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The Founding of Durango, Colorado

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The first stake for the survey of the city of Durango was driven by Charles M. Perin on September 13, 1880,[1] hence Durango will reach the semi-centennial of its founding this fall. It was located not as the result of the growth of the early settlements of pioneers as they came into the country in quest of gold, but by the fiat of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad, which decided to locate its railroad depot one and one-half miles below Animas City, which at that time was a flourishing town of between two and three thousand population, with many stores and its own newspaper, *The Weekly Southwest.*

When it was known that a new city was to be built on the Animas at the coming of the railroad, a party of capitalists, of whom Dr. William A. Bell of Colorado Springs was one, endeavored to buy the land south of Animas City, which was held as a homestead, and to lay it out into town lots. Failing to come to an agreement with the owner of the homestead in regard to price, the land constituting South Durango was homesteaded by John W. Gutherey, George L. Hitchings, James C. Cook, Eliza Duggan, Soloman Keck, and Benjamin Holmes, and was subsequently turned over to the town company, which was incorporated on September 27, 1884, as the Durango Land and Coal Company, in order to give title to the lots which had been sold. The town was named after Durango, Mexico. The suggestion for this name appears to have come from Governor Hunt, a stockholder of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad, who had recently travelled in Mexico.

Prior to the founding of Durango, considerable history had been made in the San Juan Basin. Spanish prospectors had visited the region in the latter half of the 18th century, Rivera's expedi-

*Mrs. Ayres was born in Denver and lives in Durango today. She graduated from the University of Colorado with the Class of 1900. In 1905 she married Arthur W. Ayres, who had gone to Durango as a boy in 1882 and has witnessed much of the historical development of the city. Her father, R. E. Sloan of Durango, served under Gen. W. J. Palmer through the Civil War and subsequently aided him in building the Kansas Pacific and then the Denver and Rio Grande to Durango. He early entered business at Durango, where his firm is today the oldest mercantile establishment. Mrs. Ayres, in addition to gathering pioneer reminiscences, has gone through the early newspaper files for contemporary data. The Durango Reading Club, members of the D. A. R. and pioneers have also furnished data. She presents here an interesting and accurate account of the picturesque history of early Durango. The story was read to a number of Durango pioneers and was indorsed by them.—Ed.

[1] *The Durango Record,* April 28, 1881.

tion coming in 1765. When Father Escalante came in 1776—the year of American Independence—the river upon which Durango is located was already known to the Spaniards of New Mexico and had been named by them the "Rio de las Animas" (River of Souls).

In 1860, the year following the famous Pike's Peak gold rush, Charles Baker led prospectors to the San Juan Mountains, but the first finds were disappointing and there was much suffering and some loss of life. In the early seventies there was important mining development in the San Juan Mountains and a number of towns and camps sprang into life. The region was all Ute Indian territory, but in response to the demands of the miners the Brunot Treaty was negotiated and was signed in September, 1873, whereby the Utes relinquished their rights to the mining region.

Chief Ignacio, acting for the Southern Utes, and John Moss, acting as agent for Parrott and Company of San Francisco, California, had previously made a treaty which secured peaceful possession of thirty-six square miles of territory in the La Plata Mountains, sixteen miles west of Durango.

The first page of the record books of the County Clerk of La Plata County, dated April 13, 1874, records a meeting of claim holders and miners held at Parrott City at which John Moss was elected recorder, certain by-laws were passed and the California Mining District was organized, with Richard Giles as president. Parrott City was then a flourishing mining town which remained the county seat of La Plata County until November, 1881, when it was removed to Durango, as most of the citizens had gone there to live. By that time Durango had absorbed most of the population of Animas City also.

That Animas City had not dreamed that Durango would ever supplant her is shown by an item in the Animas City *Southwest* of May 1, 1880, which reads: "The Bank of San Juan has issued a circular in which it is stated that a branch office will be opened at the 'new town of Durango on the Rio Animas.' Where the 'new town of Durango' is to be or not to be God and the D. and R. G. Railroad only know. If they are in 'cahoots' we ask for a special dispensation." How quickly the town was discovered is shown by an item in the first number of the Durango *Daily Record* of December 29th of the same year, which reads: "All of Animas City is coming to Durango as fast as accommodations can be secured. Even the *Southwest* is coming, despite its small opinions of our dimensions. It will move down some time next week."

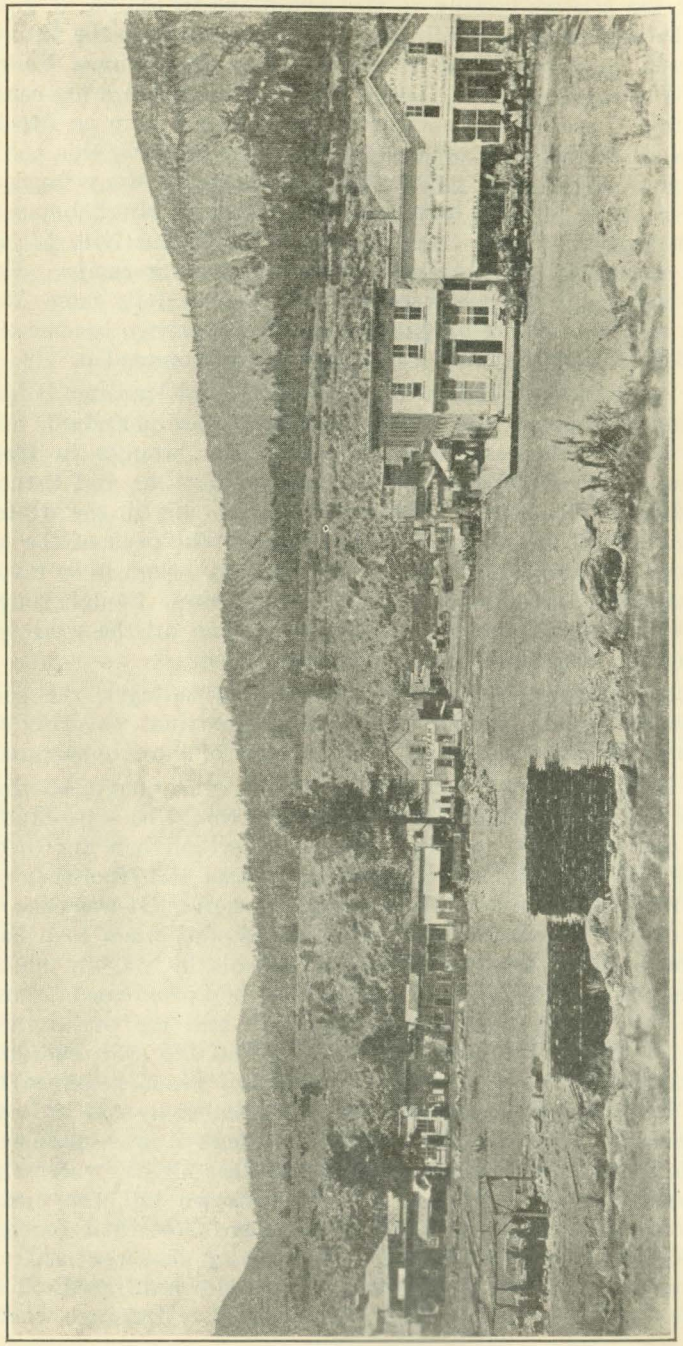
It was no doubt the news of the inexhaustible mineral wealth of the gold country around Durango, told of by the early pioneers, which was the making of Animas City and its successor, Durango.

Many of the settlers coming to the mountains in search of gold, feeling the need of an agricultural country at or near to the mining camps, left the hills and drifted down into the Animas Valley north of Durango. In 1873 Robert Dwyer wintered in a log cabin on Junction Creek, in the part of Durango now known as Brookside. As Brookside was annexed to Durango in 1893, this cabin was undoubtedly the first cabin built in Durango. Many farmers had now come to join the first three, Seth Sackett, Hugh Lambert and Dick Gaines, attracted by the wonderful productivity of the soil and the ready market afforded by the mining camps. For several years regular stages were run to Silverton daily from Animas City and with the coming of the railroad Durango became the supply depot of all the mining camps which surrounded it.

The cattle industry had also grown up around Durango before the coming of the railroad. Feed and water were abundant, and as many as five thousand head of cattle were brought in from Texas and from other parts of Colorado at one time and turned loose to run in the valleys. Those that did not die in the winter were rounded up and branded in the spring. The peak of the industry was from 1877 to 1887, when the country began to be taken up for ranches. The cowboys added a picturesque though rough element to Durango's early population, enacting all the wild life which we now know only in fiction and the movies.

In the category of Durango's natural advantages, the coal fields underlying and surrounding it in all directions, covering an area 75 by 100 miles in extent, were perhaps of most importance.

The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad became convinced that a road to the southwestern part of the state would be a profitable venture and so started to build toward Silverton, then known as Baker's Park. In 1880 the road reached Chama and from then on the growth of the new town of Durango was rapid. It was easy to haul goods one hundred miles for the new stores, when they had been accustomed to hauling them from Pueblo by wagon, taking three weeks on the way and making roads as they progressed. Many tales are told of the loads they brought in and the prices they received for them. The Durango paper of Feb. 26, 1881, contains the account of the arrival of the first piano, which belonged to Mrs. C. M. Williams. It was shipped in November by rail to Bear Creek, then the terminal of the railroad, where it was entrusted to a mule team. Three miles this side of Bear Creek, where the road capped the upper rim of a boulder strewn hill, the piano lurched and the mules, with their precious box, lost their footing and rolled to the bottom of the hill. The packing case was battered to kindling wood, but the piano and mules were uninjured. The piano was finally rescued and safely transported to Durango where



DURANGO IN 1881

The First National Bank corner, looking west. The Animas River runs along the base of the bluff in the background. The tall pine near the center is the one from which the first hanging took place.

at the Williams home on Railroad and C Street it gave great pleasure to the music-hungry townspeople.

Durango as first laid out was almost entirely a box tent town, except for a few small stores and restaurants, and a number of saloons and dancehalls. In December the first newspaper gave the population, permanent and transient, in and about the town, including the army of railroad graders in the immediate vicinity, as from about 2500 to 3000 people, for whose shelter about five hundred buildings had been erected, to say nothing about the numerous tents, dugouts, etc., which adorned the river banks. Bruce Hunt, son of Governor Hunt, opened in October, 1880, the first stock of goods ever offered for sale in Durango, having brought in a wholesale and retail stock of furniture 150 miles from the end of the railroad by bull teams, so as to be there on the completion of the road.

The *Durango Record* of April, 1881, enumerating the advantages of Durango as a place of residence states that there were six stores carrying dry goods and general stocks, three drug stores, four hardware stores, three wholesale and retail groceries, one furniture store, one bank and one smelter, five lumber companies, four brickyards, twelve firms dealing in real estate and mines, four livery stables, six hotels, twelve restaurants, six lodging houses, four bakeries, six meat markets, three fruit and confectionery stores, three saddlery and harness shops, three paint shops, three blacksmith shops, two tailor shops, two shoe shops, four news depots and cigar stands, three barber shops, three stage and express companies, two wholesale liquor establishments and twenty-five saloons, and as a concession to the fair sex, one millinery store, four jewelry stores and one dressmaker.

