArment), index, bibliography, footnotes, illustrated with photographs and maps. Cloth, dustjacket, \$27.95.

This book is presented by that indefatigable researcher and chronicler of violence and gunfighters in the American West, Robert K. DeArment. DeArment has written numerous books previously and similarly has edited the reminiscences of a Texas Ranger. This is another feather in DeArment's Stetson.

This is a reprinting, with DeArment's helpful and scholarly notes, of a Western classic, the 1931 edition of the story of the Marlow brothers of Texas. The reprinting alone is a definite public service for the likes of the Westerners. While this reviewer never has seen a copy of the first, 1892, edition, he does know that he had to pay \$250 about seven years ago for the 1931 publication (although, based upon investment value, he should have bought the original Custer photograph in the same catalogue, instead).

...tells, in this reviewers
opinion, the story of some
of the gamest men who
ever lived...

Be that as it may, this volume, which was published originally (both in 1892 and 1931) in beautiful Ouray, Colorado, tells, in this reviewer's opinion, the story of some of the gamest men who ever lived and died in the Lone Star State. The version of the tale set out in this book, which portrayed the view of

the Marlow family, was the basis for John Wayne's movie, *The Sons of Katie Elder*. In brief, the brothers, in a county-type war that took place in Graham, Young County, Texas, were accused of acts of thievery and violence. They were indicted and, while shackled together, were set upon by a mob, aided by the local Texas peace officers. The resulting shootout was one of the most horrific and amazing in frontier annals. As is typical, the legal ramifications that resulted from the gunfight dragged on for years. Characters involved in the resulting legal tangles included such worthies as Captain Bill McDonald of the Texas Rangers, Sheriff Doc Shores of Colorado, the United States Marshals Service, and the United States Supreme Court.

Like the Johnson County War in Wyoming, the story of the Marlows still makes people mad down Texas way. (The reviewer works with a relative of the Marlows, and she certainly is hot under the collar about it.) DeArment, with his input, brings a needed balance to the story. As in most conflicts, one can pick and choose who was right and who was wrong. However, the write-up by the Supreme Court, exclusive of the legalese, found at *Logan v. United States*, 144 U.S. 263 (1892), certainly tells a chilling story that supports the Marlow side.

Naturally enough for a DeArment book, this one is highly recommended. I hope the author, a gentleman and a veteran of World War II, keeps on with his good work for years to come.

--John Hutchins, P. M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
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November - December 2004

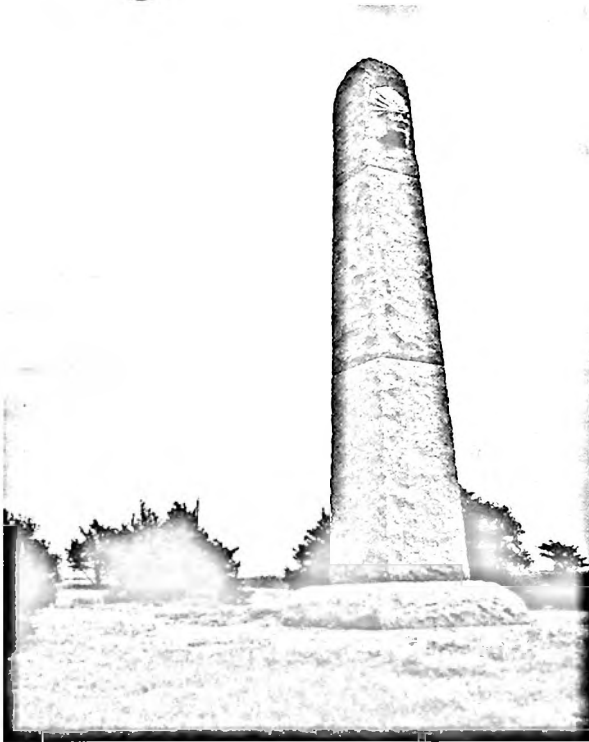


Photo by author

Monument at Massacre Canyon battle site

Counting coup: the nature of intertribal warfare on the Great Plains considered

**by Dennis E. Hagen, C.M.
(presented May 26, 2004)**

Our Author

Dennis Hagen received his BA in Political Science from the University of North Dakota in 1968, along with a commission in the Air Force. Following graduation, he served as an intelligence briefer and analyst with the Seventh Air Force combat operations center in Saigon, Vietnam, for which he received the Bronze Star medal. Dennis later served as intelligence officer for the 90th Strategic Missile Wing near Cheyenne, Wyoming. Upon leaving the Air Force as a Captain, Dennis enrolled at Colorado State University where he received his Master's degree in American History in 1974. More recently, Dennis graduated from the University of Denver with a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science in August, 2004 and has been working as an archivist at the Denver Public Library Western History Collection since August. He met his wife Mary at CSU, and they will be celebrating their 30th Anniversary in August.

Dennis briefly tried his hand at teaching, receiving his certification in Social Studies from Metro State in 1976. It became quickly and painfully obvious that Dennis was not cut out to teach high school, so he began a career in restaurant management. He was promoted to District Manager, supervising nine corporate fast-food restaurants. Later Dennis used this experience to operate his own franchise restaurant.

Dennis has been a member of the Denver Westerners for just over three years. While he enjoys all areas of Western history, he is particularly partial to the Plains Indian Wars, the frontier Army and the mountain men. He is also an avid model railroader. His wife Mary is a high school librarian as well as the principal harpist with the Littleton Symphony, and his daughter Tracy is studying cello performance at the University of Puget Sound in Washington.

