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# *Annals of Wyoming*

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“Along the Little Horn” is the title of the cover painting by artist Joseph H. Sharp. The painting is assumed to have originated in Montana in the period 1902-1912. In his book, *Artists and Illustrators of the Old West*, Robert Taft says, “Sharp was born in 1859, began the study of art in Cincinnati at the age of 14. He had a part in the founding of the artists colony at Taos, having first visited there in 1893. Sharp had a position with the Cincinnati Art Academy from 1892 until 1902 when he resigned to devote all his time to painting themes in Indian country. For a number of years beginning in 1901 he had a summer studio on the Crow agency of Montana. He became a permanent resident of Taos in 1912.”



# *"Top of the World" Broadcasts: Wyoming's Early Radio*

By

HOWARD LEE WILSON

## A BISHOP CONCEIVES THE IDEA

On Thursday, December 10, 1925, a broadcast originated from radio station KFBU. The principal speaker was Nellie Tayloe Ross, the first woman governor of one of the United States of America. There was also a brief address by the Right Reverend Nathaniel Seymour Thomas, Episcopal Bishop of Wyoming.

The announcer referred during the broadcast to the fact that it came from the "top of the world," Laramie, Wyoming, a phrase which became both slogan and motto of the station, whose transmitters were located over seven thousand feet above sea level.

The station possessed other unique characteristics. It was housed in the basement of St. Matthew's Cathedral, the result of the imaginative mind of Bishop Thomas, and, on this particular night, was broadcasting with new equipment provided by Mrs. Edward H. Harriman, widow of the late president of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Mrs. Harriman had underwritten the cost of more modern and powerful transmitting facilities since the earlier 25-watt transmitter had purportedly prevented a possible collision between two Union Pacific trains. This night was a triumph for the bishop and his radio station, but KFBU had been on the air prior to 1925.

Wyoming's relative remoteness in the twenties makes the introduction of a radio by 1923 a somewhat remarkable achievement. The first of the broadcasting stations, KDKA, Pittsburgh, opened on November 2, 1920, according to Frederick Lewis Allen in his history of the 1920s, *Only Yesterday*.

Allen is cited here because in a necessarily brief review of the impact of radio in America he specifically mentions that the rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, Dr. Edwin J. Van Etten, "permitted the services at Calvary Church to be broadcasted."<sup>1</sup>

One who availed himself of the opportunity to speak over the

---

1. Allen, F. L. *Only Yesterday* (Perennial Library, New York, 1964), page 64. The initial broadcast was on Sunday, January 2, 1921.

radio as guest preacher was Bishop Thomas, missionary bishop of Wyoming. The experience, and listener reaction to it, provided the bishop with the inspiration to use this new communication tool for the furtherance and expansion of his work in Wyoming. The thought was already planted in his mind and he mentioned it in a radio sermon from Calvary Church on Sunday, April 9, 1922.

A letter from Wheeling, West Virginia, dated April 10 was a confirmation of the plans he had in mind:

Rev. N. S. Thomas  
Pittsburg Pa.

Dear Bishop:

It was with great pleasure that Mrs. C. C. Woods, Mrs. W. W. Vardy and the undersigned, listened to your sermon last evening in Calvary Church Pittsburg by wireless at the residence of Mr. C. C. Woods of Park View this city. Was very distinct and greatly enjoyed, it's just simply wonderfull, and we especially noted what you had to say about radiating from Laramie Wyoming and provided we are fortunate enough and have the apparatus might-it-not-be possible in the future to hear your sermons from there. Thanking you for so forceful an address, and trusting that we may have the pleasure again soon, we remain

Yours truly  
Mrs. C. C. Woods  
Mrs. W. W. Vardy

By W. W. Vardy

The word was also delivered in Wyoming in a news story in the *Wyoming State Tribune* on Thursday, April 13, 1922. Headlined "Bishop Thomas Talks by Radio to People Far From His Pulpit," it read:

At the Trinity Episcopal Church of Pittsburgh, Pa., the Rt. Rev. Nathaniel S. Thomas, bishop of Wyoming, this week is delivering sermons that are heard by people in all parts of the country. The arrangement is made possible by the use of the radio-phone.

The service takes place at 12:30 p.m. daily, so that it is heard by people in the Rocky Mountain section at 2:30.

There is no record of the reception of these broadcasts by anyone in Wyoming, but a delayed message from a listener in Naperville, Illinois, must have been encouraging. This member of the Naperville Radio Club sent the following penciled note on a "Radiogram" form to Bishop Thomas at Laramie dated April 19, 1922:

Dear Rev:

Am writing you to report the reception of your sermon here on Sunday nite April 9th. Your voice was easily understandable with one stage of amplification.

I heard that part of your sermon where you referred to your plan of putting sets in each church of your jurisdiction.

I would have wrote sooner but did not know your address. I obtained the same from the Chicago Daily Journal Apr. 20 writeup.



## "TOP OF THE WORLD" BROADCASTS

I received church services the same day from Chicago and Pittsburg.  
Hoping to hear you again I remain

Yours for radio

J. A. Stoos

9DTC

Surely this convinced the Bishop, if he needed convincing, that if his voice could reach from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Naper-ville, Illinois, a broadcasting station of his own would indeed be able to cover the 97 thousand square miles of his missionary district. Accordingly he utilized the press. Page 13A of the Sunday, April 23, issue of the *Kansas City Star* carried this release:

### BISHOP WOULD RADIO SERMONS

Science May Aid Services of Wyoming "Sky Pilots."

NEW YORK, April 22. - Churchgoers in Wyoming will be served their sermons by radio if the plans of the Rt. Rev. Nathaniel Seymouth (sic) Thomas, D.D., Episcopal Missionary Bishop of Wyoming, mature.

"What I want," he said here, "is a radio outfit which will carry 300 or 400 miles. I will install it in the cathedral in Laramie and send to the small, scattered missions throughout the state the full service and sermon which we have there each Sunday.

At the same time the bishop contacted Wyoming's delegation in the Congress. Telegrams were dispatched to Francis E. Warren, at that time chairman of the Senate appropriations committee, and to Frank W. Mondell, then floor leader of the House of Representatives. Both wrote to say that they were sending everything available. Mondell noted in his letter of April 25, "The recent unusual interest in radio matters reveals the fact that there is very little data of this sort published. I assume that it will not be long until there will be more of it and I shall keep in mind your interest when there is anything new."

Senator Warren, having first answered by telegram (April 24) followed with a letter on the same date which said, in part:

I am sending also a copy of two laws which have to do with public use of Government-owned radio stations; and also a copy of Senator Poindexter's bill which has been before the Committee on Naval Affairs for some time upon the subject of regulation of radio communication. Nothing whatsoever is being done with the Poindexter bill, so you need not give much time to its contents. I am sending it merely as a sort of "curiosity."

"Curiosity" Bill S. 31 may have been, but its provisions for licensing, its recommendation for the creation of a national radio commission, and its insistence on strong regulatory controls were harbingers of the Federal Radio Commission which ultimately put KFBU, Laramie, off the air.

With the "very little data of this sort published" Bishop Thomas began to familiarize himself with the technical jargon of a radio-crazed nation. He gave thought, as well, to the method of supporting his project financially and, in this same month of April



broached initial plans to share facilities and costs of the operation with the University of Wyoming in Laramie. University President Aven Nelson responded to this overture favorably, indicating that "Our Board of Trustees meets next Tuesday, however, and I shall then lay the whole matter before that larger membership so as to give you an authoritative statement within a week."

With these preliminaries cared for, Bishop Thomas began to negotiate for the actual purchase and installation of suitable equipment—at a suitable price. The New York City press release found its way into many printed sources, and alert suppliers quickly deluged the bishop with offers to sell him what he said he wanted.

A letter from Webster Groves, St. Louis, Missouri, opened, "This morning's (April 21) telegraphic news announces your intention to procure a RADIO outfit . . ." and quotes the closing lines of the press release verbatim. The writer, William H. Forse, hand-wrote his proposal in near copper-plate script replete with underlinings, arrows, and key words printed in capital letters for emphasis. He possessed 15 Marconi receiver-transmitters "removed from U.S. Submarinechasers, Navy Standard—Government guarantee of good condition" at the bargain price of \$462.50 per unit plus freight. The proposal attracted the bishop sufficiently to respond, but with caution, and with an introduction aimed, one suspects, at impressing Mr. Forse that he was dealing with a man, bishop though he be, who had some knowledge both of business methods in general and radio in particular:

May 3, 1922

Wm. H. Forse, Esq.,  
Auto Transport Company,  
St. Louis, Mo.

My dear sir:

I have your letter of the 21st on a letterhead with no address on it. I hope you will receive my letter. I suppose your letter comes from St. Louis.

. . . I do not know whether those old Marconi transmitters, which are built for the purpose of transmitting dots and dashes over the Morse Code, are equipped for the best work in telephony. Is this a sparking or a continuous wave instrument?

Sincerely yours,

(N. S. Thomas)

The letter was a bluff, if not a stalling tactic. It is difficult to determine the reason for the sarcastic opening lines. Forse's letter is quite decent. Perhaps his suggestion that "You'll have to reach a decision very promptly, and advise. Thus also you may combine *commercial business*—if so inclined, as a means of maintenance of the structure and equipment and *entertainment*—as well as SERVICE." The idea that commercialism and evangelism be mixed may have ruffled him.

In spite of the confident-sounding technical queries, the bishop

had written on the preceding day to the president of Westinghouse Electric & Mfg. Co.:

I have just received the enclosed letter. I know nothing whatsoever about the Marconi transmitter.

The bishop had met President Edwin M. Herr through a mutual friend while in Pittsburgh in April, and at that time had “a short talk” with him. The time had arrived for top-level professional help. He goes on:

The fact that I was interested in a broadcasting station was a matter of general press report and has occasioned me to be bombarded on all sides by selling agencies who have one thing and another to dispose of.

. . . If this Governatorial<sup>2</sup> instrument will do the work, it seems as tho it were an opportunity to purchase a \$3000 instrument for \$462.60

I should value an expert opinion from any of your engineers to whom you might care to refer it.

Faithfully

/s/ N. S. Thomas

The letter, however, was never mailed. The signed original and the stamped, addressed envelope are still in the KFBU file in Laramie.

The bishop abandoned the idea of using Marconi instruments when he discovered an inquiry from a source closer to him, the Radio Distributing Company in Salt Lake City, Utah. The company’s president, Rulon S. Howells, informed Bishop Thomas that his concern was the distributor for Westinghouse equipment as well as other makes. In responding to this letter the bishop again took express pains to establish his own position and connections:

I think I should like a Westinghouse machine. I had a talk with the President of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, Mr. Kerr, when I was in Pittsburgh and went over his projecting station. I wanted to buy a machine of him, but he told me that the Radio (Distributing Company?) was the selling company of his out put.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Howells quickly replied to the effect that a broadcasting station would run about \$800, and receiving sets about \$215 each.

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2. *sic* Random House Unabridged Dictionary lists no such word.

3. The question may be raised as to why the correspondence with Mr. Forse in Webster Groves took place at all. First, the “war surplus” goods had the promise of being a good bargain. Secondly, having just returned from an extended trip in the east the Bishop’s mail was doubtlessly piled on his desk in order. He would well have dictated letters to Mr. Forse before realizing that Radio Distributing Company was the outlet already recommended to him by the Westinghouse president. The letter quoted from here is addressed simply to “The Radio Company” in Salt Lake. This would also account for failure to mail the letter to Mr. Herr (or Kerr) in Pittsburgh. It would hardly do to make inquiries about other equipment without having first investigated the recommendation made verbally by the top man at Westinghouse!



Thomas' answer to this is not available, but it was responded to by telegram:

We can meet all requirements as specified in your letter . . . STOP  
Total cost two thousand two hundred dollars installation charges extra  
STOP This price includes every item for a complete broadcasting  
station and the four receiving sets specified STOP

The cost of all this seemed to upset the bishop. He complains that having recently visited the University of Colorado at Boulder he found that "their broadcasting station has cost them between \$200 and \$300, and that their broadcasts are heard in Texas and elsewhere at a distance of more than a thousand miles." Nor was he completely satisfied with the power and capability of the receiving sets. "For that sum," he wrote, "Kansas City is advertising a Receiving Set with two amplifiers which will pick up Catalina and Pittsburgh, when the static is at all favorable."<sup>4</sup>

At any rate, the bishop promised to visit Salt Lake in person to discuss the matter further, and having done so, wrote Howells to proceed with the work.

Howells sent a letter informing the bishop that his company would arrange for all details in connection with applying for the broadcast license which had to be negotiated through San Francisco and required detailed technical data. He also enclosed a contract, the financial provisions of which irritated the bishop exceedingly. The agreement virtually called for payment in advance. Thomas said he would pay only when the equipment was "on the ground" in Laramie.

A lively exchange of letters and telegrams ensued. In the midst of it the bishop left on another trip, and, discovering on his return that Radio Distributing Company was in a new location sharing space with another firm, his suspicions grew.

In vain Mr. Howells sought to explain. His suppliers operated on a cash-in-advance basis; the move was temporary pending the completion of larger quarters made necessary by the mushrooming demand for radio equipment; his bankers at Zion Savings Bank and Trust Company would (and did) testify to his integrity; he would agree to wait for payment until the government approved the license application, but no later.

On June 15 the bishop rejected all proposals and announced that he would decline to sign the contract. In fact "I have this day

---

4. The mention of Catalina Island is suggestive. Later, when writing of the events of the blizzard and KFBU's part in averting the Union Pacific wreck, the version was that the signal from Laramie was picked up in Catalina Island and relayed. (A phrase "from Catalina to Pittsburgh" would have appealed to Bishop Thomas and would have perhaps prompted the later error.)

given order to a gentleman in Laramie to install my broadcasting station for me."<sup>5</sup>

The gentleman was Warner N. Crosby. He was actually an engineering student at the University of Wyoming. He held a second-grade commercial license for radio which was one of the requirements necessary for procuring a broadcasting license. Picking up parts in Laramie and Denver, Crosby worked from July 1 through October installing his built-from-scratch unit in three rooms of the basement of St. Matthew's Cathedral. With a qualified operator and the requisite technical data available the license to broadcast was duly applied for and was issued on October 3, 1922. The license, granted for three months, shows that the power to the antenna was 10 watts, and its estimated normal day range was 25 nautical miles. The call letters assigned were KFBU.<sup>6</sup>

An accounting of construction costs for material alone through October 20 reveal that \$1378.96 had been expended for a unit which could deliver only 10 watts of power to its antenna.

Bishop Thomas, enroute to General Convention, in September wrote a note to his secretary, Alice Caldwell, and enclosed some "cheques" to pay bills on the radio. He cautioned her to make no more payments to the Crosby Radio Shop, but rather to the suppliers direct. He added:

Mr. Crosby seems an excellent young man but I know nothing of his financial responsibility.

It was a great joy to see Mrs. Thomas.

Be sure to send Mr. Hardin and Mr. Beatty Confirmation Blanks, and Mr. Beatty 25 Baptismal Certificates,

Affy,

/s/ N. S. Thomas

The last two sentences of this note written on a train are hints of the larger perspective in which this account must be weighed.

The radio project was only one of the manifold activities of Bishop Thomas. As a missionary bishop of the Episcopal Church

5. Some weeks later, on August 23, 1922, Howells, on the letterhead of his new company, Western Radio Sales Co., wrote Bishop Thomas to inform him that he had an assembled transmitter for sale at \$700 and asked to be informed if the bishop was interested or not. Thomas evidently did not reply at all. Salt Lake exacted a measure of revenge later when the ASCAP office in Salt Lake reprimanded the bishop for trying to introduce commercial messages on his non-commercial station!

6. Licenses were then issued by the Department of Commerce and were jointly signed by its secretary and the Commissioner of Navigation. Naval influence on radio was marked at this point, strongly so in the Poindexter Bill *supra*.

The call letters appear to have been assigned arbitrarily. The first letter, K, then as now, was common to all stations in the West.

It occurs to this writer, in pure fancy, the "FBU" could be considered to mean "Forceful Bishop's Undertaking."



he was immersed in the pastoral and administrative responsibilities of his own jurisdiction, Wyoming, and had financial accountings and missionary speaking responsibilities to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church in its New York headquarters. (It was this body which financed the deficits of the missionary areas.) He was prominent in the organizational life of the Episcopal Church, was a powerful and much sought after speaker throughout the country. His wife was in poor health, a circumstance which was to delay the bishop's close contact with his radio station's growth and development.

The railroad journey was probably to Portland, Oregon, where the Episcopal Church was holding its triennial General Convention. In addition to the crowded agenda of such meetings Thomas took part in a ceremony which normally would have been a part of the renowned Portland Rose Festival held earlier in the year, but which had been deferred until convention time for special reasons. The winner of the gold medal for the season's best rose was George C. Thomas of Philadelphia. It was to be named, in honor of his mother, "The Mrs. George C. Thomas Rose."

Reporting the event, the *Portland Oregonian* September 17, 1922, stated:

Bishop Thomas, one of the most finished speakers who has ever graced the platform of the auditorium, delivered a masterful and beautiful address on the history of the rose, its association with history, art and religion.<sup>7</sup>

Not mentioned in the newspaper account was the warm tribute paid by Bishop Thomas to the winner's father, and the honoree's husband, George C. Thomas, Sr. The senior Thomas had been the treasurer of the Episcopal Church's missionary board for many years, and had been a member of the Reverend Nathaniel Thomas' parish in Philadelphia prior to the latter's election as missionary bishop of Wyoming.

Meantime, in Laramie, young Crosby labored with KFBU's tubes, batteries, generator and condensers. When the bishop, now an honorary member of the Portland Rosarians, returned home, harsher realities of life awaited. A letter from the present missionary board treasurer relayed a demand for information on the bishop's and Wyoming's indebtedness. Thomas replied with a list stating that he was trying to get "six per cent money in sufficient amounts to take up this eight per cent money" already borrowed against the time when the next mission board appropriation was expected. He concluded:

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7. The extract from the *Oregonian* plus the full text of the Bishop's address appear in *The Wyoming Churchman*, October, 1922, issue pp. 11-13.

So far as I can foresee the future, I shall have no large ventures on hand for some years to come, so when this indebtedness is paid I shall have a notable reduction in my budget.

Had George C. Thomas still been treasurer, the Wyoming bishop might have received more sympathetic inquiries from New York. Such problems did not completely turn his attention away from KFBU. In October he wrote several letters dealing with the minutiae of stringing the antenna wires from the cathedral spire. He obtained the data on wind velocities from the Cheyenne weather bureau to determine how sturdy a tower or pole would have to be to support it. At least, in October, KFBU was transmitting on an experimental basis, but this raised new difficulties about which the bishop felt compelled to write at length to Crosby.

There had been no written agreement between the two men. Now the bishop felt the time had come, since “Such a steady stream of complaints have come to my ears with reference to your operation of my radio . . .”

Criticism still comes from the street that our experimentation is a nuisance to others who are listening in. The last criticism was that Mr. Mondell’s<sup>8</sup> speech in Denver, which was broadcasted, was so interrupted by us that it was not heard. Now it seems to me that your experimentation with broadcasting should be done when you have a definite listener in at some other than the time that the main broadcasting stations are operating. One reason why I am permitting any broadcasting at the present time is that you should be sufficiently familiar with your apparatus, so that when our own extended program is ready for broadcasting, it may be well done from the start. Broadcasting for the amusement of your admiring gallery must stop. . . Now I want this private performance in the little room containing our property stopped, and any receiving in the future for outsiders must be done in the main room where the large receiving set with its magnifiers are to be installed. If you will, kindly put the soft pedal on your broadcasting from now on until such time as we have our main aerial up and broadcasting is of some value, and address your attention to putting in a receiving set of such merit that the people of the city may avail themselves of it, I shall be pleased.

This letter dated November 1 was rewritten two days later, but was not changed much. The bishop clarified his last statement quoted above in the second version:

Will you install our large receiving set in the main room downstairs and so adjust its magnifying equipment that what is received can be heard throughout the room; when this is done I wish the public to be invited nightly to hear whatever may be broadcasted.

Accompanying this second letter was an agreement which dealt with complaints and directives to Crosby. But its first clause was a real shock:

---

8. Congressman Frank Mondell of Wyoming.



The party of the second part (Crosby) will fashion, assemble and operate the radio apparatus . . . free of all monitory (sic) charge by way of salary, bonus or commission. That as a return for this, the party of the first party (N. S. Thomas) will grant unto the party of the second part all privileges which such broadcasting from such a station will permit him in the selling of receiving sets and other radio apparatus, as may result from the advantageous position which the broadcaster of this station possesses.

The bishop was pinching pennies and obstreperous operators with a vengeance!

The agreement further provided for Crosby's supervision by a broadcasting committee of the Cathedral, "the Chairman of which . . . is Mr. Thurmond (sic) Arnold of this city."<sup>9</sup>

A letter to Thurman Arnold, dated November 4, runs as follows:

My dear Mr. Arnold:

I am inclined to think we ought to have a Chairman on the Radio equipment, to act as a control of Mr. Crosby in the interest of our broadcasting. Mr. Crosby is an ardent, energetic young man but I think he lacks experience and the education necessary to properly obtain the best results with the equipment which we have and hope to have. As the work of the Committee, so far as efficiency is concerned, will depend upon the excellence of the broadcasting, I am convinced that we should have another sub-committee under your general chairmanship having to do with the equipment. I do not know whether Mr. Bellamy will serve, but I think your persuasive offices will be compelling.

Ben C. Bellamy, still living in Laramie, was persuasively compelled. "The last time I saw Thurman before he died," he recalls, "we had a drink to old KFBU." Bellamy worked with Crosby, particularly with the generators, in an effort to increase the transmitter's power and range.

The station was due to have an unusual test of its output. On

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9. This was Thurman Arnold (1891-1969), who at the time was practicing law in Laramie with his father. He was elected mayor of Laramie in 1923, called to be dean of the Law College of the University of West Virginia in 1927, invited to join the Law Faculty of Yale University in 1930, sworn in as Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division in 1938. From this position he was appointed to the Federal Appellate Bench, but resigned to work in his own law firm with partners Abe Fortas and Paul Porter, among others.

The author is indebted to Messrs. Fortas and Porter for a printed booklet of personal reminiscences of Thurman Arnold's life and work originally given at a memorial service for him at the National Cathedral, Washington, D. C., November 20, 1969.

The author was present on that occasion, and earlier had officiated at Thurman Arnold's burial service and committal at St. Matthew's Cathedral, November 10, 1969.

None of those present recalled, one suspects, that the service was being held directly above the old radio rooms, the behavior of whose operator Mr. Arnold had been invited to regulate.





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November 9, 1922

Mr. B. C. Bellamy,  
Laramie, Wyo.

My dear Mr. Bellamy:

Mr. Crosby has left bag and baggage, taking with him everything that he says is his. I should like to have a complete inventory taken . . . and should like your advice as to the next step we should take.

. . . A short time ago he told me that there was nothing here that was his. Today it looks as though he had taken everything in sight.

Faithfully yours,

Twelve days later he wrote Bellamy again to ascertain what progress was being made on "procuring a broadcaster for our projecting apparatus." During December he wrote several companies, as well as his Philadelphia architect Walter H. Thomas, for information on steel girder towers to support a larger antenna. The averted train wreck incident languished (to be used later with telling effect), and Mr. Crosby disappeared from active association with the bishop and KFBU. Crosby is truly KFBU's "forgotten man."

Mrs. Thomas' critical state of health would shortly require an extended trip out of the country accompanied by her husband. But in nine months Bishop Thomas had seen his dream become near reality. KFBU existed. It had been of service during a railroad catastrophe, but it was not yet "on the air."

#### A PAUSE - AND A BEGINNING

The year 1923 found Mrs. Thomas in such poor health that she was advised to take a long rest at lower altitudes. As a result the bishop and his wife left Wyoming for Europe on an extended trip of nearly nine months, visiting Spain, Italy, Greece, the Holy Land and Egypt.

The fortunes of KFBU hung in suspension until rather late in the year. While this state of affairs existed, however, there was an item of interest published in the April, 1923 issue of *The Wyoming Churchman* as the lead article of the column "General Church News:"

On the afternoon of Easter Day, Bishop Anderson of Chicago delivered an Easter message through the agency of the Westinghouse Radiophone Broadcasting Station KYW. It is estimated that one hundred thousand persons heard the sermon.

It is doubtful that the story was a "plant" to keep readers of the *Churchman* interested in KFBU. With the exception of the account of the use of the radio to avert the train wreck, virtually no mention was made of KFBU in the monthly publication of the missionary district of Wyoming.

Though it could hardly be appreciated at the time, it was a young engineer from KYW who came to Laramie in 1925 and was killed

while installing the new equipment provided by Mrs. Edward Harriman. Enroute to his Mediterranean trip the bishop had stopped in New York where he met Mrs. Harriman. In fact he and Mrs. Thomas were guests in the Harriman home, and it was at this time that the generous widow-philanthropist mentioned that if the bishop was ever in particular need she would try to help him. The conversation must have been a far-ranging one for the following appeared in the *Laramie Boomerang* on May 12, 1923:

MILLION-DOLLAR SEMINARY  
FOR LARAMIE IS RUMORED

Coming as the most startling bit of information uncovered here in recent years is the news that Laramie has virtually been selected as the location for a \$1,000,000 Episcopal seminary which Mrs. E. H. Harriman, widow of the late railroad magnate whose foresight and confidence in the West brought about the building of the Union Pacific Railroad into the gigantic system it is today, hopes to build, in fulfillment of her life-long wishes to erect and maintain an institution of higher learning for young women of Episcopal faith.

While the information comes as a rumor and without confirmation by members of the church, it is regarded as a well-founded report, coming on what is believed to be good authority, and that it will eventually be authenticated by a formal announcement to be made with the perfection of Mrs. Harriman's plans is believed certain.

It is understood that the idea of establishing the academy at Laramie was conceived by Bishop N. S. Thomas of the Wyoming diocese, who is at present on a tour of Europe, and that upon his return to this country or some other time shortly thereafter will assist Mrs. Harriman in drafting final plans.

Since it was not the habit of the bishop to release anything about his plans until they were fully implemented and underwritten, it is as well that he was "in Europe" when this news was leaked. Someone's angrily-held pencil circled the phrases "as a rumor", "without confirmation," and "what is believed to be good authority" in the clipping kept on file.

The publication of news such as quoted above would have had embarrassing local effects, for the bishop already had an academy for girls in Laramie.

Just a few years earlier Edward Ivinson, pioneer merchant and banker of Laramie, had turned his mansion and carriage house, together with the entire city block they rested upon, to the bishop and the Episcopal Church. The property was to become "The Jane Ivinson Memorial Hall, The Cathedral School for Girls," and was intended primarily to serve girls from isolated ranching areas. The girls attended the University school, lived at "Ivinson Hall," as it was later, and more popularly called, and there received not only living quarters and supervision, but religious training and the "social graces" as well.

Ivinson had made the gift, but had not given title to the property. At the age of 93 Ivinson remarried and, according to Bishop Thomas' correspondence, his new wife, when she discovered that



the deed had not been conveyed to the church, "stripped the house not only of its furniture, but of its electrical fixtures, cellar equipment and carpets." To replace all this and do other remodeling cost over \$21,000. Mrs. Thomas gave \$7,000 in cash plus a good deal of furniture from her own home. The balance was borrowed and by October, 1923, the banks wanted their money. The bishop turned to Mrs. Harriman and others for the funds to liquidate the loan. Whether or not the story of the million-dollar seminary brought this crisis to such a level can only be conjectured.<sup>10</sup>

By December the bishop was able to turn again to his radio station. KFBU's license was renewed and permission was given by the radio inspector in Seattle to transmit experimentally before 10 a.m. or after midnight.

To replace Warner Crosby the bishop turned again to the University of Wyoming and enlisted the services of Earl R. Witzel, instructor of applied electricity and mechanics. It was under Witzel's operation that KFBU went on the air regularly with a power of 25 watts.

The first broadcast of a church service took place on February 17, 1924. The sermon was delivered by the Very Rev. William Scarlett, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis. A second sermon was preached in the evening by Dean Thornberry of St. Matthew's Cathedral.

One response to the initial program was sufficient to revive the enthusiasm of the bishop measurably. Dr. and Mrs. Eager at the Kansas State Hospital, Topeka, wrote to the bishop the following day inquiring about the station and asking for programs and times since "We are kept pretty close here attending the sick . . . and it is such a treat and so enjoyable when we can 'tune in' to your good programs . . . and spend a restful evening after our day's work is done."

The bishop quickly wrote to Frank Burrage as his publicity chairman for radio broadcasting<sup>11</sup> to take a more direct hand in the broadcasts.

I wish you would get in touch with the Mayor<sup>12</sup> and find out what publicity he wishes given to secular week day programs, which I think he now has in hand. May I also suggest that you act instead of Prof. Witzel as the publicist (i.e. announcer). Word has reached me that he is a little too lengthy in his announcements.

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10. Mrs. Harriman did not furnish the money. A grant from hard-pressed Episcopal Church headquarters eased the burden of this and other obligations early in 1924. Wyoming's economy and its banks were also in trouble this year.

11. Burrage was also editor and publisher of the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*.

12. Thurman Arnold.

The letter continued with such niceties as suggesting to Burrage that when hymns were announced not only was the number in the Episcopal hymnal to be given, but the corresponding numbers in the Methodist, Presbyterian and Lutheran as well so that “people can take down the numbers, get their own Hymn Books and have a part in the service.” The bishop also suggested a signal system using flashlights so that the choir could be cued to come into the Cathedral after all these announcements had been made by the “publicist.” Another long memorandum was directed to his executive secretary, Robert Horne, to arrange for programs on public health, agricultural information, weather reports, book reviews (by a professor at the University), music and lastly a chairman of a committee on lectures “so as to capture any famous person in town,” including political speakers since this was a presidential campaign year.

The bishop went on the air on March 2, preaching on a regular Sunday broadcast, and again the following Wednesday evening, it being Ash Wednesday. Some days later the bishop wrote to Witzel to say that he had received a letter from Dixon, Wyoming, to the effect that broadcasts from Texas could be received, but not from Laramie. He wondered if the “aerial is right for broadcasting in our own territory.”

He sought Witzel’s advice on moving the location, erecting two aerials “with counterpoises if necessary.”<sup>13</sup> In conclusion he wrote:

I do not like to throw good money after bad, but on the other hand as we are using our radio at the present time I do not believe it justifies the original expense nor the labor you are putting into it. My feeling is that we should greatly improve our service or abandon it. I am not however temperamentally so constituted as to abandon anything that I once take hold of.

Witzel was sympathetic. A new 500-watt station would cost about \$10,000 but he felt that he could sell some of the present equipment, add new parts to increase the power and build a new antenna placed in such a way that the signal would be stronger in Wyoming. The cost of this would be about \$2,500. He also noted that KFBU was occasionally heard in Sheridan, approximately 240 air miles to the north, but only at night. Witzel had a deep concern for KFBU. He advised Bishop Thomas to get a couple of licensed operators who lived in Laramie. His own future was uncertain in that his job was training men from the Veteran’s Bureau, and its contract with the University might not be renewed the following year. Then he added this comment which

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13. A counterpoise is “a network of wires or other conductors connected to the base of an antenna, used as a substitute for the ground connection.” *Random House Dictionary of the English Language.*



may well have been the genesis of the motto which later was used by KFBU:

Another suggestion would be immediate publicity announcing the erection of "The highest broadcasting station in the world . . ." . . . But of course the first thing is the station of sufficient volume such that it will be a pleasure to listen to rather than the Banjo Kids, etc.

Witzel also assured the bishop that he "would operate your set for one Sunday service each week without charge for my time and keep the storage batteries properly charged during the summer."<sup>14</sup>

The broadcasting continued with Witzel working to improve the existing equipment. Readers of *The Wyoming Churchman* saw more frequent reference to the Cathedral radio station. The Easter services had been heard at nearby ranches. The University winners in academic contests came to the studio and performed their winning speeches, vocal and instrumental selections. Several persons phoned in to say they had received this program. In November the Red Cross cause was publicized by KFBU. The students at the Episcopalian Club in Laramie rendered a program of college songs and yells and also a vesper service every Sunday.

The greatest outreach of all occurred at Christmas when the midnight service at the Cathedral was picked up by a listener in Montclair, New Jersey, who wrote a card to Witzel.

The *Laramie Republican-Boomerang* carried the story and observed:

This is the farthest which these services have been heard, to the knowledge of Mr. Witzel, and is a very great distance, considering the size of the station, which seems to prove that the altitude of this city is an aid to long-distance transmission.<sup>15</sup>

The bishop had been "in the east" speaking on the missionary work of "his Church," from mid-September through December 4. It seems quite likely that during this period the bishop met Mrs. Harriman again. Personal contact and conversation (for there are no letters to or from Mrs. Harriman in the files), Witzel's cost estimate for a new broadcasting plant, the bishop's determination not to "abandon anything that I once take hold of," and the recollection that KFBU once aided the Union Pacific Railroad, combined to bring forth a suitable response from the wealthy benefactress. KFBU and the bishop of Wyoming were on the threshold of an almost unbelievable new year.

#### GIFTS, HOPE, TRAGEDY AND REBIRTH

The year 1925 was undoubtedly the zenith of Nathaniel S. Thomas' tenure as bishop of Wyoming. The Convocation of the

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14. Letter of April 25, 1924.

15. Reprinted in the *Wyoming Churchman*, February, 1925, p. 5.



Missionary District of Wyoming met in Casper on February 11 and 12. St. Mark's, the host church, was the largest parish in the district, and had just completed and opened a new \$120,000 church. Designed by the bishop's "favorite" architect, Walter H. Thomas of Philadelphia, the bishop described it as "the finest parish church west of the Allegheny Mountains."<sup>16</sup>

In this setting the bishop could, and did, communicate to the representatives of his jurisdiction some dramatic information.

So 1925 Convocation's note was one of joy and thankfulness for notable material achievement . . . Bishop Thomas, in his address, announced the other good news. The munificent gift of \$200,000 for the erection of Sherwood Hall by Mrs. Mary Sherwood Blodgett; the gift of \$15,000 by Charles B. Voorhis for the erection of a dormitory for Iverson Hall; the gift to enlarge the Cathedral broadcasting station KFBU from 25-watt to 500-watt power; the erection and dedication of the Memorial Peace Cross in the Cathedral Square at Laramie; the purchase of a residence for the student pastor at Laramie at a cost of \$12,000; the progress of the drive for \$50,000 for the Cathedral Home for Children at Laramie, were the details of the cause for praise and thanks to God for His blessings in splendid achievement of the past year and for future plans. With devout thankfulness Convocation sang its Gloria in Excelsis at the great opening service of its sessions.<sup>17</sup>

The bishop apparently did not sing the public praise of Mrs. Harriman. A brief article in the same issue of the *Wyoming Churchman* identified the donor simply as Mrs. Edward Harriman. No further reason or identification was given. In his correspondence, however, he referred on February 18 to the situation:

Mrs. Harriman has given me \$12,000 for a new 500-watt broadcasting station, so 1925 has been a wonderfully memorable year, as indeed it ought to be as it is the sixteenth-hundredth anniversary of the Council of Nicea.<sup>18</sup>

Later, in May and June, he said much the same in letters to Will Coe, but it was more or less in passing as he was pressing Coe for the \$25,000 to match what was being raised locally for the Cathedral Home and was being gallant about Coe's unsuccessful effort to have him elected as bishop of Long Island. With the year unfolding in such promising fashion the bishop could be casual about the possibility of a translation to the eastern seaboard.

It may now be apparent that KFBU was only one of several items claiming the bishop's attention in 1925. It consisted of only

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16. The *Wyoming Churchman*, March, 1925, p. 1

17. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

18. Letter to Grace Scoville, 10 East 52nd Street, New York, February 18, 1925, Miss Scoville was one of the bishop's major underwriters for favorite projects large and small. Together with William Robertson Coe and Charles B. Voorhis, Miss Scoville was a member of the trio of contributors to whom the bishop immediately turned when a new plan came to mind.



a part of a greater dream to provide a religious, academic and cultural complex in the city of Laramie, Wyoming, most of it centered on a square block in the downtown area where the cathedral stood. The dreams were acquiring some substance and Laramie was not unaware. Editor Burrage of the *Republican-Boomerang* printed the following editorial:

The announcement in this evening's *Republican Boomerang* of the immediate construction of Sherwood Hall on the Cathedral Square, following so closely upon the other improvements contemplated by Bishop Thomas—these building operations, coupled with those already noted in these columns in the way of commercial buildings and houses, are a splendid indication that the wonderful record made by Laramie in 1924 is likely to be surpassed in 1925 . . .

In this connection a word of appreciation should be expressed to Bishop Thomas for his activities in this line. Not only is Bishop Thomas a man of vision, a man who builds as much for the future as for the immediate present, but he is also one of those rare men who combine with his vision the ability to translate his dreams into realities. Many a man can build great air castles, plans which look well on paper and sound well when described, but most of us when it comes to turning these dream children into brick and stone do not get beyond the first steps of enthusiasm. Not so the Bishop. Convinced of the feasibility of his schemes he is able to make others see them from his own viewpoint and, since those he selects to help him have the means to do so, it is indeed a happy outcome that attends his efforts . . .<sup>19</sup>

The bishop, since the February convocation, had already taken one extended trip to St. Louis and New Orleans. Now he departed for a series of confirmation visitations in the state which found him in a different community in Wyoming virtually daily from March 21 to May 25. While he was on this demanding itinerary further news was released. Charles B. Voorhis "of Kenosha, Wis. and Dubois, Wyo.," in addition to previously announced gifts, was now giving a \$30,000 organ to St. Matthew's Cathedral. This was a delayed announcement according to the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang* as quoted in *The Wyoming Churchman*:<sup>20</sup>

This became known to a member of the *Republican-Boomerang* staff some time before the visit here a week or two ago of Ernest S. Skinner . . . one of the world's leading authorities on organ building, but at the request of certain church officials, was not published at the time, pending completion of the arrangements.

“. . . the specifications were drawn up by Mr. Skinner, in conjunc-

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19. *Laramie Republican Boomerang*, March 20, 1925.

20. April, 1925, p. 6. The interviewee in the second paragraph was William Green, formerly an organist at York Minster, England. Bishop Thomas met him in Rome in 1923 and arranged to have him come to Laramie. He planned to have Green become principal organist at the Cathedral and teach at the University. The Cathedral Vestry and the University were not amenable to these plans, and Green was made principal of Sherwood Hall. This was not suitable, and Green later left for a post in Michigan.





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Concerning Horn's credentials, the article stated:

Mr. Horn supervised the construction and was the operator at the famous Westinghouse broadcasting station, KYW, in Chicago, up until the first of May, when George S. Walker, president of the Western Radio Corporation, secured his services to construct and operate KFAF.<sup>22</sup>

A photograph with the story shows Horn to be a young man of studious demeanor wearing pince-nez glasses. It was this expert who came to Laramie to construct the enlarged KFBU.

The bishop, meantime, was enroute to another general convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in New Orleans. Characteristically, he traveled there via Cleveland, Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D. C., visiting seminaries, attending a wedding—very likely—calling on his financial friends, Coe, Miss Scoville and, possibly, Mrs. Harriman.

Three years earlier the bishop had been in attendance at a similar church convention when the original KFBU was being built and the incident of Warner Crosby's emergency message paved the way for the construction of the improved KFBU.

Now a second dramatic incident followed the first, just three years (lacking a week) later. On October 29, Elden Horn was electrocuted while installing KFBU's new generators.

Elden F. Horn, aged 26, a native of Chicago and the business partner of Bernard L. White of Denver in the Mountain States Radio Distributing Company of that city, was instantly killed Tuesday night, October 29th, at 10:50, while adding the finishing touches to the radio broadcasting station at St. Matthew's cathedral.