To look after the amusement needs of the town there were two theatres, one on the variety order known as the "Coliseum" and another called "The Clipper." The actors for these theatres were imported from Denver and Leadville. The Coliseum was 25 by 90 feet, with a stage 18 by 25 feet and could accommodate 400 people. The upper floor was divided into boxes, with a wine room in the rear, and the lower floor was fitted up with chairs and there was a bar attached where liquor was served. It was in this building a few months later that the unprovoked murder of James K. Polk Prindle occurred, which lead to subsequent lynching of his murderer, Henry Moorman, on the tall pine opposite the First National Bank. (Shown in the illustration.)

The supply of drinking water came from a spring located in North Durango on the grounds of the present State Fish Hatchery. This part of the city, lying between 13th and 19th Streets, had been homesteaded by Peter Fassbinder and later divided into town

lots. At his own expense he built a bridge to connect North and South Durango, and his house, still the family home, built in 1878, is the oldest existing house in Durango. A pipe was laid across the river at 2nd Street to convey the water to South Durango, where it was barrelled and peddled around town, selling for twenty-five cents a barrel. To take care of the needs of the town in case of fire, two large cisterns were built and a pump installed on the river to pump water for them. One of these cisterns was on the First National Bank corner at 9th Street.

When the First National Bank (then Daniels, Brown and Co.) was built, it was the last building to the south. The rest of the business section extended from that corner up to 12th Street. The First National Bank started at Del Norte as the Bank of San Juan. It came to Animas City and set up in a grocery store with a folding table and a chair. It bought lots at Durango at the first auction and has been there ever since. The first bank building was of frame, reinforced for several feet from the ground with brick as a protection from stray bullets. The larger portion of the town was west of the bank and consisted mostly of saloons and dance-halls.

The first postoffice building was just behind the First National Bank Building and began its existence some time in 1881. The first mails were brought from Alamosa to Animas via Pagosa Springs and then taken to Durango by anyone who happened to be going in that direction, and dumped into a cracker box in the rear of Harry Schiffer's store, where they were hunted out by anyone expecting a communication. This cracker-box postoffice opened Nov. 20, 1880, but was officially established Jan. 3, 1881. As the cancellation of stamps for the first quarter of the year 1881 amounted to $633.65, it was not long before Durango had rented its first postoffice building, with W. M. Keightley as postmaster and C. W. Cornell as assistant. Waiving the rule that to issue money orders a postoffice must have been in existence one year, Durango was made a postoffice of the second class and was given a permit on July 1, 1881, to issue money orders. The first county officers, as given in the *Daily Record,* were: County Judge, J. F. Hechtman; Clerk and Recorder, John Reid; Sheriff, Luke Hunter; Treasurer, A. R. Lewis; Assessor, C. B. Jackson; Superintendent of Schools, W. N. Rohrer; Coroner, Oliver Wright, and State Representative, D. L. Sheets. J. L. Pennington was appointed the first mayor and served until the city election in May, 1881, when John Taylor took office. The first meeting of the mayor and board of trustees was held May 16, 1881.

The first newspaper published in Durango, *The Durango Record,* made its appearance on Dec. 29, 1880, using the plant of

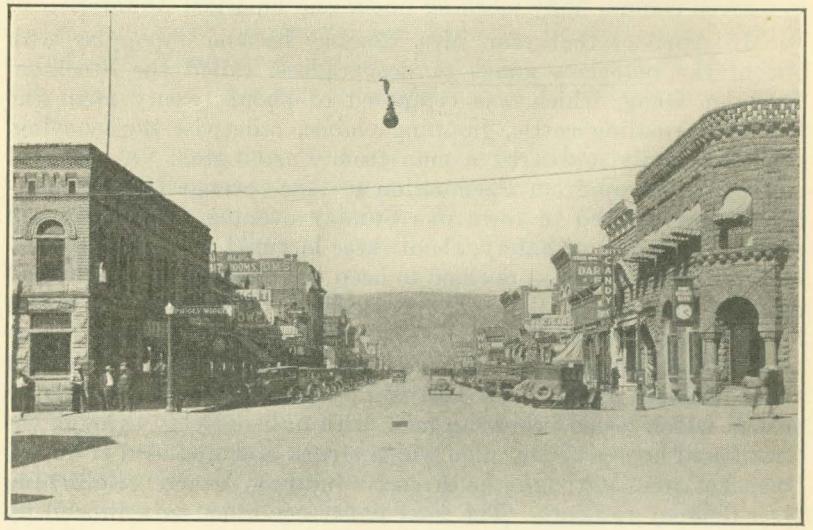
the *Leadville Clipper,* which Governor Hunt had purchased and shipped to Durango. As there was no building available to house the plant and an unbroken sheet of snow about twelve inches in depth covered the lot selected for the new office, the snow was shoveled off and a tent put up with sawdust for a floor covering. It was necessary to use a small job press. A large stove was set up in the center of the tent with the compositor's racks placed in a circle around the stove and the press. The force consisted of Mrs. Romney, editor; George Westcott, business manager; George Clark, city editor; and Tandy Hughes, Joseph A. Townsend, Joe Magnus, Charles I. Valiton and Miss Annie E. Willard. The little paper, printed every afternoon, was a four column, four page paper. The first number contained an account of two shooting scrapes. On Jan. 10th they moved into the building which had been erected for them on 2nd Avenue. The paper then changed to a seven column daily morning paper and enlarged its force.

In April of that year, Mrs. Romney became unpopular with one of the notorious gangs of desperadoes, called the Stockton-Eskridge Gang, which was composed of about twenty men who had been rustling cattle, jumping claims, otherwise misbehaving, and had finally murdered a man from Farmington. A party of cowboys came up from Farmington to take revenge for this murder. They arrived in town one Sunday evening just in time to see the Committee of Safety, about three hundred in number, lynching Henry Moorman, so decided to keep out of sight that night and rode on to Animas City. The next day they decided to return to Farmington as the Vigilantes were patrolling the streets. However, the Stockton gang discovered them riding southward along the mesa south of Reservoir Hill and opened fire. A pitched battle ensued which lasted nearly an hour with bullets flying through the streets and houses of Durango which struck and wounded two men. One shot went through the *Record* Building, nearly frightening Mrs. Romney to death. The next paper contained an editorial by Mrs. Romney, demanding that the citizens call a mass meeting to draft plans to get rid of this gang, stating they were a menace to the citizens. The meeting was called and a resolution was adopted notifying the Stockton-Eskridge gang to leave Durango.

Later in the day, Ike Stockton and Harg Eskridge made a trip to the newspaper office demanding to see the author of the editorial. They were surprised to find a frightened but plucky woman. They demanded that she retract, which she refused to do. They left the office stating that if she had been a man they would have forced her to retract and that from that moment on they were deadly enemies of the *Record* force. That night a guard was placed around the office and for ten days the printers worked with re-

volvers strapped on them and a dozen rifles within handy reach in the corners of the composing room. However, the Committee of Safety had by that time become well organized and quiet was restored. Warrants were issued for the arrest of the gang and they fled the town. The Eskridge boys left the country and the Stocktons were both killed in later shooting scrapes.

The *Record* of Jan. 10, 1881, contained the notice that Rev. C. M. Hoge, of the Episcopal Church, had arrived from Ouray and would hold service at one of the hotels the following Sunday. This was the first church service held in the city of Durango. By April there were five clergymen representing the Episcopal, Congregational, Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist churches, as well as Father Brennan, who was to conduct services in the Catholic church which was already started. The honors for the erection of the first



DURANGO TODAY
(Looking north on Main Street)

church building must go to the Episcopal church, which opened its building on Feb. 27, 1881, and on May 8th following announced a service at which time their new organ would be heard.

The first school was held in the Episcopal church building, but later a four-room building, called the Longfellow school, was built and was ready for occupancy in February, 1882. There were, according to available records, 30 pupils who attended the first school in Durango. Miss Pearl Gaines and Mrs. Ballard were the teachers. Mr. E. E. Fox was the first principal, coming to Durango

from Animas City, where he had previously taught. He retained his position until his death in 1885. During these years his corps of teachers included Mrs. Ballard, Miss Gaines, Mrs. Sarah Trew and Mrs. McKenzie. In 1884 Mrs. S. W. Pingrey was added. At the school election held on May 2, 1881, the following board was elected: D. McFadden, president; William Bayly, secretary, and W. B. Carter, treasurer.

The start of the smelting industry, which through all these years has been the mainstay of Durango's prosperity, was made with the "San Juan and New York Smelter," which is said to have started with one furnace which had a capacity of forty tons and employed twenty men. The principal Durango owners were John A. Porter and J. H. Ernest Waters. This smelter was later taken over by the American Smelting and Refining Company, which still operates it.

The first wedding was that of James Luttrell and Mrs. Katherine Wittman, which was performed by Rev. B. M. Adams on the 27th of November, 1880, at the home of the bride in Durango.

The first baby in Durango was born on January 31, 1881, and was Mary Isabelle Pearson, the daughter of John and Ella Pearson. All the business houses, as well as the saloons and gambling places, presented gifts and there was a regular pilgrimage to see her. Among her gifts were a horse and saddle and two building lots. This celebration was duly chronicled by the *Police Gazette* of New York City in a profusely illustrated article.

The first telegraph lines were completed to Durango July 30, 1881, and the first telegram was sent out to the press of the country on that day, before a building was ready to house the wires. It sent greetings to the nation and stated that the Denver and Rio Grande would reach Durango the first of August and a grand celebration would be held on the fifth.

The celebration held on the fifth proceeded without a number of the distinguished guests, as their special train was held up by high water and did not arrive until the next day. However, Governor Pitkin had arrived in advance of the special train and made his speech. The celebration began at ten a. m. with a big parade to the fairgrounds at Fifth and Tenth Streets, where a race track had been built. The ceremonies were opened by Mayor J. L. Pennington, who introduced Governor Pitkin. Later in the day, many races were run. The ladies of Durango served a grand barbecue free to all comers, which is said to have consisted of five whole oxen and a dozen sheep, besides two wagon loads of bread and biscuit and four barrels of coffee. At eleven-forty in the evening, the special train arrived and the next day the citizens, in order not to seem lacking in hospitality, put on another day's celebration.

Among the noted guests were Governor F. W. Pitkin, Ex-Governor Hunt, Ex-Governor Evans and General W. J. Palmer, each of whom made short addresses. The celebration concluded with a grand ball held at the smelter, then just ready to install its machinery, and which was the only place large enough to accommodate the crowds. Five hundred people attended the ball. The Durango band furnished the music for dancing and supper was served in relays of one hundred people from eleven until three.

On July 13th of the following year, the road was finished to Silverton and the long dreamed-of connection with the outside world was given to the pioneers.

Days of the Cattlemen in Northeastern Colorado[1]

J. N. Hall[2]

In most newly settled countries it has been the stockmen who have led the van of settlement. In Colorado the miners hold the first place, but a more enduring support was soon given to the young territory from these great pastures stretching to the eastward from the Rocky Mountains. By midsummer of 1873 there were settled in the vicinity of present Sterling the eight men whose names are inscribed on the bronze tablet erected in their honor. One of these sturdy settlers still lives, full of years and honor, W. Lee Henderson, of Huntington Beach, California.

Before transportation systems are developed the only exportable product is one that can furnish its own transportation. Vast areas of the world's surface are still in this stage of development. To the early settlers we are indebted for the taking over of these fertile lands from the Indians, and for the initial steps in preparing for the later agricultural development. This valley had been a cattle country for ages, but it was occupied by the buffalo, the "humped oxen" described by Coronado and other early Spanish explorers. It is interesting to note that the "cattle upon a thousand hills" of the days of Abraham were also "humped cattle" of the type now domesticated in the Far East and in India, and not our European varieties.

