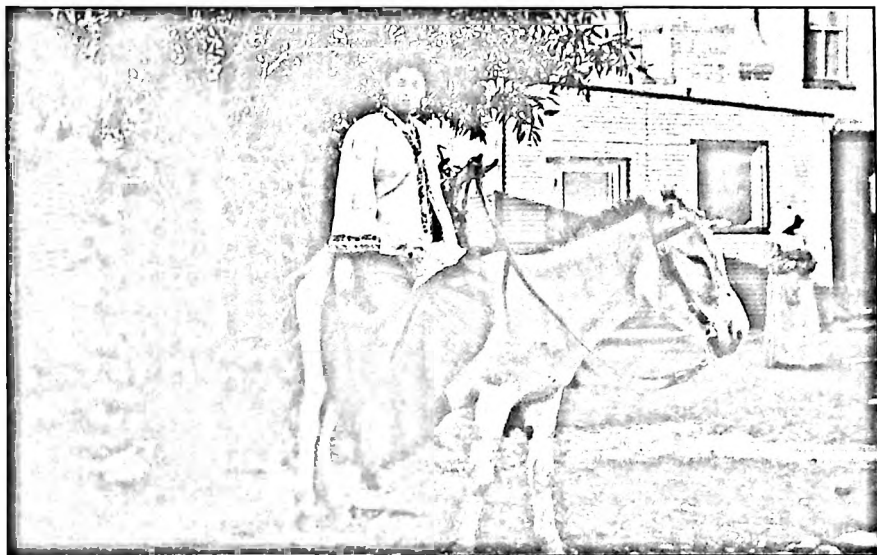




*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

January - February 2019



**Lady on a horse. Taken in the early 1900s of Laura Evens after her arrival in Salida. The parlor house she would eventually buy is in the background.**

**Finding Laura Evens**  
by Tracy Beach  
(Presented May 23, 2018)

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LXXV NO. 1



January - February 2019

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## Our Author

Tracy Beach is the author of *The Tunnels under our feet-Colorado's forgotten hollow sidewalks* (volumes one and two), *My life as a Whore-the biography of Madam Laura Evens*, *Frozen to the cabin floor-The biography of Baby Doe Tabor* and *Michael*, her first true crime biography.

Tracy, who was raised in Salida, Colorado, loves to seek out unusual legends and uncover their true story.

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**Picture next page: Laura and one of her older girls, posing next to the sign on the front door that read, "No girls."**

## Finding Laura Evens by Tracy Beach (Presented May 23, 2018)

As a lover of history and a native of Salida, Colorado, I was thrilled to discover that my home town once held not just one Parlor house, but an entire Red light district. The memory of Salida's painted ladies had been all but erased and now only existed in the memories of the town's elderly residents and inside a small, cardboard box in the basement of the town's library.

Set up on a high shelf and covered in a thick layer of dust, the shoe box was brought down for me to examine, and I wasn't disappointed. Lifting the lid, I discovered seven old photos, a small stack of papers and two books.

The book on the top was a small, hardback book with a red cover entitled *Brass Checks and Red Lights*,



by a man named Fred Mazzulla. "He interviewed Mrs. Evens's for this book, then never used the interviews," the Librarian informed me, as he handed me the tiny book.

I glanced only slightly at its pages, as I was more interested in the collection of photos, which I quickly grabbed. "This picture here was taken outside the front door

of her Parlor house, right after the city shut her down in 1949," the librarian explained, as he pointed at the photo in my hand. "She had to hang up that sign that said No Girls, to keep men from knocking on her door at all hours."

"Wait...I recognize these stairs," I announced, more to myself, as the librarian quickly filled in the blank spot in my memory. "Yeah, it's the Shriners' building on Sackett Street."

With a strong desire to learn

everything I could about the elderly woman standing on the building's front steps, wearing a stained house coat, I took the entire box of memories upstairs, popped dimes into the library's copy machine and soon headed out to my truck. I wanted to find this building.

Driving down Sackett Street, with only a picture of a staircase to guide me, I quickly found a match in a sad, two-story tall stucco building on the corner, with an unkempt dirt yard and suspiciously missing first-floor windows.

As I got out of my truck and began walking around the building, which was now embossed with a large Shriners' logo, I glanced back down at my small collection of photos. One of the pictures was of a young woman, up on a horse, with a small white dog in her lap and behind her was a row of one-story, brick apartments. Walking back to the front of the former Parlor house and standing in front of the steps, I looked across the street and noticed a set of one-story tall apartments, which appeared to be the same-time buildings in my picture, but covered in stucco.

"Can I help you with anything?" an older man asked, as he wiped his hands on his pants and glanced down at the picture I was holding. "Oh, I see you found an old picture of the cribs, before they were covered over with stucco. You know, this entire block was once owned by that woman sitting up on that horse, including our Shriner building right here."

Inviting me inside the former Parlor house, I was shown around the first floor, which was now one large empty room, full of tables and chairs, with a small kitchen in the back. At that moment I became so enchanted, that I was intent on learning everything I could about this woman.

To my surprise, my host Bob McCormick happily made me copies of the few papers he had regarding the building's previous owner, Laura Evens, also including her daughter's death certificate which gave me my first lead.

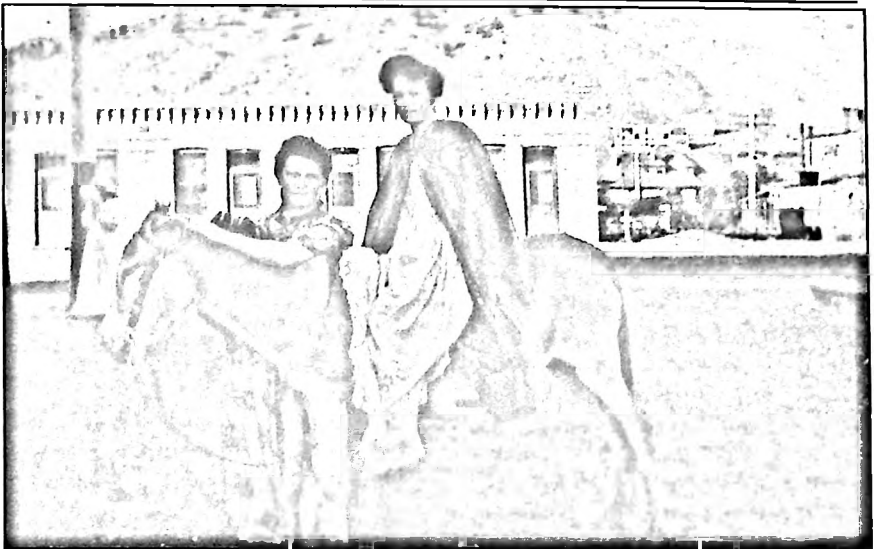
The certificate had been signed by a man named Dick Leppard, who listed his address as Salt Lake City, Utah. And with the help of the yellow pages and a few phone calls to confirm that he was related to the woman, I was soon packing up my two children in my truck and driving twelve hours to Salt Lake City, to meet Laura Even's family.

Around 6 pm and after an exchange of smiles and friendly handshakes, we were invited into Mr. Leppard's home which was decorated with numerous items that announced his intense devotion to the Mormon faith. A glass-doored hutch stood full of pint-sized Mormon Temples, while the walls of his living room and dining room were adorned with a painting of Jesus or religious scenes depicted in the Bible.

Following our host into the kitchen, we were greeted by a collection of boxes and a photo album. "Me and my brothers have very few items that belonged to our great-grandmother Laura, our grandmother Lucille, Laura's only child, rarely talked about her mother."

"What do you think about your great-grandmother?" I asked, as I carefully flipped through an old photo album full of pictures of young girls and the woman I now knew as Laura Evens.

"Well, I think she's great!" Dick laughed, as he pulled more items out of the boxes for me to see. "But knowing the story of how my grandmother was sent from foster home to foster home, then to an East



**A friend of Laura's named Jessie, in a white dress and black cloak, on a horse. Behind her are the cribs the girls lived in, that would later be stucco'ed. Early 1900s**

Coast boarding school, while my great-grandmother plied her trade, I understand why she had such hatred for her mother."

"Now, this photo album here was found among Grandma Lucille's things, after she went to the home, as well as this silver ladle and a diary you might be interested in," he announced, as he handed the tiny book to me. "My brother, who lives in Colorado Springs now, bought one of the large front windows, from Laura's Parlor house, from the Salida Museum. My niece has it now," he added, as he handed me a few old postcards, covered in pictures of young girls.

"You know, I was wondering what happened to all the front windows. The building just looks so odd without them," I added, as Mr. Leppard led me into his office to make photocopies of the diary pages. As we entered the

room, I noticed two oval photos of a young man and woman hanging up on the wall. "Oh, that's Grandma Lucille and my Grandfather William...hey, would you like a copy of these?" he asked, as he took them down from the wall and laid them face down on the printer. "Now, I can't let you take the photo album, but there is a Walmart just down the street and we can scan them if you like." I immediately answered, "Yes!"

While my children wandered around Walmart for almost two hours, both Mr. Leppard and I scanned the numerous photos into the photo machine and joked about how some of the prostitutes were beautiful women where others were quite ordinary looking.

"Is that a man in a dress?" The picture in question showed a slightly pudgy person, with either extremely

sagging breasts or none at all, wearing a shiny dress, while standing next to a chair. The shoes the person was wearing appeared to be a couple sizes too small and we both had the feeling that the model had been shoved into the footwear simply for the photo.

When we arrived back to Mr. Leppard's house, he showed the photo to his wife, who began to laugh. Confirming our suspicions, but with no name labeled, we all agreed to refer to the model simply as Mildred.

Only years later would I discover that the picture was of a woman, Lillian Powers. She was one of Laura's girls, and she remained friends with Laura for the rest of her life. Laura even helped her move into her own Parlor house in Florence, Colorado. Lillian was a husky girl, to say the least, who became huskier as she got older, but with the help of a local author, who had researched Lillian Powers, I was able to confirm that the person in the photo was indeed a woman.

After my biography of Laura was published, I had the privilege of doing a presentation of Laura's amazing life, inside her former Parlor house in Salida, Colorado. But with all the original first-floor walls gone and the staircase uprooted and reinstalled into the corner, against a wall, I had to be creative in my desire to recreate Laura's Parlor house.

Using a floor plan I had been privileged to obtain, I knew that the first floor held three of the girls' rooms off to the right side of the originally centered staircase, while the left side had held the parlor for playing cards or mingling. Taking blue painters' tape, I taped off the original location of the staircase onto the tile floor, as well as the three down stairs rooms, one of which contained a design element I was sure would shock everyone who saw it.



**Manly woman with short hair in a shiny dress. She is referred to as Mildred in the story**

Where the first two rooms were basic rooms, one of them provided a covert view of the street, which allowed the room's occupant to advertise her wares to men passing by along the street. The third room, closest to the bar, contained what was referred to as a viewing window. This large, interior window was originally covered, from inside the room, with a thick, velvet curtain, which could be pulled back to allow the guests at the bar to watch the going-on to help sell the effect. I was pleased to find an old sofa in a back room, which had originally belonged to Laura and positioned it in front of my recreated, taped-off window.

In regards to vintage furniture to fill my recreated, taped-off rooms, I

only had one cast-iron bed frame, which I chose to set up in the location of the first bedroom, closest to where a first-floor window would have been. Using an inflatable mattress on the bed frame, I covered the bed in old quilts and lacy pillows, while draping a 1920's pair of stockings over the foot rail, along with a vintage night gown and a pair of shoes at the foot of the bed. I also placed an 1897 trunk at the foot of the bed to finish off the look.

As an added help, the Salida Museum brought over a few items that belonged to Laura, such as an embroidered, Chinese house dress and a woven basket. On a long table, I also set up my handmade mannequin torsos, which were dressed in vintage outfits that dated from 1890-1940, including shoes; to help people understand that Parlor house girls wore the best clothing, not the shabby gowns you see in old Westerns, worn only by crib girls.

When the curious began filing into Laura's former Parlor house, to hear my presentation, I was introduced to numerous Salida natives who had known this unusual woman, wanted to share stories they had heard, or wanted to tell me how they themselves, visited her establishment as young soldiers returning home from WWII.

As the large first floor filled to capacity, with standing room only available to late comers, I began my presentation by introducing my special guests...Laura Even's Great-grandchildren.

Jim Leppard and his wife Kathy, from Eugene, Oregon, Dick Leppard and his wife Linda from Salt Lake City, and older brother Bill Leppard from Colorado Springs, all stood up from their seats and waved at the town's people, who gave them a wonderful round of applause followed

by the flash of cameras documenting their presence.

"Isn't it rather ironic that you are all here today, to learn about a woman your parents would cross the street to avoid. You should all be ashamed of yourselves!" Dick Leppard added, as the crowd laughed at his statement. "But seriously though, my brothers and I knew very little about our great-grandmother, but thanks to Tracy's dedicated research, we now know her history and why our Grandmother Lucille, Laura's only child, was such a miserable cuss."

"Now, I do want to add that this book gave my brothers and me a chance to get together again, after about ten years or so of being apart, so thank you, Tracy, for that." Bill announced, to a second round of applause.

"Can you tell us when you first found out about your great-grandmother?" a curious guest asked, as the group became quiet waiting for the answer.

"Well, I didn't find out the true history of my great-grandmother until I was an adult. Our dad said he wanted to protect us and our reputations. Now I'm a juvenile counselor and when I found out, Dad and I got into quite a disagreement about keeping family secrets," Jim announced, to the interested faces of the crowd. "But after I found out, my brothers and I headed down here to Salida. I was even able to purchase one of the front windows from the Parlor house, which I gave to my daughter."

"Now, our grandma Lucille, we called her Grandma Lu, didn't talk about her mother much. When we were all younger, Grandma Lu was living in one of the little apartments across the street here, which we later learned were the cribs the girls worked out of. We knew that her mother owned all these

buildings at one time, which Grandma Lu inherited when her mother died.” Bill explained, as a second hand was raised in the crowd.

“How did your grandmother explain all the buildings her mother owned?” a curious woman asked as the audience once again became silent.

“She told us she was a land lady, which isn’t really a lie. Laura did rent the rooms out to railroad men after the red light district was shut down in 1949, which is around the time that Grandma Lu and her new husband Alfred moved into one of the cribs.” Bill replied as he pointed towards the front door.

“Now, we have a question for all of you,” Dick announced with a smile, as the crowd sat up in their chairs just a little straighter. “We want to hear your stories of our great-grandmother.”

The audience was willing and came to light. Fred and Josephine Aluise had married in the late 1930’s, in an elaborate ceremony inside Salida’s Catholic Church. Dressed in an elegant white gown with a sheer veil covering her face, she was the essence of beauty and her soon-to-be husband dreamed of the life they would have together. As she walked down the aisle, Fred imagined a house full of children and perhaps even a son to play catch with.

Unfortunately, Fred’s wedding night took a unexpected turn, as his new wife felt that the act of love making was dirty and refused to let her husband ever touch her in that way again. Devastated, but not wishing to embarrass his new bride with a divorce, Fred asked his wife if he could, perhaps, visit one of the local brothels. She agreed.

Giving her husband \$4 a week, to buy “hot dogs,” Fred began visiting the girls at the numerous parlor houses down Sackett Street. His wife told him,

that under no circumstances, was he to ever tell her about any of his exploits, but he did need to wear a condom to prevent bringing home anything dirty.

As the years passed and with no children to fill their home, Fred spent his days working at his job, while his wife started a beauty shop inside their home, which she named Jo’s Beauty Shoppe. But surprisingly, despite refusing to do the hair of any of the local prostitutes, whom she considered filthy, dirty creatures, Josephine happily did the hair for the towns popular Madam, Laura Evens.

When the depression had hit their town in the 1920s, Laura had food baskets sent to poor families, paid children twenty-five cents each to pull out the tiny barrel cactuses in her garden and took in battered women and children, both of which earned her Josephine’s utmost respect.

As the years continued and both Josephine and Fred passed away, their home and personal belongings were divided up among their nieces and nephews, with their home going to their favorite niece, Jenifer, who herself followed in her aunt’s footsteps and ran a beauty shop of her own, lovingly preserved her Aunt Josephine’s possessions and loved finding interesting items that had belonged to her Uncle Fred.

Which is when she found the sealed-up coffee can. Helping her friend Doug find useful materials to use in the house he was building, Jenifer allowed him to dig through the old shed and garage in the back yard of the house. As they moved wood, old furniture, and tools, Jenifer stumbled upon an old coffee can hidden behind a cabinet.

As a lover of antiques, she eagerly snatched up the can, but with it beginning to get dark outside, she took



the can over to her friend since he had a flashlight. Removing the lid, the pair saw what looked like a pile of partially dried, sticky rubber strips. Always the curious type, Jenifer carefully stuck her hand into the coffee can and pulled out the pile of strange artifacts and laid it onto a nearby work bench. Grabbing his flashlight, Doug began moving the pile around with his fingers, until the pair realized what they had just discovered—condoms!

Getting over their initial shock, they counted them up and found almost fifty condoms inside the can before they returned them to their original hiding place. An interesting talk with Jenifer's grandfather revealed the truth about her aunt and uncle's unusual arrangement. "The funny part is, as Fred got older he would actually use the money to go buy hot dogs!"

Ray was a friendly sort of guy, but not into hot dogs. He loved filling people's ears with stories of World War II, as well as stories of the Parlor houses that used to line Salida's famous Sackett Street. When Ray returned home from the war, he was ready for some fun and he knew just where to go. As a child, he had been raised not to walk past First Street, as the next street was Sackett and decent people are never seen around the likes of "those women."

He recalled how he as a teenager would sneak down to Sackett Street, and watch the scantily dressed women dance down the street to wonderful music, that was blaring out of the open doors. Not allowed to hang out of the windows to entice customers, the women would instead open up the drapes and put on shows for anyone who passed by, including stupid teenage boys who would dare each other to run past the buildings when their parents were not around.



**Young prostitute in a dotted shirt and white skirt gives an example of how pretty some of Laura's girls were**

The story around school was that the Parlor houses were not officially open for the night until the red light came on, but Ray had heard stories of the women taking in young men during the day, if the rumors were true, that is.

But when he returned home from the war, he was finally brave enough to walk down Sackett Street, with his head held high and money in his pocket. It was just getting dark when he ventured down the street for the first time, as he wasn't sure if the story of the red light was true, but he soon discovered it was.

The first set of Parlor houses, which he saw on the left hand side of the street, were really just one large Parlor house split in half, with extra

cribs in the back. Cribs were like cottages that the women would rent from the Madams, so they wouldn't have to live inside the main house.

Ray had heard that Madam Laura Evens, who once owned the entire block, had sold the building during the depression, so she could have more money to help take care of the town's poor. But as he walked up to the split building, he noticed a heavy-set, older Negro woman sitting on the front steps. Making eye contact, he gave her a polite smile, which was returned with an action he wasn't prepared for.

Lifting up the front of her dress, she flipped her skirt back in forth, in a attempt to entice him.

Seeing that he wasn't impressed, she lowered her skirt, stood up and walked over to him. With a toothless grin, the older woman smiled at him.

Taking a step back, Ray politely refused the woman, who started to laugh, as she pointed towards the Parlor house. "I've got some pretty young things up in my house, if you care to take a look." With interested tilt of his head, he took the chance and followed the woman inside.

Walking into the Parlor house, he noticed a steep stair case up on his left and a small table at the foot of the stairs, which held a dish full of change. "That's for the delivery boys, in case we are all too busy to pay the tab when they arrive." She smiled, as she opened up a bottle of whiskey and took a swig. Wiping her mouth, she picked a silver bell off the table and shook it. "We have a customer!"

Feeling his nerves get to him, he fought the urge to run out, as the women started bounding down the steps. Slightly heavier than he was expecting and not as attractive as he

was hoping, the women were very scantily dressed in what appeared to be sheer lingerie. "Do you see anything you like? Only \$2."

With a tip of his hat and a lame excuse, Ray politely backed out of the Parlor house and headed down to Laura's. She was known for having the prettiest girls and he soon discovered that her girls were definitely worth the higher price of \$4.

Ted Argus' family had been friends with Madam Laura Evens since he could remember, but as a teenager he quickly learned that it had its drawbacks.

Laura had a rule, that in order for a teenage boy to engage in the provided services, he had to prove to her that he had become a man. And surprisingly, this was proven by playing a hand of poker with Laura herself.

Before she became a prostitute Laura had worked as a black jack dealer back in Cripple Creek, and loved playing cards. With a large card table in her parlor, she would allow teenage boys to come by after school for lessons on how to properly play poker. And once she felt that they could play the game correctly, the teenager played the game with Laura. If he passed, he was allowed to be with her girls, but not during the evening hours when the alcohol was flowing.

Ted remembered being in the house, doing odd jobs for Laura, when a classmate of his came down the stairs with a girl following close behind. "Hey Sparky, you didn't even make it thirty seconds. Here's your change." Handing the boy \$1 back, Ted watched as his classmate happily headed back up the stairs to find his next conquest.

Seeing the look on Ted's face, Laura walked up to him and put her hand on his shoulder. "I'm sorry son, but you know I can't let you be with



**Laura's parlor house after it was closed in 1949. The first floor windows were not removed until the 1950s after it was bought by the Shriners**

any of my girls. I promised your father."

"But you taught me how to play poker and I promise I won't tell him." Ted pleaded.

"The look on your face would tell him everything." Laura smiled, as she patted him on the arm. "Your face would give it away!"

Mr. Tuttle owned the trading post in Salida on F Street, which was the name of the town's main street. One day Laura Evens walked in with one of her girls and asked him advice on purchasing a hand gun, as it was the police chief's birthday and she wanted to get him something nice.

With the gift finally chosen, Mr. Tuttle wrapped it up for her and bid her good day. But as she walked out the door, Mr. Tuttle's eyes were on the prostitute that had accompanied the

Madam into his store.

She was an older, worn-out-looking woman with dyed red hair and a lot of makeup, who had lost her figure quite a while back. "You know," Mr. Tuttle told his wife with a shudder. "I can't believe people would really pay \$5 to sleep with that."

Agnes worked at Woolworth's, down on F Street and was accustomed to seeing the local prostitutes in her store. They were always very polite and friendly, as everyone knew that Laura would not tolerate rude behavior from any of her girls.

The one thing that always stood out for Agnes, was the amount of Vaseline the girls would purchase. "Gets kinda dry as the night goes on," the girls would explain to her, as she would ring up their purchases. "Kinda dry."

# 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 International 2018 Rendezvous and Gather

Since the formation of the first Westerners corral, Chicago, in 1944, and followed by the Denver Posse in 1945, Western history enthusiasts formed corrals all over the globe. Over 150 have been formed, and although some have become “dry camps” over half that number remain active today. WI was formed as the umbrella organization for the corrals, aiding in forming new corrals and assisting current ones, providing coordination and communication. From 1988 through 2017 its headquarters, the Home Ranch, was at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Now the Home Ranch resides in the Panhandle-Plains Museum on the campus of West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas.

Annually WI hosts a “Gather,” and the 2018 WI Rendezvous and Gather was held in September in Canyon, Texas. Over seventy Westerners from all over the western United States attended, exceeding expectations. Five members of the Denver Posse, Alan and Marcia Culpin, Bob DeWitt and Dorothy Merlo, and Ed Bathke, joined in. WI Chairman Dr. Bonney MacDonald presided over the Board of Directors meeting; a tour of the highly-recommended Panhandle-Plains Museum, led by former director Michael Grauer; historical presentations; a tour of Palo Duro Canyon; and culminating in a ranch banquet and awards ceremony at the Dove Creek Ranch.

Denver Posse members were recipients of two awards: Steve Friesen, second place in the Philip Danielson Awards for his Sept. 2017 presentation “I am not a Savage”; and John Monnett, the Co-Founders Award for best non-fiction book by a Westerner in 2017, for *Eyewitness to the Fetterman Fight*.

At this Rendezvous it was decided to have hosting the Annual Gather alternate between WI and the various corrals. Canyon, Texas, will be the site for 2019, and the Pikes Peak Posse is saddling up to host the 2020 Gather in Colorado Springs.

All Westerners are encouraged to visit the web site [westerners-international.org](http://westerners-international.org), for more information on WI, a list of all active and inactive corrals, their quarterly publication, the *Buckskin Bulletin*, and more. The *Buckskin Bulletin* was formerly mailed to members, but these interesting and informative issues are now online, including a twelve-year archive.



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Frederic Remington: A Catalogue Raisonne II**, edited by Peter Hassrick. University of Oklahoma Press, 2016. 312 pages. Photos, illustrations, footnotes, bibliography, index. Hardback, \$75.00.

This hefty book is superbly illustrated and filled with enough useful content to amply justify both its weight and cost. A cooperative effort between the University of Oklahoma Press and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, it is their second Remington catalogue raisonne, adding to a two-volume set published in 1996. Between this current publication and that earlier set, readers now have access to nearly everything they want to know about this remarkable artist.

The essays in the book are thoughtfully written by leading scholars of both Remington's work and that of other artists of the West. It opens with a short analysis by editor Hassrick of the various copies and fakes of Remington's work. While this might seem like a strange place to begin, it shows that Remington, a sometimes authentic and sometimes inauthentic copier of life in the West, was himself copied.

The second chapter examines the relationship between Remington and Willam F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, both of whom created visual narratives of the American West. One created his narrative on canvas and the other "under the canvas," as writers of the time referred to Buffalo Bill's Wild West. In addition to its analysis, the essay provides useful information on each of these two influential players. As a Buffalo Bill enthusiast, I found myself most delighted by this particular chapter.

The third chapter deals with Remington's relationship to his contemporary Howard Pyle, who wrote and illustrated books using the mythologies of earlier times, like tales of King Arthur and Robin Hood. Interestingly enough, these mythologies were frequently alluded to in both writing and illustrations of the Old West, which drew parallels between the two eras. This essay also ties together Remington, Pyle and N.C. Wyeth, who all were prolific contributors to America's Golden Age of Illustration from 1850 to 1925. It was an age when illustration helped establish both the myths and realities of the American West.

The following chapters including other essays which examine Remington as a "sportsman artist," an illustrator of horses and horseman, and as a painter striving to depict a heroic past only recently vanished. Remington even spent some time in Taos, which become the focus of the next wave of Western artists like Georgia O'Keefe and Ernest Blumenschein.

The book is lavishly illustrated with paintings and illustrations by Remington as well as period photographs and works by related artists. The second half of the book focuses on selected works by Remington. As the second catalogue raisonne about Remington (both edited by Hassrick) this section of book presents a

compendium of some of his lesser known paintings and illustrations. This section was very enjoyable to peruse but as a historian I found the essays to be the most helpful part of the book.

*Frederic Remington: A Catalogue Raisonne II* is a beautiful book that will fill a significant spot on anyone's coffee table. More importantly it also presents thoughtful and new perspectives on the American West's best-known and influential artist.

--Steve Friesen

**The Black Hills Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge**, edited by Wayne R. Kime. University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, paperback edition published 2017. 274 pp. Photos, footnotes, bibliography, index, maps, \$24.95.

In May 1875 Brigadier General George Crook ordered Colonel Richard I. Dodge to lead a detailed exploration into the Black Hills as a follow-up to George Armstrong Custer's highly publicized preliminary investigation. Custer reported the presence of gold in paying quantities, unleashing a flood of illegal miners into Sioux treaty lands. Dodge was tasked to confirm or deny the reports of gold and to provide an in-depth assessment of the Hills' true value, which could be used in negotiations with the Lakota. Custer's earlier exploration had spanned barely a month, while Dodge would spend nearly six months, working closely with highly trained scientists. Dodge followed much of Custer's route, and praised him for his ability to navigate the difficult terrain. Later, however, he criticized Custer's mapping skills.

Dodge was the great nephew of Washington Irving. His genealogy may account for the colorful clarity of Dodge's writing. His journals present an exceptional account of the difficulties encountered by military forces transiting rough, unexplored country in the nineteenth century. Dodge provides especially vivid descriptions of the work performed by his pioneer companies in bridging streams and clearing roads. He expresses his concerns over supply and logistics problems encountered on such a lengthy, complex journey. Yet he never fails to relate the joys he experienced bivouacking in such a pristine wilderness.

At times Dodge seems almost obsessed with hunting, and his descriptions become a bit overwhelming. The most complete descriptions of his actual work were contained in his letters and reports to General Crook, many of which the book also includes.

Dodge's journals were never intended for publication. As such they contain harsh, candid characterizations of several individuals. For example, Dodge was ordered to cater as much as possible to the needs of Walter P. Jenny, who headed the expedition's scientific team. Jenny appears to have been an incredibly egotistical and difficult partner. Dodge chronicles an intense degree of friction between them.

Dodge provides extremely accurate, vivid and colorful descriptions of all of the areas his party explored. Having spent considerable time in the Hills myself, I found the book to be extremely informative and entertaining.

--Dennis Hagen

**Lakota Performers in Europe, Their Culture and the Artifacts They Left Behind** by Steve Friesen with Francois Chladiuk. University of Oklahoma Press, 2017. Hardback, \$39.95

The initial concept of this book apparently arose from a chance meeting between author Steve Friesen and collector Francois Chladiuk. A collector of Native American artifacts, Belgian Chladiuk had come into possession of artifacts that had survived from the 1935 Brussels International Exposition. Fifteen Lakota Indians spent eight months demonstrating aspects of their culture before the estimated twenty million visitors that attended the exposition.

In the first part of the book Friesen does a great job with an overview of the history of Native American performers in Europe. His background as the former Director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave near Golden, Colorado, gives him a unique insight into the subject. Buffalo Bill of course was responsible for opening the door for hundreds of native performers to be allowed to leave the reservation. The paternalistic nature of the reservation system preferred to keep the Indians safely confined learning how to be "capable citizens" with a proper work ethic. For their part the Native performers welcomed any opportunity to escape the monotony of the reservation as well as the chance to earn some extra money. In Belgium in 1935 the male Indian performers received \$30.00 per month, accompanied by their wives, \$55.00 per month, each child worth an additional \$5.00 per month. In 1925 the Superintendent of the Pine Ridge Reservation estimated 500 to 1500 Lakotas were performing off the reservation both in and out of the United States. The irony is that the vast majority of the patrons of the various "Wild West"-type shows had seen less of the world than the "savages" they came to see perform.

The second part of the book deals with the 157 artifacts that had come into the possession of collector Chladiuk. The artifacts include beautiful examples of beaded vests, moccasins and many other items. The objects had originally been collected by August Hermans at the 1935 exposition. This is much more than just a collection of Chladiuk's beautiful photographs of the artifacts. Chladiuk has done a very impressive amount of collecting ephemera that actually shows the collected artifacts being worn by the native performers during the 1935 exposition.

Friesen does a wonderful job of then telling the story of Chladiuk's search for the descendants of some of the original performers, the Littlemoon family of Pine Ridge, S.D. This book is much more than a beautiful addition to a coffee table, it tells the story of a family re-uniting with an important part of their past. It is highly recommended.

--Ray Thal

**Gold Mountain Turned to Dust, Essays on the Legal History of the Chinese in the Nineteenth-Century American West**, by John R. Wunder. University of New Mexico, 2018, 225 pp. Tables, graphs, endnotes, index. Paperback, 29.95.

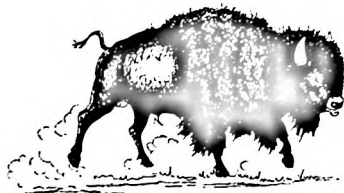
Although the title provides no indication of what the book is all about, the subtitle gives a good description of what to expect. During the nineteenth century about half a million Chinese immigrants settled in the American West. They provided a vital labor source for employers engaged in mining and railroad construction due to their ethic of hard work, willingness to take on any type of work, and the general absence of bad habits when not working. They were thanked by earning low wages, being subjected to judicial and social discrimination, and suffering widespread violence. The first two chapters of the book describe these conditions while the remaining eight chapters focus on notable legal cases involving Chinese in California, the Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest.

Chapters 1 and 2 present a good overview of violence against Chinese and the legal excuses for doing nothing about it. During the nineteenth century, 153 racial outbreaks (often called riots) occurred where predominantly whites attacked the Chinese, beating thousands and killing 143 of them, burning their homes, and driving them out of the town or mining camp with a total of 10,525 being displaced. Whites were rarely arrested for causing the trouble. Colorado had five outbreaks with the 1880 Denver riot being the most noteworthy, thanks to the anti-Chinese rhetoric printed in the *Rocky Mountain News*. Sing Lee was killed and damages to Chinese property were estimated at \$50,000. The rioters arrested for the killing of Sing Lee were acquitted, thus following the typical scenario.

The remaining eight chapters summarize key court cases that provided the foundation for marginalizing the Chinese and denying them the legal rights guaranteed to whites. The court proceedings are not presented in legalese and thus are readable and interesting. For the most part the outcome of the court cases only subjected the Chinese to blatant anti-Chinese prejudices and “some of the worst forms of legal and extralegal racism during the nineteenth century.”

*Gold Mountain Turned to Dust* helps fill a gap in the history of Chinese in America. This misunderstood ethnic group made critical contributions to building a nation despite a legal system that manipulated the existing laws to prevent the Chinese from receiving many of the privileges of living in this democratic country. John Wunder’s book is a good read not only for its addition to the nineteenth century history, but for its pertinence in dealing with related issues in the twenty-first century.

--Rick Barth

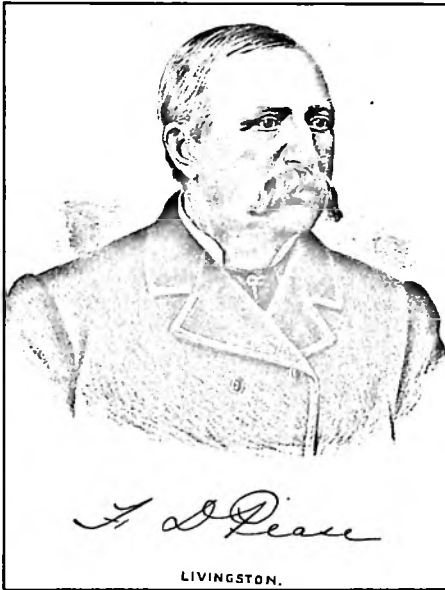






The DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

March - April 2019



Pease about 1880



Brisbin

**Major Brisbin's Fort Pease Relief:  
Humanitarian Action or Commercial Boondoggle**  
by Dennis Hagen  
(Presented April 24, 2019)



## Our Author

Dennis received a BA in Political Science in 1968 from the University of North Dakota prior to serving with the U.S. Air Force. Attaining the rank of captain, Dennis received a Bronze Star Medal in Vietnam. He earned his Master's in History in 1972 from Colorado State University. After several years as a restaurateur and national sales director for a small company, Dennis obtained a Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Denver at the age of 58. He became an archivist with the Denver Public Library's Western History and Genealogy Department.

For nine years, Dennis managed the World War II 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division archives, one of the largest special collections of its kind in the country, railroad history, 19<sup>th</sup> century military history and Indian wars history. In 2015, Dennis received the Posse's prestigious Rosenstock Lifetime Achievement award.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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## **Major Brisbin's Fort Pease Relief: Humanitarian Action or Commercial Boondoggle**

**by Dennis Hagen**  
**(Presented April 24, 2019)**

Nearly 200 enlisted men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Cavalry exercised the soldiers' ancient right to complain, cursing creatively as their horses plunged through bitter cold toward the frozen banks of the Yellowstone River on February 22, 1876. With the warmth of their Spartan Fort Ellis barracks fading behind them, most were but vaguely aware of their assignment to lift a siege, and to relieve a garrison at some remote place named "Fort Pease."

