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EDITOR  
NOTES

In college I was told that a researcher ought to know the difference between primary and secondary sources. To this day I'm not certain which is which, but I was told that primary sources are documents like diaries and letters, containing first-hand observations, whereas secondary sources are books and magazine articles that do not contain eyewitness or first person accounts. I must admit I had not held someone else's diary in my hands and the personal letters I've used for research are few. Until now.

You will get a better idea of primary source documents when you read Ann Childs' *A Hoosier Goes West*. It contains quotes from diaries and letters written by D. W. Springer to "dear ones" back home in Indiana. Childs sent us some of the diaries and letters for review. What a privilege to see an 1868 letter written in sweeping, calligraphic style! Or to leaf through an 1865 diary in which the writer describes the day he had nearly 130 years ago. After more than a century of storage Springer's letters display fold creasemarks, ink spots and the oxide stains of age. The musty odor of grandma's midwestern attic emanates from torn leather and aged pages.

Rolf Swensen, in his article about the Haynes Collection at Montana State University, also must have felt nostalgia handling his mother's antique *Haynes Guide* which, because of its signatures, poetry and greetings from Yellowstone Park co-workers and friends, is also a primary source. Swensen's *Guide* and the Springer diaries and letters are not only primary sources, they are artifacts. Students of history should be allowed to see, touch and enjoy these primary documents.

Another primary source document is the oral history interview. Among the State's collection of tapes is one containing an interview with Tom Tisdale, student of the Johnson County War who passed away last December. Tom worked in the bureaucracy as a Wyoming Highway Depart-



MARK JUNGE, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*Tom Tisdale (1922-1992) holding the shotgun his grandfather bought to protect himself against assassins. "Well, it's just a sawed-off, twelve gauge shotgun. I don't know if it's legal or not, but I know that if you get rushed by a crowd of people that a sawed-off shotgun is supposed to have been a lot more effective than a revolver or a rifle."*

ment appraiser, but he was a cowboy at heart, having been raised in the ranch country of Johnson County. His grandfather, John A. Tisdale, was murdered prior to the Johnson County invasion. On December 1, 1891 rancher Tisdale was found seven miles south of Buffalo, lying atop the Christmas toys he had purchased in town for his kids. He had been shot in the back, presumably by Frank Canton.

I never met anyone as knowledgeable as Tom Tisdale in matters regarding the War, nor anyone who passionately devoted so much of his time to the subject. Six hours of taped interview was not enough. Tom complained that I needed to do more studying so that he could discuss the finer points with me. When he died of cancer in December he was putting together the pieces in an historical puzzle that seemed to get larger. Tom was a strong man, once active as a bulldogger and calf roper, and later as a team roper. Even when his stamina left him, his handshake weakened and his deep booming voice faded to a scratchy whisper, he kept researching because he knew that work was an antidote for the pain in his chest.

*I'm not quite as close to it as my dad was. I didn't go hungry, anyway. But I don't blame the big fellas or the little fellas. I just get tired of em trying to pass off that the big fellas were all a bunch of angels and the little fellas were all a bunch of thieves and their wives were all prostitutes. And I've read books where fellas wrote ...that fella that was the head of the Stock Growers here, Russell Thorp, he knew the big fellas were right because when he was a kid, why, his father let him play with the children of the rich fella's families and they had to be right (laughs).*

Tom Tisdale gave Wyoming his labor, ideas and research materials. And now his own oral history interview is a primary document sitting on the shelves of the Historical Research and Publications Unit of the Wyoming State Museum, waiting for some historian who has more time than Tom had to work on the puzzle. ■

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In 1895 Wyoming established a department to collect and preserve state history. Today those duties are performed by the Department of Commerce located in the Barrett State Office Building in Cheyenne. Within the department are the State Archives, State Museum, State Arts Council, State Parks and Cultural Sites Division and the State Historic Preservation Office. The *Annals of Wyoming*, established in 1923 to disseminate historical information about Wyoming and the West, is published by the Historical Research and Publications staff of the Department of Commerce. The editors of *Annals* welcome manuscripts on every aspect of Wyoming and Western history.

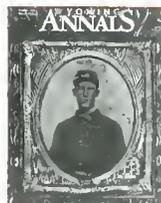
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Volume 65, No. 1  
Spring, 1993

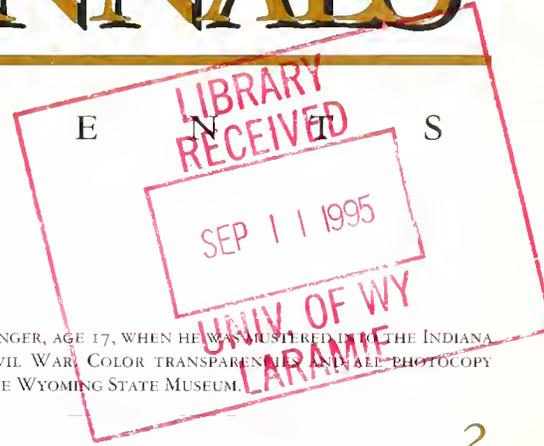
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# WYOMING ANNALS

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COVER: TINTYPE OF D. W. SPRINGER, AGE 17, WHEN HE WAS MUSTERED INTO THE INDIANA VOLUNTEERS DURING THE CIVIL WAR. COLOR TRANSPARENT BY AND ALL PHOTO COPY WORK BY PAUL JACQUES OF THE WYOMING STATE MUSEUM.



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ANNALS OF WYOMING is published quarterly by the Department of Commerce. It is received by members of the Wyoming State Historical Society and is the principal publication of the Society. Membership dues are: Single \$9; Joint \$12; Institutional \$20. Current membership is 1889. Copies of past and current issues of ANNALS may be purchased from the editor. Correspondence should be addressed to the editor. ANNALS articles are abstracted in *Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life*.

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# THE MEDICINE WHEEL

...tourism, historic preservation and Native American rights



PAUL JACOBS

BY ERIC CHAPMAN

Located at an elevation of 9642 feet near the crest of the Bighorn Mountains of north central Wyoming, the Medicine Wheel

National Historic Landmark occupies a high, alpine plateau about 30 miles east of Lovell, Wyoming. The most conspicuous feature of the Landmark is a circular alignment of limestone boulders that measures about 80 feet in diameter and contains 28 rock spokes radiating from a prominent central cairn. Six smaller cairns are situated on the exterior of this circular alignment. Some of the cairns are horseshoe-shaped and resemble Crow Indian vision quest structures. Tipi rings, lithic scatters, buried archeological sites, and a system of relict travois trails are found nearby. The Medicine Wheel is currently surrounded by an "historic" artifact: a seven foot high barbed-wire fence designed to discourage unauthorized entry and vandalism.

Scientific research has provided many clues but no absolute proof concerning the origin of the Medicine Wheel. Researchers generally believe that the Medicine Wheel was constructed between 1200 A.D. and 1700 A.D., although these dates are problematic. Wood samples recovered by the Sheridan Chapter of the Wyoming Archaeological Society from one of the cairns was tentatively dated, through the use of dendrochronology techniques, to 1760 A.D. Trade beads, probably dating to the early 1800s, have been found inside the Medicine Wheel. Hearth charcoal samples recovered by archeologists within 400 yards of the Wheel have produced

dates ranging from 1600 A.D. to 4200 B.C. A U.S. Forest Service archeologist recently recovered a 9000 year old Paleoindian projectile point from the area. Although these diagnostic artifacts and radiocarbon dates fail to decisively explain the construction and use of the Medicine Wheel, evidence clearly indicates that the locale was used by prehistoric people for almost 10,000 years.

White Americans have consistently expressed fascination with the Medicine Wheel. Since the late 1800s when White Americans first visited the site, the enigmatic qualities and apparent antiquity of the Medicine Wheel have inspired a great deal of public interest, scholarly deliberation, and hyperbolic speculation. The site is a favorite subject among students of archaeoastronomy. Several authors have commented on possible relationships to the Aztec of central Mexico, noting the resemblance of the Medicine Wheel to the Aztec calendar. The January 28, 1954 edition of the *Cody Enterprise* featured an article describing the Medicine Wheel as "...a direct link between the prehistoric Chinese and the Mayans of Central America."

Wyomingites have always assumed a proprietary interest in the welfare of the Medicine Wheel. In 1956, for example, in response to a rumor that the federal government intended to relocate the Medicine Wheel, Wyoming Governor Milward L. Simpson requested assurances from the National Park Service and the U. S. Forest Service that the "Indian Medicine Wheel" would not be moved. Federal authorities responded in June, 1957 when the Forest Service formally withdrew the Medicine Wheel and surrounding 120

acres "...from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining and the mineral-leasing laws...."

Efforts to memorialize the Medicine Wheel began in 1915 when the National Park Service recommended to the Secretary of Agriculture that the site be designated a national monument. Due to the influence of several locally prominent officials, efforts to commemorate the Medicine Wheel were renewed in the 1950s and the required supporting documentation was compiled in the 1960s. In recognition that the Medicine Wheel was "...the largest and most elaborate Indian structure of its type," the site was designated a National Historic Landmark in September, 1970 by Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel.

To contemporary Native Americans, however, the Medicine Wheel is significant for very different reasons. Traditional Arapaho, Bannock, Blackfeet, Cheyenne, Crow, Kootenai-Salish, Plains Cree, Shoshone, and Sioux revere the Medicine Wheel as a uniquely important and powerful spiritual site that figures prominently in tribal oral and ceremonial traditions. Rock alignments and cairns that make up the Medicine Wheel represent religious architecture rather than a material expression of past human behavior. Scientific research is irrelevant when compared to the intangible religious values that the site embodies. Not surprisingly, an accumulating body of ethnographic evidence demonstrates that the Medicine Wheel and the surrounding landscape is and has been a major ceremonial and traditional use area for many regional tribes.

National Park Service records show that the Medicine Wheel received

2100 visitors in 1967. Three years ago the Forest Service recorded 15,000 visitors. Last year 70,000 people visited the Medicine Wheel during three summer months when the site is accessible to normal traffic. It has become apparent that dramatically increasing visitation, and the failure of the Forest Service to regulate it, has not only resulted in physical damage to the locale, but has also discouraged traditional Native Americans from conducting religious ceremonies there. In the past year a rutted trail 10-12 inches deep has appeared outside the fence surrounding the Medicine Wheel, and the fragile alpine vegetation that occupies the landscape is disappearing. Vandalism appears to be increasing. It is common knowledge that rocks and other artifacts have been removed from the Medicine Wheel to enrich private collections or provide an attractive border for someone's flower garden. In an apparent effort to emulate the Native American religious custom of leaving prayer flags and other religious offerings on the fence surrounding the Medicine Wheel, non-Indian visitors have "decorated" the fence with condoms, tampons, used cigarette lighters, and other inappropriate trash. Historic preservationists consider these kinds of impacts anathema. To traditional Native Americans the impacts of unregulated visitation at the Medicine Wheel constitute the worst kind of spiritual desecration.

In the fall of 1988 the Bighorn National Forest introduced plans for an access road, parking lot, viewing tower, and visitor's center at the Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark in order to accommodate increased tourism. Native American traditional leaders protested the planned facilities during a series of public meetings sponsored by the Forest Service in late 1988. They expressed the belief that construction at the Landmark would disturb, or possibly destroy, the spiritual integrity of the Medicine Wheel. Several Native American representatives later disclosed that a federal official had taken them aside and threatened that the Forest Service

could "bulldoze the Medicine Wheel" in the face of tribal objections as long as the agency followed certain regulatory procedures. However, other governmental agencies and cultural resource advocacy organizations such as the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation also became concerned that planned construction activities would adversely effect the physical integrity of the Historic Landmark.

During the intervening years since 1988 it has become clear that traditional Native Americans, historic preservationists and the local public share very similar preservation goals with respect to the Medicine

parties have attempted to work cooperatively with the Forest Service to find viable solutions for long-term protection of the Medicine Wheel. As the responsible land management agency, the Forest Service needs to reconcile the contending factions and concede its failure to preserve the physical integrity and sacred attributes of the Medicine Wheel. It's time for the Forest Service to exercise their numerous statutory obligations to act cooperatively with all interested parties in order to protect the Medicine Wheel from additional disturbance and manage the site in a manner consistent with Native American religious needs. If something isn't done soon, accumulating impacts to the Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark will become irreversible. ■



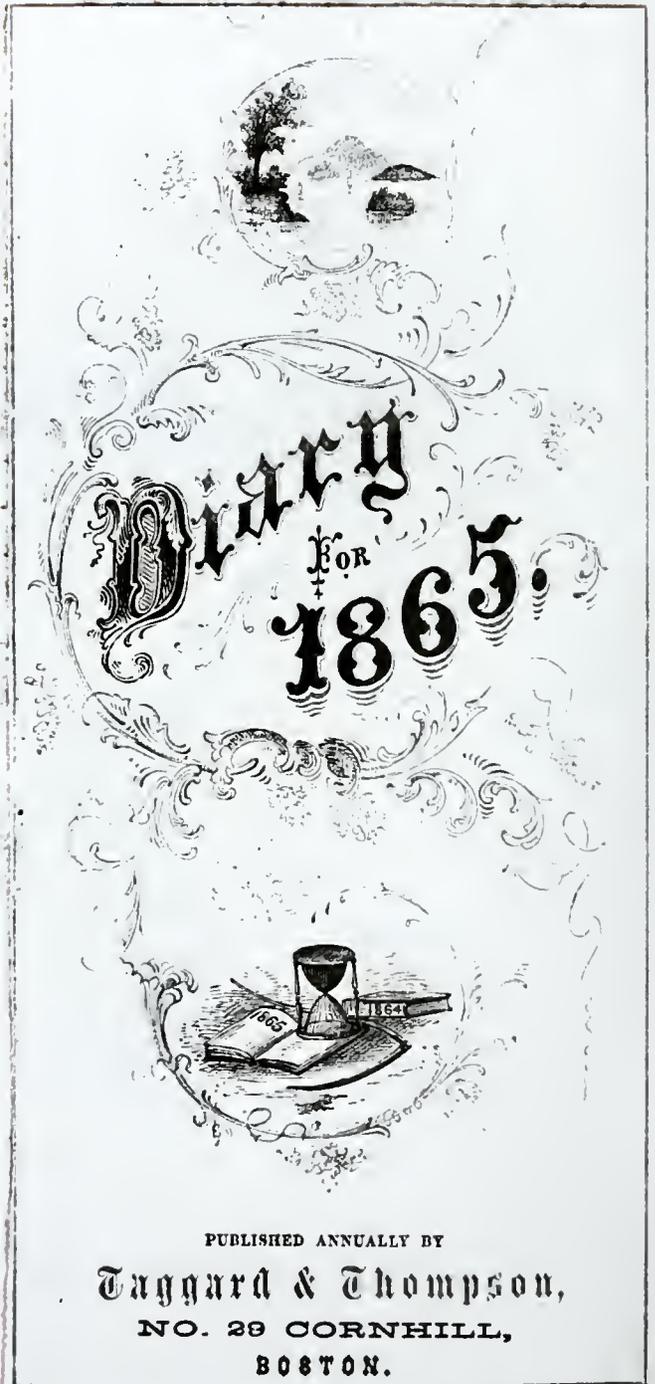
RICHARD COLLIER, WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

*Big Horn Medicine Wheel. View is southeast looking toward Medicine Mountain, 1986.*

Wheel. White Americans should have the right to visit and appreciate the Medicine Wheel in its natural state without the distraction of barbed wire fences, excessive automobile traffic and parking lots. Native Americans should have the right to conduct religious ceremonies without the intrusion of the tourist's camera lens. Over the past five years these interested

FRED CHAPMAN, NATIONAL REGISTER ARCHEOLOGIST AND NATIVE AMERICAN LIAISON, IS EMPLOYED BY THE WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE IN CHEYENNE.

# A HOOSIER



CHILDEN COLLECTION

1865 Springer Diary

# GOES WEST



## THE DIARIES AND LETTERS OF DAVID WALLACE SPRINGER

BY ANN WAYBRIGHT CHILDS

**F**amily and local history have fascinated me, as a child in Pittsburgh and Boston and later in tracing the histories of my husband's, and my own family to the mid-1860s in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The most memorable of the Pittsburgh days was being a part of a neighborhood children's fund-raising group called the General John J. Pershing Junior War Savings League, whose claim to fame was the raising of funds for an ambulance, hard-earned through back porch dramatic presentations that were inspired and endured by long-suffering parents. This splendid show of patriotism was rewarded by a post-armistice visit by the beloved General, but by that time we had moved to Boston. It was there that I spent my growing up years with Midwest parents who ardently exposed my sister and me to all the wonders of that area: history, theater,

the great Boston Pops, Mrs. Jack Gardner's Museum, the Wayside Inn and Louisa May Alcott's home. What a feast! After graduating from occupational therapy school I worked in Boston and Indianapolis, married a medical student and had fifty-one wonderful years, moving about for five wartime years with my flight surgeon husband and finally settling in the lovely Ohio River town of Madison, Indiana.

When I discovered diaries and letters dated 1861-1885 written by my husband's maternal grandfather I transcribed them, feeling certain that my children would never find the time to read them in their original state. The box containing them, so carefully saved by his daughter (my mother-in-law) was stowed away in our garage, gathering dust while our lives were busy raising two daughters and traveling to far-flung places when escape from a busy practice warranted. It was not until much later, children grown and gone, widowed and in need of a con-

suming project, that I discovered the box, unopened since it was packed away more than fifty years before. After a great deal of sorting dates and coordinating letters with diaries, the lives of these three people began to unfold: the man, the sister, the child. It has been a delightful journey 130 years into the past, this life in a dusty box .

**D**avid Wallace Springer was born April 10, 1844 in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. This enterprising young man managed to fill his life with a plethora of adventures, serving three and a half years with the 20th Indiana Volunteers in the Civil War during which he suffered a shoulder wound and the loss of a finger while still in his late teens; adventuring to the burgeoning West; bringing his bride to a dismal post on the Union Pacific Railroad and losing her shortly after the birth of their child; riding out to buy cattle hundreds of miles from his home base; and venturing into businesses in Kansas and Illinois. Meanwhile he traveled extensively through the West and South, noting every detail in his diaries. His trip to the Philadelphia International Exposition of 1876 is recorded on page after page describing all he saw. Since he was in the vicinity, his trip included Washington D.C., New York City, the Hudson River and Niagara Falls, all recorded in minutiae.

Left with a baby who was to be raised by his sister in Indianapolis, he never remarried, but kept close family ties. Although he started out humbly, in the end his estate was more than adequate to provide for his daughter May, and his sister Myra who raised her. At the time of his death at age 41 there were sufficient funds for college, graduate school and a small dowry.

Myra was guardian, and there are extant several of her meticulous accounts in court records. It's rather remarkable that after all of David Wallace Springer's meanderings in and out of businesses, all of the traveling he did,

the expenses of Myra and May in Indianapolis, and all the schooling, there was still a tidy sum (for those days) available in the end ...not bad!

The papers of David Wallace Springer were difficult to read. Parts of the diaries written in pencil were illegible and the elaborate script of the letters made slow reading. In transcribing them I have tried to show them as they were written. Where there is no punctuation I have not added any, nor is the spelling and improper capitalization corrected. Sentences frequently appear to run together. Following is a partial record of David Wallace Springer's early years.<sup>1</sup>

David Wallace Springer kept a diary the last two and a half years of his army service, the last entry being the day he returned home September 9, 1865. He was 20 years old. In less than two weeks he had made an important decision, and a new chapter in his diary was begun.



Tuesday, Sept. 26, 1865.

*This Evening finds Cp. [Corporal] Vanlaningham, formerly Capt of the 148th Indiana Vol Inft. and myself, prepared, to start to what is known [as] the far West. our idea is to settle on and cultivate a piece of Land. we think of going to Kansas. our destination and destiny is very uncertain but with our strong hopes of prosperity and the well wishes of all our Friends we start on our journey, in good spirits and a strong Heart. We leave Indianapolis at 10:25 PM.*

By the time Springer reached Omaha that October day in 1865, after fifteen days on the Missouri river boat *Tacony*,<sup>2</sup> he must have been very pleased with his decision to leave home and family in Indianapolis. Family was

1. The Springer Collection, in the ownership of Ann W. Childs of Madison, Indiana consists of approximately 80 letters and nine diaries. The first letter dates from February 27, 1862 when Springer was in the Civil War and the last is dated December 17, 1884 written in Waukesha, Wisconsin where he had gone for his health. Materials provided by author Childs will be described as the Childs Collection.

2. Frederick Way, Jr., compiler, *Ways Packet Directory 1848 - 1983* (U.S.A.: Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, n.d.), p.443. The steamboat *Tacony* sank near Ft. Peck, Montana in 1870.

a father and brother, both carpenters, and three sisters, only one of whom was married. After his army experience he could scarcely have been expected to settle into the less exciting life at home. The West would need men wanting work and there was land to be had. He wrote in his diary:



Thursday, October 19, 1865

*Have walked all over Omaha and seen the town there is between 4000 and 5000 inhabitants and in fact a very neat little place I was very much surprised, at the place the north Branch of the Pacific RR starts from here tis already built out about 20 Miles and graded to Columbus about 100 Miles. the Country is a great deal more settled than I thought it was. I find we have got to go out a good long ways to find government land*

**A**fter six months in the Omaha/Fremont area it became clear to Springer that the new railroad offered immediate jobs and money.

Certainly the latter was of primary importance, and with the fast disappearing army pay there was need for action. Action took the form of a telegraphy course in March 1867, back home in Indianapolis at the Bryant, Stratton and Co.'s business college. The receipt for Springer's \$40 tuition was for a full course of instruction in the art of Telegraphy.<sup>3</sup> With certificate in hand he went back to Nebraska and the Union Pacific which by that time was well on its way west. This time his traveling companion was a friend named Wood, probably a fellow student of telegraphy.

The letters Springer wrote to "Dear Ones at Home" showed all the depression of one whose confidence had been shattered. He found that without experience there were no openings.

FREMONT NEBRASKA

AUG SUNDAY 11TH

*Dear Ones at Home*

*You will perhaps be surprised at the*

3. Childs Collection, Madison, Indiana.

date of this but so it is and you will no doubt, if not surprised, be in sympathy with me when I tell you I am here on a fruitless errand. or in other words I have failed to get a situation as an operator on this Line and also failed to get one on the other Branch starting from Kansas City, or rather Wyandotte. The chances are now that I will never be able to be an Operator. I think I have made every exertion in my power to secure the desired end but I have not been fortunate or may be unfortunate. I hope you will not blame me too severe for learning the Telegraphing business. I now regret that I ever learned it but so it is and now can not be helped had I been a good practice Operator I could get a situation at Omaha on the line although with a few weeks of practice in a Rail Road Office I doubt not but I could run an Office very well but I lacked that necessary experience.

...The arrangement with my friend Wood were these. he was to stay in Omaha and go to work for the present and I was to come here for practice and secure an office as soon as possible and then he was to go in with me and practice until he was able to secure an office for himself I came here Friday Evening next Morning engaged boarding at the Union House kept by a private family (Irish) they are nice folks, but the boarders "Oh My." I have now concluded to go to work at my trade ... I have already Engaged to go to work Tomorrow Morning. I have written for Wood to come here do not know whether he will come or not we will have to go to work and we may as well lose no more time thinking about any thing else. ...I do not think I will like this Country in the winter time it is so awful Cold and Bleak and Stormy. I have got the cheapest boarding house in town but not the best. I am paying \$5.50 per week. I do not know what wages I am to have until I work awhile and see what I am worth.

Of course Dear Sister and all, my failing in securing a situation has upturned my notions and ideas and has caused me to change my mind on somethings considerably I had not the least doubt but I would be able to get an office but when I failed and met with no encouragement but nothing but the reverse I of course felt a little disheartened. Were I out of debt I would laugh it off but to think threw Father's kindness I went to school so long and was not only not

making nothing but on expenses, and now all for naught if I had had my own money and owed no one I would feel all right, but do not think I am going to sit down with my hands in my pockets and do nothing far from that I will yet live to be out of debt if I am never worth a Cent. Wood is very much disappointed but there is one consolation. We are not the only ones who have been disappointed in this world nor in Telegraphing. ...My principal object dear Sister in leaving telegraphing was as you are all aware to improve the mind by studying so I thought I would have more time to spare in that business than any other, it is needless to say I will have but little time to spare now I know that you will all feel disappointed fond hopes perhaps you had formed are dashed aside with relentless hands.

But pshaw I will not allow myself to be discouraged, ...

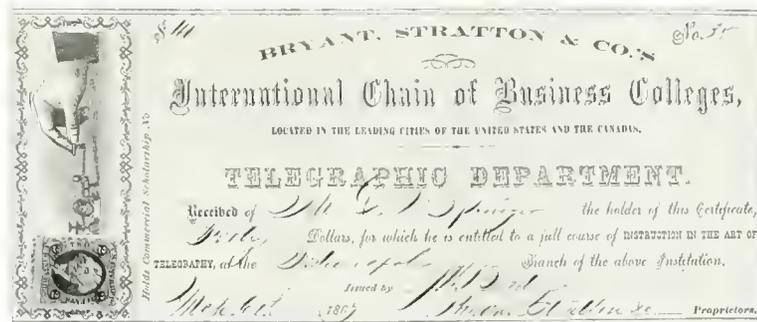
By January he had secured a situation at Kearney Station and wrote home a description of it.

can put threw him at Somebody's else's expenses we have about the Same thing every day. unless to relieve the monotony of life on the Plains. and for variety Sake we get up a little fight for private amusement which by the way Generally ends in a general free fight by all the consumers of the XXX double anchor Rotgut So much for Kearney as I am not a member of but belong entirely (except at meal Hours) to the Station House.

Although there was no previous mention of it, evidently Springer's father owed him five dollars. Springer mentions it in the same January, 1868 letter.

As to that five Dollars if Father is very anxious to pay it why he may give it for me to the first one who he may find in actual need of it (white person) soldiers Wife or Family preferred if cannot find anyone in need why give it to the Young Mens C A or else keep it himself.

Yours indeed, D.W.Springer  
Through the spring of 1868 he



Above: D.W. Springers tuition certificate from the Bryant, Stratton & Co.'s telegraphic school. Right: certificate envelope.

KEARNEY STATION NEB  
JAN 18TH 1868

just imagine a broad piece of country all Prairie as far as the Sight of man can reach with no Sign of life Save a little Spot called the Station wheron there are half dozen Houses or at least Something that bears a faint resemblance of a place where Somebody's are Supposed to Eat and Sleep in we call em Doby's these I Say and the Cars which come and go at Stated periods are the only Sign of life. and as the Citizens of this Sequestered Spot are neither noted for their energy in public or private interests (unless while playing a game of Eucre or Sledge) when each fellow tries to win as much Hardware as he



spent time in Fremont and Lincoln City and he wrote of going back to carpentering temporarily. He had the use of a railroad pass and was back working as a telegrapher by June.

GRANITE CANON DAKOTA  
JUNE 28TH

Dear Ones at Home  
Your welcome letter of 18th Sister Myra was received last Evening. & eagerly

did I devour its contents ...your letters are always welcome but more particularly was this one. if you want to appreciate a letter Just be without any for awhile from the ones you want one most & See if it doesnt do you good. In my case I think it does. haven't had before this one a letter from home and in fact from Indianapolis for a long time. Am glad to know of you all being in good health

Granite Canon is Situated nearly on the Summit of the Rocky Mountains or what is known as the Black Hills. the Summit, (or highest point on the Mountains where the Rail Road crosses) is the first Station west of here, distance of about 13 miles we are here 535 miles from Omaha & 19 west of Cheyenne at an elevation of over 7000 ft. above the level of the sea about a mile nearer heaven than you are at Indianapolis. This is a splendid locality

Splendid weather cool as November (in the States) Overcoats come in requisition nearly every day. The air is as light as can possibly be... The Station is away upon the Hill while down in the canons all around runs pure living Spring water where game of all kind abound Such as Antelope Elk Deer (haven't Seen any Bear yet though there are some here). & besides wild fruit is plenty or will be Soon as they get ripe Such as Strawberries & Currants Gooseberries etc & the nicest flowers oh my! The place is named after the Rock that is So plenty here "Granite."

Have the nicest kind of a house to live in five rooms & only two of us to live in them. have a Splendid new cook stove & plenty of grub & we do our own hash cooking but by the way if you come across Some good looking female Send her out here for we want a cook awful bad in fact that is all we do want Just now to make happiness complete.) Have plenty of wild meat Antelope etc. (If I am here until cold weather comes I will Surely Send you an Antelope or Something equally as good.

Was down in Cheyenne the other day, & in fact have been there Several times Since I have been here Talk about your fast places and hard holes and all this thing. but of all the fast towns or Cities Cheyenne caps them all. To get an idea you need only to pass the new idea (saloon) where every evening there is dancing. The front Doors thrown open & a general invitation given to all by the fair

Territory of Dakota  
County of Laramie

Known all men of these  
parts that D.W. Springer is the owner by  
privatization of Claim No. 3 on the west side  
of discovery of Sella lode and mining district  
made this 15<sup>th</sup> day of July 1868

D.W. Springer

CHUBB COLLECTION

Damsels to come in & dance, which is free but the drinks for pardner & yourself is one dollar. A few doors further on we come to another Saloon where our attention is first attracted by the musical notes of a Piano accompanied by the sweet voice of a Charming young Lady. our curiosity is excited & we walk in on entering we behold the young lady on a platform elevated some four feet above the floor in one corner of the room & all around her & on both Sides or the hall we find in a promiscuous manner all kinds of Gambling Tables. Faro, Three Card Monte, and others I do not know the name of, to the number of Seventeen tables all told. each having a crowd around them and doing a lively business. in one corner is a Splendid Bar & in the adjacent room a fine Billiard room & strange to say everything passes off nicely (apparently) Seldom have any trouble of any kind there. One has not Seen Cheyenne until he pays this Saloon a Visit (have forgotten its name, but there are others like it only on a Smaller scale. no lack of Saloons there for in fact nearly every other House in town is a Saloon or where they keep Something to take

Laramie City another Cheyenne about 55 miles west is now the hardest place on the Road. as the Rail Road advances westward new towns Spring up & Some of them away ahead of the Road. where all the Pimps & Blacklegs in the Country congregate they & a few grocers Boarding house men makes the town with the exception of the employees of the Road which form no Small part.

The road is now built Some 60 or 70

miles from Laramie or about 650 from Omaha and is being built at the rate of 3 miles per day.

Scarcely a year earlier Cheyenne had only one permanent building, a log cabin at that, and now several theaters and many saloons thrived with more under construction.<sup>3</sup> The town must have throbbled visibly with energy, if not with brawlings. Springer would later lament the severe winters, including the wind and snow storms, for the temperature was known to go as low as 23 degrees below zero. Cheyenne was but the latest "hell on wheels" town. The Cheyenne Daily Leader ran a daily column, "Last Night's Shootings," and it was said a man was fined ten dollars for drawing his gun whether he hit or missed.<sup>4</sup>

Late in the summer Springer wrote to his sister about a mining claim, addressing it, Dear bully Sister Myra.

#### GRANITE CANON DAKOTA

AUGUST 4TH

...As to my Silver mine we have Sent Specimens to Denver Col and Chicago for the purpose of having them essayed but as yet have had no return from them There is quite a number eagerly and impatiently awaiting the results but for my own par-

Above: certificate of ownership, D.W. Springer 1868 mining claim.

Right: Union Pacific Railroad at Granite Canon, Wyoming about 1869.

4. James McCague, *Moguls and Iron Men* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 174, 237-238.

particular part am of course interested but do not intend tearing my beautiful locks all out of my manly Head on account of them And Should they prove to be worth thousands why I'll coolly pocket em all and go to America

The claim, written on a torn half sheet of lined paper, reads as follows: Preemption Claim of D.W. Springer. Received & filed for record at 2:00 pm July 17th A D 1868 and recorded in Book of Preemptions on Page 53 Wm Mc enis Register of Deeds.

ON THE REVERSE SIDE:

Territory of Dakota, County of Laramie Known all men of these presents that D.W. Springer is the owner of preemption of Claim No 3 on the west side of discovery of Stella lode and mining district made this 15th day of July 1868. D.W. Springer<sup>5</sup>

Some interesting observations concerning the conduct of vigilantes in Laramie appear in a fall letter written by Springer.

GRANITE CANON, WYOMING

OCTOBER 3, 1868

Dear Sisters

...But I must tell you how the Vigilance (Vig's as they are called here dispose of the fast gents at Laramie only few days ago they made a general cleaning out of the Gamblers, Thieves, hanging four and Shooting three others that are Known and is thought several more were disposed of The Modus Operandi is thus they go up to a fellow and say here we want you if he resists he is Shot on the Spot. if not he is taken to where they can arrange a pole or Something with but little trouble and after the rope is fastened around his neck he is accused of Such and Such crimes if he denies it he is gently told that he is a d—m Liar then he is waisted gently up till his feet is from 4 to 6 inches from the ground and literally choked to death he is generally left hanging from ten to twenty four hours. One thing however in favor of the Vig's they are always Sure of their man before they commence operations every one here except those inter-

ested (the thieves) are in favor of Lynch Law as it is in fact the only one that will come any way near filling the necessities of this part of the country.

The foregoing letter was written as a type of palimpsest, lines over lines but set at right angles to each other. It ends thus:

Well, if you can't read this send her to me and I will for you. But if you can write me soon. And with love to all. I am yours, D.W. Springer.

Have just read this and have half mind not to send it but will write no more for I can hardly read it myself. Hope you will have good time with it. Better take some afternoon when you've nothing else to do, to read it. DWS.

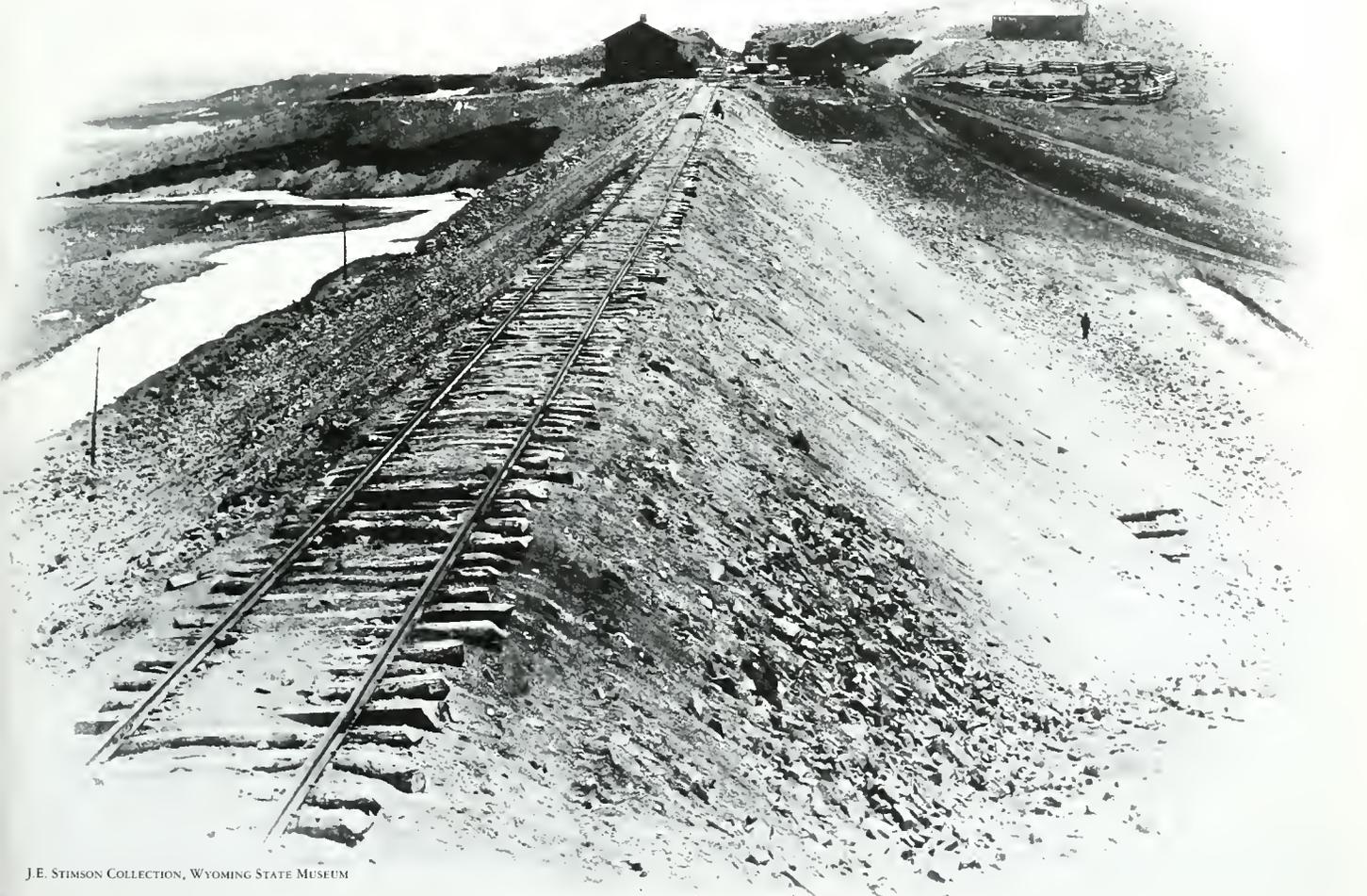
From a letter to his sisters:

GRANITE CANON WYOMING

DEC 23, 1868

I'm glad you recd the Antelope all OK. You got it in good time as I sent it on the 10th five days in transit. not long considering.

5. J.E. Stimson Collection, Wyoming State Museum



J.E. STIMSON COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

I'm glad you like the meat. You ask me if I shot it. I did have killed several since I have been here. They have been as close as couple hundred yards to our office here 50 & 100 & more in a drove. Killed a Jack Rabbit today we'll have it for dinner tomorrow I won't be here. We are enjoying some very pleasant weather just now, quite a contrast to our recent storm. The Road is being pushed ahead yet just as though were summer.

The end of track now is about 60 miles from Ogden. Ogden is about 60 miles little west of North from Salt Lake City working hard to get there this winter. Road will be completed to California about the first of July or August, then Ho for the West, eh?

Springer's 1869 diary, begins January 1. He describes his location as Granite Canon Wyoming. U.P.R.R. 535 miles west of Omaha.<sup>6</sup> His entries describe the Wyoming winter.

FRIDAY 5

The Road west of us is blocked with snow almost impossible for trains to run at all in fact most all trains (freight) are being abandoned every day for want of cars as all of them are wet and snow prevents them running.

6. Ibid. Three of the Springer diaries -1865, 1869 and 1874- were utilized as references for this article.

FEBRUARY. FRIDAY 12. 1869.

Between 12 P.M. & 2 P.M. today commenced storming and now this evening it still continues snowing and blowing terribly from all appearances it is only the beginning of a long continued storm as the storm seems to be generally all along the RR.

FEBRUARY, SUNDAY 14. 1869.

Sunday P.M. Storm continues seems more furious the longer it lasts. Have had no trains since the 12th the storm is just as bad for 2 & 3 hundred miles west as it is here and if anything worse. So the wires say.

FEBRUARY, THURSDAY 18. 1869.

Passenger from east came today first for some time.

FEBRUARY 19.

Oh "how" I long for a letter from home it is so lonesome here without any trains. Shut up from the outside world no letters. no nothing.

THURSDAY 25.

Went to Cheyenne had to remain overnight on account of trains being abandoned caused by snow blocking up the road.

Impossible for trains to run through west of Sherman.

MARCH, SATURDAY 6. 1869.

Pleasant day but no trains. Seems useless to try to run trains now for no sooner is one train through than the snow fills all the cuts up again making it just as much trouble & work to run the next train through as was the first one snowing tonight but no wind. From a letter to his sisters:

GRANITE CANON - U.P.R.R.

MCH 6TH 1869 SATURDAY EVE

Your letter was hailed with no small degree of pleasure I assure you. For you see we haven't been getting any mail regular by any means on account of non arrival of trains. The snow having blockaded the road so completely that it became an utter impossibility for trains to run tho the snow plows viz (an ordinary engine with large iron plow attached in front) were used to best of their power. The Co make use of all means and spare no expense to get trains through but no sooner are the big deep cuts cleared of snow and a train passes then they are again filled by this almost never ceasing wind, which sometimes blows fearfully.

Some of the poor fellows west of us fared even worse than we as no trains of any kind except snow plows were seen for several weeks. And quite a number at nearly

Sixteenth Street, Cheyenne, ca. 1867 or 1868



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

end of track. Suffered for the common necessities of life having failed to lay in a supply of provisions before the Snow. they of course were ill prepared to Stand a very long Seige The Company managed however by almost herculean strength and at great expense to get a train of provisions to them this was on what is Known as the Bridger division up west of Green River  
 From Springer's 1869 diary:

SATURDAY 13.

Trains running regular as far west as Laramie but west of there the Snow has again blocked up the road So trains are all abandoned again  
 From a letter to Springer's father:

GRANITE CANON WYOMING

APR 28TH 1869

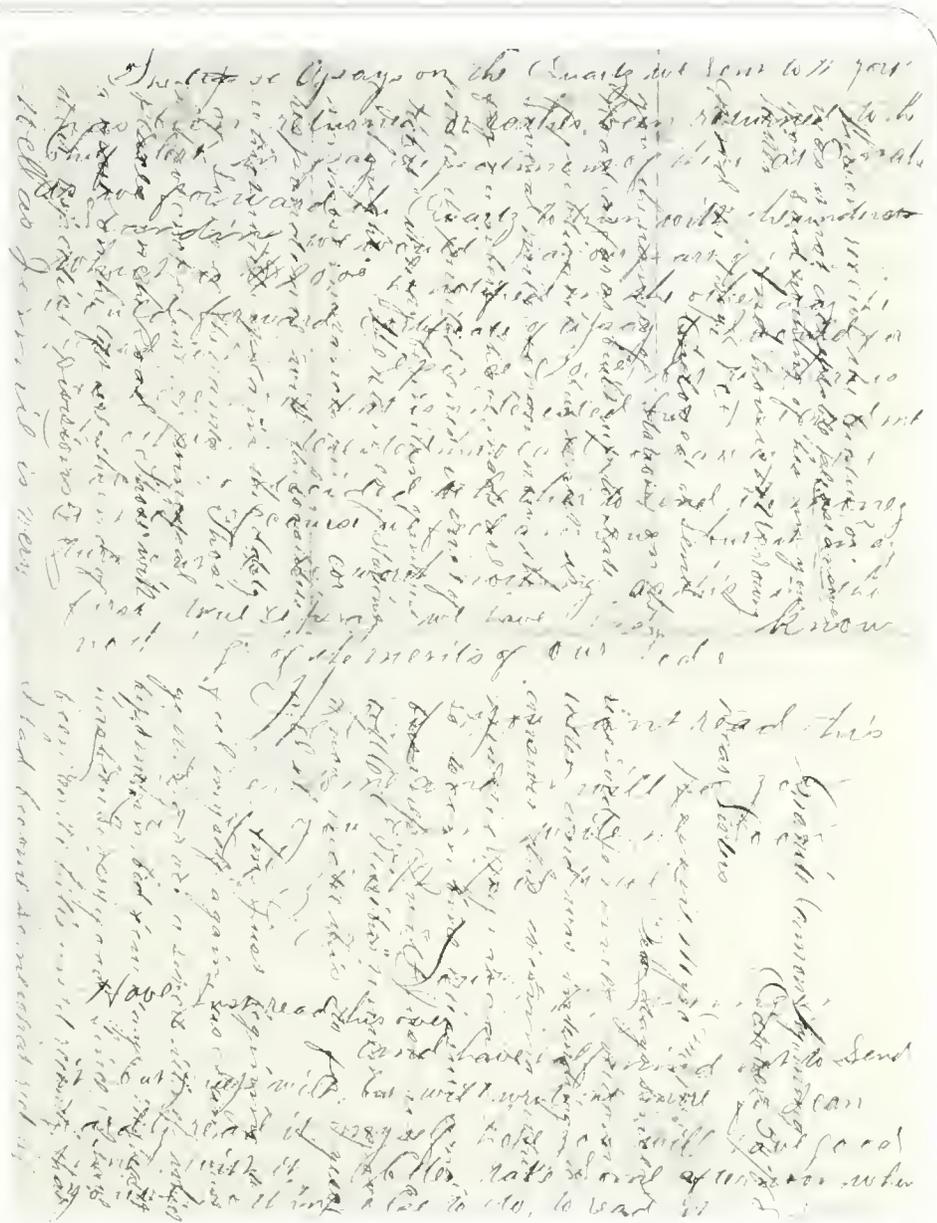
Well perhaps a little gossip in regard to the great "overland," route Viz. the Union Pacific Railroad would be interesting to you

It seems the nearer the Road comes to completion the more reckless or careless becomes the managers, of what some call the great humbug (the Road) There is now only 10 or 15 miles of track to be laid when the two Road's meet. Some trouble is anticipated from the employees on that event

I heard a message only yesterday going over the wires from W. Snyder, the Gen'l Sup't directing no more passenger trains to be run to end of track until the troops arrived quite a number of Soldiers passed on their way west last night The great trouble however is in regard to non-payment of employees the company are now in arrears three months pay. for my part I feel confident that the company are perfectly safe but there are great many who are now

and of course there is great deal of dissatisfaction and I fear if we do not get paid before very long there will be no little trouble as it is now business of all Kinds is very dull. The business of the road with the exception of the passenger ticket Sales is on the decline. I intended taking a trip to end of track before the Road was finished but guess I'll have to wait awhile now and when I do go will extend my ride to Salt Lake city

Your good advice in letter is accepted with many thanks I hope I shall be able to profit by it. Speaking of this country I think it is one of the best schools I ever knew.



CHILDS COLLECTION

One of the difficult letters in the Childs Collection, written from Wyoming territory by D.W. Springer to his sister, October 30, 1868. The palimpsest probably was done as a trick, although in many letters Springer used the margins to complete his message.

Here we get to see man in his true shape If a man is a true man he will undoubtedly expose it here if he is a dog it takes but a stork time to find him out the Army was a good place to learn one's character but the west is a better

From the 1869 Granite Canon diary:

MAY, MONDAY 3. 1869.

For some time nearly all trains are abandoned daily. "Cause," no Freight to transport. the Passenger trains run regularly and seem to be carrying great many passengers both east & west.

Now that the road is completed, many of the employees are returning to the States, while many from the states are on their way to the mines and to California. the Road will be doing through business within a week or two when business I think will be better than it is now. The success of the Road depends on through freight but will have to compete with Ships going by ocean and unless freight can be carried this way as cheap as by Steamer I predict an utter failure of the great overland route Viz the Union Pacific Railroad Time will develop many things & the Road may prove a

good investment but Just now it looks bad for success

MONDAY 10

Rain Rain guess it will never get tired raining terrible rough weather

The last Rail on this road was laid today So I heard over the wires the road is now completed from Omalia Neb to Sacramento Cal

MAY, TUESDAY 11. 1869.

Another hail storm today

Heard over the wires last night that the Pay car was coming down the Road and paying as they come along I think it about (time) for the company owe us over three months pay now.

WEDNESDAY 12, SUNDAY 16.

Since the road is completed business of all kinds Seems to be on the decline.

Passenger train East is loaded heavy with men bound for the States

Many men are out of employment of all branches of service. the R.R. Co are retracting as fast as possible The freight department of the Road are now doing almost nothing not paying running expenses all freight that is being shipped is dead head or at least most of it So. being company business, etc

THURSDAY 20.

The pay car came today paying us for February. will pay for March next week. From a letter to his sisters:

GRANITE CANON WYOMING

MAY 22ND 1869.

Well of course you have been apprised long before this of the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad. I don't know what the popular feeling in the East is in regard to this Road (Only through the columns of the Papers which is not always authentic you know) But the general opinion of Railroad men in this Section Seems to be that as a financial undertaking it will prove to be a

grand failure basing their arguments on the ground that through freights is the only thing that will Keep the road up And further that it will be impossible for the Railroad to complete with Steam Navigation. But I think for my part that that is a question to be decided. much will depend however on the proper management of the road. and Something will have to be done to Keep Snow off of the track in the winter So as to insure through communication all the year around for one month last winter (February) the company paid \$30,000.00 to Keep track clear of Snow between Laramie & Rawlings a distance of only 135 miles So you See from this that the company will have many obstacles in their way and of course must be overcome before the Road will be an entire Success financially A couple of years will prove it all however If the country through which the road runs was any account for agricultural purposes there would be no doubt of the prosperity of the Road but that's out of the question for farming



J.E. STIMSON, COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

will never prove worth a cent out here. In some places however in Utah Territory there is spots of a few hundred acres where grain and vegetables are raised by the Mormons. In Colorado however a few miles South of us they have some splendid farms and they grow the finest vegetables I ever saw any place. It is very common for them to have cabbage heads weighing from 40 to 50 lbs. they are so large it is impossible to put them in an ordinary sized flour barrel what do you think of that. They have to irrigate their land although but is not great deal of trouble.

From the Granite Canon diary:

JUNE, SATURDAY 26. 1869.

the Travel over the Union Pacific R.R. is on the increase many excursion parties are going to the Mountains on pleasure trips. Many are going to California & Oregon many are going East from the Pacific states and the Gold mines.

JULY FRIDAY 2. 1869

The weather is simply miserable. Lines work so bad that it is almost impossible to work them for nearly a week. The trouble is caused by so much Electricity being in the atmosphere.

SATURDAY 3.

The People of Cheyenne celebrate the 4th today by an excursion to Sherman (the Summit).

The party is made up of about as many prostitutes, pimps, gamblers & loafers as decent folks a splendid party I think for my own part I celebrate the 4th by remaining at home.

JULY, SUNDAY 4. 1869.

Eight Years ago today I left home for the first time. Since then my life has been one continual change.

Although I have been home several times yet not to remain very long.

I hope before many years however to be able to go home and remain thus among true friends.

Left: Although this snow blockade along the Union Pacific Railroad was near Medicine Bow, Wyoming in 1917, the feeling conveyed by the photograph is much the same as that experienced by Springer in 1868.

JULY, TUESDAY 6. 1869

Granite Canon is this day transferred to me Jeffries being transferred to Hazard Station. I am now Agent and Operator.



Mary Elizabeth Wilson, probably in her early 20s. Photo taken in Indianapolis before she married D.W. Springer and went to live in Wyoming.

There are a number of gaps in the recorded life of David Wallace Springer. Some years he kept no diary. Some months there were no letters, at least none were saved. Such a lapse occurred in 1869 and 1870. In one letter he referred to "Mollie," and more than once complained to his sisters about not hearing from a "special someone." There are, however, several letters from Mary Elizabeth Wilson, also known as Mollie but as time goes on she is spoken of only as May. Her first extant letter to Springer was written when she was 19 and starting to teach school in Indianapolis.

In October, 1870 May Wilson

married David Springer. From Indiana they immediately left for the bleak outpost at Granite Canon. It is hard to imagine the shock for the young bride, used to a fair-sized city, as she faced the lonely windswept spot which was to be their home.

As in marriages even then, the task of letter writing fell to the wife and thus the letters of 1871 and 1872 were written by May. She wrote mostly about becoming settled in their living quarters, about the food and what they had to eat, often requesting items be sent that were not available such as tea or biscuits, or small decorative things for the house.

In December, 1872 David's older sister Myra traveled west to be on hand when the Springer baby came, due in January. As was customary for a lady traveling alone, she carried the following letter of introduction on her trip through the wilds of Missouri and Nebraska.

IND., INDIANAPOLIS

DEC 7 1872

I take great pleasure in commending our most excellent sister - Miss P. Springer to the confidence and high Christian regard of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

The 1st Baptist Church of this city of which she is a member, will follow her with its prayers and best wishes on her Western visit. And in God's own time we'll gladly welcome her home again.

Henry Day, Pastor of the 1st Baptist Church Indpls, Ind.

After the arrival of Myra and for the next two years most of the letters in the collection are hers. Surely May wrote to her family back home, while Myra reported to hers. She wrote very engagingly about life in this remote station. She wrote of the sights and foods and, of course, the people. A let-

7. Childs Collection, Madison, Indiana.



*Myra*

CHILDS COLLECTION

Myra Springer was two years older than her brother.

ter in late December describes a Christmas visit with friends.

GRANITE CANON STATION  
DEC. 29TH 1872

...We took dinner with Mr. Hills family by invitation. They had a nice dinner of Oysters, mince, cherry & apple pies, three kinds of cake, apples, cherries, peaches, light biscuit, boiled ham, head cheese, etc. The people out here use pork. Wallie has tried to get some venison but though he has had the promise he has not been able to get any yet. They had some in Laramie yesterday -Mrs Haygood and her mother and Mr Haygood and their little boy spent Christmas evening at the Hills. May don't speak to Mrs. Haygood so I guess she would have enjoyed it better if Mrs. Haygood had not been there.

May don't like her and wont have any thing to do with her as she don't want her to come here. She is ignorant but stylish and rather good looking. She thinks Mrs. Springer is not very social and don't know what Mrs. Springer is mad at her for. She is one of the kind of women that get too intimate if any one will allow it and that is what May don't like. They have a little boy twenty one months old and they have taught him to smoke a pipe he will puff away at it and even light-

GRANITE CANON STATION  
JAN. 24TH 1873.

Dear Ones at Home

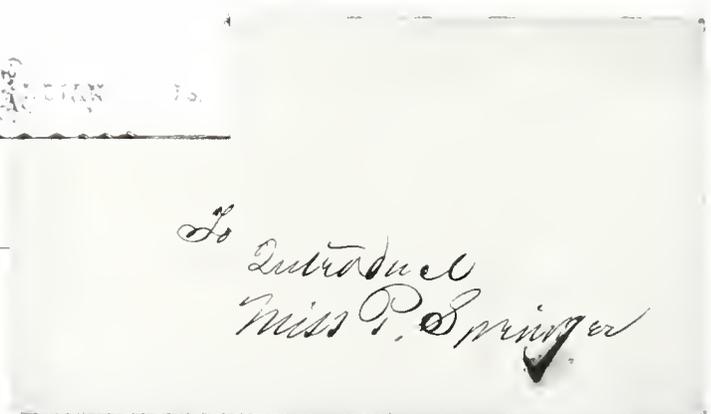
I have only time for a few lines before the train comes and that will be to tell you that May and Wall have a baby -It is a little girl born at half past Eight this morning, She had a hard time but was much relieved toward the last by chloroform. Dr. Carey came from Cheyenne last evening little after five and will go on the train soon due. May was in pain a good deal yesterday and kept her bed part of the time. Mrs. Hills was with us. Baby is small but real pretty, has thick black hair. I think they are some disappointed that it was not a boy. I shall love it I know. We were just about ready for it. ...May is very weak and pale. She has not slept for two nights. I could not sleep last night and my eyes are so heavy-

Hoping you are all well -I hastily close- Myra.

GRANITE CANON STATION, W.T.  
FEB. 17TH 1873.

Dear Ones at Home,

I can only make your hearts ache by the sad news of this letter. Our dear Sister May has gone to join her voice with Clarence's the innumerable hosts of happy spirits in the praises of Him who hath redeemed them and loved them. and my heart would spare you the new sorrow but I know how anxious you are and mine is the task to tell you. Last Sunday was the last time she sat up. She was in so



CHILDS COLLECTION

Envelope which contained letter of introduction for Myra Springer.

ed and let the smoke come out of his mouth, then get up to the spittoon and spit come back to his seat and cross his legs like a man and smoke away -They don't always light the pipe for him. It would be too strong for me if there was no tobacco in the pipe- They think it so smart in him. the child will do any thing they tell him to do -He is a quiet child too-

Myra's next two letters bring tidings of joy and sadness.

much pain and was so weak. We sent for the Dr. who came Tuesday and sent more medicine next morning. She was having pain the kidneys and could not pass urine. Wednesday evening we used hot applications which gave her some relief. When the lamp was lighted and the store door opened She

Right: February 17, 1873 Letter from Myra to Springer family in Indianapolis, describing the death of Mary Springer.

# UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY.

AGENT'S OFFICE,

Granite Canon STATION, W. T. Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> 1873.

Dear Ones At Home,

I can only make your hearts ache by the sad news of this letter. Our dear sister Mary has gone to join the rick with Clarence's and the innumerable hosts of happy spirits in the praise of Him who hath redeemed them and loved them, and my heart would spare you the now sorrow but I know how anxious you are and mine is the task to tell you. Last Sunday was the last time she sat up. She had so much pain and was so weak. We sent for the Dr. who came Tuesday and sent more medicine next morning. She was having pain in the kidneys and could not pass urine. Wednesday evening we used hot applications which gave her some relief. When the lamp was lighted and the store door opened she said why do you sit in the dark? I turned the light up and put it on the table here. We did so and then she wanted another one lighted. After a little while she seemed to get better and insisted on us all going to bed. I took baby, and Mrs. Leach lay with Mary, and Wallie on the floor. She had been taking medicine and some morphine too and was in a stupor all day, and she talked a good deal but deliriously. I heard her talking but could not understand what she said. Thought she was talking to Mrs. Leach. At three o'clock she grew suddenly worse by seven o'clock all through her bowels from which we could give her no relief. Inflammation had set in and made great efforts. Wallie telegraphed for the Dr. who came on first train and staid till all was over. She died at twenty five minutes past one on Thursday afternoon, just two months the very day I came. We had hopes of her till Thursday morning and the Dr. at first thought it was but a nervous attack for her pulse was strong and her breasts were full till just before she died. She told Wallie she was dying but became unconscious immediately and never talked with us longer. She died very easy. She had told Mrs. Wallie she would not get well and how she wanted to be laid out in the softest white muslin. She told Mrs. Leach she dreaded only to leave Wallie. She was so solicitous of all our comfort all the while she was sick. She was very nervous and suffered a great deal. Poor dear Mary when sufferings were over and I believe she is at rest. We buried her in Cheyenne in the new cemetery on Saturday. Her funeral was preached in the Methodist church by the pastor Mr. Swift from the words "Put thy house in order for thou shalt die and not live" 38<sup>th</sup> chapter Isaiah. It was very good and did Wallie good. He is going to be a Christian now and meet Mary in heaven and I am so glad there is a bright side to this dark trouble. Mr. Swift is going to Pittsburg next

...and why do you sit in the dark? Turn the light up and put it on the table here. We did so and then she wanted another one lighted. After a little while she seemed to get better and insisted on us all going to bed. I took baby and Mrs. Leach lay with May Wallie on the floor. She had been taking medicine and some morphine too and was in a \_\_\_\_\_ all day and she talked a good deal but deliriously. I heard her talking but could not understand what she said. Thought she was talking to Mrs. Leach. At three o'clock she grew suddenly worse by severe pains all through her bowels, inflammation had set in and mortification. We could give her no relief though we made great efforts. Wallie telegraphed for the Dr. who came on first train and staid till all was over. She died at twenty-five minutes past one Thursday afternoon, just two months the very day I came. We had hopes of her till Thursday morning and the Dr. at first thought it was but a nervous attack for her pulse was strong and her breasts were full till just before she died. She told Wallie she was dying but became unconscious immediately and never talked with us more. She died very easy. She had told Mrs. Hills she would not get well and how she wanted to be laid out in the softest white muslin. She told Mrs. Leach she dreaded only to leave Wallie. She was so solicitous of all our comfort all the while she was sick. She was very nervous and suffered a great deal. Poor dear May, her sufferings are over and I believe she is at rest. We buried her in Cheyenne in the new cemetery on Saturday. Her funeral was preached in the Methodist church by the pastor Mr. Swift from the words, Put thy house in order for thou shalt die and not live 8th chapter Isaiah. It was very good and did Wallie good. He is going to be a Christian now and meet May in heaven and I am so glad there is a bright side to this dark trouble.

The Laramie Sentinel on February 14, 1873 reported May Springer's death.

We have received the painful news of the death of Mrs. D. W. Springer, the interesting and accomplished young wife of the railroad agent at Granite Canon. Mrs. Springer leaves a little babe and a heartbroken husband to mourn her loss. They have the heartfelt sympathy of a numerous circle of friends in this great affliction.<sup>5</sup>

And From The Cheyenne Daily Leader February 15, 1873:

Died, at Granite Canon on Thursday 15th instant Mary wife of D.W. Springer, Esq. The funeral of the deceased will take place at the Methodist Church of this city at two o'clock P.M. today. We hope all friends and acquaintances will attend as Mr. D.W. Springer is one of our oldest and most esteemed citizens.<sup>6</sup>

Myra's February 17th, 1873 letter announcing the death of May also described how May was dressed for the coffin, the immediate concern for the infant and the problems of feeding in a day when commercially prepared baby food was nonexistent. She wrote:

I shall stay with Wallie and my baby. I cannot leave him and Papa has Mother to care for him. The climate is better for Birdie and we have plenty nice cream to feed her. Have a fresh cow today so I can soon feed her fresh milk. Wallie may leave here after he gets his debts paid, not decided where we will go.

Through the spring Myra was faced with not only the nurturing of the baby but the uncertainty of her disconsolate brother, quite a dilemma for this city-bred girl to face alone. At the end of April they left Granite Canon for Julesburg, Colorado. David Springer wrote his father concerning Myra's care of the baby and the baby's fretful attitude as she cut her front teeth.

JULESBURG COLORADO

MAY 26 1873

Dear Father

We have been at Julesburg three weeks yesterday I like the climate here much better than at Granite as we miss those old piercing winds the summers here however may not be so pleasant as I think they are much too warm for comfort. but my idea in coming to this particular place was to get where I would have more business to do something to keep my heart from aching so hard by keeping my hands and mind more active. I expect to have plenty of work to do soon as work is commenced again on our new road the "Colorado Central." this is its eastern terminus forming a junction with

the U. P. here running south west to Greeley and Evans Colorado then almost south to Golden City & Central City making a line of nearly 200 miles giving Central and South-western Colorado almost an air [?] line to Omaha and Chicago.

...We are right in the midst of the Buffalo Country here saw several droves yesterday and this morning but have not killed any yet their hides are not good taken this time of year as the hair comes out to easily in the fall and winter is the right time for them.

Henry M. Stanley wrote of Julesburg when it was called "The Wickedest City in America," filled with all the seamy ruffraff that followed the laying of the rails, streets lined with saloons -some large canvas dancing saloons where luxurious foods could be had for "twelve bits."<sup>7</sup> Myra's first letter home tells a different story.

JULESBURG COLORADO

MAY 11TH 1873

Loved Ones,

We have really moved and have nearly every thing in its place and begin to feel comfortable. We are in the Platte Valley which can be viewed from this place. This was once quite a populous place for a few months, several thousands of people living here but they are gone and there are now but two families beside us here -one keeping the section house where a dozen section men board, and the other keeps a saloon called the "Star Saloon" and "Eating House— Meals at all hours." Germans. I have only met the one woman Mrs. Entrikan, the german who kindly gave me shelter the first night and both of us breakfast. Their house is just north of us and we can see all who enter it from our kitchen window.

Our house fronts south and is the size of the one at Granite only differently arranged -Just across the tracks is a large warehouse with rooms in one and where some of the section men sleep. There is a large coal house up the track where the engines take coal. Then there is one dobie house made of mud with a turf roof. It is occupied by section men. These are all the houses here now. There is a large stock yard

5. Laramie Sentinel, February 15, 1873, p.3.

6. Cheyenne Daily Leader, February 15, 1873, p.5.

10. Henry M. Stanley, *My Early Travels and Adventures in America and Asia* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston & Company, 1895), p. 165.

and the ruins of a large dobie and a good many excavations showing where many houses have stood - We took a walk over the place last evening - it is quite level. South of us a mile or two are the ruins of Fort Sedgewick. Some day will go there - Sand cliffs are in sight all around they fence in the valley. It is the South Platte Valley. ...I think we shall like it here. I have made up my mind to be contented. It is not so windy here as at Granite Canyon.

Two months later Myra wrote to her father urging him to come for a visit.

JULESBURG, COLORADO

JULY 14TH 1873

Pa it would do you good and give you a rest and Eddie could take care of the house and your interests there while you are away... You have worked so hard I think you deserve to rest. I told Charlie the fare from Omaha here was fourteen dollars. I was mistaken it is \$18.85. We will give you both a cordial welcome you and Charlie. This is a dull place to be sure, but you can get rest and little May will help to entertain you. ...Mr. Merret who lives near Granite Canon has discovered a Silver mine about three miles from Granite he thinks in paying quantities. Mr Hills & the agent and Mr. Haygood all have taken claims. Don't know yet about us going to Cheyenne.

In a postscript to her letter Myra wrote:

Few days ago a big drove of Texas Cattle numbering thousands passed here - never saw so many at once. They were being driven to Cheyenne to a ranch near there

In December Myra wrote home, a newsy letter. Among other items, she reported:

JULESBURG, COLO.

DEC. 20TH, 1873.

...Brother has just come in from his ride. -now baby has awakened -You play with her while I write Mattie: I must tell you something: We have a post office here now and D.W.Springer is Post Master. ahem! aren't we enterprising! He is to get the big salary of twenty four dollars a year.

Entrikens have a new kitchen built to their house. This is all of the improvements of Julesburg for this year.

Mr. Ellis of Sidney, the sheriff of the county who is Mrs. Weir's son in law was arrested on suspicion of murder this week. Some weeks ago there was a man killed in a



CHILD COLLECTION

Top left: Baby May Springer, 6 months. Probably the first photograph of the infant, taken in July, 1873 and sent to the family in Indiana. The photographer's trademark on the back of the photo states: "Frank Boyd, Cheyenne, W.T. (Wyoming Territory). Top right: May Springer, age two and a half. Photograph probably taken for D.W. Springer after Myra took May to Indianapolis.

saloon in Sidney shot through a window at night by some unknown party and instantly died. He was a rough and once shot at Ellis. There is a thousand dollars reward offered for the arrest and conviction of the murderer. Ellis is a drinking man. There are several saloons in Sidney. Ellis and Entriken have been intimate friends-

P.S. ...Last week buffalos came up near the station and I stood on the platform and saw one killed, could have almost shot one from the station

Early in 1874 Myra wrote of a trial in which David Springer was involved.

JULESBURG COLORADO

JAN 25TH, 1874

Dear Papa:

Wallie went to Cheyenne last Monday morning and returned Friday night. He went to attend that Soldier trial again. The last trial the soldier was given a verdict of \$2200 and the company carried it to a higher court and this time the soldier is to get 1400. so the Co. did not make any thing and may

take it to the Supreme court. They are making a test case of it.

The trial is also mentioned in Springer's 1874 diary.

JUNE SUNDAY PM

Trial to come off tomorrow morning I go to Granite Canon today to make a diagram and Notes of the Country where soldier was put off of the train and had his feet and hands frozen for which he sued for damages.

Arriving at Granite Canon recd. message that the case had been compromised so I will be in no hurry to return to Cheyenne In January Myra wrote:

JULESBURG COLORADO

JAN. 25, 1874

There was a sick man died in the car Friday night after the train left Sidney and they telegraphed from here to North Platte for a coffin to be ready when the train reached there. He had consumption.

On March 22, 1874 David

Springer wrote to his "Dear Papa" about the weather and his daughter, May.

JULESBURG CO.

MARCH 22ND 1874.

*...Wish Father you could see my little May bird she is as pretty as half dozen Peaches better looking than all the other babies you would love her because you couldn't help it if you wanted to*

There is no hint of a decision to send Myra and the baby back to Indiana, and his 1874 diary has no entry until April 13 when he writes:

JULESBURG WELD COUNTY

COLORADO APRIL 13TH 1874

*Resigned my place as Agent & Operator today*

THE NEXT ENTRY: APRIL 23  
*Sister Myra and my baby start for home this morning*

Thus ended a significant chapter in the life of David Wallace Springer. He spent three months of that year on a long cattle drive, and remained in the area till January, 1875 when he went east. For a while he was a partner in a very successful grocery and supply business in Parsons, Kansas. His last venture was a lumber business in Fairfield, Illinois. Although he was able to do considerable traveling in the east, his health failed and he died at his sister's home in Indianapolis on October 20, 1885.

POSTSCRIPT:

The Springer baby, May, was raised by Myra and saw little of her

father except for an occasional visit. There exist some letters he wrote to her. She was twelve when he died.

May graduated from high school in 1891, spent a year in teacher training classes and taught two years in Indianapolis public schools. She graduated in 1898 from Franklin College in Franklin, Indiana, then went to the Library School in Albany, New York for one year. She returned to Indianapolis where she worked at the State Library through the summer of 1900. She was Librarian at Alma College in Alma, Michigan for one year and in 1901 went to Youngstown, Ohio to catalog the city library. The next year she married Dr. A.G.W. Childs, whom she had known at Franklin College. In David Wallace Springer's last diary his sister, Myra, wrote: "May 14, 1902 May Springer was married to Dr. A.G.W. Childs of Madison, Indiana by Rev. T.A. Childs, father of the bridegroom. It was a quiet but sweet little wedding at home. The bride was very sweet and lovable. She went to Madison to live. She put her funds into a house which they built the same year. She had four thousand and fifty dollars in her own name when she married. Thirty-five hundred was from insurance on her father's life and the rest was saved from income."

May Springer Childs had two children: a daughter Kathryn and a son Wallace, my husband. May died in June, 1949 at the time my husband passed his board examinations in radiology. Wallace died in 1986. ■

## CHRONOLOGY DAVID WALLACE SPRINGER

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1844 | BORN APRIL 10 IN LAWRENCEBURG, INDIANA TO DAVID AND SARAH BREWINGTON SPRINGER  | 1874 | SPRINGER RESIGNS TELEGRAPHY POST; MYRA AND BABY RETURN TO INDIANAPOLIS; SPRINGER LEAVES FOR THE SOUTH TO BUY CATTLE           |
| 1861 | MUSTERED INTO INDIANA VOLUNTEERS AT LAFAYETTE, INDIANA, AGE 17   | 1875 | PURCHASES HALF INTEREST IN GROCERY BUSINESS, RICHMOND, INDIANA  |
| 1862 | WOUNDED AT BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL, AGE 18  | 1876 | TRAVELS TO PHILADELPHIA EXPOSITION, WASHINGTON D.C., NEW YORK CITY; SELLS INTEREST IN GROCERY; GOES WEST                      |
| 1864 | DISCHARGED AT END OF THREE YEAR ENLISTMENT, AGE 20   | 1877 | SELLS HIS CATTLE IN WEST; SIGHTSEES BACK TO INDIANA; TRAVELS TO PARSONS, KANSAS TO PURCHASE HALF-INTEREST IN GROCERY BUSINESS |
| 1865 | REENLISTS IN INDIANAPOLIS FOR ONE YEAR, AGE 21; MUSTERED OUT OF SERVICE AT AGE 21; GOES WEST VIA MISSOURI RIVER BOAT | 1878 | VISITS FAMILY IN INDIANAPOLIS   |
| 1867 | TAKES TELEGRAPHY COURSE IN INDIANAPOLIS  | 1879 | RETURNS TO PARSONS, KANSAS  |
| 1868 | GOES TO KEARNEY STATION, NEBRASKA TERRITORY AND GRANITE CANON, DAKOTA TERRITORY                                      | 1881 | SELLS GROCERY BUSINESS; FATHER DAVID, SR., DIES   |
| 1869 | WORKS FOR UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD AT GRANITE CANON, WYOMING TERRITORY   | 1882 | TRAVELS SOUTH IN SEARCH OF INVESTMENTS  |
| 1870 | MARRIES MARY ELIZABETH WILSON  | 1883 | BUYS LUMBER BUSINESS IN FAIRFIELD, ILLINOIS   |
| 1872 | DAVID'S SISTER, MYRA SPRINGER, ARRIVES TO HELP WITH DELIVERY OF SPRINGER BABY  | 1884 | TRAVELS SEEKING HEALTHY CLIMATE   |
| 1873 | BABY GIRL, MAY, BORN; MARY SPRINGER DIES 20 DAYS LATER   | 1885 | DIES OF CONSUMPTION AT SISTER MYRA'S HOME IN INDIANAPOLIS ON OCTOBER 10, AGE 41.  |



MICHAEL HETZ

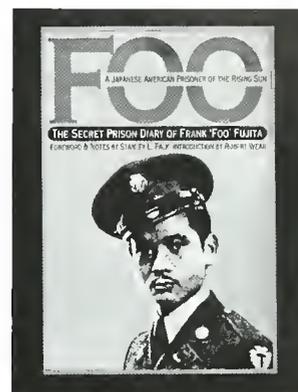
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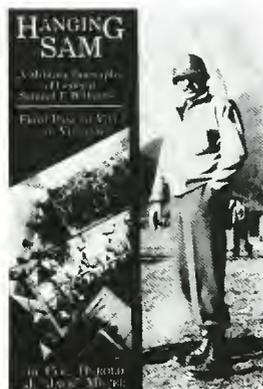
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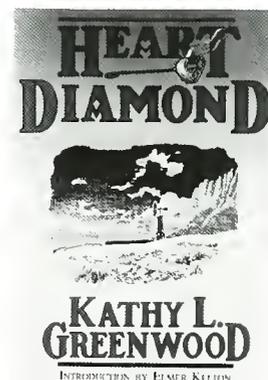
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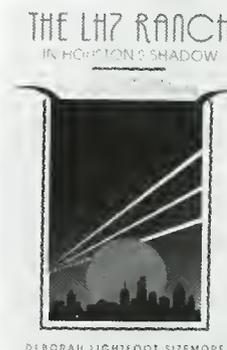
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# SUNDAY *&* SCHOOL



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## Evangelism, Religious Education and Social Values in Wyoming, 1868-1918

Sunday school has long been a familiar symbol of American Protestant education. From 1790 to the Civil War, it had evolved from an informal, evangelical gathering to an administrative unit within Protestant denominations. This institutional development coupled with its widespread distribution across the American landscape made Sunday school, in the words of Sunday school historian Anne Boylan, an American institution.

*Above: Baptist Sunday School Class, Converse County, early 1890s.*

By Carl Hallberg

Sunday school has been easily overlooked and misunderstood in historical perspective. Popular images depict it as a static symbol of Christian education. This vision is a very narrow one that relegates Sunday school to a small, cute, almost trite aspect of the church. A gallery of pictures becomes evidence of its existence and substance. Consequently, within the church as a whole, the role and value of Sunday school seems indeterminable, or insignificant when contrasted with more substantive themes, like church construction and the procession of resident ministers.

Of course, such a viewpoint would not have been shared by contemporary religious educators. To them, Sunday school was very important. Religious instruction encompassed more than merely perpetuating simple Christian tenets. It meant inculcating faith, church doctrines, spirituality and morality within the young.

How Sunday schools were to accomplish this task effectively was seriously studied. By the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, religious pedagogy was a major topic of discussion in religious periodicals, at denominational conferences and at interdenominational conventions of the Religious Education Association, the International Sunday School Association and the World Sunday School Association.

To consider Sunday school as an active religious and social force goes beyond traditional conceptions, but it is not a novel idea. For example, Paul Boyer and Anne Boylan have suggested that in pre-Civil War years Sunday schools were an instrument of moral reform in urbanized society, a medium for expression of Protestant evangelism, an instrument for evangelism among children and young adults and a means to advance changing ideas of womanhood.<sup>1</sup>

Each point has some validity. Altogether they paint a multi-faceted picture of Sunday school. While these attributes are primarily applicable to pre-Civil War Sunday schools, they are also applicable to post-Civil War, western Sunday schools. From 1867 to the decline of the home missionary movement in 1918 Sunday school was used by Protestant and social groups in Wyoming to promote evangelism, religious instruction and social values.

## I. Evangelism

Rev. D. R. Cowhick, a Methodist minister in Cheyenne, told delegates to the first meeting of the Wyoming Territorial Sunday School Association that Wyoming was but a wilderness in 1867 but by 1881 was populated with Christian people.<sup>2</sup> To his attentive listeners, his message was quite clear: Protestant Christianity had taken the upper hand in defining Wyoming's culture. History would prove him wrong, but as a devout, religious man he could think no differently. His zealous evangelical spirit affected both what he saw and what he desired. Religiosity always appeared to be quite obvious where churches were constructed, Sunday schools were organized or large crowds listened intently to itinerant preachers. In Cowhick's case, the pace of activity became the scale of activity. Such a perspective was not unique. Indeed, many Protestant missionaries and ministers shared Cowhick's grandiose assessment about the progress of Protestant evangelism.

Other contemporaries of Cowhick would have disagreed vehemently with him. They would have argued that such a religious transformation was far from accomplishment because the impact of Protestantism was tenu-

ous at best and negligible at worst. Instead of finding evidence of Protestantism triumphant, they were amazed to discover people living in a spiritual void. Reflecting on his early years of service, Rev. Ethelbert Talbot, Episcopal Bishop for Wyoming, believed that people were not prone to irreligious behavior but simply had become careless in attending to their spiritual duties.<sup>3</sup> Many Methodist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian and Baptist missionaries and ministers were not so forgiving in their outlook but believed they had found the Wild West incarnate. Wyoming was described as destitute, lawless, godless, wicked, irreligious, and one of the "waste places of our country."<sup>4</sup> Children in rural communities and mining camps possessed little or no knowledge about the basics of Christianity. In addition, the advancement of Mormonism into the western and north central areas of Wyoming presented Protestantism with a new and formidable religious rival.

These concerns influenced the course of Protestant evangelism in Wyoming. The underlying assumption was that Christian influences were deemed necessary and urgent if western emigrants were to live as civilized, moral people. Thus, metaphorically speaking, any opportunity to harvest the field for Christ was not to be overlooked.

One of many evangelical tools which brought religion to what were termed frontier and destitute regions was Sunday school. In many ways Sunday school was an ideal vehicle for Protestant evangelism. It did not require an ordained clergy, a formal liturgy or sacraments but rested upon the earnest desires of participants.<sup>5</sup> Meetings could take place wherever convenient such as a school house, a public hall, a private home or any available structure

of whatever condition. Educational material was plentiful, was doctrinally and theologically simple and emphasized basic Protestant principles of morality and spirituality. Moreover, Sunday school was not only for children but also for adults. Generally, though, Sunday school organizers focused on children because through them the concerns and needs of adult family members and the community were indirectly met. Because of its simple organization, Sunday schools became the harbinger of Christianity in many western areas.

The first use of Sunday schools as an instrument of evangelism was put forth by the American Sunday School Union. Organized in 1824 in Philadelphia, the American Sunday-School Union sought to place a Sunday school in "every destitute neighborhood" in the trans-Appalachian frontier. Through the work of its determined supporters, the Union's efforts became quite successful. By 1860, Union Sunday schools had followed the western flow of civilization across the Appalachians to the Mississippi River. Looking further westward, the American Sunday-School Union saw in the Trans-Mississippi Frontier similar opportunities for evangelism. In response to its own acclamations, the American Sunday-School Union sent missionaries further westward to continue the process of organizing Sunday schools and bringing Christianity to the Frontier.

The Union's use of the Sunday school was quickly adopted by mainline Protestant denominations. Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Methodist Sunday school boards and committees developed appropriate mission statements and instructed field workers - colporteurs, itinerant ministers, general missionaries and Sunday school missionaries - to organize Sunday schools whenever and wherever possible. In the process, these denominations made Sunday school a tool of Protestant evangelism.

A missionary's life was a busy one. Besides organizing Sunday schools, his tasks included preaching whenever and wherever possible, organizing religious services, visiting local residents, distributing literature, fil-

1. Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 34-37, 214; Anne M. Boylan, "Evangelical Womanhood in the Nineteenth Century: The Role of Women in Sunday Schools," *Feminist Studies* 4 (October 1978): 62-80; *ibid.*, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988). See also Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright, *The Big Little School: Sunday Child of American Protestantism* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971).

2. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, July 16, 1881, p. 3.

3. Ethelbert Talbot, *My People of the Plains* (New York: Brothers Publishers, 1906), p. 6.

4. *The Fifty-Ninth Annual Report of the American Sunday-School Union* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1883), p. 30.

5. Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Protestant Clergy in the Great Plains and Mountain West, 1865-1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), pp. 78-79.

ing reports and corresponding with friends, ministers and churches. Sickness, inclement weather, difficult terrain, long hours of travel, personal privation and unappreciated work tested his personal resolve.

Evangelizing in Wyoming did not come with any guarantees. Successful endeavors were counterbalanced by periods of trial and discouragement. Sunday schools could wither away as quickly as they appeared due to public apathy and neglect. Missionaries could spend most of their time just nourishing spiritual seeds within a community with little or no success. In spite of their efforts, a community could downplay the importance of religion and concentrate upon work or leisure activities. Given the numerous obstacles before them, it is not surprising that missionaries and ministers harbored feelings of anxiety and doubt. Following the dissolution of a Sunday school in Dixon, Wyoming in his absence, Frank Moore, a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary, sadly noted in his diary: "I feel sometimes that I have made a great mistake in undertaking this work."<sup>6</sup>

Those individuals who prevailed, however, considered the formation of a Sunday school a significant accomplishment. Individual efforts, like those of Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis, could be quite impressive. He began his evangelical career in 1875 at the age of seventeen with the American Sunday-School Union. He was organizing Sunday schools in Nebraska when he was asked to go to Wyoming in April, 1881. During the following three months he traversed the southern part of the territory, reporting back to the Union about the number of publications distributed, cities and towns visited, miles traveled and number of children attending his services. He claimed to have organized seven schools "in towns before wholly destitute of any religious service." Laramie's Rev. D. R. Watson praised Hillis' work, which, according to Watson, included "quickening others almost dead," starting churches, orga-

6. Austin L. Moore, editor, *Souls and Saddlebags: The Diaries and Correspondence of Frank L. Moore, Western Missionary, 1888-1896* (Denver: Big Mountain Press), p. 33.



AMERICAN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY, VALLEY FORGE, PA

*Baptist colporteur Rev. Arthur Tipton in Hulett, Wyoming about 1914.*

nizing a territorial Sunday school convention and "otherwise greatly helping the general cause of Christ." Soon afterwards Hillis was promoted to an administrative post within the Union. His new duties did not permit him to have as much direct personal contact as he once had, but he was still able to monitor the work of the American Sunday-School Union in Wyoming and occasionally was able to survey the field personally. His work for the Union coupled with his evangelical zeal aptly prepared him for future endeavors during the Social Gospel era as a preacher, lecturer and writer in New York.<sup>7</sup>

The work of Hillis and others did not go unnoticed. Church statistics about Sunday schools, teachers, students and libraries were touted as proof

7. *The Fifty-Eighth Annual Report of the American Sunday-School Union* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1882), p. 39; *The Sixty-Second Annual Report of the American Sunday-School Union* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1886), pp. 37-38; Mission Committee Minutes, Vol. 86, p. 136, American Sunday-School Union Papers, Presbyterian Office of History; Board of Officers and Managers Minutes, Vol. 8, p. 91, American Sunday-School Union Papers, Presbyterian Office of History; *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. IX (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 56; *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, June 11, 1881, p. 3; *Carbon County Journal* June 25, 1881, p. 4.

that progress was being made in Christianizing Wyoming. Sunday school missionaries sometimes applauded themselves, not so much for any personal accomplishment but for advancing the cause of Protestant evangelism. Looking back on his own work in Wyoming for the American Sunday-School Union, Rev. W. L. DeGroff reported:



Though only a few brief weeks could be used, they witnessed glorious victories in various needy districts, thus giving the stamp of God's approval in this hard field.<sup>8</sup>

Frank Moore, kept a personal record of his work in Wyoming. An energetic and devout man, Moore worked diligently to fill what he perceived as spiritual vacuums in the social structure. His travels always seemed to present him with opportunities to establish, assist or review Sunday school programs and in the process help spread the Gospel.

In truth, statistics and personal statements could give a false impres-

8. *The Seventy-Seventh Annual Report of the American Sunday-School Union* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1901), p. 15.

sion. Missionaries and ministers in the field realized that the area encompassed by Sunday school work was small in comparison to the overall territory. Their common lament was that so many areas lay beyond their reach. Wyoming's sparse population was widely distributed across a vast area of more than 97,000 square miles. Because communication and transportation lines were limited, many people were isolated from centers of Christian thought and activity. Yet, from 1870 to 1918 the number of missionaries assigned to Wyoming by any denomination averaged from one to three individuals.

Attempts to augment the number of missionaries in Wyoming were not forthcoming. While evangelical Protestantism had the entire West as its objective, attaining its goal increasingly become a political decision. Limited funds, materials, and most of all, missionaries, hindered long range plans. Desirous of starting its specific programs in the West, administrative departments competed against each other for available funds and materials. To effect appropriate use of resources in the West, church boards had to give programs and areas an order of importance. In the end, growing and larger populations in Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas and the Dakotas received greater attention and assistance than that in Wyoming.

Such tough decisions adversely affecting Wyoming missions aroused strong protests. Rev. E. E. Tarbill, superintendent of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, argued that field workers did not receive enough credit or support.



If the Methodist Episcopal church wishes to see some of her primitive heroism projected into modern times we would be glad to call her attention to some of her Wyoming sons.<sup>9</sup>

9. *Minutes of the Tenth Session of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1897* (Sheridan: Sheridan Enterprise, 1897), p. 39.

Others claimed that, of the church's many undertakings western missions were just as important, if not more so, than others. Spiritual lives were at stake and, without an infusion of additional support, as some forecasted, the ramifications could be dire. Rev. C. K. Powell, missionary for the Presbyterian Synod of Colorado, believed that social degeneration was very possible unless the church stepped in quickly.



The social conditions here are much perturbed. Christianity alone can fill the breach; living missionaries must carry the message; for the safety and welfare of our entire country Colorado and Wyoming must have the gospel. Either the gospel must roll into these hills or valleys, or heated passions among discontented people will roll down a deluge of fire and destruction.<sup>10</sup>

Rev. T. C. Kirkwood, superintendent of home missions for the Colorado Synod of the Presbyterian Church, often spoke of untouched areas or "waste places" for evangelical work and a desire to "open new work." Although regional and district superintendents of the Presbyterian Church had long been desirous of expanding the church's influence, the national board could not commit to him the necessary men and money for the task. At the turn of the century when missions were being established in Alaska, Mexico and the Caribbean, missionaries in the American West reiterated that their work was far from finished. In 1912, according to a Baptist observer, Wyoming was still "one of the most spiritually destitute states in the land."<sup>11</sup>

Further complicating the process of Western evangelism in general was inter-church competition for territory. In principle, all Protestant denomina-

10. *Fifty-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New York: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1895), p. 15.

11. *Missions* 3 (June 1912): 490.

tions acted together to promote Christianity. But the political reality was something less than amiable accord because efforts by one church group were interpreted as a threat or challenge by another. It was what Bishop Talbot called a matter of Christian statesmanship.<sup>12</sup> The American Baptist Home Mission Society considered territorial rivalry not as an obstacle but rather a challenge to its cause.



It is not proselytism to plant the standard of truth anywhere. It is loyalty to Christ. . . . Not to provide for these [people] is to waste in the West what we gained at great cost in the East.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, the American Baptist Home Mission Society believed that interference among denominations was unlikely because the field was too large.<sup>14</sup> Presbyterians, on the other hand, were not so confident. In 1891, the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions acknowledged requests for churches and ministers throughout the West but declined to respond to them all, believing "it would be better to leave the field open to some other denomination." Nor would it offer to support new extensions when other areas required immediate attention.<sup>15</sup> At the same time the General Conference of the Presbyterian Church empowered colporteurs and ministers to follow the lead of Sunday school missionaries and organize Sunday schools wherever possible.

12. *Some Account of the History, Growth and Needs of the Wyoming and Idaho Mission* [Episcopal Church] (Philadelphia: Avil Printing Company, n.d.), p. 17; Ethelbert Talbot, "Some Elements of the Missionary Spirit": A Sermon . . . (Atchinson, Kansas: Haskell Printing Company, 1888), pp. 15-17. Both publications in Francis Donaldson Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming. Hereafter American Heritage Center will be referred to as, AHC.

13. *Fiftieth Annual Report of the American Baptist Home Mission Society . . .* (New York: American Baptist Home Mission Rooms, 1882), p. 51.

14. *Sixty-Sixth Annual Report of the American Baptist Home Mission Society . . .* (New York: American Baptist Home Mission Society, 1898), p. 65.

15. *Twenty-first Annual Report of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New York: Presbyterian House, 1891), p. 15.

Denominational preference put additional pressure upon missionaries who were already struggling to meet the needs of the territory given to them. Beginning in 1909 Episcopal Bishop N. S. Thomas worked hard to broaden the Episcopal influence in Wyoming by enlisting the assistance of lay people. He listened to their difficulties and constructively encouraged them to expand their activities and services. At the same time he was not afraid to let his disappointments be known. For example, frustrated with Guy Kagey's struggles in Southern Carbon County, Thomas bluntly asked, "Why does it come that we have no Sunday School in a good church center like Dixon? Can't you manage it?"<sup>16</sup>



Guy Kagey tried to instill his  
 solution along pragmatic and  
 uninterestingly ecumenical lines.

You ask me why there is no  
 Sunday School in Dixon. It is  
 because our Christian or  
 Campbellite brethren have estab-  
 lished a Sunday School here. I  
 advised them that so long as they  
 have a Sunday School we would  
 not organize. They do not have  
 any Sunday School in Baggs or  
 Savery as we have organized there.  
 In this locality I do not think it  
 would be wise to have two or more  
 Sunday Schools; one school at each  
 station I think is enough. . . . It  
 does not pay to be antagonistic . . .  
 I feel so long as all Christians are  
 working for one and the same  
 purpose it doesn't make much  
 difference to what organization  
 they belong, so one Sunday School  
 is as good as another.<sup>17</sup>

Surprisingly, Thomas agreed with Kagey's argument. However, Thomas stipulated that if the Campbellites at-

tempted to start a Sunday school in Savery or Baggs, then the Episcopalians should start a Sunday school in Dixon.<sup>18</sup>

As Kagey discovered, Sunday school organization was made more difficult in communities where several churches competed for religious loyalties. In some instances lay people took matters into their own hands. The result was not a triumph of one denomination over another, but a kind of compromise solution in the form of non-denominational or "Union" Sunday schools. Union Sunday schools represented an early, simple form of Protestant ecumenism.<sup>19</sup> Like non-denominational services at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, Union Sunday school services were seen by lay people as a visible symbol of Christian unity within their community.

Clara McCarthy was among the list of advocates. In 1909 her family was among the newcomers establishing homesteads outside of Worland. With this influx of people, community life was growing and changing. On the subject of religion, she commented that there were three "little, weak Sunday Schools" in town. Upon reflection she thought it would be better if the churches would unite to form one church and "one lively Sunday School."<sup>20</sup>

To Clara and other lay people, denominational rivalries mattered very little in regard to Sunday schools. Such distinctions were not as important as long as basic Christian education was available to their children, even if the Sunday school was a Union Sunday school. In fact, Union Sunday schools were considered by some lay people as ideal organizations for religious education.<sup>21</sup> According to an anonymous writer in the *Carbon County Journal*, a Sunday school did not need to link it-

self to a denomination, because it was "an institution by itself."<sup>22</sup> When a Union school was formed in Manville through the union of the Congregational and Methodist Sunday schools an observer wrote, "There should never have been but one school."<sup>23</sup>

Mainline Protestant denominations did not view Union Sunday schools in such pragmatic terms. They opposed the organization of Union Sunday schools and admonished their missionaries and ministers to organize Sunday schools under their respective denominations or under the supervision of a neighboring church. If nothing else, Sunday schools should be equipped with the respective literature of that denomination. The Sunday School Union Committee of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church concluded that "attempts at Union schools is [sic] not wise, when schools can be put under the fostering care of some denomination."<sup>24</sup> Taking a different, conciliatory stance was the Colorado Conference of the Congregational Church. It found the concept of Union schools doctrinally well suited to them and approved the organization of Union schools until such time as the local congregation determined otherwise.<sup>25</sup>

Union or denominational, Sunday schools were a viable means of fostering Protestant evangelism in Wyoming. On the national and regional levels denominational boards worked to promote and support the organization of Sunday schools through missionaries, books, and periodicals. At the local level missionaries, ministers and Sunday school workers carried the process further by attempting to secure the Sunday school's hold within the community and expand its influence.

The mere organization of Sunday school did not and could not ensure its own success. Like any social organiza-

16. Letter from N. S. Thomas to Guy E. Kagey, April 7, 1915, General Correspondence, Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

17. Letter from Guy Kagey to N. S. Thomas, April 15, 1915, General Correspondence, Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

18. Letter from N. S. Thomas to Guy Kagey, April 28, 1915, General Correspondence, Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

19. Szasz, *The Protestant Clergy*... p. 19.

20. Letter from Clara McCarthy to Mrs. E. D. Taylor, n.d. [ca. 1909], Clara McCarthy Papers, Historical Research and Publications, Division of Parks and Cultural Resources, Wyoming Department of Commerce. Hereafter Historical Research and Publications will be noted as HR&P.

21. *Grand Encampment Herald*, October 2, 1903, p. 2.

22. *Carbon County Journal*, December 6, 1879, p. 4.

23. *Lusk Herald*, March 14, 1895, p. 5.

24. *Journal of the Second Session of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1889* (Evanston: Uinta Chieftain Print, n.d.), pp. 36-37.

25. *Minutes of the Congregational Association of Colorado, 1877, and Statistics of the Churches* (Colorado Springs: Franklin Printing House, 1878), pp. 7-8.

tion, Sunday schools were member dependent. Initially, a Sunday school's future seemed bright, but at times the public might have to be coaxed or at least reminded to attend Sunday school. Typical was the attitude expressed by an anonymous writer in the *Crook County Monitor*: "Come to Sunday school."<sup>26</sup> This direct phrase was both a personal affirmation as well as a publicity statement. Sunday school was obviously important to this individual to the extent that the community should support it, too.

Without adequate support from the community or congregation, a Sunday school ceased to function. To prevent this from happening, Sunday school workers used the local press as a public medium to promote Sunday school. They praised continued and growing attendance and complained about the decrease or noticeable lack of attendance and devotion. They knew that Sunday schools could start out with the best of intentions and could easily disappear for lack of attention. More than anything else they did not want to see their beloved institution fall to the wayside due to idleness, neglect or apathy. "The Pleasant Valley Sunday school is still a success," wrote an anonymous person in the *Wheatland World*. "Come, everyone and help it along."<sup>27</sup>

Ministers, missionaries, and Sunday school workers used various descriptive words in newspaper articles to attract new members to Sunday school. *Success, flourishing, prosperous, well attended* or *increasing* suggested a large following or conveyed a sense of growth. A common advertising technique was to publish or infer attendance figures. Large numbers were desirable, small ones frowned upon. Rev. R. F. Paxton of the Wheatland Congregational Church was encouraged by a past week's attendance at the Sunday school but in a public challenge to readers of the *Wheatland World* pondered, "I wonder if we can't beat it next Sun-

day."<sup>28</sup> Constant attendance at the Banner Sunday School seemed to give its supporters some assurance that it would be around for a long time.<sup>29</sup> A couple of years later a Banner correspondent proudly announced, "We have a regular Sunday school . . ."<sup>30</sup> The Stewart Sunday School in Goshen County had to purchase more chairs "to accommodate a steadily increasing attendance."<sup>31</sup> The most confident statement was expressed privately by Rev. C. M. Sanders, Congregationalist home missionary to Cheyenne. He reported that his Sunday school classes were in no danger of withering away. "Our S. S. [Sunday Schools] are larger than the day schools. Show me the place which can beat that. Does it not speak well for [the] Home Miss. [Missionary] Ch.[Church]!"<sup>32</sup> Such a statement was the envy of every Sunday school worker, but it also was the result of much hard work.

To encourage Sunday school attendance among children, churches organized attendance contests and Sunday school rallies. Ribbons and prizes were awarded to children who brought new students into school or who had the longest Sunday school attendance record. These events enlivened Sunday school as both a social and religious activity and were a welcome deviation to the children from the rote drilling that was the usual religious method of learning. From an outside perspective, a successful rally signaled that a Sunday school was well established. Following a rally by Goshen and Fort Laramie Sunday schools, a commentator in the *Goshen County Journal* concluded that "Sabbath School work in Goshen County is rapidly coming to the front."<sup>33</sup>

Another technique was to highlight events that had an entertainment value. The Sundance Methodist

Church offered Sunday school children a free ticket to stereoscopic entertainment.<sup>34</sup> Musical programs also had a positive effect. The purchase of an organ for the Sunday school, often a notable acquisition for a Sunday school, provided musical entertainment as well as instruction for the children. In an attempt to educate boys and young men in religious values and ethics a few religious organizations tried to make Sunday school seem more appealing to them through boys' and men's days.

The success of all these efforts were contingent upon the receptiveness of Sunday school participants. Both community interest and personal commitment had to be present if the Sunday school was to survive, especially if a community hoped to one day attract a resident minister. Among devout supporters there was no excusable reason to expect the worse. That the Sunday school or a Sunday school activity should have a large attendance seemed self-evident because Sunday school was inherently beneficial for everyone. Anything less than this resulted in disconcerting notes about poor attendance and accusations of laziness, apathy and disinterest. That Sunday school attendance should falter even a little was inexcusable.

Attendance was often anything but balanced between the sexes. When May Beeso of Banner wrote, "We girls are having a real nice Sabbath school . . .," girls were obviously the only gender at Sunday school.<sup>35</sup> That females usually outnumbered males in Sunday schools was not unusual or surprising. According to Victorian standards, upholding religious obligations was a responsibility that lay principally with women. Women more than men were the principle motivators behind religious activities. Women more than men openly sought religious organization, and they gave missionaries and ministers the greatest support for organizing a religious service, Sunday school or church. To some observers a woman's personality, conscience and sympathetic nature endeared her

26. *Crook County Monitor*, May 19, 1905, p. 1.

27. *Wheatland World*, February 14, 1913, p. 2.

28. *Ibid.*, January 31, 1913, p. 1.

29. *Sheridan Post*, October 23, 1890, p. 4.

30. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1892, p. 4.

31. *Goshen County Journal*, May 21, 1914, p. 1.

32. Letter from C. M. Sanders to David B. Coe, April 22, 1877, American Home Missionary Society Papers, Amistad Research Center, Tilton Hall, Tulane University, New Orleans; see also *Cheyenne Daily Sun*, June 27, 1878, p. 4.

33. *Goshen County Journal*, December 5, 1915, p. 5.

34. *Crook County Monitor*, June 7, 1912, p. 1.

35. *Sheridan Post*, May 14, 1897, p. 4.

to Sunday school and to religion in general.<sup>36</sup>

Young men, on the other hand, seemed to have a tendency to avoid Sunday school. The reasons given for their inactivity were that they had poor Biblical instruction, did not realize the importance of religion in their personal lives, or identified Sunday school with childhood.<sup>37</sup> The presence of idle men and rambunctious boys on the streets rather than in Sunday school was a common, distressful sight to strict Sabbath observers. By not availing themselves of a proper religious education, these Sunday loafers were judged prone to mischief and a potential burden to their community.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the best intentions for organizing Sunday schools, their future was never assured. The conditions under which they existed were sometimes less than ideal, particularly in rural areas. Distance, weather, and the necessity to work determined when and how many children or adults would attend Sunday school. Basin, Wyoming residents feared that the building they used would collapse.<sup>39</sup> More harmful was personal indifference to Sunday schools. In fact, disinterest was the cause of most Sunday school closures. Jonathan Clearwaters, Methodist Episcopal Sunday school missionary, found that in a survey of Methodist Episcopal Sunday schools "a few have fallen asleep, and a few into the hands of brand-blotters," [individuals who apparently sought to discredit

the good intention of Sunday schools].<sup>40</sup>

Sometimes schools could be revived or "reorganized." In Upton, a Sunday school was organized at the Christian Church with "bright prospects for . . . the future good of our children." Yet, good intentions were



THE METHODIST COLLECTION,  
DREW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, MADISON, NJ

Jonathan F. Clearwater, *Methodist State Sunday School Superintendent for Wyoming, 1908-1914* (from the *Board of Sunday School and the Department of Sunday School Publications of Methodist Episcopal Church Year Book: 1908*, New York: Eaton and Mains, date unknown).

not enough to sustain it, and the Sunday school was soon dissolved. Three years later the *Newcastle News-Journal* reported that a new Sunday school in Upton was "growing in interest."<sup>41</sup> The Parkman Sunday school was discontinued due to lack of interest. "We can't have a Bible-class of more than 2 or 3," the writer critically commented, "but if base ball is announced for Sunday afternoon we can have a whole town full of people."<sup>42</sup> Nearly a month later the Parkman Sunday school was reorganized with the hope that "all will take an interest in helping the work along,"<sup>43</sup> In Thermopolis a Methodist Sunday school was reorganized and had "new interests," though no mention was made as to what these new develop-

ments were.<sup>44</sup>

Nature could endanger a Sunday school. The Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918 forced the first-time closure of many Sunday schools. They were especially susceptible to changes in the seasons. Jonathan Clearwaters classified Sunday schools into two types. One was "winter school" which died with the onset of summer due to vacation or increased work in the fields but was reborn with the resumption of the school year. The other was "summer school" which floundered in winter due to adverse weather conditions.<sup>45</sup>

Summer proved to be the most difficult time for Sunday schools. As one individual put it, summer tested a Sunday school group's "loyalty to Christ."<sup>46</sup> In rural areas a need for help in the fields resulted in a decrease in Sunday school attendance. In urban areas summertime relaxation flourished at the expense of Sunday school. Fishing or traveling in the mountains seemed more important than church itself.<sup>47</sup> In Glenrock Sunday schools were closed so that teachers and students could spend their leisure time "automobiling."<sup>48</sup>

Winter was not much better. Cold weather provided an excellent excuse for not going to Sunday school. Writing from Fort Bridger, Mrs. J. B. Anson informed Frank Moore that "our School progressed very nicely all Summer and Fall but the winter is so severe and we live so far apart that it was very difficult for us to meet Every Sunday."<sup>49</sup> Rev. Thomas M. Coffey, a Baptist missionary minister in the Beaver Creek area, tried to change history. After organizing three Sunday schools in the area, he was determined not to let them lie idle or wither away. The

36. *Laramie Daily Sentinel*, September 27, 1870, p. 3; Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion: Volume 1: The Irony of It All, 1893-1919* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 265; "Second Annual Report General Missionary J. F. Blodgett, Worland, Wyoming" [1915] in *Wyoming Baptist Bulletin* (Lander 1916), 9.

37. Boylan, *Sunday School*, pp. 110-111; Frank Graves Cressey, *The Church and Young Men* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell and Company, 1904), pp. 50-57.

38. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, July 9, 1881, p. 3; *Lusk Herald*, February 14, 1895, p. 5; *Crook County Monitor*, December 8, 1897, p. 1; *Too Big To Go To Sabbath-School: A Story For Boys* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1869); Boylan, *Sunday Schools*, p. 111; Henry Y. Satterlee, "How the Church May retain Her Hold Upon Young Men After They Emerge From the Sunday School," *The Church Review and Ecclesiastical Register*, LV (October 1889): 187-194.

39. Letter from N. S. Thomas to M. B. Nash, 15 June 1915, General Correspondence - Basin, Wyoming Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

40. *Minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1914* (n.p., n.d.), n.p.

41. *Newcastle News-Journal*, February 20, 1904, p. 5; *News-Journal*, December 27, 1907, p. 5.

42. *Sheridan Post*, September 10, 1903, p. 3.

43. *Ibid.*, October 15, 1903, p. 3.

44. *Thermopolis Record*, January 12, 1907, p. 1.

45. *Minutes of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1913* (n.p., n.d.), n.p.

46. *Crook County Monitor*, August 16, 1913, p. 1.

47. Letter from William H. Haupt to N. S. Thomas, July 19, 1915 - August 2, 1915; General Correspondence, Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

48. Letter From Alpha W. Barlow to N. S. Thomas, May 13, 1915, General Correspondence, Glenrock, Episcopal Church Collection, AHC.

49. Moore, p. 112.

schools were well-supplied with literature and had sufficient public support, and he reported that "we are continuing the schools through the winter months, contrary to the custom here."<sup>50</sup>

To Coffey and others the Sunday school was more than just a means of religious education. It was a focal point for religion itself. National Protestant and interdenominational boards arranged programs and personnel to organize and support Sunday schools in rural areas and small towns. At the local level missionaries, ministers and Sunday school workers continued the process further. Typical was Rev. H. A. Toland's request to Casper residents in the *Natrona Tribune* to support a newly formed Methodist Episcopal Sunday school: "All who are interested along this line of Christian work come and help us."<sup>51</sup> Through missionary zeal, individual interest and community support, the evangelical mission of Sunday schools would succeed. The ultimate objective was to make Sunday school an important part of a community's religious life. The task was not an easy one. Various personal and cultural factors within the community would determine whether or not Sunday schools would become a religious force in an individual's life.

## II. Religious Education

By 1880 the Sunday school was a well-developed and well-equipped institution for religious instruction. Its values could not be stressed enough by Sunday school advocates. Church leaders saw the schools as the means to educate youth on church doctrine and bring them into the fold of the church. For others, Sunday school education taught Christian beliefs, morals and ethics essential for a good and godly life. As the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church determined, "those children [who attend Sunday school] will make the most Godly, stable and useful Christians, who are most thoroughly grounded in

the truths of God's word."<sup>52</sup>

Sunday school literature was one way of educating children, youth and young adults. It brought religion directly to the individual, and was a particularly useful medium in areas which had no organized religious services. There was no shortage of material on the market. Denominational and non-denominational religious printing houses published voluminous studies, periodicals, and books for children and adults. Within the West, the *Rocky Mountain Sunday School Times* was recognized by the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church as "an able exposition of the Sunday school lesson and a first class Sunday School newspaper."<sup>53</sup> For their part, congregations created Sunday school libraries in order to make religious literature available to local children. Public statistics and statements about volumes acquired were intended to reflect a congregation's religiosity as well as its strong commitment to the religious upbringing of its children.

