

THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

Published bi-monthly by

The State Historical Society of Colorado

VOL. XI

Denver, Colorado, March, 1934

No. 2

Catching Wild Horses

HOMER HOYT*

Having been asked by a representative of the Colorado State Historical Society to describe the method of catching wild horses, I will endeavor to do so. As the wild horse is almost a thing of the past, soon there will be no one living competent to describe the process authoritatively. There are few men now living who have had a very wide experience in catching wild horses. Among them I will mention two whom I consider the very highest authority, Mr. Thomas A. Hightower, now living in California, and Mr. Walter Harris Brown. I do not know the whereabouts of Mr. Brown. At last report, in the late '90s, he was at Cripple Creek, Colorado, with a herd of burros to sell to the miners.

I received my first tutelage from Mr. Jerry McGahan, commonly known throughout the United States as "Wild Horse" Jerry. He usually corralled his horses either at his home ranch five miles west of Pawnee Buttes, Weld County, Colorado, or at Indian Cave, twenty miles east of the Buttes.

In the summer of 1886 Bob and Tom Hightower went to the Panhandle of Texas, chased around all summer and caught nothing, although they both were first class wild horse men. The reason for failure was shortage of saddle stock. In the spring of 1887 the brothers asked me to join them as I had several saddle horses. We went overland to Tascosa, Texas, a frontier town on the South Canadian river, where Bob's wife and baby were. I also took my wife to Tascosa where we left our families. Tom was a single man then. There was no railroad there at that time, everything being freighted from Dodge City, Kansas, two hundred twenty miles away. We caught our horses that summer about seventy-five miles south of Tascosa, south of Tierra Blanca Creek and southwest of the present city of Amarillo.

First, I must describe the habits of the wild horses. Nearly all the stories I have read state that the band was led by a stallion, frequently a pacer that could not be made to break the pacing gait.

*Mr. Hoyt lives in Greeley, Colorado, today. This interesting and valuable article was obtained by Dr. W. G. Binnewies, working on the Colorado Historical Survey Project.—Ed.

Such writers are writing from hearsay or drawing upon their too vivid imaginations. I have never seen a pacer among them. And the stallion never leads. He is a tyrant and goes behind and drives his harem where he chooses. The harem usually consists of from one to eight mares exclusive of colts and yearlings. Young males are driven from the harem at the age of two. The sexes are about equally divided. Ninety per cent are bay, dark brown, or black. Other colors are very few.

Only the strongest stallions can maintain a harem. When a stallion begins to get old, some younger one will try to take his harem. Then a bloody battle ensues. If the older horse is vanquished and not killed outright he will wander away into solitude, crestfallen and broken in spirit. When he is rested and his wounds



A WILD STALLION AND HIS HAREM
(Especially drawn by Jack Carrel to illustrate this article.)

are healed, sometimes he will hunt up his harem and try to retake it. This he is seldom able to do. He will then wander away into solitude until old and feeble. Some younger stallion will then kill him. It is a matter of the survival of the fittest. A stallion is the most vicious and cruel fighter that I know.

The Staked Plains of Texas appear to be a vast level expanse, however every mile or two there are depressions from ten to one hundred acres in extent called lake beds. The spring rains settle in these. The year I was there the water was from six inches to two feet deep.

Now for the real campaign. The equipment of the rider consists of a bed blanket of wool used as a saddle blanket and for sleeping purposes when caught out too far from camp, a thirty-five foot saddle rope, a canteen of water, field glasses in one saddle pocket, sandwiches in the other, and a grass hobble, usually carried around the horse's neck while riding.

The rider is ready to start at daylight after having located the herd the day previous and watched them from a distance through his field glasses until dark. We will suppose that there are twenty in the herd, made up of four or five harems. There will be a little space between each harem. When the rider comes in sight, one or two stallions will advance a few yards, raising their heads as high as possible to get a better look. The stallion is very polite. He will bow two or three times. This is done to focus his eyes on the object of his gaze. He will then give a big snort, almost a whistle, as he starts for the herd. He drops his head to within a foot of the ground, sticks his nose straight out in front, lays his ears flat on his neck, shows his teeth to his harem, and they are off.

The rider had better not be riding a plug draft horse if he expects to keep within sight of the dust. He may start with twenty, but before night he may have forty or sixty head. Others, seeing them running across the plains, will join them. He keeps them moving all day but by mid-afternoon some of the very young colts will begin to lag. The mothers will keep calling to the colts, but if a mare should slip by a stallion and run back to the colt, the stallion will be right after her, bringing her back to the herd and biting her as often as he can get within reach.

Unlike cattle, horses do not like to leave their accustomed range. They seldom go more than ten or fifteen miles in one direction before circling back. Should the herd pass within two or three miles of camp, the rider will go in to get a fresh saddle horse, something to eat, a canteen of water, and more sandwiches. He then overtakes the herd as soon as possible and follows them until dark. Now he lets them drift into a lake bed for the night. The field glasses which he carries are night glasses so he can watch them until they are well settled. Then he takes the back track a mile or more. If he should bed down near the herd, his saddle horse would whinny and call the wild ones to him in the night. This would stampede them all.

The rider removes the saddle for a pillow, takes the grass hobble from around the horse's neck and puts it on his front legs. One end of his rope is now fastened to his horse while his arm is put through a loop on the other end. But he must be sure that the rope cannot draw tight on his arm. He next wraps up in the saddle blanket which will be soaked with sweat, and lies down to pleasant

dreams, if he can. The next morning he starts the herd as soon as it is light enough to see. If any show signs of splitting off, he hurries them a little faster, the more tired they are the better they stay together.

The rider should change horses as often as possible and also change riders as soon as convenient to give each a rest. After four or five days of about seventy-five miles per day they become very tired and will let the rider come within two hundred yards of them. Then every six or eight miles he lets them stop and rest about fifteen minutes. About one day of this and they are ready for a lesson in turning.

After a rest, approach until they are about ready to move on, then ride out at right angles to the general course. They will be watching the rider. Bear in a little closer to them until they turn and start off. The rider should now drop in behind them and follow until they are ready for another rest, then repeat the



MILLING WILD HORSES
(Drawn by Jack Carrel of Greeley, Colorado)

operation, but not too often at first. Also he should not always turn them the same way. Sometimes they should be turned to the right and sometimes to the left. As they get more tired they can be turned more often.

Soon the more exhausted ones will want to stand while the more vigorous ones swing around them. This is called milling. They should not be allowed to mill long in one direction. They can now be milled all day and all night. But be sure to give them a chance to drink occasionally or they will become unman-

ageable. When they are very tired the rider can get close to them. He is now ready to put clog-chains on them.

A clog-chain is a chain twenty inches long, the links made of three-eighths inch iron. An iron band which goes around the ankle is made of three-fourths inch iron, flat on one side, half round on the other. The round side goes next to the ankle. The band is made into about three-fourths of a circle, the chain fastened to one end and a ring to the other. When on the ankle, the chain is run through the ring, which completes the circle. The band being of iron and stiff cannot draw tight and make the ankle sore as a leather strap does. The chain is then allowed to drag or swing. It wraps itself around the forelegs and throws the horse if he attempts to run.

It takes three men to put the clog-chains on. To do this have all the saddle horses not in use near a lake bed. Have a pile of clog-chains about two hundred yards away, and bring the mill herd near the chains. Two men are to have their ropes ready and the third is detailed to take the herd some distance away when each horse is roped. When a horse is roped by the neck he will choke until he falls. The other man will then tie his feet quickly and put a clog on one front foot. The other front foot and hind foot on the same side is side-lined about three feet apart. He is then let up and put with the saddle horses.

The first caught should be the stallion with the largest harem. Then his harem should all be caught next and put with him. All stallions are castrated at the time the clogs are put on. When all the herd have been clogged except the yearlings and two-year-olds, and some of the weaker ones, the herd is brought to within fifty yards of the tent door at sunrise and kept there until noon. Then the man in charge will whistle to them and start them toward the lake to drink and graze for one hour and a half. He then brings them back to the same place to stand until sundown, when they are started to the lake to spend the night. This is repeated every day, the reason being that if they graze all day they will wander away at night. But if kept hungry all day they will graze at night and not be far away in the morning.

In this manner in the summer of 1887 we made three catches, the first of 33 head, the second of 52, and the third of 81. The real wild horse is the wildest of all creatures of the earth. No one without experience can realize this. They are the hardest and fleetest of all animals.

Camp Weld, Colorado

ALBERT B. SANFORD

Among the last official acts of President Buchanan was approval of the bill creating the Territory of Colorado, February 28, 1861. Abraham Lincoln on March 22d appointed Colonel William Gilpin as the first Governor of the new Territory. When the Governor reached Denver by stagecoach on May 29th, the Civil War had commenced and he found sentiment in the new Territory considerably divided. It is estimated that nearly one-third of the people were favorable to the Southern cause. For several months they had held secret meetings and had gathered guns and ammunition. A Confederate flag had been hoisted over one of Denver's largest stores, but had been promptly hauled down by Sam Logan, a staunch Union man and later a Captain in the First Colorado Regiment.