Struggling over the ice and snow, some must have wondered, "what was Fort Pease? Was it a military post? Was it a supply depot?" Few could have realized that with their mission's completion, Fort Pease would become simply another abandoned fur trade post, occupying ground seemingly cursed due to its long and painful history.

For almost seventy years ambitious men had attempted to establish successful trading posts at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Big Horn Rivers. All had failed.

Manuel Lisa made an initial attempt with the establishment of "Fort Raymond" shortly after the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1807, but the post was soon abandoned.<sup>1</sup> Montana's first "Fort Benton," named for Missouri's larger-than-life senator and established in 1821, represented a second venture. Less than two years later it was also abandoned.<sup>2</sup> In 1823 "Fort Henry,"

locally known as the "Big Horn Post," opened briefly, and survived less than one year.<sup>3</sup>

Samuel Tulloch,<sup>4</sup> enjoyed slightly more success, establishing "Fort Cass," a post named for Secretary of War Lewis Cass, though locally known as "Tulloch's Fort." The post endured from 1832 until 1835 during a state of near-total warfare between the American and Rocky Mountain Fur Companies when it, too, was abandoned.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-two years passed before Alexander Culbertson established "Fort Sarpy," which briefly captured the Crow trade from 1857 until its abandonment in 1860.<sup>6</sup>

Blackfoot depredations contributed to most of these failures, but by the mid 1850s, Lakota warriors had begun to displace the Blackfoot, introducing new complications into the area.<sup>7</sup>

Major Fellows David Pease undoubtedly understood these dynamics as he targeted this oft-contested confluence for an even more ambitious venture during the spring of 1875. He believed that recent American settlements at Bozeman and Helena had altered the playing field, suggesting that the confluence would finally yield its long-sought financial rewards.

Pease also had an ace or two up his sleeve. Or so he believed.

Pease was born in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, March 16,

1834, the eighth of fifteen children. His ancestors fought under Cromwell during the English Civil War, escaping to the American Colonies with the monarchy's return. At age ten Pease moved to Steuben County, New York, where he lived until he was eighteen. Moving to Wisconsin, Pease learned to trade with the Chippewa, and in 1854 he assisted with a survey to correct the boundary line between Iowa and Minnesota.

Pease arrived at Fort Union, Dakota Territory at the mouth of the Yellowstone in 1856. In 1859, he married a mixed-race Crow woman, Margaret Wallace. Her white father, John Wallace had become an honored Crow warrior. The couple produced nine children.<sup>8</sup>

In 1861 Pease began a serious exploration of the opportunities offered within the Yellowstone Valley. His business interests soon spread from Fort Benton to Fort Sully. He organized a fur trading company called the "Little Opposition," that merged with the Northwest Fur Company in 1863, and later successfully bought out a portion of the American Fur Company.

In 1868 Pease became a special Indian Agent for the United States government in Montana's Blackfoot country and in 1870 was appointed agent for the Crow Indian Agency at Fort E.S. Parker, located near present Livingston, Montana, where he served until 1874. His service as Indian Agent carried an honorary title of "Major," a title Pease happily retained upon completing his government service.<sup>9</sup>

Pease spoke fluent Crow and learned the local sign language.<sup>10</sup> He showed such sympathy and

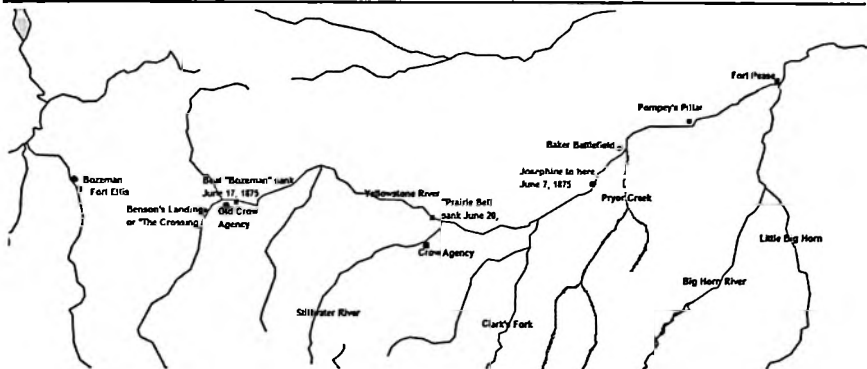
consideration in his dealings with the Crow that they adopted him into their tribe in May 1920 shortly before his death.<sup>11</sup>

His credentials certainly seemed more than adequate for his latest risky undertaking.

In the spring of 1875 Pease launched his plan to monopolize trade with his adopted people, the Crow, and to establish "Big Horn City," an enterprise which he expected to capture the commerce of the Yellowstone Valley much as Fort Benton had done along the Missouri. A wagon road already connected the fledgling town of Bozeman to the Rosebud River, and the government had created Yellowstone National Park in 1871.<sup>12</sup> There were plans to relocate the Crow Agency much further east to simplify supply and provide military protection.<sup>13</sup> Each of these factors suggested the inevitability of military operations



**Gen. Philip Sheridan**



to remove the troublesome Sioux, a step that Pease believed would yield incredible opportunities for whomever controlled the Yellowstone-Big Horn River confluence.<sup>14</sup>

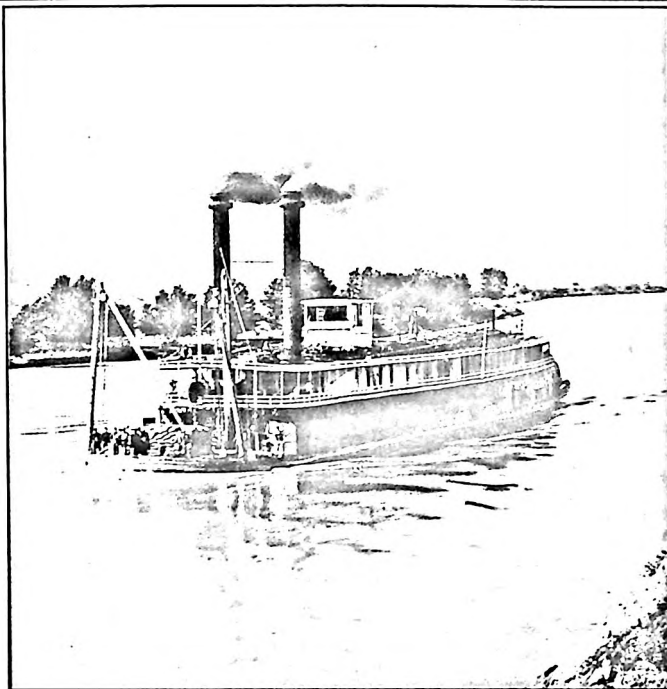
Pease felt his main “ace” lay in General Philip Sheridan’s insistent demands for forts along the Yellowstone. Although Congress had steadfastly refused appropriations, the forts appeared to be inevitable. Constructing and supplying these forts promised a commercial bonanza well worth almost any gamble. Steamboats, not ox trains, would build and support these posts.

In the spring of 1875, Pease’s plans received a substantial boost when the Coulson Packet Company placed the steamboat, *Josephine*, with its skipper, Captain Grant Marsh, at Sheridan’s disposal to explore the upper Yellowstone River. Sheridan ordered his aide, Lt. Col. James W. Forsyth, and the president’s son, Lt. Col. Fred Grant, to accompany the *Josephine* and to conduct a detailed military reconnaissance of the area. His orders explained that:

*It may be necessary, at some time in the immediate future, to occupy by a military force the country in and about the mouths of the Tongue River and the Bighorn. You will therefore make especial examination of these points with this view.<sup>15</sup>*

On May 26, 1875, the *Josephine* began churning up the Yellowstone from Fort Buford under Grant Marsh’s steady hand. The boat’s contingent included “several professors of the Smithsonian Institution, bent upon scientific research,” as well as Custer’s pathfinder, Lonesome Charlie Reynolds, an escort of seven officers, 100 enlisted men, four mounted scouts and a Gatling gun.<sup>16</sup>

The *Josephine* reached the mouth of the Big Horn River early on the morning of June 2. At that point the Big Horn spanned fully 150 yards wide. Despite facing the Big Horn’s powerful discharge,<sup>17</sup> Marsh, in accord with Sheridan’s instructions, forced the *Josephine* up the Big Horn, advancing but a scant twelve miles. Obstructions



**The Josephine**

led Forsyth to declare that point to be the head of navigation, confirming earlier assumptions that the Big Horn could not become a commercially viable route. Of course, Grant Marsh did successfully open the river to the mouth of the Little Big Horn and beyond with the steamer *Far West* in June 1876 following Custer's defeat.

Upon returning to the Yellowstone, Marsh forced a passage upriver to Pompey's Pillar, where he carved an inscription: "Josephine, June 3, 1875."<sup>18</sup>

Near Pryor's Fork and Major Eugene M. Baker's 1872 battleground, the expedition met a large group of Mountain Crow, reputedly the

wealthiest Indians on the continent. Their vast pony herds and the quality of their robes underscored Pease's desire to expand and control their trade. The belligerent Crow assured Forsyth that they would whip the Sioux if they would only stand and fight.

Despite reaching a point well above Pompey's Pillar, Forsyth's dispatch to Sheridan named the mouth of the Big Horn as the head of navigation, and recommended the mouth of the Tongue as a suitable location for a military post.<sup>19</sup>

Meanwhile, Pease and his principal associates, Zadok H. (Zed) Daniels and Paulinas W. (Paul) McCormick advanced their plans. In

addition to capturing the Crow trade, Pease had convinced himself that up-river trappers would also be forced to ship their goods from the confluence, and he was determined to be there first.<sup>20</sup>

On Saturday morning, June 5, 1875, Pease departed his ranch with six men, two days before the *Josephine* had reached her high point near Pompey's Pillar. On a flat boat loaded with some 4,000 board feet of lumber they floated nearly twenty miles down the Yellowstone. Tying up at the "Crossing," known as "Benson's Landing" near present Livingston, Montana, they constructed two additional mackinaw boats while awaiting additional members of the expedition who arrived from Bozeman eleven days later.<sup>21</sup>

Their cargo included a small cannon, referred to as the "Big Horn Gun," which a party of prospectors brought to the area in the fall of 1870. The weapon had been used against the Sioux during a road-building expedition in 1874.

An election formalized Pease as the expedition's leader, with McCormick and Daniels serving as under officers. According to the *Bozeman Avant Courier*, Pease made a stirring speech followed by the firing of the Big Horn Gun.

Pease had hoped to negotiate a truce with various factions and had proposed a meeting with the tribes for June 15, 1875. However, the expedition's delayed departure scrapped the meeting.<sup>22</sup>

Pease's optimistic flotilla comprised three small boats: the flagship, *Bozeman*, the *Maggie Hoppy*

and the *Prairie Belle*. Twenty men rode the boats while seventeen more traveled overland. The two groups camped together each night for security.<sup>23</sup> Included within the group were several men who would later scout for Custer like George Herendeen, Muggins Taylor and Samuel Shively.<sup>24</sup>

In what might seem almost a comedy of errors, bad luck struck literally within thirty-five minutes of the fleet's departure from Benson's Landing when the *Bozeman* struck a snag and quickly sank. Although the boat's occupants managed to swim ashore, the party lost nearly a full day making repairs and salvaging what could be pulled from the river.<sup>25</sup> The Big Horn Gun along with most of the party's rifles and ammunition were retrieved by diving.<sup>26</sup>

Three days later a similar mishap occurred when James Crane piloted the *Prairie Belle* into a drift pile opposite the Crow Agency near the mouth of the Stillwater. The boat was repaired and most of the cargo reclaimed. The party also requisitioned an abandoned boat found at the site and continued downstream.<sup>27</sup>

On June 24 the party landed on the north bank of the Yellowstone about three miles below the confluence with the Big Horn.<sup>28</sup> Pease had noticed Grant Marsh's marker blazed on a cottonwood tree as his rag-tag squadron drifted downstream, confirming for him once again that the mouth of the Big Horn lay comfortably within range of steamboat navigation.<sup>29</sup>

As the men debarked, they immediately spotted Lakota warriors lurking on the nearby bluffs.<sup>30</sup> These warriors were recuperating from an

intense three-day battle with the same group of Crow warriors that had recently met the *Josephine*. The Crow, who had arrived in the area to confer with Pease as requested, had been driven away.<sup>31</sup>

Construction of the Fort Pease stockade began June 25. The post probably occupied an area approximately 100 feet square, though some descriptions suggest that it may have been larger. The outer walls comprised six log huts, connected by a palisade wall that defined the stockade. Two bastions stood at opposite corners facing the northeast and southwest.<sup>32</sup>

With work on the post well in hand, Pease and George Herendeen departed for Fort Buford. Pease continued east to Pennsylvania, where he sought additional investors to support his venture.<sup>33</sup> Herendeen returned to Baker's Battleground to guard vital supplies that McCormick had cached there.<sup>34</sup>

Vigorous Sioux attacks near Fort Pease commenced almost immediately. Forty warriors killed one man and wounded another on July 10 near the mouth of the Stillwater.<sup>35</sup> Another attack occurred about a mile from the post on July 12. McCormick submitted a plea for help that was prominently published in the *Bozeman Times* under the enthusiastic letterhead, "Big Horn City, M.T." McCormick's letter graphically described how his horse had been shot from under him and how a man named Edwards had been hit by seven bullets and scalped within full view of the fort.

Several adventuresome Bozeman residents responded to McCormick's plea by constructing a 24-

foot boat, appropriately christened the *Rescue*. As the boat floated past Pryor Creek, hostile Sioux fired on it, but did no serious damage. Five days later as the *Rescue* approached Fort Pease, it promptly capsized and sank.<sup>36</sup>

A further Indian scare occurred on July 20 when a band of Indians fired on the fort from long range. However, a few rounds from the "Big Horn Gun" soon put them to flight. A trapper was wounded on August 28 and a small engagement in October saw another man wounded.

Generally, however, from mid-July through mid-December, life at the post became relatively quiet. Supply boats routinely plied the waters between Bozeman and Fort Pease keeping the small post's garrison well-provisioned.<sup>37</sup> Things had become so calm, in fact, that in early November, Paul McCormick optimistically published the following notice in Bozeman's *Avant Courier*:

*We have on hand a well selected stock for Hunters, Trappers and Miners. Will purchase all kinds of Furs, Peltries and raw skins at the highest market price. Parties contemplating coming to this country may rely upon finding everything needed for outfitting. Fort Pease, November 1, 1875 P.W. McCormick, Newman Borchardt, Agents*<sup>38</sup>

The November calm changed dramatically in December when the post's occupants turned to wolfing to sustain themselves through the winter. Wolf pelts brought generous bounties. Wolfers generally relied on strychnine-



laced meat for harvesting pelts, causing wolves to die quite violently. Even the friendly Crow objected to these methods, convinced that poisoned buffalo carcasses ruined the grass and drove surviving buffalo away.<sup>39</sup> Still, wolf skins promised profits to offset earlier setbacks, and the garrison settled in to await the river traffic they were certain would develop in the spring.

Hostile Sioux warriors returned in mid-December to attack a party of trappers in a skirmish that lasted seven hours. On the morning of December 15, they also attacked three wolfers above Fort Pease, killing one.<sup>40</sup>

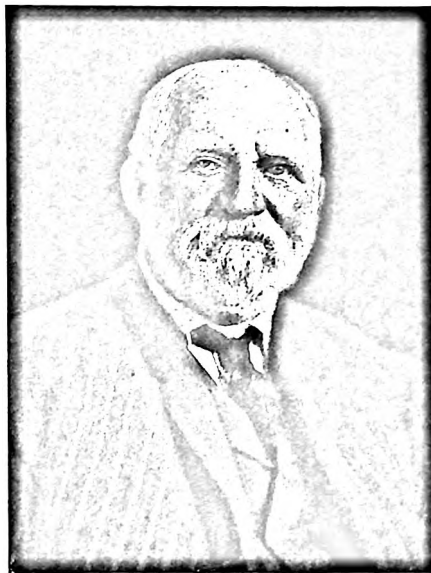
Five men were wounded during an attack by the Sioux on January 2, 1876. Bear Wolf, a friendly Crow chief quickly joined the fray by attacking a Sioux village on the Tongue River. Returning to Fort Pease around January 8, his warriors ambushed eight more Sioux, killing seven. Another wolver was killed on January 29 and the stockade fell briefly under siege.<sup>41</sup>

Crow Agent, Dexter E. Clapp alerted the Army to these incidents in a report to Secretary of War, Belknap: *CROW AGENCY, Mont., January 10, 1876. SIR: I write a line in much haste to inform you that the reports that come to me make it evident that a considerable body of Sioux are in the vicinity of the Big Horn. They seem to be scattered in small parties.*

*Two white men have been killed by them near Fort Pease lately, and another wounded.*

*A Crow who has just come in reports that they are moving in this direction.*

*The Crow Chief "Bear Wolf" tracked a party of eight*



*J. D. Pease*

#### Fellows Pease in later years

*to Fort Pease came on to them as they were watching the place, and killed six or seven. I am, very respectfully, yours,*

*DEXTER E. CLAPP<sup>42</sup>*

Following their successful ambush, the victorious Crow made a courtesy call at Fort Pease. A warrior named Medicine Raven extended a hand from under his blanket to shake hands with Paul McCormick, whom the Crow called "Yellow Eyes." As McCormick grasped the hand, Medicine Raven casually turned and walked away leaving a dumbfounded McCormick holding the severed arm of a recent Sioux casualty. McCormick later confided to Chief Plenty Coups that this

tasteless joke had left him badly shaken and nearly sleepless for two nights.<sup>43</sup>

As the fighting once again escalated, several men abandoned the post. A February 10 article in the *Bozeman Times* reported that seventeen men had just arrived in Bozeman from Fort Pease claiming that almost continuous fighting had occurred throughout the month of January.<sup>44</sup>

On February 14 McCormick also slipped away from Fort Pease during a blizzard, reaching Bozeman on the 18th. There he swore out an affidavit that grossly exaggerated conditions at the post, hoping to force military assistance from Maj. (Bvt. Brig. Gen.) James Sanks Brisbin, who commanded nearby Fort Ellis. An angry delegation of Bozeman's citizens also confronted Brisbin.<sup>45</sup>

Brisbin had acquired the sobriquet, "Grasshopper Jim" based upon his outspoken enthusiasm for Montana's agricultural potential.<sup>46</sup> He had just arrived to take command of Fort Ellis and was certainly in no shape to lead a relief column. Army surgeon Holmes Paulding later referred to him as "...the 5th wheel of a coach.... He can't ride a horse & goes booming along in a spring wagon away out of sight."<sup>47</sup> Brisbin, who was only thirty-eight years old suffered from rheumatism, which required him to use crutches. He would die at the age of fifty-four.<sup>48</sup>

Responding to the uproar, Brisbin apparently bypassed his superior, Col. John Gibbon, who commanded the district of Montana at nearby Fort Shaw, and directly telegraphed Department Commander, Gen. Alfred Terry seeking permission

to mount a relief expedition.<sup>49</sup> When Brisbin's telegram arrived, Lt. Col. George Custer was coincidentally at Terry's headquarters reviewing plans for the coming spring campaign against the Sioux. Custer had been stranded in St. Paul by a severe snow storm while attempting to return to Dakota Territory's Fort Abraham Lincoln from a leave of absence in New York.<sup>50</sup>

Terry immediately authorized Brisbin's expedition. His prompt action may have reflected embarrassment over his inability to field a Dakota column to cooperate with Crook's Wyoming expedition.<sup>51</sup> In short, with operations currently stalled by storms in Dakota, Terry undoubtedly found authorizing Brisbin's relief column more appealing than doing nothing.<sup>52</sup>

Brisbin feared his column might be too small to venture so deeply into hostile territory, so he requested assistance from Agent Clapp.

The first military operation of the Great Sioux War moved out on February 22, 1876, with Companies F, G, H, and L of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry. A twelve-man detachment from Company C, 7th Infantry, under 1st Lt. William Quinton, furnished a 12-pound Napoleon gun and a Gatling gun. Brisbin's total strength comprised fourteen officers and 192 enlisted men. Fifteen citizens from Bozeman tagged along and wagons carried rations and grain sufficient for thirty days.<sup>53</sup> Bozeman's citizen contingent included Paul McCormick, Zed Daniels and Muggins Taylor, all of whom had been members of the original Fort Pease garrison.<sup>54</sup>

Brisbin's command marched between fourteen and twenty-two

miles each day for the first five days. On February 27, near the mouth of the Stillwater River, twenty-five additional citizens and thirty Indians from the Crow Agency swelled his ranks.<sup>55</sup> The following day twenty-four additional Crow augmented the expedition.

On March 1, 1876, the column paused near Baker's battleground, where they conscripted George Herendeen and another wolfer. Herendeen bitterly protested Brisbin's order to join the column, but to no avail.<sup>56</sup> Near the mouth of Pryor Creek, several horses of Company G broke through the ice while being watered. Three horses, two Indian ponies and a mule drowned, providing the expedition's only significant casualties.<sup>57</sup>

Upon reaching Fort Pease on March 4, Brisbin's scouts discovered five Sioux war lodges near the mouth of the Big Horn River. They estimated that these lodges could have sheltered as many as sixty-two warriors.<sup>58</sup> Brisbin rested his men in camp at Fort Pease on March 5. He reported that of the post's original cadre of forty-six men, six had been killed, eight wounded and twenty-one had previously left the fort. He reported finding only "eighteen white men and one negro" at the fort.<sup>59</sup>

A.F. Ward, a soldier serving in the 2nd U.S. Cavalry, in his 1904 recollection provided a colorful description of events at Fort Pease during this period:

*Arriving at Fort Pease the little frost-bitten command went into camp about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Scarcely had the tents been pitched when stock foraging expeditions had already*

*been started out and one Ingram who was noted for his detective qualities had somehow or other found his way into the cellar of the stockade and had discovered a barrel of "red Liquor" and had returned to the tent taking a couple of camp kettles with him – one in each hand proceeded to relieve the barrel of its contents or a part of it at least and it was not long before the boys in camp Custer [sic] had proceeded to use the antidote for frost bites and when a lively time ensued in camp but it was soon discovered by our officers that the men had found their way into the wine cellar of the post trader and had already relieved one barrel of its contents and not wishing to have the rank and file use quite all of this antidote they proceeded to store it away in a more secure place.<sup>60</sup>*

Ward claimed to have driven the wagonload of whiskey during the return trip to Fort Ellis. Naturally, the kegs did not survive the trip, their contents being rather ingeniously pilfered by troopers who eventually found themselves in the guard house as a reward for their creativity.<sup>61</sup>

Several of the "rescued" men from Fort Pease denounced their evacuation as unnecessary. Undeterred, Brisbin's men loaded "all the valuable property belonging to the men at Pease and took it to the mouth of Stillwater, where there is no danger of hostile Indians at present, and unloaded it."<sup>62</sup> Upon leaving the fort an American flag was raised as a gesture of defiance to

the Sioux.<sup>63</sup>

Hoping to gain useful intelligence for Sheridan's upcoming campaign against the Sioux, Brisbin dispatched a small scouting party to observe the mouth of the Big Horn as the soldiers departed, believing a Sioux camp was near. The scouts found no sign of hostiles.<sup>64</sup> Extreme cold and lack of forage required several animals to be shot on the return trip, limiting Brisbin's additional scouting options.<sup>65</sup>

For six days the return trip to Fort Ellis proved uneventful and the column again averaged fourteen to twenty-two miles per day. On March 14 Brisbin placed Captain Edward Ball, (Company H, 2nd Cavalry) in command and hurried back to Fort Ellis. While crossing Boulder Creek, Brisbin's ambulance broke through the ice throwing him into freezing water. He arrived at Fort Ellis somewhat the worse for the wear two days ahead of his column. The expedition covered 398 miles, 208 on the outward march and 190 on the return.<sup>66</sup>

William Y. Smith, who joined the expedition from the Crow Agency, provided an appropriate epitaph:

*The occupants of the fort concluded to evacuate the place, though some reluctantly, as they believed they could hold their position until spring boats arrived. Some claim their situation had been misrepresented and speak harshly of those who created the excitement. No Indians seen [here] since January 29 and they had no fear of them in the fort. They could walk out at any time, but could not pack three barrels of whiskey.*

*The relief is a farce, a wild goose chase.*<sup>67</sup>

Indian Agent Dexter Clapp added his criticism, charging that Brisbin's expedition had simply been a favor to the Bozeman merchants who supplied Fort Ellis.

Holmes Paulding, who later served with Gibbon's Montana column, wrote a letter from Fort Pease several weeks after the evacuation confirming that no Indians had disturbed the post:

*Our orders are now to stay here and fortify the place and wait further supplies &c, which will keep us in this miserable hole for from thirty to forty days. The old stockade makes a pretty good corral for our stock, none of it having been burned except one building. . . Our camp is just outside the stockade on a sage brush alkali plain full of carcasses, old skins and other filth from the previous occupants of the place, and it will be a wonder if they don't get typhoid fever when the rains begin.*<sup>68</sup>

Gibbon's soldiers found the flag still flying. The post's only occupant was a greyhound, apparently abandoned when Brisbin removed the traders. The dog seemed overjoyed to see humans again.<sup>69</sup>

And thus ended the opening military action of the Great Sioux War of 1876.

The relief of Fort Pease can certainly be viewed as an unnecessary military expedition based upon the near absence of additional hostile Sioux activity after January 1876. Yet

in view of earlier Sioux belligerence it could also be viewed as a reasonable, life-saving precaution. Casualties inflicted by Lakota warriors argued for a protective military response, while numerous witnesses suggested the expedition had been an unnecessary exercise designed simply to recover traders' property at government expense.

Wherever the truth lies, Fort Pease as a commercial enterprise clearly never developed the way Fellows Pease originally envisioned. He badly underestimated the strength and tenacity of the Sioux. Angry warriors had fought Baker to a standstill in 1872, after all, and had twice skirmished with Custer in 1873, suggesting that Pease should have anticipated more trouble from them than he did.

Pease correctly anticipated that freighting for Forts Keogh and Custer would provide a bonanza. During 1878 alone, steamships transported over 12,000 tons of government freight to these forts.<sup>70</sup> But locating his "Fort Pease" north of the Yellowstone was also a mistake. Terry's Landing and Junction City, the facilities that eventually handled the bulk of early freighting for Fort Custer, were both located on the south side of the river and once Fort Custer became well established, steamboats regularly bypassed the site of old Fort Pease, churning up the Big Horn to the actual site of the fort itself.

Pease knew that support for military action to remove the Sioux would provide vast commercial opportunities. But it was the railroad, not steamboats, that ultimately won the day. Commerce could not be confined

by the limited access provided at the Yellowstone's head of navigation as Pease had assumed. Technology moved too quickly, and Pease Bottom quickly surrendered to Billings, destined to become Montana's largest city. Economically, cattle ranching, agriculture, coal mining and minerals all quickly displaced fur and Indian trade.

In the end, after playing its limited role in the Great Sioux War, Fort Pease became simply one more ambitious dream, chased and abandoned in its turn.

Fellows D. Pease continued to play an important role in Montana's history, serving in turn as General Manager of the Livingston Coal Company, Director of the Bozeman Coal Company, and president of the Wills Smelting and Mining Company, of Cook City. In November 1883 he served as a delegate to Montana's Constitutional Convention. He died at Lodge Grass, Montana, October 20, 1920.<sup>71</sup>

Today, the actual site of Fort Pease has been lost to the vagaries and the wanderings of the Yellowstone. No substantial monument exists, yet its approximate location is accessible, though residing on private property.<sup>72</sup> In 2010 a small but intrepid group of CBHMA explorers, including the author, sought to locate the old post. After fruitlessly raising dust up and down various dirt roads, serendipity shined as we stumbled upon the site's owner almost by accident as he worked his fields. He graciously invited us to visit his home to view the small, bronze marker placed years earlier near his front door by the Montana Historical

Library. His wife further explained that today Fort Pease rests peacefully under a swampy bog, almost completely forgotten, a short distance to the south.

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- <sup>17</sup> Joseph M. Hanson, *The Conquest of the Missouri: Being the Story of the Life and Exploits of Captain Grant Marsh*, (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1909), 214
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- <sup>20</sup> Brown, *Plainsmen*, 221.
- <sup>21</sup> McLemore, *First Settlement*, 19.
- <sup>22</sup> Algier, *Crow and Eagle*, 331.
- <sup>23</sup> McLemore, *First Settlement*, 19-20.
- <sup>24</sup> John Gray, *Custer's Last Campaign: Mitch Boyer and the Little Bighorn Reconstructed*. (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 117.
- <sup>25</sup> McLemore, *First Settlement*, 20-21.
- <sup>26</sup> *History of Montana*, 405.
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- <sup>28</sup> Edgar I. Stewart, "Major Brisbin's Relief of Fort Pease," Paul L. Hedren, ed., *The Great Sioux War 1876-77*:

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<sup>34</sup> *Montana History*, 405.

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<sup>54</sup> Gray, *Last Campaign*, 129.

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<sup>57</sup> Stewart, "Brisbin's Relief," 118-119.

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<sup>60</sup> Richard E. Jensen (ed.) *The Settler and Soldier Interviews of Eli S. Ricker, 1903-1919*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 121.

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<sup>66</sup> Stewart, "Brisbin's Relief," 120.

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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.*

## Westerner Presentations

In March the Colorado Corral enjoyed a lively presentation by Denver Westerners past sheriff Steve Friesen, "Great Plains Crossings: the Oregon Trail, the Pony Express, the Indians... and Buffalo Bill," as he told how these four inter-related themes play critical roles in the stories, and the romance, of the American West. Another Denver Westerner, Mark Barnhouse, filled the Colorado Corral's April schedule with his popular program, "Lost Department Stores of Denver." Mark refreshed the memories of the audience, adding many interesting details. For those wanting more, his book of the same title was available.

The rich history of the Colorado Springs streetcar systems was presented by John Haney, with his program "Pikes Peak Trolleys, Past, Present and Future," at the March meeting of the Pikes Peak Posse. John is the co-author, with Morris Cafky, of two books, on the Pikes Peak trolleys and the Pueblo "Steel Town" trolleys. He brought the history up-to-date with the current activities of the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum and Restoration Shop. In April the Pikes Peak Posse received the delayed program on the Florissant Fossil Beds, presented by a volunteer of the National Park Service, Lloyd Lacy. His presentation featured the restored 1870s homestead in the monument, including the fascinating history of its inhabitants, from their eastern United States migration, to Denver in the 1860s, to present-day reunions of their descendants.

## Lincoln County Indian Raids 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Posse member Jeff Broome provides the following information. He is a speaker at the anniversary activities. The 150th Anniversary of the Lincoln County Indian Raids is scheduled for May 31 and June 1. If you plan to attend please make your reservations for the motor coach tour of the historic sites soon. If you have questions, please contact Bud DeArvil at [bud.dearvil@gmail.com](mailto:bud.dearvil@gmail.com) or the Lincoln County KS Historical Society at [lchs@eaglecom.net](mailto:lchs@eaglecom.net) or 785-493-3003. The mailing address of the museum is: Lincoln County Historical Museum, PO Box 85, Lincoln, Kansas 67455, and its web site is [lincolncohistmuseum.com](http://lincolncohistmuseum.com).

## Buelah Historical Society

Part of the Westerners' activities is interacting with like-minded organizations. Programs for the Beulah Historical Society are, in March, Ed Bathke presenting "The Anthony Gold Regions Stereoview Set of 1868 and other Colorado Photographs of the 1860s," and in April, a presentation on the Hungates by Jeff Broome.





## Westerners Bookshelf



**1889: The Boomer Movement, the Land Run, and Early Oklahoma City**, by Michael J. Hightower. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2018. 328 pp. Map, photos and illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, index. Paperback, \$24.95.

Native Oklahoman Michael Hightower clearly loves his city and state, and in *1889* he ably explores the unusual circumstances that created both. Hightower, who bills himself as an “independent historian and biographer,” has a Ph.D. in sociology and a family history in real estate and banking (he has also produced a two-volume history of banking in Oklahoma). In this book he weaves together the stories of the Native Americans to whom the federal government had promised land in perpetuity, “for as long as the grasses grew and the waters ran,” with those of Kansas farmers who coveted that land to further small-scale agriculture in the Jeffersonian tradition, Texas cattlemen who drove their herds north across that land to Kansas railheads, eastern railroad tycoons who viewed that land as their own last frontier in creating a national rail network, and various Washington politicians who aligned themselves with one or more of these groups. Oklahoma’s genesis is unlike that of any other western state - it truly was the last frontier, Alaska notwithstanding.

Hightower tells the story from the beginning, several decades before the famous land rush, describing the immediate post-Civil War period when in 1868 politicians debated the morality of leaving alone the land that eventually became Oklahoma, in control of Native Americans, versus opening it to Euro-Americans who could make what many considered “better” use of it. The author successfully straddles both sides of this argument, clearly sympathizing with the original inhabitants of North America and condemning their maltreatment, while also understanding the desires of, and admiring the efforts of, men like “Father of Oklahoma” David Lewis Payne, who led numerous unsuccessful and illegal incursions into Indian Territory in effort to build momentum for white inhabitation of it. It is to Hightower’s credit that he shows such empathy for both sides of a historically contentious issue.

He has no use, however, for the elite businessmen of that era, the wealthy cattlemen and the railroad millionaires like Jay Gould. Throughout the book he uses the shorthand “Gilded Age” to refer to a set of economic and social factors that conspired against both the small Jeffersonian farmers who participated in the land rush and the non-white people, Native American and African American, who had no place in the new order crafted by the elite. The repeated use of this phrase, with little in the way of larger American context, is one of the book’s few weaknesses, although readers should be familiar the term. Those unacquainted with Oklahoma history might also like clearer definitions of the terms “Boomer” and “Sooner.” Overall, however, *1889* is a valuable addition to general Western history

and Western urban history, providing the reader with an excellent grounding in the topic. And, whether the author intended to do so or not, the story of Oklahoma's earliest settlers gives valuable context to understand the current state of Oklahoma's politics.

--Mark Barnhouse

**Out Where the West Begins, Volume 2, Creating and Civilizing the American West** by Philip F. Anschutz. Cloud Camp Press, 2017, 348 pp. Portraits, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$34.95.

The second volume of *Out Where the West Begins* follows the format Philip Anschutz established in the first volume that paid tribute with short sketches about business leaders. In this volume he covers almost twice as many people. Like the first volume this one is heavily weighted with stories of white men. There are a few profiles of African American men, some Spanish explorers, four American Indian leaders and a handful of women among the hundred people chosen to represent the creation and civilization of the American West.

Largely lost in the telling of this tale is the fact that the attempts to "conquer" this land meant taking it away from perhaps 10 million people who had lived on the land for thousands of years. Anschutz notes that Helen Hunt Jackson's *Century of Dishonor* did "raise awareness of U.S. policy regarding American Indians and served as catalysts for future generations" at time when such a stance was very unpopular. But he confuses Jackson and Patricia Nelson Limerick referring to Jackson as having written *A Legacy of Conquest*. It was, of course, Limerick's landmark work that has been called a "revisionist take on the American West."

For the serious historian there is little new ground broken here. Some readers might be introduced to new names, but the themes are very predictable. A couple of minor errors are repeated throughout this and the previous volume. When referring to the entertainment that Buffalo Bill was presenting across the country and eventually around the world as his "Wild West Show." It was properly referred to as Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Often it was "Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World," but never a "Wild West Show."

--Roger L. Dudley

**Texas Rangers. Lives, Legend and Legacy**, Bob Alexander & Donaly E. Brice. University of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas. 2017. 650 pages, index, bibliography, notes, photographs. Hardcover, \$34.95.

