

# THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

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## Nathaniel P. Hill Inspects Colorado

LETTERS WRITTEN IN 1864

Nathaniel P. Hill, one of Colorado's outstanding pioneers, did much to advance the mining industry of the entire West by building at Black Hawk the first consistently successful smelter in Colorado. He served the state as United States Senator from 1879 to 1885, and was so intimately connected with the state's development that his life-size portrait was placed among the sixteen portraits of illustrious men in Colorado's so-called Hall of Fame, in the dome of the state Capitol in Denver.

N. P. Hill came to Colorado Territory first by stagecoach in the hectic year of 1864, when the citizens were battling floods, Indian attacks and guerilla warfare. At that time the 32-year-old Hill was Professor of Chemistry at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. Having won the confidence of some wealthy manufacturers in his home community through his chemical work, he was sent by them on a tour of inspection to the gold regions of the Rocky Mountains.

Accompanied from Denver by former Governor William Gilpin, a man well seasoned in the ways of the West, Mr. Hill visited Central City and then went south to the San Luis Valley to inspect the mineral possibilities of the vast Sangre de Cristo Grant then owned by Governor Gilpin and his associates, Colonel Reynolds and Morton Fisher.

Although a chemist by profession, Mr. Hill early in his Colorado experience began to develop into a shrewd business man. He apparently had little idea, on his arrival in the West, of making his home in Colorado, but before returning to Rhode Island in October, Professor Hill wrote to his wife that on "Sept. 2nd, I bought a house and lot of L. C. Rockwell for \$1800 in Central. The house is rented for six months at \$52.00 per month." And he predicted that at the end of that time the rent would go to \$65.00. This may have been the house in Black Hawk where the Hill family later lived.

In February 1865, Nathaniel P. Hill again headed westward to Central City. At this time the stamp mills in the Central Mining region of Colorado were making poor recoveries from the complex sulphide ores which were encountered as the mines deepened. Mr. Hill studied the situation and, upon returning to Rhode Island in March, was employed by a syndicate of Boston and Providence capitalists to investigate the ore reserves of Colorado, with a view to erecting a plant for their treatment. Back to Colorado he came in June 1865, to make arrangements for transporting several tons of ore from the Bobtail Mine to Swansea, Wales, then the center of smelting in Great Britain. Professor Hill later personally escorted an ore shipment by wagon to the Missouri River, thence by boat to New Orleans and on across the ocean to Swansea, Wales, where he studied and learned the various processes of treating refractory ores.

As the result of Professor Hill's encouraging report to his American backers, the Boston and Colorado Smelting Company was organized, with the help of British capital. In 1867, Mr. Hill began the erection of a smelter in Black Hawk, Colorado, which was exceedingly successful for a decade. In 1878, N. P. Hill and associates built the Argo smelter about two miles north of Denver. Mr. Hill's business interests continually expanded, and by 1880 he owned the *Denver Republican* and a \$40,000 mansion in Denver. Upon his death in 1900, he was succeeded in business by his son, Crawford Hill.

On his various early trips to Colorado, England and elsewhere Nathaniel P. Hill wrote many detailed letters to his wife, Alice Hale Hill, to relatives and to friends. Mrs. Hill carefully preserved copies of these letters in journals and also saved a number of the originals. In 1956, Mrs. Alexander Barbour of Denver, granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. N. P. Hill, and daughter of Gertrude Hill and Charles Berger, presented to the State Historical Society of Colorado, through President James Grafton Rogers, many of the letters, clippings, journals and records of her distinguished grandparents.

The following letters, selected from the collection and reproduced, as to spelling and diction, just as written by Mr. Hill, relate to his first visit to Colorado in 1864. Mr. Hill was greatly concerned over the then poor communication facilities and repeated in each letter various instructions concerning the directing of his mail. He also continually stressed the fact that he was writing at every opportunity and asked his wife and relatives not to be alarmed if they did not receive his letters regularly.

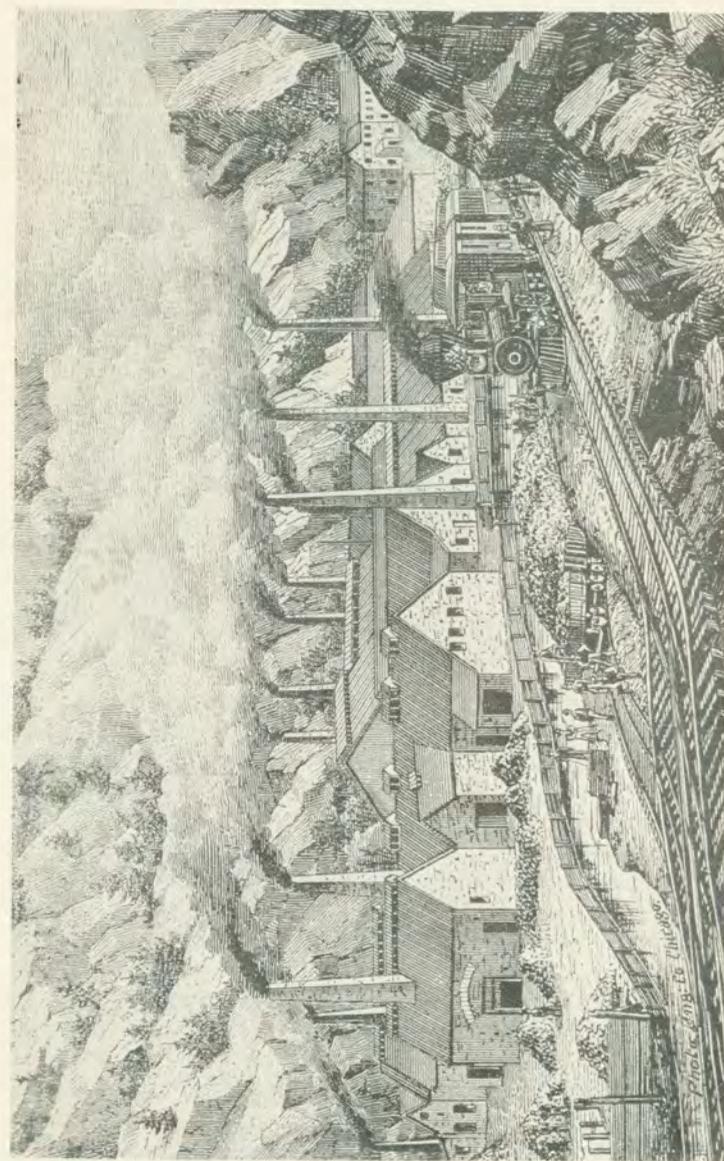
Because of space limitations many references to correspondence have been deleted by the Editor. Since the various letters written to different individuals often were very similar, now and then the Editor has shifted bits of information from one letter to another, in order to give the reader all of the items of interest penned by Nathaniel P. Hill.

Additional letters written by N. P. Hill which tell of visits to Boulder City, Buckskin Joe, Twin Lakes and the Central City area in 1864, and possibly some of his letters written from England and Wales, will be published in future issues of *The Colorado Magazine*.—Editor.

Dear Sister Bell

Denver City, June 15th, 1864

I will give you a brief account of my journey so far. . . . I left New York Tuesday morning May 31st by the Erie R. R. having in my charge Miss Rathbone of our city whom I escorted to St. Louis. The journey to St. Louis was very pleasant. The weather with the exception of one day was fine. The wild scenery on the Delaware and the magnificent prairies of Illinois were as interesting to me as when I first saw them. We saw nothing of the cities on the way as we traveled night and day. We arrived at St. Louis on Thursday night June 2nd and remained there until Saturday night at the Lindell House. In appearance it is the finest hotel and it is said to be the largest in the United States. . . . I saw several of my acquaintances. . . . After seeing Miss R. on the cars which were to convey her to her friends, I left St. Louis by steamboat, without any regrets. I have been in no place since I started, which I would not be glad to leave in two days. These western cities seem so new and unfinished, and everything is so crude compared with our eastern cities, that no consideration could induce me to live in them. St. Louis is under martial law. Every man must have a pass. . . . William Emerson, formerly at Balch's, rendered me important service in putting up my stock of medicines &c for the journey to the plain. I took 5 small bottles of brandy, 5 of whisky, none of which I expect to use; 24 small bottles of lemon juice, expressed from 50 lemons, sweetened, strained, boiled and sealed, 1 bottle of concentrated extract of ginger; 1 bottle of cayenne, a pinch of wh. I put in the water every time I take a drink; a pot of senna in prunes; a bottle of Perry Davis' Pain Killer. I had with me "Martin's Life Cordial." All we



FRANK FOSSETT: COLORADO

BOSTON AND COLORADO SMELTING WORKS  
Near North Clear Creek, in lower Black Hawk



BASKINS: HISTORY OF DENVER  
NATHANIEL P. HILL

took in way of food was 2 bottles of Anchovy Sauce. I carry all these last articles in a little hand trunk or medicine chest.

The sail from St. Louis to Hannibal, a place 160 miles up the river and commencement of the Hannibal and St. Joseph R. R., was the most agreeable part of my journey. Mr. Thurber of Providence was with me. He left Providence a week before me, but at Owego, N. Y., where he had been spending the week he joined me without any previous arrangement to that effect. Mr. T is a gentlemanly man of excellent habits and principles. . . . I find him an agreeable travelling companion, and as neither of us drink whisky, smoke, chew or swear, we get on well together. . . . At Palmyra, where the road from Rock Island connects with the Han. & St. Joseph Road, two more Providence men, well known and respectable, came on the cars, all bound for Colorado. I was highly pleased with the appearance of the state of Missouri. It is all that has been claimed for it in respect to fertility and resources. The magnificent rolling prairies are beautifully interspersed with timber lands, and judging from the large number of bridges we passed on the R. R. it must be finely watered. The climate is mild. Cattle feed out all winter. The orchards, notwithstanding the newness of the state, are as fine as I ever saw. . . . We reached Atchison (Kansas) Monday night, June 6th, and the next afternoon took the stage for Denver City. Here



ALICE HALE HILL  
(Mrs. N. P. Hill)

the hard part of our journey may said to have commenced. I entered upon it with some solicitude—[because] six or seven days of incessant riding, on a miserable diet and no sleep except what one can get knocking about in these hard seated and springless stages, looked formidable.

The water along the road is almost intolerable, so hard and brackish. But one gradually gets accustomed to almost any state of things. By the time we got here I should not have cared much if we had been going 700 miles further to Salt Lake. We crossed the beautiful rolling prairies of Kansas and Nebraska for the first two or three hundred miles. The monotony was unbroken by a hill or a tree sometimes for 50 miles. We gradually passed into a country known as the "Great American Desert" where rains never fall during the summer. Strange as it may appear, this immense waste supports innumerable herds of buffalo and antelope besides wolves and prairie dogs, and birds in large numbers such as dove, plover, quail &c. We rode for 400 miles along the river bottom of the Platte. All the way from Ft. Kearney to Denver City. The barren waste, made barren only by the want of rain, produces but little in the

form of plants except the prickly pear and small tufts of short grass growing perhaps a foot or so apart. For what use can these millions of acres of prickly pear be intended? The grass grows in the early spring by the moisture afforded by the melting snow, and the latter part of May dries up. Through the entire summer and the following winter, the plains are covered with dead grass. But this grass is almost as nutritious as grain. Cattle are herded upon the plains in immense numbers and in the Spring are as fat as our best grain fed cattle. The order of Nature seems almost reversed out here. . . . We heard at many places of Indian troubles, fifty, seventy-five or one hundred miles further on. When we reached the point named, the troubles were either behind us or still further ahead. When we arrived at a station and also when we arrived at Denver, the first inquiries were, "Is all quiet on the road? Did you see many Indians?" . . . We did for two days see a good many Indians; they were all travelling in one direction, southeast of our road toward the Republican River. Their squaws and papooses were with them. . . . The family of a ranchman<sup>1</sup> was murdered about 30 miles from Denver, last Saturday. . . . Horribly mutilated, their ranch burned and all their cattle stolen. The day we arrived in Denver, the bodies were brought here and exposed in the streets, it was said to convince the incredulous of the fact of the murder. . . . So fond are these Westerners of excitement that all the people of the town with a few honorable exceptions went to see them. Since I arrived in Denver, I have met several old acquaintances and they have introduced me to others so I have got quite a circle of friends. I find the people very cordial and sociable. I am waiting here for my trunks which contain a large amount of chemicals and apparatus.

Your affectionate brother

N. P. Hill

Denver City, Tuesday June 14th, 1864

My dear Wife:

After nearly seven days and nights of uninterrupted travel, we reached this place at 10 o'clock this morning. I wrote you a few lines hastily, and mailed them at the Midway Station on the road. I did not feel much certainty that you would receive them as the local post offices on the road are rude affairs. I feel somewhat jaded and tired but otherwise am well. The effect of a good bath and of

<sup>1</sup>"On Saturday afternoon, the buildings on the ranche of Mr. (J. P.) Van Wormer (on Living Creek, thirty-miles southeast of Denver), were burned down by Indians, as were the buildings on the next ranche. Mr. (Ward) Hunsate and family who occupied Mr. Van Wormer's ranche were barbarously murdered by the Indians. The bodies of Mrs. H. and two children were found near the house. They had been scalped and their throats cut. A later report brings news of the discovery of Mr. Hunsate's body, about a mile from the same place. Moccasins, arrows, and other Indian signs were found in the vicinity. The bodies of these will be brought to the city this afternoon, and will, at the ringing of the Seminary bell, be placed where our citizens can see them." — *Weekly Commonwealth*, Wednesday, June 15, 1864. The name of the family was Hungate, not Hunsate.—*Editor.*

a complete change of clothes, which had not been changed before, as bad as it may appear, since I left Providence, was almost renovating in itself. We had upon the way all kinds of weather; the first two days were very warm, the roads exceedingly dusty and dry. The third day we had a shower, and the night following was so cold that we had to get out and walk to keep warm. Then we had another very warm day. The last two days were showery and cool.

Last night I did not sleep on account of the thunder and lightning. I thought we would have to stop at some station and wait for daylight, but the driver kept on and before daylight we had accomplished 30 miles. By referring to the Atlas, you will see our route. We went from Atchison by a straight line for Ft. Kearney, which is on the Platte river. We then follow this river in the South part of Nebraska, and never leave it for an hour till we reach Denver City. The road was perfectly level, and the scenery perfectly uninteresting. For the last 300 miles, the principal production of the soil is the prickly pear. Thousands of acres of land are almost covered with them. You have seen by the papers, accounts of the great freshets<sup>2</sup> they have had in this part of the country. It has raised the Platte river so high, that emigrants are unable to cross, and are waiting for the river to fall. We saw at one place, 3,000 heavily loaded wagons with 12 oxen or six mules to each wagon thus waiting. Some have been waiting for 2 or 3 weeks and are almost discouraged.

Nothing in crossing the plains interested me more than these emigrants or as they are always called here "Pilgrims." We seldom rode an hour without passing one of their immense trains. Many times we passed two, three or even six in an hour. Some are bound for Oregon. Others for Idaho, and others still, for Colorado. They carry with them everything pertaining to a family even to the cat and dog. Few of them will reach their destination in less than 3 months and then find no provision for their reception, except the broad acres of rich wild lands. We frequently asked them whither they were bound, and were generally told they did not know.

When they get to the mountains, they decide which way they will turn. A large proportion of these emigrants are from Missouri and Arkansas and are leaving their homes to get away from troubles and dangers of guerilla warfare.

Since my arrival I have seen Gov. Gilpin<sup>3</sup> and Jabez Fisher.<sup>4</sup> Gilpin had received letters from Reynolds and Morton Fisher of

<sup>2</sup>The disastrous Cherry Creek flood which caused great damage in Denver occurred on May 19, 1864, and according to numerous newspaper items heavy rains kept many of Colorado's mountain streams bankfull for weeks during late May and early June.

<sup>3</sup>William Gilpin was born October 4, 1822, on his father's homestead on the old battlefield of Brandywine. At ten years of age he was sent to England where he attended school for three years. Later he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and in 1836 graduated from West Point. Gilpin participated in the Seminole War in Florida and did military service against the Indians in New

New York, which were written after I had started. He was looking for me, and was prepared to enter fully into the plans which they propose. This plan is for me to spend the summer in surveying and prospecting a large tract of land<sup>5</sup> which they got by purchasing a Mexican grant. The title is confirmed by our Congress. This tract is 150 miles south of Denver and Gov. Gilpin thinks it will take 100 days to do the work. There are no Indians upon the tract or in the neighborhood, and I think there will be no danger in getting to it. Gov. G. will furnish a suitable wagon and about 12 men; 3 of them engineers, and one to look after the cuisine. I have not yet decided what to do. It is a more formidable undertaking than I expected to engage in. I shall consider it well before I decide. I prize my home, wife and children too highly to take any risks.

My trunks will not be here till next Sunday, and I shall probably remain here till they come. Then I shall go to Central City, the heart of the mining district, about 40 miles from here almost directly West and up in the mountains. If I decide to go with Gov. G. I shall stay at Central City only about a week. Otherwise I shall be there most of the time till I go home. You must give yourself no anxiety about me, but devote yourself to that dear little boy and girl [Crawford and Bell]. I trust that they are as well, and you are better than when I left. I think I told you to direct to Central City. Although I was greatly disappointed not to get a letter here, I suppose I ought not to have expected it. Hereafter direct to Denver City and write so often that I shall never send to the office without getting a letter. This is the fifth time I have written. I could not have been more punctual. Kiss the babies for their papa. I have to restrain myself continually from thinking too much of them and you. Tomorrow I will write to Mother or [Sister] Bell. I trust, Alice,

Mexico and fought in Mexico. In 1843 he accompanied Fremont to the Pacific Northwest. There he became so well informed on the problems of the people of Oregon that he was appointed by them to lay a petition in their behalf before the President of the United States. In Washington he was admitted to all the Congressional debates on Oregon affairs, with the freedom of the floors of both houses. From about 1848 to 1861 he resided in Independence, Missouri. In 1861 he was appointed by President Lincoln to serve as the first Governor of Colorado Territory. During a situation which arose involving the equipping and payment of Civil War troops, Governor Gilpin issued drafts upon the United States government. Because he had not received authorization for such a procedure from Washington, he was removed from office and was succeeded in March 1862 by Governor John Evans. Gilpin had long been familiar with the Mexican land grant system and succeeded in raising money to buy the Sangre de Cristo grant from the heirs of Don Carlos Beaubien. It was to investigate the mining possibilities of the grant that Gilpin and his associates hired Nathaniel P. Hill to visit the grant in the summer of 1864. Although Mr. Hill's report has not been found among the papers deposited with the State Historical Society, it is understood that it was unfavorable. The tract later was put on sale in London, and was sold in Amsterdam in 1871. On February 12, 1874, William Gilpin married Mrs. Julia Pratt Dickerson, of St. Louis, widow of Captain Dickerson of that city.—Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the Life of William Gilpin* (San Francisco: The History Co., 1889.) Gilpin died January 20, 1894, and was buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Jefferson County, Colorado.—*Editor*.