Governor Gilpin had been trained at West Point, had accompanied Fremont on his most important Western exploring expedition, and had taken active part as an officer in the Mexican War. He knew of the plan of Jefferson Davis to send an army into New Mexico from Texas and to have it continue into Colorado and take possession of the gold mines that at that time were becoming famous for their extent and richness.

Gilpin organized the First Regiment of Colorado Volunteers and appointed recruiting officers in several parts of the Territory. Union sentiment blazed. Miners left their sluice boxes and lode claims in the mountains and ranchmen their squatter's cabins in the valleys, to assemble in Denver for war service. Confederate sympathizers hurriedly left for the South.

New recruits were quartered in Denver, taking possession of what few buildings were available, but the larger part occupied tents for a time. The town was practically under military rule.

In the meantime Gilpin and his officers had investigated several sites near Denver for permanent barracks and late in the summer of 1861 selected what proved to be an ideal spot. They gave it the name "Camp Weld," in honor of Lewis Ledyard Weld, Secretary of Colorado Territory. In the *Rocky Mountain News* of September 18, 1861, we read: "Camp Weld is getting to be quite a resort of our citizens to witness the evening drill. The barrack buildings are progressing quite rapidly and the soldiers will soon be comfortably quartered. . . . The members of the House attended by some private citizens paid a visit to Camp Weld

yesterday afternoon and remained until after the parade was over."

In its issue of October 24th the *News* gives a full account of the Camp, which is in part as follows: "The camp is situated on the south or east bank of the Platte about two miles from the center of the city and on a spread of tableland some thirty feet above the level of the river. The enclosure embraces about thirty acres. . . . The buildings, which consist of officers' headquarters, quarters for soldiers, mess rooms, guard-house, hospital, etc., occupy four sides of what is nearly a square, and are built in the most substantial and comfortable manner. The building space occupied



SOUTHWEST CORNER OF CAMP WELD

Eighth and Vallejo Streets, Denver. Monument dedicated February 22, 1934. The house (remodeled) incorporates a part of the original officers' quarters and is the only remaining portion of the original military buildings.

by each company is 180 feet, divided into mess rooms which are 30 by 18 feet, with huge fireplaces at either end, and sleeping apartments of the same size, capable each of accommodating 25 men. . . .

"The main entrance to the camp enclosure is on the eastern side. Immediately in front, after passing in, is the Guard House, a commodious building, standing isolated from the main range of barracks. . . . Running entirely around the enclosure, and twenty-five feet from the buildings, a top-rail fence is being constructed. . . . The entire western front of the Camp is to be occupied with

the Regimental Head Quarters. Throughout the entire length extends a commodious porch, affording a pleasant place for a covered promenade . . . The hospital is about 24 by 40 feet, and two stories high. The lower story is occupied as a Dispensary, and also contains one large ward and mess room. Above are ample accommodations for from fifteen to twenty patients, and below as many more. . . .

"The cost of the barracks, when completed, will not be far from \$40,000 exclusive of a vast amount of labor by the soldiers. In the erection of the buildings over 800,000 feet of lumber, and 30,000 bricks have been used. The sash, glass, door trimmings and nails, constitute no inconsiderable additional items. There are one hundred chimneys, and nearly two hundred fire places in the camp, all of which will have to be supplied with fuel for the coming four or five months.

"Order of Camp duty. Reveille at daylight, and breakfast call at 7 o'clock. Guard mount at 8, and company drill at 9 a. m. Battalion drill at 2½ p. m., and Dress Parade a half hour before sundown. Tattoo at 8½ p. m., and at 9, lights are extinguished and all visitors withdraw from camp."

Under date of November 1, 1861, Mrs. Mary Sanford, wife of Lieut. B. N. Sanford of the First Regiment, records in her diary: "The regiment is completed and composed of some of the best men in the country. We have all the retinue of a military camp, the pomp and ceremony without the realities of war. We have really more to fear from hostile savages. They are now on the warpath and scouting parties from Camp Weld are out constantly. It is very entertaining to watch the soldiers drill. Most of the officers and all of the men are raw recruits."

The activities at Camp Weld were not entirely confined to the training and drilling of troops. The newspapers of the time carried frequent mention of social events. Dinners given by the officers were of almost daily occurrence and "full dress balls were frequently held in the large general dining room with the post band furnishing good and appropriate music." A line of omnibuses made frequent trips between the Camp and Denver and a number of citizens used carriages that had been shipped across the plains by ox teams.

In the meantime the cherished plan of the Confederates for invasion of New Mexico and the Southwest had materialized to such an extent that General Sibley, commanding an army of about three thousand Texas volunteers, was marching up the Rio Grande. He captured the lower forts on the river and reached Santa Fe.

The Union forces, under Col. Canby, retired to Fort Union, their only remaining stronghold in New Mexico. Urgent appeals were sent to Colorado for re-enforcements. The call was answered and on February 22, 1862, the First Colorado Regiment set out from Camp Weld to go to the rescue.

W. C. Whitford in his *Colorado Volunteers in the Civil War* (published by the State Historical Society of Colorado in 1906), tells in detail the story of the achievements of this regiment, so we shall not recount them here. Suffice it to say that when the Colorado troops reached Fort Union, preparations were already being made to abandon it and to blow up the fort. The Colorado troops brought new tone to the Union forces. They met the Confederates in the famous Battle of La Glorieta, "The Gettysburg of the Southwest," and won a decisive victory. The Texans began a retreat which did not end until they were back on Southern soil.

After a time spent in New Mexico the Colorado troops returned to Colorado. In the meantime recruiting had gone on for Second and Third regiments. These were stationed for some time at Camp Weld and then were sent eastward, where they performed valuable service in Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Indian Territory.

Upon its return from New Mexico the First Regiment was made into a cavalry regiment and was distributed along the routes of travel to guard against Indian depredations that were becoming frequent and dangerous. On September 29, 1864, Governor Evans and his military staff held a council at Camp Weld with leading Chiefs of the hostile plains Indians who had arrived from Fort Lyon. Peace terms were not agreed upon, but peaceful Indians were told to gather at certain designated places of safety, while hostiles were yet to be punished.

About this time the first fire occurred at Camp Weld, resulting in complete destruction of the quartermaster's store and other buildings. Not long thereafter another fire destroyed the greater part of what was left of the original buildings.

Search through the records has not revealed a definite date when Camp Weld was officially abandoned, but as nearly as can be determined, it was early in the spring of 1865. The War Department at Washington reports that no formal reservation for Camp Weld was ever made.

Elisha Millison, a soldier who served in the First Regiment and was quartered at Camp Weld, noted the disappearance of the original buildings and the near approach of abandonment of the

ground for military purposes. He examined the records of the United States Land Office in Denver and discovered that the site was subject to homestead entry. He immediately filed such a claim, including all of the original site of the Camp. This was in September, 1864, when he was occupying the building that had been the south end of "Officers' Row." No contest to his claim was ever made and United States patent was issued to him on December 1, 1865.

Among the pioneers of Colorado few, if any, were more favorably known than Elisha Millison and his family, who made their home in the house mentioned, during the lifetime of Millison and his wife and where they raised a large family, some of whom are still living. This old house still stands and although changed in exterior appearance, little if any of the interior is different from what it was when first constructed in 1861.¹

¹It is interesting to know that Mr. Sanford, author of this article, was born in this very house (September 22, 1862), his mother being housed here while her husband was serving in the First Colorado Regiment.—Ed.

tion lasted three months. Miss Blain received a salary of fifty dollars per month. The last month's teaching was paid for by the gift of a city lot on Main Street.

The school was located on Colorado Avenue near Fourth Street, and was held in a picket house. A trench was dug on the four sides of a rectangle, poles were placed upright in this to form the walls, and poles were laid across from side to side to form the roof. The roof poles were covered with dirt. The earth floor was made as solid as possible and was wet down every night to keep it in good condition. Two buildings in town had stone floors then.



PICKET HOUSE, SAID TO BE THE FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE IN GRAND JUNCTION (1882)

The fact that the floor had to be wet every night, led to the ruining of the schoolhouse. Dr. Stroud thought to save labor by turning the water from the ditch, which now ran past the schoolhouse, into the room. In the morning the children came running to tell "teacher" that there could be no school as the roof had caved in. The water had so spread the poles forming the walls that they had let down the roof.

School was then held for one forenoon in the cabin of a bachelor of the town, but this was found entirely unsuitable. Finally, the Armory Club hall was given for school use. This had part of a board floor.

The First School, Sunday School and Funeral in Grand Junction

As Told by Nancy Blain Underhill to Frances Strock*

Miss Nancy Blain was born in Logan County, Illinois, May 28, 1863. On account of her mother's health the family moved to Kansas and later to Canon City, Colorado. Here they remained until the opening of Grand Valley to settlement. Following the removal of the Indians, her brother, Douglas Blain, came to the Grand Valley, in October, 1881. The father came in April, 1882, and the rest of the family arrived May 20th, following.