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Counting coup: the nature of intertribal warfare on the Great Plains considered

by Dennis E. Hagen, C.M.
(presented May 26, 2004)

On a hot, dry Tuesday afternoon, August 5, 1873, Captain Charles Meinhold, and 49 dusty troopers of Company B Third U. S. Cavalry, worked their way cautiously down a shallow canyon near present-day Trenton, in southwestern Nebraska. Earlier that morning, frantic Pawnee refugees had tumbled into Meinhold's camp with reports of a massacre in progress, and the troopers were investigating. As the canyon narrowed, a sickening stench rose on the shimmering heat waves. Ghastly scenes of carnage testified to the slaughter that had occurred.

Acting Assistant Surgeon David Powell described it this way: "It was a horrible sight. Dead braves with bows still tightly grasped in dead and stiffened fingers; sucking infants pinned to their mothers' breasts with arrows; bowels protruding from openings made by fiendish knives; heads scalped with red blood glazed upon them a stinking mass, many already fly-blown and scorched with heat." (Riley, 1998, p. 88)

The train of events that led to this slaughter began a month earlier, when approximately 400 Pawnee Indians received permission to leave their reservation to hunt buffalo in southwestern Nebraska and northwestern Kansas. The Pawnee had always depended upon two major hunts each year for their survival. So far, their

summer hunt had been reasonably successful despite diminishing herds, and they carried a substantial store of meat. (Hyde, 1951, p. 245)

On the evening of August 4, three white hunters warned the Pawnee that Sioux warriors planned to attack them. The Pawnees dismissed the hunter's warnings as nothing more than a ruse designed to frighten them away from an excellent hunting ground. After all, their Quaker Indian Agent William Burgess, shocked by their poverty, had given them permission for the hunt, and they were accompanied by a "trail agent" in the person of John Williamson.

The Pawnee were confident that if it came down to a fight they could whip the Sioux. Williamson's orders prevented him from interfering with the hunt, yet he was responsible for avoiding confrontations with other tribes or incidents with white settlers. (Williamson, 1922) Though well intentioned and well liked by the Pawnee, Williamson lacked experience, a fact that left him unequal to his task and contributed substantially to the impending disaster.

The previous year's hunts had been shepherded by Texas Jack Omohundro, who found the prospect of appearing on stage with his old friend Buffalo Bill Cody too appealing and was therefore unavailable for the 1873 hunt. (Riley, 1998, pp. 91-93)

Unfortunately for the Pawnees, the White buffalo hunters told the truth. No one had bothered to inform Williamson that a large party of reservation Sioux was also out hunting. (Wilson, 1984, p. 191) Indeed, nearly 1,000 Brulé and Oglala warriors were in the area.

Smarting from recent losses to Ute horse raiders, the Sioux were in an ugly mood. Their trail agent, Antoine Janis, had managed to dissuade them from mounting a revenge expedition into Ute country. However, when Oglala chief Little Wound asked if the Sioux were free to attack the Pawnee, Janis deferred, saying only that his instructions forbid the Sioux from attacking the Pawnee on their reservation. (Riley, 1998, pp. 92-98)

The Sioux therefore believed they had received tacit approval for their attack, setting the stage for disaster. On the morning of August 5, Pawnee scouts located a small herd, and the men quickly scattered to the chase. Women, children and a few old men remained with the pack animals. When a small contingent of Sioux swooped down, killing several of the hunters, the Pawnee began to argue among themselves. Should they fall back or should they make a stand? Chief Fighting Bear rashly demanded that they hold their ground, and he prevailed. However, when the main body of Sioux arrived, the Pawnee realized they were greatly outnumbered, and they began to fall back. The young and inexperienced Williamson rode toward the Sioux with an interpreter and a white flag in an attempt to avoid further bloodshed. He had his horse shot out from under him and,

grabbing another mount, barely escaped with his life. (Riley, 1998. pp. 92-98) Of his flight from the battlefield Williamson later wrote: "I often have thought of a little Indian girl, who evidently had fallen from her mother's back, in our retreat down the canyon. She was sitting on the ground with her little arms raised as if pleading for some one to pick her up. As I passed I tried to pick her up but only succeeded in touching one of her hands. I couldn't return so she was left behind to suffer a horrible death." (Williamson, 1922)

As the Pawnees raced down toward the Republican River Valley, the Sioux unexpectedly broke off their attack, returning to the canyon to partake of the spoils of battle. They raped Pawnee women who had fallen behind, then killed and mutilated them. Some still breathed as the Sioux warriors threw their bodies upon piles of burning lodge poles. (Wilson, 1984, p. 192)

Williamson reported 156 Pawnee killed, mostly women and children, though the number was almost certainly smaller, perhaps between 70 and 100. (Williamson, 1922) (Hyde, 1951, p. 247) Six of the Sioux died during the battle or perhaps later from wounds they sustained. This episode, known as the battle of Massacre Canyon, was the last significant intertribal battle on the northern Plains. However, small-scale intertribal raids continued for many more years. (House & Geer, 1993, p. 116)

Massacre Canyon raises many troubling questions. Why, for example, would one tribe inflict such slaughter upon another, especially when the Indians struggle against the whites was



Photo by author

North end of Massacre Canyon where Sioux began attack on Pawnee

so near its climax?

Based upon Williamson's report, Massacre Canyon would eclipse Sand Creek and Washita in terms of numbers killed. Was Massacre Canyon thus an anomaly? Was it just a case of Sioux retaliation for the Pawnee's alignment with the whites? Was Massacre Canyon an extreme expression of intertribal warfare, or was it simply the norm in a conflict that had gone on for generations?

To answer these questions, we must first understand the true nature of intertribal warfare. I would submit that many current portrayals of intertribal warfare are flawed. Not only do they distort the historical record, they also do an injustice to the very Native American warriors whom these views have sought to ennoble.

Let us begin with a few examples.

