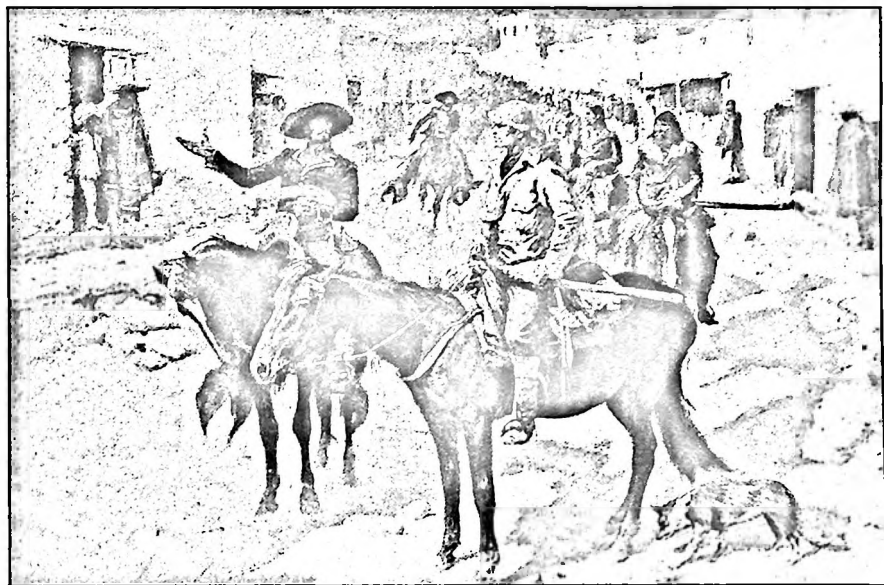




The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

January - February 2007



**Captain Pike's Feint up the middle and the
Spanish American Cold War of 1805-1808**

by John M. Hutchins, P.M.
(presented June 28, 2006)



Our author

John Hutchins has been a Posse Member since 1985. This is his fifth paper presented to the Westerners.

In addition to being a member of the Westerners, John is a member of the Civil War Roundtable. He retired as a major from the Army reserves in 1996.

Hutchins received his B.A. and his juris doctorate from the University of Colorado.

He is married and has a son, a senior in high school.



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Captain Pike's Feint up the middle and the Spanish American Cold War of 1805-1808

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I. Introduction

The Second Expedition of Zebulon Montgomery Pike often is compared to and contrasted with the grander voyage of Captains Lewis and Clark. But it is not often that either of these events is placed into the context of the times, other than a brief reference to the visions of Thomas Jefferson and his administration bringing about a latter-day age of discovery and exploration. But the many military expeditions during the two administrations of Jefferson were every bit as much products of geopolitics as quests for scientific knowledge.

These expeditions were an early expression of Manifest Destiny, whereby the American Republic, both officially and unofficially, attempted to grab as much of the North American continent as possible. Taking advantage of the dangerous and turbulent years of Napoleonic warfare, and having to counter similar expeditions by European players on the American chessboard, Pike and his army contemporaries, many of whom are seldom recalled, were aggressive parts of a very militant diplomatic struggle. Also largely forgotten today is the fact that, in addition to France and Britain, Spain also often was on the brink of war with both Federalist and Republican administrations during the closing years of the Eighteenth Century and the opening years

of the Nineteenth. Only by recognizing this Hispanic-American contest can the Southwest Expedition of Pike be made to make some sense, as a feint up the middle, while other military forces, roughly coordinated by a visionary president and a treasonous commanding general, were at work on other fronts.¹

II. Background

Historically, Spain's story in the New World was largely one of claiming everything and treating all other interlopers as heretics and pirates. While the revolutionary era of the late Eighteenth Century brought some liberalism to Spanish policies and even ended, finally, the attitude that all wars were religious wars, Spain still jealously guarded its American possessions.

Thus, although willing enough to join France against the British during the American War of Independence, Spain had no love for the new republic in the Americas. Rightly or wrongly, every movement by the United States towards the west was opposed by Madrid, and Spanish colonial officials were even more reluctant to accommodate their new neighbor. These Spanish attitudes, which were not unlike those of the British in the Old Northwest, in turn invited aggressive behavior on the part of American officials, military men, and civilians.

After the Pinkney-Godoy Treaty of 1795, which was supposed to

adjust difficulties between Washington and Madrid, the local Spanish military procrastinated in allowing the raising of the U.S. flag at surrendered posts in Mississippi, hoping that the Spanish government would nullify the changeover.² For its part, the first unit of the U.S. Army to arrive at Natchez, under Lieutenants Pope and McClary, immediately irritated the Spanish by enlisting Spanish subjects and by rounding up American deserters who had escaped to Spanish territory.³

Other incidents continued to occur which engendered ill will between the Spanish colonials and the American frontiersmen. In 1801, there had been a serious confrontation in Spanish Texas. Philip Nolan, who had been an intimate member of the household of General James Wilkinson, commander of the U.S. Army, was near present-day Waco with a group of Americans, ostensibly capturing mustangs with Spanish permission, for sale in Louisiana. However, Nolan also had written, "I look forward to the conquest of Mexico by the United States; and I expect my patron and friend, the General, will, in such an event, give me a conspicuous command."⁴

Therefore, from the perspective of the Spanish, Nolan's horse trading was a mere pretext, filibustering was his goal, and even the pens he erected, supposedly as corrals, were really small forts.⁵ As day broke on March 22, 1801, Nolan and his men found themselves surrounded by 150 Spanish soldiers and Indian auxiliaries. According to one of the twelve Americans, "[W]ithout speaking a word, they commenced their fire. After about ten minutes, our gallant leader Nolan was slain by a musketball

which hit him in the head. In a few minutes after they began to fire grape-shot at us."⁶ The surviving Americans finally were captured and, considered land pirates, those who were not shot or died in captivity were held by the Spaniards for many years.

III. The Louisiana Purchase: National Destinies Collide

Of course, both the Spanish and the British, in their treatment of the young United States, were virtual hostages to the momentous events occurring in Napoleonic Europe. Bourbon Spain, through the rise of the influence of Manuel de Godoy, in 1796 became the reluctant and subservient ally of Bonaparte. For its part, Britain, leading a coalition of reactionary continental powers, could not appreciate any rational nation not joining in on the fight against this new France. The United States often felt like the aggrieved neutral it was, while, at the same time, it also was treated like the impressionable pawn that France and Britain believed it to be. But even this unenviable position had benefits accruing from the great war going on in Europe. Thus, during the brief Peace of Amiens, Napoleon, having coerced Spain in returning Louisiana to French sovereignty, decided to transfer title to the United States, hoping that the transfer eventually would lead to an American confrontation with British America.

Napoleon's hope ultimately proved correct, although too late to help France. But the short term results put the United States and Spain into direct opposition. Obviously, Spain was less than pleased with Napoleon's cynical sale of Louisiana to the United States, especially because Napoleon had prom-

ised that such a transfer would not occur. President Jefferson was well aware of the potential for armed conflict. His grand expedition up the Missouri was entrusted to the regular army and initial plans were formulated by the War Department in secret.⁷

Since, at the time of the quick resale, much of Louisiana still was in the physical possession of the Spanish, a military confrontation over the territory almost occurred at the onset of American jurisdiction. On Nov. 9, 1803, Tennessee Governor John Sevier wrote to General James Winchester what was occurring. Sevier reported, "I have lately received a letter from the Secretary of War informing me that there is reason to suspect that the officers of the Spanish Government at New Orleans may decline or refuse to give possession of the Country of Louisiana ceded to the United States by the French Republic." Sevier said that President Jefferson wanted Sevier "to assemble with the least possible delay 500 of the Militia of this State including a suitable number of officers and cause the same to be formed into a regiment of eight companies, the whole to be mounted and well armed with rifles, and to proceed with all possible dispatch to Natchez where they will receive further orders from General Wilkinson . . ."⁸ Thus, early on, there was an expectation that, if a war erupted with Spain, the United States would have to rely heavily on the militia and citizen volunteers, lead by ambitious politician-soldiers.

IV. The Contending Forces - Spain

While fear of foreign incursions, military or otherwise, and especially by Americans, worried the

Spanish colonial officials, New Spain was ill-prepared for a full-scale confrontation. "I have asked repeatedly that our military force be increased," said the Governor of New California to a Russian envoy visiting the Presidio of San Francisco, "but when our apprehensions in regard to your proximity in the north were quieted, my petitions only resulted in vain promises. [T]he audacity of the Bostonians has alarmed us, but the ministers have promised to dispatch a frigate this year to watch the vessels from the American states, which . . . carry on a secret trade continually."⁹ It was true that San Francisco had been reinforced with additional artillery in response to the Pacific Northwest explorations of Britisher Vancouver in 1792.¹⁰ Still, the governor admitted that, in Upper California, "our garrisons are so small that the flow of American ruffians coming into his province could not be stemmed."¹¹

Similarly, with the Purchase, Texas lay exposed to real or imagined threats from the United States. Vicente Folch, governor of Spanish West Florida, warned, apparently in 1804 when he was in Baton Rouge, that "the post at Nacogdoches ought to be strongly fortified, supplied with artillery, and with a garrison composed of 50 artillerymen, 500 chassuers, and 250 light cavalry, commanded by experienced European officers."¹² In addition, Folch advised that there be a strong army of observation posted on the Sabine, consisting of a 1,500 men, to include artillery, dragoons, and light infantry. That force, according to Folch, should be under a capable officer and be positioned to threaten any movement on the part of the United States toward Mexico.¹³

The truth was that Spain and the Spanish soldier no longer evoked the fear that they did in the days of Parma in the Low Countries and Cortes in Mexico. By the turn of the Nineteenth Century, outsiders had a widespread belief that Spain would not be able to react militarily to threats close to the Iberian Peninsula, much less than those in far-off America. A British commentator of the era, Charles Coote, wrote of the Spain of 1802, "Pride and gravity were yet apparent among the features of the Spanish character: slowness in proceeding to action, and indolence, were also very common; but the last habit was not so general as to include the Catalonians or the provincials of Biscay."¹⁴ Americans shared this view of a corrupted Spain when it came to military and naval vigor. "Spain," wrote a Baltimorean before the War of 1812, "poor, degraded Spain; for such she was, after the disgraceful peace of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six."¹⁵

However, as for the individual Spaniard, there was a recognition that the raw material still was there. According to a British military treatise of 1804, "The military character of the present race of Spaniards is so unlike that of the Spaniards of the sixteenth century, that the nation can scarcely be recognised to be the same as in that period. The energy or moving spirit is gone; but the foundations of military excellence still remain in the physical constitution. Spaniards are sober in their habits, temperate in living, slow, but patient in toil, and persevering in pursuit after a given rule."¹⁶

Apparently in agreement with the assessment of Charles Coote regard-

ing who made the best soldiers, the Spanish military began active recruitment of riflemen from the mountainous region of Catalonia for service on Spain's North American borders.¹⁷ However, by no means was the typical Spanish soldier of New Spain a European, especially in the interior provinces. Most were natives of New Spain, whether of Spanish, mestizo, or Indian blood. Most were illiterate. All were required to be Roman Catholic.¹⁸ In addition to regularly enrolled soldiers, Spain, especially in New Mexico, continued, even in 1806, to rely on Indian auxiliaries, although they could be rather wretchedly armed and mounted.¹⁹

V. The Contending Forces - The United States

While the Spanish may have suffered a decline militarily, the United States, as far as the rest of the world was concerned, had no military reputation at all. The same British officer who opined that Spanish military character had slipped, concluded that the military merit of the American people "will not be found to stand very high, even in desultory or partizan war." The Americans, according to this writer, lacked "military enterprize in their nature and had Amade little, if any progress in the art scientifically."²⁰ Nonetheless, it was predicted that, for the Americans, "it is probable that they must submit to another revolution, before they attain eminence in military station."²¹

Certainly, if judged by the size of the regular army, the United States did, indeed, lack much "military enterprize." In 1802, the Jefferson administration got Congress to approve a significant reduction-in-force of the United States Army. From a paltry strength of

4,400, the army was further shrunk to 3,287 officers and men. The two troops of light dragoons were entirely eliminated, and there were but two infantry regiments remaining on the army lists.²²

This shrinkage was not the only so-called regular army reform put into place by the Jefferson Presidency. In 1802, there also had been a change of uniform for the United States Army. "The three-cornered cocked hats of the Revolution ha[d] disappeared, and the officers now [wore] chapeaux bras, while the rank and file [wore] round leather hats with bear-skin crest; all plumes [were] white."²³

And, as far as President Jefferson was concerned, there would never be too many of these new uniforms. From the beginning of his administration, the president favored relying on the militia rather than on a reasonably-sized regular army. While his administration backed Congressional enactments to cut back on the regulars, it also supported bills to beef up the militia. Thus, Americans were encouraged to believe that the regulars were to be used for policing the Indian frontier, but civilian volunteers were expected to actually defend the nation from foreign foes.²⁴

Finally, it is fitting to acknowledge at least two true military innovations which occurred during President Jefferson's watch. Both of these, not surprisingly, had to do with science and technology. First, the United States Military Academy was established in 1802. Secondly, the next year, a new American-designed military firearm was introduced. This was the new Harpers Ferry Model 1803 rifle.²⁵ This 1803 model has been described as having a

"handsome beauty," while another historian has gone further, declaring that this .54 caliber flintlock rifle is "one of the most beautiful military firearms ever manufactured."²⁶

VI. Spain Flexes Her Muscles

Even though Spain operated with many disadvantages, her diplomatic and colonial forces came out swinging in defending every inch of imagined Spanish property. In 1803, while President Jefferson obtained passports for the Lewis and Clark expedition from both the French and British ambassadors, the president met only resistance from Ambassador Yrujo, even though Jefferson believed the Missouri River country to be well within the borders of Louisiana. The best guarantee that Jefferson was able to get from Yrujo was a "quiet understanding that Captains Lewis and Clark would not be interfered with."²⁷

Of course, this "quiet understanding" was worthless. Nemesio Salcedo, in charge of the interior provinces of New Spain, which included New Mexico, ordered the governor of New Mexico to intercept Lewis and Clark. Between 1804 and 1806, there were four or more Spanish expeditions sent out from Santa Fe seeking Jefferson's grand undertaking.²⁸

The U.S. Army, while ignorant of the exact objectives, was aware of at least some of these attempts. During the winter of 1804-1805, General Wilkinson heard a report that the Spanish at Santa Fe had sent out an expedition, of 25 dragoons under a lieutenant, down the Platte, reaching the Pawnees in the vicinity of modern-day Grand Island. While there, the Spaniards warned the Pawnees about the proximity of the

Americans and "that if they suffered them to come into their Country, the Spaniards would destroy their Towns."²⁹

Both Spain and the United States, in setting sights on Louisiana, recognized the importance of the Indian tribes in winning the region. The Spanish had a long history of trying either to win the allegiance of natives or to crush them militarily. If the Indians were impressed with Spanish power, they, at a minimum, could act as a crude but effective distant early warning system. For example, in 1808, the Spanish authorities at San Antonio advised a tribe related to the Wichitas to report any American presence to them and the Spanish would come drive them away.³⁰

Or, if the Indians were true allies, they could deal with intruders themselves, avoiding direct international confrontation. The Spanish certainly were not above this methodology. When Lieutenant James Biddle Wilkinson, one of the general's sons, attempted to return an Arikara chief back up the Missouri past the mouth of the Platte in 1805, his small force was stopped by hostile Kansas Indians, and at least one man was killed.³¹ General Wilkinson feared that the repulse would be taken advantage of "by agents from Santa Fe," although the Kansans fortunately were a small tribe.³² Later, in 1808, the Spanish governor at San Antonio gave direct orders to the Lipans to kill an American trader within Texas and to deliver his head to Bexar.³³

The Americans, based on their frontier experiences, were less inclined to recruit Indians as official allies or auxiliaries. Usually, the official American policy was to encourage Indians to be at peace with other tribes and with

neighboring countries. About the same time that Lieutenant Wilkinson was confronting the Kansas Indians, Lieutenant George Peter led a small army contingent to the Osage. Peter, with the help of Pierre Chouteau, held a council with the Osage, who were going through a period of intra-tribal conflict, in an attempt "to reconcile the different parties." Lieutenant Peter found the Osage "much attached to our government although capable of killing and robbing traders."³⁴

Nonetheless, the possibility of active Indian participation on behalf of the United States remained. One of the Mandan chiefs who was sent down the Missouri by Lewis and Clark in 1805 advised General Wilkinson that "he represented 4000 warriors, & that should I ever wish to go to war with the Spaniards He knew the way well & would accompany me with His Bands."³⁵

VII. Confrontation on the Sabine

Negotiations for a peaceful resolution regarding the boundaries of Louisiana broke down in May 1805, when negotiator James Monroe gave up in frustration and left Spain. The United States responded to these growing tensions with Spain. In 1805, after nine years on the Northwest Territory frontier, the Second Infantry was posted to New Orleans.³⁶

The Spanish were even more aggressive. In October 1805, the Spanish moved eastward out of Texas and built two posts east of the Sabine River, territory openly claimed, but not occupied, by the United States. The Secretary of War Dearborn ordered American troops to run the Spanish out of the disputed area and to extend American



military authority to the Sabine. He also ordered General Wilkinson to reconnoiter and to gain intelligence with "individuals [acting] in the character of hunters or traders."³⁷

In carrying out Dearborn's orders, Captain Edward Turner, in early 1806, was sent with a company to confront the Spanish at their newly-established post at Bayou Pierre. Threatened with the application of force, the Spanish packed up and retreated to the Sabine.³⁸

Governor Cordero of Spanish Texas was seething when he heard of Turner's bloodless victory. Within a week he ordered plans be laid for a surprise attack to be launched from Nacogdoches, to seize all American

posts between the Sabine and the Arroyo Hondo.³⁹ The commandant at Nacogdoches, Sebastian Rodriguez, at first agreed with attacking, but he soon recanted, concerned that such an action would bring about a war which Spain could not win.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, pressure for war was building on both sides. While some Spaniards, in the belief that many Louisianians wanted to be liberated, were urging hostilities to commence, many Western newspapers editorialized that Americans already should consider war to have begun.⁴¹ The Spanish beefed up their forces in Texas. By June 1806, as war clouds gathered, Spanish forces in the province numbered almost 1,400 men, with most of them posted at Nacogdoches.⁴² In addition, Commandant Rodriguez had been replaced with Don Francisco Viana, who immediately began active training of his troops for hostilities. Viana also tried to recruit 100 of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians in East Texas to fight the Americans.⁴³

Meanwhile, in March 1806, more U.S. troops were sent to the contested front, stripping places such as St. Louis of men. General Wilkinson was ordered to take personal command, but he did not arrive until September. In the interim, in July, the Spanish had moved eastward and again occupied Bayou Pierre for a brief time. The American governors of Orleans Territory and of Mississippi Territory called out the militia. Again, it looked like war, although the regular U.S. Army was ordered not to escalate matters. By the time Wilkinson arrived in September, Spanish patrols still were intruding into the lands east of the Sabine.⁴⁴

VIII. Fifth Columns and Espionage

While the regular United States and Spanish Armies were facing off along the Sabine during 1805-1806, there were other forces at work behind the front lines. Skulduggery, espionage, and filibustering were rampant. While the United States was reluctant to enlist Indian auxiliaries, there was no such hesitation when it came to seeking other allies.

President Jefferson, during the spring of 1806 when relations with Spain looked gloomy, drew up a contingency plan whereby Britain would be approached to help to defend the American estimate of the Louisiana Purchase against Spanish and French threats. In exchange, the United States would join the war against Napoleon, since France would be supporting the Spanish position.⁴⁵ Britain, in principle, was not adverse to such far-flung fronts against Napoleon's Spanish ally. "Successive British governments had not been backward in devising wild-cat assaults all over the world."⁴⁶

Naturally, with this war fever, ordinary American citizens, both patriotic and ambitious, could not resist getting involved. Many were the unofficial expeditions which were planned, and many were the volunteer regiments which were raised on paper. The most notorious case, of course, was headed up by Aaron Burr, who had hoped to lead an army of at least a thousand into Spanish dominions. He was able to gather, however, considerably fewer. For his filibustering efforts, he was accused of treason as he headed down the Mississippi in 1806. Burr finally was arrested in Alabama in February 1807.⁴⁷

Burr was by no means alone in fomenting filibustering schemes during this post-Louisiana-Purchase era. In New Orleans, in 1806, Colonel Lewis Kerr, a civilian, openly discussed, with U.S. Army Lieutenants Francis Small and W. M. Murray the prospects of raising a force to invade Spanish possessions. Meanwhile, an associate of Kerr, Judge James Workman, plotted with Monsieur Brognier De Clouet, a militia officer in New Spain, and concluded, since war with Spain appeared inevitable, it was certain that "the government of the United States would authorize an expedition to Mexico, and the army would aid in it."⁴⁸

Similarly, in 1805, in New York, William Smith and others, in order to support General Francisco Miranda in the liberation of southern Spanish colonies, recruited about 200 men and outfitted a ship named the *Leander*. Packed in the *Leander* were over 1,000 uniforms, 600 edged weapons, 4,500 pikes, numerous firearms, 34 cannon, and 150 barrels of powder. The *Leander* was beaten off when it joined Miranda in attacking Venezuela in 1806, and the American Smith came home to face indictment for violation of the 1794 neutrality act. His attorney defended Smith by arguing "that a congressional declaration of war is not the sole evidence of war, actually existing between Spain and the United States. Smith was acquitted."⁴⁹

As for the Spanish, they were long familiar with international intrigue and subversive machinations. In the summer of 1805, the Bishop of Monterey was reported by an American observer to have visited Natchitoches, travelling "in a coach drawn by six

mules, and . . . [with] an escort of sixty cavalry, a party of pioneers that went before . . ." The writer of the letter further noted that "some have supposed [the visit] more of a political than an ecclesiastical nature, and it was general thought that he would make as good a general as a bishop." It also was reported that the cleric carried with him "a Theodolite for taking the latitude of places and mathematical instruments, as well as the instruments of his order."⁵⁰

And, while the Spanish had political objections to encouraging freelance filibusters, they continued in the active recruitment of Indian proxies. In the early summer of 1806, just as Lewis and Clark were finishing up their journey, an expedition of about 500 men under Lieutenant Facundo Melgares was sent from Santa Fe out on the plains. The Spanish had instructions to intercept Lewis and Clark if able, perhaps to intercept Lieutenant Pike's expedition, to aid in stopping an expedition under Freeman and Sparks if needed, and to intimidate or impress various tribes, such as the Pawnee, the Omaha, the Kansas, and the Comanches.⁵¹ During this major excursion, Melgares and his advance party reached, probably in September, a large Pawnee village by the Republican River in what is now Nebraska. Melgares and his men were worried, since this was not far from the disastrous Villasur expedition of 1720.⁵² The Pawnees later said that they had promised the Spanish that they would stop any Americans who happened along from heading further west.⁵³

IX. Military Expeditions on the Northern and Western Flanks of the Spaniards

With all of this going on be-

tween Spain and the United States, both on the Sabine and in other national and international venues, it is impossible to see the two major U.S. Army expeditions sent to the West in the summer of 1806 in terms other than strategic movements during the pending crisis. One expedition, which would march up the American side of the supposed southern boundary of Louisiana, the Red River, was presidentially authorized and obviously was not intended to be secret. The other expedition, somewhat smaller and ordered into the field by General Wilkinson, would swing westward through the general area separating the southern and northern plains, before dropping down toward Spanish Santa Fe. This second expedition had a more vague itinerary.

Jefferson's Red River Expedition was intended to explore the upper reaches of that river and to settle the controversy about its source, matters which were important in settling the border dispute with Spain. While its civilian leaders were Thomas Freeman, an engineer, and Peter Custis, a young naturalist, the party started out with a military escort of two officers, two NCOs, seventeen privates, and (as in the case of Lewis and Clark), an African-American servant. However, when the expedition reached Natchitoches on May 19, 1806, it received intelligence from the local Indian agent, John Sibley, that the Spanish intended to oppose its advance. Therefore, another officer and 20 additional men were added to the escort.⁵⁴

Thus, for a supposedly scientific endeavor, the Red River Expedition saw some definitely warlike preparations in addition to its very respectable

escort. When the War Department had authorized the additional 20 men, it stated they were required to aid the exploring party and "to repel by force any opposition they might meet with."⁵⁵ The commander of the military contingent was Captain Richard Sparks, conceded by a contemporary to be "one of the best woodsmen, bush fighters, & hunters in the army . . ."⁵⁶ Similarly, the second in command, Artillery Lieutenant Enoch Humphreys was thought to be an up-and-coming "young officer of considerable talent."⁵⁷ And, when a prominent naturalist was not selected to accompany the expedition, he opined that it was perhaps because "Mr. Jefferson expects a brush with the Spaniards . . ."⁵⁸

The Freeman-Sparks Expedition left Natchitoches on June 2. Five days later, Agent Sibley sent word that a large number of Spanish had left Nacogdoches, intending to stop the Americans at the Caddo Villages on the Red River. Nonetheless, knowing that they had instructions from the President to avoid open hostilities if possible, Freeman and Sparks agreed that they would proceed.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, General Wilkinson had ordered out that other westward expedition under Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike. Pike had just returned from an expedition up the Mississippi, which he had survived after making rather presumptuous demands on British fur traders and after bluffing his way through sometimes ugly encounters with unfriendly Indians.⁶⁰ Wilkinson's public instructions to Pike are well known, but incomplete. There were said to be certain secret instructions about the goals of Pike's endav-

or, a claim that is supported by some of Pike's journal and letters. Pike would have another officer with him, Lieutenant James Biddle Wilkinson.

Wilkinson's orders to Pike were dated June 24, 1806, with an amendment dated July 12. In those instructions Wilkinson wrote that Pike was to avoid giving "alarm or offence to the nearby Spaniards," adding that "the affairs of Spain and the United States, appear to be on the point of amicable adjustment" and that the president particularly desired friendship with "our near neighbours the Spaniards."⁶¹ These statements, while diplomatic, were patently untrue, for the Sabine Crisis had not even reached its climax and Wilkinson had not even arrived on the scene to assess the situation. Pike, in his journal, acknowledged that at the time he was leaving, "matters bore every appearance of coming to a crisis" regarding "actual hostilities between Spain and the United States."⁶² Pike had earlier told Wilkinson that if there was a war with Spain, there would be a "field of action . . . for young men, where they hope, and at least aspire, to gather laurels or renown, to smooth the decline of age; or a glorious death."⁶³ In addition, as the Spanish later learned, Pike also reportedly told his men that, in the vicinity of the Red River, if they needed rescuing from the Spaniards, they would meet up with a "Captain with an expedition of a considerable party of Anglo-Americans."⁶⁴

Thus, when the Red River Expedition set out, the Sabine Crisis was ongoing and Freeman and Sparks knew for a fact that the Spanish were moving against them. When Lieutenant Pike set out, a month later, he also knew that there still were many rumors of



Parade of Burr's Force.

impending war and that another expedition was marching on a roughly parallel course to the south, somewhat securing that flank. About ten weeks after they set out, Pike and his men heard that Lewis and Clark had made it back to civilization, so they also would know that their northern flank and the western front were completely unsecured. It must also be recalled that Pike would receive no further communications, official or otherwise, once he plunged into the wilderness; he did not even know that he had been promoted to captain shortly after his departure.

X. The Fates of the Two Military Expeditions of 1806

Although unknown to Pike, the Red River Expedition supposedly securing his southern flank did not come anywhere near to reaching the sources of that stream. In early July, Freeman and Sparks reached a village of Caddos. The Spanish were nearby and had visited the village, asking the

Caddos where they stood. The Caddo chief assured the Americans that he had told the Spanish that if they wanted to fight, they should go down to Natchitoches and fight the Americans there. When Sparks had his men parade for the Caddos, the Indians said they were glad to see that the Americans "looked like men and warriors." When the expedition started heading up-stream in their boats on July 11, the Caddos agreed to act as scouts, "to watch the motions of the Spanish troops, and to give timely notice of any thing interesting to the

expedition."⁶⁵

On July 26, the Freeman-Sparks party met up with three Caddos, who reported that a thousand Spaniards had returned to their village, cut down the American flag left there, and "said that it was their intention to destroy the exploring party." The Caddos said that the Spanish force was awaiting the Americans three days upriver and, if the Americans did not turn back, they feared that "not one would come back alive."⁶⁶

The Americans continued up the Red River. On the morning of July 29, an advance party on shore, under Captain Sparks, discovered tracks. Sparks returned to the boats and the party readied their arms and prepared for action. The entire group of Americans headed upstream in the boats and, as they went around a bend, they saw a Spanish sentinel. A few minutes later, an entire Spanish advance party was

seen galloping in the distance. The Americans put into the shore for the midday meal and, a half hour later, they saw a large detachment of Spaniards approaching in a cloud of dust.⁶⁷

Sparks immediately deployed his men into a cane brake overlooking the boats. The captain also sent a sergeant and a half-dozen men further up the river, so they could fire into the Spanish rear. An advance party of Spanish horsemen came up to the American camp on the beach and only halted when American sentinels ordered them to halt and presented their arms. A parley ensued between Captain Sparks and a Spanish officer.⁶⁸

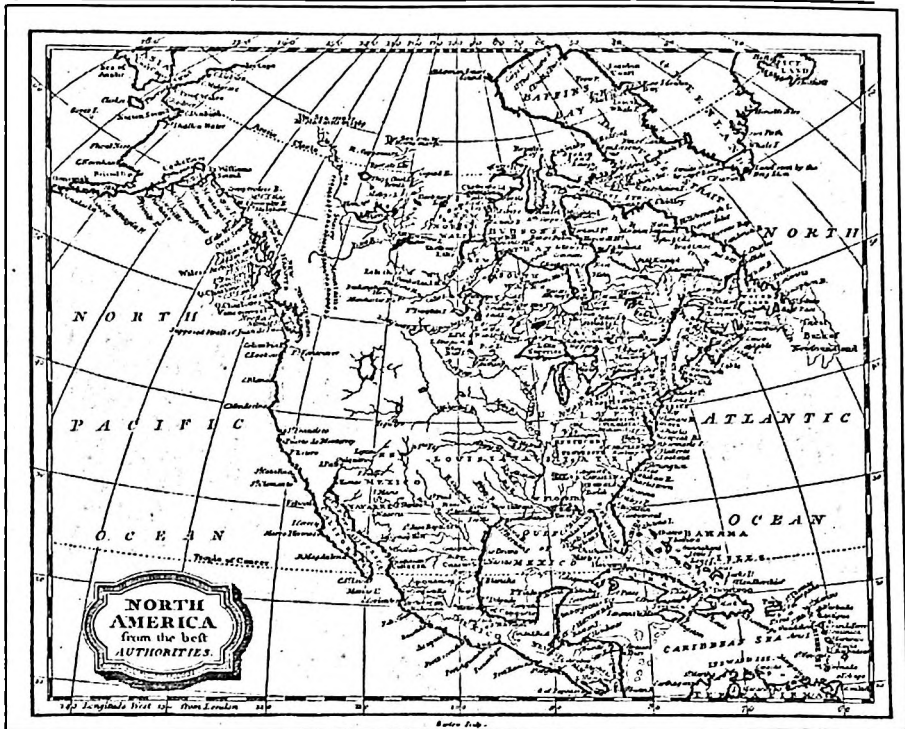
Although heavily outnumbered, Sparks and the others apparently were game for a fight. Freeman wrote in his journal, "The men being thus concealed from sight, with rests for their pieces, in a position inaccessible to horse, could, with perfect safety to themselves, have given the enemy a severe reception." The Spanish, according to Freeman, also believed that they saw evidence of "a [masked] Battery, as they believed the party had Artillery with them."⁶⁹

But the Spanish commander, who proved to be Captain Don Francisco Viana, was insistent that the Americans could go no farther. The Americans asked for a day to consider their options, which was granted. Because of the superiority of the Spanish force, and the fact that the expedition had travelled, it appeared, about all it could do by boats, the Americans agreed to withdraw back down the Red River.⁷⁰ The Americans also knew that they had already gone beyond the most westerly former French trading post, so they likely were outside of Louisiana.