Already quite a number of pioneers were in the valley and the town of Grand Junction was getting pretty well started. On June 1, 1882, the first School Board was organized in the new settlement with Dr. Stroud as President and Mr. McKelvie as Secretary. Miss Blain applied for the position as teacher. She had taught some before coming to the Western Slope, but her certificate was not recognized in Gunnison County, which then included present Mesa County. But the Gunnison County Superintendent gave permission to Dr. Stroud to examine her and grant the certificate. The money to carry on the school had to be raised by subscription. The first term of this first school in Grand Junction

*Miss Strock is a Field Worker in the Colorado Historical Survey Project under the C. W. A.—Ed.

Miss Blain had twenty pupils. The names will be of interest as all are known to old timers. Some of these pupils are living in or near Grand Junction at the present time. Jennie and Henry Davis walked five miles to school, coming from the eastern end of the district. The children of Charles Steele—Arthur, Frank and Grace—walked four and a half miles. From a ranch about where the present sugar beet factory stands, came Hattie, Carrie, Charles and James Green. Charles became a sheep man. The Gordon children—Rachel, George, Ed and Rose—attended. Rachel is now Mrs. Graham and she visits with her daughter who has the Virginia Rooms. Ed Gordon now lives at Gateway in Mesa County. The Randall children, Minnie and two brothers, came from the Randall Hotel. Other children were William Knowles, Lillian and Nelson Hall. One girl, Lizzie Resser, came one day but as she had to come five miles she found it too hard. She was from the western end of the district.

The Randall Hotel was kept by Mrs. Nancy Randall and Mrs. Underhill speaks of her as a very pleasant woman, whom nothing seemed to worry or upset. This was where Miss Blain boarded. The hotel had a dirt roof and when it rained hard the muddy water splashed down on everything, but even this did not seem to bother Mrs. Randall. There were only two rooms in the hotel and Miss Blain had a corner of the larger room curtained off so as to afford some privacy.

Water for the town was obtained from a well and from the river. Later the one ditch in the Valley was extended to run through the town. This ditch began near Palisade and when extended was the one to cause the schoolhouse disaster.

There was one store kept by the Russell Brothers. The Post Office was also here. This store had been opened December 10, 1881. J. Clayton and Henry Nichols, so well known now, were nephews of the Russells. J. Clayton Nichols located the first ranch in Grand Valley, October 10, 1881, only six days after the Reservation was thrown open for settlement. There were seven saloons in the town when Miss Blain came.

In July Miss Blain with the help of two of her older girls (only four years younger than herself) undertook the organization of a Sunday School. They made fancy posters and put one on the door of every building, including the saloons, inviting all to attend the Sunday School services. Dr. Stroud, President of the School Board, provided a bottle of mucilage. Some of the saloons had blanket doors but the posters were "stuck" on these also. At the first Sunday School service there were fifty present. The seven saloonkeepers closed their places of business and came also.

This action on the part of the saloon men continued as long as Miss Blain was in charge of the school and of the Sunday School, for Miss Blain found she had to act as Sunday School Superintendent. She asked for volunteer teachers. Anna Green taught the little folks, Miss Blain took the young people and a man volunteered for the older people. This man taught for only a short time as it was found he was teaching infidelity. As no other teacher was found she took the adult class, placing the young people in charge of someone else.

September 2, 1882, was the last day of school and a program was given. The children spoke their pieces and addresses were given by Judge Mobley and James Bucklin.

A young man, a stranger in town, died at this time and Miss Blain was asked to conduct the funeral services as there seemed to be no one else willing to do it. The funeral services were held immediately after the close of the program at school. As there was no cemetery he was buried out on the desert some distance from town.

At this time the first church was one hundred and fifty miles distant. With the coming of the railroad the first church was established by William A. Marsh. This was a Methodist Church, South.

With the completion of the railroad in November, 1882, many more settlers began to come into the Valley. Mrs. Underhill tells many interesting experiences of herself and the three other young ladies of this early day.

As Miss Blain's family was nicely settled on a ranch east of town and as she was not so needed by her mother she refused the position as teacher for the winter. She returned to Canon City where she was married to Mr. Underhill to whom she had been engaged before coming to the Valley. After their marriage they continued to live at Canon City until 1900 when they came to Collbran, in the upper Valley, to live.

It is of interest to know that Mrs. Underhill's father, Elam Blain, planted the first apple and peach trees in the Valley. All who lived in Grand Junction in the early nineteen hundreds remember well "Grandpa Blain." He was especially fond of children and they of him and he nearly always had some of them with him on the wagon as he went about town peddling his vegetables.

Mrs. Underhill and her brother George now live on a ranch on the Redlands near Grand Junction. She has one son, Elam B. Underhill, an attorney, residing in Grand Junction. Mrs. Underhill is very charming to meet and has a wonderful memory, telling so interestingly the many novel experiences of those early days.

Fort Crawford, Colorado, 1880-1890

MAJOR JOHN H. NANKIVELL, INF., U. S. ARMY.*

The Ute uprising of 1879 with its attendant reverse to Thornburgh's command on the Milk River and the massacre of "Father" Meeker at the White River Agency, Colorado, naturally resulted in the concentration of all available troops in the Military Division of the Missouri, Lieutenant General Philip H. Sheridan commanding, to quell the outbreak. Colonel Merritt with about one thousand troops (later increased to 1500) reached the White River Agency on October 11, 1879, and Colonel (Brevet Brigadier General) R. S. Mackenzie with six companies (troops) of the Fourth Cavalry was brought rapidly from Fort Clark, Texas, to Fort Garland, Colorado, and was there reinforced to an effective total strength of about 1500 men by troops from other army posts in General Sheridan's command. Colonel Hatch, Ninth Cavalry, with about 450 men of his regiment, was, at the same time, ordered to Fort Lewis, at Pagosa Springs, Colorado, from posts in New Mexico.

On October 13, 1879, all operations were halted pending negotiations entered into by General Adams of Colorado and Chief Ouray of the Uncompahgre Utes for the release of the white women and children held captive by the hostile Utes. These negotiations were successful in restoring the captives to their friends and in securing the promise from the Indians to cease hostilities. However, prudence demanded that military preparations and precautions be continued, and the commands at the White River and Fort Garland were held in readiness for active service.

The tragedies at the White River Agency had aroused a feeling of horror and hostility towards the Utes on the part of the people of Colorado, and when it finally became apparent that no punishment was to be meted out to the perpetrators of the outrages the demand arose for the expulsion of these Indians from the state. Yielding to the insistent demands, a treaty was finally agreed upon which provided for the removal of the White River and Uncompahgre Utes to a reservation in Utah. However, the Uncompahgre Utes, not having taken part in the uprising on the White River, did not take kindly to the proposed move to another reservation, and it seemed rather doubtful that when the time came they would move peaceably to the new location.

*Major Nankivell, Senior Instructor Colorado National Guard, contributed an article on "Colorado's Last Indian War" to the *Colorado Magazine* of November, 1933.—Ed.

To meet this contingency Colonel Mackenzie at Fort Garland was directed to move to the Uncompahgre Valley with part of his command, six companies of cavalry and nine companies of infantry, and prevent any outbreak. Accordingly, on May 18, 1880, he started his march from Fort Garland, and reached the Uncompahgre Valley via Cochetopa Pass on May 31st. General Parker, U. S. Army, Retired, then a lieutenant of the Fourth Cavalry, in his book, *The Old Army*, has the following to say of this march: "We traveled over the Cochetopa Pass, thence westward along a route south of the Gunnison River and generally parallel to it. The Gunnison River most of the way travels in a tremendous canyon, the 'Black Canyon', which is now one of the scenic attractions of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. The country boasted few inhabitants and few buildings except an occasional store or gin mill, selling, usually, liquor whose corroding potency, defies description. . . .

"Descending Cedar Creek May 31, 1880, the road entered the valley of the Uncompahgre River, a furious torrent. Occasionally, along the riverbank there was a narrow stretch of grass and it was on one of these that we camped, grateful after our arduous two weeks' march to find a resting place.

"We were near the Uncompahgre agency . . . and it was not difficult to see why the Uncompahgre was so much desired by the whites. It was practically the only piece of land within hundreds of miles available for cultivation; could be easily irrigated, and had an inexhaustible supply of water."

During the next few months Mackenzie's command was constantly on the march reconnoitering in the Uncompahgre and Gunnison river valleys and on the Grand Mesa, and keeping peace between the Indians and the prospectors for mines who were now invading the Ute country in ever-increasing numbers. At the same time the Uncompahgre reservation was examined in detail for the site of a new military post which it was designed to build somewhere in that section.¹ A temporary supply camp was, on

¹Definite proposals for the building of an army post in the Ute country in Colorado were made by General W. T. Sherman, commanding the army, in a letter to the Secretary of War, dated at Chicago, April 3, 1880, extracts from which follow:

" . . . General Mackenzie will be ordered forward as soon as wagons can be used on the road by Saguache and Del Norte to the Uncompahgre Agency, and thence to reconnoitre forward as far as the junction of Gunnison and Grand Rivers, to select a site for a considerable Post, one that will insure peace in all that region. For this purpose a hundred thousand dollars will be indisputably necessary and I earnestly advise that you ask this sum of Congress at the earliest date possible, because the post ought to be built this year. . . . With a good strong post on the Gunnison, and the two indicated at White River, and on the Animas, I feel certain that the Army can enforce the peace in that mountain region for some time to come." [A photostatic copy of this letter is in the library of the State Historical Society of Colorado. Along with other documents relating to Fort Crawford, it was presented to the Society by Major Nankivell.—Ed.]

