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Early Denver History as Told by Contemporary Newspaper Advertisements[1]

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April 23, 1859, was most certainly a day of days for the residents of the tiny settlements near the junction of Cherry Creek and the Platte River. Auraria and Denver, rival communities of scattered log houses and sod huts, having withstood their first winter courageously in the face of the numerous "go backs" and the disparaging stories they told on their return to the "states" and having just received meager reports of the first real gold discovery in the mountains, were further cheered by the appearance of the first newspaper to be published in their midst. William N. Byers had reached the settlements but two days previously, worked feverishly with his partners to set up the press they had brought out across the plains and managed to get off the first issue of the *Rocky Mountain News*, a matter of minutes before the initial publication of the *Cherry Creek Pioneer* appeared.

As might be supposed from the short time the publishers had in which to get this first issue off the press, it was hardly locally representative. Of sixty separate advertisements but thirteen of them were local, i. e., of firms in the Cherry Creek settlements. Most of the remaining forty-seven were of establishments in Omaha, Council Bluffs, Leavenworth and other Missouri River towns. This would indicate that Byers had busied himself with securing numerous advertisements before he had started for the West and thus was able to have a fairly respectable showing in this regard in his first issue.

Of the local advertisements only one was a "store" announcement, the rest being business cards and offers of certain classes of service. If an assumption were made that all the business houses in the two settlements were represented the conclusion would be forced that there was but one physician in the whole mountain area, one real estate dealer, a carpenter, a blacksmith, an undertaker, a cabinet maker and but one place of business—the City Bakery. Following the same assumption it would seem evident that the only means of buying liquor would be by the barrel for

[1]This article was prepared as a graduate student's term paper in Prof. Hafen's "History of Colorado" course at Denver University.

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one Thomas Pollock announced that he had "two barrels of best Magnolia whiskey for sale."

The City Bakery on Ferry Street, Auraria, "next door to Wootton's store" offered "meals at all hours" and agreed to take "gold dust, flour or dried apples in exchange." Dr. Peck of Cache la Poudre, Nebraska, let it be known that he was "at home when not professionally engaged or digging gold in the mountains." D. C. Collier's business card merely stated that he had choice real estate for sale. E. P. Stout announced himself as deputy recorder and that he, too, had real estate bargains. The Arapahoe Express, according to the advertisement of the firm, made daily runs between Arapahoe [on Clear Creek, a little east of present Golden], Denver and Auraria.

One of the most enterprising citizens of the region and the best customer of the *News* was Thomas Pollock. This gentleman had no less than five separate advertisements. In one he was prepared to do any form of carpentry work. In another he was an expert cabinet maker. In still another, by way of diversification, he maintained an up-to-date blacksmith shop. Still further he had in his employ an experienced undertaker for such as might need his services. As if all this were not enough Tom also had Magnolia whiskey on hand as a matter of accommodation. It is worthy of note here that Thomas Pollock appears frequently in the columns of the *News* in succeeding months as a grower and dispenser of garden truck, as the operator of a ferry, as a candidate for office, a member of the town council and a member of the Constitutional convention which drew up a constitution for the "State" of Jefferson. What a delight he would have been to a Sinclair Lewis of today!

A little reading between the lines would indicate that there were many establishments in Denver and Auraria which were not advertised in the columns of the *News*. Some advertisers, for instance, designated their locations as near, opposite or across from the place of business of some non-advertiser. From issue to issue many of these were added to the paid space of the paper and often their advertisements called attention to the fact that they had been doing business since the fall of 1858. Certain it is there were provision houses and outfitting depots in existence at the time, whether or not they paid for the privilege of letting the fact be known.

The advertisements in that first edition do show struggling little frontier communities, sparse population, limited accommodations and small variety of choice in purchases. From them one can draw a mental picture of buildings of logs or of rough lumber, most of them of one story and of sod roofs, of dusty or muddy

(as the weather determined) streets, of timber bridges across Cherry Creek and of flat boats ferrying heavy freight across the Platte. As to appearance of the humans inhabiting the settlements, that too is shown in this first issue, in the wood cut of a whiskered, hip-booted, flannel-shirted, slouch-hatted miner which headed the column, "Reports From The Diggings."

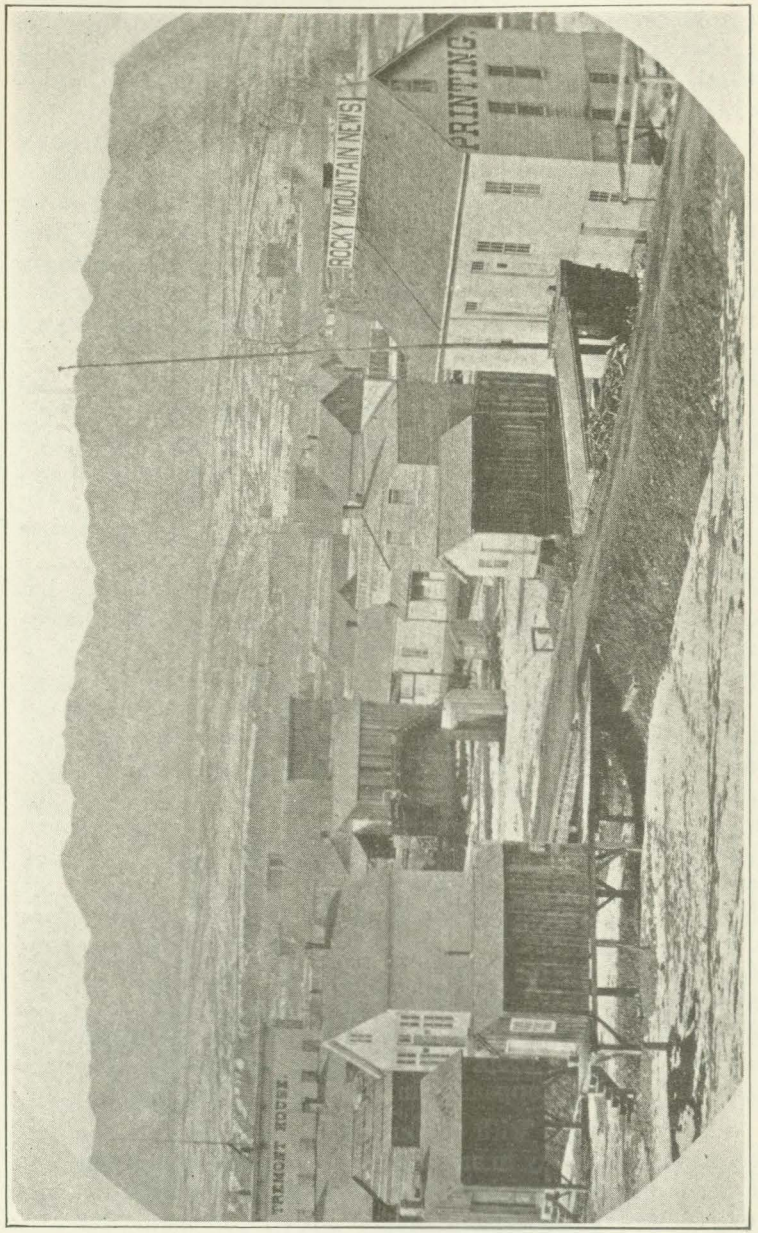
Evidence of the enterprising character of Mr. Byers is given in the announcement that quicksilver was on sale at the *News* Office. The masthead of his paper indicated that he did not choose to tie his future with either one of the rival towns to the exclusion of the other. Playing a middle and neutral course the masthead announced the paper as being published in "Cherry Creek, K. T." This caption continued for several weeks and changes will be noted in due course.

The second issue of the *News* did not appear until May 7 and there is plenty of evidence that Byers and his staff busied themselves during the interim toward getting out a more creditable paper. This issue contained more real news, more advertising and showed the editor more sure of his ground than previously. All-in-all the readers must have found it more to their liking because of its more local character.

There were nearly ten columns of advertising with some important new local ones included. Kinna and Nye, hardware merchants, inserted the most pretentious of these and took pride in incorporating in their copy that they had been established since 1858. In the interval between publication of the first and second issues a barber shop had been opened in Auraria and the proprietor accordingly made his debut in the advertising columns. Further enterprise on the part of the *News* management is shown in the announcement of "Garden seeds on sale at this office at twenty-five cents a package." A political insertion gave notice of calling elections for delegates for a constitutional convention to meet the first Monday in June. The arrival of Dr. G. N. Woodward was noted by the appearance of his business card. An office notice requested that all mail for the *News* be despatched in care of the Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express at Leavenworth.

Withal things were not going as well with the newspaper venture as the energetic proprietor expected, as witness this curt "Take Notice" which appeared in the issue of May 14.

> "In conection with the encouraging news from the mines we wish to say to our subscribers in the vicinity that if we cannot find a richer *lead* here than we have yet discovered we will be obliged to shut up and all hands try the gulches of the mountains for a while. You will take notice and govern yourselves accordingly. We start today



VIEW OF DENVER IN THE EARLY SIXTIES
The home of the Rocky Mountain News, here shown, was washed away by the famous Cherry Creek flood of May, 1864.

to prospect the mountains and Mr. Gibson, our partner, will be happy to see friends at the office.

"We must have means to pay debts, buy paper and ink, bread and meat."

In this same issue another notice shows another individual even more disgusted with the patronage accorded newspapers in the Cherry Creek settlements than was Mr. Byers. Let the notice tell the story.

> "Having sold the *Cherry Creek Pioneer* press and office to Messrs. Byers and Co. of the *Rocky Mountain News*, we now bid adieu to our readers and in doing so beg to recommend the *News* to the public and bespeak for it the patronage which should have been extended to us. We return thanks to Wm. Clancy, Esq., of Nebraska and some few others for their assistance. We are now going to the mountains and instead of picking type we shall try our hand at picking gold."
>
> (Signed) JNO. L. MERRICK.

