THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

Published bi-monthly by
The State Historical Society of Colorado

VOL. X | Denver, Colorado, November, 1933 | No. 6

Crossing the Plains to Colorado in 1865

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In the spring of 1865 I started for the plains. Arriving at St. Joseph, Mo., I found that a steamboat would start up the river the following day. I stopped over night at a hotel where I met a number of men who had come across the plains from the mountains and about a dozen or more of them were to start up the river to Nebraska City on the boat in the morning. There they expected to engage as mule drivers, bull whackers and in other occupations, as many wagon-trains were constantly leaving for the far West.

I was aboard the boat early that bright morning. When the lines were cast off and we were fairly out into the stream I found time to study and form something of an opinion of my fellow-passengers. They were a motley crowd of all ages and sizes, but as pronounced in their characteristics as mountain and prairie men as a crowd of sailors on a New York wharf would be of their calling.

Their dress was varied—board-brimmed hats, flannel shirts of all colors, from bright red to gray or butternut. Some of the men wore their pants in their boots, others wore moccasins and many sported Kentucky jeans. A number were in buckskin shirts and trousers plentifully fringed at the seams, and all, or nearly all, had six-shooter and knife slung to their belts.

Old gray-headed men were among the company, but they had the keen glance and active movement that showed plainly how lightly their years sat on them. They were as enthusiastic as their younger companions and in most cases looked up to because of their experience and knowledge of the country and people, both white and red, with whom they had been for years familiar. Then there were greenhorns, some from foreign lands, others from the farming districts of every western state, one or two from

*Mr. Stobie was born in Baltimore, Maryland, March 18, 1845. At the close of the Civil War the family moved to Chicago. This account of his trip to Colorado was found among the manuscripts left by Mr. Stobie. For a description of the Stobie collection presented to the State Historical Society see article below. —Ed.

large cities, who, attracted by the stories of the wonders of and wild life on the plains and in the mountains, had determined to cast aside the restraints of civilized society and take their chances in the wide, wild west.

Our trip up the river was a pleasant one. There was a good deal of card playing and some drinking. But on the whole there was a noticeable quiet dignity among those men of the plains and any appearance of toughness or rowdyism was frowned down, while good fellowship and a desire to be friendly was apparent among all. Many evinced a quiet and dignified manner, but were always ready to give information and advice when called upon by their unexperienced fellow passengers.

At length we landed at Nebraska City. I found the hotel at which, I had been informed, the gentleman to whom I had letters was staying and was received by him in a most friendly manner. He was superintendent of a mining company and expected to have a large wagon-train ready to start out on the old steam-wagon road, as it was called, within a short time.

The outfit was in camp about eight miles from town and, if I liked, I could start for camp that afternoon. One of the wagons was in town and, having been introduced to some of my future companions, I soon had my belongings transferred to a big Schutler wagon and was on the way. The traveling was about the slowest I had ever experienced, being my first trip with a bull team.

It was evening when we arrived at camp. The wagons were in corral—a circle, or to be more exact, an oval on the level prairie. The tongue of each wagon ran up alongside of the wagon ahead of it, except a wide space left at either end of the corral. Inside the fires were lighted.

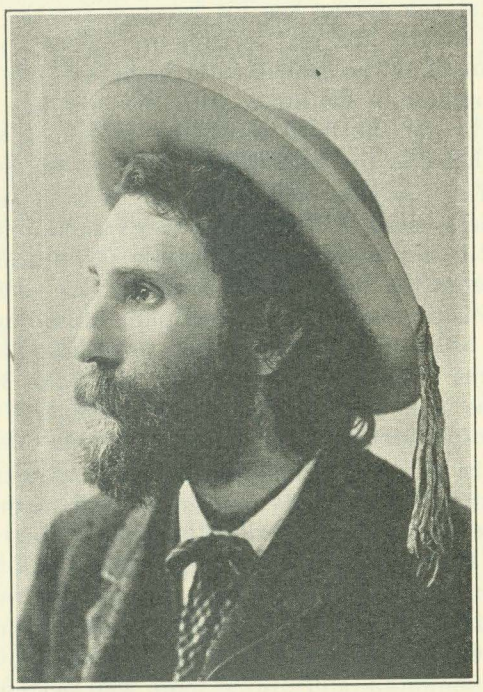
The sun was just going down as our wagon was driven into its place. We were received by the wagon boss and a number of the boys who were anxious for news from town and also to find out who the newcomer was. I was made to feel at home in camp and the welcome shout of "grub-pile, grub-pile," indicated that supper was ready. Furnished with tin cup and plate and using my belt knife, as the others did, to eat with, I was soon doing justice to my first meal on the plains.

I had noticed the herd of cattle grazing some distance on the prairie in charge of the herders and after we had our supper a fresh detail of men was sent out to relieve those who had been on duty since noon. Several horses and ponies were picketed close at hand, one belonging to the wagon boss and others owned by some of the boys who had invested their money in that way instead of spending it in riotous living in the town. Also there

were two horse teams, property of a brother of the superintendent who, with his wife and two sons, were to accompany the outfit.

After listening to the yarns spun by some of my future companions and satisfying them as to who I was and where I came from, I spread my blankets under one of the wagons and turned in for the night.

Soon I was accustomed to my new life and lost no opportunity of becoming posted on all things pertaining to the new occupation. I became a bull-whacker (ox driver). It was hard work handling those wild Texas cattle and getting them yoked



CHARLES S. STOBIE

up strung out on the road—and keeping them on the road after we got them there was anything but a picnic, even for the old hands. I had considerable experience going and coming from the town to camp and by the time orders came to yoke up and string out on the road for our long drive across the plains I was able to keep my cattle in the road in pretty good shape.

We used two kinds of bull whips. One with a very long handle or stock, which was called "fishing pole," and was not

used by the expert driver. The regulation whip, as I may call it, was often over twelve feet long, thick toward the middle and sometimes loaded with shot to make it heavy. It tapered toward the handle as well as toward the lash, which was a buckskin thong. The handle was from a foot to a foot and a half in length and generally made of hickory. The way an expert bull-whacker can handle one of the whips is a caution. There is a great knack in doing this and the crack is like the report of a pistol shot.

When the unruly ox invites punishment the great welt left on his hide and the haste with which he gets into his place and tightens the log-chain, testify to the punishment he has received. It is then that the driver has his revenge for the trouble that same ox has caused him in "yoking up" when the driver had to wander around on the prairie with the heavy yoke on his shoulder and the oxbow in his hand, with the bow key in his teeth, endeavoring to get the bow under the ox's neck and the ends run into the holes in the yoke where the bow key secures it.

Often, after the yoke was on a pair of oxen and they were left until others could be yoked up, they would sometimes twist and turn until they got the yoke upside down and underneath instead of across the backs of their necks. At such a time the atmosphere was particularly full of sulphur caused by the profane exclamations of the bull-whacker, who sometimes required much assistance from his companions before the yoke was properly replaced. The oxen gave no heed to the command of strangers, but seemed to understand the language of their drivers.

Among the old-timers employed in our wagon train was Joe Milner, known as "California Joe." He had made his way to the River—we always spoke of the Missouri as "the river," thinking he would like to see a little of State's life. But he soon tired of this. It was too crowded for Joe. So after turning loose all his money on one grand hurrah he hired with this train as a driver that he might make his way back to the mountains. Joe was a typical mountain and prairie man, well posted on "injun" fighting, hunting, trapping, etc. Having spent all his life in the far west I was anxious to learn and was not afraid to ask him questions. I took notice how everything was done in camp or on the road and worked hard to clear myself of the title of greenhorn.

Joe noticed this and one day I heard him say to the wagon boss: "Say, Cap, I guess you'd better let me have that young feller go out on guard with me." My vanity was tickled and I made up my mind to do my level best in attending to my duties and show Joe that I was worthy of being his pupil.

From that time on until I left the train Joe and I were pards. He would not talk much when about camp or on the road, but when we were out with the stock we were as thick as thieves. When the cattle were on good grazing ground, so that we had comparatively little trouble in keeping them from straggling too far, Joe would relate his experiences to me and post me on mountain and prairie craft, and many a stormy night he would insist on doing the greatest part of the work that I might, as he said, be fresher-like for the next day's duties.

Although many years have passed since I have seen my old friend, my appreciation of his devotion is as strong as ever. He was as tender-hearted as a woman and brave as a lion. He never went back on a friend nor swerved from what he considered his duty.

After a time I became tired of our slow mode of journeying and being anxious to reach the mountains so that I could spend a portion of the summer among them, I consulted with Joe.

"Well, boy," he said, "I don't blame ye for wanting to get out to the hill country, and if you get the chance maybe you'd better light out. I hate to lose you, but I'm liable to come acrost ye out thar. So don't stay on my account. With me it's different. This here bull-train is going to be some time on the road and the longer the better for me, seeing that my wages is running on and I'll need a stake when I get to the other end of the trail. But if you want to save time, I say go ahead if you can get a chance to change on to a hoss or mule train."