<sup>4</sup>Jabez Fisher, formerly of Providence, R. I., had a family according to N. P. Hill "composed of father, mother, two sons and two daughters all grown up, very hospitable and agreeable. They are intelligent and what pleased me more than anything else take the *Providence Journal*."

<sup>5</sup>Known as the Sangre de Cristo or Beaubien Grant, in the southern part of the San Luis Valley. It contained more than 1,000,000 acres.

and believe that this summer is to be a profitable one and that we shall enjoy the fruits of the labor, hardship and exposure, I am undergoing particularly for your sake and the sakes of little Crawford and Bell. Every move I make I will inform you of it. That God will keep you safe from all danger and return me safely in due time is the sincere prayer of

Your loving husband.

N. P. Hill

Denver City, Sunday June 19th 1864

Dear Wife.

I keep up one incessant line of communications to you, without having yet had the pleasure of having one from you. But as I am going to Central City, I console myself with the promise of receiving news at least a week later than the date of my departure. I sent a long letter to Hattie [Hale] on Friday, giving some account of the Indian alarm which the people of Denver suffered on the night of the 15th. The whole cause of the alarm was only some Mexicans shouting at cattle, but it shows how very excitable the people are. Rumors are floating around every day of some Indian depredation; but when you resolve it all down to simple fact, it amounts only to a few soldiers killed in April, one family murdered a few days ago as mentioned in Hattie's letter and numerous little thefts. Now when you remember that along the line of all the streams and roads, ranchmen are scattered who own stock and horses for which the Indians have a great fondness, and that these ranchmen have no defense except what they themselves can afford, you will see that the Indians are after all a very harmless race. I have no fear for my personal safety. I had some at first, but as I learn the facts and begin to understand the relation of the Indians to the whites, my fear subsides. My principal fear has been, that you would hear telegraphic reports of the panic which occurred here, and imagine all sorts of evil.

The Governor<sup>6</sup> is a very fine man, but very timid, and he is unfortunately smitten with the belief that they are to have an Indian war. He encourages sending all the reports of Indian troubles to the states, to enable him to get arms and soldiers. You may rest satisfied that I am in no danger and that I will use all proper precautions to keep out of danger.

I went this morning to hear Mr. Potter<sup>7</sup> preach. He has a very social pleasant little congregation, and Mr. P. really preached a fine sermon. He uses no notes and exhibits a polish which quite aston-

<sup>6</sup>Doctor John Evans, second governor of Colorado Territory, had just cause for alarm as 1864 and 1865 proved to be "Bloody Years" on the plains, including many skirmishes with the Indians and the Sand Creek Battle.—*Editor*.

<sup>7</sup>The Rev. Mr. Potter held services for the Baptist congregation in The People's Theatre, Larimer Street, in Denver, during June 1864, according to announcements in the *Weekly Commonwealth*.

ished me. He has loaded me with attention and introduced me to some very fine people. I send you an extract<sup>8</sup> from a paper which explains itself. You will regard it not as egotism, but a desire to show how cheaply glory is achieved at the base of the Rocky Mountains. My gratitude to the "*Mont. Standard*" and the "*Denver Commonwealth*" should be enduring.

The Fishers are living here very pleasantly. They are exceedingly cordial and kind. I never was in a place where I found such hospitable people. If you and the dear little children were here, I should feel quite at home. The plans for my summer operations are beginning to take definite form. Ex. Gov. Gilpin has a tract of land a little larger than the State of Rhode Island, to which he has an undoubted title. Mr. Reynolds and Fisher advanced him money to secure it and they together own one-half. He obtained it by purchasing an old Spanish Grant, and his title is confirmed by an Act of Congress. About one-half of the tract lies in the Rocky Mountains. The other half lying on the plain west of the Snowy Range. It is in the south part of Colorado, and extends over into New Mexico. Gilpin is now organizing a company of men, consisting of surveyors and prospectors, to explore and survey and map the whole tract. I am going as the Chemist and Geologist and will write a report embracing the subject of the mineral resources of the grant. I shall have a share in it, if it turns out well.<sup>9</sup>

We will carry with us our provisions in an ambulance, and go prepared to remain 100 days, although I am quite confident that we will not be gone more than 50. There are no Indians on the tract. It is thinly settled by Mexicans. They are not the roving class but a more peaceable class who live by farming. And from numerous authorities, I learn that if one keeps free from any intimacy with them, he is as safe as in the most civilized community.

<sup>8</sup>Pinned to the copy of the letter is a clipping which reads:

A SAVAN[T] AMONG US

We had the pleasure of an introduction yesterday, at the hands of Rev. Mr. Potter, to Prof. N. P. Hill, Professor of Chemistry and Geology in Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. We understand that the Professor comes out here in the interest of capitalists, whose attention has been attracted to our mines, and his report will be of great importance to us. He will stay in the city over Sabbath, and then, if the roads are passable, he will proceed to Central City and Empire. Returning to Denver he will afterward visit the southern mines. The Professor, we have reason to believe, will not make up a hasty judgment, but whatever verdict he gives, and of course there is now only one verdict possible, will have great weight with those to whom he will report. He will remain in the Territory during the summer, having a leave of absence from the University for the purpose of making this visit, and as he has a large acquaintance among capitalists throughout New England, his visit cannot fail to have a most favorable bearing upon our future development. He comes thoroughly prepared to prosecute his work while here, having with him all necessary mechanical aids, among which is a complete assaying apparatus.

The clipping is not dated and no source is given. It probably appeared in the *Montana Standard* as we were not able to locate it in the *Weekly Commonwealth*.—Editor.

<sup>9</sup>In a letter written by N. P. Hill to his Sister Bell on June 15, 1864, he said in referring to his work on the Sangre de Cristo grant: "I am to have one-tenth of the tract for my services, in addition to my salary."

This presents one of the finest opportunities to make not only some money, but also some fame that has ever presented itself to me. If it turns out that the tract is rich in precious metals, I want no better fortune. Gov. Gilpin has no specific knowledge as to the mineral resources, but it is well known that it is in a mineral district and it would be strange if somewhere in so large a tract there were not some mines. We will not start on this expedition until after I have been to Central City where I shall remain a week. I want you to be particular to write regularly twice a week and direct to Denver City. If it is only a few lines, write regularly. I will make arrangements with Mr. Fisher to send my letters to me, when I am in other places. I close in haste, as Mr. Fisher is waiting for me to go with him to his house to tea. If I do not mail my letters before 8 o'clock, they will not go by tomorrow's mail.

I think of you all every hour and long to look in and see how you are getting on. I hope I shall never be separated from everything in which I am interested, so long again. But I am here, it has been a hard road to travel and I must make the most of it. If you have any solicitude about the conditions of things here requiring that a man should adopt beverages which he does not use at home, I can quiet it by informing you that I have not yet found it necessary to open a whisky or brandy bottle, or to taste anything stronger than lemon juice. I am so "total abstinence" that I do not drink tea or coffee.

I send my kind regards to all our friends too numerous to mention. I shall write to Prof. Harkness in a few days.

Goodbye my dear—

Your affectionate husband

N. P. Hill

Central City June 23rd 1864

My dear Wife,

On my arrival at this place last evening, greatly to my delight I found your letters of June 4th and 7th Nos. 1 and 2. These were most truly welcome. . . . If your health is at stake, do not regard expense in deciding what you will do. If you know any pleasant family in the country with whom you can take board, you might try that. I would by all means write Bell to visit you. She will be company and help you, and you will doubtless feel better to have her with you.

Since I last wrote you at Denver, I have had considerable of experience in the mountains. We (Gov. Gilpin and I) left Denver, Tuesday A.M. by private conveyance for Central City. The Gov. owns two little ponies; the ugliest, homeliest and meanest little rats I ever saw. They are so little that you can lift them out of a mud

hole with ease. They are so baulky that about once an hour, they stop till they get ready to go. In addition to this virtue, they kick at every opportunity. But the Gov. thinks they are splendid. He has driven them for over ten years around the mountains. He calls them Toby and Fanny. The first day I saw him, he gave me an account of his little Tob and Fan. He praised them so highly, I expected to see something fine. He said they had never failed him in an emergency. Yet they balked going up the first hill and to save his life, he could not start them till they were ready. He apologized for them and patted them and caressed them. He talked to them and told them they would not go because they had not been fed that morning. After they started and he had to whip them every step, he said it was because they were fat and lazy. I relate these circumstances to give you some idea of my travelling companion. Gov. G. knows almost everything but he is the most unpractical man I ever knew. When driving, he talks incessantly; part of the time I think he is talking to me; part of the time to the horses; the rest is soliloquy. We started with an old buggy which he prizes as he does the ponies, and for the same reasons, for a fifty miles ride. We took an indirect road, because the bridges were gone on the direct road. The tires were all loose and I was sure the old buggy would not hold together. The first fifteen miles were across a beautiful plain. The sun shone down with the most intense glare. I never have seen such dazzling sunshine as we have here every day. Umbrellas are unknown, and I have seen but one covered buggy. We entered the mountains about noon. The Gov. said we would dine at Genesee Ranch, but we did not reach Genesee Ranch till 4 o'clock. This was 24 miles from Denver. At Genesee Ranch, they had nothing to eat and no feed for the horses. We were 10 miles from Idaho Village<sup>10</sup> and no stopping place between. The Gov. said we would be there at 7 o'clock. Remember, the ponies had not been fed since the afternoon before. They picket the horses by day, i.e. they tie them to a stake on the open prairie, and shut them in a corral by night. Seven o'clock found us five miles from Idaho. The roads over which we had traveled were the wildest and most terrible of which you can conceive. The ponies had eaten nothing for 24 hours, and the passengers nothing since an early breakfast. The Gov. said we would be in Idaho long before dark. "The ponies always come to the scratch in an emergency."

It grew very dark and we were still 2 miles from Idaho. The road for many miles lay along the banks of a boisterous, raging little stream called Clear Creek. In fording it once, the ponies lost their footing, and the current was so rapid that it carried us, wagon and all, down stream two or three rods. We had the roaring of this spiteful river for our music. The Gov. got frightened, but made no

<sup>10</sup> Present Idaho Springs.

allusion to the statement he made to me in the A.M. that in his mountain experience, he had learned never to get caught out after night. He walked ahead and examined the road, and I drove. At 10.30 P.M. we saw the lights of Idaho.

We stopped at the most comfortable and neat house of a New Hampshire lady, had a good supper, and I slept never more soundly. Travelling through the mountains, consists in riding through deep ravines and gorges with hills of immense magnitude on every side. Sometimes a ravine terminates, and it is then necessary to get over in another. To do this you sometimes ride up a side of a mountain for several miles, then down the other side. In some places it seems almost perpendicular. Tob, strange to say, would balk at the steepest places, always going down them. Gov. would jump out, call him pet names, tell him he was true as steel, and finally pull him along. I can give you no conception of the scenery we passed through that



WILLIAM GILPIN

day. It was grand and sublime beyond description. I am not inclined to go into ecstasies over such things, but I was truly enraptured by the scenery through which we passed. All the mountains of the Highlands heaped upon the top and sides of old "Storm King," would come short of the massiveness and grandeur of the "Old Squaw." Yet for six hours we wound our way through the deep defiles of hundreds of "Old Squaws." We had not the Hudson, but the furious, tossing, roaring Clear Creek is more impressive. I predict when the Pacific R. R. is built, thousands of people will flock in the summer months to view the grand scenes of the Rocky Mts. A whole summer could be spent by travelers, constantly in

motion, who could hourly see some of the grandest scenes on the earth, and yet never see the same scene twice. The whole White Mountain range could be buried in a single ravine in this grand system. Idaho, like all the other cities and villages of the Mts., is situated in a deep gulch at a point where several gulches or ravines meet.

We left at 11 A.M. for Central City. The Gov. spent all the morning talking with his acquaintances. He seems to know every man in the Territory. The scenes through which we passed this day were no less impressive. At 4 o'clock, we were caught in one of those showers of rain, which mountains alone can produce. It poured for an hour. The thunder and lightning were in keeping with the sublimity of the place. My rubber coat kept me perfectly dry. The Gov. took it all, and was as wet as if he had been dipped in Clear Creek. When I told him to put on his overcoat which was under the seat, "Oh, ho!" he said, "this is only a sprinkle." Strange to say, we were not in Central City till an hour after dark, but the roads were better and less dangerous than on the previous night.

You now know something of Gov. Gilpin. I desire you should, for he will travel with me much while I am here. He is kind-hearted and highly respected by everybody in Colorado; but his mind is filled with great abstractions. He has lived for 21 years in the Mts., among Indians and Mexicans, and has also associated at times with all the statesmen of the day. When he dies, he is to be buried on the highest summit of the Snowy Range, laid upon his back, with one eye turned to the Atlantic, the other to the Pacific &.

On reaching Central City, I went to the house where Redwood Fisher, James Aborn, and a Joe Watson,<sup>11</sup> three of the best fellows in the world, keep bachelors' hall. They knew I was coming and had a room all ready, would not listen to my going to a Hotel. They live as well as if they were in N. Y. They occupy the whole of a small house, containing a parlor, three sleeping rooms, a kitchen and a dining room. A black man keeps house for them. He is a trained cook. I drank here, the first good coffee, since I left St. Louis. They supply the table abundantly with canned fruits, peaches, strawberries, &c. This will be my home while I am in Central City. James Aborn is a cousin of John Peirce, and is a jolly fellow. He has a wife in Prov. Redwood, I think is the best of the Fishers. Joe Watson has been in Colorado for six years. His judgment is worth more than that of any other ten men on mining matters. This morning, I went with Henry Brastow to visit mines. I have done a hard day's work. In two separate mines, I went down by rough ladders through rough, ragged holes in the rock, over 300 ft. I visited three other

<sup>11</sup> Redwood Fisher and James Aborn were from Providence, R. I. Joe Watson probably was the Watson who later built the Hamill House in Georgetown.

mines and went down the shafts over 100 ft. At 4 o'clock, I went over to the house of Mr. Brastow and dined with him. He lives about two miles from Central City in Lake Gulch. Mrs. B. is well and seems quite contented. She complains of hard work, for she cannot get servants. She has offered \$11.00 a week.

Central City is in a deep ravine. Mountains more than a mile high surround it on all sides. The Gulch is so narrow that if you go into the back yards of the houses, you are in danger of falling down the chimney. I told you of the flood at Denver. While I was out with Brastow today, a most strange phenomenon occurred here.<sup>12</sup> A little stream runs through the place. A torrent of water came suddenly down and swept off a new mill, the finest which has been built in Colorado. The water rose over 20 ft. When I returned in the evening, the water was no higher than in the morning. The only cause of the flood, was a rain. The expression is here, "a cloud burst." It strikes a stranger as miraculous, but when you remember that it rains here so fast for an hour, that steep side hills will be covered 3 or 4 inches deep with water, and that thousands of acres of steep mountain slopes run down into these gulches, it is explained.

Now dear wife, in closing for today, let me beg you to take the best care of *yourself* and precious little Crawford and Bell. Do not concern yourself about me. I am well and strong. My only concern is for you. I shall pass through many strange and novel scenes. But I use great caution and the dangers to you seem vastly greater than they are. While I am here, I am as safe as I could be in any place in the world. Give my love to all our friends, particularly those at 37 Bowen St. Remember me particularly to John Peirce and to Appleton and Foster, should you see them. Tell Peirce that all things look well here. I have as yet, arrived at no conclusion as to whether I will be home by Sept. or not. I will decide shortly and communicate to Dr. Sears my plans. Should fortune favor me, we will travel one of these days to your heart's content. I think of you hourly, with solicitude for your health, but with the trust that God will protect you and that we will be permitted to meet again, as we never have met before. Remember me to Miss Aldrich.<sup>13</sup> Remember to write twice a week regularly. Every little item in your letter interested me. Direct to Denver City. Your loving husband.

N. P. Hill.

Denver June 30, 1864

My dearest Wife.

I have just returned from Central City. While there, on the 23rd I wrote you letter No. 7. . . . I received your letter on the 12th,

<sup>12</sup> Said a dispatch from Central City, June 23, to the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News*: "About 10 o'clock we had a very heavy rain accompanied by hail, which fell to the depth of one foot and a half. Many houses in Central are flooded."

<sup>13</sup> Miss Aldrich was the governess of Crawford and Bell Hill.

No. 3, and Mr. Peirce's of the same date on the 23rd. The last mail which we had at Central until the 27th. It was a most happy letter and did much to inspirit me. To know that you were well, and that Crawford and Bell were doing so finely is the most satisfactory information that I could have. I was much gratified to get an account of College matters from Mr. Peirce. He will confer a great favor, if he repeats his epistles often as convenient. I will write him very soon. You recall very vividly some of those old college affairs. I would like to have been with you at the President's. . . .

The chapter of my own experience since I last wrote, is short and not particularly full of interest. I spent the time in Central City and surrounding district, in examining mines, and in becoming acquainted with the owners of mines. I met many very pleasant and sociable gentlemen. If you should see Fanny Fuller, you may give her Mr. Kinney's love in advance. Mr. Kinney is Mayor of Black Hawk, a mountain city. He married a daughter of Dr. Judd, one of the most successful of all the Colorado gentlemen. Mr. Kinney had some time or other a very interesting, and I judge somewhat critical time with Miss F. I am to carry to her a package when I go home. The people generally in these frontier settlements are very sociable, and seem to be disposed to help a stranger on, as much as they can. James Aborn (cousin of John Peirce), Redwood Fisher and Joe Watson were our hosts at Central. They make money easy and live without regard to cost. Oysters, Sardines, Lobster and other salt water dishes were on their table daily and sometimes we had canned peaches in abundance, three times a day. They have a colored cook who understands his business. It costs those fellows from \$1200 to \$1500 each to live.

