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## HOWARDSVILLE IN THE SAN JUAN

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Howardsville is a small town located on the Animas River in San Juan County, Colorado, five and four-tenths miles above Silverton. Its altitude is 9,670 feet above sea level. Although shrunk from what it was in the boom days of the 1880s when it boasted a population of 300 people, it still mines gold, silver, lead, and zinc which are milled in the town. Its newer buildings are badly weather-beaten and the original ones are quietly falling to ruins along the broad highway which leads through the town. As it sleeps among the lofty peaks, Howardsville can dream of days in a vigorous past, full of excitement. Its history is a record of the ups and downs of the metal market, for San Juan County has no farmers—only miners. But who wants to dig potatoes when every heap of earth may be a gold mine?

The land on which Howardsville is situated became the property of the United States by conquest from Mexico. Scattered parties of explorers and trappers may have passed through it, but it remained practically unknown and was a hunting ground for the Indians until 1860. It is conjectured that at some time it was visited by the Spaniards or those in contact with them, because in excavating for a cellar at Howardsville, a Spanish gold coin of the reign of Charles III dated 1772, was found seven feet below the surface of the ground.<sup>1</sup>

In 1860, the year following the Pikes Peak gold rush, Charles Baker led a party through the Animas Valley and into Baker's Park where Silverton now stands.<sup>2</sup> The party spent the winter in brush shanties at Eureka, four miles above Howardsville. As these men were placer miners, they laboriously cut out lumber with whip saws

\*Mrs. Ayres, a resident of Durango, prepared this material originally for a D.A.R. Program. Upon request, she has enlarged it for *The Colorado Magazine*. She says she is indebted to N. C. Maxwell of Silverton, and Mrs. Anna J. Terry of Durango, for part of the material, and to Mrs. E. D. Peters, Durango, for typing the article. Mrs. Terry, the widow of William L. Terry, son of Judge Terry who owned the Sunnyside Mine at Eureka, lived in Silverton as a young girl and knew George Howard, the Neigolds, and others mentioned.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Edgar M. Ledyard, "The San Juan Country," *The Ax-I-Dent*, December, 1931, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Hall's *History of Colorado*, Vol. 2, p. 93.

and made sluices but they collected little gold. When they left in the fall of 1861, they received news of the Civil War, so they scattered to various points, until some time after the close of the war. In the meantime, a new treaty had given the Indians the rights to the land for three hundred miles in length and two hundred miles in width along the Utah and New Mexico borders.



HOWARDSVILLE IN 1906

The fact that the white men were now trespassers and their presence and activities vigorously resisted by the Indians, did not deter a remnant of the Baker party from taking another look around Baker's Park. In August, 1870, when the San Juan was still part of Conejos County, a party led by Dempsey Reese, Adnah French and Captain Cooley again came into the country and began to prospect at Arastra Gulch.<sup>3</sup> After discovering the Little Giant and the Mountaineer mines, they returned to Santa Fe for the winter.

The following spring they returned with a larger party and settled on the Animas River around Arastra Gulch and Hazelton mountain just above it. In the gulch they built an arastra. This was a crude device borrowed from the Mexicans consisting of a stone basin fitted with a heavy millstone which ground soft ores to powder as it was slowly turned by a horse or burro. With this arastra about \$3,000.00 was obtained from the surface quartz of the Little Giant, in about six weeks. As Del Norte had just been established, the miners journeyed the hundred and ten miles across Stony Pass to winter in the new town.

<sup>3</sup>Hall's *History of Colorado*, Vol. 2, p. 203.

Del Norte was swarming with miners who had been attracted by the discoveries at Summitsville, in Rio Grande County, which had proved disappointing. In the spring the miners stampeded across the pass to the new mines. Many prospectors and miners from other parts of the country joined them. It was estimated that two thousand miners were in the country when the spring of 1872 opened.

During the following months up to 1873, when the Indians signed the Brunot treaty, which returned the country to white sovereignty, the miners worked with a watchful eye on the Indians, a shovel in their hands and a rifle handy.

That year at Arastra Gulch, Dempsey Reese built the first cabin, which was the scene of the first Fourth of July celebration there. The orator of the day, Cy Newcomb, read the Declaration of Independence from the roof of the cabin. Among those assisting in the celebration were: R. J. McNutt, Scotty Robinson, George Howard, Reinhart Neigold, William Mulholland, Thomas Blair, Dempsey Reese and others.

In the fall of 1872, Major Wasson (later of Wagon Wheel Gap fame), brought in by ox-team, via the Lake Fork of the Gunnison and Cinnamon Creek which empties into the Animas at Animas Forks, a quartz mill which he delivered to Major E. M. Hamilton. The Major had purchased the Little Giant mine from the original owners, Dempsey Reese, Adnah French, Miles Johnson and others.<sup>4</sup> Somewhat later, stamp mills were built which were large blocks of iron, lifted by water power or steam and allowed to drop on ore placed under them.

Most of the supplies, however, came through Howardsville which sprang up at the mouth of Cunningham Gulch (named for one of the original Baker party). The miners were willing to pay an exorbitant price to anyone who could handle the freight brought in by pack trains. What was packed over the hills was a perfect marvel. Besides supplies of all kinds there were mining machinery, cookstoves, crockery, and even square pianos. The route from Del Norte was up the Rio Grande River, over Stony Pass and down Cunningham Gulch to Howardsville. The road crossed the pass at an altitude of 12,090 feet and on the Howardsville side dropped 2,300 feet in the first two miles—a grade of more than 20%. In 1876, freight was \$60.00 a ton. In 1878 it had dropped to \$40.00 probably because by that time the road over Stony Pass had become a toll road for wagons. This term "wagon road" might be a misnomer for the wagons had to be snubbed down the steepest slopes by ropes around trees. Even the least nervous passengers often preferred to walk rather than risk their necks riding down such places. These trail

<sup>4</sup>*Pioneers of the San Juan*, Vol. 2, p. 36.

wagons were narrower and the clearance higher than those of the modern day.

The first permanent cabin in Howardsville was built by George W. Howard in 1872. As a young lad he had been a member of the original Baker party and he was one of the early arrivals of 1871. With his partner, R. J. McNutt, he located the Keystone and Winnemucca mines in Howardsville and farther up the gulch the Sunnyside, Ben Franklin, Poughkeepsie, Belle Creole, and Washington.

Mrs. Anna Terry of Durango tells the story that Howard had the logs all prepared. These were sawed out with hand saws. Then he laid in a barrel of whiskey. As prospectors passed his place he would ask them if they would like a drink. When the potion had produced the required amount of good comradeship, he would ask them if they would help put some of the heavier logs in place. He would keep them helping as long as he could keep them interested and then wait for the next arrival.

Howard's cabin was of logs put together with wooden pins instead of nails and roofed with something like shakes,—shingles cut from logs three feet long. Here Mr. Howard made his home for many years. Though he was a bachelor his cabin was always neat as wax. He would scrub the floor with lye and sand and cover it with beautiful skins which he had obtained by trapping around Olathe, during the winter months, and which he tanned himself.

He made buckskin pants and shirts and had standing orders for them from the early residents of Howardsville. As companions he had a number of queer looking long-tailed cats which rustled their living by catching chipmunks and mice. When he made his exodus to Olathe in wintertime he would put his cats into saddle pockets made especially to transport them, carry them with him and bring them back on his return in the spring.

When the partnership between Mr. Howard and Mr. McNutt was dissolved, holdings were divided by lot and to make the division even a ten dollar bill was torn in half.<sup>5</sup> With first choice Mr. McNutt took the Sunnyside, which he sold for \$10,000.00, and Mr. Howard's first choice was the Ben Franklin, which he sold for \$11,000.00. When he was compelled to seek a lower climate because of illness, he went to Del Norte where he built a fine residence and lived until 1920. His cabin, in poor repair, still stands on a hill to the right of Cunningham Gulch.

Mrs. Amanda Cotton claims the honor of being the first white woman over Stony Pass and for two years the only married woman in Howardsville. According to Mrs. Cotton, when on her first

<sup>5</sup>Information obtained from N. C. Maxwell.

arrival she went out to hang up a washing one day, a miner who was unaware of her presence in town had his pick raised over his shoulder ready for a stroke. He was so surprised by what he probably thought was an apparition that he did not drop the pick for ten minutes.

During those first years there was a settlement one summer of what might be termed "Ladies of Pleasure." They lived in tents, but when the chilly blasts of winter approached they retired to warmer pastures.

Mrs. Cotton's husband ran the first store "whose stock consisted mainly of rye." Mrs. Cotton rejoiced in the title of "The Belle of Howardsville" for sometime without competition. Later she was joined by Mrs. W. E. Earl and Mrs. W. H. Nichol. Howardsville, in 1874, claimed the distinction of being the first postoffice on the western slope. Mr. Nichol, who ran the first assay office, was the first postmaster. In the spring Mrs. Nichol gave birth to a baby boy, who was the first white child born in La Plata County.

The first female white child was born on July 5, 1875, near the summit of the range at the head of Stony Pass, under a fir tree, upon a huge bank of snow, to Mrs. George Webb, who was en route to Silverton with her husband. Fir boughs were placed under blankets and a canvas stretched over her head. Two doctors were present and she had all possible attention. In a few days she was able to resume her journey to Silverton. This baby was nicknamed "The Lily of the San Juan."

During those days of pack trains and wagons over Stony Pass living costs were a problem to the pioneer women. Flour was \$20.00 a hundred, matches 25 cents a box, and eggs \$5.00 a dozen. If the residents tired of mountain sheep shot in great abundance around the camp as a meat course, they could vary it with beef from the slaughtered oxen which had carried in supplies over the trail until they were past further usefulness. One winter when a herd of cattle was driven into town and a steer was butchered, there was no wrapping paper to be had so the customers carried away their purchases on skewers. It was always possible to kill deer close to town. In summer the slopes of the mountains had wonderful wild raspberries, black currants, and small but deliciously sweet strawberries.

When La Plata County was created on February 10, 1874, from the western one-third of Conejos County, the first need was a place to carry on the work of the new county and probate courts, hence a two-roomed log courthouse, the first in the western one-third of Colorado, was built. It was of sturdy logs. Parts of the

original building are still standing. A session of the district court was held there with Judge Moses Hallett presiding, and lawyers later to become well known in southwestern Colorado were in attendance. Stone's *History of Colorado* tells that the lawyers journeyed over the hill from Del Norte, camping together, hunting and fishing and often bringing their witnesses in the party.

"Among the first law suits was one in regard to the McGregor and Susquehanna lode claims on Hazelton mountain; McGregor and T. P. Higgins being the disputants. His Honor Judge Hallett presided. The lawyers were Judge Hackett, representing the McGregor claim, N. E. Slaymaker opposing.

"Mr. Slaymaker entered the court room nattily attired in a flannel shirt, buckskin breeches held in place by a belt holding two 45 calibre guns. His opponent, knowing the force of the witty Slaymaker's arguments, was unwilling to face him with the additional aid of two six guns, requested the court to have him disarmed before opening the case. This was accordingly done and the case proceeded to trial. The Susquehanna gained the day."<sup>6</sup>

The next year without rhyme or reason the county clerk moved the records to Silverton. A clue to his actions may be found in *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. 26, Number 4, page 293, in an article on Parrott City which states that when the miners decided they wanted the county seat moved to Silverton, half a dozen intrepid souls went to Howardsville. For a few hours they were liberal spenders buying drinks for all with special attention to the custodians of the county's documents and seals. When these reached the state precluding physical and verbal objections, the visitors seized the records and departed to Silverton where possession being nine points of the law they remained.

When San Juan County in 1876 was separated from La Plata and Parrott City was made the county seat, the early records of La Plata County remained in Silverton.

As you may gather from this and other foregoing incidents that "Temperance" was not the watchword in the mining regions, it will be no surprise to learn that Charles Fischer established the first brewery in southwestern Colorado at Howardsville in the early 1880s. His first product was brewed in a washboiler but it must have been a good brand for it was expanded into a regular brewing business, first at Howardsville and later at Silverton where in 1889 he built a stone brewery. He was never able to supply the demand of the thirsty populace for the saloons always had to ship in additional beer. Upon his retirement, he built a house in the Animas

<sup>6</sup>*Silverton Standard*, Sept. 9, 1949.

Valley at Hermosa which later became the home of Edgar Buchanan and is now the home of the Gus Ambolds.

A general election took place in 1875 for members to the Territorial Legislature which was to consider statehood for Colorado. Adair Wilson, R. J. McNutt and Thomas Trippe were elected from the Council District. Mr. Trippe had come to Howardsville in 1874 from St. Paul, Minnesota, where he had been an engineer in the employ of James Hill of Great Northern Railway fame. He took up his residence in Howardsville where he maintained bachelor quarters throughout his long life. He was so fond of Howardsville that he declared that there were only two places in the United States fit for a man to live—Howardsville in the summer and New York City in the winter. Till the end of his life he followed this practice, with the exception of one winter spent in California which he viewed with disparaging comparisons with the places of his choice.

He did much of the surveying in what is now Ouray, San Miguel and San Juan counties. He acquired many mining interests and was a great factor in the development of the country.

*The La Plata Miner* of Silverton published on December 30, 1882, gives an account of a complimentary dinner given to Mr. Trippe by his Howardsville friends on the preceding Christmas day, on the occasion of his departure to Denver to resume his duties as a representative of San Juan County in the State Legislature. The dinner was given at the Watson House in Howardsville and was prepared by W. D. Watson himself. The article states it was one of the most sumptuous repasts ever prepared in the San Juan. As it included two kinds of puddings, four kinds of pie, four varieties of cake and several kinds of fruits served with four different kinds of wine and three choices of hard liquor, ending with Watson's best cigars, one can appreciate the editor's comment that: "The occasion will be long remembered with pleasure by all who participated." Those present were the following friends and neighbors of Mr. Trippe: John R. Curry, George N. Raymond, James D. McKay, John Ferrando, Peter Mario, Charles Fischer, E. W. Hunt, H. J. Forsythe, Albert Bernard, James H. Howard, W. D. Watson, G. H. Doyle, Archie Gibbs, A. J. Bourdeth, Robert Glatzel, Thomas Doyle, J. M. Lipponecott, J. C. Engel and William Alley. Through all the ups and downs of mining in the San Juan, Mr. Trippe never lost his faith in the country. Shortly before his death he remarked that the mines had reached only one-tenth of the production of which they were capable.

Up in Cunningham Gulch most of the mines had been located by 1876. The Pride of the West had been located in 1871 and shipped ore over Stony Pass in 1874 with freight at \$60.00 a ton.

It is still in operation, though closed down at intervals through the years. The company recently built a new 100-ton mill at Howardsville, which is scheduled to be enlarged by a recent purchaser, The Great Eastern Mining Company, which bought the holdings of the Green Mountain Mining Company, as well. The Green Mountain mines were also well known in the early days. In the early 1900s they had a mill and large boarding house up Cunningham Gulch and the railroad track ran to their door. All this has completely disappeared through the combined work of snowslides and vandals who, during the scarcity of lumber during World War II, carried off anything which they could use for construction.

The most flamboyant family who resided up the gulch in the early days arrived from Germany via the eastern coast to take up mining. This was the Neigold family, natives of Saxony, who possessed the cultivated tastes of their ancestors. The family consisted of Reinhart Neigold, who has been mentioned as attending the Fourth of July celebration in 1872, his brother Gustav and a half-brother, Oscar Roedel, who came in 1875 or 1876. Their first partnership work was on the Little Fanny-Philadelphia claims adjoining the Pride of the West at the foot of Stony Pass. It is related that when Gustav Neigold received the returns on a sample assayed by Tom Trippe, he ran for three miles to the foot of the trail and shouted to the miners as he climbed, to cease throwing a sand-like substance over the dump. It was a sulphuret of silver and highly valuable. In the early days of mining in this region no payment was made for gold. Whatever gold was in the ore was included in the silver. Later ore from a small deposit about the size of a box-car, when shipped to Germany yielded about 100,000 ounces of silver.

The price of silver, however, did not cause any furrows on the brows of the Neigolds. In addition to what the mines produced they were plentifully supplied with money by a rich uncle who was a banker in Philadelphia. The Neigolds built several cabins at the mouth of Stony Gulch calling the place Neigold's Town. Reinhart's ambition, which he never realized, was to build a replica of a German castle among the crags of Cunningham Gulch. They did their best, however, to recreate the culture of Europe in the far west. As Reinhart was an accomplished pianist and the rest could all play moderately well they had a grand piano shipped in by pack train for their enjoyment. Gustav Neigold had sung in New York City for what he termed "a comfortable existence" so they put on the latest opera for their friends and neighbors, appearing in knickerbocker pants, powdered hair and buckled shoes.

Their standard of living included the best in food and drinks. They had imported wines and Turkish tobacco at \$5.00 a pound. Their meals were prepared with the aid of German, Russian, and Italian cookbooks. In 1904 they sold their belongings in the Old Hundred and Reinhart went to Denver. Gustav made a splash in New York City and Roedel, being entirely deaf by that time, continued to reside in Silverton. Owing to their extravagant tastes the money did not last long. Reinhart died about 1908 and directed that his ashes be scattered from the Veta Madre mine on the top of Galena mountain at Howardsville. The others died in comparative poverty at Socorro, New Mexico.

While members of the Neigold family were living in all the luxury their money could procure for them in these rude surroundings, others of their nationality who perhaps had occupied a loftier station in Germany, were living in abject poverty. Mrs. Binscheider was reputed to have been associated with royalty in her native land. She arrived in Howardsville with numerous trunks filled with beautiful silks and velvets, none of which were suitable to a log cabin with a dirt floor and canvas roof. Her husband attempted to run a pack train. To the uninitiated this might seem easy work but it required considerable skill in handling animals and in roping on the packs so that they would stay in place regardless of what obstacles the pack animals encountered on their trip. Binscheider did not possess the business acumen which would enable him to know at what price goods could be profitably packed to the mines. His wife who had no culinary experience attempted to help out the financial situation by doing the cooking for the packers. As in their own phrase "She didn't know enough to boil water," the result was neither wealth for the Binscheiders nor complete satisfaction for the boarders.

