

not chargeable either to the agency which created them, to the original grantees, or to the ultimate owners, but rather to conditions which developed as the years rolled by leaving the determination of the out-boundaries undefined. Men were permitted to establish themselves on the assumption that they were not locating on the grants. Finally surveys were made, which included their holdings, and disaster, in various guises, resulted.

Private Land Claims in Colorado*

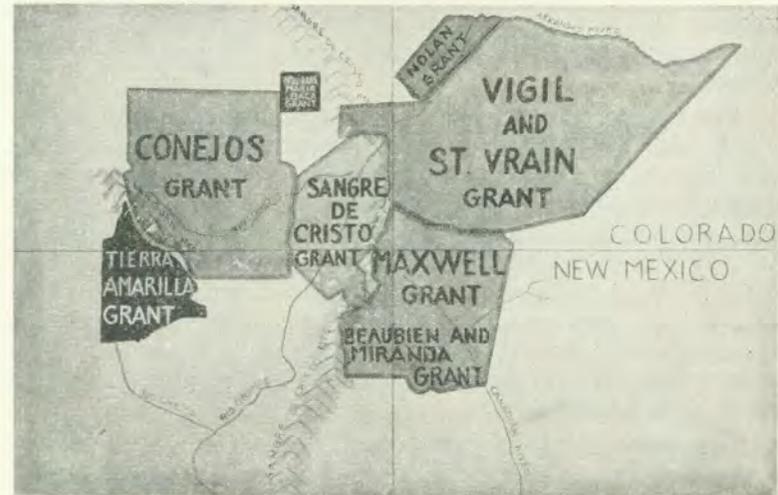
RALPH CARR

The Romance Land of Southern Colorado, embracing, roughly, nearly all of that part of the state not included within the Louisiana Purchase and totalling within its boundaries about nine million acres, or more than 15,000 square miles, was conveyed by the Mexican government in seven separate parcels without any disclosed money consideration to a handful of individuals.¹ The record of the Land Grant System offers to the historian and the fiction writer established facts apparently so improbable and fantastic in their origin, so immense in their geographical areas, and so intriguing in their dramatic unfolding, that its simple narration leaves the weaver of purely imaginative tales impotent and defeated.

The first reaction to the story of the enormous grants throughout our Southwest in the second quarter of the nineteenth century evokes visions of principalities so vast that their very size inevitably would seem to transform the few fortunate grantees into veritable overlords of inestimable wealth and power. Closer study reveals so much of ruin and loss and disappointment to hundreds and thousands that the tinsel loses its glitter. This is

*This was the address before the Annual Meeting of the State Historical Society, December 10, 1947. Mr. Carr, a prominent Denver attorney, was Governor of Colorado from 1939 to 1943. He has made a special study of the history of the San Luis Valley and the Mexican Land Grants.—Ed.

¹The Conejos Grant contained about 2,000,000 acres within its boundaries; the Maxwell and Beaubien Grant was allowed for 1,714,764.93 acres; the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant was claimed for about 4,000,000 acres; the Sangre de Cristo Grant was allowed for 1,038,195.55 acres; the Nolan Grant was claimed for 575,968 acres; the Tierra Amarilla Grant for 650,000 acres; and the Luis Maria Baca No. 1 Grant for 100,000 acres.



MEXICAN LAND GRANTS IN COLORADO

As finally surveyed and confirmed, the size of several grants is almost unbelievable today. In just one instance, that of the Miranda and Beaubien, or, as it was later known, the Maxwell Grant, the purchasers from the original grantees established a menage on the Cimarron, which for a time must have rivalled the courts of all but those of the greatest of European monarchs, in its generous but ostentatious hospitality, its lavish display and its atmosphere of pomp and wealth.

But against the glare of this single burst of glory, which burned itself out in a few short years, are the stories of those whose lives were twisted and tortured by the uncertainties, delays and conflicts which developed over the titles to the Grants.

The intervention of the Mexican war, the cession to a new sovereignty of jurisdiction over all the lands involved, the inexcusable delays by our government in performing the obligations imposed by the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Protocol which followed its execution, plus the inevitable harvest

of the Grim Reaper, robbed the original grantees of the enjoyment of the bounties which Fortune had promised.

A handful profited by the exploitation of one or two of the grants. But the all-too-late official surveys which resulted in the expulsion from their homes and their holdings, of thousands of farmers, livestock growers, businessmen, preemptioners and homesteaders—all pioneers, and most of them American citizens—draws a brush across the canvas which was not dipped in the colors of the rainbow. The suffering and defeat far outweighed in importance, and, probably, in actual money value, the fortunes which a few enjoyed.

The charge was thundered, when the disputes were at their height, and the echoes sometimes reverberate even today, that the Mexican Land Grant system, in its very inception, was unjustified and unfair. History refutes the accusation. The land grant formula is as ancient as civilization. A country's expansion into newly acquired territory always has dictated grants of land to the loyal and the subservient. The Spanish crown had long followed the practice. Among the first statutes enacted by the Mexican legislature, after she gained her independence from Spain, were ones providing for donations by Territorial Governors under certain conditions.²

Gifts of land to individuals in Mexican California and New Mexico by the new Republic, in return for purported civil or military service, sometimes actual, and, oftener, merely fancied or only promised, followed a policy which sought the colonization of a territory which had to be peopled if the struggling, young government were to hold and to dominate a distant province. It demanded sacrifice and courage to pioneer a new world and to cope with the Indians who asserted their rights. Only the chance for gain could have lured settlers into making the gamble.

Later, when the Santa Fe Trail became a constantly increasing stream of vehicles and foreigners bringing the products, the ideas and the ambitions of a nation apparently bent on expansion, additional grants were suggested in the desperate hope that the resistless tide of ox-trains, traders, trappers, prospectors, fortune seekers and camp followers from Yankeeland might be stemmed.³

To establish an insulation against the shocks of the gringo invasion a series of grants, hundreds of miles in thickness, were made by the last Territorial Governor of New Mexico. Those which involve Colorado came into being.

While the doubter and the cynic will accept, as the underlying bases for the grants, the explanations of colonization, in the first

²Mexican Congress, Statute of August 18, 1824, and Regulations of 1828.

³Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, p. 195.

instance, and of defense in the final phase of the system's development, nevertheless they are prone to suspect also that something more substantial than indefinite promises of loyalty to a government which was already on the way out, furnished at least a portion of the consideration which moved the quill pen of the blustering Governor Manuel Armijo to trace his signature at the bottom of the famous documents.

Any brief discussion of the Mexican Grants which extended into present Colorado, must, of necessity, be sketchy and general in its presentation. Most of the grants offer, and one or two have already furnished, the subject matter for a complete volume. Each follows its own peculiar plot.

When it is realized that all or a major portion of the present counties of Archuleta, Conejos, Alamosa, Costilla, Rio Grande, Saguache, Las Animas, Huerfano, Pueblo, Bent and Otero were included in the lands which were granted to a few individuals, then the place of the system in, and its influence upon, the development of our state and its people can be glimpsed.

By the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which was signed at the close of our war with Mexico, as well as the provisions of the later Protocol confirmed on May 26, 1848, it was stipulated that the people living in the territory ceded to this country should be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property. Grants made by Mexico were to be respected and recognized.⁴ President Polk stated in his Message of February 8, 1849, "the grantees may cause their legitimate titles to be acknowledged before the American tribunals." He defined "legitimate titles" as those which existed under the Mexican law in California and Mexico up to May 13, 1846, and in Texas up to March 2, 1836. The former was the date of the declaration of war with Mexico and the latter that of the declaration of independence by Texas.⁵

Thereafter it became necessary to determine exactly which among the many claims asserted actually satisfied the conditions of the Treaty and the Protocol. For California the Congress established a commission with authority to settle the titles to private land claims.⁶

In the case of New Mexico, which was still a territory, an act provided for the appointment of a surveyor general whose duty, under instructions from the Secretary of the Interior, was "to ascertain the origin, character and extent of all claims to land under the laws, usages and customs of New Mexico. He

⁴Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and later Protocol, May 30, 1848.

⁵Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, p. 454, note 373; *Senate Executive Doc. No. 52*, 30th Congress, 1st session; *House Executive Doc. No. 50*, 30th Congress, 2nd session.

⁶Act of September 30, 1851, entitled "An Act to Settle the Private Land Claims in the State of California."

was authorized to issue notices, summon witnesses, administer oaths, etc., and to make full reports to the Secretary of the Interior, to be laid before Congress for final action 'with a view to confirm *bona fide grants*' on all claims originating before the cession under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, denoting the various grades of title, with his decision as to their validity or invalidity; ****⁷

William Pelham was made Surveyor General. Most of the persons notified to present their claims before him failed to do so. The Governor of New Mexico turned over to the Surveyor General from the archives of the Spanish and Mexican governments 1,014 grants and documents relating to land titles of which 197 were private grants.

Pelham reported on September 30, 1855, that the original act utterly had failed to accomplish the purpose for which it was passed and suggested further legislation to meet the situation, stating that only 15 claims had been filed for examination and adjudication.

In a letter dated January 13, 1858, Pelham recommended that certain claims be recognized. Thereafter on June 21, 1860, Congress confirmed 13 of them in full, including in Colorado the Sangre de Cristo, the Maxwell, the Tierra Amarilla, and the Luis Maria Baca No. 4 Grants.⁸

A claim by one E. W. Eaton was allowed for not more than five acres. The Vigil and St. Vrain claim, under which more than four million acres south of the river in the Arkansas Valley had been recommended, was cut to 22 square leagues, amounting to about ninety-seven thousand acres.