[1]This is taken from an address delivered by Dr. J. N. Hall in June, 1929, at the dedication, in the courthouse at Sterling, Colorado, of a memorial tablet to the pioneer stockmen of Northeastern Colorado. The tablet was furnished by Dr. Hall and W. Lee Henderson and was presented under the auspices of the Elbridge Gerry Chapter of the D. A. R. Inscribed on the bronze tablet are the names of the following pioneer stockmen: Jared L. Brush, William S. Hadfield, Milton P. Henderson, W. Lee Henderson, John W. Iliff, Sanford S. Kempton, James S. Moore, and Martin H. Smith.—Ed.

[2]Dr. Hall was the pioneer physician of Sterling, Colorado, from 1883 to 1892. His wife, Mrs. Carrie Ayres Hall, was the first school teacher in Sterling. Dr. Hall lives and practices in Denver today. He recently established with the State Historical Society of Colorado the Mrs. J. N. Hall Foundation, the proceeds from which are being used in the marking of historical sites in Colorado.—Ed.

Neither the horse nor the cow was native to the Western continent. The prehistoric horse, the little five-toed *eohippus,* whose remains are common in the West, with his spreading five-toed foot suitable for feeding on marshy ground, became extinct ages ago. No prehistoric remains of cattle comparable to our domestic type are found.

Our present semi-native stocks of horses and cattle, introduced some four centuries ago, and best exemplified by the long-horned cattle of Mexico and of Texas and by the bronchos of those regions, are descended from cattle and horses brought from Spain as far back as the time of Cortez and Pizarro. Escaping from control, in the course of centuries they multiplied until a hundred years ago, wild as the deer and the buffalo, they covered the great southwestern plains. The horses, descended from Spanish and Moorish stock, have been transformed in the last century by the introduction of improved strains of blood. The lighter types draw their qualities from the horses of Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri, while the heavy draft animals derive their size and strength largely from the horses of Europe.

How strange that the adoption of steel armor nearly a thousand years ago should have led to the breeding of larger horses in Normandy, that the fighting knights might have battle chargers able to carry the increased weight, and that this proud stock should furnish us, through the Percheron-Normans, one of our greatest draft breeds. It is stated that the white-spotted horses, the pintos of the Spaniards, coming to us for generations from Oregon and Idaho, owe their color and most of their better qualities to the Arab grades shipped in sailing vessels around Cape Horn by John Jacob Astor about 1810. He planned to improve the scrubby Indian ponies of the Columbia River valley to provide better transport animals for the fur traders.

Less than fifty years ago, in this very city [Sterling], stockmen distinguished between bronchos and American horses, the latter coming from eastern stock. We look upon the plains Indians as great horsemen. The Crows were especially famous in the time of Lewis and Clark. Yet they have possessed horses for only about two hundred years.

Fifty years ago our western cattle were nearly all Texas longhorns. I have seen them crowded together down the main street of this city seeking shelter from a northerly storm, until I dared not try to visit my office. The clashing of their horns is one of the sounds most distinct in my memory. In the then condition of the cattle industry they filled an important place. But shortly the introduction of improved beef strains altered the entire situation.

The changes in women's apparel in the last generation have been no more spectacular than the changes of style as to livestock.

From about 1868 until the early '80s vast herds of Texas longhorns walked their weary way from down by the Mexican border to Abilene, Dodge City, and other railhead cities in Kansas, as the Kansas Pacific and the Santa Fe pushed their lines westward. The last droves came chiefly to Ogallala, one hundred miles east of us. These hardy cattle swam, or in the dry seasons forded, the Brazos, and the Red River, the Salt Fork, the Canadian, and the Cimarron. They plodded through desert stretches for days at a time without water. Stampeded by storms and tornadoes, decimated by the night attacks of hostile Indians, and the outlaws of the then Indian territory, they held their steady northward course. These cattle stocked our western plains, and the money received for them restored Texas after the neglect and the devastation of the Civil War period.

Some of my earliest recollections of this region are of long-strung-out herds of these cattle, footsore and weary after their two-thousand-mile drive, still "slogging" northward. A few lame ones brought up the rear, with perhaps a steer with one leg swollen from a rattlesnake bite. A group of bronzed, hard-bitten horsemen guided their course.

The saddle stock of this region came largely over this same route, though many Indian ponies were already on the ground. My early practice here was entirely on horseback, as no real roads existed. My first horse was a nervous, wiry Texas broncho, weighing but seven hundred pounds. Yet Bob Smith later rode him eighty miles in nine hours after a band of wild horses. The second was an Indian pony, lighter by one hundred pounds, broken by Indians to mount from the offside, and still a little shy of the white man's customs. He was small and insignificant to look at, but the best horse I ever rode in very rough ground or in the quicksand of the South Platte river. As there was only one bridge in two hundred miles, this was a matter of some importance.

The western horse has been one of the indispensable elements in the settlement and development of the region, and he deserves all the credit we can give him. The history of the Pony Express tells of some of his deeds. Fed with grain and well cared for, he was so much superior in speed and endurance to the Indian ponies that no single rider who obeyed his strict instructions to fly rather than fight was ever captured.

The cattle and horse business brought with it from the far Southwest the Spanish terms which identify the whole industry as of Spanish origin. We have for example such words as "riata," "chaparejos," "sombrero," and "corral," and the Spanish bits

and spurs, as reminders of the descent of the industry from the riders of Coronado's day.

Our pioneer stockmen fill a most honorable place in the history of this valley. They laid the first foundation stones of its development and we delight to honor them and to perpetuate their names on this memorial tablet.

Fraeb's Last Fight and How Battle Creek Got Its Name

LeRoy R. Hafen

Henry Fraeb, partner in the famous Rocky Mountain Fur Company and subsequently proprietor of Fort Jackson on the South Platte River, was a leader of mountain men during the most active days of the fur trade in the central Rockies. Northern Colorado was his chosen field; here he clung with great persistence, and here he was to make his last fight.

Fraeb, whose name was usually rendered "Frapp" by his trapper companions, was a German from St. Louis, Missouri. Of his early life nothing has yet come to light, nor can we tell the year of his first entry into the fur trade of the far West. He is mentioned as a leader of independent trappers in 1829,[1] and he soon comes into more definite prominence as one of the five men who on August 4, 1830, bought out Smith, Jackson, and (William) Sublette for $30,000 and organized the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.[2] His partners in this venture were Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, Jim Bridger, and Jean Baptiste Gervais. All were seasoned fur men and had been closely associated for a number of years. In three seasons the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was to send 210 packs of beaver skins to market (a pack was about 80 skins), which would pay its indebtedness and leave the partners with their outfit in the clear.[3]

During the season of 1830-1, Fraeb and Gervais took their party of men into northern Colorado, trapping in Middle Park and vicinity. Upon returning to the summer rendezvous on Green River, southwestern Wyoming, they met the other brigade leaders, but found that Fitzpatrick, who had gone back to the states for supplies and trade goods for the company, had not yet come in. Blankets were worn out, ammunition nearly exhausted, knives and traps were scarce and tobacco and whiskey were gone.

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[1]Frances F. Victor, *The River of the West,* 57.

[2]The document exhibiting this transfer is in the Sublette Collection of the Missouri Historical Society at St. Louis. N. J. Wyeth says, in his *Correspondence and Journals,* 74, that the transfer price was $30,000. A note for $16,000 was accepted as part payment.—H. C. Dale, *The Ashley-Smith Explorations,* 288.

[3]Wyeth, *op cit.,* 74.

Everyone grew restless. At last Fraeb, who, like many other trappers, had picked up some of the superstitions of the Indian, sought out a medicine man of the Crows, to get prophetic wisdom. Being a true professional man, the Crow oracle required a generous fee, of the value of a horse or two, before he could make medicine. With this requisite provided, the ceremony began and after several nights of singing, dancing, violent contortions, and the beating of drums, the exhausted medicine man fell asleep. When he awoke he announced that "Broken Hand" (Fitzpatrick) was not dead but was on the wrong road. Thus encouraged, Fraeb determined to find him, and taking a few companions set out forthwith.[4] The long-absent partner was found and brought to the rendezvous.

The years 1832 and 1833 found Fraeb with his party of trappers again in the Colorado Rockies. While in South Park, Mr. Guthrie, one of the trappers, was killed by lightning. The men had gathered in Fraeb's lodge and Guthrie was leaning against one of the lodge poles when the lightning struck. "Frapp rushed out of the lodge partly bewildered himself by the shock," says Joe Meek, "and under the impression that Guthrie had been shot. Frapp was a German, and spoke English somewhat imperfectly. In the excitement of the moment he shouted out, 'Py Gott, who did shoot Guttery?' 'G— a'Mighty, I expect; He's firing into camp.' drawled out Hawkins, whose ready wit was very disregardful of sacred names and subjects."[5]

After the rendezvous of 1833 Fraeb took twenty men and with "Old Bill" Williams as guide went down the Green River to trap.[6] Meek reports meeting the party as far south as Bill Williams Fork of the Colorado, in present Arizona.[7] Though far afield, as these trapping parties were wont to go, they managed to return to the regular summer gathering place.

In the early thirties, competition had become very keen in the fur trade of the far West. The great American Fur Company, founded by John Jacob Astor and backed by his genius and financial resources was winning the field from Fraeb and his partners. In addition, there was competition from the companies of Bonneville, Wyeth, Gant & Blackwell, Bent & St. Vrain, and lesser independent organizations, not to mention the powerful Hudson's Bay Company of Great Britain. The country was overrun with trappers, and the beaver streams were being depleted of furs. In addition there had been introduced in the style centers of London and

[4]Victor, *op. cit.*, 99-101.

[5]*Ibid.*, 158. Mrs. Victor or Meek makes out the year of this incident as 1834, but in a letter written by Thomas Fitzpatrick from Hams Fork of Green River, November 13, 1833, he says: "Mr. Gutheru was killed last fall by lightning and Biggs since supplied his place."—Sublette Mss., Missouri Historical Society.

[6]Fitzpatrick's letter of November 13, 1833, cited above.

[7]Victor, *op. cit.*, 152-3.

New York the silk hat, which was beginning to replace the beaver hat and thus further to reduce the market and the price of beaver skins.

At the summer rendezvous of 1834 the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was dissolved.[8] Fraeb received for his interest "forty head of horse beast, forty beaver traps, eight guns, and one thousand dollars' worth of merchandise."[9] During the two following years he most probably continued as an independent fur man.

Fraeb was wedded to the frontier; he could not return permanently to the settlements. Accordingly, he decided to turn to the buffalo robe trade and try it as a substitute for or supplement to the beaver skin business. He formed a partnership with another old-time trader, Peter A. Sarpy, and in the spring of 1837 they obtained a stock of trade goods from Pratte, Chouteau & Co. of St. Louis, brought them out to the South Platte, and established Fort Jackson. This trading post—located on the east bank of the South Platte near the present town of Ione, Colorado—began competition with its near neighbors, Forts Lupton, Vasquez, and St. Vrain. The story of Fort Jackson has been presented previously in this magazine (February, 1928), so we shall not re-tell it here. Suffice it to say that after two seasons of trade Fraeb and Sarpy sold their fort and goods to Bent and St. Vrain, who were already operating Fort Bent on the Arkansas and Fort St. Vrain on the South Platte.

