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Features of Colorado Life as Seen by Bayard Taylor in 1866

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In the summer of 1866 Bayard Taylor made a trip to Colorado. An account of his experiences appeared in various issues of the *New York Tribune*, these letters later being published together under the title of *Colorado; a Summer Trip* (G. P. Putnam and Son, New York, 1867). The book is an interesting record of personal adventure by one who had a zest for travel and who, through his extensive journeys to all parts of the world, had an unusual background for what he saw in his own country. Nor was the West new to Taylor. He had toured the gold fields of California in 1849 and written of the trip in his *El Dorado* (1850); and ten years later he had revisited the same scenes and noted the changes of a decade. He was, therefore, familiar with mining camps and new, raw towns such as spring up in the wake of discoveries of precious metals. When he came to Colorado after the discovery of gold and silver he found much to remind him of California scenes. The camps were in many ways like those of California, the prospectors, the miners, and the settlers were of the same general type and they spoke the same language.

Language always interested Taylor, whether foreign or his own. While abroad he made a practice of studying the language of a country as soon as he crossed the border and using it whenever possible. In his American travels he observed the peculiarities of speech and the local dialects, using them himself in order, as he says, "To conform to the ways of the country." His books, therefore, contain much interesting material for the study of provincialisms, place names, and the like.

The Colorado volume presents an opportunity for study somewhat different from his California travel volumes, or the books and papers of others who have voyaged for the first time to any part of the West or to any one of the mining regions. In his two extensive journeys in California Taylor had absorbed much of western speech. Many words that would seem strange to the newcomer came easily

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to his tongue. He knew about *staking claims, gulch-washing, lodes, drifts, assays*; he knew what was meant by *lariat, canon, ranch, coyote*. Such words are, as a rule, used familiarly throughout the book because, to some extent, they had become a part of Taylor's vocabulary. When he comments in any way on the peculiarities of Colorado speech we get as a result a certain separation of this dialect from that of other parts of the West so far as Taylor has noticed the difference. Of course Taylor is not consciously making a selection. Yet there is significance in his extensive remarks on certain terms and phrases, and his less conscious comments in the use of italics or quotation marks to indicate words that were new to him, or, in his opinion, were unfamiliar to his readers. Through such comments we can make a selective collection of words and phrases that throws some light on differences in western speech.

The language of Colorado had a fascination for Taylor that lasted long after his return. In a letter to a correspondent who had been his host at Central City he wrote in September: "Don't let the *thin air and alkali water* destroy your taste for poetry," using a phrase he had heard many times in the mountains. In a letter to Edmund Clarence Stedman in October he used another phrase that had stayed with him, "... Our evenings were *pre-empted* (I will speak in the language of Colorado)."

The first three chapters of *Colorado* tell of the first part of his journey overland to Denver, part by train and the remainder by stage. As early as the first page he begins his observation of language peculiarities. Of the Northern Missouri Railroad, one of the two routes west from St. Louis, he remarks that it

has the advantage of sleeping-cars ("palaces," I believe, is the Western term—at least in the advertisements). (1)¹

On the latter part of the journey he was bumped and jolted in a hard *hack*. (33) In Missouri he observed that his fellow passengers always said "Rebels" instead of Confederates, hence he inferred that their political condition was healthy. (2)

Local names for geographical formations are noticed from the beginning and throughout the book. In Kansas he sees

here and there an isolated, mound-like "butte," and farther on,

On both sides of the creek is a *mesa*, or table-land. (47)

The view of the intersecting ravines (they can hardly be called valleys, and "gulch" is a mining term. (56)

Beyond the bridge was a hotel, commanding a wonderful view of the "Notch." (74)

Describing Vasquez Pass,

This, however, is rather a *trail*, over the crest of the mountain, than a *pass*. (81)

¹The numbers following each quotation or reference designate the page in Taylor's volume, *Colorado*.

We rode forward over what is called the "second-bottom"—a low table-land, rising into hills a mile from the river.

... The stream forced its way, in a narrow, rock-walled slit—a *canon* (funnel) in the strictest sense of the word. (99)

We had travelled eight miles after entering the hills, before there were any signs of a "divide." (137)

Each section of this ridge, which was from one to two hundred feet in height, resembled a ship's hull, keel upward. They are called "hog's-backs" in Colorado. ... Their peculiar appearance suggests the idea of their having been forced up by the *settling back* of the great chain of the Rocky Mountains, after upheaval. (149)

After leaving the wheat fields of Clear Creek, we rose again to the "second bottoms," or *rolling* table-land (this sounds like a bull, but it describes the thing). (156)

Taylor makes a number of interesting comments on another geographical term much heard of in his day:

I should not wonder if the "Great American Desert" should finally be pronounced a myth. In my school geographies, it commenced at the western border of Missouri; now, I believe, it is pushed some two hundred and fifty miles further west, leaving some of the finest agricultural land on the globe behind it. So far, I had found the reverse of a desert; I determined, therefore, to be on the lookout, and duly note its present point of commencement. (20)

Not until he was a day's journey from Denver did he come upon

Brown, monotonous, treeless country, through which meandered, not the water, but the dry, sandy bed of the Big Sandy. We really seemed to have reached at last the Great American Desert. (32)

Yet after a few miles grass began to appear again, and he found that some forty miles embraced all he had seen of the desert. After visiting some of the rich farming country of Colorado and seeing its possibilities he makes his final observation:

I am fast inclining toward the opinion that there is *no* American Desert on this side of the Rocky Mountains. (41)

A botanist would be interested in Taylor's descriptions of mountain plants and flowers. They seemed to be in profusion everywhere and he always writes of them, using the botanical names with, sometimes, the common equivalent. Taylor seems to be familiar with all the varieties he meets and is able to call them at once by name. A few seem to be unfamiliar. The *horseweed* (9) and *bunch grass* (28) he singles out with quotation marks. He notes that the *machonia* is here called the *Oregon grape*. (80) Only one flower, that attracted his notice by its unusual beauty, seemed to be quite new to him, one which was called locally the *Alpine primrose*. (83)

In the Colorado that Taylor visited picturesque place names are numerous. Creeks and hills and canons and villages had names that expressed the originality of the pioneers. Taylor had travelled too much to be surprised at peculiar names, and he mentions

them with no particular emphasis. His few comments, however, are interesting. In the valley of the South Clear Creek he found

a straggling village of log-huts, which, after having outlived a variety of names, is now called "Idaho,"—the inhabitants fondly supposing that this word means "the gem of the mountains." (I need hardly say that the Indians have no such phrase. *Idaho* is believed to mean "rocks.") (72)

On one day's travel, the objective was the village of Buckskin Joe. Of this name he says

The people, for the space of two or three years, made a desperate attempt to change the name to "Laurette," which is slightly better; but they failed completely, and it will probably be Buckskin Joe to the end of time. At least, it is not a "City"—which in Colorado is quite a distinction. There are worse names in California than this, and worse places. (120)

This comment on the word *city* brings up Taylor's pet abomination, on which subject he had discoursed earlier when speaking of Golden City:

I only wish that the vulgar, snobbish custom of attaching "City" to every place of more than three houses, could be stopped. From Illinois to California it has become a general nuisance, telling only of swagger and want of taste, not of growth. Why not call it "Golden-port" (as it will become a sort of harbor to which the ores will be shipped), or any other simple name? In the Russian language two unnecessary accents usurp one-seventh of the typography; and in Colorado, if one talks about the mining towns, he must add one-seventh to his speech in repeating the useless word "City." (51)

It is easy to sympathize with this attitude of Taylor's when a few pages later we find Mountain City, Central City, and Nevada City, all up one canon. (55) And only a short time before reaching this point, at the mouth of a canon he had come upon

four or five log-houses styled Gate City. (52)

Before leaving this subject it is interesting to turn back to an earlier page and read Taylor's guess as to the origin of the name of Abilene in Kansas when he says, parenthetically,

How or whence the name was derived I cannot imagine, unless it is an abbreviated corruption of "Abe Lincoln." (19)

Such philology deserves an exclamation point!

To Taylor as with most travellers, a frequently recurring topic is food. He comments often on his fare from day to day, but whether it is good or bad, as a rule, takes things as they come. There was one phrase, however, usually having a favorable connotation, that came to be a matter of suspicion whenever it was mentioned. His first experience was unfortunate. He had asked about the possibilities of food at Abilene and was told

"It's the last *square meal* you'll get on the road!"

And Taylor comments

My experience of a "square meal," therefore, is that it consists of strong black coffee, strips of pork fat fried to a sandy crispness, and half-baked, soggy, indigestible biscuits. For these I paid the square price of one dollar. (19)

At Monument Station

The viands were about as "square" as those at the preceding stations. (30)

When he arrived at Denver he

sat down, not to a "square meal," but to an excellent supper. (36)

On starting out from Empire he had a *square* (78) breakfast, and later in the mountains he observes that it is fortunate he did not have to cook the camp meal or, he feared, it would have been of the *square* (87) order.

Before entering the mountains Taylor and his companions had their accommodating landlord put them up a lunch. Among other things there was a "kettle full" of hot biscuit.

"They might ha' been sadder," said he (the landlord), speaking of the biscuit, "they pack better when they're sad." (78)

Thus Taylor made the acquaintance of the sad biscuit, which he found on more occasions than this.