The opportunity soon came. We corralled the wagons near a stage station that evening and after supper I strolled over to have a talk with the stock keepers. There I found a man who wanted to whack cattle out to the mountains. I told him I had a chance to go with another train that had caught up with us and I would see if I could get him my place. The wagon boss did not want to let me go at first but after a little talk concluded to accept the new man in my place and paid me the money due me.

The train I spoke of was composed of horse and mule teams, and I had a slight acquaintance with the owner of one of the wagons. He made me a fair offer and I had my substitute at work with my old team and my baggage transferred to the wagon in the hoss train in short order.

Next morning after bidding Joe and the rest goodbye, we rolled out on the road and were soon making good time ahead of the ox teams. We had only five wagons altogether and two of them had women and children aboard. Our wagons were light and we

got over double the distance daily that the other train had been making.

Arriving at Fort Kearney, or rather Adobe Town, just beyond the Post, we were halted by an officer and told that we must travel in company with other trains that had been detained until a sufficient number was made up for safety against Indians.

I found time to go to the Fort. This was my first sight of a frontier post and I found much of interest there. Returning to "Dobie-town" I made a few purchases at one of the stores kept by a Scotchman, named Brown, and also scraped acquaintance with Frank North and some Pawnee Indians who were loafing around the trader's store.[1] Frank was living with the Pawnees and became chief of the Pawnee scouts. He wanted me to join him.

Going back to camp I found several of the tribe wandering around among the wagons. The grub boxes were chained to the rear end of the wagon boxes and just as I approached our camp fire a little incident occurred that came near making trouble for us. A young Pawnee buck with his blanket pulled tight around him was standing on a water keg investigating the contents of the grub box at the very end of the wagon, among which were cooked provisions, frying pan, etc.

As he had not noticed anyone in the immediate vicinity, he fancied he had a good chance to help himself to a little sugar which he knew to be kept in just such a place. I was just going to yell at him when I noticed a big Missourian, one of our party, stepping from behind one of the other wagons, armed with his long-lashed whip. He was an expert and I knew he could come pretty near clipping a buffalo gnat from off a mule's ear with that lash. The Indian's blanket was strained tight about him, and as he leaned over the grub-box the Missourian let him have the full effect of the clip from that buckskin lash in the vicinity of his breech clout. The way that Indian lit off the rear of the wagon and sailed away for the Pawnee camp would have done credit to a prairie swift (prairie fox).

He returned soon with some of his friends and had it not been for the arrival of a cavalry sergeant and his men on their way to the Fort we might have had considerable trouble. After a good deal of exciting talk the Indians left camp, but we kept a sharp lookout for mischief until we left Adobe Town far behind us the next day.

[1]Frank North was leader of the Pawnee scouts in the Battle of Summit Springs near Sterling, Colorado, in July, 1869. Mr. Stobie made an excellent oil portrait of Major North, which is now in possession of the State Historical Society of Colorado.—Ed.

At Fort Kearney we were provided with a few old muzzle-loading government rifles, and a large box of cartridges and a supply of caps were kept under or near the front seats in the wagons, although most of us had hunting rifles of our own.

After leaving Kearney we commenced to realize that there was game in the country. Antelope were to be seen in the distance at times, but generally were too far off to tempt us away from the wagons. Besides, we had strict orders from the wagon boss that no man should go far from the train.

The older heads and experienced ones in authority knew that discipline must be enforced as far as possible for the safety of the outfit. Many of us were fresh arrivals on the plains and did not realize the danger we were in, for hostile bands of Indians were known to be on both sides of the Platte. Sometimes we had to camp by the side of the road, quite a distance from the river, and whether going with the stock to water or to fill our water kegs, we were always armed. Every man had at least one six-shooter slung to his belt, and where the banks of the Platte suggested a hiding place for Indians many of us took our rifles along. In the evenings we always rounded our wagons into corral form with the camp fires inside.

The train was divided into two sections and in forming camp the first section left the road and formed a half-circle. The second section then drove around in an opposite direction so as to complete the corral, with space at each end through which to drive the stock in case of an attack. Otherwise the wagons were run as close together as possible. In an ox train the chains were hooked between the wagons in front and rear so that Indians could not dash through the corral. Then our instructions were, in case of an attack, to pile the sacks of grain and rolls of bedding against the wheels and tongues on the inside for breastworks. When there was time to accomplish this we had a pretty fair fort and would be able to defend ourselves in good shape. Trained to this every day we soon were able to run the wagons into corral form with the stock and ourselves inside without loss of time as every man knew just what service was required of him.

The monotony of travel was relieved by meeting trains eastward bound to St. Joe or Nebraska City and their drivers never lost an opportunity of warning us to look out for our top-knots as the Indians were thicker than buffalo gnats ahead of us. Now, at times, the buffalo gnats and mosquitoes made it very lively for us, as well as our stock, and horses and mules were driven nearly frantic by them.

At one noon camp we were all startled by the piercing screams of a little boy of one of the families traveling with us. The child was on the ground rolling and screaming like a little wildcat. I was near, and running up found him nearly crazy. There was a buffalo gnat in his ear. I jumped for the water keg, drew a tincup full of water and, telling his mother to hold his head tight in her lap, I poured the water slowly into his ear. The gnat came to the surface and out, relieving the youngster of his agony and the rest of the party of their anxiety. Everyone, hearing his shrieks, imagined that he had been bitten by a rattlesnake.

Speaking of rattlesnakes, there were plenty of them. Prairie dog villages were numerous all along the route and there were always plenty of rattlers in the dog towns. We sometimes shot them, but were warned to save our ammunition as we might need it all. So we contented ourselves with attacking the snakes with our long-lashed whips. I have seen half a dozen men deployed out on the prairie, all cracking away at rattlesnakes, and an expert with a whip made short work of one of them. We heard of numerous snake-bite cases but, as a rule, plenty of whiskey poured into the patients and a poultice of tobacco—made by all hands chewing as if their own lives depended upon it and each contributing his share—applied to the wound counteracted the poison and the patient pulled through.

Two days afterward we went into camp for the night, a short distance from the banks of the river. I was detailed to guard the stock from midnight until daybreak and for a partner had an Irish driver who was the veriest kind of a greenhorn, having been but a short time in America. I concluded to train him a little and arranged with him that we start around in opposite directions, meeting and passing each other at the other end of the herd. As we came together at each half-round he was to report to me if he saw anything out of the common on his circuit. Also I impressed upon him that it was necessary to watch the river banks as well as the bluffs and notice any unusual movement among the horses and mules, particularly the mules. For, if there is an Indian in the neighborhood, a mule is likely to find it out first and does not hesitate to report it by his actions.

In about an hour my attention was attracted by a star just over the top of the bluffs on our side of the river. It came in sight and disappeared several times but did not change its position. I called the attention of the Irishman to it and told him to watch it, also to notice the horizon on the north side of the Platte and see if he could find another star that did not move from the place.

On my way around I myself found it and carefully watched those two little lights blinking at each other. Satisfying myself in regard to these signal lights, I determined to send my partner to camp to tell our people and was on the eve of starting when, looking through the herd I saw that some of the mules were uneasy. Also, over and almost on line with the other guard who was passing on the opposite side, I saw an object which, at first, I thought was one of the horses standing with his head toward me. But he did not move and I went on until I met Martin. I pointed out the object to him and told him to go slow and when we met again to let me know whether it was a man or a horse.

"Ach! Charlie, de'ye think it's one o' thim injuns?" Martin's eyes stuck out and I saw he was scared. "Watch that figure and let me know what you've seen when we meet at the other end."

We parted. I was on the side next the river. Near me the ground dropped to a lower level, having at some time been washed away when the river was high. Behind this terrace I dropped and crawled as near as I could to the figure among the horses. He moved now. I was sure it was a man. I looked for my friend. Instead of doing what I had told him he was streaking it for camp like a quarter horse. The Indian saw that he was discovered, quickly made his way to the east end of the herd, grabbed the rope one of the horses was picketed with, but the horse broke away from him.

Just at that moment I cocked my rifle—an "old Springfield." The click of that lock as I cocked it seemed to me in that still night air as if it could have been heard at the bluffs. The Indian heard it, and without trying to mount another horse, ran like a deer toward the Platte, not even attempting to start the horses by swaying a blanket. I could not get the sights of my gun trained on him until he was almost at the river bank. Then I fired. Over he went. But I never had a chance to know whether or not my shot had taken effect on him.

It had its effect on the boys in camp, though, and I soon had reinforcements. We got the stock up to the wagons and, as it was about daybreak, took all the precautions necessary and got breakfast, all hands and the cooks keeping a sharp lookout at the same time. The boys complimented me on my poor shooting, of course. But how they did torment poor Martin.

I continued to watch the bluffs and surrounding country while eating and looking off north of the river saw a number of horsemen emerge from behind a bit of high ground and ride down in our direction. There were seven of them and at the sight of those Indians we got our wits about us. The stock was driven

inside the corral and secured. Arms and ammunition were examined and we got ready for business, at the same time speculating on the chances of another wagon train catching up with us in case we were attacked by a large party.

