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The Founding and Early Years of Grand Junction

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The history of Grand Junction and adjacent territory dates from the passing of the Ute Indians from what was known as the Ute Reservation in western Colorado to the region set aside for them in Utah. In 1879 had occurred the tragic Meeker massacre and the slaughter of the soldiers under Major Thornburg, who had been sent to Agent Meeker's relief. These outrages aroused the whole state. Mass meetings were held and the removal of the Indians was demanded.

The Government then took action and by a treaty the Indians surrendered all claim to the lands on the Western Slope, receiving therefor lands in the Uintah Basin in Utah and certain annuities. However, they refused to depart and war again seemed inevitable. The outstanding figure in these troubles was Chief Ouray. He was a true friend of the white race, a real statesman and a man of character. All the petty chiefs were against him, yet he accomplished much good for both races. Chief Ouray died in August, 1880, and his loss was greatly felt.

In the late summer of 1881 the last of the Indians were removed and as the land had already been declared public land the frontier towns were crowded with people anxious to enter the reservation and secure the best locations. Some of these men were adventurers but many were real empire builders. During the summer a party of government surveyors had been sent in, but they were ordered out when the Indians threatened trouble. On the 4th of July they were at the mouth of Salt Creek, below Grand Junction, and held a celebration, which was no doubt the first held in the new country.

At 5 a. m., September 4th, the bugle was sounded and all were permitted to enter. The first ranch in the Grand Junction region was entered by J. C. Nichols on September 10th. A few pioneers entered the Grand Valley from the west, but more came from the east. The base of all supplies was so far away that the first comers

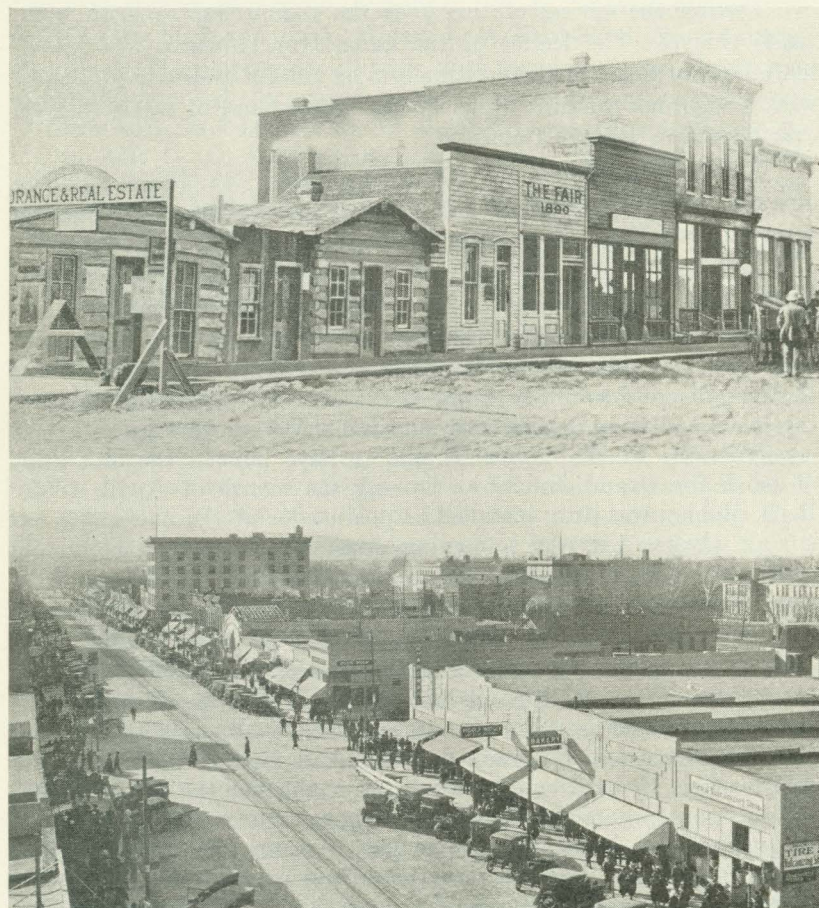
* Mr. Rankin has lived for many years at Grand Junction, playing an active part in the development of the Western Slope. The early history of the region has always interested him and he has collected historical data and old-time photographs for preservation. He is the present Assessor of Mesa County and is prominent in the civic life of Grand Junction.—Ed.

could do little more than stake out their claims and then return to Gunnison for provisions. It was at this supply point that Gov. George A. Crawford (who had won his title of "governor" during the early days of Kansas) had an interview with some of the men and induced William McGinley to return as the guide for a party just formed. Besides the governor this party consisted of R. D. Mobley, M. R. Warner, Colonel Morris and S. A. Harper. They crossed the Colorado River on September 22d and on the 26th formally located section 14 as a townsite and at once began to haul logs for cabins. Section 14 is the site of the Grand Junction of today. Gov. Crawford, chief founder of the city, had already distinguished himself as a leader in the opening of the West. He had played a large part in the early development of Kansas and brought a wide experience to the building of the new city. Today his tomb overlooks the junction of the rivers and the city he founded and loved.

Two railroad surveying parties entered the valley in the fall of 1881. The Denver and South Park party came first and the Denver & Rio Grande followed on October 5th, passing on into Utah. On October 10, 1881, the certificate for the incorporation of the Grand Junction Town Company was drawn and filed. For nearly three months the town could hardly be called a town, for not a store or even a saloon existed on the site. All provisions were brought from Gunnison or the government cantonment in the Uncompahgre Valley, and the nearest post office was seventy-five miles distant. There was still a dread and fear of a reappearance of the Utes.

On November 5th a meeting was held and a petition prepared and circulated asking the government for a post office. By common consent the name Grand Junction was adopted, the site being at the junction of the two largest rivers in the state. The first stock of goods arrived December 10, 1881, for Giles and Mitchell, and the first store was established. Four days later a saloon was opened. On the last day of the year Gov. Crawford arrived with Samuel Wade, a surveyor, who began to lay out the streets and alleys and town lots; nor were the boulevards forgotten. On January 14th William Green opened the first hotel and called it the Grand Junction House. Other hotels followed quickly, prominent among them being the Pig's Ear and the Pig's Eye. All lumber used up to this time was run by hand. Henry and Robert Henderson sawed out 15,000 feet of lumber with a whip saw and sold it at \$160 per M. The first lumber made was used to build a ferry boat for crossing the river.

In American history the log cabin has ever been the standby



GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

Two views of Main Street—upper, 1890; lower, 1926.

of the pioneer. It was true with Grand Junction that what little lumber could be had at first was used for doors, shelves, counters, etc. On the 1st day of March, 1882, work was commenced on the ditch known as the Pioneer Canal, which was located by Harlan and Fitzpatrick. A company was formed of twenty-one shareholders. The work was pushed rapidly and completed for the time being on April 20th, thus becoming the first irrigation canal in the new country. Work on the Pacific Slope Ditch commenced

March 20th. This ditch was built mainly to supply the new town with water and was finished to the townsite by July 1st.

During the spring of this year the region was overrun with cattle thieves. The leader of the gang, Gus Howard, was killed ten miles northeast of Grand Junction by Sheriff Bowman and this, with a vigorous pursuit, broke up the worst band of cattle thieves ever known in western Colorado.

Fording the Grand and Gunnison Rivers was always dangerous and the use of the boats was about as precarious. This became a serious problem, for crossing the streams was the only way out. The first deaths from this cause occurred April 1st, when two well known men were drowned by their boat being overloaded.

The manufacture of brick was started at this time in quite a large way by a number of different men and firms. It was apparent that the demand would be large as the railroad was rapidly drawing near, and roundhouses and machine shops would require brick construction. C. W. Kimbal is said to have burned the first kiln of brick for Grand Junction. During the month of April, 1882, R. D. Mobley was duly installed as postmaster of the new city. As spring advanced it was a burning question as to what should or could be raised, but while the land area under the ditches was small the results were good and greatly encouraged the settlers.

The first election in the city took place on June 1, 1882, and was for the purpose of electing a school board for the new district. H. E. Stroud, O. D. Russell and W. M. McKelvey were elected. The school house at this time was a picket cabin near the corner of Fifth Street and Colorado Avenue. Miss Nannie Blain was the first teacher. Soon after the school was established the citizens were called upon to vote regarding the incorporation of the town, and the proposal was carried on the 22d of June. At this time the river was so high that the ferry could not operate and the immigrants were compelled to camp as best they could until the river fell and they could get into the city, for back of them was the desert. The first Fourth of July in the new city was celebrated in due and ancient form with speeches, picnics and a big dance. By this time the town had four general stores, one drug store, two blacksmith shops, three hotels and seven saloons. The professions were represented by Dr. H. E. Stroud, physician and surgeon, who came in March; W. J. Miller and J. W. Bucklin, attorneys, who arrived about the same time. The first Sunday School was organized in July, 1882. It met in the school house and was well supported. J. A. Hall was its first superintendent.

On July 15, 1882, a citizens' meeting was held on Colorado Avenue to nominate a mayor and trustees for the new town. R. D.

Mobley was the choice for mayor, but the next morning C. F. Shanks was nominated in opposition and was elected, becoming the first mayor of Grand Junction. P. H. Westmoreland was elected city clerk and A. A. Miller, J. M. Russell, G. W. Thurston and W. F. Gerry trustees. At the first meeting James Davis was appointed marshal. It proved a good appointment as it took nerve in those days, and he had it. W. J. Miller was appointed city attorney and H. C. Hall street commissioner. The first marriage occurred this month, being that of Thomas Keelers to Miss Theresa Bouhalzer. A city lot was presented to the happy pair.

Many new settlers were now coming in, among them the Crandall brothers, who erected the first frame building on Main Street and founded the first bank in the city. The first newspaper established was the *Grand Junction News*. In the middle of October Edwin Price arrived from Denver and on October 28, 1882, the first issue of the *News* made its appearance from its log cabin home. Associated with Mr. Price in publishing the *News* was Darwin P. Kingsley, who in after years became internationally famous in the life insurance world and who for many years has been the president of the New York Life Insurance Company. The new city was fortunate in having as one of her first citizens Mr. J. A. McCune, who as an irrigation engineer had a large part in the early water system development of the valley. He afterward became state engineer and served the state ably for many years.