. . . The body of Mr. Horn received the full shock of 7,500 high volts, 1,080 kilocycles, and he perhaps never knew just what had happened . . .

Mr. Horn, although still a very young man, was considered one of the most eminent radio engineers in the United States. He refused an offer of \$8,000 a year to join with Mr. White in the installation of the Cathedral plant, and was immensely proud of it and the completeness of every detail . . .

The funds for the installation were contributed by Mrs. E. H. Harriman, widow of the long-time president of the Union Pacific, who took this means of showing her appreciation of the good work being done in the Missionary District of Wyoming, Protestant Episcopal Church. The station has been heralded as a complete installation of many of the newer and most approved appliances for successful radio-casting. It would have been placed in service immediately following the tests, to have been completed last night. The death of Mr. Horn will not hinder this, however, those in charge being in a position to complete all the plans as at first laid out.<sup>23</sup>

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22. News clipping with pencilled notation "Denver Post," in Thomas scrapbook, page 251.

23. Reprinted in *The Wyoming Churchman*, November, 1925, p. 12 from the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*.

Details of the tragedy were sent to Bishop Thomas by Archdeacon Balcom on October 31:

My dear Bishop Thomas:

The enclosed clipping will give you a fairly accurate description of the terrible accident which occurred in the radio room of the Cathedral on the night of October 29th, Mr. Horn's father came up from Denver yesterday morning, but almost immediately drove his son's car back so that he might be with his wife. Unfortunately, I learned nothing of the accident until noon. As I went home for lunch I stopped in at the radio room to deliver a transmitter part and some mail to Mr. Horn. At the same time the manager of the telegraph office was looking for him. I chatted with him for a while and then went on home. Neither of us knew anything about the accident. Shortly after noon the doctor<sup>24</sup> who was in attendance called me under the impression that I had called him. He first gave me the information. I was then summoned by the coroner, who made an investigation, and listened to the account of Tucker.<sup>25</sup> Tucker, himself, did a very heroic thing which is not sufficiently set forth in the enclosed article. It seems that Horn had warned him that the wires were loaded, then himself, in a moment of mental apparition (*sic*) rested his elbow on a bolt head which fastens the switchboard to the frame, and put his hand on one of the large fifty watt transmitter tubes. Tucker was standing at some little distance from him and saw his hand break out with fire. In spite of the fact that he might have been killed himself (Tucker) leapt to his rescue and pulled him off the board. He (Horn) stood for a moment, his fingers half closed as if he were holding a baseball, brought his left hand around and placed it under his right hand, raised his head and looked at Tucker, and then fell over to the floor—dead. Horn was an unusually nice little fellow. I had stopped him several times to see if I could be of help to him. He was tremendously enthusiastic about the plant and delighted to show the various little tricks through which he had brought about improvements. The same evening he was killed he had arranged a revolt (*sic*) control in the radio room by means of which the generator could be shut off. As he finished this piece of work he remarked "There is no danger of anyone being electrocuted now." I have written to his father that we are greatly distressed that no one in your office knew of the sad accident, for though we could have been of no use to his son, we might have been able to be of some service to him. I am ordering some floors (*sic*) sent to the address in Denver, in your name, thinking that would be your desire.

Sincerely yours.

It is evident that Balcom, who dictated this, and the secretary who transcribed it, were still rather shaken by the event. The Reverend Franklin Smith, editor of *The Wyoming Churchman*, paid tribute to Horn in the December, 1925 issue:<sup>26</sup>

One day this writer watched the radio engineer at work on the

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24. Dr. H. E. McCollum. He arrived within ten minutes of the accident. Details in the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*, October 31, 1925, p. 1.

25. Ross Tucker, "head of a local electrical store, in the Lastra Block." *Ibid.*

26. Page 17.



installation. Young Elden Horn had made a name for himself already. He had the true scientific idealism that has made possible the world's progress, that scorn of material interest that is ever the mark of the world's higher life. So he declined a flattering commercial post to install the Cathedral station.

"It is for the Church of God," said the young engineer, "and I am going to put my best into it."

He did. He put his life into it. Like the soldier's epitaph may be written of Elden Horn: "Died in the line of duty."

If Cathedral Station KFBU lives up to its traditions, how great its future for service.

Horn's devotion to the station was no editorial fancy. *The Wyoming Churchman* noted:

E. C. Page, consulting radio engineer, who was employed by the estate of the late E. F. Horn to complete KFBU, is returning to Chicago on January 28, after having turned over the station to young (George) Walker. It was necessary for the Horn estate to send to Chicago to obtain an engineer to complete the design and construct KFBU, which, it may be added, has been done very successfully.<sup>27</sup>

KFBU did run its tests and was ready on schedule for its official opening on December 10 as the description which opened this study affirms. An appropriate editorial appeared in the *Republican-Boomerang* on the eve of the inaugural broadcast. It reveals that the slogan "the top-o'-the world station" had already been "coined" and that millions who had never heard of Laramie and Wyoming would learn of it through the broadcasting station.

The editorial concluded by recognizing the role of Mrs. Harriman:

Here in the topmost city on the great railroad which her late distinguished husband made into the finest transportation system in the United States, and that means the world, how fitting it is that this unique and different memorial of their names should have its abiding place.<sup>28</sup>

To this point no one had put in print the relationship between the averted wreck in 1922 and the gift of Mrs. Harriman. The drama of it all was to be reserved for the bishop who, in the course of the formal opening broadcast "delivered a brief address, giving the history . . . of the broadcasting station."<sup>29</sup>

There exists in the diocesan files the first sheet of what must have been the bishop's remarks that evening. It begins:

The Venerable Royal H. Balcom, Archdeacon of Wyoming, has suggested to me that I tell you the story of the Radio Station being opened tonight in Laramie, "the top of the world."

Last winter we had a small station in the Cathedral whose cross

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27. February, 1926, p. 21.

28. *The Laramie Republican-Boomerang*, December 9, 1925.

29. *The Wyoming Churchman*, December, 1925, p. 3.



lifts its head higher than any cross set in any city of this country, and were somewhat interested in broadcasting. One night there came a terrible blizzard. . . .

In approximately 300 words the bishop summarized the situation, his recounting the episode to Mrs. Harriman in New York, and her promise to foot the bill for the expanded station facilities. He concluded:

Elton (*sic*) F. Horn, the gloriously talented young man who was testing out the machine he had built, was electrocuted. All of the great undertakings in the world have been paid for in human life. And so it has been with this station, K.F.B.U. This radio station which saved hundreds of lives by forestalling a gigantic wreck, has taken this beautiful young life.<sup>30</sup>

This vignette, recopied and slightly rewritten by the bishop and others, had an interesting life of its own which will be examined later.

But now the way was open to publicize the "new" KFBU. The January issue of *The Wyoming Churchman* carried on its cover a photograph of Governor Nellie Tayloe Ross in the KFBU studio. On the right stands Otto Gramm, chairman of the committee for the occasion. On the left are Archdeacon Balcom and Bishop Thomas.

Inside are two entire pages devoted to the reporting of the December broadcast and several other specials which preceded and followed. Some 500 letters had been received from listeners before the publication date of this issue. The programs had been heard "from Chicago to Winnipeg, from Vancouver to San Diego, and from El Paso to St. Louis."

A member of the U.S. Marine Band who caught the broadcast in San Diego wrote to call "attention to the excellence of the music by the Empress orchestra, particularly the bass viol;" but a listener in Eugene, Oregon, stated that he failed "to catch the best the piano could do, and said it sounded like a piano tuner at work."

In a note from an admirer at El Centro, Calif., it was mentioned that the message from the "top o' the world" came through to El Centro, "the bottom o' the world," Laramie being over 7,000 feet above sea level and that California city, in the Imperial Valley, being 57 feet below sea level. The writer heard the slogan, heard the orchestra playing, heard the piano, heard people talking in the room, and wondered at the marvelous science of it all.<sup>31</sup>

Among the early responses to KFBU was a very tangible one from the Charles E. Wells Music Company of Denver. The Colorado concern made a gift of a Chickering grand piano to the Laramie station—so that the piano music would run less risk of

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30. The full text appears in Appendix A.

31. *The Wyoming Churchman*, January, 1926, p. 6



sounding like a piano tuner at work. The news story was headed by the fact that Bishop Thomas had just "returned from Denver," which is not without its significance.<sup>32</sup>

The programming included educational and cultural offerings as well. Dr. Sam Knight of the University geology department lectured on "Time, Space and Speed." The University chorus and orchestra broadcast Handel's "Messiah" in its entirety on Sunday, December 20, by remote facilities from the University gymnasium. Wide response greeted this effort, with the extremes reported next day by the *Republican Boomerang*:

High tribute for "The Messiah," as sung at the University gym yesterday afternoon by a chorus of 150 men and women, comes from the Medicine Bow in the shape of a telegram to KFBU radio station from the "Bucket of Blood Saloon." The telegram reads:

"Program came in fine. None of the boys moved for two hours."

From Denver also came warm warm praise by telegraph. Mrs. Smith, wife of the artist who sang the tenor solos, was the sender of this message.

Both Mrs. Smith and the patrons of the "Bucket of Blood" had heard "The Messiah" as the result of KFBU broadcasting, which rather eloquently shows, among other things, the great breadth and scope of radio, not alone in the matter of distance, but in diversity of audience.

#### "NORMAL" OPERATION - AND SIDELIGHTS

With the literal craze developing over radio the habits of a nation were changing sharply. The value of transmitting religious services over the air brought conflicting viewpoints. *The Wyoming Churchman* carried two articles about this problem. One, included in the February, 1925, number was entitled "Radio Religion" by the Reverend R. B. Grobb. Grobb was not a Wyoming clergyman and his article was probably a part of a religious news service available to the *Wyoming Churchman*.

Grobb examined both sides of the question reasonably fairly. He conceded that radio could tap those who never went to church, and radio might well be the threshold over which the church might be moving into an era of fruitful service. But he also pointed out that the renowned preachers and superb music heard on radio would also have the effect of making the local church, choir and minister, appear to be rather mediocre.

He observed that one great drawback was the inability of the listener to truly participate in or contribute to such worship. He stated in conclusion that "devotion may attend a radio congregation, but the chances that it will not figure very largely."<sup>33</sup>

A more favorable judgment was offered by the Very Reverend

32. *The Wyoming Churchman*, January, 1926, p. 19.

33. *The Wyoming Churchman*, February, 1925, pp. 10-11.



Paul Roberts, dean of St. Michael's Cathedral, Boise, Idaho, in the pages of the *Churchman* two issues later. Some excerpts:

... We have had a broadcasting outfit . . . for about a year and a half<sup>34</sup> . . . Whether it satisfies people or keeps them away from the church it is difficult to say . . . But there is no apparent decrease in the attendance at the Cathedral and I find absolutely no disposition on the part of people who have been regular church-goers to stay away and be satisfied at home . . .

A few weeks ago one of our most faithful communicants, confined to her bed for seven or eight weeks and eager to hear the services and sermons was satisfied. We took a small crystal set into her room, attached it to the bed spring upon which she was lying for an aerial and to the radiator for a ground and since then, lying in bed, she has heard the entire services . . .

. . . In the long run . . . its value in scattering the seed can never be calculated as it reaches out into the sick rooms and hospitals, into the lonely mining camps or ranger stations, into the isolated lives on many a farm far from any church building . . . lodges there and grows up to bear abundant fruit.<sup>35</sup>

If Bishop Thomas had any question in his own mind it is fair to assume that he would have agreed with Dean Roberts. In any event, following the triumphant beginning—or second beginning—Engineer Page prepared a mimeographed form letter which was sent to all correspondents of KFBU with its program schedule.

Religious services or programs were scheduled for Sundays from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 to 11 p.m. Mondays and Fridays from 9 to 11 p.m. were for "secular" programs. Saturday was reserved for testing from midnight to 1 a.m. The initial thrust of KFBU was largely oriented to the religious and educational fields, as Archdeacon Balcom reported in a prospectus which outlined the aims of KFBU. Also he spoke of plans to provide weather reports daily, ("This alone should bring to the cattle and sheep industries of the state a saving of many hundreds of thousands of dollars.") and that the University would be responsible for one program each week.

Our primary consideration in religious broadcasting is to reach the unchurched people in the state of Wyoming.

. . . It is the intention of the station to build up a vast radio congregation who will . . . enroll as members of KFBU's congregation. The whole program for the station is broad and comprehensive. There is no particular interest in sending out a particular brand of Protestant

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34. This would suggest that the Idaho Cathedral preceded Wyoming's in having a broadcasting station. However, one suspects that it had a more placid existence than did KFBU. Dean Roberts ended his active ministry at St. John's Cathedral, Denver, and as speaker at a Religious Emphasis Week at the University of Wyoming, strongly moved the writer to consider entering the Ministry.

35. *The Wyoming Churchman*, April, 1925, p. 20.



Episcopalianism, and from time to time there will be heard from the station voices of clergymen other than our own.<sup>36</sup>

Balcom noted that already the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and Baptist pastors or laymen had agreed to cooperate. Receipted bills for remote control charges in the KFBU files indicate that this ecumenical project was actually earned out . . . even to the extent of remote broadcasts from other Laramie churches.

When "Radio News," a New York-based magazine wrote KFBU on November 21, 1927, to learn "of your experience with radio as a means of spreading religious enlightenment" for an article it was preparing on the subject, Director Smith gave the following evaluation:

Our religious broadcast includes a daily noon-day Chapel Service . . . and the broadcast of the Sunday morning service from the Cathedral, also. In addition to this a movement was started last year known as the Radio Church which included a week night religious service with a question box. We found quite an interest in responses from our hearers. Many questions were sent in for answer by people evidently seeking information. It is our opinion that our religious broadcast is appreciated by a great number of people, but the formal broadcast of a religious service is not as effective as the more informal and personal character of what is called the "Radio Church."

The expansive feelings generated by early success resulted in a resolution by the members of the Cathedral Chapter concerning the station. The archdeacon's report had been submitted to them and they responded by adopting the following:

Whereas, the Cathedral broadcasting station, KFBU, a foundation made possible by the generosity of Mrs. E. H. Harriman, being now in effective operation, be it

Resolved, That in view of the privilege thus offered this Diocese by the possession of a large and completely equipped radio broadcasting station, and of the great possibilities for usefulness of this agency in furthering the work of the Kingdom of God, the Cathedral Chapter thankfully approves the same, and endorses the inclusion in the budget of the District of a sum necessary for its operating expenses.<sup>37</sup>

The words were more encouraging than the results proved to be. The archdeacon, replying to an inquiry from the Chamber of Commerce at Minot, North Dakota, stated that the station cost about \$2,500 a year to operate. The money never came easily and KFBU was not licensed as a commercial station.

One amusing incident illustrates the struggling state of KFBU as late as 1928. On April 23 of that year a sharp letter was sent to KFBU; *Attention Bishop Thomas*. The writer, Hugo B. Anderson, resident counsel for the American Society of Com-

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36. *The Wyoming Churchman*, February, 1926, p. 9.

37. *The Wyoming Churchman*, February, 1926, p. 6.





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D. Walker) and one-half of operating costs was concluded. This was happily reported to Mrs. Harriman in a letter from the bishop on March 11, 1927.

But this solution merely raised another problem. The University shared the costs, but also used the radio more than before, and frequently by remote broadcast from the University itself. This imposed a strain on KFBU's microphones, and extra equipment was required. The bishop sought to explain this to Mrs. Harriman:

The (Our) station was not equipped in the first place for such a load of remote control, with the result that switching so heavy a voltage from one microphone to another without the instruments to lessen the shock which, I understand, has much the same effect as springs have under a motor car, our microphone has become "packed,"—a word I do not understand, but which, the Operator tells me, is well known. I am inclosing you his letter.

Would you be willing to add to the equipment of this station the apparatus which Mr. George Walker, our operating engineer says we need . . . ?<sup>38</sup>

A week later the bishop wrote again. The letter was typewritten, but on a different machine, suggesting that the bishop typed it himself. At the end he apologizes for this but giving as a reason that Mrs. Harriman could read it better and that it was a business letter. It opened:

March 18, 1927

My dear Mrs. Harriman:

Your telegram arrived this morning and stirred us to the quick, it read: "Bishop Thomas, Laramie, Wyoming. Order additional equipment but do not try to encompass the world. . . ."

As it was, KFBU had difficulty enough in trying to encompass the state of Wyoming. There was, of course, much interference, particularly in nighttime broadcasting. So, in March, 1927, the station adopted a policy of daytime broadcasting and sent this news with an accompanying schedule to the newspapers of the state.

There was possibly some reluctance over this move as daytime listening was not expected to be too heavy in the "twenties". Presumably everyone would be at work with no time for the radio until evening. A poll of KFBU listeners, however, indicated it would be worth trying. The first daytime broadcasts were lectures which included such titles as "What Constitutes a Good Forage," "How May I Learn to Know the Important Poisonous Plants in My Country?" and "Does Alfalfa Build Up Soil Fertility?". But sure-fire appeal was guaranteed for the week of the state basketball

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38. Letter of March 11, 1927. The carbon copy suggests that there was some indecision over whether to begin the sentence with "The" or "Our." The latter might have been intended to include Mrs. Harriman. On the other hand, it might have appeared that the bishop was over-possessive. Therefore, "The" was substituted.



E

K



**KFBU**

**REGISTERED**

**TRADE MARK**

K

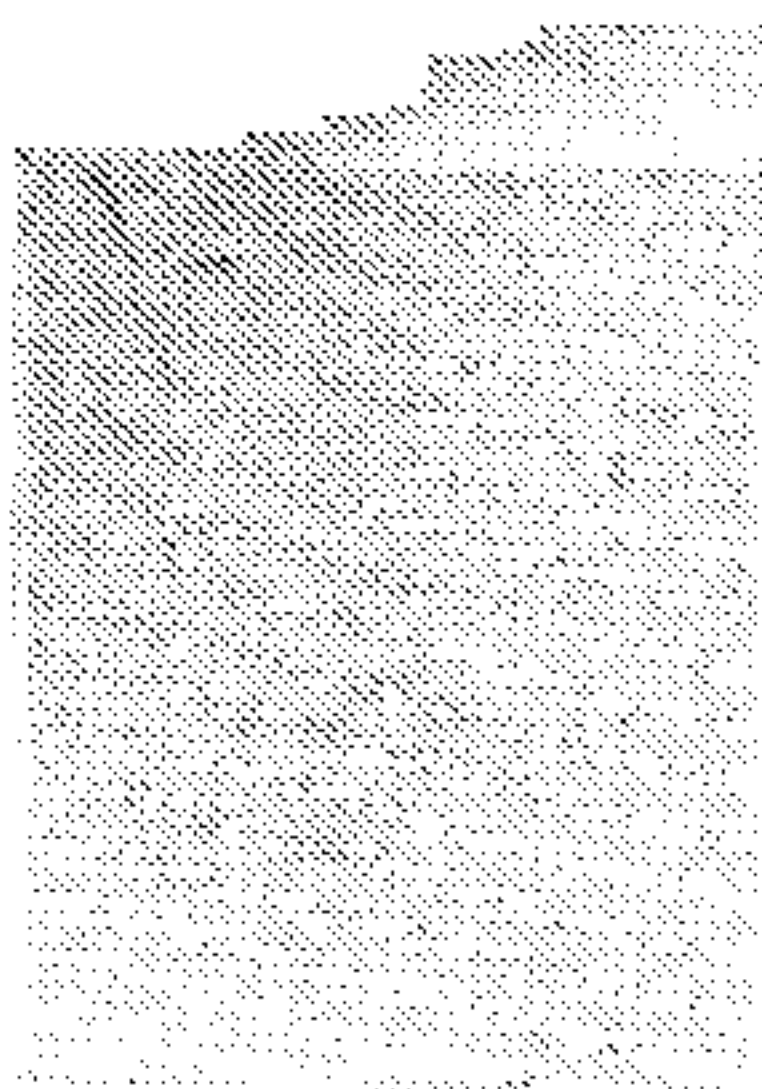
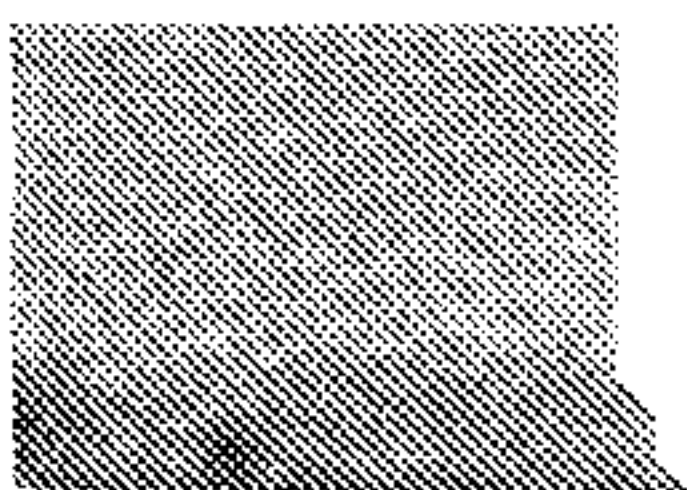
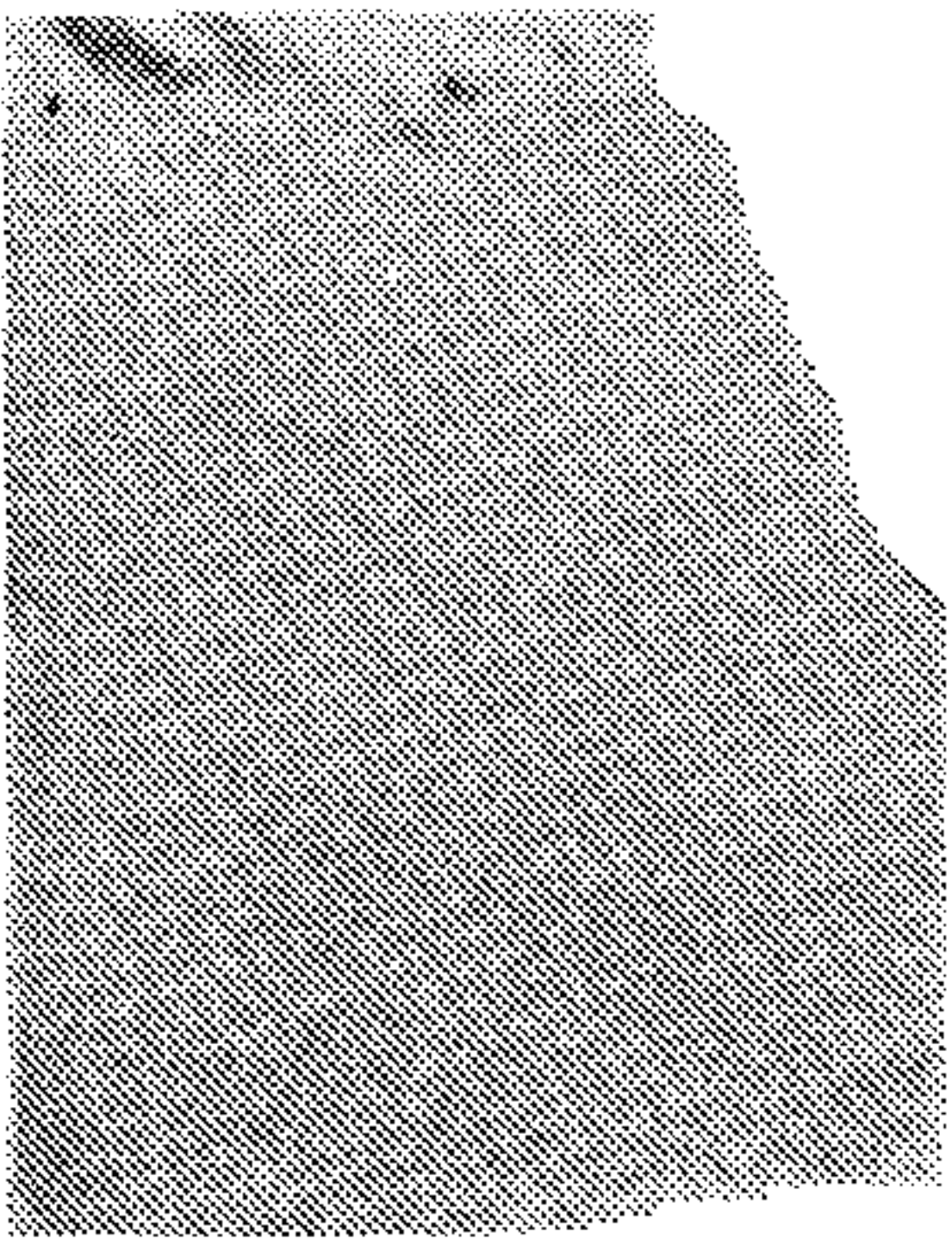
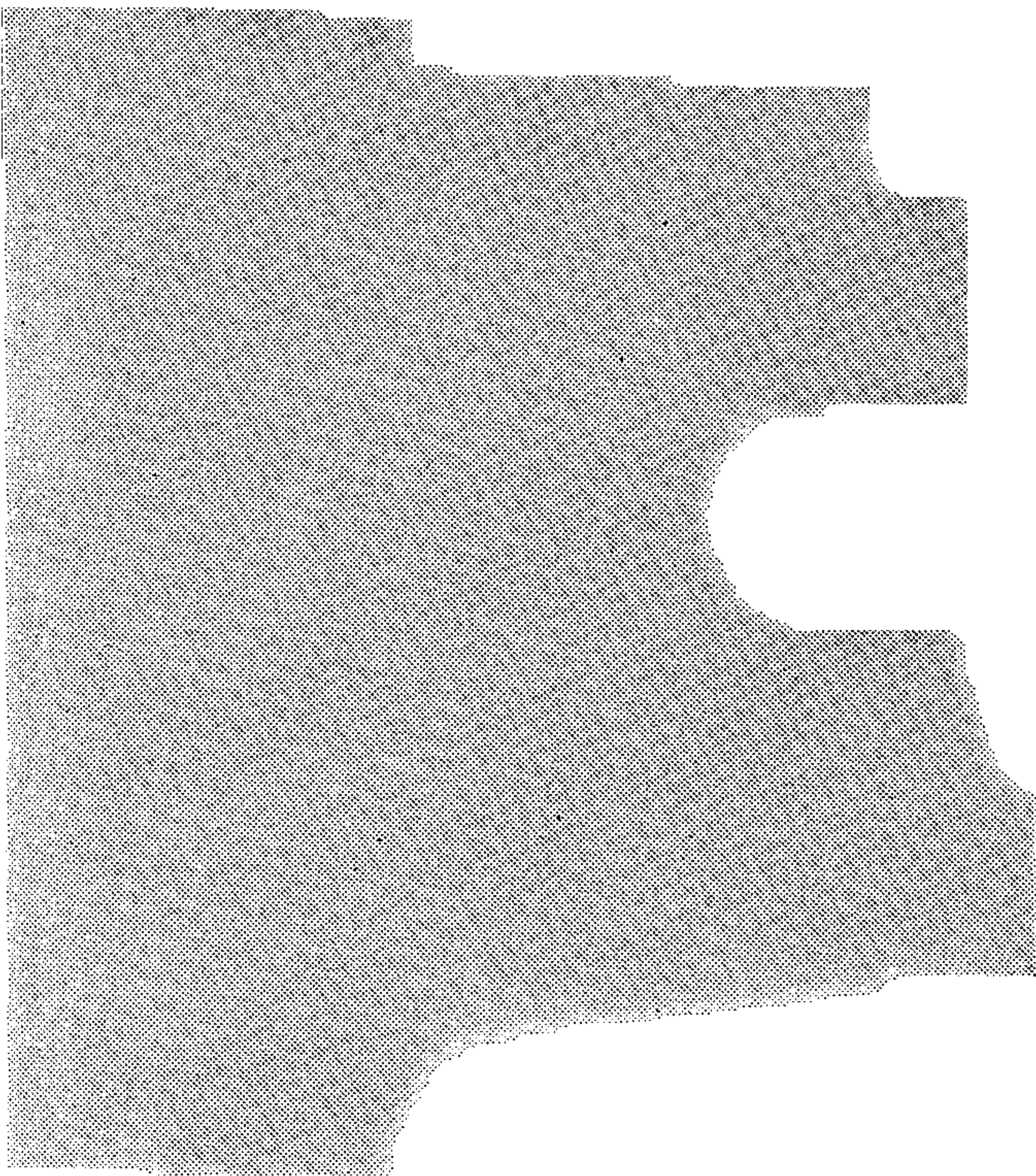
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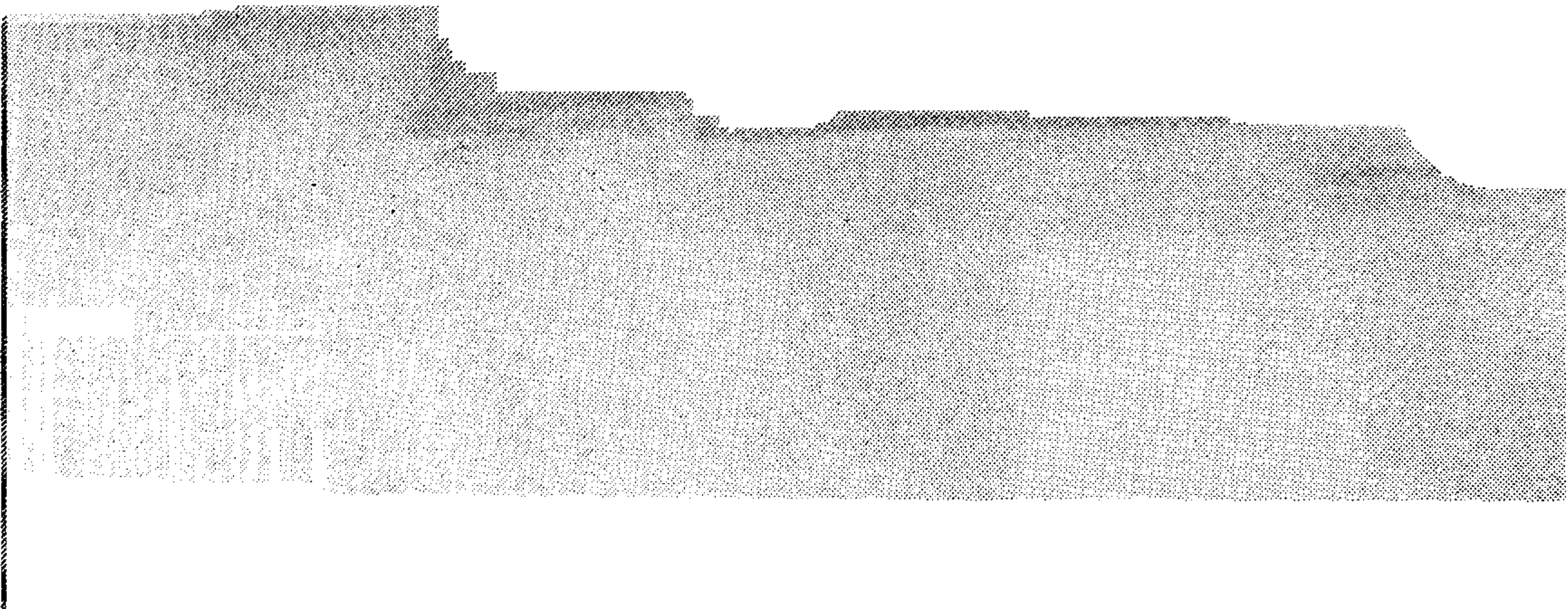
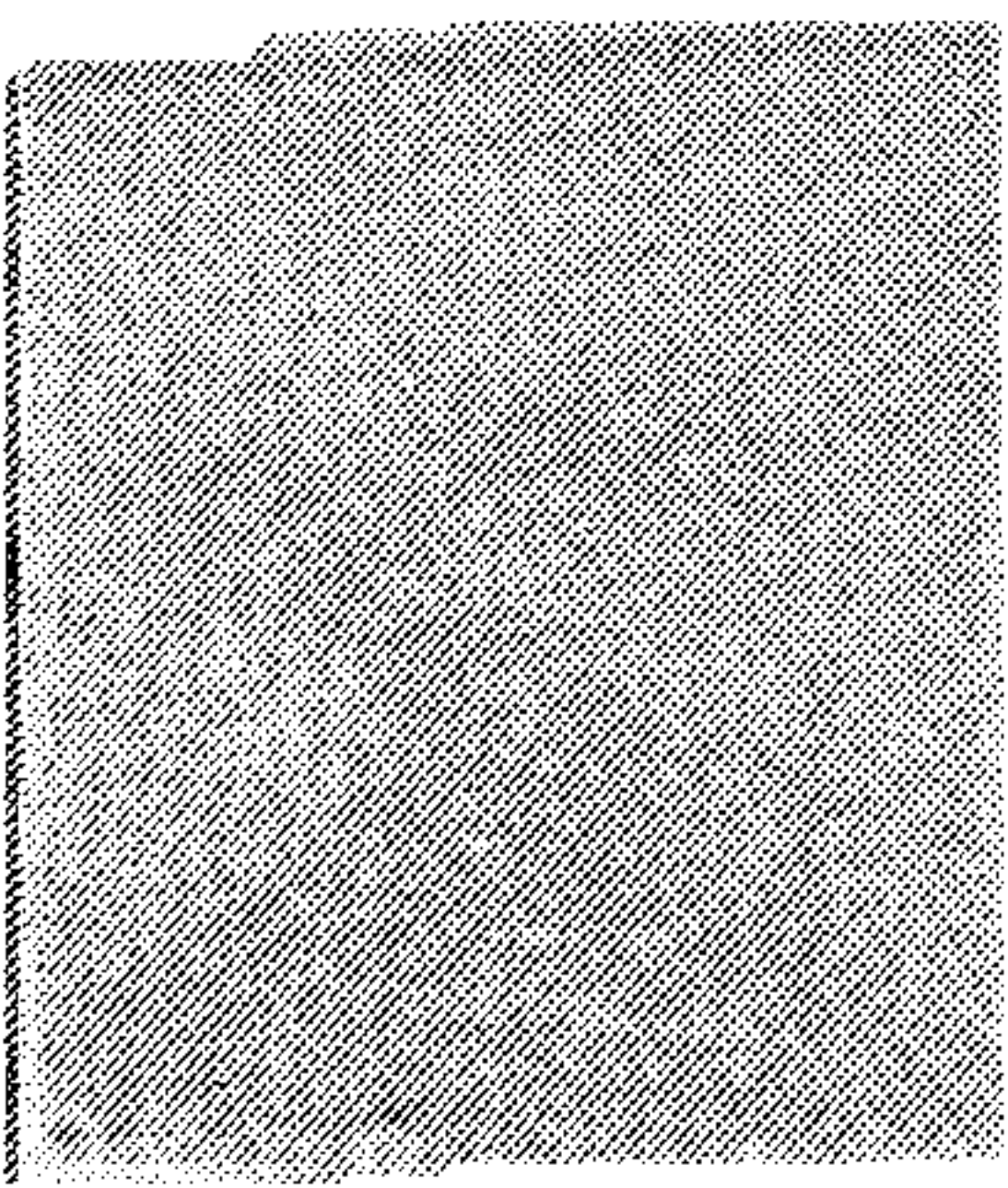
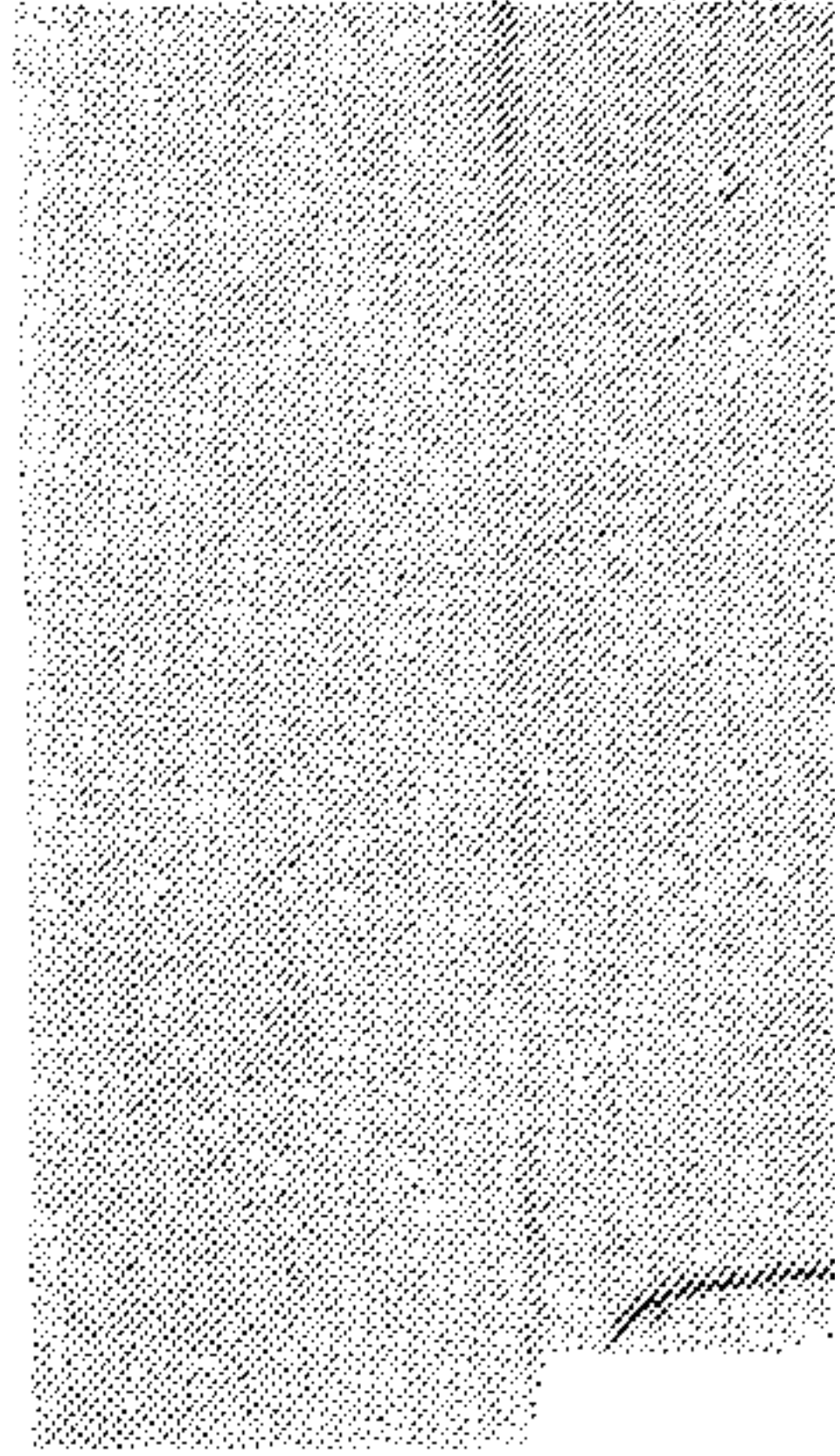
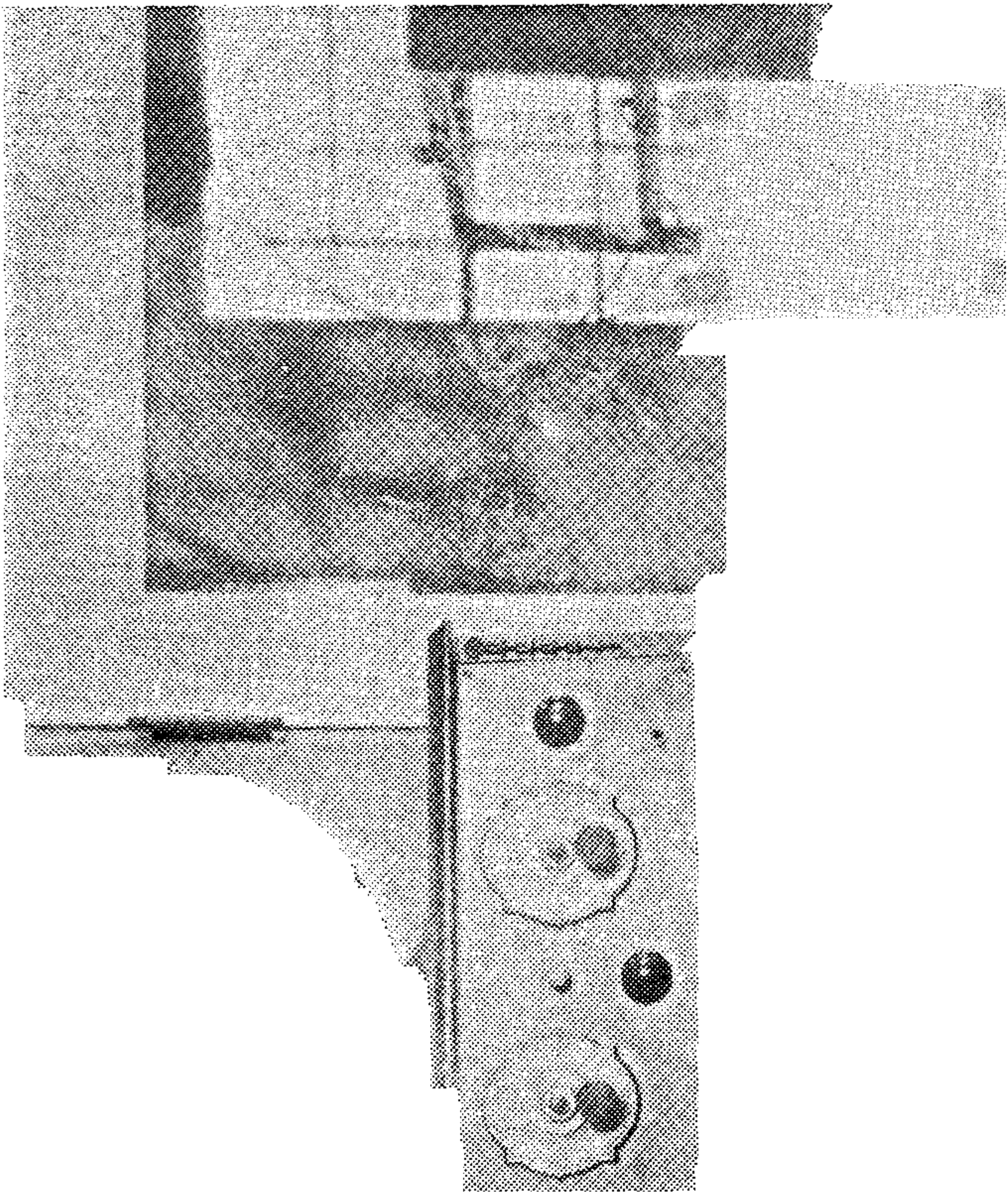
IN THE STUDIO

ted in the basement of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Laramie. Gathered in the studio in this photograph are (l to r) the Rev. Franklin Smith, Stanley Edwards, Marion W. Giesecking, William Reed and Robert Horne.











tournament always held in mid-March. KFBU broadcast the results and standings to date both in the afternoon and evening.