One is inclined in reading these notices to wonder whether they were prompted by lack of patronage as much as they were by the news which had come down from the "Diggings." In spite of these two lamentations the *News* seemed to have made some progress during the time intervening from the previous issue. There were in all nineteen Cherry Creek advertisements and some of these were duplicated in the pages. Whether duplications were paid for or merely used as "fillers" of course cannot be told here. Worthy of note was the announcement of the opening of the Denver House on Blake Street on May 11. In the local columns the arrival of the stage of the Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express was noted but no advertisement carried.

An interval of two weeks elapsed before another issue of the *News* appeared on May 28. With Byers busy in the hills and Gibson apparently "seeing friends" at the office the paper seems to have been neglected. A small advertisement gave out the schedule of the L. C. & P. P. Express, with stages leaving Denver on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and held out the hope that "a full line of groceries will soon be on hand at the office." Tom Pollock by this time had added to his multitudinous interest by entering the ferry business with James B. Ried, the ferry being established at the foot of Ferry Street.

One of the most interesting legal notices was one inserted by R. E. Whitsit as administrator for the estate of Peleg Bassett, deceased. The demise had come about by murder, although this fact was not mentioned in the notice. The estate consisted of "cattle,

blankets, clothing, etc.,'' which would indicate that Mr. Bassett was far from affluent.

In the issue of June 11 the masthead carries Wm. N. Byers and Thos. Gibson as editors and proprietors, a change from the previous liner of Wm. N. Byers and Co. Under this same date a special edition was issued containing Horace Greeley's report on his findings in the gold diggings. Needless to say, the Cherry Creek settlements found much elation over this report. The *News* management thought enough of it to warrant the expense of an extra. The *News* apparently was short of news print paper and was forced to use brown wrapping stock.

Advertisers at points along the routes leading to the Cherry Creek settlements are noticed in greater numbers in the issues appearing in June and July. Many of these were of firms in Nebraska City, N. T., particularly Russell, Majors and Waddell, who claimed a ''complete outfitting depot.''

D. C. Oakes announced the opening of his sawmill in the July 9 issue. As part of the developmental history it may be safely assumed that very few log houses went up after Oakes was set up in business and that the carpentry contracts of Tom Pollock and his competitors took a sudden jump.

Business cards appearing in the various issues during the first summer showed both little towns acquiring many attorneys and many new firms having real estate for sale. From this fact a steadily growing population can be seen, the class of population which came out with the idea of remaining.

For some reason the *News* in the issue of August 6, 1859, announced its place of publication as Auraria, K. T., and then two weeks later as Auraria and Denver, K. T. Perhaps Auraria looked more promising and was giving Byers greater patronage. At any rate within two weeks Byers was back at his previous policy of showing no favoritism. Auraria, be it noted, appeared ahead of Denver and consequently may be considered the more important of the two.

By midsummer of 1859 the *News* had adopted a plan of classification. Business cards were given definite columns, church and lodge notices were conspicuously placed apart, new advertisements appeared under a column head so stating and the editorial columns ran short notes calling attention to the new advertisements and bespeaking patronage of the advertisers.

A market report appearing in one of these summer issues and reproduced herewith will give the reader an idea of prices prevailing and the articles which the 1859ers could purchase.

MARKET REPORT

Flour, States	$14-$16 per cwt.	Cheese	$0.50 per lb.
Flour, Mexican	$10-$15 per cwt.	Lard	.50 per lb.
Corn meal	$0.10 per lb.	Crackers	.25 per lb.
Bacon, hams	.35 per lb.	Fresh beef	.12-.15 per lb.
Sugar	.20-.25 per lb.	Bread	.15 per loaf
Coffee	.25 per lb.	Venison	1.00 per quarter
Salt	.15 per lb.	Milk	.10 per quart
Beans	.15 per lb.	Molasses	2.50 per gallon
Onions	.25 per lb.	Whiskey	3.00 per gallon
Potatoes	.25 per lb.	Lumber	100.00 per M feet
Rice	.25 per lb.	Nails	25.00 per 100 lbs.
Butter	.75 per lb.	Glass	16.00 per box

The first ad of a local, general provision store was that of Jones and Cartwright, appearing on August 20. The firm announced a complete line of groceries and provisions ''consisting in part as follows: Sugar, coffee, molasses, mackerel, herring, rope, blasting powder, nails, crackers, boots and shoes, socks, domestics, locks, hatchets, butts and screws, bacon, flour, sheet iron, fry-pans, and mining equipment.'' Notwithstanding the list is only ''in part'' it will convey some idea of the scope of business conducted by Messrs. Jones and Cartwright.

The advertisements through the summer and fall show new places of business being opened, new structures going up and things ''picking up'' generally. The Vasquez House was opened in September in Auraria with ''good stables and ranches in connection.'' In the same month J. B. Doyle and Co. opens with a line of ''family and fancy groceries.'' An editorial calls attention to the new advertisement of the company and comments on its ''having everything from a needle to a cheese bigger than the biggest grindstone you ever saw.''

In September the date of publication of the *News* was changed from Saturday to Thursday in order to be off the press in time to catch the east-bound stage on Friday.

October 3, 1859, according to announcements appearing around that date, was one of great portent for the settlements saw the first school opening and the first theatrical performance on that day. An advertisement in the September 29 issue announced that the Union Day School would open on October 3 ''in a room formerly used by Col. Inslee in Auraria until a more comfortable school room and school furniture is made ready.'' Prof. O. J. Goldrick was to be in charge and the ''young are to be thoroughly grounded in elementary and practical studies and the more advanced to be prepared for college or the counting room.'' The *News* editor in this issue gave a strong testimonial to Professor Goldrick and deemed him thoroughly capable of his chosen task.

Thorne's Star Company was booked for that first theatrical performance. The advertisement announced Apollo Hall as the

place and the "Cross of Gold" as the drama. This was to be followed the same evening by a farce, "Two Gregories." Tickets were to be one dollar and the front seats were to be reserved for the ladies. From succeeding advertisements it is to be judged that Thorne's Star Company gave several performances and enjoyed suitable patronage.

Early in October the *News* gave a list of places in the various towns at which copies could be purchased. On October 6 A. E. Pierce advertises the opening of a book and stationery store in Auraria and featured "latest eastern papers." J. Smith and Co. opened a new meat market on October 13 with "all kinds of meats and vegetables on hand and for sale cheap." Choice cuts were advertised at eight cents a pound. A new drug store appears among the advertisements on October 13—E. B. Sutherland & Co. —announcing "wholesale and retail drugs, oils, stationery and liquors."

The most auspicious advertisement yet to appear was that of R. B. Bradford in this same issue. A full five inches was devoted to telling of the opening of this new store selling wholesale clothing, boots, shoes and caps. Bradford advertisements appear continuously from this time on and appear to be the best revenue producer for the *News*.

Almost each succeeding issue from this time on contains the advertisement of some new provision house which, judged by the size of the advertisement and the list of commodities for sale, formed an important addition to the commercial institutions of the two towns. Among these firms were J. H. Ming, who opened in Auraria; Gerrish and Co., Denver; Clayton, Lowe and Co., Larimer and F Streets in Denver; Curtis and Foster, Auraria; A. P. Vasquez & Co., Auraria; and G. Guirard, Denver, who opened with a full "line of French goods."

From one advertisement appearing on October 20 there is evidence that the towns were sufficiently large to support a photographer—or rather, ambrotype-gallery—for a gentleman had opened one opposite the Apollo Theatre and was prepared to "do pictures on leather."

In spite of the apparent financial success of the *News* as shown by increasing advertisements, Byers deemed it necessary on October 27 to give a straight talk to advertisers. In his notice he stated his unqualified opinion that in a "town of four thousand people there should be many more and bigger advertisements," that many stores were failing because of want of patronage which they could secure by advertising, that the *News* being the only paper in the region it should warrant far greater support. Byers also lamented the low subscription list and printed a long list of names of delinquent subscribers. It is interesting to note that in succeeding issues the list grew smaller, the names being withdrawn of those who paid up.

On November 10 the results of the election to fill offices of the provisional Territory of Jefferson were announced and many advertisers dropped the "K. T." designation and substituted "J. T." Of course the *News* date line carried the same change.

Advertisements run during the issues that fall of 1859 show Reed's Theatre opened, Pierce's News Depot adding a circulating library of fifty volumes, a long list of addresses of uncalled-for packages at the L. C. & P. P. Express Company, the opening of the Sutherland House, the opening of the Cibola Theatre, the calling of a meeting at Boulder to talk over building a road from St. Vrain to the Gregory diggings, that Dr. Smith, newly arrived, a physician and surgeon, was "prepared to perform any dental operations desired" and the fact was vouched for by four fellow physicians in the two towns, that the bridge over Cherry Creek connecting Denver and Auraria was proceeding nicely, the consolidation of two existing bakeries and lunch rooms under one management, with continued operation of a shop in each of the towns, the opening of a new bakery, prompted apparently by this consolidation, the Criterion Saloon breaking into the advertising columns and the *News* changing its publication date to Wednesday, again to meet the schedule of the L. C. & P. P. Express Company.

The close of the year, to judge by the advertisements in the issue of December 28, showed in the two towns one church, three bakeries, six real estate firms, four physicians (one of whom dabbled in dentistry), five law firms, a hardware store, eight general stores, two drug stores, three lumber firms, a book store, two blacksmiths, a brewery, a saloon, four hotels, three theatres, several commission houses, carpenters, cabinet makers and the like. Other establishments having been noted in the advertising columns before it is safe to assume that many were existing which did not take space on December 28.

The paper had taken on almost completely a local character. The bulk of the advertising was now local, although Byers' old standbys in Omaha, Council Bluffs, Nebraska City, and other Missouri Valley cities were still with him. The comparatively large advertisements the railroads of the East had favored the *News* with earlier had disappeared as had those of the connecting express companies. The railroad managements must have felt the *News* was no advertising medium to attract traffic westward. Perhaps they had advertised before to get the bulk of the business of the "go backs" and this had fallen off considerably.