July 21, 1880, established on the west bank of the Uncompahgre River about four miles north of the Los Pinos Agency and eight miles south of the site that was later to become the town of Montrose.²

Late in August, 1880, a treaty was negotiated with the Utes providing generally that the White River Utes should surrender their reservation and move to the Uintah Reservation in Utah; that the Uncompahgre Utes should move in the following spring to a reservation on Grand River, or elsewhere, as lands suitable for them might be found west of their then reservation; and that the Southern Utes would occupy practically their present reservation in southwest Colorado. No trouble being anticipated during the coming winter, Mackenzie's cavalry and part of the infantry with him were withdrawn to Fort Garland and other posts to the east; Major Joshua S. Fletcher, Jr., with his command of Companies A, B, C, D, and E, 23rd U. S. Infantry, numbering about 250 officers and men, was directed to remain at the supply camp on the Uncompahgre and construct a new post there, inasmuch as no other site had been found in the vicinity suitable for the purpose.

Winter was approaching, and Major Fletcher's command proceeded to make itself as comfortable as circumstances permitted at the supply camp and at the same time commenced construction on the barracks and quarters of what was soon to be known as the "Cantonment of the Uncompahgre." The new post was located about one half mile southeast of the center of the tract of land that was eventually set aside as a military reservation, and which extended along both sides of the Uncompahgre River in a rectangular shape about six miles long, north and south, and a little more than two miles wide, east and west. The exact location of the post proper was near the center of the tract which embraces the south $\frac{1}{2}$ of the southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 26, and the north $\frac{1}{2}$ of the northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, in Township 48 north, Range 9, all west of New Mexico principal meridian.

The actual construction of the cantonment was under the immediate direction of First Lieutenant Calvin D. Cowles, 23rd U. S. Infantry, constructing quartermaster, and all labor was performed by the troops. There was but little timber in the valley of the Uncompahgre, a few scattered groves of cottonwoods along the river bottoms constituting practically the only supply, and

²The first agency on the Ute reservation to bear the name "Los Pinos" was situated on Los Pinos Creek (a branch of Cochetopa Creek), about midway between Gunnison and Creede. In 1875 the agency and the Utes were moved to the Uncompahgre valley, and the agency still retained its name of Los Pinos. Its new location was one mile north of the present little town of Colona on the Montrose-Ouray highway. Montrose was located as a town site on January 20, 1882.

lumber for the building of the post had to be hauled in from the pine and spruce forests to the south. A sawmill was established on the reservation, and the logs were sawn into pickets and boards for the construction of the various buildings. In order to present an accurate description of the post as finally constructed I quote the following from a report compiled in 1885 by Captain John E. Greer, Ordnance Department, Acting Chief Engineer, Department of the Missouri:

"Buildings.—Quarters for four companies. Barracks, four, frame, one story, each 70x40 feet, with two wings, each 40x25 feet; wash houses, 48x12 feet, 40x12 feet, 26x12 feet, 28 x 12 feet and 68x12 feet, respectively, immediately in rear.

"Commanding officer's quarters, picket, one story, single set, 58x15 feet, with wing 62x15 feet.

"Company officers' quarters, eight, picket, one story, as follows: one, single set, 40x22 feet, with wing, 40x16 feet; one, single set, 44x22 feet; one, single set, 44x22 feet, with wing, 24x20 feet; one, single set, 40x22 feet, with wing, 36x16 feet; two, single sets, 40x22 feet, with two wings, one, 26x16 feet, and one, 14x16 feet; one, single set, 40x22 feet, with wing, 40x16 feet; one, 40x15 feet, with two wings, one, 50x22 feet, and one, 15x15 feet.

"All the quarters are picket chinked in with clay, and are lined with old canvas or cotton cloth.

"Post headquarters, frame, one story, 75x35 feet, with wing, 50x42 feet.

"Hospital, picket, 115x15 feet, with picket ward, 22x41 feet, to left, and frame ward, 24x40 feet to right of main building and nearly opposite its centre. Two wards, 13 beds.

"Guard house, frame, one story, 50x25 feet.

"Quartermaster's store houses, two picket, one story; one, 88x40 feet, contains office of Acting Assistant Quartermaster; one, 100x24 feet.

"Commissary store house, one picket, one story, 100x24 feet.

"Commissary cellars, two, 70x24x8 feet.

"Ordnance store houses, two; one, board, one story, 20x20 feet, contains office of Acting Ordnance Officer; one, picket, one story, 26x20 feet.

"Bakery, frame, one story, 22x42 feet; capacity, 300 loaves.

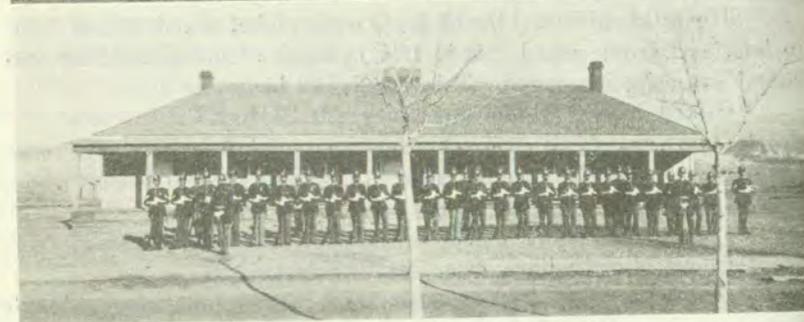
"Quartermaster's corral, picket, one story, 200x178 feet; contains stalls along sides and ends for 100 animals, and sheds for wagons, together with grain and harness rooms.

"Quartermaster's shops, picket, one story, 80x20 feet.

"Married enlisted men's quarters, six, as follows: Three, picket, one story; one 36x16 feet, one 32x16 feet, and one 24x18

feet; three, slab, one story; one, 29x17 feet, one 31x16 feet, with rear extension, 18x16 feet, and one, 36x17 feet, with rear extension, 15x16 feet.

“Hospital Matron’s quarters, picket, one story, 52x20 feet, with wing 24x18 feet.



VIEWS OF FORT CRAWFORD

Upper: Officers' Quarters. Middle: Parade Ground. Lower: Co. K, 10th Infantry.
(Photographs by T. M. McKee in 1886)

“Ice house, picket, one story, 146x22 feet.

“Post Trader’s quarters, picket, one story, 54x16 feet, with rear extension, 42x15 feet.

“Post Trader’s store, picket, one story, 60x44 feet.

“Post Trader’s store house, picket, one story, 46x24 feet.”

“Supplies—Quartermaster’s, Subsistence and Ordnance stores furnished chiefly from supply depots at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Wood, hay and straw procured in the vicinity of the post and furnished by contract. Water for drinking and culinary purposes pumped by steam power from well near bank of Uncompahgre River into tank, and thence distributed throughout post by water wagon; water also obtained from river by irrigating canal.”

Writing to the author under date of December 18, 1933, Mrs. Winifred Pollock Fairfax (wife of Lieutenant Colonel John C. Fairfax, U. S. Army, Retired, San Mateo, California, and daughter of the late Captain Otis W. Pollock, 23d U. S. Infantry, who was stationed at the Cantonment on the Uncompahgre during the winter of 1880-81), has the following to say of that first winter in the supply camp and life at the new post:

“The first winter spent at Cantonment on the Uncompahgre River, Colorado, was in tents. The weather was so cold that the officers had to be up and down all night stoking the Sibley stoves to keep their families from freezing to death, and oftentimes where there had been a snow-storm they would find the cots covered with snow.

“The following summer they moved into their permanent quarters which were log cabins.

“The majority of the families had their furniture made from packing boxes; large boxes for beds, which were filled with straw with a mattress on top of that; for dressers, a box set up on edge, with a shelf therein and cambric curtains in front; for tables, saw-horses with boards stretched across them; for stools, large stumps of trees, covered with cambric also.

“The logs of the cabins were erected in an undried state with the pitch oozing from them. These were covered with condemned canvas tent flies. The canvas was used on the walls and ceilings to keep the pitch from dropping on, or coming in contact with the occupants.

“As the majority of the families had lost their china and utensils on the wagons, enroute to this camp, dishes were scarce and nearly all therefore used tin dishes and plates.

“Notwithstanding the discomforts and primitive mode of life, there was quite a bit of entertaining, with crude service. Also certain hops were held in the headquarters building, the largest house in the cantonment.

“Above I have touched upon what has been told me by my parents, but I have one incident to relate that I remember myself:

When the Indians decided to move to Utah with a military escort, I was standing at the door of our house, watching them pass in single file, Indian style, all day long, the horses drawing the travois."