Yesterday morning, Gov. Gilpin and I with the indefatigable Tobey and Fanny left Central for Denver. The scenery was not quite so fine as on the road by which we went. Yet in any other place, it would be sufficient to put one in ecstasies. We arrived at Golden City, which is just at the base of the mountain fifteen miles from Denver, about dark, and staid there all night. We had to cross a creek there, which it is not safe to do except in full daylight. We put up at the best Hotel<sup>14</sup> in the place. Deliver us from the worst. It does not pay to go into particulars regarding the hotels, or as they call them here Ranches. You may imagine the worst you can. This morning we had a pleasant ride to Denver. In riding in this country, one thing strikes me particularly, I refer to the manner in which distance deceives one. One mile this side of Golden City, Denver

<sup>14</sup>According to the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News*, June 29, 1864: "That Union Hotel of Mrs. Wright's in Golden is the biggest institution for a tired and hungry man of anything west of the Father of Waters. Her table is loaded down with nice things, the rooms are sumptuously furnished and a bed bug would have no more show of safety within her walls, than a man with a firebrand would have in a powder magazine."

came in full view. It did not appear more than two miles distant. After riding an hour on a fast trot (not less than seven miles) it seemed no nearer than when we started. The *mirage* was also fine this morning. We could see at some times, most beautiful lakes and islands, when no lakes existed within a hundred miles. If you are not aware of the cause, Mr. Peirce will explain it.

Next comes the question of the future. I think I told you in a former letter, that I was to be one of an exploring party, to go down to the southern part of Colorado, and the northern part of New Mexico. The party is now made up, and are getting ready to start as soon as possible. Saturday is fixed as the time. The party consists of Gov. Gilpin as the head, he being the most interested person. I am the Chemist and Mineralogist, Geologist &c. James Aborn takes charge of the prospectors; there are twelve of them, well selected for their character and experience. Redwood Fisher is the surveyor and engineer. He has five men as assistants, chain carriers &c. The cook which they had at Central City goes with us, and a teamer to look after the mules &c. We take two wagons with four mules to each, and Gov. G. takes his buggy and Tob and Fan. All the provisions for the trip, the tools and instruments and the tent materials are carried along. The party is composed of just the right material; all young and active, ready for work or fun. We have a supply of shotguns, rifles and pistols, fishing tackle &c. We expect to dine many a day on game and fish. Buffalo and antelope are to form part of the diet. How much we will accomplish, I can tell you better when we are on the ground. I anticipate important results.

My purpose is not to remain there the whole 100 days for which the party is engaged, but to return to Denver in about four weeks, examine mines in the old centre for three or four weeks and then return to the party and examine what they may have discovered. You will see from this, that my return to Providence, cannot be as early as was expected. I do not need your earnest appeal that I will not stay beyond Sept. 1st. Nothing you could say would add to my desire to be home at the earliest day possible. But, dear wife, you must remember that I have come a great distance. It is a journey which cannot often be repeated. You know I had the disinterested advice of two members of the Board, that I should not hasten so much as to sacrifice important interests. That advice I appreciate now, for I see that to leave before September would be against my best interests as I now view it. I shall write to Dr. Sears today and suggest that Robert Fisher be employed, if possible, to take my class in Chemistry.

You will manage to get on nicely for the weeks of separation still before us. You will get so accustomed to manage alone, that I will be in the way. If you remain well and the children keep well,

that is all I desire. I shall be as safe, I think as I could be anywhere. We go in strong force and since the days of *Hannibal* no braver men have lived than some of our gallant band. The distance to the centre of our field of action is two hundred miles. To get there, we cross the Snowy Range.<sup>15</sup> You must send your letters as usual to Denver. There are three post offices on the tract, and I will get Mr. Fisher to forward the letters to my exact locality. It would be well to direct in care of Jabez M. Fisher. I will not be able to write you again, till after we start on our journey. I cannot tell when I will have an opportunity to mail a letter. So you must wait patiently for my letters, remembering that I never lose a chance to send you a line. If anything should happen to me, you would hear from the party as soon as if all were well.

Gov. Gilpin has handed me a photograph of some of the mountain scenes through which we pass, to send to you with his compliments. It is not quite convenient to send in a letter, therefore I will send the compliments and put the photograph in my valise. Give my regards to Mr. Peirce, also Foster and Appleton when you see them. Give much love from me to all at 37.<sup>16</sup>

I close in haste, for I have much to do before we start. I am not certain whether we leave tomorrow or Monday. You may always think of me as laboring from day to day, thinking every moment of my wife and two dear children, and sustained by the thoughts of the happy days we will spend, when I return to our pleasant home. If my object was not simply business, tomorrow coach would carry me over the plain. But that cannot be. I am to spend many a hard and toilsome day before I can enjoy the delight of knowing that I am every hour getting nearer home.

Kiss Crawford and Bell many times, and don't let C. forget his "pop." I hear his sweet voice saying "puden" and his emphatic "No" many times every day. What a frolic I will have with him, when I can take him in my arms. This last will apply slightly to his mother also. Goodbye. God bless and guard you and the dear babies.

Your very affectionate and loving husband—

N. P. Hill.

Saturday. Denver July 2nd (10 P.M.) 1864.

My dear Wife.

We did not get started today as I thought we would when I wrote on Thursday. But everything is in readiness, and early Monday morning we are to be on our way. I have told you all about our preparation and I have to say once more good bye. Your letter

<sup>15</sup> Now known as the Sangre de Cristo Range.

<sup>16</sup> 37 Angell Street, Providence, R. I., was N. P. Hill's home address. He also mentions 37 Bowen Street, evidently the home of relatives or friends.

of June 17 No. 4 which was directed to Central City was returned to me here. I received it last evening. Also your letter of the 21st No. 5, I received today. It was most fortunate that you sent it to Denver. Otherwise, I would not have received it before starting for San Luis. You cannot tell how I prize your letters, and how the pleasing information about the children affects me. It is now a source of trouble to me, the thought that I cannot receive your letters so regularly as I have done. I find there is only a weekly mail to Ft. Garland our nearest post office. You need not write but once a week, if you write regularly. Mr. Fisher knows all the mail arrangements and he will get my letters to me as promptly as possible. Direct to Denver.

We have no better friends than the Harknesses. I have long known it. I have not written to Prof. H. yet on business, for I am not quite decided what to do for him. Please give them my kind regards, and tell Prof. H. I will write him soon. You must devote your attentions to yourself and children, and never allow yourself to worry about me. With prudence and care I will get along. I feel the want of fruit and fresh vegetables more than any other deprivation pertaining to diet. I depend much on them you know.

I think the life we will lead while on our exploring expedition, will agree with me. Our fare will be coarse, but the active, outdoor life will give me an appetite. I just saw a man who came from Fort Garland. He says the roads are good all the way even over the Snowy Range. He came alone and unarmed. The people there, think no more of Indians, than you do in Providence.

If you have a map of Colorado, you can trace our route. The *first night*, we stop at a ranche just half way to Colorado City. The *second night* at Colorado City. Our road runs almost directly south. Colorado City is just at the foot of Pikes Peak. The *third night* we reach Pueblo on the Arkansas river. Here we turn off to the West and cross the Snowy Range at the Sangre de Cristo pass.<sup>17</sup> The *fourth night* we camp on the bank of ..... River, and by the *fifth night* reach Ft. Garland,<sup>18</sup> which is on the West side of the Range, and in an extensive and beautiful valley, known as San Luis Park. The tract of land owned by Gov. G. is bounded on the West by the Rio Grande, on the North by a line running 20 to 30 miles north of Fort Garland, on the [east] by the summit of the

<sup>17</sup> Between La Veta Pass and Pass Creek Pass. The party may have camped later on Ute Creek. Mr. Hill left the name of the stream blank.

<sup>18</sup> The actual building of Fort Garland was accomplished by Company E, U. S. Mounted Riflemen, and Company A, 3d U. S. Infantry, under command of Thomas Duncan of the Mounted Riflemen, and Section IV of General Orders No. 7, War Department, Washington, D. C., June 24, 1858, directed that "the new post recently established near Fort Massachusetts, New Mexico, will hereafter be known as Fort Garland." The fort was named in honor of Colonel and Brevet Brigadier General John Garland, 8th U. S. Infantry, then in command of the Department of New Mexico.—Major John H. Nankivell, "Fort Garland, Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, January 1939, p. 14.

Snowy Range and extends on the south side into New Mexico. It is about 42 miles square or 1764 square miles, or over one million acres. It has value independent of minerals, but if it contains gold and silver, its value can scarcely be estimated.

It is getting late, and I must close. What a privilege it would be, for me to spend a quiet Sunday with you tomorrow; but we must pass the day as we can and live on the expectations of Sundays yet to come when we shall all be together. I wrote to President Sears today suggesting plans for covering my prolonged absence. . . . Goodbye dear Wife. God will protect you and the little darlings and return me safe in due time.

Your affectionate Husband.  
N. P. Hill.

In Camp. 55 miles South of Denver.  
Tuesday July 5th 1864. 12 M.

Our party consisting of two four-mule teams loaded with provisions, tools, implements &c; one ambulance drawn by a good span of horses, Gov. Gilpin's buggy drawn by Tobey and Fanny, and 22 men, left Denver, yesterday at noon. The party started in separate squads and all agreed to meet at a ranche 38 miles from Denver. Gov. G. and I were the last to leave. We did not reach the ranche named, till 1 o'clock last night. The roads are splendid when traveled by daylight, but owing to the danger of running into gullies produced by the recent heavy rains, they must be traveled very slowly and cautiously after dark. Gov. Gilpin, James Aborn, Redwood Fisher and your husband constitute the Savan[t]s of the company. The ambulance carries our personal baggage, medicines, (which means whisky) scientific apparatus &c. Of the men, ten are prospectors, six, including the teamers, are to assist the surveyor, two are cooks. The prospectors are all mounted as are also Mr. Aborn and Fisher. All of the party are armed with rifle and pistol. Six shot guns for game, are carried in the ambulance. The mounted men carry their rifles and pistols strapped to their saddle. You might infer that the supply of fire-arms indicates danger, but there is not the slightest probability that we will see an Indian, except some of the tribe of Utes, who are entirely friendly. But it is the part of wisdom to be prepared for any emergency, and that we are fully.

We are encamped for dinner by the side of a clear running stream. The water is melted snow from the Snowy Range. The cooks are now preparing our dinner over some burning pine boughs. We are to dine today on boiled ham, beans and soda biscuits. These are to be reduced to a proper state of deglutition by whisky, (rot gut), for those who like the method. As for me, I have not yet found it necessary to open either of the little bottles which I laid in at St.

Louis. When I think it desirable to use any of the liquor supply, provided for the company, it will be after my own is exhausted. As I have not uncorked the first bottle yet, you will see this is not likely to happen soon. My salivary glands continue to perform their function in a satisfactory manner, and until they fail, I shall continue the old fashioned mode of moistening my food. The notion is universal, that no man can live here without liquor. The article is to be found everywhere. Every man has it in his pocket; in his traveling bag, in the pocket of his saddle. In getting up an outfit, whatever may be forgotten, whisky is never left out. The article used is a vile compound, made of corn and full of fusel oil. I am as uniformly well, and can endure as much hardship as any of our party, and thus furnish one argument at least, that the idea is sheer nonsense.

Yesterday, when we left Denver, the sun was hot and glaring beyond anything I have ever experienced. We had this for several hours. As soon as the sun had set, it grew cool so rapidly, that in less than an hour, I found it comfortable to wear both my overcoat and blanket. The Gov. regulated his health during these sudden changes, by the usual remedy, and reminded me that I would find myself sick the next morning, if I did not use his preventative. We rode you remember till after midnight. This morning I had a good appetite for breakfast, and am hungry for dinner. The Gov. had a headache, which he cured on homeopathic principles, that, like cures like, but he did not apply the remedy in homeopathic doses.

We arrived as I stated at a ranche at 1 o'clock A.M. The ranche is kept by Mrs. Coberle and two daughters. The house is built of logs and contains four rooms besides a kitchen. It was the night of the 4th and the young ladies had been to a dance, two or three miles away. They had just come home and brought with them, two other young ladies as visitors, and two young gentlemen, all of whom had come from a distance, and therefore staid for the night. The ladies could not express their regret that we had not arrived in time to accompany them to the ball. They were much inclined to make themselves agreeable. They threw off their outside robes and sat and chatted in their full ball dresses. I am poor at description of dress you know, but I noticed that the ladies in question, were dressed in height of fashion. The days of low necks and short sleeves were revived in my memory. These young ladies, like ladies generally, returning from a ball, were well satisfied and would have entertained us all night; but I soon became as well satisfied with them as they were with themselves, and asked to retire. I was shown to the adjoining room in which were three beds; one occupied by an unknown (I do not know the sex); another for Gov. G. and a third for myself. Somewhat chilled by my long ride, I was by no means

disagreeably surprized to find my bed was nicely warmed. By what means, I did not inquire, but as I saw certain unmistakable articles of wearing apparel in the immediate vicinity, I concluded I was indebted to no less worthy a personage than our hostess for the favor. I made no examination into the tidiness of the arrangements (I gave up doing that long ago), but turned the pillow, committed my head to it, and in a few minutes was enjoying as refreshing sleep as if the house had walls of marble instead of logs, and my room had a floor of velvet tapestry instead of earth. I did not even dream of wife and babies as is my usual practice.

After dinner. The men and teams are nooning, and I have retaken my seat in the ambulance, and upon the end of my valise as table will finish this letter.

Colorado City. Wed. A.M. July 6th.

I was interrupted yesterday, by an order to start. We reached this place at 8 P.M. The teams camped a few miles back, but as Gilpin had some business here, we came on and stopped at the hotel. So I have not yet spent my first night in camp. This place contains about 50 houses. It is very near the base of Pikes Peak. It was for a time the capital of Colorado, but when the Central gold mines were discovered all its business went to Denver. I shall have to close this letter very abruptly. Breakfast is ready and we start immediately after. All the party went on at 6 o'clock this morning. We will overtake them before they camp for dinner. Hereafter probably we will live in camp altogether, unless we stay one night at Pueblo. I will try and mail you another letter at Pueblo. We will meet no post office after that, till we get to Fort Garland. Goodbye dear Wife and sweet children. Every day takes me further away, but in time, this will be changed.

Your affectionate husband N. P. Hill

Pueblo Thurs. noon July 7th.

Dear Wife.

All well. Will write you at Ft. Garland. Arrive there next Monday, and the mail leaves only once a week. I do not expect to get any of your letters for two or three weeks. You can imagine the deprivation. Love to all our friends. I sent letter No. 10 from Colorado City yesterday morning.

Your loving Husband N. P. Hill.

Sangre de Cristo Pass, 200 miles from Denver

Sunday July 10, 1864.

My dear Wife.

It almost discourages me and deters me from writing, when I think of the time that will elapse before you will receive my letters

and of the possibility that you may never receive them; but I shall fulfill my promise faithfully never to let an occasion pass, without writing a line at least. . . . I will mail this tomorrow at Ft. Garland. The mail leaves there only once a week on Tuesdays. It is taken over to Pueblo and remains there till Sunday, and does not reach Denver until just a week from the time it leaves Garland.

I have given you some account of our journey until we reached Mrs. Coberle's Hotel (?) The next days ride brought us to Colorado City. This was the most delightful and interesting ride I ever had or expect to have. We kept near the base of the outlying mountains, sometimes passing behind them. A considerable part of the way, our road lay on the bank of a little rapid river called Monument River. Your most vivid conceptions of a picturesque country cannot equal the reality. The plains all resemble the most perfectly kept lawns. When seen at large, they are of a rich green and seem as soft and smooth as velvet. We would climb a high hill with eager expectations of what would come next and never be disappointed in finding some novel and beautiful or grand scene. What gives to this side its most striking interest is the wonderful exhibition of the work of nature, which bears a resemblance to the most superb works of art. The river is well named Monument River. For 40 miles you are never out of sight of imposing monuments, castles, ruins &c. Just at sunset, we passed the Garden of the Immortal Gods. There is a perpendicular wall of white sandstone on one side and of red rock on the other three sides. They inclose a rich basin filled with green. A little bubbling stream of water runs through the garden. A more lovely spot cannot exist on earth. Windsor Castle bears a most striking resemblance to the pile for which it is named. We saw monuments 40 or 50 ft. high of a white or drab color, standing on a green slope, which at a little distance seemed as perfect as if they had just come from the chisel of a sculptor. It requires no imagination to see the monuments, castles and old ruins. After examining them, you can hardly believe that they are all natural productions, and that they have existed for ages in a remote wilderness. They seem as fresh and real standing upon the green slopes or lawns or up in some high mountain as if they had all been wrought out by human hands and were the works of yesterday. I soon discovered the reasons for their production. The rocks are sandstone, of a soft crumbling nature, and limestone, which is much harder and more desirable. These are interstratified. The monuments, towers &c, are always capped with limestone. Beneath the cap, the soft sandstone is soon worn away, the column growing smaller to the base, but when there are several bands of limestone, as frequently happens, they become tablets in the monuments. How these strange works could have been started, seemed at first mysterious. But this is a country of high

winds, of violent torrents, and of grinding storms of rain and hail. I saw at one place where a stream had rushed down a slope during heavy storms. It was cutting into the rock and in such a manner as to cut a circular column for a depth of several feet. It was the beginning of a new monument to the power of the elements.