The Highland Mary mine at the extreme end of Cunningham Gulch started its history in 1875 when the Ennis brothers of New York City consulted a spiritualist and paid her \$50,000 to locate a mine for them. The spiritualist designated a point on the map where she said there was "a lake of gold". They not only spent huge sums of money on its development putting in the first steel track in the San Juan and pioneering the latest in mining equipment but they built a \$10,000 house near the entrance to the tunnel and furnished it lavishly. The course of the main tunnel was plotted by the spiritualist who sent specific instructions on how they were to proceed. The inside of the mine was a maze of twists and turns and ups and downs entirely without relation to any veins of ore encountered. Several good veins were discovered during these erratic developments but the lake of gold eluded their quest.

The veins of silver they did encounter were shipped to Del Norte by burro train. The mining directory of Colorado for 1883 says the ore when sorted ran from \$50.00 to \$1,300.00 a ton so the fault seems to have been with the spirits and not with the mine. Another complication they had to face was that the miners, (hard-boiled as they were), knowing of the spiritual direction of the mine, refused to enter it if they were alone. The hopes of the two brothers never wavered, but finally in 1885 after they had spent a million on the property they were forced into bankruptcy and lost the mine. The new owners used more mundane methods of development and soon had it back in production. After the panic of 1893 until 1902 there was not much output but in 1907 it was the second largest producer in the Silverton area, and after all these years is still in operation.

In these high altitudes the oft-quoted remark that the climate is "nine months winter and three months mighty late in the fall" is almost literally true. Winter really begins about the first of November. By that time a superintendent must have his winter supplies stored at the mine or run the risk of a snowfall which will close the trail for the winter, exposing the miners to short rations in the spring. But in spite of all this isolation, the winter is really the best time to work the mines. Well sheltered and abundantly fed, removed from the temptation of Blair Street in Silverton, which can be reached only by a frightfully fatiguing and perilous trip on snowshoes, and settled to the fact that a whole winter's work lies ahead, there is no season when such steady progress is possible, either in development of the mine or in taking out ore preparatory to shipment in the spring.

For over a decade no wagon road entered San Juan County and the only communication between it and the outside world was by saddle animals over a road that not only tried men's souls but their bodies as well. As one local paper gently expressed it, "the county was somewhat deprived of easy transportation." In the winter it was practically isolated from the outside world and all mail and supplies had to be carried in on snowshoes. It is related that some of the mailcarriers could carry as much as sixty pounds on their backs. The mails were often delayed for weeks by the severity of the storms. People did not watch for the first robin as the harbinger of spring, but for the tinkling bells of the first train of jacks to arrive in town for that meant the end of a six months siege in the midst of impassable snow.

The arrival of summer brought other problems. Though the Indians had signed the Brunot treaty in 1873, relinquishing their rights to the San Juan mining region, they still roamed at large through the country, becoming increasingly hostile as the white

settlers increased in number and more land was taken up. As the Indians lived largely by hunting they knew of no other way to exist and realized that as more land was occupied by the immense herds of cattle which were being brought in, game would disappear and their food supply be diminished. Their ideal was to preserve their hunting grounds intact while periodically visiting an agency to receive their rations. In San Juan County, where there were no farms, the miners wished merely to use the land for mining purposes, but other whites brought in cattle to fatten on the abundant grass which often reached the horses' bellies. Thus arose a continual conflict between the races.

This constant dread of the Indians sometimes led to ludicrous situations such as related by Ernest Ingersoll who was with the Hayden survey and camped in Baker's Park. Ingersoll describes a midnight raid at Howardsville above Silverton in 1874 as follows:

"It happened that everybody went off on a side trip the next morning after our arrival, except F. M. Endlich and myself. With us remained a young Cheyenne packer, a general servant and our little French cook.

"Ugly rumors were abroad and daily growing thicker that the Indians to the south of us were on the war path and had burned ranches, driven in herdsmen, hunters and prospectors and were preparing to raid this very valley and camp.

"Discussing the matter around our camp fire, it appeared that Bob, the packer, was extremely anxious that the Redskins should appear, and he had vowed to perform a miracle of valor in resistance.

"Well, that night, as usual, we went to bed at nine o'clock. The camp was on a wooded bluff about a hundred feet higher than the level of the narrow valley where stood Howardsville. I suppose I had been asleep an hour or so when I heard the most diabolical shrieking and yelling, with rattling and popping of guns and it seemed that I had been dropped into the heart of the battle of Gettysburg. At the same instant I opened my eyes, there stood Bob half dressed, his face so blanched with fear that I could detect its paleness in the starlight. Bob stammered, 'There they come' and with a loud Oh-h-h he disappeared in the adjacent timber.

"Next day came an explanation. The miners of that neighborhood, tiring of a gentleman with a fortune but no desire to invest in the local mines and becoming a little obnoxious, decided to frame him in true western manner. Accordingly they had disguised themselves as Indians, staged the raid and succeeded in scaring

the visiting capitalist to a sufficient degree as to cause him to pack up and leave the country."

In 1879 it was obvious that there would be trouble with the Indians, and after the news of the Meeker Massacre on September 29, 1879, reached the mining district there were grave fears that there would be a general uprising. How tense the state of mind became among the settlers is shown by an Indian scare which occurred at Howardsville on October 7, the night of the election in San Juan County. As the men were counting returns in Howardsville, then the county seat, a man named McCann rode to the door of Jimmie Soward's saloon. He was the bearer of an appeal to the governor to send arms to Animas City in order that the citizens might be prepared to defend themselves in case of attack, and was bound for Del Norte by the road over Stony Pass. McCann shouted:

"Git up and git out of here; the Indians have massacred everybody in Animas City and are moving on Silverton. I have got dispatches for the governor for arms and troops and am going to Antelope Springs before daylight. Jimmie give me a drink."

He showed his dispatches and swore that his story was true. He got his drink and started as fast as his horse would carry him up the gulch. Messengers were immediately sent to Animas Forks, another little mining camp, to arouse the people to arms. Then the balance of the party started for Silverton. Finding a camp of men engaged on construction of a telegraph line, they repeated the story to them. As the boss of the gang said everybody should look out for his own scalp, they immediately broke camp, some going to the mountains, some over the range to Del Norte, and some into Silverton. The camp was entirely abandoned and no more work was done there that fall.

On reaching town they learned the nature of the message which McCann carried. He had told the story to secure a drink, knowing no one would hesitate to give a drink of whiskey to a man on a mission of mercy with a forty-mile ride before him in the dark. He got his drink, but the whole country was aroused by the story.<sup>56</sup> The United States troops marched from Pagosa Springs and camped at Animas City until January, 1880. Later the Indians were moved to another distant reservation.

The arrival of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad in Silverton in 1882 connected the growing Animas Valley towns with the market in Silverton. The freight shipment over it of 6,000 tons of ore at \$16.00 a ton in the first six months brought new wealth to the country, but it firmly established Silverton in place

<sup>56</sup>*La Plata Miner*, December 30, 1882.

of Howardsville as the chief town of the region. But both Silverton and Howardsville saw the prosperity of their mining section for ten years after the advent of the railroad, especially when the price of silver rocketed after the passage of the Sherman Act in 1890, calling for the purchase by the government of great quantities of silver. They shared the depression of 1893 after its repeal. Throughout the state, mine after mine shut down and large numbers were abandoned. Many a mining baron went back to pick and shovel. The high gold content of the ore in the mines of the San Juan County, however, helped them weather the depression and continue production.

In 1894, Otto Mears built the road from Silverton to Eureka via Howardsville. Howardsville never boasted a depot, simply a loading platform. Later on in 1905 a branch road was built up Cunningham Gulch to the Green Mountain mine two miles up the gulch. Ore from the Highland Mary, the Green Mountain and the Shenandoah was then loaded at Green Mountain so the pack trains need not make the extra trip to Howardsville. This road also passed the Old Hundred Mine which was the first large property up the gulch. In the early days this property had been worked on levels which began a thousand feet above the mill and ran to the top of Galena Mountain, whose sides were so steep that the miners could not climb them each day. Boarding houses in spots sheltered from snowslides were accordingly built at each level. In 1905 a tram from the top of the mountain took the ore from these various levels to the mill and boarding houses located with the offices at the stream level where the ore was loaded on the cars.

The Shenandoah was much farther up the gulch above timberline on King Solomon's Mountain on the opposite side of the gulch from the Highland Mary. It produced thousands of dollars for its owners, Dan McLean and Dr. William Haggart, in the early 1890s. Two pack trains a day carried the supplies from the end of the railroad track at the Green Mountain to the mine and returned with the ore sacks. One misstep of a mule in many places on the trail would carry it down the mountainside. To the everlasting credit of the pack mules let it be recorded that they usually clung to the narrow trail in safety. In winter the mine was inaccessible for months except by skis on which many of the miners were very proficient. When they wished to make a trip to town they would ski down the hill to the railroad track and lean their skis against a convenient building while they made the remainder of their way down to town on the track.

It was to run the pack train to the Shenandoah Mine that my husband, Arthur Ayres, left the First National Bank in

Durango where he had worked since a boy of 17, and went to Howardsville in the summer of 1907. Our house was a two-story frame opposite Forsythe's store and the saloon adjoining it. All the water for domestic purposes for our family of five had to be carried from a hydrant located in front of the saloon. There was a bartender there who regarded it as his duty to carry my brimming bucket to the house whenever I appeared when he was on duty. My admiration of such chivalry was rudely shattered when one night he disappeared from town taking with him the entire bank roll of the saloon proprietor.



BURRO PACK TRAIN AT HOWARDSVILLE

The Shaw Brothers were running pack trains to the Highland Mary and other producing mines and there were six-horse teams for the more accessible mines. The departure of the pack trains and wagons to the mines in the early morning hours filled the streets with noise and life. Sundays being usually a day of rest, the packers would go to Silverton with all the money they had earned during the week. If able to walk they would come straggling back on Monday to the mules, minus everything but their shirts, only to repeat the performance the following Saturday. Many of the men boarded at the restaurant, next to the saloon, run by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Peskinofski. The slopes of the hills back of our house were full of a large variety of mushrooms. Lee and Amy Ayres would go up the hill with their playmates and take a water bucket which they would fill with mushrooms of all the various kinds. Upon their return I would take the bucket to the

restaurant where the proprietor's wife would sort the eatable ones from the deadly poisonous ones for me.

In 1908, we moved the pack train up to the Green Mountain Mine where we lived in the three-room house which had served as an office-building-bunkhouse for the officials. There was a large two-story frame boarding house a little farther up the gulch which had housed the men before the mine closed the previous winter. Rattling around in its huge expanse with the big dining-room and huge boarding house ranges were Mr. and Mrs. Watson who acted as caretakers.

My daughter, Mary Louise Ayres, was only a baby at that time and could not walk, but every morning as my husband led his pack train by the house someone would carry her out and he would ride her at the head of the mules for a short distance on the front of his saddle. She would stick one foot up in the air preparatory to going over the saddle horn when she saw the pack train coming. One morning when the mules were loaded with heavy beams of lumber about ten or twelve feet long one end of which was allowed to drag along the ground beside the mules, as Art picked up the baby the mules frightened by some unknown cause began to mill around. There is always great danger for the person in the center of such a movement. With the baby in his arms my husband could do nothing to counteract it. His brother, Harry Ayres, who was the assistant packer was mounted and only a short distance away. He saw the trouble and rode right into the midst of the circling mules and forced them to break out and resume their lines. It was all over in a few seconds but that was the last time my baby daughter ever rode at the head of the pack train. We had a difficult time with her for weeks as she would cry bitterly when the mules were led by and her father ignored her presence.

That summer was a joy to us all. Cunningham Gulch was a huge ravine with walls several hundred yards apart, with Green Mountain and Galena on the north and King Solomon on the south. The sides of these mountains in spots are utterly bare of trees two or three thousand feet below timberline. This is where they have been swept away and kept down by the recurring avalanches of snow, which in many parts of these ranges are liable to slip down in masses perhaps a mile square and anywhere from ten to a hundred feet deep, bringing rocks and everything else with them. Wherever some curvature of the cliff protects from the destruction of the snowslides, heavy spruce timber grows, mingled with lighter tinted aspens, or willow thickets in the wet places, or tangles of briars sheltering the woodchucks and the

conies. Overhead tower the cliffs rising so steeply that only in a few places can they be climbed.

As Ernest Ingersoll expresses it "Above this magnificence of rock work, spanned by a violet edged vault which is not sky but only color—the purest mass of color in the universe,—passes the trail and stage road cut over the lofty crest to the sources of the Rio Grande."

The ground underneath the trees was carpeted with a mass of flowers. Perhaps the columbines were not as luxuriant as they had been in the 1890s when a whole flat load of flowers was picked at Howardsville, placed in tubs and sent to the World's Fair, but they still covered the slopes in great numbers, mingled with bluebells, paint brush, harebells and dozens of other species.

Tower Mountain rose in its sublime beauty, at the lower end of the gulch. At its top was a little cairn containing the names of those who had climbed it. My husband and I rode as far up as we could get on horseback and completed the trip on foot through masses of slide rock to the top. I was either the first or the second woman to write my name on the register. The view from the top was magnificent. As far as the eye could reach stretched mountain peaks looking like the frozen waves of the sea.

In the winter of 1908 when we returned to Durango, the pack trains were still making trips to even the loftiest mines like the North Star and King Solomon's Mountain located at an altitude of 14,000 feet. Then came the trams built to the larger mines, carrying the supplies to the mines on the up-trip and the buckets of ore on the down-trip.

Later trucks came to follow the roads and treasure trails pioneered by the pack trains, and with the coming of the jeep the mountains were conquered. The price of metals once more dropped and in 1932 mining was at its lowest ebb. The railroad which had never been a source of revenue closed with the mines. In 1941 the population of Howardsville was down to twenty people. The tracks up the gulch were requisitioned by the government and torn up in 1941. The famous "Casey Jones," built in 1923 for the officials of the Sunnyside mine to ride between Eureka and Silverton and which was "a combination of auto, train and miners' ingenuity," somewhat similar to the "Galloping Goose," no longer passed over the tracks. A brief spurt in population took place during the Second World War, but at its close Howardsville dropped back to about thirty residents. The school was closed and a bus takes the children to the Silverton schools. The post-office was closed on October 31, 1939, and the Howardsville store over which Henry Forsythe, a resident of Howardsville since Jan-

uary 1, 1880, had presided over for almost sixty years was sold and then discontinued.

The only signs of life in the old town are around the Pride of the West mill which is now operated by the Great Eastern Company. Howardsville still carries on, perhaps in the spirit of the early pioneers whom nothing seemed to daunt.

## FEDERAL RELATIONS WITH THE COLORADO UTES, 1861-1865

BY JAMES WARREN COVINGTON\*

The beautiful valleys of central and western Colorado were inhabited by a group of Indians known as Ute. Northwestern Colorado was inhabited by the section of the tribe known as the White River band. The Tabeguache people lived to the south of the White River Utes. These Colorado bands and the groups living in Utah were known as the Northern Utes.<sup>1</sup>

Three units comprised the division of people known as the Southern Utes. The Capotes lived near the headwaters of the Rio Grande in Colorado and New Mexico; the Wiminuches were located chiefly in the valley of the San Juan and its northern tributaries in southwestern Colorado; and the Moaches roamed near present day Santa Fe, New Mexico and southern Colorado.<sup>2</sup>

The Utes were not true natives of the Great Plains but adopted the tepee, travois and life of the Plains Indians until many Utes could not be distinguished from their Indian neighbors to the east.

James S. Calhoun, who was one of the most efficient Indian agents to serve the United States Government, negotiated the first treaty signed with the Ute Indians at Abiquiu, Territory of New Mexico, in 1849. An agency which proved unsuccessful at first began operations the following year. It was reopened in 1853 as a permanent establishment to serve the Capote band.<sup>3</sup>

Early in December, 1853, Kit Carson, the famous trapper and friend of the Indians, was appointed agent at Taos. John Greiner had been at the post as early as 1851 but the agency had

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<sup>1</sup>See Anne M. Cooke, "The Northern Ute," *American Anthropologist* XL (October, 1938) for an account of these Indians.

<sup>2</sup>Marvin Opler, "The Southern Ute of Colorado," in *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes*, Ralph Linton, ed. (N. Y., 1940), 123-130.

<sup>3</sup>Graves to Meriwether, August 31, 1853, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1853* (Washington, 1853), 436, hereafter cited as *R.C.I.A.*

not served its purpose due to a very restricted budget. The Moache band frequented this area and were known as "Taos Utes" because they camped for a large part of the year near Taos pueblo. Many Jicarilla Apaches joined the Moaches at the agency because they had been friends for many years and were likewise great admirers of Carson.

News of the infrequent presents which the agent gave to the two southern Ute bands traveled into central Colorado and, in 1856, the Tabeguaches came to Abiquiu in search of their gifts. Although Carson recommended that an agent be assigned to assist this band, his request was ignored for several years.

When gold was discovered near the present site of Denver, [1858], thousands of gold-seekers invaded the area. This migration which reached a total of five thousand persons a week by 1861, soon brought the whites into contact with the Tabeguaches. Some friction developed between the two races but no serious clash took place.

When the Territory of Colorado was organized in 1861, the Indians were placed under the jurisdiction of the territorial governor, who was also ex-officio Superintendent of Indian affairs. The Tabeguaches were given an agent during this year and the agency was located at Conejos. Agent Lafayette Head thought that he had eight thousand Tabeguaches in his charge, who made their living by hunting the excellent supply of wild life in that area. A few families, however, cultivated the soil and owned some livestock.<sup>4</sup> Head was restricted in his job by the lack of sufficient funds and the influx of miners began to cause him some trouble when they entered San Luis Park which was the center of the Tabeguaches' hunting area.

Special Agent Henry M. Vaile was appointed by Governor William Gilpin to make a survey of the area between Denver and Salt Lake City and to pay careful attention to the aboriginal inhabitants of that section. He left Denver on July 8, 1861, and returned September 1, of the same year. Some Utes known as the "Green and Grand River Utes" numbering about three thousand, were met along the western border of Colorado. They were peaceful but complained that they had received no presents from the government. These Indians seemed to believe that only those who killed some settlers were eligible to receive gifts from Washington. They visited Provo, Utah in search of food but had not received any provisions from that settlement. Excellent ponies were owned by this band and each brave took fine care of his animals.