Bob Alexander, with the aid of Donaly Brice, has produced an excellent history of the Texas Rangers, from their founding in 1823, to the present. With the use of Colorful Texas Western language, he skillfully covers every aspect of their history, organization, changes and development.

The Texas Rangers are famous for their ability to deal with enormous challenges. Faced with Mexican Bandits, murderous Indians, and violent White outlaws, they handled themselves competently and generally to a very high

standard. The very occasional lapses are also documented in the book.

Their start came when Stephen Austin made a plea for a ten-man ranger group in 1823. Indian attacks were the order of the day in the early period, and the Rangers set out to subdue them, which, with the help of the U.S. Infantry and Cavalry, they did, but it took a long time, essentially ending in Palo Duro Canyon in the mid 1870s. Many cases are listed, such as the 1839 Battle of the Nueces, and the failure of the Comanche to return captives resulting in the Council House Fight.

Then there was the problem of Mexican Bandits such as Juan Cortina who raided across the Rio Grande, killing settlers and stealing cattle and goods. Along the way, the various Ranger companies had to deal with murders by White outlaws, especially in the Western counties and Panhandle.

Details of the make-up of the Ranger companies, including the names of men who served, and who died, are include, along with problems created by the lack of State money, resulting reductions of the force. Accounts of famous names, like Captain Leander McNelly, Captain Bill McDonald, Captain John Rogers, and others provide fascinating insights into the challenges they faced.

Alexander and Brice bring the story up to date, with accounts of re-organization, new training methods, the development of scientific skills, the story of the Branch Davidians in Waco, The Republic of Texas fight, and other accounts of problems in the twentieth and twenty-first century. It is a fascinating subject covered superbly by an expert on the subject along with his assistant, and is highly recommended.

*--Alan Culpin*

**They Called Him Buckskin Frank: The Life and Adventures of Nashville Franklyn Leslie**, by Jack DeMattos and Chuck Parsons. University of North Texas Press: Denton, 2018. 239 pp. Photographs, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Although he was one of the "Wild West's" most colorful characters, very little has previously been unearthed to document either Leslie's birth or death. The authors state in this present work, in fact, that "nothing is really known of Nashville Franklyn Leslie's first twenty-seven years that can be supported with documentation." Based on this dearth of information, only four short and very limited biographical sketches precede this volume.

The bulk of what can be documented relating to Leslie's life revolves around his extraordinary adventures in and around Tombstone, Arizona during the 1880s. The authors assert, for example, that Leslie was every bit Wyatt Earp's equal as a gunfighter, and during the 80's undoubtedly surpassed the legendary marshal in terms of notoriety.

Leslie's impact in Arizona also surpassed that of many other well-known characters. Leslie partnered in one of the largest cattle ranches in the territory. He located numerous copper mines, served as a scout during the Apache Wars and frequently as a posse member. Though not a gambler, he held financial interests in various saloons.

Severe head wounds precipitated the onset of what Leslie called “insane impulses.” He shot and killed a woman with whom he had been living, resulting in a life sentence in Yuma Prison. Eventually pardoned based on his early accomplishments, Leslie’s adventures continued into the twentieth century, prospecting in Alaska and Mexico, and marrying for a third time.

Leslie’s death is still shrouded in mystery. The authors present numerous, conflicting scenarios, concluding that Leslie was most likely murdered in October 1927, though the case was never solved.

For those seeking additional colorful background to events and personalities related to Tombstone, this book is a must-read.

--Dennis Hagen

**Across the Continent: The Union Pacific Photographs of Andrew J. Russell**, by Daniel Davis. University of Utah Press and Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 2018. 195 pp. Photographs, catalog of Russell’s images, notes, index. Paperback, \$24.95.

Andrew J. Russell was described by the book’s author as “an ordinary man caught up in extraordinary events.” Russell was modest, unassuming, and rarely given credit for his work. But what he did was document an extraordinary event, the building of the Union Pacific’s section of the transcontinental railroad. Several of the most iconic photos of the construction, including “East and West Shaking Hands at the Meeting of the Rails,” were made by Russell.

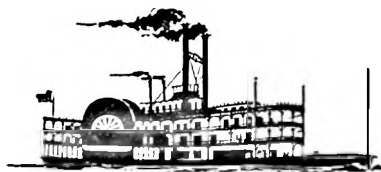
Contrary to the book’s title, the Union Pacific’s segment of the transcontinental railroad was from Omaha to Promontory Summit, Utah. The majority of Russell’s work was concentrated in western Wyoming and eastern Utah in 1868 and 1869. His over 1,000 images taken during these years concentrate on the skilled and unskilled laborers who made the railroad happen.

Departing from the book’s primary theme of UP photographs, the author has included topics such as Russell’s Civil War images, his later work at *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, and the general rise and decline of Western photography after 1870.

The author’s job as a photographic curator makes him highly qualified to track down all available Russell images. The book’s catalog of over 900 images shows the diversity of Russell’s work.

The year 2019, the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad, is the perfect time to rediscover Russell and the railroad laborers who made the completion of the undertaking possible.

--Lee Whiteley





*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

May - June 2019



*Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society*

**The four captives rescued and brought to Denver September 28, 1864. This picture includes Danny Marble on the right, captured August 8, at the Plum Creek Massacre. On the left is Ambrose Asher, with Laura Roper holding Isabella Eubanks**

**Massacre Along the Little Blue, August 7, 1864**

**Part One**

**by Jeff Broome**



## Our Author

Jeff Broome is a fifth-generation Coloradan, his family first coming to Colorado in 1859. Born in Pueblo, he received an MA at Baylor University and a PhD at CU, Boulder, both degrees in philosophy. He has written three books, *Dog Soldier Justice* (2003); *Custer into the West* (2009) and *Cheyenne War* (2013). He has been published in six *Roundups*; a chapter in six books; five feature articles in *Wild West*; three in the *Research Review of the Little Big Horn Associates*; three in the *Papers of the Annual Symposium of the Custer Battlefield Historical & Museum Association*; two in the *Journal of the Wild West History Association*; one *Brand Book* with the English Westerners as well as *Greasy Grass*, *Journal of the Indian Wars* and *Journal of America's Military Past*. Jeff has received six national and international awards for his publications, including twice for First Prize, Philip A. Danielson Award of Westerners International, 2012 and 2014. After thirty-two years as a Professor of Philosophy at a Colorado community college, Jeff is now retired and living in Beulah, just a few miles from his great-great grandfather's 1860s homestead.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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## Massacre Along the Little Blue, August 7, 1864

### Part One

by Jeff Broome

Deadly Indian raids along the roads to Denver through south-central Nebraska Territory, beginning August 7, 1864, prompted territorial Governor John Evans to issue his call for the Third Volunteer Colorado Cavalry—to enlist for one-hundred days to quell a now-undeniable Indian outbreak.

Evans earlier had been warned by all his Indian agents working in the field with the various tribes—as early as 1862 but frequently in 1863—that the different village chiefs, consisting of both Northern and Southern Cheyenne, Northern and Southern Arapaho, various bands of the Lakota Indians, specifically the Oglala and Brule, had made a pact among themselves to act friendly when trading with the white man, but only trade for arms and ammunition, and when enough was collected, the war would begin.

The most quoted warning came from a man named Robert North, dated November 10, 1863. North reported:

*The Comanche, Apache, Kioways, the northern band of Arapahoes, and all of the Cheyennes, with the Sioux, have pledged one another to go to war with the whites as soon as they can procure ammunition in the spring. I heard them discuss the matter often, and the few of them who opposed it were forced to be quiet, and were really in danger of their lives. I saw the principle chiefs*

*pledge to each other that they would be friendly and shake hands with the whites until they procured ammunition and guns, so as to be ready when they strike. Plundering to get means has already commenced; and the plan is to commence the war at several points in the sparse settlements early in the spring....<sup>1</sup>*

Governor Evans feared Colorado Territory would encounter similar violence as was experienced in Minnesota in 1862.<sup>2</sup> Believing it was soon to occur—and the large plundering of stock that commenced in the spring of 1864 convinced him that North's statement was indeed true—Evans was unable to convince higher authorities to authorize a regiment of territorial pioneers to protect the frontier. That changed when the raids in Nebraska Territory came to his awareness. Those raids proved Evans was correct in his prediction of an impending Indian war. Later that fall, an officer's report out of Nebraska Territory claimed "... all that is necessary to obtain peace with the Cheyenne and Sioux is to crush some of their large winter encampments out of existence, when feeling the power of our arms, they will submit...."<sup>3</sup> How ironic this report was written on November 29, just as the Sand Creek affair was unfolding.

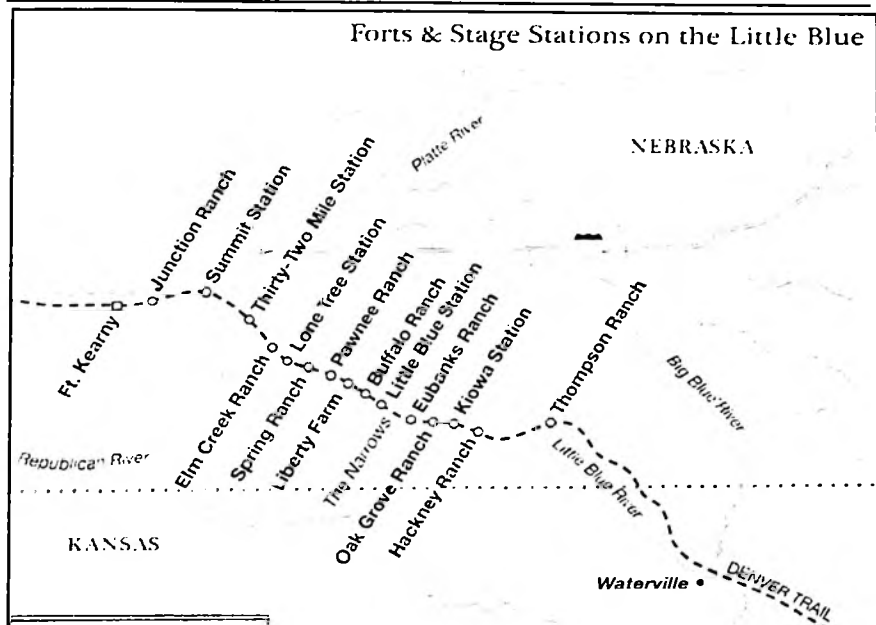
The raids on August 7 covered

an area anywhere from 100 miles to as much as 250 miles, from roughly present-day Fairbury, Nebraska to the Colorado border near Julesburg. The Indians, perhaps as many as 500, divided into smaller raiding parties and committed their terror along the plains. What follows covers just those events that occurred on August 7 and is found mostly in unpublished individual Indian depredation claims later filed by survivors or descendants of the victims of the raid.<sup>4</sup> That Sunday was a typical summer day in Nebraska, the weather "calm, warm, and beautiful, and there was a great deal of travel on the road...."<sup>5</sup> There had been rumors floating around that the Indians were about to become warlike, and people had been warned to be alert. But rumors were not enough to cause settlers to flee, and on this fateful day, it appears none of the victims anticipated anything other than a typical August day. The first victims were of the Joseph Eubanks, Senior, family. It was a large extended family. Nearly all perished, in what was a series of attacks at four different locations, all at nearly the same time.<sup>6</sup>

Joseph, Junior, and his brother William (Bill) were the first Eubanks to live along the Little Blue. They came from Missouri in 1862. With Joseph was his wife, Harriet Palmer Eubanks, who went by the name Hatty. On August 7, she was two months pregnant with her first child.<sup>7</sup> Joseph was 29 and had been operating and living at Kiowa Station for about eight months before the raid. Bill was 26 and also married, and had two children. Lucinda, who went by Lucy, was his wife. She turned 24 four days after August 7. The young

family had a son, ten-months old (born Oct. 1, 1863) William—named after the father—as well as a daughter, Isabelle, who was three-and-a-half, who went by Belle.<sup>8</sup>

Bill Eubanks was living in a small cabin along the Little Blue about three-and-a-half miles west of Kiowa Station. Joining Bill's family a few months before that terrible August day were the father, Joseph, Senior (64), two and maybe three daughters (Hannah-23, Madora, who went by Dora-14, and Sarah-21), as well as four other sons (George-17, Jimmie-13, Henry-12 and Andrew [Frank]-19. According to census records, the actual name was Frank and not Andrew.) Yet another son, Frederick—Fred (twin of Frank-19), was living with Joseph, Junior, along with Hatty and her brother, John Palmer. In addition to all of these family members, a grandson from another daughter (Mary-30), seven-year-old Ambrose Asher, also was part of the extended family. His mother Mary had remained in Missouri with her mother (Ruth-62), Joseph, Senior's wife. Shortly before the raid, Hannah, who had been on the Little Blue for maybe a year and worked at one of the ranches, returned to Missouri and missed the trauma. Only Joseph, Junior's wife Hatty survived being a victim of the raid. All others were killed except four who were captured: William's wife Lucy, and their two children, along with seven-year-old Ambrose Asher, Joseph Senior's grandson. The captured victims were later released in two separate negotiations.<sup>9</sup> The killed were Joseph, Senior and Junior, Bill, Fred, Andrew (Frank), George, Henry, Jimmie, Dora



Author's collection

### Stage stations along the Little Blue River, Nebraska Territory

and possibly another daughter, Sarah. Add Belle, who, when rescued, only lived until March 18, 1865, when she died in Denver from effects of her captivity, and the extended Eubanks family suffered as many as eleven casualties in the August 7 raid.<sup>10</sup>

The raids consuming the Eubanks family all seem to have occurred at about the same time, even though happening at different locations, one near where Joseph, Jr., lived at Kiowa Station, and the others at and near where Bill lived about four miles west. Shortly before it all began, Joseph, Jr., had decided to walk a little distance from home, to scout fields for potentially cutting and storing hay at the station. He went alone, and his body

was not found until three days later, between one and two miles from his home. His body was lying face down, stripped of clothing, head scalped, and pierced with three arrows in the back and another in an arm. Hatty declined to walk with her husband that Sunday and remained at the station. She was not feeling well and asked her brother John to go about a half a mile distant to where there was a spring of Sulfur water. She thought the Sulfur would help her feel better. John had been raking hay with Fred Eubanks, near the station when Hatty made her request. He left Fred in the field and went to retrieve the water for his sister. When he returned, he discovered Fred scalped and dead in the hay field. Fearing for

his sister's safety he quickly rushed back to the house. Hatty had been unaware of any danger. Looking from a window 300 yards to the north, the brother and sister saw ten Indians on a hill. Luckily, to the east, a few hundred yards—Hatty said 100 yards, John said 600 yards—a freight train of about twenty-five wagons had been in camp, resting. Immediately, the siblings rushed to the wagons where they found safety:

Hatty later gave sworn testimony about the events that Sunday:

*I was sick at the time and I craved Sulphur water to drink and I had a brother there, John Palmer, and I wanted him to go to the Sulphur springs and give me some water to drink and when he came back he found my brother-in-law [Fred] killed and scalped. When my brother came back to the house he notified me the Indians were coming and we ran to the train for protection.<sup>11</sup>*

John's memory was more detailed:

*The massacre of the Eubanks took place late in the afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock ... this was a Sunday evening. The Eubanks were all at their house excepting one of the younger sons who was with me — we were pulling up some hay. Young Eubanks [19-year-old Fred] was raking hay while I was going to a spring about a half mile distant for water. I was absent about half an hour — upon my return I found young Eubanks dead and scalped. He*

*had been shot with arrows .... Where I found the younger Eubanks dead in the hay field upon my return with the water from the spring I at once ran to the house to see if my sister ... was safe. When I got to the house I saw the Indians ride to the top of a hill about 300 yards north ... from the house; a train of freighters was corralled about 600 yards east from the house. I found my sister unharmed and we ran with all possible haste to the freighters ... the Indians then left and I did not see any more of them [that day].<sup>12</sup>*

At about the same time, another band of warriors came upon Bill Eubanks' home four miles further west. Earlier in the day 16-year-old Laura Roper, whose family had a home about one-and-a-half miles west of Bill Eubanks' home, had come for an afternoon visit. She was dropped off at the house after riding in a wagon with her father's store partner, Marshall Kelley and another man, Jonathan Butler. The two men in the wagon then rode east about two miles to the ranch at Oak Grove where they stopped for dinner. It was their last meal.<sup>13</sup> The sudden outbreak of violence had not yet begun and Laura enjoyed her company there for most of the afternoon, until about four o'clock, when Bill, wife Lucy and their two children—Belle and William—escorted Laura along the road west to her house. They had only gone about a half mile when Bill, walking barefoot, got a sliver in his foot. He told his wife and Laura



Author's collection

**Lucinda Eubanks, captured Aug. 7, 1864 with her children William and Isabelle. She and William were released near Ft. Laramie, nine months after their capture**

to continue on and he would catch up after tending to his foot. Unknown to them, at this same time warriors had descended upon the remaining Eubanks still at Bill and Lucy's home, which included Dora, probably Sarah, and two of Bill's younger brothers. Just before this, Joseph, Senior, had taken two of his other young sons, and his grandson, Ambrose, and driven his wagon east to a nearby hay field, where the two young teens and their father were going to cut hay. As they approached the field a band of Indians came out of the tall grass, and began shooting arrows into Joseph. The two younger Eubanks boys then ran and the Indians at once caught them and killed them. Ambrose, just seven at the time, was taken captive. He

gave a sworn affidavit thirty years later, just six months before he became ill and died of malaria fever.<sup>14</sup> The memories in his mind remained vivid:

*I was on the wagon with my [grand]father and two uncles going after hay. One Indian rode up out of the tall grass which is higher than a man on horse back. The Indian asked my grandfather for a chew of tobacco. My grandfather took a twist from his pocket cut it in two and handed one piece to the Indian. The Indian took a chew and put the remainder of the piece in a sack he had with him. The Indian then got his bow and arrow and made a motion as though he would shoot one of the oxen. My grandfather told him by sign and words not to do that, and the Indian then presented the bow successfully at my grandfather's son, then at me, and finally at my grandfather himself. The Indian ended his performance by shooting my grandfather with a number of arrows. My grandfather's two sons started to run back to the ranch when a large number of Indians maybe fifty or seventy-five arose from the tall grass with a yell, and killed my two uncles. At this time I was hanging to the wagon, as a boy would, and one of the Indians rode up dismounted, and threw me on the horse behind him. The Indians taking me with them then went on to the ranch where they killed another one of*

*my uncles, and my aunt, Dora. They took prisoners also my aunt Lucy and her two children, and at a point some distance from the ranch they killed also my uncle Fred who was in the hay field. The Indians then tied my feet under a horse, and tied my hands under the horse's neck and in this way I rode to where the Indians stopped a few moments – I suppose for water – they then proceeded until some time the next day when we reached their camp. They untied me then from the horse, and when I got off began to kick and cuff me around until a squaw came and took me away from them. I was with the Indians some months [37 days], but was finally taken away by some soldiers, and after some delay sent back to Missouri or Illinois to my mother.<sup>13</sup>*

Meanwhile, Bill, Lucy, their two children and Laura Roper had walked about one mile from Bill's home, escorting Laura back to her parent's cabin – in the opposite direction Joseph had driven his wagon—when Bill got his sliver and told the women to continue on. As he was tending to his foot, the women heard him scream. Laura recalled what then happened:

*We had gone about 50 yds. Around the bluff [the Narrows] when we stopped to wait for him. Just then we heard terrible yells. I said I thot it was Indians. So we turned and ran back [east] until we came*



Courtesy Find-a-Grave

**Lucy Atkinson-Eubanks headstone. Notice the Eubanks name is spelled with an "s" at the end**

*in sight of Mr. Eubanks, and he was running toward the house. We could see the Indians at the house, and they were chasing Mr. Eubanks' sister – a girl about 17 [14] years old. Then Mr. Eubanks [Bill] turned and ran toward the river, and just as he got to the edge of the sand bar the Indians shot and killed him. His two brothers who were in the house started to run up a draw and they were both killed. The sister started to run towards us, and they tried to take her prisoner and she fought them and they stabbed her in the head and killed her. By this time we had gotten to the timber.*

*I was carrying Mrs. Eubanks' little girl Belle, about 4 years*

*old, and Mrs. Eubanks had her baby [William] about 6 [10] months old. We ran right to a buffalo wallow and sat down on the edge of the wallow. By this time the Indians had killed everyone at the house and started [west] for my father's place. As they passed it [us], I suppose the little girl [Belle] saw them and gave an awful scream. They whirled their horses and came right to us. I had taken off my slippers and was carrying them in my hand. The first thing they did was to snatch my hat off my head and my slippers out of my hand. I had a signet ring on my finger and they took it off next.... Then they took us by the hand and told us to come. And picked us up and put us on the horses and took us to Mr. Eubanks' house. On the way back we saw this girl - Mr. Eubanks' sister lying beside the path about 100 yards from the house. We could see where they had stabbed her, but she was not quite dead then. We saw her throw her arm over her head. We then went on to the house. We had been there but a few minutes when an Indian rode up with this girl's scalp on a spear. We knew it was hers because it was still dripping with blood. He was yelling like a madman.<sup>16</sup>*

The superintendent of the Overland Mail Line, George Otis, sent a report to Washington August 31, confirming ten members of the Eubanks

family were killed: "A family, ten in number, living at this station (Ewbank Station), was massacred and scalped, and one of the females, besides having suffered the latter inhumane barbarity, was pinned to the earth by a stake thrust through her person, in a most revolting manner."<sup>17</sup> Daniel Freeman, living along the Little Blue and a witness to seeing the dead Eubanks after the Indians had left, confirmed what Otis said, noting the male Eubanks "were scalped, their joints unjointed, privates cut off; the women [plural, implying two dead at Bill Eubanks' house] were scalped their bodies mutilated and the private parts scalped,...."<sup>18</sup> The only Eubanks not scalped was Joseph, Senior. That was because he was bald, although he had long side whiskers, and those had been scalped from his face.<sup>19</sup>

The grisly mutilations that survivors witnessed when viewing the dead was not something people in Nebraska Territory were unaware of. The year before, in the northern part of the territory, the family of Henson Wiseman—a wife and five children—were staying at their home in St. James, Cedar County, while Henson was serving in the Second Volunteer Nebraska Cavalry. On July 23 a handful of Indians—later identified as Yankton and Santee Sioux—came south and caught the children alone at home while the mother was shopping in the nearby town. The *Brownville Advertiser* on August 22, 1863 reported "... three children were brutally murdered in cold blood, and two horribly mangled." The two wounded soon died. The tragedy haunted Henson and especially his wife Phoebe, for the remainder of their lives. In 1894 Henson described

in vivid detail the injuries to his three dead children, boys aged seventeen, thirteen and eight, but of the two mortally wounded, it is worth repeating, as settlers knew that if the killing of whites that occurred in Minnesota came to Nebraska, as it did with Wiseman's family, they could expect a similar treatment, now witnessed with the dead Eubanks. Wiseman later recalled:

*The youngest boy, aged five years could tell "the Indians scared him," was all he ever said; he was stabbed under the left arm and lived three days. The girl fifteen years of age, as savages always do, bore savage infamy until they were satisfied; a cartridge put in her mouth, was set on fire, tearing out her teeth; then passing an arrow through her birth and out at the top of each hip; left her in that condition for dead; she was alive and lived five days; never spoke a word but looked wildly around to anyone that came in her sight.<sup>20</sup>*

It was fear of this kind of treatment that remained active in the minds of all settlers throughout the region, once the Indian war went into full swing on the Little Blue.

The great tragedy of the Eubanks family was just a part of the murders committed on August 7, although it was the largest. Different sorties of warriors appear to have spread out in the vicinity to commit other murders nearby, likely simultaneous to when the different Eubanks were attacked. Another murder that happened right at the time the



*Courtesy, Nebraska State Historical Society*

**William Joseph Eubanks at age 20. He was rescued with his mother in mid-May, 1865. He is buried in Eaton, CO after changing his last name to Eubank**

warriors started killing members of the Eubanks family was the killing of an 18-year-old boy named Theodore Uhlig. His mother Johanna was a widow when she brought three of her sons to live along the Little Blue in 1860. Her husband Karl had suddenly died once the family immigrated from Germany in 1847. In 1860 those sons were Otto (26), Edmund Hugo (23) and Frederick Theodore, who apparently went by Theo (15).<sup>21</sup> Their home was two miles west of Kiowa Station. By 1864 they made a comfortable living growing crops and hay and selling it to travelers on the ever-growing-popular road to Denver and Oregon. Johanna described her son Theo as the favorite



in the family. Earlier she had sent him to Kiowa Station to get a basket of eggs.

More than fifty years later John Gilbert recalled what happened. In his memory, a man named James Douglas was the owner of Kiowa Station, and Joseph Eubanks, Junior, lived less than half a mile west of Kiowa Station. When Theodore got to Kiowa, John was there. Both were teenagers. Douglas wanted John to go with Theodore back to the Uhlig house and get some things he needed at the Uhlig house and bring them back. The boys agreed to race their horses back to Uhlig's place. But Theodore got a head start. The boys were racing along the top of a hill when John got to Joseph Eubanks' house, and learned from Mrs. Hatty Eubanks that the Indians had just killed Fred Eubanks across the river. It must have been just before she and her brother John fled east. Gilbert then turned back to Kiowa Station and saw four Indians riding west, apparently following Theodore. They might well have been the Indians who had just killed Fred Eubanks. As Gilbert soon learned, when Theodore was about 400 yards from the Uhlig home, those four Indians he earlier saw had captured and held Theodore, apparently waiting a bit for John to catch up, not realizing that he had stopped at Joseph Eubanks' house. Gilbert fled east to Pawnee Ranch, as did Hatty Eubanks and her brother John Palmer. When he did not arrive as the Indians expected, the warriors then shot Theodore. Theodore's mother, Johanna, witnessed the attack from her home, watching in horror as the warriors shot her son off his horse and scalped him. She screamed to her oldest son Otto and



*Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society*

### **Laura Vance Roper, 1929**

a hired man for help, and those men ran to Theodore and brought him into the house where he soon died. The Indians did not continue their attack and instead turned back east.<sup>22</sup>

Roughly halfway between Bill Eubanks' home and brother Joseph's Kiowa Station was another ranch—Oak Grove—operated by Erastus Comstock. Comstock had two sons, George, who operated Thirty-Two Mile Station almost fifty miles further west, and James, who operated Little Blue Station, the next station west of Bill Eubanks' ranch. Erastus was returning from Thirty-Two Mile Station and had stopped for lunch at Pawnee Ranch, roughly half-way between Thirty-Two Mile Station and Oak Grove. He thus missed being present when Oak

Grove was attacked.<sup>23</sup> Oak Grove was where the two men who dropped Laura Roper off at Bill and Lucy's home went after leaving her at her visit. Kelley and Butler had taken lunch at Oak Grove, and while there about thirty-six Indians appeared. The warriors were also fed, and then hung around the ranch for about two hours. Then, on a given signal, they attacked the men at the ranch, killing Butler and Kelley, wounding George Hunt in the leg, and mortally wounding Nelson Ostrander, pummeling his body with fifteen arrows. He lived a few days before dying.<sup>24</sup> The remaining men at the station fled to the interior of the house where a few weapons were stored, and there made a defense. They wounded two Indians, one of whom was Gall, who would later gain fame as one of the warriors who defeated Custer, and years later settled down at Pine Ridge, becoming one of the leaders in bringing Indians into an acceptance of reservation life. Soon the Indians left, but when the house was abandoned later that day, the Indians came back the next day and burned it to the ground.<sup>25</sup> The incinerated bodies of Butler and Kelley were found several days later among the burned ruins.<sup>26</sup>

At about the time that the Indians turned against the men at Oak Grove, another incident occurred back west near Pawnee Ranch. Patrick Burke was a freighter living in Beatrice and had a wagon load of corn to deliver to Fort Kearney. He had married in 1850 and by 1864 had six children, thirteen and younger. Patrick had left Beatrice on August 4, and shortly before noon on August 7, he briefly stopped at Liberty Farm to water his oxen. Charles

Emery invited him for lunch but Patrick declined, saying he would take his meal at Pawnee Ranch, the next ranch about six miles further west. Around half past one that afternoon, Charles and his hired man, Joseph Markman, rode their horses to Pawnee Ranch. When they got about a mile and a half of the ranch, they found Burke on the ground, mortally wounded by a shot to his head. He was also scalped alive. Charles testified later to what he saw:

*... we found him [Burke] shot and scalped and lying in the road. He was not dead. I got down, and said, "Why Burke, what's the matter?" He said "The Indians have shot and scalped me." We could do nothing for him; we rode up to the ranch, and got a wagon and some men, and came back and put him in the wagon, and they took him to the ranch; I and my man rode home to Liberty Farm.<sup>27</sup>*

James Bainter was also a witness to the killing of Burke. He was living six miles west of Liberty at Spring Ranch. Bainter said several days before Aug. 7 the Indians had seemed to change their disposition, not talking or acting friendly, then disappeared about a week before raid; then on the 7<sup>th</sup> he saw one that on the road as he was going to his ranch,

*... and from his movements I was satisfied he meant to kill me if he got a chance, but he saw I was prepared for him & he left his hiding place in a ravine and pretty soon I saw another Indian come out of the ravine & meet the first one. I*



Courtesy Duane Gile, Scandia, KS

### Painting depicting warriors attacking settlers in the 1860s Plains Indian wars. Artwork by James Davis Nelson, Jewell, KS

then saw a man coming towards the Indians in a wagon. The Indians passed him and then I saw one of them turn & shoot the man in the wagon. About that time my son & hired man came up with their guns & drove the Indians off & we got the horses & the man, whose name was Burke and took them to Pawnee Ranch, about one mile from my house.<sup>28</sup>

Two other men also witnessed Burke's killing. Brothers Richard and Charles Wells had spent the day resting at Pawnee Ranch. Charles recalled it was about 3:30 that afternoon when someone noticed three Indians passing on the road, going east. Charles:

*Rushing to the door, we saw they were advancing toward a lone man coming up the*

*road with a load of corn. At a glance we saw they intended to murder him. Brother and I went with all possible haste to the barn for our horses, hoping we might rescue and save the man's life. On entering the barn we found the harness on our horses, which caused some delay. By the time the harness was stripped from the horses, and we were mounted and at the house receiving firearms, the Indians had shot and were scalping the unfortunate man, who had fallen from his wagon into the dusty road. As we started from the house, the savages mounted their ponies, and were off like an arrow. Brother and I followed them into the hills, and soon lost sight of them.... On reaching*

*the wounded man, we found some of the men from the ranch there, ministering to him as best they could. On examining the wound, it was discovered that the ball had entered the back part of his head and come out through the mouth, inflicting a mortal wound. Notwithstanding his wound was fatal, he could talk, and seemed quite conscious. Some of the men knew him and said "It is Burk, from Beatrice.... After getting him into the wagon, he insisted that we should not move him until he was dead, begging us to let him alone.... Just before the going down of the sun his spirit took its flight. Only three days before this awful deed this man left his wife and children, expecting to return to them in a short time. But they will never see him on this side of eternity; for he is still sleeping in his lonely grave by the roadside."<sup>29</sup>*

After Charles Emery helped get Burke to Pawnee Ranch, he and Markman quickly ran their horses back to Liberty Farm. He wasn't quite sure what to do. As the operator of the stage station, there was a stage due around 10 o'clock that night from the east, going west, so he decided to maintain vigil at his home, unaware of any other killings except Burke. He likely hoped it was an isolated incident. However, the stage did not appear until after 9 o'clock the next morning, and with the stage to Denver came the reports of all the murders to the east, of the Eubanks as well as the killings at Oak Grove.

As soon as Emery learned this, he put his wife and two young children, aged five and three, as passengers on the stage and told them to stay at Pawnee Ranch where he knew there were about 40 men in a large wagon train. He and Markman then collected the stage horses, as well as their own, and steered them to Pawnee Ranch.

Soon, everyone got to work and constructed a defense, building breastworks around the buildings at Pawnee Ranch. While this was happening, John Palmer and some other men reconnoitered the area to see what destruction had occurred. Palmer:

*My sister and I remained with the freighters that night and the next day I went to where the Eubanks lived about 4 miles northwest of where I lived. When I reached their house I found five dead bodies, i.e., those and two younger sons aged about 14 and 16 years and a daughter aged 17 of Joseph Eubanks, Sr., William; two children of William and a boy about 7 years old, a grandchild of Joseph, Sr., were captured. All had been shot with arrows except William – he was shot in the head with a bullet. All except Joseph E., Sr., were scalped and entirely stripped of their clothes. I with some of the freighters before mentioned buried all of them. The wife of Wm. Eubanks was taken captive and was with the Indians over a year [actually, nine months]. At the same time Miss Roper who lived about a mile from the house of the Eubanks was taken*

*captive & kept by the Indians  
about 6 weeks....<sup>30</sup>*

The last raid of the day occurred further to the west, probably about twenty miles past Pawnee Ranch and between Lone Tree Station and Thirty-Two Mile Station. Warriors killed six drivers of a six-train company taking important freight into Denver. The business that subcontracted the freight for various Denver merchants was called Simonton and Smith, commission agents out of St. Joseph, Missouri, who coordinated freighting companies to haul freight from the Missouri River at St. Joseph and further west, most commonly Denver. Woolworth and Barton were in partnership in St. Joseph to finalize the freight excursions. Two of the Denver merchants who contracted to haul their goods were George Tritch, a Denver merchant at 15<sup>th</sup> and Wazee, and John Dye, who had a large threshing machine attached to one of the wagons. Coincidentally, Dye would also lose a large store of general merchandise on August 8, at the Plum Creek massacre.

It is not entirely clear exactly when the Indians attacked and killed these six freighters. The only known name of the dead was Horace Smith, who was in charge of the train. The other freighters remain unknown—hired men to haul freight. Most historians set the attack on August 7, at around the same time as all the other attacks were taking place. However, Charles Emery had spoken with Smith and the other freighters at 10 o'clock that Sunday morning at Liberty Farm, when they briefly stopped and purchased four large bags of corn feed for their

mules, placing their purchase on top of a thrashing machine they were hauling. The corn was to feed their mules when they stopped to camp further west later that day. According to Emery, they left his farm after staying about thirty minutes, and they got about half-way between Lone Tree and Thirty-Two-Mile, where in a large ravine—later called Dead Man's Hollow—the men were found dead and mutilated and their freight destroyed. The thrashing machine was also found in the ravine. Only one wagon was found further away on the plains out of the ravine. Emery passed by the carnage after everyone left Pawnee Ranch on August 10, seeking safety at Fort Kearney. He estimated the location where they were killed was about seventeen miles west of Liberty Farm. If that is the case, that distance would take the better part of a day to travel carrying freight on wagons being pulled by four mules, as was the case with this train after purchasing the feed corn earlier at Liberty Farm. It seems more likely that the men had made their camp and sometime after that were attacked. Emery does say that earlier in the day on August 8 a stagecoach coming from the west alerted him at Liberty Farm that the stage had passed by the dead freighters. The passengers told him they quickly buried the dead and then hurried on east, reporting what they found when they got to Liberty.<sup>31</sup>

But a later report from Captain Edward Murphy of the 7<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry, sent from Fort Kearney to investigate reports of the wide-spread murders, recalled that the dead men "had formed no corral, and as they were hitching up in the *morning* the



Author's collection

**Author (right) with Dave Welch near the site where Dave's great-grandfather, Ambrose Asher, was captured in 1864. Picture was taken on the 150th anniversary of Ambrose's capture**

Indians came upon them." He said the soldiers buried the dead, contradicting what the stagecoach passengers told Emery. If indeed it was a morning attack as reported by Murphy when he found the dead men on August 9 – the stagecoach passed by sometime on the morning of August 8—then it is more likely the freighters were killed earlier that morning, and then were discovered by the Stagecoach passengers riding east, and the morning after that they were also found by Murphy and his soldiers. Murphy finding the dead men on August 9 supports his claim that the soldiers buried the dead men and not the stagecoach passengers, as was reported to Emery. Emery remembered being told one of the freighters was found hiding in the willows, wounded

with an arrow in his head but still alive and conscious. He told those who found him what happened, but when the arrow was removed, he immediately died.<sup>32</sup>

Thus ended the tragic day of August 7, 1864, with several dead citizens along the Little Blue. Killings continued for several more days, but mostly the attacks were isolated. However, the most noted attack occurred nearly 90 miles west, on August 8. It is known as the Plum Creek massacre, and will be covered in Part Two.

