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The Pioneer Store at Greenhorn on the Santa Fe Trail

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IN 1824, twenty-five wheeled vehicles formed a caravan at Independence, Missouri, to mark out a wagon road to Santa Fe, New Mexico. For three gruelling months they followed the weaving trails made by pack mules with their three hundred pound burdens.

The road marked a new era in Western civilization. It tied the American to old Spanish settlements; the descendants of the Pilgrim fathers to those of the Spanish Grandees who dated back to 1493.

In 1850 the first government mail coach reduced the time required to one month. By 1861 the longest coach drive, without changing the six mules, was the 240 miles between Fort Larned, Kansas, and Fort Lyon, Colorado.

The advent of the seventies found the schedule reduced to two weeks, by driving day and night and switching teams every twenty miles at Change Stations. One of these was Greenhorn Post Office, where my father, George Sears, started a miniature department store, catering to the needs of grimy travelers on the Old Santa Fe Trail and to the scattered stockmen who had settled on the mountain streams. As Postmasters for thirty years, we passed out mail to an ever-growing patronage.

In the seventies, the mail on Barlow and Sanderson's Stage Line had to be changed by lamp light at 2 in the morning, while sleepy, hungry passengers bought cheese and crackers, canned salmon and sardines, cigarettes and chewing tobacco. Winter and summer, coal-oil lamps with quicksilver reflectors served as silent salesmen as my father was changing the leather-sack mail while dim lanterns flitted from tugs to lines in the hurried swapping of teams. The rapid transit of the seventies meant trotting from station to station on twelve-mile relays.

Topographically and commercially, the Greenhorn Stand was the logical location for a trading post. Naturally, the main stream

*Mr. Sears spent his boyhood on the Greenhorn, where his father operated the store.

and Post Office took their names from the first towering chain of mountains piercing the clear atmosphere westward.

The 12,000-foot timber-lined peak of Old Baldy saw the impounded ice flow of the Glacier Age break through the sandstone barrier—gouging out deep canyons on its way to the sea, leaving in the wake of the ice torrent, chiseled hogbacks to end abruptly fifteen miles from the Peak.

Indian trails had marked the low gap between the limestone ridges and the sandstone canyons that modern engineers have had to accept as the logical highway westward. A traffic center, nature-made. The original Right Fork going south from Greenhorn led to Fort Garland, Taos, and Santa Fe at the time of the Taos Massacre. Later, the Left Fork ran to Raton, Las Vegas and Santa Fe, passing over Dick Wooton's Toll Road beyond Trinidad. North of Greenhorn one trail skirted the foothills to where the Arkansas River broke through the Rockies. The other trail led to the mouth of the *Fontaine qui bouille*, where Pueblo now stands. All four of these hoof-gouged trails can still be followed.

The emigrant trains going south and west, trail herds drifting north, bands of Indians as late as 1870, Mexican War troop-trains, all did their part, with the wind as an ally, in digging the broad troughs over hills and prairie lands, to be known to us as the Santa Fe Trail.

A network of deep canyons east, with the Greenhorn Range west, threw this immense road traffic through the low gap of 6,200-foot elevation at Greenhorn. From the east came the sturdy pioneers with visions of wealth lurking behind each new horizon. They, who conquered the West by determination and perseverance, trudged by their ox-teams at one mile an hour or twelve miles a day, over the same route that the auto of today reels off at sixty miles an hour. The ox-train emigrants lived in an age when a bathtub was almost unknown, slept on the hard ground in wet blankets, ate food spiced with trail dust, drank the run of the streams where the stock watered, warmed in stale kegs strapped to the covered wagons. Yet they have set us examples of longevity.

H. T. Austin crossed the Plains in 1863, eventually settling on the Big Graneros, one-half mile north of the Greenhorn store, where an old rock chimney now stands to the west of the highway. He was the father of twenty-one children and died at the age of 91 years, 6 months and one day. A son, John, lacked but one day of living to the age of his father. John and Tom Austin helped my father dig the old well in 1874 at Greenhorn, where the store was built in 1875.

George Sears shipped his emigrant outfit from Valpariso, Indiana, to the end of the railroad at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and



THE GREENHORN STORE
The famous well is in the foreground, beside the telephone pole.

crossed the plains in a prairie schooner to locate on the Greenhorn in 1872. He died in California at the age of 84.

For sixty years the cold water of the old well has quenched the thirst of ox-team and auto drivers alike; and there is an amusing story which will illustrate its renown. Having served the public for a half century gratuitously, together with the welcoming shade of a line of cottonwood trees that were planted as saplings brought from the J. B. Hudson Ranch on the Huerfano; there finally came along the "hew to the line" technical State Highway Engineers ready to chop down the trees and fill up the obliging old well, so that everything would conform to their ideas of alignment. It required the combined prestige of the owners, the countryside, County Commissioners, and the other officials to preserve the old landmarks in order that posterity might enjoy the salient features of the Greenhorn—cold water and shade.

More than one traveler feels a sense of deep gratitude to that old well. One day on the street of Pueblo, far back in the team and buggy age when wagon ruts made one horse a novelty, my father and a friend met one hot afternoon. A traveled-stained city man joined them.

"Hello, Jim, what's happened to you and where have you been?" my father's friend asked the city man in anxious surprise.

"Why, I just drove in from Trinidad. Nearly died of thirst until I ran into a well some damn fool had dug right in the middle

of the road; but that pure, cold water saved my life. If I had that well in town I could sell the water at a dime a glass."

"I want you to meet Mr. Sears, Jim," answered my father's friend.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Sears." And then he continued, "Do you live around these parts?"

"Yes, I do," said my father, "I'm the man that saved your life."

"Saved my life, what do you mean?"

"Oh," my father replied, "just the damn fool that dug that well."

In this well's long life of public service, more than one heavy water trough has been battered down by butting wagon-tongue ends as the thirsty teams leaned on their tugs while the creaking bucket rope pulley warned the store clerk of a prospective customer. During the late drouth, when the streams dried up, it was the only convenient water from Pueblo to Walsenburg. A day's drive of thirty miles from Pueblo and similar distances from Walsenburg, La Veta and Gardiner, made the hotel known as "The Thirty Mile House." Here supper, bed and breakfast could be had for one dollar. Accommodations for the team were provided in the barn at the same price. The surfaced lumber in the hotel was shipped direct from Chicago, making the building the finest of its day in the community. It held a full house of ten boarders during the hard winter of '79 and '80 when two feet of snow fell and stayed until Spring, making it necessary to haul in supplies from the railroad by bobsleds.

The eighties were the old heyday of Greenhorn, when it boasted a doctor, T. D. Baird; a lawyer, C. C. Stein; druggist and notary, J. H. McDaniel; besides an Odd Fellow Hall above the store; a saloon and drugstore across the street; an all-around blacksmith shop; a wagon-shop, where a 3" wagon was made; lumber yard; a grain-grinding mill; and a horseback mail route to Wetmore, tying up with Canon City Post Office.

Oyster supper dances were given at intervals in the Odd Fellow Hall and they drew crowds for a radius of thirty miles. Numbers were sold at \$2.50 each. They permitted a patron to dance in the two sets in a quadrille only when his number was called. It was an all-night affair lasting until sun-up.

In the records of Colorado Cowland, '79 was known as the "Dieout" year and P. T. Barnum, Cleveland Cattle Company, Billy Wilson, Lonnie Horne, Hamilton T. Pope, and many other open range men lost nearly all of their entire herds. Texas dogies turned loose on the ranges drifted into settlements and died in windrows. Out of the thousand head turned loose in the U. T. E. brand of Hamilton Pope, only eight were gathered the next year.

Charley Goodnight's last big trail herd passed through the Greenhorn in 1875. He left Texas with 20,000 head and turned them loose on the north side of the Arkansas River at Goodnight, or the Rock Canyon, west of Pueblo, on what is known as the Teller Pasture Country. It was an immense undertaking, considering merely the feed and water problem. They drank 43 tons of water and ate 200 tons of grass a day on short rations, and would string out ten abreast for two and a third miles or 23 miles Indian file. Some 80,000 carved the soil and pounded it into powder that rose in the sky to be seen for ten miles. Forty trail-herders fought this hungry, thirsty herd of dumb animals, compelling it to follow the one man who led them. At his heels were the aged steers. With one mess-wagon in the lead and another on the drag, the two crews held the strong with the weak cattle while other wagons, scattered through the trailing herd, had huge bull hide swung like a pouch under the wagon-bed, into which the calf-drop of the night, born on the trail, were thrown to be dumped out on the bed ground at night for their mothers to suckle them.

Then came the first brain-child of man to change the patronage of the old trail store, the grand-parent of rapid transit—first danger signal of the passing of the old West—the steam engine.

Climatic products and natural resources of cotton and corn, coal and mineral, sheep and cattle, needed faster passage north, south, east, and west. The dust clouds in the sky of wagon trains and trail herds that marked the avenues of transportation took on new alignments and the color of smoke. With the increasing ratio of curling smoke periscoping the western sky, the dust clouds on the old trail gradually disappeared. Wagon trains and trail herds came no more by the old store. But in their wake was the trek of scattered bands of sheep and shearers working their way north with the shearing season and trickling back in the late summer and fall. In the early spring the Mexican pilgrimage for gold started far south in New Mexico to end on the sheep ranges of Montana.

Poverty in its worst aspects was the trademark of the north-bound. Some tramped the dusty trail in homemade moccasins with their thin blankets for a pack while others prodded lean, lop-eared burros with heavily loaded packsaddles. From the burros' load of tanned sheep pelts and frayed serapes swung smoked coffee pots and greasy frying-pans clinking with the cadence of tinkling bells hung on the necks of the descendants of Balaam.

Rickety old carts, creaking buggies, paintless, wobble-wheeled spring wagons that made four separate wheels-tracks, all tied together with baling wire and rawhide. The antique vehicles groaned and creaked under their loads as the droop-headed, leg-weary little Mexican ponies drew up to the Free Camp House.

The cavalcade of peaked-hipped, corduroyed-ribbed, sore-backed, galled-shouldered road stock swelled their lean flanks with the cold water from the old well before being turned, hobbled for the night, to crop the short winter-worn grass.

Their owner fared little better on black coffee and thin tortillas, for mananas had come too fast for the winter store of Mexican beans. Wrinkled swarthy skin was draped over high cheekbones; sunken eyes squinted from sun-glare and trail dust. Some men acknowledged past acquaintance with the store clerk for "Major domo" tobacco and cigarette papers, while others of the band used corn-husks to roll their own.

The more affluent might buy a dime's worth of hay to feed his tired horse in the long shed stable; while another built a fire in the free camp house with wood at the door for their convenience. The tiers of rough board bunks were a poor substitute for the Mexicans' chief characteristic hospitality. It was a transient home, however, that our Spanish friends chose to enjoy twice a year.