This left Pike's party alone on the Great Plains, although Pike did not know it. On July 29, the day of the military standoff on the Red River, Lieutenant Pike's party had not even completed its first mission, which was to return some Osage and Pawnee to their respective homelands. Much of August was spent by Pike parlaying with the Osages. On September 1, Pike and his men were ready to leave the Osages and strike off for the Pawnee. When they left, Pike wrote that they had "fifteen loaded horses, our party consisting of two lieutenants, one doctor, two sergeants, one corporal, fifteen privates, two interpreters, three Pawnees, and four chiefs of the Grand Osage, amounting in all to 30 warriors and one woman."⁷¹

Pike's band headed off to the northwest, coming across sign which the grand expedition of Lieutenant Melgares had left. On September 25, Pike's little army reached the large Pawnee village on the Republican, in what is now Webster County, Nebraska. Again the expedition tarried, and Pike held a grand council on September 29. Pike, who realized that the Spanish force had "made a great impression on the minds of the young men," nonetheless argued that the Pawnee should take down the Spanish banner which had been left flying in the village, and hoist, in its place, Old Glory. Since the Pawnee were not happy about this, Pike compromised and agreed to leave the Spanish flag in the village, in case the Spaniards returned.⁷²

The next several days, Pike and his men prepared to continue their journey, but the Pawnee were insistent that they should go no farther west. Pike



was just as insistent that they would. During their last days at the Pawnee Village, Pike bought fresh horses for his party and learned from some French traders that Lewis and Clark had completed their voyage.⁷³

Finally, on October 7, Pike and his men struck their tents and mounted their horses to leave. The village was all in motion and many young Pawnee “were walking about with their bows, arrows, guns and lance,” Pike later wrote. Pike also recalled, “I had given orders not to fire until within five or six paces, and then to charge with the bayonet and sabre, when I believe it would have cost them at least 100 men to have exterminated us” (which would have been necessary). Fortunately, Pike’s

little party, now reduced to 25 men and one woman, was allowed to leave in peace.⁷⁴

Pike’s party headed towards the Arkansas, seeing many campsites of Melgares’ force and feeling indications that the season was changing. When the Americans reached the area of the Great Bend of the Arkansas, Lieutenant Wilkinson, as planned, separated, heading down the Arkansas in canoes. He took with him Sergeant Joseph Ballenger and four privates.⁷⁵

Ballenger was a long-time operative for General Wilkinson, who, it was later reported to Congress, was on the expedition to recruit Indian allies to aid Burr’s movement against Spanish forces and he actually engaged two

or three nations to do so.⁷⁶ Also, when young Wilkinson headed down the Arkansas, he supposedly took a written order which the expedition had, directing it to arrest and convey all Spaniards met along the way.⁷⁷

Pike headed west along the Arkansas, still following Melgares' track. On November 15, Pike was on the plains of eastern Colorado, when he discerned what he thought was a mountain, which looked "like a small blue cloud." A half hour later, the whole party saw the Rockies and there were "three cheers for the Mexican Mountains."⁷⁸

The rest of Pike's expedition need only be briefly noted. After travelling across the plains, the party entered the mountains in what is now southern Colorado. Searching for the Red River, travelling along the Arkansas through the Royal Gorge, their general condition became wretched and, were it not for buffalo meat, they would have perished. The party was often separated. On February 1, 1807, Pike and his men set about constructing a stockade on the Conejos, which was a tributary of the Rio Grande. Pike felt that the post could withstand an attack by 100 Spanish horsemen.⁷⁹

The party's civilian doctor, John H. Robinson, headed towards Santa Fe on February 7, 1807. In about a week, Pike's presence was discovered by two Spanish scouts. On February 26, a party of 50 Spanish dragoons arrived and Pike was informed that he was not on the Red River. Pike wrote that he "had no orders to commit hostilities, so he and his men became the guests of the Spanish."⁸⁰

Pike and most of his men were

treated to an escorted tour of New Mexico, Chihuahua, and Texas. Pike was not returned to American jurisdiction until June 30, 1807.

XI. The Calming of the Waters

What Pike could not have known before he was picked up by the Spaniards was that the Sabine Crisis had fizzled out, even before he first spotted the "blue cloud" which later would bear his name. Wilkinson finally had arrived on the Sabine scene in September 1806. On September 24, the general wrote Texas Governor Cordero that Jefferson ordered the American Army to consider the Sabine as the border. However, Cordero already had ordered the advance Spanish forces, who had medical and supply problems, to pull back to the Sabine. Cordero then told Wilkinson that he would consider any American movement to the banks of the Sabine to be an aggressive move.⁸¹

Nonetheless, in October, Wilkinson (who had just been informed that Burr and his little army was on its way), marched with his regulars and militia past the Arroyo Hondo and up to the Sabine. The Spanish had been ordered by Cordero not to fight unless they were positive of victory. Therefore, when Wilkinson proposed the establishment of a temporary neutral strip and demilitarized zone to the east of the Sabine, the Spanish on the spot agreed. This local agreement occurred on November 5, 1806. General Wilkinson already was on his way to New Orleans to publicly denounce Burr and to crush the so-called Burr Conspiracy.⁸² Jefferson accepted the Sabine accord

willingly; the Spanish leaders did so reluctantly.

With Pike's return to his country, the last vestige of the Sabine Crisis certainly was over, although, obviously, there ultimately would have to be a final determination regarding the route of the contested border. So the cold war still was in place with slightly chilly temperatures. Many in the United States felt that time was on their side, for they believed in the special Providence looking out for America. Thus, Manifest Destiny and the inevitable spread of republicanism would take care of the problem.

Spain, the tottering monarchy, could afford no such luxury of optimism. The end of the immediate crisis and the double repulse of the Red River Expedition and Pike's pathetic little force did not cause the Spanish to be dismissive of the potential of Yankee military influence and might. Thus, in August 1807, Spaniards in Texas still were worried when they found that many of the Indians of East Texas still looked to Natchitoches for trade and not to Nacogdoches.⁸³

In 1808, over a year after Pike departed Texas, a new resident governor arrived for Texas. He was Manuel de Salcedo, a nephew of Commandant General Salcedo, with whom Pike had talked so much. The new governor had come along Pike's route of departure, passing through Natchez and Natchitoches on his way to San Antonio. Based upon his observations, certainly augmented by the first-hand reports of the determination of Pike's tiny army, Manuel de Salcedo reported, "[W]e ought [not] to hold the Americans in contempt. [T]hey are not

to be underestimated as enemies. [T]he Anglo-Americans . . . love to live in deserts . . . This very kind of life hardens them and necessarily makes soldiers of them; [with] the traits of robustness, agility, sobriety, and valor."⁸⁴

Salcedo put his words into action. Fearing that Pike's force had undermined Spanish influence with the Indians, especially the Comanches, Salcedo organized a counter-expedition to travel from San Antonio to Santa Fe. On March 30, Captain Francisco Amangual headed westward with 200 soldiers. Marching across the Texas Panhandle, Amangual met with the Comanches. The Spanish reached Santa Fe and then descended south along the Rio Grande and, after passing through El Paso del Norte, arrived back in San Antonio in time for Christmas.⁸⁵

However, what really caused the cold war between the United States and Spain to thaw completely by mid-1808 was the simple fact that a new crisis for each nation replaced concerns over Louisiana. As for the United States, there first was the Burr Conspiracy trial in Richmond. Burr became the new boogeyman and he, and other Americans, were prosecuted for attempting to invade Spanish possessions. But the Burr Conspiracy was dwarfed by events on June 22, 1807. That was the day that *H.M.S. Leopard* attacked the *U.S.F. Chesapeake*. Affairs between America and England, which had been on the upswing, suddenly hit rock bottom with talk of war. Even Jefferson, who had no love for the dictator Bonaparte, concluded that, with the *Chesapeake* crisis, "friendship with France, and peace at least with Spain, become more interesting."⁸⁶

Similarly, Spain suddenly became less concerned about what was happening in her overseas empire. In October 1807, Napoleon's forces crossed the Spanish peninsula to destroy Portugal, one of Britain's long-time allies. Thousands of Frenchmen marching through Spain caused the situation rapidly to deteriorate into rioting and open warfare between natives and the French army. By May 1808, Napoleon gave the putative crown of Spain to his brother Joseph. The long and bloody Peninsular War, which would prove Bonaparte's undoing as much as would Russia, had begun.⁸⁷ By the time it was over, Spain's own colonies would be providing the real threats to the empire, and all of the king's horses and all of the king's men would be unable to put it together again.

In hindsight, it probably was well for Americans that none of the crises along the border, including Pike's Expedition, served as a *causa belli* for an open and hot war between Spain and the United States. Based upon the disastrous opening campaigns of the War of 1812, the Republican administration's belief in the easy liberation of colonial possessions by a few raw regulars, aided by massive numbers of untrained volunteers and unwilling militia, was unrealistic. Further, as the British found out in their invasion of Argentina in 1806-1807, Spanish colonials were capable of determined resistance. The Hispanic people of New Mexico, Texas, and other Mexican provinces, not yet having tasted the difficulties and disappointments of local rule, probably would have resisted foreign incursion more successfully than 30 and 40 years later.

XII. Conclusion

Texas Historian Dan Flores has recognized the geopolitical implications of the Red River Expedition in relation to Pike's Expedition. According to Flores, "[A] confrontation, and particularly a battle, between Americans and Spaniards on the Red River was quite likely to lead to a war, and in this context it begins to be more and more certain that Pike's expedition really was a spying mission against a principle Anglo objective: the highway to Santa Fe."⁸⁸ However, this cautious conclusion does not take into account other military considerations or the likelihood of several secret instructions from Wilkinson to Pike. For example, the Spanish heard that Pike, while in Santa Fe, was asking around whether the locals were good with arms and whether "they would be capable of fighting with the Anglo-Americans."⁸⁹ This implies that Pike also expected, if a war had broken out by the time he reached Spanish territory, that there was some prospect of leading local New Mexicans in resistance against Spanish authority, *ala* Fremont in California 40 years later.

In any event, placing the Southwestern Expedition of Zebulon M. Pike into the context of the other events of the time goes a long way in explaining why Pike was out west to begin with. Knowing of the other military activities going on also gives clues as to why, during the latter stages of the expedition, Pike did seemingly inexplicable things such as searching so hard for the Red River, sending Robinson to Santa Fe with a phoney cover story, and setting up a fortification on presumed Spanish territory while simply waiting



XIII. Postscript on the

Medina

Ironically, seven years after the near-war with Spain, there was a military conflict in New Spain that involved many of the same characters who figured in the events of 1805-1808. The very similarity of this 1813 scenario to that which almost occurred during the Pike expedition is eerie, if not enough to comprise material proof about what actually was going on behind the scenes in 1806.

During the War of 1812, Spain was, of course, now allied with Britain, at least in the fight against Napoleon. Although not officially at war with Spain, United States forces, led by General Wilkinson, occupied Mobile in Spanish West Florida in April 1813.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, in 1812, a revolution had occurred in Texas, in which native Mexicans, aided by American filibustering volunteers, overthrew the Spanish authorities in San Antonio. The revolutionaries appealed to General Wilkinson to use his "influence and power to aid them."⁹¹

James B. Wilkinson, the general's son, who usually is portrayed by historians only as a weak and sickly man, had stayed in the army and was promoted to captain in 1808.⁹² In June 1813, as General Wilkinson paused on his way to a new command on the Canadian frontier, he conferred with his son in Mobile, providing what has been called "parting advice."⁹³ Then, according to the late Donald Jackson, James B. Wilkinson resigned from the army to become the postmaster of Mobile, dying shortly thereafter at Dauphin Island [Mobile], Alabama.⁹⁴

for either Robinson's return or for the Spanish to come.

Finally, looking at so many parts of this thousand-piece puzzle even helps explain the so-called Burr Conspiracy. While the broad view seems to show Burr to be a victim of a sudden change in United States policy every bit as much as a victim of his own ambition, it also tends to clear Pike of any treasonous intentions. However, the big picture, as does so much of the evidence, still tends to brand Wilkinson as a scoundrel, for, once the chance of war between the United States and Spain evaporated, Wilkinson suddenly tossed his friend Burr to the wolves, in order to protect and enhance Wilkinson's reputation within the United States, while, at the same time, giving Wilkinson a plausible scenario to ask the Spanish for more money for having frustrated the supposed plot.

Meanwhile, Dr.

John Robinson, during the War of 1812, had become involved with the revolution going on against Spain in Texas, supporting the efforts of Jose Alvarez de Toledo against the Spaniards. In attempting to recruit American volunteers in Philadelphia, something which still was against American law, Robinson openly published a broadside, in which he claimed that the "late gallant and brave General Pike" would have joined them in Texas "had he lived." Although Robinson intended to join Toledo, before he could do so the Tejano patriots, assisted by American volunteers, were slaughtered at the Battle of the Medina on August 18, 1813. Those of the liberal force not killed on the battlefield were cut down as they fled to the refuge of Louisiana. Most of the dead were never identified, but it was reported at the time that a son of General Wilkinson was one of the volunteers on Toledo's staff and was one of those killed.⁹⁵

The late Texas historian Ted Schwarz believed that it was James Biddle Wilkinson who was the Wilkinson on Toledo's staff, and who

was able to escape, mortally wounded, across the Sabine.⁹⁶ This supposition appears correct. Certainly, no other son of the general appears as a likely candidate.⁹⁷ And, U.S. Army records indicate that James B. Wilkinson died on September 7, 1813. No resignation or discharge is mentioned.⁹⁸ Therefore, his supposed resignation from the army probably was submitted (and held in abeyance) to provide the U.S. government with the ability to deny any involvement in what followed. Once James B. Wilkinson was back in U.S. jurisdiction and dying, his resignation would have been considered a nullity, a situation which presumably would allow young Wilkinson to get army medical care and to die as an American officer.

Yet James Biddle Wilkinson, who apparently died in a covert U.S. Army operation in the national interest during wartime, putatively approved by the Madison administration, has been denied any widespread recognition as a hero. Certainly, he has no grand peak name after him. Apparently, even his father, General Wilkinson, ignored his late explorer son and his fate.⁹⁹ But then, General Wilkinson always was a scoundrel.



ENDNOTES

1. Like evidence in a trial, many of the facts here are subject to other interpretation and much of the testimony can be both corroborated or discredited. Of course, General James Wilkinson was, for many years (including those when he was commanding general) a secret spy in the pay of Spain, even informing the Spanish of various American movements, including those of Lewis and Clark. Yet, being a man totally without scruples, it cannot be assumed that he always was loyal to his Spanish masters. This paper considers General Wilkinson's words and actions (even when illegal) to be generally in the interest of the United States, since acting on behalf of those national goals often promised the greatest long-term financial reward to Wilkinson. Although Wilkinson is a man whom historians love to hate, there are defenders of him, although very few, and usually (but not exclusively) descendants. See James Wilkinson, "James Wilkinson: A Paper Prepared and Read by his Great Grandson James Wilkinson," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Vol. I, No. 2 (The Louisiana Historical Society: New Orleans, September 14, 1917); Patricia Wilkinson-Weaver Balletta, The Wilkinson Book: Being The Ancestry & Descendants of Major General James Wilkinson (Gregarth Publishing Company: Wyandotte, Oklahoma, 1994); Theodore J. Crackel, Mr. Jefferson's Army: Political and Social Reform of the Military Establishment, 1801-1809 (New York University Press: New York, N.Y., 1987).
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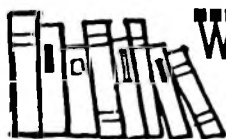
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24. See Jacobs, The Beginnings of the U.S. Army, 244-245.
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41. Crackel, Mr. Jefferson's Army. 126.
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60. See John M. Hutchins, Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike Climbs his First Peak: The U.S. Army Expedition to the Sources of the Mississippi, 1805-1806 (Avrooman-Apfelwald Press: Lakewood, Colorado, 2006)
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66. James, Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, 2:312.
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Westerners Bookshelf



The Southwester Journals of Zebulon Pike, 1806 – 1807, Edited by Stephen Harding Hart and Archer Butler Hulbert, With a new introduction by Mark L. Gardner. University Of Mexico Press, Albuquerque. 5 halftones, 4 maps. 280 pp. \$27.95, cloth.

In this, the bicentennial year 2006, we are honoring Lt. Zebulon M. Pike, (b.1779 – d.1813) in appreciation for his initial explorations into Spanish-claimed territories in Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and New Mexico, Texas and Louisiana. The University of New Mexico has published an outstanding reissue of Lt. Pikes Southwest Journals to honor Lt. Zebulon Pike's bicentennial year 2006.

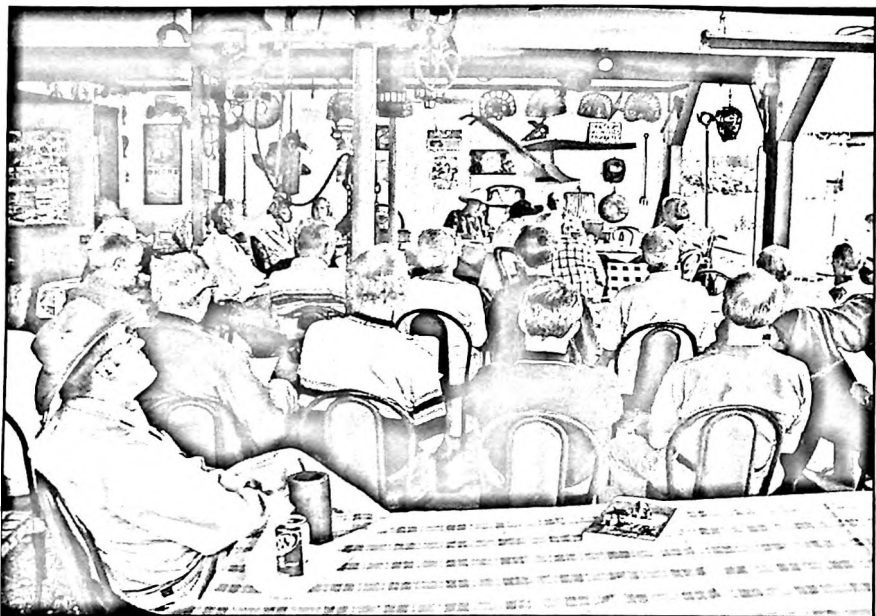
The editors, Stephen Harding Hart, who was a prominent Denver attorney and longtime president of the Colorado Historical Society, and Archer Butler Hulbert who was a professor of history at Colorado College, Colorado Springs and the author of *Forty-Niners: The Chronicle of the California Trail* is now joined by Mark L. Gardner, a professional historian who lives in Cascade, Colorado and has published *Wagons for the Santa Fe Trade: Wheeled Vehicles and Their Makers, 1822 – 1880* (UNM Press) in helping us interpret the documents of Zebulon M. Pike's SW expedition. Their commentary rebuts all the critics of Lt. Pike's Southwest Journals and rekindles his stature as intrepid explorer, statesman, and military hero equal to the other explorers and expedition leaders into the American West.

Mark L. Gardner's introduction points out that many of the detractors were badly mistaken with their presumptions and questionable interpretations of Lt. Pikes Journal, maps, and intent. Mr. Gardner's defense of Zebulon M. Pike is based on clear and logical examinations of all the material, (the original maps, and some important letters, of Lt. Pike were not found until 125 years later) which is included in this book, and these long-lost documents quell the notion that Lt. Pike was on a "spy" mission, but instead was assigned a military reconnaissance expedition whose primary purpose was to procure and bring back to the government, information about the tremendous Louisiana territory, especially the country near the head waters of the Arkansas and Platte River.

To read the journal entries brings an unexpected awareness, and appreciation of the travels and travails that Lt. Pike faced throughout the expedition. He was made of the "right stuff," and like our modern-day explorations into space, Lt. Pike remained undaunted by the difficulties he not only faced, but surmounted.

U.S. General Zebulon Pike died a hero, leading a charge on a British munitions dump at York (Toronto) in 1813 at the age of 34. And even though he was often maligned, in the popular press as well as in scholarly studies, Lt. Pike is vindicated with this important publication from UNM Press, in honor of Lt. Zebulon Pike's Bicentennial celebration.

—Michael F. Crowe, C.M.



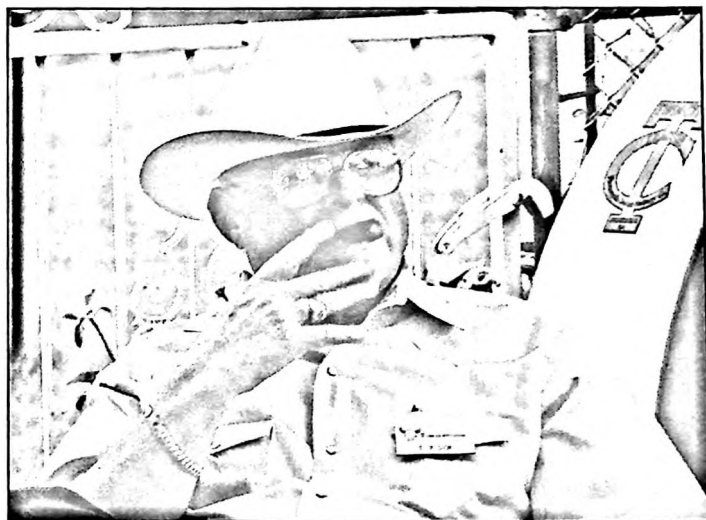
The Denver Posse held the annual July Posse meeting at the home of Florence Staadt. Here, members conduct the year's business with Sheriff Dot Krieger presiding



Three lovely lady Westerners enjoy conversation before dinner



Archive photographs of a 1970s Posse meeting are examined and good times remembered



A good Westerner needs a good après-meal stogie

The annual Summer Rendezvous was held at Louviers, Colo. This was a company town founded by Dupont, for the manufacture of explosives, primarily dynamite, in 1920. The afternoon and evening was spent with tours of the town and company buildings followed by a barbecue dinner and a talk by Jay Fell of a brief history of mining in Colorado detailing Colorado's mining industry during WW I.



Westerners enjoy a presentation on the history of Louviers



Westerners enjoy a lovely setting at the Summer Rendezvous

Winter Rendezvous

December, 2006 Winter Rendezvous was postponed by snow until January 4, 2007



Ron Hill, of the J.A. Merriam Drug Store in South Park City, Fairplay, Colorado, receives the Fred A. Rosenstock Award for "Outstanding Contributions to Colorado History"



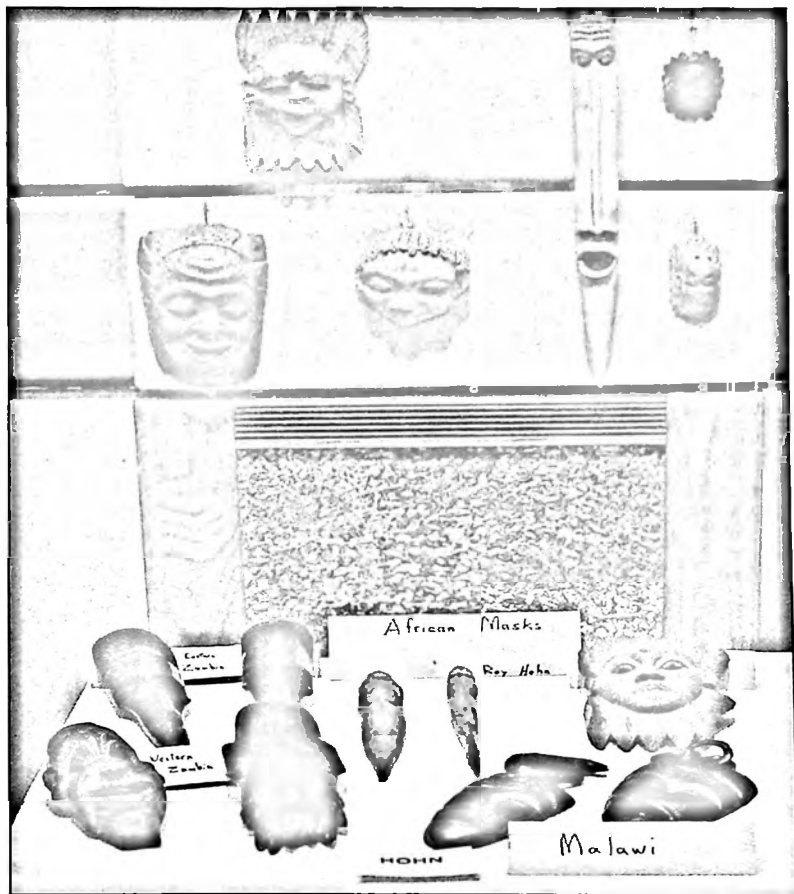
Dr. Robert W. Larson, accompanied by family, receives the Fred A. Rosenstock award "For Lifetime Achievement in Western History" at the Winter Rendezvous





The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

March - April 2007



The "Collections" issue
(an event October 28, 2006)



The event

When Ken Gaunt established the Gaunt Fund, he had several programming ideas in mind, ideas which would enhance the quality of our monthly meetings and our bi-monthly *Roundup* magazine. The concept was to go the extra step, to get Westerners to show and tell other Westerners where their interests lay, and that could be in arts and crafts, or collections. What started out as a bold idea, to get people motivated enough to take action and partake in an arts, crafts, and collections program, turned out to be a smashing success. Many entries filled up a huge room at the hotel, more than any of us expected. People seem to genuinely enjoy the variety, ranging from quilts to sculpture, showcasing the many talents of Denver Posse members, and collections ranging from campaign buttons to lunch boxes, plus a whole lot of "who knew" things collected by a whole lot of people. The end result? People loved the evening and want to do it again. And a lot of Westerners got to know a lot of other Westerners, thanks to you, Ken Gaunt.

--Robert Pulcifer

(Editor's note: First through third place prizes were awarded in two categories. Votes were cast by attendees of the meeting.)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

VOL. LXIII NO. 2



March - April 2007

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 Deputy Sheriff, Program Chairman: John Burdan
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Book Reviews Keith Fessenden 3031 E. 8th Ave Denver, CO 80206	(303) 321-6181
Dues and Other Payments Ted Krieger 280 E. 11th Ave. Broomfield, CO 80020	(303) 466-7737
Reservations for meetings Dorothy Krieger 280 E. 11th Ave. Broomfield, CO 80020	(303) 466-7737

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The Collections Issue

(an event October 28, 2006
in presenting order)



Ken Gaunt

When I started working in a drug store in 1937, we were giving away wooden rulers advertising "TUMS," with the store name printed on it. This was my first collectable item. In the 69 years since, I have collected quite a few drug store items, such as several hundred written prescriptions. These are written on all kinds of paper, because the doctors did not have prescription blanks as we know them today.

Some of the items I have tonight are: a prescription balance and weights from the 1890s, a unique pencil sharpener from 1906, a pressurized bottle to make carbonated water, a kerosene vapocresaline lamp used to make vapor at the bedside and a leather case holding 24 bottles of different kinds of pills that a doctor would carry in his saddlebag as he made his rounds in the 1890s.

In the early 1960s I started a History Committee at St. Luke Hospital while I was Chief Pharmacist there. It is still functioning and has a curator and large room of memorabilia. My collection will go to them in the future.



Winnie Burdan

This is a collection of crewel embroidery, which is a form of ornamental needlework that is done with wool on a closely woven ground fabric. The word "crewel" actually refers to the type of wool, a worsted yarn of two twisted strands, either finely spun or coarse.

Soon after man began to clothe himself, he looked for means of embellishing his garments. Evidence of early embroidery has been found in ancient Stone Age homes in Switzerland on fragments of cloth and leather. During the 13th century in England, the most beautiful church vestments were embroidered using bone, wood or ivory needles. In the 16th century, traders returning to England from China brought steel needles and the manufacturing of steel needles began in England. Crewel work, as we know it today, had begun.

The industrial revolution caused embroidery work to lose favor, and crewel gave way to cross stitch, needle point, etc. The choice of subjects to be embroidered has changed throughout the centuries, but the basic warmth and beauty of crewel and its offspring are as much appreciated today as in the past and continue to be satisfying outlets for self-expression.



Vonnie Perkins

I started collecting Denver items in the early 1990s. I especially like early advertising items from Denver's pioneer businesses. Old bottles, labeled jars and giveaways always grab my interest.

Favorites are: a menu from Charpiot's Hotel, Christmas 1887, the first Denver directory, the George Allison bowl and trade cards from Cornforth & Co., and The Dollar Store.

I also make "handmade" greeting cards using acid-free stock, clips, special inks, crayons, powders, beautiful ribbon and artwork.



William (Bill) Leeper

I have entered two of my oil paintings in the show. I found the time and opportunity to try painting while I was in the Strategic Air Command stationed in Grand Forks, ND. During the dead of winter, several of my neighbors in base housing and I enrolled in a painting class offered by the city of Grand Forks.

My inspiration for these two paintings came from a page out of Life Magazine, and a magazine advertisement for Allied Chemical.

I have never shown my work before in a public display, but wanted to participate in this special experiment by the Westerners.



Roy Hohn

My wife and I began collecting African masks when our daughter was in the Peace Corps in Malawi, Africa. *(See cover photo.)* We visited her twice in Malawi and also traveled across Zambia. We hope to augment our collection when we visit Tanzania and Zanzibar next year.

I enjoy photographing our travels, but I especially enjoy photographing grandchildren. *(Roy with his photography shown above.)*



Dorothy Krieger (*1st place Arts and Crafts category*)

My entry of eight quilts is in the Arts & Crafts category. I come from a creative family of sewers, driven probably by necessity. My earliest quilting session was at age eight on the eve of my brother's birth in 1940. That experience was the inspiration for my many years of quilting.

I have attempted to make and have completed many quilt-top patterns. At first I felt it somewhat nonsensical to buy fabrics to cut them up into small pieces just to sew them back together to create a quilt design. But like any other creative venture it captivates and draws a person into further sewing adventures. I have kept and given away to family and friends many quilts during the past 30 years.

I have usually started a different quilt pattern each January with the hope of its completion before summer arrives. I am showing a varied selection including: my first quilt, 40th anniversary friendship, violets-embroidered bedspread, Dresden plate, log cabin, trip around the world, broken star and cathedral window patterns.

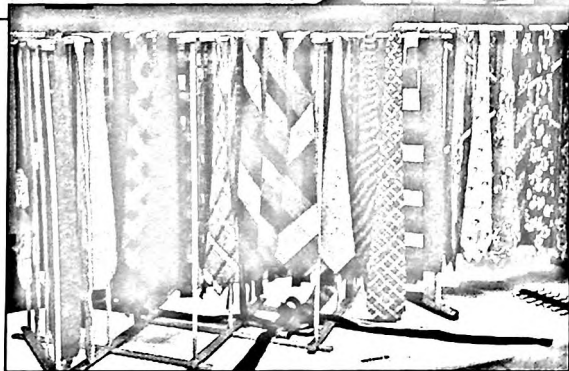


Wayne, Dale and Max Smith (*Max 2nd, Wayne 3rd place Arts and Crafts category*)

Wayne, the oldest of the three, (*bottom photo*) seemed to have a natural talent for drawing animals, and between military services attended the Kansas City Art Institute where he became a multi-media artist. He shared his learned techniques with the other two brothers. Wayne developed a liking for the history and collection of barbed wire. He has over 200 items in his collection.

Max (*top photo*) preferred pencil, ink and wood-burning sketches of ghost towns, mining buildings, trains and barns. Max and his wife collect Native American items.

Dale (*not pictured*) leaned toward three-dimensional work by starting out wood carving and eventually sculpting. He worked in bronze and hydrocal until he suffered a massive stroke during brain surgery five years ago.



Reed Phillip Weimer presented his artwork consisting of award-winning linocuts, serigraphs and other types of graphic art and his whimsical collection of neckties.

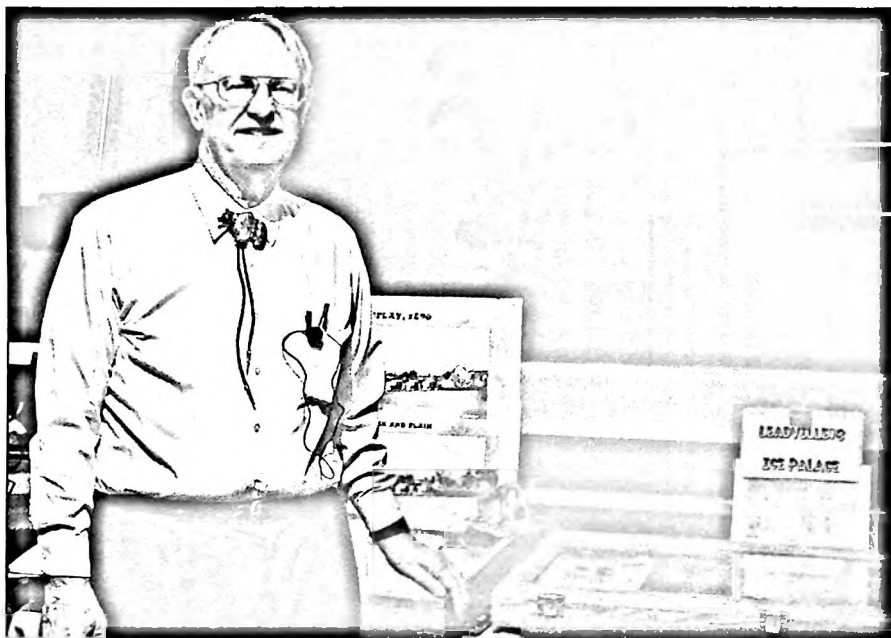


Richard Barth

In 1901 attorney Barnard Stewart started purchasing land in a high mountain valley about 60 miles east of Salt Lake City. Several years later he established the Stewart Ranch that encompassed over 3000 acres of what would soon become irrigated grain and hay fields. Once grazing leases for cattle and sheep were secured from the adjacent national forest and log buildings constructed, a ranch was created. Although its purpose and function have changed and considerable land was lost during the depression, the ranch remains in family ownership and was placed on the National Register of Historic places in 1990.