Of our route south of Colorado City, I shall have to draw quite a different picture. Had our journey been all the way through such scenes, it could not become tiresome. But before 24 hours, we were paying dearly for all our first pleasure. From Col. City to Pueblo, the country is perfectly flat and barren. The mountains to our right, flatten down, and lose all variety and interest. Rain rarely falls along the line of this road, nor east of it for hundreds of miles. The principal vegetation consists of wild sage and the elk horn cactus. The latter takes the place of the prickly pear of a more northern latitude, and grows from 2 to 5 ft. tall. It would be a rare plant in some of our greenhouses. We left Colorado City on Wed. A.M. At noon we dined as usual, along the road. Do not fancy some cool shady spot, by a running stream of cold water, green grass for a tablecloth &c. The sun was intensely hot; no shade, not even a bush for 20 miles. Water was warm and impure, and we were invited to sit down on the sand and dirt. The glare of the sunshine is almost intolerable. Every day since we left Denver, now six days, the thermometer has been over 95° in the shade. The effect of this heat is increased many fold by the brilliancy of the sunshine. The sky is cloudless and perfectly clear. The deep blue sky which we have in the East sometimes after a storm, when the wind blows from the Northwest, we have here every day. There, it indicates a pure bracing air. Here, only an unobstructed blaze of sunshine. Our dinner which will describe every meal since we left Denver, excepting three or four taken at ranches, was fried ham and soda biscuits. To this is added abundance of tea and coffee, for those who like them. I eat the ham and biscuits, but can't go the coffee. Living exclusively as we are on such diet, I find the lemon juice I prepared in St. Louis of incalculable benefit to me. It keeps perfectly. We tarried for dinner two hours, and then travelled on till sunset, when we reached the Fontaine que Bouille River, a tributary of the Arkansas, where we found grass for the horses and water. In a country like this, in selecting a camp ground, there are several things to be considered, all of which are essential. Feed for teams; water for teams and cooking; wood for fuel. To reach the places where these are to be had, requires a knowledge of the country and care. Some days, we have travelled only 20 miles, other days over 40, simply because we were obliged to encamp at certain points.

Yesterday, we were travelling on and became thirsty. We inquired of a traveler where we would find water. He told us the first water was 15 miles further on. It took us four hours to go the distance; thermometer over 90°, no shelter from the sun. Now for the first night's experience in camp. Supper disposed of, the men began to spread their blankets on the ground for the night. A small tent was pitched but no one would sleep inside but me. So I spread my blankets in the tent. James Aborn and Redwood Fisher slept near the front outside. The breeze blew freshly and cool. It finally came on so strong as to blow over the tent. I spread my bed on top and was in it for a sleep. I had a woolen blanket under me and one over me. The under one doubled up at the end made the pillow. The upper one inclosed my head for a night cap. A hole was left open, just large enough to breathe through. Whatever the days may be, the nights are always cool. You can't get on too many covers. One hour after sunset, you need an overcoat. I fell into a sleep promptly on said night. In a few minutes, a mule came along close to my bed and made his peculiar semibray. Start No. 1. Went to sleep again; in an hour or so, some of the men were looking around for more covering. Start No. 2. From my next doze, I was startled by Aborn jumping up and shouting "snakes." My head was out in an instant. I spoke to Aborn; no answer; he seemed transfixed. Then Fisher shouted to him, which had the effect. In a minute he was laughing heartily over a dream. He is much afraid of rattlesnakes, and somewhat predisposed to walking in his sleep. After getting over this alarm, I had barely got into a sleep again, when the cooks commenced to get breakfast. As for the results of the whole night, I will only say that it took me some time to recover my usual elasticity in the morning.

The next day we went to Pueblo, at the confluence of the Arkansas and Fontaine qui Bouille. Four of us dined here, and I can hardly express my satisfaction at finding stewed green currants (They grow wild here,) the first fresh fruit I had tasted since we left Denver. In the afternoon of the same day, we went seven miles up the Arkansas, crossed over on a bridge, and encamped for another night. Our first greetings came from the mosquitoes. I judge they sent out their best representatives. But before bed-time the wind sprung up and they withdrew. Close along the river is a low strip of land called river bottom, it is not safe to sleep in this. It is quite well covered with grass. A little higher, is the barren prairie. The soil is as dry as our carpets. The air above is dry, and but for the high winds which blow at night, we could sleep well. To give you

an idea of the dryness of the air, I will state a circumstance. I enjoyed the luxury of a bath in the Arkansas about 8 o'clock. My towel which was saturated with water was hung on a bush. Fearing it would blow away, at 9 o'clk. I took it in, and was astonished to find it perfectly dry. I think since we left Denver, there has not been a time during a night, when rapid evaporation would not take place.

The second night was worse than the first; Mr. Aborn dreamt of snakes again; I awoke at midnight, finding him stooping over his bed, holding on to his blanket. He had put on a linen coat, which he had not worn before, just for turning in, (to say retiring would be very inappropriate.) He seemed to me too tall for Aborn. I concluded it somebody trying to rob him. I did not even dare to move my head, as I wanted to see how it would end. Just then he came to his senses and spoke. He had jumped up not knowing what he was doing and was looking for snakes. No other events that night except that the sand blew in my ears, nose and mouth all night. Friday and Saturday we travelled all day through the same barren and miserable country. There were only three families living along the line of our entire two days journey. Our camping grounds were pleasanter and both Friday and Saturday nights, I slept as securely and soundly as I ever did in my life. My appetite has improved, so that I wait impatiently for meal time. Today, the surroundings have all changed. We are again out of the desert and in the mountains. While we encamp for dinner, I improve the time by writing home, and turning thither all my thoughts. We are in a beautiful, romantic green glen by the side of a fine spring of water. We will get into Ft. Garland tomorrow, Monday at about noon. I hope to mail this so that the mail carrier of Tuesday will take it. We have about ten miles of mountain road yet to pass and ten more on the plain beyond. I opposed travelling on Sunday; but there is no one in the party who could scarcely conceive of greater folly than spending the day in idleness. I must admit that we spend the day in a better manner than we would have done by waiting impatiently in camp. When I reach Ft. Garland, I will finish my letter, so that you will have the latest news from me which it is possible to have.

Ft. Garland, Monday Eve. July 11.

All well at this place. I have not time to add a word; will write you again by next mail. Goodbye. God bless you and guard you, is the sincere prayer of

Your devoted Husband, N. P. Hill

Culebra<sup>19</sup> July 12th 1864

Friend Peirce—

After a days travel over an arid plain, destitute alike of water and vegetation, we have arrived at the model specimen of a Mexican town known as Culebra. It contains more than a thousand inhabitants, but I do not remember in studying geography ever to have seen it on the map. It is situated about 20 miles south of Ft. Garland. The population is entirely Mexican, and the place possesses all the characteristics of the Mexican towns. It contains only adobe houses, extending along for half a mile on either side of the road and all joined together. The adobe is made of a fine alluvial soil ground with water into a stiff paste. It is then moulded into forms about three times the size of an ordinary brick. These are baked in the sun for a few days, and then used for building. The walls of the houses are thick and only one story high. The roof is perfectly flat and formed by stretching poles across from wall to wall and covering them with the adobie. It never rains enough at one time to saturate these roofs and consequently they do not leak. In approaching one of these towns, it looks like an extensive brick kiln. We are staying at the house of Amidor Sanchez, one of the old and rich men of the place. He is 101 years old, and was born in the house in which he now lives. The house has been enlarged from time to time by additions. Gov. Gilpin, with whom I am traveling is an old friend of Sanchez, and for that reason I am introduced to the family. The house inside is quite splendid in its way. The walls are covered with calico. Instead of carpets, they use cowhides, dressed with the hair on. The floor is entirely covered with them. A cushioned seat extends entirely around each room, and the walls are well covered with small paintings, most of which represent the crucifixion or some event in the life of Christ. The house contains eight rooms, each about 12 x 20 ft. The family of the son, Julien Sanchez, is quite ceremonious, and I have no doubt, I have made some awful breaches of etiquette. All the people in the place are Catholics. A cross is stuck up in the roof of almost every mud house.

The people live by farming. By irrigation, they raise good crops. Their villages are on the line of the several streams which come down from the mountains. They are very simple in their tastes, and lead indolent and apparently happy lives. We are invited to a fandango tonight, got up on account of the arrival of strangers in town. I expect to be highly entertained.

<sup>19</sup>During the summer of 1851 a colony started a plaza on the Rio Culebra near the present town of San Luis in Colorado. Most of the people came from Taos and were induced to go there by Charles Beaubien, then owner of the Sangre de Cristo Grant, which included the lands now (1928) embraced in Costilla county and a portion of Taos county, New Mexico. Don Carlos (Beaubien) had been Judge of the Northern District of New Mexico, during pre-territorial days. Through his efforts the settlement on the Culebra proved stable and was soon followed by San Pedro in 1852-3. San Acacio and Chama in 1853-4.—Francis T. Cheetham, "The Early Settlements of Southern Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. V, No. 1, February 1928, p. 5.

Costilla<sup>20</sup> July 13th 1864.

I was obliged to close abruptly to go to the fandango. It was in a neighbor's house. The invitation was given to the public at sunset by a man walking up and down the streets playing the flute. The people assembled at 10 o'clock. The room was about 40 x 15 ft. About 20 ladies, the *elite* of the place were present. The ladies were dressed in their best ball dresses. No evidence of hoop skirts nor *crinoline* could be detected. The upper part of their persons were very imperfectly covered except by shawls which they all wore over their heads and which they threw off when they danced. Our men were camped half a mile out of town but they all came in. The miners accompanying our party entered into it with zest. I never saw a more amusing spectacle. The Mexican men who were present all wear their knives and dirks even while dancing. They are an extremely jealous race and suspicious of their wives and sweethearts. The fandangoes usually break up with a fight growing out of jealousies. I left the party at 12 in full blast. They did not close till 3 this morning. It passed off without disturbance.

We left Culebra this morning and have come down 20 miles directly south to another settlement, Costilla (pronounced Costēya). Costilla is situated just on the line of New Mexico.<sup>21</sup> The country over which we rode never receives any rain. A species of wild worm-wood is the only plant to be seen. For five or six miles before entering this town we rode through fine wheat fields. The water of the Costilla river is used to irrigate and so far as it is carried productive fields are the result. The tract of country in which we are, is known as the San Luis Park. It is surrounded by mountains. It is over 100 miles long and about 80 wide. The Snowy Range seems to divide; one branch passes down to the West, the other runs on the east side of the Park. It seems strange that while in the mountains it rains every day, a valley so narrow should be so perfectly arid. I am

<sup>20</sup> Edmond C. van Diest, "Early History of Costilla County," *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. V, No. 4, August 1928, p. 141, says that: "... in 1848, one George Gold attempted to start a colony upon the Costilla River. This enterprise failed, partly on account of the land being in possession of Charles Beaubien, who inherited the possession of one-half interest at the death, without issue, of his son Narciso, and bought the remaining one-half from the administrator of the estate of Luis Lee. In the next year the first actual colony was started by Charles Beaubien, this colony locating on the Costilla River, almost on the site where the house and store of Mr. Ferdinand Meyer now (1928) stand, about one-half mile south of the south boundary of Colorado, but at one time, before the establishment of the boundary line on the 37th parallel of north latitude, in the limits of Costilla County. The colony starting with but a few cabins was reinforced the next year by additional colonists, all Mexicans, with the exception of three or four Americans, or foreigners, who established stores.

"In 1851 the colony of San Luis was started, in the autumn, the original site being about three-fourths mile below the present site."

<sup>21</sup> At the time that N. P. Hill visited the lower San Luis Valley there was much uncertainty as to just where the boundary line was between Colorado and New Mexico. The United States Census, 1860, listed the towns of Costilla, Conejos and others in that part of the valley as belonging to Taos County, New Mexico. Mr. Hill evidently considered the Costilla Colony on the border line. It was not until the U. S. Supreme Court rendered a decision on January 26, 1925, that the true and lawful boundary between the States of Colorado and New Mexico was established.

here for the purpose of examining a tract of land owned jointly by Gov. Gilpin of this territory, and two gentlemen in the East. The tract is over 42 miles square and contains more territory than our State [Rhode Island]. We have now reached the southern limit of the tract and the miners will start this afternoon into the mountains to look for minerals. About one-half the tract is mountain, the other half plain. Our plan of prospecting will be to follow up the three principal rivers: the Costilla, the Culebra and the Trenchera [Trinchera]—all of which rise within the bounds of the said tract, and empty into the Rio Grande. I think two months will be required, but the miners are engaged for 100 days. I am impatient to get through and resume the more agreeable duties of my place in college. I did not expect when I left home to undertake so large a work, but I have been almost unavoidably led into it. If I return safely, I shall feel amply repaid for all the labor and hardship of the journey in the interesting and useful experience which it will have afforded. My absence from the College after the first of September, will be annoying and unpleasant to me. My labor here is hard. The climate is in a certain sense severe. The heat of the sun to one who is exposed to it is severe and our work is outdoors. From Ft. Garland to this place, a distance of about 40 miles, I did not see a shade tree. The nights are very cool, and as we generally have to sleep on the ground in the open air, it is almost impossible the latter part of the night to keep warm. The fare, or fodder as it might more appropriately be called, will do to support life.

At Amidor Sanchez' we had venison in Mexican style, coffee made of some kind of a bean, and unfermented bread, baked in very thin cakes. My appetite was so feeble, Amidor feared I was sick. I have not tasted anything that was fresh or green since I left Denver. Here at Costilla, I will stay at the house of Don Jesus Maria Barilla. He ranks as the rich and aristocratic man of the place. His is also a fine family. His house is built in the form of a quadrangle. If straightened out, it would be 300 feet long. His house like Amidor's is furnished in the best style by the Mexican standard. The walls are covered with calico and a large number of paintings hang in every room. Costilla is larger than Culebra, containing about 2500 inhabitants. There is only one family in the place at present which speaks English. Gov. Gilpin has been a pioneer for 21 years and he understands traveling among these people. They all know him and he stays at their houses and is hospitably entertained. The labor here is performed mostly by peons, a kind of slave of Indian descent. Before we had been here half an hour we were informed that there would be a fandango made for us at night. Our mining boys are so fond of these things that we get off without notice. I fear they will find it expensive for the fashion here is that the gentleman after

dancing with a lady must always take her to a refreshment table and treat her, and if there is a table where presents are sold, which is usually the case, he must buy her a present. The present usually consists of powder for the face, and pink saucers, or some ornament for the person. The ladies are extremely ambitious about their appearance. They are fully as dark-complexioned as the Indian and with few exceptions ill looking. They are a strange and curious people.

I think of you as enjoying your vacation by a pleasant and easy retirement from labor. I long to be with you again. Should the days of Commencement still find me in the wilderness, I shall find it hard to keep composed. I would have written you before had I not known that you were kept informed of my movements by my letters to Mrs. Hill. Please give my kindest regards to your Mother and sisters. Also remember me kindly to Appleton and Foster.

Your sincere friend, N. P. Hill

La Costilla July 13, 1864

My dear Wife:

I send you only a line to say I am well, and to give you my love. I have just mailed a long letter to Mr. Peirce, and also one to Mother. You will learn from Mr. Peirce's letter of my movements since I last wrote. My letter No. 12 which I mailed at Ft. Garland, July 11th was left unfinished. When we reached the fort, we at once became the guests of the Captain and Surgeon. I inquired when the mail would leave. He replied, the boy was on his horse and had the mail bag, but he could get a letter in. I scribbled a line and closed it as the next chance would be in just one week. We were very kindly and hospitably entertained by the officer at the fort. I found a good bed under a roof as quite different from a blanket on the hard ground.

I long to see you and those dear little young ones. I shall lay aside this rough style of living and adopt my old style with a good deal of satisfaction one of these days. I had no thought when I started of getting into New Mexico; but we are now just on the line. I shall see considerable of the American Continent before I return. Give my love to all at 37 Bowen St. Always say a kind word to Miss Aldrich from me, and tell her, the little present she gave me on starting has been among the most useful articles I have with me. The last word I had from you was just before leaving Denver on July 2nd. . . .

Goodbye dear Wife. I trust you are getting through these hot days comfortably, and that when I return in the Fall, you will be well and strong. Kiss Crawford and Bell for their papa.

Your affectionate Husband, N. P. Hill

La Costilla July 19th 1864

My dear Wife

I have had but little to do for the past week but to watch the manners and customs of the Mexicans and of two tribes of Indians, the Apaches and the Utes, who come here to trade. As there is a mail but once a week, I cannot even console myself by writing you as frequently as I have done. The time has hung heavily on my hands, more particularly as I had an ill turn for two or three days. It was one of my old acquaintances, in form of a bilious attack, but rather more severe than I am in the habit of having. I have entirely recovered from it and shall guard against any subsequent illness of the same kind, by more care in respect to diet. The only difficulty I experience in keeping well is owing to the food we are compelled to eat. It consists exclusively of meat, eggs and bread, the latter is excessively poor. While we were travelling every day, and sleeping out, I could get along with it but when we had to settle down and remain quiet for a few days, it brought on the illness referred to. I could have cured myself in one day with the proper remedies, but they were not at hand. My only remedy was ice water; strange to say they have ice here. At Ft. Garland, there is an excellent physician [Dr. McLean], and all the pills and powders to be found in any drugshop. I propose while I remain here to eat meat and eggs once a day and not three times as I have done.

We are staying at the house of Mr. Posthoff,<sup>22</sup> a German, the only storekeeper in the place. We concluded not to stop at Barilla's as I wrote Mr. Peirce we would. They are very accommodating people. He has two young clerks whom I like much. His establishment is quite extensive. His buildings are a little out of the village, and make up four sides of a large square. There is one entrance from the outside, and no windows. All the doors and windows are on the inside of the court. The cooking rooms, storerooms, mess rooms, and sleeping rooms, as well as the stable, granary, all open into the court only. This arrangement, as you see, is advisable for defense. It was adopted a few years ago when they were surrounded by hostile Indians. The village, which contains about 2500 people, is built on the same principles. The houses usually form three sides of a square, with the open side to the street as you will understand by this rude sketch. On the outside as *a* and *b* there are no openings. The interior space between the houses is several hundred ft. wide to afford room to contain all their cattle, sheep and implements when they are attacked by Indians. The extreme ends of this broad street are closed by an

<sup>22</sup>"The first store was established in 1851 in Costilla, by Moritz Bielshowski and Wm. Koenig, this store passing into the hands of F. W. Posthoff, and after him becoming the possession of Mr. Ferdinand Meyer." *Ibid.* In 1864 F. W. Posthoff and Ferd Meyer also had the store at Fort Garland. *The Weekly Commonwealth*, June 22, 1864, listed Posthoff & Meyer, Sutlers, Fort Garland, as contributing \$100.00 to the Relief Fund for the Cherry Creek flood victims of May 19, 1864.

adobe wall of the same height as the houses, about ten feet. It is said that these people live just as their ancestors did, hundreds of years ago. Their lives are simple and to a great extent pastoral. They cultivate little patches of land along the stream Costilla. They water it by irrigation and raise little but wheat. They think themselves well off, with a piece of land 25 yds. by 2 or 300. Their principal occupation is to herd cattle and sheep in the mountain ravines and valleys. When there is danger, they drive them in at night. At present, a man will go out with a flock of sheep, carry with him all his subsistence on a donkey (or as they call them asses) and remain for three months, and in that time not see another human being. This mode of life does not develop a warlike or blood thirsty spirit. They seem to be a peaceable, indolent and happy people. They are of course very ignorant and attach little importance to human life. It is with them less of a crime to kill a man than to omit to observe some rule of the church. The only motive, however, from which they ever are known to make an assault is that of jealousy and distrust between man and wife, lover and sweetheart.

