



The DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

January - February 2020



*Author's collection*

*Cover of The Official Souvenir Book for the 1897 Festival*

**Denver's Festival of Mountain and Plain  
and the First Movies Shot in Colorado**

*By David Emrich*

(presented October. 24, 2018)



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## THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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## Denver's Festival of Mountain and Plain and the First Movies Shot in Colorado

By David Emrich

Part Mardi Gras, part State Fair and especially in later years, part rodeo, Denver's Festival of Mountain and Plain was both a celebration of economic revival following the economic depression after the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act in 1893 and a city-wide event to promote Denver and Colorado as the true economic center of the Rocky Mountain West. From the hyperbole of the day, the Chamber of Commerce said,

*The financial panic of 1893 had left its withering trail upon every industry of the land. Values went tumbling downward until such a low tide of depreciation had been reached, that courage had faltered and hope had vanished from the realms of business....Luxuries were discarded, household expenses curtailed, horses and carriages relegated to the farm or possibly the auction block. All around was darkening and hopeless business despair.... The year 1894 saw the discomfiture and failure of many who had, by super-human effort, survived the crash of 1893. Enterprise and ambition counted for naught. Speculation stood aghast at the vast extent of ruin. The season of 1895 seemed at last to offer some basis of at least partial hope....A feeling of renewed security, a desire to be up and doing.... The impulse was to publicly testify in some fitting manner the glad alacrity with which all business interests grasped at the new lease of prosperity. Out of this public sentiment of universal gratitude grew the idea of the Festival of Mountain and Plain.<sup>1</sup>*

William Byers, *Rocky Mountain News* founder and civic booster extraordinaire, stated that,

*The Festival of Mountain and Plain was conceived and originated as an expression and outpouring of the thankfulness of the people for the bounteous harvest of 1895. It was to be an expression of "hope which began with promising crops and signs of revival to commerce and the industries. It was to be a reunion of all the varied interest of the State...[with] equal significance to those whose crops and herds had grown upon the plains, or who worked in the shops of the cities or toiled in the mountains at the mines."<sup>2</sup>*

## THE FESTIVALS

The Festival was one of the first of many events around the region that wanted to celebrate the rugged roots of its past. These events continue to be a way to increase local business and, of course, to just have a great social event and a very big party. But these celebrations are also public relations events that promote the unique character, the vibrancy, and the importance of the region to the rest of the country. The 1897 *Official Souvenir Book of the Festival of Mountain and Plain* puts the public relations goal front and center:

*Denver is the colonizing center of a territory much larger than California. Indeed, it may be said, that it is the City of the Arid West. This means the country west of the 100th Meridian and east of the Sierras, within which territory there is neither city or town threatening to rival it. The charm of Denver, is its freshness and absence of squalor. There are no "Poor sections," nor is there even dinginess or decay....[I]ts public and private buildings have been adapted both from architectural and sanitary standpoints, to the latest requirements of taste and health.<sup>3</sup>*

Credit for the initial idea of holding a festival was given to General S.K. Hooper, general passenger agent of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. His visit to the Flower Carnival in Colorado Springs led him to feel that if Colorado Springs could put on a festival, why not Denver? The Flower Festival too was a celebration and parade held from 1893 to 1902.

Perhaps Hooper's actual goal was to create passenger traffic into Denver from all over the state for the railroad he worked for, but his conversations with various city leaders in the spring of 1895 led to the creation of the Festival. While William Byers headed the Board for the Festivals in 1896 and 1897, it was Platt Rogers and future mayor Robert Speer who spearheaded this first Festival.

The Festival Board worked hard to create a memorable celebration. In the official program of the 1895 Festival it is stated that

*It is intended to give a new form of state fair and mining exposition. In them every county and town will have a place, combining to make such a grand showing of the wonderful wealth and unrivaled resources of Colorado that the festival will at once attain national reputation. This display of material wealth aims to have a setting of parades, pageants and other attractions many of them wholly unique and others typically western in character....It is the first time at any fall festival that an attempt has been made to trace the entire history of the state of the union and show here present development in one mammoth parade.<sup>4</sup>*

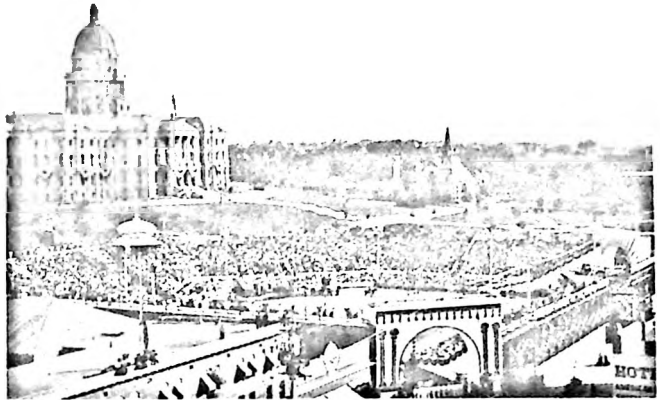
Board member J. H. Jordon was from New Orleans. His involvement brought together elements that made Denver's festival have its Mardi Gras feeling. Like Mardi Gras, the Festival of Mountain and Plain was structured around multiple days of parades through downtown, where citizens could participate or just observe. These parades created the structure and the excuse for the citywide party-like atmosphere in the first few years of the Festival. Through his contacts, many of the floats that appeared in the

parades were imported from New Orleans. These floats were brought by train to Denver and provided the examples of what could be created by Colorado communities. Some were stored by the Festival Board and used again for later parades.

Jordon also took a very active role in creating the Slaves of the Silver Serpent Ball and Royalty for the Festival. Not officially part of the Festival itself, the Slaves of the Silver Serpent nonetheless was tightly interwoven into the celebration. "For the first time in the West an allegorical parade will be given after the plan of the ideal Mardi Gras. This will be under the direction of a mystic order known as the Slaves of the Silver Serpent, which is sparing neither time nor money to make the pageant gorgeous and complete."<sup>5</sup>

The Festival parades worked their way through the downtown streets, serpentineing up and down the streets from 14th and 19th, from Larimer all the way to 12th and Broadway. They ended at grandstands set up at the corner of Broadway and Colfax, where the 16th street mall bus turnaround is today. It would seem that this piece of ground was, as it is today, owned by the Denver Tramway Company, now the Regional Transportation District.<sup>6</sup>

The first year's three-day event was structured much the same in the following years. The first day consisted of two parades, one during the day and one at night. The day-time parade consisted of eight divisions. In the first division



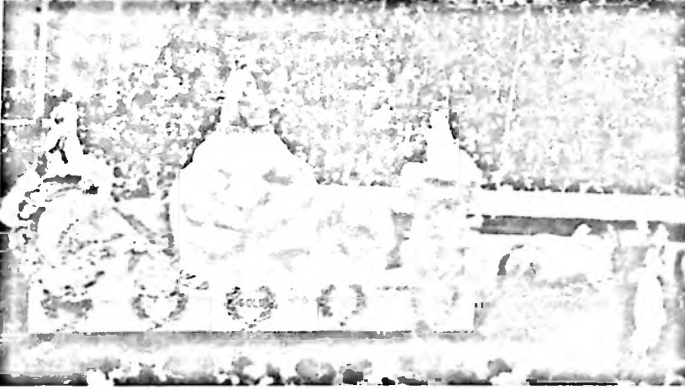
Buckwaller Collection, History Colorado, 10029040

*Broadway Grounds was the End Point of Most of the Parades*

*...will be pictured, step by step, the development of Colorado from the earliest days. After a glimpse at the Cliff Dwellers and the Indian and Mexican occupancy of certain sections of the country, the invasion of the Rocky Mountain region by the whites will be taken up and the wealth of dramatic and historic incident followed through the entire pioneer period. The trials and discoveries of early pioneers and the coming of hunters and trappers to the wilderness will be portrayed, and next the greater invasion, when a vast tide of humanity swept slowly across the plains to found a new empire.... A score of events of historic interest will be presented by floats and tableaux, making a complete panorama of the development of the State, historically accurate and intensely interesting.<sup>7</sup>*

The second division displayed Colorado's mining sector. "[Colorado's] inexhaustible mines of the precious metals will be supplemented with extensive exhibits and

attractive floats, illustrating here wealth of coal, iron, oil and other mineral products. The displays made by the different mining camps will have places assigned in this division, which will prove an impressive object lesson in the magnificent wealth of the State."<sup>8</sup>



*Kirkland Collection, Denver Public Library, X25033*

*Mining Float from the 1896 Festival*

limited to flowers, natural and artificial, but grains and grasses, ribbons and bunting and other decorative materials will be used."<sup>9</sup> Finishing with the seventh and eighth divisions were Civic Societies and Schools.

The first night's event was a "illuminated trolley musicale" along 16th Street between Larimer and Broadway. "Ten of the largest electric cars will be used. They will be splendidly and lavishly illuminated and the crowds upon the streets will be treated to a charming musical festival." The program notes that over 3,000 electric globes will be used.<sup>10</sup> This parade could be seen as the precursor for the Parade of Lights that winds through downtown Denver in December each year since 1975.

The second day's daytime event was a military parade with the Seventh United States Infantry and Second United States Cavalry from Ft. Logan, the First and Second National Guard Infantry, and Chaffee Light Artillery participating. Various Posts of the Grand Army of the Republic also marched. The evening parade was an illuminated "wheelman's" parade with as many as 2000 bicycles winding their way through downtown. The program states, "The band on tandem bicycles which will lead the parade, is something never before attempted in this country."

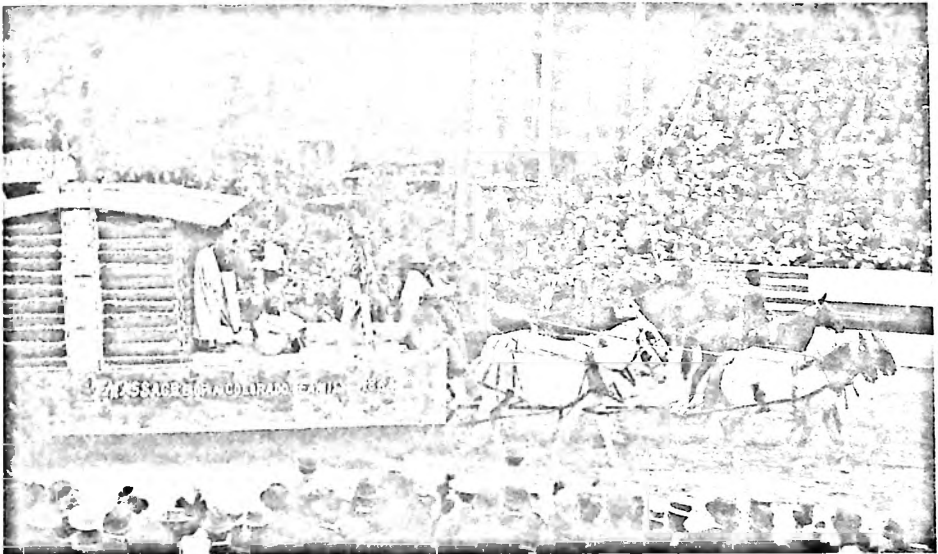
For just the first year, mining took center stage when various miners drilling contests were held on day 3. Both single-handed and double-handed drilling contests were held. For the double-handed contests first price was \$250 donated by the Denver Mining Exchange plus all entrance fees, making this reward equal to \$7600 today. Requirements stated, "All steel must be full size—seven-eighths of an inch. 'Milling' hole with two hammers not allowed beyond two blows from each hammer when change is made. Weight of hammer not to exceed eight pounds. Rock to be used, Gunnison granite. Time of contest, fifteen minutes." The judges for this event were from Ouray, Cripple Creek and Leadville.

The third division: Agriculture and Horticulture; the fourth: Live Stock; the fifth: Manufacturing; the sixth: Decorated Carriages. "One of the most pleasing features of the long line will be a parade of decorated carriages, buggies and traps of various kinds.... The decorations will not be

At the same time, 10 a.m., at City Park, a band contest—only non-professional bands—was held with a \$500 prize. At 2 o'clock the Ute and Santa Clara Indians who had come north and were camped there, performed dances and ceremonies. Although not in the program, the *Republican* discussed the Ute dances on Thursday morning:

*For almost two hours yesterday morning such an entertainment was given Denver and her visitors as was never before imagined possible even in the wild and woolly West. No other city in the Union could produce such a variety of picturesque and unique performances....When all was in readiness of the dance of the Utes the familiar "hie, hiding" of the Indians began, and quickly it ran from one mouth to the other until the entire party was at it. Half a dozen of them commended a droning song and the dance began. A Tom-tom kept up an incessant beating and the dancers each performed fantastic figures....It would be difficult to picture anything more promisingly blood-thirsty than a Southern Ute dance....It was vociferously applauded by the crowds and as both the crowd and the Indians became better acquainted the better they got along."*

The military troops that were in the parades during the second day were also encamped at City Park. The regular army troops and the tribes were camped where the Denver Zoo is today, the National Guard troops were in the area that was not yet the big lake we know today. This is an indication that Colorado had changed just a bit since the 1860s. Native American dances were performed in a city park just a generation away from what those in attendance called the conquering of the West.



Kirkland Collection, Denver Public Library, X25034

*The Indian Attacks East of Denver that Led to the Sand Creek Massacre are Portrayed*

The final night was perhaps the biggest moment for the Festival. At 8 p.m., the "Grand Allegorical Parade" was presented by the Slaves of the Silver Serpent. After this final street party, there was a general reception given by the Slaves of the Silver Serpent at the Brown Palace. A lively night was had by all. The Slaves of the Silver Serpent always was referred to as a secret society. For this first year, the ball included a reception for the public from the King of the Slaves of the Silver Serpent. The *Denver Republican* newspaper reported that, "The flying hours were caught and held, that all of pleasure that was in them might be extracted and nothing lost."<sup>12</sup>

Over 100,000 people participated in the first-year festivities. This, when the population of Denver proper was 125,000. Because it was such a success, it wasn't too difficult for the city fathers to plan a second Festival. It is reported that 150,000 people saw the first day parade of the second Festival in 1896, one third of them from out of town. Once again, a "Pageant of Progress" opened the first-day and a "Street and Trolley Musical" with ten bands playing from the trolleys ended the first day. The second day started with a band contest, a balloon ascension and a parachute jump in City Park in the morning. [One might ask, where did one jump from in City Park in 1896, perhaps from the balloon.] The afternoon saw a Masked Parade serpentine through downtown between 17th, 19th, California and Arapahoe. "Lord Mayor Argentum Autumn will begin his reign with a monster parade. It will be composed of clubs, societies, individuals, in fancy, humorous and grotesque costumes, all doing homage to Queen Thalia."<sup>13</sup>

This Masked Parade again is reminiscent of Mardi Gras. Perhaps not as outrageous a party as today's Mardi Gras or New Year's Eve events, yet still beyond the social norms restricting 1890s Denver. Mysterious, a touch dangerous perhaps, apparently the year before the evening Allegorical Parade became quite a party. For the second and third year the official program and the newspapers gave the instruction that at the parade's conclusion, "...all teams and floats will turn to the right and retire for the day. Individual maskers will turn to the left and be allowed to remain within the district bounded by 15th and 17th streets, Larimer and Broadway until 6 pm, when all maskers will be compelled to retire from the streets."<sup>14</sup>

The third day was the military day and at the night the Festival ended once again with the "Grand Parade of the Slaves of the Silver Serpent" and the invitation-only Silver Serpent Ball at the Brown Palace. In this second year, it seems that Denver Society had taken full control of the Silver Serpent.

## THE MOVIES

The movies were quite new in the late 1890s. As of yet, they were no competition to events like the Festival of Mountain and Plain. But at the same time that Denver was enjoying the first three festivals, the movie business was developing. While moving images had been seen since 1893 with Edison's Kinetoscope and the later Mutoscope, it was the invention of a projector in 1896 that allowed a room of people to see movies at the same time that propelled the movies over the next ten years into the entertainment king it was in the 20th century. The interest in seeing projected movies

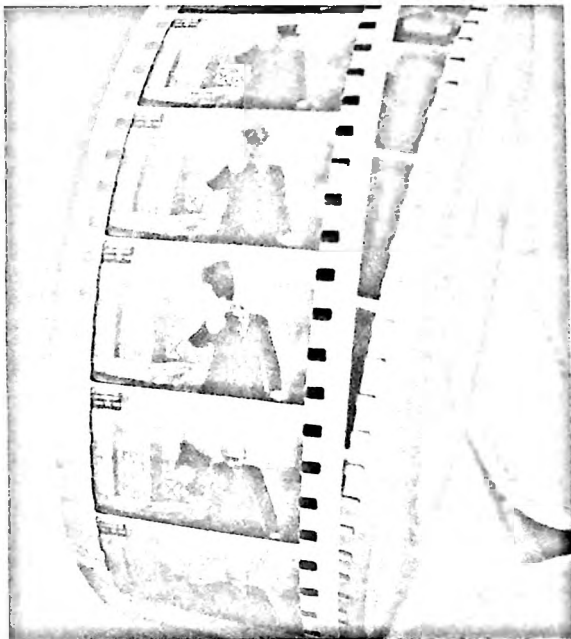


was great throughout the U.S. and throughout the country, competition to be the first in every town was robust.

The first projected movies seen in Colorado were exhibited in August 1896. Elitch Gardens at 38th and Tennyson and Manhattan Beach at Sloan Lake both tried to be the first to show movies in Colorado. Competition between the two main early film companies, Thomas Edison's company and the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, were equally determined to become the dominant film production company. The Elitch theatre showed the first movies two days earlier than Manhattan Beach, on August 14, 1896.

Movie projectors were new contraptions. The ability to shoot and then project movies was rapidly evolving. The Edison Vitascope projector that was premiered in April in New York, and in Denver in August 1896, was abandoned by the end of the year. Even faster than in our current electronic age it's difficult to imagine how quickly competing systems were built, used and then abandoned. Seemingly overnight the still photographer and tinkerer wanted to build their own combination camera-projectors. These were the techies of the day that made their start at working in the moving image business.

The Edison company, because of its longer history and greater reach, was aggressive at producing content. For us today, the movies are the end goal of the movie industry. For Edison, however, the movies themselves were more of a necessary evil that enabled them to sell projectors. Using today's terms, Edison was a hardware manufacturer, not a software producer. Films in this first generation of moving images were sold, not rented out. The business model was still being



*The Library of Congress*

*A Film Print from the Paper Print Collection*

worked out in the first ten years too. They were sold by the foot, so that when you see early movies, it sometimes feels like the camera keeps running when the action is already finished. But, nothing was wasted and every foot could be sold.

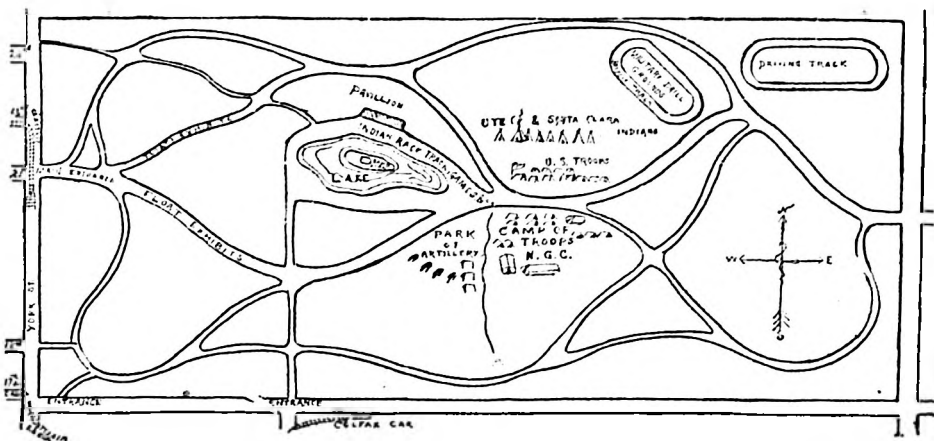
The two men who shot the films in Denver were true adventurers. Twenty-five-year-old and veteran Edison head of production James H. White and cameraman Fred W. Blechynden spent ten months travelling west, eventually getting as far as Shanghai and

Yokohama. Leaving Orange, New Jersey, they travelled west, shooting in San Francisco, Yellowstone, and Seattle before coming to Denver. From here they moved south through Colorado Springs, Ignacio, and then on to Mexico.

By 1897 the Festival was at its peak. And this was the year the movies gave it, and Denver, exposure to an international audience. The first day, again was a Parade of Progress, and it is here that the first films were shot. The *Denver Post* wrote:

*All the latest inventions for obtaining life-like pictures of the week's parade will be in use. The Viviascope, which is the very latest creation of this character, the product of C. S. Jackson, son of Denver's famous photographer, W. H. Jackson, will be given its first practical work. It was tested on Saturday and proved that it is capable of accomplishing the designs of its inventor. The Viviascope not only takes pictures at the rate of 30 per second, but displays them on canvas. Mr. Jackson will take pictures of the scenes from a vantage point in the grand stand.*

*The local representatives of the New York Biograph company will obtain many views for use in theaters and the Edison Vitascope will also catch all that can be secured of the parades, balls and other moving panoramas, all guaranteed that millions of amusement-seeking people throughout the union will be reminded of the Festival of Mountain and Plain during the next year as a result of scientific discoveries.<sup>15</sup>*



Rocky Mountain News, October 17, 1895  
City Park Camps for the 1895 Festival

The paper print collection of the Library of Congress houses some of the earliest moving images produced. These films exist because until 1912 the law of the day only allowed moving images to be copyrighted as "photographs." Since there was no restriction of what size a photograph could be, these photos were 35mm wide and dozens or hundreds of feet long paper prints. This required film production companies to print paper rolls from their film negatives to allow their movies to be protected by copy-

right. These submissions were saved, whereas the negatives, and the prints that were made from them, were lost to chemical decomposition, warehouse fires or outright destruction by the companies that produced them. The nitrate film that the original negatives and projection prints were made of were flammable and, with time, combustible. These characteristics were not shared with the paper prints at the Library of Congress. While the production companies did not bother to copyright all films, this treasure trove of movies allows us to see these very early films.

In recent years a select few were re-transferred from the paper rolls with greater resolution. Unfortunately, the films produced at the Festival of Mountain and Plain by the Edison company have not been remastered. The Biograph company films were not part of the surviving Library of Congress collection. It is unknown if the Jackson films made it out of its camera.



Paper Print Collection, Library of Congress  
Still from the Edison Film "Decorated Carriages"

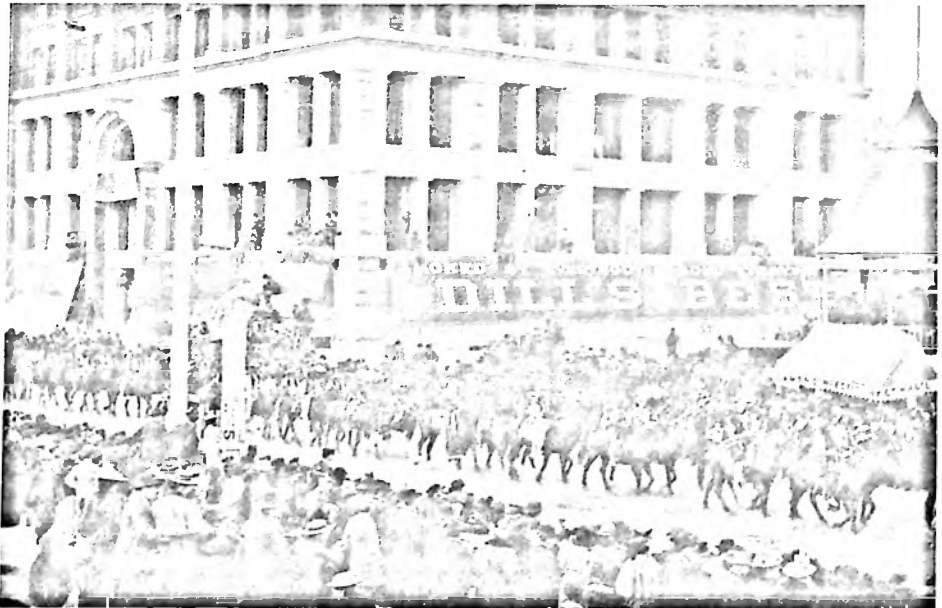
Five films shot of the first day have been preserved: "Procession of Mounted Indians and Cowboys," "Cripple Creek Floats," "Horticultural Floats," "Decorated Carriages," and "Chinese Procession #12." These films are all one static shot of a parade going by a grandstand. To our eyes, these are not much, but in 1897, the idea of seeing motion and seeing these images from around the world was entertainment. Sometimes we forget that 120 years later people are entertained by watching single-shot videos on YouTube. Perhaps we're not too different after all. (To see these movies, go to: [www.coloradofilmhistory.com](http://www.coloradofilmhistory.com).)

The first night, again, had a bicycle parade, and fireworks were presented over the lake in City Park. The second day consisted of band competitions throughout the morning. No footage of these events exists. Once again there was a Masked Procession from 3:30 to 6:30 pm and we have the surviving film, "Masked Procession." The Festival's program calls this part of the day, "Promiscuous Masking." The day ended with a large street party, or Bal Champetre (country ball), from eight to midnight. Only the fully costumed could participate on the dance floor. Observers were allowed to sit in the grandstand.

For those who did not want to participate in the Bal Champetre, "Unique Indian Dances and Games" were had in City Park. It is here that we can see four more movies: "Wand Dance, Pueblo Indians," "Eagle Dance, Pueblo Indians," "Circle Dance, Ute Indians," and "Buck Dance, Ute Indians." Perhaps these were not shot this evening and were filmed at a different time; we don't know for sure.

Finishing up the 1897 Festival, the third day was similar to previous years: A military march, with bands again in the morning and early afternoon and then the Parade of the Slaves of the Silver Serpent. *Harpers Weekly* wrote of the Festival,

*The willingness to take a huge amount of trouble and to spend a good deal of money for annual frolics of this sort is an interesting feature of contemporary Western character. Such ebullitions have never developed on such a scale in New England or in the East. They are of the South and West and they indicate the presence of a streak of spectacular gayety in the American character on which we have not been much used to count. It means no doubt, a strong infusion of French or German blood.<sup>16</sup>*



Kirkland Collection, Denver Public Library, X25041

*Parade of Cowboys and Indians from the 1896 Festival*

## LATER YEARS

The Festival continued uninterrupted for two more years, 1898 and 1899. But the novelty of the parades and masked processions began to wear thin. One of the initial successes was the participation of so many other communities in the parade.

*It is hoped that one result of the festival will be that people living in Colorado outside of Denver will cease to think that this city is their enemy and that it is a duty they owe themselves to oppose it in all things. The truth is that Denver seeks to build up all parts of the state.... Very recently Colorado has learned the lesson of self-reliance. It has discovered that it can stand alone and that it does not have to depend upon Eastern money for the development of its resources.<sup>17</sup>*

But the cost of attending on an ongoing basis and just disinterest outside of Denver shrank attendance. In Denver, businesses and individuals were not as interested in donating money and fund raising became more difficult. So the board running the Festival looked at other options to reinvigorate the Festival.<sup>18</sup>

In 1899, the Festival incorporated the Colorado State Fair and a horse show as additions. The Queen of the Silver Serpent and her retinue still presided over the full week of the 1899 Festival. And the "Heroes of Manila and Santiago" were at the front of the military parade. Change was good, but interest waned.

There was no Festival in 1900, really for no stated reason, and by 1901 the State Fair found its home in Pueblo. So the path forward for the Festival became narrower. The committee working on the festival approached the Woodmen of the World to ask if they would participate. While an "exhibition team" did march, along with representatives from other fraternal orders, there was no great level of collaboration. The Festival became smaller with each year. Indeed, while the Festival for 1895-1899 had nicely printed programs, attendees of the 1901 Festival depended on the schedule printed in the newspapers. The most interesting event that debuted in 1901 was the Rough Riders Tournament. This event presented a "Championship Rough Riders Belt of the World" to Martin T. Sowder of Diamond, Wyoming.<sup>19</sup> This belt became a point of pride and the term Championship Rough Rider was held by the Festival board as one of its most important assets. Perhaps a way forward was beginning to appear, a true celebration of the West.

But in 1902, the board decided not to hold a Festival. There was concern that because the committee had gone to businesses for sponsorships the previous year with the idea that this would not be repeated, that the festival could not be held without a clear new funding source. The *Denver Republican* editorialized,

*Public Opinion both in Denver and out of it will approve the decision of the manager of the Mountain and Plain Festival to hold no festival this year...the attraction became stale and people living in other parts of the state refused to come. Denver itself became wary of the show and business men refused to contribute to the festival fund.<sup>20</sup>*

However, the board did decide to hold another competition for the Championship Rough Rider's Belt. On August 8th the Tramway Company agreed to allow the Festival

Association to use Broadway Park for free for three days. It is here that the final film of the Festival of Mountain and Plain was shot. Denver's own first filmmaker, Buck Buckwalter, was awarded a place to photograph the competition. "Bronco Busting Scenes, Championship of the World" is also found in the Paper Print Collection of the Library of Congress. Buckwalter went on to work on many other films for the Selig Polyscope Company of Chicago until 1908.

In 1903, the board again decided not to hold a Festival, but they did promote the Bronco Busting Championship and its Belt to other cities. Both the Pueblo State Fair and Cheyenne Frontier Days were considered for the honor of hosting the championship, and for this single year Frontier Days did hold the competition.

Cheyenne Frontier Days' origin was similar to that of the Festival of Mountain and Plain. It is said that its genesis was when Union Pacific Railroad Agent Frederick W. Angier thought of ways of increasing passenger traffic to Cheyenne after seeing festivals such as Greeley's potato festival. One would expect that Cheyenne's leadership saw both the successes and failures of Denver's Festival as both encouragement and a warning of what lay ahead in presenting a multi-day event. The Cheyenne Frontier Days began its initial events on September 23, 1897, just a few days before the 3rd Festival of Mountain and Plain. Clearly, by 1902, Frontier Days was a more viable event than Denver's Festival. Its intention "to show the life of the cowboy and cowgirl of the Wyoming plains" was a more sustainable version of celebration.<sup>21</sup>

In 1904, the board approached the board of the St Louis World's Fair to see if they would be interested in holding a competition for the championship belt. The World's Fair declined and there isn't any indication as to whether Cheyenne or Pueblo were approached again. Perhaps they thought these competitive events were just too close to Denver to make sense to offer them the World Championship Belt to a close competitor. The belt was never awarded again.

In 1905, discussions were held with the leaders of the upcoming Great Army of the Republic Encampment about combining their events. The discussions didn't get too far it would appear as the Festival board minutes do not discuss this proposal in detail. While the Festival board wasn't giving up the effort to hold another festival, these two events really were not that compatible. Perhaps this could have been a one-time event, but the limited effort made by the board makes it clear that a renewal of a large festival like those held during the first five years was not being contemplated.

Strangely, there's no mention of the National Western Stock Show—which started in 1906—as a potential partner. Surely the Festival could have been melded into the Stock Show celebrations. But at least from the perspective of the Festival board minutes, this was not discussed.

The final Festival was held in 1912 after a rejuvenated board found the enthusiasm and the funds to hold a parade and a ball. Autos replaced bicycles and horses. A ball was finally held in the Auditorium. A fire brigade demonstration was held at a "burning" of the Daniels and Fisher Tower. The Denver Post wrote, "After eleven years of absence the god of Folly and of Mirth has come down from the mountains and out of the plains to take command of this city and give it over as a hostage to happiness."<sup>22</sup>

Crowds filled the streets for this revival of the Festival after its lengthy hiatus, but this was the last festival for 70 years.

Efforts to continue on became more and more spotty after 1912. The surviving board's minutes show that the closest the board came to holding another Festival was in 1937 when a schedule was even lined out by the board. One would imagine that the last economic dip of the Great Depression that occurred that year didn't allow the festival to get through the funding stage. There was some discussion about holding a fair in 1939 as the economy really began to lift. This would have been appropriate given the similarity of that year to 1895. It too would have been a celebration of coming out of the long darkness of a deep economic downturn. But nothing is in the board minutes beyond just preliminary discussion. Finally, in 1941 discussions about a World Fair were held. But it was mentioned that much of the world would not be able to attend because there was a World War going on. With these notes, the Festival Board minutes unceremoniously cease.

Today the festival lives on within the Taste of Colorado event held in Civic Center each Labor Day weekend. In 1983, Downtown Denver Partnership created this event to celebrate the opening of the 16th Street Mall. The name of The Festival of Mountain and Plain is still attached to the weekend. There's not too much history here, but it still is a big party. Food and music are the draws today. Approximately 500,000 attend during its annual run. Denver has indeed grown.

The Festival of Mountain and Plain represents a point of deflection in the normally constant path of history. First there is a celebration of recovery from the 1893 Silver Crash. The Festival celebrated all three legs of the stool of the Colorado economy: mining, manufacturing and agriculture. This event was the beginning of twenty-year



Kirkland Collection, Denver Public Library, X25041

*Blowup of the Parade of Cowboys and Indians, with the Edison Poster Behind*

period of rapid change in the mining industry. Silver was no longer king, but the growing diversity of Colorado's mineral riches (gold, zinc and coal) with the continued growth of the other two legs of the economy led to lengthy expansion and maturity of the Colorado economy during the next thirty years.

On the other side, and, perhaps by chance, it is a moment that hints at one of the hallmarks of the twentieth century: mass media culture as represented by these first movies shot in Colorado. The movies were just starting, but thirty years later movie-going was a weekly event for most Americans.

As historians we hope that we can not only understand the past, but anticipate the future. It is so difficult to see what the future really will be. We can see changes in history's path in hindsight, but not see them at the time they emerge. The Festival was celebrating the successes of the past and anticipating a similar future. But as we see pictures of people enjoying the celebration of Colorado of the past, in the background, there is an obscured indication of this future. In many of the photos from the 1896 Festival, people are standing in front of a very large poster. Those who were standing in front of this Edison movie poster could not see what movies would become, could not see the expansion of mass media that would in some ways define the twentieth century. So much of what changed in this recently past century—changes that bound the country together—were the shared common experiences shown on movie and TV screens and heard on the radio. For these Festival goers, their future was partially obscured. Their focus was on the past parading in front of them, not what was soon to come.