During the winter months the advertisements show the opening of new business institutions in Auraria and Denver. A gun shop was opened by S. Hawken in January. In the same month Moyne and Rice began a furniture store on F Street (now Fifteenth Street) between Lawrence and Larimer Streets. Graham's City Drug Store was added to the number of places where patent medicines and liquors could be purchased. A millinery store was opened in March with Mrs. A. E. Carpenter in charge. A new express company was formed—The Rocky Mountain Express Company—with daily runs to Golden and Gregory Diggings. The "South Platte Rangers" were organized during the winter and under our old friend Tom Pollock, as captain, were drilling weekly at Cibola Hall.

The *News* ran a bit of history in February under the caption of "Early Days In Jefferson" in which a pen picture of the settlements was given.

Some idea of the accommodations a traveler desired in the early part of 1860 can be gleaned from the advertisement of the L. & P. P. Express. The coaches left Denver on Thursdays at 6:30 A. M. and arrived at Leavenworth a week later at the same time. They left Leavenworth on Tuesdays and reached Denver a week later. Eight passengers could be carried "with comfort and care" and especial attention was given to the comfort of ladies. The trip cost $100.00 per passenger, board included. A final conclusive argument in the advertisement was, "Our drivers are sober, discreet and experienced men."

A scarcity of flour in the spring of 1860 brought the price up to $25.00 a hundred pounds.

The townsfolk of Auraria having voted with some misgivings on April 1 to consolidate with Denver, that fact is duly recorded in the legal notices in the issue of April 11 and the paper henceforth carries "Denver, Jefferson Territory," on its date line.

Russell, Majors and Waddell advertise on April 18 that they have moved their branch at Fort Laramie to Denver and that the Denver offices are to be in charge of Hiram Lightner.

The spring season finds Woolworth and Moffat opening a news stand and stationery store, a new livery stable opened, an ice company prepared to make house to house deliveries, Rev. J. M. Chivington taking charge of Methodist affairs in the city, two new jewelry stores opened and Stockton and Company launching a furniture store venture.

A May advertisement indicates that John A. Sowers and Co. was speeding up express service in the mountain districts, running stages through to Golden City, Mountain City, Missouri Flats, Russell's Gulch and Nevada Gulch in eight hours.

There is evidence that Denver merchants were beginning to take on metropolitan airs. In an advertisement a clothing dealer announces a closing out sale in which he advises: "country merchants will do well to call early and examine our stock."

The first advertisements of quartz mills on hand for local distribution appear in April, 1860. Jones & Cartwright had announced as early as the previous August that they would take orders for delivery from eastern firms, but by April local dealers had mills on hand. The advertisements thus show the change from placer to lode mining at about this time. For many months the drug stores had advertised gold scales and miners' supplies, indicating, of course, placer mining. The quartz mill advertisements always carried testimonials from users to show their worth.

Development in the summer months of 1860 is further shown by the advertisements. One shows the opening of City Hospital, managed by local physicians. The launching of a daily edition—*The Daily News*—to be printed in addition to the weekly, was duly announced in the *News*. Cuts to illustrate advertisements made their first appearance during the summer and "toned up" the paper considerably.

Of great importance among the summer developments was the opening of the bank of Clark, Gruber & Co. In their opening announcement the firm states, "We have in connection with our banking a mint and are prepared to exchange our coin for gold dust. The native gold is coined as it is found alloyed with silver. The weight will be greater but the value the same as the U. S. coin of like denominations." The editor's comment on the opening of the bank pictures the building as the finest business structure in town. Advertisers gradually withdrew their offer to accept gold dust in exchange following the setting up in business of Clark, Gruber and Co.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of the mountain towns were competing for supremacy with Denver, that city would seem to be the hub of affairs. Jones and Cartwright in opening a branch store in Central City advertise in the Denver *Rocky Mountain News,* apparently to be read by Central City folk, that in their mountain store "Denver prices" prevail.

As the third winter experienced by Denver citizens approached, affairs seemed to be in a most flourishing condition. Byers had not had occasion to belabor advertisers for many months, the columns were filled with advertisements with almost every known industry of the day represented, new places of business were going up, wagon trains were arriving every day and with them tons of products to be used by the residents. It is significant, too, that the new buildings were being constructed of brick as the

advance advertisements indicated. The first evidence that insurance companies thought Denver buildings and the merchandise in them a good risk is shown on November 3 with an imposing advertisement of the Quaker City Insurance, Company, maintaining an agent in the young city.

The first display advertisement worthy of the name ever to appear in the *News* was that of the Elmes and Bickford Quartz Mill, a two column-eight inch affair with an appropriate cut, appearing on November 10. In time many such advertisements appear in the *News* pages.

The inception of a present major Denver industry is to be noted during the fall of 1860. A none too imposing advertisement in November announces that "a hotel for invalids" is to be opened at Wazee and G Streets. Not much was mentioned regarding the climate and health building facilities but the fact remains that here we find our first sanitarium, the forerunner of the many in the region today.

The classified and "display" columns of both papers in April, 1861, showed eight physicians, fifteen lawyers, three real estate firms, eight hotels, seven saloons, fourteen general stores, six quartz mill dealers, three drug stores, three banks, five active fraternal orders, five churches and various other business ventures such as hardware stores, clothing establishments, commission brokers, jewelers, confectioners, bakers, restaurants, news stands, corrals, machine shops, nurseries, a bath house and a vinegar factory. Add to these the many establishments heretofore noted and not appearing in the advertisements at this particular time and a thriving city may be pictured in contrast to the two straggling little settlements of a short two years earlier.

It is worthy of note here that all provision houses purveyed liquor as did the restaurants and the drug stores. Ice cream was served in hotels and restaurants. "Segars" formed part of the stock in trade of drug stores and saloons. Bakeries were operated in connection with restaurants. "Rectifying whiskey" was a side, or perhaps the main, endeavor of the vinegar factory. All advertisements savored of the "latest from the East."

Trade names of commodities were little used and it is evident that so-called national brands were practically unknown. Exceptions are to be found in the mention of Fairbanks Scales, Three Star, Henessy and Bourbon whiskies and the best known quartz mills of the day—Elmes and Bickfords and Gates. A patent medicine—"Helmbold's Ex. Buchu"—was frequently mentioned in drug store advertisements. No special brands of groceries or clothing were noted in any advertisements.

A final quotation of a market report will tend to show trade developments up to the spring of 1861.

MARKET REPORT

Flour	$8.00-$10.00 a cwt.	Cheese	$0.20-$0.25 per lb.
Meal	$0.08-$0.10 per lb.	Coffee	.26-.33 per lb.
Bacon	.20-.25 per lb.	Sugar	.18-.23 per lb.
Beans	.08 per lb.	Lumber	$30.00-$50.0 per M feet
Beef, dressed	.09 per lb.	Hay	$20.00-$22.00 per ton
Butter	.50-.60 per lb.	Wood	$4.00-$5.00 per cord
Lard	.30 per lb.	Coal	$8.00 per ton
Potatoes	.15 per lb.	Freight (from the States)	$8.00-$10.00 per cwt.
Onions	.08 per lb.		

In bringing this history as told by advertisements to a close it is fitting to list some of the names of Denver pioneers and builders who are mentioned in the advertisements. The mere fact that the names are taken from advertisements and not from the news columns is proof, it would seem, of the assertion that history is told by advertisements. The following names are offered as proof of the assertion: Wm. N. Byers, Thos. Gibson, D. C. Oakes, R. C. Wootton, J. M. Broadwell, M. E. Clark, C. H. Gruber, Lewis N. Tappan, George H. Tappan, J. B. Doyle, H. P. Bennet, Moses Hallett, L. N. Bassett, D. C. Collier, R. E. Whitsitt, E. P. Stout, George Tritch, John P. Slough, Hugh Murdock, E. T. Cheesman, David H. Moffat, B. D. Williams, Amos Steck, Richard Sopris, R. B. Bradford, Alex Majors, E. L. Berthoud, O. J. Goldrick, and R. L. Wooton. Mention of the clergymen in Denver, J. M. Chivington, Wm. A. Kenny, S. P. Machebeuf, and Rev. Kehler—is necessary to complete the list.

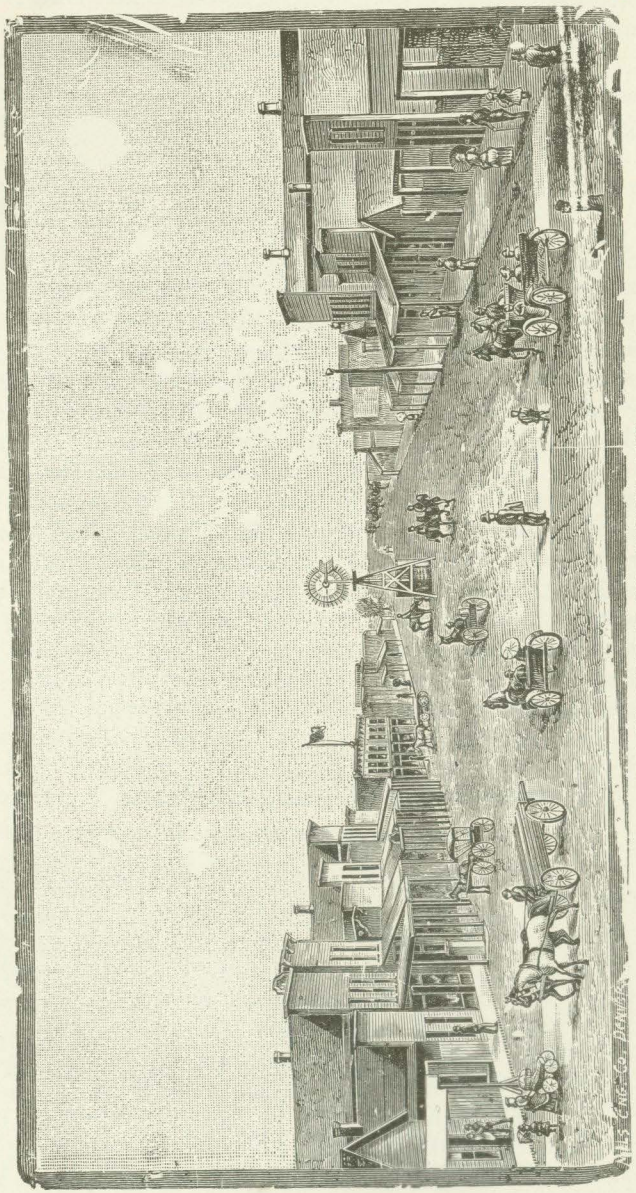
Pioneering at Akron, Colorado

MILLARD FILLMORE VANCE*

The youngest of twelve children, I was born at Fairfield, Iowa, May 23, 1854. My childhood was spent on an Iowa farm. After attending country school I went to Avery's Academy at Fairfield.