## Endnotes

1. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1865), 224-225. Robert North was illiterate and in other documents, as well as this, he signed an "x" to designate his name. Thus, someone else wrote this document, but North attested to its accuracy in what was written. For another report similar to North's, see also p. 232. Other reports warning of an impending war are found a year earlier in *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1863* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), report on p. 122-123; report on p. 135; and another report on p. 136.
2. Estimates of civilian dead in 1862 range from 400 to 800. Robert Galbraith, in his report as the Sioux Agent of the guilty Indians, said, "... we have seven hundred and thirty-seven persons who, I am convinced, have been killed by the Indians." *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1863*, 294.
3. Sandra Slater & Patti Simpson,

compiled and edited, *Plum Creek, The Rest of the Story* (Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing, 2016), 186.

4. I have located forty-nine different Indian depredation claims starting with the Aug. 7 raid on the little Blue, and continuing in that area for several more days, as well as claims for the raid on August 8, ninety miles northwest on August 8. Only a portion of these claims are used in this study. For a summary of the significance of the claims in studying this history, see Jeff Broome, *Cheyenne War Indian Raids on the Roads to Denver; 1864-1869* (Sheridan and Sterling, CO: Aberdeen Books & Logan County Historical Society, 2013), 15-26. See also Larry Skogen, *Indian Depredation Claims, 1796-1920* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996). There was little newspaper coverage detailing the facts of the raids, as newspapers were outside the boundaries of where the raids happened. Later reminiscences, as well as stories in newspapers written decades after the events have been the material most historians have consulted. A careful study of the testimonials in depredation claims against the warring tribes gives us the best detail about the raids.

5. Charles Wesley Wells, *A Frontier Life, Sketches and Incidents of Homes in the West* (Cincinnati, OH: Press of Jennings and Pye), 72.

6. One controversy about the Eubanks victims is whether their name was Eubank or Eubanks. In the Second, revised edition of John Ellenbecker's *Tragedy at the Little Blue*, Ellenbecker is acknowledged for identifying the family name as Eubank, not Eubanks. The reason cited was that ten-month

old William Eubanks, captured during the raids and rescued with his mother Lucinda several months later, had spelled his last name as an adult as Eubank. See Lyn Rider, Introduction, John G. Ellenbecker, *Tragedy at the Little Blue The Oak Grove Massacre and the Captivity of Lucinda Eubank and Laura Roper* (Niwtot, CO: Prairie Lake Publications, 1993), ix. However, one must understand that William had no Eubanks to return to, other than his mother, who was now a widow. She soon remarried. There were few Eubanks to continue association with. The better source to determine the correct spelling of the last name comes from the Indian depredation claims later filed by the descendants of Joseph Eubanks, Senior, and the widow of Joseph Eubanks, Junior. The widow of Joseph, Junior, consistently spelled the last name Eubanks, not Eubank. Ambrose Asher, a young boy captured during the raids, was the grandson of Joseph, Senior. In his affidavit he consistently spells and refers to the Eubanks family as Eubanks, not Eubank. Missouri census records for 1840, 1850, and 1860 also spell the name as Eubanks. These primary-source documents confirm more strongly the correct spelling than as Ellenbecker incorrectly surmised.

7. Joseph Eubanks, Junior Indian Depredation Claim #1117. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Hatty remarried in 1869 to a man named Joseph Adams, and moved to Gunnison, Colorado, where she remained. She gave birth to a daughter, Josie, and in 1898 Josie was living in Minneapolis as Josie Smith.

8. The Eubanks family census for 1850

and 1860 is used to determine the ages of each Eubanks, as well as Find-A-Grave. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/28653817/lucinda-atkinson>. Accessed Feb. 18, 2019.

9. Lucy's daughter Isabelle and Laura Roper were rescued in the middle of September, thirty-seven days after their capture, along with Ambrose Asher and nine-year-old Danny Marble, who was captured on Plum Creek with Mrs. Nancy Morton, on August 8. They were brought into Denver on September 28, when several Cheyenne chiefs met with Governor Evans at the Camp Weld Conference, a peace conference that did not end in a negotiated peace. Lucy and William were released in the middle of May 1865. One account says May 15 and another says May 18. Mrs. Morton was released in late January 1865. See Broome, *Cheyenne War*, 72, 109.

10. All of the noted names of the victims were found in the Joseph Senior and Junior Indian Depredation Claims #1117 and #2733, except Sarah and Frank. However, the U.S. Census on the family, in 1850 and 1860 do not list a son named Andrew, but instead list a son named Frank. Frank and Frederick were both born in 1845 and were most likely twins. Thus, it is suspected the correct name of one of the Eubanks victims was not Andrew but rather Frank. Another sister in both censuses is named Sarah, and it is unknown if she was yet another victim of the raids or if she was in Missouri and was not a victim. See <https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1850usfedcenancestry&indiv=try&h=19417316>, and <https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1860usfedcenancestry&indiv=try&h=39971939>. Accessed Feb.

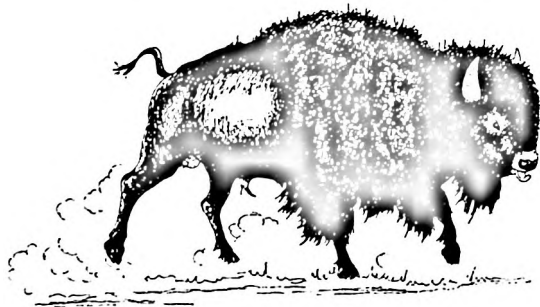
17, 2019. The depredation claims state there were Eubanks females (plural) who died, which would include Sarah as a victim. However, she is not listed by name in the claims. Also, in the Ambrose Asher testimony, made thirty years after the raid, in 1894, he states his aunt Hannah Walton was the only child living of Joseph Senior, which might support the claim that Sarah died in the raid at William Eubanks' house. Her name does not appear in the 1870 census, further supporting she died in 1864. The death of Isabelle comes from the *Rocky Mountain News*, March 21, 1865. It is possible that Sarah was not in the raid and perhaps living as a married woman in Missouri at the time. She does not appear in the 1860 family census. It is also possible that Frank and Fred are the same person and not twins, the result of a census mistake. The 1850 census mentions Frank but not Fred, and the 1860 census mentions Fred but not Frank. The 1850 census lists a daughter Maria, who would have been sixteen in 1864. She could be the second female Eubank daughter killed at brother William's home, if Sarah was married and living elsewhere at the time. Or, perhaps she died of other causes before 1860, which explains why she is not mentioned in the 1860 census as living in the Joseph Eubanks, Senior home. The conclusion to draw about the total number of Eubanks members killed remains speculative, without uncovering new documents pertaining to the family. What is known is that nearly the entire family was victimized in the August 7, 1864 raid on the Little Blue.

11. Joseph Eubanks, Junior Indian Depredation Claim # 1117.



12. Joseph Eubanks, Junior Indian Depredation Claim # 1117.
13. Laura Roper Vance, "Captured by Indians August 7, 1864, on Little Blue R, 1." MS 221.5, Nucholls County, 1864. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska. Ronald Belcher, *Massacre Along the Medicine Road* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1999), 159-160.
14. *California Democrat*, California, Missouri, Obituary, October 11, 1894. Ambrose was thirty-seven when he died, had been married for thirteen years and had five children. Descendants live today, one of whom remains active in the Oregon California Trails Association. I had the privilege of being with him—David Welch—on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the capture of Ambrose Asher, where it occurred in 1864.
15. Joseph Eubanks, Senior Indian Depredation Claim #2733. Indian Depredations Claims Division, Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. It is not clear in the depredation claim which two Eubanks boys were killed near the wagon, and which two were killed in the home. The four brothers were Henry, Andrew [Frank], George, and Jimmie. Ambrose Asher's mother was the oldest Eubanks sibling, Mary, born in 1834. Ambrose apparently was born outside of wedlock, but in 1861 his mother Mary married Samuel Dye, four years after Ambrose was born.
16. Laura Roper Vance, "Captured by Indians," 2-3.
17. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864*, 254.
18. Charles Emery Indian Depredation Claim #1019-1020. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
19. Ambrose Asher affidavit, Joseph Eubanks, Senior Indian Depredation Claim #2733. See also Wells, *A Frontier Life*, 104.
20. Copy of claim shared with me via email by Warren Watson, Elk Horn, Iowa, Jan. 11, 2019. See also Louise Guy, *The Wiseman Massacre The History of the Henson and Phoebe Wiseman Family* (Sioux Falls, SD: Pine Hill Press, 2002).
21. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/175855292/frederick-theo-uhlig>. Accessed Feb. 21, 2019. See also Johanna Uhlig Indian Depredation Claim #4024. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. See too <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/70130862>. Accessed Feb. 21, 2019
22. Johanna Uhlig Indian Depredation Claim #4024. Edmund Uhlig Indian Depredation Claim #2496. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. John Gilbert, "Incidents of the Indian Outbreak of 1864," *Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, Volume XIX (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1919), 18-19. Gilbert names the middle son as Hugo, which was the middle name of Edmund Hugo. Likely, both Edmund and Frederick went by their middle names, Hugo and Theodore.
23. Wells, *A Frontier Life*, 72-73.
24. Daniel Freeman testimony in Charles Emery Indian Depredation Claim #1019-1020. See also Daniel Freeman Indian Depredation Claim #4943. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

25. William Mudge was a witness to finding the burned bodies of Kelley and Butler. He said the bodies "... were almost unrecognizable. We could only tell them by portions of their clothes that were not burned." William Mudge Indian Depredation Claim #4123. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
26. George Comstock Indian Depredation Claim #5156. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. When the claim was presented to the Indians at Pine Ridge, agent V. T. McGillicuddy identified Gall of his reservation as present with Two Face at the raid, and that Gall acknowledged to him he was "wounded at an attack on a ranch, which I [McGillicuddy] should judge to be Comstock's ranch, attacked August 7, 1864." See also George Comstock Indian Depredation Claim #2493. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. For more on Gall's life, see Robert W. Larson, *Gall Lakota War Chief* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press), 207.
27. Patrick Burke Indian Depredation Claim #7659. Record Group 123. See also claim #6848, Record Group 75. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. See too Charles Emery Indian Depredation Claim #1020.
28. James Bainter Indian Depredation Claim #1019. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
29. Wells, *A Frontier Life*, 73-75.
30. Joseph Eubanks, Junior Indian Depredation Claim # 1117.
31. George Tritch Indian Depredation Claim #1174 & 3102. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
32. "Incidents of the Indian Outbreak of 1864," Memoranda of Captain Edward B. Murphy, 9, italics added. Murphy remembered there were eight dead men, although the depredation claims filed on behalf of those who lost property said it was only six men and six wagons. Simonton tells the story of one freighter still alive when the dead freighters were first discovered. So did John Dye. They must have heard it from the military later, as neither was present when the freighters were discovered by the troopers. See T.H. Simonton and Horace Smith Indian Depredation Claim #2498 & 3102. See also John Nye Indian Depredation Claim #4635. Record Group 123. 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.*

## **Colorado Corral of Westerners**

Colorado Corral's May program, "Dave Cook: Lawman Extraordinaire," was presented by Rebecca Hunt, historian teaching at the University of Colorado, Denver. Dave Cook during his life was a farmer, gold miner and a member of the First Colorado Volunteer Regiment. More importantly, he was the police chief who stopped the 1880 anti-Chinese riot in Denver. He helped stop the Leadville anti-Chinese riots as well. Cook managed to spend most of his life bringing in the bad guys.

## **Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners**

In May Brett Lobello, Director of Regional History and Genealogy of the Pikes Peak Library District, presented "A Treasure Trove of Regional History... Right in our Backyard!" This brief overview of the scope of historical material in the PPLD Special Collections provided general information, and highlighted four specific collections illustrating the breadth of this historical treasure trove.

"Penrose Heritage Museum, Home to Carriages, Race Cars and much more!" by Sarah Rogers, was presented to the Pikes Peak Posse in June. The history and heritage of the Pikes Peak region is showcased through the personal artifact collection of Colorado philanthropists Spencer and Julie Penrose. Sarah Rogers is the curator of Penrose Heritage Museum, and also helps the El Pomar Foundation curate art and exhibits at Penrose House and the Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun.

## **Denver Posse Summer Rendezvous**

Plan now for the special Summer Rendezvous, Saturday, Aug. 24, at Stromberg Picnic Shelter, Newton Park, South Foxton Road, Conifer, CO. The program is "A Visit with President Theodore Roosevelt," by Pikes Peak Westerners Deputy Sheriff Don Moon, renowned for his Roosevelt impersonation. Contact Denver Chuck Wrangler Joe Sokolowski, at [Jsokolo102@aol.com](mailto:Jsokolo102@aol.com), to make reservations by August 10, and payment of \$30 by August 17.



## Westerners Bookshelf



**Gold Mountain Turned to Dust: Essays on the Legal History of the Chinese in the Nineteenth-Century American West**, by John R. Wunder. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 2018. 225 pp. Tables, graphs, endnotes, index. Paperback, \$29.95.

Although the title provides no indication of what the book is all about, the subtitle gives a good description of what to expect. During the nineteenth century about half-a-million Chinese immigrants settled in the American West. They provided a vital labor source for employers engaged in mining and railroad construction due to their ethic of hard work, willingness to take on any type of work, and the general absence of bad habits when not working. They were thanked by earning low wages, being subjected to judicial and social discrimination, and suffering widespread violence. The first two chapters of the book describe these conditions while the remaining eight chapters focus on notable legal cases involving Chinese in California, the Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest.

Chapters 1 and 2 present a good overview of violence against Chinese and the legal excuses for doing nothing about it. During the nineteenth century, 153 racial outbreaks (often called riots) occurred where predominantly whites attacked the Chinese, beating thousands and killing 143 of them, burning their homes, and driving them out of the town or mining camp with a total of 10,525 being displaced. Whites were rarely arrested for causing the trouble. Colorado had five outbreaks with the 1880 Denver riot being the most noteworthy, thanks to the anti-Chinese rhetoric printed in the *Rocky Mountain News*. Sing Lee was killed and damages to Chinese property were estimated at \$50,000. The rioters arrested for the killing of Sing Lee were acquitted, thus following the typical scenario.

The remaining eight chapters summarize key court cases that provided the foundation for marginalizing the Chinese and denying them the legal rights guaranteed to whites. The court proceedings are not presented in legalese and thus are readable and interesting. For the most part the outcome of the court cases only subjected the Chinese to blatant anti-Chinese prejudices and "some of the worst forms of legal and extralegal racism during the nineteenth century."

*Gold Mountain Turned to Dust* helps fill a gap in the history of Chinese in America. This misunderstood ethnic group made critical contributions to building a nation despite a legal system that manipulated the existing laws to prevent the Chinese from receiving many of the privileges of living in this democratic country. John Wunder's book is a good read not only for its addition to the nineteenth century history, but for its pertinence in dealing with related issues in the twenty-first century.

--Rick Barth

**White Hat: The Military Career of Captain William Philo Clark**, by Mark J. Nelson. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. 260 pp. Photos, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Best-known for his landmark study: *The Indian Sign Language*, Philo Clark also compiled a record of military service virtually unmatched in America's frontier army. Born July 27, 1845, Clark graduated from West Point in 1868. Assigned to duty on the northern plains, Clark participated in virtually every major action occurring in that theater during the Indian Wars.

Serving variously as a regimental adjutant and as chief of scouts, Clark accepted responsibilities and made decisions seemingly far beyond the purview of a young lieutenant. Staff assignments brought him into contact with most of the significant commanders of the Frontier Army, all of whom gave him the most stellar endorsements and commendations.

A fearless fighter, often cited for gallantry, Clark's major contributions came in the pursuit of peace. He became the army's foremost expert in Indian sign language and worked tirelessly to negotiate peace and understanding between white and red races. Indians came to trust and respect him perhaps more than any other white man.

As the need for his incredible wartime services diminished, Clark turned his attention to various explorations, and particularly toward refining his expertise in Indian signs. Sadly, he died unexpectedly at age thirty-nine, before he could see his most significant works published.

Although this book contains significant background information, the author uses the term "probably" far too often to describe Clark's actions, feelings and motivations. Much of the text lacks vibrancy, appearing in many cases to comprise dry restatements of sources used. Occasionally, the text also seems wordy or repetitious.

However, despite these minor stylistic shortcomings, this is an important book that provides substantial information about a truly remarkable, exceptionally important figure from the Plains Indian Wars.

--Dennis Hagen

**A History of Mortgage Banking in the West, Financing America's Dreams**, by E. Michael Rosser and Diane M. Sanders. University Press of Colorado: Niwot, 2017. 379 pp. Photographs, bibliography, index appendices. Paperback, \$24.95.

An interesting book about how we borrow for homes seems an oxymoron. We Americans take for granted that we can go down the street and find several sources to help us buy real estate but this did not just happen. The story of how that came about is surprisingly entertaining and informative. Early British lending to American farmers helped populate this part of the continent. The industry has long used local agents to qualify and underwrite business, and this practice was central to early success. Of course there were a number of failures and wrong turns

as well. The book follows the industry from infancy through to its maturation. The patchwork of government-sponsored entities is looked at and critiqued as well. Any story of mortgage banking wouldn't be complete without a look at the great recession. There is an insightful account of the bursting bubble of the early 2000s.

Rosser and Sanders have done a detailed and authoritative job. This is a good look at an oft-ignored part of our society.

--Stan Moore

**Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California 1535-1846**, by Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, eds. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2001. 505 pp. Maps, photographs, drawings, glossary, bibliography, index; primary document translations from Spanish to English. Paperback edition 2015, \$26.95.

This book is an impressive and fascinating collection of original materials from early California. We see California's vast, unfamiliar and often harsh landscape through the writings and narratives of Spanish explorers, missionaries, soldiers and settlers as they meet surprisingly large numbers of indigenous people. We gain a sense of the various political, military and religious tensions that flavored the earliest colonizing efforts, as well as an understanding of how very difficult these efforts were. First-person reports and narratives translated from original Spanish (and sometimes Indian) languages generate extraordinarily vivid pictures of the people, their exertions and frequent failures.

We review the reports and letters of Columbus, Cortes, de las Casas, Serra, and Portola, along with those of a multitude of less-well-known personages. It is surprising to see how much detail and opinion went into correspondence from the men in the field to the authorities above them, and how lengthy those letters and reports were. Their frustrations are evident—responses to their needs and hopes could take months, and often ran counter to what they were seeking. Human stories, including murders and rapes, appear in the records of trials and church actions. The brutal treatment by soldiers of both Indian women and men caused seething resentment at some of the missions, resulting in occasional violent uprisings. The author/editors weave together the series of original materials with knowledgeable interpretation and commentary. Explanations are brief and thoughtful.

This anthology is exactly what anyone who wants to know more about early Western—particularly California—history should have. It's interesting, carefully done, and tremendously informative.

--Judy Zelio



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

July - August 2019



*Courtesy Margaret Coel, Boulder, CO*

**Captured August 7, 1864 at the Little Blue Massacre. On the left is Ambrose Asher, with Laura Roper holding Isabella Eubanks. Not pictured is Danny Marble, captured August 8 at the Plum Creek Massacre\***

**Massacre Near Plum Creek, August 8, 1864**  
**Part Two**  
by Jeff Broome

*\*See page 15*



Author Jeff Broome (on right) pictured with David Welch, great-grandson of Ambrose Asher. Taken on the 150th anniv. of the Little Blue Massacre

## Our Author

Jeff Broome is a fifth-generation Coloradan, his family first coming to Colorado in 1859. Born in Pueblo, he received an MA at Baylor University and a PhD at CU, Boulder, both degrees in philosophy. He has written three books, *Dog Soldier Justice* (2003), *Custer into the West* (2009) and *Cheyenne War* (2013). He has been published in six *Roundups*; a chapter in six books; five feature articles in *Wild West*; three in the *Research Review of the Little Big Horn Associates*; three in the *Papers of the Annual Symposium of the Custer Battlefield Historical & Museum Association*; two in the *Journal of the Wild West History Association*; one *Brand Book* with the English Westerners as well as *Greasy Grass, Journal of the Indian Wars* and *Journal of America's Military Past*. Jeff has received six national and international awards for his publications, including twice for First Prize, Philip A. Danielson Award of Westerners International, 2012 and 2014. After thirty-two years as a Professor of Philosophy at a Colorado community college, Jeff is now retired and living in Beulah, just a few miles from his great-great grandfather's 1860s homestead.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

VOL. LXXV NO. 4



July - August 2019

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## Massacre Along the Little Blue, August 8, 1864

### Part Two by Jeff Broome

Whereas the August 7, 1864 raid on the Little Blue focused mostly along a fifty-mile area starting about ninety miles east of Fort Kearney, the attack along Plum Creek on Monday, August 8, happened about thirty-five miles west of the fort. It became known as the Plum Creek Massacre. Together, these two days of deadly raids confirmed without doubt that the Indians—Cheyenne, Arapaho and Lakota—had indeed banded together to begin a war against encroaching white civilization. Governor John Evans was thus correct in making his earlier reports on this coming war, as was noted in Part One of this two-volume *Roundup*.<sup>1</sup>

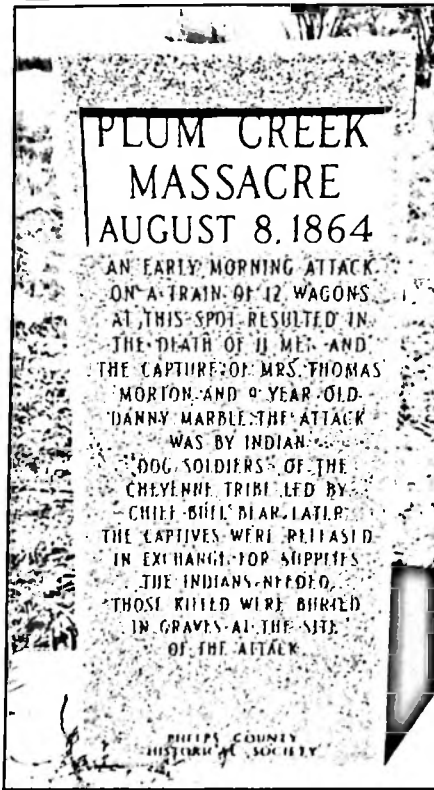
There were a series of raids

in the area, but the well-known one was an early-morning attack against an eleven-man wagon train, which had just pulled out on the Denver road after the freighters finished breakfast. It occurred about two miles east of Plum Creek Station, south of present-day Lexington, Nebraska. The station had a few soldiers present, but more importantly, a telegraph and operator were housed there. The attack was witnessed by those at the station, which included the soldiers. Lieutenant Joseph Bone dictated a quick message sent on the wire to Fort Kearney: "Send company of men here as quick as God can send them. One hundred—100—Indians in sight firing on ox train."<sup>2</sup> Colonel Samuel Summers received the alarming

<b>PACIFIC TELEGRAPH COMPANY.</b>	
<small>INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.</small>	
<b>TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON WHICH MESSAGES ARE RECEIVED BY THIS COMPANY FOR TRANSMISSION.</b>	
<p>It is to be notified that in order to guard against mistakes in the transmission of messages, every message of importance ought to be repeated at the station at which it is to be received, to the station from which it is originally sent. Had the usual price for transmission not been charged for it while this Company will, as heretofore, be every possible to ensure its reliability, it will not be responsible for mistakes which may be made in the transmission of messages, but will be held liable for the amount paid for sending the message; nor will it be responsible for the transmission of unimportant messages from whatever cause they may arise, nor for delays arising from interruptions in the working of its lines, or from any other Company, over whose lines a message is to be sent to reach the place of destination. All messages will be valued as received up to the point of the above conditions.</p>	
<b>E. CREIGHTON, Sup't, Omaha, N. T.</b>	<b>J. H. WADE, Pres't, C.</b>
<p>Col Summers          Ft Kearney <sup>By</sup> Telegraph from Plum Creek Aug 8<sup>th</sup>          Send company of          men as quick as God can          send them one hundred Indian          in sight firing on ox train</p>	

Courtesy Nebraska Prairie Museum, Holdrege, NE

**Telegram sent from Plum Creek Station on the morning of Aug. 8, 1864,  
while Plum Creek raid was occurring**



Courtesy Nebraska Prairie Museum, Holdrege, NE

**Plum Creek Massacre monument, originally erected in 1991 by the Phelps County Nebraska Historical Society**

message but inexplicitly delayed at least two hours before sending eighty soldiers out, and the command did not arrive at the site until ten o'clock that night, walking the horses for five hours and taking two hours to prepare dinner. He was strongly criticized in the *Omaha Republican* on August 19, 1864, for his slow response.

Some accounts say there were thirteen freighters killed, but careful analysis of the Indian depredation

claims filed for losses in the attack make it more likely only eleven men were murdered.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the dead, one woman was taken captive, as well as a nine-year-old boy, Danny Marble. Nineteen-year-old Nancy Fletcher Morton was married to Thomas Frank Morton, who was killed. Both Danny and Nancy were eventually rescued.

Michael Kelly was named as one of the victims in an early newspaper account of the massacre; however, depredation claims show no such name, although there was a man, Michael Tully, who was killed. Tully was likely the person named Kelly in one of the first accounts of the massacre, in the Omaha *Nebraskian*, on August 17, 1864:

*The names of those certainly killed are Charles [William] Iliff, Marble and boy [Danny Marble was captured, not killed], Smith and Smith's partner all of Council Bluffs; Wm Fletcher; Colorado; and five others not known. Six wagons loaded with corn and machinery from St. Joe, belonging to Michael Kelly, and outfit belonging [to] E. F. Morton from Sidney, was destroyed....*

The depredation claim of Ann Marble says that her husband William's wagon was part of a four-train freight excursion, with William driving one wagon, James Smith driving another, William, not Charles, Iliff driving the third wagon, and Mr. St. Clair driving the fourth wagon.<sup>4</sup> That leaves seven other wagons in the train. Four of those wagons belonged to the freighting firm

of Morton and Pratt, hauling goods to Denver. Thomas Morton was in charge of that train, and three freighters drove the remaining wagons.<sup>5</sup> In one Morton depredation claim those freighters are not named; however, in another statement from an earlier filed depredation claim, a copy kept by Morton's widow and later donated to the Dawson County Historical Society, Nancy Morton names two of the three freighters (in addition to her husband) as her brother, William Fletcher, and a cousin, John Fletcher. The third driver is unnamed.<sup>6</sup> With eight wagons thus belonging to the Morton and Marble trains, each hired by others to haul freight into Denver, that only leaves three other freighters making up the massacred party. The *Nebraskian* article falsely stated six wagons belonged to a fictional Michael Kelly. And, as will be seen, the three other unaccounted wagons come from other men named in separate depredation claims.

Several years after the raid Margaret Joy filed a claim on behalf of her brother, Thomas Harmon, who she said was one of the teamsters killed. She confirms eleven men died, and stated that an unnamed married couple was with the eleven-man train—thus making the train on the morning of the attack twelve wagons—but the unnamed couple had started their wagon earlier and managed to make it to the station of Laurence Hays (the claim states Hays was the owner of Plum Creek Station) just before the rest of the train was attacked. Like Lt. Bone, they witnessed the killings from the station.<sup>7</sup> The couple then went on to Denver. In a later, undated account of the attack, Nancy Morton said that



*Courtesy Nebraska Prairie Museum, Holdrege, NE*

**Thomas Frank Morton, husband of captive Nancy Morton, was killed at the Plum Creek massacre Aug. 8, 1864**

the night before the raid, nine other wagons joined her husband's train, which she said consisted of just three wagons—not four as noted earlier. With nine other wagons joining her husband's train, this confirms a total of twelve wagons in the party.<sup>8</sup> But only eleven wagons were attacked on August 8, thus supporting the statement in the Joy depredation claim that one wagon escaped the attack. This is further confirmed in the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News* on August 17, 1864, identifying the fortunate woman as the wife of Thomas Smith:

*Mrs. Thos. Smith, who was in the midst of the Plum Creek massacre, and escaped as if by a miracle, relates many instances of most horrible barbarity. The first was the*

*murder of a settler at whose door she stopped for a drink of water. After bringing it, the man handed her a letter with the request to mail it at the next post office. As he turned toward his door, a rod distant, he was met by a savage who struck him down and in an instant had taken his scalp.*

The paper does not say how she escaped being caught in the massacre. But in an earlier article in the *Rocky Mountain News*, August 9, it was reported via telegraph that Mrs. Thos. Smith and the ("colored") wife of J. G. Smith were captured. Both husbands were in Denver and upon hearing this, they immediately left for Plum Creek, when shortly after, "word came of the safety of both wives. They were at Plum Creek and had escaped the attack altogether."

Three other depredation claims name two other men killed, which leaves only one freighter unnamed, and that is most likely the unnamed freighter with the Morton train. One of the claims clears up the confusion between the name Kelly and Tully, likely demonstrating the *Nebraskanian* article was mistaken in noting one of the victims was Michael Kelly. It was Michael Tully who was killed, and his wagon was part of a two-wagon party, not a six-wagon train. Elizabeth Tully filed a claim on behalf of her murdered husband. Michael Tully was carrying a ton of freight into Denver, contracted by Woolworth and Barton, for the merchants Woolworth and Moffat.<sup>9</sup> The merchants operated a stationery and bookstore in Denver that stayed in

business until 1872. The claim filed by Woolworth and Moffat lists in detail all of the items being freighted and lost in the wagons of Tully and Peter Dolan.<sup>10</sup>

Some accounts say all the wagons were either burned or destroyed, but to the contrary, Tully's wagon apparently was not damaged. It was brought to Fort Kearney and returned to Elizabeth. Her claim was for her husband's personal contents, including two mules, showing that Tully's wagon was not as weighted down as other wagons requiring four mules to pull freight. Tully's body was recognized for the ring he wore which was still on his finger when his body was found. It was a Pikes Peak gold ring.<sup>11</sup>

Tully's freighting partner was Peter Dolan. What is interesting about Dolan is that his freight bill was pilfered by the warriors and recovered in an incident at Summit Springs, south of Valley Station, Colorado Territory, one month before the November 29, 1864 Sand Creek massacre. Captain Daniel Nichols, of Company D, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Colorado Cavalry, wrote of the incident in an affidavit in Tully's depredation claim:

*... on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 1864, my command had a fight with a band of Cheyenne Indians, 8 miles from Valley Station, led by a chief called Big Wolf. Twelve Indians were killed in that fight, among them said chief. I took from the pocket of said chief, an annexed bill of lading, and other bills of lading and papers which were filed in the office of the Governor of Colorado. The bills ...*

*comprise a bill of lading signed by Peter Dolan acknowledging the reception of certain boxes from Woolworth and Barton, St. Joseph, Missouri, to be delivered to Woolworth and Moffat at Denver, dated July 22d, 1864.<sup>12</sup>*

This fight near Valley Station was at White Butte Creek—a stream that runs off the ponds at Summit Springs near present-day Sterling, Colorado. It was a controversial fight. Morse Coffin, a soldier present, later wrote that the Indians were occupants of two lodges caught sleeping at sunrise. Coffin said ten Indians were killed but of those, only four were warriors, two of them quite young. In addition, four females were killed and two babies. The killing of the women and children haunted Coffin:

*One of these [women] was killed with her feet in a pool of water, and bent over her child as if to shield it, and as we came up it opened its eyes and looked up at us. I said "Boys, don't kill it, it is too bad," etc., but one of the guides (glad it was not a soldier) came up and coolly shot it, at the same time making a remark not indicative of pity. I strongly denounced this part of the work, using cusswords.<sup>13</sup>*

It should be clear that this war on the plains had atrocities on both sides, each event fueling similar animosity.

The names of the dead freighters at Plum Creek can now



*Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society*

### **Nancy Jane Morton at the time of her wedding**

be named but one. There is a hint of who the unnamed man might be, the final unnamed freighter on August 8; however, the depredation claim naming the deceased man contains no details. Olive Lyon filed a claim for the loss of one "cow" killed and another "cow" stolen at Plum Creek on August 8. In the claim, Olive is listed as the administrator of F. P. Thomas, who was deceased. Unfortunately, with no details accompanying the claim, it is unknown if Thomas was killed driving a wagon at Plum Creek. If he was killed at Plum Creek, then Thomas is the name of the eleventh victim.<sup>14</sup> If it was Thomas, he might have been carrying goods for John Nye, as Nye's Indian depredation claim – in addition to his losses August 7 on the Little Blue – reports one wagon of general merchandise goods lost at Plum Creek.<sup>15</sup>

There is yet another person who filed a claim for losses at the Plum Creek massacre, but he was not present. William Baker filed a



**Nine-year-old Danny Marble, as his picture would have looked when cut out from the rescued captives picture by Laura Roper to send to Danny's mother in Iowa, as Laura promised she would do**

*Courtesy  
Nebraska State  
Historical Society*

claim for losing personal contents in one wagon. The freight contained all of his family possessions. He had just finished working at Cottonwood Station [Springs] and had contracted to have his family possessions freighted into Denver. He had been living at Cottonwood with his wife, a daughter twenty and two children. The only thing he said he recovered was the family Bible and a cane, which he found on the ground at the Plum Creek massacre site three days after the raid. Unfortunately, he did not name who was in charge of the wagon, or if his goods were carried with other freight. His transported goods could have been in either the Morton or the Marble caravans. Investigation of his claim determined he had extensively overvalued his loss at \$3,581, when at best his loss amounted to only \$600. Overvaluation of losses

was common in depredation claims.<sup>16</sup>

There is one more detail to cover before bringing this tragic story to a close. What happened to the five captives taken on the Little Blue August 7, and the two captives taken the next day at Plum Creek? There is evidence the captives included an unnamed fifth child taken in the Little Blue raids, and that child was later killed in the Indian village. Nancy Morton said in her earliest account for her depredation claim, in a sworn affidavit, filed less than four months after her rescue, that there were five children—not the presumed number of four—as well as three female adults captured along the Little Blue and Plum Creek. Thus, in addition to Ambrose Asher, Danny Marble, William and Lucinda Eubanks, there apparently was a fifth child taken.<sup>17</sup> This number is further supported with an account recorded in 1870, taken from what Nancy shared with Sarah Larimer at Fort Laramie, where she was delivered at her rescue in late January 1865. She told Sarah that among the captives was a little girl, seven years old, either taken from a home or a wagon train at the same time as the attacks along the Little Blue and Plum Creek. The girl terribly missed her mother and cried constantly, to the point that, not long after her capture, an Indian set her aside from Nancy and pierced her heart with an arrow, killing her instantly.<sup>18</sup>

The five captives taken August 7 and two captives August 8 were eventually rescued in three separate instances, beginning with Laura Roper, Isabell (Belle) Eubanks, Ambrose Asher and Danny Marble, recovered five weeks after their capture. The

opportunity for their release began when Black Kettle in early September sent two letters, carried by different couriers, saying he had seven prisoners the chiefs were willing to exchange for peace. One letter was written by George Bent and the other by Edmund Guerrier, both half-breed young men—white father and Indian mother—who lived in both the white and Indian worlds. The letters were identical, but it was the letter written by Bent that was brought by three Indians, two males and a female, to Major Wynkoop at Fort Lyon.<sup>19</sup> One Eye—later killed at Sand Creek—was the older warrior and Eagle Head—Minimic—was the younger. One Eye's wife accompanied him. Taken under armed escort near Fort Lyon, the three Cheyenne were brought to Major Wynkoop inside the fort. From his interview, Wynkoop felt the sincerity of the invitation for peace. Importantly, Black Kettle said “We have seven prisoners of yours which we are willing to give up, providing you give up yours.”<sup>20</sup>

Wynkoop immediately made arrangements to bring about 150 soldiers with him to meet Black Kettle at his village more than 100 miles northeast of Fort Lyon. He got the four prisoners above mentioned, brought them to Fort Lyon and soon after delivered them to Denver, bringing with him Black Kettle and six Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs, who then met with Governor Evans and Colonel John M. Chivington, in an unsuccessful peace council. The four rescued captives were boarded and cared for until arrangements were made to return them to their families.