Taylor anticipated certain modern students of picturesque contributions to the American language in noting the mottoes adopted by settlers moving West in covered wagons across the plains:

The white wagon covers of some of these parties contribute to the popular literature of the Plains. Many of them are inscribed with the emigrant's name, home, and destination, "accompanied" (as the applicants for autographs say) "with a sentiment." I noticed one which was simply entitled "The Sensible Child." Another had this mysterious sentence, which I will not undertake to explain: "Cold Cuts and Pickled Eel's Feet." "The Red Bull," and "Mind Your Business" were equally suggestive; but the most thrilling wagon-cover was that which met our eyes on crossing the Platte Bridge, and whereon we read: "Hell-Roaring Bill, from Bitter Creek!" (155)

Mining terms are scattered throughout the book, used both descriptively and metaphorically. He sees *color* in a pile of fresh ore (71); describes a showing of coal in the hills by the word *color* (50); notes many a *preempted* (174) tract about the valleys and towns. And speaking of certain hot springs that he and his companions saw but could not reach because of a swollen stream that flowed between, he says

They are said to work wonderful cures, and two gentlemen dispute the priority of preempting them. (94)

He finds a stream whose waters have the hue of *tailings* (53); the Lyons company is buying the *tailings* of the stamp mills (67);

there are lines of paying *lodes* (56). In all of these Taylor makes particular notes by italics or quotation marks.

More specific and extensive comments are made, both on the language of the miners and the Colorado vernacular generally, in the passages in which he describes his visits to the mines. The following passages carry their own explanation.

Perhaps the "thin air and alkali water" may account for the rage for owning "claims" and "lodes," which seems to possess all classes of the community. Every man you meet has his pocket full of "specimens." When you are introduced to a stranger he produces a piece of "blossom rock," a "sulphuret," or a "chloride." The landlord of the hotel where you stop confidentially informs you that he owns 25,000 feet—"the richest lode in the country—assays \$1300 to the cord, sir!" The clerk is the happy possessor of 10,000 feet; the porter (where there is any) has at least 5,000; while the chambermaid boasts of her own "Susanna Lode" or "Bridget Lode." The baker has specimens beside his bread; the dispenser of lager beer looks important and mysterious; the druggist is apt to give you "chlorides" instead of aperients; and the lawyer, who takes his fees in "feet" (money being scarce), dreams of realizing millions after the Pacific Railroad reaches Denver.

I have disgusted several individuals by refusing to buy, but the jargon has already infected my speech, and, after hearing a man at the table ask, "Is there a *pay-streak* in that bacon?" I found myself on the point of asking the waiter to put a little more sulphuret in my coffee. The same waiter afterward said to me: "Pie's played out, Sir!" If I had then requested him to "corral the tailings," he would have brought me the fragments from the other plates.

The Colorado dialect, in other respects, is peculiar. A dwelling-house is invariably styled "shebang"; and the word, in many cases, is very appropriate. The Spanish *corral* (always mispronounced *correll*) has become completely naturalized, and is used as a verb, meaning to catch or collect. A supply of any kind is an "outfit"; a man does not shout but "lets a yell out of him"; and one who makes a blunder "cuts open a dog." I cannot recall, at this moment, half the peculiarities of the dialect, but I am learning them as fast as possible, in order to conform to the ways of the country. (59-60)

Taylor visited the newspaper office at Central City, and among other comments says of its style:

The editorial dialect, to meet the tastes of the people, is of an exceedingly free-and-easy character. A collection of very curious specimens, both of approbation and attack, might easily be made; but I am too fatigued by the thin air to make the attempt tonight. (60)

To return to the mining talk:

Indeed it is quite necessary to acquire some general knowledge of the peculiarities of the ores and the technical terms describing them in order both to understand three-fourths of the conversation one hears, and to avoid the enthusiastic explanations which would be immediately offered if one should confess entire ignorance. One would soon "cap out," or "peter out," socially, if he did not yield so much to this community. (61)

The chapter on *Mining and Mining Processes* (Chap. IX) is full of mining terms throughout. The passages quoted here are

only those in which Taylor singles out special words and phrases, with no attempt to illustrate the language of early Colorado mining in general. He explains that

gold is found here under very different conditions from those of California. "Free gold," as it is called (native or virgin gold), is much less abundant. Owing to the conformation of the mountains, there is but a limited space for "gulch" or surface washing, and the rush of miners to the country in 1859 and '60 soon exhausted the best of these. The "blossom-rock" (partially disintegrated quartz, with the gold mostly in a "free" state) gradually followed, leaving the great storehouse of the mountains still untouched, but containing the gold in such stubborn and difficult combinations, that by the old processes from fifty to eighty per cent was lost, or, as they say here, "went down the creek." (62)

There is much of this sort of explanation, including such topics as mining methods, and other metals such as silver, lead, and copper. Taylor, however, does not repeat simply the description of others, but get his material at first hand:

The descent into a mine is one of the inevitable things which a traveller must perform. It is a moist, unpleasant business, but no one can speak authoritatively of "capping out," "wall rock," "flukin's," etc., who has not been down and seen the articles from beginning to end. (63)

Taylor confesses that he would gladly have escaped from the descent into the mine, but there seemed to be no excuse. So he was conducted to the bottom of the mine 300 feet below. He examined everything closely, and describes one vertical lode as typical of all:

The vertical crevice, sunk to an unknown depth in the primitive rock, has sides more or less curved or waved, so that one side, from irregular upheaval, sometimes overlaps the other: the granite, or gneiss, meets, and cuts off the streak of ore. This is called "capping out." The first discovery thereof occasioned a good deal of consternation. It was supposed that the lode was at an end, and that, in all probability, the Rocky Mountains were only rich on the surface. Now, however, when a lode caps out, the owner strikes through the isthmus of "wall rock," certain of finding his "pay streak" below. Sometimes the lode is only "pinched," not entirely cut off. (65)

The ore is absurdly measured by "cords"—an ordinary two-horse wagon-load being called a quarter of a cord—and one cord may represent from eight to twelve tons. (65)

The above passages will illustrate Taylor's observation of mining language and of Colorado speech in general, and the way in which he has emphasized their peculiarities. A few more terms might be added—reference to *biled shirts*, and *store clothes* (79, 113) the evil character who some morning will leave the country *up a tree* (155); etc. However, practically all the words or passages have been given which seem to stand out in Taylor's description as significant of the region. It was a different region, the people were different, and so was their speech—even to one who had travelled much in the West.

Taylor's final note on a phrase of the country, written his last night in Denver, after he had climbed the mountains, descended into mines, and visited many settlements, may well close this article.

After a month beside and among the Rocky Mountains, I am going (as the people here say) "to America." (161)

The Kingdom of Bull Hill

EMIL W. PFEIFFER*

The Cripple Creek mining district, located in the western portion of El Paso County, came into prominence just after the panic of 1893. The silver mining camps were dead and the miners looked to the new camp as a life-saver and flocked into it from the older localities. The population of the entire district, both towns and hillsides, increased rapidly, as did the mining activity also. The Victor, Isabella, Pharmacist, Zenobia and Free Coinage were some of the prominent mines on Bull Hill, although there were many others of lesser magnitude.

The town of Altman was platted in the summer of 1893. It was about three miles from Cripple Creek and up hill more than 1,000 feet, its elevation being about 10,700 feet. It was nine miles in an air line from the top of Pike's Peak. A population of some 1,200 was served by stores, boarding houses, postoffice, a livery stable and five saloons.

The first "Miners Union" of the district was organized there that summer, a branch of the Western Federation of Miners. The mines were working eight-hour shifts, with one-half hour off for lunch on the company's time; the pay was \$3.00 per day. Some mines were working three shifts, day shift, night shift, and "graveyard" shift, as it was called; thus it was possible to employ more men and get out more ore.

The first sign of trouble came in August, 1893, when the then superintendent of the Isabella Gold Mining Company, at the shaft of the Buena Vista mine, had notices posted to the effect that after September 1st the hours of the shift would be ten, nine for work and one for lunch, but with no increase in pay. Trouble came to the "super" without delay. He came to the mine daily from Cripple Creek in a horse-drawn cart. On the morning of the day when the order was to become effective, as he approached the mine, he was surrounded by the incensed miners and addressed in most ve-

hement language. He very unwisely tried to bluff his way out of a very tense situation. Not until a loud voice was heard saying, "Bring on that can of tar," did he realize his predicament. He was pulled out of his cart and threatened with violence if he did not rescind the order. After a few minutes of talk he decided to comply and I am sure he posted the notice at once and without the knowledge of the owner.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," was the motto this "super" seemed to follow, for he finally succeeded in getting all the owners of the large mines into an agreement to put the ten-hour shift into effect. So on January 20, 1894, notices were posted at all the mines. The following day, as usual, he drove over from Cripple Creek in his horse-drawn cart, a deputy sheriff on horseback preceding him, and another deputy sheriff on horseback following behind. He was just passing the "Dougherty Boarding House" when he was met by a crowd of men and stopped; another crowd of men in the rear cut off his retreat; his two guards were also captured.