In 1978, NBC premiered what I

consider the best mini-series ever done for television: James Mitchner's monumental epic, *Centennial*. Very near the beginning of the first episode, the narrator asserts that: "War between the various tribes of the plains was a kind of dangerous game that seldom resulted in death. What was important was a display of courage. Bravery was shown by touching or striking an enemy with hand or weapon, a practice later to be known as counting coup." (Wilder, 1978)

Centennial is a work of fiction, of course. Nevertheless, I believe this brief quote summarizes current popular beliefs about intertribal warfare rather well. Patrick Mendoza maintains in his 1993 book, *Song of Sorrow: Massacre at Sand Creek*:

"Warfare to the Tsis Tsis Tas [Cheyennes] and other Indian tribes was not the brutal slaughter of an entire enemy. Great losses of

life were rare in tribal fighting . . . The coming of the White man though taught the Tsis Tsis Tas the lessons of wholesale slaughter."

(Mendoza, 1993, p. 2)

Mendoza goes on to describe a "golden age":

"It was a time before the horse and a thing called 'war'. In this 'golden age' all men and strangers were greeted in peace as they warmed themselves by the village fires. With the coming of the horse however, life changed. With this new, speedy mode of transportation the Tsis Tsis Tas lost their golden age. Warfare replaced peace as this verdant grassland's greatest splendor." (Mendoza, 1993, p. 2)

One popular coffee table book describes intertribal warfare as but a sport:

"Performing warlike deeds of note was called counting coup, from the French word for blow or stroke... feats of bravery were much more highly prized than killing. War was viewed as a sport, roughly comparable to tournaments of Medieval Europe... All-out tribal wars that endangered a nation's survival were extremely rare. Such confrontations happened more by accident than by plan." (Maxwell, 1978, p. 186)

Another such book seems to imply that intertribal warfare never even happened, asserting that "For the Indians, the West was only wild because the white man made it so." (Conley, 1993, p.69) Ken Burns' highly acclaimed series *The West* carries this

theme forward, presenting the American West as a virtual Garden of Eden before European contact.

The massive companion book to the television documentary *500 Nations* devotes less than two pages to intertribal warfare, describing it as but a complex ritual; one which involved the "mere touching of an enemy." In this work Alvin Josephy further asserts that because Native Americans somehow instinctively understood the deadly potential of their newly acquired firearms, they agreed to adopt this "ritual combat" in order to minimize casualties. (Josephy, 1994, p. 363-364)

Many other recent books, movies and documentaries have also emphasized this benign view of intertribal warfare. Thus, it is not surprising how firmly rooted this notion has become in the public mind.

During the summer of 2001, a presentation by a park ranger at Fort Laramie described differences and similarities between the American and the Native combatants of the Plains Indian Wars. Toward the end of his talk, the ranger posed a simple but instructive question: Who was more likely to kill women and children as a matter of policy, the United States Army, or the Native Americans? There was a brief, silent pause as the audience considered the question. For those schooled in the guilt of Sand Creek, Washita and Wounded Knee, the answer was obvious. Everyone knew the Cavalry killed women and children. Shock was palpable when the ranger explained that Native warriors killed women and children as a matter of policy while the Army's official doctrine, despite what often occurred on

the battlefield, sought to minimize such casualties. Based on the mumbling that followed his presentation, I am not sure he won many converts. (Hagen, 2001)

So, how does this popular view of intertribal warfare stand up when measured against the historical record? A detailed examination would surpass the scope of this presentation. Still, it should be possible to construct a brief outline at least one relative to intertribal warfare as practiced on the northern Plains.

Our first question, then, is simply this: Was there really a "golden age" in which intertribal warfare was unknown: a "golden age", moreover, that disintegrated with the advent of the horse?

George Bird Grinnell, one of the most prolific chroniclers of Indian culture (Grinnell, 1985, p. 2) does in fact present oral traditions from several tribes that suggest times before war. Unfortunately, none or them can be specifically documented beyond a vague reference to "in those days", or "long, long ago." (Grinnell, 1925, p. 125)

George Hyde another noted Indian historian, suggests that the Pawnee migration northward into present-day Kansas and Nebraska around 1400 might have occurred during a time of peace, since virtually no other tribes occupied or contested that area. (Hyde, 1951, p. 23-24)

Weasel Tail, a very old man of the Blood tribe of Blackfeet, described a time of peace to anthropologist John Ewers in the 1940s. However, according to Weasel Tail, this peace was shattered after an injury to a Snake boy during something akin to a football

game. The boy's angry father clubbed to death the Blackfoot boy whom he believed responsible for the injury, setting off a period of sustained warfare. (Ewers, 1967, pp. 11- 12)

Warfare intensified when the Snakes disregarded a long-established battle protocol. In those days, a man could simply sit down on the battlefield and raise his hands to signify that he no longer wished to fight. Opposing warriors had generally respected this convention. During one battle, Snake warriors killed a Blackfoot who had made such a sign, and from that time forth, according to Weasel Tail, war was without quarter on either side. (Ewers, 1967, pp. 11-12)

Although not specifically dated, Ewers maintains that all of the incidents related to him by Weasel Tail occurred long before the advent of the horse. (Ewers, 1967, p. 12)

But more importantly, as to whether or not a time of peace ever really existed, Ewers concludes: "Archeological evidence cannot pinpoint the beginnings of intertribal warfare in this region. But it certainly reveals the existence of warfare in prehistoric times." (Ewers, 1997, p. 167)

Stan Hoig, another historian noted for his works dealing with Native Americans agrees, suggesting that we have "ample evidence of prehistoric conflicts" in the form of human remains, weapons, pictographs and other types of rock art. Hoig also describes a prehistoric Nebraska site containing some fifty mutilated skeletons found lying within a burned structure. (Hoig, 1993, p. 31) Herman Viola goes even further, contending that intertribal



Photo by author

Inscription on Massacre Monument

warfare “had been a fact of life in North America since the first paleo-Indians sorted themselves into discrete bands and tribes.” (Viola, 1999, p. 23)

Oral traditions and archeology suggest a long history of intertribal warfare, but the picture they present is hazy at best. Fortunately, we can clarify our understanding of this warfare by consulting the observations of the first British, French and Spanish traders to penetrate the Great Plains.