Laura Roper soon went back to



*Courtesy George Ulbrich, Lawrence, KS*

**Veronica Ulbrich was captured along the Little Blue on July 24, 1867 when she was just thirteen. Her account of her brutal Indian captivity allows one to understand how harsh such captivity really was**

Nebraska and rejoined her family. She later shared some of her experiences while in captivity. Like the young girl that Nancy Morton said the Indians killed because of her incessant crying, Laura said Isabelle almost had a similar fate. She recalled “an Indian grabbed her [Isabelle] by the hair and I thought he was going to kill her, and I ran and grabbed the knife and they just laughed and laughed and called me, ‘brave squaw’.” From then on, she kept Isabella as if she were her own daughter.<sup>21</sup> Laura’s written

recollections did not talk of any cruelty or unnecessary hardships, an arena of remembrance she did not wish to enter. But she did share a bit about who captured her:

*I learned that they were Cheyennes and Arapahoes. The Cheyenne chief was Black Kettle and the Arapahoe chief was Left Hand. The one that captured me was a Cheyenne and kept me for about a month when he traded me to the Arapahoe for 5 ponies. The Arapahoe that bought me, his name was Neva. He had a brother named Notany. Both could speak good English.<sup>22</sup>*

There are no known documents where Laura Roper tells of the hardships of her captivity, specifically of her sexual abuse by the warriors. But it did occur, and it was customarily done among all female captives of this era of the Plains Indian wars. A hint of Laura's trauma is found in another depredation claim, for a similar captivity along the Little Blue River near present-day Fairbury, Nebraska, on July 24, 1867. The raid was led by Cheyenne Chief Turkey Leg, whose warriors captured four children of a family named Campbell, and two children of Peter Ulbrich. Peter's son was shot and killed shortly after his capture. The other five captives were exchanged six weeks later, after the military had captured some younger Indians while chasing Turkey Leg's warriors.<sup>23</sup>

Peter Ulbrich had a hearing investigating his losses more than twenty years after his daughter was

released. He asked for secrecy and said that in order to protect his daughter's reputation he had misrepresented her age as being too young to be mistreated when in captivity, and that her husband of less than two years was not aware of the truth. He wrote of fear if the truth came out: "It might cause trouble in the family, similar to the Roper family in Beatrice if Mr. Mengin [Veronica's husband] should find that my daughter was a subject of the Indian's bestiality."<sup>24</sup>

The fact that there was still social trouble more than twenty-five years after Laura Roper's captivity is indicative that she was mistreated. That mistreatment included sexual abuse. Social ostracism shamed rescued victims when returned to society via a Victorian-influenced view that such abused females were permanently damaged. Veronica Ulbrich, only thirteen when captured by the Cheyenne, testified how bad it was. No doubt it would have been Laura's experience too:

*I did not get enough to eat, suffered from thirst, had to wash and do all other work; sometimes they whipped me, sometimes they wanted or threatened to kill me. Soon one Indian, soon another belonging to the band forcibly violated my body, causing me immense pain and anguish thereby. This was almost a daily and nightly occurrence, which would have killed me, if I had not been liberated almost exhausted.<sup>25</sup>*

Laura had to live with social shame after she was released and



reunited with her family. But she did live a long life, married and had several children. In her final years she revisited her capture site, almost sixty-five years after her capture, and it seems by then she was welcomed back in the white community.<sup>26</sup> She married twice, first to Elijah Soper in 1866, and had four children. But soon after her last child she abruptly left her husband and ran off with who became her next husband, James Vance. With him she had five more children. Her second husband died in 1895. Laura remained a widow until she died on March 11, 1930.<sup>27</sup>

The story of the three children rescued by Major Wynkoop is one of sadness. Shortly after being brought to Denver, the children were boarded together in town. Only seven-year old Ambrose Asher survived to return back to his grandmother and mother in Missouri. He married as a young man and remained in Missouri until his untimely death of malaria fever October 6, 1894.<sup>28</sup>

Isabelle (Belle) Eubanks was never reunited with her mother. In fact, she never left Denver, dying March 18, 1865. Mollie Dorsey Sanford, a young newlywed who came to Denver from Nebraska in 1860, kept a journal early in her marriage. She wrote in September 1864 that the four released captives were kept in her house for a time. Mollie recorded that:

*Miss Roper was subjected to all the indignities usually given white captives, and the children were brutally treated by the squaws. The mother [Lucinda Eubanks] of little Bell was taken away by some distant band, and the poor*

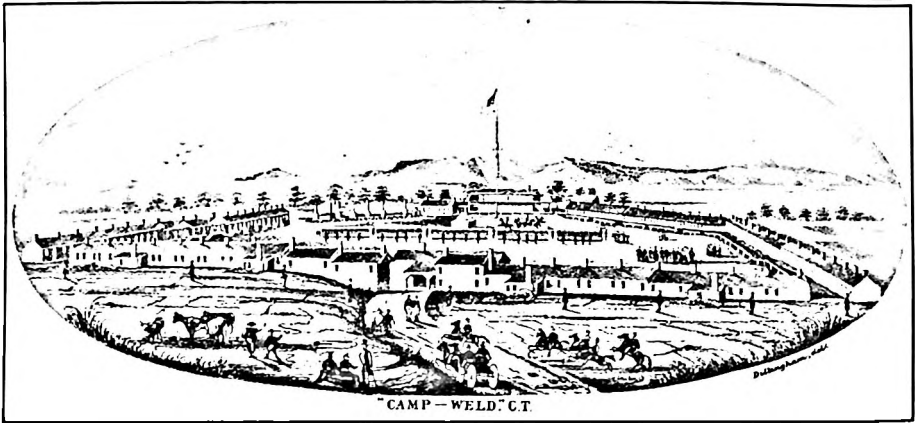


*Courtesy Nebraska Prairie Museum, Holdrege, NE*

**Nancy Morton, taken shortly after her release from captivity and dressed in clothes forced on her by her captors**

*little things left. She saw her father butchered, and only three years old, can and does recount the whole tragedy. I took her, thinking I might adopt her, but I could not stand it. She would wake from a sound sleep, and sit up in bed with staring eyes, and go in detail over the whole thing. She was scarred all over with the prints of arrow points that the squaws tortured her with. Dr. Brondsall has adopted her, where she will have medical care and good care otherwise.<sup>29</sup>*

The care of Dr. Brondsall, sadly, was not successful. The *Rocky Mountain News* reported Belle's death six months after her release, on March



Courtesy Denver Public Library

### Camp Weld near Denver as it appeared Sept. 28, 1864 when the Indian chiefs came to town seeking peace

21, 1865, confirming arrow wounds as a cause of her death: "DIED: In this city, on the 18<sup>th</sup> inst., of inflammation of the brain, MARY [Isabelle] EUBANKS, aged 4 years. This was the girl captured from [by] the Indians, on the Arkansas [Little Blue], last fall. Her death was caused indirectly from three arrow wounds in different parts of her body."

The fate of Daniel Marble is equally sad. He developed typhoid fever at Camp Weld shortly after the captives were brought to Denver, dying on November 9, 1864, just five weeks after being brought to town. The papers in his mother's Indian depredation claim tell a more complete story of what happened.<sup>30</sup> A soldier, W. F. Smith, accompanied Wynkoop's troopers to the eastern plains to receive the captives Black Kettle held. He took special interest in nine-year-old Danny. He wrote to Danny's mother Ann and told her about the affection he and other soldiers had for the young lad. Smith wrote a second letter on October 12, from Fort Lyon, after Danny had been

delivered to Denver, and told her how Danny said his dad was freighting corn to Denver when he was killed at Plum Creek and Danny captured. Smith wrote that the prisoners were released between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of September:

*I took the boy in my care when he came to us. I brought him to Ft. Lyon C.T. Company D 1<sup>st</sup> Col. Cav. [Captain Silas Soule, commanding] gave him \$72½ when he left and I gave him as good clothes as I could get for him at this place. I wanted to keep him till I could hear from you but the Maj. [Wynkoop] went to Denver and wanted he should go so I sent the money for him to Denver to be used for himself. He was well pleased with me and wanted to stay with me. I would been glad to of kept him but I am in hopes he will get home this winter. I think he will. Please write and tell me he gets home safe and if he is not at home let me no if*

*you have heard from him.*

Mrs. Marble wrote back to Smith again and he answered her letter on October 24:

*Mrs. Marble it is with the greatest of pleasure I take my pen in hand to answer yours of the 9<sup>th</sup> though I expect that Daniel will be at home at least I hope so. Daniel left me and went to Denver in September though Daniel hated to leave me mighty bad. I felt sorrow for the poor fellow. He told them he wasn't going to go unless I went with him but I couldn't go with him. I took a looking to the boy when I first saw him on the Smoki hill. There was an old squaw made him a kind of a coat and I tried to get him to take it with him but he said he didn't want any thing to do with any thing they had. It was the Indians took him prisoner and some Arapahoes with them.... I don't consider I could do to much for such a boy as Daniel or any person in his situation. I halve got an uncle that started across the plains and havent heard from him since August 8. I expect he was murdered with them red faced rascals. If Daniel has got home tell me what he says about Smith ... when the capt. came back he told me my boy had gone to his mother or was soon to and I rested contented about him. I was expecting to hear from Daniel him self when I heard from you but was disappointed in not hearing from him. He*

*said when he got home he would halve you to write to me.*

Nancy Morton later mentioned the suffering Danny endured. She said he was whipped by Bull Bear:

*The old chief Big Bear [Bull Bear] which took Danny whipped the little fellow severely because he too was crying ... While I was sitting here suffering and trying to comfort little Dan who was crying like his heart would break. Several warriors came near us then they would toss scalps into the air; and laugh with all the vengeance they could procure. Then Old Chief Big Crow came up and threw a scalp into my face which I soon recognized was taken from my own dear brother's head and their clothes were still wet from the lifeblood of my dear ones lying upon the battlefield.<sup>31</sup>*

No doubt Danny recognized the scalp and bloody clothes of his dead father too. When rescued, he desperately wanted to go home to his mother in Iowa. But it wasn't to be. Sometime in late September, perhaps immediately after arriving, Danny came down ill, and it turned out to be typhoid fever. Learning her son was ill, Mrs. Marble had written to a doctor in Denver, H. W. McClellan, and inquired when Danny would be coming home. McClellan wrote her back, receiving her letter on October 18, "Your little boy is in Denver but unable to travel, he is sick with the typhoid fever & has been for the past three weeks but is now



Courtesy Denver Public Library

**Picture of Cheyenne and Arapaho Chiefs in Denver for a peace conference at Camp Weld, Sept. 28, 1864**

recovering. I went and saw those who have him in charge & he will be sent to you as soon as he is able to travel by some safe way & kind person this, you can depend on."

Mrs. Morton answered his letter, which McClellan received on November 8. Four days later he wrote Danny's mother to report the sad news. Danny had died the day after he received her second letter.

*I have to disclose to you a sorrowful report. Your little boy was taken to the military hospital [Camp Weld] three days from the time he took sick and was attended by the surgeon of the hospital for some time of four weeks & died on last Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of*

*November ..., I made frequent inquiries about him and the surgeon always told me that he was doing well. When I heard of his death I was much surprised, I hope he had good attention. I would have been glad to attended to him if they had consented but the military authorities thought it best to have him taken to the hospital as boarding was costing so much when he took sick. I much regret that you have just this so great a loss, but he is gone and you must be reconciled to your fate which is a bitter one though God does all things well and we have to submit. I hope that God will support you in*

*your sad afflictions.*

Danny's mother then wrote Laura Roper, who had returned to her family in Nebraska, and informed her of Danny's passing. Laura wrote back on November 28:

*I received your letter yesterday, was very sorry to hear of the death of little Daniel. I was to see him the night before I left Denver and the dr sayed he thought he was out of danger. Dan wanted me to stay with [him] he sayed that he would soon be well and then he would go home to see his mother. ... I have a picture of all of the children. I will see if I can get another taken from them. If I can't I will cut Dan's [face] out and send it to you. I hate to cut the picture but I will do it if I can't get another for I know that you must feel very sad having [lost] him yet it was from those Indians ... I will write you again in a few days and then I will send you the picture. Good bye from your friend Laura Roper.<sup>32</sup>*

Where Danny Marble was buried in Denver has apparently been lost to history. What was at first happy news to Danny's mother, Ann, that her young Daniel had been rescued, in the end turned into bittersweet news. She never saw him again. All she had to remember her son was a picture of his face, cut from the portrait picture taken of the four captives when brought to Denver.

Nancy Morton was the next captive rescued. She was exchanged by

traders and brought into Fort Laramie on January 30, 1864.<sup>33</sup> She gave a sworn affidavit of her captivity, taken on May 11, 1865:

*It was on the morning of August 8 1864, that we were then and there attacked by about sixty-five Indians on horseback. The Indians commenced firing on us with guns & with bows and arrows and killed the whole party except a boy about ten years old and myself. I was wounded in two different places, one arrow piercing me in the right side and the other in the thigh: the Indians then secured the boy Daniel Marble and myself, cut the harness from the mules & horses and after loading the animals with all they could they burned the wagons and all the goods. I was then put upon the back of a mule that had never been rode and started in a Southerly direction and traveled about ten miles and camped on the bank of a small pond or lake. When I arrived at the lake I saw a young white man there and he approached me and spoke to me and said his name was Smith, and he, Smith, further told me that the Indians were Cheyennes and that Bull-Bear was chief of that band. When we were on the route to the lake the Indians also told me that they were Cheyennes. We traveled two days and the most of two nights and came to an Indian town of about 400 lodges. I was taken to a lodge*

*and then saw another Indian who they told me was the great war chief of all the tribes and they called his name Flat Foot or Old Medicine Man. Soon after we arrived at this village the chief who captured the train and took me prisoner by the name of Bull Bear left and took with him about three hundred warriors and I did not see him again for about three months. When I arrived at the lake I was compelled to take all my clothes off which were used and destroyed by the Indians & I was furnished with a buckskin suit which I was compelled to wear that and similar ones during my stay with them. While I remained in this village a company of military officers and soldiers came there having with them several wagons and one cannon and when they went away they took one of the female prisoners with them and whose name was Miss Lory Roper. There was also one other female captive with the Indians besides Miss Roper & myself and her name was Mrs. Eubanks and five children. I was not allowed to see or speak to any of the officers or soldiers and I do not know as they knew that Mrs. Eubanks & children or myself was there.<sup>34</sup>*

When Nancy said she was placed on a mule that had never been ridden, she failed to say how she was secured. Warriors commonly secured captives by stretching their feet down

on each of the horse's side and then tying them tightly together under the belly, as was earlier noted in the statement of Ambrose Asher.<sup>35</sup> They would do the same with the prisoner's hands fastened tightly under the horse's neck. This ensured the captive would not fall off as the warriors galloped away. Thus secured, the prisoner would barely be able to lift his/her head to see anything. This kind of tying down resulted in much pain and hardship. One can imagine how hard it was for Nancy to be thus tied to a wild mule that would continually buck when not being run, compounded by her wounds. Each animal would have a harness placed upon it and the leather straps usually tied to the tail of another animal such that one warrior could secure the final animal to his horse's tail, and in this way, he could carry along several captured horses and mules as well as captives. When the Indians would stop to water their horses and satisfy their own thirst, it was common that they ignored their captive's needs. Instead, captives stayed tightly secured on a horse until arrival at the Indian village.

There are some interesting statements in Nancy's sworn affidavit. The man named Smith was Jack Smith, who was later murdered at Sand Creek, shot by soldiers after the battle. His father was a well-known trader, John Smith, who had married into the Cheyenne tribe, as was fellow trader William Bent. But more revealing than that is Nancy's claim that Bull Bear led the party who did the murders at Plum Creek. Bull Bear was a noted Southern Cheyenne tribal chief and leader of a band of Dog Soldiers, the most elite warrior society of the Cheyenne. More

importantly, Bull Bear was one of the council chiefs who came with Major Wynkoop to Denver in late September to participate in the Camp Weld Conference. Thus, Black Kettle brought participants of the deadly Nebraska raids with him to Denver seeking peace, deceiving Governor Evans and others that the Indians with him were not involved in the deadly Nebraska raids, as his letter received by Wynkoop indicated. While Black Kettle did not participate in the raids, to be sure, obviously his younger warriors associated with Bull Bear's Dog Soldier men did. As confirmed in Laura Roper's statement, Bull Bear would have brought his captives back to the village where Black Kettle's tribe was camped.

White Antelope, the principal chief killed at Sand Creek and also one of the Indians with Black Kettle at Camp Weld, admitted to Governor Evans at Camp Weld that Cheyenne warriors were responsible for the attack at Plum Creek and the taking of the two captives. Governor Evans: "I suppose you acknowledge the depredations on the Little Blue, as you have the prisoners there taken in your possession?" White Antelope: "We (the Cheyennes) took two prisoners west of Fort Kearney, and destroyed the trains."<sup>36</sup> Nancy Morton



*Boose. Left Hand. White Wolf.  
Black Kettle. White Antelope, Bull Bear, Two  
Chiefs of Arapahoe, Sioux, Cheyenne Sioux & Arapaho*

*Courtesy Denver Public Library*

**Picture of Black Kettle, White Antelope, Bull Bear and other chiefs at Camp Weld conference. No peace was secured, setting the stage for the attack on Black Kettle's village along Sand Creek near Ft. Lyon, CO, Nov. 29, 1864. The subsequent massacre of women and children by a few troopers of the 3rd Colorado Cavalry put a dark stain on Colorado's military history and fueled retaliatory Indian raids that continued until the Cheyenne were defeated on July 11, 1869 at Summit Springs, near present-day Sterling, CO**

also said she was in the village when the other prisoners were released to Wynkoop, which contradicted, again, what Black Kettle is said to have reported. The *Weekly Rocky Mountain News* on September 28 noted that

the reason Wynkoop was unable to secure the remaining captives was because "they were with a tribe on the Republican over two hundred miles from us." That was a lie, and implicates Black Kettle's insincerity for wanting peace. But so too, from Black Kettle's perspective, he was caught at an impasse between two worlds, the world of his people and the world of the white man. He was also caught between those in his tribe who wanted peace and those who wanted war. Perhaps, in not being truthful, Black Kettle saw no other option but to distort the truth to Governor Evans.

In her statement Nancy did not mention any sexual abuse. It was not an experience that anyone wanted to see discussed. She did declare in another sworn affidavit that she "would not willingly, here or elsewhere, reveal all the abuses heaped upon [me] by the said Indians, while a prisoner, but will say that [I] suffered all the indignities that could be offered and carried into execution, not only by one of said tribe, but by many of them."<sup>37</sup> In another statement her attorney said: "The case of the captivity of Mrs. Morton I will add was one of hardship she having undergone great wrongs and sufferings at the hands of her barbarous captors."<sup>38</sup> This conforms with what Veronica Ulbrich testified was her experience.

Nancy did not stay a widow for long. On November 19, 1865 she married George Stevens, had four children, three of whom reached adulthood. She died August 24, 1912.<sup>39</sup>

Lucinda Eubanks and her boy William stayed among the Indians the longest of the Nebraska captives. She was able to keep her nursing son

with her throughout her ordeal, which extended through the winter until their rescue near Fort Laramie in early May 1865. On June 22, she made a statement to Lieutenant Jeremiah H. Triggs of the 7th Iowa Cavalry. She said the warriors who captured her were Cheyenne. When Lucy was brought to the Cheyenne village, tied to a horse as earlier described, she was soon taken to the lodge of an old chief whose name she had forgotten:

*He forced me, by the most terrible threats and menaces, to yield my person to him. He treated me as his wife. He then traded me to Two Face, a Sioux, who did not treat me as his wife, but forced me to do all menial labor done by squaws, and he beat me terribly. Two Face traded me to Black Foot, (Sioux,) who treated me as his wife, and because I resisted him his squaws abused and ill-used me. Black Foot also beat me unmercifully, and the Indians generally treated me as though I was a dog, on account of my showing so much detestation towards Black Foot. Two Face traded for me again. I then received a little better treatment. I was better treated among the Sioux than the Cheyennes – that is, the Sioux gave me more to eat. When with the Cheyennes I was often hungry.... During the winter the Cheyennes came to buy me and the child, for the purpose of burning us, but Two Face would not let them have me. During the winter we were*



*on the North Platte the Indians were killing the whites all the time and running off their stock. They would bring in the scalps of the whites and show them to me and laugh about it. They ordered me frequently to wean my baby, but I always refused; for I felt convinced if he was weaned they would take him from me, and I would never see him again. They took my daughter from me just after we were captured, and I never saw her after. I have seen the man today who had her; his name is Davenport. He lives in Denver. He received her from a Dr. Smith. She was given up by the Cheyennes to Major Wynkoop, but from injuries received while with the Indians, she died last February [March].... While encamped on the North Platte, Elston came to the village, and I went with him and Two Face to Fort Laramie. I have heard it stated that Two Face's son had saved my life. I never made any such statement ... and I think if my life had been in danger he would not have troubled himself about it.<sup>40</sup>*

Pine Ridge Indian agent Valentine McGillicuddy acknowledged in nearly all the depredation claims filed for the August 7, 1864, attacks that Two Face was a Sioux leader of a mixed band of predatory Indians and was one of the primary leaders of the raids. Yet others report him as not Sioux, but rather half Arapaho and half Cheyenne - and hence the name Two Face. He

was one of the main chiefs involved in the August 7 raids, along with Big Thunder, Dock Billy and Roaring Wind.<sup>41</sup> After Lucy's release she spoke with the commanding officer at Fort Laramie, Colonel Thomas Moonlight, telling him of her cruel ordeal. Soon after, Two Face and Black Foot came to the fort, apparently thinking that since they allowed for Lucy's release they would be welcomed at the fort, where they freely mingled before hostilities had broken out. But once Moonlight heard from Lucy of her ordeal, he ordered the two Indians arrested. A trial was soon held, Lucy testifying of her mistreatment. The warriors were quickly found guilty. The sentence was hanging, and both men were promptly hanged, on May 26, 1865, just outside the fort. Their dead bodies hung from the gallows for weeks, suspended in iron chains. For the Indians, this double hanging simmered long-standing animosity; for Lucy and others, it represented justice.<sup>42</sup>

Lucy married two times after her release. In 1866 she married James Bartholomew. He died sometime in the 1880s and then in 1893 she married Dr. D. F. Atkinson. He died in 1907, and Lucy lived as a widow until her death in McCune, Kansas, on April 4, 1913. Her son William lived until 1935 and died in Weld County, Colorado, and is buried in Eaton. He changed his last name from Eubanks to Eubank.<sup>43</sup>

In closing, it should be obvious it was the knowledge of these murderous raids in Nebraska—quickly brought to Denver by both stage and telegraph—that prompted Governor Evans' call for the Third Volunteer Colorado Cavalry. These murderous

August raids, more so than the earlier June 11 murder of Nathan Hungate and his young family on Running Creek east of Denver, crystalized the citizens of Colorado in knowing they were in the midst of a violent Indian war and a strong response was needed. Unfortunately, the notorious killings that occurred later that fall upon Black Kettle's women and children at Sand Creek following the battle, on November 29, only brought embarrassment to the citizens of Colorado and five more years of war. Had the 3<sup>rd</sup> Colorado Cavalry been led by anyone other than John Milton Chivington, perhaps there would be a have been a different history than happened. We will never know.

### Endnotes

1. Jeff Broome, *Massacre Along the Little Blue, August 7, 1864 Part One* (The Denver Westerners Roundup, Vol LXXV, NO. 3, May – June 2019), 3.
2. Slater, Sandra and Simpson, Patti, *Plum Creek The Rest of the Story* (Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing, 2014), 41.
3. See, e.g., Ronald Becher, *Massacre along the Medicine Road A Social History of the Indian War of 1864 in Nebraska Territory* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1999), 452. It is appropriate to list the victims as being murdered and not killed. This is because few of the men, if any, were armed. It was common among freighters on the road to Denver, prior to the outbreak of August 7-8, to venture along the road without arms. Numerous Indian depredation claims from this era show as few as two or three pistols and perhaps one rifle ("gun") among

a freight train of a dozen wagons. Of course, after the war was launched, it was a fool to enter the wagon roads without arms.

4. Ann Marble Indian Depredation Claim, Record Group 75, no claim #. Entry 700, Box 9. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
5. Nancy Morton Indian Depredation Claim. Record Group 217. Settled Indian Accounts Entry 525, Box 1197, claim #7564. 1868. See also claim #1642, Record Group 75. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
6. Russ Czapslewski, *Captive of the Cheyenne* (Kearney, NE: Morris Publishing, 1993), Section One, 68.
7. Margaret Joy Indian Depredation Claim #4942. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. In another part of Joy's claim, she says Hays kept the government station in Rawling Springs, Wyoming Territory (in 1864 it was Dakota Territory, but Joy filed the claim in 1890), so it is unclear if Hays first had a station in Nebraska and another later in Wyoming. She says her brother Thomas was in charge of just one wagon and was unmarried.
8. Czapslewski, *Captive of the Cheyenne*, Section Two, 14.
9. Elizabeth Tully Indian Depredation Claim #1837 & 2497. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
10. Calvin C. Woolworth and David H. Moffat Indian Depredation Claim #4958. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Recently I was able to purchase online a book published in 1867, written by Bayard Taylor, *Colorado: A Summer Trip* (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam

and Son, 1867). On the front page is written "Compliments of Woolworth & Moffat." For a list of all the items lost, copied from the records of Woolworth and Barton, see Broome, *Cheyenne War Indian Raids on the Roads to Denver, 1864-1869* (Sterling and Sheridan, CO: Aberdeen Books and Logan County Historical Society, 2013), 102-104.

11. Becher says, without a citation, that one of the dead was a good-looking young man about 23. "A gold ring still remained on the fifth finger of one hand." Becher, *Massacre along the Medicine Road*, 266.

12. Elizabeth Tully Indian Depredation Claim #2497. The fight actually occurred on October 10.

13. Morse H. Coffin, *The Battle of Sand Creek* (Waco, TX: W.M. Morrison – Publisher, 1965), 8.

14. F. P. Thomas Indian Depredation Claim #3377. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

15. John Nye Indian Depredation Claim #4635. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

16. William Baker Indian Depredation Claim #2185. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

17. Morton Indian Depredation Claim #217. On May 11, 1865, Nancy swears under oath her statement, saying "There was also other female captives with the Indians besides Miss Roper and myself ... was Mrs. Eubanks and five children."

18. Sarah. L. Larimer, *The Capture and Escape; or, Life Among the Sioux* (Philadelphia, PA: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1870), 130-131.

19. E. W. Wynkoop to Governor Evans, September 2, 1864; S. G. Colley to Hon. John Evans. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1865), 233. Hyde, George E., *Life of George Bent*, ed., Savole Lottinville (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), 142. The original Bent letter is housed in the collections at the Colorado College Library College Room, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

20. Black Kettle to Major Colley. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1864*, 233. One of the seven captives was a woman named Mrs. Anna Snyder, who was captured by Arapaho warriors along the Arkansas River west of Fort Lyon August 14. Her husband and two other men were killed. Shortly after Bent left with Black Kettle's letter for peace, she had escaped, but was quickly caught and brought back to the village. She was then hanged, and accounts differ whether it was suicide or she was hung by an Indian. See Broome, *Cheyenne War*, 114-116.

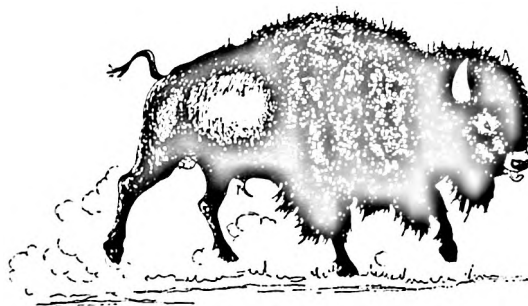
21. Laura Roper Vance, "Captured by Indians," 5. MS 221.5, Nucholls County, August 7, 1864. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

22. Laura Roper Vance, "Captured by Indians," 6. One should not assume that Laura was saying Black Kettle and Left Hand were with the Indians that captured her. That was not the case. She said she was captured by a party of six or seven warriors and soon joined a few more. But she was then brought to their joint village.

23. The incident is covered in Mark Van De Logt, *War Party in Blue Pawnee*

- Scouts in the U.S. Army* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 93-97. The author fails to note that Veronica Ulbrich was the female captive misidentified in earlier literature as a girl named Martin. For an account of the Campbell family, written by the oldest son, see John R. Campbell, "An Indian Raid of 1867," Albert Watkins, edited, *Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, Vol. XVII (Lincoln, NE: The Nebraska State Historical Society, 1913), 259-262.
24. Peter Ulbrich Indian Depredation Claim #6220. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
25. Peter Ulbrich Indian Depredation Claim #6220. Veronica's captivity lasted as long at the captives rescued by Wynkoop.
26. Becher, *Massacre along the Medicine Road*, 447. See also F. A. Sherzinger, "Visit of Mrs. Laura Roper Vance to spot where she was captured by the Indians, August 7, 1864" MS 221.5, Nucholls County, August 7, 1864. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.
27. Becher, *Massacre along the Medicine Road*, 427-428.
28. [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/search?firstname=ambrose&middlename=&lastname=asher&birthyear=&birthyearfilter=&deathyear=1895&deathyearfilter=before&location=C+alifornia%2C+Moniteau+County%2C+Missouri%2C+United+States+of+America&locationId=city\\_76100&memorialid=&datefilter=&orderby=&page=1#sr=27915925](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/search?firstname=ambrose&middlename=&lastname=asher&birthyear=&birthyearfilter=&deathyear=1895&deathyearfilter=before&location=C+alifornia%2C+Moniteau+County%2C+Missouri%2C+United+States+of+America&locationId=city_76100&memorialid=&datefilter=&orderby=&page=1#sr=27915925). Accessed March 1, 2019. See also obituary, *California Democrat* (Missouri), October 11, 1894.
29. Donald F. Danker, introduction,
- Mollie The Journal of Mollie Dorsey Sanford in Nebraska and Colorado Territories 1857-1866* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1959), 189-190.
30. Ann Marble Indian Depredation Claim, no number filed. All of the following quotations from letters comes from this claim.
31. Czapslewski, *Captive of the Cheyenne*, Section One, 109-110.
32. Ann Marble Indian Depredation Claim, no number filed. This last letter from Laura Roper corrects a long-held identity mistake in the picture of the four rescued captives taken after they were brought to Denver. It has always been assumed that since Danny was two years older than Ambrose, the bigger boy to the left of Laura in the picture was Danny Marble. However, from Laura's letter to Mrs. Marble we learn that she cut Danny's picture out from her own copy of the captives picture and sent it to Mrs. Marble. That original photograph was given to Margaret Coel by a granddaughter of Laura Roper to use in Coel's book on Chief Left Hand. See Margaret Coel, *Chief Left Hand Southern Arapaho* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 227. Now, for Danny's memory, historians can identify him correctly in the picture of the four captives.
33. Broome, *Cheyenne War*, 95.
34. Morton Indian Depredation Claim #217. Nancy's sworn affidavit begins by placing her memories in the third-person, e.g., "Mrs. Morton states..." It then turns into a first-person report, e.g., "I was then taken ..." I have changed the third person statements into first person statements in order to make her narrative consistently flow.

35. Broome, *Massacre Along the Little Blue*, 8.
36. John M. Carroll, Introduction, *The Sand Creek Massacre A Documentary History* (New York, NY: Sol Lewis, 1973), 39th Congress 2d Session Senate Ex. Doc. No. 26, "Report of the Secretary of War," 216.
37. Nancy Morton Indian Depredation Claim. Record Group 217.
38. Nancy Morton Indian Depredation Claim. Record Group 75.
39. Czaplewski, *Captive of the Cheyenne*, Section Two,
40. Carroll, Introduction, *The Sand Creek Massacre*." Appendix "The Chivington Massacre," 90-91 (179-180, bottom of page). It should be noted that Lucy made this statement at Fort Sedgwick, after leaving Fort Laramie, just three months after her daughter Belle had died in Denver. Apparently told Belle died in February when in fact she died in March, Lucy was aware at this early date that her daughter Belle did not survive her harsh captivity, even though she died under medical care five months after she was removed from her Indian captors. Isabelle was the last of the Eubanks family to die as a result of the raid on the Little Blue August 7, making her likely the 11<sup>th</sup> victim of the Eubanks extended family.
41. George Tritch Indian Depredation Claim #1174 & 3102. Record Group 123. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
42. Douglas McChristian, *Fort Laramie Military Bastion of the High Plains* (Norman, OK; The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2008), 201-207.
43. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37481366/william-joseph-eubank>. Accessed March 3, 2019.



# Over the Corral Rail

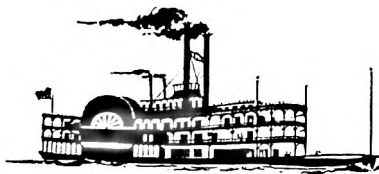
*Compiled by Ed Bathke. Please submit your items of news, etc. to Ed. Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the first month in the date of publication.*

## **Pikes Peak Posse Fourth Annual Summer Rendezvous**

August 4 is the date for the Summer Rendezvous, at the Colorado Springs landmark Union Printers Home. All Westerners are invited to join the Posse for the occasion. The dedication on May 12, 1892 of the Childs-Drexel Home for Union Printers marked the culmination of a dream pursued by union printers for over three decades. This handsome structure, originally 144 feet long, with 90-foot and 106-foot towers, provided room for 200 residents. Admissions from July 1892 to May 31, 1903 numbered 537. Since then there have been numerous modifications to the structure. These included extensive farming and a dairy herd for the self-sustaining operation. Eight-sided tents for TB patients were present here, similar to the many other TB facilities for which Colorado Springs was noted. At this Rendezvous the Posse will be able to visit this historic site as well as viewing the current operations.

A hundred years ago the medium for group presentations was the lantern slide, a 3.5x4-inch glass plate. In the 1920s the Secretary of the International Typographical Union traveled the circuit of union locals with a set of forty lantern slides, show printers what a portion of their monthly dues provided for them in the way of a retirement home and sanatorium. Western memorabilia collector Ed Bathke will be showing these slides, using a Keystone projector, vintage 1915.

Ed Bathke has been a Western history buff since his arrival in Colorado in 1960. He has been a member of the Denver Posse of Westerners since 1965 and was the first sheriff of the Pikes Peak Posse in 1977. He has presented numerous programs to the Pikes Peak Posse, as well as other Westerners posses and corrals, and historical societies. A native of Wisconsin with degrees in mathematics, he enjoyed a long career in developing scientific simulations for digital computers.





## Westerners Bookshelf



**The Steamboat Bertrand and Missouri River Commerce**, by Ronald R. Switzer. University of Oklahoma Press, 2013. 374 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Paperback, \$29.95.