On Sunday, October 9, 1882, Rev. Isaac Whitcher of the M. E. Church, South, delivered his first sermon in the city. He was the first minister to be stationed here. The Baptists and the Catholics held services the following year, and the Presbyterians organized early in 1884.

As the day of the county election of 1882 drew near party lines were forgotten in the desire to get men who would be favorable to division of Gunnison County. As Grand Junction was the only polling place within a radius of fifteen miles, over 1,100 votes were cast, but most of them were by men working on the railroad grade that was now getting close to the city. It was on election day that quite a perceptible earthquake shock was felt over the valley. One event of immense importance to the city occurred at this time—the arrival of the first locomotive and the completion of railway communication with the outside world. The coming of the first train to the city, on November 25, 1882, caused great rejoicing among the citizens and filled them with new confidence in the future of the town. It was like the arrival of an army sent to relieve a beleaguered city. The railroad was narrow gauge and came down the Gunnison. During the latter part of November a census of the city was taken, which showed a population of 524. On

December 6th Mayor Shanks entered in the land office at Leadville the subdivision which included the townsite.

A mass meeting was held on December 28th for the purpose of petitioning the legislature to create a new county in the western portion of Gunnison County, and W. J. Miller was sent to Denver to assist in bringing this about. It can be seen how vital this matter was to the new city as the county seat was 140 miles distant. The deepest interest prevailed and great anxiety was felt over the outcome, but on February 11, 1883, the bill creating Mesa County passed the legislature and three days later was signed by the governor. Great indeed was the celebration of the event—bonfires, processions and speeches were indulged in on a grand scale. On February 21st Governor J. B. Grant paid the new county a visit and was accorded a handsome reception at the Brunswick Hotel, which had been completed and was quite a pretentious three-story brick building.

Soon after the governor's visit he appointed the following officers for the new county: M. L. Allison, clerk and recorder; Martin Florida, sheriff; Robert Cobb, county judge; G. W. Thurston, T. B. Crawford and B. F. Carey, commissioners; J. N. McArthur, coroner; S. G. Crandall, treasurer; A. J. McCune, surveyor; and William Keith, assessor.

On the 1st day of March, 1883, Charles W. Haskell arrived in the city and on the 30th, with C. F. Coleman, published the first issue of *The Democrat*. Mr. Haskell was an able writer and the Western Slope is greatly indebted to him for carefully recording and preserving the record of the early settlement of the country. Most of the data of this article is taken from his writings. A fine military company, called the Grand Valley Guards, had been organized some time before and on March 13th was mustered into the state service by Adjutant General Shepard. The election for city officers which took place in April, 1883, resulted in a victory for the Democratic candidates, W. J. Miller being elected mayor. Streets now began to be graded in the city, new sidewalks extended in all directions and many new brick business houses were erected, and most important of all, irrigation laterals were run along the streets.

It was early apparent to all that the development of the irrigation systems was closely correlated with the prosperity of the city and, in fact, of vital interest to everyone. It was in this connection that work had been started on the Grand Valley Ditch, a project that was ultimately to embrace about 50,000 acres. But for various reasons the work had been delayed until the project came under the charge of Matt Arch in the spring of 1883, and the enterprise was then pushed with vigor. This system has stood

for more than forty years as one of the most successful water projects in the entire country.

In March, 1883, W. T. Carpenter opened the Mesa County Bank, which long stood as one of the leading banks of the Western Slope. Mr. Carpenter was a very progressive citizen and engaged in many enterprises in the upbuilding of the city. His home on First Street was the finest residence in the town.

The County Commissioners of Mesa County met with those of Gunnison County in June, 1883, and agreed to assume \$7,208 of the indebtedness of the old county, and a bond for that amount, bearing ten per cent interest was issued therefor.

The first term of the District Court for the new county was held in January, 1884, and was presided over by Judge M. B. Gerry. In March an effort was made to build a toll road from the city up the Grand River (or the Colorado River as it is now called) to connect with Glenwood Springs. This road was of great importance and was finally built under the leadership of H. R. Rhone. Stages operated over it until the building of the Denver & Rio Grande standard gauge in 1891 down the Colorado River.

In the spring of 1884 school bonds to the amount of \$10,000 were voted and a school building was ready for the fall term of school. In December of this year a Board of Trade was organized with D. Crandall as the first president. This body served a large purpose in the growing city, as did the Mesa County Horticultural Society which was organized about the same time with R. A. Orr as president.

Before this time Hon. J. W. Bucklin, who had been elected to the legislature, had urged the federal government to establish an institution for the education of the Indians. The government responded by establishing Teller Institute, located about one mile east of the city on a tract of 160 acres donated by the citizens. It remained for many years a prominent Indian school. The school was finally withdrawn and has since been replaced by the State Home and Training School for Mental Defectives.

More and more the river became a serious menace in crossing, until in 1886 the state joined with the county in building a steel bridge at the foot of Fifth Street. Among the great assets of the new city were the fine forests of spruce and pine on Pinon Mesa, south and west of the city, that afforded ample building material at low cost. It is, however, a matter of regret that these excellent forests were not more carefully used so as to conserve the new growth and preserve some of the wonderful old trees, many of which were five hundred years old.

The First Congressional Election in Colorado (1858)

Milo Fellows*

After arriving at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, some of the boys came to me and wanted to know if I would go with them to the mountains, giving me the plans which they had partially completed. On the 16th day of September, 1858, I told them to count me in and we at once formed a company, composed mostly of men of more or less property but mighty little money. Such things as they could not do without I furnished the money to buy, while they in turn furnished things I needed. I also bought a yoke of cattle and a pony and on the 18th the teams started west. I accompanied mother and you [his son, Rush O. Fellows] to Glenwood, Iowa, on your way back to Michigan and on the 20th I left for Salt Creek, overtaking the boys at Wahoo (Nebraska).

The next morning we started for a thirty-day trip up the Platte River. It was a long journey, rather pleasant withal, and at one time we had five hundred Indians traveling with us. Some few mishaps occurred, but nothing of importance, and we arrived at the mouth of Cherry Creek and on the ground where Denver now stands, on October 23, 1858. It rained that night, and the next morning the mountains were covered with snow down to the base. In a few days we went into winter quarters five miles above Cherry Creek, on what was later known as Clark's Ranch. We cut our logs, floated them across the Platte, put up our cabins and were living in good mountain style inside of two weeks.

About this time the first excitement since our arrival occurred, all over an election to send a delegate to Washington to represent a territory to us unknown. There was a pretty "strong" element among the settlers, in other words, a "drinking" element who had decided to send one, William Clancy, of Omaha, as our representative. Our bunch and others among the settlers did not take to the idea. We proposed to send Hon. Hiram J. Graham, formerly of Pacific City, Mills County, Iowa, as the first Colorado representative. And now came the tug of war. Before nine o'clock in the morning of the day set for the election a regular mountain blizzard set in and the boys were somewhat out of sorts with the prospects of a long winter with nothing to do, tending to the monotonous. But the time was here and we must act now or allow them to send a drinking man to Congress. No one deemed

it his duty to take hold and start the election board going, so after dinner I told the boys I was going to fix up a ballot box and taking a cigar box I soon had a good one—as good as there was in Colorado at that time.

Then arose the question as to who would administer the oath of office to the election board. Some contended that it would make no difference in that far off country whether they were sworn in or not. Others made it plain that everything should be regular, in order that the Clancy crowd might not find fault with our books and throw our man out even if elected. They finally put it to a vote that I should administer the oath, so I stood them up in a row, the same being Moses Stocking, J. H. Tierney, G. F. Griffith and William Younker and administered the oath used in qualifying town officers in the state of Michigan. Then Mr. Griffith swore me in after I had taught him the oath. Most of the others were laughing at us but we went through with it straight as a string, opened the polls, voted every man who would put in his ticket. After supper, in the midst of the blizzard we wrapped up our books and ballot box and started out to different cabins for more votes from those who failed to brave the storm and by nine o'clock we had enough votes to beat Mr. Clancy. I think it was about seven majority. At all events we sent Mr. Graham to Congress armed with the strangest and first election credentials Colorado ever sent to Washington, D. C.

* Mr. Fellows was one of the Colorado '58ers. In 1897 he lived in South Dakota. In that year, and shortly before his death, he wrote this short sketch at the suggestion of his son, Rush O. Fellows. It is very valuable as giving a first-hand account of the first election held in what became Colorado. Mr. Graham, the delegate elected, went to Washington as a representative of the people of the Pike's Peak region, "Jefferson Territory" (1859-60) and Colorado Territory (1861) being later creations.—Ed.

Early Central City Theatricals and Other Reminiscences

Hal Sayre*

The first theatrical performance ever given in Central City was given in 1860 by three daughters of a couple named Wakeley. By that time Central had come to be quite a populous town. Gregory Gulch and all the surrounding mountains and valleys were lined with prospectors and miners. Already there were a number of gambling halls and saloons, but up to that time there had been no effort to make appeal to the amusement loving propensities of the pioneers.

Wakeley and his wife were an ordinary couple of middle age. They made no effort to act themselves, but I think that the father

* This article is an interview with Mr. Sayre taken by Mr. T. F. Dawson, former Historian of the State Historical Society of Colorado, on May 21, 1921. Mr. Sayre was an outstanding pioneer of Colorado, prominent in her mining and military history. He made the first plat of Central City and was long prominent as a mining engineer and operator. He served as an officer of a Colorado regiment in the Civil War and was later Adjutant General of Colorado. He continued to the time of his death, December 11, 1926, to take an active part in mining and banking development in the state.—Ed.

managed the hall in which the performances were given. This hall made no very great pretensions, but it was large enough to accommodate three or four hundred persons. It was located on the second floor of a store building which was erected by a man named Hadley and stood across the street from the Buell Mill and south of that structure. Only the upper floor was used for the performances. Of the three daughters, only one possessed any talent, so far as I remember. Although her name was Wakeley, she appeared upon the boards at the theater as Mlle. Haidie. The boys were not used to the French word, and they soon called her "Miss Millie," by which appellation she was known during her entire stage career. Miss Millie probably would not have been considered a star on Broadway in New York, but she surely was popular with the mountain men. She also was ambitious, not to say presuming. There was no role that she would not undertake to present. As a consequence Central was treated to a delineation of all of the favorite plays of the time with the young lady as the chief heroine. To our way of looking she did her work very well. I am sorry that I can not say so much for her support. As I have said, her sisters were not brilliant, and she had no brothers. For the male parts in her plays she was compelled to take almost anyone she could get, literally going out upon the streets and picking up men to assist her. As you may surmise the result was often very distressing to her and disappointing to her audience. Still, Millie was so popular herself that the young fellows would accept almost any performance in which she was a participant.