In October, 1875, I went to Kansas and took up a homestead. The following year, with two companions (Pickett and Pettigrew), I set out on a hunting trip to Colorado. We had a wagon and team and one saddle horse and were equipped with breech-loading Springfield rifles. Our course was up the Solomon River, across to the Arikaree, and then westward to Antelope Springs, Rock Springs, and Battleground (Summit) Springs. We were out five or six weeks on the trip. Our method of hunting was to hide near

*This article is the product of an interview had by LeRoy R. Hafen with Mr. Vance in June, 1931. After being written up from notes the story was submitted to Mr. Vance and was corrected and approved by him. Mr. Vance lives in Akron today.—Ed.



MAIN STREET OF AKRON, 1888

(Courtesy of Mr. R. B. Cooley, Publisher of the Akron News-Reporter)

the water holes and shoot the game as it came to water. We got plenty of antelope but killed no buffalo, although we saw some.

There was a wagon trail then which came by way of present Akron, went east of Fremont Butte and struck the Platte at about Fort Wicked. A branch of this trail led to Battleground Springs. Returning to Kansas we followed down the Republican River.

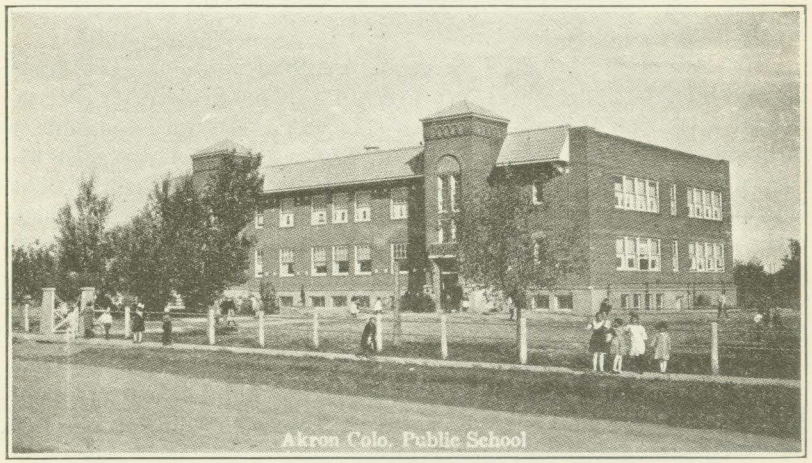
I became sick, gave up my homestead and returned to Iowa. I was appointed Deputy Treasurer and then Deputy Sheriff at Fairfield. In the fall of 1879 I came to Colorado and worked a while first in Pueblo. Then I went to the mines in Saguache County, where I helped lay out and build the town of Bonanza. In that locality I mined and prospected for about two years. During the winter of 1884-85 I taught school at Sheridan, Wyoming.

In September, 1885, I came to Akron, Colorado. The town had been laid out by the Lincoln Land Company, which was connected with the Burlington Railroad, but there were no houses built as yet. The first building put up in the town was a structure about 16 by 24 feet and was built by Pat Daugherty. The Yeaman brothers, Ed. and Charlie, rented it and started a hardware store in the fall of 1885. The next building, erected on the site of the present Citizen's National Bank, became a general merchandise store. The Hallack-Howard Lumber Company of Denver was about the next concern to establish a business here. The first hotel was built by Andy Anderson and was run by Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Rexrod. A post office was established in about December, 1884, and was located in the railroad depot. Bill Sherman became the first postmaster.

The growth of the town and district was rapid in 1886-88. Those were wet years, everything looked promising, and everyone was hopeful. Many men who came in obtained three quarter sections of land. They would preempt one quarter, take one as a tree claim, and after making proof on this would homestead one quarter. For a tree claim a man had to plant and cultivate ten acres of trees. Cottonwood and ash were usually planted. Of the 5,000 gray ash I planted at first, only one tree is living now. I planted about twenty acres of cottonwoods and black locusts. All these have died. The worms will eat into and kill a black locust in about five years. We had to pay $1.25 per acre for preemption claims. The homestead requirement was to live on the place five years.

During the wet years of the middle eighties we were greatly encouraged and felt that we could grow anything they could anywhere in the world. We planted mostly corn, sorghum and millet at first. Then wheat and oats came in. We had considerable

trouble with the range cattle and had to fence against them. The long trail herds going north usually passed to the west of us, going down Beaver Creek and through Brush. Once a bunch of longhorn cattle drifted in with a storm and ate up thirty acres of corn for me and thirty for my neighbor in one night. There were hundreds of cattle in the herd. We fenced with black-painted, barbed wire. Fence posts were shipped in by the railroad. They were mostly white cedar and Osage orange and were brought from the South. Some of the posts on my original homestead, which I still own, have been in the ground for forty years. The Osage orange lasts better than cedar. The posts we get now from Oregon do not last so well. Often they are rotted off in four or five years.



MODERN PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING AT AKRON

In breaking the sod we generally used horses, although some used mules or oxen in their plowing. Our horses were mostly small, weighing 1,000 pounds or less. Only one span was used in pulling the plow. The traces on the harnesses were leather or chain, but rope was sometimes used. We brought in good milk cows, short-horns. Chickens and hogs were also brought in by the first settlers. One emigrant coming in from the East, shipped out a stump-puller. This became a great joke among our farmers on the treeless plains.

The first grade school building and the first bank in Akron were built from brick made and burned here. Both buildings still stand. The town's first church, the Presbyterian, is still standing also. The first newspaper was the *Pioneer Press*, started in the fall of 1885 by D. W. Irwin. Horace Greeley Pickett was owner and editor of the paper during most of its existence. It ceased

publication about three years ago. Judge L. C. Stephenson and I opened the first abstract office here, in 1887. Saloons were here from the start. Bill Sturdevon, who never drank a drop himself, kept the first saloon. Dances and picnics were our principal forms of amusement. The ranchers usually came in to town for the dances on Saturday nights.

The first well in Akron was put down by J. H. Boning and Johnnie Williams at the intersection of Greeley Avenue and Fulton Street. The drill was raised by means of a windlass which was turned by hand. The bore was about six inches in diameter and they went down about 100 feet for water. Many wells in this locality were dug with pick and shovel. These were usually dug round and were three to four feet in diameter.

Soon after Washington County was organized in 1887, there was a fight between Akron and Yuma for designation as the county seat. It went as such fights did at the time. We had the railroad on our side, this being a division station. It was easy to bring in a load of men from McCook to insure a majority.

The good years of the middle eighties ended with the dry years of 1889 and 1890. Then we had good years in 1891 and 1892. In the latter year I had twelve acres of oats that went sixty-five bushels per acre. The years 1893 and 1894 were dry and in 1895 the grasshoppers came. Relief in the form of food and clothing had to be sent in from the East. There was a great exodus from this region in 1889 and 1890 and again in 1893-95. Many houses and farms were given up and deserted. I bought one quarter section for $50 and another for $100. In 1905 and 1906 settlers began to come in again and take up the land. They stayed on generally up to and through the World War. During the war prices were high and we prospered. Since then there has been a slump and another exodus. Wheat now is down to twenty-five cents per bushel and times are pretty hard for the farmer. We have improved machinery and methods of farming that now generally insure a crop. In the early years our chief concern was whether there would be enough rain to mature our crops. Now our main problem is to sell at a decent price what we raise.

Trekking to the Grand River Valley in 1882*

NANCY BLAIN UNDERHILL

In October, 1869, with father, mother and two brothers—Douglas and George—I left Astoria, Illinois, in a covered wagon

*This reminiscence was written in 1930 by Mrs. Underhill. She lives in the Redlands region south of Grand Junction, Colorado, today. This story was obtained by Walker Wyman, a graduate student at the University of Iowa, and was sent by him to the *Colorado Magazine*.—Ed.

drawn by two horses. We settled in Montgomery County, Kansas, on a farm which had been preempted before our arrival. This county was on the frontier in 1870, there being but few organized farther west. After enduring hardships and poverty in southern Kansas for eight years, mother's health demanded a change in climate. Consequently, in July, 1878, we left for Colorado. After forty-two days of travel in a covered wagon we arrived at Canon City. The team and wagon were traded for a very humble little home and we started life anew.

Having stopped at Canon City for a while we were still all agreed upon one general object—to work toward the purchase or possession of a farm home in the Rocky Mountains. Father hauled freight to Leadville, as there was no railroad there at that time. Douglas worked out, and put his earnings into the common fund. The only girl in the family desired to become a school-ma'am; hence, she must go to school. Unselfish George needed an education too, but both could not go; so George worked out and paid for his sister's books and tuition, until she could obtain a certificate to teach. Then while she kept school in a little mountain mining town, George, at fifteen years of age, rented some lots, raised a market garden and peddled the produce in town on a wheelbarrow, thus taking care of mother and himself, while the rest tried to lay up a little sum for the next moving enterprise.

While teaching at a little mining camp called "Hell Gate," I also conducted a Sunday School as long as school lasted. All the people who attended this Sunday School, walked to and from it, some of them coming from five to ten miles. It was necessary while there, to attend a teachers' examination at the county seat, but being miles from any railroad or thorofare, how to get there was a problem. A letter home solved the problem. In due time, here came brother George driving a great big freight wagon—side-boards and all—into which the school ma'am climbed and rode to the county seat.