As programs of special interest occurred telegrams were sent to key newspapers through the state which were expected to fashion a news story out of twenty words or less, such as "VESPER MUSICAL SERVICE FEATURE OF MUSIC WEEK WILL BE BROADCAST KFBU SUNDAY MAY FIRST FOUR AFTERNOON." When, on June 21, the citizens of Laramie gave a dinner for Bishop Thomas the speeches were aired on the Cathedral station. The afternoon broadcasts were presumably upgraded when KFBU subscribed to a service provided by the Department of Agriculture. Scripts for several series were offered, and of these, "Housekeeper's Chat" and "Special Farm Features, Young Folks' Program" were selected.

The Harriman gift of additional equipment greatly improved the ability of the engineers to quickly tune the proper frequency and hold it once it was set. In reporting these enrichments *The Wyoming Churchman*, keenly aware of the past, added this:

The removal of all parts of the transmitter having high voltage to the back of the panel will practically eliminate the danger of electrocution to the operators or others.<sup>39</sup>

In September the remote facilities of KFBU were taken to Cheyenne to cover a banquet given there in honor of Colonel Charles Lindbergh. The air hero's speech was broadcast "live" to launch a series of fall programs following a cut-back during the summer to a daily chapel service from the Cathedral at noon.

The favorable image of KFBU was tarnished in October as a result of the poor publicity accruing from the Atwater Kent contest. As this national contest was planned, each state was to hold a vocal talent contest to be broadcast by a radio station in that state, the winners there to go on to regional, then national competitions. Voting by those who listened to the broadcast, as well as by six judges in the studio, was to determine the winners in each state. The audition in Wyoming was to take place on October 26, 1927. Chairman for Wyoming was Mrs. James Mackay of Cheyenne, who was also choir director for St. Mark's Episcopal Church there. The contest, when broadcast, did not cover the state at all well, and a decision was made to choose the winners solely on points awarded by the judges present for the audition.

Mrs. Mackay, in reporting all this to the *Wyoming State Tribune*, was quoted in that newspaper on November 4 as saying "Owing to the fact that the radio was not received in any part of the state the Atwater Kent Foundation authorized that no mailed votes or Little Theater votes should be counted . . ." Director Franklin

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39. September, 1927, p. 3.



Smith was furious. He wrote the *Tribune*, Mrs. Mackay, and every state newspaper which had picked up the story, demanding a retraction. He wrote to Chancellor T. S. Taliaferro at Rock Springs, and then to Bishop Thomas in Philadelphia, asking permission to sue for libel. Both counseled coolness and restraint as there was no legal case against the paper, and Mrs. Mackay was not personally liable. The bishop offered some sound advice:

Even if Mrs. MacKay (*sic*) did retract, what would be gained? The damage is done. The thing for you to do is to make use of your columns in the Wyoming Churchman (filtering the vitriol out of your pen), and simply make a statement.

I think the thing to do is to publish . . . every favorable notice that we can get from any location that hears us. Make no comment as to the criticism, for it will but give publicity to what is a fact, namely, that in spite of our doing the best we can, broadcasting from our Station is not as satisfactory as it should be.<sup>40</sup>

Enthusiasm for sports was another matter, however, and KFBU utilized this avenue to recover lost prestige. The state football championship that year was to be played for by the Cheyenne and Worland high schools at a neutral field in Douglas, Wyoming. A strong Worland supporter, B. L. Schaffer, contacted KFBU, offering to pay the cost of a remote broadcast of the game so that it could be heard in Worland. Marion W. Giesecking, who had succeeded George Walker as engineer for the station, was willing to try and the arrangements were made. Giesecking was an avid amateur, or "ham", something of an inventor, and the project appealed to him. Taking a short wave transmitter and sending the play-by-play in "continental code" to Laramie (over a hundred air miles) it was decoded by a Mr. Walton and broadcast by voice in the regular manner.

Mr. Schaffer was delighted with the broadcast and the score (Worland 19 - Cheyenne 0.) He enclosed a check to cover the cost of his program for which he had been billed \$34! He further reported, "I had an audience of 75 here on Saturday and that was not bad, so you can see that we were awake."

Not only did KFBU try to improve its coverage, but the federal authorities were attempting to clear the air waves. The Federal Radio Commission changed KFBU's wave length three times in less than a year. In March, 1928, it decreed that KFBU must share time with station KFUM in Colorado Springs. This necessitated meetings between the officials of the two stations to set up a basic schedule, and required occasional letters, phone calls and telegrams to take care of special emergency situations. For example, KFUM relinquished its time to Laramie so that the state basketball tournament could be aired fully. KFBU, in return,

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40. Letter of December 20, 1927.





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As a final sidelight to the programming and listener reaction to the station, two items are offered. The first deals with an unusual service performed by the station as reported in *The Wyoming Churchman* of March, 1928:

The Western Union telegraph office in Laramie, received a telegram for a man named Cloonan, at Fluorspar, on the Laramie, North Park and Western. The telephone line to the mine was out of commission, and Operator Rollins at the Western Union placed a call on the radio broadcasting apparatus at the Cathedral. In five minutes the section foreman at Northgate, near the fluorspar mine, called the Laramie, North Park and Western office, telling it to get the message from Mr. Rollins and he would deliver it to "Mike" at Fluorspar. Ed Fanning at Northgate also heard the radio and he rode on horseback to find Cloonan.

And, in February, 1928, the *Churchman* printed a response received from a listener who was a penitentiary inmate:

KFBU, Laramie, Dear Sirs: I hope that you will not be offended at me, a prisoner, for writing and telling you that I heard your station this morning at 1 o'clock and it was very plain, also the program was fine. One would not think that we can hear so plain here in jail as there is so much steel here, steel bars on the windows, steel cells, steel doors and some of the prisoners are in jail for stealing.

Editor-Radio Director Smith had heeded his superior's advice, removed the virtriol from his pen and labored diligently to brighten KFBU's reputation—like stainless steel!

#### THE BISHOP AND KFBU SIGN OFF

In June, 1927, the *Wyoming Churchman* startled its readers with the announcement that Bishop Thomas had resigned. The news came without warning. No significant reasons were given for his action. Newspapers about the state ran commendatory editorials praising the bishop and expressing disappointment over the announcement.

Thomas had presented his resignation to the House of Bishops at its meeting in New York on June 1. There is little evidence to suggest that anyone in Wyoming was aware of his plan. Editor Franklin Smith ran a laudatory and regretful editorial-news story in the *Churchman* and followed it with the text of a letter from the presiding bishop to Bishop Thomas in which he appointed the latter provincial bishop with full authority until his successor was elected and consecrated. Since the House of Bishops was in session it was its prerogative to elect a successor since Wyoming was a missionary district and not a self-supporting diocese of the church. Accordingly, at that same meeting, the house elected the Reverend H. Percy Silver, S.T.D., rector of the Church of the Incarnation, New York City. This news was also recorded in the same issue of *The Wyoming Churchman*.

Everyone asumed that Thomas' role as provisional bishop would



be a matter of a few weeks or months at the most. Silver, however, declined the election. Another was not held until the General Convention of 1928 where the Reverend George H. Thomas was elected, and he, too, declined. The presiding bishop then appointed the Right Reverend Granville Gaylord Bennett, bishop of Duluth, to act as provisional bishop of Wyoming. Since no bishop for Wyoming was consecrated for Wyoming until December 15, 1929, the interim arrangements were not only awkward in themselves, but particularly so with regard to the fate of the cathedral station, KFBU.

Under these circumstances the bishop of Duluth made periodic visits to Wyoming for confirmation visitations and some administrative work, but the bulk of administrative routine was handled by the missionary district's council of advice, of which The Very Reverend David W. Thornberry, Dean of St. Matthew's Cathedral, was chairman.<sup>41</sup>

Both Dean Thornberry and Bishop Bennett were responsible for the ongoing activities of their respective primary jobs, and between them had to devote additional time and correspondence to the life and work of the Missionary District of Wyoming. Most actions prepared by Thornberry had to be submitted to Bishop Bennett for final approval and authorization. Therefore, Bishop Thomas was removed from the scene when the Atwater Kent "scandal" broke, although as provincial bishop it was to him that Director Smith turned for advice on the matter. But by 1928 much of the responsibility of KFBU's future fell upon Dean Thornberry. Bishop Thomas, however, was still the owner of record of KFBU and was a factor to be reckoned with until the end. Some observations, appraisal and tentative conclusions about Bishop Thomas will be made in the final section, but now it is in order to follow the events and actions of KFBU's final days.

As early as 1926 it was apparent that changes in federal policy were forthcoming. Writing again to the Minot Chamber of Commerce, Archdeacon Balcom observed:

The radio situation is now, however, in such a state of chaos that I would consider it unwise at this time to make a large investment. As you probably know, the control of radio was, last summer, taken out of the hands of the Department of Commerce. Now there are no restrictions whatever. If the legislators at Washington ever find time

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41. Dean Thornberry's son, David Ritchie Thornberry, who was a page at the 1927 Convocation of the Missionary District (at which Bishop Thomas gave his farewell address), was consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of Wyoming on May 1, 1969. The present bishop recalls his most intimate association with KFBU as the effort on several occasions to use his bow and arrow to cut KFBU's aerial wires which were suspended between two steel towers, one on the east tower of the Cathedral, and the other on the roof of Sherwood Hall.



to act during the coming session, it may be that new stations will not be allowed to operate. I would suggest that you have your lawyer look into this matter very carefully before making an investment.<sup>42</sup>

When Franklin Smith wrote Bishop Thomas in April of 1928 he evidenced some concern as to whether KFBU would be able to continue in its present state:

As I wrote in my last letter, it might be possible for us to secure allocation as a Regional Station with one thousand watt power but, in order to carry this, we must spend from \$1500 to \$2500 in improvements on the Station. Unless this money can be obtained, I see no reason for applying to the Radio Commission for allocation with increased power.<sup>43</sup>

The source of Smith's information came from President Crane at the University. A communication from the University of Maryland to all land grant colleges warned that changes in radio were forthcoming and that those with radio stations should look to protecting their broadcasting outlets. Smith discovered the details of this and communicated them to Bishop Bennett. The plan of the Federal Radio Commission was that three classifications of stations would be inaugurated: national, with "unlimited power;" regional, with 1000-watt power; and local with 250-watt power. Since the local limitation would be unsatisfactory for the University's use, it was felt that expansion to one thousand watts was essential. President Crane, who had secured the services of an expert, physics professor Charles A. Culver, of Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, had Culver's report on KFBU and his recommendation that the power increase be made. The obstacle, of course, was money. The University was in sore straits in this regard due to the decrease in oil royalty revenues.

Smith and Crane invited Bishop Bennett to Laramie for a conference on the whole matter, and Smith wrote to Bishop Thomas explaining all these details and requesting him to sound out Mrs. Harriman for the estimated \$2,500 for the project. There is reason to suspect that Smith and Bennett began to believe that a closer relationship with the University would be a beneficial thing, especially in negotiations with the Federal Radio Commission.

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42. Letter to David S. Owen, Secretary of the Minot Chamber of Commerce. The legislators did act in 1927, and a stronger Federal Radio Commission was the result.

In closing this letter, Balcom added some words which bespeak the agonies of sad experience: "In purchasing a station, it would seem a wise thing to invest in a standard machine. To do otherwise lets one in on an enormous amount of trouble."

43. Letter of April 17, 1928. This letter has affixed to it the one available sample of KFBU's Ekko Stamp. The letterhead also proclaims that KFBU is operating at 100 watts, but, obviously, this was untrue. In other letters this claim was "x-ed" out and the true figure of 500 typed in.



Such intelligence disturbed Bishop Thomas. He took issue with several statements in Professor Culver's report, and was particularly upset about what he saw as the implication that the transmitters and studios would be moved to the campus. He began his reference to KFBU's "frank" or "franchise" to operate, comparing it to a seat on the Stock Exchange—a privilege of salable value. These two expressed concerns were to be instrumental in the actions—or attempted actions—to follow shortly.

Bishop Thomas was so anxious about these impending developments that he secured a long interview with the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, John Gardner Murray, and the church's executive assigned to domestic missionary matters, Charles Tompkins. In thanking the presiding bishop for his "audience," Bishop Thomas wrote that he felt that Tompkins "can now understand the situation quite fully." How fully he did understand will soon be seen.

Although Bishop Thomas' suspicions were aroused, the negotiations proceeded at Laramie. The University trustees were willing to authorize Dr. Crane to investigate the radio situation further, and Crane felt that pending the arrangements of details the University should file petitions with the Federal Radio Commission which were shortly due. Crane, too, felt that the bargaining position would be stronger in the University's name.

Franklin Smith wrote at length to Bishop Thomas to allay his suspicions concerning KFBU's disposal. But he pressed the bishop to deed over the station to Bishop Bennett since there was some question as to whether title went to the provisional bishop automatically. This only increased Thomas' skepticism, as did the suggestion that KFBU be put in Presiding Bishop Murray's name.

Even the Episcopal Church's law firm found this inadequate, opining that a corporation set up between the church and the University of Wyoming would be more advantageous in that the corporation would be eligible for membership in the National Association of Broadcasters, a decided advantage.

Meantime, other efforts clouded the issue. Former KFBU engineer George D. Walker offered to buy the station and remove it to Denver. A KFBU staffer, for reasons not quite clear, wrote the Federal Radio Commission to apply for permission to erect a new 1000-watt station in Laramie. This baffled the commission, which assumed that KFBU was hale and hearty. The commission would entertain an application for a station of that power in Cheyenne, but Laramie was eligible for only a 250-watt station as long as KFBU operated.

Since this correspondence is in KFBU's files it might be reasonable to assume that church and university officials were preparing an alternate strategy in the event that Bishop Thomas proved to be uncooperative. It was a sound idea, and one which perhaps should have been pursued. But the correspondence also reveals that the



applicant, William J. Reed, eventually withdrew the Laramie application in favor of the University and announced his intent to apply for the Cheyenne option.

In June, 1928, a radio committee appointed by Bishop Bennett, met to hear a report by Franklin Smith on the current situation. He made a strong case for turning KFBU over to the University. A motion was passed concurring with this recommendation pending the approval of the Federal Radio Commission, Bishop Thomas, Mrs. Harriman and Presiding Bishop Murray.

On the strength of this Bishop Bennett, on August 14, made a formal proposal to the university through President Crane. For the sum of one dollar, the Missionary District of Wyoming would turn over to the university trustees the equipment and, "insofar as we are able to grant them, the franchises of the Radio Station of KFBU. . . . ." Arrangements for the church to rent and pay for upkeep of remote facilities for religious broadcasting was also insured with a token dollar payment. Details were to be cast in proper contract form. The provisional bishop concluded:

I wish that we might see our way clear to continue, but we cannot do so. Therefore, as a Church, interested in the cultural and educational side of life, we turn to our co-worker in the cause, the University, and raise our "Macedonian cry."<sup>44</sup>

The balance of the year 1928 was characterized by the awareness of the Federal Radio Commission of what was afoot in Laramie, and the Reed applications, described above, were being settled. At last, Dean Thornbury officially notified the commission of the intent to execute the transfer to the university. In responding, Commissioner Harold Lafount informed the dean that there should be no objection to such transfer, that he had recommended approval and that the commission would give the matter "immediate consideration."

It may be helpful at this point to identify and bracket the major figures in the bizzare exchanges which follow. Bishop Thomas was the most mobile, being, during the year, at Philadelphia, New York, Europe and Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Florida, near Palm Beach. Presiding Bishop Murray, Charles Tompkins and the counsel for the National Council of the Episcopal Church, Davies, Auerbach and Cornell (hereinafter known as "The Church's law firm") were in New York. (Bishop Murray was vacationing in Nova Scotia during part of the summer.) Dean Thornberry was in Laramie, Bishop Bennett in Duluth and Wyoming, and the Federal Radio Commission was in Washington, D.C.

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44. Letter of Bishop Bennett to President A. G. Crane, August 14, 1928. Most of this section's events are derived from correspondence among the principals involved. There was no public account of these actions of such revelatory nature.



The year began with permission being given KFBU to change its call letters to KWYO. The university was interested in a better identification symbol. It had brief possession, however, and this favored designation is now being used in Sheridan, Wyoming, by the commercial station there.

Bishop Murray was in contact with Bishop Thomas to obtain his signature to the transfer, but on February 19 he received the following telegram:

Willing to transfer radio station when informed of terms of transfer  
 When President of University pledge to operate station is forwarded.  
 When Mrs. Harriman consents to alienation of her gift is received  
 When reasons for this transfer prior to institution of my successor are presented.

(signed) N. S. Thomas

The last of these specifications seemed to impress Bishop Murray, but for the moment he sent copies of the wire to Bishop Bennett and Tompkins plus a covering letter to Bennett (carbon to Tompkins) advising Bennett to inform Thomas as fully as possible and suggesting that Thomas was the logical one to sway Mrs. Harriman.

In Laramie Dean Thornberry supervised the drafting of contracts with what he felt to be suitable safeguards for the church, and informed Presiding Bishop Murray on April 10 that five copies of the contract had been sent to Bishop Thomas for his signature. He added that in the past year the cost of operating the station had been about \$5000, of which the University had contributed \$1500. A copy for Bishop Murray was enclosed.

President Crane wrote Dean Thornberry two weeks later to say that no signed contracts had been received. Engineer Gieseke's resignation had been accepted and "as far as we are concerned the Station is now closed." Crane was willing to proceed in spite of this if only Bishop Thomas would sign the release.

Presiding Bishop Murray wrote to Thornberry at the same time. Bishop Thomas was unavailable, but he, Murray, had one or two changes to suggest on his own. Further he would like to review the whole proposal with his counsel (the church's law firm) but he was absent from the city and might not return for a week or two. Thornberry quickly apprised Bishop Bennett of these developments, the latter preparing to leave for Wyoming to settle the matter.

Commissioner Lafount wrote President Crane asking for proof of the assignment of license since the current one was to expire on June 15.

In New York, Charles Tompkins sent the contract to the church's law firm, along with some suggestions *he* had made and added this:



I have purposely delayed for it is doubtful now if we get this contract in shape to make the transfer before the new Bishop for Wyoming is elected which we expect will take place along about the first of October . . . My own judgment is that the newly elected Bishop should be the one to make final decision as to the disposition of this station.

Dean Thornberry wisely wrote the commission for an extension, then the best direction possible from the objections of the presiding bishop, had revised contracts drawn and sent to New York and to Bishop Thomas hoping to get some action prior to the expiration date of the license—only ten days away.

The church's law firm, having examined the original contract, wrote that they had made a revision of their own which ought to be checked out with all parties involved. President Crane was trying to get the Thornberry revision to his trustees, but there were delays. All this transpired on June 14, on which date at 3:35 local time a telegram arrived in Laramie:

THE COMMISSION HAS NOT RENEWED YOUR LICENSE  
STOP IT EXPIRES THREE AM EASTERN STANDARD TIME  
JUNE FIFTEENTH AFTER WHICH TIME YOU ARE NOT  
AUTHORIZED TO BROADCAST STOP YOU WILL BE GIVEN  
A HEARING UPON YOUR APPLICATION IN THE NEAR  
FUTURE

B M WEBSTER JR  
GENERAL COUNSEL  
FEDERAL RADIO COMMISSION

This development put the church and the university at a decided disadvantage. Their application at the hearing, set for September 3 would find them petitioning for renewal of a non-operating installation. The *Boston Globe*, June 23, 1929, in an article headed "Radio Commission Bans Five Stations" reported that the five, KWYO among them, "have been removed from the air for deviating from their assigned frequency."

Thornberry assured Crane that he would try to have the contracts executed prior to the hearing so that the University would be the applicant with whatever advantage this might hold. On July 3 he again beseeched the presiding bishop to find Bishop Thomas and encourage him to sign since the dean was not certain where Bishop Thomas could be found. But before his letter could reach Nova Scotia, Bishop Murray wrote to say:

. . . after a very full conference with our Counsel and earnest consideration of the matter I have decided to postpone all action . . . until next October. I can not but feel that this courtesy is due whomsoever may be charged with the duties of administering the affairs of the District permanently. . . .<sup>45</sup>

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45. Letter of Bishop Murray to Dean Thornberry dated July 4, 1929 from Chester, Nova Scotia.





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the transfer to the University retaining privileges for the church?" Unequivocally no.

. . . there is nobody to which the franchise should go comparable to the University.

. . . The value is in its use, its franchise, its prestige, and the psychology behind the thing; the material value is almost nothing.<sup>46</sup>

The letter, along with others written earlier, says almost as much about Bishop Thomas as a person as it does about his projects. It is almost in the spirit of his own phrase "the psychology behind the thing" that the concluding appraisal of KFBU and its principal creator will be made.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND THE THING

Part of that psychology is the use Bishop Thomas made of the blizzard of 1922 in which KFBU played a part. Not only did he shape it into a terse and moving tale for the expanded KFBU inaugural in December, 1925, but evidently concluded that it was worth repeating at other times and other places.

On February 7, 1926, the bishop was again guest preacher at Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, the service and sermon being broadcast over KDKA. In the course of his remarks the bishop repeated the story. It was heard in Laramie by C. L. Clark who informed the press that he "caught enough to know that it was Bishop Thomas . . . telling of the storm on the Union Pacific which led to the installation of the cathedral broadcasting station, KFBU."<sup>47</sup>

It was also received by Charles D. Stewart in his lakeside home near Hartford, Wisconsin. Stewart was a frequent contributor to *The Atlantic Monthly*, and having heard the bishop's tale informed the editor of that publication. Both agreed it was "worthy of being put on paper." Stewart then wrote the bishop for details. He commented that he habitually made "a special try for Dr. Van Etten<sup>48</sup> of Calvary in Pittsburgh" for his wife's sake, and that night "you came rolling in . . . with wonderful power. Mrs. Stewart declares your intonation is magnificent."

Stewart begged for details, and with his trained eye noted some questionable details which he wished to have further information. Thomas responded with the typed version (of which several copies still remain in the file) and this elicited further queries on points of

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46. Extracts of letter from Bishop Thomas to Bishop Schmuck, February 19, 1930. One can only surmise that the document the bishop claims he signed was one to Presiding Bishop Murray which the church's law firm advised against accepting.

47. Original story in the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*, reprinted in *The Wyoming Churchman*, March, 1926, p. 9.

48. *The Wyoming Churchman* in February, 1928, carried a general news item to the effect that Dr. Van Etten had completed his year of consecutive broadcasts and was said to have been the first to preach a sermon via radio.



clarification. And although this correspondence is full of promise, an examination of *The Atlantic Monthly* from 1926-32 reveals that Stewart did not submit his story, although other articles by him appear with some frequency.

In May another inquiry appeared from a journalist of considerable repute, Mrs. Richard Lloyd Jones, wife of the editor of *The Tulsa Tribune*, visited Laramie and heard the story which she passed on to her husband upon her return. It is "a story which appeals to my journalistic instinct," he wrote the bishop, "and which I am tempted to make use of in one of my editorial Saturday Sermonettes." He, too, listed some specific questions of fact he would need to put the story in proper perspective. The bishop being absent on confirmation visitations, this letter was answered by Archdeacon Balcom who enclosed another copy of the "approved text" of the tale.

Richard Lloyd Jones did make use of the material. It not only appeared in the *Tribune*, but was later gathered into a booklet entitled "Burning Springs," which was a compilation of several of the Saturday Sermonettes.

The bishop obtained at least one copy of "Burning Springs" which he sent on to Mrs. Harriman and announced his intention of trying to obtain several more copies.<sup>49</sup>

As inquiries came in the prepared copies were sent in response.<sup>50</sup> They were revised to the extent of changing Catalina Island to Redlands, California, for instance, but the basic text remained. The bishop used poetic license in his account which served his purpose well and was well-suited to broadcasting use.

Still another version of the story was written by C. M. Cosby of Laramie. He embroidered the fact further, stating that the bishop was present and was actively involved in the episode. In some way not apparent this description became the basis for a story which appeared in the September 2, 1926 issue of *The Chicago Evening Post Radio Magazine*. Alongside the text is a photograph of the KFBU studio with small inset photos of Mrs. Harriman, Bishop

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49. None of them remain in the files. The book was apparently put out by the *Tribune* itself. It is not in the Library of Congress, since Senator Gale McGee tested that source for the writer. An inquiry to *The Tulsa Tribune* was responded to generously by Richard Jones's son, Jenkin, who sent a photocopy of the pages in question. The Thomas version was used as sent. The pickup of KFBU "by a boy in Catalina Island" remains as does the bishop's consistent misspelling of Vice-President Jeffers' name.

Jones' moral is interesting and rather contemporary. He wrote: "We need churches that are concerned with today . . . that dare to speak in terms of modern life.

"The only church that can save is the church attuned to the time, that has the wattage power to broadcast intelligence. . . ."

50. Full text appears in Appendix A.



Thomas and Archdeacon Balcom. The bishop nonetheless was pleased with this and ordered reprints within the week.

What should be clear in all this is that the bishop used the blizzard episode for publicity purposes, but for what motive?

It is the writer's opinion that the bishop was using this method as a means of getting his name before the public with the hope of being elected to an eastern diocese. His last opportunity was in 1925 when W. R. Coe and others were willing to arrange for his name to be placed in nomination in Long Island. Earlier, in 1920, he had been elected to be bishop of Delaware, but declined. Twice he was nominated for the prestigious diocese of New York but failed to get a majority of votes.

Bishop Thomas' scrap book is filled with newspaper clippings, one of which is particularly revealing. The clipping is identified in a penned note as having appeared in "Stageland and Society," March 13, 1909:

#### A CLERICAL BEAU BRUMMEL

Bishop Talbot has long held his own, as the Beau Brummel of the House of Bishops in America, and also more than made good in this particular at the Lambert (Lambeth) conference last season. But he will shortly have a rival in the field in Nathaniel Thomas, the popular rector of Holy Apostles, who has lately been elected to the Bishopric of Wyoming, Bishop Talbot's old stamping ground.

Mr. Thomas has been elected Bishop to various dioceses, but has always declined the honor. Now! he has accepted. Bishop's sleeves are so becoming! There is no doubt that the West will not have him for very long, as George C. Thomas, one of the best men that ever graced Philadelphia in any way, will endeavor to have him brought back to the East. George C. can do it, as he is practically the arbiter of the Philadelphia diocese.

Gossip-column venom notwithstanding, it is significant that the bishop retained it for his memory book. It suggests in its way that here was a man of seaboard orientation, educated in Minnesota, to be sure, but also in England. His personality, tastes, ambitions and performance were strongly molded by this environment in spite of his midwestern antecedents.

He was a headline-maker wherever he went, as his scrap book eloquently testifies. He was, at least in the beginning, a capable and powerful speaker with voice and appearance to match.

His close association for many years with George C. Thomas was a real factor, and the columnist is probably right in assuming that he could well have exerted the influence necessary to recall the bishop of Wyoming to an eastern diocese. But this friend's untimely death removed this source of influence and it is not just to expand this study that the address at the Portland rose festival is included.

As has been observed, the possibility of election to the diocese of Long Island, might have been seriously considered if it were not for the fact that the year 1925 held such promise. One can see



that Bishop Thomas may well have felt that the great plans for Wyoming could actually be carried out, and that hope was so strong that he reluctantly declined this final opportunity to be translated.

Mrs. Thomas' poor health must also be considered as a factor in a wide appraisal. Aside from the incident described, she was, in 1927, bitten by a dog suspected of being rabid, and there was a painful 40-day period of inoculations and observation all filled with anxiety.<sup>51</sup>

The implementation of his plans had a glaring weakness. Money was often forthcoming for their establishment, but little success was enjoyed by the bishop in endowing them suitably. It was a fatal flaw.

The bishop once complained to William Robertson Coe<sup>52</sup> that “so far the state has done miserably.” He was referring to the lack of support to raise matching funds offered by Coe for the Cathedral Home for Children, and it was true in other areas as well.

Two points relate to this aspect of the situation. For one thing, the bishop was away from his jurisdiction as much as he was in it, and his pastoral relationship with the majority of his flock was minimal. A whirlwind series of confirmation visitations from one Wyoming community to another in rapid succession would not be the route to developing the deepest relationships. The bishop could and did cultivate the Very Important People in Wyoming (as well as outside it) but to a lesser degree did he exhibit real concern for others.

The other factor was economic. As Dr. T. A. Larson points out so clearly<sup>53</sup>, Wyoming entered the era of depression much earlier than other parts of the country. This in itself curtailed financial support of the church generally, and the bishop's programs in particular. And, as the decade wore on, even the Coes, Scovilles and Voorhis' began to retrench in their contributions. The sources were simply drying up for the bishop, and it was not as apparent to him in 1925 as it was in 1927.

Thomas was regarded as something of a maverick by the church officials in New York. He was probably regarded as a pirate by the eastern bishops into whose jurisdictions he came, often departing with sizeable gifts for the work in Wyoming to the chagrin, and possibly envy, of his fellow bishops.

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51. The stone altar in the chapel of St. Matthew's Cathedral was given by the bishop as a thanksgiving for his wife's recovery, a fact not disclosed for some time.

52. Letter to Coe, June 8, 1925.

53. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965). The point is clearly made beginning on page 411, and pertinent material occurs throughout most of Chapter 14.



It is not clear if the grandiose projects built upon uncertain financial foundations caused the first two men elected to replace him to decline the honor. It may be significant that Elmer Schmuck, who did accept at long last, had been an officer in the Episcopal Church's national council and was, perhaps, chosen to give some stability to the missionary district of Wyoming.

Occasionally in his enthusiasm, or in desperation, he became party to unusual actions. For instance, Mr. Coe's offer of \$25,000 to Cathedral Home was conditional on the bishop's cooperation in disseminating an article of Coe's regarding taxation to Wyoming and Montana newspapers. Arranged to appear that it was an innocent request from the bishop to Coe, it was, in fact, Coe's idea from the start, and he shrewdly guessed that his opinions would be enhanced or paid attention to, if they were accompanied by the announcement of a large and locally significant gift.

The bishop did his part, but the views of Coe did not appear to seriously effect the economy, capital or labor.

It is by no means to be assumed that the bishop was a man without principles. He had a view of the church, the nation and its culture which was not precisely the prevailing view of these same things in Wyoming. He did accomplish a great deal through his energy and persistence, and the ability to oversee a whole group of plans at various stages of development—all overlapping in time—while yet traveling widely, speaking often, and working to achieve his manifold goals in a variety of ways.

His efforts to find able men to function as archdeacons, executive secretaries and directories in one form or another evidence both his concern for having someone in Wyoming to coordinate and further pursue the work in his absences, and the further problems which could arise when that deputy was not overly-effective.

It must be admitted that there are limitations in viewing a few years of a man's work in the perspective of a single facet of it, in this case KFBU. Yet there is a certain suggestiveness of similarity between KFBU and its prime mover. Both were developed in the east and encountered difficulties in performing well in the west. The technology of radio changed and improved almost from day to day, and the dreams of Bishop Thomas grew, developed, existed and faded in like manner.

KFBU was closer to the bishop's heart, perhaps, than some of the other endeavors he initiated. Because it was a new technique, loaded with promise, its appeal was extraordinary for the personality of one like Bishop Thomas. With it he sensed great opportunity to spread religion and culture as he had received them and wished to share them.

It was a worthwhile—even noble—concept which fell short in execution. It was frustrated by a variety of circumstances, not the least of which was the bishop's own stubbornness. But even in retrospect he could describe, rather well, his vision:



The value is in its use, its franchise, its prestige, the psychology behind the thing; the material value is almost nothing.

There is also the value of examining the successes and failures of those who pioneered in early Wyoming radio.

In *The Wyoming Churchman* (March, 1928, p. 14) Bishop Thomas wrote the following appreciation of Bishop Ethelbert Talbot:

"When Bishop Talbot's book, 'My People of the Plains,' appeared in 1907, it did more than any other missionary book of the time to interest the people of the East with the Church's work in the West. He wrote with freedom and intimacy, which, I think, in some places in Wyoming was misunderstood. But there was a kindness and generosity of spirit in it . . . which will make the book a permanent contribution to the annals of the development of the West."

May this account of Bishop Thomas' work with KFBU be received in the same spirit.

#### APPENDIX A

The following account was prepared by Bishop Thomas for his own use as well as for distribution to inquirers who heard his sermons and broadcasts where this story was related.

As a point of accuracy it should be noted that the cross atop St. Matthew's Cathedral is the highest of any cathedral in the country, though not of any church or city.

#### THE STORY OF THE RADIO STATION OPENED RECENTLY IN LARAMIE

Last winter we had a small station in the Cathedral, whose cross lifts its head higher than any cross set in any city of this Country, and were somewhat interested in broadcasting. One night there came a terrible blizzard tearing down all telephone and telegraph lines entering Laramie both from the East and from the West. A fruit train from the Pacific Coast crashed into a freight coming over the Borie cut-off, spilling about twelve cars over the tracks. The three trains, the Overland Limited, the Los Angeles Limited, and the Pacific Limited, were due to leave Cheyenne within a very few minutes of one another. There were no available means of communication with Cheyenne, and unless word could be gotten to Cheyenne to hold these trains, the chances were that the most terrible wreck in the history of the railroad would ensue.

A track hand managed to reach Laramie on a small gasoline speeder, hurried to the dispatch office and reported the wreck. All wires were down and there was no way by which to communicate with Cheyenne. It so happened that Vice-President Jeffries (*sic*), General Manager of the railroad, was in the City at the time in his private car. Someone suggested to him that it might be possible to broadcast a warning by the Morse Code, using the small broadcasting station at the Cathedral. It was then after midnight, but the request was broadcasted that anyone picking up the message should wire Cheyenne from the East via Kansas City, at once telling of the disaster. The message was picked up by a boy in Redlands, California. It was sent by Western Union along the line of the Santa Fe to Kansas City. The



message reached Cheyenne just five minutes before the Overland Limited was due to leave that place and the wreck did not occur.

On a visit to New York I happened to tell this story to Mrs. Edward H. Harriman, widow of the late railroad magnate, and she told me to install an adequate broadcasting station in the Cathedral and that she would be responsible for the bill. In fulfillment of the promise in 1924, we finished the erection of our station a few weeks ago.

Elton (*sic*) F. Horn, the gloriously talented young man who was testing the machine he had built, was electrocuted. All of the great undertakings in the world have been paid for in human life. And so it has been with this Station K.F.B.U. This radio station which saved hundreds of lives by forestalling a gigantic wreck, has taken this beautiful young life.

I thought that you might be interested in hearing this story of our station, K.F.B.U.

Very truly yours,

This account, originally prepared in late 1925, and slightly revised later, may be compared with the actual events of 1922 contained in Appendix B immediately following.

#### APPENDIX B

The events of November 5-6, 1922, were more complex than suggested by any of the writers who described the role of KFBU three or more years later.

Accounts of the situation published by Laramie and Cheyenne newspapers contain information by which the reader may measure the interpretation of the bishop and also of Mr. Cosby.

The *Wyoming State Tribune* in Cheyenne published a Sunday edition on November 5 while the *Laramie Republican* and *Laramie Boomerang* did not have Sunday issues and covered the story on Monday the sixth.

The *Tribune* going to press in the early hours of Sunday morning indicated that one passenger train was already stalled in snowdrifts two miles west of Cheyenne, the storm being so intense that the passengers had to remain with the train in spite of its proximity to the city.

Communications were broken or intermittent in all directions. passenger train No. 7, whose whereabouts was unknown, finally arrived in Cheyenne at 12:20 a.m. Sunday morning. The news story added that it would not be sent on westward until communications were restored. Thus, just prior to the accident at Buford, there was no disposition in Cheyenne to allow trains to proceed toward Laramie.

Monday's *Tribune* reported that three accidents had taken place on the previous day. The first was at Hillsdale, east of Cheyenne, and the tracks had been cleared rather quickly. The second was at Borie (9.6 miles west of Cheyenne) where Extra No. 260 was struck from the rear by Extra No. 228 at about 12:30 a.m. Sunday morning. Both trains were eastbound to Cheyenne from Laramie. This blockage was also cleared, though with some difficulty.





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used his equipment to inform Burlington Railroad officials in Denver of the location of two C.B. & Q. trains stalled near Wendover, Wyoming. His message was relayed to Denver by amateur station 9ANQ of Kansas City.<sup>55</sup>

All three newspapers subsequently ran stories of the calling of investigations and inquests, but their results were not immediately forthcoming since congressional and gubernatorial elections had taken place on Tuesday, November 7. The Democratic party scored an unexpected upset sweep at the polls and monopolized the media for many days at the expense of the follow-up on the railroad accidents.