The hall was very roughly finished and almost any sort of makeshift was used for seats. The floor was made of rough hand-sawed boards and many of these were loose. On one occasion Millie's father, Mr. Wakeley, went to Hadley, the landlord, with a request for some nails. "What in thunder do you want with nails? Don't you know that nails cost money?" "I know that," responded Mr. Wakeley, "but I just got to have them to fasten down the floor. Millie is making a row about it because she dances out her shoes."

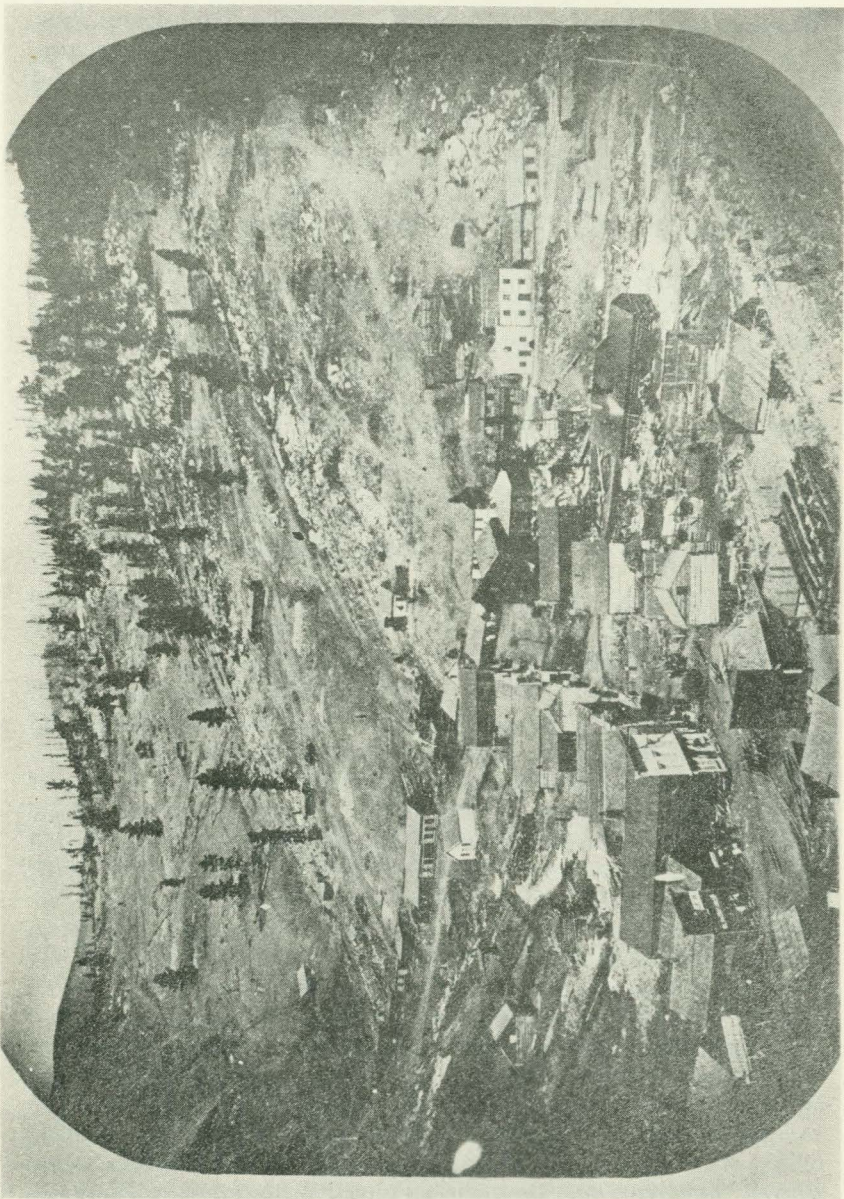
Miss Wakeley did not continue long to adorn the stage. There were very few young women in Gregory Gulch in those days, and her attractiveness proved a great magnet to the young miners. She had many suitors but of all these the young lady soon displayed a preference for Ned Wyncoop, who had come to the gold regions from Kansas and who afterwards became prominent as an officer in the First Colorado Regiment during the Civil War. I do not recall how long they had been married when he went to the War, nor where the couple settled after the War. I know, however, that they left Central, and I think went to New Mexico. I cannot say

that I was intimate with Wyncoop. I knew him, however, but knew an old acquaintance of his much better. That was Bob Strauss, who was a Georgia "cracker." Strauss had known Wyncoop in Kansas during the troublesome times in that section preceding the War. Strauss was a strong Southern sympathizer and was much disgusted with Wyncoop for joining the Union forces. He talked with a broad accent and never tired of denouncing his old time friend. "Whar's the use'n talkin'?' Ned Wyncoop—huh! Why he used to be a bawder ruffian." This was his favorite characterization of Wyncoop, and he repeated it every time the subject came up.

The Wakeleys were followed in the theatrical business in Central by a man by the name of Harrison, who must have come in 1861 or 1862, and who later figured in a very exciting tragedy. Harrison obtained a hall occupying the second floor of a building on Gregory Street, where now stands the Edmundson Block, and called the place the Montana Theater. The lower floor was used as a saloon. The hall must have seated eight or nine hundred people and he brought quite a troupe to the booming mining town. I do not remember much about his performances but recall that Harrison himself was manager and that he seemed to do a thriving business.

The one incident connected with Harrison which I do recall most vividly was his quarrel with a gambler named Charles Switz. What the disagreement was about I cannot state at this remote time, but I do know that their feud became notorious throughout the community. They spent much of their time in denouncing each other, and naturally the remarks of each were carried to the ears of the other. This went on until Harrison stationed himself on a balcony one night in front of the theater when he knew that Switz was coming up the street. There he stood and waited with a gun in hand until his enemy came within range, when he shot him dead in his tracks. I recall this incident very clearly because I heard the shot and saw the body of the dead man after he fell. The affair occurred about eleven o'clock at night. I had retired to bed in my room over Reese and Kratzer's jewelry store. I was awakened by the sound of the shot and rushing out, found them dragging the body into the nearest building. As I went out of my door, Harrison still stood on the balcony, and I heard him cry out, "I want the sheriff of Arapahoe County."

Harrison gave himself up, but when the trial came on, which, by the way, was conducted by Judge Allen A. Bradford, he easily proved that Switz had been threatening his life and was therefore acquitted. I recall the appearance of Judge Bradford at that time. He afterward was delegate in Congress from Colorado Territory, and he always attracted attention by his oddities. Among the



VIEW OF CENTRAL CITY IN 1860

witnesses on the stand was a young fellow who had been subjected to some rather scathing interrogations. He did not relish his treatment and he went out muttering something to himself. This the judge overheard and calling to him from his seat on the bench said, "Young man, you dry up."

After Harrison, came the Langrishes, but they are comparatively modern. Much has been written about them, and I will not undertake to give you an account of them, except to say that they were very estimable people and fine actors. They lived next door to me in Central, and I found them to be excellent neighbors. Langrishe would attempt any character in the category of plays from the gayest to the gravest. He was best, however, as a comedian, and he could keep the house in an uproar for several minutes without uttering a word. His facial expression was truly wonderful.

Central City theatricals reached their zenith when the Teller Opera House was built. This building took its name from Senator Henry M. Teller and his brother, Willard, who were its principal constructors, although all of us chipped in. The building was considered very fine for its day, and would have been so regarded almost anywhere. All the attractions of importance which came to Denver came also to Central City, and you may rely upon it that Central considered herself quite in the swim. But, alas! that glory is all departed. The population of Gilpin County has dwindled to about twelve or thirteen hundred people, and one movie a week in the Teller Opera House supplies all the amusement which is given to the Central people of the present day. The building cost the Tellers \$80,000, and I am sure they never received a cent in return for the outlay.

Let me tell you something more about Judge Bradford. As I have said, he was a unique character, and the people generally were fond of relating anecdotes about him, many of them referring to his peculiar voice, which was very shrill and squeaky. On one occasion in Golden when the Territorial government was established there, they were having some general meeting at which those present were required to state their native places. "I escaped from Maine," announced the Judge in his highest key, and brought the house down. After that it was a favorite method of telling where a man was from to say that he "escaped" from such and such a place. On another occasion he rode a mule from one point to another, and when night came on picketed the animal out. When he arose from his earthen couch the next morning his mount had disappeared. He discovered from the tracks the way the mule had taken, and started out after him, carrying his saddle and blankets

on his back. Meeting a couple of men down the road he asked them whether they had seen anything of the mule.

"Don't cry, you'll find your mule," said one of them in an effort to console the apparently distressed man. "Cry, be damned, I ain't crying," replied the Judge, "I always talk that way." But, peculiar though he was, Bradford was very popular throughout the territory, and he was withal a man of parts.

Of course you have heard of Doctor Paul, "Doc Paul" we called him. He was one of the most eminent mining men in the territory and in the State after it became such. He was a Kentuckian and a Democrat, but was very fond of his brother-in-law, Ben Eaton, a strong Republican, who became Governor of the State. When Eaton, as a candidate, visited Central, Paul took him around and introduced him to his friends. As you will recall, Eaton was a very stout, heavy-set man. Meeting a Cornish friend on the street Paul stopped him and said: "Let me introduce my brother-in-law, Ben Eaton." "Ben eatin'?" He looks more like as he'd been drinkin'."