In 1881 the Ute Indian Reservation in Western Colorado was opened for settlement, the Indians being conducted by United States soldiers to another (and poorer) place in Utah. The land was opened for settlement in October.

Previous to this time, Douglas Blain had gone to Ouray, the mining camp nearest to the junction of the Grand (now Colorado) River and the Gunnison, calculating to go over into the newly opened country as soon as possible. Accordingly, as soon as the date of removal of the Indians was announced he, with three other young men, Phil Shott, Meritt Wimber and Art Hotchkiss, started for the promised land. It took them three days to make the journey, so on the third day after the removal of the Indians, they

crossed the Grand River into what has since been called Grand Valley. There was a good plain Indian trail which the first settlers followed, and the river was fordable in fall and winter at the place where the Indian trail crossed, four miles above the junction of the two rivers. Once across, they proceeded to camp and to stake their claims, Douglas on the west side, and Art Hotchkiss on the east side of the trail, by the river. Needless to say there were no houses or towns or other improvements in the reservation at that time. A group of men, however, had slipped in a day or two previous to the opening, and had driven a stake into the ground where Grand Junction now stands, naming it "West Denver." After the land was opened for settlement, those men established the town of Grand Junction at that place.

The first thing all the early settlers proceeded to do was to build little log huts on their claims to live in during the coming winter, and to establish their claim to the land. Douglas Blain's cabin was 10 feet square, built of cottonwood logs, having a door made of split poles, a hole for a window, and a roof of earth. Other cabins were constructed similarly. Art Hotchkiss, being under age, could not hold a claim, so he traded his to Charley Steele for a horse. As early in the spring as it was safe to try to cross the mountain range (in April), father went with three other men in a light spring wagon across the range via Poncho Pass and Cochetopa Pass to our new home, where my brother Douglas was located. There he cleared a little patch of ground and planted a garden and twenty-five young apple trees, also some peach pits, which had to be cracked so they would come up that year. This was in May, 1882. He also planted some currant and gooseberry bushes and one rose bush the same spring, we taking them with us from Canon City when we made the trip in May, 1882.

Father had arranged for mother, George, and me to follow him early in May, in company with several other families, among whom was one named Reeser. The others had a few cattle to take along, and they were very tardy about starting. So Mr. Reeser and family pulled out alone before the others started. At last, on the 9th of May, we all got started, and drove a few miles, then camped.

On account of the cattle, Gibsons and Frasiers found it necessary to travel quite slowly, so as to let their cattle graze. Thus we made only a few miles each day. But father had written instructions to us, telling us exactly how to go, where to camp, and about how many miles to make each day. We could not follow his directions and stay with the crowd. So, after a few days, George, mother and I pulled out ahead of the others, making our

camp at Poncho Springs, and starting on in advance of the others next morning.

We hoped to overtake Reesers, who were one day ahead when we started. This, the good Lord enabled us to do, in due time, because Reesers went out of the prescribed course via Gunnison, which, though not farther, was much more difficult to travel, so they were delayed a little. We crossed Poncho Pass and on through the San Luis Valley, via Saguache, alone. Then, up, up, up the long grade up the east side of Cochetopa Pass fifteen miles to the top, and I walked all the way to the top, to save the little pony team as much as possible.

Going up we met two men on horseback, who told us that the Reesers were only two or three hours ahead of us. Oh, how glad we were. George resolved not to camp for dinner until we could overtake them. So we passed a good stopping place, only stopping long enough to water the horses, and hastened on. Now we had passed the summit, so we could make good time going down grade. At last, we came in sight of Reeser's mules and covered wagon, just pulling out from their noonday camp. George had good strong lungs, and he used them. Standing up in front of the wagon, he shouted at the top of his voice, and waved his hat. They heard, they shouted and waved back. Then they stopped, and waited until we had our noon lunch (though past noon) and let the horses eat. Thereafter they and we traveled together, and it was well for us that we did.

From the beginning of the Indian Reserve, the rest of the way the road was just wagon tracks along the Indian trail, though there were one or two places where some white men had taken possession of the crossings of streams, and called them toll roads. So we had to pay toll, to ford the streams; but one place Mr. Reeser searched out a way around, so we crossed free. In one place the road went down a steep incline into a deep gully and then abruptly up the other bank. George was jerked from his seat at the bottom of the ravine, and thrown out onto the wagon tongue, behind the ponies. Instantly his sister grabbed for the lines and yelled "Whoa!" The little ponies stopped, and George was not much hurt; but we were stuck. Reesers traveled ahead, so we had to shout for them to stop. They unhitched their mules, came back, and pulled us out.

We were traveling over desert hills, in an uninhabited country, bleak and bare. The sun beat down upon us, for there were no trees nor grass, and the last day of our journey we ran out of water in our carriers, so all were very thirsty.

Previous to this we had crossed the Gunnison River at Roubidoux ford, but some white men had placed a ferry boat at

the crossing on the Grand, which was two miles above Grand Junction. How glad we were when we came to the Grand River, where we could get water to drink. One little girl drank so much she could not speak for some time, because of cramps. And Reeser's dog, how he did drink and drink. We crossed the Grand River there and made camp. Then Mr. Reeser and John Spicklemier, George, and myself, set out afoot to find Douglas' ranch, as we had instructions from father not to try to come farther than the ferry until one of them should come to guide us. Douglas and his neighbors had dug ditches, which must be crossed at certain prepared places only, as the loaded wagons would sink in the mud and be stuck. We found no road, but followed along up the river, crossing (on foot) deep gulches, until we came to a little log cabin near the river, among the great cottonwood trees. For the trees grew along the river, but nowhere else.

How glad father and Douglas were to see us. They were anxious because our delay in starting had made our arrival later than they expected. And they were going to Ouray, 100 miles distant, in a few days to help in hay harvest, as their little hoard of money was just about gone and it was the only way to get means to live upon until we should arrive. So we were doubly thankful that we had followed father's directions, though we had to leave the wagon-train to do so. Among those we left behind was a lawyer (J. T. Cox) with an invalid wife and two children. They never got through but turned back, after much hardship.

Douglas went back with the men after the wagons, showing them where to cross the gullies and also the ditches. So on May 20, 1882, according to George's statement, we safely reached our home in Grand Valley, four miles above Grand Junction. The river was high and rising every day, as it does at that season, so it could not be forded. There were no bridges, and in a few days the ferry boat went down the river. So for awhile there was no crossing, except by skiff or canoe. Meanwhile, our party which we had left behind, excepting Mr. Cox and family, arrived on the opposite side of the river, but could not cross over to us. So they turned and went away, but came again the following autumn, I believe.

I have often thought, how much better it is, upon life's journey to our future home, to follow Father's directions. Our neighbors, after being separated from us, went a different way, so some of them never arrived at all, while the others had a much harder time, and were greatly delayed.

Our Heavenly Father has sent us a guide and left complete instructions for us to follow, so as to reach our future Home, where our father and elder brother are awaiting us.

The Colorado Legislature and International Affairs*

HUMBERT REES

Reviewing the history of the state legislatures of Colorado from 1877, when the First General Assembly of the state met, to the Twenty-eighth General Assembly, adjourning in April, 1931, a recent survey by the writer seems to add a new angle of approach to Colorado history. The study established the fact that, the Constitution of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding, the State of Colorado exerts an international influence and sometimes engages in international relationships to a decided extent.

Something of the glory of history and the romance in the study of great panoramas of human endeavor as they were reflected in the history of the state, came from this study, written though it was from a dry and sometimes agonizing (to the reader) compilation of committee reports, votes and record of laws enacted or killed.

Perhaps the most romantic period in the history of the state extends from 1877 to 1895. This was the time of the Ute rebellions, of the growth and decline of many mining camps, of the development from a raw and rough territory to a relatively quiet and civilized state. Even during this time the men of the legislature turned their attention to the international field.

One of the most interesting of the phases of this study is that of the Irish problem. It would appear that there were a great many Irish citizens in the State or a great many Irish members of the legislature, or both. For from the legislative session of 1881, when the law-makers first passed a resolution on this subject, down to 1921, when the Irish free state eventually was established, there was perpetual agitation, resolution-adopting, and memorializing from the halls of Colorado's law-givers concerning the most unfortunate state of affairs in the land of the shamrock, and commending its defenders. The unique departure of the resolution of 1881 and those following appears in the fact that they were addressed to officials of a foreign nation, and did not pass through the hands of the State Department of the national government.

This resolution has little significance from the historical standpoint, and simply serves to indicate the lines along which the survey was conducted. Resolutions concerning the "oppression and cruelty" of the British government during the Boer War, concerning the terrible ravages of the Turkish troops in Armenia, concerning the mistreatment of Jews in Russia (significantly introduced by a Jewish senator), and many others are found to indicate that the state government at least had its opinions toward the conduct of international affairs.

*This article is a digest from a longer report prepared for the International Relation Seminar, University of Denver. Mr. Rees lives at Rifle, Colorado.—Ed.

The first actual indication of a legislative act affecting both the history of Colorado and the international field occurs also during the session of 1881, when House Concurrent Resolution Number 6 was adopted endorsing James B. Belford's defense of silver in Congress. From that day to this, the legislature has labored and enacted and memorialized in an effort first to preserve the silver standard and later to restore the original principle of bimetallism. As late as 1931 a memorial was passed requesting Congress to restore the monetary value of silver coinage.

This problem of the coinage of silver has been extremely vital to the state, since a goodly proportion of the nation's silver comes from the mines of Colorado. During the decade following 1890, after Congress had demonetized silver, the mining industry of the state went into a decline from which it has never recovered; the doom of many a flourishing camp and the fate of those deserted villages known as "ghost cities" dates to a large extent from that single Congressional act.

The state legislature did not submit tamely to the adoption of the single standard, in the attempt of the United States to conform to the international monetary system. The act by the legislature of 1881 already has been mentioned. In 1883 the General Assembly resolved "That the people of Colorado are unalterably opposed to any measure whatever having for its object the abandonment or depreciation of silver money or restricting its coinage or circulation."