The cavalcade that treked north each spring gauged the size of the order my father bought from Butler Bros. or Marshall Field and Company of Chicago. On one of these buying trips he said to Fields Lytle, "I need a good watch, Fields—here's \$100 in gold—pick it out for me." And when he came home I crawled up on his lap and found in his vest pocket—a watch. One side was engraved with his initials, the other with the year 1882. The watch and his heart, in tune with each other, checked off forty-six years of time; then one day both stopped at 10:15 a. m. The faithful watch had regulated the periods for taking prescribed medicine until his death. This gold watch, an Odd Fellow emblem, and the stiff-bosom white shirt and black tie marked my father as "El Senor" with his Spanish customers.

When shearing was over, it was an entirely different appearing contingency that trickled into our camp ground. Slick Wyoming and Montana teams hitched to new light wagons or led by pack horses were watered at the friendly well beside the road before they were turned loose on the green pastures for a day of rest while owners crowded the old trail store and leisurely traded. They enjoyed counting out the cash for each article as it was bought; besides the pleasure of handling the coin, it kept cash balances straight. Their money-mind was concerned with a matter of cash—not a column of figures.

An added incentive for their trade was the fact that the contents of the old safe contained enough cash to turn into money checks on old established sheepmen as far north as Montana. As late as 1900 200,000 sheep were sheared out of the sheds six miles north of Miles City, Montana, where scattered herds were rotated for shearing in their turn.

Local sheepmen bought shotgun wads by the thousands at shearing time. They were used as tokens for each fresh fleece turned in by a shearer, to be redeemed in cash at the end of the day's work.

It was not surprising for a southbound Mexican to pull several bank books from a greasy overall pocket and mentally debate on the amount he should draw for his all-day trading.

To accommodate the new trade that followed in the wake of the covered wagon on the Santa Fe Trail, the old department store expanded by cutting a stairway to the old Odd Fellow Hall on the second story. Into this hall was shoved a carload of bright-colored quilts and blankets. Counters were piled high with all sizes of a variety of store clothes suitable to the Mexican trade, and enabling the young blood to dress from the skin out for the winter's fandangos.

Staple articles of those days would be curiosities in a store nowadays: cut-iron nails, buckshot, black gunpowder, green coffee, candles, tall, flat-heeled cowhide boots, and heavy flannel undershirts—all went out of vogue with the bustles.

The store ceiling was decorated with a display of bright tinware and swinging hardware that advertised its presence by clanking on windy days. The showcase, made of small window glass, was the treasure house of bright-hued bandanas, lace, cheap jewelry, fine-toothed combs, cravats, and leather hat-bands direct from faraway Chicago. Shelves, tiered to the ceiling, held gingham and calico for dresses, bolts of unbleached muslin for underwear, cashmere shawls, and cotton stockings which, with a cabinet of O. N. T. thread and needles served the thrifty housewife in her trading.

Adjoining the ladies' department was the gent's furnishings with an overflow on the second floor. Boots and shoes, hobnails to high heels, from copper-toed to tooth-pick styles. Some waited a decade for a customer.

The Hardware Department was on the last aisle to the left, beyond the second wooden pillar where horse-shoe nails, buckshot, six-shooter and huge rifle cartridges crowded narrow shelves. Then came the Grocery Department with its bins of bulk green coffee, beans, rice, brown and cane sugar, lead-lined boxes of bulk tea—all to be weighed over the scoop scales. Great burlap sacks of peanuts, buckets of stick candy with an assortment of crystal, lemon, red-spiraled peppermint and molasses hoarhound, cigars, smoking tobacco, and caddies of Climax and Star. Temptingly labelled California canned fruit gave color to the background of shelving, adding its lure to the sun-kissed State that started with gold in '49—even the meek advertisements adding their quota to the land of the Golden West.

Parked in a near-by drawer were bulk allspice, nutmegs, cloves and cinnamon to be ground at home for seasoning. From a string of auger holes in the floor a knot of ropes of different sizes led to coils in the dark cellar which held their moisture weight in hot weather, to be sold by the pound, but measured in feet on the knotty floor that was marked to the front door. Piled high were huge 200-pound sacks of salt-side, bacon, and lard, bins of spuds, taken in on account from mountain ranchers. Filled grain bins in the wareroom were the results of their philosophy: "I always like to sell wheat, oats, 'n taters at \$1.00 a hundred, fer it's so easy to figger."

The lone clerk of the pioneer store forced me in as helper on rush days, initiating me into the mysteries of the Drug Department with its cures for all the ailments of mankind: bulk calomel, quinine, salts, gallon bottles of castor oil, camphor, peppermint, turpentine, etc. Part of my task in the apprenticeship was the mastering of the cost-mark used in the various chapters of the store's history—some of them telling the age of the stock not yet charged to profit and loss. Then there was the finger combination of the money drawer with its tell-tale bell—hid under the counter—which required two hands of a boy to operate. In one of its hollowed-out compartments was hoarded the curio collection of a year—not worthy of a count in making up cash—the pennies which were a medium of exchange to which one was unaccustomed in the West and that marked the customer as a "tenderfoot" and was known as Yankee money.

The master-key that solved all money problems was the Banking Department. Tucked away under protruding shelves behind the pigeon-holed P. O. portfolio, a steel fireproof safe. The combination was "Masonic," written only in the mind. It was a storehouse of secrets.

Hugging close to the slots that held late invoices, contracts, deeds, and Ledger Account, paid once a year by patrons with established credit, was a tier of locked drawers that housed ear-marked envelopes and buckshot bags belonging to widely scattered cow and sheep men who had left them there for safe-keeping. The locked dial and the gun that nestled in my father's hip-pocket were their only assurance of safety.

El Querno Verde (Greenhorn) was a one-man town—a broad place in the road—and catered to the cash trade of the grateful Mexicans and the local patronage. It served their needs unhampered by city laws and customs.

While horses were being shod at the blacksmith shop, conviviality reigned at the saloon or there was trading like that of the Christmas shoppers at the miniature Department Store. The patronage was honest, and shoplifting was at a minimum under

the one-man management at the crowded store where W. F. McPherson made \$120.50 in small cash sales in one day. Weight alone limited the buying for it was a hundred—perhaps two hundred miles down the dusty, rutted trail to the places they called home. The costumers came through city shop-lined streets to spend their money at Querna Verde, stocked with merchandise direct from Chicago—merchandise with lower price tags because there were no city licenses, taxes, high rents or expensive advertising to add to its cost. What with poker games on the horse blankets scattered about in the oak brush, the jingle crackalove of silver quarters vying for nearness to cracks of the saloon board floor, matched cow pony races scattering dust down the road; the Greenhorn was a hot spot in those days.

It was the Old West—the West peopled by men taught by Nature itself the lesson of self-denial, the value of integrity, respect for just laws—the West where homes were never locked; where the Golden Rule was more practiced than preached. Not that West described by writers who have never been west of Philadelphia, who use the old dime novels as a lexicon of western character, and kill more cowboys than were ever born—who waste more lead than was ever mined, and besmirch real Western gentility to sell hocus to a guileless reading public.

Fifty years came and went—the old store building growing grizzled with unpainted age; high knots harboring generation after generation of hornets and bees in its hollow walls; unguarded and untenanted, from 9 p. m. until morning, its noon shadows falling on the crowded camp house; while its owner slept content in a home 150 feet away—all the nationalities that have made up the authentic West, respecting as an unpassable barrier the thin store door with its flat jack-knife, even though the old safe was packed with money and the store walls bulged with the needs of mankind.

The next step in the evolution of the Trail and the patronage of the old store was the advent of the automobile. There was pandemonium when a little red two-cylindrical Brush came chugging down the wagon-track road and expired with a groan at the old well. Range cattle near by stampeded through the oak brush; saddle-horses broke loose from the hitch-rack; a scared pup ran under the warehouse and howled. Everyone poured out of the store as the driver of the auto squeezed a rubber bulb on a side horn adding its questionable harmony to the rattle of tin, whistling steam from the radiator, chuck-chuck of missing cylinder and exhaust explosion before the car finally subsided at the cold well.

The car's crankcase, maimed on high centers, bent fenders, booted clincher tires and patched broken springs were mute records of what the square-jawed, red-faced driver had been through.

There was no windshield or top which made a hat a luxury and a nuisance one could not afford.

From that time on, the mortgage builders drifted in in different colors, size, and power, to kill chickens and dogs; breaking wagon-tongues, upsetting buggies and eventually out-lawing the horse on the road he had established in 1824.

That dilapidated pioneer red roadster blazed the trail and yeggmen followed, bringing highway to the old store for the first time in a half a century. By the time the wagon tracks had been smoothed into a surfaced National Highway with the state line only two hours away, capped and sweated bad men, schooled in the art of crime, subtracted from the old safe, three times in a year. High-heeled boots and spur-rowels had worn grooves in the knot-spotted flooring and tattooed counter sides for decades and six-shooters hung on slack belts of real cow-punchers while all knew what the old safe hoarded. Yet the speeding automobile from the East, where so many wild West stories are written, brought its quota of gunmen with blunt automatics, to exploit the law-abiding West.

Aside from this get-it-easy quota, a new speed-mad patronage came in and out of the old store demanding immediate service without regard for the old customers at hand. Their excited conversations were of records, of mileage, horsepower and new models of cars instead of cattle, horses, sheep and range conditions. New standards of living, new methods of doing business, stock on shelves meant a radical change in the habits and customs of the Old Stand.

Rural communities were slow to grasp the significance of the transition from horse to automobile traffic; also reluctant to invest in machine power that was in competition to the horses they raised to sell.

The winter following the intrusion of the little Brush car, a few ranchers rode to the store through a snow storm which left two feet of snow in its wake. They were huddled around the big red coal stove worrying over the plight of the range stock, when the purr of a motor was heard. Peering out of a north window through a blinding sleet, they saw a dim, dark object push a reef of soft snow off the ditch bridge. A moment later two men broke in the front door, shut it on the blustering storm, and rushed to the warm stove.

"Where did you come from in that contraption?" inquired a surprised rancher, who had come to the store for tobacco.

"Denver," they answered, "and we're going to Walsenburg or bust." The salesman who spoke had strong features set with determination and he continued, "Talked over long-distance this morning with Fred Walsen. His sheep are marooned somewhere 'way out in a camp and he can't get to them. He has agreed to

pay me \$4,500 for this Peerless if it can buck these snowdrifts and can be delivered today."

There was not even a wagon track ahead of him, while deep arroyos were filled with snow. Later we learned that after reaching Walsenburg, that dare-devil driver had taken Walsen out to the sheep camps and then ridden the train back to Denver with a \$4,599 check in his pocket.

A few lean years between the team and auto travel depleted the Old Stand of its prestige. Long before the sheep-shearing machines had obliterated the Mexican caravans. Then the ranchers adopted the autos which put them nearer to the city shops. In 1904 my father moved to San Diego, California, relinquishing his control of the stock in the Sears Merchantile Company at Rye and Greenhorn. In the years that followed, the store passed through many hands, finally to come into the hands of five shrewd brothers whose thrift has brought it to the prestige that it enjoys today. Divided responsibilities have made it feasible to expand every potential resource endowed by nature to the Greenhorn. Pure spring water with a 52-foot fall has been piped to the various enterprises of hotel, store, restaurant, gas station, menagerie of the wild life indigenous to the country, feed pens, and slaughter house and there is, besides, a surplus for irrigation.