The films themselves are short little scenes, proto-movies really, not much storytelling going on. They are a new form of expression, and of exhibition and social interaction that is just beginning to be. This is similar to today when we can guess that video streaming is well on the way of being how we all will be consuming moving images in the future. But right now, we can't quite see the entire picture of how and where we will be entertained and influenced and how this will change society.

These movies were shown all over the world. They were the first time Colorado was recorded in motion. They are recorded memories, storytelling in the form of dance and celebration, and a shadow



Library of Congress

*Edison Poster Advertising the Vitascopes*



play of the important events of the past. When we watch these little movies we are seeing, 120 years later, these ghosts of our forefathers celebrating their own time. But we are also seeing a transitional moment where our future selves started. Our ghosts just don't know it.

## ENDNOTES

1. *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the National Live Stock Association*, Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1899, p 384-385.
2. *Colorado Magazine*, July 1948, p. 146, from Encyclopedia of Biography of Colorado, Chicago, 1901, p. 162.
3. *Official Souvenir Book, Festival of Mountain and Plain*, 1897, p. 4.
4. *Official Souvenir Book, Festival of Mountain and Plain*, 1895, p. 3.
5. *Ibid.* p. 7.
6. One source states that it was here, at what was called Broadway Grounds, that the first recorded baseball game in Denver was held in April 1862. "Less than three weeks after the Battle of Shiloh, and a day after David Farragut captured New Orleans for the Union, McNeils Side defeated Hulls Side 20 to 7 in a baseball game held at Broadway Grounds." ("Baseball Before Coors Field," [purplerow.com](http://purplerow.com), Chris Chrisman, August 5, 2013.) While this was Denver's first location for baseball, another field, River Front Park near today's Common's Park behind Union Station, was home to early baseball league play in Denver. Broadway Grounds also predates other baseball fields farther down Broadway: Broadway Park at 6th and Merchants Park at Virginia.
7. *Official Program of the Festival of Mountain and Plain*, 1895, p. 7.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.* p. 8.
11. *Denver Republican*, October 18, 1895, p. 2.
12. *Ibid.* October 19, 1895, p.2.
13. *Second Annual Festival of Mountain and Plain Official Program*, 1896, p. 6.
14. *Official Program, Second Annual Festival of Mountain and Plain*, 1896, p. 8.
15. *Denver Post*, October 4, 1897, p. 3.
16. *Harper's Weekly*, October 30, 1897, p. 1074.
17. *Denver Republican*, October 18, 1895, p. 1.
18. The minutes and notes for the Festival Board for after April 1901 are housed in the library at History Colorado. The minutes for earlier years do not survive.
19. This belt is one of the 100 Objects in the "Zoom In" exhibit at History Colorado. This event is considered by some, especially the Festival Board, to be the first true commercial "public" rodeo.
20. *Denver Republican*, May 22, 1902, p. 8.
21. *Cheyenne Sunday State Leader*, July 15, 1917, p 33, 34; repeated on the Cheyenne Frontier Days website, [cfdrodeo.com](http://cfdrodeo.com).
22. *Denver Post*, October 15, 1912, p. 1.

# Over the Corral Rail

*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

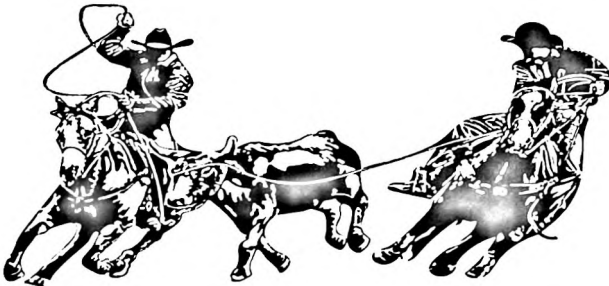
## Westerners' Presentations: Wrapping up the old Year, Beginning the New

The December meeting of the Colorado Corral of Westerners featured "The National Western Stock Show, Packing Houses, and the Denver Union Stockyards Company," by Keith Fessenden. The topic is a timely preview, the world-famous National Western Stock Show being in January. Keith is an expert on the subject, having volunteered at the National Western for twenty-five years, and being their official historian and archivist since 2011. Keith is a past sheriff of both the Denver Posse and the Boulder Corral of the Westerners, and a member of several other posses and corrals in Colorado and Utah.

Finishing the year's presentations at the Pikes Peak Posse was Susan Fletcher's "History of Toys." The Posse enjoyed the many illustrations of vintage toys, and then more recent items, invoking personal memories. Her book about historic toys and games (1840-2000) will be released in 2020. Susan Fletcher serves as the Director of History and Archives for The Navigators and Glen Eyrie, Colorado Springs.

The Colorado Corral started the new year with "Shady Dames of Denver" by Katy Ordway. She discussed the history of Denver's infamous "Row," those few blocks of Market Street known as the city's red light district. Katy holds an M.A. degree from the University of Colorado in Denver, and she is a member of the History Department of Red Rocks Community College. Her publications include *Colorado's Rodeo Roots to Modern-Day Cowboys*, on the development of the rodeo in the American West.

For January, the Pikes Peak Posse heard "How Mining impacted the West and Colorado," by Grant Dewey, the executive director of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry.





## Westerners Bookshelf



**Tombstone, Deadwood, and Dodge City: Re-Creating the Frontier West**, by Kevin Britz and Roger L. Nichols. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2018. 266 pp. Footnotes, photographs, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$32.95

*Tombstone, Deadwood, and Dodge City* is a careful analysis of the role played by these three towns in the evolution of the mythical Frontier West, as well as the impact of that role on their own development. Real, and often very violent, incidents acted as the bedrock upon which the towns' reputations were built. Sensationalist reporting in newspapers, dime novels, and pulps then began the construction of fiction around the characters involved in the incidents, like Wild Bill Hickok, Doc Holliday and Wyatt Earp. They also emphasized the lawlessness of the towns, most notably Tombstone, Deadwood and Dodge City, in which these notorious characters operated.

There were plenty of towns in the West with pasts comparable to those of the three towns examined by the authors. And there were shootouts every bit as violent as the gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Yet those other communities did not capitalize on their violent past as aggressively or as quickly as Tombstone, Deadwood and Dodge City. As the book points out, by World War I the economies of both Deadwood and Tombstone were foundering, driving them toward tourism as a solution. Dodge City's economy was not as endangered but community leaders saw an opportunity and followed the other two towns' leads. Soon all three were not only repeating the existing legends, but sought to add to the legends with fake boot hills and other bogus attractions. By the time movies and television shows like *Tombstone: The Town too Tough to Die*, *The Legend of Wyatt Earp* and *Gunsmoke* appeared on the scene, the towns were actively capitalizing on their own versions of the Frontier West.

The authors provide a thorough re-counting of the entire myth-making process, as well as more recent efforts by the three communities to present accurate historical information to visitors. While the process is carefully reported and documented, they make some minor errors re-counting the historical events upon which the mythmaking was based. These don't detract from the book but one suspects that even the authors could not escape the influence of the myths.

In the broader sense, the book looks at the role of the "created" West in our popular culture and gives us pause as Westerners. We too have exploited the frontier West. While we might claim to be pursuing a more studious and academic path, we also re-create the Frontier West. After all, we have fictional posses led by sheriffs and deputies. In many ways we share a heritage with towns like Tombstone, Deadwood and Dodge City; their growth as tourist attractions parallels our growth as an organization. But who can complain? For many of us a monthly trip to a Denver Posse meeting and occasional visits to towns like Tombstone, Deadwood, and Dodge City provide a welcome break from our everyday lives.

– Steve Friesen

**My Ranch, Too: A Wyoming Memoir**, by Mary Budd Flitner. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2018. 211 pp. Maps, photos, foreword, preface. Hardback.

The first chapter tells how the author's great-grandfather moved his family from Kansas to Big Piney, Wyoming, in 1880 and established the Budd ranch where the author grew up. The book's title, *My Ranch, Too*, is the underlying theme throughout the book, which describes the reality of ranching.

From the beginning, the ranch was always a family affair. Children learned to ride and push cattle at an early age. The author learned at a young age to take responsibility. When she married she moved to her husband's Flitner ranch near Shell, Wyoming, and was a full partner with him in all the decisions and work required.

I like the way she focused on a particular job, like the roundup or branding, and gave enough detail for the average person to understand. It was interesting how so many people had to work together to get it done. A lot of funny things could happen, but she also told how hard ranching could be when it was fifty below zero. Ranching was a gamble due to weather and market prices. Even the loss of one cow was a big deal.

Handing down the ranch responsibility to the next generation was usually a problem. It's very hard for the older generation to let go, but they would work it out.

I found the book to be very educational and interesting and funny. I highly recommend it.

– Susie Morton

**Charlie Davis Vail: The Highway Engineer Who Transformed Colorado Roads**, by Thomas J. Noel with Shelby Carr. Colorado Studies Center, University of Colorado Denver, 2019, 94 pp. Photos, maps, charts, editorial cartoons, bibliography, appendices, index. Hardback, \$20.00.

This short volume is lavishly illustrated with items from the scrapbooks that were kept by Charlie Davis Vail's daughter Vera Mary Vail Winslow. While an interesting read it is not organized in a readily identifiable manner. Starting with a history of the Vail family the reader would benefit greatly from a simple pedigree chart to allow the jumble of names to fall into some order.

Early in the book sometimes he is referred to as "Charlie" and others as "Vail" which creates unnecessary confusion. The whole volume feels a little disjointed, perhaps owing to the randomness of the scrapbooks themselves, but the author's job is to bring order from chaos. This volume jumps forward and backward in time from topic to topic and while each topic is explained in sufficient detail there is a lack of flow from one to the next.

For Colorado natives this is a fascinating look at the evolution of the highway system we now take for granted. As with most books by Noel new insights are offered about political and journalistic bedfellows while at the same time tying in historical facts such as the arrival of the first automobile in Denver.

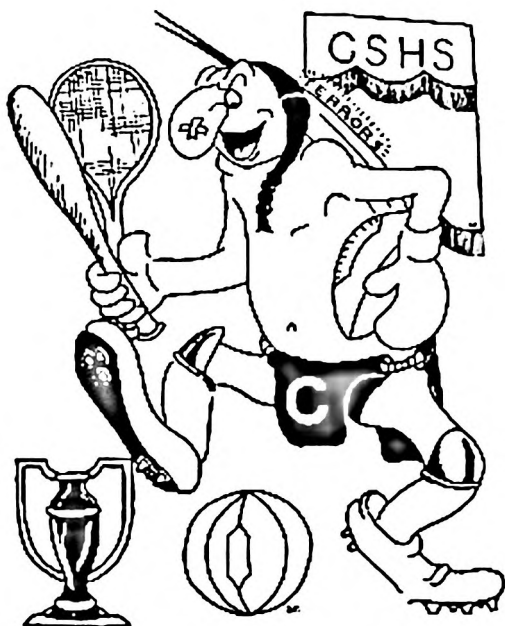
[The scrapbooks referred to are available at the Denver Public Library in the Western History and Genealogy Department by requesting Charles Davis Vail Papers WH244]

– Roger L. Dudley



The DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

March - April 2020



1947 CSHS Yearbook

*Sports Page Graphic in the 1947 Yearbook*

**The Paradox of Native American Mascots:  
A Case Study of Eaglebeak the Mascot**

*by Kathryn T. Kummel*

(presented October. 23, 2019)



## Our Author

Kathryn Kummel is a high school Senior at William J. Palmer High School in downtown Colorado Springs. In her free time, Kathryn enjoys reading, playing music, engaging in science research, and taking care of her menagerie of pets. She became curious about the mascot Eaglebeak when she first learned about him as the previous mascot of her high school and as the namesake of the school's current mascot. As she continued encountering vestiges of Eaglebeak in school rituals that mimic Native-American practices, she grew interested in studying the emergence, the official termination, and then continued use of the mascot at her school as well as the general history of Native American representation in media.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LXXVI NO. 2



March - April 2020

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## The Paradox of Native American Mascots: A Case Study of Eaglebeak the Mascot

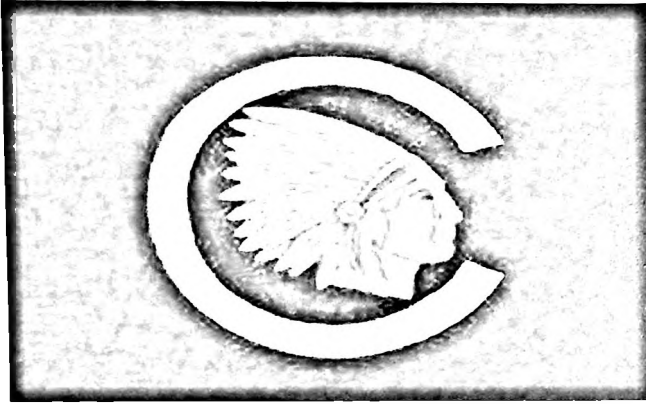
By Kathryn T. Kummel

When the U.S. federal government established the Courts of Indian Offenses in 1883, American Indian religious practices, such as participation in traditional ceremonies and possession of ritual objects, were outlawed.<sup>1</sup> This persecution of American cultural identity stopped almost a full century later with the passage of the American Indian Freedom Act of 1978.<sup>2</sup> Cultural oppression also took the form of boarding schools such as the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. In schools such as these, Native American children were separated from their families and severed from their culture. They were banned from using their original names and from practicing their indigenous cultures, replacing them with Anglo-American customs in appearance, communication, and religion.<sup>3</sup>

Paradoxically, while Native Americans were restricted from expressing their culture, white Americans were dressing in native costumes, imitating native dances, watching Western films, and reading works like the *Song of Hiawatha*.<sup>4</sup> These behaviors built on the stock idea of the “noble savage”—the idea of the American Indian who exists in an uncorrupted state of nature, is an expert outdoorsman, and fights valiantly yet loses with dignity and resignation. This concept emerged in the early days of settlers’ interactions with Native Americans. Jonathan Carver, an early American explorer, in his description of his travels among the Sioux in 1766-1768 wrote, “These savages are possessed with many heroic qualities and bear every species of misfortune with a degree of fortitude which has not been outdone by any of the ancient heroes either of Greece or of Rome.”<sup>5</sup>

Enduring into the twentieth century, the idea of the noble savage appealed to the public who felt nostalgic about the past.<sup>6</sup> This led to the widespread use of Native American images as sports mascots. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, many of these mascots were eliminated due to the controversy of the oppression and negative stereotypes that the mascots perpetuated. In some instances, many of these removals were preceded by heated debate. The issue of Native American mascots proliferated at the national level, and locally, such as in Colorado Springs at William J. Palmer High School. A focus on this issue at the local level enhances the broader picture of Native American Mascots.

In the late 1920s, William J. Palmer High School (formerly Colorado Springs High School or CSHS) in Colorado Springs introduced as a mascot a Native American in a headdress, and in 1945, updated the mascot as Eaglebeak—a caricature of a American Indian. Colorado Springs was originally inhabited by the Utes. By 1882, the Utes were



*Palmer High School Alumni Historical Room*

*The Non-Caricature Drawing of a Native American that was Adopted in 1928 as the Mascot of CSHS*

American mascots. It is an examination of images and texts of the yearbooks of CSHS/Palmer High School from 1905 to 1991, early twentieth-century texts on scouting, and local historical news articles. Yearbooks are useful primary sources because they describe students' thoughts and activities over time.

The research traces "Indian warrior" imagery prior to the adoption of Eaglebeak as the mascot, the late 1940s when Eaglebeak became the mascot, the 1960s and 1970s when the popularity of Eaglebeak eroded, the time from 1984 to 1985 when Eaglebeak saw a revival, and finally, Eaglebeak's retirement in 1986. To some, the retirement of Eaglebeak was a triumph for justice. To them, the use of Indian mascots was doubly tragic because while idealized notions of Indians and how their rituals were celebrated, real Native Americans were denied agency to express their culture. However, to the supporters of the mascot, using Indian mascots honored the triumph and nobility of the Native American warrior culture and Eaglebeak's removal was a tragic censorship of "Palmer Pride." From these contrasting perspectives the story of Eaglebeak can be seen as both a triumph and a tragedy. This local issue reflected a larger national debate on the nature of Native American mascots. What happened in Palmer High School demonstrates similarities to other organizations, such as the University of Illinois' Chief Illiniwek and the Cleveland Indians baseball team.

## **THE NOBLE SAVAGE, SCOUTING, AND SPORTS MASCOTS**

The Boy Scouts used the exemplar noble savage as an image for scouting and masculinity. In the 1910 Boy Scouts manual, by Ernest Thompson Seton, the author of many Boy Scout guidebooks, wrote that scouts should learn the "way of the Indian" by making teepees, wearing Indian clothing, and singing Indian songs.<sup>8</sup> He stated, "The idealized Indian of Hiawatha has always stood as the model for outdoor life, woodcraft, and scouting," and an ideal Indian "was a master of woodcraft ... manly, heroic, self-controlled,

forcibly relocated to reservations and were not allowed to return to their ancestral lands in the Pikes Peak region until 1912, and at that, only to participate in a carnival as performers of Ute dances at the opening of the highway that crossed through Ute Pass.<sup>7</sup>

This paper focuses on Palmer High School and Eaglebeak as a case study of the creation and use of Native

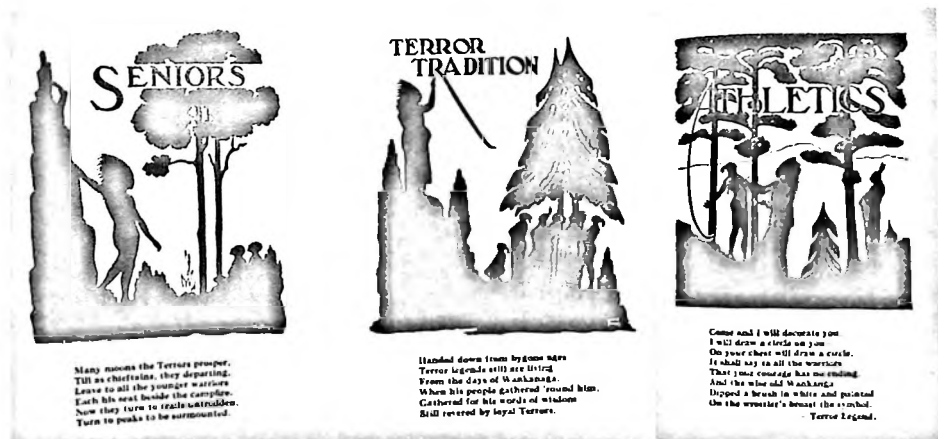


reverent, [and] truthful.”<sup>9</sup> The Indian was a top warrior: “He [the ideal Indian] can teach us the ways of outdoor life, the nobility of courage ... the glory of service, the power of kindness, the super-excellence of peace of mind and the scorn of death.”<sup>10</sup> From this perspective, “playing Indian” was a way to pay homage to Native American values.

Another value emphasized by the early scouting movement was to improve the masculine physique by learning the way of the Indians.<sup>11</sup> Seton wrote, “We know that white men’s ways, vices, and diseases have robbed them [the white men] of much of their former physique.”<sup>12</sup> He pointed out how, in contrast, “the wonderful work of the Carlisle Indian School football team is a familiar example of what is meant by Indian physique.”<sup>13</sup> The connotations of bravery and strength made Native American mascots attractive for sports. Football saw an influx of Indian mascots in the early 1900s.<sup>14</sup> Many Native American mascots were created around the time of the First World War and during the 1920s.<sup>15</sup> One such mascot was the University of Illinois’ Chief Illiniwek, which was created in 1926 (retired in 2007) by two former boy scouts based upon their knowledge of Indian scouting rituals.<sup>16</sup>

## PALMER HIGH SCHOOL – THE LEAD UP TO EAGLEBEAK 1905-1944

The first instance of Native American imagery in CSHS yearbooks occurred in the 1923-24 yearbook in the form of pictures and text associated with Boy Scout Troop #12. Troop #12 had amassed \$12,000 worth of Indian paraphernalia (equivalent to over \$170,000 in 2019 dollars), including teepees and costumes.<sup>17</sup> They ran ceremonial Indian pageants and had gatherings to imitate Indian tradition with dance,



Section Cover Pages of the 1929 CSHS Yearbook

*The Right Cover Describes the Initiation Ritual: “Come and I will decorate you, I will draw a circle on you—On your chest will draw a circle. It shall say to all the warriors That your courage has no ending And the wise old Wakanago Dipped a brush in white and painted On the wrestler’s breast a symbol.”*

songs, and costumes.<sup>18</sup> The group grew to over sixty members in 1924-25.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, tragedy occurred in New Mexico as tribal governments had to defend American Indian rights because the Pueblo Indians were not permitted to do ceremonial dancing and their children were not allowed to learn traditional rites.<sup>20</sup>

In 1928, CSHS adopted a customary depiction of a “Traditional Indian” as the mascot.<sup>21</sup> In the 1929 school year, art teacher Pansy Dawes wrote a poem titled *The Palmer Legend*, describing how CSHS students became the “Terrors” Indian tribe with the initiation rites of the tribe in the style of Henry W. Longfellow’s *Song of Hiawatha*.<sup>22</sup> The associated visual art was designed by students and featured prominently in the 1929 yearbook. The poem would later be named the *Terror Legend*. It has remained in use in Palmer High School for new student orientation activities and is still printed in yearbooks.<sup>23</sup> Around the time of the creation of Troop #12 and the “Terror Legend,” the U.S. witnessed the influx of Native American mascots.<sup>24</sup> The movement of romanticized American Indian imagery likely played a part in the formation of both the Troop and the Legend, and likely affected other American communities in similar ways.

After the 1929 yearbook, yearbook themes varied, but none returned to Native Americans or showed the mascot again until 1947. The opportunity to create another Native-American-themed yearbook was there, but student interest was likely low, and the theme did not generate support in yearbook committees or the student bodies.



CSHS 1945 Yearbook

*The First Yearbook Appearance of Eaglebeak in the 1945 Yearbook*

## THE CREATION OF EAGLEBEAK: 1945-1947

Don Willis, in the class of '45, drew a caricature of a Native American and named it Eaglebeak.<sup>25</sup> It first appeared in the 1945 yearbook football page as well as in a comic, anticipating the CSHS vs. Salida football game, suggesting the football team might have unofficially accepted it in its first year.<sup>26</sup> In the academic year 1946-1947, Eaglebeak had been fully adopted as the mascot, and the 1947 yearbook was saturated with Eaglebeak imagery.<sup>27</sup> The theme was prominent even on the teachers' page.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1947 yearbook, a poem emphasized Eaglebeak as a noble savage—a “symbol of ... greatness... loyalty, and power.”<sup>29</sup> Eaglebeak was associated not just with athletics but also with academics and arts, encompassing all of student life.<sup>30</sup> However, the drawings perpetuated the stereotypical appearance—short, potbellied, extremely prominent nose, and braids with feathers. The caricature was also portrayed as uncivilized and unrefined; Eaglebeak was drawn misspelling “organizations” as “organizashuns,” mishandling sports equipment, and wearing nonsensical loincloths, perpetuating the stereotype that Native Americans lacked sophistication.<sup>31</sup>

In the mid-1940s, the Cleveland Indians also developed their mascot, a cartoon caricature named Chief Wahoo.<sup>32</sup> The designer likely was influenced by the cartoon style of the day—exaggerated features that lent themselves to the use of stereotypical features and the creation of caricatures. Both Chief Wahoo and Eaglebeak appear in this cartoon style, suggesting that the style may have also influenced Don Willis.



CSHS 1947 Yearbook

*Yearbook Faculty Page with Native American Theme*

## THE YEARS OF CONVENTION, CHALLENGE, AND CHANGE: 1950-1980

After its inauguration in 1946-47, Eaglebeak was regularly seen in yearbooks, but was relegated mainly to sports, often appearing on team uniforms. Eaglebeak became central to student morale, and in pep clubs, as well as at alumni events such as Homecoming and the Pow-wow football game. For both events, people dressed up and had parade floats with Native American themes. Eaglebeak and Native American themes were featured in the yearbooks a few times during the following years. The 1953 yearbook used the ghost of Wankanago, the Chief in the Terror Legend, as the narrator of the yearbook.<sup>33</sup> In the 1957 yearbook, Eaglebeak was on section cover-pages, doing activities associated with the topic of the section (e.g., academics, arts, athletics).<sup>34</sup>

CSHS changed its name to William J. Palmer High School in 1959. Perhaps due to nostalgia for the "old school," the 1960-61 yearbook depicted Eaglebeak participating in school activities. There were derogatory portrayals of Eaglebeak as unsophisticated and girl-obsessed.<sup>35</sup>

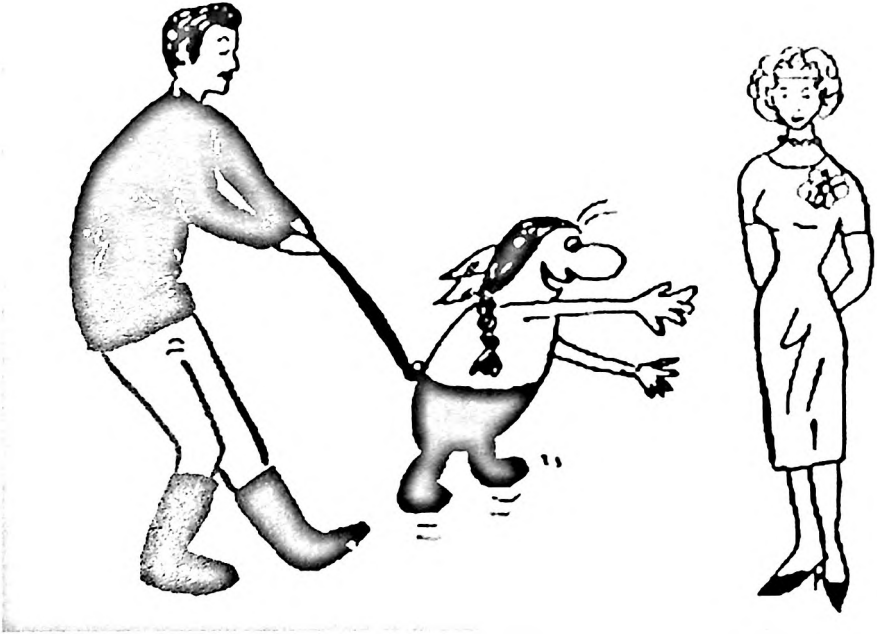
The final yearbook to prominently feature Eaglebeak was in 1977, portraying him as a superhero. This issue included the superhero Eaglebeak on the cover, comics of him, and pictures of a student dressing up as him.<sup>36</sup> During these decades, another Native American "ritual" appeared at Palmer High School: the performance of the Terror Legend during first-year orientation as a rite of passage for new students, and yearbooks regularly showcased this event. This tradition continues into the present.<sup>37</sup>

Some groups started moving away from the use of Eaglebeak. In 1967-68, the B-squad cheerleaders got new uniforms without the Eaglebeak logo and the Publicity Committee did not have any Eaglebeak-related signs in the yearbook.<sup>38</sup> In the 1973-74

## ORGANIZATIONS



1947 William J. Palmer High School Yearbook  
Eaglebeak in the 1947 Yearbook



1961 William J. Palmer Highschool Yearbook  
*Eaglebeak in the 1961 Yearbook*

school year, the Student Organization tried to change the school's mascot after controversy arose due to an investigation that was conducted by Palmer students concerning the possibility that Eaglebeak was offensive. This disagreement was revealed in a yearbook commentary.<sup>39</sup>

This consideration coincides with multiple public Native American protests of the oppression they had endured. In 1964, one year after its closing, five Sioux landed on Alcatraz and tried to seize it, citing an 1868 treaty that allowed Native Americans to claim unused federal land.<sup>40</sup> Another small group of Native Americans tried again in early November 1969. Both groups of American Indians did not succeed in securing Alcatraz, but their efforts sparked a later movement in late November, when a group of eighty-nine men, women and children claimed the island for all the tribes of North America. More activists joined them. At the height of its occupation, the island housed about 600 people and was organized under a governing counsel and even had a clinic, public relations department, and school.<sup>41</sup> However, this movement didn't last. During its second year of occupation in 1970, the island had a leadership crisis and from then until the end of the settlement the conditions only worsened and the population dwindled. The last of the occupants were removed in 1971 after succeeding in holding Alcatraz for fourteen months. The push for Native American rights continued.



1977 William J. Palmer Highschool Yearbook  
*Eaglebeak Takes Centerstage as a Comic Strip Hero*

In 1968, the American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded and began to stage protests to stop police brutality against Native Americans.<sup>42</sup> The notoriety and respect they gained through their fight for equality threatened the political power of Dick Wilson, the conservative Sioux tribal chairman. On February 27, 1973, approximately 200 AIM members occupied the hamlet of Wounded Knee, a culturally significant area due to the Wounded Knee Massacre that had taken place there in 1890,

to protest Wilson and his part in keeping the Native Americans oppressed.<sup>43</sup> Wilson responded by besieging Wounded Knee. The siege lasted seventy-one days during which AIM members and federal officers would often clash, leading to exchanged gunfire and hundreds of arrests. The AIM protesters stood down on May 8 after they negotiated a settlement with the federal officials. The siege and protest at Wounded Knee brought AIM and their goals for Native American rights into the spotlight, bringing the issue to the public's attention.<sup>44</sup>

In another move to bring Native American rights to the forefront of news, Marlon Brando, a celebrated actor, used his fame to bring more attention to the oppression of Native Americans, particularly in the negative stereotypes of them in film and media.

During the 45th Academy Awards on March 27, 1973, Sacheen Littlefeather, an aspiring Apache actress and established Native American rights activist, represented Brando to decline his Best Actor Award in order to protest "the treatment of Indians today by the film industry and on television in movie re-runs, and also with recent happenings at Wounded Knee."<sup>45</sup> This, again, brought to light the issue of Native American rights, reaching out through media to inform the American public. The students of Palmer most likely encountered news of the occupation of Alcatraz, the siege of Wounded Knee, and of Sacheen Littlefeather's speech due to the publicity that all three received, any of which might have changed their opinions of Eaglebeak.

Nonetheless, there were still organizations that were staunch supporters of Eaglebeak, the most notable of which were the Terrorettes, a pep squad club founded in 1956 who performed during halftime and pep rallies and at one time had over 400 members.<sup>46</sup> Their uniforms consisted of native-themed short dresses with leather fringes, headbands with feathers, and jackets with large Eaglebeak logos. Numerous photos across the years showed them in stereotypical Indian "crossed-arm" poses.<sup>47</sup> Terrorettes' gear did not change until Eaglebeak was retired in 1986.

## THE REINTRODUCTION AND CONTROVERSY: 1984-87

The 1984-85 academic year saw a reinvigoration of Palmer traditions. The forgotten 'Legend of the Terrors' was retold, accompanied by a pantomime of the legend by the school's drama club, and the Homecoming Bonfire was reinvigorated. Carolyn Churchill, the president of the Palmer Pride Club, in collaboration with Don Willis, designed and made a new Eaglebeak costume and mask.<sup>48</sup> The resurgence of old traditions succeeded in giving the student body a morale boost. The yearbook reported that "there is a feeling of worth this year at Palmer."<sup>49</sup> A resurgence of Native American mascots had appeared after the Vietnam War and in movies in the 1980s about the Vietnam war, perhaps as a way to revive the past in the face of changing times.<sup>50</sup> The resurgence was a harkening back to the "good old days" with the reappearance of the popularity of the idea of the noble savage.

The revival of old traditions also brought community attention to Palmer's mascot. Two attempts were made to change it. The Lone Feather Indian Council sent representatives to talk to school officials about retiring the mascot in January 1985. Council Chief Robert Talltree asked the school to present a "more realistic, more proud picture" of the Native American.<sup>51</sup> Principal Gary Wisler told the Council that Palmer would make the change, but he only "put the process into motion through discussions."<sup>52</sup>

A second move against Eaglebeak was from Ned Locke, who filed a complaint in 1985 with the Colorado Civil Rights Division against Eaglebeak because it was a "racially offensive caricature of an Indian."<sup>53</sup> The school district conceded and retired the mascot, but the student body and alumni were opposed. The Student Organization held a student vote for the new mascot in 1986, but the winning answer was the write-in response "Bring Eaglebeak Back!"<sup>54</sup> Many students viewed Eaglebeak's removal as a tragedy as they had lost their beloved mascot.<sup>55</sup> Many community members spoke out

against Eaglebeak's removal in the local newspaper, calling into the newspaper to have their comments anonymously aired. Some examples include: "Eaglebeak is not racially demeaning to anyone." "Indians are part of Colorado heritage. Leave Eaglebeak alone and leave him at Palmer where he belongs." "As a recent Palmer graduate, I know how strong the tradition of Eaglebeak is... Eaglebeak will prevail in the end."<sup>56</sup> Less common were people who supported the removal of Eaglebeak. One of the few community members who showed support for removing Eaglebeak in the newspaper said, "Is Palmer High School's Eaglebeak offensive to American Indians? I can see how it could be, so throw it out."<sup>57</sup>

School District 11 did not change its policy. Eaglebeak did not return. Eaglebeak disappeared officially from the yearbooks from 1986-1991. The Eaglebeak mascot could still be seen in the background of alumni pictures in the 1987 and 1988 yearbooks, after which he disappeared entirely.<sup>58</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Palmer High School settled on having a Bald Eagle as its new school mascot. As a nod to their old mascot, they kept the name Eaglebeak. The rise and fall of the original Eaglebeak as Palmer High School's mascot was experienced simultaneously as triumph and tragedy to people with different perspectives. To those who viewed Eaglebeak as a symbol of Native American exploitation, and as a paradox of non-Native people celebrating the idealized noble savage while American Indians were oppressed; his removal was a triumph. To others, it was the tragic loss of a beloved mascot and tradition, and censorship of their notion of Indian warrior imagery. The contrast between the two perspectives reveals the importance of comprehending the historical context of different points of view. The Terror Legend is still performed at Palmer High School today. It is presented by students at new student activities, performed during assemblies during student orientation, and is printed in the Yearbook. This may be considered a triumph to some as a reminder of Palmer's past identity. However, with deeper understanding of the cultural background of this practice, the activity can be considered a tragedy due to the misrepresentation of Native American culture and history. Many schools and organizations still have American Indian mascots, several of which are controversial. They are having debates like the one faced by Eaglebeak. For example, in 2018, the Cleveland Indians Major League Baseball team





quit the use of Chief Wahoo, a caricature of a Native American, for on-field use, but continued to use the name and sell merchandise with the caricature mascot on it.<sup>59</sup> This sparked anger from both sides: the fans of the mascot were upset that official use of it had ended; while those who were against its use felt that the team had not fully purged its usage.<sup>60</sup>

Native mascots, on a cultural level, are similar to blackface. Both are caricatures of marginalized and oppressed racial groups that were and are used by the dominant culture as entertainment. Studying the history of Eaglebeak and observing the continued use of contemporary mascots raises the question: Why is it so difficult for more people to recognize the tragic and problematic side of Native American mascots? People learned to understand the offensiveness of blackface. It is important that people learn about the tragedy of native mascots as belittling caricatures of oppressed people that are used for the oppressors' amusement, and not as a symbol of tradition and triumph.