In 1840 Fraeb and Jim Bridger formed a partnership and with thirty men set out, presumably, to trade and trap on the waters of the Columbia River.[10] But their old-time haunts seemed more alluring and soon they were again in the valley of the Green River, Wyoming. Here they established a trading post in 1841.[11] While Bridger was at the post, Fraeb led a party of trappers toward northern Colorado to "make meat" and get furs. On the Green River, in July, he met the first overland emigrants bound for California (the Bartleson party) and the Catholic missionaries headed

[8]The articles of dissolution are reproduced in H. M. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, 864.

[9]*Ibid.*, 304.

[10]Letter of W. L. Sublette to Sir William D. Stewart, September, 1842—Sublette Mss., Missouri Historical Society. It is probable that Louis Vasquez was in the partnership also. Basil Clement, who went up the Missouri River in 1840 and to Fort Laramie with Louis Vasquez in the spring of 1841, was in the Fraeb fight and speaks of "the three partners." See the *South Dakota Historical Collections*, XI, 282, 288, 291. We know that Vasquez was Bridger's partner at Fort Bridger after Fraeb's death.

[11]The location of this post is uncertain. Stansbury, who got his account from Bridger in 1850, says (in his *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake*, etc., p. 240) that Fraeb's fight occurred while Bridger was erecting his "trading-post on Green River." Basil Clement, an employe of Fraeb and Bridger at the time, after telling of the fight, says (*So. Dak. His. Coll.* XI, 291): "Bridger was not with us in the fight, he was at Fort Bridger on the Black Fork." If this is true it would place the founding of Fort Bridger two years earlier than the generally accepted date. W. L. Sublette, in writing to W. D. Stewart in September, 1842, *(op. cit.)* says that Fraeb was killed "whilst out making meat from the fort."

for Oregon, all being guided by his old-time partner, Thomas Fitzpatrick.[12]

In the valley of the Little Snake, a branch of the Yampa River, Fraeb with his white hunters and Snake Indian allies were menaced by a large party of Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Sioux. A pitched battle occurred in late August, 1841. A number of brief mentions of this fight have appeared in historical writings, but heretofore no good detailed or first hand accounts have been available. From Jim Baker, the picturesque Colorado pioneer, who had come out with the Bartleson party of emigrants and joined Fraeb's party at Green River, we get some interesting details. To an interviewer in 1886 Baker told the story:

"Shortly after I came out here the second time we were camped on the very creek where I live now—Snake River we called it then --and there we had a lively fight with a party of about 500 Sioux, Cheyennes and Arapahoes. The Arapahoes didn't do much fighting, but they urged the others on. There were twenty-three in our party, and I can give you the names of every one of them. Old Frappe was in command. The Indians made about forty charges on us, coming up to within ten or fifteen paces of us every time. Their object was to draw our fire, but old Frappe kept shouting, 'Don't shoot till you're sure. One at a time.' And so some of us kept loaded all the time. We made breastworks of our horses and hid behind stumps. Old Frappe was killed, and he was the ugliest looking dead man I ever saw, and I have seen a good many. His face was all covered with blood, and he had rotten front teeth and a horrible grin. When he was killed he never fell, but sat braced up against the stump, a sight to behold. Well, when the fight was over there were about a hundred dead Injuns. There were three of our party killed."[13]

A few years before his death Jim Baker gave to a Superintendent of Schools some additional data on the battle and its exact location: "It was the hardest battle I was ever in. It was not on that mountain [Battle Mountain], but down in the valley at the mouth of Battle Creek at its junction with the Snake. I can show you some of the rifle pits there yet. The whites with their allies, the Snakes, were fortified at that point. Many of the whites had married squaws of that tribe. Before the battle began they sent their squaws to a mountain south, at a point of safety, and where

[12]Father De Smet reports that Fraeb had just returned from California.—H. M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet*, etc., I, 300. This has not been verified. John Bidwell, of the emigrant party, says that Fraeb's party purchased a supply of trade whiskey from the emigrants.—*The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, XLI (New Series, XIX), 119.

[13]Denver *Tribune-Republican*, July 10, 1886.

they could watch the progress of the battle. The battlefield is in Routt County, less than a half mile from the Wyoming line. Their enemy, two tribes, Cheyennes and Arapahoes, came down Battle Creek and made the attack. Some were armed with rifles and some with bows and arrows. At that time they were scarcely out of the stone age. Would pay a good price for a barrel hoop to convert into knives and daggers. They fought all day, and no sooner did the enemy retreat up the creek than the whites and Snakes retreated to the mountain where the squaws were. From this circumstance that mountain has since been known as Squaw Mountain. Battle Mountain, Battle Creek, and Battle Lake, at the source of Battle Creek, took their names from this hard fought battle."[14]

The losses sustained by the enemy Indians could not be determined, for the Indians usually carry off their killed and wounded. Even in the reports of white losses there is some variance. The earliest accounts report the death of Fraeb and four of his men.[15]

[14]*Steamboat Pilot* (Steamboat Springs, Colorado), March 2, 1904.

[15]Rufus Sage was told by mountain men in September, 1841, that Fraeb and four of his men were killed. Two years later he visited the site of the engagement. See his *Rocky Mountain Life*, 52, 286. Sage says the enemy lost fifteen or twenty killed but drove off eighty head of horses. J. C. Fremont was told of the fight by Bridger and others in 1842. He reports that the enemy "Indians lost eight or ten warriors, and the whites had their leader and four men killed."—*Report of an Exploring Expedition*, etc., p. 40. Fremont passed the site of the battle on his return from California in 1844. W. L. Sublette in his letter of September, 1842, to Stewart (*op. cit.*) says Fraeb and three others were killed.

Capt. Howard Stansbury, guided near the site of the battle by Jim Bridger in 1850, was told of the fight by Fraeb's partner. Stansbury reports (in his *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake*, etc., p. 239) a preliminary fight and then the main attack about ten days later. Fraeb "had but forty men; but they instantly 'forted' in the corral attached to the trading post and stood on their defence. The assault lasted from noon until sundown, the Indians charging the picket several times with great bravery; but they were finally repulsed with the loss of forty men. Frappe himself was killed, with seven or eight of his people."

Basil Clement, who was in the fight, gives the following report in the *So. Dak. Hist. Coll.*, XI, 291: "We had a fight with the Sioux and Cheyennes there [on Little Snake River]. Old Frapp (Henry Fraeb) was killed there, he was one of the three partners. We went there (from Black's Creek) on a buffalo hunt to make jerked meat. We got meat of the Sioux and Cheyennes, with 47 men. After we had plenty of meat they made a dash for us. We defended ourselves. That was in the morning about 8 o'clock. This was about July, some time early in July. We fought them from the morning about 8 o'clock till dark. They killed ten of our men, and killed 110 head of horses that belonged to us; and of the 45 head of horses alive, there was only five not wounded. All that we had to protect us was dead horses. We made a fort of them. The next morning we fired guns and showed fight, for them to come out, but they wouldn't come. Then we made a cache and put the dried meat into it. This was my first year with Bridger. Bridger was not with us in the fight; he was at Fort Bridger on the Black Fork." The statements of Clement were obtained by Charles E. Deland in 1899 and 1909. Mr. Clement was born Jan. 7, 1824, and died Nov. 23, 1910.

Frontier Firearms

CHAUNCEY THOMAS*

Contrary to the general impression today, nursed by the movies and the so-called "Western" stories, there was but little need of firearms on the frontier by the emigrants during the California, the Mormon, and the Pikes Peak movements across the plains and over the mountains. The "Mountain Men," or early trappers and fur traders, of course, had daily need of firearms, but this was not the case with the early emigrants to the West, who had little trouble with the Indians and needed guns only as food getters.

But during the Civil War period conditions changed. The increase of whites on the plains, the destruction of the buffalo, and the civil strife among the whites altered matters. The Indian, seeing his land and his food supply rapidly vanishing under white invasion, took to war to save what was his own. Then, from about 1862 on, the whites did need firearms for protection and also for offense. Also by this time the criminal element among the whites was flocking to the frontier to escape punishment in civilization and to avoid army service. But even during these times not all men by any means carried firearms.

In this article I shall deal with firearms on the western frontier, by which I mean the region west of the Missouri. When a gun was invented, when placed on the market, and when widely used upon the frontier are, of course, successive dates. Here we are concerned primarily with the outstanding firearms generally used on the frontier.

The "Plains Rifle" was one of the unique weapons of the West. To better understand it let us look at its antecedents. In the forests of the East the rifle was of small bore, about 32 caliber, and with a very long, four to five foot, barrel, and shot a round ball with a light powder load. It was fired, like all other firearms in America, first with flint, then with percussion cap. It was almost universally single-barreled. The reason for this odd and apparently unreasonable combination was to give a very light "whip-like" report, a sound that might easily be mistaken for the breaking of a dry branch. This was much less likely to bring down a nearby foe upon the shooter, especially before he could slowly reload his rifle. And the game was small, and all at short range, usually about sixty yards or less. Thus, too, the lead could easily be recovered in the body of the game and remoulded, for lead was heavy to carry and very hard to get in the non-mineral regions where the forests stretched for hundreds of miles.

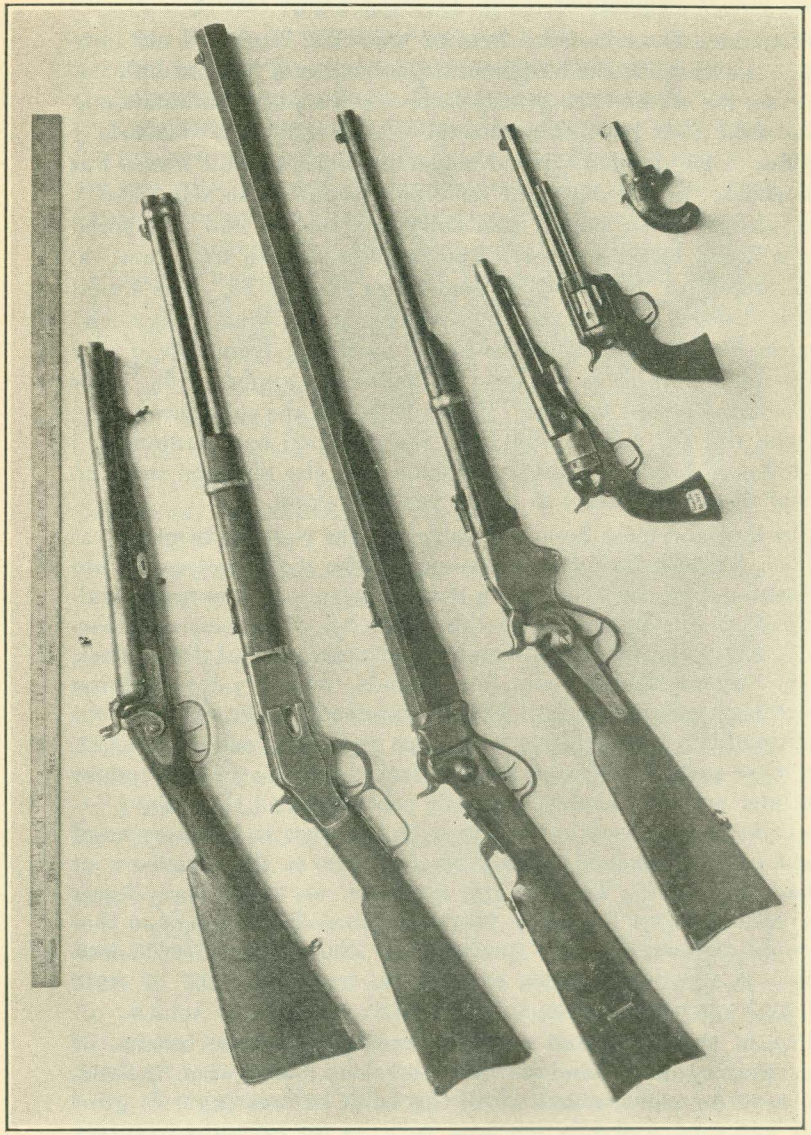
*Mr. Thomas, though a firearms expert, is best known as a short story writer, his famous "Snow Story" being a classic in the field. He is a man of the West, a student and champion of the frontier.—Ed.