There was no editorial comment by any newspaper about the accidents. The *Tribune* and the *Boomerang* both carried, within the week, a syndicated editorial featuring the comments of Lady Asquith of Britain. She compared sleeping car accommodations in the U.S. very unfavorably with those in England and Europe!

It would be fair to assume, in conclusion, that the role of KFBU during the Union Pacific's difficulties was useful, but not critical. William Jeffers, in Laramie, was not as aware of all that his employees in Cheyenne knew. His action was wise, resourceful and prudent, but the limited evidence available suggests that Union Pacific authorities in Cheyenne were acting with great caution and would hardly have released trains to the west until matters radically improved with respect to full information on train locations and the restoration of communications.

It is extremely improbable that the catastrophic collision held out as a possibility—even certainty—by later writers would have occurred at all.

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55. The story in the November, 1922, issue of *The Wyoming Churchman* was a conflation of this story in the *Boomerang* and the report of Dr. Hamilton in the *Laramie Republican*.



# *Recollections of a Goshen County Homesteader*

By

CHARLES OLIVER DOWNING

Edited by

Sharon Reed Smith

## INTRODUCTION

Recollections of a Goshen County Homesteader was written almost exclusively from notes kept by C. O. Downing. Part of the text, however, is from stories told by C. O. and Belle. It was written to give an insight into homestead living in Wyoming and the development of the Goshen County area at the turn of the century.

## EARLY LIFE

Charles Oliver Downing was born in New York State in the little town of Himrods, August 24, 1883, the third son of George F. and Minerva Downing.

His paternal grandmother, Dorothy Kitterer, came from Alsace-Lorraine, a small region in northeastern France, which at that time was part of Germany. In C. O.'s words, "I remember her as being tall, well-groomed, in good health and congenial. Her husband, John Downing, who was of English descent, passed away and was buried at Himrods, when my father was 17. Since he was the oldest of the children, my father was forced to work and bring home the earnings to support his mother and brother, Charles, and sisters, Lillian, Mate, Anna, and Margaret. These were all frugal and industrious people. Charles was a carpenter by trade, and also worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and lived in Pennsylvania. The sisters eventually married and lived rural lives in the state of New York. I was always glad when Uncle Charlie came to visit us. He was jolly and had a special way of making us children feel important."

Enos Morse, a Welchman, was C. O.'s maternal grandfather; his wife's maiden name was Kelley. According to C. O., "When the German and English get to quarreling inside of me, I call the Irish Kelley up to laugh them out of it."

There were four children in C. O.'s family. Fred, the eldest son, was born in 1880; Frank in 1881; and the sister, Mabel, in 1884.



All of the children were taught to work at an early age and daily chores were assigned to each. They helped hoe the garden, milk the cow, gather eggs, and feed the hogs. C. O. recalls, "In those days, many families kept a cow and chickens and grew most of their own vegetables. Some families even owned fruit trees, and often Father and Mother and all of us children would pick apples and other fruit for these people in order to receive a share for ourselves. Each summer, Mother canned about 200 jars of fruits and vegetables for our winter use. We children also gathered hickory nuts and walnuts from nearby woods. We had a large cellar where we stored apples, nuts, cabbage, carrots, and turnips. Living was hard work in those days, but we were brought up learning to work and accepted it as a fact of life."

Himrods was a small community. The schoolhouse for the area was located one mile south of Himrods, and children walked to and from school each day. According to C. O., "The teacher had all eight grades so it was largely up to the individual child to dig out the facts of learning himself. Father had taught school in that building before we entered there. Father loved studying and books. Although he did a lot of day-labor work, he always had a book with him and read while eating his noonday meal."

Because there was no high school at Himrods, and the Downings wanted their children to have the advantages of more education, the family moved to the town of Dundee, after C. O. completed second grade. C. O. says, "The part of my grade school experience that I remember most distinctly is having to stay in the third grade two years before going on to fourth." The high school in Dundee, known as the Dundee Academy, was a private school. By the time the Downing children had finished grade school, the Dundee school system had bought the Academy building and was conducting a regular, four-year high school program, conforming to the New York state requirements. There C. O. studied geometry, English, four years of Latin, two years of Greek and one year of German, among other subjects. Fred quit after one year of high school and went to work in a mercantile store. Frank quit after two years and took a job in the same store. Mabel and C. O. both completed four years of high school and received their diplomas in 1903.

During this time of learning in Dundee, C. O. recalls that, "The German-English idea of thrift gave way to the desire of ownership, Father bought a house in Dundee, and we were all happy to have a place of our own. All these years I have been proud of Father for this and for other things he did for his family."

Throughout his grade school years, C. O. did small chores for a widow. The chores included emptying the ashes from the two stoves, bringing in buckets of coal and kindling and shaking the rugs. For each day of work, he was paid five cents which was used for necessary items such as shirts. In addition to the work for the



widow, C. O. sold the weekly paper from Elmira on the streets on Saturday nights, and delivered it to homes on Sunday, usually selling a total of 140 papers each weekend.

Later, while attending high school, he worked part time in Ed Dailey's grocery store in Dundee. Before school in the morning, he opened the store, swept it out, washed the windows, and put items out on display. The owner came to relieve him at 8:40, and C. O. went to school. At noon, he went back to the store to allow the owner to go out for lunch. He then ran back to school after stopping at home for a sandwich. When school was out, C. O. went back to the store to run errands and deliver goods. While working there, he learned to grind coffee, cut bacon, fill bottles from a vinegar barrel and weigh out cookies and candy.

After high school, C. O. worked in a clothing store in Dundee, and then spent one year at Colgate Academy and another at Syracuse University. Following this training, he took the teacher's examination and received a New York state teaching certificate. Armed with these credentials, he taught school one year in a country school about 25 miles northwest of Dundee, receiving \$30 per month, out of which he paid board and room at a nearby farmhouse.

C. O.'s brothers, Fred and Frank, had gone to Duluth, Minnesota, before C. O. was out of high school. Frank was a secretary at the Y.M.C.A. there, and Fred went across the river to Superior, Wisconsin, to work as manager of the linen department in the Roth Brother's Department Store. The two brothers went back to Dundee one summer vacation and persuaded their younger brother, the teacher, to go back with them.

C. O. found a job in a large department store in Duluth, but after the trip west from Dundee he had wandering fever. Late in the summer, he bought a train ticket to Wahpeton, North Dakota. He had heard about the large wheat fields there and wanted to see them for himself. Following his arrival in Wahpeton, he rode in a local wheat company wagon out to the fields where he saw 36 binders cutting wheat on 640 acres. Back near Dundee, 20 acres of wheat was considered a lot! For the rest of that day, C. O. helped by driving a small, two-horse mechanic's cart. When a binder broke down, and this happened fairly regularly, the driver of the broken machine put his hat on top of his long whip and pulled out of the line of binders. This was the signal for the repairman to be taken to the broken binder in the little cart, and soon the machine was back in the line again.

C. O. stayed there that evening and returned to Wahpeton the following day, Sunday. After church he met a wheat farmer who enlisted his help. C. O. agreed, and shocked wheat for a week. At the end of that time the farmer said, "Downing, they are threshing wheat over at the neighbor's. Take a gunny sack and put some



blankets in it, get that wheat rack wagon and that team and go over there. The crew boss will tell you what to do."

C. O. was told to go out into a field and get a load of wheat shocks. As he drove the team onto the field he was joined by another man, and together they pitched shocks onto the wagon. C. O. drove the loaded wagon alongside a large threshing machine. The two men climbed on the load and started pitching bundles into the machine. C. O. was greatly surprised to see another wagon pull up on the other side of the machine, and to see two men pitching bundles in from that side too. This threshing was done on a much larger scale than in the East. At 9:00 o'clock a boy brought out a pail of sandwiches along with plenty of water to drink. Then, at noon, all work stopped and the crew went to the cook shack to eat. There was plenty of good food, and all ate heartily. By 1:00 p.m. the whole crew was back pitching shocks into the threshing machine or going out to the fields to load bundles. At 4:00 p.m. out came more sandwiches. The workers helped themselves and went right on working until 7:00 p.m. and then went to the cook shack for the evening meal. After supper, the help climbed into the haymow of the barn for the night, and a short night it was. After the roll call, which was done by states, the men drifted off to sleep. At 4:00 a.m. the call came, beginning another arduous day, "You teamers get out. Get those teams fed and harnessed."

When it was time to move on to another spot, the crew boss instructed C. O. to hitch his team to the cook shack and take it two miles down the road to the next threshing spot. C. O. didn't know too much about this kind of work, but he wasn't afraid to try. The cook rode inside the cook shack and continued to make his next meal without a break. Very little time was lost.

All of this was brand new for a young rover from New York, and was most enjoyable. Having been taught to work when he was growing up was paying off.

After six weeks of harvesting, C. O. had earned \$250, which was a lot of money in those days. He took the train back to Duluth and from there, went to Indiana University. He signed with Fred Bennett of the Balfour Company to sell fraternity and sorority jewelry and he continued the enterprise through the winter at colleges in Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa. While riding on the train from Ames, Iowa, to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, C. O. met a man with an idea that caused a decisive change in his life. His seat partner, seeming to realize that C. O. was a young adventurer at this stage in his life, told him that he was going to Cheyenne, Wyoming, to see about some homestead land. He asked C. O., "Why don't you go to Wyoming and take a homestead?"

C. O.'s first response was, "What is a homestead?" The man went on to explain that a person could get 160 or 320 acres of land



free from the government by homesteading it. The Homestead Act required a person to select his land, enter a filing on it at a federal land office, live on it a certain length of time, and make proof of residency to the land office. If the requirements were satisfied, title to the land was issued. The idea intrigued C. O. and at Lincoln he wrote to Washington and had homestead information sent to him at General Delivery, Lawrence, Kansas, which was his next stop. At Lawrence, he studied the homestead laws thoroughly, then bought a ticket Denver, Colorado. The mountains seemed very high to C. O. who was accustomed to the hills in New York, and in the thin air of the higher altitude, they seemed quite near. From Denver, he went to Cheyenne.

The state of Wyoming was just about twenty years old when C. O. arrived in 1910. Cheyenne, the capital, was merely a grown-up western town. The capitol building stood at the upper end of the street and the magnificent red stone Union Pacific depot stood at the lower end of the long street. The three-story Inter Ocean Hotel was the center of Cheyenne business. The town was oriented around the Union Pacific Railroad, whose double tracks could hardly handle the numerous passenger and freight trains. Talk around town at that time was that the Union Pacific Railroad controlled Wyoming. It was said the Union Pacific named the Wyoming territorial governors and that this control by the Union Pacific had continued after statehood. As Wyoming's oil, gas, iron ore and other mineral resources were developed, with the resultant increase in population in other portions of the state, some of the Union Pacific's influence in the legislature was lost.

Cheyenne had the atmosphere of the West. Cattle were the main topic. Homesteaders were coming, filing on lands, and they were not liked by the cattlemen. But the Cheyenne business houses felt their economy growing as lumber, posts, wire, windmills, groceries, and house supplies moved out to the homesteads. Cheyenne not only was the capital, but the county seat of Laramie County as well. Fort D. A. Russell with its foot soldiers and cavalry added to the western spirit of Cheyenne.

C. O. viewed Cheyenne and the surrounding area, and walked the streets to get the feel of it all. Shortly after his arrival in Cheyenne, a man tapped him on the shoulder and said, "I will locate you on a homestead near Chugwater." This man, along with the man on the train, greatly changed the life of the young adventurer from New York.

#### STARTING TO HOMESTEAD

C. O. asked the man for more information, and he said, "For \$150 I will pay the expense of the train, the travel to the land, the return trip expense, and the filing fee."

To this C. O. replied, "Man, I don't have \$150, and if I did I wouldn't give it to you."



The man laughed and said, "We are going up on the train in the morning. You pay me \$25 and pay your own train fare and I will help you locate the land. But keep quiet about it because the others going are each paying me \$150."

Years before the homesteaders came, the Chugwater Creek area north of Cheyenne was inhabited by Indians. To get meat from the buffalo herds, the Indians formed two lines leading to a cliff. Other Indians, riding horses, herded the buffalo toward the cliff between the two lines, driving buffalo over the cliff to their death. As the buffalo hit the ground near the stream, they made a chugging sound. The stream was called Chugwater by the Indians, a name later adopted by the ranchers.

C. O. and company arrived in Chugwater at the Burlington railroad depot and found a general store, the Swan Land and Cattle Company headquarters, a one-room schoolhouse, and several dwellings, one of which was occupied by Jack Porter. Jack was employed to drive the men across the prairie east of Chugwater to select their homestead. He had a team of western horses hitched to a mountain wagon with three seats. They traveled across Chugwater Creek, past the Swan buildings, up a long hill and on to the open prairie. There were no houses, no roads, no trees, no fences, just low rolling hills and level ground, all covered with prairie grass. Jack had been a cowboy for the Swan Company, more familiarly known as the Two-Bar, because of the brand they used.

At one time, the Swan Land and Cattle Company ran 100,000 cattle and 75,000 sheep on the public range. Their summer range was 75 miles west on the west side of the mountains. Much of their livestock was brought to Chugwater Creek for the winter where there was plenty of hay and shelter. They had 75 sheep dogs. Those dogs reportedly were imported from Australia, because the American dogs would mind only one master while the Australian dogs would attend sheep with any master. Most of the sheepherders were Mexicans and would remain in employment for short periods of time only—hence the importance of the Australian dogs. Wyoming law made it a penitentiary offense for a herder to leave a band of sheep without first being relieved by another herder. At the headquarters in Chugwater, the company maintained a large house for its employees, many of whom belonged to the local Masonic lodge. C. O.'s prior membership in that lodge would soon serve to establish him in the new community. But being in the midst of that large ranch operation was a test for a greenhorn from New York.

Huge ranches and miles of prairie were new to C. O. On and on they went through the endless prairie grass. This was completely different from the wooded areas of the East. Finally, Jack drove to the west end of a long valley and stopped the team. The locating man, Charles Christy, said, "Men, this is where your homesteads





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Ranchmen controlled the schools and were on the school boards. Much of the land was federally owned, not patented. The small amount of patented land was owned and controlled by ranchmen and their livestock grazed free on the public lands, so there was little tax money for schools. The district that included the school at Chugwater and the land C. O. had filed on was 20 miles east-west by 60 miles north-south. J. C. Underwood, a ranchman living 30 miles south of Chugwater, was clerk of the district. C. O. wrote to him, asking for a teaching job. Mr. Underwood wanted a teacher for the one-room school at his ranch, for his children and the children of other ranchers in the area, and he assigned that school to C. O. Shortly after that, however, C. O. was asked to teach in Chugwater. Underwood said he would release him from his school and assign him to the Chugwater school if he could get another man to take his place. C. O. wrote to another teacher he had met in Laramie, telling him about the job and this man agreed to take the Underwood school for \$50 per month. The only problem now was to make some money to tide him over until his first teaching check in September.

The big rodeo and celebration, Cheyenne Frontier Days, took place in August. C. O. went to Cheyenne and applied for work in a cafe where they needed an extra counter man during Frontier Week. He had worked as a counter man during his college days at Syracuse. He bought a black jacket for one dollar and went to work counter-hopping the next morning. About 11:30 that morning, in came a well-dressed man who ordered a beef sandwich and a glass of beer. C. O. ordered the sandwich and went through the door joining the bar and bought a glass of beer. The man left a quarter tip, after finishing his lunch. Later, C. O. found out that the man was U. S. Senator Francis Warren. He came in daily, ordered his lunch, and left C. O. a quarter tip. C. O. went home with \$18 for the week.

C. O. went back to Chugwater and employed Charlie Brandon to put down a well for water at the homestead. He hit water at 236 feet and C. O. paid him 50-cents a foot. Brandon put casing part way down, then he installed pipe to the bottom of the hole and put a pump on the pipe. C. O.'s teaching paid for these homestead needs.

Frank Brain, who had a homestead three miles away, was hired to plow the required acres on C. O.'s homestead, and was paid \$3 per acre for plowing 40 acres.

#### IOWA CENTER

There were several homesteading laws in effect at this time. The one that applied to the Chugwater area was the Homestead Act which allowed a maximum of 320 acres to each settler. Most of



the homesteaders filed on the full 320 acres. The residence requirement was five years with 80 acres cultivated. The Kinkaid Act allowed filing on 640 acres, but that was in Nebraska. Many of the people who filed on lands east of Chugwater came from Iowa, so a post office was created in this area about 12 miles east of Chugwater, it was logically given the name Iowa Center, and Mrs. Earl Arnold was named postmistress.

Some of the homesteaders filed only on 160 acres, and commuted from town after the required 14 months residence. A few came with money and built substantial houses and barns and lived as they had before. They fenced their land, put down wells, and bought cows to milk. They plowed the prairie sod and planted crops, usually with horses and machinery. Railroads prospered with the incoming homesteaders who quickly developed the public lands. Before long, wheat, flax, oats and livestock were being shipped out. Machinery, materials, and lumber were bought from mercantile companies in Cheyenne and Chugwater. Young men without families worked for the ranchers and put their earnings into buildings and machinery for their newly acquired lands. Some homesteaders employed their neighbors to plow the required acreage and seed it. Gradually, money was moving into the area. Because Chugwater was slow in creating markets for the grain, the farmers organized a cooperative and C. O. bought stock in it to help the community.

Fences were put up around the homesteads, marking section lines, which the rough roads usually followed. Some of the men took their teams and graded a short road in front of their land. Because the county seat was in Cheyenne, 50 miles south of Chugwater, the county commissioners were slow in realizing the new development. As a matter of fact, there was not enough tax money to meet all the newcomers' needs. Most of the commissioners were ranchmen. The homesteaders settled on the public prairie, which had previously been free grazing for the ranchers' livestock, so they didn't look kindly toward spending money for roads to help those who were destroying their way of life. However, the homesteaders bought goods in Cheyenne and helped the general economy of the county and state, and gradually overcame the ranchers' adversity.

### TEACHING SCHOOL

C. O. opened the one-room school at Chugwater in the fall of 1910. There were 14 pupils, from the Swan Company families, and from homestead and other ranch families. There were several grades, and C. O. was kept quite busy. He rode his horse from his homestead 16 miles out to start this term of school. The horse was turned loose within the school grounds, which were fenced. Grass was plentiful, and Chugwater Creek passed through the grounds.



Mrs. Austin had a boarding house for the Swan employees, and C. O. ate there too. Thus, he soon was settled in the western community. One requirement for all the students at his school was that each read a book aloud at home once each month. Some students groaned about it, but they all read a book. The size of the book was left to each student. Each student's word was taken at the end of the month, and a record was kept. This requirement was talked about around the Chugwater area.

C. O. completed the eight-month term of school at Chugwater and Jess Yoder asked him to teach a six-month term at his ranch during the summer. The school board of the district approved this, so C. O. finished the school at Chugwater on a Friday and Monday morning started the summer ranch school at Jess's ranch, six miles from his homestead. The schoolhouse there was made of sod with a door made of planks. Foot-wide boards were put on the roof, and sod was put on top of those boards. Two windows illuminated the inside of the building for this school. School was disrupted only once during the six-month term, when a skunk was discovered under the floor. The children were dismissed while C. O. pulled up the floor boards and got rid of the animal. Classes were resumed the following day. Early in the morning C. O. rode his horse to school, taught until 4:00 p.m., and rode back to his shack for the night. He wore his western boots both for riding and teaching school. The ranch children also wore boots, so C. O. was right in style. Years after, one of the pupils at the school told C. O., "The best days of my life were the days I spent at that school. The life was free and easy. We learned there the things we needed later to get us through life."

C. O. rode as the crow flies across the open prairie. On many occasions, he rode up over a hill and scared up several antelope and occasionally a deer. At times he rode through many cattle grazing on the prairie. The prairie was covered with wild flowers amidst the grass. Cattle, horses, and antelope found early grass on the ridges to feed on during and after spring blizzards. The grass was short, but it was said that it contained almost as much protein as oats. Later came the gramma grass, which grew taller and had leaders from the stem containing seeds with strength for the grazing stock. The prairie wheat grass came on a little later, grew taller, and gave the stock strength after the other grasses of the prairie ripened beyond choice for the cattle and horses. Many tons of native prairie hay were cut to stack for winter use. It was mostly cut in the large valleys where the winter snow and the spring rains added the moisture that develops taller grass. Cattle grew fat on these western prairie grasses and were shipped to market for slaughter. The cattle roundups for shipping in the fall required many cowboys to drive the cattle to the railroad shipping points. The Swan Land and Cattle Company was said to have 100,000 cattle and almost as many sheep grazing on the free prairie at the



height of its operation. Other ranches were also believed to have large numbers.

By this time another school was needed east of the Iowa Center community. The ranchman school board members told the community that the district would pay for the lumber, provided the parents would haul out the materials and construct the building. All of the community helped with this project and the building was ready for school in the fall of 1911. The school board requested that C. O. teach in this new community building. So, after finishing the Jess Yoder school on Friday night, C. O. started the new school the following Monday morning with 32 children of all ages in attendance, from first grade through the eighth grade. By four o'clock in the afternoon, the teacher was ready to go east two miles to his homestead shack for peace and quiet. The next morning back he went to school to help each pupil with his learning. He took a lunch to get him through the noon hour.

C. O. taught 27 months with only three weeks off. During that time, he was cutting posts in a nearby canyon to fence the remainder of his 160 acres.

L. B. Hunt, owner of the Chugwater Mercantile Company, asked one Friday morning, "Downing, are you riding out to your homestead this afternoon?" C. O. said, "Yes." Hunt said, "Ride my horse, Gunpowder, out. I have a carload of potatoes here on the track and I want the people out east to know that it is here, so they can come in and get a supply of potatoes. Gunpowder won't buck you off, and it won't hurt to ride him hard. Just ride zigzag north and south from the main route and spread the word, but when you get to your homestead don't turn Gunpowder loose. If you do, you can't catch him."

After school, C. O. rode Gunpowder toward his home, spreading the news of the carload of potatoes as he went. He stopped at a community meeting, while an old-fashioned literary society was in progress. Many were there, including a young lady named Belle Charlson, who might have been the reason he stopped. He arrived home late that night, put the rope around Gunpowder's neck, and went to bed. However, when he looked out in the morning, he saw that Gunpowder had gotten the rope off, and try as he might, he couldn't catch him. When he got the horse in a corner of the fence, Gunpowder would jump and run to the far side of the ten acres. There was nothing to do but to go for help. C. O. walked west, but no one was at home at the first stop. He walked to the next habitation and no one was home there either. Finally, he arrived at the home of Bill Wright, who was a good horseman. He drove C. O. back to his place and the two of them were able to catch Mr. Gunpowder. C. O. was mighty glad. He paid Bill, saddled Gunpowder, and after the pasture gate was closed, he mounted and gave Gunpowder a hard 16-mile ride into Chugwater.



## LIFE ON THE HOMESTEAD

All the prairie land from Chugwater east to C. O.'s homestead and even farther was settled by homesteaders. Houses and barns were built and fences erected; the prairie took on the patchwork look of farming and stock raising; wagons traveling to and from Chugwater wore ruts for roads; and at night, one could see lights shining from homes in all directions. Railroad cars brought machinery, livestock and household goods. Many homesteaders milked cows and sold cream or raised chickens and sold eggs. Soon, incomes improved family living. Community meetings in schoolhouses or at the larger houses brought people together. Literary societies were formed with semi-monthly meetings and there were spelling contests, book reviews, debates, and public speaking, all with food brought in for a full evening. C. O. attended many of these where he met his neighbors, old and new. Afterwards, he rode to his homestead shack for the weekend. Many Saturday night dances were held—people rode miles for an all night dance, and then rode home in the morning light.

One large dance was held at the Kelly ranch, about one mile north of the town of Chugwater. This ranch had a large log house, with many rooms. Everyone was invited to the dance and C. O. asked Belle Charlson to go with him. The dance master was Bill Yates who was an old-time cowboy and had a ranch of his own on Bear Creek. A three piece orchestra was engaged for the music. There were square dances, two-steps, and waltzes, with at least three sets in different rooms. Bill called all three sets, and when one set got mixed up, Bill stopped the music, straightened it out and went on with the dance.

The homesteaders had been named "Wrinkle Bellies" by the ranchmen. This came from the supposition that the newcomers didn't have enough to eat and their bellies had wrinkles. However, at Thanksgiving and Christmas, all the people of the community met at one homestead for a feast. All brought food and there was singing, horseshoe pitching, racing, wrestling and a ball game. It was a happy, congenial but hard-working group.

## BELLE.

When Julia Isabelle Charlson and Amelia (Millie) Marvick decided to leave Iowa to homestead in Wyoming, relatives came from far and near to tell them goodbye. They were afraid they would never see the girls again. Belle's aunt presented her with a small bottle of whiskey for snake bites, and a can of black pepper to be thrown in the eyes of fresh cowboys.

Belle and Millie came from the town of Story City, Iowa, just 50 miles north of Des Moines, and filed on adjoining homesteads near Iowa Center. Their shacks were built near a common boundary so they were close to each other.



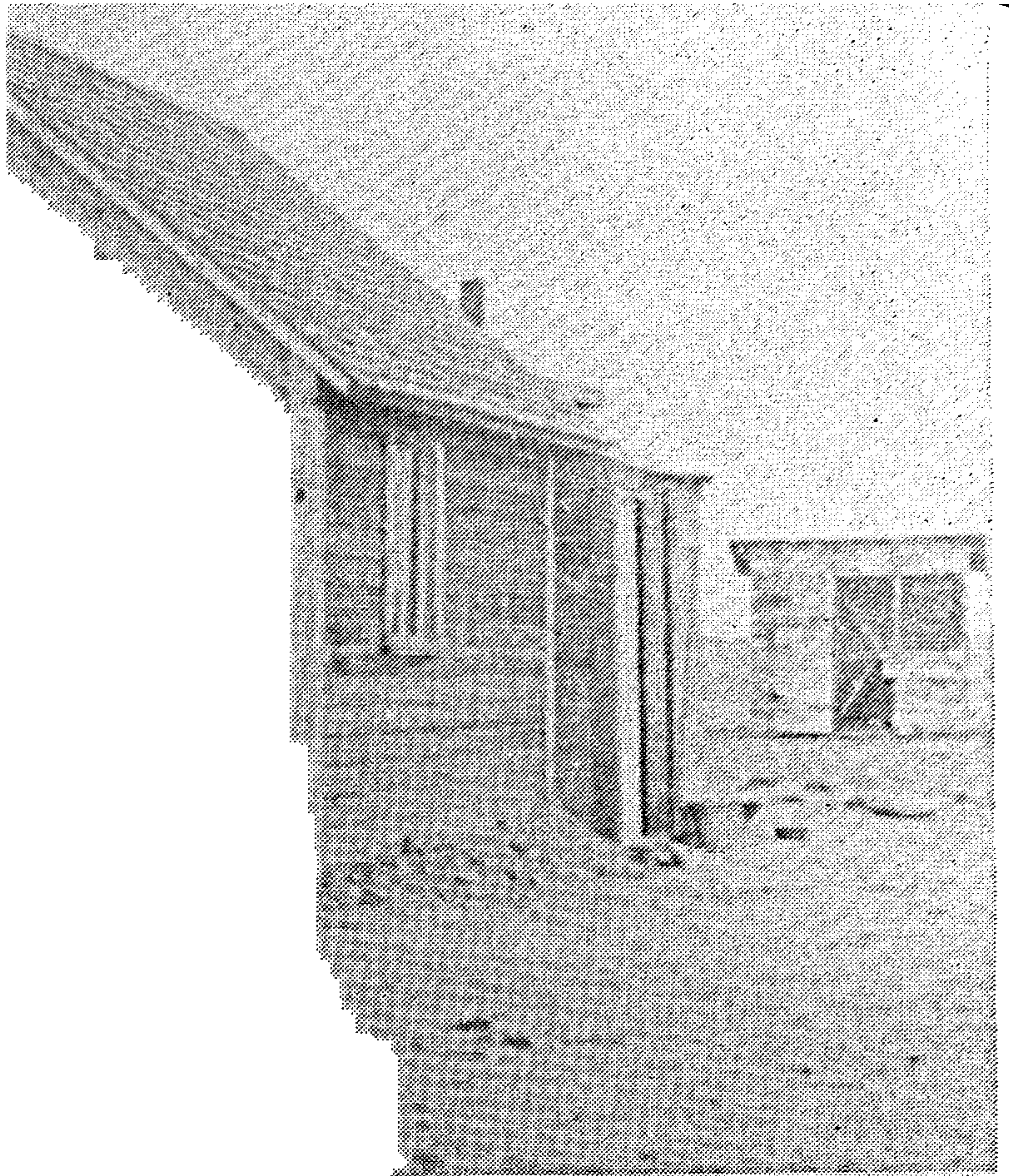


Photo courtesy of C. O. Downing

**“BELLE AND C. O. DOWNING WITH DILL”**

was taken in front of Belle’s homestead shack. C. O.’s shack was joined to the rear of the structure.

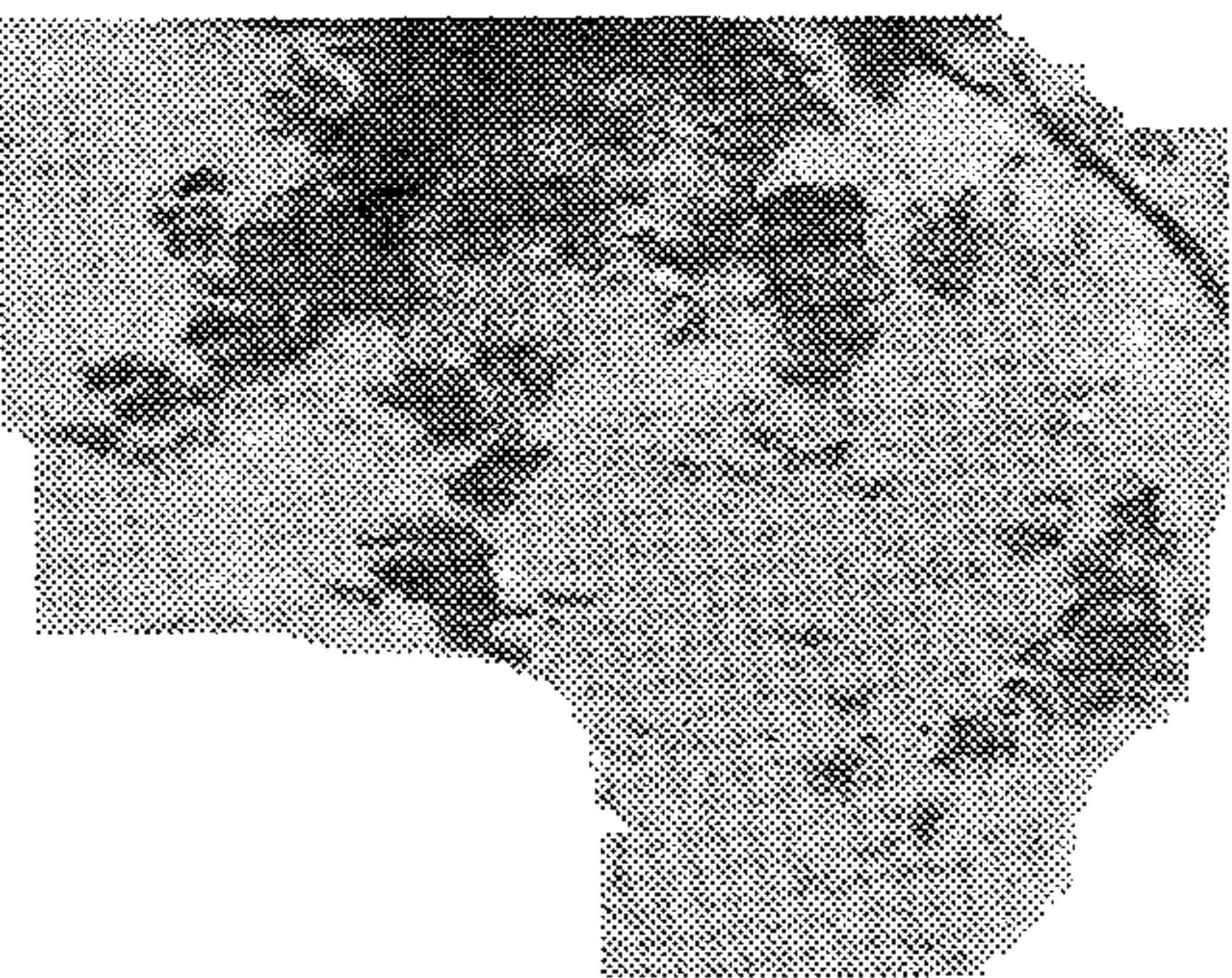






Photo courtesy of C. O. Downing

**“EARLY AUTOMOBILES IN GOSHEN COUNTY”**


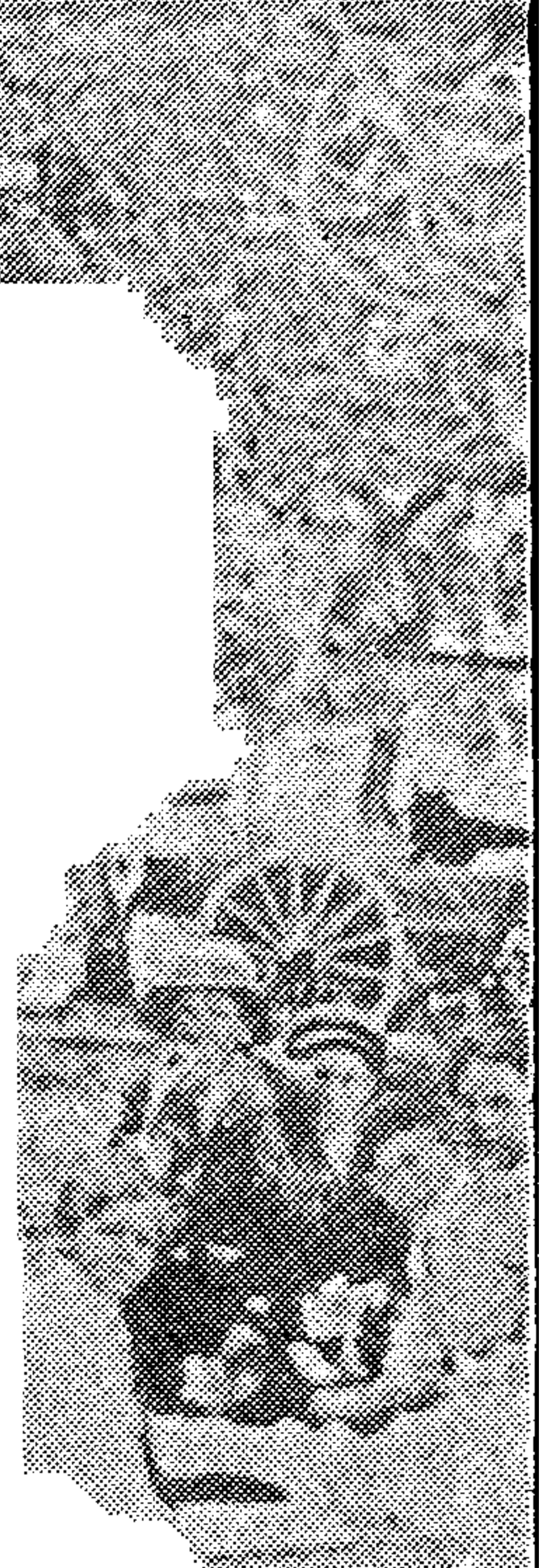
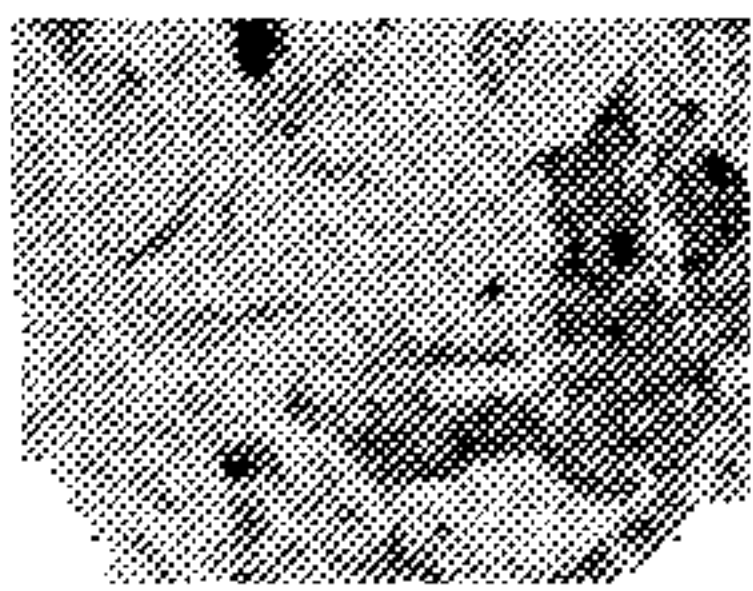


Photo courtesy of C. O. Downing

**“HOMESTEADER’S PICNIC, JULY 4, 1911, AT BEAR CREEK”**





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A school was needed for the children in this community and the Iowa Center school board employed Belle to teach. The board paid the teacher \$50 a month and furnished books which were gathered from schools that had been at the ranches. Because there was no tax money to build a school, the parents of the community's children chose a building on a temporarily vacated homestead. The building was about sixteen feet square and the prairie ground provided the only floor. On a Monday morning, Belle went to the building to open school. As she opened the door, out ran a young steer. Undaunted, Belle entered the building, took the names of the children, and started school. Belle was patient, a good teacher, and the parents and the school board were pleased with her work.

Years later, Miss Charlson, then Mrs. Downing, told her daughters, Lois and Dorothy, a little about homesteading. One of them mentioned that it seemed a bleak and rather lonesome life. Belle replied that she was lonely at times, but the wind, for which eastern Wyoming is notorious, kept her company. However, the wind was responsible for scattering her suitcases and their contents for miles upon her arrival at the shack. She had chosen an acreage with a large ravine—a poor choice as far as the future value of the land was concerned. But Belle thought it would be picturesque and it provided a break in the monotony of the prairie land. Fortunately, the ravine caught and held many of the articles contained in the errant suitcases.

With the coming of Miss Charlson to Iowa Center, C. O.'s interest in the literary society and various other social activities increased sharply, and the two of them enjoyed many happy hours together. After a while, they decided to be married.

The wedding was set for a Saturday, but due to a bad snow storm, was postponed until the following Monday. During the ceremony, held at the preacher's shack, newly hatched chicks under the preacher's bed provided the only wedding music.

Fuel was scarce on the prairie so a week after the wedding the newlyweds set out on a honeymoon trip to Lone Tree Canyon to gather a wagon load of pine and cedar.

After Belle proved residency and improvement on her homestead land, she had her shack joined to C. O.'s to form a two-room shack! C. O. had a board granary built and a windmill installed on his well. Many neighbors brought their cattle and horses there for water. The homesteaders worked together and helped each other in many ways.

The Downings were fortunate in having Wid and Ida Eyler for neighbors. Ida showed Belle how to dress chickens, make pies and bake bread and, on at least one occasion, she cut up a hog that had just been butchered and showed the new bride how to make head cheese. Belle was learning a lot, but at times life on the homestead seemed hard indeed. She was particularly saddened when one of



the pigs ate several of the baby chicks she was raising. Another pet, a horse named Doll, was bitten on the nose by a rattlesnake while grazing and her nose swelled until she could be heard wheezing a mile away. Belle applied a soda and vinegar poultice daily for several weeks and gradually Doll recovered.