Between 1650 and 1670, bloody fighting frequently occurred

between the Sioux and the Cree, according to information provided by early French traders like Nicolas Perrot. He commented that these tribes were still in the Stone Age and untouched by white influence at the time these wars began. (Hyde, 1937, pp. 4-5)

There is strong evidence that the Cree and the Assiniboine attacked neighboring tribes before 1690. The Snakes also fought regularly prior to 1730. These tribes were all afoot at this time. (Hyde, 1959, pp. 120-127) A Catholic priest, Father Couquart tells of a combined Assiniboine Cree attack against the Sioux in 1742 in which some 270 people, including women and children, were killed.

(Hoig, 1993, p. 14)

Throughout the early 1700s, the Sioux pushed back the Omaha, Iowa and Otoe tribes, and in 1760, they began a long and costly war with the Arikaras. In short, the Sioux were engaged in active and deadly warfare for at least 120 years before they obtained horses. (Hyde, 1937, pp. 14-17)

Many authors cite the descriptions of typical pre-horse warfare that an aged Cree tribesman named Saukamappee provided to British trader David Thompson during the winter of

1787-88. (Secoy, 2000, pp. 34-39)

During battle, warriors from contending tribes typically faced off in long lines protected by thick leather shields and hurled insults and shot arrows at each other, often for a full day, accomplishing little more than show. However, in at least one instance, the Piegan Blackfeet charged their Shoshone adversaries during such a battle, breaking the Shoshone line. The Piegan pursued them vigorously and a great slaughter ensued. (McGinnis, 1990, p. 8)

It is important to note, however, that, according to Saukamappee, warfare's greatest danger during the pre-horse period occurred not during these ritualized battles, but rather when extremely large, roving war parties attacked and wiped out small villages. Indeed, the French explorer and trader Pierre Gautier de Varennes de la Verendrye and his sons commented on this practice after visits to the Mandan Indians in 1738 and 1742. The extensive killing of women and children during such raids surprised them greatly, as they had seen nothing comparable in Europe. (McGinnis, 1990, p. 4)

Spanish sources report substantial numbers of Pawnee casualties in their wars with the Apaches in the late 1600s. For their part, the Pawnee sold many Apache captives to the French for use as slaves. (Hyde, 1951, p. 36)

It seems unlikely then, that intertribal warfare could have resulted from the introduction of the horse. On the contrary, historical records suggest that the horse may actually have served to moderate the slaughter. While the first mounted tribes may have gained an

initial advantage in battle, that advantage was short-lived. Furthermore, the first few horses provided mobility for but a small number of warriors, actually leading to a brief period of smaller war parties. However, some tribes, like the Snakes, simply continued to fight on foot as they always had. (Hyde, 1959, p. 132)

As horses proliferated, tactics calling for small raiding parties designed specifically to steal horses quickly developed. This also led to smaller confrontations and at least for a very brief time to fewer casualties. In short order, though, most of the tribes obtained horses in substantial numbers and deadly warfare resumed at nearly its pre-horse level. The answer to our first inquiry seems clear then, given even this brief glimpse. If a "golden age" ever existed on the Great Plains, it must have been a long, long time ago. Intertribal warfare was, in fact, a brutal and bloody business that substantially pre-dated the advent of the horse.

Next, let us return to the Park Ranger's question: did Native Americans kill women and children as a matter of course?

As we have already seen, Sioux warriors killed women and children in substantial numbers at Massacre Canyon. But again, was this an anomaly or was it the norm? La Verendrye and Saukamappee, among others, recorded the killing of women and children during the pre-horse period. The post-horse period provides many additional examples.

Edwin Thompson Denig traded with many tribes for more than twenty years from the 1830s to the 1850s, and married two Indian women. Denig

believed firmly in the adage that one should know one's customers. To this end, he compiled an encyclopedic knowledge of the major tribes then occupying the upper Missouri. In some cases, his observations provide the only first-hand accounts available from the first half of the Nineteenth Century.

Denig says of the Crows: *"One excellent trait in their character is that, if possible, in battle they take the women and children prisoners, instead of dashing their brains out as the rest of the tribes do. They and their friends and brethren (the Gross Ventres) are the only nations we know who exhibit this mark of humanity."* (Denig, 1961, p. 148)

Rufus Sage, it should be noted, made this same observation while traveling among the Crows in 1842. (Sage, 1982, p. 175)

Denig's endorsement of the Crows stands in marked contrast to his description of a particular battle between the Assiniboine and the Blackfoot that occurred sometime before 1838. 1,100 to 1,200 Assiniboine warriors, under the leadership of a chief named Gauche, also known as He Who Holds the Knife, massacred a Gross Ventre village consisting of 30 lodges. Denig described the battle thusly:

"By his usual good fortune he arrived with his warriors at a time when all the men of the village except eight or ten were out hunting. The few men in camp defended themselves bravely but were all killed, also every woman and child found there, who num-

bered about 130 souls. This was a terrible massacre. The children were killed and tormented to death in every possible variety of savage warfare. Many were roasted alive. No prisoners were taken, no mercy shown." (Denig, 1961, p. 77)