<sup>4</sup>Lafayette Head to Governor William Gilpin, October 3, 1861, R.C.I.A., 1861, 102.

At the time Vaile visited Salt Lake City he met some handsome Indians known as the Elk Mountain Utes. They were well dressed, had good guns and rode fine ponies. The Elk Mountain Utes were not very friendly with the Mormons and obtained their guns and ammunition from the Mexicans and Navajos whom they occasionally visited.

Vaile learned much from his visit and recommended that the government buy clothing, blankets, shirts, food, sugar, coffee, bacon, and flour for the Indians. He thought that the clothing should be distributed in the fall and the food early in the spring. A farm system would be desirable on a small scale and developed as the skills of the Indians increased, but white settlements must not be located nearby the Indian farms. He concluded the report by asserting that something must be done for the Indians or necessity would compel them to rob and steal in order to stay alive.<sup>5</sup>

It became apparent to the political leaders of Colorado that a treaty should be signed with the Ute Indians living in their territory. Governor John Evans, successor of Gilpin, saw the danger of war between the gold-seeking miners and Utes. He most earnestly pointed to "the absolute folly and great danger of delaying longer to treat with the different bands of the Ute Indians in Colorado for the cession of their lands."<sup>6</sup> One political leader, C. Whetmore, had, as early as March, 1861, urged the passage of a treaty and feared that war would otherwise soon result.<sup>7</sup> Hiram Bennet, the delegate to Congress, wrote in April, 1862, "Better a treaty than a war of extermination."<sup>8</sup>

Only one agency for the Utes was located in Colorado at this time and it was situated in a very beautiful valley at Conejos. Some eight hundred acres were under cultivation by 1862 but only small patches of corn and vegetables were grown. Lafayette Head, first agent at this post, was accused of speculating in government property and hiring an interpreter who could not speak Ute. A delegation of Tabeguache chiefs visited Fort Garland to complain about the meager amount of food they received and its moldy, rotten condition. Their request for lead and powder was granted, but the soldiers gave them only a very small amount.<sup>9</sup> Some time later federal charges were brought against Head but he defended himself by pointing out that his interpreter could

<sup>5</sup>Vaile to Gilpin, July 5, 1861, R.C.I.A., 232-38.

<sup>6</sup>Evans to Dole, October 30, 1862, R.C.I.A., 1862, 231.

<sup>7</sup>Whetmore to Dole, March 14, 1861, National Archives, Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, *Colorado*, 1861, W 182, hereafter cited as O.I.A.

<sup>8</sup>Bennet to Dole, April 5, 1862, O.I.A., *Colorado*, 1862, B. 1196.

<sup>9</sup>Notes of an interview between Major Adolph Mayer (1st N. M. Cavalry) and twenty-four head men of the Tabeguache Utes at Fort Garland, no date. Army officers stated that Head was furnished an adequate supply of rations by them, *ibid.*, M 632.

speak Ute and the Indians had left Conejos when an outbreak of smallpox occurred.<sup>10</sup>

Early in 1863, Head took some Ute Indians to Washington for a conference with "the great white father."<sup>11</sup> William Army, acting Governor of New Mexico, thought that some of these Indians en route to Washington were not chiefs and that several lived in New Mexico.<sup>12</sup> The Indians enjoyed themselves in the capital city and the return trip was made by means of railroad and stage coach.

Head's nephew, Finis Downing, joined the group in Illinois and journeyed to Colorado with his uncle.<sup>13</sup> The young boy liked these Indians, for two Utes spoke some English and taught him the sign language by which means he was able to converse with the rest of them. They were "quick to learn and understand and they were grateful and kind to those they reposed confidence in, but as sullen and hard as flint when they were suspicious or felt that someone was wronging them."<sup>14</sup>

War was narrowly averted between the settlers and the Tabeguache Utes for several years and the date for a council was at last set for October 1, 1863, at Conejos, Colorado. Governor Evans had spent many months in making the necessary arrangements for this meeting and hoped to have present representatives from all Ute bands. Before the council convened, a disturbance in western Colorado showed what could happen in the southern part of the territory if a treaty were not negotiated.

Trouble began to the north along the route of the Overland Stage Company when the food supply became very inadequate. Many Utes came to Fort Halleck, Wyoming, and begged for food. Soon, stock was stolen from the stations of the stage company.<sup>15</sup> Early in February, some Utes attacked the station at Pass Creek [Wyoming], drove off the stage company's mail stock, cut up the harness, and enjoyed themselves while wrecking the place. They were overtaken by soldiers from Fort Halleck on February 19 and a number of Indians were killed. They were found again, five days later, and part of the horses recovered, but the Indians escaped in the midst of a wild storm.<sup>16</sup>

Raids began again in the summer of 1863, when all of the horses were stolen from Cooper Creek Station [Wyoming]. The

<sup>10</sup>Transcript of hearing of Lafayette Head, December 29, 1862, *ibid.*, C 1198. One soldier testified that these Indians had no influence in the tribe.

<sup>11</sup>Major Arch Gillespie to Captain Ben Cutler, February 7, 1863, O.I.A., *Colorado, 1862*, W 1096.

<sup>12</sup>Army to Dole, February 21, 1863, *ibid.*, A 92.

<sup>13</sup>Finis E. Downing, "With the Ute Peace Delegation of 1863," *Colorado Magazine*, XXII (1945), 195.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 197.

<sup>15</sup>LeRoy R. Hafen, *The Overland Mail* (Cleveland, 1926), 252.

<sup>16</sup>Captain Asaph Allen to General James Craig, February 27, 1867, *The War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XXII, Part I, 234.

hostiles visited Medicine Bow Station [Wyoming] and took all the food and the shirts and ties of the station keepers, but did not steal any livestock. Some two hundred and fifty head of horses were stolen in another raid from a place within eighteen miles of Fort Laramie.<sup>17</sup>

Lieutenants Henry Brandley and Hugh Williams, of the Ninth Kansas Cavalry, were sent in pursuit of the Indians with seventy men. Captain Asaph Allen wanted to end this series of raids so he ordered his entire command with the exception of three men after the Utes. All passing emigrants to the West were stopped and temporarily drafted into the United States Army, so that they could guard the post until the troops returned. The Indians were overtaken about thirty miles from the post and concealed themselves in a thick cover of bushes and trees at the top of a hill. They were better armed and mounted than the soldiers as they had Hawkens rifles, revolvers, bows and arrows, and spears. The whites dismounted and moved up the hill, seemingly good targets, but the Indians aimed too high and the bullets went over the heads of the advancing blue line. When the troops reached the top of the hill, the Indians ran to their horses and fled after the two hour battle. Twenty dead Indians were found; one soldier was killed and six wounded.<sup>18</sup>

Major Edward Wynkoop of the First Colorado Cavalry was ordered to proceed to a point in Colorado, about one hundred miles southwest of Fort Halleck, with four companies of cavalry to recover the stolen horses, but the force was unable to locate the Indians. The disturbance was ended by this show of force.<sup>19</sup>

The scheduled conference was held on October 1, 1863. Members of the commission included Superintendent Michael Steck from New Mexico, Agent Simeon Whiteley from the newly created agency in western Colorado, Agent Lafayette Head from Conejos, and Governor John Evans of Colorado. John Nicolay, Lincoln's secretary from Washington, was present and served as secretary for the commission. Indians from the Tabeguache, Capote, and Wiminuche bands attended the meeting, but a sudden attack by the Cheyennes had forced the Moaches to remain away. Whiteley had not notified his charges in time for the council.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Agent J. H. Jones to D. Johns, Division Agent of Overland Stage Co., July 7, 1863, *The War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XXII, Part II, 369-370.

<sup>18</sup>Allen to Captain Frank Eno, Assistant Adjutant-General, July 7, 1863, *The War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XXII, Part I, 444.

<sup>19</sup>Colonel John Chivington to Eno, August 7, 1863, *The War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XXII, Part II, 437.

<sup>20</sup>Evans to Dole, October 14, 1863, *E.C.I.A., 1863*, 126. Nicolay had a slightly different account concerning the Indians who were present,—one Capote and three Moache leaders attended the conference. Several Wiminuches started on the trip but changed their minds and retraced their steps. The Uintahs or Yampah band declined to send representatives because their horses could not stand the journey. John Nicolay to William Dole, November 10, 1863, *House Executive Document No. 1*, 38 Cong., 1 Sess., Vol. III, 266, hereafter cited as *H.E.D. 1*.

Since there was not sufficient representation of the other bands present to act upon a treaty, the commission decided to negotiate only with the Tabeguaches.

These Indians assured themselves of a strong position in the negotiations when they justly asserted in their opening speeches that the power of the President "must be as potent to control and restrain his white as his red children; and while it was their duty to acknowledge obedience, it was also their right to claim protection."<sup>21</sup>

Although it had been the plan of the federal officials to move the Indians to a new location, the Ute leaders would not consent to this change. They liked their hunting grounds in Colorado, were satisfied with their present treatment by the government, and did not want farming substituted for a life of unhampered migration.

A treaty was arranged, however, with the Tabeguache band. Article Two, which specified the reservation to which the people were to be located, read as follows:

Beginning at the mouth of the Uncompahgre River; thence down Gunnison River to its confluence with Bunkara River; thence up the Bunkara River to the Roaring Fork of the same; thence up the Roaring Fork to its source; thence along the summit of the range dividing the waters of the Arkansas from those of the Gunnison River at its intersection with the range dividing the waters of the San Luis Valley from those of the Gunnison's Fork of the Great Colorado River; thence along the summit of said range to the source and down the main channel of said Uncompahgre River to its mouth, the place of beginning.<sup>22</sup>

It was agreed that the Moaches could join the Tabeguaches upon this reserve.

The land which the Tabeguaches surrendered included much of the area of white settlement in Colorado and the mining sites discovered at that time. In return for relinquishing title to their excellent lands, the Tabeguaches were to be given cattle, "not exceeding one hundred and fifty head annually during five years beginning with the ratification of this treaty," which was ratified in 1864, and "sheep not exceeding one thousand head annually during the first two years after the ratification of this treaty and five hundred head annually during the next three years."<sup>23</sup> In order to receive the livestock, the Tabeguaches should show some interest in agricultural or pastoral pursuits. The government promised to supply a blacksmith, who might repair guns and agricultural implements. For a period of ten years, the Indians were to receive annually ten thousand dollars

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>22</sup>Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, II (Washington, 1904), 856.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 858.

value in goods and ten thousand dollars worth of provisions.<sup>24</sup> Ten Tabeguache leaders, including Colorow and Ouray, signed the treaty which was witnessed by five army officers and John Nicolay. After the formal business of the gathering had been concluded, Governor Evans selected seven of the more friendly Indians and presented them with silver medals.

John Nicolay and members of the commission were not supporters of the farm system for the Indians. Nicolay did not think the Indians would be good farmers for, said he:

The cultivation of the soil in that country depends almost exclusively upon irrigation, and as this system of farming again requires great care, and irrigable lands are very scarce, it is hardly possible that the Indian, with his ineradicable habits of indolence and carelessness, can ever be taught to cultivate land and produce his own bread.<sup>25</sup>

The commission was certain it would take the Indians some time for a complete adjustment to reservation life and consequently "consented to their retaining, not as a permanent reservation, but as hunting grounds nearly one-half of the lands they claimed to own."<sup>26</sup>

Sheep and cattle were provided for the Indians in the hope that the Indians would make use of the pasture lands which were full of rich grass and "stock-raising is so easy and so much more nearly conforms to his present life and habits, there seems to be but little doubt he may eventually be taught to become a successful herdsman."<sup>27</sup> Final success would be in the hands of the agent and Nicolay wanted the selection of this officer to be made with great care. Although the livestock would be given only to those who properly cared for them, it was hoped that "Congress should make ample appropriations to patiently continue the experiment, even in the face of temporary failures at least as long as stipulated in the treaty."<sup>28</sup>

Congress had authorized an agency for the "Green River and Uintah" Utes in 1862 but it was not until April, 1863 that an agent reported for duty. Simeon Whiteley was appointed as the first agent and he was directed to open an agency at Grand Sulphur Springs in the Middle Park of Colorado. Indian raids, previously mentioned, and the Conejos council prevented Whiteley from taking full control of his charges until late in the year but he appointed Uriah Curtis as interpreter and ordered him to locate the Indians. Curtis found that the Grand River and Uintah bands had visited their friends at the Spanish Fork Agency in

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 857.

<sup>25</sup>Nicolay to Dole, H.E.D. 1, 267.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 268.

Utah territory. He had not seen this group for some years and was very surprised to see how disease had decimated the bands. Curtis reported that: "Chiefs who, a few years before, led hundreds of warriors now do not have as many dozens."<sup>29</sup> The Indians admitted that they had attacked the stage stations but now they were very friendly and wanted to enter into agricultural pursuits and one Indian was reputed to own a herd of cattle.

The following year Whiteley was put in charge of the Grand River and Uintah Indians, also a band of Arapahoes at Camp Collins. He thought that his Utes were friendly towards the whites and he spent most of his time watching the Arapaho band, for this year (1864) was a critical year in its history. These Ute Indians must have taken a very severe beating in the fight with the soldiers in 1863, for they were most peaceful in 1864. One party of Utes, seeing some emigrants leave their wagon trains, halted and:

... sent one of their party in pursuit of the frightened people, who told them in good English, "if you do not go back to your train, my people will pursue and kill you; you shall not run off to the fort (Halleck) and say we drove you away. We are going to fight the Arapahoes but are friends to the whites."<sup>30</sup>

They hoped to receive their presents from the government at Conejos, but a heavy snow kept away all except fourteen families from the agency.

Conejos Agency seemed to have a satisfactory year in 1864. The Tabeguaches remained very quiet and showed great friendship for the whites. One of them met a white trader and boasted to him that he was the better man for he had talked to the Great White Father in Washington. Uncompahgre Park, occupied by the Uncompahgre Utes, was now attached to this agency and Head thought these Indians were doing a good job of cultivating wheat, corn and beans with implements which they had manufactured.<sup>31</sup>

A heavy snow which fell during the fall of 1864 prevented the Tabeguaches from going to the Great Plains and obtaining a plentiful supply of meat and hides. The starving Indians gathered about Colorado City and forced the citizens to give them ten sacks of flour. Ninety-five more sacks of flour were given to them by their agent as a bribe to remain away from the settlements. Many of these Indians were very bitter since the government had not fulfilled any one of its promises of the 1864 treaty.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Whiteley to Evans, October 26, 1863, *R.C.I.A.* 1863, 123.

<sup>30</sup>Whiteley to Dole, October 23, 1863, *R.C.I.A.* 1864, 242.

<sup>31</sup>Head to Dole, July 19, 1864. *Ibid.*, 241.

<sup>32</sup>Head to Evans, August 10, 1865, 178. Head had previously distributed two horses to each male Tabeguache in 1864.

Friction soon developed between the Latin-Americans of San Luis Valley and the Utes. A Ute murdered a Latin and the dead man's friend killed two Indians; one of them was Chief Colorow's brother-in-law. Governor Evans immediately sent presents to the relatives of the deceased to prevent the development of a feud. Trying to avoid a repetition of the murders, Evans wanted the agency moved to the Uncompahgre River or Grand River as the Indians' presence at Conejos was a constant source of difficulty and was likely to result in warfare.

Presents for the Indians had been delayed for several months at Nebraska City, Nebraska, by one of the strange miscalculations which frequently occur in a large organization, but finally the obstruction was removed under pressure by Evans and the goods arrived in Colorado.

They were distributed to the Uintah and Grand River bands at Empire City, September 28, 1865, by Daniel Oakes, the new agent to these Indians. After receiving their gifts, the Indians promised they would protect the new route of the stage line which was being established through by Ben Holladay.

Much was done during this period to keep the Tabeguaches peaceful. Evans was afraid that Chief Colorow was ready to attack the Mexicans so he had a conference with the Tabeguache leaders and they pledged themselves to remain peaceful. It seemed that if the Indians traveled to Conejos to receive their presents, they would probably fight with the Mexicans. In order to avoid a conflict, a spot known as the "Salt Works" was selected as a distribution point. Since some members of this band were on a raid against the Arapahoes, they received their presents at Empire City.<sup>33</sup>

Empire City served as the distribution point for annuities in 1865, 1866 and 1867. A thousand or more Indians with all of their equipment advanced upon the town and usually camped on Clear Creek in a valley called "the Ranch," which was soon denuded of all vegetation. They went into Empire City and begged for biscuits and tobacco and often the whites came and watched the nightly dances.<sup>34</sup>

Relations between the average settler and the Utes during this period were good. The Indians behaved themselves and, if well treated, did not bother the whites. Sometimes the Indians came to the various settlements when their food supply became low and the kind-hearted townspeople gave them enough supplies to take them to the next community. Often humorous incidents

<sup>33</sup>Evans to Commissioner Daniel Cooley, October 7, 1865, *ibid.*, 182.

<sup>34</sup>Emma S. Hill, "Empire City in the Sixties," *Colorado Magazine* V (February, 1928), 29.

took place and infrequently tragic events occurred when the two races met under difficult circumstances.

It had taken three years to negotiate a much needed treaty in Colorado and several years were needed to fulfill any of the provisions. The Treaty of 1864 was written in terms of long range planning and the stock raising plan proposed by the commission was excellent. Federal aid did not seem to reach most of the Utes in western Colorado and not even an agency building was provided for them. Fortunately, however, the game supply was still sufficient and these Indians were not dependent upon the government for food.

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## SAN LUIS VALLEY

BY LUTHER E. BEAN\*

San Luis has been the county seat since Costilla County was established in 1861, as one of the seventeen original counties of the Territory of Colorado.

Many Folsom points have been found in the higher parts of San Luis Valley, which indicate that the Folsom Man once was there. Yuma points also have been found in the area.

When the Spanish explorers came north from Mexico they found the Ute or Utah Indians in possession of the fertile San Luis Valley. They hunted in the mountains and on the mesas of Costilla County, leading a wild, nomadic life. Other tribes often wandered over the mountains and into the valley to hunt deer and elk and sometimes to procure turquoise from the mines found west of the Rio Grande.