The traditional format for a child's religious education was organized Sunday school classes. Sunday school pedagogy rested largely upon rote learning or, as it was commonly known, "drilling." It was not the most effective means of instruction, and de-

# WYOMING Territorial Sunday School Convention,

HELD AT  
Baptist Church, Laramie, June 2d, 3d and 4th, 1885.

## PROGRAMME.

### TUESDAY EVENING

8:00—Devotional Exercises, REV. J. T. KILLEN  
8:30—The S. S. Convention, REV. S. H. HUBER

### WEDNESDAY MORNING

9:00—Devotional Exercises, REV. S. H. HUBER  
9:30—Organization, Reports, Miscellaneous Business.  
10:30—What is the best plan for opening and closing the School? A. S. PEABODY  
11:00—How to conduct the Quarterly Review, REV. G. A. HERTZOG  
11:30—How to interest a class, C. P. ARNOLD

### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON

2:00—Song Service, Conducted by A. S. PEABODY  
2:30—How to prepare the lesson, REV. W. H. BONNER  
3:00—What system of Rewards should be adopted to increase the efficiency of the school? REV. A. L. T. EWERT  
3:30—How shall we induce Sunday-school scholars to attend church? REV. W. E. HAMILTON  
4:00—What plan should be adopted for extending the Sunday-school work in our Territory? DR. J. H. HAYFORD

A. S. PEABODY COLLECTION, AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

*Wyoming Territorial Sunday School Association 1885 program.*

spite the intrinsic value of Sunday school education, drilling could tax the patience of both teacher and pupil. In a notice about an upcoming Sunday school concert, an anonymous Evanston Sunday school worker wrote: "Great pains have been taken in training the children, and a pleasant entertainment is expected."<sup>54</sup> By the latter part of the nineteenth century, Sunday schools were looking at graded lesson plans and contemplating current pedagogical techniques for Sunday school instruction.

Because drilling was the principle instructional procedure, the effectiveness of Sunday school instruction was measured by the students' ability to

50. *The Baptist Home Missionary Monthly* XXVII (January 1905): 31.

51. *Natrona Tribune*, September 6, 1894, p. 3.

52. *Minutes of the Twelfth Session of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* . . . (Denver: Rocky Mountain News Steam Printing House, 1874), p. 22.

53. *Official Minutes of the Sixth Session of the Wyoming Mission* . . . 1893 (Newcastle: Putnam & Nichols, 1893), pp. 19-20.

54. *Uinta Chieftain*, December 24, 1881, p. 3.

recite Biblical passages, lists or lines for Biblical plays. Through these performances the children demonstrated their religious knowledge before the congregation, and the congregation was in turn convinced that the children were indeed learning. At the Vaughn Union Sunday School in Goshen County students learned "...many verses of Scripture. Some of the Seniors can name the books of the Bible in their order."<sup>55</sup>

J. H. Hayford, publisher of the *Laramie Sentinel*, approved of children's programs because he felt they gave children a sense of worth, stressed the importance of Sunday school in the church and community and trained youth in morals.<sup>56</sup>

Overseeing the Sunday school program was a small bureaucracy of church officials. At the top was the minister who supervised officers below him and dictated the use and kind of Sunday school material. As spiritual leader his responsibility was to make sure that Sunday schools were places of education, redemption and salvation. He was not totally aloof from the children. Through children services, children's sermons or youth programs, he spoke directly to the children about citizenship, temperance, and doctrinal themes.

Concern for Sunday school education was often combined with the desire for greater religiosity in the community. Ministerial remarks tended to be brief and to the point, and like their fellow Sunday school advocates, they felt no need to explain the "why's" of attending Sunday school. The main point was to remind readers to be more conscientious in attending Sunday school. "Let all parents send their children to the Sunday school," wrote Rev. L. R. Bailey of Sundance.<sup>57</sup> Following the organization and good attendance of a young people's Sunday school class, Rev. C. L. DeLaBarre told other young adult readers of the *Wheatland World* that their presence was welcomed: "There is room for you and you are wanted,"<sup>58</sup> Rev. J. M. Robinson

of Thermopolis voiced a similar entreaty and added that the Presbyterian "Sabbath-school has suitable departments and classes for all old and young."<sup>59</sup> Rev. Watson of Grand Encampment's St. James Episcopal Mission reminded parents that they had a responsibility to their children's spiritual development, because "children should not be brought up in ignorance of matters of such vital importance to them."<sup>60</sup>

Below the minister in the Sunday school organization were several subordinate officers - superintendent, treasurer, and librarian. Of these, that of superintendent was the top post for lay people and thus of some prestige in the church. Being superintendent of a Sunday school did not require any formal educational training in Sunday school pedagogy. In many places superintendents were men of social standing in the community. Elsewhere, in many



AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

*A.S. Peabody, Laramie businessman and first president of the Wyoming Territorial Sunday School Association, date unknown.*

small urban and rural churches, women were Sunday school superintendents. Because of the standards of the time, their experience with children, their secular occupations as teachers and because of a mother-child bonding psy-

chology, women qualified women for this position. Their appointments may have been pragmatic as well as sincere in that they were probably more willing than men to assume the task. Nevertheless, being superintendents provided women with the only real opportunity they had to participate in church affairs.<sup>61</sup> Not surprisingly, women superintendents did not receive the same credit that the press and mug books conferred upon male superintendents.

At the base of the organizational pyramid were Sunday school teachers. Again Sunday school teachers were usually women and the choice seemed a natural one. Within the social milieu, women were often public schoolteachers and were the caretakers of domestic life. Subsequently, religious education naturally fell to them. Many women who were active in social reforms also took an avid interest in Sunday school because Sunday school instruction complemented their civic duty of instructing young minds in morality, family life and community values.

Sunday school teachers had the most important task because the success of any Sunday school program reflected directly upon their abilities as Sunday school teachers. Subsequently, churches and Sunday school workers placed great emphasis upon choosing teachers. Basically there were two selection criteria. One was an ability to teach. Once in a while churches appointed Sunday school teachers who could not teach despite their sincere desires to do so. As the Sunday school committee of the Wyoming Methodists lamented "unintelligent church members are given classes of children to teach, simply because they are church members, regardless of their fitness to teach the young and active mind in things Divine."<sup>62</sup> Rev. W. C. Merritt, a field worker for the International Sunday School Association, took a more philosophical stance and told participants at the Big Horn County Sunday School Convention to look for teachers

55. *Goshen County Journal*, May 7, 1914, p. 5.

56. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, June 16, 1888, p. 3.

57. *Crook County Monitor*, November 11, 1896, p. 1.

58. *Wheatland World*, May 22, 1903, p. 7.

59. *Thermopolis Record*, August 7, 1909, p. 1.

60. *Grand Encampment Herald*, March 10, 1905, p. 3.

61. Szasz, *The Protestant Clergy...* p. 78.

62. *Minutes of the Ninth Session of the Wyoming Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church...* 1896 (Evanston: Press Printing Company, 1896), p. 21.



SWEETWATER COUNTY MUSEUM, GREEN RIVER

*Rock Springs First Congregational Sunday School Class, 1893-1894.*

“who could look forward and see in the boy the embryo man.”<sup>63</sup> A second criteria was that teachers be Christian. This condition meant that an individual’s character and personality exhibited qualities befitting a devout, religious instructor.

Support for Sunday school teachers was deemed equally as important as selecting them. Occasionally outstanding teachers were publicly noted for their work. At the Methodist Episcopal Church in Big Horn a certain Mrs. Dickenson was acclaimed as an excellent teacher of small children. “Let everybody send their small girls and boys to come under the management of that teacher.”<sup>64</sup> Parents also had an obligation to see that teachers did their work. “For the sake of the young,” wrote Rev. E. J. Robinson of Banner, “let us do our duty.”<sup>65</sup>

Because a student’s religious instruction was conditioned by a Sunday school teacher’s ability, teacher training quickly assumed importance within Sunday school circles. As early as 1881, N. D. Hillis reported to the American Sunday-School Union that at least five Sunday schools in Wyoming were known to have instructional seminars for Sunday school teachers.<sup>66</sup> At denominational conferences held during the latter part of the nineteenth century,

teacher training was incorporated into the programs. In a related move, workers from different Sunday schools organized county Sunday school conventions to discuss teacher training.

Irregularly held, a county convention was somewhat akin to a teachers’ institute since its purpose was to help Sunday school teachers become better teachers. Speakers did not attempt to stress one lesson plan over another but concentrated upon teaching methods. How Christian education was actually discussed beyond this is not clear. The only sources on these conventions are newspaper accounts which tend to be vague or generalized. Evidently by listing speech titles and participants, the newspapers intended to give such programs credibility. In addition, these gatherings seemed to paint a picture of Christian unity, superficial and brief though that might be.

A similar institutional framework existed at the state level under the title of the Wyoming Territorial (after July 1890, State) Sunday School Association. The Association was organized in 1881 through the efforts of American Sunday-School Union missionary N. D. Hillis. As a parliamentary organization, it elected officers and held annual meetings. Unfortunately, the official proceedings are apparently lost, and all surviving references to it are from local newspapers.

The Association had two objec-

tives. First, it sought to establish new Sunday schools across the territory. This evangelical endeavor was idealistic because the Association did not have the financial and administrative resources to carry out this mission. All it could do was to become a visible symbol of Christian evangelism in Wyoming and encourage the organization of Sunday schools.

Nonetheless the Association’s members believed that through their participation and activism they could be in the forefront of evangelism. The very assemblage of Christian workers from various denominations at the annual meetings discussing and promoting Christian education was itself seen as a sign that Christianity was an active force in the state. They applauded the progress of Sunday school organization while at the same time recognized that many areas yet remained untouched. They hoped that the religious education of children and eventual diffusion of Christian tenets would result in the Christianizing of Wyoming. The mission of Sunday school workers statewide was aptly stated in the title of a speech at the 1904 annual meeting: “Christ for Wyoming and Wyoming for Christ.”<sup>67</sup>

The Association’s primary purpose was to discuss methods of Sunday school instruction. This educational objective was outlined at the 1883 annual meeting:



The object of such a gathering is to bring together the Sunday school workers from all parts of the Territory to consult and advise, to exchange ideas and experiences upon all matters of Sunday schools, to aid and encourage each other, [and] to awaken new interest in and devise new ways for making their labors more effective in instilling moral and religious training into the hearts of the young.<sup>68</sup>

Annual meetings of the Association, like those at the county level, were

63. *Basin Republican*, August 30, 1906, p. 1.

64. *Sheridan Post*, March 19, 1903, supplement, n.p.

65. *Ibid.*, April 9, 1903, supplement, n.p.

66. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, July 16, 1881, p. 3.

67. *Wyoming Press*, September 1, 1904, p. 4.

68. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, June 2, 1883, p. 3.

similar to teacher's conventions. Lecturers discussed methods of Bible study, lesson preparation, discipline, attendance, use of the blackboard, the role of the Sunday school within the church and community, temperance and the religious conversion of children. In addition to attending lectures, participants were admonished to keep abreast of new methods and publications on religious and secular pedagogy. For its part the Association promoted the use of county conventions and tried to keep itself abreast of Sunday school activities across Wyoming. The importance of Christian education and pedagogy was further expounded to convention participants by national Sunday school advocates such as Mary Lamereaux and Mary Lathrop of the periodical *Sunday School Union*, Marion Lawrance, Rev. W. C. Merritt and William Reynolds of the International Sunday School Association, American Sunday School Union personnel and representatives of neighboring state Sunday school associations.

Scheduled between sessions were interfaith services, wherein participants prayed and sang together as gestures of their common Christian faith. If nothing else these intermittent activities served as a respite from the series of serious talks and discussions. Individual performances could be quite entertaining. At the 1908 convention a reporter noted that a singer known only as Miss Peabody "sang even better than usual."<sup>69</sup>

The Association's annual conventions were important not only because of what was spoken but who attended them. Due to the concentration of the population along the Union Pacific Railroad, Southern Wyoming representatives from Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist churches tended to dominate the Association's annual meetings. Inefficient communication lines and long distances across the territory restricted the ability of the Association to achieve a truly statewide representation until 1890. By the turn of the century most denominations and counties within the state were represented at the state conventions.

Ministers of reformed Protestant denominations dominated the early conventions as both speakers and organizers. They stressed educational techniques and objectives and the role of Sunday schools in the evangelical crusade. From their standpoint proper teacher training was imperative if children were to grow up to become responsible Christian adults.

As the Association grew more and more ecumenical in its membership, it also became increasingly administered by prominent civic laymen from all walks of Wyoming life. Among them were John Hoyt (governor), Bryant Brooks (governor), I. C. Whipple (businessman), A. S. Peabody (businessman), M. C. Brown (judge), J. H. Hayford (editor), C. P. Arnold (attorney), D. W. France (businessman), L. L. Newton (businessman), J. W. Lacey (supreme court justice), H. A. Coffeen (businessman), Aven Nelson (university professor), and C. N. Potter (supreme court justice). Their real interests in the organization, however, could vary greatly. The roles of Governors Hoyt and Brooks, based upon their brief mention in the newspapers, appear merely superficial. Aven Nelson, on the other hand, not only was a member but became president of the Association and an active member of the International Sunday School Association.

While prominent civic men and ministers dominated the ranks of officers and speakers, the majority in attendance were women. The reason was simple. Mainly women were the Sunday school teachers and, in some localities, Sunday school superintendents. It was for their benefit that Sunday school conventions were held. In time women, too, became active within the Association as speakers, discussing the teacher's role, lesson planning, student preparation and the intertwined roles of family life and Sunday school education.

Within the administration itself women were generally relegated to the position of executive secretary, the primary responsibilities of which seemed to be correspondence and record keeping. There were two exceptional moments. In 1891 and 1895 respectively, Lydia Fitch and Cora McDonald were

elected president of the Association. While nothing is known about McDonald she was probably very much like Fitch, a woman very active in social and religious causes in Laramie. In any case, their election to the presidency was no small matter and reflective of their staunch interest in Sunday school work; otherwise they would not have appeared qualified to preside over the convention.

The Wyoming State Sunday School Association was a loose knit ecumenical organization that advocated the organization of Sunday schools across the state and improved teaching methods, but in reality it had no power or ability to effect any real cause. What the Association actually accomplished from an administrative perspective is difficult to determine. The Association's correspondence, district reports, speeches and other records have long since been lost. Without these records it is impossible to assess how the Association addressed the questions of Sunday schools as a force of evangelism and religious education. Nor have any of its members left substantive accounts about the Association. Newspaper reports of the annual conventions are the only source of information about the Association, but newspaper coverage varied from city to city. In Laramie under the watchful eye of Hayford, a detailed account of the proceedings was published, while other city editors gave it less or no publicity.

The Wyoming State Sunday School Association was but one representative of many individuals and organizations committed to religious education. Their common and seemingly self-evident premise was that Sunday school had a positive affect upon the future character of its students. Only through proper instructional methods were Christian ideas carried home and executed. Despite these seemingly high objectives there was no qualitative method for determining the long term effects of Sunday schools. How well Christian education was taught and followed would only be seen in the future actions of its recipients. As William Schureman, a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary in Northern

69. *Laramie Boomerang*, April 3, 1908, p. 1.

Colorado and Southeastern Wyoming, wrote:



Eternity alone, will reveal the helpful influence of that little ranch Sunday school in shaping and moulding [sic] the characters of these children, many of whom received their first religious impressions from the lessons therein taught.<sup>70</sup>

### III. Social Values

In his tale "The Story of the Good Little Boy" Mark Twain points out the irony of Christian rhetoric in Sunday school literature compared to the reality of everyday life.<sup>71</sup> Nonetheless, to serious supporters of Sunday schools and other religious organizations for youth, religious literature and organizations were considered necessary in guiding the social and moral lives of children and youth. Tract societies and religious publishing houses distributed a variety of literature and educational material for adolescent and children programs. Among the social leagues and organizations for young people in reformed Protestant denominations were Christian Endeavor (Congregational), Epworth League (Methodist Episcopal), Young People's Baptist Society (Baptist) and Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor (Presbyterian). The Boys' Brigade of the First Congregational Church of Cheyenne was a para-military organization in name only. Its objective was "the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys" and the promotion of social values for "true Christian manliness."<sup>72</sup> Another Congregational youth group, The Boy's Club of the Knights of the

Round Table strove "to achieve Christian Knightliness."<sup>73</sup> Although different in title, each sought in one way or another to shape the development of Christian character in young people by providing acceptable social outlets for young adults or by being a positive influence in their social environment.

Newspaper editors tended to support these programs as they did other religious activities that appeared to contribute to the community's general welfare and social improvement. The *Wyoming Republican* in Sundance, Wyoming applauded the organization of a Christian Endeavor Society within the community:



We are glad to note the fact, that our young folks are becoming interested in a work that will make them better and more useful to society.<sup>74</sup>

When the Epworth League was organized in Casper February, 1894 the *Natrona Tribune* hoped that "all the young people of Casper will join it. There are no dues and good times are expected at the social and literary meetings."<sup>75</sup> The success of the Epworth League in Big Horn was due to "a most excellent class of young people in this place."<sup>76</sup> The organization of a Young People's Temperance League at the Manville Methodist Episcopal Church had as its objective "the promotion of moral and social purposes" and according to the newspaper notice, it "promises to fill an acceptable place in the community."<sup>77</sup> The Young People's Union of Otto met with great success but there was the hope that if more could be enticed, "a great deal may be

accomplished."<sup>78</sup> Church outings or picnics were considered acceptable for both a child's enjoyment and the improvement of a child's social skills.

Proponents of civic improvements, newspaper editors viewed Sunday schools as positive contributions to society and personal development as well as extensions of church work. It thus seemed incumbent upon the community to support such a worthy endeavor. *Natrona Tribune* Editor J. Enos Wait saw a strong and apparently self-evident need for Sunday school: "Parents should see that their children attend, for the school is one of the best places for young people."<sup>79</sup> Echoing this feeling, the editor of the *Sundance Gazette* told his readers to "attend Sabbath school and encourage an institution worthy of your support."<sup>80</sup> In 1906 the first Sunday school in Worland was organized in a school house, and the editor of the *Worland Grit* hoped that it would be well-supported:



It is expected that all who can will attend, as the children here have had very little religious training, and when opportunity presents itself parents should see that their children attend.<sup>81</sup>

Other Sunday school functions such as picnics, programs and outings received equitable endorsement because they were seen as providing an acceptable atmosphere for socialization among young adults and children. A Sunday school picnic for the Laramie and Cheyenne Sunday schools was viewed by J. H. Hayford, editor of the *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, as helping to increase "interest among scholars and cultivate good feelings all around."<sup>82</sup>

Hayford's statements with re-

70. W. H. Schureman, "Pioneer Sabbath School Missions in Colorado and Wyoming, 1898-1923," unpublished report, 1931, Western History Collection, Denver Public Library.

71. Mark Twain, "The Story of the Good Little Boy," Charles Neider, ed., *The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), pp. 66-70.

72. First Cheyenne Company, First Battalion, Wyoming, Boys' Brigade Constitution, p. 6, First Congregational Church of Cheyenne Records, HR&P.

73. Boy's Club, Knight of the Round Table Constitution, p. 41, First Congregational Church of Cheyenne Records, HR&P.

74. *Wyoming Republican*, November 20, 1889, p. 6; see also *Lusk Herald*, December 29, 1892, p. 5; *Sheridan Post*, April 7, 1892, p. 4; *Fremont Clipper*, January 11, 1895, p. 1.

75. *Natrona Tribune*, February 8, 1894, p. 3.

76. *Sheridan Post*, March 12, 1903, supplement, n.p.

77. *Converse County Herald*, October 31, 1901, p. 5.

78. *Big Horn County Rustler*, May 1, 1908, p. 2.

79. *Natrona Tribune*, July 22, 1891, p. 4.

80. *Sundance Gazette*, October 31, 1885, p. 8. See also *Sundance Gazette*, June 6, 1885, p. 8; February 20, 1886, p. 8; August 22, 1886, p. 8.

81. *Worland Grit*, February 1, 1906, p. 1.

82. *Laramie Daily Sentinel*, June 9, 1870, p. 3.



CARBON COUNTY MUSEUM, RAWLINS

*Episcopal Sunday School Class on the Platte River, date unknown.*

gard to Sunday schools were not merely sidelights to fill his paper. A devout and religious man as well as editor of the *Sentinel* during the 1870s and 1880s, Hayford championed social reform in Laramie, was a strong believer in the temperance movement and was an active member of the Laramie Chapter of the American Bible Society. Most of all he strongly supported religious devotion in Laramie. About Sunday schools, his opinion was no less than virulent because he saw Sunday schools instilling moral truths and the tenets of Christianity in young minds. The resulting benefits contributed not only to personal growth but to citizenship as well. Thus, Sunday schools were to him beneficial for Christians and non-Christians.<sup>83</sup> Under his direction the *Sentinel* even became an advertisement for Sunday school instruction. At the request of a Sunday school worker Hayford printed Sunday school lessons in his paper from February through April, 1881.<sup>84</sup>

As a conservative force for Protestant values, Sunday schools acquired a usefulness in other social circles.

Their value depended upon the nature of the issue and the viewpoint of the proponent. For example, by 1910 Casper school officials were asking students if they attended Sunday school. A student's response to this question coupled with other statements about activities, hobbies and interests became an indicator of his social skills. At the 1901 Carbon County Sunday School Convention, Prof. F. H. Roberts of Rawlins advocated the support of Sunday schools as a means of crime prevention.<sup>85</sup> The most obvious attempt in this regard occurred in 1880 when a Sunday school was organized at the Territorial Penitentiary in Laramie.<sup>86</sup> What transpired there is a matter of conjecture, but no doubt there was an attempt to evoke a penitent spirit from an incarcerated and legally incriminated audience. Nearly sixty years later, Biblical teaching was still seen as a way to combat juvenile delinquency.<sup>87</sup>

Sunday schools were also seen as a means to champion the cause of temperance. Temperance was not merely a minor sidelight but an integral part

of many Sunday school programs, one that complemented reform efforts by ministers and lay reformers in the community. Illustrating the need for temperance reform was not too difficult. Teachers had but to look at the lively atmosphere of saloons and gambling dens around them for examples of licentiousness, drunkenness and depravity. Beginning in 1882 the Wyoming Territorial Sunday School Association made temperance instruction a regular topic of discussion at its annual meetings. Interestingly, temperance education was later required in Wyoming public schools in 1886.<sup>88</sup> Whether or not Sunday schools, the Territorial Sunday School Association or people associated with Sunday schools played a role in this legislation is not known. Late in its history the Wyoming Women's Christian Temperance Union made Sunday schools a vehicle for their cause. In 1912 the WCTU claimed that Sunday school was "in the front ranks of the temperance army."<sup>89</sup>

Outside the church, Sunday school became equated with various civic causes. The premise was that the seemingly inherent goodness that characterized Sunday schools in religious circles could be used for civic purposes in social circles. For youth and sometimes young adults Sunday school provided a socially acceptable atmosphere. On a broader scale Sunday school became a favorable symbol for some reform and civic movements. For whatever purpose, Sunday school served as an acceptable example and in some cases a means toward an end. There is some question as to whether the Sunday school truly served these purposes because specific benefits are expressed vaguely and ambiguously. Whether or not Sunday schools truly contributed positively to individual social development or social programs could only be determined in a comprehensive sociological study.

83. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, February 5, 1881, p. 3; August 20, 1881, p. 3.

84. Sunday School lessons were also printed in the *Clugwater News* during the 1920s and the *Big Piney Examiner* from 1912 to 1913. It is not known how many Wyoming newspapers carried this feature.

85. *Carbon County Journal*, July 17, 1901, p. 1.

86. *Laramie Weekly Sentinel*, July 17, 1880, p. 3.

87. Child Evangelical Week, February 21 - February 28, 1960, Proclamations, Secretary of State Records, Wyoming State Archives; *Torrington News*, October 7, 1954, p. 6.

88. "Teaching Temperance in the Public Schools," *Session Laws of Wyoming Territory*. . . 1886 (Cheyenne: Vaughn and Montgomery, 1886), pp. 75-76.

89. *Report of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Wyoming* (Cheyenne: S. A. Bristol and Company, 1912), p. 38.

## IV. Conclusion

Sunday schools were a viable Protestant force in Wyoming. From 1867 to 1918 missionaries, ministers, colporteurs, religious publishers and civic leaders organized and supported Sunday schools as a tool for Christian education, Protestant evangelism and social values. Depending upon the cultural climate, a Sunday school could serve one or all of these purposes.

The underlining premise behind Sunday schools was that the schools were intrinsically beneficial for the individual and society. Because it was a religious organization, a Sunday school could receive more emphasis than a secular organization. In fact, Sunday school was an ideal social organization because it entailed conservative Protestant precepts that were easily interchangeable with other, complementary, social and civic values. Sunday school supporters sought not only the religious education of their children, they hoped

to mold and shape the future of society. The end result would be a moral individual and an orderly society.<sup>90</sup>

There is no way of knowing if Sunday schools achieved all or some of these objectives. Statistics provide evidence about the organization of Sunday schools but do not provide answers to more substantial questions about the schools themselves or the participants. There are no qualitative or quantitative means for measuring Sunday schools, religious conversions or morality. The social benefits were based upon observation or experience. Sunday school advocates believed some values to be self-evident and universally shared so that there was no real reason to explain the "whys" or in some cases the "hows." By themselves, such assumptions provide an interesting insight into how individuals perceived the importance and role of religion. Upon closer examination historians will find it difficult to determine if Sunday schools

90. Boylan, *Sunday Schools*, pp. 169-170.

successfully fulfilled all the religious and social aspirations held for them. ■

*The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Wyoming State Historical Society.*



PAUL JACQUES

CARL HALLBERG (1958-) IS SENIOR HISTORIAN AT THE WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES. RAISED IN ILLINOIS, HE HAS RESIDED IN CHEYENNE SINCE 1985. HALLBERG EARNED A B.A. IN HISTORY FROM AUGUSTANA COLLEGE IN ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS AND A M.A. IN HISTORY WITH A CONCENTRATION IN ARCHIVAL MANAGEMENT FROM COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY IN FORT COLLINS. HIS ARTICLES ARE PUBLISHED IN THE *Wyoming Annals*, *Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Notes*, *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* AND *the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*. CURRENTLY HE IS RESEARCHING F.W. OTT (1857-1909), A LARAMIE PUBLISHER.

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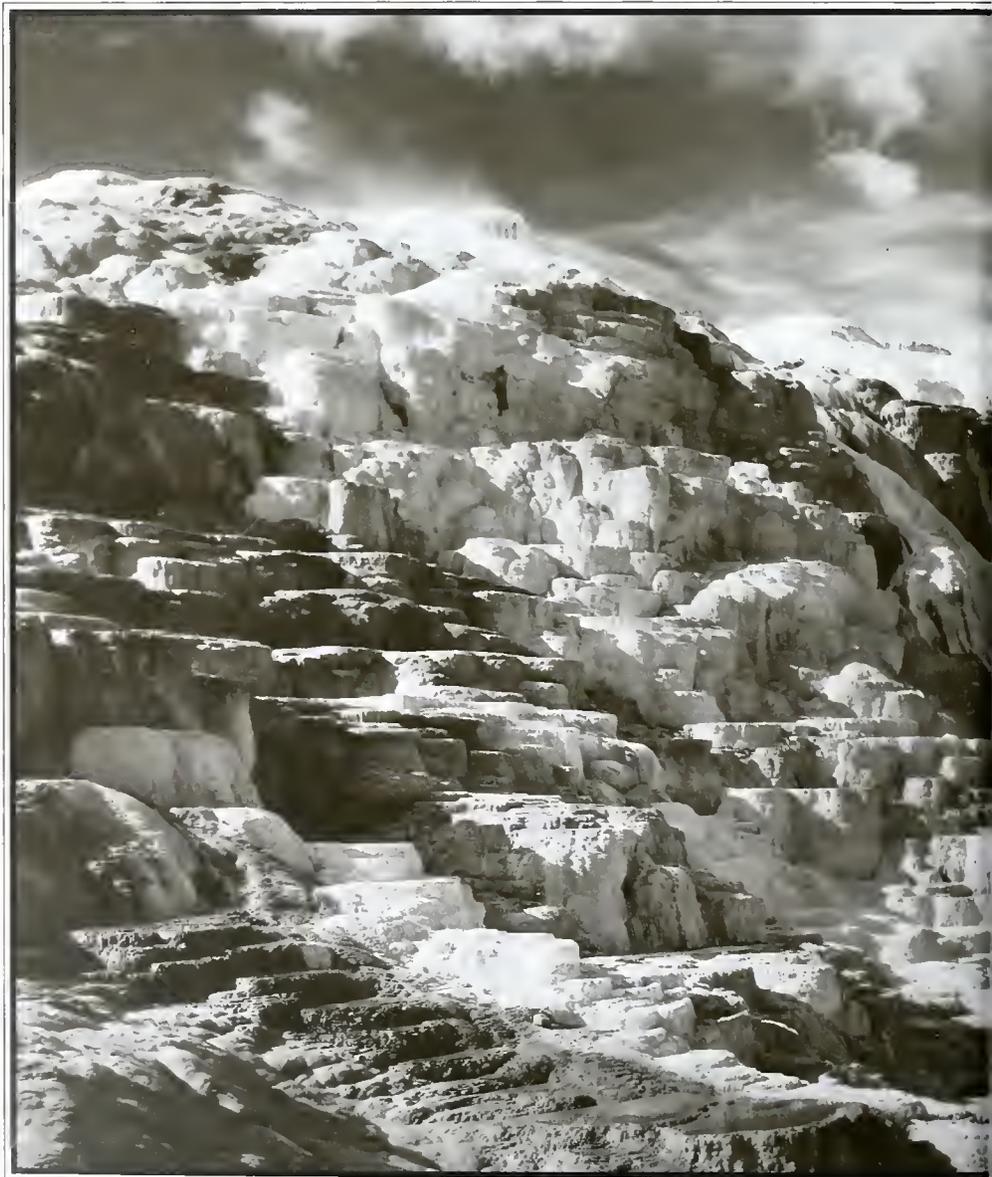
# “ALL THE FANTASTIC FORMS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE”

The Haynes Yellowstone Park Collection at Montana State University



by Rolf Swensen

“It’s simply wonderful [sic] to see them spout up 300 feet with a column of hot water for 5 or ten minutes, I have seen no one who can explain the process.” With these words, photographer F. Jay Haynes (1853-1921) described Excelsior and Old Faithful Geysers in a letter to his wife Lily on his first trip to Yellowstone National Park in 1881.<sup>1</sup> This item is only one of thousands of letters, books, guides, pamphlets, post cards, and other historical materials in the Haynes Collection, which is the centerpiece of Montana State University’s Yellowstone National Park Collection. Focusing on Yellowstone but also covering other parts of the American West, the Haynes Collection documents the activities of the Haynes family, noted photographers who also rank among the most remarkable concessionaires in a national park. The thousands of photographs in the Haynes Foundation Collection at the Montana Historical Society in Helena have received considerable attention, but the closely-related books and archival materials in the extensive Haynes Collection in Special Collections at Montana State University (MSU) Libraries in Boze-



1. F. J. Haynes to Lily Haynes, September 16, 1881, Haynes Yellowstone National Park Collection, MSU Libraries.

man have enjoyed only superficial published coverage, despite their utilization by scholars.

F. Jay Haynes, the founder of the "House of Haynes,"<sup>2</sup> was a talented and prolific photographer who possessed an aggressively ambitious nature.<sup>3</sup> After opening a successful photographic studio in Moorhead, Minnesota, in 1876, he quickly devel-

2. See Isabel Haynes, "The House of Haynes," printed open letter March, 1968, announcing the sale of the Haynes enterprises. This name is also used in "Dedication of the Haynes Room, Montana State University Library in Grateful Appreciation and Acknowledgment of the Gift of the Yellowstone National Park Manuscript Collection Accumulated by Jack Ellis Haynes and Isabel Haynes of Haynes, Inc., on this Special Occasion Honoring Mrs. Haynes, June 1, 1978." Printed program.

oped a relationship with the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR), then trying to finance construction of its line to the Pacific.<sup>4</sup> Almost immediately he received a commission to supply publicity photographs for the railroad,

3. Edward W. Nolan, *Northern Pacific Views: The Railroad Photography of F. Jay Haynes, 1876-1905* (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1983), p. 199. See also Nolan and John C. Smart, "A Portfolio of F. Jay Haynes Railroad Photographs," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 33 (Summer 1983): 24-33.

4. On the NPRR, see Robin W. Winks, *Frederick Billings: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Louis T. Renz, *The History of the Northern Pacific Railroad* (Fairfield, WA: Galleon Press, 1980); James Blaine Hedges, *Henry Villard and the Railways of the Northwest* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1930); Dietrich G. Buss, *Henry Villard: A Study of Transatlantic Investments and Interests, 1870-1895* (New York: Arno Press, 1978).

which led to his service as its official photographer for more than twenty years.

In 1885 he reconditioned a Pullman car, christened it the F. Jay Haynes Palace Studio, attached it to available NPRR trains, and spent portions of each year for the next two decades traveling from Chicago to Puget Sound, in Washington state. Historian Edward Nolan writes "Haynes was everywhere, photographing every aspect of Northern Pacific Country - in cities, towns, and villages; in mountains, valleys, and on the prairies - aiming his camera at whatever might sell."<sup>5</sup> Freeman Tilden dubbed him the "great news photographer of the frontier."<sup>6</sup>

In 1883 Haynes accompanied President Chester A. Arthur on his tour of Yellowstone National Park, an excursion no doubt prompted by the recent completion of the NPRR's transcontinental line, which passed just to the north of the park.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, Haynes wore the mantle of official photographer of the park from 1884-1916; operated a studio and outlets to dispense his expert photographs, stereoscopic views and lantern slides; successfully concluded a perilous expedition to Yellowstone in the winter of 1887;<sup>8</sup> and published the first annual *Haynes Guide* to the park in 1890. Yellowstone

*Left: Jupiter Terrace, Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone National Park, Jack Ellis Haynes photo, date unknown.*



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

5. Nolan, *Northern Pacific Views*, 85. For a discussion of how railroads promoted national parks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, see Alfred Runte, "Burlington Northern and the Legacy of Mount St. Helens," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 74 (July, 1983): 116-23. Runte specifically addresses the NPRR and its Wonderland series of illustrated pamphlets or guide books on pp. 117-19.

6. Freeman Tilden, *Following the Frontier with F. Jay Haynes: Pioneer Photographer of the Old West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 79.

7. See Jack Ellis Haynes, "The Expedition of President Chester A. Arthur to Yellowstone National Park in 1883," *Annals of Wyoming* 14 (January 1942): 31-38. For an account of a presidential visit to the park in the 1920s, see Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Shennock, "The Coolidges in Wonderland," *American West* 23 (July/August 1986): 20-27.

8. See William L. Lang, "'At the Greatest Personal Peril to the Photographer': The Schwatka-Haynes Winter Expedition in Yellowstone, 1887," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 33 (Winter 1963): 14-29; Jack Ellis Haynes, "The First Winter Trip through Yellowstone National Park," *Annals of Wyoming* 14 (April 1942): 89-97.

photographs became almost synonymous with F. Jay Haynes. "Haynes' pictures were so good," notes one observer, "that they were widely pirated, reproduced cheaply in mass quantities, and sold, even inside the park, in competition with his own merchandise."<sup>9</sup> Ever the astute businessman, Haynes helped organize the Yellowstone Park Stage Company in 1888 and was proprietor of the Monida and Yellowstone and Western Stage Company (later called the Yellowstone and Western Stage Company) from 1900-1917. Amy E. Stark, former Haynes Picture Collection Cataloger at the Montana Historical Society, characterized his photographs as a "combination of a commitment to documentation and a lyrical interpretation of the natural landscape."<sup>10</sup> In *F. Jay Haynes, Photographer*, the Montana Historical Society credits him with demonstrating a "remarkable affinity for combining technical skills and marketing sense."<sup>11</sup>

**J**ack Ellis Haynes (1884-1962) followed his father as official photographer of Yellowstone Park in 1916, continued and expanded the photography business, and eventually operated thirteen Haynes Picture Shops at such places as Tower Fall, Fishing Bridge and Mammoth. During his tenure he and his assistants produced many thousands of photographic images which Stark has characterized as more commercial and repetitive than the work of his father.<sup>12</sup> Historian Aubrey L. Haines, a longtime employee of Yellowstone National Park and close friend of Jack Ellis, described him as possessing a "mastery of photography and merchandising."<sup>13</sup> Horace M. Albright (1890-1987), Super-

intendent of Yellowstone Park from 1919 to 1929 and Director of the National Park Service from 1929 to 1933, wrote in 1985 that his copy of an exceptionally popular Haynes photograph, the "Madonna of the Wilds" bear photo, had hung in his office or personal quarters for more than fifty years."<sup>14</sup>

- 13. Aubrey Haines, "Jack Ellis Haynes, Yellowstone's Official Photographer," *Hoofprints of the Yellowstone Corral of the Westeners* 8 (Winter 1978): 9.
- 14. Horace M. Albright, introduction to Gwen Peterson, *Yellowstone Pioneers: The Story of the Hamilton Stores and Yellowstone National Park* (Yellowstone National Park: Hamilton Stores, 1985), p. 12. Strangely, Albright does not mention that this was a Haynes Studios photograph. E. W. Hunter, a Haynes employee, actually took the celebrated bear photograph. See Tilden, *Following the Frontier*, p. 388.



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HAYNES FOUNDATION COLLECTION, MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HELENA

- 9. Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), p. 93.
- 10. Amy E. Stark, "F. Jay Haynes: A Neglected Photographer of the American West," *Journal of the Visual Resources Association* 12 (Spring 1985): 5.
- 11. *F. Jay Haynes, Photographer* ([Helena]: Montana Historical Society Press, 1981), 16-17.
- 12. Amy E. Stark, "Photographs at the Montana Historical Society: How One Collection was Processed," *Picturescope: The Quarterly Bulletin of the Picture Division, Special Libraries Association* 29 (Winter 1981): 4.



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WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

Left: Tower Fall and Tower Creek, from 1924 edition of *Haynes Guide*.

Above: Haynes color postcard.

Below: Artists colorizing Haynes photographic prints at studio in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1893.



Although commercially successful, Jack Ellis' sense of public service made the strongest impression on his contemporaries. Aubrey Haines observed to me that Jack Ellis was a "remarkable old-style gentleman" who served the public well, and those qualities formed the basis of his lack of friction with the federal bureaucracy.<sup>15</sup> In this respect, Haynes stood in contrast to his friend Charles A. "Ham" Hamilton (1884-1957) of the Hamilton general stores, whom Gwen Peterson paints as engaging in "swash-buckling high-handed treatment of Washington officials."<sup>16</sup> Known as "Mr. Yellowstone," Jack Ellis served as the unofficial director of the Park's educational program for many years.<sup>17</sup> An admiring Horace Albright said of Haynes immediately after his death, "No man in business in a National Park has ever been more cooperative, more generous, more unselfish." According to Albright, Haynes was a born artist, historian, explorer, author and businessman, and a talented musician who also possessed skill as a photographer.<sup>18</sup>

The multi-faceted Haynes was perhaps most absorbed in the history of Yellowstone Park. Aubrey Haines has written, "Jack's interest in an accurate recreation of the Yellowstone of yesterday, progressed from furnishing historical comments, which were always a feature of his Yellowstone Park guide book, to writing those scholarly accounts that provide a charming coverage of such outstanding events as President Arthur's visit in 1883, the Haynes Winter Expedition of 1887 and the five

15. Telephone interview with Aubrey L. Haines of Phoenix, Arizona, May 22, 1991.

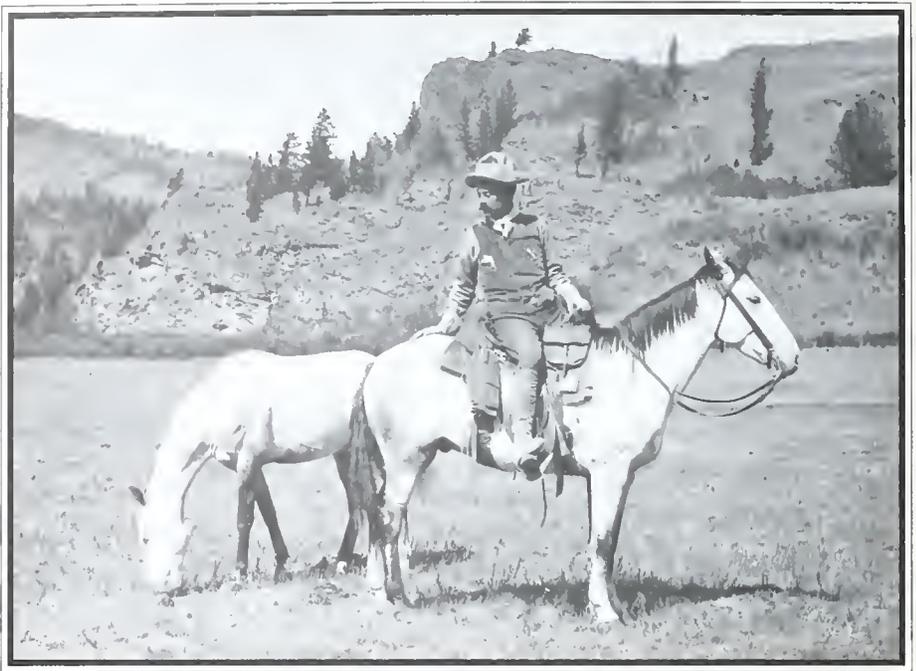
16. Peterson, *Yellowstone Pioneers*, p. 96.

17. Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story: A History of Our First National Park*, 2 vols. (Yellowstone Park: Yellowstone Library and Museum Association, 1977), pp. 2: 414, n.43.

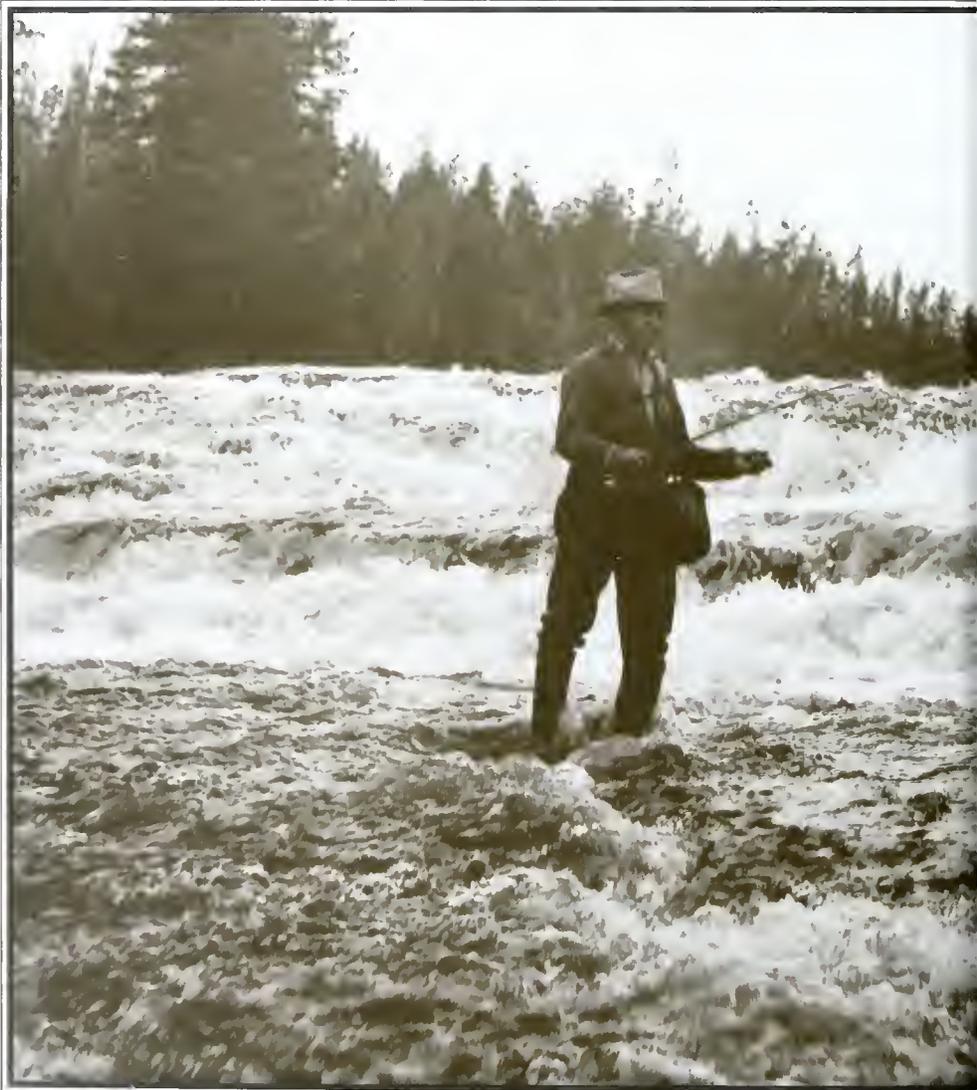
18. Horace M. Albright, "Jack Ellis Haynes - A tribute," *Annals of Wyoming* 35 (1962): 85. Aubrey Haines agrees with Albright's characterization of Jack Ellis Haynes. Albright frequently refers to Haynes in his published works, including *The Birth of the National Park Service: The Founding Years, 1913-33* (Salt Lake City: Howe Bros., 1985) which he wrote jointly with Robert Cahn.

stagecoach holdups."<sup>19</sup> Though they could not be described as scholarly, these Haynes publications do represent a genuine contribution to the folklore and history of Yellowstone. A colorful and accomplished raconteur whose wit enlivened parties of all kinds, Haynes gave many entertaining talks on various aspects of the park and was the inspiration for the definitive and readable history of Yellowstone by Aubrey Haines.<sup>20</sup> Haines recalls in a magazine article that his friend Jack Ellis gave the appearance of eccentricity, in part because he liked to smoke his cigars upright in a pipe, but he states that closer acquaintance revealed that he was "...prone to value ultimate truth as highly as any man I have ever known."<sup>21</sup> Despite his importance, historians and others have virtually ignored Jack Ellis in favor of his more famous father. Perhaps some budding scholar should prowl through the Haynes Collection to test the glowing opinions Aubrey Haines advances about his friend Jack Ellis Haynes!

**I**sabel May Haynes (1899- ) began to work in the park in 1920, becoming a lodge manager, marrying Jack Ellis in 1930 and participating in the successful operation of the picture shops. According to Aubrey Haines she was a foreman with the help and handled the routine of business."<sup>22</sup> Lida Lisle Haynes (1930-1952), the daughter and only child of Isabel and Jack Ellis, was being groomed to assume the reins of the family business, but was killed when the car in which she was riding skidded off the highway and overturned in the Yellowstone River. Faced with various challenges, Isabel Haynes repeatedly demonstrated her mettle.



HAYNES FOUNDATION COLLECTION



19. Haines, *Yellowstone Story* 1: xiii. See Haynes, "The Expedition of President Chester A. Arthur to Yellowstone National Park in 1883." "The First Winter Trip through Yellowstone National Park; *Yellowstone Holdups* (Bozeman, Mont.: Haynes Studios, 1959).

20. Albright, "Jack Ellis Haynes," p. 86; Haines, *Yellowstone Story* 1: xiii-xiv.

21. Haines, "Jack Ellis Haynes." Haines also quoted this passage in a letter to me May 23, 1991. See the entire Winter 1978 issue of the *Yellowstone Corral* for further articles about Haynes.

22. Haines interview, op.cit.



HAYNES FOUNDATION COLLECTION

Left: F. Jay Haynes on "Rock," "Rye" in background 1893.

Above: Horace M. Albright delivering address on occasion of Yellowstone National Park 50th anniversary, 1922.

Below: riffle fishing, Gardiner River Yellowstone National Park, Jack Ellis Haynes photo, date unknown.

Described as a woman of indomitable spirit and resiliency, she ran the picture shops for six years after her husband's death in 1962.<sup>23</sup> Her sale of the business in 1968 to the Hamilton Stores brought to a close more than eight decades of the House of Haynes.

In 1974, as President of the Haynes Foundation, Mrs. Haynes offered to give the archival and bibliographic portion of the Haynes Collection to Montana State University, and the thousands of photographs and art materials to the Montana Historical Society in Helena. Mrs. Haynes continued to donate additional items to MSU as she cleared out the former Haynes warehouse in

Bozeman, Montana, where Haynes, Inc. was headquartered from 1942-1968. During two lengthy visits to the nearly-empty warehouse to meet Mrs. Haynes and to collect several boxes of books and other materials for MSU in 1986 and 1987, I was impressed with Mrs. Haynes' generosity and feistiness, as well as with the scope of activities that had once transpired there. In the past few years Mrs. Haynes' health has failed and she is now in a nursing home.

According to the brochure prepared for its official opening at MSU in 1978, the Haynes Collection is "one of three great private collections built during the years of the [Yellowstone] Park's development and the only one not to be disbursed [sic]." <sup>24</sup> The Montana Historical Society noted that Jack Ellis assembled the collection from the family's business and personal records, as well as from supplemental sources.<sup>25</sup> The Haynes Collection, which may be used by appointment only, consists of 3,000 books and more than 110 linear feet of letters, pamphlets, research files, magazines and other historical items, housed in a special Haynes Room at the Montana State University Libraries. Minnie Paugh, Special Collections Librarian at MSU Libraries from 1964-1984 who deserves recognition for her tireless efforts, handled many aspects of the donation as well as most of the arrangement and description of the collection.

Previous writers have commented on the wealth of materials in the Haynes

23. Peterson, *Yellowstone Pioneers*, p. 108.

24. Telephone interview with Minnie Paugh of Bozeman, Montana, March 17, 1991. Minnie Paugh, Special Collections Librarian at MSU Libraries from 1964-1984 and author of the brochure, "Dedication of the Haynes Room," feels that one of the other disbursed archival collections belonged to Horace M. Albright, but can't recall the owner of the third collection. Aubrey Haines is certain that the reference to the Haynes Collection should apply to the Haynes photographs at the Montana Historical Society. According to Haines, one of the two scattered photographic collections would certainly have been that belonging to William Henry Jackson (1843-1942), noted pioneer photographer of the American West. For information about Jackson's role as a member of the 1871 Ferdinand Hayden expedition to the Yellowstone Country, see Lewis W. Selmer, "First Camera on the Yellowstone a Century Ago," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 22 (Summer 1972): 42-53. Haines hazards an educated guess that Laton Alton Huffman (1843-1931) amassed the third now disbursed photograph collection. Haines interview, op.cit. F. J. Haynes gave Huffman his photographic knowledge. Tilden, *On the Frontier*, p. 388.

25. F. J. Haynes, *Photographer*, p. 190.



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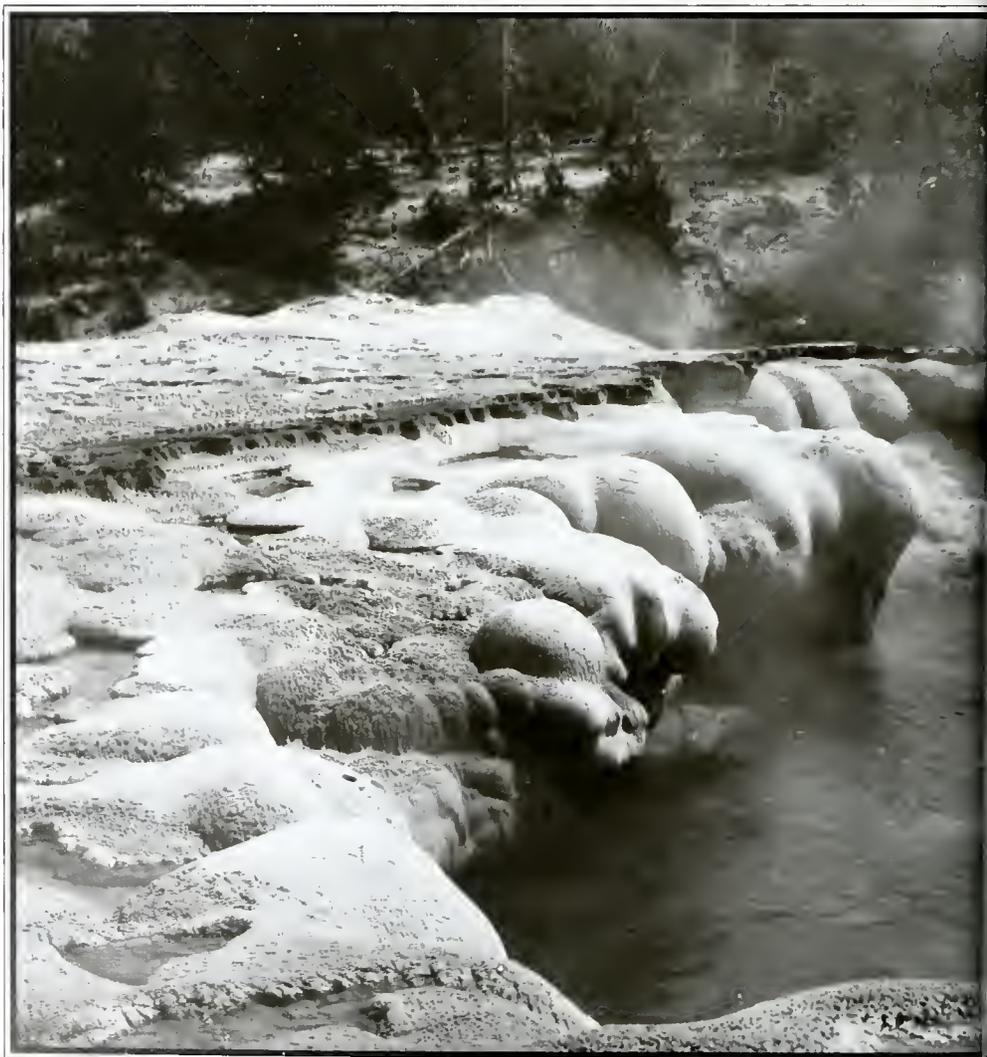
Collection, though not in any systematic manner, nor about the entire tenure of the Haynes family. In the 1960s Freeman Tilden praised the Haynes' efforts to preserve the photographic, printed and written record of their enterprises, although his study was flawed by lack of access to all Haynes materials. Referring to the "treasures of that glorious collection of Northwest materials," Tilden took note of the magnificent library of books and rare miscellany and the collection of artifacts. "It is a masterpiece, a labor of love, of what our trained museum friends call 'housekeeping.'"<sup>26</sup> Historian Nolan, who lauds Jack Ellis Haynes for his sense of history and devotion to his father's work, skillfully utilizes and notes what he terms the "F. Jay Haynes Papers" at MSU, characterizing them as essential to an understanding of Haynes' personal and business relationships.<sup>27</sup> The book, *F. J. Haynes, Photographer*, offers a thumbnail sketch of the collection: "These manuscript and printed materials document the life of F. Jay Haynes, the members of his immediate family, and the 'House of Haynes,' which operated in Yellowstone National Park for more than eighty-five years."<sup>28</sup> In her otherwise excellent piece about F. Jay Haynes, Haynes picture cataloger Amy Stark mistakenly describes the photographer's library, his diaries, and many letters to and from his wife Lily as if they reside with the photographs in Helena. In fact, these items form an integral part of the Haynes Collection at MSU. Aubrey Haines feels that, although Jack Ellis assembled a fine library the archival portion of the Haynes Collection is not out of the ordinary, but is a useful record of a photography business. Like archivist Stark, Haines mistakenly places Jack Ellis Haynes' "collection of mementos" in the care of the Montana Historical Society.<sup>29</sup> An accurate assessment of the true worth of the Haynes Collection falls some-

where between Tilden's euphoric description and Aubrey Haines' more restrained characterization.

A centerpiece of the collection is the complete run in multiple copies of the *Haynes Guide to Yellowstone National Park*, which was issued almost annually from 1890-1968. Covering geography, geology, history, travel tips, rules of the park, wildlife, wildflowers, accommodations; and suggestions for the amateur photographer the guides were profusely illustrated with Haynes photographs. From 1890 to 1909 A.B. (Albert Brewer) Guptill (1854 to 1931), an associate of F. Jay Haynes at the Northern Pacific Railroad, wrote the text, but beginning with the 1910 edition

Jack Ellis assumed this function. Purchasers of the 1910 guide read that Emerald Pool in Norris Basin was a "sulphur-lined basin with coral walls, most beautifully shaped [which] can be seen to an appalling depth."<sup>30</sup> The water in Excelsior Geyser, which F. Jay Haynes first admired in 1881, was "of a deep blue tint, and is intensely agitated all the time, dense clouds of steam constantly ascending from it." (p. 45). Lower Yellowstone Falls, perhaps the premier attraction of the park, was for Haynes a "sheer, unbroken compact, shining mass of silver foam, below which is an overmastering canyon into which the river leaps, and through which it flows, dwindling to but a foamy ribbon there in its appalling depths." (p. 89). Since the first system-

30. Jack E. Haynes, *Haynes Official Guide to Yellowstone National Park* (St. Paul: F. Jay Haynes, 1910), p. 27.



26. Tilden, *Following the Frontier with F. Jay Haynes*, [vii].

27. Nolan, *Northern Pacific Views*, 203.

28. F. Jay Haynes, *Photographer*, p. 190.

29. Haines, "Jack Ellis Haynes," p. 11.



Above: Hamilton Store at Old Faithful, Yellowstone National Park, 1991.

Below: crater of Oblong Geyser, Y.N.P., Jack Ellis Haynes photo, date unknown.



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atic expeditions to Yellowstone Country in the 1870s, writers had been fond of employing the word “appalling” to depict the great falls and other attractions in the park, a habit which Jack Ellis used to great effect.

After the introduction of automobiles into the park in 1915 each *Haynes Guide* included a complete road log of the park, containing exact mileage between various points of interest. Among the important “Don’ts” for the tourist in the 1924 guide were the admonitions “DON’T drive on the wrong side of the road” and “DON’T run by STOP signs.”<sup>31</sup> Always the businessman, though more tactful than one might expect,

31. Jack Ellis Haynes, *Haynes New Guide and Motorists’ Complete Log of Yellowstone National Park* (St. Paul: J. E. Haynes, 1924), 17.

Jack Ellis tooted his horn for the Haynes outlet store at Tower Fall in the 1924 guide: “The Haynes Picture Shop and General Store situated here affords tourists opportunities to restock their larders, replenish their fishing equipment and have the confidence that some pertinent habitation is near at hand.” (p. 108). Perhaps Haynes had a special right to feel proud of his store at Tower Fall, at least according to Horace Albright. “When other concessioners failed to respond to a plan for tourist facilities at Tower Falls [sic],” wrote Albright, “the risks were assumed by Haynes as a public service without much hope at the time that they might ultimately be profitable.”<sup>32</sup>

The 1924 guide also included a lengthy but colorful poem titled “Yellowstone Park and How it was Named,” written at Canyon in 1894 by William Tod Helmuth. Three of the twelve stanzas of this *magnum opus* give something of its flavor.

Then the Devil with mortals kept  
plying the fire,  
Extracting the water around from  
the mire,  
And boring great holes with a ter-  
rible dust,  
‘Till soon quite a number appeared  
near the crust,  
Then he turned on the steam - and  
lo! upward did fly,  
Through rents in the surface, the  
rocks to the sky,  
But Yankees can sometimes, with  
out doing evil,  
O’ermatch in sagacity even the  
devil.  
For not long ago Uncle Sam came  
that way  
And said to himself, “Here’s the  
devil to pay.  
Successful I’ve been in all previ-  
ous wars;  
Now Satan shall bow to the Stripes  
and the Stars.

32. Albright, “Jack Ellis Haynes,” 86.

This property's Mine, and I hold it  
in fee;  
And all of this earth shall its maj-  
esty see.  
The deer and the elk unmolested  
shall roam,  
The bear and the buffalo each have  
a home;  
The eagle shall spring from her ey-  
rie and soar,  
O'er crags in the canyons where  
cataracts roar;  
The wild fowls shall circle the  
pools in their flight,  
The geysers shall flash in the  
moonbeams at night,  
Now I christen the country - let all  
nations hark!  
I name it the Yellowstone National  
Park. (pp.178-80)

One can imagine campers reciting these stirring verses while sitting around their evening fires, perhaps keeping one ear open for mysterious noises from the wild!

**H**aynes' commitment to the culture and development of the park is strikingly evident in the thirty-eight page historical section of the 1924 *Haynes Guide*. Among the numerous entries were: a sketch of the explorer James Bridger by Olin D. Wheeler; the text of the 1872 federal act establishing Yellowstone Park; Jack Ellis Haynes' account of some of his father's exploits; a listing of every superintendent of the park since its founding; and the Helmuth epic, which concludes the historical section and the guide itself. Continuing the tradition of historical vignettes, the 1947 guide contained valuable data about the National Hotel which existed at Mammoth from 1883 to 1936.<sup>33</sup> With colorful covers, photos, maps, skillful text, historical tidbits, poems and statistics copies of the *Haynes Guide* remain

a pleasant and handy source, as they were for untold numbers of enthralled tourists winding their way through Yellowstone Park.

A well-thumbed copy of the 1924 *Guide* belonging to my mother, documents the summer of 1925 that she spent as an employee of the Hamilton Store at Lake, which remains adjacent to the large Lake Hotel and fronts Yellowstone Lake. Visitors to the store, who usually signed the *Haynes Guide* in question, included a nephew of Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels (1913-21) who helped store employees eat candied peanuts from a barrel; Franklin D. Roosevelt's son James, who arrived

in the company of other Easterners staying at a posh summer camp somewhere near the park; and a bear who wandered in through the front door and subsequently frightened the cook in the bunkhouse behind the store. The bear didn't sign the *Haynes Guide*, but Roosevelt and dozens of other tourists did! Co-worker Edna O'Connor, a school teacher from St. Paul, Minnesota wrote, "When I look over and see you so comfortably seated on the bear rug I have to get lazy and sign my name." Blair Wood of Waterloo, Iowa inscribed the following doggerel:

*Below: Upper Falls, Yellowstone River, Y.N.P., F. Jay Haynes photo, date unknown.*



33. See Jack Ellis Haynes, *Haynes Guide* (Yellowstone National Park and Bozeman, Mont.: Haynes, Inc., 1947), pp. 156, 161, 166, cited in "In Yellowstone Park, 1886-1889: George Tutherly's Reminiscences," ed. Lee H. Whittlesey, *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 33 (Winter 1983): 11, n. 44.

**"Think of me when your  
[sic] far off/  
Where the woodchucks die of the  
whooping cough."**

As long as I can recall, my mother's *Haynes Guide* was a treasured memento. It reminded her of the most enjoyable time of her life, as it must have been for countless others.<sup>34</sup> When I mentioned that my mother had been employed by "Ham" Hamilton, in some ways a competitor of the Haynes interests, the usually steely Mrs. Haynes smiled and magnanimously remarked, "That's all right!"<sup>35</sup>

34. Interview with Clare Helmer Swensen, Darien, CT, December 11, 1992.

The *Haynes Guide* was by no means the only souvenir sold at the Haynes Picture Shops, as evidenced by items on display in an exhibit case at MSU Libraries. Included are hand-colored black and white photographs, hand-colored post cards, etchings, lithographs, souvenir albums, stationery, playing cards and greeting cards. The contents of the case is a montage made from the wide array of materials that tourists would have found in the Picture Shops mainly during the 1920s and 1930s. Mrs. Haynes observed that twenty to twenty-three artists worked each win-

35. Interview with Isabel Haynes, Bozeman, Montana, April 10, 1987.

ter in St. Paul, Minnesota, winter headquarters for the Haynes interests from 1889 to 1942 hand-painting photographs and other illustrations for sale each summer in Yellowstone.<sup>36</sup> There is a separate file containing multiple copies of many of the linen post cards offered for sale during the interwar period and even into the 1950s.

Researchers can use an exceptionally complete library of 3,000 books about Yellowstone and the West, some of them published by the House of Haynes itself, as well as the personal libraries of both F. Jay and Jack Ellis Haynes, comprising various literary and historical works. This portion of the article is partly an annotated bibliography, containing citations for some of the rare and interesting volumes in the collection. Materials concerning the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806, which passed north of the Yellowstone Country, abound in the Haynes Collection, as do accounts of other explorations and travels in the West during the nineteenth century. Typical of the many volumes about the West is John C. Van Tramp, *Prairie and Rocky Mountain Adventures or Life in the West* (Columbus, Ohio: H. Miller, 1862). Of paramount importance to an understanding of the exploration of the Yellowstone Country and its creation as the world's first national park are the complete accounts of the official expeditions of 1871 and 1872 led by Ferdinand V. Hayden. See Hayden, *Preliminary Report of the United States Geological Survey of Montana and Portions of Adjacent Territories, Being a Fifth Annual Report of Progress* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872); and Hayden, *Sixth Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey of the Territories, Embracing Portions of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah; Being a Report of Progress of the Explorations for the Year 1872* (Washington, DC: Government

36. *Ibid.*: The Montana Historical Society volume on Haynes indicates that in the late 1890s, the seasonal photographic staff exceeded twenty. F. J. Haynes, *Photographer*, pp. 10-11.



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Printing Office, 1872). Elegantly-bound copies of these reports and others published by the U.S. Geological Survey reside in the Haynes Collection.

Other contemporary accounts of early trips to the park are entertaining and useful, although space permits only a few examples of the many dozens of such volumes in the collection. James Richardson, ed., *Wonders of the Yellowstone* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1873) eloquently depicts the glories of the new national preserve. His description of Mammoth Hot Springs is particularly pertinent because this was the first significant wonder that early tourists would see in the park:

**Small streams flow down the sides of the Snowy Mountain in channels lined with oxide of iron of the most delicate tints of red. Others show exquisite shades of yellow, from a deep, bright sulphur, to a dainty cream-color. Still others are stained with shades of green, all these colors as brilliant as the brightest aniline dyes. (p. 30).**

W.E. Strong, in *A Trip to the Yellowstone National Park in July, August, and September 1875* (Washington, DC, n.p., 1876), penned dramatic thoughts about the marvels of the new preserve but was particularly moved as he stood on the summit of Mount Washburne, tallest peak in the park: "Grand, glorious, and magnificent was the scene as we looked upon it from Washburn's [sic] summit. No pen can write it- no language describe it." (p. 46). Harry J. Norton, in *Wonderland Illustrated; or, Horseback Rides Through the Yellowstone National Park* (Virginia City, Montana Territory: Harry J. Norton, 1873) offers insights into how pioneer Montanans viewed the new park established to the south.

One of the most rare volumes in the Haynes Collection is *Journey through the Yellowstone National Park and Northwestern Wyoming: Photographs of Party and Scenery along the Route Travelled and Copies of the Associated Press Dispatches Sent whilst en Route* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883). This account of President Arthur's trip

to the park in 1883 is enhanced by the superb and timely F. J. Haynes photographs carefully tipped into the volume.<sup>37</sup> These photographs and his proximity to the president and other important officials led directly to Haynes being named official photographer of Yellowstone Park the following year. This was probably the first concession granted in the park and a signal honor for a person barely thirty years of age.

While not rare, complete annual reports of the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology from 1880-81 through 1902-03 complement two dozen volumes by James Willard Shultz who wrote convincingly about his experiences with,

and customs of, the Blackfeet Indians. Other publications include the *Wonderland* series of Northern Pacific Railway brochures, 1884-1894, graced by Haynes photographs; and the western and adventure writings of Theodore Roosevelt, perhaps the most prolific writer among U.S. presidents, whose rather racist-sounding prose has a timeless elegance and historiographic value.<sup>38</sup> Printed diaries include those of explorer James H. Cook who led an expedition to Yellowstone in 1871; General Philip Sheridan who commanded the Army of the West; and Elizabeth B. Custer, widow of Gen. George Armstrong Custer.<sup>39</sup> Recent titles in the collection include

37. According to Jack Ellis Haynes, only twelve copies of the book were produced. See Haynes, "Expedition of President Chester A. Arthur," p. 33.

38. For a discussion of the *Wonderland* series and other NPRR promotional efforts see Runte, "Burlington Northern," pp. 117-19.





Above: Auto stages near Gardiner Arch at north entrance to Y.N.P. in 1917, when Park transportation was motorized. Below: President Arthur and group at Upper Geyser Basin, in August, 1883. Standing, l to r: Michael V. Sheridan, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army; Anson Stager, Brigadier General, U.S. Volunteers; W.P. Clark, Captain, Second Cavalry, U.S. Army; Dan G. Rollins, Surrogate of New York; James F. Gregory, Lieutenant Colonel and Aide-de-camp. Seated, l to r: John S. Crosby, Governor of Montana Territory; Philip H. Sheridan, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army; President Chester A. Arthur; Robert T. Lincoln, Secretary of War; George G. Vest, U.S. Senator from Missouri.



HAYNES FOUNDATION COLLECTION, MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HELENA, MT.

Lewis R. Freeman, *Down the Yellowstone* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1922), an historical/geographic treatment of the great river flowing northeast out of the park; and Merrill D. Beal, *The Story of Man in Yellowstone* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton, 1949), which chronicles the history of the park. Horace M. Albright and Frank J. Taylor, *Oh, Ranger!* (Palo Alto, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1928) is a series of entertaining anecdotes of the national parks, including a great deal of information about Yellowstone.

That the Haynes family were serious publishers of historical books and other works about Yellowstone is evident from several relevant titles in the collection. F. Jay Haynes was the first to publish Nathaniel P. Langford's, *Diary of the Washburn Expedition to the Yellowstone and Firehole Rivers in the Year 1870* (St. Paul: F.J. Haynes, 1905). Langford was the first superintendent of the park, serving from 1872 to 1877. There are various editions of Hiram Chittenden's, *The Yellowstone National Park* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1895), including two published by Jack Ellis Haynes (St. Paul: 1924 and 1927). Among sixteen works by Western novelist and historian Emerson Hough (1857-1923) is *Maw's Vacation: The Story of a Human Being in the Yellowstone* (St. Paul: J.E. Haynes, 1921), a humorous account of early automobile campers in the park. It is appropriate that Jack Ellis Haynes published *Maw's Vacation*, since Hough was with F. Jay Haynes in Yellowstone during the winter of 1894 when celebrated poacher Ed Howell was apprehended. Hough's indignation and subsequent efforts helped pass a federal law protecting buffalo in the park.<sup>40</sup>

39. From 1886 to 1918 the U. S. Army kept order, eliminated poachers and discouraged souvenir hunters in

the Park. See H. Duane Hampton, *How the U. S. Cavalry Saved Our National Parks* (Bloomington, Ind., Indiana University Press, 1971).

40. During the 1880s there were only about 200 surviving bison out of the millions that had roamed the plains. See Mary Meagher, *The Bison of Yellowstone Park* (National Park Service, Scientific Monograph Series #1, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1973), cited in Whittlesey, "In Yellowstone Park," 10, n. 37.

Equally rich, though with some idiosyncracies and gaps, are the 110 linear feet of historical records dating from 1867 to 1968, among which are the Haynes Picture Shop files, personal correspondence, extensive business records, research files and vertical files. According to Aubrey Haines, Jack Ellis Haynes always kept business and personal records by subject, presumably to facilitate his many historical projects. Therefore, the Picture Shop files containing the bulk of correspondence on all aspects and phases of the Haynes' careers were organized and maintained in one chronological unit, with each year in alphabetical order by subject. In his eagerness to conduct historical research Jack Ellis Haynes not only altered the order of his own business and personal files, he incorporated his father's records into this subject file structure. According to the archival principle of provenance, the records should have been left reasonably intact and in their original order to reflect the historical organization and practices of the business. However, since the "maker," or in this case the maker/manager, of the records may arrange the files in any convenient order, a deviation from the rule of provenance is technically within the bounds of accepted archival theory.<sup>41</sup> Detailed inventories greatly assist a researcher to utilize the collection.

*Right: entrance to Norris Geyser Basin in Yellowstone National Park, January, 1887. Photo by F. Jay Haynes.*

41. For a discussion of provenance and other archival principles, see T.R. Schellenberg, *The Management of Archives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965); Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956); Kenneth W. Duckett, *Modern Manuscripts: A Practical Manual for Their Management, Care and Use* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1975); David B. Gracy II, *Archives & Manuscripts: Arrangement & Description* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1977); Frederic M. Miller, *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990).

Minnie Paugh feels that some materials were destroyed prior to the donation of the collection to MSU, including some that might reflect unfavorably about the Haynes' enterprises. Paugh points out that there were several boxes of materials "we were not supposed to process," which presumably contain additional records of Jack Ellis Haynes' business and personal activities. These boxes will remain unprocessed until after Mrs. Haynes' passing. According to Paugh, the weeding and restricting of some records were due to "fights that Jack would have had with the Park Service in order to keep his concession," as well as "sort of a marital mixup." Paugh professes a vast amount of sympathy for Jack Ellis Haynes, who

wanted the same dignity his father enjoyed.<sup>42</sup> Aubrey Haines knows nothing about any fights or marital problems but hazards a guess that the closed materials simply relate to Haynes' will.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps the excitement generated by the unsealing of these records will not reach the fever pitch attained when the *Titanic* safe was recently unlocked, but scholarship will be advanced when this event occurs.

42. Haynes had a first marriage which was childless. Since Haynes felt he had to have an heir, this marriage ended in divorce, a comparatively rare phenomenon in the 1920s. Telephone interview with Minnie Paugh of Bozeman, Montana, April 15, 1991.

43. Haines commented to me that he didn't know anything at all about the Jack Ellis Haynes' marital problems. He said Isabel Haynes was always close mouthed about family matters. Haines interview, *op cit*.



The Haynes Picture Shop files cover the years 1870-1968 and contain letters and other manuscript-type materials illustrating various aspects of the professional careers of the Haynes family. Examples include notes, sketches, letters, and diaries of F. Jay Haynes from the 1870s and 1880s; leases; contractor's bills for the construction of a log cabin studio at Old Faithful in 1896; tickets for the Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company; diagrams of geysers; and a typed 1914 article by F. Jay Haynes arguing against the introduction of automobiles in the park. Later items include letters detailing Jack Ellis Haynes' 1924 trip around the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake, the

preparation of various 1929 souvenir albums, a 1941 letter about a bear-proof garbage can, the 75th anniversary of the park in 1947, a 1951 interview for radio, and the 1956 ground-breaking for Canyon Village. Other subjects represented include the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883, Horace M. Albright, park naturalist Clyde Max Bauer, the Hamilton Stores, and Emerson Hough.

That there was no wholesale weeding of the Picture Shop files prior to their donation is illustrated by a series of communications written in 1929 about mismanagement and alleged profiteering by concessionaires in Yellowstone and other na-

tional parks. In a letter to United States Senator David I. Walsh, Ralph S. Bauer, mayor of Lynn, Massachusetts charged that Yellowstone Park was not operated for the citizens of the United States. Not only were roads narrow and dusty, but a chain of general stores, the Hamilton Stores, operated near any extensive camping site in order to "shake down the campers." After making other charges, Bauer remarked, "A fellow by the name of Haines [sic], supposed to come from St. Paul, has the picture taking concession for the Park, and no one is allowed to sell any pictures of anything in the Park, except Haines." Bauer admitted that Yellowstone and Yosemite were the only national parks that were in the black, but he was angry that the profits from these two parks were redistributed to other parks showing a deficit. Jack Ellis Haynes' cordial relations with the federal bureaucracy might be viewed with a jaundiced eye by some outside observers, but to Haynes' credit he did not remove such criticism from his voluminous historical collections. A wide variety of politicians, business people and public-spirited citizens have periodically raised similar indictments against the National Park Service and its concessions policy.<sup>44</sup>

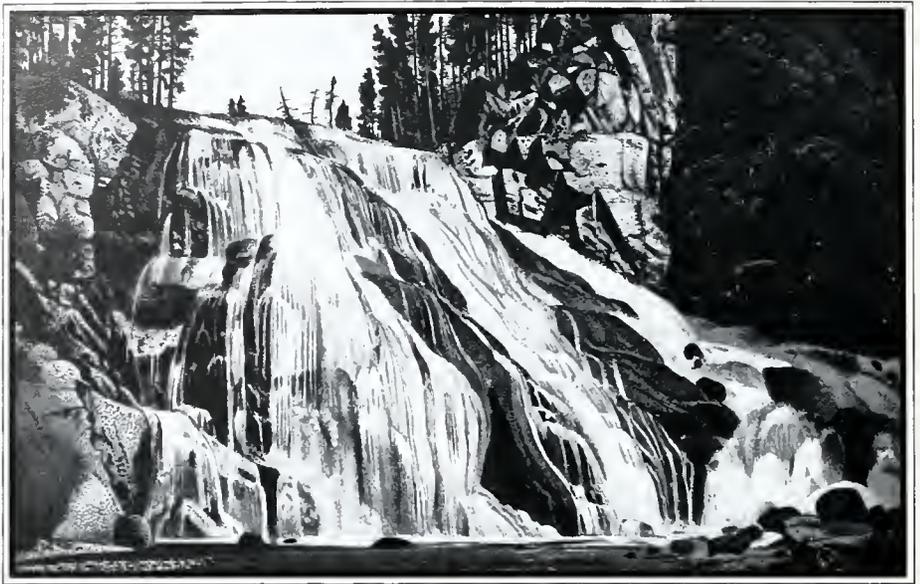


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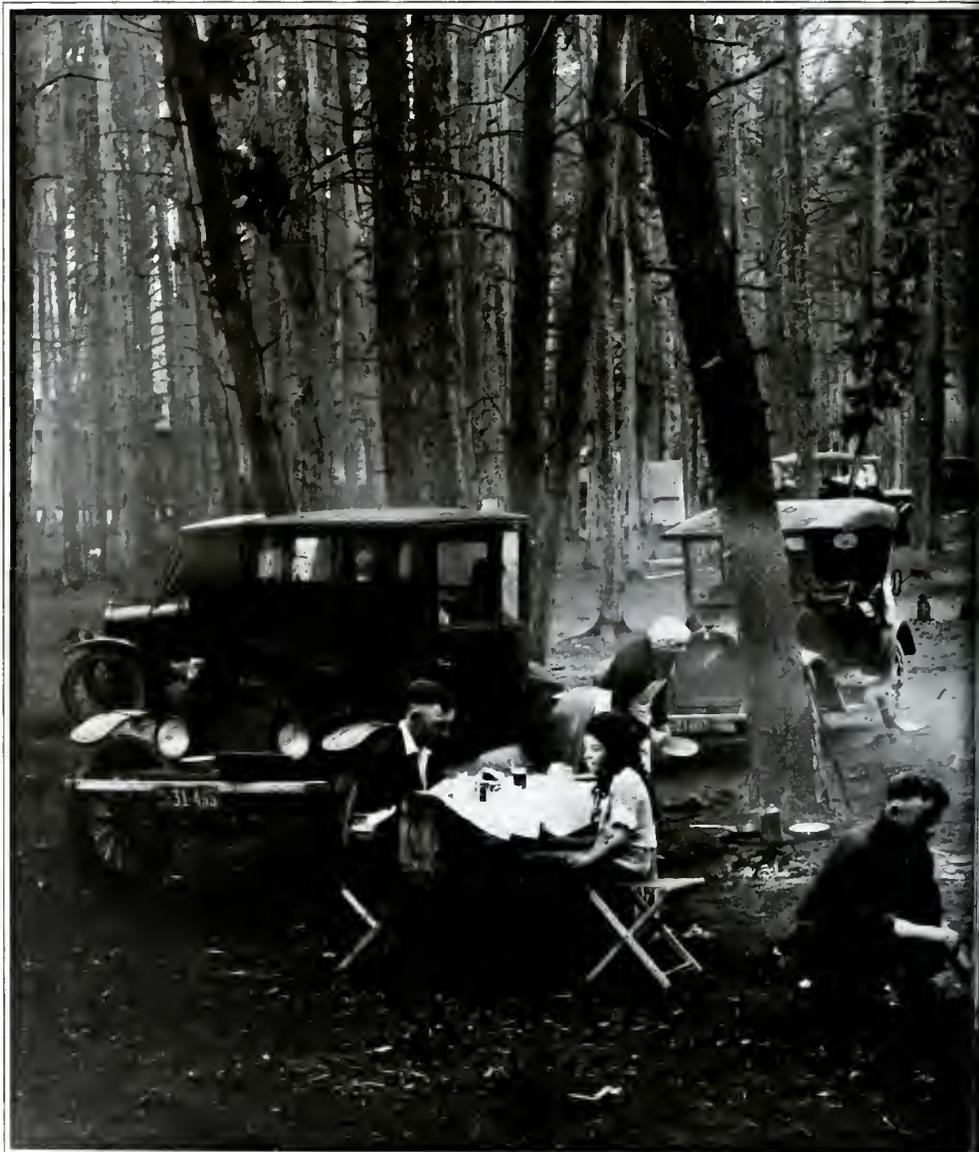
44. Photostat copy of Bauer to Walsh, August 26, 1929. See also photostat copy of Walsh to the Commissioner of the National Park Service, August 31, 1929; carbon copy of telegram from W. L. Daley to Yellowstone Transportation Company, September 14, 1929. G. A. Moskey, Acting Director of the National Park Service, sent the two photostats to Jack Ellis Haynes under a cover letter September 4, 1929. This barrage may have been aimed at Horace Albright, who had just vacated the superintendent's post at Yellowstone to become Director of the National Park Service in January 1929. For an illuminating discussion of politics and the national parks see Albright, *Birth of the National Park Service*, especially chapter 14, "The Man Who Tried to Steal Grand Canyon." For a thoughtful treatment of the first ten years of concessions in Yellowstone Park see Richard A. Bartlett, "The Concessionaires of Yellowstone National Park: Genesis of a Policy, 1882-1892," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 74 (January 1983): 2-10. Don Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks: The Destruction of Concessions and Park Access* (Bellevue, WA: Free Enterprise Press, 1987), offers a provocative discussion from the point of view of the park concessionaire. See also U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources Subcommittee, *Review of Management of Recreational Concessioners on Federal Lands* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1991); "Reform Ahead for Park Concessions," *National Parks* 65 (March/April 1991) 8-9; "To Reform Concessions, New Law is needed," *National Parks* 66 (May/June 1992): 11-12.

While the Picture Shop files and the bulk of the rest of the Haynes Collection were donated to MSU in 1978, other personal letters, business correspondence and other business records of F. Jay Haynes dating from 1876 to 1916 arrived in 1983. According to Minnie Paugh, these constitute some of the most valuable records that had been kept apart from the Picture Shop files. Moreover, this accession of F. Jay Haynes papers was the only thing in the Haynes Collection that had not been altered. There had been no effort to put it in order, even to open it up.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, since these particular business and personal records of F. Jay Haynes were never incorporated into the Picture Shop files, they have been kept virtually in original order. It is this segment of the Haynes Collection that Nolan labels the "F. Jay Haynes Papers."<sup>46</sup>

These separately-filed papers of F. Jay Haynes include a running record of his activities with the Northern Pacific Railroad, periodic photographic expeditions to the Pacific Northwest and Canada, work in Yellowstone Park, and personal matters as illustrated in personal and business correspondence. Of particular interest is the run of letters to his wife Lily, 1876-1904 and 1915. "Last night," he reported to Lily in September 1881 during his initial visit to Yellowstone, "we scraped the snow off the Ground [sic] for our Camp [sic]."<sup>47</sup> Other letters include descriptions of the building of the Northern Pacific Railroad in the 1870s and 1880s, an 1877 trek to the Black Hills of South Dakota, the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, photographing President Arthur and party in 1883, the capture of the infamous poacher Ed Howell during the winter of 1894, and a 1915 convention in San Francisco. Three boxes of correspondence from 1886-1887 are, according to the inventory, valuable for the preparation for, and photography resulting from, the winter expedition into Yellowstone Na-



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45. Paugh interview, March 17, 1991.

46. Nolan, *Northern Pacific Views*, p. 203.

47. F. Jay Haynes to Lily Haynes, September 28, 1881.



Opposite: Gibbon Falls - Gibbon River, drawing from Yellowstone National Park, souvenir views photographed and published by F. Jay Haynes, Fargo, North Dakota, date unknown.

Above: F. Jay Haynes, photographer on Missouri River, date unknown.

Below: Lake auto camp tourist park, 1923.



tional Park in 1886-1887.<sup>48</sup>

Other business records from 1876 to 1927, some portions donated in 1978 and others received five years later, further illustrate how concessionaires operated in the park, and offers a picture of how photography evolved technically and as a business enterprise. Among the wide array of business records are cash books, quotations about lantern slides and other photographic products, American Express shipments, and lists of customers of the Haynes Picture Shops and the Haynes Palace Car Studio. "We can scarcely imagine the excitement of Bostonians or New Yorkers," Nolan exclaims, "as they unwrapped their packages of 'Haynes' Northern Pacific Views' to behold the wonders of the West - Indian War dances, the geysers of Yellowstone, Dakota 'bonanza' farms, new towns, or the record of a railroad slowly building through the western empire."<sup>49</sup> The papers of F. Jay Haynes' stagecoach lines cover the years 1898 to 1921 and include registers of horses, lists of passengers disembarking from the railroads, and route books.

Personal records of Jack Ellis Haynes, donated in 1983, exist under several different names and are all arranged in the same manner as the Picture Shop files. Aubrey Haines depicts Haynes as a "super string saver," whose papers are more in the way of bits and pieces in a miscellaneous file, some items in multitudinous form. According to Haines, these were merely hobby files. While Haines intended these observations to apply to the entire archival portion of the collection, his evaluation pertains more to Jack Ellis Haynes' personal records. Horace Albright may have unwittingly agreed with Haines' characterization when he wrote, "No item was too small or too insignificant for Jack's attention if it had historical, archeological or anthropological value."<sup>50</sup>

48. "Haynes, Inc., Inventory of Small Sets Deposited in the Haynes Room, Montana State University, 1983," p. 9. typescript.

49. Nolan, *Northern Pacific Views*, pp. 1-2.

The voluminous Jack Ellis Haynes Chronological Research File contains reports, interviews, notes, clipping files and catalogued manuscripts including diaries, maps and letters. For example, there is a diary and articles written by Mrs. Alice Richards McCreery, daughter of Wyoming Governor William A. Richards pertaining to her 1898 Yellowstone trip. The Jack Ellis Haynes "Public File," 1950-1962, contains price lists and materials regarding various talks and articles by Haynes, including a purported 1902 auto trip to the park. Other active files at the time of Haynes' death in 1962 contain correspondence about pictures, guide books, park hold-ups, stories about the Haynes enterprises, and Vinton Stallo, who wanted to write a biography of Jack Ellis Haynes in the 1940s. Haynes intended to utilize his carefully collected and maintained files to collaborate with his friend Aubrey Haines on *The Yellowstone Story*, a partnership cut short by Haynes' death.

The extensive Isabel Haynes Vertical File of clippings, articles, maps, interviews, pamphlets, fliers and other materials, donated in 1978, adds to the breadth and research potential of the entire Haynes Collection. Among the several hundred files are ones relating to Horace Albright, more than thirty artists having an interest in the park, the Hamilton Stores, other park concessionaires, Old Faithful Lodge, humor in the park, stagecoaches and their drivers. The remaining portions of the Haynes Collection include many pamphlets and pertinent journals, lengthy runs of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century magazines, the Isabel Haynes Fine Art and Indian Art Collection, the Lida Haynes Children's Book Collection, and travel books of Isabel Haynes. Most of the twenty or so boxes of materials received from Mrs. Haynes after 1983 have proven largely superfluous.

*Right: Giantess Geyser, Upper Geyser Basin, Yellowstone National Park, January, 1887. Photo by F. Jay Haynes.*

50. Albright, "Jack Ellis Haynes," p. 86.

The Haynes Collection represents the heart of MSU's Yellowstone holdings, but the libraries possess other materials that form part of its greater Yellowstone National Park Collection. The William W. Wylie Collection contains correspondence about the "Wylie Way," a series of privately-run tent camps that existed in Yellowstone Park for several years before and after the turn of the century. As he conducted tours for his campers Wylie, a "renegade pedagogue," lectured along the route about instructive and humorous topics.<sup>51</sup> The James G. Hamilton Collection, assembled by a former president of MSU, features his early history of the park. The Yellowstone National Park Museum Collection at MSU includes twenty-one linear feet of photocopies and carbons from the park research library at Mammoth plus diaries, photographs, maps, and letters. The Alexander Leggett Collection of 2,300 rare and scarce books offers several early published editions of the journals of Lewis and Clark and a copy of Ferdinand F.V. Hayden, *In the Yellowstone National Park, and the Mountain Regions of Portions of Idaho, Nevada,*

51. Shankland, *Steve Mather*, 120.

*Colorado and Utah, illustrated by Chromolithographic Reproductions of Water-Color Sketches by Thomas Moran* (Boston: Prang and Co., 1876). Armed with a recent \$100,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Education, Nathan Bender, the Head of Special Collections/Archives at MSU Libraries, is embarking on a long-range campaign to expand the Yellowstone National Park Collection.<sup>52</sup>

Interested researchers should also consult the 23,500 photographs, photographic notebooks, studio portrait registers, merchandise order books, and Haynes Palace Studio Car ledgers (1885-1906) in the Haynes Foundation Collection at the Montana Historical Society in Helena. When Mrs. Haynes donated her family's collection in the late 1970s it was determined that the Montana Historical Society was in a more advantageous position to care for the photographs than was Special Collections at MSU. Hence the bifurcated collection, each part of which should be used in tandem with the other. The Yellowstone National Park Research Library at the park headquarters in Mammoth contains a wealth of material including

52. Nathan Bender to me December 17, 1991; "Grants and Acquisitions," *College & Research Libraries News* 53 (September 1992): 539.



9,000 volumes, 120,000 negatives, 800 cubic feet of locally-generated park records from the 1920s to the present, an extensive Vertical File Collection of papers and reports and some Manuscript Collections.<sup>53</sup> Yellowstone Park and the American West are represented in the Carl Parcher Russell Papers at Washington State University Libraries in Pullman. The Federal Records Center in Denver and the National Archives in Washington, D.C. also have extensive records concerning the park, including materials about the Haynes enterprises. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but is intended to aid anyone researching the House of Haynes or Yellowstone National Park. Arrangements must be made in advance to use any of these collections, including those at MSU Libraries.

Other historical records dealing with that "brilliantly varied wilderness"<sup>54</sup> named Yellowstone National Park may be more voluminous, but none contain the personal insights and

idiosyncracies of the Haynes Collection which is a melding of nature, history, and business. The collection may be styled as one family's experiences with, in the words of F. Jay himself describing his 1887 winter expedition, "all the fantastic forms possible to imagine."<sup>55</sup> If father and son had been present at the massive fires that swept through Yellowstone during the summer of 1988, as I was, I suspect they would have grasped at the opportunity to capture some new fantastic forms, with Jack Ellis Haynes adding historical yarns and monographs to the photographic output. How could the Haynes' entrepreneurial instinct have failed to record the greatest natural event to hit Yellowstone in 300 years, even as they fought to save their business and those of their fellow concessionaires?<sup>56</sup> Even without material about the fires, the Haynes Collection beckons to scholars. Research potential in the collection is as varied as the park and possible topics might include a literary or historical analysis of different depictions of the wonders of the world's first national park, the evolution of photography in a western setting, the development of concessions in Yellowstone, the role of women in national park management, articles about Lily and Isabel Haynes and full-length biographies of F. Jay and Jack Ellis Haynes. Despite, or even because of, Jack Ellis Haynes' archival picaresques, historians, outdoor enthusiasts, photographers, librarians, archivists and others will find it rewarding to investigate the Haynes Collection at MSU. As the libraries accumulate additions to the Yellowstone Park Collection, MSU will receive greater recognition as a premier resource on the world's first national park. ■

\* I would like to thank Isabel Haynes, wife of Jack Ellis Haynes, and Noreen Alldredge, Dean of Libraries at Montana State University, for granting permission to write this article. Special thanks should go to Minnie Paugh, former Special Collections Librarian at MSU Libraries; Aubrey Haines, noted historian of Yellowstone Park; the Montana Historical Society; Nathan Bender, present Head of Special Collections/Archives at MSU Libraries; and Suzi Katz and the Inter-Library Loan staff at Rosenthal Library, Queens College. Thanks also to two colleagues who read and critiqued the manuscript: Dr. Jackson Cohen, Reference Librarian/ Sciences Bibliographer, Queens College; and Dr. Gene M. Gressley, Director Emeritus of the American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming. I appreciate the efforts of Matthew J. Simon, former Chief Librarian at Queens College and currently Dean of Libraries at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, who encouraged me and offered guidance.

53. Interview with Timothy Manns, Yellowstone National Park Historian, Mammoth, Yellowstone National Park, June 26, 1987.  
54. Haynes, *Yellowstone Holdups*, p. 5.



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

55. Haynes, *Haynes New Guide*, 160. The original text is from "Chicago Tribune, March 5, 1887, newspaper clipping in Lily Haynes' scrapbook. Haynes Coll." as cited by William L. Lang, "At the Greatest Personal Peril to the Photographer," p. 22, n. 26.  
56. See William C. Symonds and Vicky Cahan, "Did the Park Service Fiddle While Yellowstone Burned?" *Business Week*, 26 September 1988, 48; "After the Fire," *Economist*, 29 July 1989, 26-27; Brian Storer and Peter Ling, "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," *History Today* 40 (December 1990): 6-8



MATT DINZEY, CIMS, QUEENS COLL

ROLF SWENSEN (1944-) IS REFERENCE LIBRARIAN/SOCIAL SCIENCES BIBLIOGRAPHER AT QUEENS COLLEGE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, WHERE HE

ALSO TEACHES A COURSE ABOUT LIBRARY RESEARCH. A PH.D. IN AMERICAN HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, HE WAS FORMERLY HEAD OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/ARCHIVES AT MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY AND HAS WORKED IN OREGON, ALASKA AND PAPUA, NEW GUINEA. HIS ARTICLE "ERNST HOFER'S 'AGE OF MUSH AND COWARDICE': AN IOWA JOURNALIST AT WORK, 1855-1890" WILL APPEAR IN THE FALL, 1992 ISSUE OF *Annals of Iowa*. IN ADDITION TO A CONTINUING FASCINATION WITH YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK AND ERNST HOFER, SWENSEN HAS A RESEARCH INTEREST IN THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MOVEMENT.

BOOK  
REVIEWS

THE MAGNIFICENT  
MOUNTAIN WOMEN:

ADVENTURES IN THE  
COLORADO ROCKIES

BY JANET ROBERTSON  
REVIEW BY LOIS HANSEN

HIDATSA SOCIAL  
AND CEREMONIAL  
ORGANIZATION

BY ALFRED W. BOWERS  
REVIEW BY ROBERT D. GANT

BONANZA RICH:

LIFESTYLES OF THE WESTERN  
MINING ENTREPRENEURS

BY RICHARD H. PETERSON  
REVIEW BY DAVID A. WALKER

FALLOUT:  
AN AMERICAN  
NUCLEAR TRAGEDY

BY PHILIP L. FRADKIN  
REVIEW BY MICHAEL A. AMUNDSON

SCHOOLWOMEN OF THE  
PRAIRIES AND PLAINS:

PERSONAL NARRATIVES FROM  
IOWA, KANSAS, AND NEBRASKA,  
1860S TO 1920S

BY MARY H. CORDIER  
REVIEW BY TERRY BALL

FORT MEADE AND THE  
BLACK HILLS

BY ROBERT LEE  
REVIEW BY RICHARD F. KEHRBERG



R.S. Van Tassel Library, 1905

Who are little girls' heroes? Mine were Gene Autry and Wonder Woman. I didn't know about women like Julia Archibald Holmes, Isabella Bird, Dr. Susan Anderson, Harriet Vallie or Dorothy Collier. In *The Magnificent Mountain Women*, Janet Robertson tells the stories of these and more than thirty other women whose love for the Rocky Mountains led them to climb them, homestead in them, farm, ski, and die in them. They were ridiculed, reviled, admired and loved. Now they are made heroes through Robertson's chronicle of their adventures and contributions.

Robertson arranges their tales chronologically and by subject. Six chapters deal with mountain climbers, sportswomen, park promoters, homesteaders, botanists and modern recreationists. Drawing from newspaper articles, interviews, journals, letters and books written by the women, she profiles some of the gutsiest ladies alive (excluding Native American women) between the years 1858 and 1988.

The first woman to climb Pike's Peak, Julia Archibald Holmes, traveled with her husband by wagon train in 1858 to look for gold near Pike's Peak. Her traveling costume, for which she was criticized by a fellow female traveler, included bloomers under a below-the-knee length dress. That summer she climbed Pike's Peak with her husband and two other men. She wrote to her mother, "Nearly every one tried to discourage me ... In all probability I am the first woman who ever stood upon the summit of this mountain and gazed upon this wondrous scene ..." (p. 6). Her comment should be amended to read "the first non-Native American woman." We know that Native Americans climbed Long's Peak to trap eagles (p. 46). Women may have accompanied them there and also up Pike's Peak.

In 1873 Isabella Bird climbed Long's Peak with mountain man Jim Nugent. She wore an outfit she de-

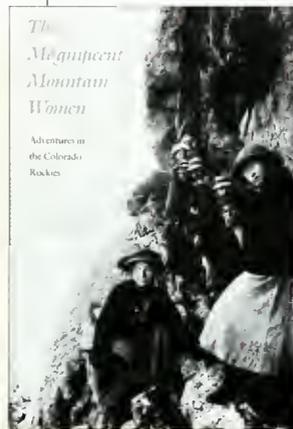
scribes in her book, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, (New York/London: G.P. Putnam's Sons/ The Knickerbocker Press, 1888; Reprint, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960, 1962), as a Hawaiian traveling dress. It included bloomers and its facsimile was later displayed at a National Health exhibition in England. In 1892 she was made a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. Long's Peak was only the beginning of Bird's adventures. She traveled in and wrote about China, Hong Kong, Saigon, Singapore, the Malay peninsula, Japan and Korea. She was the first European woman to meet an Emperor of Morocco. She built medical missions (several specifically for women and children) in Islamabad and China and an orphanage in Japan. This was one terrific lady!

Due to sexual prejudice, medical doctor Susan Anderson, was prevented from practicing in Denver. Consequently, she settled in Fraser, Colorado in 1907. She serviced mountain-dwelling patients day or night in any kind of weather. She walked, skied, snowshoed or rode horses to reach them. She did not retire until 1950 at the age of eighty.

Around 1912 Harriett Vaille brought Arapaho men from the Wind River Reservation to give names to their former tramping grounds in the proposed Rocky Mountain National Park. Congress was more likely to fund creation of the park if its features were named, so Vaille took on the research. Having little luck she sought help of the old Arapahos. Not only did this provide names for the park's features, it also produced the "only oral history of the area from the Indians' viewpoint." (p. 46).

In 1971 Katherine Bell and her assistant, Emily Dixon Fose, spent several harsh winter months living in primitive conditions on Trail Ridge

## THE MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN WOMEN: ADVENTURES IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES



BY JANET ROBERTSON

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1990.

ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, REFERENCES, INDEX. XXIII AND 220 PP.

PAPER \$9.95.

## HIDATSA SOCIAL AND CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION



BY ALFRED W. BOWERS

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA,  
1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. V AND 528 PP.  
PAPER \$15.95.

Road. In freezing temperatures and high winds they conducted botanical research. They suffered frostbite and psychological stress. Bell's work earned her a doctorate in botany. Her professor stated that she was the first person to live and work in a severe alpine environment in winter in order to learn what the plants were doing. (p. 141).

The list goes on. Virginia Donaghe McClurg and Lucy Peabody worked tirelessly to make Mesa Verde a national park. Due to their efforts it has been called the "Women's Park." Gudrun Gaskill, "Supermom" of the 470-mile Colorado Trail, pushed the hikers' path to completion during a fourteen-year period.

Homesteaders Katherine Garetson and Esther Burnell, mountain guide Elizabeth Burnell, moun-

tain climbers Dorothy Collier and Agnes Vallie, skiers Marianne Stevenson Magnusson and Betsy Cowles, mountain climber and climbing teacher Coral Bowman are only a few of the other magnificent mountain women profiled in this concise and well-written book. An additional treat is an excellent photographic spread which makes almost all these women visible heroes.

Research breeds research, and Robertson's extensive source list entices the reader to delve into other books written about and by her subjects. Women heroes for little girls exist. Robertson's book is an exciting compilation of some of their stories.

LOIS HANSEN

FREELANCE WRITER AND ARTIST LIVING IN  
CHEYENNE, WYOMING.

This classic volume first appeared as *Bulletin 194, Bureau of American Ethnology* in 1965, as noted by Douglas R. Parks in an Introduction added to the original text. The

reprinted classic stands in recognition of thirty years of meticulous study by Dr. Bowers. It has long been considered the finest work to appear regarding the three groups known as the Hidatsa tribe (Hidatsa proper, Awaxawi and Awatixa). It is indeed fortunate for us that Bowers was sent to the field in the early 1930s when it was still possible to secure from individuals who had participated in events as bundle ceremonies and buffalo hunts. All of his informants were born approximately in the decade 1850-60 and were adults at the time of the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Bowers' knowledge of the Hidatsa language likewise provided him with insights and a rapport not available to most students. Thus the study has more the ring of a tribesman explaining his own culture

than an outsider commenting upon an alien and unfamiliar way of life.

The study begins with a short account of how fieldwork was conducted and research data handled. Next is a short chapter on the historical and cultural background of the Hidatsa groups. This is followed by a lengthy section about ceremonial organization. Finally, in what will probably be the chapter of greatest interest to those involved in the relationships between ethnology and the huge corpus of archaeological work from the Missouri River Valley, there is a chapter on the Hidatsa cultural position among Northern Plains tribes.

Bowers has done a tremendous job, equalling his excellent work about the Mandan titled, *Mandan Social and Ceremonial Organization*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950). A similarly thorough study of the Arikara, the third affiliated tribe on the Fort Berthold Reservation, remains wanting.

Only minor criticisms of an ethnographic nature were noted in this fine work. The characteristic lumping of the Sioux would have more mean-

ing if cultural divisions were identified such as Santee, Middle, or Teton. Also, I would have welcomed, perhaps, in the Introduction, an update of the archaeological data which was dated at the time of the study's first printing in 1962. These are mi-

nor criticisms, indeed, for a book now listed among American anthropological classics.

ROBERT D. GANT  
COLLECTIONS CURATOR AT THE WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM IN CHEYENNE

Western mining areas continue to attract the interest of historians and the general public. Former mining camps have been reborn as centers for legalized gambling and tourist attractions. The Mining History Association brings together academics and buffs in a cordial spirit of inquiry. Historians have moved beyond Sierra gold and the Comstock Lode to study mining safety, women and Irish residents of Montana, and Chinese laborers in Wyoming's coal fields.

Fifteen years ago Richard H. Peterson analyzed the social origins and business behavior of fifty leading western mining entrepreneurs. He concluded that the typical "bonanza king" was self-made, native born of British ancestry and one who had a limited education and was from a lower or middle class background. Few had training or education in mining but they did possess business experience in banking, freighting or merchandising. These western entrepreneurs had more in common with eastern business elites than they did with other frontier residents. Data from this non-quantitative and non-theoretical analysis seemed to corroborate Frederick Jackson Turner's claim that the frontier promoted vertical social mobility.

In the current volume Peterson subjected the sample of fifty western mining leaders to an analysis of their ideologies, political activities, recreational and cultural interests, family relations, and philanthropies. The author concluded that the "bonanza kings" accepted the social Darwinian ideology of success through hard work, self-denial, rugged individual-

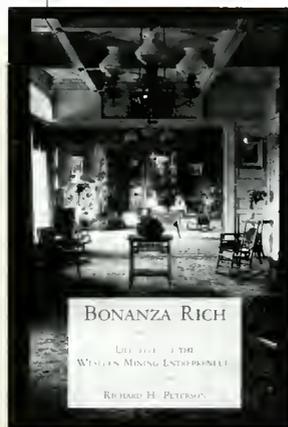
ism and natural selection. In addition, they embodied virtues familiar to the readers of the Horatio Alger stories: ambition, industry, frugality, honesty and luck.

Following the pattern set by their eastern counterparts, these mining leaders sanctioned the theory of *laissez faire* but insisted that government protect property and maintain law and order. They urged restraint in taxing mineral lands but insisted on regulating railroads. Most supported free and unlimited coinage of silver and William Jennings Bryan in his 1896 presidential campaign.

Peterson does not categorize business leaders as either robber barons or industrial statesmen, but refutes the notion that all elites were socially irresponsible and primarily interested in conspicuous consumption. Western mining leaders contributed substantial sums to churches, orphanages, relief organizations and most consistently to various educational institutions. In addition they assumed positions on boards of trustees, often displacing clerics on these governing bodies. This leadership was motivated in part by a desire to reform the traditional curriculum toward a more scientific, technical and business-oriented education.