The final removal of the Utes from the Uncompahgre Reservation referred to in Mrs. Fairfax's statement above, occurred during the fall of 1881, and at times the situation assumed rather serious aspects. Early in the spring of 1881, General Mackenzie had returned to the Uncompahgre valley with six troops of the Fourth Cavalry and four companies of infantry to reinforce the garrison at the cantonment. A new reservation had been selected for the Uncompahgre Utes by the Commissioners of the Interior Department at the junction of the White and Green Rivers in Utah, no suitable lands, presumably, having been found for them in Colorado west of their present reservation. The Utes were not at all satisfied with the selected reservation, and when called upon by the Commissioners on August 23, 1881, to commence their movement to the new reservation they flatly refused to comply. The Commissioners at once appealed to General Mackenzie for military assistance to enforce the removal of the Indians, and acting under orders from the department commander General John Pope, Mackenzie at once called the Ute chiefs together and informed them of his orders. He emphasized the fact that the orders would be executed to the letter, by force if necessary, and he gave them just one day in which to consult and decide upon their future actions. Quoting now from General Pope's report of September 22, 1881:³

"The next day the Indians submitted and pledged themselves to go quietly and at once. Mackenzie being satisfied of their good faith returned them to the charge of the Indian Commissioners, and they moved off in a day or two thereafter peaceably, but manifesting the greatest grief and regret at being obliged to abandon, in this manner, the home of their tribe for so many years. The whites who had collected, in view of their removal, were so eager and so unrestrained by common decency that it was absolutely necessary to use military force to keep them off the reservation until the Indians were fairly gone. . . ." The exodus of the Utes caused great satisfaction to the people of Colorado, and the *Ouray Times* had the following to say on the occasion:

"Sunday morning the Utes bid adieu to their old hunting grounds and folded their tents, rounded up their dogs, sheep, goats,

³Report made by General Pope as commander of the Department of the Missouri to General Sheridan commanding the Military Division of the Missouri.

ponies and traps, and took up the line of march for their new reservation, followed by General Mackenzie and his troops. This is an event that has long and devoutly been prayed for by our people. How joyful it sounds and with what satisfaction one can say, 'The Utes have gone!'

The Indians having entirely vacated the Uncompahgre valley, General Mackenzie and his troops were withdrawn from the district, and the garrison at the cantonment was reduced to four companies of the 14th Infantry under Lieutenant Colonel Henry Douglass, which detachment relieved the original garrison from the 23d Infantry in October, 1881. Life at the post now settled down to the daily routine of drill, guard duty, and parades, interspersed with occasional social functions and hunting expeditions into the adjacent game paradise in the mountains to the south and southeast. Attempts were made to beautify the post, and the parade ground was surrounded by young cottonwoods which survive to this day as lordly trees.

The Indian menace having been removed from the valley General Pope made recommendations for the abandonment of the post in the following words: "I think it will be but a short time before we can safely abandon the cantonment on the Uncompahgre, which even now only serves to give confidence to the settlers in that region, who are more or less excited by imaginary apprehension of hostilities with the Utes who have been placed on a reservation in Utah far to the west of them." However, these recommendations met with a storm of protest, and petitions poured in from the settlers to Governor Grant, the Secretary of War, and Senator Teller, urging the retention of the troops in Western Colorado. Evidently the petitions had the desired effect for the troops were retained, and the President on March 12, 1884, formally declared the establishment of the Cantonment on the Uncompahgre, which declaration was published in General Orders No. 22, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D. C., on the same date.

The area of the reservation was reduced under the provisions of General Orders No. 80, Adjutant General's Office, dated July 28, 1884, to approximately 8.55 square miles, and on March 28, 1885, jurisdiction of the tract was ceded by the State of Colorado to the United States in an Act passed by the State Assembly on the same date. On December 15, 1886, General Orders No. 91, Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C., ordered that—"By direction of the President the military post on the Uncompahgre River, in Colorado, now called 'Cantonment on the Uncompahgre' will hereafter be known and designated as 'Fort

Crawford,' in honor of the late Captain Emmet Crawford, 3d Cavalry, who died January 18, 1886, at Nacori, Mexico, of wound received in an attack made on his command of Indian scouts by a force of Mexicans, while in pursuit of hostile Indians."

The troops garrisoning Fort Crawford were relieved at irregular intervals, and the annual reports of the War Department for the period 1881-1890 show that following the relief of the original garrison of the 23d Infantry in October, 1881, by a battalion (4 companies—13 officers and 162 enlisted men) of the 14th Infantry under command of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Douglass, the troops serving at the post were as follows:

June, 1884, to April 2, 1889: Companies G and K, 10th Infantry (average strength 7 officers and 89 enlisted men), Captain J. A. P. Hampson, 10th Infantry, commanding.⁴

April 3, 1889, to December, 1890: Companies A and E, 10th Infantry (12 officers and 148 enlisted men), Captain Lacey, 10th Infantry, commanding.

Occasionally troops from other posts, particularly the 9th Cavalry (Colored) from Fort Lewis, 109 miles to the south, visited the post, and at various times the garrison of Fort Crawford made practice marches through the adjacent country. During the Ute troubles of 1887 in the White River country, Colorado, in which Colorow, one of the minor Ute chiefs, came in conflict with the Colorado state troops, the garrison at Fort Crawford was held in readiness for immediate service, but was not employed in the field.⁵

On January 5, 1886, one of the barracks was destroyed by fire, and once again the troops had to turn from their legitimate business of training for war to that of carpenters and laborers. Apropos of this matter of the use of troops for building posts, General Pope reported, "The amounts allowed for building posts on the frontier are so small that, notwithstanding the labor of troops—a labor which should not be imposed on troops serving in the field, for very manifest reasons—the posts are necessarily of the frailest and least substantial character, and require constant repairs, made by the same labor of troops, until within a few years hardly a remnant of the original material remains in the buildings. At the end of that time they are quite as worthless as they were in the beginning."

⁴For a period of about two years (1886-1887), the garrison was under command of Major G. K. Brady, 18th Infantry, although no troops of the 18th Infantry were stationed at the post. Major Brady was transferred in September, 1887, with two companies of his regiment to the new post of Fort Logan, near Denver, Colorado.

⁵See the *Colorado Magazine*, X, 222-24.

Apparently with General Pope's report in mind, and the further fact that Fort Crawford had about outlived its usefulness and was much in need of necessary repairs, the War Department in General Orders No. 43, dated April 10, 1890, directed that the troops from Fort Crawford and other posts named in the order be withdrawn "so soon as the department commanders concerned can provide suitable accommodations for them elsewhere." Under the provisions of this order the companies of the Tenth Infantry were withdrawn—A to Fort Leavenworth and E to Fort Lewis—in December, 1890, and on December 31, 1890, General Orders No. 148, Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C., directed that "the military reservation of Fort Crawford, Colorado, declared by President's order dated March 12, 1884, and reduced by President's order dated July 22, 1884, is hereby transferred and turned over to the Secretary of the Interior for disposition, as provided in subsequent sections of the aforesaid act, or as may be otherwise provided by law, the same being no longer required for military purposes."

On the departure of the troops the post was placed in charge of a caretaker, and later the buildings were sold at auction to the settlers in the valley. One of these buildings, the old hospital ward, was bought by a Mr. E. L. Hays (now of Montrose, Colo.), and moved by him to his land near the present Riverside School, five miles south of Montrose on the highway to Ouray. This was Mr. Hay's home for many years, and it is still in use as a dwelling and is now owned by Mr. T. M. Reynolds of Montrose.

James A. Fenlon, who conducted the sutler's store at the post for many years, acquired title to that portion of the reservation on which the post proper was located, by patent from the United States government. Inasmuch as he was already on the land, he promptly exercised his preemption privileges, and when the military reservation was thrown open for entry he filed on the 160 acres that embraced the old post limits. Proof was made, and receipt was issued to him by the Montrose land office on April 15, 1895, for his payment of the required \$1.25 per acre. Later the land was deeded to Mrs. Lizzie C. Fenlon, his wife, who came to the Cantonment on the Uncompahgre as a young bride in 1881 and who is still living on the site of the old fort, her house being on the north edge of the old parade ground. This parade ground still exists; the young cottonwoods that surrounded it in the '80s are now stately trees, and the parade ground itself is a beautiful meadow, but to Mrs. Fenlon, whose heart is still with the old army that she loved so well, there comes, in those beautiful words of Moore,—

“the light of other days around her” and she once again sees those gallant lines of blue as the stirring notes of the march and reveille announce the beginning of another day and the unfolding to the breeze of that grand old flag that her ancestors had fought to bring into being. Then, ere the day is done, there comes to her as in a dream the haunting notes of “Taps”—ghostly memories of those gallant days of the “old army,” but what a world of meaning they have for those who understand!⁶

⁶The writer had the pleasure of interviewing Mrs. Fenlon at her home on the site of Fort Crawford in the summer of 1932.

Pioneer Ranch Life Near Sterling

GEORGIA L. McROBERTS.*

I was born September 23, 1869, in LaFayette County, Mississippi. I came to Colorado with my parents, brothers and sisters when quite a small child, and my whole life so far has been spent in this state.

My father, in company with J. M. King, came to Colorado during the year 1875, in search of health for his family. Looking the situation over, they decided to locate about six miles north of Sterling, and both men filed on homesteads, and immediately purchased teams near Greeley and left them there in care of M. C. King.