I was the major in the regiment of Colonel Chivington and went through the Battle of Sand Creek with him. I always regarded him as a good-natured, well-intentioned man. Crude though he was, he still had been a Methodist preacher before the War; but when it came to entering the service he refused to accept a commission as chaplain, and demanded a position which would call for fighting service. Of course his religious training forbade his use of profanity, which I always thought was somewhat of a handicap to him. On one occasion when he was trying to get the regiment into line for inspection he seemed to have unusual difficulty, and after considerable effort turned to someone and said, "Where's Major Sayre? Go and get him and tell him to come here and cuss this regiment into line."

I believe the conduct of the Colorado forces at Sand Creek was justified. It is true that we killed a lot of the Cheyennes, but they were the worst set of thieves and murderers that you can imagine and they had to be taught a lesson that they would not forget. I have heard it said that there were some white people with the Cheyennes when they were attacked. The only white person there that I know of was old John Smith, the trapper. He had an Indian squaw and half-breed children, one of whom was a grown-up son named Jack. Smith's tent was not attacked during the battle, and the next morning after the fighting ceased some of our boys visited the tent and had a conversation with the old man. Jack was sitting across from them and was an attentive onlooker of an inspection of guns which was being made by Smith and the Colorado soldiers. Accidentally, or otherwise, the weapon

which was in the hands of one of our men was discharged when pointed directly at Jack. The shot was fatal, and of course his mother and other squaws set up a great howl. I have never been able to determine whether the tragedy was intentional or not, but I know that there was no mourning in our ranks over it. As a matter of fact, some of the boys dragged the body out onto the prairie and hauled it about for a considerable time. Their blood was aroused, and they were guilty of a course which they would not have pursued under different circumstances.

I think I should say that Central City never was quite as tough and turbulent a place as were, for example, Leadville and Creede. There were not so many disreputable resorts as in many other new mining towns, and while there were occasional shooting scrapes, they were rather far apart, considering the fact that adventurers from all parts of the world were attracted by the gold finds. Even our toughs were pretty good fellows. We had one, Doc Thayer, who was an intimate friend of Dr. Vincent, the pastor of the Methodist Church. He attended the Doctor's services regularly and they were much together. The proprietor of the leading bar room was Jack Kehler, son of a prominent Episcopal minister of the diocese. After the town got to going well it was an orderly community, maintaining churches and schools and generally acting with becoming decorum. So you see the "Kingdom of Gilpin" presented a good front to the world.

Thomas Fitzpatrick and the First Indian Agency in Colorado*

LeRoy R. Hafen

In the early forties, if not before, the Indian frontier along the western border of Missouri, which had been planned as a permanent institution in the days of President Monroe, fell before the pressure of Americans seeking trade or homes in the West. Those great western arteries, the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, were becoming ever more firmly established and travelers upon them, in carrying forward "manifest destiny," refused to consider themselves as intruders on Indian land. If they were breaking laws, let the laws be changed, their plans could not be altered nor their march halted. Hence, as it became more evident that relations with the western Indians must become increasingly complex and intimate, the need for an official representative among the tribes grew more apparent.

* This paper was read before the Mississippi Valley Historical Association at the annual meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, in April, 1928.

For some years there had been agents among the tribes immediately west of the Missouri, but prior to 1846 no agency had existed among the wild tribes of the far western plains. In this year, however, the region of the upper Platte and Arkansas was designated an Indian agency and Thomas Fitzpatrick was appointed as the first agent.¹

For twenty-five years Fitzpatrick had been one of the outstanding fur men and guides of the Far West. As a young man, fresh from Ireland,² he entered the fur trade with William Ashley in 1822 or 1823, and lived through the rise and fall of that pioneer industry. In the forties he was acknowledged as the most famous guide in the Far West. In 1841 and again in 1842, he led emigrant parties to Oregon; in 1843 he guided Fremont to Oregon and the following year continued with him back to the states. Kearny engaged him as guide in 1845 for the First Dragoons on their expedition to South Pass, and returning to Bent's Fort he became guide to Abert's expedition down the Canadian. In 1846 he was again guide to Kearny, now leading the Army of the West into New Mexico. It was while in this service that he was apprised of his appointment as Indian agent. Returning from New Mexico he carried dispatches to Washington and on November 30, 1846, accepted the appointment and filed his bond.

The appointment gave general satisfaction on the frontier. "A better selection could not have been made," wrote T. M. Moore, agent of the Upper Missouri.³ The St. Louis *Reveille* commented thus, "This appointment will give general satisfaction; for, among both the whites and Indians upon the frontier and the plains, Mr. Fitzpatrick is deservedly held in high respect—the latter indeed reverence his person, and, from this fact he has more power to control and restrain them than even the presence of armed force."⁴

In the spring of 1847 Agent Fitzpatrick set out from St. Louis on his first official visit to his wards. Joining a detachment of the First Dragoons at Fort Leavenworth, he journeyed along the Santa Fe Trail to Pawnee Fork.⁵ Here he met traders' caravans which had recently been attacked by the Comanche. After traveling some few miles farther west his own party was attacked. Five soldiers

¹In a letter of February 4, 1847, Fitzpatrick wrote from St. Louis saying that he was appointed in August, 1846, but was away at the time and that not until November 30, 1846, did he accept the appointment and give bond. This letter is in the St. Louis Superintendency File, H. 75, Indian Department Archives, Washington.

²In a letter from Bent's Fort, dated October 19, 1847, Fitzpatrick said that he was born in Ireland and came to America when sixteen years of age, but did not give the date of his birth. The original of this letter is in the Ind. Dept. Archives, where I found it in December, 1927. This seems to be the first definite statement found on the nativity and early life of Fitzpatrick.

³Moore's report of September 21, 1846, *Sen. Ex. Doc. 1, 29 Cong., 2 Sess.*

⁴St. Louis *Reveille*, September 14, 1846.

⁵Account of this journey is given in Fitzpatrick's first annual report, written from Bent's Fort and dated September 18, 1847. The original is in the library of the Missouri Historical Society. It is published in *Sen. Ex. Doc. 1, 30 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 238-49.*

were killed, others wounded, and many of the stock were lost. Thus the reception of the first Indians of his agency was far from reassuring to the newly appointed agent.

Fitzpatrick continued with the troops and caravan to Santa Fe and at the earliest opportunity went to Bent's Fort on the Arkansas. Here he found white friends and well-disposed Indians. This famous post had long been a rendezvous for the Cheyenne and Arapaho, William Bent, the proprietor, having himself married a Cheyenne woman. A large band of Cheyenne who were encamped near the fort welcomed the new agent, for they had learned that agents usually distribute presents.

Procuring from the proprietors of this trading establishment a supply of bread and coffee, Fitzpatrick gave the assembled chiefs and braves the expected feast. With preliminaries over he addressed the council, explaining the kind intentions of the government towards peaceful Indians but indicating that plundering Indians would be severely punished. He reminded them of the diminution of the buffalo and advised them to turn their attention toward agriculture. Yellow Wolf, the chief, replied in friendly vein, expressing a peaceful disposition and a desire to be taught agriculture. The Arapaho present joined in a similar expression, but admitted that some of their tribe were already among the marauding Comanche.

In this council there was no thought of the formation of a treaty, only an attempt to promote friendship. Even in this, Fitzpatrick was not overconfident. Long experience had acquainted him with Indian character and made him dubious of great or rapid improvement.

One of the chief requisites for the maintenance of peace among the Indians, declared Fitzpatrick, was the abolition of the liquor traffic. The larger trading companies would gladly lend their support, for they had long since learned the inexpediency of the trade in whiskey, but the petty independent traders were the ones who kept up the trade and debauched the natives. He complained especially of the smuggling operations being conducted across the international boundary of the Arkansas River.

As to the Comanche and Kiowa who during the summer had been attacking trains on the Santa Fe Trail, Fitzpatrick recommended energetic and effective military action. Regarding their activity Colonel Gilpin, after careful inquiry, had estimated the losses sustained from these Indians during the summer of 1847 as "Americans killed, 47; wagons destroyed, 330; stock plundered, 6,500."⁶ These Indians had asked the Cheyenne and Arapaho to

⁶Gilpin's report from Fort Mann, August 1, 1848, *House Ex. Doc. 1, 30 Cong., 2 Sess. 136-40.*

join them, saying the whites were easier to kill than elk or buffalo, and that the spoils of the raid were rich.

"I am well aware," writes Fitzpatrick, "that the intentions of the government towards the Indians are conciliatory and humane. But those of this country who know not our strength, and attribute our forbearance to dread of their great prowess, must be dealt with in precisely the opposite manner."⁷

One feels that the Irish agent was instinctively a military man. In his various reports advice on military matters is often presented which in its character reveals a man of positive ideas, with no little knowledge of Indian life and of effective military measures.

During the winter Fitzpatrick employed his best efforts to retain the friendship of the Cheyenne and Arapaho and prevent their joining the Comanche. Not only did he succeed, but was able to draw out from the Comanche some of the Kiowa and induce them to join the friendly Indians.

Late in February, 1848, he left Fort Bent to visit the Indians of his agency on the Platte. On the south fork he met Arapaho and Sioux who expressed friendship and promised peace. To what extent the Indian agent was able to control the liquor trade we do not know, but he does mention taking from a white trader two kegs of whiskey, which he forthwith dumped into the river.⁸

Continuing down the Platte, Fitzpatrick journeyed eastward and reached St. Louis early in June. From here he was called to Washington. His oral report to the Department was supplemented by a written one dated Washington City, August 11. In this he recommended the immediate establishment of a fort on the Oregon and one on the Santa Fe Trail, each to be garrisoned by five hundred mounted troops and equipped with mountain howitzers. A winter campaign against the Comanche in their own country would be most effective, he said. Only ten days before this, Colonel Gilpin, after an indecisive campaign of several months, had written his report from Fort Mann, saying, "All the atrocities of a very severe Indian war may be momentarily looked for, and are certain to burst forth with the early spring." Gilpin had further recommended one thousand mounted troops and six forts for the Arkansas and its flanks, saying, "This is the minimum of force necessary."⁹

Into a region thus threatened, Fitzpatrick was to set out on his second trip to his agency. Before leaving the frontier he made his regular annual report.¹⁰ In it he flayed the action of the troops, saying they had acted almost entirely on the defensive. He again

⁷ Report of September 18, 1847.

⁸ Report of June 24, 1848, Upper Platte File, H. 545, Ind. Dept. Archives.