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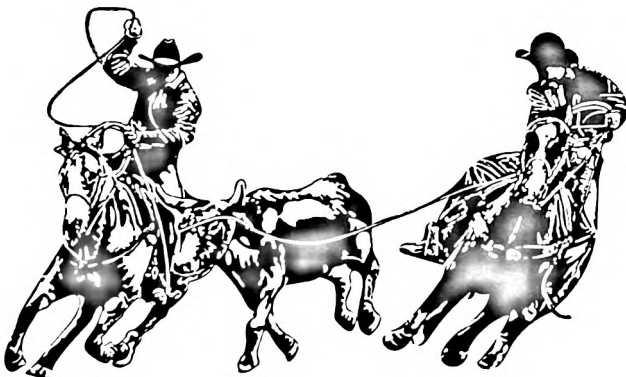
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List! the big-nosed Indian calls you;  
 He is mascot of the Terrors,  
 And the symbol of their greatness,  
 Of their loyalty and power,  
 Of their teamwork and their spirit.  
 Long ago Don Willis drew him,  
 Drew the figure of the Indian,  
 Called him Eagle Beak, the warrior,  
 Eagle Beak, the mighty warrior,  
 Who is known to every Terror.  
 He appears on many posters,  
 In parades and in assemblies.  
 Now we call on him to lead you  
 Through the 'Terror' Trail, your annual.



1947 CSHS Yearbook

*Eaglebeak's Poem in the Introduction and his Appearance on the Academics Page*



# Over the Corral Rail

*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

## Springtime Programs in the Rockies

In February Megan Winterfeldt shared some of the history of Pro Rodeo with the Pikes Peak Posse, starting with the world's first rodeo in Deer Trail, Colorado on July 4, 1869. She touched upon the arrival of the Spanish, cattle drives, the closing of the West, Wild West shows and Heritage celebrations. Part of the past of Pro Rodeo involved many associations. Megan provided an overview of what Rodeo is today, and how the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame became a part, starting in 1978. Megan Winterfeldt is the exhibits and collections coordinator for the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame and Museum of the American Cowboy in Colorado Springs.

"The Last Train from Cripple Creek" by Mel McFarland was the March presentation to the Pikes Peak Posse. The so-called "last train" involved more than one event, and Mel detailed all in a talk well illustrated with photos and video. Mel McFarland is a longtime member of the Posse, having provided more presentations to the group than any other member. He is an artist, author, historian, railroad enthusiast, and also a native of the Pikes Peak Region.

## Old Joe, the Buffalo

The name "Old Joe" is rooted in a nurse's rhyme: "Joe, Joe, broke his toe; riding on a buffalo." The rhyme is legendary, and its variations are legion, such as one for the railroad historians, "Jack, Jack, broke his back; riding on a railroad track."

As historians Denver Posse members have a history of their own to recall and maintain. The first topic of interest examined is a large remnant of bone, a skull, of a buffalo, or more properly of the American Bison. The Westerners began as the Chicago Corral, in 1944. This icon of the American West is associated with the Westerners from the very beginning, as it appears on the very first publication of the Westerners, the *Brand Book of the Chicago Corral*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1944. According to co-founder Elmo Scott Watson, that first sketch was executed by charter member Burleigh Withers, a professional illustrator. But he apparently followed a Charlie Russell drawing, and we currently attribute the skull representation to him.

Chicago soon established an "Old Tradition." The Corral roundups are not officially open till two members uncover a bleached buffalo skull on the wall as members stand and, with right hand in Napoleonic posture, grin, and emphatically affirm. "Hello Joe, you old buffalo!" – and at the meeting's end, the rite is reversed with, "Adios, Joe, you old buffalo!"

Denver followed suit: at the June 1957 meeting Sheriff William S. Jackson accepted a 100-year-old bison skull. The skull was the gift of W. C. (Slim) Lawrence of Moran, Wyoming, who delegated Dr. Nolie Mumeley to make the presentation. (Jackson was a Colorado Supreme Court justice, and a member of the Jackson family in Colorado Springs, the noted author Helen Hunt Jackson being his stepmother.) Eventually Posse member Mick DeWitt crafted a glassed case for Denver's Old Joe. This case is too heavy to conveniently bring to meetings, and now rests in the Posse's archives at Fort Logan.

Incidentally, Dr. Mumeley, legendary Westerner and prolific Western author, also presented a buffalo skull, a specimen over a hundred years old unearthed in western Kansas, to the Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners to be their Old Joe. At a recent meeting a "new Old Joe" was presented to our sheriff, Everett Brailey by Bill Carle. Once again the posse gatherings can be concluded with a light-hearted salute to our emblem, with "Adios, Joe, you old buffalo!"



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Chasing Good Sense: A Boy's Life on the Frontier**, by Homer McCarty; edited by Coralie McCarty Beyers. University of Utah Press: Salt Lake City, 2018. 374 pp. Paperback, \$19.95.

Childhood memories are often not as accurate as we would like to think they are. Homer McCarty, after a lifetime spent as a teacher, mineral surveyor, merchant, and newspaper editor, wrote this memoir in retirement, aided by a clear-eyed perspective that sometimes comes late in life. He overcomes the natural tendency to recall youth in warm, sepia tones; instead, his "creative memoir" of 1870s life in Summit, Utah Territory, brings forth his family's hardscrabble existence in all of its difficulties. Finances are tight and resources scarce; Homer goes barefoot in summer and winter.

A middle child in a large Mormon family (with his father's second family living not far away), seven-year-old Homer helps with household chores, pulling weeds to feed hogs and aiding his mother at her loom. He accompanies his father on trips to sell the farm's products; an extended section recounts journeying to the gold camp of Pioche, Nevada, where they vend scarce eggs, flour, cured hams and bacon. Tension arises on the return, when the unarmed father and son encounter notorious highwayman "Idaho Bill," but manage to avoid losing their hard-earned cash, sewn into a quilt and hidden under Homer's shirt. Shorter episodes feature his best friend Earl. Each helps the other through scrapes, and both partake of the fascinations rural life offers young boys. We also feel Homer's first crush, on the angelic Rebecca, a girl so elevated in his mind that he cannot ever speak to her.

Yet this work, edited by McCarty's granddaughter, offers more than charming episodes. Her editing of his thousand-page manuscript gave the memoir structure and an arc. Early on, Homer simply seeks fun, but as he grows toward his eighth birthday life becomes more serious, and he learns things. He senses the tiny town's class structure, and knows that he is near the bottom of it. He loses a beloved sister to illness. His father often finds himself in difficulties after "getting his Irish up," and when sheep belonging to the local Bishop pollute the stream the family depends on, his anger results in the family's banishment from the church, forcing them to relocate. Homer's world collapses overnight, and his dream of being "babetized" alongside Earl is crushed. Yet ultimately he adapts to his new life, losing none of his hopeful spirit.

The memoir is written in first-person and McCarty's prose style engages the reader. While he occasionally utilizes stylized spellings, these do not detract from its literary quality because he does not overuse them. His constructed dialog sounds natural and true. The publisher compares the work to *Huckleberry Finn*, but this reader is reminded more strongly of Ralph Moody's classic autobiography *Little Britches*. Written at about the same time, the late 1940s, *Chasing Good Sense* deserves a place on the shelf with both.

— Mark Barnhouse

**Rosebud, June 17, 1876: Prelude to The Little Big Horn**, by Paul Hedren, University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2019, 468 pp, Maps, Illustrations (photos, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardcover, \$34.95.

To nearly 1,000 soldiers who fought there it was the Battle of Rosebud Creek. The Northern Cheyenne remember it as the Battle Where the Girl Saved Her Brother. It was complex for the number of combatants engaged and the landscape it was fought over. The Rosebud may have been the largest battle between the U.S. Army and the Indians in the American West.

In his previous *Powder River: Disastrous Opening of the Great Sioux War*, Hedren recounted General George Crook's first attempt to bring the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne to battle in March 1876 following his success against the Apaches in Arizona. Crook accompanied the column as observer, leaving Col. Joseph J. Reynolds in command. Snowy weather, missed communications, and indiscipline made that Big Horn Expedition a poor showing. Crook wouldn't let it happen again. In *Rosebud*, Hedren picks up from the conclusion of *Powder River*.

The Big Horn And Yellowstone Expedition set off from Fort Fetterman on May 29. Crook commanded a much bigger force this time: five companies from the 2nd U.S. Cavalry and ten from the 3rd Cavalry, five companies from the 4th and 9th Infantry Regiments, a hundred supply wagons, and a group of civilian auxiliaries besides teamsters and packers. One of Crook's concerns was the number of scouts he could enlist. Besides obtaining services of three experienced plainsmen, Frank Grouard, Louis Richard, and "Big Bat" Pourier, he had been assured the assistance of Crow and Shoshone auxiliaries as well. They would play a major role.

By June 11 the expedition had reached Goose Creek, which became Crook's base camp, and the delayed Crow and Shoshone scouts finally arrived. On the morning of the 16th, after hearing that Sitting Bull and his followers were encamped along Rosebud Creek, Crook moved to engage them. Since this would be a campaign of rapid movement, he mounted the infantry on mules to keep up with the cavalry. The mounted infantrymen were given the title, The 11th Dragoons, by their cavalry comrades. In the early evening of June 16th camp was established along the banks of the South Fork of the Rosebud.

The fight just north of Rosebud Creek on June 17, 1876 encompassed a battlefield of around fourteen square miles, with draws, ridges, gullies, and high points. Both sides maneuvered to gain high ground. If the Sioux and Cheyenne took up a threatening position on a ridge, Crook made counter moves to eliminate that threat. There were acts of bravery by both soldiers and Indians. During the retrograde movement of around 210 dismounted men led by Lt Col. William B. Royall along Kollmar Creek, fighting became very intense and in some cases hand to hand. This was where the majority of the soldier casualties occurred. By the time Royall withdrew from what would be called "The Valley of the Shadow of Death," the all-day shooting had petered out, leaving Crook holding the battlefield.

Paul Hedren has written what will undoubtedly stand as the definitive account of the Battle of the Rosebud. This book is a must for those who are interested in the

Indian Wars of the West, the Frontier Army, and the plains Indians. This reviewer is looking forward to the author's next book on the Great Sioux War.

– Mark Hutchins

**The Cornett-Whitley Gang: Violence Unleashed in Texas**, by David Johnson. University of North Texas Press, Denton, 2019. 284 pp. Map, photos, endnotes, appendices, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

The *Cornett-Whitley Gang* is full of resources, accurate telling of historical events, and some “possible” historical occurrences. The author does an excellent job of sourcing the research he conducted to tell the story of a gang that is not well known. Most of the research is quoted from newspaper articles, eye-witness accounts, census, and other authors regarding the geographic location and time era. There are accounts of exact dates, people and places, and even pictures that bring the characters to life.

The story begins by describing each gang member and their childhood. In some cases, the character's grandparents are described as well as the home life, and any deaths that occurred in early childhood. One example is that of John Barber. The author describes Barber's possible reasons for possibly being in a gang, and in other cases, such as Reeves, the author doesn't see any reason why he would join a gang given that he had good solid childhood upbringing.

I think this book would have been easier to read if the author hadn't referenced the records in the chapter and instead used an endnote to explain. One example of this over-explanation is, “The census taken in 1930 found Reeves living in the home of his grandson” whereas it would be easier to follow if the author just said, “Reeves was living in the home of his grandson” (p. 189). If removing the terms, “In the census,” or “it was reported,” or “the newspaper provided,” were removed I think the book would flow more easily and be more engaging.

The words, “probably, or may”, are used often, which made me wonder if the author is making his own assumption, or just couldn't prove his theory. It takes away from the credibility of the information in the book and causes speculation of the accuracy.

The book is interesting in describing all the gang members' names, and different names they used as well as their height and weight. The confusion comes when the author points out that Wells Fargo had different heights and weights. While I understand this is an attempt to show the truth is not always reported it doesn't add anything to the story. It only made my mind wonder.

Overall, the story of the gang, their victims, their actions, and the lawmen that interacted with them made for an interesting read. What I found most interesting is how this gang did things we are still dealing with today. They stole horses, and we still have car thefts. They walked into a church with guns, and we recently had a shooter in a church in Texas. They robbed trains and banks, and banks are still robbed today. They shot people, and we have shootings today. Has anything really changed? History does tend to repeat itself. If you want more detail, pick this book up and give it a read.

– Sharon Gaare





*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

May - June 2020

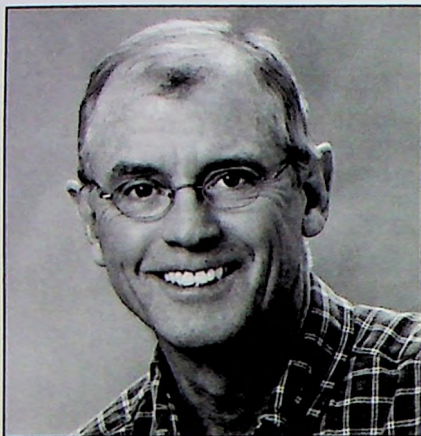


*Courtesy Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, WY. Bequest in memory of Houx and Newell families.  
Artist Depiction of the Rescue at Summit Springs. Charles Schreyvogel, 1908.*

**Cody and Summit Springs**

*by Jeff Broome*

(presented September 23, 2020)



### Our Author

Jeff Broome is a fifth-generation Coloradan. His great-great grandfather, William Alonzo Watson, first came to Colorado as a freighter on the Santa Fe Trail in 1859. Born in Pueblo, Jeff received his MA from Baylor University and his PhD at the University Colorado, Boulder, and taught philosophy for a state college for 32 years. Now retired, he lives in Beulah, Colorado with his two cats, Watson and Alonzo. This is his article for the *Roundup*. A member of the Denver Westerners since the 1990s, he has also served as sheriff in 2007.

## THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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### 2019 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

**Sheriff:** Everett Brailey  
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## Cody and Summit Springs

*By Jeff Broome*

When studying published accounts of the battle of Summit Springs, fought July 11, 1869 in northeast Colorado Territory, one is immediately confronted in the literature with what is today fashionably called “fake news.” There are five “truth cavities” creating truth decay that need an application of historical dentistry, in order to give the reader a clean understanding of both the battle and Buffalo Bill’s involvement therein. Among the historical decays found in the literature are first, who likely killed Tall Bull, the Cheyenne Dog Soldier chief whose village was captured at Summit Springs? Second, how did the command come to learn that the Indians they were tracking had female captives taken in their recent raids in north-central Kansas? Third, there were two Medals of Honor awarded during the campaign (Republican River Expedition), yet both recipients have been misidentified or their names misspelled. Who were they and what are their stories? Fourth, of the two captured pioneer women found in the village, what happened to the surviving wounded captive, Maria Weichell? Did she marry a soldier connected with her recovery or not? And, finally, what role did Cody play in the campaign and the final fight at what the officers first called Susanna Springs, in honor of the slain female captive whom the soldiers buried on the battlefield? The name of the battle site was later changed in military reports to Summit Springs, once Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr, in charge of the 5th Cavalry that captured the village, later learned the site had earlier been named Summit Springs.

Of all the engagements that Cheyenne warriors participated in between 1864 and 1869, when they were most active in warfare against encroaching white civilization, the fight at Summit Springs in northeast Colorado Territory is the most neglected. The subsequent destruction of warrior chief Tall Bull’s Dog Soldier village of eighty-four lodges represented more than just destroyed property. There was so much plunder captured that it was necessary to create 160 fires to destroy all of the property the military left behind.<sup>1</sup> The fight resulted in at least fifty-two dead warriors as well as the capture of seventeen women and children who were eventually released at the Whetstone Agency (Pine Ridge today). The 5th Cavalry casualties were only one soldier slightly wounded with a glancing arrow wound to his ear, one horse killed in the fight, as well as twelve horses that died of exhaustion while chasing fleeing Indians, and another horse killed by lightning during a terrific hail storm that pelted the battleground shortly after the fight was over.<sup>2</sup>

The village contained two young female captives, taken six weeks earlier in Lincoln County, Kansas. Twenty-four-year-old Mrs. Susanna Alderdice was killed at her rescue—three of her four children were murdered when she was captured—and twenty-three-year-old Maria Weichell was wounded—shot in the back—but survived. It was a remarkable fight, especially in how one-sided it turned out to be.<sup>3</sup> This fight destroyed

the resistance so fiercely fought by the Dog Soldier society of the Cheyenne following the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864. Summit Springs effectively ended Cheyenne raids in the Indian wars,<sup>4</sup> even though the Cheyenne had participation in the Red River War in Texas in 1874-1875, the Little Bighorn in 1876 and subsequent fights in 1877; and, more tragically, the Cheyenne Outbreak of 1878-1879. But as an active military unit on the plains, Summit Springs terminated Cheyenne resistance against white encroachment in Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado Territory.

The causes for Cheyenne resistance are multiple and varied. Conceptually, Euro-Americans saw civilization in a linear view, sort of a beginning-to-end vision (think conquest and ownership). Whereas Indians, especially the Cheyenne, saw civilization in a cyclical vision, a connected chain of events in a circular yet coherent way—ownership of land was not the issue, rather it was the resources within the land.<sup>5</sup> These different cultural understandings made for misunderstandings in treaty negotiations, especially with the Federal government seeking to identify a singular or small cadre of chiefs—basically the ones willing to make treaties—while not acknowledging the Cheyenne council of forty-four chiefs' disseminating order within the various Cheyenne villages. But more than this, there were factors aligned with resources rapidly diminishing as more and more Euro-Americans advanced into Cheyenne hunting and living territory. This migration used up the resources of wood, water and especially forage along the water routes, which upset the buffalo migration that the Cheyenne relied on for their basic food source.<sup>6</sup> The advancing of the railroad only exacerbated this tension.<sup>7</sup> With this influx of white encroachment came diseases, food shortages, etc. All combined together to leave the Cheyenne to either surrender all claims to the land they lived on, or resist intrusion into their hunting region. Summit Springs marked the violent end to this ongoing conflict. But the Sand Creek Massacre on November 29, 1864 was, and is, in the eyes of the Cheyenne, the principal cause of their militancy through 1869.<sup>8</sup>

William F. Cody was present in the region during all of the Cheyenne resistance. The fight at Summit Springs, however, was the final engagement prior to Cody's growing fame in the American and European public; and thus, it marked perhaps his zenith as a scout for the U.S. Army. Just twenty-three, his knowledge of the area as a scout and hunter for the army, his ability as an Indian fighter, and his impression among the officers under whom he served was non-pareil when compared to all other scouts and frontiersmen at this time. Indeed, only Kit Carson stood above Cody, due more to his long service on the plains. But Carson was dead one year before Cody emerged into the American conscience. Cody was the new "Kit Carson," the friend of the military, the guide who could move a military campaign to its fruition. This, anyway, was how Cody first emerged into American history as the icon he represents today.

But the history of the West did not easily acknowledge Cody as the scout he was, especially as this history was first written for the general public. Indeed, Cody's own autobiography, published in 1879, as well as later reminiscences, left readers wondering what was the wheat and what was the chaff in his unfolding story. Early historians writing on this history were influenced not by Cody's own writings but rather by the interviews and writings of Luther North. North was also present in the Summit Springs campaign, serving in command of one of the Pawnee companies assigned

to support the 5th Cavalry. North was born the same year as Cody and outlived Cody by eighteen years. More importantly, these years between Cody's death in 1917 and North's in 1935 were when historians first began to disseminate their explications on Summit Springs. George Bird Grinnell, writing in 1928 of the aftermath of the Summit Springs fight, when troopers returned to the captured tipis after an exhausting search for fleeing villagers, and just before a big hail storm pummeled the battleground, claimed Cody was not even present at the fight at Summit Springs:



*Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming*  
**Cody with His Springfield rifle. Photo Taken When Cody was Serving as Chief of Scouts with the 5th Cavalry. The Others were Officers of the 5th Cavalry Who Fought at Summit Springs**

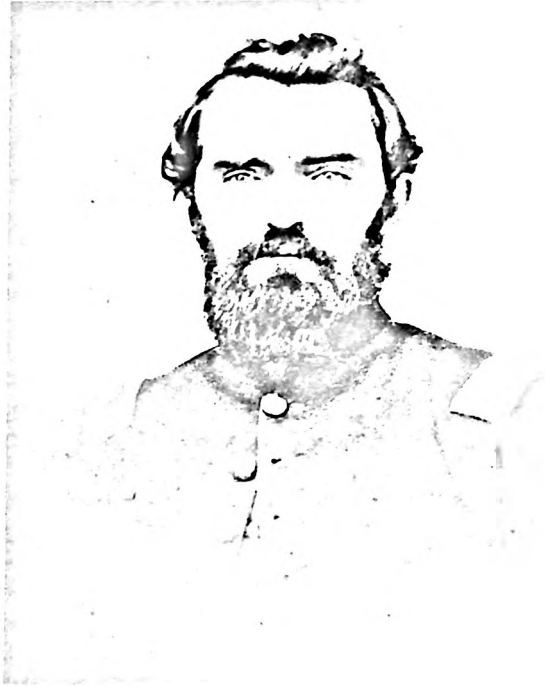
*Just as they [returning troopers after chasing fleeing villagers several miles] reached the village, a terrific storm of rain and hail came up and while all hands were trying to get under shelter in the lodges, Cody rode into camp. He had been with Colonel Royall and had missed the fight. Later, by Ned Buntline (E. C. Judson), he was given credit for having killed Tall Bull, but he was not in the fight at all.<sup>9</sup>*

The problem with this claim—coming to Grinnell by Luther North—is that Cody was first identified as finding the village in an anonymous 5th Cavalry officer-authored article on Summit Springs, published in *The New York Herald*, July 28, 1869. There it stated that as the command approached the yet undiscovered village, at “one o’clock p.m...the chief scout, Mr. William Cody, came dashing up hatless, reporting that he had come upon their camp about eight miles to the left and near the Platte River.” Carr’s

unpublished memoirs said Cody reported to him that he had seen the village and when the soldiers charged into the village Cody was with Captain George Price's column.<sup>10</sup> Clearly, Cody was in the fight.

In the "fake news" reported by Luther North and repeated again and again by later historians, beginning with Grinnell claiming that Cody missed the fight, the question of who killed Tall Bull was deferred to what Luther North claimed, viz., his brother Frank North killed Tall Bull, in the ravines where several warriors had retreated and made a last stand. One warrior carefully stuck his head and rifle out of the top of one of the ravines and shot at but missed Frank North. Frank patiently waited for the warrior to

reappear and take another shot, and when he did North killed him with one bullet to his head. The dead warrior was later identified as Tall Bull, by one of his wives.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent historians accepted Grinnell's account, and in this way the image of Frank North killing Tall Bull transcended any credit to Cody. In 1961, Donald Danker edited a work titled *Man of the Plains Recollections of Luther North 1856-1882*. Using documents Luther North had compiled in his later years, additional credence was given to what Luther said about the fight.<sup>12</sup> In 1963, Donald Berthrong repeated North's claim in *The Southern Cheyennes*.<sup>13</sup> Also in 1963 James King continued the claim when he published the definitive



Author's Collection, Courtesy Jean, North and West McArthur, Salina, KS  
Luther North commanded a Company of  
the Pawnee Scouts at Summit Springs

biography of General Eugene A. Carr.<sup>14</sup> To King's credit, he noted the contrary claims of Cody's assertion that he killed Tall Bull alongside Luther North's claim that his brother Frank killed Tall Bull. Further, he references an unpublished manuscript in the archives at the Nebraska State Historical Society, allegedly produced in the 1870s by Alfred Sorenson, which covers the adventures of Frank North, where Frank is credited with killing Tall Bull.<sup>15</sup> King claims "the weight of evidence seems to tip the scales slightly in favor of Frank North."<sup>16</sup> The obvious point is Cody created the historical cavity when claiming he killed Tall Bull in his 1879 autobiography and subsequent publications.

It was with the documents noted in the publications above that other historians advanced their views in articles, with the majority crediting Frank North with killing Tall Bull. Clarence Reckmeyer, who visited the battlefield in the late 1920s with Luther North, repeated Luther's claims that Cody missed the fight and Frank killed Tall Bull.<sup>17</sup> In 1928, Richard Walsh, in his biography *The Making of Buffalo Bill*, cited various factual discrepancies in Cody's different accounts, all attributing him as killing Tall Bull, along with others claiming the same, as part of his advertising for his Wild West shows decades later. Walsh noted that Luther North's account does not so suffer, yet concludes, "Beneath so many discrepant accounts *the truth lies forever buried.*"<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps the truth indeed lies buried, but not forever, as there are other original sources not used by the many authors cited. These documents identify, in addition to Cody, an unknown Pawnee, Lieutenant George Mason, or Sergeant Daniel McGrath as the killer of Tall Bull, thus bringing the field of potential slayers to five, and not just Cody or North. Mason is credited with killing Tall Bull by a teamster who arrived at the battlefield after the fight, when Carr's wagon train rambled into the village.<sup>19</sup> Brevet Major General Eugene Carr is guilty of identifying three different people killing Tall Bull. In a letter to Cody in 1906, he wrote of Tall Bull turning his wife away as he prepared to die, saying that "he could not live after this; that she must escape and treat the white woman [captive] well and the whites might treat her well. *He turned back and the Pawnees killed him.*"<sup>20</sup> But later that same year, Carr wrote another letter to Cody, to be used in his Wild West show, and there Carr wrote about Cody getting Tall Bull's horse after the fight, "... Buffalo Bill shot him off his horse and got the horse ... which he, Cody, rode for a long time, and won many exciting races. So that left no doubt that Buffalo Bill killed Tall Bull."<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately, Carr's two claims go contrary to what he earlier wrote in 1901, in support of his long-tenured NCO, Daniel McGrath, "He...particularly distinguished himself at the Battle of Summit Springs, Colorado, where he killed Tall Bull."<sup>22</sup>

It is somewhat ironic that in Cody's 1879 autobiography, when he discussed the fight and credited himself with killing Tall Bull, he included the names of Sgt. McGrath and Lt. Mason in his own account. He noted Mason as claiming the fancy war bonnet belonging to Tall Bull, and when he went to retrieve Tall Bull's horse, it was in the possession of McGrath.<sup>23</sup> So, who did kill Tall Bull, and if unanswerable, then is that question forever unanswered? Yet one more document has emerged, and it is the opinion of this author that the killer of Tall Bull narrows down to Daniel McGrath more so than Buffalo Bill Cody. Three years after the Summit Springs fight, John Stevenson enlisted into the 5th Cavalry and made a career of his enlistment, but serving under the alias Charles Abbott. When he retired, he wrote his memoirs. Here is what he said, no doubt culled from the enlisted men present at Summit Springs:

*Buffalo Bill claims to be the man who killed Tall Bull. So, also, did Lieutenant Mason, Regimental Quartermaster; but neither one is entitled to the claim. Tall Bull was killed by Sergeant Dannie McGrath, Company H, 5th Cavalry. Cody was all of three hundred yards from where Tall Bull fell. It is true that this is not an extraordinary range for such an expert shot as he is, but when men were galloping through a line of fire as these men were, it is almost*

*impossible. Lieutenant Mason was only about half the distance from Bull than Cody was, but was armed with a revolver; so it seems to me that it was rather preposterous for him to make the claim, notwithstanding the fact he was an expert pistol shot.<sup>24</sup> My experience in pistol shooting is that when mounted and going on the dead jump it is necessary to burn your opponent with your powder to get him. Still a lucky shot might get a fellow even at long range. Now, McGrath's horse was shot and he was on foot at a distance of less than fifty yards.<sup>25</sup> He deliberately kneeled on one knee, took careful aim and fired and shot Tall Bull through the heart.<sup>26</sup>*

Without evidence to discredit Stevenson's account, it emerges as the best document in determining who killed Tall Bull. North's claims were motivated by his love of his brother, who tragically died as a result of injuries while performing in Cody's Wild West show<sup>27</sup>—and lack of positive feelings about Cody, perhaps blaming Cody for his brother's death; Cody's account is embedded within his desire to develop his fame for theater and eventually the Wild West show, which somewhat discredits Carr's endorsement of Cody killing Tall Bull; the claim that a Pawnee killed Tall Bull is embedded in the thought that the fight was so general that no one knew who killed whom, so perhaps some unknown



*Author's collection. Quito Osuna Carr, Albuquerque, NM*

*Brevet Major General Eugene Asa Carr in a Later Picture.*

*He Commanded the 5th Cavalry in the Fight at Summit Springs*

Pawnee gets the credit for Tall Bull's death. It should be acknowledged too that when black powder is burned in a fight such as with Summit Springs, the ensuing dark smoke permeates the air, negatively effecting the ability to see a target in heavy firing, as was the case at Summit Springs. Stevenson's account is the only one that brings other factors into the equation, reasoned factors of distance and ability, plus the fact that Carr did give McGrath credit for killing Tall Bull stands as further support for Stevenson's account. As a final judgment it remains unknown who killed Tall Bull, but it is at least more probable



that Dannie McGrath killed him over the other claims. The probability, however, does not equate to knowledge. Still, it seems more rational to believe McGrath killed Tall Bull than any of the other four possibilities. Cody probably comes in second over the other claims, or perhaps equal to the claim that a Pawnee killed Tall Bull.

The next issue involving truth decay is the question of how the command learned the Indians they were trailing had with them captives taken from homesteads along the Saline River in northcentral Kansas in late spring. Cody himself is responsible for advancing an embellished little fib, grounded in an actual truth. In his autobiography published ten years after the fight, he reported that when the command came upon abandoned Indian camps, more frequent as they approached Summit Springs, the men observed a woman's shoe print where the village had camped. "Whenever they had encamped we found the print of a woman's shoe, and we concluded that they had with them some white captive."<sup>28</sup> He repeated this claim word for word in the *The Great Salt Lake Trail*, co-authored with Colonel Henry Inman in 1898.<sup>29</sup> As a result of this alleged discovery, the command came to learn that the Indians they were trailing were carrying female captives from their Kansas raids. This myth was repeated again and again in the literature produced on Summit Springs. After Cody mentioned it, it then re-surfaced in 1904 with Brady's *Indian Fights and Fighters*, and has continued from that point on.<sup>30</sup>

The problem with this story, however, is that it is false. It is what is today called "fake news." It suffers from what I prefer to call "truth decay."<sup>31</sup> Indians always made female captives wear Indian dress and moccasins. They were smart enough to know that allowing captive white women to continue to wear their own clothing and shoes would alert others to the fact that they held captives.<sup>32</sup>

Four years after Cody's autobiography came out, Lieutenant George Price—who was present with the Republican River Expedition—wrote that near the end of the column's march to Summit Springs "...it had become known that the enemy held as captives two white women whom they had captured on the Solomon River about the first of June [sic, May 30 on the Saline River]...."<sup>33</sup> He did not say this was learned because of shoe prints in abandoned village sites. How, then, had this become known? A clue comes from Lieutenant William J. Volkmar. Volkmar was assigned as Carr's Itinerary Officer during the Republican River Expedition and wrote in his journal, dated June 29, that the resupply wagons from Fort McPherson arrived in their camp.<sup>34</sup> This is the only way in which Carr could have received information that the Indians held female captives. There is further evidence to support this. Tom Alderdice had written a letter giving a description of his wife Susanna that had been transmitted via telegraph to Fort McPherson—roughly two weeks after Carr's command left Fort McPherson—which would have been sent to Carr with the resupply wagons. Carr cited this letter in his report on the fight. How could he have this letter in his possession unless it was delivered when the supply wagons connected with Carr twenty days into the expedition. Thus, this is more likely the incident that Price was referring to when he said the command became aware that the Indians held female captives. In his report, Carr said that the dead woman matched the description given to him, which was supplied by Susanna's husband, Tom Alderdice. That description provided by Tom was not delivered to the military until Tom had travelled to Fort Leavenworth on June 19, after he had discovered the location of the village



Author Collection, 1868 West Point Picture  
 Lieutenant William J. Volkmar Maintained a Daily  
 Itinerary Report of the Republican River Expedition

Leavenworth, arriving there June 19, thus making it impossible for Carr to be aware of white female captives being held by the Indians he was ordered to pursue, when he left Fort McPherson on June 9. The *Leavenworth Times and Conservative* covered Tom's story, denouncing the military for not meeting him the day before because he arrived after five o'clock the evening of the 19th. He had to wait until the next morning to meet with General John Schofield, the Commander of the Department of the Missouri. After this meeting, Tom put pencil to paper and wrote of his discovery of the Indian village, in the Republican River valley south of Fort McPherson. More importantly, he wrote a description of his wife.<sup>36</sup> This was the document Carr made reference to in his report on the fight, when he wrote that his surgeon, Louis Tesson, examined the dead woman and prepared her for burial, saying "she answers the description sent by Mr. Alderdice."<sup>37</sup>

Cody had embellished the story of when the column became aware that the Indians held female captives. Thus, Cody created the truth decay. It is an interesting embellishment, designed to make his autobiography more entertaining, but it is a false story, and subsequent historians have perpetuated the myth. That myth should now be put to rest once and for all.

several days after his wife was captured.<sup>35</sup> This occurred ten days after Carr had departed Fort McPherson, making it impossible for the command to know when they left on their campaign that there were female captives with the Indians they were sent to find.