The squad of redskins came nearer, and we expected every moment to see a large party come in sight. Nearer came the seven reds, signalling us and making insulting gestures, knowing that we had neither the means nor intention of going after them. How far it was across the river and up to where they were I could not tell. But a shot was fired by one of the Indians and the bullet threw up the dust a short distance from where I stood.

Aha! that means business. I was bound to retaliate. My own rifle I knew would not carry up to them, so I grabbed a soldier-gun standing against a wagon wheel. By this time other shots had been fired by their side. I asked one of the men if the gun I had was loaded and understood him to say "no." So reaching into the front of the wagon where the cartridges were kept, I procured and rammed down a cartridge, putting some more in my pocket. After capping the rifle I started for a little bunch of soap-plant—Spanish Bayonet—about fifty yards nearer the river, flattened myself behind it and shoved the rifle through the spikes of the soap-plant for a rest.

Several more shots were fired. Some of our boys were firing —without effect, however, so far. I took careful aim for the group, waiting until they were bunched, and elevated my rifle on account of the long range. Two more bullets cut up the dust. Then I fired. Jiminy! what a rap in the face I got. The short-stocked military rifle caused my thumb knuckle to come close up to my nose, and when I fired I got such a rap in the face that I thought the gun had burst. I rolled over on the ground, but instantly righted myself to see the result of my short. The reds were on the retreat. Two of them were holding a third on his pony and he was doubled up in such a way as to cause us to think that something had struck him, too.

The boys yelled and I joined in, but not as heartily as I might have done under other circumstances. I was interested just then in my own condition. My right eye was closing up and the whole side of my face swelling rapidly and feeling as if it had been shot away. My head felt as big as a barrel. Two cartridges in my gun had made it do good execution in both front and rear and the warnings I got from the boys ever afterwards to the effect that I had better use one cartridge at a time or I'd make more of those fore and aft shots, soon became monotonous.

There were no more Indians in sight but we thought we heard firing away to the east. It was finally concluded that we

start on the road and get away from that locality and to the next ranch or stage station as soon as possible.

In about a half-hour after starting we noticed the dust from a party coming up the road in our rear and we swung out again to corral the wagons when we saw that they were soldiers. They soon came up and informed us that a big train had that morning narrowly escaped losing all their stock but no one had been hurt seriously. The train was not far back and would soon overtake us. We kept on and the train caught up with us shortly after, and we traveled in company to Julesburg. Several times the Indians made their appearance on the bluffs but we had no further trouble.

Army and navy revolvers were in general use at this time and the Colt's pistols were the favorites, although many carried Remingtons and the old Manhattan five-shooter. They were of the old pattern for loose ammunition or oiled paper cartridges, and the cylinders had to be capped. As we could procure ammunition for them at all of the ranches, we used a great deal of powder and lead in practicing—bottles, tin fruit cans, etc., afforded us a choice of targets when we did not use the prairie dogs as such.

Every wagon-train had its champion shot who often carried a card, the ace of spades, stuck in his hat band. He was open for challenge from those of other trains that we met or camped near and some very fine pistol practice was shown. The stakes generally were canned goods, Red Jacket Bitters, etc.—very seldom money. Sometimes the targets were tossed up and fired at in the air. But six bottles or cans in a row was the more usual way of arranging the objects to be fired at. However, our shooting from horseback at telegraph poles was of most service to us and trained our horses to stand fire as well. A man would ride on a keen lope along the line of poles at any distance he liked from them and fire at the knots or other marks on the poles that would catch his eye.

One of our best shots was the cause of the wagon boss putting a stop to the too full use of revolvers. We were corralled near a ranch and one of the drivers had imbibed a little, just enough to make him somewhat reckless. As he came into camp he noticed Martin, the Irishman, seated on a water keg smoking a long-stemmed new clay pipe. The pipe was cocked up in a most inviting way for a mark, and all being clear around him Jim pulled his sixshooter and whanged away at Martin's pipe. The pipe was knocked into smithereens and poor Martin fell backward off the water keg worse scared than when he had sighted the Indian in the horse herd. This act, of course, was denounced

by all the boys and the wagon boss put a stop to all pistol shooting for practice in close proximity to the camp from that day on.

We had been particularly lucky in escaping attacks by Indians for trains had been attacked and much stock run off as well as some people killed both to the east and west of us during our journey from Nebraska City. The alkali water had affected us all more or less and we frequently used citric acid to counteract its effects.

At old Fort Morgan we left the Platte and struck off on the cut-off road to Denver. Nothing out of the ordinary occurred on this last part of our journey except a flood at Coal Creek. When we arrived on its banks it was almost dry and we corralled on the east side as we were late in making this camp. In the night we could see that a storm was raging to the southwest of us. About the time we had our breakfast prepared we heard the men who were out with the stock shouting. Looking up the creek we saw rushing toward us down the creek-bed an immense volume of water and sand. Down it came swiftly and steadily and swept past us. Where a moment before had been a dry, sandy bottom there was now a turbulent, foaming yellow flood. This caused a delay of about two hours. Then we pulled through the creek without much trouble and strung out on the road. Our stock was in pretty good condition and we made long drives.

As we drew near the mountains we daily noticed their changing appearance and reveled in the anticipation of exploring their wild fastnesses. The snow-capped range glittered in the sunlight. All past vexations and disappointments were forgotten. The driver of the lead wagon yelled, "Ain't I glad to get out of the wilderness!" and all hands took it up and sang with might and main. Bert Smart swore that the mules caught the air and came mighty near getting the words right.

On the high ground east of Denver we made our last camp, had a general cleanup, went through our trunks, gunny-sack valises and togged up in good shape for our drive through the city of the plains.

What wonderful changes have taken place since I first trod the streets of that town of not more than four thousand inhabitants. And that, it appeared to me, included all the horse, mule and ox outfits.

Here we separated. Some of our fellow travelers went into the mountains, some off south, and others to find new homes in the Platte valley. I had letters to Mr. Jim MacNasser of the Planters House, and others, who all extended to me a hearty welcome and I soon felt almost as much at home as a '59er.

The Bicycle Era in Colorado

ANDREW W. GILLETTE*

The earliest form of vehicular conveyance within what is now the State of Colorado was the *travois,* "a contrivance consisting of two poles lashed at one end to each side of a dog or a horse, the other ends trailing on the ground, having also a hurdle lashed from pole to pole to receive a load" (Standard Dictionary). These primitive contrivances were used by the Indians to carry their tepees, equipment and utensils and sometimes for the transportation of papooses, old people and the wounded.

At an early day the Spaniards introduced in the southern part of the state the *carreta,* a kind of bullock cart with two solid wooden wheels which squealed dismally when in motion.

Then came the ox-drawn covered wagon, or "prairie schooner" of the pioneers, to be quickly followed by the horse and wagon and the stagecoach, the motive power of which latter was generally mules. The transcontinental stage ran only a few years before it was supplanted by the railroad (which reached Colorado in 1870), and both the stagecoach and the prairie schooner became obsolete.

Some twenty years later was witnessed the advent of the bicycle as we know it (there was an earlier style with a high wheel—56 to 60 inches—in front and a small wheel behind), a rubber-tired vehicle of two wheels, "rimmed," as expressed by a poet of the period, "with the viewless prisoned wind," and propelled by the rider's legs. Until practically displaced, a quarter-century later, by the motor car, the bicycle enjoyed a great and constantly increasing popularity, affording, as it did, even with the streets and roads as unimproved as they then were, gratification of the ever-growing desire for greater and greater speed.

Bicycle clubs sprang up all over the state, their membership running into the thousands. There were in Denver professional bicycle exhibitions and races, in the old skating rink on the site now occupied by the Denver Dry Goods Company, and there were professional and amateur road races galore. A favorite course was the "sandpaper track" to Brighton. Petersburg was a popular objective for friendly races of clubs composed of members of the same trade or profession, the route being out Broadway to what is now Englewood, thence to the hotel in Petersburg, where a good dinner was paid for by the riders comprising that

*Mr. Gillette is a retired lawyer and a member of the State Historical Society of Colorado. He lives in Denver today.—Ed.

half of the number last to arrive. Everybody rode a "wheel"—men, women and children, old and young, clergymen, lawyers, doctors, business men. When the first automobile, a "one-lunger," made its appearance in Denver, about 1901, the number of bicycles in the city was nearly or quite as great, in proportion to population, as the number of automobiles of the present day. "Century rides" (one hundred miles in a day) were not uncommon, usually to Greeley and back. One "centurion," who was very proud of his feat, was Edward S. Irish, of the Denver National Bank. The writer, together with his after partner, Mr. Henry H. Clark, rode to Estes Park ("James Ranch," now Elkhorn Lodge) and back in 1894, and Mr. Clark, with a companion, made the round trip, Aspen to Detroit and return, by bicycle, the preceding year. Such achievements were too common to attract notice.

But the vogue of the bicycle was brief. The phenomenally rapid increase of automobiles, satisfying as they did the urge for greater speed, gradually relegated equine-propelled and man-propelled vehicles to the realm of the obsolete until at the end of the first quarter of the present century, save for the wheels of messenger boys and newspaper carriers, the ubiquitous "auto" possessed the streets and highways of Colorado and horses and bicycles were as rare as were automobiles at the beginning of the century. Now we have the motor bus and the airplane. What next?