⁹ Gilpin's report of August 1, 1848.

¹⁰ Fitzpatrick's report for 1848, *House Ex. Doc.*, 1, 30 Cong., 2 Sess.

warned the government that the unpunished Indians who had found marauding so profitable would not cease plundering until the government exhibited an ability and a willingness to chastise them.

Leaving St. Louis early in October, 1848, and joining a party of traders at Westport, Fitzpatrick proceeded over the Santa Fe Trail toward Bent's Fort. At Big Timbers on the Arkansas he had a talk with the assembled Indians. It was here that the adventurous Fremont, bound on his tragic fourth expedition, met his one-time guide, and with apparent satisfaction wrote Senator Benton describing Fitzpatrick among six hundred lodges of Apache, Comanche, Kiowa and Arapaho. "He is a most admirable agent," he wrote, "entirely educated for such a post, and possessing the ability and courage necessary to make his education available. He has succeeded in drawing out from among the Comanches the whole Kioway nation, with the exception of six lodges, . . . I hope you will be able to give him some support. He will be able to save lives and money for the government, . . . In a few years he might have them all farming here on the Arkansas."¹¹

Of the detailed work of Fitzpatrick during the winter of 1848-49 we know little. He held several "big talks" with the Indians about Bent's Fort and assisted in securing the freedom of certain Mexican captives held among the tribes. In March, 1849, he again turned eastward.¹² At the Big Bend of the Arkansas he met a Santa Fe bound caravan in charge of his friend, Solomon Sublette. To him he spoke of his plan to go east and ask for authorization to make a treaty with the plains Indians.¹³

In August, 1849, Superintendent Mitchell ordered Fitzpatrick to Washington to urge in person the advisability of holding a general council with the prairie tribes.¹⁴ That his plan met with favor is evidenced by the sequel. He returned to St. Louis within the month with certain instructions. Five thousand dollars was provided for purchase of presents to be distributed by him among the Indians, and arrangements were made for a great council during the summer of 1850. In pursuance of the treaty plan, Superintendent Mitchell, the Indian Commissioner, and the Secretary of the Interior, each recommended in his annual report the advisability of negotiating a treaty with the prairie tribes. To the same end Senator Atchison, of Missouri, introduced a bill on March 18, 1850, authorizing an expenditure of \$200,000 for effecting the purpose.

¹¹ John Bigelow, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Fremont* (New York, 1856), 359-60.

¹² Report written from St. Louis, May 22, 1849, Ind. Dept. Archives.

¹³ Sublette Papers, Missouri Historical Society. Letter of Solomon Sublette to his wife, written from Santa Fe, May 29, 1849.

¹⁴ Ind. Dept. Archives, Upper Platte File M. 448-87, order of August 1, 1849.

Thus Fitzpatrick returned to his agency in November, 1849, bearing with him presents and telling the Indians that their Great Father in Washington was planning to hold a great council with them the following summer. After a sojourn with the tribes during the winter he returned eastward by way of the Arkansas. At Big Timbers and again at Fort Mann he waited among the assembled tribes hoping for instructions or definite news from the east. Finally he disbanded the Indians and continued to St. Louis, only to learn that the expected law had failed of enactment. It was a keen disappointment to the agent and in his report of September 24, 1850, he stated that the Indians of that country would never again be found in better mood for treaty-making, and warned that the postponing of such matters would have a very bad effect on them.

The treaty plan met with better success at the hands of Congress in the session of 1850-51. The law of February 27, 1851, appropriated \$100,000 "for expenses of holding treaties with the wild tribes of the prairie and for bringing delegates on to the seat of government." Plans could now go forward with official sanction and backing. Superintendent Mitchell and Agent Fitzpatrick were duly appointed official commissioners of the United States to negotiate a treaty with the prairie nations, and arrangements were made for execution of the project. Fitzpatrick was to go ahead, acquaint the Indians with the plan, and invite the tribes to assemble at Fort Laramie on September 1.

Westward on the Santa Fe Trail he went carrying the good news. Near the site of Fort Mann the Indians of the region were assembled and his message was given, but it did not meet with the favor hoped for. The Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache refused outright to go so far from their own country among so many strange Indians, stating with candor that they "had too many horses and mules to risk on such a journey, and among such notorious horse thieves as the Sioux and Crows."¹⁵ The Cheyenne and Arapaho, however, agreed to go to the meeting-place and immediately began preparations. Fitzpatrick continued through the agency inviting all Indians met with to come to the council.

Superintendent Mitchell, with an escort of Dragoons, came up the Oregon Trail after seeing that the Indian goods for the treaty council were loaded at the river. Upon reaching Fort Laramie on the last of August he found great numbers of Indians already assembled. A site at the mouth of Horse Creek, some thirty-five miles below the fort, was chosen as the treaty ground. Thither they all moved and the council opened with the firing of cannon and the raising of the flag on September 8.

¹⁵ Fitzpatrick's report, *Sen. Ex. Doc. 1, 32 Cong., 1 Sess.*

It was the largest and one of the most important Indian councils ever held in the Far West. The Cheyenne, Arapaho, Snakes and several branches of the Sioux were there en masse, while the Assiniboin, Gros Ventres, Aricara and Crows were represented by delegations. Ten thousand Indians were present, and when rigged out in colorful regalia they made the council an exhibition and country fair as well as a peace meeting. B. Gratz Brown, in his correspondence in the *Missouri Republican* (October 6 to November 30, 1851), and Father De Smet,¹⁶ in his letters, have left us colorful pictures of this great assemblage, but space will not permit a recounting of occurrences here. It must suffice to say that on the 17th the treaty was finally agreed to and the formal signing occurred. It provided for a lasting peace among the signatory tribes and with the whites; recognized the right of the United States to establish roads and military posts in the Indian territory; made depredations by Indians or whites punishable, and restitution obligatory; fixed the boundaries of the territory of the respective tribes; and provided for the payment of annuities of \$50,000 in goods for a term of fifty years.

On the 20th the train of twenty-seven wagons arrived with the presents, and the goods were distributed. Father De Smet wrote: "The great chiefs were, for the first time in their lives, pantalooned; each was arrayed in a general's uniform, a gilt sword hanging at his side. Their long, coarse hair floated above the military costume, and the whole was crowned by the burlesque solemnity of their painted faces."¹⁷ On the second day the distributions were completed and the Indian villages began to move off.

To impress the tribes with the white man's numbers and cities, a delegation of representative Indians was chosen to visit Washington under Fitzpatrick's escort. Superintendent Mitchell carried eastward the treaty for presentation to the United States Senate. Subsequently, when considered by the Upper House, that august body in its wisdom cut down the term of the treaty from fifty to fifteen years¹⁸ and the formality of a ratification of the change was later bribed from most of the signatory tribes.

In the summer of 1852, Fitzpatrick again visited his agency, carrying with him \$30,000 worth of goods to be distributed as annuities.¹⁹ The details of his movements during this season are not available.

In the spring of 1853, Fitzpatrick was called to Washington

¹⁶ H. M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson (eds.), *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, S. J., 1801-1873* (New York, 1905), II, 675-92. P. G. Lowe in *Five Years a Dragoon* . . . (Kansas City, Mo., 1906), gives interesting data on the council, on pages 77-96.

¹⁷ Chittenden and Richardson, *op. cit.*, 683.

¹⁸ C. J. Kappler (ed.) *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, II, 594, *Sen. Doc. 452, 57 Cong., 1 Sess.*

¹⁹ Central Agency File (1852), Indian Office Archives, Washington.

and was appointed sole commissioner on the part of the United States to negotiate a treaty with the wild Comanche, Kiowa and Apache who had refused to treat at Fort Laramie, and had never yet had treaty relations with the United States. Having sent messengers ahead to call in the tribes, Fitzpatrick found large numbers assembled upon his arrival at Fort Atkinson. Three of the largest bands of the Comanche and the Apache were assembled en masse, while the Kiowa were represented by their principal chiefs.

"At first," wrote Fitzpatrick, "almost insurmountable difficulties presented themselves, in the distant and suspicious bearing of the chiefs, and the utter impossibility of obtaining any interpreters who understood their intricate languages. But little intercourse had ever existed between them and the white race, and that usually of the most unfriendly character. . . ." ²⁰ But finally the Indians were induced to bring forth some of their Mexican prisoners and through the medium of the Spanish language communication was established.

Fitzpatrick remarked the keen intelligence with which these desert warriors replied to propositions submitted to them. A right of way through their territory—a privilege already long enjoyed—was readily assented to, but on matters such as establishment of military posts and cessation of hostilities against Mexico more vigorous opposition was encountered. The treaty, as finally agreed upon, bound the three tribes to maintain peace among themselves and with the United States. It recognized the right of the United States to lay off roads, locate depots for railroad purposes, and establish military posts in the region.

In the matter of the return of Mexican captives Fitzpatrick struck a stone wall. For years these wild tribes had made incursions into the Mexican provinces beyond the Rio Grande to replenish their *caballadas* and secure prisoners. The Mexicans carried away were readily adopted into the Indian tribe and very often had no desire to return to the Mexican provinces. These the Indians refused to give up, saying they were the husbands of their daughters and the mothers of their children, and a separation would not be tolerated. The United States commissioner succeeded only in obtaining an agreement that the Indians would cease taking captives in the future. Fitzpatrick agreed on the part of the United States that an annuity of \$18,000 would be paid to the three tribes for ten years, subject to an extension of five years. ²¹

The usual inducement for signing the agreement was at hand in the form of presents. When the chiefs had marked their respect-

tive crosses on the treaty, the distribution of goods took place. Gay trappings for the chiefs, blankets, beads, trinkets, and the whole gamut of Indian goods, useful or ornamental, were passed out and produced the usual effect of jollity, good will, and expressions of good intentions.

This mission successfully performed, Fitzpatrick set out from Fort Atkinson to visit other of his wards, get the changes in the Fort Laramie treaty ratified, and distribute the annuities.

