Staking the First Ranch at Grand Junction, Colorado[1]

WALKER D. WYMAN

There is no better illustrative material of the motif of western expansion than is found in the settlement of Grand Junction, Colorado—that "Gem of the Western Slope." Here the many forces played on the destiny of a frontier town, caused it to be, made it grow, and impelled it to dream of heights improbable of attainment.

The temper of the Uncompahgre Utes may have prevented the abortive attempts to establish a town at the junction of the Colorado and Gunnison rivers; the grim realities of geography dictated the spot at which that town must be located, if such were to be; but mountain miners hungry for vegetables and impatient of their dependence upon Kansas farmers for their sustenance[2]—these gave force and reason to restless, land-hungry souls, and to the vision of a frontier capitalist and speculator, George A. Crawford, revered father of Grand Junction.

Long before the removal of the Utes had been consummated, eager eyes had been turned toward the valley of the "Grand." The well-known cry that the Utes must go, resounding throughout the mountain country, had more in it than an inherited hatred for the red man. It was also based on the feeling—it could not have been more than a feeling—that over the mountains lay a land of milk and honey for those who were no longer interested in digging gold. Colorado, even if then on a wave of hysterical grubbing for precious metals, was growing up, getting mature, wanting to settle down to a quiet agricultural life, and thus reap the golden benefits of rising land values. Men of the East and West were interested in promoting railroads, in doing big things. This land rush to the western slope upon the removal of the belligerent Indians, disciplined by an alert land company, came as a natural sequence of events.

The leading character of this drama was Crawford.[3] He had the well-earned reputation of establishing a town every decade or less. At the Philadelphia Exposition in 1877, where he represented Kansas, he met some officers who had done plebeian duty on

[1]For the story of the removal of the Utes see my "A Preface to the Settlement of Grand Junction," in the *Colorado Magazine*, January, 1933.

[2]This appears in several places, even in the report of the Secretary of the Interior, who quotes the Indian office report for 1878, in *House Executive Documents*, 46th Congress, 2nd Session, Volume IX, Number I, Part I, pages 96-97.

[3]For biographical sketches of Crawford consult the *Collections* of the Kansas State Historical Society, Volume VI; F. M. Burger's *Progressive Men of Colorado* (Chicago, 1905), page 151; and the *Grand Valley Star* for January 31, and February 7, 1891.

the western slope, and from them he learned of the wonders of that untapped country. Apparently he listened attentively, for he immediately planned to establish a town "at or near" the junction of the Grand and Gunnison rivers.[4] The difficulty at that time was caused by the persistence of the Indians in wanting to make western Colorado their home. There could be no fulfillment of white man's dreams until that region became public land.[5] The Utes were still blocking the ways of civilization.

The opportunity was at hand for the "Little Governor" (so called because he was once elected governor of Kansas, though he never served, and because he was physically of small stature) when the White River Utes murdered Agent Nathan C. Meeker in 1879. Soon the Utes would have to go. An aroused public opinion saw to it that the Indian commission did their duty in the subsequent two years. By October, 1881, frontiersmen with farm land fever hung about Gunnison and other mountain towns then in the lusty heights of their heyday. All waited for the exodus of the Utes.

Back in Gunnison the Irish youth, William McGinley, stalked around the saloons and bawdy houses, spending some extra money he had made as guard for the stretching D. and R. G. Railway. He had a cousin who was scout for Colonel R. S. McKenzie, then in command of the military at the Uncompahgre Cantonment. This accommodating relative had confided to McGinley, one day when in Gunnison, that a Ute uprising was expected anytime, and that the Colonel would pay $150 and rations per month for men to run the pack trains when needed. This was enough inducement for the Irish lad. He tore himself away from the gaudy town, and went out with the government wagon train on August 11, 1881. With Clayton Nichols, his constant companion for years to come, riding a horse, and McGinley himself driving a speckled burro to a decrepit cart, loaded down with simple foods and liquids, together they followed the fourteen-wagon supply train toward the Uncompahgre camp. This pair of youthful adventurers may have been interested in a teamster job, but the arrival of three of their friends —J. C. Nichols, Milton and O. D. Russell—at the camp within a few days, indicated that they were ready for most anything.[6] When five men, four of them quite young, congregated in frontier lands from which Indians were to be expelled soon, forcefully if

[4]Crawford told his nephew at this time of these plans. This information was given by the nephew, Thomas B. Crawford, Ouray, Colorado, in a letter to the writer, August 25, 1930.

[5]*Colorado Magazine, op. cit.*

[6]The story of the part played by these men in this drama has been compiled from an interview with William McGinley, Grand Junction, 1930; and a staff-written article by McGinley appearing in the Grand Junction *Sentinel*, March 30, 1930.

necessary, it might appear that they expected a ranch out of it somehow. Evidence bears out this suspicion.

Idle camp life in the vicinity of the cantonment did not intrigue these men. The army had no need of teamsters unless the Utes went on the war-path. This the Indians refused to do. One could not stake a ranch before the red men left for the Uintah Basin. What was there to do but wish something would happen? Of course there was nothing else besides the customary routine of cooking, sleeping, playing poker, and sampling liquor too often.

About September 1 this group decided to move somewhat closer to the forbidden pasture of Grand Valley. Reminiscing in 1930, McGinley admitted that they planned to steal a march by slipping past the military outposts and thereby be "the fust wuns thur." However, while they were cooking dinner over a noon-day camp-fire in the Uncompahgre River bottom, troops unexpectedly appeared, and took them back to headquarters to explain this new twist in their behavior. Disappointed, they rattled along ahead of the soldiers. Sunny-dispositioned McGinley, the only one who enjoyed this game of hide-and-seek, looked up from his obscure position in the cart, and said: "Clayt, this will be a great uxperience to tell our gran' children." "Clayt" Nichols "damned the prospect of progeny and admittedly would have traded it for a free pass signed by General McKenzie."[7]

The commander revealed his frontier wisdom in not ordering the "sooners" courtmartialed. Instead of death before the firing squad he ordered them to stay in the vicinity of the post. Troops virtually held them prisoners. On September 4, 1881, they were informed that they might go as far as the Gunnison River, but no farther. If violations occurred this time, they would be turned over to civil authorities. Fearing the loss of their outfits by confiscation, they went down the river to the junction of the Uncompahgre and Gunnison—no farther—and there camped.

On the evening of September 5, two of this wandering band went over to the temporary camp of some soldiers nearby. Probably a game was soon in progress, and spirits mounted high as well as flowed. All was interrupted by the dramatic arrival of a messenger, carrying instructions for the troops to move for other lands. The Apaches were on rampage.[8]

The bugle was sounded. Blue-clad troops were off for Arizona. The Colorado frontier was no longer guarded by a cordon of soldiers. McGinley and partner ran back to the pilgrims' camp, reported the news, and soon O. D. Russell spoke what was in the minds of all when he said: "Let's move for Grand Valley."[9]

[7]Clayton Nichols in a letter written from Cebu, Philippines, May 4, 1930.
[8]McGinley, interview, 1930.
[9]*Ibid.*

Horses were saddled, the team hitched to the wagon and the burro to the cart, and as the rain began to fall the pioneers were off to other lands for the great adventure. Along the old government road they wound. Soon finding the "spotted jackass too slow, ditched it and hotfooted on an all-horse cavalcade along the old trail the Indians were traveling." One man was left to guard the wagon, "pinto burro," and provisions, while the others followed the Utes at a safe distance for their new home over in the valley.[10]

On the night of September 6, these bellwethers camped about one mile above the future Grand Junction, having crossed the treacherous bottom of the Colorado "on the hurricane deck of a broncho." Chief Colorow's band was camping in the bottoms ahead of them. The several tepees there only reminded them of a strained relationship existing between the two races; so they rolled up in their blankets with clothes and boots on, and went to sleep without a warm supper.[11] A fire was too much to risk for a cup of coffee.