The following article, by the present writer, re-printed from the September 16, 1898, number of *Bulletin and Good Roads,* the official publication of the League of American Wheelmen, will perpetuate the memory of an incidental outgrowth of "the bicycle craze" of thirty-five to forty years ago. In view of the recent return to favor of the bicycle, it may perhaps be not without interest.

A COLORADO CYCLE PATH

The first section, eleven miles, of what, when finished, is destined to become one of the most famous bicycle pathways in the world—the Denver-Palmer Lake cycle-path—is now completed, from Denver to Littleton, affording a delightful ride to the 25,000 wheelmen and wheelwomen of the "Queen City." The path, as planned, will extend from Denver southward fifty miles, to Palmer Lake, skirting the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, passing, for the first twenty miles of its course, through a rich agricultural district, and for the remainder of the distance circling in and out among the picturesque foothills and playing at hide-and-seek with the pine trees.

In this distance of fifty miles the path gains an elevation of 2,000 feet, rising from one mile above sea level at Denver to 7,238 feet at Palmer Lake. Palmer Lake is a popular summer resort, with a fine hotel, "The Rocklands," and cottages, and is also the site of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly, which holds its sessions here for several weeks every summer. It is reached by the Denver & Rio Grande, the Colorado Midland, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, the Chicago & Rock Island and the Missouri Pacific railroads, and is distant only one and one-half hours from Denver and three-fourths of an hour from Colorado Springs. It is unque in location, being upon the crest of

ON THE DENVER TO PALMER LAKE CYCLE PATH

the "Divide," which here juts out eastward from the Rockies, diverting the waters which fall on its southern slope into the Arkansas River, while those which fall on its northern side find their way into the Platte. It is the highest railway station between Cheyenne on the north and Trinidad on the south—a distance of 300 miles. A ride by train to Palmer Lake, taking one's wheel (bicycles are "baggage," by law, in Colorado), and coasting back to Denver over the new cycle-path, will make an ideal trip.

This wonderful piece of wheel road has been made possible through the unselfish and unremitting labors of the officers and

members of the Denver-Palmer Lake Cycle-Path Association, nearly all of whom are members of the L. A. W. [League of American Wheelmen]. Their efforts secured from the city of Denver the passage of an ordinance protecting cycle-paths, an appropriation of $1,000 for the commencement of this path, and the building of the first four miles, to the city limits. Another mile was built by the commissioners of Arapahoe County.

For the first five miles of its course the path follows the west side of Broadway, due south from the city; then, upon the brow of a hill, at a point where the City Ditch crosses Broadway, it leads off to the right, and from this point to Littleton, a distance of some five or six miles, it follows the banks of this stream, now on one side and now on the other, keeping the even grade of the ditch as it circles about, and always on the highest ground. This is, perhaps, the most picturesque part of the entire route, taking the cyclist, as it does, away from the roadway, away from the necessity of watching for teams and pedestrians, into the very midst of a luxuriant farm life, among fields of waving wheat, barley, oats, alfalfa and timothy, and resting the eyes upon many a peaceful rural scene. As the path turns and twists about, following the devious windings of the stream, a stranger would be at a loss to know whether he were going towards Denver or away from the city. It reminds one of that famous trail described as

"Winding in and winding out,
As still to leave a man in doubt
Whether the snake that made the track
Was going south, or coming back."

While not bearing a very euphonious name, the City Ditch is in reality a beautiful stream, carrying a large volume of water from the Platte for the irrigation of City Park and the trees lining Denver's streets, and is bordered for nearly the entire length of the cycle-path by large cottonwoods. The path itself is ten feet in width, and as hard and smooth as it can be made. This portion through the fields is the most expensive bit of the entire path, costing something more than $400 per mile. Much of this expense was occasioned by the necessity of cutting and uprooting trees and shrubbery, of building cattle-guards and bridges, and of making fills.

One of the peculiar features of this path, necessitated where it must pass through fences, is the cattle-guards. These were designed by Peter O'Brien, the engineer, under whose supervision the path was built, and serve their purpose admirably. They are 10x10 feet in size and are built of timbers placed across the course

of the track, five inches apart, sufficient to prevent cattle crossing, but causing no unpleasant jar to wheels.

It is proposed to complete the path to Palmer Lake as rapidly as possible, and it is hoped to have it finished as far as Sedalia this present season. The association has provided an attractive button, containing in the center its monogram and, around the margin, the legend "Denver-Palmer Lake Cycle-Path Association—Contributor," and an active canvass for the sale of these buttons at one dollar each has added largely to its funds. The efficient officers of the association are: Hon. Alva Adams, governor of Colorado, president; Lucius W. Hoyt, vice-president; William P. Hillhouse, secretary; George E. Ross-Lewin, treasurer.—A. W. G.

Albert H. Pfeiffer

Laura C. Manson White*

In 1822 there lived a Lutheran minister and his wife who was of noble Scotch descent, in Friesland, a northern province of the Netherlands. To them a son was born in October of that year. This little boy, whom they named Albert Henry Pfeiffer, was in the course of time to leave the shores of his native land and go westward to take an active part in the development of the American Southwest, as a scout and explorer and a soldier in the United States Army.

At the age of twenty-two Albert sailed to America. He came west almost immediately and joined a freighting outfit at St. Louis, working down into Santa Fe, New Mexico. On one of these expeditions he met Capt. Charles Deus, and the two men became close friends.

Mr. Pfeiffer made many trips into Santa Fe. There he met the beautiful Spanish girl, Antonita, whom he married in 1856. She is said to have had one of the most expensive wedding dresses of the time. It was of heavy white satin, "yards and yards of it," all hand embroidered at the convent. Red roses literally covered the cloth, and the veil was of white tulle, caught here and there with white flowers. Her necklace was of Mexican filigree medallions, in the center of each one a red, green or turquoise stone, and the pendant made in the form of a golden fish with jewelled eyes, each scale a precious pearl shell. The hair ornaments were wonderful to see. The wedding was a military

*Mrs. White contributed an article on Pagosa Springs to the May, 1932, issue of the *Colorado Magazine*.—Ed.

affair, and it is said there was much champagne and wine, with music and dancing all night, according to the custom of the time.

In June, 1859, Pfeiffer received his appointment as Captain of Company A, Abiquiu Mounted Volunteers of the Militia of New Mexico. This was signed by A. Rencher, Governor of New Mexico, and in the lefthand corner is the signature of A. W. Jackson, Secretary of the Territory.

The year 1863 was a tragic one for Capt. Pfeiffer. He was then at Fort McRae, New Mexico. While at the hot springs near that post, Capt. Pfeiffer, his wife and two servant girls, with an escort of six men of the First New Mexico Volunteers were attacked by a party of Apache Indians. The Captain was bathing when the Indians made the rush upon the party, killing two men and wounding Pfeiffer in the side with an arrow. The women were taken captive and soon after were fatally wounded.

Capt. Pfeiffer had just time to seize his rifle and wade across the river in pursuit of the Indians. He struck out without a stitch of clothing on, and the sun blazing hot. Knowing the Indian character, he thought the Indians would not kill his wife immediately, but would take the women to their hiding place and compel them to do menial labor; therefore he made for the Fort to give the alarm and get reenforcements. He was followed by the Indians, who shot at him, one of the arrows entering his back with the end coming out in front. This wound troubled him for years afterward.

In this condition, with the arrow in his body, he ran until he reached an inclosure of rock where he made a halt to rest and to defend himself. He remained here for several hours, with the sun burning down upon him. He was known to the Indians as an excellent marksman and when they found they could not get him out of the stronghold without losing several of their number, they gave up the siege, which gave him his opportunity to escape to the post, about nine miles away. He reached the fort more dead than alive. When the surgeon drew out the arrow from his back the sun-scorched skin surrounding the arrow wound came off with it, and for days the Captain suffered intense agony, and lay for two months at the point of death from this experience.[1]

In the meantime the men sent out by Major Morrison found the murdered women and two men.

During the years following this tragedy, Capt. Pfeiffer spent his time, when not in the service of the Army, in hunting down the warring tribes, especially Apaches and Comanches, which

[1]From an official report and a personal narrative reproduced in E. L. Sabin, *Kit Carson Days*, 614-17.

were the ones that participated in the Fort McRae tragedy. He would burn their tepees, and capture their men when he did not kill them outright.

One time he came upon a band of Comanches from Texas, and opened fire upon them. The Indians crouched down on the opposite side of their horses, placing the horses between their bodies and the bullets, but Pfeiffer was too quick for the Chief and shot him in the back, killing him instantly. The Chief wore a beautifully beaded coat of deerskin which the Captain took from him. Symbols of Indian folk-lore are displayed on this coat; stars, moon, trees, gourds, snakes, worked in beautiful colors, and the beads are sewed on with deer sinew. Two small bullet holes in the back of the coat bear evidence of the marksmanship of Pfeiffer.