When Susanna was captured on May 30 in north central Kansas, Tom was not present. He was returning from filing a land claim in Junction City, and arrived at the scene of the deadly Indian raid the day after his wife was captured and his children murdered. He then went, apparently alone, on a scout that covered well over 100 miles. Like Cody, Tom knew how to scout an Indian trail, the warriors always using streams to hide their cover, only leaving one stream to enter another, and thereby return to their village undetected. When Tom located the village, he went east to Fort

The third area of truth decay involves the two Medals of Honor given in the campaign, one to a soldier and one to a Pawnee scout. Both medals have a history of misinformation surrounding their respective recipients. Both the soldier and Indian were acknowledged for actions above and beyond the call of duty on July 8, but in separate incidents. Corporal John Kile successfully fought off several Cheyenne warriors when he was attacked while he was away with two privates trying to recover a lame cavalry horse that had been abandoned the day before. Kile has been misidentified as John Kyle or John Kelley since then.

He died July 18, 1870 in the post hospital at Fort Hays, Kansas, the morning after being shot in a drunken brawl with Wild Bill Hickok, after he had reenlisted and returned for a second stint in Custer's 7th Cavalry. When Kile was recognized for his heroics in 1869, his name was misspelled by Carr in his recommendation as John Kyle, yet all the muster rolls, enlistment papers, and other military records show Kile's name was always consistently spelled Kile, not Kyle. His headstone at Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery was finally changed in 2011 to reflect his correct name.<sup>38</sup>

The other Medal of Honor was awarded to Mad Bear (Co-rux-te-chod-ish), a Pawnee sergeant, who was severely wounded in the evening of July 8, when accidentally shot by friendly fire as he advanced forward to engage Cheyenne Indians that had tried to stampede the cavalry horses corralled near the camp late that night. He was later misidentified by Luther North as Traveling Bear (Co-rux-ah-kah-wah-dee), for his brave actions at Summit Springs. North asserted this misidentification of the wrong Pawnee was Carr's fault, as Traveling Bear had fought brilliantly in the ravines at Summit Springs, killing several warriors. North even claims, falsely, that he made sure the award was given to Traveling Bear and not Mad Bear.<sup>39</sup> However, in Carr's summary report of July 20, he makes it clear that it was Mad Bear on July 8 that got the recognition for bravery that resulted in his receiving the Medal of Honor. He made no mention of Traveling Bear at Summit Springs. Mad Bear missed the July 11 fight because of his wounds and was

*Fort Leavenworth June 21 1869  
 Description of the Battle of Summit Springs  
 Captured by Indians on Saline River  
 Private John Kile  
 Height 5'6 inches  
 Complexion Light  
 Hair Light Brown  
 Age Twenty Six years  
 Eyes Blue  
 Started in pursuit of the Spirit of  
 Clouds, traveled from <sup>Summit Springs</sup> three miles East  
 of Summit Creek north by trail  
 striking the north branch of Salt  
 Creek Saline 1/2 mile traveled  
 that by north up north branch of Salt  
 Creek striking Spillman Creek about  
 1/2 mile above main fork Saline of which  
 traveled up West Fork of Spillman  
 to head of creek Traveling West by north  
 crossed to Wolf Creek striking East  
 Fork and up East Fork about 1/2 miles*

Author Collection, from the National Archives

The First Page of Tom Alderdice's June 21, 1869 Letter  
 Written at Fort Leavenworth, Transmitted to General Carr

attended to while with the wagon train, which did not arrive at Summit Springs until nightfall on the evening of the fight. In the National Archives there is a letter showing the "x" for Mad Bear when he received the Medal of Honor that August, thus disproving Luther North's oft-repeated claim that his brother Frank gave

the medal to Traveling Bear.<sup>40</sup> Traveling Bear may indeed have distinguished himself at the fight at Summit Springs, but General Carr did not intend for him to be the recipient of the coveted Medal of Honor. The military documents show otherwise.

Yet another issue of truth decay occurs with the two women captives in Tall Bull's village at "Susanna Springs." When the cavalry, Cody and Pawnee scouts made their surprise attack in the afternoon of July 11, at the southern end of the village, Tall Bull's tipi held the two white women, who had been taken exactly six weeks earlier—at almost the identical hour—in Lincoln County, Kansas. Susanna was struck in the head by an Indian, with either the butt of a rifle or a tomahawk and killed. Her body was later reported found a little north of the tipi, lying alongside White Butte Creek, the small stream that flows south and then north from the springs for which the battle was named. Maria, painfully wounded in the back, had crawled outside the lodge where she had been shot in the back by Tall Bull. She had seen someone near the tipi, crawled out and grabbed the legs of the North brothers' cousin, Captain Sylvanus E. Cushing, who commanded one of the Pawnee companies.<sup>41</sup>

Maria Weichell had only arrived in America, from Germany, in early May, less than four weeks before her husband was killed and she was captured. She was treated on the battlefield by Carr's surgeon, Louis Tesson. A German bugler interpreted for her, giving Carr an account of her story, which he reported in his report on the fight.<sup>42</sup> Maria was placed in a hospital wagon and transported to Fort Sedgwick, arriving July 15. She remained in the post hospital until her discharge August 4.<sup>43</sup> The standard historical narrative regarding Maria is that she soon married a soldier or hospital attendant connected with her recovery. The first production of this story was reported by Washington Smith, a resident of Lincoln County, where Maria had been captured, in the *Saline Valley Register*, July 4, 1876. Smith reported that Maria had visited the settlements where she had been captured and said: "The soldier who first reached her in the rescue was one whose time had about expired, and Mrs. Weichell afterwards

Pawnee Agency, W.S.A.M.A.  
July 29th 1876

Received this day, 22 P.M. the Medal of Honor, awarded to me.

Carr  
Mad Bear

Luther North  
Traveling Bear

Author Collection

*Pawnee Agency Receipt Conferring the Medal of Honor to Mad Bear (Co-rux-te-chod-ish), Not Traveling Bear (Co-rux-ah-kah-wah-dee)*

became his wife." Three years later, in Cody's 1879 autobiography, he wrote, "after her recovery [at Fort Sedgwick] she soon married the hospital steward, her former husband having been killed by the Indians."<sup>44</sup> General Carr repeated this story in an 1887 letter, writing to the same Washington Smith who gave the first account of Maria's remarriage, saying after her rescue she was taken to Fort Sedgwick, "where she was placed in the hospital and cured, and afterwards, as I was told, married an infantry soldier."<sup>45</sup> In Carr's unpublished memoirs, later organized by his wife, Mary P. M. Carr, he added the soldier "was an hospital attendant."<sup>46</sup> In 1908, Elizabeth Barr wrote a short history of Lincoln County, Kansas, and said Maria remarried, "but it is not definitely known at this time whether it was a soldier, a blacksmith, or an army surgeon."<sup>47</sup> In 1910 Christian Bernhardt wrote a short book on the Indian raids in Lincoln County. Noted for its efforts at historical accuracy, the book claimed Maria "again remarried, and is supposed to live on a farm in eastern Kansas."<sup>48</sup> And finally, to complete authors who produced the earliest material on the battle at Summit Springs, Adolph Roenigk wrote in 1933 that Maria "was married to a blacksmith in one of the companies, whose name was Kyle."<sup>49</sup> From that time on, all authors writing on Summit Springs acknowledge one of these accounts.

It turns out on further examination, that none of these accounts are entirely accurate. At the time of writing *Dog Soldier Justice*, in 2003, it was speculated, correctly, that Maria had a child named Minnie Wurthmann, who in 1904 wrote to Kansas authorities for information regarding her mother's captivity. However, it was wrongly claimed that this woman was likely the child of Maria's second marriage.<sup>50</sup> As it turns out, Minnie Grace Weichell was the daughter born from Maria's pregnancy with her husband George before she was captured. New information recently discovered now shows to whom, when and where Maria married. She married twice, both in Omaha, and it remains possible her first marriage after her rescue might be the man claimed to have assisted with her recovery; but if that is the case, further searches in the National Archives are necessary to confirm this.



Author Collection, Jeanette Lyon, Tucson, AZ  
 Maria Weichell Married John Mantz, Her Third Husband, in 1875. Maria's First Husband Died When She was Captured. She was Rescued at Summit Springs

Records show she gave birth to her daughter in Omaha on December 18, 1869, verifying that her pregnancy was with her husband George Weichell.<sup>51</sup> Her next marriage in Douglas County, Nebraska reveals a marriage to Joseph Walch, age 27, on November 25, 1870.<sup>52</sup> That marriage did not last, either by death of the husband, abandonment or divorce, because yet another marriage is recorded, this time to John Mantz, on July 2, 1875.<sup>53</sup> Soon the couple moved to San Francisco, where Maria remained married until her early death at the age of 45 in 1890. She only had the one child with her first husband, George. *The San Francisco Morning Call*, September 23, published her obituary three days after she died, noting she was "45 years, two months and 2 days," which would make her birthday July 18, 1845. She turned twenty-four just six days after her rescue at Summit Springs.

Returning to the second, short marriage to Joseph Walch, there is a very similar name coincidence with that name and a cavalryman present at Summit Springs, such that further investigation is warranted to flesh out whether this coincidence in names represents the same man or two different men. A private with Company D, 5th Cavalry, was named John Walsh, a close correlation with the man named Joseph Walch, as recorded on the November 26, 1870 Omaha marriage certificate.<sup>54</sup> The similarity of the two names might not be enough to consider this second marriage—her first after she was rescued at Summit Springs—was to a man connected to her recovery as was noted in the first published accounts of her remarriage, and connecting that, as Cody said, to a hospital steward at Fort Sedgwick. However, records in the National Archives do show that private John Walsh had on July 30, 1869, during the time Maria was still recovering at the post hospital at Fort Sedgwick, put in a request "to be appointed hospital steward" at Fort Sedgwick.<sup>55</sup> Is it possible John Walsh is the same person as the man named Joseph Walch on the marriage certificate? The answer is clearly yes, but more

### MARRIAGE LICENSE.

State of Nebraska, }  
DOUGLAS COUNTY }  
1870

The People of the State of Nebraska,

To any Person Legally Authorized to Solemnize Marriages, Greeting:

You are hereby authorized, in full to the Holy Bonds of Matrimony, and to solemnize within this county, the nuptial ceremonies of America between *Mr. Joseph Walch* and *Mrs. Mary Weichell* of Omaha Nebraska, age *27* years, *single* and *26* years, *single* you of *Michael Walch* his mother's maiden name *Walch* of *St. Louis* and *Mrs. Mary Weichell* a *daughter of Henry Scholtz* and *Anna Weichell* of *Omaha Nebraska* age *26* years, born at *St. Louis* Missouri, her mother's maiden name was *Louisa Scholtz* and this shall be your good and sufficient warrant, and you are required to return this license to me within three months from the celebration of such marriage, with the certificate of the same approved thereto, and signed by you, under the penalty of five hundred dollars.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal this *25* day of *November* A. D. 1870

*A. B. Seiber*  
Probate Judge

STATE OF NEBRASKA, }  
County of *DOUGLAS* }  
1870

Be it Remembered, That at *Omaha* in said county, on the *26* day of *November* A. D. 1870 *Mr. Joseph Walch* and *Mrs. Mary Weichell* were duly joined in Marriage by me, in presence of *George Tomlin* *William* residing at *Omaha* and *John Scholtz* residing at *St. Louis* Missouri witnesses present at the ceremony.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this *26* day of *November* 1870

*A. B. Seiber*  
*Probate Judge*

Author Collection, Courtesy Mke Day, Tescott, KS  
Marriage Certificate of Joseph Walch (Circled) and  
"Mary" Weichell. Maria's Second Husband, Joseph  
may have been 5th Cavalry Trooper John Walsh

research needs to be done on John Walsh. The 5th Cavalry muster rolls show his enlistment was for five years and was to end in 1872, yet the Joseph Walch/Maria Weichell marriage certificate shows a marriage in Omaha in 1870. Perhaps further research in Walsh's military career will show an early release or a transfer to the headquarters of the Department of the Platte in Omaha. What is not known is how this marriage ended, as Maria married a final time in 1875. But clearly, it is a tantalizing possibility that Maria in fact did marry a man connected with her recovery.

Bernhardt created a confusion in his 1910 book when he stated that at the time when he wrote *Indian Raids in Lincoln County, Kansas 1864 and 1869*, Maria was "negotiating with the old settlers around Salina for evidence through which to secure damages from the government for losses sustained at that time [her capture]." <sup>56</sup> This was simply false because Maria had been dead for almost two decades when he wrote that. This bit of truth decay seems to mar his otherwise fact-worthy book. The confusion clears, however, when one understands that Bernhardt likely misunderstood when learning at about the time of his writing the book of efforts being made to recover Maria's property losses, thinking they were made by Maria when in fact they were being made by her daughter. In a story published March 1, 1894, the *Kansas City Times* reported that Mrs. Ben Wurthmann was inquiring about a cattle ranch in Kansas City. The story goes on to report that her father, George Weichell, had earlier come to Kansas with his new wife to start a cattle ranch in Kansas City, but that he was killed by Indians and her mother taken prisoner with another woman and "kept prisoners for six weeks." The story states her mother was rescued in a skirmish between the soldiers and Indians. "The other woman was tied to a post and whipped to death by the Indians, and my mother was shot, but not killed. She was taken to a Soldier's hospital and shortly afterward went to Omaha, where I was born. Since that time she has died." Mrs. Wurthmann was interested in knowing if the ranch her parents had was still in her father's name. The article closed stating that her inquiry was turned over to a Mr. Smith who knew about the raid Mrs. Wurthmann mentioned, and would reply to her directly. It must have been from that correspondence that she later decided to write to the Kansas government for information regarding her mother's captivity, hoping that would help her to locate and recover the ranch her mother told her about. <sup>57</sup> From this newspaper story Bernhardt must have learned that there were ongoing efforts to recover losses from the raid, and made the wrong assumption that Maria Weichell was still alive, when in fact it was her daughter who had been making inquiries in the area at the time Bernhardt was gathering information for his book.

One final bit of historical dental surgery is necessary to put a final repair on the truth decay that clouds the history of Summit Springs. We began with Cody, and it is appropriate we end with Cody. As should be obvious by now, much of the "plaque" that created distortions regarding Cody at Summit Springs came from Luther North and spread through the writings of George Bird Grinnell, thus producing our modern issue of truth decay that permeates modern understanding of the fight at Summit Springs. Historical "dentistry" should finish its work by polishing the truth that exists. This can be accomplished by asking a simple question: How was Cody perceived by the officers whom he served under in 1869? That can be answered by a quick examination of the writings of Eugene Carr. Prior to leaving Fort McPherson on June 9, the beginning

of the Republican River Expedition, Bill Cody had been with the 5th Cavalry since 1868. He had accompanied Carr's troopers into New Mexico in the winter campaign that began late that fall, ordered by General Philip Sheridan after Cheyenne made a murderous assault on settlers in northcentral Kansas earlier in August. Two months after those August raids, Carr was sent to Kansas to assume command of the 5th Cavalry already there under the leadership of Major (Brevet Colonel) William B. Royall, to whom Buffalo Bill Cody had already been assigned as a scout. When meeting Carr for the first time near the Smoky Hill River east of Fort Wallace, Carr did not have a high opinion of scouts he had earlier worked with. He thought no differently of Cody, when he first saw him: "There is one of those confounded scouts posing."<sup>58</sup> But soon Cody offered to deliver Carr to Royall a few miles distant. Carr's opinion quickly changed: "His splendid physique, nonchalant manner, promptness to act and superb horsemanship disarmed, as regarded him, my prejudices."<sup>59</sup> More: "He was a wonderful shot from horseback, killing game, even antelopes running, which was an extraordinary feat in those days, had eyes as good as a field glass and was the best white trailer I ever saw."<sup>60</sup>

Carr's understanding of Cody's expertise and ability was reinforced later that fall when his command had traveled south of Fort Lyon as part of Sheridan's winter campaign. Though it was Custer's command and not Carr's that had success at the Washita on November 27 (Carr's victory at Summit Springs seven months later terminated the punitive campaign), the winter expedition took a terrible loss on all the men in the field, including Carr's 5th Cavalry. And it was Cody who, through extraordinary effort, provided buffalo meat for Carr's freezing and starving soldiers. Between 200-300 cattle had been assigned to Carr's command, but not long into the march into Indian territory a hard blizzard halted their journey. When the snow stopped, several horses and mules had died, and most of the cattle herd had either died or were missing. Smarting from their losses, the command continued their journey south, seeking the enemy in its winter camp.

It was not long before the command was without meat. This created what might have been Cody's shining moment as a 5th Cavalry scout. He volunteered to take twenty empty wagons driven by teamsters and one wagon master, as well as twenty infantrymen attached to Carr's command, and hunt buffalo. Infantry Sergeant Luke Cahill oversaw the soldiers. The journey was a long and hard march of several days in the freezing weather, but Cody was successful. In one hunt—the first, four days after leaving Carr's camp—he was able to trap and kill fifty-five buffalo. As Cahill remembered, Cody "never shot an animal but once and not one of the buffalo escaped."<sup>61</sup> Filling several of the wagons with fresh buffalo meat, the freighters brought the meat to Carr's camp while Cody and the remaining men and wagons continued to hunt more buffalo. Soon another herd was found. Cody this time "killed forty-one buffalo on that run and completely exhausted his two fine horses and he himself was very badly jarred from the recoil of his heavy Springfield rifle."<sup>62</sup>

The wagons were not all yet filled with meat, and so, after a few day's rest Cody continued to search for more buffalo. This time the wagon master joined in the hunt and soon the wagons were secured with plenty of buffalo meat for the deprived soldiers. Cahill was so impressed with Cody's conduct that he recalled "the world only



had one Buffalo Bill and it will never have another."<sup>63</sup>

In early spring, after Custer's victory at the Washita, Carr's command was ordered back to Fort Lyon, and from there Carr was ordered to Fort McPherson along the Platte River in Nebraska. While marching through northwestern Kansas toward his destination, by coincidence Carr's troopers ran into Tall Bull's warriors, whose tribe had escaped from Custer in the Texas Panhandle in March. (Custer cornered other Dog Soldier chiefs and rescued two Kansas women, Sarah White and Mrs. Anna Morgan, who had been captured in mid-August and mid-October.) Carr's cavalrymen had two fights with Tall Bull's warriors, May 13 and 16, killing more than two dozen and wounding at least as many more.<sup>64</sup> This set the stage

for Tall Bull's revenge through north central Kansas, resulting in the two captive women found at Summit Springs. But it was Cody's actions in the May 16 fight that impressed Carr. Cody suffered a serious scalp wound in the fight. Carr recalled seeing Cody soon after he was wounded, when Carr brought the rest of the command and met up with the company that had engaged in the fight:

*A figure with apparently a red cap rose slowly up the hill. For an instant it puzzled me, as it wore the buckskin and had long hair; but on seeing the horse I recognized it as Cody's 'Powder Face' and saw that it was Buffalo Bill without his broad brimmed sombrero. On closer inspection I saw his head was swathed in a bloody handkerchief, which served not only as a temporary bandage, but as a chapeau – his hat having been shot off, the bullet plowing his scalp badly for about five inches. It had ridged along the bone, and he was bleeding profusely – a very "close call," but a lucky one.<sup>65</sup>*

What is remarkable about Cody when he appeared with his bleeding head wound was the fact that he immediately volunteered to make a fifty-mile ride to Fort Kearney to obtain much-needed supplies for the soldiers and their mounts. Carr gave him the best horse in the command and when it was dark, off Cody went, after having his head wound patched up. That was Cody in 1868-1869. Carr also noted that Sheridan offered



*McCracken Research Library, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody WY  
Cody Wearing a 7th Cavalry Officer Coat. Although Never Actually in the Army, Cody was Offered a Commission in the 5th Cavalry After Summit Springs*

Cody a commission in the 5th Cavalry, "but, while always respectful to authority, his love of personal freedom from the restriction of official routine and etiquette caused him to refuse, thereby losing what might now adorn his shoulders, a high army rank."<sup>66</sup>

The officers treated Cody as if he were one of their own. Again, "One of his remarkable qualities was his knowledge of the country and ability to lay out roads over unknown wilds. With instinctive engineering inspiration he could tell what sort of ground was in front of him, although he had never been over it, and he could always pick the very best route for a wagon train."<sup>67</sup> Carr was so impressed with Cody's service that he wrote his commander during the campaign for permission to increase Cody's pay an additional 100 dollars a month, "for extraordinarily good services as trailer and fighter in the pursuit of hostile Indians."<sup>68</sup>

In closing, it is rather obvious that serious truth decay has infiltrated nearly all publications that have been written in the 20th and 21st centuries regarding Cody and Summit Springs. Historical dentistry has been necessary to chip away significant truth decay involving both Cody's actions in the Republican River Expedition, as well as various issues of distorted fact with the white captives rescued at Summit Springs and factual details about the fight itself. This historical dentistry has demonstrated it is possible to separate the wheat from the chaff regarding Cody and his scouting experiences prior to his ongoing fame, first as a theater entertainer and then as the majestic leader of his many successful years of operating his Wild West Show. It would not have been possible had Cody been any less than he actually was, the real deal. Say what you want regarding Cody's personality in his later famous years, but do not try and diminish Cody's efforts as a twenty-three-year-old scout for the 5th Cavalry. The factual record, once sorted out, does not permit that.

And finally, for the Cheyenne, the fight at Summit Springs produces very different emotions today than did the massacre that occurred in the aftermath of Sand Creek nearly five years earlier. Sand Creek, justifiably, produced rage and indignation (and still does). It justifies, for the Cheyenne apologist, the violent acts of retaliation that lasted until Summit Springs. But Summit Springs does not produce a similar rage and indignation now. It instead produces acute awareness of a tragic end, a loss of a cultural lifestyle that was to be no more. Summit Springs defeated the Cheyenne Nation, even though resistance continued for another decade. Cody had nothing less than a crucial role in the military success of the 5th Cavalry.

## ENDNOTES

1. Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr, Letter to General G. D. Ruggles, from Headquarters Camp near Fort Sedgwick, July 20, 1869. Republican River Expedition, Part 1, Entry 3731, Department of the Platte, Letters received, 1869. Record Group 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

2. Carr, Letter to Ruggles, July 20, 1869.

3. For accounts of the fight, see Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*, Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 1960, p. 129-148; James T. King, *War Eagle A Life of General Eugene A. Carr*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska

Press, 1963, p. 94-119; Jeff Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice The Ordeal of Susanna Alderdice in the Kansas Indian War*, 2003; reprint, with a foreword by John H. Monnett, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009, p. 163-186; Mark Van De Logt, *War Party in Blue Pawnee Scouts in the U. S. Army*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010, p. 110-140; Jeff Broome, *Cheyenne War Indian Raids on the Roads to Denver; 1864-1869*. Sheridan, CO: Aberdeen Books and the Logan County Historical Society, 2013, p. 433-468. In *Dog Soldier Justice* Susanna was represented as being twenty-nine-years old when in fact she was twenty-four. A mistake in reading one census record from 1850 caused the error. Subsequent census records provided by descendants of Susanna's birth family established her actual age as twenty-four in 1869.

4. George Bird Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians Their History and Ways of Life, Volume II*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1923, p. 72.

5. Gary L. Roberts, *Massacre at Sand Creek How Methodists Were Involved In An American Tragedy*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016, p. 8-12.

6. Elliott West said it best: "Indians, white travelers, and their horses and oxen and mules were gobbling the very bejabbers out of one of the most vital, vulnerable, and limited habitats of the great plains [the river bottoms]." *The Way to The West Essays on the Central Plains*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995, p. 27.

7. Jeff Broome, *Cheyenne War Indian Raids on the Roads to Denver; 1864-1869*. p. 40-42. See also Elliott West, *The Contested Plains Indians. Goldseekers. & the Rush to Colorado*, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1998, p. 68.

8. For an account of Dog Soldier activity after Sand Creek, taken from a ledgerbook containing Cheyenne art recovered at the Summit Springs fight, see Jean Afton, David F. Halaas, and Andrew H. Masich, *Cheyenne Dog Soldiers A Ledgerbook History of Coups and Combat*, Niwot and Denver, CO: University Press of Colorado and Colorado Historical Society, 1997.

9. George Bird Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts and Their Pawnee Battalion*, p. 201. Italics added. Addison Sheldon, when superintendent of the Nebraska State Historical Society, said in 1930 that Cody was not in the fight. See also Robert Bruce, *The Fighting Norths And Pawnee Scouts*, Lincoln, NE: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1932, p. 67. Grinnell first told this story in 1889, when Cody was very much alive, in *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk Tales* New York, NY: Forest and Stream Publishing Company, 1889, p. 329-330; and again, in *The Fighting Cheyennes*. first published in 1915, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956, p. 317.

10. Eugene A. Carr, "Campaigns of Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr (Medalist), p. 30, p. 33." Typewritten manuscript in the possession of Carr descendant Tom Van Soelen, Durango, Colorado. A copy resides at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska. Cody repeated Carr's claim, quoting from the memoirs in his 1908 autobiography, *True Tales of the Plains*, New York, NY: Empire Book Company, 1908, p. 155. See also George F. Price, compiled, *Across the Continent With the Fifth Cavalry*, New York, NY: D. Van Norstrand, Publisher, 1883, p. 137, where Price notes it was Cody who reported the location of the village to Carr.

11. Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts*, p. 198-199. Don Russell carefully analyzed the many claims that Luther North gave crediting Frank with killing Tall Bull in *Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*, p. 138-148. Russell identified nine separate published accounts in which Luther North gave credit to his brother killing Tall Bull. After Russell's publication, yet another account was published citing Luther North. See Bruce R. Liddic and Paul Harbaugh, edited, *Camp on Custer Transcribing the Custer Myth*, Spokane, WA: The Arthur H. Clarke Company, 1995, p. 173. The editors also cite a letter North wrote to another brother in 1874, when he said, "That big brother of mine killed the chief."

12. Donald F. Danker, edited, *Man of the Plains Recollections of Luther North 1856-1882*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1961. In studying this work, one can see how Grinnell used North's sources for his account in *Two Great Scouts*. See *Man of the Plains*, p. 118 alongside *Two Great Scouts*, p. 201.

13. Donald J. Berthrong, *The Southern Cheyennes*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, p. 342.

14. King, *War Eagle*, p. 113-116.

15. King, *War Eagle*, p. 114.

16. King, *War Eagle*, p. 116.

17. Clarence Reckmeyer, "The Battle of Summit Springs," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. VI, NO. 6, 1929, p. 213-215. Adolph Roenigk was also with Reckmeyer and North when the battlefield was visited, and he wrote about the battle in *Pioneer History of Kansas*, self-published, 1933, p. 234-239, 268. There (p. 278) he wrote that in 1878 Cody was confronted by Frank North regarding who killed Tall Bull and Cody admitted the claim that he killed Tall Bull was created by Ned Buntline, apparently for advertising purposes for the Wild West show. See also Stanley Vestal, *War Path and Council Fire The Plains Indians' Struggle for Survival in War and in Diplomacy*, New York, NY: Random House, 1948, p. 170, 173; Elmo Scott Watson, "The Battle of Summit Springs" *Chicago Westerners Brand Book*, Vol. VII, no. 7, September, 1950, p. 50-51; Jack D. Filipiak, "The Battle of Summit Springs," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XLI, NO. 4, 1964, p. 351; Reginald S. Craig, "Tall Bull's Last Fight," *The Denver Westerners Monthly Roundup*, April 1968, Vol. XXIV, Number 4, p. 24; Fred Mazzulla and C. Jefferson Cox, "Summit Springs," *The Denver Westerners Monthly Roundup*, March 1970, Vol. XXVI, Number 3, p. 22; Liddic and Harbaugh, *Camp on Custer*, p. 173.

18. Richard J. Walsh, *The Making of Buffalo Bill*, Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1928, p. 153, italics added.

19. Cyrus Townsend Brady, *Indian Fights and Fighters*, New York, NY: McClure, Phillips & CO, 1904, p. 177.

20. Eugene A. Carr Papers, Box 3, United States Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Italics added.

21. McCracken Research Library, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, WY. Carr repeats this claim in his unpublished memoirs. "Campaigns of Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr (Medalist)," p. 33, 37.

22. Research Archives, Overland Trails Museum, Sterling, Colorado. See also Don

Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, p. 64. Carr's letter is also copied and on file in the McCracken Research Library in Cody, WY. See MS 62 Russell, Series 1:D, Box 5/f23.

23. William F. Cody, *The Life of Hon. William F. Cody known as Buffalo Bill the famous Hunter, Scout and Guide*, New York, NY: Indian Head Books, 1991, p. 260. Reprint, first published in 1879.

24. Unfortunately, Lieutenant Mason was killed in a barroom shootout in Cheyenne, March 1, 1870, less than eight months after the Summit springs fight. See Col. Gerald M. Adams, *The Post Near Cheyenne A History of Fort D. A. Russell, 1867-1930*, Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1989, p.41-42. Carr, in his unpublished memoirs, mentions Mason killing an Indian at Summit Springs other than Tall Bull, which may explain the dispute. Carr: "One warrior was very prominent with a full headdress and Lieutenant Mason and another officer disputed as to which killed him." Eugene A. Carr, "Campaigns of Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr (Medalist) 1868-1869." Silver Reel 1, Carr, Eugene Asa, Brevet Major General 1830-1910. MS2688, #8672, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE., p. 32-33, 217-218. It remains possible the other officer disputing with Lt. Mason could have been Frank North, validating Luther North's claims that his brother killed a chief in the manner he described. But if so, it was not Tall Bull. Carr went on to say Cody killed the chief with the white horse and after the fight, in the camp, Tall Bull's wife said the horse belonged to her husband and thus Cody killed Tall Bull. It should be noted that no soldier could recognize who Tall Bull was, which can explain the confusion of Lt. Mason and perhaps Frank North thinking the chief they said they killed must have been Tall Bull. In Luther North's own account of Summit Springs, published as a chapter in E. A. Brininstool, *Fighting Indian Warriors*, Harrisburg, PA: The Stackpole Company, 1953, p. 215-229, North said that after the fight Lt. Mason came to Frank and showed him the war bonnet he had taken from one of the chiefs he had killed, and asked if it might be Tall Bull's war bonnet, and noted that at the time no one knew that Tall Bull had been killed until the command arrived at Fort Sedgwick two days after the battle (see p. 228). It was at Sedgwick, North says, that Tall Bull's wife pointed to Frank North as the killer of her husband.

25. In Carr's report on Summit Springs, he said one horse had been killed in the fight and another dozen had died of exhaustion chasing the fleeing Indians. That horse was McGrath's. Carr, "Letter to Ruggles, July 20, 1869," See Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 166.

26. This account is unpublished and belongs in the possession of Harry H. Anderson, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

27. Danker, *Man of the Plains*, p. 282.

28. Cody, *Life of Buffalo Bill*, p. 255.

29. Colonel Henry Inman and Colonel William F. Cody, *The Great Salt Lake Trail*, London: The Macmillan Company, 1898, p. 413.

30. Brady, *Indian Fights and Fighters*, p. 172; Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts*, p. 194; *The Fighting Cheyennes*, p. 311; Roenigk, *Pioneer History of Kansas*, p. 271; Walsh,

*Making of Buffalo Bill*, p. 147; Russell, *Lives and Legends*, p. 132; Colonel Ray G. Sparks, *Reckoning at Summit Springs*, Kansas City, MO: The Lowell Press, 1969, p. 46. See also his "Tall Bull's Captives," *The Trail Guide, the Kansas City Posse of Westerners*, Vol. VII, March, 1962, Number 1, p. 24; Richard Weingardt, *Sound the Charge The Western Frontier: Spillman Creek to Summit Springs*, Englewood, CO: Jacqueline Enterprises, Inc. Publication, 1978, p. 41.

31. "Fake news" might be too harsh a phrase to use, because one of the meanings in using that phrase today is that authors of fake news are intentionally deceiving the public with information they know to be false or misleading, and this is certainly not the case with all of the false claims made about the Summit Springs campaign. However, Cody knew it was misleading when he mentioned finding a woman's shoe print in the abandoned villages the command came upon. Also, Luther North knew what he said about Cody missing the fight was categorically false. Probably outside of those two claims about incidents related to the Republican River Expedition, the other false claims were likely sincerely believed by those making the assertions. Thus, perhaps the idea of "truth decay" is a better phrase, as it does not delve into the cause of the cavity producing the decay of truth.

32. Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 146. Others have embellished it with further claims of finding a woman's note in an abandoned village saying, "For God's sake make haste to rescue us." See Roenigk, *Pioneer History of Kansas*, p. 241.

33. Price, *Across the Continent*, p. 136. Note the significance of the fact that Price merely says the command became aware of white captives with the Indians. He does not say how this knowledge came to the command.

34. Lieutenant William J. Volkmar, "Journal of the March of the Republican River Expedition." Department of the Platte, Letters Received, 1869, Box 12. Record Group 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

35. Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 118-123.

36. Tom's letter is in Record Group 123, Department of Missouri, Letters received, 1869. Part 1, E2601. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. It is dated June 21, 1869.

37. Carr, "Letter to Ruggles, July 20, 1869." See also telegram dated June 21, 1869, Fort Hays, Letters and Telegrams received, 1867-1889, RG 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Telegram is quoted in Wayne M. Sarf, *A Winter Campaign: General Philip Sheridan's Operations on the Southern Plains, 1868-1869*, Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services, 2001, p. 451.