This statement expresses the general tone of all the requests by the state to the national government concerning the silver question. In 1885 a resolution was adopted scoring class discrimination under the guise of discrimination against silver and urging the free and unlimited coinage of silver. Further acts were adopted in 1887 and 1891; and in 1893 resolutions concerning silver coinage flooded the legislative files. In 1894 a special session of the legislature was called by the governor to consider, according to his message, the unjust attack by the national government on the silver mining industry. This session, naturally, could do little, and ended in accepting the situation. Although periodic outbursts from the legislature concerning the national and international monetary situation have occurred since that date, they have been ineffectual.

This brief discussion may serve to indicate the interest shown by the state legislature in an international problem which resulted, from one point of view, in the transformation of Colorado from a predominantly mining state to one devoted primarily to farming

and manufacturing, and therefore the passing of an epoch in the history of the state.

Another aspect of this subject that is almost as old as the state itself is that of the tariff. Here the subject becomes economic; and the plea of Colorado, almost without exception, for a higher tariff on certain of her products may have a definite relation to other nations that produce the same goods, and might even lead to retaliation or conflict. In the session of 1885 the legislature passed the first of another long series of resolutions and memorials that have extended down to the present. In this case, the body is pleading for a higher tariff on the products of sheep growers, and requests "the immediate restoration of the tariff of 1867 on wool." In 1889 the Colorado solons requested Congress to place a duty on silver and lead imported into the United States. In 1897 the legislators united again to request a higher tariff for lead imports, in the belief that such action would immediately benefit that industry.

These illustrations are sufficient to indicate the Colorado attitude toward the tariff question. Only one other should be mentioned at this time, and that might be the interesting inconsistency of a Democratic Senate, with a party affiliation that traditionally has favored the abolition of tariffs, when it passed at one and the same session a resolution aimed directly at the importation of zinc ores from the Republic of Mexico by raising the United States tariff barriers, and another resolution advocating the reduction of all duties to a schedule aimed at revenue only. Fortunately, perhaps, such inconsistency was avoided by the House of Representatives, which killed the resolution in committee. Later the same resolution requesting no protective tariffs, perhaps expressing the sincere desires of the legislature, was passed without any incriminating tariff request.

Another action taken by the legislature, surely of interest in the history of the stock industry, and certainly of especial significance in any study of the international relationships of the Colorado state legislature, was a resolution passed in 1895 that provided practically for negotiations between the State and the governmental officials of Great Britain.

Since Colorado cattle are mainly of the type known as stockers or feeders, the growers were able at that time to enter only slightly into foreign export trade, when all American cattle were required to be slaughtered immediately upon being landed at a European port because of a disease quarantine. Therefore fat cattle were in the main imported, and the growers of England and Scotland were requesting feeder cattle for their fattening pens. The Colorado legislature authorized the state veterinary surgeon to carry on negotiations with English customs officials with a view to raising the embargo, manifestly a notable benefit for the cattle growers here.

The history of the United States is surprisingly well mirrored in the incidental history of the State during such international cataclysms as the Spanish-American War and the World War. Being an integral part of the nation, Colorado's man power and resources were mobilized and her interests in general directed toward the successful prosecution of the two foreign wars engaged in during her period of statehood.

It will be found that the work of a state during a war involving the nation is mainly confined to organizing the producers of the state so that they may bear the additional strain that the war entails, to protecting the citizens during the war period, and of appropriating money and materials to pay for the mobilizing of troops, the expenses of the national government, and other expenditures. Illustrations of these considerations may be found in the session of 1899, after the Spanish war, and in the special session of 1917 and the post-war assembly of 1919.

In pursuing the study of the foreign relationships of the state legislature, it is surprising what engaging reading matter can be found among the journals of the twenty-eight sessions. The strenuous life of frontier days may be read from between the lines of the early records. The first two or three meetings were devoted largely to the establishment of military posts and Indian regulations, the building of military roads, the financing of wars with the aborigines, the preservation of law and order, and other problems characteristic of an early-day settlement. One of the laws passed in 1879 made it compulsory for railroads to plough firebreaks on the prairie to prevent the spread of prairie fires.

The legislature had its humorous moments, also; it has requested the investigation of the ventilating apparatus of the Senate chamber (with good reason) as early as 1881. It has excluded the reporters for one of the Denver daily papers from the floor of the House of Representatives; it has criticized the heads of the state universities for talking too much. It must not be thought that it has never had any serious moments, however. In 1893 positive anarchy prevailed in the House of Representatives, with two speakers and two sergeants-at-arms, and with the Senate clamoring for the gentlemen to settle the question as to who was to be the leader, in order that the state might continue with its business. It has been forced to meet in special session during industrial disturb-

ances, outstanding among which was the great coal miners' strike of the early part of the century.

In concluding, it might be averred with entire truth that the international relationships of the state of Colorado have had a certain influence on the history of the commonwealth. That the premise of the article is correct I have attempted to indicate by the few examples cited, which may be backed up by a wealth of further instances. Once this is admitted, the importance of international events on the history of the state is easily demonstrable.

In the first place, the world-wide movement toward the adoption of the single standard of gold coinage as the basis of monetary systems has been a contributing factor to the action of the United States toward silver and the resultant crippling of the silver mining industry in Colorado, even in the mines where silver is a secondary product; and this in turn has hastened the coming of a new agricultural and industrial epoch that replaced the former all-embracing interest in mining.

It may also be demonstrated that the tariff policy of the United States and of foreign nations has resulted in the encouragement of new industries or the suppressing of old in Colorado, with resulting industrial prosperity or chaos, which have contributed their pages to the history of the state. It may be mentioned that the strike of 1914 resulted in the payment of damages by the State of Colorado to the Italian government for injuries done to the persons and property of citizens of that nation, a definite embroilment in the international field, and an offshoot of a period of considerable importance in the history of the state.

Indicative of the importance in Colorado history of international events is the illustration of the two wars prosecuted by the United States. The necessity for the expenditure of money and man-power for use in foreign disputes might seem to make advisable the continued attention of the state to the progress of international relations; for its whole history may be altered by an altercation. Other instances illustrating the general premise might be cited but for the lack of space.

In conclusion we may say, first, that the State of Colorado as represented by its legislature has had a large number of contacts with and a certain influence on international relationships; and second, that these incidents have a definite influence on the history of Colorado.

On the Westward Trail*

J. N. Hall

I shall speak briefly today of two aspects of the great westward migration of the middle of the last century.

Pioneering in new countries has always been a perilous undertaking. The Pilgrims at Plymouth lost a third of their number during the first winter. The early settlers in Kentucky and Tennessee often lost half their numbers within the first few years, and a similar sacrifice was made by the Boers of South Africa, in the "Great Trek." The Hudson's Bay Company records tell us that from ten to even as high as fifty per cent of the trappers failed to return to the posts in the spring.

The perils which have beset all great migrations in history were ever present in the movement of population, which interests us today. The pioneers took all the usual risks to life and health, but in addition many unusual ones. Not the least was the inability to obtain skilled help in case of accident or disease.

Along the Overland Trail the use of drinking water contaminated by disease was a frequent source of illness and death, wholly apart from the danger to man and beast of poisonous alkali water, which in certain seasons, was a serious menace. In his *Oregon Trail*, Parkman, the historian, mentions the attack of dysentery which he contracted in the summer of 1846, which nearly cost him his life and left him a partial invalid.

In 1849, Asiatic cholera extended along this very trail to the mountains. Those coming down with it traveled daily westward, and contaminated the water at each successive camp. As always, the death rate was high. Many travelers perished because of accident or illness, the fatalities occurring because they were without ordinary care. An attack of typhoid or pneumonia, with delirium, the contagious diseases, a broken bone preventing locomotion, accidents with firearms, drowning, or death from attacks of wild animals or at the hands of the Indians—all these causes depleted the ranks of the immigrants. Yet the spirit of adventure and conquest led them on.

Secondly, I wish to pay a tribute to man's most useful animal friend, the horse. Though the patient ox bore much of the burden so far as freight movement was concerned, the horse filled an even more important place.

*This address was delivered by Dr. Hall at the dedication of the historical markers at Julesburg, Colorado, on June 14, 1931. See the *Colorado Magazine* of July, 1931, for a note on the markers and for the picture of one of them.—Ed.

The horses used in the Pony Express were selected in the Middle West, with especial regard to speed and stamina, with the express idea that they should have the ability to run away from Indian pursuers. You recall that the riders were forbidden to carry arms, for flight and not combat, was to be their salvation in case of pursuit. So well did these horses perform their part that the records of the company show that not a single rider who obeyed these orders was killed by the Indians. The horses were fairly well bred, of good size, and were grain fed. No small Indian pony on a grass diet could overtake them.

As illustrating the small size and weight of the ill-bred and ill-cared for Indian ponies, I will mention that two, which I owned in the '80s weighed respectively 540 and 610 pounds. They at first knew nothing of oats as food and refused them. The taste for grain amongst half-wild horses has to be acquired, like the human taste for olives.

The stage horses, rather heavier than the saddle stock, and similarly well-bred and well-cared for were able to outdistance the Indian ponies, even with the handicap of a loaded stage. Col. R. J. Spotswood, Division Superintendent, who bought these horses, must have had an extraordinary eye for a good horse to have been so wonderfully successful in his selection of the stage stock.

From Dr. T. A. Hughes of Denver, one of my oldest friends, a son of General Bela M. Hughes, I heard long ago of an incident the relation of which will be peculiarly appropriate to the exercises of this day.

In 1864, as you recall, all but two stations of the stage route between the Missouri River and Denver, were destroyed by the Indians. The westbound stages banked up at Julesburg, Fort Sedgwick being unable to guarantee them protection over the long route to Denver. General Hughes, the attorney for the Stage Company, and its general manager, was a cousin of Ben Holladay, the owner. Just at this critical juncture, Ben's brother Joe, residing in Salt Lake City, got into an altercation with a Mormon and killed him. He sent a message back to Gen. Hughes, at Atchison, Kansas, to hurry to Salt Lake City to defend him at his trial.