The saddle house was an important place for the ranch hands and now provides insight as to how the ranch functioned. While the bulk of the saddle house contents remains in Utah, some items have been temporarily relocated to Colorado. This display included the typical items one would expect, saddles, bridles, spurs and saddle oil. The saddle house was also the last stop for endless odds and ends that no one knew what to do with. So the display includes Indian baskets and beaded buckskin mittens that no ranch hand would touch. Another odd item for a ranch is the miner's candle stick. Unknown to his family, Barnard branched out into mining. He purchased several claims near Park City, Utah, and lost considerable money trying to find silver.

The attic is not the only place one can find family treasures and secrets.



Ed Bathke

Leadville's Ice Palace - In 1895 America was still attempting to recover from the economic Panic of 1893. But the Cloud City of Leadville was enjoying prosperity. In 1895 its mines were the most productive since 1880. Citizens wanted to show the country how well they were doing and they wanted to celebrate. The time was ripe for planning the greatest ice castle ever constructed.

The Leadville Crystal Carnival Association was incorporated on Nov. 7, 1895, and the cornerstone for the Leadville Ice Palace was laid on Nov. 25. On a five-acre plot of land on Leadville's Capitol Hill between Seventh and Eighth streets, an extravagant structure arose, of dimensions 320 by 450 feet, and towers 90 feet high.

January 1, 1896, the Leadville Crystal Carnival opened with its showpiece, the Ice Palace, on a sunshiny day and temperature of eight degrees below zero. The building contained a ballroom and dining hall, each 50 by 80 ft.; a hockey rink of 190 by 80 ft.; ice sculptures that included "Lady Leadville", 19 feet tall with a 12-ft. pedestal, in front of the palace; and products of the state's businesses on display, frozen in the walls.

Leadville had made a memorable mark in history, and today we have a trove of souvenirs to enliven those memories.



Nancy Bathke

According to the late Levette J. Davidson, P.M. of the Denver Westerners, "Colorado's greatest festival, The Festival of Mountain and Plain was inaugurated in Denver in the Autumn of 1895. It was held annually through 1899 and revived in 1901 and 1912." President of the Board of Directors of the Festival, W. N. Byers, attributed the idea of this festival to Mrs. S. K. Hooper, wife of S. K. Hooper, the general passenger agent of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. She had attended the first Flower Carnival in Colorado Springs and thought that Denver could have a successful festival too.

The festivals were very successful and included many differing activities. One year it was co-listed as a State Fair. Other activities were a rodeo, a horse show, a carnival (fashioned after the Mardi Gras in New Orleans), a mining exposition with drilling competitions, and manufacturing displays. It was truly a way to celebrate the thankfulness the people felt after the Panic of 1893 and the reign of Gov. Waite.

The festival slowly faded away; perhaps World War I contributed to its demise. But interest lagged, the State Fair in Pueblo grew and officers tabled decision making regarding any more festivals.

Artifacts of the Festival of Mountain and Plain are avidly collected and provide us with a great reminder of what special events have been celebrated in Denver.



Father Blaine Burkey

For the past nine years, I lived in the National Register's Midtown Historic District of St. Louis in a 116-year-old house built as the home of Halsey Cooley Ives, founder and first director of the St. Louis Art Museum. Every large room in the house had a large fireplace and mantle. The fireplace in my room had been closed, but the expensive mantle was still there. The items in this collection and scores of others, graced it.

When I moved to Denver's Historic Highland, I came with a hundreds of boxes. Most of this collection were in one inscribed, "Mantle Memorabilia." Unlike other collectibles being shown, this group was not actively collected. Each item was passively collected as an unexpected gift. The collection's value is priceless, but only to me, for the memories.



John Hutchins (2nd place Collections category)

Selected artifacts, illustrations, relics and reproductions from the beginnings of the United States Cavalry: a traveling collection.

Items selected for display represent seven categories. First there are the framed uniform prints of Continental cavalymen, including a dragoon of Lighthorse Harry Lee. Second are porcelain or ceramic figures from the 1950-1970 period. Third are the toy soldiers and "action figures" from 1959 to the present. Fourth there is a scattering of Bicentennial and other commemorative items. Fifth are the artifacts representing what was in use in the war, sidearms, swords, and a bronze bit. Sixth, there are several original "ephemera" documents, including one signed by Col. Washington, Gen. Moylan and Col. White. Lastly there are just a few of the many books or booklets that touch on the subject.



Mark Hutchins

The Royal Air Force uniforms displayed showed Officers, NCOs and Other Ranks (ORs) worn during World War II. Officer's Service Dress uniforms were always made of a fine blue-gray barathea material while NCO and OR were made of blue-gray serge material with no inside lining. Two of the SD tunics on display were worn by foreign pilots serving in the R.A.F. as could be seen by the shoulder flashes on the shoulders of their sleeves.

Since 2001 I have been collecting R.A.F. uniforms, flight clothing and insignia. It all started when I obtained an R.A.F. fleeced-lined jacket. I also have several WWI-period Royal Canadian Air Force uniforms and a few U.S. Army Air Force uniforms.

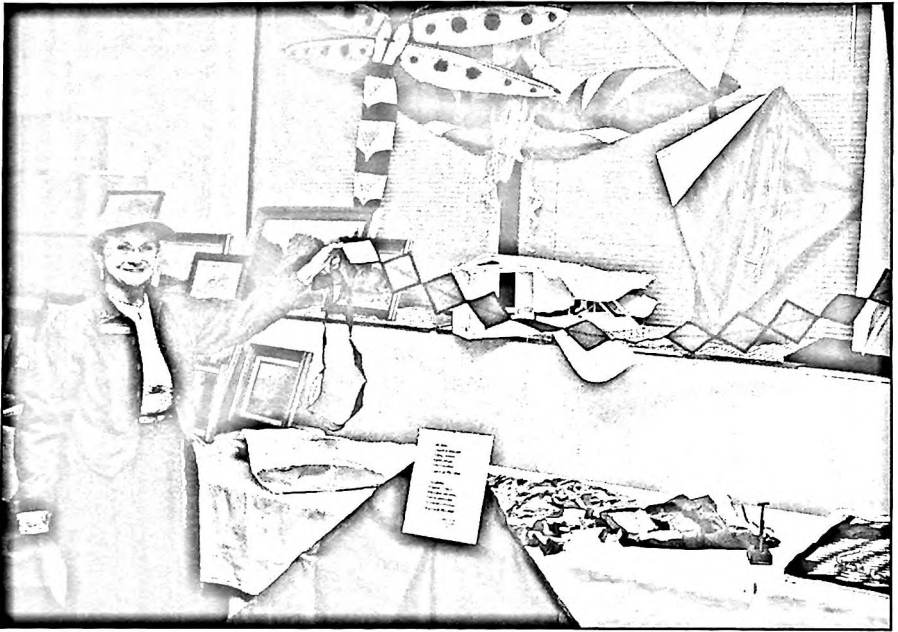


Jim Donohue

The introduction of celluloid campaign items began in 1876 with solid pieces of celluloid into which the likeness of the candidate was molded. Since the solid celluloid items tended to crack and split, the early experiment was short-lived. The real beginning for celluloid presidential campaign buttons began in 1896 with the battle between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan. The first William won, but the other William ended up in my collection.

Whitehead and Hoag, early pioneers in the productions of celluloid and owners of the early patents, dominated the industry and established the foundation upon which future elections were decided. Whitehead and Hoag soon had numerous competitors and the celluloid campaign button became a cornerstone of causes and campaigns from that time to today.

Be warned, if you run for president and receive at least one electoral vote and loose the election, I will be in search of your celluloid campaign button.



Johanna Harden

I fly kites:

To touch the sky with my hands
 To play tag with the wind
 To feel like a child again
 To share the fun with others
 To say to you, "Go fly a kite!"

I collect kites:

To brighten the sky with color
 To fly in different wind conditions
 To share the wind with a child
 To introduce kites to first-time flyers
 To say to you, "Go fly a kite!"



Janet Greiner (great great-granddaughter of F.T. Brunskill)

F.T. Brunskill Paintings

Fredrick T. Brunskill had a long career in Denver as a sign painter and landscape painter. In the family collection of his art there is one commercial art piece, a sign designed for the Turf Bar that advertised Zang Beer. Of the oil paintings, some on canvas and many on particleboard, all are landscapes except one of a swan on a lake. Many of the paintings have a note written by Brunskill about the place of the scene like "John McBroom's Cabin Bear Creek Valley 7 miles above Denver 1925". Many also have a price like \$35.

Brunskill, born November 27, 1861 of an English mother Elizabeth Rose and Irish father Henry Brunskill, emigrated from England.

The known paintings are in the hands of family members, some having two and others having five. Gathering them together, we had 26 to show as a collection to the Westerners. It was a treat to see them all in one place.



Lee and Jane Whiteley (*3rd place Collections category*)

Children's lunch boxes, as we know them today, were ushered in with television. For boy and girls of the new baby boom era, a lunch box was one of the schooling essentials, much as a rifle was for the early pioneers. Lunch boxes captured the electronic landscape of the post-World-War-II generation.

The first licensed TV-character lunchbox was Hopalong Cassidy. It consisted of a decal on a plain red or blue metal box. Over 600,000 were sold the first year at a price of \$2.39. Three years later the Roy Rogers box was fully lithographed with scenes on the front, back and band. This box perfected the lunch box transition to a full-screen TV replica. Two-an-a-half-million were sold. The first "dome" children's box was produced in 1957. Many children wanted a box shaped like their father's black box. The best selling of all boxes, a dome, Disney's "school bus" was produced from 1961-1973.

In 1972 the state of Florida banned all metal lunch boxes in schools. These were said to be used as weapons. Shortly thereafter, manufacturers began releasing injection-molded plastic boxes. The last metal box was "Rambo," released in 1987.



Bob Terwilliger (*1st place Collections category*)

Since the late 1940s, I have been deeply involved in a love affair. It began with a train trip from Lincoln, Nebraska to Regina and Saskatoon, Canada, to visit family members. That trip was followed by another when a friend in the sixth grade and I purchased tickets on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy for \$24.95 each to ride the Zephyr from Lincoln to Chicago. My conductor (wife) for the last 41 years, Carol, was pulled in, in 1965 to spend time on the Cripple Creek-Victor narrow gauge on our honeymoon. The table cover on this exhibit is an Amtrak blanket we were awarded for winning a railroad trivia contest en route to Glenwood Springs while viewing fall colors on that route.

All items, from pictures to videos tapes, from books to railroad tools, have been accumulated over the last forty-some years. The collection, of which tonight's examples are only a fraction, fills out an important niche in my Western history-themed basement, extending from the Anasazi/Ancstral Puebloan to the ultimate Western myth representative, William F. Cody.

Over the corral rail

The Denver Posse mourns the passing of a friend

Jack Morison

On Feb. 13, 2007, the Denver Westerners lost longtime member Jack Morison. Jack had been a corresponding member since the 1950s, and was elected to the Posse in 1968. He served as Sheriff in 1993, and as the Chuck Wrangler for several years. Jack and Erma's adventurous raft trip, floating down the Yukon River, resulted in his article "Steamboats on the Yukon", in the Nov/Dec 1979 Roundup. He also authored "Early Colorado Auto Trails", in the Jan/Feb 1991 Roundup.

Jack had an avid interest in ghost towns and railroads. He was a charter member of the Ghost Town Club of Colorado, and a longstanding member of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

A Colorado native, Jack was born Sept. 18, 1932, attended elementary school in Pueblo, and graduated from Denver South High School. After earning his degree at the University of Northern Colorado, he embarked on a teaching career with the Denver Schools that spanned over 33 years.

He married Erma in 1954, and they have two children, Charles (in Idaho), Linda (in California) and two grandchildren John and Jackie Kimmel. Jack and Erma have enjoyed extensive travels, often by travel trailer or motor home. During the past decade they had wintered in Kerrville, Texas.

Jack was very active in all of the historical organizations in which he held membership, presenting programs, leading field trips, and contributing more than expected, for the benefit of the groups, and the enjoyment of the members. The cheerful and humorous way that he met everyone, made friends, offered help, and told stories, has left us with a host of happy memories.

The Denver Posse of Westerners welcomes the following new members:

Donald W. Nuce of Arvada. Donald is interested in Western history and California missions. He is a member of the California Missions Study Association, the Colorado Historical Society and the Ghost Town Club of Colorado. He was referred by John Burdan.

Kenneth D. Larson of Hurley, SD. Ken states his interest is any part of Western history. He was referred by P.M. Bob Larson.



Westerners Bookshelf



The Custer Reader, edited by Paul Andrew Hutton, foreword by Robert M Utley. University of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 585 pages, illustrations, photos, maps, bibliography, index. Softbound.

This is a softbound version of the original 1992 edition. The book is divided into four sections regarding George Armstrong Custer's life and career: The Civil War, the Indian Wars, the Little Big Horn debacle, and the Custer Myth. Each section contains selections by various authors: Custer himself, eyewitness accounts, and writings by later authors, including some from the present day. Individually, the articles are not lengthy, running up to about 30 pages maximum length.

Of particular interest to this reader were the accounts of the Little Big Horn battle from the other side: Chief Joseph Whitebull and Kate Bighead both describe June 25, 1876, from the Indian point of view.

The "Custer Myth" was assiduously initiated, fed and cared for by Libby Custer until her death many years after her husband's. She is given no voice on the subject, which is considered from different angles by several writers.

A biography of George Armstrong Custer this is not. Custer's early life is ignored. There is a good, but very selective, overview of his involvement in the Civil War; but his Reconstruction duty is only very briefly mentioned. There are good accounts of Custer's life and death on the Plains. Items addressed and well covered in this section include: his "breaking in" by the Plains and the Plains Indians, the Battle at Washita, his harsh treatment of deserters, his yearning for and breaking the rules to see his wife, and his last expedition on the Yellowstone. Yet the Black Hills Expedition is given short shrift, it gets only a few sentences.

This book probably goes into greater detail than most readers would like. For Custer historians, most of who, by definition, feel strongly for or against, it provides interesting and varied vignettes and stories about his life and times.

--Stan Moore, P.M.

Colorado's Volunteer Infantry in the Philippine Wars, 1898-1899, by Geoffrey R. Hunt. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2006. 299 pages. Illustrated with maps, photos, a diagram, and a graph. Endnotes, index. Cloth, dustjacket. \$39.95.

This is the long-awaited history of Colorado's volunteer infantry regiment in the Spanish American War and Philippine Insurrection. Geoff Hunt has been working on this volume, which started out as his dissertation, for probably at least a dozen years. Indeed, when this reviewer initially was asked to give the Spanish-American War Centennial address at Fairmount Cemetery in 1998, he suggested that Geoff Hunt be asked instead, but was overruled by the rest of the Centennial committee.

As many in the Denver Westerners will recall from the reviewer's 1995 paper on the subject, Colorado responded to the war with Spain by offering its rather well-organized national guard units for federal service. One regiment-worth of Coloradans was accepted by the McKinley administration and this consolidated unit, the First Colorado Volunteer Infantry Regiment, headed to San Francisco to participate in the sea-borne invasion of the Spanish Philippines. While there was only occasional combat, it was the adventure of a lifetime for most of the Coloradans.

There have been previous publications about the First Colorado Volunteers, including a couple published by the Colorado State Historical Society. But Professor Hunt's tome is the closest thing to a definitive study so far. Indeed, it may end up being the last word on the subject.

Hunt gives the background of the Colorado recruits, many of whom participated in the labor troubles in the mining camps. Hunt then takes the regiment and its members from the mustering in at Denver's City Park off to San Francisco and the Presidio. Next, Hunt chronicles the memorable Pacific voyage to Hawaii and, finally, to Manila. Of course, Hunt details the regiment's brief participation in the waning moments of the Spanish American War. Also given considerable space are the activities of the regiment at the beginning of the long Philippine Insurrection. Finally, Hunt brings the regiment home, and, as a bonus, writes about the veterans' activities over the years, for those who made it back.

Hunt tries to give an accurate picture of the men of the regiment, going into their statistics, their strengths, and their weaknesses. He notes that while some came out of the conflict with an appreciation of other cultures, many became more biased in their parochial views. While portions of the volume take a rather detached, professorial, and analytical view of some rather common-place aspects of soldiering and warfare, Hunt has covered virtually all the angles of the regiment, although he misses a scandal or two.

This volume is a worthwhile one for those interested in Colorado's military heritage, and it complements nicely those books detailing Colorado participation in the Civil War. The book is recommended as being well worth the somewhat stiff price.

--John Hutchins, P.M.

Tales from the Journey of the Dead, by Alan Boye. University of Nebraska Press, 2006. 255 pp. Photos, maps, bibliography. Hardbound.

Tales from the Journey of the Dead's subtitle is *Ten Thousand Years on an American Desert*. This American desert is located in New Mexico, east of the Rio Grande, from Socorro on the north to Las Cruces on the south. The Jornada Del Muerto, or Journey of the Dead, refers to the road across the desert. The first European known to have crossed this desert road was Juan de Onate in 1598. As to the name, Jornada Del Muerto, just who died, when and where are lost in myth and time. But it is known many did die while crossing these 90 miles of flat, waterless, featureless desert on a route which was used well into the early twentieth century until supplanted by a good road built along the west side of the Rio Grande River.

Alan Boye spent a season or two hiking, backpacking, and four wheeling throughout the area discovering its long and rich history.

- Folsom points have been found on the Jornada.
- There is ancient rock art.
- It was home to bands of Mescalero Apache until the late 1800's. Victorio was one of the last Apache chiefs to surrender his people although he chose to die in battle rather than submit.
- The Jornada has carried much traffic – it was traversed by Spanish settlers and refugees from the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.
- Zebulon Pike and party were taken across it as prisoners.
- The 1862 Battle of Valverde was fought on its fringes, after Sibley's Confederate forces crossed the Jornada.
- Today jet fighters from many nations crisscross it with training flights.
- Ranching was first attempted here several hundred years ago and still is, although not as much.
- Ted Turner owns chunks of the east side where his people are ranching buffalo.
- The United States Government exploded the first atomic bomb there in 1945, and has appropriated much of the rest for its White Sands Missile Range in the central part of the desert.

During his travels along The Jornada Del Muerto Alan Boye talked, walked, and explored with old timers, ranchers, rangers, ranch managers, and public affairs types from the missile range. He paints a vivid picture of the Jornada's past and present.

While not quite on a par with Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* this book is a good review of the history of an overlooked area. For the desert aficionado, it is a must read.

--Stan Moore, P.M.

A Decent Orderly Lynching: The Montana Vigilantes by Frederick Allen. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 2004. 421 pages. Illustrated with three maps, pictures, endnotes, bibliography, index. Cloth, dustjacket. \$34.95.

In the past, there have been two gangs when it comes to discussing the history of the vigilantes of Montana, men who triumphed against their opponents while the rest of the nation was fighting the Civil War. (Indeed, what was happening on the Montana frontier was an extension of the war.) The first gang of chroniclers is the traditional law-and-order posse. This posse is made up of the early writers, some of whom participated in the events. According to these survivors of the controversy, what they did was courageous and borne of the necessity of ridding the territory of a band of corrupt cut-throats, led by Sheriff Henry Plummer and aided by the likes of Jack Slade. This pro-vigilante side has, more or less, been the version adopted by the Montana history texts.

The other gang is made up of the revisionist rebels. According to this crop of baby-boom biographers, Henry Plummer was more of a victim than a villain, and Jack Slade was a misunderstood man who couldn't hold his liquor. These writers have given the vigilantes no more credit than would be given the Ku Klux Klan or other murderous mobs.

This book, written by an experienced reporter, Frederick Allen, charts its own course. This is not history as written by Francis Parkman, where definite biases (whether correct or not) are obvious and the writing is elegant. Allen, as is the more modern trend, is more exhaustive in his use of virtually all of the sources, published and unpublished. Allen also is less preachy, although there sometimes is mild lecturing. Overall, he uses an effective technique of discussing the various evidences and their likely weight. In short, it is good investigative writing. The result is a detailed, rational, middle course, with a mild chastisement of the vigilante movement in Montana (especially since they kept refusing to close operations).

For Denver Westerners, the book is useful because of Montana's relationship with some of the Civil War lawlessness in Colorado Territory. A few of the same characters even were involved in both venues.

While I disagree with some of the conclusions, especially about the weight of some evidence, this is a dandy book for its scholarship and for its organization. If one wanted to know both the passion and the facts surrounding Montana's first travail with lawlessness, I would suggest Dimsdale's *The Vigilantes of Montana* (Oklahoma Press' Frontier Library edition), to be followed immediately with a thorough reading of this volume. The true revisionist stuff can be skipped as being as biased as the early stuff, without having the advantage of any firsthand knowledge.

Although the truth about Plummer and his gang may have to wait the time when the sea shall give up its dead, this book comes about as close as one can. It is highly recommended and is a real keeper.

--John Hutchins, P.M.



The Denver Posse of the Westerners

Dinner Meeting, Wed., Apr. 25, 2007

“ How the Franciscans took California”

by Donald W. Nuce, C. M.

Aurora Ballroom, Radisson Hotel Denver SE

3200 S. Parker Road (NE corner of I-225 & Parker Rd.)

Social Hour, 5:30-6:30 P.M.

Dinner, 6:30 P.M. Dinner Price is \$22.00

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Call Dot Krieger (Chuck Wrangler), 303-466-7737, or e-mail at

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Free parking at the hotel. No-shows will be charged unless a cancellation is received. *****

Shows by Don will feature “The Rise and Decline of California Missions”

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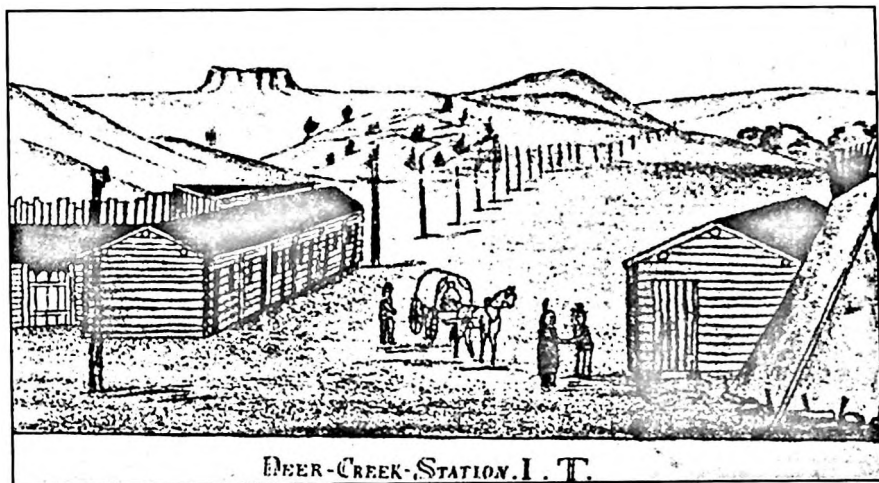
Artistic donations appreciated. The Chuck Wrangler appreciates your

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The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

May - June 2007



Mit bruederlichem grusse*

*** With brotherly greeting**

Karl Gottlieb Krebs

Lutheran Missionary to the Northern Plains Indians

by Jim Krebs, P.M.

(presented Nov. 22, 2006)



Our Author

Jim Krebs is a Denver, Colorado native and has been a Posse member for a dozen or so years. Jim is the "Registrar of Marks and Brands" and has published the bimonthly *Roundup* for over ten years. He has had a hand in the publishing of the last three Brand Books.

Jim's interest in Western history developed during his 25 years of scaring himself silly four-wheeling the toughest mining trails in Colorado's high country. Now Jim scares himself silly driving way too fast on über-motorcycles. Jim is the father of two sons, grandfather of two grandsons, and a graduate magna-cum-laude of the School of Hard Knocks. He is a perpetual student of the Denver Posse of Westerners.

Jim considers his greatest accomplishment the continual pulling-of-the-wool over his wife Susan's eyes, and managing to keep her married to him for 32 years.

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

VOL. LXIII NO. 3



May - June 2007

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 Broomfield, CO 80020

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Mit bruederlichem grusse*

* With brotherly greeting

Karl Gottlieb Krebs 1829-1909

Lutheran Missionary to the Northern Plains Indians

1860-1865

by Jim Krebs, P.M.

(presented Nov. 22, 2006)

This is my second presentation to the Denver Posse of Westerners. The first, "The Hole in the Rock," was about the Mormon roadbuilders of 1884, and the establishing of roads and traveling across the American Frontier to establish communities in the area that is now Lake Powell. I traveled sections of the Mormon trail in Utah in my rusty, trusty Jeep, and presented numerous high-tone color slides on a Kodak Carousel projector. Here, I present high-tone electronic files on a digital projector. No silver halide crystals were harmed in the making of this show.

The story you are about to read isn't anywhere near as romantic or exciting as stories you've heard from other of our fellow Westerners. Particularly, I recall the story of Dick Cook's grandfather and his hero adventures in cowboy Dodge City, as published in our last Brand Book, or Larry Reno's tales of his grandfather William H. Reno, the "Dick Tracy" of the early railroads, or the tracing of his relatives all the way back to the Lewis and Clark expedition. This is a story about my great-grandfather, a poor, pacifist preacher from Prussia. Tonight's story has a common thread woven within my last paper: that of Pioneer Spirit, intestinal fortitude, and the following of a spiritual calling.

The autobiography and nearly

eight-week diary on which this story is based, were translated in 1967 from its original German by K.G.'s daughter, my great aunt, Sister Magdalena. As such, there are grammatical inconsistencies probably native to the original document, and probably Sister Magdalena's translation of the writings. He speaks mostly in the first person, but changes to third person when he talks about the mission. There are some interjections by the author for clarity. We begin with his early life in Prussia and Germany, his travels to Deer Creek Station, now Glen Rock, Wyoming, and his hasty exit to return to Iowa and New York, just ahead of certain massacre.

Karl G. Krebs

"I was born September 7, 1829, at Mittweida, in the Kingdom of Saxony. My dear parents were: The Master Weaver Christian Gottlieb Krebs and Christiane Stollberg.

"My parents were by no means wealthy; but poor, at times very poor; but they were never considered the poorest of the poor, since they never had to eat food obtained by begging. And if in times of great need it happened that they had to go into debt for a few dollars, it never was for more than they knew they could pay off in a few weeks. In the entire city it was known

of them that they believed in the proverb: 'Honesty is the best policy.'

"Since their income was so small, my parents never reached the point when they could purchase a house for themselves. They therefore remained as hundreds of other families did--in the poverty-stricken position of having to pay rent for a room in which they could at one and the same time live and carry on their work.

"At this time my parents with their diligence and economy had saved 29 Prussian dollars. Then my father contracted a severe illness, abdominal and typhoid fever, and an abscess of the lung. He was confined to bed for a half year, and came very near to death. The 29 precious dollars dwindled fast for the household needs. The physician and pharmacist had great consideration, and years passed before these debts could be paid. Bread was borrowed at the bakers, and paid for after it had already been eaten. This extreme poverty lasted for years.

"We were three children, three boys. I was the eldest. My second brother was seven years younger, the third, nine years younger than I. Sometimes I heard my father say to my mother: 'Give the children enough to satisfy them: I would rather eat somewhat less.' I am sure he often left the table only half satisfied, in order that we children could eat what was left. If there had always been bread and potatoes, other food did not worry us.

"My parents attended church diligently. My father took me there when I was about four years old, when I was brave enough not to be afraid to sit by myself in the nave of the church; for he had chosen as his place the corner of

the highest balcony, from which vantage point he could see me and I could see him. My mother had rented a seat for herself in the church, for which she paid the rent yearly.

"At the age of six years I was sent to school. I still remember having figured algebra, but in this study I never passed beyond the fundamental principles. To figure in this way was beyond the horizon of my comprehension and it remained a mystery to me. In spite of this my teachers had expected me to pursue a higher goal than that of the weaver handcraft. One day, as I stood before a merchant's house with a finished piece of weaving under my arm, waiting to be admitted to the store, the School Director who was paying a visit to the merchant in the upper story passed by.

"He saw me standing there and asked in so many words: 'Krebs, are you going to be a weaver?' I answered, 'Yes.' Then he said: 'You wretch.' This was supposedly his idea of the weaving industry as well as of me who had chosen this trade and all the hundreds in general who followed this trade in the city of Mittweida.

"For three full years I was a weaver's apprentice with my father. In the weaver's guild of my home city, a person who had completed his training had to be pronounced a 'journeyman' publicly. Before this declaration could take place, the candidate journeyman had to produce a 'journeyman's' piece of work, which had to be throughout without a flaw. This piece, 40 yards in length, had to be brought to the Weaver's Hall for inspection, by the master weavers. My piece was found to be 'good'; afterward I was declared to

be a 'journeyman weaver.' I worked as a journeyman with my father for some time; if I had not, my father would have had to take a stranger to work with him.

"Now came a difficult year.

The market for weaver's produce was poor, there were not enough sales, the merchants did not want to buy as much as the weavers wanted to produce. This led to a lack of work opportunities in our city of weavers, and therefore also a lack of wages and bread. So for me, as for many others, it became necessary to search for work.

"In order to meet the wide-spread need and provide work and wages for those who had none, the government stepped in and created some employment by beginning a program of street repair and building of new streets. I, too, applied for work on the street project and was employed.

"I was unused to this heavy work, and it was difficult for me to wheel the barrow loaded with earth from one place to another; but this work brought a somewhat better salary than weaving. And so I could pay my parents well for my board, and still had something left over for myself. The Fall brought more work for the weavers, as well as more sales, so that once again we had withstood the hardest time.

"At that time there was as yet no compulsory military service. Only as many as were needed of the 20-year-old men, as would fill the number of vacancies left by those who had served and would be released from duty. All those able to serve in the military had to draw lots. If it was a man of means, who could pay for his release, the government might hire another man, who wished, to remain soldiers of their

own free will. All the young men whose name had not been drawn by lot, were free from the military for all time.

"Therefore, I wanted to wait for the possible military service, before I would leave this part of the country. I worked for several masters in the city. Then came the year of 1849, when I became 20 years old and had to report for military draft. A war was feared, and therefore I was not declared free, although I was declared too "weak" for service. I was placed in the reserves and told to appear the next year for the draft. The war clouds dispersed, and in the next year, 1850, I was declared forever free from military service.

"I do not recall the month, but the following year, 1851, I made ready in earnest for my journey into strange country. I purchased a knapsack, such as the soldiers carry on their backs, filled it with clothing and underwear, buckled a pair of good boots on the top of the knapsack, and so was ready for travel.

"It was on an afternoon. My mother and another journeyman weaver of our family's acquaintance accompanied me to the city gate and probably an hour's walking distance further. There we parted, amid tears and blessings, and a 'God keep you.'

"The two returned home and I went forward. We could see one another still, by looking around, and Bisgar, the journeyman weaver who had accompanied me, called to me loudly and distinctly, 'Karl, do not forget your church'. That I have not. Under God's gracious guidance and direction I have not forgotten my church, though I never returned to live in my native city. My 'travel abroad,' just begun, and became

lasting and lifelong.

“Very beneficial to my Christian perception and development was the following circumstance: As long as I worked for my master (I do not remember how long it was—perhaps a year or a bit more) his parents also lived in the house. The father had been a tailor until he became blind and consequently had no income. So the two old people lived in their son’s house and didn’t need to pay rent. Beside the master, his two sons also lived in the house, and all three helped sustain the old folks. These two old people owned a precious book, ‘Arndt’s True Christianity.’ The book lay there, no one read from it. Since I spent most of my Sunday afternoons with the two old relatives of the tailor, I began reading portions from this book to them. And as I saw that the old parents listened with great interest, and that even lengthy readings were well tolerated and enjoyed, I read to them in the afternoon, Sunday after Sunday, long and much. Thus I became familiar with the dear book and I, too, became very fond of it. Besides, upstairs where my bed stood, I found another large book. It was an explanation of the Holy Bible. I pulled the book out, cleansed it of the thick covering of dust and read it on weekdays, when I had time. Who knows how long that book had been lying up there under the roof, perhaps completely forgotten. However, I told no one of my discovery.

“I cannot recall how individual happenings took place. I recall, however, that I purchased a large Bible with many illustrations of Bible stories, also a copy of Arndt’s True Christianity, printed and published in Basel, and also a copy of the Explanation of the

Creeds of the Lutheran Church. Now I possessed good reading material, and also owned a hymn book. I also read religious periodicals from the Prussian-separated Lutheran Church.

“All these activities were experimental, and necessary to my memory. For mission work and preparation for it was always uppermost in my mind and in my activities. The archdeacon Hoffmann once, when I had announced myself for Holy Communion, asked me whether I still longed to be a missionary, I naturally said that I did. The archdeacon and his brother-in-law, Inspector Horlbeck, had refused me at my first request for service as a missionary. Now, after years of observation, and years of opportunity to become acquainted with me, some were actually interested in me and asked about my purpose of giving my life to missions. During these years, the unknown, strange weaver’s journeyman, had become a respected friend of missions. Thus by the grace of God, a page had been turned for me.”

Author’s interjection: The story of the Lutheran Mission begins around 1850 in Neuendettelsau, Germany where Pastor Wilhelm Loehe was preaching a vision of taking the Gospel to the entire world.