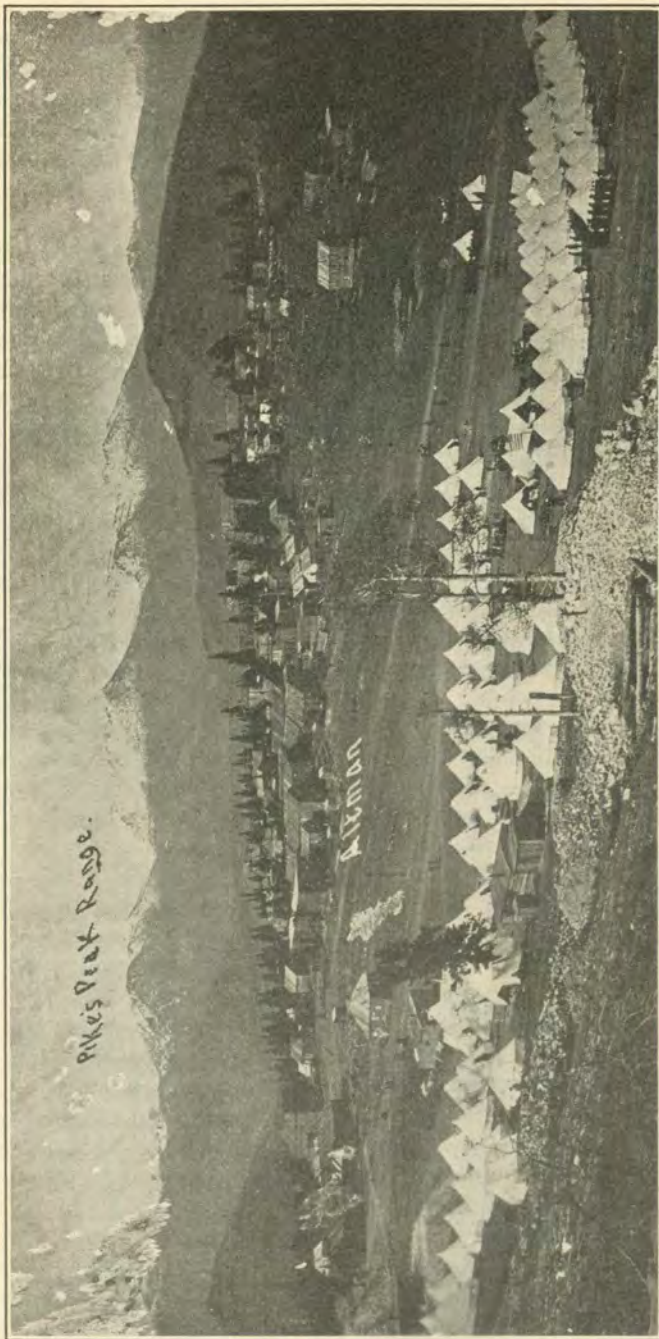
He was dragged from his cart and subjected to rough treatment. He was walked down backward by two husky fellows to the wagon road in Grassy Gulch; then down the road toward the old Spinney Mill, all the time being told that he was to be hanged at the mill. Upon arriving there, however, the gang relented. He was forced, nevertheless, to kneel down in the road and take an oath that he would never return to the district unless invited by the miners themselves. The horse and cart were returned to him, an escort was provided and he was set out on his way down the old Cheyenne Canon road to Colorado Springs.

Following this event, about February 1, 1894, the "Kingdom of Bull Hill" was born. An army was recruited, picket lines were established and patrolled by squads of men selected by the officer of the day; no one was allowed to enter or leave without a proper pass, the result being that we were without the confines of the United States. We were a band of outlaws; the mines were closed; a few watchmen were permitted to remain on the properties, but the owners were not allowed to work them. The war was on.

At this time in my story it is proper to say that the Governor of the State was Davis H. Waite, a Populist, who had been elected in 1892, was a well-known advocate of union labor and no doubt a friend of the striking miners.

The mine owners appealed to the authorities of El Paso County to take steps to restore possession to them of their properties. To this end the County Sheriff organized a "posse" to the number of 1200. In the course of events the Sheriff had his force encamped near the town of Gillett, about four miles from Altman. Mean-

*Mr. Pfeiffer was born in Lexington, Kentucky, in 1864. He came to Colorado in 1882 and worked as a bank accountant. In 1893 he went to Cripple Creek and Bull Hill and lived through the troublous times there. Upon the creation of Teller county he was appointed one of the first county commissioners. He moved to Denver in 1907 and has since resided here, holding a number of important positions.—Ed.



CAMP OF THE STATE MILITIA AT BULL HILL IN 1894
(Photograph supplied by Col. Edward Verdeckberg)

while, a force of one hundred detectives were employed in Denver to attempt to regain the possession of the mines—it was said they would bring plenty of arms and a cannon.

The miners appeared to be well entrenched in their stronghold, with guns and a fair supply of ammunition, also a “Johnny wagon.” This was a wagon rigged with an electric battery, spools of wire and a supply of dynamite to be used as occasion arose.

The roads and trails were planted with charges of explosives ready to be set off. It was said that a cannon mounted on the bluffs above the Victor Mine was a part of the equipment. This, however, was not true. It was only a bluff, the artillery being a round log dressed up for the part. A big timber was fashioned into a bow gun, grooved in the center so that a beer bottle filled with nails and other missiles could be projected quite a distance, in case the fighting was close. Steam was kept up at the Pharmacist Mine to be used in blowing the whistle for signals, also as an alarm. When an alarm was sounded all men responded, the team was hitched to the “Johnny wagon” and off they went to investigate. It was a virtual state of siege for a while during the months. With much bad weather, snow and, as spring came on, rain, the pickets suffered, but they stuck to their posts.

Let me here digress to personal affairs. When the strike was called I was working on a mine and living in Altman. At the same time, with others, I was trying to make a “stake” in a lease on a mine. We had a good lease on a property which we lost by reason of the trouble and the owners afterward took out two million dollars! One of the partners had been a cadet at West Point.¹ During his fourth year he was dismissed for his part in hazing a fellow student. He drifted west and became a good miner. We became such close friends that he was taken into our home as one of the family. He came from a fine southern family. Because of his West Point training he was selected to be general of the “army.” He mapped out the territory and laid out the plan of a defensive campaign. Owing to his wise counsel to the men no property damage resulted, with one exception, to which reference will be made later. He was opposed to any destruction, although he had a hard time in restraining many of the so-called “fire eaters” and extreme radicals. With his knowledge of military affairs and law, during the hostilities, he effected an exchange of prisoners with the authorities of El Paso County. This, he said, was a recognition of the rights of belligerency and was his greatest triumph.

From the beginning affairs began to get to a stage when there must be a final “show-down.” Each side of the controversy was becoming desperate. The month of May was a most trying one,

¹Junius J. Johnson. He afterwards became a major with the Arkansas Volunteers in the Spanish-American War and died at Anniston, Alabama, in 1898.

with its heavy snows and rains; and the men on picket duty began to complain. Also it was difficult to obtain food and other necessities. The railroad from Florence to Victor had just been completed and a train bearing detectives from Denver was en route. They were reported to be well armed and had on board a cannon. Then arose the most acute situation of the war.

The "general" decided it was time to make a demonstration of force and, as such, it was to be one of terror. As the train approached slowly on a curve in sight of Victor the shafthouse of the Strong Mine was blown into the air. The train halted, then backed down to a station called Wilbur. At the blown-up mine two men were trapped. They were taken as prisoners to Altman, held a time, and then exchanged for three prisoners held in jail in Colorado Springs.

After the train with the detectives aboard was stopped at Wilbur the miners planned to capture the whole outfit. A locomotive and cars were manned and the raid was on. The men were so eager to accomplish their purpose that in their enthusiasm the approach was too noisy and they were discovered. A battle ensued, resulting in the death of a deputy sheriff who had been one of the guards of the offending superintendent, and three miners were captured. The attacking forces were compelled to retreat, but the detectives made no further effort to renew the combat and returned to Denver. Hell began to pop. The El Paso County "posse" began preparations to take Bull Hill. Governor Waite came on the Hill and gave the men a talk. He had ordered out the state militia and after some tense days General Brooks and his troops marched into Altman.

Were they welcome? I'll say they were! They received a royal welcome from the men, even though they did bring along the sheriff, who had warrants for the arrest of some four hundred miners. A few of the miners gave up and were taken to Colorado Springs to jail. Had not the troops intervened just at that time between the El Paso forces and the miners I am of the opinion there would have been much blood shed.

After a number of conferences between the Governor and representatives of the miners and mine owners, the trouble was settled. Eight hours' work with the lunch time of one-half hour on the men's time was the result of the compromise.

Many outrageous things happened during this "war." One of them occurred at Colorado Springs when the Adjutant General of the State was taken from his hotel and was tarred and feathered. Old Tom Tarnsney did not deserve such treatment. By whom and by whose orders? Thus endeth my story of "The Kingdom of Bull Hill." Altman is now extinct.

The Twelve Mile House

Recollections of MRS. JANE MELVIN as related to JAMES HARVEY*

The old Smoky Hill Road, a pioneer route from the Missouri River to Denver—once the scene of many a tragedy—is now but a memory, obliterated by the grain fields of a thousand farms. But it served its purpose for a few years, providing a central route to the Pike's Peak region. To travel this route required grim pioneer courage, for the winter blizzards were severe, water was scarce on the western half, and the Indians were numerous and savage. Therefore, it became known as the "Unmarked-grave Route." The road as it neared Denver ran through the present town of Parker, along the high ridge east of Cherry Creek to approximately Colorado Boulevard and Colfax Avenue and thence to Fifteenth Street, then known as "F" Street.