Leading mining entrepreneurs attempted to convince a skeptical eastern elite that the western wealthy was "respectable," not only because of their philanthropic activities but also through lavish spending. Many constructed opulent mansions on San

## BONANZA RICH: LIFESTYLES OF THE WESTERN MINING ENTREPRENEURS



BY RICHARD H. PETERSON.

MOSCOW: UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO PRESS,  
1991. APPENDIX, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY,  
INDEX. XIV AND 184 PP.  
CLOTH \$21.95.

Francisco's Nob Hill and in the Capitol Hill section of Denver, as well as in Helena and Butte. Often the site for ceremonial and costly entertainment, the mansion also served to exhibit one's art collection and extensive library. Although these homes frequently were constructed for their social value, they included technological innovations in lighting, heating, and electrical or mechanical conveniences.

In similarly social ways, eastern and western aristocrats luxuriously entertained guests, raced thoroughbred horses and purchased private railroad cars. Making the grand tour of Europe was not only important socially, it provided an opportunity to collect books, works of art and expensive furnishings. Ten of Peterson's sample gained a seat in the U. S. Senate, perhaps the ultimate political goal of elites.

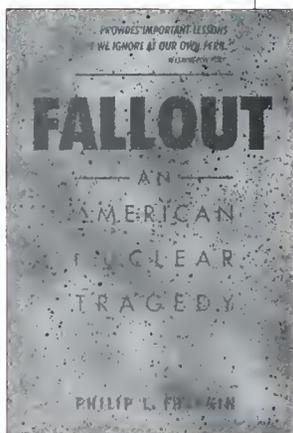
In his earlier study Peterson portrayed western mining leaders as fitting into the Turnerian pattern of vertical social mobility. As one discovers in his sequel, however, the lifestyles of these individuals do not fit this historical model. The ideology of social Darwinism and success through ambitious opportunity, frugality and honesty

were not unique to the frontier. Their generous support for education challenges Frederick Jackson Turner's idea of the frontier as anti-intellectual and culturally limited. Once they achieved success, mining elites did not create a unique western lifestyle, but followed the example of eastern contemporaries. Peterson concludes, "Far from being true pioneers in the Turnerian context, the mining elite perhaps sought to overcome a sense of provincial cultural inferiority by conforming to national standards of business elitism." (p. 156).

This is an engaging sequel that adds to our understanding of successful western mining entrepreneurs in the late nineteenth century. The author provides us with more flesh and blood personalities than he did in his previous study. Letters and diaries enhance a work that relies on standard secondary sources. Although Peterson needs to compare mining elites with other frontier entrepreneurs, he has produced a notable contribution to the growing and diverse literature about the mining West.

DAVID A. WALKER  
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY & GRADUATE  
DEAN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN  
IOWA, CEDAR FALLS.

## FALLOUT: AN AMERICAN NUCLEAR TRAGEDY



BY PHILIP L. FRADKIN

TUCSON: UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
PRESS, 1989. MAPS, NOTES,  
INDEX. X AND 300 PP.  
PAPER \$16.95.

On May 19, 1953 the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) detonated "Shot Harry" at the Nevada Test Site northwest of Las Vegas. Estimated to be three times stronger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, "Shot Harry" vaporized its 300 foot aluminum support tower as well as the loose soil and rocks at its base before rising into a spectacular fireball. As these gases condensed, a strong updraft was created that pulled more debris from the ground and mixed it with radioactive materials that had escaped fission. This mixture, containing particles from

one thousandth of a millimeter to almost half an inch in size, created the familiar mushroom shape that rose over 42,000 feet above Yucca Flats. Within an hour radioactive particles known as fallout began to land on sheep grazing nearby while winds pushed the lighter materials toward St. George, Utah. Two hours later the AEC reported that if fallout occurred in town, it would not exceed dangerous levels. In *Fallout: An American Nuclear Tragedy*, Philip Fradkin traces not only the radioactive fallout that rained down on the people of southern Utah following "Shot Harry" but also the legal fallout brought about when downwind victims filed suit against

the federal government. Despite the government's continued assurances of safety, the downwind population developed high rates of cancer in the years following atmospheric testing. Indeed, the tragedy that Fradkin refers to was not nuclear testing but rather the government's malfeasance in first denying, and then covering-up, any wrongdoing.

Engagingly written, Fradkin's tale interweaves personal stories, government reports, scientific findings and legal proceedings into a very readable narrative. Loosely organized around the *Irene Allen v. the United States of America* case, Fradkin tracks the radioactive and legal consequences of "Shot Harry" much like a lawyer presenting a case. Providing a brief background covering the history of nuclear tests, Fradkin first presents the facts concerning the government's alleged crime in not adequately forewarning or protecting downwind populations. Repeatedly told by government officials that they had nothing to worry about, the downwinders—mostly rural, Mormon, patriotic and Anglo-Saxon—later showed unusually high frequency rates of leukemia and other cancers.

The author then builds his case by examining how congressional investigations were stymied by conflicting scientific studies regarding the correlation between fallout and cancer. When legislative measures failed, the victims took their cases to the courts. After the final 489-page opinion was given in 1984, only ten of the twenty-four plaintiffs were given modest monetary settlements. After the decision was overturned, the tragedy concluded when the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the victim's appeals.

Extensively researched, *Fallout* serves as an excellent case study in the abuse of federal power. The book should be mandatory reading for anyone interested in modern American history, the West, the history of technology, environmental history or bureaucratic history. Finally, as communities across Wyoming and the nation study the possibilities of locating temporary nuclear waste facilities, *Fallout* provides an invaluable lesson in local/federal government relations.

MICHAEL A. AMUNDSON  
PH.D. CANDIDATE IN HISTORY AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, LINCOLN.

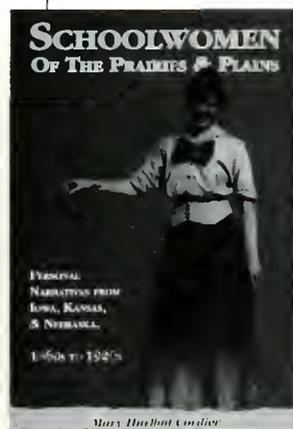
*Schoolwomen of the Prairies and Plains*, by Mary Hurlburt Cordier, is a well-researched account of the lives of five women teachers of the plains states of Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska covering the years 1860-1920. In drawing upon the diaries, journals, and personal records of these women, Cordier has tried to show that the stereotype of the strict, unbending, spinster teacher of the one-room schoolhouse is false.

In Part One of her book Cordier provides the reader with an educational and historical setting, taking us from the raw beginnings of schools held in settlers' homes, dugouts, and sod houses to the time when enough taxpayers lived in a district to pay for

schoolhouses. Early schoolteachers were usually female, White and the wives and mothers of lower middle-class families. Cordier brings us through the transition from school being held for just a few months to seven or eight months, a factor in the feminization of teaching since men were thought to be needed to pursue other careers and to farm the land.

The trend toward formal teacher education is traced through the establishment of normal schools (normal meaning standard), written examinations, institutes and self-instruction to university training. Cordier describes the working and liv-

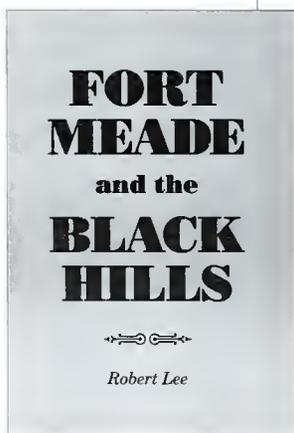
SCHOOLWOMEN  
OF THE PRAIRIES  
AND PLAINS:  
PERSONAL NARRATIVES  
FROM IOWA, KANSAS,  
AND NEBRASKA, 1860S  
TO 1920S



BY MARY H. CORDIER

ALBUQUERQUE: UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, 1992. NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. IX AND 365 PP. CLOTH \$32.50.

FORT MEADE AND  
THE BLACK HILLS



BY ROBERT LEE

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
PRESS, 1991. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY, NOTES. VI AND 321 PP.  
CLOTH \$40.00.

ing conditions of teachers and the type of teaching methods which prevailed. She notes that while teachers seemed to be very progressive in their approach to grouping students and meeting individual needs, it was more a matter of expedience due to limited space and lack of books, and led to innovative, alternative methods of teaching.

In Part Two of her book Cordier introduces the reader-by way of personal journals, diaries, records, and photographs-to five women teachers of the period, chosen mainly because they left sufficient documentation. Their careers ranged from a few to more than fifty years. Through the use of these personal documents we are shown what it was like to be a young female teacher away from home for the first time and faced with an array of students of diverse ages and abilities. Her sometimes deplorable living and working conditions are personally described, as is her compassion for her students. Her strong desire to do her best with available materials is apparent, as well as her struggle to gain more status and education in her chosen career. We also get to know

the students, their susceptibility to contagious diseases and their normal school days, complete with recitations and helping with chores.

In her epilogue Cordier concludes that these five, representative women were strong and resourceful, and were motivated throughout this entire, transitional period of American education to provide students with a challenging and enjoyable education. They chose to overlook the poor pay and bad working conditions and tried to guide their students toward reaching their full potential. They took pride in being teachers and were ambitious for themselves and their students.

Cordier provides us with a useful account of the lives of women teachers and students of the period, 1860-1920. She does it in a personal and lively way which leads the reader to want to know more about these strong and fascinating women and the time in which they lived.

TERRY BALL

FOURTH GRADE TEACHER AT ANDERSON  
ELEMENTARY IN CHEYENNE, WYOMING.

In 1857 First Lieutenant Gouverneur K. Warren, U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers, topped Bear Butte on the northeastern edge of the Black Hills and surveyed the surrounding countryside. In his report Warren concluded that a war between the Sioux and the United States was inevitable and that a military post should be established in the region. It was not until twenty-one years later, however, that such a fort came into existence. Robert Lee's *Fort Meade and the Black Hills* recounts the sometimes torturous processes by which Warren's recommendation became reality and the subsequent history of the Black Hills fort.

The Civil War and the Sioux uprising in Minnesota postponed action on Warren's original recommendation. After the war, rumors of gold caused an army of White miners to invade the region and once again the call went up to erect a fort in the Black Hills. In 1878 Congress finally authorized a permanent military post. Named Fort Meade after General George G. Meade, the victor of the Battle of Gettysburg, the new post gradually took shape during the next few years. Ironically, the war Warren predicted with the Sioux had come and gone when the new fort came into being.

With the Sioux on their reservations, Fort Meade's soldiers settled into a dull routine of post building and garrison life. Only twice would

the garrison take to the field against Indians: in 1890-1891 during the Ghost Dance troubles and in 1905 to corral the "absentee Utes." Although it never played a role in the major Indian campaigns of the Northern Plains, Fort Meade was in a strategic position near the major Sioux reservations, allowing it to survive when other frontier posts closed in the 1890s. Even this attribute gradually faded in the twentieth century, however. When talk of abandoning the post emerged the South Dakota congressional delegation and the region's business leaders launched determined campaigns to gain funding and troops for the fort. While this coalition succeeded handily after the Spanish-American War, it took a much more strenuous effort to get the War Department to move the Fourth Cavalry to Fort Meade following the first World War.

Fort Meade's utility as a military base slipped dramatically during World War II. After the Fourth Cavalry left the post in January, 1943 the fort briefly served as the home of the 88th Glider Infantry Regiment. But that

regiment also left South Dakota before the end of the year. Despite an aggressive campaign by the Sturgis Chamber of Commerce to secure more troops for the post, the War Department seemed content to let the fort lapse into genteel decay. Fort Meade was simply too small for the type of large-scale training the Army was undertaking. Instead, the Army suggested that the post be turned over to the Veterans Administration (VA) as a neuropsychiatric hospital. The region's congressman, Francis Case, took up the cause of a hospital at the fort and guided the measure through the VA and Congress. In 1945, after a year of reconstruction, Fort Meade began its new role as a veteran's hospital.

Robert Lee, a veteran journalist and past-president of the South Dakota Historical Society, has produced a valuable study about the life of a frontier Army post. Fort Meade witnessed a colorful parade of characters and events: the court martial of Major Reno (of Battle of the Little Big Horn fame), a troop of Sioux cavalry,

and German prisoners of war although in relating these stories the author occasionally strays from his principal subject. While military matters predominate, the author does not ignore the fact that Fort Meade had an important social and economic effect on the surrounding community. The fort's economic effect on the city of Sturgis seems to have declined through time, although more detailed economic analysis of the fort-town relationship would have been helpful. One of Lee's important contributions is to explore the efforts of business leaders, newspapermen, and congressmen to get and keep a military post in the region. This is particularly timely as the government enters a new era of base closings. Beyond the normal scope of fort histories, *Fort Meade and the Black Hills* is an important study both in military history and the history of the Black Hills region.

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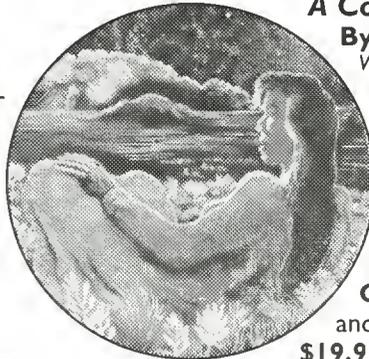
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Volume 65, Nos. 2/3

# WYOMING ANNALS



EDITOR  
NOTES

I wanted motivation to write this column. Since this is the year we celebrate the Sesquicentennial (150 years) of the Oregon Trail I decided to read Irene Paden's *Wake of the Prairie Schooner*. I followed along as Paden, her husband and her son traced the Oregon Trail and its cutoffs in the 1930s. When I finally reached the end of the 477-page book I was mentally footsore but probably a better person for that. Certainly I had been entertained during recuperation from heart surgery.

Another opportunity for inspiration came later in the summer. My wife and I were planning to visit our son in San Francisco, so it seemed a good opportunity to read a few diaries at the Bancroft Library across the Bay on the University of California, Berkeley, campus. It would be a treat, after plodding the trail with Paden, to actually feel a real emigrant diary in my hands. At the university we followed campus sidewalks to the redoubtable, white stone Bancroft, worked our way through tedious library preliminaries including credential checks and then probed the card catalog. I asked for a diary which at last came to me in a grey archival box.

It was a booklet written by Amos Batchelder who had recopied his original diary of an 1850 trip to the California goldfields. The first 2000 miles was a journey from Boston, by train and steamer, to a trailhead on the Missouri River. From there part of the overland route west was along the Humboldt River in Nevada, a tough stretch where emigrants cleaned out their wagons of all but the most essential items. After exhausted draft animals laid down to add their bodies to windrows of carcasses, the diarist and other survivors constructed makeshift backpacks and continued their stolid march to the goldfields.

Having traveled part of Batchelder's route we, too, had seen discarded items. But it was the flotsam and jetsam from Interstate 80 travelers whizzing down the highway in air conditioned cars and vans. Bored or needing a break, today's emigrants pull over to the side of this blistered road and create smiling faces, hearts and spiritual messages out of black rocks, or pop bottles stuck headfirst into the sand of the desert floor. I wondered if they knew that the Oregon/California Trail was



MARK JUNGE

*Well, the wife and I we decided that we'd like for this library to be on the Oregon Trail, in a town on the Oregon. It belongs there. They offered to move us. I'd have to buy my own house, sell out and move. But come and get the library and they'd move us free and everything and come to Laramie and live. Well, it's too goddamn cold. I don't want to do that. I'm gettin too old, you know. (Paul Henderson, 1975)*

a few feet away or if they envisioned the death marches of earlier travelers.

I digress. My purpose is not to write about a summer vacation. Nor is it to produce a hagiography about hardy trail pioneers and those who came this way to win and hold the West. Highway markers reflect those patriotic thoughts. But it does seem appropriate to say something about trail historians. Three of the most knowledgeable and well-known Oregon Trail scholars -Merrill Mattes, Bob Munkres and Greg Franzwa- have written articles for this issue of *Annals*. Some others who deserve to be remembered during the Sesquicentennial are gone, including Paul Henderson (1895-1979), a Burlington Railroad employee who made trails his life's avocation. It was also his vocation

because for eight and a half years, beginning in 1966, Paul worked for the Wyoming State Parks Commission, a predecessor to the Wyoming Department of Commerce.

Randy Wagner, Wyoming's coordinator for the celebration of the Sesquicentennial, told me how much of his trail knowledge was absorbed from Paul.

*I just loved the guy. What an amazing man he was. Paul was so full of Oregon Trail information. It was really all he was interested in. He was just absolutely stuffed with it. He was like a great big sponge and when you squeezed him a little of this stuff just oozed out of him and got all over you, and I never could wash it off. It was just infectious. Boy, his enthusiasm for that ...I don't know what kind of a person could be around Paul very long and not become an Oregon Trail buff. It just had to happen.*

Wagner explained how Paul developed an interest in trails.

*He was never a drinker or a boozier or a party guy. He didn't go out with the other railroad crews down to the bars in Guernsey. When they did that he'd just wander out on the trail and start kickin' stones, lookin' around. He said he got hooked on trails outside of Bridgeport [Nebraska] and it wasn't even the Oregon*

continued on page 39...

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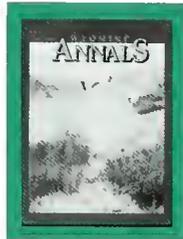
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# WYOMING ANNALS

## C O N T E N T S



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BACK: *Inscription Rock, Guernsey, Wyoming, June 4, 1932.* STIMSON PHOTO COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM.

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ANNALS OF WYOMING is published by the Department of Commerce. It is received by members of the Wyoming State Historical Society and is the Society's principal publication. Current membership is 1,916. Membership dues are: Single \$9, Joint \$12, Institution \$20. Copies of ANNALS may be purchased from the editor. ANNALS articles are abstracted in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

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# THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY IN WYOMING



BETTY BURNETT

BY  
GREGORY M.  
FRANZWA

Preservation is good business. We said that in 1982 when the Oregon-California Trails Association was founded and, indeed, it has proved to be good business. Because Wyoming people have saved the vestiges of the pioneer road to the Pacific Northwest, tourists by the tens of thousands are pouring into Wyoming this year, the 150th anniversary of the Great Migration of 1843.

Instead of zipping through in a day, they will stop to see Fort Laramie and the dozens of romantic historic sites leading up to it. They will marvel at the sandstone ruts south of Guernsey and search for the Unthank names on Register Cliff. They will stop to see the Ayers Natural Bridge, and mourn at the grave of Joel Hembree, the lad who became the first fatality on that memorable trek.

And all this time they will be spending money. On gasoline, on lodging, on food, on admissions, on countless other things. And leaving Wyoming no children to educate, no sewers to build, no added layers of government. It's called tourism by some, a license to steal by others. But by any name it is good business. And it is only because the citizens of Wyoming have saved their historic treasures that this is happening.

The Oregon Trail is Wyoming's most famous road, but there is another road traversing the state that ought to be more famous. The Lincoln Highway carried a hundred times as much traffic.

Conceived in 1912 and routed in

1913, it became America's first coast-to-coast highway. It extended through the national midsection from Times Square, New York City to the Pacific Ocean at San Francisco.

In that second decade of the twentieth century, people looked upon the airplane as we look upon the space shuttle today. The toy of the hour was the horseless carriage. But it was no more than a toy in those early years, for without some place to go it was used chiefly to putter around town, scaring horses.

But in 1913 the new Lincoln Highway opened America's door. It was not looked upon so much as an efficient way to get from here to there, but as an adventure in itself. People thirsting for the thrill of the open road took that highway for the sake of driving on it, to stare in awe as the American West unfolded before their very eyes.

Like I-80, the Lincoln entered Wyoming at Pine Bluffs, coursed through Cheyenne and on to Laramie. There it made a loop to the north, away from treacherous Elk Mountain and up through Rock River and Medicine Bow. Then it looped back to the southwest, joining the route of the present superhighway east of Fort Steele. From there through the rest of Wyoming it paralleled I-80 within a mile or two. In many places the interstate was not poured over the Lincoln highway.

Therefore, through benign neglect, much of it is still with us today. At first it was gravel, much of it not hard-surfaced until the 1930s. Some miles which were asphalted are once again in gravel. Leonard Hay of Rock Springs took me to a stretch on his winter range near Bitter Creek, where the asphalt had been pulled up, moved to a batch plant, mixed with fresh oil and spread on the new

I-80 a mile or so to the south. In other places the highway is broken, with grass growing between the cracks.

Do Wyoming people, and other Americans for that matter, know about all this? Maybe one in a thousand. Do they give a hoot? Not yet they don't, but we hope through the efforts of the Lincoln Highway Association they will, and soon.

The second LHA is unlike the first, which was formed by businessmen allied with the automobile industry. They were heavily capitalized by titans of the industry. Within thirty minutes of the announcement of its founding Goodyear gave \$300,000.

The reincarnation is a not-for-profit group declared a 501(c)(3) operation by the Internal Revenue Service, and donations are deductible from personal and corporate income taxes. It was founded by preservationists, not industry titans. On May 1, 1992 when the new group was six months old, membership stood at 205 and there was a little less than \$1,000 in the bank. But it's a going outfit and membership will top 1,000 within two years. It could be 20,000 in ten.

Randy Wagner, whom the State of Wyoming commissioned to lead its 1993 observance, the sesquicentennial of the 1843 migration over the Oregon Trail, also represents the state on the LHA board of directors. Despite his heavy involvement in that project he has spoken across the state, building interest in the revitalization of the historic highway, and has offered Cheyenne as the headquarters for the 1995 LHA convention.

If the highway has survived all these years without the LHA, what is the need for the outfit now? We have only to turn to Greene County, Iowa to discern that need.

Greene County, in the western third of the state, was the first county

in Iowa to pave the Lincoln from border to border. It was a source of great pride in the county in 1924. Most of the original paving is still there and the sixty six-foot right of way is now marked by towering trees, farm buildings and, of course, those endless cornfields.

A few years ago the Greene County Commissioners enacted a master plan which would extend the right of way to 100 feet, and widen and top the original concrete with asphalt. Fences would be moved back, trees would be destroyed.

Bob and Joyce Ausberger, who farm near Jefferson, the county seat, have tried to stop the destruction. They mortgaged their farm for \$165,000 to provide a cash bond during the lengthy appeal process. They hoped that during that time the commissioners would come to their senses and realize that, since modern U. S. 30 was less than a mile to the north, the pioneer highway could be saved.

The Commissioners nevertheless signed the contract for destruction. A few weeks later the electorate threw the three incumbents out of office. Again there was hope. But the new board, although sympathetic with the Ausbergers, refused to rescind the contract. Demolition of a 2.75-mile stretch of the 1924 paving was scheduled to take place on May 3.

Bob Ausberger, Iowa's representative on the LHA board, had planned to start a local chapter which would post Burma Shave signs and the familiar red, white and blue utility pole markings on the old highway (the markings were a substitute for road maps in 1913).

The battle was lost but it has been good for the LHA. Membership in Greene County is now more than the rest of Iowa combined, and membership in Iowa is greater than the rest of the states combined. But it's better to win than to lose. Greene County will have a tough time attracting the flood of tourists expected to rediscover the Lincoln in the next few years. Instead of cash flowing into motels, restaurants and service stations, they will have exhaust fumes from speeding cars.



THE LINCOLN  
HIGHWAY EAST OF  
ROCK SPRINGS,  
WYOMING.

GREGORY M. FRANZWA

What can Wyoming do to prevent this situation from happening? Wagner is now on the brink of organizing the state chapter, and that in turn will lead to local chapters. That's where the real education will occur. Local chapters can cause minimal improvements to be made on the old, broken road to make it drivable again. They can once again mark the way with red, white and blue utility pole signs. They can sponsor historic automobile runs. They can publish self-guiding, tour route maps.

It is almost unthinkable that any local or state agency would deliberately destroy any portion of the Oregon Trail in Wyoming. Last summer the Wyoming Department of Transportation unwittingly dropped an enormous pile of paving aggregate

right on the Oregon Trail west of South Pass, and people gave them such a lecture that they removed it and will never do that again.

That is because the people of Wyoming (and now, presumably, the Wyoming Department of Transportation) have been educated to the need for preserving the Oregon Trail as an economic as well as historic asset. The Lincoln Highway wouldn't have a chance today, but maybe after a few years of educational activity by Wagner and his legion of friends in Wyoming the dreams will become reality.

GREGORY M. FRANZWA, A TUCSON AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER, IS THE FOUNDER OF THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION. HE FOUNDED THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION IN 1992 AND CURRENTLY SERVES AS ITS PRESIDENT.

POTHoles

IN THE

GREAT

PLATTE

RIVER

ROAD

Misconceptions in  
Need of

**RePaIR**

By

Merrill J. Mattes

One of the most important chapters in western frontier history is that of the central overland migrations, 1841-1866. Although there were various jumping-off places along the two hundred mile stretch of the Missouri River from the Kansas City area to Council Bluffs, Iowa, all trails converged in the vicinity of Fort Kearny, Nebraska and - with the exception of the swing southwestward along the South Platte to Colorado beginning in 1858 - all trails combined to follow the Platte and North Platte rivers to the headwaters of Sweetwater River at South Pass in western Wyoming. On the Pacific slope emigrant trails fanned out in different directions according to planned destinations, with successive waves of emigrants heading for Oregon, Utah, California, Montana, and other territories of the Far West. Regardless of ultimate destination it was the Platte River corridor that enabled emigrants to get anywhere to begin with.

The Platte route, discovered by returning Astorians in 1812-1813 and later

used by fur company caravans, became the trunk line for all later overland migrations because it was the one that led to South Pass, the only place along the entire length of the Rocky Mountain cordillera affording relatively easy passage for wheeled vehicles. Consider the known historic alternatives! Lewis and Clark used Indian packhorses to cross the Continental Divide between the headwaters of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, but this was rugged wilderness and no covered wagon emigrants bound for the Pacific slope followed in their footsteps. The South Platte route of the Colorado gold rush came to a dead end at the foot of the central Rocky Mountain barrier. The much romanticized Santa Fe Trail was a regional route of commerce; less than five per cent of those heading for the Far West via Santa Fe and the Gila River used this semi-desert route to make an end run around the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas to reach Southern California. Thus the Platte route alone became Western America's great highway of empire. To quote the late John D. Unruh in *Plains Across*, the Platte was "the most important route west in American history."<sup>1</sup>

Much of the covered wagon mystique - company organization and disintegration, encounters with Indians, disease, accident, death, roadside burials - relates to the Platte and North Platte Valleys. The most famous and most often described landmarks like Chimney Rock, Scott's Bluff, and Laramie Peak, were scenic wonders of the Platte which uplifted the spirits of the emigrants. Also, here on the Platte and North Platte were famous Forts Kearny and Laramie, the only Army posts between the Missouri River and California during the climactic years of its gold rush.

However, the purpose of this paper is not to rehash the covered wagon theme. The purpose is to expose and hopefully terminate, or at least discredit, a few myths about the central overland migrations which have become engraved in overland literature, matters of so-called "common knowl-

edge" which are inaccurate or misleading. These errors were revealed to me through in-depth research in the only reliable firsthand evidence available: the diaries, letters and recollections of over 2,000 emigrants and observers. Only one third of this number are included in the data of my book *Great Platte River Road* but all of them are identified and described in my recently published *Platte River Road Narratives*.<sup>2</sup> Analysis of a far greater number of sources than those previously used by historians provides data pointing to conclusions that demand revision of certain long-cherished, but now obsolete, concepts about the migrations.

## MISCONCEPTION # 1

### The way west was most commonly known as the Oregon Trail during the historic migration period as well as now.

That's what the south side of the main Platte route has been called by latter-day authors of textbooks, guidebooks, maps and highway signs. There are doubtless several reasons for this. The first and most sentimental of all migrations was that to Oregon. Classic accounts of the Platte route by John C. Fremont and Francis Parkman relate to the Oregon migrations.<sup>3</sup> The name *Oregon Trail* has a poetic ring to it, and the term *Platte Route* sounds rather dull, doesn't it? Thus, professional writers as well as the general public seem to have been hooked on the term *Oregon Trail* even though subsequent migrations up the Platte Valley to California, Colorado, Nevada, Idaho and Montana heavily outnumbered those to Oregon by a ratio of ten to one!<sup>4</sup>

The truth is that the south side of the Platte was exclusively the *Oregon Trail* only through 1848. While many heading for Oregon continued to use it during the California gold rush, beginning in 1849 the heavy majority of emigrants following the south side of the Platte, having jumped off at Independence, Westport, or St. Joseph called it the *California Trail* or the *California Road* for the simple reason that California, not Oregon, was their destination.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, in this latter day the magic name *Oregon Trail* still dominates trail terminology. If you doubt the potency in modern times of that name versus *California Trail* consider that Philip Ashton Rollins entitled his classic edition of Robert Stuart's journal of the returning Astorians as *The Discovery of the Oregon Trail*.<sup>6</sup> Consider also that in 1980 Congress passed a bill officially designating the *Oregon National Historic Trail*. During the lengthy studies that led to this new category of federal program, no one seemed to give thought to recognizing the far more heavily used *California Trail*. Early in these studies, while stationed with the National Park Service in San Francisco, I wrote to the NPS director protesting the lack of awareness of the most important of all western historic trails, the one that led to California beginning in 1849. My protest was ignored.

The Mormon Trail managed to retain its separate identity because it began along the north side of the Platte, opposite the Oregon Trail on the south side. Also, both dedicated Mormon historians and sentimental, non-Mormon historians became vocal champions of the Mormon Trail as an all-American heritage, coequal in fame to the mystic Oregon Trail. Thus, it, too, gained early recognition as a *National Historic Trail*. Meanwhile, though everyone has heard about the great California gold rush,

2. Merrill J. Mattes, *Great Platte River Road* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969); *Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel Over the Great Central Route to Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Montana, and Other Territories, 1841-1866* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

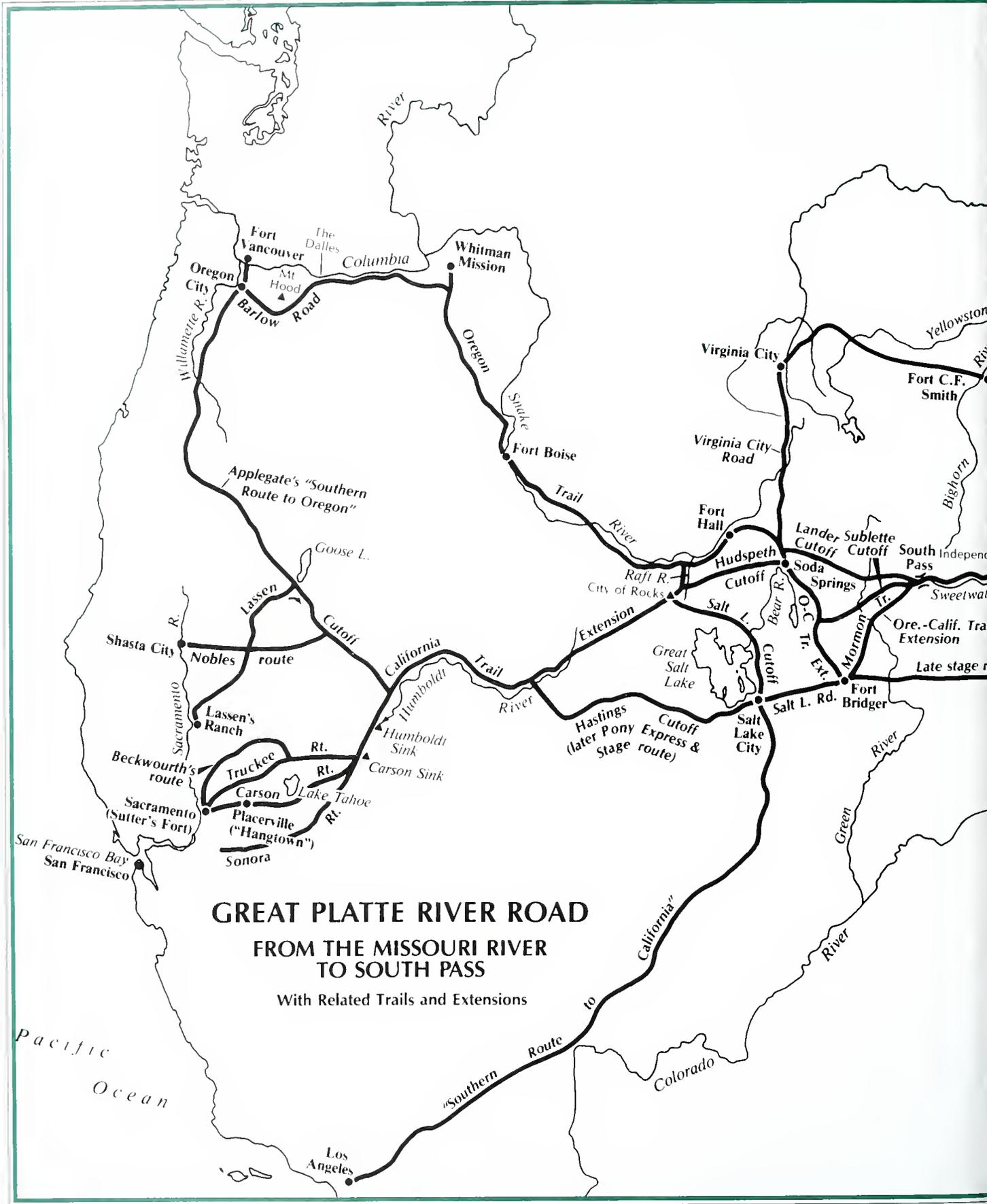
3. Captain John C. Fremont, *Report on the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and Northern California in the Years 1843-44* (Washington, D.C., 1845); Francis Parkman, *The Journals of Francis Parkman*, ed. Mason Wade (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 2 vols.; *The Oregon Trail* (Garden City, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946).

4. Unruh's census of migration to Oregon, 1840-1860, is 53,000, approximately one tenth of my tentative total of 525,000. However, extending this period to 1866 in *Platte River Road Narratives*, I identify more than 300 Oregon entries out of a total of nearly 2,100.

5. It is somewhat disconcerting to find from the examination of several hundred California gold rush diaries that the term *California Road* was actually the most commonly used term.

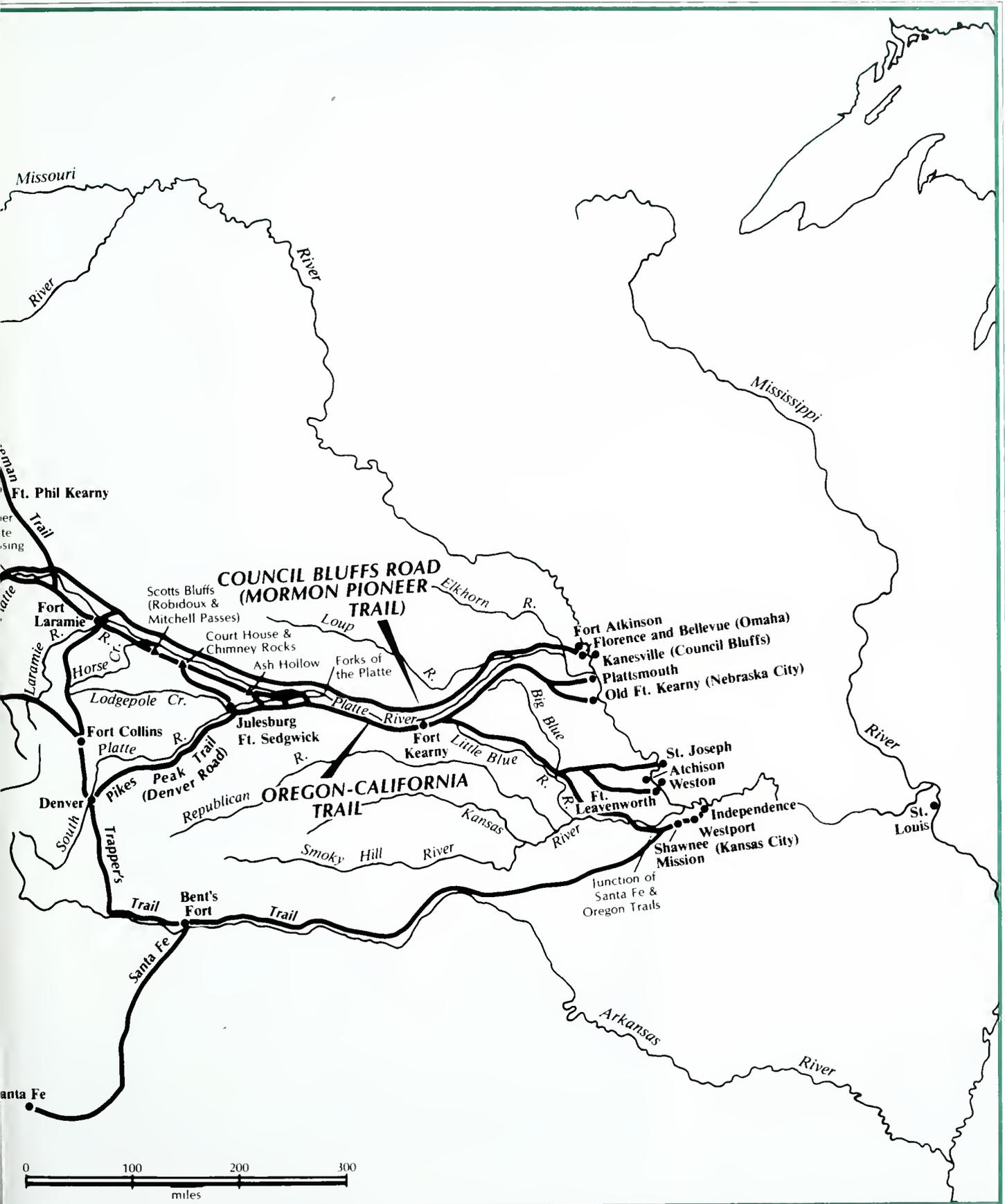
6. *Discovery of the Oregon Trail: Robert Stuart's Narratives of his Overland Trip Eastward from Astoria, 1812-13*, ed. Philip Ashton Rollins (New York: Edward Eberstadt and Sons, 1935).

1. John D. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across: The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 20.



**GREAT PLATTE RIVER ROAD**  
**FROM THE MISSOURI RIVER**  
**TO SOUTH PASS**

With Related Trails and Extensions



JAMES A. BIER, FROM *Platte River Road Narratives* BY MERRILL J. MATTES (URBANA: UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS, 1988)

the proper identity of the gold rush trunkline route up the Platte has been blurred, and federal recognition of the historic California Trail, route of the most famous of all western migrations, has been too long postponed.<sup>7</sup>

Early in my career I was impressed by the need to find one label for all this travel along both sides of the Platte and North Platte corridor to South Pass. One quite logical term would be *Central Overland Route* but that sounds vague and colorless. The term I came up with is *Great Platte River Road* which clearly defines the corridor in question and its dominant role. That is the name of my first book on the subject and I am gratified that with the passage of time the term has caught on in some recent publications.<sup>8</sup> Though it was for the emigrants only a rough road or trail, it was indeed a primitive superhighway not only because of heavy traffic which reached a crescendo in the California gold rush but also because the westward flow was along both sides of the Platte.

A fresh alternative to the above suggestions, if one is referring primarily to the two earliest and most famous of all migration episodes that took place during the period 1841-59, would be *Oregon-California Trail*. It is not an unreasonable term because Oregon migrations did continue into the 1850s, along with the gold rush, and the two trails did largely coincide along the Platte and North Platte rivers. Accordingly, this is the rationale for the name of the Or-

gon-California Trails Association founded by myself and others in 1982.<sup>9</sup>

## MISCONCEPTION # 2 About 350,000 men, women and children followed the Platte westward.

This is the grand total that writers on the subject traditionally use, simply copying from each other. Its components include 25,000 for 1849 and about 50,000 each for 1850 and 1852, the three peak California migration years. Adding the orthodox numbers for Utah, Montana, Oregon and elsewhere through 1866 you get something like 350,000 total. That, indeed, is the figure I used in *Great Platte River Road* published twenty five years ago when I had access to only approximately 700 dia-

ries. However, in *Platte River Road Narratives*, based on nearly 2,100 emigrant testimonials, I found it necessary to upgrade the numbers for all migration years beginning in 1849 because of the mass movement via the South Platte to Colorado beginning in 1858 and to Montana and other territories thereafter. Putting it all together, in the introduction to *Narratives* I calculate a new total of over 500,000 which tentatively I would firm up to 525,000 emigrants through 1866, the last significant year of transcontinental wagon traffic.<sup>10</sup>

How do I account for the larger number? Primarily from statements or inferences from emigrants themselves, some of whom venture surprisingly high estimates. For example, no less than four emigrants of 1850 estimate 65,000 to 75,000 for that year versus the traditional figure of 50,000.<sup>11</sup> Also,

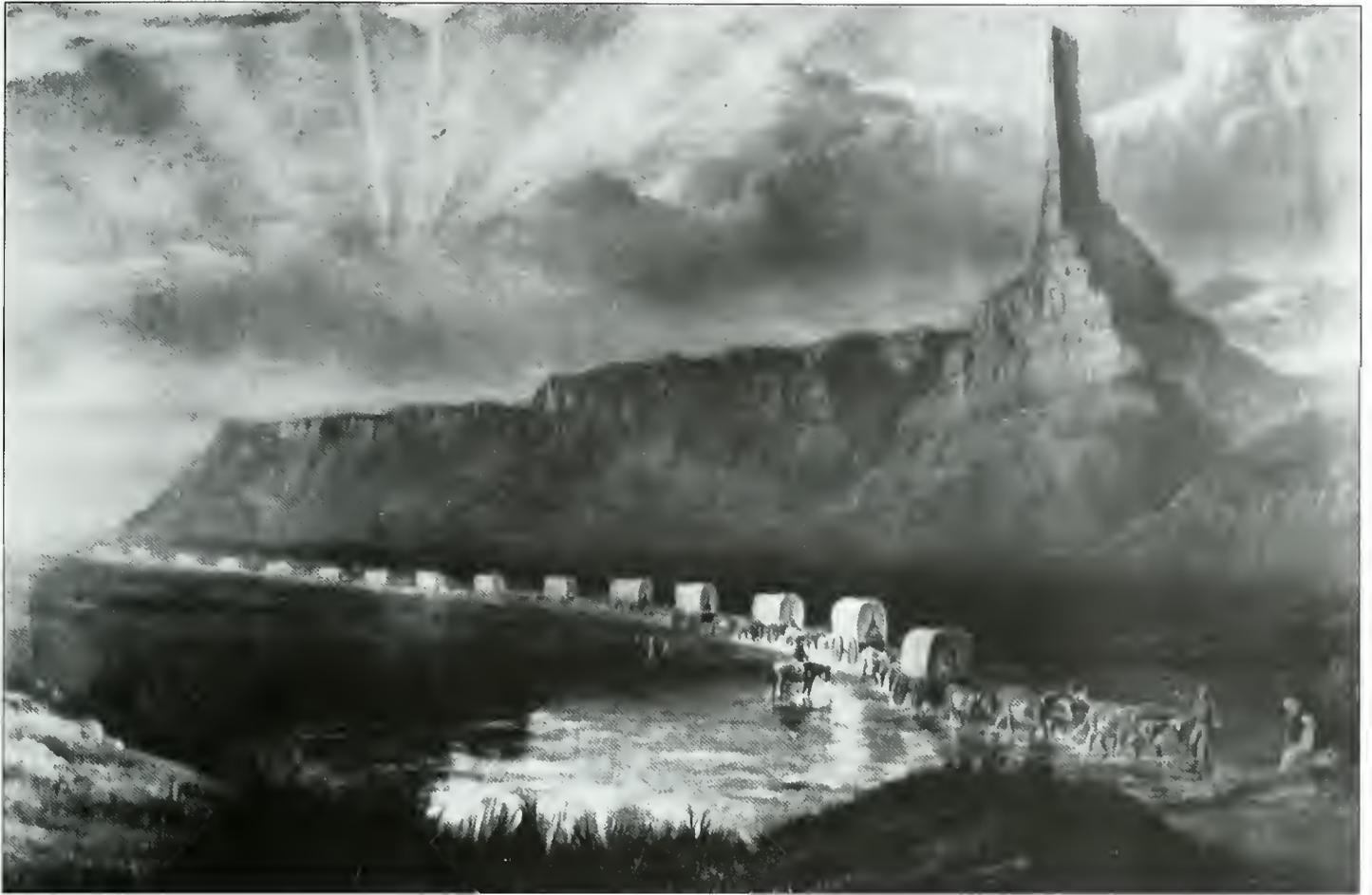
10. My calculation of total numbers is based on estimating an average of 250 emigrants for every identified emigrant recordkeeper during the twenty five year period, 1841-1866. The total of 525,000 is derived by multiplying 250 times approximately 2,100 identified recordkeepers. The ratio varies from year to year. For example, in 1850 there are 336 recorders for a conservatively estimated 65,000 emigrants, which would be a ratio of 1:200. On the other hand the ratio in 1860 is 1:333.

11. Dr. Horace Belknap, letter of February 2, 1851 in *Annals of Iowa*, 36 (1926): 462-65; Lucena Parsons, "An Overland Honeymoon," Kenneth L. Holmes, ed. and comp., *Covered Wagon Women* (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1983), II, pp. 237-94; A. M. Williams, letter in the *Missouri Courier*, reported in *California Emigrant Letters* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1942) pp. 118-24; "Messrs. Robidoux," interview in (Kanesville) *Frontier Guardian*, 26 June 1850.

7. A notable exception to the general ambiguity about California Trail geography and nomenclature is George Stewart's *The California Trail: An Epic with Many Heroes* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1962). Stewart devotes little space to the Platte trunkline itself, being mainly concerned with examining the evolution of alternate routes to California west of the Continental Divide.
8. See Ray A. Billington's foreword to *The California Gold Rush of Byron N. McKinstry, 1850-1852* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1975), pp. 14-15. Also, Gregory M. Franzwa, *Maps of the Oregon Trail* (Gerald, Missouri: Patrice Press, 1982), and Unruh, *op. cit.*
9. The Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), with headquarters at the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence, Missouri is composed of both professional and amateur trail enthusiasts who help to identify, preserve and interpret trail remains, sites and landmarks in cooperation with local, state and federal agencies. It publishes the quarterly *Overland Journal*, and has its annual conventions each August somewhere along either of these two great trails. The 1991 OCTA convention was in Sacramento, the historic end of the California Trail, the 1992 convention was held in Rock Springs, Wyoming and the 1993 convention was held in Baker City, Oregon.



WILLIAM H. JACKSON, MERRILL MATTES COLLECTION, DENVER  
Trail historians atop Scotts' Bluff in Nebraska during the summer of 1938. From left to right: Arthur Proctor, Secretary, Oregon Trail Memorial Association; Paul Henderson, Trail Historian; Harold Dollinger, member, Scottsbluff Chamber of Commerce; Merrill Mattes, Custodian, Scotts Bluff National Monument; Howard Driggs, President, OTMA.



UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM

*Chimney Rock, a landmark along the Great Platte River Road in western Nebraska. The romanticized view is by artist Alfred Lambourne.*

historians have paid little attention to the sizeable, less publicized wagon migrations to Colorado, Nevada, Montana, and Idaho Territories that continued to follow the Platte through 1866. Another factor is that traditional numbers have been predicated primarily on testimony of emigrants concerning the census data in registers kept at south side Forts Kearny and Laramie at the height of the California gold rush.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, however, something else has been left out of the equations altogether. Ignored are large numbers who followed the north side of the Platte out of Council Bluffs, and later Omaha, a parallel column of emigrants who, beginning in 1850, rarely crossed over to the south side forts and

therefore were not included in the official emigrant head count.<sup>13</sup>

**MISCONCEPTION # 3**  
***Most covered wagon emigrants, having jumped off at Independence, Ft. Leavenworth, or St. Joseph followed the south side of the Platte. Except for Mormons, migration along the north bank was either comparatively light or negligible.***

You will find this misconception stated or implied in current textbooks and maps by recognized authorities. Three examples will suffice. In *Western America* Dr. LeRoy R. Hafen identifies only Mormons on the Mormon Trail, and the reader is left to infer that all others followed the south side or *Oregon Trail*. Dr. Thomas D. Clark in *Frontier America* wrote separate chap-

ters on the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Hegira and various gold rushes with no hint of any travel westward from Council Bluffs other than by Mormons. Dr. James C. Olson in *History of Nebraska* refers vaguely to the *Platte Valley-South Pass Trail*. While he does mention Council Bluffs as a jumping-off point he writes, "gold seekers generally followed the Oregon Trail across the Plains," and his map identifies only

13. Before 1850 emigrants understood that continuing west from Fort Laramie along the north side of the North Platte was impractical, if not impossible, because of difficult terrain and hostile Indians. This was possibly a self-serving myth fostered by denizens of the fort. For this reason, through 1849 northside emigrants departing Council Bluffs felt obliged to cross the North Platte. But there was no compulsion for them to register because the crossing was still a mile from the fort, and many kept right on westward. In 1850 some daring emigrants discovered that the north side route, west of the fort, was no more difficult or dangerous than the one on the south side, so from that year forward most northsiders stayed on the north side all the way to the Upper Platte Crossing, where both trails finally joined. See McKinstry, *op. cit.*

12. The famous Fort Laramie register was reported missing in the 1880s according to testimony of a retired Army officer in H. H. Bancroft's *History of Wyoming* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890). Such priceless records were probably dismissed as unimportant by some unimaginative clerk. Our knowledge of the census-taking is based on testimony of more than fifty emigrants. See the statistical table of 1850 in Unruh, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

the stereotyped Oregon, California and Mormon Trails.<sup>14</sup>

The customary narrow focus on the Mormon experience, coupled with the failure of non-Mormon historians third of all migrations jumping off from the Missouri River - the whole two hundred-mile stretch between Kansas City and Council Bluffs - during the twenty five-year migration period, 1841-1866. In other words one third of 525,000, or about 185,000 emigrants, followed the north side of the Platte. Contrast this with Professor Frederick L. Paxson's statement in 1913 that few goldseekers followed the north side and "even fewer have left journals of the route."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, American history textbooks written in recent years by persons whose accessibility to data was apparently no greater than Paxson's seventy five years ago almost uniformly ignore the existence, or minimize the importance of, the large army of non-Mormon emigrants who jumped off from Council Bluffs-Omaha.

To put this in more concrete terms, tabulation of all Missouri River jumping-off places shows that over 700, or one third, of 2,100 recording emigrants followed the north side of the Platte. This includes both Mormons and non-Mormons. While 2,100 emigrant narratives, or one recorder per 250 emigrants, may seem a weak sampling, we are unable to commune with the spirits of those emigrants who failed to keep a record. However, one out of 250 is a far more accurate gauge of comparative numbers than the tiny percentage used by Nielson to rate television viewing habits of fifty million American families.

Concerning the ratio between Mormons and non-Mormons, my estimate is that not more than one fifth of those along the north side were Mormons. In *Plains Across Unruh* tabulates 42,000 Mormons out of a total of 296,000 emigrants during the period

1849-1860. This yields a figure of fourteen per cent Mormons, or one out of seven emigrants along both sides of the Platte. In my *Narratives* are 202 Mormon entries or roughly ten per cent of the grand total of about 2,100. It is a little recognized fact that after 1848 large numbers of Mormons, for a variety of reasons, elected not to follow the north side route, forsaking it for the south or *Oregon Trail* side of the Platte. Mormon jumping-off places of record below the mouth of the Platte included Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, a settlement near there called *Wyoming* and Atchison, Kansas.<sup>16</sup>

Aside from comparative statistics, emigrant descriptions of the north side or *northern* route offer a wealth of trail literature rivaling that of the southsiders. George Jewett and Catherine Haun in 1849, James Dutton and Franklin Langworthy in 1850, and Ezra Meeker and Lucy Cooke in 1852 are six non-Mormon journal-keepers who describe the northern route including the three Missouri River crossings, the hazardous passages of the Elkhorn and Loup rivers in flood, the begging Pawnees, the vast buffalo herds, glimpses of endless wagon trains along both sides of the Platte, the Ancient Bluff Ruins in western Nebraska, and looming south side landmarks.<sup>17</sup>

The Mormon pioneers of 1847 and 1848 and the Argonauts of 1849 crossed over to Fort Laramie under the impression that further travel along the north side was dangerous, but beginning in 1850 northsiders discovered that the dangers were overrated and most elected to continue along the north side of the North Platte to the so-called Upper Platte at present

16. Mattes, *op. cit.* I identify a number of Mormons who followed the south side of the Platte, including some who, having reached Council Bluffs from the East, still elected to drop south before crossing over. In other instances steamboats carrying Mormon converts had to stop short of Council Bluffs/Omaha because of low water. In the 1860s the Mormons actually established disembarkation points in the vicinity of Nebraska City, Nebraska and Atchison, Kansas.

17. George E. Jewett, Ms. at Bancroft Library; Catherine Haun, "A Woman's Trip Across the Plains in 1849," in Lillian Schlissel's *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982); Jerome Dutton, "Across the Plains in 1850," *Annals of Iowa* (1911) 447-89; Franklin Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains, and Mines* (Princeton: 1932); Ezra Meeker, *Covered Wagon And Ox-Team Days, Centennial* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1931), pp. 29-91.

14. LeRoy R. Hafen, Eugene Hollon and Carl Coke Rister, *Western America* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970); Thomas D. Clark, *Frontier America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969); James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966).

15. Frederick L. Paxson, ed., "Thomas Turnbull's Travels from the United States over the Plains to California," in *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 1913 (Madison: 1914), pp. 151-220.

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Casper, Wyoming. Here southsiders were compelled by geography to cross over to the north side, thus merging with the northern migration out of Council Bluffs, all emigrants combining for the grand advance up Sweetwater River to Independence Rock and South Pass.<sup>18</sup>

## MISCONCEPTION # 4

### *The north side route was always called the Mormon Trail.*

This concept is in the same category as that of the name, *Oregon Trail*, so often mistakenly used as an umbrella term for all south side travel westward. Both of these old reliables have a certain magic based on romantic or emotional associations: the brave Oregonians seeking homes in a far distant wilderness or the persecuted Mormons fleeing to a stronghold beyond the Rocky Mountains. Like the Oregon Trail on the south side, the Mormon Trail has been welded into history books as being virtually synonymous with the north side route. Even if there is occasional grudging admission that the route was taken later by some non-Mormons, historians refer to it only as the *Mor-*

*mon Trail*.<sup>19</sup> The distinguished Mormon historian, Dr. Stanley Kimball, takes it one step further when he says, "The Mormons found only a trail, which they made into a road and thereby earned the right to have their route bear their name."<sup>20</sup> But this is simply an assertion that the route should be called the Mormon Trail on the sole grounds of chronological priority. What we are talking about is not what any historical trail

ten the *Northern Route* or the *Council Bluffs Road*.

Going beyond the early 1850s to the succeeding gold and silver rushes up the Platte to Colorado, eastern Oregon, Nevada, Idaho and Montana, one finds only rare reference to an earlier *Mormon Trail* among emigrants other than Mormons themselves.

To the majority it was the *Council Bluffs Road* because that's the name of the place they jumped off from. Even after Nebraska Territory was created in 1854 and Omaha became its temporary capital, Council Bluffs still dominated the migration scene for a few more years because most of the later emigrants continued to reach this Missouri River jumping-off point by land, having traveled westward across Iowa, even though some emigrants were beginning to reach Omaha directly by steamboat. In the 1860s other variations appear, such as *Fort Kearny Road* adopted by those Colorado-bound, or *Fort Laramie Road* or *Military Road* in recognition of Omaha's becoming headquarters for the U. S. Army's Department of the Platte.



MERRILL MATTES, MERRILL MATTES COLLECTION

*Merrill Mattes, then Custodian at Scotts Bluff National Monument, took this photo in August, 1938 during an annual trek of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association. Photographer William H. Jackson pounds a stake west of Mitchell Pass at the site of an encampment he used when bullwhacking along the Trail in 1866. At right is Dan Greenburg of the Wyoming Historical Landmark Commission.*

18. In 1847 Brigham Young and his pioneers crossed over to Fort Laramie trading post to contact people there for provisions and advice about the trail further west. Finding themselves in the vanguard of non-Mormons bound for Oregon they set up a ferry service on the Upper Platte for those who followed. This crossing was imperative because the headwaters of the North Platte, like those of the South Platte, were in Colorado, thus requiring that the North Platte be abandoned in favor of its tributary, Sweetwater River, enroute to South Pass.

19. In 1988 the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce joined Iowa congressmen to push for a federally recognized "National Historic Trail Center" at Council Bluffs. To help their cause they identified a second north side trail, the non-Mormon Council Bluffs Road. Their cause was strengthened by demonstrating that three great trails intersected Council Bluffs, Iowa (the third trail being that of Lewis and Clark). They enlisted my aid in putting together a documented proposal which Congress has accepted in principle for National Park Service review.

should be called today based on someone's sentimental preference, but what a given trail was actually called at different periods during the mid-nineteenth century based on documentable facts. Copious evidence provided by over 600 non-Mormon north side emigrants demonstrates that during their travels, especially during the gold rush of 1849 through the early 1850s, emigrants hell-bent for California, not Utah, did not refer to their route as the *Mormon Trail*. To them it was most of-

20. Kimball's statement appears in his *Historic Sites and Markers of the Mormon and other Great Western Trails* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 57.

Naming a trail for its place of origin was not unique with the Council Bluffs Road. Many emigrants jumping off from Independence or St. Joseph referred to the first leg of their journey, prior to reaching Fort Kearny, as the *Independence Road* or *St. Joe Road*. Thereafter, of course, it became the full-blown *Oregon* or *California Trail*, according to destination. But the route up the north side of the Platte led to a variety of destinations, shifting according to the gold rush of the moment. Accordingly, the terms *Council Bluffs Road* or *Northern Route* gave some stability to non-Mormon, north side nomenclature though

the term *Mormon Trail* probably lingered for the faithful heading for Salt Lake City.<sup>21</sup>

Rediscovery of the almost forgotten non-Mormon north side route was first reported in *Great Platte River Road* with several pages of text and two maps describing and identifying this route. In 1984 my article entitled "The Council Bluffs Road: Northern Branch of the Great Platte River Road," was published in *Nebraska History* magazine. In my *Narratives* the subject is well-documented in the introductions as well as the summaries of emigrant diaries, and maps in both books label the north side route as *Mormon Trail - Council Bluffs Road*. Unfortunately, textbook writers seem reluctant to recognize research that leads to revision of outmoded concepts. Perhaps just as the durable *Oregon Trail* has become a catchall term for all south side trails, the term *Mormon Trail*, - misperceived by some as the only valid historical term for the north side route - has become so enmeshed in folklore, academic bias or indifference that the name *Council Bluffs Road* may remain a while longer as the lost *Orphan Annie* of historic western trails. However, there are three good reasons why she may yet be rescued.

21. Yet another name for the northside route appears as *The Great Salt Lake Trail* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1898) by Colonel Henry Inman and Colonel William Cody. However, I have not yet found this name in any overland account.

1 The Oregon and California trails coincide most of the way from Fort Kearny to South Pass, yet nobody has had the temerity to suggest that we forget about the California Trail just because the Oregon migration came first. By the same token the Mormons, who were certainly first but heavily outnumbered by later non-Mormons, have neither historical nor legal grounds to exclusive trail commemoration rights along the north side of the Platte.

2 While Brigham Young's Mormon Trail of 1847 - the basis for the federally-designated *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail* - did coincide with the later non-Mormon route most of the way across Nebraska, these two trails were separate and distinct geographically at three different places totaling about three hundred miles. One difference is their respective, principal, Missouri River jumping-off places. A second is widely different crossings of

22. See also Merrill J. Mattes, "The Northern Route of the Non-Mormons: Rediscovery of Nebraska's Forgotten Historic Trail," *Overland Journal* VIII (1990) 2, 2-14.

23. The *Oregon National Historic Trail* and the *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail* have been officially recognized for many years. Unfortunately, efforts by the Oregon-California Trails Association and others to urge equal recognition of, and status for, a *California National Historic Trail* have been frustrated until quite recently with passage of a bill to recognize, finally, both the *California National Historic Trail* and the partly coincident *Pony Express National Historic Trail*. The act will be implemented by the National Park Service. It is encouraging to note that the California gold rush is recognized in this legislation as flowing along both sides of the Platte and North Platte rivers beginning in 1849.

Loup Fork, with different routes to regain the Platte. A third is the stretch between Fort Laramie and the Upper Platte Crossing at Fort Caspar in which they were on opposite sites of the North Platte. Thus the northern route from Council Bluffs is not only different from the Mormon Trail thematically it is different, in part, geographically!

3 The non-Mormon, Council Bluffs Road is an integral part of the California Trail complex, as reported by the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior and now defined in a bill before Congress designating the complex as a *National Historic Trail*. This trail is not just the main California route along the south side of the Platte, but also all documented extensions and alternate routes including the Council Bluffs Road as the northern half of the California Trail trunkline from the Missouri River to the Upper Platte. The latter is not the Mormon Pioneer Trail of 1847. It is the north side Platte River migration route of the California Forty-Niners and successive waves of 1850s and 1860s emigrants to California, Montana, Idaho and other territories. Federal recognition of the great California Trail complex should end academic indifference or obtuseness on this subject and lead to proper designation of the long-buried, Council Bluffs Road, northern migration route of the California gold rush, America's almost forgotten Way West.<sup>23</sup> ■



MARK JUNGE

MERRILL JOHN MATTES (1910-) WAS BORN IN CONGRESS PARK, ILLINOIS AND RAISED IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI. HE OBTAINED A

B.A. IN HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI IN 1931 AND IN 1933 RECEIVED HIS MA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM KANSAS UNIVERSITY. IN 1935 MATTES BECAME A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGER IN YELLOWSTONE, AND AFTER ONE SUMMER WAS NAMED CUSTODIAN OF SCOTT'S BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT IN

GERING, NEBRASKA. HE THUS BECAME THE FIRST GOVERNMENT HISTORIAN STATIONED WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, SPENDING HIS ENTIRE CAREER IN THE WEST. HIS INTEREST IN THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAIL PROMPTED MATTES TO AUTHOR TWO MAJOR WORKS ON WESTWARD MIGRATION: *Great Platte River Road* AND *Platte River Road Narratives*. HE ENDED HIS 40-YEAR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CAREER IN 1975 AS CHIEF OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AT THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER. IN 1982 HE BECAME A CO-FOUNDER OF THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION (OCTA) AND HIS RESEARCH COLLECTION WAS DONATED TO THE MERRILL J. MATTES RESEARCH LIBRARY AT THE NATIONAL FRONTIER TRAILS CENTER IN

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI. MATTES IS A CHARTER MEMBER OF THE WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION, A LIFELONG MEMBER OF THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND A MEMBER OF THE WYOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY. THE MOST RECENT OF HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO *Annals* IS "THE CRUSADE TO SAVE FORT LARAMIE," (VOL. 50, #1, SPRING, 1978) AN ARTICLE IN WHICH MATTES DOCUMENTS INTERMITTENT CAMPAIGNS BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND PRIVATE CITIZENS TO PRESERVE FORT LARAMIE, A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE. HE AND HIS WIFE CLARE HAVE BEEN MARRIED 51 YEARS AND LIVE IN LITTLETON, COLORADO.



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# WAGON TRAIN ANIMALS

BY ROBERT L. MUNKRES

During the middle third of the nineteenth century about half a million people emigrated from the eastern part of the United States to the Pacific Coast or regions west of the Rocky Mountains. As different as these individuals and families were from each other, they all shared at least one thing in common: they employed some type of vehicle, conveyance or beast of burden to transport supplies (as well as the emigrants themselves!) necessary for survival during the arduous trek.

Some of those who went "westering," particularly during the height of the gold rush to California, opted to travel by use of slow-moving wagons. Those who used wagons required draft animals. How many? No one knows, nor is any current or future historian likely to come upon an animal census. A

*Ezra Meeker and Governor B.B. Brooks in front of the Capitol Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming, June, 1910 standing by wagon being pulled by an oxen team.*

Ezra Meeker, with quirt in hand, traveled the Oregon Trail from Indianapolis to Portland in 1851. He retraced his steps through Wyoming in 1910. His prairie schooner was smaller and lighter than the big-wheeled, boat-shaped Conestoga wagon used by freighters.

ballpark figure can, however, be arrived at in the following manner. Historian Ray Allen Billington suggested that, in the great 1843 migration initially led by Peter Burnett, a total of about 1,000 men, women, and children, of all ages were involved.<sup>1</sup> He notes that this large group was divided into two columns, each of which had sixty wagons.<sup>2</sup> About 1,000 emigrants traveling in 120 wagons means that there were on the average about eight persons per wagon. If eight occupants per wagon is one ballpark figure, still another is needed. How many wagons were used in the course of the multi-year migration? Making a very generous assumption that twenty per cent of those who traveled the road west did so on horseback or on foot, we are left with an estimate of 400,000 wagon train emigrants. Assuming eight people per wagon, we thus arrive at an estimate of 50,000 wagons. It may be assumed, however, that such an estimate is low because diary evidence clearly indicates that some parties utilized more than one vehicle.<sup>3</sup> Be that as it may, since two draft animals per wagon was the absolute minimum and quite a few parties possessed a greater number of wagons, it seems that at least 100,000 to 200,000 draft animals participated in travel on the Oregon-California-Utah Trail.

One point concerning draft animals may be noted in the form of a question: what kind of draft animal was most favored by wagon train emigrants? John Unruh, Jr. and Merrill Mattes, the two premier scholars of westward migration, are in general agreement that oxen were much preferred, with horses and mules considerably less favored. Unruh is content to make the general observation that more than half of all overlanders' wagons were pulled by oxen, while Mattes



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*Hitching up the Steers.* Copy of a painting by William H. Jackson. "Your yokes should be of the lightest material. The bond must not be too tight," said one immigrant. "If they are your steer will be found to swell up as tight as a drum head."

cites diary excerpts that suggest a figure closer to two-thirds or three-quarters.<sup>4</sup>

The required presence of such a great number of draft animals explodes a myth of the western migration that is sometimes still given credence: the notion that most emigrants were "down-and-outers" whose economic and social failures motivated their decisions to relocate. The cost of a yoke of oxen during the last half of the 1840s varied from a low of \$25 to a high of \$65.<sup>5</sup> Assuming the ballpark accuracy of the draft animal figures noted above, during the period of migration a collective investment of several millions of dollars in draft animals was made by those proposing to travel west. It seems quite unlikely that even several generations of relative failures would have had that kind of capital available.

In addition to draft animals, many trains were accompanied by cattle herds of a size that varied from

one milk cow to herds numbering in the hundreds and even thousands. Jesse Applegate's 1843 "Cow Column," for instance, consisted of more than 5,000 oxen and cattle.<sup>6</sup> Eleven years later in June, 1854 Sarah Sutton noted: "there is about a 1000 head of cattle herded near us to night..."<sup>7</sup>

Given the indispensability of draft animals, the only question concerning their acquisition involved the point in the journey at which the acquisition took place. For virtually the entire migration population, there were only two possible answers. Either the animals were acquired prior to departure from home wherever that might be, or they were purchased at the point of departure from the Missouri River. If cattle were to be herded west, however, it was a certainty they were acquired at least in the general vicinity of the Missouri River crossing because of the difficulties involved in herding hundreds of head of cattle through heavily populated areas.

Cattle, of course, represented an investment in one's economic future on the Pacific Coast, but they also possessed a more immediate utility. They

1. Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), p. 524.

2. *Ibid.* One column, the so-called "light column," had few or no loose cattle while the second, called the "cow column," was comprised of those with herds. The cow column was captained by Jesse Applegate.

3. Trading caravans used many more draft animals than did wagon train families. It is quite fair to assume that considerably larger numbers of draft animals were used in connection with the Santa Fe trade than were used on the northern trails.

4. John Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 108. Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mainline Via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969), XXV, p. 39. Mr. Mattes cites Isaac Foster's 1949 statement that ninety four of ninety six teams near Fort Kearny were oxen and G.W. Thissel's statement of the following year that eighty per cent of the wagons of the 1850 migration were drawn by oxen.

5. John Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across*, p. 114.

6. Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion*, p. 524.

7. Sarah Sutton, "A Travel Diary in 1854," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1988), VII, p. 49, entry for Tuesday, June 13, 1854. Hereafter referred to as Sarah Sutton.



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*The Upper California Crossing of the South Platte River. Copy of a painting by William H. Jackson. Called the Julesburg Crossing after 1859, this was one of three places where emigrants forded the South Platte.*

could serve as emergency replacements for oxen and could be butchered and eaten if meat supplies ran low. The unique value of dairy cattle was succinctly summarized by Mrs. Inez Eugenia Adams Parker in reminiscences of her 1847 trip: *Our cow, 'Old Rose' then 11 years old, gave us a continuous, and generous supply of milk, she wrote, so we fared better than those who had no cow.*<sup>8</sup>

Indispensable as they were, draft animals were not maintained without cost. They were dependent on their owners for food, water and such care as they received. The most desirable camp sites were those which resembled one described by Lucretia Lawson Epperson in late June, 1864. *Camped*

*near a stream of clear water, plenty of wood and feed. Mrs. Coleman washing, men shoeing horses.*<sup>9</sup> Again and again emigrant diarists matter-of-factly recorded, as did Orange Gaylord in 1850, the essential activity of halting to *feed and water the teams...*<sup>10</sup> Where such feed was not readily available, special exertion was necessary to remedy the deficiency lest the party encounter the problem noted by Harriet A. Loughary in 1864

when she wrote that the combination of heavy roads with but little grass are plainly telling on our stock.<sup>11</sup>

One precaution was to make hay while it was available; that is, to cut and bag grass for use later when camped at sites less well provided. On July 7, 1864 the male members of Epperson's party were busy cutting grass with their knives and putting it into sacks. Again the next day they were reported as still cutting grass.<sup>12</sup> Particularly later in the travel season it was common for trains to have to stop at sites in whose vicinity grass simply was not available. On such occasions draft animals and cattle had to be herded whatever distance was required to find

8. "Early Recollections of Oregon Pioneer Life by Inez Eugenia Adams Parker," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #7, p. 18. Copy in the Henderson Society Collection. Mrs. Parker notes that the cow gave five gallons of milk a day. Hereafter referred to as Inez Eugenia Adams Parker.

9. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, "A Journal of Our Trip, 1864," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1989), VIII, p. 181, entry for June 25, 1864. Shoeing the hooves of livestock was a task that had to be accomplished with some regularity during the western trek. The penalty for failing to do so was lame animals whose usefulness was thereby temporarily diminished or extinguished. In many instances such stock was simply abandoned. Hereafter referred to as Lucretia Lawson Epperson.

10. "Diary of Orange Gaylord's second trip westward," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #6, p. 415, entry for July 31, 1850. Hereafter referred to as Orange Gaylord.

11. Harriet A. Loughary, "Travels and Incidents, 1864," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1989), VIII, p. 137, entry for June 16, 1864.

12. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, p. 214, entries for July 7 & 8, 1864.

sufficient vegetation. In early July, 1853 camping on the north side of the North Platte River a half day beyond Fort Laramie, Mrs. Velina A. Williams noted: *we had to go some eight miles before we could find grass for the cattle.*<sup>13</sup> In like manner, the year before, James Akin complained that there was *not much grass near on July 7 and the next day he had to drive cattle two and one-half miles to grass in the morning.*<sup>14</sup>

Even when sufficient feed and water was available, the lot of draft animals was not a particularly pleasant one. After all, they did most of the work in getting wagon trains west. As miles of travel piled up so did the possibility of physical deterioration of animals. The need to diminish the burden on draft animals to ensure their continued effectiveness, indeed their survival, more than occasionally resulted in humans having to accept greater burdens. Thus, a day before reaching the Umpqua River in November 1846 Virgil K. Pringle reported that it rained all day and that *Pherne and the girls obliged to walk the oxen so weak.*<sup>15</sup> Almost twenty years later in late June, 1864 Loughary's party was in present-day Idaho when the departure of a hired hand to the gold fields imposed additional and heavy responsibilities upon her entire family. She now had to prepare food and beds for eight in the family as well as having to:

*harness and drive a four horse team while my husband and our thirteen year old son looked after feed and water and loose stock...(and) My husband yoked and drove the ox team and with the aid of the small children got the wood, water and all manner of camp work.*<sup>16</sup>

Nonetheless, even with these nearly crushing burdens to bear, ev-

ery day at noon, she wrote,

*Every horse was unharnessed, and every ox unyoked...to give jaded animals rest, as well as food. This order must be implicitly obeyed, since to lose one animal affected the whole train as no one could be left behind.*<sup>17</sup>

Another difficulty experienced by virtually all travelers, animal and human alike, was described by Edwin Bryant in July, 1846. *The atmosphere is filled with swarms of mosquitos,* he wrote, then added the warning that they *bite with a fierceness far greater than their civilized brethren of the settlements.*<sup>18</sup> The 1850 experience of Margaret A. Frink's animals was even more frightful. Camping close to Fort Hall at about the same time of

*year, she reported: Mosquitoes were as thick as flakes in a snowstorm. The poor horses whinnied all night, from their bites, and in the morning the blood was streaming down their sides.*<sup>19</sup>

Fourteen years later, in 1864, Epperson matter-of-factly observed that *Mosquitoes nearly ate us up.*<sup>20</sup> Mosquitoes were not the only form of insect life to pose a threat to the well-being of draft animals. Camping in 1850 in a small valley with a fine stream of water running through it between Soda Springs and Fort Hall, Gaylord noted: *Here we found large crickets, or grasshoppers so numerous that they frightened our oxen.*<sup>21</sup>

Mr. Gaylord's reference to frightened animals brings to mind what was certainly one of the dreaded possibilities associated with trail travel, that of stampeding animals. Domesticated

though they were - given their size and physical strength - animals crazed with fear, thirst, hunger or simply spooked by unexpected happenings such as lightning, thunder, blowing tumbleweeds, swarms of grasshoppers and so forth posed a distinct threat to emigrant life and limb.

During the middle third of the westward trek buffalo and a lack of water could be the culprits. Jane Kellogg in 1852 remembered how her party had passed over a long desert, and even before she and her companions could see the river they knew they were coming to water because *...the cattle would throw up their heads and sniff the air — they knew.*<sup>22</sup> The Kellogg party was fortunate that such was the only reaction of their animals. In similar instances teams simply bolted in the direction of the water they smelled. The buffalo problem was admirably described by Jean Rio Baker a year earlier. The train was, she reported,

*Much bothered with Buffalo, which are very numerous (and) stragglers are apt to run in among our cattle, terrifying them very much, and it has been all the housemen (sic) to do, to prevent their doing mischief.*<sup>23</sup>

Mrs. Matthew P. Deady remembered from her childhood another cause of stampedes. A child of eleven when they crossed the plains in 1846, she had vivid memories of

*how filled with terror I was when we experienced the violent thunder storms with the torrential rains that occurred in the Platte country. Our oxen would try to stampede, our tents would be blown down, and everybody and everything would be soaked with the driving rains.*<sup>24</sup>

17. *Ibid.*

18. Edwin Bryant, *What I Saw In California: Being The Journal of a Tour, By The Emigrant Route and South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, Across the Continent of North America, The Great Desert Basin, and Through California, In The Years 1846, 1847* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1967), p. 128, entry for July 10, 1846. Hereafter referred to as Edwin Bryant.

19. Margaret A. Frink, "Adventures of a Party of Gold-Seekers," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trail 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1983), II, p. 117, entry for Thursday, July 11, 1850. Hereafter referred to as Margaret A. Frink.

20. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, p. 181, entry for June 25, 1864.

21. Orange Gaylord, p. 412, entry for July 3, 1850.

22. "Memories of Jane D. Kellogg, 1852," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #6, p. 90. Hereafter referred to as Jane D. Kellogg.

23. Jean Rio Baker, "By Windjammer and Prairie Schooner, London to Salt Lake City," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1984), III, pp. 262-263, entry for July 30, 1851. Hereafter referred to as Jean Rio Baker.

24. Mrs. Matthew P. Deady, "Crossing the Plains to Oregon in 1846," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #7, p. 57. Hereafter referred to as Mrs. Matthew P. Deady.

13. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, "Diary of a Trip Across the Plains in 1853," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #6, pp. 201-202, entry for July 1, 1853. Hereafter referred to as Mrs. Velina A. Williams.

14. "Diary of James Aiken, Jr.," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #5, p. 298, entry for Thursday, July 8, 1852. Hereafter referred to as James Aiken.

15. "Diary of Virgil K. Pringle, 1846," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #6, p. 298, entry for Thursday, November 5, 1846. Hereafter referred to as Virgil K. Pringle.

16. Harriet J. Loughary, p. 141, entry for June 24, 1864.

Many times, of course, no cause for such animal behavior was apparent other than fright or just pure *cussedness*. Early in the 1851 travel season Henry Allyn reported that horse teams of a company six miles behind them took fright in the morning, before harnessing up, and started on the road.<sup>25</sup> Although no real harm was done, things along the road were considerably livened up because the stampeding horses passed some companies with ox teams which also took fright and ran some distance before their drivers could succeed in stopping them.<sup>26</sup> Allyn further noted his own apprehension that our mules would take the panic, but they did not, even though the horses went about 12 miles before running out of steam.<sup>27</sup> Later that same month Velina Williams reported a similar incident, but this one resulted in some injury.

Soon after starting, she wrote on June 26, the team attached to Myron's baggage wagon took fright and ran some distance.

*One yoke of oxen were considerably hurt, but no other injury was done.*<sup>28</sup>

Not all stampedes covered great distances, as demonstrated by the experience of Lucretia Epperson. Soon after retiring for the night, she wrote in her diary, *Mr. Coleman's horses became alarmed, and started all of ours. I began to fear another stampede; they only ran about one mile when they were stopped and brought back. They were tied for the night, and all was quiet after.*<sup>29</sup>

The results of stampeding were not always so easily remedied, however. The party with which Mrs. Cornelia A. Sharp traveled crossed the Big Blue River and camped. She wrote: *Our cattle in the course of the night stampeded, and we were detained in consequence of the cattle being scattered.*<sup>30</sup> The cost in time was not small, for the next day Mrs. Sharp ruefully noted: *Spent all day (looking) for the lost cattle without success.*<sup>31</sup>

Lost time could be deadly if it meant that snow would be falling by the time the trains reached the mountains. But for the emigrant deadly potential existed at the moment. Inez Parker in her recollections of 1847 recalled: *one day our oxen, startled at something, 'stampeded' and ran a long way, at top speed, toward a dangerous precipice.*

25. "Journal of Henry Allyn," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #6, pp. 394-394, entry for Wednesday, June 1, 1853. Hereafter referred to as Henry Allyn.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

28. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, p. 201, entry for June 26, 1853.

29. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, p. 181, entry for June 25, 1864.

30. "Diary of Mrs. Cornelia A. Sharp," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #5, p. 172, entry for Friday, May 21, 1852. Hereafter referred to as Mrs. Cornelia A. Sharp.

31. *Ibid.*



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*Independence Rock... and Trail of 1866.* Copy of a painting by W.H. Jackson. The elliptical mass of granite is located in central Wyoming. Plans were made by emigrants to celebrate the Fourth of July at this point, midway on their journey from the Missouri River and the West Coast.

...*...pice.*<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, at the time the animals bolted the parents were walking beside the wagon while, she wrote, *My baby sister, Helen, and I were in the wagon.*<sup>33</sup> The father had no option but to run along

*beside the maddened beasts, beating them over their heads with his goad, and shouting 'Whoa!' with no apparent effect, until finally they stopped short at the precipice's very brink.*<sup>34</sup>

Later, after things had calmed down the father admitted that he had confronted a truly deadly dilemma as he ran to keep up with the team.

*...he was, during the whole wild race, trying to decide which child to save, as he could snatch out only one, but could not, so it resulted in his choosing neither.*<sup>35</sup>

Not all stampedes were caused by natural elements. On occasion, In-

dians had a hand in the event. Jean Baker, for example, reported in 1851 that a party camping near her own *have had their cattle stampeded by Indians, and lost 18 head of them, Sister Kingebly who was among them was run over and killed...*<sup>36</sup> Unlike the incident just recounted, the experience of Velina Williams two years later was not second-hand. At the end of August, she wrote, about two o'clock in the morning one of the men standing watch over the train's cattle *discovered Indians lurking around the camp and fired at one.*<sup>37</sup> The result was predictable, a stampede caused either by the discharge of the firearm or the subsequent commotion caused by the Indians. In any event the cattle burst from the makeshift corral and took off, with both Indians and Whites - some equipped, some not, some mounted, others on foot - in pursuit! Five head were caught and brought back by daylight. Williams wrote:

*Between 8 and 9, 65 more were returned. Two companies volunteered to assist in the search. About 10 another company returned with 18 more and*

*about 11 the remaining 50 (to our joy) were driven into camp. Two of the footmen were fired upon by the Indians, but were unharmed.*<sup>38</sup>

A similar, but much less time-consuming incident was reported by Lucretia Epperson in 1864. Having seen Indians all day, Mrs. Epperson's party camped and settled in for the night.

*...two shots were fired, and the cry of a stampede was heard on all sides; our horses, jennets, and cattle, that were near, were all gone entirely out of sight in much less time than I can write it.*<sup>39</sup>

All but two or three of the men, she said, started after our stock, but *They all returned by midnight, and the sound of the horses' feet had entirely ceased.*<sup>40</sup> As things turned out, the Indians who had been sighted the previous day were not part of the problem, they were the solu-

32. Inez Eugenia Adams Parker, p. 18.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. Jean Rio Baker, p. 263, entry for July 30, 1851.

37. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, pp. 218-219, entry for August 31, 1852.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, p. 172, entry for May 25, 1864.

40. *Ibid.*

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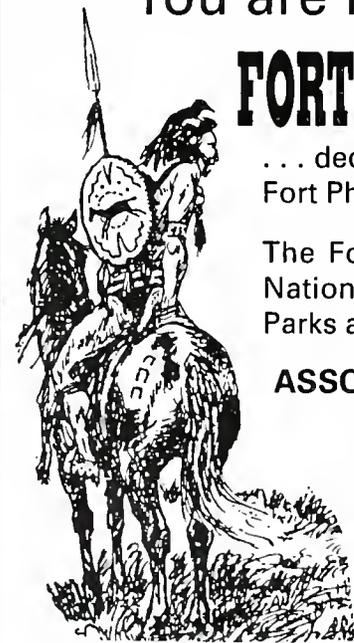
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*Types of Transportation in Covered Wagon Days.* Copy of a painting by W.H. Jackson. The view is west, looking toward the trail landmark, Split Rock, in central Wyoming.

tion. The jennets came to camp about eight o'clock, 'poor things' looking much frightened. Then at almost three o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Henry Reed came to camp with all our stock, which filled our hearts with gratitude to Him who is ever caring for the distressed.<sup>41</sup> It seems that the Indians had gathered the stock and herded them in a little valley over the summit of the mountain.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the incident was concluded when Mr. Reed paid one dollar per head for our stock and they (Indians) were satisfied. The stock were only a little the worse for the

41. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, pp. 172-173, entry for May 26, 1864.

42. *Ibid.* Indians were more than capable of causing difficulties when it suited their purposes to do so. Early in the travel year on May 20, 1853 Henry Allyn reported encountering a man who "...had three of his oxen killed by the Pawnee Indians, and he was obliged to turn back. He was at the ferry today, trying to sell off his outfit." Henry Allyn, p. 389, entry for Friday, May 20, 1853.

wear, ...the horses looked as though they had little to eat or drink.<sup>43</sup>

The possibilities of stampede were ever present, but equally vexing if not equally dangerous was another problem which appears to have been omnipresent since it was so closely related to the continuing need to herd animals. A lack of careful attention by members of the train doing herd duty frequently resulted in animals simply not being present at the time of departure. At one of the fords of the South Platte River, for example, Pringle in 1846 found ...a company of thirty-three wagons from St. Joseph on the other bank, having been there a week hunting cattle, a hundred head strayed from them last Thursday.<sup>44</sup> The inevitable result of scattered cattle was a delay in starting the wagons west once again. The length of

the delay was subject to considerable variation, ranging from a few hours to a day and perhaps several days. Several of the cattle had strayed, observed Jean Baker in early September 1851 which delayed us an hour after our usual starting time...<sup>45</sup> The absence of ten oxen caused Jesse Harritt's 1845 party to lose the better part of a day.

*We sought diligently for them until about 12 o'clock, he wrote, when they were discerned by a company of emigrants about sixteen miles back when myself and three other men met them, which enabled us to get them and get started at 3 o'clock P.M.*<sup>46</sup>

43. *Ibid.*

44. Virgil K. Pringle, p. 287, entry for Thursday, June 11, 1846.

45. Jean Rio Baker, p. 268, entry for September 9, 1851.

About two months later on the Snake River, Harritt's company of forty wagons took up the line of march. Since two of his oxen were missing, he reported, *we were compelled to remain; six families and thirteen wagons stopped with us...*<sup>47</sup> Many diarists, complaining of this phenomenon, followed Mary Ringo's example. In 1864 she simply noted: *This morning the cattle are scattered very much and we get a late start.*<sup>48</sup>

What causes cattle to stray? Probably nothing more than searching for better grass which, as the saying goes, is always greener somewhere else. M.P. Deady provides another explanation that relates to a westward trek made in early 1846. *Many of the emigrants lost most of their oxen*, she wrote, add-

46. "Diary of Jesse Harritt, 1845," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #5, p. 509, entry for June 4, 1845.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 519, entry for August 13, 1845.

48. Mary Ringo, "The 1864 Journal," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1989), VIII, p. 209, entry for Thursday, June 23, 1864. Hereafter referred to as Mary Ringo.

ing that she did not know *whether the Pawnee or Dakota Indians stole them or whether they got homesick for Missouri and started on the back track...*<sup>49</sup>

It should be remembered that in many, perhaps most, instances strayed cattle were recovered. Similarly, lost cattle were also frequently recovered but not always by the original owner. Cornelia Sharp's 1852 party was fortunate. *Yoked up our broken teams and started. Met the lost cattle, which had been overtaken, and returned. This caused no small relief to the company.*<sup>50</sup> The next year the train with which Velina Williams traveled had a somewhat different experience. While one of the men was laying in wood, he found a yoke of oxen probably strayed from some emigrant.<sup>51</sup>

Cattle were hardly unique as far as their propensity to wander was concerned. No matter how well trained to the harness or the saddle, horses were also very much inclined to wander in search of food, water or whatever else struck their fancy. Lucretia Epperson provides us with a series of examples that occurred during the late spring and summer of 1864. She wrote that on June 24 at Fort Bridger,

*Our horses, not being satisfied with their feed, plunged into the water and swam to the other side, thinking, probably, the grass on that side looked more inviting. Mr. Epperson and one of our men had to go down the creek two miles, where it could be forded without danger, and drove our horses back to camp.*<sup>52</sup>

Approximately one month later, Mrs. Epperson reported four more incidents within a week's time.

*July 22. The men came into camp with three horses; said the others had wandered off, and*

*they could not find them. They soon found them and brought them to camp. Mr. Epperson gave them powder and caps for their trouble.*<sup>53</sup>

*July 24. When the men were bringing the horses to camp this morning, one of our mares started back on the road we traveled yesterday. She was caught by some men at a stage stand, eighteen miles from our present stopping place. Mr. Epperson started after her, and did not return until nearly night. It was a lonely day for me.*<sup>54</sup>

*July 28. Started early for our new camping ground, arrived safely there about noon... We turned the horses loose, thinking they would not stray off, but before dark the men went to drive them close to camp, and three were missing; and were not found to-night.*<sup>55</sup>

*July 29. Bright and early our men started to find the missing horses. Soon after the men were gone the horses were driven into camp by a wood chopper, who camped near us. He was looking for some horses he had lost when he came upon ours.*<sup>56</sup>

If evidence is needed that straying animals were not somehow unique to the Epperson party, Cornelia Sharp, Harriet Loughary, and Mary Ringo provide it. Their accounts amply demonstrate the pervasiveness of the problem. Near the Big Blue River in 1852, two of the men left the train to which

49. Mrs. Matthew P. Deady, p. 58. Mrs. Deady pointed out that as a result of the loss of their draft animals, "...many of the emigrants had to abandon in large part their loads and get along with one yoke of oxen in place of two or three." In the case of her own family, however, she wrote: "We had six heifers, which father yoked up in place of our own lost oxen, and they brought us through to Oregon."

50. Mrs. Cornelia Sharp, p. 172, entry for Sunday, May 23, 1852.

51. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, p. 188, entry for May 10, 1853. It is possible that the oxen in question did not stray but were abandoned by their owner because of a lameness that had cleared up by the time the Williams' wagon came on the scene.

52. Lucretia Lawson Epperson, pp. 180-181, entry for June 24, 1864.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 189, entry for July 22, 1864.

54. *Ibid.*, entry for July 24, 1864.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 191, entry for July 28, 1864.

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Cornelia Sharp belonged for the purpose of hunting. According to Sharp they *Returned in the evening without any game, but with the loss of a very fine horse.*<sup>57</sup> Two men sent to search for the horse the next day had no luck. In the meantime the train traveled about sixteen miles. The second day after the loss of the animal, she wrote, *we struck the Platte, or Nebraska river, where we stopped to noon.... Our men came up with the horse.*<sup>58</sup>

In late June, 1864 Harriet Loughary reported: *During the night a number of our mules strayed off, which detained us until a late hour.*<sup>59</sup> With similar brevity Mary Ringo gave an account of a somewhat more serious problem which presented itself in the vicinity of Chimney Rock during the same year.

*Last night Mr. Tipton's horse and our Kate mule run off and Mr. Ringo was out all day hunting them and found them some eight miles down the road, going back the picket pin had stuck in her leg and she is quite lame.*<sup>60</sup>

As the latter incident suggests, horses and oxen were almost as susceptible to accidents as humans. Approaching the Platte River in the spring of 1852, E.W. Conyers' party was just about to start moving when

*...two horses broke loose about 100 yards below us and came directly toward us with all the vim there was in them. The foremost horse jumped over a yoke of cattle and caught his forefoot in a chain that coupled his head under, which caused him to fall flat on the ground and came very near killing him. He was hurt so badly that his owner gave him away.*<sup>61</sup>

A year later emigrant Allyn watched as a friend attempted to drive his team

and wagon across a creek that was deep with miry banks.<sup>62</sup> Mr. Allyn described what happened.

*...the surge of the wagon as it descended drove the hinder span against the forward and the near hind mule got his foot over the whipple-tree of the forward, and the hook of the whipple-tree caught its leg and perforated it, which has injured him very much, besides the value of his labor.*<sup>63</sup>

Animals belonging to the trains with which Rachel Taylor in 1853 and

Sarah Sutton in 1854 were traveling suffered accidents, and in these instances the accidents proved fatal. In Miss Taylor's case, a favorite horse had gotten tangled up in rope during the night and suffered a broken leg, an injury which necessitated that it be destroyed.<sup>64</sup> *One of Missouri Cook's horses was dead this morn,* wrote Sarah Sutton in June 1854 *...kill'd (sic) itself with the rope that was around its neck.*<sup>65</sup> Margaret Frink provides our final example of equine accident. While crossing the Sierra Nevadas in 1850 one of the party's horses sustained an injury falling while ascending a steep grade. Some time later this white horse, a favorite of Mrs. Frink, gave out.

*...we gave fifty cents a pound for flour to mix in water for him to drink, thinking it would strengthen him; but we only managed to get him as far as Tragedy Springs, where we had to leave him for the night.... The next morning, when Mr. Frink sent Russell back for him, he found the faithful animal dead.*<sup>66</sup>



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**Cattle, N. Platte at Orim (sic). Sooner or later emigrants had to cross the North Platte River. This particular ford, southeast of Douglas, Wyoming, was photographed by W.H. Jackson.**

56. *Ibid.*, entry for July 29, 1864. Crossing the Carson Desert, the Epperson horses once again strayed off into potentially deadly country. Near Salt Wells Mrs. Epperson counted sixty-five head of dead horses and cattle within twenty-two miles. Noting that this region produced "...tons of salt which is shipped in great quantities to Austin and Virginia City," she also observed several camels carrying packs of salt. *Ibid.*, p. 195, entry for August 23, 1864.

57. Mrs. Cornelia A. Sharp, p. 173, entry for Saturday, May 29, 1852.

58. *Ibid.*, entries for Sunday, May 30 and Monday, May 31, 1852.

59. Harriet A. Loughary, p. 139, entry for June 20, 1864.

60. Mary Ringo, p. 213, entry for Thursday, July 14, 1864.

61. "Diary of E.W. Conyers, A Pioneer of 1852," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society Microfilm reel #5, p. 437, entry for May 27, 1852. Hereafter referred to as E.W. Conyers. At the other end of the trail, nearing the Little Deschutes River, Conyers described another animal accident. While descending a very steep grade with

wagon wheels locked and chained, a wagon in front of Conyers' inexplicably halted, causing a telescoping pile-up. "In the mixup," he wrote, "one of our wheel oxen had his neck so wrenched that a stream of blood about the size of a lead pencil spurted from his nose...The blood soon stopped running from his nostril and he seemed none the worse for the mixup." E.W. Conyers, p. 504, entry for Saturday, September 18, 1852.

62. Henry Allyn, p. 410, entry for Thursday, July 7, 1853.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Rachel Taylor, "Overland Trip Across the Plains," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1986), VI, p. 164, entry for June 23, 1853. Hereafter referred to as Rachel Taylor. The fifteen year-old girl also reported that the incident "...threw a damper upon our feelings to think of our favorite thus coming to an untimely end and some tears were shed as we left him on the plains." Rachel Taylor, pp. 164-165.

65. Sarah Sutton, p. 53, entry for June 24, 1854

River crossings were unavoidable parts of the trip west. And with river crossings came the danger of drowning which presented itself to humans and animals alike. Even before he arrived at one of the ferries in 1853, for example, Allyn had already been informed: *Five yoke of oxen were drowned this morning...*<sup>67</sup> A common practice was to ferry wagons, carriages and so forth across a stream while the stock were required to swim. In the case of a party whose activities were observed by E.W. Conyers, Indians were hired to perform the task of driving the animals while provisions and women were floated across in a wagon. Unfortunately, he wrote,

*In the middle of the stream the cattle became frightened of the Indians and turned their course right down the stream. At this critical moment the Indians left the cattle to their fate and turned their attention to the wagon and the ladies, and with great effort succeeded in landing the wagon just before the falls were reached. The cattle made for the shore and succeeded in getting out on the same side from which they started, just above the falls.*<sup>68</sup>

Accidents, illness, straying and stampeding, are important phenomena to be assessed when figuring the role of draft animals in the westward movement. But they are overshadowed by the function draft animals performed which was indispensable to every wagon train. What is that one function? Simply the willingness and ability of such animals to work and perform the tasks assigned to them, even under conditions that verged on the unimaginable. Hot or cold, wet or dry, thirsty or hungry, the application of mammalian muscle to wheeled vehicles was the activity that gave meaning to all others associated with trail travel.

*Morning clear and quite warm,* wrote E.W. Conyers in 1852 while tra-

versing the Platte River Valley. *The sun came out very warm and it went hard with our cattle. Their tongues are hanging from their mouths.*<sup>69</sup> For Pringle's 1846 party, *...running parallel with the Kansas it became very hot. ...Several oxen overcome with the heat.*<sup>70</sup> In like manner in 1864 Mary Ringo reported traveling *...some miles and camp near the river, some of the cattle give out almost and fall down.*<sup>71</sup>

Some felt some compassion for the laboring beasts. Allyn was one who expressed such feeling. In early August 1853, riding ahead of the ox teams, he was

*in hopes the ox teams will come on, as there is no water between us and them.... The ox teams did not come up, so we had to camp alone and we felt a little solicitude for the safety of our beasts.*<sup>72</sup>

Even though some felt such solicitude, on numerous occasion owners deemed physical coercion of animals necessary to accomplish the harsh work load. Harriet Loughary in 1864, for example, noted that because of the absence of water and grass *the poor tired animals wee (sic) goaded and whiped (sic) on until night and then only a few green weeds and no wood.*<sup>73</sup> In her reminiscences, Jane Kellogg recalled dealing with a cow that

*refused to work, she would lie down and would not get up; the only way to move her was to fiddle her tail with two sticks. This caudle (sic) appendage dried up and dropped off; she remained one of our best workers until the end of our journey.*<sup>74</sup>

O.A. Stearns, traveling west with his aunt Velina Williams in 1853, saw some men tie a cow to a tree, *...making her*

*hind legs fast to another tree, and proceeded to give her a terrible flogging with some large saplings.*<sup>75</sup> The men's explanation for such behavior was that the cow periodically had to be flogged, otherwise she would kick and fight until they could not get near to milk her.<sup>76</sup>

It was an unfortunate fact that some owners purely and simply maltreated their animals. In 1862 Louisa Cook witnessed an incident in Nebraska's Platte River Valley in the vicinity of Fort Kearny. Camping on the Platte on June 21, she stated:

*A train of 6 wagons came in just after we did with 5 yoke of oxen attached to each wagon.*<sup>77</sup>

*They started from near Omaha City about 150 miles back and had large fat oxen but their drivers, like nearly all the drivers I have seen on the road, are a cruel and brutal set of men lashing their beasts who covered with welts would shrink from their approach & manifest the greatest fear but there was no mercy for them. Although there is plenty of grass & water for teams on the road we have passed by the dead carcasses of an ox on an average of once a mile from Leavenworth to this camp just literally drove to death. But enough of this unpleasant subject.*<sup>78</sup>

Circumstances of life on the trail for animals were perhaps almost as different from those at home as for humans. It is therefore not surprising the animals, like humans, got sick. Entries similar to one in Sarah Sutton's 1854 diary appeared in virtually every account kept of the trek west.

*...yoked up our teams this morning to start, and discovered one of our cows was sick turned her out, put in another and started. We had not got far until we saw one of Mr. Cooks' oxen was sick and could not work. Turned him out, and gave them both a dose of*

66. Margaret A. Frink, pp. 153-154, entry for Saturday, August 31, 1850. Mrs. Frink also reported: "These springs were named from a tragical affair occurring in 1849, in which two men, intoxicated, got into a fight with each other, in which one of them was killed."

67. Henry Allyn, p. 389, entry for Friday, May 20, 1853.

68. E.W. Conyers, p. 482, entry for Tuesday, August 10, 1852.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 434, entry for Monday, May 24, 1852.

70. Virgil K. Pringle, p. 284, entry for Sunday, May 17, 1846.

71. Mary Ringo, p. 208, entry for Saturday, June 18, 1864.

72. Henry Allyn, pp. 423-424, entry for Tuesday, August 2, 1853.

73. Harriet A. Loughary, p. 136, entry for June 11, 1864. Not all animals had to be goaded. Jane Kellogg in 1852 remembered, "one yoke of black oxen who were very ambitious, never lagged; they pulled until they dropped dead, but not at the same time." Jane Kellogg, p. 89. Similarly, at Willow Springs in 1854 Sarah Sutton simply noted: "one of our largest and best oxen died to day...making 3 that have died in two days." Sarah Sutton, p. 65, entry for Monday, July 24, 1854.

74. Jane Kellogg, p. 88.

75. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, p. 186, entry for April 30, 1853.

76. *Ibid.*

77. Louisa Cook, "Letters From the Oregon Trail, 1862-1863" in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1989), VIII, p. 38, entry for June 21, 1862. Hereafter referred to as Louisa Cook.

78. *Ibid.*



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*We are continually driving round the dead cattle, and shame on the man who has no pity for the dumb brutes that have to travel, and toil month after month, on this desolate road, an emigrant sadly recalled. The photo was taken along the Bozeman Trail, but the scene probably was common along the Oregon Trail.*

*lard and pepper, and they both died in two hours after...<sup>79</sup>*

Writing in late November, 1846 Pringle noted simply: *one steer dies at this camp.*<sup>80</sup> Six days later he was able to assign the cause of the loss of *two steers to the cold.*<sup>81</sup> One type of sickness was described in July 1864 by a man named Dr. Davis. Preparing to start, the Ringo family discovered:

*our ox was sick and bleeding at the nose, we turned him out and he was dead in about an hour after we unyoked him. Dr. Davis cut him open to find out what disease was killing off so many cattle and pronounced it bloody murrin [murrain], all the entrails were full of blood and no one can tell of anything that will cure them.<sup>82</sup>*

79. Sarah Sutton, pp. 76-68, entry for Saturday, July 29, 1854. Two days later Sutton reported: "best wheel oxen died before we started this morning; the animal had worked all day yesterday. we did not know that he was sick until this morn...." *Ibid.*, p. 68, entry for Monday, July 3, 1854.

80. Virgil K. Pringle, p. 299, entry for Friday, November 20, 1846.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 300, entry for Thursday, November 26, 1846.

It is clear that one of the prime causes of animal illness, particularly during the first half of the journey, was the presence of alkali in the water. The places mentioned in the following diary excerpts illustrate how pervasive was this danger throughout the high plains, and even beyond.

*Left Pawnee Springs this morning...Cattle seem to like alkali water which if taken in large draughts kills them.<sup>83</sup>*

*We hitch up and travel some 18 miles crossing the Scotts Bluff...There is an alkali slough here and some of the cattle drank of it and it killed them.<sup>84</sup>*

*In the vicinity of Willow Springs there were many dead cattle and horses, which I suppose had drank too freely of the alkali lakes along the road.<sup>85</sup>*

*traveled 15 miles crossed another branch of Bear River. We then crossed*

82. Mary Ringo, p. 216, entry for Monday, July 25, 1864.

83. Harriet A. Loughary, pp. 128-129, entry for May 27, 1864.

84. Mary Ringo, p. 214, entries for July 16 and 17, 1864.

*a very high mountain and came to the river again. Here we left one of our lead oxen in consequence of being poisoned with alkali. We passed several dead oxen during this day's travel.<sup>86</sup>*

While most emigrants were convinced that there was no cure for alkali poisoning, E.W. Conyers disagreed. At Devil's Gate in 1852 he learned the ingredients of a remedy from the trader there, *a Frenchman by the name of Schambau.*<sup>87</sup>

According to Conyers, the remedy consisted of:

*one-half pint each of lard and syrup; warm just sufficient to mix good, and if the animal is bloated, add to this one-half pint of good vinegar and drench them immediately.<sup>88</sup> This recipe, he added, proved a sovereign remedy, and we lost no more cattle.<sup>89</sup>*

One problem was probably unavoidable. No matter how well-prepared one might be, it was likely that one's animals would at some point become footsore or lame. *We lay at camp today to rest man and beast, Allyn recorded in his diary in July 1853. The crippled mule does not appear to be hurt so bad as we expected. It walks about and feeds and limps but little.<sup>90</sup> More than ten years later in 1864 Mary Ringo made a similar notation, observing: Our mule is too lame to work today and we will have to ride tied to the other wagon.<sup>91</sup>*

Efforts were made to minimize the impact of this problem. Techniques used were similar to that employed by E.W. Conyers in 1852. After noting that

85. Henry Allyn, p. 405, entry for Saturday, June 25, 1853.

86. Orange Gaylord, p. 410, entry for June 30, 1850.

87. E.W. Conyers, p. 455, entry for Friday, July 2, 1852.

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.* There were other mishaps which could befall animals for which no treatment was possible. Harriet Talcott Buckingham recorded such an incident in 1851: "This morning after herding in the cattle found one which was much crippled in the hind quarters. Boys drove it some ways & were obliged to shoot it. The flesh was yellow & green, had been bitten by a snake...." Harriet Talcott Buckingham, "Crossing The Plains in 1851," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1984), III, p. 32, entry for Sunday, June 22, 1851.