38. Jeff Broome, "The Soldier who almost killed Wild Bill Hickok: John Kyle, John Kelley or John Kile?" *The Denver Westerners Roundup*, Vol. LXVIII, No. 2, March-April, 2012. See also "Wild Bill's Brawl With Two of Custer's Troopers," *Wild West*, Vol. 25, No. 4, December, 2012, p. 50-57.

39. Grinnell first states this false claim in *Two Great Scouts and Their Pawnee Battalion*, p. 200; it is repeated in Bruce, *The Fighting Norths and Pawnee Scouts*, p. 19, 72; and Danker, *Man of the Plains*, p. 120.

40. Part 1, Entry 3731, Letters Received, 1869, Department of the Platte, Record Group 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. See also Carr, "Campaigns," p. 23/213.

41. Danker, *Man of the Plains*, p. 3, 108. See also Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts*, p. 197-198.

42. The soldier who interpreted Maria's statement was Henry Voss, who, when his enlistment expired with the 5th Cavalry, soon re-enlisted into the 7th Cavalry. In 1876 he was serving as the Chief Trumpeter assigned to Headquarters and died with Custer at the Little Bighorn June 25, 1876. See Hercules Price, "Letter to Ferdinand Erhardt, December 6, 1907." Price Letters, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS. See also Company G, Fifth Cavalry Muster Roll, July/August, 1869. Record Group 94, National Archives Building, Washington, DC; Ronald H. Nichols, edited, *Men With Custer Biographies of the 7th Cavalry*, Hardin, MT: Custer Battlefield Historical & Museum Association, Inc., 2010, p. 407.

43. Carr, "Letter to Ruggles, July 20, 1869." See also Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 178-179.

44. Cody, *The Life of Hon. William F. Cody*, p. 262.

45. Washington Smith Indian Depredation Claim, #3951, Record Group 75, Indian Depredation Claims Division, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Carr's unpublished memoirs repeated this claim. See Carr, "Campaigns," p. 36.

46. Mary P. M. Carr, "Memoirs of Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr," p. 34. Typewritten manuscript in the possession of Carr descendant Tom Van Soelen, Durango, Colorado. Copy is also at Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE.

47. Elizabeth N. Barr, *A Souvenir History of Lincoln County, Kansas*, Self-published, 1908, p. 42.

48. C. Bernhardt, *Indian Raids in Lincoln County, Kansas, 1864 and 1869*, Lincoln, KS: The Lincoln Sentinel Print, 1910, p. 46.

49. Roenigk, *Pioneer History of Kansas*, p. 238.

50. Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 201-202.

51. 1880 Census lines 26 – 28 = <https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/6742/4239985-00140?pid=15844094&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse>.

52. [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61335/47291\\_552609-00896?pid=900008123&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61335/47291_552609-00896?pid=900008123&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse).

53. [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61335/47291\\_552610-01018?pid=900107910&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61335/47291_552610-01018?pid=900107910&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse).

54. The marriage certificate is written throughout in one penmanship style, which indicates it was filled out by the clerk of the court and not the man who married. That makes it possible, especially if his first language was German—which is likely since Maria could not speak English at the time of her rescue and recovery that the husband's name is misspelled due to a language/translation issue when filing the certificate. If this is the case, the person writing the information on the marriage certificate could have easily misheard and thus misspelled Joseph Walch for John Walsh.

55. Record Group 393, Department of the Platte, Part 1, Register of Letters Received, Entry 3927. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

56. Bernhardt, *Indian Raids*, p. 46.

57. See Mrs. B. Worthman document in "Weichell Manuscript Collection." Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS. Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 201-202.

58. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 12.

59. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 13.

60. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 13a, underlining by Carr. For another account of Cody's remarkable actions under Carr, see Luke Cahill, "An Indian Campaign and Buffalo Hunting with 'Buffalo Bill'", *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. IV, no. 4, August, 1927, p. 125-135. Carr's manuscript, quoted here, is undated, the manuscript being discovered after he died in 1910. It was likely written before 1887, when he wrote a letter to Washington Smith, whose son Chalmers was one of the survivors of the 1868 fight at Beecher Island. In one letter he thanks Smith for the information from newspapers that he sent Carr regarding the raid when Susanna was captured on May 30, 1869. Carr then wrote "I always understood Mrs. Alderdice was captured in the fall of 1868...." In his manuscript he wrote wrongly that Susanna had been captured in the fall of 1868. It is likely he would have corrected that had he written his memoirs after his correspondence with Washington Smith. Carr "letter to Smith" in Washington Smith Indian Depredation Claim, #3951. This misrepresenting Susanna's capture as happening in 1868 has been used in some publications, distorting truth in the story. See Elmo Scott Watson, famed founder of both the Chicago and Denver Westerners, "The Battle of Summit Springs," *The Westerners Brand Book*, Chicago, Vol. VII, no. 7, September, 1950, p. 49-51.

61. Cahill, "An Indian Campaign," p. 132.

62. Cahill, "An Indian Campaign," p. 133. Cody's shoulder was so badly bruised by the powerful recoil of his Springfield that his shoulder and breast "were a mass of black and blue." Some years ago, I fired a similar Springfield rifle fifteen times in succession. The recoil from firing the gun caused a painful and yellow shoulder bruise lasting several days. One can imagine how Cody's bruised shoulder would have been from such firing over several days of hunting. Cody's shooting was enough to impress Cahill with a lasting and powerful memory of his military service.

63. Cahill, "An Indian Campaign," p. 133.

64. Bvt. Maj. Gen. E. A. Carr, "Report to Bvt. Brig. Gen'l Geo. D. Ruggles from Headquarters Detachment 5th Cavalry, Camp at Fort McPherson, May 22, 1869," Record Group 393, Part 1, Entry 3731, Department of the Platte, Letters received, 1869. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Broome, *Dog Soldier Justice*, p. 71-75.

65. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 20-21.

66. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 24.

67. Carr, "Campaigns," p. 13a.

68. General Eugene A. Carr, "Letter to General C. C. Augur, June 11, 1869." Department of the Platt, Letters Received, Part 1, Entry 3731, Record Group 393, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.



# Over the Corral Rail

Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.

## The Denver Posse mourns member Robert Larson's Passing

With great sadness we report the loss of a long-time member of the Denver Posse, Robert (Bob) Larson, who passed away on May 18, 2020, at the age of 93. Bob joined the Westerners in 1993, following his retirement as a history professor at the University of Northern Colorado. While a Posse member he authored *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (1997); *Gall: Lakota War Chief* (2007); and *Ernest L. Blumenschein, the Life of an American Artist* (2013). In 2006 he received the Denver Posse's Lifetime Achievement Award.

He served in the Navy in World War II, and then earned BA and MA degrees while attending Denver University. Bob held membership in Phi Beta Kappa and was also a Fulbright Scholar. He was a teacher and administrator in the Denver Public Schools for eight years, and in 1961 received a Ph.D. in Western history from the University of New Mexico. In 1960 he joined the faculty of the University of Northern Colorado and retired as professor emeritus after thirty years.

Additional publications are *New Mexico's Quest for Statehood, 1846-1912*, (1968); *New Mexico Populism, a Study of Radical Protest in a Western Territory*, (1974); *Populism in the Mountain West*, (1986); and *Shaping Educational Change: The First Century of the University of Northern Colorado at Greeley*, (1989). Dr. Larson's first publication was produced from his Ph.D. thesis. It was held in such high regard that the State of New Mexico had it reprinted in 2012, as part of the state centennial celebration.

The Denver Posse of Westerners extends condolences to Bob's wife and family.



## Pikes Peak Posse Presentations

Following the cancellation of the April meeting the Pikes Peak Posse converted to virtual meetings via Zoom. The May presentation was the "History of NORAD, ENT AFB and more..." by Dr. Brian Laslie. The Colorado Springs downtown site of ENT Air Force Base originally housed the North American Air Defense Command, and then the construction inside Cheyenne Mountain, NORAD's current quarters, were described. Dr. Laslie is the Deputy Command Historian for NORAD and USNORTHCOM.

The June program by John Stansfield was titled "Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Long Expedition exploring the Front Range, 1820." Storyteller John has been recounting stories of the American West for forty years, reacting lives of Colorado pioneers, and authoring several books.

In July the oldest intact residence in Colorado Springs was featured in a program by Eric Metzger, "Who was Major McAllister: a closer look at the man who helped build Fountain Colony." In the Civil War Henry McAllister served under General William Jackson Palmer in the Fifteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and then in 1873 he moved to Palmer's new town, Colorado Springs. Thorough research on the architecture and construction of this historical landmark in a well-illustrated Zoom presentation entertained the Pikes Peak Posse.

## Denver Westerners Paraphernalia

Following the artifact described in the previous issue of the *Roundup*, the next oldest item is the sheriff's badge, worn by the current sheriff, Everett Brailley. This authentic badge is inscribed on its reverse, "PRESENTED TO ELMO SCOTT WALTSON BY THE WESTERNERS - CHICAGO POSSE, MAY 22 -1950." Elmo and Leland Case are the founders the Westerners Chicago Corral in 1944, the beginning of all Westerners. Watson, a Professor of Journalism at Northwestern University, moved to Denver for his health, becoming a professor at the University of Denver. Upon his death, Mrs. Watson presented the badge to the Denver Posse, which has proudly used it since.

Next, our gavel is an appropriate bit of the Old West, being made from scrap wood picked up at old Fort Union, New Mexico. It was hand-turned by founding Posse member Dr. Nolie Mumey.

These two Posse artifacts are cased in a beautifully carved box. Posse member Bob Brown taught history at Lincoln High School, and he brought fellow faculty member, Dwight "Mick" DeWitt into the Posse. Mick, a woodshop teacher, crafted this case.

Finally, Mick also made the podium that we use, a crafted tongue-and-groove table-top lectern. Starting in 1969, both the gavel-and-badgecase and the podium have been inscribed with the names of successive sheriffs.



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Brigham Young and the Expansion of the Mormon Faith** by Thomas G. Alexander. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2019. 392 pp. Maps, photos, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Very early in this book, Thomas Alexander declares himself a devout, practicing Mormon, who believes that complete objectivity is probably not possible. Despite these disclosures, Alexander's biography of Brigham Young appears to be, for the most part, comprehensive and well balanced.

The first portion of the book delves much more deeply into the background and early history of the Mormon Church rather than into Young's youthful life, though in fairness Young was so intimately associated with the creation of the Church, especially following Joseph Smith's murder, that it would be difficult to separate the two story lines.

Brigham Young's life presents a montage of contradictions, many of which Alexander examines in some detail. According to Alexander, for example, although Young was poorly educated, he became incredibly well read and well informed. Though he served as a man of God, his sermons and speeches were often liberally spiced with crude, vulgar and even occasionally obscene references. He believed Native Americans to be part of a lost tribe of Israel, and urged his followers to treat them with kindness. Yet, when confronted by their hostility, he also advocated fighting back with lethal fury. As an ardent advocate of polygamy, Young also supported many women's rights, especially voting, at a time when such positions had not yet found favor in the country at large.

Alexander also debunks many myths that surround Young's life, while taking issue with several other authors. According to Alexander, Young was not the first to arrive at Salt Lake to proclaim, "This is the place." Rather, he confirmed that the place where others had already stopped was where he had in mind. He may not have been as firmly in command of the Church as is often assumed. Alexander cites a "Mormon Reformation," a concept of "Blood Atonement," and even polygamy itself as issues that generated substantial resistance to Young among other Church leaders.

Introducing a degree of controversy, Alexander offers credible evidence suggesting that Brigham Young did not order or possess pre-knowledge of the fateful Mountain Meadows Massacre. His creation of various economic "United Orders" can also perhaps be viewed as failures.

Unfortunately, Alexander omits a discussion of Young's role in the Mormon handcart migration, an issue that remains a controversial topic in Mormon history. Occasionally, Alexander's theological critiques also become somewhat difficult for a layperson to follow.

These are, however, minor flaws in an otherwise extremely readable, well-researched and thoughtful addition to Mormon history.

– Dennis Hagen

**Art and Advertising in Buffalo Bill's Wild West**, by Michelle Delaney, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2019. 235 pages. Photographs, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index. Clothbound, \$45.00.

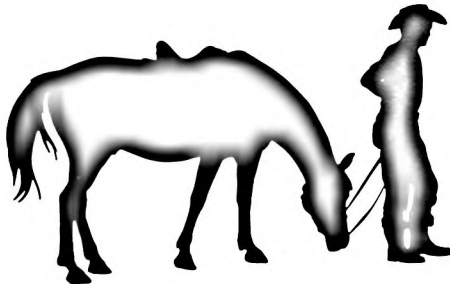
"Buffalo Bill's Wild West" had an incredible impact upon the way the entire world looks at the history of the American West. At the helm was William F. Cody, Buffalo Bill himself, an inspiring and charismatic figure. Millions of people in America and Europe turned out to see Buffalo Bill and his version of the West, propelled in part by the colorful and enticing advertising posters used to promote the show. Michelle Delaney's book deconstructs that unique advertising process, examining everything from the ideas that drove their content to the emergent technological processes that produced the posters.

This well-illustrated book discusses the people behind the scenes who worked with Buffalo Bill on the posters as well as profiling the different printing companies who created the posters. Delaney further looks at the manner in which posters captured the different acts in the Wild West, appealing to the interests, and even the stereotypes, of audiences of the day. Many of the posters are beautifully reproduced in color within the book.

The book is thoroughly researched and well documented, with extensive endnotes. There are several helpful appendices, including a review of literature and primary sources, which I found useful to my own research.

*Art and Advertising in Buffalo Bill's Wild West* is a part of "The William F. Cody Series on the History and Culture of the American West," a cooperative effort between the University of Oklahoma Press and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. The series examines the impact of Buffalo Bill and his Wild West upon the history of the West. Poster art was critical to the success of Buffalo Bill's Wild West and helped establish Cody himself as one of the legends of the West. Delaney's book will be a welcome addition to the library of anyone who is interested in Buffalo Bill.

– Steve Friesen





*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

July - August 2020



*Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Department , Z4989  
George T. Clark, Mayor of Denver, 1865-1866*

**George Tillinghast Clark**  
**1837 - 1888**

*By Richard Cavenah*



### Our Author

Dick is fourth in six generations of Coloradans. He and his wife make their home in Arvada, close to their children and grandchildren.

He received a B.A. in Chemistry and spent much of his working career in scientific instrumentation, sales management, cryogenics, and owner of a home improvement business.

His mother was born in Cripple Creek (on the map) and his father in a box car in the town of Tabasco (not on the map) near the Ludlow, CO massacre.

In addition to his interest in history and genealogy, Dick also enjoys his hobbies in taxidermy, photography, and many volunteering activities

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LXXVI NO. 4



July - August 2020

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QUESTIONS? Should you have any questions concerning the *Roundup* or the Denver Westerners, please email Roger Dudley at [rogdud@comcast.net](mailto:rogdud@comcast.net).

## George Tillinghast Clark 1837 - 1888

By Richard Cavenah

I always knew my mother's family had played some part in the development of Denver as she had managed to save a great many items that were relevant to her grandfather, George Tillinghast Clark. It wasn't until 1966 until I realized how valuable her trove of information was. After visiting the Colorado State Historical Society and the Western History Department at the Denver Public Library, we appreciated the significance of all the photos, letters, papers, and other items she had stored away. In 1967, I packed up my family and made Denver our new home. Once settled, I immediately started a quest to research, organize, and compile George T's story and its relationship to the early days of Denver City, Territory of Colorado.

George Tillinghast Clark was born on February 24, 1837, in Douglas, Worcester County, Massachusetts, one of eight children, to Griffin Clark and Sara Scott Tillinghast. He attended school in Massachusetts until he was thirteen, at which time his parents moved to the town of Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin. He continued his education and began pursuing an interest in business while working at the dry goods establishment of N.W. Dean.<sup>1</sup>

On April 24, 1860, at the age of twenty-three, George left Wisconsin and headed for Denver after joining the William Wallace Company of gold seekers. He kept a daily journal of the trip which was later published, in part, in the June 1913 edition of *The Trail*. The Colorado portion of his journey began on Thursday, May 24, 1860.

*Left our camp at 6 a.m. Roads not very good...a great deal of sand. Stopped for dinner on the Platte. Whilst there, a lot of Shian [Cheyenne] Indians come up on horses, prepared for war with the Pawnees. They had a great quantity of silver ornaments on them. They were armed with spears, swords, guns, and bows and arrows. After dinner the wind came up and it was very dusty. Roads very sandy, mostly sand hills. Camped on the Platte ¼ mile above a Shian [Cheyenne] Indian village. They had a great number of horses. Their tents are made of elk hides and are very nice. A great many of the squaws came to our tent. Went on watch until 12 M.<sup>2</sup>*

George arrived in Denver on May 31, 1860 and soon found a job with Hinckley and Company as an express agent.<sup>3</sup> Within a few short weeks he accepted a job as agent for the Western Stage Company. By the end of the next month, he had left Hinckley's to become the purchasing agent of gold dust for Austin Clark, Milton Clark (no relation to George T.) and Emanuel H. Gruber, owners of the newly established Clark, Gruber & Company Bank and Mint in Denver.<sup>4</sup> In 1861, while employed with Clark, Gruber & Company he was appointed Treasurer of Colorado Territory by Governor Gilpin.<sup>5</sup>

*Thursday, June 14, 1860. Got up this morning at 5:30 a.m. Found it a beautiful cool morning after the rain. The man that murdered the other had his trial*

today. They sentenced him to be hung tomorrow between the hours of 2 and 5 p.m. Saw Kit Carson in the office today. He is a young looking man, short and thick-set, with a red moustache, 50 years old. Saw Elmore from Milwaukee today. Had a fall of hail this afternoon. Made up express for mountains at night. Slept at station with Charley.

Friday, June 15, 1860. Hinckley set Charley and myself to work copying on to the list. Quite warm this afternoon. About three o'clock went down to see the German hung. The gallows were erected a short distance below the Kansas House. There was a great crowd and a good many women present. He was very cool to the last minute; had a prayer and his sentence read. Did not make a struggle after he dropped. Everything about the hanging went off quietly. Took a walk after tea.<sup>6</sup>

George was to become prominent in the world of banking and local government as the town of Denver began to grow. His quick acceptance into the business world was an indication of his honesty, education, knowledge, and dedication. Perhaps, his early interest in government stemmed from the fact that he was the great-great-grandson of Stephen Hopkins, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.<sup>7</sup>

The Colorado Territorial Library was established in 1862 and George was appointed by then Governor Gilpin as the first official librarian. His job was to control the reports of the Supreme Court and statutes with other states. In addition, he was responsible for finding a location for the library, securing funds to purchase books, as well as developing the first catalog of contents.<sup>8</sup>

On December 14, 1861, Governor Gilpin appointed George to be Notary Public for the Colorado Territory.<sup>9</sup> By 1863, Governor Gilpin had also appointed George to be the Treasurer of Arapahoe County along with that of the Colorado Territory. While holding these offices, the territory was attempting to charge the Negro citizens a school tax while denying their children the right to attend. George considered this unjust and refused to collect the tax.<sup>10</sup>



Author Collection

Clark, Gruber & Co. Bank and Mint at 16th and Market,  
Denver, Colorado, 1861



That same year, Clark, Gruber & Company continued with their banking business but sold the building and minting equipment to the Denver branch of the U.S. Mint. George continued to work for the bank as a cashier. In 1864, Gruber resigned and sold his interest to the Clark brothers. The name was then changed to Clark & Company and George was promoted to serve as interim manager.<sup>11</sup>

In October 1864, despite his busy schedule, George found time to marry his sweetheart, Miss Katherine (Kate) Goss of Boulder. Kate was the daughter of C.J. Goss, a successful dairy farmer, who had come to Boulder with his family in 1859. She was one of three beautiful sisters who were so rosy-cheeked that their father said they had been "painted by God." George had met Kate while visiting her father's dairy farm. Their wedding was considered to have been one of the most elegant events of the day.<sup>12</sup> The bride was given a lovely home, beautifully furnished, at 16th and Welton. The furnishings had been brought from New York by a family who wanted

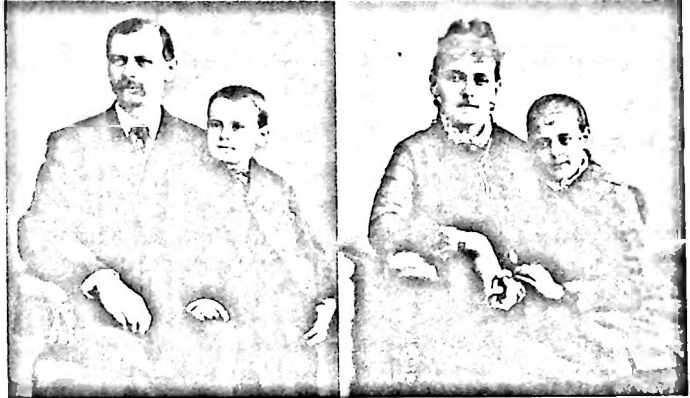
to return and abandon their lifestyle in the "uncivilized wild West." It was considered one of the most beautiful private residences in all the region and later became known as the "Fountain House" because of the ornate iron fountain George had installed in the front yard. The fountain had been built in New York and shipped out on one of the first steam locomotive trains ever to come this far west. They were also one of the first families in Denver to own a piano. It was made of rosewood and inlaid pearl.<sup>13</sup>

Kate proved to be one of the loveliest and most gracious ladies in Boulder. Prior to her marriage to George, she had been appointed teacher for the first school building in Boulder. After one year, Abner R. Brown placed her in charge of the entire school upon his departure in 1860. She continued to teach until her marriage to George.<sup>14</sup>

George and Kate became very prominent in Denver's social circle. Their home was the gathering spot for many of the town's leading citizens. Some of those men were J.B. Chaffee, Henry J. Morgan, Governor John Evans, Judge Moses Hallett, W.N. Meyers, Governor R.L. Routt, and David H. Moffat.<sup>15</sup>

During their busy life together, Kate gave birth to two children. Fannie Adele was born on January 17, 1867, and Frank Goss born March 8, 1870.

Late in 1864, George accepted a request from the businessmen of Denver asking him to run for mayor on the "Union ticket." His opponent was George Tritch, head of the "Working Man ticket."<sup>16</sup> The election proved to be an exciting one and Clark was elected



*Author Collection*

*George and Katherine Clark with Son Frank and Daughter Franny*



Author's Collection

George T. Clark, Mayor of Denver, 1865-1866

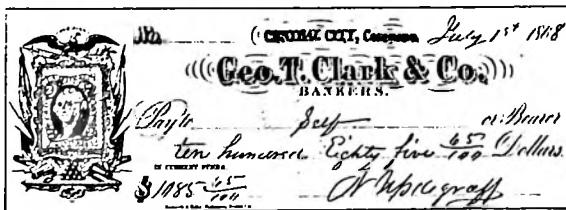
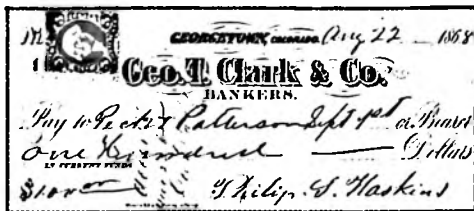
At the end of the Civil War, the territory being on the edge of civilization, hundreds of hard characters drifted into the area. Gambling was open, dance halls flourished, saloons sprouted everywhere, and the town became lawless. The police force consisted of a marshal, J.L. Bailey, and four deputies. Less than two weeks after George's election, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. That day it was hard to tell who was in control, the Confederates or the Union sympathizers. Fortunately, good sense prevailed and no blood was shed. It was concluded that the "Boy Mayor's" administration had done a great job on controlling the situation.<sup>19</sup>

In May 1865, Clark & Company merged with the newly chartered First National Bank of Denver—the first bank to receive a national charter west of the Missouri River—and the Clark brothers also sold their Central City and Georgetown banks to George Clark and Eben Smith. Those banks became George T. Clark & Company. Even with his own banking interests to keep him busy, in 1865 George was elected first cashier with First National Bank. In September 1866, he resigned but retained his personal banking interests until 1869.

George's professional career continued to grow when in 1870 he was elected Assistant Secretary to the Council of the Territory as well as reappointed Territorial Treasurer by Governor McCook. He was elected secretary of the first Colorado State Senate in 1876,

by a 270-vote majority. Population estimates in 1864 were about 4,700 with 3,700 having the power to vote. It should be noted that only white males had the right to participate.<sup>17</sup>

George received a letter from the County Clerk, Francis Hall, dated April 5, 1865, informing him of his job as Denver's fifth mayor. At that time, terms were for one year. Due to his young age of only twenty-eight, he became known as the "Boy Mayor." Under his administration, the first street grading was done, the first crosswalks were laid, and the Fifteenth Street Bridge was built.<sup>18</sup>



Author's Collection

Checks drawn on George T. Clark & Co Bank, 1868

member of the General Assembly in 1883, and secretary of the Senate in 1885.<sup>20</sup> George had been a strong partisan Republican, a delegate to every Republican convention held in the territory as well as many state conventions. He was a delegate to the National Convention in Chicago in 1880 and was secretary of the Republican State Central Committee in years 1872 through 1884.



Original Stockholder Certificate from First National Bank, 1866.  
Issued and Signed by George T. Clark, Cashier

In 1867, Governor Hunt was trying to secure land suitable as a site for a capitol building. Almost immediately, the prominent and successful builder and owner of the Brown Palace Hotel, Henry C. Brown, offered ten acres at east Colfax Avenue and Lincoln Street. The property was accepted in 1868. As of 1875, there had been no activity toward the designing and construction of a building.

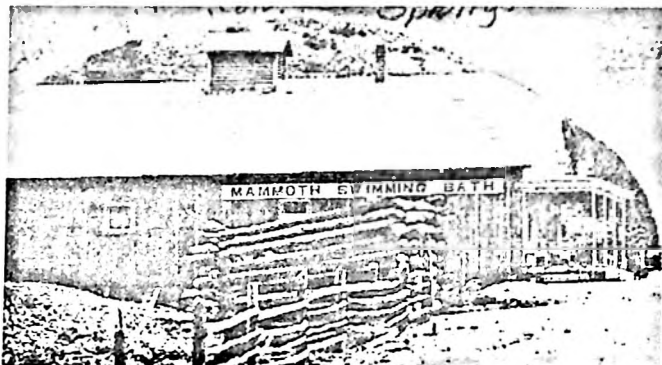
By 1876, Colorado was actively campaigning for statehood and a capitol became a priority. Statehood was confirmed on July 1, 1876 and declared the 38th state in the Union on August 1, 1876. Finally by popular vote in 1881, Denver became the people's choice for the State Capitol.

During the year 1883, Governor James B. Grant created the Board of Capitol Managers. It was a group of seven men of diverse backgrounds selected to supervise the design and construction of the State Capitol. George was appointed secretary of that group. Legislation was passed to build the Capitol and \$150,000 was given to the Board to be used as needed.

He was secretary of the Board of Capital Managers, a group of men selected to supervise the design and construction of the state Capitol. During this time, George and former governor John Routt left Colorado to visit six state capitols to study design and construction. They logged over 3,750 miles and spoke to dozens of officials on the perils and possibilities of capitol building. He was also construction superintendent of the State Capitol buildings and its ground until his death.<sup>21</sup> During this time George served as president of the Governor's Guard. This was a group of highly trained military men, noted for their elite status, who served as an honorary guard for the city.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to his time spent in politics, George maintained a strong interest in business. During 1866, he and H.C. Brown, builder and owner of the Brown Palace Hotel, purchased a brick-making machine, not only capable of manufacturing a better brick, but also capable of producing over 30,000 bricks per day, according to the *Rocky Mountain News*. It was so successful they built additional machines for Golden and Black Hawk.<sup>23</sup>

In 1868 George had purchased the "Mammoth Bath" in Idaho Springs. The building housed a mineral hot springs that flowed into a thirty-by-sixty-foot pool. During the summer months, over 2500 bathers enjoyed its warm waters. Those hot springs had been used by the Indians and are still in use today.<sup>24</sup>



Author's collection

*Mammoth Mineral Springs and Bath House, Idaho Springs, 1868*

A successful business man, a former mayor of Denver, and together with his wife Kate, a leading figure in Denver's social circle, he was the ideal choice to quickly organize a reception for President Ulysses S. Grant's July 1868 vacation stop in Colorado. In a letter George wrote to his wife, plans for a mountain mining tour started with a "dispatch from Mr. Cotterill, Superintendent of the W. F. & Company, to provide a dinner for General Grant and party of seven who would be up on the coach." The "party" included General Sherman, General Sheridan, and General Dent. Cotterill asked George "to go through with the party to Georgetown and show them up."

George promptly made arrangements for dinner and lodging, then met the generals when they arrived in Central City, their first mountain stop, and traveled with them through a "heavy storm" to Georgetown by way of Idaho Springs. "We were greeted in our arrival [at Georgetown] with firing of guns and every flag in town was displayed. As the whole thing was thrown upon me, I had to do all the honors of the occasion by introducing the people." Following a bit of rest, George took them on a tour of the town and down to the smelters before returning to the Barton House for dinner. At about ten o'clock in the evening and in the midst of rain, "ladies commenced to pour in and the whole house was soon filled." They were followed by a band and about 500 people who stood outside and yelled for the generals to come out. Rejecting that idea, George took his guests "up to the balcony of the Barton House and introduced them to the crowd. After this was over and a few words said by General Sherman, we went down stairs and had a little sing." The party left Georgetown the next morning after enjoying a hot bath and a good breakfast. A band and crowds of people welcomed the generals when they arrived in Central City. "I then had to introduce them individually to the callers which took me half an hour. I then put them on a coach and away they went to Denver."<sup>25</sup>

An exhausted George T. Clark returned to Central City and included the following in his letter to Kate:

*Of General Grant I can only say I like his looks very much. He is a plain, simple, straightforward man. He says nothing, nor can you draw him out at all. Sherman was sharp and active usually. Sheridan seemed to fill the eye of all*

as a key, wide-eyed fighting man. General Dent is of no particular account. We have had the great men of the nation with us. They were pleased to death with all they saw and went on their way rejoicing. I never expect to see them or any three men like them together in my day. They came here in the worst time that could have come. It rained pretty much all of the time and they did not have much of a chance to see the mountains but they say they shall come again, but of course that is very uncertain. [Good to his word. Grant kept his commitment and returned to Central City and the mountains in 1873 and 1875.] The Democrats of course have made a great many dirty flings at General Grant even in his short stay here with us. I trust he will pay them back next November.<sup>26</sup>

Over the years, George had a strong relationship with George H. Pullman. Pullman was living in the Central City area during the 1860s. At that time he was involved in a quartz mill operation and, as a result, built a large facility that included the mill office and his cabin. Pullman's partner, James E. Lyon sold his interest in the mill to George T., Emory J. Sweet, and Cady Hollister.

George T. was approached by Pullman to join him in developing a sleeping car for the railroad. It was the dominant such car and became known world wide as a "Pullman." George T. encouraged him in his plans but declined to enter into the partnership, believing greater wealth would be found in the mines of Colorado. Pullman established his company in 1862 and went on to build sleeping cars with an unparalleled level of comfort. Pullman's wealth is well-documented and George missed a great opportunity.<sup>27</sup>

George began to pursue an active interest in mining about 1878. During the next few years he had purchased several mines in the new boomtown of Leadville. Among them were the Smuggler Mine, Silver King Mine, and the Oriental Mine all of which were co-owned with other partners. He became known as one of the most successful mining men in the Great Carbonate Camp of Leadville. His mining interests also extended into Central City with the purchase of the Small Hopes Mine and the Gregory Group of Mines on Mt. Bross.<sup>28</sup>

A "somewhat embellished" story about George and a bear was printed in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* publication in September 1885. It seems he was in the Breckenridge



William Shaw Warren, Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons  
George Pullman

area checking on some mining properties during a severe winter. While snowshoeing up the side of a steep mountain, he came face to face with a grizzly bear. George aimed his rifle and managed to shoot and wound the bear, only adding to the danger of the situation. He immediately turned downhill in an attempt to outrun the wounded bear. In doing so, they started an avalanche that promptly propelled them both down the hillside at record speed. The bear was rapidly gaining on George, so he reached out and grabbed a huge boulder that was hurtling past him. They both continued to fly down the mountain but George gained ground through the speed with which the rock was moving. Fortunately the bear was hit by flying debris and buried, while George was propelled up the opposite side of the hill where he was able to dig himself out.<sup>29</sup>

On a November day in 1864, Colonel John Chivington and elements of the First and Third Colorado Volunteers attacked a peaceful village of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, resulting in what is now known as the Sand Creek Massacre. One of the Cheyenne chiefs who was killed was Chief White Antelope. After the massacre, a blanket was removed from White Antelope by Henry Mull, a private in Company F, 1st Colorado Cavalry and sold to someone in Denver for \$150. In March 1865, George purchased the chief's blanket for \$350 and it became one of his most prized possessions.