Perhaps one of the most colorful of stage stations along this trail was the old "Twelve Mile House," located on the east bank of Cherry Creek, twelve miles southeast of Denver. Nothing remains to mark the site of a place once teeming with gay life, but it still lives vividly in the memory of Mrs. Jane Melvin, one of Colorado's pioneers, who, with her husband, owned and operated the station. Mrs. Melvin, now eighty-three years of age, clasped and unclasped her hands as she told and relived the following story of pioneer life:

"I was born in Maine, in 1852. At the age of fifteen I started with my father and mother for Colorado in a horse-drawn covered wagon. We came by easy stages to Fort Kearney, Nebraska. Having found that our horses could not endure the hardships, we traded them for mules and prepared to continue our trip. But the soldiers refused to let us leave the fort until there was a sufficient number in the party to protect us from the Indians. We were forced to delay three weeks before there were enough wagons, men and ammunition in our party. Nothing beyond the usual hardships marked our trip. My father settled ten miles southeast of Denver, on Cherry Creek. One year later, at the age of sixteen, I married John G. Melvin, and the 'Twelve Mile House' became our home and place of business.

"Mr. Melvin came to Colorado in 1859, from Connecticut, in an ox-wagon. He took up a homestead of 320 acres, twelve miles southeast of Denver, on Cherry Creek. Here he raised cattle and blooded horses. He was a member of the First Colorado Cavalry.

"At the time of our marriage we had a three-room log house,

*Mr. Harvey of Denver recently obtained this story while gathering material for the State Historical Society.—Ed.

but at once built an additional ten rooms that we might handle the transient trade on the Smoky Hill Road. Our kitchen was large, with two stoves, which soon were in constant use. For our large ballroom we had furniture freighted in from the Missouri River. The rest of our furniture, rugs, and drapes, Mr. Melvin bought from a 'would be' gold prospector who, having come this far over the Smoky Trail by wagon, had lost heart and wished to sell everything and take his family back 'East.' Of course we had a barroom; and Mr. Melvin having been appointed postmaster (which



JOHN G. MELVIN, COMPANY H, FIRST COLORADO VOLUNTEERS
(taken in 1861)

MRS. JANE MELVIN (recent photograph)

position he held for over twenty-five years), we had the postoffice located in the barroom that he might attend to both at one time.

"Our home soon became known as the 'Twelve Mile House.' The stage stopped once each day to change horses, leave the mail and to leave any passengers who wished a bed or meals.

"The Smoky Hill Road divided near our house—the Lower Road crossed Cherry Creek and continued on down the valley through the present town of Sullivan; the Upper Road, used by the stage coach, continued along the higher ridges east of Cherry Creek, and then down 'F' Street to the heart of Denver. Cherry Creek had a much larger flow of water then, often running three to five feet deep, and crossing was dangerous.

"Our nearest neighbors were the Lewises, a half mile south, and Hawkeys, one-half mile beyond them. There were few or no houses west toward Littleton. Jim Parker owned the 'Twenty Mile House' which is still standing in Parker, Colorado, a town named in his honor.

"There was a large grove of cottonwoods on the creek below our ranch. Here was built a pavilion and many were the picnic parties that came out from Denver and the surrounding country to dance and feast in the shade of our trees. The German people from Denver were particularly fond of picnics, and with them came always the inevitable keg of beer.

"Game was plentiful. Many times I have seen a herd of 200 to 300 antelope forced by the severe winter blizzards to seek the shelter of our pastures and the solace of our hay-racks. Antelope meat was always available, but we soon tired of it. Jack rabbits and cottontails were abundant, and in the spring large flocks of wild ducks and geese frequented Cherry Creek. The coyotes were a menace to both our poultry and small calves, so we were glad to welcome hunting parties from Denver.

"Women today know nothing of work or hardships. Although still a child of seventeen, I was cooking for large numbers, caring for my infant son, doing all the washing, baking, cleaning, sewing and mending. It was difficult to get anyone to assist. Sometimes a man cook from the gold mining camps would drop in and work for his board for a week or month. Mr. Melvin could never refuse anyone a bed or meals. Consequently we had from three to ten men about the station continually who helped with milking, chores, or did nothing but sit and smoke in the barroom.

"Mr. Melvin, whose hobby was race horses, built a half-mile track on our ranch and here he held races. He often took his horses into Denver to enter them at the Old Fair Ground.

"Sometimes we drove into Denver to a play at the Tabor Opera House, but it was hard to get away, so most of our social life came with the dances we held in our own ballroom. We sold tickets for the dinner and dance at \$5 apiece. Many were the parties that drove out from Denver with their stylish tally-ho and prancing blooded horses. Also our friends came from the Bijou Basin, Kiowa, Frankstown, and Running Creek.

"I did all the cooking for these dinners, and both stoves were going until late at night three days before the dance. I always baked thirty-six large cakes, six of each kind. If any were left we sold them for one dollar apiece after the dance. I roasted whole hams, large cuts of beef and pork, baked endless loaves of bread and made pounds of butter. We served also oyster stew, pies, cof-

fee and liquor. However, I never saw a woman take a drink or smoke a cigarette in our house.

"For the dance we had the Gilman orchestra from Denver. There were five of them and we paid them fifty dollars an evening. But the dance often lasted throughout the night and until well into the next day. It was a lovely sight—the ladies in hoop skirts and bustles dancing the old-fashioned square dances, schottisches and waltzes. I was very young those days and in spite of my heavy work I never missed a dance from dusk until dawn.

"The afternoon before the dance Mr. Melvin conducted horse races on our own track. The cowboys raced their ponies and some-



TWELVE MILE HOUSE (1900)

times gave exhibitions of their skill in riding and roping. Mr. Melvin always kept some game chickens and often held cock fights.

"February 22 and March 26 always called for exceptionally large celebrations. The 26th of March commemorated the victory of Colorado troops at La Glorieta Pass during the Civil War.

"This was perhaps our most prosperous period. Mr. Melvin was offered ten thousand dollars cash for the station and ranch, but we were making money and were happy and contented in spite of the hard work so did not care to sell.

"There was any number of Ute Indians in our neighborhood, but they were always friendly to us, perhaps because we never refused them the sugar, milk, and bread for which they came begging. They camped just across Cherry Creek, two hundred yards

from our house. The squaws often came up to visit with me. Never would they bring their papooses into the house. They stood them up in their little 'carriers' outside my door, sometimes six or eight in a row—little dark faces with solemn beady eyes staring out from under their reed baskets. Then the squaws sat about in a circle on my kitchen floor and carried on a form of conversation with their hands; one could speak broken English. I think she must have been a white child stolen by the Indians while she was yet a baby. But she knew no other life or people and so was content. My twin babies were objects of fascination to both the squaws and bucks. They would sit by the hour watching them creeping about the floor or nursing their bottles. One large Indian buck was so insistent in his demands for a nursing bottle that I fixed one for him, which made him very proud and happy.

"At night our door, which was never locked, would often be pushed stealthily open and morning would find several Indians asleep on the barroom floor. Chief Ouray once stopped at the 'Twelve Mile House.' I remember him particularly because of his chin whiskers and his manly, intelligent bearing. Also Chief Colow, a large fat Indian weighing perhaps two hundred and fifty pounds, came to our ranch many times. He was never mean or threatening—just sitting quietly on the barroom floor until Mr. Melvin made him a present of some sugar and milk. We never gave or sold liquor to the Indians as this was against the law, and a friendly Indian became a savage when drunk.

"Although the Indians were always friendly to us, there were many Indian scares in our community. When the news came of an Indian marauding party all the neighboring families were notified and drove in wagons to our station. Here the women and children stayed while the men quickly formed a party on horseback and, each carrying his rifle, started in search of the savages. Although there were nearly fifteen of us women, we were hardly comfortable at being left with no one to protect us. Each of us had one or more children, and even with our guns at hand we spent uneasy days and restless nights. Whenever a rider passed the station we rushed to the door with the eager question, 'What news of the Indians?' Sometimes our husbands would be gone for a week at a time, the pursuit taking them over on the Kiowa and Running Creek.

"And once tragedy touched us. Our neighbor, Mr. Detrich, who lived on the Kiowa, perhaps thirty miles from us, drove into Denver after a load of furniture, and on his return trip he reached the 'Twelve Mile House' at dusk, so he spent the night with us. The next day, before he reached home, the Indians attacked his ranch. His wife, their little five-year-old boy, and her sister started run-

ning across the fields to a neighbor's. However, Mrs. Detrich, an expectant mother, and her small son could not run fast enough to escape, so were captured, killed and scalped by the Indians. Mr. Detrich stopped at our station on his way to Denver with the bodies. They lay in the back of his spring wagon, covered with a canvas. Mrs. Detrich had been completely scalped, but the little boy still had one patch of hair the size of a silver dollar above his right ear.