90. Henry Allyn, pp. 410-411, entry for Friday, July 8, 1853.

91. Mary Ringo, p. 213, entry for Friday, July 15, 1864.

quite a few of their cattle were lame because of the hot, sandy and stony roads, Mr. Conyers described the home remedy which was applied.<sup>92</sup>

**W**e cut a piece of hide from a dead ox by the roadside; making small holes in the border of this piece of hide; through these holes we run a string or a narrow strip of hide for a drawstring; we then put this piece of hide on the lame oxen's feet, flesh side out, drawing the string tight enough to hold it on the foot, and then tie it fast. This completes the job. Two days' wear is sufficient for a cure.<sup>93</sup>

Sometimes, however, it proved too difficult or impossible to treat lameness in draft animals. In such instances it was not at all unusual for animals too lame to travel simply to be abandoned, left behind to forage for themselves as best they could. Near Salmon Falls in 1852, Cornelia Sharp left our "Rose" cow to die,<sup>94</sup> and Sarah Sutton's 1854 party had to leave another of our oxen to die this morning....<sup>95</sup>

Although exact figures are impossible to ascertain, certainly in many instances abandoned animals were subsequently acquired by members of trains traveling through the area later in the season. Nearing South Pass, Jane Kellogg recalled: *Some cattle were foot sore, and left by the roadside.* She supposed they were picked up by some one when they were able to travel.<sup>96</sup> O.A. Stern in 1853 even suggested that on occasion traders located along the trail would pick up lame animals, at no cost of course, care for them until a cure was effected, then sell them to other emigrants. He also suspected traders were sometimes stealing from emigrant herds for the same purpose.<sup>97</sup> E.W. Conyers provides our final example of animal abandonment. On August 25, 1852 he wrote: *we left poor old "Bill", one of our oxen that had given out, so lame he could hold out no longer.*<sup>98</sup>

Six days later Conyers' party found  
*an ox that had been driven into this ravine for grass, but, being too weak to climb the steep hill, the owner had left him behind. We took the ox along with us, calling his name "Lazarus". He took the place of "Old Bill", the ox that we left by the road several days back.*<sup>99</sup>

Some abandoned animals were in such shape as to make their continued survival doubtful. In such instances owners usually resorted to the remedy described by George Himes in 1853. Nearing the end of their journey to Oregon, within sight of Mt. Rainier, Mr. Himes recalled:

*teams suffered dreadfully...for want of food, and not a day passed but that some of the animals dropped (sic) in their tracks and were left to die alongside the rugged trail. Pathetic, indeed, were these experiences, in being compelled to leave faithful beasts in the wilderness to starve. But there was not help for it, grievous as it might seem, and the animals were shot to end their misery.*<sup>100</sup>

The sorrow and compassion for suffering animals implicit in Mr. Himes' account marked the attitudes of many, perhaps most, emigrants. That oxen were frequently assigned personal names by their owners bespeaks

the emergence of a relationship that went beyond stark utilitarianism. There is a real sense of loss in Inez Parker's remembrance of

*...Brindle our third ox, mired and died, leaving us but one ox, "Old Bright," and our cow. The scene is clear before me now of poor old Brindle lying beside the mud hole from which he had been extracted, his big dark eyes rolled back, and his chest painfully heaving with his last feeble breaths.*<sup>101</sup>

One may perhaps assume that Mrs. Amelia Knight's attitude was representative of most emigrants. She wrote that her wagon crossed Burnt River in 1853. Continuing west,

*...lost one of our oxen, we were traveling slowly along when he dropt (sic) dead in the yoke, unyoked and turned out the odd ox, and drove round the dead one, and so it is all along this road.*<sup>102</sup> *We are, continually driving round the dead cattle, and shame on the man who has no pity for the poor dumb brutes that have to travel, and toil month after month, on this desolate road.*<sup>103</sup> *I could hardly help shedding tears, when we drove round this poor ox who had helped us along thus far, and had even given us his very last step.*<sup>104</sup>

**M**onuments commemorating the westward movement frequently have as a central icon a covered wagon with an emigrant family whose members are variously placed about or in it. Perhaps on occasion, at least, such a memorial ought to reflect more directly what Edgar Allen Poe once referred to as *the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of the animals that served them.*<sup>105</sup> ■

92. E.W. Conyers, p. 453, entry for Wednesday, June 20, 1852.

93. *Ibid.*, pp. 453-454.

94. Mrs. Cornelia A. Sharp, p.181, entry for Friday, August 6, 1852.

95. Sarah Sutton, p. 66, entry for Thursday, July 27, 1854.

96. Jane D. Kellogg, p. 89. Mrs. Kellogg also noted: "We shod ours (cattle) with leather."

97. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, p. 109, note by O.A. Stearn following entry for July 16, 1853. Mr. Stearn, Mrs. Williams nephew, added ex post facto annotations to his aunt's diary.

98. E.W. Conyers, p. 491, entry for Wednesday, August 25, 1852.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 495, entry for Tuesday, August 31, 1852.

100. "Annual Address — An Account of Crossing the Plains in 1853 by George Himes," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Oregon State Historical Society microfilm reel #5, p. 147. Mr. Himes also noted one clear-cut exception to the rule that suffering animals were shot to spare them further suffering. He recalled: "The C.B. Baker family had a blooded Kentucky mare, which became so exhausted as to be unable to get up one morning, and it was decided that she would have to be left behind." Mrs. Baker, however, did not concur because she was very fond of the animal. Consequently, she stayed behind the train to care for it. Her efforts were successful. Mrs. Baker and her horse rejoined the train by midday. One more time during the journey Mrs. Baker performed the same service for the same horse. Her reward was to see the mare subsequently "...become the dam of some of the best running horses known in the early days of Oregon and Washington." *Ibid.*

101. Mrs. Inez Adams Parker, p. 18.

102. Amelia Knight, "Iowa to the Columbia River" in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890*, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1986), VI, pp. 64-65, entry for August 12, 1852.

103. *Ibid.*

104. *Ibid.*

105. Edgar Allen Poe, "The Black Cat" in *The Shorter Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, (New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1964), p. 297.



MARK JUNGE

DR. ROBERT MUNKRES (1930-) IS PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT MUSKINGUM COLLEGE, A

PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL IN NEW CONCORD, OHIO. THIS IS HIS TENTH ARTICLE FOR ANNALS SINCE 1968. BORN IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA AND RAISED

ABOUT 50 MILES EAST OF SCOTTSBLUFF AT BROADWATER, MUNKRES DID NOT BECOME INTERESTED IN THE OREGON TRAIL UNTIL GRADUATE SCHOOL. BEGINNING IN 1956 HE WORKED THREE SUMMERS AS A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGER AT FT. LARAMIE WHERE HIS INTEREST IN THE WEST AND TRAIL HISTORY BLOSSOMED. HIS FIRST SABATICAL (1967-68) WAS SPENT IN BRIDGEPORT, NEBRASKA WORKING IN PAUL HENDERSON'S OREGON TRAIL COLLECTION. MUNKRES' LENGTHY VITA CONTAINS ABOUT TWO HUNDRED JOURNAL AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

ABOUT WESTERN HISTORY, PARTICULARLY THE SUBJECTS OF THE OREGON TRAIL AND INDIAN-WHITE RELATIONS ON THE NORTHERN PLAINS. HE IS AUTHOR OF THE BOOK, *Saleratus and Sagebrush: the Oregon Trail Through Wyoming* (CHEYENNE: WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT, 1974). HE SERVES AS ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE CHICAGO WESTERNERS BRAND BOOK, AND IS ON THE EDITORIAL BOARDS OF FOUR WESTERN JOURNALS. BOB AND HIS WIFE, JEANNETTE, MADE NEW CONCORD THEIR HOME IN 1962.

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---

AMERICA THEN  
AND NOW

EDITED BY DAVID COHEN  
TEXT BY SUSAN WELS  
REVIEW BY MARK JUNGE

Mark Dugan has provided a rare treat for the aficionado of outlaw stories as well as for the scholar interested in how the law operated in the "Old West." The book is an entertaining and carefully researched collection of biographies of notorious outlaws in states ranging from North Carolina to Washington.

The author is right in his opening assertion: "Probably no topic of America's past has been so sorely neglected by academic historians as the criminal history of the Old West." And he correctly adds that several recent scholarly attempts have removed drama and color from what should be fascinating stories. Happily for Dugan's readers, *Tales Never Told Around the Campfire* manages to capture excitement and titillating details while offering up only those assertions which can be completely documented. Dugan's book demonstrates that the truth is indeed far more fascinating than many legends which have grown up around notorious Western outlaws and which have trapped unwary writers throughout the years. The book proves the adage that truth is stranger, and more interesting, than fiction.

Although some stories are well known, Dugan has managed to uncover significant evidence to cast doubt on their accuracy. Take, for instance, the story of Wild Bill Hickok's first "gun battle" with David McCandles, supposedly for the hand of Sarah Shull. Dugan's research reveals that the dispute began with McCandles's attempt to collect money he claimed was owed him. Shull may have been a witness to the shooting but her presence was not the cause. Following McCandles's death she stayed in the vicinity for more than a month. As Dugan reasons, if Hickok had any amorous feelings about her why didn't he make approaches during that time?

Dugan's research provides

more than mere debunking of outlaw myths. Authors have written about many of the incidents described in this book, but until now postscripts to stories have not been included. Dugan gives the reader a thorough background for each of the principal characters and follows their lives after the incidents. For example, in the Sarah Shull story he provides documentation for "The Lost Years," or where Shull went after the McCandles-Hickok incident. Further, the book briefly documents outlaws who gained local notoriety but whose reputations are unknown to present-day readers.

Wyoming readers, in particular, will be interested in chapter ten which focuses on Tom Horn. Dugan wisely does not repeat details about the death of Willie Nickell. Instead, he carefully examines the evidence in the earlier slayings of Fred Powell and William Lewis which many credit to Tom Horn even though his involvement with them was never proven.

The narrative is supplemented by numerous rare photographs, reproductions of significant documents and contemporary photographs of outlaw haunts. Particularly valuable are facsimiles of legal documents which provide graphic evidence of Dugan's careful research.

The book should be valuable for the scholar interested in how the justice system functioned in the West, and entertainment for the casual reader who enjoys exciting stories about Western outlaws. It is a tribute to Dugan's writing skills that both should be delighted by true, exciting *Tales Never Told Around the Campfire*.

**PHIL ROBERTS**

*Assistant Professor of History at the University of Wyoming, Laramie.*

TALES NEVER TOLD  
AROUND THE  
CAMPFIRE: TRUE  
STORIES OF FRONTIER  
AMERICA



BY MARK DUGAN

ATHENS: UNIVERSITY OF OHIO PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. XVII AND 257 PP.

CLOTH \$34.95.

PAPER \$17.95.

In the public mind the 1939 movie *Stagecoach*, directed by John Ford and starring John Wayne, is the classic western film. Yet film scholars in recent years have often downplayed the film's significance as a work of art and viewed it primarily as a breakthrough for both Wayne and Ford who in later years would go on to make such major westerns as *The Searchers* (1956) and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962). The great strength of this slim volume by Edward Buscombe is to discover why critics so applauded *Stagecoach* in its initial release as well as to understand why audiences around the world flocked to see it. After reading this book even the most skeptical will be convinced that *Stagecoach* is one of the twentieth century's major films.

For such a distinguished movie, *Stagecoach's* plot is deceptively simple. A group of diverse passengers ride a stage across the Southwest and come under attack from Indians. Geronimo is on the warpath. An escaped prisoner, the Ringo Kid (Wayne) flags down the stage and plays a key role in battling the Apaches. Before the fighting, Ringo manages to fall in love with Dallas (Claire Trevor), a soiled dove with a "heart of gold." By journey's end the couple plan to marry, but Ringo must first "do what a man's got to do," and face the Plummer brothers who have murdered his family. The outcome, even in 1939, was already predictable. Ringo vanquishes the foe and the lovers ride off into the sunset.

*Stagecoach* offered Ford the opportunity to show that a western could be a serious film rather than the second half or "B" film on a double feature, but first screenwriter Dudley Nichols would have to rewrite Ernest Haycox's short story, *The Stage to Lordsburg*, which Ford had earlier purchased. Ford and Nichols had been

collaborating for several years on movies that were based on literary classics, and Ford was known as a director of serious films like *Arrowsmith*, *The Informer* and *The Plough and the Stars*. In the mid-twenties he had made the classic silent western, *The Iron Horse*, but had been away from the genre since 1926.

Both Ford and Nichols were struck with the similarity of Haycox's story to Guy de Maupassant's *Boule de Suif* (1880), a tale of a stage ride through enemy lines during the Franco-Prussian War. In the French story, a prostitute is the only passenger who can save her countrymen from the Germans and she proceeds to sleep with enemy officers to protect her fellow travelers. De Maupassant makes a biting commentary about the nature of the rigid European class system: once the freedom of the French aristocratic and bourgeoisie passengers was secured, poor Boule de Suif was again treated with contempt and disdain. Screenwriter Nichols in *Stagecoach* would exaggerate class distinctions among the Americans in order to draw similar conclusions.

To make a profitable, feature western Ford had to appeal to female audiences who had indicated a lack of interest in typical "B" westerns which seldom involved women. Thus, the love story of Ringo and Dallas is brought center stage, and Lucy Mallory (Louise Platt), an army officer's wife, gives birth to a child at an isolated stage stop. Advertising for the film emphasized this aspect of the story. Casting is always a key to a film's commercial and artistic success, and Ford selected outstanding character actors for his passengers, intentionally creating stereotypical individuals. Especially memorable are John Carradine - a dissolute southern aristocrat, Andy Devine - a Falstaffian stage driver and Thomas Mitchell - an alcoholic physician and intellectual.

Ford experimented with photography in *Stagecoach* in such a way as

## STAGECOACH



BY EDWARD BUSCOMBE

BLOOMINGTON: INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY. 92 PP. PAPER \$9.95.

to make the film truly pathbreaking. Light and shadow are always important elements in Ford's black and white films and in *Stagecoach* he used new techniques such as sets with ceilings and night scenes illuminated solely with backlighting. This style would later be called *film noir* and dated to the 1940s, but few authors other than Buscombe have noted its origin in *Stagecoach*.

This study is a publication of the British Film Institute which has

compiled a list of 360 key films for the history of cinema. Other works in the series will be hard pressed to equal Buscombe's masterful effort. His book will prove enjoyable reading for anyone who owns a VCR as well as for scholars interested in the American West and cinema history.

DR. GERALD THOMPSON  
*Professor of History at  
 the University of Toledo, Ohio*

During the past few decades, the *Montana Magazine of Western History* has published several articles pertaining to Indian-White conflicts on the Northern Plains during the 1870s. Paul Hedren has compiled a selection of these works in a book, *The Great Sioux War*, to further the discussion of this transitional period in the region's history. The collection of articles demonstrates that the significance of this era was not confined to Custer's defeat on the Little Bighorn River but was defined by numerous events and forces.

As in most edited works, the articles in *The Great Sioux War* vary in scope and quality. Some focus on specific events while others explore the larger historical and cultural forces that shaped encounters between the army and the Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho. Robert G. Athearn's "The Firewagon Road" examines the railroad's key role in the extinction of the buffalo and the Whites' increasing technological advantage, forcing tribes to move onto reservations. Paul Hutton's portrait of Phil Sheridan analyzes the personal and cultural factors motivating the general in his execution of American Indian policy. Thomas Buecker provides an edited version of Dr. Holmes O. Paulding's first person account of the immediate aftermath of the Little Bighorn battle. Just a few days after this famous conflict the surgeon tried to piece to-

gether the perplexing facts surrounding the battle, unknowingly engaging in an exercise that continues today. In "The Southern Response to Custer's Last Stand," Brian Dippie provides an interesting investigation of how the South, tired of Republican Reconstruction, used this military defeat to discredit the Republican administration during the 1876 presidential campaign.

There is much to like about *The Great Sioux War*. It is enjoyable reading and the articles are generally well-written and researched, tributes to the book's and magazine's editors. Using an extended introduction and occasional summaries, Hedren overcomes the disparate nature of the articles to present a fairly cohesive investigation of this complex topic while including some recent scholarship in the field. The book is useful in conveying the collection of articles to an audience outside *Montana Magazine's* long-time subscribers.

However, the format presents some problems. Confining the selection of articles to those that have appeared in *Montana Magazine* limits the book's interpretive breadth. For instance, none of the articles provide an Indian perspective of events surrounding the conflicts on the Northern Plains. Referring to this series of

## THE GREAT SIOUX WAR 1876-77



BY PAUL L. HEDREN

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1991. ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. IV AND 293 PP.  
 CLOTH \$27.50.  
 PAPER \$11.95.

military engagements as the Great Sioux War, as military historians have done for years, is ethnocentric and discounts the involvement of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Shoshone and Crow. Finally, a few of the articles deal only marginally with the book's topic.

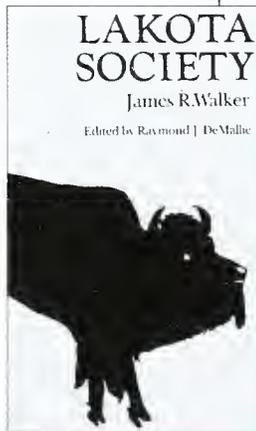
Despite these problems Hedren's edited work is worth reading, for it furthers our understanding of the diverse events and cultural forces that shaped this important period in Northern Plains history. Researchers may want to read this book in conjunction with other, recent, scholarly works in the

field such as Sherry Smith's *Sagebrush Soldier: Private William Earl Smith's View of the Sioux War of 1876* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), Neil Mangum's *Battle of the Rosebud: Prelude to the Little Big Horn* (El Segundo, California: Upton and Sons, 1987), and Joe Marshall, et al., *Soldiers Falling Into Camp: The Battles at the Rosebud and the Little Big Horn* (Encampment, Wyoming: AWN, 1992).

MICHAEL MASSIE

Assistant Director of the Wyoming Council for the Humanities, Laramie

## LAKOTA SOCIETY



BY JAMES R. WALKER  
EDITED BY RAYMOND J. DEMALLIE

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
PRESS, 1982. ILLUSTRATED, INDEX,  
NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY. VII AND 207 PP.  
PAPER \$10.95.

Though small in size, 239 pages, this second volume in a series of three about Lakota society is packed with detail. The general topic, as the title suggests, is a consideration of the society of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) during the late 1800s. The author, James R. Walker, was the agency doctor at Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota during the turn of the century, 1896 to 1914. This is not a recounting of his experiences; rather it is a compilation of informational accounts which Dr. Walker gathered from several informants.

It is not a book for the beginner since some knowledge of Oglala societal structure, customs, winter counts and so forth is helpful to appreciate the material offered. A better book on the subject for the novice might be Royal B. Hassrick's, *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society*. Even for the knowledgeable reader the detailed kinship terminology is a bit staggering.

The introduction and preface by the editor are clear and give the reader a good background and perspective for the ensuing material. There are three sections: I - The Structure of Society, II - Hunting, War,

Ceremony and Art, and III - Time and History. The section about hunting, war, ceremony and art is the shortest and therefore less comprehensive than the other two. Doubtless, the first section regarding the structure of society is the primary one in importance and detail. Nevertheless, I was particularly intrigued by the third section, time and history, which consists of various winter counts, the method by which the Oglala recorded tribal history. These chronological events are reconciled to modern dates and provide historical context.

One minor problem is that an 1827 entry in the winter count section has a picture of an antelope but the text says deer (the editor notes this also). The point is that inconsistencies often occur in the translation process. Another problem relates to a probable nineteenth century bias, also in the winter counts, by which one Indian is classified as a hermaphrodite or transvestite (winkte). Current sociological research refers to this social adaptation as the *Berdache tradition* and indicates there is more to it than cross-dressing or physical/sexual configuration. These minor points do not alter the value of the book.

The book contains a good index, a short phonetic key that is useful if one is already acquainted with the Lakota

dialect, a list of resource persons and a good, extensive bibliography.

All in all, this is a worthwhile addition to the literature about Oglala Lakota culture. The material concerning relationships and kinship is detailed and revealing, and the

wintercounts are entertaining as well as informative.

DONALD W. HOUSH

*Volunteer in the Photographic Unit of the Wyoming State Museum, Cheyenne*

This book chronicles the lives of three generations of the Charles Sternberg family who were independent, professional fossil hunters from 1876 to 1982. According to Rogers, the Sternbergs bridged the period between freelance diggers of the nineteenth century and paleontologists of today.

Rogers' major objective is to convey to the reader the idea that the Sternbergs were avid dinosaur hunters. They traveled across the American West, Alberta, Canada and Patagonia serving pre-eminent men and institutions of the day such as Edward Cope of Como Bluffs fame, the Smithsonian and the National Museum of Canada. Drawing upon personal notes and published articles, Rogers weaves together accounts of how the Sternbergs found, unearthed and marketed fossils.

Rogers observes that the Sternbergs' love for dinosaur hunting had a significant affect upon their domestic life. Patriarchal influence is well-documented in that three generations of men took up the profession, the second and third generations evidently influenced by the first. The effect it had upon husbands and wives is less balanced. Early in the book the author emphasizes that the constant travels of Charles Sternberg tested the strength of his marriage. But the divorce of Mabel from Charles's son, George, in 1926 is stated as an afterthought rather than described as an integral part of George's family life (pp. 110, 130). The hardening of the elder Charles

Sternberg's heart (pp. 25, 49-50) seems an attempt to add social drama and to give the reader a preview of things to come rather than a description of domestic life. Succeeding generations just fell in love, got married and that was that.

But my major criticism of the book relates to its scientific perspective. Despite what the Sternbergs did, Rogers does not clearly convey to the reader that they realized themselves how significant their discoveries were, aside from merely finding dinosaur bones. Family members contributed to a scientific body of knowledge, but the reader is not given a critique of their writings. A survey of dinosaur studies and papers of the time would help put their work and the state of paleontology into historical context. Rogers suggests that as a result of their work in the field, and their accumulated knowledge of biology and geology, the Sternbergs formulated theories about dinosaurs, but she does not explain what these ideas were. Reference to modern dinosaur discoveries (p. 170) does not support or refute the Sternbergs' scientific prescience or abilities but merely appears to be an interesting, albeit misplaced, sidelight. Finally, dinosaur names would be better understood by the non-paleontologist if the book had an illustrated appendix.

The significance of this book lies in its initial conception. Early dinosaur discoveries were made by

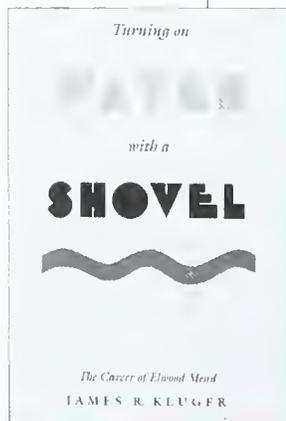
## THE STERNBERG FOSSIL HUNTERS: A DINOSAUR DYNASTY



BY KATHERINE ROGERS

MISSOULA, MONTANA: MOUNTAIN  
PRESS PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1991.  
MAPS, NOTES, INDEX. XII AND 288 PP.  
PAPER \$10.00.

TURNING ON WATER  
WITH A SHOVEL:  
THE CAREER OF  
ELWOOD MEAD



BY JAMES R. KLUGER

ALBUQUERQUE: UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. IX AND 218 PP. CLOTH \$29.95.

diggers independent of any institutional support. The methods employed by the Sternbergs' in their vocation would be judged by modern scientists and archaeologists as ethically offensive but at the time were common in paleontology. De-

spite its faults, Rogers' book provides insight into one family's role in the history of paleontology.

CARL V. HALLBERG  
*Senior Historian at the Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne*

Elwood Mead, Wyoming's only territorial engineer and first state engineer, has long been deserving of a comprehensive biography. Mead was a man of vision and his genius is reflected in the landscape of the western United States even today. His career as a reclamation engineer and his efforts as a social planner encompassed three continents and more than five decades. As Commissioner of Reclamation, his crowning achievement was the construction of Hoover Dam on the Colorado River. The reservoir formed by the dam was named Lake Mead in his honor, ten days after his death on January 26, 1936.

James Kluger's biography of Mead was twenty years in the making and included detailed research spanning the globe. The data were gathered from such diverse archives and libraries as the Bancroft Library, the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, the Wyoming State Archives, the U.S National Archives, the Israel Archives and the Australian Archives. Every aspect of Mead's career is explored. In addition to being extensively researched, Professor Kluger's biography is well written and easy to read.

The early years of Mead's career, beginning in 1882 with his appointment as professor of physics and mathematics at what is now Colorado State University in Fort Collins, are of special interest to Wyoming readers. It was during those early years, despite breaks at Iowa State University and

Purdue University to earn his advanced degrees and reading law in Indiana under the tutelage of his father-in-law, that Mead developed his lifelong passion for irrigation and reclamation. This passion had its beginning in the summer of 1885 when Mead was employed by the Colorado State Engineer as an assistant engineer overseeing irrigation in the South Platte River Valley. Not only did the summer irrigation and engineering work spur his interest in irrigation and reclamation, it gave him practical experience and led directly to his appointment as Wyoming's only Territorial Engineer.

During the next ten years, working in Wyoming, Mead developed the concepts and ideas which he would try to implement throughout his long career. In Colorado Mead quickly recognized the deficiencies, and looked for solutions to the problems water laws created. In Wyoming he encountered the same legal deficiencies. The move for Wyoming statehood led to a constitutional convention in 1889 shortly after his arrival in the state. Mead found the time ripe to resolve the legal problems that existed in state water laws.

The result was that two of Mead's ideas unique to water management were incorporated into the Wyoming State Constitution. The first provision was that all surface water (the courts later interpreted the term to include ground water) was the property of the state. The second provision established an administrative board of control to adjudicate water rights. These rights were based upon priority of appropriation and attachment of the adjudicated

water right to the land. During the next eight years Mead worked to implement the provisions of the constitution and bring water to the arid lands of Wyoming. From his efforts and laws passed by the state legislature would come what is known as the Wyoming System, which in time would be adopted in whole or in part by other states and other countries for water management.

For Mead, personally, his nearly ten years in Wyoming gave him a national and international reputation as a leader in reclamation and engineering, and a powerful political sponsor. Mead served directly under Francis E. Warren during Warren's second term as Wyoming Territorial Governor and his short tenure as the first state governor. During his more than thirty years in the Senate, Warren introduced many bills incorporating Mead's ideas for reclamation of the West. Warren also supported and sponsored Mead's career. In 1897, when Mead was anticipating a career change after the death of his first wife, Warren prevailed upon Secretary of Agriculture James A. Wilson to establish a Division of Irrigation in the department and appoint Mead its director. Mead served in this position from 1899 to 1907.

Throughout his biography of Mead, Professor Kluger stresses Mead's idealism and his belief that reclamation of the arid West could be a tool for resolving many of the nation's social problems. Mead believed in the family farm (he had been raised on one) and envisioned the settlement of the West through creation of family farms as a way to relieve overpopulation in eastern cities and the boom and bust economic problems of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Wherever Mead worked—in Wyoming, California, Australia, or Israel—when he held policy-making positions with the United States government his

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\$29.95 (September)

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## ARCHITECTURE IN THE COWBOY STATE, 1849-1940



BY EILEEN F. STARR

GLENDO, WYOMING: HIGH PLAINS  
PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS,  
APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. VI  
AND 199 PP.  
PAPER \$14.95.

efforts were always directed toward providing opportunities for families to thrive in agricultural communities.

Reclamation suffered criticism toward the end of the twentieth century. However, Professor Kluger's biography of Elwood Mead is important reading for those wanting to un-

derstand how the West became what it is today.

JIM DONAHUE

*Administrator of Archives, Records Management and Micrographic Services at the Department of Commerce, Cheyenne*

In *Architecture in the Cowboy State, 1849-1940* Eileen Starr sets out to write a survey of Wyoming architecture from a preservationist's point of view and succeeds in this goal. The book is divided into two sections: the first an overview of architectural styles and the second an outline for doing an architectural survey of historic structures.

Starr begins her survey with a discussion of the difference between the stereotypical idea of Western architecture presented by Hollywood and popular literature and reality. She describes the typical development of the Western town and illustrates how in some areas of Wyoming this development has been disrupted because of the desire to conform to a marketable, popular myth. She also describes the

influence that landscape and culture had on the development of a distinct style of architecture.

Demonstrating how to interpret historic architecture, Starr lists classifications used to identify structures and gives examples of Wyoming structures which illustrate architect-designed, manufactured and folk architecture. Her discussion of prominent Wyoming architects and their well known buildings further illustrates the variety of styles found in the state.

This book is written from an historic preservationist's perspective, confirmation of which can be seen in the choice of historic themes to describe the types of structures commonly found in Wyoming. The themes selected correspond to "historic contexts" used by preservationists when nominating a building to the National Reg-

ister. Information in this section is particularly helpful to someone completing a National Register nomination because it covers many themes that should be considered in the process. True to preservationist thinking is her consideration of the site and cultural landscape, their influences on particular types of structures and how they characterize the history of an area. Examples in each historic theme are given. When the information in this chapter is used in conjunction with architectural descriptions in the second part of the book, the reader is well on the way to knowing what is necessary to complete an architectural history and survey.

All in all, Starr presents a highly readable history of Wyoming's architecture and more importantly provides a starting point for further research. The bibliography is annotated. The book is fully illustrated with numerous photographs and line drawings which complement, and are placed appropriate to, the text. Each is properly captioned with the name and location of the structure and a brief comment. Appendices contain line drawings which illustrate architectural features commonly found in Wyoming structures, and a glossary contains architectural terms.

Anyone interested in historic preservation or simply the richness of Wyoming's architectural heritage would do well to make this book a starting point in their inquiry.

CATHERINE MAILHO GAUPP

*Volunteer at F.E. Warren Museum, Cheyenne.*

Having pounded the hated enemy into submission, United States forces which occupied Japan in September, 1945 quickly began the formidable task of reshaping that defeated nation in the democratic image. Within a week of the signing of the surrender a Civil Information and Education section was set up in General MacArthur's headquarters to expedite the establishment of freedom of religious worship, freedom of opinion, speech, press and assembly by the dissemination of democratic ideals and principles through all media of public information.

Ironically, to promote such freedoms the occupation forces found it necessary to impose censorship. This volume is a meticulously documented study of the way the Japanese motion picture industry was censored on two levels, civilian and military, with confusion and bumbling at both.

The goal was to help the Japanese people develop individual liberties and human rights. Movies, feature films, documentaries, and newsreels were seen as an important part of the re-education process. Desirable subjects included free discussion of political issues, demonstrations of individual initiative and cooperation in national reconstruction and building a peaceful nation. Prohibited were themes infused with militarism and nationalism, portrayal of feudal loyalty or contempt of life as honorable, depiction of revenge as an acceptable motive, and anything at variance with directives of the occupation forces.

The prohibitions quickly ran into problems. Kabuki plays, a national art form, were replete with themes of revenge, loyalty to feudal lords and violence. While native arts were encouraged as morale-builders, what should be done when they violated United States decrees? Ultimately the censors decided that Kabuki plays could be performed on the stage but Kabuki-type movies were verboten.

There were other dilemmas. Witness: When swordplay scenes were prohibited, Japanese filmmakers protested that there was no difference between swordplay and gunfighting in American westerns. But the American censors claimed that Japanese swordsmen used their weapons as instruments of personal revenge and defended the lords to whom they were loyal, and thus were motivated by feudalistic values, whereas the gunmen and sheriffs of the Wild West resorted to their weapons only to defend justice and to restore safety to the communities. Let me know if you can unravel that tortured logic.

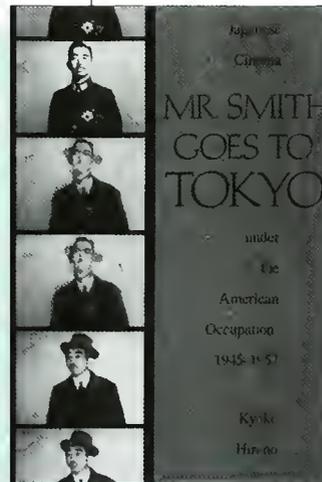
But there were even knottier matters. United States film censorship was caught up in leftist vs. rightist ideological conflicts among the Japanese and similar rivalries among American officials. Mixed signals from Washington didn't help.

Author Hirano probes the role of censorship in promoting the imperial image after it became United States policy to use the emperor rather than prosecute him as a war criminal, and in promoting progress and tranquility. However, inconsistency was about the only thing consistent in the program which muddled through in spite of language problems and huge gaps in cultural understanding.

Footnotes (759 of them) and 19 pages of bibliography belie the contention that the role of censorship was largely a hidden chapter in the story of the American occupation of Japan. Be that as it may, Kyoko Hirano, director of the Japan Film Center of the Japan Society of New York, has done a remarkable job of focusing the spotlight on an important chapter of history.

WILLIAM K. HOSOKAWA  
*Retired, editor and author, Denver, Colorado*

MR. SMITH GOES TO  
TOKYO: JAPANESE  
CINEMA UNDER THE  
AMERICAN  
OCCUPATION,  
1945-1952



BY KYOKO HIRANO  
WASHINGTON: SMITHSONIAN  
INSTITUTION PRESS, 1992. NOTES,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. VII AND 365 PP.  
CLOTH \$34.95.

If you are going to do a pictorial, "then and now" book this is the way to do it. At 10.5" x 12", *America Then and Now* is a big enough book to contain large photos, and enlargements are particularly useful when reading historic photographs. The printing is excellent. Duotones of historic photos and color separations of contemporary photos were done by Toppan, a Tokyo company with a reputation for quality work. Finally, the book is heavy with good paper and cover stock. In short, this book is a delight to see and feel.

You need money for fine quality printing and binding, for research at photo archives around the country, and for re-photographing scenes across America. To get the job done Editor David Cohen, co-editor of *Day in the Life of...* books on various countries, obtained a generous grant from K-Mart in celebration of the company's thirtieth anniversary.

Cohen's purpose in doing *American Then and Now*, in addition to celebrating K-Mart's birthday, was to "rediscover America." As Cohen and his staff looked at historic photos, two questions became insistent. "If we went back to the same places, tried to recapture the same scenes, what would they all look like now? And if these scenes were juxtaposed with the old, what would we learn about the ebb and flow of American life?" (p. 12). The answers are left to the reader who is treated to more than 200 pages of historic photos next to, opposite, or followed by, contemporary photos.

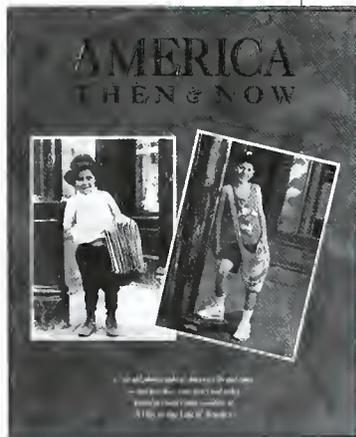
The format of *American Then and Now* is simple, the scenes entertaining and the captions short and informative. Every page or set of pages, patterned after radio or TV bytes, informs and entertains. The 103 historic photos are not familiar to most readers and all of the contemporary views, of course, are new. Probably the historic photo most familiar to readers is Alfred Eisenstadt's shot

of a sailor kissing a woman in Times Square on VJ day, 1945 (p. 170). Opposite is the Persian Gulf War homecoming of Melissa Rathbun-Nealy, the first American servicewoman to be taken prisoner of war since World War II.

How the old is juxtaposed with the new varies from page to page. Some comparisons are literal, with tripod points nearly matched, while others are creatively suggestive. An example of the literal approach is the very first set of photos in the book (pp. 14-15, 16-17): an 1860 view of the U.S. Capitol Building followed by a contemporary view taken from nearly the same spot with nearly the same focal-length lens. However, matching perspectives is not as important to Cohen as matching concepts. For example, an historic photo of a stunt woman diving her horse from a 35-foot platform at the Colorado State Fair is opposite a bungee jumper bouncing up from a bridge west of Denver (pp. 68-69). A Polish coal mine worker is matched to a Puerto Rican mushroom farmer, both wearing miner's hats (p. 88-89). The first World Series, held in 1903 at a Boston outdoor park, is opposite the 1991 American League Championship Series held in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis (pp. 62-63). Accompanying text contains player salary comparisons and -not to anyone's surprise- the difference is enormous. One of my favorites is the comparison between Tupperware parties of yesterday and today (p. 208-209). Fifty years have passed and we still use these plastic containers to preserve leftovers until they're moldy enough to throw away.

Photo pairs appear one right after another. Short, informative captions, keep you turning pages to find: Ellis Island immigrants, remote radio broadcasting paraphernalia, bathing suits, hamburger drive-ins, bomb shelters, Elvis Presley souvenirs, and pajama parties. Although some photo

## AMERICA THEN AND NOW



EDITED BY DAVID COHEN  
TEXT BY SUSAN WELS

SAN FRANCISCO: HARPER COLLINS,  
1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAP,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY, APPENDICES, 223 PP.  
CLOTH \$40.00, PAPER \$20.00.

sets clearly document social problems such as population growth and urban sprawl, most are not heavy with serious issues. This book is a smorgasbord for the eyes and a delight to anyone who enjoys history occasionally, but particularly history that is light and entertaining. The book contains three photos by J.E. Stimson (pp. 4-5, 85 and 108-109), an indication of the talent and breadth of this important Wyoming and Western photographer.

The problems in *American Then and Now* are small in comparison to the joy it gives, but they should not go unnoticed. For example, American photography before the Civil War is left out, as is the photography of the

great Western surveys and Western railroad building and -except for an Arthur Rothstein photo of a store in Grundy Center, Iowa, and an interior shot of a one-room Oregon schoolhouse by Dorothea Lange, used as filler at the end of the book- the massive Farm Security Administration (FSA) Collection in the Library of Congress is not represented. Finally, although the book does have America in the title, twenty-one states were not represented. Wyoming was lucky to see three Stimson photos.

For Cohen and staff, answering their two questions must have been an adventure. Even after discovering how the new does or does not resemble the old, putting the raw materials into a

book must have been another adventure. I wonder, when old and new photographs were laid out side by side, if Cohen found that he had reinvented America while he was rediscovering it. After all, what he selected for rephotography is a value judgment itself. Someday a statement will be made about how the editor who helped produce books containing late twentieth century, time-capsule, views of countries throughout the world- looked at American history.

MARK JUNGE

*Editor of Annals of Wyoming*

#### Editor Notes, continued from page 2...

*Trail. It was a stage road that went up, I guess, to the Black Hills from Sidney. It went through his property. He discovered that as a young kid, and found a half-dime or something out on the trail, and got interested in trails when he was just a tad.*

Paul's interest was in the geography of the trails. His wife Helen, who probably does not get as much credit even though she was as knowledgeable as Paul, was more interested in the history of the emigration. "It was always fun," Wagner related,

*when the two of them were together and talking about the trail to hear the interaction between them because Paul was so enthusiastic and Helen was so laid back and quiet. But every now and then she would pipe up and say ... "Now, Paul!"*

Although Paul Henderson did not have an academic degree he deserved one. And although he did not have a teacher's certificate, truly he was an educator, sharing his knowledge, library and home with colleagues. His nature was democratic, his style down to earth. He didn't like pretentiousness in anyone, including fellow trail historians. One summer night in 1973 in a tent along the Overland Trail at the Little Laramie Crossing, Paul told a few trail neophytes including myself about one such historian.

*Turrentine Jackson, who wrote a wonderful book on transportation over the Oregon Trail... I had him in the first teachers' trek. He was one of the counselors.*

*And we was at Ash Hollow, pretty close there, and I took em where they could look down in and over the situation. He was kind of a smart-aleck guy., I didn't like him. He said, "Dr. Henderson...." I said, "It's mister. There's no doctor about it." Well, anyway, he says, "I'd just give a fifty dollar bill to really walk out and stand on the Oregon Trail." Well, I was standing in it and was just gonna tell him about it. And I says, "Well, listen, Mut, bring your money and come over and stand with me and you'll be right in it."*

Paul Henderson cared more about his subject than being recognized as a literary historian. He approached it, explained Wagner, in the true spirit of the historian.

*Paul just wanted to know why, why they went over this ridge, why they went up this valley, why they didn't go here rather than over there. He learned partly because, of course, he grew up in the era. But he understood the restrictions of travel by covered wagon, the kinds of terrain those wagons could tackle and the kinds they couldn't. And so he would work things out in his own mind and he would discover "why."*

Some of those whys were explained to us that night on the Little Laramie. I asked Paul if emigrant wagons traveled the high ground because of potential Indian attack. He replied:

*No. They kept on the high ground because in this western country the snow swept off of the high ground. I've seen people go out there with me and, oh, a lotta*

*people "...Oh, yes, we're gonna hunt for the trail. It went right down a swale. See how nice that slopes? Right down there?" Yes! Did you ever think that in the winter time how deep the snow would be right down that swale? And them stages run winter and summer! See?*

He further instructed us...

*And I'm gonna tell you guys right now. When you're huntin for trails don't ever hunt for a trail goin around a slope on a mountain like that. They didn't! The wagons had to go up and down! If they'd a started around, goin around ...oh, yes, we'll start up here and we'll go around the mountain like some of our roads.... Those roads wasn't graded. Just as quick as he got around there and started around the mountain the old wagon woulda rolled right over on down the hill, See?*

We all wondered how Paul could retain so many details of trail history since he seemed to be able to spin one tale after another. "Well, I enjoy it," he told us,

*...when you enjoy doing something you wonder why you do it, like going up this trail, one thing and another. You can't forget them things. You just can't forget em.*

Before rolling over in our sleeping bags Paul capped the whole evening's discussion in an expression of love for the trail.

*You know what?... Comes time for me to die I'd like to be out on something like this and lightning strike me. ■*

ALL BOOKS DESCRIBED IN THIS EDITION OF "BOOKNOTES" ARE FIRST EDITION PAPERBACKS PUBLISHED BY BISON BOOKS, A DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS. BEGUN IN 1941, THE PRESS IS A UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT LOCATED ON THE EAST EDGE OF THE CAMPUS IN LINCOLN. BISON IS THE TRADE NAME FOR UNP PAPERBACKS AND WAS INTRODUCED IN 1961. THREE-FIFTHS OF UNP PUBLICATIONS BEAR THE BISON LOGO. NEBRASKA PUBLISHES MORE THAN FIFTY NEW BISON BOOKS A YEAR AND REGULARLY REPRINTS WESTERN CLASSICS. SUBJECT MATERIAL INCLUDES NOT ONLY THE HISTORY OF THE WEST AND FRONTIER EXPANSION, BUT ALSO STUDIES IN NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE AND AMERICAN HISTORY IN GENERAL INCLUDING THE CIVIL WAR. THE PRESS INTENDS TO REPRINT IN PAPERBACK ALL OF THE WORKS OF NEBRASKA NATIVE, MARI SANDOZ, INCLUDING THE TWO BELOW. A DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF BISON REPRINTS IS A NEW INTRODUCTION FOR EACH PUBLICATION.

*Cheyenne Autumn*  
by Mari Sandoz

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, NEW YORK: MCGRAW-HILL BOOK CO., 1953. XX AND 282 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAP, NOTES, INDEX. \$9.95.

This is the first Bison Book printing of Sandoz' classic work concerning a band of Cheyenne Indians that traveled in Autumn, 1878 from Indian Territory in Oklahoma, where they had been sent by the U.S. government, to their homeland in the Yellowstone River Country of Montana 1,500 miles north. It is the saga of a heartbreaking journey told by Sandoz, a Western writer raised in the sandhills of western Nebraska. Sandoz based her story partly upon talks with an old Cheyenne woman who was a participant in the flight, conversations with other veterans of the frontier, and documentary research. Although some of the direct speech she used is fictional, she believed she remained true to the

rhythms of Indian speech. Warner Brothers made *Cheyenne Autumn* a motion picture in 1964. A map located in the front of the book and nine illustrations grouped within the text help the reader visualize the location and some of the key individuals in the event. The setting includes a portion of eastern and northeastern Wyoming.

*Hostiles and Friendlies*  
by Mari Sandoz

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1959. XXI AND 250 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAP, PUBLISHER'S NOTES, CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AUTHOR'S WRITINGS, LIST OF AUTHOR'S PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS. \$10.95.

Sandoz' book is a novelette combined with short stories linked together by passages from the author's letters, articles and interviews. The introduction is an autobiographical sketch of her youth in the Nebraska sandhills. The body of the work indicates how the author developed as a writer. It contains a study of the two Sitting Bulls (Hunkpapa and Oglala) and other Indian pieces; a novelette, "Bone Joe and the Smokin' Woman; and nine other short stories including Sandoz' first, "The Vine." Together, they provide a picture of both the Niobrara River Country of northwestern Nebraska, the Dakotas and of Sandoz's emergence as a Western and American writer.

*The Travels of Jedediah Smith*  
by Maurice S. Sullivan, ed.

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA: FINE ARTS PRESS, 1934. 195 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. \$9.95.

This is a pioneering work about Jedediah Smith, a man described by the author as, "...in brief, the man who charted the way for the spread of the American empire from the Missouri River to the Western Sea." (p.2, Foreward). It contains Smith's sketch

of his entry into the fur trade in 1822, a documentary outline by Sullivan of Smith's next five years, and Smith's daily record of activities from June 24, 1827 to July 3, 1828. The latter is the only material remaining from a journal kept by Smith for more than eight years. It documents his journey on foot over the Utah desert, his second visit to California, his escape from the Mojaves, and his adventures in Oregon. Supplementing the journal is the diary of Alexander Roderick McLeod and correspondence describing events of the 1828 Hudson's Bay Co. expedition to recover property carried off by Indians in a fight on the Oregon's Umpqua River. Smith's career is of interest to Wyoming historians since he traversed the state in his search for furs and "rediscovered" South Pass.

*Fremont, Pathmarker of the West*  
by Allan Nevins

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, APPLETON CENTURY, 1939. XIV AND 689 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE, INDEX. \$19.95.

Based in part on an earlier biography of *Fremont* done by the same author, *Fremont* is the definitive work about the explorer. It was written fifty years after Fremont's death by one of America's greatest historians, Allan Nevins, author of Pulitzer Prize-winning *Grover Cleveland* (1932) and *Hamilton Fish* (1937). One reviewer called *Fremont* long and tedious, a "camouflage." Another claimed that Nevins had "raised biography to the level of literature." In either case, John Charles Fremont was one of the most controversial and romantic figures in American history. Nevins documents the explorations of the "Pathfinder" which included his adventures in Wyoming and his disastrous winter in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, his political career including his court-martial for disobeying orders during the Bear

Flag Rebellion, his defeat as the first presidential candidate of the Republican Party and the loss of his Civil War command. Interwoven is the romance with his wife, Jessie Benton Fremont. If history is biography then surely this book will interest historians of the West.

The Gathering of Zion  
by Wallace Stegner

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, NEW YORK: MCGRAW-HILL, 1964, THE AMERICAN TRAILS SERIES. 332 PP. CHURCH CHRONOLOGY (1805-1896), MAPS, ILLUSTRATIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES, INDEX. \$12.95.

This is the second book written by Stegner about the Mormons. His first was *Mormon Country*, published in 1941. Although Stegner is not a Mormon, he is not a Mormon-hater. Saints and non-Mormons alike will probably derive benefit from this history of the 1,200 mile Mormon Trail, 400 miles of which crosses Wyoming. Stegner documents the great Mormon migration to Salt Lake starting with the 1844 mob attack on Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Illinois and ending with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah. It is a story akin to that of the Israelites who journeyed from the land of Pharaoh into Palestine. According to Wyoming Historian, Gene Gressley, the book is the best volume of in what was an "undistinguished" trail book series. Most Western readers will recognize Stegner as the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Angle of Repose* (1972).

Handcarts to Zion  
by LeRoy R. Hafen & Ann W. Hafen.

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA: ARTHUR H. CLARK CO., 1960. 328 PP. APPENDICES, INDEX. \$12.95.

Three thousand Mormon converts migrated from Europe to

America, purchased 653 wooden handcarts and joined companies of emigrants in a 1300 mile trek from Iowa City to the Salt Lake Valley. Without money to buy wagons and draft animals, the handcart pioneers-women as well as men-pulled and pushed two-wheeled carts containing their possessions. Combining scholarly research with what has been called "delightful prose," LeRoy Hafen (1893-1985) and Ann Hafen (1893-1970) documented the incredible migration using journals, reports and rosters of the ten handcart companies. Hafen, a history professor and former director of the State Historical Society of Colorado, and his wife, Ann were prolific Western historians and authors who wrote, among other works, fifteen volumes about the Far West and Rockies and ten volumes about the Mountain Men and the fur trade. *Handcarts* was dedicated to Mary Ann Hafen, LeRoy's mother, who wrote about the handcart experience in *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860: A Woman's Life on the Mormon Frontier*, also a Bison book. Wyoming figures prominently in the handcart saga, since not only did the Saints follow the Oregon/Mormon Trail, the Martin and Willie Companies were nearly destroyed by early winter storms east of South Pass.

Annie Oakley  
by Walter Havighurst

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, NEW YORK: MACMILLAN, 1954. XVIII AND 246 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. \$10.95.

Most of Walter Havighurst's books focus upon the Great Lakes area and Ohio. Although mid-America was his specialty this professor of English wrote a biography that is a description of the West portrayed in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. A star of the show was Annie Oakley, markswoman without peer. One reviewer called the book readable as history or as circus and theater. Although Havighurst gave his subject careful study, he interpolated imaginary conversations. In so doing,

says *New York Herald Tribune* reviewer, Stewart Holbrook, he was able to "catch all of the excitement of tanbark, lights, gunfire and brass bands." Born in rural Ohio in 1860, Annie Moses rose from poverty to become the well-known personality W.F. Cody called "Missie." For seventeen years she was loved both in America and overseas. The introduction was written by Canadian author and English Professor, Christine Bold. Wyomingites may be interested in furthering their knowledge of Buffalo Bill, one of the state's foremost historic personalities.

Personal Recollections and  
Observations of General Nelson  
A. Miles (2 Vols.)  
by Nelson A. Miles

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, CHICAGO: WERNER, 1896. (2 VOLS.) XXI AND 591 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS BY FREDERIC REMINGTON, INTRODUCTION BY ROBERT WOOSTER. \$11.95 PER VOLUME.

After fighting for the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War, General Miles was transferred to the West where he achieved his greatest fame fighting Sioux, Cheyenne, Apache and Nez Perce. These are his memoirs, illustrated by one of America's greatest Western artists. Volume I contains Miles' early years in the East, the Civil War and his Indian campaigns on the Northern Plains, ending with the Battle of the Little Bighorn and the surrender of Sitting Bull. Volume II shifts to the northwest, Washington Territory, and his role in the Indian Wars there, then to the Southwest where he succeeded General George Crook fighting the Apaches. Robert Wooster, who introduces each volume of the Miles memoirs, is Associate Professor of History at Corpus Christi State University and author of *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier*, a book scheduled for publication by the University of Nebraska Press.

# SAVOR WYOMING HISTORY A DAY AT A TIME



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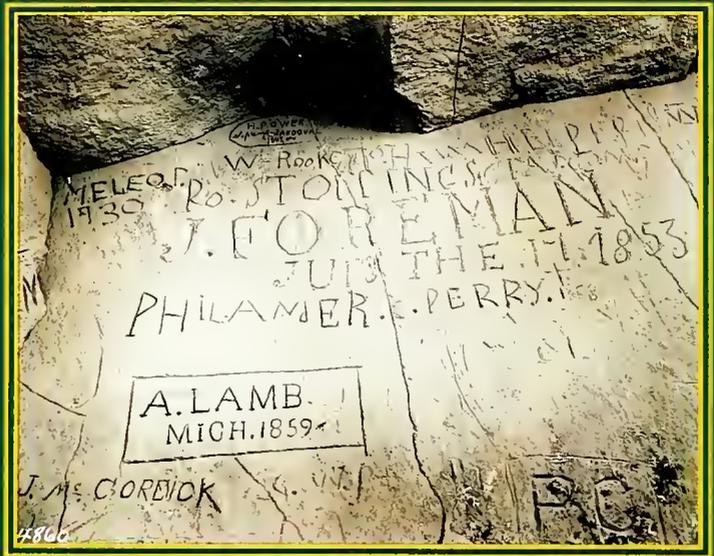
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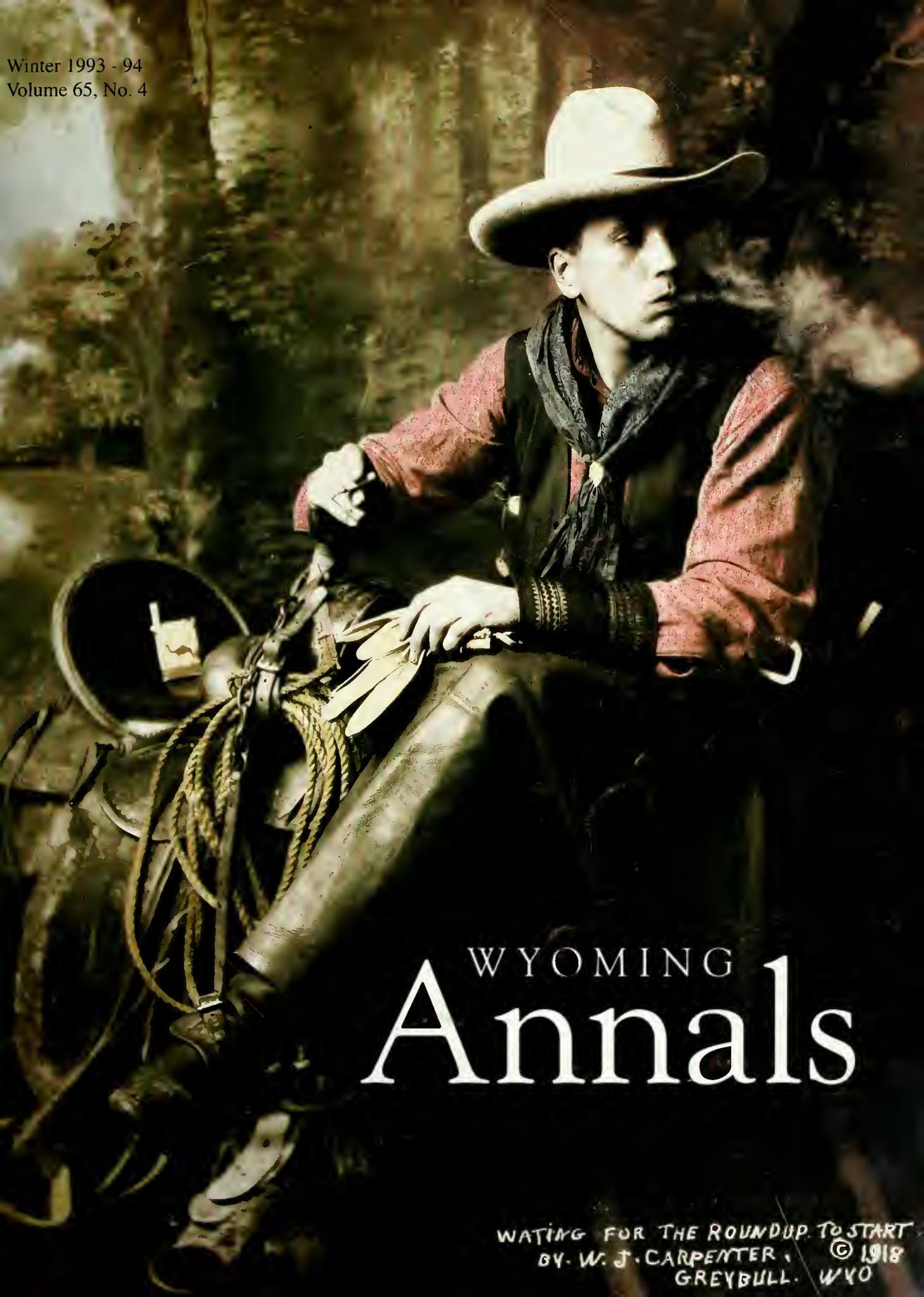
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Winter 1993 - 94  
Volume 65, No. 4



WYOMING  
**Annals**

WAITING FOR THE ROUNDUP TO START  
BY W. J. CARPENTER, © 1918  
GREYBULL, WYO

## EDITOR NOTES

If you like cowboys this is your issue. In the lead article Peter Hassrick discusses the changing of the cowboy image. Roscoe Buckland tries to show how Owen Wister—author of the most famous of western novels called *The Virginian*—changed his mind about the big cattlemen. Mark Harvey is not shy in expressing his opinion about “good guys” and “bad guys” in the Johnson County War. And when you think you’ve got the war pretty well figured out, Jack McDermott will give you not only lots more to think about, but also many leads to further reading. The one topic that doesn’t relate to cowboys is Bruce Noble’s article about South Pass mining entrepreneur, Emile Granier, whose misadventures took place a few years before the northern Wyoming range feud.

As I sat wondering what I could write in this column that somehow related to all that, what bobbed to the surface of my mind was the Tom Horn Retrial in Cheyenne this past September. Most will recall that Horn was tried, convicted and hung in Cheyenne for killing 14-year-old Willie Nickel. It was in 1903, a decade after the classic period of open-range cattle ranching had ended, that Horn admitted the killing was “the dirtiest trick I ever done.”

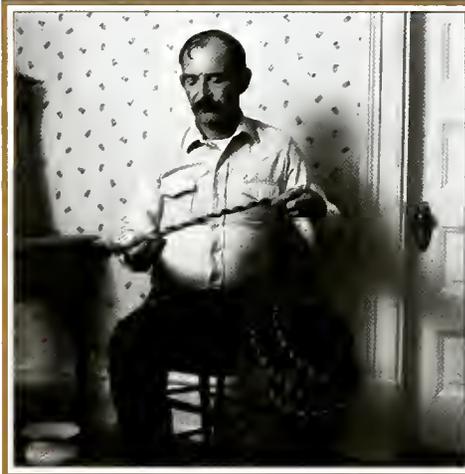
After rereading four, front page *Wyoming* (Cheyenne) *Eagle* accounts of the retrial, I wondered, “Why so much ink devoted to resurrecting a 1903 event?” I puzzled, “Why, even before the retrial began, would a newspaper reporter indicate that the retrial would bring a verdict of ‘not guilty?’” I couldn’t quite figure out... “Why would Amnesty International ask Governor Sullivan to posthumously pardon Horn—comparing his hanging to the 1991 execution of Mark Hopkinson—when it was known that the Governor didn’t pardon Hopkinson?” Furthermore, “Why would Wyomingites, who root for underdogs, try to vindicate a man whose job in the struggle between big and small cattlemen was to kill un-



HOWARD WAGNER COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

**left:** Tom Horn in the office of the Laramie County Jail 1903  
**right:** Ken Rolfsness. Tom Horn look-alike 1991 Wyoming Governors’ Mansion

*“A number of years back, when my daughter was probably around age six or seven, she went out and got the newspaper off the front steps and brought it in the house. She was just kinda glancing through the newspaper and all of a sudden she come runnin’ in to my wife and*



MARK JUNGE

*saying, “What’s daddy’s picture doing in the paper?” My wife Carol took a look at the picture and she said the first thing she thought, too, was well, what’s my picture doing in the paper? She started reading the article. It was on Tom Horn and the picture that they were talking about was a picture of Tom Horn. But that would have been probably 15 years ago. Even then they said I looked enough like Tom Horn to be Tom Horn and a year ago I still looked enough like him to be him, I guess.”*

killer, Horn continues to attract international attention.

Pondering the questions I began to realize what bothers me. It is that people seem caught up in outlaw and lawman history. Other questions came to mind: Why is there no end to documentaries and books that highlight lawmen and outlaws? Why do people think that gunfighting is what Wyoming history is all about? What makes us perk up when we are told stories of the “Old West?” Sure, I realize that Tom Horn is good for drawing tourists. *Tom Horn Kick and Growl* events even provide scholarships. But, they serve as blinders, blocking out our peripheral vision and preventing us from seeing the history we’re losing. While Cheyenne people crowd a courtroom to attend a theatrical event like the Tom Horn Retrial, they turn their heads when historic Cheyenne buildings like the Gem Coal Chute are torn down. That wooden structure lasted longer than one might expect, given today’s mindset. It was a unique symbol of two key industries in Wyoming’s development: the railroad and coal. Probably I shouldn’t be too surprised since this sort of destruction takes place continuously throughout the state. But who gives a Cheyenne newspaper reporter, covering the demolition of such structures, the right to pronounce them “unhistoric?” What judge and jury determined their guilt or innocence?

Some guy in a beer commercial asks, “Why ask why?” ...Because maybe someday I’ll get an answer.

derdogs? Why all the kick and growl over a hired killer?”

Then it struck me, Tom Horn *was* an underdog. Regardless of his guilt or innocence in the Nickel killing, Horn was a loner, feared by small cattlemen and eventually shunned by the big cattlemen who hired him. Regardless of the fact that neither his antagonists nor his apologists deny he was a cold-blooded

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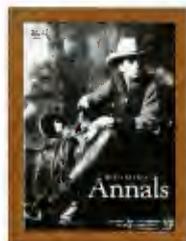
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UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING  
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WYOMING  
ANNALS

Winter, 1993 - 94  
Volume 65, No. 4

C O N T E N T S



COVER: *Waiting (sic) for the Roundup to Start* by W. J. Carpenter, 1918, Greybull, Wyo. CARRIGEN COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM  
TONING, COLORING, AND COLOR TRANSPARENCIES BY CRAIG PINDELL

BACK: *Billy Cramer, 1899*  
RAINSFORD COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM  
COLORING BY RICHARD COLLIER

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The editor of *ANNALS* welcomes manuscripts on every aspect of Wyoming and Western history. Authors should submit manuscripts on diskettes utilizing WordPerfect or ASCII text, and double-spaced, hard copy to: Editor, *Wyoming ANNALS*, Wyoming Department of Commerce, Barrett Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 82002. Manuscripts should conform to *A Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press). They are reviewed by members of an editorial advisory board and the editor makes decisions regarding publication.

*ANNALS* is received by members of the Wyoming State Historical Society and is the Society's principal publication. Current membership is 2,141. Membership dues are: Single \$9, Joint \$12, Institutional \$20. Copies of *ANNALS* may be purchased from the Wyoming Department of Commerce. *ANNALS* articles are abstracted in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

# LEGACY OF A RANGE WAR



BY  
MARK  
HARVEY

CRAIG PINDELL

On a blustery spring afternoon a mysterious train departed from the stockyards of Cheyenne and headed north over the Wyoming plains. Consisting of only five railroad cars and a steam locomotive, the special train rolled through the night under cover of a moonless Wyoming sky. In the pre-dawn hours of April 6, 1892 it clamored to a halt some two hundred miles down the track on the outskirts of the fledgling cattle town of Casper.

A well-armed force of fifty-two Wyoming cattlemen, stock detectives and hired Texas gunmen disembarked from the passenger car, unloaded their equipment, horses and supply wagons and began their journey north through the rolling grassland of the Powder River Basin. Carrying a death list compiled by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association and riding with the blessings of high-ranking state officials including the governor, their intention was nothing less than to purge Johnson County of every known cattle thief and rustler by whatever means possible. Thus began the invasion of Johnson County.

The story of the Johnson County War has been told so many times and in so many ways over the past century that its legacy has long since transcended the confines of historical reality. No other single event in Wyoming state history has generated as much controversy, folklore, myths and leg-

ends than the war on Powder River. It has been the subject of works of history, fiction and what can be referred to as hysterical fiction. Each side of the conflict has its own version of the story and each version has been embellished by various interpretations. Moreover, the people, issues and events of that long-ago conflict are favorite topics of conversation and debate on the Wyoming range and can still quicken blood and make tempers flare. There remains no middle ground.

When a person takes into account the fact that history and tradition run deep in the veins of Wyoming people, that the majority of Wyoming's mythic and legendary tales deal with cowboys, outlaws and range feuds, and that the Johnson County War is a microcosm of the time when cows wore horns and men packed guns, the continual rehashing of the war over the past century isn't all that surprising. And it's a cinch bet that stories of the people and events of that century-old conflict will be told until Powder River runs dry.

But there are ramifications of the war on Powder River that transcend Wyoming and its people, branching out and connecting with the history of the entire nation. Inherent in the struggle are universal themes intrinsically woven into the fabric of American culture which give meaning to the history, character and makeup of the nation. Not the least of the themes is the timeless strife and struggle between the haves and have nots of American society. The antagonism that existed between the wealthy, powerful cattlemen of Cheyenne and the independent cowboys, small ranchers and homesteaders of Johnson County is a reflection of antagonism between capital and labor during the latter decades of the twentieth century.

Coined the "Gilded Age" by Mark Twain, the decades following the Civil War were a time of unparalleled social unrest and unrelenting conflict between

two opposing forces and ideologies. On one side were large corporations, political power and wealth. On the other were labor unions, independent farmers and ranchers, the common man and working poor. It was an era of fear, violence and alienation and distrust between social classes.

At about the same time events were coming to a head on Powder River, there arose in the South and West a grassroots rebellion of farmers, homesteaders, and working poor coalescing into the Populist Party. Although short-lived, populism brought to the consciousness of the American public many of the same charges being leveled against the cattlemen of Cheyenne by the small ranchers of Johnson County. In 1891, just one year prior to the invasion, Hamlin Garland became a voice for the Populist movement when he published *Main Traveled Roads*. This widely read novel consisted of a collection of short stories depicting the plight of simple, hard-working Dakota farmers and their struggle for survival, not only against the hostile forces of nature but against the unrestricted practices of their powerful oppressors. The latter included land-grabbing speculators, dishonest bankers, crooked politicians, monied corporations and the magnates of unregulated railroads. In 1892 the Populist movement resulted in the first major third party in American politics since the Civil War. The platform of the Populist Party that year contained the statement:

*We meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot box, the legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The people are demoralized ... The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes ... we breed two great classes — paupers and millionaires.*



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*Bar C Roundup Wagon About 1884.* Standing, l to r: Hank Devoe —foreman, Ray Peters, George Gordon, Cheston Morris, Nate Champion, Joe Vincent. Sitting, l to r: Buck Jackson, Jack Donahue, W. H. Hall, Rice McCarty, Sig Donahue, Al Allison, Bill Rankin, Jack Flagg.

The wealthy elite of the nation, on the other hand, viewed the common man with disdain and distrust. Fearing anarchy due to fast-growing labor organizations and countless labor strikes, they struck back with rhetoric, legislation, and finally, private armies. During the late 1880s and early 1890s America witnessed numerous violent confrontations between the forces of capital and labor including the 1886 Haymarket Riot in Chicago, the 1892 Coeur d' Alene and Homestead strikes, and the 1894 Pullman strike. It was within this historical context that the Johnson County War was played out.

The War is a powerful learning tool for those interested in conflicts between the haves and have nots of our own times. One hundred years ago opposing sides in the conflict were popularly known as the "White Caps" and "Rustlers." Today they might be referred to as the "Postmodern Barons" and the "People of the Horseback Culture." These two forces still do battle but not with guns.

Postmodern Barons believe in

money, progress, power and political control. They are wealthy urban capitalists who dominate the economic policies of state and country and, to a certain extent, the politics as well. Although individuals, they can be readily identified by the initials of their corporations, associations and government affiliations. Their leaders and spokesmen are often politicians as well as successful businessmen. The ideology of the Postmodern Barons is demonstrated by their tendency to battle, dismantle or destroy any obstacle in the path of their economic interests. In the past their initial response was to pick up a gun. Today whenever they encounter an obstacle, be it be human or environmental, the initial response is to lobby for legislation enabling them to start up a bulldozer or drilling rig, build a dam or power plant, lay a pipeline, strip the earth or clear-cut timber.

People of the Horseback Culture, on the other hand, are primarily folks who live in the hills, on family ranches and farms, and in small towns. They have an inherent distrust of authority - especially state and federal agencies-

the corporate world, the rich and powerful elite and the fast-paced modern world in general. They are people who believe, as Charley Russell put it, that "Progress don't make a town any better ... just makes it easier for cars to travel." They are people who perpetuate traditional values of hard work, family, honesty, friendship and self-sufficiency, and who retain a sense of community and neighborhood cooperation. The culture's ideology is expressed by individuals such as Charley Russell and Will Rogers. Horseback Culture is also a state of being in which people measure time with the sun and the seasons. It is a place where Wyoming doesn't wear barbed wire in her hair, where she doesn't have stretch marks on her belly from railroad tracks, freeways and highways, where her lungs aren't full of factory and power-plant smoke, and where her jewelry isn't power poles and telephone lines. In essence, Horseback Culture is the antithesis of

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# IN OLD

# WYOMING



BY Larry K. Brown

*Why is there a rather general disposition to deprecate the legislature? If all the wisecracks of this category were laid end to end they'd reach from the last smartaleck who made one back to the beginning of time and lap over into infinity. Forty years of reporting legislatures have seen a steady increase of the respect with which this writer regards the average earnest, honest well-meaning citizen who is representing his fellow citizen in the law making branch of the government...John C. Thompson*

Thus, for the first time—February 11, 1937—John C. Thompson expressed “One Man’s Opinion” under that banner and byline in the *Wyoming State Tribune*.<sup>1</sup>

As a Cheyenne newspaperman since the age of eighteen Thompson had observed and reported the news for roughly forty years.<sup>2</sup> But that was not enough. He sensed Wyoming and its people were not receiving the attention and recognition he felt they deserved and it concerned him greatly. To make sure his state and “the folks who had accomplished things from the bottom up” were not forgotten, the congenial but rather private journalist collected a rich trove of

facts and anecdotes about their lives then shared their stories in ink with page-one prominence.<sup>3</sup> In doing so, he enriched the lives of his readers by putting the events of their time in perspective.

This was no ordinary newsman. In addition to being a skillful writer, perhaps his greatest gifts were his ability to cultivate invaluable news sources, ask the right questions and accurately recall the most obscure facts related to him. The courtly gentleman also had great empathy for his fellow man. Oh, there were times when he could be stern, aloof and even irascible, but he usually saved his rancor for those whom he perceived lacked “moral fiber.”<sup>4</sup>

Unlike many of his firebrand competitors, Thompson chose reason rather than rhetoric to express his views. He congratulated rather than castigated. Tired of “attack dog” editorializing, the public found Thompson’s straight talk refreshing. They warmed to his yarns about the good ol’ days like trail-worn travelers ‘round a friendly fire.

As he matured professionally from reporter to editor, “Charley,” as a few close friends called him, spent more and more time in search of interesting individuals who had made important contributions, particularly to Thompson’s community. In telling their tales he evolved into a kindly mentor. To reflect that approach he retitled his column “Cheyenne, Wyoming” on February 23, 1937.<sup>5</sup>

Readers discovered, within Thompson’s column rule, the great strengths of Wyoming people including honor, fidelity, self-sufficiency, honesty, fairness and, above all, equality. He shared those attributes in stories about those he admired in such a way as to help his readers cope and succeed in their

own lives. The values he cherished, however, transcended the “Magic City of the Plains.” With that discovery he chose a more appropriate title for his column: “In Old Wyoming.” It first appeared on July 27, 1938.<sup>6</sup> In that issue he mused: “It would be interesting to know how many men there are in Cheyenne whose careers included a period when they were carrier-boys for one or another of the several newspapers now merged in and their names perpetuated by *The Tribune*” Clearly, he must have recalled his youthful start in journalism.<sup>7</sup>

Born July 15, 1879 at Harrodsburg, Kentucky, Thompson was brought to Cheyenne in 1884 by his father who also was named John C. Thompson. After working as a miner and stenographer, the junior Thompson launched his newspaper career in 1897 as “conductor of the Wyoming department” at the *Rocky Mountain News*.<sup>8</sup> Three years later he became a reporter for the *Tribune*. In 1902 he joined the *Cheyenne Leader* which

1. John C. Thompson, “One Man’s Opinion,” (Cheyenne) *Wyoming State Tribune*, 11 February 1937, p.1.

2. “Eminent Tribune Editor John C. Thompson Dies,” *Wyoming State Tribune*, 8 February 1952, p.1.

3. Telephone interview: T. Raymond Cahalane, 2 November 1993. Other telephone interviews: Shelby Thompson, 3 November 1993; Don Clair, 4 November 1993; and Pat Sullivan Larsen, 4 November 1993.

4. Telephone Interview: Burton Thompson, 3 November 1993.

5. John C. Thompson, “Cheyenne, Wyoming,” *Wyoming State Tribune*, 23 February 1937 p.1; also, Cahalane interview.

6. John C. Thompson, “In Old Wyoming,” *Wyoming State Tribune*, 27 July 1938, p.1.

7. *ibid.*

8. “Eminent Tribune Editor,” *Tribune*, 8 February 1952, p.1.



T. Joe Cahill (left), Cheyenne police chief, visits Editor John Charles Thompson in his Wyoming State Tribune office, ca. 1942. Both witnessed the November 20, 1903 execution of Tom Horn.

Beriah Thompson Collection

was subsequently absorbed by the *Tribune* and from 1908 until 1911 edited that newspaper. The following year, after a brief stint as Laramie County assessor, he returned to the *Tribune* where he worked for five years as a reporter.

During the years 1917-1918 he was secretary to Governor Frank Houx and in 1920 returned to the *Tribune* where four years later he again became editor. From 1926 until the late 1940s he also served as editor of the *Tribune's* subsidiary, the *Wyoming Stockman-Farmer*. During his journalism career Thompson covered every big news story in Wyoming including the Tom Horn trial, the Jackson Hole congressional investigations, the pre-World War I convict strike at the state penitentiary in Rawlins, mine disasters at

Hanna and the Teapot Dome scandal. During much of that time he also was Wyoming correspondent for the *New York Times* and wrote extensively for other major newspapers and periodicals. His support of history brought him appointment to the Wyoming State Historical Landmarks Commission in 1939.<sup>9</sup>

Despite his many interests and responsibilities, Thompson always carved time from a busy schedule to craft his column. "In Old Wyoming" welcomed its readers nearly every day for more than twelve years. Like strong coffee and sunrise, it gave them comfort and spirit to meet their daily challenges. Not content to hide it beneath the fold of an inside page, Thompson let it com-

pete with the hard news of crime, death and taxes for front page attention. Rarely did he allow it to be pushed by anything less than a major disaster or nations at war.

The stress and long hours imposed by the rigors of his business, the debilitating effects of nearly ten years of cardiovascular disease, his wife Della Mae's heart attack and the tragic death of his son Edward in 1947 finally took its toll.<sup>10</sup> His once bright torch slowly faded to a warm glow like the embered tip of his ever-present cigarette. "In Old Wyoming" went to print for the last time on Friday, July 14, 1950. Thompson's weary lead paragraph was followed

by some lengthy quotes from characters in Virginia Cole Trenholm's history of Wyoming and the West, *Footprints on the Frontier*.

About a year and a half year later, on February 8, 1952, journalism wrote "30" to Thompson's life.<sup>11</sup> John Charles Thompson is gone. But his love of the past and his desire to preserve it live on. This is the first in a series of commemorative "In Old Wyoming" anecdotal articles to appear in *Wyoming Annals*. We hope you enjoy them.

Larry K. Brown is a volunteer, writer and researcher for *Wyoming Annals*.

9. *ibid.*

10. Telephone interview: Beriah "Bill" Thompson, 2 November 1993. Bill's twin brother, Edward (Bob), was killed in an auto accident in 1947.

11. "Eminent Tribune Editor," *Tribune*, 8 February 1952, p.1.



# THE WYOMING COWBOYS

by Peter Hassrick

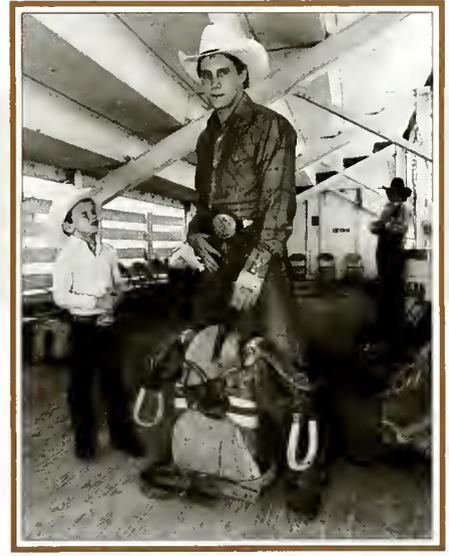
There are states and then there are states of mind. Although Wyoming has been the latter longer than the former, it is perhaps perceived today as a set of symbols and frozen pictorial images as much as a specific geographical domain bordered by political boundaries with elected officials -bolstered by shelves of leather-bound statutes- ministering to it. It is symbols and images which inform the public conscience about Wyoming's unique place in the scheme of things. At least that is true nationally. Of those symbols, there are two that are especially pervasive. One is the grand Wyoming landscape with its sweep of plains, its sublime ridges of mountains that spire skyward as the Tetons, the Absarokas and the Wind Rivers, and those wondrous and curious features of Yellowstone National Park. The other is somewhat less glamorous though no less compelling, the cowboy...that laconic, loose jointed, free roaming horseman of the grasslands whose life centers on raising beef cattle and bringing them successfully to market.

Placed side by side with any of those natural wonders, even the prairie which is his work place, the cowboy seems dwarfed and daunted. Nonetheless, the scale of his symbolic essence and the magnitude of his public presence give him stature as an emblematic force nearly equal to nature's grandest efforts.

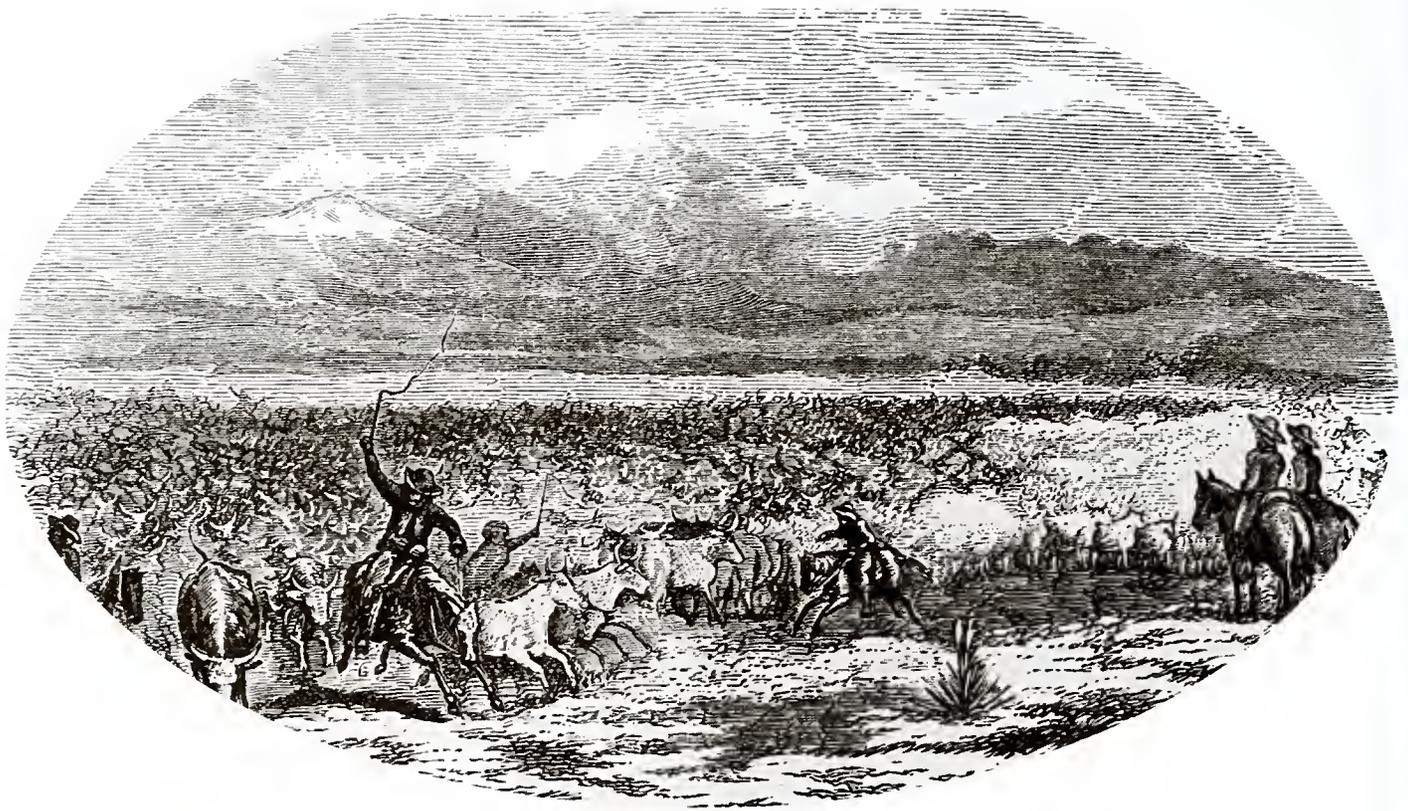
Within the broad Western and Wyoming image symbolized by the landscape and the cowboy are two perceptions. One which has persevered is that the region has remained Edenic in its limitless bounty and beauty. The other one is that man dominates nature, or its antithesis: nature controls man, sort of an environmental determinism. In almost any story or account of Wyoming cowboy life the reader may witness examples of one of these perceptions at work.<sup>1</sup>

Although the West, and Wyoming in particular, have long been perceived in such sweepingly mythic terms, the earliest writings about them and the cowboys who peopled their landscapes were remarkably simple. The cowboy was treated as a common laborer who toiled on the land, a herder whose craft was to move and control groups of cattle. Robert Strahorn's 1877 *Hand-Book of Wyoming* treated the cowboy strictly as one of the typical residents of the Territory. He was paid an average of \$32.50 per month and board, and he performed his task with rudimentary tools: a saddle, a horse, a whip and a fair measure of equestrian skill and

1. These perceptions are discussed in several sources. Two important references include Ray A. Billington, *America's Frontier Culture* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1977), pp.11-15, 76-77; and Wallace Stegner, "Who Are the Westerners?" *American Heritage* 38, no.8 (December 1987): 35-41.



# EVOLVING IMAGES



***The Round-up -Cutting out Cattle.* Unknown artist. Woodcut illustration in Robert Strahorn's *The Hand-Book of Wyoming and Guide to the Black Hills, Big Horn Regions* (1877). BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER LIBRARY, CODY**

savvy.<sup>2</sup> As portrayed by artists of the period, the cowboy's job was challenging and vital but hardly more so than that of a teamster or miner. The illustration of a roundup scene in Strahorn's book is a plainly unaffected genre piece capturing the activity of everyday life on the prairie. Strahorn describes it in ordinary, unaffected, rather non-mythic terms:

*Early in the summer of each year the great "round-ups" occur. All herders, and frequently owners of stock, gather together in certain localities, and, with the most experienced and skillful stockmen for leaders, inaugurate a short season of the herdsmen's wildest revelry. Mounted upon their best ponies, the herders swiftly scatter out across the range, gathering in every animal, and finally concentrating the property of perhaps a dozen prominent stock growers in one immense, excited herd. Passing near the ranches of respective owners, the animals are halted in a convenient location, and part of the cow-boys hold the mass while others ride through it, single out the "brand," or animal, belonging to the adjacent range or ranch, and separate it from the main body of cattle until none of that description are to be found. Moving along to the next man's range, the scene is repeated, and so continued until the cattle are divided. Then young stock is branded, marketable stock sometimes disposed of, and the cattle are again allowed their freedom. Five or ten thousand head are thus frequently gathered together, and during the round-up season men "camp out," wagons following the herd with provisions, blankets, etc. Our artist has given a very fair representation of the "cutting out" scene on another page.<sup>3</sup>*

The majority of Wyoming's cowboys originally hailed from Texas, as did the longhorn cattle they pushed north to the railheads and grasslands of Wyoming. Most were Anglos who found the postbellum South, especially Texas, an uncertain place for their futures. But many were also Hispanic punchers and Blacks seeking work and a change of terrain.<sup>4</sup>

Wyoming became an attractive spot for cattle raising in the early 1870s, once the transcontinental railroad assured a means of marketing the beef. At first the southern plains of the Territory provided the only usable grasslands, the northern reaches being reserved until 1876 for Indian habitation. With the treaty signed that year at the Red Cloud Agency (northwestern Nebraska), a vast area north of the Platte River was opened to the burgeoning cattle industry.<sup>5</sup>

The first cattlemen, who were raisers rather than herders, were not drovers who pushed cattle north to Wyoming but rather merchants, freighters and miners from southern Wyoming towns who recognized an opportunity develop-

2. Robert E. Strahorn, *Hand-Book of Wyoming and Guide to the Black Hills and Big Horn Regions for Citizen, Emigrant and Tourist* (Cheyenne: Knight & Leonard, 1877), pp. 27-35.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-35.

4. Herbert O. Brayer, "The L7 Ranches," *Annals of Wyoming* 15 no.1 (January 1943): 20.

5. David Dary, *Cowboy Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), pp. 239-242.

ing in those years. They observed that Texas cattle could successfully winter on Wyoming's prairies and, in fact, could flourish there. By the end of the decade the most enterprising cowboys began to settle in as stockmen, first by obtaining a few cows of their own and then gradually acquiring land, or by "repping" for a larger outfit owned by eastern or European interests.

ot all observers saw Wyoming as a buffalo grass bonanza. An Englishman, S. Nugent Townshend, wrote in 1879 of Wyoming as "a state where the bare mention of agriculture raises a laugh of derision. Arizona is a blooming garden as compared with it..."<sup>6</sup> Yet it was immensely attractive and productive. A cross-country train traveler ten years earlier, W. R. Rae, painted a much rosier picture.

*At Laramie City, a halt of thirty minutes is made, and a good meal is provided for the hungry passengers. We are now in the midst of the Laramie plains, reputed to be the finest grazing land in this part of the Continent. Here thousands of buffaloes used to feed and wax fat. With the exception of Texas, no place can be found where cattle may be fattened at a less cost.*<sup>7</sup>

Wyoming's cattle, which numbered about 10,000 in 1871, could be counted in the hundreds of thousands ten years later. By 1884 one of Wyoming's roundups alone took six months and involved some 400,000 cattle.<sup>8</sup>

Almost half of the cowboys who came up the trail from Texas remained in Wyoming to ply their trade or become stockmen or both. Books have been written about the most celebrated of the cowboys who matured into influential cattlemen. Addison Spough came north in 1874, stayed around as a cowboy, earned a sufficient reputation to be appointed as one of the range detectives for the Wyoming Stock Growers



Association and eventually became an influential rancher. The OW Ranch on Lance Creek came under his watchful eye, and he ultimately owned two ranches, the Bel Pre and the 77 Ranch near Lusk. John B. Kendrick of Sheridan had a similar story, pushing up the trail from Texas in 1879, then cowboying, range managing, and ranch owning before establishing a distinguished political career as governor and U. S. senator.<sup>9</sup>

Although Texas supplied most of the cowboys and cattle and provided the essential operational format for the business of cattle raising, Wyoming exerted a strong influence on both man and his enterprise. The cooler climate demanded obvious modifications in clothing: woolens replaced cotton, angora chaps were common, and the broad-brimmed Texas sombrero gave way to a narrower brimmed and banded

6. S. Nugent Townshend, *Colorado: Its Agriculture, Stockfeeding, Scenery, and Shooting* (London: 1879), pp. 47-48.

7. W. R. Rae, *Westward By Rail: The New Route to the East* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1871), p. 91.

8. Dary, *Cowboy Culture*, p. 250.

9. Dary, *Cowboy Culture*, p. 248.

**top: John B. Kendrick on Horseback at OW Ranch, 1895. Photographer unknown.**

WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

**left: A.A. Spough on Horseback. 1883. Photographer unknown. In 1884 Spough was appointed foreman of the largest roundup in Wyoming history. Cowboys gathered over 400,000 cattle in six weeks.**

WYOMING STATE MUSEUM





*Cutting out the Calves.—*

AMON CARTER MUSEUM LIBRARY, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Detail from *A Spring "Round-Up" in Montana*. Wood engraving from a photograph by L.A. Huffman in *Harper's Weekly*, May 15, 1886.

version that stayed on better in the wind. Texas-style saddles underwent change to accommodate Wyoming tastes. By the 1880s the city of Cheyenne alone boasted of more than a dozen saddle makers, each producing his own version of a transformed, Texas-style saddle known in those northern reaches as the "Cheyenne saddle." Even the cattle changed over time. Texas longhorns were bred with, and eventually replaced by, other shorter horned varieties brought in from Kentucky and elsewhere, primarily because they were gentler, beefier, and more adaptable to the Wyoming terrain and climate.

By the mid-1880s Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska had enacted laws which prohibited southern cattle from moving north across their boundaries. Thus ended the great Texas drives and the migrant nature of the Wyoming cattle business. By that time also shorthorn introduction had gentled the herds to a state of relative domesticity. After the tragically severe winters of the mid-1880s, especially 1886-87, the open range was increasingly closed off by fencing and large tracks were broken up by small ranch operations.

For those close to the business, such transformations were immediately apparent. Charlie Siringo, famous Texas cowboy and author, commented in the early 1880s that one of these factors alone, the proliferation of shorthorn stock, had caused a fundamental change both in the cowboy's work and the way the cowboy was perceived.

*attle are becoming so tame, from being bred up with short horns, that it requires very little skill and knowledge to be a cowboy. I believe the day is not far distant when cowboys will be armed with prod-poles to punch the cattle out of their way—instead of fire-arms. Messrs. Colt and Winchester will then have to go out of business or else emigrate to "Arkansaw" and open up prod-pole factories.<sup>10</sup>*

10. Quote attributed to Charles A. Siringo in 1882. See Douglas Branch, *The Cowboy and His Interpreters* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1961), p. 112.

By the middle of the next decade most observers had concluded that the transitory cowboy in Wyoming and elsewhere on the plains was gone. Cattle trails by then were completely closed, the ten million cattle and one million horses which had trodden those dusty paths north were now history and the cowboy, according to one of his most astute chroniclers, Douglas Branch, had come to an end "as a craftsman and gentleman. Thereafter he was merely an employee of 'a corporation operating for profit.'"<sup>11</sup>

It was during that ten-year period, from 1885-1895, that the image of the cowboy underwent a fundamental metamorphosis. As the cowboy's actual functions became more and more routine, mundane and ordered, his historic image was regarded as increasingly picturesque, adventurous and noble. His popular image was transmogrified from one of ordinary laborer—usually frolicking, free and fun-loving as portrayed by *Harper's Weekly* illustrator Rufus F. Zogbaum, to one of mythic American hero.<sup>12</sup> The new image proved to have a fictional veil so impervious that not until the 1920s in historian Philip Ashton Rollins' book, *The Cowboy*, was the absurdity of the caricature revealed.<sup>13</sup> It developed into a popular inclination of such pervasive proportions that even today, a century later, our image of the cowboy and the state which calls itself the "Cowboy State" are painted with 19th century brushes and clouded by 19th century perceptions. Despite the efforts of Rollins and subsequent students of the cowboy to debunk the myth, to show the "rarely picturesque, usually shabby, unlettered, loyal, hard-riding, tireless and fearless cow-puncher as he really was," the iconic mantle perseveres.<sup>14</sup>

11. *Ibid.*, p.69.

12. See Rufus F. Zogbaum, "A Day's 'Drive' with Montana Cow-boys," *Harper's Weekly* 71 (July 1885): 188-193.

13. Philip Ashton Rollins, *The Cowboy: An Unconventional History of Civilization on the Old-Time Cattle Range* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 40-41.

14. Branch, *The Cowboy and His Interpreters*, p. iii.



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*Cutting Out.* ca. 1885. Charles Kirkland photograph.

What caused that image to be transformed from one of reality to one of myth? How did Wyoming's cowboys fit the picture? And how was Wyoming's landscape conducive to the creation of mythic figures? The answers lie in the pens and brushes of writers and painters who looked into Wyoming from outside during the 1880s and 1890s and created a figure and a landscape for an eastern audience. It was essentially an image that the East wanted to see and that the West, in turn, gradually came to believe itself.

As mentioned previously, the early renderings of Wyoming cowboy life, both literary and pictorial, were essentially genre treatments. The cowboy was regarded as a drover or herdsman whose relatively exotic environment and grueling, sometimes grim, journey from Texas separated him from his eastern or midwestern counterpart but he was not elevated particularly in stature. When cowboys described themselves they created colorful but far from mythic self-portraits. Baylis John Fletcher, a Texas cowboy who arrived in Cheyenne in 1879, was exemplary in his writing,

*After five months of rough life on the trail, we Texas cowboys, deprived as we had been of all the conveniences and comforts of civilization, were a picturesque squad as we rode into Cheyenne. Our neglected and dilapidated clothes were worn and patched, our hair was uncut, and our faces unshaven. We presented no particularly novel sight to the natives, however, as they were accustomed to the arrival of travel-worn cowboys.<sup>15</sup>*

Asperity was added to the cowboy's ragtag, vagabond image and he gained some national attention when President Chester Arthur read a special message to Congress in

1882 about the cowboy's rowdy behavior in certain southwestern towns. The president roundly condemned such behavior since it reflected poorly on the perpetrators as well as the communities which reportedly suffered the depredations. One Cheyenne newspaper that year observed that "morally, as a class, they are foulmouthed, blasphemous, drunken, lecherous, utterly corrupt."<sup>16</sup> Another Cheyenne newspaper responded self-defensively and with a sigh of relief at the president's suggestion that military forces be permitted to assist the territorial authorities in the maintenance of order.



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*Even Cheyenne is, in some quarters of the globe, credited with an outlaw element, when, in truth, this city is as far advanced in safety and culture as cities of the east. Wyoming has therefore, as good reason to be gratified with the course of the president as Arizona and New Mexico.<sup>17</sup>*

While the cowboy received national exposure in the press for his raucous and occasionally violent behavior, during the decade of the eighties he also retained his status as a somewhat colorful, romantic and vigorous figure. An article "The Powder River Round-up," which appeared in *Harper's Weekly* in 1886, pictured the cowboy as the "prominent character of the country" who "dashes to and fro on his spirited mustang, performing the various duties of his vocation." Wyoming photographer Charles D. Kirkland recorded similar scenes near Cheyenne in the mid-1880s. In contrast to President Arthur's claims the article suggested:

*These men present a decidedly picturesque, not to say*

16. "The Cow-Boys of the Western Plains and Their Horses," *The Cheyenne Daily Leader*, 3 October 1882, p. 4. The story evidently originated in the *Providence Journal*.

17. "Generous Cowboys," *Denver Republican*, 28 December 1898.

15. Baylis John Fletcher, *Up the Trail in '79* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p. 62.

...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...

There were many who, even as early as the 1870s, felt that discussions of cowboy depredations and their supposed weakness of moral fiber were fabricated primarily by easterners for eastern tastes. Robert Strahorn commented in his 1877 *Hand-book of Wyoming* that eastern writers arrived in the West with preconceived notions of its rude character.

...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...

Perhaps easterners had acquired an appetite for such interpretations from James Fenimore Cooper's writings or the ubiquitous dime novels, with or without cowboy themes. In an effort to counteract such profane portraits, those who admired the cowboy set out to picture him quite differently, to enhance his image by somehow applying the embellishment of virtue to the otherwise plain cloth of cowboy character. As a result, he began to take on qualities of extraordinary physical prowess, special endowments of wit and humor and chivalrous traits which were equated with those of the knights of old. No less lofty a supporter than Theodore Roosevelt defended the cowboy's character in the eighties, claiming rough edges were environmentally justifiable.

From the late 1860s to the early 1880s western newspapers ran numerous articles with titles like "Cowboys and Their Slanderers" and "False Notions of Western Character."<sup>21</sup> By 1890 a dual myth had begun to evolve, one apparently responsive to eastern tastes for violent and crude horsemen of the plains who possessed at least a streak of the criminal impulse that President Arthur had denounced, and the other an apologist's reaction, which depicted the cowboy as a rough but sincere Galahad of the prairies. As the century came to a close those two forces settled firmly into place. The cowboy had received his stereotype in pictures and in prose.

Historian Robert Hine aptly described one stereotypical version of the cowboy in his book *The American West: An Interpretive History*.

He was like the noble knight of old at the court of Camelot



...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...  
 ...and the cowboy... *chaparejos*... and their...

The obverse stereotype might be applied to those cowboys who illegally fixed their brands to mavericks or took to the "outlaw trail" in even more nefarious ways such as horse stealing. Douglas Branch in his 1926 book on *The Cowboy and His Interpreters* expanded on that iniquitous behavior.

In the late eighties the more daring of the lawless element that drifted into Wyoming (choosing between two careers decided that whereas rustling cattle meant brand-altering and slow moving horses could be moved swiftly and in large bands to some hiding place where they might wait comfortably for a purchaser. How many horses travelled over this Outlaw Trail has never been known but old timers in the Wind River country tell of seeing two hundred go past in a single band—records Frederick Becholdt. In Wyoming by 1890, the horse-rustlers who harassed the big stockmen had the secret support of the small cattlemen, and it was almost impossible to get a jury to convict.<sup>22</sup>

Two artists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were particularly responsible for extending the cowboy's mythic image into the public conscience. One, Frederic Remington, was a sculptor, writer and painter. The other, Owen Wister, was a writer. They met in Wyoming in 1893 and agreed to collaborate on an illustrated article, "The Evolution of the Cow-Puncher," which would reveal in word and picture the ontogeny of the cowboy hero.<sup>23</sup> Wister's view was essentially romantic and he developed a sentimental, knightly, Anglo-Saxon character type. Remington's was no less romantic but was informed by visions of cultural fatalism and Darwinian notions of survival of the fittest. Wister's view coincided with Hine's "troubadour" and was amply portrayed in *The Last Cavalier*, the final Remington illustration in the article. Remington's view is best expressed in another illustration from the same article, *The Fall of the Cowboy*.<sup>24</sup> In the latter painting the cowboy has dismounted to serve the

18. "The Powder River Round-up," *Harper's Weekly* 30, no.1534 (15 May 1886): 318.  
 19. Strahorn, *Hand-Book of Wyoming*, p. 105. See similar comments ten years later in William T. Hornaday, "The Cowboys of the Northwest," *The Cosmopolitan* 2 (September 1886-February 1887): 219; also, Reuben B. Mullins, *Pulling Leather: Being the Early Recollections of a Cowboy on the Wyoming Range, 1884-1889* (Glendo, Wyoming: High Plains Press, 1988), pp.98-99.  
 20. *Lis Animas (Colorado) Leader*, June 26, 1869. See Clifford P. Westermeier, "The Cowboy - His Pristine Image," *South Dakota History* 8, no.1 (Winter 1977): 5.  
 21. Robert V. Hine, *The American West: An Interpretive History* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), p. 131.  
 22. Branch, *The Cowboy and His Interpreters*, pp. 46-48.  
 23. Owen Wister, "The Evolution of the Cow-Puncher," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 91 (September 1895): 602-617.  
 24. For a thorough discussion of the differences between Wister's and Remington's interpretations of the cowboy, see Ben Merchant Vorpahl, *My Dear Wister: The Frederic Remington-Owen Wister Letters* (Palo Alto: American West Publishing Company, 1972), pp.33-96; also, A. Edward White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 125.

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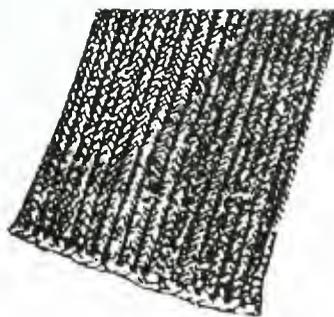
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**top: *The Last Cavalier*. 1895. Frederic Remington. Oil on canvas, 23" x 35."**

**bottom: *The Fall of the Cowboy*. 1895. Frederic Remington. Oil on canvas, 25" x 35."**

conventions of civilization by opening a fence gate. Barbed wire, another reference to civilization, cuts across the previously free open range. The painting's bleak tones suggest the winter of 1886-87 when vast herds of cattle succumbed to weather's fury, a harbinger of the demise of both the open range cattle industry and the first phase, at least, of cowboy history.

Wister went on to develop the cowboy character to its highest form in his novel about a nameless Wyoming cowboy, *The Virginian*, published in 1901. It is a romance story devoid of reference to ranch work or cattle in which the hero,

epic in form and burdened with a full suit of metaphorical knightly leather armor, succumbs to the wiles of Molly Wood, the manifestation of civilization disguised as a Vermont schoolmarm. It was an image which became common fare for the next generation of western writers and illustrators,

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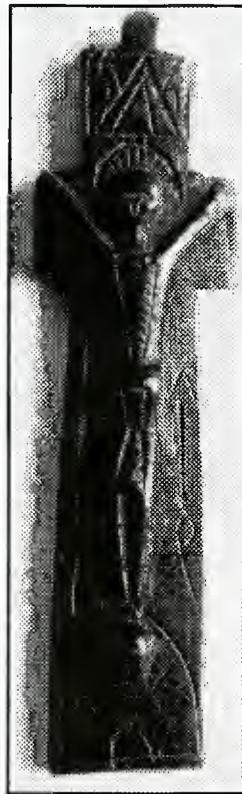
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*Stray Man Heads Home, 1928.* William Henry David Koerner. Oil on canvas, 29" x 41."

especially those influenced by Howard Pyle and the traditions of his Brandywine School. An extension of the Wister prototype may be readily seen in the work of Pyle's students who chose western and cowboy subjects.<sup>25</sup> Of note were Horace Ivory, N. C. Wyeth and W. H. D. Koerner. In Koerner's 1928 illustration, *They Stood There Watching Him Move Across the Range*, Wister's character is essentially extended forward in time. The laconic cowboy, Bud Crandall, plods proudly and sunlit across the canvas. He is the main figure in a short story by Hal. G. Everts which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*.<sup>26</sup> His mission in life is to follow a school teacher from one Wyoming town to another until she ultimately relents and agrees to marry him. They would soon settle down on a small ranch, domesticated and servants to a bank loan.

Although such imagery was popular, it did not ultimately provide the armature around which the real lasting stereotype of the cowboy was molded. That was left to Remington who refused to embrace Wister's prototype, preferring instead to fashion his own. In its most emblematic form, Remington's cowboy appeared as a bronze statue in

1895, the same year that his collaborative article with Wister was published. The statue was simply titled *The Broncho Buster*. It showed that Remington's cowboy was first and foremost a horseman whose skill at equestrian craft enabled him to control the wild forces of the bucking steed below. Symbolically, that horseman was taming the West rather than being tamed by some external influence. It was a macho statement and one which has persisted to the present day far more forcefully than Wister's vision. Yet in a way they both revealed the same irony: that the cowboy, whether being tamed or doing the taming, was ultimately a victim. In Wister's case, the cowboy lay victim to the external forces of civilization...of learning, civility and culture. For Remington, the cowboy was a victim of his own heroic nature. The wild spirit, as the cowboy would demonstrate, could be vanquished with sufficient manly adroitness, and ultimately civilization's exertions against that wild spirit would prevail. Once civilization had won over the wild spirit, the cowboy's skills and heroics would no longer be needed and he would pass into the pages of history.

another element of the mythic cowboy which Wister and Remington shared has pervaded the popular interpreta-

25. See Kirsten H. Powell, "Cowboy Knights and Prairie Madonnas: American Illustration of the Plains and Pre-Raphaelite Art," *Great Plains Quarterly* 5, no.1 (Winter 1985): 39-52; also, Michael Olmert, "Points of Origin," *Smithsonian* 5 (November 1984): 212-214; and John L. Cowan, "Knights and Barons of Our Western Empire," *Overland Monthly* 48 (October 1906): 251-256.

26. Hal G. Everts, "Post Office at Dry Fork," *The Saturday Evening Post* 201 (November 3, 1928): 5-7, 71-72, 77-78.

tion of the cowboy. That is violence. In either the bravura of a bronze bronco buster or the chivalry of a knightly Virginian in prose, violent resolution to problems was essential to the late romantic plot just as it reputedly had been to the cowboy code of behavior that President Arthur demurred.

In various forms that combine the historic emblems of past purveyors, the mythic cowboy has entered our own times. The iconography seems a bit tiresome when exposed as such, hackneyed but enduring and cherished well beyond easy explanation. The cowboy is in many minds today- as he was in those of Remington and Wister- laconic, chivalric, physically attractive, adroit, violent, romantic and lonesome. That mythic image may have very little in common with the real cowboy of today, or even with history, but it persists by popular demand. "Why hasn't the stereotype faded away as real cowboys become less and less typical of Western life?" asked writer Wallace Stegner in an *American Heritage* article titled "Who are the Westerners?" He replied, "Because we can't or won't do without it, obviously."<sup>27</sup> So what began as simple observations of simple if somewhat picturesque laborers at work moving cattle to market or raising cattle for profit on Wyoming's ubiquitous buffalo grass ranges, became transcended within a generation into a myth of such captivating strength that it has endured for a century unchanged by either reality or time.

27. Stegner, "Who are the Westerners?," p. 35.



PETER H. HASSRICK (1941-) IS DIRECTOR OF THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER IN CODY, WYOMING. ALTHOUGH HE WAS RAISED IN DENVER HE HAS RESIDED IN CODY SINCE 1976. HASSRICK EARNED A B.A. IN HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, AND AN M.A. IN ART HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER WITH A CONCENTRATION IN NINETEENTH CENTURY

AMERICAN ART. HE HAS CURATED WESTERN ART EXHIBITIONS AND AUTHORED NUMEROUS ART EXHIBITION CATA-



*The Broncho Buster.* ca. 1895. Frederic Remington. Bronze, cast #21, height 23-3/8," base 7-5/8 x 15-1/2." Gift of G.J. Guthrie Nicholson, Jr. and son in memory of their father/grandfather, G. J. Guthrie Nicholson, rancher at Four Bear, Meeteetse, Wyoming.

LOGS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES. HIS BOOKS INCLUDE: *Frederic Remington* (1973), *The Way West* (1977), *The Rocky Mountains: A Vision for Artists in the Nineteenth Century* (1983), *Treasures of Our West* (1984) AND *Charles Russell* (1989). CURRENTLY HE

IS WRITING A BOOK ABOUT ARTISTS IN YELLOW-STONE. AMONG THE CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES HE HAS UNDERTAKEN ARE THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE WYOMING COUNCIL ON THE ARTS AND THE DIRECTORSHIP OF THE CODY MAIN ST. PROJECT, AND A PARTICIPANT ROLE IN YELLOW-STONE NATIONAL PARK INTERPRETATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. HASSRICK CURRENTLY IS INVOLVED WITH A VARIETY OF NATIONAL ART AND MUSEUM ORGANIZATIONS, IS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT THE UNI-

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VERSITY OF WYOMING, AND IS ON THE PARK COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL. HE IS MARRIED TO ELIZABETH WHITNEY DRAKE, WHO IS ACTIVE IN NEWS REPORTING AND WOMEN'S ISSUES. THE COUPLE HAS TWO CHILDREN, PHILIP AND CHARLES. PETER AND BUZZY LIVE IN CODY AND PARTICIPATE IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SKIING, HIKING, FISHING AND RIDING.