Daylight of September 7, and the Indians were on the move with their flocks of sheep, goats, and ponies grazing leisurely ahead. The first families-to-be, warmed by a breakfast of pancakes and coffee, followed slowly, riding behind a fringe of cottonwoods. Near the present day Fruita they turned back. The soil seemed to be the same throughout the valley. Back at the place where only a few hours before they had breakfasted, O. D. Russell and McGinley staked the first ranch in Grand Valley.

An Act of Congress in 1880 had approved the sale of part of the Ute reservation, not under the Homestead law but for cash only.[12] Some of the land had been surveyed by the time the first ranches were staked. This title difficulty was not even temporarily settled for another year. But what are titles to those on the front lines getting the land? The land was there, the Indians were gone, so why bother with formalities conceived in faraway Washington, to plague honest men?

Thus argued this first band of pioneers as they started toward Gunnison. Thus had argued others who were in the rear of the first to stake a ranch. The outgoing emigrants camped with the

[10]Letter of Nichols appearing in the *Sentinel*, May 26, 1925.
[11]*Sentinel*, October 10, 1926.
[12]A later act of July 28, 1882, confirmed "the entries, settlements, and locations of those who had entered the ten mile strip believing it to be public land, subject, however, to the payment of the price fixed by law for the benefit of the Indians." This difficulty was the cause of much anxiety over titles. The Secretary of the Interior merely did the expedient thing in upholding the settlers. See the *Statutes of the United States of America Passed at the First Session of the Forty-Seventh Congress, 1881-1882*, page 178; *Digest of Decisions of the Departments of the Interior and General Land Office in Cases relating to the Public Lands*, Volume I-XXII, 1897, Pages 280-281; also Grand Junction *News*, October 26, 1933.

incoming immigrants on the night of September 7.[13] They were asked about the Indians, what had happened to them, were they on the warpath? Assurance was given that everything was quite all right. As they sat around the campfire great yarns probably were spun of the possibilities of this new adventure. Hopes must have been high and pulses beating fast as the story of this new land unfolded. The next morning the McGinley group headed toward the Rockies, the others for Grand Valley. Upon arrival at Gunnison McGinley disappeared for four days in celebration of his good fortune.

In the meantime other forces were concentrating on this new country. At or about the same time that the bellwethers were crossing the turbulent waters of the Colorado on September 7, three men—J. S. Gordon, William Green, and a Mr. Forbush—were marching into the valley from the west. Up in Gunnison Crawford was thinking of his town-site. Having chosen the exact location already from a study of the Indian surveys, he was more impatient than ever to hear of the final removal of the Indians. That news came when the McGinley-Nichols party returned from their ranch-staking escapade. Crawford sought them with the offer of employment as guides to his group. McGinley was nowhere to be found. Saloons, dance halls, hotels and brothels were searched to no avail. Finally he also appeared, slightly the worse for the last four days and as yet too inebriated to be sociable. He spurned the offer of employment either as guide or protector of the town-site from the avalanche of squatters, even if he had been wanted because of his "fearlessness and his reputation. . . ." Impetuously he and Nichols set out for the Valley, disregarding the honor of a job with pay.[14]

Crawford and his men, R. D. Mobley, M. R. Warner, S. W. Harper, and one Colonel Morris, adequately supported by Philadelphia capital, made their way to the junction of the Gunnison and the Colorado without the services of a guide. On September 26 they formally located section fourteen on the north side of the river as the future town-site. Four days later Crawford left to file the claim.[15] McGinley and Nichols were employed to build four cabins on section fourteen. Perhaps the benevolence of the "Little Governor" had something to do with the conversion of McGinley. Wages paid in cash, in advance, would be an induce-

[13]McGinley in the *Sentinel, cit, ante.;* also Clayton Nichols, *Sentinel,* October 26, 1933.

[14]McGinley, interview, 1930.

[15]James Rankin, "The Founding and Early Years of Grand Junction," *Colorado Magazine,* March, 1929. This article is a poor compilation of material taken from a rare little book by Haskell, *Early History of Mesa County.* In 1931 the writer saw this publication of 1883, then in the possession of Nelson Prichard, Grand Junction, Colorado.

ment to most anybody. These "city architects" and private police set about making cottonwood cabins for the company in the daytime, and in building their own before and after work. After completing their rude shacks on their claims up the river, they hewed puncheon floors—a mark of distinction for several months to come.[16] Keeping off squatters was a task requiring some attention for there seemed to be an abundance of "public enemies." Settlers were coming in considerable numbers. Many could not understand how a land company could hold choice land if the members were not there building on it at the time.[17]

As the October and November days passed the tents multiplied in number. A half-dozen cabins stuck their sod roofs above the sage-brush. The herd of horses and burros foraging on the scanty vegetation grew in size. Supply trains wound in from Gunnison or the Uncompahgre Cantonment. By the middle of November thirty miles of land touching the river had been staked. R. D. Mobley, the liaison officer for the Company with the outside world (the outside world to them being Gunnison) wrote that 100,000 acres of good land still remained beyond the thirty mile stretch.[18] The land back from the river was not in great demand. An irrigation ditch was in order, to concentrate the population. The Town Company had such an idea. So did some of the settlers. Some of them on the upper river began one as soon as they had their shacks built. By spring several miles of farms were benefitted.[19]

Two railroads surveyed through the "town" by the first of the year. Survey had begun on the town-site by an imported town-lot artist. Crawford, upon arrival in the Valley about December 1, found his cabin completed. He began to rough it immediately. To his friend he wrote that by frequently burning his fingers, the "Governor" believed he was learning to cook.[20] Country mice evidently began their fall migration, for he was yearning for cats. The worst thing, though, they had to contend with was the lack of "mails and females."

However, more than cats and postcards were needed. Mobley believed an excellent opportunity existed for the establishment of a "bologna sausage factory." In the middle of that mild De-

[16]Letter of Nichols, *Sentinel,* May 26, 1925; also an unsigned letter of Nichols of September 28, 1930, in an undated clipping of the *Sentinel.*

[17]There are many tales afloat concerning the methods used by the town company in keeping squatters off the town-site. Most of the accounts do not reflect credit on the company.

[18]*Gunnison Review,* November 19, 1881. Files of this paper were in the possession of George A. Root, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, in 1930.

[19]George Blaine, pioneer, Grand Junction, 1931, in an interview.

[20]Letter of Crawford to Frank A. Root, paraphrased by Editor Root in the *Gunnison Review,* December 3, 1881. Rankin's article states that Crawford did not return until December 31.

cember the first store was opened in a rude cabin.[21] A doctor, reputed by some to be a first-class "quack," made his appearance to cure the ills of this growing society. As the Christmas season came for the first time, dirty snow drifted over the desolate desert. Men were working in their shirt sleeves, or sitting in front of their tents thinking of the days that were to come. Appetites were reported to be good, but they were "running short of grub." By New Year's day a new butcher shop had been opened to care for some of their simple needs.

This was a man's society in 1881. It was restless, hopeful, ambitious. It had a vision. And it was youthful. In another year this bachelor settlement was to melt into an orthodox civilization. It was to have a fling for a year or two before settling down to the business of raising families and making a living. Tent saloons, roulette wheels, and loose women, literally flowing into the town in the spring of 1882, were to have their day before being replaced by brick and mortar, Sunday Schools, and families. As soon as a social order takes root in the soil it regrets sowing wild oats; woman makes it mature and gives it a new code, a new reason to exist. Thus the little settlement of "Ute" prepared for the new year. Soon it was to adopt a higher sounding name, establish law and order, get ready to live. The Land Company saw to it that it never forgot the vision.