The Nolan Grant was recommended for confirmation on October 8, 1861, but was not confirmed by act of Congress until July 1, 1870, when a tract of eleven square leagues, or 48,695.48 acres out of a total of about 575,978 claimed, was fixed as its limitation.⁹

The Luis Maria Baca No. 4 Grant enjoyed a history which distinguished it from those which had their inception in the exercise of the colonization powers of Mexican Territorial Governors. It was originally established under Spanish jurisdiction. Later it was considered and recommended by New Mexico's Surveyor General.

Colorado's Baca Grant is one of the five separate tracts selected by the heirs of the first claimant after the original site was confirmed in the town of Las Vegas, New Mexico.

⁷Act of July 22, 1854; Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, 457.

⁸Act of June 21, 1860.

⁹Act of July 1, 1870.

This grant was included in the provisions of the confirmatory act of June 21, 1860. William Gilpin, former Territorial Governor of Colorado, was at one time the owner of the Baca No. 4 Grant.

The only claim in Colorado which was not allowed in any amount whatsoever was the Conejos Grant. A petition was filed with the Surveyor General in 1861.¹⁰ No recommendation ever went to Washington from his office. The petition was finally presented before the Court of Private Land Claims at Santa Fe in 1900 and was formally disallowed.¹¹

A splendid discussion of Mexican Land Grants in Colorado by Dr. LeRoy Hafén is found in the *Colorado Magazine* where he outlines the major facts and gives the original descriptions.¹²

This leaves it for us to consider some of the factors which involved the country drained by the Rio Grande and the Arkansas River in Colorado from the early forties until the eminent Justices of the Court of Private Land Claims arose on June 30, 1904, never again to resume their inquiries and the most unique tribunal which was ever created under our nation's judicial setup ceased to function.¹³

The titles to a thousand or more grants in New Mexico were still dangling uncertainly in midair on July 1, 1891, when that Court opened its sessions, because only 71 claims had been settled through the agencies of the Surveyor General and the Congress. Congress finally succumbed to the demands of the people of New Mexico and their representatives and established this Court and clothed it with the authority to finish the task.¹⁴

THE SANGRE DE CRISTO

The grant whose history probably is laden with more dramatic interest and historical significance than the others was the Sangre de Cristo, for which a request was filed on December 27, 1843. Stephen Luis Lee, Sheriff of Taos County, distiller of that potent beverage which only Mountain Men, inured to the rigors of winters in the Rocky Mountains, could imbibe with safety—Taos Lightning—was one of the petitioners. The other was Narciso, the twelve-year old son of Carlos Beaubien, the French-Canadian storekeeper, public official, and Federal District Judge to-be, to whom along with Guadalupe Miranda, the empire which was later to be known as the Maxwell Grant had already been given.¹⁵

¹⁰Notes on the Conejos Grant in Hafén, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, p. 91.

¹¹*Annual Report of the Attorney General of the United States* (1900), p. 59.

¹²Hafén, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, 81-93.

¹³*Annual Report of the Attorney General of the United States* (1904), p. 96.

¹⁴"An Act to Establish a Court of Private Land Claims in Certain States and Territories," March 3, 1891.

¹⁵Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, p. 461; Hafén, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, p. 83.

These particular grants were made by a man so enormous physically that the very size of the tracts which he established must have been influenced by the generosity of Governor Manuel Armijo's own poundage.¹⁶ Trouble was brewing along the border between Texas and the United States and their neighbor, Mexico. There had been repeated clashes between Texas and New Mexico resulting in many killings. It verged upon actual warfare between the Tejanos and New Mexicans.¹⁷ Governor Manuel Armijo personally, had engaged in one or two of the clashes.¹⁸ But his military efforts there reflected little more glory upon his name than his flight at the time of the approach of Kearny's Army of the West through Las Vegas and on toward Glorietta Pass and Santa Fe. He issued soul stirring pronunciamientos calling upon his people to fight to the death in defense of their country. The gubernatorial mind was changed when the Missourians with straight shooting rifles on their shoulders neared Glorietta Pass. In a carriage drawn by six—probably white—horses, he withdrew at a dignified but space-devouring gallop from his Capital city headed southward toward Chihuahua and safety. Armijo's retreat should not be too harshly condemned, however, because it undoubtedly saved the lives of many good men on both sides. It permitted Kearny to complete his famous bloodless conquest of New Mexico.¹⁹

We need not recount the factors and influences leading up to the outbreak of hostilities between our own and the Mexican Republic which sent Kearny's Missourians out of Fort Bent on the Arkansas to Santa Fe.

Before leaving New Mexico for his advance to California, General Kearny established a territory of the United States with Santa Fe as its capital and Charles Bent as Governor. The new executive was one of the family who with Ceran St. Vrain had conducted various trading posts and which marked them as the West's business leaders. Donaciano Vigil, who had been Armijo's Secretary of State, held the same position under the new government. Later when Governor Bent was assassinated he became the Acting Governor.²⁰ The Taos merchant who had

¹⁶Lt. Ruxton met Armijo on his flight from Santa Fe, near Durango, and said of him: "I stopped and had a long chat with Armijo, who, a mountain of fat, rolled out of his American 'gearborn' and inquired the price of cotton goods in Durango, he having some seven wagon-loads with him, and also what they said, in Mexico of the doings in Santa Fe, alluding to its capture by the Americans without any resistance. I told him there was but one opinion respecting it expressed all over the country—that General Armijo and the New Mexicans were a pack of arrant cowards; to which he answered: 'Adios, they don't know I had but seventy-five men to fight three thousand. What could I do?'" Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico*, p. 118.

¹⁷Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, pp. 70-89.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 74.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 265-278.

started life with the thrilling French name of Charles Hipolyte Trotier, Sieur de Beaubien at his birth in Three Rivers, Quebec, had changed it to Don Carlos Beaubien when he relinquished fealty to the British crown and became a Mexican citizen. With Kearny's coming he acquired an American status and was elevated from his place behind the counter, across which he had sold bacon and beans and flour and saddles, to the Federal District Bench along with Joab Houghton and Antonio Jose Otero.

The very establishment of the territorial government caused the formation of the plot which resulted in the uprising of the natives as soon as Kearny marched away. Both of the grantees of the Sangre de Cristo tract, Stephen Luis Lee and Narciso Beaubien, together with Governor Charles Bent, Cornelio B. Vigil, and many others were slain. Beaubien subsequently sat in at the trial of the men who killed his son in the massacre of Taos.²¹

When the last rebellious group had been dispersed or liquidated, Judge Beaubien found that he had inherited his minor son's one-half interest in the Sangre de Cristo Grant. The other half belonged to the estate of the late sheriff. Lee's personal effects were of insufficient value to pay the claims presented against his estate. Joseph Pley, a son-in-law of Carlos Beaubien, who had been appointed Administrator, sold Lee's interest to the new Judge for exactly One Hundred Dollars. The sale was authorized by an order of the Prefect or Probate Court of Taos County.²²

The opinion by the Colorado Supreme Court in 1890 in a case wherein the widower of Stephen Luis Lee's daughter attacked the sale offers interesting reading. It went off on points of law involving the length of time which had elapsed before the complaint was made. Unfortunately for history perhaps, the matter was not determined on any issue of fact.²³

Thus an international conflict in front of his adobe store building and a rebellion which followed, plus the payment of a hundred dollars joined to make Carlos Beaubien the owner of an empire of 1,038,000 acres, bordered on the east by peaks whose snow-topped heads rise more than 14,000 feet above the sea and which included, in addition to a generous slice of the Sangre de Cristo Range, some of the best agricultural and pasture lands in the Rocky Mountain West. At the same time Beaubien was also owner of half of the Maxwell Grant.

The story of Governor William Gilpin's purchase of a five-sixths interest in the Sangre de Cristo from the heirs of Carlos Beaubien and the acquisition of the remaining one-sixth from the

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 214.

²²Original records in the Surveyor General's Office, Denver, Colorado.

²³*De Mares v. Gilpin et al.*, 15 Colorado, p. 76.

estate of James F. Quinn, pioneer lawyer, legislator, and Indian fighter, is too well known to require narration here.

The sale of a half million acres to a Dutch Company for a dollar an acre, the construction of the narrow gauge Denver and Rio Grande Railroad by General William J. Palmer from Walsenburg across the Sangre de Cristo and over the Grant to Alamosa, thence turning southward via Antonito to Santa Fe, deserve full chapters.

The first fort established within territory ceded by Mexico was constructed on upper Ute Creek in 1851 and called Fort Massachusetts. A few years later the garrison was transferred to Fort Garland.²⁴ The names of Kit Carson, who served as Commandant, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, who visited the forts, add color to the Grant's story.

The question of the validity of the Sangre de Cristo Grant was considered by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Tameling v. United States Freehold Land and Emigration Company*, 93 U.S. 662. It held that the Surveyor General's report and the subsequent confirmation by Congress were binding upon the court and passed the title as effectually as if it had been conveyed by a direct patent.

THE MAXWELL GRANT

Much of the history of the West has been influenced by the Miranda and Beaubien or Maxwell Grant. Guadalupe Miranda, a man of education and talents, along with Carlos Beaubien, had signed the original petition on January 8, 1841.²⁵ Miranda had occupied positions of trust in the territory but had never developed the lands consigned to himself and Beaubien. In the last years of his life he addressed a letter to his co-owner announcing that he would be unable to realize his dream of leaving the property to his sons. He asked Beaubien either to purchase the Miranda interest or else to agree that some other person might do so.

Beaubien sold his half interest to his daughter Luz and her husband, the able and glamorous Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell. Thereafter, Lucien Maxwell acquired a quit claim deed for the other half from Guadalupe Miranda for \$2750.00, of which \$250.00 was to be paid to Carlos Beaubien to reimburse him for his personal expenditures in connection with the signing of the petition and other incidentals.²⁶

The Maxwells established their home at Cimarron on the eastern slope of the mountains. If half the tales are true which are told of the royal manner in which that household was conducted

²⁴*Colorado Magazine*, XIV, 128.