**Photographs, p. 8:** *Killing Time Until the Roundup Ride Starts*, W.J. CARPENTER PHOTO, 1918, CARRIGEN COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM; p.9, left: *unidentified cowboy*, WILLIAM WALKER PHOTO, N.D. WYOMING STATE MUSEUM; center: *Clayton Danks*, J.E. STIMSON PHOTO, 1912, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM; right: *Dan Etbauer and admirer*, MARK JUNGE PHOTO, 1990, WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

# Writers in Judgment: Historiography of the Johnson

by John D. McDermott



## THE BACKGROUND

The Johnson County War is famous in the history of the American West as a violent manifestation of the cataclysmic change in the late nineteenth century from open-range cattle raising to controlled grazing and settled agriculture. Nineteen ninety-two marked the 100th anniversary of the armed conflict between big cattlemen and those who threatened their traditional way of life, and the perspective of a century provides the opportunity to view the conflict in more objective terms and to evaluate the writings of participants and observers with the benefit of modern scholarship and the recent discovery of additional contemporary materials.

The story of the Johnson County War is familiar to Wyomingites. Its most dramatic episode began following conclusion of the annual meeting of the Wyoming Stockgrowers Association on April 5, 1892 when 46 vigilantes, led by Frank Wolcott and Frank Canton, left Cheyenne aboard a special Union Pacific train for Casper. In the group were 22 hired gunmen from

Texas and Idaho. The so-called *Invaders* surprised and shot to death Nick Ray and Nate Champion near present-day Kaycee. Two hundred citizens of Johnson County led by its sheriff surrounded the gunmen at the TA Ranch twelve miles south of Buffalo. Arrival of a troop of cavalry ended the foray, but ill-feelings and occasional acts of violence continued for years thereafter.

Perhaps what is most lacking in early works that deal with the Johnson County War is what the historians call "context," a consideration of those general factors at work in the world and in the particular society of the time that influenced and shaped the actions taken. In retrospect, we can see that the last years of the nineteenth century were a time of ferment and change. The era gave rise to captains of industry, whose skills led to phenomenal growth in manufacturing and commerce and whose excesses fostered violent retaliation and the rise of the labor movement. In the broad view one can understand the half-century following the Civil War as both the culmi-

This page: Asa Mercer. Author of *Banditti of the Plains*, n.d.

WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

Opposite: Frontispiece, *Banditti of the Plains*. Published and written by Asa S. Mercer, the book was the bane of big cattlemen. According to Historian T.A. Larson, first editions (1894) of this rare book sold for \$800 in 1974.

WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

# County

nation of the economic philosophy of *laissez faire* and the reaction against it.<sup>1</sup>

As historian Milton Rugoff has noted, it was also an age of lynchings, subjugation of Indians, and discrimination against Irish, Chinese, Jews and others. But occurring at the same time was freedom for slaves and the opening of gates to the oppressed and downtrodden.<sup>2</sup> Rugoff characterizes the period as one of "acute contradictions," and looking back over the last half of the nineteenth century it does appear that it was a jousting field for extremes, a time of vigorous, often violent, testing in a rush to find commonality. Violence gained the upper hand in the struggle between capital and labor, in Indian relations, in the fratricidal confrontation of Union and Confederate forces, and in the meeting of Old World aristocracy and burgeoning populist democracy.

George T. Watkins III, in a 1961 article on the Johnson County War in *Pacific North-westerner*, labeled the conflict between concentrated power and the masses seeking

empowerment as an effort at defining the word "democracy." The struggle was between early nineteenth century romantic individualism, nurtured by Emerson and Thoreau, and two democratic ideas: first, that individual and personal rights were more important than property rights; and second, that when necessary the welfare of the individual must be subordinated to the welfare of the group. According to Watkins,

*It was inevitable that the cattlemen, personification of American Romantic Idealistic Individualism, and the grangers and tradesmen, personification of the growing spirit of American Democracy should eventually square off for a showdown fight.*<sup>3</sup>

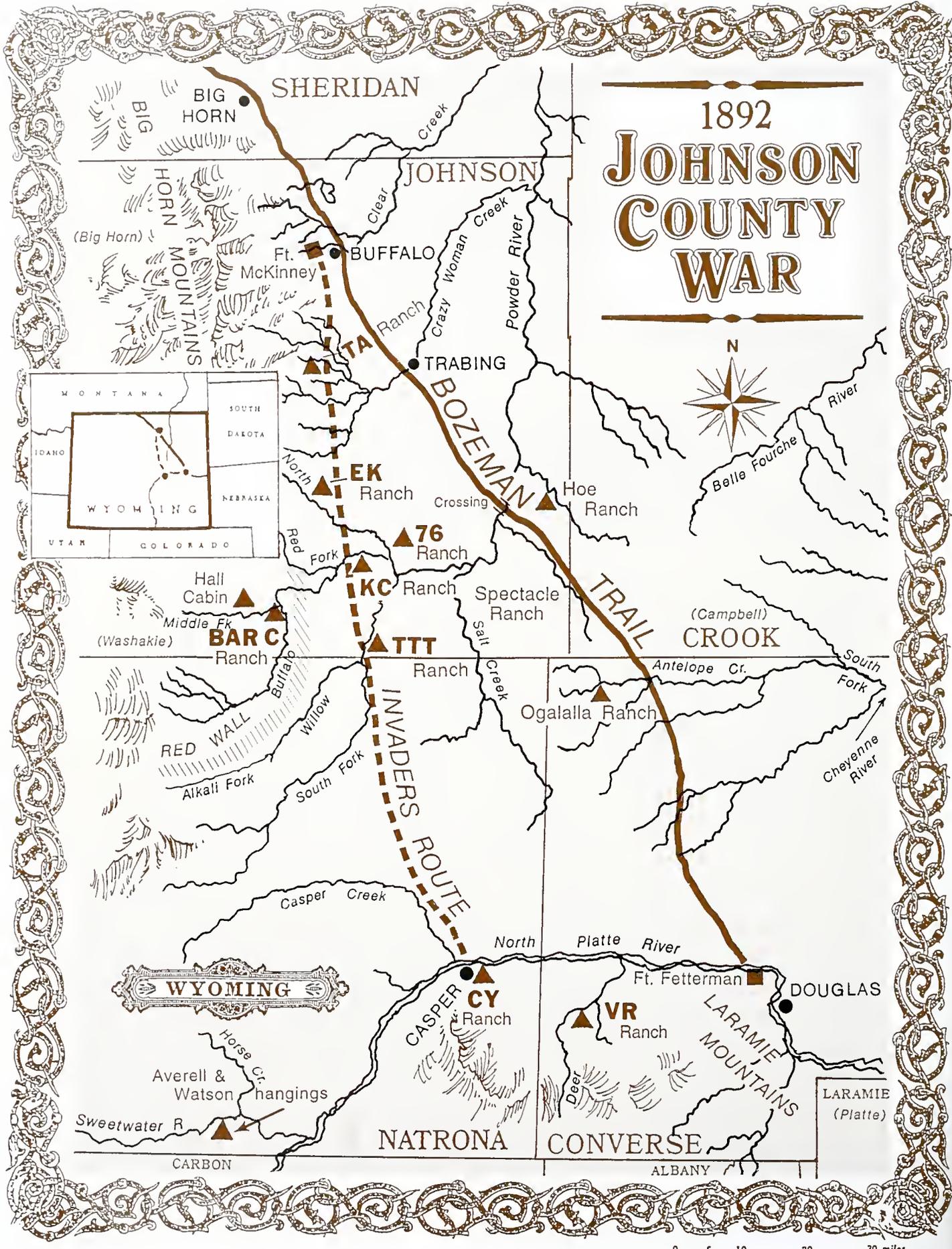
1. Harold Underwood Faulkner, *American Economic History* 5th ed. (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1943), p. 430.
2. Milton Rugoff, *America's Gilded Age: Intimate Portraits for an Era of Extravagance and Change, 1850-1890* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989), pp. 349-50.
3. George T. Watkins III, "Johnson County War," *Pacific North-westerner* 5 (Spring 1961): 1.

THE  
Banditti of the Plains

— OR THE —  
Cattlemen's Invasion of Wyoming in 1892

[THE CROWNING INFAMY OF THE AGES.]

By A. S. MERCER.



# 1892 JOHNSON COUNTY WAR



It is true that property rights were a causal factor in the Johnson County War, and that the system of land laws in the United States and England were also in part responsible. In 1862 Congress passed the Homestead Act, making it possible to file on 160 acres for \$1.25 per acre. This was sufficient for a man who wanted to make his living farming in the East, but it was not adequate for a man who wished to raise cattle in an arid land where thirty acres might support one animal. Consequently, Northern Plains entrepreneurs moved cattle onto the public domain to find sufficient pasturage. This method served until other settlers followed and began to file on what had been the open range. As might be expected, these agriculturalists chose claims closest to water and began fencing off their properties, thus disabling the old system.

From the perspective of one hundred years it is clear that the passage of federal land laws unsuitable for the Great Plains environment led unalterably to confrontation. If the United States government had taken geologist and explorer John Wesley Powell's advice, perhaps conflict could have been avoided. Powell, as director of the Geological and Geographical Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, had recommended in a report on April 21, 1878 that the homestead unit in the West be increased to 2,650 acres. Congress later used the report to support land reform in the twentieth century, but change came too late to affect the violent confrontation of opposing interests in Johnson County.<sup>4</sup>

Strangely enough, the land laws of Great Britain also played a significant part in engendering conflict. In England the law of primogeniture required that the oldest son receive the family estate. This caused male siblings to seek their fortunes elsewhere, and in the 1880s many of them chose to invest in the American cattle business: the Frewens, John Clay, and William Irvine being examples in Johnson County. Coming as they did from a country ruled by limited monarchy and being raised in a class society, these aristocrats had neither the temperament nor background to compromise with frontier settlers or cowboys with long ropes.

Perhaps even more fateful than the attitude of the aristocrat was the frontier attitude toward confrontation. Richard

Maxwell Brown, in his 1991 book, *No Duty to Retreat: Violence and Values in American History and Society*, traces change in the United States concerning the use of violence in settling disputes.<sup>5</sup> Under English common law a person had a legal duty to retreat when threatened with violence. He was justified in responding in self-defense only when cornered. In the view of many Americans this dictum smacked of cowardice and served as a tool to keep the masses in line when confronted by authority. Following westward settlement, state after state saw its highest court approve the doctrine of standing one's ground. Americans, ruled such

authorities as Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, had no duty to retreat. Such injunctions were unsuited to the American mind, given the increased accuracy and firepower of new weapons. Brown also shows how the doctrine of "no duty to retreat" became a force in what he calls the "Western Civil War of Incorporation." "The acceptance of violence resulted in the spawning of bands of Western gunfighters who fought either for or against the consolidation of capital and property. According to Brown those who fought on the side of corporate interests -- expanding banks, railroads and big business -- were usually Republicans and Unionists. Cowboys and independent farmers were often Democrats sympathizing with the Confederacy.<sup>6</sup> In looking back at the Johnson County War one can see that gunplay was almost foreordained. It was part of a national experience that found violent expression not only here but in Cochise County, Arizona; Mussel Slough,



C.D. KIRKLAND, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*Gentlemen Jockeys — Cheyenne Club Cup Race. September 17, 1889. Portrait of members of the Cheyenne Club, the watering hole of the Wyoming's big cattlemen.*

Top row, l to r: Walter S. Gardner, John M. Kuykendall, Thos. B. Adams, Wm. C. Irvine.

Bottom row, l to r: T.W. Brooks, Harry L. Kuykendall, Frederic O. deBillier.

Opposite map by Eileen Skibo

4. John Wesley Powell, *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878). See also Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1931), pp. 353, 498.

5. Richard Maxwell Brown, *No Duty to Retreat: Violence and Values in American History and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

6. *Ibid.*, p.8.

...The  
Johnson County  
War is at once  
a historian's  
dream and  
nightmare.

California and other places. Thus, because existing land and legal statutes did not accommodate the climate, provide for change, or discourage violence as a means of settling disputes, conflict occurred. It was unresponsive public policy and the failure of laws to meet the needs of the time, rather than the violation of them, that made conflict inevitable.

Psychologists and anthropologists note that there are two ways to resolve conflict: by law or warfare. In the case of the

Johnson County War, the method used by corporate powers was to enact laws to stop the practice of mavericking. However, administered rules did not stop the practice or stem the tide of settlement because they did not meet the needs of the majority. As George Watkins put it, the failure of mavericking legislation was "a clear example that in a democracy a law is only so good as the consent of the governed make it."<sup>7</sup> In the end the majority spoke, and the making of a nation continued.

## THE PROBLEM

The Johnson County War is at once a historian's dream and nightmare. It is a dream because sources for writing its history are so plentiful. They abound in literature including books, monographs and newspapers; in thousands of unpublished documents including letters, diaries, memoirs and interviews; and in voluminous archival records including county records, district court files, and reports of the United States Army and the Department of Justice. From the standpoint of narrative history the story is replete with interesting, even charismatic, characters; full of intrigue and scandal in high places; and abundant in dramatic incidents that include accusations, confrontations, escapes, rescues and murders. Here also the historian has the opportunity to apply his methodology: determining frame of reference, evaluating evidence, delineating presuppositions and identifying context.

The Johnson County War is a historian's nightmare for the same reasons. Published and unpublished sources are so voluminous as to be overwhelming. Newspaper sources, in particular, almost defy analysis in one lifetime. Intrigue and scan-

dal usually leave an indistinct paper trail that may be untrustworthy because of falsification of documents to protect the unworthy. And emotion colors eyewitness accounts and reminiscences. The parties involved in the Johnson County War were so polarized that it is nearly impossible to find objective commentators to balance the views of those at the barricades. Added to the problem of judging self-interest in the evaluation of testimony is the obfuscation caused by time. Memories fail, stories grow, and contradictions in testimony motivated by fear are compounded by time and the inherent human need for self-glorification.

What follows is an attempt to make some sense out of the sources, sample them, identify writers whose interpretations greatly impacted public perception of the Johnson County War and its causes, list the major writings produced by spokesmen for both sides, discuss the viewpoints of some twentieth century commentators, and list repositories that contain significant materials where new research might be profitable.

## THE JOURNALISTS

To begin we must deal with the journalists because by and large it is their story, a story of real life drama played out in a panoramic setting—full of prejudice, violence and human failings—the stuff of newspaper headlines and editorial speculation. Two journalists were almost entirely responsible for public perception of the Johnson County War in the nineteenth century: Samuel Traves Clover who ensured that the conflict would become a national media event, and Asa Shinn Mercer who

gave the story coherence and a point of view that remains largely intact after ten decades.

7. George T. Watkins III, "Johnson County War," p. 3.
8. Helena Huntington Smith, *War on Powder River: The History of an Insurrection* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966, reprinted Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 232.
9. Samuel Traves Clover, *On Special Assignment*. (Boston: Lothrop Publishing Company, 1903).
10. *Cheyenne Daily Sun*, April 19, 1892, p.1. The *Sun* was the first Wyoming newspaper to carry the story.

Helen Huntington Smith in her book, *War on Powder River*, wrote of Chicago Herald reporter Samuel Clover:

*Detestable he may have been, but...he can no more be overlooked in telling the Johnson County story than you can overlook a cinder in your eye. He was an early-blooming product of the yellow press, which was shortly to burst into full flower in Chicago and New York and he had all the vices and virtues of his kind; he was unscrupulous and a liar -and he got the story.<sup>8</sup>*

Clover was not new to the Northern Plains. In December, 1890 he covered the Ghost Dance for the *Chicago Herald*, and rode with Captain Edmond Fechet of Fort Yates toward Sitting Bull's cabin when the chief died at the hands of Indian police. No doubt Clover's previous experience helped to win him his forthcoming assignment. In his autobiography, *On Special Assignment*, Clover states that shortly after Christmas, 1891 he heard of the punitive expedition planned by members of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association in a meeting at the Chicago stockyards. In search of possible feature stories on cattle shippers from the West he ran into a Montana acquaintance who gave him the story and Clover's editor decided to send him to Wyoming to follow the lead.<sup>9</sup>

Through his cattlemen connections Clover received permission to join the armed expedition, and on April 5 he boarded a secluded Pullman car in Cheyenne for the trip to Casper and so-called "rustler country." Before it was over Clover had mailed five stories to the *Chicago Herald* beginning with the April 16 issue. The first installment was so sensational that it captured the nation's attention, and the

Johnson County Cattle War was assured a place in Western history.

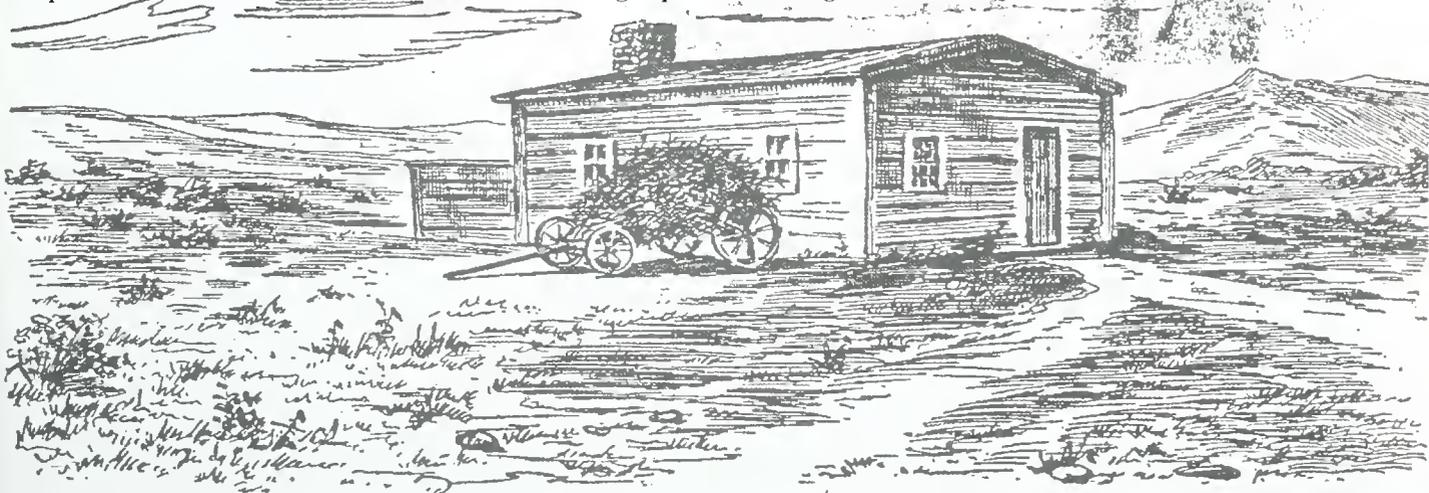
The publication of Nate Champion's diary was the key. The diary's simple clear language, free of prejudice and panic, gave it lasting life:

*They are shooting at the house now. If I had a pair of glasses I believe I would know some of those men. They are coming back. I've got to look out. Well, they have just got through shelling the house again like hail. I heard them splitting wood. I guess they are going to fire the house to-night. I think I will make a break when night comes if live [sic]. Shooting again. I think they will fire the house this time. It's not night yet. The house is all fired. Good bye, boys, if I never see you again....Nathan D. Champion!"*

But it would be days before Clover gave the story to the public. On the road to Buffalo the Invaders learned from a messenger that the citizenry of Buffalo had been warned and were organizing resistance. Clover decided to take his chances with the townsfolk, telling Wolcott and Irvine that he must leave to file his story. Taken to the sheriff's office upon arrival in Buffalo, Clover learned that his old friend Fechet, now a major, was stationed at Fort McKinney. Through Fechet's intervention Clover was released and went to the post where he enjoyed all comforts, while his former compatriots dug in at the TA Ranch until taken into custody by Fort McKinney troops on April 13. Always in the forefront when news was to be made, Clover turned up in the lead party of the military column, thus participating in the second most newsworthy event of the Johnson County War: the cavalry coming to the rescue. "Being in the right place at the right time" was a



**Top: Nate D. Champion.; Middle: Nick Ray.; Bottom: K.C. Ranch. Sketches from *Banditti of the Plains* (Cheyenne: A.S. Mercer, 1894). TOM TISDALE COLLECTION**





TOM TISDALE COLLECTION, CHEYENNE  
**Charles E. Burritt. Mayor of Buffalo  
 the Invasion**

phrase Clover could have invented.

While in Buffalo, Clover kept his direct knowledge of the KC Ranch killings secret, posing as a wandering correspondent who had innocently come to see Wyoming. To keep his cover he forwarded only stories that anyone who happened to be in Buffalo could have written. However, secretly he prepared for the *Herald* copy which he finally sent to a telegraph office in South Dakota, apparently using civilian scouts employed by the army as couriers. The first story broke in the *Herald* on Saturday, April 16, 1892. Described as one of the great eyewitness reports of the century, Clover's account told of the double killing at the KC Ranch. Although datelined Buffalo, April 15, it had really been sent from Edgemont in southwestern South Dakota.

The next day, April 17, Clover was on his way out of Wyoming, safe in the company of Major Fechet and three troops of cavalry which had been given the task of taking the Invaders to Douglas. There Clover took the train to Cheyenne, getting off at Fort Russell. He then caught an eastbound train for Sidney, Nebraska and then an express for Chicago, arriving in his office to receive the plaudits of his peers who had already prepared a headline story recounting his death, just in case.<sup>11</sup>

In his stories Clover was fairly impartial. For example, consider his famous line, "Nate Champion, king of the cattle thieves, and the bravest man in Johnson County was dead."<sup>12</sup> It bestows condemnation and praise in the same sentence. In his April 23 *Herald* article, Clover takes sides, but in a qualified way. He wrote:

*Each side in the trouble has its grievances, but it would seem that the cattlemen were the greatest offenders, inasmuch as they started out in cold blood not only to invade the sheriff's office at Buffalo and kill Sheriff Angus but to wipe out a dozen or more of men who they suspected of cattle stealing.*<sup>13</sup>

Because of his stance against the big cattlemen Clover stated in private correspondence that he was fearful of threats made against him by William Irvine.<sup>14</sup> When urged by Fechet to return to Wyoming to testify against the Invaders, Clover declined, telling John Clay in Chicago that he would not go except by force.<sup>15</sup> Always a survivor and possessing great resilience, Clover put the Johnson County War quickly behind him and went on to a

successful reporting and publishing career. He died in Los Angeles in 1929. In a letter to Historian Grace Hebard written on January 1, 1914, William Irvine noted that he had read Clover's autobiography with the comment that the author "was very careful to blow his own horn," and left the reader dangling with the comment, "I could tell you a number of things about Samuel none of which appeared in his book."<sup>16</sup>

The second newspaperman to have a lasting impact on public perception of the Johnson County War was publisher Asa Shinn Mercer. He was a man of many talents who possessed a flair for the dramatic and exuded personal magnetism. He was an exasperation to some, being very predictable and often motivated as much by self-interest as professed idealism. A relative by marriage and a man who knew him from childhood, Clarence B. Bagley, had this to say of him in 1906:

*Mr. Mercer is the incarnation of Colonel Sellers. I have never been able to rid myself of a liking for him, though he has given me and so many of my relatives and friends cause for bitterness toward him. Then as we grow older we grow more tolerant.... If I should go to Wyoming I should go and visit him if I had to take a buckboard ride of a hundred miles to reach him.*<sup>17</sup>

11. Smith, *War on Powder River*, pp. 232-33, 241.
12. *Chicago Herald*, April 16, 1892, p.1.
13. *Chicago Herald*, 23 April 1892, p.1.
14. Herbert O. Brayer, "Letter from Samuel Traves Clover to Henry A. Blair, His Chicago Sponsor, May 15, 1892," *Chicago Westerners Brand Book* 9, no.12 (February 1953):89-90.
15. "Letter from Clay, August 9, 1892 to Henry G. Hay," *Henry G. Hay Collection*, American Heritage Center (AHC), Laramie, Wyoming.
16. "Letter from Irvine, January 1, 1914 to Hebard," *File B-Ir8-wc*, AHC.
17. "Letter from Clarence B. Bagley, January 3, 1906 to Julia H. Emery," *Asa Shinn Mercer Vertical File*, Historical Research Unit (HR), Wyoming Department of Commerce, Cheyenne. The reference to Colonel Sellers comes from Mark Twain, and Charles Dudley Warner's novel, *The Gilded Age*, which features Sellers as a charming scoundrel.
18. *Northwestern Live Stock Journal* editorial quoted in *Laramie Boomerang*, 31 August 1889. Mercer took a different view in *Banditti of the Plains, or the Cattlemen's Invasion of Wyoming in 1892, The Crowning Infamy of the Ages* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), pp. 18-20.
19. *Northwestern Live Stock Journal*, 8 July 1892.

Born at Princeton, Illinois on June 6, 1839, Mercer migrated in 1861 to the Territory of Washington, where he became at age 22 the first president of the University of Washington. As a territorial senator (1863-1865) and as Territorial Colonist (1865-1867), he became famous as the man who brought 57 marriageable women from the East Coast to the arms of willing bachelors on Puget Sound. After managing a New York to Portland, Oregon steamer line from 1869 to 1876, he moved to Texas where he was owner and publisher of five newspapers. In 1883 he settled in Wyoming, becoming the editor of *Northwestern Live Stock Journal* in Cheyenne.

As the editor of this newspaper Mercer supported the position of Wyoming's large cattlemen whose advertising filled his pages. In 1889, for example, he condoned the hanging of Jim Averell and Ella "Cattle Kate" Watson, declaring in an editorial:

*There is but one remedy, and that is a freer use of the hanging noose. Cattle owners should organize and not disband until a hundred rustlers were left ornamenting the trees or telegraph poles of the territory. The*

*hanging of two culprits merely acts as a stimulus to the thieves. Hang a hundred and the balance will reform or quit the country. Let the good work go on and lose no time about it.*<sup>18</sup>

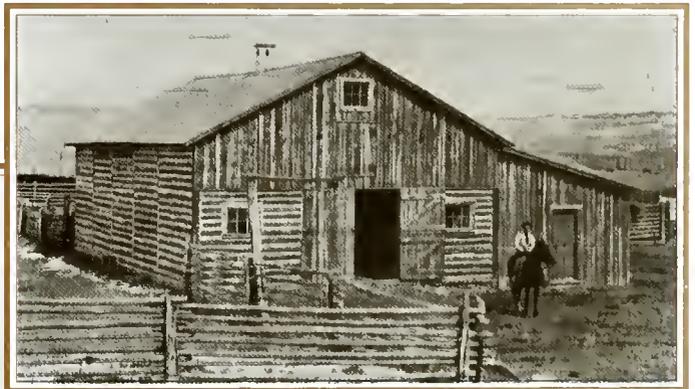
Soon, however, he was to change his allegiance and his rhetoric, opposing the big cattlemen as vigorously as he had supported them. Mercer explained the beginning of his disaffection in an editorial in the *Live Stock Journal* on July 8, 1892. He recounted that after he had offered to set bail for E. H. Kimball, editor of the *Douglas Graphic* and "a brother quill driver" who had been arrested in June, 1892 on the charge of libeling the cattlemen, his former patrons had withdrawn their advertising.<sup>19</sup> At least one historian has suggested that Mercer's subsequent change of heart was motivated by financial difficulty and a switch in political allegiance from Republican to Democrat in a calculated attempt at wresting new patronage.<sup>20</sup> A rival newspaper, *The Cheyenne Sun*, suggested an ul-

**Top: Barn on the TA Ranch. 1892. Where the Invaders came under attack by a local posse and were rescued by United States Army troops from Fort McKinney. Barn and ranch buildings have been preserved and are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.**

J.E. STIMSON COLLECTION,  
WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

**Bottom: Invaders. Group portrait taken apparently at Fort D.A. Russell, Cheyenne. 1892.**

J.E. STIMSON COLLECTION,  
WYOMING STATE MUSEUM



terior motive when it asked,

*For the past five years the editor of the Live Stock Journal has advocated the shooting down of rustlers, calling them "human wolves." Did he do this solely because the stockmen published their brands in his paper?"<sup>21</sup>*

Mercer responded:

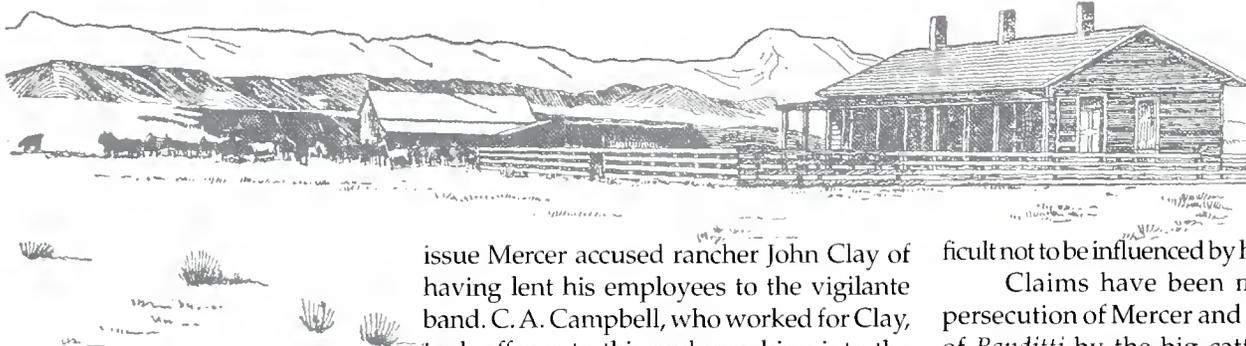
*These are war times. There can be no fence riding. If your sympathies are with the constitution breakers and murderers, get into the republican ranks where you belong. This is the party of freebooters, land grabbers, and millionaires, and you will feel at home with them from the start. They are your kind of people.<sup>22</sup>*

The switch in sides had its physical consequences as well. In his August 23, 1892

*Crowning Infamy of the Ages.*<sup>23</sup>

This little book remains in print after nearly a century, available in the Western Frontier Library edition published by the University of Oklahoma Press. *The Banditti of the Plains* leaves little doubt as to who was at fault. The Invaders are presented as foul villains, dastardly caitiffs intent upon exterminating the honest settlers of Johnson County. Never one to mince words, Mercer had this to say of the cattlemen's raid:

*The invasion of the state of Wyoming by a band of cutthroats and hired assassins in April, 1892, was the crowning infamy of the ages. Nothing as cold-blooded, so brutal, so bold and yet so cowardly was ever before recorded in the annals of the world's history.<sup>24</sup>*



*View of the "TA" Ranch - Photographed by E.E. Mills, Buffalo, Wyo. From Banditti of the Plains*

TOM TISDALE COLLECTION

issue Mercer accused rancher John Clay of having lent his employees to the vigilante band. C. A. Campbell, who worked for Clay, took offense to this and marching into the newspaper office demanded a retraction, finally hitting Mercer, breaking his glasses and causing deep facial cuts.

Mercer's battle with former clients accelerated when he published George Dunning's confession on October 14. Dunning was one of the Invaders who had joined the party, so he claimed, to warn the intended victims. Previously he had been a small stockraiser and handyman in Idaho. As the result of the confession and other revelations implicating state and federal officials in the debacle, the Democratic party in Wyoming elected a governor and congressman in 1892 and gained the balance of power in the Legislature. As a reward Mercer was appointed statistical agent for the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. His newspaper, renamed the *Wyoming Democrat*, did not fare as well as expected, expiring in the summer of 1893. That winter Mercer worked as the Cheyenne correspondent for Denver's *Rocky Mountain News* and began writing his famous expose', *Banditti of the Plains*, or the *Cattlemen's Invasion of Wyoming in 1892*, *The*

So skillful was Mercer in his work that those uninterested writers who followed him found it dif-

ficult not to be influenced by his point of view.<sup>25</sup>

Claims have been made about the persecution of Mercer and the suppression of *Banditti* by the big cattlemen, and accounts of jailings and burnings have been given. However, Mercer's oldest son wrote to State Historian Lola Homsher many years later:

*Father's book was never suppressed by court injunction, nor was he ever jailed.... It is correct that the cattlemen did all in their power to suppress the book. They got possession of a large number and destroyed them. I peddled his book over a portion of the State and sold a lot of them.<sup>26</sup>*

Mercer served as a commissioner to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and in 1895 settled in the Paint Rock Creek Valley near Hyattville, Wyoming where he became a cattle rancher and pursued many other interests. As president of the Valley Development Company of Basin, Wyoming dealing in oil field and mining investments, he maintained offices at the Monadnock Building in Chicago. He traveled extensively and appears to have lived life to the fullest. He died on August 10, 1917 at the age of 78 in Buffalo, Wyoming at the home of his daughter, Dorothy Webb.<sup>27</sup>

The best analysis of the many legal complexities of the Johnson County War comes to us from the pen of Frank B. Crosthwaite, an investigator for the U. S. Department of Justice who was sent to Wyoming in late September, 1892 to examine charges against Cheyenne's U. S. Marshal Joseph Rankin, who was cited for cowardice and failure to perform his duty.

Following the failure of the expedition to eliminate the opposition, the big cattlemen took another approach, obtaining an injunction prohibiting an independent roundup in Johnson County.

After the murder on May 10, 1892 of George R. Wellman, who had been appointed U. S. Deputy Marshal to help enforce the ruling, they were successful in getting U. S. Department of Justice Commissioner Edmund J. Churchill in Cheyenne to issue warrants for the arrest of 23 men in Johnson County for "conspiracy to interfere with the rights and privileges of citizens, under the constitution and laws of the United States, and other charges." When Rankin refused to leave for Johnson County he became the subject of an investigation, and Crosthwaite received the assignment. Crosthwaite's twenty-page report, including 180 pages of Rankin's official correspondence and statements from those interviewed, are found in the National Archives in Washington, D. C.<sup>20</sup>

As a preliminary, Crosthwaite described his version of the Johnson County War and noted who was at fault stating, for example, that he was "perfectly satisfied that Johnson County was, at that time, infested with a band of desperate men who had no regard for human life or laws of the land," and that "while cattle owners frequently sought redress in local courts ...through a feeling of sympathy or fear of

the results, it was almost impossible to get a jury to convict a man for stealing cattle."<sup>29</sup> He goes on to state:

*whatever may have been their grievances, the cattle owners ...organized a band of men ...and unlawfully invaded Johnson County with this force ...for the express purpose, as they do not hesitate to say, of driving the thieves out of the country, or killing them.*<sup>30</sup>

After much analysis Crosthwaite concluded his report on Rankin's conduct, which he believed was justified in view of the general state of alarm that prevailed in Johnson County, by stating that in his opinion

*a point was stretched to bring this matter within Federal jurisdiction for the purpose of utilizing and securing the benefits to the cattle owners the strong arm of the Federal government, with a view to accomplishing thereby what had been attempted by the unlawful invasion, but which proved such a miserable failure, viz. the disposition by one means or another of a class of men that the cattle owners styled as thieves.*<sup>31</sup>

Concerning the involvement of the Federal government in the whole matter, he declared:

*It appears that nearly everyone in authority, or in official life, was doing just about what the representatives of the cattle owners told them to do, and did not appear to exercise any personal judgment or discretion of their own.... In my opinion, the only time when it was expedient to ask for the assistance of the Federal troops during this entire affair, was when Gov. Barber asked for aid to save the lives of the men who had unlawfully invaded Johnson County.*<sup>32</sup>

*..IT WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO GET A JURY TO CONVICT A MAN FOR STEALING CATTLE.*

20. Lewis L. Gould, "A. S. Mercer and the Johnson County War: A Reappraisal," *Arizona and the West* 7 (Spring 1965): pp. 10, 12.  
 21. *Cheyenne Sun*, 9 July 1892, p.1.  
 22. *Northwestern Live Stock Journal* article quoted in the *Rawlins Carbon County Journal*, 20 August 1892.  
 23. Gould, "A. S. Mercer," pp. 14, 18-19.  
 24. Asa Shinn Mercer, *Banditti of the Plains*, p. 28.  
 25. Gould, "A. S. Mercer," fn. 1, p. 5.  
 26. "Ralph Mercer, June 9, 1954 to Lola M. Homsher," *Asa Shinn Mercer Vertical File*, HR.

27. Charles W. Smith, "Asa Shinn Mercer, Pioneer in Western Publicity," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 27 (October 1936), p. 353.  
 28. Report of Frank B. Crosthwaite, November 2, 1892, Cheyenne, Wyoming to the Attorney General, Washington, D.C., "Year File No. 6316/1892," *Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60*, National Archives, p.5.  
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 9.  
 32. *Ibid.*, p.17.

## THE PARTICIPANTS



**Top:** Amos W. Barber

**Middle:** F.E. Warren

**Bottom:** J.M. Carey

Sketches from *Banditti of the Plains*

TOM TINDALE COLLECTION

Let us now consider the writings of the participants: the small ranchers/farmers/rustlers, and the big cattlemen and their employees.

### *Small Ranchers/Farmers/Rustlers*

The first participant in this group to tell his story was George Dunning, the Idaho roustabout who traveled with the Invaders in order to warn the Buffalo townfolk. Dunning's story appeared in the *Northwestern Live Stock Journal* on October 14, 1892 the headlines reading: "The Dunning Confession, the Traitorous Invasion of the State Laid Bare, in All Its Revolting Details— By A Member of the Invading Host."<sup>33</sup> While written in a rambling manner reminiscent of the oldtimer's story in Mark Twain's *The Blue Jay's Tale*, Dunning's confession did two things. First, it showed that the conspiracy was no sudden thing. Dunning stated that the Secretary of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, H. B. Ijams, had told him in March, 1892 that the Association had a contract with Frank Canton, Joe Elliot, Tom Smith, and a fourth man to kill fifteen men who were considered by the stockmen to be the leaders among the thieves in Johnson County. Second, Dunning publicly implicated Governor Amos Barber, Wyoming Attorney General Charles Potter and Senators Joseph M. Carey and Francis E. Warren in the planning of the invasion. About 1400 copies of Dunning's story were delivered Friday, October 14. Two days later the cattlemen destroyed 24,000 copies printed for the Democratic Party, but the damage had been done.

Two other important anti-cattlemen accounts are those of Oscar "Jack" Flagg and William Walker. Flagg was one of the so-called rustlers who nearly lost his life when he and his stepson stumbled onto the Invaders at Nate Champion's cabin but outrode the pursuers. Flagg's history ran serially in the weekly *Buffalo Bulletin* for eleven installments, beginning in May, 1892. It was published in book form in 1967 by Stan Oliner as *A Review of the Cattle Business in Johnson County Since 1882 and the Causes that Led to the Recent Invasion*.<sup>34</sup> Flagg moved to Nevada in 1907, dying at Verdi at age sixty-five. An obituary noted: "Fiery, quick-tempered and a bitter hater of his enemies, acquaintances declare he

was 'never known to go back on a friend'.<sup>35</sup>

William Walker, one of the men who had been in Champion's cabin on the morning of April 5, 1892 and who was spirited away to Rhode Island by the big cattlemen so that he could not testify against them, finally told his story in Daisy F. Baber's *The Longest Rope: The Truth About the Johnson County Cattle War* published by Caxton Press in 1940.<sup>36</sup> Walker, who died in November, 1946 at the age of 81, lived in Lyons, Colorado for 65 years.

Another interesting account is the reminiscence authored by William A. Martin who, with Charles Negus, on his way to Buffalo had inadvertently met the Invaders. Kept in tow, the cowboys finally made their escape and joined the townfolk. Later threatened by the big cattlemen, they agreed to take an oath not to tell what they knew and it was not until 1925 that Martin was free to speak. In 1928 Martin finished a manuscript entitled *Negus in Johnson County*, a copy of which may be found in the Johnson County Library. Particularly interesting is "Part Eight: The Siege of the TA Ranch," in which Martin minutely describes the scene and the defenses of the Invaders.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Cattlemen*

Surprisingly enough—complaints to the contrary—a great deal more has been printed by the big cattlemen and their associates than by the small cattlemen/farmers/rustlers. John Clay, the president of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association in 1892 and who was absent from Wyoming at the time of the invasion, saw his memoirs printed in 1924. Entitled, *My Life on the Range*, the book was privately published. In 1930 Houghton Mifflin published *Frontier Trails: The Autobiography of Frank M. Canton* edited by E. E. Dale. A year later

34. Stan Oliner, *A Review of the Cattle Business in Johnson County Since 1882 and the Causes that Led to the Recent Invasion* (New York: Arno Press & the New York Times (1969).

35. Unidentified newspaper clipping, "Old Settler, Oscar H. Flagg is Dead," File B-F97-Oh, AHC.

36. D. F. Baber, *The Longest Rope: The Truth About the Johnson County Cattle War* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Press, 1940).

37. William A. Martin, "Negus in Johnson County: A History of the Johnson County Stock," MSS, Johnson County Library, Buffalo, Wyoming.

33. *Northwestern Live Stock Journal*, 14 October 1892.

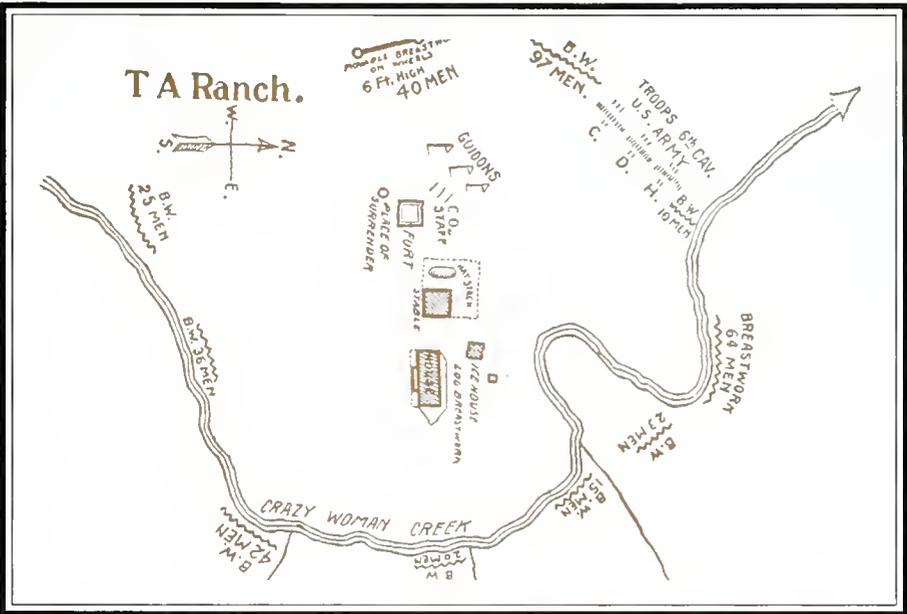
came the publication in Casper of *Malcolm Campbell Sheriff* by Robert B. David. Another sympathetic book is Charles A. Guernsey's, *Wyoming Cowboy Days*, published in 1936.<sup>38</sup>

In 1914 Dr. Charles B. Penrose, the physician who accompanied the Invaders, wrote his version of the affair. It was published by the *Douglas Budget* in 1959 under the title, *The Rustler Business*.<sup>39</sup> Penrose has a peculiar kind of detachment. In speaking of the men the Invaders meant to kill, Penrose remarks,

*The rustlers were not degenerate criminals such as are found in cities and thickly populated districts.... The worst of the cattle thieves would probably have been good fellows and agreeable companions after they had accumulated a herd and got on easy street.*<sup>40</sup>

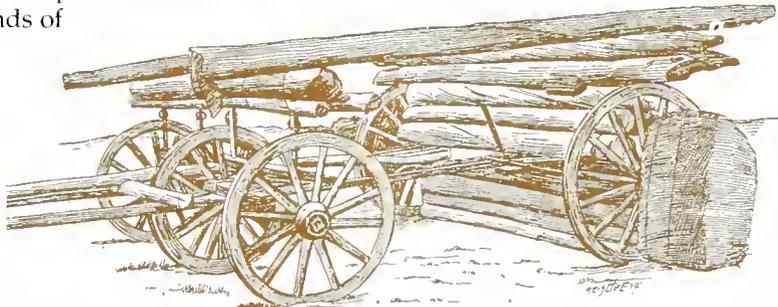
One reason why the book is important is because it contains lengthy comments made by one of the cattlemen, William Irvine, at Penrose's request. Not all of Penrose's ruminations are published in this volume. Correspondence with Irvine in 1914 is found in the Amos Barber Papers at the American Heritage Center in Laramie. Lois Van Valkenburgh reproduced these letters in her master's thesis written in 1939.<sup>41</sup>

The mayor of Buffalo, Charles H. Burritt, who according to one historian was secretly in the employ of the big cattlemen, wrote a number of letters to friends that were published in the *Buffalo Bulletin*, beginning January 26, 1961.<sup>42</sup> Another important account from the cattlemen's point of view is that written by Fred H. G. Hesse to Major Frank Wolcott, dated January 25, 1893. Printed and reprinted in newspapers from time to time, the article speaks of the



**Map of the Battle Grounds Surrounding the "TA" Ranch. From *Banditti of the Plains*. TOM TISDALE COLLECTION**

difficulties in obtaining convictions for rustling. It also notes that an association was created in February, 1892 to undertake the killing of any and all stockmen who might attempt to return to Johnson County to gather their stolen cattle.<sup>43</sup> The massive F.G.S. Hesse Collection of personal and business correspondence remains in the private hands of



***Go-Devil, or Ark of Safety.* A moveable breastwork built by the settlers in their attempt to dynamite the Invaders out of entrenched positions at the TA Ranch. From *Banditti of the Plains*. TOM TISDALE COLLECTION**

the Hesse family of Buffalo. One of the most interesting collections recently acquired by the American Heritage Center is that of Henry G. Hay. The first cashier of the Stock Growers National Bank in Cheyenne at the time of the invasion, Hay became the bank's president in 1894. The collection consists mostly of correspondence to him from John Clay, Senators Warren and Carey, William Irvine and others of the inner circle. The following letter from William Irvine dated July 6, 1892 is indicative of the richness of the collection.

*My Dear Henry, It seems to me the war on Old Mercer should be continued*

38. Clay, *My Life on the Range* (Chicago: Privately Printed, 1924); Frank Canton, *Frontier Trails: The Autobiography of Frank M. Canton*, ed. by E. E. Dale (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1930); Robert B. David, *Malcolm Campbell Sheriff* (Casper: Wyomingana, 1931); Charles A. Guernsey, *Wyoming Cowboy Days* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936).  
 39. Charles B. Penrose, *The Rustler Business* (Douglas: Douglas Budget, 1959).  
 40. *Ibid.*, p.  
 41. Lois Van Valkenburgh, "The Johnson County War, the Papers of Charles B. Penrose in the Library of the University of Wyoming with introduction and Notes," M. A. thesis, 1939, University of Wyoming, Laramie.  
 42. *Buffalo Bulletin* beginning 26 January 1961.

43. "Late F.G.S. Hesse Justifies Action of Cattlemen," *Buffalo Bulletin*, 2 July 1959.

zealously until we break him. What say you more, as to whether marshal (sic) law can or could have been declared since the Idaho affair; and who has given Joe Rankin his instruction to let up. I am very rapidly losing faith in the powers that be, and certain people will have a difficult time in explaining to me. I think we have been played all the way through as suckers.

Truly Yours, W. C. Irvine<sup>44</sup>



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

Henry G. Hay, 1903

One great loss in the telling of the full account of the Johnson County War from the cattlemen's point of view is the failure of William Irvine to detail his story. In a January 1, 1914 letter to Historian Grace Hebard, Irvine stated that his letters were in the hands of Dr. Penrose in order to assist the latter in his book. When they were returned he would give them to his son Ross "who has for years wanted to do this same work for hire."<sup>45</sup> In the same epistle Irvine states that Mercer asked him for \$500 to support the Invaders in his newspaper, and when he refused Mercer took the other side.

### MODERN WRITERS

In recent years the story has been the subject of many articles and books by writers and historians. Monographs adding new information or interpretations to the story include one by George T. Watkins III, "Johnson County War," which appeared in a 1961 issue of *Pacific Northwesterner*, and Robert A. Murray's "The United States Army in the Aftermath of the Johnson County Invasion," which appeared in *Annals of Wyoming* in 1966.<sup>46</sup>

An undocumented but interesting account of the killing of George Wellman is Herbert O. P. Brayer's tiny volume, *Range Murder: How the Red Sash Gang Dry-Gulched Deputy United States Marshal George Wellman, a Vignette of the Johnson County War*, published by Branding Iron Press in Evanston, Wyoming in 1955.<sup>47</sup> Brayer

names Ed Starr as the culprit. W. Turrentine Jackson's discussion of "British Interests in the Range Cattle Industry" in the book, *When Grass Was King*, authored in 1956 by Jackson, Maurice Frink and Agnes Wright Spring, and Louis Petzer's, *The Cattlemen's Frontier: A Record of the Trans-Mississippi Cattle Industry from Oxen Train to Pooling Companies, 1850-1890* published in 1936 are indispensable in understanding the growth of the cattle industry and its problems.<sup>48</sup> In 1963 Ted Bohlen and Tom Tisdale collected a number of documents under the title *An Era of Violence*, prepared in a limited edition of twenty five typed and bound copies.<sup>49</sup>

Many authors have written about the episode in chapters within broader studies. The best of these include R. J. Mokler, *History of Natrona County, Wyoming* (1923); Maurice Frink, *Cow Country Cavalcade: Eighty Years of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association* (1954); Henry Sinclair Drago, *The Great Range Wars: Violence on the Grasslands* (1970); and T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (1978).<sup>50</sup>

Lewis L. Gould made a substantial contribution in a chapter on the Johnson County War in his volume, *Wyoming: A Political History, 1868-1896* which appeared in 1968. In commenting on the work of previous historians, Gould declares:

Unhappily, their accounts are more distinguished for partisanship, incomplete research and inaccurate presentation than for scholarly analysis and thoroughness. Relying on inadequate reminiscences, biased newspapers, and occasionally their own imaginations, historians have focused on the colorful events of the war itself, missing the significance of an event which changed the shape of Wyoming politics in the 1890s.<sup>51</sup>



MARGOT LIBERTY COLLECTION, SHERIDAN

Helena Huntington Smith.  
Author of *The War on Powder River*.

44. "Letter from William Irvine, July 6, 1892 to Henry G. Hay," *Henry G. Hay Collection*, AHC.

45. "Letter from Irvine, January 1, 1914 to Hebard," *File B-1r8-wc*, AHC.

46. George T. Watkins III, "Johnson County War," pp. 1-12; Robert A. Murray, "The United States Army in the Aftermath of the Johnson County Invasion," 38 *Annals of Wyoming* (1966).

47. Herbert O. P. Brayer, *Range Murder: How the Red Sash Gang Dry-Gulched Deputy United States Marshal George Wellman, a Vignette of the Johnson County War* (Evanston, Wyoming: Branding Iron Press, 1955).

48. W. Turrentine Jackson, "British Interests in the Range Cattle Industry" in Maurice Frink, W. Turrentine Jackson and Agnes Wright Spring, *When Grass Was King*, (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1956); Louis Pelzer, *The Cattlemen's Frontier: A Record of the Trans-Mississippi Cattle Industry from Oxen Train to Pooling Companies, 1850-1890* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1936).

49. Ted Bohlen and Tom Tisdale, *An Era of Violence*, 1963, copy in AHC.

50. A. J. Mokler, *History of Natrona County, Wyoming* (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley and Sons, 1923); Maurice Frink, *Cow Country Cavalcade: Eighty Years of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association* (Denver: Old West Publishing Company, 1954); Henry Sinclair Drago, *The Great Range Wars: Violence on the Grasslands* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970); T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978).

Gould's strong positions tend to put the reader off, but his work does add new insights concerning the conflict's ramifications. Gould details the unsuccessful attempts of the cattlemen, through Senators Carey and Warren, to persuade President Harrison to declare martial law so that U. S. troops could be mobilized against the opposition. He also explains the legal strategy employed in freeing the Invaders.

The most extensive treatment of the Johnson County War is Helena Huntington Smith's *War on Powder River: The History of an Insurrection* which appeared in 1966. Upon publication, Historian T. A. Larson called it the best study of the Johnson County War, and it remains the definitive work. Smith was a magazine and newspaper writer who wrote three western classics: *They Pointed Them North*, *A Bride Goes West* and *War on Powder River*.<sup>52</sup> Delving deeply into newspaper sources she spent many weeks in the Buffalo area, acquainting herself with the people and country. While showing some compassion for the big cattlemen, Smith stands on the side of the small rancher. At the book's end she concludes:

*So everything indicates time did win, and won handily and soon enough so that Wyoming became a state of small independent ranchers before the slashing changes of the last industrial revolution drove the old-time cow business out of the picture, except for a few traditions. Time won and the small independent rancher won. And the latter, after all, was what the shooting was really about.*<sup>53</sup>

## COLLECTIONS OF SOURCE MATERIAL

Those interested in pursuing their own research have the chance to look at some new material, just opened for public use. Preserved at the American Heritage

51. Lewis L. Gould, *Wyoming: A Political History, 1868-1896* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1968), reprinted in 1989 as *Wyoming From Territory to Statehood* (Worland, Wyoming: High Plains Publishing Company, Inc.), p. 138.

52. E. C. Abbott and Helena Huntington Smith, *We Pointed Them North* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939); Nannie T. Alderson and Helena Huntington Smith, *A Bride Goes West* (New York: Rinehart, 1942); and Smith, *War on Powder River*.

53. Smith, *War on Powder River*, p. 283.

Center in Laramie are audio tapes made by the late Robert T. Helvey in the 1950s and 1960s. Now transcribed, they include interviews with Johnson County War participants Billy Brock, Harvey Munkers and Fred W. Hesse, son of F.G.S. Hesse, one of the Invaders.<sup>54</sup> Undoubtedly, the American Heritage Center has the best collection of materials on the conflict, notably the records of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, the papers of many of the public figures involved in the Johnson County War, biographical files on most of the participants, and collections of Buffalo history buffs J. Elmer Brock and Burton Hill. The best private collection is that amassed by the late Tom Tisdale of Cheyenne whose grandfather was one of the first casualties in the Johnson County War and whose knowledge of the relationships of the people involved was a priceless asset.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Research still needs to be done in assessing the Johnson County War. Aspects of the conflict have been covered in great detail, but there remain some important questions to answer and critical analyses to be performed. Four special areas of research might be pursued profitably.

First, many have claimed that big cattlemen could not find redress in the courts. For example, Emerson Hough in

**Bottom left: Tom Tisdale (1922-1992) John A. Tisdale, a casualty of the Johnson County War, was Tom Tisdale's grandfather. He was shot and killed in November, 1891 south of Buffalo.**

**Frank Canton, bottom right, stock detective and former Johnson County Sheriff, Canton was accused of the crime but the case was dismissed.**

54. Robert T. Helvey Collection, AHC.



MARK JUNGE



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

*The Story of the Cowboy* states that between 1888 and 1892 cattlemen brought 108 suits against rustlers for stealing cows or calves, but only one conviction was obtained.<sup>55</sup> A cursory glance at court records does not bear this out, but careful research in these documents should resolve this issue.

Second, someone needs to look carefully at the charges that a core of out-and-out thieves operated in Johnson County. Malcolm Campbell in his book, *Malcolm Campbell Sheriff*, estimated that of the 434 men surrounding the TA Ranch on the last day, seventy per cent were small ranchers, fifteen per cent were merchants and laborers and fifteen per cent were cattle rustlers and gamblers.<sup>56</sup> Names of the purported criminal element have been identified in various accounts but little checking has been done concerning their backgrounds or charges against them. Furthermore, claims have been made that many of the cowboys and small ranchers from Texas had previous criminal records. Research in Texas state archives and county records could prove or disprove these contentions.

Third, since the Johnson County War when reduced to its basics was a conflict over land and its use, there is a need for a history of land settlement patterns in Johnson County: who filed homestead papers and where, and how these actions may have affected the operations of those already using the public domain. Fourth, we need to look carefully at newspapers for the ten-year period preceding the outbreak of violence. They should yield a great deal of information concerning early settlement, relationships between individuals and evidence of conflicts. It is important also to search newspapers following the invasion, since interviews with participants were common.

In summary, what can we conclude about the Johnson County War and those who wrote about it? The late Burton S. Hill, a Buffalo lawyer who wrote much about the region's early history, had this to say:



PAUL JACQUES

**J**ACK McDERMOTT (1935-) IS AN HISTORIAN, INTERPRETIVE PLANNER, CONSULTANT AND PRESIDENT

*The implication usually is that the cattlemen, with their superior background and training should have known better. There are those who say that an unbiased account of the Johnson County War has never been written, and that the rustlers always have the best of it. But whatever view taken, the unadorned and unvarnished facts are not pretty, and can never be made so for either side.<sup>57</sup>*

Perhaps Philip Ashton Rollins in his 1930 book, *The Cowboy*, summed up the event as aptly and impartially as anyone. The Johnson County War, he declared, was "an uprising against concentrated wealth; and, at the end, it signified an accomplished, social and political revolution."<sup>58</sup>

What are the lessons of the Johnson County War? Have we learned to resolve our differences without recourse to violence? Is public policy more responsive to the needs of the people so that violence is less employed now? Are we less concerned with concentrations of wealth handicapping the ability of newcomers to develop their potential? Recent events, such as the 1992 Los Angeles riots where violence became the vehicle of protest, are humbling. So is the fact that we still have the highest homicide rate among developed nations in the world. But in looking back over a century, charity is in order. We need to look at the Johnson County War with compassion as well as condemnation, viewing it as an historical event that can teach us to do better, generating hope for better ways to resolve our differences.

55. Emerson Hough in *The Story of the Cowboy* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1931). See also S. S. Metzger, "The Wyoming 'Rustlers' War," *The Pacific Monthly* (April 1911): 394.

56. Robert B. David, *Malcolm Campbell Sheriff* (Casper: Wyomingana, 1931)

57. Burton S. Hill, "Buffalo-Ancient Cow Town: A Wyoming Saga," *Annals of Wyoming* 35 (October 1963), reprinted in *On the Platte and North* (Buffalo: Buffalo Bulletin, n.d.), p. 33.

58. Philip Ashton Rollins, *The Cowboy: His Characteristics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930), p. 34.



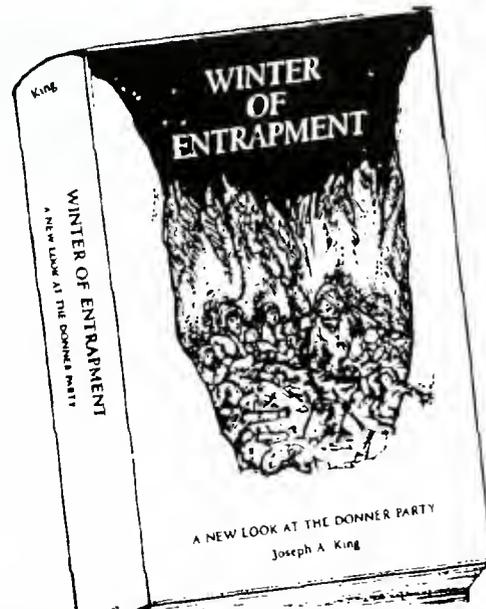
OF McDERMOTT ASSOCIATES WHICH HE FOUNDED IN 1989. HE WAS BORN AND RAISED IN REDFIELD, SOUTH DAKOTA AND EARNED A B.A. IN HISTORY

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA. HE OBTAINED HIS M.A. IN HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, AND HAS DONE POST-GRADUATE WORK. HIS CAREER WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BEGAN IN 1957 WHEN HE TOOK A JOB AS A SEASONAL RANGER AT FORT LARAMIE.

FROM 1960 TO 1986 McDERMOTT BECAME A FULL-TIME FEDERAL HISTORIAN AND ADMINISTRATOR, FIRST WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND THEN WITH THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AN AGENCY CHARGED WITH PROTECTION OF AMERICA'S CULTURAL RESOURCES. LISTED IN THE *Directory of American Scholars*, HE IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO *Wyoming Annals* AND IS WELL-PUBLISHED. HIS BOOKS INCLUDE *Dangerous Duty* (1993), A STUDY OF OUTPOSTS PROTECTING THE OREGON TRAIL IN THE SOUTH PASS AREA OF WYOMING, AND *Forlorn Hope* (1978), A BOOK ABOUT THE NEZ PERCE INDIAN WAR.

HE IS THE EDITOR OF *The Dull Knife Symposium* (1990), CO-AUTHOR OF *Fort Laramie: Visions of a Grand Old Post* (1974) AND AUTHOR OF FOUR BIOGRAPHIES APPEARING IN THE ARTHUR H. CLARK CO. SERIES, *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West* (1965-72). DOZENS OF ARTICLES AND BOOK REVIEWS BY McDERMOTT APPEAR IN TWENTY WESTERN AND MIDWESTERN HISTORY JOURNALS. HE IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS STUDIES AND REPORTS IN THE FIELD OF AMERICAN HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

McDERMOTT RESIDES IN THE LEE OF THE BIGHORN MOUNTAINS AT SHERIDAN, WYOMING. MUCH OF HIS TIME IS SPENT IN THE PURSUIT OF HISTORY, BUT HIS HOBBIES INCLUDE GARDENING, HUNTING, BOOK COLLECTING AND SPORTS.



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# CONTRASTING VIEWS OF LYNCHING...



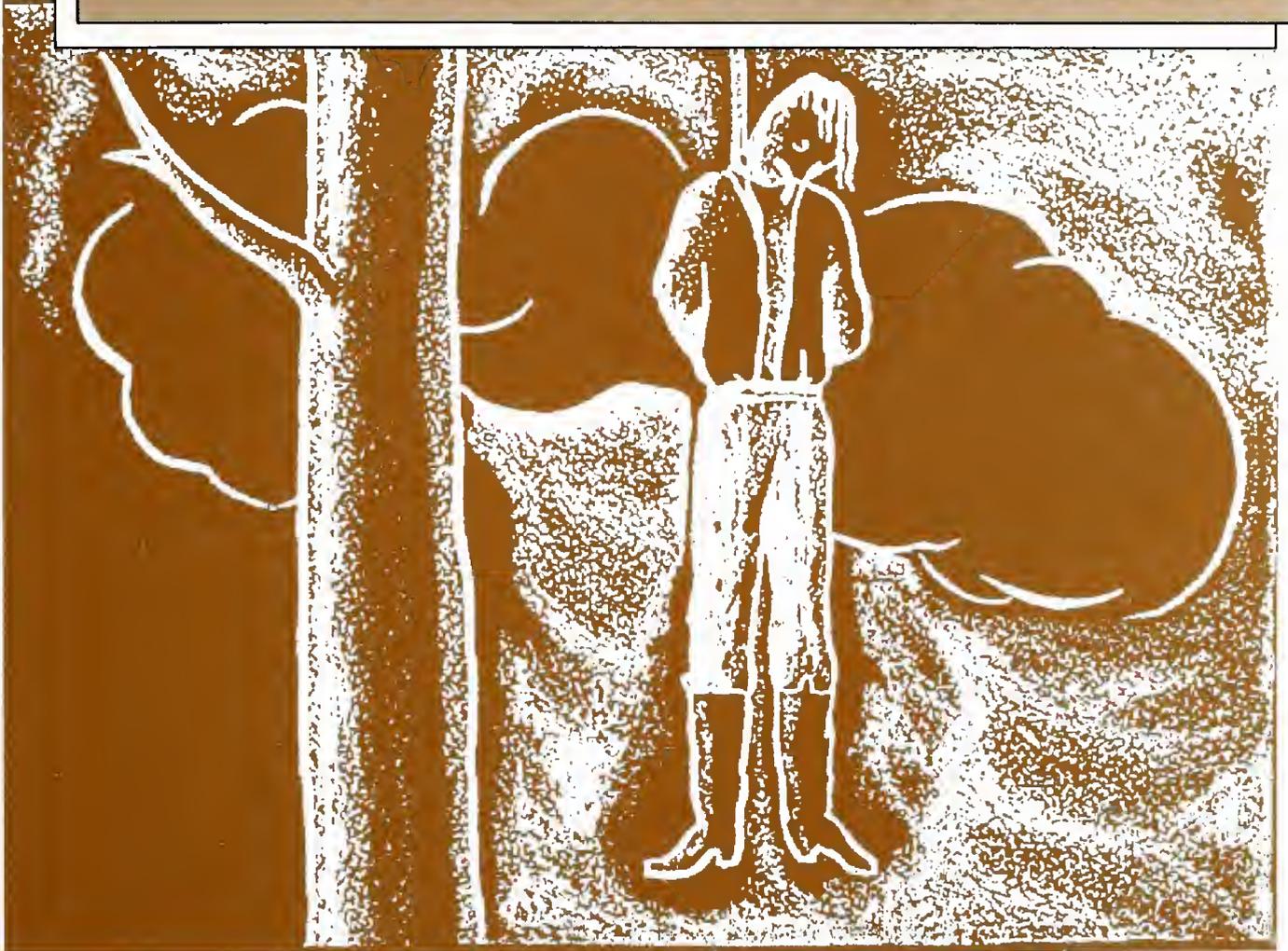
Sketch from *Banditti of the Plains* by Asa S. Mercer (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1935)

ARVILLA PARKER

by Roscoe L. Buckland

**I**n *The Virginian* (1902) and the short story, “The Gift Horse” (1908), Owen Wister wrote two antithetical lynching stories. There are notable similarities in setting, mood and plot, but the stories present differing points of view toward lynching and toward conflicts in the cattle country of Wyoming in the 1880s.<sup>1</sup>

# ...IN TWO WISTER STORIES



The hanging of Steve in *The Virginian* is the most familiar lynching in American novel, stage or film. Its drama derives from a situation in which a man (the Virginian) must hang a longtime friend, Steve. But the lynching episode gave Wister trouble from the beginning. His mother regarded it as both illogical and improper. The problem was that no matter what rationale might be given for lynching, the act itself was repellent, especially at a time when lynching was a subject of considerable discussion.

1. Owen Wister, *The Virginian* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), pp.228-65; Owen Wister, *Members of the Family* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1911), pp.159-206. References to these works are hereafter given in parentheses in the text. "The Gift Horse" was first printed in *The Saturday Evening Post*, 18 July 1908 and later included in *Members of the Family*.

death with knives and fire. To witness this scene young men and women came in crowds. It is said that the railroad ran a special train for spectators from a distance. How might that audience of Paris, Texas, appropriately date its letters? Not Anno Domini, but many years B.C. The African deserves no pity. His hideous crime was enough to drive a father to any madness, and too many such monsters have by their acts made Texas justly desperate. But for American citizens to crowd to the retribution, and look on it as a holiday, reveals the Inquisition, the Pagans, the Stone Age, unreclaimed in our republic.<sup>3</sup>

Wister was referring to the lynching of Henry Smith at Paris, Texas, on February 1, 1893 for the murder of a four year-old girl, the daughter of a former police officer. Smith, a Negro, was described variously as a "fiend," a "weak-minded fellow," a "brute," and an "imbecile." The murder was brutal. There was neither inquest nor trial; Smith was reported to have confessed. Accounts of the savagery of the murder and refutations of those accounts are

equally subjective and lurid. By all accounts the lynching was a well-planned barbaric spectacle. Smith was arrested at Hope, Arkan-

**left:** Owen Wister on return from the West, ca. 1890

AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER,  
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING,  
LARAMIE.

**right:** title page of *The Virginian* by Owen Wister  
WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

sas and escorted back to Paris by citizens of the town who assured crowds along the way that he would be appropriately executed. During the journey preparations

were made in Paris for the coming event. Bulletins were sent to neighboring small towns and school was dismissed by proclamation from the mayor. Saloons were closed and unruly mobs were dispersed so that, as the *New York Sun* reported, "everything was done in a businesslike manner."<sup>4</sup> Ten thousand or more



## The Virginian

A HORSEMAN OF THE PLAINS

BY

OWEN WISTER

AUTHOR OF "RED MEN AND WHITE," "LIN MCLEAN"

"L. S. GRANT: A BIOGRAPHY," ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARTHUR I. KELLER

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1902

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Wister finally resolved the problem in the stage version, upon which movie versions are based, by making the scene so remote, even romantic, in its atmosphere, and "so utterly restrained in tone as to banish everything except the gallant fatalism of Steve, and the misery of the Virginian."<sup>2</sup> In the novel he sought to make the act less repellent by comparing it to the Southern lynching of a Negro.

In 1855 in his Preface to *Red Men and White*, Owen Wister cited a lynching in Texas to illustrate the survival of "many ancient periods" in the civilization of nineteenth century America.

*In the single State of Texas you will find a contrast more violent still. There, not long ago, an African was led upon a platform in a public place for people to see, and tortured slowly to*

men, women and children assembled. Smith was placed on a carnival float and paraded down main street, around the town square and to the edge of town. There he was bound on a platform and tortured for some fifty minutes with hot irons applied by the girl's father and two uncles. Then he was doused with kerosene and set on fire. Souvenir hunters gathered buttons and pieces of bone from the ashes.



Lynching with fire, usually as an accompaniment to hanging, was not uncommon and unknown. The Paris incident was notable for its total depravity. Its details were widely publicized and reports of it reached as far as Aberdeen, Scotland. It gave impetus to the organization of anti-lynching crusades in the United States and Great Britain.<sup>5</sup> Wister was referring to a well-remembered incident.

But Wister does not cite the incident as an indictment of lynching. He does not even use the word. It is an example of the "violent contrasts" of barbarism and civilization that exist between or within communities: ". . . the young men and women who will watch side by side the burning of a Negro [sic] shrink from using such words as bull or stallion in polite society."<sup>6</sup> It is the manner of the execution - the torture and the spectacle - that made the Paris incident something from the dark past.

In *The Virginian* Wister again used the Henry Smith lynching, or certain aspects of it, to draw a contrast. After Molly learns that her Virginian was the leader of the men who hanged his old friend Steve and a man named Ed, Judge Henry comes to her cabin to explain things to her.

"Well," he said, coming straight to the point, "some dark things have happened . . . But you must not misunderstand us. . . "Judge Henry," said Molly, also coming straight to the point, "have you come to tell me that you think well of lynching?"

He met her. "Of burning Southern Negroes [sic] in public, no. Of hanging thieves in private, yes. You perceive there's a difference, don't you?" "Not in principle," said the girl, dry and short. (*Virginian*, 263)

Judge Henry asks what Molly means by "principle." Molly accuses him of quibbling. Judge Henry returns to the comparison.

"I see no likeness in principle whatever between burning Southern Negroes [sic] in public and hanging Wyoming horse thieves in private. I consider the burning a proof that the South is semi-barbarous, and the hanging proof that Wyoming is determined to become civilized. We do not torture our criminals when we lynch them. We do not invite spectators to enjoy their death agony." (*Virginian*, 264)

Molly admits "The way is different," but in both cases "Ordinary citizens take the law in their own hands." To answer this objection Judge Henry leads Molly through a syllogistic dialogue: the ordinary citizens haven't taken the law out of the hands of the courts; the courts were created by the Constitution, the Constitution was created by the delegates and the delegates were elected by the people; thus, "when they lynch they only take back what they once gave." Then he takes up the comparison again, this time applying it to the matter of "taking the law in their own hands."

2. Darwin Payne, *Owen Wister: Chronicler of the West, Gentleman of the East* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1985), pp. 202,224.

3. Owen Wister, *Red Men and White* (New York: Garrett Press, 1969), pp. vi-vii.

4. For contemporary accounts of this lynching, including the *New York Sun* report, see Ida B. Wells-Barnett, "A Red Harvest," *On Lynchings* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), pp.25-33. *On Lynchings* is a reprint of pamphlets by Wells-Barnett, paged individually.

5. Alfreda M. Duster (ed.), *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 84-86.

6. Wister, *Red Men and White*, p.vii.

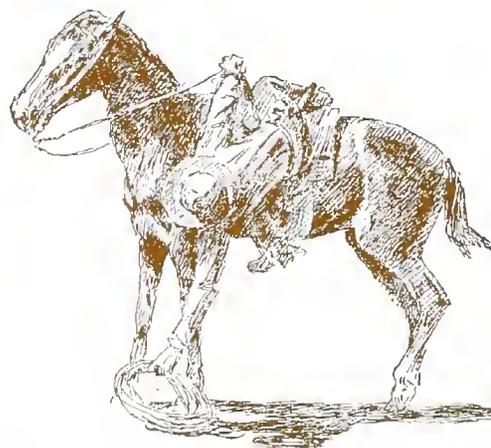
"Now we'll take your two cases that you say are the same in principle. I think they are not. For in the South they take a Negro (sic) from jail where he was waiting to be duly hung. The South has never claimed that the law would let him go. But in Wyoming the law has been letting our cattle-thieves go for two years . . . The courts, or rather the juries, into whose hands we have put the law, are not dealing the law . . . And so when your ordinary citizen sees this, . . . he must take justice back into his own hands, where it once was at the beginning of all things. Call this primitive, if you will. But so far from being a defiance of the law, it is an assertion of self-governing men, upon whom our social fabric is based." (*Virginian*, 265)

Judge Henry's argument does not really answer Molly's question of principle. In fact, it raises questions. Is our whole social fabric based upon "self-governing men," or is it based upon those processes by which the courts were established? When does a self-appointed group of men become the "self-governing," or "ordinary" citizenry? Is hanging Wyoming cattle thieves in secret the opposite of the public spectacle of the Southern lynching, or are they points along a spectrum of lawlessness? Even when legal executions were public in the nineteenth century, they were conducted by men who were accountable. Neither then nor today have our legal executions been secret as they were in *The Virginian*, where a group of men was sent out secretly to capture cattle thieves, hanged the men in a remote place and returned secretly. Molly learns of the affair when her schoolboys make a game of it. Judge Henry is concerned that Molly may expose the affair and his part in it. A legal execution, in contrast, is publicly announced and officially witnessed. There are important principles involved in these formalities.



Molly finally cannot answer Judge Henry's argument on "principle". She can only say that "it is all terrible" to her (*Virginian*, 265). It is in the degree of terror, or more exactly, horror, that the Southern lynching serves Judge Henry best. Compared with the Henry Smith lynching, the lynching of Steve and Ed is certainly different in manner. Steve is the dashing young cowboy who knows he's done wrong. The men are solicitous of the comfort of their prisoners. They joke pleasantly with them about their capture. Ed takes it pretty hard, but Steve is game to the end. The hanging is quickly done. The corpses are never seen.

The lynching episode is necessary to the novel. It brings to a climax the conflict of loyalties and obligations that give thematic unity to a rather episodic novel. It provides a complication to be



*Wister*

resolved in the romance between Molly and the *Virginian*. At the same time a novel which sanctioned lynching might not appeal to his reading audience. Between 1882 and 1903 there had been 324 people lynched in Texas, and 34 -all white- in Wyoming.<sup>7</sup> Lynching was a subject much reported, editorialized upon and agitated against.

By constructing such a dignified lynching as never took place, even out West where the victim was almost always white, and comparing it to something like the Henry Smith affair, Wister removed his Wyoming incident beyond and above a Southern lynching. It was a contrast his readers could recognize and appreciate. It gave an emotional, if not logical, appeal to the Judge's argument.

Wister was well aware that lynching out West was not conducted in the mode of Steve's hanging. Early in *The Virginian* a cowboy in Medicine Bow makes a joking remark about the hanging of "Cattle

Kate," a reference to the Ella Watson/James Averell lynching along the Sweetwater River on July 20, 1889. Wister viewed this lynching with some equanimity. On October 11, 1889 he sat in a smoking car with "one of the men indicted for lynching the



man and woman." He hoped the man would "get off." He "seemed a good solid citizen" and it was "only the wayward class that complained."<sup>8</sup>

But by 1891 Wister was harboring ambivalent, conflicting, feelings about the Wyoming cattle empire and its citizens, both "solid" and "wayward." This emotional conflict becomes evident in a comparison of the lynching episode in *The Virginian* and the short story "The Gift Horse."

Since "The Gift Horse" is less familiar, here is a brief plot summary. An Easterner befriends a young rancher, McDonough, who has been injured. In return McDonough gives the Easterner a fine sorrel horse. The Easterner rides the horse to a mysterious place called Still Hunt Spring and camps there for the night. He awakens to find himself captured by a group of men led by a cattleman, Lem Speed. He learns that the sorrel is a stolen horse and Still Hunt Spring is a cache valley for stolen horses. Just as the cattlemen are about to hang him, he is rescued by Scipio le Moyne, his hunting guide. When the Easterner and le Moyne ride away, they come upon the body of young McDonough hanging in a tree.

Both stories are narrated by an unnamed Easterner. In each the Easterner ceases to be a tenderfoot. He proves that he can find his way in a

wilderness. He arrives at the right place, but at the wrong time, and through his experience learns the customs of the country. In each story a range-wise cowboy is teacher and protector: the Virginian in one story, Scipio le Moyne in the other.

The setting of both stories is northwestern Wyoming, the Upper Snake River-Jackson Hole country and the Wind River Valley -regions which Wister visited in 1887, '88, '89, and '91, and with which he had fallen in love. The Virginian and a group of men sent out by Judge Henry pursue the villainous Trampas and his gang into the upper Snake River mountains. Trampas escapes and finds refuge among the "settlers" of Jackson Hole -"a nomadic and distrustful people" (*Virginian*, 257). In "The Gift Horse" cattleman Lem Speed has come into the Wind River Valley "to look after his interests" (*Members*, 165).

Secrecy and suspicion permeate the action in both stories. The men with the Virginian are suspicious of the Easterner when he rides into their camp, and after the lynching people back at the ranches refer to it only with veiled comment and dark hint. In "The Gift Horse" no one wants to talk about Still Hunt Spring; the post trader is a spy for Lem Speed. If anyone had spoken plainly to the Easterner about McDonough and Still Hunt Spring, he would not have ridden into danger.

There are basic differences in the plot of the two stories. The central incident of the lynching story in *The Virginian* is the hanging of Steve, while in "The Gift Horse" it is the near-hanging of the Easterner. *The Virginian* is a romance in which the lynching is a climactic incident: the Virginian has not let friendship stand in the way of duty, so will Molly let the lynching stand in the way of true love? "The Gift Horse" is a tale of suspense: the mystery, the intrigue, the terror of an innocent man about to be hanged, and a hairbreadth rescue. The lynching of McDonough is a fact that finally resolves the mystery.

Yet McDonough's hanging is more than just a footnote to the plot of a suspense story. His hanging does not seem as just or deserved as Steve's. Nor does lynching itself seem as right in "The Gift Horse" as in *The Virginian*.

7. James Elbert Cutler, *Lynch Law: An Investigation into the History of Lynching in the United States* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1905), p.180.

8. Fanny Kemble Wister, *Owen Wister Out West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p.91. This book is a reprint of Wister's journal entries edited by his daughter.



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*Owen Wister with camera in Yellowstone, nd.*

Neither story condemns lynching as being of itself destructive of law and order. Judge Henry and Wister himself- speaking as omniscient author directly to his reader- argue at length that lynching in certain circumstances is necessary and appropriate (*Virginian*, 261-269). In "The Gift Horse" the Easterner attempts an argument with Scipio le Moyne: "Do you think they'll not break out in a new place: condemn some other man who looks guilty in their almighty minds? . . . There's got to be lynching where there's no law, but ...." His unfinished argument does not convince Scipio. When they come upon McDonough hanging in the tree he will close the dead man's eyes, but he will not cut down the body that has been left there for "a lesson" (*Members*, 204, 206).

In his Wister study in the Twayne American Literature series, Professor John L. Cobbs observed that Wister resolved his feelings on the matter of lynching by creating "good" lynch mobs and "bad" lynch mobs - town leaders, for instance, who hang murderous stage robbers *versus* no-account miners and riffraff who lynch an innocent man.<sup>9</sup> A comparison of men involved in the lynchings in *The Virginian* and in "The Gift Horse" illustrates Cobb's point.

The lynchers in *The Virginian* have been sent forth by Judge Henry, a prosperous rancher, a former federal judge and a man of many affairs, private and civic. They are led by the *Virginian*, a cowboy who has chosen the path of responsibility. They are out to bring order to the territory, and after the hanging some of the men would "witness in a case at Evanston" (*Virginian*, 242). They are solicitous of the comfort of the men they are about to hang. There



*Wister*

is no doubt about the guilt of their prisoners. Steve is the dashing young cowboy who knows he has done wrong. He has taken wages from Judge Henry, then repaid his employer by stealing his cattle. He has thrown in with Trampas, a man of unmitigated evil.

The lynchers in "The Gift Horse", on the other hand, are five or six men led by Lem Speed who is looking after his interests. In "their almighty minds" and in their haste to get on to McDonough, they will not give the Easterner the chance to establish his identity. After he is rescued they attempt to joke about the matter. This attempt the Easterner regards

as “a pretty mongrel humor, more like true cowardice” (*Members*, 202). The man they do lynch, McDonough, like Steve is the cowboy who has chosen the wrong path. But unlike Steve he has not become part of a gang, nor is he under any obligation to Lem Speed. In fact, he operates under a strict personal code of obligation: he pays his bills. In the gift of the horse the Easterner learns the meaning of obligation: McDonough is obligated to repay the Easterner’s help, and the Easterner is obligated to



accept the horse. Essentially, the lynch mob in “The Gift Horse” is a bad mob because it is led by Lem Speed and it hangs a man like McDonough.

Lem Speed and young McDonough are cast as symbolic figures in a social conflict. People in the Wind River Valley tell the Easterner that Lem Speed is “the biggest cattleman in the country.” He has a “store and a bank in Lander,” a “house in Salt Lake,” a “wife in Los Angeles” and a “son at Yale” (*Members*, 164). When Lem Speed asks who McDonough is, he is told that McDonough “is a new settler on Wind River.” He has “taken up a ranch” and “built him a cabin,” and is “going to raise horses” (*Members*, 162-163).

Lem Speed is an outsider in the Wind River community. A few men are his allies, some are his enemies, and some, like Scipio le Moyne, simply want to steer clear of trouble. Lem Speed personifies the rich and ruthless cattleman. Young McDonough is one of those settlers who, as the saying went, “did a lot of ranching and a little rustling” or “a little ranching and a lot of rustling.” The description the Wind River citizens gave was meant to deceive Lem Speed and protect young McDonough.

On the stage out of Laramie, the Easterner shared the box with the driver, who expressed what must have been the view of many. Trouble was due, the driver said, “the sort of trouble they were having on Powder River . . . he did not wonder that poor

men got tired of rich men: not that he objected to riches, but only to hogs . . . the big cattlemen were going to ‘demonstrate’ over here as they had on the Dry Cheyenne and Box Elder.” The Easterner understood “demonstration” to be “the sudden hanging of somebody without due process of law” (*Members*, 172).

“The Gift Horse” should not, however, be read as a general defense of rustlers and settlers who sympathized with them. It does present an alternative to the view of cattlemen and cattle land presented in *The Virginian*, but this alternative view is a very personal one, reflecting Wister’s disillusionment with the cattle empire. Associated with this was a strong dislike for two cattlemen. To explain this personal disillusionment some background is essential.



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Major Frank Wolcott, nd.

In “The Gift Horse” two of the brands of the stolen horses are the **76** and the **VR**, two historic Wyoming ranches. The **76**, established by Morton Frewen, was one of the oldest and largest ranches on

9. John L. Cobbs, *Owen Wister* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, G.K. Hale Co., 1984), pp.43-44.

Powder River. The **VR** was the brand of the Valley Ranch established by Major Frank Wolcott on Deer Creek a few miles from the present town of Glenrock. In the summer of 1885 Wister stayed at the Valley Ranch. In the summer of 1891 he stayed at the Tisdale brothers' ranch about 60 miles north of Casper and adjacent to the **76**. This part of Wyoming north from the Platte to Powder River country was Cattle Land to Wister.<sup>10</sup>

In 1885 things were going well in Cattle Land. The **VR** Ranch was at the height of its prosperity. Wolcott was active in territorial politics and the Wolcotts were noted for their hospitality. This 1885 version of Wolcott and the **VR** Ranch is the model for Judge Henry and his Sunk Creek ranch.

In 1891 Wister found a different country. Cattle Land was in a depression and, worse yet, a blight was



on the land. A railroad had been built along the Oregon Trail route to a terminus at Casper, bringing with it railroad towns and what Wister regarded as their attendant lower social species.

While at the Tisdale Ranch, Wister saw Robert Tisdale gouge the eye out of a horse. He was disgusted and horrified at the act and ashamed that he had done nothing to stop it. In *The Virginian* he has his hero knock Tisdale ("Balaam") down. In "The Gift Horse", after the near hanging, Lem Speed offers



a jocular handshake and the Easterner shows his contempt by refusing to speak to him. (*Members*, 290).

The eye-gouging incident prompted Wister to conclude that "life in this negligent, irresponsible wilderness tends to turn people shiftless, cruel, and incompetent. I noticed in Wolcott in 1885, and I noticed today, a sloth in doing anything and everything ...." Wister wished that someday he might be the one to lay bare "the virtues and the vices of this extraordinary phase of American social progress . . . its rise, its hysterical unreal prosperity, and its disenchanting downfall."<sup>11</sup>



Just what Wolcott may have said or done to provoke a judgment of shiftlessness, cruelty or incompetence can only be conjectured. It may be that during his stay at the **VR** he heard some of the rumors of misuse of public office, dependence on friends in high places, or fraudulent land titles that circulated about Wolcott. In 1891 he probably heard that by then Wolcott was hopelessly in debt.<sup>12</sup> In going into debt Wolcott carried with him Robert W. Irwin, whose family was close to the Wisters. In 1890 Irwin sold out his interest to Wolcott for one dollar.<sup>13</sup>

The only town in Cattle Land that Wolcott found tolerable in 1891 was Buffalo. He was charmed by its valley and mountain setting, he sensed a vitality and permanence in the town's streets and buildings, and he was fascinated by the "motley blackguards" that he met and talked with. Buffalo in 1891 was a place divided by the tensions of the cattlemen/rustler/settler conflict as Wind River was in "The Gift Horse". The Wind River people to whom Lem Speed is enemy are much like the "nomadic and secretive settlers of Jackson Hole" in *The Virginian* and the "motley blackguards" that Wister met in Buffalo. In 1892 Frank Wolcott led some fifty armed men into Johnson County to attack the town of Buffalo. In "The Gift Horse" Lem Speed



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*Buffalo Street Scene from Court House Yard 1903* This placid street scene, captured by Wyoming photographer J. E. Stimson, probably had not changed much from the time Wister observed it a decade earlier.

comes into the Wind River Valley to look after his interests and hangs a rustler. In both fact and fiction cattlemen are invading what was to Wister the last romantic West.

In 1893 on the road to Lander, Owen Wister shared the stage box with the driver, a colorful character who "entirely sympathized with the horse thieves and rustlers over in Johnson County and told [Wister] there were four men who ought to be killed - Wolcott, Canton, Irvine, and the other [Wister] forgot. He was handsome, and with that fascination that so many of his kind have."<sup>14</sup> Fifteen years later Wister put this stage coach driver in "The Gift Horse", a story which expresses a view of the big cattlemen different from that in *The Virginian*.

Wister supported the cattlemen immediately and publicly in the Johnson County War, and *The Virginian* is an ideological novel which reduces all

10. Historical material on the cattle country and the Cattle War is drawn from Helena Huntington Smith, *The War on Powder River* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967).

11. *Owen Wister Out West*, p.112. For the impact of this incident on Wister and his fictional use of it see Don D. Walker, "Wister, Roosevelt and James: A Note on the Western", *American Quarterly* XII (Fall, 1960), 358-366. Wister's changing attitude toward Cattle Land shows in journal entries for 1891 and 1893.

12. Eugene Potter, "Wolcott, Frank and Adelaide," *Pages From Converse County's Past* (Douglas: Wyoming Pioneer Association, Converse County, 1986), pp.648-650. I am much indebted to Mr. Potter, formerly of Glenrock and now of Casper, for oral and narrative documentary material he has shared with me.

13. Converse County Clerk, *Bills of Sale, Book 8*, "Bill of Sale No.1232" pp.56-59.

14. *Owen Wister Out West*, p.174. Irvine was a cattleman, corporation director and political associate of Frank Wolcott.

the problems of the cattle bonanza into a problem of rustling and weak law enforcement.<sup>15</sup> He reacted viscerally toward any attack upon respectable men of property, and many of the cattlemen were from good families of New York or Pennsylvania. But his sympathy for the cattlemen was somewhat dampened by his disillusionment with the cattle empire. What disturbed Wister's romance with Cattle Land was the quest for the quick and easy fortune through speculation, the impermanence of its ranches and towns, the railroads - all the sordid commercialization that came with the cattle bonanza. In Wister's mind all of this was akin to what was happening with the rise of the new money man, the "yellow man" of Wall Street who often came from the West with a fortune made

resolve this problem in *The Virginian* Wister created the wealthy cattleman, Judge Henry, a man from back East who had built a home in Wyoming and made his fortune through industrious and scientific husbandry. In "The Gift Horse" he created, in contrast, Lem Speed, a banker and cattleman whose home is California and whose son goes to Yale, not Harvard, as had Wister and some of Wyoming's more prominent men. The very name Lem Speed connotes a lesser birth and breeding. It is a name from the flush times of Mississippi, Alabama or Pike County, Arkansas. And against Lem Speed he set stagecoach drivers, cowboys, hunting guides and mountain valley settlers, and motley blackguards - the sort of people who fascinated him. Thus he could keep romance alive in spite of his disenchantment.



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W. C. Irvine, ca. 1905

in minerals, land speculation, or railroads and threatened the established families of New England. And associated with all this was a personal dislike for two cattlemen: Major Frank Wolcott and Robert Tisdale.

One of the problems with Wister's picture of modern finance out West was that some of its most monied men were from New York or Pennsylvania. Such a man was William C. Irvine, organizer and manager of large land and cattle companies and director of corporations, including one railroad. To

15. Darwin Payne, Owen Wister: *Chronicler of the West, Gentleman of the East*, pp.126-127. Wister's social views have been analyzed by various critics including Professors Cobbs and Payne. The best source is Wister himself: in several long polemics in *The Virginian*, in the prefaces to his books, and throughout Wister's novel, *Lady Baltimore* (New York: Macmillan, 1906) and Wister's reminiscences in *Roosevelt: The Story of Friendship* (New York: Macmillan, 1930).



Sketches in article taken from **The Virginian**  
(New York: Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, 1902)  
as they appear: pp. 117, 190, 219, 246, 434, 230, 446,  
311, 101, 254



GRETEL MACGREGOR  
BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

**ROScoe L. BUCKLAND** (1918- ) GREW UP ON A SMALL FARM NEAR BLÁCKFOOT, IDAHO. HE WORKED AS FARM HAND, PAINTER, MENTAL HOSPITAL ATTENDANT AND RURAL SCHOOL TEACHER. IN WORLD WAR II HE

SERVED WITH THE ARMY AIR CORPS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND JAPAN. HE RECEIVED HIS B.A. AND M.A. IN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO IN 1948 AND PH D. IN AMERICAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA IN 1955. HE HAS TAUGHT AT WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AT LONG BEACH AND WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY. HE HAS ALSO TAUGHT IN AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN AND DONE RESEARCH IN ENGLAND AND AUSTRALIA.

BUCKLAND IS A CHARTER MEMBER OF THE

WESTERN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION. HE HAS REVIEWED BOOKS ON NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE, AND AUSTRALIAN AND AMERICAN FRONTIER HISTORY, LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE FOR *Western American Literature* and *Studies in Short Fiction* SINCE THOSE JOURNALS BEGAN. HIS RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION INTERESTS RANGE FROM NINETEENTH CENTURY POPULAR SONG, TO BRET HARTE AND OWEN WISTER, TO HOLIDAY FOLKLORE, TO HAWAIIANS AT OLD FORT HALL.

BUCKLAND LIVES IN BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON WITH HIS WIFE, WHO UNDER THE NAME OF AUDREY PETERSON IS A SUCCESSFUL MYSTERY NOVELIST.

HE IS PRESENTLY COMPLETING AN ESSAY ON FRANK WOLCOTT AND THE GENESIS OF THE VR RANCH. IN HIS SPARE TIME BUCKLAND TRAVELS THE WEST AND OCCASIONALLY PLAYS A FRIENDLY GAME OF POKER. BY HIS OWN ADMISSION HE WAS "BORN TO RETIRE."

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by Bruce J. Noble, Jr.

Miners seldom cover their tracks very well. Wyoming's historic South Pass mining area - with its prospect pits, crumbling mine shafts, forgotten machinery, and abandoned log buildings scattered throughout the eroded gulches and windswept ridges - portrays the undeniable truth of this axiom. Huge mounds lining the banks of Rock Creek offer evidence of the extensive dredging which took place during the Great Depression, while examples of more recent mining activity include the gaping crater which is a reminder of the United States Steel Corporation's deserted iron ore mine.

A closer examination of mining's many imprints on South Pass history reveals the trail of Emile Granier, a French mining engineer who, in 1884, first ventured into the rugged terrain which separates the Wind River Mountains from the Red Desert. Present-day visitors to Atlantic City still notice traces of the Granier ditch on the steep hillside just opposite the town on the south side of Rock Creek. More detailed inspection reveals fragments of the elevated flume structures which played an integral part in the once massive hydraulic mining project that brought renewed albeit fleeting, vitality to the area. Although active use of Granier's ditch system ended close to a century ago, his lasting impact on the face of this mining district justifies examining his efforts in light of the boom and bust history of both the town of Atlantic City and the state of Wyoming.

Contemporary remnants of the Granier ditch offer only vague hints regarding the magnitude of this hydraulic mining system, but Monsieur Granier himself stands as a greater mystery. Local residents still sometimes while away cold winter evenings debating the merits of Granier and his ambitious mining endeavors, but the passage of time has proven him almost as elusive as the precious metal he sought. Indeed, the legends and tales spun in this old mining community have possibly done more to disguise Granier than to define him. Any contemporary attempt to understand Granier and his work will not fully penetrate the veil of myth that has grown around him. But a closer look at his hydraulic project will disclose something about his efforts to revitalize a depressed mining area while attempting to enrich himself through a complex undertaking designed to extract paying quantities of gold from the gulches surrounding Atlantic City.

When Granier first arrived in Atlantic City in 1884 the tiny mountain camp must have ap-



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

# A FRENCHMAN IN WYOMING:

# T HE SOUTH PASS MINING MISADVENTURES OF EMILE GRANIER

peared rather desolate to a man who had promenaded down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. Only a few residents inhabited the lonesome buildings that mostly sat boarded up and empty. Undoubtedly, a prospector occasionally ventured forth to work a lode or to labor with cradles and gold pans along the nearby stream beds. Yet this meager activity contrasted sharply with the flush times of the late 1860s and early 1870s.

The South Pass area had acquired a reputation as a promising mining region long before Granier arrived on the scene. The local fable holds that the first South Pass gold discovery occurred in 1842. Credit for this alleged find goes to an unnamed Georgian whose home state had previously witnessed the first gold strike in the United States. This man reportedly had worked as a miner in his native state and ultimately ended up in the South Pass region after signing on to work as a trapper with the American Fur Company. His trapping duties evidently did not preclude a little mineral prospecting and he eventually located gold deposits. Legend relates that Indians killed him before his discovery attracted

widespread attention, but rumors of gold persisted in the decades that followed the premature demise of this intrepid, though obscure, miner.<sup>1</sup>

Sporadic prospecting occurred during the 1850s and early 1860s, but no gold strikes occurred. Prospecting escalated with the onset of the Civil War. Fort Bridger, located in the southwest corner of Wyoming, played a role in energizing mining activity. With the regular garrison called away to battle, the fort temporarily hosted the First Nevada Volunteer Cavalry. Many of these troops had previous mining experience in the Sierra Nevadas. This mining background led them to organize and fund prospecting expeditions to South Pass during the war. Following Lee's surrender at Appomattox, some of the soldiers returned to civilian life and stayed in the area to continue their quest for pay dirt.

By the mid-1860s increased prospecting activity began to show promising results. Miners made some fairly

1. Among the sources which recount the story of the first gold discovery in the South Pass mining district are: Rossiter W. Raymond, "Statistics of Mines and Mining in the States and Territories West of the Rocky Mountains," reprinted in *Annals of Wyoming* 40, no.2 (October 1968):226-227; Robert A. Murray, "Miner's Delight, Investor's Despair: the Ups and Downs of a Sub-Marginal Mining Camp in Wyoming," *Annals of Wyoming* 44, no.1 (Spring 1972):28-29; and Peter Sherlock, "Mining Operations at Atlantic and South Pass," *Wyoming State Journal*, 11 April 1935, p.1.

**Opposite page:** *Emile Granier. Atlantic City, August, 1884*

**Right:** *Atlantic City, Wyoming, 1884*



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

substantial discoveries during the summer of 1867 and a sample of South Pass gold dust eventually ended up in Salt Lake City, Omaha, and Chicago newspapers. The boom had begun.<sup>2</sup>

By all historical accounts, the boom was a relatively minor one both in terms of the number of people involved and the amount of gold recovered.<sup>3</sup> Dubbed "Sweetwater Fever" by optimistic promoters, the rush created several towns including Atlantic City, South Pass City and Miner's Delight (also known as Hamilton City), but the initial influx dissipated quickly. A special census conducted following the creation of Wyoming Territory in 1869 disclosed that the entire mining district had a population of only 1,517. Furthermore, the \$2 million in gold produced during the 1867-1872 boom years represented a mere pittance compared to other western mining areas. For example, the 1860s gold strike in Virginia City, Montana produced \$40 million within three seasons. However, South Pass offers the best example of a substantial gold rush in a Rocky Mountain state with an atypical scarcity of precious metals.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the collapse of the South Pass mines after 1872, territorial boosters continued expressing their boundless faith in the region's mineral potential. In his 1878 report to the Secretary of the Interior, the governor of Wyoming Territory proclaimed that the Atlantic City area offered particularly good mining prospects and "there are in that locality rich veins yet undiscovered." The governor had such faith in the presence of precious mineral deposits in Wyoming that he boldly stated that "now the only questions that remain to be settled are those of extent and richness."<sup>5</sup> Such confident asser-

tions may well have reached the ears of opportunistic men like Emile Granier.

Additional gold deposits may well have existed, but successful extraction would require innovative approaches. The stereotypical image of the independent miner leading a heavily loaded surefooted burro had become a thing of the past. The rise of America's giant corporations during the late nineteenth century included megalithic mining companies armed with new technologies designed to meet the challenge of recovering elusive ore. In 1871 the federal mining commissioner reported aptly that the dominant trend in mining involved "operating with advantages of large capital, and by concentration of labor and the consolidation of large tracts of mining ground."<sup>6</sup>

Wyoming promoters clung to the hope that the arrival of big mining companies would herald the rejuvenation of the South Pass mines. By the end of the boom era in 1872 the greater part of the readily obtainable high grade South Pass ore had been exhausted. Much of the remaining ore represented a low grade variety which could not be profitably worked on a small scale. Only large-scale, well financed mining operations could alleviate the post-boom depression.<sup>7</sup> The editor of the Lander, Wyoming newspaper, the *Fremont Clipper*, echoed the same unbridled optimism in 1887: "More capital is needed in that locality (South Pass), and we venture the assertion that there is no place in the mining region of the Rockies that would produce greater returns."<sup>8</sup>

In the same article the editor identified an additional hindrance "...which today is the cause of Atlantic (City) being a deserted mining camp. This obstacle is simply an insufficient water supply." The Territorial Geologist also acknowledged the South Pass water problem in 1886 by stating: "Hereto-

fore, the prime obstacle to placer mining has been the scarcity of water."<sup>9</sup> Until someone arrived with a plan for supplying water power, the difficult task of refining the gold ore would remain a barrier to development.

While the need for capital investment and the lack of water constituted the two greatest problems of the mining district in the 1870s and early 1880s, many promoters pointed to the threat of Indian attack as a convenient excuse for the lack of mineral productivity. While it is difficult to determine if clashes between miners and Indians actually deterred South Pass mining development, the belief remained that the federal government owed a favor to the courageous miners who worked so hard to bring civilization to the veritable wilderness that was then Wyoming.<sup>10</sup>

Heeding the demands of boosters and miners, the United States government took two steps designed to resolve the South Pass "Indian problem." First, in 1870 the government established the small army post called Camp Stambaugh a few miles east of Atlantic City in order to protect the miners. Second, in 1872 the government entered negotiations with the Shoshone tribe whose huge reservation then included portions of the South Pass mining district. The Shoshone agreed to relinquish their lands located south of the North Fork of the Big Popo Agie River in return for \$25,000 worth of cattle to be paid during a five year period.<sup>11</sup> This concession effectively extinguished Indian claims to the mining area.

Following Indian removal, boosters asserted that only the lack of capital and ever-precious water kept the South

2. Murray, "Miner's Delight, Investor's Despair," pp.31-33.

3. The best account of the rush can be found in James Chisholm, *South Pass, 1868*, ed. Lola M. Homsher (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960).

4. Murray, "Miner's Delight, Investor's Despair," p.39; and Mike Massie, "After the Bust: the South Pass Mining Area Since 1872," *Occasional Papers on Wyoming Archeology* 3 (1984):30.

5. *Report of the Governor of Wyoming to the Secretary of the Interior, 1878* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1878), pp.15-16.

6. Rodman W. Paul, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848-1880* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963; reprint ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), p.90.

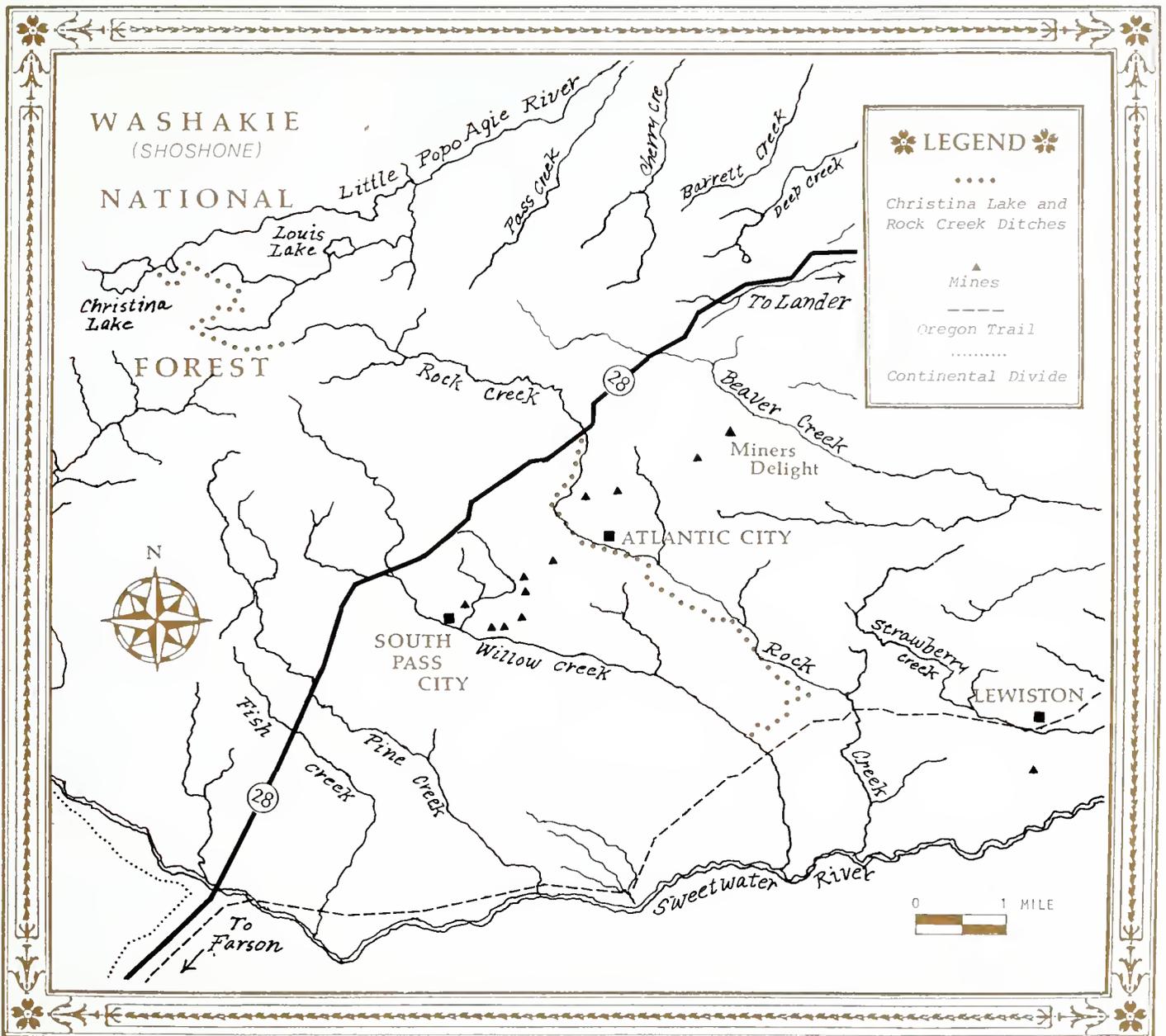
7. Randall E. Rohe, "Hydraulicking in the American West," *Montana, the Magazine of Western History* 35 (Spring 1985): 28; Helen Henderson, unpublished manuscript in research files at South Pass City Historic Site, South Pass City, Wyoming, p.1; and Sherlock, "Mining Operations," pp.5-6.

8. "Atlantic City!," *Fremont (Lander, Wyoming) Clipper*, 29 October 1887, np.

9. For information about the scarcity of water in the South Pass Mining District see L. W. Trumbull, *Atlantic City Gold Mining District Fremont County (Cheyenne, Wyoming: S. A. Bristol Company, 1914)*, p.91; and Murray, "Miner's Delight, Investor's Despair," p.46.