One of the news articles which my mother, Catherine Clark Cavenah, had saved is a picture of the blanket with her (age 3) standing along side.<sup>30</sup> During my quest to compile family history, I spent almost forty years trying to trace the blanket's current home. Finally, in February 2005, I stumbled on an article on the internet, mentioning a meeting being held by the School of American Research in Denver. It was centered around Chief White Antelope's blanket. Through this I was able to find its location and the people responsible for its safe keeping.<sup>31</sup>



*Author Collection,  
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Bear Chase  
of George Clark, 1885*

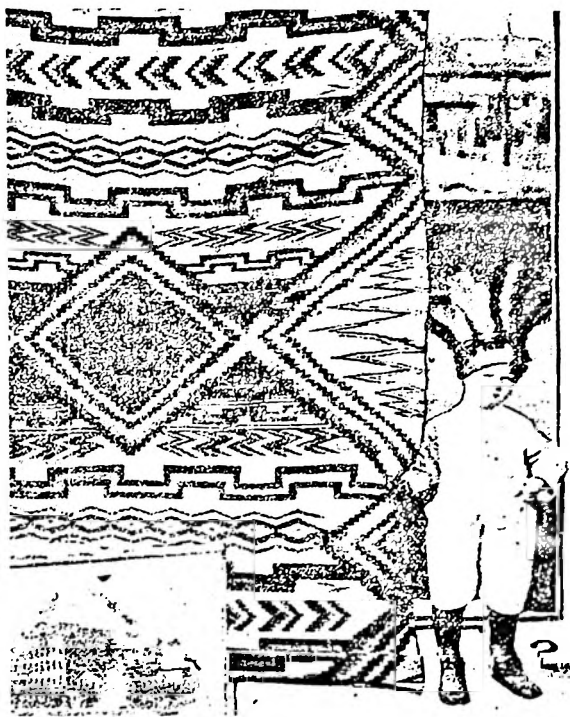
The blanket is now housed at the Indian Arts Research Center, School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The museum is closed to the public and is dedicated to preserving Indian art for future generations. They have some 11,000 pieces of pottery, textiles, clothing, jewelry, silver, paintings, baskets, and kachinas housed at the center.

The success of George T. must have encouraged one of his younger brothers to come to Denver and "give it a try." Walter S. Clark arrived in 1872, at the age of twenty-two. He immediately became involved in the mercantile business and established Bucklin and Clark.<sup>32</sup> Around 1879, George's family was in Leadville where he held some of his mining interests. Walter followed in his footsteps and joined them that same year. While there, he became acquainted with a group of prospectors who had obtained a copy of the Geological Reports

and maps of the Leadville area. After careful study, they realized that the mineral formations were very similar to those in the mountains farther to the west. On July 8 of that year, Walter and three others headed over Hunter Pass (later known as Independence Pass) via Twin Lakes into what is now the Roaring Fork Valley. While there, they established claims in the Durant, 1001, Aspen Mountain, Monarch, Iron, Hopkins, Mose, Steele, and Smuggler mines. Soon after these discoveries, word spread and the town of Aspen began to grow from a small Indian village.<sup>33</sup>

Within two years, Walter continuing his involvement in mining, he and F. L. Denman became partners in the Clark & Denman Staple & Fancy Groceries.<sup>34</sup> They had stores in both Aspen and Ashcroft. As a well-known figure in town, Walter was nominated and appointed Postmaster by President McKinley on June 23, 1897 and reappointed in 1902 and 1906 by President Roosevelt.<sup>35</sup>

It should be noted that Walter named the City of Aspen, in addition to helping in its development, and is also credited with naming Aspen Mountain and the Roaring Fork River. He died in 1919 and is buried in Aspen alongside his wife Rose.<sup>36</sup>



*Author Collection, Rocky Mountain News  
Chief White Antelope's Blanket, Taken at The Sand  
Creek Massacre, and George's Granddaughter/Author's  
Mother at Age 3*

As was true of so many of our pioneers, life did not always smile down on George T. Clark. Because George was known to be a kind and generous man, many people took advantage of him. His charitable nature found him in periods of both wealth and totally lacking in funds. It is said by some that "he gave far more than he received."

George T. held numerous positions of trust and confidence during his long and eventful residence in Colorado. His integrity and honorable course are matters of which his descendants may always feel are among the truest and most commendable parts of the personal history of Denver's best citizens.

George died in 1888, at the young age of fifty-one, from what was then called "softening of the brain." He knew his death was imminent and monies for his funeral, along with a list of pallbearers, were found in his desk drawer. He is buried at Riverside Cemetery, in a family plot along with his wife, Kate, daughter Fannie Wigginton, her husband William, and their infant son, George C. Other family members also buried at Riverside include Mrs. C.J. Goss and infant, Carver Jonathan Goss, Harriet M. Goss, Carver P. Goss, and F. Goss.<sup>37</sup>

Found in the many obituaries for George T., the following quote best sums up his life during the early days of Denver:

*George T. held numerous positions of trust and confidence during his long and eventful residence in Colorado. His integrity and honorable course are matters of which his descendants may always feel are among the truest and most commendable parts of the personal history of Denver's best citizens.*<sup>38</sup>

## ENDNOTES

1. *The Trail, a magazine for Colorado, official organ of the Society of Sons of Colorado*, Vol. 4, No. 12, May 1912, p. 17-20
2. *The Trail*, Vol. 6, No. 1, June 1913, No.1, p. 8.
3. Annette Student, *Denver's Riverside Cemetery*, San Diego, CA: CSN Books, 2006, p. 80.
4. Ibid.
5. *Rocky Mountain News*, Nov 9, 1861, p. 3.
6. *The Trail*. Vol. 6, No. 1, June 1913, p.12.
7. Central City Opera House Association, *Glory That Was Gold*, 1861, p. 43.
8. Annette Student, *Denver's Riverside Cemetery*, San Diego, CA: CSN Books, 2006, p. 79.
9. Author's Collection, certificate on his appointment, signed by Governor Gilpin.
10. Annette Student, *Denver's Riverside Cemetery*, San Diego, CA: CSN Books, 2006, p. 79.
11. Eugene Adams, Robert Pulcifer *The Pioneer Western Bank-First of Denver, 1860-1980*. Denver, CO: State Historical Society of Co, Adams, p. 7, Pulcifer, p. 19.
12. Annette Student, *Denver's Riverside Cemetery*, San Diego, CA: CSN Books, 2006, , p. 80.
13. *Denver Post*, June 24, 1923.
14. Jerome Smiley, *History of Denver*, Denver, CO: Times-Sun Pub. Co, 1901, p. 736.
15. *Denver Post*, June 24, 1923, section 2.
16. *Denver Post*, October 9, 1899, p. 3. George Tritch was much like George T. in that he arrived in Denver in 1860 and both men started with nothing. Tritch, having been trained as a tin maker, immediately opened a hardware store where he made cups, pans, silverware and other metal objects. He continued to successfully run that store until his death in 1899. His obituary stated that "He was, without question, the most conservative businessman of



large holdings in Denver.” Tritch’s fortune in real estate and the hardware business was believed to be over \$2,000,000 when he passed away. His only involvement in politics was running against George T. for mayor of Denver.

17. *Right to Participate*, KUNC, Patty Limerick, November 8, 2016.

18. Excerpts from George T’s acceptance speech as new mayor, April 12, 1865. “The legislatures of last and former winters, granted charters to different parties to build roads to the Middle Park, South Park, Southern Mines, New Mexico, and other points, and it is to the interests of Denver that she should have connections with these roads in order to bring trade and travel through the city. We should take some immediate steps in regard to the crossings of the Platte River. Bridges should be built which will intersect the different avenues of trade which lead to the city.... The principal product Denver, for the past year, seems to have been dogs. We have good ordinances on our statute books in regard to these animals and I ask of you to instruct the proper officer to enforce the same....The dogs should not be left to roam the streets and bite the children of our citizens or make night hideous by his barks and yells.” *Rocky Mountain Weekly*, p. 3, City Council Meeting.

19. Agnes Wright Spring, *The First National Bank of Denver, The Formative Years*, Denver, CO: Bradford-Robinson Printing Co., 1958, p. 61. Even with all his new governmental duties, George was appointed Captain in the “100 Volunteers” (a calvary unit) in 1864. As a result of his new position, he filled his company quota of thirty-eight recruits in one evening. While the 100 Volunteers were involved in the Sand Creek Massacre, George and David Moffat (now an Adjutant General) were not part of the Indian carnage.

20. Scrap book of George T. Clark, in author’s collection.

21. Derek R. Everett, *The Colorado State Capitol*, Boulder CO: University Press of Colorado, 2005, p. 34.

22. *The Daily Tribune*. April 6, 1872. Agnes Wright Spring, *The First National Bank of Denver, 1860–1865*, op cit., p. 36.

23. *Rocky Mountain News*, June 30, 1866, p. 4.

24. Ibid. September 17, 1868, p. 4.

25. Letter from George T. Clark to Kate Clark, July 23, 1868, Author’s collection.

26. Ibid., *The Weekly Register-Call*, September 29, 2016.

27. *Daily News*, Denver, CO, December 5, 1899, in *The Glory That Was Gold*.

28. *Rocky Mountain News*, May 23, 1880, p.3.

29. *Frank Leslie’s Popular Monthly*, September, 1885, Vol. 20, No. 3, p.303.

30. *Denver Post*, March 4, 1917, section 2, p. 10.

31. Indian Arts Research Center, School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

32. Edward C. Bucklin, Wm. C. Bucklin, and George T. were dealers in the Staple and Fancy Groceries Mercantile. *Aspen Morning Chronicle*, November 8, 1888.

33. Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *Aspen, The History of Silver Mining Town, 1879-1893*, Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1986, p. 4-6.

34. Staple and Fancy Groceries, *Rocky Mountain Sun*, June 26, 1897.

35. A.W. Bowen, *Progressive Men of Western Colorado*, Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co, 1905.

36. Walter S. Clark died on Nov. 1, 1919. Rose Clark died on Feb. 21, 1924, buried in Red Butte Cemetery, Aspen, Colorado. Data from Anna Scott, Archivist, Aspen Historical Society, Aspen, Colorado.

37. Riverside Cemetery, Denver Colorado, records.

38. *The Denver Times*, Tuesday, November. 6, 1888, p. 8.

# Over the Corral Rail

*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

## Pikes Peak Posse Presentations

In August the Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners viewed a program of timely interest, "Spanish Flu of 1918 and its Impact on Pueblo and Southern Colorado," by Maria Sanchez Tucker, Director of the Santa Fe, New Mexico, Public Library. Sanchez-Tucker, originally from Pueblo, earned a BA in Anthropology at the University of New Mexico, an MA in Museum Science at Texas Tech University, and a Master of Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The September program, "The Jewish Colony of Cotopaxi, 1882-1884," by Nancy Oswald, touched upon the reasons this unique group of Jewish immigrants left Russia, the challenges and hardships they faced at Cotopaxi, and the successes they had in life after the dispersal of the colony. Nancy is a retired teacher and writer living on her family ranch south of Cotopaxi. Her first published historical fiction book, *Nothing Here but Stones*, is based on the first year of the Jewish colony in Cotopaxi. The book won the Willa Literary Award, was a Spur finalist, and was named a Notable Book for a Global Society.

Donald Kallaus and Angela Crews presented "Colorado Springs: A Changing Landscape" to the Posse in October. Their talk was based on their book by the same name, a combination of history and photography exploring the city of Colorado Springs through Glenn Wesley Murray's photographs made during the 1930s through 1960s, contrasted with contemporary images made by local photography students. Kallaus is the publisher of Rhyolite Press, and Crews is a documentary photographer, retired from Pikes Peak Community College.

## Denver Posse Member Dr. Robert Shikes

The Posse lost another long-time member when Dr. Robert Shikes passed away on September 7. Bob joined the Denver Westerners as a corresponding member in 1975, was elected to the regular posse in 1983, and transferred to reserve posse in 1992, holding that membership to 2012. Born in Brooklyn, NY, he moved to Denver in 1965 and became a pathologist and professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

An avid collector, he formed an outstanding collection of books on the American West and on the history of medicine. Dr. Shikes is the author of *The University of Colorado School of Medicine: a Centennial History, 1883-1983* (1983), *Rocky Mountain Medicine: wDoctors, Drugs, and Disease in Early Colorado* (1986), and *The University of Colorado School of Medicine: a Millennial History* (2000).

The Denver Posse of Westerners joins his wife, Patricia, and family in mourning the loss of Bob.



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Objects of Survivance: A Material History of the American Indian School Experience**, by Lindsay M. Montgomery and Chip Colwell. Denver Museum of Nature and Science & University Press of Colorado: Niwot, 2019. 243 pp. Illustrations (some color), references, chapter endnotes, index. Hardcover, \$37.95.

As an archivist this volume struck a particularly interesting note for me. It is based on a collection of materials housed at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Of particular note are the numerous photographs that were taken by Jesse H. Bratley while he was an instructor at several federally funded Indian schools around the U.S. from 1893 to 1903. He photographed "all aspects of life on the reservation he lived on, taking portraits and landscapes and documenting a wide range of intimate, religious, and everyday scenes." He also collected many artifacts. Contained in the pages is the story of how the collection came to be at the museum.

The title of this book *Objects of Survivance* deserves a bit of explanation. The images and objects in this collection encapsulate domination and opposition, change and continuity, impotence and strength, loss and profit and shame and honor. These objects represent ways that Indians found to live within the colonial frame.

Perhaps the greatest value of this book is that it introduces a collection rich in historical significance that few of us would expect to find at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Unfortunately, this type of museum makes examining such a remarkable collection very difficult, unlike if it were housed in the Denver Public Library's Western History Collection or at History Colorado, where reviewing the contents of such a collection are routine.

This book is the dream of many an archivist who falls in love with a collection while processing it. It creates the opportunity to share the important details of the vast contents of a collection that might otherwise be overlooked. This one also offers a rare look inside the Indian schools and the cultural subtraction that was the essence of the U.S. government's plan for the natives of this continent.

– Roger Dudley

**Western Art, Western History: Collected Essays**, by Ron Tyler. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2019. 300 pp. text, footnotes, bibliography, index. 170 images. Hardback, \$61.00.

Ron Tyler has the antidote for your wintertime blues. In the new installment of a lifelong project he calls "artists on horseback," it is again summer in our West, and high time to go exploring with his crew of artist-adventurers.

Tyler is a multi-tool historian of the American West and its art: in Austin a professor and later director of the state historical association, then a sometime curator and art museum director in Fort Worth, and always an easy-going spinner of yarns. With this volume, weighty in every sense, he assembles under one cover eight scattered but updated essays in tightly-woven biography set among more than 170 reproductions, all suitable for catching your breath without warning.

From the expedition group of the early 19th century, Tyler presents the meticulous Karl Bodmer among the Plains Indians, Louis Choris in the Pacific and the Pacific Northwest with the Second Russian Circumnavigation, and young Alfred Jacob Miller with hard-partying Captain William Drummond Stewart at the great Rendezvous of 1837. In the days before the hand-held camera, these artists were charged with recreating an expedition's sights, events, characters and creatures with "factual pictures" for its commander's printed report. Less well known is the charmingly persistent Civil War veteran Alfred E. Mathews, friend of William Byers and lithographer of booming downtown Denver. John James Audubon comes west late in life on a quest to document our four-footed viviparous neighbors, while in genre and narrative painting, George Caleb Bingham conjures the boatmen and politics of the Mississippi Valley, and Frederic Remington struggles to paint world art's grand themes against his bedrock attraction to the West.

Tyler is especially strong on details and developments of printmaking technologies and promotion, and the narrative is full of skirmishes between the primary artists and the "middleman" lithographers (occasionally fine artists themselves) who fashion the pictures for the public with varying degrees of commitment to accuracy.

Particularly illuminating is a chapter on the multitude of various government expeditions and reports, the millions of individual scientific and booster lithographic images generated, and the millions of dollars spent to jump-start the way west in the era of Manifest Destiny.

Let it snow. Leave it to Ron Tyler to ease you into the wide saddle of your imagination on your surest-footed mule, and head you into the Rockies with these stirring sights and stories.

— Hugh Bingham

**Soul of the Indian An Interpretation** by Charles A. Eastman, new Introduction by Brenda J. Child. Bison Classic Edition, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2020, originally published 1911. 156 pp. Photographs, paperback, \$18.95.

Most people who have read much Western history are familiar with the name Charles Alexander Eastman and his role at Wounded Knee. This volume has withstood the test of time and is republished more than a hundred years after it was written. It also features an insightful new introduction by Brenda J. Child, an Ojibwe.

Eastman provides insight on every page and much of his focus is on the religious practices and beliefs of the native Americans. He observed that "the native American has been generally despised by his white conquerors for his poverty and simplicity. They forget, perhaps, that his religion forbade the accumulations of wealth and the enjoyment of luxury."

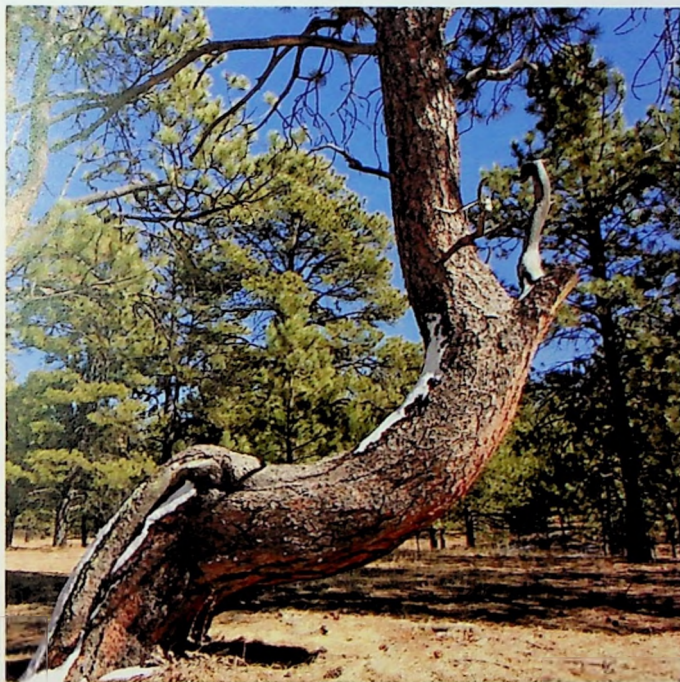
One is often reminded in these pages that Indian beliefs were not looked upon as a "religion" when they were referred to as pagans and heathens by the "Black Robe" priests. Of course, Eastman took an English name when he went to school and got a medical degree that went well with his earlier experience as a medicine man. His observation that Indians believed "there were no priests authorized to come between a man and his Maker" would have been hard for those pioneering priests and ministers to accept, since for many it was their life's work.

— Roger Dudley



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

September - October 2020



*Courtesy Gary Ziegler*

*Culturally Modified Tree Categorized as a Medicine Tree due to Indian Modifications that Convolutd its Trunk and Created a Basal Scar*

## **Native American Prayer Trees of Colorado**

*By John Wesley Anderson*

(presented October 28, 2020)

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LXXVI NO. 5



September - October 2020

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## Our Author

John Wesley Anderson, MBA, is a published author, storyteller and TEDx speaker. He retired after a twenty-two year career with the Colorado Springs-Police Department and served eight years as the elected Sheriff for El Paso County, Colorado. John retired from Lockheed Martin in 2012 to pursue his love for history, writing and art. John has traveled around the world—including adventures on a catamaran sailing the Caribbean, corporate security assignments into a combat zone on the Horn of Africa and landed on an aircraft carrier at sea—but remains most fascinated by the history and art of the American West.

His books include *Sherlock Holmes in Little London, 1896*, *The Missing Year*; *ZacBox and the Pearls of Pleiades*; *R.S. Kelly, A Man of the Territory*; *Native American Prayer Trees of Colorado*; *Rankin Scott Kelly, First Sheriff El Paso County, Colorado Territory*; and *Ute Indian Prayer Trees of the Pikes Peak Region*. The first four are available on Amazon.

## Native American Prayer Trees of Colorado

By John Wesley Anderson

Whether they are called Prayer Trees, Spirit Trees or Trail Trees, the fact remains there are thousands of Native American Culturally Modified Trees with bent trunks blended into the green forests of the United States and Canada. According to the Georgia Mountain Stewards January 2020 *Trail Tree Newsletter*, their Trail Tree Project database documents over 2,700 Trail Trees in forty-four U.S. states and Canada, including Colorado.<sup>1</sup> Ethnographical and field research conducted by the author suggests there are easily twice that number still standing today in the forests across the ancestral homeland of the Ute.<sup>2</sup> These trees are living Native American cultural artifacts that deserve to be added to our historical, cultural and archeological records.

A Culturally Modified Tree (CMT) is defined as a tree modified by the indigenous people of a region pursuant to their cultural beliefs or traditions. The most widely recognized CMTs in the world are Bonsai trees shaped by the people of Japan and China for thousands of years. Using similar techniques, American Indians have also shaped trees for hundreds if not thousands of years. While Bonsai trees are shaped primarily for meditation or relaxation, the shaping of trees by the indigenous people of North America was for utilitarian purposes, such as way-finding. Trailmarker Trees informed our indigenous people what lay ahead—similar to today's highway signs—and are the most common type of CMTs found in the U.S. and Canada.

On the cover of this booklet is a photo of a Medicine Tree found near Westcliffe, Colorado. This old Ponderosa pine was discovered northeast of the Great Sand Dunes near dozens of other Native American artifacts (e.g. stone tools and stacked circular rock formations). Other Trailmarker Trees have been discovered along the Cherokee Trail. The Cherokee Trail connected the Santa Fe Trail to the California-Oregon Trail prior to Colorado becoming a territory. This trail was well-researched and documented in the book *The Cherokee Trail. Bent's Old Fort to Fort Bridger*, by Lee Whiteley and published by the Denver Posse of Westerners.<sup>4</sup>

While following Cherokee Trail maps in Whiteley's book, other Trailmarker Trees were discovered in eastern El Paso County that look remarkably *dissimilar* to most "Prayer or Spirit Trees" located elsewhere in the ancestral homeland of the Ute. This, and other recent CMT discoveries, suggests some Trailmarker Trees in Colorado may be attributable to other Indian tribes (e.g., Cherokee, Comanche, Jicarilla Apache).<sup>5</sup> One exquisite Hawken-type projectile point (arrowhead), estimated to be 7000-8500 years old, was discovered within a few hundred yards of Trailmarker Trees lining wagon ruts believed to have been part of the Cherokee Trail.<sup>6</sup> Hawken points attached to a wooden foreshaft were launched using an atlatl—an Indian device used for throwing a spear—to hunt bison. This discovery suggests the Cherokee Trail may have been in use long before these Trail Trees were shaped.

Dozens more Trailmarker Trees have been discovered along well-traveled mountain passes—from Glorietta Pass in northern New Mexico to Rabbit Ears Pass in northern Colorado—including La Veta Pass, Ute Pass, Vail Pass and Kenosha Pass (Kenosha is an Indian word for water jug.)<sup>7</sup> The majority of these Trailmarker Trees have one bend to the trunk, bent at about a thirty degree angle, which is also the approximate angle of inclination for tipi lodgepoles. In addition to pointing toward a trail or mountain pass Trailmarker Trees are also known to point to a resource, such as where chert (rock used for stone tools) or spring water could be found.<sup>8</sup>



Author Collection

Native American Trailmarker Tree Located in  
Fox Run Regional Park, El Paso County, Colorado

In the article *Trail Trees Along the Old Spanish Trail*, written by Southern Ute tribal elder James Jefferson and published in *The Southern Ute Drum*, he explains,

*The Ute are a people who lived in the mountains of Colorado, Utah and New Mexico. The traditional hunting grounds extended far beyond that territory.... Important to the Ute Indians were the trail trees and rock art that guided them on their travels. While many of these trees can live to be 300 to 600 years old, some are near the end of their lives.... The Utes call them Spirit Trees as they were known to hold the prayers and then they go to Creator.<sup>9</sup>*

In reference to another publication, Jefferson stated: "I can confirm the existence of Prayer Trees that were used by my ancestors for navigational, medicinal, burial, educational and spiritual purposes."<sup>10</sup>

In the book, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, the authors stated:

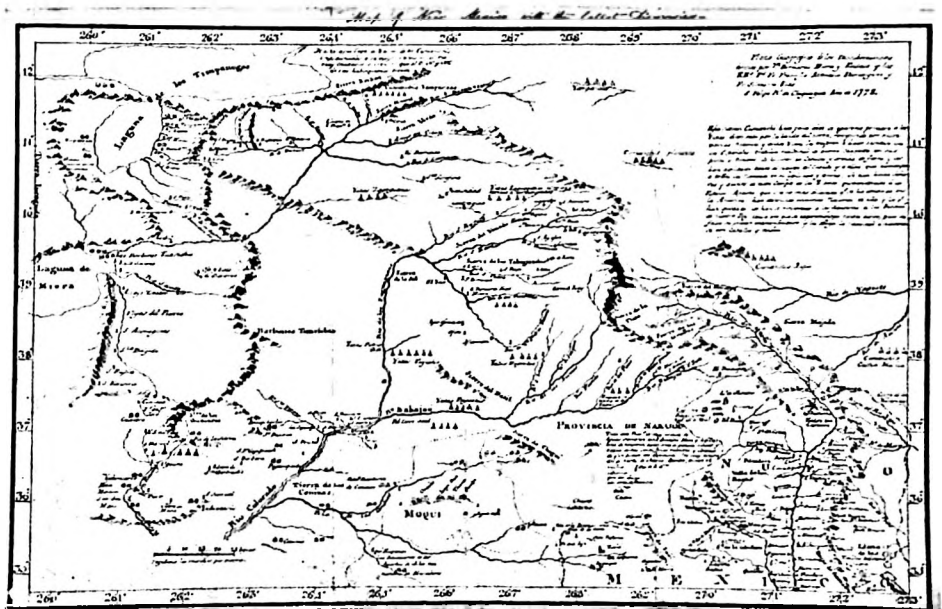
*...uses of trees are more individual to the tribes they represent, such as the Ute Indian Prayer Trees in Colorado or the Comanche Storytelling Place*



*Tree in Dallas, Texas. The consistency of use among tribes is noted by Arterberry: Prior to entering into Texas, the Comanche had migrated out of the Great Basin area, then southerly into the Ute territories and became allied with their linguistic relatives. They spent many years living amongst the Ute before entering into the Southern Plains of Texas. The Comanche brought with them a technique of tree usage that served a host of purposes. Not only were these trees used to mark trails, springs, meeting locations, plant and geologic resources, they identified boundaries, events and other activities that were important to Comanche cultural history.<sup>11</sup>*

The Spanish made first contact with the indigenous people of present-day Colorado during the mid-16th Century. Spanish Conquistadors traced the Colorado and Rio Grande Rivers to their headwaters, high in the Rocky Mountains, the ancestral homeland of the Ute. The Ute Creation Story teaches them Creator brought them to the "Shining Mountains" at the beginning of time. They are one of the few Indian tribes without a migration story. The Ute and Comanche languages are Shoshonean, a dialect of the ancient Uto-Aztec language. According to the Southern Ute website, "The Ute people lived in harmony with their environment. They traveled throughout Ute territory on familiar trails that crisscrossed the mountain ranges of Colorado."<sup>12</sup>

A Spanish map by Bernardo Miera y Pacheco, dated 1778, documents where encampments for the Yutas (Utes) and Cumanchis (Comanches) were found. In 1779

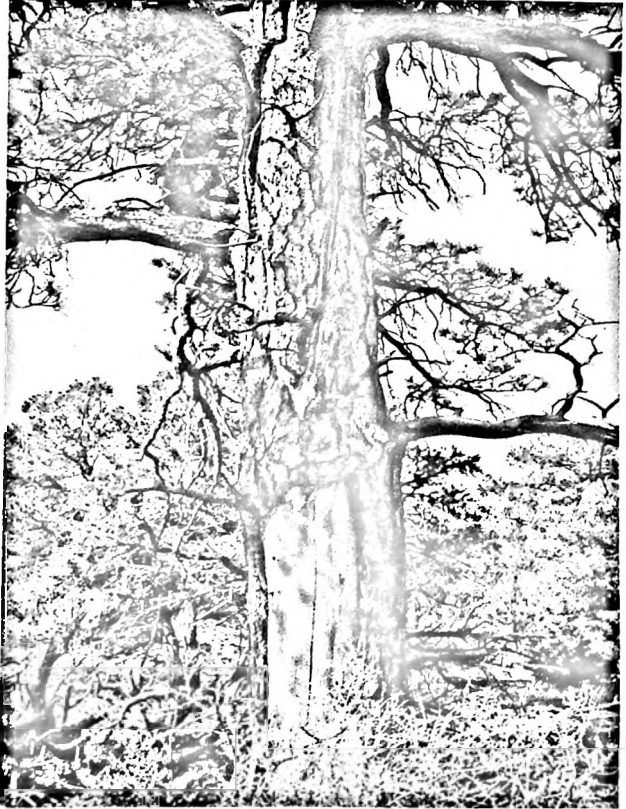


Courtesy Library of Congress

Miera's "Map of New Mexico with the Latest Discoveries (1778)," Including Parts of Present-Day Colorado, Utah and Arizona. Note Comanche Tents near Present-Day Denver

Juan Bautista de Anza, Governor of the Spanish Northern Frontier, led a punitive campaign from Santa Fe (NM) against the Comanche Warchief Cuerno Verde (Green Horn) who had been raiding other tribes and Spanish settlements disrupting the balance of trade. A translation from Anza's journal reads, "Friday August 20, 1779, From Santa Fe to Rio de Los Conejos (Conejos River), 41 Leagues...two hundred men of the Ute and Apache Nation also joined me with one of their principal captains...on a campaign against the Comanches."<sup>13</sup> According to Jefferson, the Utes made good guides for the 1776 Dominguez-Escalante Expedition—establishing the Old Spanish Trail—and the 1779 Anza Comanche Campaign because the Ute could read rock art and Trail Trees.<sup>14</sup>

Obviously, not every bent tree in the forest is a Prayer Tree. There are many natural causes for a tree to be disfigured. To help distinguish between natural and man-made features, author John Anderson collaborated with Lois Adams to develop a Culturally Modified Tree Verification Chart.<sup>15</sup> (See pages 10-11.) The CMT V-Chart guides people down the left-side of the V to help rule out many natural causes for trees disfigurement and up the right-leg of the V to search for human-caused features. Examples of natural causes might include; animal involvement (e.g., porcupines), weather (i.e., heavy snowfall, lightning) or disease (Dwarf Mistletoe, Western Gall Rust, etc.). Human-caused indicators might include peeled bark or tie-down marks in the bark.



*Author's Collection*

*This Tree was Modified by Humans Below a Lightning Strike as Shown by the Oval Basal Scar.*

Many Native American tribes in the Southwest, including the Ute, braided yucca fibers to make a lightweight rope or cordage. This durable cordage was used for eagle snares, bridles for horses or to bend the trunk of a young tree by tying the sapling to a wooden stake driven into the ground. Similar to baling wire or barbed wire being wrapped around

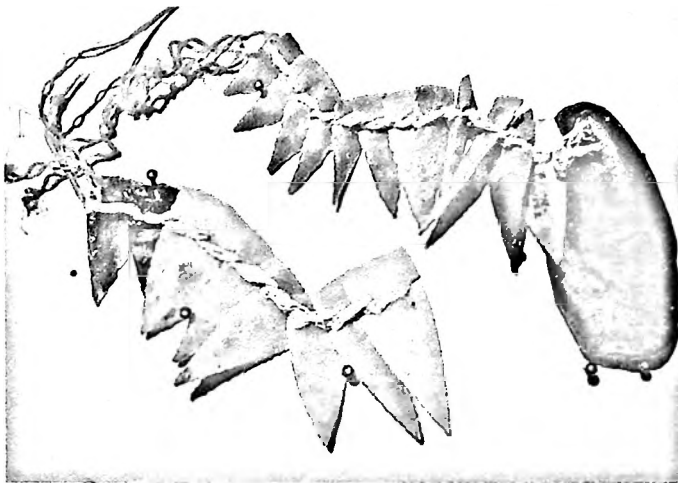
the trunk of a young tree, after a few years of growth, when the wire or cordage is removed, it will often leave a visible indentation in the outer bark. The book *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas* refers to these tie-down or ligature marks across the bark of a CMT as “cross-grain scars.”<sup>16</sup>

The second most common type of CMT found in Colorado is the Burial Tree. These trees have two ninety-degree bends to the trunk.

The two bends were made when the tree was young and the trunk pliable enough to be bent at a ninety-degree angle close to the ground. The Cherokee used a branch from another tree, called a “thong,” shaped like a capital Y and driven into the ground. They bent the trunk of a young tree over the thong, creating the first horizontal bend in the trunk, and then at the desired length, drove a second wooden stake into the ground to tie the tree to the ground. Often a cut can be seen in the bark going down the trunk over the first bend, called the “hip.” Occasionally a parallel cut can also be observed severing the outer fibers of the heartwood on the hip which helped keep the tree from resuming its natural shape.

Horticulturalists explain when the main trunk of a plant or tree is staked down it will grow a secondary trunk, called a leader, which resumes the natural sun-seeking growth of the tree. The primary trunk continues to grow outward for years and may wither and die on its own. However, if a dead primary trunk is examined closely, cut marks can occasionally be found all the way around the primary trunk cutting through the bark and exposing the heartwood. This technique was done to intentionally kill off the primary trunk to redirect the natural sun-seeking growth of the tree. Foresters refer to this bark removal process as “girdling” and some suggest this characteristic may be the most compelling evidence the tree was modified by human hands.

Some people claim these Ponderosa pine trees with bent trunks are not old enough or big enough to have been shaped by the Native Americans. Yet, dendrochronology—the science of determining the age of a tree by counting annual tree rings—proves most of these CMTs are at least 200-300 years old. Foresters are taught to measure and core a tree at diameter breast height (DBH) to determine its age. However, a challenge arises when using an incremental bore core tool to determine the age of a CMT as the “pith



*Courtesy Bruce Clark*

*Yucca Cordage here used to Lace Together Projectile Points that may have been used as an Eagle Snare or for Picketing a Horse*

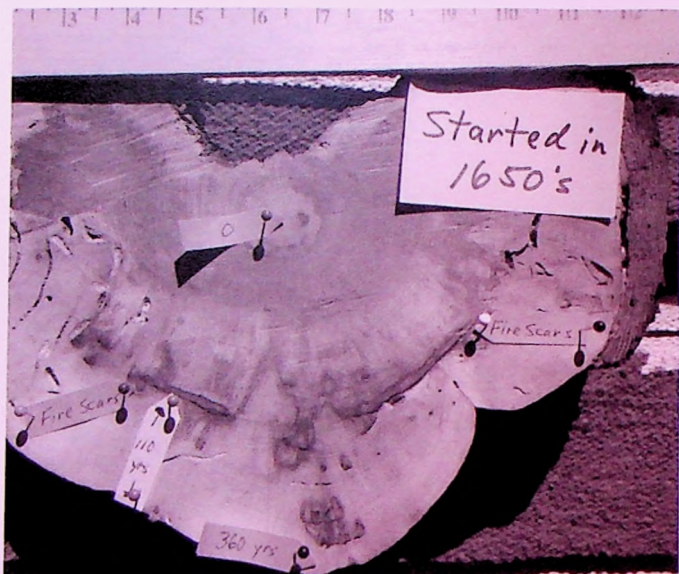
ring” (the center ring or year one) is off-set and is no longer located at the exact center of the trunk. To support the weight of the tree above the bend, annual tree rings grow thicker at the bottom causing the trunk to assume an oval shape.<sup>17</sup>

For a tree to be old enough to have been modified by American Indians it must be well over 100 years old; but CMTs don't have to be huge. Dendrochronology analysis supports the hypothesis that the height and diameter of a tree is determined more by sunlight, access to water, soil conditions and altitude, rather than by the tree's age. Dendrochronology results for a CMT with a 12-inch diameter, discovered in El Paso County, was determined to be 360

years old when it died several years ago. Another Ponderosa pine with a 9-inch diameter trunk was confirmed to be 309 years old.<sup>18</sup> After years of research, Anderson has concluded that deciding if a tree is a Native American CMT is an easier task than determining its attribution (*who?*) or interpretation (*why?*).