Although the forestman used pack horses, he himself usually traveled on foot, hence he could readily carry this long and comparatively silent rifle. It was known mostly as the "Kentucky squirrel rifle," although of course by other names earlier.

But when this rifle came west of the "Big Muddy," out onto the open plains, with the buffalo and the horseman hard to kill, not to mention the elk and the grizzly bear—then a plains animal along the timbered river bottoms across the plains—this rifle was nearly worthless. Concealment was no longer possible, and all travel was on horseback. So the barrel of the rifle was cut off to about thirty inches, almost never longer than thirty-six inches, and was bored out to a much larger caliber. The smallest caliber was about 40 and it ranged up to 45 and 50, sometimes even to 60. The round ball was discarded as of too short range, and a long, heavy lead projectile was rammed down the barrel on top of from two to four times as much powder as was used in the former squirrel rifle. Now the rifle, transformed into the "Plains Rifle" of the collectors today, could and did kill buffalo, and kept the mounted hair-hunters and their 200-yard bows at a fighting distance, or else dropped the running war ponies as readily as it put an elk to grass.

The first and most famous revolver on the western frontier was the Colt. Though invented in the early '30s, it did not come into prominent use in the West for a decade or so. It was a cap-and-ball weapon, this being before the invention of the metallic cartridge. After the Mexican War this revolver was of three sizes, one very large, weighing about four pounds, too heavy for anything but horseback use, and known as the "Dragoon"; then one of about the same caliber, technically a "44," but of lighter load and weight, about three pounds, with no special name; and one of still lighter weight and load and less caliber, a 36 caliber, called the "Navy"—not because it was used in the navy, but because it had a scene of a naval battle engraved around its cylinder as an ornament, as also had the "44." This "Navy revolver" or "Colt Navy" was the favorite revolver for many years, as it was light enough so that two could be carried, or "packed" as the frontier term was. ("Tote" is a Southern term, applied to revolvers only in later years, and was not heard on the frontier.)

Two of the two-pound revolvers were often worn, because of the uncertainty of fire and slowness to reload. But when the cartridge revolver came, about 1870, the habit of wearing two guns rapidly vanished, and only one was worn, as the cartridge revolver was very sure of fire, as sure then as now, and was easy and fast to reload. When my father first met Jas. Hickok ("Wild Bill") he was carrying two 44 caliber ivory-handled, cap-and-ball Colts; my



REPRESENTATIVE FRONTIER FIREARMS

Beginning at the top they are: 1. Sawed-off shotgun; double barrel, 10 bore, muzzle loader. Favorite Express Messenger and stagecoach gun. 2. Favorite Indian rifle: Winchester carbine, 44-40 caliber, Model 1873. 3. "Buffalo Sharps," favorite rifle of the hidehunters. 4. Spencer carbine, favorite cavalry gun. 5. "Colt Navy" revolver, 44 caliber. 6. "Colt 45," celebrated cavalry and cowboy sixshooter. 7. Later day derringer. (Numbers 1, 5, 6 and 7 are property of the State Historical Society. Numbers 2, 3 and 4 belong to Dr. E. B. Swerdfeger, Denver.

father (W. R. Thomas, a newspaper man at that time in Denver) did not even own a gun.

Men sometimes carried a beltful of these cap-and-ball revolvers to the exclusion of the rifle, musket, or carbine, this especially in warfare on the frontier. Some altered this rather heavy system by carrying two such revolvers on the side of the saddle horn. But these men usually had extra cylinders, and had them loaded. Then, instead of attempting to recharge their weapons from powder horn and bullet pouch while in a fight, they merely substituted these loaded extra cylinders for the emptied ones. These extra cylinders, though loaded with loose black powder and a cap, both very absorbent of dampness, could easily be made almost waterproof by dipping them when loaded into melted beeswax and wiping off the surplus while yet warm. This made the whole extra cylinder one metallic cartridge with six loads in it, which could be inserted into the empty revolver frame as one unit, where later each metallic cartridge had to be loaded into the cartridge revolver one at a time. The time of reloading the two was practically equal.

These guns used both round bullets and projectiles. The user himself usually had a bullet mould, often small enough to go readily into his pocket or pouch, and ran his own bullets from what lead he could get. Incidentally, lead was much harder to get on the frontier than was gunpowder or caps. It had to come the same distance and was much heavier. Today lead is so common that we never think of this, but it was an important matter on the frontier from the time of the Revolution till the days of factory-made metallic cartridges. A sort of paper prepared cartridge was often used for the cap-and-ball revolvers, especially for army issue, but loose powder loading was much preferred by individuals.

These revolvers were not equal in range or deadliness to the Indian bow and arrow, so old plainsmen have often assured me, nor were they so reliable under all weather conditions. But when farther ranged and more reliable metallic cartridge revolvers came, about 1870, they equaled the Indian bow. However, to stop a horse or a buffalo the revolver appears never to have equalled the Indian arrow.

So far I have spoken of the firearms of the white man only. The Indians sometimes carried revolvers, but usually preferred the bow. The white man was a revolver man; the Indian was not. The favorite Indian gun was the Winchester 1873 model carbine—not rifle. He usually drove its woodwork full of brass-headed tacks and otherwise decorated it with bits of red cloth, feathers, and sundry trinkets. The Indian, by the way, was usually a poor rifle shot. Also, what greatly contributed to the usual Indian inaccuracy with all firearms, was the absence of that constant care and cleaning of

them which was so necessary. So between his lack of sighting and the deplorable condition of his firearms, and often the wrong ammunition in them, the Indian bullet was not so deadly in general as his arrow. Even when the Indian had firearms he was always loath to give up the bow and arrow. The arrow was a silent weapon and could be used over and over again. These were additional reasons for his holding on to it.

Besides the three holster revolvers I have mentioned as made by Colt, there were others of the same general shape and design, but much smaller and lighter, for pocket use. Colt often made revolvers to individual order, and thus any number of slightly different designs exist. That was before the days of factory standard. Later Colt introduced the now almighty system of standardization and interchange of parts without hand fitting. Great as was the contribution of the Colt revolver to the world in aiding in settling the frontier, this was almost as nothing in comparison to its influence on civilization through the creation of the modern system of manufacture with interchangeable parts. The Colt revolver was the first machine in the world so manufactured, and this more than anything else made it such a favorite on the frontier. All other guns, if broken, had to be repaired by hand. But two broken Colt revolvers could in a few minutes be made into one good revolver by interchange of parts.

There were, of course, revolvers other than the Colt on the frontier in the cap-and-ball days, such as the Remington, the Starr, and the Kennedy, but there were more Colts than all others combined. The celebrated Smith & Wesson revolver was from 1860 on to be had in a small 32 caliber "Officer's Revolver," shooting one of the first rimfire metallic cartridges, but this never was used much on the frontier. They are a good gun even yet. I was shooting one of them recently.

Incidentally, I have shot and in many cases owned, all the guns mentioned in this paper, sometimes from curiosity, sometimes for ballistical information, and in the older days, as an actual weapon, such as the cap-and-ball Colt revolver, and the muzzle-loading shotgun. I have killed much game with the latter gun, but that was now nearly fifty years ago.

Now the derringer, and our review of the muzzle-loading era comes to an end, and that of the metallic cartridge begins. The derringer left no counterpart in the gun world of today. It was of very large caliber, from the size of the little finger to that of the thumb, with a barrel two to three inches long. Some were so made that the barrel screwed off, and the bullet was put into the barrel, then the powder, and the barrel was then screwed back into the frame. The whole load of powder and bullet often filled the barrel

to the muzzle. The derringer was fired like any shotgun or rifle, by a cap. If there were flintlock derringers, they do not concern us here, for they were not used on the frontier, but the cap ones were, and they were a special favorite with the gamblers, as they were quicker to use than a revolver. But they were good for only one shot and that at a range of only five or six feet. They gave not only a deadly wound themselves, but also created a diversion so that the knife could be brought into the fight right after the derringer. They were often carried in pairs, could be concealed in the palm of a large hand, or in the vest pocket, and weighed about half a pound each.

We now turn from the muzzle-loading firearms to the metallic cartridge guns. The change was swift on the frontier and the metallic cartridge made "the ramrod good for nothing but to whip your wife with," and that proceeding was so highly dangerous that the ramrod fell at once into disuse.

There have been many changes but no improvement in the revolver since its invention by Colt except the use in it of the metallic cartridge instead of loose powder and round ball. The revolver, the machine itself, is now being superseded by the automatic pistol, and this makes the revolver perhaps the one famous machine in the world that was not capable of material improvement from its invention to its disuse, over a period of now nearly a century, and over all countries around the world. Incidentally, the revolver was a purely American invention, and during its now rapidly ending life no other nation or people ever learned how to make one as good, or how to use one so well, as the American. The revolver is the typical American weapon, although the once famous "Bowie knife" was also uniquely American. But the Bowie knife has vanished like its companion, the derringer. Both were Mississippi River boat weapons, useful mostly to gamblers; and the river steamer, the Bowie and the derringer sank into the frontier together.

The metallic cartridge came onto the frontier after the Civil War, although used in that war, first in the Henry repeating rifle, the forerunner of the later famous Winchester rifle, and in the cavalryman's Spencer carbine. This Spencer carbine at once became the favorite horseback and stagecoach rifle, or carbine, rather, for a carbine is, of course, only a short rifle. My father carried a Spencer carbine and two Navy Colts from Fort Laramie, Wyoming, back and forth along the Rockies to Santa Fe in 1866 to 1868 as traveling correspondent for the *Rocky Mountain News,* the first newspaper of the region.

When the center fire brass cartridge guns arrived on the frontier, about 1870, all other guns were soon laid aside.

In revolvers, the Colt still held the lead; the Smith & Wesson,

in many ways a better made gun than the Colt, came too late to win the place its excellent workmanship deserved, as was the case with the Remington and the Merwin and Hulbert, now changed to center fire metallic cartridge revolvers. A number of makes in cap-and-ball revolvers simply died and were promptly forgotten. The most popular pocket revolver, as it still is, was the 38 double-action Smith & Wesson; the most popular holster revolver was the Colt 45 in army circles, the 44 in cowboy camps, because it shot the same cartridge as did the cowboy's 44-40 Winchester rifle, and the 41 in the gambler's waistband, concealed by his right vest pocket. The gambler had a special pocket made in his trousers, merely a gun-sized watch pocket. My personal favorite of all revolvers has always been the Colt 45 army revolver of the old days, with its greatest load and full length barrel, and at one time I had something of a reputation for skill in its use. It is the only thing in the world known solely by a number, a "45."