10. Raymond, "Statistics of Mines and Mining," p.239; and *Report of the Governor of Wyoming to the Secretary of the Interior, 1878*, pp.15-16.

11. For information on the establishment of Camp Stambaugh see Betty Carpenter Pfaff, *Atlantic City Nuggets* (1978), pp.71-73; and Robert A. Murray, *Military Posts of Wyoming* (Ft Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1974), p.77. Details of the treaty settlement are contained in Virginia Cole Trenholm and Maurine Carley, *The Shoshonis: Sentinels of the Rockies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p.232.



MAP BY EILEEN SKIBO

**Map of South Pass Mining Area.** From "Location Map: Christina Lake and Rock Creek Placer Ditches, Constructed Under the Supervision of Emile Granier, Fremont County, Wyoming," by Johnson Land Company, Aurora, Colorado; and "Sketch Map of Atlantic and Adjacent Districts, Wyo., Showing Distribution of Gold Placers in Part," in Arthur C. Spencer, "The Atlantic Gold District and the North Laramie Mountains," Department of the Interior, United States Geological Survey, Bulletin 626 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), plate III.

Pass region from becoming a prosperous Rocky Mountain mining district. With impeccable timing, Emile Granier entered this perplexing situation with answers to both of the district's major problems. He came with substantial financial resources and a creative plan designed to make use of the limited water supply. Successful implementation of this plan offered prospects for a return to boom times and a handsome

dividend for Granier.

Apart from his mining work, little is known about Emile Granier's life. Born in France in 1829, he reportedly learned to speak English fluently and received part of his college education in Dublin, Ireland. He first came to the United States in 1851 and eventually became a naturalized American citizen.<sup>12</sup> An 1887 issue of the *Fremont Clipper* indicates that Granier arrived in

12. "Folder 7," *South Pass Area Collection*, Historical Research Unit (HR), Wyoming Department of Commerce, Cheyenne. These records indicate that Granier entered the U. S. District Court in Sweetwater County on November 22, 1884 to file a "declaration of intention" stating his willingness to become a United States citizen. Although the exact date that Granier obtained citizenship is not known, the 1902 deed outlining the sale of Granier's property to the Dexter Mining and Development Company described him as a citizen of the United States. See *Fremont County Quit Claim Record, Vol. D*, instrument recorded 17 March 1902, Archives, Records Management and Micrographics Section (ARM&M), Wyoming Department of Commerce, Cheyenne, p.2393. Minutes from a December 12, 1885 miner's meeting in

Wyoming accompanied by his wife who employed herself by "enlarging and painting from photographs." The few available accounts of his appearance describe him as stocky, bearded and well-dressed. The only known photograph of Granier confirms the accuracy of this description. Beyond these sketchy facts, few details remain concerning his pre-Wyoming life or the personal qualities he possessed.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of the limited information about the man himself, evidence demonstrates that Granier arrived in Atlantic City in 1884 and quickly set about acquiring several hundred acres of gold claims. Granier's mineral development plans called for utilizing a hydraulic mining system to facilitate the recovery of gold from the bed of Rock Creek. Consequently, he made certain to purchase several contiguous claims extending along Rock Creek from Atlantic City to a point approximately four miles downstream in a southeasterly direction.

Once he had acquired the claims, Granier confronted the mining district's water shortage. Undaunted by the aridity of the region, Granier forged ahead with an ambitious project designed to supply the water needed to power his hydraulic machinery. The first step involved constructing the 10.5 mile Rock Creek ditch. A few miles upstream from Atlantic City, he directed a labor force to build a dam near the junction of Rock and Slate creeks. This dam would create a reservoir which could store water needed to operate the hydraulic machinery during the dry, late summer months. Upon demand, the water in the reservoir

would travel through the ditch running along the south bank of Rock Creek. According to Granier, "The ditch on Rock Creek is...3 feet wide at the bottom, 6.75 feet wide at water line, 2.5 feet deep with 10 feet grade to the mile, and can carry about 40 feet of water per second." The water completed its 10.5 mile journey at the hydraulic plant located downstream from Atlantic City. Begun in September, 1884 work on the ditch concluded in November, 1885.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the time and effort devoted to the project, the reservoir did not hold sufficient water to fill the ditch during the entire summer. Unperturbed, Granier began work in late 1885 on a second ditch to further supplement the water supply. Although shorter than the Rock Creek ditch, the six mile long Christina Lake ditch proved to be a considerably more complex undertaking. Nestled in the Wind River Mountains at an elevation of 9,942 feet above sea level, Christina Lake and adjoining Gustave Lake normally empty their water into the Little Popo Agie River which flows into the Wind River Valley. Granier built a dam at the mouth of these lakes which raised their level and allowed for the diversion of water away from the Little Popo Agie and into the six mile long Christina Lake ditch that terminated at the head of Rock Creek.

The new ditch measured three feet in depth, five feet in base width, eleven feet in water line width, and had a grade of sixteen feet to the mile and carried 144 feet of water per second. Much of the extensive construction work required cutting and blasting through solid rock. Clearly the most impressive structure on this ditch segment was a six feet wide, four feet deep flume which sat atop trestles seventy feet high and five hundred feet long.<sup>15</sup>

The completion of the Christina Lake ditch in October, 1887 finally gave Granier the requisite water supply to operate his hydraulic plant during the entire summer work season. With the Christina Lake ditch significantly aug-

menting the flow of Rock Creek, ample quantities of water could pass into the previously constructed storage reservoir located near the confluence of Rock and Slate creeks. The water added to Rock Creek by the Christina Lake ditch kept the reservoir filled throughout the summer. Water flowing from the reservoir into the Rock Creek ditch could then drive the hydraulic equipment for the full work season. In a document used to support a placer claim patent application, Granier succinctly stated that the completion of the ditch system "increases considerably the volume of water needed for the hydraulic power without which the placers can not be worked profitably."<sup>16</sup>

While the new 16.5 mile ditch system represented an important step in the hydraulic project, the construction work did not come cheaply. Granier spent \$32,000 to build the Rock Creek ditch and the work on the Christina Lake ditch cost an additional \$28,000. A \$6,000 sawmill, constructed to supply lumber for the building of twenty-nine flumes interspersed throughout the length of the two ditches, added to the debit column.<sup>17</sup> This substantial initial investment preceded the recovery of a single flake of gold.

Following this spending spree, Granier apparently felt compelled to defend his record of expenditures. He wrote an article for the *Fremont Clipper* which clearly illustrated that he would not be deterred by skeptics. Granier stated, "Of course I am anxious to see the work completed, but as for the amount of capital I have expended in this enterprise, I have no fear." In the same article, he confidently reported "that I will accomplish what I started in to do, surprise the world with the output of gold from my mines in the vicinity of Atlantic City."<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, many prominent authorities speculated that Granier would soon launch a successful project. In an 1887 report, Wyoming Territorial Governor Thomas Moonlight discussed a recent visit with Granier in Atlantic City. Moonlight wrote, "I had the pleasure of spend-

12. continued... Atlantic City contain a discussion of the adoption of bylaws requiring both United States citizenship and no unbroken periods of absence from the mining district greater than twelve months as prerequisites for holding valid mining claims. Enactment of these requirements may indicate some sort of public reaction to Granier's proposed mining activities. Although the reasons for this possible reaction are unknown, Granier complied with mining district bylaws. See *Atlantic Mining District Mining Record*, Vol. A, ARM&M, pp.80-81.

13. Personal information about Granier is located in "Exhibit A," *South Pass Area Collection*, HR; "Mrs. Granier," *Fremont Clipper*, 29 October 1887, p.3, article found in Granier file at Pioneer Museum in Lander; Pfaff, *Nuggets*, p.11; Helen Henderson, unpublished manuscript, p. 3; and Peter Sherlock, "Early Mining in Atlantic," *Works Progress Administration Collection* (hereinafter cited as WPA), HR.

14. Louis D. Ricketts, *Annual Report of the Territorial*

*Geologist to the Governor of Wyoming* (Cheyenne, Wyoming: Leader Book and Job Printing House, 1888), p. 72; *Fremont County Quit Claim Record*, Vol. D, ARM&M, p.132; and "Folder 7," *South Pass Area Collection*, HR.

15. Henderson, unpublished manuscript, pp.3-4.

16. "Folder 7," *South Pass Area Collection*, HR.

17. *Ibid.*

18. "Atlantic City!" *Fremont Clipper*, 29 October 1887, np.

ing two days under his hospitable roof, and made personal inspection of his gigantic undertaking." After noting that Granier had spent \$150,000 on the project, Moonlight stated, "The work is almost finished, and next spring will witness a wonderful excitement in that locality. The building of this canal has given employment to a large number of men and teams, and Mr. Granier has justly earned the right to reap a rich reward."<sup>19</sup>

Despite the atmosphere of optimism which accompanied the completion of the ditch system in 1887, Granier's placer claims did not immediately begin to yield gold. Part of the reason for the delay related to the onset of a series of petty disagreements which seemed to plague Granier throughout his years in Wyoming. The first of these feuds involved Wyoming's Territorial Engineer, Elwood Mead.

Mead became Wyoming's first Territorial Engineer in 1888 and the first State Engineer when Wyoming achieved statehood in 1890. Between 1888 and 1890, Mead strongly influenced the framing of Article VIII of the Wyoming State Constitution which deals with water law. The most significant portion of Article VIII involves the mandate to place all water within Wyoming under control of state government. Thus, the constitution gives the state of Wyoming broad powers to regulate water usage.<sup>20</sup>

The constitution vested water regulation authority in the State Engineer's office. However, Mead had begun to centralize control of Wyoming's water even before statehood became reality. He achieved this control by requiring that water users obtain permits before beginning water diversion. Although the regulation process would pertain to all water users, the specific intent of placing water under state control related to the desire to utilize this precious commodity in a manner which would benefit farmers interested in settling in Wyoming.

In the meantime, Granier's efforts to divert water in connection with his



RICHARD COLLIER, WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



J.E. STIMSON COLLECTION, WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

**Top:** *Granier Ditch on hillside south of Atlantic City, 1985*

**Bottom:** *Christiana Mine, Atlantic City, 1903*

19. *Report of the Governor of Wyoming to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1887), p.36.

20. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, second edition, revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp.253-255.

mining project managed to anger some local irrigators hoping to use water for agricultural purposes. By constructing dams at Christina and Gustave lakes and transferring water into a ditch system leading to Rock Creek, Granier's project altered the natural course of these waters which normally flowed out of the lakes and into the Little Popo Agie River. Thus, Granier had effectively denied water to farmers and ranchers living along the Little Popo Agie River in the Wind River Valley. As other miners had discovered in California and Colorado, Granier learned that efforts to appropriate water for mining purposes could lead to opposition from the agricultural community.<sup>21</sup>

As this controversy simmered, Mead traveled to Atlantic City late in the summer of 1888 to provide technical comments on Granier's water project. The following summer Granier read an article in the *Cheyenne Sun* which led him to believe that Mead had spoken out in support of the agriculturalists who opposed Granier's water diversion activities. Reacting in disbelief, Granier fired off an angry letter to Mead. After all, Granier said, he had only followed Mead's own advice in carrying out his construction work. In a following letter, Granier undiplomatically implied that Mead had deliberately delayed issuing a permit to certify Granier's project.<sup>22</sup>

Mead's two response letters expressed great indignation. On August 15, 1889 Mead wrote, "Your letter of the 10th which came to-

21. A story still occasionally repeated in the Atlantic City area holds that irate farmers and ranchers in the Wind River Valley eventually used dynamite to blow up the Christina Lake Dam which Granier's workers had constructed. If this story is true, the dam was not destroyed until after Granier had left Wyoming permanently. After Granier's departure, and after subsequent attempts to resurrect his hydraulic project had failed, it is possible that ranchers used the ditch system to irrigate hay meadows near the Sweetwater River south of Atlantic City. It is also possible that Christina Lake Dam became unstable and threatened to unleash flood waters on the Wind River Valley. Either of these two possibilities could have induced residents of the Wind River Valley to blow up the dam. For information about the intense rivalry between farmers and miners in California during the late nineteenth century, see Robert L. Kelley, *Gold vs Grain* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1959).

22. Emile Granier to Elwood Mead, 10 August 1889 and 17 August 1889, "General Correspondence," *State Engineer Records*, ARM&M.

day was a rather unpleasant surprise as I had supposed that the interest I had taken in securing you your (water) rights would have relieved me from the reflections which it contains." Mead stated that he had told the reporter nothing about Granier's controversy with the irrigators and speculated that Granier must have reacted to remarks quoted from another source. Mead followed with another letter in which he told Granier, "As both your letters seem to criticize my actions and reflect on my integrity I must respectfully decline to give you any further advice than is required by my official duties."<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps realizing that he could not afford to alienate a man of Mead's competence and authority, Granier quickly endeavored to make amends. "Let me tell you at once," he wrote to Mead, "that I am very sorry indeed to be deprived of your private advices." He attempted to excuse his actions by saying that he believed it more "manly" to speak openly about his feelings. Whether Mead formally accepted the apology remains unclear, but he did maintain a professional relationship with Granier. For example, in October, 1889 Granier acknowledged receipt of a Christina Lake "certificate" which apparently provided Mead's official endorsement of Granier's plans to construct a dam and divert water.<sup>24</sup> Although the two men continued to correspond about business matters, their subsequent dialogue assumed a noticeably cooler tone.

The autumn of 1889 found Granier embroiled in further controversy. In a frantic letter to Territorial Governor Francis E. Warren, Granier wrote, "Permit me at once to ask for your protection against threats on my life and my property." He attempted to demonstrate his credibility as a bona fide Wyoming citizen by informing the governor that he had lived in Atlantic City for six years and invested more than \$250,000 in the community. He further explained that the United States government had recently granted him placer claim patents after years of investigating his applica-

23. *Ibid.*, Elwood Mead to Emile Granier, 15 August 1889 and 17 August 1889.

24. *Ibid.*, Emile Granier to Elwood Mead, 27 August 1889 and 27 October 1889.

tions.<sup>25</sup> Certainly Governor Warren would extend a helping hand to this prominent citizen in distress.

The particulars of this dispute involved property ownership. During his years of residency, Granier had acquired ownership of most of the relatively small number of buildings which comprised the town of Atlantic City. In addition, because his placer claims encompassed the ground below the entire community, he also owned land beneath certain buildings without actually owning the buildings themselves. To resolve this rather unusual situation, he offered to give other building owners conditional deeds for the land occupied by their homes.

Most residents of the community accepted Granier's offer, but not everyone proved so willing. One man insisted that Granier either grant him an outright deed or buy him out for a large sum of money. After Granier rejected his counter proposals, the man gathered a few friends together and accosted the Frenchman in the street. Although the encounter apparently involved only verbal taunts and not physical violence, Granier became frightened enough to write Governor Warren for help. Granier wrote, "Permit me to beg your prompt attention to this matter as I am positively helpless here." He felt that a half dozen soldiers or constables sent by the governor would resolve the unhappy matter.<sup>26</sup>

Although Warren's response cannot be located, circumstances indicate that no troops or constables marched into Atlantic City. In October Granier informed Elwood Mead, "I have not settled yet with the party who has threatened me. I hope I shall have no trouble, but as soon as I can leave here I shall be glad to go."<sup>27</sup> He soon did exactly that, leaving the area to winter in Paris. Since first arriving in Atlantic City in 1884, Granier had returned to France each winter when cold weather ended min-

25. Copy of letter from Emile Granier to F. E. Warren, 9 September 1889, "State Engineer's letterpressbook," *State Engineer Records*, ARM&M.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Emile Granier to Elwood Mead, 14 October 1889, "General Correspondence," *State Engineer Records*, ARM&M.

ing activity for the season. His ocean crossing following the 1889 mining season provided a welcomed opportunity to leave his troubles behind.

Whether Granier actually created these confrontational situations or simply found himself the victim of unfortunate circumstances, he displayed a definite knack for finding his way into trouble in the late 1880s. Still, he had made undeniable progress. He had completed his ditch system in 1887. Furthermore, he had received final patent on his mining claims and official approval of his dam and water diversion plans. One important technological step remained before beginning the eagerly anticipated recovery of gold from the bed of Rock Creek: the successful implementation of a piece of machinery known as a hydraulic elevator.

The elevator would play a critical role in Granier's overall hydraulic mining scheme. Hydraulic mining uses water to break down gold-bearing earth. Typically, this process involves a series of hoses which convey a high pressure stream of water through a nozzle known as a hydraulic giant. An operator directs the water stream toward a hillside, thereby bringing down a large mass of top soil to the sluices positioned below. The earth passes through the sluice box and the gold, owing to its greater specific gravity, sinks to the bottom. A series of raised cross pieces, called riffles, bisect the base of the sluice box. The riffles

capture the gold and allow its recovery.<sup>28</sup>

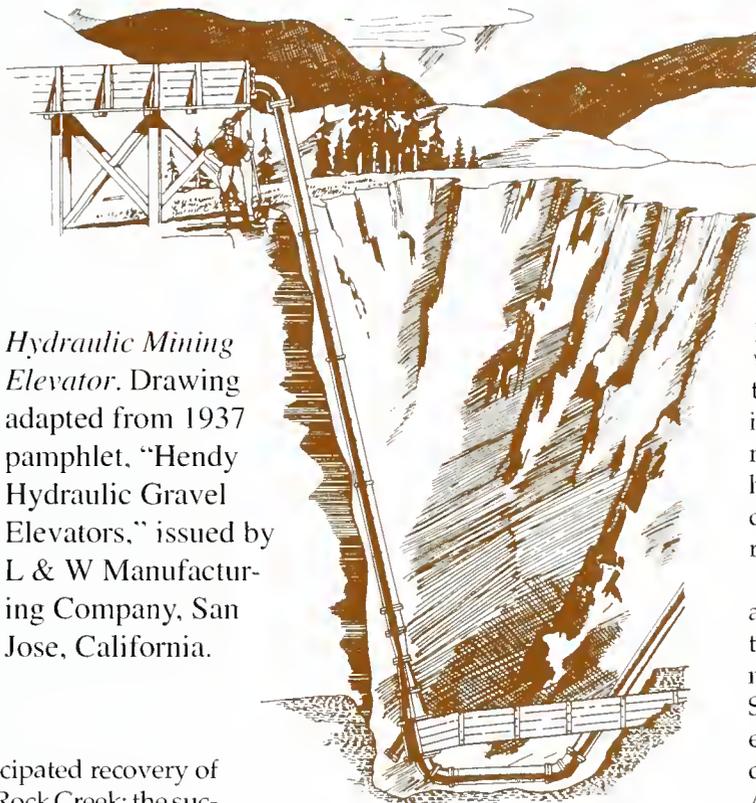
The success of this method depends, in part, on the water carrying the earth through the sluice box at a fairly rapid rate. If the sluice sits in the bed of a flat stream, not only will the riffles capture gold, but also a substantial quantity of dirt and rock debris as well. Obviously this makes gold recovery less

tor base where pressurized water propelled the ore to the top of the elevator and into the inclined sluice box. Gold recovery then proceeded as the falling water deposited particles of the precious mineral in the riffles of the sluice box.<sup>29</sup> Granier had high hopes that this method would compensate for the lack of grade in Rock Creek.

For reasons not totally clear, efforts to begin using the elevator encountered frustrating delays. In 1888 Granier stated, "I intended to wash the Rock Creek bottom with one of Joshua Hendy's (a San Francisco mining equipment company) Hydraulic Elevators because the grade of the bed of the creek is so small that it is impossible to wash off the tailings. It is not yet quite certain that this machine will work well."<sup>30</sup> Granier finally resolved the problems in time to begin operating the elevator during the 1890 summer work season. More than two years had passed between completion of the ditch system and the beginning of gold recovery efforts.

The only firsthand information available about day-to-day operation of the elevator comes from a young man named J. C. Stageman. In May, 1890 Stageman ventured forth from his parents' home in Iowa in search of independence and employment in Wyoming. After arriving in Atlantic City he had the chance to move to Christina Lake while working as a laborer charged with keeping a segment of the ditch system free of obstructions. He returned to Atlantic City in June to pick up supplies and accepted an offer to begin working at the hydraulic elevator site.

Given the short work season in the high altitude locality, two crews worked separate twelve hour shifts to keep the elevator operating around the clock. Stageman worked the night shift and received three dollars pay per night. The mining company provided a cook but the work crew paid for the food. Although he complained about having to pay nine dollars to buy rubber boots that re-



*Hydraulic Mining Elevator.* Drawing adapted from 1937 pamphlet, "Hendy Hydraulic Gravel Elevators," issued by L & W Manufacturing Company, San Jose, California.

DRAWING BY HERB DAWSON

efficient. Because the bed of Rock Creek has only a slight inclination, Granier needed a solution to the gold retrieval problem.

A hydraulic elevator seemed to offer him the answer. The overall success of this operation depended on the ditch system which Granier had designed to transport water. The water would pass through the ditches and collect in a pond or small reservoir constructed some small distance above the elevator site. The pond water then flowed into a series of pipes which also led to the elevator base. The elevator acted literally to elevate one end of the sluice box, thereby creating an incline which offered sufficient fall to separate the gold from the base alluvium. A work crew shoveled ore into the eleva-

and Miners, translated by H. W. Bristow (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869), pp.442-444.

28. Several sources provide good discussions of hydraulic mining practices during the approximate time of Granier's Wyoming project. See Eugene B. Wilson, *Hydraulic and Placer Mining* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1898); Cecil E. Longridge, *Hydraulic Mining* (London: The Mining Journal, 1910); and Louis Simonin, *Underground Life, or Mines*

29. For information on the use of the hydraulic elevator see Trumbull, *Atlantic City Gold Mining*, p.90; and Longridge, *Hydraulic Mining*, pp.235-236.

30. Ricketts, *Annual Report*, p.72.

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RIVETED STEEL PIPE.

*Advertisement for Joshua Hendy Iron Works.* Taken from Longridge, C.C., *Hydraulic Mining* (London: The Mining Journal, 1910), xxiii

quired frequent replacement, he expressed general satisfaction with his financial circumstances. He stuck with the job until the elevator shut down in the fall and then closed out the work season by helping to winterize the Christina Lake dam.<sup>31</sup> Stageman's brief story provides the few details that exist about the operational phase of Granier's hydraulic elevator.

Lured by big game hunting and other adventures, young Stageman did not return the following work season.

However, work crews did continue to operate the elevator during the summer work seasons in 1891 and 1892. The following year the hydraulic system remained idle with Granier reportedly detained in France because of illness. This lack of activity did not prevent one prominent Wyoming geologist from expressing faith in the project's future. W. C. Knight declared Granier's venture to be "the largest mining undertaking in the state" which one day would "reward the company amply for their great

expenditure of money, as well as for their grit and enterprise in carrying out their scheme."<sup>32</sup> Despite this vote of confidence, Granier would never again return to Atlantic City to direct his mining campaign.

Although removed from the scene, Granier remained an indirect factor in Atlantic City in the role of absentee owner. When he departed for France after the 1892 summer mining season, Granier left his mining property in the hands of his agent, George A. Zimmerman. This continued an annual practice begun in 1885 when Granier had first employed Zimmerman. In that year they established an arrangement where by Zimmerman worked directly for Granier during the mining season. This work required him to perform various management tasks related to the mining project. When Granier returned to France each winter, Zimmerman maintained Granier's Atlantic City properties and conducted business in his absence.<sup>33</sup>

During his years in the Atlantic City area Granier acquired extensive business and personal property holdings. By 1893 he owned property valued at \$35,450. His holdings included nearly two thousand acres of land and improvements thereon, a lot in the town of Lander, four "4th class" horses, and two wagons.<sup>34</sup> As previously indicated, Granier owned several buildings in Atlantic City as well. When Granier left for France in the autumn of 1892 this property was placed under George Zimmerman's supervision. Zimmerman became year-round manager of these properties when Granier decided not to pursue his hydraulic mining efforts and also received instruc-

31. "MSS 532," J. C. Stageman Papers, HR, pp.4-9.

32. W. C. Knight, "Geology of the Wyoming Experiment Farms, and Notes on the Mineral Resources of the State," *University of Wyoming Agricultural College Department, Wyoming Experiment Station, Bulletin 14*, October 1893, p. 126.

33. Examination of George A. Zimmerman by Edward L. Johnson in "William Giessler v. Emile Granier and J. G. Edwards," *Fremont County District Court Civil Case File #572*, 7 June 1900, ARM&M, p.5.

34. *Fremont County 1893 Assessment Roll*, ARM&M, p.28.

35. *Fremont County Miscellaneous Records, Vol. B*, ARM&M, p.3. Instrument recorded December 10, 1894 states that poor health has detained Granier in Paris, France. This document grants George A. Zimmerman power of attorney in connection with the selling of Granier's property.

tions to attempt to sell all of Granier's Atlantic City property holdings.<sup>35</sup>

Zimmerman and his wife moved into Granier's Atlantic City home and remained there until October, 1896. Finding no buyers for Granier's mining property and confronted with the recent loss of his eyesight, Zimmerman decided that he and his wife should take leave of remote Atlantic City and establish domicile in Denver. Before leaving, Zimmerman hired William Giessler to look after Granier's property.

Although he offered Giessler a salary of sixty dollars per month, Zimmerman explained that actual payment would probably not occur. He cited recent letters from Paris which indicated that Granier had no money. Zimmerman told Giessler that he could not realistically expect to receive his salary unless a sale of the Granier property provided money for payment. Unemployed and happy to have a chance to live in Granier's house, Giessler accepted the uncertain deal. Satisfied that he had arranged for appropriate care of Granier's interests, Zimmerman departed for Denver.

The arrangement worked well for a time, but Giessler eventually decided that he could not continue to endure the vain hope that he might one day receive a salary. In October, 1897 he wrote directly to Granier in Paris to protest: "...Mr. Zimmerman's promises are such that no one can believe him...." Although he requested that Granier provide payment for past wages, Giessler still received no money.<sup>36</sup>

Finally losing all patience, Giessler initiated proceedings in Fremont County District Court that resulted in the placement of a Miner's Labor Lien on all of Granier's property. The amount of the lien equaled the salary which Giessler felt he had earned between October 4, 1896 when Zimmerman had left for Denver, and May 3, 1898.<sup>37</sup> Other plaintiffs also jumped on the legal bandwagon

and filed motions for recovery of money supposedly owed them by Granier.<sup>38</sup>

As his legal troubles mounted, Granier efforts to sell his mining properties accelerated. At one point rumors circulated that Granier intended to sell to an English mining syndicate. The deal reportedly fell through because Granier rejected the pay-cut offered him. Local legend in Atlantic City holds that Granier's refusal to accept the purchase offer led his creditors to have him arrested and thrown into debtor's prison in Paris.<sup>39</sup> No solid evidence exists to verify this story.

In the meantime D. G. Calhoon, an agent of the Dexter Mining Company headquartered in Rochester, New York, developed a keen interest in Granier's placer claims. Calhoon traveled to Paris and in February, 1902 successfully negotiated purchase of Granier's claims, mining equipment and other property for an unknown amount of money. The settlement which closed the purchase also resulted in the removal of all liens attached to Granier's former property.<sup>40</sup> Although Emile Granier had permanently left the state a decade earlier, this episode culminated an inglorious series of events which marked the official end of his rather unrewarding involvement in Wyoming gold mining.

In the optimistic atmosphere which prevailed a decade earlier, few skeptics entertained thoughts about the demise of Granier's South Pass mining project. Following the 1891 mining season, Granier stopped in New York City during his return journey to France. On October 23 he wrote a letter to Elwood Mead from the Hotel Brunswick saying that he hoped to arrange a hydraulic mining exhibit for the upcoming World's Fair in Chicago.<sup>41</sup> Although no records remain to verify whether he managed to organize the exhibit, Granier's actions during 1892 did not indicate the imminent passing of his Wyoming mining ambitions. In May, 1892 he bought the Red Cloud Saloon in Atlantic City which he converted into office space for his mining company.<sup>42</sup> He also acquired the North Pole Claim in late October, 1892 shortly before his seasonal return to France. Despite these signs of activity his departure in 1892 marked the

abrupt termination of his mining project.

The rapid transformation from World's Fair optimism to cessation of his plans raises puzzling questions. Considering the time, money and technological expertise which Granier invested in his grandiose hydraulic operations, why did the project fail so suddenly? Explanations vary and remain the subject of some uncertainty.

Monetary considerations certainly played a role in the project's demise. Estimates regarding the amount of gold Granier recovered vary from zero to \$200,000.<sup>43</sup> Considering the large initial investment necessitated by the ditch construction alone, even the more optimistic of the two figures would have left the project considerably shy of spectacular

39. For information about Granier's unsuccessful negotiations with the English syndicate see Charles E. Bates, "Early History of the Gold Rush in the Atlantic and South Pass Country," *Lander Evening Post*, 3 February 1930, np. Bates says that Granier did not serve time in jail, but that his financial backers had him arrested and prohibited him from leaving Paris, France. A similar story is repeated in Virginia A. Scharif, "South Pass Since 1812: Woman Suffrage and the Expansion of the Western Adventure" M.A. thesis (Laramie: University of Wyoming, 1981), pp.97-98. Pfaff, *Nuggets*, p.13; and Mrs. Lyle Maerer and Jim Carpenter, "Atlantic City," *Annals of Wyoming* 40, no.1 (April 1968), pp.116-118. Authors of both sources state that financial misadventures landed Granier in jail. The only support for their contentions come from unconfirmed rumors.

In an interesting aside, both Bates and Pfaff report that Granier authored a comprehensive history of the United States through the Reconstruction period. Copies of this work have not been located, although the possibility exists that publication occurred only in France. Granier did author a small treatise entitled "What Is Money" (Denver, Colorado: C. J. Kelly, Printer and Binder, 1892) which outlined his preference for a bimetal monetary system. Originally issued as a series of four articles published in the *Denver Times* during the autumn of 1892, the small, bound volume can be found at the University of Wyoming library in Laramie.

40. Discussion of the sale to the Dexter Mining Company occurs in the previously cited article by Bates, "Early History of the Gold Rush in the Atlantic and South Pass Country." For official recordation of the sales transaction, see *Fremont County Quit Claim Record*, Vol. D, 17 March 1902, ARM&M, pp.129-134. This document indicates that the Dexter Mining Company paid \$1 to acquire the property, although this probably is not an accurate reflection of the amount received by Granier.

41. Emile Granier to Elwood Mead, 23 October 1891, A&RM.

42. *Fremont County Quit Claim Records*, Vol. B, ARM&M, p.391.

43. The estimate that Granier recovered no gold came from Jim Sherlock during an interview with the author on August 24, 1985. Sherlock based his estimate on stories he heard from his uncle, Peter, who worked for Granier. The \$200,000 estimate is contained in Arthur C. Spencer, *The Atlantic City Gold District and the North Laramie Mountains* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1916), p.25.

36. *Fremont County Civil Case File #572*, ARM&M. The preceding discussion about the agreement between George A. Zimmerman and William Giessler essentially reflects the viewpoints of Zimmerman as stated in several depositions.

37. *Fremont County, Lien Record*, Vol. A, 14 May 1898, ARM&M, pp.83-84.

38. *Fremont County Civil Case Files #659 and #663*, ARM&M.

economic success. Although the exact source of his investment money is unknown, Granier may have had financial benefactors who simply tired of waiting for the big strike that never came.

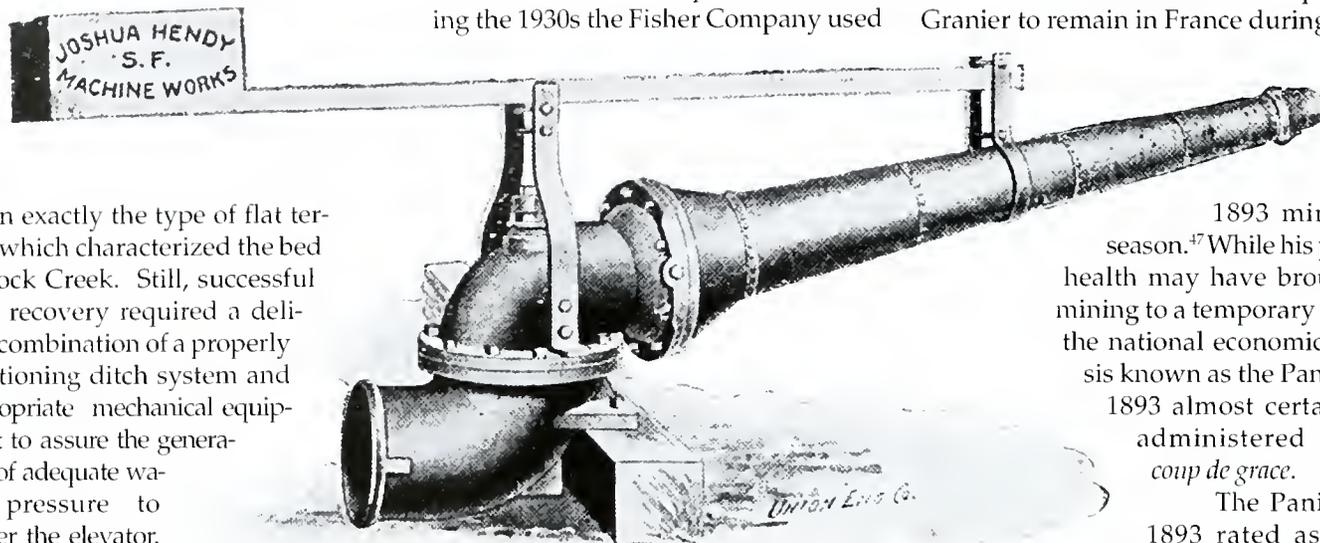
Problems with the hydraulic elevator may also have hampered Granier's efforts. His plan to use the elevator stands as a well conceived decision designed to enhance gold recovery

*high pressure into the sides of the mountains expecting to catch his values in the riffles below. It was necessary to have a bed rock or a solid clay on which to gather his colors, but this he did not have and the more he worked the deeper they went and farther away his values escaped.*"<sup>45</sup>

The later gold recovery success of the E. T. Fisher Company of Seattle adds credence to Fourt's explanation. During the 1930s the Fisher Company used

verifying his conviction that significant gold deposits existed along Rock Creek, but also suggests that Granier employed a mining technology inappropriate for the circumstances he encountered.

Problems related to personal finances, operation of the hydraulic elevator, and the nature of the gold ore may have all played some part in the termination of Granier's Wyoming mining enterprises. In addition, several accounts stated that an illness required Granier to remain in France during the



ery in exactly the type of flat terrain which characterized the bed of Rock Creek. Still, successful gold recovery required a delicate combination of a properly functioning ditch system and appropriate mechanical equipment to assure the generation of adequate water pressure to power the elevator. Granier himself had acknowledged the possibility of problems with the elevator in the 1888 Territorial Geologist's report. Peter Sherlock, who worked on the hydraulic project until a dynamiting accident blinded him, later wrote that, "...it was found that the ground was too flat to permit of its being worked successfully by the hydraulic process..."<sup>44</sup> Perhaps the three brief seasons of elevator operation between 1890 and 1892 demonstrated the ineffectiveness of this technology.

In addition, the character of the gold itself may have inhibited its recovery. Judge E. H. Fourt, who Granier had hired to perform legal work when the young lawyer first arrived in Wyoming in 1890, addressed this matter many years after the fact in a March 22, 1934 article in *The Wyoming State Journal*. In this article Fourt offered another perspective concerning the hydraulic operation's fatal flaw. Concerning Granier's approach to the project, Fourt wrote, "

*...he handled it as a straight hydraulic, forcing a stream of water under*

a huge dredge to work the same stretch of Rock Creek previously encompassed by Granier's placer claims. The dredge simply dug deeply enough into the creek bed to capture the available gold. Many reports place the value of the Fisher Company's gold earnings at \$400,000.<sup>46</sup> The success of this project provides some measure of vindication for Granier by

1893 mining season.<sup>47</sup> While his poor health may have brought mining to a temporary halt, the national economic crisis known as the Panic of 1893 almost certainly administered the *coup de grace*.

The Panic of 1893 rated as the most severe financial slump in the United States up to that time. Wyoming suffered along with the rest of the country. The Union Pacific Railroad, the bulwark of southern Wyoming's economy, declared bankruptcy in October, 1893. The Warren Livestock Company, property of Wyoming Governor and Senator Francis E. Warren, went into receivership in August, 1894. Several Wyoming banks failed as well.<sup>48</sup> The pervasive economic turmoil induced by the Panic of 1893 most certainly dealt a critical blow to Granier's ambitions.

**W**hat of Monsieur Granier's ultimate destiny? Only a few bits of evidence remain. For example, his 1898 letter to William Giessler listed his Parisian mailing address as No. 10 Rue d'Athenes. However, little additional news about Granier reached Wyoming after the sale of his mining property to the Dexter Company in 1902. One exception came in 1907 when a Lander newspaper melodramatically reported, "Emile Granier resides in Paris, France and is a

44. Quote included in Peter Sherlock, "Early Mining in Atlantic," *WPA Collection*, HR. See also Peter Sherlock, "Mining Operations at Atlantic and South Pass," *Wyoming State Journal*, 11 April 1935, p.6.

45. Quote included in E.H. Fourt, "Interest in Gold Mining Increases Greatly as Price Rises and New Methods are Success," *Wyoming State Journal*, 22 March 1934, n.p. Several other sources offer similar explanations for the hydraulic project's failure including that of an interview of Jim Sherlock by the author, August 24, 1985; Henderson, unpublished manuscript, p.4; Pfaff, *Nuggets*, p.13; and Donna Woods, "Atlantic City: Ghost Town Refuses to Die," *Wyoming State Journal*, 4 July 1985, p.C-1.

46. \$400,000 estimate included in Massie, "After the Bust," p. 36; see also Sherlock, "Mining Operations," p. 7.

47. Knight, "Notes on Mineral Resources," p.126; C. G. Coutant, ed., *Lewiston Gold Miner* 1 (May 1894): p.7; and *Fremont County Miscellaneous Records*, Vol. B, ARM&M, pp.3-4.

48. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, pp.295-296.

**Left:** *Hydraulic "Giant"* A rotating attachment for the end of a pipeline. Taken from Longridge, C.C. *Hydraulic Mining* (London: *The Mining Journal*, 1910), figure 220A.

**Right:** an artist's delineation of the hydraulic mining process in action. A high-pressure jet of water from the nozzle, or hydraulic giant, is directed toward banks and hillsides. The resulting mass of dirt and rocks are then swept into a sluice box designed to separate gold from tailings. Taken from Simonin, Louis, *Underground Life; or Mines and Miners* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869), figure 150.

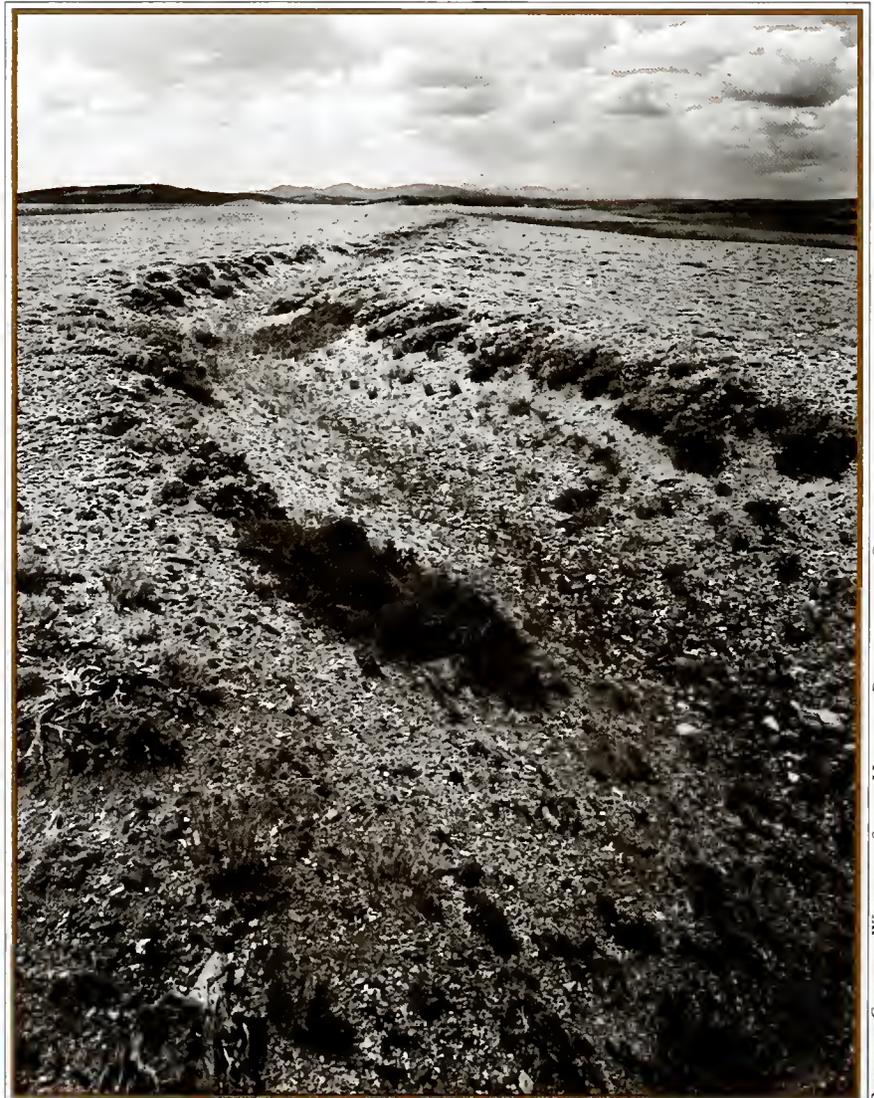
**Bottom:** a hydraulic mining operation in Wyoming, contemporary to the Granier mining venture. Location and date unknown.





Flume ruins located on a steep hillside along Rock Creek, a few miles upstream from Atlantic City, 1985

RICHARD COLLIER, WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



Ditch segment southeast of Atlantic City. Wind River Mountains in the distance, 1985

RICHARD COLLIER, WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

very old man and it is questionable whether he will ever again visit the scenes where twenty years ago he built gigantic castles and painted every cloud of fleeting thought with the yellow tinge of gold."<sup>49</sup> Indeed, Granier never returned after his departure from Atlantic City following the 1892 mining season. He apparently died in 1908 or 1909, probably in Paris.<sup>50</sup>

Although Granier's Atlantic City mining endeavors never brought him the personal fortune he most certainly coveted, an examination of the larger historical context surprisingly reveals an optimistic picture. Granier's most telling contribution is the renewed vitality his project brought to Atlantic City and the young state of Wyoming. Noted Western mining historian Otis E. Young has written that money invested in mining played an important role in stabilizing frontier society. He wrote: "it was expended in payrolls, transportation, cost of materials, and construction of which most was locally purveyed and from which the general locality benefitted." He concluded that "no matter what tenor of ore it was hoisting, a working mine was doing its share toward western development."<sup>51</sup>

J. C. Stageman, the young man who labored on the Granier project during the summer of 1890, offers testimony substantiating Young's assertions on a personal level. After his summer employment ended, Stageman wrote, "it was a proud day that I sent my father \$100 saved out of my summer earnings. Times all over the United States were bad, and I knew that he would appreciate having a little extra at home."<sup>52</sup> Herein lies the foremost value of Granier and his work. Not only did his hydraulic mining project enhance the welfare of Stageman's family in Iowa, it also provided

an injection of economic vitality which contributed to the survival of a small, isolated mining community.

Although Granier brought an important glimmer of prosperity to the Atlantic City scene, the failure of his project had more sobering implications for the state of Wyoming as a whole. Newly admitted to the Union in 1890 and seeking positive publicity that would attract new settlers, the sudden failure of the state's largest mining enterprise must have discouraged promoters interested in advertising Wyoming's mineral wealth to the world. The failure of Granier's mining project happened to coincide with a national economic crisis which caused bankruptcies across Wyoming. In 1893 the statewide financial climate would have appeared rather unappealing to prospective settlers and positively frightful to potential investors.

These grim occurrences might lead to the conclusion that Granier's story has no real importance. After all, his visions of earning wealth in Wyoming met with resounding defeat. Yet this very defeat renders his story worth telling. Many viewed the nineteenth-century West as a land of abundance where anyone with pluck and determination had a chance to find his fortune. This belief lured farmers, ranchers, miners, merchants and others to the West. The success encountered by a few fortunate opportunists often overshadows the reality of the majority who tried and failed. Granier's efforts speak on behalf of many who found that a harsh climate and scarce water served as formidable barriers to prosperity. Statehood had arrived, but life in Wyoming remained a challenging option that only a few would choose.

*The author wishes to thank the Wyoming Council for the Humanities for financially assisting with the preparation of this article.*



MAUREEN HOWELL

A PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTOR TO *Wyoming Annals*, BRUCE J. NOBLE, JR. (1958-) MOVED TO WYOMING FROM THE PITTSBURGH AREA IN 1976. HE OBTAINED HIS B.A. IN AMERICAN STUDIES AND M.A. IN HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING. WHILE WORKING AS A SUMMER INTERN AT SOUTH PASS CITY NOBLE BECAME INTERESTED IN EMILE GRANIER. COMPLETING GRADUATE STUDIES HE WENT TO WORK FOR THE WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE IN CHEYENNE AS A SURVEY HISTORIAN. IN 1986 HE BEGAN HIS CAREER WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, WORKING AS AN HISTORIAN FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES IN WASHINGTON, DC. DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS NOBLE HAS BEEN IN THE PRESERVATION PLANNING BRANCH, ASSISTING THE NPS AND OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE TASK OF PRESERVING AMERICA'S CULTURAL RESOURCES.

NOBLE IS A MEMBER OF HALF A DOZEN HISTORY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION AND THE WYOMING STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. HE AND HIS WIFE, PATRICIA, LIVE IN PISCATAWAY NATIONAL PARK IN ACCOKEEK, MARYLAND. ALTHOUGH HE HAS THE GOOD FORTUNE TO LIVE CLOSE TO THE POTOMAC RIVER, NOBLE MAINTAINS AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN WYOMING AND THE WEST.

49. Miles O'More (also known as Charles E. Bates), "Early Days in Fremont County," *Wind River (Lander) Mountaineer*, 15 February 1907, p.4.

50. A rough estimate regarding the year of Granier's death is found in Sherlock, "Early Mining in Atlantic," p.2.

51. Otis E. Young, Jr., *Western Mining* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p.288.

52. "Manuscript 532," J. C. Stageman Papers, HR, p.9.

**B O O K  
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**ROCKY  
MOUNTAIN WEST:  
COLORADO, WYOMING,  
AND  
MONTANA, 1859-1915**

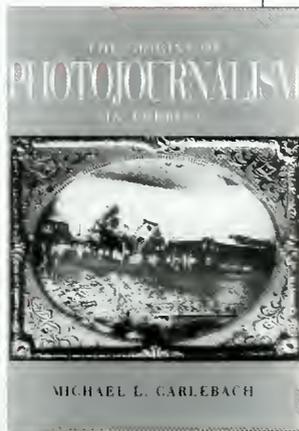
BY DUANE A. SMITH  
REVIEW BY MALCOLM L. COOK

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**THE FUR TRADE OF  
THE AMERICAN WEST,  
1807-1840**

BY DAVID J. WISHART  
REVIEW BY MELVIN T. SMITH

THE ORIGINS OF  
PHOTOJOURNALISM  
IN AMERICA



BY MICHAEL L. CARLEBACH

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SMITHSONIAN  
INSTITUTION PRESS, 1992. NOTES,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. 1X  
AND 194 PP.  
PAPER \$29.95

NBC's recent debacle in reporting on the safety of General Motors trucks resulted from a need for more bang-bang to stimulate viewer interest. Pictures of the truck alone would not have been enough. To make the point visually the truck had to be in flames. Regardless of the potential hazard of General Motors' truck design, NBC's report was more snake oil than reporting.

The entire premise of USA Today is to communicate the news visually and attractively to a society that does not take the time to read. Space once given to in-depth coverage has now been given to a picture. Most American newspapers have had to adopt much of USA Today's look to survive.

News reporting today is driven more by images than by events. A story without good visuals may be scooped by a less important but highly graphic story. The journalist's profession, which once aimed toward objective reporting and made a proud label distinct from pejorative muck-raking, has been compromised by marketing.

The MTV generation has been described as the beginning of post-literate society. A look at the origins of the pictorial press provides some understanding of a society that gets its news and information from pictures rather than words. Carlebach's book recounts those origins but never truly interprets them.

Carlebach begins with a brief history of photography's introduction in 1839 and the rivalry between the Daguerre and Talbot processes. Technical details are thoroughly covered, but photography's real, two-edged, significance to journalism is not explored. Photography is able to represent scenes with near perfect objectivity, but can be manipulated to paint a very convincing distortion. Since the medium's invention, people have given photographs excessive credibil-

ity in spite of notable exceptions to the contrary. In his introduction Carlebach acknowledges the camera's ability to lie: "We know, of course, that photographs do not always tell the truth" (p. 4). But the truly interesting problem of photography and objectivity is missed.

Although nearly from the beginning of the medium photographs were published in newspapers as engravings. Photojournalism as a discipline did not begin until the first halftone was reproduced in 1880. Carlebach considers photojournalism's precedents by looking at the early use of the camera to document news, but he spends more time looking at the events than how the camera recorded them. Two chapters cover the problems of dissemination of photographic prints, the introduction of modern photographic processes and the invention of the halftone, but the book's bulk is devoted to the Civil War and westward expansion.

Ultimately Carlebach's book is more a general history of photography in American than an analysis of photojournalism. It complements many, if not most, histories of photography in that its intellectual foundation is historical rather than aesthetic, and in that it considers photography something more than an evolving art form. The book is interesting and enjoyable to read but seems to miss the title's mark.

The Smithsonian Institution Press has again produced a handsome volume that is well designed. Photographs never run over the gutter and are reproduced with excellent tonality. The book is printed on glossy stock with sewn signatures.

RICHARD PEARCE-MOSES  
CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHS  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES,  
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY,  
TEMPE

It is difficult to imagine a more helpful or comprehensive record of a tribe than that of the Omaha left by Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche. The collaboration between Fletcher, a self-trained anthropologist who worked at Harvard's Peabody Museum in the 1890s, and La Flesche, a member of a prominent Omaha family and Fletcher's adopted son who worked for the Bureau of American Ethnology, produced an intimately detailed and richly illustrated study of the tribe.

Their two-volume work, which preserves an overwhelming catalog of ethnographic information about the nineteenth century Omaha, originally appeared in 1911 as the Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. The University of Nebraska Press reprinted the entire report (minus the list of original owners of allotments on the Omaha Reservation and the accompanying map) as a two-volume paperback in 1972, and in a 1992 edition added an introduction by Harvard-trained anthropologist Robin Ridington, professor of anthropology at the University of British Columbia. The inclusion of Ridington's introduction answers a criticism of the 1972 edition by placing the work in historical context and providing biographical information about the co-authors. Readers now get a better sense of the work, researched before anthropologists "invented" fieldwork and before the emerging field of anthropology prescribed a "correct" way to document the Native American experience.

Fletcher and La Flesche cover Omaha life ranging from tribal organization, government and social life to music, disease and its treatment, religion and ethics, and language. While much of the work describes what might be called traditional or pre-contact Omaha ways, the appendix describes Omaha history from contact with white traders in the mid-seventeenth century through 1910. The book

embodies twenty-nine years of fieldwork which, given La Flesche's tribal connections, produced "unusual opportunities to get close to the thoughts that underlie the ceremonies and customs of the Omaha tribe" (p. 2).

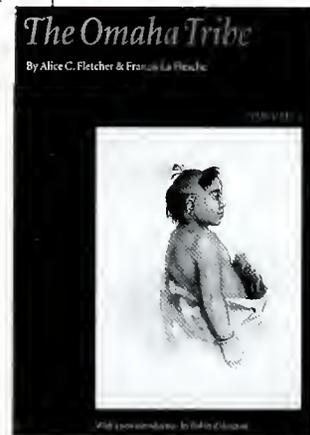
Many Omaha stories appear in the words of their speakers and Fletcher and La Flesche use Omaha categories to organize their research. Initially this earned scorn from professionals in the newly emerging field of anthropology who sought to build the discipline on a foundation of scientific objectivity and organization. Many anthropologists and ethnographers have since warmed to Fletcher and La Flesche's methodology.

The 197 illustrations, including many photographs, aid the reader immeasurably in understanding the surrounding text. Unfortunately, few photographs depict women and their roles. Numerous song scores will fascinate music aficionados. Likewise, liberal doses of Omaha terms will interest linguists, although the book lacks a comprehensive dictionary and the brief, three-page, chapter on language gives only a cursory analysis.

Despite the inclusion of fascinating legends and generally good narrative, *The Omaha Tribe* will not likely inspire many cover-to-cover readings. The book succeeds wonderfully, however, as a reference work. The book's age and a flaw in the conclusion containing reference to the Omahas in the past tense may serve to encourage needed research into the tribe's twentieth century history.

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HISTORY PH.D CANDIDATE  
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LINCOLN

## THE OMAHA TRIBE VOLUMES I AND II



BY ALICE C. FLETCHER AND  
FRANCIS LA FLESCHÉ

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, APPENDIX, INDEX. 660 PP. PAPER, EACH VOLUME \$12.95; SET OF TWO \$25.90.

CUSTER'S LAST  
CAMPAIGN:  
MITCH BOYER AND  
THE LITTLE BIG HORN



RECONSTRUCTED BY  
JOHN S. GRAY

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
PRESS, 1991. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS,  
APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX.  
IX AND 446 PP. CLOTH \$35.00.

The late Dr. John Gray (1910-1991) was an acknowledged historian of the Custer fight. This substantial volume further demonstrates the skill and methodology he constantly applied to the interpretation of this popular and controversial event in western history. The book can be considered a refinement of Gray's acclaimed *Centennial Campaign* (Ft. Collins: Old Army Press, 1976). Both works now replace Edgar I. Stewart's *Custer's Luck* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955) as the standard text of the campaign. *Custer's Last Campaign* has been labeled the most important book ever written about the Battle of the Little Big Horn, a fitting description.

Gray was intrigued with Mitch Boyer, the mixed blood scout who died on June 25, 1876 with Custer. Because so little was known of Boyer's early life, Gray was determined to write his biography which takes up the first third of the book. Boyer, of French and Sioux parentage, moved from Missouri to the Fort Laramie vicinity in 1849. He traded there for some years before moving into the Yellowstone Country in 1864. After serving the army in various capacities at Fort C. F. Smith he lived with the Crows. He married into the tribe in 1869 and worked for their agents. The reader might be interested to know that his half-brother, John, was the first person legally hanged in Wyoming Territory (4/21/1871).

By 1875 Mitch Boyer was recognized by the army as the best guide in the country. In 1876 he was hired to guide Gibbon's Montana column. On June 10, 1876 he was transferred to Custer's column. It was in this role that Mitch Boyer rode with Custer and the Seventh Cavalry into immortality. At the point of Boyer's transfer Gray begins his reconstruction of Boyer's and Custer's last days.

The last two-thirds of the book minutely details the trail to Last Stand Hill. Gray does an admirable and believable job of reconstructing the fi-

nal sequence of events for the Custer battalion. As Custer moved down the east side of the Little Big Horn he discovered that Reno's force was being overwhelmed. He decided to relieve the pressure on Reno by moving down Cedar and Medicine Tail Coulees to attack the village. After Boyer informed him of Reno's collapse Custer divided his five company battalion, sending two companies to threaten the village. Gray reasoned such a maneuver would relieve pressure on Reno and give Custer a chance to find a holding position where his command could await the arrival of Benteen's battalion and the pack train. We all know the rest of the story.

In the last minutes before total engagement began, Custer ordered Boyer and the remaining Crow scouts to the rear. Boyer elected to stay. The Crow scouts survived, only to confuse generations of battle historians with what seems contradictory testimony of Custer's last movements. However, Gray feels that useful information could be culled from the recollections of the Crows, including that of the Crow scout Curly. Gray organizes itineraries for troop movements between identifiable landmarks at feasible speeds. Because cavalry officers often recorded the pace of movement, Gray employs the standard rate of three miles per hour for walking and six miles per hour for a trotting column. By using this method he is able to lay out most of the battle sequence. He charts out "time-motion patterns" to help the reader understand his argument for time and space interpretation. Thus, according to Gray's calculations, Custer's fighting lasted from 4:46 p.m. to 5:25 p.m., thirty-nine minutes to be precise. Incidentally, in *Centennial Campaign* Gray times the Custer action beginning between 4:20 p.m. and 4:25 p.m., somewhat earlier than that of his final analysis. He does not attempt to reconstruct the final fighting sequence on the Custer field, "as

no participant with Custer survived to describe it" (p. 384).

Some readers may be critical of Gray's exact, to-the-minute schedules. It would be more useful had those carefully reconstructed itineraries been placed on maps, giving the reader a better idea of the relationship between geography and event sequence. *Custer's Last Campaign* will hold a permanent place in Custer

battle historiography. One noted historian, Paul Hutton, includes it in his top-ten list of the basic books for the Custeriana library, calling it "the most informative and enlightening book on the Battle of the Little Big Horn." Most will heartily agree with this assessment.

THOMAS R. BUECKER  
CURATOR, FORT ROBINSON MUSEUM,  
CRAWFORD, NEBRASKA

I have long been an admirer of Marion Huseas' humor and articles and was looking forward to this little volume. Ms. Huseas has always researched thoroughly and an example is her book, *Sweetwater Gold: Wyoming's Gold Rush 1867-1871*. *The Best of the Old West* is no exception.

This first volume is divided into six segments with several stories in each starting with "Indians, Explorers, and Mountain Men" and ending with "Cowboys and Cowgirls." The book starts in 1519 with the Indian slave trade in the southwest and ends by giving a very thorough description of cowboys, what they did, why they did it, what they wore and why they wore it. Spurs had a functional purpose. They were designed to guide a horse. Usually not sharp enough to harm the animal, they did attract his attention. When the cowboy dismounted, the jingle, jangle of the loose spur chain served another purpose. It attracted the ladies. The episode, "Mrs. Nash," was fun reading even though I knew the ending. I've often wondered how "she" managed to be married so many times without her husbands....oh well, enough of that.

"Thanksgiving on the Frontier," "Frontier Christmas" and "Frontier Christmas Customs" paint a picture of how ingenious folks were back then and how they made do with what they had. I doubt many of us would wash apples several times and

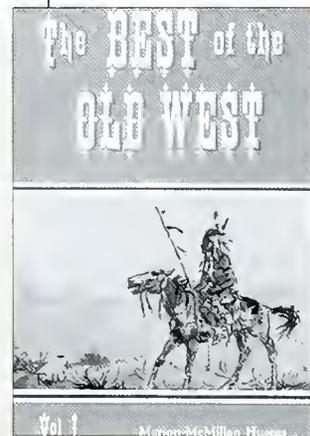
soak them for forty-eight hours to get rid of the worms. And \$8.00 for a box of raisins? All this to make mince pie that ended up "a triumph of art over nature."

Most of the anecdotes are familiar to anyone who has read or studied even a little Wyoming or western history, but this book is easy and fun reading, worth a few minutes to brush up on little known facts or remember old stories.

Eileen Skibo's illustrations at the beginning of each story tend to make the volume look like a book for young readers. Maybe that is the intent and perhaps that is the reason people who do not read anything connected to history might just pick this book up. The cover is bright and eye-catching. The book would make a nice little gift for a young person or, for that matter, anyone who is interested in learning more of the old west.

CHAR OLSEN  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, WYOMING  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,  
CHEYENNE

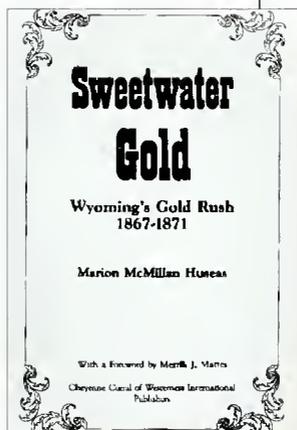
## THE BEST OF THE OLD WEST, VOL. I



BY MARION M. HUSEAS

CHEYENNE, WYOMING: MARIMAX  
PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1992.  
58 PP. PAPER \$4.95.

SWEETWATER GOLD:  
WYOMING'S GOLD  
RUSH 1867-1871



BY MARION M. HUSEAS

CHEYENNE, WYOMING: CHEYENNE  
CORRAL OF WESTERNERS INTERNA-  
TIONAL, 1991. ILLUSTRATIONS,  
MAPS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. VII  
AND 184 PP. CLOTH \$29.95

Rumors concerning the impending publication of Marion Huseas' book about the history of Wyoming's South Pass region have floated around for a decade or more. Given the lengthy gestation period required to give birth to the book, it is only natural to ask whether the final product was worth the wait. Although the study does exhibit certain merits, the book generally falls short of the expectations that may have resulted from the time required to produce it. The wait for a definitive historical study of South Pass is not yet over.

On the positive side of the ledger, *Sweetwater Gold* cites almost all the major sources pertaining to South Pass mining and community life during the 1867-1871 time period. The one notable exception is that the book makes no mention of Robert A. Murray's "Miner's Delight, Investor's Despair: the Ups and Downs of a Sub-Marginal Mining Camp in Wyoming." Published in the *Annals of Wyoming* in July, 1972, this article may rank as the best overview of South Pass mining history yet written.

Aside from this omission, *Sweetwater Gold* exhibits the use of a comprehensive range of important sources pertaining to the history of South Pass. As a result, researchers investigating early South Pass mining history will want to reference *Sweetwater Gold* as a point of departure.

On the negative side the book contains a number of generalizations and misinterpretations that range from harmless to serious in nature. On the benign side of the spectrum, the book contains statements such as the following: "Nineteenth-century mining camps looked much alike, whether they were in California, Montana, Colorado or Wyoming." (p.2) In fact, the appearance of mining camps in these four states differed enormously. Such comparisons convey a false impression by placing a relatively ob-

scure locale like South Pass City in the same league as more noteworthy mining towns like Bodie, California; Butte, Montana; or Cripple Creek, Colorado.

On a less benign level, the book contains a rather troubling discussion concerning the impact of Indians on South Pass mining activity. Huseas contends that Indian raids "drove the people from the Sweetwater mining district." (p.80) She writes elsewhere in the book that, among other things, "the ever-present Indians prevented the mining district from flourishing, and led to the end of Wyoming's gold rush." (p.161) She cites a few examples illustrating that a small number of clashes between miners and Indians did occur, but her evidence in no way supports the conclusion that Indians deserve blame for stifling the area's mining potential. The real culprit behind the declining mineral output after 1871 had much more to do with a lack of truly valuable mineral deposits than anything else. Historians need only look to the Black Hills of South Dakota to recognize that Indians could do little to keep miners out of a region that possessed bona fide mineral wealth.

From an organizational standpoint the book lacks sharp focus. Readers will encounter a broad-brush treatment of the region's mining history that considers topics ranging from the vices of the mostly male population to the emergence of South Pass City's Esther Hobart Morris as the leading figure in Wyoming's early movement to grant equal rights to women. While this diversity has some value, little new light falls on the varied subjects under consideration.

With some justification Huseas writes in the introduction that missing and inadequate source materials prevented her from producing a definitive work. Of course, the lack of sources relates in part to the lack of significant South Pass mineral wealth in the nineteenth century. Given the difficulty of weaving sketchy source

materials into a cohesive narrative, Huseas certainly deserves credit for devoting a considerable period of time to piecing together a story that is not easily told.

One suspects that efforts to produce a definitive study of the South Pass region will elude anyone utilizing mining history as their primary organizational nucleus. As a general rule, Wyoming lacked the precious mineral wealth that characterized most other Western states in the nineteenth century. Future historians looking specifically at South Pass mining may conclude that the spotty data will not fill an entire book. As Huseas discovered, writing a book-length history of a mining region aptly characterized as "sub-marginal" is a daunting task indeed.

Like the intrepid miner who remains convinced that a spectacular

fortune will settle to the bottom of the next gold pan, the South Pass region offers great prospects for further study. During the past two hundred years South Pass has played host to Indians, mountain men, the first White women to cross the Rocky Mountains (Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding), '49ers, Oregon Trail travelers, Mormon pioneers, and miners periodically from 1867 to the present day. Few areas in the West can claim a heritage so diverse and enduring. A wonderful book may result from an attempt to embrace the full scope of this region's compelling history. Until then, *Sweetwater Gold* provides just a hint of that promise.

BRUCE J. NOBLE, JR.  
HISTORIAN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

It has been 118 years since the Seventh United States Cavalry rode to glory and defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Since 1876 there probably has been more printers' ink spread on the subject of the regiment's field commander, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer, than blood spilled on the battlefield. One may wonder if the world needs a "Custer Reader." It is in this unflagging fascination and mountain of literature that *The Custer Reader* reflects its worth.

Editor Hutton, an able frontier historian of national reputation, has selected twenty-one articles and essays dealing with America's most unfortunate soldier. These writings and recollections include those by Custer himself as well as ones by those who knew him and those who fought him, and a number of modern scholarly essays each well researched and written.

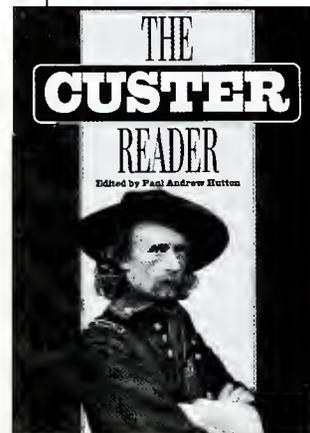
The book contains four sections of discussions on Custer and the Civil War, the Indian Wars, the Battle of the Little Big Horn and the Custer Myth. This weighty work is concluded by an

impressive bibliographic essay of interest to both students and buffs alike.

Dr. Hutton's selections provide balance in interpreting a very controversial American, allowing the reader to draw his own conclusions. Custer detractors may forget that George Armstrong Custer was a very successful Civil War soldier and a hero in the eyes of many of his contemporaries. This view was not necessarily shared by Joseph White Bull and Kate Bighead, whose opinions offer Indian perspectives.

In the essay, "The Little Big Horn," Robert M. Utley, retired Chief Historian for the National Park Service, offers the interesting thesis that Custer was a victim of federal Indian policy. He puts Custer into the context of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, which established the great Sioux Reservation encompassing half of what is now the modern state of South Dakota including the Black Hills. Custer's 1874 expedition into the

## THE CUSTER READER



BY PAUL A. HUTTON

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. MAPS, SOURCES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, XIV AND 585 PP. CLOTH \$40.00.

INDIAN ROCK ART  
OF THE  
COLUMBIA PLATEAU



BY JAMES D. KEYSER

SEATTLE: UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. 138 PP. CLOTH \$35.00, PAPER \$17.50.

Black Hills verified rumors of gold and touched off the last major gold rush in the continental United States. The invasion of white miners was clearly in violation of the Fort Laramie Treaty and angered the Sioux and their allies, the Northern Cheyenne. Their rage set the stage for Custer's defeat at the Little Big Horn. Utley neglects to mention that the army, to its credit, attempted to honor the country's obligations under the Fort Laramie Treaty by arresting invading whites. Those efforts were halted by order of President U. S. Grant. Although it does not justify erasure of Sioux title to the Black Hills, the Financial Panic of 1873 is a factor, and a discussion of its effects would have been refreshing. At that time there was a national need to bolster a faltering economy with Black Hills gold. This factor, coupled with an election year in 1876, influenced the formation of Black Hills policy.

The final essay of the book, "The Custer Myth," offers insight into the

Prehistoric rock art has fascinated viewers since archaeologists first began recording such sites in the nineteenth century. Archaeological literature abounds with publications describing and interpreting specific rock art sites around the world. Regional syntheses about rock art sites are not as commonly published, nor are such presentations as comprehensive as those prepared on single sites. *Indian Rock Art of the Columbia Plateau* is an exception, however. Its author presents in an orderly, straightforward manner all information presently known about rock art of the Columbia Plateau. The author spent years studying the region's rock art and has already published several technical reports on specific sites. In this book Keyser puts together all this regional information into one highly comprehensive, yet readable, report. He should be commended for the work that has gone into the preparation.

mystique of Custer and of his Last Stand, which has fired the imagination of Americans well over a century after that dramatic event. Indeed, it is the drama of artwork, motion pictures and television that have kept the mystique alive. In "From Little Big Horn to Little Big Man," Paul Hutton ably traces the undulating image of Custer from hero to villain, and describes modern scholarly attempts toward balance. Custer's image, according to Hutton, reflects America's own changing social history.

There are as many different views of George Armstrong Custer as there are years from the date of his death in 1876. *The Custer Reader* offers a broad spectrum of them and ought to be a welcome addition to any library.

ROBERT RYBOLT  
INTERPRETIVE PARK RANGER, LITTLE BIGHORN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD, CUSTER, MONTANA

The book begins with an introduction on the whole concept of rock art and its terminology. This is one of the book's strong points. If a reader cannot understand what the writer is talking about, then the book becomes meaningless. But that is not the case here. All technical terminology is explained in the introduction in such a simple manner that anyone should be able to understand all discussions. Additional terms and concepts are defined in the glossary.

The main portion of the book is divided into discussions on the rock art of five subregions of the Columbia Plateau: Western Montana, British Columbia, the Central Columbia Plateau, the Lower Columbia Plateau, and the Southeastern Columbia Plateau. Within these subregions distinct rock art traditions and styles occur and they are defined and discussed. Some are found only on the Columbia Plateau. Others occur primarily

in different regions of North America and are found in the Columbia Plateau as outliers from the main geographic regions in which they occur. Many of these peripheral styles are easily recognizable by Wyoming rock art researchers.

Keyser provides, wherever possible, interpretations of the story that he feels rock art is trying to tell. While many professional archaeologists do not like to make such interpretations, Keyser believes his twenty years of study, both on rock art and the ethnographic background of Native American art in general, allows him to do so. Perhaps his explanation of why he makes such interpretations says it best:

*This book is, therefore, my interpretation and retelling of some of the myriad fascinating stories with which archaeologists entertain one another around field campfires some of these deductions are not "statistically significant," and some have alternate explanations in the form of "competing hypotheses." They are, however, good stories, based on the best available scientific information and thousands of hours of analysis, study, and thought. I hope they make you think about the subject . . . (p. 21).*

If the reader, likewise, approaches Keyser's interpretations of rock art sites from a cross-cultural point of view, the

*It required a bold hand to wield the brush for such a subject. Mr. Moran has represented depths and magnitudes and distances and forms and color and clouds with the greatest fidelity. But his picture not only tells the truth, it displays the beauty of the truth.*

So wrote John Wesley Powell, the great explorer, of Moran's masterpiece, the "Chasm of the Colorado," a result of their 1873 expedition to the

book becomes much more readable. And the science behind the study also becomes more enjoyable and understandable.

Perhaps from the laymen's point of view one of the most important aspects of the book, in next to the last chapter, is the listing of rock art sites in the Columbia Plateau that are open for public visitation. Seventeen are discussed, ranging from sites that can still be seen in natural settings to those that were removed and placed into buildings before destruction or inundation of their original locations. Persons interested in seeing the rock art Keyser describes, especially, should read this chapter because it provides locational and background information necessary to find and appreciate these sites.

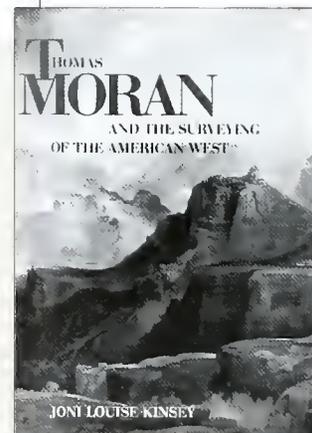
If one is interested in Native American rock art this book is one that must be read. The presentations are highly readable and the illustrations are excellent. But more important, Jim Keyser's enthusiasm about rock art is evident. If one is enthusiastic about a topic he is discussing, it makes it more enjoyable for the reader or listener. That is definitely the case with *Rock Art of the Columbia Plateau*.

DR. DANNY N. WALKER  
ASSISTANT WYOMING STATE  
ARCHEOLOGIST,  
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING,  
LARAMIE

Grand Canyon. The quote is applicable to Thomas Moran's entire, sweeping vision of the nineteenth century American West.

This in-depth study of Moran's career is published by the Smithsonian as part of a series titled *New Directions in American Art* and was written by an assistant professor of art history at the University of Iowa. It includes eight color plates and more than one hundred black and white reproductions

## THOMAS MORAN AND THE SURVEYING OF THE AMERICAN WEST



BY JONI LOUISE KINSEY

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SMITHSONIAN  
INSTITUTION PRESS, 1992. VII AND 237  
PP. NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX.  
PAPER \$34.95.

including many of Moran's lithographs, several matched by photographic views taken by his friend William H. Jackson.

The title emphasizes the relationship between Moran's art and the exploration of the American West, and implies what the book contains: an excellent blend of historical and artistic analysis.

Moran was a guest of two of America's most notable explorers, Ferdinand V. Hayden and John Wesley Powell, accompanying their expeditions in the early 1870s and returning with material for his influential paintings. The book offers the reader an in-depth study of Moran's career, but focuses on three of his major works: "The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone" (1872), "The Chasm of the Colorado" (1873-74), and "Mountain of the Holy Cross" (1875). These are preceded by a description of Moran's background and the prevailing aesthetic thought of the mid-nineteenth century that shaped his work.

In 1871 Moran was invited to join the Hayden Expedition, then in its fifth year. The relationship between commerce, science and art was complex and pervasive. Moran's trip was sponsored by the Northern Pacific Railroad and Scribner's Magazine in return for artwork that would entice tourism and enhance corporate profits. Moran joined the expedition, which also included the famous photographer William Henry Jackson, and made several studies of Yellowstone, concentrating on the falls of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. The following year, 1872, Yellowstone was set aside as America's first national park, and some credit for its establishment is given to the images brought back to Congress by Moran and Jackson. Moran's 7' x 12" oil painting of the canyon was the first American landscape to be purchased by the government and was hung in the Capitol.

Easterners in need of the curative powers of the mineral springs. A close association was developed between the healing waters and the redemptive symbolism of the mountain.

This third magnum opus resulted from an 1874 expedition, again with Hayden, into the remote and rugged Sawatch Range in central Colorado. The 14,000-foot peak with its cross of snow had intrigued the public imagination since its discovery the previous year when Jackson's photographs brought it to national attention. Its very inaccessibility lent it almost mystical powers; indeed, even today one can view the cross from only two or three points. The best vantage point is from the top of Notch Mountain, a 13,734-foot peak directly across from Holy Cross. It was from this point that Jackson made his historic glass plates of a nearly perfect cross. Having recently climbed both Holy Cross and Notch Mountain, I found Moran's painting fascinating but frustrating, because there is no single spot one can stand and see the scene he painted. As in many of his works, Moran used a composite technique, making sketches from many vantage points and then combining them for the most artistic effect.

In 1873 Moran accompanied John Wesley Powell on an expedition to the Grand Canyon, a journey that resulted in "The Chasm of the Colorado," which took two years to complete. It proved a perfect companion piece in size and style to his first and was purchased by Congress to hang opposite the Yellowstone panel.

The third major painting, "Mountain of the Holy Cross," was relentlessly promoted by the Denver and Rio Grande Railway which used it to advertise its route as well as its resort at Manitou Springs, a watering spot popular with ailing wealthy

While most people probably associate Moran with grandiose oil paintings, his biggest impact may have come through his smaller woodcuts, ink washes and lithographs which were used to illustrate official survey reports and were widely published in the most prestigious magazines of the times. A far greater number of Americans learned about the West from his published illustrations than from his major paintings. Scribner's and other notable publishers continued to act as Moran's patrons, underwriting several of his trips in return for illustrations and allowing him to return to the West again and again where he continued to paint with increasing maturity the scenes he first captured in the early

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**Sixteen Months of the Gold Diggings ...** Daniel Woods worked the California gold fields for 16 months and published this book of his experiences in 1851. It was one of the first books written about the gold fields. He reveals the hardships that the miners faced and describes the mining methods they used. Also tells how much money they made. 200 pages



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1870s. He continued to do this almost annually throughout his long and prolific career until his death in 1926. Although the point might be made that Moran's work led to the eventual exploitation of pristine areas, the importance of his work lay in bringing the adventure and romance of the

West to millions of viewers who would never experience it in person.

BETTY LU ROSENBERG  
FIELD AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT,  
ROSENBERG HISTORICAL  
CONSULTANTS,  
CHEYENNE

Duane Smith has added a meritorious volume to the Histories of the American Frontier Series. Smith writes with an understanding of the humanity of the people who settled and developed Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana. In this well written synopsis of numerous classical works, Smith demonstrates a sense of perception and proportion that includes a variety of significant episodes and narratives that highlight the major themes of western history. In so doing, his book creates a sense of unity that crosses territorial and state lines by touching upon common interests and problems of the area as a whole rather than doing a rehash of state histories.

Early in the book, Smith reviews the reasons for the development of each of the three states without dwelling on the pre-1859 history of the West. For some this may be considered a fault, but the book's title does warn the reader that a knowledge of the primitive West is subsumed. Smith then devotes individual chapters to the development of agriculture, mining, railroads, and the role of the federal government as each of these topics touches upon the states in question. It is in these eight chapters that Smith's skill as an historian shines through. His selection of materials from the books of recognized experts are as insightful as they are well chosen.

The last four chapters may be the best. It is in these pages that Smith reviews the early part of the twentieth century with all its successes and failures. He then projects the reader into

the years beyond 1915 and brings all the various threads of the book together. It is at this point that Smith reaffirms the historian's right to make sense out of the past and provide the reader with a carefully considered opinion of what it means.

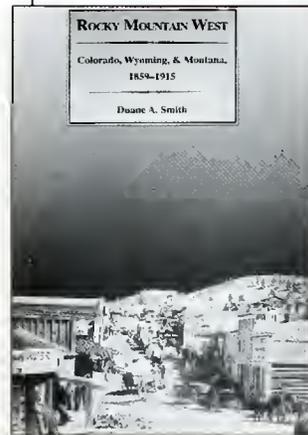
Smith then describes the foundations of the late twentieth century West and takes a hard look at the roots of its recent past. This is done so well that the reader is subconsciously encouraged to consider a reexamination of the values and infrastructures of these three states. Smith seems to be saying, "If history is of any value, it is in its use in making intelligent decisions. The past can teach us a great deal -if we understand it."

Comments on the back cover of the book lead one to believe that the book's value lies in its description of places and events.

While this is important, and Smith does it well, the real merits of this book rest in its assessment of the issues and developments, and the implied judgements Smith makes. There are many other books that provide detailed narrative history and travelogues of these three states. Smith's book is useful in acting as a catalyst for the authors that have preceded him.

The book is well organized and has a useful bibliography with extensive notes. There are few pictures, but the meat of Smith's work needs no illustrations. If there are any weaknesses in the book it may be Smith's fondness

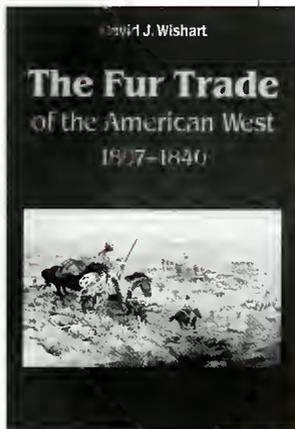
## ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST: COLORADO, WYOMING, AND MONTANA, 1859-1915



BY DUANE A. SMITH

ALBUQUERQUE: UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. VII AND 290 PP. CLOTH \$32.50, PAPER \$16.50.

THE FUR  
TRADE OF THE  
AMERICAN WEST,  
1807-1840



BY DAVID J. WISHART

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX, 237 PP. PAPER \$10.95.

for the history of mining. However, since all three states have been dominated by the economics and consequences of extraction, this fits.

Finally, Rocky Mountain West is a "good read." It is short enough to be read rather easily, it is cleverly written with good humor, and scholarly enough to benefit all who invest the time.

Smith is a professor of history at

Fort Lewis College and specializes in mining and urban history and has written numerous books in these areas of study. He is a biographer of H. A. W. Tabor, Colorado's well known miner and entrepreneur.

MALCOLM L. COOK  
RETIRED HISTORY TEACHER,  
CHEYENNE

Because of its geographic focus this book is an excellent supplement to traditional narratives about the American West fur trade. First published in 1979, it is an example of good interdisciplinary writing. The author encourages additional studies to treat more completely the roles of American Indians in the western fur trade.

Wishart's preface indicates that this book is a synthesis directed toward the fur trade's geographical setting, the two production subsystems therein with their macro-geographic structures and man's intimate relations with the environment. It also includes the author's own assessment of the latter topic (p. 10).

Two dominant geographic features -the Missouri River with its many tributaries, and the valleys, streams and isolation of the Rocky Mountains- focus Wishart's study. Indian tribes living in these areas had already been impacted by the arrival of the horse, the relocation of other Indian tribes from east of the Mississippi River, and cultural disruptions resulting from Euro-American trade goods and subsequent options.

The British fur companies, with well-established trading policies and extensive resources, penetrated the upper Missouri River area from Canada at an early date. There they proved formidable competitors to the Americans who probed westward from St. Louis.

The fur trade strategy for the upper Missouri involved that river as its main transportation artery to reach the

posts and forts built along its banks and major tributaries. At first, trade goods were delivered in keel boats and pirogues, but after 1830 steamers gave more predictability to the delivery of trade goods and the shipping of furs; however, the mackinaw (raft) was the real workhorse for downriver freighting.

The taking of furs and hides in this region was done by both Euro-Americans and Indians. Each group required large support labor forces provided by camp tenders and Indian women. The best furs were taken in the spring and fall seasons, then traded at posts or forts during the early summer. Winter was freeze-up time and mainly about survival.

Indian tribes gave their own spin to the fur trade with the Blackfeet as hostiles and the Assiniboin as selective traders, but with most tribes being supportive. Beaver was the prime fur, but was never economically as important or enduring as the buffalo. Competition for resources was keen between the American Fur Company and other St. Louis-based companies.

It was William Ashley who first caught the vision of trapping away from the Missouri. He chose to use Euro-American trapping brigades mainly, to provision them with overland supply lines, and to do his trading at the summer rendezvous held between 1825-1840 at some appropriate location within the region. Here furs were traded, supplies ob-

tained and enough whoopee raised to keep trappers in the field year-round.

Annual trapping cycles were similar to those on the Upper Missouri, except that winters were spent in wooded valleys west of the continental divide where game and forage were available.

These trappers found competition from the British in the Northwest, from Taos trappers, and from adventurers like Captain Benjamin Bonneville and Nathaniel Wyeth. Other factors contributing to the decline of business were depleted resources, competition from silk, de-

clining prices and increasing costs.

The transition from brigades to forts beginning in 1834 set the tone for the remaining years of fur trading, and the American Fur Company bought out those competitors who were still around after 1834. It was the end of an era.

Wishart's book gives readers a good overview of the fur trade, the people and companies involved, and the factors affecting their successes and failures. While they never had national importance, the trappers did exploit a vast hinterland for St. Louis.

Wishart's assessment sees these men as Jacksonian capitalists out to find

a fast fortune where they could. He credits their roles as explorers who possessed territory for the United States, but he also indicates that they left a legacy of exploitation - of beaver, bison and the Indians who suffered immensely from alcohol and smallpox - a legacy still with us.

This book is well written and thoroughly documented. Keeping it in print is a valuable service to students of the American fur trade.

MELVIN T. SMITH  
HISTORIAN  
MT. PLEASANT, UTAH

Focus/continued from page 5

postmodern contemporary culture pervading our society. It is the culture of oral tradition, stories and folklore. Horseback Culture is the legacy of the so-called "rustlers" of Johnson County.

Another theme which threads its way through the fabric of American culture and that was inherent in the Johnson County War is vigilante justice. At the time of the invasion Wyoming was undergoing the difficult transition from territory to statehood. The cattlemen's justification for the invasion - a resort to vigilante justice - was that the breakdown of the Johnson County court system forced law-abiding citizens to take matters into their own hands.

Nowhere is the defense for vigilante justice better articulated than in *The Virginian* (1902) by Owen Wister. This most famous of all Western novels has many themes and messages, but one which particularly stands out is Wister's insistent justification of the vigilante actions of his friends, acquaintances, and Cheyenne Club peers. Being aware of Wister's affiliation with the big cattlemen helps one understand his

defense of the invasion. Between 1885 and 1891 Wister's annual visits out West by train were often occasioned by a stop in Wyoming's capitol city where he was a welcome guest at the Cheyenne Club. Many members of the Club were old friends from Philadelphia or Harvard. On his first trip to Wyoming in 1885 Wister stayed the entire summer on the VR Ranch near Glenrock. He was the guest of Major Frank Wolcott, one of the principal organizers and leaders of the invasion. The summer preceding the invasion Wister was in Johnson County, a guest at the TTT Ranch where the invaders rested before riding to the KC Ranch and killing Nate Champion and Nick Ray.

The idea that Wister was, in fact, much more at ease in Philadelphia and Cheyenne than at a cow camp, is demonstrated in chapter thirteen of *The Virginian*, "The Game and the Nation — Act First." Wister forcefully writes:

*There can be no doubt of this:— All America is divided into two classes,— the quality and the equality. The latter will always recognize the former when mistaken for it. Both will be with us until our women bear nothing but kings.*

It was through the Declaration of Independence that we Americans acknowledged the eternal inequality of

man ... "Let the best man win!" That is America's word. That is true democracy. And true democracy and true aristocracy are one and the same thing. If anybody cannot see this, so much the worse for his eyesight.

In Wister's novel "quality" men are represented by the Virginian and Judge Henry who take it upon themselves to rid Wyoming of the lawless element or cattle thieves. Historians and literary authorities on Wister and *The Virginian* acknowledge that Major Frank Wolcott was a primary figure in the makeup of the composite character of Judge Henry. Frank Canton's name often surfaces in the debate over who was the model for the Virginian.

When the Virginian takes part in the vigilante hanging of his former friend, Steve, he justifies the action by saying:

*He [Steve] knew well enough the only thing that would have let him off would have been a regular*

continued page 75

*jury. For the thieves have got hold of the juries in Johnson County. I would do it all over, just the same.*

The most powerful passage in the novel regarding justification of the invasion is found in the long, drawn-out conversation between Molly Wood and Judge Henry about whether or not the Virginian had done the right thing in taking the law into his own hands. After a lengthy debate over the good or evil of the action, Judge Henry gets in the final word:

*But in Wyoming the law has been letting our cattle thieves go for two years. We are in a very bad way, and we are trying to make that way a little better until civilization can reach us. At present we lie beyond its pale. The courts, or rather the juries, into whose hands we have put the law, are not dealing the law. They are withered hands, or rather they are imitation hands made for show, with no life in them, no grip. They cannot hold a cattle-thief. And so when your ordinary citizen sees this, and sees that he has placed justice in a dead hand, he must take justice back into his own hands where it was once at the beginning of all things. Call this primitive, if you will. But so far from being a defiance of the law, it is an assertion of it -the fundamental assertion of self-governing men, upon whom our whole social fabric is based. There is your principle, Miss Wood, as I see it.*

Near the end of the novel, Wister wrote:

*When the thieves prevailed at length, as they did, forcing cattle owners to leave the country or be ruined, the Virginian had forestalled the crash. The herds were driven away to Montana. Then, in 1892, came the cattle war, when, after putting their men in office, and coming to own some of the newspapers, the thieves brought ruin on themselves as well. For in a broken country there is nothing left to steal.*

The *Virginian* was published ten years after the Johnson County War. While it is obvious that Wister's sympathies lay with the cattlemen whose actions he tried to justify in the novel, his main character ultimately tran-

scended the complexities of the conflict. The mythic image of the romantic cowboy-hero eventually rode into the hearts and minds of the American public, capturing their imagination.

For nearly a century, since publication of *The Virginian* in 1902, America has had a romance with this chivalrous knight of the open plains of the Old West. The legacy of a single man or men working above or outside the established system of law and order, bringing justice to society with the violence of fists and guns, has been a dominant theme of the nation's popular culture. It is manifested in Western film, television and novels containing mythic heroes like Buffalo Bill, Tom Horn and Wyatt Earp, and by film actors such as John Wayne and Clint Eastwood who on the screen take the law into their own hands and deal out justice to criminals who have managed to elude the law.

The trouble with applying this mythic theme -the good guy with the white hat tracking down and killing the bad guy with the black hat, thus bringing justice to the land- to the Johnson County War is that it isn't that simple to determine who was whom. To the cattlemen, stock detectives like Frank Canton and Tom Horn were models for the lone cowboy-hero. But they were not Robin Hood types seeking justice for the poor and oppressed. They were hired gunmen of rich cattle barons, Sheriff of Nottingwood types, and their services included cold-blooded murder.

The men they killed, such as John A. Tisdale, Orley "Ranger" Jones, Nate Champion and Nick Ray were honest, hard-working cowboys. Although the latter two had probably mavericked their share of stock, neither had ever been charged or indicted for stock theft in Wyoming or elsewhere for that matter. Both had worked for the big outfits as wagon-bosses or "reps," had gained the respect of fellow cowboys, were well-liked by the rural community in which they lived, and were revered at their funeral by citizens of Johnson County.

The only justice associated with

the Johnson County Invasion was the surrender and indictment of the cattlemen for the heinous crime of murder. The popular uprising of the citizens of Johnson County to repel the cattlemen's invasion not only marked a partial victory for the Populist movement on the Wyoming range, more importantly it served notice to bigwigs in Cheyenne that a rural community of strong-willed and independent people rallying to fight a just cause was a force to be reckoned with. Let us not forget.

MARK HARVEY WAS BORN IN 1949 TO MISSIONARY PARENTS IN A SMALL HILLTOP VILLAGE OF NORTHERN INDIA. ACCORDING TO MARK, "IF I EVER WENT BACK, THE HINDUS WOULD PROBABLY STRING ME UP FOR COWBOYING." HE IS REFERRING TO THE FACT THAT, BEFORE HE EARNED HIS M.A. DEGREE IN AMERICAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING IN 1992, HE WORKED AS A COWBOY, HERDER, HORSE PACKER AND HUNTING GUIDE. IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT HE BECAME INTERESTED IN THE JOHNSON COUNTY WAR, LISTENING TO OLD-TIMERS IN BUNKHOUSES AND AROUND CAMPFIRES. HIS M.A. THESIS IS ENTITLED "A CIVIL WAR IN WYOMING," AND IN THE SPRING OF 1992 HE WROTE AND PRODUCED AN HISTORICAL DRAMA BY THE SAME NAME WHICH WON AN ALBANY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARD.

HARVEY AND HIS WIFE, VALERIE, LIVE AND WORK IN LARAMIE WHERE MARK IS A RADIO DISPATCHER FOR THE WYOMING HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT. SITUATED AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS DEVELOPMENT AS A WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER AND PUBLIC SPEAKER, HARVEY CURRENTLY IS CONCLUDING A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE LARAMIE PEAK AREA OF SOUTHEAST WYOMING FOR THE ALBANY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD.

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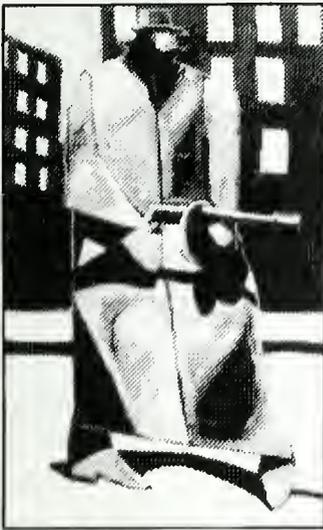
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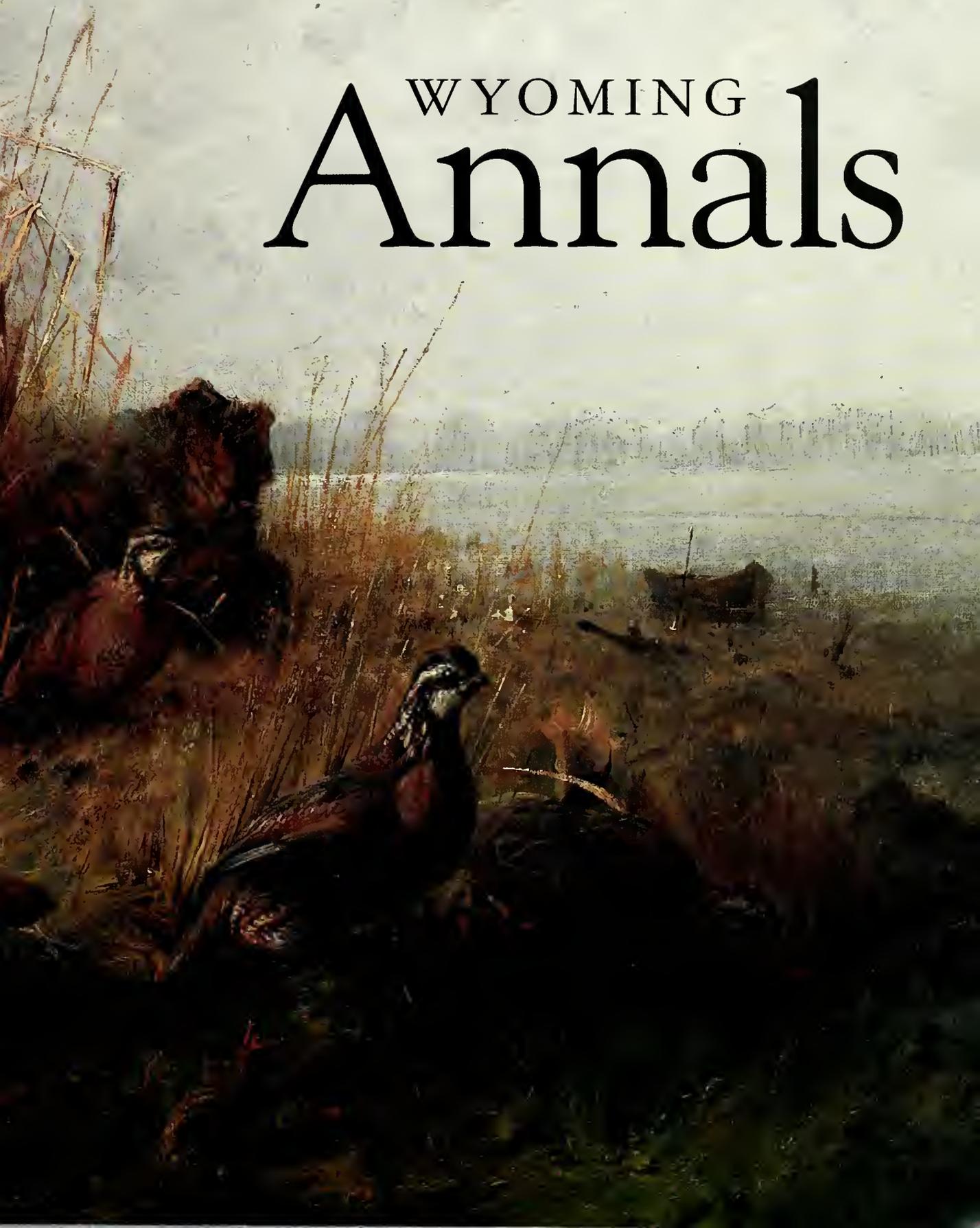
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SPRING/SUMMER 1994  
Volume 66, Nos. 1&2

# WYOMING Annals



by Peter C. Merrill



# John Fery

## *Artist of the Rockies*

*By the late nineteenth century the world was eager for pictorial images of the American West...*

Earlier they had been made by exploring, documentary artists such as George Catlin or magazine illustrators such as Paul Frenzeny and William D. Carey. Then, just prior to and following the Civil War came a school of panoramic landscape painters whose approach was mainly aesthetic rather than topographical or ethnological. Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Moran created sublime landscapes of the American West. Samuel Coleman and Sanford Gifford, with less éclat, brought the aesthetic principles of the Hudson River School to this genre of painting in which the ancient and enduring values of nature and the monumental American past were portrayed. The West offered a promising field for this kind of painting.

John Fery, a self-taught artist whose painting graces the cover of this issue of *Wyoming Annals*, fits within the tradition of panoramic, Western landscape painting. He is perhaps best remembered for large canvasses of Glacier National Park in northwest Montana, but more than a dozen of his extant paintings depict Wyoming scenes such as Jackson Lake and the Tetons.

Fery was born at Strasswalchen, Austria on March 25, 1859 to John and Maria (nee Illyes) Fery. His early life appears to have been spent partly in Pressburg (Bratislava), Czechoslovakia. Sometime during the early 1880s Fery was married to Swiss-born Mary Rose Kraemer (1862-1930). In 1886 they were living near the Ammersee, a lake twenty two miles southwest of Munich, when their oldest child, Fiammetta, was born. The family emigrated to the United States the same year, and their second child, Lucienne, was born in Ohio in 1888. By 1890 Fery was in Duluth, Minnesota where the youngest child, Carl, was born. Although Fery's stay in Duluth apparently was brief he found time, with his friend Feodor Von Luerzer (1851-1913), to paint mural decorations for the tap room of the Fitger Brewery.

It was his work in the American West, however, which causes us to remember Fery's work. His first trip west came in 1890. In 1893 and 1895 he led parties of European sportsmen on extended hunting expeditions, and described one of these trips, *Eine Jagd in Wyoming* (A Hunt in Wyoming) for a European publication. Fery's base of operations during the late 1890s was at Jackson Lake in northwest Wyoming. He considered the lake the most beautiful body of water he had ever seen and reportedly painted at least thirty-five pictures of it.

In 1903 Fery moved to Milwaukee where he remained for the next seven years, making the acquaintanceship of other German immigrant artists such as George Peter (1859-1950), a Viennese who had come to Milwaukee in 1886 to work as a panoramist. Another was Robert Schade (1861-1912), a former student of the Munich Academy and well-known in Milwaukee where he excelled in portraits and still lifes. A Milwaukee artist that Fery must have known at the time was Franz Biberstein (1850-1930) with whom he had much in common. Biberstein was a Swiss who worked as a panoramist in Germany and knew George Peter when both were students at the Karlsruhe Academy. Like Fery, Biberstein painted European mountain landscapes and then traveled to the Rockies.

During the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, railroads provided photographers and artists with opportunities for work. Fery was no exception. In 1911 he moved to St. Paul, Minnesota where he began a long association with the Great Northern Railway. His patron was James J. Hill who employed him to paint large, scenic views of the West. For years the Great Northern provided the only convenient access to Glacier National Park in northwest Montana, where the railroad also operated the only hotel. By displaying large paintings of the park in railroad stations, Hill sought to publicize the railway and its hotel. Fery spent summers in the Rockies, particularly at the park, and in the winter returned to St. Paul where he produced large canvasses. The Great Northern also connected St. Paul with Seattle, which probably accounts for the fact that Fery eventually settled in Washington. His contemporary Franz Biberstein also benefitted from railroad patronage, spending two summers in the Canadian Rockies as a guest of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

Fery settled in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1919, living there until about 1923. He painted many Utah landscapes, particularly at Zion's Canyon. Following a six-year stint in Milwaukee, where he remained until 1929, the artist moved to the cabin on Orcas Island near Bellingham, Washington. A fire the same year destroyed his cabin and wiped out all of Fery's possessions including thousands of sketches and many paintings. The

*continued inside back cover...*

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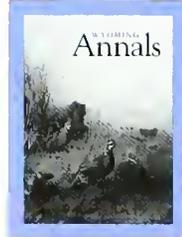
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# WYOMING ANNALS

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The editor of *ANNALS* welcomes manuscripts on every aspect of Wyoming and Western history. Authors should submit manuscripts on diskettes utilizing WordPerfect or ASCII text, and double-spaced, hard copy to: Editor *Wyoming ANNALS*, Wyoming Department of Commerce, Barrett Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002. Manuscripts should conform to *A Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press). They are reviewed by members of an editorial advisory board and the editor makes decisions regarding publication.

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EDITOR  
NOTES

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GREETINGS  
from



Hipee!  
Let'er Buck

OLD WYOMING

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WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

Wyoming Postcard, nd.

The caption on the reverse side reads: *The state of the great open spaces. Plenty of room to breathe, to roam, to hunt, and fish. One of America's last frontiers, where relics of the old West still can be seen—Wild game, unfenced prairies, cowboys, Indians, unspoiled mountain areas, and great herds of cattle.*

If promoter O.P. Hanna could see the development that has taken place in the valley of Little Goose Creek, he wouldn't worry about whether or not his little town of Big Horn would ever prosper. Mike Amundson's article in this issue of *Wyoming Annals* is the story of Hanna's dream and the early development of Big Horn. There is a difference, however, between the growth that Hanna promoted more than a century ago and the growth taking place in these pastoral places today.

When my two boys were growing up I expressed the opinion that they were living in the greatest country in the world, the best state in the country, and that there was no better place to raise a family than Cheyenne. Here you can walk into the governor's office unannounced. The five o'clock rush lasts ten minutes. The wind blows any bad air into Nebraska, crime is low and the education system is excellent. The city is small enough so you can become acquainted with lots of people, but big enough to provide anonymity. But if you want to become really anonymous, a two-hour drive south can put you into a different biological and cultural ecosystem. In Denver you can go to a ball game or theater, try a new restaurant ...maybe buy a couple of Lotto tickets. Even though Cheyenne is in the southeast corner of the state you still have access to mountains, rivers, high-altitude deserts or the serenity of rural agricultural landscapes spread over nearly 98,000 square miles. Being a resident of the state with the nation's lowest population entitles you to hunt and fish where game is under less pressure and you don't have to stand elbow to elbow to cast a fly. You don't pay state income taxes and your property taxes are low. What better place to live, work and raise a family than in Cheyenne, Wyoming?

Over the past several years I've become uneasy, however. I'm vaguely aware of a change taking place in Cheyenne and Wyoming. Before writing this column I decided to make some phone calls to people who might be able to articulate reasons for the uneasiness I felt. The perspicacious

Director of the State Board of Equalization, Nancy Freudenthal, suggested that, indeed, land ownership changes were taking place that would have an impact on Wyoming's tax base and maybe it's culture. She advised me to contact assessors in some of the counties where rapid change was occurring. After talking to employees in the Sheridan, Johnson, Sublette and Teton County assessors offices, I became convinced that we are in the midst of an historical transition. That's nothing new to historians, since we are always in transition. But the change is becoming clearer to see.

We are leaving a decade of *bust* which followed a decade of energy *boom* and are beginning to see growth once again. Housing is in such demand in Cheyenne. And it's all but impossible to find in the rural community of Buffalo. It's easy to understand why people are willing to commute from Idaho to work in Jackson Hole, or why scenic property is selling well in Pinedale and Dubois. But Buffalo? The Big-horns and the Powder River Basin are not more spectacular than Jackson Hole and the Tetons. What's happening is that people from urban areas throughout the country are moving to new homes in Wyoming, and when areas like Jackson Hole fill up and become pricey, people seek out other, less crowded, less expensive homesites.

Growth is occurring despite the fact that the state's extractive industries are not booming. Freudenthal calls it the "California factor." Linda Weppner, President of the Cheyenne Multiple Listing Service, gives an example of the push and pull factors that are involved. A modern emigrant family wants to sell their home in California. The push is the perceived need to get away from high land values, high taxes and the problems associated with urban living. The pull is the attraction of an acreage and a home where land is cheap, where the scale and pace of life is less stressful, more human. And they can do it by selling their high-priced California home and moving to Wyoming. These people have the money to live in Wyoming without working. They aren't looking for jobs.

Other emigrants create their own jobs. The development of weapons and transportation gave O.P. Hanna and other emigrants the edge over native inhabitants of the Powder River Basin. Technology was responsible for change. It still is. The state is beginning to see more individual entrepreneurs. But they don't come in wagons or armed with long rifles, Green River knives and traps.

They're armed with hard drives, modems and fax machines, and they use telephones and express mail. Rapid communication gives today's entrepreneur the ability to make his home and office in rural places. Why shouldn't you be able to take a cup of coffee to your desk facing snow-capped peaks or meadows dotted with grazing cattle? Jackson Hole consultant Jonathan Schechter sees growth in the second home market. Barbara Merry, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce in Dubois, speaks of an unprecedented rise in property values in a town that historically has had its share of Yellowstone tourists as well as local recreational traffic. Dottie Elsom of Buffalo has processed more property deeds in the last three years than in any other period of her 34 year tenure at the Johnson County Assessor's Office. And local people are not the buyers. They are coming from coast to coast and from as far away as Saudi Arabia. Ridges and valleys on the outskirts of Sheridan have accumulated ranchettes and trailers like barnacles on a ship's hull. Jim Bridger, who established a trail to the Montana goldfields through the Big Horn Basin, might be surprised that the west side of the Big-horns has become a preferred place to live.

The increase in land values and population comes without industrial development. It brings hardship for some as land values, and thus taxes, increase. Natives who were raised in Wyoming and those who have built a retirement home may not contribute a wage to the economy, but they nevertheless exert pressure for services. And what about long-term change? This is not like the oil boom of the '70s whose detritus was left scattered over the prairie when oil prices went down. Today's growth means fewer open spaces ...permanently. What will become of the historic Wyoming landscape you have known for so many years? Will agriculture survive as land becomes valuable for non-agricultural use? Will those wide-open spaces fill up with homes, fences and mini-marts? Does everybody want an acreage, pickup truck and a dog? Can't you just imagine that twenty years from now you'll look back in hindsight and chuckle over news stories about how lucky we were to have recruited new businesses to the community? We may be like Oregonians who printed bumper stickers dis-inviting people to their state. Dottie



*Cheyenne Postcard, nd.*

Elsom says that some are talking about putting a fence around Johnson County. It's interesting to her, whose family homesteaded there in the nineteenth century, that the ones saying it have lived in the county only four or five years.