Before the advent of the Spanish, these people had no horses. Dogs were sometimes used to help them in transporting their scanty possessions. Whether they got their first horses direct from the Spanish or captured ponies which had gone wild is not known, but the Utes were expert horsemen when the first explorers came into the area.

The Kiowas, Comanches, Apaches, and Navajoes, as stated above, sometimes came over the mountains to dispute possession of the hunting grounds, but usually the Utes were successful in maintaining their claims on the San Luis Valley as their own.

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It is not known who was the first white man to glimpse the beauties of Costilla County. Some think Coronado may have crossed this area, but more believe that perhaps Zaldivar, nephew of Onate, may have been the first Spanish explorer who saw the valley.

De Vargas came through the southern part of the Valley about 1694 and fought with the Utes, losing several of his men who were buried on the spot. Perhaps some day their burial place will be found.

Zebulon Pike records that when he and his men came to the San Luis Valley in 1807, they observed a well-worn road up the Trinchera River, which would indicate that the Spanish traveled in the region. He remarked concerning the deer, antelope, and other wild animals on the river bottoms and speculated that perhaps the people in New Mexico came north on hunting expeditions to obtain meat for their families.

Mexico desired to establish settlements between New Mexico and outposts of the United States. Accordingly, in 1843, the governor of New Mexico granted more than a million acres under the name of the Sangre de Cristo Grant to Stephen Lee and Narciso Beaubien. After both of these men were killed in the Indian uprising of 1847, the Grant came into the possession of Carlos Beaubien, father of Narciso.

In 1849, a settlement was made at Costilla, which is south of the Colorado line. The first settlement in Colorado was in 1851, made by twelve hardy souls who pushed north from the vicinity of Taos and settled San Luis. They were: Faustin Medina, Mariano Pacheco, Ramon Rivera, Juan M. Salazar, Benancio Jacquez, Antonio J. Vallegos, Diego Gallegos, Juan A. Vigil, Dario Gallegos, Juan J. Jacquez, Jose Martinez, and Jose H. Valdez.

Several of these men originally had come to the vicinity of San Luis in 1842, but had been forced by the Indians to flee. It is probable that they later heard of the decision of the United States Army to build Fort Massachusetts in this area. As soon as they realized that they might expect some protection they hastened to return.

These settlers were hardy pioneers. Some of them were killed by the Indians as they tried to protect their homes. The village was built around a plaza for protection and there were always guards to give alarm if the enemy approached.

Soon after the founding at San Luis, two other settlements were made on the Culebra River: one near the present town of San Pablo in 1852; and the other, at Old San Acacio in 1853. Chama, Los Fuertes, and La Valley followed.

Although soldiers had been dispatched from Fort Leavenworth in 1851 for the purpose of establishing a fort in the San Luis Valley, they arrived too late in the fall to accomplish this. They did, however, build Fort Massachusetts in 1852. It was located at the forks of Ute Creek, where the old Ute Indian Trail crossed the stream. There were plenty of trees for fuel and for the construction of the fort buildings. Too, there was abundant pasture.

In spite of the alertness of the residents of San Luis, the Utes in 1855 fell upon the settlement and drove the inhabitants to the hills. But these brave people returned almost immediately, as the soldiers from Fort Massachusetts pursued and punished the Indians.

In 1858, Fort Massachusetts was abandoned and a new fort was constructed six miles south on the plains. Called Fort Garland, this post was occupied until 1884. Many famous men were located there at various times, including Kit Carson, who was Commander in 1866, Tom Tobin and Colonel Albert H. Pfeiffer, pioneer scouts.

In the year that Fort Massachusetts was abandoned, gold was discovered in the Denver area. By that time the settlements on the Culebra were well established. A flour mill had been built to grind flour for the settlers and soon oxtteams were hauling flour and other supplies from San Luis to the new settlements beyond Pike's Peak.

Colorado Territory was founded in 1861. It is interesting to go to the County Clerk's office in San Luis and read the first proceedings of the County Commissioners. Here are a few of them:

The town shall be kept as clean as possible and the scattering of trash will be prohibited.

Drunkenness will be prohibited in the presence of women and children. Fights and quarrels will also be prohibited.

It is prohibited to block the roads leading into the town.

Any person wishing to buy a lot in the Town of San Luis shall appear before the Judge and after having qualified as a good citizen shall pay the Judge the price of the lot, said price of the lot shall be turned over to the church for its benefit and use.

Just east of San Luis lies the "vega." This is a large meadow which was set aside for the use of the residents of the area. Beaubien specified that sheep could not be grazed on it and that it could never be sold.

The area of Costilla County has been much diminished by the formation of Saguache, Rio Grande, and Alamosa Counties. All of the land now within the county boundaries was once a part of the Sangre de Cristo Grant. Consequently there are no National forests or homestead lands.

The San Luis ditch holds the first water priority of Colorado, under the date of 1852. Pioneers say that it was dug by hand and that each man of the settlement was assigned a part to complete in order that water might flow to his garden.

Today many of the descendants of these hardy settlers still live in the area. Some live on the same farm as did their ancestors, a century ago. In one instance, a great-grandson maintains a store established by his great grandfather.

These people endeavored to recapture the past in their Centennial celebration and to honor the pioneers of the region of whom they are justly proud.

## MIDDLE PARK STAGE DRIVING

BY REV. EDWARD T. BOLLINGER\*

The terrible winter of 1898 and 1899 is a frostbitten memory of impassable snow drifts and sunless days that seemed without number to Middle Park pioneers.

The ranchers in the west end of Grand County depended on the stage line that ran from their desolate-looking little cow town of Kremmling, south forty-one miles to Dillon, served by the mountain climbing South Park railroad, which came in from Denver over Boreas Pass, on its way to Leadville. Dillon was on the end of a stub that began a couple of miles out at Dickey. The Rio Grande had a narrow gauge branch from Leadville in to Dillon. Both narrow gauge roads had graded a line most of the way to Kremmling.

Kremmling was desolate-looking only because of lack of trees. A spirit of hospitality was heart warming and as beautiful as the far distant Eagle's Nest range and the colorful Grand (Colorado) river so close by.

Charlie Free, a stocky built, round-faced, young buck, became the stage driver in October of 1898. The golden colors of Indian summer were writing their story of balmy days as Charlie headed out of Kremmling.

It was seven a. m., when Charlie headed south to the old rickety viaduct over the Grand river. He did not trust this dilapidated structure and forded the stream immediately to the east

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of it. As was so often the case, a spring wagon served for the stagecoach and was very adequate for the two or more mail bags, the occasional passenger, and what express might be shipped.

Sol Jones, famous pioneer wagon maker, blacksmith and county sheriff, was partner with Fount McQueary in operating the stage. They had been bondsmen for a man who had had some unfortunate experiences with the spirits that have been bottled.

The mail contract called for tri-weekly service. The daring young Free found twenty-six mail boxes that day as he drove his team up and down hill and around a multitude of turns and curves.

By noon he had reached the Cow Camp<sup>1</sup> and had dinner. The horses were changed here. Later a second horse-changing stop was made at a two-story log house, where a Mr. Jacobs lived.<sup>2</sup> Jacobs owned a frisky team, but being an older man, he proposed that Charlie tame the team for him that winter by driving the horses to the stage.

On the rest of the way to Dillon, the steel tires of the spring wagon found about as many jolting rocks and stones as on the first lap. There were occasional irrigation ditches to soak up the dry spokes and several little streams to supply water to the new team.

Thanksgiving came and Christmas, with no intimation of an ugly winter ahead. Some days there was a passenger going over to take the South Park narrow gauge to Leadville, but more frequently to Denver. The Kremmling merchant, Tracy Tyler,<sup>3</sup> and the surrounding ranchers had already stocked up with sufficient flour and goods for the winter. These shipments were brought in direct by wagon during the summer and late fall over Berthoud Pass. Express and freight shipments on the stage, therefore, were only a few items that had been overlooked or unforeseen earlier.

Winter usually set in, in earnest, around Christmas time, but that year there seemed to be not enough winter to justify a "January thaw." The calendars of Grand County had another page torn off and everyone read "February." It was no trouble to make the occasional dance at some ranch. These dances were well regulated affairs which did not tolerate tipsy or quarrelsome guests.

Charlie Free, however, did not find his "gal" at any dance that winter as she was going to school in Denver. Fred Field,

<sup>1</sup>About a mile and a half east of present Green Mountain Dam. The Cow Camp apparently was established years before when some great ranch outfit, possibly the Adams Company, was bringing in cattle from Texas.

<sup>2</sup>Upper Knorr place today (1951).

<sup>3</sup>Now the colorful blacksmith shop of Dan Hoare.

who was suffering the same pains, was taken for a twin of the stage driver by many ranchers who strayed into these social occasions.

It may be unbelievable, but no one ever dreamed of running a dance past midnight Saturday for the Middle Park pioneers came from God-fearing homes. The dances held on other nights frequently lasted all night, with only one desire on the part of the cow hands apparent, to get home in time for the morning milking and feeding.



CHARLES F. FREE AND COACH AT SUMMIT OF BERTHOUD PASS

The second of February found Charlie Free driving his spring wagon out of Dillon on a snow-free road. He rattled over the many little bridges and raced here and there down hill, letting his team walk up from the Blue River to the Cow Camp for noon rest and dinner. He expected to make Kremmling in good time for supper. There was a little snow north of here on the road, for after all it was winter.

Free climbed the hill south of the Grand River and dropped down to the ranch on the river's edge where Rolland Grindle and two widows, Tacey Whitney and Sara Carr, lived. Just then out of Gore Canyon and boiling down off Gore Range from the west, there came a terrific blizzard, turning the fine winter day into a nightmare of wind and snow.

The women insisted that Charlie give up the idea of going the last mile and a half into the town of Kremmling. They said that he might miss the opening in the fence and find a dangerous piece of ice on the river. (There was no water diverted out of this stream in those days.) But to that husky, red-blooded lad it was unthinkable to give up so near his goal with the United States mail.

Charlie squared his jaw and headed north into the fury of the worst storm he had ever seen. After many long minutes he fumbled around to find the opening in the fence. He became worried and tried it again. Suddenly he and the wagon dropped into a hole on the bank of the river. Scared plenty, young Free turned his team square around and attempted to return to the ranch.

The cabin was small and would be hard to see, but the log barn was large, he knew. He also knew that he was in for trouble. After what seemed to him hours, he could find nothing at all, so gave up straining his eyes and began to call.

There is normally a mother's heart of concern in women the world over. The women back at the cabin had been greatly perturbed when Charlie Free had turned down their invitation to spend the night. One of them said, "I thought I heard someone calling."

The windows rattled. The weird sounds of the wind racing up the chimney chilled even Rolland Grindle as he and the women listened.

Again one woman said: "I am sure that is someone lost in the storm."

So Mr. Grindle lit the lantern, hastily wrapped himself in plenty of clothing and climbed to the top of the barn to hold the lantern.

There was no question that the stage driver was calling. So Rolland began calling back. The changes of the wind, as it hurled the blizzard this way and that, brought voices occasionally very clearly so that the lost driver was able to direct his course by sound alone. So blinding was this storm that Free never saw the lantern until he was literally against the barn and a gust of wind left a momentary lull.

Nothing was ever more welcomed than that cabin, its fire, and hot coffee that night.

Morning came. The wind had stopped, but when the door of the cabin was opened four feet of snow fell into the cabin. Everyone exclaimed, in the thrill of the discovery, that they had never, never, seen anything like it in the low country of Kremmling.<sup>4</sup>

Youth normally has a determination and when set back is more determined than ever. So giving up his wagon and throwing the mail sacks over one horse, Charlie mounted the other and set out, too restless to wait for a warm breakfast.

<sup>4</sup>Ted Engle's scrapbook, kept by his mother, records two feet.

All of nature was buried in white. Trees, bushes, landmarks were all plastered so that no landmarks could be located. It was a far different world than Charlie had ever seen. He could not find the river crossing. He gave up and returned and ate breakfast.

With more light seeping through the sunless morning, Jim Thompson made his way out of Kremmling with the Kremmling mail, according to arrangements previously planned in the event Charlie Free should fail to show up. Thompson got across the river and found Charlie finishing breakfast.

The men exchanged mail sacks. Free took a sled with a buckboard box and headed south up the hill. It was tough going in the four feet of snow. As he plowed down the other side of the hill to the fork in the road, he shoved with the blunt end of the wagon box a great pile of snow and was floundered at what is now the junction of Routes 9 and 11.

Four times he attempted to move ahead and finally gave up and returned to Grindle's ranch, where he spent the night. He crossed the river to see Bill Ball, who was willing to spend the entire night making a pair of skis for Charlie. Free thought he might make it on skis with the mail, even though he had never skiied before.

Next morning the sun was not shining; it was not going to shine any that week, or that month. It would be March with no sign of the sun; and it would be the same several days in April. Sixty-three days would come before the sun would shine. But this, Charlie Free did not know as he set out for the first time in his life on skis.

As for muscle and endurance, Charlie had all that it took to handle those skis and carry the mail sacks, even though he did not have ski poles.

The road was tricky for all of nature was plastered white. Time and again he fell through snow traps, when he missed sharp turns and unknowingly was out over nothing where the wind had built out the bank of the road with snow. To daring young Free it was just guess and then drop like a shot; then struggle and perspire to get out. He soon was plastered white.

By three o'clock in the afternoon, he had skiied and fallen as far as Butch (Bill) Bower's place.

"Where have you been?" came the greeting from Butch.

"Fighting snow," were the tired, yet husky words in return for the foolish question.

Butch offered his hospitality, including the little brown jug he had brought out. Charlie turned it down, but he didn't turn down the meal that Butch offered. Then he continued his trip.

The afternoon wore on. The game of drop in and crawl out kept up, but by the determination of youth, Charlie reached Colorow postoffice which was at Tom Pharo's.<sup>5</sup> There he ate supper and spent the night.

As the hired help on the ranch were feeding at the south end of the meadow the next morning, Free rode the first mile and a half on the sled.

When he sprinted up what is now called Stafford Hill, he saw two men coming towards him on a bobsled. They turned out to be the Westlake boys, who had decided to come in search of the stage driver and their mail.

Quickly the men turned the sled around and the three headed for the Cow Camp, where Charlie Free should have been at noon two days before. Mrs. Mary Thompson, her brother, Edgar, and sister, Maude, were living at the Cow Camp at that time.

A team had been waiting for the stage driver, as well as a sled, so that the second half of the journey was made without anything other than snow fighting to mark the trip.

With the mercury curling up and going to sleep every night and refusing to stretch up the sunless mornings, it was very clear that the tri-weekly service could not be maintained on the mail route by one man. The route was cut in two: Bill Kimball ran the lap north of the Cow Camp into Kremmling, while Charlie ran the south end.

Stage business increased as the train service on the poorly located South Park was non-existent for seventy-three days. The mail was re-routed over Berthoud Pass and Hot Sulphur Springs until Berthoud Pass blew shut with snow for three weeks. The fact of how, or if any, mail got in is lost in the memories of those interviewed regarding this winter.

Charlie, however, found plenty of business to handle and to help pay for the doubled expenses. Dillon was without mail service. The merchants had not laid in a winter's supply of food, so Tracy Tyler of Kremmling began to ship flour, bacon, sugar, and the like to the empty larders of Dillon from his well-stocked shelves.

When the sun did break through in April, it had a delayed job of cutting down the snow banks. By May tenth there still were six to eight feet of snow in Dillon.

Then came the thaw. Bridges were washed out on the road north. The day came when the sled had to be given up, because the sun made some parts of the road bare. Driving a spring wagon

<sup>5</sup>Ranch now owned by Paul Heeney.

was next to impossible on the bare stretches as the frost that had gone deep earlier in the winter now was coming out, leaving the wagon road with no bottom time and again.

Great detours were made by Mr. Free as he struggled over to the Cow Camp. The only true sign that summer might come was the fact that teachers were penetrating Middle Park to take over the school term, which very obviously was best held in the summer-time . . .

One day a young teacher arrived who was to teach school somewhere around Kremmling. Charlie never was very talkative but he could cut out enough words as they rattled over the stony part of the road and mired in the sticky ruts to tell the young girl just what kind of a harem-scarem he-man he was, for he had carried the mail through the terrible blizzard of that winter.

There had never been so much water. Plenty of bridges were out and there were more detours up steep banks and down almost straight places to prove that Charlie knew spring wagons and had the only team that could make these trips.

When the Mumford bridge over the Blue was reached, only the stringers were left. The torrent was washing and boiling over the boulders in as fantastic a way as could be imagined. This mad and chilly, swollen stream had taken away the pole floor and now dared the stage driver to find a way to Kremmling.

Charlie stopped and looked at the stringers that were well soaked by the lashing of the water.

"You know, I think I could get across on those stringers," he said.

The girl realized that she was a decided handicap in the mail reaching Kremmling.

Charlie then suggested, "I think I could carry you across piggy back."

Now what would any daring young school teacher say, who had nerve enough to head into Middle Park that spring?

In later years, Charlie said he was just stark mad to think of attempting such a crossing. If he slipped, the two of them would be cracked from boulder to boulder and frozen in the raging stream.

But Charlie got the girl across to the other side though they were both sprayed with the water. Then he went back, shouldered the girl's trunk and brought it across. Next came the mail sacks and then the walk of a mile and a half to the Cow Camp.

That was the last run on that route for Charlie Free.

Because of the severe winter, stage and mail service had been very uncertain over the Berthoud Pass route, with the result that the contract was cancelled and the bondsmen, Sol Jones and Fount McQueary, had to take over the line in the spring. Charlie Free was asked to drive the stage from Hot Sulphur Springs to Georgetown.

As the eastern end of the county is higher and normally deeper in snow and given to severe weather, the winter had been a hard one. Bob (R. O.) Throckmorton, had been freighting that winter. He was postmaster at Coulter.<sup>6</sup> He met Bob Spitzer and Criss Young headed up Berthoud Pass and warned them that he considered another trip very doubtful. Criss replied, "I never saw Berthoud when I could not cross it."

Spitzer and Young got their wagon to Georgetown, but could not get back over until April. The feed bill was so high that they almost lost their teams. Late in April, on their way back, they met Throckmorton. He had driven over fences with ease as the snow had crusted.