They abound in superstitious notions. When they want rain to raise the water in the ditches which they use to irrigate, they take one of the wooden gods out of their church, and all the people will follow after for a mile or two, in the direction from which the wind blows. In the same manner, when they want wind, they take out a wooden god. There is not a wagon, cart or anything of the kind in the place. All the work is done by the asses, except the cultivation of the crops which is done by bulls. The only plough they know is a pointed piece of wood. They thresh their grain on the ground and separate the chaff by throwing it up in the air. Every hour of the day they pass Posthoff's store carrying wood from the mountain a distance of 15 miles. It is all done on the backs of donkeys. They regard 300 lbs. as an ordinary load for these little animals which are not larger than a good sized dog.

When Aborn started a few days ago into the mountains with the miners, all the provisions for a party of twelve for ten days, with the heavy tools such as picks, sledge-hammers &c., with powder for blasting, and their clothing, blankets &c were packed on four donkeys. They had to carry about 300 lbs. each and would travel 10 or 12 miles a day. When the people of the village heard that a professor had arrived at the store, some of those who were sick or afflicted with felons, or other malady, came over to get cured. One woman, Senora Reynaldo, had a terrible felon on her hand. She had painted crosses all around it. Don Fernando Lamberto had some chronic disease of the abdomen, and consequently the entire external covering of this organ was covered with crosses painted in different colors. Perhaps you have by this time, sufficient knowledge of the

Mexicans. I am trying to get some photographs of them, taken by a German who is staying here and who has an apparatus. The difficulty consists in inducing them to subject themselves in groups or any other way to the process. They have an idea that the camera as also opera glasses, telescopes &c are for looking through their clothing. I directed an opera glass at three or four who were passing in front of the store some distance off. They saw it, and the women immediately squatted and remained in that position till I went inside. You can hardly appreciate this extreme modesty in ladies who wear seldom more than a single short skirt and a shawl over the head and shoulders. On Sunday about fifty Indians, men, women and children came here to trade. Their commodities consist of venison, hair ropes, buffalo robes &c. They take in exchange belts, knives, gaudy dry goods, coffee, sugar &c. They beg for whisky and fire arms, but the law forbids the sale to them. They all had ponies loaded as heavily as they could bear with their traps. When they bought any article of clothing, the purchaser immediately went outside and put it on. Like all other Indians, which it has been my fortune to see, they are a treacherous and mean looking set. They know that in war with the whites, they are killed off, and are therefore careful not to get in trouble. The only tribes of Indians now in this part of Colorado, or who have a right to come here, are the Apaches to which the party above mentioned belonged, and the Utes. I have seen only a few Utes and they were much superior to the Apaches. The finest Indians physically and every other way in the whole country, are said to be the Pueblos, a small tribe just over the line in New Mexico. They are the only tribe which lives in houses. The only entrance to the house is at the top, in the roof. In each house they keep a light constantly burning until the return of Montezumas, whom they regard as their king and lord. The Navajoes just over the Rio Grande are a wretched looking set, and yet quite skilled in manufacturing. They make pottery, and a woolen blanket, known as the Navajo (pronounced *Navaho*) blankets. They readily command in the East 75 to \$100. I am waiting here until the miners shall discover some mines in the mountains. Then I shall go and see them, collect samples &c. I have nothing to do except occasionally to examine some specimens which they send in. The absence of active employment makes every day seem a week. But here I am, in a perfect prison, and I must make the best of it. It requires an effort to keep up my spirits and to drive off homesickness and anxiety for you and the two precious children. But all labors and cares are overcome by fortitude and perseverance, and so I trust will this be. I would like, you can imagine how much, to look in at our home today. I hope Bell is with you now. Her company will be of great service as well as pleasure to you. I will keep

this letter open till tomorrow, when the mail goes, as I may have something to add—Goodbye for the present, dear wife and babies.

Costilla July 21st, 1864

All well this morning. I shall go to Denver the first chance and return here after three or four weeks. Take good care of yourself and the children. God bless you and your valuable charge. Love to all our friends. I send my kindest regards to Prof. Harkness and family. Tell him when you see him, that I have been on special service all the time thus far and have not had an opportunity to examine into the question of investments yet. Regards to Prof. Peirce. Goodbye. My thoughts are directed homeward constantly.

Your devoted Husband N. P. Hill

Denver, Sunday  
July 31, 1864

My dear Wife

I have just returned from my southern tour. It would be difficult to express the anxiety to hear from you and to know that you were well, which I have felt for the past few weeks. . . . To my intense satisfaction and delight, I found five letters from you. . . . Your account of yourself and little Crawford and Bell, I read and reread. . . . It seems to me, almost awful to see all the necessaries of life so high and gold so beyond the reach of our currency. While I am here laboring hard to increase our little possessions, I see them fading away without power to do anything. All my property is in the form of greenbacks or their equivalent. But we can only do what seems best for the time and leave the future to be overruled by the All Wise Being who controls the destiny of all.

My object, as you were aware, in going on that long journey with the party was to examine the mineral resources of a tract of land belonging to Gov. Gilpin, Col. Reynolds and Morton Fisher. After spending over two weeks on the ground (It is four weeks tomorrow since we started) and taking a general view of the territory, I concluded to come to Denver, and spend a few days examining claims, then go to Central City and remain two or three weeks and finally return to the Valley and stay with the party till their work of exploration is finished. Then I shall be ready to throw up my hands and start for home. You will see that my engagement with Reynolds requires that I should remain till that exploration is finished. You do not wish it was ended so much as I, and you must control all your desires and be patient as I try to be.

Last Sunday, one week ago. I heard at Costilla, that some officers from the Fort were going to Denver, and as it happened on Monday morning, I had a chance to get to Ft. Garland. As there

was no prospect of my having anything to do for the coming two or three weeks I eagerly availed myself of the opportunity to go. We rode up to Ft. Garland (Dr. McLean, the physician at the post and I) on Monday and on Tuesday early, I set out with Capt. (W. A.) Van Vliet, a very gentlemanly officer when sober, and his driver, a very good driver when sober, for Denver. Our vehicle was a one-seated buggy, and it was drawn by a 4-mule team. The distance is not far from 250 miles, and part of the road is mountainous. We went 50 miles the first day, and expected to go 10 farther to a good stopping place; but one of the mules became sick and we were obliged to pull up by the side of a Mexican's house and stay all night. The only food we could get was some dried antelope meat. The Mexican went up on the roof of his mud house, which was covered with meat drying, and brought us down a few slices. We borrowed of him a fry pan, built up a little fire outside (we make it a rule never to go into a Mexican house) boiled some water in the pan to clean it, then boiled the meat for a minute to clean it, and finally fried it. It was hard fare to be eaten alone and without seasoning. It was antelope or nothing and we all preferred the antelope. I would have brought some bread from the Fort, but the Capt. said it would not be needed, as he would stop at good ranches every night. We all slept on the ground close by the buggy, or rather put ourselves in a position to sleep. I did not sleep for the reason which I will give. It was a feast day with the Mexicans, Santiago day. When we stopped, there was one man at the house, but it appeared that 8 or 10 lived there and all the others were away a few miles at a fandango.

About 11 P.M. they began to come home, one or two at a time, talking loud or singing. I began to wonder what so many were gathering in the house for, and did not like the appearance of things. About daylight, I went to sleep and when I awoke all the Mexicans were out in the field at work.

The second night we reached Pueblo. There we spent the night fighting bedbugs. We started from Pueblo at 4 o'clock to avoid driving in the hot part of the day. We went 20 miles to breakfast and in the afternoon, a drive of 30 miles brought us to Colorado City. The second day in crossing the mountain we had a terrific thunder storm. It seemed as if the lightning struck all around us and our bodies seemed to be charged with electricity. From Colorado to Denver, we drove through the same splendid scenery which I described in a former letter. Our road lay most of the way along Monument Creek. Last night we slept out and started at daylight this morning and drove 20 miles into Denver where we arrived at 8.30 A.M.

If I can get as comfortably and safely back to Ft. Garland in three or four weeks from this time, I shall consider myself fortunate. . . . You ask about the cities of Col. Denver is a city; Central City is also a city; Colorado City contains about twelve houses, several of them deserted. It is a city only in name. Pueblo is about like Colorado City.

I am quite solicitous about the delay in letters to you. While at Costilla there was but one chance a week. And after a letter was mailed there, it took two weeks to reach Denver. Now we learn the Hannibal & St. Joseph road is in possession of the rebels, and we cannot tell when this mail will go forward. I trust you will not get uneasy. Remember there are many causes for delay. This country is full of rumors of Indian troubles. There is no doubt that the Indians are beginning to resume a hostile attitude. I should not like to take the stage to cross the plains today. They have not yet disturbed the stage, but a band of 150 were seen in the vicinity of the road a few days ago. They have robbed a number of emigrant trains &c. The state of Missouri is filled with guerillas. Some of the passengers to the East have gone across Iowa by stage, rather than cross Missouri by the R. R. I do not like the aspect of things, but at the same time, I am not frightened nor excited. I shall in all my movements act with caution and avoid all exposure and risks which can be avoided. God will preserve me for the sake of those two dear children and their mother. In comparison with the responsibilities of bringing up and educating Crawford and Bell, all my other claims upon life seem slight. . . . All your letters are duly received to this time, 11 in all.

Your devoted Husband  
N. P. Hill

[To Be Continued]

## Sidelights on Bent's Old Fort

By ARTHUR WOODWARD\*

For several years it has been my conviction that William Bent did not completely burn and destroy his fort on the Arkansas. The recent archeological work undertaken by The State Historical Society of Colorado, and the preliminary report of Dr. Herbert W. Dick in the July, 1956 issue of *The Colorado Magazine*, "The Excavation of Bent's Fort, Otero County, Colorado," has only served to confirm my belief. To bolster archeological facts, however, I submit the following brief account of contemporary evidence and subsequent data obtained by Prof. F. W. Cragin of Colorado Springs from Col. J. L. Sanderson, Boulder, Colorado, 1903.

It has always been a matter of mystification to me why various writers on the subject of Bent's Fort have been content to let the post slip into oblivion after Bent abandoned it. Why has no one attempted to trace the subsequent use of the old structure from 1861 to 1880?

As to the matter of the burning and destruction of the fur post, J. S. Calhoun, Indian Agent at Santa Fe, wrote to Col. W. Medill, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 5, 1849: "... One of the owners of Bent's Fort has removed all property and caused the Fort to be burnt." This, it must be admitted, is only hearsay evidence, but the fact remains that in 1849, not 1852 as Grinnell and others mentioned, there was a rumor circulating that Bent had destroyed his post and moved out. Another eye witness account of the "destruction" of the place was a Mr. Paladay (?)<sup>1</sup> who claimed that he was an employee of Bent and was absent from the fort when Bent blew it up. He was at a camp at Hole-in-the-Rock and heard the explosion. Later, on the 22nd of August, 1849, he

\*Dr. Arthur Woodward of Altadena, California, former Curator of the Museum of the City of Los Angeles, and for some years in educational and research work with the National Park Service, Berkeley, California, sent this article on Bent's Old Fort to *The Colorado Magazine* just prior to a five months' trip to Oaxaca, Mexico. Dr. Woodward is a well-known authority on Western Americana. The article varies in a number of respects from hitherto published data, especially relative to the time of the burning of part of Bent's Fort.—*Editor*.

<sup>1</sup>In a letter written by Colonel W. O. Collins, commander of the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry with headquarters at Fort Laramie, Dakota Territory (Wyoming) in 1862, he said: "I have employed an excellent interpreter whom I intend to keep permanently if the Government will pay him. His name is Leo Pallardy, a Frenchman, or rather of French parentage, born in St. Louis, raised in St. Charles, Missouri, and for the last seventeen years a resident among the Indians and agent and trader. He was interpreter for General Harney and also for the Sioux chiefs at Washington City on a visit to the President a few years ago. He is about 32, a very good scholar, a capital hunter (he brought in an antelope yesterday) and thoroughly acquainted with the country and the Indians from the Rocky Mountains to the Missouri. His dress is a black buckskin hunting coat, highly ornamented, and light buckskin pantaloons with moccasins. He occupies the tent with Caspar and myself and makes himself generally useful in packing, unpacking, loading, etc."—Agnes Wright Spring, *Caspar Collins* (New York: Columbia University, 1927), 109-110. Various spellings have been found for the name "Pallardy," and this man "Paladay" probably is the same as the guide hired by Colonel Collins.—*Editor*.



BENT'S OLD FORT.  
CRAGIN COLLECTION, PIONEERS' MUSEUM, COLORADO SPRINGS  
BENT'S OLD FORT

From a photograph presented to F. W. Cragin by J. L. Sanderson of the Barlow & Sanderson Stage Co.

visited the post and walked among the still smoking ruins. He published his account in the *Missouri Republican*, October 2, 1849.<sup>2</sup>

The latter item seems to be the most circumstantial one I have seen. Calhoun heard that the fort had been "burnt," Paladay said

<sup>2</sup>Through the courtesy of the Missouri Historical Society we quote the item from *The Missouri Republican*, October 2, 1849: "Later from the Plains.—Burning of Bent's Fort Confirmed.

Correspondence of the Republican.

Independence, Sept. 27, 1849.

"I have a little more information from the Plains, perhaps of a later date than you are yet in receipt of. Today, Messrs. Paladay and Riley, who accompanied one of the Government trains under charge of Capt. Keits, as far as the Little Arkansas, arrived, by way of Bent's Fort. Mr. Paladay had been in the employ of Wm. Bent, at the Fort. On the 16th of August, he was sent over in the direction of Kit Carson's settlement, on the Moro. In returning he fell in company with the train of Capt. Keits. While they were encamped at the Hole in the Rock, they heard distinctly a loud report, resembling that of cannon. They journeyed on—crossed the Arkansas river on the 22d August, and came up to the site of the Fort, and saw that the rubbish of the buildings was all that was left. It had been burnt down by the Indians, and was still smoking and burning on the 24th, when they left it. They now were able to account for the report, as the magazine belonging to Bent had been fired. The guns and traps were consumed, and it is supposed all the goods, books, &c., of Bent's concern, had shared the same fate. The pack saddles and riding apparatus were not destroyed, as they were still in the bastions. What had become of Mr. Bent, or any one connected with the concern, they could not tell: there was no trace of them or their whereabouts. As our informant came on down the Arkansas, they saw the trail of the cattle from the Fort. On the 17th of the month, Mr. Bent relieved Mr. Fisher, and the latter went over towards Taos.

"Mr. Fisher says, that in some of his conversations with Red Wolf, the chief of the Cheyennes, the chief told him he was very anxious for Mr. Fitzpatrick to return, as he promised; that he and the old men of the tribe wanted to live with him; that the young men were desirous of fighting with the whites. He also said to those at the Fort to keep the gates closed against many of the Arapahoes, as they would do them injury. The Indians also said to those about the Fort, frequently of late, that they intended to go over to the settlement of thirty whites, southwest of the Arkansas, in the direction of Taos, and take all their corn, of which they have an abundance. If they raised any objection, they would then take their cattle; and if they still objected, they would make way with the men.

"The company, as they came in, met a party of Cheyennes, to whom they told their numerical strength, and asked them if they wanted to fight them or not. They replied no. They then tried to get some information respecting the burning of the Fort, but all they could learn was, that the Eutaws had done the deed.

"What is done by the Government for the protection of the many trains that have left here this summer and fall, and the many emigrating parties to California, as well as those returning, you can best tell; but that something ought to be done, and efficiently too, for the continuance and permanency of this great trade, and the safety of the lives and property of the many who will venture every one, who has any discrimination, must see.

"Yours, &c., in haste, \_\_\_\_\_"

it was blown up. From subsequent information contained in Cragin's interview with Col. J. L. Sanderson, it would appear that at least a portion of the old building had been partly destroyed by an explosion. Mr. Seeley's account, cited by Dr. Dick, and the archeological evidence presented in the ruins themselves, seem to bear out Paladay's report that some time between August 16 and 22, William Bent exploded some powder in a room or rooms and pulled out.

Colonel Sanderson, at the time of his interview with Cragin, was living at Boulder, Colorado. He told Cragin, December 10, 1903, that he had been western partner and general superintendent of the Barlow & Sanderson Overland Stage, Mail & Express Company.

The first stage line operated by this outfit in 1860 was from Otterville, the terminus of the Missouri Pacific Railway, to Kansas City. Later it extended its line from Kansas City to Sedalia, and afterward the firm ran lines from Kansas City to Leavenworth and Fort Scott in Kansas. When the Civil War broke out it interrupted the stage service in Missouri, but the partners obtained a contract to haul mail to Santa Fe. This was in 1861. The Overland Mail & Express Company was then organized by these same two partners as a private concern; it was not a stock company.

The line swung into full operation in 1861. Stations were established from 10 to 12 miles apart, the locations depending upon the availability of good water. Every fourth station was a "home station." Each driver had to handle the reins from one home station to another. Horses were changed at the "swing stations" and thus four teams were used on such runs. The stages were pulled by four and six horse teams, according to the condition of the roads.

Among the stations cited by Sanderson on this run was Fort Aubrey, named for the noted plainsman and long distance rider, F. X. Aubrey. This home station was near Aubrey's Crossing on the Arkansas, noted by Sanderson as a fair ford. Here were built a cottonwood log house, stable and corral. These stood about four miles below (east) of the present Syracuse, Kansas, not many miles east of the Colorado boundary.

In 1861 the company built a home station where Fort Dodge was later built in the same year. The first camp at Dodge consisted of a few tents down on the river where the soldier-laborers, who were sent out to construct the new post, lived. At the crossing of Walnut Creek, Kansas, was Peacock's Ranch, which was there prior to the construction of the company's station. Later this was called Cottonwood Station, and at this point Fort Zarah was built by Gen. Samuel R. Curtis in 1864.