The 700 acres of the original ranch has been extended to 3,500 acres, and whitefaced cattle now range on the land on which my father turned 100 long-horned Texas cows in QUIE, bought from Goodnight ranch and Greswell Trail herd. The deep canyon to the east end of the ranch was the weaning pen for mavericks in the early days and John M. Waldron, the great corporation attorney for the D. & R. G. R. R. studied law in the batch shack just back of the old store and for revenues, taught the first school in the district. It was located in a log house three quarters of a mile west on the Pierson Ranch.

Too much cannot be said for the vision and enterprise of the Fossecoco brothers in the transformation of the natural beauty spot on the old Santa Fe Trail. They have a reverence for the little valley with its surrounding shale hills where seventeen deer now brouse in peaceful serenity and safety. Deer, antelope, buffalo, prairie chickens, grouse, and wild turkey once claimed this rincon in the wild hills as their rendezvous while beaver built their dams in the canyon below, long before civilization exploited its charms.

A trickling stream of clear water wound through watercress and peppermint and blue violets peeped from mossy banks. Clematis and wild grape vines climbed the sturdy oaks to look down on a bramble of choke cherries and red-laden plum thickets.

A protecting Nature devised the high limestone hills to save from harm the little Eden from cold east winds. On the west there were cedar and pinon timber where black and white magpies fashioned wicker-basket homes.

Pack rats and grey rock squirrels, chipmunks, and the meek-eyed cottontail had apartments in the little caves of shelving rock ledges of the friendly hills, safe from their mutual enemy—the coyote. There was a cold spring at either end of this little Eden for the comfort of the wild life and sunshine and shade ever present in the half-mile of the winding S of the stream.

The never-freezing, never-failing iron spring on the north was the logical location for settlement but Barlow & Sanderson Granary and Change Station threw their business to the south end. The resourcefulness of the Fosseececo brothers may yet contrive to pump the mineral water to the cement block tourist cabins as an added attraction to the many inducements to the traveling public. This healthful water drawn from a large GREEN HORN would be keen advertising in a unique design. It would be a “catchy” trademark, a silent salesman and an unusual symbol which would linger in the mind and record a mental picture.

Nature lovers, the Fosseececo brothers are artificially maintaining the Greenhorn as the pioneer hunters found it. Its native wild life of wildeats, lynx, porcupine, badger, coyote, bear and others are collected in comfortable cages and a strong woven wire fence encloses a landscape of high sloping hills where timid deer and antelope hide from the curious traveler.

Soon buffalo will join them in a family reunion of native wild life into which Man intruded a century ago. It is well worth the while for the traveler to pause at the Greenhorn and drink from the old oaken bucket or quench his thirst at the modern bar. Coax the bear from his den and see the living picture of wild deer peeping from behind the oaks on the hillside.

For 112 years the low gap on the 6,200-foot divide has inveigled all changing modes of transportation to spend a night in this sheltered glen. Long pack-trains of mules loaded with Mexican silver pesos, '49er caravans, trail herds, cavalcades of Mexican shearers, and now the automobiles and transcontinental stages have, in turn, paid their homage to the Pioneer store.

Some day an artist will paint on the inner walls of a modern building of Fosseececo brothers this history of Greenhorn in tableau which will depict the evolution of trail transportation and be a fitting monument to the men who have been content to “live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man.”

The Little Bear and the Big Bear

JOHN FIELD*

THIS is a story of pioneer experiences in the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

My parents, sisters, two of mother's cousins, and I were at Wagon Wheel Gap on one of our regular mountain outings in the summer of 1875.

We had fish, antelope, deer, elk, mountain sheep and wild fowl almost without number. We left Wagon Wheel Gap and proceeded down the river and camped at about the place where Alamosa is today. There we crossed the river. But before we left, mother expressed the desire to have more feathers because she wanted to make some bolsters or pillows, or perhaps, even a feather bed. So, we concluded to stay there on the river for a day or two because the river and the slough were full of ducks and geese. The menfolk took their shotguns and went out to gather some feathers for mother. In this hunt they flushed a little Cinnamon Bear, perhaps two years old. The bear swam the river two or three times with the hunters after him with shotgun and "popgun" pistols. The bear finally climbed a tree and father killed him by shooting him through the mouth with his .44 Smith and Wesson pistol.

I, a small boy, had heard all this racket, shooting, and carrying on, so I went out to meet the mighty hunters returning from the chase and father picked me up and put me on the mule, which, by the way, was deaf, and which was carrying the bear into camp. I smoothed the nice fur, as we rode along. Father, with a twinkle in his eye, said to his cousin, "Lawrence, when we get to camp, we will have a little fun with the womenfolk. We will have them guess the weight of this bear." Now I knew that my father knew everything. I knew that he knew to a nicety the weight of the bear, so I got him out to one side and I said, "Papa, how much does the bear weigh?" He says, "John, when it comes your turn to guess, you guess 800 pounds."

So, I stood around, first on one foot and then on the other, waiting for my turn to guess. Some of the women guessed 100 pounds and some 125 or 150, possibly some of them got as high as 200 pounds. My father pretending impatience, said "You womenfolk don't know how to guess the weight of a bear. Why, John can guess closer than you womenfolks can." So, he turned to me and he says, "John, how much does that bear weigh?", and with all the confidence in the world, I shouted "800 pounds." Even

*Mr. Field, of Denver, is a prominent civil engineer who is now writing his Colorado reminiscences.—Ed.

the women laughed, and I realized then that my father had double-crossed me, and the person in whom I had the utmost confidence had "sold me down the river." I took to the willows and they had to come to find me and take me in to have my supper, because I was broken-hearted.

The first camp we made after we left the vicinity of Alamosa, was at Fort Garland. The officers came into our camp to hear the gossip and to find out what kind of a time we had had. Oh, we had had a wonderful time. All kinds of game and all kinds of fowl and all kinds of fish. "Oh, did you get a bear?" "Yes, we got a bear." "How much did he weigh?" "Well," says father, "we didn't have any way to measure him or to weigh him, but one of the party guessed him at 800 pounds." And, you know when that story would start, and it started in nearly every camp where we stopped, I would go and hide behind the wagon, because I was still very upset by being double-crossed by my father.

We next camped on the top of Veta Pass, and there was an old gentleman living there by the name of Russell. I understand that he was one of the Russells from Georgia, and was one of the pioneer prospectors of Colorado. He had a homestead on the top of Veta Pass and he came over to our camp to gossip and this same old story of the 800-pound cub bear was told. The old gentleman said, "Well, 800 pounds, that is a big bear, but I believe I have a pelt of a bear which did weigh 800 pounds and I believe he was a real grizzly, the only grizzly that I have ever seen in my twenty years residence in these Sangre de Cristo mountains." He went and got a pelt off of the fence, brought it over, and held it up. It was doubled and was dried. That big 6-foot 2-inch or 3-inch man, weighing perhaps 200 pounds stood erect and stretched his arms as far as he could and he held up that pelt and the feet still dragged the ground. That pelt was as big as an oxhide and a good big ox at that. Of course, we wanted to know just how he got that bear, and he told us the story.

"I had two sons, one had been east to school and had graduated as a doctor, had served his internship and was ready to hang out a shingle; but before he did that, he wanted to come and spend a summer with me. One morning he took a shotgun and his twelve-year-old brother and they started into the quaking aspen to get grouse, and almost at the first turn of the path, there was this big bear. He rose up on his hind legs. They were so close together there was nothing to do but for the two to tie into each other. The bear slapped the shotgun out of my son's hand and bent the barrel. In the meantime, the small boy had high-tailed it for home yelling for his father, while he could hear the noise of the battle behind him. Knowing that something terrible had happened I grabbed my rifle and ran down to where the fight had occurred.

My boy was terribly mauled (he showed us the boots the boy wore, and there through the soles of that heavy hob-nailed boot were the holes bitten through by this bear, and it looked almost as though the holes had been punched with a leather punch). He lived only a couple of hours. I took up the bear's trail and he hadn't gone much over a hundred yards before I ran across the carcass; the boy had literally cut the heart out of that 800-pound grizzly bear."

As he told the story, of course, I was fascinated. I noticed that our womenfolk had their handkerchiefs to their eyes. Particularly was I impressed to see that great big man stand there with the tears rolling out of his eyes and down to the tip of his beard. It was a sight that I shall never forget, to see that man grieve over the loss of his eldest son.

The Argentine Central Railway¹

ELMER O. DAVIS*

THE original idea of a railroad, to serve the Argentine mines and reach the summit of Mt. McClellan, was probably conceived by William Rogers of Georgetown. Some grading work was done by him near Silver Plume in 1904, but soon thereafter the project was abandoned, and in 1905 Edward John Wilcox took it over.

The surveying and engineering for the railroad was done by Arthur H. Osborne, an 1893 graduate of the School of Mines at Golden, County Surveyor, and United States Deputy Mineral Surveyor, with headquarters at Georgetown. All preliminary work was done without any publicity, and the original field notes, maps, and profiles have not been found. Maps now in existence were made some time after the completion of the road.

Grading for this new line, some 400 feet below the Rogers grade, was started at 7 a. m. Tuesday, August 1, 1905, 43 years ago today, at a point just south of the Colorado and Southern pavilion at Silver Plume. The public ceremony was under the supervision of A. H. Osborne, surveyor of the road, and C. T. Tingle, superintendent of the Waldorf mines under Mr. Wilcox.

Mayor Charles H. Dyer of Silver Plume broke ground, using

*Mr. Davis is railroad historian for the Union Pacific Old Timers' Club No. 2, and author of *First Five Years of the Railroad Era in Colorado*, soon to be published by Sage Publications, Denver.—Ed.

¹This paper was prepared for and read at the unveiling of a monument to Mr. E. J. Wilcox at Waldorf, now a ghost town, and the christening of Mt. Wilcox in his honor on Sunday, August 1, 1948.

The data was gathered from contemporary newspapers, from Colorado & Southern, and State records; also from those persons mentioned in this paper.

a pick to loosen up the earth. Then the wife of Edward John Wilcox threw the first shovelful of dirt on the grade, followed by Alderman Charles Staunton, Thomas McGrath, and W. H. Stephens, then Senator H. L. Roberts, Representative B. J. O'Connell, James T. Garrett, E. E. Moore, and others. Following these civic leaders of Silver Plume, fifty laborers stationed at intervals of 15 feet for a distance of 750 feet along the staked line struck their picks into the ground simultaneously, and the building of the Argentine Central was started.

Ten days later, on August 10, 1905, Articles of Incorporation were signed by Edward John Wilcox, James Magee, Jacob Fillius, Simon E. Wirt, and George Richardson. These papers were filed for record with the Secretary of State the next day (found in Book 113, page 18) and the organization became official.