As I drove down the highway between Rawlins and Muddy Gap one bright day early this summer I looked off to my right across the flat, sagebrush-dotted horizon stretching toward the

Seminole sand dunes. I got to thinking maybe I was wrong. Maybe Wyoming really isn't filling up, after all. Probably we're in a periodic upswing of real estate development that will taper off as interest rates rise. Wyoming hasn't changed that much. It was just a bothersome panic attack, I reassured myself. Besides, I was taught to believe that we'll always be a state through which people want to pass through quickly in order to get to somewhere else. Doubt lingered, however. Nancy Freudenthal warned me that change is slow and someday when we wake up we'll be shocked. I tried to relax. I pushed a cassette into the car's tape player and listened to Robert Bly read a poem written by his friend, William Stafford.

### IN THE WHITE SKY

*Many things in the world have  
already happened. You can  
go back and tell about them.  
They are part of what we  
own, as we speed along  
through the white sky.*

*But many things in the world  
haven't yet happened. You help  
them by thinking and writing and acting.  
Where they begin, you greet them  
or stop them. You come along  
and sustain the new things.*

*Once in the white sky there was  
a beginning, and I happened to notice  
and almost glimpsed what to do.  
But now I have come far  
to here, and it is away back there.  
Some days, I think about it.*

Robert Bly, ed. *The Darkness Around Us is Deep: Selected Poems of William Stafford* (New York: Harper Collins, Publisher, 1993), p. 125

# WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS LOVE AFFAIR?



BY  
MIKE  
MASSIE

Wyomingites work hard to celebrate their history. Two dozen local historical groups meet monthly to discuss the past. Town newspapers carry reminiscences about the early settlement of the community. Powwows and historical re-creations of mountain men rendezvous and frontier military exercises define summer as much as softball and fishing. We see ourselves living in either the Equality State or the Cowboy State, an image based upon historical myth and some reality. Indeed, a significant part of our identity as residents of Wyoming is grounded in history.

As a result of this popular interest in history, state government has preserved historic sites such as Fort Bridger, the Governors' Mansion and South Pass City, and has appropriated public funds to support private restoration of the Territorial Prison and the Cheyenne Union Pacific Depot. In addition, every county and the Wind River Indian Reservation have at least one museum or cultural center, some with regional followings such as the Museum of the Mountain Man in Pinedale. The Buffalo Bill Historical Center plays to a national audience.

So our love affair with history is torrid and enduring. But is our passion self-indulgent? Is it enough to study history because we are interested in the past, or do historians have the responsibility to apply their knowledge to current affairs?

I believe that we do. What transpired and what people thought fifty, one hundred or two hundred years ago is relevant today in discussing water rights, resource development, abortion, women's rights, civic virtue, severance taxes, tourism as well as preservation. Yet, most of us choose to avoid these contemporary debates, robbing them of an informed perspective based upon our understanding of the past. I am not suggesting that historical groups tackle these particular topics. Some are better left to individuals. However, there are several history-related issues that Wyoming's historical organizations should be addressing with more diligence.

Perhaps one reason we have not been more effective in pursuing good causes, such as historic preservation, is that we have a tradition of not talking with one another. After years of research, college history instructors usually convey the results of their work to students in a classroom, or in a professional journal or in a book directed toward other professionals. The report of a historical consultant who may have examined a significant cultural remain is passed from one government reviewer to another before being placed in a grey file cabinet. And while the research of local historians receives better public distribution, it is often confined to a local newspaper or a presentation at a Historical Society chapter's monthly meeting.

While these efforts are clearly important in furthering our understanding of the past, we would benefit from a greater sharing of ideas, viewpoints, and experiences among ourselves as well as with the larger public. Fortunately, these collaborative endeavors have increased in the past few years. The discussion of the "New" western history has generated lively debates, not only among academics, but among all historians. Because this discussion has been so public, with articles in popular maga-

zines and countless programs in numerous towns, the debate has encouraged the participation of people who normally do not explore history, from professionals in other disciplines to elected officials.

Some organizations are working to encourage a dialogue among the state's historians. For example, at the annual September meeting of the Wyoming State Historical Society (WSHS) a symposium will be held at which local and academic historians will debate the fate of Butch Cassidy and critically explore the role of outlaw history within regional events. The conference will also feature an exhibit, a group oral history session, and a keynote address by Western historian and author, Robert Utley.

The symposium promises to attract a cross-section of Wyoming historians and other interested individuals. This mix should produce some interesting and informed discussions about history and may duplicate successful programs employing similar formats such as the annual conferences of the Fort Phil Kearny/Bozeman Trail Association and the symposium held in conjunction with the 1992 WSHS trek. For the past two decades the Wyoming Council for the Humanities has provided funds for history programs that combine the talents and knowledge of local researchers with those of humanities scholars. For example, the Council recently awarded two grants to the WSHS for research and public discussion of Wyoming's involvement in World War II and for an oral history project that examines the experiences of people growing up in the Equality State.

The desire to talk with others who share an interest in history partly explains this collaborative trend. It also explains the recent formation of the Wyoming Association of Professional Historians (WAPH). Professors, archivists, museum curators, private con-

sultants and other historians created WAPH to promote the professional study and application of history in Wyoming. The organization includes not only those who study Western history, but also devotees of national and international history. The group will encourage professional historians throughout the state to discuss common interests.

The recent willingness of historians to share experiences in settings that include the public is a critical step toward promoting debate on contemporary issues. Considering the large number of people who indulge in their love affair with history, the potential exists to forge one of the most powerful political and community-based groups in Wyoming. Yet, we are reluctant to assume leadership roles in these areas, even with issues that deal directly with history.

Historic preservation is a good example. A superficial look at historic preservation in Wyoming gives the impression that we are actively engaged in this worthwhile endeavor. After all, our state has some of the finest, unspoiled historic sites in the country. Hundreds of cultural sites have been enrolled in the National Register of Historic Places, restored, interpreted, or converted to modern uses with their historic characteristics left intact. With the assistance of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), seventeen communities and counties have created historic preservation boards comprised of volunteers from backgrounds ranging from professional historians to business owners to ranchers. Through the Certified Local Government grant program administered by the SHPO, these groups have received substantial grants for conducting surveys of nearby historic sites, evaluating site significance, and for determining how to preserve the most important ones. A strength of these boards is that they encourage the participation of local citizens who would not otherwise be involved in preserving the remnants of our past. In addition to melding their experiences with the expertise of professional historians, they provide effective "sagebrush" support for historic preservation.



*Bozeman Trail, Campbell County, 1982*

MARK JUNGE

We should be proud of these accomplishments, but ought to realize that all this work has not created much political support for historic preservation. Our legislature routinely rejects historic preservation bills. Funding the state historical and archaeological programs is a struggle every biennium. In addition, state government administrators are under enormous pressure to compromise historic preservation goals for the sake of private development and federal goals. If the historical community does not become more effective in advocating historic preservation, our lawmakers will never pass the measures we

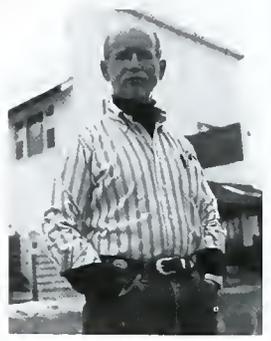
need, and bureaucrats will be free to hamstring important government functions such as the SHPO review and compliance program.

Since the federal government owns nearly half of the land in Wyoming, how responsibly its agencies manage the public lands is crucial to the preservation of our history. According to the National Historic Preservation Act, Presidential Executive Order 11593 and enabling regulations, agencies must analyze impacts upon cultural resources caused by any federal undertaking. Each state has authority to re-

*Continued pg. 72*

# IN OLD

# WYOMING



BY Larry K. Brown

*...At this point they caught sight of 30 to 40 windmills which were standing on the plain there, and no sooner had Don Quixote laid eyes upon them than he turned to his squire and said, "... You see there before you, friend Sancho Panza, some 30 or more lawless giants with whom I mean to do battle. I shall deprive them of their lives...for this is warfare, and it is a great service to God to remove so accursed a breed from the face of the earth."<sup>1</sup>*

Astride a snow-white horse and wearing a black mask that covered all but his eyes, the "Masked Rider" was first seen one warm summer night in 1930 near Laramie Peak. His rough scrawled signs, however, had preceded him, warning his opponents to leave the country or suffer the consequences.<sup>2</sup>

About 10:45 p.m. on June 9 rancher William Atkinson was called to the outer entry of his kitchen. As he half opened the door a masked man with his hat tied down over his face pulled a pistol. Instinctively, Atkinson slammed the latch shut and jumped aside as a slug ripped through the wood, missing him by inches.

Mounting his trusty steed that was draped with a light gray blanket, the assailant sped off into the night. A white cardboard sign found later on Atkinson's step threatened: "This is the last warning. leave or you will be killed. the Masked Rider."<sup>3</sup>

*...he gave spurs to his steed Rocinante, without paying any heed to Sancho's warning that these were truly windmills and not giants that he was riding forth to attack.<sup>4</sup>*

Although the authorities were called immediately, the case was hard to solve. Rumors were rife. Confusion reigned. Each new report fueled a firestorm of media

coverage. First, the Phantom was a moonshiner trying to protect his still. Next he was a rustler. Some thought he meant to scare off a rival lover. He was dead. He was captured. Those who tried to follow him even suggested he shod his horse's front feet "...in the correct manner and on his rear feet the shoes are reversed...to keep the direction of the rider's travel a mystery."<sup>5</sup>

Hand-penciled signs and typed notes continued to chase and chastise those whom the phantom perceived as evil-doers. But no one seemed to attract the Rider's wrath more than Charles M. Adams who worked for Charles Wagner. The slender youth, with blue eyes and a reddish complexion was relaxing in his bunkhouse on the night of July 18 when a bullet tore through his left shoulder. It barely missed the heart.<sup>6</sup> Sid Sturgeon, who was visiting the ranch, heard the shot and raced to the scene where he

found Charlie wounded. The young cowboy, weak from loss of blood, was rushed to the hospital in Wheatland where he slowly recovered.<sup>7</sup>

The twenty year-old range rider claimed it was the third attempt on his life. Six months earlier someone fired a bullet from ambush that ripped a hole in the leg of his pants. Then in early July another shot from a brushy draw creased the pommel of his saddle.<sup>8</sup> After the last attack law enforcement officers redoubled their efforts to clear up the situation.<sup>9</sup>

*...being well covered with his shield and with his lance at rest, he bore down upon them at a full gallop and fell upon the first mill that stood in his way, giving a thrust at the wing, which was whirling at such a speed that his lance was broken into bits and both horse and horseman went rolling over the plain, very much battered indeed.<sup>10</sup>*

A break in the case finally came on August 2 when Adams received the following note postmarked at Wheatland, Wyoming.

1. Cervantes, *The Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote de la Mancha*, Samuel Putnam, trans. and ed. (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p.110.

2. "Phantom Rider Spreading Terror," *Sheridan* (Wyoming) *Post-Enterprise*, 6 July 1930, p.1.

3. "Phantom of Laramie Peak is Given Credit for Numerous Deeds," *Wheatland* (Wyoming) *Times and World*, 17 July 1930, p.1.

4. Cervantes, p.111.

5. "Capture of Hooded Phantom Expected to Happen Very Soon," *Wheatland Times & World*, 31 July 1930, p.1; "Phantom of Laramie Peak," p.1

6. "Phantom Rider Shoots Chas. Adams in Fight at Chas. Wagner's Ranch," *Wheatland Times & World*, 24 July 1930, p.1. Prison records show that Adams was 5'8" tall, weighed 135 pounds. *Prisoner Register*, 9 August 1930, Albany County Sheriff Records, Wyoming State Archives.

7. "Phantom Rider Shoots Rancher and then Dashes Away to Hills," *Sheridan Post-Enterprise*, 20 July 1930, p.1.

8. *ibid.*

9. *ibid.*

10. Cervantes, p.111.

Dear Mr. Adams: When you get this letter I will be on my way to Canada. It wasn't me that shot you. The man that shot you is dead and buried. I killed him. You can find him somewhere close to Laramie Peak if you look hard enough. I may come back and finish the job I started when things quiet down a little. I hate thieves. I am sorry if you thought I was after you. That fellow said he was going to rob you but he forgot after he shot you. He shot you because he hated red hair. Yours truly, The Masked Rider.<sup>11</sup>

Less than a week later Charles Adams was arrested and jailed by Sheriff George Weln and his staff. The last memo from the phantom proved to be the last straw. Fingerprints found on the note were compared with smudges on the Rider's earlier warnings and the whorls matched Adams' handwriting. A print specimen was taken from a typewriter found at the Wagner Ranch where Charlie worked. Court reporter Fred C. Lebhart, and W.P. Reed, a University of Wyoming professor, carefully compared it with that of the Masked Rider's typed messages. They were identical. It was also discovered that the caliber of the bullet fired through Atkinson's door matched Adams' pistol. And the slug that passed through Charlie's shoulder left but one hole at the back of his shirt. Obviously he had pressed the gun against his bare chest before pulling the trigger.<sup>12</sup>

*...I am sure that this must be the work of that magician Feston, the one who robbed me of my study and my*

## MEET THE MASKED RIDER



The Wheatland Times, 14 August 1930, front page

Poor Charlie Adams! His vivid imagination and love of western dime novels led him into a mis-adventure that blazed across the front pages of newspapers throughout the nation in 1930. His fate? Like the literary legend Don Quixote, though he'd lived a crazy man, "when he died he was sane once more."

*...and when his time changed the courts into windmills, to deprive me of the glory of overcoming them, so great is the enmity that he bears me*

Poor Charlie! Born in an era too tame for an overly-imaginative boy who spent many of his waking hours reading pulp western and detective stories, he decided there was some cattle stealing and other "out of the way affairs" which needed looking into. Some ranchers, he said, were "doing too well" financially to be strictly honest.<sup>14</sup>

12. "Adams is Jailed as 'Phantom Rider,'" Laramie (Wyoming) Republican-Boomerang, 9 August 1930, p.1; "Charles Adams, 20, Confessed Masked Rider Arrested and Jailed," Wheatland Times & World, 14 August 1930, p.1.

13. Cervantes, pp.111-112.

The trouble, Charley confessed, started in early June, 1930 when he first drew and posted warning signs trimmed with crude sketches of a cowboy's head. As far as Atkinson was concerned, Charley said he never meant to hurt him. He only wanted to scare and warn him to "quit harboring thieves." He added, "When I thot (sic) the gang suspected me, I shot a hole in my saddle and poked another hole through my trowsers (sic) with a file." When the law caught his scent, he turned the gun on himself to divert suspicion.

*I didn't intend to do such a good job of shooting myself,"*

14. "Adams is Jailed as 'Phantom Rider,'" p.1.

he said. "I thought a little 'burning' would be enough."<sup>15</sup>

On August 11, Prosecutor and Albany County Attorney F.K. Dukes accused Adams of breach of peace and a warrant was issued. That same day Adams was arraigned and brought before Justice of the Peace W. H. Hayes in Laramie where he pleaded guilty. His sentence: a fifty dollar fine and court costs plus thirty days in the Albany County Jail. Because he was unable to pay the fine, Charlie spent an extra 50 days in jail. Working it off at a dollar a day, he spent much of his time standing in his cell, magazine resting on the top tier of his bunk, reading his favorite tales of the wild and wooly West.<sup>16</sup>

So ends the tale of an fanciful young cowboy who read himself into a misadventure that created banner headlines from coast-to-coast. After serving his time he left the area and passed into history like the fictional character he emulated.

*By the world he set small store  
He frightened it to the core  
yet somehow by Fate's plan  
Though he'd lived a crazy man  
When he died he was sane  
once more.*

15. *ibid*; "Charles Adams, 20, Confessed," p.1.

16. Laramie Justice of the Peace Criminal Docket, Wyoming State Archives, Vol.3, p.24; Prisoner Register, Albany County Sheriff's Records, Wyoming State Archives.

17. Cervantes, p.701.

Larry K. Brown is a volunteer writer and researcher for *Wyoming Annals*.

11. "Masked Phantom Denies Shooting Adams and Admits Murdering Cowboy's Assailant," Wheatland Times & World, 7 August 1930, p.1.



THE RISE AND FALL OF

BIG

BY MICHAEL A. AMUNDSON

HORN CITY



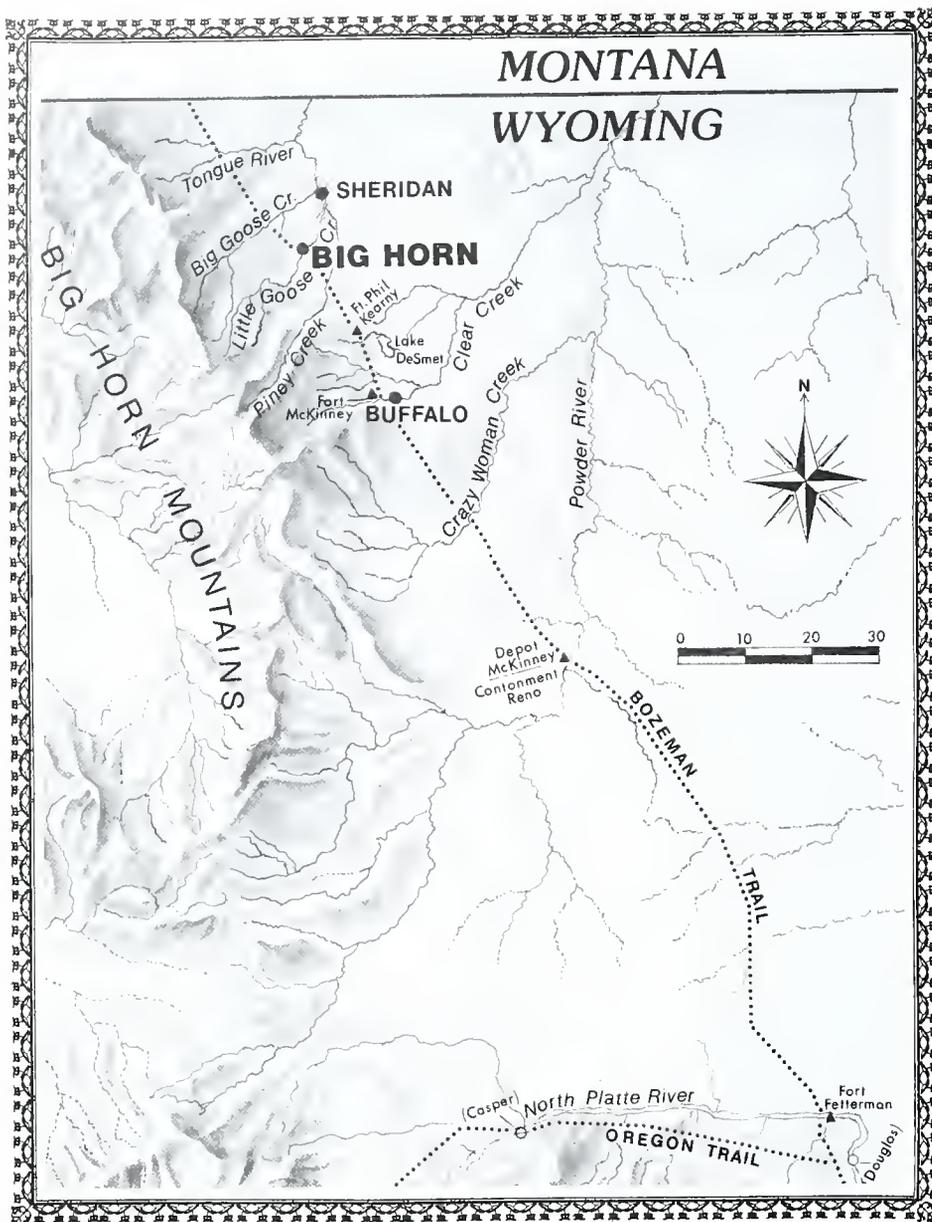
*"Treelessness:" the town of Big Horn, Wyo. July 30, 1901*

Wilson Clough Collection, American Heritage Center, Laramie

**inset:** *O.P. Hanna, first settler in the County, the Grand Old Man, nd.*

Robert E. Helvey Collection, American Heritage Center

While the village of Big Horn is today a quiet agricultural and bedroom community of nearby Sheridan, for a decade during the last century Big Horn City was a thriving frontier town struggling to become northern Wyoming's commercial center. After the Sioux Wars of the 1870s opened lands for White settlement, the 1880s was a decade of founding, boom and then bust for the hamlet nestled along Little Goose Creek at the foot of its namesake range. Indeed, the early history of Big Horn is one shared by many communities in the West. And like most frontier communities Big Horn's early history is closely tied to its first citizen, in this case Oliver Perry Hanna.



The Bozeman Trail in Wyoming

Map by Eileen Skibo

In the spring of 1878 Hanna, a former army scout, gold miner and frontiersman, left Missouri looking for a homestead in the recently opened lands of northern Wyoming and southern Montana territories. To reach his destination Hanna traveled the Bozeman Trail. He had traveled this road before, and as he made his way through Wyoming Territory Hanna must have thought much about both the past and the future. He remembered bloody Indian battles and dreamed of future cities. Symbolically, Hanna was at an historical gate in the history of northern Wyoming. On one side he helped close the door to the Indian-dominated past while on the other he helped open the door to White settlement. In time Hanna would become not only the

first settler but also a promoter and leading citizen of a town that was at that time only in his imagination. Although these thoughts may have been in his mind back in 1878, it would have been impossible for him to imagine them on land which twenty years earlier had been Sioux hunting ground. Further, it probably would have been impossible for Hanna to imagine that less than a decade after its founding he would leave Big Horn City for a nearby community.

Hanna traveled westward along the Oregon Trail to Fort Fetterman and then followed the Bozeman route north along the eastern flank of the Big Horn Mountains. The land from the North Platte River to the Powder River crossing was flat, dry and mainly sagebrush. There were a few set-

tlers scattered across the prairie. As he continued north, mountains began rising from the west and the topography changed to a land of rolling, grassy hills. When Hanna traveled the Bozeman more than ten years earlier, the trail passed through the heart of Sioux Country and frequent skirmishes had given the road the nickname "Bloody Bozeman." At the Powder River Crossing, a few remains of Depot McKinney or Cantonment Reno, an abandoned military post, must have reminded Hanna of these events. As he traveled farther, homesteads became fewer and farther apart. On a branch of the Powder River named Clear Creek, Hanna found several detachments of the U.S. army building a new post: Fort McKinney, named for a victim of the Dull Knife Battle.

Pushing into unsettled regions beyond Fort McKinney, Lake DeSmet, and the charred remains of Fort Phil Kearny, Hanna crossed Piney Creek and moved into the watershed of the Tongue River. He crossed "Massacre Hill," where Captain Fetterman and his men were killed a dozen years earlier. After fording several more small creeks Hanna moved into the valley of Little Goose Creek. Sweeping down from the Bighorn Mountains to the west and south, warm chinook winds kept the grass free of snow during the winter and alpine breezes kept the valley cool in the summer. The trail was different from the way it had been in the 1860s. Back then, emigrant wagon teams consumed much of the grass and water along the trail. But now prairie grass once again grew tall. Game and fowl were abundant. Hanna must have understood why the Sioux had fought to keep this land for their hunting ground. In 1876 John F. Finerty, a correspondent covering the Indian Wars for the *Chicago Times*, had also remarked on how rich the area had been since abandonment of the forts.

*Our road lay through one of the richest ranges that I have ever seen. It is capable of high cultivation. The air was laden with perfume, the ravines being filled with wild flowers of many species...We saw a number of deer, and wild fowl sprang up at almost every step. The plain was indented with buffalo tracks, showing that we had struck a belt of the hunting grounds.<sup>1</sup>*

1. John F. Finerty, *War-Path and Bivouac* (Chicago: M.A. Donohue and Co., 1890), p.87.

In the fall of 1878 Hanna built the first cabin in what is now Sheridan County. Although his first claim was at the junction of Little Goose and Big Goose Creeks, he soon moved up the Little Goose. With an abundance of game and a new army post nearby, Hanna negotiated a contract to deliver 3,000 pounds of wild meat weekly to Fort McKinney.<sup>2</sup> During the winter of 1877-1878 a mail route was established from Rock Creek Station, a railhead on the Union Pacific, north along the Bozeman Trail to the Yellowstone River. Hanna and another man agreed to carry the mail from Fort McKinney to Fort Custer, Montana. By 1879 a new chapter of history was being written in the Little Goose Creek Valley. Although the Indian population had been cleared from the land, the paradise of abundant game and waist-high native grasses still flourished along the slopes of the Bighorns. The land had not only persevered, but thrived, in the wake of the Indian wars. With Indians removed and very few Whites having arrived, the Little Goose Creek Valley must have seemed a land of milk and honey to Hanna.

Over the next ten years Hanna, frontiersman and Indian fighter, settled down to promote his dream of Big Horn City. According to his published recollections, Hanna sent letters describing events in his make believe town to another settler named Gus Trabing who had them published in a newspaper.<sup>3</sup> Letters soon began to pour into Hanna's mailbox, asking for his insight into what kind of store could be opened in the town which did not even exist. But as settlers began to move to the Little Goose Valley during the next decade, Hanna made his dream reality.

In the spring of 1879 Hanna left his

homestead and traveled 350 miles south to Cheyenne to purchase farm tools and a plow. He brought these back to his place and enjoyed lettuce, onions, radishes, turnips and beets that summer.

In July an Oregon-bound wagon train camped near Hanna's cabin. In this outfit were Big Horn pioneers William F. Davis, his wife and three children. William "Bear" Davis, a Missourian who came west during the Civil War, was very familiar with the Little Goose Creek Valley since he had been a Bozeman Trail guide.<sup>4</sup> He later worked as a sawyer and helped construct Forts Phil Kearny and C.F. Smith. During the spring of 1879 Davis, with his second wife Jennie and their family, was Oregon bound. In June they crossed Little Goose Creek and camped near a spring where Davis built his home.<sup>5</sup> Like Hanna, Davis signed a government contract to supply hay for the soldiers' horses at Fort McKinney. He later built Big Horn's first sawmill.

Other settlers soon followed. In 1880 three men settled on the Little Goose. In the spring W.E. Jackson located west of Hanna. That



Wm. E. Jackson, December 11, 1889  
6th Postmaster



Benjamin & Gowling,

LIVINGSTON, MONT.

4. Davis earned the colorful nickname of "Bear" by cleaning out 159 local grizzlies and black bears. *Sheridan Press* 9 June 1979, and Interview, Fred Hilman (Davis' grandson) by Nancy M. Olson, Western Heritage Center, Billings, Montana. Transcript available at Sheridan County Library, Sheridan, Wyoming. An excellent source on Big Horn pioneers is Deck Hunter, *Big Horn City, Wyoming Territory: Vol. I: The Homesteaders* (Casper: Hawks Book Company, 1991).

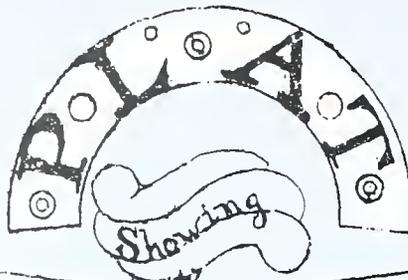
5. After camping the first night on Little Goose Creek, Bear Davis declared that the family would stay in the area. When his wife protested that they were going to Oregon, Davis simply replied that when they crossed the stream the family crossed the Oregon border. The family stayed. This bit of folklore comes from Big Horn Public Schools, *Big Horn Pioneers* (Lovell, Wyoming: Mountain States Printing Company, 1985), pp.5-6. The book contains a general history of some of the area's pioneer families.

6. Dick Redburn, "Big Horn, Treasure of History, First Hamlet," *Sheridan Press*, 7 August 1963.

O.P. Hanna and family, nd., left to right: Tressie Merle, Dora Myers Hanna, Laura, Jesse, O.P. Hanna

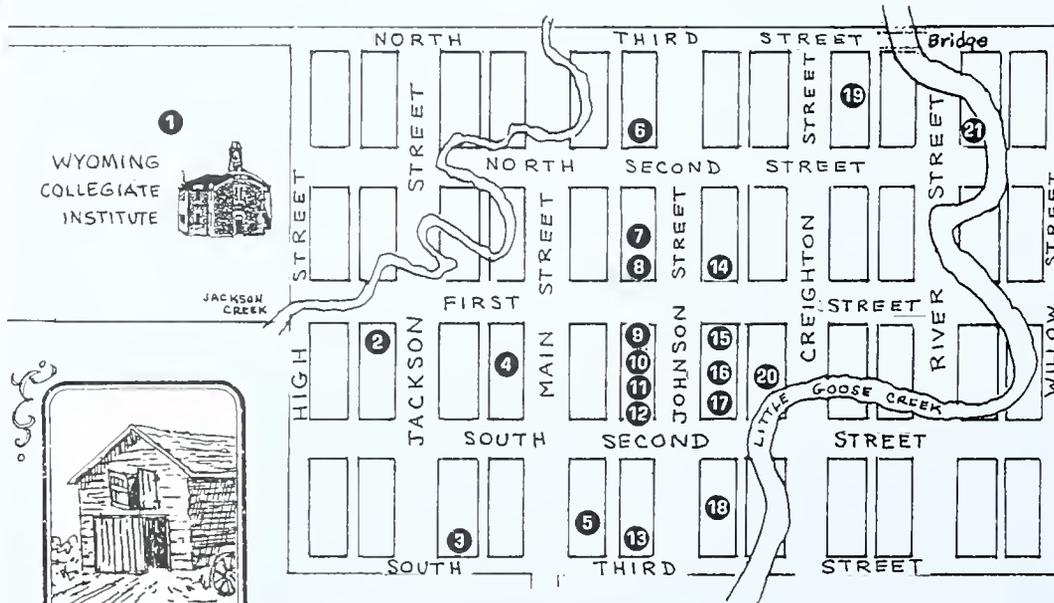
WYOMING  
TERRITORY

1884  
1899



# TOWN OF THE BIG HORN

and ITS INCORPORATE LIMITS



③ METHODIST CHURCH.



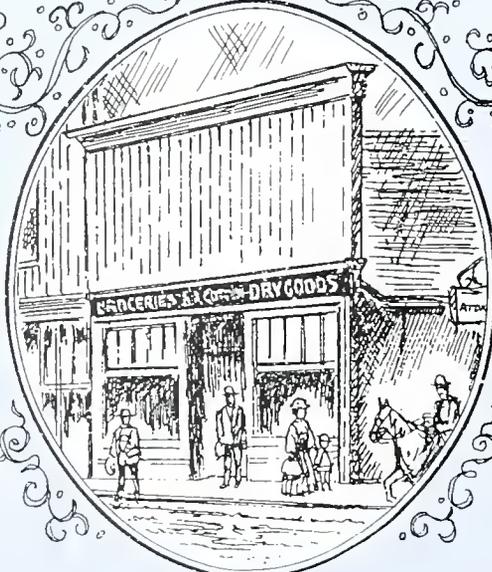
② CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.



⑥ FARWELL LIVERY.



⑧ LAST CHANCE SALOON.



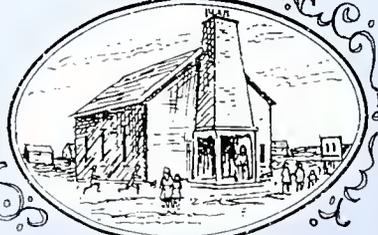
⑭ COFFEEN GROCERY & DRY GOODS.



⑱ DEWITT BLACKSMITH.



⑮ ORIENTAL HOTEL.



⑤ BIG HORN SCHOOL 1884.

Watercolors by Deck Hunter



*Big Horn Mercantile Building*. Built by John W. Sackett and Charles W. Skinner, the Big Horn Mercantile has been in operation since it was built in 1882 and has remained in the ownership of the Skinner family and descendants.



*Big Horn Sentinel Building*. The weekly newspaper published by E.H. Becker appeared in Big Horn on Saturday mornings until November, 1885 when it was moved to the town of Buffalo. Over the years the building served as a saloon, home, blacksmith shop, auto repair shop.



*Wyoming Collegiate Institute*. Sponsored by the Congregational Missionary Society, the college was built and opened in the fall of 1892. It graduated one class of four students in 1897 but financial difficulties forced it to close soon afterward. In 1903 the building was sold to the Big Horn School District and in 1931 it was torn down.

- 1 *Wyoming Collegiate Institute*
- 2 *Congregational Church*
- 3 *Methodist Church*
- 4 *Creamery*
- 5 *School*
- 6 *Farwell Livery*
- 7 *Big Horn Saloon*
- 8 *Last Chance Saloon*
- 9 *Big Horn Mercantile*
- 10 *Warehouse*
- 11 *Star West Saloon*
- 12 *Butcher Shop*
- 13 *Big Horn Hotel*
- 14 *Coffeen Groceries and Dry Goods*
- 15 *Oriental Hotel*
- 16 *Big Horn Sentinel*
- 17 *Burkhart Grocery*
- 18 *Dewitt Blacksmith*
- 19 *Woodley Blacksmith*
- 20 *Snyder Mill*
- 21 *Sackett and Skipper Sawmill*

Data from *Big Horn City, Wyoming Territory, Vol.2: The City*. (Deck Hunter: Big Horn, 1992), p.37.

**opposite left:** *Plat Showing the Town of Big Horn and its Incorporate Limits.*

Art by Eileen Skibo

fall two partners from Cheyenne, John Henry Sackett and Charles William Skinner, arrived in a loaded down freight wagon to open the first store in what is now Sheridan County.<sup>6</sup> At first they ran this mercantile establishment from their wagons and tents. With a covey of homesteaders now secure, Hanna went back to work promoting his town of Big Horn City. During the winter of 1880-1881 he wrote a notice for a mass meeting whose purpose was to organize a townsite company. The company's first meeting was held on January 8, 1881 at the Big Horn Post Office. Minutes of the meeting show that the company called for "the Said Town or City to be located at or within one mile of the Present Site of the Big Horn P.O."<sup>7</sup> At their first meeting the stockholders of the company, including Secretary Hanna, decided to locate Big Horn City on forty acres one mile north of the present post office. The land was at that time occupied by W.E. Jackson and John Loomis, each of whom held twenty acres. After agreeing on articles of organization and bylaws, members of the townsite

company sent notice of their organization to the Wyoming Territorial capital in Cheyenne and also to the county clerk in Rawlins.<sup>8</sup> During the next year the townsite company had a bridge built over Little Goose Creek and then authorized Jack Dow, a nearby rancher, to survey the townsite.

The townsite was laid out in grid pattern based upon the cardinal directions. Four lots by six in size, Big Horn City was divided into east and west parts by a split in Little Goose Creek. The easternmost part came to be known as the Island. Numbered streets ran east to west while streets named for pioneers ran north to south. First Street was in the middle of the plat with North Second and North Third Streets and South Second and South Third Streets paralleling First. From north to south, beginning from the west, thoroughfares were named High, Jackson, Main, Johnson, and Creighton Streets with River and Willow Streets located on the banks of Little Goose. With only one bridge spanning the creek, access to Wil-

low could be gained only at the North Third Street crossing.<sup>9</sup>

With the new town platted, construction began in earnest during the spring of 1882. The most imposing edifice built was the Sackett and Skinner store. Still operating today as the Big Horn Mercantile Company and the town's post office, the structure is a two story, false front, wood frame building on the northwest corner of First and Johnson Streets. A store has always been operated on the first level while the second floor has served as a meeting hall, a roller skating rink, and then an apartment.<sup>10</sup> To celebrate the opening of the store, that spring a dance was held. Directly across the street on the southeast corner of First and Johnson, Hanna built a two story, six room hotel named the Oriental. The name was chosen as a counterpoint to the Occidental Hotel in Buffalo. On the block opposite the Sackett and Skinner store to the north, diagonally from the Oriental, another building was constructed in 1882 which was first the Last Chance Saloon, then later as a store, and now the Bozeman Trail Inn. It is interesting to note that all three buildings were constructed not on Main Street, but on the adjacent Johnson Street.<sup>11</sup>

7. "Minutes of the Big Horn City Town Company," 8 January 1881, Bozeman Trail Museum, Big Horn, Wyoming. The minutes of these meetings have been transcribed and included in: Deck Hunter, *Big Horn City, Wyoming Territory: Volume 2: The City* (Casper: Hawks Book Company, 1992). Hunter is the best source for primary documents relating to early Big Horn City.

8. Johnson County was first drawn as Pease County in 1875. The name was changed in 1879 but the county was not organized until 1881. Before that time it was part of Carbon County and the county seat was Rawlins, 300 miles to the south.

9. Deck Hunter, *Pioneer Map of Big Horn City* (Big Horn: Deck Hunter, 1988).

10. This information can be found in various editions of the *Big Horn Sentinel*, William Robertson Coe Library, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

# rn Sentinel

## The Occidental Hotel

*Big Horn Sentinel Masthead, Saturday, March 21, 1885.*  
Wyoming State Museum

Big Horn City's first sermon was preached in 1881 in the Hanna cabin. The first school classes were also held that year. The following year Hanna and others built six school houses in the area including one southwest of town called Lone Star and another in Big Horn City.<sup>12</sup> The Big Horn Building constructed south of the Sackett and Skinner store served for years as a meeting house for various civic committees.

By 1884 enough settlers had moved into Big Horn City that the Board of Trustees felt it was time for the town to have a newspaper. Published by E.H. Becker, a friend of Hanna, the *Big Horn Sentinel* made its debut on Saturday, September 13, 1884. The weekly paper, a seven-column, four-page broadsheet, included both an editorial and local news page. It was priced at ten cents per copy. Subscription rates were three months for one dollar, six months for two dollars, or one year for \$3.50. In the first issue editor Becker stated the main purpose in his coming to Big Horn.

*THE SENTINEL is most favorably impressed with the country it is directly interested in developing, and thinks Johnson county is the coming county of the territory.*<sup>13</sup>

Becker went on to say that although his paper was printed and titled under the name *Big Horn*, it would not give special treat-

ment to Hanna's city. Instead, each week the paper would attempt to make a general roundup of news from all parts of the county. Becker also gave a pretty good description of Big Horn's location and the paper's goal when he added:

*Although published in a town practically isolated, without railroad or telegraphic connections, and more than a hundred miles from "nowhere," THE BIG HORN SENTINEL intends to be recognized as an over-average country newspaper.*<sup>14</sup>

Advertisements in the first issue included one for Hanna's "Oriental" Hotel and another for the Star of the West Saloon. The former advertised table board at \$1.50 per day or \$6 by the week, paid "strictly in advance." The latter gave notice that it was

"Open at All Hours." Babcock and Hanna Dry Goods ran a large ad as did the Big Horn Brick Yard. Others placing advertisements in the first issue included a blacksmith shop, livery and feed stables, and the General Merchandise enterprise of Sackett and Skinner. Advertisements from Buffalo, Sheridan, a nearby village called Prairie Dog, and Custer, Montana also appeared.

Throughout the next year Big Horn's commercial growth can be traced through the pages of the *Sentinel*. In October a barber was reported to have taken up business in the Star of the West Saloon. The Big Horn City Townsite Company tried to promote the town through the following advertisement run on October 25, 1884:

*The Big Horn Townsite Company are now selling lots in this thriving town at lowest possible rates. The town of Big Horn City has been founded scarcely more than two years, and now contains a good newspaper, three general Merchandising Establishments, each carrying a large stock of everything needed in this country. One Hotel. Two Blacksmith Shops. Two Saloons. Two Livery and Feed Stables. A Saw-mill and Lumber Yard. One Photograph Gallery. And a Public School.*<sup>15</sup>

For patrons interested in the surround-

11. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form*, "Big Horn Johnson Street Historic District," prepared by Molly Mooney and Christy Love, March 30, 1982. State Historic Preservation Office, Wyoming Department of Commerce, Cheyenne.
12. Hanna, "Wild West," and *Pioneers*, pp.29-30.
13. *The Big Horn Sentinel*, 13 September 1884.
14. *ibid.*
15. *Sentinel*, 25 October 1884.

ing country the *Sentinel* also routinely ran the reports made by the territorial land office. The July 11, 1885 issue reported that a ranch of 160 acres within one mile of Big Horn could be purchased for \$2,100. An unknown business house worth one thousand dollars also could be purchased by a cash buyer for a bargain. On the last page of each paper local stockmen, including Patrick Brothers Livestock, W.F. Davis Livestock, and J.O. Willits Horse Grower, purchased drawings that depicted their local brands.<sup>16</sup>

Despite its many proud businesses and ranches, early-day Big Horn was not a pretty sight. Each rain or snow challenged pedestrians, first with large puddles, then with deep mud. After one early spring thaw a story appeared in the paper requesting someone to take the initiative to collect money and build a few crosswalks in town because they are an "absolute necessity at this season of the year." In another story it was reported that "traveling on foot about the town has been accomplished with difficulty during the past week, on account of the superabundance of water upon the streets, sidewalks and alleys, the drainage being filled with ice and snow."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the troublesome streets, garbage and animals also presented problems. The *Sentinel* noted:

*It would add materially to the general appearance of Big Horn, if the rubbish in the rear of business houses and residences, should be removed. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." Who will take the initiative?"*<sup>18</sup>

Given the garbage problem it is not surprising to find that dogs were also an irritant. According to Editor Becker, by February, 1885 there were 119 dogs in town.<sup>19</sup> The combination of garbage and dogs also suggests a large vermin population in the early town.

Despite such conditions locals were able to move about enough to organize entertainment groups. During that first year these quickly became popular sources for stories. On November 29, 1884 the paper reported that the Big Horn Dramatic Club

16. *Sentinel*, 29 November 1884.

17. *Sentinel*, 7 February 1885.

18. *Sentinel*, 29 November 1884.

19. *Sentinel*, 7 February 1885.



Deck Hunter on Porch of Big Horn Mercantile Co., 1994

inset Big Horn Mercantile Building, n.d. Deck Hunter Collection

had been organized with the intent to stage entertainments during the upcoming winter. Sadly, the paper related the following week that the club dissolved before a play had even been chosen due to "members dividing up into cliques of three or four, a disagreement as to the play to put on the boards, and a general dissatisfaction in the ranks of its officers."<sup>20</sup>

In the new year 1885, a roller skating craze that had been sweeping the country arrived in Big Horn, despite it being 150 miles from the nearest railroad. The rink would be located upstairs in the Sackett and Skinner store. By the middle of January the paper reported that "the fascinating amusement is developing into a mania." Two weeks later the paper reported that the rink would only be open on Wednesday and Saturday evenings and that its managers were trying to obtain music for the skaters. When a fierce winter storm pushed people indoors for a few days in February, a "gang of hoodlums" terrorized the rink with a display of "rowdyism and ill breeding." On another occasion a masquerade party was combined with a night of roller skating. Probably the most unusual event was when a band of Crow Indians came down from Montana to roller skate.<sup>21</sup>

20. *Sentinel*, 6 December 1884.

Other sports also found their way to Big Horn. Hanna boasted that Big Horn held a prize fight in the early days.<sup>22</sup> During the summer of 1885 a baseball team was organized to play Buffalo on the Fourth of July. Several prominent Big Horn men, including Jackson and Sackett, were on the team.<sup>23</sup>

Minorities and women received disparaging coverage in the *Sentinel*. The October 11, 1885 issue reported that "neither Sheridan nor Big Horn can boast of having as one or more of its inhabitants a Chinaman or 'gemman of color'." A similarly styled article on December 20 contained the statement that a "coon" dance was held at the Oriental Hotel. According to the article the local ladies "blacked their faces with burnt cork and had a regular plantation breakdown."<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, female companionship seemed to be lacking according to this advertisement which appeared the following May, 1886:

21. The material in the paragraph was obtained from the January, February and March, 1885 issues of the *Sentinel*. Concerning the visit of the Crow Indians, it was reported in the March 14 issue: "The treacherous rollers appear to have the advantage over the Crows and the redskins manage to leave their imprint on the smooth surface of the rink."

22. Hanna, "Wild West."

23. *Sentinel*, 27 June 1885.

24. *Sentinel*, 20 December 1884.

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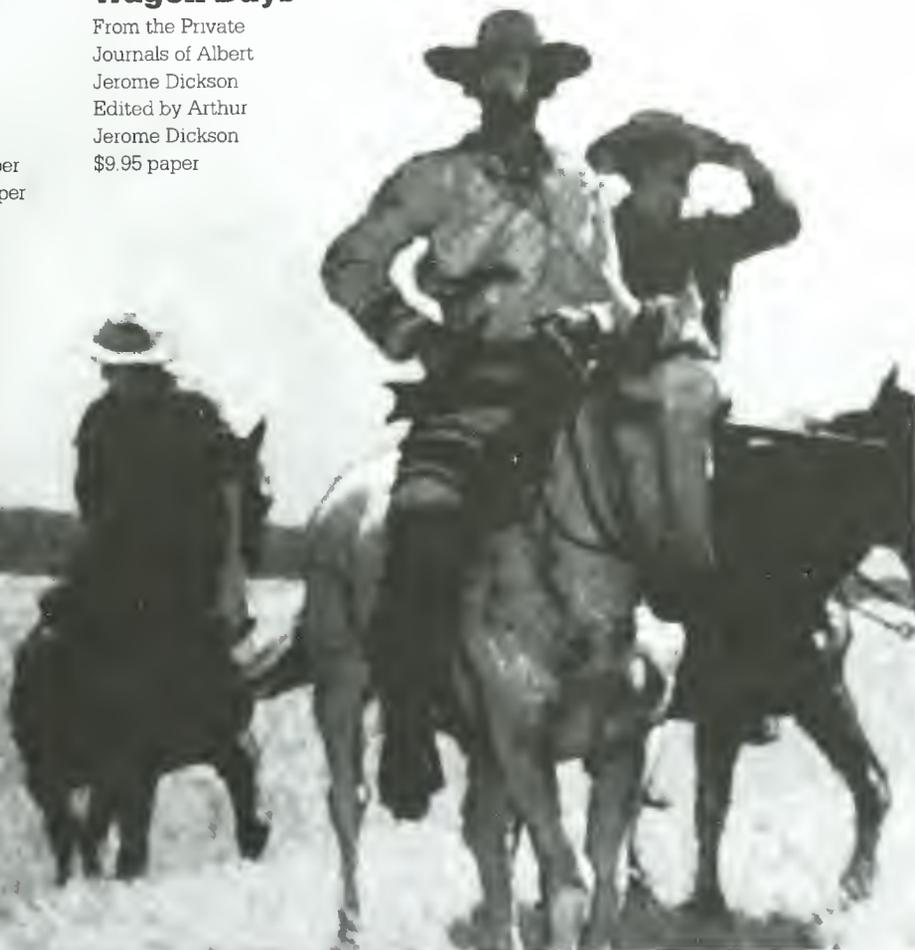
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*Female matrimonial timber is becoming scarce very quickly around here. There should be some steps taken toward stocking our market with material from the east.*<sup>25</sup>

As Big Horn prospered and life began to settle down by 1885, thoughts turned to the hereafter. Plans were made to organize a committee to look for an appropriate site for a city cemetery. When Mrs. Charles Farwell passed away in early February she was laid to rest one and one quarter of a mile southeast of town on a gentle slope named Mount Hope. The *Sentinel* reported that it was the first natural death in Big Horn and was also the first interment in the new cemetery.<sup>26</sup>

Exactly one month later the *Sundance Gazette* reported that an "unnatural" death had occurred in Big Horn City. In a front page story the paper reported that Jao. Peyton, alias Dick Backley, was shot and killed in a Big Horn saloon the week before. The *Gazette* reported that Peyton had made some "bad breaks" lately and had tried to kill a man named Jones.<sup>27</sup> Interestingly, the *Sentinel* made no record of this shooting. One might speculate that either the *Sundance* paper was misinformed or the Big Horn paper withheld information so as not to embarrass the town.

The biggest event to come to Big Horn during this decade was the Johnson County Fair. On August 8, 1885 the *Sentinel* announced the Johnson County Agricultural Association fair would be held on September 15, 16 and 17 on forty acres of land that had been donated by Sackett. Henry Coffeen, a local proprietor, was named president of the Association with Jackson as secretary and Skinner as treasurer. A special half-mile track was graded for trotting and running races. Events included a slow mule race, a fifty mile race against time, a ten mile dash, a foot race and a sack race. The advertisement stated that special consideration would be given to Johnson County animals.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the racing program, typical county fair showings of farm and ranch animals, garden products, and kitchen and dairy products were made. Industrial and domestic goods such as fine arts, textile fab-

rics, needlework, cut flowers, school exhibits and trained animals were judged. Highlights of the fair included performances by the Buffalo brass band, an oratory by U.S. Senator J.B. Beck of Kentucky, and the numerous horse races.<sup>29</sup> A little more than a month later the *Sentinel* remarked that the fair was creditable, "reaching beyond the expectation of those who attended."<sup>30</sup> The fair not only promoted the goods of local ranchers, but Big Horn City as well.

The fair marked the heyday of the frontier town of Big Horn City. The growth of Hanna's community was soon challenged by its two neighbors, Buffalo and Sheridan. Buffalo, thirty miles south, was the seat of Johnson County government. By 1877 it could proudly claim a water works and electric lights. Sheridan, located ten miles north at the junction of Big Goose and Little Goose Creeks, was also beginning to grow and prosper. The town had been incorporated only one year after Big Horn was platted, and talk was heard of the railroad coming to town.<sup>31</sup>

During the fall of 1885 the challenge became real when the *Sentinel* decided to move its shop to Buffalo on Halloween Day. The paper had been in Big Horn for just a little more than a year. Editor Becker defended his move with an editorial:

*The position at Big Horn has become untenable, and to provide for the safety of the paper in these dull times, the removal to Buffalo was a forced issue. The choices of remaining in Big Horn and going broke, or moving to Buffalo, with a certainty of liberal support, was not at all difficult to decide.*<sup>32</sup>

Becker went on to say that the move had been made to take advantage of a larger clientele. He vowed continued coverage of Big Horn and Sheridan and recalled that since the original intention was to cover the entire Big Horn country, it really did not matter where the paper was printed.

But it did matter. Buffalo's capture of the *Sentinel* marked the beginning of the end for Big Horn City. Sheridan joined the fight for spoils and five years later it had grabbed a new county seat, two of Big Horn's leading citizens, its fair, and the hope and promise of a future.

The first of these losses was Henry A. Coffeen. During the fall of 1887 Coffeen, a Big Horn proprietor who had come to town in September, 1884, jumped ship for Sheridan. Coffeen had been one of Big Horn's biggest supporters. His large, general merchandise cash store was located on the block north of Hanna's Oriental Hotel. All of his advertisements had run in the *Sentinel* under the banner, "Big Horn Still Ahead." He had also served as president of the Johnson County Agricultural Association. When it became apparent to Coffeen that the future lay in Sheridan and not Big Horn, he packed up his merchandise and moved his store—building and all—to Sheridan.<sup>33</sup> In November, 1887 Sackett and Skinner dissolved their partnership in the merchandise store, which remained open under the guidance of Skinner.<sup>34</sup>

These two moves foreshadowed a bigger event the following year. In 1888 the Tenth Legislative Assembly, in spite of the veto of Governor Thomas Moonlight, created three new counties in Wyoming Territory. One of these, Sheridan County, was carved from the northern sections of Johnson County. Buffalo, however, remained the Johnson County seat. Although Big Horn City, Sheridan, and Dayton all vied for the new county seat, Sheridan won by a small margin.<sup>35</sup> Big Horn City was now situated between two county seats and its future was not very bright. Later in 1888 Big Horn City sold the County Fair improvements to Sheridan.<sup>36</sup>

The final blow came in 1888 when Hanna, founder and leading citizen of Big

25. *Sentinel*, 16 May 1885.

26. *Sentinel*, 14 February 1885.

27. *Sundance Gazette*, 14 March 1885.

28. *Sentinel*, 8 August 1885.

29. U.S. Senator J.B. Beck was visiting his son, George T. Beck. A small ranching community west of Sheridan, Becton, was named for G.T. Beck and later he became one of the founders of Cody, Wyoming.

30. For a complete listing of fair results see the *Sentinel*, 26 September 1885.

31. I. S. Bartlett, *History of Wyoming*, v. 1 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1918), pp.564,604-605.

32. *Sentinel*, 31 October 1885.

33. Biographical information on Coffeen can be found in Bartlett's *History of Wyoming*, pp.150-154. Information on Coffeen's store in Big Horn is in *Pioneers*.

34. *Pioneers*, pp.98-99.

35. Francis Birkhead Beard, *Wyoming from Territorial Days to the Present* (Chicago and New York: American Historical Society, Inc., 1933), pp.404-407, and Work Projects Administration, *Wyoming: A Guide to Its History, Highways, and People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), pp.211-212. Dayton is approximately twenty miles northwest of Sheridan and was established in 1882.

36. Hanna, "Wild West."

Horn City, sold his ranch and moved into Sheridan. Hanna's role in Big Horn was complete. He was the first settler, built the first cabin, plowed the first field, built the first hotel, and served on the townsite and fair committees. His hope for the town waned shortly after his marriage in 1885. He sold his hotel the following year. When he sold his ranch in 1888 and moved into Sheridan it was the end of his involvement with Big Horn City.<sup>37</sup>

When Hanna followed the boom as it shifted from Big Horn City to Sheridan in the early 1890s, remaining Big Horn citizens looked for ways to draw some interest back to their town. With the newspaper re-established in Buffalo and the railroad, county seat, and fair, and part of the population heading for Sheridan, progress seemed to have jumped over Big Horn City. Those who remained could either watch it slowly die out and become a ghost town or they could try to

revitalize their "city." The next decade was a difficult time for residents, as the town tried to cut a new niche in Sheridan County. The last decade of the nineteenth century can best be described as a period when Big Horn City searched for a new identity in Sheridan County.

The first attempt to create this new identity began in 1894 when the Congregational Missionary Society proposed building a college in Big Horn if the community would sell scholarships to finance the enterprise. The Missionary Society not only was interested in education but felt that an academy would help revive Big Horn and raise local property values. During the next year many

scholarships were sold—quite a few paid in notes—at the price of one hundred dollars each. A two-story brick building was constructed on the west edge of town and the Wyoming Collegiate Institute opened its doors in the fall of 1895.<sup>38</sup>

One has to look no further than the school's first catalog of 1894-95 to under-

nois and return, to attend school will go far to carry them through a school year at home. The Wyoming Collegiate Institute has been established to provide the young men and women of Wyoming a liberal and practical education at as low an expense as possible.<sup>39</sup>

A faculty of six furnished the education. The staff included two men of the clergy, a natural scientist with a Ph.D., two women music teachers, and one man who taught business classes. There were three terms each year: fall, winter and spring. Preparatory and remedial coursework was provided by a two-year grammar school that offered classes in arithmetic, geography, reading, spelling and other basics. A two-year normal course followed, upon which a student had the option of taking the three-year Classical Course, Scientific Course, Musical/Literary Course, or Commercial Course.

The struggling citizens of Big Horn had much to gain by locating the school nearby. Their motive is evident by examining the composition of the school's board of trustees. Of the fifteen trustees elected for the years 1896-1898, six were from Big Horn while Sheridan and Buffalo each supplied two. The catalog was designed to sell not only the school but also Big Horn.

*For beautiful and picturesque scenery, the village and institute cannot be excelled. Its location gives it an invigorating, salubrious mountain atmosphere, making it a veritable sanitarium. Parents or guardians having children or wards that are unable to endure hard study on account of physical debility, should try the effects of mountain air by*



above: *Dedication of the Sundial at the site of the first cabin at Big Horn, on Leroy Sackett's old place on Hanna Creek*, nd. Dora Myers Hanna, third from left. Deck Hunter Collection

right: *Larry Brown and Deck Hunter at Hanna Sundial, Big Horn, 1994*. Mark Junge



stand the dual purpose of the Missionary Society. In addition to their ambitious academic plans, the people of Big Horn planned to make money boarding students. And land values would rise with the college located nearby. But the primary goal of education can be determined from this catalog passage:

This Institute has been established to meet a long felt want among the people of Wyoming. There are many parents who wish to give their children an education beyond that furnished by the district school, who are unable, or do not wish, to send their children to the eastern colleges. The expenses of a trip to Nebraska, Iowa, or Illi-

38. Various sources depict the organization of the Wyoming Collegiate Institute. See: *Pioneers*, pp.33-35; Bartlett, *History of Wyoming*, p.441; untitled, typed MS in Bob Helvey Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

39. *Catalog of Wyoming Collegiate Institute, First Year, July, 1895, Big Horn, Sheridan Co., Wyo.* (Big Horn: Collegiate Press, 1895), p.11.

37. The story of Hanna's marriage can be found in the *Sentinel*, 4 July 1885. Details on his store and hotel business deals can be found in his manuscript, "Wild West."

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Nebraska State Historical Society



sending them to the Wyoming Collegiate Institute. The moral surroundings are good. A strong temperance sentiment prevails in the community, so that we are free from the saloon.<sup>40</sup>

The effects of mountain air on the mind notwithstanding, the above declaration certainly was meant to promote the town as well as education. Indeed, it sounds much like an expression of Hanna's dreams ten years earlier. The motivation of the citizens can also be detected from this paragraph in the catalog:

*The citizens of the village being interested in our school will throw open their homes for students, and afford pleasant boarding places for reasonable rates. Board and room can be obtained from \$3.00 to \$4.00 per week. Students can secure rooms and board themselves at a much lower cost.<sup>41</sup>*

The Wyoming Collegiate Institute met with little success. The *Catalog* records indicate that fifty-six students were enrolled at the school the first year. Of these, thirty-four were taking courses through the gram-mar department.<sup>42</sup> By the end of the first term two faculty members had resigned. They were soon replaced and the school graduated its first class of four students in 1897. Four addresses were given on commencement day in May. Three of them—"Ambition," "Success," and "Opportunities,"—have titles reflecting not only the typical graduate's viewpoint about the future, but that of the town of Big Horn as well.

Sadly, it was the only commencement day that Big Horn would see. The school closed its doors the

following year. The reasons for its short life are fairly simple. One theory suggests that the nationwide Panic of 1893 and the depression that followed contributed to the failure.<sup>43</sup> Another suggests that the beginning of Sheridan High School in 1893 spelled doom for the school.<sup>44</sup> And finally, many course scholarships were sold on credit, the money for which was never collected.

Soon after the failure of the Wyoming Collegiate Institute became apparent another effort was made in September of 1897 --if not to promote Big Horn, at least to nurture the town— when sixteen townsmen started an Odd Fellows organization.<sup>45</sup> More than any other event, the establishment of a fraternal, benevolent society highlights the problems Big Horn was facing in the last few years of the nineteenth century.

The International Order of Odd Fellows, founded during the early eighteenth century to assist workers displaced by the Industrial Revolution, maintains four basic

purposes: "To visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan."<sup>46</sup> These purposes were well suited to Big Horn's needs at the time. Although individual commercial gain was not a goal, enlightenment of the mind was. Thus, the Odd Fellows helped pick up some of the pieces left by the college.<sup>47</sup>

40. *ibid.*, p.12

41. *ibid.*, p.12.

42. *ibid.*, p.7. By comparison, the University of Wyoming had an enrollment of 129. Wilson O. Clough, *History of the University of Wyoming* (Laramie: Laramie Printing Company, 1937), p.99.

43. For a general discussion of the 1890s depression see T.A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp.295-298.

44. Bartlett, p.441.

45. Corwin Havill, telephone interview 30 April 1990.

46. Havill interview.

47. Corwin Havill, letter to author, 1 May 1990



*Odd Fellows Hall rehabilitation, Christy Love residence, 1982*  
Doug Goodman, State Historic Preservation Office

**inset:** *Garage and Odd Fellows Hall, 1962*  
Edmund Randolph, American Heritage Center



In 1901 the group purchased for use as a lodge a two-story, false-front grocery constructed in 1894.<sup>48</sup> On a facade the Odd Fellows painted the recognizable, three-link chain symbolizing friendship, love and truth. Three years later the Cloud Peak Chapter of the Daughters of Rebekah, the women's auxiliary of the Odd Fellows, was organized.<sup>49</sup>

According to historian Don Harrison Doyle, fraternal organizations or "voluntary associations," helped control frontier community conflict and aid in social order. According to Doyle:

Whatever their explicit mission, all of these voluntary associations performed very special covert roles by integrating community leaders, enhancing individual opportunity, safeguarding the middle-class family, and serving as schools that taught organizational skills and group obedience.<sup>50</sup>

These covert roles were most often made manifest by economic and social relief in the form of insurance and financial aid. In addition, relief was felt in the camaraderie of others in similar situations. In this

48. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Big Horn Odd Fellows Hall*, prepared by Christy Love, 9 December 1980, State Historic Preservation Office, Wyoming Department of Commerce, Cheyenne.

49. Alvin J. Schmidt and Nicholas Babchuk, advisory ed., *Fraternal Organizations* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980), p.285. According to Schmidt and Babchuk, members of the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies (IARA) use the letters in Rebekah to describe their organization's qualities:

- R- Rendering your service above self.
- E- Ever mindful for all to remember of your Love and devotion.
- B- Represents our Bible for which you are a part of.
- E- Ever striving to please God and your people.
- K- is for Kindness— one of your many outstanding traits.
- A- Always striving to live up to God's teachings.
- H- represents your Hospitality shown a humble unknown servant.

50. Don Harrison Doyle, *The Social Order of a Frontier Community: Jacksonville, Illinois 1825-1870* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p.178. For a basic understanding of the role of the fraternal organization on the frontier see Doyle, pp.178-193 and Schmidt and Babchuk, *Fraternal Organizations*.



Panorama, Moncrieffe Ranch, Sheridan Co., Wyo., 1903

The glass plate used to make the print on the right has deteriorated, possibly due to a lack of chemical fixer.

way fraternal societies helped achieve group solidarity in the face of hard times.

In addition to performing the function of supplying relief to the needy, fraternal organizations helped people of different backgrounds assimilate by teaching them — through meetings and the various activities of the group— American forms of democracy. Although traditionally nonsectarian, nonpartisan and nonprofit, such voluntary associations usually took a conservative viewpoint toward government. Likewise, they helped establish a moral foundation for the community by adopting the belief in a supreme being. Finally, fraternal societies offered members a bit of social prestige within their own communities. This was especially true in small towns where members could separate themselves from nonmembers through the use of secret handshakes, passwords, and club activities.

For Big Horn the Odd Fellows played all of these roles. It is important to understand that their goals were to maintain social order and relieve the downtrodden. After the fall of Hanna's Big Horn City in the late 1880s, the Panic of 1893, and the failure of the Wyoming Collegiate Institute, Big Horn had an ample supply of distressed

citizens. Although future events make it difficult to judge the relative success of the Odd Fellows in Big Horn, it is safe to say that its longevity —it lasted until 1949 when it was absorbed into the Sheridan Chapter of Odd Fellows, and the Daughters of Rebekah lasted until 1972— indicates that the two groups made a difference in Big Horn.

By 1895 the Little Goose Valley and the village of Big Horn resembled many of the struggling towns that the railroad had bypassed. Without that link to the rest of the world Big Horn would remain a small village surrounded by small plots of land held by ranchers, farmers and a few sheep men. A homestead map of lands filed in 1900 shows that there were more than fifty homesteads staked out in two townships that contained Big Horn and the Little Goose Creek Valley.<sup>51</sup> Most of these were 160-acre quarter sections although some husband and wife teams filed on adjacent lands to increase their acreage. No property owner held more

51. The date of 1900 is used rather than 1895 because lands were not registered by the county assessor until they had been lived on and improved upon for a period of at least five years.

52. *Original Sheridan County Homesteads*, map, (Big Horn, Wyoming: Deck Hunter, 1988).



J. E. Stimson Collection, Wyoming State Museum

than 480 acres.<sup>52</sup> Livestock and produce grown on these homesteads were consumed at home, sold locally or taken to Sheridan to be shipped on the railroad. By 1897 it looked as if Big Horn's future depended upon the persistence of small ranchers and a small town. The village's promise and identity as northern Wyoming's leading city, so strong just ten years earlier, was lost.

During the next decade the community of Big Horn and the Little Goose Creek Valley were forever altered by the arrival of three remittance men: the Englishman, Oliver H. Wallop; and the Scots, Malcolm Moncrieffe and his brother William Moncrieffe. After their successful business venture sold more than 20,000 horses to the British for use in the Boer War, the town of Big Horn was soon transformed from a small ranching supply post to a center for an elite, polo-playing, horse-breeding culture that linked America's old monied aristocracy to

the traditions of European nobility.<sup>53</sup> Thus, by 1940, as the town celebrated almost six decades of settlement, the dreams of Hanna's Big Horn city had been all but forgotten. That year the federally-sponsored Work Projects Administration book, *Wyoming: A Guide To Its History, Highways, And People* contained the remark:

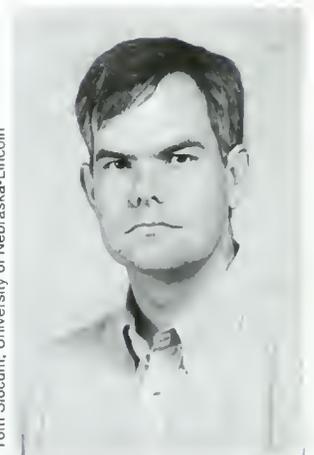
Ranchers here, many of them wealthy Easterners, have consciously preserved the Old-West atmosphere of the town -- its single street, plank sidewalks, hitching posts, and general store, where residents and guests sit on apple boxes and nail kegs around the stove and swap yarns, while waiting for the mail.<sup>54</sup>

Big Horn, with a single street, plank sidewalks and a general store, has survived to this day. As one crosses that lone, paved street from the Odd Fellows Hall —now a private residence— to the Big Horn Mercantile and Post Office, it is very difficult to even imagine a bustling little burg called Big Horn City.

MIKE AMUNDSON (1965-) WAS BORN AND RAISED IN LOVELAND, COLORADO. IN THE FALL OF 1983 AMUNDSON CAME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING TO

PLAY BASKETBALL FOR COACH JIM BRANDENBURG. HE GRADUATED IN 1988 WITH A DOUBLE MAJOR IN HISTORY AND JOURNALISM, AND STAYED TO COMPLETE THE M.A. IN AMERICAN STUDIES IN 1990. WHILE TRAVELING AROUND WYOMING TO RESEARCH AND PHOTOGRAPH SITES FOR HIS BOOK, *Wyoming Time and Again*, MIKE'S INTEREST WAS DIRECTED TOWARD THE TOWN OF BIG HORN, AND IT BECAME HIS THESIS SUBJECT. ALTHOUGH HE IS NO LONGER IN WYOMING, MIKE CONTINUES TO PURSUE WYOMING HISTORY IS FINISHING WORK TOWARDS A PH.D DEGREE IN HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN. HE HAS RECEIVED, AMONG HIS MANY OTHER AWARDS, RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS FROM THE WYOMING COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES AND IS WORKING ON WYOMING

TOPICS FOR TWO PUBLICATIONS. ONE IS A BIOGRAPHICAL PIECE ON ITINERANT WESTERN ARTIST MERRITT DANA HOUGHTON WHICH WILL APPEAR IN THE FALL ISSUE OF *Montana Magazine of Western History*, AND THE OTHER RELATES TO WYOMING URANIUM TOWN, JEFFREY CITY, WHICH WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE FALL, 1995 ISSUE OF *Western Historical Quarterly*. HE WILL SPEND THE 1994-95 ACADEMIC YEAR AS VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY AT POCATELLO.



Tom Stocum, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

53. Big Horn's history through the twentieth century can be found in Bucky King, *The History of Big Horn Polo* (Sheridan: Still Sailing Publications, 1987), and Michael A. Amundson, *The Mink and Mamure Crowd: The History of an Elite Subculture in Wyoming*, unpublished M.A. thesis, (Laramie: University of Wyoming, 1990).<sup>54</sup> *Wyoming, A Guide to Its History, Highways, and People*, p.269.

# The Architecture of Garbutt, Weidener, and Sweeney in 1920s Casper

by Patrick Frank

Photos by Richard Collier, State Historic Preservation Office

*The current state of research on the architectural history of Casper makes it relatively easy to find out who designed the most important buildings and when they were built. Local historians have done much groundwork examining tax records, insurance maps and directories, and compiling a fairly complete inventory of early twentieth century Casper buildings.<sup>1</sup> I will attempt to build on this work by examining in more detail a selection of the most important buildings of the boom years of the early twenties and placing them against a backdrop of American architecture of the time.*

A building is a cultural artifact which reveals important information about its time, place and the attainments and aspirations of the people who lived and worked in them. Several Casper buildings provide excellent evidence of this kind. They provide important clues, both in what they say and do not say, about the culture of Casper during a time of extremely rapid economic expansion. They specifically provide two answers to an important question of the day, namely: *What kind of society will Casper be?* Will it be stable and provincial, or relatively boisterous, competing for a place among the West's important cultural centers? Casper's architects opted for the latter, yet the question persists not only for Casper but for all of Wyoming.

Most of the important buildings of the time were designed by the single firm of Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney. It was Casper's architectural leader during the years of the oil boom. Between 1914 and 1925 its architects designed fifteen schools and over fifty homes and com-

mercial buildings. Their competition was only minimally in evidence during the period.<sup>2</sup> Below, a brief description of the early 1920s Casper economy will be followed by consideration of the major architectural influences on the firm, in turn followed by a detailed consideration of a few key buildings. We will find that Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney provided stylistically ambitious buildings

1. Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Casper, "Historic Preservation in Casper," undated booklet, Vertical File, Casper College Library Special Collections (hereafter CCLSC); Casper Symphony Guild, "Symphony of Christmas Homes," undated brochure, Vertical File, CCLSC; Art Randall Collection, CCLSC; Downtown Casper Main Street Project, "Historic Walking Tour," brochure, 1987, CCLSC. South Wolcott Street Historic District National Register Nomination, CCLSC.

2. Significant buildings by their competitors include the Masonic Lodge on South Center Street designed in 1914 by Dubois and Goodrich, the Henning home on South Wolcott Street designed in 1925 by Raymond Webb, and the B. B. Brooks home on South Wolcott designed in 1924 by an unidentified architect. Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney also designed the Natrona County High School. This building, designed in a medieval style considered appropriate for educational buildings at the time, is beyond the scope of this paper.

# A BOOM TOWN MCMXXX AD

bespeaking Casper's desire in the 1920s for commercial leadership in the Rocky Mountain region.

The engine that drove the Casper economy in the early 1920s was oil production at the Salt Creek Field some thirty miles north of town. Impelled by fast-rising automobile traffic, the field's output climbed steeply, as the following table shows (in million barrels):

1918.....	5.5	1920 .....	10.5
1922.....	19.2	1923 .....	35.0

During the peak years 1923-24 the Salt Creek Field alone produced over four per cent of the entire nation's output of crude.<sup>3</sup> Casper's population increased at a similarly rapid rate.

1917.....	8,474	1920 .....	15,400
1922.....	22,040	1925 .....	26,520 <sup>4</sup>

Perhaps more relevant to the architectural profession, building permits numbered 574 in 1920 and rose to a record 1,256 just three years later.<sup>5</sup>

Not surprisingly, many of Casper's leading citizens saw an opportunity to promote the city as a financial and

industrial hub. The city spent \$20 million on civic improvements in the decade ending in 1927.<sup>6</sup> A promotional brochure solemnly intoned: "Expert and reliable opinion is that the oil fields surrounding Casper will continue to flow at the same rate for the next sixty years at least."<sup>7</sup> A Chamber of Commerce newspaper advertisement declared that the city was "destined to become an inland empire. . . the greatest industrial center west of the Mississippi River."<sup>8</sup> There was a move in the state legislature in 1923 to relocate the Wyoming state capital to Casper.

Such boundless optimism probably was a major reason why Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney came to Casper. Arthur M. Garbutt, the head of the firm and the only one whose history is traceable, arrived first. A native of New York, he had studied architecture at the Mechanics Institute in Rochester for four years ending in 1896. He came west at the turn of the century and spent ten years in Fort Collins, Colorado where he designed several commercial buildings and taught architecture at Colorado State University.<sup>9</sup> Arriving in Casper in 1914, he set up the office at

3. Production figures from *Casper Daily Tribune*, "Pictorial and Printed Survey of the City of Casper and the State of Wyoming," (1924 brochure, CCLSC); and Harold D. Roberts, *Salt Creek Wyoming: History of a Great Oil Field* (Denver: privately printed for Midwest Oil Company, 1956), p.173.

4. Figures from *Polk's Casper City and Natrona County Directory* (Casper: Mountain States Lithographic) for the years cited.

5. Casper Chamber of Commerce, "The Casper Pathfinder," typescript, 1927, CCLSC.

6. Jean Mead, *Casper Country: Wyoming's Heartland* (Boulder: Pruett, 1987), p.77

7. *Casper Daily Tribune*, "Pictorial and Printed Survey."

8. Mead, *Casper Country*, p.80.

9. Garbutt's buildings in Fort Collins, all built between 1904 and 1906, include the Armory on East Mountain Street, the Colorado Building and the Commercial Bank and Trust on College Avenue, the Catholic Church Rectory on West Mountain (all extant), and the YMCA (destroyed). *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, 27 March 1907. For other biographical data on Garbutt I am indebted to his three surviving children, Irving Garbutt, Bill Garbutt and Nina Kubichek who kindly gave assistance and information. See also the Garbutt Family file in the Local History Room, Fort Collins (Colorado) Public Library, and the University Archives in the Special Collections Room at Colorado State University Library, Fort Collins.



1. *Facade of Troy Laundry, 1920 (extant though altered).*

first in partnership with Charles Weidener alone. James Sweeney arrived in 1921.

Most of the business buildings designed by the firm were in a classical style descended from either Roman or Renaissance antecedents. This is not surprising since the mode was dominant in American public architecture between the 1880s and the onset of the Great Depression. The style, known as Academic Classicism or Beaux-Arts Classicism, emphasized tradition, balance and fidelity to the past. Its pioneer in America was the New York firm of McKim, Meade and White whose work at the Boston Public Library (begun 1888) and the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 was highly influential.

McKim, Meade and White were the principal architects of the World's Fair, and they created the sparkling White City which seemed to embody all that was best and most noble from past styles. Daniel Burnham, another Fair planner, wrote to Frank Lloyd Wright, then a young draftsman.

*The Fair is going to have a great influence in our country. The American people have seen the "classics" on a grand scale for the first time . . . I can see all America constructed along the lines of the Fair, in noble, "dignified," classic style. The great men of the day all feel that way about it. All of them.*<sup>10</sup>

This is precisely what happened, as the influence of the Fair—which was seen by one in ten Americans—spread from coast to coast at the turn of the century. For example, the San Francisco Civic Center included its own version of the Boston Public Library. Reed and Stem's Grand Central Station in New York boasted monumental Roman round arches separated by correct columns. Denver's Civic Center Park was designed with an amphitheater of Renaissance derivation. McKim, Meade and White went on to remodel the White House for Theodore Roosevelt in 1902. Other architects such as Charles Platt, John Russell Pope, and the firm of Warren and Wetmore became leaders in the new movement toward tradition. Gone were Victorian idiosyncrasies such as rusticated stonework, eccentric decoration and asymmetrical plans. The new style was balanced, harmonious and, above all, firmly based in classical tradition.

This stylistic change has its roots in two aspects of American culture of the period, both of which were also operative in Casper. One was America's fast-developing industrial wealth which made possible not only such grand edifices, but also the scholarship required to do them tastefully. Second, and perhaps more important, was a desire for some semblance of permanence and stability in a society being overturned by industrialization, urban-

10. Quoted in Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time, and Architecture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p.394

ization and immigration. Academic Classicism provided a visual manifestation of taste and tradition in a society characterized, according to architectural historian Alan Gowans, by the

*sense of being adrift on a chartless sea of untested principles, indeterminate values, and shifting social order. . . . There were those—a majority—who felt somehow that the solution was to return to precedents and improve on them; this meant in effect reproducing past styles as the early Victorians had done, but with all the greater accuracy now allowed, and all the greater size and scale demanded, by half a century's accumulated wealth and scholarship.<sup>11</sup>*

Such influences must have been acutely felt in Casper, which was rising from the Wyoming plain as residents streamed in and oil wealth accumulated. If so, then Casper's buildings of the period likewise express the hope for an anchor in the storm.

The Troy Laundry (ill.1) displays the efforts of Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney to imbue even a modest commercial structure with some sense of tradition. The elevation is symmetrical, though only the right half is seen here. Surrounding the firm name at the top are imitation garlands done in brickwork. The windows are surmounted with Roman round arches, and the two central doorways are topped with panels in a low-cost mock-up of Renaissance style. The office door at the far right has a triangular pediment in brickwork above a door surrounded by sidelights in the manner of American Georgian detailing, a style which itself was based on Renaissance models.

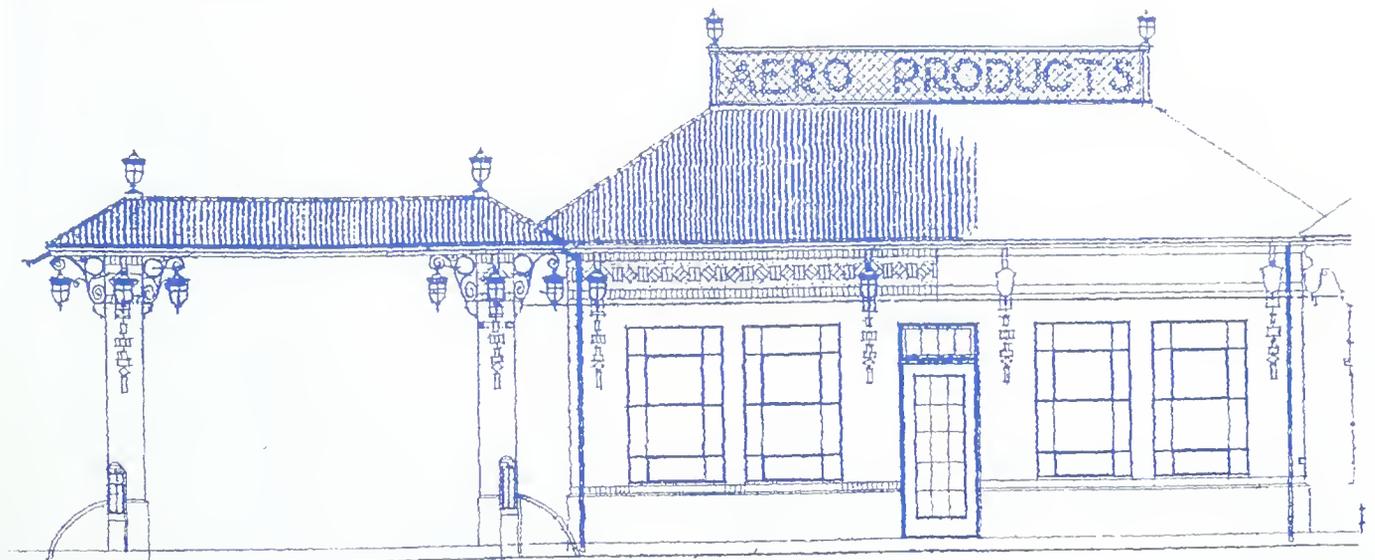
The Aero Service Station (ill.2) was similarly modest yet also subtly pedigreed. The lines of the central block

are highly reminiscent of a Colonial American home with its symmetrical arrangement of openings, hipped roof and its doorway accented by lanterns. The fact that the station resembles a traditional home is also fairly typical of the time. According to Chester Liebs,

*The most popular architectural costume for packaging filling stations by the early 1920s was that of a small, tidy house. . . . The sight of a little house selling gas along the roadside could also trigger a host of positive associations—friendliness, comfort, security—in the minds of motorists whizzing by.<sup>12</sup>*

11. Alan Gowans, *Images of American Living: Four Centuries of Architecture and Furniture as Cultural Expression* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1967), pp.363-364

12. Chester H. Liebs, *From Main Street to Miracle Mile: America's Roadside Architecture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1985), pp.100-101.



2. Facade of Aero Service Station, 1924 (destroyed).



3. *Facade of Nicolaysen Residence, 1922 (extant but lacks top story as built).*

In the Nicolaysen House (ill.3), various allusions to Classical traditions come together. The facade is Federal in character with a symmetrical array including wings at the sides, a Classical cornice just below the eaves of a hipped roof, and an accented doorway. The porch is semi-circular, resembling the south facade of the White House. Doorway details (ill.4) show delicately curved mullions in the panes around the door behind attenuated columns of combined Ionic and Tuscan orders. The Federal models on which this house is based are buildings by Charles Bulfinch, the leading architect of Boston near the turn of the nineteenth century. Bulfinch in turn based his delicate designs on recently discovered Roman interiors that had been found practically intact at Pompeii and Herculaneum in Italy.

This was the stylistic heritage desired by Peter Nicolaysen, who, by selecting this most traditional of American styles for his house, may have wanted to show enthusiasm for his adopted country. Born in Denmark in 1863, he first migrated to British Columbia, then Nebraska, working in lumbering and construction. He came to Casper in 1888 and started Nicolaysen Lumber Company five years later. Since he did not derive his fortune from oil, he represented whatever there was of "old money" in Casper prior to the boom. He later diversified into ranching, and served as mayor, city councilman and county commissioner, while his wife Mary Nicolaysen amassed Casper's first art collection.<sup>13</sup> The home is a symbolic expression of the family's devotion both to tradition and to America.

13. Biographical information from Art Randall Collection, CCLSC.



4. *Doorway detail of Nicolaysen Residence*

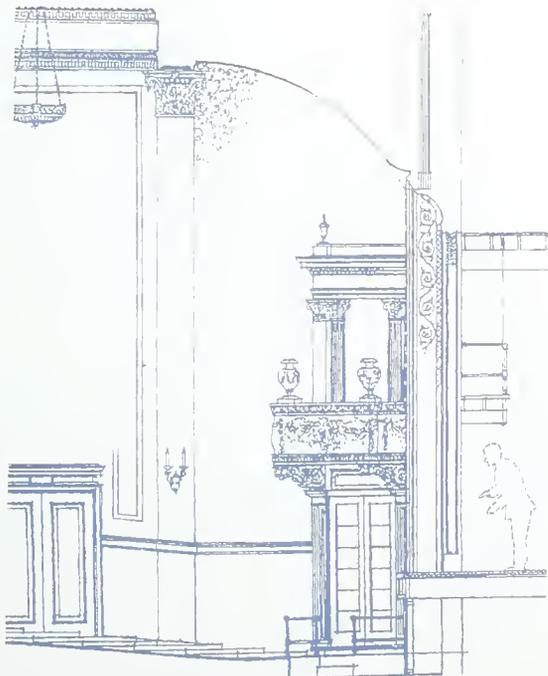


- 5. *opposite top: Facade of Rex Theater, 1918 (destroyed)*
- 6. *opposite middle: Ticket Booth and lobby of Rex Theater*
- 7. *opposite bottom: Proscenium of Rex Theater*

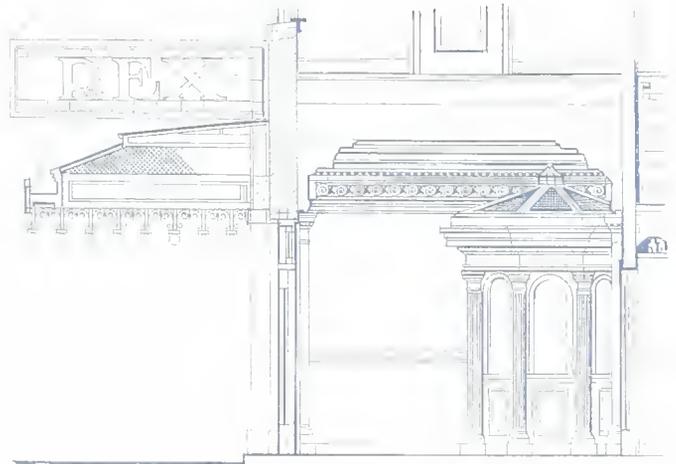


The Rex Theater in downtown Casper (ill.5) was a much larger building no less steeped in Classicism. Its symmetrical and somewhat imposing brick facade was marked by the rhythm of pairs of Corinthian pilasters, a time-honored device which Michelangelo used in the dome of St. Peter's to suggest stateliness and monumentality. These pilasters appear to support an elaborate entablature derived from the Greek Ionic order. The mullioned octagonal lozenges in the upper halves of the windows, while useful in maintaining the energy of the composition, strike a slightly discordant note and look faintly medieval. The Rex ticket booth (ill.6) was a perfect circular temple in which engaged columns support round-arched ticket windows, the whole topped by a low-pitched roof that recalls the Roman Temple of Vesta.

The decorative scheme of the Rex Theater reaches a climax at the proscenium (ill.7), where Renaissance and Roman motifs combine to produce an overall sense of



tasteful opulence. The proscenium arch next to the outlined bowing figure is marked by a curving garland of Renaissance derivation. The flanking two-story pavilion contains columns with full entablatures, a wide garland between the stories and decorative plaster urns. The gently undulating vegetal motifs that highlight so many of the features of this building are derived from Renaissance models which in turn come from ancient Rome. To the Romans such motifs symbolized fertility and tranquility, such as those on the Roman Altar of Peace. The whole ensemble is luxurious, calling to mind Venetian Renaissance buildings by Andrea Palladio and Jacopo Sansovino, architects who established Venice's reputation for wealth and taste. Even in the Western United States, Vene-



tian motifs were widely copied. Denver's Daniels and Fisher Tower (1916) is based closely on the bell tower in Venice's Plaza of St. Mark. In Cheyenne, the curtain of the Atlas Theater, designed in 1907 by William Dubois, contains a depiction of a Venetian scene. Wherever they were built, however, early movie places were as opulent as local budgets would allow. According to David Naylor,

*Their purpose was to build a showplace with all the trappings of the rich, but accessible to all. George Rapp, a leading palace architect, put it best: "Here is a shrine to democracy, where the wealthy rub elbows with the poor."<sup>14</sup>*

Garbutt, Weidener, and Sweeney also designed several business buildings such as the *Casper Daily Tribune* Building (1920, extant) and the Ohio Oil Company offices (1917, destroyed). Their real showplaces, however, were large public buildings in which they used decoration and luxurious materials to create a tasteful whole along Classical lines that the times seemed to demand. Among these are the Townsend Hotel (1923, extant), now on the National

14. David Naylor, *American Picture Palaces: The Architecture of Fantasy* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1981), p. 31.



8. *Facade of Wyoming National Bank Building, 1921* (extant though much altered), original design.

Register of Historic Places, and the Consolidated Royalty or Con-Roy Building (1917, extant) where the firm had its own offices. Their best office building is the Wyoming National Bank Building, also known as the Midwest Building, which was the largest in the state when it was completed in 1921. The bank was built during the midst of a major expansion of deposits which rose from \$270,000 in 1914 to \$4.4 million by 1923.<sup>15</sup> Its president was Bryant B. Brooks who had risen from cowhand to rancher to governor. His house was an elegant Federal dwelling just down the street from that of the Nicolaysens.

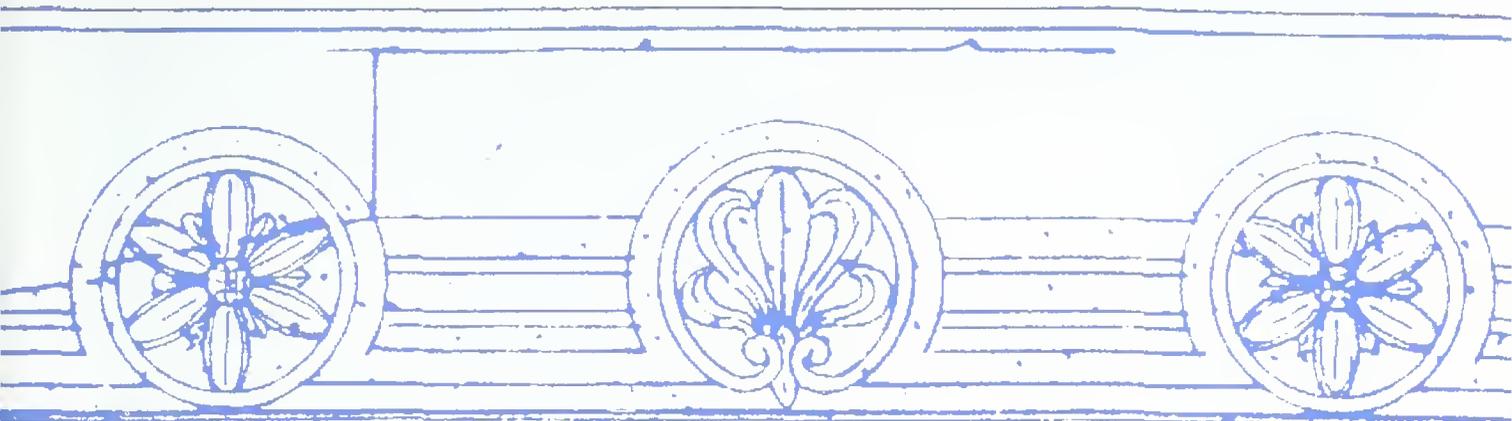
As originally designed (ill.8), the Wyoming National Bank had an accented main entrance in the center of the ground floor, with a subsidiary door just to the left and space for a shop on the right. The grouping and spacing of the windows on the upper floors reflect the organization of these entrances. It was designed in a manner similar to a Greek column with the base being the ground floor, the relatively unadorned shaft being the office floors and the capital being the top floor and cornice. The proud inscription bearing the company name was carved into an Indiana limestone beltcourse just above the ground floor that dominated the street-level view at the corner of Second and Wolcott in the heart of downtown. Before construction began, however, the entrance scheme was altered by shifting the subsidiary doorway toward the corner, thus equalizing the doorway accents. This shift called for a revision of window spacing (ill.10). The main doorway, like other ground floor entrances, was finished in granite after a Renaissance design. A twisted molding surrounded the

bronze door, coming to a peak with an oval cartouche just below a carved eagle. The eagle had strong associations both with currency and America but it was also the symbol of the Roman empire. To Americans it meant efficient administration, citizenship and public duty in a secularized republic. The main entrance was an identical doorway which had another granite panel above the eagle that was inscribed in Roman style: WYOMING NATIONAL BANK BUILDING. The cornice (ill. 9) was elaborate, and sat atop the edifice like a crown. A row of tooth-like dentils rested on moldings above the top story windows and was capped by two more moldings which, finally, were topped by round medallions containing alternating sunbursts and floral motifs. This type of cornice was less an invention of the Renaissance than of the Renaissance-inspired McKim, Meade and White. They used similarly alternating motifs in their buildings at Columbia University and in the Boston Public Library itself. Charles McKim, who supervised the design of the library, wrote to Edith Wharton that it was not necessary to strictly copy ancient models as long as their spirit was captured.

*The designer should not be too slavish, whether in the composition of a building, or a room, in his adherence to the letter of tradition. By conscientious study of the best examples of classic periods, including those of antiquity, it is possible to conceive a perfect result suggestive of a particular period . . . but inspired by the study of them all.<sup>16</sup>*

15. B. B. Brooks, *Memoirs of Bryant B. Brooks* (Glendale, California: Arthur C. Clarke Co., 1939), p.272.

16. Charles McKim to Edith Wharton (1897) quoted in Brooklyn Museum, *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum exhibition catalog, 1979), p.61.



9. top: cornice of Wyoming National Bank Building.  
10. bottom: ground floor corner of bank, as built.



11. Elks Club, built 1923 (extant).

Beyond the bronze doorways and granite decorations, the interior of the Wyoming National Bank building was also sumptuous. The walls were oak and walnut stained to dark shades and situated above a five-foot wainscoting of Vermont marble. The lobby sported painted decorations (which no longer exist) just below a ceiling hung with bronze light fixtures.

The opening of the building on June 27, 1921 was announced on the front page of the *Casper Daily Tribune*.

*Marking another epoch in a history of lightning growth and advancement which probably holds few parallels in the entire country—the development of a private banking concern into one of the largest financial institutions in the state within seven years—the Wyoming National Bank will open for business Monday in its palatial new home in the Midwest Building. . . . That hundreds of patrons and others who take pride in local achievements will through the elegant new banking rooms is assured.<sup>17</sup>*

B. B. Brooks was on hand at the opening to greet well-wishers from his huge desk on the main floor.<sup>18</sup>

The firm's best building, however, and one that sums up most of their concerns, is still standing nearly in its original condition. From the park across the street, the Elks Club (ill. 11) looks elegant and authoritative with its repeated round-arched windows highlighted in terra cotta. The facade is exceedingly simple. Windows rest on a light-colored, terra cotta beltcourse with no accents at the corners. The doorway is only subtly accented with a balustrade above and terra cotta panels surrounding. The metal awning is a much later addition along with the BPOE sign at the far left. The entire impression is one of a Renaissance palace made of simple elements tastefully arranged. Below each window is a recessed panel with an urn depicted in low relief. Window moldings are encrusted with trailing floral motifs similar to those found on sixteenth century Italian palaces. Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney bought their terra cotta from the Denver Terra

17. "Palatial New Home to be Occupied Monday by Bank;" *Casper Daily Tribune*, 25 June 1921, p.1.

18. Wyoming National Bank officials never lost their taste for architectural splendor. In 1964 the firm moved into a futuristic, onion-shaped cement building also unique in Wyoming.

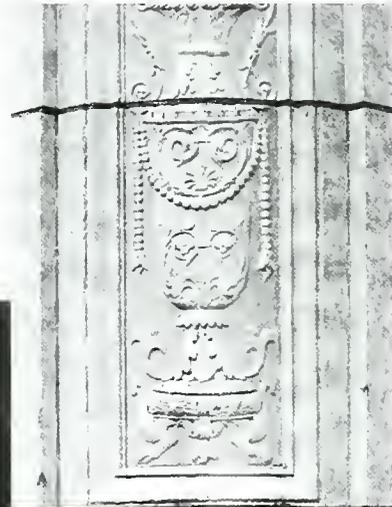
Cotta Company which modeled its designs after actual Renaissance buildings.<sup>19</sup> A closer view of the corner molding of the Elks Club (ill.12) shows that it is related to the work at the Rex Theater. It also resembles the ground-floor exterior moldings that once adorned the Townsend Hotel, and which would have adorned the Natrona County Court House that the firm designed in 1924 but was never given the opportunity to build.<sup>20</sup> The gracefully curving foliage with repeated urns and vases is similar to terra cotta designs on any number of Renaissance palaces, among them the Palazzo Roverella in Ferrara and the Palazzo Palavicini in Bologna.<sup>21</sup>

The effort to recapture the splendor of sixteenth century Italy was not done unknowingly in Casper or elsewhere in America. Architects provided the nation's businessmen with a set of uplifting images drawn from a time in which society was heavily influenced by financiers such as the Medici and the Peruzzi families rather than the clergy, soldiers or hereditary nobility. The business ethic of the Renaissance contributed directly to one of the greatest periods of art ever seen in Europe, and the heads of families were known as much for their taste as their wealth.

19. The National Terra Cotta Society, a national consortium of terra cotta producers, published an elegant book of Renaissance palace decorations in 1925 which the head of that Denver company sent free of charge to leading architects of the region. I have not located one belonging to Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney, but have seen copies that were given to William Dubois of Cheyenne and to the School of Architecture at the University of Colorado.

20. Plans for this building, which was not constructed due to a failed bond issue, are in the Jan Wilking Collection (JWC), Historical Research Unit, Wyoming Department of Commerce.

21. Both illustrated in National Terra Cotta Society, *Terra Cotta of the Italian Renaissance* (New York: National Terra Cotta Society, 1925) pp.135, 171.



12. Corner molding of Elks Club.

This was the ideal to which the leaders of Casper, along with those of a great many other cities, aspired. Sigfried Giedion, who dubbed this building style "mercantile classicism," traced the style to the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

*At the Fair the architects believed that the time, reviv-  
ing the creative spirit of Medicean times, and the pub-  
lic believed that the radiance of Florence was being re-  
called for them to live in.<sup>22</sup>*

But America had an advantage over Renaissance Florence in that it was a democracy in which the fruits of wealth were believed to be available to anyone with creativity and determination.

In such ways the buildings of Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney are in line with currents elsewhere in America. They reflect the presence of an upper class that thought of itself first as American rather than Western or regional. The firm eschewed references in their buildings that pointed to Wyoming's rural past. Indeed, oil wealth brought political strife to the state as ranchers—who thought of themselves as the true Wyomingites—urged the legisla-  
ture to lay a severance tax on oil, claiming that it would soon be gone. Casper's leading poet at the time was a dyed-in-the-wool Westerner who lamented the growth of industrial cities which he saw as inimical to health.

*Through the polluted atmosphere  
Smoke plumes from chimneys rise  
Discordant bells offend the ear  
Shrill whistles shriek their warning cries .*

*Bold women with painted faces,  
At night (They shun the light of day)  
Like grey wolves in desert places  
Travel alone seeking their prey,  
The marching stars are far away;  
The light of sorrow in their eyes,  
The moon, half-hid by clouds of grey  
Looks on in shocked surprise.<sup>23</sup>*

Casper's architecture was aimed at newcomers, of which there were many, saying to them that the values and virtues of Casper were not different from those elsewhere in the country. This contrasts with the work of architects such as Rudolph Schindler in California and John Gaw Meem in New Mexico who were then developing regional variations on dominant styles, creating buildings which more directly reflected local culture. If Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney avoided regionalism they also avoided Modernism. By the time of the oil boom, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and Irving Gill had already designed some of their most innovative structures. Modern architecture was an effort to create new building forms for new times, but Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney were unsympathetic. They saw their art as a reminder of what they thought was permanent and enduring rather than

uncertain and experimental.

Yet, if their buildings do not have a Wyomingesque look to them there is one factor that marks them specifically from Casper, and that is the gap between appearance and reality. In nearly every place where Mercantile Classicism was dominant it was in part a response to fast-changing society, and there were probably few places changing faster than Casper in the early twenties. Casper had all the features of a classic boomtown: crime, corruption and relatively easy money. It had in the Sandbar one of the world's largest red-light districts for a city of its size.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the Volstead Act was ignored on a massive scale.

*Former law enforcement officials estimated that 400  
people were engaged in the manufacture, traffic, and  
sale of bootleg liquor, making it one of the largest in-  
dustries in the county.<sup>25</sup>*

A captain and four police officers were indicted in 1924 for taking protection payoffs from a long list of buyers of booze, among them "well-known persons in Casper's business and social life."<sup>26</sup> Ethnic minorities routinely met with discrimination. There were several hundred Black oil rig workers but, according to one source, "Negroes were not allowed to cross the line. The 'line' was north and west of Ash and B Streets."<sup>27</sup>

This was the unsteady if somewhat exciting atmosphere in which Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney worked. If one of the most common uses of art is for escape from the times or unpleasant realities, then the architects answered the call. They did so using the best language that they knew of, one that had explicitly idealistic and high-minded connotations.

True to ranchers' predictions, the oil bubble began to burst in the middle of the decade. Production at Salt Creek began to drop. By 1927 the output was 20 million barrels below its 1923 peak.<sup>28</sup> If, as Dr. T.A. Larson says, "Expanding oil production cushioned the state's economic difficulties in the early 1920s," the cushion was wearing thin. Due to competition from Texas and Oklahoma the price of crude dropped from a boom high of three dollars a barrel to a mere 19 cents in 1931.<sup>29</sup> By 1929 Casper's population had dropped 5,000 from its 1925 peak.<sup>30</sup> As early as 1926 building permits fell by more than 1,000 to a mere 212.<sup>31</sup>

The latter statistic was, of course, crucial for the architecture trade. Casper's leading firm, under the impact

24. Don Clark, "The Sand Bar," typescript, 1975, CCLSC, n.p.

25. Mead, *Casper Country*, p.89.

26. Walter Jones, "Casper's Prohibition Years," *Annals of Wyoming* 48, no.2 (Fall 1976):270. The captain's list mysteriously disappeared before the trial.

27. Don Clark, "The Sand Bar," n.p.

28. Roberts, *Salt Creek, Wyoming*, p.173.

29. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp.431-32,437.

30. Polk's *Casper City and Natrona County Directory*, 1929-30.

31. Casper Chamber of Commerce, "The Casper Pathfinder."

22. Giedion, *Space, Time, and Architecture*, pp.274-5.

23. E. Richard Shipp, "Pioneer Blood" (Casper: Oil City Printers, 1926), n.p.

of the decline, broke up in 1925. The year the firm ceased operation Arthur Garbutt traded an unsalable Casper apartment building for a piece of land north of Worland and took up farming and ranching the next year.<sup>32</sup>

Somehow this was appropriate. Once the oil boom ran its course, Casper's economy returned to the agriculture which had previously sustained it. Depression-driven stockholders of the Wyoming National Bank passed a resolution in 1934 which began:

*Whereas, Wyoming is essentially a livestock state... with vast area of mountain and plain more suitable for livestock production...making Wyoming's future dependent largely upon the continued success of her livestock producers ...*<sup>33</sup>

Creating buildings of sophistication, Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney sided with Casper's "boomers." Their buildings speak more clearly of Casper's aspirations to Western business leadership than of a particular Wyoming identity.

*Research for this article was assisted by a grant from the Wyoming Council for the Humanities. A slightly different version of the work was read at the Casper College Humanities Festival on March 3-6, 1993. Architectural drawings of Garbutt, Weidener and Sweeney buildings may be found in the Jan Wilking Collection, Wyoming State Museum. Line drawings were enhanced by Eileen Skibo.*

32. Interview with Irving Garbutt, Bill Garbutt and Nina Kubichek, Casper, 24 April 1992.

33. *Brooks Memoirs*, p.273.



RICHARD COCHRAN

PATRICK FRANK WAS BORN IN THE SIERRA NEVADA FOOTHILLS TOWN OF JACKSON, CALIFORNIA AND TOOK UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY IN SACRAMENTO, RECEIVING A B.A. IN ART IN 1976. HE

SPENT SEVEN YEARS IN THE SOCIAL SERVICE FIELD AS A HOMELESS SHELTER MANAGER AND PRISON LIBRARIAN BEFORE DOING GRADUATE WORK AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY. HE COMPLETED HIS PH.D IN AMERICAN STUDIES THERE IN 1992. A SPECIALIST ON MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART, HE HAS PUBLISHED SEVERAL ESSAYS AND REVIEWS ON THE SUBJECT. CURRENTLY HE IS RESEARCHING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MODERN ART AND ANARCHIST PHILOSOPHIES, AND HAS WRITTEN SEVERAL ARTICLES FOR ANARCHIST MAGAZINES. A VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER, PATRICK ALSO TEACHES THAT SUBJECT ON AN ADJUNCT BASIS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING.

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America's Largest Wooden Vessel

THE SIX MASTED SCHOONER  
*Wyoming* 

*The Schooner Wyoming on its first voyage (1909)* MAKER: MANNING BROTHERS, BOSTON, MASS.



by Francois M. Dickman

*She was a six-master and the biggest thing of wood I ever knowed of... She was a great cargo carrier and a mighty smart ship, light or loaded.*<sup>1</sup>

It is unusual for a ship to be named for a landlocked state. When Wyomingites speak of such a ship, most think of the battleship *Wyoming* which served the nation well in both World Wars. What is not generally remembered, however, is that the largest wooden-hulled ship ever built in the United States and put into commercial operation was the six masted schooner *Wyoming*. The vessel was constructed in the yards of Percy and Small in Bath, Maine and launched on December 15, 1909 with several Wyoming residents among its shareholders. Not only was the *Wyoming* the largest, it would be the last of the six-masted schooners built, capping a period which lasted thirty years when four, five and six masted schooners provided an economic means of carrying bulk cargo, especially coal and lumber, for coastwise trade.

After the Civil War iron-hulled steamers began to encroach on square-rigged sailing vessels and slowly take over the business of carrying passengers and freight. By 1880 this takeover was virtually complete. Also, by then most passengers and cargoes that originated in the United States were being carried on for-

1. Quotation from a crew member who once sailed on the *Wyoming*. Charles Merriam, *Loss of the Fire Masters* (New York: Claude Kendall Inc., 1936), p.175.