"When the Denver and New Orleans Railroad, later called the Texas and Gulf Railroad, and now the Colorado and Southern, was being built, I was unusually busy. With the help of a colored woman from Running Creek, I baked biscuits and served meals to eighty men—and they were *hungry* men. I used to rise at three in the morning and work until eleven o'clock at night. The fires in my two stoves never went out.

"We raised our own beef and pork. Every two days I used a hundred-pound sack of flour. Food was high; eggs were one dollar a dozen, milk twenty-five cents a quart, and butter seventy-five cents to one dollar a pound. We milked seventeen cows but still had to buy more butter.

"But with the coming of the railroad, the stage stopped running over the old Smoky Hill Road. Mr. Melvin and I turned to stock raising, and the old 'Twelve Mile House' became our private home once more."

Mr. Melvin died November 6, 1900, at Denver. Mrs. Melvin is now living with her daughter, Mrs. Nettie Reef of Denver. She has another daughter, Mrs. Rose Mars, and two sons, Charles and Wilbur, living in California.

Silverton country, so Father and I started for that place. The Barlow & Sanderson stages, with their gaily painted coaches and dashing horses, had been one of the most interesting and exciting things I had seen and I was mighty glad to have a ride on one. The stage stations were about eleven miles apart, and the six horses were driven at a run for the whole distance. A fresh team would be ready and waiting, the change taking only a few minutes. I know we made the fifty-five miles from Del Norte to Antelope Springs, where the stage branched off for Lake City, in exactly five hours. There was no stage to Silverton, so at the Springs we bought a burro, which cost us \$27, packed Father's carpenter tools on it and went on to Silverton afoot, over the well-kept toll road used by the freighters.

Father immediately went to work at \$1.00 an hour, making and putting in the woodwork and fixtures in the Sherwin & Houghton store building, and I got a job at \$70 a month and board, washing and caring for the silverware in the Walker House. After two months of this work, I took our burro, which was eating its head off, and packed grub to the Highland Mary Mine. Usually I could make two trips a day, pack a load up and ride the burro back, at \$3.50 a load. For a fourteen-year-old boy, I made good wages.

About this time I met a boy from Del Norte who offered to sell me his team, wagon and harness for \$200, and as I had been saving my money and had the cash, I took his offer. The very next day I found four passengers for Del Norte, at \$20 apiece, and from then on I put in several years taking freight or passengers from Alamosa to Del Norte and Silverton. Sometimes, if I only had a couple of passengers for Silverton, I would put in a couple of cases of eggs and a box of butter or maybe a sack of cabbage and a sack of potatoes. Eggs cost thirty-five cents a dozen at this time and brought \$1.10 in Silverton; butter cost thirty-five cents a pound and brought \$1.50; and cabbage and potatoes were a cent a pound in Alamosa and sold for ten cents a pound in Silverton.

I was just a kid, of course, but into the ten years from 1879 until I settled in Alamosa in 1889, I crowded a lifetime of adventure and experience.

One time Father and I were starting home from Silverton with his tools packed on a burro, when a big snow made it impossible to go to Del Norte direct, and it was necessary to go south to Animas City (near Durango), then to Pagosa, to Tierra Amarilla, to Tres Piedras, and into the valley from the south. This trip took us at least two weeks and four of those nights we spent out in the snow where it was at least forty degrees below zero. I well remember the last day, when we had a contest, and walked from Conejos to

My First Ten Years in the San Luis Valley

As told by ROBERT BORN to C. E. GIBSON*

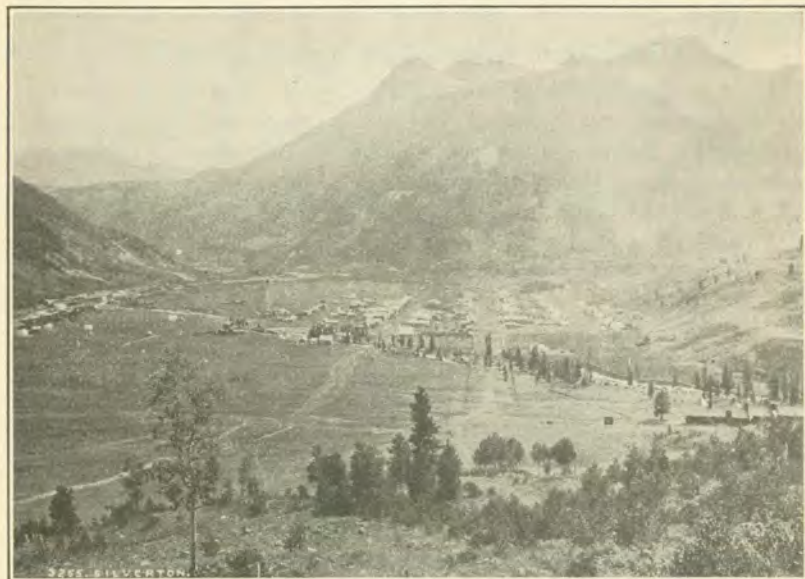
Until I was fourteen years old, I lived on the East Side in New York City. Father was a cabinet maker and finisher for the Steinway Piano Company. He became discouraged after twice losing most of his savings through the failure of banks. Taking what money he had left, he loaded the family on the train, and on April 20, 1879, we arrived in Alamosa. We went immediately to Del Norte and leased a small farm, about three miles east of town. As the spring was still young we had plenty of time to put in a crop of buckwheat. Thirty days later a terrific hail storm ruined our crop prospects and ended our farming.

Work was scarce in the Del Norte district and plentiful in the

*This interview was obtained by Mr. Gibson of Alamosa while working on the Historical Society's CWA project.—Ed.

Del Norte. Father won, and I arrived several hours later, driving the burro.

Many incidents of those days are impressed on my mind. I remember when two men had held up the stage from Lake City and shot the driver. Now just a plain holdup to relieve the passengers of their cash was no hanging offense, but when someone was shot or the mail was disturbed, it was necessary for the vigilantes to take a hand. The holdup men had been caught and were awaiting trial in the Del Norte jail, when one evening about forty of the vigilantes surrounded the jail, quietly took the prisoners out, and started down to the river where the big cottonwoods grew. A good



EARLY VIEW OF SILVERTON
(Taken by the Pioneer Photographer W. H. Jackson)

many of the more curious townspeople followed to see what would happen, but the vigilantes, not caring for an audience, shook them off.

My pal and I, however, went prowling along the river when suddenly a large, black-masked figure stepped in front of us. "Where in the hell do you kids think you're going?" he asked. "Oh, we just wanted to see what's going on," I replied meekly. He peered at us in the gloom and then said, "Well, go on and take a look." We hadn't gone many steps when I suddenly felt a pair of boots in my face and we were at once completely satisfied with our excursion.

The freighting road between Alamosa and Del Norte went south to about where the "chicken-ranch road" now is, from there westerly about to the Gun-barrel, northerly to what was later Lariat and later still Monte Vista, and west to Del Norte. There was no stage directly to Silverton, the stage branching off at Antelope Springs for Lake City, while the freighters to Silverton went on up the river to Crooked Creek, through Road Canon and over Grassy Hill, and down to the river again. This detour was necessary because of the deep box canyon about seven miles above Antelope Springs. There were three toll gates on this road—one at Wagon Wheel Gap, another at Antelope Springs, and the third beyond Grassy Hill—with a charge of \$2 a team at each gate, making a total of \$6 toll between Del Norte and Silverton for an outfit with only one team. You can see that this amounted to quite an item for the heavy freighters who used three, four and five teams to the wagon. There were two more good pulls beyond Grassy Hill, after the road reached the Rio Grande again, one over Timber Hill, and the last and hardest over Stony Pass. From this point it was a long down grade to Silverton.

One time I had made a trip to Animas City, and when I rolled out of my blankets in the morning, found my team was missing. Looking around, I discovered my horses, each carrying a drunken miner, almost at the top of the hill. Grabbing up my rifle, I sent a shot after them and it had the desired effect. The miners rolled off the horses and went on afoot and I had my team back a short while later.

Contrary to the impressions given by most wild west story writers, holding up the stage was not a common occurrence. Possibly twice a year the stage was robbed and it was seldom anyone was hurt.

On one trip out of Alamosa I had a light load of perishables and one passenger, a gambler bound for Del Norte. We stopped for lunch at the Half-Way House, a ranch owned by August Dupke, where we could get plenty of bread and milk for a dime. There was a crippled fellow there by the name of Burton, and we sat on a log and visited for a while after lunch. He was as pleasant a fellow as I ever met. That evening, I learned later, Burton held up the stage near the Dorris ranch. No one was hurt, he didn't even have a gun; just used a stick as a bluff, but he made the mistake of meddling with the mail. If it had not been for this he would probably have been forgotten, as he got away clear out of the valley, but the Federal agents kept on his trail and several months later he was caught and sentenced to a long term in the penitentiary.

Alamosa, as the end of the rails, was a busy and prosperous town. The San Juan country was booming and in need of all sorts

of machinery and supplies, and freighting gave work to a good many men. It seems to me there must have been two or three hundred transients in Alamosa every night, most of them engaged in freighting, and more than once I found the sleeping accommodations in Wilkins Barn rather crowded.