The presence of the Ute was well-documented by Colorado's early explorers and frontiersmen, including John C. Fremont and Kit Carson, who used the Ute as guides. General William Tecumseh Sherman wrote, "Kit Carson first came into public notice by Fremont's *Reports of the Exploration of the Great West* about 1842-3." Continuing in the same letter he commented, "Reaching Fort Garland, New Mexico, in September or October 1866, I found it garrisoned by some companies of New Mexico Volunteers, of which Carson was Colonel or commanding officer. I stayed with him some days, during which we had a sort of council with the Ute Indians, of which the Chief Ouray was the principle feature."<sup>19</sup>

Some people might question how so many Prayer or Spirit Trees could still be standing in the homeland of the Ute? There are a couple possible explanations; first, is the longevity of Ponderosa pine tree, with an average lifespan of 600-800 years, which outlives most species of trees growing at lower elevations. Secondly, the Indians that once



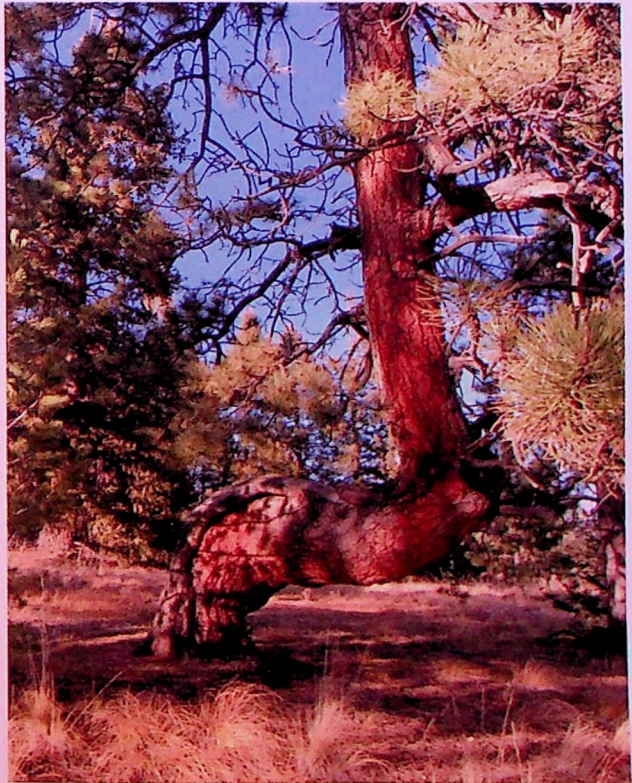
Courtesy Dean Williams

Partial Cross-section (or Cookie) of a CMT Showing 360 Tree Rings that Started Growing in the 1650s. Found North of Fox Run Regional Park, El Paso County, Colorado

occupied the ancestral homeland of the Ute modified trees extensively. The last possibility is that all other American Indian tribes were displaced from their homelands before the removal of the Ute. The Ute were the last American Indians forced onto a reservation following the September 29, 1879 Battle of Milk Creek, fought between the Ute and U.S. Cavalry, and the simultaneously occurring Meeker Massacre. The result was the 1880 Ute Agreement forcing the Ute to relocate to reservations in Colorado and Utah.<sup>20</sup>

The early presence of the Ute in southern Colorado, from the Four Corners to the Spanish Peaks, is well documented and many CMTs and stone features (projectile points, tipi rings, firepits, rock art, etc.) have been attributed to the Ute. However, the Jicarilla Apache were also known to have traveled across present-day southern Colorado and were known to have modified trees. Place names with Native American references might help determine which tribes once occupied or traveled through a region. For example, travelers today heading west on Highway 160 approaching La Veta Pass, may notice a road sign sharing the Native American name for the Spanish Peaks, "Wahatoya." However, this place name is neither Ute nor Apache, but Comanche.<sup>21</sup>

Trailmarker Trees are often found in alignment with other Trailmarker Trees. Hikers following Trail Trees may come across CMTs of different configurations clustered together. A grouping of CMTs might suggest the area was a destination location for gatherings, ceremonies or hunting camps used while harvesting food. While exploring a group of CMTs on the Black Hawk Ranch, located on the eastern slope of the Spanish Peaks, a cluster of CMTs was found in association with bedrock mortar holes. These stone features may have been used long ago by Native Americans to crush pinon nuts and meat mixed with melted fat, mountain sage and other ingredients to create a protein-rich food source called pemmican.<sup>22</sup>



Author's Collection

*Ute Prayer Tree at Mueller State Park*

While the Ute are generally accepted as the indigenous people of Colorado, many other federally recognized tribes also claim a presence including the Apache, Arapahoe, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Comanche, Hopi, Navajo, Pueblo, Shoshone, Sioux, Wichita and Zuni. With the notable exception of the Cherokee, these tribes were not known to have a written language. Their culture and history have been passed down from one generation to the next in the form of stories, ceremonies or songs. Without a clear understanding of which tribes and tribal bands were where, and when, and without knowing the approximate age of a CMT or stone feature, the attribution or interpretation of an artifact remains challenging.

Visitors to the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park, in the four corners of Colorado, south of Cortez, can take a Ute-guided tour into the park where broken pottery shards still lay on the ground below ancient ruins and petroglyphs.<sup>23</sup> Ute guides and tribal elders claim many of these petroglyphs are hundreds of years old and a few have solstice alignments. By definition, petroglyphs are images pecked into the rock surface rather than painted as are pictographs. Arborglyphs are images carved into the trunks of trees (Utes primarily used Ponderosa pine or aspen trees). Petroglyphs, stone enclosures and CMTs with bent trunks have been discovered with sunrise or sunset solstice alignments across the Ute ancestral homeland.

Jefferson tells how the Ute planted trees, transplanted trees, grafted parts of one tree onto another and used trees as a clock, a calendar and a compass. Standing in the forest, Jefferson points to the shadow of a tree as it tracks slowly across the ground. He explains this is how his people knew the time, which way is north and how tracking the sun informed them of the season. Native American CMTs, with sunrise or sunset alignments for the summer and winter solstice, have been located. A few trees appear to incorporate the sun setting behind a distant mountain peak. CMT trees with bent trunks have alignments to the four cardinal directions, thus proving the direction of the bend is not random.

### Rule out Natural Causes

Animals? (i.e., deer, elk, porcupines).

Weather? (i.e., heavy snowfall, strong winds).

Lightning?

Disease? (Mistletoe, etc.).

Recent, man-caused damage (lumbering, road work, etc.).

All negatives? Move on to confirm!

#### Key:

- > A positive to any of the causes will likely rule out the tree being a Native American CMT.
- > The more indicators that are confirmed, the higher the likelihood the tree is a Native American CMT.



Jefferson tells stories how his ancestors studied the stars in the night sky and used the North Star to help guide them along their annual migration routes. He tells stories of how his people sang songs when they traveled at night. He says he remembers his elders telling stories about how their ancestors sang four different songs, one for each direction. They also had four names for the wind, depending upon which direction the wind was blowing. Many Native American people believe the wind is sacred. Some accept its touch upon their face as the breath from their Creator. Sadly, the four names for the wind and words to the four Ute songs appear to have been lost from their culture over the years, along with their family traditions of shaping trees.<sup>24</sup>

Jefferson explains this cultural loss began when his ancestors were forced onto the Ute Reservations. They didn't need Trailmarker Trees—they weren't going anywhere. He tells how the "process of cultural assimilation" implemented by the U.S. Government was intended to take "the Indian out of the child." He says Native American children, including himself, were forced to leave their families on the Reservations to attend the white man's boarding schools. There they were punished if they spoke their Ute language, used their Indian names or practiced their tribal ceremonies and traditions.<sup>25</sup> Jefferson remembers he had an Indian name, and it was just one word; but sadly, he has forgotten his Ute name.

Jefferson is one of the last surviving members of his tribe who as children were taught Ute as a primary language, a language that had been spoken for at least 14,000 years. It wasn't until he was five years old that Jefferson was taught English and by then he had already learned Spanish. He also learned to speak Diné (Navajo), the Native American language of his wife of fifty-three years. Professor of Ojibwe, Anton Treuer, estimates in his book that, "there may have been as many as five hundred distinct tribal languages in North America prior to sustained contact with Europeans. There are now around 180, but the number is shrinking quickly."<sup>26</sup>



**Confirm Man-caused Indicators**

✓ Peeled bark pattern and/or hurls not caused by nature.

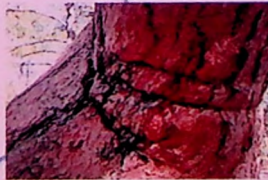
✓ Tie-down marks where tree was shaped, grafted or possibly planted.

✓ Other CMTs found in area and/or indications of Native American activity (i.e., bedrock mortar holes, stone enclosures, etc.).

✓ Location: near a trail or water source and/or oriented to point to important land mark(s).

✓ Appears to be over 100 years old.

Ponderosa Pines start to turn orange about 80-100 years of age and will turn full orange as they mature.



Lois Adams 3/6/2017

Author Collection,

Wade Davis, a Colombian-Canadian anthropologist, ethnobotanist and author, shares in his digital TED Talks (TED meaning technology, entertainment and design), "When each of you...were born, there were 6,000 languages being spoken on the planet. Today ...fully half are no longer being whispered into the ears of children. They are no longer being taught to babies, which means, effectively, unless something changes, they're already dead." Davis teaches, "A language is not just a body of vocabulary or a set of grammatical rules. A language is a flash of the human spirit. It's a vehicle through which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world." Dr. Davis explains, "Perhaps the greatest cultural loss is language loss" and, explains Davis, "we must be the agents of cultural survival."<sup>27</sup>

People ask, "Why are not more people aware of these trees?" Jimmy Arterberry explains it this way,

*Many years ago, American Indians became reluctant to share details regarding their customs with outsiders. They had lost the basic necessities for their way of life. The Comanche's painted trees and carved trees, as well as other trees obviously related to the American Indian way of life, were often removed by early settlers. Bent and less-obvious Indian marker trees often survived because only the American Indians knew of their significance, and tribe members were instructed not to talk about them. As a result, it is difficult to uncover the tree's secrets from a past that was buried long ago. Add to that the fact that Traditional Cultural Properties and Indian marker trees are often in the way of future development or redevelopment. As a result, society often greatly underestimates or ignores the true value of these cultural resources.<sup>28</sup>*

Many Native Americans believe these modified trees are sacred and may lead to sacred places. The U.S. Highway 285 corridor west of Denver, between Morrison and Kenosha Pass, is lined with CMTs. Many of these CMTs were found in association with stone features including arrowheads, stone tools, Moqui (or Moki) steps carved into the surface of



Author's Collection

*Native American Medicine Wheel found in Jefferson County. Left to right: Gary Ziegler, Tom McGuire, James Jefferson and Janet Shown.*



a rock formation and one extraordinary Medicine Wheel.<sup>29</sup> This Medicine Wheel was constructed entirely of milk white quartz crystal, one of the three sacred stones of the ancient Ute people. Two distant Trailmarker Trees were discovered pointing to where this Medicine Wheel was found.

While visiting this Medicine Wheel site with botanists from the Denver Botanic Gardens in 2018, evidence of “lichen bridging” was observed with lichen growing from one rock onto the next, confirming the site to be an older archeological site.<sup>30</sup> Jefferson “feels” this site is attributable to the ancient Ute and offered a prayer in his native language before performing a smudging ceremony to bless the site located on private land. An earlier visit by Jefferson and archaeologist Gary Ziegler confirmed compass readings taken of the two intersecting lines of rocks extending outward from the center stone are aligned to the four cardinal directions.

During another late summer field trip to this site in the mountains west of Denver, dozens of Painted Lady butterflies were observed flying across the Medicine Wheel, from north to south.

Birds and insects, including butterflies and bees, use the Earth’s magnetic field for navigation during their annual migrations. This poses an intriguing question; since the Ute also traveled along annual migration routes, is it possible they too somehow used the Earth’s magnetic field for navigation?.

When visiting ancient cultural sites and sacred trees, people must be taught from a young age to protect the archaeological integrity and respect the spiritual sanctity of these Native American sites by “taking only pictures and leaving only footprints.”

The only grove of trees listed on the National Register of Historic Places is in southern Colorado on the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. Over 200 Ponderosa pine trees with large peeled bark patterns are protected as “living artifacts” around the Great Sand Dunes.<sup>31</sup> Over seventy of these CMTs are clustered in the Indian Grove area. Our field research located over forty more directly south of the Sand Dunes, including the CMT shown on page six. While other Indian tribes visited the dune for centuries, these large peeled trees are believed to be attributable to the Ute who used the inner layer of bark, called the cambium layer, for medicinal or nutritional purposes.

While exploring these large peeled CMTs with Jefferson, he shared, “What this tells me is this was done during a time of great sickness and starvation among my people.”<sup>32</sup> While some people on and off the Ute Reservations dismiss any tree with a bent trunk as being a CMT, large peeled bark trees and arborglyphs are widely accepted. However, hundreds of Burial and Trailmarker Trees have been discovered with peeled bark patterns. In the San Juan National Forest stand several large peeled bark trees, Trailmarker Trees, Burial Trees and arborglyphs, including one Ponderosa pine that had the trunk of another tree grafted onto its trunk and bent around the trunk to fuse with the trunk of a third tree.

Many Native American elders who have “walked on” left behind their words of wisdom. Shortly before her passing, Northern Ute tribal elder Loya Arrum was interviewed for the film documentary, *Mystery of the Trees*. She shared, “I talk to the spirit of the Prayer Tree; the Prayer Tree is holding the prayers.... They are not just Trailmarkers, they are places where you could have an offering...speak to the ancestors. What they would

do is bend the tree...the prayer is to Creator.”<sup>33</sup> A Lummi Nation elder, Jewell Prayer Wolf James, cautions, “If we can’t protect the Earth, can’t protect the sky, if we can’t protect our sacred sites, then we’ve failed the world.”<sup>34</sup>

Despite the teachings of some Ute tribal elders, there are archeologists, historians and Ute representatives who claim trees with bent trunks are simply causalities of nature (heavy snowfall, lightning, disease, porcupines, wind, etc.) and profess, “There are no oral histories of cultural practices that provide any evidence for ‘prayer trees’ in the Ute tradition. In fact, recent studies have indicated that some of these identified trees are only a handful of decades old.”<sup>35</sup> Other naysayers claim the Ute didn’t need Trailmarker Trees because they knew their ancestral homelands. However, Jefferson teaches, “My ancestors who modified trees didn’t do it for themselves, they knew where they were, they did it for the next generation to follow.”

A statement denouncing the existence of “Bent Trees” as being part of any “Traditional Practices of the Ute Nation” claims, “while other Tribes may have conducted these types of practices, the practice of bending trees is not part of the customary cultural traditions of Ute people, past or present, who comprised the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribes.” In this statement, Southern Ute elder, Alden Naranjo, goes on to state, “I want to stress that individual Ute families may have their own traditions associated with physically bending and or making prayers to trees.”<sup>36</sup>

In 2018 Southern Ute elder, James Jefferson, gathered a small group, including author John Anderson, to found the nonprofit Association for Native American Sacred Trees and Places ([www.NASTaP.org](http://www.NASTaP.org)). Its mission is to inspire discovery, appreciation and conservation of CMTs and places held sacred to Native Americans. Every year NASTaP conducts CMT field trips and holds an annual conference to share research findings to help the children of the next generation learn from this legacy gift left behind by our Native American people.<sup>37</sup> The author and other presenters at past NASTaP events



*Author's Collection*

*A Ponderosa Pine Trailmarker Tree in Teller County  
with Peel used for Food and Medicine*

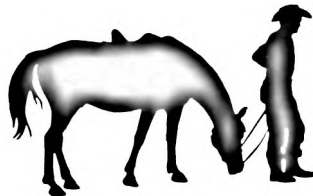
agree, the study of these CMTs offers an entirely different world-view of the indigenous people of North America, a people far more advanced culturally and spiritually than the image of nomadic “hunter-gatherers” often taught in public schools.

Whether Native American Culturally Modified Trees with bent trunks are attributed to a specific Ute band or family, or to the Comanche, Cherokee or the Apache tribal nations, should not matter. The study of CMTs found in situ with stone features will advance both the field of anthropology and archaeology. These historic trees are living *Native American* cultural artifacts that deserve to be added to our historical, cultural and archaeological records and preserved for The Seventh Generation. We must be the “agents of cultural survival” while we still have access to these sacred trees and the tribal elders who are willing to share their stories.

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# Over the Corral Rail

*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

## Pikes Peak Posse Presentations

The Pikes Peak Posse learned about "The Espinosas and the Conejos Experience," as Virginia Sanchez used newly found historical documents to examine the Espinosas' life in Conejos, including the way they were hunted down and violently killed in southern Colorado during the early Territorial Period (1861-1876). Virginia is an independent scholar with an MA from the University of Colorado, Denver, and a BA from the University of Wyoming. Several of her articles on her research about southern Colorado territory have been published, including in the *New Mexico Historical Review*, and by the University of New Mexico Press.

The December meeting was a special treat for the Posse as it was entertained by Donna Guthrie with "Troubadours on Horseback: The History of the singing Cowboy." Donna presented a musical lecture featuring the history of the singing cowboys of the 1940s and '50s, including Ken Howard, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers. Donna W. Guthrie is a writer, filmmaker, playwright and lecturer. She is the author of twenty-three books and eighty educational videos for children, and the co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival.

## The Beginning

The very first paragraph in the monthly *Brand Book* of the Denver Posse of Westerners, Volume 1, Number 1, published on March 1, 1945 reads:

*Every once in a while an organization seems to arise out of sheer need for a medium whereby men of common interests can gather and exchange ideas and experiences. For a number of years such eminent Colorado men of letters as Dr. Leroy R. Hafen, Colorado Historian, Professor Levette J. Davidson, nationally known folklore authority, and Thomas H. Ferril, poet and writer, have recognized the need for an informal assembly of men interested in various aspects of Western cultural history. Unfortunately, circumstances never seemed quite favorable until the summer of 1944, when Mr. Leland Case, editor of The Rotarian and a member of the Chicago group known as "The Westerners," visited Denver and suggested the organization of a Colorado affiliate of "The Westerners." The result was the organization of this chapter on January 26, 1945.*

From this beginning the Denver Posse of Westerners has grown and prospered, adding women to that initial membership, and changing the periodical to the *Roundup*, resulting in over 600 issues, plus publishing thirty-five bound volumes, *Brand Books*, of member research on the American West. We look back at that start, as we browse the early efforts, and take pride in having succeeded in maintaining a thriving Posse for seventy-five years.



## Westerners Bookshelf



**A Man Absolutely Sure of Himself: Texan George Washington Littlefield**, by David B. Gracy II; Foreword by J. Phelps White, III. Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. 450pp. Index, bibliography, notes, appendices, genealogy, illustrations, photographs. Hardcover, \$34.95.

This is a very interesting story of an unusual man, a rancher, a banker, a Civil War veteran who fought for the Confederacy and was almost killed and who went on to become one of the richest men in Texas and the United States. George Washington Littlefield lived an extraordinary life.

His story begins when, as a Captain in a Texas Regiment, he was seriously wounded in the hip at Chickamauga. That ended his Civil War involvement, although he was not discharged until June 1864. Major Littlefield, as he was ever afterwards known, inherited a ranch in Gonzales County from his father, but due to floods and droughts, it was failing, so he decided to do a cattle drive to Kansas. He also opened a store that made money, which he traded for cattle.

In 1871 he headed his cattle to market, and was able to pay off his debts, and made an additional \$3,600—a lot of money in those days, and never looked back. He founded the LIT Ranch, and made \$5,500-\$95,000 between 1871-1877. He opened a ranch in the Panhandle, and ultimately the Yellow House Ranch in New Mexico. Along the way he mixed his herd with Durhams and Herefords, which became the most productive cattle to have. In 1881 he sold the LIT ranch for \$248,000.

In 1883 he bought a mansion in Austin that became part of the University of Texas campus. Soon he controlled 1.75 million acres, and employed his nephews to manage the ranches, which freed him up to found The American National Bank in Austin, and contribute significantly to the University of Texas. He helped the Terry's Texas Rangers, The Hoods Brigade, the University Library, and ultimately gave millions to UT. He planned the town that bears his name.

By the 1910s he was on the board of the University, fighting Governor Ferguson who was trying to close it down. He was selling off his ranches and in November 1918 he resigned as chairman of his bank. During World War I he gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Liberty Loan fund. Other examples of his generosity were giving \$500,000 for John Henry Wrenn's book collection, and a similar amount for a 320-acre field for training. He bought a fountain designed by Coppini that honored World War I soldiers.

This is a complex and interesting book. At times, Gracy tends to wander from subject to subject, and the overall organization could be a little better. But he put forty-seven years into researching the subject and this book is full of significant history of the Littlefields and their relatives.

- Alan Culpin, BA, MA Western History



### *A Man Absolutely Sure of Himself*

TEXAN GEORGE WASHINGTON  
**LITTLEFIELD**

DAVID B. GRACY II  
FOREWORD BY J. PHELPS WHITE III



**Through a Native Lens: American Indian Photography**, by Nicole Dawn Strathman. Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 2020. 228 pp. Photographs, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$50.00.

The fact that American Indian tribes did not readily accept the invasion of their lands by European cultures does not mean they were unwilling to adopt the invader's technologies. This adoption and adaptation began with things as simple as glass beads, iron tools and fabrics then progressed to ready acceptance of new inventions like repeating rifles and even photography. As author Nicole Dawn Strathman illustrates, native peoples' relationships with photography began by "authoring" the manner in which non-native photographers depicted them. She points out that some, like Red Cloud, used photography as a "mode of representation and resistance." Some scholars have questioned the manner in which Edward Curtis posed his subjects. But Strathman points out that some of his subjects knowingly and actively participated in the creation of those photos.



This book begins by exploring these relationships between Indian subjects and photographers. It then examines the lives and work of several tribal photographers who, as professionals, documented their own cultures, particularly in the early 20th century. Their work often recorded not only the traditional cultures of their peoples but also the gradual adoption of the dress, housing and technologies of the encroaching American culture. Some scholars have claimed this latter trend shows successful assimilation. The author, however, suggests that while those photographs show acceptance and adaptation, the photographs of traditional life also demonstrate a continued embrace of their native cultures. My own study of Lakota performers during the same period, who successfully straddled several cultures, shows that process as well.

As photography became more accessible in the 20th century, there were amateur photographers in American Indian communities. Like other amateur photographers, they recorded everyday life. Those images are a unique record of 20th century life in communities going through cultural transition. Many have already been discovered and I suspect that many more images are yet to be discovered.

This book covers new ground and will hopefully be followed by other comparable studies. It is illustrated with some remarkable images. One of my favorites is a photo of two modern Kiowa warriors, posed Curtis-like in their feathered headdresses and military uniforms in the fuselage of a 1944 plane. One holds a surveillance camera while the other holds a machine gun. Photographs like this, plus the author's thoughtful analysis, will make this book a useful addition to the library of anyone interested in photography and its role as cultural narrative.

- Steve Friesen

**Legacies of Dust: Land Use and Labor on the Colorado Plains**, by Douglas Shellin. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. 406 pp. Map, photos, table, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$55.00.

Douglas Shellin's *Legacies of Dust: Land Use and Labor on the Colorado Plains* explores the causes and the long-term impact of the Dust Bowl in the contexts of land, water, labor and government intervention as experienced in two contrasting southeastern Colorado counties. The two counties, Baca and Prowers, faced very different challenges. Baca County farmers relied primarily on dry land farming and responded more quickly to the efforts to expand soil conservation practices. Prowers County farmers with access to irrigation water were less vulnerable to the environmental and economic disaster and more resistant to the efforts of county agents from the Extension Service and others. Their focus was and continues to be on gaining access to reliable water sources for irrigation. Shellin's extensively researched and detailed account centers on the years between 1929 and 1962 and is an important reference for scholars, history buffs and others who want a deeper understanding of the "real legacies" of the Dust Bowl.

The region was first settled in the wet years of the 1880s and seemed to live up to the boosters' promise that "rain follows the plow." The high demand for wheat through the end of WWI, lead farmers to prioritize mono crop production at the expense of soil exhaustion. When farmers faced declining demand, drought, soil degradation, dust storms, and locust they were forced to plow even marginal land as they tried to make good on debts and mortgages. When the drought lengthened and the winds intensified, millions of tons of topsoil were blown away. For many, the promise of a "better year next year" did not come soon enough. A period of consolidation ensued resulting in fewer and larger farms, a declining population and a need to meet labor needs from sources such as Braceros from Mexico, German POWs, migrant workers, Japanese internees from Amache, and convicts.

Shellin proposes that the real legacies of the Dust Bowl "only emerged well after the catastrophe ended." Farmers were forced to adapt to the new realities of farming in an arid region. The unprecedented state and federal intervention relying heavily on Extension Service agents helped to develop a willingness among farmers to institute practices that would in time mitigate soil erosion and better prepare them for the next dry period.

Shellin notes that visitors to the region can still see the success of the cooperation between state and federal officials, local boards, and farmers. Cover crops, windbreaks, windmills, terracing, irrigation projects, ghost towns, and subsidy programs resulting in land being left fallow or incorporated into the Comanche National Grasslands are just a few of the "real legacies" of the Dust Bowl. However, the most enduring legacy continues in family histories and memories passed down from those who lived through the worst ecological disaster in American history.

- Jim Donohue

## Legacies of Dust

LAND USE and LABOR on the  
COLORADO PLAINS | DOUGLAS SHELLIN

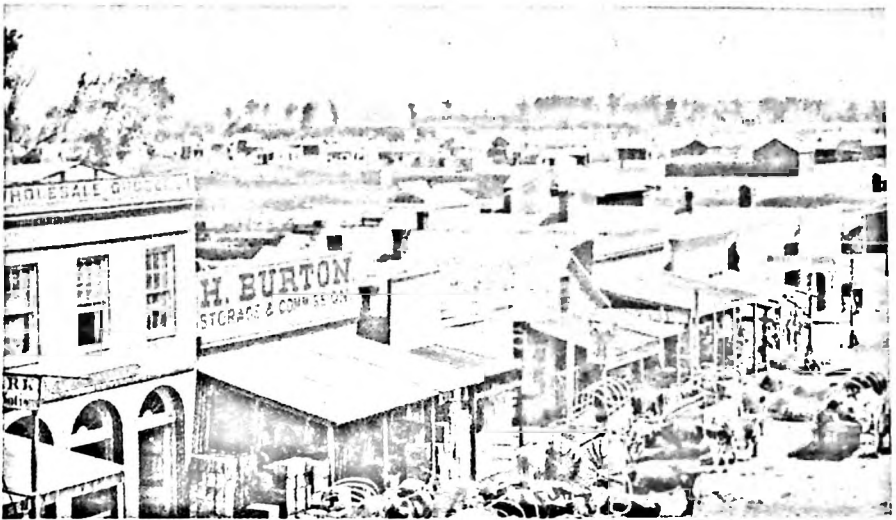






*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

November - December 2020



*Courtesy Western History Department, Denver Public Library, Z-7012*

*Denver's Blake Street, Between Present-day 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets.  
The Building that Housed Jones and Cartwright Grocers at Far Left*

**John S. Jones**  
**Denver 1859er and co-founder of the Pony Express**

*By Lee Whiteley*

(presented January 22, 2020)



## John S. Jones Denver 1859er and co-founder of the Pony Express

By Lee Whiteley

*Death of John S. Jones, Esq.*

*He was well and favorably known all over the northern part of the Territory and belonged to that hardy, honest class of men that one so much likes to meet. He was one of the earliest settlers of Colorado, started the first pony express across the plains, and was one of the first freighters of the year 1859. The war, by its changes, reduced him from a rich man to comparative poverty, but with the energy of a man to whom the word fail is an incentive to action, he labored with a zeal and a hope for the future.<sup>1</sup>*

John Stykes Jones, a true Denver 1859er, supplied Denver City and the mines to the west with one of the most important services possible: better communication between this isolated region and the states back east. Jones was born February 20, 1811. He became a partner in 1850 with the company formed by James Brown and William Russell. They obtained a contract from the War Department to haul military supplies from Leavenworth to Santa Fe. Brown died after being caught in a blizzard in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The unprofitable company ended in 1851.

### Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company (L&PPX)

William Russell, Alexander Majors, and William Waddell signed a partnership agreement on January 1, 1855. Their company, Majors, Russell & Waddell, held a monopoly on the transportation of military supplies west of the Missouri River.

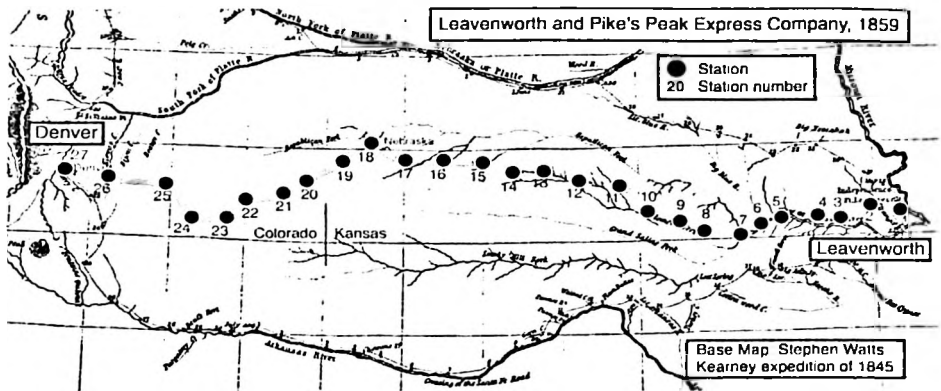
Russell wrote to Waddell in 1858, "Pike's Peak will rage next year and make no mistake. We must keep our eyes open and try to make enough out of it to cover our extraordinary losses next season arising from high prices of cattle and wagons....

I am for sending cargo of supplies out there."<sup>2</sup> Majors and Waddell were not supportive of the idea, so Russell teamed with John S. Jones to form the Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company (L&PPX). Russell was president and Jones the general manager. Concord stagecoaches from New Hampshire and mules from Missouri were ordered.



*Courtesy National Archives via Wikimedia*

*Typical Stagecoach of the Concord Type Used by Express Companies on the Overland Trail, ca. 1869*



Courtesy Library of Congress

*Map of the Route of the Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company, First Stagecoach Route to Denver. Route of the Stage Road and Station Numbers Added by the Author*

There were twenty-seven stage stations, spaced about thirty miles apart. The selected route followed the established military road between Leavenworth and Fort Riley, Kansas then turned northwest to follow the divide between the Republican and Solomon rivers. This section of the road had been used by John C. Fremont in 1842. The L&PPX then followed the South Fork of the Republican to its headwaters before crossing over to Big Sandy Creek. It continued northwest to Denver. This road northwest of present-day Limon would become the Middle or "Starvation" branch of the Smoky Hill Trail. The L&PPX was the first stagecoach line to Denver.

*The Great Express Line.* John S. Jones and W. H. Russell have established an Express and Transportation line from this place [Leavenworth] to the gold mines. Mr. Jones is now here, and has his office in the Planter's House, and is actively and energetically engaged in outfitting his companies, hiring his hands, and putting the line into complete and successful operation. He is preeminently qualified for the position he occupies as general superintendent of the whole business. He is a practical man, of great energy and indomitable perseverance. There was a general rush of men at his office on Monday last, from early dawn till night. He hired on that day about 100 hands as drivers of teams.<sup>3</sup>

The first set of two stagecoaches departed Leavenworth on April 18 and arrived Denver on May 7.

*Arrival of the First Express.* On Saturday evening last—7th inst.—two coaches, the first of the 'Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express', arrived in our city [Denver], having made the trip in nineteen days, bringing news from the States, also nine through passengers. This is the beginning of the stupendous enterprise undertaken by the above named express company—the making of a new road, over a comparatively unknown country, and immediately stocking it with a working force of men, animals and wagons, sufficient to forward

*with passengers and dispatch a daily mail and passenger coach from each end of the line. The coaches which we have seen are the very best of Concord coaches, finished in the best style, and perfectly new.*<sup>4</sup>

Only a few sets of coaches used the L&PPX Republican River route, but the passengers on these coaches were of great importance. After receiving free passage on the L&PPX, Horace Greeley, founder and editor of the *New York Tribune*, Henry Villard, future president of the Northern Pacific Railway, and Albert D. Richardson, historian and travel writer, went to the newly discovered "Gregory's Diggings," near present-day Central City.

Their findings were published in a *Rocky Mountain News Weekly* extra on June 11, 1859.

*The Kansas Gold Mines. We are indebted to the kindness of Mr. William, of the Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express, for the following report from Messrs. Greeley, Richardson, and Villard, which will give satisfaction to the public mind, and at once set at rest the cry of 'humbbug' reiterated by the returning emigration from this region.*

It was Richardson who clarified the term "Pike's Peak Gold Rush."