THE ARGENTINE CENTRAL TRAIN NEAR THE TOP
OF MOUNT MCCLELLAN

The Shay geared locomotive No. 1 arrived in Silver Plume Sept. 1, 1905. Track construction on the railroad was started on September 24, 1905, by the installation of a stub 40 lb. No. Eight-and-one-half turnout by the Colorado and Southern Railroad under an order signed by H. W. Cowan, chief engineer. This switch was located about half way between the legs of the wye tracks and from the heel of this frog the Argentine Central's track force under track foreman James Hahlaman took over and started constructing the track southerly towards the Waldorf Mines and Mt. McClellan.

This track, with a maximum curvature of 40 degrees and grades of six percent, was completed during four months of real winter weather to the mouth of the Wilcox mining tunnel at Waldorf, approximately eight miles from Silver Plume. It took four months to build a track which under ordinary weather conditions would take about eight days.

Here, on January 30, 1906, a golden spike was driven at the temporary terminus of the railroad by James Hahlaman, assisted by William Dunning, master mechanic, in the presence of Edward John Wilcox, Superintendent C. T. Tingle, a number of prominent citizens of Silver Plume, and the entire working force of the railroad.

Mr. Tingle then broke a bottle of Aqua Pura and christened the town Wilcox, later changed to Waldorf. Fred W. Tingle, a son of the superintendent, was a chainman of Osborne's engineering party during the survey and construction of this railroad and is now an engineer on the Colorado and Southern Railroad running between Denver and Cheyenne. He witnessed the spike ceremony.

The post office at Waldorf, located at timberline, and said to have been the highest post office in the U. S. A., was at an elevation of 11,666 feet. Mr. C. T. Tingle was postmaster at one time.

This, the first one-half, or eight miles of track, was built primarily to reduce the cost of transporting ore from Mr. Wilcox's extensive silver mine holdings (which consisted of some sixty-five mines in the Argentine District) to the C & S rails at Silver Plume.

Had the price of silver not dropped it would no doubt have been a successful venture.

In 1907 Wilcox was offered three million dollars for his mines and railroad by a British syndicate, but the money panic of 1907 ruined the project.

Annual reports filed with the Secretary of State by the Argentine Central Railway indicate the rail line was operated at a loss from its beginning to its end.

As weather permitted in the spring of 1906, track construction continued on towards the summit of Mt. McClellan and the famous Ice Palace, which was reached August 1, 1906, or forty-two years ago today. This was sixteen miles from Silver Plume. Up there, on that date, another golden spike was driven, bearing the inscription:

THIS SPIKE DRIVEN BY A. D. PARKER

AUGUST 1, 1906

ELEVATION, 14,007 FEET²

Mr. Parker was vice president of the Colorado and Southern

²Later U. S. Geological survey figures show the elevation of Mt. McClellan to be 13,423 feet. Therefore the tracks lacked 416 feet of reaching the highest point.

Railroad and this ceremony was witnessed by E. J. Wilcox, president and sole owner of the Argentine Central Railway, W. H. Stillwell, its general manager, and by J. H. Young and George Geiger, officials of the Colorado and Southern. A special train brought a large delegation from Georgetown and Silver Plume but no speeches were made or heard as a blinding blizzard hit the excursionists at timberline and continued until their return.

The road was officially opened for business on August 12, 1906. Two entries in my personal diary indicate that on August 1, 1906, I first arrived in Denver from my prairie home near Lincoln, Nebraska, and on August 12 made my first trip on any mountain railroad up Clear Creek, but only to Idaho Springs. Am now sorry that I did not continue on up to the top with the many excursionists who made the initial trip in two special cars from Denver on that date.

The last eight miles of railroad was built exclusively as a scenic tourist line to the "top of the world," the highest narrow gauge steam railroad in existence.

On account of weather conditions it could be operated but three months during the summer. Also due to the owner's strict religious convictions it was not operated on the Sabbath, the best tourist day, while under his control.

Mr. Wilcox sold his \$300,000 investment in 1909, three years after the railroad's completion, for \$44,000. On June 15, 1912, the railroad was sold to William Rogers, the originator of the project, for \$5,000. What a lot of cash he saved by not building it himself!

On November 9, 1918, permission to abandon and dismantle the Argentine Central was secured from the Colorado Public Utilities Commission and in 1919 it was torn up and removed by the Morse Brothers Machinery Company under a contract with Buckley Brothers of Silver Plume.

The last physical trace of this bold railroad project was erased on January 13, 1920, when the connecting switch was removed by the Colorado and Southern track forces under an order issued by William Hess, chief engineer of that road, fifteen years after its original installation.

A. H. Osborne, the engineer who ran the preliminary lines, staked out, and had charge of the construction of the sixteen-mile Argentine Central Railway, was killed in a snow slide from Kelso Mountain, near the Stevens Mine, January 6, 1916. He was staking out a mining claim for Mrs. Mary Collins, assisted by her son Edward, and by Ray Buckley. Edward Collins lost his life in the same accident but Mr. Buckley survived and lives in Denver.

Mr. Osborne's widow, now Mrs. H. F. Haeseler, also resides in Denver and a son in Boulder, Colorado.

The Buckley boys worked as kids, peddling spikes and other track material on the Argentine Central when it was built and had the contract for dismantling the road from Morse Brothers in 1919, picking up the same material they helped distribute fifteen years before. Frank Shoemaker, now a retired Union Pacific conductor, had charge of the construction, or rather destruction train that tore up the track from the summit of Mt. McClellan to Waldorf in 1919.

Edward J. Wilcox survived his engineer just twelve years, having passed away January 7, 1928, at Los Angeles, and is buried in Forest Lawn at Glendale, California. A daughter, Helen B. Wilcox, and a son, Edward B. Wilcox, survive.

Garland City, Railroad Terminus, 1878*

JOHN MORGAN

Garland City, Colorado
March 13, 1878

Editors Herald:

Yesterday at 3 p.m. your correspondent stepped aboard the narrow-gauge railroad train headed from Pueblo to this point, the present terminus of the Denver and Rio Grande railway. Pueblo, the starting point of this trip, is a place of some importance as a railway centre and business point in southern Colorado. It is the present terminus of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe route, and has rolling mills just starting up, foundries in process of erection; about 6,000 inhabitants, the reputation of being the warmest place in Colorado, as well as one of the healthiest. The Arkansas River runs between the two towns of north and south Pueblo, furnishing an excellent supply of drinking water, which is furnished to the citizens by means of water works. It only needs street cars and gas to make it a first class city. Several good, substantial school buildings give token of the educational ideas of the people, many extensive wholesale houses have branches at this point and other localities in the mining districts West.

We reprint here a letter written from Garland City, one-time Denver and Rio Grande Railroad terminus. The letter was supplied by N. G. Morgan, son of the writer, and an attorney in Salt Lake City, Utah. John Morgan (1842-1894) proselyted for the Mormon Church and led a colony to the San Luis Valley in 1878. On the trip related in this letter he met Gov. A. C. Hunt, official of the D. & R. G. and former governor of Colorado, at Garland City and received his approval for Mormon colonization in the San Luis Valley. One of Mr. Morgan's families later lived at Manassa, Colo., where four of his 19 children were born.—Ed.

So much for Pueblo, and now for the trip. The little pony engine carried us rapidly out of the basin where the city is located, up to the plateau that skirts the base of the Rockies on the east, and turning south, headed for the far famed Spanish Peaks whose snow capped summits vied with Mount Blanco and Pike's Peak in attracting the eyes of the traveler. We could feel that we were gradually ascending up and up, each mile revealing that our course was upward. The little engine puffed and snorted at times, as though restive under the power that held him back, but maintained a steady gait until we came to the town of La Veta, where a halt was called and a few moments time allowed to look at the settlement of Georgians, who recently left the sunny south and cast their lot in this far off land. The town itself is neatly built, and surrounded by lands, that with careful culture can be made very productive.

On the trip down we had passed numerous huts and hovels that swarmed with dirty specimens of humanity, rightly called greasers. In my innocence, in times gone by, I had often read of Mexican Plazas, and if I remember rightly the book men have them enclosed with rich white concrete walls, with ponderous gates, towers on the corners and Mexican señoritas looking out from behind long scarfs artistically turned about the head and shoulders. Imagine my disgust when a travelling companion pointed out a lot of cottonwood logs set on end, the crevices daubed with reddish-yellow clay and straw; the roofs of the building ranged along either side of this enclosure covered with dirt and poles; the door so squatty that even a medium sized man would have to make a low obeisance to enter, and an old, dried up, swarthy female, with a greasy government blanket thrown over her head, peering around the door. "That," said my companion, "is a Mexican Plaza." Whether it was the logs, the dogs lying around loose, the houses or the female he alluded to I did not stop to enquire, but preferred to turn my attention to the course our little engine was heading, which was directly at the great range of mountains that tower into eternal snow, and almost continuously cloud-capped. Plunging into a dark defile we soon commenced an ascent of 270 feet to the mile. Up the side of the mountain we went, a yawning abyss on the one hand and the dizzy heights of Blanco on the other. Up the canyon we saw a dark line that looked like the blackened edge of a ledge of granite high up on the mountain. Soon the whirr of the car wheels tells us that we are making a sudden curve, when lo! and yonder, we are running along on top of the identical supposed ledge of rock that now proves to be the grade of the narrow gauge railroad. Still up and up we go, until in the dim distance we can see the narrow thread of road that makes the route we have come over, thousands of feet below. The cars swing and sway to and fro, at places where it seems

as though the least displacement of equilibrium would topple us over the side of the mountains into the top of the tall pines, so far below that they assume the look of mere shrubbery.

The snow increases in depth, huge banks are piled on either side of the road that readily extinguish the sparks that our iron shod steed flings on his upward track. The glare of his headlight, as it has now grown to be night, glints and glistens ahead of the sparkling diamonds of snow, often in plain view from the rear car, so short and abrupt are the curves; but all this while we are climbing, until at last, with a sudden jerk, as if the lead had struck a level road, we come to a standstill nine thousand three hundred and thirty-seven feet above the level of the sea—the highest railroad post in the known world; and here while the wind sweeps the banks of snow into eddies, and whirls them into the tourist's face, sighs through the knotted, gnarled boughs of the pinion pine, we stop to rest, and prepare for the descent, which is much more gradual than the ascent, and at twenty minutes to nine we come to the temporary end of the track at Garland, find a bed and retire to lay awake half the night, listening to the clatter of feet on the plank side walk, and the usual noise and confusion attendant upon a border city.

Garland is emphatically a railroad town. It has no surrounding agricultural country, but is dependent entirely for support upon the business done at the terminus; consequently as Alamosa, forty-five miles further west, has been selected for the next terminus, Garland begins to move forward, and on every hand we see men tearing down the frail wooden structures with which it is built, and starting westward with them. Soon Garland will be a thing of the past and only battered oyster cans, cast-off clothing, old shoes, and debris generally will mark the site of where once stood a flourishing city, with its hotels, its stores, its theatre comique, etc.