In August, 1913, Belle's father, C. J. Charlson, passed away. The message was telephoned to Cheyenne then to the Yoder ranch, and Myrtle Yoder rode out to the homestead with the message. C. O. quickly hitched the team to the old buggy and drove across Fox Creek Canyon to bring the news to Belle's sister, Helen. Both sisters took the only passenger train south for Cheyenne. A closely-knit family was all assembled when Nellie, another sister, received the message. She had been singing with the Saint Olaf Choir in Europe. She was aboard the "Hellige Olav Steamer" at the time, and was landed quickly. She boarded a train on the Lackawanna Railroad and soon joined the family. C. O. went back to the homestead and his teaching.

After spending a few weeks at home, Nellie went to Des Moines for further business schooling. Belle returned to the homestead with her younger sister, Cora, in tow and C. O. helped Cora find a teaching job. Cora was then given the dubious pleasure of driving Doll two and a half miles to school and back. Doll was slow, but Cora found she could coax her to go faster by singing to her. So away they went each day, arriving just in time for school.

C. O.'s new frame granary was on a concrete foundation, and with her woman's touch, Cora soon made it her sleeping quarters. With the addition of bed springs and a mattress to a two-by-four frame, Cora had a comfortable bed. Late one night, Wid Eyer sneaked over to the granary, opened the door, and threw a coyote hide on Cora's bed while she slept. Just as she was recovering from that surprise, a neckyoke, which was hanging on the granary wall, fell on her bed, but Cora was a good sport, was afraid of nothing, and thoroughly enjoyed her little "guest house."

#### ROADS, FENCES, AND THE SHOT-GUN OUTFIT

The big news on the homestead was Jess Yoder's new Buick automobile, the first in the area. The only problem about owning the first automobile in the area was that the only roads over the prairie were wagon trails, and now that Jess had a car he needed a road. His ranch was about 30 miles from Chugwater, where he had to go for supplies every few weeks. To remedy the situation, he fastened a regular walking plow to the back of a wagon, pulled by two horses, and started out across the prairie, making a furrow as he went. To complete the job, he turned around and made a second furrow next to the first one on the way back. C. O. was



surprised to see this crude road-making outfit pass his homestead after seeing nothing but horseback riders and an occasional wagon. The road was built and other homesteaders purchased cars as time went on. The addition of automobiles made a big change in homestead living.

Jess had been the foreman for the Two Bar outfit before settling on his own ranch and becoming the foreman of the "Shot-Gun outfit." The "Shot-Gun outfit" was the name given collectively to all the small ranchers on Fox Creek, Bear Creek, and Horse Creek who went together for the spring and fall roundups.

All the ranches in the area, large and small, including the large Swan Company, went together and built a north-south drift fence across public land about ten miles east of Chugwater Creek. This fence prevented the Swan cattle from ranging too far east from Swan headquarters in Chugwater and kept the Shot-Gun cattle from drifting too far west into Swan country.

Teddy Roosevelt, then President of the United States, ordered all fences taken down from public lands to make room for the homesteaders. Both Swan and Shot-Gun ranchers ignored the order and left the drift fence up. The President then ordered the cavalry in Cheyenne to move out to the fence and cut it down. The posts were cut to the ground and the wire cut to bits with no resistance from the ranchers. Some of the stubs can still be found today. Homesteaders coming in gathered the posts for firewood as they settled.

#### GOSHEN HALE AND GOSHEN COUNTY

From 1884 to 1910, Laramie County extended 35 miles north of the North Platte River, which flows east from central Wyoming to the Nebraska-Wyoming border. Many people settled on homesteads, ranches, and in small towns along the river. Consequently, Cheyenne, the county seat, was a long distance for many of the people in the northern part of Laramie County to travel for county business, including recording deeds, patents, securing marriage licenses, and other registrations. In order to receive better representation in Cheyenne, these people sent petitions to the governor, which resulted in the election of a senator from the North Platte community. The senator, J. L. Sawyer, secured passage of legislation which allowed the residents of the area to vote whether or not they wished to form a new county. The residents of northern Laramie County were quick to take advantage of this new legislation and outlined an area which included Iowa Center, extending north-south 72 miles and east-west three miles west of the Iowa Center post office to the Nebraska-Wyoming line. These boundaries included the North Platte and the area 36 miles north of that river.



Following this legislation, Governor Joseph M. Carey appointed a clerk and a commission to hold an election for the people of the area to vote whether or not they wanted to form a new county. These men set up voting precincts, one of which was Iowa Center. C. O. was named a judge of election and Belle was named the clerk of election. The voting took place at Christy's homestead. Christy had operated a small store in a town in Iowa and had brought a lot of merchandise with him, including a number of small hats for boys. C. O. bought these caps and distributed them to the boys in the area prior to the election; all who voted at Christy's Iowa Center precinct voted in favor of the new county. Although some ranchers at the southern end of Laramie County had voted against the resolution, the majority of the electorate in the designated area voted for the forming of the new county. In 1911, the new county of Goshen was created. The name was chosen in a roundabout way from the name of a cowboy, Goshen Hale, who worked for the Union Cattle Company.

The Union Cattle Company, an English outfit with headquarters on Bear Creek, ran thousands of cattle on the prairie of eastern Wyoming and western Nebraska. These were the times of the open range. Much of the land was owned by the federal government, except for a few spots on streams, and cattle ranged on public grass the year around. The Union Company had title to thousands of homestead acres up and down Horse Creek, Bear Creek, Fox Creek and on Cherry Creek, primarily because they had their cowboys file homesteads on these streams. The story goes that a Union Cattle Company cowboy filed on a piece of land, built a little house 20 inches square, and then went to the land office to make proof. The question was asked, "Have you a house on this land?" The answer was, "Yes, a house 20 by 20." No one looked into the matter and the cowboy was granted the land. Later on, this cattle company sold 35,000 acres to the Lincoln Land Company and quit the Wyoming and Nebraska cattle business when the homesteaders started fencing the public ranges.

Many cowboys were needed in the spring and also in the fall to round up cattle, but in the winter, when they weren't needed, many of the cowboys lived in canyons where water, wood and game were plentiful. One cowboy, by the name of Goshen Hale, wintered with some of his friends in what was called Lone Tree Canyon, a few miles north of the Fisher Ranch. The foreman and the chore boy wintered on the Fisher Ranch. In the early spring, the foreman said to the chore boy, "Go over to Goshen's hole and tell the cowboys it is time to come to the ranch for the spring roundup." After that the lower prairie was called Goshen Hole and Goshen County took its name from this area. At that time the assessed valuation of the county was \$3,500,000. In fifty years, the assessed valuation leaped tenfold to \$32,000,000.



## ELECTIONS

After the new county was formed, an election was held to select the county seat. Along the North Platte River, the town of Torrington was established a few miles west of the Nebraska state line. Ten miles west, the town of Lingle was thriving. Naturally, the citizens of both Torrington and Lingle wanted their towns to be the new county seat of Goshen County. The officers of the Burlington Railroad which ran through both towns owned much of the land and lots in Torrington. Just before the election which determined the county seat, the citizens of Torrington and the surrounding area agreed to build a new court house building if Torrington was selected. This offer swung the votes, and in 1912, a new building valued at \$20,000, was erected at no cost to the taxpayers of the new county.

The new county now needed officers and C. O. decided to run for the post of county superintendent of schools. He was interested in organizing the one-room schools and in getting adequate textbooks and materials for all students.

C. O. borrowed a saddle horse from the Jess Yoder ranch. He set out early in the morning, rode all day, a distance of 45 miles, passed one house, and arrived in Torrington. For the next two days he visited with people in Torrington, soliciting their votes then rode back to his homestead to await the results of the elections. He was elected, and was to be sworn in on January 5, 1913, in Torrington. The day before his swearing-in, C. O. hired Frank Brain to drive him to Torrington. They had no thermometer, no phone, and no weatherman, but they knew it was a very cold ride. During the trip, the two men took turns running behind the buggy to warm up. When they arrived in Torrington late at night, they learned that it was 30 degrees below zero. Had they known how cold it was, they probably wouldn't have made the trip.

C. O.'s office was in a small, rented building in Torrington in which the county clerk also maintained his office. However, C. O. didn't stay long in Torrington because it was important for him to locate all the schools of the county. There were two teachers in Torrington, one in Lingle and one in Fort Laramie, but there were many schools on ranches scattered about the county. C. O. drove for three weeks with team and buggy to locate the schools and he became acquainted with all the schools and their teachers. The county school board and the new superintendent met and divided the county into four school districts—District Number One extended across the north part of the county; Number Two was the area around Fort Laramie; the Torrington area was District Three; and the south end of the county was District Number Four. The system of town and ranch schools improved with the ever-expanding population and tax base of the county. C. O. required all the children in the county schools to write him a letter once a month.



He thought it was good experience for them and it also was enlightening for him.

LINGLE vs. WYNCOTE  
A WYOMING GHOST TOWN

E. B. Hudson had been the manager of the PF Ranch and had developed a farm near Torrington along the Lucerne canal. About 1903, the Burlington Railroad built across the south side of the farm and E. B. set up a post office at his home with Mrs. Hudson as postmistress. The post office was called Wyncote. The railroad set off an aged passenger coach for a depot, and employed a station master. Several stores were started, and the town of Wyncote was on its way. The railroad company asked Mr. and Mrs. Hudson for additional land for switching. Mr. Hudson told them they could have what footage was needed, but Mrs. Hudson saw a chance to make a little money, so she said, "You measure off the land you need and we will give a price on it."

The land three miles east along the railroad right of way belonged to H. D. Lingle. He heard of the needs of the railroad and immediately told the railroad to move the station to his land and he would give them all the ground they needed for track. A few days later a Burlington engine with several men and a flat car backed up to the Wyncote station. The passenger car station was loaded, and the engine moved east to the Lingle land where the passenger car was left for a station at the future site of Lingle, Wyoming. With the loss of the Burlington station, the town of Wyncote dried up, and stores were moved to the Lingle townsite. Eventually, the post office was moved to the town of Lingle, and Wyncote was virtually forgotten.

TORRINGTON: THE MAKING OF A WESTERN TOWN

Wyoming Territory was formed with the present Wyoming state boundaries. Five counties were formed, all extending from the south line of the territory to the north line and the seat of government of each was situated on the line of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Several trails were used by emigrants crossing the territory headed for Oregon and California. Some of the emigrants grew tired of their traveling and settled along these trails. Old Fort Laramie was a major stopping place for travelers following the Oregon Trail. Marshall Field of Chicago had a contract with the United States Government to furnish supplies to the fort and the supplies were brought in by wagon.

The first known settlers in the Torrington area were Sioux Indians with their Chief Red Cloud. Their headquarters were along the banks of the North Platte River between the present towns of Torrington and Lingle.

Red Cloud, along with many other Indian chiefs signed a treaty





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It acquired water and sewer for the homes of the town, paved its streets and developed more farms. The cement school building built in Torrington was ridiculed on the grounds that there would never be enough students to use all of it. Later, it was full to overflowing. The area was developed by the energy and determination of many men.

After three terms as county superintendent, and one term as county assessor, C. O. decided if he could manage the business of the county schools, he might be able to handle a business of his own. He bought a house in Torrington and started a real estate office. The real estate business grew as the town of Torrington grew. C. O. and Belle lived in Torrington and raised their three children there.

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### CORRECTION

On page 230 of Vol. 42, No. 2, October, 1970, a footnote to the article, "Voting Patterns in the Wyoming Constitutional Convention of 1889," should read as follows: Zero equals a no vote or an absence. The YYNNN indicate the yea or nay characteristic of the votes in the Guttman scaleogram.



# *The Crow Indian Treaties of 1868*

AN EXAMPLE OF POWER STRUGGLE AND CONFUSION IN  
UNITED STATES INDIAN POLICY

*By*

A. GLEN HUMPHERYS

In the years immediately following the Civil War, the Crow Indians were part of a four-cornered confrontation of power. They also were victims of inefficient, uncorrelated government actions. But the Crow were successful in preserving a large portion of their ancestral lands.

The economic development of the American West by railroads, mining, and settlement was the most powerful, disruptive force. Industry that had rapidly expanded during the Civil War was mainly located in the Ohio River Valley and New England. The railroads that were linking the California wealth, markets, and Pacific parts to the industrial East cut across the Indian-dominated Great Plains.

The second movement to change the basic way of life of the Plains Indians was the humanitarian civilization program of the 19th Century liberals. The Office of Indian Affairs was the government agency through which this viewpoint was spread just as the army was the agency protecting the railroads. These two government methods, force and peace, confronted the divided and warring Indian tribes. Many Indians used raids and hostility in response to the railroad intrusion, thereby answering force with force. Red Cloud and his band of Sioux were the outstanding example on the northern plains of Indians using power politics. The Crow represented the fourth corner of the power position. By peaceful alliance with the United States Government, they hoped to obtain a strong ally to protect them against other Indian tribes. The Crow also used the peaceful treaty process to preserve their tribal lands. In the midst of this conflict of respective interests, the government was inefficient, disinterested, uncoordinated. The two Crow treaties of 1868 are illustrative of this inept government role, with one being ratified and the other disregarded.

Part of the circumstances that created these basic and significant Crow treaties grew out of the Union Pacific Railroad stretching the edge of civilization arrow-like toward the Wyoming plateau. There the Bozeman Road linked the outpost forts of Laramie, Fetterman, Reno, Phil Kearny, C. F. Smith, and Ellis to the Montana boom towns of Virginia City, Diamond City, and Last Chance Gulch. These iron bands and dirt traces cut across the hunting grounds of



most of the Plains Indians. The resulting raids against workers, travelers, and settlers were also widespread against the freighters, stage drivers, and gandy dancers. However, it was completion of the railroad that made possible the treaty concession demanded by both the Crow and Sioux to abandon the forts along the Bozeman Road. Traffic could go west by rail to the Great Salt Lake then north by wagon or coach across Idaho to Montana.

Mining in Montana was another factor, in addition to railroads, that created a need to locate the Indian tribes on a clearly defined reservation. The Blackfeet, Sioux, Crow, Gros Ventre, and Flathead tribes all claimed the mountains of Montana. But since mines were dug where the ore might be found without regard to the unwritten and poorly defined Indian claims, the miners wanted not only freedom from attack but also mining rights on the Indian lands. This could be accomplished either by treaty or removal. Lacking faith in the ability of treaties to keep peace, the acting governor of Montana, Thomas F. Meagher, a former Union officer, in April of 1867, created a force of volunteers to protect against Indian depredations. On September 9, 1867, after an unsuccessful chase to overtake Indians on the Yellowstone, the Seventh Regiment of Volunteers left Camp Meagher to attack the Crows on the Sweetwater River. They felt there was no doubt of the hostility of the Crows.<sup>1</sup> This regiment of Montana troops almost involved the United States in an interminable war with the Crows except for the timely intervention of the regular army. The use of volunteer troops was further condemned by the policy recommendation that no governor or legislature of states or territories be permitted to call out and equip troops for the purpose of carrying on war against Indians. Since Colorado troops were involved in the war of 1864-65 with the Cheyennes, and the hundred-day men perpetrated the butchery at Sand Creek, the army wanted control of Indian affairs directly and did not want either the militia or the civilian Indian agents disrupting order on the frontier.<sup>2</sup>

Congress made provision in July, 1867, for a top-ranking commission to make peace, settle Indians on reservations and, if possible, remove the causes of hostilities. This group differed from the usual presidential appointees that made treaties with the Indians in that the prestige and composition of the commission added to its power. President Andrew Johnson appointed Lieutenant General William T. Sherman and Brevet Major General William S. Harney and Alfred H. Terry as members of the Indian Peace Commission. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel G.

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1. *New York Times*, September 22, 1867, p. 4.

2. U. S. Congress, House, *Report of the Indian Peace Commission*, 40th Cong., 2d Sess., 1868, Exec. Doc. 97, p. 22.



Taylor, a former Methodist minister, and Senator John B. Henderson of Missouri, chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, had places provided by law on the peace group. Samuel F. Tappan of Colorado, and John B. Sanborn, both of whom had been generals in the volunteer forces, were named to the commission.<sup>3</sup> Later, Brevet Major General Christopher C. Augur was added to the group when Sherman was called to Washington.<sup>4</sup>

The commission held its first meeting at the headquarters of General Sherman in St. Louis on August 8, 1867. The group organized with N. G. Taylor as president and Ashton S. H. White, also of the Office of Indian Affairs, as secretary. Tappan and Sanborn were named as a purchasing committee for supplies.<sup>5</sup> The commission then proceeded to conduct peace councils with the Plains Indians despite widespread opinion that money would be wasted on useless treaties, that the war had been provoked by agents for their own profit and that the army was growing restless for victory.<sup>6</sup>

The Indian summer fires had swept the prairies for hundreds of miles.<sup>7</sup> Then, brisk fall winds revealed the lateness of the season as the commissioners arrived at Fort Laramie in November, 1867, following their successful treaty council at Medicine Lodge Creek. The commission was disappointed that Red Cloud and his band of Sioux had not come to Fort Laramie.<sup>8</sup> However, the commission did hold a council with the Crow. The commissioners knew that the Crow were friendly and that good management would keep them peaceful. The Crow were bitterly hostile to the Sioux who had driven them from their country on the Powder and Big Horn Rivers and were occupying it themselves.

On November 12, 1867, beaver trappers, buffalo hunters, traders, and Laramie loafers crowded into the quartermasters storehouse for the Crow treaty council. The Crow chiefs among whom were White Horse, Wolf Bull, Shot-in-the-Face, and Blackfoot appeared with full costume. The chiefs forded the Laramie River, followed by their women and children. Chanting a Crow song, the chiefs filed into the storehouse where the commissioners and the Crow leaders were seated on chairs and benches which formed a circle when filled in by the secretary, agents, interpreters and

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3. *New York Times*, July 27, 1867, p. 5.

4. Telegram, Grant to Augur, October 5, 1867, NARS, RG 98, LR, Dept. of the Platte. As cited by James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), p. 59.

5. *New York Times*, August 9, 1867, p. 1.

6. *Ibid.*, July 28, 1867, p. 4.

7. *Deseret Evening News*, November 21, 1867, p. 1.

8. *New York Times*, November 29, 1867, p. 2.



journalists. All the others moved in around the room as the Crow treaty council began.<sup>9</sup>

As silence was established, Dr. Mathews, U. S. agent for the Crows, arose and presented to the commission the chiefs of the Crow nation. Turning toward the chiefs, Mathews introduced the commissioners sent from Washington to make peace. The council then was opened by Commissioner Taylor, who delivered his usual preliminary speech which contained many fine promises and soothing words.<sup>10</sup> His speech was translated by Pierre Chene, a Canadian, and by John Richard, Jr., who also was the messenger who summoned the Crow to council.<sup>11</sup>

Bear's Tooth arose and honored the commission by four times repeating this ceremony as related by the correspondent of the *New York Times*:

"Father" said he to Harney, "smoke and take pity on me" which request the general gladly complied with. "Father" he repeated to Col. Tappan "smoke and remember me and my people."

"Father" he again said, handling the hookah up to Sanborn, "smoke and remember me and my people, for we are very poor."

"Father" he said, turning to Taylor "smoke and give me what I shall ask" and handling the pipe to Generals Augur and Terry he again said to each, "Father, smoke, I have come from afar, grant me what I shall ask, and take pity upon me."

Three times did he repeat the ceremony, uttering only the simple adjuration "Father take pity upon me; smoke and grant me what I shall ask," then slowly walking to the center, and casting a sweeping look around, he commenced his speech as follows.

"My friends and fathers, last spring I came from the Big Horn and one of your young men said that you were coming to see us. This fall, when the leaves of the trees were falling the Crows were on the Yellowstone, and a messenger from you came to invite us to a pow-wow. He brought me ten plugs of tobacco and thus delivered your message. I studied about it, and at last, though it was a long journey, I concluded to come, and in answer to the invitation I said 'yes, yes.' I want my father to come to Fort Phil Kearny, and not to Laramie, and I said that if he came I would say 'yes, yes' to everything he would ask. But then the cold days of winter came and I had to come to Laramie, I therefore want my fathers to say 'yes, yes' to every request of mine. I have been waiting for you a long time. I am hungry and cold. Look at me well all of you. I am a man like each of you. I have limbs and a head like you. We all look like one and the same people. I like my children to prosper and grow rich."

Then getting up he walked up to Taylor and Harney, and lifting up

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9. Wilson O. Clough, ed. and trans., "Fort Russell and Fort Laramie Peace Commission in 1867," Historical Reprints, Sources of Northwest History No. 14, Missoula: State University of Montana, p. 7. Reprinted from *The Frontier: A Magazine of the Northwest*, XI, (January, 1931).

10. *New York Times*, November 23, 1867, p. 8.

11. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent* (Washington: National Archives Microfilm publication, Microcopy No. 21, 1943), 86:111.



his voice he cried out "*Achan! Achan! Achan!* Father, Father, Father, listen well; call your young men back from the Big Horn. It would please me and my people. Your young men have gone on the Powder River Road and have destroyed my timber and green grass and have burnt up the country. Father! Your young men have gone on the road and have killed my game—my buffalo. They did not kill to eat, they left it where it fell. Father, were I to go to your country to kill game or your cattle, what would you say? Would you not declare war? Well, the Sioux proffered me hundreds of mules and horses to go with them to war; I did not go. A long time ago you made a treaty with the Crow Nation and afterwards you took a chief with you to the States. He has never returned. Where is he? We have never seen him, and we are tired of waiting for him. Give us what he left, for we have come for his last words. I have heard that you have sent messengers to the Sioux; but the Sioux tell me that they will not come. You have cheated them once. The Sioux tell us in a jeering way—'Ah, the white fathers are calling to you. You are going to see them. Ah, they will treat you as they have treated us. Go and see them and then come back and tell us what you have heard. The white fathers will beguile your ears with soft words and sweet promises, but they will never keep them. Go and see them and they will laugh at you.' In spite of these words of the Sioux I have come to see you. When I go back I expect to lose more than half my horses. Father, Father, the Great Spirit made us all, but he put the red man in the centre surrounded by the whites, Ah, my heart is full and sad. All the Crows and the old chiefs of bygone days our forefathers, told us often, 'Be friendly to the palefaces for they are mighty.' We their children have obeyed. A long time ago, over forty years, the Crows camped on the Missouri. Our chief was knocked on the head by a white chief." (Here he was interrupted by Gen. Harney who said, "Ah! I remember the time, but the White Chief was crazy!")

"On the Yellowstone stream there were three wagons camped, and there were four palefaces with them. Four Crows went up to them and asked for a piece of bread; One of the white men took out a gun and shot Sorrel-Horse, a chief, dead. And many other things have happened in just the same manner, but we jump over them. These things I tell you to show you that the palefaces have done wrong, as well as the Indians.

("That's so," loudly responded Gen. Harney. "The Indians are a great deal better than the whites are.")

"Sometime ago I went to Fort Benton because we had done some wrong. Also, and begged pardon from the white chief at that post. I gave him nine mules and sixty robes as atonement for what my tribe had done. I thus paid for my wrong. I then went on the Big Horn to Fort Smith and found that there were whites there. I went up to shake hands with the officers, but they replied by shoving their fists in my face and knocking me down. That is the way we are treated by your young men. Father, you talk about farming and about raising cattle. I don't want a hear it. I was raised on buffalo and I love it. From my birth I have been raised on buffalo meat, and left to move my camp where I like—to roam over the prairies at will. Fathers, fathers, take pity upon us. I am tired of talking.

"You father," said he, as he concluded his speech, and turning to Taylor, took off his mocassins and handed them to the commissioner, "keep your feet warm with these mocassins."<sup>12</sup>

12. *New York Times*, November 23, 1867, p. 8.



To give greater emphasis to the demands the Crow were making of the commission, Blackfoot, a Crow warrior of gigantic stature, rose up and shaking hands with each individually, implored them to be patient and listen to him; to open wide their ears and grant his request. Divesting himself of his robe he folded it around the commissioner as a token of brotherhood.<sup>13</sup>

Peaceful, friendly relations with the white man had been the long range policy of the Crow tribe from the days of the early trappers. Surrounded by hostile tribes and lacking close Indian allies, the Crow attempted to ally with the whites, for these Crow chiefs wisely recognized the superior power of the palefaces. Secondly, the Crow were acting as a negotiating team not only for their own interests but also as an example to Red Cloud. Both Red Cloud and his hostile followers and the Crow desired the Bozeman Trail be closed and the army posts removed. Red Cloud refused to meet with the Indian Peace Commission until the forts were actually closed and his demands satisfied. The Crow council demands and possible treaty were a peaceful example that Red Cloud could follow.

The previous major treaty to which the Crow were parties had been signed in 1851. That agreement gave passage to the California Trail. For this right-of-way, 50 years annuities were stipulated in the treaty but the Senate cut this to ten years. This bad faith demonstrated by the government was pointed out by Blackfoot as well as the fact that annuity goods had only been received by the Crow two or three years. Since the last treaty had not been kept in the strict letter of the promises, this caused the Crows "to doubt whether it was really of any use to make any more treaties."<sup>14</sup>

The second day of the council was started by a carefully read speech of Commissioner Taylor expressing thanks to the Crow for not having avenged the mistreatment they had received. Painfully he expressed the requirement for reservations since settlements were being established on the Great Plains and the buffalo were disappearing. A concession of hunting rights off the reservation was tendered along with the incentive that whites would be restricted from the reservation.<sup>15</sup>

Blackfoot arose in response to Taylor's invitation and asked for payment for the part of land on which they were located. "You have not observed the one you signed at Horse Creek. Pay first what you owe us, and you shall speak afterward about concluding another treaty!"<sup>16</sup> Commissioner Taylor and Generals Harney and

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13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. Clough, 12.

16. *Ibid.*





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changed to be special agent for the Prairie or Missouri River Crow Indians, located at or near the mouth of Milk River in Montana Territory. He was ordered to proceed to the area soon to observe conditions and the disposition of the Indians.<sup>21</sup> Bad weather prevented Cooper from going to the River Crow but he did appear in Washington, D. C., at the Office of Indian Affairs by the end of March, 1868, to collect his salary of \$775 for services from October 29, to March 31, 1868.<sup>22</sup> Agent Cooper, who then traveled West, was used by the Office of Indian Affairs on several special assignments. He later arrived at Fort Laramie in August, 1868, to help conclude the treaty with Red Cloud. But his appointment and work little benefitted the Crow. This is an example of a problem within the Indian service absentee agents.

Dr. H. M. Mathews, who had been with the peace commissioners since August, 1867, and was well acquainted with the Crow Indians, was appointed a special agent by Commissioner Taylor. The letter of appointment was delivered November 15, 1867, at Fort Laramie after the conclusion of the Crow council. The letter informed Mathews that he was appointed a special Indian agent for the Crow Indians and other tribes inhabiting the country in the vicinity of Forts Phil Kearny and C. F. Smith.<sup>23</sup>

While at Fort Phil Kearny Agent Mathews received a report from L. P. Bradley, who was at Fort C. F. Smith on the Big Horn River. On January 10, 1868, Bradley indicated the Mountain Crow numbering about 3,500 were poor and dependent almost entirely on buffalo for their existence. The habits of the buffalo were such that the herds left the area of Fort Smith and went to the lower river valleys during the winter months. Therefore, the Crow could not depend on them for food and would need assistance from the government. The second part of the Crow nation, the Missouri River Crow, was located near the mouth of the Big Horn River. This band of about 2,500 was better off than the Mountain Crow in that they had obtained good blankets by trading at the Missouri posts.

Both of the branches of the Crow tribe blamed the army and the Bozeman Trail for the scarcity of game that had put them in a position of poverty, for the buffalo was the wealth of the Indian. The buffalo furnished not only food but clothing, and buffalo robes provided the means of exchange for the Indians to trade for the other items they wanted. It was an immediate vital interest of all the tribes of the northern Plains to have the army and emigrants

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21. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 85:162.

22. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 488:680.

23. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent*, 85:367.



removed from their hunting grounds.<sup>24</sup> By hostilities, Red Cloud had effectively reduced travel on the Bozeman Trail. Most of the Montana travel was routed across Idaho to connect with the stage-coaches and freight lines of the central route. With the steady advance of the railroad on the central route, travel to Montana by way of Utah became even easier, thus making it possible to grant the demand to close the Powder River route.

The army reluctantly agreed to close the forts on the Bozeman Trail during the summer of 1868. This decision gave hope to the peace commissioners that a successful treaty council with the tribes of the northern prairie could be held in the early spring at Fort Laramie. In late March, 1868, Agent Mathews was instructed to proceed from St. Louis to the Mountain Crow country to deliver assistance goods and induce the Mountain Crow to meet the commission at Fort Laramie. At Omaha, Mathews received instructions to purchase not more than 500 pounds of powder with lead and caps in proportion. He also was to obtain from the peace commission stores at North Platte City and Laramie, five bolts of blue and five bolts of scarlet cloth. The major concession that Mathews was to announce to the Crow was abandonment of the posts on the Powder River road, provided the Crow kept their treaty date.<sup>25</sup> Commissioner Taylor also arranged with General U. S. Grant for Mathews to obtain 1,500 suits of military clothing of a kind suitable for the Crows and other northern Indians.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Mathews was authorized to obtain from military posts enroute, including Fort C. F. Smith, surplus clothing and condemned stores to be given to the Crow as best fit the judgement of Agent Mathews. By comparison, however, when N. G. Taylor went to New York to purchase annuity goods, he obtained for the Arapahoes and Cheyennes "250 rifles, 500 'Remington' revolvers, 1,000 pounds of powder, 3,500 pistol caps and 1,700 rifle caps, as well as 1,500 pounds of lead." The peaceful Crow were brought to council at the cheapest price possible.

On April 1, General Sherman informed the other members of the commission assembled at Omaha that he must respond to a telegram from the sergeant-at-arms of the United States Senate and be in Washington April 6 to testify in the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson.<sup>27</sup> However, it was April 13 when Sherman testified before the Senate in a very stormy session regarding the position of secretary of war ad interim which had been tendered by President Johnson.<sup>28</sup>

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24. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 488:1222.

25. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent*, 86:35.

26. *Ibid.*, 79.

27. *Ibid.*, April 13, 1868, p. 2.

28. *Deseret Evening News*, April 14, 1868, p. 2.



Also absent from the commission was its president, N. G. Taylor. He was in New York purchasing annuity goods for the Indian service. He was to become involved with the Indian problem in Kansas and entirely miss the commission proceedings at Fort Laramie. The rest of the commissioners, with J. B. Sanborn as president *pro tem*, proceeded to Fort Laramie and concluded a treaty with the Brule band of Sioux.<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, opposition to the civilizing, humanitarian policy of the commission was being expressed in Montana, where the mining towns would be particularly affected by the abandonment of the Powder River road. The *Daily Gazette*, published at Helena, Montana, expressed the interest of the Montana miners and the industrial developers in demanding a policy of armed force toward the Sioux, Crow, and Blackfeet. The people of Montana wanted peace even at the expense of catacombs of savages. Their "policy would be to whip the murdering, thieving prowlers of the plains and forests into good manners when they deserve it and treat them well as long as they behave themselves."<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the Indian Peace Commission, the second government process that resulted in a treaty with the Crow was being initiated in April, 1868. James M. Cavanaugh, delegate to the House of Representatives from the Montana Territory, had arranged the appointment of W. J. Cullen of Helena, Montana, as a special Indian agent. Formerly, Cullen had been a commissioner dealing with the Indians in Minnesota. He was instructed to meet and conclude treaties with the Blackfeet, Gros Ventres, Crow, and other tribes in Montana in order to extinguish their claims to the Montana mining area. Cullen was receiving his appointment and instruction to locate the Montana tribes on reservations while the peace commission was at work at Fort Laramie.<sup>31</sup>

In Washington, D. C., General Sherman had completed his testimony in the impeachment trial by April 21, and proceeded toward Fort Laramie to join the Peace Commission. He arrived in Cheyenne April 30, and was met at the station by a number of officers and a company of cavalry which accompanied him as escort to Fort Russell.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, on April 29, the commission concluded a treaty with the Brule band of Sioux at Fort Laramie.<sup>33</sup> Red Cloud had refused to come to council until the Powder River posts were abandoned. However, the Oglala and the Miniconjou bands of Sioux were on the trail toward Fort Laramie. After

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29. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent*, 86:317.

30. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1868, p. 2.

31. *Ibid.*, 1158.

32. *Deseret Evening News*, May 9, 1868, p. 2.

33. Robert G. Athearn, *William Tecumseh Sherman and the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p. 196.



arriving at Fort Laramie, Sherman added his signature to the Sioux treaty which was eventually left at Fort Laramie. Signatures were added throughout the summer and fall.<sup>34</sup>

The Indian Peace Commission that greeted the Mountain Crow band included General Sherman, who had been absent from the previous November meeting. Taylor, who had headed the November talks, was not present but all of the other commissioners were familiar to the Crow and knew of their feelings and requests. The Crow accepted the pledge to remove the posts on the Bozeman Road. They especially wanted the abandonment of Fort C. F. Smith, which was centrally located in the Crow Reservation. This May 7 treaty signing permanently established a reservation for the Crow on part of their traditional lands. The Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes made an agreement with the same commissioners three days later on May 10, 1868.<sup>35</sup> All of the Fort Laramie treaties signed in the spring of 1868 resulted because of the belief of the Indians that the Bozeman Trail would be closed that summer and the soldiers removed. The second approach to forcing this Indian demand was the refusal of Red Cloud to cease hostilities and make a peace treaty. By combining these two approaches, the pressure was applied to the government throughout the summer and fall of 1868 to keep its promise to close the Powder River trail. When November arrived and the promise was fulfilled, Red Cloud, without losing face, could sign the Sioux treaty that was left at Fort Laramie.

Returning to Cheyenne on May 13 were Generals Sherman, Augur and Terry, and Mr. Tappan. General Harney and Senator Sanborn remained at Fort Laramie to meet the Oglala Sioux and also to arrange for the removal of the large numbers of Indians at Fort Laramie to their reservations. The Commission divided again at Cheyenne with General Sherman and General Tappan heading for Fort Sumner, New Mexico, to conclude a treaty with the Navajo tribe. General Augur went to Fort Bridger to meet with Chief Washakie and the Shoshone and Bannocks. General Terry went to Forts Randall and Sully to prepare for the placement of the Indians on reservations. Thus the Indian Peace Commission separated following the Fort Laramie treaty council.<sup>36</sup>

By making his mark on the document, Pretty Bull, with ten other Crow chiefs, agreed to the treaty that still forms the basis of the Crow land titles. The treaty provided for continued peace with the government and for offenders from both groups to be subject to the laws of the United States. The reservation boundaries were

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34. Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), II, p. 998-1012.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *New York Times*, May 15, 1868, p. 5.



precisely established, with the eastern boundary placed on the 107th degree of longitude from the southern Montana boundary to mid-channel of the Yellowstone River. The northern boundary followed the southwesterly mid-channel of the Yellowstone upstream to where it crossed the 45th degree of north latitude, which is today in Yellowstone National Park. The line then continued eastward along the 45th degree to the point of beginning, thus forming a large, wedge-shaped reserve containing the Big Horn River, Pryor Mountains and the valley of the Little Big Horn.<sup>37</sup> By peaceful means, much of the Crow land was safeguarded in a reservation. The United States government recognized by ratification of the treaty the Crow tribe's title to the land. The long range Crow policy of peace with the white man here proved beneficial. The Crow had not been placed on a reservation as the result of war and defeat, but had preserved their land by choice. The United States government did not give them their land for they had traditionally owned it. This treaty, which forms part of the basic law of the United States, recognized the Crow tribal land claims as defined in the reservation boundaries.

The agreement also provided an agency be constructed on the reservation. The agency was to consist of a warehouse; agency building for the residence of the agent; residence for a physician; five other buildings for a carpenter, blacksmith, farmer, miller, and engineer; a school house; and a good steam circular sawmill with grist and shingle mills attached. When the agency was fully constructed, this reservation was to be the permanent home of the Crow and they were to make no permanent settlement elsewhere. The agent was to reside at the agency and the land was to be surveyed for farming. A school was going to be established and attendance made compulsory for children of both sexes from ages six to 16. In addition, instruction in farming was to be provided, along with seeds and implements to start. A cash prize of \$500 a year would be awarded to the ten persons growing the best crops for the three years after farming commenced.<sup>38</sup> All of these treaty provisions reflect, in definite terms of cows, teachers, and doctors, the general Indian policy of civilization and settlement. This peaceful approach of the Office of Indian Affairs was a humanitarian contrast to the previous policy of conquest and destruction.

In payment for the surrendered land, annuity goods enumerated in the treaty were to be provided by September 1, of each year. Each male over 14 was to receive a suit of woolen clothing consisting of a hat, pants, flannel shirt, and a pair of woolen slacks. Each woman over 12 was to receive a flannel shirt, woolen hose, 12 yards of calico and 12 yards of cotton domestics. Boys and girls

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37. Kappler, II, 1008.

38. *Ibid.*, 1010.



each were to receive enough flannel and cotton to make a suit and also a pair of woolen hose. The quantity of these goods would be based on a yearly census submitted by the agent. To guard against fraud, the treaty provided that the president would annually detail an officer of the army to be present and attest the delivery of all the goods to the Indians. The officer was to inspect and report not only on the quantity and quality of the goods but also on the manner of their delivery.<sup>39</sup> This provision for military supervision of the Indian agents was written into the Fort Laramie treaties. This reflected the demand by the military members of the commission to transfer the Office of Indian Affairs from the Department of the Interior to the Department of the Army.

Another important article in this treaty signed by Sherman, Harney, Terry, Augur, Sanborn and Tappan, was the democratic principle of majority consent. The land held in common by the tribe could not be disposed of by treaty or other means without the signatures of at least the majority of all adult male Indians of the tribe. Thus, an approach was made to universal manhood suffrage in tribal affairs.

Even though much of the nation viewed the treaty process as a necessary step to settling the Indians, *The Montana Post* carried a front page editorial speaking out against the treaty. The Crow treaty was labeled a sellout to the central route because the reservation blocked the proposed northern railroad route. In addition, the Powder River Road was being closed. Also, with fear of reservation-based depredations, the commission was denounced, with the deliberate exception of General Sherman, as being composed of "corrupt or visionary ninnies."<sup>40</sup>

Congress was very concerned with reconstruction readmission of the southern states and the power of Congress in relation to the office of president. Since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson had been president. During this period, the fight between Congress and the president culminated in the impeachment of Johnson. His trial before the United States Senate disrupted the regular flow of business during the spring of 1868. Following the acquittal of Johnson, a large backlog of business waited to be transacted before the Congress went home to campaign. Many Republicans were particularly anxious to leave Washington in order to nominate General Ulysses S. Grant for president. The impeachment process had narrowly failed to remove the unpopular Johnson. Election victory was the next expedient means to change the man in the White House. Indian treaties, especially those with peaceful tribes, took low priority as Senate business. On the last weekend before recess, the Crow,

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39. *Ibid.*, 1011.

40. *The Montana Post*, May 22, 1868, p. 1.



Navajo, Cheyenne, and Arapaho treaties were ratified, July 25, 1868, in a late evening executive session of the Senate.<sup>41</sup> This brought to a successful conclusion the first part of the 1868 Crow treaty process.