The Lutherans of various ethnic backgrounds had a relatively late start in the missionary movement in the West, and the extent of their work doesn’t favorably compare in scope and success with other large Protestant missions or with the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church. Actually, that’s being pretty political correct. From what we will learn, my great-grandfather and his brother missionaries

ultimately spent all of the missionary budget several times over and had only three Indian boys return to Iowa to show for five years' effort. Nevertheless, the efforts of various Lutheran church bodies shouldn't be overlooked in American history. The Swedish Lutheran Church began as early as the seventeenth century to Christianize tribesmen near Wilmington, Delaware.

The Michigan and Missouri Synods made inroads among the Chipewewa in Michigan; the Danish Lutherans established a mission among the tribes in Oklahoma; the Missouri Synod to the Stockbridge in Wisconsin; the Norwegian Lutheran to the Winnebago in Wisconsin; and these, the Iowa Synod, a German-Lutheran church body in eastern Iowa, went to the Northern plains. Now back to K.G.'s words....

"The year 1857 came around. This was an important and meaningful year for me. I received a letter early in the Spring from the Inspector of Missions at The Mission Institution at Neuendettelsau in Bavaria, Frederick Bauer, in which he told me to send him a written sketch of my life.

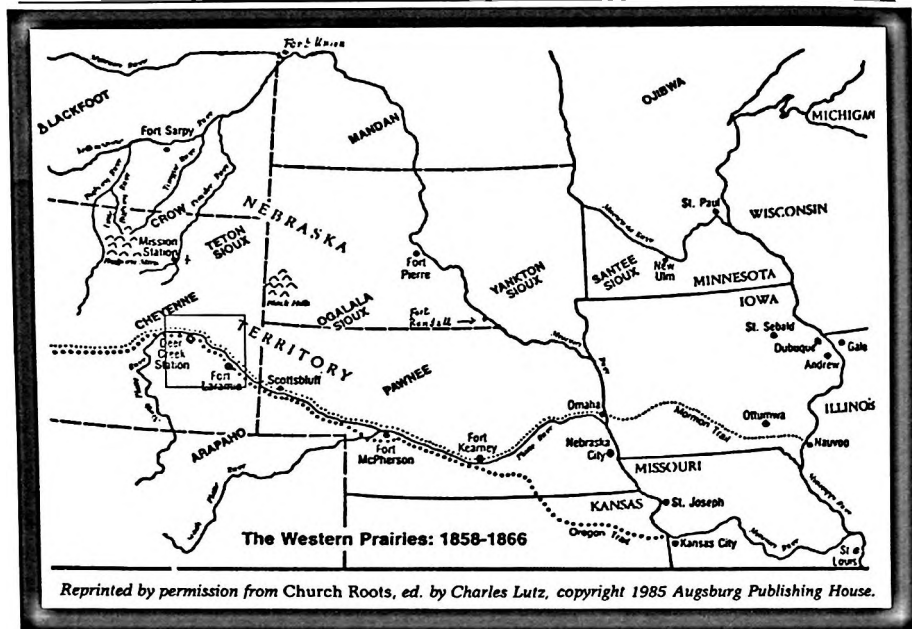
"This I did, and sent my report to Inspector of Missions Bauer. It was but a brief time before I had an answer from him: 'You may enter the Mission Institution at Neuendettelsau on the first of May.'

"The year 1858 approached. Our Lutheran 'Synod of Iowa and other States' sent out two missionaries, Schmidt and Brauning, to the Indians of the Northwestern States of our country (North America). They traveled by steamboat up the Missouri River. They had a difficult trip, inasmuch as

the passengers in the ship sometimes had to assist in pulling the ship through the water. They reached a fort 'high up in the Northwest,' where some Indians were camping. The missionaries attempted to become acquainted with them. These Indians proved to be very friendly toward these two missionaries and accepted them happily and peacefully. The Indians called themselves the 'Upsaroka' tribe (in the English language they were called 'Crows'). They took the two missionaries with them. They were quartered in Indian tents, and received sufficient food, which consisted mostly of buffalo meat. The two missionaries now studied the Upsaroka language, observed the living conditions and the activities of this tribe, were treated at all times with kindness, and observed that the message of peace, as expressed in the Gospel, would find an entrance here.

"Two months had passed, autumn began to show its harsh side. So the brothers decided to return to Iowa, with the serious intent of returning to this place in the next year, in order to realize the plan of colonization they had prepared. It was a sad parting for both the missionaries as well as the Indians. Yet each group comforted one another with their earnest intention to return after the coming winter had passed. With these plans and this understanding they departed, and reached Iowa and the Seminary safely.

"The plan, as set forth by Schmidt and Brauning for this mission, was as follows: They would begin a mission with the Upsarokas which would by and by be able to sustain itself. With the help of mission-colonists they would introduce and continue agri-



culture, the produce of which would be sufficient to sustain the entire mission family. At the same time the Indians would also be trained to do the farm-work and be educated, so that in not too long a time a great, Christian mission colony could be built up encouraging the self-supporting Indians to a settled resident life and to grow up into a body of Christian people; which could further be a pattern and model for good, and afford help in giving aid and support to other Indian tribes in their mode of living. In many ways this appeared to be a good plan which could be recommended, provided it could be carried on to completion.

“The two missionaries now wrote to the Mission Institute at Neuendettelsau, and explained their plans, to make their experiences among the Upsaroka tribe known, and asked for

support to carry out the mission plan. But most fervently they begged for helpers: missionaries, mission helpers, and builders of colonies.”

Author’s interjection: As we will hear soon, K.G. will arrive in America. His travel route to the mission station was the Oregon Trail. The author and his wife took a trip in late September to visit sites contained in this paper, including Ft. Laramie, the Oregon Trail and Glen Rock, Wyoming, site of the Deer Creek Station. Now back to our story as told by K.G...

“In the winter of 1859 the letter arrived at the Mission Institute of Neuendettelsau and was received by the Rev. Inspector Bauer. The students were offered an opportunity to make a free choice to choose or refuse the



Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

Photo from Wartburg Seminary website

call to the mission among the Indians. Four students responded. They were: Kessler, Doderleir, Flachenecker, and Krebs. The remaining members of the 'task force' had already been secured in America: the two missionaries already there, Schmidt and Brauning; a mission helper, Seyler at Wartburg, the Pastors seminary, and three colonists: Beck, Bunge, and Feldmeier. These together made up the mission personnel ready for service.

"On the 26th of March 1859, the four men from the Mission Institute at Neuendettelsau boarded the sailship which would take them to America.

"We arrived from Germany at the end of May, 1859 to the Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa.

"Travel was now to take place by oxcart and wagons drawn by horses. In order to purchase these, plus provisions for ten missionaries and mission helpers, as well as provisions for several months after arrival, the Mission Committee, which was supposed to provide our caravan with these needed

materials, saw how much was lacking for the trip proposed by the missionaries. It was absolutely necessary to change our travel plans and to simplify them, if all of us were not to fall by the wayside and our plans meet with complete failure.

"Years later, some Americans, who knew the cost of a plan such as had been planned by the two missionaries, told us that we should have had many thousands of dollars, and we merely had hundreds.

"A decision was made which of these ten men, ready for mission service, were to continue. It was decided that only half as many should go as had been planned, the other half were to remain until the following year, when further assistance and support could be expected from Germany. The Iowa Synod was at that time still very small, and had to be concerned with its own structural needs. There was little help to be expected from this source for mission work among the heathen. It did turn out that the Central Committee



Photo by Author

Ruts on the Oregon Trail carved so wagons could pass over the rock



Photo by Author

Confluence of the North Platte River and Deer Creek, near Glen Rock, Wyoming.

for Missions in Bavaria, due to Pastor Loehe's mediation, sent considerable sums of money to the Iowa Synod for the proposed Indian Mission.

"However, this support could not be expected until the following year, 1860. The brothers who remained would have to wait until that time to be sent. Those who were permitted to go were: Missionaries Schmidt and Doderlein. as missionary helper, Seyler; as colonists, Beck and Bunge. But the eager missionary, Brauninger, could not be detained: he must go back to his Upsarokas. The mission committee did permit him to join them: he was added to the number and sent with them. Those who remained were: Missionary Kessler, he was placed to serve a

congregation in Iowa; Mission helper Flachenecker and my humble self. We were directed to continue our studies at the Seminary Wartburg. As colonist, Feldmeier had also to wait. However, he left the Wartburg farm and we never saw him again.

"Thus the aforementioned six emissaries left (Dubuque). The journey, however, did not go as smoothly as expected. It was uncertain whether the horses could endure the long trek through all of Iowa and the wide state of Nebraska to the Yellowstone River. (Nebraska, at that time included the territories of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho.)

"The brothers saw by traveling, that oxen would endure more than

the horses. Therefore they sold the horses and purchased oxen. Travel now became somewhat slower, but more safe than with the horses. Missionary Schmidt became ill on the way, but could continue, as a "spring seat" was purchased for the wagon. All of the men suffered much and severely from the summer's heat.

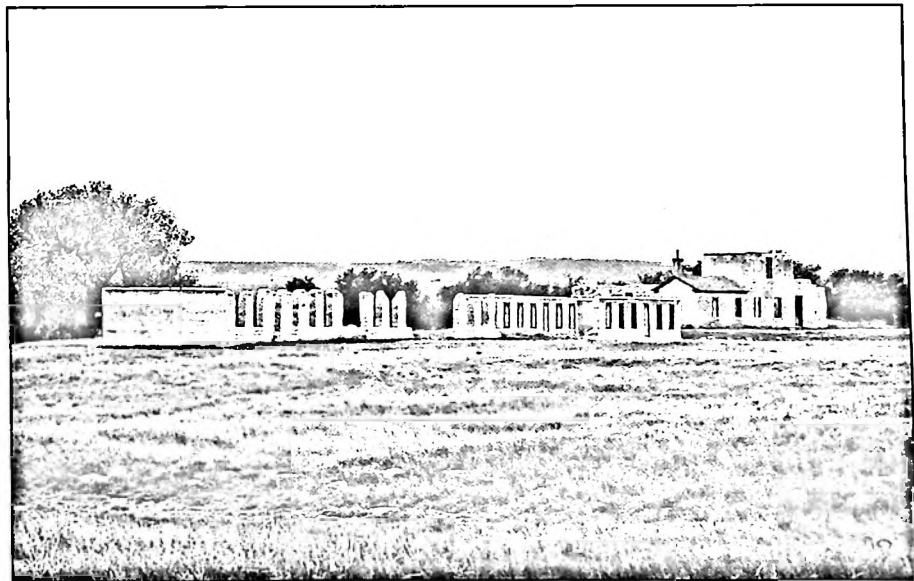
"Because they had to travel through, to them, unknown country, they were not acquainted with the places where water was to be found. Had they known these places, they could have driven toward them. For this reason there was at times much danger and suffering for lack of water for man and beast. They attained some distance each day, but did not reach their destination, the Upsarokas. Winter was approaching and they had to begin looking for a place for their winter quarters.

"The brothers reached Fort Laramie. In this fort there were a great number of United States Cavalry. This group was stationed there because of the Indians camping thereabouts.

"100 miles west of here was the Deer Creek, which joined the Platte River. Not far from here there was a trading station.

"The trader was a Frenchman, named Bissonette, who lived with an Indian woman, had several children by her and who traded with the Indians."

Author's interjection: here is where our trip to Wyoming really paid off. I find it interesting the names used in K.G.'s autobiography match the names on historical markers in Glen Rock, WY.



Ft. Larimie Historic Site, Wyoming

Photo by Author



Photo by Author

Historic marker and viewing "scope" points to the site of Major Twiss' cabins that housed the Lutheran Missionaries

"Five miles to the South lived Major Twiss, a row of log cabins, who had been placed here by the U. S. Government in order that he could keep peace with the Indians by distributing the annual presents, which were given them on condition that they keep the peace.

"The major, old and grizzled, had made himself at home here for the duration of his Army duty. He lived familiarly with an Indian woman, with whom he had two small children. This major had long hair, worn in two braids, exactly like the Indians.

"He was the owner of much beef cattle, horses, and chickens, and kept a number of Indians who did his

hunting for him and for which they received board and clothing. He also had several white men who worked for him, watched over his herds and kept them in order. He was a sort of Law and himself led a comfortable life.

"The entire group of missionaries still possessed \$20.00 in cash, a half sack of flour of about 50 pounds weight, and a side of bacon. If they all had to live off of this amount, they would have finished it in a couple of weeks, and what of the winter? On top of all this, they were strangers, unknown "Johnny-come-lately." However, the people believed their words and honest faces and the account of their intentions. It was a good thing, and to

be considered a sure sign of God's care for them, that they met Captain Reynolds here, who needed workers to erect another row of log cabins, that should serve as winter quarters for him and his many men. How willing and thankful our brothers were for the fact that they found paying jobs here, enabling them to pay for lodging, shelter and food for the imminent winter! They could now face the hard winter without worry. Another fact was in their favor: the number of people would guard against any surprise attack by wild Indians, and insure their safety. This was all God's gift, blessing, and protection. God did not forsake his own!"

Author's interjection: My great-grandfather's diary contains many pages of interesting stories about the first six missionaries and their year-long tribulations at Deer Creek Station. As this is a story of K.G.'s experiences, I am forwarding to the time of his trip to the mission. Missionary Brauningger had sent a letter to the Iowa Synod requesting the two missionaries be sent at this time...

"The report of Brauningger arrived at the Wartburg Seminary at harvest time and greeted joyously. Brauningger's call, 'Send immediately two missionaries to assist me,' was answered at once. One day, Professor Sigmund Fritschel came to Flachenecker and me, to ask whether we still were willing to go to the Indians and to join Brauningger there. When we answered in the affirmative, he said: 'Then get ready at once to travel, write your examinations, then we will ordain both of you and send you to Mission-

ary Brauningger.' So we got ready, wrote our examinations but the ordination did not take place at once, for the following reason: the religious paper of a small insignificant Synod carried a small, but malicious notice, directed against Missionaries Schmidt and Brauningger, that 'the Iowa Synod has two ordained vagabonds' traveling about. Wasn't that mean and wicked of the editor of that so-called 'church paper?' Simply because the 'paper' wanted to accuse the Iowa Synod of some disgraceful act. President Grossmann then came to Flachenecker and me, just in the days when we were preparing for our examinations, and told us of this matter, and added that the mission committee had decided that we would not travel as ordained missionaries but would be asked to wait with ordination until we had reached Brauningger, who could then ordain us to the ministry. In order to keep peace and not to give new offence, starting another such an unfair accusation, the ordination would be deferred, I answered President Grossmann as follows: 'But what if we should have the misfortune to arrive, and Pastor Brauningger would be dead?' President Grossmann answered, 'Oh, let us not anticipate such a thing! But if it should happen, we will have to send an ordained man to ordain you.' That satisfied us, and we continued to work toward our examination. On the tenth Sunday after Trinity, 1860, both preached our trial sermons, I in the morning worship service, and Flachenecker at the afternoon service. During the same week we lost no time, but departed without delay.

"Since, according to Missionary Brauningger's letter haste was necessary, we were advised to take the



Photo by Author

Historic marker for the Pony Express station at Deer Creek

shortest travel route that was in existence at that time. At that time there was only an 'Overland Mail,' a stage coach, by which one could travel as far as San Francisco. This coach left St. Joseph, Missouri every Tuesday. Here in St. Joseph we had to wait three days, until Tuesday, when the stage continued. This gave us time to make a few necessary purchases, such as raincoats, and spectacles. We came to and crossed Kansas, and all of Nebraska, since, as mentioned earlier, the entire country as far as the Rocky Mountains was called the Nebraska Territory. How much we had to pay for traveling to Deer Creek, I do not remember, As long as we drove through Kansas, four horses were provided for each coach. In Nebraska, however, and to the end, we always had six mules. About every 30 miles was a postal station where we would find new teams of horses or mules all ready to

be hitched up, to take the place of those whom we had used, so that these could rest until their turn came for another trip. In the time it took to change teams, the passengers and the drivers had time for their meals, three times a day, morning, noon and evening. For every meal, and even if one only took a cup of coffee at table, each passenger paid one dollar.

"Sometimes it happened that the mules would have to find their fodder on the prairie; sometimes they drifted so far away that they could not be found from night time till morning. In this case the wagon train simply had to remain and the passengers take sleeping quarters in the coach, unless he wanted to spend good money for a bed to sleep in.

"On this stretch there was also a rider, 'the riding mail,' which delivered mail that needed to be sped to its destination. (Special Delivery) Every post station had a riding horse, which was ready to go, as soon as the mail carrier announced his arrival by blowing his trumpet. The trip was 100 miles, which each postman had to complete.

"The stage drivers out of the West had brought sad news from Deer Creek, that the Indians had murdered one of the missionaries that had settled at the Powder River. If this were true, it must have been one of our people.

"Certainly, we were filled with fear by this tale, and now earnestly longed for the end of our journey, the 150 miles still to be covered. The man murdered by the Indians had been a missionary from Germany, and among the three who had worked together had been the 'Chief.' The two remaining were living in Deer Creek. All this

*Photo by Author*

The site of Major Twiss' cabins that was home to the author's great-grandfather in 1860. Deer Creek provides water to foliage

followed a pattern. The 'Chief' must be Missionary Brauning, our missionary is dead, the other two, who worked with him, assistant Seyler, and the mission colonist, Beck, are still living and we shall find them at Deer Creek. This much we were fairly sure actually hearing a name mentioned. We had seen Indians here and there, standing at the postal stations, and we had our missionary thoughts about them at the time, but now, we observed them with altogether different thoughts in mind, after having received the gruesome message.

"There were now over 100 miles left to cover before arriving at Deer Creek, and yes, at the last station before Deer Creek, we must stay overnight, because the mules that were

to be hitched up had run off over the prairie and could not be found. Now we had to pay for our supper, but had no money acceptable in payment. We had paper money, but that was worthless there. One had to have 'ringing' coins, either silver or gold to use as payment. And our 'ringing coins' had given out when we left Kansas. After that no paper money was accepted, only silver and gold coinage. When this money on the way began to fail us, we had off and on skipped a meal. And now we were only 100 miles from Deer Creek in this predicament! When I told the station master of it, he answered that he could not use any paper money because he could not get rid of it again. If he accepted it, it would be as good as if he

would give us our supper. 'However,' said he, 'come on in anyway, and eat your supper; I shall not charge you for it.' We accepted his generous offer, then returned to the mailcoach for a night's sleep. However, the news of the murder of Brother Braunerger had roused some fear in us. We now would have trusted no Indian, would have thought each one a robber or murderer, had one dared to come near the mailcoach. The one revolver we owned, was kept ready for business all night. Little sleep came to our eyes. I remained greatly excited all through the night.

"In the morning the lost runaway mules returned, six in number, and after breakfast, which was again a gift, the trip toward Deer Creek continued. We arrived at Deer Creek about noon. We could see nothing more than a solitary trading station, a few dwellings, connected with a store.

"We went on foot from Bissonette's station the three miles distant to Major Twiss' fort and toward evening arrived at the dwelling of Seyler and Beck. What a reunion especially sad because of the death of the Missionary Braunerger, so treacherously murdered by the Indians. These two brothers had been waiting to be recalled, since they expected that Synod would be giving up this mission. Instead of this, there now had arrived two new workers (Flachenecker and Krebs). Because of Braunerger's murder, the mission work took a different turn. The threat of the group of dangerous Indians, of the Sioux tribe, had still existed; they had continued their raids along the Powder River, raids against other tribes, and in just this vicinity.

"Now we must begin to gather

building material in the Black Hills and move it down three miles from where we were, and then to transport it another two miles to the place where we wanted to build. During the winter, little of this could be done. But due to the fact that we four men all had our living quarters with Major Twiss, everything that pertained to room, board and fuel we had to work for. First of all we must provide a supply of wood for the winter.

"There were at least four houses to be provided with wood for fuel, enough for all of the winter, which was hard upon us. We worked hard at bringing in all the wood supply to be found nearby and in the Deer Creek country. Load upon load of old, fallen as well as fresh cut trees were brought into the yard by the wagons drawn by oxen. Strong men were greatly needed to load the wagons, such as Brother Beck. We also were responsible to bring in the herds of horses and cattle, that had been put out to graze during the day. Brother Beck milked the cows. He brought me a cup of milk to the house every evening, when this was feasible. I had fallen ill and needed this milk. For our daily work during the winter, Major Twiss promised to help us with the building of our house, which was also to be our mission station. While I was cutting branches one day a frightening thing happened, I broke the handle of the axe due to my awkward handling of the axe. So in my helping to cut branches, I had made an expense for our mission treasury. For a new handle we had to pay the trader one dollar.

"I have mentioned before that I had been ill, and needed the milk which Brother Beck, the 'milkman,' brought me daily, if he could. We had been



Courtesy American Lutheran Church archives, Wartburg Seminary

at Deer Creek for six weeks, when I became very ill. The doctor decided that I had typhoid fever. It was fortunate that we had a doctor in the house next door to ours, where he had winter-quarters. He had been sent here by the government, because of the smallpox among the Indians. I had spent some time in bed without a notable turn for the better, before the doctor was called to see me. He said at once that my sickness was typhoid fever. He gave me a dose of quinine in a spoonful of whiskey two times, with the additional instruction that I might eat whatever I liked, but after each meal I was to drink a spoonful of brandy. This was the entire treatment this doctor used. As time passed, I gradually recovered. I was confined to bed until around Christmas time. But I was so weak, that I could sit down on one of our home-made chairs, but could not stand up again by myself. Then I became bald, had lost all my hair during my illness. But my strength returned

gradually, so that I could go to the table at Major Twiss's when someone would rap on the door and call, 'Come and eat.' Major Twiss had so many people at table, that the table had to be set three times before they had all been fed. The Indian woman with whom he lived, and the two children, were never present. Most of the meals consisted of cooked rice and crackers, with coffee or milk, meat, such as venison or other game. In winter there would be only two meals a day: early, at 8 o'clock in the morning, and one at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. There would be no more for 17 hours. But I had a terrific appetite. The 17 hours between 3 o'clock P.M. to 8:00 A.M. were all too long for my enormous hunger.

"Brother Flachenecker cooked several flour dumplings for me in the evening and fried a bit of bacon that had been lying for some time and turned yellow, since it had been part of our provisions for last summer's travel.

All this tasted wonderful to me, so that I could get along until 8:00 in the morning. But one thing remained with me from that bout with typhoid fever, that was a terrific backache. I complained of this to the doctor, but he answered: 'we have no cure for that; it will have to go away by itself.'

"Building now really became a necessity, because we expected Missionary Kessler in the near future. By that time we certainly wanted to have our own station buildings finished. It went faster and easier to build and complete it than I had expected. One block of wood after another would be laid in position quickly; and soon the four walls had been completed. On two sides openings were left for windows, one on the gable end, the other on the wide side. The doorway was on the gable end opposite from the window end. The roof slanted upward and consisted of fence rails laid side by side, covered by about one foot of earth. That was sufficient earth, since there was no continuous rainfall in these parts. If the rain should off and on trickle through this roof, we would just have to put up with it.

"We now had our own dwelling place. Major Twiss himself built and plastered the fireplace, using stones that had been searched for and found in various places. The chimney was put on somewhat higher up than the roof. The mortar was prepared, lacking lime, from a clay soil, worked into the water. The same mortar was used to fill the cracks between the wood logs of the walls, so that these should be airtight. The brothers, lately arrived, had brought a small cookstove and window glass. Thus we could now begin our own

housekeeping. We could move in, and put our belongings in a dry place. Each window was to have 2 rows of panes. I put the frames together, figured up and down and across, so that the individual portions of the frame fit together, so that there were six panes in each window. The greatest difficulty resulted from the fact that we had no putty. So it became necessary to make a narrow groove in each frame, I used a butcher knife for making this groove in the wood, deep enough to that each single pane fit into its groove, and would be held tightly, so that the pane would be prevented from dropping out and breaking.

"Everything looked very primitive, but we had made it as good as we knew how at this time. I must repeat: We were happy to have our own 'hideaway' and at the same time, a mission station. Major Twiss gave us an additional number of boxes, which had contained the government gifts to the Indians, which had been distributed to them. These boards we used to make a sort of 'pantry' for our house, where we would keep our food. With the remainder we laid a floor, half of the space in the house, in the remaining half we walked on the bare ground. Soon after this a well was dug near the house, which provided us with sufficient fresh drinking water. Deer Creek was also near by furnishing 'soft' water, and the wooded strip along the creek provided wood for cooking and heating, as well as some game: rabbits, ducks, and other small game.

"Missionary Kessler's arrival was now to be very soon. He arrived during the week before Cantate Sunday. On the Cantate Sunday church service of 1861, Flachenecker and I were OR-

DAINED!

Herewith I close my account and entitle these many lines of writing: 'HOW I BECAME A MISSIONARY'”

Almost the end of the autobiography, but certainly not the end of the story. Four years of living among the different tribes brought many experiences uncovered in another autobiography written by Missionary Johann Schmidt, and in a number of reports written by K.G. to the both the Iowa Synod, and the Mission headquarters in Germany.

May, 1861-- At Deer Creek, Krebs and Beck busied themselves with building a dam across the river to capture extra water for irrigating their fields. Despite their ingenious efforts, the crops were a failure. Grasshoppers and mice ate the crops, and low water level in the dry season made it difficult to collect water.

December, 1861-- The missionaries made another attempt to join the Cheyenne for the winter. Krebs, Flachenecker and Kessler, the three ordained missionaries, soon began to suffer from the severe cold, lack of food, and the generally primitive conditions. The inexperienced missionaries learned that they had been welcomed by the Cheyenne because they had expected to receive gifts from them. When the Cheyenne learned that there was little to get, they treated the missionaries with disgust. The missionaries encountered an itinerant trader of dubious reputation, who appeared at the camp with a supply of shirts, blankets, flour, coffee, rice, sugar, tobacco, knives and whiskey. The missionaries witnessed first hand the attraction of alcohol to the

Cheyenne, despite their repeated warnings. The Cheyenne were willing to trade their last horse for whiskey, which was sold illegally.

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 led to change along the frontier as troops were pulled from garrisons. In the spring of 1862, as many stage stations were burned and raided, the missionaries thought it wise to withdraw temporarily to the safer Ft. Laramie, after stashing their valuables at Deer Creek. They returned in September 1862 finding their property intact.

In the years 1861-1863, services were held near the mission station. Krebs went to a nearby Cheyenne camp on Sundays and Wednesdays. The Cheyenne learned to recite the Lord's Prayer in their language, they then heard a sermon, sometimes interrupted by an approving exclamation, and afterwards they discussed the Word of God and even asked questions. Krebs and Flachenecker alternated their sojourns with the Arapaho or Cheyenne each for two months. They felt well accepted and were generally satisfied. They were concerned, however, about the disappearing wildlife, particularly the buffalo, which encouraged the natives to steal the livestock of the white settlers.

For all their work, the missionaries did not show great results in converting the tribesman. A good share of the time was spent in learning the language of the Cheyenne and Arapaho. The mission board advised Krebs in January 1863, to consider preaching the Gospel to be more important than the study of language. K.G. gained a fine reputation as a healer. Many sick tribal people came to him for help. Krebs was appalled by the frequency of stomach



Krebs family collection

Only known photograph of Karl Krebs. Shown with adopted Indian boys Little Bone, Owl Head, and Brown Moccasin

ailments which were caused by overeating. In time of abundance, people went from one tent to another eating. Those who suffered stomach pains went to Krebs wanting pills, but he told them to stop eating more than they needed. Gradually, he was able to persuade the natives to use more common sense and to watch their diets.

Then, in 1863, two Cheyenne boys, Brown Moccasin and Little Bone, were entrusted to the missionaries for their education. Some time later, another Cheyenne boy, Owl Head, joined the other two Cheyenne youth. Soon the boys knew the Lord's Prayer in German and parts of Luther's Little Catechism in their own language.

The missionaries could carry on their work independent of the rest of the Deer Creek population, with whom they had very little in common. Krebs

worried, however, about maintaining their independence when in need of future supplies for the mission station. When the supplies were depleted, they would be forced to beg from traders who would take advantage of their misery and make the missionaries their servants.

K.G. reported in detail about the trouble he had with the boys, particularly with Little Bone, who seemed to be a master of deceit. Whenever he committed a misdemeanor in the eyes of the missionaries, and was then faced with strong admonitions or even physical punishment, he pretended that he was in such pain that he would die momentarily. It was more and more Krebs' task to educate and train the boys while Kessler and Flachenecker traveled with the tribe. The process of acculturation for the young natives was slow and at

times painful. K.G. realized that the boys at their camps had been brought up in a more indulgent manner than he could concede to them at the station. He did not approve, for instance, of boys, ages nine to thirteen, visiting the trader's places, where they met undesirable white men, who were usually married to tribal women. Sometimes, the youngsters would not return to their new home, or if they did it was very late in the night. Such cases of disobedience, or lack of discipline, troubled K.G. One day one of the horses of the mission station was discovered to be missing. Krebs asked Little Bone, the oldest boy, to find it and bring it back. Instead, the boy went to the traders and did not return until late at night. He told the other boys about the wild adventures he had had on the prairie. K.G. became suspicious and found out that the boy had not gone for the horse at all but, rather, to his favorite company. For his lying, Krebs struck the boy five times as punishment. Little Bone asked for forgiveness and gradually adjusted to the rules of conduct of the mission

station, but the story of the beating spread quickly to the traders and the tribes. The incident was vastly exaggerated and caused repercussions among the population at Deer Creek Station and among some tribes.

K.G. was generally delighted about the progress the boys exhibited. Brown Moccasin, nine years old and of Cheyenne background, was the most gifted child. The smallest child, he loved Krebs like a father and willingly did what was asked of him, advancing well in his Bible studies, writing, learning German and simple mathematics. He would often retell in proper Cheyenne what Krebs had explained to him in crude Cheyenne, for K.G.'s benefit of learning the language. Little Bone, about thirteen or fourteen years old, was a problem. His slyness often aroused K.G.'s anger and resulted in punishment. The third boy, Owl Head, was a diligent lad and promising student.

Christmas, 1863, at Deer Creek Mission Station was an exciting and eventful occasion, as reported by K.G. "The missionaries secured a



Christmas Eve, Deer Creek Station, Wyoming, 1863. Sketch shows the missionaries Krebs, Kessler, and probably Beck, and the three Cheyenne boys. Courtesy ALC Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

Tannenbaum and decorated it secretly in Kessler's room, which was off limits for the boys that day. What a surprise it was for them to see their first decorated Christmas tree in the shining splendor of burning candles on Christmas Eve. Each boy received a new shirt, a pair of shoes, a mouth organ, sweets, and cookies in the shape of the meaning of their names, moccasin, owl, bone. The boys were overwhelmed by the "great medicine" and pleased about such a surprise of light and gifts. Kessler preached that evening, and Krebs retold the Christmas story in simple language and explained the significance of Christmas to the elated boys. They tried out their new shoes and even played their mouth organs in bed.

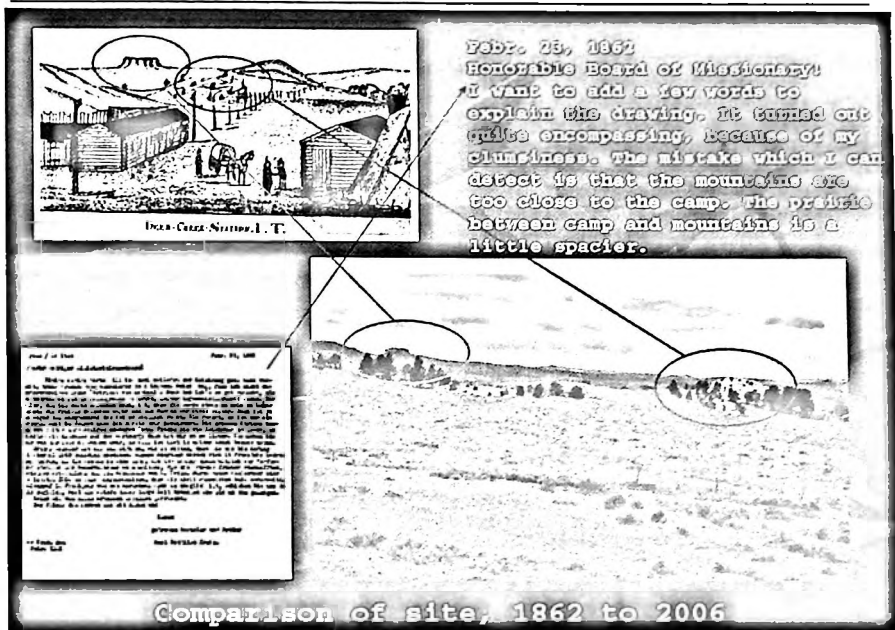
On that first Christmas Day, Brown Moccasin was baptized in his own language. As the first baptized convert, he received the name Friedrich Sigmund Christoph, in honor of Reverend Sigmund Fritschel. The other two boys were much impressed by the baptism and looked forward to theirs.

The missionaries kept their religious discipline regardless of circumstance. They preached every Sunday to their own small group, held devotions and Bible studies, taught the boys, and sang together, in addition to their duties with the tribesmen. Krebs enclosed in his report to Iowa, a handwritten letter, dated January 2, 1864 to Professor Sigmund Fritschel, who became the godfather to little Friedrich. Friedrich drafted the letter in his native language, and Krebs translated it into German. Friedrich expressed his hope, and also Krebs' hope, to come to Iowa some day to study for two years and then to return to his people.