The citizens appear to take it as a matter of course, and are getting ready to vacate the premises. Even the postoffice is getting ready to move out. When we take into consideration the nature and character of its surroundings, Garland has been measurably quiet. Several violent deaths have occurred and the usual amount of cutting and shooting; but Garland has done pretty well. A murder of a most aggravating character took place last week. A young man, well thought of, was killed only a few paces from where I write, and while suspicion was abroad the officers were at a loss as to who the perpetrator was. This morning's paper contains an account of the boarding of the outbound train by a number of men heavily masked, who took a suspicious character off and deliberately swung him over a limb, in the meantime instructing the conductor to move on with his "wagons," which, nothing loth, he readily did, and left poor Johnson to his fate. After hanging him four times he

concluded to tell what he knew, and the result was that with a badly discolored and swollen neck he lives to tell the adventure, or whatever he prefers to call it. One thing seems very apparent—his disclosures have had an effect to render very uneasy several parties here. This is the rough side of Garland. We met a number of gentlemen here who treated us courteously, and were anxious to give us all the information they could, and doubtless if Garland were rid of a few special characters, the balance of the people would be a quiet and industrious community. But so it is; a few bad men give a place a bad name.

The probabilities are that the road will reach Alamosa by the middle of May, and from that point turn south toward Wingate or Santa Fe, as there appears to be a race between this and the A. T. and St. F. road as to which shall get into New Mexico first.

More anon,

J. M.

Early Days in the Uncompahgre Valley

GUY O. HAMMOND*

THE early days were quite strenuous, particularly in the Ouray district. Ouray is surrounded on three sides by some of the highest and most rugged mountains in the state. Practically the only way to get in was across the Indian Reservation, which of course, meant a long way between stops.

There was no Montrose, Delta or Grand Junction to draw on for supplies in those days, because they did not exist until the Indians were moved out in 1881. The San Luis Valley was the nearest source of supplies, and a journey there was a pretty hard trip over mountain roads.

We lived in the Uncompahgre Park, a little above the site of present Ridgway. My father made it a practice of going to Alamosa every fall with a four-horse team and bringing in enough supplies to last us a year, so that made us more fortunate than some in times of real shortage. I remember one time of flour famine, when flour was \$50.00 a sack, and none to be had. That was one time we were able to practice the Good Neighbor Policy by loaning our neighbors flour, and some of our neighbors were exceedingly thankful for it, because otherwise they would have had to go without bread.

After the Indians were moved out in 1881, Montrose, Delta and Grand Junction started up, but their connections with the outside world were so limited that their growth was slow until the railroad came.

*Mr. Hammond lives today in Paonia.—Ed.

It was different with the town of Ouray, which was strictly a mining town. Until the Indians were moved out in 1881, the Uncompahgre Valley was the only near-by source of supply for agricultural products, and it was such a small valley and at such a high altitude that hay, grain and potatoes were about their only crops. But, after Otto Mears built the toll road into Ouray, it was a big help about hauling heavy loads. Then when the railroad got into Montrose and Dave Wood put on those big eight-mule-team freight wagons, they could get all the supplies they wanted. I never will forget those big freight wagons. The hind wheels were about as high as the top of an average sized man's head. Each driver rode the high wheel mule and drove the eight mules with a jerk line. I don't imagine many of us would be a success at driving a whole bunch of mules with a jerk line, but those drivers surely made a mighty fine job of it.

In spite of all their hardships in those days, there was always something exciting going on. Some things were sad and some amusing, but they all went to make up the life in the West.

I shall tell some of the things that happened just across the river from where we lived in the Uncompahgre park. These things all happened at Lou Orvis' hot spring, just above where the town of Ridgway now is, but it was a good many years before Ridgway was even thought of—even before the Indians were moved out of the country. In those days the main road did not go past Ridgway, where it does now, it was on the other side of that hill. The road went from Cow Creek between those hills and straight to the Orvis Spring. At that time the spring, or pool, was not fenced in. It was right out in the open and the road went within a few feet of it. Anybody going by there now can see the round hole in the ground where the pool used to be. It was about fifteen feet, or possibly a little more, across, and as round as a wash basin. The hot water came up in the bottom of the pool and it over-flowed on the lower side and ran down the hill.

One hot summer day some people were coming into the country in a covered wagon and they had the usual dog along. After they left Cow Creek there was no more water until they got to the hot spring. Being a hot day, the dog was hot and thirsty, so as soon as he saw that beautiful pool of water ahead he made a run and jumped right in to cool off. The sudden and intense shock excited him so he didn't know enough to turn around and crawl out, but started to swim across, but he didn't get half way across until he was dead as a mackerel.

Another time, some men were driving a small bunch of cattle along the road and as they passed the hot pool one steer decided to have a drink. He did not jump in like the dog, but it amounted to the same thing, because he got so close that both front feet

slipped right into the pool, plunging him in head first. Like the dog, he started to swim across, but he no more than got started until he was dead.

I did not see these things happen myself, but I knew people who did. However, the balance of these things I am going to tell you about I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears, so I don't have to take anybody's word for it.

I will first tell you about a little affair I took part in myself, which I had ample cause to regret. Mr. Orvis built a small bath house just below the pool, but he didn't run it very long because there was so much hot water and so many baths at Ouray, only nine miles away, that it didn't pay, so he quit running cold water in, but continued to run the hot water through, as it had to run down the hill anyhow to get away.

One Sunday a bunch of us kids were over there and we were set on having a swim. Mr. Orvis told us we could go in if we could stand it, but he didn't think we could. As the water ran from the pool down to the bath in an open trough it, of course, cooled some, but not too much. We sat on the edge and dangled our feet in, and finally managed to get in all over. We stayed in as long as we could stand it, which was not very long, for we soon began to get weak, and by the time we got out we were so weak it was hard to get our clothes on. We started home by taking a short cut across the meadows, but we only got a short distance when the strength we had left was used up and we had to rest. We lay right down and stretched out on the grass and I began to think I never would see home again, but by working it in relays we did make it home, and it cured us completely of any further desire for a bath of that kind.

I think the biggest thing that happened at the spring was a race meet. Lou Orvis had a colt he was training for a race horse, so beyond the knoll just south of the spring he fixed a track to train his colt on. His neighbor, Johnny Strayer, just across the meadow next to the river, had a race horse, too, and a good one. Strayer matched a race with Dick Netherly, down in the Ignacio Country in the southern part of the State. They matched this race for \$500.00 a side, and agreed to run it on Lou Orvis' track. This, of course, meant a big race meet. Well, when the time came and they ran the big race, the horses came out so even that the judges could not decide who won. In fact it was a dead tie.

The first inkling I had of trouble was when I heard some loud talk, and when I turned to see where it came from, I saw Strayer and Netherly sitting side and side on their horses quarreling. I heard Netherly say, "I'll bet you \$500.00 my horse can beat yours every jump in the road from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast." I thought this was taking in quite a bit of territory for

a horse race, so like everybody else, I crowded up as close as I could to hear it all. I guess I was about forty feet from them when I saw Strayer hit Netherly over the head with his quirt. Netherly was a pretty good sized man, but he only had one arm. His left arm was off right at the shoulder, but he made pretty good use of his right arm reaching for his gun, but Strayer did not wait to see what he would do with the gun. He knew. He slipped off his horse and left it standing there, and disappeared in the crowd. I don't know whether he went home or kept hid in the crowd, but he did not show up any more that day, especially where Dick Netherly was.

They had quite a time over that race, and finally took it to Court, but as the race was a tie and nobody won, of course the Court could not decide a winner any more than anyone else, so they were advised to draw their money down and call the whole thing off, which, of course, was the only way it could be settled.

There were all kinds of races that day, horse races, burro races, and foot races, but the race that caused the most fun and amusement was a race between a horse and a mule. A man named Johnny Donnellon, who before that had been working for my father on a farm just across the river, had a saddle mule that was a wonderful roadster, as he could out-travel most of the horses. Johnny was no gambler, but he was quite a fellow for fun, so he got to joshing one of the cowpunchers about the horse he had in the race, and finally offered to bet his mule could out-run his horse. No cowpuncher could take a dare like that, so they matched a race. When they ran the race, the mule won and did it easily. Before they got through guying that poor cowpuncher, he wished he had never seen or heard of a mule.

To wind up the day the Indians pulled off the really big event of the day. Anyone who knows the Ute Indians knows they will never miss a horse race, and that they will bet anything they have on it. This day one Indian bet his squaw on one of the races and lost her. After losing his squaw, he objected to giving her up with the result that he and the Indian that won her had a fight. I never knew which one it was, but one Indian swiped the other one across the stomach with a sharp knife and ripped him wide open. The other Indians laid him out on a blanket and started their medicine dance to keep the evil spirits away.

They formed a circle around him of about twenty or more and kept going around and around, hopping on one foot, then on the other, and ki-yi-ing at the top of their voices every hop. Occasionally one would hop out of the circle and another hop in to take his place, but they didn't stop going and they kept this up all night. I never knew if it was the wound that killed the poor

Indian or if it was the infernal racket, but just at daylight he died, and thus ended one of the biggest events of the early days in the Uncompahgre Valley.

Wild Horses of the West

A. R. Ross*

THOUSANDS of wild horses roamed at will during the '70s and '80s over the largest pasture the world has ever known, that is, the territory from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Colorado, as a territory and as a state, had her share of these unclaimed and untrained animals. They chose the secluded swales in the rolling hills for their hiding places at night and grazed the endless plains at will in those early days. These bands increased so rapidly that they caused the cattle barons and settlers of that day much concern as to what would happen to the winter pasture. Their presence on the range was a decided loss and they were not wanted for they were consuming much valuable feed. Therefore, many plans for their capture or disbanding were continually being discussed and some of them were definitely tried.

Every state in this vast area had the wild horse problem to solve and a few attempted to destroy the leader of the bands. That was no easy task because the fleet-footed leader could make a "get-away" so fast that it would have been impossible to reach him even with a bullet from a high-powered rifle. How did these great bands of wild horses happen to be encroaching on the precious feed supply of the beef cattle and generally cluttering up the Western range in those days? Why is the problem that they create still unsolved in some areas today? In short, from whence came they? What was their origin? Since the Spaniards landed those first horses on the coast of Mexico in the 15th century and started their march of conquest across this continent, this type of hardy, speedy animals has been an important factor in western growth and progress.

By crossbreeding with Arabian stallions early in these conquest days, the horse of many colors, or the spotted or calico pony so common in this western country, was developed. In addition to these, there followed the Quarter horse with the perfect knee action and the rope and "cut-out" horse who knew his "stuff" just as well as did his rider, and the natural single footer, the pride and joy of any rider. Still another and heavier horse that soon came into prominence was the curly horse. It was a curly-haired horse that General John C. Fremont chose as his mount while exploring

the West many years ago because of the endurance of this breed, that had been tested out in long rides. Curly was covered with soft, silky curls from his head to his fetlocks. They would have been the envy of the girl of today for he needed no permanent wave, the more damp and rainy the weather, the tighter they curled.