At this time a sort of armed truce existed between the military forces at Fort Sedgwick and the Arapahoes, Sioux, and Cheyennes, gathered in camp to the westward. We must remind you that these Indians were armed ordinarily with the bows and arrows. If they had had rifles, the exploit to be mentioned scarcely could have been attempted.

As manager of the line. General Hughes had, of course, a free hand in traveling on the Overland Route. The commanding officer at Fort Sedgwick advised him strongly not to attempt to go through, as he could offer him no efficient protection. But the case was urgent.

Picking the best driver and six splendid horses, for, owing to the interruption of traffic there were plenty available, the General laid his plans to make a surprise run through the Indian encampment which lay along the stage route, west of Fort Sedgwick. He chose a "jerkey," a light hack for two or three passengers, instead of the heavy coach. Late in the night the six horses were hitched up, with every buckle, ring and trace chain muffled, that their approach to the Indian camp should be as nearly noiseless as possible. Just as dawn showed its first, faint light, they started quietly along the road toward the encampment. The Indians slept in their tepees, their ponies not far away.

As they came nearer, the horses gathered a little more headway, and as the driver saw the tepees in the darkness, he gave the eager horses their heads. At a full gallop, but, for a six-horse team, with comparatively little noise, they slid along in the darkness. A watchful dog caught the sound and gave the alarm and a hundred more joined in the chorus. Surprise was now no longer possible. The long whip cracked like a rifle shot, and the horses responded with a burst of their utmost speed. As they rushed by like a hurricane, an Indian here and there hurried out to learn the cause of the alarm. He saw only the galloping steeds like a flash of light disappearing into the darkness. It was too late. General Hughes was already out of their reach, and speeding westward toward the next stage station, which fortunately had not been destroyed. He reached Salt Lake City safely, and successfully defended his client.

I congratulate your community, and especially your leaders in this work, on the fine spirit you have shown in attempting, by the erection of these monuments, to preserve for future generations a remembrance of the romantic days of the last century. In dedicating them, we pay homage to the courage and resourcefulness of the hardy men and women who, along this trail, did their part in laying the foundations for our GREAT EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

Denver to Salt Lake by Overland Stage in 1862[1]

EDWARD BLISS[2]

We left Denver on the morning of the 18th ult. [October, 1862], in one of the comfortable and luxurious coaches of the Overland Stage Line. The day was bright and beautiful—one of the many which our delightful Indian summers abound in—not a cloud flecked the heavens, and a mild breeze from the mountains furnished the very finest and purest atmosphere for the respiratory organs. We arrived at Boone's station, on Boulder Creek in time for a good dinner, such only as can be obtained where a well-managed and amply supplied dairy furnishes milk, butter, and cheese. Mr. Boone has a fine ranch, under excellent cultivation. His dairy house is a well-constructed stone building, containing among other conveniences, a mammoth churn driven by water power.

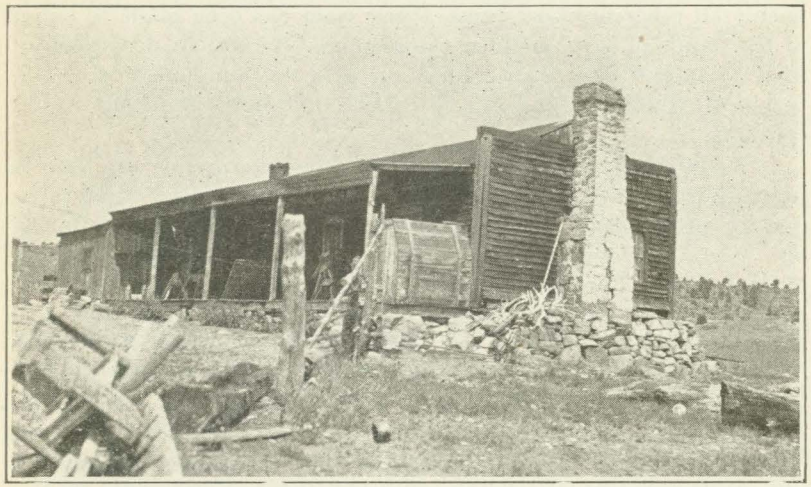
Early in the evening we arrived at Laporte, on the Cache la Poudre, where we met Capt. Allen of the Kansas Sixth, and several of his associate officers. Capt. Hardy, of the Second Colorado Volunteers, was encamped a short distance from Capt. Allen's command, but the limits of our stay gave us no opportunity to pay our respects to him. A short distance beyond Laporte, the road gradually ascends until the Black Hills are reached. The ride through these hills was most delightful and exhilarating. Here and there dense groves of shrubby pines were sandwiched between extensive lawns, while at intervals, pure, babbling brooks threw their limpid and graceful volumes down the hillsides and across

[1]In the summer of 1862 the daily overland stage line running from the Missouri River to Utah and California, was changed from the Oregon Trail route, along the North Platte and South Pass, to what became known as the Overland Trail along the South Platte to the vicinity of present Greeley and thence northwestward by Virginia Dale and the Laramie Plains to a crossing of the continental divide at Bridger's Pass. The route was then changed to the "cut-off" road from present Fort Morgan to Denver and thence northward to intersect the pre-existing line in the vicinity of present Fort Collins. The article here presented is perhaps the first published description of the new route. It appeared in the *Rocky Mountain News* of Nov. 13, 1862.—Ed.

[2]Mr. Bliss, one of the editors of the *Rocky Mountain News* of Denver, made the stage trip here described, in company with Gen. Bela M. Hughes, then president of the stage line. In the *Denver Republican* of Sept. 13, 1883, appeared the following comment:

"Bliss was a bohemian, without room for doubt. He had 'newspapered' in almost every country on the civilized earth. He had once published a paper in the British Colonies in Africa, another in South America and also one in Australia. After quitting the press in Colorado he went to England and there for a time held a position on the London *World*. Many years prior to this he accompanied Bayard Taylor through Lapland, Labrador and the frozen North in search of knowledge for the New York *Tribune*, and had twice made the circuit of the earth. As a correspondent of the New York *Herald* he had traveled on foot the Russian possessions and British North America. He had lived on crackers and cheese in a New York garret while writing squibs at a penny a line, and again had dined with Washington Irving on the Hudson, and with Mr. Thackeray in the London club rooms. Bliss had known wealth and enjoyed it, and had experienced poverty. . . . He went out to the Crimean War with the British troops and witnessed the fall of Balaklava; was with the same army in the campaign in China. He had written several small volumes in his day, but invariably let the publishers get away with the profits." He died in 1876 while on his way from California to Colorado.—Ed.

the grass-covered dales. At midnight we drew up at Virginia Dale Station, the residence and headquarters of Mr. J. A. Slade, one of the division agents of the Overland Stage Line. Nature, with her artistic pencil, has here been most extravagant with her limnings. Even in the dim starlight, its beauties were most striking and apparent. The dark evergreens dotted the hillsides, and occasionally a giant pine towered upward far above its dwarfy companions, like a sentinel on the outposts of a sleeping encampment.



THE OLD VIRGINIA DALE STAGE STATION AS IT APPEARED IN 1926

A few miles farther on we descend gradually from the Black Hills to the Laramie Plains, across which, near the base of the Wasatch Mountain Range, the road runs for over a hundred miles to Fort Halleck. Seventy miles to the north Laramie Peak rears its grim and ragged crest, looking not more than two hours' ride away. Big Laramie and Little Laramie Rivers are crossed on the route, both clear and beautiful mountain streams. The plains abound in elk and antelope, and the adjacent mountains furnish delightful haunts for the playful grizzly and the facetious mountain lion. . . .

Near what is called Cooper's Creek station, and distant some five miles from the road is a beautiful lake, some twenty miles in length and from three to five in width, which has been christened with the name of Lake Hughes, in honor of the efficient General Agent of the Overland Stage Line, Gen. Bela M. Hughes. Its deep blue tinge formed a beautiful contrast with the sere and yellow but still waving and nutritious grassy sea which surrounded it.

This lake is said to abound in fine fish, some of them of enormous size.

Just after dark of the second day's ride from Denver, we drove through the grounds of Fort Halleck and stopped at the Medicine Bow station, kept by Mr. Campbell. This new military post is rapidly advancing toward completion. Extensive quarters have been erected, ample stabling room for several cavalry companies is already provided, and the boys at Fort Halleck will soon be snugly ensconced in comfortable winter quarters. Here as at nearly all other military posts, Uncle Sam has been made to suffer at the hands of unprincipled contractors. We are in possession of some facts and figures in connection with certain contracts at this new post, which we shall in a few days, thoroughly ventilate in our columns.

We stopped at this point for two days, occupying our time in hunting for grizzly bears and elk on the Medicine Bow Mountains, and in prospecting a "lively-looking" canyon for the glittering ore. . . . We were pleased to meet at Fort Halleck, Alexander Majors, Capt. Thompson, and Drs. Holliday and Smith—all true gentlemen and gallant officers. Leaving the Medicine Bow just after nightfall, and feeling more like sleep than ecstatic admiration of beautiful scenery, we saw nothing of the country west of Halleck until just before day, when we arrived at Pine Grove. Of all the dismal, dreary, and desolate spots we have ever seen, this out-Herods Herod. We alighted from the coach about half-awake, only to be greeted by the horrid howls and snarls of at least a score of wolves, who were fighting over the mutilated carcass of a defunct horse, not more than twenty-five yards from the station house. Such hideous and unearthly yells, mingled as they were with the moaning night wind, produced anything but agreeable sensations, and we welcomed the early dawn most heartily. Our disgust for the place was not much lessened when we were informed that the grizzly bear claimed this grove for his favorite haunt, and often approached in close proximity to the station.

A capital breakfast of black-tailed deer and bear meat soon dissipated our wolfish impressions and left us in a more happy mood for the resumption of our journey. For several stations each way from Pine Grove, there is little to attract the attention of the traveler, save at the crossing of the North Platte. At this point the stream is wide and rapid and the water is clear as crystal. Preparations are in making for the establishment of a ferry at this crossing, in time for the high water of the winter and spring months. At present the ford is an easy and excellent one. Just after nightfall, we arrived at a station kept by Mr. Gilman, formerly of this city. Mrs. Gilman, better known to our citizens as Miss

Kendall, so long attached to the Langrishe and Dougherty theatrical troupe, is assisting Mr. Gilman in the management of this station, but intends soon to return to Denver and her old vocation.