The coat shows evidence of having been burned. When the son, Albert Pfeiffer, Jr., late of Monte Vista, Colorado, was questioned as to how the coat came to be burned, he answered: "When I was a little chap, my father and I came in one day and it was cold, and we heated bricks to warm our feet with. I wrapped my brick in that coat, and came near burning it up."

Capt. Pfeiffer was a life-long friend of Col. Christopher (Kit) Carson, serving in Carson's Regiment for several years. During parts of the years 1863 and 1864, Pfeiffer was with Col. Carson in what they termed the "Navajo Country." A letter from Carson to Pfeiffer dated Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 8, 1863, reads:

"Dear Pfeiffer: I received all of your letters but have been so busy and have been knocking about so that I really had not an opportunity of answering them.

"I have made out, signed, sealed and delivered to Capt. Mink the deed of the land made over to your boy, and I trust and believe that before he arrives at man's estate it will be a fortune to him.

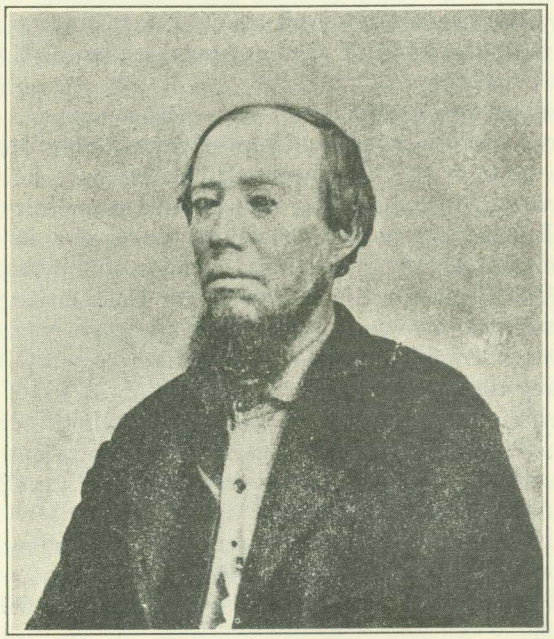
"Should this news of the advance of the Texans be untrue, as I hope it is, we will all go to the Navajo Country about the 1st of June. If it is true, I can't say what will be done with us. We are due, in any case, to see active service soon, so try all you can to get your horses in condition to take the field. . . . There is no news of interest from the States but next mail we expect to hear of a big fight on the Potomac. . . . "

No doubt the news of the advance was without foundation for we find Carson and Pfeiffer in the Navajo country in the late fall of 1863.

In 1863-4 the Navajos, who had been almost constantly at war with the whites since 1847, were attacked in an extensive

campaign directed by Col. Carson. The most brilliant feat of the expedition was the passage through the Canon de Chelly by Capt. Pfeiffer and one hundred men. Other troops had attempted to go through the famous walled canyon with its prehistoric fortresses in the cliffs, but had failed. Capt. Pfeiffer reports:

"Here the Navajos sought refuge when pursued by the invading force, whether of neighboring tribes or of the arms of the government, and here they were enabled to jump about on the ledges like mountain cats, hallooing at me, swearing and cursing and threatening vengeance on my command in every variety



ALBERT H. PFEIFFER

of Spanish they were capable of mustering. . . . . At the place where I encamped the curl of the smoke from my fires ascended to where a large body of Indians were resting over my head, but the height was so great that the Indians did not look larger than crows, and as we were too far apart to injure each other no damage was done except with the tongue, the articulation of which was scarcely audible."[2]

At the end of the second day, January 13, 1864, Capt. Pfeiffer and his command emerged from the canyon, having as Col. Carson reported, "accomplished an undertaking never before successful in war time."

[2] *Ibid.*, 436.

In 1865 Pfeiffer was appointed an Indian Agent. In 1866 he received his appointment to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel by Brevet, to rank as such from the 13th of March, 1865; "for gallant and meritorious services against the Indians in Arizona." This was signed by President Andrew Johnson and by Secretary of War Stanton.

Pfeiffer served as Indian Agent at Abiquiu, New Mexico, for some years, but during this time also took up his homestead on the upper Rio Grande, near Granger, in Rio Grande county, Colorado, where he spent his declining years. He was adopted into the tribe of the Utes, who always referred to him as "Tata Pfeiffer." He was called into their councils, and they had every regard for his advice and leadership.

The Utes and Navajos were always at war with one another, and especially did they dispute the possession of Pagosa Springs. Colonel Pfeiffer was at his home at Granger, when the call came for him to come to Pagosa, as the Utes were on the warpath. He left home immediately, and joined the tribe into which he had been adopted some time before.

The Indians were having skirmishes every few days. Sometimes one side would win and sometimes the other. Finally the leaders decided to leave the decision of ownership to the outcome of a duel between the best man of each tribe. The Navajos selected a veritable giant for their leader, and the Utes brought forward a little, short and not very strong-appearing paleface for their leader. Col. Pfeiffer offered his services to his tribe, with the understanding that he was to be allowed to name the weapons used, and the manner of fighting. He chose the bowie knife, and insisted that the combatants be stripped to the waist. Both advanced, Pfeiffer rapidly, and threw his knife to the hilt, killing his adversary instantly. The Navajos acknowledged defeat and the Utes retained possession of the Springs until later treaties between Chief Ouray and the United States changed the order of things.

This duel was fought eight and one-half miles southwest of Pagosa Springs, on the Durango road, on what is known as the Stollesteimer or Dyke Ranch, on the right side of the highway and railroad going west, in view of the old Smith ranch now owned by Jule Macht.

On one of his expeditions in the early days of his career, Col. Pfeiffer captured an Indian boy and his sister, taking them near the Cimarron River. This was Navajo Pollock and his sister.

He released the sister soon after her capture, and later did the same with Pollock, who spent the later days of his life in Alamosa.

Col. Pfeiffer in the later days of his life became associated with Christy Stollestimer, Ferd Meyer, Budenbrock, Morrison and Plumteaux in the cattle business, working over from the San Luis Valley side of the Divide, having their largest holdings in the long-grass country of the southwestern slope, in the San Juan country, and more particularly the Pagosa Springs region.

In 1878, Col. Pfeiffer spent some months in the Pagosa region, looking after the Stollesteimer and Meyer interests. It is said, Stollesteimer went over to Pagosa Springs to get permission from Chiefs Ouray and Ignacio to run their cattle on the meadows that winter. The Indian chiefs were not at all favorable to the proposition, but as soon as they learned that "Tata Pfeiffer" was part owner of the cattle, they gladly acceded to their wishes, and allowed them the free use of the pasture.

Col. Pfeiffer died April 6, 1881, at Granger, Colorado, and is buried on what is called the Gredig Ranch, near Del Norte, Colorado. In November, 1931, members of the D. A. R. Chapters of Del Norte, Alamosa, Monte Vista and Saguache participated in the unveiling of a marker at the grave where the aged Colonel and pioneer rests, far from the abode of man, in a beautiful spot overlooking the rippling Rio Grande wending its way through the estate which once was his, given to him for services rendered his adopted country.

Colorado's Last Indian "War"

MAJOR JOHN H. NANKIVELL*

The last conflict with the Indians on Colorado soil took place during the late summer of 1887, and the story of the outbreak is of more than passing interest to students of Colorado military history in as much as it was one of those rare occasions on which the troops of the state took the field against the Indians without federal assistance or control. True, a considerable number of troops used during the Indian Wars of 1863-5 in Colorado were Colorado Volunteers, but they were under control of the federal government and not amenable to the orders of the Territorial Governor.

*Major Nankivell is of the regular United States Army and is Senior Instructor for the Colorado National Guard.—Ed.

As background for an understanding of the Ute difficulties of 1887 we should have in mind the famous uprising of eight years before, with its terrible Meeker massacre that horrified the people of Colorado. That tragic event had caused insistent demands for the removal of the Utes from the state and had resulted in the placing of the White River and the Uncompahgre Utes on the Uintah Reservation in Utah.

Colorow, a sub-chief, and his small band of followers were never reconciled to the change, but they were compelled to accompany the others nevertheless, and were taken across the border despite their remonstrances. The surrender of the White River country by the Utes in accordance with an act of Congress was full and complete, and no reservation was made of hunting privileges or rights of any kind.

Settlers began to pour into the country, the town of Meeker was established near the site of the old agency, and in time the valley of the White River became fairly well covered with farms and ranches. The Utes, as a whole, accepted the new order of things, and remained on their reservation. However Colorow, who was disliked by most of his own people and detested by the whites, with a small following drifted back into Colorado. He and his band soon began to inflict petty annoyances on the settlers. Stock was stolen and killed and crops destroyed. Women were frightened and bullied into feeding Colorow and his band, and the settlers in the more isolated sections were subjected to his bulldozing tactics and boastful threats to such an extent that a feeling of alarm soon became manifest. The bloody days of 1879 were still a poignant memory in this section of the state and the settlers were haunted with fear and anxiety. Such, then, was the prologue to the Ute troubles of 1887.