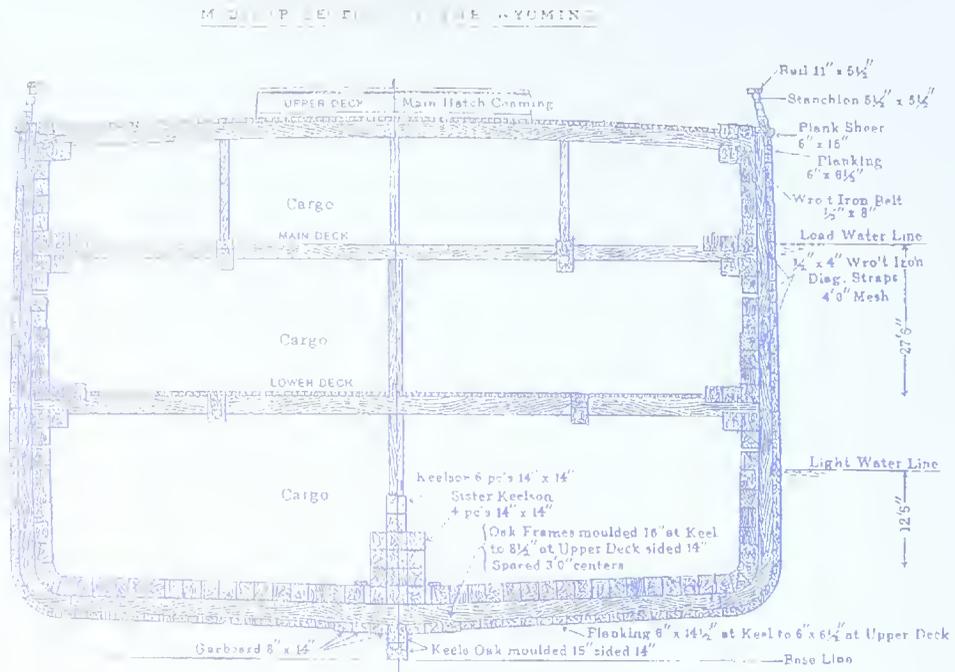
eight flag vessels. Most shipyards on the East Coast had fallen on hard times and many had been forced to close. Nevertheless, there remained a place for an American sailing vessel provided it could carry cargo quickly and at lower cost than a steamer. The result was the development in New England beginning in 1879 of large four masted schooners, to be followed by five masted schooners in 1890, and finally six masted schooners in 1900, the construction of the latter reaching its apogee with the *Wyoming*. The majority of these large schooners were built in Maine.

When the *Wyoming* was built, everything about the vessel was massive. Her registered length at the waterline stretched 329.5 feet from bow to stern, or roughly the distance between goal posts in a football field. But she appeared even longer with her bowsprit and jib boom extending an additional 95 feet. The schooner's width was 50.1 feet and the depth of her hold 30.4 feet, as much as many modern tankers. Grossing 3,731 tons, she had three decks and five cargo hatches. Her six lower masts of Oregon pine were each 126 feet in length with the foremast having a diameter of 32 inches and each of the other five being thirty inches. The topmast poles were 56 feet long, and when fully rigged the schooner could carry 12,000 square yards of canvas. Her two stockless anchors each weighed 8,500 pounds and she was capable of carrying 6,000 tons of cargo.<sup>2</sup> It was said that she could operate with one third of the crew needed for square-rigged sailing vessels.<sup>3</sup>

What made these large New England schooners economical was their low crew-to-cargo ratio. The crew was never more than twelve to thirteen men. This was made pos-

2. "Six Masted Schooner Wyoming," *International Marine Engineering* 15, January 1910, p.1. The reported dimensions vary slightly. According to the construction survey of the *Wyoming*, the length of her lower masts were 123 feet.

3. William Armstrong Fairburn, *Merchant Sail* (Center Lovell, Maine: Fairburn Marine Educational Foundation, 1955), Vol.4, p.2610.



Midship Section of the *Wyoming* Drawing from *International Marine Engineering*, 15 (January, 1910):3

sible by the relatively simple fore-and aft rig of these schooners and, most importantly, by the introduction in 1879 of the donkey steam engine.<sup>4</sup> The latter was normally situated at the back of the forward deckhouse and used to provide power to run the anchor windlass, the winches to hoist the sails, and the pumps located in the hold, but not for the purpose of propulsion. It is difficult to see how these multi-masted schooners could have developed without this innovation.<sup>5</sup>

Although the donkey engine required having aboard an engineer whose responsibility was to maintain

4. W.J. Lewis Parker, *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909* (Mystic, Connecticut: Maine Historical Association, 1948), p.35. Captain O'Keefe of the schooner *William D. Marvel* is credited with the idea of installing donkey steam engines in large schooners. This device made it possible to operate the vessel with a very small crew, thus differentiating the schooner from a square rigged sailing vessel which was entirely dependent upon manpower to raise or lower sails.

5. Michael J. Heinrich, "Forester," *Ships in Scale* 2, No.11 (May/June 1985):46. The donkey engine was instrumental in the survival of American commercial sailing because it meant fewer crew members were necessary. Thus, higher profits were possible in spite of competition from steamers.

steam at all times, whether the vessel was underway or cargo was being handled, the cost of his position was balanced by the schooner's other economies. It did not have to store fuel and could use virtually all of its carrying space for cargo. A small crew meant that it had a cost of labor advantage over cargo steamers and square riggers. Unlike the steamer, no crew was required for the ship's propulsion. In terms of freight capacity the large schooners could carry 250 tons more cargo for every crew member than their most efficient rivals.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, it was far less costly to keep a large schooner idle. If the ship was laying at anchor awaiting cargo, all but the captain, the first mate, the engineer and the cook could be paid off.<sup>7</sup> The economic profitability of the schooners was assured by the fact that many of their voyages were in coastwise trade, thereby benefitting from laws passed by Congress banning foreign flag vessels from engaging in coastal trade.

6. Parker, *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909*, p.59.

7. *Ibid.*, p.95



*View of deck. It was a long  
walk from stem to stern.*

MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM, MYSTIC,  
CONNECTICUT AND  
CAPTAIN W. J. LEWIS PARKER



WYOMING STATE MUSEUM

**Bryant B. Brooks**

At the time *Wyoming* was launched, there was some question whether she was the largest wooden sailing vessel ever built. The *New York Times*, in reporting her launching, stated incorrectly that the new schooner did not "mark a new record in the line of gigantic wooden sailing craft for the ill-starred seven master *Thomas W. Lawson* had a gross tonnage of 5218." While the *Lawson* was larger, the *Times* had failed to point out that this ship was steel hulled.<sup>8</sup> Others compared *Wyoming's* dimensions and tonnage with Donald McKay's giant clipper ship *Great Republic* which was built in Boston in 1853. Depending on the source, the length of the latter was variously reported as 335, 325, 324 and 320 feet. However, the clipper was badly damaged by fire before she could sail with her cargo. After the *Great Republic* was rebuilt she had one less deck, her length was reduced to 302 feet, and her displacement cut by 1,200 tons.<sup>9</sup>

The *Wyoming* was named for the state in recognition of previous investments made by Bryant B. Brooks—in a private capacity while he was Governor of Wyoming—and that of his associates in vessels built by the Percy and Small shipyard in Bath.<sup>10</sup> The latter company had actively sought Western capital for

Eastern shipbuilding. Born in Bernardston, Massachusetts, Brooks had come to Wyoming Territory in 1880 at the age of nineteen. After a year as a cowboy he struck out on his own as a trapper, purchasing an old wagon from Harry Hynds in Cheyenne. In 1882 after a year of trapping, he settled in the Deer Creek area south of Glenrock. The following year he entered into a ranching partnership with his father, who was a lock manufacturer in Chicago, and his older brother John, a resident of Boston, under the name of B. B. Brooks and Company with its distinctive V-V brand. The livestock business prospered and a decade later the partnership was renewed for the purpose of not only raising cattle and sheep but also for selling or leasing real estate.<sup>11</sup> By 1904, when he was elected to fill the unexpired term of Governor DeForest Richards who had died in office, Brooks had become one of the State's leading personalities. His wife Mary Willard Brooks was also a leader, being instrumental in bringing the Woman's Club of Wyoming into the General Federation of Womens' Clubs of the United States. She was also active in Natrona County community endeavors.

Early in 1907 following re-election to a second term, Governor Brooks, his brother John, and several business associates acquired an interest in some of the older schooners managed by Percy and Small. Attracted by the excellent earnings of the large schooners that were used as coastwise colliers, in April, 1907 they invested in the construction of a new five masted schooner



Wyoming Stock Growers Association, *Brand Book* (Cheyenne: Northwestern Live Stock Journal, 1887) p. 21.

8. "Big Schooner is Launched," *New York Times*, 16 December, 1909, p.4. The seven masted *Thomas W. Lawson* was built in 1902 in the Fore River shipyards of Quincy, Massachusetts. It was lost in a 1907 storm off the southwest coast of England, on the rocks of the Scilly Islands.

9. Whipple gives the dimensions of the *Great Republic* as 335 feet in length, 4,535 tons in displacement, with a mainmast soaring to 200 feet. A. B. C. Whipple, ed., *The Clipper Ship* (New York: Time Life Books, 1980), p.110. Landstrom describes the clipper's length as 325 feet and its width as 53 feet. Bjorn Landstrom, *The Ship* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday and Co., 1961), p.197. McCutchan states that the clipper's length was 324 feet or six feet shorter than the *Wyoming*. Philip McCutchan, *Tall Ships* (New York: Crown Publishers Inc., 1976), p.38. Finally, Chappelle notes that dimensions given for the *Great Republic* vary widely, one source giving her length as 324 feet and another as 320 feet. Howard Chappelle, *The National Watercraft Collection* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, Second edition, 1976), p.313. When the clipper was rebuilt after the fire her length was 302 feet, her width 48.4 feet, her depth 29 feet and her tonnage 3,356 tons.

10. The *Wyoming* was the only schooner built by Percy and Small that was named for a state. All other schooners built by the company were named for specific individuals, such as the *Governor Brooks*. From available records for schooners built during the period from 1879 to 1914, no other bore the name of a state, only the name of an individual or a city.

11. Bryant Butler Brooks, *Memoirs of Bryant Butler Brooks, Cowboy, Trapper Lumberman, Stockman, Oilman, Banker and Governor of Wyoming* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark and Co., 1939), pp. 132,179. Brooks served as Governor of Wyoming from January, 1905 until January, 1911. He died in Casper on December 7, 1944 at the age of 83.

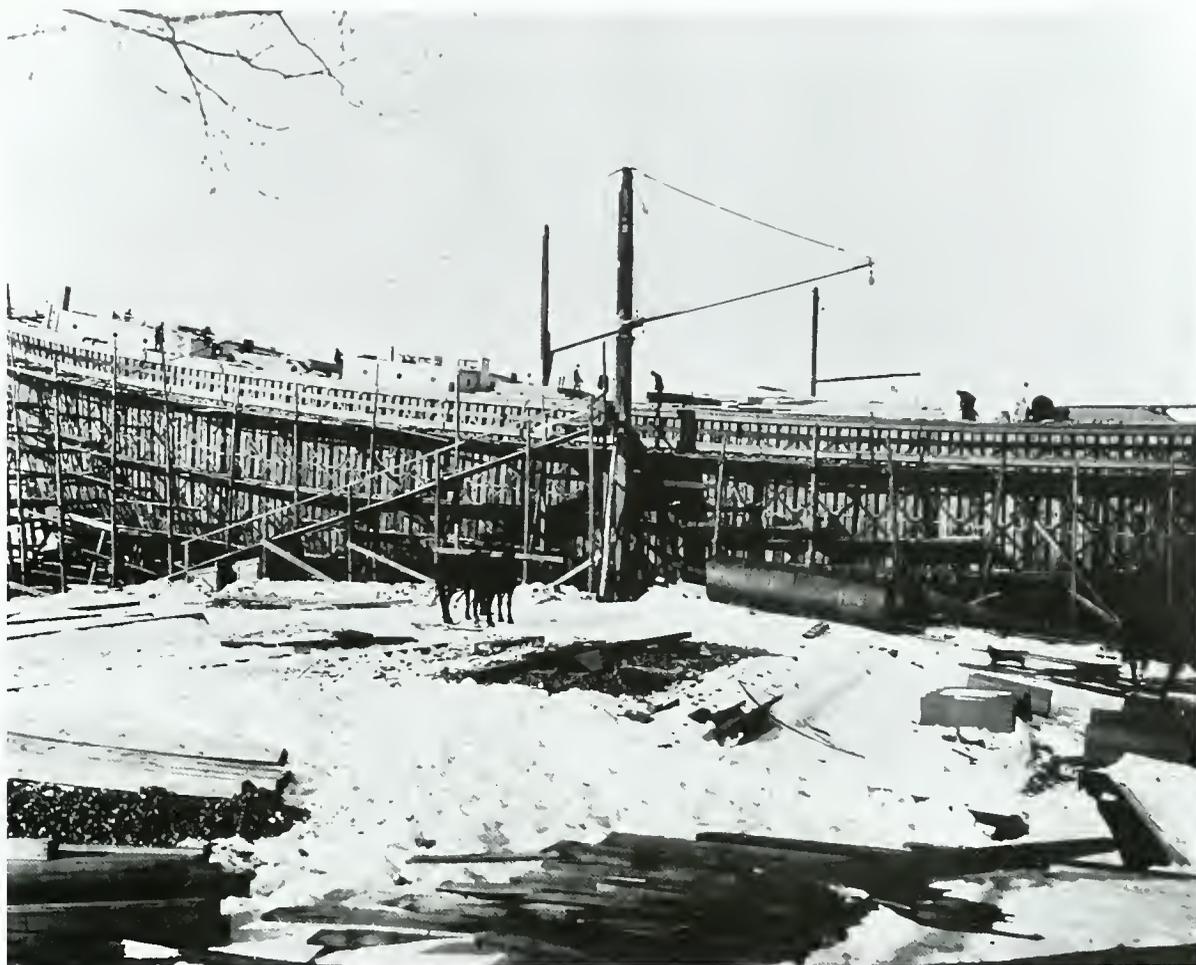
named *Governor Brooks*. The cost of the schooner was \$132,000.

The investment procedure required that each vessel be financed separately according to the old custom of taking up shares. Each share normally represented an interest of 1/64 or a fraction thereof.<sup>12</sup> The general rule was for the master of the schooner to own one or more shares, assuring him an incentive to operate the vessel efficiently. The managing owners generally held only a few shares, selling the balance to outside investors. Dividends were paid regularly to each shareholder based on the earnings of the schooner.

The *Governor Brooks* was launched at Bath on October 22, 1907. In attendance with the governor was Mrs. Brooks, their second daughter Abby and the governor's brother, John, along with a host of other personalities.<sup>13</sup> Abby, who was a student at Dana Hall preparing for her entry into nearby Wellesley College, had been designated the schooner's sponsor. The governor held one 1/64 share, for which he paid \$2,050. A similar share was held by the B. B. Brooks Company, and brother John held a third share.<sup>14</sup> Abby christened the vessel with a bouquet of roses, while the governor proclaimed the enterprise a "combination of New England energy, skill and muscle with Western confidence and money."<sup>15</sup> The schoo-

ner flew a special flag with a red, V-V insignia, a facsimile of the governor's Wyoming brand. The flag attracted much attention, and one ship captain at the ceremony was reported to have remarked, "I never saw it in a code book and suppose it is some Masonic sign."<sup>16</sup>

Two years later, a somewhat similar scenario would take place involving the schooner *Wyoming*. Designed by Bant Hanson to be as profitable as possible, the ship had more than a 6.5:1 beam-to-length ratio.<sup>17</sup> Thus, narrow width and great length made her a fast sailer capable of carrying large amounts of bulk cargo. Miles M. Merry, Maine's most experienced builder, supervised her construction. The schooner's keel and frames were of white oak from the Chesapeake Bay area. Her planking and decks were



THE MARINERS MUSEUM, NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

*The Wyoming under construction.* At Percy and Small Shipyard in Bath, Maine, 1909. Note the crisscross iron bracings along the hull.

12. Parker, *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909*, pp. 64,76.

13. Brooks, *Memoirs*, p.258

14. *Percy and Small Accounts Journal*, December, 1907, pp. 371-2. The document is available in the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath. Other identifiable Wyomingites who invested in the *Governor Brooks* were the Richardson Brothers (1/128) and J. A. Fullerton (1/128) from Cheyenne; Harold Banner (1/64) from Glenrock; Patrick Sullivan (1/64) from Casper; and J. D. Woodruff (1/64), a long time business associate of the governor who, among his other activities, at one time managed a mine in Mexico.

15. Brooks, *Memoirs*, p.257.

16. "Brooks Gayly Launched," *Bath Daily Times*, 22 October 1907, p.1. In the *Governor's Memoirs* he describes in detail the launching ceremony and the personalities present.

17. As the number of masts increased, so did the length of the schooners. The result was that the hulls of large schooners were designed with a beam-to-length ratio of as much as 6.5 compared to the 5.5 ratio of the most extreme clipper ships. Parker, *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909*, p.43.



MAINE MARITIME MUSEUM, BATH, MAINE

*View of Wyoming from the bowsprit. n.d.*

of southern pine and her masts and booms had to be brought in by rail from Oregon. Altogether, some 1,500,000 feet of pine were used in her construction. The cost of transporting the timber was one of the reasons why the vessel's cost escalated to \$190,000.<sup>18</sup>

The *Wyoming* was described as being one of the strongest wooden ships ever built. She was given an "A-1" rating by the American Bureau of Shipping which meant that the schooner was considered seaworthy for at least 16 years. Because of her great length and in order to deal with the problem of longitudinal weakness, the keel was composed of two tiers of 14 x 15 inch oak beams which extended 304 feet in length. Directly above, the keel was reinforced by an enormous keelson, 14 x 14 inch timbers six tiers high, bolstered on either side by sister keelsons of the same size four tiers high (see drawing of *Wyoming* midship section). All were bolted together as well as bolted down to the keel.<sup>19</sup> In addition, before the ship was planked, an eight inch wide wrought iron belt one half inch thick was countersunk on the outside of the frames below the planksheer which bordered the exterior surface of the schooner's upper deck from stem to stern. Attached to this belt on either side were ninety iron bracings, each four inches wide, running diagonally in a criss-cross pattern over the surface of the frames. The schooner was the largest of its kind to be fitted with this kind of iron stropping.<sup>20</sup>

The *Wyoming* had a flush deck pierced by five cargo hatches each measuring 12 x 18 feet except the forward hatch which was a foot shorter in width. The flush deck had the advantage of no depressed areas that filled with water during

18. Robert J. Albion, *Five Centuries of Famous Ships* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Publishing Co., 1978), p.334.

19. "Six Masted Schooner Wyoming," *International Marine Engineering*, pp. 1-2.

20. "The Wyoming Was Spry," *Bath Daily Times*, 15 December 1909, pp.1,5. Also, see Parker, *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909*, p. 107.

*Maintenance work on the Wyoming*  
December, 1909  
Note the upturned, T-shaped stacks for the galley and donkey engines.  
Photographer: John B. Brooks.



MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM, MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT AND CAPTAIN W. J. LEWIS PARKER

storms and also provided added strength. The schooner carried three boats, the longboat being suspended at the stern with davits. The deck featured three houses which drew attention for the comforts they provided not only the officers but the crew. The afterhouse, finished in oak, maple and mahogany, contained the captain's room, the first mate's room, three guest bedrooms, a pantry, a living room, a large bathroom, and a medicine compartment. The midship house contained the galley, the mess room, the second mate's room, the cook's room and the carpentry shop. The forward house was occupied by the donkey engine, the engineer's room and the crew's quarters.<sup>21</sup> Above the donkey engine was a large T-shaped smoke stack with upturned ends. A smaller, similar shaped stack was located above the galley. When the ship was underway, the weather end of each stack was capped so that the smoke would be drawn away from the direction the wind was blowing, thereby avoid soiling the sails.<sup>22</sup>

The schooner was advanced for her time and endowed with much of the technology of the period except for internal propulsion. The living quarters were provided with heat

from the donkey steam engine, and complete communication with all parts of the vessel was made possible by a telephone system. Even the heads (bathrooms) were equipped with running water, a rare innovation for a sailing ship.<sup>23</sup>

The launching of the *Wyoming* was scheduled to occur on December 14, 1909, but a severe winter storm and high winds postponed the ceremony by one day<sup>24</sup>. While this delay normally was considered an ill-omen by seafarers, it was overlooked in the excitement of witnessing the launching of such a large ship. The next day the schooner slipped down the ways into Maine's Kennebec River without a hitch. Launching occurred at 12:45 p.m., fifteen minutes ahead of schedule, to the disappointment of latecomers. Present at the spectacle was Mrs. Brooks, the Brooks' third daughter, Lena, who at the time was a student at Dana Hall, and the governor's brother, John. As reported by the society column reporter for the *Cheyenne State Leader*, Lena had been chosen to be the *Wyoming's* sponsor. Her older sister, Abby, now a student at Wellesley and who had christened the *Governor Brooks*, was also invited to the ceremony.<sup>25</sup> Dash-

ing a large bouquet of flowers against her bow, Lena Brooks christened the *Wyoming*. Since the State of Maine enforced prohibition in those days, the bouquet of flowers replaced champagne or other spirits in the christening ceremony.<sup>26</sup>

21. *Bath Daily Times*, 15 December 1909, p.5.
22. All large schooners of this period were fitted with T-shaped smokestacks. When sailing, the crew was supposed to cap the weather end of the stack so that the smoke would be drawn leeward. When tacking, the crew was supposed to shift the covers to prevent smoke from pouring in the wrong direction. See Francis E. Bowker, *The Story of the Schooner Herbert L. Rawding*, (Mystic, Connecticut: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1986), p.91.
23. Steve Libby, "The Wyoming that Went To Sea," *Casper Star Tribune Annual Edition*, 24 March 1968, p.8. So immense was the vessel that she required 450 pounds of tallow, 15 gallons of fish oil, and 30 pounds of flaxseed to grease the ways.
24. "Launching Tomorrow - Gale and Rain Postpone the Dip of America's Largest Sailing Vessel One Day," *Bath Daily Times*, 14 December 1909, p.1.
25. *Cheyenne State Leader*, 11 December 1909, p.3.
26. The christening of the *Wyoming* is vividly described on the front page of the December 15, 1909 issue of the *Bath Daily Times* as well as on p.8 of the December 16 issue of the *Cheyenne State Leader*. While Governor Brooks states on p.256 of his *Memoirs* that he was present for the launching, this is not substantiated by any newspaper account. Interestingly, the governor devotes much less attention in his *Memoirs* to the launching of the *Wyoming* than he does to the schooner bearing his name.



THE MARINERS MUSEUM, NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

*The Schooner Wyoming fully loaded. The photo was taken February 8, 1920 as she was sailing down Chesapeake Bay.*

Percy and Small, the shipyard company that built the *Wyoming*, became her manager. The company chose Angus McLeod to be her master. Until then McLeod had been the master of the *Governor Brooks* and had over thirty years of sailing experience. The first mate was the captain's younger brother, Norman. Captain McLeod was originally from Nova Scotia and a devout Christian Scientist who read his Bible every day.<sup>27</sup>

In spite of the presence of the Governor's family at the launching of the *Wyoming*, there is no record that the Governor held any shares in the vessel as he did in the schooner bearing his name. However, thirteen Wyoming residents or partnerships became shareholders, purchasing eleven of the original 64 shares in the schooner. Of these, four were women.<sup>28</sup> The governor's brother, John, owned an additional share. The other shares were held mainly by residents of New England with the Percy and Small families collectively owning four shares,

builder Miles M. Merry holding one half share, and Captain McLeod being the largest individual shareholder with seven shares. McLeod, except for short interludes, would remain the schooner's master over the next eight years.<sup>29</sup>

The governor's nephew, John B. Brooks, who at the time was enrolled as a cadet at Manlius School in Upper New York State, would go on *Wyoming's* maiden voyage from Bath to Norfolk, Virginia. In describing the trip, young Brooks who was eighteen at the time, recalled that the meager supply of coal to operate the steam donkey engine ran out enroute, forcing the vessel's small crew to manhandle the massive canvas sails.<sup>30</sup>

The large schooners handled differently than square rigged vessels. Seamen who served on square riggers complained about the safety of the large schooners which, with their massive booms swinging across the deck as the vessel tacked, could maim or even sweep members

27. John Paul Heffernan, "A Winter Voyage on the Six Master 'Wyoming'," *Down East Magazine*, January 1970, pp.49-50.

28. *Records of Marine Inspection and Navigation*, File No. 207010 National Archives, Washington D.C. The Consolidated Certificate of Enrollment and License registered with the Bureau of Navigation in the U.S. Department of Commerce shows the following shareholders from Wyoming: "Frank A. Hadsel 1/64 of Rawlins; Nellie A. Kabis 1/64, Hofman Bros. 1/64, J. H. Fullerton 1/128, Amelia Kent 1/64, Richardson Bros. 1/64, Roderick N. Matson 1/64, and Pricilla Mullen 1/128 of Cheyenne; Edward Merriam 1/64 of Moneta; Geo. W. Metcalf 1/128 of Douglas; and Margaret M. B. Banner 1/128, Patrick A. Sullivan 1/64, H. L. Patton 1/64 of Casper.

29. East Coast schooners were generally run as single corporate enterprises with 64 shares or fractions thereof spread to 40 or more investors. The local saying was that investors were of two kinds, those actively involved in the shipping business and "dry owners" who simply collected dividends. Basil Greenhill, *Schooners*, (Annapolis, Maryland, Naval Institute Press, 1980), pp.75-76.

30. Heffernan, "A Winter Voyage on the Six Master 'Wyoming'," p.50. John B. Brooks would later have a distinguished career as an Army aviator serving in both world wars and retiring as a Major General. His photographs of the *Wyoming* at sea are among the earliest taken of the schooner.

# THE SIX-MASTED SCHOONER WYOMING

BY JIM HAND

In our wake was the 'Cora F Cressy'  
With a load of coal in the hold  
As we sailed early March out of Norfolk  
On the mighty 'Wyoming' of old.

We were bound for Saint John in New Brunswick  
(The 'Cressy' for Portland in Maine)  
With our good Captain Glaesel commanding  
As northward the canvas did strain.

The heaviest, largest and strongest  
of wooden ships sailing the seas  
Was our iron-strapped schooner 'Wyoming.'  
A good sailer in any breeze!

'Twas the six-masted schooner, Wyoming,  
(No wooden craft larger would sail)  
And we slid past Nantucket on schedule  
Passed the shoals, then were caught in a gale.

Icy gusts in our masts and our rigging  
Lurching decks and shrieks from the hull  
With nothing in sight but shadows and white  
And so cold the skin shrank to the skull.

"Don't worry," said the Captain, "we'll make it.  
Fifteen years this old schooner's been blown  
'Cross most every part of this ocean  
And never a weakness was shown."

But what of our five-masted cohort?  
If she founders her crew's sure to drown.  
We must bear on her course and be ready,  
Just in case the Cressy goes down.

The Cressy's location was plotted  
And a rescue encounter was made  
Then we signalled the Cressy to follow  
And, close-hauling, westerly made.

A week on the log we dropped anchor  
Off of Chatham to ride out the night  
In a battering sea in a blizzard  
With the protected Cressy in sight.

Just at dusk the bad weather grew frightful  
And screaming winds raised up the sea,  
And snow blew so thick and so heavy  
That nothing but white could we see.

In crew quarters fit for a captain,  
Exhausted, we clung to our beds  
Sharing a rev'rance for nature,  
In silence concealing our dreads.

The doom of the Cressy seemed certain –  
She must turn to claw off shore.  
Blinded by blizzard we waited  
Hearing naught but the deafening roar.

Never a storm such as this one.  
Never a sea quite so dread.  
We stood by to rescue the crew of the Cressy  
And lost the Wyoming instead!

They say that on Wednesday our name-board  
Returned to its home on the land  
And that seventy-two feet of one mast washed ashore  
[Deemed too short for a vessel so grand].

Could it be that the largest and strongest  
Six-masted schooner was through?  
In Nantucket, Chatham, and elsewhere,  
Was there no one to mourn for the crew?

Oh, they called it the 'Mighty Wyoming'  
The pride of our maritime fleet  
But when it went down and all hands were lost  
'Twas the twilight of wood, rope, and sheet.

And today as the steamers pass Chatham  
Each hand feels a lump in his chest  
As he thinks of the hopes of the brave men below  
Where their bones in 'Wyoming' now rest.

of the crew overboard during foul weather. The steam donkey engine could be a problem too. During very bad weather, the boiler fire was generally put out or drawn by order of the captain as a safety precaution.<sup>31</sup> This generated criticism that the large schooners were understaffed for heavy weather conditions and hence risky. Another complaint was that while the large schooners were fast sailers under favorable weather conditions, they were too long to handle easily in confined waters.<sup>32</sup> Still other detractors would describe the five and six masters as clumsy with their huge box-shaped hulls, being no more than mere cargo carrying barges while rigged as schooners.<sup>33</sup>

Nonetheless, despite her colossal size, the *Wyoming* gained a reputation as being an unusually easy vessel to handle as well as a good and profitable ship for her managers and shareholders. Until she was sold by Percy and Small to the France and Canada Steamship Company on April 30, 1917, the schooner's main activity was carrying coal from Virginia to New England ports.<sup>34</sup> By 1917 World War I caused a great shortage of shipping. The French government sent a special mission to the United States to purchase wooden transport schoo-

ners, and the original shareholders of the *Wyoming* made a handsome profit when the schooner sold for over \$350,000.<sup>35</sup>

During the remainder of the war the *Wyoming* was used to carry cargo from the United States to foreign ports. In one voyage the schooner carried a full cargo around the Cape of Good Hope to southeast Africa.<sup>36</sup> In another voyage, because of her speed, the *Wyoming* was able to elude at least one German U-Boat in a crossing from New York to Saint Nazaire, making the Atlantic passage in eighteen days which compared favorably with convoy schedules.<sup>37</sup>

The *Wyoming* was sold again on November 21, 1921 to a group of investors, mainly from Maine, headed by Mr. A. W. Frost of Portland, Maine. The new master, Captain Charles Glaesel, held 3/64ths of the shares.<sup>38</sup> The schooner reverted to its traditional role as a collier along the Atlantic coast carrying coal from Virginia ports to ports in New England and Canada. On March 3, 1924 the *Wyoming* set sail from Norfolk, Virginia with a load of 5,000 tons of coal bound for Saint John, New Brunswick, with Captain Glaesel as its master and a crew of twelve. The five masted schooner *Cora F. Cressey*, under the command of Captain C. N. Publicover, also

left Norfolk on the same day with a load of coal bound for Portland, Maine. By March 8 the two schooners had passed Martha's Vineyard and were approaching the southern tip of Cape Cod when they were faced with an approaching gale. The weather rapidly worsened and ice formed on the rigging of the vessels. The masters of the two schooners decided to drop anchor about two miles east of the Pollock Rip Lightship, near Chatham at the southeastern tip of Cape Cod, and



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**At the helm of the Schooner Wyoming. It was not unusual for Blacks to hold subordinate positions as crew members. They often came from the West Indies where they learned their seafaring skills.**

31. McCutchan, *Tall Ships*, p. 38.

32. Chapelle, *The National Watercraft Collection*, p. 42

33. Fairburn, *Merchant Sail*, Vol 4, p.2609.

34. *Records of Marine Inspection and Navigation*, U.S. National Archives, Washington D.C. At the time of the sale the number of investors in the *Wyoming* had grown to 15 holding 13 of the 64 shares, with Fred and Edward Hofman of Cheyenne having each acquired a share

35. The *Governor Brooks* was sold at the same time to the France and Canada Steamship Company. In his *Memoirs* (pp. 264-265), The governor states that his investment in Percy and Small schooners paid good dividends, with the capital investment returned when the vessels were sold in 1917.

36. Merriam, *Last of the Five Masters*, p.181.

37. John Fuller, "The End of the Great Schooners, Missing - the 'Wyoming'," *Portland Sunday Telegram*, 26 January 1958.

38. *Records of Marine Inspection and Navigation*, File No. 207010, U.S. National Archives, Washington D.C.

ride out the storm. Both vessels were anchored in the dreaded Nantucket shoals, which is the graveyard of many a ship. The shoals are a maze of quicksand cut by passages of various lengths. A gale can cause a ship to toss violently and strike a shoal, especially if the ship is heavily laden and covered with ice.

By March 10 the Boston Weather Bureau had issued a full hurricane warning. That evening Captain Publicover, fearing that the *Cressey* would be pounded to pieces on the shoals, decided to lift anchor and head out to the relative safety of the open sea. As he left he could still see the anchor lights of the *Wyoming*. On March 12 the Pollock Rip Lightship reported seeing the *Wyoming's* lights at 3:00 a.m. but thereafter the blinding snow blotted out all visibility. While the *Cressey* managed to limp into Portland two days later, the *Wyoming* was never seen again. A few pieces of wreckage including the schooner's nameplate and two of her boats washed ashore on the north side of Nantucket Island. However, no traces of

the bodies of Captain Glaesel or the other twelve members were ever found.<sup>39</sup> In an ironic coincidence Governor and Mrs. Brooks were returning from a trip they made to Europe, and their passenger vessel successfully rode out the gale. By the time they reached New York they were greeted with news of the *Wyoming* tragedy.<sup>40</sup>

Over the years people have speculated about what caused the loss of this splendid ship. One theory is that she foundered on the Nantucket shoals and was pounded by the waves. Another is that she collided with another vessel reported missing in the area. A third theory is that when Captain Glaesel tried to hoist anchor, the anchors held causing the bow to break away from the hull. The mystery of what caused the demise of the *Wyoming* remains unsolved.<sup>41</sup>

*I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Nathan R. Lipfert, Library Director of the Maine Maritime Museum, and Captain Francis E. Bowker, Research Associate at the Mystic Seaport Museum, for their assistance.*



39. "Fifteen Believed Lost in Schooner Wreck," *New York Times*, 14 March 1924, p.7. A similar article appeared on p.1 of the *Washington Post*. The next day the *New York Times* reported that the storm caused several shipwrecks and more than forty crewmen were missing. The most detailed account of the disappearance of *Wyoming* and her crew is contained in a January 26, 1958 article by John Fuller in the *Portland Sunday Telegram*.

40. Brooks, *Memoirs*, p.263.

41. There is no record of an official inquest into the causes of the loss of the schooner and the fate of the crew. The National Archives contains a memorandum dated March 15, 1924 addressed to the Lighthouse Service of the Department of Commerce noting that the schooner *Wyoming* was sunk about two miles east-northeast of Pollock Rip Light Vessel Number 73 with the loss of all hands, and that another, unknown schooner was sunk nearby. The memo states that the wrecks would be marked as necessary by gas buoys. "Letter from Superintendent to Commissioner of Lighthouses, Subject: Schooners sunk," 15 March 1924, U.S. National Archives, Department of Commerce, Lighthouse Service, Office of the Superintendent, 2nd District Customhouse. There is no record currently available indicating that either the schooner or its cargo were insured.



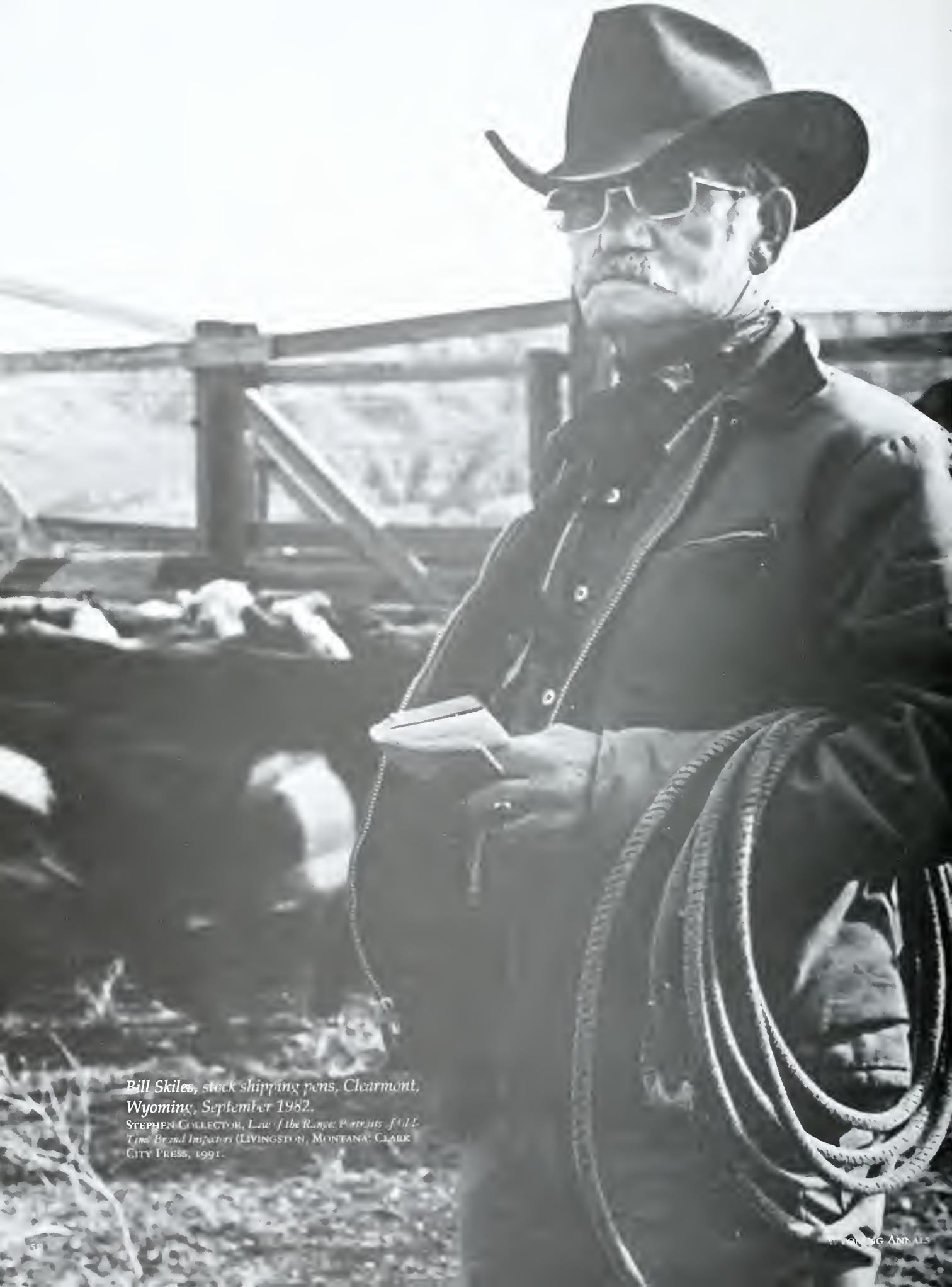
MARK JUNGE

FRANCOIS M. DICKMAN (1924-) IS A WELL-TRAVELED, FORMER CAREER FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER. AMONG HIS DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENTS WERE THE DIRECTORSHIP OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT (1972-76) AND AMBASSADORSHIPS TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (1976-79) AND KUWAIT (1979-83).

DICKMAN RECEIVED HIS B.A. IN HISTORY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING IN 1947, AND HIS M.A. FROM THE FLETCHER SCHOOL OF LAW AND DIPLOMACY IN 1948. HE SERVED IN THE U.S. ARMY DURING WORLD WAR II AND THE KOREAN WAR, ENTERING THE U.S. FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1951. IN 1984 HE RETIRED AND RETURNED TO HIS BOYHOOD HOME IN LARAMIE. SINCE 1985 HE HAS BEEN AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR IN THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF

WYOMING, TEACHING COURSES ON INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

DICKMAN IS PRESIDENT OF THE ALBANY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SERVES ON THE BOARDS OF THE WYOMING TERRITORIAL PARK AND THE LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM, AND IS ON THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER. HIS LIFELONG INTEREST IN SHIPS AND MODEL SHIPBUILDING, PARTICULARLY SAILING SHIPS, WAS ABANDONED WHEN HE ENTERED THE FOREIGN SERVICE, BUT HAPPILY REACQUIRED UPON RETIREMENT. FRANCOIS AND HIS WIFE, THE FORMER MARGARET HOY, LIVE IN LARAMIE. THEY HAVE TWO CHILDREN, CHRISTINE AND PALL.



*Bill Skiles, stock shipping pens, Clearmont, Wyoming, September 1982.*

STEPHEN COLLECTOR, *Law of the Range: Portraits of Old Time Brand Inspectors* (LIVINGSTON, MONTANA: CLARK CITY PRESS, 1991).

**B O O K  
R E V I E W S**

THOMAS BIOLSI

**ORGANIZING THE LAKOTA**

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE  
NEW DEAL ON THE PINE RIDGE AND  
ROSEBUD RESERVATIONS

REVIEW BY ROBERT L. MUNKRES

STEPHEN COLLECTOR

**LAW OF THE RANGE**

PORTRAITS OF OLD-TIME  
BRAND INSPECTORS

REVIEW BY RICHARD COLLIER

RICHARD ALLAN FOX, JR.

**ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND  
CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE**

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**A FEW INTERESTED RESIDENTS**

WYOMING HISTORICAL  
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**THE WILD BUNCH**

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SHIRLEY A. LECKIE

**ELIZABETH BACON CUSTER  
AND THE MAKING OF A MYTH**

REVIEW BY MARK NELSON

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**TO RECLAIM A DIVIDED WEST**

WATER, LAW, AND PUBLIC POLICY  
1848-1902

REVIEW BY JIM DONAHUE

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**THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTLAW**

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THE CF&I IN THE  
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HELEN WINTER STAUFFER

**LETTERS OF  
MARI SANDOZ**

REVIEW BY WALTER EDENS

CARROLL VAN WEST

**CAPITALISM ON THE FRONTIER**

BILLINGS & THE  
YELLOWSTONE VALLEY  
IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY

REVIEW BY CHARLES E. RANKIN

This is a first-rate descriptive analysis of a very frequently ignored aspect in the history of Federal Government—Native Americans relationships. As indicated in the subtitle, Professor Biolsi, an anthropologist at Portland State University, concentrates on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations in south-central and southwestern South Dakota. He presents in chronological fashion the political, economic, and social decisions by which the Federal Government administered Indian affairs between 1880 and 1934.

Presenting his material in seven chapters, the author deals *seriatim* with: (1) the reservation system between 1880 and 1934; (2) Lakota politics prior to 1934, with considerable and deserved emphasis on the importance and impact of Lakota interpretations of the “3/4 majority rule” embodied in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868; (3) the background events on reservations which culminated in tribal voting on the IRA (Indian Reorganization Act); (4) the 1935 tribal constitution which was based on a non-Indian model of self-government drawn up in Washington, D.C.; (5) the politics of drought, the Depression and the economic programs of the New Deal; (6) the relationship between the OIA (Office of Indian Affairs) and tribal councils, resulting in what Professor Biolsi describes as the “disempowerment” of the tribal councils; and (7) the emergence of an organized group which opposed the New Deal on reservations. Known as “Old Dealers,” these opponents pursued a policy of attacking the tribal councils rather than calling for the elimination of the OIA from reservations.

Through it all, one over-arching pattern seems to emerge: Indian Affairs were to be conducted on the basis of white standards for the purpose of achieving white purposes or values. And nowhere was this pattern more apparent than in making decisions about what was best for the Indians.

The author seems to belabor one point a bit. Does it truly constitute an

unexpected discovery that reservation Indians may oppose and attack their own tribal councils, but are generally reluctant to push for separation of reservations and Indian affairs from the Federal Government? As Professor Biolsi himself notes on several occasions, Indians readily perceive that most of the material and economic benefits distributed on the reservations flow from the Federal Government, not from tribal councils. He notes the reason is quite obvious: government prefers to dish out the “goodies” as a means of getting credit and maintaining control.

A question might be raised. Are reservation economic systems different in kind or only in degree from broader economic systems? If it is artificial to support the Lakota on a reservation through such things as government rations, is it not similarly artificial to support non-reservation farmers or ranchers via subsidies and price supports?

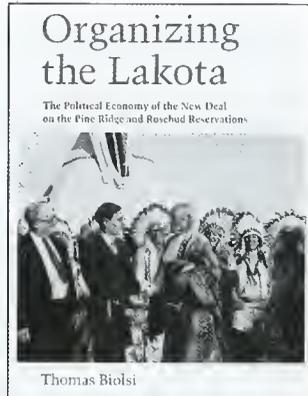
This reviewer hopes that Professor Biolsi will next focus his attention on two questions clearly emerging from this work. First, were the same patterns apparent on other reservations? Second, have these patterns been maintained through the “termination” years to the present?

Professor Biolsi has written a book that should be carefully read by anyone interested in the long and continuing relationship between the Federal Government and Native Americans. Certainly this volume belongs in the library of any institution which offers courses covering the impact of the New Deal.

ROBERT L. MUNKRES  
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
MUSKINGUM COLLEGE  
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## ORGANIZING THE LAKOTA

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE  
NEW DEAL ON THE PINE RIDGE  
AND ROSEBUD RESERVATIONS



BY THOMAS BIOLSI

TUCSON: UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES,  
BIBLIOGRAPHY. XXII AND 244 PP.  
CLOTH \$35.00.

## LAW OF THE RANGE

PORTRAITS OF OLD-TIME  
BRAND INSPECTORS



Law of the Range

PORTRAITS OF OLD-TIME BRAND INSPECTORS STEPHEN COLLECTOR

BY STEPHEN COLLECTOR

LIVINGSTON, MONTANA: CLARK  
CITY PRESS, 1991. PHOTOGRAPHS.  
120 PAGES. CLOTH \$45.00

When Stephen Collector took his first photograph of brand inspector Lyman Edgar in 1979, he was hooked. Eleven years later he turned his obsession with brand inspectors and range detectives into an enjoyable documentary book. *Law of the Range* is a photographic collection of fifty brand inspectors, but more than just a collection of photographs and biographies it is a documentary about a way of life that is little known and understood outside of the rural West.

As film maker Annick Smith said in her introduction, "...it's not a profession we know much about, but we've seen these faces all over the West. Each man has a close-mouthed story idiosyncratic as his name, specific as his face, and yet the sum of fifty biographies reveals a western everyman's tale."

Smith continues: "The range detectives and brand inspectors who peer at you from these pages have no myth to honor them." They spent their entire lives on ranches, living the life of what we call the western myth: herding cattle, riding horses, rodeoing and making a living in some of the most spectacular country in the United States. Some became brand inspectors because cattle was all they knew, and it was a way, says Smith, to "get married and raise a family and save up for your own piece of ground." Others were top hands for big ranches who turned to their new occupation in retirement. Still others followed their fathers into the business. But for whatever reason, they chose this line of work and stayed because they loved working cattle and liked who they worked for. It was a hard life, but you won't read one complaint or regret.

Stephen Collector is a fine portrait photographer with the ability to put his subjects at ease. His photographs are straightforward and honest, nothing fancy — just like the men themselves. When Lance Robinson, retired brand inspector from Wyoming, saw some of

Stephen Collector's portraits he commented: "It's the responsibility that makes 'em look that way. They all look the same don't they?" I think he's right. They all do seem to look alike. They have that "I've been there, I've done that," no nonsense look. But that is not a criticism. On the contrary, it speaks highly of Steven Collector's ability to capture on film the traits that makes these fifty individuals look as if they are all part of the same person.

*Law of the Range* is a coffee table, fine art publication. With few exceptions the portraits are well-printed and beautifully reproduced in duotone. They demonstrate Collector's ability to use light, both natural and artificial, and his awareness of the importance of shadow detail and composition. What Stephen Collector has been able to do with his photographs, what Annick Smith has been able to do in her introduction, and what the men in their own words give the reader, is an insight into the world of brand inspecting and a vanishing West. They show us, each in his own way, the essence of their lives, their characters and the land that shaped them.

If you are interested in the West and fine photography, I highly recommend this book. It is one man's obsession to record what is left of the West before a new West is all we have to remember. Edward Sheriff Curtis, quoted by Annick Smith, says it best: "The passing of every old man or woman means the passing of some tradition, some knowledge of sacred rites possessed by no other. . . The information that is to be gathered for the benefit of future generations . . . must be collected at once or the opportunity will be lost for all time."

RICHARD COLLIER  
PHOTOGRAPHER, WYOMING STATE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
CHEYENNE

It has been 118 years since Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer met his fate along the banks of a Montana river called the Little Big Horn. But the dust hasn't settled yet. Fox's book will undoubtedly kick up more.

In 1876 the army mounted a campaign aimed at locating and defeating Sioux and Cheyenne tribesmen who had refused a government order to return to their agencies. On June 25, 1876, the Seventh Cavalry, operating as an independent unit, located a large village in what is now southwest Montana. During the movement to make contact, Custer divided his command sending Capt. Fredrick Benteen with a battalion to the south presumably to cut off any Indian avenue of escape. Major Marcus Reno, with a second battalion, was ordered to attack the eastern end of the village while Custer retained command of the last battalion consisting of five companies.

Reno's assault was repulsed and his surviving command driven to some nearby bluffs where they were joined by the Benteen battalion. These two commands fought a defensive action until relieved by Gibbon's troops two days later. Only then did the army survivors learn the fate of the Custer battalion. Five miles away they had been killed to a man in what has popularly been called Custer's Last Stand.

The mystery of Custer's last movements and the reasons for his defeat have prompted as many theories as the years intervening.

In 1983 a disastrous prairie fire destroyed much of the natural vegetation at Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument. The scorched earth revealed many battle-related artifacts previously hidden by the dense grasses. As a result, the Midwest Archaeological Center of the National Park Service sponsored a five-year archaeological project of which Richard Fox was co-director.

White stone markers dot the battlefield noting locations where cavalry bodies were initially buried. Some

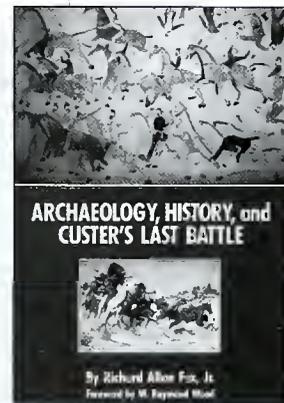
were randomly selected for excavation in order to determine if they were accurately placed. By using a systematic metal detector survey the project would also determine troops movements of the Custer battalion and locate soldier and Indian firing positions. Ballistic studies were done comparing casings and slugs to trace troop movements across the battlefield. The artifactual evidence strongly suggests Custer divided his five company command into two smaller units. Custer and two companies rode past what is now referred to as Last Stand Hill while Capt. Myles Keogh and three companies sustained the first attack some three miles east. According to Fox, soldier resistance was not the concerted back-to-back fighting extolled in the popular view. Instead, the cavalrymen suffered from total tactical disintegration and utter annihilation.

The stone markers for the most part are accurately placed as indicated by soldier skeletal remains discovered during excavation. The so-called "South Skirmish Line" at the base of Last Stand Hill toward the Little Big Horn River is spurious. Evidence suggests that the markers at the South Skirmish Line were placed to commemorate approximately nineteen bodies, members of Company E, found in a nearby large ravine. Efforts to locate these remains were unsuccessful. Fox's convincing analysis is that while Custer's last stand was on the hilltop, the last stand of the remnant military group occurred in the ravine where they, too, were exterminated.

Fox's use of Indian accounts is superb. His combination of history and archaeology in interpreting the Battle of the Little Big Horn is brilliant. *Archaeology, History and Custer's Last Battle* is extremely readable for both the professional and layperson. He places the battle well within its historical context but also explains the technical aspects

## ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE

THE LITTLE BIG HORN  
REEXAMINED

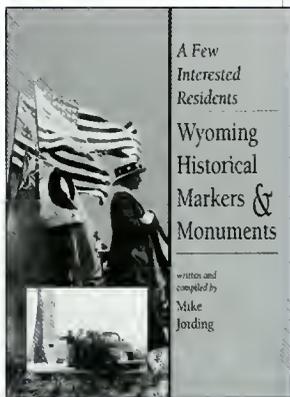


BY RICHARD ALLAN FOX, JR.

NORMAN: UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
PRESS, 1993. XVIII AND 411 PP.  
ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY,  
INDEX. CLOTH \$29.95.

## A FEW INTERESTED RESIDENTS

WYOMING HISTORICAL  
MARKERS & MONUMENTS



BY MIKE JORDING

HELENA, MONTANA: FALCON PRESS  
PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1992.  
ILLUSTRATIONS. VIII AND 205 PAGES.  
PAPER \$19.95

of archaeological analysis. This book may become one of the most important works to utilize history and archaeology in interpreting human behavior. The book may not settle the dust on Custer's Last Stand, but it is difficult to argue with Fox's conclusions.

The title *A Few Interested Residents* is an apt one for Mike Jording's book about Wyoming's historical monuments and markers. Wyoming historical marker enthusiasts will recall that the phrase "a few interested residents" appears on numerous markers and commemorates the many civic-minded citizens whose efforts produced hundreds of historical markers in Wyoming. The same spirit compelled Mike Jording to contribute his time and money to completion of the book. The traveling public in Wyoming will greatly appreciate his efforts.

Jording's book contains a complete catalogue of historical markers and monuments found in Wyoming. Each county is a chapter, and a numbering scheme developed by the State of Wyoming further identifies the markers in each county. Each chapter also includes a county highway map showing the location of every marker, descriptions of individual markers including legends or texts, and detailed directions for locating markers.

Unfortunately, the book lacks a map of the entire state and its counties. That failure could cause confusion for people who are not familiar with the geographical configuration of Wyoming counties. However, this problem can be easily rectified by acquiring the excellent, free state map published by the Wyoming Transportation Department.

Because this book includes the legend inscribed on each marker, travelers rushing across Wyoming during summer vacation may decide to enjoy the state's markers without dropping below 65 miles per hour. Although that is

ROBERT R. RYBOLT  
INTERPRETIVE PARK RANGER  
FORT ROBINSON  
CRAWFORD, NEBRASKA

possible, resist the temptation. Obtaining a full appreciation of Wyoming's monuments and markers is not for those in a hurry. To read about Split Rock or Oregon Trail Ruts without stopping to appreciate these sites is to miss the essence of the experience.

In some cases, simply managing to find a remote marker poses a pleasurable challenge. Consider, for example, the Tri-Territory Site in Sweetwater County. Located on a dirt road in the vast expanse of the Red Desert, this isolated marker denotes a point where the boundaries separating the Louisiana Purchase, the Northwest Territory and Mexico were joined. Upon reaching the marker, travelers will no doubt feel like victors in a treasure hunt contest. As noted by the author, good weather and several hours of spare time are prerequisites for the trip. Markers such as this one are not for the fainthearted!

While the sheer isolation of Wyoming's historical markers and monuments is part of their charm, it also lends itself to vandalism. Through the years, markers have been peppered with high powered rifles, dynamited, spray-painted, toppled by cars and pickup trucks and rubbed down by cattle. While nobody can entirely eliminate this unfortunate threat, Jording might have done a little more to draw attention to this serious problem. He does mention that the 1913 legislation creating the Oregon Trail Commission included a provision for prosecuting individuals found guilty of defacing historical markers. But the Wyoming State Legislature should enact a modern law that makes such criminal behavior a serious offense.



*Oregon Trail Ruts Informative Sign*

RICHARD COLLIER  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The book includes a chapter containing a brief history of efforts to erect historical markers in Wyoming. Although the lack of footnotes may confound readers interested in knowing more about the author's source material, the chapter does contain much good information. Particularly interesting is the evolution of the Wyoming Historical Landmark Commission.

From the time of its founding in 1927 until it was dissolved in 1959, the Wyoming Historical Landmark Commission erected 138 historical markers and acquired 33 properties on behalf of the State. Among the properties are several of Wyoming's premier historical sites including Fort Bridger, Fort Laramie, Fort Reno and Connor Battlefield. During its later years, however, the Commission was beset by critics who argued for greater authenticity in portraying state history. Jording documents the transition from early efforts to glorify Wyoming's frontier past to an assault upon perceived myth-making

by the champions of greater historical accuracy.

Mike Jording's book is not slated for permanent residency on the living room coffee table. The exclusive use of black and white photographs which are frequently too small leave this book somewhat lacking in coffee table appeal. In fact, I suspect that someone's leaving this book at home would actually disappoint the author. Jording has achieved great success in crafting a book that can enhance the Wyoming travel experience. Use this book to chart a course for experiencing the splendid sights and scenes associated with Wyoming's fabulous history. If you do that, the worth of this book will become clearly apparent.

BRUCE J. NOBLE, JR.  
HISTORIAN, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

*A good example of the prose of Ned Frost (1911-1978) – former Cody outfitter, historian, preservationist and author of numerous sign legends. Once, when someone informed him that sign legends ought to be written for a reader with an eighth grade education, Ned replied, "Well, then let the B\_\_\_'s learn!"*



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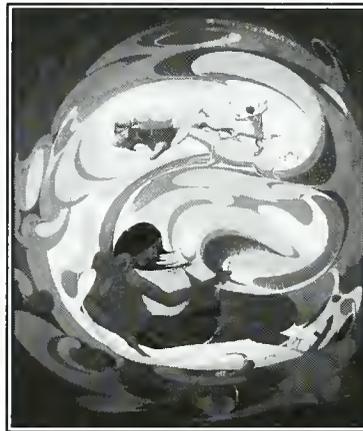
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*Onkto Mi Dreaming (1976), by Oscar Howe. Collection of the University Art Gallery, University of South Dakota. Copyright, Adelheid Howe, 1983*

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### THE WEST OF

WILD BILL HICKOK

By Joseph G. Rosa

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Well done, annotated bibliographies are indispensable aids to research and their appearance is greeted with enthusiasm by various disciplines. Literate and discerning, these compendia of scholarly and popular literature are arranged alphabetically by author, cross referenced by subject, and include brief statements of each entry's thesis together with commentaries concerning readability, use of sources and degrees of bias and reliability. The key factor here is "well-done."

The full title of and introduction to *The Wild Bunch* tells the reader that F. Bruce Lamb is selective rather than comprehensive in his compilation of the literature. Wishing to "make a worthwhile addition to the authentication of some of the literature," Lamb limits his sources to pamphlets and popular literature, eschewing newspapers, magazine articles and archival data on the grounds that they may contain errors in the material he reviews (p. 2). One would think that a worthwhile addition to authentication might include an examination of the sources of error as well as the perpetrators of it. Clearly, Lamb does not agree. Further, he sees no contradiction between his assertion that contemporary accounts or archival data might contain errors, and his acceptance as gospel the tales Kid Curry told Lamb's father and uncles (pp. 91-93).

His taste in popular literature is eclectic: non-fiction, pulp novels, a screenplay. Works which deal exclusively or extensively with his subjects, or those that mention them only in passing, get space. Some, like the Louis L'Amour pulp, get more than they deserve, and this bias causes the reader to contemplate changing the title to *Things in Print that Mention the Wild Bunch*. One expects some repetition in annotated bibliographies, but it is possible to overdo. In several instances Lamb includes two editions of the same book and points out the same errors in each. In his introduction he states that Butch Cassidy's given name

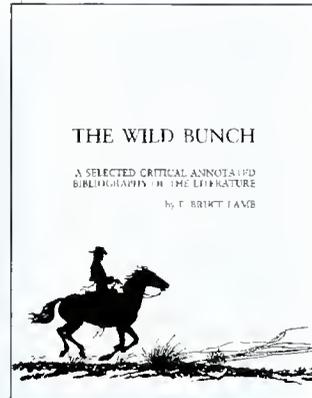
was Robert, not George, and in his commentary finds no fewer than twenty-five occasions to restate the assertion. While I am not suggesting that Lamb ignore errata, one mention in the introduction, then a brief statement in each of the appropriate entries, would suffice. Similarly, references to the correct spelling of Flat Nose George Currie's surname are repeated needlessly, as are references to the given name and aliases of William Ellsworth Lay.

*The Wild Bunch* suffers most through poor editing and appears to have been slapped together hurriedly, perhaps the victim of a rush to publish. Page references are better placed at the ends of sentences rather than randomly through them. A bit of creative typography would enable a reader to discern subheads from incomplete sentences, and the consistent use of brackets rather than a mixture of these and parentheses would go a long way toward determining which comments belong to the original author and which belong to Lamb. Seemingly pointless quotations from published works without Lamb's comments, rambling stream-of-consciousness prose, typographical errors, and abbreviations give the volume the appearance of typed fieldnotes.

The reader has no doubt that this volume represents much work, but in its present form *The Wild Bunch* does not make a worthwhile contribution to scholarship. It is difficult to determine by whom the author was served least: his editor, his publisher or himself.

PEG TREMPER  
HISTORY PH.D. CANDIDATE,  
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

## THE WILD BUNCH



BY F. BRUCE LAMB

WORLAND, WYOMING: HIGH PLAINS  
PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 1993.  
ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX. 163 PP.  
CLOTH \$23.50.

## ELIZABETH BACON CUSTER AND THE MAKING OF A MYTH



BY SHIRLEY A. LECKIE

NORMAN: THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS, 1993. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY. XXIII AND 419 PP. CLOTH \$26.95.

In *Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the Making of a Myth* Shirley Leckie examines the relationship between Elizabeth "Libbie" Custer and her famous husband, George Armstrong or "Autie" as his wife and others referred to him. The close ties between the two did not end with Autie's death for Libbie dedicated her life to preserving the memory of her dear "Boy General" and in the process created what has become known as the Custer myth. One need only read the author's chapter headings to realize Libbie's intentions regarding Autie's image, with such titles as "My Husband as He Should be Known" and "Tradition and History Will be So Mingled."

Leckie has divided her book into two parts, Libbie — The Girl He Left Behind, and The Making of a Myth. The author sets the stage for understanding Libbie by analyzing the environment in which she lived. Victorian morals, sex roles and expectations are discussed, thereby establishing a frame of reference for the reader and placing Libbie's actions within a proper context. Thus, Libbie's dedication to her husband was not due entirely to love but was also a product of the Victorian era. Libbie saw it as her duty to improve Autie, and she did this during and after his life.

The first section of the book explores the background of the Custers and chronicles their wedded life with its shortcomings and merits. The author's close scrutiny of the Custer marriage has uncovered some fascinating details including information about the couple's creative sex life. Leckie uses a profusion of insightful quotes throughout the text and they are particularly appealing during the first part of the book, giving the reader a strong sensation of eavesdropping on Libbie and Autie's intimate moments.

Soon after Autie's demise at the Little Bighorn, his devastated widow decided to spend the rest of her life

idolizing her husband. The second section of Leckie's book delves into this aspect of Libbie's life and focuses on her efforts to create and maintain the Custer legend. While laboring within the limits set for Victorian women, Libbie wielded enormous power over all matters pertaining to her husband's legacy. Libbie's influence, however, had its unfortunate effects on history. No one wanted to confront or hurt Mrs. Custer with information that contradicted her views. Libbie died in 1933, outliving most of her husband's contemporary detractors and thus temporarily preventing the tarnishing of her husband's name.

Photographs profile the various stages of Libbie Custer's life, providing the reader with a heightened reading experience. Libbie is portrayed from her teens to her golden years, allowing the viewer to imagine her as she lived with Autie and as she endured her reflective life. The images of the elder woman speak volumes for her pride and determination.

Some readers will undoubtedly find fault in the author's broad explanation about Libbie's feelings for Autie and her efforts to immortalize him, seeing more than simply undying love as her motivation. In some circles the book may even prove controversial. What's this? The name of Custer being linked with controversy? Never!

Overall *Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the Making of a Myth* will appeal to a wide and varied audience. Historians interested in the Custers, the Indian Wars or Women's Studies will find the book particularly informative and enjoyable. Leckie should be commended for her fine research concerning the life of Elizabeth Bacon Custer, an effort which has enabled us to know and understand a truly remarkable woman.

MARK NELSON  
CURATOR, SWEETWATER COUNTY  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
GREEN RIVER

*To Reclaim a Divided West: Water, Law, and Public Policy, 1848-1902* is the latest publication of the "Histories of the American Frontier" series initiated by notable Western historian Ray Allen Billington. Professor Donald Pisani's contribution to this important series is a study of water: territorial, state, and national water law; local, territorial, state and federal government land and water policy; and water use including its ownership and administration in the arid West. Pisani's work deals with the formative years in the development of Western water law and policy, beginning with the 1848 discovery of gold in California and ending with the passage of the Reclamation Act of 1902.

Professor Pisani explores the development of irrigation in the West as a private, public and mixed enterprise, and the relationships between water law and policy. His major focus throughout the book is on California, Colorado, Nevada and Wyoming because those four states were significant in the development of federal water law and policy. The author makes three major assumptions in developing the theme that there was no single West. First, the West was composed of diverse parts that were defined by values, culture and institutions as well as by climate and geography. Second, local economic conditions were far more important in the development of Western water law and policy than arid conditions. And third, as he states, "individuals mold history as history molds them" (xvi). Pisani's point is that the West was fragmented which resulted in the region's inability to achieve a unified and cohesive water policy.

In his book Professor Pisani examines the multitude of conflicts which existed and frustrated the development and implementation of a unified Western water law and policy. He begins with the history of the doctrine of prior appropriation in the California mining districts, and that doctrine's inherent conflict with the common law

and riparian (riverbank) rights recognized by the nation's courts. The sale of riparian water rights intensified the conflict. Western territories and states attempted to resolve the conflicting claims by including elements of both in their first water laws. The enactment of the Desert Land Act in 1877 by Congress eventually abolished riparian water rights from the public lands.

Pisani points out that national ideals of individual initiative, independence, and the promotion of new wealth conflicted with ideals of protecting society from monopoly and special interests, and establishing community solidarity. These were at the core of conflicts about establishing water policy and law. Set in opposition to miners, farmers and ranchers were: the organization of entrepreneurial water and ditch companies, and the grant of extensive legal powers by territorial and state legislatures controlled by special interests. Some states and territories exercised virtual tyrannies.

Investors and speculators considered irrigation projects and water companies as means of obtaining wealth and came into conflict with irrigation and agricultural settlements such as the Greeley Colony, whose goals were to establish harmonious and prosperous agricultural communities. There was controversy between developers wanting to bring irrigation water to virgin land and established ranchers and farmers wanting to supplement existing water supplies. There was continuous discord caused by the discrepancy between overly-optimistic cost estimates made by irrigation promoters, and the actual cost of large irrigation projects.

Reclamation cannot be separated from public land policy and law. Professor Pisani addresses public land issues such as the proposed cession of public lands to states and territories, and the background for passage of the Desert Land Act of 1877, the Carey

## TO RECLAIM A DIVIDED WEST

WATER, LAW, AND  
PUBLIC POLICY  
1848 - 1902



BY DONALD J. PISANI

ALBUQUERQUE: UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, 1992. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. XXI AND 487 PP. CLOTH \$40.00 PAPER \$19.95

Act of 1894 and the Reclamation Act of 1902. Throughout his discourse on public land policy and law, Pisani examines sectional and regional differences, varying economic concerns, individual and corporate public land entries, and conflicts that developed in California and the Southwest as a result of their heritage of Mexican land and water laws and policies.

Chapter 7 in Pisani's book, "Wyoming, Land Cession, and the 'Terrible Nineties,'" is of particular interest to the student of Wyoming history. In it Dr. Pisani examines Wyoming's role in instituting water law reforms and the efforts of the state's political leaders to win cession of federal lands. Included is a detailed analysis of the roles played by Francis E. Warren, Joseph M.

Carey and Elwood Mead, and their significance in the development of Wyoming and national land and water policy and law.

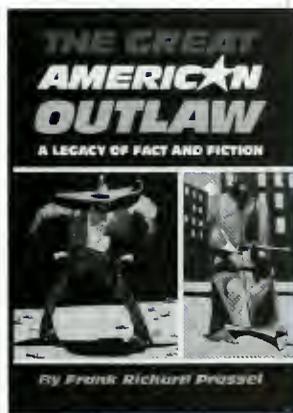
*To Reclaim A Divided West* is an excellent history of the struggle to adapt water and land policy and law to the boom and bust, arid, nineteenth century West. The data is accurate, detailed and comprehensive, and the interpretations and conclusions presented are insightful. This is an important book for the serious student of Wyoming and Western history.

JIM DONAHUE

DIRECTOR, WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES,  
RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND MICRO-  
GRAPHIC SERVICES  
CHEYENNE

## THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTLAW

A LEGACY OF FACT AND FICTION



BY FRANK RICHARD PRASSEL

NORMAN: UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS, 1993. XIV AND 412 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, APPENDIX, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. CLOTH \$29.95.

No American creation is as jumbled in myth and reality as the American outlaw. From Jesse James to John Dillinger or Belle Starr to Ma Barker, it is nearly impossible to separate improbable from possible and fact from legend. Part of American mythology, the outlaw has been transformed by half-truths and lies and given new life by newspapers, dime novels, folk songs, wild west shows, motion pictures and television.

*The Great American Outlaw: A Legacy of Fact and Fiction* by Frank Richard Prassel traces outlaw history from the British Isles before the time of the Norman Conquest to the fantasy of *Road Warrior*. It is an enlightening and fascinating journey of violence, revenge and society's creation of outlaws. Dr. Prassel points out that "Every society has it outlaws." Also evident are recurring themes, valid or not, that link outlaws from Hereward the Wake in late eleventh century England to Al Capone in twentieth century America. The outlaw could be the defender of the oppressed, the product of conflict or a political activist. The outlaw might be, like

Robin Hood, greater than history. We really do not care if what is believed about him is based upon compounded works of fiction; we know that he represents right against wrong.

Dr. Prassel's interest and knowledge of the subject is evident in the care that he takes with each category of outlaw and individual, defining not only what is factual but how popular opinion mythologized outlaw exploits. The book is carefully researched and has a thorough bibliography containing government documents, periodicals, newspapers and general works. An appendix of outlaw ballads provides additional character insight.

The author also provides reasons for perpetuation of outlaw myth in the form of ballads, books and the silver screen. It is by these means that authors or artists for a variety of reasons liberally produced works that celebrate outlaws in a famous or infamous fashion. In many ways the public is quite willing to accept these highly fictionalized accounts and consider them as gospel.

The only difficulty for the reader is that chapter titles are not always appropriate. "The Pirate" defines the tra-

ditional sea-going outlaw and the author's treatment of the subject is effective. The reader is into "The Gangster" seventeen pages before the subject is broached, and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show is included when it might have been better in a chapter dedicated to popular outlaws.

*The Great American Outlaw: A Legacy in Fact and Fiction* is a very readable account about how outlaw myth

Twentieth-century industrial histories are not always very appealing. Details about complex technical processes and corporate reorganizations often obscure the larger impact of industrial development. In *Mill and Mine: The CF&I in the Twentieth Century* H. Lee Scamehorn successfully avoids both of these hurdles to produce a concise and readable history about the Pueblo, Colorado steel producer. It is a companion to his 1976 book *Pioneer Steelmaker in the West: The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, 1872-1903*.

Most historians, Scamehorn suggests, have focused on CF&I's labor policies, especially the violent coal miners' strike of 1913-14, and have excluded the rest of its history. His thesis is that the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company has played an influential role in the region's history and has contributed significantly to the long-term economic development of Colorado and the American West. Though small in comparison to the giant steel producers of the East and Midwest, CF&I has long been one of the region's principal employers. In addition to its Pueblo smelter, the company operated iron ore, coal, limestone and fluorspar mines in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico and Oklahoma. It was a major supplier of coal as well as steel and iron products to agriculture, railroads, mining and other leading industries in the West.

Like other historians, Scamehorn carefully examines company labor

is generated. It provides the reader information about societies that produced not only real outlaws but also created myths to shield themselves from the truth.

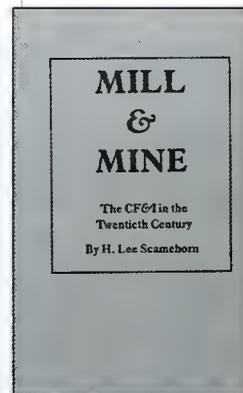
STEVEN M. WILSON  
DIRECTOR  
CHEYENNE FRONTIER DAYS  
OLD WEST MUSEUM  
CHEYENNE

policies, but he does so in the context of its "Industrial Representation Plan." The plan grew directly out of the labor struggles of 1913-14 and was a strategy for avoiding similar problems in the future. It was designed to promote voluntary cooperation and compromise between management and labor as an alternative to independent unions. Representatives from both sides were appointed to discuss grievances and suggest solutions, with appeals to outside authorities used only as a last resort. Scamehorn argues that the plan did improve working and living conditions at CF&I-controlled operations and company towns.

Historians have noted that CF&I coal miners ultimately chose affiliation with the UMWA. However, Scamehorn argues, many other CF&I employees accepted the plan and opposed efforts to abolish it. Its framework was widely adopted by iron, steel and railroad enterprises and remained popular until the late 1930s when the federal government took steps to ensure the right of workers to bargain collectively. Other social and economic changes affected CF&I in the twentieth century. The automobile and new consumer marketing strategies brought about the end of the company store. Reduced demand for coal in homes and businesses made CF&I's Fuel Division largely obsolete. Competition from foreign steelmakers and domestic mini-

## MILL AND MINE

THE CF&I IN THE  
TWENTIETH CENTURY



BY H. LEE SCAMEHORN

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1992. 247 PP. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY. CLOTH \$37.50.

LETTERS OF  
MARI SANDOZ



BY HELEN WINTER STAUFFER

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
PRESS, 1992. BIBLIOGRAPHY,  
INDEX. VII AND 493 PP.  
CLOTH \$60.00

mills forced the company to undergo painful but effective modernization during the 1980s. Scamehorn concludes that the company remains dependent upon the economic success of the West's boom-and-bust industries. However, as a result of these changes it is now in a better position to compete than it has been in recent memory.

The book is not without its flaws. Throughout much of the text the author's sympathies appear to lie with CF&I management. The portrait of CF&I Scamehorn tries to create would benefit from a more inclusive examination of company employees. Also,

To form this handsome book Helen Stauffer selected 450 letters from the many thousands written by author and historian Mari Sandoz. They define Sandoz and explain how she negotiated the problems of publication, stubbornly rejecting any editorial attempts to "mutilate" her manuscripts. The letters tell us that Sandoz's treks in and out of the Nebraska sandhills produced vast quantities of research materials: 300,000 index cards for her massive files, six or seven books per week read, ten to twenty books written, twenty articles written, fifty short stories written including many burned in despair, many lecture and conference engagements West and East ...and so many carefully maintained friendships. She was a remarkable repository of information. When *Crazy Horse* was published her Indian friends call her "Mouse Lodge" either because of her frame or her tenacious character in garnering data.

Introducing the book, Helen Stauffer tells us: "The letters delineate Sandoz's eventual success in her chosen field as a well established literary and historical authority, but they are also a valuable record of the many obstacles she faced" (xxxiii). *Old Jules*, the

many readers who are unfamiliar with the process of steel production may find some of the terminology difficult to understand.

These criticisms aside, however, Scamehorn has created the most complete history of CF&I to date. The book will be extremely valuable to anyone interested in twentieth-century industrial or labor history.

MATT MAYBERRY  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, WESTERN  
MUSEUM OF MINING AND INDUSTRY  
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

biography of Sandoz's hard-nosed father, describes the severe limitations Nebraska sandhills life placed on Mari, a person who loved the land but who was discouraged in her attempts to find and express her own meanings. "You know I consider writers and artists the maggots of society," her father said, denouncing her efforts at self-discovery (pp. 81, 135-136). A locator of settlers for the purpose of making the sandhills bloom, Jules imposed his will on others including the several wives he used up and the children he bent to his purposes. "There were some," Sandoz wrote, "who indicated that I must be a morbid character to think up such a man and call him my father." But even after her escape from bondage and ignorance, her sandhill roots still nourished and impelled her. Though lacking a high school diploma, Mari enrolled in the University of Nebraska, dropping out just short of an English baccalaureate. Years later an honorary doctorate, in light of her contentious reputation with publishers, vindicated the enduring value of her Western and regional literature.

Testing her value system against apprehensive eastern publishers, she was often defensive, sometimes pungently brusque. "I don't give a good goddamn about the whole raft of readers and critics," she snapped, and later

added, "I have no intention of deodorizing my work...these books of mine are true."

Do the letters in this collection give access to her books and stories? And are the books and stories requisite to an understanding and appreciation of her letters? The answers are yes to both questions. The honesty and ardor of the letters characterize Sandoz's struggles to author books and find publishers who wouldn't patronize her or compromise her integrity.

Certainly she was gritty, a 100-pounder who could lift more than her own weight in the hayfields. She was also gifted, portraying imagined and real worlds with the skill of Willa Cather or John Neihardt. She was warm in her Lincoln-Denver-New York friendships, and wry in contem-

plating the bone cancer that was killing her. "Some people are struck by drunken drivers," she noted. Sandoz's letters give insight into a human success story, one she modestly questioned the year before she died: "But if you did concoct a definition of success that could include my work, what formula could possibly include the prospects of a barefoot little girl on the Niobrara River with a language handicap, little country schooling, and no opportunity to attend high school?" The Sandoz letters selected by Helen Stauffer address the question very well, indeed.

WALTER EDENS  
PROFESSOR EMERITUS, UNIVERSITY OF  
WYOMING  
LARAMIE

Capitalism came to the Yellowstone Valley with the fur trade as early as 1805. By the end of the same century, capitalism had transformed the valley's economic and social systems, shaped much of its appearance, and planted a sizable urban community in an inviting twenty five-mile stretch of bottomlands along the Yellowstone River. Where there had been little permanent human impact prior to the 1860s, the region and its urban center of Billings by 1900 boasted interconnected steel rails, plush Victorian homes and an urban vitality not without its attendant problems. Along the way the region's original inhabitants, the Crow Indians, suffered. Economic growth came in fits and starts, with indecision and misdecision, and boom and bust. Natural resources — animal hides, timber, coal or land — were exploited ruthlessly for the benefit of local individuals and absentee corporate barons, all in the name of progress.

Such are the broad outlines of the story Carroll Van West tells in this community history of Billings, Montana.

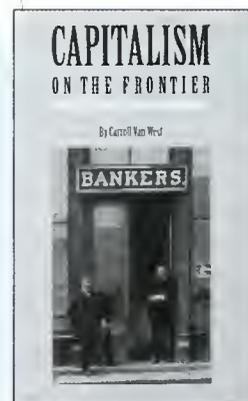
From the earliest penetration of the region by whites to the increasingly impersonal economic order brought by the great railroad reorganizations and financial consolidations of the 1890s, capitalism was the engine of economic growth and change.

Building on the relationships of mutual dependency and exchange established between whites and Native Americans during the fur trade era, frontier settlers attempted to establish themselves in the Clark's Fork bottomlands of the Yellowstone in the 1860s and early 1870s. Their efforts were defeated repeatedly by determined Sioux and Northern Cheyenne Indians. Not until the Indians' defeat in the Great Sioux War of 1876-77 were white settlers successful in creating a lasting nucleus of settlement. That nucleus called itself Coulson.

At the heart of Coulson was Perry McAdow, a classic frontier entrepreneur attracted by government trading contracts for nearby military posts and

## CAPITALISM ON THE FRONTIER

BILLINGS & THE YELLOWSTONE VALLEY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY



BY CARROLL VAN WEST

LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 1993. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX. XI AND 281 PP. CLOTH \$37.50.

the Crow Indian agency. Coulson did not fit the stereotype of the Wild West town. Rather, it was a relatively peaceful place that enjoyed mutual exchange and a highly personalized society. But Coulson was a transitional community, soon to be overwhelmed by the Northern Pacific Railroad. The founding of Billings is a familiar story of how the railroad bypassed the existing town to take advantage of land speculation. But Van West also tells the less familiar story of how the railroad was not all-powerful and how its resources and those of its land company were not great enough alone to ensure permanence.

Named for Frederick Billings, a Vermont native and wealthy railroad entrepreneur, the city struggled throughout the 1880s. It lacked an adequate water supply, reeled from social instability brought by violence, vice and unemployment after the railroad arrived in 1882, and grew distrustful because of the land company's fraud and mismanagement. Taking charge of the situation in 1888, Frederick Billings did much to alleviate these problems, resolving land titles, fostering cooperation with the railroad and having his son, Parmly Billings, come to live and be personally involved in the community. Still, it was not until after 1890 with the arrival of a second railroad, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy, and because of a corporate plan to make the city a regional economic hub, that the future of Billings was assured.

This study surpasses the community histories and article-length studies that generally make up the local history of cities and towns on the northern plains. It is detailed and based on substantial research in disparate sources, and it effectively places local history into larger historical contexts. Those contexts include: the impact of white settlement on Native inhabitants; boosterism and imported, Eastern, cultural aspirations; social relationships and the rise of an increasingly impersonal society; and capitalistic expansion generally. It is especially the story of

the dynamic and often conflicting efforts of local entrepreneurs and corporate tycoons to effect economic development for their own gain.

My criticism of this book is that it gives somewhat short shrift to developments in the community itself during the 1880s and 1890s. Six of the book's nine chapters relate to the twenty years between 1864 and 1883, that is, up to the time the Billings family took charge and paved the way for capitalism's greatest impacts which came after 1890. Yet the final decade of the century is presented largely from the perspective of James J. Hill, J.P. Morgan and a few other leading men. The result is less satisfying than the author's thorough treatment of previous decades. Still, this book provides an excellent model for community history and contributes to our knowledge of the forces and events that shaped eastern Montana and the Northern Plains.

CHARLES E. RANKIN  
EDITOR  
*Montana Magazine*





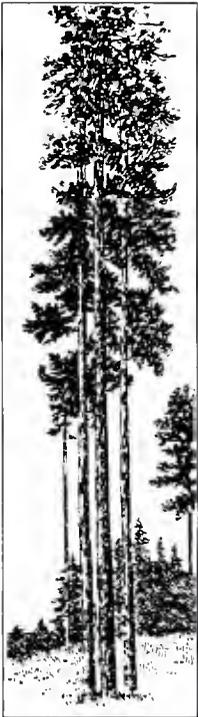
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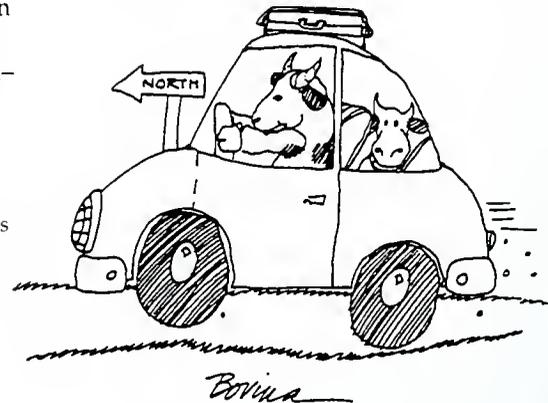
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## V I D E O R E V I E W S

BY DANIEL JUNGE



"The way I see it, you're a real sad case," scoffs Al Sieber (played by Robert Duvall) to sympathetic Lieutenant Charles Gatewood (Jason Patrick) in *Geronimo: An American Legend*. "You don't love who you're fighting for, and you don't hate who you're fighting against."

The line could no more eloquently summarize the confusion of Hollywood's recent treatment of western historical topics. Sieber adequately represents a vestige of the genre known as the western, in which the good prevail by killing the bad and manifest destiny is kept intact. Gatewood exemplifies the new Hollywood aesthetic: politically correct, racially sensitive and employing the hindsight of revisionist history. The problem is that Sieber is a hell of a lot more entertaining to watch. Another problem is that factual accuracy in recent depictions of historical topics isn't observed more closely now than it has been in the past, which isn't saying much. In four releases available on video this season, *Geronimo*, *Tombstone*, *King of the Hill*, and *Eight Seconds*, historical veracity ranges from the painstakingly deliberate to the same whitewashing approach seen in Edwin S. Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* shot ninety-one years ago.

*Geronimo* could be called ambitious or unsettling at best, but more appropriately, ambiguous and unsure of itself. Under the helm of veteran director Walter Hill (*The Long Riders*, *Crossroads*) and writer John Milius (*Apocalypse Now*), *Geronimo* is ground-break-

ing in the same way that it is ultimately forgettable. Immediately conspicuous is the overall absence of the title character, no doubt due to the obvious complexity, and not necessarily benevolent, personage of the actual Geronimo. How does a filmmaker reconcile in this Native American the conflict between this warrior as both a murderer and a victim? While certainly a victim of the American Government's plan to restrict nomadic Apache tribes to reservation farmland and the subsequent genocide carried out by the cavalry to facilitate this, Geronimo was also a murderer. Depending on who you ask, Geronimo and his fellow Chiricahuas killed Anglos, Mexicans, and other Native Americans to avenge the murder of his wife and children by Mexican soldiers, to protect the land of his people, or to simply evade capture, but no one could insinuate that he acted without an agenda. The film entirely sidesteps this quandary, though, preferring to portray Geronimo entirely as a victim of circumstance. The only multiple slaying we see him commit is defensive, for instance, when cavalrymen kill a medicine man for conducting a ritual. As in most of its Indian policies, the U.S. Government lied to Geronimo, continually promising him asylum and free reign. This the film diligently reproduces. But Hill is not so diligent in questioning the honesty of Geronimo who often parlayed with generals, surrendered, and even settled for a year at Turkey Creek Reservation, only to continually return to the warpath. Instead, the film reveals historical half-

truths through the journal narration of fictional Lieutenant Britton Davis, who joins Gatewood in his sympathy for the Apache and their own subservience to a dishonest government. Here we have the formula for new westerns, which are now back in vogue, perhaps best illustrated by *Dances With Wolves* in which good white guys commiserate with noble savages and the two are pitted against bad white government, a formula which holds more historical truth than all of John Ford's films put together but still misses the boat.

Historical discrepancies are evident throughout *Geronimo*. The breathtaking vistas afforded by the Moab, Utah shooting location don't accurately represent the cholla-dotted arroyos of the Mexican-American border. Actor Wes Studi is easily ten years too young to play the aging Geronimo and his almost unbroken English is incorrect. Sieber and Gatewood did not play as large a role as they do on film. But for these detractions, Hill and Milius should be commended for an admirable attempt to show the inevitable and large process of history, a history that is driven, not by the actions of a few prominent men but by sort of a teleological tide of people, in multitudes and over generations. The film places the momentary heroics of Geronimo against the backdrop of white migration. Some Apaches are afflicted with "the coughing sickness." The presence of miners causes violence to proliferate. Gatewood informs Geronimo that they must change. "You must learn to

farm, it's your only chance to survive." Geronimo dreams of an iron horse, the same one which at the film's end will take him east to imprisonment. These historical changes represent what preceded the last Indian campaign in this country.

If *Geronimo* can at least be recognized for attempting to re-invent the western, *Tombstone* should be ignored for poorly regurgitating the genre. The first shots of archival intercut mixed with artificially-aged footage give viewers the impression this will be a reasonable historic investigation. But on closer inspection these are not images of the West, they are Hollywood's perception of the West. Moments later Director George Cosmatos re-affirms in giant, cinemascope color that he has no other intention than to repeat the familiar play using stock characters and conventions. We meet the outlaws – the Clantons, the McLaurys, Johnny Ringo—as they rape and pillage in a Mexican village. We meet the good guys – the Earps and Doc Holliday – as they demonstrate their poses and squeaky clean boots. The cast, of course, is a delectable ensemble which reads like a Who's Who list of current box-office boffos like Val Kilmer, Kurt Russell, and Powers Booth, all of whom probably didn't need their giant paychecks to strap on some six guns and play outlaws and marshals (I can just picture Russell at a casting meeting: "I get to be Wyatt!")

Forget historical integrity. *Tombstone* deals with an episode which has been told and retold by almost every generation in Hollywood (*My Darling Clementine*, *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*, *Cheyenne Autumn*) and which prior to that had already achieved mythic stature in dime novels. The real Wyatt Earp was an opportunist who moved to Tombstone like other prospectors in search of wealth and prominence. In his political and entrepreneurial endeavors



Lane Frost, 1987

MARK JUNG

he and his brothers feuded with county sheriff Johnny Behan who was allied with the McLaurys and Clantons. On October 26, 1881 the Earps and tubercular dentist Doc Holliday killed two McLaurys and a Clanton in a shoot-out which lasted between 30-34 seconds. In the film the incident is blown into a morality play of epic proportions, where everyone is reduced to characters, the conclusions are foregone and the climactic gunfights are slow-motion, bloodsquir-fests ala Sam Peckinpah. The whole story takes on the flavor of a good old-fashioned melodrama, which Cosmatos completes with Hollywood fluff-smoking irons, clapboard storefronts, a swooning Hollywood score and snappy lines like "Skin that smoke wagon and let's see what happens!"

This all would be tolerable if *Tombstone* was the Hollywood western at it's best. It isn't. The script is insipid and

almost impossible to follow. At one point every character seems to be deputized. Dana Delaney as Josephine, Wyatt's mistress, is practically unwatchable, but that irritation is negligible since here, as in all westerns, women are regrettably no more than wallpaper for the setting of the West. One bright spot is Val Kilmer, who's over-the-top characterization of Doc Holliday is the most memorable of recent years. Nevertheless, by *Tombstone's* end even his swagger becomes as disposable as the rest of this pabulum.

If you would like to see a movie which earnestly represents history in an honest, accurate and meanwhile entertaining manner, don't miss *King of the Hill*, out on video now after hardly making a dent at the box-office. Steven Soderbergh (*Sex, Lies, and Videotape*, *Kafka*) pulls no punches bringing to life the memoirs of depression survivor A. E. Hoetchner's. Set

in 1933 St. Louis, the film centers around thirteen year-old Aaron (played by Jesse Bradford), his home on the third floor of the decrepit Empire Hotel, his perceptions of a community sliding deeper into depression, and his rites of passage into adulthood. While so many depictions of this era are cast through the foggy filter of nostalgia, through which everyone appears rosy red or down in the dumps, *King of the Hill* recreates the pluralism inherent throughout American history, including the thirties. Some got it and some don't, and Aaron –as one of the latter– has an honest perspective on the disparities which are part of his world. At school he listens to fellow classmate Billy espouse the philanthropy of John D. Rockefeller, then visits Billy in his life

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of opulence. Billy gives him a business opportunity: breeding canaries. As this and other business opportunities result in failure, it becomes apparent that the money gained from such endeavors is quickly becoming more necessary for food than for new marble shooters.

The Depression's invisible hand is apparent in other facets of Aaron's life. His brother is sent away to relatives, his mother must recover her health in a sanatorium, and his father (Jeroen Krabbe of *The Fugitive*) hits the road to earn money. The disappearing family is a less overt but more insidious result of the Depression than the Hoovervilles which are only a step away for residents of the Empire Hotel. But instead of merely focusing on the hardships, Soderbergh peppers the film with a colorful cast, with Aaron's achievements, and with such simple things as Aaron's thrill in finding on the street a rare cigar band to add to his collection. The movie rings true in depicting the bittersweet realities of growing up, an honesty typically seen in European coming of age stories like *My Life as a Dog* or *Au Revoir Les Enfants*.

*King of the Hill* faithfully recreates the novel of the same name, each chapter providing a separate adventure in the film—some embellished, some regrettably forgotten. While remaining faithful to the book and to the events in Hoetchner's life, Soderbergh compresses them for the sake of the film. Gary Prutkoff's production design is seamless, down to the Brylcream radio ad, the discarded Hoover campaign poster, and the offering of Beech Nut gum. Cinematographically, the film favors sharp, stark realism to the soft focus so often used in Thirties period pieces. Many scenes are illuminated in amber with long shadows, as if the film was shot late in the day. It was the twilight of an era and the twilight of Aaron's childhood and naivete.

"The Old West may be gone but the spirit presides." This opening line of *Eight Seconds* indicates that Hollywood's myth-making machine does not limit itself to events preceding our generation, but can produce one for Lane Frost, the bullriding legend who lost his life at Cheyenne Frontier Days in 1989. A biography of Frost

from childhood to stardom, *Eight Seconds* relies on the typical Hollywood convention of exploring actual living people, only to reduce them to characters. Early drafts of the screenplay apparently focused on Frost's rodeo exploits, but the final piece concentrates much more on Lane's personal life, specifically his relationship with friends, parents and wife.

Luke Perry of *Beverly Hills 90210* was attached to the project from the beginning and, in fact, was instrumental in seeing it through to production. While his boyish good looks and likeable charm match those attributes in Frost, and while both he and Cinthea Geary (*Northern Exposure*) as Kelly Frost turn in admirable performances, *Eight Seconds* never creates the artifice of reality, due largely to the amount of baggage Perry carries with him. The moral of the story is that drawls, dirt and denim do not make T.V. stars into cowboys. In an attempt to be accessible to the largest audience, the makers of *Eight Seconds* produced a watered-down film that performed only marginally in theaters.

What is commendable, especially considering the presence on set of the Frost family and their friends, is that *Eight Seconds* reveals Frost's personal problems in the aftermath of his quick rise to stardom, including some long-unreconciled frustration with his father and his marital infidelities. This is where the drama lies, and it contrasts with his incredibly endearing public persona.

Academy Award winning director John Avildson normally pays close attention to choreography, whether it is dance or the elaborate fight sequences in his films *Rocky* and *The Karate Kid*. Bull riding obviously leaves so much more to serendipity, and while the rodeo coverage is adequate, it inevitably shows seams (Perry fans may be interested to know he did much of his own stunt riding). Avildson went out of his way for accuracy on some things, like identifying which bulls Frost rode on certain occasions and by including George Michael, rodeo enthusiast and television sports commentator. However, what should be painfully obvious to Wyoming residents and rodeo fans alike is the exclusion of Cheyenne as a shooting location. Shot entirely in Texas, the film doesn't capture the feel-

ing of Frontier Days, which is crucial.

*Eight Seconds'* best moment, almost sublime, is the fusion of filmed and archival footage of Tuff Hedeman, Lane's best friend, riding out his championship bull at the National Finals in tribute to his dead friend. It is the merger of fact and fiction, when distinctions become irrelevant and the two overlap in the common language of story. Even more remarkable is the realistic portrayal of Lane's death. I was at Frontier Park the day Lane died and I think Hollywood producers should take note of how *Eight Seconds* doesn't misrepresent the quick, freakish death of a rodeo hero. In the movie, as in real life, one minute Lane was with us and the next minute he was gone.

DANIEL JENGE IS A GRADUATE OF COLORADO COLLEGE WITH A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN FILMS AND FILMMAKING. HE CURRENTLY LIVES IN DENVER, COLORADO.





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view federal government compliance with the law. In Wyoming the SHPO exercises this function.

The Review and Compliance process reflects the understanding that actions on public lands could adversely affect historic properties of even local significance. Review and compliance developed in the 1970s and became a distinct section of state government in 1980. Over the past fourteen years it has evolved into one of the most highly visible entities within the SHPO and is recognized as a leader among its national counterparts. However, in the conscientious pursuit of their duties, review and compliance officers have created conflict with federal bureaucrats, corporate representatives and cultural resource consultants.

Because federal agencies do not employ enough cultural resource specialists to search for historical and archaeological remains affected by every project that occurs on public lands, they routinely require the prospective permittee to hire a consultant to conduct a cultural resource survey of the impacted area. The federal agency reviews the resulting report and sends its recommendations to the state. The SHPO review and compliance staff must complete a review within thirty days. Usually the SHPO agrees with the proposed course of action, and the project proceeds. Disagreements are generally resolved quickly, but a few may take time to work out.

If permitted to operate according to established procedure, the system is reasonably efficient and expeditious, resulting in the identification and protection of cultural sites significant to state and local history. However, federal agencies face pressure to facilitate development, sometimes at the cost of ignoring historic preservation mandates and not properly consulting with the SHPO. They refer to this as "risk management," which is a willingness to violate cultural resource management procedures in order to take an expedient action. Unfortunately, bureaucratic procedure is not the only thing at risk. I have stood where an 1860s Overland Trail stage station and the ruts of the Oregon and Bozeman Trails existed only

a few months prior to my visits to those sites. They were destroyed because the government or a public lands lessee failed to follow historic preservation policies. While such destruction is not common, losses accumulate and over a period of years become quite significant because they are permanent. If it were not for the SHPO Review and Compliance Section, the razing of our heritage would be more pronounced. It would be similar to the intentional neglect of important historic sites that is occurring in Grand Teton National Park. It would be like the im-



Laclède Stage Station, Sweetwater County, 1979

MARK JUNGE

pending destruction, by the United States Forest Service, of the Trail End Lodge west of Cody and the Watt Cabin west of Buffalo. The Big Horn National Forest wants to replace the historic Watt Cabin with a volleyball, or "multiple-use" court, to use agency terminology.

A majority of cultural resource professionals who work for the federal government are well-trained and devoted to historic preservation. But at times their efforts are undermined by a system that promotes less discussion about preservation and more attention to development of other resources. The SHPO is thus an invaluable defender of our state's historic sites. Over ninety per cent of cultural resource report reviews, numbering in the thousands each year, result in agreements between the federal and state government. Occasional SHPO insistence upon protection of an historic site, however -such as at the Medicine Wheel in the Big Horn National Forest- results in the preservation of our history.

Historians themselves have been the

benefactors of SHPO Review and Compliance recommendations. When the cultural resource review process was created in the early 1970s, archaeologists were the only professionals available willing to search for and evaluate cultural remains on public lands. Their academic training prepared them well for this work, for they were experienced at examining archeological evidence. While written records and an historian's perspective should have been important elements in the examination of historic sites, historians simply did not show much interest in this aspect of

public history until later in the decade. By that time the majority of consultants were archaeologists, as were cultural resource management positions in the federal agencies. Thus, they were generally unwilling to share their lucrative consultant fees, or management decisions, with recently-arrived historians. With the exception of the National Park Service, which employs several historians, federal agency cultural resource survey standards are written for archaeologists, and contain virtually no provision for the involvement of historians or other professionals and members of the

public in determining the importance of historic remains.

Fortunately, the SHPO employs an historian who routinely reviews consultant reports and federal agency recommendations, and who insists that historians be involved in assessing the significance of certain historic sites. However, the federal government's reluctance to employ historians and to devise equitable guidelines continues to precipitate conflicts between federal and state government and between archaeologists and historians.

The problems inherent in cultural resource management are contemporary issues that warrant the attention of Wyoming's historical community. Locating and evaluating cultural resources on federal lands should involve the public to a much greater extent. Currently the work of the consultant, federal manager and SHPO reviewer occurs with little public discussion, yet these people determine the fate of thousands of the state's cultural sites every year. The government prints environmental assessments for the public,

containing evaluations of specific impacts a project might have upon resources such as communities, endangered species and wildlife. Routinely incorporated into the same document is the statement that a cultural resource survey will occur later, after the public comment period has ended. For example, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission initially determined that the construction of the Altamont Pipeline through South Pass would not adversely affect this nationally significant historic place. That determination was made before the company conducted a cultural resource survey of the pipeline route. It is ironic that people who have researched local and regional history for years are not given an opportunity to share their knowledge during the evaluation of our most endangered sites ...or any site for that matter.

To change this closed process, Wyoming's historical groups need to contact local and state offices of the Bureau of Land Management, United States Forest Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation and insist on being included in the cultural resource management process. Ask them to allow your group the opportunity to review assessments on historic and archaeological sites that may be impacted by federal undertakings in your county. The local historic preservation boards, which usually are part of county or municipal government, are in a particularly good position to do this because federal agencies are experiencing increased pressure to involve local governments in the decision-making process concerning public lands. In 1989 the Fremont County Historic Preservation Board played a key role in preventing the 1838 Rendezvous Site south of Riverton from becoming another Wyoming Highway Department gravel pit. Our participation will also help inject some much-needed historical expertise into the cultural resource management process, forcing it to become more public.

Historians should take notice of an unusual situation that is developing even as this is being written. At a recent meeting in Cheyenne representatives of several federal agencies were invited to meet with SHPO staff in order to examine the review and compliance process. It quickly became apparent that the agencies wanted to reduce SHPO review responsibilities, although they failed to cite any substantive evidence that the SHPO was delaying the implementation of projects or being unrea-

sonable in its preservation recommendations. In fact, some agencies and corporations such as the Petroleum Association of Wyoming phone the State Historic Preservation Officer to request priority reviews of their reports. But that accommodation is not enough. Federal agency staff members simply do not want the State looking over their shoulders. The SHPO staff was directed to step into the hallway while federal staff and a few other individuals met behind closed doors to determine how best to restrict SHPO oversight function. In essence, the federal government dictated to state government how it should operate.

If the State Historic Preservation Officer implements federal agency demands, his staff will review only a small percentage of cultural resource recommendations. In other words, an agency that was created nearly thirty years ago, one of the most important advocates of historic preservation in Wyoming and the only organized forum for involvement of historians in the cultural resource management process, will virtually be silenced. History advocates everywhere in this state ought to tell their legislators and the State Historic Preservation Officer that such changes cannot be tolerated. We stand to lose too much.

Debates such as this one, relating directly to the preservation of our history, beg for increased involvement in contemporary public policy issues by our historical organizations. We also need your activism in other areas including the establishment of a State Register of Historic Places and an inventory of historical and archaeological sites on state-owned land, and the advisability of providing public funding for privately-managed museums and historic sites. Small groups such as the Friends of South Pass readily jump into the middle of local historical frays. Our statewide organizations must be willing to do the same by assuming a more visible leadership role in contemporary historical problems.

Will this happen? In the January edition of *Wyoming History News* editor Loren Jost offered four vignettes of how some people recently utilized the Oregon Trail and its associated historic sites, and recounted the reactions of three people concerning whether or not the uses are appropriate. Not only did the article contain an examination of important ethical questions, it reflected the spirited, value-laden discussions that often characterize debates involving historic preservation. I thought that Loren's essay would precipi-

tate strong reactions from Wyoming State Historical Society members, but in the May edition of the newsletter Loren noted his disappointment with the poor response to the article.

Research is what we do as historians. It is what attracts most of us to the field, and it generates valuable information about the past and about who we are. We should continue to disseminate that information through traditional venues such as books, conferences and historical treks, but we also should look for opportunities to share our views with other members of society. By cooperating in our work we can become more effective in participating in contemporary issues that interest us as historians and in contemporary discussions that involve us as members of our communities. We have a great deal to offer if we are willing to share it.

*\* The term "historic" refers to the cultural remains of American Indians as well as non-Indians. Even though Native Americans rely more upon an oral tradition rather than a written one, their cultural sites should not be considered "prehistoric."*

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MIKE MASSIE WAS BORN IN AKRON, OHIO IN 1954, THE LAST YEAR THAT THE CLEVELAND INDIANS WON THE PENNANT. AFTER RECEIVING A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HISTORY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON, HE MIGRATED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING WHERE HE EARN'D A MASTER'S DEGREE IN HISTORY. THE NEXT TEN YEARS MIKE LABORED IN WYOMING STATE GOVERNMENT, MOST OF THEM SPENT AS CURATOR AT SOUTH PASS CITY STATE HISTORIC SITE IN CENTRAL WYOMING. PREVIOUSLY HE WORKED IN THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE AT THE WYOMING RECREATION COMMISSION IN CHEYENNE WHERE HE CREATED AND DIRECTED WYOMING'S HISTORY REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM. CURRENTLY MIKE LIVES IN LARAMIE WHERE HE IS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE WYOMING COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES AND PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR IN THE UW HISTORY DEPARTMENT. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS ARTICLES, INCLUDING THREE THAT APPEARED IN *Wyoming Annals*, AND IS THE RECIPIENT OF THE WYOMING HISTORIC PRESERVATION CITATION. HE IS MARRIED TO RUTH JORDAN AND HAS TWO CHILDREN, KARA AND JEDEDIAH.



Stamp covered Oldsmobile owned by Ed Hadley, The Palms Ice Cream & Floral Co., Casper, Wy. (414 E. 2nd St.), 1936  
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**Grand Tetons, Jackson Lake, ca. 1900**

FERY FAMILY COLLECTION, BOISE, IDAHO

*Continued from inside front cover...*

following year his wife died and Fery subsequently lived in Everett, Washington. On September 10, 1934 he died at Everett General Hospital and was buried beside his wife at the Olga-Doe Bay Cemetery on Orcas Island.

John Fery painted in broad strokes and is said to have completed most of his canvasses in a short time. At least 150 still exist, most of them privately owned. More than half are Rocky Mountain landscapes, mainly of the Glacier and Jackson Hole areas. Seventeen paintings depict scenes in California and the Pacific Northwest and another fourteen depict locations in the Southwest, principally Utah. There are eleven paintings of Wisconsin subjects and two feature Minnesota locations. Other canvasses with identifiable locations depict scenes in New York State, Michigan and Indiana. Only two works survive from Fery's European period, a scene in Venice and a view of the Ammersee near Munich. The exact number of paintings Fery produced is not known, but his work appears in the art market from time to time, and doubtless numerous paintings are unreported.

Fery traveled so widely and worked in so many locations that it is hard to characterize him as a regional artist, though he seems to enjoy that status in Utah. One of the best institutional collections of his work, containing nine paintings, can be found in Salt Lake City at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Museum on Church History and Art. Probably the most important group of Fery paintings is the impressive collection owned by Burlington Northern, successor to the Great Northern Railway. Quite a few pieces are in private and institutional ownership in the Milwaukee area. The paintings seen in *Annals* are part of a collection owned by Fery's grandson, John Fery of Boise, Idaho.

The self-taught artist John Fery was greatly influenced by the world of academic art but not really a part of it. For ex-

ample, he does not appear to have been in the habit of joining art associations or showing his work in group exhibitions. He probably was too busy filling commissions and finding new places to paint. More attention should be devoted to artists like Fery who occupy a middle ground between the luminaries of his age and those destined to remain unrecognized.

*Editors note: Peter Merrill's manuscript, complete with footnotes, was reduced to a two-page, cover biography in order to provide Annals readers full color examples of John Fery's work.*

PETER C. MERRILL (1930-) WAS BORN IN EVANSTON, ILLINOIS AND RAISED IN WINNETKA, A SUBURB NORTH OF CHICAGO. SINCE 1967 PROFESSOR MERRILL HAS TAUGHT GERMAN AND LINGUISTICS AT FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY NORTH OF MIAMI. HE HAS PUBLISHED NUMEROUS ARTICLES ON GERMAN IMMIGRANT CULTURE AND RECENTLY COMPLETED *German-American Artists in Early Milwaukee*, A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY COVERING THE PERIOD FROM 1850 TO 1950. HE AND HIS WIFE, AUSMA, RESIDE IN BOCA RATON. A SON, THOMAS, ALSO LIVES IN BOCA RATON.