²⁵*House Reports*, No. 321, 36th Congress, 1st session, p. 245.

²⁶Kelleher, *Maxwell Land Grant*, p. 43.

during the next few years, then the people of the West who lived mostly in the raw, enjoyed glimpses of the manner in which the families of crowned heads sometimes function when taxes are collectible.

The furniture, rugs, linens, dishes and crystal were purchased, for the most part, in shops of far-off Paris. They were hauled on the last lap to their final abode by ox-teams. Solid gold and silver were laid beside the most expensive china and glassware upon the table coverings from Europe. The number of men and women who served the family and their guests amounted to a young army, we are told.²⁷

No traveler ever was denied a comfortable bed after partaking of the finest foods which the Southwest ever enjoyed at tables which were constantly in use. Stories of the hospitality of the mansion on the Cimarron spread through the country and Lucien and Luz were acclaimed as the finest hosts on the nether side of the River.

Maxwell was not only a host with generous ideas, but also a cattleman of extraordinary ability. He was a financier and a builder. He established the First National Bank of Santa Fe which never has closed its doors, regardless of the financial stringencies which have afflicted other institutions in the Southwest.

Maxwell's downfall attended his dream of a great irrigation development. More talented men than he have lost their rocks and their socks on similar projects for the reclamation of this land of scanty rainfall. A great canal which was to irrigate the lands along the eastern slopes of the Sangre de Cristo in the northern half of the Grant was commenced. But it just did not pay off. Before he passed to his reward the big hearted host probably would have been grateful for a small portion of the bounty which he bestowed out of the sheer goodness of his heart upon strangers and ne'er-do-wells who journeyed for miles to eat his food and absorb the heat of the great fireplaces which warmed the adobe castle in his lustier days.

But the passing of the title from Maxwell to others did not end the story of the Maxwell Grant. His rights went to men of money and influence who started its exploitation and development of the land. The patent was issued after his death.

THE NOLAN GRANT

Like Ceran St. Vrain and Carlos Beaubien, Gervacio Nolan was of French origin. He petitioned Governor Manuel Armijo for a grant of the Valley of the Rio San Carlos on November 14, 1843.²⁸

²⁷Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, p. 415.

²⁸Hafen, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, p. 86.

Here again Cornelio Vigil, the ever active Justice of the Peace at Taos, presided at the ceremonies during which Nolan was given formal possession under the grant which was dated December 1, 1843.²⁹

Ceran St. Vrain and Kit Carson testified as witnesses in support of the petition of Nolan's widow for the allowance of the grant by Surveyor General Pelham on October 31, 1860. That official recommended that the grant be confirmed. This was done on July 1, 1870, but was reduced by the Congressional Act to 11 square leagues.³⁰

THE VIGIL AND ST. VRAIN GRANT

Cornelio Vigil, Justice of the Peace at Taos, and Col. Ceran St. Vrain, business associate of the Bents, Indian scout, military leader and scion of a royal French family, on December 8, 1843, petitioned for more than 4,000,000 acres of land running south from the Arkansas River with its northeastern and northwestern points lying near the present cities of La Junta and Pueblo and taking in all of the territory southward to join the Maxwell Grant's northern extension. Thereafter they both conveyed lands within the exterior boundaries of this tract to many settlers.³¹

The survey of the Maxwell Grant encroached upon the Vigil and St. Vrain tract. For some reason the Congress by its Act of June 21, 1860, allowed only 11 square leagues to each of the two claimants. The Government saw fit to recognize the conveyances which each had made and by the time their transferees were taken care of there was little left to the heirs of either man. Ceran St. Vrain had died at Mora, New Mexico, and Cornelio Vigil was one of the victims of the Taos massacre.

THE CONEJOS GRANT

The history of the Conejos Grant, which never was approved, is made up of heart-breaking instances of hardship and defeat.³² Carlos Beaubien who was later to become a grantee of the Sangre de Cristo and Maxwell Grants went to the Conejos River in 1832 or 1833 with Juan Antonio Lovato of Abiquiu under authority from Don Santiago Abreu, the territorial Governor, to allot lands in that section "to those who asked for them and others." In an affidavit dated August 4, 1855, Beaubien said that he learned afterwards that the colonists had not been permitted to remain because the Navajos were at war.³³

In the proof presented to the Court of Private Land Claims it was shown that after the settlers had started to cultivate the

²⁹House Executive Doc. No. 112, 37th Congress, 2d session; records in the Office of Supervisor of Surveys, Denver, Colorado.

³⁰Hafen, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, p. 86.

³¹House Reports, No. 321, 36th Congress, 1st session, p. 269.

³²Hafen, "Mexican Land Grants in Colorado," *Colorado Magazine*, IV, p. 90.

³³Notes on the Colonization of Los Conejos, pamphlet 349, doc. 28; Collection of Interviews, State Historical Society of Colorado.

land the Indians drove or rode their horses across the plowed fields preventing the harvest. They were not actually at war with the settlers but seemed determined to create an atmosphere of terrorism.

In another affidavit dated January 18, 1858, Beaubien stated that he and Lovato had given the land on the Conejos, in accordance with a grant from the Mexican Government, to about 80 men. The document under which the grant was claimed was not offered in evidence at the hearing before the Court of Private Land Claims in 1900.³⁴

On February 21, 1842, Jose Maria Martinez, Julian Gallegos, Antonio Martinez and Seledon Valdez then petitioned for a new grant stating that they had not been able to cultivate the land on the first attempt. Thereupon Juan Andres Archuleta, Prefect for the District of Taos, decreed that on February 23, 1842, the territory could again be granted because there was no one to oppose the petition. Cornelio Vigil, claimant to the Las Animas Grant with Ceran St. Vrain, who occupied the position of Justice of the Peace at Taos, went to the Conejos on the 11th of October, 1842, and carried out Archuleta's decree by parceling out the lands. On October 5, 1846, Julian Gallegos, Mansanares and Fernandez Montoya presented a third petition to Carlos Bent, the current Governor of New Mexico, stating that they had been unable to raise any crops for some time because of a drouth. The Governor replied by letter that he possessed no jurisdiction at the moment but told the claimants to go upon the land and promised to do everything in his power to protect their rights thereafter.

The settlement which finally "took," and which has continued down to the present was led by Major Lafayette Head, a veteran of the Mexican war, and Marino Martinez to Guadalupe, across the river from Conejos, the present county seat. Soon the settlement spread southward to cross the river to the present site of Conejos where a church with walls of adobe four feet thick was constructed, followed a few years later by a two-story sandstone court house. When the Court of Private Land Claims started its consideration Crescencio Valdez, an heir and successor of one of the original claimants, sought approval of the original grants.

A typewritten transcript of the testimony given before the Court of Private Land Claims presents a pathetic picture of the struggle of the pioneering groups to gain a foothold and to establish homes along the Conejos and its main tributaries. From their descriptions it would appear that several farms were located in the vicinity of Zebulon M. Pike's stockade near the junction

³⁴Original documents in Office of Supervisor of Surveys, Denver, Colorado.

of the Rio Conejos and the San Antone River. The stockade now is to be rebuilt through the efforts of the State Historical Society.³⁵

The Honorable Wilbur F. Stone, Colorado's member of the Private Land Claims Court, who wrote of its cases in one statement, would seem to be referring to the hardships and disappointments of the Conejos groups when he said:

An interesting feature of the business of the court, says one of its able justices, is the historic romance attaching to the settlement and holding of these lands. The documentary evidence in many cases had to be supplemented by the oral testimony of witnesses, relating to occupation, abandonment by Indian hostilities, heredity, and family pedigree of claimant, dating back to a time when witnesses from seventy-five to one hundred years old testified to what, when children, they had heard told by their aged grandfathers. Here were brought out the stories of the marches northward into the frontier provinces across arid deserts, over drifted sands, through prickly cactus, thorny mesquite-chapparel, and under burning suns reflecting the blinding light from wastes of snow-white alkali, on and on to the welcome, pine-clad mountains, with their cool streams and fertile valleys. Then the settlements, the building of the rude adobe and jacal dwellings, the little mission church with its venerated cross, the forts for defense, the pastoral life, with flocks of sheep and cattle, and the oft contention over watering places—the life over again of the patriarchal age of Abraham and Lot. Then the hostile raids of the Indians, the massacres, captivities, flights, years of wars and persistent returns.

In these stories one could look back in fancy over the long trails these settlers followed and see the marches of the first Spanish invaders, the old conquistadores who, like the Crusaders of the middle ages, clad in all the panoply of Spanish cavaliers, resplendent in the glamour of the conquest of a New World, rode forth from the Halls of the Montezumas, on that long stretch of mountain plateau from the City of Mexico to El Paso del Norte, and thence up the Rio Grande to its mountain sources—a journey of nearly three thousand miles—bearing the flag of Spain and the banner of the Cross, the mailed warriors going before and the black-robed priests following behind, and with glittering pomp and holy zeal bayoneting, baptizing and benevolently assimilating the natives 'de las Indias.'

The old world has scoffed at the lack of interesting history in America. The history of the Atlantic colonies and Mississippi states has been immortalized by the novelist and poets, like Cooper and Campbell, in tragic and bloody song and story, but the greater romance in the drama of American history, touched upon by the pens of Prescott and the Spanish chroniclers, is spread over the sunlands of the trans-Missouri and Pacific half of the continent, now the graveyard of the mystic Toltec, the golden templed Aztec, the peaceful Pueblos, and the fierce Apaches—the Bedouins of the American Desert.³⁶

LUIS MARIA BACA NO. 4 GRANT

The Baca Grant, so-called, lies nearly 100 miles north from the Colorado-New Mexico interstate line at the western base of the Sangre de Cristo range in eastern Saguache County and contains 100,000 acres. This was the only grant in Colorado which had a

³⁵Transcript of Record of Hearing before Court of Private Land Claims, State Historical Society of Colorado.