It is worthy of note that the whites needed and used revolvers more against each other than against the Indians. The revolver had but little to do toward winning the West from the Indian; that was practically all rifle work. When the cattle came onto the plains, after buffalo and the Indian had gone forever, then was when the revolver rose to its chief use and fame, and its place in history. When the cattle finally gave way to the nester and his wire fence, then backed farther off for the sheep herds, the revolver lost its use and in due time became even an object of obnoxious legislation, even on the once frontier. The old-timer's rifle, revolver, saddle, and hipflask have now about disappeared, like the Indian bonnet which they once faced in flashing battle for the frontier. The day of the revolver is done. The automatic pistol has taken its place, just as the repeating rifle has displaced the single shots and the metallic cartridge banished all the stick-loaders.

We are now done with the belt and pocket weapons. The center fire rifles alone remain to be looked at briefly. The main one was the Winchester in the models of 1873, 1876, and 1886. During the period of these guns things changed rapidly on the frontier. There came the railroad, the police, the sewing machine agent; and the gunman stared and gave up in sheer disgust, dead hopeless. Only three other rifles are worthy of note during this time beside the Winchester. These were the Sharps—in two models, hammer and hammerless—the Ballard, and the Remington. The army was using the "tip-up" Springfield, first in 50 caliber, then soon in 45 caliber, which was also fairly popular in civil circles. But no others equalled the Winchester in the lighter repeating lines or the Sharps for sheer accuracy and reliability at long range. The Ballard was like the Smith & Wesson revolver, a finely-made rifle, but

better for the target than for the frontier. The Marlin, the attempt of the Ballard to get into the repeater field, was well liked, but it never seriously rivaled the Winchester.

We cannot here describe all these guns; they can be found in any good collection. Out of them all arose but two rifles that will live in history, as will their companion belt gun, the Colt 45 revolver. These two were the 1873 Model 44-40 Winchester and the "Buffalo Sharps."[1]

Before Winchester could get out the 1895 Model, a splendid rifle, the one Roosevelt used on lion, the frontier had gone. The date, 1893, is the deadline of the frontier, its last kick. The frontier died in the Southwest with the capture of Geronimo in the late eighties; in the Dakotas, among the Sioux, with the totally needless murder of hundreds of women and children at Wounded Knee in 1890-2; and throughout the whole West in 1893, when the world panic of that year enabled the eastern money lender to foreclose on the over-borrowed West. Then the one-time frontiersman, now gray-haired, was pulled from the saddle and from the seat of final authority he had held in the West since the rushes of the forties up the Platte and over the Rockies. That ended the frontier, ended the frontiersman; in came rapidly woman suffrage, women governors, prohibition, anti-gun laws, hunting licenses, sheep, inspectors galore, and the frontier was done. Gone into history.

[1]For a description of the "Buffalo Sharps" see my article, "Butchering Buffalo," in *The Colorado Magazine*, Vol. V, 41-55.

Early Days in Canon City

An Interview with Anson S. Rudd in 1884*

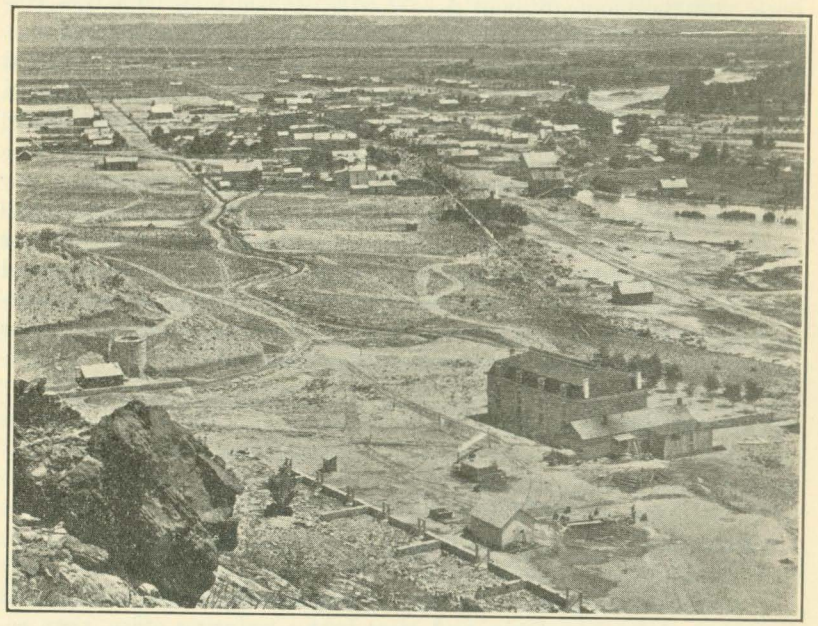
I was born in Erie County, Pennsylvania, in 1819. In 1833 I went to Columbus, Ohio, and went into a printing office, then returned to Pennsylvania. After two years I went to Illinois, then to California, then to Kansas, and thence to Denver, Colorado, in 1860. My impression then was that Denver was a dead town, about as large an exodus from it as there had been to it. Many were disappointed in the mines, pronounced them a humbug and returned.

I spent most of the summer going through the mines and then came to Canon City and settled here in the autumn of 1860. A few houses, perhaps a dozen, had been built during the previous winter, the builders expecting to make the place an entrepot for all the southern country.

*Mr. Rudd was an outstanding pioneer of Canon City, Colorado. This interview was obtained by the Historian, H. H. Bancroft, in 1884. Bancroft's interview with Warren R. Fowler, another pioneer of Canon City, was published in *The Colorado Magazine* of May, 1926.—Ed.

Then the war broke out. On account of the war the soldiers employed as escorts were now withdrawn. This broke up everything, as there was danger from the Indians. The Utes were peaceable here (at Canon City), but the Arapahoes and Cheyennes would fight the Utes and they were likely to become hostile. The only route now protected by soldiers was the Platte. All Government money for such purposes was expended on Denver, and Denver consequently came up and stayed up.

In the spring of 1860 there were probably a dozen people here. There was one saloon. That winter there came a large emigration,



CANON CITY IN 1874

The beginnings of the state penitentiary are seen in the foreground.

of perhaps 500 persons. A newspaper was established. Millet was the editor. That was in the fall of 1860, and it was called the *Canon City Times*. It continued until the next year. Whiskey got away with it. It was some time before another was started. The next was called the *Canon Times*. Then came the old *Canon City Record* with Felton as editor. It lasted two years. Another was the *Avalanche* with Warner editor. There have been in all two Democratic and two Republican papers. The *Record* of today (1884), under Felton, has been handed down under different names and editors; the first was Ripley. It was called then the *Fremont County Record*.

I have remained in Canon City since 1860, blacksmithing. This place was an exact counterpart of every such camp in a mining district. There were perhaps five women here. They were treated with the greatest respect and as though they were creatures from another world.

The first *Canon City Times*, Millet editor, fall of 1860, lasted a year. Some years later, *Canon Times*, edited by Ripley; then *Fremont County Record*, by Blake; then by Felton; now changed to *Canon City Record*.

We established a court called the People's Court. This followed the law and order party. One of the instances of the court was this. A Dr. Dunn was arrested here for stealing cattle and selling them in Denver. Judge Howard presided. I was clerk of the court. The complainants didn't come forward to testify. I suspected lynch law was awaiting him. His wife was in delicate condition so I obtained an order for his release and sent him out of town. They threatened me and were filling up on whiskey. He escaped and never returned to his family. Generally the court was satisfactory to the people; it lasted during the winter and until spring.

The local claim club sometimes tried cases, but generally confined itself to matters pertaining to the squatters' claims.

At one time there was very little money in circulation here. Deer skins were very plentiful and the merchants had their stores filled with buckskins, 2,000 skins piled up. These were taken in payment instead of money. They were sent East and large profits were made on them. Here they would allow from twenty-five cents to one dollar for a buckskin and they would sometimes get $5.00 apiece for them in the East. The freight back was nothing to speak of, for wagons were going back empty.

It was under the state organization, held in Denver, that I was nominated as Lieutenant Governor. That is how I got the title of Governor. The organization, however, fell through.

Mail facilities were meager in 1861. A line of stages was established and mail came in once a week from Denver. Previously it was carried by individual enterprise. One day Mr. Wetmore walked sixty miles to Colorado Springs and returned the next day, carrying the mail on his shoulders. Hardly anything was impossible with the pioneers.

Uncle Jesse Frazer has now a good orchard here. He left Pike County, Illinois, and came here with an ox team for his health. He was scarcely able to walk when he came. Some flour was brought in; the wagon broke down, and he carried a bag of flour (100 pounds) on his back for eight miles. He gained that strength in three or four months.

Canon City was virtually deserted in 1863. There was left here only Mr. and Mrs. Rudd, their son, and Felix Burdett, working with them, and a crazy woman who sometimes called herself the Queen of Sheba, Mrs. Washington, etc. Now she is in the insane asylum in Omaha. She walked across the plains. She gave us a great deal of trouble. I gave her her provisions. She would occupy the empty houses, and would break windows, thinking the devil was in the house. Sometimes she put everything into the street during a storm.

A minister came over from old Colorado City to see what the prospects were for religious work. Our family constituted the congregation. During those months we had a mail. Mr. Jenks was the last of the old town company to leave; he passed the city books over to me and advised me to leave, too. Sometimes I had to go to Denver and then my wife was left alone.

The first company had no energy. Jenks took lots in board. When he went away, the last man, I homesteaded 160 acres. We formed two companies for ditching. The first fell through after getting a survey and digging about one-fourth mile. The next year the second company was organized. It accomplished the making of a ditch six miles long, covering about 2,000 acres of land. It made an agricultural land of it.

Coal was discovered in 1860, only one or two veins being discovered at that time. The first to take it up was Musser. He would come here with an old blind horse, would dig it out and carry it to Denver in his cart, and would sell it to blacksmiths and so advertised the coal. He took up the vein and sold it to the C. C. I. Co. for $4500. He then entered about 900 acres and had mortgaged the whole or part to pay for it. Before it was due he was shot in a quarrel and the whole was sold for $1200 or $1500. It is now worth some $50 an acre. Bituminous coal, one of the best opening coal banks, is now all over these low hills south of Canon City.

Oil was first discovered by two old settlers here, Bowen and Bolin, clerk of the Squatter's Club. They were prospecting and discovered the spring. Oil was on the surface. The man who first worked it was Pratt. Did not do anything with it. Cassidy took it and sold a large interest to a Boston company. They never developed anything but the surface—went down sixty feet. I was oil inspector of the United States. Of no value—for a while it was profitable.

The first sawmill was brought in in the fall of 1860, by Cooper, Harkins and Moore from Minnesota. They were to have an original share in the town if they would locate the mill here. There was a water mill on Hardscrabble. There was possibly one at old Colorado City. There was another established at Mill Creek the

following year. The mill established in the fall and winter of 1860 was above the Soda Springs. Now they are scattered all over the country.

There are two smelters, a match factory and an excellent flour mill here now. In 1862 the first flour mill was established on Beaver Creek by Louis Conley; the next by Johnson and Bradley on Four Mile. Both were water mills. The next was by Fickes and Company in town. It was burned down in 1883.