The snow began melting in May, which was unusually late. An ice jam formed at Sulphur and gouged out one of the wooden truss spans of the "Red" bridge. A dizzylike swinging-bridge enabled people to walk back and forth to the Hot Sulphur Springs bath house, which was much in demand for local people. The canyon road, however, was isolated and a demand for the immediate repair of the Red bridge was great, for the county was practically cut in two, as far as any good road was concerned.

The bridge was built so that the road from Sulphur came in high above the Grand River, swung across the stream to a bluff, and then began dropping slowly down to the Byers' place, the sulphur springs, and ever swinging to the right dropped until it was ready to loop under the bridge after crossing the spring's slough on a small bridge.<sup>7</sup>

Plans were made to tear down the bridge and build a new one across the river at near high water level, and thus reach the county road through the canyon, without the loop.

During the thawing weather of 1899, many bridges went out and the only way to operate the stage line was to rearrange the schedule of departure from both Hot Sulphur Springs and Georgetown to a much earlier hour than the regular seven A. M. Two o'clock in the morning was inconvenient for the passengers, but the stage could get over Berthoud Pass before the sun had

<sup>6</sup>The old Coulter Post Office log building can be seen today, west of Highway 40 on the Johnson Hereford Ranch, six miles south of Granby.

<sup>7</sup>The Moffat Railroad took over this right-of-way under the bridge and down the north side of Byers Canyon, on the prior rights of the Colorado Railways' filing, which it had bought up.

thawed out the crust and the bottomless ruts in much of the meadowland that offered easy access for a road. This change in schedule was standard practice year after year. To this day (1951), springtime wrecks the best built roads over this route and has caused considerable relocation in the valleys. Special drainage measures and hundreds of tons of rock fills have replaced the slab and log corduroy once used in attempts to support freighters' wagons and stages.

It was seven o'clock, one summer morning at Hot Sulphur Springs when Charlie Free climbed up to his seat on the Concord coach, and was off with his four horses, headed for Georgetown. The residents of Sulphur, who had heard much about the leather strap swing action that took up the shocks from the stones that the steel tires hit on the road, were just as proud of the new stage as were its owners.

The stage soon climbed the foot of Cottonwood Pass. The mangy looking cattle that had survived the winter looked pathetic down in Ute Bill Thompson's meadow. A few ranchers had been able to get feed to their cattle, but many head of stock had died and many were still dying.

As Charlie drove over the pass, he thought of how hungry some folks had gotten around Dillon, for it was a story much told around Kremmling. Some had had to live on ground corn and sage hens, which they shot. And it had been difficult to eat the black meat.

On down the pass and by Cottage Lane ranch the four horses carried the mail and passengers. At Coulter postoffice, the mail from Grand Lake was picked up. Then the climb began all over again. The road was narrow, with a stream to the right and a fence to the left. Snow hung like white shadows around the pine trees. This wooded road turned right several miles this side of what is now Tabernash, and inland from the Fraser River valley. At the 4 Bar 4 Ranch, horses again were changed near the two-story log structure, which still stands. From the road, beautiful meadows could be seen.

Timber stood ever in the background, when it was not leaning over the road. Straight east for a good long mile and the Fraser Valley appeared as the stage dropped down a hill where the water was running in the ruts. Charlie pulled back on the reins as a stretch of corduroy road enabled the outfit to get across the swampy meadowland.

The Divide stood majestically ahead, with the Devil's Thumb to the left. Now the stage veered south. It crossed St. Louis Creek and on to Cozens ranch where the mail would be exchanged.

Beyond Cozens' ranch and meadows, the park was clogged with trees that filled the valley like blades of grass. So crowded were they that they rarely attained any girth. The Fritz ranch was buried in such spindly timber.

Mrs. Ed Evans had dinner hot on the stove, with pies in the oven when the stage reached Idlewild. Charlie welcomed this noon stop. The family-style, thirty-five cent dinner there, met the demand of any hungry traveler. It would certainly hold the passengers until supper, which would come after seven that evening.



SPRUCE LODGE STAGE STOP AS IT LOOKED YEARS AGO

Fresh horses pulled the stage on from Idlewild. The Fraser river was crossed on a little bridge immediately after leaving the place. The road swung to the right with a full view of the bankfull stream. To the tourist this was spring or winter. To the Middle Park resident this was summer.

At Spruce Lodge flowers were blooming at the edge of snow banks. Old timers declared that day that they had never seen so many waterfalls rushing down the mountain side. From here the road ascent was very steep. The horses walked in snow and the tires cut through drifts that never wanted to melt. When Berthoud Pass was reached the horses paused to breathe. Then as the coach was braked down the steep descent the slab pile was reached a mile and a half down the south side. From here down there was no question that it was summer time. Birds were singing

and the air was warm. The Divide really had kept summer on the eastern slope and had denied it to Middle Park.

By the time Empire was reached the sun was dipping behind the peaks. The Georgetown postmaster chalked up the arrival of the mail on time with a "good conscience." Georgetown, with the atmosphere of an established city with marks of culture from bars to the greater number of churches and some elaborate homes, was in striking contrast to Middle Park.

The stage run that Charlie Free most remembers driving occurred when he left Hot Sulphur Springs one day with twelve passengers and six horses. The bridge men had completed the rebuilding of the "Red" bridge and they were going out. Seated with Charlie was Ruth, the daughter of William Jennings Bryan. The third person up front with the driver was a hardware dealer named Dillon. He furnished the hardware for the stageline, and the blacksmith and wagon shop of Sol Jones.

Ruth Bryan was in her teens. South of Coulter where a long stretch of the road was narrow with a bank to the left and a stream immediately to the right. The road was straight so that Charlie could see a buggy coming down the grade towards them. The driver of the buggy evidently expected the stage to go through the fence and climb the hill to the left or just plunge into the stream, for he made no effort to slow down and hunt for a passing place.

The clean-cut stage driver, with his wrestlerlike neck, held the road. The buggy came straight on, then with a very belated dropping of pace, which necessitated the teenage driver to pilot his team up the bank to avoid a headon. A front wheel collapsed. Angry words were hurled by the kid, who flourished a gun. The man with him was perhaps his father.

Young Free handed his reins to Miss Bryan saying, "Do you mind holding these horses for me while I take care of a little business?"

Mr. Dillon cautioned Charlie to be careful that the kid might have a gun. Charlie climbed back on the seat, for he did not want any of his passengers to be the accidental target for a shot.

"I will see you on my way back," Charlie shouted.

That evening at Georgetown, Mr. Dillon presented Charlie with a revolver. "Take this with you, you might find it convenient," he said.

So Free carried a gun for the first time. With only Otto Shot as a passenger going into the Park on the return trip, Charley eagerly looked for the young driver. He did not meet him on Berthoud and no one had seen him at Idlewild. On down through

the spindly pines that reached sixty feet, Charlie drove with that same expression that made his girl friend remark some years before, "Who is that sour puss?"

In what is now known as Hideaway Park, "Skip Monk" Fritz had a cabin and camp ground next to Vasquez Creek, which then was not running through Moffat Tunnel as drinking water for Denver.

Otto Shot, riding up front with Free, looked back and spied the buggy which they had been looking for. It was back in the trees. Charlie pulled on the reins and the stage came to a stop. The buggy dashed through the timber and made its escape before Charlie could get off to get his hands on that insulting, reckless kid.

Today Charlie Free and the girl who wondered "who that sour puss is," have celebrated their golden wedding. She is the daughter of Sol Jones, who owned the stageline. Charlie lives as a retired rancher in Hot Sulphur Springs. When he threw his support behind the organization of a bank at Granby, he was elected president. Men said, "Charlie's word is better than any bond. He is lasting proof of that pioneer honesty of Middle Park."

Bob Throckmorton is no longer postmaster of Coulter, for he has held a county office for about a half century and is now County Clerk.

Mrs. Ed Evans now lives in Winter Park. Her daughter and son-in-law still serve good meals while the Idlewild Stage log building stands close by with the sign, "Winter Park Post Office." Mrs. Evans still bakes pies. But Middle Park has changed. The railroad came with the "Billy Woods" sawmill. Moffat Tunnel was built and Idlewild became West Portal. Then Denver wanted a ski resort and the name was changed to Winter Park. Highway 40 has recently been moved up out of the meadowland, but the platform of the stage stop still stands, while Charlie drives more than a hundred horses ever itchy to be on the road during the winter.

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passable canyon of the river, and below are steep bluffs and deep banks. Besides being an easy ford, the bottomland along the river must have been a favorite place for Indian encampments, for when the deep soil along the bottom is plowed, many arrow heads and rubbing stones and other artifacts are uncovered. Along the edge of the bluff overlooking this land are many flint chips left from making arrow heads. The bluff was an excellent place for Indians to watch their horse herds and to keep a lookout for game or enemies.

It may be of interest to have a direct description of this country before it was stripped of timber, and before the streams were drained of water diverted for irrigation. Fremont's second expedition went through the Livermore country in July of 1843. The expedition camped near what is now Ted's, and, finding they could not go up the main Poudre, Kit Carson guided the party over a low gap near where Dwayne McMurray now lives. Fremont's party dropped down on the North Fork above the present location of Ft. Collins City Waterworks. Thinking they were on the main Poudre, they came up the North Fork as far as its junction with the Pine, and then followed practically the same route as the present highway to Virginia Dale and over the divide.

Fremont hit a wet spell in this region, and found the streams swollen by rains. This is Fremont's description of the North Fork country:

We were compelled by the nature of the ground to cross the river eight or ten times, at difficult, deep and rocky fords, the stream running with great force, swollen by rains, a true mountain torrent, only forty or fifty feet wide. It was a mountain valley of the narrowest kind, almost a chasm; and the scenery was wild and beautiful.

Towering mountains rose around about; their sides sometimes dark with forests of pine, and sometimes with lofty precipices, washed by the river; while below, as if they indemnified themselves in luxuriance for the scanty space, the green river bottom was covered with a wilderness of flowers, their tall spikes rising above our heads as we rode among them. A profusion of blossoms on a white flowering vine (*clematis lasianthi*), which was abundant along the river, contrasted handsomely with the green foliage of the trees. The mountain appeared to be composed of greenish grey and red granite, which in some places appeared to be in a state of decomposition, making a red soil.

The stream was wooded with cottonwood, boxelder and cherry, with currant and serviceberry bushes.<sup>1</sup>

Having ceded their land in the United States, the Cherokees in 1848 sent a party to the west coast to find a new location for their tribe. Returning in 1849, they came down the Laramie Plains through St. Cloud and Cherokee Park, over Cherokee Hill, down Calloway Hill and crossed the river at Silver Bow Ranch.

<sup>1</sup>J. C. Fremont, *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains*, page 121.

## HISTORY OF SILVER BOW RANCH, LIVERMORE

By GERTRUDE G. BARNES\*

From earliest times, crossing of the North Fork of the Poudre River has been made on this ranch. Above the ranch is the im-

(Note.—Every ranch should have a name, and to the Barnes family this ranch has always been "Silver Bow Ranch." This name seemed fitting as the North Fork of the Poudre makes a huge silver bow across the place. It also has a personal touch, as we were married in Silver Bow County, Montana. As a motif on the blue shutters of the house, we used a silver bow and a red arrow. So, through this article, the ranch will be referred to by the name Silver Bow.—THE AUTHOR.

\*Gertrude G. Barnes (Mrs. Fred J.), is an accomplished writer, who makes her home near Fort Collins, Colorado. She has contributed other articles to *The Colorado Magazine*.—Ed.

In the spring of 1860, the 7th U. S. Infantry, which had been stationed in Utah to quell the Mormon uprising, came down the Cherokee trail on its way to Fort Bent and camped at the ford of the river.

Actual title to land of this section began with a transfer from the United States to the Union Pacific Railroad of all odd-numbered sections of land for a width of twenty miles along each side of the transcontinental road from the Missouri to the west coast. This was intended to help defray the cost of building the railroad and speed establishment of a connecting link between the East and California. Silver Bow lies within twenty miles of the Union Pacific Railroad at Granite Canyon, Wyoming.



SILVER BOW RANCH  
Cottonwood tree planted by Calloway

Recorded on November 1, 1865, is a mortgage of all the Union Pacific's real property west of the Missouri River, which had been acquired as right-of-way. At this time the U. P. was projecting possible routes to the west coast, and in the fall of 1867, a party of Union Pacific engineers surveyed this territory and very probably went through this ranch.

In this same year, William Calloway took a ranch in Boxelder Canyon which he sold. After a trip to Idaho, he returned and settled on Silver Bow Ranch in 1870. Bill Calloway was a hardy pioneer, a diligent worker, and a persistent builder, who started from nothing and developed a comfortable home. He planted the row of giant cottonwoods that line the road, and the large cottonwood trees standing back of the house. Later he planted an orchard of apples and plums. On the west side of the river, he built the

Calloway ditch, and also the irrigation ditch running along the east bank of the river at the foot of the cliff. This ditch was abandoned when the North Poudre ditch was built on a higher contour. Parts of this ditch are still to be seen along the east side of the river below the bridge. His chicken house and a building, then used as a granary, are still in use. Calloway built a log house on his ranch that was added to as years went along. That same year, 1870, he married Fannie Keach, and this was the first wedding in Livermore.

Calloway cut hay along the bottom lands and raised grain and vegetables. Cheyenne offered better prices for ranch produce than Fort Collins, and although the distance was forty-five miles, twenty miles farther than to Fort Collins, he freighted marketable crops to Cheyenne by ox-team. After crossing Stonewall Creek, his road wound up the hill east of the present highway. Now the tracks are weathered and cut into deep wrinkles along the face of that slope.

On one of his first trips to Cheyenne, Calloway learned that hay was selling for \$125 per ton. Knowing how tall the grass was on Silver Bow Ranch, Calloway bought a scythe and snath for \$7.50. He hurried to his ranch and mowed hay from sunup to sundown. Calloway was a huge man, more than six feet tall and broad in proportion. When he mowed, he really knocked the hay down with his powerful sweeps. Before sunrise the next morning, he loaded his wagon and started his oxen toward Cheyenne. Grass in his meadow was so tall that Calloway did not see a herd of eighteen buffalo grazing in the east part of the field until he passed them with his load of hay.

Hot sun beat down, and by the time Calloway reached Lone Tree Creek he was dusty and thirsty. All freighters carried a pail hanging beneath the hind axle of their wagons, so that they could water their oxen without unhitching them. Calloway stopped at the little stream and carried water to his oxen. Then, sitting by the bank, he dashed cool water over his bearded face. He looked at his load of hay which, shaken by thousands of jolts along the rough road, had settled down and now looked to be only half as much as he had loaded at Livermore. Bill picked up a wisp of hay as dry as ashes and rolled it in his calloused palm. Taking his water bucket, he carried pail after pail of water and sprinkled it over the hay, which sopped it up as if it were blotting paper. He trudged the rest of the way into Cheyenne beside the heavily laden wagon, which dripped water into round dimples in the dust of the trail.

Arrived at Cheyenne, he found the hay buyer who asked, "How much hay you got on that wagon?"

"Somewhere around two ton," answered Bill.

Without offering to weigh the hay, the buyer said, "Unload it over there. Here's your money," and counted \$250 into Bill's hand.

Bill hurried home and returned with another load of hay, which he did not sprinkle this time at Lone Tree. When he got to Cheyenne, he found that the price of hay had dropped \$75 per ton, and buyers weighed every load.

About this time the government made a survey of Colorado lands. The survey of Silver Bow Ranch began on February 5, 1878, south of the southeast corner. The surveyor describes in detail the size, the kind, and identifying marks he made on each stone used to mark corners and quarter-sections. Going along, he mentions such things as "Wetzler's fence, running east and west"; "a steep thirty-foot descent to the river." Along the east line, he describes the land as "rolling, with blue grass and sage-brush"; also "a dry gulch, course S. W. then S. E. then S. W." The North Poudre ditch was built since that survey, and seepage water has entirely changed the character of this dry gulch to a lush, wet draw with steep sides, dense brush, thick tall grasses and a live stream that never freezes.

The government surveyor gives his impression of the country: "The north and central portions of this township are of the red sandstone formation; the eastern, a gray limestone, and the south and west, granite. It consists of alternate ranges of mountains and fertile valleys. The valleys of the Lone Pine and Stonewall Creeks and the North Poudre River are well watered and produce large quantities of hay, vegetables and small grains." Old timers say that more people were in this area at that time than at the present time, for each little draw or valley where there was enough water for domestic use was the home of a settler and his family.<sup>2</sup>

Martin Calloway, a younger brother of Bill who lived on Boxelder Creek, and Mrs. Fannie Calloway, wife of Bill, both died

<sup>2</sup>On February 7, 1878, the surveyor lists the location of settlers in Township 10, Range 70 W., which is probably a tribute to good meals and the traditional hospitality of Livermore people.

T. A. Gage	N.E. ¼	S.W. ¼	of	Section 35
Bennett Brothers	N.E. ¼			Section 26
	N.W. ¼			Section 28
Wheeler	N.E. ¼			Section 10
Forks Hotel	S.W. ¼	N.E. ¼		Section 34
J. Barlow	N.W. ¼	N.W. ¼		Section 21
George Barlow	N.W. ¼	N.W. ¼		Section 16
Bristol	S.E. ¼	N.W. ¼		Section 5
Sawin	near	the center	of	Section 29
Livermore	S.E. ¼	S.W. ¼		Section 32
Wetzler	N.W. ¼	N.E. ¼		Section 31
McNey	N.E. ¼			Section 30
Wm. Calloway	N.E. ¼	N.W. ¼		Section 19
J. Mitchell claims	N.E. ¼	N.W. ¼		Section 30
Roberts	N.E. ¼			Section 32

—AUTHOR.

the same year, 1879. In 1881 Martin's widow, Mary, married his brother, Bill Calloway, and came to live at Silver Bow Ranch. The original house of logs had one main room in the middle, with bedrooms built on one side, and the kitchen on the other. As Mrs. Calloway described it to me, "It looked like a hen hovering chickens."

Calloways had five children of school age, and they hired their own teacher to come to their house and teach there during the summer months. Shortly after that, Livermore established a school, the ninth district in Larimer County. The school house was about a mile down the river from Calloway's house.