³⁶Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, 469.

Spanish origin. Originally a grant of land called the Vegas Grandes within the jurisdiction of San Miguel Del Vadeo was petitioned for by Luis Maria Caveza de Baca on January 16, 1821. This man claimed to be related to the famous Alvar Nunez Caveza de Baca.



CERAN ST. VRAIN



GOV. WILLIAM GILPIN

His petition was addressed to the provincial deputation in the City of Durango, Capital of the Internal Provinces of which New Mexico was then a part. The land involved was in the vicinity of Las Vegas, New Mexico. It was eventually confirmed by the United States in conformity with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as being a title recognized by the Mexican Government.

On October 17, 1823, de Baca was placed in possession. He drove his stock consisting of 600 head of horses and mules, to the land and lived in a hut at Loma Monposa while he attempted to farm. De Baca was driven away by the Indians. In 1827 he was killed by a Mexican soldier when he refused to give up contraband property belonging to an American. In 1835 a number of others presented a petition for another grant. This was allowed with certain provisions. This group contended that the grant made to de Baca by the provincial deputation was void because it was accomplished in the year that Mexico won its independence from Spain while the country was in confusion. However, it was decided that the deputation had acted within its jurisdiction and Antonio de Baca, a son of the original claimant, carried on the battle for its confirmation. When the matter came before Surveyor General Pelham he found that the de Baca claim was justified and recommended confirmation. Thereafter the Congress gave the land

to the town of Las Vegas but allowed the de Baca heirs to select an equivalent amount of land within the Territory of New Mexico, provided it should not be mineral land and should be in square bodies.³⁷

Five selections of 100,000 acres each were made, two in New Mexico, two in Arizona and the fifth in Colorado. These were known as "floating grants." Governor William Gilpin acquired the title to the Colorado grant contemporaneously with his purchase of the Sangre de Cristo Grant. Later the title passed to a Pennsylvania company for a purchase price of \$1,400,000.

It escaped the difficulties which plagued all the others. It is valuable for its mineral deposits in spite of the conditions contained in its confirmation. Today it forms one of the greatest cattle ranches in the West.

THE TIERRA AMARILLA GRANT

Manuel Martinez and his eight sons petitioned in the earliest of the requests which touch Colorado on April 23, 1832. The Territorial Deputation granted the petition on July 20, 1832, and the family was placed in possession thereafter.

This grant extends northward into Colorado to include a large portion of Archuleta County and contains some of the most valuable proven oil deposits in this part of the Rocky Mountain West.

Difficulties between settlers and the owner of the grant have continued up until within recent years. Burned barns, the destruction of barbed wire fences and similar acts have been committed within the memory of some of us who have come to know the country in these later days.³⁸

THE ATTACKS ON THE LEGALITY OF THE GRANTS

After the Congress, by the confirmatory acts of 1860 and 1870, had approved the recommendations of the Surveyors General, and the Supreme Court of the United States had held the grants to be legally valid, although patents in the nature of quit-claim deeds has been executed by the President, nevertheless efforts were made to declare every grant made by the Mexican government involving land east of the Rio Grande invalid and ineffectual.³⁹

The bases for these attacks, in the main, were three in number. The opponents charged, first, that under the Mexican statutes in effect when the grants were made, not more than 11 square leagues could be donated to any claimant; second, that

³⁷Twitchell, *Spanish Archives of New Mexico*, I.

³⁸Tierra Amarilla Grant in *House Report* No. 321, 36th Congress, 1st session, p. 326. Original documents in Office of Supervisor of Surveys, Denver, Colorado.

³⁹Land Titles in New Mexico and Colorado, in *House Reports*, No. 1253, 59th Congress, 1st session, IV (Committee on Private Land Claims).

fraud was committed in at least two of the official surveys; and, third, it was asserted that the United States had acquired the territory in question from Texas on its admission to the Union in 1836, so that Mexico had no title to cede at the time of the execution of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.⁴⁰ The Maxwell Grant was made the target for the bitterest attacks although the Sangre de Cristo shared a portion of the calumny.

Whether the accusations were justified is beside the point today. The determining fact is that the surveys were approved and the patents were issued. Decisions of the United States Supreme Court unquestionably were decisive from a legal viewpoint in addition to being most convincing in the light of all the facts.

Unfortunately for grantees of other tracts, as well as their successors in interest, the criticism directed at the Maxwell Grant was extended to include all of the other important ones made by Governor Armijo in the '30s and '40s, either within Colorado or touching its borders. The case of the Maxwell Grant will remain to be argued and discussed as long as men are interested in southwestern titles.⁴¹

A man with any knowledge of the economic and political conditions existing in, and the geography of the country claimed by, Mexico during the first half of the Nineteenth Century and prior thereto, must find it difficult to keep a straight face when he charges that the country lying east of the Rio Grande at the time of our war with Mexico was not Mexican territory. He first must blind his eyes to the fact that all the important settlements in New Mexico lay east of the Rio Grande. The Capital at Santa Fe is miles east of that area. It is true that Texans had questioned New Mexico's right to control the territory. This was ignored when Kearny marched to Santa Fe and later when the Treaty was executed.⁴² The act which provided for the establishment of the office of Surveyor General to determine the validity of the grants did not limit his jurisdiction to land on either side of the Rio Grande.

Even after the Court of Private Land Claims had been set up and had been functioning for about ten months, Mr. Otis, Congressman from Wisconsin, presented a report to the House on behalf of the Committee on Private Land Claims, wherein, among other things, it was stated that at the time Texas claimed her independence, New Mexico was bounded on the east by the Rio Grande. Further, the report says that Governor Armijo was in the habit of making grants to land outside his own province of New

⁴⁰*Idem*, p. 8.

⁴¹"Alleged Conspiracy in Connection with New Mexican Land Grants," *Report* No. 1824, 52nd Congress, 1st session, IV.

⁴²Articles VIII and X, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Mexico, proper, and upon the east side where he possessed no jurisdiction. For thirty years, the report said, the Surveyors General of New Mexico had been sending to Congress for confirmation a long list of alleged Spanish-Mexican grants not located in the territory of New Mexico. It called attention to the fact that Senator Judah P. Benjamin, later Secretary of State of the Southern Confederacy, and, still later, one of the outstanding members of the English Bar, had maintained at the time of the passage of the confirmatory act in 1860 that under Mexican colonization laws no claimant could receive a grant of more than 11 square leagues. One wonders why the Maxwell and Sangre de Cristo Grants were not held subject to this limitation. This constitutes a prime inconsistency.⁴³

In nearly every session of Congress for many years Mr. Otis introduced resolutions calling for investigations of the alleged frauds. The Congress never took any action but it did set up the Court of Private Land Claims in 1891. The hostility born of the inclusion of more than 1,700,000 acres in the Maxwell Grant and the subsequent expulsion of the settlers will die only with the passing of the first three or four generations of men and women whose ancestors participated in that near civil war and lost.

THE SURVEY OF THE MAXWELL GRANT

On May 30, 1869, the Surveyor General of New Mexico submitted for approval to the Commissioner of the General Land Office at Washington a contract for a survey of the Maxwell Grant. It was stated that the estimated area of the claim was in the neighborhood of 2,000,000 acres. Thereafter on September 10, 1869, the Commissioner of the General Land Office decided that the confirmation by Congress in 1860 did not warrant a survey of the entire region and found that 22 square leagues was the extent of the confirmation by Congress.

Lucien Maxwell appealed to the Secretary of the Interior who affirmed the holding of the General Land Office and said that it was the purpose and intent of Congress to grant 11 square leagues to each of the two original claimants.

Five years later the Commissioner of the Land Office instructed the Surveyors General of New Mexico henceforth to consider the disputed area as public land and to extend the Public surveys over it. Many individual entries were made under the homestead and preemption laws and several thousand people took up their homes in that section.

The land was assessed for taxes in 1874, '75 and '76. When they were not paid the land was offered for sale at public auction.

⁴³Mexican Land Titles in Colorado, *supra*, p. 3.

M. W. Mills, a member of the New Mexico Legislature, purchased at the sale and then transferred his title to the Hon. Thomas B. Catron, United States Attorney for the territory.

Subsequent to the issuance of the tax deed, the current commissioner of the General Land Office in 1877 ordered the survey of the Maxwell Grant. The Surveyor General then entered into a contract with Robert T. Marmon and John T. Elkins, a brother of Stephen B. Elkins, one time Congressman from New Mexico, and, later, Senator from West Virginia, to make the survey.⁴⁴

Therein lies the difficulty. William A. Kelleher has written a book entitled *The Maxwell Land Grant, a New Mexico Item* wherein he lays great stress upon the fact that one of the surveyors was the brother of the dominating character, Stephen B. Elkins, and charges that the extension of the acreage beyond 22 square leagues was fraudulent. Kelleher makes out a good case for the opponents of the Grant. His book is an interesting account of the problems of certain groups of our pioneers.

Gustavus Myers in his *History of Great American Fortunes* discusses what he terms colossal private land frauds which he asserts were committed in New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, California, and other states and territories.⁴⁵

Myers makes Elkins his major villain, also. Then he dips his pen in vitriol as he describes the manner in which the extended Maxwell Grant was conducted by its later owners. He asserts that the Supreme Court of the United States in sustaining the validity of the Maxwell Grant by the Act of June 21, 1860, established virtually a new grant.⁴⁶ The story of the ousting of settlers who had made filings and established their homes in the honest belief that they were on public domain is painted in high colors by Kelleher and Myers, as well as in the reports of the Committee on Public Land Claims to the House. Kelleher's story is a detailed account of the near civil war which developed.