West of Fort Zarah and Cottonwood Station was another home station at Fort Larned. Here was a thirty-five mile stretch of road without water. Between Larned and Fort Dodge was a "swing station" on Coon Creek. There were other stations along the route at various points: Cimarron Crossing, Bluff Station, Big Sandy, Old Fort Lyon, New Fort Lyon, Bent's Old Fort, Timpas, Iron Springs, Hole-in-the-Rock, Hole-in-the-Prairie, Gray's Ranch, Dick Wootton's and on south into New Mexico.

In 1861 the partners obtained permission from William Bent to occupy Bent's Old Fort, and Colonel Sanderson and his wife renovated some of the rooms in the abandoned post and moved in. Thus the post became one of the "home stations" on the stage line from Kansas to Santa Fe.

Sanderson said that when the company moved in it found the walls standing to a height of about twelve feet and a portion of one of the towers still standing.

For the next twenty years the stage company kept the old post in fairly good repair, especially the main dwelling rooms and the main wall, which reached up to the height of the roofs. The kitchen and dining room were on the south side of the enclosure. On the east were three rooms north of the main gate and two rooms south of the gate. There were two rooms in use on the north side, none on the west. The remains of the old adobe ice house south of the post were still visible during the 1860s.

Concerning the controversial date of the establishment of the old fort, Sanderson stated that Colonel William Bent told him it was built in 1828.<sup>3</sup>

Colonel Sanderson owned a small photograph, badly faded, of a drawing of Bent's Fort made some time during the period when the stage company used the post as one of its "home stations." The dim sketch shows a stagecoach drawn up in front of the gate, part of one tower (probably the northeast) and the walls, ragged and uneven, are indicated. (The original photograph is now in the collections of the Pioneers' Museum of Colorado Springs.)

So much for Colonel Sanderson's brief account of his occupancy of the old station. Bent's Fort was regarded as sort of a half-way point on the Kansas City-Santa Fe run, and a general repair shop was kept there for the stages on the long run of approximately 1,000 miles. The station was estimated to be 600 miles from Kansas City and 400 from Santa Fe.

Another man interviewed by Cragin was Theodore Clearmont Dickson, who, on November 4, 1907, said that he was a member of

<sup>3</sup>The date of establishment of Bent's Old Fort is a controversial question. See: Herbert W. Dick, "The Excavation of Bent's Fort, Otero County, Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. 33, No. 3, July 1956, p. 182.



CRAGIN COLLECTION, PIONEERS' MUSEUM, COLORADO SPRINGS  
COL. J. L. SANDERSON

Green Russell's "Georgia Party" who came to the Rocky Mountains in May, 1858, hunting gold. When his party passed Fort Bent, they found it occupied by a party of four or five men who had a considerable stock of trade goods and were dealing with the Indians.

Professor Cragin opened a correspondence with George Bent, son of William and his Cheyenne wife, and in the course of this contact, Cragin queried Bent on the old fort on the Arkansas. In a letter dated October 5, 1905, George Bent wrote in response to one of Cragin's letters of September 30, 1905:

"Towers of Bent's Fort were round. One tower was built northeast corner and one Southwest corner. These towers were built to protect outside walls from Indians or other enemies. To climb the walls from the Towers one on Northeast protect the North and East Walls. One in Southwest protected South and West walls.

"Fort Bent, the double gates were on East side, small gate was North side. Another gate was on West side going into adobe corral. Corral gate was facing south towards the river. Lot of prickly pears was planted on top of the walls of this corral clear around so no one could climb over it.

"Thick iron was nailed over these doors so they could not be burnt from outside by anybody. They looked like iron doors to look at them.

"The Towers had square windows to shoot out from. In these towers the Company had guns, pistols, swords and lances. It was plan to run to these Towers first thing when attacked. Another Tower was built over the big gate for Watch Tower. They had a fine telescope in this tower. Many times this saved surprize (*sic*). During day time some one was looking out this Tower. There was a Flag Pole and Flag of course and one Cannon.

"When Cheyennes and Arapahoes came to Fort in Fall for Winter Camps near it to trade. When they move in sight of the Fort they fired this Cannon. This meant for everybody to come to the Fort for their big feast which was customary. The men eat first. The women had to unpack their ponies with their loads, then the women and children would come next. Same time the Company made present to them. Knives to skin buffalo, paints, combs and powder and bullets.

"The rooms were all built inside of course. There were good many rooms, store houses, Blacksmith shop and Carpenter shop. There was Billiard Hall also when the Fort was in its prime. I understand the Indians all had big time when the Fort was finished. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes all moved back to the Arkansas River from the Black Hills after the smallpox was over with.

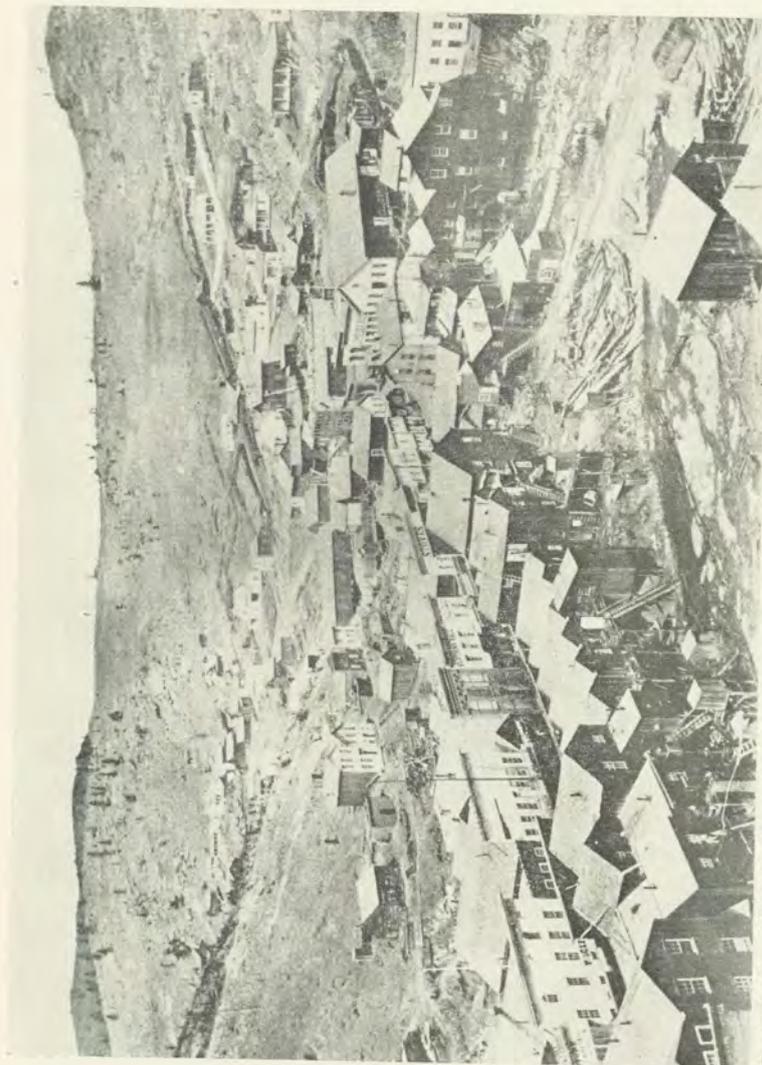
"Bent and St. Vrain built trading post on South Canadian River in 1844.

"Hatcher and Fisher were the ones that built Adobe Walls on the Canadian River. This was built to trade with the Kiowas-Comanches and Apaches, as these tribes did not come to Bent's Fort to trade much. Just before this these 3 Tribes were too hostile those days.

"In 1868 Maxwell told me, and also Black Beaver, Delaware Indian, there was six of them left in the post. In the night the Comanches had taken all the ponies from there. They buried everything and left afoot in the night. They all wore moccasins. They told me they had an awful time in Walking on prickly pears at night. They were making back for Bent's Fort. They took nothing except plenty ammunition, as there was all kinds of game in the country then. Black Beaver told me they killed fat, wild horses on the Cimmaron River and roasted ribs.

"Bent's Fort was covered, that is the roof, with dirt. The walls were whitewashed inside of the rooms. The Fort had a big Council room also to hold Council with Indians. Kit Carson told me before he died, 1868, he was employed by Bent & St. Vrain and was in charge of 12 men cutting timbers for the fort when one night a war party of Crows stole all their animals. Three Cheyennes, 2 men, 1 woman came to their camp that evening and stayed all night with them. These Indians tied their ponies that night as there was plenty of cottonwood limbs for them to eat. Little Turtle and Black Moon both told me they were the Indians that came there with squaw. Carson had all the horses running loose as there was plenty of cottonwood for them to eat.

"The snow was on the ground. Crows had drove off all the horses except 3 Indian ponies. Black Moon died only a short time ago. He told me he got on his pony when Carson's horses were missing and found the horses had been stolen and the trail heading north in the snow. So Carson must have been employed before the firm built the Fort."



Central City, 1864, by George D. Wakely. This view was made from much the same place as the one by Henry Paul in 1862. The street from the lower left of the picture to the middle is Main Street, with Eureka (and Lawrence) Streets in the middle, from left to right.

## A Few Early Photographers of Colorado

By OPAL M. HARBER\*

The discovery of gold in the Pikes Peak country in paying quantities in 1858 brought many seekers after wealth into Colorado. Photographers were in the vanguard—not to pan for gold, but to relieve the successful miner of some of his gains by making his portrait or selling him views of the camps to send to his loved ones at home. Many did not intend to remain, but came only to make their photographs of the new El Dorado and take them East to show the stay-at-homes what conditions were really like.

### I. George D. Wakely

George D. Wakely is believed to be the first photographer to set up a permanent gallery in the pioneer metropolis of Denver. The first business directory of the settlers at the junction of Cherry Creek with the Platte River, published in 1859, listed only Wakely's name as being engaged in the photographic art, as an "AMBROTYPYST."<sup>1</sup> The preface of this directory gave the basis for including names as being only those permanently located there:

Hundreds of men can, indeed, to-day, be found idling about the streets and places of public resort, that, tomorrow, might be seen wending their way through the very heart of the Rocky Mountains, and whose places are immediately filled again by new comers from the States or mines. The compilers found it utterly impossible, for this reason, to enumerate in the following pages all that moves on Cherry Creek in the shape of human beings, and hence none but *bona fide residents*—that is, such as are engaged in vocations that require a permanency of location—have, therefore, been embodied in the list of inhabitants.<sup>2</sup>

Wakely's ambrotype gallery, opposite Apollo Hall, was opened on Larimer street in October, 1859. He was a member of the theatrical family of Wakelys, which may have accounted for the location of his gallery near this pioneer theater, Apollo Hall. He and his wife were a part of Colonel Charles R. Thorne's company of players which arrived in Denver on September 27, 1859, and made its debut on October 3. Apparently, they originally did some work backstage in addition to operating the photographic gallery. Wakely may have

found greater profit taking pictures of the populace while the female members of his family did the entertaining.

One of Wakely's earliest and best-known pictures, taken in July, 1861, was of a crowd on Larimer street watching Mlle. Carolista walking a tightrope suspended above the street. This view, said to be an ambrotype, one of several taken at the time, seems to have been the only one preserved.

In the summer of 1862, Wakely had apparatus sent from New York for taking the exquisite little *cartes de visite* photographs which were so much in fashion in the States at that time. Many of these portraits of Colorado pioneers bear his name.

On April 9, 1864, Wakely advertised his photographic business for sale. The gallery was to be completely equipped, and Wakely promised to teach the art of photography to the purchaser, insuring his pupil a fortune in a few years. Before completing the sale, however, he recorded a famous and tragic event. This was the deluge of water, which, with little warning, washed down the "dry" bed of Cherry Creek with such devastating force on the little frontier settlement during the night of May 19. Wakely set up his camera fairly early on the morning of the 20th and made six exposures from different angles of the havoc wrought by the flood.

The *News* offices, built in the bed of the creek, were washed away, but the *Commonwealth* carried descriptions of the great catastrophe and mentioned Wakely's photographs as follows:

The views taken by Wakely, on Friday morning last, are surprisingly faithful in their representations of the wildness of the waters, and the terrible desolation apparent everywhere at that hour. They are six in number.<sup>3</sup>

A week after the flood, an item appeared in the columns of the *Commonwealth* which stated that the proprietor of "a photographic institution on Larimer street" (obviously referring to Wakely) who had made considerable money in the sale of the views had refused to subscribe to a fund to construct a footbridge and road-way over the creek.<sup>4</sup> Although his name had not been mentioned, Wakely took exception to the statement and sent a letter to the editor, Charles M. Ferrell, which said in part: "If you enter my Rooms again, or make any disrespectful allusions to me in your Local Columns, I will whip you publicly on the streets." Ferrell answered in equally strong language, but apparently nothing came of the altercation, at least as far as anything reported in the newspapers.

Wakely probably went East late in 1864 as some of his mountain views were sent to Central City from New York early in 1865. Not until 1879 was Wakely's name again found in print in connec-

\* Opal M. Harber (Mrs. William G. Harber), a member of the staff of the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library, is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and in 1956 received a Master of Arts degree in History from the University of Denver. Her thesis entitled *The Early Photographers of Colorado, 1853-1876*, described at some length the work of approximately fifty photographers. In the appendix of the thesis, Mrs. Harber had a list of about sixty photographers about whom very little information was found. For *The Colorado Magazine*, Mrs. Harber has prepared an article pertaining to the work of half a dozen of the photographers described in her thesis. All photographs used in the article published in this issue of *The Colorado Magazine* were obtained by Mrs. Harber from the Western History Collection of the Denver Public Library.—Editor.

<sup>1</sup> *Denver City and Auraria, the Commercial Emporium of the Pike's Peak Gold Regions in 1859*, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Daily Commonwealth* (Denver), May 24, 1864, p. 3, col. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Weekly Commonwealth* (Denver), June 1, 1864, p. 3, col. 2.



Top: Mlle. Carolista walking the tightrope over Larimer street in July, 1861. This view, made by George D. Wakely, was taken from almost the same angle as the one of Larimer street, Denver, about 1862, taken by W. G. Chamberlain. Bottom: A view of the Cherry Creek Flood, made on the morning of May 20, 1864, by George D. Wakely. The street down the middle of the picture is Larimer, looking southwest.

tion with Colorado—it appeared in the first city directory of the boom camp of Leadville. George Wakely was listed as being one of the first photographers there, as he had been in the pioneer camp of Denver twenty years before. He made numerous views of the town and the surrounding scenery, but then he again dropped from public view in Colorado, and no record of his subsequent career has as yet come to light.



CENTRAL CITY, 1862, PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY HENRY FAUL.

## II. Henry Faul

Another of the more permanent settlers was Henry Faul of Central City. He opened a handsome Daguerrean and sign painting establishment there in April, 1861. During the next year, he must have started to make "wet plate" negatives from which *paper photographs* were made.<sup>5</sup> Not many of these early negatives of Colorado have ever been found. Some, however, believed to have been made by Faul have turned up. A number of them are in the possession of the Denver Public Library's Western History Department. Prints made from them are remarkably clear and have been identified as

<sup>5</sup> These negatives were made by flowing an iodized collodion solution onto a glass plate, allowing this to "set," bathing the glass in a silver sensitizing solution, and then while it was still damp, exposing and developing it. When the operator was in the field, it was necessary for him not only to carry along all the materials for this "wet process," but also to have a portable dark room, which was usually some form of tent. The first *paper* prints were very crude by modern standards. In these earlier years, the paper, too, had to be made fresh each day by the photographer.

Central City, Black Hawk, Nevadaville and vicinity in the early 1860s. (See photographs with this article.)

A Denver newspaper article in the summer of 1863 referred to Faul and mentioned that photography had become one of the best paying professions of the day, and that it had been "hugely" helped by the war. It claimed that marriage was also a big boon to the photographer in the following way:

While there is marrying or giving in marriage, or adding to the planet's population in any way, the photographer will be



Top: Larimer street, Denver, about 1862, taken by W. G. Chamberlain. While this print was marked 1861, Chamberlain did not move to this location until August, 1862. Chamberlain's shop was at 14th street, next door to the People's Theatre, formerly Apollo Hall. Wakely had his gallery across the street.

Bottom: Larimer street, Denver, about 1862, taken northeast toward 16th street by W. C. Chamberlain. The Denver Theatre sign on the building in background (at 16th and Lawrence) was not put on the building until after October, 1862. There is a drawing made from this photograph in J. C. Smiley, *History of Denver*, 327, which describes it thus: "On Larimer street in autumn of 1860—Arrival of a steam boiler hauled from the Missouri river by five yoke of oxen."

patronized. Ye belles that want to discover in days to come how ye looked when you were on it, and you beaux who wish to transmit to your young ones a mirror in which they can take a glance at their daddy as he looked when he was gay and festive, lose no time in be-taking yourselves to Chamberlain or McDonald, in Denver, or to Faul in Central City, and invest in *cartes visites*.<sup>6</sup>

The beauties of Faul's photographs of mountain scenery were periodically brought to the attention of the public all through 1863, one item in September even claiming that his name was to be found on three-fourths of the photographs to be seen in the territory.<sup>7</sup> The last known Colorado reference to Henry Faul was made in October, 1864, at which time he had just taken a picture of seven Indian chiefs visiting Denver, a picture described as being a most clear and striking likeness of them.<sup>8</sup>

### III. William Gunnison Chamberlain

A discussion of the early Colorado photographers would not be complete without a mention of William Gunnison Chamberlain. (William H. Jackson also fits into this category, but so much has been written about him that he need not be included here.) Next to Jackson, Chamberlain has probably left more examples of his work in Colorado than any other early photographer.

Chamberlain was born in 1815 in Massachusetts. In 1839, he set out to see the world and landed at Lima, Peru, where he engaged in various pursuits. He purchased a daguerreotype outfit from two young men touring Chile and Peru in 1847, for which he paid \$300.00, with some instruction included. He spent many leisure hours practicing the art. He became so proficient that when he moved his family to Chicago in 1855, he made photography his business.

In 1859, Chamberlain set out for the Pikes Peak gold regions, but the discouraging reports of the returning emigrants induced him to go on to California instead. It was not until June, 1861, that the Chamberlain family reached Denver. The first studio opened by Chamberlain was on the corner of F (now Fifteenth) street and McGaa (now Market) street. He moved from that location in August, 1862, to rooms over Florman's Ice Cream Saloon, on Larimer, next door to the People's Theater (the old Apollo Hall). By 1864,<sup>9</sup> his business had improved so much that he needed a still larger studio. He moved to the upper story of Graham's new block at the corner of Larimer and F streets, where he remained until he retired from business because of failing eyesight. He sold his portrait and view business to Francis D. Storm the latter part of February of 1881.