The second part of the process of Crow treaty making was being conducted by W. J. Cullen. He had been appointed a commissioner to make treaties with the Blackfeet, Crow, Gros Ventres, and the mixed Bannocks and Shoshones. Cullen, having received his commission in Washington, D. C., April 30, 1868, proceeded to Helena, Montana, by way of Salt Lake City, Utah.<sup>42</sup> He was instructed by Charles Mix, acting commissioner of Indian affairs, to attempt to make a treaty with the Crows as one nation but if this was not possible to settle the River Crow with the Gros Ventre on a reservation separate from their common enemy, the Blackfeet.<sup>43</sup>

Agent Cullen arranged for a meeting with the River Crow at Fort Hawley on the Missouri River. He arrived at Fort Hawley from Fort Benton on July 7. The Gros ventre band arrived, and by July 13, a treaty agreement had been reached. On July 15, the Prairie or River Crow followed the example of their friends, the Gros Ventre, and signed a treaty wherein their title was extinguished to the Montana hills except for a reservation near the Gros Ventres.<sup>44</sup>

Cullen returned upstream to Fort Benton on the Missouri River aboard the steamer *Leni Leoti*. The Captain, David Haney, while at Fort Hawley, witnessed the treaty made by Agent W. J. Cullen on the part of the United States with the principle chiefs and head men of the Crows and Gros Ventre Indians. He also heard the speeches of the "Big Indians" who were well disposed and satisfied with the treaty they signed. Captain Haney observed that the treaty "was fully explained to them, which, I think, has not been generally the case."<sup>45</sup>

While on board the *Leni Leoti*, Cullen wrote the Washington office reporting the attitude and disposition of the Gros Ventre and River Crows by observing, "I have been among all these Indians without soldiers and have been treated by them kindly and with respect."<sup>46</sup> He had also been able to have a census taken of the Crow and Gros Ventre. This census served as a basis of providing

41. U. S., *The Congressional Globe*, 40th Cong., 2d Sess., 1868, Part 5, 4463.

42. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 488:941.

43. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Sent*, 86:348.

44. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 488:977.

45. *The Montana Post*, July 31, 1868, p. 6.

46. U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Letters Received*, 488:977.





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with a stronger power, secured by this treaty-making process a title recognized by the United States government to a portion of the land they claimed. This land title was to be protected by the United States government from encroachment not only of other Indian tribes but also from white settlers. In addition, Fort C. F. Smith on the Big Horn River was abandoned about July 27, 1868, marking the removal of the Powder River road from the Crow Reserve.

Railroad construction on the central route had pushed construction crews and trains toward the Rocky Mountains. The violence between raiding parties of Indians and the railroad construction workers gave rise to a demand for peace. Congress created an Indian Peace Commission to place the unsettled tribes on reservations. In Montana, many miners and settlers regarded the Indians as a threat to their safety and had openly supported Governor Meagher in raising a volunteer militia to forcefully remove the threatening menace of local Indians.

These economic developments in the West demanded settlement of the Indian problem. A humanitarian policy of health service, education, and agriculture was implemented along with the reservation system. Force and violence as Indian policy were gradually being replaced. But as the two Crow treaties illustrate, the inefficient and disinterested national government was the reluctant vehicle of change. These treaties were also involved in the power struggle between the U. S. House of Representatives and the Senate over the control of Indian affairs.<sup>53</sup> Secondly, the dispute over the transfer of the Office of Indian Affairs to the army was intermingled with the Indian Peace Commission. And finally, it is remarkable that the Crow tribe was able to preserve its traditional lands despite the treaty system.

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Ft. Fetterman. Everyone knows about where Ft. Fetterman is located, it having been once an important military post, during the Indian troubles in this country. When the post was abandoned the large buildings were sold to individuals, and quite a town has been established here. It is situated on a high level eminence overlooking the surrounding country, on the south bank of the North Platte, and is certainly a beautiful site for a town. Were it not on a military reservation there is little doubt that the railroad company would locate its town here, but at present that seems impossible. Ft. Fetterman now has the following business houses: 3 general merchandise stores; 2 hotels; 1 bank; 1 hospital; 1 meat market; 1 variety store; 1 hardware; 1 drug store; 1 livery, 2 barber shops; 1 blacksmith shop; 1 restaurant; 1 saddlery; 6 retail and 1 wholesale liquor establishments; 2 land offices; 2 notaries; 2 lawyers; 1 doctor; 1 newspaper; deputy clerk of courts; telegraph, post-office, etc. Men are coming in every day and establishing new businesses and the town is having quite a boom. Thousands of people will visit this section during this season and all are invited to stop and see us at our rooms in the postoffice building, north side of the parade ground.

—*The Rowdy West*, June 2, 1886

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It can be given in a cup of coffee or tea without the knowledge of the person taking it, effecting a speedy and permanent cure whether the patient is a moderate drinker or an alcoholic wreck. Thousands of drunkards have been made temperate men who have taken the Golden Specific in their coffee without their knowledge, and today believe they quit drinking of their own free will. No harmful effects result from its administration. Cures guaranteed. Circulars and testimonials sent free. Golden Specific Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.

—Advertisement

*The Daily Boomerang*, January 5, 1885

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Robert Estelle. Dealer in and hauler from Crow Creek of Soft Water to regular customers. Nine Barrels of Water for \$2. Orders left at Russell and Graham's opposite Eagle House promptly attended.

—Advertisement

*Cheyenne Daily News*, April 14, 1875





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Rialto Amusement Company of Tom and Mary Berta and the organization of original stockholders which included Antone Facinelli, Etoe Allais, Edward Crippa, J. G. Rumsey, John Perko, P. C. Bunning, John Mrak, Antone Justin, John Berta, Anne Magagna, Antone Mengoni, A. E. Young, V. J. Facinelli, August Martello, Mike Radakovich, Flo Leonardi, Sam Ward, John W. Hay, Charles Sparks, William Gottsche, Tom Berta and Mary Berta.<sup>3</sup>

All of Rock Springs watched as the construction of the Rialto Theatre progressed. By the time of the opening the papers reported:

In the construction of the Rialto great care was taken. The lighting, heating and ventilating systems are the very best and most modern. The stage is arranged so as to accomodate the largest productions of vaudeville, stock or road shows. The seating capacity of the theatre is approximately one thousand three hundred. The building is fire-proof, being built almost entirely with the best quality of brick and concrete.<sup>4</sup>

On February 21, 1921 the long-awaited day arrived. The opening day's showings were free to the public and it was estimated that three thousand people flocked to see the new theatre. All day long pictures, newsreels, cartoons and special features were shown. Letters and telegrams poured in from all over the country, congratulating Tom Berta on what was termed "the finest theatre in Wyoming."<sup>5</sup>

The first production to be shown was John Golden's "Three Wise Fools." Vaudeville played each Sunday; the acts came from ". . . Marcus Loew's new Vaudeville House in Salt Lake City. Included with the acts was a movie, with the total price per person running forty to sixty cents for balcony seats, sixty to seventy-five cents for main floor and ninety cents for exclusive loges."<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the road shows and vaudeville acts which came to the Rialto, it served as a theatre and stage for local groups. The first such local entertainment, the B.P.O.E. Minstrel Show, took place only a couple of days following the new theatre's opening. Every seat in the house was filled, 1,264 to be exact, and the audience was most receptive. It was reviewed as being "one of the best performances ever given in Rock Springs."<sup>7</sup>

The desire of the manager, Tom Berta, to bring good shows to

3. Files Mrs. J. H. Goodnough.

4. "Industrial Review - 1921 Sweetwater Co.", Published by *Rock Springs Rocket*.

5. Goodnough, *op. cit.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. Files, John J. Brueggemann.



the people was expressed in the following letter sent to members of the community:

Dear Sir or Madam:—

We have arranged for such a splendid line of Moving Pictures to be shown at the Rialto Theatre, "Beautiful", that we want to call your attention to the pictures booked for March showing.

We also wish to advise that we have equipped the New Rialto with all the latest projection equipment, employed a Six Piece Union Orchestra under the leadership of John J. Brueggemann, expert picture player. We have perfect ventilation and comfort.

It is the intent of the management to present good road shows in season, Marcus Loew's Vaudeville road shows on every Sunday evening, starting March 20th. Season reservation can be made.

It is our intention to present everything in amusements that has merit.

Kindly look over the list of pictures in column to left, to be shown during March.

Hoping you will avail yourself of the privilege of attending some of our shows. We earnestly solicit your patronage and will endeavor to make your evening with us a pleasant one.

Sincerely yours,  
Rialto Amusement Co.,  
By Thomas Berta, Manager

P.S. For information as to coming shows 'Phone 40.<sup>8</sup>

Road shows needed an intermediate location between Denver and Salt Lake and Tom Berta saw to it that the Rialto became that location. Consequently big shows played frequently in the Rialto. In less than a month after its grand opening the *Rocket* reported a coming attraction:

The most tuneful, the funniest, and the best acted comic opera in a generation. This in a sentence expresses the opinion of New York critics upon the one great hit of the past theatrical season. For "Ruddigore" is a masterpiece whose popularity has never been equalled. It took the New York public by storm, and it drew multitudes for month after month.

Columns might be written about the many tuneful numbers of "Ruddigore." Shrieks of laughter greet the burlesques of the familiar characters of old fashioned melodrama that W. S. Gilbert has introduced into this best of his operas. To see "Ruddigore" is to be captured by it on the instant, and to see it once, is to want to see it many times.

All this is proved by the fact that during its long run in New York, many people, including some of the notables of the theatrical profession, saw it many times, and enjoyed it all the more every time they laughed at its humor and listened to its music.

So much for "Ruddigore" itself. What is more important is the company of stage celebrities that are bringing it to this city, where at the Rialto Theatre, on Sunday evening, March 20, it will be given for the first time. In the cast will be Eugene Lockhart, George Bogues, Marionne Godbourt, Alice May Carley, Bertram Goltra and Joseph

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8. *Ibid.*



Florian, all well known artists in their lines. This is the same all star company which has made "Ruddigore" the sensation of New York.<sup>9</sup>

In the spring of 1921 the Metropolitan Grand Opera Singers arrived for a three-day appearance. The papers reported:

The Rock Springs musical season for 1921 will get away to an early opening this week with the appearance of the Metropolitan Grand Opera Singers at the Rialto Theatre next Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday.

Four singers of the first magnitude comprising the principal stars of the Senora Grand Opera Company who were heard last year with such evident enjoyment, have been secured by Manager Berta, who will present each performance a different program of grand opera and popular selection in connection with the regular feature picture program.

In addition to the four principals, who are Sperla Castel, mezzo, Beatrice Pizzorni, soprano; and Eduardo Lejarazu, baritone; Ricardo Clark, tenor; and Ignacio Del Castillo will appear as accompanist and Luisa Armes as support. From the cities where they have played during the past year, excellent reports precede these singers, and it would seem that this company is endowed with unusually capable artists who not only possess wonderful voices, but who are also actors of ability.

Music lovers will remember especially Eduardo Lejarazu in his portrayal of the title role in "Rigoletto" in which he has delighted musical critics in most of the prominent cities of the United States. Before touring with the Senora Grand Opera Company he was a member of the Boston Opera Company who acclaimed him not only as one of the world's greatest baritones, but also a wonderful actor.

In addition to the regular nightly performances, a special matinee will be given on Sunday, at 2:00 p.m. for the benefit of those unable to attend the night performances.<sup>10</sup>

Little did the people of Rock Springs realize what impact the opening of the Rialto Theatre would have on their lives during the next years. They were given the opportunity to be entertained by the "greats" of show business, for Berta was true to his word and through the years such famed personalities as Sydney Greenstreet and Jeanette MacDonald were to appear in the road show, "Mitzi," Otis Skinner in "Sancho Panza," Jane Fooshee in "No, No Nanette." Paul Whiteman appeared with his concert orchestra and John Philip Sousa with his renowned band. "Abie's Irish Rose," "Blossom Time," "Smilin' Through,"—the list goes on and on. People in Rock Springs and the surrounding area took advantage of the good entertainment, some traveling from ranches as far away as 125 miles.

Nor did the people of Rock Springs realize the tremendous influence that the leader of the Rialto's orchestra, John J. Brueg-

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9. *Rocket*, Rock Springs, March 11, 1921.

10. Brueggemann, *op. cit.*





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second was a public appearance at the new Club House of the Union Pacific Coal Company.

Thus began new interest in many of the younger people toward a lifelong love of the musical arts. Although always serving in the capacity of volunteer, Mr. Brueggemann gave of his time freely and willingly and through his devotion was to become an influence in the community.

One of the highlights of the spring of 1923 was the dedication of a new elementary school. The *Rocket* reported that event in detail.

On Thursday evening of last week, appropriate exercises were held in dedication of the new Yellowstone elementary school of this city. A large attendance was noted, and that all might see the advantages of the modern operation of schools in this city, a regular class session was held for 30 minutes, and each room had a splendid display which added to the interest of the event.

The dedication ceremonies included music, vocal, and instrumental, recitations, etc. including addresses by Miss Morton, state superintendent of public instruction, Superintendent Schwiering, and Dr. Chambers, president of the board.

Mrs. Morton pointed out the necessity of looking ahead in education, and complimented the school board and school system of Rock Springs in glowing terms, stating that this city led the state in some features and was in the front rank in others. She complimented the board on their building three<sup>12</sup> schools with only \$150,000 to work with, and said she couldn't understand how they did so well.

Mr. Schwiering, superintendent of schools, explained that it was by efficient management on the part of the board coupled with community and state cooperation, that made possible a saving in the neighborhood of \$100,000 to the taxpayers of School District No. 4. In brief, they secured \$250,000 for their bond issue of \$150,000. The things which contributed to this were the donation of school sites by the Union Pacific Coal Company for the Lowell and Roosevelt schools and the joint donation by the State Board of Charities and Reform and the U. P. Coal company of the Yellowstone School site. Another saving was the selling of the bonds to the State of Wyoming at full value. The bids were also let at a time when the board were able to save at least \$20,000 on building materials.<sup>13</sup>

1924 was the year that Peter Christian Bunning, a German immigrant who had worked in the mines to save money to establish a business career, was elected mayor. He was to serve his community faithfully for the next ten years. The crowning achievement of Bunning's administration was to turn what was then cesspool into a grass-covered city park, known in later years as "Bunning Park."

. . . Rock Springs was then (January 1, 1924) the largest city in the United States without sanitary and storm sewers, paved streets, adequate lighting and water system, and sidewalks. The roads, for streets they were not, were strewn with loose gravel and punctuated with

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12. Yellowstone, Lowell, and Roosevelt were built at this time.

13. *Rocket*, Rock Springs, May 4, 1923.



chuck holes at frequent intervals. Here, obviously, was a mining village that had grown beyond its residents' expectations, a town and city that had outstripped all attempts to equip it with the conveniences and facilities that are a modern community's birthright. Mayor Bunning looked the situation over with that fierce but shy blue gaze of his, and then he shut his teeth hard on the inevitable cigar and went to work. The job was to take him ten years to finish.<sup>14</sup>

When Bunning proposed a city park his friends smiled at such an idea as even sagebrush had a hard time making a go of it in the soil, such as it was. Through sheer perseverance Bunning was able to win the aid of the U.P. Coal Company and a park site was selected at the place where Bitter Creek had once been.

. . . Watching the work being carried forward, the people laughed and called it "Bunning's Folly," but within a short time the "Folly" had become a park of no mean pretensions. Where sagebrush had drooped, grass thrived. It was impossible, but it was true. The persistence of the stocky little man with the white mustache had won out.<sup>15</sup>

On August 21, 1936, just one year following his death, a memorial fountain of rose-colored granite was dedicated to the memory of Mayor Bunning.

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF  
PETER CHRISTIAN BUNNING  
MAYOR OF ROCK SPRINGS  
1923 to 1933  
WHOSE LOVE OF BEAUTY  
INSPIRED THE BUILDING  
OF THIS PARK IN 1926

So reads the inscription on the memorial as it rests among the many trees, shrubs, and flowers that were planted by the man "who saw more in life than in gathering dollars."<sup>16</sup>

At the dedication ceremony many speakers gave fitting testimonials to Mayor Bunning, and the Union Pacific Coal Company band, led by James Sartoris, played appropriate airs. Eugene McAuliffe said in part:

We are not honoring 'Chris' Bunning in dedicating this beautiful memorial to his memory, but instead we are honoring ourselves, whose privilege it was to know him, to work with him, and to live with him. This beautiful memorial fountain, located immediately in front of the monument erected to the memory of the men of Rock Springs and vicinity who died in the Great War, in a sense completes the consecration of Bunning Memorial Park, and I know that those of our citizens who love beauty and who come down here to see and

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14. *History of the Union Pacific Coal Mines, 1868-1940*, Union Pacific Coal Company, The Colonial Press, Omaha, Nebr. 1940, p. 220.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 226.



enjoy the same, will, through the medium of this memorial, be reminded of the thought that inspired this lovely park, and I trust that our present Mayor's successor, whoever he might be and whenever he may come into office, and whatever happens, will maintain the standard of care established by our late friend and his successor, Mayor Muir.<sup>17</sup>

Bunning Park was like an oasis in an area of land which sometimes was compared to the surface of the moon. Here townspeople could visit the park and enjoy its beauty and solitude, apart from the cares of the day. The difficulty in maintaining the grounds was little understood by newcomers to the community who were often chagrined by the signs of "Warning: Stay off the Grass." But to those who had seen the area in its original state, this small piece of land would always be something special.

Rock Springs was a community of hard-working people, largely immigrant miners. The Union Pacific Coal Mines had an average employment of 2,447 with an average wage per pay period of \$166.20. Average employment figures rose in 1923 to 3,302 with an average wage per pay period of \$184.39.<sup>18</sup>

The Biennial Report for 1925-26 gave the following information:<sup>19</sup>

<i>Trade</i>	<i>Average per month employed:</i>	<i>Avg. Pay</i>	<i>Hours per days work</i>	
1925, Carpenters	48	\$1.12½	hr	8
1926, Carpenters	51	1.12½	hr	8
1925, Painters	14	1.00	hr	8
1926, Painters	15	1.00	hr	8
1925, Electrical Workers	7	1.00	hr	8
1926, Electrical Workers	8	1.00	hr	8
1925, Barbers	22	25.00	wk	9 (1926 same)
1925, Meat Cutters	18	45.00	wk	10 (1926 same)
1925, Laundry Workers (male)	3	35.00	wk	8 (1926 same)
1925, Laundry Workers (female)	12	17.50	wk	8 (1926 same)
1925, School Teachers (male)	11	2152.72	yr	
1925, School Teachers (female)	63	1618.79	yr	
School Janitors (male)	4	1680.00	yr	
School Janitors (female)	2	1100.00	yr	

Leisure hours were spent in various ways. In the summer, favorite picnic spots in the area were Kent's Ranch, Cedar Bricks, and 6-mile spring. There were formal dancing clubs, tennis, and golfing at Kent's Ranch.

The half-way mark of the twenties brought the first annual Union Pacific Old Timers celebration, an event which was to gain

17. *Ibid.*

18. "Fourth Biennial Report of the Labor Department, 1923-24," Dept. of Labor and Statistics, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

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men and women who are here tonight will forget all that was harsh and unfriendly in the past, recalling that which was joyous and cheery and lovable (and there *is* lots (sic.) of such in the world) you will have a good time and you will want to come again.”<sup>21</sup>

The honor roll of those entitled to gold buttons representing service of more than forty years was as follows: David Abrah, Robert Belam, Thomas H. Butler, Peter Boam, Sr., William Bean, Sr., Leo Chee, Ah Chung, Robert Cox, Robert Cardwell, Ah Chinn, Joseph Dyett, Thomas T. Edwards, Ah Fung, Ah How, An Him, Theodore P. Henkell (retired), Chris Johnson, Thomas LeMarr, James Moon, William Price, Patrick Russell, W. W. Williams, Joe Kong, Leo Ting, Thomas Crofts, Charles Morgan, Robert Muir (retired.)”<sup>22</sup>

Early in 1926 Rock Springs received word that their city was to be included in John P. Sousa's last tour across the country. Mayor Bunning issued a proclamation in the local newspaper:

#### PROCLAMATION

“Lieut.-Commander John Philip Sousa, has done more for the cause of good music than any other man, woman or organization in America. More than a quarter of a century ago, John Philip Sousa assembled a band of the best musicians obtainable and in all of those years, without assistance from individuals or communities, depending entirely upon the popularity of his organization and its music for his financial success, he has presented programs appealing to all classes of people. And he has brought to countless cities and towns throughout the country the best music they have known. Without Sousa, they would have been bereft of any opportunity to acquire an appreciation for the world's greatest music.

Hence, the news that Sousa is coming to our city in his seventieth year, cannot fail to arouse in the people of Rock Springs the happiest anticipation. Thursday, February 4th, is the date of his engagement at the Rialto Theatre. The fact that 'the' Lieut. Commander is going to honor us by directing the Elks Juvenile Band in a special number at the matinee, Let us call it “SOUSA DAY,” and let it be an occasion for rejoicing throughout the city. I commend its observance to the people and suggest that a welcome be given “The March King”.

May he be spared to return to us many, many times.”<sup>23</sup>

The fact that a Rock Springs musical organization was to have an honor that few such bands could boast lay in the directing by Sousa of Brueggemann's Elks Juvenile Band. News items reporting this honor were to be found in *The Chicago Tribune* as well as *Mt. Vernon's Democrat*. Hundreds of persons from Rock Springs, Green River, and the surrounding camps attended the two concerts. People who had heard Sousa on his earlier appearances in Rock Springs as early as 1904 were in the audience, as well as children

21. *History of the Union Pacific Coal Mines, op. cit.*, p. 263.

22. Brueggemann, *op. cit.*

23. *Ibid.*



who were hearing and seeing him for the first time. On this, his 33rd tour of the United States as a leader of a band, his popularity was attested "when the audience paid tribute after tribute to the master's own march compositions as they were played. As the first strains of "Stars and Stripes Forever" swelled through the Rialto, Thursday evening, the entire audience burst into applause of this wonderful old march."<sup>24</sup>

Particular enthusiasm was given when Sousa picked up his baton and led Rock Springs' own youth in music. The *Miner* reported, "Sousa, the great band master, made this statement after the students had played: 'It's the best musical organization of its kind that I have heard in my travels.' This is some compliment to Prof. Brueggemann as well as the young musicians."<sup>25</sup>

In the five years that Brueggemann had been a resident of the community, a high school orchestra had been organized and was entertaining the local people with regular performances, an Elks Juvenile Band had been established and received its highest honor in Sousa's stop in Rock Springs. In 1926 attention began to be directed toward the success of seven young jazz players, better known as "Paul's Juvenile Symphonators." Organized and directed by Paul Cazin, an instructor from the Brueggemann School of Music, this group, said to be "the youngest jazz band in America"<sup>26</sup> left in July of 1926 for an extended tour of Wyoming and Colorado. They received enthusiastic reception wherever they played:

"The curtain just wouldn't stay down at the Rialto Thursday night and again and again it was raised to give the audience another glimpse of Paul's Symphonators, at the conclusion of their program. And even at that, the youngsters merited every bit of the ovation they received, for their work was splendid. Rock Springs likes to honor its home folks and the reception was given in the usual Rock Springs style.

"The Symphonators have made wonderful progress during the year that has elapsed since they first appeared as an organization. New instruments have been added, their stage presence is easier, and the year's progress in music shows that they have worked faithfully. The result is a splendid little novelty orchestra, playing in good time and tone, full of life, and with the enthusiasm which only youth can give.

The personnel of the orchestra, their instruments and ages are as follows:

Roland Miller, the Coming Tom Brown, Saxophone, age 15.  
 Nephi Young, Violin and Sax, age 15.  
 Donald Miller, Violin and Bass, age 16.  
 Oliver Cundy, Trombone, age 15.  
 Donald Mills, Trumpet, age 14.  
 Vernon Ward, Piano, age 15.  
 Leais Miller, Drums, Chimes, Xylophone, age 14.

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24. Brueggemann, *op. cit.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*



All are pupils of the J. J. Brueggemann School of Music except Vernon Ward, who is the pupil of Mrs. Mary Morris. They are all students of the Rock Springs High School, just happy normal boys, who find enjoyment in their music . . .

Mr. Cazin, their manager and director, is an instructor in the Brueggemann School of Music, a member of the Rialto Orchestra and better yet, a lover of boys . . . Without doubt, this organization will play an important part in the entertainment of the community during the next few years, and who knows what honors the future may have in store for them? Anyhow we'll all keep our eyes and ears open."<sup>27</sup>

The famed International Night came into being in the year 1926. Reverend Stephen D. Pyle of the First Baptist Church of Rock Springs was also acting as good fellowship chairman of the local Lions Club. Serving in this capacity he invited some twenty foreign-speaking men to be guests of the club. The idea was received with such enthusiasm that plans were arranged immediately to demonstrate the Pyle idea.<sup>28</sup>

The first International Night was held on May 11, 1926. A local Rock Springs paper covered the event:

"An impressive demonstration of the fact that America is the 'Melting Pot' of the nations, and that Rock Springs is an important part of the 'Pot' which invites the blood of every continent to share its life, was witnessed in this city Tuesday when the Lions' Club was host at an 'International Day' celebration.

Glimpses into the intimate life and customs of people from all parts of the globe, entertainment featured by yellow men, brown men, white men, black men and red men, and the spirit of broadest fraternity were manifest when representatives of 43 different nationalities assembled for common interest and common enjoyment.

After spending a half hour mingling in informal fellowship, the guests of the Lions' Club were treated to a program featuring exceptional talent, colorful costumes, interesting personalities and entertainment paraphernalia of rare qualities. The appearance of Rosie Tayo, formerly of Ispaster, Spain, in native song and dance; the Samisen solo by Mrs. K. Yasumune, Japanese, and the tamboritza quintette by handsome gentlemen of Croatian origin are just a few of the unusual features which so delighted the guests."<sup>29</sup>

Following this part of the entertainment representatives of forty-three nationalities were introduced.

". . . 'I love ——— (some one of the Old Lands.) I love America, too,' was heard in forty-three languages and dialects. Not always these words. Always this theme. I love America. Everybody was eager to tell it. Here were men and women from the Orient, from China and Japan and Korea. Here were representatives from almost all the countries of Europe, from North and South America, from Mexico and from the Holy Land, solid and valued citizens telling the

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27. Brueggemann, *op. cit.*

28. W.P.A. Manuscript, "International Night," Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

29. Brueggemann, *op. cit.*





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B. Kendrick and Francis E. Warren; Congressman Winter; the Ambassadors of France, Japan, Germany, England, Poland; and the ministers of China, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and Persia; and the Charge de Affaires of Norway.

Elaborate exhibits prepared by the different foreign groups were on display at the Elks Home following the Rialto program. Expense of time and money were not spared in making the exhibit complete.

A three-ring circus made things lively in the auditorium throughout the evening. Miss Rosie Tayo's Spanish songs, dances and instrumental numbers by the Slovenians, Slovaks, Basques, and Italians were particularly delightful numbers.

Later in the evening a number of talented entertainers performed impromptu. George deBernardi sang several Italian selections. Several accordian numbers were delightful and Pierre Baly did some dances which caused every one to marvel at his ability. Grandmother Mrak was persuaded to give an exhibition in spinning and to sing as she did so the characteristic Slovenian spinning song.

On the whole, Rock Springs felt that the event was of such great merit and such tremendous possibilities that it must be repeated each year."<sup>32</sup>

The third International Night celebration took place January 31, 1928, in the Rialto Theatre and the foreign exhibits were displayed in the adjacent Elks Home. Interest in the annual affair had grown to the point that more nationalities were represented and fresh ideas were used for displaying the interesting aspects of the native culture represented. Special entertainment features were presented by Slovenians, Scots, Basques, Slovaks, Japanese, Finns, Greeks, Croatians and Italians. Grace Webb adds that:

"Following the entertainment features, the Rock Springs citizenship class of 21 persons was presented. Greetings read were from the White House, from various foreign legations, ambassadors, ministers, and men prominent in national and international affairs.

The candle lighting ceremony was again presented, it being the most impressive feature of the evening.

The principal speaker of the evening was Fred B. Smith of New York City, chairman of the Alliance of International Friendship. Governor Frank Emerson and Melvin Jones, secretary of the Lions Club also gave short talks.

The Elks Home was the usual scene of foreign exhibits. The Greeks were unusually picturesque in their Cretian and Evzone (sic) costumes, the latter being the regalia of the body guard of the Greek Kings and presidents of the Greek Republic. 'Grandmother Mrak' again sang her spinning song as she manipulated the ancient wheel. The Slovaks displayed handloom work and in the Japanese teagarden Japanese women served tea and rice wafers while selections on the samisen were played. The Chinese also served refreshments as did the Slovaks and Greeks.

Informal entertainment was provided by talent from various groups in all parts of the large building during the entire evening and these features were the most delightful of the entire carnival. Truly, in the words of Confucius, 'All within the four seas are brothers.'"<sup>33</sup>

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32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*



The fourth and final International Night celebration ever to be held took place on December 3, 1928, with the largest number of representatives yet to participate in the ceremonies. Two thousand persons were reported in attendance and at least one thousand more suffered the disappointment of being turned away because there simply was no available standing room left. As Grace Webb aptly remarked:

“The humanity of all the world in miniature; the dress worn, the language spoken, the music, the art, the dances, the culture of peoples from the great centers of population and from remote quarters of the earth; a kaleidoscopic view of races, creeds, and nations of every continent gathered in mutual friendly accord; such was the annual International Night as celebrated at Rock Springs, Wyoming.

In closing let me say it's a deplorable fact that these International Night celebrations were not repeated in succeeding years. Rev. Pyle answered a call to China and while the interest and enthusiasm of the foreigners did not wane, the movement died for want of a leader and a sponsorship, though the kindly feeling, understanding and respect for their fellow men and fellow nations engendered by the associations with each other in giving these celebrations have not died in the hearts of the people.”<sup>34</sup>

Rock Springs was not only becoming known as a community where all ethnic groups could co-exist in peaceful harmony, but it was also rapidly achieving recognition as a town of musical talent and harmony.

The year 1927 brought the organization of a Kiltie Band, formed by the Union Pacific Coal Company.<sup>35</sup> The uniform adopted was that of the 42nd Royal Highlanders, the “Black Watch.” The tartan was that of the Stewarts. The magnificent uniforms were expensive—reputedly worth \$10,000.

The Wyoming Scotchmen piped and drummed with their kilts and sorans swinging, and they were good. They performed in Omaha, competed in California, were present for the opening of the highway up Pikes Peak. They marched at rodeos, county fairs and football games—and the people loved them.<sup>36</sup>

By 1928 two teachers from the Rock Springs high school, Miss Emma Roessler and Elmer Halseth, in addition to their regular duties had organized a girl's glee club, a boy's glee club, and a mixed chorus.

This was the year that Rock Springs brought home all the honors from the state competitions held annually at Laramie. The awarding of the cherished Gold Medal in the various fields of competition went to the top boy or girl from the entire state's field

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34. *Ibid.*

35. The former Pipe-Major, Mr. Wm. H. Wallace, who organized and so splendidly trained the band, was later succeeded by Pipe-Major Alec (Sandy) Davidson.

36. “The Empire”, *The Denver Post*, date unknown.



of entries. This particular year Rock Springs not only won a gold medal in the violin competition (awarded to a Rock Springs-Brueggemann student that year making it the sixth consecutive win for Brueggemann) but also in voice competition and basketball.

Rev. Pyle, wanting to share the fact that Rock Springs could proudly contribute mixed nationalities in the state competition phoned the editor of the *Republican-Boomerang* of Laramie during the tournament week to inform him that there was an international aspect of the entrants. The editor wrote:

“... The parents of one of the players on the Rock Springs basketball team were born in Poland, those of another in Germany, two of them have Finnish parents, another's father and mother came from Jugo-Slavia, and still another one had parents who were natives of Norway. Two other members of the team are just two generations removed from Germany and Norwegian parentage.

This same international aspect also manifests itself in the academic contests. The parents of the boy who entered the finals in violin, Arvo Maki (sic), were born in Finland, and Tom Jones, in the finals in voice, is of Welsh extraction. Other entrants in the academics were two girls of Swedish and Finnish descent.”<sup>37</sup>

When John Brueggemann arrived at Rock Springs in 1921 to assume the duties at the Rialto he never dreamed that he would make Rock Springs his home for the next forty-odd years. With his wife, Mildred, he settled down to raising a family of three daughters and he began a livelihood which would be more rewarding and satisfying in spirit than in material wealth.

Brueggemann was interested in transforming the latent musical potential of the townspeople into an active, enjoyable, usable talent. It was largely through his persistent efforts that Rock Springs received the distinction of becoming a musically educated community.

The fact that Brueggemann's violin students won the state gold medals annually from 1923 through 1929 at the Laramie competitions was a unique recognition of his abilities as a teacher. This in itself would have been a worthy contribution for any one person of any community. These winners were awarded the opportunity of playing in the National High School Orchestra, an annual event and certainly a memorable thrill for each winner.<sup>38</sup> Several of the winners, after playing in the National Orchestra with other superior musicians from all corners of the United States, recognized the desire to continue violin study in larger musical centers. Brueggemann again served a useful purpose in helping each student select a good musical college compatible with his aspirations and abilities. Of the hundreds of students who developed musical abilities under

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37. *Rocket*, Rock Springs, March 30, 1928.

38. Appendix, list of gold medal winners.





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"We have just been handed a program of a concert to be given by the Rock Springs Symphony orchestra in that city on Thursday, November 17. How many people knew that Rock Springs had such an organization?"

Perhaps unwittingly you may have thought that the Sweetwater county metropolis, very famous for its coal mines, gave itself over chiefly to the mining industry. That may be true in a bread and butter sense, but it is very far from true in an educational cultural way.

Rock Springs has long been known for its splendid school system. Its high school graduates for many years have given a splendid account of themselves at the University, and presiding over those schools have been some of the best school men of the state.

Rock Springs, too, has been well and favorably known for some of its singing organizations. We have heard Rock Springs choirs that would have done credit to a city of 100,000 people. Now comes the announcement of this symphony orchestra and its concert.

It is the program, however, that gives the true indication of its musical standard. It is one thing to have an orchestra, but the real test is—What does it play?

Well at this particular concert the Rock Springs orchestra is to start off with the first movement of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. Then later it plays the superb "Finlandia", by Sibelius, and closes with Beethoven's magnificent Egmont Overture. Think of that for one program, and consider what that means in the way of musical progress in a state like Wyoming.

Our congratulations to the Rock Springs Symphony! May it continue to flourish and to promote the cause of the true and beautiful in music here in this state of cowboys, sagebrush and Bitter Creek."<sup>41</sup>

Music continued to flourish in the Sweetwater area and by May of 1929 the county was to celebrate its first annual May Music Festival. The *Star* reviewed the event:

"Sweetwater County's First Annual May Music Festival, the combined orchestras of the Rock Springs, Reliance and Green River high schools, given on last Monday evening in the Lincoln high school auditorium in this city, proved the greatest musical treat ever given in this city by Sweetwater County talent, and the program struck a responsive chord in the hearts of those who heard, and ruled and swayed at will the audience which sat in awe, with the wonder of the classical program rendered by these youthful artists, under masterful direction of Prof. John J. Brueggemann.

The first annual appearance in a May Festival Musical of Sweetwater County's high school talent, left none to be disappointed. More than sixty of the high school students took part in the combined orchestra, and they were as one in responding under the masterful direction of Prof. Brueggemann. It was a program to delight, to rule by the touch of these young people, who had developed the touch of the master under Mr. Brueggemann's instructions, the harmony was pulse-moving in its rendition, and left a lingering memory of a superior moment musical.

. . . That Prof. Brueggemann has done more for the youth in Sweetwater County in developing musical talent than any individual that has ever endeavored to impart his talents to others, and the many splendid programs that have been given by his pupils in the various

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41. Reprinted by the *Rocket*, Nov. 18, 1928.



towns of the county, stamps him as a man who possesses unusual talent in his work, and has the added advantage of a personality that is most pleasing and wins the confidence, and brings out the best efforts that it is possible for his pupils to put forth, with the result that he works wonders in a manner that reflects credit to both his pupils and himself.

He never tires in giving unstinted service at all times to aid the musical talent in the young people of the county, and this unselfish attitude, and his great accomplishments in the Sweetwater County schools, should give him the loyal support of every man and woman in the county.

. . . Mr. Charles Nicoll, who had much to do with the bringing of the May Festival to Green River, during the course of the program, made a short but most forceful talk on the splendid work that had been accomplished in the county schools by Prof. Brueggemann, and, among other things to his credit, stated, 'that the group of musical artists that was gathered upon the auditorium platform, was a living demonstration of his ability as a musical instructor and director.'

Good music is an acquired taste. It is like a good cigar. The individual who has never smoked one, believes that a cheap cigaret or pipe is the best smoke obtainable, but after smoking a few good cigars, he acquires a taste. Therefore, anyone who hears a program such as was given on last Monday evening, has little inclination for the less classical programs. Those present had a taste of such a marvelous musical treat, that while jazz is not objectionable in its proper place, it can never be a substitute for the treat given on this occasion."<sup>42</sup>

The introduction of talking pictures took Brueggemann from the theatre pit, but by this time his School of Music and influence had grown to such proportions that he did not mind the financial loss brought about by the change. Neighboring communities sought his services and each week he traveled many miles to develop musical education in Superior, Reliance, Green River, as well as Rock Springs. Many of Brueggemann's students have done well for themselves. Pupils have scattered across the country since the days of yesteryear. Some are teaching in colleges; some are playing in orchestras in cities. Others have sought other lines of vocation but continue to enjoy music as a pleasant pastime.

When asked to write as guest columnist for the *Wyoming Clubwoman*, Brueggemann expressed his philosophy clearly when he said:

“. . . In order that the profession of music teaching may reach a worthy level—even of minimum attainment—requires only this: that each one of us make every effort to become individually well prepared; that no less a standard inspire all the teaching we do; and lastly, that we find our greatest interest in life in our profession and not in something else.

Just as long as music is used as a pin-money means of escape from a limited income, so long it will be taught without wholly right purpose, method or cultural effect. If it appeal to us as a hard days' work, for which we are thankful when it is done, we have thrown our

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42. *Green River Star*, May, 1919.



effort with the wrong cause. But if it be the first and absorbing interest in life, if it appeal to the best effort of which we are capable, if the joy of accomplishment in its service give us joy in return, we may know that we have chosen our profession wisely.

. . . The teacher who is musical, educated, cultured; who is tactful, sympathetic, encouraging; whose natural and attained equipment makes for distinct character, is a benefit to any community. Such a teacher is indispensable in the musical scheme of things . . . The music teacher must be able to support himself and while supporting himself, benefit the community by what he does."<sup>43</sup>

John Brueggemann practiced daily these principles. Through his efforts Rock Springs developed a worthy cultural environment.<sup>44</sup>

As the twenties drew to a close the people awaited the thirties in anticipation. By 1930 the population had swelled to 8,440.<sup>45</sup> In spite of the crash of the previous October, prices and incomes in Rock Springs remained relatively unaffected.

These were the days before Hitler and atomic blasts, before super highways and traffic lights.

Ten years had brought many changes to the lives of the people of the southwest corner of Wyoming, and many precious memories would be recalled when times got bad. Not a person lived through these years who did not sometime, somewhere look back on the twenties as the good ol' days—a time that each day brought a new experience—a time when it was great to be alive and living in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

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43. Brueggemann, J. J., "The Education of the Music Teacher," *The Wyoming Clubwoman*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Casper, April 1928, p. 10.

44. Brueggemann received additional recognition as composer. Orchestration written include "Wyoming Moods," "Wyoming Butterfly Caprice," and "Wyoming Youth."

45. 1930 census, Office of the Secretary of State, Cheyenne, Wyo.





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Newfork Items. **FIRST ANNUAL AUTO SHOW.** The first annual automobile show came off Friday afternoon with a nice crowd present. It was a beautiful sight to see the nicely decorated cars.

John Vible and Sons 40 h.p. Overland car took first prize while A. L. Faler's 40 h.p. Auburn car took second prize. After the prizes had been awarded everyone present was given a ride. Dancing followed after supper; although the gathering was not very large everyone went home saying it was one of the best times they ever had.

—*Pinedale Roundup*, December 21, 1911

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**INDIANS.** Yesterday a party of about 200 Indians of assorted sexes and sizes came up Crow Creek to within about three miles of this city where they erected lodges and are now ready for anything from matrimony to manslaughter.

—*Cheyenne Daily Leader*, July 18, 1868

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Fortune will favor Laramie in 1885. The rolling mills will soon start up, the soda beds will be utilized; the Union Pacific may build a branch into the park; the big silver brick works will be built. Everything looks favorable.