Once in a while one comes across a book that provides a glimpse at a small intriguing thread of the miraculous cloth that is Western American history. Ronald Switzer's *The Steamboat Bertrand and Missouri River Commerce* is a well-crafted, enlightening and enjoyable example of such a glimpse.

The Missouri River steamboat era ran roughly from the 1840s through the 1860s, and played a larger role in opening the West than is widely recognized. Thousands of steamboats were constructed during this time and over 400 sank in the Missouri River. Carrying passengers and freight north from St. Louis to Fort Benton, Montana Territory was a risky business: seasonal, fraught with danger, and difficult to insure. The wooded banks upstream sent snags downstream. One of these submerged pointed trees holed the sternwheeler Bertrand about twenty miles north of Omaha on April 1, 1865. At the time, the vessel was carrying about 15,000 cubic feet of cargo headed for new communities in western Montana. The captain and pilot safely got the crew and twenty-five to forty passengers ashore and the steamboat's owners quickly launched a salvage operation, but called the workers off to another wreck before much of the cargo could be recovered. The Bertrand was soon mired in deep sand and silt. Over time, the Missouri River had at least five major channel shifts, and the remains were left buried in a cutoff meander. A pair of salvagers discovered the wreck in DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Nebraska in 1968.

Ronald Switzer wrote that he had three main purposes in mind for his book: 1) "Not simply to catalog & describe the artifacts, but to capture the invention, manufacturing, marketing, distribution and sale of these products and to trace something of the measures taken to get them to the frontier mining camps of Montana Territory," 2) "To capture new information about the private and social lives of the officers, crew, passengers and consignees... and to say something of the passengers' motivations for traveling to the relatively uncivilized mining towns of Montana," and 3) To "Place Bertrand in the context of its time and to examine its intended use and some of the technology and industry used in its manufacture. He accomplishes all three with an engaging style that keeps the pages quickly turning.

Beyond Switzer's main purposes and behind his narrative lies the nearly two million individual artifacts, 300,000 of which initially appeared to warrant stabilization and restoration for future study and exhibition. The rapid covering of the hull with silt and sand that compressed to tightly-packed blue clay sealed the contents from oxygen and created this intriguing time capsule. As soon as the goods were exposed and catalogued, they were resealed in polyethylene and taken to a

cool, moist storage room to await preservation and stabilization. A temporary field laboratory was quickly established in a garage bay at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge. With assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service design team, the first climate-controlled conservation laboratory was built on site. A staff was hired and trained for accessioning, cataloguing, photographing and preserving the rapidly deteriorating cargo. As of the 2013 publication date, this work continues at the laboratory. As a result of this project, research in conservation, preservation, and history of the era continues and a broad spectrum of experts continues to gain knowledge in their fields from the curation efforts for this collection. The preservation of artifacts that have been submerged in a fresh water environment is complex, and techniques continue to evolve for preserving textiles, paper, leather and other items that lose stability when exposed to a free-oxygen atmosphere.

Switzer conveys his remarkable experience, which was one yearned for by many historians and scientists. He came into a large, complex project early in his career, under the guidance of a kindred spirit, Jerome Petsche, who was the principal archaeologist and historian responsible for the excavation of the boat and its cargo. They shared the journey of gathering material regarding the steamboat, and its officers, crew, passengers and cargo for the better part of forty years until they were separated by Petsche's death in 2008. Petsche's background included Korean War service, a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's in archaeology. Switzer came to work for him as a laboratory director and museum specialist. This broad range of skills they individually brought to the project gave the pair the ability to endure the inevitable setbacks and pitfalls associated with such a large project and to delve into all its aspects with comprehensive methodology.

With Petsche's death the author became more aware that it was time to assemble and present some of the voluminous material they had protectively gathered over the past four decades. The readers are fortunate that he shares with us their amazing project through this enlightening combination of archaeology, history and Switzer's writing craft.

If *The Steamboat Bertrand* leaves the reader curious about earlier aspects of the project, Jerome Petsche's 1970 article in *Nebraska History* "Uncovering the Steamboat Bertrand" is available online. It includes additional pictures and details of the excavation.

--Corinne Lively

**Beautifully Grotesque Fish of the American West**, by Mark Spitzer. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 2017. 232 pp. Photographs, endnotes. Hardcover, \$24.95.

The pictures of some of the fish on the cover reminded me of childhood fishing trips when I called for help, to cut my line, as soon as I got a glimpse of a strange fish I had hooked. The fish described in this book include common varieties as well as the extremely rare, some a lot more butt-ugly than others. The author includes a sportsman's view of fishing for these wonderful fish, as well as an ecological narrative of why these fish should be studied and saved. His description of the fishing tournaments is well done, although if I had to find fault, he spent a



little too much space on team names, many of which showed a lot of imagination, and the weights of the fishes caught.

The chapter on "Fear and Noodling in Oklahoma" is probably best read in private, unless you like people asking if you are all right. Mark colorfully describes a method of catching fish which is best done with close friends or family, which includes a lot of close contact and inadvertent touching. He also includes the downside of this sport which is rapidly decreasing the numbers of larger catfish.

Mark does not mince words in this book regarding the fish, catching the fish, importance of preservation of species, or eating the fish. For example, there is one fish which he described as "the worst fish I've ever tasted. I've tried cooking it in all sorts of ways, and there's something about it that's not right. It has a spoiled-tasting barky bite that always leaves the toxic tinge of fetid intestines in your mouth." His description continues.

I have seen on TV, a program about alligator fishermen who sometimes had to dodge fairly large fish which would jump from the water as their boats go past. Mark describes fishing for these "flying carp" using traditional methods, but included an alternative method using a speeding boat, a football helmet, and either a large fishing net or a baseball bat.

Some fish are in competition to game fish or endangered species, so local authorities have instituted a "bounty" system for the catching and removal of these fish. At \$5 or more for each fish, one character in the book earned \$81,000 for a year fishing for these ugly fish.

The "Conclusion" chapter is a review of why fish as species are important and even help assure the continued survival of plant and animal species, including man. It reads very different from the rest of the book, but is important and enjoyable.

This is a book I have to recommend highly for all fisherman and nature lovers. It is written in a humorous and colorful style with information that makes you smile, chuckle and think about the importance of fishes in the future of mankind.

--Chuck Mattson

**Mesa of Sorrows: A History of the Awat'ovi Massacre**, by James F. Brooks. W. W. Norton & Company, 2016. 274 pp. Endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$26.95.

I never thought I would read such a book as *Mesa of Sorrows*, a history of perhaps the Hopi people's darkest and most painful moment—the Awat'ovi massacre. Anthropologist and historian James Brooks sifts through layers of ethnographic information, oral histories, Catholic Church history, archival research and past excavations of the site as an archaeologist might. What emerges in *Mesa of Sorrows* is a rich and provocative tapestry of the deep past.

Brooks approaches Awat'ovi thoughtfully, asking "how does one narrate the meaning of an event that many of the descendants of its perpetrators and victims might rather forget?" (p. 13-14) But, as Brooks points out, "even Hopis who may

want to forget...find it a source of continuing conversation.” (p. 217)

*Mesa of Sorrows* opens with the massacre itself, taking the reader up on Antelope Mesa that autumn night in 1700. The village of Awat’ovi was observing the *wuwuicim wimi* ceremonies, with the sacred societies ensconced in kivas, initiating adolescent boys into tribal knowledge and manhood. In the predawn darkness, warriors from the neighboring Hopi villages crept through an open gate—a gate unlatched by the leader of Awat’ovi himself—and wreaked unspeakable carnage upon the village. They killed the young men in the kivas, struck down the old men, grandmothers and children as they fled, and set the kivas, the homes and the Franciscan mission aflame. Women and young girls were spirited away; later amidst disagreement as to who should claim these human spoils of war, most of the captives were butchered and dismembered. A few women were allowed to live when they, like Scheherazade, bartered for their lives by spinning tales of coveted clan knowledge and secrets of rainmaking. In the long tradition of women slaves in the Southwest, they married into and became a part of the fabric of their new communities.

The extreme violence at Awat’ovi was not unprecedented in Hopi society. Awat’ovi, its leader and neighboring villages believed, had become rife with witchcraft, and was not living in harmony, or *suanisquatsi*. To restore balance, the elements of *koyaansiqatsi*, or chaos and corruption, must be purged. Therefore, its own chief ordered the town utterly destroyed and abandoned, never to be occupied by the Hopi again. Similar measures had been taken at Sikyatki on First Mesa, when sorcerers were believed to have infected the village causing social chaos. Its chief invited warriors from Old Walpi to purify the people with fire and blood, and rewarded them with women and the rights to farm Sikyatki’s corn fields. In 1700, the Southwest was swirling with change. Reverberations of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and Spanish reoccupation in the 1690s were keenly felt. People were on the move, a new religion had been introduced, and people of many ethnicities and languages were trying to navigate in a new world order. In several ways, the situation mirrored what had occurred in the region during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when migration, integration and new religious beliefs upended social order.

Brooks shows how other societies have used extreme measures to achieve perceived social justice, including the nearly contemporaneous Salem witch panics. He also invites readers to draw uncomfortable parallels to current society. These shared stories give insights into the roles of women, their marginalization, suffering and ultimate resilience.

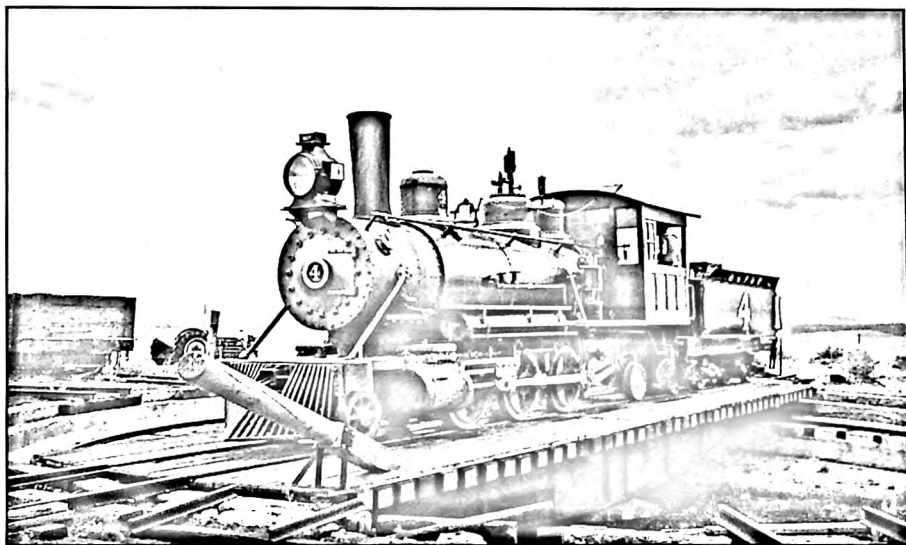
The story has it all: Sorcery, sudden, savage violence, an ancient prophecy, power, betrayal, a remote landscape, clashing religions, the adventure of early archaeological expeditions, a mysterious burial of a European man, and the sense that the reader is somehow privy to information that should not be shared. Brooks handles these elements masterfully. *Mesa of Sorrows* is fast-paced with clear writing that pulls no punches while never sensationalizing events or practice. He delivers a solid, scholarly work that illuminates Hopi culture and sheds light on the deep past in the American Southwest.

--Kimberly Field



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

September - October 2019



*Authors' collection*

**Klondike Kate on the rebuilt turntable, August 24, 2018**

**The Como Revitalization Project**  
by Robert Schoppe and Charles Brantigan



## Our Authors

### Robert Schoppe *on left above*

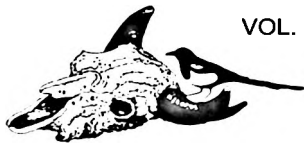
Bob was born in Philadelphia and enlisted in the Navy right after high school, retiring at the rank of commander twenty-seven years later. In 1999 Bob joined Frontier Airlines as a pilot and retired from that profession in 2017. He has been a "railfan" since childhood and has been a member of the Denver South Park & Pacific Historical Society since its founding in 1998, serving as president since 2010. Bob moved to Fairplay in 1998 and has been involved in the restoration efforts in Como since 2008.

### Charles Brantigan *on right above*

Born in Baltimore, Chuck Brantigan graduated from Cornell in 1964 and four years later from medical school at Johns Hopkins University. He spent three years in the Navy as a medical officer. Once a civilian, Chuck's career included cardiothoracic surgery and wound care as well as Professor of Surgery at the University of Colorado. He has written and published over 100 books, chapters, journal articles on medicine, historical and musical subjects. In 2018 he received the Rosenstock Award from the Denver Posse of Westerners.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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## The Como Revitalization Project

by Robert Schoppe and Charles Brantigan

*The South Park!* To the average Coloradan this term signifies one—perhaps the most beautiful—of a number of great, high, mountain valleys, surrounded by ranges of even higher peaks, which are scattered throughout the central Rocky Mountains. But to the historian or railfan it calls to mind the most picturesque of the pioneer narrow gauge railroads in Colorado, a state once saturated with picturesque narrow gauge railroads. It was a railroad known, as the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad (DSP&P). To most historians it was simply the South Park Line.

To those interested in the broader picture of history, the South Park Railroad was a mere footnote to Colorado railroad history. It was just a streak of rust, from one end to the other, during much of its existence. It was poorly surveyed, poorly located, poorly engineered, poorly financed and in financial trouble during most of its history. Perhaps because of its obsolescence during much of its history, the spectacular scenery visible from virtually every inch of the line's trackage and its underdog status, it has won an enduring and perhaps excessively prominent place in the history of railroading. (Paraphrased from: Chappell, G. Richardson, R.W. Hauck, C.W., *The South Park Line: a Concise History*, Colorado Railroad Museum, Golden, Colorado 1974.)

### Como in the Past

As the Denver South Park & Pacific Railroad was built across South Park in 1879 on its way to the Gunnison Valley, its route was likely dictated by the nearby coal deposits. The South Park line arrived at what would become Como in June 1879 and the town of Como sprang up almost overnight. Just to the northwest a modest coal deposit was mined initially, but a much larger deposit was discovered in what would become to be known as King Coal Mine, just two miles south of Como. Coal was not only used in locomotives but was also used to fire the boilers of mines and to heat homes. Availability of coal and water was a huge incentive for the railroad to come through this area. The King Coal Mine produced until June 10, 1893 when it was destroyed by an explosion, killing some 23twenty-three miners.

Initially, as with most boom towns, the early dwellings were mostly tents. Very rapidly more substantial structures of wood and even brick were constructed. Right from the start Como was a very busy place with as many as twenty trains per day passing through. In the spring of 1880 the line was completed over Trout Creek Pass and down to Buena Vista. Meanwhile the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) was building up the Arkansas Valley on its way through Buena Vista and on to the mining camp of Leadville. The DSP&P entered into a "Joint



*All photos are authors' collection*

### Como Depot before restoration in May 2008 and after restoration in May 2018

Operating Agreement” with the D&RG and both roads ran trains between Nathrop (five miles south of Buena Vista) and Leadville. This relationship deteriorated and by the fall of 1881 the South Park Line decided to build its own line to Leadville. This route ran north out of Como, over Boreas Pass and down to Breckenridge, then down the valley of the Blue River to Frisco, up the Ten Mile Canon to Fremont Pass and then down to Leadville. There were branch lines to Dillon and Keystone. An extension was planned from Keystone to Montezuma but this never materialized. Now that Como was a junction point, the railroad decided it was a good place for facilities to service the locomotives. Thus the six-stall stone roundhouse was built in 1881

by Italian stone masons. Over the next twelve years this was greatly expanded with the addition of thirteen more stalls constructed of wood and Como was a very busy place. At the dawn of the twentieth century business was declining and in 1910 there were three major closures that greatly impacted the railroad and the town of Como:

- The Alpine tunnel was closed cutting off Gunnison from the Arkansas Valley.
- The Trout Creek Pass line was also abandoned cutting Buena Vista from South Park and the line to Denver.
- Finally, Boreas Pass was closed which cut off the town of Breckenridge from supplies arriving from Denver.

These closures by the railroad demoted Como from a major junction point to merely a stop on the line to Fairplay and Alma. The town of Breckenridge fought the (then) Colorado & Southern Railroad in the courts and finally prevailed, with Boreas Pass reopening in 1913. There was little else to transport and business continued to decline. A roundhouse fire in 1935 burned down the wooden stalls and subsequently only three wooden stalls were rebuilt. Those additions were torn down in 1938. With business from mining further declining and the advent of better roads and trucks, the Colorado and Southern Railroad finally abandoned the road in 1937, with the track being removed the following year.

The remaining railroad structures, the hotel, depot and the original six-stall roundhouse, steadily deteriorated over the ensuing decades. But in 1984 things began to change when Bill Kazel acquired the roundhouse. By then the roof was mostly caved in, the windows were gone and the roundhouse doors were falling off. Bill, along with his son Greg, acquired a large grant from the Colorado Historical Foundation (today, History Colorado) and began to rebuild the roof and stall doors, repair damaged stonework and replaced the windows.

In 2001 Dr. Charles and Kathy Brantigan purchased the roundhouse and are continuing the restoration process. Today the turntable has been completely restored and a genuine narrow gauge steam engine now resides in stall number five!

## Como Today

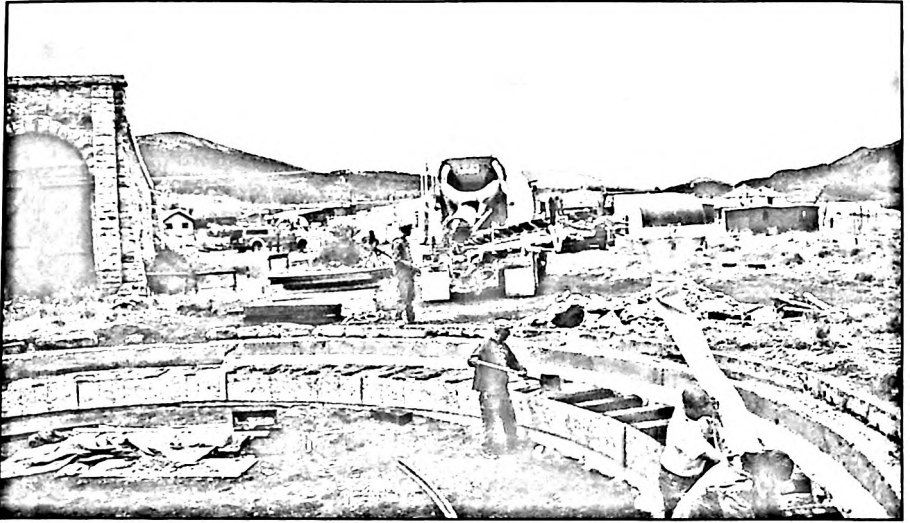
The depot has been restored.

Major renovations to the hotel have been accomplished. Track has been laid and restoration of the Como railroad yard has begun. The turntable has been rebuilt and Klondike Kate is enjoying the shelter provided by the roundhouse. A collection of heritage rolling stock is being developed.

## The Depot

Railroad buffs and historians worried over the decrepit state of the depot for many years fearing that it might fall down of its own weight. Klaus Gunnick described the situation in his 1987 book on Colorado railroad structures. After some detailed drawings and a few paragraphs about its history, he concluded that "... it is truly regrettable that Como's historic railroad depot is little more than a ruin. No doubt the old wooden combination depot will vanish from the scene before many more winters will pass—barring a miracle." That miracle happened. Deb Stremke spearheaded the push to get the depot listed as one of the most endangered historic structures in the state by Colorado Preservation, Inc. Suddenly it was on everyone's radar. In partnership with David Tomkins, owner of the property, the Denver South Park and Pacific Historical Society took on the restoration of the depot and after seven long years the completely restored depot was dedicated in 2015.

The depot restoration began in 2008 with the stabilization of the existing structure. This was just in the nick of time. The depot's roof was nearly gone, all of the windows were broken, the west face had sunk into the ground two feet and the entire building was leaning at twenty degrees!



### Rebuilding the Como turntable pit, July 2017

It was felt that the depot had no more than two or three winters left before she collapsed. Some thought that if you gave it a strong push it would fall down sooner. In the summer of 2008 the building was stabilized with four-inch beams to hold up the west facade. To keep the weather out the roof's missing panels of corrugated tin were replaced and the windows and doors were boarded up. The following year the building was jacked up so that it was again level and square. Jacking up the walls allowed supporting beams to be replaced. The building had been stabilized and protected from the elements. Over the next several years grants were obtained and in many phases the depot was completely restored. The restored building was dedicated on Boreas Pass Railroad Day 2015 to the delight of all.

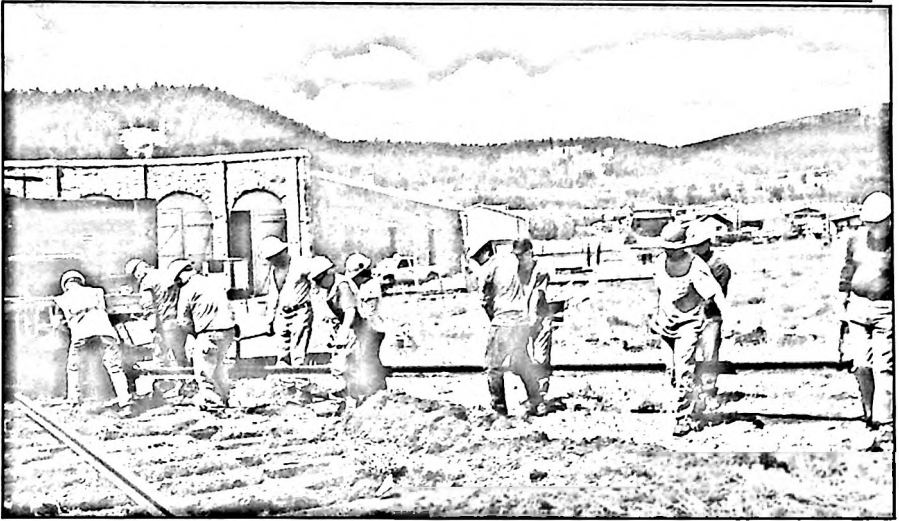
### The Hotel

Much restoration work has also been completed on the Como Hotel. The first phase included rebuilding all of the windows and since then a new heating system has been installed. Many other interior improvements have been completed.

### Steam Returns to Como

In 2017, just two years after the depot dedication, "Klondike Kate," our steam engine of a 2-6-2 type wheel arrangement, arrived from the Georgetown Loop and was steamed up within a couple of days. Arrival of a working steam engine stimulated a flurry of track building. Although not originally a Colorado locomotive, Kate has an interesting history. She was built in 1912 for the Klondike Mines Railway in the Yukon Territory of Canada. She served only briefly as the mines quickly closed down. Kate



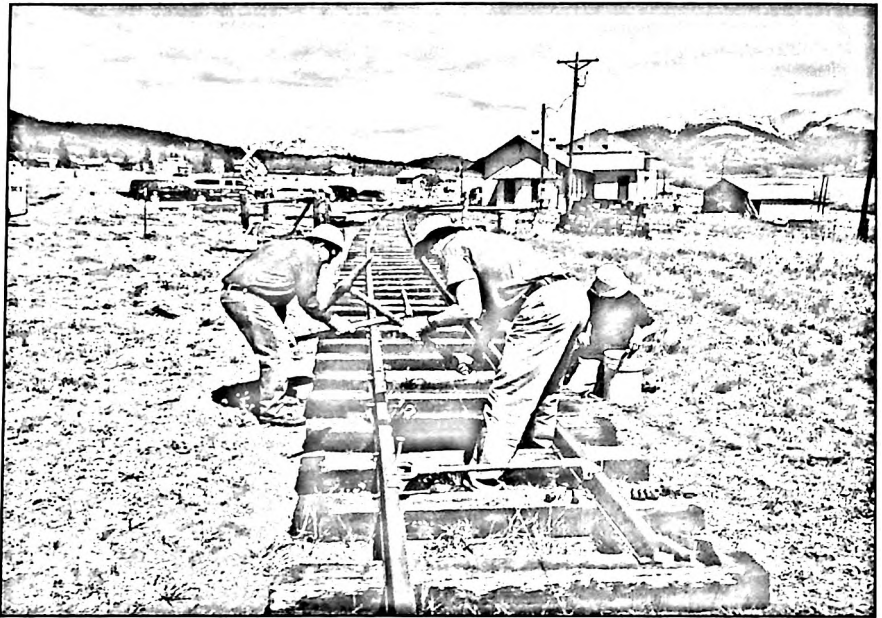


Como rail gang

and her siblings were winterized and placed in storage in the boarded-up engine house in Klondike City where she sat until the White Pass and Yukon Railroad (WPYR) had an urgent need for more motive power for building the Alaska Canadian (ALCAN) Highway during World War II. Of the four locomotives in storage, Kate was well enough preserved to go back into service. The engine house was torn down to get to the engines. Kate, her tender and another tender were taken to Whitehorse by steamboat. She then went to Skagway for refitting. The rest of the rolling stock was left in the weeds in Klondike City for decades.

The US Government obtained Kate by nationalizing the railroad and sent her to Skagway, Alaska to haul supplies to Whitehorse which was on the ALCAN Highway. The WP&Y used her into the 1950s and then she sat on static display for many more

years. She made her way down to the lower 48 and bounced around several small operations, some running her, some not. After spending a few years on the Georgetown Loop (which did not operate her) she was shipped to a locomotive repair shop in Cheyenne, WY. In mid-August 2017, she arrived at Como on a Wednesday and we thought she would slip into town unnoticed. Not so! Somehow the word got out that after seventy-nine years there would once again be a steam locomotive in Como. There were perhaps 100 people on hand to watch her arrival and unloading. On August 19, 2017, Boreas Pass Railroad Day, Klondike Kate was introduced to the public and the looks on people's faces were priceless. Most had been to Como in the years prior and they could not believe what they were seeing. The experience was enhanced by handcar rides on an authentic replica and also rides on a motorized "speeder."



**Como track laying, 2017**

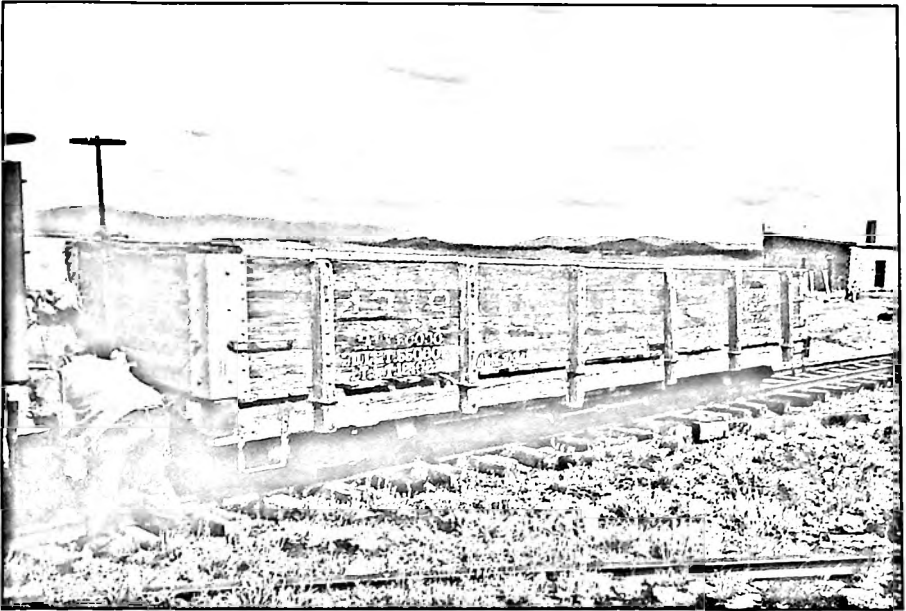
Several pieces of rolling stock are now on the property. There are several former D&RG cars along with two cars original to the South Park Line.

The South Park Rail Society was formed a few years ago and today works in partnership with the Denver South Park & Pacific Historical Society. Its primary focus is the roundhouse, Klondike Kate and the rolling stock. The organizers brought a wealth of experience with their successful efforts to bring back the Sumter Valley Railroad in Oregon. With the Como Depot restoration behind it, the DSP&P Historical Society has obtained rail and ties and is responsible for organizing the volunteers and laying the track.

### **Rolling Stock**

The two original cars in

the Como Yard are Boxcar 608 and Gondola 4319. Boxcar 608 was built in 1879 by the Litchfield Car and Machinery Co. as part of a batch of 150 boxcars. In the 1890s she went to the Denver Boulder and Western Railroad (DB&W); at another time the Union Pacific (UP) owned her. After her life there she ended up on the ground in Cardinal, a small town near Nederland where she served as a cabin for many years. In fact, two of our society members actually lived in it for two years back in the 70s! When the property sold, the new owner wanted it out of there and so it was moved to the Boulder Valley Railroad Museum for a time. As it was the only piece of narrow-gauge equipment in their collection, they felt that it “did not belong” and so it came “home”



**C&S gondola 4319 on Gunnison Main, June 2018**

to Como. Currently the car is being partially restored as an interpretive display.

Gondola 4319 spent many years in Central City and then in the 1970s it was moved out of town to a park where it sat on display until being moved to Como in 2018. The car had received no maintenance or even paint in all those years and looked pretty sad when she was moved. The South Park Rail Society negotiated a ten-year lease with Central City and the deal is that the society will restore and repaint the car, and maintain her until the lease is up and she goes back to Central City.

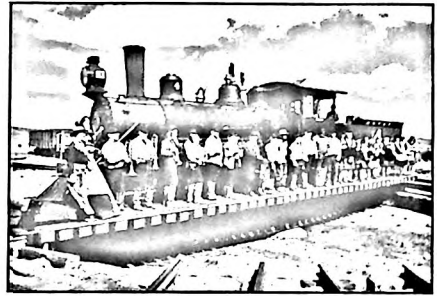
Como has changed little over the years and still contains many historical buildings, some dating from the earliest days. A small stretch of rail was laid in front of the depot for

its dedication in 2015. When news of Klondike Kate's arrival spread, a lot more track laying began in earnest. By the end of 2018 approximately 1800 feet of track has been laid, and much more is planned.

The big event each year is Boreas Pass Railroad Day, celebrated on the third Saturday in August. From just a few hundred visitors not-so-many years ago this event saw about 1,500 in 2018, and more are expected in 2019. Klondike Kate will be pulling passengers, visitors will experience handcar and speeder rides, be able to "push Kate around" on the hand-powered turntable, and be invited to tour the property along with the roundhouse and depot museum. Original equipment on display will include DSP&P boxcar 608, C&S



**Como Denver Brass concert,  
August 2017**



**Denver Brass and Celtic Colorado  
Bagpipers with Klondike Kate  
August 2018**

gondola 4319 and a newly restored C&S boxcar 8027 will be on hand. In addition, the original frame from C&S caboose 1008 and one end of coach no. 3, the “Geneva,” can also be viewed. There will be vendors for both souvenirs and food.

But the highlight of the day in 2018 was the concert by the Denver Brass and the Celtic Colorado Bagpipes and Drums. The Denver Brass was founded by the Brantigans and along with the Celtic Colorado Bagpipes and Drums performed an unforgettable concert in 2018 to a packed (round) house!

### **Como Tomorrow**

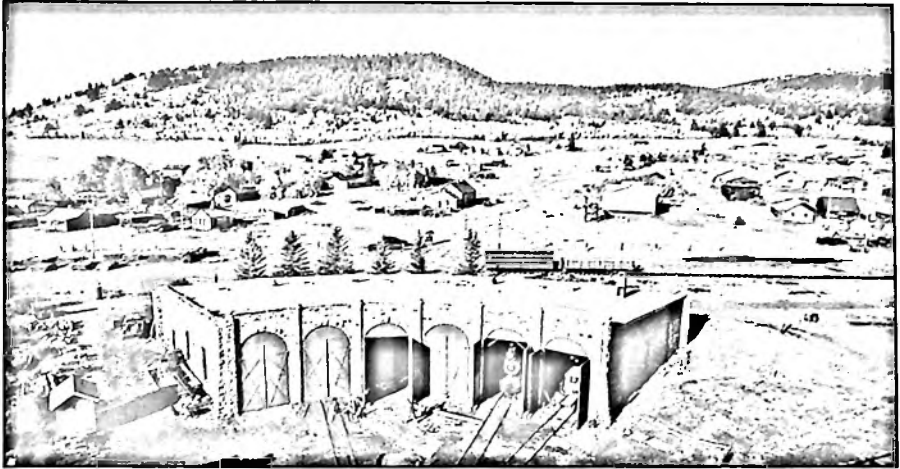
Klondike Kate is receiving some much needed repairs and will be ready to go again in 2019. We have a rider gondola and a rider boxcar (with one more coming) so that Kate can accommodate passengers. We hope to have several operating weekends featuring Klondike Kate pulling passengers. Handcar and speeder rides will be available. Kate needs a replacement part which is being fabricated and needs an inspection pit

restoration to install it. Visit us on the web to see our progress and to obtain updates on operational days and work days ([www.Southparkrail.com](http://www.Southparkrail.com)).

The roundhouse also included the original *Fairplay Flume* printing presses and a lot of block letters and typesets. These historical artifacts, while significant, are not directly part of Como’s railroad history and will probably be moved to a nearby location where they will be displayed to the public. For now we are planning on operating the printing equipment on Railroad Day. Rick Molzar, current owner of the former Allen’s Saloon/ Como Mercantile, has announced that he plans to reopen the building as a “railroad saloon.”

Track laying volunteers average about twenty-five per day and we now have a list of about fifty! The day usually starts about 9:00 am and the break for lunch in the hotel is around 1:00 pm. After lunch the work resumes until 5:00 p.m. or so. The schedule is one day every other week on a weekend and one solid work week in early June.

Former Rio Grande Southern passenger coach 256 is coming. It will



**Como roundhouse showing Klondike Kate in stall 5 and the speeder and tool car in stall 6 with the passenger train out back on the Gunnison Main, Sept. 14, 2018**

be moved from Monte Vista to Como in 2019. Also, another former D&RG flatcar and another rider boxcar are coming. Over the next several years we plan to rebuild the water tank, three roundhouse stalls, the Park Gulch trestle, and lay much more track. And the Zephyr is coming!

The "South Park Zephyr" was a model "T" Ford modified to run on three-foot gauge track. It was built by three Como residents in 1938 to run on the abandoned track and was successfully used for that purpose. During the spring and summer of 1938 track was being pulled up starting at the Climax mine on Fremont Pass and working back through Como towards Denver.

Jeff Badger, chief mechanical officer for the Georgetown Loop Railroad as well as for Klondike Kate, has acquired an authentic model "T" and refitting it with batteries and an

electric motor (for ease of operation and reliability) and even is installing a sound system to replicate an authentic model "T" sound!

There have been many partners in this effort. These partners include Charles and Kathy Brantigan, owners of the roundhouse, Bill Kazel, former owner of the roundhouse who started this process (and is still involved), David Tomkins, owner of the hotel and depot, Deb Stremke, who arranged to put the depot on Colorado's Most Endangered Places list in 2006, the Denver South Park & Pacific Historical Society, South Park Rail Society, South Park National Heritage Area, Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, Como Civic Association, Breckenridge Heritage Alliance and the Town of Breckenridge and last but certainly not least, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.

Grants from the National Trust



**Como, August 2017, with (left to right) Pat Mauro, Jeff Badger, Bob Schoppe, Charles Brantigan**

for Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society (History Colorado), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, South Park National Heritage Area, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, the Gates Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Denver Posse of Westerners were greatly appreciated.

The “Como Team” now consists primarily of the two property owners as well as the two non-profit societies and many volunteers.