But in a lengthy letter to the Executive Board of the Iowa Synod, dated February 27, 1864, Krebs warned against having too high hopes for early and many converts. It was a slow and frustrating process, he explained. He reported that the natives resisted Christianity because they had their own religion, their own higher, mysterious deities, six of them, in fact. They worshiped and sacrificed to them. They would listen to the missionaries with some degree of interest and pretend to appreciate the new insights, but no sooner were they back in their own lodge than they continued their tobacco-pipe ceremonies and called upon their gods. When they lost an argument, they just refused to continue talking, especially when the missionaries warned them about their worshiping of idols.

They claimed they had their own miracles. For instance, their ancestors knew how to start a fire by rubbing two sticks against each other, an art which they had forgotten. Krebs pointed out that making fire is more a skill than a miracle. Krebs tried to explain to the mission board that Christian religious concepts did not appeal to the tribesmen, because their persistent concern was whether the missionaries wanted to trade with them.

Although the missionaries were generally accepted, some Arapaho and Cheyenne disapproved of their preaching and threats of damnation. They resented the strict way of life the missionaries prescribed for the boys at the station. Even the father of the newly baptized Friedrich told his son to come home and forget about his association with the missionaries. Friedrich told this to his new father, Krebs, and stayed



Present-day photograph and photo illustration by Author

at the station. The missionaries had established themselves among the Arapaho and Cheyenne, but the rumblings of uprising came closer and closer to Deer Creek.

Here we come to what I consider a dramatic incident, and the reason for the missionaries' decision to leave Deer Creek and return to Iowa.

This story of fleeing was told by Hazel M. Cooly, a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Beck. "This is the story as I remember. An Indian mother had a very sick baby. She brought it to Mission to grandmother Beck, who used her own baby's little woolens and warm blankets to sweat one who was ill with pneumonia. She succeeded in breaking the fever and the baby recovered. Later when the Indian became very angry with the white people and planned to

raid to kill them this Indian mother came secretly to grandma Beck and in true Indian fashion exposed the plan to her so that grandmother might have a chance to save her life and that of the baby boy. The missionaries were spared a tragic fate by a grateful mother."

So you have it. If it hadn't been for a grateful Indian mother, whose own child had been saved by the missionaries, my friend and fellow Westerner Jeff Broome could very well be researching a massacre on the Wyoming plains of my great-grandfather and his missionary brothers. A later account of this tale was written in a report by Krebs. There is no date on the document, but it must be some time after their return. It reads: "It was in the summer of 1864 that the war of the Indians against the white population rolled across the Mis-

souri after it had raged for two years previously in Minnesota, into the states of Nebraska, Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. The Indian tribes of the Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapahoes which resided in these states were induced by the Sioux tribes which had plundered and murdered in Minnesota to take part in the great Indian insurrection against the whites in those states. For the Indians planned a war which should be waged in all parts at the same time, so the whites should find no rest anywhere and should be induced to leave the land. The tribe of the Cheyennes, among which we labored, was drawn into this conflict. The North Platte became the scene of many cruel raids. They became so bold and insolent that they took away before our very eyes 22 horses from a man residing near us. Now also we were in real danger. The few white families, about three or four in number fled, even though they lived at the military station. The missionaries with their three Indian boys now were the only ones left of the white inhabitants in that section. Reports of new atrocities came. It was a time of tribulation. Besides we saw the time approaching nearer and nearer, when we would have to flee, and the ruin of our missionary work stood before our eyes. The Indians had agreed to clear Deer Creek territory of the whites. This attack was directed towards us, for no other whites lived there. It was not the Cheyennes who planned to raid us. On the contrary these informed us in the time of impending danger so that we might escape in time. Young warriors of the Cheyenne had hidden themselves in the Platte until they found a chance to inform us of the intended attack through

a woman married to a Frenchman. The Indians had loaded their guns in aim for us. Instead of shooting us, they fired at a soldier who rode though a thicket past our former home, but they hit only his coattails. When, after soldiers searched the whole vicinity, traces were found of about forty Indians which had camped there. Three weeks later the Indians inaugurated another raid of our house in exactly the same manner as before: this time they were seventy strong. When the last Cheyenne bade farewell to us they requested us to leave and to go away entirely from the Indian territory. For, they said, as far as Indians were to be found, war against the whites would be carried on, a war of life and death. Either the whites would have to leave that part of the country or the Indians. But this would be attained only by their utter destruction. As long as any Indian would remain, war against the whites would go on. Hence we should go where no Indians were to be found."

Now comes the diary of the withdrawal. According to Sister Magdalena, "This Diary by Rev. Karl G. Krebs was contained in a little leather-covered notebook, 6 1/2 x 4 1/16. It was written with lead pencil and was well used by rubbing. About half of the booklet is filled with notes and the other half with accounts of the trip and drafts of letters to the Mission Board. Some of these accounts are from a time later than the trip. There are also lists of objects contained in a violin case and trunks."

According to the last family records, "This booklet is in the possession of Sister Madgalena Krebs, Deaconess Home, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Deceased 1972). At present it is in the care of Prof. Geo. J. Fritschel, 791 Nevada

Street, and is copied by him.

“The diary begins with Sept. 14 and ends with a vacant notation of Nov. 13, Sunday. The entry before the last one is: ‘Saturday, Nov. 12’ and the incomplete entry: ‘Buresz einen’ (Incomplete).”

For the preparing of this paper, I did internet research of the last recorded address which led me to Prof. Fritschel’s granddaughter in Dubuque. She referred me to the Archivist, Dr. Bob Wiederaenders, at the Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. He was a great help, but at this point it doesn’t seem that the diary exists anymore.

I am going to eliminate some of the passages, as some of the day-by-day journey is less than dramatic compared to what we have read so far.

Sept. 14.--The trader Jul today offered his two children, a three-year-old girl and a six-year-old girl, to us for education. This man is said to have been a priest. It is indifferent to him, if we will educate his children in the Lutheran faith. The Sioux here are still friendly, but everyone is afraid of them; no one wants to buy horses, since one does not know, whether they will not be stolen over night.

Friday, Sept. 16--Our sale is over. They have offered and given us low prices. Besides we did not receive cash money. We must wait until we come to Laramie or Omaha. Our customers have lost their money by gambling. One has lost \$1500 to a wanderer. Friedrich received a flogging from me before going to bed, because during the sale he was tempted to take for himself in secret a rifle. Afterwards he behaved well, he showed

repentance and apologized. The theft which occurred here, in which a traveling man lost 68 pair of boots from the captain’s room has been discovered. Thirteen soldiers perpetrated it. They were arrested and were led off today. The telegraph wire has been broken at two places, likely by the soldiers. The captain was to be murdered. The soldiers are very insolent towards us and especially now before our start. The prisoners are to be transported today to Laramie. We traveled six miles to the Platte.

Saturday, Sept. 17--Traveled 19 miles from the Platte to beyond Box Elder then traveled six miles further. Went into camp at sun-down. One ox was sick.

Monday, Sept. 19--Went 12 miles to Elkhorn. Another ox was sick therefore went into camp. Found many plums. Two soldiers, one more drunk than the other, behaved like swine. Our children hid in the woods for fear of them.

Wednesday, Sept. 21--Stopped for dinner in Little Cotton woods. In Peter’s wagon was a loaded gun, which otherwise did not go off and for that reason was yet loaded. When he had unhitched he intended to draw a string from the wagon. The string got tangled at the lock. The gun exploded in the wagon. The ball went through the box with the altar supplies, went through the candle holder and smashed a piece from the foot of the same, the broken piece bounced back and smashed a piece from the cross. God be thanks that no man was wounded. The damage can very likely be repaired quickly. May

DEER CREEK STATION

Deer Creek Station, which once stood on the site of present-day Glenrock near the confluence of Deer Creek and the North Platte River, became a familiar landmark along the Oregon-California-Mormon Trail between 1857 and 1866.

The station began with Joseph Blasonette's trading post, also known as Dakota City. The mountain man's store, post office, blacksmith shop, corrals, and hotel-saloon served the needs of a variety of visitors. They included photographer William Henry Jackson during his days as a freighter, stage passengers such as British author Sir Richard Burton, a party of Lutheran missionaries who remained in the area from 1859 to 1864, troops enroute to Salt Lake City during the Utah War, and in the winter of 1859-1860 an expedition of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers under Captain William F. Raynolds. From 1857 to 1861, the post also was the trading center for the nearby Upper Platte Indian Agency, located about 3½ miles upstream along Deer Creek.

Beginning in April of 1860, Pony Express riders exchanged mounts here at Deer Creek Station. The Pony Express experiment, however, ended abruptly in October 1861. The completion of the first transcontinental telegraph meant that clicking telegraph keys quickly replaced pounding hooves.

Indian-white hostilities escalated after the Civil War began, prompting troops from Fort Laramie to erect a military installation across the road from the trading post in 1862. From Deer Creek, troops sought to protect the telegraph line and travelers along the trail. Intensifying conflicts between soldiers and Indians ultimately forced Blasonette to abandon his establishment in the fall of 1864. Indians finally burned Deer Creek Station on August 18, 1866. This incident marked the closing of an important chapter of Wyoming's early history.

Historical marker in Glen Rock, Wyoming

the Lord prevent, that the candlestick of the Gospel be not taken from its place with us. Then we would be lost for time and for eternity. May God protect us in grace. Amen.

Friday, Sept. 23--Last night we had a heavy rain. Also it is rainy. We pitched the tent which felt fine. The Major in Laramie permits us to stay in the fort preserve. We are 2 ½ miles from the fort along the Platte. We found red cactus fruit, palatable, tasty like good plums. Brother Seyler went into the fort, to receipt for the money from the trader, which he owes us for all our food supplies and tools etc. from the sale in Deer Creek. He received the money OK.

Sunday, Sept. 25--Had service in the tent. The brothers Matter and Flache-necker too bargained with a train (ox-

train) that he should take us along for hire. (Note: They paid \$240, one half cash and one half at the end at Nebraska city). We have sold our teams and wagons except two horses, two oxen and two small wagons which the brethren need. Tomorrow, if God wills, we shall travel. God be with us.

Monday, Sept. 26--Started with an oxen train. With the same five drivers go, two sick soldiers and our troop of five men, two women and three Zistas and the two babies of the women. In Ft. Laramie are many Sioux, who are peaceable, perhaps that the military holds the most peace with the Indian women. Bisonette is still at Ft. Laramie. Our brethren erect their tent. (we made nine miles) Ft. Laramie is a fine fort.

Friday, Sept. 30--Dinner at Chimney Rock. Kessler is hunting antelopes. At

sunset we camped once more at North Platte. Tomorrow we are to leave it.

Saturday, Oct. 1--Noon at Lawrence Fork. Hunted until noon but got nothing. There were enough deer, but too far away. Hunting around here without horses is without result or with the greatest hardship. It is too tiresome to climb hill up and down and run after the deer half a day long.

Sunday, Oct. 2--Camped until noon at Mords Springs. The train master was of the opinion that he would camp there the whole day. For if man and cattle have worked six days, then the day's rest for the seventh day is not to be begrudged. It is true the wagons are not heavily laden; but 20 and more miles are made every day. Because we rest today we can read a sermon. On such a trip one gets mentally tired and dull, that the soul hungers and thirsts for heavenly food. Today we travel over a stretch where for 28 miles no water is to be found and no wood. This smarts at the present time cold weather. Yesterday we had a thundershower and today we have snow.

Monday, Oct. 3--This night it was very cold. There is no water to be had and no wood. But the fire of buffalo chips (manure of oxen) is very good and will take the place of wood. A rumor causes anxiety, that at the Plum Creek a train has been attacked by Indians. Paul has shot an antelope, which Kessler had wounded already.

Saturday, Oct. 8--Brother Kessler, Brother Glaeser and I crossed the Platte and bought us some whiskey, since one

needs it on the trip at the season. We met at a trader's station where the settlers had fled from the Indians. They are about to go back. The mail runs again, but is accompanied by the soldiers.

Sunday, Oct. 9--We stayed the whole day. The celebration of Sunday is something fine and the rest is a necessity for man and cattle. You refresh yourself by reading a sermon and other good books and one is free of the trouble of starting. You rest entirely if you camp on Sunday.

Thursday, Oct. 13--Started late this morning, because the cattle had strayed. Today we heard all kinds of rumors about the insecurity. The Indians are said to have burned houses here and there. Last night they attacked a train not very far to the east from here and are said to have wounded two men.

Saturday, Oct. 15--Yesterday we broke camp rather early and drove till about 10 o'clock, because they would not stay at dangerous places. The watchmen had seen Indians and for that reason we started early. This morning a train passes us which is pulled by about 200 oxen. Recent rumors of settlers and traders along the road fill our travelers with fear so that everyone has his gun ready for use. The stretch from here, is said to be full of Indians to far below Kearney. Five different tribes are said to have joined for war against the whites along the road, to rob and make war. Everything out of the common attracts the attention and makes traveling insecure. If there were peace, such events would not attract attention. It is noticeable that just around the two

forts Laramie and Kearney the Indians are the worst. And yet little is done by the soldiers, and if something is done it is done the wrong way and nothing good is achieved. We hear that again a lieutenant and a common soldier fell in a fight with the Indians.

Sunday, Oct. 16--It is Sunday and nevertheless we travel. This is caused by the uncertainty of this region. three days ago a skirmish between seven soldiers and four Indians took place. Four Indians were seen. Seven soldiers started for them. They were addressed in English whether they wanted to fight them; they would risk it because they understood it as well as the soldiers. It is surmised that a white man or a halfbreed was among them, because he spoke in English. The fight began. The number of Indians increased by four men, which were equipped with pistols and guns. The seven soldiers stood against them but were equipped only with poor guns. Soon six more Indians joined them, and attacked the soldiers from the rear. Two soldiers turned against them and were killed. All horses were killed under them. So the soldiers had to flee. We saw the graves of the soldiers near the military station. A train which camped near this station found on the road the skull of a white man, which was partly gnawed and smelled badly. At the side they found some hair. There were clear indications that it had been scalped. Some of us saw it. The drivers were about to bury it. This road is a veritable cemetery. There are so many graves along it. We found the grave of a woman that wanted to dismount from the wagon and fell and the wheel went over her neck.

Monday, Oct. 17--Drove beyond Plum Creek and then camped. Here is a military station, which has a cannon. Here we saw a grave in which eleven white people were buried together. They were all killed on one day. Only two of thirteen escaped. The military takes good care of themselves. Where its supplies are transported or high military persons travel, they are accompanied by many soldiers.

Tuesday, Oct. 18--That the new law which is to take every man between 16 and 65 for war frightens me. For easily it might be extended to all inhabitants instead of all citizens. They won't get me for military service. For I swore to God in my ordination oath that I will preach the Gospel to the Indian. I have three Indians with me and I cannot leave them without breaking my ordination vow. I never swore obedience to the state. Then I am free and if I should be compelled for war the oath which I swore to my God is more than what the law says, which tries to compel me to say farewell to my oath for three years. They shall shoot rather than that I should say farewell to such a law.

Friday, Oct. 21--On Wednesday we came until about three miles of Kearney, before the son of one of the owners of a wagon saw a young rabbit. He wanted to shoot it, he pulled a gun from a wagon whilst it was going and the cock somehow got stuck and the shot hit him from the wrist to the elbow into the arm and shattered it to the bone, so that you could see the tendons. He lay there on the prairie and no one noticed him, until one of the drivers looked there for oxen manure for burning and

noticed the wounded boy. He was carried in. Thus it goes when such lads know how to handle the gun better than the catechism. The doctor of Kearney was called at once. He was about a half hour with the wounded boy and bandaged him; his bill was \$25. When we drove yesterday through Kearney City we had to make some purchases. But everything was exorbitant in price. If Indian wars are not carried on as energetically by the Indians, even if they should rest entirely, we do not have peace. In Spring the Indians will begin anew so much more energetically as they have quit now. They have always desired war among themselves and against the whites and they seek it now with eagerness and with pleasure. In Kearney a man was shot by a drunk soldier. The man tried to prevent the soldier from entering a tavern and therefore held the door shut. Then the soldier shot through the door from the outside and wounded the man who stood on the inside. The man walks around once more.

Monday, Oct 24--We have travelled about 13 miles. We make our camp at forest along the Beaver Creek. The sickness of the little Kessler is colic with strong issue of blood. It does not end, also his child is no better. We advised him therefore to stay at one of the post stations and take the stage wagon. Of course he would have to take his wife along with him, on account of the baby. He consented and intends to accept the counsel and would seek the advice of a doctor at Nebraska City. But the trainmaster gave him some medicine for the child. One cannot trust American medicine. Perhaps this is a

home remedy; then it would be satisfactory. But God, our Lord, who is in all our troubles may He help us out of all tribulations for His grace's sake.

Tuesday, Oct. 25--Had strong rain the whole night, and heard thunder from afar off. May the Lord be merciful especially to me a sinner. The pills which Mr. MacWilliam gave Kessler for his child taste terrible hot and are abominable. When the child took them clear and mixed with sugar, the blood ran out of its mouth. The medicine is similar to Spanish pepper. But may it be as it will, it is the only kind which one can get here in the wilderness. And in need one uses what is recommended as good. Camped at the Blue River.

Thursday, Oct. 27--Fine weather today. Brother Kessler interviews the doctor who stays here, for his sick child. He gave him some medicine which is to relieve the sickness and prevent the full force of the sickness; every day some medicine powder is to be scattered in the mouth after the mouth has been cleansed with water. He understands the language of the Sioux, he has dealt for a long while with the Indians. He recognized our boys from a distance as Indians. Also the youth who shot himself the other day he sought the help of this man. He looks wild, does not look like a physician, as we do not look like missionaries. That is not good, does not recommend him. For noon we stayed at the Big Blue River near the firm bridge.

Friday, Oct. 28--Camped this night at Cheese Creek. Kessler's baby has improved; the fever did not return since yesterday. If the sickness does not

concentrate and settle there, it may be beneficial for the child. But who will trust these American physicians. To this man who gave the medicine we can confide in as he said right away, that he was not able to cure, when the patient is on the road.

Saturday, Oct. 29--The old man waited in vain for the stage. It could not take the boy along, they expect gangrene in his case. All seats were taken; one even lay on the top wrapt in a buffalo robe. It is queer that so many travel, even though the prices are exorbitant for the passengers (32¢ a mile). Because the stage could take the wounded one, his father planned to make the 45 miles by tonight. For they are afraid of gangrene of the wounds.

Monday, Oct. 31--I think of the divinations of last year, which were heavy and full of forebodings. We had them yesterday and today a year ago. Who would have thought that this year on the same day, Oct. 31, we should be separated so far from each other, some of the brethren at Laramie and we would camp before Nebraska City. The gangrene had extended in 6 or 8 hours up to the elbow. Although his father hired a horse, to reach town more quickly, it may have been too late to amputate the arm. Gangrene may have today entered from the arm into the whole body. It is surprising that children (the brother and sister) have so little pity with each other. The brother of the deadly sick youth, who is a child of school age, 10-11 years old, is absolutely indifferent when he hears of the amputation or possible death of his brother. Oh, how this American is devoid of all love of

the neighbor. This is a great wound of which the people is sick. Unrighteousness, a high spirit, and roughness are the fundamental characteristics of this people. It is nourished by their pride of the Union. And yet the Union is broken; who will heal the break? Only repentance and the unity of the church and of the salvation of souls will establish the union. But they do not desire this, therefore the destruction of America approaches and there is no peace in its boundaries. Camped seven miles from Nebraska City.

Wednesday, Nov. 2--Hired two wagons to convey us to Ottumwa, Iowa (200 miles) at \$75.

Monday, Nov. 7-- I and the boys had to sleep in the wagon. At first the landlord said there were enough beds. Then he was short for several men. He shall receive less pay from us and I will tell him, that we will not come to him and will not eat his dear meals.

Tuesday, Nov. 8--Stayed last night with a widow. In the afternoon it rained, ugly, and we were drenched through and through. The widow kept us over night. They were not well to do, but very friendly people. The stay was cheap. The others paid 75¢ and we paid only 40¢. We got off from the way, and could not find the road again. We roamed around in snow and sleet over the prairie and through the woods without being able to get information or discovering the way to Clinton. One of our drivers repeatedly broke something on his wagon, so that finally we had to bind it with ropes. In the evening we reached Dakota City and stayed at the

tavern overnight. They had beds for eight persons. The Indians and I slept in the waiting room wrapped in our buffalo robes. A negro slept next to us. He was very gay and frequently sang the Union song. The day was very important; it was election day everywhere, for in the whole country an election of a new president was taking place. The hotelkeepers are friendly people; they are Irish.

Wednesday, Nov. 9--We must lay over the whole day. For the rain did not cease all night and heavy sleet has

fallen. Now snow is falling. Because the child of Kessler is more and more sick he is to take the stage to Ottumwa together with his wife and Mr. Beck. It is about 90 miles and costs only \$9.00 per person. In time of need one must not consider money. The stage leaves tonight between 9 and 11 o'clock. They are to arrive tomorrow night. We others will have to drive yet four days. Deep snow has fallen and severe cold has set in. A negro man and a negro woman are working here; they are diligent and modest people.

Seven generations of Krebs

▶ Christian Gottlieb Krebs married Christiane Stollberg

Karl Gottlieb Krebs married Katherine Auman

Children:

- Phillip died at 15 days
- John died at 13
- Christina
- Gottfried
- Christian
- Maria
- Martin
- Paul
- Fritz (Friedrich)
- Elisabeth (Deaconess)
- Magdalena (Deaconess)
- Gottlob Phillip (My Grandfather)
 - ▶ Children: Richard, Erwin Gottlieb (My Father)
 - ▶ Wayne, Keith, Glenn, James (Me)
 - ▶ My boys, Jessi, Kyle
 - ▶ My Grandsons, Kyle Jr., Ethen

Krebs family tree on the author's father's side. Beginning with Karl Krebs' father, and ending with the author's (Jim's) grandsons, 2006



Karl Krebs' ten children that "grew to adulthood," two of his children died early in life. Author's grandfather, Gottlob Phillip, on lower right

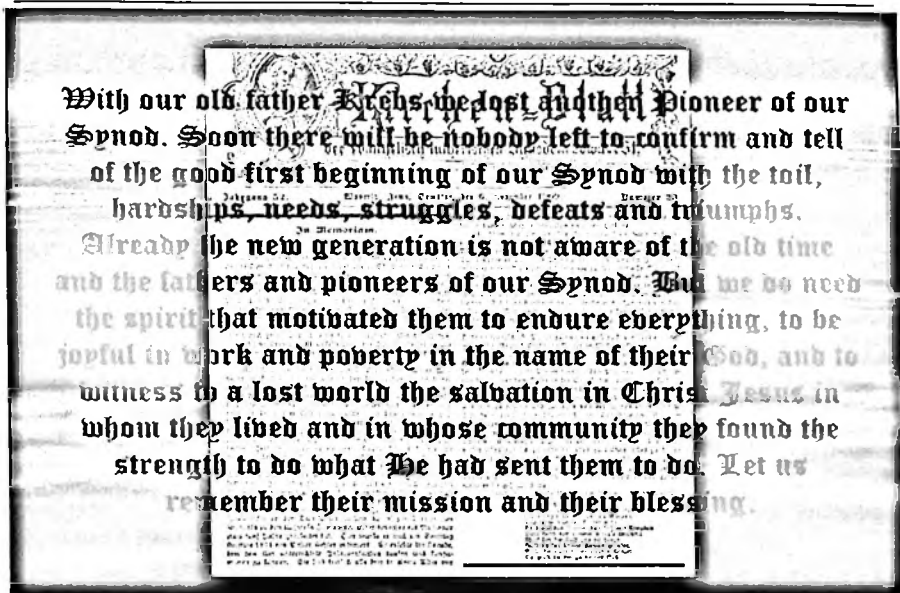
Friday, Nov. 11--Via New York to Bethlehem. Stayed here overnight. The whole day is cloudy, some rain and snow. The other part of our travelers are not with us any more. They are about seven miles ahead. They dined here, while we ate seven miles from here. Tomorrow, God willing, we will catch up with them as the sled goes heavier over the mud.

There is no further verbiage in the diary, just some accounting details.

I share the last few paragraphs from Karl Krebs' autobiography:

"Anyone can draw the conclusion from what I have related about my life that I came from a family poor in earthly goods. Not only had my dear parents been poorly paid weavers, but

so also had been my grandparents, the parents of my father as well as those of my mother. Very few weavers ever reached a point beyond 'from hand to mouth,' as the saying goes. There never was anything left over. There were seldom a few pennies with which to purchase bread for the week ahead, or a few dollars to pay the rent every quarter year, or for purchasing peat and wood to heat the house when winter came on. Poor people, living in poverty, dying in poverty! And yet a 'man of honor' when carried to the grave--as the justice of the court could say at my father's burial, "Today we have buried a man of honor"--a gentleman. In these days, to live and to die a poor man is considered by many people, perhaps most people, a dishonor, contemptible, a disgrace! But if someone becomes rich, and dies



Karl Krebs' obituary as printed in the Kirchen-Blatt
(Church Bulletin) Nov. 6, 1909

wealthy, the entire world will doff its hat and praise him: 'Oh, he is rich, he was rich, he has made much money, he himself did not know how much he made!' So one speaks about the rich of this world—and adds: 'He has it good!' or 'he had it good.'

"I served in missions to the heathen people. I had no stated salary, for the undertaking was an altogether new thing, the costs of which could not have been determined in advance. All participating people lived off the incoming support from other people and this also had to be used for all expenses. We had to make it reach, to make it go as far as possible. Since

we were all poor in material matters, we all remained in missionary service together. We thought ourselves lucky, and sufficiently rich, if our expense bill did not show a deficit.

"After my time of service with the mission to the heathen, I was pastor for two years in a congregation which promised me a salary of 60 dollars a year. These people knew their business for when I received my year's pay it came to something over 100 dollars. So I was in a good position and satisfied. In the three congregations that I later served, I have never asked for a raise in salary. What the congregation voluntarily offered to pay me as my salary had to supply my

Spending was dependent upon income, for I was an enemy of debts, of which I knew that I never would be able to repay them

needs, and it out to be sufficient was dependent for I was an of which I would be able avoided them.

And if our Lord today would ask: "Have you lacked in anything?", I would answer: "Lord, never!"

this way I always remained poor. I never had a desire to 'lay up earthly treasure' in spite of the fact that nothing was spent unnecessarily; and an addition to my income would have been very welcome to supply the needs of my growing family. For the family by and by grew to the number of twelve. The Lord took two of the children to Himself early in life, but ten grew to adulthood. Thus it can be understood that an accumulation of this world's goods was impossible.

"But, considering everything: how the Lord has led me throughout my life, this thought is uppermost and most true: 'If we have food and raiment, be satisfied. For we have brought nothing into this world, so we shall not carry anything from it.' This was the way it was with me: 'Born in poverty, and raised in poverty. Remained poor during my youth, remained poor during the ministry, that is poor in material goods.' And since it is the Lord's will, since I can no longer carry on the duties of my calling and am now classified among the pensioners who need to be on pension, I will also die poor. However, my family and I have always had sufficient food and clothing, and our food was more than sufficient to keep us from starvation at all times. And if our Lord today would ask: 'Have you lacked in anything?' I would answer: 'Lord, never!'

"Thus I can to the end praise and glorify my Lord: 'Even if I had little of earthly goods, one thing remained to me: my heavenly possessions, beyond all earthly goods. I have my Savior Jesus Christ. He goes with me, and will take me to heaven!'"

Amen.

always worked efficient. Spending upon income, enemy of debts, knew that I never, so I to repay them, so I Of course, in



Photo of Ft. Larimie National Historic Site by Author

Over the corral rail

The Denver Posse of Westerners welcomes the following new members:

Robert Rust of Denver was referred by Reed Weimer. Robert states that he is interested in late 19th and early 20th century Western history. He is on the Board of Directors of the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society. He is the author of arts and crafts movement books and articles.

Pam McClary of Denver, referred by Reed Weimer. Pam is interested in early artists of Colorado and 20th century architecture. She is a former board member of the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society.

Paul Malkoski of Aurora was referred by Tom Noel. Paul has an interest in the old West and cowboy songs.





Westerners Bookshelf

Solomon Avengers: The Battle of Beecher Island September 17-25, 1868, by Bob Snelson. Copyright 2006 Bob Snelson. 188 pp. 15 photographs, 2 illustrations, 2 maps, Afterward [sic], Appendix, index. Paper, \$15.00.

Solomon Avengers seeks to tell the story of the famous Indian fight known as Beecher's Island, fought near Wray, Colorado, September 17-25, 1868. After a three-day fight, the 49 scouts, two officers, one enlisted man and a surgeon were under siege for an additional five days before rescued by a column under the command of Captain Louis Carpenter.

The Beecher Island fight is well known to readers of Western history. The Beecher Island Battle Memorial Association preserves a site recognized officially in 1905 as the battlefield, and has annual activities at the site each weekend closest to the anniversary of the fight. While there is controversy whether this traditional site is the actual battle site, or if it is nearly four miles to the west along the Arikaree River as indicated in an 1873 US Geological Survey map, Bob Snelson does not consider. In fact, the controversies that exist concerning this famous fight are not solved in *Solomon Avengers*.

The facts relating to the battle are simple enough: Indians, predominantly Cheyenne but also Sioux and Arapahoe, after agreeing to yet another treaty, soon begin a another series of deadly raids across Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado, the most deadly and violent of which occurs along Kansas pioneer settlements in the Saline and Solomon River valleys in Lincoln and Mitchell County. Snelson seems to exonerate the Indians for this raid when he writes that "we have treaty violations on both sides and no clear villains, only victims." This, I think, is ill advised, as evidenced by the numerous Indian depredation claims filed against the Cheyenne and presented in my own *Dog Soldier Justice*. Soon after the raids, a special detachment of Kansas citizens, many recent Civil War veterans, and most from families affected by the raids, join as scouts under the command of Brevet Colonel George A. "Sandy" Forsyth. What remains remarkable about this fight is that only six men under Forsyth died (the sixth dying days after rescue), including his second in command, Lt. Frederick Beecher, of whom the island where they made their defense was named. About half the scouts were wounded.

The Battle of Beecher Island is always an entertaining battle to read about, and if one has not read about it, *Solomon Avengers* would be a good start. If one is familiar with the story, *Solomon Avengers* is still an interesting read. Just don't look for any examination of the controversies.

There are a few mistakes. Eli Zigler is noted as the youngest of the scouts, at 16 years of age, but on p. 142 Snelson says Sigmund Schlessinger was also 16 and the youngest scout. However, the best biography written on the scouts, by Orvel Criqui, *Fifty Fearless Men*, clearly notes that Schlesinger was 19 years old and not 16. The two maps are printed too small to readily make out the writing. If typos bother the reader, they are evident here.

With any book on history, there should be an extensive bibliography, but there is none here. When endnotes are cited at the end of each chapter, the sources are always incomplete. Still, it is the Indian wars and an easy book to read, even in one sitting.

--Jeff Broome, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

July - August 2007



The National Park Service's exact reconstructions of Central Pacific's "Jupiter" in the foreground facing the Union Pacific's "119"

T-Rex, Schmee-Rex

The Building of the Transcontinental Railroad
by David Emrich, P.M.

(presented Jan. 3, 2007.)

Dec. 20, 2006 meeting postponed due to snowstorm)



Our Author

David Emrich has been a member of the Denver Westerners since 1986. This is the fifth paper he has presented to the Denver Westerners. Previous papers have been: "Early Colorado Filmmaking" in 1990, "Tom Mix in Colorado" in 1996, "Silver Dollar Tabor" in 2000 and 2004's "*The Limited Mail and The Trail of '98, Movies shot in Colorado in the 1920s*".

David is President and a senior editor at Post Modern Company, a video and film production company in Denver. His firm, opened in 1992, produces documentaries, television promotion and programming, independent feature films, commercials and corporate projects. He has edited a number of documentaries including the Academy Award-winning short documentary, *A Story of Healing* in 1997. David is the author of a book—*Hollywood, Colorado*—and a couple of companion DVDs on the history of early filmmaking in Colorado.

David wishes to thank the Westerners once again for the on-going inspiration for the research and presentation of these programs. He also wishes to thank his wife Mary (and all other spouses in a similar situation) for putting up with the obsession that is research, and in this case, for driving across middle-America in August!

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

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1925 Xanthia St. Denver, CO 80220	
Book Reviews	
Keith Fessenden	(303) 321-6181
3031 E. 8th Ave Denver, CO 80208	
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280 E. 11th Ave. Broomfield, CO 80020	
Reservations for meetings	
Dorothy Krieger	(303) 466-7737
280 E. 11th Ave. Broomfield, CO 80020	

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T-Rex, Schmee-Rex

The Building of the Transcontinental Railroad

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The initial reason I wanted to present this paper was because of a movie: not a Hollywood movie, but a National Park Service movie that has a personal connection. A year and a half ago, my company was approached by Golden Spike National Historic Site to rejuvenate their Visitor Center film. Because the Park Service's budget has been cut back so much over the last 20 years, it is very difficult for any site to do almost anything new. So the request came to try to make their centennial-celebration film last another 10 to 20 years. As it turns out, 38 years ago, this film was produced by my father. And I remember this film to be the film I saw as a kid where I thought, "gee, my dad has a cool job." Now I can't say that this movie was the reason my career has been spent in film and video, but I have come to call *The Golden Spike*, my Freudian Film.