The immediate cause of the outbreak is somewhat obscure, but as near as can be ascertained, two members of Colorow's band, Shevalo and Uintah (Big) Frank, it is alleged, stole two horses from a white man named Lem Hammond living near Rangely, and, with a lot of other horses, sold them to George Toedt and J. M. Woods of Meeker. As soon as Toedt and Woods found the horses were stolen they turned them over to Hammond and made the Indians replace the stolen stock with other horses out of their band. The Indians were subsequently indicted by the grand jury of Garfield County for horse stealing, and warrants for their arrest placed in the hands of Sheriff J. C. Kendall for service. Kendall gathered a strong posse, rode into Colorow's camp, and endeavored to arrest the offending Indians. He was

met with determined opposition, and threats and war-like demonstrations ensued on both sides.

Accidentally or otherwise a gun was discharged, and Kendall's men immediately opened fire on the Indians. Several shots were exchanged, and the Indians finally retreated and disappeared in the mountains. There is no doubt that Kendall lacked proper discretion in the discharge of his duty, and his rough-shod methods had much to do with precipitating the outbreak. "Rumors of war spread on every side," says Frank Hall, "reaching all towns and ranches, causing general excitement and alarm among the settlers who discovered in these proceedings the beginning of a general massacre. A thousand exciting tales were told; all the dreadful particulars of the slaughter of Agent Meeker and his employes in 1879, with the seizure and inhuman treatment of the women then made captives, were rehearsed over and over again until a universal panic was created. The ranchmen hurried their families out of their homes into the principal town, and put guards about them."[1]

COLOROW
(From a photograph in the C. S. Stobie collection.)

[1]Frank Hall, *History of Colorado*, III, 56.

Governor Adams in his introduction to the report of the Adjutant General says: "So alarming became the reports, so urgent the demands for assistance from the officials and citizens of Garfield County, so imperative seemed the necessity of state aid to enforce the law and protect citizens and property, in the opinion of the Adjutant General, and others in whom I had confidence, that it seemed my clear and bounden duty to use the power of the state to sustain the majesty of the law, and prevent the massacre of settlers in the White and Bear River country, which would no doubt have been the result of Sheriff Kendall's campaign had not the state sent troops to enforce peace and protect the people."

The Governor was swamped with telegrams, letters and petitions. Some of these he sent on to Washington. The federal authorities taking no immediate or decisive action, Governor Adams decided to act. He sent Adjutant General West to Glenwood Springs to investigate the matter and report his findings. After making an estimate of the situation at the scene of the disturbance General West decided, perhaps mistakenly, that war with the Utes was inevitable and, at the importunity of all the county and town officials of Garfield County, recommended that the state troops be ordered to Meeker at once.

The troops called out for service under command of Brigadier General F. M. Reardon, 1st Brigade, Colorado National Guard, were as follows:[2] First Battalion of Cavalry, Colo. N. G., Major Gavin Leslie, Commanding; Troop A, Colorado Springs; Troop B, Leadville; Troop C, Denver; Company H, 2nd Infantry, Colo. N. G. (mounted), Canon City; Aspen Infantry Company (later Company F, 1st Infantry, Colo. N. G., Aspen).[3]

The first detachment of troops left Denver at 8:30 P. M., August 16, 1887, were joined by Troop "A" at Colorado Springs enroute, by "H" Company at Canon City, and arrived at Gypsum, at that time the farthest point west on the Denver and Rio Grande Railway, at 3 A. M., August 18th. Troop "B" from Leadville had arrived at Gypsum at 8:30 P. M. the previous evening.

Major Gavin Leslie, commanding 1st Squadron Cavalry, Colo. N. G., was directed to move forward with "B" Troop at 6 A. M., the 18th, and establish camp at Glenwood Springs, a distance of thirty-eight miles from Gypsum; the remainder of the troops, with the exception of a detail of twenty men from "H" Company,

[2]Two additional companies were organized on August 24, 1887, for service during the emergency. They were commanded by Captains J. D. Hooper and W. F. Dendy, respectively, and were mustered out at the conclusion of the campaign. Total of the two companies about 68 officers and men.

[3]This company reported for duty at Meeker on August 22, 1887.

2nd Infantry, which was left at Gypsum, to follow as soon as practicable.

Starting in advance, Brig. Gen. Reardon arrived at Glenwood Springs, August 18, 3:30 P. M., the troops arriving at 7 P. M., the same evening. The troops bivouacked at Glenwood Springs the night of the 18th and the following day was spent in perfecting arrangements to continue the march to Meeker.

"Boots and saddles" was sounded at 1:30 A. M., August 20, and the command, excepting a small number that could not be mounted, took up the march to Rifle Creek, twenty-seven miles from Glenwood Springs, where they camped the night of the twentieth. On the 21st the march was continued to Morgan's ranch, eighteen miles from Rifle Creek, and the following day, August 22, 1887, the command reached Meeker at 3 o'clock P. M., a distance of twenty-two miles from Morgan's ranch.

General Reardon established his headquarters in Meeker on the 22nd of August where he was joined by Brigadier General George West, the Adjutant General, late on the same day, the troops meantime going into camp close to the town limits. Here all officers and men were made acquainted with the Governor's instructions to the Adjutant General which were, in part, as follows:

"I wish to caution you to act upon facts and not upon rumors. Remember that you are there to enforce civil law and to protect the citizens of Colorado, and to do these things you will use every power at your command. But you must be careful that your power is not used to assail Indians unjustly or to gratify the desire of those who want an Indian war, whether right or wrong."

During this time Sheriff Kendall and his posse of cowboys were ranging through the country to the north of Meeker in search of the Indians, but apparently without much success. On the 22nd, Major J. L. Pritchard, Chief of Scouts, who had previously reported to General Reardon with his company of scouts, was directed to establish his headquarters near Meeker, to divide his force and to send one party north to find Sheriff Kendall, and the other south and west and along the White River valley, to ascertain the movement of the Indians. The scouts departed on their mission, and later the same day word was received from Kendall as follows:

"General West:

"Dear Sir:—If you will send one hundred men to cut off the Utes below and send them back this way, I will take care of them on this end of the trail. If you make a forced march to Blue Mountain you can cut them off sure. I am on their trail here. Would come down and see you, but if I do everything will stop here.

"Yours truly,

"J. C. Kendall."

In response to Kendall's request the following order was issued:

Headquarters First Brigade, Colo. N. G.
Camp Meeker, August 23, 1887.

General Orders, No. 8:

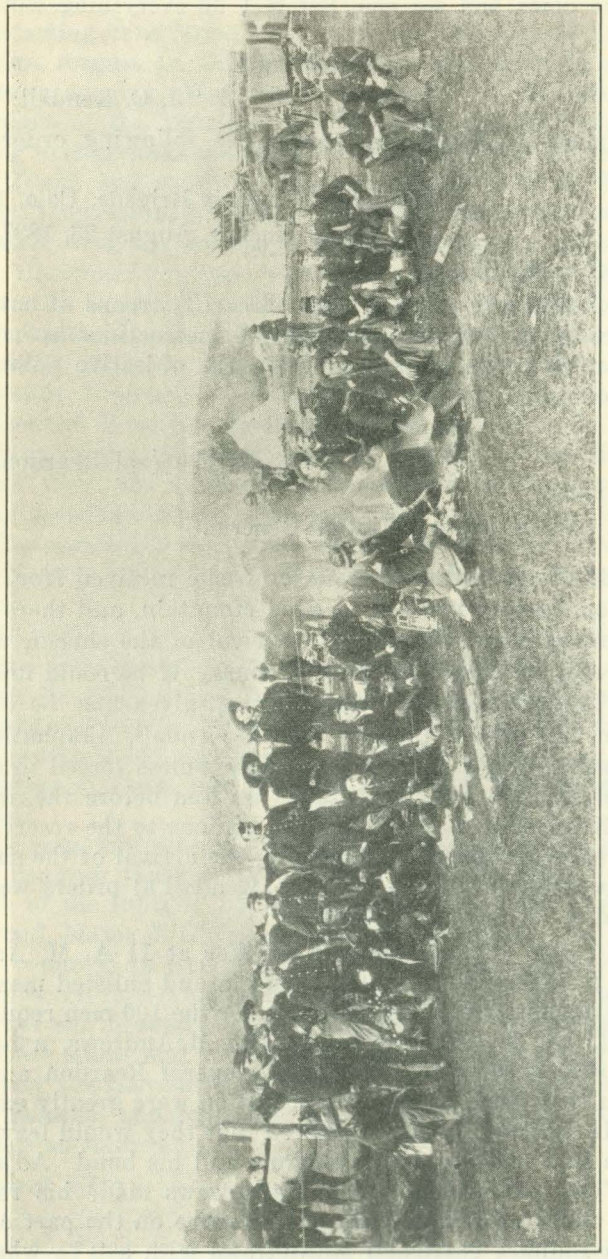
Major Leslie will proceed with three (3) troops of cavalry, under his command, under such personal instructions as he may receive from the commanding general. His objective point will be Blue Mountain.

By command of
Brigadier-General Reardon.