Over the next five years it is planned to lay much more track, ultimately offering us a ride of about one mile in length, with the original wye at the far end and much more yard track in Como. With the wye at one

end and the turntable at the other the locomotive will always be “pointing in the right direction.” A functional replica water tank is planned, as well as a few more wooden stalls to restore the roundhouse to its 1938 appearance. Rebuilding the eighty-foot trestle in Park Gulch is also planned. The roundhouse needs a new wooden floor as there is little left of the original. One of the original roundhouse work pits is being restored to operating condition, along with one of the wooden roundhouse pits. Currently this one is outside but will be within one of the planned wooden stall rebuilds. The ultimate goal for the roundhouse is to turn it into a museum of “big things that move” which suggests that the depot is a museum of “little things that don’t move.”

During the railroad years the townsfolk worked long hours at brutally hard labor, with very few amenities and little pay. They lived here and kept the railroad running through the seemingly endless winters that were even harsher than today's infamous South Park winters. And here's the rub, they loved it! They were fiercely loyal to the railroad and to each other. They lived well, and their stories are worth retelling and learning from. We are striving to convey their stories and history to the visiting public and future generations. That is what the Como Project is really about.

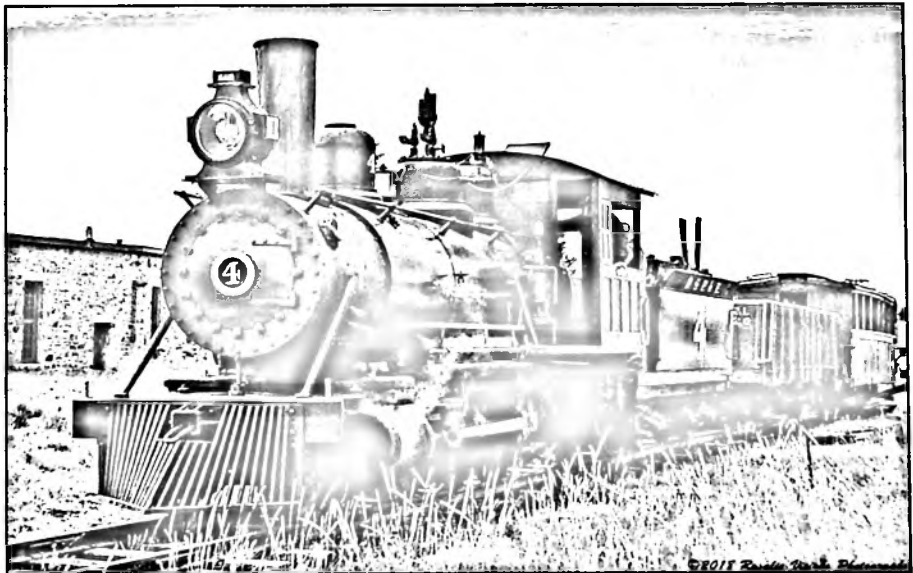
When Bill Kazel began his work on the roundhouse in the 1980s, and even as recently as 2008 when the depot work began, no one envisioned we would have come this far by 2019. This "slow motion miracle" is the direct result of volunteers, donations and grants. The Como Team welcomes and needs any help you might provide. The volunteer work ranges from hard (track laying) to very easy (helping in the kitchen cooking lunch for the volunteers). And we certainly welcome and need any donation you would consider; no amount is too small! Every penny goes directly to further construction/restoration. Come by and see for yourself!

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Como engine No. 4 and train, August 2018

# 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.*

## **"Jack Kerouac's Snowy West"**

The September meeting of the Colorado Corral of Westerners featured "Jack Keroauc's Snowy West" by Denver posse member Hugh Bingham. Jack Keroauc was the leading figure in the Beat Generation of the 1950s. Arriving in Denver in July 1947, Jack's Denver summers of 1949 and 1950, tour-guided by his chums Allen Ginsberg, Neal Cassady and Ed White, plus other Colorado adventures formed a vital part of the 120-plus linear feet on the *On the Road* scroll.

Hugh Bingham graduated from Brown University in the late sixties and after a stint in the western Pacific came to Colorado to ski bum for a season. He stayed on to get a J.D. from the University of Denver and never left. As part of his Western repertoire he presents Western adventurers Green Russell, Louis DePuy, Robert Stuart, Jack Kerouac, and Sam Clemens.



## **Denver Posse Summer Rendezvous**

Newton Park, Conifer, was the August setting for a visit with President Theodore Roosevelt, as portrayed by Pikes Peak Posse Deputy Sheriff Don Moon. Teddy reviewed his extensive role in conservation and the national parks. A plug for the Denver Mountain Parks was provided by Shannon Dennison, Denver Parks Cultural Resources Administrator, as we enjoyed this fine facility of the Denver system.

Don Moon specializes as a re-enactor of Western characters, being an expert of Theodore Roosevelt.

## **"Cody and the Battle of Summit Springs"**

Jeff Broome was the presenter at the September meeting of the Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners. Before Buffalo Bill Cody became famous, he was the chief scout in Gen. Carr's Fifth Cavalry Republican River Expedition that culminated in the last battle in Colorado between the Cheyenne and whites, on July 11, 1869, at Summit Springs.

**Pikes Peak Posse Deputy Sheriff Don Moon portrays Pres. Theodore Roosevelt at the Denver Posse Rendezvous in August**



Publications on the Cody experience, as well as the battle, have today been mired in much false history. The presentation highlighted the extent of this “truth decay” and set the historical record straight, or at least, as straight as it can be maintained 150 years after the events.

Jeff is a fifth-generation Coloradan, past sheriff of the Denver Posse of Westerners, the author of three books on the Indian wars as well as other publications, and a retired philosophy professor at Arapahoe Community College.

### **Gone and Mostly Forgotten: Gunnison’s first Burial Ground**

The Pikes Peak Posse’s October program featured the first burial ground in Gunnison, where the earliest pioneers of that west-slope community are buried, and then drifted into oblivion about 1884. Bob Easterly presented his historical research of the past three years, a subject he got interested in when he learned the cemetery was located on a ranch owned by grandfather and father in 1930s. The land is now part of the Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport. There are no records of the ground being used for burial purposes from 1876 to 1883. It was abandoned in favor of a new cemetery west of Gunnison. In 1994 the original site was accidentally uncovered by an earth mover during a uranium mitigation project. After remediation in 1995, it slipped into oblivion again.

Bob was born in Gunnison and is a fourth-generation Coloradan. He is a member of both the Denver Posse and the Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners, as well as other historical organizations. His previous program to Westerners featured his book *By an Act of Congress*, on his great-grandfather. Also an active genealogist, Bob is the immediate Past President of the Mount Evans Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution.

### **John Brisben Walker: a Father of Foothills Tourism**

In October the Colorado Corral learned of John Brisben Walker. He might not be a household name, but he was responsible for some of the most popular tourist destinations near Denver, such as Red Rocks and Mt. Falcon Parks. At the turn of the twentieth century, Walker went from magazine publisher and automobile manufacturer to one of the greatest Colorado boosters of his era, laying the foundation for the Denver Mountain Parks and Jefferson County Open Space. Presenter Andrea Keppers is an Education Specialist and Curate of the Hiwan Museum for Jefferson County Open Space. A Colorado native, she has a BA and an MA in American art history, served as Director of Education at the Wichita Art Museum, and taught college for ten years.

## **New Hands on the Range**

Since mid-year 2018 the Denver Posse has a significant number of new members. We acknowledge and welcome the following new members to the posse, with locales and specific historical interests:

Kathleen Barlow, Denver, architecture and environmental history;

Ruth Barth, Bailey, writing and editing manuscripts;

Bruce Bartow, Dillon;

Patricia Calhoun, Denver;

Shelby Carr, Thornton;

Theresa Cosgrove, Denver. Western history;

Keith Dameron, Lakewood, Colorado, Denver, and outlaw and lawman history;

Peg Ekstrand, Denver, Denver, Colorado and Western history;

Joseph Falcone, Broomfield, Colorado and Western history

Sharon Gaare, Denver;

Tom Haynie, Pine;

Joyce Holly, Denver;

Joe Jordan, Lakewood, early Denver and Colorado history;

Leslie Karnauskas, Denver, women's history, especially journals and memoirs of women pioneers;

Tom Keeton, Littleton, recent Colorado events (1950-2000);

Judi Harry Krizman, Denver;

Joseph Lamos, Ph.D., Denver, trade period, 1830-1860, in Colorado, Trapper and Taos Trails;

Eleanor (Ellie) Leinaweaver, Lakewood, Colorado history;

Jack Lindsey, Denver, horsemanship, cavalry, Cripple Creek District mining;

Barbara and Ralph (R. D.) Melfi, Pine, Western history;

Sandy and John Nance, Wheat Ridge, Colorado and Wheat Ridge history;

Kathy O'Halloran, Aurora;

Cindy and Dean Pickett, Littleton, Colorado history;

Stephanie Reitzig, Longmont, early twentieth-century history of Colorado and the West;

Isabel and John Shanahan, Denver, Western mining, Colorado and Western history;

Dan Shannon, Denver;

Thomas-James (T.J.) Kaisch Trump, Denver, historic preservation, public history, Native-American history;

Dr. Charles D. Vail, Centennial, Colorado, fishing, horses, veterinary medicine;

Lesley Watson, Denver, Denver history, old Colorado cemeteries.





## Westerners Bookshelf



**Emory Upton: Misunderstood Reformer**, by David J. Fitzpatrick. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2017. 325 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$39.95.

Sometime during the late hours of March 13, or the early hours of March 14, 1881, Colonel Emory Upton, Fourth U.S. Field Artillery Regiment, put a Colt 45-cal. revolver to his head, pulled the trigger and took his own life at the Presidio of San Francisco.

What drove Emory Upton, a dedicated officer in the United States Army, to take his own life, is discussed in this excellent biography of the man who is well known today as one of America's most influential military thinkers and reformers. Though there were several others who wanted changes in the army, such as Generals William T. Sherman, who was Upton's mentor, and John Schofield, it was Upton who was determined to bring reform about.

Born on August 27, 1839 on a farm near Batavia, New York, Emory was the tenth of thirteen children of Danial and Electa Upton. All the children grew up in a strict Methodist family and had a good education, several going to college. Before being admitted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1856, Emory spent the two previous years at Oberlin College. Upton's West Point class was one of only three that took part in a five-year course of instruction that existed at the time. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Emory's class graduated in May 1861 and what would have been the Class of 1862 graduated in June. In a class of forty-five cadets, Emory was ranked as eighth. It is interesting to note that there was a cadet in the June class who graduated thirty-sixth out of thirty-six. The cadet was George Armstrong Custer.

It was during the Civil War that Emory Upton showed his ability at being an exceptional commander leading troops in the field and began forming his thoughts in army reform and tactics. The newly commissioned second lieutenant saw his early battles of the war with the artillery. For many young officers who showed promise during the conflict, promotions came rapidly. In the fall of 1862 Upton was appointed Colonel and assumed command of the 121<sup>st</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Upton's Regulars). By the time of the Gettysburg Campaign, he was a brigade Commander. In November 1863, Emory was cited for gallant service and given a brevet promotion of major in the regular army. However, it was during the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House on May 10, 1864 that Upton is best remembered for in which he devised an unusual tactic to assault Confederate entrenchments that would cause a breakthrough in their lines. His tactic was a success in penetrating the middle of the Confederate entrenchments, but his brigade was forced to withdraw for not being supported in the face of heavy artillery fire and an increase of enemy

reinforcements at the point of the breakthrough. For his action on that day, General Grant promoted Upton to brigadier general. By the end of the war, Upton was in command of a division of cavalry and given a brevet promotion to major general in the regular army. The 25-year-old had commanded outstandingly in all three branches of the army (artillery, infantry, and cavalry).

After hostilities ceased between the North and South, Emery was down graded to lieutenant colonel in the regular army. The next sixteen years were devoted to his command assignments and especially to tactics and army reform. He published *The Armies of Asia and Europe* after his round the world tour of observing other nation's armies, which was commissioned by Commanding General William T. Sherman and the War Department. Upton wanted to show that the American military system was broken. He proposed combining both American military requirements and political realities with the efficiency of the Prussian military system. It was this proposal, that some were to call "too Prussian," that was stressed in his next book, *The Military Policy of the United States*. The War Department put it into print in 1904 and was distributed throughout the army.

David Fitzpatrick shows in this well-researched and interesting book how Emory Upton, the misunderstood reformer of the American citizen-soldier, was in fact a strong supporter of the American military tradition. This book will be of great interest to those who will want to know about the man who not only led American soldiers in combat but sought to improve the army they served in.

--Mark Hutchins

**Mesa of Sorrows: A History of the Awat'ovi Massacre**, by James F. Brooks. W. W. Norton & Company, 2016. 274 pp. Endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$26.95.

I never thought I would read such a book as *Mesa of Sorrows*, a history of perhaps the Hopi people's darkest and most painful moment—the Awat'ovi massacre. Anthropologist and historian James Brooks sifts through layers of ethnographic information, oral histories, Catholic Church history, archival research and past excavations of the site as an archaeologist might. What emerges in *Mesa of Sorrows* is a rich and provocative tapestry of the deep past.

Brooks approaches Awat'ovi thoughtfully, asking "how does one narrate the meaning of an event that many of the descendants of its perpetrators and victims might rather forget?" (p. 13-14) But, as Brooks points out, "even Hopis who may want to forget...find it a source of continuing conversation." (p. 217)

*Mesa of Sorrows* opens with the massacre itself, taking the reader up on Antelope Mesa that autumn night in 1700. The village of Awat'ovi was observing the *wuw'icim wimi* ceremonies, with the sacred societies ensconced in kivas, initiating adolescent boys into tribal knowledge and manhood. In the predawn darkness, warriors from the neighboring Hopi villages crept through an open gate—a gate unlatched by the leader of Awat'ovi himself—and wreaked unspeakable carnage upon the village. They killed the young men in the kivas, struck down the old men, grandmothers and children as they fled, and set the kivas, the homes and the Franciscan

mission aflame. Women and young girls were spirited away; later amidst disagreement as to who should claim these human spoils of war, most of the captives were butchered and dismembered. A few women were allowed to live when they, like Scheherazade, bartered for their lives by spinning tales of coveted clan knowledge and secrets of rainmaking. In the long tradition of women slaves in the Southwest, they married into and became a part of the fabric of their new communities.

The extreme violence at Awat'ovi was not unprecedented in Hopi society. Awat'ovi, its leader and neighboring villages believed, had become rife with witchcraft, and was not living in harmony, or *suanisquatsi*. To restore balance, the elements of *koyaanisqatsi*, or chaos and corruption, must be purged. Therefore, its own chief ordered the town utterly destroyed and abandoned, never to be occupied by the Hopi again. Similar measures had been taken at Sikyatki on First Mesa, when sorcerers were believed to have infected the village causing social chaos. Its chief invited warriors from Old Walpi to purify the people with fire and blood, and rewarded them with women and the rights to farm Sikyatki's corn fields.

In 1700, the Southwest was swirling with change. Reverberations of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and Spanish reoccupation in the 1690s were keenly felt. People were on the move, a new religion had been introduced, and people of many ethnicities and languages were trying to navigate in a new world order. In several ways, the situation mirrored what had occurred in the region during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when migration, integration and new religious beliefs upended social order. Brooks shows how other societies have used extreme measures to achieve perceived social justice, including the nearly contemporaneous Salem witch panics. He also invites readers to draw uncomfortable parallels to current society. These shared stories give insights into the roles of women, their marginalization, suffering and ultimate resilience.

The story has it all: sorcery, sudden, savage violence, an ancient prophecy, power, betrayal, a remote landscape, clashing religions, the adventure of early archaeological expeditions, a mysterious burial of a European man, and the sense that the reader is somehow privy to information that should not be shared. Brooks handles these elements masterfully. *Mesa of Sorrows* is fast-paced with clear writing that pulls no punches while never sensationalizing events or practice. He delivers a solid, scholarly work that illuminates Hopi culture and sheds light on the deep past in the American Southwest.

--Kimberly Field

**The Popular Frontier: Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Transnational Mass Culture**, edited by Frank Christianson. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2017, 252 pp. Photographs, maps, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$32.95.

This is volume 4 in the William F. Cody series on the history and culture of the American West. It contains articles by Emily C. Burns of Auburn University, Frank Christianson of Brigham Young University, Chris Dixon of the Dublin Institute of Technology, Jennifer R. Henneman of the Denver Art Museum, Jamie Horrocks of Brigham Young University, Jeremy M. Johnston of the Buffalo Bill

Center of the West, Renee M. Laegreid of the University of Wyoming, Monica Rico of Lawrence University, Robert W. Rydell of Montana State University, Julia Stetler of the University of Wyoming, and David Wrobel of the University of Oklahoma.

This is a fairly interesting volume, but like any work with multiple authors there is wide variation in the writing quality, style, and the level of research. Most of the articles are well researched, but there is a tendency to try and make *everything* fit into their various theses.

One example is in a chapter drawing parallels between Oscar Wilde and Buffalo Bill. Jamie Horrocks makes the observation that “The celebrity of both men [Cody and Wilde] relied more on their theatricalization of an idea than on any particular action or accomplishment.” But she also tries too hard to make her case in discussing how a drawing of Buffalo Bill and Oscar Wilde “merges the two figures.” She posits the “near-meeting” of Cody’s vest and Wilde’s elbow and other aspects of the drawing as an “affinity recognized by this illustrator” rather than recognizing that it was just as likely the illustrator needed to fit the drawing into the width of a newspaper column.

There are a number of interesting items offered up like Jeremy M. Johnston’s quotation related by actor Tim McCoy after the end of World War I in the chapter pairing Teddy Roosevelt and Buffalo Bill. McCoy’s Arapaho friend Goes In Lodge, is asked what should become of the defeated kaiser. Goes In Lodge replies, “This is what we should do if we really want to punish the man: send him to an Indian reservation to make him live like us.”

There are some predictable chapters here about Annie Oakley, and others about travels in France, Spain and Germany. One of the most implausible scenarios explored here is the *discovery* that Buffalo Bill’s genealogy was found to be Italian; he was called the Italian Hero of the Prairies.

For Buffalo Bill aficionados this book may fill a gap, but for the rest of us it doesn’t really provide much substance or important information.

--Roger Dudley

**Esteban: The Africa Slave Who Explored America**, by Dennis Herrick. University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 2018. 282 pp. Maps, illustrations, photographs, endnotes, bibliography. Hardcover, \$39.95.

Very little is known of Esteban, the slave that traveled with the survivors of the ill-fated Pánfilo de Narváez expedition to conquer Florida in 1527 and later served as a guide for the Friar Marcos de Niza expedition in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola.

Most of what is known of the eight-year-long cross-country ordeal of the four known survivors of the Florida debacle comes from Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, the treasurer of the Narváez expedition. Few other extant records survive. Dennis Herrick has thoroughly synthesized the existing documentary evidence and set out to debunk many of what he calls the “Eurocentric perspectives, misunderstandings, prejudices, assumptions, falsehoods, and myths” surrounding Esteban’s

place in history.

In recounting the struggles of the survivors of the Narváez expedition as they traveled cross-country, Herrick seeks to discredit many of the conventional beliefs held by what he refers to as “early supposed historians.” He points out that the gaps and ambiguity of the written record leaves much room for misinterpretation due to bias and preconceptions. Some readers might find Herrick’s “scholarly speculations” and editorializing apocryphal; however, he effectively illustrates extensive misrepresentations of Esteban’s contributions to the survival of the Cabeza de Vaca party and his subsequent leadership in guiding the Friar Marcos de Niza expedition.

Much of Herrick’s scholarship centers on questioning the conventional wisdom that Esteban died at the hands of the Zuni as reported to Friar Marcos by Indian runners. No European was present and Herrick speculates that Esteban may have used the ruse of his death to escape slavery. Herrick suggests that Zuni oral history and fragmentary documentation cast doubt on how or where Esteban died.

Herrick’s book enriches and deepens our understanding of Esteban’s place in history and chronicles two early Spanish expeditions. It leaves the reader wishing for more, knowing that the historical record will always be left “with a fragmentary image of the man behind a haze of centuries.”

--*Jim Donohue*

**Remembering Lucile: A Virginia Family’s Rise from Slavery and a Legacy Forged a Mile High**, by Polly E. Burgros McLean. University Press of Colorado: Louisville, 2018. 286 pp. Photographs, endnotes, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Ms. McLean paints for us the incredibly detailed and almost forgotten story of Lucile Buchanan Jones. “Born in a shed in what was called Denver’s Platte River Bottoms,” Lucile was the granddaughter of emancipated slaves. She went on to become the first female African graduate of the University of Colorado. Her reach and influence went far beyond Colorado.

Obviously a labor of love for the author, this book is a compelling work. It does however spend tremendous amount of time on minute details that one could do without. The book however makes a substantial contribution to the history of African-American women in our state.

The author’s research spans over numerous years and is very thorough. She provides us with information from numerous documents and interviews, including the University of Colorado archives, on-the-street conversations and the plantations of Virginia. She leaves no stone unturned.

As it turns out I had the opportunity to meet the author in my roles at Fairmount Cemetery. She was determined to get to the bottom of every detail surrounding Lucile’s life.

The book is a must read for lovers and researchers of African-American history. While I found the book provided interesting and important information I also found it at times very tedious reading.

--*Jim Cavoto*

**Valley of the Guns: The Pleasant Valley War and the Trauma of Violence**, by Eduardo Obregón Pagán. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2018. 295 pp. Maps, photos, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

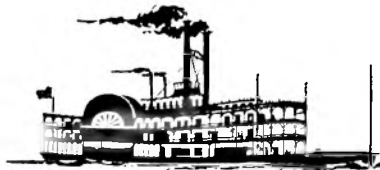
One of the most violent episodes of the Wild West occurred in an area ironically called Pleasant Valley. Long presented as a family feud between the Grahams and the Tewksburys, Arizona's so-called Pleasant Valley War claimed at least twenty-two lives, while destroying many others.

In this decidedly revisionist retelling, Pagán relies upon a thorough, thoughtful examination of the evidence to strike down many of the myths that have grown around this compelling story. He demonstrates clearly that this episode's violence was not a case of cattlemen against sheep herders, nor was it simply large ranchers pitted against small ranchers or settlers. Rather, Pagán weaves an incredibly complex web of intertwined threads to depict the manner in which constant exposure to violence drove business associates, neighbors and even very close friends to succumb to their fears, turn upon one another, and ultimately to resort to the extreme of murder.

Pagán's research is impeccable, featuring detailed footnotes and an extensive bibliography heavily weighted toward archival and primary sources. His prose is incredibly clear and colorful. The most compelling aspect of Pagán's research involves his use of modern understanding of stress and trauma, drawn from intense combat experiences, to explain the often irrational actions of the major characters in this drama. He demonstrates how constant exposure to violence from Apache raids, rustling and general lawlessness, combined with the stresses of drought and financial downturns to create psychological pressures sufficient to break even the strongest settlers, driving them into a spiral of uncontrolled violent reactions.

Pagán's interdisciplinary approach provides a monumentally groundbreaking interpretation of the role that violence and trauma played in making the Wild West wild. His insights offer incredible possibilities for reinterpreting other historical events. This book is a real page-turner that will grab you in a way that will make it very difficult to put down.

*--Dennis Hagen*





**Man-Hunters of the Old West, Volume 2**, by Robert K. DeArmant. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2018. 329 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

In the first volume, the author focused on eight man-hunters of which one, Charles A. Siringo, may be familiar to a casual reader of 19th-century Western history. The Texas cowboy and man-hunter Charlie Siringo comes back into focus in Volume 2 when he joins another man-hunter, Patrick Floyd Jarvis "Pat" Garrett, as a posse member accompanying Garrett in tracking Billy the Kid to his Stinking Springs hideout and the capture of the "Kid." This one episode reflects the overall purpose of both Volume 1 and Volume 2 for author DeArmant: to give recognition to those individuals who brought law and order to the west but did not gain the notoriety of the outlaws they pursued, such as Billy the Kid. The face of law enforcement in the 19th century west was white, but one of the most notable and regarded man-hunters was Bass Reeves who was black.

The chapters on the lives of the eight man-hunters in Volume 2 are arranged to some degree in a chronological order, encompassing a period of time from the Mexican-American War and its immediate aftermath to the early part of the 20th century. With a few exceptions the author does not interject any summary observation on the lives or actions of the people being profiled. It is left for the reader to conclude what these lives represent in terms of the development of law and order in the Wild West. For this reader, it became clearer how law and order grew from an ad-hoc formation of "law or justice" enforcers to individuals who dedicated themselves to law enforcement as part of formal organizations.

While there are secondary book sources already published on each of the individuals profiled in this book, each chapter provides a solid overview of each individual, and taken together, provide a reader with the development of law and order from the 19th century into the 20th century. By citing primary sources, DeArmant gives the reader insight into some of the 19th-century values that supported these man-hunters in pursuit of their quarry. For example, in the chapter on Granville Stuart, the Diamond City newspaper editorial is quoted, "...we cannot censure [the ranchers for] summarily dealing out justice without waiting the inefficient, slow action of the law."

Some readers may be put off by the timeline nature of how the author handles the lives of each of his subjects. Following a litany of dates can become dry reading and, on occasion, one can become lost when the author jumps back to an earlier period in the person's life. But overall, the reader who sticks with it will come away with a good sense of how law and order developed in the West through the lives of men who were just as extraordinary as those of the more popular and famous lawmen such as Hickock, Earp or Masterson.

--Joseph Lamos





*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

November - December 2019



*History Colorado*

**Miners pose in Hubert Mine, Nevadaville, Colorado, with an ore bucket 850 feet below the ground. Photo by H. H. Buckwalter, 1895**

**Colorado's mineral endowment and its  
heyday of extraction**

**by Peg Williams  
(presented Feb. 27, 2019)**



## Our Author

With a master's degree in energy resources and a second one in technical communications, Peg Williams worked for sixteen years as an exploration and development geologist before joining Hart Energy, a business information publisher. She has been with them for twenty-seven years, and now serves as their vice president and editorial director.

She and her husband Ron Williams own Columbine Ink LLC, a small publishing venture that produces a series of guide books about Colorado ghost towns and mining camps. Peg and Ron enjoy visiting the old sites and continually learning more about Colorado's fascinating mining past.

# THE DENVER WESTERNERS ROUNDUP

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# Colorado's mineral endowment and its heyday of extraction

by Peg Williams  
(presented Feb. 27, 2019)

Colorado's history is inextricably linked to mining. As is the case with other extractive industries, the story of Colorado mining is the story of the interplay between resource quality, commodity price and developing technology. This paper focuses primarily on gold, with some history of silver included.

Silver production was overall much, much larger than gold production in Colorado. Cripple Creek is the preeminent gold-producing district, while Leadville was far and away the largest silver district. There were significant differences in the volumes of mined gold and silver (the precious metals) and copper, lead and zinc. Colorado produced many times more silver than gold, and much more copper, lead and zinc were produced than the precious metals.<sup>1</sup>

## Geology of the Mineral Belt

The historic metal mining districts of Colorado fall into a general trend that is oriented about N43°E. This is the Colorado Mineral Belt (CBM)<sup>2</sup>. (See Map 1, next page.) It is a zone of weakness in the earth's crust that crosses Colorado, extending back into early times. It essentially runs from Durango to Boulder.

Mineralized rocks are found in this zone. Certainly, there are outliers, but most of Colorado's mining towns and camps were founded within the CMB. Cripple Creek, the Hahn's Peak area and the Summitville area are outside of the CMB but are thought to relate to the overall processes that emplaced the ore within the CMB.

Precious metals are generally emplaced from deep-earth sources that intrude into overlying rocks. Precious metals are often contained in the last surge of an igneous intrusion. This surge will often follow lines

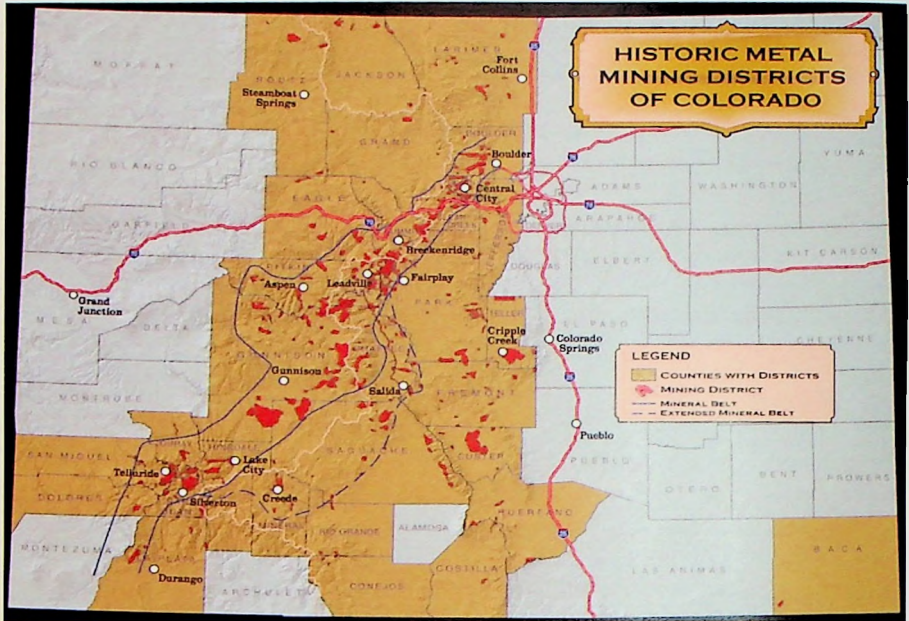
Table 1: Colorado's Mineral Production Through 1953

Product	Years	Production
Gold	1858-1953	39,937,129 fine ounces
Silver	1858-1953	750,098,322 fine ounces
Copper	1868-1953	640,702,430 pounds
Lead	1869-1953	5,303,666,383 pounds
Zinc	1895-1953	3,326,405,985 pounds

Table 2: Colorado's Major Mining Districts

Mining District	Discovery	Product	Production
Central City-Idaho Springs	1859	Gold	6,300,000 ounces
Leadville	1874	Silver	240,000,000 ounces
Telluride-Red Mountain	1875	Gold	6,800,000 ounces
Aspen	1879	Silver	101,000,000 ounces
Gilman	1879	Silver	64,000,000 ounces
Creede	1887	Silver	80,000,000 ounces
Cripple Creek	1890	Gold	21,000,000 ounces

Colorado Geological Survey



*Colorado Geological Survey*

### Map 1: Most of Colorado's mining towns and camps were founded within the Colorado Mineral Belt.

of weakness in the adjacent rocks, such as faults or joints, and will form veins along these zones of weakness. The precious metals have apparently followed such fractures in the CMB.<sup>3</sup>

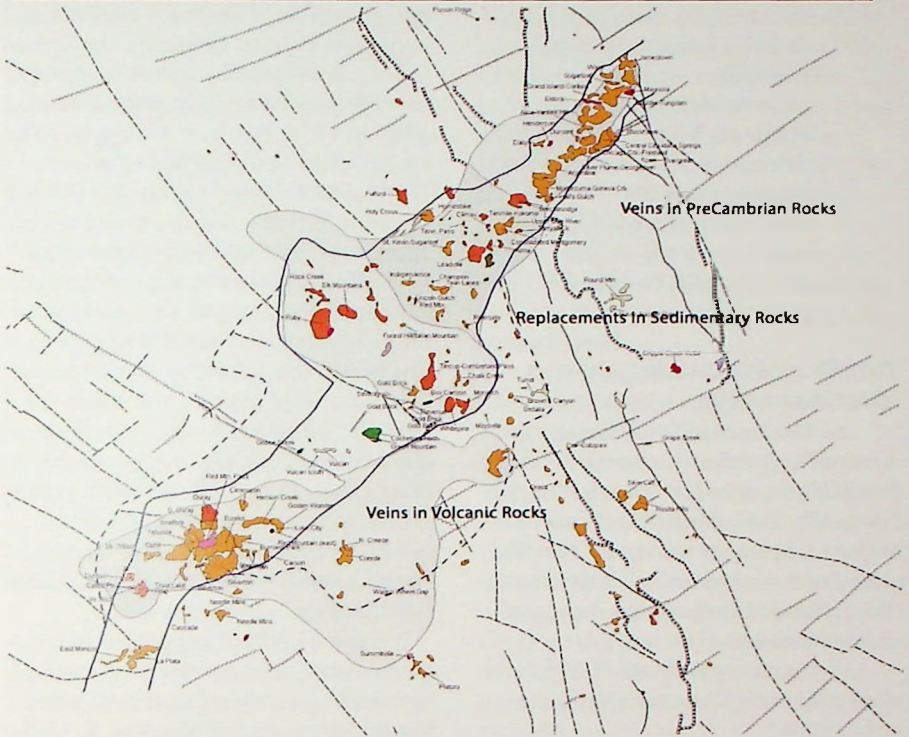
The CMB cuts indiscriminately across the geologic grain of Colorado, seemingly independent of the tectonic elements it crosses.<sup>4</sup> It is a unique geologic feature.

Across a period of about seventy million years, from the Late Cretaceous through Late Cenozoic, there were two long-lived magma chambers that spawned both Late Cretaceous-Early Tertiary and mid-Tertiary magmas. These were the two major periods of mineralization. There was also a Late Tertiary event. (See *Map 2, next page.*)

Two sets of shear zones localized ore-related igneous activity. These shear zones formed some 1.4 billion years ago, in the PreCambrian. The main set of shears is oriented NE. A secondary set of NW-trending shears had secondary control, most evident in central Colorado where the mineral belt widens from some forty miles to about eighty-five miles.

These shear zones are the plumbing along which the ore was deposited. The ore deposits tend to be at intersections of the shears.

In general, there are three types of ore bodies in the CBM. The particular geology depends on the interplay of the overlying rocks with the metallic fluids.



*From Wilson & Sims, 2002*

**Map 2: This map shows the distribution of the types of ore bodies in the Colorado Mineral Belt; the location of the shear zones, faults and thrusts that intersect the CMB; and the location of the batholiths that underlie the CMB**

- In the northeast portion of the CMB, veins in Precambrian rocks are prevalent. These commonly border Laramide intrusions. Ore bodies are typically small and high grade. This mineralization occurs almost continuously from Jamestown to Breckenridge, and includes Ward, Caribou, Empire, Central City, Idaho Springs, Georgetown, Silver Plume and Montezuma.
- The central portion of the CMB features replacement deposits in sedimentary rocks. Most deposits are around the Sawatch Uplift. The Leadville Limestone is the most important ore host. The mineralization is mainly silver-lead-zinc or lead-zinc deposits. Leadville, Gilman, Aspen and Tincup are in this group.
- In the southern portion of the CMB, the types of ore bodies

shift to veins in volcanic rocks. Ores are a mixture of gold, silver, lead, zinc and copper minerals that filled fractures. Many deposits were very rich but small. These include deposits in the San Juan Mountains. Cripple Creek, which is actually a collapsed volcanic caldera, is in this group.<sup>5</sup>

### **Timeline of Colorado gold and silver discoveries**

Mining was far and away the driver of Colorado's economy for the first half-century of the state's history. Practically everything in Colorado was linked to mining in some way, and the price fluctuations of silver in particular had tremendous impacts on the region and on its residents.

Rumblings of gold in Colorado were around for some time since the early 1800s.<sup>6</sup>

Zebulon Pike heard the story of gold discoveries in South Park; in 1820, traces of color were found near the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River.

When people got excited about the gold discovery at Sutter's Mill in California in 1849, there was a rush to get there. The rush was so great that the gold in Colorado was essentially passed up. The Colorado gold rush didn't really occur until ten years later, when it was known as the Pike's Peak gold rush.

That started when William Green Russell discovered some minor deposits of gold in the Denver area where Little Dry Creek joins the South Platte.<sup>7</sup> Discoveries were made in

streams on the plains but were not large enough to support communities.