As we reworked the film—improving the image quality and reworking the sound nearly from scratch—I began to reacquaint myself with the transcontinental railroad's history. What an amazing story it is. In an era in which very little mechanical assistance was available, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific companies completed 1776 miles of operating track between the final year and a half of the Civil War and the driving of the Golden Spike on May 10, 1869. Ultimately, what attract-

ed me to this story was how difficult the construction was and how much it affected the history of the West, the history of America.

At the same time we were working on the movie, we were living with a monster highway/rail project running through Denver, appropriately named T-Rex. I couldn't help but think how different these transportation projects were from each other. But I also thought about the things that were similar. There were people that doubted the viability or feasibility of building either of the lines. Both were major publicly funded projects that were impetuses for development. And both involved the construction of rail lines, lines that were seen as test runs for additional construction. That being said, there are many more differences than similarities.

Now admittedly the complexity of the final outcomes of the two projects are different, but in roughly the same time that the men of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific built 1776 miles, T-Rex's workers built 17. The weather we've seen in the winter of 2006-2007 would have shut down the workers of T-Rex. For the men of the Central Pacific, they would have just worked through it, for months at a time.

Where we as a community were inconvenienced by the construction of T-Rex because there are so many people, the construction of the Transcon-

tinental Railroad was inconvenienced because there were so few people to help along the way. This isolation from community was both a curse for construction and a personal financial blessing for the men who owned the Central and Union Pacific. There wasn't a lot of support, but neither was there a lot of oversight.

Whereas T-Rex was completed under budget, the American taxpayer probably paid too much money in comparison to what the Pacific Railroad could have been built for. While the funding of T-Rex was assured before construction began, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific struggled to finance their construction efforts as the railroad was built.

Many believe this first railway across the West would not have been built without the help Washington gave. The subsidized construction of the Pacific Railroad, as it was called during the time it was built, demonstrates both the good and the bad of public works. There were political corruption, private enrichment, personal backstabbing and public whitewashing to be sure; but also a tremendous push forward for the nation economically, politically and culturally. And this occurred decades ahead of the time it would have without public assistance.

The Beginning

With the discovery of gold in California in 1849, both the government and the business community saw a need to get the mineral riches of the West to the East. This desire is still strong today, as evidenced by the lengthy coal trains by which many of us get stopped on our travels. In the 1850s, of equal

or even greater interest to business was trade with the Far East. Rather than transporting imports and exports west out of China and India across Europe, some merchants wanted a path to be built across the Pacific, across North America and to the eastern United States. This path would both enhance the international aspirations of the United States and bring goods more cheaply to the eastern United States. Before the Civil War, this was the main purpose for building the "Pacific Railroad."

So beginning seriously in 1853, Congress started to look at five routes across America:

The Northern Route (47-48th parallels)

The Overland Route (41st-42nd parallels)

The Buffalo Trail (38th-39th parallels)

The 35th Parallel

The Southern Route (32nd parallel).

Surveys were ordered and expeditions were taken, but the regional interests of North and South could not be overcome to set a route. The South wanted a southern route, the North a northern route. The Civil War simplified the equation tremendously.

President Abraham Lincoln was a big supporter of a Pacific Railroad. Without his support, the railroad would not have been started when it was. During his first political campaign for the state legislature, he ran on a platform that included support for the construction of a railroad across Illinois. As the Civil War began, he felt that it was important that the gold fields of California and Nevada should be bound together with the eastern states both figuratively and literally. The construction of the Pacific Railroad did have a bit to do with the Civil War. But because most



Union Pacific tracklayers working in Nebraska

believed that it would take ten or more years to build the railroad (if it ever would be), this decision really had little to do with the war.

Personally, I never stopped to think that anything truly significant happened during these war years except the war itself, but what an important decision to make. On November 17, 1863, two days before his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln decreed that the eastern terminus for the railroad would be the western boundary of the state of Iowa between the north and south boundaries of "Omaha City." The Central Pacific had just laid its first rail a month earlier. The Union Pacific would start here, but would not lay its first rails for another twenty months, on July 10, 1865. One very important thing was left undecided, where the two companies would meet. Somewhere between Nevada and Wyoming, the two companies' railroads

would unite; and unite a continent, east to west.

The other early proponent for the Pacific Railroad was an engineer and dreamer in California, Theodore Judah. He was able to get the attention of both Congress and President Lincoln. His research and lobbying efforts laid the foundation for the transcontinental railroad. Some described him as brilliant, even crazy. At the very least, he was persistent. He first worked to find an acceptable route over the Sierras and then worked in the halls of Congress to show that it was possible to build the Pacific Railroad. His efforts were what really moved the transcontinental route from being merely a dream to a reality.

Judah failed to find supporters in San Francisco. But he did find allies in Sacramento. They came to be called the Big Four. First was Collis Huntington, the purist entrepreneur of

the Central Pacific. He was vice president of the railroad and played a key role in acquiring financing, the building materials and rolling stock for the company. On a trip east in 1862, Huntington acquired nearly \$1 million in supplies and rolling stock on the security of only his word.

Mark Hopkins, Huntington's partner in their hardware store, was the first treasurer. He provided the conservative voice for the partners' ever-expanding ventures. He was instrumental in creating the Big Four by demanding that all directors pay for their stock in full, something only the Big Four were able to do. Perhaps this was a tactic to drive away Theodore Judah, who could not afford to buy the stock. Whether or not this was their short-term goal, in the long run, this helped Central Pacific avoid the boardroom brawls that the Union Pacific would have.

Third of the Big Four, and the one with the greatest name-recognition, was Leland Stanford. He too was a Sacramento shopkeeper when he was elected president of the newly formed Central Pacific Railroad on June 28, 1861. The following September, he was elected Governor of California. Stanford used his political influence to benefit the railroad and to solicit financial support from California cities, counties and its legislature. He turned the first shovel of dirt at the Central Pacific groundbreaking ceremony on January 8, 1863.

The fourth was Charles Crocker. When the Central Pacific was formed, he owned a dry goods store in Sacramento. But he quickly recognized the potential of being a major supplier to the new railroad as well as a major

shareholder. The Charles Crocker Company contracted to construct the railroad to the California border. Eventually, he was in charge of construction all the way from Sacramento to Promontory, Utah.

Now it gets a bit confusing. Charles Crocker's brother, E.B. Crocker really was considered to be the fifth member of the Big Four. Because his involvement in the company ended in 1870 after he suffered a stroke—and because of the self-aggrandizement by Collis Huntington in the late 1800s—he was mostly forgotten. He was, however, the fifth large stockholder and replaced his brother Charles on the board of directors once construction started. He was the attorney and business manager during this period of Central Pacific's growth. He worked with Treasurer Mark Hopkins to provide the stable ground necessary for the big dreamers Huntington and Stanford.

These were powerful men who, when all is said and done, worked well together. As an example, early on the Central Pacific was able to get President Lincoln to agree to establish the beginning of the climb up the mountains a mere seven miles outside of Sacramento. To the naked eye, it would appear that this was a bit early; by most accounts it was at least 20 miles too early. There was a simple reason for this early claim. The railroad companies were paid \$16,000 per mile for work on flat grade, \$48,000 per mile for mountain terrain. The Central Pacific was able, therefore, to bill an additional \$500,000 for the work that was done at this early stage. For their efforts, the Big Five of Central Pacific gained notoriety as men who could "move mountains."

On the other side of the mountains, a much less harmonious group of people directed the Union Pacific. The most colorful was Thomas Durant. Durant was a trained physician but never practiced medicine. He was what we would call a venture capitalist and rapscallion. More than anyone, he manipulated Congress and his partners to enrich himself, many times to the detriment of the Union Pacific itself. Officially vice president, Durant marshaled construction financing and worked at every level within the enterprise, from lobbying Congress to intervening in the business of track-laying. In today's business world, he would be back-dating stock options and manipulating multiple interlocking boards of directors; in his day he hid his corruption with dummy contracts and financial maneuvering.

Oliver and Oakes Ames amassed a fortune during the California gold rush by manufacturing picks and shovels. In his book *How We Built the Union Pacific*, Greenville Dodge said of them, "Nothing but the faith and pluck of the Ameses, fortified with their extensive credit, carried the thing through." Oliver Ames served as president of the Union Pacific from 1866 to 1871 and both brothers helped balance Durant's mighty influence on the board.

Oakes, a member of Congress, was personally asked by President Lincoln to help get the railroad built. He took this challenge to heart. Oakes was also the Union Pacific's Congressional lobbyist and, during the financial and political scandal that was revealed as the road was finished, was nicknamed "Hoax Ames." A monument was erected in the Ames' honor at the top of

Sherman Hill between Cheyenne and Laramie, the highest point on the Union Pacific line—at 8,247 ft.

Finally, there was General Greenville Dodge, a lifetime railroader and passionate supporter of the trans-continental line. During the Civil War he was in charge of constructing and maintaining Union rail lines and rebuilding captured Confederate lines. It was here that friendships were formed with Generals Grant, Sherman and Sheridan that served him well during his years with the Union Pacific. During the Civil War he passed information to Durant, who at the time was busy selling contraband cotton. His title was Chief Engineer and his skills of managing men and logistics helped get the railroad built. Dodge was involved in Union Pacific from its very first survey to the company's reorganization 30 years later.

So those are the lead characters in our drama. We'll talk about the people that actually did the hard labor in a little bit.

The Construction

The question should be asked, who had the more difficult job, the Union Pacific or the Central Pacific? Many of us have heard of the Central Pacific's difficulties of getting through the Sierras. And we can see the years of extraordinary effort the Central Pacific put in to these miles.

Central Pacific had to build 15 tunnels that were 6,213 ft. in length: five tunnels on the west slope—the longest at the summit measuring 1,659 ft.—and nine on the east slope. It was important to get through this barrier quickly, not only because of the race

to meet the Union Pacific. Legislation allowed Central Pacific to collect more than half of the government bonds due when mountain roadbeds were complete. So in order to collect those funds, Construction Foreman James Harvey Strobridge sent teams to work on the tunnels in 1865, well in advance of the railhead. It would take two years to work through the granite mountains. (This early deployment of workers was something the Union Pacific did not do in Utah, ultimately costing the Union Pacific time and mileage.)

Eventually the Central Pacific experimented with nitroglycerin, but much of their work was done by hand and with the use of the weaker black powder. An equal cause for the slow progress through the Sierras was the record snowfall in the winters of 1866-67 and 1867-68. An engineer for the Central Pacific recorded 44 snowstorms in the winter of 1866-67. The worst started on February 18, 1867, accumulating six feet of snow in four days. Six days later another storm dropped four more feet of snow in five days. But work continued in and around the tunnels that were being bored through the Sierras. After all, work could continue in the dry tunnels, if they could just get to them.

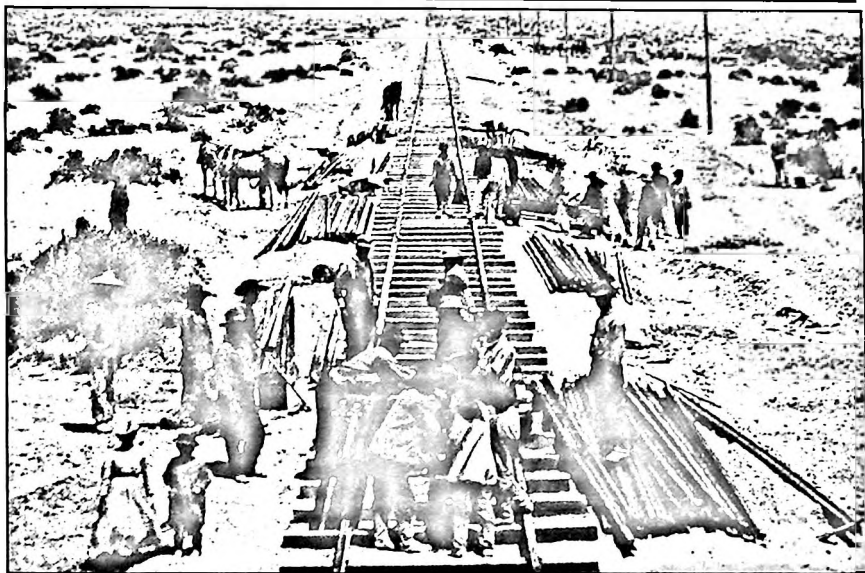
In March 1868 Central Pacific hoped to get in some early work to fill in a seven-mile gap that had held them back all winter from working down in the drier, warmer climate at the California-Nevada border. But spring snows reeked havoc. Five feet stood on the ground in mid-March. Then in three days, 13 feet piled up. As Charley Crocker reported on March 29, "There is no place between Cisco & Cold Stream Gap with less than fifteen feet

of snow laying on the track and line of uncompleted work" and "a dozen snow slides between Cisco and Emigrant Gap raised hell generally."¹

Tunnels were cut through the snow. E.B. Crocker reported that the snow tunnel at the Summit Tunnel was "at least three hundred feet long." And the tunnel system around Tunnels 7 and 8 was extensive. First, there was a snow tunnel connecting the two ends of Tunnel 8 that went for 200 ft. over the top along a steep bluff. There were windows in the sides of the tunnel and at one point a stairway was cut into the snow to get down to a blacksmith's shop. A series of tunnels were cut between Tunnel 7 and 8 connecting quarries and shops that worked to build a large stone culvert and the foundation of an immense retaining wall.

In addition to the heavy snowfall, Central Pacific was concerned about the effect of avalanches, not only on construction, but during the winter operation of the railroad. The answer was to design and build snow sheds. By 1868 2,500 men were dedicated solely to building snow sheds. When the line was completed, Central Pacific had built more than 37 miles of them, using 65 million linear feet of lumber, at a cost of \$2 million.

The difficulty of this ascent of the Sierras was contrasted with that of Union Pacific's route up the gentle slope of Sherman Hill in Wyoming. On April 16, 1868, after the Union Pacific officially crossed the continental divide, Thomas Durant sent a telegraph message to Leland Stanford which read: "We send you greeting from the highest summit our line crosses between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, eight thou-



Central Pacific workers laying track in Nevada

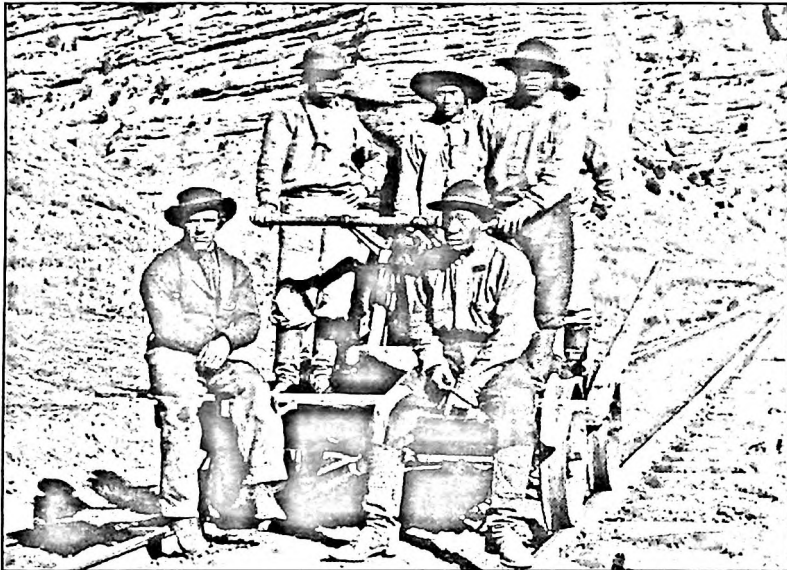
sand two hundred feet above the tide water. Have commenced laying the iron on the downgrade westward." Stanford replied, "We return your greeting with pleasure... We cheerfully yield you the palm of superior elevation. Seven thousand and forty-two feet has been quite sufficient to satisfy our highest ambition." Perhaps pointedly he added, "May your descent be easy and rapid."²

Central Pacific also had the disadvantage of having an immature economy at its home base. While the Union Pacific had railroad tracks behind it which brought forward both supplies and Civil War veteran labor, the Central Pacific had to bring almost everything by ship: iron rails, rolling stock and anything else metal around Cape Horn; and Chinese workers from across the Pacific.

This source of labor was not the Central Pacific's first choice. In fact,

when Leland Stanford ran for governor he called for the stoppage of immigration of the Chinese to California. But in 1865, Central Pacific had work for 4,000 men. They had only been able to rouse 800. In desperation, the company hired Chinese immigrants. "Celestials" were not thought to be rugged enough for the heavy work. In a very short time, the Chinese proved this belief to be wrong. They didn't drink alcohol and rather than drink the tainted water that whites drank, they boiled it for tea. They proved to be more reliable employees than most, they stayed healthier than most and were more productive than most. By 1868, 80% of the 12,000 people grading and laying track for the Central Pacific were Chinese.

The Central Pacific did have one advantage over the Union Pacific. While almost all of the freight the Union Pacific carried during con-



Chinese emigrants provided the vast majority of manpower for the Central Pacific

struction was outbound from Omaha, Central Pacific's freight also included income-producing material going east and west from the minefields of California and Nevada. This not only helped the bottom line, but it gave some assurance to both the Big Five and to investors that the whole endeavor would be sustainable.

The Union Pacific had its share of problems too. While they did have a much easier time of getting rails and other hardware to end of track, they had no simple access to wood for railroad ties. This meant chemically treating soft cottonwood to make it sturdy enough for use. Union Pacific also had to cut and haul timbers from the upper Midwest for use in bridges and trestles. Central Pacific, on the other hand, could cut their ties adjacent to the road itself in the Sierras. Ties were no small mat-

ter. Construction gangs used 2,500 ties a mile. The Union Pacific built 1069 miles, using a total of over 2.6 million ties. And the transportation cost at one point was \$4.50 a tie. This meant that ties alone could cost over \$5,000 - \$10,000 more per mile than the Central Pacific's.³

Another problem was water for man and machine. While adequate water was a problem for the Central Pacific once it reached Nevada, it was a constant problem for the Union Pacific. Although the road went along the Platte River, it was not the best source of water. As J.H. Beadle wrote in 1873: The Platte is, "a dirty and uninviting lagoon, only differing from a slough in having a current, from half a mile to two miles wide, and with barely water enough to fill an average canal; six inches of fluid running over another stream of six feet

or more of treacherous sand; too thin to walk on, too thick to drink, too shallow for navigation, too deep for safe fording, too yellow to wash in, too pale to paint with—the most disappointing and least useful stream in America.”²⁴

Wells had to be dug every 10-20 miles because the steam trains of the day needed to stop for water that often. You can still see this along I-80 especially in Nebraska. As my family and I drove alongside the railroad this summer, I noticed that the exit signs would always say how many more miles there would be to the next exit. It seemed like it was always “10 miles.”

A more pressing problem was the constant possibility for attack from the Native American tribes of the plains. From the Sand Creek Massacre on November 29, 1864 onward, the plains tribes were fighting back, throughout the area north of the Arkansas and on past the Platte. The survey crews—who worked in twos and threes, sometimes without military escort—were the most vulnerable. In the summer of 1867, Vice President Durant wrote Secretary of Defense Ulysses S. Grant,

May 23, 1867,
General, (Grant)

I have the honor to transmit herewith for your information the enclosed copies of dispatches from the line of this road, dated the 17th, 21st, and 23rd respectively from which you will observe that the Indians are interfering very seriously with our operations, both in the location of the line west of the Black Hills Range of the Rocky Mountains and in the construction of the road in the Upper end of the

Platte Valley and across the Black Hill Range.

Unless some relief can be offered by your Department immediately I beg leave to assure you that the entire work will be suspended as it will be impossible to keep a force of men and teams employed upon the work without adequate military protection.

Being aware to some extent of the scarcity of troops now in the field in that military department I will take the liberty of suggesting that if those that are now there could be (indecipherable) or in the vicinity of the line of the Pacific Railroad they would be able to afford ample protection to the work and at the same time be the means of keeping the hostile Indians considerably to the Northward of the Territory contiguous to the road.

I am General your observant servant,
TC Durant, Vice President, UPRRCO.

By one count, in 1868, not the most violent of years, 45 Union Pacific workers were killed by Native Americans.

According to Greenville Dodge's book on the building of the Pacific Railway, in one case, it might have helped the railroad to have “Indian trouble.” In the summer of 1866, before he went to work for the Union Pacific, Dodge was the commander of the troops sent to quell Indian uprisings along the Powder River. While scouting for the best route through the Wyoming hills, Dodge's party saw and then fought a group of Crow Indians. During this running battle, Dodge found himself standing on a gently sloping ridge that descended to the plains near Crow

Creek. A year later, as chief engineer of the Union Pacific he returned to the base of what he named Sherman Hill and established a town to support the construction of the railroad. He named the town "Cheyenne," after a different Indian tribe than the one that chased him.⁶

Another factor that complicated the Union Pacific's effort was the violence associated with end-of-track towns, the so-called Hell on Wheels. As the track was built west, the "camp followers" were there to tempt workers with liquor, gambling and women. The men worked hard and had nowhere to spend the \$2 to \$5 a day they labored for. The proximity of the towns to the end of track was always a concern for Dodge and the foremen of the Union Pacific crew, Jack Casement. In general, many of the simple structures themselves were moved, by flatcar, as the tracklayers moved forward.

These were rough towns.

Henry Morton Stanley, of Stanley and Livingstone fame, writing for the *St. Louis Missouri-Democrat* wrote, "Every gambler in the Union seems to have steered his course for North Platte and every known game under the sun is played here. The days of Pike's Peak and California are revived. Every house is a saloon, and every saloon is a gambling den. Revolvers are in great requisition. Beardless youths imitate to the life the peculiar swagger of the devil-may-care bull-whacker and black-leg, and here, for the first time, they try their hands at the 'Mexican monte,' 'high-low-jack,' 'strap,' 'rouge-et-noir,' 'three-card monte,' and that satanic game, 'chuck-a-luck,' and lose their all. On account of the immense freighting

done to Idaho, Montana, Utah, Dacotah, and Colorado, hundreds of bull-whackers walk about, and turn the one street into a perfect Babel. Old gamblers who reveled in the glorious days of 'flush times' in the gold districts, declare that this town outstrips all yet."⁷

As the Union Pacific approached Cheyenne, the end-of-track town moved there. The town had grown from 0 to 1500 people in three months; in another month it would be 4500. The *Cheyenne Leader* newspaper had just started to be published and ran a column entitled "Last Night Shootings." Shortly after the rails reached Cheyenne on November 11, an engine crawled into town pulling flatcars holding dismantled buildings and their contents. A guard on the train is said to have announced, "Gentlemen, here's Julesburg!"

In Laramie, the town's first attempt to establish order failed when the mayor and other town leaders resigned rather than face the desperados in town. Vigilantes took control of the situation, and cleaned up the town.

The winter encampment of the Union Pacific at Wasatch, Utah existed for just three months in the winter of 1868-1869. During that time *The Salt Lake Reporter's* owner J.H. Beadle remembered that "it established a graveyard with 43 occupants, of whom not one died of disease. Two were killed by an accident in the rock-cut; three got drunk and froze to death; three were hanged, and many killed in rows, or murdered; one 'girl' stifled herself with the fumes of charcoal, and another inhaled a sweet death in subtle chloroform."⁸

Perhaps Union Pacific's great-

est barrier was infighting on its board of directors. There were arguments and lawsuits, attempts at corporate coups and more lawsuits. At times future progress on the railroad was threatened because this bickering discouraged potential backers from investing in the Union Pacific. These conflicts also stopped both money and important decisions from getting to the construction teams.

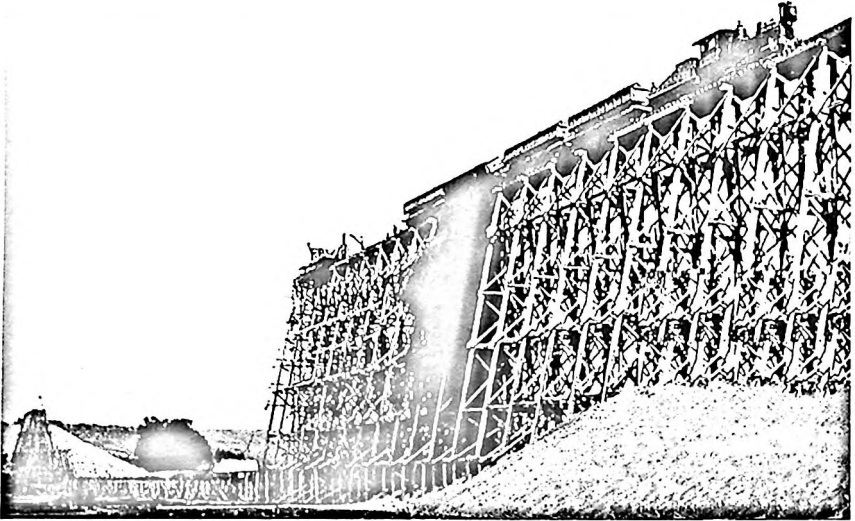
Officially vice president, Durant was very aggressive in trying to control not only actions in the boardroom but also in the field. Durant and his Consulting Engineer Silas Seymour made multiple parries and thrusts to change the engineering decisions made by Dodge and his surveyors and engineers in the field. Second-guessing the soundness of these decisions disrupted the military-like precision that would have allowed the railroad to build more quickly into Utah. By 1868, Durant pushed Seymour forward even more. Historians see most of the changes made by Seymour and Durant as being made for the financial well-being of Durant and his cronies rather than for the betterment of the railroad.

One of Durant's manipulations involved the purchase and sale of real estate. As an example, while Dodge and his engineers picked Cheyenne as the best place for a division point (with an eventual feeder line from Denver), Durant let it be known that he favored Laramie. Thus, he was able to inflate the value of the land he already owned in Laramie and then sell it for a handsome profit. Then he was able to buy land in Cheyenne for less money than just a few days before. When he reversed himself and let it be known that

Cheyenne would be the choice for the major facilities after all, he pocketed even more money.

Morale suffered with this expanding graft. As the months passed, everyone from the lowest station clerk to the corporate directors tried to skim money wherever they could. When Durant exerted more oversight by coming west to supervise the construction (and his own interests), things got even worse. Dodge wrote to Oliver Ames, that he would resign rather than let his crews work under "a man who has not an honest drop of Blood in his veins, who is connected with the Co. for the sole purpose of bleeding it and who the Co. say they cannot discharge for fear he will Black Mail it."⁹

The tension came to a head in July 1868 when Dodge was called to a meeting with Durant and Seymour in Rawlins. Dodge expected a showdown. So Dodge went to meet Ulysses S. Grant, along with Generals Sherman and Sheridan while they were on a trip before Grant was elected President. Dodge was able to describe his frustration with having his decisions superceded and his authority undercut. When Dodge walked into his meeting with Durant and Seymour he brought the generals along. Dodge described the progress of construction at length and threatened that if Durant changed the route, he would quit. Durant lashed back, but Dodge's comrades Grant, Sherman and Sheridan stood behind him. The Generals told Durant that Dodge must stay with the project. Recognizing that Grant would almost certainly be the next president of the United States, Durant backed down, at least for the time being. The Union



One of Union Pacific's trestles along the road, just outside of Omaha

Pacific continued to build west.

Because they feared that Union Pacific could even reach into Nevada, Collis Huntington pulled out all the stops to get Secretary of the Interior Browning to approve Central Pacific's preferred route to the north of the Great Salt Lake and to restrain the Union Pacific from getting nearer to Nevada. So, Huntington approached the Secretary's old friend and law partner, General Thomas Ewing, with the offer to pay him \$10,000 in cash and \$20,000 in stock to approve the Central Pacific's route around the north end of the lake and past Ogden toward Echo Canyon. Within three weeks, this plan was approved, with Browning promising to keep the decision secret for two months. Once the Union Pacific discovered the plan and pushed to have the decision rescinded, General Ewing bluntly asked for \$10,000, presumably for Browning

to reconsider and reshape his earlier decision. This lobbying by the UP fueled Huntington's concerns that his subterfuge would be all for naught. He wrote to Hopkins that he was willing to go even farther: "If \$100,000 will get the line located to the end of our line as per map in the Interior Department, I shall get it done."¹⁰

While it is difficult to arrive at a true 2007-dollar value to these bribes, there are a few gauges that show us how large these payments were. A common laborer on the railroad was paid between \$2 and \$5 a day or roughly \$600 to \$1000 a year (Most of the Chinese were paid substantially less: first \$30 and later \$35 a month.) A congressman was paid \$5000 a year. So a \$10,000 bribe was substantial.

Another way of seeing what these payoffs would be worth today is by using the Consumer Price Index as a

gauge. The \$10,000 bribe that Brown- ing most likely accepted would be equivalent to over \$1.4-million dollars today. A \$1,000 bribe would be worth \$140,000. This episode gives an indication of how much money was spent to influence government officials and in turn how much money was to be made by the victor.

The Railroad is Completed

As the tracklayers moved forward, the competition was getting more intense. The Union Pacific resolved to build 400 miles of track in 1868. Central Pacific spies relayed this information to Collis Huntington. Both companies saw their goal to be the rich coal seams in the Wasatch Range along the Utah-Wyoming border. Who would reach there first?

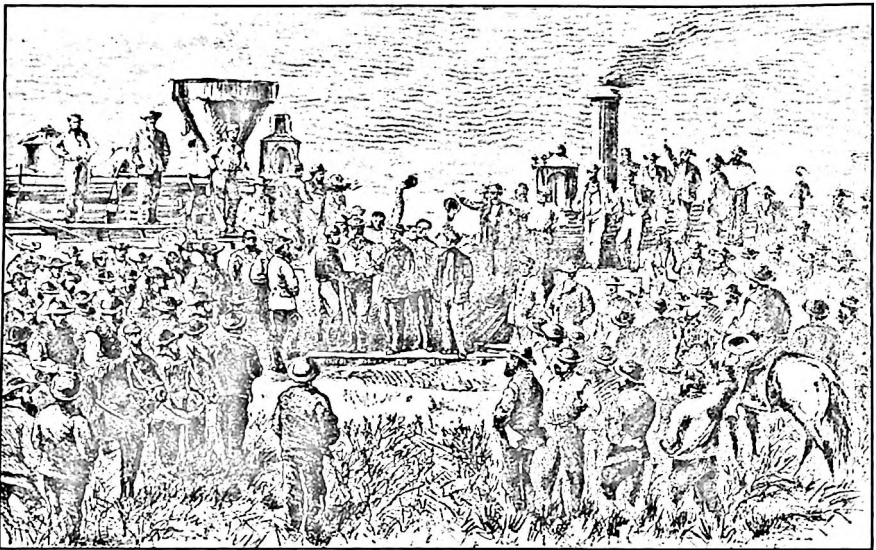
Huntington exhorted his partners to accelerate construction: "I would build the cheapest road that I could and have it accepted by the [Commissioners], so it moves on fast. Make it cheap. Run up and down on the maximum grade instead of making deep cut & fills, and when you can make time in the construction by using wood instead of stone for culverts etc., use wood, and if we should have now and then a piece of road washed out for the want of a culvert, we could put one in hereafter."

Mark Hopkins responded, "We won't expect to build a road of the character we have been building through the mountain & deep snow line. We expect to build the cheapest road we can make answer to purpose. Undulating in grades, wooden culverts where rock would delay, trestle wherever it will tend to more rapid progress. In short, to

build road as fast as possible of a character acceptable to the commissioners. And we know the commissioners will readily accept as poor a road as we can wish to offer for acceptance."¹¹

The Union Pacific's construction was even shoddier. Poor design, eroding embankments and fills, mismatched ties and lightweight rails were all obvious to everyone. Three bridges collapsed under their own weight without a train ever crossing them because of poor work on their footings. At one point Durant ordered track to be laid directly on snow and ice because the ground was too frozen to be worked. When Dodge returned to the railhead he witnessed a train on this track sliding sideways until the train rolled over into a ditch upside down. Even the beholden government inspectors felt that this work was unacceptable. By September 1868, Union Pacific's cash flow slowed down dangerously because the government commissioners required a \$3-million reserve fund to be created to guarantee that the work would be brought up to standard.

By 1869, the Union Pacific was nearly bankrupt. The financial drain of building the railroad was also straining the resources of the Central Pacific. In addition, throughout 1868 and early 1869 both companies were surveying and grading in opposite directions across the same ground; sometimes even crossing each other or claiming the same grade. Both companies knew that they were wasting money, but neither wanted to be the first one to blink. As the money was being paid out faster and faster from both sides of the country, both for this roadwork and for the numerous payoffs, the press



Harper's Weekly illustration of the celebration at Promontory

began to catch wind of the waste and illegal activity. With continued threats to his job, even Dodge started to leak the more dastardly actions of Durant to the press and to anyone else who would listen. The press began to concentrate on the ill-gotten gains of the directors of the company and their undo influence over Congress.