In 1838, the Cheyenne mounted a large revenge raid against the Kiowa resulting in the battle of Wolf Creek near the valley of the Washita River. During the opening stage of this battle, Walking Coyote charged a man and a woman who were fleeing the onrushing Cheyenne. Despite the woman's cries for help, the man rode away. Walking Coyote caught the woman and counted coup on her and then he killed her. During this same battle, the Cheyenne came upon twelve women digging roots on the south side of the Kiowa camp. They quickly killed all twelve. As the battle ended, the Cheyenne discovered a woman hiding in some brush and killed her as well. (Grinnell, 1976, pp. 54- 58)

Lieutenant James H. Bradley, chief of scouts with Colonel Gibbon's Montana Column during the 1876 Sioux campaign, relates a tale told to him by one of his Crow Indian scouts named Little Face about a celebrated Crow chief, Tattooed Forehead. One evening Tattooed Forehead entered an Assiniboine camp disguised as an Assiniboine. He spied two naked Indian maidens bathing in the river. They believed him to be one of their own tribesmen and modestly retreated into the bushes until he passed. Tattooed Forehead then sneaked back to grab one of the women, decapitating her before either woman could sound an alarm.

Bradley's Crow scouts thought it a great joke on their enemy, and the retelling of the story even many years after the fact brought, according to Bradley, a delighted chuckle from them. (Bradley, 1991, pp. 120-121)

During the winter of 1829-30, some 300 Osage warriors swarmed over a Pawnee village near a large lake along the upper Arkansas River. Attacking by surprise, they drove the Pawnee into the lake. The Osage warriors leaped in after the Pawnees and tomahawked men, women and children, as they stood helpless in the water. The Osage boasted that they had shed more Pawnee blood than they had ever done before, and claimed to have massacred 80 or 90 Pawnee without the loss of a single Osage warrior. (Hyde, 1951, p. 125)

Again, this is but a brief snapshot. Nevertheless, it suggests that warriors considered women and children to be enemies rather than non-combatants. Indeed, as historian Robert Utley has summarized:

"In combat, although quarter was sometimes granted on impulse, no one was immune. Men, women and children of all ages expected to be killed if seized or cornered, their scalps and other parts of the body torn off as trophies, their remains hacked and disfigured as a permanent affliction in the spirit world." (Utley, 1993, p. 16)

Moving to a third and more fundamental question: Was intertribal warfare simply a rough game? Was it ritual combat, or was it something entirely different? The benign view of intertribal warfare stems, in large

measure, from a misunderstanding of the practice of counting coup. Most of the literature describing the specifics of counting coup is correct, insofar as it goes. However, focusing narrowly on this single aspect of personal combat obscures the larger picture of how Native Americans actually conducted warfare.

Touching an enemy with hand or weapon truly was the greatest feat a warrior could perform and it provided the greatest single honor to which a warrior could aspire. However, coup involved targets other than armed combatants. As described above, warriors could and did count coup on defenseless women. Grinnell also describes counting coup by striking particularly dangerous animals such as bears. (Grinnell, 1910, p. 297)

In addition to touching an enemy, man, woman or child, certain tribes awarded coups for riding an enemy down with one's horse. Capturing a live enemy's weapons or successfully stealing a tethered horse from an enemy village, as depicted here, also counted as coup for many tribes. (Linderman, 1962, p. 19)

A second misconception is that warriors counted coup only upon combatants who were able to fight or to strike back. This was not always true, as Grinnell explains: "When an enemy was killed, each of those nearest to him tried to be the first to reach him and touch him. Anyone who wished to might scalp the dead. Neither the killing nor the scalping was regarded as an especially creditable act. The chief applause was won by the man who first could touch the fallen enemy." (Grinnell, 1910, p. 297)

As Robert Lowie points out, being the first to strike an enemy who was already dead often provided a better measure of a warrior's fleetness of foot than his skill or his valor in hand to hand fighting. (Lowie, 1956, p. 228) Later, Grinnell conceded that, while killing an enemy was not in itself a high achievement, it was recognized as a positive good, in that it served to reduce the opposing force.

John Stands in Timber, a Cheyenne tribal historian, contradicted Grinnell with respect to the scalping of an enemy. He noted that while the Cheyenne permitted three coups on an enemy, the man who took the scalp actually did receive credit for a fourth coup. (Stands in Timber, 1967, pp. 68-69)

A third misconception is that coup involved some form of ritualized combat. To illustrate the error in this position we need but consider the case of Tall Bull, a renowned Cheyenne chief killed later by white forces at the Battle of Summit Springs. In 1853, Tall Bull and a companion scouted a Pawnee camp in preparation for an attack. Tall Bull suggested that they disguise themselves as Pawnees and sneak into the camp where they could mill about and bump into many enemies, thus counting many coups. His companion declined, admonishing Tall Bull to stick to business. The Cheyenne war party needed their scouting report. (Grinnell, 1976, pp. 86-87)

Once a Crow warrior named Bull Tongue scouted a Lakota village. He encountered a woman urinating and killed her. This act, while seemingly devoid of ritual trappings, was sufficient for Bull Tongue to claim and to

receive credit for striking a coveted first coup.

In another incident, several Crow warriors hid themselves outside a Sioux village. Eventually, an unarmed Lakota man wandered out of the village toward the concealed warriors. One of the Crow warriors quickly killed him, setting off a mad scramble. The first Crow to touch the corpse received the honor of striking a first coup. (Lowie, 1956, p. 229)

The single greatest popular misconception, though, is that counting coup somehow minimized, or even substituted for killings. As we have already noted, killing an enemy to immobilize him often facilitated the counting of a coup and served as a necessary preliminary. Moreover, even when a warrior counted coup in a manner that maximized the demonstration of his bravery, he usually followed up by immediately killing his enemy. (Grinnell, 1976, p. 54-58.)