Father then returned to Mississippi, and said the country out here looked like "starvation" to him, but said he thought he could make a living most any place where his family would have good health, provided the Indians would let them alone.

So accordingly, my parents began to make preparations to move. Mother dried bushel after bushel of fruit and sweet corn; got cotton and wool which she carded, then spun; dyed and wove yard after yard of sheets, bed spreads, dress goods and even "jeans" for men's pants. My mother also took all of the old clothing and made it into rag carpets; cured a lot of pork and brought that along.

In the spring of 1876, my father secured an emigrant car and we started for the West. There were twenty-one in the party, namely: my father (A. H. Sanders), mother, their six children, by name, Lena, Bob, Nanny, Will, Joe and myself; one nephew, named Hodge; two aunts, Charity and Kate Sanders (father's sisters); Mr. and Mrs. J. M. King and six children, by name, Billie, Anna

and Mattie Tidwell, and Alec, John and Art King. Two young men also accompanied us, Dr. Ivy and a Mr. Davis.

Somewhere, after leaving Oxford, Mississippi, M. V. Propst from Alabama, got on the same train with us. There were eight in his party: Mr. and Mrs. Propst and six children, namely, Koger, Mary, W. F., Allen H., Edna and Lena.

These three families made up quite a delegation, and I suppose the children had a good time—probably better than their parents. My father brought along a very large coffee pot, as I remember it was almost as large as a heating stove, but imagine that is exaggerating somewhat. When the "grownups" would feel the need of a good cup of coffee, they would have the conductor send word ahead, and at various points would get the said coffee pot filled. Then this was passed to all of the men and women in their coach, and oranges were bought for the children.

After a long, slow trip we reached Julesburg, where the Propst family left us, and the remaining twenty-one came on to Sidney, arriving there in a blizzard. It was impossible to get accommodations for such a large crowd, so the Sidney people kindly opened up the Court House and built us a rousing old fire, and there is where we stayed until the weather cleared. Then our friends from Sterling got all the wagons and teams together that they were able to find and came over after us. That was father's idea in buying a team—to move us over from Sidney, Nebraska. There came a morning when we were all loaded in the wagons, ready to start for our new homes. Some rocks were heated and put down between two trunks and the little folks were put there and covered up. The wagons screeched and squeaked in the hard snow. Finally, sometime in the night, we reached our destination. The women and small children were taken to the home of M. C. King; the young ladies to the Gunn ranch and the men went to the homes of Smith and R. C. Perkins.

The following day my father secured a one-room dobie house and moved his family into that. Everything for building purposes had to be brought from Greeley, and he was anxious to get in his crop before he built.

Our first Indian scare occurred one day when my aunt had taken me and gone over to the M. C. King home. Mrs. King's father and step-mother (Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Minter) lived with them. Mrs. King saw a dust rising at the mouth of Cedar Creek, which she supposed was smoke. She thought the Indians had fired the Gunn ranch and were coming after us. The ladies gathered up all of the ammunition and guns that the men had not already taken to the fields, as in those days, they did their farm work

*This story was obtained by Miss Mary D. Armour, Field Worker at Sterling on the State Historical Survey Project.—Ed.

with guns strapped to their shoulder, took us youngsters by the hand and away we went as fast as we could run for the field to the men. Mr. Minter, a nice big fat man, weighing about 250 pounds, I should judge, climbed on to one of his work horses—a large fat gray, with feet like an elephant—took Ella, now Mrs. Wells, up in front of him and some one put me behind him, and away we went as fast as the old horse could go. Mr. Minter kept telling me to “hang on, if you fall off the Indians will be sure to get you.” So I took a death grip on his suspenders, and I was not sure whether my fingers would break or his suspenders. We all reached a dugout and every one got ready to defend themselves, when we discovered it was a bunch of cowboys driving saddle horses and the dust looked like smoke.

After this it was reported that a band of Indians would cross the Platte River somewhere near old Sterling. The men gathered up the women and children, taking them to Sidney, excepting the families of Clark, Gunn, Paul and Sanders. These families all met at a sod house that had sod corrals, and made all preparations to defend their stock and families. But the Indians never molested, except to steal some horses up near Atwood.

Miss Emma Martin, brother of George, was my first school teacher; then Bob Smith, then George Martin, in our own house. After that, Jesse Waugh was the teacher.

My parents, brothers and sisters are all deceased except brother Will and myself.

I recall several things that I might have mentioned above and will do so now. After Mr. Spencer Gunn (husband of the late Nannie Gunn) died, having been thrown from his horse, my aunt used to stay with Mrs. Gunn a great deal. I was quite small and would stay there too most of the time. It used to be my delight to go out in the yard at this Gunn ranch and climb up in an old freight wagon and watch the cowboys catch their horses. They would drive their ponies in by the chuck wagon and surround them with lariat ropes. Each cowboy would take his turn to rope his horse and lead him out; then when all had secured their horses, the rest of the bunch would be turned loose again, and the boys would proceed to saddle up their fresh ponies. Of course there were not a great many in the bunch, but they pitched equal to the “wild west” show that you see nowadays. Many a stray rope went my way, and I had to beg to get loose.

But the most fun was to see the cook, Charles Fitch. In getting their meals ready, he had two sticks that forked near the top. In these forks was an iron bar with old wire hooks, and on these hooks the large iron kettles hung and the fire was kept up under

the kettles. He also had big dutch ovens that set in the fire and had live coals on top of the lids. These were for baking biscuits, and these biscuits were certainly good.

When the boys came in, the heavy lids were removed, and every fellow grabbed a tinplate and cup and helped himself, then sat down on the ground with legs curled up so as to make a kind of a table for the plate. I remember one day the bean kettle was set off of the fire and was open; along came one of the ranch hogs, and down his nose went into that kettle of beans. The beans were hot and the kettle was smaller around than the hog's head, and he was therefore “fast.” Such squealing and running, you never heard or saw. The cowboys jumped on their horses and gave chase; they tried to rope the hog and finally one succeeded in getting him by a hind foot. Then some of the boys got hold of the hog and some of the kettle and finally succeeded in extricating the poor hog. But the boys did not get any beans for dinner that day, and when all of the ranch help rushed out to see the hog roped, the kitchen door was left open and a young skunk silently wended his way in through the door and back into the front bedroom, followed by the cowboys. Everyone gave his idea, how best to get him out of the house. One 6 foot, 3 or 4 inch Texas cowboy, called “Shanks,” said: “If you-all will get out of here and keep quiet, I'll get that animal out.” The boys seemed only too willing for him to have the job, and filed out of the house. “Shanks” procured a long stick, sharpened one end, and stuck a piece of meat on it, placed it not far from the animal's nose and kept it moving slowly in front of him until he had him outside of the door, and no harm to any one. The boys gave a warwhoop and three cheers for old “Shanks,” the bravest of them all. They led “Shanks” out to the chuck wagon, seated him on the ground, and helped his plate; their way of showing their appreciation of bravery.

But the thing that has appealed to me most is how the cowboys can quiet their cattle when night herding them in a storm. Many times have I awakened at night, hearing the rain pattering against the window with thunder and lightning crashing around, and above all of this noise could hear some good old song like “Home, Sweet Home” or “Pull for the Shore” wafted out into the depths of that dark, disagreeable night. Such faithfulness and loyalty as these cowboys had are worthy of some reward.

My first experience with owning stock was about in 1878, when the cowmen were fording the Platte River at the mouth of Cedar Creek with a bunch of cattle. One little calf was too small to swim, so a cowman roped the calf and gave it to me.

The grand old West, with its herds of stock, has always appealed to me, and when a cowboy who had batched for eight years asked me to share his trials and troubles, I finally consented and was married to J. T. McRoberts on September 26, 1899, and for thirty-five years we have kept the old T— (T Bar) ranch, which is twenty miles northwest of Sterling, rolling along, and I think I would be safe in saying that I've cooked more meals for cowboys than any other woman in the county.

Before I was married I took a Normal course in Boulder at the State University, then taught school two years nine miles west of Iliff to pay back the money which I had borrowed to take me through the Boulder school. After that I took a commercial course at Greeley, paying my way there by teaching in the school. I completed the shorthand and typewriting course in Denver. I was Deputy County Clerk under Mrs. Nannie Gunn for two years, 1896 to 1898. Mrs. Gunn was the first lady to hold office in Logan County.

Shortly after I was married, Judge E. E. Armour of Sterling offered me the District Court reporting, which I would have liked to accept, but my cowboy husband did not think that way, and here I am today.

I had a fine young Arabian saddle horse, and I've helped to round up, brand, dehorn, vaccinate and dip cattle, and feel that I am "well versed" in handling stock. Just recently I was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the "Mount Hope Local Farmers Union." Now, I suppose, I will have to become a "full fledged farmer" from this time on.

We traveled up Lodgepole and near what was then known as Cheyenne Pass, Captain Morse and I and my company of Pawnees, ran into a band of Arapahoes that had been raiding over near Fort Laramie. After a running fight of about ten miles we overtook and killed three of them, and recaptured the stock they had taken from emigrants, and also some Government mules that they had taken from Fort Laramie. General Sherman was much pleased with the Pawnees. We went with him to Fort Laramie where we turned over the captured stock to the emigrants who had been stranded there for more than a week. We were then sent back to guard Graders' Camps along the line of the Union Pacific. This doesn't take us into Colorado very much. In fact the only fight of importance that we ever had in Colorado was at Summit Springs two years later.