[21]Grand Junction *News*, March 24, 1883. Letter of W. A. E. DeBeque to the Denver *Tribune*.

A Cowboy on the Arkansas and with a Wild West Show

As Told by Sam Fosdick to Leah M. Ryder*

Sam Fosdick was born in the city of Quebec, Canada, February 11, 1855. In 1861 his mother, two sisters, a brother, and he went by railroad to Leavenworth, Kansas, where they met his father, who had gone to Colorado in 1859 with the Pike's Peak gold rush. His father, Harry M. Fosdick, was a prominent pioneer of Colorado. He was the civil engineer who in 1859, surveyed the triple towns of Denver, Auraria and Highland and also the town of Colorado City, forerunner of Colorado Springs.

At Leavenworth the family loaded their belongings onto a wagon, drawn by oxen, and joined an ox train which was leaving for the West. The train was made up of twenty-five or thirty wagons, some of which were transporting people and others hauling freight. Sam was only six years old then, and does not remember very much of that trip, although one little incident stands out clearly in his memory. Scooping out the sand in a creek bed to get a drink of water, he saw something bright, which proved to be a bowie knife. It was in good condition, and to him it was symbolic of many daring and courageous acts of some unknown scout. He kept it for many years, and has no doubt it is still in possession of some member of the family.

*This story was obtained by Miss Ryder of La Junta while working on the State Historical Society's C. W. A. Projec[illegible] last winter.—Ed.

The Fosdick family went to old Colorado City (now Manitou), where Mr. Fosdick had a little ranch. Two years later he got some land near Boone and the family moved there. Colonel A. G. Boone had a ranch, also a post offiffice, and nearby was a stage station. A little settlement sprang up, which was named "Boone" in honor of the early settlers by that name.

The entire Arkansas Valley was then principally a cattle country, though some trapping and hunting was done. There were a number of ranches along the Arkansas River, some of them being the Boone Ranch, Jim Haines ranch, the Gilbert, Ross, Innis, Bagby, Kidwell, Cramer and Corbin ranches. The land was not fenced, and was prairie land for miles except along the river where there were groves of trees. Indians were quite common then and gave a great deal of trouble. They made occasional raids, drove off cattle, and sometimes killed people. There was constant fear of them. Sam Fosdick still remembers the fright he got one evening while out after milk cows. A coyote's sudden yelp behind him he mistook for a war-whoop, and thought surely the Indians were after his scalp.

The Indians were under the supervision of the War Department, and troops of soldiers were stationed at Fort Lyon for the purpose of keeping the Indians in check. They finally became so troublesome that the soldiers found it difficult to protect the white people as they were so scattered. The officer in charge at Fort Lyon sent word to the ranchers in the Boone vicinity to move their families into one camp. Camp Fillmore was thus established about two miles west of Boone. Later a government fort known as Fort Reynolds, was established on the river not far from Boone, and Camp Fillmore was then abandoned and the troops moved to Fort Reynolds. There were barracks, officers' quarters and parade grounds there. During the maintenance of that government fort officers and soldiers visited the Fosdick ranch once in a while, and sometimes would give the boys a five, ten or twenty-five cent piece of paper money, or shinplaster, as they were called. J. J. Lambert, who later founded the *Pueblo Chieftain* and which he operated till his death, was an officer at Fort Reynolds.

During the early days on the ranch, the Fosdick family tried to farm some, and raised corn, oats, wheat, and later on, barley. They ground corn in a hand mill with which to make corn bread. Parched corn was used for coffee.

In 1876 Sam Fosdick went to work as a cowpuncher for the Hexter and Berry outfit on the Apishapa River, and followed that line of work for many years. Spring roundups usually started about May first on the Kansas line and worked westward under the direction of a captain, who directed the various groups of riders for the different outfits which participated. The round-ups were conducted as a mass movement, but each outfit had its own force of workers, cook and food, and camped by itself near the camps of other outfits. The spring round-ups lasted till well into the summer, and the cowboys rode and branded till the entire country had been covered. Then came the fall round-up when the beef that was ready for shipping was gathered. In the winters there was building to be done, stock to be taken care of, and occasionally it was necessary to ride out on the range. It was a busy life. There was always plenty of food, though once in a while a cowboy through some unlooked for happening, had to spend the night out on the prairie without his supper. Beans, sour dough biscuits, beef, and sometimes potatoes and bacon, were the usual items on the bill of fare, with plenty of stewed prunes as dessert, (sugar-coated pay-roons as one of the cowboys always called them). Sometimes other dried fruits were used, but prunes were the old stand-by.

Sam Fosdick spent thirty-five years "in the saddle," working all along the Apishapa, Arkansas, Cimarron, Canadian, Beaver, Berry, Wolf Creek, Bear Creek, Sweetwater and Clay Creek. He then worked in Kansas City for two years as brand inspector. While there he learned that Whitney and Carver wanted some riders and ropers for their wild west show which they were organizing to take abroad. It was a good opportunity to see something of the world, and Mr. Fosdick decided to go, provided the owners would guarantee to get him back to his own country when his employment with them ceased. A contract to that effect was drawn. He was with the show for three years, and toured Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy and Australia.

The personnel of the show was twenty-three Indian men, two or three children, an Indian princess and about twenty cowboys. Besides the other equipment of the show, there were about fifty horses and about the same number of steers for roping. The show put on riding and roping acts, Indian dances and tomahawk throwing, a stage-coach holdup by Indians and the timely rescue

by cowboys. Mr. Fosdick was "Master of Camp" which office in the show was comparable to the office of Captain of the roundup. Sometimes the Indian performers succeeded in getting whiskey, and when intoxicated they were a mean lot to control.

While showing in Vienna in the stage holdup act, a horse fell on Mr. Fosdick, and he sustained a fractured skull. He was treated by able physicians in several different countries, but it was not until after his return to the home at Boone that Dr. Thombs of Pueblo effected a complete cure. The show always played to immense crowds, and in places where they happened to be showing in competition with Buffalo Bill's show, they got a better response than the latter, due partly to the fact that Whitney and Carver had an electric lighting system and gave night performances as well as day, while Cody did not, and "besides," said Mr. Fosdick, "ours was a better show." After three years with the show, Mr. Fosdick returned to the Arkansas Valley, where he has since resided.

Mary Nash Mear, Pioneer

RICHARD CARROLL*

Mary Nash was born in the jail—her father, Joseph Nash, was sheriff—at Richmond, Virginia, in 1851. Joseph Nash knew Lincoln personally, and Mary's brother, Joe, was present in the theatre and witnessed the president's assassination. Joe also witnessed the hanging of Mrs. Surratt. Mary's father and three brothers served the North during the war; one of them was wounded, but they all returned home.

Although Joseph Nash was a slave owner, he did not approve of slavery; and it was probably for this reason that in 1854 he moved his family to Waterloo, Iowa. Auntie, the Nash's faithful old negro mammy, became unduly alarmed, before they departed from Virginia. Thinking she was to be disposed of and left behind, she severed her right hand with an axe, knowing that no one would buy a slave so maimed. She accompanied the family to Waterloo.

Mary spent the greater part of her girlhood in Waterloo. Her father decided to move west, and while enroute to Kansas City he was smitten with the gold fever, and so decided to come to the Colorado mountains. On May 18, 1866, the Nashes left Omaha with a cattle train of 21 wagons; theirs was the only wagon drawn by horses. Each family brought along cows, pigs, and chickens,

*This sketch was obtained from Mrs. Mear of Buena Vista by Mr. Carroll of Salida while working on the Historical Society's C. W. A. Project last winter.—Ed.

and it required much work to attend to them. One woman in the party became ill, and near Fort Kearny it was discovered that she was afflicted with smallpox.