Major Thompson, Chief Ouray and the Utes

THOMAS F. DAWSON*

(An interview with MAJOR JAMES B. THOMPSON, May 23, 1921)

Almost blind, weighted down by eighty years of age, and nearly helpless on account of two paralytic attacks, Major James B. Thompson is largely confined to his quiet home at 57 Grant Street in Denver; but his mind is still active, and he remembers in great detail many of the stirring incidents of his long life.[1] Coming to Denver in 1869, Major Thompson has spent almost two-thirds of his existence in this state. The late General Edward M. McCook, who was one of the best known of Colorado's territorial governors, was a brother-in-law of Major Thompson, and it was to him that the major owed his removal from his Illinois home to this city.

He was still a young man when, in 1867, General McCook, fresh from his well-won laurels in the Civil War, came to Peoria, where Mr. Thompson's father lived, and claimed as his bride Major Thompson's youngest sister, Miss Mary Thompson. Their father, Sylvanus Thompson, had settled in Peoria when that city was of comparative insignificance, and had started on his career by establishing there the first of the many big distilleries, which in after years did much to enhance the city's material prosperity.

Always partial to his old associates in the army, General Grant made it a point to prefer them in matters of official appointment while he was President. He had not occupied that responsible post for a great length of time when General McCook's claims to consideration were presented to him, and he responded promptly by appointing him to what was then considered one of the most desirable posts at his disposal, namely, the governorship of the Territory of Colorado. General McCook accepted the position gladly

*Mr. Dawson was Historian and Curator of History of the State Historical Society of Colorado at the time he interviewed Major Thompson in May, 1921. After the interview, here published, was written, it was read and signed by Major Thompson. Mr. Dawson was killed in an automobile accident on June 24, 1923, while accompanying the President Harding party on a tour of Denver's Mountain Parks.—Ed.

[1]Major Thompson died at Denver on Feb. 17, 1923.—Ed.

because he had resided in the territory before the war and had risen to the distinction of being sent to the legislature of Kansas as the representative of that portion then embraced in Colorado, and he felt as if he were coming home in returning to the Pike's Peak country.[2] He had resided in Peoria during a portion of the time after his marriage, and had thus had opportunity to become acquainted with his young brother-in-law, "Jim" Thompson, and when the opportunity arose, tendered to the young man the appointment of private secretary, which was accepted.

Previous to the appointment of Governor McCook, the governor of the territory had been, ex-officio, superintendent of Indian affairs for the territory; but McCook did not enjoy the Indian relationship, and in order to relieve himself of the duties of that branch of the work had his private secretary and brother-in-law, Mr. Thompson, designated as special agent for all the Ute Indians, who were the only tribe of aborigines residing within the territorial borders at that time. From the date of his appointment to this position, Thompson occupied the dual office of private secretary and Indian agent, in addition to which he also was auditor of public accounts. He continued to act for the Indians for some time after McCook's retirement from the gubernatorial office, and may truthfully be said to have had more intimate relations with the entire Ute nation than any other white man. He was the special friend of Chief Ouray, and there were among the Indians many others who held him in high regard.

As has been explained, Major Thompson became the special agent of the Utes almost immediately after his arrival in Denver in 1869, and he continued to hold that office during the greater part of the remainder of the time that Colorado remained a territory. His first act upon assuming office was to summon Head Chief Ouray and other chiefs of the tribe to Denver for consultation with them. This first interview with Ouray was the beginning of an intimate friendship which continued to grow so long as the old chief lived. He also formed a high opinion of many of the subchiefs of the Utes, and he says that he never had occasion to change his view. Indeed, Major Thompson is today an admirer of the Utes as Indians. That the Indians liked and trusted the major in turn is evidenced by the fact that they often sought his counsel. They called him "One-Talk," meaning that he did not lie to them. A man whose word they did not rely upon was designated as "Two-Talk," or a person who did not always tell them the same story.

[2]After his retirement from the governorship, McCook left Colorado and went to California. According to Major Thompson, he was subsequently appointed Minister to the Hawaiian Islands, and then to one of the South American countries. He died in Chicago when sixty-two or sixty-three years of age.—Ed.

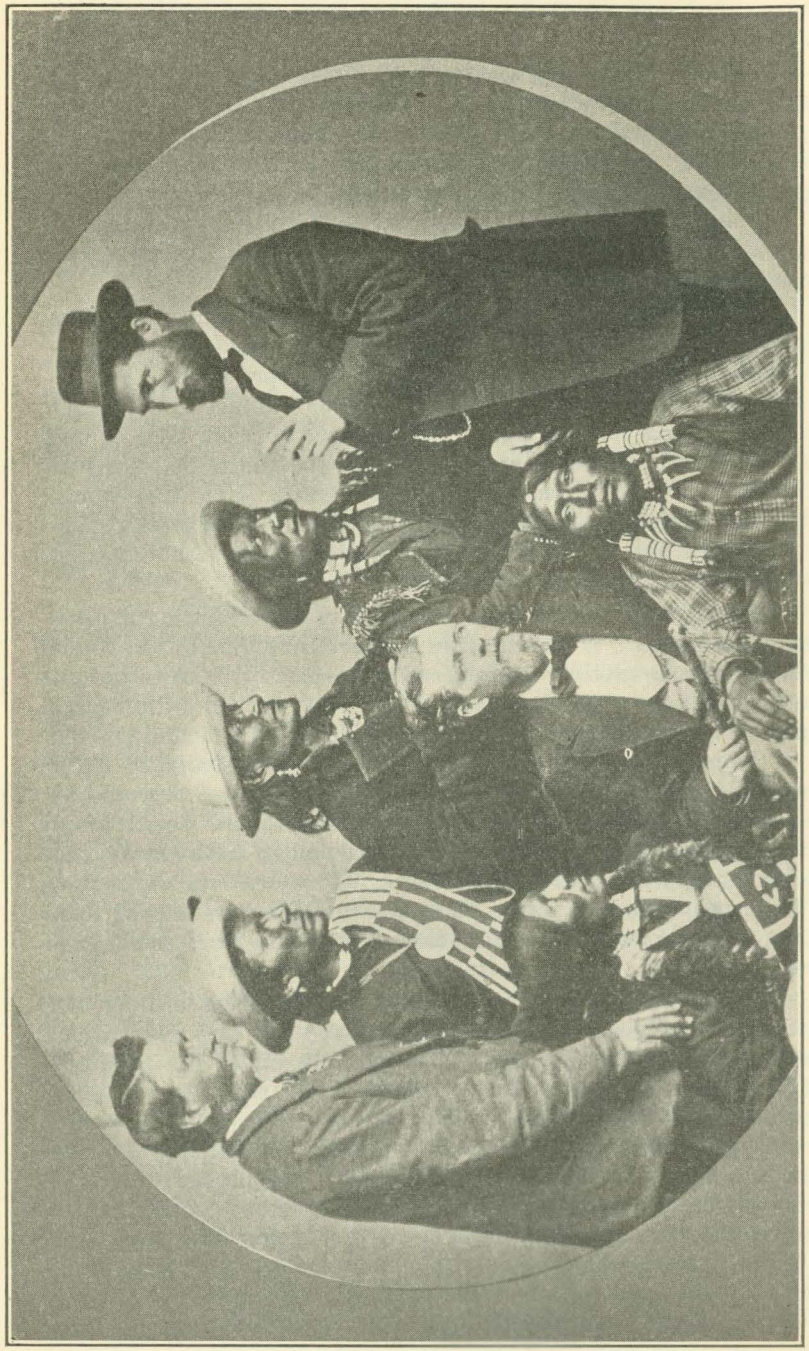
A "one-talk" man was indicated by one finger and a "two-talk" man by two fingers.

"At this conference it was arranged," says Major Thompson, "that a census of the tribe should be taken in order that the authorities might know the exact number of the Indians and also their general status. Provision for this enumeration was made through special Indian messengers, one being sent to each branch of the Ute Nation. The Indians themselves performed the duties of enumerators, and I have every reason to believe that the work was thoroughly and well done.

"I never had any trouble worth speaking of with the Indians themselves. In those days the government issued annuities to practically all of its Indian wards, and the issuance to the Utes was made by me in Denver. They would come here to meet me in great numbers. I have had as high as a thousand of them here at one time. Their favorite camping place was in the Platte bottoms just across the river from the mouth of Cherry Creek. Here they would set up their teepees and sometimes remain for several weeks, coming into town almost every day and walking around and gazing into the store windows for amusement.

"Denver also was frequently the base of their hunting expeditions on the plains. While the Utes had no real rights on the lands outside of the mountains, the government deemed it wise to permit them to go out upon the plains and kill buffalo for their winter meat supply. This privilege was highly regarded by them and proved one of the most potential agencies in keeping them straight. They knew that if they did not properly conduct themselves it would be taken away from them, which they also understood would mean much hardship to them. They were instructed by both Ouray and myself that they must neither beg nor steal from settlers, nor molest the white people in any way. These instructions were obeyed during my administration of their affairs, but there were some complaints afterward.

"When I first became general agent there were no local agents, and I made it a business to visit all parts of their vast reservation, which, as you will recall, covered practically all of the territory west of the Continental Divide. Generally the trips were made in the summer and fall seasons and under auspicious conditions, but there were exceptions. I recall very vividly one journey I made to the Los Pinos Agency, west of Saguache in southern Colorado. There was occasion for expedition on this journey, and notwithstanding the distance from Denver to the agency and back was 720 miles I made the round trip on one horse in sixteen days, spending a day and a half at the agency. The horse was a wiry little broncho and never showed any especial signs of fatigue. The



NORTHERN UTES, AGENTS AND INTERPRETER

Standing—J. S. Littlefield, Indian Agent at White River Agency; Tab-u-cha-kat; Pah-ant; Catz; and U. M. Curtis, Interpreter. *Sitting*—Wanzitz (Antelope); Maj. J. B. Thompson, Special Indian Agent; and Honko. (This photograph, taken in 1872, was presented to the State Historical Society by Miss Bessie Thompson, daughter of Major Thompson.)

country was unsettled and both man and mount were compelled to hustle for substance.

"Another trip, the memory of which remains vividly with me, was made to the headquarters of the White River Utes in the dead of winter. When orders came to me to make this expedition in the fall of 1874, I had tendered my resignation as agent and was preparing to quit the service. I also had under preparation the details of a family reunion which was to have taken place at my house in Denver during Christmas, which was rapidly approaching. It was a very cold winter, and you may imagine I did not relish an order to leave my fireside and go to the wild northern Indian country under the prevailing conditions. However, the orders were imperative and I started immediately. A report had reached the commission in Washington to the effect that the Utes under Captain Jack were committing depredations and that white men were selling liquor to the Indians. As whiskey always has been the potential cause of disorderly conduct on the part of the savages, it was considered important that the facts should be known and the whiskey dealers apprehended at the earliest moment possible.

"My instructions were to go to Rawlins, Wyoming, by train and to proceed then to Ft. Steele, where I was told that I could have an escort of two troops of cavalry if needed. I did not believe that I needed any soldiers, and contented myself with hiring a buckboard and a four-horse team at Rawlins and on this made the entire round trip of two or three hundred miles, with the driver as my only companion. Al Farley was the driver and a good one, too. The road was covered with two feet of snow. The thermometer registered sixteen below and we made the start in a blinding snow storm. However, we were well provided with blankets, and we covered the distance to White River in three days, stopping once at the crossing over Snake River for the night and again at a hay ranch farther down the road.