To an outsider at this late date it is difficult to understand how the survey managed to take in a great area to the north of what was undoubtedly considered as the Maxwell Grant in the earlier years and which eventually included, along with the valuable coal and pasture lands of northern New Mexico, 265,000 acres in present Colorado.

The question of the validity of the Maxwell Grant went to the Supreme Court of the United States and was finally settled there on rulings with which no lawyer can quarrel.

We might well speculate as to what Kelleher, Myers, Congressman Otis and other writers might have said had they known

⁴⁴*Idem*, p. 4.

⁴⁵Myers, *History of Great American Fortunes*, p. 651.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 655.

of a statement by the late F. E. Dunlavy, Treasurer of Las Animas County, which is recorded in the source book of this Society. Dunlavy said that he heard a conversation between one of his employers, John Cooke of the general merchandising firm of Cooke and Davis, with Uncle Dick Wootton, Indian scout and Mountain man, who built the toll road across Raton Pass paralleling the line of the Santa Fe. Dunlavy says that Wootton asserted that John T. Elkins, one of the surveyors, hired Wootton to help him move the north corner stone of the Maxwell Grant farther north. It was intended to place the stone at the south city limits of Trinidad but this plan was changed because of fear of the Santa Fe Railroad, which owned the town of Starkville and the territory north to the city of Trinidad. For that reason it was placed at the south boundary of the town of Starkville. It took three days with a wagon and team to accomplish the change, according to this conversation. This fact may shed some light on the extent of the disputed area which was finally included in the survey.⁴⁷

According to A. W. Archibald, at one time United States Marshal at Trinidad and until recent years a successful and respected member of the Southern Colorado Bar, who worked for Lucien Maxwell, and traveled with him over the Maxwell Grant, Lucien considered the Raton Mountains as his north boundary and agreed that the watershed which carried water northward belonged to the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant, while the watershed south toward the Canadian River was claimed by Maxwell. During Maxwell's life he never thought of or claimed any other dividing line.

The memorial to the late Senator Samuel de Busk at Trinidad contains many interesting documents including the Archibald statement from which we quote:

Maxwell sold his land to purchasers who proved to be unscrupulous. They conceived the scheme of acquiring 250,000 acres of land more than they had bought. Their purchase was not for a definite number of acres but for a domain described by metes and bounds. They boldly decided to claim the Raton Peak to be Fisher's Peak and moved their north line to correspond.⁴⁸

THE SANGRE DE CRISTO SURVEY

As the result of the official Kellogg Survey of the Sangre de Cristo Grant an area lying north of Trinchera Creek was included in that claim and specifically described in the patent which was issued to Carlos Beaubien in 1881.⁴⁹ Ranchers on Ute, Sangre de Cristo and Indian Creeks, together with the people living in Russell and other towns along the right-of-way of the

⁴⁷Las Animas County Interviews, II, doc. 33, p. 190.

⁴⁸*Idem.* p. 183.

⁴⁹*Senate Executive Doc. No. 142, 47th Congress, 1st session.*

Rio Grande, were dispossessed. Some 300 or more entries are found on the records of Costilla County of land transactions involving the disputed acreage.

Investments in great numbers, but, perhaps, never in any large individual amounts were lost when the survey was approved. This appears to have resulted in an open conflict, however, as was the case on the Maxwell.

Similar difficulties arose between the settlers under the public land laws and the claimants under the Grant on the Conejos. It did not involve any survey because none was ever made but one man was killed in the front yard of an agent for the grantees at Guadalupe.⁵⁰ However, the Conejos had a different origin. The delivery of possession of separate tracts was made to many individuals and evidently no thought was given to claiming the entire acreage within the out-boundaries amounting to about 2,000,000 acres. When the Court of Private Land Claims denied the petitions of all the individuals who presented themselves at Santa Fe in 1900, no survey was needed.

The blame for the whole situation is found in the delay in making the surveys for which our government, itself, was responsible. By a prompt investigation of the official documents, the letters and protests which were filed in the Interior Department, followed immediately by surveys, contention might easily have been avoided. The passage of further laws as Surveyor General Pelham suggested, would have accomplished wonders.

The complete justification for the Grant system was contained in the eloquent argument of Frank Springer of the New Mexico Bar in his argument on behalf of the company before the Supreme Court of the United States, where the legality of the Maxwell grant was upheld.⁵¹ Without considering the question of unfair surveys or other conditions which developed subsequently, we must accord to Mr. Springer's statement full agreement and approval insofar as he answered the charge that the grant was not justified.

This account of Colorado's land grants may well be concluded with the quotation of a few paragraphs from that speaker's remarkable argument:

The grantees of these lands paid for them, not in money, but in the service they then gave the state, and by the risks they took in maintaining a foothold upon them. And the same may be said of the early American pioneers who acquired them from their Mexican owners. I doubt if any of those who now bawl the loudest about the Maxwell Grant would have had either the sagacity to secure it as

⁵⁰Deposition of Jose Maria Chavez taken in behalf of Plaintiff in case of Crescencio Valdez v. United States, at Abiquiu, New Mexico, March 1, 1900, before Associate Justice Wilbur F. Stone of United States Court of Private Land Claims.

⁵¹United States v. The Maxwell Land Grant Company, et al., 122 U.S. 365.

Maxwell did, or the courage to hold it through the perils of a quarter of a century of Indian warfare. . . .

And I say now, after the labors of the pioneers for half a century have made it safe and comfortable to live there, it lies not in the mouth of any man coming there amid the ease and luxury of a palace car, to say that Mexico had no right to make these grants, and the grantees no right to own them. The United States, so far as it depended upon its legislative and judicial departments, has never sought to evade the obligations imposed upon it by this treaty. It has desired to acknowledge and confirm the property rights derived from Mexico. Whether great or small, in every case where it is evident that the title would have been recognized or perfected by the Mexican authorities, it has, as this court has said, not sought to discover forfeitures, nor enforce rigorous conditions. It has not sought to defeat them by a rigid adhesion to strict rules, or the application of refined technicalities. It has endeavored to act as a great nation, ready and anxious to perform its treaty stipulations, ungrudgingly and liberally, as the law and policy of nations enjoin. Its declared purpose, as long ago stated by this court, has been to authenticate titles, and to afford the solid guaranty to rights which ensue from their full acknowledgment by the supreme authority. . . .

Macauley has somewhere given a picture of the British public in one of its periodic attacks of morality, and I am not sure but it might equally apply to those paroxysms of virtue into which a portion of the American public occasionally works itself. At such times, the cry of fraud becomes epidemic throughout the land, and is echoed far and wide. It is taken up by every man who covets the possession of his neighbor. It is the cry of indolence against activity and energy; of envy against success; of the sluggard against the vigilant. It is the cry of every man who has slept away his opportunities, against those who were shrewd to think and bold to act when the time was ripe. It is the cry of every demagogue, who is looking for some popular wave upon which he may ride into public favor. And in the majority of such cases, as in the case before us, it is found after all to be little more than clamor—vox, et praeterea nihil.⁵²

⁵²Twitchell, *Spanish Archives of New Mexico*, I, p. 54 ff.

possibly because their editors pictured their towns as jumping-off points for the trip West, with the increasing prosperity that would result; but it seems quite probable also that they were overwhelmed by the reports and were carried away along with thousands of others by the gold fever.

This paper deals with a brief investigation of the Pike's Peak Gold Rush as it was publicized in the Old Northwest—especially in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa—by the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, by far the most widely read newspaper in that area. The general reception to the gold rush news was strikingly different in the *Press and Tribune* from its reception elsewhere, in at least two ways: first, the paper was frankly cynical of the fabulous reports and warned its readers against believing them; secondly, the *Press and Tribune* was quick to publish any reports available concerning the agricultural prospects of the Pike's Peak Region.

The *Press and Tribune*, like all ante-bellum newspapers, was a master at copying *in toto* letters, editorials, or news items from other newspapers. For some weeks in the summer and early autumn of 1858, it published fabulous letters about the Pike's Peak Region which were lifted from various Missouri Valley papers. By September 16, 1858, the newspaper, in an editorial, even went so far as to state that "the Kansas gold region seems to be far more inviting than that upon the Frazer River." Within two weeks, however, the *Tribune* had pulled in its head, quoting an unfavorable account and adding: "It is possible that previous accounts from the borders are exaggerations got up for speculative purposes by cunning traders . . ."²

By January, 1859, the *Press and Tribune* appears to have formulated its policy toward the Pike's Peak Rush. It was a policy of caution.

We have said, and again repeat it, that we would advise no man to go to Pike's Peak next spring who is in possession of steady employment. Let those who are out of work, or of a roving, adventurous nature make the experiment, if they choose. If the thing proves a success there will be plenty of gold a year hence; if it turns out like the Frazer River speculation, the fewer that go there the better. . . .³

In the months to come several alarmingly discouraging reports appeared in the *Tribune*. A remarkably accurate letter was published on January 25th, in which the writer blamed the excitement on the towns in the Missouri Valley, "which aspire to be outfitting points for the gold region;" as well as upon the

Reception of the Pike's Peak Fever in The Chicago Press and Tribune*

By RICHARD A. BARTLETT

Because nearly a hundred thousand people responded to the gold excitement and trekked Westward to the Pike's Peak Country in 1859, the general impression has existed that the fabulous reports which made their way Eastward were accepted at their face value and were so published by the newspapers. An article appearing some time ago in *The Colorado Magazine* shows the gullibility of the newspapers in the towns up and down the Missouri Valley.¹ These newspapers printed fabulous tales of the diggings,

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¹James F. Willard, "Spreading the News of the Early Discoveries of Gold in Colorado," VI, No. 3 (May, 1929), pp. 98-104. See also LeRoy Hafen, "Colorado Gold Rush, Contemporary Letters and Reports, 1850-1859," in *Southwest Historical Series*, Vol. X (Glendale, Cal., The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1941).