The wagon train finally crawled into Fort Kearny, where three of its families, the Cantonwines, Royals, and Nashes, were quarantined on an island for weeks. At last, given permission to break quarantine and to depart, they joined a merchandise train, with Captain Gleason in command, bound for Denver.

They were in the Indian country now, so circle was made and guards posted each night. When an Indian scout, or spy, came to the train with his invariable, "How, how! Hungry, biscuit!" he was regarded with suspicion. When the Indian departed, he was sometimes followed by a man who had instructions to bring back his blanket and scalp. At Julesburg, just outside the buildings, hung the bodies of four Indians as a grim reminder that a white girl had been kidnapped, and her captors had paid for their crime.

The wagon train reached Cherry Creek late in August. Here the Nashes camped awhile and then pushed on over Kenosha Pass, through South Park, then down Trout Creek—where they had their fill of trout, caught with a bent pin and a string—to the Arkansas, and then on to Brown's Creek, arriving there in the fall of 1866. Here, below Erhart's ranch, near the Arkansas, a cabin was erected and a home established. Joseph Nash and his sons engaged in placer mining on the river, using the rocker method. The ground proved to be rich and good results were obtained. During the noon hour, while the men were at dinner, Mary often washed gold, sometimes getting as much as $6 worth during that short period. The Nashes also placer mined near where Cleora was later located.

While living on Brown's Creek, Mrs. Nash took her children to the hot springs on Chalk creek once or twice a week for baths. A frame of logs was erected at the springs on which blankets were hung, thus giving the people the privacy of a bath house. During this time, from 1866 to 1868, Mary attended school in Fairplay. Her father first took her there with the oxen and wagon, the trip requiring three days. While camping on Trout Creek the grass, which was knee high, caught afire from their camp fire and it required almost a half day to extinguish it.

School was held in a log cabin, with long benches serving as desks. A Mr. McLean was teacher and there were about twenty-five pupils. Mary's board and room for the winter, which cost her father $40 per month, was secured at the home of William Hansen, who was the first to discover oil near Canon City.

Most of the supplies for the Nashes were purchased and hauled

in from Fairplay. Flour was as high as $50 per hundred, coffee and sugar $2 per pound, and calico forty-five cents a yard. Most of the meat eaten was of deer, bear, turkeys and grouse. Fish were plentiful. When they experienced a good year potatoes and corn bread constituted a large part of their diet. One winter at Cache Creek—before the building of the salt works in South Park—the men became so busily engaged in washing out gold that they did not lay in supplies for the winter, and thus the camp was without salt for months.

On one occasion "Indian Pete," a friendly Ute, came to the settlers in the valley to warn them that the hostile Cheyennes were on the warpath in South Park, and were likely to make an attack on the Arkansas. "Take squaws to mountains; all men come fight Cheyennes," he ordered. A pitched fight followed, somewhere in the vicinity of South Park, and the Cheyennes were forced back to their own territory.

The men's chief amusement in those days was horse racing, with small, but tough ponies. They would bet on anything, usually, and drinking and fighting received their share of attention. Dancing, of course, was the women's most enjoyable amusement. Once, while the subject of this sketch was living at Granite, she attended a dance on the South Arkansas, 50 miles distant. It was a major event and everyone went. She made the trip in an ox cart, it requiring two and one half days each way. Taking food and bedding with them, they camped wherever night overtook them. Arriving at the scene of the dance, old acquaintances were renewed, and gossip was exchanged. There was plenty of food and drink, and the dance sometimes continued for two days. Then the outfits were made ready, the children bundled up, goodbyes said, and the long, weary ride home began.

Pioneer life with all its hardships had its compensation. Life from necessity was very simple and democratic. Isolation united the people with stronger ties than any of today; and because of this loneliness friendships flourished. Everyone knew everyone else and their affairs.

There were no churches then. The pioneer preacher was Father Dyer, who would preach anywhere and anytime. It is said that he would ride up to a saloon and shout, "Come on out, boys, I want to talk to you!" Whereupon the men within would quit their gambling and drinking, stamp outside and listen to his sermon.

The Nashes brought milch cows with them from the East, and in the summer they moved, with the cows, to Granite, selling milk there to the miners at twenty-five cents per quart. Later the family moved to Cache Creek and engaged in placer mining there.

It was in Granite that Mary met Horace Tabor, who had come there from Oro City. As there were few women in Oro he attempted to engage Mary to act as a companion for his wife. Mrs. Nash, however, would not permit her to go. Later, Mary accompanied her father on a trip to Oro and there met Augusta Tabor.

In 1871 Mary Nash was married at Granite by Judge Hugh Boon to John Mear, who was employed at the Yankee Blade mine. John Mear served as deputy to Ledger Tucker, the first sheriff of Lake County. The Mears made their home in Granite.

Mrs. Mears remembers very vividly incidents of the "Lake County War," especially the night Harrington's store room was set afire, and his being shot when he attempted to extinguish the fire; and how his small wife valiantly dragged his huge frame from the flames, and then ran to the Bertcheys after aid. Later, on July 3, 1875, when court was held at Granite and Judge Dyer was assassinated, she and her father heard the shots and rushed to their door in time to see the three murderers leave the court house. She recognized them but held her tongue. Another saw them also, and talked. He did not live long.

Granite reached its heyday in the 1870s, with a population of about 4,000, and began to decline with the removal of the county seat to Buena Vista. Meanwhile John Mear, in 1879, when Chaffee county was created, was appointed sheriff of the new county. An election was held in November, 1880, and it was voted to establish the county seat at Buena Vista.

One night at Granite, in the spring of 1881, Mrs. Mear heard noises at the court house, which also served as the jail. Thinking that the prisoners were escaping, she called her husband, and when they left their house to investigate, they were held up by about a dozen men, who forced them back into their house. An engine and flat car, with Conductor Ernest Wilbur in charge, and with other citizens of Buena Vista aboard, had come to take the records to that town. A track was laid to the nearby railroad from the court house and the heavy safe, containing the county records, was rolled on this to the flat car. It took an hour or two to complete the task and the records were transported to Buena Vista.

The following day John Mear had to come to Buena Vista, the new county seat. Mrs. Mear followed shortly after. After becoming the county seat, Buena Vista grew very fast. The Mears established their home there, and Mr. Mear served during the years following until 1903, either as sheriff or deputy. Mrs. Mear lived in the court house, or jail quarters for 25 years. Mr. Mear passed on in 1904. Mrs. Mear, in good health, still makes her home in Buena Vista, now with her son, where she is surrounded by her grandchildren.

Letters and Notes From or About Bent's Fort, 1844-45

Copied from the St. Louis Reveille*

[*St. Louis Reveille,* June 6, 1844] "We feel pleasure in welcoming again to the city, William Bent, the well-known and enterprising Spanish and Indian trader. He arrived yesterday, on board the John Aull, accompanied by Messrs. Simpson, Glasgow and other gentlemen, from Chihuahua and Santa Fe. A native child of the mountains, called, in English 'slim face' of the Cheyenne tribe, comes with this party.

"The sum of $28,000 in specie was brought in by this party. They left Chihuahua on the 10th of March, and Santa Fe on the 10th of April. They came by Bent's Fort, where all things were in proper order and condition. The company had, in some instances, to pay an export duty on the specie which they have brought away, of from four and a half to six per cent. Some came off without paying any duty. The large Caruvan from Santa Fe and from Bent's Fort, will be here in twelve or fifteen days. There was no snow on the mountains, but the water courses were very high, owing to frequent heavy rains."