The strike by John Gregory in 1859 was the first big find of lode gold. In 1858, Gregory, a Georgia native, came to Colorado to prospect. He panned his way between the Poudre River and Pikes Peak. Early in the spring of 1859 Gregory prospected up Clear Creek, following the north fork (toward present-day Black Hawk) when the creek divided. He left the creek to investigate the gulch that now bears his name (toward Central City). When the color increased to its maximum then quickly faded out, Gregory suspected that he had just passed the lode outcrop sourcing his color. Before he could follow up his suspicions, however, a spring snowstorm set in and forced him back to town.

In Golden, Gregory got a grubstake, picked up provisions, and recruited two partners to accompany him on his return trip. On May 6, 1859, the party arrived back at Gregory Gulch and began digging. They immediately found gold, and the rush was on. Gregory shipped home \$5,000 in June, and when he returned to Georgia in September he carried \$30,000 with him. Soon after Gregory's discovery, thousands of people were searching for gold in and around Gregory Gulch. Central City grew rapidly. It became Colorado's first major boomtown and the largest city in the Colorado mountains. It rivaled Denver for several years, and was considered a possible capitol for the territory.

### **Volatile prices affected Colorado**

The glory days of silver were between its discovery and 1893.<sup>8</sup>



The United States had a bimetallic (gold and silver) monetary standard since 1792 when the mint was authorized to coin as much gold and silver as were offered.

The 1849 gold rush in California resulted in gold becoming relatively less valuable than silver. Silver was sold in the market for a higher price than it commanded at the mint, and silver coins were being melted down for commercial use. During the Civil War silver coins were driven out of circulation. Further coinage of silver dollars was prohibited by the Coinage Act of 1873—thus putting the United States on the gold standard. Europe and Latin America likewise abandoned the free coinage of silver in the 1870s.

Large discoveries of silver, such as those at Leadville, the San Juans, and the Comstock Lode in Nevada, eventually depressed the price of silver. Silver mine owners, farmers, and debtors, who wanted to increase the supply of money in circulation began a campaign to restore the bimetallic standard.

The Bland-Allison Act of 1878, vetoed by President Hayes but passed over his veto by Congress, instructed the Treasury Department to purchase between \$2 million and \$4 million of silver per month at the market price, and coin it into silver dollars. This made the western silver mine owners happy, but the silver dollars were only worth about \$.90 in gold, so the policy was not good for the nation as a whole.

Grover Cleveland became President, and he was opposed the free coinage of silver. But the congressmen from the western silver-producing

states became more influential, and the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 was passed. This act called for the purchase of 4.5 million ounces of silver per month at the market price. The price of silver rose from \$.84 to \$1.50 per ounce. The U.S. Treasury started stocking silver bullion.

People lost confidence in the federal fiscal policy, and they began to hoard gold; the nation's gold reserves were reduced.

On August 7, 1893, President Cleveland called a special session of Congress, and the Sherman Act was repealed, thus demonetizing silver. The government ceased buying silver for coinage, and the domestic silver market fell to levels so low that many mines suspended operations. Many mining towns that relied primarily on silver production were deserted almost overnight. Those that produced gold were more fortunate. This was the Panic of 1893.

The 1896 election pitted William Jennings Bryan, a silver enthusiast, against William McKinley, a gold man. McKinley won, and the Gold Standard Act of 1900 closed most of the silver mines that had been able to hold on for the past seven years.

There were some minor upticks in silver demand during the ensuing years. During World War I the price of silver picked up and silver dollars were brought back.

The depression of the 1930s reawakened an interest in silver, and the U.S. Treasury started buying silver. It purchased twenty-four million ounces of silver at \$0.64 cents per ounce—half the traditional price, but 50% more than the prevailing market price. The price

was artificially maintained throughout the 1930s, the government buying silver ostensibly for coinage, but in reality mostly for burial in the vaults at West Point. Many silver towns underwent a rebirth during this period.

During World War II, when the silver-using industries were operating at full capacity, the price of silver rose rapidly. The public began to hoard silver coins in anticipation of the market price exceeding the face value. When this finally occurred, in the 1960s, the government ceased to issue Silver Certificates and removed silver from the monetary system. In 1965, the silver content of newly minted quarters and dimes was eliminated, and the silver content of the half dollar was reduced to 40%.

In 1970, silver was eliminated entirely from U.S. coins. Silver became simply a precious metal.

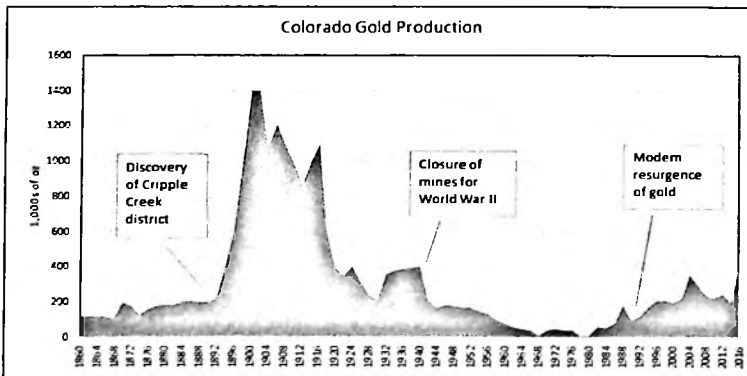
The price of gold followed a separate trajectory. Never as common as silver, gold was perceived as a scarce and highly valuable metal both here and around the world. The price of gold was fixed by the government between 1791

and 1834 at \$19.49 per ounce. In 1834, gold was raised to \$20.69 per ounce.

For Colorado gold production, the best years were 1899-1900, when production reached 1.4 million ounces per year. While Colorado had a robust gold mining industry prior to the discovery of the Cripple Creek district in 1890, that district was truly a game-changer for the state. Cripple Creek was a world-class deposit and ranks as the third largest gold deposit in the U.S.<sup>9</sup> (See chart below.)

After the Great Depression started in 1929, prices were volatile until 1934, when private ownership of gold coins, bullion and certificates was outlawed and the price was set at \$35 an ounce. It stayed at that rate until gold was deregulated in 1971 and the U.S. came off the gold standard.

After deregulation, the value of the mined gold went way up, and people looked again at old areas to see if any value remained. Essentially, the high-quality gold had already been extracted from Colorado and the remaining deposits were very low grade. Newer methods such as heap



leaching were developed, and gold mining has had a localized resurgence, particularly in Teller County.

The latest totals for Colorado gold production were 396,000 ounces in 2016, which fetched an average price of \$1,270 per ounce, for a value of \$502 million.<sup>10</sup>

### Gold prospecting

Gold is actually found in many places in very small concentrations—in sea water and in many types of rocks. But it can only be mined where it is highly concentrated by geologic processes.<sup>11</sup>

Primary deposits form where gold precipitates during chemical reactions between hydrothermal (hot fluids) mineralizing solutions (metal-bearing) and rocks in the Earth's crust. Hydrothermal deposits can be classified as either epigenetic (deposits that form after the formation of the surrounding rocks and other events of

mineralization) or syngenetic (deposits that form the same time as surrounding rocks).

Precious metals are often found in veins that contain pyrite, also known as fools gold. One way of recognizing a vein was to look for a limonite stain. Iron sulphide (pyrite) oxidizes to limonite which has an orange stain. So, finding an orange stain in an outcrop, the prospector might start digging.

Secondary deposits form later during the chemical and mechanical processes of weathering and erosion, and the physical reconcentration of gold-bearing sediment into placer deposits.

As veins are uplifted and eroded from rainfall, the precious metals are washed into streams. Gold, being heavy in specific gravity, will settle to the bottom of a container such as a stream. The original tool for a prospector was a pan. Prospectors would wash a pan full of sediment from



*History Colorado*

**Prospectors pan for gold along Cripple Creek, Colorado.  
Photographer unknown; date 1870-1880**

a stream, and, if lucky, discover gold in the residue after all the lighter junk had been washed out.

Knowing that this gold had come from a source higher up in the stream valley, prospectors would pan their way up the stream to locate the lode that sourced the gold.

Claims could, and still can, be staked. A prospector had to do a certain amount of dollar-value work on a claim to keep it. The working of a claim for profit was not previously required for a patent, so many claims were patented in the past.<sup>12</sup>

- Lode claims were 100 feet along the length of the lode and twenty-five feet on each side.
- A patch, or placer, claim was 100 feet square.
- A gulch claim was 100 feet long and fifty feet wide, or from bank to bank.
- Claims for land to build a quartz or stamping mill could be 250 feet square.
- Tunnel claim dimensions varied and lacked definition; the Montgomery District specified 250-foot square at the mouth for buildings and deposits, and 250 feet on each side of the tunnel as it was bored.

### Gold mining

Placer gold can be recovered in several ways. When prospectors used gold pans, they would swirl sediment and water around in their pans until they obtained gold and a lot of black sand. This was magnetite, and it stayed in the pan because it also has a high specific gravity.<sup>13</sup> The magnetite can be removed with a magnet. Since gold

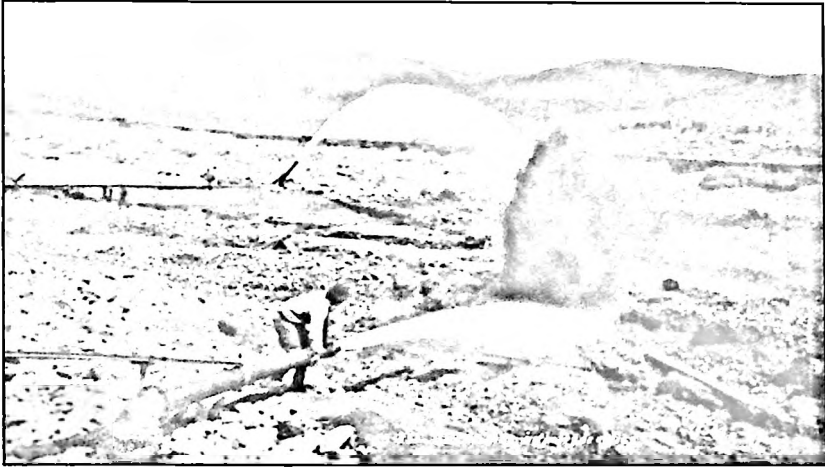
is also soluble in mercury, mercury can be mixed with the panned product. The problem was how to remove the mercury. One old way was to pour the amalgam into a potato, and bake it. The mercury would evaporate into the potato, leaving the gold. This not only didn't allow for the recovery of the mercury, but it could cause health problems if the vapors were inhaled. A retort could also be used, and this allowed for the recovery of the mercury.

Obviously, a placer miner had to find large nuggets or a lot of dust to make it worthwhile. It often was worthwhile for the first miners, but there was only so much gold in the stream to start with, so the metal would play out with continued placering. Essentially, placer mining is washing of sediments to separate out gold. Variations on placer mining included sluicing, hydraulic mining and dredging.



*History Colorado*

**Sluicing is a form of placer mining, in which flowing water is used to wash sediments and separate out the gold. Photo by unknown photographer, mid 1800s**

*History Colorado*

**This photo shows gold mining done with hydraulics. Photo by unidentified photographer, circa 1885**

But the placer deposits were only part of the story. Most of the gold in Colorado has been recovered in hard rock mines.

Hard-rock mining poses many more problems than does placer mining. The ore must be dug from under the ground, brought to the surface, and then milled to remove the precious metal from the host rock.

The easiest way to remove underground ore is to tunnel beneath the vein, use gravity to drop the ore into carts, and then haul it out. A horizontal tunnel might be driven into the side of a mountain beneath a vein, or a vertical shaft might be dug down until it reached below the vein, then horizontal “drifts” or “cross-cuts” were tunneled out from the vertical.

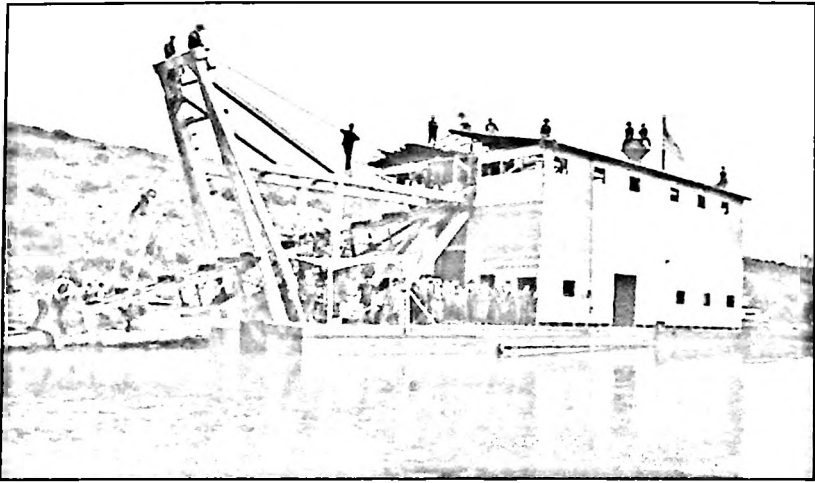
As the vein is followed farther down, the vertical shaft is extended deeper and more drifts are dug out from it—thus creating a series of levels in the mine. Seldom is a lode deposit

so wide that large, roomy caverns are dug, although the Comstock Lode in Nevada is certainly an exception to this statement.

Tracks were laid in the horizontal tunnels to move the ore carts around—often pulled by mules. The vertical shafts required hoists, and these might vary from a hand-cranked windlass operation to large hoist houses with steam or electric power driving big spools of cable.

Extending the shafts of the mines could be done with pick and shovel, but usually explosives were used. Holes had to be drilled in which to place the explosive charges. Prior to 1875, when machine drills and dynamite came into widespread use, the principal tools were hand drills (called steels) and black powder.

Hand drills consisted of a sharp drill bit on the end of a steel rod which was driven into the rock with a sledge hammer. In “single-jacking” one miner



*History Colorado*

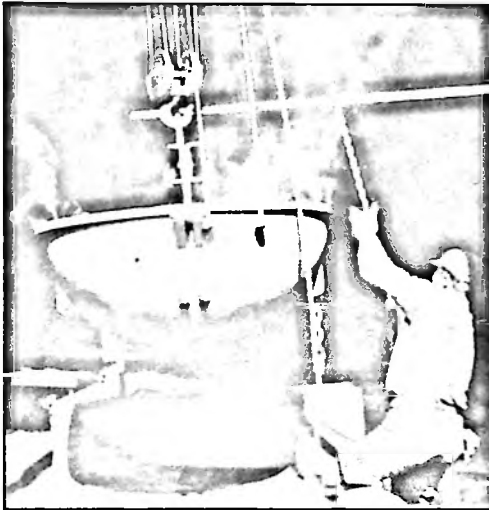
**This hydraulic dredge was owned by the Colorado Gold Dredging Co. It was photographed working near Russell, Colorado, by Hildreth Velton, circa 1900-1910**

did the whole job, but “double-jacking” was much faster. The steels were turned constantly to keep them from sticking, and a good team of double-jack men could deliver as many as sixty blows a minute. Ordinarily, it took about an hour to drill to the average depth of thirty inches. A popular sport was to have drilling contests, just as volunteer fire companies often competed with each other for sport.

The large mines were usually kept operational on a 24-hour basis. Two shifts worked ten hours each. Two hours between shifts allowed for ingress and egress of the work force, and provided time for dust to settle. Commonly, one shift drilled, set and exploded the charges, leaving the area for the next shift to come in, clean up after the charge had been detonated, and repeat the process—advancing the mine about three feet for each shift.

In the 1870s, hand drills and black powder were replaced with pneumatic drills and dynamite. Pneumatic drills, run by compressed air supplied from the surface, were much faster and required fewer men to operate. Many double-jack teams were reduced from proud drillers to lower-paid muckers and car pushers, although there was an increased need for blacksmiths to sharpen the drill bits. Pneumatic drills provided fresh air to the miners, but they stirred up quite a bit of dust, which eventually led to a lung disease known as Miner’s Consumption. This was a common problem until the mid-1890s when the water-flushed drill came into use.

Dynamite, about four times more powerful than black powder, had a disadvantage in that it released clouds of nauseating fumes. In poorly ventilated mines, miners who entered

*History Colorado*

**A worker hoists a pot full of melted slag and prepares to tap it into a granulating pit at the Argo Smelter Works in Denver, Colo.**

**Photo by Jessie Hale, 1906**

too soon after a charge had gone off would be felled. In the long run, the use of pneumatic drills and dynamite actually increased the work force because more mining of lower-grade ore could be accomplished than with the more expensive prior methods.

### **Milling and smelting**

The greatest strides in the mining process came in milling and smelting. Basically, the ore obtained from hard rock mining needed to be crushed, the precious metal physically and chemically separated from the host rock, and then recovered.<sup>14</sup>

An early, simple manner of crushing ore was the use of an arrastra. An arrastra was merely a circular stone, usually placed near a stream, on top of

which was placed another stone that was turned to crush the ore lying between the two. A burro, or some such animal, would walk circles around the arrastra, dragging the crushing stone behind it. The stream could wash away the debris leaving behind the heavier material. This was satisfactory for "free-milling gold," but much ore, especially that containing silver, did not have the precious metal in its pure form.

Stamp mills crushed the ore by mechanically elevating and dropping heavy iron pistons onto ore held in a trough below. Initially animals linked to a gearing mechanism

*History Colorado*

**Three miners stand near an iron tunnel brace and rock face in a mine shaft in Georgetown, Colorado. Photo by George Dagleish, circa 1890**



*History Colorado*

**An early, simple manner of crushing ore was the use of an arrastra. This photo is from Sunshine, Colorado. Photo by H.H. Buckwalter, circa 1890**

provided the driving force, and later were supplanted by steam engines.

The sophisticated gold mills were large structures that, from top to bottom, broke up the ore using large steel jaws, crushed it by the pounding of heavy stamps lifted by cams, tumbled it with steel balls, then processed it. Initially, plates were coated with mercury, and after the ore was crushed in stamp mills the ground material would be run across the plates. The gold combined with the mercury and formed an amalgam. After amalgamation, the remaining ground rock would be washed across concentration tables to catch any remaining gold.

But Colorado's deposits of free gold were playing out between 1864-1868. The problem was that a lot of remaining Colorado ores were

refractory ores, which meant they had ultra-fine gold particles that were disseminated throughout gold-occluded minerals. These were resistant to the established methods, and miners scrambled to improve recovery. This was the period of "process mania" in which all sorts of novel methods were tried.

The breakthrough was made by Nathaniel P. Hill.<sup>15</sup> Hill was a Brown University professor who came west to study the gold recovery problem. He went to Wales and studied European methods of smelting. Hill opened the first successful smelter at Black Hawk in 1868.

In Hill's process, sulfide ore was roasted. Gold usually occurred as inclusions in pyrite. Roasting drove off about 96% of the ore's sulfur content



*History Colorado*

**This was the first silver bullion produced by Richard Pearce, the manager at the Argo Smelter. Pearce brought experienced men to Colorado with him from Swansea, Wales. Men are Richard Pearce (on left), Josiah Burgess (refiner, on right), Thomas Thomas (mason, in light overalls), and William Abbe (foreman, in doorway).**

**By unidentified photographer, circa 1873**

(resulting in clouds of sulfur dioxide gas).

The roasted ore was then placed on a hearth in a reverberatory furnace where it was heated to 1,400 degrees C for six to eight hours. Almost everything melted in the furnace— gold, silver, copper and some lead. Iron combined with molten silica to form a slag that floated on top of the molten metals.

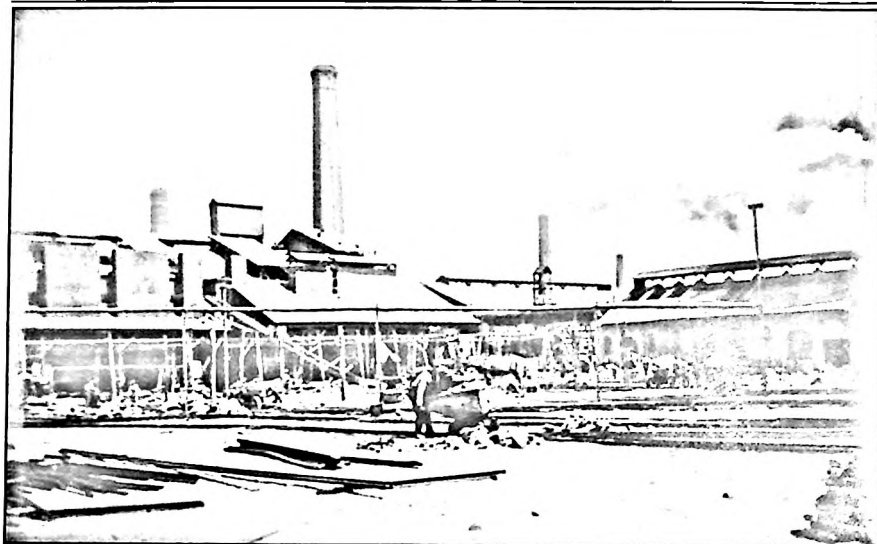
The metals were poured out to harden and cool as copper matte, which was a metallic copper sulfide mixture that contained gold and silver. This matte was shipped to Wales where it was refined and separated into gold,

silver and copper.

Hill's smelting works became an instant success. As workers were hired and the employees wanted to live close to their jobs, the population of Black Hawk climbed to 2,000 people.

Eventually, some sixty ore treatment plants were strung along North Clear Creek for two miles. The creek was also extensively worked for placers, and had some thirty arrastras worked along it.

Initially Hill shipped the copper matte to Wales for final processing. But Hill wanted to do the entire process in Colorado, so he hired Richard Pearce, a Cornishman, to work out the final



*History Colorado*

**The Globe Smelter was at 52nd Ave. between Washington and Logan Streets in Denver. A worker pushes an ore cart on the Denver & Rio Grande narrow gauge railroad tracks. Photo by William Henry Jackson, circa 1889**

refining steps and supervise the plant. Pearce's process proved to be the best separation technique for the metals, and it became the industry standard for many years.

In 1873 Hill began to do every step of ore processing in Colorado. Hill relocated the business to the Globeville neighborhood in north Denver in 1877 and established the Argo Smelter Works. The plant processed gold, silver, and copper ores for more than thirty years and finally closed in 1910.

Near the end of the 19th century the cyanide process was invented, whereby the ore could be dissolved in a solution of sodium cyanide, then the solution passed through boxes of fine zinc shavings to which the gold and silver would adhere. The precious metals could then be

separated from the zinc by heating, and the result was virtually 100% recovery.

Cyanidation led to the reworking of many old mine dumps and mill tailings, and resulted in another "gold rush."

Gold mining still goes on today in Colorado. Far and away the largest operation is in Teller County.

In August 2015, Newmont Mining Corp. acquired the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company (CC&V). The property consists of the Cresson surface mine.<sup>16</sup>

This is a low-grade ore that has an average resource grade of 0.022 ounces of gold per ton; historically, good-quality ores in the Cripple Creek district were between three and five ounces per ton.

Newmont uses both heap leaching, a process developed in the 1970s that allows for recovery of very low-grade gold concentrations, and a traditional mill.

Other gold is recovered from various small mines and placer deposits; in 2017 there were thirty-four active gold mining permits in Colorado.

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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.*

## **Westerners November Presentations**

For the Colorado Corral Shelby Carr showcased “Denver’s Dowager Queen, Louise Sneed Hill and the Sacred Thirty-six.” Mrs. Hill ruled over Denver’s high society for over four decades, and Shelby’s extensive research provided a thorough view of how Denver’s society operated in the early 1900s, with many entertaining vignettes.

Shelby Carr graduated from the University of Colorado with a Master of Arts in American history. She is a published author and specializes in Gilded Age women’s history.

The Pikes Peak Posse viewed the “History of the Cripple Creek Mining District,” by Steve Antonuccio. The fascinating story of the world’s greatest gold camp, in addition to illustrations by rare photos, featured obscure film clips of 1) the Midland Railroad traveling from Colorado Springs to Cripple Creek in 1929, 2) a 1966 interview at the Imperial Hotel of world-renowned journalist Lowell Thomas and Cripple Creek historians Marshall Sprague and Mabel Barbee Lee, and 3) a first-hand account by Lowell Thomas of Teddy Roosevelt’s visit to the Cripple Creek Mining District Creek.

Steve Antonuccio enjoyed a thirty-year career working in public and academic libraries. For twenty years he worked for the Pikes Peak Library District managing their library cable access channel where he produced over 100 local historical documentaries and developed a collection of historic films shot in the Pikes Peak region. Of the four documentaries of Cripple Creek he produced, “The Treasure of the Cripple Creek Mining District” was nominated for a Heartland Emmy.

## **Westerners mourn Loss of Distinguished Member**

Dr. Bruce C. Paton passed away on Nov. 4, at the age of 94. He was born in India, educated in Scotland, and at eighteen joined the Royal Marines, serving in World War II. Following his military service he received his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh. He was a Fellow of the



Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh.

Supposedly coming to Colorado to learn more about heart surgery, he entered a career at the University of Colorado, as Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery from 1962 to 1979, and then in private practice, as cardiac surgeon at Porter Hospital until retirement in 1995. Combining history and medicine, Bruce wrote *Sixty Years on the Cutting Edge: A History of the Department of Surgery, University of Colorado, 1950-2010*.

In addition to his medical career Dr. Paton was an expert on wilderness medicine, the president of Wilderness Medicine Society from 1996-1998, and he co-authored *Wilderness First Aid: Emergency Care for Remote Locations*. His keen interest in explorers spurred him to write two books, *Lewis and Clark: Doctors in the Wilderness*, and *Adventuring with Boldness: The Triumph of Explorers*.

Bruce's Westerner presentations involved the medical and survival problems and solutions of such as Lewis and Clark, Major Long, Fremont, and Kit Carson. In 2013 Dr. Paton received the Denver Westerners' Lifetime Achievement in Western History Award.





## Westerners Bookshelf



**Native American Prayer Trees of Colorado**, by John Wesley Anderson. Old Colorado Historical Society, Colorado Springs, 2018. 115 pp. Photographs, glossary, bibliography. Hardcover, \$37.95.

It is commonly known that the indigenous people of the United States are trained from childhood to respect nature and all of its surroundings. Many Native Americans, including the Ute, Comanche and other tribes inhabited this land long before white man arrived. Their traditions were passed down verbally from one generation to the next. Mr. Anderson's book explains the Natives' practice of using trees to mark trails and other important landmarks. Additionally, many trees were used for medicine and sacred purposes. This practice was not only utilized by Colorado Indian peoples but also by other Native Americans across the country and Canada.

Mr. Anderson stresses that not all deformed trees were altered by Indian cultures. His most informative and highly illustrated book describes in detail how a tree may be identified and differentiated from those simply altered by nature. Recognizing these valuable trees is paramount to the continued survival of specimens from this largely unknown lost tradition. Without the awareness of this cultural phenomenon, some of these resources will be lost forever to development or simple ignorance. This is a great "how to" guide to identify and help preserve our Native history.

*--Dorothy Merlo, Bob DeWitt*

**The Mormon Handcart Migration: Tongue nor Pen Can Never Tell the Sorrow**, by Candy Moulton. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2019. 272 pp. Photographs, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

Award-winning author Candy Moulton speaks with great authority in presenting this impressively detailed examination of a unique chapter in the history of the Western trails. Among the amazing multitude of diaries, journals, letters and other primary sources she researched, Moulton includes examples from her own family's history as well as her personal experiences reliving aspects of the trek during sesquicentennial reenactments.

Early in the history of the Mormon Church, missionaries found great success proselytizing in Europe, resulting in a flood of immigrants bound for the new Zion at Salt Lake City. The Church established a "Perpetual Emigration Fund" designed to offset their expenses, but this quickly became inadequate. Brigham Young proposed that immigrants could walk from Iowa to Utah, using handcarts rather than wagons much less expensively. Spanning 1856 to 1860 ten handcart companies made the trek. Two companies, the Willie Company and the Martin Company

departed late, and like the Donner Party became trapped in the snow, suffering horrendously before they could be rescued.

Mormon tradition suggests that the other eight companies fared quite well, and the handcart experience is still celebrated as a highpoint of the Church's history. Moulton's narrative provides ample evidence that death, starvation and extraordinary hardship accompanied all, including the successful companies. She documents poor decisions made by church hierarchy, and eventual recriminations that accompanied the obvious failures in execution that were a part of the experiment. Nevertheless, with careful balance, Moulton celebrates the indomitability of the human spirit shown by the pioneers who successfully completed the often nightmarish trek.

Moulton's *Handcart Migration* provides an incredibly rich, highly detailed examination of the immigrant's ordeals. Weaving countless diaries and journals into a fascinating narrative, Moulton provides the reader an experience about as close as one can get to actually accompanying the handcart companies along the trail. I highly recommend this book, but be warned. You will almost certainly become emotionally involved and highly moved.

--Dennis Hagen

**Valley of the Guns: The Pleasant Valley War and the Trauma of Violence**, by Eduardo Obregón Pagán. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 2018. 295 pp. Maps, photos, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

One of the most violent episodes of the Wild West occurred in an area ironically called Pleasant Valley. Long presented as a family feud between the Grahams and the Tewksburys, Arizona's so-called Pleasant Valley War claimed at least twenty-two lives, while destroying many others.

In this decidedly revisionist retelling, Pagán relies upon a thorough, thoughtful examination of the evidence to strike down many of the myths that have grown around this compelling story. He demonstrates clearly that this episode's violence was not a case of cattlemen against sheep herders, nor was it simply large ranchers pitted against small ranchers or settlers. Rather, Pagán weaves an incredibly complex web of intertwined threads to depict the manner in which constant exposure to violence drove business associates, neighbors and even very close friends to succumb to their fears, turn upon one another, and ultimately to resort to the extremity of murder.

Pagán's research is impeccable, featuring detailed footnotes and an extensive bibliography heavily weighted toward archival and primary sources. His prose is incredibly clear and colorful. The most compelling aspect of Pagán's research involves his use of modern understanding of stress and trauma, drawn from intense combat experiences, to explain the often irrational actions of the major characters in this drama. He demonstrates how constant exposure to violence from Apache raids, rustling and general lawlessness, combined with the stresses of drought and financial downturns to create psychological pressures sufficient to break even the strongest settlers, driving them into a spiral of uncontrolled violent reactions.

Pagan's interdisciplinary approach provides a monumentally groundbreaking interpretation of the role that violence and trauma played in making the Wild West wild. His insights offer incredible possibilities for reinterpreting other historical events. This book is a real page-turner that will grab you in a way that will make it very difficult to put down.

*--Dennis Hagen*

**Man-Hunters of the Old West, Volume 2**, by Robert K. DeArmant. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2018. 329 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.

In the first volume, the author focused on eight man-hunters of which one, Charles A. Siringo, may be familiar to a casual reader of 19th century Western history. The Texas cowboy and man-hunter Charlie Siringo comes back into focus in Volume 2 when he joins another man-hunter, Patrick Floyd Jarvis "Pat" Garrett, as a posse member accompanying Garrett in tracking Billy the Kid to his Stinking Springs hideout and the capture of the "Kid." This one episode reflects the overall purpose of both Volume 1 and Volume 2 for author DeArmant: to give recognition to those individuals who brought law and order to the West but did not gain the notoriety of the outlaws they pursued, such as Billy the Kid. The face of law enforcement in the 19th century West was white, but one of the most notable and regarded man-hunters was Bass Reeves who was black.

The chapters on the lives of the eight man-hunters in Volume 2 are arranged to some degree in a chronological order, encompassing a period of time from the Mexican-American War and its immediate aftermath to the early part of the 20th century. With a few exceptions the author does not interject any summary observation on the lives or actions of the people being profiled. It is left for the reader to conclude what these lives represent in terms of the development of law and order in the wild West. For this reader, it became clearer how law and order grew from an ad-hoc formation of "law or justice" enforcers to individuals who dedicated themselves to law enforcement as part of formal organizations.

While there are secondary book sources already published on each of the individuals profiled in this book, each chapter provides a solid overview of each individual, and taken together, provide a reader with the development of law and order from the 19th century into the 20th century. By citing primary sources, DeArmant gives the reader insight into some of the 19th century values that supported these man-hunters in pursuit of their quarry. For example, in the chapter on Granville Stuart, the Diamond City newspaper editorial is quoted, "...we cannot censure [the ranchers for] summarily dealing out justice without waiting the inefficient, slow action of the law."

Some readers may be put off by the timeline nature of how the author handles the lives of each of his subjects. Following a litany of dates can become dry reading and, on occasion, one can become lost when the author jumps back to an earlier period in the person's life. But overall, the reader who sticks with it will come away with a good sense of how law and order developed in the West through the lives of men who were just as extraordinary as those of the more popular and famous lawmen such as Hickock, Earp or Masterson.

*--Joseph Lamos*



**Bluecoat and Pioneer: The Recollections of John Benton Hart, 1864-1868**, edited by John Hart. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2019. 225 pages. Maps, photographs, illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$32.95.

The book deals with the life of John Benton Hart that included his last year with the 11<sup>th</sup> Kansas Cavalry in the Civil War, and the following three years as settler and message carrier for the army on the Bozeman Trail during Red Cloud's War in Wyoming. Hart gives a personal perspective to some historic moments of those four years.

After fifty years, Hart's original manuscripts were shared with his son Harry Hart who interviewed his father in those later years. The interviews added new remembrances, which enhanced the original manuscripts. Grandson Lawrence Hart began putting the memories together and great-grandson John Hart did the final editing resulting in this book.

Interesting quote: Civil War in Missouri, "...all the time that line of Jonnies stood there, they never showed the white feather, they were as good as our boys, and why not? Weren't they born under American stars? And weren't they our brothers?"

Though Hart found himself sometimes at odds with the Indians, he also maintained a very healthy respect for them, with some of them becoming dear friends.

Suggest the reader reads thoroughly the Introduction and epilogue first to get a better understanding of the story. The Civil War section starts off slowly but the personal side picks up as one goes along. Once one reaches the Wyoming section, it is hard to put down the book.

Quote: Lawrence Hart, the grandson of John Benton Hart talking about the manuscripts of his grandfather and his father, Harry Hart: "...and I cannot retrieve what I arrogantly threw away. But as a great poet may be known first, and best, through his books, so I know Harry and John Benton Hart....through what I have of the manuscripts." And we catch a glimpse of the personal side of the soldier and pioneer thanks to the efforts of son, grandson and great-grandson.

*--Everett Brailey*



**Forty Years a Forester, Annotated Edition**, by Elers Koch, edited by Char Miller. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2019. 227 pp. Index, maps, photographs, footnotes, bibliography, index. Paperback, \$24.95.

Elers Koch was present at the creation. Hired by Gifford Pinchot, he was among the first employees of the newly created US Forest Service. He was instrumental in surveying newly created National Forests, his first being in the area of Mt. Shasta. He went on to implement many of the practices for which the USFS is known: timber management, fire lookouts and fighting, trail building, tree planting, and others. He touches on the relations between the USFS and the New Deal. At the end of the book he wonders if in addition to timber sales, there shouldn't be space for recreation and road-free areas.

The annotation gives context and background. We learn of Gifford Pinchot's guidance of the early Service and his eventual running afoul of the powers that be (President Taft). One ranger quoted by Elers was a Rough Rider with TR. Other ranger's stories of their days in the wilderness, usually with good notes on their background, add to the picture. Koch himself tells of his first ascent of Granite Peak, Montana's highest.

The author spent a career in northwest Montana, where he was also born and grew up. He retired in 1944 and lived until 1954. This volume gives a good feel for life in the back country before roads, GPS, satellite phones, and other modern inventions. It is an enjoyable read.

*--Stan Moore*