On November 27, 1885, Francis L. Carter Cotton received a warranty deed to this section of land, and the following day borrowed \$5,000 on it with interest at 10%. Cotton defaulted on this note, and the land was sold to the Colorado Mortgage & Investment Company of London, England. It is well to note here that although Calloway squatted on this land, he had no legal rights. Title was really with the owners of the warranty deeds.

About this time, many settlers who had squatted on Union Pacific-owned land began to worry about title to their land. Bill Calloway made many trips to Denver to consult a lawyer named Woodward. Returning home, Bill would think over his problems as he worked, trying to find some way out of his dilemma. Always he would think of another question, and again he would make the long trip to Denver to consult his lawyer. He was told that he could acquire title from the government to 160 acres on his squatter's rights, but the balance of the section would have to be purchased. Bill was a stubborn man; his active mind probed here and there. At last his lawyer told him, "Well, Bill, the Union Pacific probably will never throw you off that place, but they can sell it out from under you."

Still Bill would not pay for what he obstinately considered his own land. He went back to Woodward with another question. Bill hadn't paid for his last question, so Woodward said, "See here, Bill, I get paid for what I know."

Bill pounded his fist on the table and yelled right back, "But I've been paying you for what I know!"

Calloway returned to Livermore and went ahead with his work of developing the ranch. He built fences and corrals, hauling logs and lumber from the hills west of his ranch. To the west he built the road which he used for hauling wood and which can still be traced. It goes west from the house and cuts around the hills which rise south of Calloway Hill. The beginning of this road looks like an excellent location, but old timers say it was

full of hairpin turns, sharp hills and steep grades entirely unsuitable for present day high speed traffic. Roads then were neither graded nor maintained. On hillsides they were sidling, rough, and the natural selection of those who traveled them.

About this time Bill Calloway set out the orchard. Mrs. Calloway told me, "From our upstairs bedroom window, on bright moonlight nights, it would enrage us to see the rabbits playing gayly around the trees of which we were so proud. To save our orchard we put wire and slabs of wood around the tree trunks."

Snowfall in the spring of 1883 was unusually heavy in the mountains. Supplies were badly needed by the family, so Bill Calloway made a trip to Cheyenne in June with his first cutting of hay.

When he left home, the river was beginning to rise with the rapid thaws of the first warm rays of the summer sun. There was no bridge across the North Fork, and the ford was about one-fourth mile south of the present bridge. Bill managed to ford the river, fully expecting that the water would have subsided before he made the return trip.

But the spring thaws continued, bringing even little Calf Creek into flood. Calf Creek, now an intermittent stream, was a little brook that flowed in front of the house, over the course of the present road. Marked by big trees and thick bushes, its channel is still easily followed to where it joins the North Fork above the present bridge.

Mrs. Calloway said, "When Calf Creek was high, it would run over the stone steps at my front door. But this big freshet of 1883 washed out the road and ran right through my house."

When Bill returned, the North Fork of the Poudre was still in flood stage, and flowing so swiftly that Bill dared not cross with his wagonload of supplies. They were precious property and Bill took no chances.

He rode his horse across the river and got home about dark. Next morning he went to his neighbor, David Harned, and engaged him to build a raft to transport his load of supplies. The crude raft was soon finished, and Bill left his wagon on the east bank and ferried his provisions across the surging river.

Fremont's descriptions of our streams, and old timers' experiences with sudden floods seem almost impossible to us who know these streams as dry sand beds which occasionally carry surplus rain run-off.

Mrs. Calloway finished telling of this flood by saying, "I can tell you I had a time cleaning up the mud and drying out

the house and the carpets. After the water went down, I found rattlesnakes sunning themselves on my front doorstep.

"Rattlesnakes were plentiful in those days. Often the men pitched rattlers up on a load of native hay cut above the ditches. And when I picked chokecherries, I had to watch closely. Rattlesnakes and ticks were the scourge of our cattle."

William Calloway died in 1891. For a time Mrs. Calloway carried on ranching operations. Crops were hay and grain which was tramped out with horses. Horse-raising had come to be a major part of her stock-raising program. About 100 head of horses were kept on the ranch at this time. In winter the men broke colts, and in the spring horses were shipped south and east to cotton farmers who needed a light type of horse to cultivate cotton fields. Mrs. Calloway raised both riding and driving horses, but the spread of loco weed made horse raising a losing proposition. Market prices also took a dive at this time, and railroads would not accept shipments of horses unless the shipper would deposit enough money to cover freight charges. So Mrs. Calloway sold the horse herd.

On New Year's Eve, the last day of 1894, the Calloway family was gathered about the table in the dining room eating supper. One of the children glanced up and saw a ruddy glow where the kitchen stove pipe went through the ceiling. "The house is on fire!" he shouted. The lean-to kitchen had a tile pipe, but the overheated stove had set fire to leaves and trash that had blown into the space over the lean-to.

The boys climbed through the man hole to the attic, and the rest of the family passed buckets of water to them. They fought the fire furiously, but soon the blaze broke through the roof and shot flames high into the sky.

At that time the North Poudre Irrigation Company had a construction camp a half-mile up the river. Men there saw the flames lighting the whole sky, and hurried over to the ranch to help. While the family fought the fire on the kitchen roof, flames had spread to the main body of the house. Fire fighters from the ditch camp could see that the kitchen was doomed, and they turned their efforts to saving the rest of the house. By this time smoke filled the house and fire was eating away the walls. The only thing saved from the Calloway home was the piano.

Ranch women of those days faced misfortune with indomitable courage. Although all household goods, clothing and family keepsakes were wiped out, Mrs. Calloway lost no time in moaning over her misfortunes. She still had her family, and they were all in good robust health. She still had a piano, too. As soon as possible

Mrs. Calloway began the construction of another home, a square two-story house of eight rooms. This is the main part of the present residence.

Title to the land was definitely dubious. Bill Calloway had not yielded from his stubborn belief that he had a right to the land upon which he had settled. Mrs. Calloway was a practical woman, and she decided to buy this section and clear title to the ranch. The abstract shows that in February, 1894, the Colorado Mortgage & Investment Company gave a warranty deed to Mrs. Calloway. Three years later, Mrs. Calloway sold the ranch to Charles Cradock and moved to Fort Collins.

Cradock was a tall, fair Englishman, fond of company, a jovial, convivial host, who spoke with a clipped British accent. Cradock was a remittance man; that is, one of those men who received an allowance from their family as long as they remained away from England. To me a remittance man personifies human sorrow and regret, a true exile, banished infinitely far from the home he loved, apparently seeking forgetfulness. So I shall not enlarge upon Lord Cradock's many pranks and frolics, which are legendary.

Cradock married in 1898, and brought his Virginia bride to Livermore. He made many changes in the ranch, one of the major ones being the diversion of Calf Creek to its present deep channel which runs south of the present barn. He tore down the large shed that Calloway used for storing hay, and erected the big barn, with roomy stalls and a special box stall for his favorite horse. In the house he changed the stairway which had led from the front door to the upstairs, building the large fireplace and moving the stairs to the opposite side of the house. While the stairway was being built, Cradock made a wager that he could ride his favorite saddle horse up the stairs. He won the bet, but a ramp had to be built to get the horse down again.

Relatives in England sent money to build a play house for the children. One of the Cradock girls who now resides in Denver, stopped last summer to see her old home. She said this play house was furnished with all kinds of toy household equipment—a stove, cupboards, dishes and furniture. For about three days the two little girls played with the new toys. Then, the novelty having worn off, they resumed their usual romping games—cowboys, robbers, stage coach hold-ups.

Evidently Cradock believed in advertising. On the barn roof he painted in large letters about twenty feet high, two immense "C's". They say these stood for his initials, *Charles Cradock*; his cattle brand, *CC*; his school in England, *Cambridge*

*College*; and his favorite whiskey, *Canadian Club*. He also had his name painted on the front of the barn in bold letters.

Cradock knew and loved a handsome horse. Along the road one day, Cradock met a man driving a beautiful team of mares. Stopping the driver, he asked what he would take for the outfit. Off hand the man said, "\$500." Cradock had just received his allowance, and immediately paid for the horses. The owner, on second thought tried to back out of the deal, but Cradock stood firm and took possession of the horses and buggy. Mark Harned worked for Cradock at that time, and grew to love this dashing team. One night Cradock drove them home from Fort Collins in a little more than an hour. Next morning, one mare was dead and the other was never any good again.

Charles Cradock and his wife, Maud, gave a quit claim deed to his brother-in-law, Herbert Straker, of London, England. A. C. Kløver bought Silver Bow Ranch from Straker on November 11, 1910, the transaction being carried through by cablegram, a novelty in that day. The next year, Mr. Kløver gave the ranch to his son, Fred, as a wedding gift.

Fred Kløver brought his bride to the ranch in 1911, and they lived there for sixteen years. It made an ideal home ranch, for Fred Kløver owned land west of Silver Bow. He raised as much as 400 tons of hay on this ranch to winter his herds of cattle.

One morning Fred glanced out the window towards the barn. He rubbed his eyes and looked again. Then he called to his wife, "Alice, come here and tell me if you see what I think I see."

Mrs. Kløver came and looked. She agreed, it was a cow that had her head out the big hay door in the highest part of the barn, enjoying the scenery. The cow had climbed the stairs to the hay loft. It seemed impossible that a cow could climb the steep narrow stairs that made a sharp turn around the box stall.

How to get the cow down again was quite a problem, and there was no Farm Editor of *The Denver Post* to fly to the ranch with a cow extractor. The cow was wild and hard to handle, but the men finally roped her and slid her down into a hay manger well filled and padded with hay. The cow got stuck between the chute and the wall, and the men sawed away the timbers to release her.

In 1927, Fred Kløver transferred the ranch by warranty deed to Charles R. and Ambrose Shered, father and son, who were living on a farm near Timnath. Ambrose and his wife lived in the little house on the east side of the river. His father and mother lived in the big house on the west side. Ranching and farming was only an avocation for Ambrose Shered. He felt

that his vocation was aviation. With Thorwald Sackett he went to Grand Junction where the two men operated a flying field and maintained a flying service. On June 1, 1929, the Sherreds sold Silver Bow Ranch to J. R. Henderson.

Mr. Henderson was an automobile salesman and suffered with tuberculosis. Hendersons remodeled the main house, and built a large sleeping porch and a sun room on the west side of the house. Besides his farming operations, Henderson ran a small flock of sheep and a few cattle. As his health did not permit much active work, Henderson sold the ranch in 1930 to Edward O. Smith.

Mr. Smith stocked the ranch with cattle and with his son farmed and ranched for three years. In 1933 he sold the ranch to Fred J. Barnes.

Fred Barnes, an irrigation engineer, was superintendent of the North Poudre Irrigation Company and lived in Wellington. He did not move to the ranch until more than eleven years later. Barnes equipped the ranch with machinery and stocked it with sheep and cattle. Again the tortured house was remodeled. Porches and the ell containing the kitchen and bath were torn off and the house stripped down to the main square part that Mrs. Calloway built after fire had destroyed the first house.

We moved to the ranch the first part of December 1944, and lived there four years. It never seemed real to me; seemed too ideal to be actually true. No matter how long we lived there, it always seemed as if I were on a vacation, sometimes a strenuous vacation, and that some day I should have to go home.

We sold the ranch November, 1948, to Don and Adele Nesbitt, who, after two years, sold it to Bert and Ella Nauta.

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## COLORADO WOMAN'S COLLEGE—THE COLORADO VASSAR

BY JUNE E. CAROTHERS\*

It was in the summer of 1886 that the Reverend Robert Cameron, pastor of Denver's First Baptist Church, conceived the idea of building a college for women which is known today as Colorado Woman's College. Cameron saw that educational institutions were being built throughout the state by other church groups such as the Methodists, Congregationalists, and Presby-

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terians. These institutions, however, were designed for coeducational instruction and he felt that there was a need for a college exclusively for the young women of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Cameron soon interested others in his plan, and the initial meeting of the woman's college group was held in June, 1887, although it was not until July of the following year that active steps were taken toward forming a group to build the college. This group was first known as the Denver Ladies' College Society and the college was to be known as the Woman's College of Colorado. It was the intention of the committee on college campus to raise \$750,000 in cash and real estate and proceed at once to erect a suitable building to cost approximately \$300,000. Since the college was not opened until twenty-one years later and the building which housed the school cost about one-sixth of the estimated \$300,000, these changes might be considered typical of those that had to be made before the college could be established. At first, however, preparations went along smoothly enough, and the college idea was accepted most enthusiastically by Denver people. According to the *Daily Rocky Mountain News*:

Denver with its splendid climate, fine scenery, numerous churches, excellent public libraries, and many opportunities for culture, is an excellent location for such an institution and it is believed that the new college will receive every encouragement from public-spirited citizens and friends of education among all religious denominations.<sup>2</sup>

Later the same paper remarked:

The opening of this institution should remove the last vestige of reason for the senseless customs of sending young people from Colorado to Eastern colleges, while our own schools have won the highest encomiums from the foremost Eastern educators.<sup>3</sup>

A certificate of incorporation was filed by the college group on November 14, 1888, and through a clerical error which was not corrected until the following July the group was called the "Woman's College Society" instead of "Colorado Woman's College Society" the name which it still bears. There were twenty-seven trustees elected to the college board, including five women. The trustees represented a cross section of the best in business and professional abilities. The first president of the Board of Trustees was C. S. Morey of the Morey Mercantile Company and the former governor, J. B. Grant, served as vice-president.

The trustees early decided to pattern their college after Vassar and Wellesley and, as a consequence, the college was known for years as the Colorado Vassar or the Vassar of the West. The plans called for an elementary school, an academy, and a college.

<sup>1</sup>Eugene Parsons, "The Colorado Woman's College," *The Trail*, XVI (March, 1924), 15.

<sup>2</sup>*Daily Rocky Mountain News*, August 14, 1887.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, November 18, 1888.

A handsome home was given to the school in 1890 for use as a preparatory school. It was moved from downtown Denver to York street near Sixteenth, but it was never used, as it burned in 1892. It wasn't until many years later that a preparatory school was opened in connection with the college, and it existed until 1936 when the school was reorganized. Plans for an elementary school never materialized.

The site for the location of the college was finally chosen in Montrose, a division just north of Montclair, which later became part of Denver. There had been considerable controversy concerning the location of the school since real estate men were each vying for the site for their own particular locality. It was considered that the college would be an ornament to any section it graced and the real estate men made liberal offers to encourage the college to build in their own section. The old Exposition grounds on South Broadway were offered to the college, as well as forty acres of land near the site selected for the new home of the University of Denver. This ground was estimated to be worth \$20,000 and two real estate men who owned property near there offered to contribute \$10,000 each to the school if the offer were accepted. Just why this generous gift was rejected is not known but later the college accepted twenty acres in Montrose which was given to the school by Job A. Cooper. Cooper had platted the eighty acres which he called Montrose on April 30, 1888. The area was divided into eighteen blocks of regular size and a twenty-acre block which was known as Block A. The area was bounded on the north and south by Perry and Bates (now Montview Boulevard and Seventeenth Street) and on the west and east by Monaco Parkway and Hyde Park Avenue (now Quebec). The Woman's College Society was evidently responsible for the sale of the eighteen blocks which were placed on the market at values ranging from \$3,500 to \$5,500. According to the *Denver Republican*, "As soon as the 18 blocks are sold, the society will pledge itself to improve the site immediately as a park, and agree to spend at least \$50,000 in buildings within one year ....."<sup>5</sup> Not long afterwards the *Republican* reported that the last of the eighteen blocks which were to be sold before the location of the college could be secured had been sold. It was estimated that the twenty acres which were reserved for the college and which it received for nothing by virtue of the sale of the other blocks would be worth \$50,000. The eighteen blocks were purchased by prominent business men such as H. B. Chamberlin, Hayden and Dickinson, and W. G. Sprague. Several of these business men purchased the blocks only in order to make the plan a success. Cooper presented

<sup>4</sup>*Denver Republican*, April 13, 1888.

the deed to the college on May 31, 1889. Although it was originally planned that the deed would be delivered when the first building was under roof, it was given to the school when the contracts were let.<sup>5</sup>

On May 4, 1888 the college site in Montrose was dedicated. The grounds had been laid out as a park and part of the ceremony was the planting of trees. The grounds were described as very beautiful and the high knoll in the center of the campus was declared admirably adapted to the college building. A thousand trees were planted that day and among them were maples, ashes, elms, and evergreens. The Reverend Robert Cameron presided at the ceremony and the chief speaker of the afternoon was Governor Adams. He felt "that there was a great need for it (the college) and a great field of usefulness open before it."<sup>6</sup>

Construction was started on the college and by February, 1890 work was progressing so rapidly that plans were made for laying the corner stone in March. This ceremony was the occasion for a brilliant celebration. The corner stone was laid on the afternoon of March 25, 1890, and that evening a reception was held in the parlors of the First Baptist Church.

The ceremony began with what seemed to be an endless procession of buggies, carriages, and busses from the Albany Hotel to the college which stood on the crest of a hill overlooking Denver and Montclair. The visitors could see not only the castle of the Baron Von Richthofen and the Jarvis Military Academy in Montclair and the smoke stacks in Denver several miles away but they could also see hundreds of miles of the Front Range extending from Long's Peak to Pikes Peak. The visitors inspected the foundation to the first story and the arched doorway on the south side which was all that was completed of the building. The architect was Frank H. Jackson and the builder was T. H. O'Neal. The building was built out of red sandstone and white lava stone. It was expected that it would be under cover by August 15, and the faculty expected to open the doors for pupils that fall.

Ex-Governor J. B. Grant, who was vice-president of the Society, presided at the ceremony which began at 2 o'clock, with music by the Trinity Quartet. The opening prayer was given by the Reverend A. S. Hobbs, and it was followed by addresses given by Bishop Warren and the Reverend J. T. Duryea of Omaha. The reading of the historical documents which were placed in the corner stone was done by Miss Emma Juch, who was a famous

<sup>5</sup>R. Maud Ditmars, "Brief History of Colorado Woman's College, 1888-1937," (unpublished paper to be found in the files of the library at Colorado Woman's College. The source material cited by the article was the Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Colorado Woman's College Society. These Minute Books were not available to the author).

<sup>6</sup>*Denver Republican*, May 5, 1888.