[*St. Louis Reveille,* June 14, 1844] "From the Prairies.—Charley Bent and the other traders, left at Pawnee Fork by the express that has arrived here, were near falling into danger with a force of several hundred Indians, on the Arkansas, near the great crossing. Several different tribes, the Chayennes, Sioux, Apaches, Kiawas, and others, as is supposed, were scouring the plains 'in cahoot,' and but for the prompt action of the traders in drawing themselves up and forming their defence, there is little doubt that they would have been stripped of their property and, perhaps slaughtered.

"A grand movement among the Camanches is soon to take place, as we understand, and many thousands of them are to meet for some important pow-wow during the present month. They are daring and desperate Indians when once embarked in an enterprise, but they seldom attack until they see advantage clearly on their own side. What the meaning of this proposed convention is we are not informed, and what bearing it may have upon Clay or Calhoun, Van Buren or Polk, Tyler or the annexation of Texas, we are not prepared to say."

[*St. Louis Reveille,* June 22, 1844] "A party of Santa Fe traders arrived yesterday on the steamer Balloon. They report

*Through the kindness of the Newberry Library of Chicago we were able to procure recently, as an inter-library loan, three volumes of the *St. Louis Reveille,* from which these items were extracted.—Ed.

the main body to have reached no further than Walnut Creek, in consequence of the impassable condition of that stream, and, in fact, the whole country, occasioned by the flood." [The water in the Missouri was reported to be the highest since 1785.]

[Letter from Bent's Fort, August 25, 1844, appearing in the *St. Louis Reveille*, Oct. 12, 1844]

"The Mysterious Drum

"What on earth can all that drumming mean?"

"It must be a party of Texans, on their way to New Mexico, who have mistaken this post for a Mexican fortress! Don't you think we'd better be getting things a little in order to receive them? How are we off for cartridges for the six-pounder? Have we any balls for the swivels. Perhaps they may try to take us by storm, without giving us an opportunity to explain who we are!"

"Don't you think, sir, it's a war party of Comanches?"

"No, sir! Comanches don't carry drums, nor would they make such noise in approaching the place they mean to attack."

"What on earth can it be?"

"I'll tell you," says one; "it's the Delawares coming to take revenge of the Cheyennes and Sioux, for killing that trapping party this summer."

"But who the devil ever heard of the Delawares carrying real bona fide soldier's drums? Or who ever heard of an Indian beating a drum like that? Why, that rub-a-dub sounds as if it was beaten by a man who has been all his life at the business—aye, and there's more than one pair of drum-sticks rattling there!"

"Maybe it's Slim Face, come back with a party of sojers, to drive them free men, what catches buffalo calves, out of the country!"

"No; you may depend it's a party of Texans going to Santa Fe, and who have got short of provisions, so they came up here to see if they can't get some; at any rate, let them be whom they may be, they will not catch us napping. All hands get your guns in readiness!"

Such was the conversation on a clear, sultry afternoon, about the middle of this month, as the whole party at Fort William were assembled in front of the Fort, listening to an unusual sound upon the river. Presently, an object was perceived slowly coming round the bend, a mile or so below the Fort.

"It's a single man, a horseback—get the spy-glass!"

"Is it an Indian?"

"I can't tell; he carries his gun in front of him, like a white man, and I think he's got a hat on!"

"Give me the glass. It's a white—he's got a fur cap and coat on, and carries his gun like a white man!"

"But do you see anything like a drum? What can make all that noise?"

In a few minutes the object of so much conjecture approached near enough for us to discover our old friend "Slim Face," just from the United States. He was asked if there were a party of soldiers on the river. He said, no; but he left Mr. Wm. B. and his party at the salt bottom below.

"But what means that drumming which we hear?"

He couldn't tell—he first heard it when he was in the big village, away down the long water, and it had been ringing in his ears ever since. He thought it was the whites "medicine."

After ascertaining that Mr. B. and his party would not arrive until the next day, we retired into the fort, but still unable to account for the constant rub-a-dub.

The sound continued all the next day; but, as we knew that Mr. B. was on the river, and that if any hostile party had been in the neighborhood he would have sent an express to the Fort, announcing the fact, we remained comparatively quiet.

At length the party arrived; the sound continued. We looked for the drummer and the drum, but could not see neither. The wagons were unloaded—the trunks of the party carried to their respective rooms. The sound still continued louder than before. What on earth could it be! Mr. T. B. seeing, by my countenance, that I was laboring under great anxiety about something, asked me to walk into the room. I did so; and behold—not a file of soldiers, but one of the "Reveille." The rub-a-dub was accounted for!

After devouring (not the papers, as the Nashville folks did Kendall's "Santa Fe Expedition," but) the news which they contained, I forwarded the whole file to the editor of the "La Verdad" at Santa Fe, with the request that, after copying, without much mutilating the papers, he would, the first opportunity, send them to California, to be forwarded thence to the Sandwich Islands, and from thence to China; so, your friend Sterling need not be at all surprised, if, by the next overland mail from India to London, he receives, via New York, a request from the "Sun's Brother," that he will forward a receipt for making that same "turtle soup." How are you, citizens? J. B-y.

Fort Williams, Arkansas River,
August 25th, 1844.

[*St. Louis Reveille*, Oct. 31, 1844]

"MEXICAN AND INDIAN WAR

Fort William,
Arkansas River, Sept. 20, 1844.

"Messrs. Editors Reveille: By a letter received yesterday by Mr. Wm. Bent, from his brother George, dated at Taos, New Mexico, the 9th inst., we are informed, that hostilities have commenced between a portion of Eutaw Indians and the citizens of New Mexico. It appears that, some time last fall, the former Governor of Santa Fe (Armijo) granted to a Frenchman, named Portalance, and an Englishman, by the name of Montgomorie, authority to raise a party for the purpose of invading the territory of the Navajo Indians, with whom the Mexicans were then at war, but returning from the Navajos, rather unsuccessful, they fell in with a band of Eutaws, who were then at peace with the Mexicans, killed several of them, and drove off a number of their horses and mules.

"A few days previous to the date of Mr. B's letter, the Eutaw Chief (Spanish Cigar) called upon the present Governor (Martines) at Santa Fe and demanded satisfaction for the outrage committed on his tribe. The Governor refused to give him the desired satisfaction, and the Indian seized him by the throat, and commenced shaking him. Martines drew his sword, and run the Indian through the body;—he then gave orders to his soldiers to fire, and six of the Indians who had accompanied the Eutaw Chief were killed upon the spot. The Indians then retired to Albuquerque, where they had left their lodges, charged upon the citizens of the place, and killed ten of them; they then decamped from among the settlements—but it is feared they will augment in numbers, and make another attack soon.

"The Indians in this neighborhood appear to be not a little alarmed at a report which has reached them, of an intended invasion by the Delawares and other tribes on the frontiers of the United States, next spring, to get revenge for the murder of a trapping party of Delawares, who were killed by the Sioux and Cheyennes, on the head waters of the Kansas, this summer.

"Mr. E. Leitensdorfer and party from the United States arrived here the 17th inst., and left here yesterday morning for the Spanish country. They report having left Mr. S. C. Owings, of Independence, Mo., and party, with twelve wagons, and Wethered, Gentry and others, with their wagons, at the crossing of the Arkansas, on the Santa Fe trail, on their way to Santa Fe and Chihuahua, the 13th inst.

"Mr. C. Bent and party have not yet arrived, but we are looking for them daily.

"Yours truly, J. B."

[*St. Louis Reveille*, May 11, 1845] "Mr. Bent, and a party of gentlemen from Fort William on the Arkansas River arrived here yesterday on the steamer Hibernian."