When the railroad reached Del Norte in 1882, I quit freighting and went up to the Carnero mining camp, where I worked as a teamster at the Buckhorn Mine. After this I carried the mail from the camp, where the post office was called Biedell, to Greene, near where La Garita now is. At this time foot racing was my strong point and I was in training for the Firemen's Meet in Pueblo, as a member of the Del Norte Fire Brigade. There was a strike on at the Buckhorn Mine and the miners had set off several blasts of giant powder trying to intimidate the owners. Going up to my boarding house that evening I was running, as was my habit, when George Southey, the Buckhorn foreman, spied me. Not recognizing me and wanting to be on the safe side, he took a shot at me and just creased the top of my head. I was "out" for twenty-four hours. But, luckily, being shot in the head did not affect my running, and a month later I went to Pueblo and won the 1,000-foot race, becoming Amateur Champion of the state, to the glory of the Del Norte Fire Department.

The Annual Firemen's Meet was one of the big occasions in the state, and the rivalry between the teams of the different towns was keen. The Harry A. Mulnix Team of Trinidad, and the J. B. Orman Team of Pueblo, were the outstanding brigades of the state and the greatest competitors. It was not an uncommon thing for a town to hire professional runners for these contests. There were two kinds of races: the hub to hub, a straightaway run; and the wet race, in which the teams made the run, unreeled the hose, coupled up, and the first to throw water was the winner.

Del Norte at this time had three brigades: the Engine Company, with red shirts; the Hose Company, with gray shirts; and the Hook and Ladder Company, made up of younger fellows, with blue shirts.

Horse racing was also one of the popular outdoor sports of those days. Several of us boys owned a sleepy looking horse we called Red Antelope, who lived up to his name. I think there was only one horse in the state that could beat him. One of our favorite pastimes was to "take" the Mexicans. We would hitch our horse to a light wagon and tour the country. When we could find a Mexican who owned what he thought was a fast horse we would match a race. The dejected appearing Red Antelope looked like easy pickings, but the result was always the same—a very surprised Mexican with a very flat pocketbook.

We boys used to "horn in" sometimes on the Gallo races, a great sport with the Mexicans. A rooster was buried in the dirt so that just his head and neck stuck out. One at a time the boys would ride by at a gallop, lean from the saddle, and grab for the rooster's head. Even when the rooster forgets to duck and one of the boys gets him, the race isn't over, as the purse belongs to the one who crosses the finish line with the rooster, and its anyone's bird until then. It is plenty exciting and often a little rough, especially on the rooster.

To return to my days as a mail carrier. One day I was only fifty feet from Greene, a stopping place on the Saguache-Del Norte stage line, where the Biedell mail was dropped, when I heard a shot. Miss Greene came running out the door and cried to me that she thought her brother Arthur had killed himself. It took me several minutes to find that this was true. He had been standing by the bed, and when he fell his body rolled under it. After Arthur's death Miss Greene refused to handle the mail any longer, so my route was extended clear to Del Norte and I used a buckboard instead of a saddle horse.

By 1887 Biedell had dwindled so that the mail route was discontinued, and that summer Bill Goodacre and I went up to Emma to work on the Midland Railroad, which was then being extended beyond Leadville. We left Del Norte with a bull-train and it took us seven days to go the fifty miles to Villa Grove. The bull-whackers were so worn out when we arrived there that they spent most of the night refreshing themselves, so that it was necessary the next day for Bill, myself and a girl who was in the party to drive the teams. We worked that summer on the Midland as bull-whackers, driving a team of oxen with a scraper, and in addition I had the rather doubtful honor of being stable-boss, which meant it was up to me to see that the teams were in and ready to go to work in the morning, at no extra pay.

In the fall we drew our pay in a lump and started home, stopping the first night at Aspen, where we picked up five dollars in a foot race. The next night we hit Leadville and made a night of it, waking up in the morning practically broke. Of our summer's wages we had just seven dollars and a half left, so we could still eat, but it was a long old walk back to Del Norte. That cured me of ever letting anything like that happen again.

For six months after that I worked in the Del Norte depot, where Don Haywood was agent, as messenger boy and clerk. Don was pretty well fixed, as he was running a coal business on the side, with no bins or any other overhead attached to it. McCloskey, the town drayman, took the orders for the coal. When he had enough

to make up a car, Haywood wired the mine to ship a car and McCloskey delivered it directly to the customer.

McCloskey's horse was also the town delivery system. If you bought a bill of goods at Middaugh's or Shiffer's, you would load them in McCloskey's wagon, which was kept hitched close by, drive home, turn the horse loose, and he would return to his stand.

The following year my brother and I took the mail contract between Del Norte and Summitville, which was then a thriving little town supporting thirteen saloons. It was there I saw my first electric lights. Tom Bowen was operating the Little Ida Mine there, and on our down trips, if not too heavily loaded, we would take out ten or fifteen sacks of concentrates and load them on the car. Sometimes it would take two or even three weeks to fill a car, but Haywood always held it as long as necessary.

On one trip, coming by what we called Bear's Den Hill, within a distance of not more than a quarter of a mile, six bears crossed the road ahead of us and we certainly had a time with our team. A horse seems to be more afraid of a bear than anything else in the world. In the winter we could use our team for only seventeen of the twenty-eight miles to Summitville, and the last eleven miles my brother and I had to travel on skis with the mail on our backs.

In 1889 Don Haywood was transferred to Alamosa, and made the move with the understanding that he was to take me along as his cashier. Our mail contract had some time to run yet, but that was satisfactorily arranged and ever since then I have been a resident of Alamosa.

The Last Buffalo Hunt in Kit Carson County

H. G. HOSKIN*

When the Union Pacific railway was completed in 1869 it divided the vast number of buffalo on the plains into two herds, the northern and the southern. It likewise brought facilities for the easy shipment of buffalo hides and started the industry of hide hunting that ultimately exterminated the buffalo as a wild animal.

By the early 1880s the extermination was almost complete and only small scattered bunches existed over the western part of the plains country. In the region now called Kit Carson County, buffalo were seen as late as 1887, and in fact three buffalo passed through Burlington and were killed in the spring of 1887.

At this time Burlington was located about where the John Lueken farmhouse is and many of the business houses were only tents. Among the business houses which were established in tents

was the drug store of Maynard E. Cooke. Mr. Cooke afterwards moved his drug stock to the present site of Burlington, about where the Dunn garage now stands.

Mr. Cooke's statement or story of the hunt is as follows:

"I was camped in a tent with my stock of drugs and medicines on the old townsite, west of the present Burlington townsite, in the spring of 1887, don't remember the month, along late in the afternoon. I remember it was quite warm and sunshiny. Suddenly, someone gave a shout, 'Buffalo.' Only a few of us had transportation of any kind but we managed to get something to ride—horses, ponies, wagons, buggies, carts—and everybody that could, got away on the chase. There was one cow, her calf and a buffalo bull, and how they could run. Howdy. It was a long chase for many miles to the northeast by east.

"Everything was open in those days and we had a clear sweep of the open country. Talk about rough-riding, over that country on wheels and over plowed ground, now and then down the draws and over the raises, down the gullies and out. It was the most exciting race I ever saw, except the time we chased the deputy sheriff with Old Man Baker, to Cheyenne Wells, where he was hanged to a coal chute. I don't remember now, it has been so long ago, who helped to kill the buffalo, but after a long, hard race we captured the calf, and the cow and bull were killed with many shots fired. Guns and 45s were used and we really never knew which or whose gun did the killings.

"Dr. Bishop claimed the bull and he got the hide, which he had made into a fine big coat and which I purchased from him when he left Burlington. Mr. T. G. Price got the head of the bull, but I never knew who got the other hide or head or where they went. John Anderson got the calf and it became a pet around the camp. After about six months he took it to Denver and sold it to Elitch's Gardens, their first buffalo. Mr. Price had the head mounted and kept it at his office. It would be hard for me to name those who took part in the chase. We never got back until after dark and a sorry looking bunch of horses they were when finally they all got home. Some of them died from the effects of the run, others were winded so they never were any good afterwards. I kept my buffalo coat until about six years ago (1927), when the moths got into it and ruined it."

At present Mr. Cooke is in the drug business in Las Animas, Colorado. Inquiry at Elitch's Gardens produced no information as to what happened to the calf they were said to have bought. The land for the Gardens was bought in 1887 and opened to the public in 1890, so there is a great possibility that Mr. Cooke's memory is correct.

*Mr. Hoskin contributed an article on "Kit Carson County's Ghost Towns" to the *Colorado Magazine* of March, 1933.—Ed.

The mounted bull's head was kept in Mr. Price's office in the court house for a number of years and in 1900 or 1901 he sold it to Mr. S. B. Hovey, who lived at Goodland and was connected with the Rock Island Railroad. Mr. Hovey later moved to Colorado Springs and from there went to Fort Worth. Here he was made vice-president and general manager of the southern division of the Rock Island and died in 1924. For many years the head hung in his office and at present hangs over the fireplace in the home of his daughter, Mrs. W. A. Durringer, of Fort Worth, Texas. It is still in a good state of preservation. It seems to be well established that Mr. Price received \$250 for the head.