This story was told of General Fremont that, while riding down the South Platte river near the place that bears his name, "Fremont's Orchard," the General was attacked by one lone bumble bee. While he was fighting it away, the bee became entangled in Curly's beautiful coat and the General was saved a severe stinging. This incident was well known on the South Platte in the '70s, and a saying went round from one cow puncher to another, "So long, Remember General Fremont, and don't get stung."

These roving bands of wild horses with a stallion leading them, most of them wearing no brands and not a scratch on their sleek and shiny hides that could have told their ownership, were claimed by no one. They were yours or mine if and when we branded them. They were here when emigration was at its peak, as many home seekers found out to their sorrow when they turned their mares out to graze and never saw them again. Some wild stallion had seen and admired them and added them to his already large harem. Emigrant mares wearing leather head stalls were caught in the wild horse round-up. Wild horses on the endless plains enjoyed their freedom and avoided man who had been their master, friend, and companion in domestic life and they kept him in the distance as much as possible. Old dobbin had always been a faithful servant but now in this wild state gloried in his freedom, it got into his blood, and he feared and shunned domination. The ability of the horse to be independent and find food and look after himself makes a wild life possible for him. Other animals are not so wise or sagacious as is the horse. Perhaps that can be attributed to what we call "horse sense," but this is true, that a horse will paw down through deep snow in the far North and find grass and keep himself alive until spring when other animals perish.

The vast buffalo herds on the western plains moved out to make room for the long-horned cattle and the settler fenced the Longhorns out, but still the wild horse had his freedom. The farmer's plow and drill have toned them down to a minimum, but some states still have bands of wild horses.

It was my privilege to be employed on the South Platte in open range days and in that part of the country where the last band of wild horses in the State had their rendezvous. They came under my personal observation day after day and I learned the wild horse habits at a distance. Seldom did a rider even get a close up glimpse of the beautiful leader of that particular band of outlaws. He was

*Mr. Ross of Fort Collins has contributed frequently to this magazine.—ED.

a Claybank stallion with tan mane and tail and he took good care to keep at a distance. He was King of the Prairie and was always on the watch for intruders. He stood as a sentinel on some elevation while his harem of mares grazed peacefully near by. If he saw a rider even at a distance, he would give a loud shrill whistle and this would set the entire band in motion. He followed in the rear nipping the rumps of any that were lagging, which would increase their speed and soon the band would be covered up in a cloud of dust. Some of the riders, who had jumped the band up at close quarters and had a good look at him, decided they were going to have this magnificent animal for their saddle horse, and none of them would have agreed to shooting him even if that could have been done. Those who had seen him, loved him for his beauty and build, and admired him for his courage and leadership and care of his family. The King feared nothing that came his way, whether man or beast.

Once while making my usual rounds across the King's territory, I found a yearling steer with the best part of his hindquarters eaten away. Frequently, we found a steer carcass on the prairie that we were sure had been killed by the much despised gray wolf, but never before had we found anything like this where the animal had been left to drag out a living death. He was soon shot and put out of his agony. If that same wolf had dared to attack one of the King's colts, he would have felled it to earth with one blow of his powerful front feet and every bone in its worthless body would have been broken. The gray wolf gave the King's family a wide berth, we knew, because no colt carcasses were ever found on his domain.

After carefully considering the wild horse question, the cattlemen and settlers decided to have a horse round-up without any delay and began at once to select men with some experience to take charge and carry it through. The territory to be circled began at the mouth of Beaver at Wisconsin ranch, on the Platte River west to Fort Morgan, and south of that on a fifty mile front to the Arickaree River, about thirty-five miles. One hundred riders were used and relayed morning and evening so that the wild horses were kept on the run as much as possible. The riders kept closing in and making the circle smaller and not allowing the horses to rest or graze and, of course, not letting any of them escape out of the circle. On the morning of the third day, they began to weaken and the mares seemed ready to walk, but the King was much too fresh yet. The circle was slowly being moved to a suitable place where the roping could be done. The best ropers on the South Platte were selected and one of them was my Indian boy friend, Jeff Gerry, and then the fun began. The mares were pretty tired and some of them showed great fatigue, but the King had lots of pep and kept continually circling to find a place to break through. Finally, like a

perfect demon, with mouth open wide, he began charging the circle for a get away and anyone that stood in his way would have been trampled to death. He had changed into an infuriated beast when he realized how he was trapped, and with a look of hate in his blood-shot eyes and death, or freedom, showing in his murderous face, he reared and pawed until for fear of losing not only their faithful cow horses but their own lives, the cowboys pulled back and let the dangerous outlaw out of the circle. He left his family he had guarded so zealously and sped away to the south as fast as his tired legs and hungry body would allow, never to return. A hundred pairs of arms paused at their roping and a hundred pairs of eyes watched the King's departure. The prize was lost. He had fought his way out rather than forever to be under man's control again. The cowboys had decided anyway that they did not care to try to make a saddle horse out of such a devil. They watched him out of sight and as the dust from his heels settled along the trail, that he took back to his old haunts, they turned their attention to the mares and colts that they held in the circle, and they were divided among the riders.

Many select mares were roped and led away. Some were claimed as the property of the cattlemen there. Most of them had no brands, and leatherhead stalls were found on a few. These were the property of emigrant stockmen and settlers, no doubt. My Indian friend, Jeff Gerry, roped the only mule in the bunch and led him away as his. He got a great deal of fun poked at him by the other punchers, but that mule made a fine, steady animal and under Jeff's training became most useful on the range.

Banking in Colorado Springs—The First Sixty-two Years*

WILLIAM S. JACKSON

It will be noted that after the El Paso County Bank bought out the Peoples Bank in 1887, the number of banks in town fell to two. A year later, in the fall of 1888 a third bank was formed, the Exchange National Bank. F. E. Dow was the first president, and M. A. Lowe, of the Rock Island Railroad which had just reached Colorado Springs as its western terminus, was one of the organizers. The first nine years of this bank's history showed only gradual progress. Its real growth began after a reorganization in 1897. At that time its deposits were about \$187,000. It was then that J. R. McKinnie became its president, and A. G. Sharp left the First National Bank to become its cashier. About

*Continued from the September issue and concluded in this.—Ed.

that time its directorate included E. M. De la Vergne, A. L. Lawton, W. S. Stratton, V. Z. Reed, E. W. Giddings, William Lennox, A. S. Holbrook, W. Arthur Perkins, W. S. Nichols, D. M. Holden, J. A. Himebaugh, W. R. Barnes, and Frank F. Costello.

In 1900 James H. Barlow, one of the partners in the El Paso County bank, died and shortly thereafter another partner, C. H. White, retired from active banking and sold his interest. In that year the last private bank in Colorado Springs took out a national charter and became The El Paso National Bank. C. C. Hemming and his family, who had moved from Gainesville, Texas, purchased the controlling interest. W. S. Jackson retained a small stock interest and remained as president of the new national bank until 1911 when, at the age of seventy-five, he forced his resignation by selling his remaining stock. He thus completed thirty-eight years of continuous service as the executive head of a bank, until then the longest continuous service by any bank head in Colorado Springs. In addition to the Hemming interests, three St. Louis bankers, J. C. Van Blarcom, W. H. Thompson, and B. F. Edwards, acquired an interest. The flavor of the old partnership form of organization seems to have carried over in the new national bank's advertisements, for, where the other two national banks published simply the names of their officers and directors, the El Paso National Bank published the names of its stockholders as if they were still partners. Among these stockholders, in addition to those already named, were General Wm. J. Palmer, Asa T. Jones, B. F. Lowell, E. P. Shove, O. L. Godfrey, George Bernard, G. C. Hemenway, H. M. Blackmer, S. S. Bernard, Sherwood Aldrich, Edward H. Eyre, Henry LeB. Wills, Thomas E. Curtin, O. E. Livermore, B. S. Kaufman, and, later, H. Alexander Smith.¹ The beginning of the century, therefore, saw the conversion of the last private bank into a national bank—making three national banks in that field.

No account of banking in Colorado Springs at that time is complete without a reference to Cripple Creek. As the latter grew and prospered during the nineties, Colorado Springs became the banking center for that district. In fact, the officers and directors of the three banks in existence at the end of the century were directly interested in some of the then large producing mines of Victor and Cripple Creek. A few examples only can be given here. William Lennox and E. W. Giddings, officers and directors of the Exchange National Bank, were officers and large stockholders in the company owning the very productive Strong mine. W. S. Stratton, who toward the end of the century became a director of the Exchange National Bank, represented probably the largest single Cripple Creek interest at that time. Irving How-

¹Now U. S. Senator from New Jersey.

bert, James F. Burns and other directors of the First National Bank were also officers and directors of the Portland Gold Mining Co. and of the Anchoria Leland. Wm. S. Jackson of the El Paso National Bank was president of the Elkton Mining Company at the time of that mine's largest production. In later years the Cripple Creek mining activities of Spencer Penrose and A. E. Carlton meant additional business to the First National Bank through their respective directorships on the board of that institution.

But as the mining boom in Cripple Creek had stimulated banking activity in Colorado Springs, so the subsequent drop in volume and value of production from that area—intensified by the first World War—meant a corresponding diminution of business for the banks in Colorado Springs. This gradual falling off of business in Cripple Creek, the impending abandonment of the Colorado Midland Railroad, and the closing of the shops in Colorado City started a shrinkage of deposits in the various banks. This shrinkage seemed to have affected the First National Bank and the El Paso National Bank more than the Exchange National, and in 1916, when A. E. Carlton, a director of the First National, asked Wilmer D. Hemming, cashier of the El Paso National, for an opportunity to examine the books of the latter for the purpose of working out a consolidation with the First National, the deposits of the First National were under \$2,800,000, and those of the El Paso National were less than half that amount. The Exchange National deposits at that time were \$4,000,000. In the matter of deposits the position of the First National and the Exchange National had been just reversed from the year 1900, when deposits in the First National were over \$4,000,000 and those in the Exchange National were under \$2,800,000.

A consolidation was worked out between the First National and the El Paso, reported to have been on the basis of one share of stock of the First National in exchange for two shares of stock of the El Paso. This arrangement was roughly based upon the amount of assets in each bank, although at the time of the consolidation it was said that the El Paso, still living up to the title of the bank which it had previously bought out, the "People's Bank," had twice as many depositors' accounts as the First National. Even after the consolidation of these two banks, for some time the deposits of the First National were no larger than the deposits of the Exchange National.

As a result of this consolidation, E. P. Shove, Wilmer D. Hemming and O. L. Godfrey, who had been officers of the El Paso National, became officers and directors of the First National, and B. F. Lowell, who had been a director of the El Paso National, became a director of the First National Bank.