A few miles beyond Gilman's station, the road enters upon Bridger's Pass. The journey through this pass, which is some twenty miles in length, is not well calculated to provoke merriment and hilarity. On all sides, desolation and solitude seem to reign supreme. Vast stretches of barren and furrowed sand hills are passed over, on which no vegetation flourishes, save the inevitable sagebrush, and even that seems to struggle for a sickly existence. The soil, if such it may be called, resembles a mixture of well-leached ashes and pulverized sandstone, and suggests the opinion that the contents of a half dozen volcanoes have been vomited forth long years ago and scattered over the face of all that region. Beasts and birds shrink away from this dreary and desolate spot, and even the faithful bronchos who follow the guidance of the well-skilled driver's hand, seem to quicken with new courage as they whirl the coach away from the recesses of this almost infernal region.

After attaining the "Summit"—the ridge pole of the great watershed of the Rocky Mountains, where the same thundercloud discharges a portion of its volume for both Atlantic and Pacific oceans—the road descends along the banks of Mud Creek for ten or twelve miles. This stream is the happy home for thousands of beaver, and all along its course, at intervals of not more than twenty rods, these sagacious and industrious animals have constructed dams and live undisturbed. But the intrepid trapper has lately discovered this extensive beaver settlement, and will soon be at work with his ingenious contrivances for their capture.

At the foot of Bridger Pass, there is a station house, and near it an excellent sulphur spring, of which our party partook liberally. For many miles beyond this point the country is barren and desolate, only relieved occasionally by formidable and rocky exposures, some of them of most picturesque and fantastic appearance. But on entering the valley of Green River, the whole country assumes a more agreeable and attractive feature. Grass grows luxuriantly, small timber makes its appearance, and the soil seems to be capable of easy and profitable cultivation. The Green River is a noble stream, something larger than the Platte at this city, and its clear and pellucid contents flow over one of the finest gravel beds we have ever seen. At present, it is easily forded, but it has a way of "getting on the rampage" once or twice a year, and at such times ferriage has to be resorted to. From this point to Ham's Fork of the Green River, a distance of fifteen miles, the country is rolling and the soil good. But the settlers in this vicinity feel dis-

couraged and disheartened on account of the constant danger to be apprehended from Indian raids. The vagabond and treacherous Snake tribe last year committed many depredations along this portion of the route, and farther to the eastward, and are now encamped in large force about one hundred miles north of the Overland road. Washkee, the chief of the tribe, professes to be friendly to the whites, but professes that his influence with the young men is fast fading away, and he can do but little towards restraining them from violence. They number about eleven hundred warriors, and unless something is done soon to chastise them for their murderous and thieving propensities, they will doubtless repeat and perhaps exceed the atrocities of last winter.

OVERLAND STAGE LINE RECEIPT

Fort Bridger is the next point of any importance beyond the Green River. This post is at present unoccupied by soldiers, but an effort is making to secure a portion of a California regiment, now at Salt Lake, for duty at this point. The buildings are very comfortable, commodious and convenient, and in excellent repair. Through the grounds run several beautiful and clear streams of water, fuel is abundant nearby, and forage most plentiful. Situated as is Fort Bridger in the very heart of the detested Snake country, it is all important that four or five efficient companies should be permanently stationed at that point. Unless this is done, it will be idle to attempt to keep up any daily mail transit through this district, during the coming winter and spring. The Snakes are elated over their last success in stealing stock and plundering the

stations, and if no demonstrations are made to overawe them, we may expect to hear of terrible outrages in that vicinity before another year rolls away. The government has been urgently appealed to for aid, and it is to be hoped not in vain.

Leaving Fort Bridger, the road commences ascending and so continues for a distance of some twenty-five miles, when the so-called Rim of the Basin is reached at Quaking Asp Spring. The scenery along this portion of the route is wild, romantic, and almost Alpine in appearance. From a point near Quaking Asp, the eye takes in a range of not less than sixty miles in every direction, embracing the snow-capped peaks of the Wasatch Mountains on the south, the wild and broken region in the vicinity of Bridger's Pass to the eastward, and a vast semicircle of lofty and jagged mountain ranges to the northward and westward. Once over the summit, the descent to the west is rapid, but the road is in most excellent condition and a speed of ten miles an hour is easily attained. We passed, on this portion of our journey, the great Needle Rocks, so-called for their sharp and elevated points which look more like the rude structures of semi-civilized architects than freaks of nature. Great massive shafts of conglomerate rise abruptly from the valley, like giant monuments, needing the addition of appropriate inscriptions and epitaphs to complete the delusive impression that here the gods of the Great Mountains buried their dead—if indeed mountain gods ever became tired of their earthly labors and sank down to rest.

Ten miles beyond the Needles, the road enters the head of the famous Echo Canyon. It was after sunset when we reached this point, but the night was clear, and the stars shone out with a brilliancy more intense than we had ever before noticed. With a fresh relay of spirited bronchos we began the descent. . . . Halfway down the canyon is Hanging Rock Station, below which the scenery is even grander and more soul-inspiring than that above. The road is more tortuous, the canyon torrent more furious and dashing as if impatient for egress from its rocky confines, and along its bed are strewn immense rock, which have become detached from the walls hundreds of feet overhead, and have dashed like an avalanche into the channel beneath. Numerous bridges cross the stream, dugways carry the road around mountain sides where a chamois could hardly find footing, and the solid rock itself has in many places been removed by blasting, to overcome the difficulties of the route.

In one of the vast natural amphitheatres of the canyon, we passed through an extensive camp of Mormons, their numerous watch-fires lighting up the mighty arena, and bringing out with magical effect the grim and grand escarpments on either side, which

towered three hundred feet above. Men, women and children were gathered in groups about their gypsy hearths, the glare and glimmer of the camp fire giving to their features that wild and weird expression which the face assumes when peering out from a lighted circle into the black darkness beyond. Over one hundred wagons were in corral, stretching like a monster crescent on either side of the road, with openings above and below, through which our horses dashed half-affrighted with the thundering reverberations of the clatter of their own hoofs flung back from the cliffs around them. A few hundred yards above and below this encampment were solitary watch-fires, around which vigilant sentinels on outpost duty had been stationed; a precaution always taken by Mormon emigrants while passing through the Indian country. An hour later, a thousand Mormon pilgrims were quietly sleeping in that dark and gloomy defile. Who shall say that these proselytes to a new and novel faith are not prompted by a sincere religious zeal? Perils and privations such as they are compelled to encounter on their long and weary pilgrimage from the Old World can only be boldly and bravely met by men whose hearts stimulate their efforts. . . . .

The length of Echo Canyon is twenty miles, its foot debouching upon the fertile and fruitful Weber Valley. As we leave the defile, the road winds around the base of a huge and lofty column of conglomerate, surmounted with sharp peaks resembling the Needle Rocks—a giant landmark to indicate the mouth of the canyon, which may be seen from a distance many miles away. Here the gorge is so narrow and the road is so tortuous, that almost a bewildering effect is produced upon the traveler as he emerges from the canyon and rides out in full view of the magnificent valley before him. . . .

From near the head of the Weber Valley, the road ascends a long stretch of mountain side, when crossing a divide, the descent towards Great Salt Lake City commences, through Mill Creek Canyon. Although not so formidable or lengthy a canyon as the famous Echo, it nevertheless, airs itself not a little, and to one who had never passed through the latter, Mill Creek Canyon would present many interesting and inspiring features. Its length is about twelve miles, but its rocks and precipices are fewer and farther between than those of its grand old progenitor up the mountains. Near the foot of this canyon the road leaves the ravine and ascends by an easy grade to the summit of a bald mountain to the right, at which point the Great Salt Lake Valley suddenly bursts upon the enraptured vision of the traveler.

We shall never forget the thrilling effect produced upon us, as we halted on this mountain crest, and took in at a single glance

the magnificent panorama spread out before us. Five miles distant lay the City of the Saints, embowered in the variegated autumn foliage of its numerous gardens; twenty miles farther on, the broad, smooth surface of Great Salt Lake, shimmering like a vast mirror in the rays of the setting sun, while from its glassy bosom rose the grand and massive hills of Antelope Island, with the thick, purple haze of early evening encircling their summits. Winding along through the valley from the south, and gently flowing towards Salt Lake, was the river Jordan, with overflowing banks. Sixty miles up the valley, a high mountain range marks the boundary of the Salt Lake district, on the west another and higher range looms up like a mighty barrier, and on the north, almost overhanging the city, is still another range. Let the eye turn in whatever direction it may, it rests on a segment of mountain wall, which seems to entirely encompass a vast, level valley. We cannot resist the belief that there was some design in turning the road from its natural course, through the mouth of the Mill Creek Canyon, to the summit where such a magnificent prospect and such enchanting scenery meet the eye. . . .

We cannot close this article without a passing tribute to the admirable condition and excellent management of Ben Holladay's Overland Stage Line. When it is remembered that during the last summer an entire new and before untraveled road was opened from this city through Bridger's Pass; stations at intervals of from twelve to fifteen miles erected on a route extending nearly three hundred miles; and an immense amount of stock and material transferred from the old Northern route, without interfering with the regular daily transit of the mail coach, there is certainly great credit due to the enterprise, determination and vigor of the man who planned and prosecuted this great work. The advantages to our own city from this change can hardly be overestimated. We are now on the direct line of the great Overland Mail Route, and a fresh impetus to our business and enterprise is already manifest. No stage line in the world is more systematically and admirably managed than that between Denver and Salt Lake. The stock is in excellent condition, the stations comfortable and convenient, and the time schedule most punctually adhered to throughout. To accomplish all this, and maintain regularity and punctuality, could only be the result of more than ordinary energy and effort.