As he journeyed up the Arkansas he was impressed, perhaps more than ever before, with the good soil and rank vegetation along the stream. In several respects he was the advance agent of a new day for this region. In the heart of the area which Major Long had labeled the "Great American Desert" he saw the dawn breaking. "My course led through rich alluvial bottom lands," he wrote, "rank with vegetation, and skirted heavily with cottonwood, near the margin of the stream. Fine soils prevail in these low grounds; and on the high table lands a short but nutritious grass affords excellent grazing, and will cause this country to be some day much prized for pastoral purposes." ²² He thus saw the great cattle herds that were to speck the plains two or three decades hence, even though he may not have visioned fully the day and reign of the cantaloupe and the sugar beet.

From the Pueblo he turned northward up Fountain Creek and crossed the divide to the South Platte drainage. Again the gray-haired pioneer peered into the future. "Indications of mineral wealth," he wrote, "abound in the sands of the water courses, and the gorges and canons from which they issue; and should public attention ever be strongly directed to this section of our territory, and free access be obtained, the inducements which it holds out will soon people it with thousands of citizens, and cause it to rise speedily into a flourishing mountain state." He spoke almost better than he knew, for following his track but five years after, came the famous Russell party of prospectors who panned gold from these same streams and inaugurated the famous stampede which had "Pike's Peak or Bust" as its motto. Here speedily arose the "mountain state" he visioned, assuming first the name of Jefferson, and then that of Colorado.

In the vicinity of Fort St. Vrain he met the Cheyenne and Arapaho, gave them their annuities and induced them to accept the Senate amendments to the Fort Laramie treaty. Continuing northward he met the Sioux at Fort Laramie and a similar procedure was followed.

Now turning his face to the east and leaving for the last time the far western mountains and plains that for thirty years had

²⁰ Fitzpatrick's report for 1853, *House Ex. Doc.* 1, 33 Cong., 1 Sess.

²¹ Kappler, *op. cit.*, II, 600-602.

²² Fitzpatrick's annual report for 1853.

been his home, he journeyed down the Platte and to St. Louis. Here he wrote his last report, paragraphs of which are in the spirit of a valedictory. "After mature reflection, . . . I am constrained to think that but one course remains which promises any permanent relief to them (the Indians), . . . That is simply to make such modifications in the 'intercourse laws' as will invite the residence of traders amongst them, and *open the whole Indian territory to settlement*. . . . Trade is the only civilizer of the Indian. It has been the precursor of all civilization heretofore, and it will be of all hereafter. It teaches the Indian the value of other things besides the spoils of the chase, and offers to him other pursuits and excitement than those of war."²³

In the winter of 1853-54 Fitzpatrick was ordered to Washington for consultation relative to the treaty he had negotiated with the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache. It was while on this mission that he died of pneumonia in Washington, February 7, 1854.²⁴

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), February 8, 1854. I am indebted to Mr. W. J. Ghent of Washington for this reference.

Karval, Colorado

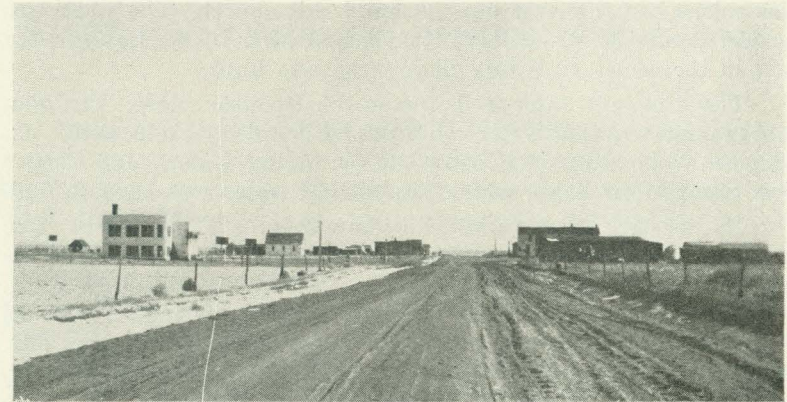
Esther Johnson*

Approximately fifty years ago the Karval region, in Lincoln County, was surveyed. It was then known as the "Hershberger Flats." Shortly after, it was opened for homesteading, tracts of one hundred sixty acres being taken up by the homesteaders. There are several small creeks in this vicinity. Horse Creek is one, which was named for the wild horses roaming along it. Adobe Creek is named because of the adobe which surrounds it.

There were antelope, wild horses and buffalo in this country before the settlers came. Messrs. John Cooper, Matheson and Hershberger were among the first pioneers. About thirty years ago Mr. Barker homesteaded one hundred sixty acres and was known as the early pioneer of the Karval school district. His ranch was known as the Spring Grove ranch, on which Mr. Frank Crosson now lives. Mr. Hackabee was another pioneer homesteader. He homesteaded several years after Mr. Barker. He settled about a mile east of Mr. Barker's place.

In 1908 a new homestead law was passed, which let the homesteaders each have three hundred twenty acres. More settlers came in about this time. Some of these were Messrs. Hodgson, Page,

* This short account of one of the new dry farming towns of Colorado shows that pioneering is still being done in Colorado. This essay won a prize in the Historical Essay Contest for High School students, conducted by the State Historical Society of Colorado in 1928. Miss Johnson is a High School student at Karval.—Ed.



KARVAL, COLORADO

Karval Consolidated High School building at the left.

Stone, Trainers, Cooper, Kravig, Ugland and Gunderson. Before that time the country was largely used for sheep grazing. Among these sheep owners were Messrs. Fields, Matheson, Forder, Zimmerman, Wetzel, McNew and Hershberger.

In 1913, Mr. W. R. Dudley started the first store in the Karval vicinity. This store was located where Mr. Fred Cain now lives. Approximately twelve years ago Mr. Page started a store in Karval. The post office was at Mrs. Gilbert Kravig's place, one-half mile west of where Karval now stands. We got the mail from Boyero then, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Mr. Page took over this post office afterwards, when he built a store in Karval. The blacksmith shop was on the Kravig place also.

Twelve years ago there were five little school houses in this district. Two were on the east side, two on the west side and one was in Karval. They had no busses at that time to take the children to school. In 1920 the present school building was completed. This united the five little schools. Busses were used and only three teachers were hired. In the same year our school building was erected we began to get our mail from Hugo, which came daily on the star route. Before that time Mr. Clauson carried the mail in his wagon, drawn by mules, from Boyero.

In 1919 Mr. Middleton built a new store; also Mr. Patterson moved his goods from the Dudley store which he had purchased not long before. In the spring of 1920 the garage was built at Karval. The Kravig boys moved down from their home, where they had been doing blacksmith work. The first building in Karval was built in 1913. This building was the community church. It was also used as a community hall for public meetings. The money

was subscribed that was used to build this church. The work was largely donated. Mr. Gilbert Kravig and Mrs. D. W. LeVan were laid in the cemetery before the church was built.

The first soft water well was on the Hodgson place. The general opinion was that water could not be found in this locality. Mr. Charles Webb dug sixty holes before finding water. Joe Cooper dug twenty-four holes, which proves that water was hard to find.

In the early days it was customary to have big feasts. The neighbors gathered and had debating societies. They met in private homes. There was no sitting room and hardly standing room. Dances were held also. Mr. Trepte furnished the music with his flute. Mr. Henry Kravig accompanied him with his ukulele. Mr. C. A. Johnson had the first gasoline engine on wheels at Karval, on which he hauled water at that time. It was called an "auto buggy." He still has this buggy among his souvenirs.

Mr. J. R. Hodgson says: "Our first crop was planted with a corn planter brought from Minnesota. Our crop consisted of corn, beans and watermelons, which my wife harvested, while I worked out. In 1911 I carried mail from Boyero to Karval with a team. In 1912 we had fifty-one acres broken by Mr. Gaberalcon. We had a good crop of corn and feed. The first job of threshing was done by Henry Swan on the Kravig homestead."

Mr. Joe Cooper says: "I filed on a homestead claim in 1909. I had a real hard time finding my claim as there were no roads or any trails. This country was once open, bare range, with only a few cabins of the few homesteaders to mar its loneliness. The ranch owners at that time were Messrs. Fields, Matheson, Forder, Zimmerman, Wetzel, McNew and Hershberger. At that time they ran sheep over all the free open range they chose. I lived in a tent in the spring, and there was the finest weather, but on the 28th of March there came a blizzard that killed lots of stock for the ranchers and settlers. That spring I built my corral and roofed a twelve by sixteen-foot shack on the east side of my three hundred twenty acres.

"I put down eighteen holes before I got water fit to drink. The water was filthy with alkali. That summer was so dry I hardly raised any feed, and had to turn my horses loose at night; then I must be up before daylight hunting my horses on foot. Sometimes they were near at hand, other times they would stray away ten or twelve miles and join bands of other horses."

Karval was named for a city in Norway. Mr. Kravig named it. It was an odd name but was voted for unanimously.

Western Experiences and Colorado Mining Camps

Wolfe Londoner*

I was born in New York in 1835. My first adventure was in coming out to California. My attention was called that way by there being a good deal of talk about the discovery of gold, and what was published in the newspapers. My recollection is that I was under 15 years of age when I landed in San Francisco in 1850—got out of New York on a sailing vessel and went around the Horn. My father did not know where I was until I wrote to him from San Francisco.

The first job I got on arriving there was a job at washing dishes. It was rather a new experience to me but the way it happened was that I did not have a single cent when I arrived in San Francisco, and the first thing to find was a place where I could get something to eat. I found a place and they put me to work. I think they paid me \$50 per month. Help was very scarce then in San Francisco. Everybody was rushing to the mines. I stayed in San Francisco all the time I was in California.

The first decent job I got was a situation with a Mr. Jessell, auctioneer, a very celebrated man in early days. He invented a patent kind of auctioneering to beat the city license. They made a very high license, and his idea was to start an article at say \$10, and then drop down to what he wished to sell it for, at a profit. I did not like the hotel business very much, and he tried me, and after I had worked for him for a week he offered me \$150 per month, which I thought was a very magnificent offer. I worked for him until he broke up. I don't know whether it was on account of the wages he paid me or whether he did not attend to his business; but there was a great decline about that time, there was a general crisis throughout the country. It struck me as a boy that the settling up of California was owing to its great distance from civilization—when they got there they were so very poor they could not get away.