—*The Daily Boomerang*, January 7, 1885

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A box containing a black bear was received at an express office in San Francisco the other day with this inscription: "Black bare. Ef yew don't want to get bit, kepe yer fingers outen the crax."

—*Cheyenne Daily Leader*, October 27, 1870

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Work is to be resumed on the Elk Horn mine, in the Snake River section, as soon as the water can be pumped out. Three carloads of ore recently shipped from the property gave returns of \$97 per ton in silver and copper.



# *Monuments and Markers to the Territorial Surveys*

By

ELLIS L. YOCHELSON

Everyone interested in western history knows of the four territorial surveys headed by Hayden, King, Wheeler, and Powell, that collectively from 1867 until 1879 investigated the geology, geography, ethnology and natural history of the west. Because 1969 was the centennial year of John Wesley Powell's first trip down the Green-Colorado River, celebration of his accomplishments was front page news. Before the enthusiasm generated by that occasion is lost, it might be useful to consider what the average tourist can see to encourage his curiosity about all four survey chiefs. A number of fine accounts and biographies have been written of their exploits, but one would think that geographically-oriented investigations should leave a large number of tangible marks on the landscape. Except in the case of Powell's first trip, this does not seem to be the case.

John Wesley Powell was a great scientist and an even greater organizer and administrator of scientific policy. It does not lower his accomplishments one whit to add that he was a late-comer to western exploration and that he headed a tiny organization operating on a busted shoestring. The cost of the various stone monuments and bronze plaques along the river from Green River, Wyoming, to Grand Canyon National Park would have covered a substantial part of his operating budget. I compiled a list of the existing markers in *Geotimes* (volume 14, number 5, 1969), but activities during Powell Centennial added others and for the sake of completeness they might be mentioned here.

The granite marker erected in 1949 at Green River, Wyoming, has been supplemented by a magnificent five-foot square stone slab. The front is engraved with a map of the route and one boat passing through canyon rapids; the obverse carries a portrait of Powell and a description of his accomplishments in exploration. This monument is situated in the newly designated Expedition Island National Historic Site. Designation of this site and the two markers collectively constitute a fitting testimonial to the start of Powell's voyage.

On June 26, 1969, the National Park Service conducted a local Powell Centennial Celebration at Split Mountain Gorge in Dinosaur National Monument on the south side of the Uinta



Mountains. They placed a bronze plaque 16¾" wide x 18¼" high on a large pebble-conglomerate boulder near the Split Mountain launching ramp. The inscription is:

MAJOR JOHN WESLEY POWELL  
FIRST EXPLORER OF THE GREEN AND  
COLORADO RIVERS. ON JUNE 8, 1869  
THE POWELL EXPEDITION ENTERED  
THE CANYON OF LODORE, NOW WITHIN  
DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT, AND  
ON JUNE 26, 1869 LANDED NEAR  
THIS LOCATION. POWELL LATER  
REMARKED OF HIS EXPERIENCES,

“. . . THE SCENERY WAS ON A GRAND  
SCALE, AND NEVER BEFORE DID I LIVE IN  
SUCH ECSTASY FOR AN ENTIRE MONTH . . .”

TO HIS ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT  
COURAGE AND FORESIGHT THIS  
MONUMENT IS DEDICATED.

1869-1969

The largest monument to Powell in terms of square miles, but also the one least likely to be seen by the average tourist—at least until the day a boat trip down the Colorado is average—lies further down river in Desolation Canyon, on the western edge of the Hill Creek extension of the Uinta and Ouray Reservation. It occupies the middle third of the river stretch between Ouray and Green River, Utah, in an area in which paved roads are absent and even horse trails are uncommon.

On the west bank of the river at Sand Wash where a former ferry crossed the Green River, a large monument has been constructed of native flagstone, ten feet across at the base and six feet, eight inches at the top. It is seven feet high and bears three signs. On the lower right is the Bureau of Land Management emblem and on the upper right a tablet noting that Desolation Canyon is designated as a registered national historic landmark. To the left is a larger descriptive plaque. One side shows the course of the river and its tributaries through the canyon and at the bottom of the text is a photograph of one of the Powell boats (from the 1871 expedition) in the canyon. The explanatory text is:

#### DESOLATION CANYON

Major John Wesley Powell and nine men left Green River, Wyoming, May 24, 1869, in four wooden boats to chart the Green and Colorado rivers—one of the last unexplored regions of the United States.

When the Powell party passed this point on July 7, one man had left the expedition and one boat had been wrecked. The group camped that night on the east bank below here.

While exploring the west side of the river the next day, the one-





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and smaller through the years and eventually disappeared without giving rise to another agency.

Still further down the Colorado a large circular bronze medallion has been added to the stone work of the Powell memorial overlooking Bright Angel Creek, on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. It reads °POWELL EXPEDITION° - 1869 - 100th ANNIVERSARY - 1969. and has a side view of the major at about the time of this voyage, against a background of the canyon.

To correct an earlier uncertainty, Powell, Wyoming, definitely claims J. W. Powell as its namesake even though said town was named in 1914 after his death. Powell, Nebraska, northwest of Fairburg is small enough to have been missed in the first account; it isn't clear whether Major Powell was involved. The artificial Powell Lake in Wisconsin probably has no connection; but some historically minded person might have thought to name it after the farmstead of the Powell's which was near by.

Even though Powell began his greatest single accomplishment at the Union Pacific railway bridge at Green River, Wyoming, just a few feet north of Exploration Island, one can argue that he is a marginal figure to Wyoming. Please, let me explain before everyone rises in wrath to smite me down. I mean marginal in a geographic sense only! Powell's ideas transcended artificial boundaries, but maps show that most of his field work was confined to Utah.

If Wyoming feels the need of a geologic patron saint, they might look to Ferdinand Vandever Hayden. Although the Hayden Geological and Geographic Survey of the Territories as such dates from 1867, he was first of the four chiefs to be in the field starting western exploration in 1853. A bronze plaque in Bear Butte State Park, near Sturgis, South Dakota, records Hayden as the first man to climb the butte. In a strict interpretation this would not really count as a monument to the Hayden Survey.

Closer to the mark, at the entrance to the town park in Glenrock, Wyoming, is a granite monument which at the top has a medallion of a covered wagon and "Oregon Trail Memorial". Below is the engraved legend:

TO ALL PIONEERS  
WHO PASSED THIS WAY  
AND  
IN MEMORY OF  
PIONEER GEOLOGIST  
FERDINAND V. HAYDEN  
CHIEF U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
OF THE TERRITORIES  
1867-1878  
BORN AT WESTFIELD, MASS., 1829



A plaque attached at the base reads:

ERECTED BY  
WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON  
A MEMBER OF THE  
DR. F. V. HAYDEN EXPEDITION 1870-1878  
1931

The monument was not actually put up until 1933, and much of the cost was borne by the people of Westfield. So far as I can determine this is the only monument on the land to Hayden's work.

Hayden was the only one of the four territorial survey chiefs who unequivocally and publicly has a town named after him. On U. S. Highway 40 in Grand County, just west of Hayden, Colorado, there is a large wooden sign with impressed lettering.

FERDINAND VANDEVEER HAYDEN  
IN THE 1870's PROFESSOR F. V. HAYDEN'S UNITED STATES  
GEOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF THE  
TERRITORIES COMPLETED THE FIRST SYSTEMATIC STUDY  
OF THE MINERAL WEALTH OF THE COLORADO  
MOUNTAINS. WILLIAM H. JACKSON, OFFICIAL  
PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE SURVEY, MADE THE FIRST  
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MOUNT OF THE HOLY CROSS AND  
THE MESA VERDE CLIFF DWELLINGS. WITH AMAZING  
ENERGY AND THOROUGHNESS, HAYDEN'S PARTIES  
SKETCHED, MEASURED, PHOTOGRAPHED, AND  
CHRONICLED THE INCREDIBLE GEOGRAPHY OF THE  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST. THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE  
SHOWED THEIR GRATITUDE BY NAMING STREAMS,  
MOUNTAINS, AND EVEN A TOWN AFTER THE EMINENT  
GEOLOGIST. FOUNDED BY AN ADMIRER OF DR. HAYDEN,  
THE TOWNSITE IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN A CAMPING PLACE  
FOR THE HAYDEN PARTY THAT SURVEYED THE YAMPA  
VALLEY. THE MOUNTAINS THAT MADE HAYDEN  
FAMOUS ALSO BROUGHT HIS DEATH. WEAKENED BY  
"MOUNTAIN FEVER" THE AGING SCIENTIST DIED IN 1887.

ERECTED BY THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
COLORADO FROM THE MRS. J. N. HALL ENDOWMENT,  
BY THE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT, AND BY THE  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS.

One might suspect Mr. Jackson aided with this marker also.

Hayden, Arizona, is a town in good standing, but almost certainly it was named for the unrelated Arizona Haydens. In one of the early accounts of place names of the United States, Hayden Hills, California, was given as named for him, though another source states the name to be from that of a local miner. Hayden, Montana, was supposed to be named for the explorer; neither exists



now or at least has a post office. There were obscure places named Hayden in New Mexico and Oklahoma, but who can now say for whom they were named?

Hayden is also the only one of the four territorial chiefs whose office was marked in any way. On December 13, 1933, the six surviving members of his survey—W. H. Holmes, G. B. Chittenden, Ernest Ingersol, W. H. Jackson, S. B. Ladd, and F. D. Owen—gathered at Washington, D. C. in a poignant ceremony to dedicate a bronze tablet, stating:

**THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 OF THE TERRITORIES  
 FERDINAND V. HAYDEN GEOLOGIST  
 IN CHARGE  
 WAS ESTABLISHED BY AN ACT OF CONGRESS  
 APPROVED MARCH 3, 1867**

**BY THIS ACT AND SUBSEQUENT APPROPRIATIONS  
 ROOMS WERE SECURED IN THE UPPER FLOORS OF  
 THE OLD BRICK BUILDING ON THIS SITE SUBSE-  
 QUENTLY PURCHASED BY THE STAR COMPANY.  
 SCIENTISTS WERE EMPLOYED. EXPLORATIONS  
 GEOLOGIC TOPOGRAPHIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC  
 WORK BEGUN BY MANY FIELD PARTIES.**

**AFTER THE SURVEY OFFICES WERE MOVED TO THE  
 UPPER FLOORS OF 509 7th STREET WHERE FINAL  
 COMPILATION OF ALL FIELD WORK WAS MADE.**

**THE SCENIC BEAUTY THE TOPOGRAPHIC AND  
 ECONOMIC POTENTIALITIES OF PARTS OF THE  
 ROCKY MOUNTAINS AND THE YELLOWSTONE WERE  
 SURVEYED, PHOTOGRAPHED, AND PUBLICATIONS  
 ISSUED RESULTING IN COMPLETION OF THE  
 COLORADO ATLAS**

**MANY NATURAL PARKS WERE DISCOVERED AND  
 THEIR PRESERVATION RECOMMENDED TO THE  
 CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES**

**THIS MEMORIAL WAS ERECTED BY THE SURVIVING  
 MEMBERS OF THE HAYDEN SURVEY 1933**

Jackson may have been responsible for the headquarters tablet in Washington, but some Hayden scholars think that the guiding force was W. H. Holmes. In any event it says something about Hayden that he could have inspired such loyalty. The sequel to this noble gesture is unfortunate. In the 1950s the building lobby in which the plaque was installed was remodeled. No one thought to care for the tablet, and it ended as scrap copper. Historical markers are just as ephemeral as any other man-made object, and





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are enigmas. Perhaps they were named for George M., but more likely they were named for another Wheeler. The one prominent mountain that was properly and explicitly named by the U. S. Geological Survey in honor of Lt. George Montague Wheeler is Wheeler Peak (13,063 ft.) in White Pine County, Nevada. There is also a Wheeler Peak (13,160 ft.) the highest point in New Mexico, in Taos County, New Mexico; it probably was named for Lieutenant Wheeler. Wheeler Wash at the north end of the Hualpai Mountains in Mohave County, was definitely named for him, even if it isn't a mountain.

Alaska has a Wheeler Peak (3,731 ft.) on Admiralty Island, named for him by a Navy surveyor! The one Powell Peak (2,662 ft.), of the two in the state, which is named for the Major is in the Coast Mountains about 100 miles east of Sitka. Hayden Glacier runs five miles to join Malaspina Glacier in the St. Elias Mountain. King this and King that dot the landscape, but none seem to have been named for the geologist.

As every good map reader knows, the Uinta Mountains of Utah are the place to look for the names of early explorers. King's Peak in Duchesne County (13,528 ft.) is the highest point in Utah. Mount Powell (13,159 ft.) in Summit and Duchesne Counties and Hayden Peak (12,485 ft.) in Summit County, commemorate the other two men. It may be coincidence or it may have been a subtle reminder of the struggle for civilian versus military control of exploration that the Lieutenant is not singled out for a mountain peak in the stately Uintas. Before we read too much politics into geography, one should note that the Mount Powell 7½-minute quadrangle only received its name in 1969.

In Kootenai County, Idaho, Hayden Lake was named for a Matt Hayden, but the obscure town of Haden, Idaho, in Teton Valley was supposed to be named for F. V. Hayden, in spite of the postal service spelling. In the west, Colorado is authentic Hayden territory. Mount Hayden graces the San Juan Mountains in Ouray County. There is Hayden Creek, a right-hand branch of the River in Fremont County; Pass, between Fremont and Saguache Counties; Gulch, in Lake County; Park, in Teller County; Butte, in Huerfano County; and Peak, part of the Elk Mountains in Pitkin County. There may be more. Unfortunately, the absence of historical signs is once again critical for the unwary are here warned that the first two were named for a settler on Texas Creek; the others seem to be dedicated to F. V. Hayden. Various pieces of real estate in Rocky Mountain National Park are named for Al and Julian Hayden.

Colorado has honored Powell with Powell Peak in Larimer and Grant Counties and Mount Powell (13,534 ft.) in Eagle and Summit Counties, Mount Powell was named in 1868 before the canyon voyage. A few minor streams and lakes have also been given his name. However, except where there is a fight, as in the



futile attempt to change the designation of Copeland Mountain to honor Clarence King, most geographic names today are just terms, without any inner meaning either to tourists or local inhabitants.

Arizona also bears place names that were given to honor the leaders of the territorial surveys; naturally Grand Canyon National Park is the place to look. Powell Plateau is prominent on the north side of the river as an outlier of the Kaibab Plateau, and gives the name to the Powell Plateau 15-minute quadrangle; at least one tourist map gives this incorrectly as Powell's Plateau. Powell Spring is in this quadrangle. Powell Point is where the monument stands near Park Headquarters on the South Rim of the Canyon. At the Canyon is an obscure Wheeler Point and even more obscure King Crest. It is a shame that with all the names given to features in the canyon to commemorate various geologists, and other scientists, nothing has been named for Hayden. Perhaps in the early days, this was an indication of the rivalry between the Powell and Hayden surveys; perhaps people just forgot. For those who would challenge, please note that Mount Hayden in the park is named for Charles Trumbull Hayden who founded Tempe.

Appropriately, there is a great park-like area called Hayden Valley in Yellowstone National Park but that is all. Hayden's Fork, a name formally used in that park, is now Nez Perce Creek. Hayden was the name of the most respectable mountain in the nearby Teton Range of Wyoming, but every one knows it as Grand Teton. F. V. Hayden's role in establishing the park surely should be commemorated in some way. The National Park Service does a good job with campfire talks and trailside exhibits, but something more obvious seems appropriate.

Administrations change and often maps change accordingly. Lieutenant Wheeler made it big on the western maps with the establishment in 1908 of Wheeler National Monument in Mineral County, Colorado. He was a man who never had any good luck, and in 1950 this monument was abolished, and the area is now incorporated into the expanded Rio Grande National Monument. This is not bad considering that Powell National Forest, as a named entity in Utah, lasted from 1908 until 1945. Hayden National Forest, also established in 1908, only lasted until 1929, with the Colorado part going into Routt National Forest and the Wyoming portion into Medicine Bow National Forest.

There may be additional places named for these four men, but this list seems to cover the principal ones. At any rate, the principal geographic features in the United States have been named and there is scant opportunity to place more names on the land.

Even in death these territorial explorers are obscure, and it is difficult to find their gravesites. The first to die was Hayden in Philadelphia in 1887. He is buried with his wife in Woodland Cemetery, West Philadelphia. A mildly Victorian style, cross-shaped granite monument bears the somewhat repetitive legend:



FERDINAND V. HAYDEN, M. D.  
 DIED DECEMBER 22, 1887  
 EMMA WOODRUFF  
 WIFE OF  
 FERDINAND V. HAYDEN, M. D.  
 DIED SEPTEMBER 16, 1934  
 FIDE ET AMORE

Clarence King was the second to go, dying in 1901 in Phoenix, Arizona. He is buried at Island Cemetery, Newport, Rhode Island. The marble headstone is engraved:

CLARENCE KING  
 SON OF  
 JAMES RIVERS KING  
 AND  
 FLORENCE LITTLE KING  
 BORN IN NEWPORT R.I.  
 JAN. 6, 1842  
 DIED IN PHOENIX, ARIZ.  
 DEC. 24, 1901  
 I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE,  
 SAITH THE LORD.

Major Powell died the following year in Haven, Maine. As befitted a veteran of the Civil War, he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery and his grave marking was that standard to the Cemetery.

Wheeler's final fate is saddest of all. Major (retired) Wheeler died in New York City, apparently on the street, May 3, 1905, and his body was unclaimed by relatives. However, the Army takes care of its own, and he was interred in the cemetery at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, in section 10 not far from the Old Cadet Chapel. His simple marble marker reads:

GEORGE M.  
 WHEELER  
 MASSACHUSETTS  
 MAJOR, U.S.A.  
 MAY 3, 1905

There is one happy note to this general theme of obscurity of grave sites. In 1909, Powell's friends in Washington rallied for one last time following the congressional appropriation for construction of the Grand Canyon Monument. With the approval of President Taft, they raised a huge granite monolith to him. On the front is a medallion of the Major, and below it is carved:





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granite horse watering trough at 39th and Baltimore in Philadelphia, outside the gate of the Woodland Cemetery. It was inscribed:

IN MEMORY OF  
FERDINAND V. HAYDEN  
A LOVER OF ANIMALS

Lack of horses and a new highway caused this fountain to vanish from the scene. There was a World War II Liberty Ship, the John W. Powell, but it, too, is long gone.

Utah, Colorado and Arizona issued commemorative medals during the special ceremonies connected with the Powell Centennial; the Arizona portrait of Powell is that which was added to the Grand Canyon National Park monument. The Major was most certainly a national figure and fully deserving of the honor of having a postage stamp issued at the anniversary of his voyage. People might like to know that the original painting from which the stamp was designed hangs in the John Wesley Powell Museum; the museum itself in Page, Arizona, is the result of effort by local citizens. For some years the Southwestern Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science has had an annual Powell lecture. The special exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution in 1969 was both outstanding and appropriate.

There is not much question but what the major would have enjoyed all the fuss in 1969. He was no shrinking violet at any stage of his career. As a scientist he used other scientist's data but was also more than generous in sharing his data and ideas with others. I think that he might have been the first to say that his efforts were only one facet of the attempt to gain better insight into the west and that the other territorial explorers deserved equal credit for their efforts. The field is wide open for individuals or dedicated groups to mark routes, noteworthy spots and acknowledge the overall accomplishments of the three forgotten men.

Of course, the names of assistants and members of the four territorial surveys also dot the western landscape, but they do not directly relate to the four survey chiefs. Someone else may have the fun of compiling them. No one is perfect, and the same goes for compilations. However, even if the number of historical signs and geographic features is double that given here, chary praise is still being given to the western surveys and to these men who helped build the science of geology a century ago.

Being one of the few native-born Washingtonians (D.C.) and an easterner by up-bringing, most of the places mentioned are places I would like to visit, rather than spots I've seen. This compilation is due entirely to the kindness of friends and strangers who took the time to answer inquiries.



# Wyoming State Historical Society

## SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING

Worland, Wyoming

September 11-13, 1970

Registration for the seventeenth annual meeting of the Wyoming State Historical Society began at 7:30 p. m., Friday, September 11, 1970, in the lobby of the Friendly Innkeeper in Worland. The members enjoyed seeing slides of National Girl Scout Center West, located in the Worland-Ten Sleep area. Refreshments were served by the Washakie County Chapter.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1970

After a continental breakfast served in the Hospitality Room of the Stockgrower's Bank, Mrs. Hattie Burnstad, president, convened the meeting. Al Finneseth, president of the Worland-Ten Sleep Chamber of Commerce, welcomed members of the Society to Worland. Mrs. Burnstad called the attention of the group to the beautiful gladioli arranged around the room, grown by David Wasden, of Cody, and brought to the meeting by him.

Curtiss Root moved that the reading of the minutes of the sixteenth annual meeting be dispensed with since they had been published and were available to all members. The motion was seconded and carried. The secretary then read the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held in Casper on May 17, 1970. There were no corrections or additions and they were approved as read.

The treasurer read the following report which was placed on file for audit:

### TREASURER'S REPORT

September 6, 1969 - September 12, 1970

Cash and investments on hand September 6, 1969		\$18,565.50
Receipts		
Dues	\$ 4,454.00	
Pinettes	4.80	
Interest (Savings)	944.11	
Life Members (3)	150.00	5,552.91
	<hr/>	
Disbursements		
Annals of Wyoming	3,114.45	
Annual meeting (Newcastle)	162.48	
Awards		
Scholarship	300.00	
Grant-in-Aid	<u>0</u>	
Junior Awards	35.00	335.00



Trek		34.14	
Officer's expenses			
President	52.50		
Secretary	122.55		
Others	125.00	300.05	
Committee Expense (Awards)		5.00	
Printing		19.57	
Postage			
Department	613.14		
Secretary	20.56	633.70	
Phone		—0—	
Bond & Sec. of State		5.00	
Misc. (Foundation Fund)		133.28	4,742.67
			<u>19,375.74</u>

## ASSETS

Savings			
Certificate (Executive Headquarters)		\$10,000.00	
Federal Building & Loan		2,088.88	
Capitol Savings (Life members)		4,714.98	
Federal Building & Loan (Memorial)		521.40	
Cheyenne Federal Bldg. & Loan		1,632.65	18,957.91
Cash			
First National checking account			417.83
			<u>\$19,375.74</u>
Cash and investments on hand September 12, 1970			

## MEMBERSHIP

	1968	1969	1970
Annual Members	1246	1278	1396
Life Members	54	54	53

Lost four, gained three life members

The president appointed the following committees: auditing, Howard Watt and Mrs. Burton Marston; resolutions, Mrs. Elsa Spear Byron and Mrs. Mabel Brown. She also appointed Burton Marston timekeeper and Jack Mueller parliamentarian.

Dr. T. A. Larson reported for the scholarship committee that William Barnhart had completed his history of Carbon County. Robert Murray is still working on the history of Johnson County and Ray Pendergraft on the history of Washakie County. Current holders of grants-in-aid are Gordon Chappell and Eugene Gallo-way. The scholarships for county histories pay \$500, the individual receiving \$200 when he is awarded the scholarship and \$300 when the finished work is accepted by the scholarship committee. Grants-in-aid are for a total amount of \$300, with \$100 paid when the grant is awarded and \$200 paid upon acceptance of the work. Interested persons should write for further details to the executive secretary of the Wyoming State Historical Society, State Office Building, Cheyenne.

The Projects Committee report was given by Reuel Armstrong, who said that he had sent letters to every Chapter president asking





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have expired. Frank Bowron nominated Dr. Larson and Mrs. Wilkins to continue as Board members. Burton Marston moved that the secretary be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the two nominees. The motion was seconded and carried.

Dr. Larson commented on the fact that federal matching funds are available to carry out projects of the Foundation Fund, and that successful completion of the projects will undoubtedly take a long time.

The Foundation Fund meeting was adjourned and the Wyoming State Historical Society was again convened at 10:35 a. m.

Mr. Howard Watt, auditor, reported that the treasurer's books had been examined and found correct.

Frank Bowron, Casper, chairman of the Wyoming Library Association, read the legislative program of the Library Association as follows:

1. The Wyoming State Library, Archives and Historical Board be abolished and a new board for the State Library be organized.
2. The limit on the salary of the State Librarian be abolished.
3. The revenues from permanent state funds be given to county and state libraries.

Mr. Bowron moved that the Wyoming State Historical Society endorse the legislative program of the State Library Association. The motion was seconded. The Parliamentarian stated that the three points would have to be voted on separately. Mrs. Katherine Halverson suggested that the Society should have a longer time to consider the acceptance of the legislative program before voting on it. Paul Knowles amended the motion to read that the entire legislative program of the Wyoming Library Association be referred to the Historical Society Legislative committee. The motion was seconded and carried. Reuel Armstrong further moved that the amendment be amended to refer the matter to the Executive Committee of the Wyoming State Historical Society for consideration at the October meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

A letter was read inviting the Society to hold the 1971 annual meeting in Green River. A motion was carried to accept the invitation.

Mr. Bowron moved that in view of the large savings of the Wyoming State Historical Society reported by the treasurer, the savings program of the Society be reviewed with a possibility of placing savings where they might earn larger interest. Motion was seconded and carried.

Miss Carley moved that the single annual Society dues be raised from \$3.50 to \$5 and joint annual dues be raised from \$5 to \$7, effective January 1, 1971. Burton Marston, delegate from the Albany County Chapter, moved that the motion be amended as



follows: that dues be raised one dollar for both single and family memberships. This motion was seconded and voted on unfavorably. Mr. Bowron amended the motion to increase single life memberships to \$100 and joint life memberships to \$150. The amendment was voted upon favorably and the original motion was carried. Mr. Dubois moved that a five-year installment payment program be established for life members. Mr. Armstrong then stated that there is no provision for installment payment in the by-laws, and he moved that the by-laws (Article II, Section 2) be amended to provide for installment payments. This motion was seconded and carried and the original motion was then seconded and carried.

Mr. Marston suggested that a study of the relationship between the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department and the Wyoming Recreation Commission be made. Following discussion he moved that the Legislative Committee be instructed to study these agencies and report to the Executive Committee at the next meeting. Neal Miller stated that the law presently provides for cooperation of these agencies.

The meeting was adjourned at noon.

A delicious salad-bar luncheon was served at the Worland Country Club. Thermometer and pen favors were at each place, and the head table was decorated attractively with fresh gladioli.

The invocation was given by the Reverend Gerald Dingman, after which Ray Pendergraft, master of ceremonies, introduced state and county officers of the Society. Following luncheon Mr. Armstrong read a poem entitled "Hold-up at the Nowood Store", written by Mr. Pendergraft, and Edness Kimball Wilkins spoke on "Wonder Women of Wyoming—Famous and Infamous." Sacajawea, Narcissa Whitman, Esther Morris, Nellie Tayloe Ross, "Poker Alice", "Calamity Jane", "Cattle Kate" and Lou Polk were the subjects of her very entertaining talk.

#### CHAPTER REPORTS

Only highlights of chapter reports are given here as complete reports are located in the files of the Society. Reports were called for in the order in which the Chapters joined the Wyoming State Historical Society. At the right of each chapter name is a number indicating the number of persons who responded to Chapter roll call when the reports were presented.

*Fremont County* (1) When the Wyoming Recreation Commission requested help at South Pass City in restoration work, the Chapter donated carpenter help on the hotel. They also assisted in filling in a grave which had been vandalized.

*Campbell County* The group continues its practice of placing books in the George Amos Memorial Library in memory of deceased members. It continues the sale of the reprint of the Gillette Cookbook, first published in 1916. A history of the Campbell



County courthouse, soon to be razed, was developed through a student committee headed by Darrell Olds, and placed in the county library.

*Goshen County* (4) Nine dinner meetings were held. The summer activity committee is one of the busiest in the chapter. Each year the Chapter presents a book to the outstanding history student in Eastern Wyoming College at Torrington.

*Laramie County* (8) The Chapter has worked during the year with the Cheyenne Model City program. One meeting was held at Pine Bluffs, and the others in Cheyenne.

*Albany County* (4) At a youth meeting children pantomimed a buffalo hunt. The Chapter submitted six entries for awards. On the summer Ranch Tour 26 ranches were visited.

*Natrona County* (4) A marker has been approved for the spot where the Bridger Trail crosses the present highway. The Chapter will assist with the 1971 Oregon Trail trek.

*Carbon County* (6) The last standing stage station in Carbon County was moved from Lake Creek, four miles north of Saratoga, to the site of the Culleton Memorial Museum in Encampment, where it was put on a concrete foundation. The cost of the moving was paid by the Chapter.

*Johnson County* The group helped purchase and restore an old sheep wagon which was placed with a roundup wagon and a chuck wagon on the lawn of the Gatchel Museum.

*Washakie County* (19) The Chapter still hopes to obtain the old post office building for a museum. They spent a great deal of time planning for this annual meeting.

*Park County* (1) The Chapter built and entered a float in the annual Cody Stampede parade, and won a second place prize of \$30. Special events during the year were a box social and a Chinese auction.

*Sweetwater County* (1) The Chapter has been involved in the observance of the centennial of Sweetwater County. They have studied the history of the county through the original record books.

*Uinta County.* No report.

*Sheridan County* (3) The Kendrick mansion was purchased for \$30,000 and is being developed as the Trail End Museum. Thousands of visitors have registered since it opened. One of the most successful special events at the Museum was an exhibit of William Gollings' paintings.

*Weston County* (2) The Green Mountain school, one of the oldest in the county, is being restored, and will soon be moved to the park near the Anna Miller Museum in Newcastle.

*Platte County* (2) The group hosted a party in Guernsey for Oregon Trail trekkers, and also served refreshments to 250 people who attended the dedication of the Oregon Trail ruts near Guernsey as a National Registered Historic Landmark.

*Big Horn County.* No report.





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*Caspar*; Sharon Lass Field, Cheyenne, honorable mention for her book, *Fort Fetterman's Cemetery*.

Publications Awards, periodicals, magazines, newspapers: Dr. T. A. Larson, Laramie, for his two articles, "The New Deal in Wyoming," and "Woman Suffrage in Western America"; Martha Thompson, Carpenter, for numerous articles published in the *Wyoming Eagle* and the *Wyoming State Tribune*; Curtiss Root, Torrington, for numerous articles published in the *Torrington Telegram*; *Torrington Telegram* for printing numerous articles dealing with Wyoming history; John Halsey, Alexis Mitich, Lory Tunnell, Vicky Genoff, Vicky Stockton, Tony Sears, Tom Perino, Bill Johnson, Dana Davis, Andy Mitich and Kenny Morgan for their articles which appeared in *Bits and Pieces* magazine; Mrs. V. J. Reckling Bales, Laramie, for several articles published in the *Laramie Boomerang* and Cheyenne newspapers.

Activities Awards: Albany County Chapter for their Laramie Plains Museum at Laramie and the promotion of the museum; Albany County Chapter for their annual Old Time Ranch Tour, July 18-19, 1970.

Special Fields Awards: Frank Bowron, Casper, in the field of photography for his work in reproducing historic photographs for slide presentations.

Fine Arts Awards: Milton Larson, Cody, for his stamped leather picture of a male Indian head; Margaret Schumacher, Cheyenne, for her one-act opera, "The Wyoming Tea Party"; Dixie Lynne Reece, Leiter, honorable mention for her painting of Nels Martin's homestead cabin.

Cumulative Contribution Award: Robert Murray, Sheridan, for a wide variety of accomplishment in the field of history, including writing, interpretation, preservation, research and promotion; Maurine Carley, Cheyenne, for her contribution to Wyoming history as an author, teacher, lecturer, promoter and her years of service as an officer of the Wyoming State Historical Society.

Cash Awards: \$400, Sheridan County Chapter for the Trail End Museum; \$200, Crook County Chapter for the Court House Museum.

Elsa Spear Byron read a resolution expressing the appreciation of the Society for the courtesies of the Washakie County Chapter during this annual meeting. Mabel Brown read a poem, "Hills," written by Fred E. Holdredge, a 91-year-old resident of Thermopolis. He was present at the dinner and was introduced to the group.

Mrs. Betty Hayden, Jackson, chairman of the nominating committee, announced the election of the following officers for 1970-71: President, J. Reuel Armstrong, Rawlins; 1st Vice President, William Dubois, Cheyenne; 2nd Vice President, Lucille Patrick, Cody; Secretary-Treasurer, Maurine Carley, Cheyenne.

Mrs. Burnstad then turned over the gavel to Mr. Armstrong who



said he would continue to carry out some of the plans which had been initiated. He thanked the Washakie County Chapter for the fine meeting and then presented Mrs. Burnstad with a certificate of appreciation.

Dancing was enjoyed after the banquet.

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Society members were guests of the Wyoming Industrial Institute at breakfast. Superintendent B. D. Kuchel welcomed the group and explained the basic philosophy on which the School is administered. He emphasized that many aspects of the "jail" concept have been discarded, and it is hoped that further advances in this direction will be possible in the future. In lieu of a guided tour of the school, considering the somewhat limited time and the cold, wet weather conditions, Mr. Kuchel had arranged that two of the boys present a video tape they had helped to produce to orient new boys entering the school. It was exceptionally well done. This was followed by a series of questions from the audience which were answered by Mr. Kuchel and the two young men who had presented the program.

MAURINE CARLEY  
Secretary-Treasurer



# Book Reviews

*The Arapahoes, Our People.* By Virginia Cole Trenholm. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970). Index. Illus. 372 pp. \$8.95.

Here is an excellent companion volume for *The Shoshonis*, which the same press published in 1964 for the same author, although Mrs. Trenholm was aided on that occasion by Maurine Carley. These two volumes belong on the same shelf since together they cover the history of the only two Indian tribes now resident in Wyoming.

In dealing with the Arapahoes, as was true also of the Shoshonis, the historian was not able to focus on a unified people. For almost a century and a half the Arapahoes have been divided into northern and southern branches, now located respectively in Wyoming and Oklahoma. This separation has, of course, complicated the historian's task, but she has bridged the gap about as well as anyone can. A journalist by training, she has assembled her story from previous studies by anthropologists, ethnologists and historians, and she has herself interviewed many Indians and gone to manuscript sources and government documents.

Mrs. Trenholm makes no pretense of being a revisionist. Rather, she is a synthesist. She presents a clear, straightforward account of the Arapaho experience down to about 1900, insofar as it is known. The qualification is necessary because much of the pre-19th-century story is lost forever, and remains conjectural and controversial.

In the first half of the 19th century, however, observers began reporting their impressions—observers such as Robert Stuart, Edwin James, Francis Parkman, Rufus Sage, Lewis H. Garrard, George F. Ruxton and Thomas Fitzpatrick. Mrs. Trenholm's judgment (p. 122) that the 22-year-old Parkman, on the basis of brief acquaintance, "well understood the nature of the Indian" comes as something of a surprise. She is on firmer ground when she credits Thomas Fitzpatrick with knowing the Indians very well, after many years among them. She quotes Fitzpatrick extensively.

Mrs. Trenholm thinks that before the white man came the Arapahoes led a pretty good life, "well organized and satisfactorily adjusted" (p. 68), and with the individual able to live "to the fullest his life of freedom." Although generally sympathetic with the Arapahoes, she does not romanticize their life. She notes the drudgery of the women and mentions bloody wars with several other tribes. She explains that it was the threat of starvation around 1860 that caused depredations on the whites to multiply. She gives a chronological account of the tribe's tragic relations with the whites in the 1860s and 1870s.





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the myriad of daily events which consumed such a large amount of his time. Highlight events included the continual expansion of his land holdings by taking up "Desert Land" homesteads (after friends and associates filed on them at his request); his election as Commissioner of Laramie County; and his continual deficit spending—a major factor in his personal financial crisis of 1887. Those time-consuming daily events included such things as his semi-annual struggle with severe attacks of hay fever, his daily ranch routine, his favorite social pursuits of playing Pedro at the Cheyenne Club and attending the theatre, and just plain loafing (in this score he's perhaps more honest than many diarists in admitting "loafing" or "doing nothing".)

Hunton's life during those active, trying years tells an accurate story of fairly typical frontier ranch life. However, I am quite sure that his diary would have little meaning to many readers, if it were not for the skillful, thorough editing by the late Pat Flannery. His work adds perspective and provides the necessary framework for understanding the true nature of the times in which Hunton lived. Without that editing, we would lose track of important Wyoming events while the scene of action shifts to the Hunton's visit back home in Virginia. And, perhaps more importantly, without his editing, we'd know absolutely nothing of Hunton's activities during the 17-month period for which diary entries are missing—August, 1888 to December, 1889). It was during that time Hunton accepted appointment as Fort Laramie's Post Trader in an unsuccessful attempt to recoup his financial losses of '87.

I find the new, larger format and smooth binding of this volume an improvement over the five previous volumes of this series. Their imitation suede binding is most attractive, but it also makes it almost impossible to remove one volume from the other four of the set on a book shelf without bending or mutilating its paper binding.

I find only one shortcoming with the book; unfortunately, the volume begins with it. For some reason, strange to me, the foreword for the year 1885 begins with an inventory of guns and watches from the back of Hunton's 1892 diary and has nothing to do with 1885. Although Flannery's commentary is most interesting, its irrelevance might tend to discourage some readers at the outset. I would encourage readers to bear with the editor, their efforts will be rewarded.

The book's objective is succinctly stated on the copyright page: to "preserve a true picture of day-to-day life on the frontier and other accurate details of Wyoming's early history and development." It succeeds most interestingly and effectively!

Oft times a journal of this type holds particularly pleasant surprises for certain readers. That pleasant surprise from this volume came for me in Hunton's entry of February 18, 1886. In describing the beginning of one of his return journeys from Virginia to



Wyoming, Hunton wrote "George Young took the baggage". My wife hails from that same Piedmont region of Virginia as did Hunton, and George Young was her great-grandfather.

*Fort Laramie National Historic Site*

THOMAS E. WHITE

*Battle Drums and Geysers: The Life and Journals of Lieutenant Gustavus Cheyney Doane.* By Orrin H. and Lorraine Bonney (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1970). Illus. Index. 622 pp. \$15.00.

Gustavus Cheyney Doane was an extraordinary pioneer. Born in Illinois in 1840, he trekked to Oregon with his family in 1846, worked his way through the University of the Pacific (where he acquired the scientific knowledge that was to distinguish his later writings), served in the Civil War on the Union side, and, as a career officer, participated in the major Indian campaigns following the Civil War—from the Sioux and Nez Perce Wars to the Apache campaigns. Doane's whole career was actuated by a love of adventure and a drive for exploration. "One cannot explore the earth's surface from an observatory, nor by mathematics, nor by the power of logic," Doane once wrote, "it must be done physically. . . ." True to his nature, Doane led the Howgate expedition to the Arctic in 1880, and repeatedly (but unsuccessfully) petitioned the United States government to send him to Africa to search for the elusive source of the Nile River. But his most significant contribution as an explorer was his factual account of the Yellowstone expedition of 1870. The expedition was made up of nine prominent citizens of Montana and was escorted by a small cavalry detail under Lieutenant Doane's leadership.

Prior to 1870 the Yellowstone region was truly *terra incognita*. The stories of the early trappers were embellished and stretched, tall tales and wild rumors circulated freely, and the few printed accounts were largely unknown (and to the extent known, were suspect) in 1870. Doane's 25,000-word account, which provided the curious with the first accurate description of the Yellowstone region, is precisely what he felt a journal of exploration should be—"a faithful delineation . . .—truthful, plain, unembellished; a simple narrative of facts observed. . . ." Despite this attention to factual and scientific clarity, however, Doane's journal, with its vivid descriptions of natural wonders observed, ranks with those of other great explorers of the American West. Doane fell in love with Yellowstone, and his journal, the first official report on the region, helped prepare the way for the Yellowstone Act of 1872. During the later years of his life (he died in 1892), Doane longed for an assignment to Yellowstone National Park, but his request, ironically, was not granted.