The writers of that fight, and even the report of General Carr, speaks of it as though the entire command took part. There were 150 of our Scouts in that command, and only about forty of them were in the fight, and only three of our officers: my brother, Captain Cushing, and myself of the Fifth Cavalry.

I shall quote from my brother's [Major Frank North's] diary, going back a couple of days:

"Friday, July 9th, 1869—Camped on Beecher's (Forsythe) battle ground. Arrived at four p. m., marched thirty-one miles without water, and, oh, how hot and dry! The wounded man is doing fine. We have very poor standing water.

"July 10th—Moved at six a. m. and followed Indian trail thirty-five miles. Passed three Indian camps. Water poor. In the morning we move early and take three days' rations on pack mules and light out after the Indians. We will have a fight sure. Hope we may come out victorious.

"July 11th—Marched this morning with fifty of my men and 200 whites. Followed trail till two p. m. Made a grand charge and it was a complete victory. Took the whole village, 85 lodges, killed 60 Indians, took 17 prisoners, and about 300 ponies, robes, etc., innumerable. It rained pretty hard this evening."

This will show you that many of the stories about Summit Springs are fiction. My recollection is that there was not more than four officers of the Fifth Cavalry, besides General Carr, in the fight. We stopped nearly a half hour behind a sand hill, about three miles from the village, while General Carr sent a messenger after Colonel Royal, who was following another trail. Then the General said, "I am afraid to wait longer as the Indians may see us and get away." So he ordered the charge. The fight was over. The Indians were scattered in the sand hills.

My Military Experiences in Colorado

CAPT. L. H. NORTH*

In June, 1867, General W. T. Sherman and General Augur made a trip to Fort Laramie to meet some of the hostile Indians and try to make a treaty with them. He came up the Platte River from Fort Kearney to Julesburg on the south side. He had two companies of cavalry as escort. After crossing the river to the north side he took two companies of our Pawnee Scouts (there were fifty Indians and two white officers to each company). My company and Captain C. E. Morse's company went up the Platte River to Fort Morgan, where we turned north, crossed the hills, and struck Lodgepole Creek, where Pine Bluffs is now.

*Capt. North lives in Columbus, Nebraska. He wrote this short sketch at our solicitation, on Dec. 1, 1933. He is a survivor of the Battle of Summit Springs (July, 1869), the last battle with Plains Indians in Colorado.—Ed.

We had gathered the horses and come back into the village, and the rain and hail storm was in full force and it was sundown when Colonel Royal rode in with his command, and W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) was with Royal.

My brother, Captain Cushing, and I led the Pawnees into the village just where the marker stands, and that is very near where Tall Bull's lodge stood. Mrs. Weichel came out of the lodge as Cushing got off his horse. She was screaming and caught him around his legs and would not let go. My brother finally pacified her and made her understand that she was safe and was to stay where she was until we returned. The troops had turned to the left and followed up the stream to the..... We crossed and drove the Indians before us. Most of them caught horses and ran away. Twenty of them ran up the Gulch opposite the marker. We captured a woman and girl that climbed out of the Gulch and Frank shot the Indian that was with them. Three days later at Fort Sedgwick this woman told Leon Pallady, interpreter, that the Indian Frank shot was Tall Bull.

The Smoky Hill Trails in Colorado

MARGARET LONG, M. D.

This article is chiefly concerned with the Smoky Hill Trail from Limon east to the state line, and is a sequel to my previous article which appeared in the *Colorado Magazine* of November, 1932. Additional information about this trail in Kansas and in Colorado west of Limon will also be given briefly.

The Smoky Hill Trail began at the "Big Muddy," or Missouri River, and from Junction City, Kansas, followed up the Smoky Hill River to Old Cheyenne Wells, Colorado.

I. THE SMOKY HILL SOUTH

Western roads have a way of dividing, usually into the ridge road for wet weather and the valley road for dry, and the Smoky Hill Trail is no exception. The Smoky Hill South was the route of the Butterfield Overland Dispatch, which was operated by David A. Butterfield (who has no connection with John Butterfield of the southern transcontinental mail route). Due to increasing traffic to Denver, the Butterfield stage line was inaugurated in 1865 over the Smoky Hill Trail, which had been an emigrant route to Denver since 1859. When the Union Pacific Railroad was completed to Ft. Kearny in 1866, many of the Overland stages were trans-

ferred to the Smoky Hill Route. In that same year the Smoky Hill Stage line changed ownership twice. Ben Holladay took it over from Butterfield, and passed it on to Wells Fargo. Denver was at that time sufficiently important to be connected with the east by two stage lines, the Smoky Hill across Kansas, and the Overland, which connected with the Oregon Trail across Nebraska.

The Smoky, like other trails of the stage and covered wagon days, was as broad as a modern highway, and bits of it can still be seen where not ploughed up, composed of many parallel, grass grown ruts, cut deep by stage wheels and the hooves of horses and oxen. The old roads went straight across country to their destination, selecting the easiest grades and following water courses. The location of the vanished trail may be learned from the traditions handed down to the sons of pioneers who settled along its route, from range riders who are familiar with the out-of-the-way places, and by locating the site of stage stations. The old trails shown on the map accompanying this article are taken from the township plats, surveyed mostly in the sixties, and check fairly accurately with the mileage between stations as given in Root and Connelley's *The Overland Stage to California*, which has a chapter on the Smoky Hill Trail.

At Old Cheyenne Wells, the Smoky divided into the North and the South branches, which met east of Hugo, and again separated at Lake, not to meet again until they reached Denver.

Charles Pennock, who freighted on the Smoky, and who now lives at Bellevue, Colorado, gave me the information about the following stage stations. The Smoky coincided pretty closely with Colorado No. 83 from Denver to Parker, and local stages ran over this line for a long time after the completion of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, when the through stages from the Missouri were abandoned. Not all the "Mile Houses" were stage stations, but they were stops for both travelers and freighters who were driving their teams to Denver.

Twenty Mile House (Sec. 21, T. S. 6, R. 66 W.). The Smoky came down Sulphur Gulch where there was a stage station, a mile or two southeast of Parker (located by W. Newlin of Parker). Twenty Mile House is a two-story building, and the first house one comes to on entering Parker from Denver. It was the first house in the town, built by Jim Parker.

Seventeen Mile House (Sec. 33, T. S. 5, R. 66 W.). Formerly the Cummings, now the Lindholm Ranch, is an one and a half story building, painted white and surrounded by trees. The north end of the building, which was the original house, contained the bar. The story goes that dead men were passed out of the north window and buried beside the house.

and potatoes—a royal meal, after two days of detestable fare. Here we saw the last of Smoky Hill Fork. The road strikes across a broad plateau for twenty miles, and then descends to the Big Sandy, a branch of the Arkansas. . . .

“From the western edge of the watershed, we overlooked many a league of brown, monotonous, treeless country, through which meandered, not the water, but the dry, sandy bed of the Big Sandy. . . . At the stage station [Dubois?] we found two men living in a hole in the ground, with nothing but alkaline water to offer us. . . . At Grady’s Station, eighteen miles further, there was but one man, a lonely troglodyte, burrowing in the bank like a cliff-swallow. . . . The road, however, will soon be carried from Cheyenne Wells up the divide, entirely avoiding the Big Sandy. This new route, I am told, shortens the distance to Denver by twenty miles, and has good grass and water all the way.

“Towards evening I was struck with a peculiar tint in the shadow of a cloud along the horizon. After half an hour’s study, I pronounced it to be a mountain—and, of course, Pike’s Peak. . . . At sunset we saw not only Pike’s Peak, but the tops of the Sangre de Cristo Range, and the Spanish Peaks, like little pimples, on the line of the horizon.

“What a night followed! The hard “hack” bumped and jolted over the rough roads; we were flung backward and forward, right and left, pummelled, pounded and bruised, not only out of sleep, but out of temper, and into pain and exasperation. At one o’clock yesterday morning we were at Hedinger’s Lake, ninety-seven miles from Denver. . . . The hours dragged on with incredible slowness, until dawn. . . .

“From Hedinger’s Lake to Denver a new cut-off [Smoky Hill North] has recently been made, shortening the distance about twenty miles. Ours was the last coach which passed over the old road, [Smoky Hill South], the stations and stock being taken up behind us, and transferred across the country to their new positions. The road from Cheyenne Wells to Denver is thus abridged by forty miles, making the entire distance from Ft. Riley to the latter place 460 miles. . . .

“At Reed’s Springs we obtained our last ‘square meal’ [breakfast], with the inevitable bacon, for a dollar and a half. Thenceforth our road led over the high divides between Beaver [E. Bijou] Bijou [W. Bijou], and Kiowa Creeks, all of which flow northward to the Platte. . . .