American vocalist. When she had heard that the ceremonies were planned, she requested to be allowed to attend and the president of the board of trustees hastily sent her a telegram requesting her to be present. The documents which she placed in a copper box inside the corner stone were: a *Denver Annual*, H. B. Chamberlin's address to the Chamber of Commerce, views of Denver and vicinity, list of the founders of the college, *Examiner*, *Brighton Register*, a college circular called "Climate and Health" by Dr. Fisk, blue book of the First Baptist Church with historical sketch, banquet and other programs, history of Bethany Baptist Church, manual of Galilee Baptist mission, historical facts concerning Colorado and Denver, Judson Memorial Manual, Colorado Baptist *Annual*, Broadway Baptist Church list of officers, Calvary Baptist Church articles of faith, *Daily News*, *Daily Times*, *Daily Republican*, Swedish Baptist Church list of officers, list of contributors to the college enterprise, prospectus of the University of Denver for 1890, list of Governors for the University of Denver for 1890, list of real estate donated to the college and by whom, and a list of officers of Woman's College.

When Miss Juch finished the reading, she took the box and laid it on the mortar when the stone was lowered. The honor of laying the corner stone was conferred on Mrs. Job A. Cooper, the wife of the Governor. When the stone had been lowered to its resting place she struck it a couple times and said, "I declare this stone well and truly laid." The corner stone was cut out of sandstone and the date of the founding, the date of the erection, and the names of the architect and builder were inscribed on it. However, the lettering filled only half of the front side of the stone, and it was explained that the blank space was left open for a further inscription for the name of the institution when it was properly christened. It was declared that the name of Colorado Woman's College was only a temporary one. However, a further inscription has never been placed on the stone.

The principal address of the afternoon was given by John Evans, former territorial governor of Colorado, founder of the University of Denver, and a large financial contributor to the Woman's College. His talk revealed that a number of years before there had been a plan for a union University of Denver. At that time the Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Methodists each appointed three men to meet and discuss such a school. The group met and agreed on a plan and then asked the territorial legislature for a charter which would enable them to hold lots and lands without taxation. The college was to be non-sectarian but moral and religious in teachings. Bela M. Hughes and Judge William B. Mills carried the bill through their respective branches

of the legislature by almost unanimous votes in each. When adjournment made it too late to correct it, it was discovered that precisely similar bills had been passed in both houses and yet failed to become law because neither had passed the bill originated in the other house. Thus ended the union college plan.

The address by Evans was followed by an address by President Slocum of Colorado College and the benediction was pronounced by the Reverend T. M. Hopkins.

That evening five hundred people assembled by invitation in the First Baptist Church parlors for a reception and collation. I. E. Blake, president of the Society, presided and there were a number of addresses made by prominent men including the Governor, an ex-governor, and the former president of the board of trustees of Wellesley. Miss Emma Juch was asked to sing and she responded by singing the "Last Rose of Summer." The *Daily News* declared that she was applauded for fully five minutes.<sup>7</sup>

Plans continued to be made during the rest of the year for enlarging the school. Apparently the board felt that the school had such wealthy and influential friends that despite the shadow of financial panic, the school would grow and prosper. The Reverend Cameron hoped within a year to be able to secure another twenty acres adjacent to the present campus so that a lake could be built. Cameron, who had resigned as pastor of the First Baptist Church in 1888 to accept an appointment with the Home Mission Society and to aid the college, believed in man's generosity to provide the funds. According to the *Daily News* he felt that in time some good man would give the school a million dollars and then the Society would ask permission to throw the luster of his name over the college. In 1888 Cameron visited Wellesley and wrote a glowing account of the school for the *Denver Republican*. He closed his article on this note: "Such is Wellesley and such is its many features. I hope we shall see one college for women in Denver. But where is the Durant who will consecrate a million of money to the accomplishment of this great end?" However, the Society had over \$170,000 in real estate, campus, and pledges of money and buildings in 1890. Plans were made for several cottages as well as a music hall, gymnasium, observatory, and museum.

Then came the Panic of '93 and Colorado was stunned by the Sherman Act repeal which restricted the coinage of silver. This was a crushing blow to those who hoped to open the school that fall. In ninety days some \$30,000 in pledges were lost. Work on the building lagged despite loans which were secured and in

<sup>7</sup>*Daily Rocky Mountain News*, March 26, 1890.

1891 and 1892 work was interrupted time and again. In 1893 work was stopped, not to be resumed in earnest until 1908.

Those intervening years were dark ones for those who still believed in the need for a woman's college in Denver. Loans were begged and often money was raised just in time to save the college from foreclosure. In 1892 Melvin Dempsey, a Cherokee Indian, offered to give the college \$5,000 if the school would educate gratis an Indian girl each year who could pass the entrance examinations. Since there wasn't a college yet, the board was unable to accept the money.

A financial crisis was averted in 1895 and again in 1897. In 1896 the college buildings and grounds had been offered to the Odd Fellows for a state home for invalid members and widows and orphans of Odd Fellows. The property was offered for only \$12,000; but the lodge decided not to establish a home at this time and, luckily for the future of the college, the offer was rejected. In 1900 hope had revived and it was decided that despite desperate straits not to finish the building and to sell it to the Elks for a home for the aged and disabled or turn it into a home for consumptives. It was wistfully mentioned in the *Daily News* that it would take only about \$40,000 to start the school. Sixteen thousand dollars were needed for the mortgage, interest, and delinquent taxes and \$20,000 were needed to finish the building. In 1902 the Baptists had four days in which to raise four thousand dollars to complete a payment of \$18,000. Elisha S. Converse of Boston, who had long been interested in the college, had loaned the school \$14,000 at 6 per cent interest. When not even the interest had been paid for several years, Converse offered a conditional gift of \$6,000 if the remainder of the money could be raised in a certain length of time. By appeal to all those interested in the enterprise the college was saved.

The Reverend Cameron became dispirited and discouraged and left Denver to accept other pastorates. The Reverend W. T. Jordan, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, became interested in raising money for the school. He suggested that should anyone desire to contribute, say, \$100,000 toward the endowment fund, the donor would have the privilege of naming the college. At this point \$100,000 looked as good as a million had earlier.

In 1904 interest in the college project revived and the Baptist ministers in Denver enthusiastically decided that a new start would be made on the building and that the start should be a strenuous one. So they decided to begin work on the building by flooring the school themselves. Professional and business friends of the college laid 16,000 feet of flooring. Gradually money was collected through the church and the debt wiped out. College

Auxiliary Societies had been established among the women of the churches and they were quite influential in aiding the college. Then in 1908 hopes for finishing the college were realized when Dr. A. H. Stockham of Delta, made a large contribution to the Society.

Jay Porter Treat, former Trinidad, Colorado, superintendent of schools, was elected President of the college. The school was planned with the avowed purpose of refraining from teaching women how to earn a living. There were to be four departments—Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, Sunday School Pedagogy, and Domestic Science and Efficiency. There was careful avoidance in the course of study of stenography, bookkeeping, or any other subject taught to women who desired to compete with men in the world of business or in the professions. The school was devoted to the training of wives and mothers. A slightly different view is taken today, it must be confessed, and the Business Administration course is one of the most popular.

On Sunday, September 5, 1909, the college building was opened for a service of thanksgiving and consecration. Two days later the Colorado Woman's College opened its doors to students. The plaster was scarcely dry and some of the rooms were still unfinished, but the school had nine teachers who were qualified to teach anything from music to mathematics, tennis, and croquet. There were forty pupils that first year who enrolled in the freshman and sophomore classes. There were no upper classes although it was a Senior College, but they were expected to be added soon. The college continued to offer four years of college training until 1920 when the school was reorganized as a Junior College and received academic recognition.

The college which was conceived in hope and born through difficulty was to have a bright future. The school soon outgrew its restricted quarters and an addition was built onto "Old Main" in 1916, and named in honor of the first President—Treat Hall. In 1930 and 1939, Foote Hall and Laura W. Porter Memorial Hall respectively were built to house the students. In 1947, David T. Pulliam Dormitory and Dora Porter Mason Hall, the activities building, were added to the campus.

The college has had six presidents. Jay Porter Treat served the college until 1917 when he was succeeded by Dr. John W. Bailey. In 1923, the Reverend James Asa White became president and he was followed by Dean Robert H. Lynn who was acting president for the school year of 1925-26. Samuel J. Vaughn was president from 1926 until 1932. Dr. James E. Huchingson was president from 1932 until 1950 when he retired and Dr. Val H. Wilson succeeded him.

Today the Colorado Woman's College, familiarly known as C. W. C., has justified the hopes and struggles of the many who guided their dream to fulfillment. Colorado's Vassar serves not only Colorado but the rest of the forty-eight states and many foreign countries by helping to educate their young women. The founders of the college might well be proud of their contribution to the academic world.

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## COLORADO'S DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY STAMP\*

In 1927, the first attempt was made to obtain a commemorative stamp for Colorado by Dr. O. W. Randall and associates of Eagle, Colorado. The stamp they proposed bore a likeness of the Mount of the Holy Cross.

Again in 1939 an effort was made by the Holy Cross Pilgrimage Association, Inc., to obtain such a stamp. Both attempts were unsuccessful.

In April 1950, the Holy Cross Postmasters' Association took up this idea and obtained the endorsement of the National League of District Postmasters of the United States, at their annual convention held in Denver in August. At this same time the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of Colorado, meeting in Annual Convention at Colorado Springs, endorsed a similar resolution. These resolutions requested the Postmaster General to issue a 3¢ commemorative stamp of the Mount of the Holy Cross on August 1, 1951, in honor of God, the Creator of this natural shrine, and of the 75th Anniversary of Colorado's Statehood, with first day sales at Minturn, the "Gateway to the Mount of the Holy Cross."

This petition was presented to both of these organizations by Elmer E. Owen, President of the Holy Cross Postmasters' Association. At both meetings Mr. Owen was encouraged to continue this project by obtaining endorsements from other organizations throughout the state and nation.

Realizing the tremendous task and expense involved, he presented the idea to the Battle Mountain Kiwanis Club of Minturn. Harold Steinmier was then president of the club and after thorough discussion a commemorative stamp committee was appointed to devise ways of financing, as well as promoting the stamp campaign. The committee reported to the Kiwanis Club at its next regular meeting, recommending that the Club sponsor the movement. The club heartily accepted the committee's recommendations and the committee originally chosen became the permanent stamp committee. This committee comprised: Frank Bassing, Chairman,

\*Data for this article supplied by Elmer E. Owen, Postmaster at Minturn, Colo.

Elmer E. Owen and Harold Goodale. The committee was instructed to start immediately with the distribution of a resolution to all religious, fraternal, civic and other organizations throughout the state.

This distribution entailed the handling of more than 5,000 resolutions and 1,500 post cards depicting a reproduction of the original William H. Jackson print of the Mount of the Holy Cross. In addition, more than 7,000 Holy Cross Pilgrimage leaflets were distributed. Almost immediately encouraging responses came from various organizations and a count was kept of those groups endorsing the idea. Briefly there were 99 Kiwanis Clubs, 102 Lions Clubs, 105 Chambers of Commerce, 154 American Legion Posts, 176 Ladies Auxiliaries of the American Legion, 104 Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts, 98 Ladies Auxiliaries of the V. F. W., 124 editors of Colorado newspapers, 54 postmasters in foreign nations, Colorado legislative bodies, and many other organizations and worthy individuals, including a former Governor of Colorado, a member of the United Nations, and a former British Prime Minister.

Colorado's Senators and Representatives through correspondence, starting on November 29, 1950 and extending through December 18, 1950, assured the local people of their wholehearted cooperation in obtaining the stamp. Through December the committee received copies of letters sent by the Post Office Department to the constituents to the effect that the Department issued State Commemorative Stamps only in multiples of 50 and 100 years.

The Colorado committee, however, kept working away. On February 19, 1951 an Associated Press release stated that Colorado would get one of four Commemorative Stamps issued this year.

The local committee was thrilled by the news but at the same time was disturbed by the fact that the description of the stamp, the place and date of first day sales were not given. Then followed a few anxious weeks of telegraphing to legislators in Washington.

On March 1, 1951, Senator Ed Johnson telegraphed that the Postmaster General was asking Governor Thornton to appoint a Committee to work out details.

On the recommendation of Senator Johnson the following committee met with Governor Thornton on March 5, to discuss stamp details: Floyd Templeton, Past President of the Colorado State Branch of National League of District Postmasters of the U. S.; W. W. Walsh, State Commander of the American Legion of Colorado; Dr. O. W. Randall, President, Holy Cross Pilgrimage Association, Inc.; Frank Bassing, John McAllister, and Charles Lienert of the Battle Mountain Kiwanis Club. At that time, Governor Thornton, together with Lewis Cobb, Director of Publicity

for Colorado, endorsed the design of the stamp drawn by Al Urness, artist in the Minturn Public Schools. They also endorsed Minturn as the place of first day issuance.

The committee left the Capitol feeling very confident that all matters pertaining to the Colorado Commemorative Stamp were settled.

A release from the Governor's office was publicized through the Denver papers showing the design selected by Governor Thornton and the committee and listing Minturn, Colorado as the place, and August 1, 1951, as the date of issuance.

On March 7, Governor Thornton sent a letter to Osborne Pearson, Assistant Postmaster General, saying that he personally believed that the design made in Colorado was appropriate. The Governor also called attention to the fact that although Mr. Pearson had suggested Denver as the release Post Office, he could see no objection to having Minturn, since it was more closely associated with the subject matter of the commemorative stamp.

On March 15, Mr. Pearson advised Governor Thornton that the Mount of the Holy Cross did not have sufficient relationship to the 75th Anniversary of Colorado Statehood to warrant its use as a central motif. Neither did he think Minturn seemed an appropriate place for the first day sales unless it was in some way associated with the early state government.

Upon receipt of a copy of this letter, Postmaster Owen sent a statement asserting that the history of Minturn went back to the establishment of a fort by John Jacob Astor as a fur trading post in 1780, that this fort was destroyed in a snowslide during the winter of 1884-85, and that the boulder stockade remains are still in evidence in what is now Astor Flats. This information was sent to Governor Thornton and by him relayed to Washington. Again an appeal was made to Colorado's representatives in Washington.

On April 2, a committee from the Minturn Club met with Ross Brown, executive secretary to Governor Thornton, to view the designs drawn up by the U. S. Post Office Department. All designs included a view of the Mount of the Holy Cross.

On June 20, the Post Office Department made public a design for the stamp commemorating the 75th anniversary of Colorado's admission to the Union. The stamp, 1.44 inches wide, is blue. It went on sale August 1, Colorado Day, at Minturn. Prominent in the design are the Mount of the Holy Cross, Colorado's state flower, the Statehouse at Denver, the state seal with the motto that translates: "Nothing without God," and a cowboy on a bucking horse.

## The Greenback Party in Colorado\*

RICHARD C. WELTY

The American political and social movement known as the Agrarian Crusade began in the years following the Civil War as the result of a revolutionary change in American agriculture. Agriculture in the early decades of the nineteenth century was largely of the self-sufficient type with the farm family consuming almost all of the products of the farm. With the advent of increased industrialization after the war this pattern changed abruptly. Farmers found that it was more profitable to raise one cash crop, and the self-sufficient farm practically disappeared. This meant that each farmer actually became a small businessman, competing with the other farm businessmen for the sale of his products. This fact in itself was not damaging, but coupled with other factors it was almost fatal. Compared with the other businessmen in the United States the farmer was at a serious disadvantage. The farmer alone, of the major producers, had no control over production, markets, and price. As a result, the farmer's economic position grew steadily worse and he was preyed upon by the large organized industries. To counterbalance the downward trend of prices, the farmer was forced to borrow heavily. Fortunately, land values were rapidly increasing so that many farmers were able to sustain themselves by borrowing on inflated land values.

There were many specific complaints raised by the agricultural classes during this period of American history. The most serious defect was a result of declining prices for farm products. As a result of overproduction, the price of major staples fell almost 50 per cent during the period 1870-1896. Another complaint was the widespread dissatisfaction with high interest rates. Because many farmers were forced to borrow heavily, unreasonable rates charged by banks caused much hardship. In addition, taxes were burdensome since at this time government in the United States was supported largely by the property tax. When the farmers did raise a good crop, much of the profit was drained away by the extremely high prices asked by the transportation and storage interests. Finally, the farmers sold in a free competitive market but bought the goods they needed in a controlled, protected market. The logical result was economic ruin for American agriculture and with it ruin for millions of American families.

The first organized attempt to improve the farmer's position was made by the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, formed in 1867. The purpose of the Grange was to improve the

\*This paper was written by Mr. Welty as a Graduate student in History at the University of Colorado.—Ed.

economic, social, and intellectual life of farming families by working through the existing political parties. Education and lobbying were the principal methods employed. Despite the fact that the organization became a major fraternal organization, it had little political success.<sup>1</sup>

The Greenback movement was an effort to solve the farmers' problems by using a different approach from that taken by the Grange. The latter concentrated on reducing transportation and storage costs through education and lobbying. The Greenbackers proposed to solve the farmer's economic problems through inflation of the currency. In this manner it was hoped that farm prices would rise, thus increasing farm income. This would enable the farmers to pay off debts accumulated through the lean years following the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of greenback currency was not new to the United States. During the Civil War Congress had authorized \$400,000,000 in greenbacks to help finance the war effort. When Congress started to recall them after the war, great protest was raised by agricultural and labor interests. As a result, a resolution was passed in 1868 prohibiting any further redemptions.

Meanwhile, an Ohio politician, Samuel F. Cary, developed what came to be called the "Ohio idea" in an effort to increase the amount of greenbacks in circulation. His plan was to use greenbacks to redeem the bonds issued during the Civil War. Although the plan was incorporated in the Democratic platform of 1868, it was never very popular with the two major parties.

Failing to make any progress through the Democratic Party, the Greenbackers took independent political action by founding the Independent Party March 11, 1875. The name was later changed to the National Greenback Party; however, it was popularly known as the Greenback Party. At the national convention of 1876, Peter Cooper was nominated for President and Samuel Cary for Vice President, but the two received only 81,000 votes in the election. In the Congressional elections of 1878 the Greenbackers had their greatest success, polling over one million votes and electing fourteen members of Congress. In 1880 the party nominated General James B. Weaver, who conducted a very vigorous campaign, but did not poll as many votes as the Party received in 1878. From this point on the party declined rapidly, finally disappearing entirely after the 1888 election. The decline was caused in part by temporary return of prosperity to the farm belt as a result of several years of bumper crops following 1880.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas H. Greer, *American Social Reform Movements* (New York, 1949), pp. 61-69.