It may be noted that when the First National consolidated with the El Paso National, it merged with the only bank that had an older history than its own—one that was the outgrowth of the three private banks that were prior in time to its organization. As the result of such consolidation, the First National had thus absorbed all of the banks that were in operation during the first seventeen years of the city's existence. It had within it all the banking history of Colorado Springs up to the time of the founding of the Exchange National Bank in the fall of 1888.

In 1891 the legislature of Colorado passed a general law providing for the creation of trust companies. Almost immediately after the Act was signed, The International Trust Company of Denver was created under its provisions. It is believed that this was the first important trust company formed in the state, and it certainly was the first formed under the new General Statute of 1891. Of the twenty-six incorporators, six were residents of Colorado Springs (Wm. S. Jackson, J. A. Hayes, Irving Howbert, Henry C. Lowe, J. J. Hagerman, and B. F. Crowell) and six were residents of Pueblo (M. D. Thatcher, Charles E. Gast, Alva Adams, Andrew McClelland, O. H. P. Baxter, and Robert Gibson). The foregoing names are listed in the order in which they signed the incorporation papers. The Denver incorporators were: David H. Moffat, Edward L. Raymond, Henry W. Hobson, V. D. Markham, Moses Hallett, W. S. Cheesman, M. E. Smith, C. S. Morey, G. W. Clayton, A. H. Fowler, L. H. Eicholtz, Sam S. Landon, James W. Jackson, and Henry C. Brown. Of the thirteen original directors, two were from Colorado Springs (Hayes and Jackson) and two from Pueblo (Thatcher and Baxter). This fact and the fact that approximately half of the incorporators resided outside of Denver lead to the conclusion that the intention of the founders was that this trust company should have a state-wide patronage and not merely serve residents of Denver, thus obviating the necessity of having trust companies elsewhere. In fact, it is reported that the Trust Company maintained for a time a branch office in Colorado Springs, where its chief activity seems to have been acting as trustee in various mining promotions and transactions.

Another point to be noted is that it could hardly have been intended by the founders that this institution should go into commercial banking and become a competitor of the commercial banks then in existence, for among the founders of the Trust Company were men who were already closely identified and interested in one or more commercial banks in Denver, as well as in other parts of the state. David H. Moffat was then president of The First National Bank of Denver; M. D. Thatcher was at the time heavily interested in, and a director of, The First National Bank of Den-

ver, as well as The First National Bank of Pueblo; W. S. Jackson was a director of the Denver National Bank, and also the head of the El Paso County Bank in Colorado Springs; C. H. Dow was president of another Denver bank; and other directors of the Trust Company were directors of commercial banks in Denver.

The International Trust Company, in the early years of its banking existence, apparently did very little commercial banking and did emphasize the business that is now done in the trust department of a modern bank—work which at that time was not handled by the ordinary commercial bank. This is added indication that the intention of the founders of the new Trust Company was that it should occupy and develop a new field of its own.

Perhaps because of the above mentioned circumstances, it was not until over ten years later (1901) that The Colorado Title and Trust Company was started in Colorado Springs; and not until 1909 that the Pueblo Savings Bank became the Pueblo Savings and Trust Company and had trust powers added to its charter. It is still the only bank in Pueblo doing a trust business.

The capital of The Colorado Title and Trust Company when organized was \$300,000, with a surplus of \$50,000. Mr. J. Arthur Connell was its first president, and continued as president during the thirty-two years of its corporate existence. The original directors were Philip B. Stewart, A. E. Carlton, William F. Slocum, R. P. Davie, J. P. Pomeroy, E. P. Shove, Charles M. McNeill, Winfield S. Stratton, J. Arthur Connell, Spencer Penrose and Clarence C. Hamlin. Here again we find names of those who were directors of commercial banks and an indication that the "Trust Company" was started with the idea of going into a new field that the commercial banks were not serving. As time went on, the trust company invaded more and more the commercial field of banking; and, in later years, it in turn felt the invasion of the commercial banks into the field of trust business. So, thirty years after its founding, it was little different from any other state bank doing a trust business.

In May, 1933, Grant McFerson, State Bank Commissioner, notified the Colorado Title and Trust Company that, in his judgment, owing to the shrinkage in value of some of the bank's assets, there was a question whether the capital of the bank was not impaired and that immediate steps should be taken to protect the depositors.

The officers and directors of the Trust Company immediately considered what steps should be taken and, after a great deal of negotiation with government and state officials and with The First National Bank of Colorado Springs, an agreement was worked out. This plan was described in a declaratory judgment rendered by the District Court, sitting in Colorado Springs, in August, 1933. The

following portion of the decree gives the substance of the arrangement:

"... the condition of the plaintiff (the Trust Company) is such, by reason of the depreciation in the market value of many of its security holdings and its inability to realize at this time on a considerable portion of its resources, that the ultimate liquidation of the affairs of the plaintiff is deemed in the best interest of all parties in interest and particularly of its depositors; that the plaintiff has entered into an agreement with the First National Bank of Colorado Springs whereby said First National Bank will take over without recourse certain assets of plaintiff and assume the payment of all its obligations to its depositors provided plaintiff will furnish additional funds in the amount of approximately Four Hundred and Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$460,000.00) required to pay said depositors in full; that Reconstruction Finance Corporation has agreed to loan plaintiff the sum of \$250,000.00, and Telsa Finance Company has also agreed to loan plaintiff the sum of \$210,000.00, which said loans will provide the funds necessary to enable said First National Bank to pay the depositors of plaintiff in full, and will enable plaintiff to pay all its bills payable in full; that the aggregate of the amounts so agreed to be loaned plaintiff exceeds by the sum of \$235,000.00 the unimpaired capital and surplus of plaintiff as shown by its statement as of the close of business on the 30th day of June 1933, . . ."

In accordance with this plan, at the end of one week in August, 1933, the depositors of the Colorado Title and Trust Company had their accounts in that bank, but on the following Monday morning they found that their deposits were in The First National Bank of Colorado Springs and that the Colorado Title and Trust Company had withdrawn from the banking business. This retirement was not in any sense a consolidation with the First National (as was the case of the El Paso National) but was a liquidation by the Trust Company in the course of which the First National Bank assumed the deposit liabilities of the former, took over those assets approved by the national bank examiner and sufficient additional cash to cover the deposit liabilities. The Trust Company retired from the banking field, and The First National continued with its capital, surplus and undivided profits unchanged. Likewise, its staff of officers, headed by William I. Howbert as president, remained the same.

There were many problems to overcome and settle in working out this transaction, and Charles L. Tutt and Russell D. Law, both directors of the Trust Company, were especially active in bringing this episode to a successful conclusion without loss to depositors and without confidence being impaired in the community in general.

The Telsa Finance Company, referred to as loaning the Colorado Title and Trust Company the funds necessary to make this deal possible, had been organized by certain of the stockholders and directors of the Colorado Title and Trust Company. Telsa

took over all of the slow, remaining assets of the Trust Company and has since liquidated them—so that not only have the preferred stockholders of Telsa been paid off in full, but each share of common stock of the company, which represents a share of the old Colorado Title and Trust Company, has received in liquidation up to the present time, October, 1939, the sum of \$25 per share. There are assets still to be liquidated to net possibly \$15 to \$25 per share more. This graphically illustrates the advantage of an orderly and gradual liquidation over one that is forced.

The Colorado Savings Bank was organized under a state charter November 28, 1903, with E. J. Eaton, at one time a director of The First National Bank, as its president. Mr. Eaton continued as president until the time of his death, June 13, 1932, and was succeeded by Frank P. Evans. Its first board of directors consisted of E. J. Eaton, president; N. S. Gandy, vice-president; F. P. Evans, cashier, and W. S. Nichols, O. H. Shoup, S. D. McCracken, F. F. Costello, John Curr, and B. F. Lowell. It was organized with a capital of \$50,000 and a paid in surplus of \$10,000.

In 1907 the rumors of 1886 took form and the Colorado Springs National Bank was organized with a capital of \$100,000 and a paid in surplus of \$20,000. The officers were S. D. McCracken, president; W. K. Jewett, N. S. Gandy and William F. Richards, vice-presidents, and Willis R. Armstrong, cashier. Upon the subsequent death of S. D. McCracken, Willis R. Armstrong became president and has continued to serve in that capacity. On the original board of directors was a Colorado College professor, M. C. Gile. David N. Heizer, for many years mayor of Colorado Springs, was also an early member of the board of directors. Later O. E. Hemenway became vice-president and director. As later referred to, this bank absorbed the City National Bank and has shown steady progress.

Six years later, in 1913, the State Savings Bank was incorporated under a Colorado charter with a capital of \$25,000. It was the failure of this bank in December 1931 that marred the perfect record of Colorado Springs banks. No depositor had ever before suffered a loss. The bank was closed after the suicide of the president, when it was found that there were certain unexplained transactions and that the capital had been impaired. The deposits at the time amounted to \$267,389. Immediately thereafter certain of the Colorado Springs Clearing House banks started a movement to have the clearing house take over the bank and administer it, with the idea of paying the depositors and working out the assets as best they could. But to do this all of the banks had to agree, and there was opposition to the proposal on the ground that nobody knew just what the situation was and how the banks might become involved. The result was that the Bank Commis-

sioner put in a receiver who, by assessing the stockholders and selling the assets, paid the depositors over 89% of their claims. The net deficit to the depositors amounted to \$29,412.79. This loss cannot be considered a severe one in comparison with losses in other communities. It has been urged that the depositors were probably just as well off having their money in the bank and suffering an 11% shrinkage as if they had taken their money out at the time the bank failed—this on the theory that they would probably have put it in investments that would have shrunk considerably more.

Nevertheless, the perfect banking record of Colorado Springs was definitely marred by this occurrence. Had the clearing house taken over the bank, the expenses of a separate receiver and his administrative expenses would have been avoided and the loss to the clearing house banks would therefore not have been as large as they actually were to the individual depositors. Students of bank failures will observe that this one occurred where the bank had started out with six others already occupying a limited field; that the failure also occurred in that type of bank where statistics show that mortality has been the highest, namely: state banks having deposits of less than \$500,000.

Mrs. Ormes, in *The Book of Colorado Springs*, refers to the fact that the failure was followed by a series of tragic collapses among loan associations involving the lifetime savings of many citizens. In fact the president of the State Savings Bank was at the same time the president of the Assurance Savings and Loan Association, and apparently it was to bolster up the failing building and loan association that he invaded the assets of the bank.

The building and loan association collapse was as complete in Colorado Springs as in any city in the state. All four local associations went into the hands of receivers; the presidents of two of them received penitentiary sentences, and the presidents of the other two ended their lives by their own hands.

The contrast between the handling of the banks and the handling of the building and loan associations, the latter all under state charter, could not be more sharply drawn in any community. There is thus a touch of irony in the probability that the perfect banking record of Colorado Springs was marred by the vulnerability of a building and loan association*.