²*Chicago Press and Tribune*, September 29, 1858. For the California attitude toward Pike's Peak, see Robert H. Bahmer, "The Colorado Gold Rush and California," *Colorado Magazine*, VII, No. 6 (November, 1930), pp. 222-229, 229.

³January 13, 1859.

miners already on Cherry Creek who "are for keeping up the excitement, in order to draw crowds of gold hunters in the spring, when they expect to sell their claims and cabins for large sums, and return home." The writer pointed out that Cherry Creek was "a little stream which a man can easily jump across," that traders in the Pike's Peak Region who had anticipated great sales due to expected immigration to Utah and California (which had been halted by the Mormon War) were keeping up the gold excitement, hoping "to draw people out there, when they can sell their goods at enormous prices." And a later correspondence warned: "No thousand dollar nuggets astonish men's visions as they stub their toes. It is only by labor that wealth can be got even there."⁴

On the 28th of March, when the gold fever was at its highest, the *Press and Tribune* stated its policy and ran a column-long interview which its editors had held with a gold seeker passing through on his way East. "We have never ventured the opinion that gold would be found in paying quantities," stated the newspaper, "but have from time to time advised all persons in possession of steady employment to stay at home and attend to their businesses until the adventurers had spent a summer in the mining regions, and removed all the doubts which invested the subject. We still give the same advice. . . . More cherries will be found at home than at Cherry Creek, and we believe there is more gold to be dug out of every Illinois farm than the owners will ever produce by quitting the home diggings for those on the headwaters of the Arkansas and Platte."

Of great interest is the column-long report of the interview, mentioned above, with one Charles Nichols, bound for Ohio but said to have prospected "from the *Spanish Peaks* on the South to the *Medicine Bow* on the North." The *Tribune* noted that Mr. Nichols "had no idea we would tell our readers what he told us." Mr. Nichols enlightened the minds of the editors considerably.

He told them that he had dropped his pick and pan in October, 1858, when he first heard of the gold fever in the East, and had become "a genuine Western speculator. . . . and turned his attention to the more profitable business of laying out towns and cities, and fixing prices upon corner lots." He said that no one averaged a dollar a day or even fifty cents. The best he had heard of was "made by a company of six men, who averaged three dollars a day for two weeks, but they worked hard and had happened to find an extra rich placer. But the general average of the miners was not one third or fourth so much. . . ."

While the hard-headed editors of the *Press and Tribune* maintained a "show-me" policy on the gold stories, they were

⁴February 4, 1859.

quick to publish, and accept, evidently—the stories told of agricultural possibilities lying in the areas of Western Kansas and Nebraska. As early as September 16, 1858, the *Tribune* editorialized on the agricultural prospects of the region. "The county [stated the *Tribune*] . . . is described by Fremont as a plain, and is generally spoken of as a desert, yet the soil is excellent, capable of supporting a large agricultural and pastoral population. [The region] lies just upon the middle line of Western immigration, and those who go there may be said to run no risk at all. If they do not find gold so abundant as they anticipate, they can turn to the cultivation of the soil, and thus contribute toward the establishment of an important outpost of civilization." Thus the myth of a Great American Desert was broken almost as soon as the gold stories began to come in. By September 25, 1858, in fact, a *Press and Tribune* correspondent was predicting "a new state on the Rocky Mountain slope."

On the 13th of January, 1859, two columns of gold rush correspondence from other newspapers appeared in the *Tribune*. Nearly every letter referred in some way to the agricultural possibilities of the region. One letter stated that "farming claims are being taken up all around us, although the claimants will have to await a treaty with the Indians. . . . before their claims will be made valid." Some of the claimants, according to the writer, "will marry Indian women, and thus attempt to secure their claims." A letter lifted from the *Leavenworth Times*, written by William Larimer, stated that "the land here is different from what I expected to see. Plenty of timber—both pine and cottonwood." Other letters spoke of the country bidding "fair to be the first territory of the United States. . . . The soil is excellent and well adapted to cultivation, being of a deep, rich and loamy nature, and also well-watered." And a last letter written in this group said that "the farming land is good, rich in soil, and extends in the Platte and Cherry Creek Valleys from 100 to 140 miles. . . ." Several weeks later a correspondent wrote that "it has not yet been decided whether the agriculturalist who raises more products for the new markets opened, or the gold washer, will outstrip in the race for wealth."⁵

The interview with Charles Nichols, previously mentioned, ended with some amazing truths about the Pike's Peak Country. Nichols told the editors that "one tenth" of the gold country was susceptible to cultivation. "Fertile lands [Nichols was quoted as saying] were observed in all the valleys, capable of producing wheat, corn, oats and potatoes, in abundance. This climate, though severe in winter, from its great elevation, is delightful in the summer and fall months and exceedingly healthy. . . . Multitudes of

⁵*Chicago Press and Tribune*, February 25, 1859.

small streams break down from the mountains, and each has its fertile strip of land, and for the most part, they are fringed with cottonwood, willow, cherry and pine. . . ."⁶

With amazing foresight, the editorial concluded as follows:

Whether gold be found in paying quantities or not, one thing is certain the country will soon be settled by grain growers and stock raisers. Farmers will find gold in corn fields and flocks and herds, if not in the ground; but the multitude of gold seekers may return home next fall, disappointed and disgusted with their season's adventures and hardships.⁷

From its interpretation in the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, one is inclined to suspect that a very normal land hunger, as well as the lure of gold, was in part responsible for the Pike's Peak Rush of 1859.

⁶*Chicago Press and Tribune*, March 28, 1859.

⁷*Ibid.*

A History of Mining Machinery Manufacture in Colorado*

ELLSWORTH C. MITICK

THE COLORADO IRON WORKS COMPANY

The Pioneer Colorado establishment in the manufacture of mining, milling, and smelting equipment is the Colorado Iron Works Company, founded in 1860, just one year after the Gregory, Jackson, and subsequent gold discoveries made necessary the presence in Colorado mining districts of adequate equipment for working the mines. The suddenness of the discoveries led to an early reliance upon Eastern manufacturers for implements and machinery relative to mining the rapidly growing number of lodes. The hazards and delays incident to shipment from remote localities of the East were frequent and annoying to the Colorado miners. In some instances the machinery proved a total failure because it was unsuited to the peculiar characteristics of these mines. A few enterprising men were eager to serve the needs of Colorado miners with Colorado-made machines, and among these were those whose efforts comprise the early history of the Colorado Iron Works. They were ready to prove that machinery of every kind, and of the best quality, could be produced here.

The Colorado Iron Works Company is the culmination of a series of enterprises, more or less isolated, extending over a period of sixteen years before actual incorporation of the company in 1876.

We may trace those sixteen years of enterprises thus: In 1860 two men, Messrs. Fraser and Scoville established a foundry and machine shop on half a block of ground on the west side of Larimer Street,¹ just south of Cherry Creek, for the purpose of repairing machines, making castings, and manufacturing any mining equipment ordered by nearby mines. Used as raw material for hoists and pumps was old machinery which had been wagoned across the plains and never used. In December of 1860 the shops were sold to Joseph M. Marshall. He operated the shops at the Larimer street location until 1862. Since Marshall's interests shifted to the coal fields near Erie, Colorado, he sold the shops in that year to a trio of men, A. G. Langford, William L. Lee, and Milo Lee. These men felt that the foundry should be closer the mining districts, and moved the shops to Black Hawk. The Black Hawk Foundry and Machine Shop was known to miners in that locality as Langford and Co.'s Foundry. Selected as manager for the machine shop was John Wellington Nesmith who had come to Central City in 1860 from Ohio at the age of 24. He well understood Gilpin County mining, and his successful career with Langford and Company led to his election as an early Senator from Gilpin County.

Langford returned to Denver in 1875, selling the Black Hawk Foundry to Silas Bertenshaw, who continued its successful operation. In Denver, Langford interested F. J. Ebert, Samuel S. Davidson, and William R. Havens in forming a company for the manufacture of mining and milling equipment, and on December 17, 1875, the four men effected the organization of the Colorado Iron Works, setting its capitalization at \$25,000. Shops were located at 471 Larimer Street. In the process of organization, constitution and by-laws for the company were adopted January 27, 1876, and the articles of incorporation were forthcoming from the Colorado government on February 26, 1876,² five months before the admission of Colorado as a state into the union. Serving as president of the company was F. J. Ebert; secretary-treasurer, A. G. Langford; trustee, William R. Havens; and superintendent, Samuel S. Davidson. William R. Havens possessed a good deal of inventive genius, and his "friction clutch" made Colorado Iron hoists the safest large mine hoisters in use.

Operations did not always run smoothly in the years 1876-1879, and financial difficulties beset the company, particularly through the failure of customers to pay for their Colorado Iron Works equipment.³ The four directors felt that a move into the business part of town (that is, closer to Fifteenth Street) was

¹Reports of Denver Board of Trade, 1880, p. 44.

²Records of Colorado Secretary of State.