[*St. Louis Reveille*, May 18, 1845] "Mr. Sausser and several gentlemen of Mr. Norris's company arrived here yesterday evening on the steam boat Lexington. They left Santa Fe on the 16th of April, and had very favorable weather on their way in. The annexation news had reached Santa Fe before their departure, but it created no excitement of popular feeling. The Governor had issued a proclamation, desiring such of the foreigners as were so disposed, to meet at a place designated and receive their protection papers. Very little attention, however, was paid to the proclamation, as no apprehensions were entertained of any immediate difficulties. Another party of Santa Fe traders arrived yesterday on the Henry Bry."

[*St. Louis Reveille*, May 27, 1845] "Several traders from the head waters of the Arkansas river arrived here on Sunday last [May 25] with 160 packages of robes, furs and skins."

[*St. Louis Reveille*, Sept. 16, 1845] "From Fort William. The Independence Expositor contains a letter from Fort William, on the Arkansas, dated July 27th. The writer says: The present company for Santa Fe have chosen this route in preference to that of the Cimaron, in consequence of the extreme dryness of the season, and supposed scarcity of water on the other route—it is also said that the whole Comanche nation are on the western route.

"The New Mexicans, we are told here, are still amicably disposed to our people. Whether there is really a declaration of war on the part of the Mexicans, these northern people are equally in the dark with ourselves. I do not anticipate any trouble with them in any event.

"The stopping at the fort is a most delightful interlude in our journey. Nothing can exceed the kind and hospitable treatment of the Messrs. Bent and St. Vrain, and the traders and clerks in their employ."

Journal of a Trip from Denver to Oro City in 1860

WEBSTER D. ANTHONY*

Monday, July 9th, A. D. 1860. Again I take up my "Journal of travels" in a trip from Denver City to California Gulch. Scott [brother of Webster D.] takes the Express in the morning, leaving me to accompany the team which is freighting us some goods. Mr. Howe of Denver sends the team. Were delayed some time in getting off, but at about five o'clock had the load in and we started out. Our company consisted of two besides myself (their names I do not know), one the teamster, and the other a gentleman who is to accompany us to Tarry-all. About three miles from Denver a heavy shower set in and obliged us to seek shelter in a vacant cabin close at hand until the rain abated, when we moved on. The night set in dark and cloudy, and still we were some distance from water where we could camp. I mounted the load and wrapped in the blankets lay down while being jolted over a rough road. About eleven o'clock we arrived at Bear Creek and soon had a good fire and some coffee and then packed ourselves in the blankets and lay under the wagon to sleep. As our road is over a rough and mountainous country, all articles of weight that can be dispensed with, must be, consequently we have no tent, but being very tired and sleepy was soon forgetful of all this in sleep.

Tuesday, July 10th, 1860. Was up early and soon breakfasted and on our way. Crossing the creek took the "Bradford Road" to the mountains. About ten o'clock entered the "Canyon" through a narrow pass and wended our way toward "Bradford City." This Canyon or Gulch is a pass between the high range and the table mountain (this being the outside range of the mountains) about half a mile wide. Through this we soon arrived at "Bradford City" consisting of about thirty vacant houses.[1] In one place I noticed a board stuck up saying "Hotel" but where this was located I could not see. Here we ascend a very steep long hill over the mountains following an old Indian "Trail," the "Ute Pass." About half way up is a toll gate where after paying $1.50 we were allowed to pass. Still the steep hill is before us and

*Mr. Anthony, prominent pioneer of Colorado, was born in Union Springs, Cayuga County, New York, on June 4, 1838. He moved to Illinois in 1856 and to Kansas two years later. He came to Colorado in the spring of 1860 and in the summer of that year went to the new camp of Oro City, where later was to rise Leadville. Mr. Anthony became Speaker of the House of the first Legislative Assembly of the State of Colorado and during his lifetime here held many other important positions. The original Journal of his trip to Denver and to Oro City, part of which is published here, was given to the Historical Society some months ago by Mrs. Frederic C. Krauser of Denver.—Ed.

[1]One of the stone houses of Bradford City, with the name over the doorway, still stands. It is located between the Hogback and the foothills, about a mile north of the Ken Caryl Ranch (southwest of Littleton). The old road over Bradford Hill, long forsaken, can still be traced.—Ed.

the enquiry naturally arises—How are we to get up? But little by little we go. At some points the road looks dangerous for if an accident happens certain destruction surely awaits the wagon. At last we gain the top, and here the view is fine overlooking the Table Mountain, the Platte River; Cherry, Clear, Bear and Montana Creeks can be traced, while Denver is seen nestled among the trees of the Platte. Looks as though we had progressed but slowly, the tall Pines and rough "Boulders" adding a wildness to the scene around us. These "Boulders" appear as though formed of fine gravel and sand firmly cemented making a very hard stone, many weighing thousands of tons and these piled one upon another. At this height shows what power an eruption can have when directed by nature.

Again we descend the mountain which at last is gained. Here I called at a log cabin for some goods left a few days previous. About eight children of all ages and sizes appear the principal actors in this "Home in the Mountains." Upon enquiry concerning the goods, the oldest (a young lady in ragged petticoat and moccasins) seemed delighted that she could furnish me the required information and took from the shelf a note from Scott, left the day previous, stating the goods were gone on. Now it began to rain and I waited until it was over. The old lady sat smoking her pipe and very sociable, while the young lady gave me particularly to understand she was from Missouri, which was entirely needless for the Missouri was prominent in every sentence. I knew she was from thar.

Rain over, I started on and soon found the Boys had camped for dinner. Here met the gentleman who had started with the goods returning, had broke down. I paid him five dollars for his trouble and thought I should find them somewhere. Our road this afternoon is up hill and down, through the thick forest of tall pines and altogether rather crooked and "hard road to travel." The pines are "Spruce and Pitch" and full of pitch which I should think would make a fine country for "turpentine." Night soon came on and although we had a poor camping place, were obliged to camp in the forest. A short shower came up which dampened our expectations for awhile. Presently some other teams came up and also camped with us. Selecting some "Pine Knots" we soon had a bright fire and supper, and our Friends kindly offered us their tent which was very acceptable and their kindness appreciated. Soon we retired, first securing our stock.

Wednesday, July 11th, 1860. Took rather a late start as we were detained some time looking for cattle. At last on the way, leaving our friends of the Camp still looking up their stock which

is no easy matter in the thick timber. Presently were passed by a large company of prospectors for "over the range." Among them met my friend Ventiflin of L—. Still the road continues through timber and over mountains. Here the rocks are large, formed of red and white sand, blue lime and marble all mixed promiscuously. The Boulders of sand, one upon another for hundreds of feet, look as though poised upon their centers and from their great height ready to fall, yet their time worn fronts have withstood the tempest that for ages have beat upon them. Thus through timbers until noon, when we camped in a small gulch where grass was good and a fine mountain spring whose waters were cold and clear.

Again after an hour rest we proceeded onward. Met Mr. Tileston. Soon after a terrible hail storm set in and for about twenty minutes stormed very hard, large hail stones fell thick and fast and not very comfortable to travelers. The ground covered to the depth of four inches and streams of water and hail flowing down the steep mountain sides, rendering it very hard traveling, but soon after the sun shone out warm, melting the hail and snow, the trees dripping with wet—not unlike our own garments. At night reached a gulch through which passes "Buffalo Creek." Here we camped and prepared supper and again set in a cold rain which made it anything but pleasant, but when this was over we built a large fire of pine logs by which we were soon dry. Building a "Bower" under the wagon of spruce and pine boughs we had a very comfortable place for the night. The mountains on every side of us are high and rocky and to see their rough rocky peaks around which the clouds break and play far above the storm clouds look odd. After supper all turned in to our Bower for the night. About 11 o'clock was awoke by the unearthly yell of "Wild Cats" (at least such we took them for) which in the still night air was not very melodious to my unsophisticated ears. Stepping out to replenish the dying embers the stars were shining brighter than I ever saw them before, then lay down still leaving our "Midnight Serenaders" to sing "their lay-out."