NUMBER OF BANKS. It will be noted from the foregoing that in 1872 Colorado Springs had one bank, William B. Young & Co.; in 1873 it had two banks: William B. Young & Co. and the Peoples

*As a result of the building and loan association failures in Colorado, in 1932 Governor W. H. Adams appointed a three man committee to investigate the state building and loan department and report and make recommendations thereon. Justice Jackson, the writer of this article, was a member of that committee and helped to draft the resulting recommendations and report.—Ed.

Bank, and immediately upon William B. Young & Co.'s withdrawal, the El Paso County Bank took its place. When the First National Bank received its charter in August, 1874, this brought the number of banks in Colorado Springs to three, and these three banks: the El Paso County Bank, the Peoples Bank and The First National Bank, remained the only banks in Colorado Springs until 1887, when the El Paso County Bank bought out the Peoples Bank, thus reducing the number to two. This condition lasted only one year, for the number was restored to three in September, 1888, when the Exchange National Bank was organized.

We thus find Colorado Springs going into the twentieth century having attained the greatest share of its growth of population, with a record of never having had more than three banks at any one time in its nineteenth century existence.

In 1901 the Colorado Title and Trust Company was incorporated and in 1903 absorbed a small company known as the Colorado Springs Trust Company. On November 28, 1903, the Colorado Savings Bank was organized as a state bank. In 1907 the Colorado Springs National Bank was organized, thus doubling the number of banks in Colorado Springs from the traditional three that had been the prevailing number in the nineteenth century. In 1913 the organization of the State Savings Bank brought the number of banks to seven, at a time when there had been no particular increase in population of the city and, in fact, a drop in the production from the Cripple Creek District and an abandonment of the shops of the Colorado Midland Railroad.

This was the high-water mark in the number of banks, for in 1917, with the consolidation of The First National Bank and the El Paso National Bank, the number dropped back to six. With the failure of the State Savings Bank in 1931, the number receded to five; and with the liquidation of the Colorado Title and Trust Company in 1933 the number became four, where it stands at the present time. It is interesting to note that each of the four banks now operating has a trust department—three operating under a national charter and one under a state charter—and each owns the building in which its banking quarters are located. It is reported that the architect for the First National Bank building took as the basis for his main plan the Doges Palace in Venice, Italy, and then made appropriate modifications to suit the local requirements. This may explain the exterior stone columns appearing at intervals on the ground floor and the arched windows of the upper stories.

Reference has not been made to the City National Bank, in West Colorado Springs, because for many years it was the First National Bank of Colorado City. After the annexation of Colorado City to Colorado Springs, it became the City National Bank

and was eventually merged in the Colorado Springs National Bank.

PANICS. What happened in the 1873 panic has already been related. The hard times of 1883 seem to have been surmounted by the three banks in Colorado Springs without too much difficulty.

However, the panic of 1893 caused great concern to the local bankers. This was not only because of what was happening generally throughout the country, but also due to the suspension of those banks in which Jerome B. Wheeler, a well known citizen of Manitou, was interested. Mr. Wheeler had three banks—one in each of the three towns of Manitou, Colorado City and Aspen. The bank in Aspen closed first, and the nervousness caused by that situation probably brought about, or at least hastened, the failure of his banks in Colorado City and Manitou.

The national bank statements of July 12, 1893, show that The First National Bank was then carrying cash of \$187,000 against deposits of \$815,000; that the Exchange National had cash and sight exchange of \$35,000 against deposits of \$197,000.

With these facts as a background, Mrs. Ormes' anecdote about the panic, included in her account on banking,² which she mistakenly ascribes to the writer, becomes more vivid. The story actually has for its authority O. L. Godfrey, who was connected with the El Paso County Bank in 1878 and continued as either assistant cashier or director of the First National Bank until his death in 1938. The story is that at the time of the crisis, William B. Jackson, a nephew of W. S. Jackson, was summoned to the bank from Manitou Park where he was vacationing and taken through the vaults of the bank by Mr. Godfrey and shown how they were crammed with gold, silver and paper currency. Then he was told to get a horse and buggy and drive around the outskirts of town among the bank's customers and, in the course of conversation, show them casually a telegram received that day from New York addressed to W. S. Jackson, El Paso County Bank. The telegram read:

"Shipping today 100,000 currency. You may have as much more as you need. J. P. Morgan & Co."

Colorado Springs went through the panic of 1893 without a bank closing.

The panic of 1907, brought about by the failure of the Knickerbocker Trust Company in New York, saw the local banks give serious consideration to the issuance of Colorado Springs Clearing House certificates. This was the course banks in other communities seemed to be adopting, but locally the panic, which has been described by others as a bankers' panic, did not lead to the serious results that occurred in 1893 and the banks generally soon recovered from the stringency.

²In her, *The Book of Colorado Springs*.

In the moratorium that occurred March 4, 1933, it is believed that the Colorado Springs banks were nearly the last in the whole country to close. The majority did not open at all that Saturday morning; but Colorado banks had shown unwillingness to close and were doing business on Saturday morning when Governor E. C. Johnson's proclamation closing the banks was issued. The telegraphic proclamation was posted about 11 a. m., but people were in the midst of transactions and, although the front doors were closed, some business was done practically until closing time, 12 o'clock noon on Saturday.

As in the case of previous panics, there occurred conferences of bankers throughout the state with Denver bankers during the days after the moratorium had been declared; and again the proposal of Denver bankers, that banks throughout the state use Denver Clearing House certificates, fell on unresponsive ears. Denver Clearing House certificates had already been printed and were ready to use at the time the banks were reopened. The reopening—first on a limited and then later on an unlimited basis—obviated the need for the use of these certificates. Colorado Springs bankers participated in these conferences held in Denver.

Illustrating the fact that the Colorado Springs bankers were not in sympathy with the state-wide use of the Denver Clearing House certificates, the Colorado Springs Clearing House had already provided for the printing of clearing house certificates which are reported to have been of gaudy appearance.

INTEREST RATES. The rate of interest is more than an academic question to the borrower and also demands the attention of the student of trends. The writer has been able to discover nothing of record as to the rate of interest charged in the first year of operation of William B. Young & Co. and the Peoples Bank; but Hall's *History of Colorado* (Vol. II, p. 109), gives the following picture of the prevailing interest rates in Denver in 1872, the year that Colorado Springs had its first bank:

In the summer of 1872 the money market in Denver, though evincing premonitory symptoms of the approaching panic of 1873, was reported easy, with interest rates at from eighteen to twenty per cent per annum, on first-class commercial paper. Extortionate as these rates seem to us of the present day, they were considered quite liberal when compared with those of the previous decade, when they ranged between five and twenty-five per cent a month, on substantial collateral. It is a fact that George W. Brown, who established one of the first banking houses in Denver, and was also one of the first Collectors of Internal Revenue, appointed by President Lincoln, loaned money in small sums at twenty-five per cent per month. Most of his contemporaries did the same. Money was money in those days, and the fortunate few who possessed it were able to secure any rate they chose to demand. For years the ruling rate on commercial paper at the regular banks was three per cent per month, and from that to five per cent. Though the charges

were extortionate, the risks were proportionately great, as there was no fixed value to property. Under the prevailing instability of things the man or bank which loaned money had to take serious chances.

One of the first bits of evidence as to the rate of interest charged in Colorado Springs appears incidentally in the testimony of C. H. White, one of the partners of the El Paso County Bank, taken in the so-called "Stratton widow case," referring to a loan made to W. S. Stratton:

Exhibit 70 which you hand me is a deposit slip. . . . The word "dis" means a discount of \$99.00. A discount probably of \$100 with a dollar discount for interest. He gets credit for \$99.00 for the discount—that is we took his note for probably \$100 and discounted the note for a month at 1% per month.

From this it may be inferred that 1% a month, or 12% interest a year, might have been considered the prevailing rate in the early part of the year 1874.

This rate, as time went on, dropped to a 10% per annum rate, as evidenced by various unpaid promissory notes taken by the El Paso County Bank in the '80s and '90s. These notes are now in the writer's possession.

In connection with the interest rate in those early days, it must be recalled that few of the borrowers had substantial collateral to put up as security; that the banker lending the money was really, in a great many cases, betting upon the ability of the individual to whom he was lending the money and upon the worthwhileness of the enterprise into which he was going. In other words, the banker in those days was in many cases more of a partner in the enterprise to which he was lending money than he was a creditor. Therefore, because the risk was greater and also because of the lack of available capital, the interest rate was higher. The wastage and loss from bad debts was probably larger than under the present method of banking.

Reference has been made hitherto to checks and deposit slips covering transactions in W. S. Stratton's account with the El Paso County Bank in 1873-4, used as evidence in the Stratton widow case. Among these documents was a check, which now would be called a counter check, indicating that Stratton had drawn it, presented it in person and drawn the money out on January 2, 1874. That date was the day after the alleged marriage of Stratton to Mrs. Chellew in Shelby County, Texas, and in those days transportation facilities were not such as would make it possible for him to be in Colorado Springs one day and in Fort Worth, Texas, the day before. Frank Waters, in his biography of Stratton, entitled *Midas of the Rockies* (p. 313), makes the following comment on the production of this documentary evidence:

"Why, for this significant period alone, these old records of

the bank had been kept when it was custom to return such canceled checks to clients remains a mystery."

Inasmuch as it was the writer and the late Robert G. Argo who discovered these checks and documents, it is germane to state here that it was not merely the ancient checks of W. S. Stratton that were in the basement of the bank but the old checks of other of the bank's depositors of that period. In other words, it was apparently the custom at that time not to return canceled checks to the customers of the bank. The writer's testimony was that the joint search by Argo and himself covered a period of two or three months. The old checks and documents were so voluminous that it was only after that length of time and amount of search that Stratton's checks and the books and accounting items relating thereto were finally located. So it appears the assumption of Waters, that "it was custom to return such canceled checks to clients," is unwarranted. The habit seems to have been just the opposite.

Moreover, this practice indulged in at that time is not such an extraordinary one as he infers. Inquiry discloses that this is precisely the method that is in vogue today in European banks. The European bank retains the customers' checks and renders simply a statement of debits and credits for the period covered. It was because of this custom that the French Government was able to obtain certain evidence in the Stavisky scandal in 1934, for it was able to compel the bank where Stavisky had his account to produce his canceled checks.

This paper does not pretend to be more than an outline. Comparatively few figures and statistics have been used, and there are places where further documentation undoubtedly suggests itself. There seem to be few, if any, accounts of banking in other communities in this state. This one stops with the formation of the Federal Deposit Corporation and the guaranteeing by that organization of deposits up to \$5,000 in all member banks. That is an appropriate place to close, because it marks a rather final step away from the system of private banking with which the town started.

A brief survey of banking in Denver and Pueblo shows that Colorado Springs has a far better record in minimizing losses to depositors than either of those cities. It is believed that the record is better than that of most of the smaller communities, and that it will compare favorably with the best of them.

Here is an account of banking in a community where "rugged individualism" in the form of the private bank persisted longer than in most other Colorado towns—a community in which the leading bankers recognized and put into practice the principle that the first duty of a bank is the protection of its depositors.