These three buffalo came into the town from the southwest and the two were killed somewhere east of the McCrillis, now Spring Valley, ranch. Sometime during the latter part of 1886 or the spring of 1887 a group of three buffalo crossed the McCrillis ranch just west of the ranchhouse. Also, during 1887 a number of hunters killed a buffalo near the river. Mrs. C. J. Buchanan's father participated in the last hunt. A lone bull appeared near the Lehman farm on the Idalia divide south of Idalia and was chased for many miles by farmers on horseback and armed mostly with shot-guns. An uncle of Eads Lehman has always claimed that he shot him with a 45-75 Winchester rifle, but the lone bull disappeared in the darkness of the night and they lost him in the rough land along the river. An extensive search was made the next day but he was gone. Hoyt and Cole, of Oxford, Nebraska, were the last of the professional buffalo hunters to operate in this country.

The Route of the Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express

MARGARET LONG*

The Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express was the first stage line to run directly from the Missouri River to the Pike's Peak Region. Before it was put into operation, mail came to Denver from Ft. Laramie, Julesburg, Santa Fe and Bent's Fort as chance afforded.

Henry Villard, later president of the Northern Pacific Railroad, rode into Denver on the first stage to arrive via the L. & P. P., and Horace Greeley, famous New York editor, came in a few months later on the last stage over this route. After operating from May to July, 1859, the stages were transferred to the Platte River route, because of the scarcity of fuel and water in the arid region over which the pioneer line had passed, and in order to

consolidate it, so far as possible, with the existing line along the Oregon Trail. This latter—the line to Salt Lake and California—crossed the South Platte at Old Julesburg and followed up Lodgepole Creek. A branch line, to supply the Colorado region, now continued up the South Platte from Julesburg to Denver. Later the Salt Lake stage followed up the Platte River to Latham, near present Greeley, and thence by the Laramie Plains and Bridger Pass to Fort Bridger, on what was called the Overland Route.

All trace of the Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Trail has disappeared. Not only are the wheel tracks gone, but also the tradition of where it ran no longer exists among the ranchmen who live in that area. It can only be located by identifying the places mentioned in Boyd's field notes, to be quoted, and by rather meager references in the literature.

The L. & P. P., 687 miles long, started from Leavenworth, Kansas, and went via Lawrence, Topeka, and Manhattan to Fort Riley, a distance of 116 miles. Junction City, three miles farther west, was both the junction of the Republican and Smoky Hill Rivers, and of the Smoky Hill and L. & P. P. stage routes. The latter, from this point, went west between the Republican and Solomon Rivers, leaving wheel tracks in an unsettled country. The stations, which were often nothing but tents, were about twenty-five miles apart, and the accommodations for travelers, when there were any, were poor.

Horace Greeley, in *An Overland Journey*, describes the trip to Denver on the L. & P. P. After leaving Junction City, the stage passed through Station 9, on Pipe Creek, a tributary of the Solomon, and came to Station 11, from which point Boyd's survey describes the route to Denver. The Smoky Hill and L. & P. P. trails met at Station 22 in Colorado, and from that point west the Smoky was abandoned in favor of the L. & P. P. There were two considerable wells at this station, where water came to the surface in the Republican and soon sank again. The last water was twenty-three miles away to the east on the L. & P. P., and according to Lt. Fitch's report, sixty to eighty-five miles in the same direction on the Smoky. Thence the combined trails followed up the Republican for twenty-five miles, crossed a plateau twenty miles wide, and followed up the north bank of the Big Sandy for another twenty miles before crossing it. "The Sandy, like the Republican," wrote Horace Greeley in 1859, "is sometimes a running stream, sometimes a succession of shallow pools, sometimes a waste of deep, scorching sand. * * * At length we crossed its deep, trying sand and left it behind us, passing over a high divide, much cut up by gullies through which the water of the wet seasons tears its way to the Arkansas on the south or the Platte on the north."

*Tr. Long has previously contributed articles on the Smoky Hill Trail.—Ed.

The following log of the L. & P. P. is based on the field notes of E. D. Boyd, who surveyed the "Great Central Route along the First Standard Parallel," or First Correction Line, to the gold fields of western Kansas, now a part of Colorado. The State Historical Society of Kansas furnished the copy of these notes, taken from *Freedom's Champion* (Atchison) of June 25, 1859.

The survey passed nearly due west from Atchison to the Republican River, for one hundred and forty-one miles. Thirty-one miles farther west it joined the Jones-Russel Road, or L. & P. P., at Station 11. The L. & P. P. ran between the Republican and Solomon Rivers from Junction City, Kansas, to Station 18, where it struck the South Fork of the Republican and followed up the south bank of that river to or near Station 23. The trail crossed over into Nebraska and soon recrossed back into Kansas from Benkleman, Nebraska. It passed near St. Francis and Jaqua in the northwest corner of Kansas, and left Kansas to enter Colorado in T. 5 S., R. 42 W. (Evert's Atlas of Kansas, 1887). Near the abandoned town of Hoyt and the present town of Seibert the trail crossed the South Fork of the Republican and followed up the north side of the river to its headwaters. Beyond the Republican-Sandy Divide, it followed up the Big Sandy from west of Hugo to Old Riverbend, and thence to Denver its route is supposed to have coincided with the Starvation Trail, one of the branches of the Smoky Hill Trail in Colorado. Between the Middle Bijou and Running Creek, however, the two trails did not coincide, the L. & P. P. running several miles north of the Smoky, or Starvation Trail.

The L. & P. P. stage stations have disappeared completely, but can be located by the latitude and longitude given in Boyd's survey. These readings have been translated into miles by the use of a table which gives six miles of latitude as equal to 5.22 minutes, and six miles of longitude as equal to $6\frac{2}{3}$ minutes, at the 39th parallel. Boyd does not give the readings in seconds, so there is the possible error of about a mile in interpreting his observations.

Boyd's Log. Great Central Route.

- 00. The Republican River ten miles north of the First Standard Parallel and one hundred and forty west of Atchison, Kansas.
- 31. *Station 11.* Ten miles north of the First Standard Parallel and one hundred and seventy-one miles west of Atchison. (On Clear Creek, according to Greeley.)
- 86. *Station 13.* On Reisinger's Creek (Greeley).
- 139. *Station 15.* "On Prairie Dog Creek."¹
- 170. *Station 16.* "On Sappa Creek."
- 187. *Station 17.* "On Sappa Creek."

¹The quotations are from Boyd's notes.

- 222. *Station 18.* "On south bank of the Republican." Greeley says that the Republican was far north of the L. & P. P. until the trail struck the river at Station 18, three hundred miles from Ft. Riley. As this station was on the Republican, it must have been in Nebraska and not far east of Benkleman. Greeley mentions the fact that the Republican forks just above Station 18. It divides into the North and South forks at Benkleman, and the South Fork crosses back into Kansas.
- 271. *Station 20.* "On the bank of the Republican." The trail was on the south bank of the Republican (Evert's Atlas of Kansas) and this station was undoubtedly in Kansas near the Colorado state line. The L. & P. P. Road appears on a few of the Kansas land plats, but on none of those for Colorado. However, the Colorado land plats of the eighties show the Hale-Hoyt-Hugo Road, which except in the western half of R. 42 W. and the eastern half of R. 43 W., agrees with the description in Boyd's log as far west as the Republican-Sandy Divide.
- 285. "Lat. 39 deg., 45.5 min.; Long. 102 deg., 12 min." This reading is 12 minutes or about 10 miles west of the 102d meridian and therefore in Colorado.²
- 290. "Republican 1 mile north."
- 295. "Republican $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north."
- 300. *Station 21.* "On bank of the Republican. Lat. 39 deg., 33.5 min.; Long. 102 deg., 26 min." If the reading of degrees and minutes is correctly interpreted this station was in Sec. 4, T. 6 S., R. 45 W., in Kit Carson County, five or six miles below the Tuttle Ranch. There is water in the Republican at the supposed site of Station 21, below its junction with Spring Creek, but there is none for about twenty miles above this junction, until it comes to the surface at Lower Water or Station 22. Greeley speaks of the water in the Republican as sinking six miles above Station 21, which would be at the junction mentioned above, near the Tuttle Ranch.
- 306. "Republican $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north."
- 324. "Lat. 39 deg., 25 min.; Long. 102 deg., 49 min."
- 329. *Station 22.* "On the south bank of the Republican; large spring in bed of river which sinks immediately below. Since first striking the Republican our course has been nearly parallel with it and our road nearly level. For the last 23 miles

²The map accompanying Dr. Long's article, "The Smoky Hill Trails in Colorado," will prove helpful in conjunction with the present article. See the map in the *Colorado Magazine*, XI, 72.—Ed.

there is no wood or water, but the grass is good. The Smoky Hill route comes in from the southeast. The South Fork of the Republican comes in from the southwest."

This description of the Republican at Station 22 agrees with that given by Greeley. The station was in Kit Carson County, T. 8 S., R. 49 W., about five miles northwest of Seibert.

333. "North Fork of the Republican $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north, South Fork $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south."

The North and South Forks of the Republican divide near Benkleman, Nebraska. The North Fork is a small branch which flows past Wray, Colorado, and the Arickaree is called the Middle Fork on some of the old maps. Hoyt is an abandoned town a few miles east of Station 22, whose population has moved three miles south to Seibert on the Rock Island Railroad. At Hoyt, in Kit Carson County, the South Fork of the Republican sends off a large southern branch, called the Sandy. According to the nomenclature of today, Boyd's North Fork is not the small branch at Wray but the present South Fork of the Republican, and Boyd's South Fork is now called the Sandy.