I stayed in California until 1855, then I went to New York. From New York my father started business up at Dubuque, Iowa, which was a very prosperous city in 1855, and I was put in charge of two stores he had there. They were running on the high pressure plan until 1857, when the whole thing changed. There was not any money in circulation. All the big merchants issued what was

* Mr. Londoner was a prominent Colorado pioneer and business man. In 1884 he was interviewed for the historian, H. H. Bancroft, who was then preparing a history of Colorado, and the article presented here was the interview taken at that time. Mr. Londoner lived in Denver for many years after the period reached in this story. In 1889-91 he served as Mayor of Denver. He was always noted as a generous citizen and a genial host. He died November 23, 1912.—Ed.

called scrip for the payment of labor and materials, and anybody who could not take it did not do any business and that was all there was about it. After awhile the banks would not take it and the whole thing collapsed. Father went down to St. Louis, started a little business out of the ruins and left me with the family on my hands. After he had been down there several months he wrote up to me that I would have to bring the family down to St. Louis, and I brought them down.

After we were established I got a job with an auctioneer at \$25 per month, which was pretty dry picking, but then it was the best that could be got. I worked on in St. Louis and got a better job after awhile, got a situation with a man by the name of A. Hanauer (now of Salt Lake), who buys and sells ores and has some mines in Salt Lake. I worked with him until the spring of 1860. He went in partnership with the Dold Bros. of Las Vegas, N. M. He made a proposition to me to go out to Colorado and work for him. He said he had to go on and attend to the business of putting up a building in Denver, and wanted me to go on with the train. They had some 43 wagons, I think.

I went up to Atchison by boat and had to stay there for two or three weeks while the train was loading and when it got ready I put my traps on board and pulled out in good shape. The wagon-master was a Mexican, and the first day we only made five or six miles. I walked along and thought it was very nice to walk out on the green fields. The next start was at four o'clock in the morning, and we did not intend to camp until three in the afternoon, for some reason. I got very tired before we struck camp, I crawled into the last wagon and thought I would take a ride. I was in there about three or four minutes when I heard a hollering outside—the Mexican wagon-master was telling me in Mexican to get out of the wagon or he would blow the top of my head off.

There was one of the Mexican drivers who spoke a little English and he explained to me that it was the rule of the train that no one should ride in the wagons or on the tongue, as it was considered not the right thing. The men would have to be walking along looking after the cattle outside and would have no business in the wagons. I tried to explain to him that I was a partner in the concern, but he told me very distinctly that I would have to walk or go back to Atchison. I had only two or three dollars left, Mr. Hanauer had gone on ahead in good style with a wagon and mules, so I made the best of it and walked along with the train until we reached Denver. The train was bringing out goods. Mr. Hanauer did not have very much money, but had some stock. The Dold Bros. were very well fixed.

We reached here (Denver) in, I think, it was forty-five days'

travel, everything in good order, in the year 1860. Business was very fair for a new mining country. Profits were very good, and the proprietors thought they would start a branch at Canon City. They wanted me to attend to the putting up of a building in the summer of 1860. That was the first stone building that was put up in that town. After that had been running a little while they started me up at California Gulch (now called Leadville). Canon City was situated right at the mouth of the Grand Canon, right on the main road from the States to the mines, that is—California Gulch and Tarry-All Diggings (commonly called "Pound Diggings"). It was thought by some that on account of that route being through a warm climate, up the Arkansas River, that it would make a greater city than Denver, and it might have done so had it not been for the war in 1861. We had the worst of it down in the southern country. General Price was raiding around in the southern towns of Missouri, stopping all travel and threw it over the Platte route.

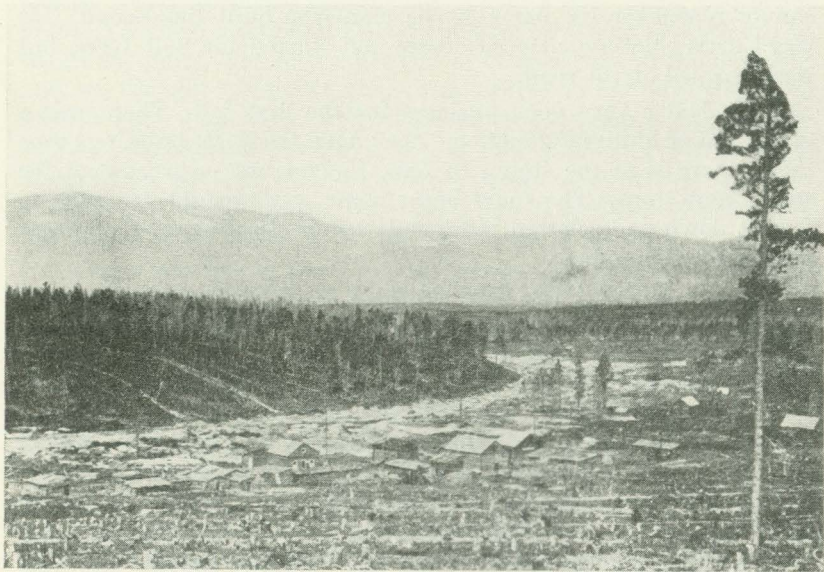
The first firm that opened in Canon City was this firm that I represented, Dold & Hanauer. They sent over twenty large freight wagons with \$50,000 worth of goods for a starter, right from Denver. This belonged to the firm. The warehouse of Majors, Russell & Waddell was, I think, the third warehouse that was built there. I cannot remember the name of the man who built the second. [It was Curtis Stevens.] He left there and started for Salt Lake, but was drowned on the road.

We had a very good business for the first fall. There was a great deal of building going on. They have the finest building stone there, there is in the state. In fact, Denver uses a great deal for store front stone. The court house stone was brought from there. I went down and selected it when I was on the Board of Commissioners for this county.

In the fall of 1860, they got up a great excitement in regard to the San Juan mines. It was started by a man named Baker, who came up with glowing accounts of immense deposits of gold in the streams of the San Juan. He went around throughout the mining camps and told his story and got a great many converts, and there must have been during that fall at least 5,000 miners that went through Canon City and bought all their supplies there. They went away rigged out in very good style, with their mining tools, quicksilver, pack animals, wagons, nice mule teams and lots of provisions to last them during the winter. It was those men who had made a great deal of money during the first year of the mining excitement in the mountains where they had struck good diggings, and they layed out all their gold dust for supplies, think-

ing all they had to do was to go down and strike "Baker's Park," as we called it, and dig it up by the shovel full.

Canon City was the supply place because it was that much nearer south. It was 130 miles nearer the wonderful San Juan mines. We got pretty well acquainted with all those miners and they all promised to come back next season and get more supplies and wanted us to be there and give them good prices for their gold dust. We heard nothing of these miners until late next spring, we could get no news from them at all. There were heavy snows in the San Juan mountains and ranges down there. About the first week in May some of them commenced straggling in. They had lost their plump and ruddy appearance; their nice mining boots with red tops to them had disappeared; of their mining shirts there was only a small scrap or a button or two left, and they were, taking them all in all, a sad and weary crowd who had come afoot across lots and were picking their way back to their first love, the mining camps. Later they came in larger numbers but mainly in the same condition, everything gone. They had lost their animals in the mountains, some of them had died, a great many of them had been lost and were never heard of again, starved to death in the mountain ranges of the San Juan.



CALIFORNIA GULCH WITH DESERTED ORO CITY
IN THE FOREGROUND

This was the scene of considerable placer gold mining in the early sixties.

What little profits the merchants of Canon had made in outfitting them in the previous fall, they gave back to these people in food and clothing and helping them to the camps of Tarry-All and California Gulch. Most of the inhabitants of the once great city of Canon, then emigrated to the mountains, leaving but a very few behind to guard the vacant stone warehouses and dwellings which had been built during its prosperity. In fact, besides old man Rudd and his wife and a man named D. P. Wilson and myself, the town was like Goldsmith's Deserted Village.

Early in the summer of 1861 I went to California Gulch to start a store for the firm there, and hauled a great deal of goods from Canon City. California Gulch in 1860 and 1861 had a population of something over 10,000 and was *The Camp* of Colorado. It was strung along through the gulch, which was something over five miles long, that is the mining part of it. There were a great many tents in the road and on the side of the ridge, and the wagons were backed up, the people living right in the wagons. Some of them were used as hotels; they had their grub under the wagons, piled the dishes there, and the man of the house and his wife would sleep in the wagons nights. They would get some rough boards and make tables where the boarders took their meals, and those who did not want to board did their own cooking. The gamblers would have tables strung along the wayside to take in the cheerful but unwary miner. The game that took the most was what was commonly known in those days as "Three Card Monte."

Most of the claims paid very rich. They would pay from \$10 to \$100 the man per day. Some of those claims produced as high as \$100,000, very little of which did any good to the original owners of the claims, as things were run with a high hand in camp, and the men and women were mostly bad who were not mining, and they managed to get most of the miner's dust and skip. After 1860 the population decreased somewhat, and in 1861 it probably all told did not exceed over 5,000, the miner's desire being to strike new diggings and a great many went over the range but found very little. Some of them went below California Gulch and discovered very good placer diggings at Cache Creek, named so because in 1854 a party of trappers who were hunting in that region were ambushed by the Indians in the vicinity and buried their supplies and attempted to escape over the mountains, but there was only one left out of the party of nine who ever reached Salt Lake to tell the tale.

Cache Creek was a very promising camp, having something over 1,000 miners working in the vicinity and taking the first two years of its discovery panned out very good, in some cases paying as high as \$25 to the man per day. The ground afterwards was

mainly gobbled up by large companies from the east, who operated on the California plan, which is to take everything in sight and squeeze the laborer down to starvation rates, which had the effect of killing the camp, and today there is but one company operating there. During the winter months when miners in California Gulch could not work their claims, a great many of them went down below Cache Creek on the Arkansas River and panned for a living, making from two to five dollars per day. The miners all claim that if a company of practical men would organize with sufficient capital to turn the river that there would be millions of dollars of gold taken out of the soil along the banks and on the bedrock of the river.