Thursday, July 12th. Awoke early and commenced preparing breakfast. Now our little valley shown to advantage. The mountain tops were glittering in the sunshine while with us its rays were not yet felt. Sky was clear and the morning air cool and bracing, the high mountains on each side covered with pines and still above these the rocks loomed up in all their grandeur. Our road this forenoon is through some beautiful gulches, ravines and canyons. Roads good, and in these valleys were some of "Natures flower gardens" and through which coursed the clear mountain

streams. About ten o'clock arrived at the "Half Way House." Here we found the lost goods which we loaded on to our wagon and then started on for a favorable camping place. After dinner found our road was continual down hill and for about three hours we descended at times very steep and through timber where trees had been cut just sufficient to admit a wagon by being careful, and to make the road still worse a heavy rain set in and in the tall pines the storm was not very pleasant. The vivid lightning almost blinding and so quickly followed by such peals of thunder that reverberated through the mountains causing each to be still louder until it finally dies away in a continual roar. Although I thought of danger when passing through the timber which might serve as conductors of lightning and thought it a little precarious, still in such scenes there is such a grandeur in the works of nature one must look on in awe and admiration, although—

> "The tallest Pines feel most the power
> Of wintry blasts! the loftiest tower
> Comes heaviest to the ground,
> The bolts, that spare the mountain side
> His cloud-cap't eminence divide,
> And spread the ruin round."

At last the storm is passed and we soon reach the "valley of the Platte" which appears in one view as we enter at this point. The sun was now shining and the valley looked fine. About a mile up the stream and at the crossing is a ranch. Halted a few moments. The river was very high and running swift, making it very difficult crossing and at any other time the water would be clear, now thick and black as tar—filled with "burnt cinders" which the heavy rains had washed down the mountain. But we succeeded in fording with safety although the water was in the wagon box. We now had pretty rough road until camping time which we soon made and commenced supper when for variety it commenced raining. We were now in a very pretty valley, a branch of the Platte and after supper while the boys were preparing for the night, I sat by the fire and soon got interested in the first chapters of Little Dorret, and compared the opening of that popular work with the climate in the "Rocky Mountains" in the month of July, A. D. 1860, and had the "Marseilles" lay here even at noonday the "burning sun" could have no such effect as when in "Southern France" and the inmates could not stare at the light or suffer from intense heat, and yet this work opens with the month of August. About ten o'clock turned in.

Friday, July 13th, 1860. Took an early start and soon began to find the roads more difficult than at any time previous. Through the timber stumps and stones, crossing the head waters of the Platte eight times, some of which were very difficult, but at last becomes a small rivulet and at its very "fountain head." The mountains all day have been very high and abrupt, much larger than those we have passed and their tops are white with "Eternal Snows." At the very head of the Platte the canyon becomes very narrow and on one side for hundreds of feet is a perfect wall of rugged rocks, and in the bottoms the pines seem to endeavor to out-grow the rocks which still look down upon them. Here we passed another toll gate and another $1.50 for the privilege of driving over the worst road I ever saw. About two miles farther came to a small gulch where we camped for the night.

Saturday, July 14th, 1860. This morning the ground is white with a heavy frost and the air like a January morning, and while the boys were out looking for their cattle I built up the fire and made it comfortable. Were detained rather late to find the cattle but when on the road were pleased to find it much better than formerly. About three miles brought us to a beautiful little park in the mountains. At the head of this is a beautiful lake of clear water, "Chicago Lake." Here also is one of the Express stations and the finest location we have seen. Through this park of about a mile and we came to the Hill at the head of the South Park. Here the scene was the most grand of the trip. Below us and as far as the eye could reach to the south, was this level prairie which appears perfectly flat, which appears so odd, after passing over such rough mountains. Upon the right the high range of snow-capped mountains add a fine contrast to the dark pine covered range upon the left. In the distance the towns of Tarry-all and Hamilton appear nestled at the base of the mountains.[2] Descending the hill (which is a long one) we are in the park on a level road which is a great relief to man and beast.

The park has the appearance of at one time being a lake and of a later day probably the scene of many hard fought Indian Battles, as it must have been a favorite hunting ground. This is evidenced by the numerous buffalo bones and deer horns. In this park the Utes and Arapahoes had a fight the first of June. Now the park is the home of "Prairie Dogs" and "prickly pears" and since the white man in search of Gold has made his track of civilization, the Savages and wild beasts have to flee. At noon camped again for dinner on a small stream, and again passed on. A few miles brought us to the towns of Tarry-all and (better known here

[2]For an account of these two towns, that have long since disappeared, see the *Colorado Magazine* of July, 1933.—Ed.

as "Grab-all") and Hamilton. Two small towns at the edge of the Park and base of the mountains, on the banks of the "Bayou Salada" a branch of the Platte. Considerable mining is carried on up the stream which causes the water to be very roily and muddy, and the only peculiarity in the stream is its romantic name. Considerable building is going on at these two towns and a great strife to gain the ascendency and call as many as possible to their respective towns to winter.

Here we left one of our company who is going to the mines on the Blue. After about three miles, camped for the night in the Park, but where timber was plenty. While preparing supper it commenced raining and hailing and the ground became wet, muddy and white with hail, extinguishing our fire and night set in with a decidedly unfavorable aspect, no tent, and no shelter, no fire and no supper. Cold and wet we were considering when fortunately a Mexican drove up with two empty wagons and camped with us. Although he could not understand a word of English, yet by signs I gave him a history of our situation and he offered us his wagon and blankets which were decidedly very acceptable in our situation, and thus we turned in wet and cold.

Sunday, July 15th, 1860. Up early and found it still very cold but the rain had subsided and the sky clear. Ground frozen and white with snow and hail, rather a peculiar climate for July. Soon we had a blazing fire and prepared breakfast and again resumed our journey after expressing our thanks to our friend the Mexican. The road still continues good and occasionally over a small ridge which again brings us into another Park, which seems to be a succession of parks. These again are broken by large "Mounds" or "Bluffs" thickly covered with poplar and pine. The day now was warm and pleasant and at noon camped upon the "South Fork" of the South Platte. Again were visited by our daily luxury, a refreshing shower, although such luxuries could well be dispensed with for cold as they were they are not very refreshing, but at times it is consoling to look off but a short distance and see the rain pouring in torrents while with us the bright sun shines out warm and this is our consolation, when again we are in storm while the mountains are in sunshine, and then the mountain tops project above the storm clouds and while at its base it rains at its top the snows are gleaming with light.

At this creek we found a Ranch and after the rain had subsided I went for some milk. Making enquiries of a woman, was answered in the extreme modest language that she had some but, "By G—d, I guess the D—d thunder had soured it." Passing my own opinion privately as to the demeanor of her lady-ship, I

at last procured some at the moderate price of 25 cents per quart. Making our dinner of this we passed on and after about five miles again camped. Prospects for a beautiful eve, no rain and the air much warmer than any previous night. Presently two gentlemen came up and also camped with us. After a good smoke I turned in.