So, as David Bain writes in his wonderful book, *Empire Express*, "It had become clear to both Dodge and Huntington that they could either stand toe-to-toe and slam each other until one was dead or compromise before blood lust had the onlookers climbing over the ropes to get them both."¹² So Huntington and Dodge met at the house of Massachusetts Congressman Samuel Hooper, who held stock in both railroads and Credit Moblier, and knocked out an agreement. The companies' crews would meet at Promontory Sum-

mit. Also, Central Pacific would buy the track already laid by the UP from there to just short of Ogden for the amount that it cost to build (the Central Pacific eventually paid \$2,852,870 or \$58,824 per mile).

So, the two companies were ready to join their empires; the date was set for May 8. But there were two more delays. First, on May 6, Durant and UP President John Duff were on a train heading for Promontory when a few hundred workers stopped their train by piling up railroad ties on the tracks. They demanded \$200,000 in back wages before they would let the train proceed. Durant telegraphed Oliver Ames in Boston to send the money, but by this time Union Pacific had little-to-no money. The workers did get some of their back pay and the UP train moved forward. Greenville Dodge and Oliver Ames were two who believed that it

was quite possible that Durant had set up this stoppage himself. After all, he had a financial interest in the subcontractor for that very crew. As Ames said, "Durant is so strange a man that I am prepared to believe any sort of rascality that may be charged against him."¹³

The second delay occurred just as the UP train reached Weber Canyon. Heavy rains damaged the Devil's Gate Bridge. The train was delayed and the final track laying was delayed two days.

Finally came the eventful day. May 10, 1869 was a beautiful day at Promontory. As the two engines—Central Pacific's "Jupiter" and Union Pacific's "119"—moved forward, 600 people stood waited with anticipation to see the final rail be laid to connect the East and West. Three of the Union Pacific's Irish carried one rail. Three of the Central Pacific's Chinese laid down the second rail. The rails were placed carefully around pre-drilled holes in the last laurel-wood tie. After a morning of debate between Stanford and Durant, it had been decided that Stanford would have the honor of driving the last spike.

There were actually four precious-metal spikes: There was a second golden spike presented by the *San Francisco News Letter* which weighed about 9.5 ounces and was valued at \$200. Another spike was presented: "ribbed in iron, clad in silver and crowned with gold. Arizona presents her offering to the enterprise that has banded a continent, dictated a pathway to commerce." The third spike was made of silver: "To the iron of the East and the gold of the West, Nevada adds her link of silver to span the continent and wed the oceans..." And finally, the Golden Spike. Slightly undersized at 5

1/2 in. x 1/2in., it was made of 14.03 troy ounces of 17.6-caret gold, alloyed with copper. The spike is engraved on its head with the words: "The LAST SPIKE." It includes the following words on one side: "May God continue the unity of our Country as this Railroad unites the two great Oceans of the world." (There was no equivalent statement upon the completion of the T-Rex.) Actually, this really wasn't the last spike. After the ceremonial spikes had been tapped into their pre-drilled holes, the last iron spikes were set in place.

In many ways this was the first large media event in America. There were a total of four photographers present, so we have a lot of photos of the day. In addition, the event was heard live in many cities in America. The last spike and the maul each had a telegraph wire attached to them. Thus, when the final spike was driven home, the event would be transmitted to every city in America, at the speed of light (well, of electricity). In any city equipped with fire alarm telegraphs, the alarm would sound; in those that didn't, the telegraph operator would hear it on his telegraph key. In San Francisco and New York the electrical circuit included cannons that would fire automatically over the Pacific and the Atlantic; a figurative celebration of emerging world power as well as for celebration of the feat itself.

As Central Pacific's Construction Chief Strobridge and Chief Engineer Samuel Montague, and Union Pacific's Durant, Duff, Dillon, Reed, Hoxie, Casement brothers and Seymour looked on, Stanford stepped forward swinging a silver-headed maul and...missed the spike...at first. (At

least that's the story told; although contemporary stories do not report this.) Then the spike was tapped in, and America celebrated.

The Liberty Bell rang along with hundreds of others. Two-hundred-twenty cannons in San Francisco and 100 cannons in Washington D.C. were fired. Chicago had a parade that was seven miles long. Cities that were in the Confederacy, such as Atlanta, New Orleans and Richmond, celebrated. All parts of the country could celebrate because people from all over America had worked on the railroad. The binding of the East and the West was supplemented by the additional bonding of the North and the South. America felt proud.

The Scandal and its Aftermath

America could be proud of the railroad, but they really couldn't feel the same about the graft that was part of its birth. The Union Pacific was short of money during the final weeks of construction because it had been bled dry by Credit Mobilier. Credit Mobilier officially was the construction company for the railroad, but it had also been created to make money for its stockholders, and indeed it did. In the 18 months leading up to the railroads joining at Promontory, dividends totaling 341% were paid to stockholders. So, if a person owned 100 shares of stock that were valued at \$100 a share, that person made \$34,100 in those 18 months. In 2007-dollars, 100 shares would have generated over \$500,000 of profit!

In addition, Durant, Dodge and other Union Pacific board members had multiple interests in the construction companies that were hired by Credit

Mobilier to do the work. Many of the grading companies, tie-cutting contractors and companies hired to provide food and logistics were partially owned by members in the inner circle of the Union Pacific. Peter Dey, the initial chief engineer of Union Pacific before he resigned in protest in 1866, estimated the cost of building through the Platte River basin at \$25,000 per mile; Credit Mobilier charged \$50,000 per mile and up. (As another point of reference: Charles Crocker had charged just over \$22,000 per mile for the first 18 miles out of Sacramento.)

And among those who benefited were many stockholding senators and congressmen who were ostensibly responsible for the oversight of the congressionally-chartered Union Pacific and the federal bond-supported Central Pacific. Oakes Ames was a congressman. Greenville Dodge was a congressman. Early stockholders included Massachusetts Congressman Samuel Hooper and John B. Alley, Indiana Representative James Wilson Grimes, Pennsylvania Representative Benjamin M. Boyer and New York Congressman James Brooks.

Then in 1867, a block of Credit Mobilier stock became available just as the company announced a new dividend and Union Pacific stock and bond bonuses for shareholders. This led to a feeding frenzy of interest by people in Washington. Those who were caught up in this included Schuyler Colfax of Indiana who was Speaker of the House and future Vice President. Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts would become vice president in 1873. Pennsylvania Congressmen William D. Kelley and G.W. Scofield, John a Bing-

ham of Ohio, John A. Logan of Illinois, Senator James W. Patterson of New Hampshire and Representative Henry Laurens Dawes of Massachusetts were included. And the biggest name was future president James Garfield of Ohio.

As a "convenience" the stock for these individuals was held in Ames' name. Colfax and Allison didn't even pay for the stock until a bonus was paid on their shares, effectively giving them a 70% discount. Garfield, Logan, Kelley and James Wilson had their stock paid for by Ames, but they still received their dividends and stock in Union Pacific.

Even what was clearly a political conflict of interest was tossed aside. On December 5, 1867, Wisconsin Representative Cadwalader Washburn—yet another Civil War General—introduced a bill to regulate (and reduce) the fares and other rates charged by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific. This bill was buried once it reached the committee overseeing the railroads, chaired by Oakes Ames.

Central Pacific also wasn't immune. "There is a very strong combination against us, wrote Collis Huntington to Mark Hopkins, "but I expect to beat them-but it will cost something." Congressman Donnelly on the Land and Railroad Committee was "short of cash," as Collis Huntington put it in a letter to Judge Crocker, "and I loaned him \$1000." For Senator James Nye of Nevada, Huntington help him get an interest in the new railroad city at Lake's Crossing, soon to be called Reno. For Congressman Samuel Axtell of California it was as a "job" of a confidential attorney. For Senator William Stewart of Nevada, it was the entire funding

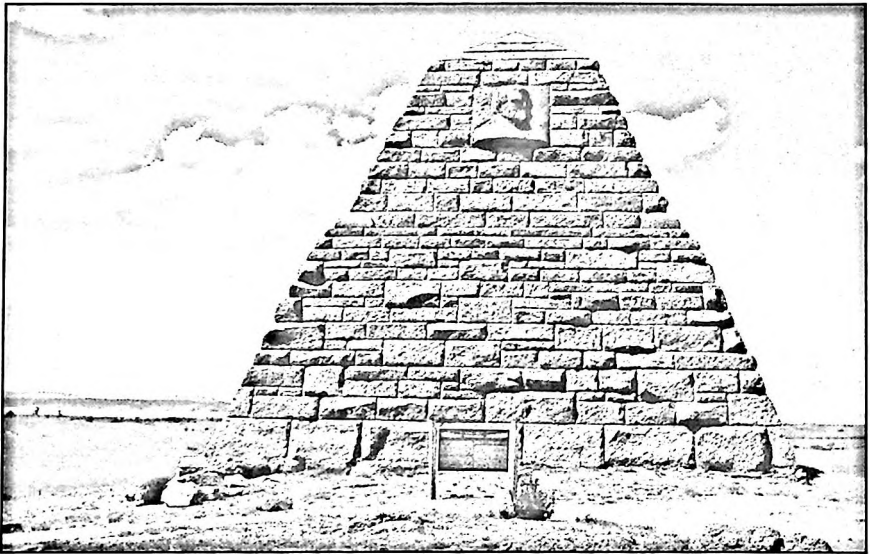
of his re-election contest. Huntington reported, "he said he hoped it would not cost over \$20,000, but it possibly would cost \$50,000."¹⁴ In early 1868 Aaron H. Cragin and James W. Patterson of New Hampshire were helped in their election campaigns with \$1000. This was the same Senator Patterson who had invested for free in Credit Moblier and Union Pacific the fall before.

Maine's James G. Blaine did turn down Union Pacific's offer. Later, he stated, "It never once occurred to me that Mr. Ames was attempting to bribe me."¹⁵

Ames for his part, also saw no wrong-doing. The general feeling was that Congressmen would show more interest in the needs of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific if they had some "personal interest" in the companies.

So a railroad was built, a railroad that benefited man and corrupted men. This railroad was another step toward unifying and reunifying a country, east and west, north and south. Four years after the end of the Civil War, America had a reason to call itself one country.

In the span of one generation, travel across America had been reduced from being a threat to life itself to a relatively common occurrence. One in 17 died on the immigrant trails in the 25 years before the railroad was built. That number was radically reduced with the completion of the railroad. It took Brigham Young four months to reach New Zion in 1847. With the completion of the railroad it would take only 7 days to go from New York to San Francisco. What must it have been like to take a train from Sacramento to Reno in 12 hours and then to go back, only



The memorial to Union Pacific's Ames brothers was built next to the railroad outside of Cheyenne. The tracks were relocated in 1902

21 years after the ill-fated trip most associated with the pass the train crossed: Donner Pass.

For the decade before the railroad was built, the fastest, most comfortable way to get to California was by stagecoach. Tickets from Fort Kearny to California could cost \$500 each. Within five days of the Golden Spike being driven home, regular train service started. Tickets from New York to San Francisco cost \$150 for first class, \$70 emigrant class. By the 1880s, nearly one million people rode the train west each year, three times as many as those who had made the trip during the 25 years of wagon migration, 1841-1866. The possibility of travel across the country between the Missouri and the Pacific and back again, made the opening up of America, the unifying of America be both a geographic and a psychological reality.

The Great American Road

The railroad was built along what is still the spine of America. The Transcontinental Railroad was just one of the names for this road. Much of the route is along the California Trail (1850) and the route of the Pony Express trail and first transcontinental telegraph route (1860-61).

In 1912, Indianapolis Motor Speedway founder Carl Fisher proposed creating the country's first coast-to-coast highway in time for the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. In October 1913 the 3,389-mile-long Lincoln Highway was dedicated, the first "US" designated east-west highway. This highway followed along most of the route of the Pacific Railroad.

President Eisenhower promoted the Interstate Highway system in 1956.

I-80 became the first east-west interstate. Again, much of this road is within eyesight of the others. One of Eisenhower's justifications for building this huge public works project was to allow the rapid movement of military material from the east coast to the west coast. This fact has a nice parallel in that some of the first transcontinental passengers, also at the Golden Spike ceremony, were officers and soldiers of the 21st Infantry heading west to San Francisco.

Finally, one of the core paths of the Information Highway runs along this spine. Posts marking the path of one of the main fiber optic strands follow the same path where 140 years ago telegraph poles stood.

As you travel along I-80, much of the time you can see the railroad to your left or your right. Some of the original route is not used or has been straightened out. Most notable, the mainline bypassed Promontory in 1902 and the rails themselves were pulled up for scrap in 1942. Also, a memorial to the Ameses sits a half-mile off I-80 and over two miles off the mainline, a nearly forgotten reminder of the stunning achievement of the construction of the railroad.

Really all of these projects, including T-Rex, were built with the help of tax money to make it easier to get people, products and information around the country. In any large endeavor, there is some form of waste, some form of inequality of financial compensation. I think we all strive to see these factors minimized, but in any large endeavor, whether public or private, they are present. Is that any excuse? Does the end justify the means? I don't think so. But the value of hav-

ing the railroad built was so great, we should avoid concentrating on the corruption in the construction.

The railroad built towns where none existed before: Kearney, Cheyenne, Laramie, Reno and most towns in-between. The completion of the railroad represented the end of the way of life of the Plains Indians. The owners of the railroads became the powerful and influential men of the "Gilded Age." The laborers who built the railroad became the core labor force of the West. The railroad became a symbol of growing US economic and political might. A project that many thought might never be completed or would take at least a dozen years to finish was accomplished in less than half that time.

How forward-looking was America's transcontinental endeavor? The other continent opened to European settlement at roughly the same time, Australia, did not complete its first transcontinental route until 1917; it didn't have a consistent gauge on that route until 1970. Australia's North-South Transcontinental Railroad started operation in 2004. The changes that building a railroad had on the United States has just begun in parts of the interior of Australia.

As the Denver metro area rebuilds its highways and its urban railroad, as it negotiates to expand its transcontinental and intercontinental airplane departures, we can honor those who built the Pacific Railroad. Ahead of its time by a generation or two... or three, the Transcontinental Railroad was an achievement surpassed by few others. Its importance is hard to overestimate.

As the *Rocky Mountain News*

said, "There is one theme everywhere present. The one moral, the one remedy for every evil, social, political, financial and industrial, the one immediate vital need of the entire Republic, is the Pacific Railway."

Bibliography

1. Bain, David, *Empire Express, Building the First Transcontinental Railroad*. 1999: Viking, p. 460
2. Ibid. p 476
3. Ibid. p 594
4. Ibid. p 264
5. From a museum display at the Union Pacific Museum in Council Bluffs, Iowa.
6. There is some compelling evidence that this story may not have been the initial examination of this route. Even though it may have been fiction on the part of Dodge to say he was the discoverer of this hillside, the story itself is plausible short of this fact.
7. Ibid. p. 345 *My Early Travels and Adventures in America* (1895) Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982, p. 107.
8. Ibid. p. 606
9. Ibid. p. 485
10. Ibid. p. 483
11. Ibid. p 446, 447
12. Ibid. p. 632
13. Ambrose, Stephen E., *Nothing Like it in the World, The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000 p. 360
14. Bain, op.cit. p. 418
15. Ibid. p. 423

By far the best resource I used was David Bain's book, *Empire Express, Building the Transcontinental Railroad*, published by Viking in 1999. This is a tour-de-force work. In its foreword, Bain tells the story that every non-fiction author fears, just as you are trying to put years of research down on paper, a much more well-known author announces that he too is working on the same subject:

Stephen Ambrose's book, *Nothing Like it in the World*, published a year later in 2000, is a much quicker read...and a good one.

Another interesting book is a compilation of early writings about the road, *Riding the Transcontinental Rails: Overland Travel on the Pacific Railroad*, Philadelphia: Polyglot Press, 2005. The book was edited by Bruce C. Cooper, the great-great-grandson of the Superintendent of Track and Chief Assistant Engineer of the Central Pacific.

Another outcome of recent research deals with the Chinese workforce: William F Chew's *Nameless Builders of the Transcontinental, Victoria, B.C.*: Trafford Publishing, 2004. While the book has some narrative, its emphasis is on the statistics of the Chinese workforce.

PBS's *American Experience* produced one of its wonderful documentaries *Transcontinental Railroad* in 2003. Co-produced by David Bain, it is well worth the look on DVD.

There's a very nice book about the Lincoln Highway, the second half of which is about the part of the country we care about: Brian Butko: *Greetings from the Lincoln Highway; America's First Coast-to-Coast Road*, Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003.

Over the corral rail

Loss of a friend:

The Posse was saddened to hear that Earl McCoy, P.M., died on May 31, 2007. We express our sympathy to Wanda and the family.

Earl joined the Denver Posse of Westerners in 1984 and was an active member until recently. A native of Illinois, Earl attended Illinois Wesleyan University and the University of Illinois. From 1956 to 1959, he was a volunteer with the American Friends Service Committee, directing a center in an Arab community in Acre, Israel. He came to Denver in 1959 as program director of Auraria Community Center. From 1968 to 1987, he was community coordinator for the Fort Logan Mental Health Center and Information Officer for the center. This work led to his researching the history of the old Army post. Following retirement, Earl organized the Friends of Historic Fort Logan. He conducted numerous tours of Ft. Logan, and of Ft. Logan Cemetery. His paper on the history of Ft. Logan, "From Infantry to Air Corps," was given on February 2, 1986. Earl's other interests included the history and culture of Native Americans, especially in the Southwestern United States.

Earl was elected a Posse Member in 1987, and served as our Roundup Foreman from 1991 to 1995. He recently served as Archivist. He received the Denver Westerners Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.





Westerners Bookshelf

Jim Courtright of Fort Worth: His Life and Legend, by Robert K. DeArment. Texas Christian University Press, Fort Worth, 2004. 287 pages. Illustrated with photographs; endnotes; bibliography; index. Cloth, dustjacket, \$24.95.

This is one of the latest of Robert “Bob” DeArment’s books dealing with gunfighters and gunmen, especially those shootists hailing from down Texas way. It seems that every time DeArment writes another such tome, he ends up with enough information left over about a collateral player or event to start another book. This is not a criticism, since Bob is an indefatigable researcher and a good writer. While some of the material thus produced, especially those volumes about lesser-known personalities or incidents, necessarily is “filler,” it usually also is worthwhile background information.

Indeed, this one may be about the best of DeArment’s biographical books (other than the one about Frank Canton), for Bob has dug up about all there is to know about “Longhaired” Jim Courtright. Indeed, Bob has discovered that much of what is “known” about Courtright is inaccurate (including the longhair part). Such writers as Eugene Cunningham and Father Stanley Crocchiola, in their writings about Courtright, gave the sanitized family version of the gunman. According to DeArment, the accurate picture is not so complimentary. Thus, while Bob DeArment earlier came up with a positive assessment of Frank Canton (respectfully not shared by this reviewer), this book comes to the opposite conclusion. While it certainly is no hatchet-job, neither is it a white-wash. DeArment is incapable of producing either of those lesser products.

While Jim Courtright, one-time city marshal and one-time murderer of homesteaders, may not be deserving of a full biography, he now has one. Most of what can be told about Courtright, from the Civil War to the final confrontation with Luke Short, is covered superbly by Bob DeArment, using primary sources and contemporary records.

This volume is an excellent study for anyone interested in Western gunmen and in examining “when the legend becomes fact.” Therefore, the book is highly recommended as being one of DeArment’s best, which is high praise indeed.

—John Hutchins, P.M.



The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

September - October 2007



Author's Collection

Brothels, Bordellos and Bad Girls
Prostitution in Colorado 1860-1930
by Jan MacKell
(presented Jan. 24, 2007)



Our Author

Jan MacKell is a freelance writer and the Interim Director at the Cripple Creek District Museum. She is a former Historic Preservation Commissioner for the City of Cripple Creek and gives programs throughout the state about the history of prostitution as well as the Cripple Creek District. Ms. MacKell is also a member of several historical societies in both Colorado and Arizona, including the Colorado State Historical Society.

Her first book was *Cripple Creek District: Last of Colorado's Gold Blooms*, published by Arcadia Publishing in 2003. The subject of this paper is her second book, *Brothels, Bordellos & Bad Girls: Prostitution in Colorado 1860-1930*, published by the University of New Mexico Press in 2004. She is also working on a third book with the UNM Press about prostitution in the Rocky Mountains.

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

ROUNDUP

VOL. LXIII NO. 5



September - October 2007

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Book Reviews

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 3031 E. 8th Ave
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Dues and Other Payments

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

Reservations for meetings

Dorothy Krieger (303) 466-7737
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 Broomfield, CO 80020

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Brothels, Bordellos and Bad Girls

Prostitution in Colorado 1860-1930

by Jan MacKell
(presented Jan. 24, 2007)

Many prostitutes enjoyed being photographed, especially if the picture could portray them in a mysterious and alluring light. Photographs of this nature could range from demure to what could actually be considered pornography for the time. Girls and madams could use cabinet cards for advertising. Even actresses were known to use provocative photographs for advertising. Some actresses doubled as prostitutes, so society frowned on socializing with them. Also, photographs could be used by the law or some other unpleasant person in a girl's life to identify her when she least desired it.

Let's look at the typical life of a prostitute. She worked hard, stayed up late, preferred drugs to alcohol-which was fattening-tried to avoid venereal disease, pregnancy and, domestic violence. She spent the majority of her time in the brothel in which she worked. Because she traveled a lot, a prostitute had few possessions.

Madams had it a bit easier. They were more likely to own their houses of ill repute. They were more likely to stay put and be able to have many nice possessions. But being a madam was by no means easy. She could choose whether or not to have sex with her customers. Some did not. Madams had to maintain order over their business, control their girls, care for them when they got sick or died,

and even serve as surrogate mothers because their employees were likely to be depressed and temperamental much of the time.

Prostitutes tended to fight among themselves over men, money and possessions. The industry was highly competitive, yet they depended on each other for friendship and moral support. In order to make it in the business, you had to be talented. Prostitutes came from all walks of life. Many prostitutes were able to read and write and were educated. But you also had to be talented in other areas. You had to know how to dance, sing or play an instrument. And you had to be good at poker, since many brothels offered it.

Being a prostitute also meant you had to obey strict ordinances in the towns where you plied your trade. Most cities banished prostitution to one part of town. Some cities had laws declaring that prostitutes could only do their shopping downtown one day a week. Most of the girls wore aprons. Girls shortened their skirts to keep their hems from getting ruined, exposing their ankles. Cities then passed ordinances that skirts could only be so many inches above the ankle. Dance hall girls then wore aprons so their ankles wouldn't show in public.

It is important to note that not all dance hall girls worked as prostitutes. Some were married and even had



Author's Collection

Laura Bell's house, Colorado City, 1950s

families. Even so, most dance hall girls were lumped in with the rest of the bad girls. They were ostracized from public events. In Cripple Creek, prostitutes were allowed to attend the theater as long as they used a side door and sat in the very back.

One of my favorite stories is about Dixie, a madam in Montezuma who liked attending the local baseball games. She was told she could come as long as she sat at the end of the bleachers. Just to spite the authorities, she always "dressed to the nines" and it was said she would yell louder than anyone else.

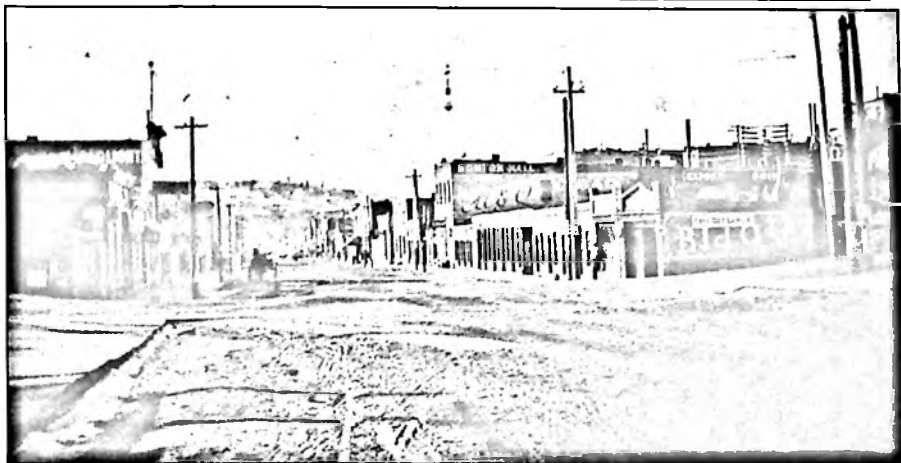
Dixie also did a good business with the local merchants, and they say she would buy milk by the case to feed the stray cats around town.

Good deeds like Dixie's largely went unrecognized, but it is an established fact that most prostitutes did more than their share of community service. They donated to schools and churches, gave to the poor, fed the

homeless and paid hefty fines to the city coffers!

In the aftermath of the silver crash of 1893, many women whose families had lost everything came to Denver's Jennie Rogers looking for work. Jennie refused to let them work as prostitutes, but gave them food and lodging until they got gainful employment or could go live with relatives.

As far as pioneer prostitution goes, Denver is established as the place the industry got its start in Colorado. There was also Colorado City, which is now the westside of Colorado Springs. Established in 1858, it was the supply town at the "Gateway to the Goldfields." One of the fun facts about Colorado City is that the town actually competed with Denver to become the state capital, but Denver won out. In time, the capital building was also known as Doc Garvin's cabin and Sam Wah's laundry, complete with an opium den in back.



Courtesy Cripple Creek District Museum

Myers Avenue in Cripple Creek

In later years it also sat on the Broadmoor Golf Course in Colorado Springs and spent a year on the lawn of the capital here in Denver during the 1959 Rush to the Rockies centennial celebration.

The best known madam of Colorado City was Laura Bell McDaniel. Born in Buffalo Lick, Missouri, in 1861, by 1882 she was living as a single mother in Salida. In 1887 married Thomas McDaniel. Just a month after the marriage, Tom shot Morgan Dunn. He was acquitted, but there were suspicions around town and the couple left Salida. Laura Bell arrived in Colorado City in 1888 and established herself along Colorado Avenue with a handful of other prostitutes.

Later she moved one block down to Cucharas Street, where she was the reigning madam for 30 years. Laura Bell was living here when she was arrested for harboring stolen liquor in her home. She was tried and acquit-

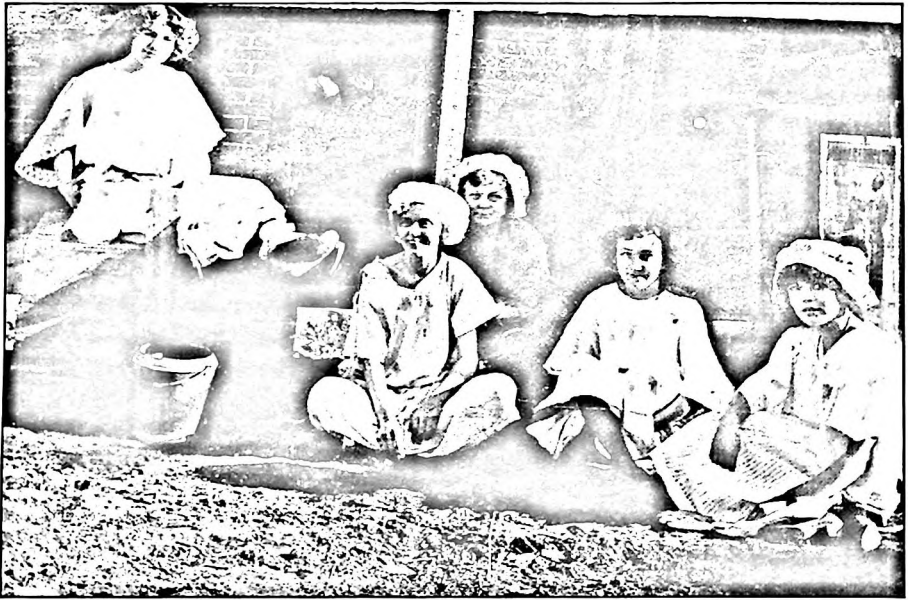
ted, but was killed the next day. The Deputy DA witnessed the accident.

Laura Bell's biggest competitor was Mamie Majors, who for a time had a house next door. Both women were astute business people, and both houses were laid out very business-like.

As Colorado grew, hundreds of other towns were established. Most had a red light district. I found very few towns and camps that did not have one.

Leadville was one of the wildest towns and its Sate Street was part of one of the wildest red light districts in the state. Reigning madams here were Mollie May and Sally Purple, who delighted in fighting with each other.

By the 1890s, the Big Mama of all red light districts became Myers Avenue in Cripple Creek. By then prostitutes were seasoned. They knew that any new boom town could yield lots of money for them. By 1900 there were over 300 prostitutes working in Cripple Creek.



Courtesy Cripple Creek District Museum

Myers Avenue girls

It is interesting to note that while many red light districts did not distinguish between races, Myers Avenue did. The next block up was known as the Parisian Block, where many French prostitutes worked. The 300 block was where the majority of fancy parlor houses and cribs were located.

The best known brothel in Cripple Creek was the Homestead. The Old Homestead was built by Pearl who came in 1894. Pearl de Vere and her sister were raised in Indiana. By the time she came to Cripple Creek from Denver she had already been married once. Pearl supposedly used designs and ideas from France. Pearl's girls were treated to fancy bedroom suites, each with its own bedroom set, wood-burning stove and toiletries. Pearl had her own suite

downstairs that included a sitting area and the house's only commode.

The docents at the Homestead Museum, the only museum of prostitution in Colorado, like to joke that this was one of the earliest forms of window shopping.

Pearl died of a morphine overdose in 1897 and it was said her funeral was one of the largest funeral processions in town. Even today, she is remembered by hundreds.

Nearby, the city of Victor also had its own red light district, which was actually less regulated. Among the girls here was Goldfield Lil, who was killed in a bar fight at the Senate Saloon.

For every prostitute who died, however, there was one to take her place.



Author's Collection

Here are some of my favorite ladies. Lillian Powers because I like her story of determination. She had worked as a laundress and was dubbed The Laundry Queen. She worked as prostitute in Denver but a series of murders in the red light district in 1894 scared her and she moved to Victor and then Cripple Creek. Lillian worked for Leola Ahrens, aka Leo the Lion. Soon Lil was taking Leo's customers, because her place was cleaner and she offered beer as part of her services. She was also a good listener. One night Leo got drunk and threatened to kill Lillian. Lil escaped, hopped a train to Salida and went to work for madam Laura Evans. The two women eventually became good friends and business partners. Later on Lil moved to Florence and

opened her own place there. Both Lil and Laura stayed in business for nearly 50 years.

Mae Phelps was the reigning madam in Trinidad. Mae favored having her portrait taken every few years by photographer O.E. Aultman, and luckily, these are preserved today in Denver. Mae was also instrumental within the industry in two other ways. She negotiated with the city to extend the trolley line into the red light district so that customers and drunks wouldn't be wandering the streets. She also opened a Madams Rest Home for prostitutes and madams who became ill or retired. Mae was truly a good madam to her girls, sending them out to the homes of single ranchers to recuperate when they became ill or got pregnant.

Mexican Jennie, aka Jennie Wenner, Juanita Keif and Jennie Phillips, lived Poverty Gulch with a drunk named Robert Phillips who beat her when she didn't make enough money. On Christmas night in 1913, Phillips hit Jennie again. This time she pulled a gun, shot him and left town. She took the train to El Paso, Texas, swam the Rio Grande River to Mexico, and joined some camp followers heading to Chihuahua City. These days, Jennie would have been considered a victim. As it was, Sheriff Henry Von Phul chased her to Chihuahua, got her to the border, and actually bribed a city clerk who had embezzled Cripple Creek's money to help him get her across. Jennie was found guilty of murder and sentenced to the state pen in Canon City. She was released in 1919, returned to Chihuahua, and died of tuberculosis in 1921.

One of my favorite stories about Pearl of Silverton was about her



Courtesy Cripple Creek District Museum

Old Homestead postcard

little dog. By the time Pearl died in 1928, authorities around Colorado had been working for decades to shut down prostitution. By 1910, the population had increased sufficiently to include women and wives who didn't want it. In 1913 there was Colorado prohibition and in 1919 nationwide prohibition. By this time, the ramifications of prostitution, drug use, thievery, gambling and alcohol were extremely well-known.

With prohibition came the demise of the red light districts as they were known. In the years following, city authorities and a good lot of other people tried to forget about Colorado's bawdy past.

In time, the old red light districts were abandoned, torn down or changed. Friends and family, and even the girls themselves tried to bury their lives. A letter to author Caroline Bancroft from a friend of Lillian Powers

reads in part, "Miss Powers exacted a promise from us, that upon her death, no details of her life or her business be given to anybody!"

Thankfully, some people refused to forget. I found enough documentation, letters and even interviews with the girls themselves to prove that many of the people who loved these women want their memories preserved. Thankfully, a healthy handful of red light districts and brothels do survive, such as Silverton's notorious Blair Street, which has evolved into a major tourist mecca with restaurants, shops and ice cream parlors.

Mercantile at Prospect Heights, a suburb of Canon City, had an upstairs brothel, which is now a private home. The Monte Cristo in Trinidad is still functioning as a bar, and if you ever get down there, I recommend a visit. The Navarre, which had originally opened



as the Brinker Collegiate Institute for girls, had soon become a gambling house with prostitution. It is now a private home.