Certain tribes permitted three individuals to count coup on a single foe. Others permitted four. Once the requisite number of warriors had counted coup on an enemy, he was essentially good for nothing else so, if he were still alive, someone usually killed him whether accolades accrued or not. Many works stress that counting coup involved more skill and bravery than simply killing an enemy, hence the higher honors accorded. This is true up to a point. However, it omits one critical element. Touching the enemy was more highly praised than killing him impersonally from a distance with a missile such as an arrow or bullet. (Maxwell, 1978, p. 194) Killing an enemy in close combat with a weapon

in hand was a different matter entirely. It defined the essence of counting coup. Smashing an opponent's skull, for example, was merely an extreme case of touching an enemy with a weapon, representing the best of both worlds.

Deaths often resulted when warriors recklessly rushed headlong into untenable positions simply to count coup on an enemy, and were themselves subsequently killed. They succeeded in winning ultimate glory, of course, but they died in the process. It is also axiomatic that warriors who became the object of coup and lived were so deeply humiliated that nothing short of a vengeance killing could restore their honor. Let us consider a few examples of counting coup in actual practice. Red Cloud, the famous chief of the Oglala Sioux, counted the first of his many coups when he took the scalp of a Pawnee at the age of 16. Shortly thereafter, he killed and scalped a Crow. (Larson, 1997, pp. 41-42)

Sitting Bull, a Hunkpapa holy man, counted his first coup at age 14 by knocking a Crow warrior from his horse with a hatchet. Another Hunkpapa rushed in to count a second coup by way of killing the downed man. (Utley, 1993, p. 14) One of the first childhood memories of Chief White Bull, another noted Sioux leader, was that of viewing the bodies of ten Crow horse raiders killed by his older relatives. (Vestal, 1991, p. 10-12)

Washakie, a noted war chief of the Shoshone, said of his youth:

"As a young man I delighted in war. When my tribe was at peace I would wander off sometimes alone in search of an enemy. I am ashamed to speak of these years,

for I killed a great many Indians."
(Hebard, 2000, pp. 53-54.)

Even Crazy Horse, the Oglala warrior so often cited for his roles in the Fetterman and Custer battles, won his name as a teen-ager when he killed two Snake warriors and scalped them. (Sandoz, 1961, pp. 116-117)

The famous warriors who later fought the Americans compiled their distinguished war records long before any Americans arrived on the scene. Their coups and their battle experience came at the expense of other Indians. However, it was not the experience of tournaments or games. Rather, war was a deadly serious business for these fighters. While it is true that for the Plains Indians warfare was above all else a quest for glory and honor, their focus on personal prowess in no way mitigated the fact that death remained an integral part of warfare. As Western artist George Catlin (1994, p. 48) noted in the 1830s:

"The loser in an Indian war might regret the loss of his teepee, might regret his women, his children, his scalp or his life. But if he fought gallantly, he would still have his honor."

We must conclude, then, based on the overwhelming weight of historical evidence, that despite the practice of counting coup, death remained an intrinsic part of intertribal warfare. Deaths occurred on one side or the other in virtually every encounter between hostile tribes.

We now move to what I consider the most fundamental question of all: (53) Were large-scale losses of

life in intertribal warfare actually the rarity that some recent works have portrayed? This is, of course, a difficult and relative question. When contrasted to losses of thousands killed in a single battle occasioned by our own Civil War, the loss of but 50 or 100 killed may seem slight. However, one must remember that Native Americans regarded the loss of even a single warrior as a tragedy. Certainly, a village consisting of 500 or 600 souls would have viewed the deaths of 50 or 100 people as catastrophic on a scale we can scarcely imagine today.

With these numbers in mind, let us turn again to the record. Lewis and Clark found the Brulé, Sioux in high spirits in September 1804 after they had killed 75 Omaha warriors and taken 48 women and children prisoners. Clark described the resulting scalp dance as the Sioux celebrated their victory. (DeVoto, 1997, pp. 38-40) While it is unclear whether or not the Sioux killed any women or children, Clark noted that the captives seemed to be in very bad shape. (Ambrose, 1996, pp. 171-173)

In 1812, a large force of Pawnee warriors, drawn from three of the major Pawnee bands, attacked a Kansa or Kaw village near the site of the later battle of Ash Hollow. The Pawnee greatly outnumbered the Kansa, but had little experience in the use of horses. Sensing this, the Kansa chief, Burning Heart, held his warriors safely within their earthen lodges until the Pawnee had spent their horses in randomly racing about the village. He then sent two parties crawling out of sight to circle the Pawnee and attack them from the rear. The Pawnees

panicked, and abandoned their exhausted horses in an attempt to escape the trap on foot. The Kansa fell upon them killing more than 80. (Hyde, 1951, pp. 105-106.)

A party of 32 Cheyenne warriors encountered a Crow scout in 1819, near the site of the later Fetterman battle, and killed him. Almost immediately, a large body of Crow warriors arrived, forcing the Cheyenne to retreat to a nearby hilltop. After a two-day siege, the Cheyenne ran out of arrows and ammunition. They resigned themselves to facing death and charged the Crows with only their knives. The Crow quickly killed all 32.

To avenge this loss, the Cheyenne mounted a large expedition into Crow country the following year. The Crow got wind of the invasion and attempted a preemptive strike on the Cheyenne camp. They were unsuccessful in locating it, and during their search, the Cheyenne fell upon the Crow camp. Most of the fighting men were out searching, so the Cheyenne easily killed all of the older men in the camp. Crow tradition suggests that dead bodies of men, women and children lay everywhere. The Cheyenne say they captured and released many older women taking only the younger women and children as prisoners. Wherever the truth lies, both sides acknowledge this particular battle as a tremendous slaughter. (Grinnell, 1976, pp. 22-26) (Powell, 1998, pp. 70-73)

During the 1830s a Crow warrior named Arapooesh rose to prominence as war chief of the Crows. He envisioned taking warfare into enemy country on a grand scale, and in

1832, he targeted a Blackfoot village of about 80 lodges on the Muscleshell River. Rotten Belly, as his name translates into English, maneuvered his warriors into position for a dawn attack just as the Blackfoot village prepared to move. This was a highly vulnerable time as pack animals and women and children straggled out in a long, indefensible line. The Crows slammed into the Blackfoot just as they got the village moving. In a matter of hours they killed well over 100 men and took over 200 women and children prisoners along with all the camp equipment and provisions. The Crow lost 22 men in the battle. (Denig, 1961, p. 163.)