J. H. Hammond,
Major, and Assistant Adjutant-General.

The additional instructions Major Leslie received from General Reardon were to proceed to Blue Mountain, and there hold such Indians as he found until the arrival of the sheriff, which would probably be within forty-eight hours. If he could find the individual Indians named in warrants then given him, he was to arrest them and deliver them to Sheriff Kendall. Emphatically, he was directed to not quarrel, or to fight unless forced to do so in self defense. If a fight was forced on him before the arrival of Sheriff Kendall he was to drive the Indians to the reservation and then guard its eastern line pending the arrival of the sheriff. On the appearance of the sheriff, his (Kendall's) orders were to be observed in all lawful matters.

Major Leslie left the camp at Meeker at 11 A. M. August 23rd, with an effective force of 84 officers and enlisted men and two guides, mounts not being available for the 100 men requested by Kendall. On the same day one John McAndrews, a herder on the Uintah Reservation, called on General Reardon and informed him that the Utes on the reservation were greatly excited and that Mr. Byrnes, the agent, feared that they would leave the reservation in a body to assist Colorow and his band. Adjutant General West was present when McAndrews made his report, and, in an effort to forestall any hostile move on the part of the reservation Indians, entrusted McAndrews with a "To whom it may concern" notice, an excerpt from which is as follows:



TROOP A (PIKE'S PEAK RANGERS), FIRST SQUADRON CAVALRY, COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD, CAPTAIN WILLIAM SAXTON COMMANDING, AT MEEKER, COLORADO, DURING THE UTE OUTBREAK, AUGUST, 1887.

"That the Indians are amenable to the laws the same as white men and no farther; that if they are arrested they will have the privileges of the law in all respects, and that if they think they cannot have a fair trial in this county, they will have the privilege of change of venue, to any other county, the same as the whites; that all promises to the Indians will be kept in good faith, to which the State of Colorado is hereby pledged. The Commanding General is ready at all times to receive parties for parley and will always do so under a flag of truce."

On the 24th Brigadier General Reardon received dispatches from Major Leslie and Captain Pray of Pritchard's scouts to the effect that they had encountered Colorow and his band near the mouth of Fox Creek, and that Captain Pray, after "skirmishing for position" (whatever that may mean), had made a truce with the Indians and was holding them pending the arrival of reinforcements. According to Pray, in an interview with Colorow and other chiefs under flag of truce, the Indians expressed their demands as follows: "White man must go back as he (Colorow) now has reinforcements from the Uncompahgre reservation and can get more if he wants them. Me no afraid of soldiers. White man want little fight, Indian little fight too; white man want big fight, so Indians have big fight, too." Pray also stated in his dispatches: "There are no Indians north of this place. Colorow's band means fight on the drop of the hat, and he is quite ready to drop it himself. He showed me some of his warriors from the Uncompahgre. . . . They are all superbly mounted, and as well armed as we are. They are loaded with ammunition, and many of them have the most approved field glasses."

Major Leslie in his dispatches, reported having come up with the Indians at 7 A. M., August 24; that at eight o'clock they entered the Indian camp, the Indians leaving on the approach of the command, and that they had a flag of truce flying, and were awaiting reinforcements, further that the Indians had sent all their stock to the reservation, and that they wanted the soldiers to go no further.

General Reardon's reaction to the dispatches of Leslie and Pray is best expressed in his own words in his report to the Adjutant General at the conclusion of the campaign. He says:

"At 3:15 P. M., the twenty-fourth instant, I sent a dispatch to His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief, requesting his presence in Glenwood Springs, to meet yourself and County Commissioners Gregory and Reynolds, I deeming that an emergency existed requiring his presence.

"Acting upon the call for reinforcements, a volunteer force

of fifty-three men, under Sheriff J. D. Hooper, was forwarded at 10 P. M., the twenty-fourth instant, after being mustered into the service by the Adjutant-General of Colorado, and thirteen men, under Captain Dendy, also volunteers and mustered into the service, left Meeker for the front at 11 o'clock P. M., the twenty-fourth instant.

"Dispatches were sent to Major Leslie notifying him of the reinforcements forwarded, and directing him to arrest any party or parties who attempted to obstruct his passage through Garfield County, in the performance of his duty in assisting Sheriff Kendall to serve process upon Indians for whom he had warrants."

Returning now to Major Leslie's command it was evident that events were fast approaching a climax, and in order to present the story of the ensuing fight from both sides I shall quote first from Major Leslie's report to General Reardon, and then from the report of Brigadier General George Crook, U. S. Army, commanding the Department of the Platte, which gives the Indian view of the affair. Starting at that point in Major Leslie's report subsequent to the sending of the dispatch to General Reardon as noted above:

"At the Ute camp a halt was called[4] . . . The troops at this time, 2 P. M. (August 24), killed a beef, and this, with water, made the first meal for thirty hours for my men; during the meal a hail storm such as few have ever seen, came up, and lasted an hour, badly chilling the horses and men. As soon as the hill on which the Utes were last seen was again sighted, nothing within sight, and each man was promptly in his saddle and riding down the river, crossing the river at Stedman's ranch. There the rain again came down in torrents, and a halt was had for a few moments. Kendall's force was now seen riding at a gallop down the opposite side of the river, and my command left at once to join him, overtaking him at McDowell's ranch. The scouts did not now accompany us, but remained at Stedman's ranch until morning; having had so much hard riding, and no forage, several horses were badly given out, and some forty men and mounts were left for the night at McDowell's ranch. The Kendall party, now numbering about thirty men, pushed down the river and hard riding until 11 P. M. of the twenty-fourth brought us to Rangely, Colorado, on a hot trail. Here the guides were unacquainted with the country west, and a halt was ordered and hay procured for horses, and a few crackers bought for the men. At

[4]The matter omitted here refers to Pray's parley with the Indians referred to in his dispatches as noted above.

daybreak both Kendall's command and mine were at a full gallop on the trail of the night before. At 6:30 a Ute, known as Gus, rode up the mesa and tried to call a halt, but we kept right on down the river, and suddenly came upon a Ute camp with about twenty-five therein in sight. These took down the river, and after a short distance took to the bluffs and commenced firing. Eight of our rashest, but bravest men, charged down the valley, and here Lieutenant Folsom, of Aspen, Private Caffrey, of Leadville, Dr. Du Mont, of Glenwood, and Private Stewart were wounded, and three horses killed. Kendall's, and my remaining force then took to the high ground and had a running fight for its occupation. It was here that Jasper Ward, of Kendall's men, was killed. We drove the Indians from this position, and not a coward is known among either command, and after general orders were given for position, it was every man for himself. Bullets were flying thick and fast around us, and both Kendall and myself have cause for congratulation in the possession of so many nervy men. Special mention is unnecessary, and all should receive commendation at the proper time. The Utes were constantly receiving reinforcements, and now numbered, according to experienced men, about one hundred men, and were entirely around us, watching for reinforcements and detached men. Pray's party came up and had a skirmish, but no one hurt. This state of affairs lasted until noon, when only stray shots were being fired at us; but the men and horses were all nearly famished, and my troops had been out forty-eight hours with only one piece of beef, and some of the men crackers. It was necessary to at least get to water, and being surrounded as I was, the situation looked serious.

"At about noon a large body of men were seen and proved to be Hooper's party, with the men of Kendall's and my parties who were left at McDowell's ranch, numbering about seventy men, arrived, and such a shout as went up was heard for miles around.

"As this body came up the Utes took flight and left us in possession of the battlefield and about 250 horses.

"A council of war was held and we decided to move our wounded men and force to Rangely, and being but a few miles from the Utah line, would await orders for further movements. We returned to this point, and late in the afternoon the dead and wounded were brought to camp, and given the best possible care.

"The above was the substance of the action of my battalion, Kendall and Hooper for August 25, 1887. . . ."

Quoting now from General Crook's report:[5] "During the night of the 24th and 25th a heavy storm of rain and hail arose, during which the Indians started down the White River and moved about 25 miles below Wolf Creek to a point, as they believed, on the Uncomphagre Indian Reservation. Here they went into camp. . . . The White River at this point makes a bend, while the bluffs run more nearly in a straight line. The "bottom" between the foot of the bluffs and the river is covered with a thick growth of willows. The Indian camp was scattered along the edge of the willows and near the foot of the bluffs, which are here about 60 feet in height. . . . They believed themselves secure; no sentinels or runners were guarding the approaches to the camp and the whites attained a position on the bluffs without alarming the Indians. Kendall's party at once opened fire. The surprise was complete. The Indians took refuge in the brush, and returned the fire for about three and a half hours, covering in this way the removal of their wounded and the women and children. Late in the afternoon they fell back, the whites soon after withdrawing to Rangely. . . ."[6]

On arriving at Rangely Major Leslie immediately entrenched his camp and prepared for an attack. Lieutenant F. Folsom, Company "F," 1st Infantry, Colo. N. G., who had been wounded in the stomach on the 25th, died on the night of the 26th, and with deputy Ward was buried in the field with military honors. Private E. T. Goshon, Troop "C," a recruit enlisted at Glenwood Springs, left his troop about this time and, against orders, tried to run off some horses. Apparently the Utes were on the alert and on August 29th Goshon's dead body was found several miles from camp. He had been shot through the lungs, and his horse killed and lying near him.