<sup>6</sup> *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), August 29, 1863, p. 3, col. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Miners' Register* (Central City), September 1, 1863, p. 3, col. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), October 7, 1864, p. 1, col. 5.

<sup>9</sup> According to the *Weekly Commonwealth*, June 15, 1864: Chamberlain opened a suite of rooms over the Postoffice in Central City, "where his associate, Mr. Davidson, will hereafter officiate."—*Editor*.



LYNCHING OF DUGGAN IN DENVER.

One of these photographers probably was W. Delavan. This sketch taken from D. J. Cook, *Hands-up* (Denver, 1897), 56.

Chamberlain's death occurred in March of 1910. Prior to his retirement at the age of sixty-six, he had spent twenty active years making photographic views all over Colorado, and countless portraits of the pioneers.

#### IV. W. Delavan

One of the itinerant photographers was W. Delavan, a deaf-mute artist who arrived in Colorado late in 1868. He had spent the summer along the line of the Union Pacific Railway making views and sketches in order to paint a panorama of the road and its branches. This panorama, to be called "Across the Continent," representing the west from Omaha to San Francisco, was slated to be sketched on a canvas covering more than 6,000 square feet, each scene being 6x10 feet. The general view of Denver, occupying thirty feet of the canvas, was to be paid for by the Union Pacific, but the *Businessmen* of Denver. The article which appeared in November, 1868, closed by saying: "Mr. Delavan might quickly fill up his space with views of grog-shops and keno rooms, but that neither suits him nor would it us. Denver, at the rate she is going on, is likely to be more slimly represented on the panorama than either Cheyenne, Laramie, Central, Georgetown or Golden City."<sup>10</sup>

An unfortunate incident occurred in Denver early in December which it was feared would indeed give Denver a poor representation on Delavan's panorama. One Sanford S. C. Duggan was hanged from a cottonwood tree in Cherry Creek by a mob. The *News* made the following comment about Duggan's body swaying gently in the breeze:

... We are told that certain artists were nigh fighting over it this morning for the exclusive privilege of taking photographic views of it. Denver, after eight years of freedom from lynch law, seems destined to figure in Mr. Delavan's Panorama of the World as the rival in lawlessness of the worst of the railroad towns.<sup>11</sup>

The names of the photographers were not mentioned, but Delavan must have been one of them. (See the accompanying photograph for a drawing of this altercation.) Afterwards, Delavan went East, but what happened to him, the panorama, and his views and sketches remains unknown.

#### V. Duhem Brothers

Constant and Victor M. Duhem opened their first gallery in Denver in May, 1869, in the rooms over the post office on Larimer street, formerly occupied by Williams and McDonald. They were quite popular and made many views of Denver and Colorado, and numerous portraits, before going into bankruptcy in January, 1877.

<sup>10</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, November 14, 1868, p. 4, col. 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, December 2, 1868, p. 4, col. 3.



Top: View of Denver taken by W. G. Chamberlain in 1864, probably after the flood when the bridge over Cherry Creek on Larimer street (coming in from the right), had been replaced.

Bottom: Looking down 15th street from Larimer in 1865, view taken by W. G. Chamberlain. By this time, his studio had been moved to Graham's block at the left in this photograph. In the distance may be seen the road going over the hill to Boulder.

In the *Hand-book of Colorado* for 1871 and 1872, the Duhems advertised their collection of more than 300 stereoscopic views taken all over Colorado. These views were said to give "a more accurate and vivid impression of the wild scenery of the 'SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA,' than volumes written on the same subject." A great many Colorado scenic prints and portraits remain to show the work of the Duhem Brothers, but their negatives seem to have vanished as they did.



Duhem Brothers' photograph showing the studio of Charles Bohm on 15th street, between Lawrence and Arapahoe, looking southwest. The building in the middle of the view was the Lawrence Street Methodist Church on 14th street. The skylight on the Bohm building was one of the most important parts of a studio in those early days, both for the taking and developing of photographs.

#### VI. Joseph Collier

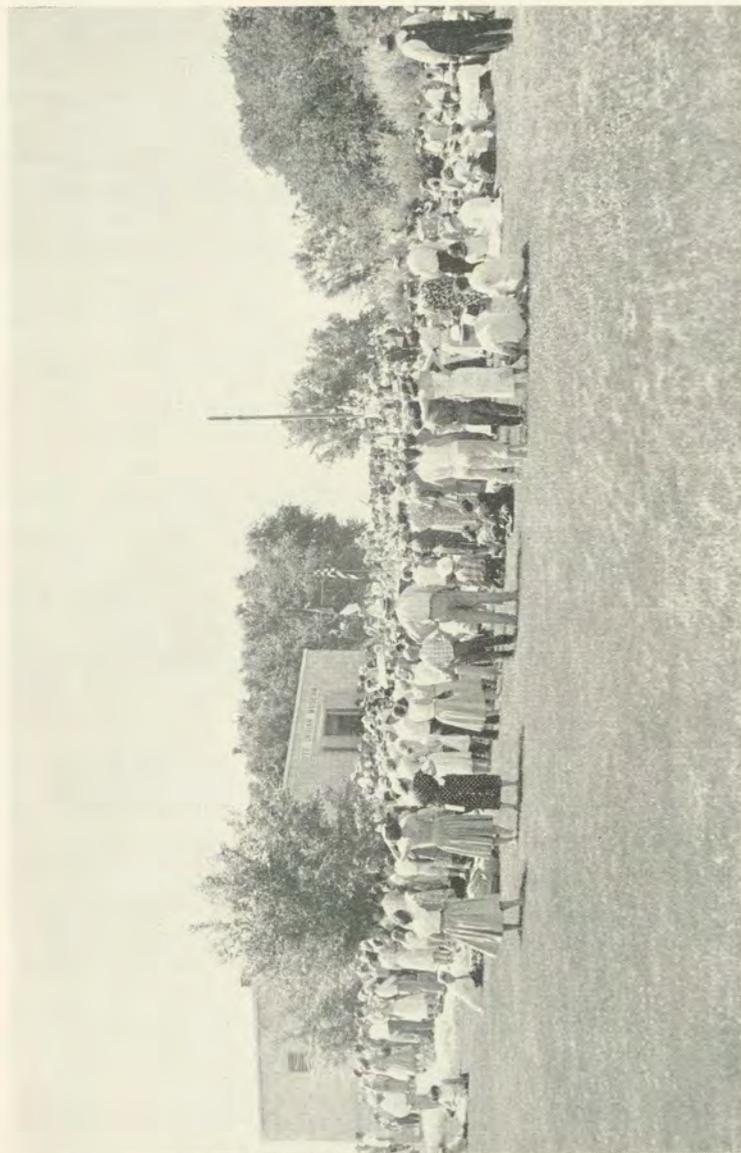
Joseph Collier ranks with the most important of Colorado's photographers. He took pictures for a great many years—from the time of his arrival in Central City in 1871, until only a short time before his death in 1910. Not only are many of his prints in existence, but a large collection of his negatives was preserved by his family and placed by his son, Robert Collier, in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library.

Joseph Collier was born in Scotland in 1836, and by 1859 had learned the trade of a blacksmith. After a serious injury, he was unable to do strenuous work for a while so he took up photography as a hobby during his recuperation. He became so proficient in the art that he decided to make it a profession. He built up a thriving business and had a high reputation for taking good pictures. After some ten years in Scotland, the wanderlust became too strong for him. He moved his family to America, locating in Central City where Joseph's cousin, D. C. Collier, was an editor of the *Register*. He remained there from 1871 until 1878, when he moved to Denver and opened a studio at 415 (later 1643) Larimer street. He maintained this establishment until about 1903 when he "retired," but he still continued doing some commercial photography from his home at 23 South Grant street until 1908.



*Top:* Another Duhem Brothers' photograph, taken of Denver in about 1875. The area in the lower left was part of the land later belonging to Mrs. Augusta Tabor after her divorce from H. A. W. Tabor, located between Broadway and Lincoln, and 17th and 18th avenues. Broadway would be in about the middle of the picture, from left to right. The street on the right is 18th, with the old Arapahoe School looming up in the middle distance.

*Bottom:* A photograph made by Joseph Collier down 15th street from Guard's Hall on Curtis street, about 1880. By this date, business had moved "up-town," but the road to Boulder can still be seen in the background, wending its way over the hill.



D. B. WALKER

Some of the 2,500 persons at Dedication of Ute Indian Museum, Chief Ouray State Historical Monument, 3 miles south of Montrose, Colo., on U. S. Highway 550.

## Ute Indian Museum Dedication

CHIEF OURAY STATE HISTORICAL MONUMENT, MONTROSE

With an overtone of jingling bells on restless Indian dancers, more than 2,500 persons withstood brilliant, hot sunshine for two hours on Sunday afternoon, August 15, to hear a program of music, speaking and Indian dancing at the dedication of the State Historical Society's newest field installation—the Ute Indian Museum at Chief Ouray State Historical Monument, three miles south of Montrose, Colorado, on U. S. 550.

This museum, built at the site of a former home of Chief Ouray and his wife Chipeta, is the culmination of many years of dreaming and planning. Following the ceremony at what was termed "one of the most momentous events in Western Colorado history," Mrs. Nelle B. Callaway, a charter member of the Uncompahgre chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, cut the ribbon to officially open the first unit of the Ute Indian Museum.

Arrangements for the dedication were under the direction of Mr. P. C. Moshisky, chairman of the State Historical Society's local committee in Montrose, who has given much time and labor during the past ten years to make the museum a reality.

The following was the official program prepared by the Program Committee of the D.A.R. comprised of Mrs. Ralph B. Vote, Chairman, Mrs. C. A. W. Gordon, Miss Annie Gray, Miss Mary Olive Gray, Mrs. R. L. Seely, and Mrs. C. W. Grauel.

Music Selections.....Montrose Municipal Band  
Mr. Louis A. Lanyon, Director

Welcome.....Mrs. W. A. Gillaspey, Past State Vice Regent, D.A.R.  
Talk.....Mayor H. V. Ross  
Mary Olive Gray....."History of Chief Ouray Park"  
Talks by:

Mr. George Cory.....Radio Station KUBC  
Mr. Clyde AuMiller

Mr. George Lindfelt.....County Commissioner  
Mr. Earle Bryant.....Attorney  
Mr. Willis A. Gillaspey.....Chamber of Commerce  
Mr. H. A. McNeil.....State Representative  
Mr. Rex Howell.....Radio and TV Station KREX, Grand Junction  
Mr. P. C. Moshisky, Local Chairman for State Historical Society  
Mr. Maurice Frink, Executive Director, State Historical Society  
Mr. James Grafton Rogers, President, State Historical Society  
Vocal Duet: "Where the Columbine Grows".....Flynn  
Mrs. R. B. Vote and Miss Annie Gray

Indian Dances: Southern Utes from Ignacio, Ute Mountain Indian  
Tribe Entertainment

Two speakers were unable to attend the meeting: State Senator George Wilson was absent because of illness; and William Prescott Allen, Jr., publisher of the *Montrose Daily Press*, was out of town on business.

Following a short talk, Mr. Moshisky introduced a number of persons connected with the State Historical Society who were attending the dedication. These included: Mrs. James Grafton Rogers, wife of the President of the Society; Mrs. Maurice Frink, wife of the Executive Director; Dr. Lois Borland, Regional Vice President of the Society, Gunnison; Mrs. Agnes Wright Spring, State Historian; Mrs. Willena Cartwright, Curator of State Museums, and Juan Menchaca and Roy Hunt, staff artists and technicians, who assisted Mrs. Cartwright with planning and installing the displays at the museum; Miss Ginny Norman, Resident Curator of the Ute Indian Museum; Mrs. Dutcher, mother of Mrs. Cartwright, Denver; and Carl Lovato, grounds keeper of the local museum.

The following history of the Chief Ouray Memorial Park was read by Miss Mary Olive Gray:

### History of Chief Ouray Park from Origin to Date of Turning It Over to the State Historical Society

Honored guests and the friends of the Chief Ouray and Chipeta Memorial:

I feel it an honor to have the responsibility of this resume of the Chief Ouray and Chipeta project of the Uncompahgre Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mrs. Jennie Huntsman Foster (James) as National D.A.R. Chairman of Colorado, of Preservation of Historical Spots and Markings, conceived the idea of restoring Chief Ouray's and Chipeta's adobe home and of marking the spring where they got their drinking water. Mrs. Foster designed the tepee that is erected over the spring as a typical symbol of the Ute Indians whose homeland was in this valley until the government moved them to Fort Duchesne, Utah, in 1881.

This accomplishment did not take place at once but extended over a period of twenty-five years of persistent effort. The ladies of Riverside offered to help in the project, as did also the W.C.T.U. The Uncompahgre Chapter decided to make an effort to reclaim the spring entirely as a D.A.R. project.

The Chamber of Commerce committee of three: John Gray, Attorney, E. E. Schuyler and Captain Clark approached the Uncompahgre Chapter, D.A.R., to take over at a cost of \$350.00, the restoration of the adobe home, that was fast deteriorating. The \$350.00 was for a 99-year lease. Fifty dollars was for current expenses, binding the contract, not to permit the destruction of the building. The D.A.R. chapter at that time, declined because lacking in funds.

The Archaeological Society was greatly interested and made an effort to combine the project with the Black Canyon National Monument bill, but it was not until November 12, 1920, that Mrs. Foster announced to the chapter that permission had been received from the county commissioners to restore and mark the Ouray Spring. The chapter voted \$50.00 to start a fund. The Regent, Mrs. McCrimmon, appointed a committee of three to secure plans and estimates for the work. The *Daily Press* put the matter before the public. Seventy-five public spirited citizens contributed \$459.50. Great zeal was put forth by chapter members. Large card parties were given, several moving pictures were sponsored at the Fox Theatre, bake sales were held often, a concert took place in the



D. B. WALKER, MONTROSE  
 Group Picture at Main Entrance to Ute Indian Museum, at Dedication, August 15, 1956. Chief Ouray State Historical Monument, 3 miles south of Montrose, Colo., U. S. 550.  
*Front row*: Mrs. Maurice Frink, Denver; Ginny Norman, Resident Curator, Ute Indian Museum; Miss Anna Gray, Regent, Uncompahgre Chapter, D.A.R.; Mrs. R. E. Vote, chairman D.A.R. Program Committee for Dedication; Mrs. James Grafton Rogers, Georgetown; Mrs. Agnes Wright Spring, State Historian, Denver.  
*Second Row*: P. C. Moshisky, Chairman Local Committee, Chief Ouray State Historical Monument, Montrose; Roy Hunt, Technician, State Historical Society; Juan Menchaca, Technician, State Historical Society; Mrs. Dutcher, Denver; Mrs. Willena D. Cartwright, Curator of State Museums, Denver; Dr. James Grafton Rogers, President, State Historical Society of Colorado, Georgetown and Denver.  
*In Doorway*: Maurice Frink, Executive Director, State Historical Society, Denver. Also visible back of Mr. Frink is Arthur Sutton, Montrose County Sheriff.

Christian Church given by Mary Olive Gray and Mrs. Ralph B. Vote, and the chapter turned a \$100.00 Liberty Bond into the fund.

On March 5, 1924, Mr. Walter Fleming surveyed the ground at Ouray Spring. The land was a gift from Mr. Warren Barlow, the deed being recorded on December 3, 1924. Cash on hand \$399.96. The total cost of the spring was \$386.00, leaving a balance of \$13.96.

On June 7, 1925, the chapter voted to accept the sixty-day option on two acres of land adjoining Ouray Spring Memorial, with the idea in mind of providing a burying spot for Chief Ouray and Chipeta, and converting this land into a park. Without his indomitable effort the mausoleum could not have been completed in time to receive the body for the formal ceremony planned for Chipeta by the chapter and the community. Mr. Fleming donated his time spent in surveying the land purchased. And he took charge of the erection of the concrete mausoleum, wherein now lies the body of Queen Chipeta. Mr. Fleming also landscaped the park. Seep water was discovered around the spring and it cost more than \$60.00 to drain it. Later, Mr. D. B. Woodruff, the architect who built the tepee of reinforced concrete, put into it various features characteristic of the Indian motif. Donations were received from Mrs. James Fenton, \$25.00; Mr. Charles A. Block, \$10.00; and Judge Black and son, John, \$10.00. Prior to moving Chipeta's remains here in 1924, Mr. R. H. Gross, Superintendent of the Indian Reservation at Fort Duchesne, Utah, visited our Memorial Park. He was agreeably surprised to see what had been done to perpetuate the names of these famous friends of the white man. He exclaimed "O, this looks like Chipeta's real tepee. How did you do it?"

Senator John J. Tobin secured an appropriation from the State Legislature to erect the granite shaft in memory of Ouray. The fence was given by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. Mr. and Mrs. John Howell gave six very rare and beautiful trees for the park, to be cared for by Al Lohr who lived nearby.

Mr. Tom McKee was guest speaker several times for the Uncompahgre chapter. There was probably no one in this vicinity better able to give an authentic history of the Indians of this valley when the first white men came in. Mr. McKee made an extensive study of the Indians. He knew Ouray and Chipeta well, also Ouray's chief lieutenant, Chief Shavanah, Chief John McCook, Buckskin Charlie, Colorow and others. Olathe was originally named Colorow. Mr. McKee knew their way of living and their spiritual life. He lived among the Utes and was all of forty years making his marvelous Indian collection. Almost everything symbolic of their life was included. The collection was exhibited for years in the Fox Theatre in the same location where it was originally collected. Mr. McKee's home and photograph studio were in a small frame house on the alley adjoining the theatre building. Uncompahgre chapter is indebted to him for much Indian knowledge.

City Manager, Herman Elliott, promised to make a survey of the ground to provide for the running of a ditch that would water the entire plot. Chapter voted Mrs. Lacker and Mrs. Flonnie Kerbel to become members of the Chipeta Memorial. Mr. Tom McKee and Mr. W. H. Lingham were also made members at the time.

Mr. C. E. Adams suggested that a place should be found to display relics of Ouray and Chipeta, as it might come about some day we would have a museum for them. The Chamber of Commerce put the relics on display in glass cases.