"I succeeded in quelling the disturbance between the whites and the reds and in running the bootleggers out of the reservation and captured one of them. This man was sent up for his offense, and the last time I heard from him he was still swearing vengeance against me. However, I was not afraid of him, nor of any of the many others of his ilk who disliked me because of my official acts. I always went prepared for them, and would be now if they should come in on me, for I always keep this old six-shooter revolver loaded and hanging on the bedpost within my reach. (With this explanation Major Thompson reached over and pulled the gun down for exhibition to his visitor. It was one of the old-fashioned Civil War revolvers, but evidently was still in good shooting order.

The major declared that he had killed with it every wild animal in the woods with the exception of elk and buffalo.)

"The trip back was made more leisurely, and I took occasion to stop for a few days with friends on Snake River, including the old scout Jim Baker. Baker had a wonderful influence over the Indians and he was one of my stanchest standbys. He was my friend from first to last, and I am glad to testify to his character as a man and his loyalty as a citizen. He was of great service in keeping the Utes on the right path. My outfit for the trip cost me at the rate of $16 a day, and the department made a great ado over paying the bill. Still, I thought it was reasonable in view of the condition of the weather and the service rendered, to say nothing of the money saved in not taking advantage of the opportunity to employ a military escort.

"I did not want the soldiers with me for various reasons. One was the fact that I did not believe that they were needed, and another, my knowledge of the attitude of the Indians toward soldiers in general. They never welcomed the idea of a visit by troops, and when at last the crisis at White River which resulted in the Meeker massacre arrived, the bringing in of the soldiers was the culminating offense to them. I should say also that I did not take as serious a view of the liquor situation as did the department at Washington. As a matter of fact, the Utes were not a whiskey drinking tribe. There were many of them who would not touch liquor of any kind, and a very few of them ever indulged in it to excess. All of them would say 'No wano' when it was offered to them, but some of the younger men would yield occasionally when it was pressed upon them. I knew these facts and did not expect any great trouble, at least not from the Indians themselves, in which conclusion I was proved to be correct. Indeed, while I am on the subject, I may say that the Utes were a moral people. They were strictly monogamous, and they did not encourage or tolerate marriages to their women by white men. There are very few half-breed Utes. The marauders among the Indians were making serious trouble, and there was a small war on, but a few words of advice on both sides sufficed to re-establish peace.

"Of course, there were some general exceptions in the matter of Ute morals. Some of them were bad, and one of the worst of them was old Colorow. A great deal has been said about Colorow in Colorado history, much more, I think, than the subject deserves. He was not a hereditary chief, but merely the leader of a roving band of young Indians, many of whom were renegades. They roamed about the country and generally made themselves at home wherever they chanced to be, with the exception that they did not go to the agency, where they knew they were not wanted. Colorow

was a big, lubberly man, and an arrant coward. With women and tenderfeet he was a bluffer. He knew me and knew that I knew him. He threatened my life many times, but he knew that I knew that he was too cowardly to fight anyone. Governor McCook booted him out of his office on the occasion of one of his visits there. When I was in he generally kept away. But when he did come to see me I gave him very little attention, but would generally get up, put my hand on his shoulder and say, 'Pikey,' which in the Ute language means 'get.' He knew what he would get if he didn't obey and he went without protest.

"Ouray was a very different kind of man. Indeed, Ouray was a good man, a man who would have measured up to a high standard in any civilized community. He was only half Ute, and his Ute blood came through his mother. She was a member of the Tabeguache band of the Ute tribe, but her husband, Ouray's father, was a Jicarilla Apache, Guera Murah by name. The father had been captured from his own people when young and adopted into the Ute Nation. This gave him all the privileges of a member of the tribe, but did not save him from the slurs of his Ute enemies, who always referred to him as an Apache. Ouray won his position as the head of the Ute Confederacy through genuine merit. When he was a young man there were few American whites in the country, and at that stage of his life he was an active warrior. His exploits in the wars with the plains Indians were numerous, but even then he was as much noted for his wise counsel as for his deeds of daring. When later the whites began to arrive in large numbers, he was quick to perceive their advantages over the Indians and from the first assumed a conciliatory attitude toward them. He was ever the friend of the white man, and all of his vast influence was directed toward maintaining amicable relations with his pale-faced neighbors.

"I have said that I knew Ouray practically from the time of my appointment as special agent. I discerned his good qualities the first time I met him. I discovered then his intelligence and fair-mindedness and made up my mind to cultivate him in order to be able to use him for the benefit of the white and also in his own interest. I taught him to write his own name, and prevailed upon the government to build a good house for him. In this house, which consisted of four rooms, and was made of hewn logs, he lived until he died. He lived like a white man, too. He had his horses and carriage and he went in state when he traveled. At home he had all the comforts of an ordinary household, including beds, tables and cooking utensils. Chipeta, his wife, was a woman of more than ordinary Indian intelligence and she directed their domestic affairs competently. I hear that she is still living, but she must be very

old, and I doubt whether the life to which she has been subjected since the removal of the Indians is to her liking.[3]

"I have spoken of Ouray's courage as a warrior. He never lost this quality after he left the warpath and took upon himself the responsibilities of administration. The Indians respected him and also feared him. And well they might fear him. He was a just ruler, but an autocratic one. Indeed, he might well be called a tyrant. To disobey his orders meant severe punishment and often death. He would shoot down a disobedient buck without compunction. But his severity did not interfere with his determination to do justice and treat all as they should be treated. He was a highly moral man, a member of the Methodist church, and a strict teetotaler. I have had him to my own house to dinner many times when there was wine on the table, but he could not be persuaded to touch it. His influence was strong throughout the entire Ute Nation, and he was greatly respected by the white people. His standing with both elements placed him in a position to be of great service in rescuing the women of the White River Agency after the massacre of the male members of the Agency in 1879.

"But while Ouray was severe with his people and inexorable in his enforcement of the law of justice as he understood it, he still was most particular in establishing the truth of a charge before proceeding with punishment. I remember an instance which will make this point plain. On one occasion there was a dispute over the ownership of a horse between an Indian named Tab-we-ap, who had a bad name, and a white man named Marksberry. This occurred in the early seventies, and at the time the Indians were occupying a temporary camp in the vicinity of Florissant, then known as Castellos, where they had a winter hunting ground. Marksberry had lost a pony which he found in the regular Indian herd. He claimed the animal, and in the absence of Tab-we-ap started away with it. Upon his return the Indian picked up the trail and followed and at the first opportunity shot the white man from behind his back, killing him dead. There was a small boy with the victim at the time, but he was so frightened that he could not tell a straight story. Ouray with others sought to punish the slayer, but when investigation was made could find no evidence that would convict anyone. Tab-we-ap made no positive denial of guilt, but simply said 'If I am guilty, prove it.' That was impossible, and while with everyone else Ouray was satisfied of the fellow's guilt, there was no way of establishing the fact and he was compelled to allow the rascal to go free, which he did rather than take any chance on punishing an innocent man.

[3]Chipeta died in August, 1924, and is buried on her old homestead, near Montrose, Colorado.—Ed.

"There was a tragedy in Ouray's early life which saddened his later years, and I think had a marked influence on his character. That was the loss of his son, and only child, which occurred in 1865 while he and a party of followers were hunting buffalo on the plains and when the child was only three or four years old. They were encamped on the headwaters of Republican River in what they believed to be absolute security, but their village was raided by a band of Cheyennes, who killed several of their number and carried others off into captivity. In this latter class was Ouray's baby boy. For years he made every possible effort to get track of the child, enlisting in this behalf all the agencies at the command of the Indian bureau, but to no avail. Once, in 1873, it was believed that the lad had been found in Indian Territory. Ouray traveled a long way to see the child, but upon failing to find a certain mark on the body, pronounced against the boy and then ceased to search. He never mentioned the loss afterward.

"People are always disposed to attach meaning to Indian names. There was no meaning to Ouray's name. He told me that the first word he ever uttered was 'Oo-ay,' doubtless the usual baby gurgle. The parents thereafter called him 'Oo-ay' and he grew up without other appellation. The whites corrupted the word into 'Ouray,' but his own people, to whom the sound of the letter 'r' always presented difficulties, called him 'Oolay' or 'Ulay'."

Major Thompson takes the position that the White River Indians were not so much responsible for the tragedy there as was Agent Meeker. He holds that Meeker was a man of visionary ideas, which when applied to the control of savage Indians were most impracticable, not to say disastrous. Thompson was not agent for the Indians nor in any way connected with them when the White River outbreak occurred, but he had become so impressed with the economic possibilities of northwestern Colorado that after he resigned his official position he went over there with his family and established a big ranch at Hayden, not far from the agency. There he and his wife and children lived from 1876 to 1879, when they left on account of the threatening condition at the agency. During his residence there he maintained the friendliest relations with the Indians, and when affairs began to take on a foreboding aspect the older men among the Utes advised him to get out. They complained of Meeker's treatment of them, and told Thompson that if Meeker persisted in his course there would be serious trouble and probably bloodshed. In that event, they said, it might be difficult to control all of the younger and more hot-headed bucks, and they might attack even his (Thompson's) family.

Among the things of which they complained was the introduction of barbed wire, which they said cut up their ponies, and the agent's determination to make a grain field out of their race track. These innovations may seem trivial to the man of civiliza-

tion, but they were of vast moment to the Indians and they resisted them. Meeker then threatened to bring in troops to enforce his regulations. This was the last straw. The Indians declared that they would fight if the troops came in. "And if we fight, we kill 'em all at agency before soldier comes." They declared that they did not want to hurt Thompson and would not do so if it could be prevented. However, he understood them well enough to take the warning and leave the country. He was well established and the outlook for the future for him was good, but when he returned after the disturbance had quieted down, his ranch buildings were gone and his livestock had disappeared. His loss was heavy. Major Thompson named Routt county in honor of Governor Routt and the town of Hayden for Professor Hayden of the Geological Survey.

Another brother-in-law of Major Thompson's was General Charles Adams, who led the expedition which rescued the women of the Meeker Agency after they had been carried into captivity by the Indians. General Adams had been local agent for the Utes, both at White River and Los Pinos, and had won their regard. He was a man of courage and address and got on well with the whites as well as with the Indians. After leaving the Indian service he became minister from the United States to Bolivia, where he served with credit to himself and the country. Unfortunately, he lost his life in the fire at the Gumry Hotel in Denver in August, 1895, soon after his return to the United States. His wife, who was the oldest sister of Major Thompson, died four or five years ago.

The interviewer asked Major Thompson whether General Adams had attained the rank of general in the army. "No," he responded with a merry laugh, "he was only a militia general. His real name was not Adams, as you know. It was Karl Adam Schwanbeck. He was German by birth, and as his German name was difficult of pronunciation, he took the simple English name of Adams. He was responsible for the change, but McCook made him a general.

"In those days, soon after the Civil War, the military spirit ran high in Colorado as elsewhere. The territory was divided into four military districts, with provision for a brigadier general in each district. The situation was a source of amusement to McCook. 'If we don't look out we will have more generals than privates,' he said to me. Then he proposed that I should raise the army while he would appoint the officers. His idea was to satisfy all elements, and he determined to give each of the four predominant nationalities a representative among the general officers. One he said should be an American, another a German, the third an Irishman, and the fourth a Negro. The choice among the Americans fell to H. B. Bearce, that among the Germans to Adams, that among the Negroes to a bright mulatto named Harden, all of these being from Denver. He also appointed to the fourth position an Irishman, whose name I have forgotten."