³Directors' Minute Books for that year.

advisable; Davidson, Ebert, and Langford agreed to donate one-half of their stock, and Havens one-fourth of his, for the proposed move. However, this move was not completed, and directorship of the company changed hands on June 25, 1879, when Nelson Hallock was elected president, Elbert Headley, secretary-treasurer, and John W. Nesmith, superintendent—at a salary of \$300 per month. Nesmith's activities away from the company since his association with Langford at Black Hawk had been with the Kansas-Pacific and Colorado Central Railroads.⁴ With the railroads he had shown the same inventive spirit that had done well with Langford and Company Foundry at Black Hawk. An interesting story relative to one of his inventions bears reporting here:

It seems that great plagues of grasshoppers swarmed the Colorado plains in the 1870s, and at night "camped" on the rails, made warm by the intense heat of the summer sun. When the insects were crushed by the wheels of the Kansas Pacific trains, the tracks became so slick that no friction could be developed and the engines literally "spun their wheels." Nesmith produced a large brush which could be attached to the front of the engines to sweep aside these obstacles to railroading.⁵

Specialties of manufacture in these early days were hoisting and milling machinery such as stamp mills, crushers, Cornish rolls, lead and copper blast furnaces, and Cornish pumps for mines. The Cornish pump proved wonderfully serviceable in relieving mines of water. Mines and mill owners began to comprehend that machinery of the best quality could be obtained right here in Colorado, and every inducement was given them to buy at home. Leadville discoveries of 1878 and 1879 afforded many opportunities for the company to display its equipment there.

It took a fire in August, 1881, to bring Colorado Iron Works into general notice (and also the incompleteness of Denver's water system).⁶ The works and equipment suffered \$150,000 damage in the fire. The fire, however, was to result in the construction of new works, which for five years the directors had planned to construct. Nelson Hallock and John Nesmith had the determination and energy to rebuild on a solid scale. At Thirty-third and Wynkoop Streets they constructed a fireproof building, 100x230 feet, covered with iron-trussed, corrugated roof, with wide walls, twenty-two feet high. The pattern shop was disconnected from the main building. The total floor space of 24,000 feet gave them the largest plant of any single works between St. Louis and San Francisco.⁷

⁴*Rocky Mountain News*, January 1, 1882, p. 13, c. 6.

⁵As related by Mr. T. A. Dickson, President of Company, and nephew of J. W. Nesmith.

⁶*Denver Republican*, September 26, 1881, p. 6.

⁷*Denver Tribune*, September 29, 1881, p. 1.

New equipment, costing about \$50,000 was purchased by Nesmith, who went East to get the required machinery. Two enormous steam hammers were purchased. The anvil, however, was cast by the Company itself. New plant and equipment, with a big demand for their product, made it possible to hire 175 or 200 more men than the 100 who had previously comprised the personnel of the company on Larimer Street.⁸ Business progressed steadily with profits at a sum pleasing to the stockholders; the company was forced to refuse several contracts.⁹

Change of leadership came again September 2, 1886, when John Nesmith, who had long been associated with the company, assumed the presidency. His daughter, Isabel, was chosen secretary, and John H. Morecom, superintendent. Controlling stock in the company was held by these three. Ten years later, when the company was re-incorporated (this time with articles of incorporation in the state of Maine), the top positions were held by the same three. Samuel Hubert Nesmith, younger brother of the president, was to serve as assistant superintendent. Date of their re-incorporation was February 21, 1896. Five-eighths of the new stock was controlled by J. W. Nesmith, two-eighths by Isabel Nesmith Evans, and one-eighth by John Morecom. New by-laws were drawn up and the seal of the company designed in 1896.

The business of the company at this time consisted largely of stamp mills, ball mills, and other machinery for gravity concentration of ores, as well as cyanide machinery for chemical processing. Crushing rolls designed and applied by Frank Cazin, and known as "Cornish rolls" improved ore crushing methods in the 1890s.

After the turn of the century the use of steel cyanide tanks was urged by Colorado Iron Works, and included in estimates made by company engineers on new jobs. This meant replacing old concrete and wooden cyanide tanks, with their susceptibility to climatic conditions and tendencies to crack or warp. Ore gates and irons, ore feeders, hydraulic classifiers, concentration mills, "impact" screens, dumping cars, and complete ore reduction plants were listed in the 1905 catalogues.

In the window of the present office of the Colorado Iron Works on Seventeenth Street, between Wazee and Wynkoop Streets, stands a model of a stamp mill built to scale for the 1893 World Fair in Chicago. Although badly burned in a fire, the model was restored through the efforts of Mr. T. A. Dickson, present president of the company, who began work there in 1903. By 1917 Mr. Dickson had become manager of the company, having

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*

worked in the shops and as a salesman, developing a thorough understanding of the business. Through business agreement with the two daughters of John Nesmith, who had died December 17, 1909, he was able to obtain control of the company interests.

During World War I the company manufactured ship winches for big merchant ships of the United States Fleet. Such manufacture was somewhat similar to that of the old mine hoists. The sudden end of the war left the company with many on hand, and in the confusion with which the government handled disposition of this material as scrap, the company suffered certain financial losses.

The great Pueblo flood of 1921 destroyed the Stearns-Roger Manufacturing Company plant in that city, and Mr. Dickson, sensing the fact that the inevitable establishment of works by that company in Denver would create an even greater competition between machine companies and overlapping of plant equipment, proposed to effect the General Iron Works Company, using one large works to manufacture the designs prepared by the engineering departments of the contributing companies, and sold by their individual sales forces. Working with others, Mr. Dickson helped organize this new idea in manufacture, and at the end of 1921 General Iron Works was doing the manufacturing for Colorado Iron Works, Stearns-Roger, Vulcan Iron Works, Queen City Foundry, and Denver Engineering Works. While the shops were in the process of construction, shops of Colorado Iron and Vulcan Iron were rented and used. The modern plant of General Iron Works was completed in October, 1924, but only three of the original companies were left to participate. Queen City Foundry had sold out to American Manganese Company, and Denver Engineering Works was no longer in existence. The plant at Thirty-third and Wynkoop remained vacant for many years, before being sold to Hugh M. Woods Lumber Company.

During World War II the regular activities of the Colorado Iron Works occupied most of their time, since their useful mine equipment, used in large American mines, like Anaconda and Phelps-Dodge Copper, was vital to the overall war effort. Large numbers of Colorado Iron Classifiers were sent to Russia on lend-lease. The General Iron Works plant was kept busy turning out big demands for machinery. Designed for 250 men, the shops were used by over 1000 men and women during the war.

Today the Colorado Iron Works Company has manufacturing and sales agents throughout the United States, and two of each in Canada, Australia, and South Africa, as well as sales agents in the Philippines. For eighty-seven years this company has sought to fulfill the dreams of A. G. Langford, John W. Nesmith, and

T. A. Dickson that Colorado could produce mining and milling machinery in keeping with the needs of the state, and marketable throughout the world wherever practical mining equipment was necessary.

HENDRIE AND BOLTHOFF MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLY

Today on Eureka Street in Central City, Colorado, just about a block above the historic Teller and Opera Houses, stands the site and part of the original building representing Colorado's oldest foundry and machine shop, manufacturer of mining machinery and haven of repair for broken-down equipment. A plaque on the building today commemorates the event of 1861 by which Hendrie and Butler started an enterprise which was to evolve into the large establishment known to the mining world today as Hendrie and Bolthoff Manufacturing and Supply Company.

The history of this company antedates its Colorado beginnings, for it was as far back as the "fifties" that the Hendrie Iron Works were in operation at Burlington, Iowa, serving the foundry and machine shop needs of saw mills, steamboats, and railroads.

Gold had been discovered on Cherry Creek and other tributaries of the South Platte River in 1858, but it was not until the discoveries of John Gregory, in May, 1859, near Central City and Black Hawk that the need for machinery made here in Colorado became certain.

Charles Hendrie, Sr., of the Hendrie Iron Works of Burlington, came west to investigate the machinery needs of Colorado's infant mining industry. He found that Central City's population had, within a few months, grown to 15,000; mines were opening up everywhere; and a demand for more efficient machinery to meet the peculiar requisites of the region was being heard. Not knowing the mining machinery business himself, he travelled to California in 1860 to study methods and machines used there since the days of Forty-nine.

Returning to Burlington, he set to work manufacturing mining machinery for this new "Eldorado" near the continental divide. The Burlington shops of the Hendrie Iron Foundry (they also had branch shops at Council Bluffs) worked day and night to turn out the equipment wanted by the Colorado miners of Gregory Gulch. The machinery produced was shipped via Hendrie's own ox-train service to Central City and other mining camps. Only a person who knows the geography of Colorado, and the particular location of the Gregory diggings can realize the almost impossible task of transporting heavy machinery from the East to the mining camps of the West.

Charles Hendrie's two sons, Charles F., Jr., and William C., remained in Burlington to operate the Hendrie Foundry there

after their father's departure for Central City, where in partnership with John Butler he started the first foundry and machine shop. Butler remained with Hendrie about one year, and then disappears from the story of the company. No one at present employed with the company can recall other facts about him.¹⁰ The Eureka Foundry and Machine Shop which they constructed was a stone and frame building with dimensions, 25'x50'; and the shop housed a new steam engine of 25 horsepower, an iron planing machine for the repair of machinery, drill presses, lathes, etc.

The partners offered to repair or make any mining machinery for use in the territory, and would cast Freiburg pans for mining on short notice. Orders for quartz mills and steam engines would be filled within sixty days. The motto of the company, as noted in the earliest issues of the *Central City Register Call*, was, "We defy competition."¹¹

Iron and coke needed for their manufacturing processes were brought to Central City from the Missouri River by ox train. Anthracite coal came from Pennsylvania, and had to make a 600-mile trek from St. Joseph, Missouri, or Atchison, Kansas, by wagon train to Denver; thence over the mountains to Central City and Black Hawk. The perseverance of these early entrepreneurs was surely invincible, when one considers the difficulties surmounted by pioneer manufacturers of mining machinery.