Mattie Silk's old place in Denver, was also Jennie Rogers' establishment. By the 1970s, much of the facade was missing, but now it is restored as Mattie's Restaurant.

The Old Homestead was purchased in 1958 by Fred and Pat Mentzer, who decided to turn it into a museum.

So now, I know what you all are asking yourselves: **WHAT CAN I DO TO SAVE COLORADO'S WHOREHOUSES?**

Visit the Homestead, and take a tour. Then go next door to the Wild Horse, have a good time, and tell them why they should be preserving the museum.

There are also a few celebra-

tions that take place around the state, including Lou Bunch Days in Central City. Featured are 300 pounds of delight, (Lou was a big girl) parades and bed races. Last year, Mattie's in Denver put on a play called *Madams and Mayhem on Market Street*, and I am hoping to see that keep going. In Cripple Creek, we have Pearl's Follies, an annual benefit to make money for the Old Homestead. It's a great time and really fun for the community: local talent singing songs, dancing, reciting poetry, playing music and dressing the parts of our bad girls. And this family event happens every March. Plan for next year and I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

The time has come to recognize these women as a class of people who contributed to the economy as America grew and helped form the West. Dreams and hopes and desires and lives, we need to remember them for who they were, not what they were.

I like to end with a few lines from a poem written by Rufus Porter, the hard-rock poet of Cripple Creek:

Sin and lust I ain't defendin'
But history must be fair
And there ain't no use in pretendin'
That Myers Avenue wasn't there.



Darkest Before Dawn, Sedition and Free Speech in the American West, by Clemens P. Work. University of New Mexico Press, 2006. 318pp. Photos, index, bibliography. Softbound. \$19.95.

The Patriot Act is to some a new and strange trampling of our civil liberties. As this book shows, it is really just another chapter in an epic American struggle: in peace but especially in times of war, we have been known to overshoot the line over which free speech becomes treachery, sedition, or gives aid and comfort to the enemy. Often we must come back, redefine or redraw the line, and make amends to those who fell afoul of the wartime laws.

Mr. Work starts with the travails of the International Workers of the World, (IWW) in Montana at the turn of the last century, and follows through the "Red Scare" of the early 20's.

Gurley Flynn and Frank Little are followed in their attempts to organize on street corners in Missoula starting in about 1908. They fought many battles, winning a few and losing many, in their struggle for free speech.

The book moves on to the passage and enforcement of the Federal Sedition Act of 1917 and the Montana Sedition Law of 1918. An example: one Ben Kahn, a Montana wine and brandy salesman, disparaged the nation's wartime food regulations as a "big joke", then said that Americans had no business sailing on the Lusitania. He was sentenced to seven years in the pen and served 34 months.

As Work says, "The US Supreme Court rulings immediately after the Armistice were an unmitigated disaster for free speech. Wartime hysteria continued to echo inside the marble halls of the US Supreme Court." But ultimately, in decisions from 1919 through 1927, the right to free speech, and the right to dissent publicly, were upheld and strengthened.

Mr. Work notes that the generation of World War I failed to protect freedom of expression, and asks what will this generation do?

Good question. This book should be read by all who use and revere the right to speak out.

--Stan Moore, P.M.

The Southwestern Journals of Zebulon Pike, 1806-1807, Edited by Stephen Harding Hart and Archer Butler Hulbert, new introduction by Mark L. Gardner. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2006. 280 pages. Illustrated with Pike's sketch maps and several pictures; endnotes; index. Cloth, dustjacket, \$34.95; paper, \$19.95.

This edition of the southwestern portion (Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, Old Mexico, and Texas) of the journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike came out just in time for the Pike Bicentennial in the Rocky Mountain West. While various editions of Pike's travel journals are obtainable, this edition may be the only version in print at the moment. In addition, this product of the University of New Mexico is a beautiful one, and comes at a moderate price. A copy of an American

first edition of Pike's journals (1810), or the English edition (1811), with a copy of Pike's wonderful map (which showed his "highest" mountain) would set one back about \$30,000. A later edition of Pike's western voyage, printed in Denver in 1889, goes for about \$400. Even the two volumes from which this edition is reprinted (which came out in 1932 and 1933) would cost the collector about \$500 total. While the 1966 Readex facsimile runs only 20 or 30 dollars, it, being a facsimile, naturally lacks any significant commentary occurring since the original 1810 publication date.

This New Mexican edition reprints the Pike travelogue found in the two volumes produced and edited in Colorado by Stephen Hart, Esq., and Professor Archer Hulbert. It also includes their respective introductions and their original footnotes as endnotes. While Mark Gardner, a dedicated historian of the Santa Fe Trail and Southwestern scholar, contributes a succinct, informative, and balanced new introduction, he has elected not to editorialize on the commentary of Hart and Hulbert, which probably was a wise choice, since the obvious mission of Gardner was to get Pike's journal once again before the reading public in time for the bicentennial.

This mission objective is important because Gardner knows that the ultimate goal for the curious reader, perusing Pike's actual published journal, is to experience something that brings the Captain's arduous journey to life. Only by reading the words of such explorers (even if written for publication) can one learn details that must escape a reader of even the best historians. Thus, while a writer like Stephen Ambrose can bring Lewis and Clark before the vast American public, only those who seek the actual journals of discovery can call themselves really well-informed on the subject. By reading the actual words, such students are re-living history as well as anyone can without retracing a part of the actual journey in the appropriate season.

As for the viewpoint of the original editors, especially Professor Hulbert, some caution is in order. Some years before Hart and Hulbert tackled the job, Jerome Smiley went after Pike like a federal prosecutor goes after a crooked corporate CEO. Hulbert, on the other hand, defended Pike with the dedicated (if misguided) zeal of a Dershowitz, also using a scorched-earth policy. Neither side in such a debate seems to have much use for reflection and respectful discussion. Therefore, it is a pity that Mark Gardner, a Western gentleman and a masterful scholar, did not have the time to produce a truly new edition with his own notes and personal commentary. While Gardner, in his new introduction, honestly admits that the late Donald Jackson's edition of Pike's journals and papers cannot be topped, Gardner undoubtedly would fairly critique a few of Jackson's conclusions. Gardner also would make use of new investigations, including the good geographic work of Colorado Springs' own colorful and controversial John Patrick Michael Murphy, Esq.

In any event, this volume is a "must-have" for any Pike scholar. The new introduction by Gardner and the colorful jacket watercolor by Ronald Kil are themselves worth the modest price.

--John Hutchins, P.M.

San Juan Bonanza: Western Colorado's Mining Legacy, by John L. Ninnemann and Duane A. Smith. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2006. 85pp. Photos, maps, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$24.95.

Duane A. Smith has written countless books about the West, and especially about Colorado. His favorite region is the San Juan Mountains, near his Durango home; his favorite topic is mining history. In *San Juan Bonanza*, Smith combines his broad knowledge and writing skills with the photographic genius of John L. Ninnemann to give us a grand summation of why so many of us love those jagged mountains at the far end of the state, dotted with their mining ruins and quaint little towns. Their history can be summed up in two areas of study, mining and the towns which supported it. The book contains but two chapters, one for each of these topics, concluding with a five-page Epilogue.

“The land still ‘stands on edge,’ and the dreams still float around the mountains and down the canyons and vanish, swirling about the valleys. Once those dreams moved men to search and dig, live and love. Now the silent, wind-haunted remains dimly remind visitors of what once was in a land where tomorrow did not exist.”

With this, Smith sets the tone for a book of mining-era memories now largely turned to rot and rust (but very historically meaningful rot and rust, with a beautiful backdrop). We see the miners arrive, in this case at a very early time. While conventional historical wisdom seems to hold that Colorado's first gold discoveries were made in the vicinity of the Front Range, with the mining boom then moving west, Smith reminds us that the San Juans saw the very first Colorado gold findings by non-Native Americans. These date back at least to the 1765 Spanish de Rivera expedition. Even Americans arrived early to the region, with the 1860-1861 Charles Baker party's exploration of Baker Park (later Silverton), which ended in abject failure when it came to finding valuable minerals. In fact, what did come late to the San Juans was anyone actually making money off its ores. The rush began in earnest in the 1870s, and picked up steam once the Ute Indians were “removed.” Whatever its wealth, the remote San Juan region was seriously “transportation challenged.” It seemed doomed to forever be playing second fiddle to the more easterly and easier-to-reach booms like Leadville and Aspen. Finally the D. & R.G. arrived in the 1880s. Aided by the skills of San Juan Pathfinder Otto Mears, the area was soon crisscrossed by narrow gauge lines, memorialized today by their survivor, the Durango and Silverton line. Money finally arrived, but there were more bumps in the road such as the 1893 Silver Crash, and the 1901-1904 Telluride labor violence.

Towns followed miners, making the San Juans like much of the mountainous West, a region far more urban than rural. A place more vertical than horizontal could support few rural activities such as farming and ranching, but it did provide fertile ground for bustling (if sometimes short-lived) towns. The miners' supporting cast arrived in droves, taking the form of doctors, lawyers, shopkeepers,

undertakers, policemen, and a host of others. Not among the least of these were the many inhabitants of red light districts.

Then it was largely over, at least for mining. Like wildflowers growing out of a broken-down headframe, the San Juans are resilient. Now tourists come in droves. They take bumpy jeep rides to marvel at rotting timbers perched on a cliff well above timberline, where hundreds of miners once dug out millions worth of ore. Then they bounce back down the mountain to relax in a well-preserved old mining town, with its shops, bars and soothing hot spring pools. When they head back east, more than a few will be packing Smith and Ninnemann's vivid portrait, to preserve their own fond memories.

--John Stewart, *PM*.

The Utes - a Forgotten People by Wilson Rockwell. Western Reflections, Inc, Ouray, CO 1956 -1998. 307pp. Photos, Illustrations, appendix, bibliography, index. Paper, \$19.95 (This is a classic reprint by Western reflections of the original 1956 Sage Books publication by Alan Swallow of the Denver Posse of Westerners.)

If you have an interest in learning everything there is to know about the Ute Indians, this comprehensive treatise by Wilson Rockwell will fill the need. The author has thoroughly researched the Ute culture, from prehistory to the first exposure to white men when the Spaniards came north out of Mexico.

Prior to 1630 when they first came in contact with the Spaniards, the Utes lived a primitive existence. They had no horses, no knowledge of farming, and their crude weapons were made of stone. The struggle for survival was hard, with each family working as a single unit.

After exposure to the Spaniards, trading flourished and they lived a peaceful life for the most part. The introduction of the horse made it easier for the Utes to hunt buffalo, thereby enhancing their quality of life by utilizing the many resources provided by the buffalo.

The invasion of Colorado by white settlers and miners was a major disruption to the Utes and their culture. This book takes the reader step by step from the first negotiations with the Utes, through all the broken treaties, the many depredations, to the last treaties that finally established the reservations that gave the Utes their own land. In this book you will get to know all those Indians whose names we all have heard and used over and over, but never really connected to a real person.

This is a history of a people and their culture. It is also the story of how they were forced to give up their culture and accept the white man's way. This is a good read for those interested in Western history.

--Ron Perkins, *C. M.*

Ballots and Bullets: The Bloody County Seat Wars of Kansas, by Robert K. DeArment. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2006. 266pp. Photos, bibliography, map, index. Cloth, \$29.95

The “Bleeding Kansas” of *Ballots and Bullets* is not the pre-Civil War years, nor the bloody raids occurring during the Civil War, but rather the little known but equally frightening bloody engagements incurred by animosities created out of bitter county seat wars in the years 1885-1892 from various counties roughly from south-central to northwestern Kansas. *Ballots and Bullets* is a well-written, thoroughly researched book that gives the reader a good reading knowledge of how violent some of the disputes became over attempts to establish towns that became county seats.

As many as a dozen men were murdered in these “wars,” many more wounded, and nobody ever really brought to justice for these brazen murders.

A general introduction brings the reader into the conflict. After a chapter on non-lethal county seat battles, DeArment discusses violent conflicts in Grant, Gray, Wichita, Stevens and Stewart counties. By far the most gratuitous violence occurs in Stevens County where what became known as the Hayfield Massacre occurred. A party of five men was surrounded as they slept in a hayfield on the night of July 25, 1888. They were then summarily shot by more than a dozen men, themselves seeking to retaliate against an earlier unsuccessful attack upon some of them.

All were executed except for one, a young man named Herbert Tonney, who, though shot through the neck, feigned death and survived. What is interesting about this event is that six men were later sentenced to die upon conviction for the murders, but they were eventually released on a court technicality and were never again tried for their crimes. Indeed, what marks these violent county wars as remarkable is the fact that no one really ever was brought to justice for these vicious criminal attacks, and that primarily because of the issue of the county seat. One’s peers are the very people who would not convict the killers for their crimes.

There is much more intrigue and detail to this book than has been revealed here. *Ballots and Bullets* is a very interesting book about an aspect of Kansas history that has had little written about it. The Wild West remained wild long after Indian raids, outlaw towns and other well-known events of the West had been tamed. This is a good book and comes highly recommended for anyone interested in reading this relatively little-known history of 19th-century Kansas.

--Jeff Broome, P.M.





The DENVER WESTERNERS
ROUNDUP

November - December 2007



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

**Chiefs Ouray and Ignacio pictured shortly before
Ouray's death in 1881**

The Utes Must Go

by Peter Decker

(presented Feb. 28, 2007)

THE DENVER WESTERNERS

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 280 E. 11th Ave.
 Broomfield, CO 80020

Reservations for meetings

Dorothy Krieger (303) 466-7737
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 Broomfield, CO 80020

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**Our Author**

Peter Decker is married to Dorothy and they have three grown children. He is the President of Decker & Associates, an agricultural consulting firm specializing in management, acquisition, leases, and relations with state and federal agencies. He was the Director of the Colorado Department of Agriculture. He is the owner and operator of the Double D Ranch, Ridgway, Colorado. His past experiences include Staff for Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 1967-1968 as Policy (Domestic) Analyst and speech writer for the Senator's presidential campaign.

Current memberships include: National Western Stock Show, Director, 1989- present, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association, and many others.

He attended Columbia University, New York, N.Y., earning a Ph.D. in U.S. History; Syracuse University, Syracuse, N. Y.; Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont.

The Utes Must Go

by Peter Decker
(presented Feb. 28, 2007)

In the early 19th century, President John Quincy Adams declared that we Americans had to subdue the continent because we are “commanded by bequest of the God Almighty.” Adams referred, of course, to the North American continent from which President Jefferson had, with the Louisiana Purchase, doubled the size of the United States. Others joined the Manifest Destiny chorus—ministers, the press, and most insistent of all, politicians. Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri said that the white race had “alone received the divine command to subdue and replenish the earth; for it is the ONLY race that hunts out new and distant lands, and even a New World, to subdue and replenish.”

To subdue the continent was more easily declared than accomplished. The first impediment was geography—mountains, rivers, and deserts. Assuming these geographical impediments could be overcome by American technology, Americans would have to remove somehow the native population from their lands, natives who had already demonstrated in New England, the South and the Northwest territories a willingness to fight to preserve their homelands from those who wished to take it from them.

To rationalize that the fight against Native Americans was a righteous cause and had the blessing of God, we (Anglo-Americans) demonized our enemy as “heathens,” “savages,” “Red Devils,” “redskins,” and “red

niggers.” Indians, after all, hadn’t made proper use of Nature; they had neither mined it, farmed it, nor cut timber from it. Nor did they abide by the established rules of warfare. They wouldn’t stand and fight; Indians used camouflage, and after a victory, they scalped their victims, and committed other unspeakable crimes. Most Americans agreed with Francis Parkman who declared: “few will see their extinction without regret.” Or as General William Sherman said to President Grant: “The only good Indians I have seen are dead.”

How then to remove the Indians? Various options presented themselves. (1) We could allow the Army to kill them off, an alternative favored by the Army which, with this mission, could expect an increase in its Congressional appropriation. (2) Allow Divine Providence to work out its predetermined plan for an inferior race (Indians). Do not interfere, therefore, with the deadly process by which white man’s diseases killed off the native population. (3) Encourage intra-tribal warfare whereby the Indians would eventually kill themselves off as tribes fight with each other over the shrinking hunting grounds. (4) Let them starve to death after their hunting grounds had been occupied or decimated. (5) Make treaties with the tribes to take their land, and then place them in outdoor holding pens (e.g. reservations) guarded by the US Army.

After much debate, the government thought it more humane and inex-

ATTENTION!
INDIAN
FIGHTERS

Having been authorized by the Governor to raise a
Company of 100 day

U. S. VOL CAVALRY!

For immediate service against hostile Indians. I will agree all who wish to engage in such service to rank at my office and march their arms immediately.

**Pay and Rations the same as other U. S.
Volunteer Cavalry.**

Payable to include their own horses will receive \$40 per day, and rations for the same, while in the service.
The Company will also be entitled to all horses and other plunder taken from the Indians.

Office first door East of Recorder's Office.
HAY SATT.

Central City, Aug. 13, '84.

Colorado Historical Society

Courtesy Colorado Historical Society

Col. Chivington's recruiting poster for the Third Volunteer Cavalry Regiment

ensive to move towards the reservation option.

The first major effort to limit the wanderings of the Ute tribe occurred in Washington in 1868. In the negotiations to establish a Ute reservation, the question arose: how to deal with six bands of Utes and their six different leaders? The US government selected Ouray, a chief of the Uncompahgre band, an Apache-Ute leader who also spoke Spanish, and, most importantly, some English. Ouray agreed to the Treaty of 1868, without the mutual agreement of the Ute's two southern bands, which condemned Ouray for giving away all claims to the San Luis Valley, land in northern New Mexico,

and some critical hunting grounds in northern Colorado. Under the provisions of the treaty, the Utes would be confined to a reservation (approximately the western third of Colorado, or 16 million acres). The US promised the Utes protection against trespassers onto their reservation, the establishment of new agencies on the reservation and money, plus annuities and rations.

Almost before the ink had dried on the treaty, and with the discovery of silver and gold in the San Juan Mountains, white miners defied the reservation boundaries. In order to minimize contact and conflict with the growing number of miners, Washington offered to buy the San Juans from the Utes. Ouray this time said "No," after being misled in 1868 as to the eastern boundary of the Ute reservation. Otto Mears, an Indian trader who profited handsomely from government contracts, suggested to the American negotiators that Chief Ouray might be enticed to sign the treaty if promised an annual "salary" of \$1,000, and if the US government would agree to move the Los Pinos Agency from the Gunnison region to a location close to Ouray's farm near, what is today, Montrose. Ouray and the US came to an agreement. Four million acres in the San Juans were carved out of the original (1868) reservation, and the Indian Bureau moved the agency from Gunnison to a site adjacent to Ouray's farm.

Meanwhile at the Ute Indian agency on the White River, established by the Treaty of 1868, the Utes there complained about the lack of rations and the poor quality of their annuities. The turnover of agents, frequently

the agency on the White River, established by the Treaty of 1868, the Utes there complained about the lack of rations and the poor quality of their annuities. The turnover of agents, frequently



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

1873 Brunot Treaty delegation to Washington. Chipeta and Chief Ouray are in front row, flanked by two Uncompahgre sub-chiefs and interpreter Otto Mears. Back row sub-chief Washington, Susan (Ouray's sister), sub-chief Johnson and two unidentified sub-chiefs.

relieved for incompetence by the Indian Bureau in Washington, hampered any loyalty the Utes might have to the US.

The founder of Greeley, Colorado, and a former newspaper correspondent for the *New York Tribune* applied for the agent vacancy at White River agency. Nathan Meeker, an idealistic visionary who had lived among various experimental communities in Ohio before taking on the leadership of the Union Colony in Greeley, had run up large personal debts in the colony and, given his autocratic leadership style, had antagonized most of the first-generation colonists. After Horace Greeley's death in 1877 and unable to

pay off debts to Greeley's daughters. Meeker sought alternative employment. He believed that by combining his agricultural background with his Christian principles, he could improve the lives of the Utes at the White River Agency while earning enough to pay off his debts. So with the assistance of Colorado's Senator Teller and Secretary of Interior Schurz, President Grant appointed Meeker as Indian agent at the White River agency. Meeker carried with him to the agency an arrogant and self-righteous style of leadership which he had developed and practiced in Greeley.

Almost immediately Meeker



Courtesy Frank J. Meyers Collection

Soldiers with their pet elk at Fort Fred Steele, Wyoming Territory circa 1878. The fort provided protection to the Union Pacific Railroad and settlers and sent troops to the Ute White River Band Indian Agency to protect Agent Nathan Meeker.

antagonized his charges. He failed to understand Ute customs or culture, and demonstrated little interest in learning them. He insisted that the Indians give up their hunting way-of-life and with their horses, and devote themselves to “the ways of civilized whites,” which translated by Meeker meant farming, schooling and Christianity. If the Utes would not perform as directed by the agent, he would withhold their rations until such a time as they cooperated with Meeker and accepted the new way of life he outlined for the Utes.

One late summer day in 1879, Meeker ordered one of the white agency workers to plow up a horse pasture used by the Utes so that it could be transformed into a corn field. An Indian shot at the worker, but Meeker declared: “The plowing will continue.”

The next day, one of the White River Ute chiefs, Johnson, confronted Meeker in front of his office where harsh words were exchanged; the chief and Meeker tussled, and Meeker was thrown to the ground on his already injured shoulder. Embarrassed and humiliated by the incident, Meeker fired off a telegram to Washington, exaggerating the incident with Chief Johnson, saying: “My life and that of my family is threatened.”

Washington immediately called upon troops at Fort Fred Steele (a small Army outpost along the new rail line of the Union Pacific in southern Wyoming) to come to the aid of Agent Meeker and his family, to capture the guilty Indian (Johnson), and other Indians at White River thought to have set fires in the area, and transport them back to Wyoming for trial. The small



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

Hospital (left), guard house (center), and soldiers quarters (right) at Ft. Crawford on the Uncompahgre River, close to the Los Pinos Agency, circa 1880.

Army force, under the command of Major Thomas Thornburgh, assembled itself, gathered additional supplies and a guide in Rawlins, and then proceeded south to the White River Agency with 175 troops and 25 civilian teamsters. Thornburgh, a West Point graduate, had an undistinguished military career. Earlier when ordered to chase down some Indians in Nebraska, he managed to get his unit lost in the middle of the Nebraska Sand Hills, and had to be rescued by another cavalry unit.

Thornburgh believed that his orders to head to the White River Agency and make the necessary arrest could be accomplished with ease. He also recognized that like all Army officers at the time, promotions only came to Indian fighters, not to military peace

keepers.

The Utes and their war chief, Captain Jack, kept an eye on the Army column as it moved south from Rawlins, Wyoming to the agency and sent word to Thornburgh that if he and his troops crossed the reservation boundary at Milk Creek, they'd be attacked by the Utes. There was no reason, nor any treaty authority, for US Army troops to come onto the reservation. Meeker stories were all lies, the Utes claimed, and he had treated the Utes unfairly; he needed to be replaced with someone who understood the needs of the White River band of Utes. Thornburgh would not listen to the pleas of the Indians and claimed "I have my orders" as he and his troops kept moving towards the reservation. When the Utes understood



Courtesy Colorado Historical Society

Ration day at the Los Pinos Agency, with US soldiers in attendance, circa 1880.

he would not turn back, they waited for him at Milk Creek, some 15 miles north of the agency.

As Thornburgh's troops crossed Milk Creek, the Utes attacked the soldiers from their camouflaged positions behind rocks and bushes. At first the troops were easy targets, including Thornburgh who took a deadly bullet to the chest. The troops quickly formed a defensive circle with their supply wagons at the edge of Milk Creek waiting for reinforcements.

Simultaneous to the attack at Milk Creek, Captain Jack, the Ute war chief, sent a messenger from the battlefield back to the agency to report the army's "invasion" onto the reservation. At the agency, armed Indians attacked and killed the white workers, including Meeker, who died with a metal stake

driven into his mouth and through his skull. The Indians took as hostages Mrs. Meeker, her daughter and the wife and two children of a white agency worker. The Indians burned much of the agency before escaping to the south with their hostages. The troops at Milk Creek meanwhile, managed to survive despite heavy casualties, until a relief column of "buffalo soldiers" came to their assistance. At the western Army headquarters in Chicago, General Sherman learned of the Army's defeat. This battle loss, in addition to the humiliation suffered by the Army at Little Big Horn only three years earlier was enough for the Army to call for all-out war against the Utes. General Sherman alerted three-quarters of the entire US Army to prepare for war with the Utes in Colorado and their reported Indian allies in

Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico. Governor Pitkin, the racist Colorado governor, also added to the public call for all-out elimination of the Utes when he sounded the alarm that the Indians were preparing to attack pioneer settlements throughout Colorado. Few politicians in Colorado would dare to argue with the headline in the *Denver Post* "the Utes Must Go."

Fortunately calmer heads prevailed, in particular Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz, who first convinced the Army to back off while he attempted to negotiate a temporary peace with the Utes. He promised the Utes a fair hearing in Washington before they released the women and children hostages. Chief Ouray also aided the peace efforts with a message to the White River Utes suggesting that further fights with the Army would only lead to further military action against all Utes.

As part of the peace negotiations, hearings were held in Washington to determine the guilty Utes charged with "violating" Mrs. Meeker and the other woman hostage and leading the "massacre" at the agency. Capt. Jack and Chief Ouray refused to implicate, or hand over to the US authorities, any Indian charged with leading the massacre or with raping the woman hostages. In the growing atmosphere of racial prejudice, the President appointed a Peace Commission which soon recommended that all Utes, with the exception of those in the south, be removed to Utah onto a new reservation or then existing Uintah (Ute) reservation. Only

the southern Utes would be allowed to remain in Colorado on a small reservation along the New Mexican border.

For the most part, the Utes had lost their homeland. Ouray, a realist, understood that further fighting would only spell disaster and the total eradication of the tribe. He recommended that the tribe vote in favor of the forced peace treaty. Again, assisted by bribes from Otto Mears, the Utes approved of the Peace Treaty of 1881.

For the Army, only one matter needed to be brought to a close. That meant the capture of Captain Jack, who bragged to Congress that his warriors had defeated the weak and poorly-led US Army, and that he took personal responsibility and pride for the death of Major Thornburgh. When the Army learned, through a spy, that Jack had returned to his old hunting grounds in southern Wyoming, the Army ordered a small detachment of soldiers to track him to the Shoshone Reservation near Fort Washakie. They located Jack, told him to surrender, and when his answer was a defiant shot to the heart of one of the soldiers, the officer in charge ordered up a howitzer from the nearby fort. The blast from the weapon, at point blank range on the teepee where Jack had hid, decimated the war chief and with him went any thought of further military engagement against the US Army.

Their fight had ended; yet they have survived into the 21st century, as a proud and healthy tribe in Utah and Colorado.

Over the corral rail

With this issue of the ROUNDUP we are expanding the "Over the Corral Rail" section to include current news regarding the Denver Posse of Westerners and its members. Please submit your items of news, etc. to the editor, Jim Krebs, P.M. at JKrebsCO@cs.com. Deadline is the 10th of the first month in the date of publication.

Meeting of Denver Posse of the Westerners, September 26, 2007.

Margaret Coel, a fourth generation Coloradan, graduated in 1960 with a B. A. from Marquette University. She did graduate work at C.U. and attended Oxford University. Many of her books are set in the West telling about some great event that happened a long time ago. Her informal talk entitled "The Arapahos Past and Present" was of her research, interactions, and participation in ceremonies, etc. with some of the Arapaho Nation people. It was an interesting dialogue. She also displayed and signed some of her several books.



Meeting of Denver Posse of the Westerners October 24, 2007

Dr. Jeff Broome, P. M., presented his paper entitled "Custer's Summer Camp of 1867." It will be published at a later date in the ROUNDUP.

A photography contest was held with the subject "While On Vacation" sponsored by the Gaunt Fund. There were 14 very fine photographic entries.

First prize: Ray Koernig \$50.00; second prize: Roy Hohn \$25.00; third prize: Jim Krebs \$10.00

Posse members win awards

Westerners International has announced its "Co-Founders Best Book" competition for 2006. Third Place was awarded to Larry Reno, P.M. for his book, *The Life and Times of Nathaniel Hale Pryor*.

The Westerners International also announced that the Third Prize for the Philip A. Donaldson - Best Program" competition for 2006 was awarded to Dr. George Krieger, Ed and Nancy Bathke, and Ted Krieger for their presentation, "Colorado in Song: The Good, the Bad, and the Atonal."

Certificates for these awards were given at the meeting, and the Denver Posse of Westerners congratulates each of the recipients of these awards.

New sound system

The Denver Posse has been given two new sound systems. They will be used at the regular meetings. One system is a lapel microphone which allows the speaker more freedom of movement around the podium and projection screen. There are also two wireless portable hand-held microphones which may be used anywhere

in the room. These will be used for the introductions and to make announcements from the audience from anywhere in the room. The systems were donated by Ken Gaunt P M, through the Gaunt Memorial Fund.

Coming events

Dinner Meeting, November 28, 2007 at the Park Hill Golf Club House.

John Fielder, "Colorado 1870-2000, Vol. II." John Fielder is a nationally renowned photographer, publisher and preservationist. He hikes and skis hundreds of miles in Colorado alone each year and drives thousands - in order to record on film its most sublime natural places.

December 19, 2007, Park Hill Golf Club House, Annual Christmas Party and Winter Rendezvous. Hugh Bingham, as "Mark Twain"; presentation of Rosentock Awards; installation of 2008 Officers of Denver Posse.

New members

Diane Rossi of Littleton, referred by Nancy Bathke. Her interests are Western history and reading. She is Archivist manager of Friends of the Historic Fort Logan.

Linda Alden of Denver, referred by Keith Fessenden.

Carolyn MacRossie of Denver, referred by Bob Pulcifer.

Anna Lee Frohlich of Lakewood, referred by Bill Anderson. Her interests are: Western and family history and gardening. She is a member of Tesoro Foundation (The Fort)

Gary Chandler of Centennial, referred by Jeff Broome. His interests are Western history, Indian wars and Civil War Round table.

Dave Patrick of Aurora, referred by Linda Alden. He is interested in places and what happened there.

Stan Dempsey of Lakewood, referred by Bob Pulcifer. He is interested in mining history, Colorado history. He is chairman of the Colorado History Society, and president of the Mining History Association.

Sheriff's report

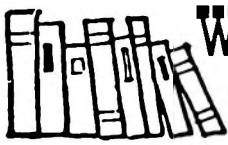
Sheriff Bob Pulcifer announced that Dennis Hagen, P.M. has accepted an appointment to be the Archivist for the Denver Posse. Dennis is an archivist at the Denver Public Library and will provide valuable expertise to that responsibility. Rick Barth, P.M. has agreed to serve as assistant Archivist under Dennis Hagen.

Posse members' published works

Gall, Lakota war Chief, Larson, Robert W., P.M., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.

Tall Grass, Dallas, Sandra, P.M., St. Martins Press, N. Y., 2007.

Thomas F. Walsh: Progressive Businessman and Colorado Mining Tycoon, Stewart, John, University of Colorado Publishing, 2007.



Westerners Bookshelf



Ballots and Bullets: The Bloody County Seat Wars of Kansas, by Robert K. DeArment. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. 266pp. Photos, bibliography, map, index. Cloth, \$29.95.

The “Bleeding Kansas” of *Ballots and Bullets* is not the pre-Civil War years, nor the bloody raids occurring during the Civil War, but rather the little known but equally frightening bloody engagements incurred by animosities created out of bitter county seat wars in the years 1885-1892 from various counties roughly from south-central to northwestern Kansas.

Ballots and Bullets is a well-written, thoroughly researched book that gives the reader a good reading knowledge of how violent some of the disputes became over attempts to establish towns that became county seats.

As many as a dozen men were murdered in these “wars,” many more wounded, and nobody ever really brought to justice for these brazen murders.

A general introduction brings the reader into the conflict. After a chapter on non-lethal county seat battles, DeArment discusses violent conflicts in Grant, Gray, Wichita, Stevens and Stewart counties. By far the most gratuitous violence occurs in Stevens County where what became known as the Hayfield Massacre occurred. A party of five men was surrounded as they slept in a hayfield on the night of July 25, 1888. They were then summarily shot by more than a dozen men, themselves seeking to retaliate against an earlier unsuccessful attack upon some of them.

All were executed except for one, a young man named Herbert Tonney, who, though shot through the neck, feigned death and survived. What is interesting about this event is that six men were later sentenced to die upon conviction for the murders, but they were eventually released on a court technicality and were never again tried for their crimes. Indeed, what marks these violent county wars as remarkable is the fact that no one really ever was brought to justice for these violent criminal attacks, and that primarily because of the issue of the county seat. One’s peers are the very people who would not convict the killers for their crimes.

There is much more intrigue and detail to this book than has been revealed here. *Ballots and Bullets* is a very interesting book about an aspect of Kansas history that has had little written about it. The Wild West remained wild long after Indian raids, outlaw towns and other well known events of the West had been tamed. This is a good book and comes highly recommended for anyone interested in reading about this relatively little-known history of 19th century Kansas.

--Jeff Broome, P.M.