*Thus far no gold has been discovered within sixty miles of Pike's Peak; but the first reports located the diggings near that mountain, and 'Pike's Peak'—one of those happy alliterations which stick like burs in the public memory—was now the general name for the whole region.*

Russell and Jones, again without the support of Majors and Waddell, purchased the St. Joseph, Missouri, to Salt Lake City mail contract on May 11, 1859. The contract called for the use of the Oregon-California Trail along the Platte River through Fort Kearney, present-day Nebraska, and along the North Fork of the Platte River through Fort Laramie, present-day Wyoming. Russell, Majors & Waddell took over the operations of the financially troubled L&PPX and moved it to this north route. A branch line ran from Julesburg, Colorado, to Denver, along the South Platte River. The first coaches along this new route arrived in Denver on July 9.

*Jones, Russell & Co.'s Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express is winning golden opinions. The stages now make their regular trips in a little over six days, carrying their mails with unflinching regularity, and putting passengers through with more comfort, and giving better and more regular meals than can be obtained on any other stage line in the Western States. The fact is, this express is about the only link that binds us to the states. Long may it prosper.*<sup>5</sup>



Author's Collection

Jones and Russell Pike's Peak Express Co.  
Postmark, Dated September 15, 1859

Excerpts from the newspaper advertisement for the stage line included:

*Jones and Russell & Co's Express Stage Coaches—Each stage coach is capable of carrying eight passengers with comfort and ease. Passengers through to Leavenworth \$100, board included.... Especial attention is given to the comfort of ladies traveling the coaches.... Our drivers are sober, discreet, and experienced men. The teams are the choice of 800 mules. John S. Jones, General Superintendent.*

In November 1859, the L&PPX name was changed to Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company (COC&PP), but informally called Clean Out of Cash & Poor Pay.

*The New Overland Express Co. The Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company was organized yesterday under a liberal charter from the Territorial Legislature, with A. Majors, John S. Jones [Jones], Wm. B. Waddell, B. C. Card, W. S. Grant, J. B. Simpson, and Wm. H. Russell, as directors. They have purchased the old company of Jones, Russell & Co., who are running the Pike's Peak Express and Utah Mail Line, for the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, and will continue to run the same, together with the Pony Express to Sacramento, California.<sup>6</sup>*

## The Pony Express

Russell was the driving force behind the establishment of the Pony Express. Once again, Majors and Waddell were less enthusiastic. It was Russell and Jones who forged ahead with the Pony Express by advertising in the *Leavenworth Daily Times* expressing their need for horses:

WANTED  
TWO HUNDRED GREY MARES,  
from four to seven years old,  
not to exceed fifteen hands high,  
well broke to the saddle, and  
WARRANTED SOUND,  
With black hoofs, and suitable  
for running the 'Overland Pony Express'  
JONES, RUSSELL & Co.<sup>7</sup>

Almost three weeks later when the news arrived in Denver, the *Rocky Mountain News* published the exciting words that Jones, Russell & Co.

*are advertising for horses to stock the line of their Pony Express from Leavenworth to Placerville, Cal. They will put on 300 ponies, and expect to make the time in eight days; will commence the 3d of April. To this Rocky Mountain country, this Pony Express will be of incalculable importance, bringing us, at once, within three and a half days of the Eastern States, and within six and a half days, of those on the Pacific slope. Thus time and space are annihilated. Less than a year ago, news from the States was considered late if not more than a month old. The Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company*

have reduced that time to seven days, and now propose to again reduce it one half, and we have no doubt that before another year has passed, the electric flash will give us instantaneous communication, with all the cities and towns of the Union. The greatest possible success, say we, to such men as Messrs. Jones, Russell & Co.<sup>8</sup>



Copy in Author's Collection

The Pony Express was Established by The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company. Note that the Apostrophe had been Removed from Pikes

It was the completion of the first transcontinental telegraph by the Western Union Company on October 24, 1861 that ended the need for horses. The Pony Express ran from April 3, 1860 to October 26, 1861. A few remnants remained such as horseback service that linked the Pony Express station at Julesburg with Denver until the telegraph arrived in Denver from Julesburg on October 10, 1863.

But Jones and Russell knew the value of telegraph communication before then.

Telegraph to the Gold Fields. We are informed from a reliable source, that it is the intention of Messrs. Jones, Russell & Co., to establish, in the spring, a telegraph line through from the Missouri River to Denver City.... A line to Denver is such a far stretch towards the Pacific, that we think it a safe prediction that another year will see the continent spanned by the electric wires.<sup>9</sup>

## Jones & Cartwright

John Jones teamed with J.T. Cartwright to establish a large freighting and wholesale-retail mercantile business. On June 8, 1859, twenty-five Jones freight wagons arrived in Denver, and by September large advertisements began appearing in the *Rocky Mountain News*. Excerpts from one of their many ads included the following on April 4, 1860:

Wholesale Grocery. Ferry Street, Auraria, and Blake Street, Denver City.... We will keep constantly on hand, a full and complete assortment of groceries and provisions, bacon, flour, sheet iron, fry-pans...mining implements.... All orders for shipment of goods from the states, entrusted to our care, will be promptly forwarded by Jones Russell & Co.'s Express line, or our freight trains, as the person may desire. Gold dust will be received for goods or payment for freight.

Another advertisement elaborated on the mining equipment.

*We are fully prepared to furnish the best quartz crushers, and gold retorts, made under the supervision of old California miners, with all the latest improvements made in California, wholly adapted to Pike's Peak.*

#### Freight Transportation

*The subscribers are prepared to forward all kinds of freight from any point on the Missouri River to Denver City and points throughout the mining region, upon the opening of spring, and during the summer and fall, at reasonable rates. The well-known character of the firm, as successful freighters over the plains, is sufficient guarantee that contracts will be faithfully carried out. Jones and Cartwright, Denver City and Leavenworth, Kansas.<sup>10</sup>*

The firm of Jones & Cartwright operated from these two locations. In January 1860 the *Rocky Mountain News Weekly* began describing buildings along the streets of Denver and Auraria. The February 1 description of Ferry Street, now 11<sup>th</sup> Street, noted:

*This brings us to Fourth Street [now Walnut Street], and some of the most valuable ground in the country—except some of the big paying quartz leads. It is held at about \$25 per front foot, or \$1,500 to \$2,000 per lot. Next on the right is Jones & Cartwright's mammoth grocery and provision store, from which has been sold the past fall and winter near a thousand tons of goods. They occupy the old Pollock House, which has been extended to serve their necessity. Next door is the gun shop of S. Hawkins, the oldest gun maker in St. Louis.*

This location is now the northwest corner of the open space in front of the former Tivoli Brewing Company building.

On February 22 the newspaper described the east side of Denver's Blake Street, north of F Street, now 15<sup>th</sup> Street:

## JONES & CARTWRIGHT.

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in

# GROCERIES,

## Provisions, Hardware,

## MINING TOOLS, &c.

We will make **Liberal Discounts** on prices to MOUNTAIN MERCHANTS or WHOLESALE BUYERS

**Also, General Freighters.**

**H**AVING Trains leaving Leavenworth and Atchinson EVERY WEEK, from this to the middle of September next.

We can give parties unusual facilities for getting out freights. All orders promptly attended to, and Goods forwarded without delay.

Being Agents for Foundries both at Leavenworth and St. Louis, we can at any time

**Order and Freight out Quartz Mills** on the shortest time possible. We are situated on  
**BLAKE STREET, EAST DENVER,**

— AND —

**Ferry street, West Denver,**

Call on us before buying your goods or contracting for your freight.

JONES & CARTWRIGHT.

Denver. June 27. 1860.

21.

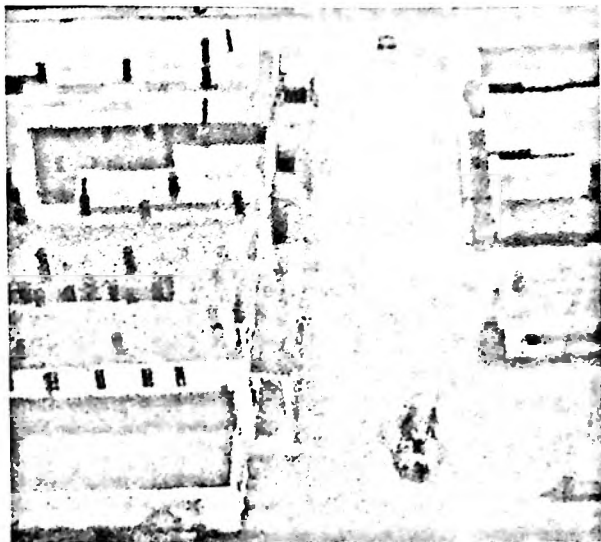
*Coloradohistoricnewspapers.org*

*Jones & Cartwright ads in the Western Mountaineer [Golden City, Colorado], July 26, 1860*



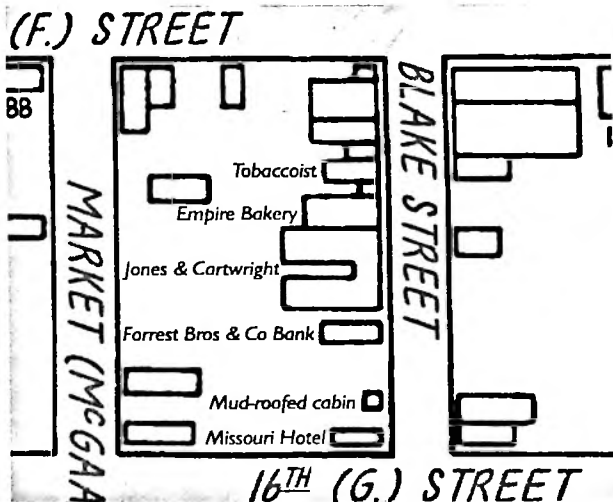
Passing several inferior buildings, occupied as bakeries, saloons, etc., we will next notice the two story block of stores occupied by Messrs. Jones & Cartwright and E. B. Sutherland. There are three: the first as yet unoccupied, and just being finished. Messrs. Jones & Cartwright occupy the second as a wholesale and retail house; dealers in groceries, provisions and hardware. Their room is twenty-five by one hundred feet, and in the fall was filled from floor to ceiling with their mammoth stock. It will be early refilled.<sup>11</sup>

New Store in the Mountains. Jones & Cartwright, Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Groceries, Provisions & Hardware. In order to accommodate our friends and customers in the mountains, and meet the wants of the trade there, we have rented the store lately occupied by Mr. Storms, in the Bank Building, in Central City, where we have opened a Branch of our House in Denver.... Wholesale purchasers



Author's Collection

A Section of the Diorama at History Colorado. Shown is Blake Street Between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The Jones and Cartwright Building is at Left Center. The Museum's Diorama Depicts the Downtown Area of Denver in 1860



Author's Collection

Diagram of this Same Block of Blake Street Shown in the History Colorado Diorama.

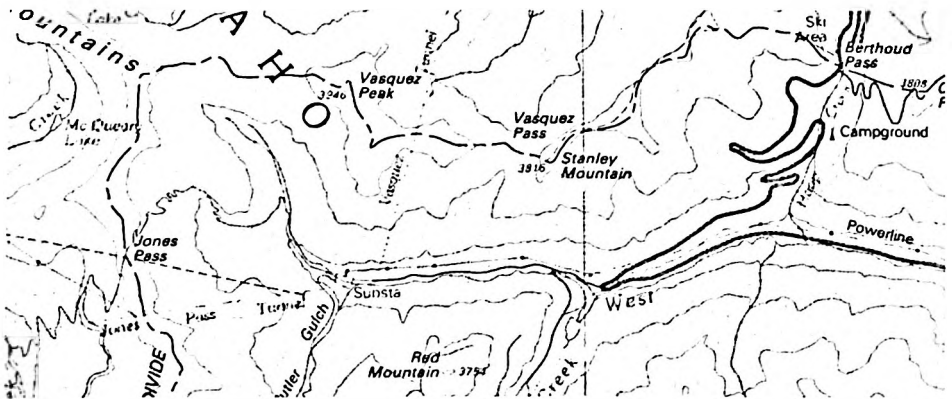
*will be supplied at Denver prices, freight added. A large stock of the best St. Louis Flour always on hand. Jones & Cartwright.<sup>12</sup>*

*Ferry Street. Those who think Ferry Street is 'played out,' should drop in at Jones & Cartwright's old stand—the immense brick warehouse, which has held more goods than any other in this country—and glance over the immense stock of staples there displayed. The old pioneer merchant, John S. Jones, Esq., who has done as much for the country as any man who ever 'struck' it, is there as affable as in the balmy days of '59, when he held the reins of the P. P. Express, and the heaviest mercantile company at Pike's Peak. Wholesale buyers remember the place.<sup>13</sup>*

The Civil War years brought most Jones' businesses to an end. His name rarely appeared in the Denver newspapers. After the war, his interests changed to such things as the "Fifty-Niners." The first meeting of this group consisting of gentlemen who lived in the Colorado Territory since 1859 met on June 22, 1866 in an East Denver court room at 7 1/2 o'clock. Among the 33 in attendance, the list included Daniel C. Oakes as president, E. R. Sopris, W. N. Byers, John Q. A. Rollins, and John S. Jones. Dues were one dollar. The official uniform for members was a black felt hat, black pants and belt, and a red flannel shirt with a silver "59" badge on the right breast.<sup>14</sup>

## Jones Pass

*Colorado and California Wagon Road. A meeting of citizens of Empire City convened this day, attached at the request of John S. Jones, President of the Colorado and California Wagon Road Company, the following proceedings were had: Mr. Jones stated that the object in calling the meeting was for the purpose of taking measures for the immediate completion of a wagon road*



United States Geological Society's Denver West 1:100,000 scale topographic map, 1983  
 Map of the Berthoud Pass, Vasquez Pass and Jones Pass Area West of Denver.  
 All Three Crossed the Continental Divide

*across the Snowy Range into the Middle Park.... [H]e had selected a few of our most competent citizens, who, with himself, had thoroughly examined a new pass, and found it a much easier grade than either Berthoud or Vasquez.... Also this new route would open a nearer communication with Breckinridge and Snake River than any other.<sup>15</sup>*

*Altitude by Boiling Point of Water, 12,400 Feet. In 1866 Mr. J. Jones with indefatigable energy, undertook to continue the road which is built six miles above Empire City on the main fork towards Vasquez Pass.... but whether it will be a success, or become a traveled route, is as yet undetermined, but is considered very doubtful. The route as located necessarily is much exposed to snow, and even in midsummer drifts were found from fifteen to twenty feet deep on the very route chosen.<sup>16</sup>*

Jones Pass is six miles west-southwest of Berthoud Pass. The 7.1-mile-long Jones Pass road, classified as a 4x4 road by the U.S. Forest Service, passes the Henderson Molybdenum Mine. The Jones Pass Tunnel, renamed the Gumlick Tunnel, carries water from the Williams Fork to the eastern slope.

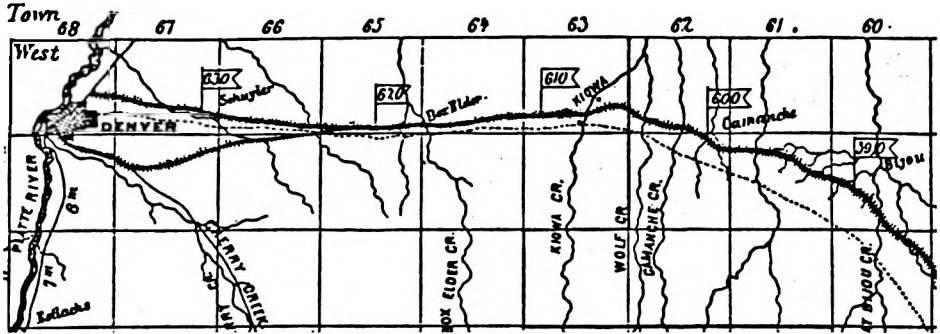
## Railroad Construction

The Kansas Pacific Railway, originally known as the Union Pacific Railway Company, Eastern Division, began construction west from Kansas City in 1862. As the railroad advanced westward, the freight wagon distance to Denver along the general route of the Smoky Hill Trail was shortened.

*Messrs. John S. Jones and L. F. Bartels, contractors, have some fifteen thousand ties in Platte Canon, which are to be delivered on the first ten miles of the Kansas Pacific, out of Denver. They propose, if permission is obtained, to attempt to float them to town down the Platte Water Company's canal.... If successful it would demonstrate to the Platte Water Company the value of their canal as a sort of cheap railroad, down which enough wood could be floated each summer to supply the city during the winter.<sup>17</sup>*

*Wanted—Teamsters and Graders, to Work on the Kansas Pacific. Work will commence between Kiowa and Bijou. Inquire of Jones & Armor.<sup>18</sup> Jones & Armor, contractors on the Kansas Pacific, have orders to commence work, and they advertise for more men today. They propose to begin on Monday next to Bijou [West Bijou, present day Byers], forty miles from town, and grade this way. They will shortly begin at three other points also—at Comanche [present-day Strasburg], five miles this side of Bijou; at Kiowa [present-day Bennett], eleven miles, and Lost Creek [West Sand Creek], fifteen miles. They begin with eighty teams and about 300 men. The road is located to within about fifteen miles of Denver; somewhere near Box Elder [present-day Watkins], and will not be located any farther this way until the company decides to come in near the fairgrounds or via Cherry Creek and West Denver.<sup>19</sup>*

*Located at Last.* Our Denver exchanges inform us that the junction of the Kansas Pacific and the D.P.R. [Denver Pacific Railroad] has been finally located 'near the fair grounds,' and this is about all they have to say about it.<sup>20</sup>



Courtesy Wesley Brown Collection

*A Section of an 1870 Kansas Pacific Railway Map Showing the Line of the Railroad East of Denver, 637 Miles from Kansas City to Denver. Note that the Company had not yet Decided on the Final Route into Denver. The North Route was Selected*

The railroad decided to build west to "Denver Junction," near present-day 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Race Street. Here it met the Denver Pacific's Cheyenne-to-Denver line. The Kansas Pacific followed closely present-day Smith Road.

The importance of the completion of the Kansas Pacific on August 15, 1870 was noted in the *Rocky Mountain News*, September 4, 1870:

*Colorado now joins hands socially, commercially, politically, with the East. We are no longer isolated. We belong to the nation and to the country. The Missouri River is no longer the frontier. Omaha and Leavenworth no longer preside over the great far west. There is a 'New West,' growing and prosperous, situated on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, of which Denver is the commercial queen, and for which the Kansas Pacific is now the grand highway.*

## The Coal Business

The Denver & Boulder Valley Railroad, on January 14, 1871, completed tracks from Hughes, now Brighton, to the coal fields at Erie. To commemorate this event the *Rocky Mountain News* ran the following headlines on January 25:

### THE RAILWAY EXCURSION.

Opening of the Denver and Boulder Valley R.R.  
Denver and the Coal Fields United by Railroad.

The new town of Erie and the Boulder Valley Coal Company.  
A Pleasant Ride—Speeches—Good Humor and a Flow of Wine.

The article continued with a list of thirty-six railroad and Denver officials on the excursion. One of the names was John S. Jones.

Four days later, the newspaper continued with a report on the coal:

*It is the best locomotive coal found in Northern Colorado, and will be mined extensively for the use of the Denver Pacific, Kansas Pacific and Boulder Valley railways. It will be sold in Denver at about \$5 per ton, the right of delivering it having been granted to John S. Jones, who is bound not to charge over sixty cents per ton for this service.*

## The Red Barn

*[John S. Jones] takes pleasure in informing his friends and the general public that he has just purchased the old Butterfield Corral, Cor. F [15th Street] and Wivatta Streets. where he has opened a Livery, Feed and Sale Stable. Grain of all Kinds and Hay Constantly on Hand. Coal Always for Sale. Also for sale a first class Railroad Grading Outfit, comprising everything necessary for a railway camp. J. S. Jones, Proprietor.<sup>21</sup>*

With the purchase of this new property, he again opened a large retail operation, the Red Barn.

*Fresh arrival of dressed hogs, always on hand, hams, shoulders and sides, dry, salt and fresh smoked hams; leaf lard in twenty and forty pound cans. Also, just arrived, a car load of corn and a car load of nails, assorted sizes. John S. Jones, Red Barn, F Street.<sup>22</sup>*

*Having completed a fine fire-proof brick warehouse, with railway tracks running alongside, raised platforms, and all modern improvements for hauling freight to the best advantage, I am now prepared to receive, store and forward freight of all descriptions, to any point in Colorado or New Mexico. Also, store and transfer to any point in the city. John S. Jones.<sup>23</sup>*

*I have just received two car loads of apples fresh from the orchard in Kansas. John S. Jones.<sup>24</sup>*

## Ranching and Farming

*For Sale: Thirty head of large American work oxen, with yokes, chains and wagons, on my ranch, fifteen miles up the Platte River, north side. John S. Jones.<sup>25</sup>*

*Enclosed Pasture for Stock—I will take in a limited number of horses to graze. Inside a good fence. Good grass and water. Terms, \$4 per month, or \$1 per week. Ranch 15 miles from Denver, up the Platte, in Jefferson County. Apply Jones and Streets' coal yard, Denver. John S. Jones.<sup>26</sup>*

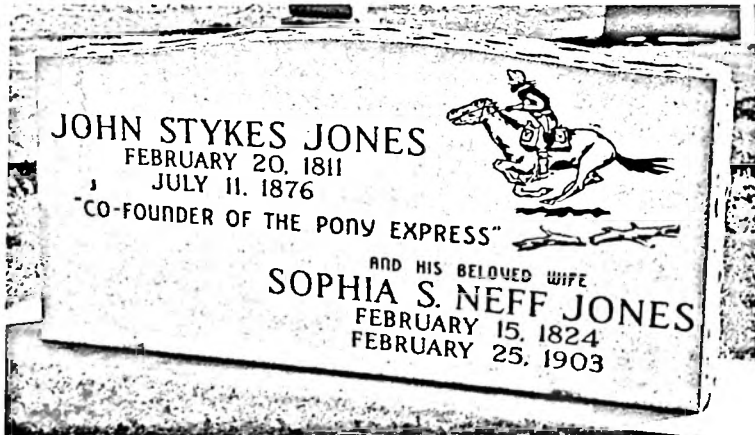
*John S. Jones, Platte Canyon. Wheat first rate; oats, barley and rye good; potatoes thin; hay fair in the valley of the Platte. Within the hog back crops not so good; his experiments with alfalfa is very satisfactory.<sup>27</sup>*

A trustee sale notice appeared in the *Denver Daily Times*, October 25, 1876. The Jones property was listed as being in Section 2, Township 6 South, Range 69 West. This parcel was just northwest of present-day Chatfield Reservoir.

### End of the Trail

Jones died July 11, 1876. His beloved Colorado Territory would become the State of Colorado twenty-one days after his death. He was buried at Riverside Cemetery, Block six. A new marker was placed in 1976 by his great-granddaughter Adelaide Field Donnelly.

The *Rocky Mountain News*, July 13, 1876 noted his cause of death: at the celebration of the Fourth of July he went to Denver and marched in the procession as a '59er. The change of water and diet added to the heat, brought on a violent diarrhea which caused his death.



Author's Collection

*John S. Jones is buried in Denver's Riverside Cemetery*



## Endnotes

1. *Rocky Mountain News*, July 13, 1876.
2. Raymond W. Settle, *Empire On Wheels*, Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1949.
3. *Leavenworth Herald*, March 26, 1859.
4. *Rocky Mountain News Weekly*, May 14, 1859.
5. *Ibid.* October 3, 1859.
6. *Ibid.* March 1, 1860.
7. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, February 10, 1860.
8. *Rocky Mountain News Weekly*, February 29, 1860.
9. *Ibid.* January 11, 1860.
10. *Ibid.* February 1, 1860.
11. *Ibid.* February 22, 1860.
12. *Rocky Mountain News*, April 24, 1861.
13. *Ibid.* July 11, 1862.
14. *Ibid.* June 23, 1866.
15. *Ibid.* June 29, 1866.
16. *Colorado Transcript*, May 29, 1867.
17. *Ibid.* March 30, 1870.
18. *Rocky Mountain News*, April 1, 1870.
19. *Ibid.* April 2, 1870.
20. *Colorado Transcript*, May 25, 1870.
21. *Rocky Mountain News*, November 6, 1870.
22. *Ibid.* January 27, 1871.
23. *Ibid.* July 19, 1871.
24. *Ibid.* September 5, 1871.
25. *Ibid.* September 31, 1870.
26. *Ibid.* August 15, 1873.
27. *Ibid.* July 31, 1874.



# Over the Corral Rail

*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed.  
Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

## The Charter Posse of the Denver Westerners

As the Denver posse celebrates its seventy-fifth year, we look back at that group of intrepid individuals who formed the charter membership of the posse. These men are recognized in the first issue of the *Brand Book*, published March 1, 1945:

Ed Bemis, editor, *The Littleton Independent*; secretary, Colorado Editorial Association

Herbert O. Brayer, State Archivist for Colorado; Director Western Range Cattle Industry Study

John T. Caine III, Director, National Western Stock Show; former professor of Animal Husbandry, Utah State College of Agriculture; promoter and publicist

Art Carhart, Office of Price Administration

George Curfman, M.D., physician-surgeon; Chief Surgeon, Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

Levette J. Davidson, Professor of Literature, University of Denver; author and folklore authority

Edward V. Dunklee, Attorney at Law

Robert Ellison, retired oil executive; one-time member of the Wyoming Historical Monuments Commission; collector of Western Americana

Thomas H. Ferril, poet, author and editor of the house organ of The Great Western Sugar Company

LeRoy R. Hafen, State Historian for Colorado; Executive Director, Colorado State Museum

Paul D. Harrison, Office of Price Administration

E. W. Milligan, Vice-President, Kistlers Stationery Store; lecturer of early Western history with illustrations

Lawrence Mott, Denver Public Library; engineer

Dr. Nolie Mumey, physician-surgeon; author and historian

Forbes Parkhill, Office of Price Administration; author, journalist

Virgil V. Peterson, Associate State Archivist for Colorado; geologist and archaeologist

William MacLeod Raine, noted Western story writer

Fred Rosenstock, book dealer; publisher

Charles B. Roth, author

B. Z. Wood, Professor of History, Colorado Women's College

Arthur Zeuch, printer's representative for Bradford Robinson; photographer.

Note: for you youngsters who don't remember World War II, the Office of Price Administration (OPA) was the federal agency responsible for pricing and rationing of essential goods.





## Westerners Bookshelf

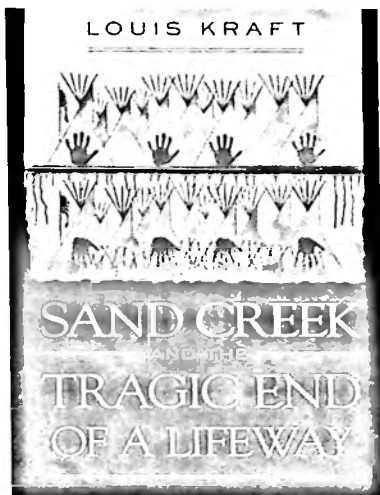


**Sand Creek And The Tragic End Of A Lifeway.** by Louis Kraft, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020. 430 pages. Maps, illustrations, endnotes, epilogue, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$34.95

The story of the last days of the Southern Cheyenne prior to confinement on reservations is powerfully sad. It warrants a complete presentation and critical evaluation of all surviving primary source documents. Unfortunately, many of those documents are ignored in Kraft's book. When primary source documents go contrary to Kraft's interpretation of events, he often dismisses them without good reason, or worse, ignores them.

One important source of primary source documents Kraft ignores comes from Indian deprecation claims. In presenting events prior to Sand Creek, Kraft leaves out important information. For example, in his coverage of the Camp Weld conference in Denver in late September 1864, Kraft wants readers to believe Territorial Governor John Evans was not interested in peace while the Indians were. During the conference Evans asked who killed the Hungate family on June 11. He was told a northern band of Arapaho led by Medicine Man and Roman Nose (not the Cheyenne Roman Nose later killed at Beecher Island) killed the family. Kraft then quotes interpreter Simon Whitely, who replied, "That cannot be true." (p. 187) He concludes: "The Whites had blamed the Cheyennes, which made Neva's statement [to Evans] unacceptable." Here Kraft ignores why Whitely told Evans he knew it was a lie: "Medicine Man ... had not been in this section of the country since the preceding September [1863]." Further, "Roman Nose was dead ... [and] Medicine Man was fighting the Snakes in Montana Territory" (Carroll, *The Sand Creek Massacre*, 407-408). Thus, Evans knew he was lied to. Perhaps Evans was being lied to because warriors addressing him were indeed responsible for the Hungate family murder. It was certainly true that Bull Bear, present at the council, led the raid on Plum Creek August 8 where eleven freighters were killed. Unquestionably, Major John Chivington bears blame for the atrocities that made Sand Creek a massacre. Kraft wants Evans to share blame, but to do so he misrepresents the documents.

Another example of poor presentation of original documents occurs when Kraft covers the Cheyenne raid in north central Kansas August 10-15, 1868, in which up to forty settlers were killed. A second raid in the same area two months later is not mentioned. He mislocates the first raid thirty miles west of where it occurred. It was those deadly raids that prompted the winter campaign that resulted in Black Kettle's death four years after



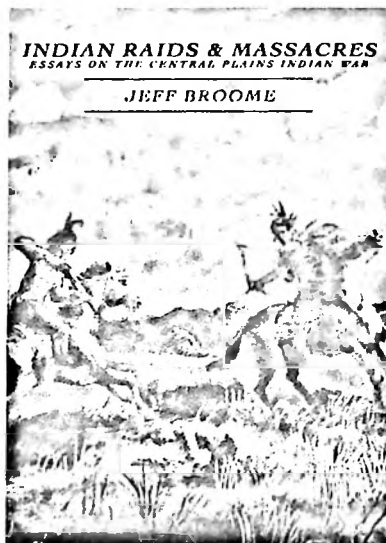
Sand Creek. Indian depredation claims would have benefited Kraft's presentation of this violent raid.

Brevity forbids further explication of Kraft's unsound interpretations of events, but there are numerous others. Despite this book's serious flaws, it should be studied, but with a cautious eye. The sad story of the final days of the Southern Cheyenne is still waiting for a proper and full account.

– Jeff Broome, PhD

**Indian Raids and Massacres: Essays on the Central Plains Indian War**, by Jeff Broome. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Press, 2020. 506pp. Footnotes, Bibliography, Index. Softcover \$24.95, Hardcover, \$34.95.

This is a very interesting book, with wide perspectives concentrated into a short period in Western history. Jeff Broome provides us with thirteen chapters that cover Indian attacks in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska, beginning with Indian massacres in Elbert County, and covers the period 1864-1869. Included are the Hungate Massacre, the Massacre on the Little Blue, the Eubanks Massacre, Plum Creek, the Fletcher sisters, Kidder, Dietemann, Clara Blinn, and perhaps most importantly, Susanna Alderdice, among many other accounts of rape, murder, killing of children and other brutalities, mostly by the Cheyenne.



Along the way, we visit famous characters like George and Libbie Custer, General Carr, Black Kettle, Tall Bull, James and Charles Moore, Buffalo Bill and Wild Bill Hickok. Also included are accounts of the battles fought at Summit Springs, Beecher Island and the Washita which makes for interesting reading.

What is impressive about these accounts are the details that Broome provides which are so effective in dominating the history of this period with great accuracy. Along the way he occasionally points out the fallacies in several historians' and writers' accounts. At times, however, he tends to be a bit repetitive, but it always fits the coverage he is providing.

The final chapter covers the archaeology of the Summit Springs site, which is what got him into the subject in the first place and the pursuit of what happened to Susanna Alderdice and where her grave might be. The account of the pursuit of trying to find her grave is fascinating. Highly recommended.

– Alan Culpin, BA, MA in Western History

**Colorado: Day by Day**, by Derek R. Everett, Louisville, CO: University Press of Colorado (co-published by History Colorado, Denver), 2020. 438 pp. Photos, endnotes, index. Paperback. \$26.95.

Professor Everett provides a delightful, spirited compendium of vignettes, both major and minor, that comprise Colorado's raucous history. The format of the book follows the "This Day in History" newspaper feature that Everett became intrigued with during his high school days at Arvada West High School. Since then he has been collecting and editing notebooks full of noteworthy events, both current and historical that make up the pioneer and modern story of the Centennial State.

The selected events occupy one calendar day each. Each calendar day gets an average of one page in the book leaving the reader to indulge at her/his own pace. Devoting a minute or two a day clears the selected events in a year. An hour clears a month. A leisurely sitting or two clears the entire book in less than a week. The serendipity of the selected events sets a lively pace—never boring, always interesting, well written.

Most of the chronicled events are familiar to even the novice history buff but occasionally, there is one of those "I didn't know that" moments. At least one event represents happenings in each of Colorado's sixty-four counties. Each ethnic group is represented multiple times. Consequently, *Colorado: Day by Day* is a fun book to read. As a History Colorado product, it is a very useful tool to enliven Colorado high school history classes. As bedside reading it may put a smile on your face and postpone sleep a bit.

— Dan Shannon

**We Who Work the West: Class, Labor and Space in Western American Literature**, by Kiara Kharptarian, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. 251pp. Index, Bibliography. Hardcover, \$60.00.

The author stipulates three elements of identity: how much money we make (class), what we do (labor), and where we live (space).

Through that prism, she examines several works of American literature. It seems she is sympathetic to working men and women, to native peoples, and the dispossessed. The "Anglo nation building" narrative presented by mainstream literature runs roughshod over and is inimical to those parts of the population.

Quite a few academic theories and ongoing arguments are brought to bear. It seems to this (admittedly non-academic) reviewer that she is merely confirming that the victors write the history. If one wants to learn the latest trends in analysis of literature, this is a book to read.

—Stan Moore