In 1863, I think it was, they got up quite a mining excitement over in what was called the Red Mountain district. A great many people from the territory then flocked in and took up claims and made it very lively for the recorder's office, and netted the recorder (who was myself in those days) something like \$10,000 for the season. The fees were pretty high in the early days here. That was about twelve miles from Cache Creek, something like 18 miles from Leadville or what was called California Gulch in those days. It created a great deal of excitement, there were a great many veins discovered which were all lost at the time and amounted to nothing, on account of their not understanding what mineral they were working. They were trying to work gold ore when it was nothing but silver, and it broke most of the prospectors who had taken up claims, and as it afterwards turned out, the miner who was working at California Gulch, or Leadville, sometimes only making his \$2 a day, in walking home to get his supper would walk over ground that would have netted him millions if he had only known anything about silver ore.

I went from Canon City to California Gulch when business dropped out of Canon City, and did a very large business for the firm. I was elected clerk and recorder of Lake County and served four years. During that time the Red Mountain mining excitement came in and I made considerable money out of it, but the best diggings had been worked out, and they got up a big mining excitement in Montana in 1865 that almost made California Gulch look like Canon City. I did not go there but concluded to come to Denver and opened a store, which I now occupy. I think it was in 1866. A great part of the mining population left Colorado and went to Montana. A great many came back with money they had made there and invested it in ranches, bought cattle and now are considered among the wealthy men of the state. They had very rich diggings in Montana.

Attention was turned to cattle as early as 1866 and 1867. They had to go down to Texas to get the cattle. There were quite a num-

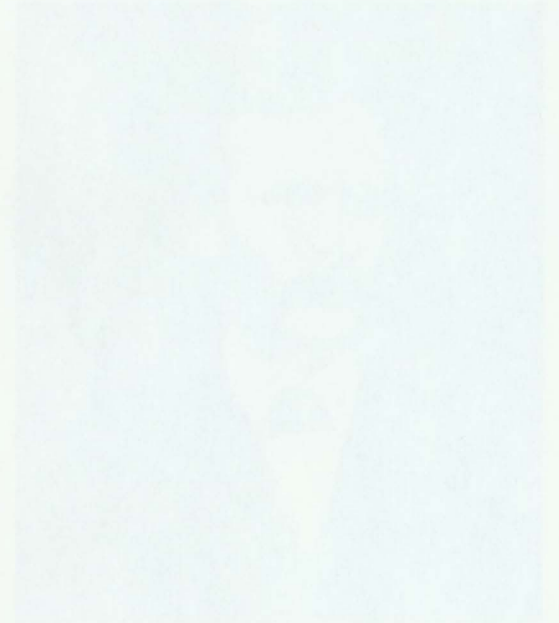
ber in the country. They picked them up in very small lots. There were no great bands here. They would drive up cattle from Texas and these men would pick them up to fatten and grade them with better cattle and in that way we got some very good cattle in this country.

I went east and purchased stock, had in cash something like \$5,000, got credit for \$10,000 worth of goods. They were hauled by rail to Julesburg. The freight was about \$5,000. The freight would have been more than the goods cost but at that time the railroad was completed to Julesburg. Julesburg and Cheyenne were the two great termini for the Union Pacific. My elder brother was with me in partnership and he kept the books and I was the porter and salesman. We worked very hard and built up a big business. Our sales for the first year were, I think, about \$70,000. We did a good business right along for quite a number of years. My brother left me alone then, times were dull in the state and people doing business were not making any money, and he thought he would retire. A little while after that the Leadville excitement came up and trade picked up all over the state, especially in Denver, which was greatly benefited by the Leadville excitement. From a small beginning my business has now reached to where the sales amount to nearly a million dollars a year, but it is the hardest kind of work and worse than running a saw mill.

Four years ago I was elected county commissioner and chosen chairman of the finance committee. The entire responsibility of the financial part of putting up the court house honestly devolved upon me, and after I had commenced I found I had got into the worst business I ever struck in my life. It had either to come out before the public after the building was finished and have people say I was a thief, or else neglect my own business and attend to that solely, and as I had a small but increasing family and a great many friends in this country I thought I would let my store run itself for a little while and attend to the affairs of the county, and I had to take in one of my clerks and give him one-third interest in the business to run the store while I was working for the County of Arapahoe at \$5 a day. And everybody says that is the only building of the kind built in the United States that did not have a dollar stolen in the building of it.

It cost a little over \$300,000. The block is worth \$75,000 in the first place and those fountains outside cost us \$4,500, and the stone sidewalks in and out at the lowest contract rates cost about \$26,000. Then we have an artesian well that cost over \$5,000. We have the finest gas fixtures in any public building and paid \$4,500 for those, although at wholesale figure and a special rate from the railroads by which I got them through at the same classification as

for groceries. We have got \$24,000 worth of cherry furniture in that building, which is equal to any furniture that there is in any public building in the world. The furniture is all plain but just as good as you could wish for. The county was very fortunate in getting a contractor, Peter Gumroy, who did the work honestly. When I left the board last January (1884) they drew up a complimentary resolution which paid me for all the work I had done on the court house building. They had a public meeting in the district court at which Judge Elliott presided and the speeches and resolutions were very complimentary to the commissioners.



There were about a thousand people residing in West Denver then, and not more than half as many in East Denver. A great rivalry obtained between the town companies. Whenever a prairie schooner was seen nearing port, West Siders would start as pilots to "take them in," telling those with families that if they, the pilgrims, would settle in West Denver they would find a school already es-

The First School in Denver

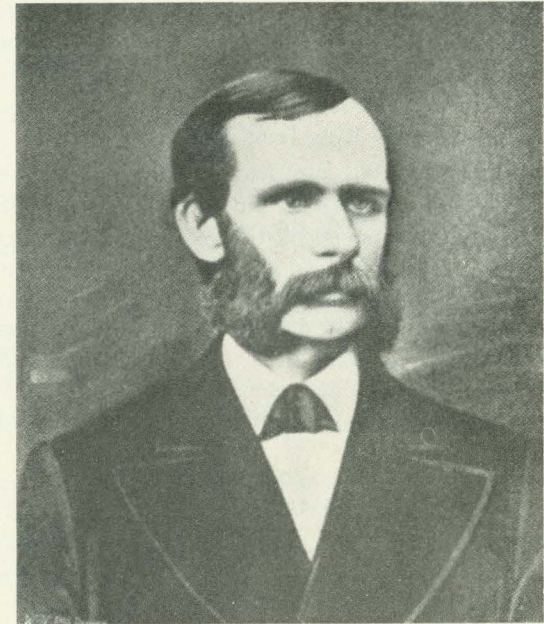
O. J. Goldrick*

The first school that was founded in Denver, or in Colorado, or indeed in that vast scope of country then known only as "the great unknown" desert interior, was opened on the third of October, 1859, by the present writer, in a small log cabin near the corner of Twelfth and Blake Streets, West Denver. The hut had a flat roof, which was a great conductor of snow and rain, much to the dripping discomfort of the dear little urchins during wet weather. A small hole in the gable end sufficed for an unglazed window, and a strip of wagon cover tacked to the lintel hung down to the ground, covering the hole that the log carpenter left for a door until some saw mill should supply dressed lumber.

There were ten or twelve scholars in attendance during the first week, and the first month averaged a daily attendance of fifteen or sixteen. Two or three of these were Indian half-breeds, three or four were Mexican half-breeds, and the rest were, strange to say, mostly from Missouri. But "everything went" in those days and no questions were asked. Three dollars per head per month was big money here then, to buy flour at \$20.00 a hundred, and tallow candles at a dollar apiece, not to speak of the towering tariff that was obtained here then on tobacco and whiskey. Indeed were it not for the twenty dollars a week that the writer got for his letters to eastern papers he could not have made a living in the school line.

* Mr. Goldrick is known as the founder of the first school and of the first Sunday School in Colorado. He was born in Ireland in 1833 and was educated at the University of Dublin. He taught school in Ohio some years before the Pike's Peak fever gripped him. Upon driving his ox team into Denver in 1859 he attracted considerable attention, for he was decked out in a "plug" hat, "boiled shirt," broadcloth suit and kid gloves. But he soon adjusted himself to his environment and filled his proper niche in the pioneer society. After his years in the schools he became a journalist. He died in 1886 and is buried in Riverside Cemetery, Denver.

This short sketch of the first schools was written by "Professor" Goldrick in 1882.—Ed.



O. J. GOLDRICK

tablished there for the benefit of their children. There were twenty thousand people in this territory then, but they were scattered all over the mountains and plains, prospecting for gold, or preparing to return home to "America." True, a few fortunate fellows found considerable gold in the Gregory mines near Central City that summer, but the great majority found only disappointment and fears of distress in the dim future.

About the first of November, 1859, a larger and more comfortable cabin, with both a regular door and a glazed window, was rented on the corner of Tenth and Blake Streets and the school was moved and conducted there until the following May, when it was taken to East Denver (which side of the town had greatly increased in population). This time a log building with glass doors, shingle

roof and supplied with school desks, on Fourteenth and Holladay Streets, was occupied for the school; also of nights it was used for a free reading room and of Sundays for the services of Rev. J. H. Kehler's Protestant Episcopal Church, the first nucleus of the "St. John's Church in the Wilderness."

The writer found his school growing so rapidly that, in May, 1860, he engaged the services of a bright young lady assistant, a Miss Miller, from Iowa. A second school was founded here, in West Denver, May 7, 1860, by Miss Sopris, now Mrs. Cushman, of Deadwood, South Dakota. The immigration rolled in here so thick and fast in the summer of 1860 that a third school was opened here, in East Denver, by a Miss Ring from Kansas.

In the summer of 1861 our legislature made provision for a system of free public schools; the undersigned was elected county superintendent and by him school districts were first located in this county. District No. 1 comprised all of East Denver; District No. 2, all of West Denver; and District No. 3, all of Highland and up and down the Platte three miles. Another School District was established at "Brown's Bridge," and another at Henderson's Island, these five localities being the chief settlements in this county at that date. The total population of this town and county then was about three thousand.

The first regular "public school" system was inaugurated in the fall of 1861, when Mr. Brown and two lady assistants took charge of the juvenile herd from both sides of town, corralling them in a large frame building near the corner of Larimer and Tenth Streets. By this time the pioneer schoolmaster had become a journalist and had flung his ferule into the Platte, to be picked up some time or other by the old waves of immortality.