343. "Cross North Fork of the Republican. Lat. 39 deg., 15 min.; Long. 103 deg., 06 min."

The road to Hugo and the L. & P. P. coincided pretty closely. They crossed to the north side of the South Fork (Boyd's North Fork) just east of Crystal Spring, a resort between Flagler and Seibert on Old U. S. 40 North. The L. & P. P. crossing a few miles farther east at reading 343 has been located by John Verhoff of Flagler, and is a little east of the longitude given above on modern section line maps. The trail crossed a bend in the Republican twice at reading 343, in Sec. 18, T. 9 S., R. 50 W., and so remained on the north side of the river. Flagler can be seen across the plain, two or three miles to the northeast from Section 18.

346. "Parallel with the North Fork from 343 miles."

This is the South Fork of the Republican, which Boyd calls the North Fork.

- ... Station 23. "On the North Fork."

The North Fork is again to be interpreted as the South Fork. The mileage at this station is not given. As far west as the supposed site of Station 23 the L. & P. P. described by Boyd agrees with the road to Hugo shown on the land plats of 1881. On these plats the trail divides at the line between sections 13 and 24, T. 10 S., R. 52 W. One branch passing through the K. P. (Ketchum and Pugsley) Ranch followed up the

south side of the Republican to its headwaters and went on to Hugo. The other remained on the north side of the river, passing over the bluffs above the K. P. The latter is undoubtedly the L. & P. P., which is supposed to have passed a little north of Hugo.

T. H. McCallum of Arriba has located the K. P. Ranch. His ranch is on the north side of the Republican in Sec. 24, T. 10 S., R. 52 W., and the K. P. is in Section 23 of the same township and range. The K. P. no longer exists. The corrals were on the bluff above the north bank of the river and the barns were below the same bluff. A round, shallow hole where the dugout house was located is just across on the south side and is almost surrounded by a loop in the river, which contains living springs or water holes.

Based on the distance between stage stations, about twenty-five miles apart, Station 23 was near the abundant water supply on the K. P. Ranch, which dates back to 1875.

359. "Head of Republican."

360. "Top of divide; fine view of Pike's Peak."

The land plats T. 10 S., R. 52 and 53 W., of 1881, show the Hugo-Hale road south of the Republican, and a road which should be the L. & P. P. north of it. Greeley tells of following up the dry bed of the Sandy, crossing and recrossing it for twenty miles, which indicates that the L. & P. P. was nearer the Sandy than the later Smoky Hill Trail between Bagdad, Lake and Old Riverbend. The distance from Old Riverbend, about three miles west of the present Riverbend, to Bagdad, is about twenty miles and may well be the portion of the Big Sandy included in the L. & P. P. route.

373. Station 24. "On the north bank of the South Fork of the Republican; dry sandy bed with pools of water; no timber." As the trail had crossed the Republican-Sandy Divide, this station was undoubtedly on the Big Sandy and not the South Fork of the Republican. Again the confusion of names over the South Fork of the Republican. Based on the average distance between stations, Station 24 was west of Hugo, and the pools of water in the creek bed may have been the "Capt. Barron" Spring about seven miles east of Lake.

The L. & P. P., described in Boyd's log, coincided with the Starvation Trail westward from Lake, if not from Station 22. It is represented by "the Settlers' Road to Riverbend" on the land plat of T. 9 S., R. 57 W., of 1870. Much of the Starvation Trail, which includes the L. & P. P., can still be followed over dim tracks between Old Riverbend and Denver.

377. "Cross same fork [the Big Sandy]. "Water obtained by digging two feet; willow bushes."
380. "Cross same fork. Dry sandy bed 100 yards wide; large branch comes in from northwest with large pools of water; shrub willows."
This description agrees with Lake Creek at its junction with the Big Sandy.
389. "Lat. 39 deg., 18 min.; Long. 103 deg., 49 min."
This was near Old Riverbend, west of the present Riverbend.
391. "Leave South Fork of Republican [the Big Sandy], which runs from southwest towards the southeast."
They had followed up the Big Sandy from Station 24 to this point at the big bend of the Sandy.
396. "Top of Divide." The Sandy-Bijou divide. West of this divide the creeks entered the Platte, east of it they entered the Arkansas.
401. *Station 25.* "On west bank of creek, dry sandy bed 60 yards wide, runs north into South Fork of Platte, water by digging two feet; a few willows and cottonwoods."
This station must have been on East Bijou Creek, the first creek reached after crossing the divide mentioned at reading 396.³
403. "Top of hill; fine view of Long's Peak and Pike's Peak. Former bears N. 80 W., latter S. 60 W."
407. "Beaver Creek runs north; very good water; a few scattered small cottonwoods and willows."
This is not Beaver Creek shown on present maps, which empties into the Platte at Brush, Colorado. The Beaver to which both Boyd and Greeley refer is now called the East Bijou.
411. "Creek runs north, good water, pine."
This growth of pine was probably near the Starvation Trail Crossing of the Middle Bijou. Much timber has been cut down in this section, and at present there are no pines east of the Middle Bijou drainage.
414. "Top of hill, magnificent view of whole range of mountains from Long's Peak to Pike's Peak; deep, broad valley immediately west."
This was the valley of the West Bijou.

³The Arapahoes rescued Daniel Blue and brought him in to the station on East Bijou Creek in the early spring of 1859. Blue was the only survivor of a party of four men. They had lost their pack horse and with it their stock of provisions. Before the other men died, each one had authorized the survivors to use his body for food. Blue had thus kept alive for eighteen days, but was in an exhausted condition and reduced almost to a skeleton. (See Henry Villard's account in the *Colorado Magazine*, VIII, 232-3.)

- ... "Bijou Creek, 50 yards wide, bluff bank 6 to 10 feet high, bottom sandy, very shoal; scattering willow and cottonwood; pine one mile west."
422. "Top of hill." Bijou-Comanche Divide.
423. "Creek, dry sandy bed 100 yards wide, water by digging one foot, runs north, bushes." This must have been Comanche Creek.
426. "Creek, sandy bed 100 yards wide, good water, runs north." This must have been Wolf Creek.
427. "Top of ridge." Wolf-Kiowa Divide.
429. *Station 26.* "On Kiowa Creek, 10 feet wide, sandy bed, very shoal, good water, runs north, willow bushes. Lat. 39 deg., 29 min.; Long. 104 deg., 29 min."
The latitude and longitude place Station 26 in Sec. 31, T. 6 S., R. 63 W., ten miles north of Kiowa, five north of the Starvation Trail Crossing of Kiowa Creek, and two miles west of this creek. If, as stated in Boyd's notes, the station was on Kiowa Creek, there is a mistake of two miles in the longitude. It may have been on some tributary to the Kiowa where there was good water. Based on this crossing of the Kiowa, the L. & P. P. went northwest from the Middle Bijou where the latitude and longitude agree with the Starvation Trail, and at Kiowa Creek turned due west to the Starvation Trail Crossing of Running Creek. The Starvation Trail went west from the Middle Bijou and turned northwest at Kiowa Creek.
- The Horse Shoe Ranch, Sec. 32, T. 6 S., R. 62 W., is one of the oldest in Elbert County. An old trail is known to have passed through this ranch, and the typical, broad depression filled with grama grass can be traced across section 32. Its location and direction agree with the L. & P. P. if that trail crossed the Kiowa as indicated in Boyd's log.
433. "Dry bench bears N. W.; pools of water; willow bushes." This was probably Hay Gulch.
434. "Dry branch, sandy bed runs N.; two or three trees and some bushes; pools of water." They may have crossed two forks of Hay Gulch.
436. "Creek 20 yards wide, sandy bottom, very shoal, runs north; a few bushes; pools of water." This must have been Running Creek.
441. "Creek, dry sandy bed, 10 yards wide, runs N. E.; pools of fine water, scattering cottonwood and pine." This must have been Coal Creek.

446. "Creek, bluff bank 3 to 8 feet high; sandy bed 12 yards wide; runs N. W.; good water; scattering pine above; leave pine. Lat. 39 deg., 36 min.; Long. 104 deg., 48 min." This reading was on the south side of Sampson Gulch, about two miles above its junction with Cherry Creek, and the junction of the two creeks was about a mile above the present Melvin bridge and the former Twelve Mile House. The Starvation Trail was on the north side of Sampson Gulch. Sampson Gulch is called Piney Creek on the Colorado land plat (T. 5 S., R. 67 W., 1865-67), and South Cherry on the U. S. G. S. Quadrants.
449. "Top of hill, Pike's Peak bears S. 10 deg. W.; splendid view of the mountains; a wide valley in the foreground; the lower (black) mountains in the middle, and the high mountains covered with snow in the background."
454. "Strike old road at Cherry Creek, on road from Santa Fe. Thence parallel with Cherry Creek which runs N. W." They followed the east side of Cherry Creek, the route of Colorado No. 83, to Denver.
469. *Station 27.* Denver. From its junction at reading 454 with the Santa Fe road, which had already united with the Smoky Hill South, the L. & P. P. entered Denver on Fifteenth Street on Broadway, Colfax and Fifteenth Street.
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