The Indian losses in the fight of the 25th were never accurately determined. Major Leslie reported eight killed and six wounded; unofficial accounts placed the losses much higher, and General Reardon reported that he had been informed that two Indians and a colored trooper of the 9th U. S. Cavalry had, on separate occasions, stated the Indian losses to have been fifteen killed on the day of the battle, one dying since, and five badly wounded. In any event the news of the fight, when it reached the Agency in Utah, caused the wildest excitement, and had it not

[5]Messages and Documents of the War Department, 1887-88. Report of Brig. Gen. Crook.

[6]This account of the fight differs in all material facts from that of Major Leslie's. Although written by General Crook, who was not present at the fight, it is, as admitted by Lieutenant Burnett and who gave it to General Crook, the Indians' account of the affair. I have interviewed some of the participants in the fight and the concensus of opinion is that Major Leslie's account is the correct one.

been for the restraining influence of Agent Byrnes, Interpreter Curtis, and Lieutenant Burnett, 9th Cavalry, there is no doubt that Leslie's force at Rangely would have been attacked by an overwhelming force. Fortunately the three officials, backed up by a troop of the 9th U. S. Cavalry, were successful in inducing the Indians, including Colorow and his band, to return to the reservation where they arrived August 27th.

On August 29, 1887, Governor Alva Adams accompanied by Hon. G. G. Symes, Hon. Wm. N. Byers, Attorney General Alvin Marsh, Adjutant General George West, and Colonel S. A. Sheppard, Colo. N. G., arrived at General Reardon's headquarters in Meeker, and here they were met on August 31st by Brigadier General George Crook, U. S. Army, and Agent Byrnes for a conference on the Indian situation.

Colorow had expressed a desire to meet Governor Adams, but for some unknown reason did not present himself at the appointed time and place. General Crook agreed to place a sufficient number of United States troops between the Uintah Reservation and Colorado to restrict the Indians to their own territory, and to use his influence to prevent any more invasions upon Colorado soil.

At the conclusion of the conference orders were at once issued for the withdrawal of the state troops, and on September 3rd Major Leslie started his march back to the railhead at Gypsum, arriving there on September 10th, after a two days' halt at Meeker to recuperate. Meantime Company "F," 1st Infantry, of Aspen, had returned to its home station on September 2nd. All remaining troops accompanied Major Leslie's command to Gypsum and here they entrained on the 10th for their respective home stations. Thus ended the Ute campaign of 1887.

The conduct of the Colorado troops during the campaign had been above reproach. Adjutant General George West reported to the Governor:

"I desire to commend, in the highest terms of praise, the officers and men composing the detail for duty in aid of the authorities of Garfield County, for the promptness and energy displayed by one and all, as well as for their soldierly qualities exhibited during the entire campaign."

It has been urged in defense of Colorow in official reports and other documents that he at no time desired to fight nor engage in war with the whites. This is rather contradictory to a statement made by General Crook in his official report on the outbreak to the effect that "They (the reservation Indians) had on one occasion sent a delegation of some of their head men to

Colorow on a mission, the object of which was to prevent him from engaging in hostilities." If Colorow, as alleged, did not want to fight, why was it necessary to send a delegation to dissuade him from engaging in hostilities?

Colorow had no legal right to be absent from the reservation in Utah, and he knew it. Furthermore he was well aware that sooner or later his depredations and annoyances would cause a clash, but he made no effort to avoid the clash. It was manifestly the duty of the general government to have compelled his return to the reservation when his escape therefrom was known; however, this was not done, and the consequences of that neglect were the outbreak of 1887, and a cost to the State of Colorado of $80,314.72. However, to make a final quotation from Governor Adams' report: "If the expedition into Garfield County saved the wife or daughter of a single settler from ravishment; if it preserved a single life, be it child or man, the state but performed its duty, and in this received full compensation for every cost."

Colorow died at his camp at the mouth of the White River near the Uintah Reservation, Utah, December 11, 1888; and his own people were agreed with the white men, "that," to quote Smiley, "it was the only praiseworthy thing he ever did."

A Winter Storm on the Open Range

EUGENE WILLIAMS*

In the '80s settlers began to take up homesteads on the cattle ranges and to fence up the water, so owners of the larger herds began to move their cattle into northern Wyoming, northwestern Nebraska, southern Montana or Dakota.

At that time I was working for Lusk, McQuillet and Macrum and was one of the men who went north with their herd. They had already established a ranch on Running Water in northwestern Nebraska. It was very late in the season to start rounding up the cattle, so by the time we were ready to start the drive the weather was getting cool. We were camped at Big Crow Springs with about 2,500 head of cattle of all ages ready to start the next day.

These cattle had to have men with them both day and night to keep them from straying and to keep the range cattle from mixing with the herd. In the evening about sundown all the men would go out from camp to the herd and round them up into a rather compact bunch and ride around them until they got quiet and began to lie down. Then all but two of the men would leave and go to camp. These men continued to ride around the cattle (usually riding in opposite directions) until ten o'clock, when one of them would go to camp and call the second guard of two men, who would hold the herd until twelve o'clock. Then the third guard would

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be called to hold them until two o'clock and the fourth guard would stay with them until after the rest of us had breakfast (which was usually served at or before daylight), when the cattle began to get up and start grazing. Any herd of cattle which is being night-herded when the weather is pleasant will lie down early in the evening and rest until about midnight. Then they get up and stretch and move around a little and lie down again on the other side.

The night before we were to start north the weather looked stormy. When we went out to bed the cattle they were uneasy and did not want to lie down. So instead of leaving two men with them the two who were to have taken second guard were left also. I was one of the second guard. A short time after the men had left for camp it began to blow, with a little rain, and we could tell by the bawling and uneasiness of the cattle that we were going to have a bad night. Later it began to snow and get cold and the wind grew stronger and stronger until it was one of the worst blizzards I have ever experienced and I have been out in a good many of them.

We stayed with the herd, keeping them together as well as we could. I have never seen a darker night. Part of the time the only way we could locate the cattle was by the balls of fire on their horns. There were balls of fire on our horses' ears also and along their necks and at the roots of their tails. I have several times seen fire on cattle's horns during summer storms, but that is the only time I ever saw it when it was snowing.

When it came time for the next guard to take the cattle, at twelve o'clock, I went to camp and called them and rolled into my bed without even taking off my boots. I was about frozen. These men relieved the others and stayed with the cattle for a couple of hours. Then one of them came in and said they were so cold they could not stand it, so we went back to the herd and stayed until morning. When we were relieved and went to camp we found the cook trying to find something with which he could build a fire. Everything was covered with several inches of snow and it was still falling. He finally took some canned vegetable boxes from the mess wagon and got enough fire to boil coffee which, with crackers, was all we had for breakfast.

About this time we missed one of the boys and while wondering what had become of him we saw a regular volcano of snow off a short distance from the wagon and the missing man appeared from his bed, which he had made outside the tent before the storm began. He had slept all night and had not known of the storm. When he raised up and saw what had happened the first thing he said was "Hell! It has been snowing."

It continued to storm all that day, but we held the cattle until the middle of the afternoon, when they began to die from cold and lack of exercise. So we turned them loose and went to camp after the most uncomfortable experience during my fifteen years as a cowboy. By the next morning the storm had passed and we started out to gather up the cattle again. We got about 2,000 of them in the next few days and started north with them. Those we did not find were left to be gathered and taken north the following year.

When we started to gather the herd, after the storm, camp had to be moved several miles down Crow Creek, as the cattle had drifted that way. The boys left camp and were to return to the designated new camp with what cattle they found that day. I had been ordered to move the horse "cavy" (saddle horses) and the cook drove the mess wagon. The ground was covered with six to eight inches of snow, in some places badly drifted, which made travel very slow.

When we reached the place where we were to make camp I left the horses to help the cook unhitch the work horses, when I noticed that the saddle horses were getting quite a distance away. So I got on my horse and started after them. When nearly half a mile from camp my horse stepped in a hole and fell down. I was thrown off and fell in such a position that my horse fell on both my feet, with his front feet on one side of my head and his hind feet on the other and all feet just high enough off the ground so that every time he kicked or tried to get up his feet waved back and forth, just missing my face. I was unable to move, as every move on my part would start my horse to kicking, and every move on his part caused me the most intense pain from his being on my feet.

After being in this fix for some time, I realized that I must have help or I would freeze. I began to call and after what seemed to me a very long time the cook, a young negro, heard me and came and helped me out of my trouble. My feet and legs were very sore for some time, but no bones were broken.

There was a lot of hard riding to do during the next few days, rounding up the cattle and getting them on the trail for the drive north. The weather was bad on the whole trip and by the time we arrived at the ranch we were all very glad to be relieved of the herd.

After staying at the ranch for several days, four of us started back to Greeley with two horses hitched to a wagon. As it had snowed nearly every day while we were at the ranch, the trail was covered several inches deep and in some places the snow was badly drifted. It took nearly two weeks to make the trip to Greeley and the weather was stormy and cold all the way.