<sup>2</sup>Solon J. Buck, *The Agrarian Crusade* (New Haven, 1921), p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>Greer, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-73.

Solon J. Buck, leading authority on agrarian movements, has written the classical summary of the reasons for the decline of the Greenback Party:

Although the platforms of the Greenbackers contained many demands which were soundly progressive, inflation was the paramount issue in them; and with this issue the party was unable to obtain the support of all the forces of discontent, radicalism, and reform which had been engendered by the economic and political conditions of the times. The Greenback movement was ephemeral. Failing to solve the problem of agricultural depression, it passed away as had the Granger movement before it; but the greater farmers' movement of which both were a part went on.<sup>4</sup>

The Colorado Greenback Party was first organized in Boulder County in 1877. Although there had been meetings of persons interested in fiat money for several months, the first action taken to organize the group into a political party did not come until June 22, 1877. On that day there was published in the *Boulder County News* a call for a mass meeting of all persons interested in the Greenback cause. After setting forth briefly the principles upon which the party was to be formed, the call invited all citizens

... to meet at the Court House in Boulder to consider such measures of relief as the case demands, and to organize for an effort to lift the load of bankruptcy from the nation, and beggary from the shoulders of the people, and inaugurate an era of prosperity which shall be beyond the reach of gold gamblers, and to which financial panics shall be unknown.<sup>5</sup>

About fifty persons attended the meeting.<sup>6</sup> Although the Greenbackers continued to gather with some degree of regularity throughout the summer, it was not until September that any further action was taken to form a party and to nominate candidates. The nominating convention for Boulder County was called for September 18, 1877.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to nominating a slate of candidates for the county, the convention adopted a platform which called for increased issue and recognition of greenbacks in addition to a generally progressive program. Besides the money question the convention favored the labor union movement, a revision of the banking system, unlimited coinage of silver, economy in public administration, woman suffrage, and honesty on the part of government employees.

The Boulder County Convention also established the basis of a state organization for the Greenback Party. A state central committee was organized of Boulder County citizens. The committee was empowered to increase the membership until one person from each county in the state had been added.<sup>8</sup> The committee published

<sup>4</sup>Buck, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>5</sup>*Boulder County News*, June 22, 1877.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, June 23, 1877.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, September 14, 1877.

<sup>8</sup>*The Colorado Banner* (Boulder), September 20, 1877.

throughout the state a series of resolutions, usually accompanied by an explanatory article. The following, listed as the program of the Temporary State Central Committee, appeared in one paper:

First—The immediate organization of Greenback clubs in every county, and in every school district, if possible.

Second—The Presidents of these clubs, or some one elected by each club, should constitute a County Central Committee.

Third—The County Committee should elect their most aggressive, positive, persistent, patient member to be a member of the State Executive Committee for that county. . . .<sup>9</sup>

Because the party entered the field too late to make really adequate preparations, it ran third in the Boulder County elections of 1877, polling about 25 per cent of the vote.<sup>10</sup> The party nominated a full slate of officers for the Boulder municipal election held on February 13, 1878. In this election the party fared much better, electing most of its ticket. The *Boulder County News* commented after the election on the fact that the ticket was generally supported by the temperance elements in the city. The majority for the winning Greenbackers ranged from four to 171 out of a total vote of approximately 425.<sup>11</sup>

The nominating convention for the general election of 1878 met in Denver, August 14, 1878, with Joseph Wolff of Boulder, Chairman of the State Central Committee, presiding. Robert O. Old of Clear Creek County was elected President of the convention. The ticket was headed by Dr. R. G. Buckingham, a prominent Arapahoe County physician. So great was the personal popularity of Dr. Buckingham that the *Denver Times*, a strong Republican paper, remarked that the nomination of Dr. Buckingham had ruined any chance the Democrats might have had in the election.<sup>12</sup>

The platform passed by the convention followed the pattern of all Greenback platforms. It endorsed greenback money, condemned the banking system, demanded the repeal of the resumption act and free coinage of silver, favored Chinese exclusion, and called for the establishment of a state labor bureau.<sup>13</sup>

The Greenbackers polled only about 8 per cent of the total state vote in the state election of 1878; however, in Boulder County the party did much better, getting almost one-third of the votes cast for state offices.<sup>14</sup>

In the Boulder County election of 1879 the Greenback Party ran a full slate of candidates. After an active campaign in the county it polled about 14 per cent of the total vote in the October

<sup>9</sup>*Georgetown Courier*, November 29, 1877.

<sup>10</sup>*The Colorado Banner* (Boulder), October 11, 1877.

<sup>11</sup>*Boulder County News*, February 15, 1878.

<sup>12</sup>*Denver Times*, August 15, 1878.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, August 15, 1878.

<sup>14</sup>*Boulder County News*, October 4, 1878.

election. The Republicans carried the county with the Democrats running a rather poor second.<sup>15</sup>

The Greenback nominating convention for the general election of 1880 met in Denver on June 17, 1880. A full slate of candidates for state offices was nominated, headed by Rev. A. J. Chittenden of Boulder for Governor and Joe Murray of Larimer County for Congress. The convention adopted the platform of the national party organization with several local planks. Among other things the convention urged that Congress pass laws to protect prospectors against the large mining corporations. They also advocated the free use of public land for grazing, that railroad lands be subject to taxation, and "that the outrageous military legislation of the past two legislatures, the refusal of the general assembly to enforce . . . all of the direct provisions of the state constitution, meets our earnest condemnation."<sup>16</sup>

The Greenbackers did not have much success in the state as a whole, polling only about 3 per cent of the total vote in 1880.<sup>17</sup> Boulder County was easily the hotbed of Greenback votes. In the county they polled 307 votes out of a total vote of approximately 2,300. In Lake, Gunnison, Saguache, and Chaffee counties the Greenback Party polled 326 votes out of a total vote of about 13,000. In the other counties the party received only a smattering of votes.<sup>18</sup>

As in past elections, the Greenbackers were the most active in Boulder County. Their county convention met September 18, 1880, and nominated a slate of county candidates.<sup>19</sup> In commenting on the anticipated results of the election, the *Boulder County Herald* said on October 6, 1880, "The Greenbackers say their vote will be so remarkable that they intend to pickle it and preserve it to exhibit next campaign." In another place, the *Herald* stated, "Boulder is confidently counted on by the Greenbackers and they are spending money recklessly in this town. . . ."

Despite the party's efforts the Republicans were able to carry the county, with the Democrats second and the Greenbackers a poor third, with approximately 13 per cent of the total vote.<sup>20</sup>

In spite of its miserable showing in the election of 1880, the Greenback Party made plans to enter the 1882 contest for state offices. Their intentions led the *Denver Republican* to comment, "It had been supposed that Greenbackism was a thing of the past, and the followers of the faith in Colorado at least deserve credit for the tenacity with which they cling to their peculiar ideas."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup>*Boulder News and Courier*, October 17, 1879.

<sup>16</sup>*Denver Times*, June 18, 1880.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, November 27, 1880.

<sup>18</sup>Taken from the report of the State Board of Canvassers, reported in the *Boulder News and Courier*, December 3, 1880.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, September 24, 1880.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, November 12, 1880.

<sup>21</sup>*Denver Republican*, July 6, 1882.

The state nominating convention met in Denver, September 9, 1882. Dr. Buckingham was again nominated for Governor, but he declined to run because of the demands of his private practice. He was replaced by George W. Woy of Longmont. The only new planks in the platform were for a graduated income tax, free water rights for all citizens, and legislative control over transportation rates. There was sentiment in the convention for a prohibition plank, but the motion to add it was defeated, fifty-five to twenty-two.<sup>22</sup>

The results of the election of 1882 indicate very clearly that the Greenback Party was of no consequence in the determination of the final results. The overall state average for Greenback candidates was less than 2 per cent of the total vote.<sup>23</sup>

In Boulder County the party ran well ahead of its state average. Despite the fact that the campaigning in the county was less vigorous than in previous years, the Greenbackers were still able to poll a respectable 16 per cent of the total county vote in 1882.<sup>24</sup>

Two years later the Greenbackers again made a feeble effort to elect a slate of state officers. The convention was held in Denver on September 17, 1884. John E. Washburne of Larimer County headed the ticket as the candidate for Governor. The state-wide average of the party in this election was about 3 per cent of the total, approximately 2,000 votes out of a total of 66,000.<sup>25</sup>

In Boulder County, where a good portion of the Greenback votes were accumulated, the party polled 16 per cent of the total county vote. Joseph Wolff, the guiding light behind the Greenback movement in the county, ran for the state legislature on a Greenback-Democratic fusion ticket and was defeated by only forty-five votes out of over 2,600 votes cast. On the same fusion ticket, G. P. Wood was defeated 1,465 to 1,188.<sup>26</sup>

The election of 1884 was the last time the Greenback Party put up a state ticket in Colorado. The death of the party was sounded by the Boulder County convention October 10, 1885, when it was decided that the Greenbackers would not enter a slate of candidates in the county election of that year. Efforts for a permanent merger of the Democrat and Greenback parties in the county were unsuccessful. The following resolution was passed by the county convention:

Whereas, The members of the National Greenback party of Boulder county see no necessity for putting a ticket in the field this year; and

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, September 10, 1882.

<sup>23</sup>Estimated from the official canvass of December 2, 1882, appearing in *ibid.*, December 3, 1882.

<sup>24</sup>*Boulder News and Courier*, November 10, 1882.

<sup>25</sup>*Boulder County Herald*, December 3, 1884.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, November 12, 1884.

Whereas, We have no evidence that there is any material difference between the national leadership of the Republican and Democratic parties; and

Whereas, The political history of the country for the last twenty years shows them both to be the enemies of the masses of the people and the friends of the favored few; and

Whereas, The incentive of both these parties in Boulder county is nothing but the spoils of office; therefore

Resolved, That the National Greenback party of Boulder County declines to place a ticket in the field for this contest, and, in convention assembled, advise the members of the party to hold themselves aloof and take no part whatever in the election.<sup>27</sup>

The principal instrument used to spread Greenback doctrine was the Greenback Club. There were a number of such clubs operating in Colorado during the period 1877-1878. The Greenback Club was merely an organization of persons interested in the greenback question. As a general rule, weekly meetings were held to discuss current issues or to hear a speaker imported from some other part of the state or even, in rare cases, from outside the state. Joseph Wolff is credited with the organization of the first Greenback Club in Boulder and also with the organization of many of the clubs in surrounding communities.

Although the most common function of the Greenback Club was the discussion of questions related to the movement, the clubs also performed other functions. These organizations were the foundation upon which the party was built in Colorado. They also constituted the basis of the state organization of the party. Finally, the clubs were the instrument through which Congressmen and other public officers in Colorado were informed of the party's stand on current issues.

One of the common questions about the Greenback Party concerned the relationship between it and the Democratic Party. The Republicans of the state maintained that the Greenback movement was merely an effort on the part of the Democrats to gain political control of Colorado. There was some basis, in fact, for this feeling. The Democrats did endorse the principle of fluctuating currency in their 1878 platform. In Boulder County the Democratic candidates, while not openly advocating the Greenback platform, did seem to indicate some willingness to go along with the fluctuating currency idea.

The Republican *Boulder County News* accused the county Democrats of trying to negotiate a fusion with the Greenbackers in 1878. The paper remarked:

The Democratic party is not only ready to kneel, but to crawl on its belly to the Greenback Party, which is a little upish and offish, but evidently flattered by the advances of the old party, and half willing to wed. At the Greenback meeting in this town last week,

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, October 14, 1885.

Col. Logan as a Greenbacker, and Maj. Price as a Democrat, spoke from the same platform, not as opponents, but as co-workers.<sup>28</sup>

The next year the *News* accused the Democrats and Greenbackers again of attempting to merge their forces. The Greenback Party nominated one H. E. Washburn for County Treasurer. Two years earlier Washburn had been elected to the position of Treasurer as a Democrat. John Cosgrove was also nominated by the Greenbackers for Sheriff. Both men were later nominated by the Democrats for the same positions. Washburn refused the Greenback nomination, but Cosgrove ran on both tickets.<sup>29</sup>

The Greenbackers were accused many times of trying to fuse their organization with either the Republicans or the Democrats. Not until the declining days of the party, however, was there any serious attempt on the part of the Greenbackers to unite with either of the major parties. In the election of 1884 the Greenbackers of Boulder County agreed to unite part of their following with the Democrats of the county. As their part of the bargain the Greenbackers were allowed to nominate the fusion candidates for State Senator and County Commissioner.<sup>30</sup> Joseph Wolff was nominated for Senator and G. P. Wood for Commissioner. Wolff was defeated by a narrow margin, 1371 to 1316; Wood was defeated 1465 to 1188.<sup>31</sup>

The final effort to unite the Greenback and Democratic parties was made in 1885. The Greenback convention in Boulder County had decided not to enter candidates in the county election of that year. A portion of the party wanted to join the Democrats and support their candidates, but it soon became apparent that a majority of the Greenbackers would refuse to support the Democratic ticket. As a result, the convention passed resolutions condemning both major parties and requesting all Greenbackers to abstain from any participation in the election.<sup>32</sup>

The Colorado branch of the Greenback Party had few formal connections with the national organization. In 1878 and 1880 the state sent a delegation to the national convention, but other than that there was little interest in the national affairs of the Greenback Party. The Colorado Greenback leaders were not important in the national organization, although in 1879 D. B. Harris of Denver was chosen a member of the National Executive Committee and Joseph Wolff was appointed to the National Committee on Organization.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup>*Boulder County News*, September 6, 1878.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, August 8, 1879; August 22, 1879.

<sup>30</sup>*Boulder County Herald*, September 24, 1884.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, November 12, 1884.

<sup>32</sup>*Infra.*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>33</sup>*Boulder News and Courier*, March 4, 1879.

The principal support of the Greenback movement in Colorado came from the agricultural elements. Farmers and persons sympathetic with the farmer's efforts formed the bulk of the party. The party was not, however, strictly a farm party; some professional persons were members—mainly lawyers, physicians, and preachers. In many cases these professional men furnished the leadership and were often the party's candidates for state or local offices. Some support was derived from mining interests, including some prominent mine owners; but, by and large, the mining communities of the state were not affected by the Greenback movement. The party did continually endorse free and unlimited coinage of silver and no doubt this plank accounts for the presence of such men as Robert Old, prominent Clear Creek County mine entrepreneur, in places of importance in the Greenback Party.

One reason why the Greenback movement was not as successful in Colorado as in other states was the presence of a powerful hard money faction in the state. Paper money was not very popular with the mining interests; and although the Greenback Party made efforts through its platform to win the support of these interests, it was generally unsuccessful. The party had the greatest success in those states thoroughly dominated by agricultural classes where it was comparatively easy to arouse sympathy for the plight of the farmers. As a result, the party was at least temporarily successful in certain sections of the country. In Colorado the farming interests were in the minority, if not in numbers, at least in political power. It is not surprising, then, that a farm party found the road to political control rocky and difficult.

At the height of its power the Greenback Party was probably fully organized in no more than eight Colorado counties.<sup>34</sup> The party organization was similar to that maintained by political parties today. The State Central Committee was the ruling organ of the party in Colorado. Each organized county had a County Central Committee. In addition, many towns, school districts, and townships were at least partially organized. Because of the relatively simple problems of finance and campaigning and the absence of patronage, the party organization was largely informal and operated only during periods of election. The Greenbackers had no party bureaucratic hierarchy as did the two other parties in Colorado.

The campaign techniques of the party were very elementary. There was no evidence of a well-planned and well-financed campaign at any time during the party's brief life in Colorado. All campaigning was locally conducted and consisted mainly of speeches and rallies. Because the chances of success were so slight, many of the party candidates did not bother to conduct vigorous campaigns

<sup>34</sup>Arapahoe, Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Jefferson, Lake, Larimer, and Weld.

but were merely content to rest on their personal popularity and the popularity of the party principles. Not all of the Greenback candidates were lackadaisical in their campaigning, however. Joseph Wolff was one of the most active men on the Colorado political scene and undoubtedly traveled as far and worked as hard in the interests of the Greenbackers as any Democrat or Republican did in the interests of his party.

The Greenback Party did not expect to gain control of Colorado government but merely wanted to become the balance of power. It was hoped that the party could "steal" enough votes from the other parties that neither could muster a majority of the legislature and a majority vote for Governor. In such a situation, then, the Greenbackers could sell their votes for the assurance that their platform would be carried out. Such was not the case, however, because the party did not develop enough strength to drive the Republicans from control of the legislature.

In spite of its lack of success at the polls, the party did have considerable influence on Colorado history. In the first place, some of the principles of the Greenback Party had an effect on the other parties. The state Democratic platform of 1878, drafted at Pueblo, endorsed the principle of a fluctuating currency; but little material progress came from the endorsement. In the long run, there is little question but what the farm parties, of which the Greenback Party was only one, had considerable effect on the course of Colorado history. At least the Greenbackers could say that they were setting the stage for later, more potent farm parties.

In the second place, the Greenback Party was important in certain local Colorado communities. In Boulder County, for example, the party had a great deal of influence during the period 1877 through 1879. On the other hand, it is true that in a great majority of Colorado communities the Greenbackers were almost unknown.

In the third place, the party was important, not for what it stood for nor for what was accomplished at the polls, but for what the movement signified. The one most important observation that can be made about the Greenback Party in Colorado is that it represented a discontented minority group, a group that was economically and politically unhappy. As has been mentioned above, mining was the dominant industry in Colorado during the period of the Greenbackers. The political strength of the farming communities was still to be felt in Colorado; in fact, the great farming areas of the state were still undeveloped. The Greenback movement, then, was an effort by a minority to gain expression of their views. In this respect their efforts were successful. Although accomplishing little in the way of gaining political control, they nevertheless publicized

their views throughout the state and secured recognition for what they were—a minority group dissatisfied with the government of the state. As Buck said in a statement quoted earlier, it was unfortunate that the principal issue of the Greenback movement was inflation because it was impossible to secure majority acceptance of that principle.