“Midday was intensely sultry. . . . We took a hasty dinner at Running Creek, and then made our slow way, with poor horses, across the ridges to Cherry Creek, which we struck about fifteen

miles above Denver. Up to this point we had found no settlement, except two or three grazing ranches. The ride down Cherry Creek, through sand and dust, on the banks of the muddy stream, was the most tiresome part of the overland journey. Mile after mile went slowly by, and still there was no sign of cultivation. At last, four miles from the town, we reached a neat little tavern, beside which grew some cottonwoods [Four Mile House]. Here were two or three ranches in the process of establishment. The water from the wells was very sweet and cold.

“Our next sign of life was the evidence of death,—the unfenced cemetery of Denver, on the top of the ridge. I looked out ahead, from time to time, but could see neither horse, tree, fence, or other sign of habitation. . . . Suddenly I perceived, through the dust, a stately square Gothic tower [Lawrence Street M. E. Church] . . . built of brick, well proportioned and picturesque. Dwellings and cottages rose over the dip of the ridge, on either side; brick blocks began to appear, and presently we were rolling through gay, animated streets, down the vistas of which the snowy ranges in the west were shining fairly in the setting sun. The coach drew up at the Pacific Hotel, . . . and in just four days and six hours from Ft. Riley I sat down, not to a ‘square meal,’ but to an excellent supper.”

Log of The Smoky Hill South¹

O. Old Cheyenne Wells (Sec. 27, T. S. 13, R. 44 W.). The old Wells are five miles north of the present town of Cheyenne Wells. There were Indian wells on the south side of the South Fork of the Smoky Hill River, one of which Lt. Fitch enlarged in 1860 to furnish an abundant supply of water for emigrants. This well can still be seen, filled with muddy water. The station was in a cave in the bluffs on the south side of the river.

24. Dubois. This station was near Kit Carson, possibly at the junction of Eureka Creek and the Big Sandy, a few miles to the southeast, where Lt. Fitch in his survey of the Butterfield route mentions a site for a stage station with a supply of good water. A mile or two southeast of the Eureka-Sandy junction, a wagon road branched off from the Smoky Hill South to Old Fort Lyons and Bent’s New Fort on the Arkansas near Lamar. This road was originally an Indian Trail between Bent’s Fort and the Smoky Hill River. When Kit Carson became a railroad terminus in 1870, the Santa Fe stage went over the Bent’s Fort Road. I have been unable to find any legend that locates Dubois or even preserves its memory as a stage station.

¹The mileages and names of the stations are from Root and Connelley’s *Overland Stage to California*, 398. The comments are by the writer of this article.

35. Grady's. Probably near Wild Horse.

48. Cornell or Connell Creek.

60. Coon Creek. Eight miles east of Hugo.

71. Hogan. Near Hugo. This station may have been a mile west of the town, where there is a fine spring on the north bank of the Big Sandy on the former Captain Barron Ranch, as suggested by John Dickinson of Hugo.

80. Hedinger's Lake. Now Lake railroad station. This is three miles east and a little south of Limon, and was an important stage station before Limon came into existence. For months in 1870 this was the end of the railroad and the starting point of the stage road to Denver. A hole in the ground on the north bank of the Big Sandy is all that is left of the mule cellar which connected by an underground passage with the station at Lake. A house on the site of the former stage station is reached by an underpass just west of the railroad station.

93. The Big Bend of the Sandy. The Smoky Hill South crossed the Big Sandy for the second time, a few miles southwest of Resolis.

106. Reed's Station (Sec. 28, T. S. 9, R. 60 W.). This station is gone. It was three miles south of Colorado No. 86 at Kuhn's Crossing, on the west bank of Reed's or Spring Creek, a tributary to the East Bijou. From here a branch road went to Colorado Springs via the Bijou Basin and Eastonville. Three miles west of the station the Smoky crossed East Bijou Creek. Station located by Mrs. Laura Woodward of Ramah.

118. Bijou Station (Sec. 11, T. S. 9, R. 62 W.). The station was on Station Gulch, about a mile east of West Bijou Creek. The Smoky crossed the Bijou about where Colorado No. 86 does now.

127. Kiowa Station in the town of Kiowa. A branch trail, which followed Kiowa Creek, connected the Butterfield, or Smoky Hill South, with the Starvation Trail where the latter crossed Kiowa Creek.

136. Ruthton. This station was near Osborn, formerly a post office, and now a deserted ranch (Sec. 18, T. S. 7, R. 66 W.). The station was on the west side of Running Creek, just above its junction with Henderson Gulch. The Smoky, which passed north of Elizabeth, followed up Henderson Gulch, and passed a mile north of Round Hill, now Hilltop, to Parker on Sulphur Gulch, near its junction with Cherry Creek. The only reference to Ruthton is made by Bayard Taylor. He mentions the fact that it was on Running Creek. Mrs. Carrie I. Brooks of Arvada identifies Osborn as the Smoky crossing of Running Creek.

152. Cherry Valley. This station was near the junction of Sampson Gulch and Cherry Creek, a little above Twelve Mile House.

166. Denver.

II. THE SMOKY HILL NORTH

In June, 1866, Bayard Taylor came into Denver on the last stage to go over the Smoky Hill South via Kiowa. The route was changed and thereby shortened and the stage stations moved to the Smoky Hill North. This section between Lake and Denver passed northwest from Limon to Buick, and from there into Denver was south of the railroad and U. S. 40. Soon after, the Smoky Hill South was again shortened between Lake and Old Cheyenne Wells and changed to the Smoky Hill North via Big Springs. In the following log, the mileages and names of stations are taken from Root and Connelley, *The Overland Mail to California* (p. 167):

O. Old Cheyenne Wells. See Smoky Hill South. Unimproved roads can be followed west to Hugo. The Bent's Fort road south to New Cheyenne Wells has practically disappeared.

26. Big Springs (Sec. 12, T. S. 13, R. 49 W.). On Eureka or Big Springs Creek, twelve miles north of Kit Carson. There are some holes on the east side of the creek that were once dugouts. Located by W. H. Henderson of Kit Carson.

36. David's Well.

59. Willow Spring. A mile east of Hugo at the Fair Grounds. Located by George Miles of Hugo.

70. Hedinger's Lake. See Smoky Hill South.

87. Fairmont. Probably the station located by H. O. Beuck of Matheson, which is between Buick, formerly called Godfrey, and East Bijou Creek. From here the Smoky cuts straight across country to Bennett, so misses all the railroad towns to the north.

96. Benham Spring.

107. Bijou Station. On West Bijou Creek, near Byers.

117. Kiowa Station (Sec. 26, T. S. 3, R. 63 W.). A mile and a half east of Bennett, on the south side of old U. S. 40, and just west of the old highway bridge over Kiowa Creek. Located by George Mack of Bennett. This was a junction of the Smoky Hill North and the cutoff road to Ft. Morgan.

129. Box Elder Station (Sec. 5, T. S. 4, R. 64 W.). This station was on the west side of Box Elder Creek, on the property now the Furgerson Ranch, and less than two miles southeast of Watkins. Located by Eugene Trout of Watkins. Half a mile north of A. T. & T. poles, the old trail, much overgrown with

prairie grass, can be seen from the county road approaching the site of the station on Box Elder Creek from the west. Located by George W. Kinzie of Watkins. This station was also a junction of the Smoky Hill North and the Ft. Morgan cutoff.

136. Coal Creek Station is here although not mentioned by Root and Connelley.

141. Tollgate Station (Sec. 7, T. S. 4, R. 66 W.). On the east side of Tollgate Creek, a short distance southwest of the Sixth Avenue bridge over Tollgate Creek. Across the Creek, Sixth Avenue jogs a little to the south, and can be seen going east over a hill where the old stage road used to be. Station located by W. H. Howery of Aurora.

151. Denver. Where all the branches of the Smoky Hill met at the end of the trail.

III. THE STARVATION TRAIL

This trail left the Smoky Hill North between Riverbend and Buick, and passed between the North and the South Smoky or between the modern highways, the U. S. 40 and Colorado No. 86. It was the earliest pioneer trail before the institution of the Butterfield stage. The following quotations from the *Rocky Mountain News*² of May 7, 1859, explain how the Starvation Trail got its name.

"Two footmen have just arrived via the Smoky Hill Route. They appear to have suffered severely from hunger and thirst. They report having passed some ten or fifteen dead bodies unburied, and many new-made graves. These men say they lived for nine days on prickly pears and one hawk." A pioneer train arriving in Denver at about the same time reported: "We picked up three men who have given out and laid down to die of hunger and thirst, having eaten nothing for four days, and brought them in with us. . . . We traveled 150 miles without water, except for melting snow, which fortunately for us fell twice during that time."

The Starvation Trail was fully described as the Smoky Hill Freight Road in my article in the *Colorado Magazine* for November, 1932. Since writing it, I find that the Starvation Trail crossed Running Creek on the Tinon Ranch. Sec. 28, T. 6 S., Range 64 W. This was five or six miles north of the Smoky Hill South which crossed the same creek at Osborn. In Arapahoe County the Starvation Trail followed the east side of Sampson Gulch, also called South Cherry and Piney Creek, to the junction with the Smoky Hill South in the Valley of Cherry Creek.

²I found these quotations in the News through Dr. Hafen's book, *The Overland Mail*.