Henry Bolthoff, who had worked with Charles Hendrie, Sr., since 1851, serving as shop superintendent of the Burlington plant, became travelling machinist for the Hendrie Company in 1864, and to this job he was able to apply his exceptional abilities in machine repair and design. In May, 1865, he came to Central City to erect an ore mill for the Hope Mining Company, and set up an engine for the Manhattan Company. From the cylinder of an old water pump and two broken, old-fashioned Burleigh air drills, and other scrap, he built the first two self-contained hoisting engines ever built in Colorado.¹² The T-Square used by Bolthoff in designing this historic piece of machinery was made from a piece of an ox-bow and the walnut leaf from a sewing machine. The mining world has this T-Square to thank for some of the most valuable and indispensable mining machinery developed in its history. Throughout his life he was a mining machinist. The stamp mills which he developed in 1898, and his mining hoist of 1900 were so effective that their use became widespread throughout the West.

Leaving behind the Burlington, Iowa, establishment, the Hendrie Brothers, Charles, Jr., and William, came to Central City

¹⁰Interview with Mr. R. W. Hanington.

¹¹*Central City Register Call*, July 16, 1937, p. 30.

¹²*Denver Times*, January 28, 1900, p. 3.

in 1864, and for the next nine years the foundry and machine shop was under the management of the brothers. It was in 1864 that the shops were expanded to a two-story building. In 1867 the Hendrie Brothers manufactured and erected a smelter in Montana, where Edwin B. Hendrie, a younger brother, and later president of the company, was in charge of the smelter foundry and machine shop.

Henry Bolthoff entered the management of the company in 1873, from which event the name "Hendrie Brothers and Bolthoff" represented the leadership for the foundry and machine shop on Eureka Street. During May of the following year a serious fire struck Central City,¹³ necessitating the rebuilding of a large portion of the city. H & B rebuilt on the old site, utilizing the portion of the old stone building which had not burned. The capacity of the shops was more than doubled, and the firm was better able to meet the requirements of those in need of steam engines, boilers, and other mining machinery. Their own machinery was driven by an engine of their own manufacture which showed valuable improvements over previous ones in the shape of Bolthoff's cut-off-valves, which made for saving of fuel in operation of the machine.¹⁴

With the formation of the co-partnership of the Hendrie Brothers and Bolthoff, the company grew rapidly. The inventive genius always made itself felt, and orders from all the West and from foreign countries were received for the Bolthoff Steam Hoist, and Bolthoff Sample Grinder, patented in 1876.

Although business was booming for H & B in Gilpin County and elsewhere, recognition of the fact that Denver would probably become the great distribution center of the West caused them to establish a branch office in Denver on Sixteenth Street, just east of the present Sugar Building on Wazee Street. The following year, 1877, the company moved its offices to 376 Holladay Street (now 1526 Market).

The Hendrie and Bolthoff Manufacturing Company filed articles of incorporation with the Colorado Secretary of State on January 11, 1878; according to the articles, "a company organized for the purpose of carrying on the business of manufacture and sale of mining and milling machinery." The capital stock was to be \$30,000 divided into 600 shares at \$50 each. A board of five trustees was to manage the affairs of the company. Trustees under the new company were Dennis Sullivan, Joe V. Kimber, William Fullerton, Henry Bolthoff, and Charles F. Hendrie. The company, as such, existed for twenty years, and its operations were largely in Gilpin and Arapahoe Counties.

¹³A description of Central City after the fire may be found in Lynn I. Perrigo, *Social History of Central City, Colorado, 1859-1900*. (Typed thesis in University of Colorado Library.)

¹⁴*Rocky Mountain News*, August 29, 1874, p. 4, c. 4.

Old cash books of 1878 reveal such names among Hendrie and Bolthoff patrons as: Charles Boettcher, Leadville; Eben Smith, a partner of David Moffat, and later the founder of the Mine and Smelter Supply Company; H. A. W. Tabor; J. K. Mullen, founder of the Colorado milling industry; Chester S. Morey; Senator Nathaniel P. Hill, founder of the smelting industry in Colorado; Mayor Wolf Londoner of Denver; Governor James B. Grant of the smelting industry; and William Ainsworth of the Denver Gas Company.

In another year the company's main offices were moved to Denver, and the foundry on Eureka Street at Central City was sold to McFarlane and Company. November, 1880, saw the purchase of the first six lots of the present warehouse properties in the vicinity of Twenty-third and Inca Streets. In 1881 the offices were moved from Holladay Street to those they now occupy at Seventeenth and Wazee Streets.

William C. Hendrie moved east in 1881, and a friend of the Hendrie brothers, Henry P. Waterman, entered the employ of the company. His brother, Herbert Waterman, father of the present president of H & B joined in 1885. Edwin B. Hendrie, whom we referred to relative to the Montana smelter contracts of 1867, became secretary-treasurer in 1889, at the time when his brother C. F. Hendrie was president and Henry Bolthoff, vice-president.

Three travelling salesmen were employed by the company to visit all mining camps and take orders from customers needing stamp mills, hoisting engines, sampling machinery, hoisting rope, or steam pumps. The company served not only as an agent for its own manufactures, but also as general and special agents for most of the machinery manufacturers of the east and west.

In 1898 the company reincorporated under its present name—the Hendrie and Bolthoff Manufacturing and Supply Company. Edwin B. Hendrie, who had first been president in 1891, continued in that capacity under the new articles of incorporation. It was in this year that C. F. Hendrie retired from active participation in the company.

H & B catalogues at the turn of the century are huge—the size of a small encyclopedia, containing a vast number of descriptions and pictures of the machinery, which they both manufacture and supply. An 80-stamp mill was designed in 1900 for the Boston and Colorado Consolidated Mines of Black Hawk. Bolthoff's automatic ore feeder was the only revolving disk feeder in use at that time not operated by clutches and gears. The company continued to make a specialty of boring engines and pump cylinders in place.

Transportation of equipment from company warehouses to the customers often presented an interesting picture, for it was mostly into rugged mountain terrain that the machinery must go. The reliable old pack-mule was burdened with the transport of heavy equipment mountainward. The usual limit of weight for a pack-mule is 200 pounds; so Hendrie and Bolthoff had to devise a means of "sectionalizing" the mine hoist into small units so that it might be packed on the backs of the mules. The wire cable couldn't be cut, but the problem was solved by tying several loops of the cable on the back of one mule, extending the cable to the next mule, and so on until the cable had all been loaded. If one mule went over the cliff, he could fall only a few feet, being held up by the wire rope on the other mules.¹⁵

Wagons and the harnesses for the teams had to be custom made in Denver for H & B's extensive delivery of boilers, engines, hoists, compressors, and other machinery used in milling operations. The company at the turn of the century had thirty draft horses, nine single wagons, and eight transfer wagons to use in transporting the machinery to the mountain camps. The first truck used by the company for delivery did not come in until 1909, but it was long after this before automotive power could be applied to mountain deliveries.

Because of the rapid expansion of the business at the turn of the century purchase of the large building at the corner of Seventeenth and Wynkoop (across from the Union Station) was made, and remodeling was undertaken. This building today serves as offices and retail store for the company.

The years from 1900 to 1910 saw a tremendous expansion of the United States industrially, and H & B kept pace, creating new departments to handle equipment for new industries. No longer was the company engaged in manufacture, but only in the distribution of the manufactures of others. Installation and supply of the power plant for the Tabor Opera House, the May Company, the First National Bank, the Phipps Sanitarium (now part of Lowry Field), and the Boston Building were completed. The municipal plants for Longmont and Loveland were designed and supplied by H & B.

A machine tool and shop equipment department was added during the first World War to service the needs of Ingersoll-Rand Company, a manufacturer of drills and compressors. An electrical department with complete stocks of motors, generators,

¹⁵H & B Brochure, 1937, p. 9.

wiring devices, and household appliances followed development in that field. An auto supplies department was created in 1915. In 1921 H & B was appointed distributor for Colorado and adjoining states by the Radio Corporation of America.

Branches have been established at Pueblo, Colorado, Deadwood, South Dakota, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, to provide immediate service to patrons in those territories.

During World War II H & B served as distributors in "rounding up" vitally needed equipment for companies manufacturing government equipment. Their extensive contracts throughout the United States made their work highly important.¹⁶

THE STROEHLE MACHINERY AND SUPPLY COMPANY

Some opera or drama enthusiast will, at each performance in the historic old Central City Opera House, sit in a chair named in honor of George Stroehle, a Civil War Veteran who came to Black Hawk in 1865 and established in that year the Stroehle Machinery and Supply Company. The history of this company has been continuous, and relates the story of the Stroehle family, which has maintained directorship of the company from its origin to the present. This is a record which no other Colorado business can boast.¹⁷

Stroehle had brought with him a mechanical skill earned in Rock Island, Illinois, and an enthusiasm for manufacture and repair of mining machinery in a community which could readily put him to work. Traveling from mining camp to mining camp, he found his services much in demand. Skilled repairmen for boilers, hoists, pumps, and other mining equipment, were few; new boilers were in demand in Gilpin County; so Stroehle decided to manufacture and repair those items in a shop in Black Hawk.¹⁸ Having transported his wife and children to Black Hawk on a long six weeks journey (in which they almost lost their lives in Cherry Creek quicksand¹⁹), he built a home at the mouth of Dry Gulch, another the following year on the location of the Black Hawk Mill, and in 1868 at Gregory Gulch. The following year a home was erected in Chase Gulch, where some of the family still reside. Death came to George Stroehle March 22, 1912. Since then the business has been conducted by sons, nephews, and grandsons.

(To Be Continued)

¹⁶Mr. R. W. Hanington, Vice-president. With the company since 1897.

¹⁷*Central City Register Call*, February 2, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁸These shops are on the main road from Black Hawk to Central City, in the center of the town of Black Hawk.

¹⁹As related by Fred Stroehle, July 13, 1946.