For years Mr. Louis Meyers donated his services in keeping Memorial Park free of rubbish. Beginning in 1936 the Uncom-



REX HOWELL, KREX

#### INTERIOR VIEWS OF UTE INDIAN MUSEUM

Diorama and Installations done by Mrs. Willena Cartwright, Curator of State Museums; Roy Hunt and Juan Menchaca, Artist-Technicians, on Museum staff.

pahgre chapter gave him \$12.00 a year as a slight gesture of appreciation.

Before his death, Chief John McCook requested that he be buried beside the mausoleum that contained the remains of his sister, "Queen of the Utes." He died at Fort Duchesne, Utah, October 31, 1937, and was buried as he had wished, with a fitting public ceremony.

Mrs. Vashti Seely became a member of the Uncompahgre chapter in 1937. In 1942 as State Chairman of Conservation of American Indians, she presented a wooden marker for Chief John McCook's grave and had it placed.

Three times, according to the D.A.R. records, Mrs. Walter Lacker, Mrs. Flonnie Kerbel and Mr. Adams appealed to the City Council to accept the Chipeta Memorial as a gift. Each time the request was refused, for very good reasons on its part.

In 1942 the chapter assisted by the Board of Commissioners and the City of Montrose, with other interested persons, spent considerable time improving this historical spot. Mr. Frank Hill Sr. covered the spring to keep it from becoming contaminated. The city furnished the material.

City Manager, Orin L. King, the Board of County Commissioners, Agent Glen W. Yeager and others were most cooperative. The County constructed the rest room building, on the north side of the park, the city furnishing men and material. About \$1,000 was spent on the grounds.

On April 5, 1944, Mrs. Vashti Seely was instrumental in selling one acre of Chipeta Memorial Park for \$75.00. On October 12, 1944, part of Chipeta's adobe house was destroyed by fire. The city helped the D.A.R. to tear the house down and move the remaining room to Memorial Park. Don Gilmore gave \$20.00 to apply towards the expense.

On February 28, 1945, eleven members of the D.A.R. chapter attended a meeting at which Mrs. George Bruce moved that the chapter empower the Chipeta Memorial Committee to convey to the State Historical Society of Colorado the Chipeta Memorial acreage and all improvements thereon. Unanimously carried.

Mrs. Ralph B. Vote, chairman of today's program, has been at the helm since the inception of our D.A.R. project. She has worked devotedly in all the activities of this chapter. She has given her talent freely and willingly to the chapter and to the public.

This adventure of Uncompahgre chapter, D.A.R., has been a great achievement, mainly because it is the combined union of all our efforts, town, state, county and individual. To Mr. Charles J. Moynihan, who never fails at any opportunity to give himself by word or deed for the betterment of our community, we are deeply appreciative. The whole community has honored itself for posterity.

After acquiring title, in 1945, to the park, the State Historical Society, through the generosity of one of its members, purchased two adjoining tracts of land needed for landscaping and as a protection against undesirable commercialization. This brought the total acreage to nine.

Building of an Indian museum in the memorial park was long a cherished dream of the late Edgar C. McMechen, former Curator of State Museums, who considered Chief Ouray of the Utes one of the greatest Indians in American history. According to Mr. Mc-



D. B. WALKER, MONTROSE  
 Southern Ute Indians from Ignacio, Colo., managed by Ute Indian Eddie Box, performing an Indian dance at Opening of Ute Indian Museum, Chief Ouray State Historical Monument on U. S. Highway 550, Montrose, Colo.

Mechen, "To Chief Ouray, more than to any other individual, goes credit for having induced the Ute tribe to cede to the whites the area now embraced in the San Luis Valley, and the land on the Western Slope of Colorado. Had it not been for his undeviating friendship for the whites and his great natural intelligence and ability, Colorado history might well have been stained with one of the most disastrous Indian wars in the country. No Indian ever occupied such unique position. In recognition of his services, Ouray was chosen as one of sixteen outstanding builders of Colorado to be represented by stained glass windows in the dome of the Capitol in Denver. A county and a town in Colorado bear his name."

In 1947 the Thirty-sixth General Assembly authorized the improvement and development of four historical monuments in Colorado under the direction of the State Historical Society. The projects for which appropriation was made included: restoration of Old Fort Garland; improvement of Pikes Stockade site in the San Luis Valley; development of the Ouray Memorial Park near Montrose; and much needed improvements at Healy House, Leadville.

In 1948 the Society purchased the noted Ute collection of more than 300 individual objects, made during the 1880s, by Thomas McKee of Montrose. It was known to museums and ethnologists throughout the country as probably the finest authentic old Ute Indian bead work in existence. Especially interesting items in this collection were authentic representations of the Ute bear dance and the Ute sun dance painted on buckskin by an Indian artist of the early 1880s. This collection has now been placed by the Society in the Ute Indian Museum at Montrose, and will be displayed as space permits.

In speaking at the opening exercises of the museum, Maurice Frink, Executive Director of the Society, said: "I never have had a pleasanter or more rewarding assignment than that of helping to construct, staff and equip the Ute Indian Museum."

President James Grafton Rogers explained that, through pinching and saving at headquarters in Denver, the State Historical Society had been able to erect this first unit of the Museum, and that approved plans will permit the addition of three units when funds are available. Mr. Rogers gave an inspiring talk covering the history of the Utes of Colorado, beginning with "The Utes are the first Colorado people here as far back as we can find traces of people that we can identify."

## Pioneering in the San Juan\*

By WELCH NOSSAMAN

### Part II.

(The following manuscript is being published through the courtesy of Terrie Jones of Los Angeles, and Tom Nossaman of Pagosa Springs, daughter and son of Welch Nossaman, who pioneered in the San Juan in the 1870's. The story was related, at the insistence of Carl Weeks of Des Moines, Iowa, to I. E. Carlin. A copy of the manuscript has been loaned to the Colorado State Historical Society by L. C. George of Pagosa Springs.

Welch Nossaman was born in Pella, Iowa in 1851. His father had come from Kentucky, and his mother, from North Carolina. According to Welch Nossaman, his mother "boiled the meat off the head of Chief Black Hawk in order that "Doc" Turner could take the head back to a museum in New York.

Nossaman began his story with this sentence: "I have done all my life just what I have had to do." He worked very hard on his father's farm; cut timber and owned part interest in a saw mill; did some rail-roading; and attended school one session.

He knew Nick Earp and his three boys, Jim, Virgil and Wyatt during Civil War times in Pella, Iowa. He said: "The boys, Jim and Virg, were handy with six shooters. We used to go down to our place four miles south of Pella, hunting squirrels and rabbits and turkeys, and they could do as well with their gats as I could with a rifle. We were together a great deal."

Welch Nossaman quit railroading in Iowa and helped Mark Butts bring a mill out to Colorado for Dr. B. F. Keebles, who was an eminent physician in Iowa. Dr. Keebles had gone to Del Norte at the time of the gold rush. Nossaman's story, continued from the January issue of *The Colorado Magazine*, follows.—*Editor.*)

Taos is right opposite on the other side from the San Luis Valley. It wasn't any trouble to take that horse trail, Sam on one side and me on the other, and just run clear out there about eighteen miles to the bank of the Rio Grande River where it runs into Deep Box Canyon.

Just before we got to the river we saw two fellows with our horses. They saw us coming on the run and they just quit the horses and dropped over the cliff. Sam said, "Will we go after them?" I said, "Lord no. Let's get the horses. They have all the best of it. They are over the cliff and we are on the top. It wouldn't do for us to start down the cliff hunting them." So we rounded up the horses and got back at noon with them. We had gone eighteen miles out and back—thirty-six miles in half a day.

The next day we got up pretty well into the settlement. When we got to where Alamosa is now in the San Luis Valley—there was no Alamosa or railroad there then—we stopped at night with two fellows named Quick, from Texas. They didn't charge us anything. Johnson left us there. A fellow named Tackett who trapped with Johnson went on to Garland with his team. Tackett was an old trapper who had started to go out with Johnson's

teams from Pine River and was with the Johnson crowd when I dropped into it at Pagosa.

I gave Johnson the 2-inch auger and started from where Alamosa is now to Del Norte, thirty-five miles on north. There was a stage line—Barlow & Sanderson—running from Pueblo to Lake City. When I got up to the Venable stage station just below Del Norte the first day, I asked Mr. Venable if I could stay all night with him. I told him I didn't have any money but wanted supper and breakfast and a bed. This Venable was from Knoxville, Iowa, and a friend of Doc Keebles. I said, "I am going up to Del Norte. Doc offered me work and I am going to work for him."

He said, "Yes, you can stay here all night, and a week if you want to."

The next morning I struck out. My feet were pretty sore. I hadn't gone a mile or two when the stage overtook me. The driver stopped and said, "Jump on."

He had six horses on one of the big stage coaches. I said, "I haven't any money." He said, "That is all right. Venable said for me to pick you up and take you into Del Norte." So I rode in.

When I got there Keebles said, "I'm glad you came early. We can't do anything toward starting the mill, because we haven't any grub or mine supplies here, but I have leased the Chaffee location. I want you to go to Summitville and go to the old slaughter house right below where we had the mill last year. There are a lot of beef hides there. Get some men and haul them from the mine down to the mill. Those hides are on top of the snow, which is about fifteen feet deep. We will give them \$4.00 a ton for hauling them."

So I went up there and told about wanting to haul down the bull and beef hides. I got six or eight men to work at it, and Keebles sent a young fellow up who had been a lawyer in Philadelphia. He had T.B. He was a tall, light complected fellow named McDuffey. He was in the St. Louis fire in 1876. He came out to Colorado from Philadelphia. He had \$600.00 when he left home—all the money he had in the world. When he got in that fire he only got out with \$15.00. He grabbed his clothes that he had on the bed and he had just \$15.00, in them. The rest was in his clothes that burned up, but he had his ticket. When he got to Del Norte he just had 50¢ left. He had a bad hemorrhage on the side walk in front of the Windsor Hotel.

Keebles saw him get off the stage and saw him sitting on the walk and asked him if he was sick.

"Yes," he said, and then told Keebles what had happened and that he had come to Colorado to see if it would help his lungs.

\* Continued from January issue.

Keebles' sympathy was aroused and he said to Mac, "Haven't you got any money left or any money that you can have sent to you?"

"No," Mac said, "My mother is a widow. I have just been admitted to the bar, but my lungs were weak and then this T.B. developed. Six hundred dollars was all the money I could rake up." Then he said, "But it don't matter. I am done anyway."

Keebles said, "No. I am going to send you up to Summitville." And he wrote me a letter and sent Mac up there. In the letter he said, "Welch, put this fellow to work and make him believe it is important, but don't let him work. He has a bad case of consumption."

After I read the letter I said to Mac, "I am glad you came up. You know I have to weigh this ore and keep the books. I make two or three trips a day with these bull hides and could make \$3.00 or \$4.00 more a day if I didn't have to attend to the scale and the books. You take the scale and the books. Don't handle any ore—just let the boys do that."

Mac took the job and when the snow went off Keebles put him washing blankets and I took the job of running the engine.

So Keebles started up the mill (San Juan) when it came time, but he couldn't make it pay. The tailings assayed almost as much as the ore. So he tried another amalgamator and he couldn't make it pay. He tried still another with the same result. Finally, after he had run the mill for about three months he still couldn't make it pay. This McDuffey was attending what we called the concentrates—just blankets—just rinse them off and spread them out again, and so on. McDuffey came to me in the evening when I went on shift at six o'clock and said, "Welch, the boys are having a lyceum over at the Queen Office and they want you to put somebody onto the feed stamps in Nibbs' place."

I asked McDuffey, "Why didn't they tell me they were going to do this?"

"Well," he said, "they wanted me to tell you." I said, "Well do you think they are having a lyceum? Mac, don't you think Doc Keebles has been a friend to you?"

He said, "He saved my life." I said, "Haven't I tried to befriend you?" He said, "You sure have. You gave me an easy job. I am getting better and getting over my trouble and getting fleshy."

"Well," I said. "I don't claim anything for myself, because I just did what Keebles told me to—to nurse you through and get you on your feet—but I do think you owe Doc Keebles the truth

He began to cry. "Welch," he said, "if I owe anybody the truth I owe it to Doc Keebles and you."

I said, "Now tell me what is up."

"I will have to lie to them, but I am going to tell you. They think the mill is paying and they are going over there and have a meeting and pay a fellow to take charge of the gold and clean up the mill tonight."

I said, "Why didn't they come and ask about it and ask if it would be all right?"

"Well," he said, "they think Doc Keebles is holding out on them."

So I went up to the office and Doc was sitting there reading the paper and when I stepped into the office he said, "What do you want?" He knew there was dissatisfaction because he hadn't paid his men for so long.

I said, "Well, it is awful lonesome down there before morning and I left a magazine on my pillow and I thought I would go in and get it." So I went in and got the book and also got a big .45 six-shooter, and went down to the mill.

As I went out Doc evidently thought I didn't act quite right. He told me later that he went and looked and found my gun was gone. So he went and got John Russell, who used to be the station agent on the Keokuk branch in East Des Moines, and Mark Butts, and said to them, "Welch acted queer and told me he got lonesome and came after his book. He got his six-shooter and cartridges and I'm afraid there's going to be trouble down there tonight. Will you fellows take the rifles and go down there and lay in the blacksmith shop and see if there is any trouble? If there is, help Welch out."

So after a while, about ten o'clock, here came all of these miners and men. It was dark except right around the mill doors and windows. The mill was lit up. So I told Mac, "Go out and tell the boys that this is all right. The idea of cleaning up the mill we don't object to, but tell them they have to wait until 7 o'clock in the morning. They mustn't do it tonight because the company would have a damage suit against them, claiming they knew it paid and that they robbed in the night and shut the mill down by force."

Mac came back and said, "They don't ask you to shut down the engine. Nibbs is going to shut it down. He volunteered to do it. All they ask you to do is just walk out. They know you are a friend of Keebles. When they come to the door, all they ask you is just to get out."

I said, "No, I won't do it. You tell them I won't do it. I will clean them just as fast as they come in the door until they get me." There were fifty or sixty of them. "But," I said, "they can't shut this place down until they clean me."

They went to the saloon and got some more whiskey and got their nerve up again and came down and Nibbs stuck his foot over the door sill. He looked into the six-shooter and backed off and said, "That fool Welch is in there. I don't want to be the one."

So they went and got some more whiskey and came back again. They said they wanted us to reconsider it. They wanted to clean up the mill. I said, "Well, you just have to get rid of me first."

Nibbs went back and told them the third time. They said, "Well, all right. Tell him we will wait until 7 o'clock in the morning, and we want him to have Doc Keebles here."

I said, "I will have him here and Doc will tell you to go ahead and clean the mill up and sell the amalgam, and we will give you a letter to the bank that it is all right to buy it because the mill isn't paying more than \$1.25 per ton."

They came down at 7 o'clock. I blew the whistle and Doc was there and he said, "Welch tells me you want to clean up the mill. It is all right, boys. We just can't catch the gold. We know the gold is in the rock, but we just can't make it catch on the plates."

So they cleaned it up and sent Nibbs Bennett to Del Norte with it. And Nibbs got down there to Del Norte and gave the bank the letter from Keebles that it said it was all right to buy this amalgam. A. P. Camp and John McNeal were the bankers—that same bank that is in Durango. They bought the amalgam of Nibbs and gave him \$180.00.

Evidently he thought, "That won't do. There are 150 men maybe. This won't do much good—but it will do me a whole lot of good." And he hiked out for St. Louis.

Well, Nibbs had betrayed the boys. When they found it out they came and shook hands with me and thanked me and said, "Welch, you are the only sane one there is in the bunch. We sure got drunk that night and gave the gold to Nibbs and sent him to Del Norte. Now he is gone, so we ain't bettered ourselves a bit."

Still they felt Keebles could get the gold, so they laid a mine under Keeble's office—that is, put dynamite under there, and laid a fuse to it and was going to blow him up. Well, McDuffey told me about this and he says, "I couldn't sit here and see them blow Doc Keebles or you up. I sleep up in the office myself. I couldn't do it."

Of course the mill was practically just ready to shut down. Credit was all gone. So I sent Harry Keebles to tell his father to get out—and get out before midnight. I said, "And you stay in the mill tonight." I expected they would blow the office up that night.

Harry told his father and his father sent for me to come up. He wanted to know something about this. I went up and told Doc. I said, "They are still sore. They have a shot under the office here now and I am afraid they are going to set it off tonight. The best thing you can do is get out and go."

It was twelve miles down to Howard's at the foot of the hill. Doc said, "All right." And he walked that twelve miles down to Howard's and got Howard to take him on down to Venable's stage station below Del Norte fifteen miles. There he took the stage for Pueblo and the train from Pueblo to Iowa. Harry Keebles missed his father very much and when I went to work and earned a little money I let Harry have money to go home on. He had tried to protect his father and his interests and everything there . . .

The next season there was nothing doing at the San Juan mill, and probably the next. In 1878 I went to Silverton, Colorado, above Durango, on the Animas River. (To be continued.)

#### OLD FORT GARLAND PIONEER DAY

Residents of the San Luis Valley and members of the staff of the State Historical Society, according to custom, celebrated Old Fort Garland Pioneer Day with a picnic at Fort Garland State Historical Monument, on Sunday, August 26.

Members of the local committee were: Luther A. Bean, Regional Vice President, State Historical Society, Alamosa; E. F. Smith, Blanca, Master of Ceremonies; Mrs. Belinda Carpenter, San Luis; Henry Lague, Monte Vista; Mrs. Murray Daniels, Antonito; and William Hoagland, Curator of the Monument.

Following a picnic dinner on the Old Parade Ground, a program was given in which Dr. James Grafton Rogers, President of the State Historical Society, gave the main address. Mr. Rogers paid high tribute to the American soldier and sketched the life and background of the pioneer soldiers who were quartered at Fort Garland in the early days. Music was furnished by the 179th Army Band in charge of Chief Warrant Officer Thomas G. Reid of Fort Carson. The Costilla County Civil Air Patrol, under the direction of Major Ernest Lyckman, conducted the Flag-Raising Ceremony.

Before and after the program, visitors inspected the various buildings of Old Fort Garland, and were high in their praise of the splendid care which is being given this field installation by William Hoagland, Curator, and Mrs. Hoagland.