The Crow then dispersed. One group of some 30 lodges, perhaps 150 to 200 people, moved toward the Black Hills. A large party of Cheyenne discovered them there and wiped out almost the entire village, indiscriminately killing the women and children. Only a few men escaped to bring the news back to Rotten Belly. (Denig, 1961, p. 165)

About 600 Crow warriors assembled to take revenge on the Cheyennes. The remains of their dead Crow tribesmen, which they found scattered about an abandoned campsite, set them howling for revenge. They vowed to follow the Cheyenne all the way to Mexico if necessary, and finally caught them near the valley of the Arkansas River. There, the Crows began decoying small parties of Cheyenne warriors out of their village by pretending to be only a small party of horse raiders. They massacred each small group in detail. Denig believes the Crow killed over 200 Cheyenne warriors, taking 270 women and

children prisoners. However, other sources put the number at something over 100 killed. (Denig, 1961, pp. 166-168)

In 1829, the Skidi Pawnees fell upon a Cheyenne raiding party that had tried to steal horses from their camp. They killed every man, chopping up their bodies and dumping them into a nearby creek. When the Cheyenne discovered what had happened, grief-stricken relatives demanded a massive revenge raid. In August 1830, the entire tribe accompanied by their women and children set out to attack the Pawnee. Several Sioux and Arapaho joined them. (Hyde, 1951, p. 126) This was the third time in tribal history that the Cheyenne invoked the power of the Medicine Arrows against an enemy. (Powell, 1993, pp. 31-40)

During the initial attack, a sick Pawnee man asked his friends to carry him out onto the prairie where he could face the Cheyenne onslaught and die an honorable death. A Cheyenne chief named Bull carried the Sacred Arrows tied to his lance and led the charge. He veered over to strike the Pawnee sitting on the ground. By stroke of fortune, the sickly Pawnee managed to avoid the lance thrust and wrested the lance away. Realizing that he had captured something of great value, the Pawnee surged forward to protect the sick man and his trophy. The dispirited Cheyenne withdrew in despair. (Hyde, 1951, pp. 126-127) For many years thereafter, the Cheyenne blamed their ill fortune in battle on the loss of these Sacred Arrows.

In November 1834, a large Crow village had moved into the Bighorn Basin to hunt buffalo. As they

prepared to launch their winter hunt, they spied a party of warriors whom they quickly identified as their ancient enemies, the Piegan Blackfoot. (Leonard, 1983, pp. 236-255)

The Crow immediately abandoned all thought of buffalo and raced to the attack. The badly outnumbered Blackfoot scrambled into a rocky fortress where they managed to defend themselves for most of the morning.

Several Crow charges failed to dislodge them before the noted Black Mountain man, Jim Beckwourth, harangued the Crow warriors, whipping them into a frenzy. He then led a charge into the fortress that broke the Blackfoot resistance. The Crows subsequently killed and mutilated all of the 160 Piegan defenders. (Beckwourth, 1982, pp. 189-200) (Algier, 1993, pp. 113-114) (Leonard, 1983, pp. 236-246)

In 1837, a party of 48 Cheyenne set out to steal horses from the Kiowa. A Kiowa hunter who had set out early in the morning discovered them. The Cheyenne were on foot, expecting to ride back to their village on captured ponies. They managed to wound the Kiowa hunter's horse, but were unable to prevent his return to warn the village. A large number of Kiowa raced out to search for the Cheyenne and finally found them fortified in a ravine. They fought until the Cheyenne expended their ammunition and then the Kiowa killed all 48.

The Cheyenne learned of the fate of the men when a group of Arapaho encountered the Kiowa performing a scalp dance near Bent's Fort. (Grinnell, 1976, pp. 43-45) The winter of 1837-38 had been hard on the Cheyenne so they could not mount an

immediate revenge expedition. However, with the coming of spring, the Cheyenne went after the Kiowa. This was the battle of Wolf Creek mentioned earlier. In a daylong battle the Cheyenne killed 60 Kiowa, but suffered severe losses themselves. The keeper of the Sacred Arrows had sometime earlier shed the blood of a fellow Cheyenne. This was a terrible sacrilege, and the Arrows had not yet undergone their required purification. The Cheyenne attributed their losses to this spiritual affront.

During the spring of 1841, a large party of Pawnee went out to steal horses from the Cheyenne. The Cheyenne discovered them and in the ensuing battle killed 50 Pawnee. (Hyde, 1951, p. 149)

Meanwhile, an unidentified band of Pawnee departed for their spring hunt only to have a band of Kansa or Kaw Indians attack their camp. The Kaw slaughtered virtually all the old men, women and children who remained behind. Only 11 Pawnee escaped. (Hyde, 1951, p. 149)

300 to 400 Sioux warriors descended again on a Pawnee village in June 1843. They approached the camp at night and lay in wait along the riverbanks until dawn. A woman discovered them when she went for water in the morning. Bitter hand-to-hand fighting ensued. The Sioux attempted to draw the Pawnee out with a feigned retreat, but the Pawnee refused to follow. The Sioux then began burning the lodges. This panicked the Pawnee and they tried to flee. The Sioux fell upon them, braining women and children and throwing their bodies into the burning lodges. The