Monday, July 16th, 1860. The morning sun rose clear and warm, found us still comfortably rolled up and fast locked in old Morpheus under the wagon. Such a comfortable night, we improved it to advantage, but a short time sufficed and we were off again. The road continued as yesterday until about ten o'clock, when we entered the Canyon at the creek, a branch of the Platte. This Canyon is narrow and the mountains rise on each side very high. Following the creek up, which we cross several times and which is at times very difficult, water swift and the bottoms covered with boulders causing the wagon to weave and twist considerably, but the carefulness of the driver brought us over safely. The sides of the mountains here are very thickly covered with pines, but from appearances there has been a large fire through here as nearly all of the trees are dead and their straight slim forms shoot up leafless and branchless like ship masts to a great height.

The bottoms along the creek are covered with wild currents and gooseberry bushes but no fruit at this time. Thus we proceeded up the canyon and soon after dinner came to the mountain leading over the "Divide" at the base of the "Snowy Range." Here we found a gentleman with team who hitched on with us and doubled up. The ascent was very steep and long, making it very hard to get up with the load. But at last had passed the worse part of it and rested upon a sort of shelving place where I stopped with one wagon while the others went up another steep hill and amused myself by rolling down huge stones and down the steep banks for hundreds of feet they went bounding and crashing until they landed in the creek at its base. Soon the teams returned and took the remaining wagon, but before we had reached the top, found breath getting short and knees rather weak. The air becomes so light that it is difficult breathing, but thinking we had progressed far enough we camped for the night and of course it commenced raining but when this was over we prepared supper. After the sun had gone down we found it rather cold. We were now near the top of the "Snowy Range" and all around us was snow, although none where we were camped. Strawberry plants were growing here which looked odd in so cold a climate. Another inhabitant of warmer weather, "Mosquitoes," also abounded. After supper we spread our blankets and robes close to the burning logs and was soon asleep with the blue vault of heaven with its myriads

of stars for our roof. Methinks I never saw them so bright, not a cloud in sight and they sparkled in the clear night like Diamonds.

Tuesday, July 17th, 1860. Was up early after a good sleep to find our blankets wet with frost and the air cold. The stones covered with ice and soon had breakfast and ready to start. The morning rays of the sun were gilding the mountain tops long before its genial rays were felt by us. Our road was still ascending. This road follows the "Ute Pass" over the Divide, and upon each side of the road the mountains rise still higher. Leaving the team, I attempted to climb one of the mountains. The stones covered with ice and along the sides lay deposits of snow. I had proceeded but a short distance and still the top was a long way up, but my breath getting short I gave up the walk and returned. Along this ridge is several wild flowers. Strawberry blossoms are also numerous and one can walk along and while with one hand gather snow balls and with the other a bouquet of flowers. When near the top there is a beautiful little lake covering about an acre. The water is as clear as crystal and very cold and looks odd upon the very mountain top. This Ridge divides the tributaries of the Platte and Arkansas rivers, the one running east and joins with the others until it reaches the "Big Muddy," the other running west and south and finally both are mingled again after thousands of miles in the warmer climate of New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. From this point the scene was the most grand I have ever beheld and never before saw the Majesty of Mountain scenery. The sun of proper highth to reflect upon the tops which are covered with snow. I recalled the Piece I used to declaim when at school of "Tell's Address to the Mountains," wherein he says:

> "Oh! Sacred forms how proud ye look,
> How high ye lift your heads into the sky,
> How huge ye are, how mighty and how free,
> etc., etc."

Methinks I could see him as he stood in awe and admiration of the scene before him and his feelings just escaped from the Tyrant who held him in chains and fled to his "Mountain Home," which never before looked half so grand and wonderful and with an outburst of admiration at the wonders of creation uttered those words. I. H. Elliott says that "A Man who can not appreciate Nature, can not appreciate its Creator, and a man who does not love Nature loves not God."

And an old writer says:

"Oh, who can strive
To comprehend the vast, the awful truth,
Of the eternity that hath gone by,
And not recoil from the dismaying sense
Of human impotence! The life of man
Is summed in birthdays and in sepulchers,
But the Eternal God had no beginning."

I stood for some time here and then proceeded on. Here the road descends the mountain again, and in places very steep. After about a mile I called at a camp by the roadside, seeing several gentlemen around. In a wagon lay a woman seemingly in great pain. Upon inquiring, ascertained that the woman (Mrs. Smith) had left "California Gulch" with a man to return to the states. Her Husband hearing of it put off in pursuit, overtook them, fired at the young man (Bur Curtis) but the ball struck his wife and Curtis fled. This occurred on Friday, and yesterday Smith, while at the camp, was shot dead by the hand of Curtis or his accomplice (so supposed) and now neither are to be found. Smith was this morning buried on the mountain side. Truly "the way of the transgressor is hard," but general report seems to side with Mr. Smith. Soon after we came to a very steep rocky hill called "Stony Point," and rightly named. Here we were obliged to chain two yoke of cattle to the wagon, and chain both hind wheels. Was a dangerous path both to cattle and wagons but we passed it in safety, and presently reached the bottom. Here the road runs close to a perpendicular wall of rock on the one side, and upon the other the "Arkansas" comes dashing and foaming over the huge Boulders, forming a beautiful "Cascade."

Here the canyon becomes gradually wider and again into timber. The road continues descending for about seven miles, and at last we are out of the canyon and in the valley of the Arkansas. Very tired and hungry, we drove to the "Empire Ranch" where we camped for dinner. Took a pretty long stop as we were very tired and cattle needed rest. About three o'clock drove farther, about three or four miles and here camped for the night. The eve was pleasant and warm (the first day without rain). The valley is about three miles wide, through which runs the main Arkansas. On the opposite side of the valley rises another high range of snow crowned mountains. All these ranges run N. W. and S. E., while the canyons generally run N. E. and S. W. After supper I soon retired. This has been the hardest day's travel we have had, and I, very much fatigued, soon was unconscious of trouble or fatigue.

Wednesday, July 18th, 1860. Was up before the sun and soon on our way toward the Gulch. When we arrived at the Mouth I left the teams and proceeded on foot. California Gulch is quite wide, the banks covered with pines and the bottoms with rank wild sage. After about three miles came to the cabins of Sacramento City. About three miles farther and found Scott at the store, a little "Log Cabin" like the rest of the "Palaces" of this New City. The building however is as good as any in the Gulch and boasts of the first Glass windows. Hinckley & Co.'s Express office is here and Mr. Black, their agent, a fine fellow. Was surprised at seeing so large a town, where only a few weeks ago not a house was seen, and not a wagon had ever made its track. Now the crooked street upon both sides is walled up with log Palaces and at least 8000 inhabitants claim this as their Mountain Home until fortune favors them and their Purses become fat with the "filthy Lucre," the "Root of all evil." Such is the rush for these mines, when a new Gulch is discovered.

California Gulch was discovered in May and considerable gold is taken out. Some of the claims are paying well. Sacramento City is now consolidated with another town site below and goes under the name of "Oro City" (the Spanish interpretation for gold). The streets appear as though every one built his cabin in its own place without regard to survey and as a consequence they are very crooked. The mining portion of the Gulch is about six miles long and nearly every claim is being worked and at the store the sound of gravel and shovel as they "wash out" with their "Toms" is heard. Have heard and read much about the rapid growth and population of these "fast cities" but to appreciate them one must see for themselves. From the appearance should think that gamblers ruled the place, from the numerous "Hells" which they have erected. And from the general inhabitants of young "Oro" should judge they would hardly rank among the first society. About noon after my arrival the goods came up and the remainder of the day was spent in unpacking.

Commenced boarding at Mr. Gibson's at the rate of ten dollars per week. Business not as good as I had hoped, but a prospect of its increase. Again at the close of another tramp fraught with many pleasing incidents and many hardships, still passed along very well and with all enjoyed the trip pretty well. At the store during the eve and at bed time rolled up in the blankets on the saw dust floor, the habit of the country.