Sioux killed some 80 Pawnee. (Carleton, 1991, pp. 107-108)

This raid was only one of many that occurred against the Pawnee in 1843. Samuel Allis, a missionary residing with the Pawnee, reported that the tribe had lost between 200 and 250 people killed by various enemies in just four months between March 1 and July 1. (Hyde, 1951, p. 156)

During the winter of 1843-44, the Sioux returned in force to strike another Pawnee village, burning 100 more lodges and killing an additional 80 Pawnee. In October 1846, Father De Smet, a missionary who had long worked with the Indians, wrote:

"The year 1846 will be a memorable epoch in the annals of the Blackfeet nation . . . The Crows have struck them a mortal blow fifty families, the entire band of the Little Robe, were lately massacred and 160 women and children have been led into captivity." (Ewers, 1958. P. 188)

In May 1847, a force of Sioux warriors, estimated at 700 to 800 men, attacked one of the last Pawnee villages that remained on the Loup River. They found the village deserted and destroyed it. Later, they chanced upon a group of some 200 Pawnee and killed 83 persons. (Hyde, 1951, p. 169)

In 1849 or 1850, the Blackfoot took revenge upon a horse-stealing party of Assiniboine estimated at 52 men. They chased them down, and in a daylong battle annihilated every one. (Ewers, 1958, p. 137) (Denig, 1961, p. 91) In 1854, a combined force of Kiowa and Cheyenne warriors overwhelmed a party of 113 Pawnee and

killed nearly every one. (Grinnell, 1961, p. 309)

Perhaps the bloodiest example of intertribal conflict occurred in the summer of 1867, about 20 miles east of the Cypress Hills near the Canadian border in southern Saskatchewan. Here the Piegan Blackfoot had gathered in a huge encampment under the leadership of a highly beloved chief named Many Horses. One morning Many Horses and his wife departed camp to gather the meat from buffalo he had killed the previous day. During his absence a large force of Gros Ventre and Crow warriors approached. At first, the Piegan thought they were buffalo. However, when they recognized their enemies, a long-range battle quickly developed. Neither side gained an advantage until a young Piegan raced into camp to report that the Crows had murdered Chief Many Horses during their approach to the village. This horrible revelation energized the Piegans, and they charged their foes with wild abandon. The Gros Ventres and Crows panicked under the pressure and retreated in confusion. (Ewers, 1958, p. 243)

The Piegan warriors pursued until the enemy horses began to give out. By this time the Crows and Gros Ventres were so demoralized that the Piegan had no trouble killing large numbers of them. In one incident:

"Some one overtook an old Gros Ventre, who called out: 'Spare me! I am old!' The Piegan's heart was touched and he was going to spare him, but another man ran up and said, 'Oh, yes, we will spare you,' and he blew out his brains. "Very few of the enemy were killed with

guns. It was not necessary. They killed some by running over them with their horses, others with bows and arrows, others with hatchets . . . and killed some with stones." (Grinnell, 1925, p. 139-140)

The chase and the slaughter reportedly raged for 18 miles. As the Piegans returned to camp, they counted some 400 enemy bodies. Later, they determined their own losses at ten killed. (Grinnell, 1925, p. 141)

Some writers have cited small-scale horse raids as evidence to support their benign view of Plains warfare. Yet, Two Leggings, a Crow warrior who participated in dozens of such small raids throughout his long life, relates that in virtually every one of them someone was killed. (Nabokov, 1967)

Indeed, such limited skirmishes were almost a daily occurrence for the Plains Indians. Denig (1961, pp. 146-147) estimates that many tribes lost upwards of 50 to 100 warriors every year to these raids deaths, in addition to casualties suffered in larger battles. Grinnell summarized the true tone of Plains warfare this way:

"To the plains Indians of early days the terms 'stranger' and 'enemy' were almost synonymous. A man or a small party not recognized was likely to be attacked without warning, and cases have occurred where a war party has been attacked by another party of its own tribe and men killed and wounded before the fighters recognized each other." (Grinnell, 1976, p. 93.)

Plenty Coups confirms this, noting that when such incidents occurred among the Crows, the overly-aggressive warriors simply assumed responsibility for the care of the dead warrior's family. (Linderman, 1962, p. 54)

Historical evidence seems to leave little room for doubt. Relatively large-scale massacres occurred if not routinely, then at least frequently during the intertribal wars. The resulting carnage predated, for the most part, any significant White presence on the plains.

The foregoing discussion seeks neither to rationalize nor to excuse White actions that occurred later during the Plains Indian wars. That is an entirely different subject. There has been no intent to imply value judgments, nor should any be inferred. This paper simply seeks to correct a badly distorted view of an important aspect of early Indian life on the Great Plains.

Intertribal warfare was never the game of mere touching that modern writers have so often and so erroneously portrayed. Rather, like all wars everywhere it was a brutal, nasty business often conducted without quarter. It brought death to many, many Native Americans.

Certain warriors won the adulation, the near worship of their fellow tribesmen by their pledges to stake themselves out during particularly desperate battles and fight to the death. One would be hard-pressed indeed to explain this renown and this celebrity if one truly believed that all these warriors had to fear by their actions was a ritualized slap on the head.

It defies all logic, moreover, to

suggest, for example, that the expansionist Lakota could force Crow, Arikara or Pawnee warriors to surrender their prime hunting grounds, their very means of survival, simply by threatening to rap them with sticks. No, these were tough, courageous fighting men. For them, the stakes of battle could not have been higher. They understood that in every confrontation with an enemy, deaths could and often did result. They conducted themselves accordingly. To contend otherwise diminishes and demeans the very memory of these gallant warriors.

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