The book is divided into three sections. Part I is the story of Doane's life, while Part II contains his complete journal of the 1870 expedition (first printed by Congress in 1871 as a Senate executive document), as well as excerpts from the accounts of other members of the party. Part III contains Doane's journal of the Snake River expedition of 1876-77. The journals are supplemented with introductory commentaries and thorough annotations, and the well-documented text is enhanced by numerous photographs, illustrations and maps. Orrin H. and Lorraine Bonney, authors of *Guide to the Wyoming Mountains and Wilderness Areas*, know the Doane territory well, and they have given scholars and historical buffs a work of enduring significance. *Battle Drums and Geysers* is a handsome, well-printed contribution to Western Americana.

*Morningside College*  
*Sioux City, Iowa*

MICHAEL B. HUSBAND

*The Expeditions of John Charles Fremont. Volume I: Travels from 1838-1844 and Map Portfolio.* Edited by Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970) Index. Illus. 854 pp. \$22.50 Vol. 1, maps. \$10 maps only.

This work—thus far only Volume I and the map portfolio have been published—must represent years of labor by the editors, Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence.

The average reader may have the tendency to look askance at an expensive book which is only "Volume I" of a projected series. But if he is interested in Fremont and his explorations, this series is sure to be "the Bible" for years to come on the subject. The maps, by expedition cartographer Charles Preuss, are remarkable.

With painstaking research, the editors have tracked down and annotated every document that sheds any light on Fremont's life and explorations. They have become "pathfinders" themselves, leading the reader on an exploration of discovery which might have been a tedious trip without the "map" their notes have drawn.

The documents are arranged in a chronology that makes for easy reading, but even more important, gives the reader an insight into the logistics—and politics—that Fremont faced on every one of his ventures.

There is a mass of information contained in the financial records that is available nowhere else. It is interesting to note, for instance, that the men who accompanied Fremont on his 1842 expedition—mostly French voyageurs—were paid a salary scale that varied from 62 1/2 cents per day as a "common hand" (Francois Tessier) to the rather princely sum of \$100 a month as guide (Christopher





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Some lines penned by her in later years reflect not only her feelings, but also an honest estimate of her husband's value to his country: "Railroads followed the lines of his journeyings—a nation followed his maps to their resting place—and cities have risen on the ashes of his lonely campfires."

*Cheyenne*

PAT HALL

*General Pope and U. S. Indian Policy.* By Richard N. Ellis. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970). Index. Illus. 287 pp. \$10.00.

Victor at Madrid and Island No. 10, controversial loser at Second Manassas, able departmental commander in the West, Major General John Pope was all of these. Dr. Richard N. Ellis, director of the American Indian Historical Research Project and assistant professor of history at the University of New Mexico, has selected a much maligned army officer as the central figure for his first book. Most of what is known today about John Pope concerns his Civil War years. Except for a brief sketch written during the 19th century, a book on Pope's role in the Northwest (*The Civil War in the Northwest* by Robert Huhn Jones, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), and a few articles in various periodicals, very little has been written on General Pope's years in the West. Although Dr. Ellis' book is not so much a biography as a study of the development of Western Indian policy during the last half of the 19th century, it does include much about the personality of Pope and his role as a military commander in the West. Perhaps Dr. Ellis will use this volume as the basis for a future book-length biography of Pope.

The book is divided into two broad sections: one covering those years in which Pope was commander of the Department of the Northwest (1862-1865) and the Division of the Missouri (1865-1866), and the other dealing with Pope as commander of the Department of the Missouri (1870-1883). The two concluding chapters provide a summation of Pope's abilities as a military commander and as an implementor of Indian policy, and the various attempts by the government at different types of policies throughout the latter half of the 19th century. Little is mentioned of Pope's position as commander, from 1867 to 1868, of the Third Military District of the South (which included the former Confederate states of Georgia, Alabama and Florida), or his positions as commander of the Department of California and the Division of the Pacific from 1883 until his retirement in March 1886. These phases of his career might not have had a bearing on the writing of this volume but it would be interesting to learn if Pope's experiences in the war-torn South and among the recently freed



blacks, influenced his Indian policy when he returned in 1870 to command the Department of the Missouri. Although Pope was perhaps one of the more important commanders in the West during his era, the glory and the fame went to the colorful field commanders; men such as Crook, Miles, Custer, and Mackenzie.

Dr. Ellis should be commended for his fine contribution to the field of 19th century U. S. military-Indian relations. However, a few comments are in order. The selection of photographs is adequate but there are no maps. In a volume such as this, that covers an area from Minnesota to California and from Montana to Arizona, and includes many of the significant battles and campaigns of the Indian Wars, at least one map is a necessity. The bibliography is most comprehensive and thorough, but the index is somewhat skimpy.

Pros and cons can be found on footnote format but this reviewer prefers the notes at the bottom of each page. Nothing is more frustrating than having to turn from a page to the back of the book, search for the correct footnote for the proper chapter, and then return to the page (if you haven't lost your place in the meantime).

There are a number of errors in the text, some probably the fault of the printer, others purely factual. On page 32 is a statement: "the Santa Fe trade (opened by William Becknell in 1821)". William Becknell opened the Santa Fe trade in 1822. Dr. Ellis has Colonel Henry B. Carrington commanding the 27th Infantry Regiment as it passed through Fort Laramie in June 1866 on its way to construct new forts along the Bozeman Trail. At this time Colonel Carrington was commanding the 18th Infantry Regiment. It wasn't until September 21, 1866, that one of the battalions of the 18th Infantry officially became the 27th Infantry.

The University of New Mexico Press has published many fine volumes in the past, and Dr. Ellis' work is no exception, but this reviewer does feel that the price of \$10 might cause a prospective buyer to hesitate before adding this fine book to his library.

*Fort Laramie National Historic Site* B. WILLIAM HENRY, JR.

*Medicine Lodge, The Story of a Kansas Frontier Town.* By Nellie Snyder Yost. (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1970)  
Illus. 237 pp. \$6.00

Those of us who live in Kansas have known that the town of Medicine Lodge, while not having a unique history, has had an extremely interesting one. This story by Nellie Snyder Yost, based on material gathered by I. N. Hewitt, a long-time resident of Medicine Lodge, depicts the high and low points of the town's life. It is not the usual dry relation of data interspersed with occasional flashes of mediocrity that we normally associate with local histories.



Instead it is a warm compassionate biography of a town that has had more than its share of problems and successes common to most short grass settlements. Mrs. Yost writes well and tells a fascinating tale of Indians, cowboys, bandits, floods, politicians, tornadoes, crusaders and plodding progress.

Even before there was a town by the name, Medicine Lodge was a prominent place because it had been the site of a grand council of Indians and United States commissioners who met there in the fall of 1867 to agree upon certain documents of peace. A large entourage of newspaper and magazine reporters had attended the councils and their words reached a large portion of the civilized parts of the country. Interest in the councils has continued so that even now, every five years, Medicine Lodge commemorates the event with a large scale pageant which depicts not only the historic event but also the whole settlement of the West.

Probably the most exciting episode in the life of the town of Medicine Lodge occurred on a late April morning in 1884 when the marshal and assistant marshal of Caldwell, a cowtown southeast of Medicine Lodge, attempted to rob the Medicine Valley Bank with the help of two cowboys. The president and cashier of the bank died as a result of the affair as did all four of the would-be robbers, the marshal by gunshot and his henchmen by hemp.

Barber and surrounding counties were then in the midst of a profitable range cattle industry. Hundreds of cattle were grazed on thousands of acres of land in the Indian country by large outfits like the Comanche County Cattle Pool. Medicine Lodge was the headquarters for some of these and business was good.

The cattle bubble burst in the great blizzard of 1886 and Medicine Lodge watched a new era of small ranchers and farmers come to life. This time it was not a period of prosperity and life was pretty prosaic in Barber county.

To take their minds off the routine of living citizens played with politics and delighted in the antics of "Sockless Jerry" Simpson who alternated Congressional terms with Chester I. Long during the 1890s. As that game began to pall Carry Nation stepped in with her rocks, brickbats and little hatchets to enliven the scene. Medicine Lodge was her residence when she began her anti-liquor crusade and it soon became the shrine of those who opposed the devilish liquid. Though she moved on to larger and more sophisticated cities, Medicine Lodge remains known as her home town.

People like J. N. "Poley" Tincher and I. N. "Jibo" Hewitt, who was responsible for the book, continued the town's reputation for colorful characters. Floods, tornadoes and other more usual facets of the town's past pale when compared to its flamboyant residents.

The primary fault in the preparation of the book is the lack of good source materials. The citations that are given are not always to material as reliable as a historian might wish. And I'll even





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years in servitude, and hard labor was characterized by poor living and work conditions, bad diet, insensitivity and brutality of guards; all of which was magnified in severity by lack of proper clothing and protection from the elements.

The author points out that the Army caste system which prevailed was one of the primary reasons for the private soldier's disaffection with Army service. This circumstance, plus the low esteem in which the soldier was held in the eyes of the civilian populace, was a chief cause of desertion.

Many soldiers of the era could not read or write and because of lack of skills sought service in the Army especially during periods of high unemployment throughout the United States. Army pay, though low by present day standards, and free board and room, served as an inducement for recruiting. When work conditions improved on the outside, however, Army desertions increased.

That part of the book dealing with the Negro in the Army following the Civil War points up many of the problems faced by the Negro, and other minorities, in the Army in that time period. For a long time only whites were eligible by Army regulations for enlistment. Eventually four regiments, two of Infantry and two of Cavalry, were organized and manned entirely by Negro soldiers, except for white officers. These units performed admirably despite discontent among the white officers assigned for duty. Negro soldiers were not permitted to aspire to, or achieve, officer status.

Several companies of Indians were organized as attachments to regiments west of the Mississippi River. White officer and political opposition soon saw the abandonment of this concept, however.

Throughout the book the reader is left with the feeling that the author has a deep sense of compassion and empathy for the soldier, especially those in the lower ranks. Mr. Foner has documented many instances where the soldier, in a generic sense, has been the victim of injustice, mistreatment and debasement of rights to which he is entitled as a human being. The author has not hesitated to place the blame upon those in command for disavowing responsibility for, or aiding in the carrying out of such abuses. The author points out also that not all of the officers were insensitive to the grave deficiencies in the Army system. Ample evidence is in the book that many officers and civilians held a deep concern for, and desire to improve the welfare of the private soldier.

Mention of incidents which took place in troop garrisons at Fort Bridger, Fort Sanders, Fort Washakie and Camp Pilot Butte should be of interest to Wyoming readers.

*Cheyenne*

ROBERT OUTSEN



*Sentinel to the Cimarron: The Frontier Experience of Fort Dodge, Kansas.* By David Kay Strate. (Dodge City: Cultural Heritage and Arts Center, 1970) Index. Illus., 147 pp.

Acting as an anchor on the westernmost flank of a frontier line which extended along the Arkansas River for miles, Fort Dodge faced southward, a sentinel to the Cimarron during most of its life as an important military post. The history of this frontier fort, eclipsed because of the color of the boisterous nearby cattle town of Dodge City, has been carefully traced by David Kay Strate in this fact-filled little volume. Beginning with a rather sketchy treatment of the historical background of Fort Dodge, Strate discusses the crude beginnings of the fort when it served as an outpost for those traveling westward into Colorado Territory or those fording the Arkansas to push south and west along the legendary Santa Fe Trail into New Mexico. After the Treaty of Medicine Lodge in 1867, the activities of Fort Dodge were directed toward the south to "hold the line of the Arkansas" against the Indians who had been expelled from the buffalo country between the Arkansas and Platte rivers. The various military expeditions dispatched south from Fort Dodge to pacify the restive Plains Indians are chronicled by the author. The familiar campaigns of General Winfield S. Hancock, the lionized William Tecumseh Sherman, and Nelson A. Miles during the late sixties and early seventies are retraced. The tragic migration of Dull Knife and his sad Cheyennes is retold. But more important is Strate's contention that the "constant vigilance and tenacious field engagements" emanating from Fort Dodge and other posts along the Arkansas were ultimately more important than the "colorful but rather ineffective" major campaigns sent to subdue the southern Plains Indians. Strate concludes his study with the coming of the settler's frontier, the establishment of Dodge City as a railhead at the end of the Western cattle trail, the closing of the fort in 1882, and the eventual establishment of the present soldier's home at Fort Dodge.

The most interesting part of this valuable new monograph, in the reviewer's opinion, dealt with the building and operation of the fort rather than the celebrated Indian campaigns with which Fort Dodge was associated. The digging of temporary sod dugouts, described by General John Pope as "holes not fit to be dog kennels," is chronicled. The rigorous and often monotonous life of the soldier at the fort is detailed, even to a brief discussion of the careful segregation of blacks and whites throughout the post. The prevalence of scurvy, diarrhea, venereal diseases, rabies, alcoholism and pneumonia is analyzed to take much of the glamour out of military life, but the result is to provide a more realistic understanding of the soldier's life in the Old West.

Strate's narrative does not always hold together as it should. The tendency not to include the Christian names of important



people when they are introduced was particularly distressing to this reviewer. Many of his historical conclusions have already been well established. But his heavy reliance on primary materials, particularly the invaluable accounts found in the Records of the War Department, do make this study worthwhile, a needed contribution to Western historiography. Photographs, maps, and illustrations, although of uneven quality, further enhance this recent publication of the Cultural Heritage and Arts Center of Dodge City and aid the Center in its expressed purpose to preserve our national experience.

*University of Northern Colorado*

ROBERT W. LARSON

*The Fourteeners. Colorado's Great Mountains.* By Perry Eberhart and Philip Schmuck. (Chicago: Swallow Press, Inc., 1970) Index. Illus. 128 pp. \$10.00. Paper \$3.95

This book sets out to probe the mystique of that exclusive "fraternity," the Colorado Fourteeners, and to capture the natural beauty of the great peaks, 53 of them, that reach above the magic mark of 14,000 feet.

Facts, legendary, historic, and oddball, are presented. Statistics and survey data are spiced with the tragic, the amusing, the curious anecdotes that most Colorado mountains collect.

It was extremely interesting, for instance, to be reminded again that the Mount of the Holy Cross was formerly a national shrine which drew thousands of pilgrims who waited for miracles; and to have my memories of Long's Peak whetted again, although I was a bit shaken by the author's statement, "Keyhole Trail, now one of the more popular routes up the west face, was not discovered until 1940." (The Keyhole Route was being used in 1921 when I first climbed the peak although subsequent to those years the National Park Service went in and dynamited the path across all difficult climbing slabs and painted it with "ham and egg" marks.)

The black and white pictures used to illustrate each mountain are the straightforward wide-screen type, giving clear and detailed views. However, the lack of captions is unfortunate. From what direction are we looking at the peaks?

A good map keys in all the mountains with their ranges and access roads.

Obviously this book is not intended as a guide book for the mountain climber, but an entertaining and beautifully illustrated introduction to Colorado's primadonna peaks for the armchair traveler and mountain lore collector.

*Houston, Texas*

ORRIN H. BONNEY





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1868, only five years from the beginning of Carson's campaign the Navajos had signed a treaty and moved back to their homeland.

*Navajo Roundup* gives a vivid picture of Indian campaigning in the 1860's, and, in the process, destroys any romantic notion of adventure the reader might have had. However, as the author himself admits, the work does not presume to give the Indian point of view. Kelly suggests that such an account should soon be forthcoming by "some young Navajo conversant with both the Indian and the white traditions."

*Albuquerque, N. M.*

MARGARET SZASZ

*The Wild West.* By Don Russell (Fort Worth: The Amon Carter Museum, 1970). Illus. Index. 149 pp.

In his latest book, Don Russell makes one thing very clear—pity the persons (including this reviewer) who never attended a Wild West show. His *The Wild West* (Russell points out that Cody never used the term "show") is a delightful, colorful book. The enjoyable text goes well with the numerous illustrations—photographs of performers, show scenes, behind-the-scenes activities and numerous showbills, the latter in full color.

Though theatrical and circus entrepreneurs had developed features later incorporated into the Wild West shows, it was Buffalo Bill Cody who pulled it all together, creating a new type of entertainment. Cody's creation was to thrill millions of people throughout the United States and Europe prior to World War I. Though the war and rising costs brought the demise of many shows, the growing sophistication of the motion picture industry (utilizing many former Wild West stars) was the real successful enemy.

Cody, Carver and Miller Brothers are the big names of the Wild West extravaganzas, but, as Russell points out, there were many small competitors traveling the length and breadth of the land, about whom there is virtually nothing known. Occasionally a star would come out of one of these imitators, joining one of the big shows, and attaining nationwide fame, while the discovering show rolled into oblivion.

While Russell details the ups-and-downs of the various Wild West shows, this is not a dry business history. It seems unlikely that anyone could write a dull study of so exciting a business. As Cody was the leading Wild West figure and as Russell is the leading Cody authority, it is natural that much of the book centers on that noted Wyoming booster. Despite the claims of various business managers, Russell makes a good claim for the business ability of Buffalo Bill. Even though he continually made expensive, poor investments, it must be recognized that he had had the ability to make the money to invest. It is also made clear how enemies Cody



made in show business did much to blacken his very real contributions as a genuine frontier personage.

Through his readable text and the well-selected illustrations (though not always located to the best advantage), Don Russell and the Amon Carter Museum have brought forth a delightful creation, sure to provide readers with hours of enjoyment. The book grew out of an exhibition of Wild West poster art at the Amon Carter Museum, and, for those of us unable to attend it, Russell's book will serve as a suitable substitute.

*Nebraska State Historical Society*

PAUL D. RILEY

*Catlin's North American Indian Portfolio, Hunting Scenes and Amusements of the Rocky Mountains and Prairies of America: a reproduction.* By George Catlin. Introduction by Harold McCracken. (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1970) Limited edition reprint. 25 plates. 24 pp. text. \$100.00.

*The Charles M. Russell Book.* By John Willard. Foreword by U. S. Senator Mike Mansfield. (Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., Salisbury Press, 1970) Illus. 64 pp. \$15.95.

*A Classified Bibliography of the Periodical Literature of the Trans-Mississippi West. A Supplement (1957-67).* By Oscar Osburn Winther and Richard A. Van Orman. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970) Index. 340 pp. \$5.00 (Paperback).

*Two Leggings: The Making of a Crow Warrior.* By Peter Nabokov. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1970) Index. Illus. 226 pp. \$2.25 (Paperback, Apollo Edition).

*'Aunt' Clara Brown. Story of a Black Pioneer.* By Kathleen Bruyn. (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1971) Index. Illus. 206 pp. \$3.95 (Paperback).

*The Wake of the Prairie Schooner.* By Irene D. Paden. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970) Reprint. Index. Illus. 514 pp. \$2.95 (Paperback, Arcturus Books).

*Bankers and Cattlemen.* By Gene M. Gressley. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971) Index. Illus. 320 pp. \$2.25 (Paperback, Bison Book).



*Fossil Discoveries in Wyoming.* Reports by members of the Union Pacific expedition. (Cheyenne: Triple R Press, 1970). Reprint. Illus. 67 pp. \$3.95 (Paperback).

*Western Wagon Wheels.* By Lambert Florin. (Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1970). Index. Illus. 183 pp. \$12.95.

*Dictionary of Pagan Religions.* By Larry E. Wedeck and Wade Baskin. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1971) 363 pp. \$10.00.

*Life and Adventures of Calamity Jane.* By Herself. (Cheyenne: Triple R Press, 1970) Reprint. 7 pp. \$1.00.





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board of directors of the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society from 1966 to 1969. He is married and has three sons.

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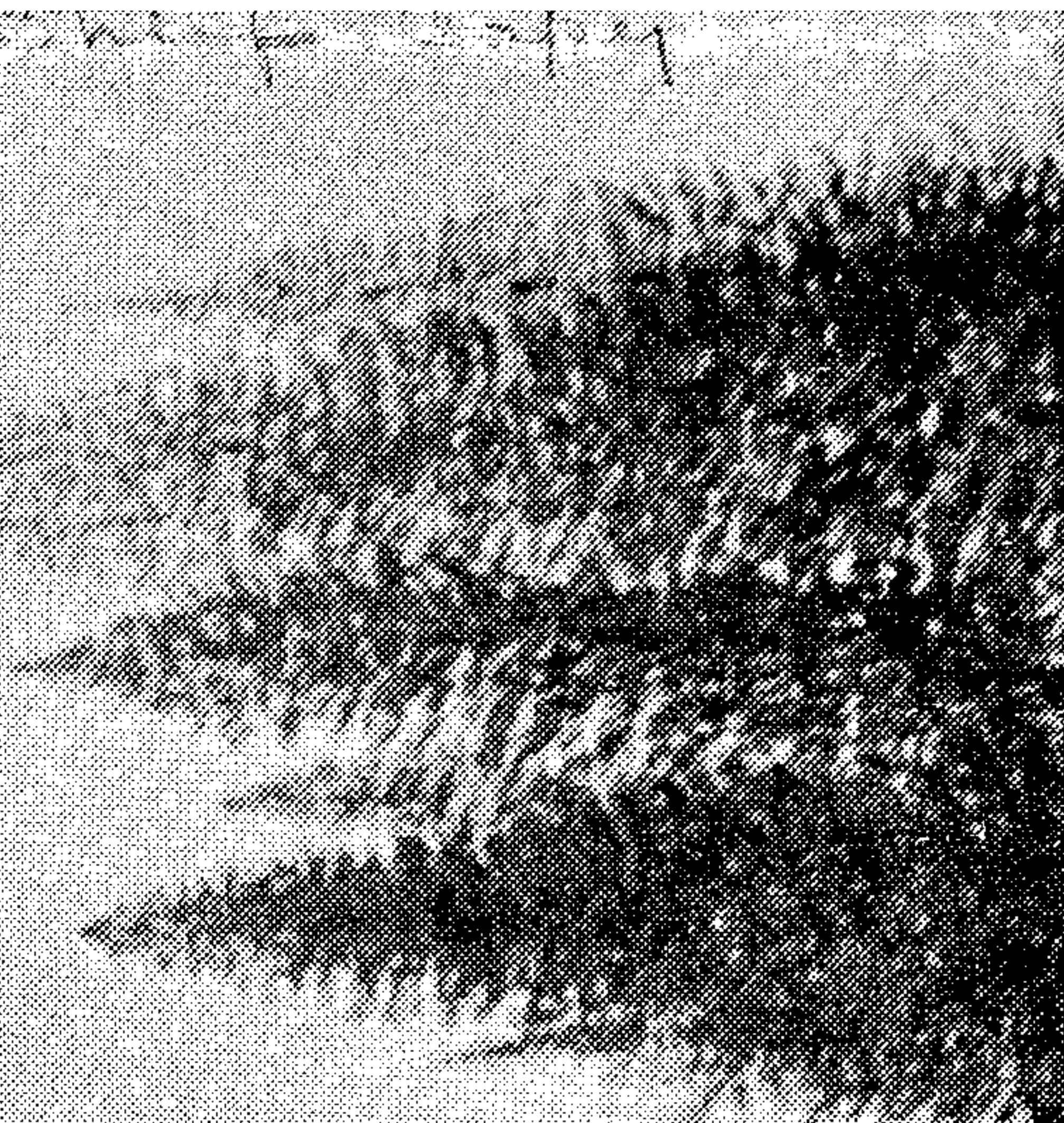






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“Pole Camp and Home of John Sublett, at Elk Mountain, Carbon Co. Wyo.,” is the title of the cover sketch. While not identified as a Merritt D. Houghton sketch, Houghton almost certainly was the artist. A very similar sketch appears in Houghton’s book, *Views of Southern Wyoming* published in 1904 by the Herald Publishing Company, Grand Encampment, Wyoming. The rendition which appears in the book is entitled “The Home and Pole Camp of John Sublette.” While apparently sketched from the same viewpoint as the cover sketch, it varies slightly in detail.





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*Frontier Index* in Fort Kearney or Kearney City (Nebraska) and continued under that name through North Platte (Nebraska), Julesburg (Colorado), Fort Sanders, Laramie, possibly Benton, Green River City and Bear River (Wyoming); changed to *Ogden Freeman* in Utah; to *Daily and Weekly Inter-Mountain* (being a merger of his *The Frontier Index* and *The Glendale Atlantis*), then *Inter-Mountains Freeman* and later *Union-Freeman*, all in Butte City (Montana); back to *Frontier-Index* (with hyphen) in Thompson Falls (Montana), which was discontinued July 5, 1884. Freeman then left for Yakima County, Washington, where he took over the *Yakima Record* and later the *Pacific Coast Dairyman*. When he retired he was managing editor of an illustrated weekly, *Northwest Farm and Home*, earlier called the *Washington Farmer*.

If Freeman was not the publisher of one migratory newspaper published in numerous locations, and the data shows he was not once he left Wyoming, then he must have been one of the predecessors of media manipulators so common in the twentieth century.

The Freeman brothers were originally from Virginia and both Legh and Fred had served in the American Civil War on the side of the South, probably as telegraph operators behind the lines. Evidence is scanty that Legh was actually a telegrapher but there is correspondence in the Department of Defense<sup>5</sup> which indicates Legh had offered his services to the Union as a telegraph spy. He was later captured by Union forces in Kentucky and imprisoned until he took the oath of allegiance to the United States on October 27, 1864. After the war, Legh, and later Fred, came West and worked as telegraphers at Fort Kearney, Nebraska.

Legh Freeman is described as being "bombastic, somewhat eccentric; he was always flamboyant, aggressive and rigidly positive in his beliefs. Though he died almost in obscurity in Yakima in 1915, his contributions to newspapering on the frontier cannot be underestimated."<sup>6</sup>

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the Freemans, believed Legh Freeman owned a number of different newspapers in his lifetime which he liked to think were all part of *The Frontier Index*. In a letter to the Historical Society of Montana, January 7, 1937, Jacobucci wrote: "I think it probable that there was in Montana no paper actually called *The Frontier Index*. Freeman liked to think that the paper, which he renamed after purchasing *The Kearney Herald* in Nebraska in 1865, had a continuous existence, when actually he was merely the owner of various papers, under various names, in several towns in the West. In that case it is probable that Freeman established or took over the *Glendale Atlantis* on his arrival in Montana in 1879 and later moved it to Butte changing the name to the *Intermountain*."

5. Letter to Jacobucci from War Department, Adjutant General's Office, December 3, 1936. In Jacobucci Files, *op. cit.*

6. Robert F. Karolevitz, *Newspapering in the Old West* (Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1965), pp. 169-170.



As a forerunner of Wyoming journalism,<sup>7</sup> Freeman's *The Frontier Index* set a precedent of wild and woolly newspapering that even Bill Nye's *Laramie Boomerang* (named after Nye's mule), Merris C. Barrow's *Bill Barlow's Budget* (an eight page weekly that cost \$3 a year or \$300 for 300 years), Asa Shinn Mercer's *Northwestern Livestock Journal* and the *Platte Valley Lyre* found difficult to follow.

One characteristic the *Index* possessed which was common to its Wyoming and Western colleagues was an unrestrained language when describing the riches, beauties and commercial possibilities of the frontier towns. Barrow probably captured this enthusiasm on the part of frontier editors when he wrote in 1903:

The Wyoming newspaperman is an optimist, if there ever was one. Even in his sober moments—and he has 'em—he sees things. Given a country store or two at an isolated cross-roads and he builds a city; . . . a forty dollar addition to your modest shack makes it a mansion, and his town is the only town, and the best ever. He is always willing to fudge a little in handling cold fact, and as prophet he simply skunks Elijah and all his ilk. . . . Of necessity, he is sometimes a liar; but to sorter toy with the truth in prophetic spirit for the good of the country or community in which he lives is with him a labor of love, and by reason of a special dispensation granted him directly from Deity, these trifling idiosyncrasies which we of the profesh term 'essential errors' are not charged up against him in the Big Book.<sup>8</sup>

Linford captured the spirit of *The Frontier Index* along these same lines when she wrote, "Its space was devoted to proclaiming breezily the advantages of the particular community from which it issued its sheet."<sup>9</sup>

Despite such promotional zeal, editors faced a formidable task in that there was very little to make for stable territorial development in the Rocky Mountain West. Towns cropped up overnight, it is true, but they died just as quickly when the railroad construction crews passed through or when the mining boom<sup>10</sup> petered out. However, as John Hanson Beadle, editor of the *Corinne (Utah) Reporter* observed, editors of his day really believed their towns were destined to boom.

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7. For list of Wyoming imprints of the era, see: Wilhelmina Carothers (ed.), "Check List of Wyoming Imprints 1866-1890," *American Imprints Inventory, Historical Records Survey* (New York: Kraus Reprint Corp., 1964). See pp. 10-11 for description of *The Frontier Index*.

8. *Bill Barlow's Budget*, October 19, 1903.

9. Velma Linford, *Wyoming: Frontier State* (Denver: Old West Publishing Co., 1947), p. 278.

10. One author described the mining booms in this fashion: "The boom itself turned out to be an abortive business that ran the course from prosperity to ghost town more rapidly than was usual on mining frontiers." (Elizabeth Keen, *Wyoming's Frontier Newspapers*, Laramie: University of Wyoming, 1956, master's thesis. Also published in *Annals of Wyoming*,



As for the railroad, little doubt exists that it wasn't the greatest single factor<sup>11</sup> in opening up what is now Wyoming and Utah. As the construction of the Union Pacific railroad approached these states, railway agents staked out towns along the right of way; the difficulty, however, was that many of these towns folded up in traditional tent-town fashion after the crews departed.

Whereas normally newspapers get started once a town is laid out, *The Frontier Index* reversed the procedure; it anticipated where the next winter terminus of the UP would be and went ahead to help develop the town. Because the railroad was establishing some of the first towns in Wyoming, the *Index* in turn became the "first newspapers"<sup>12</sup> in the state.

### HARD TO FOLLOW

Newspaper and printing historian, Douglas McMurtrie, after attempting to reconstruct the *Index* story, wrote, "Published first at one place and then another, the 'Frontier Index' has a decidedly elusive history."<sup>13</sup> That was an understatement. The many tales that surround *The Frontier Index*, most colored in retelling, in addition to the mobility of the newspaper physically and of the Freemans mentally, make it difficult to separate fact from myth. Usually, easily verified data such as a paper's name becomes con-

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under same title, Vol. 33, No. 2, Vol. 34, No. 1, Vol. 34, No. 2, Vol. 35, No. 1.

Wyoming historian T. A. Larson, agreed that the birth of Wyoming towns was something other than a planned action:

"It is sometimes supposed that there was an orderly procession of towns across Wyoming, like beads being strung one after another. On the contrary, new towns arose almost simultaneously; owing partly to the speed of advance, and partly to speculative enterprise. One correspondent aptly described the railroad towns as being engaged in a game of leapfrog." T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), p. 57.

11. Myers pointed out the people pinned their hopes on the railroad. "In the mountains there were the gold, silver or copper strikes drawing prospectors or mine workers and those who flocked to serve or prey upon them. On the prairies or plains the same function was performed by stampedeers to grab up land claims. In both types of terrain railroads could bring the purchasing power of thousands . . . to terminal construction points. (John Myers Myers, *Print in a Wild Land* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), p. 49.

12. The *Index* is referred to as "first newspapers" because it was the pioneer in a number of places. Fort Bridger had the first Wyoming newspaper, Cheyenne the second, the *Index* was the third when it published at Fort Sanders, the fourth in the state's history when it appeared in Laramie, the fifth newspaper was *Sweetwater Mines* at South Pass City and the eighth city to have a newspaper was Bear River when the *Index* published there. McMurtrie, (Hattiesburg, Miss.: Printed for Book Farm, *Early Printing in Wyoming and the Black Hills*, 1943), pp. 30-44.

13. McMurtrie, "Pioneer printing in Wyoming," *op. cit.*, p. 736.





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Although most of their efforts were for self-aggrandizement, the Freemans also were for law and order, municipal government and a number of political candidates who fit their fancy, most notably brother Fred. That the Freemans promoted themselves frequently can be gleaned from the number of advertisements and notes that call attention to what Legh Freeman was doing on one of his many excursions or what the reader could get by dealing with "Freeman Bros. Real Estate Agents" or by staying at their Frontier Hotel. Those in the enemy camp, whatever that should be at any given time, were treated unmercifully for impartial reporting was not one of Legh or Fred Freeman's strong suits.<sup>16</sup>

*The Frontier Index* had its birth at Fort Kearney, Nebraska, the same garrison which sheltered and employed Hiram Brundage, founder of the first newspaper in Wyoming, *The Daily Telegraph*<sup>17</sup> at Fort Bridger. An army camp was not an unusual birthplace for newspapers of that day because it was around such forts that the settlers clustered for protection from Indian attacks.

With the purposes of attracting attention to the West and providing news of the Civil War for the soldiers and residents about the fort, Moses H. Sydenham in 1862 established the *Kearney Herald* at Fort Kearney. "But from want of proper support and other causes," according to Sydenham,<sup>18</sup> he did not keep the paper for long, passing it to Seth P. Mobley, a soldier in the Seventh Iowa Cavalry, and Brundage, the telegraph operator at Fort Kearney. The Mobley-Brundage partnership did not endure either:

They issued a weekly paper. That arrangement did not last for long, for a new telegraph operator soon appeared in the person of Leigh R. Freeman, a red-hot, unreconstructed 'secessionist' fresh from the southland and the theatre of the southern civil war, where he had been a telegraph operator under the Confederate government. . . . He bought out the old *Fort Kearney Herald*, press and material, and

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16. Anyone who has taken even a cursory glance at the files of *The Frontier Index* would have to disagree with Linford's remark: "Along with the UP, the *Index* hustled across mountains and deserts, a noisy, good-natured, mouthpiece for a noisy, transient population. It broadcast *impartially* [author's italics] the enterprise of the Union Pacific and the merits of each region and terminal which railroad and paper reached together." (Linford, *op. cit.*, p. 279.)

17. For men on the *Daily Telegraph* and Hiram Brundage, see: McMurtrie, "The Fourth Infantry Press at Fort Bridger," *Annals of Wyoming*, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 347-351; Joe F. Jacobucci, "Hiram Brundage and Wyoming's First Newspaper," chapter typescript for book Jacobucci proposed on Wyoming journalism but never published. Typescript dated April 20, 1939, in Jacobucci Files, University of Wyoming Library.

18. A. C. Edmunds, *Pen Sketches of Nebraskans*, (Lincoln: R. & J. Wilbur, 1871) p. 213.



started the *Frontier Index* with them.<sup>19</sup> He then got a brother of his to come out from Virginia, Fred K. Freeman, and removing the press and material to old Kearney City or 'Adobe Town' continued the *Frontier Index* there for some time. There it became the democratic party organ in Kearney County. . . . After that, the two brothers transferred the press and material to the north side of the Platte for service as a pioneer press in the lead of the constructing forces building the Union Pacific railroad. Then they changed the name of their paper from the *Frontier Index* to *The Frontier Index On Wheels* and thus it kept along at the mushroom towns that sprang up—for a time at the head of the railroad construction.<sup>20</sup>

As for Brundage, he left Fort Kearney destined for Fort Bridger where he started the *Daily Telegraph*, June 26, 1863. Late that year, he left the *Telegraph* and via Montana ended up back at Fort Kearney by early 1865, "possibly engaged as telegraph operator and publishing the *Herald*."<sup>21</sup> Brundage probably recommended the *Herald* in April, 1865, published it through June and then sold his interest to Mobley, who also had returned to Fort Kearney. Mobley continued publication of the *Herald* until December 1865,<sup>22</sup> when he sold out to Legh R. Freeman and Fred K. Freeman, the former a telegrapher at the fort since the departure of Brundage six months earlier.

Legh Freeman's recollections of the birth of *The Frontier Index* are in no way similar to the above account; he takes his connections with the paper back to 1850, and other times to 1847, through what seem to be vicarious experiences:

In the spring of 1850, a colony of Mormons left Council Bluffs as a reinforcement to Brigham Young, who had already established him-

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19. The change of name was not made at once after the purchase. As late as January 17, 1866, the *Nebraska Herald* at Plattsmouth acknowledged the receipt of a copy of the *Kearney Herald* published by Leigh R. Freeman at Fort Kearney.

20. Letter from Moses H. Sydenham to Lincoln (Nebraska) *State Journal*, March 6, 1906.

In another letter quoted in Root and Connelley's *The Overland Stage to California*, Sydenham said:

"Leigh R. Freeman came to Fort Kearney about the year 1864 or 1865, just after the war was over: for he had been an operator (telegraph) within the Confederate lines, and he and his brother were Democrats of the strongest secessionist type—Freeman came to take charge of the telegraph office at Fort Kearney. He was not even a printer and had no press or type whatever (when he came). Before he came to Fort Kearney, I had sold my press and printing outfit to Seth P. Mobley of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry, who purchased it to do some printing for the army and publish a paper besides. L. R. Freeman purchased the outfit of Mobley and then started his paper, *The Frontier Index*, which was published for a while at Fort Kearney and Kearney City and then started it along at the terminal stations of the Union Pacific railroad, for a time at Plum Creek, then at North Platte and then at Julesburg, Laramie, etc. until he finally stopped at Butte, Montana."

21. Jacobucci, *op. cit.*

22. Edmunds, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-198.



self at Salt Lake City. With this party was J. E. Johnson, who had with him a small army press and a few fonts of type. He and some of his friends settled temporarily on Wood River, a tributary of the Platte, . . . and during the stay of the party, Johnson begun [*sic*] the publication of a paper. The Indians were found to be hostile and drove them on to the American Mecca. The printing outfit was abandoned and knocked into pi, but Legh R. Freeman coming along gathered up what was left and by whittling out with a jack-knife the missing pieces, began the publication of the *Frontier-Index* in the Fort Kearney garrison. The printers were detailed from the ranks of the army; the devil was a drummer boy; the imposing stone was made of a two inch oak plank obtained from the Quartermaster's Department and the ink stone was presented by the Government painter who had used it in grinding and mixing paints. Quarters were set apart by the Secretary of War for this first printing office that ever crossed the Missouri above St. Louis. The principal patronage came from the military posts, and as outfitting towns sprang up at Omaha, Platts-mouth, Nebraska City and Leavenworth, the business men of those places found use for advertising space.<sup>23</sup>

Legh did not say when he actually began printing newspapers although throughout his lifetime, he talked in terms of 1850 as the beginning of the *Index* and of his own career in newspapering. In 1850, Legh Freeman was eight years old. His brother Fred considered May, 1866, as the birthdate of the *Index*, a much more realistic figure.<sup>24</sup> "It was published on an old time handroller

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23. Legh R. Freeman, "Notes on Pioneer Printing and Newspaper Publishing in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and Montana," 33rd anniversary story in *Butte City Union Freeman*, June 24, 1883, from McMurtrie, *The History of the Frontier-Index, the Ogden Freeman, The Intermountain Freeman and the Union Freeman*, (Evanston, Ill.: 1943) pp. 7-8.

Legh Freeman wrote similarly about the founding of the *Index* in the June 19, 1877, anniversary issue of his *Ogden Freeman*, reprinted in J. Cecil Alter, *Early Utah Journalism*, (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, 1938). p. 155.

Other versions of the founding of the *Index* were given by Hubert Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, (San Francisco: 1890) p. 532; and McMurtrie, "Pioneer Printing in Wyoming," *op. cit.*, p. 737. See also: Samuel A. Bristol, "Newspaper Press of Wyoming," dated 1884, eight page manuscript in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.

24. Jacobucci found in his research in 1937 that the Freemans published the *Kearney Herald* as early as January 6, 1866. A copy bearing that date, owned by the family of General Henry B. Carrington, was marked Volume 1, Number 2 and listed Legh R. Freeman as publisher. In a reader advertisement in that issue, Freeman advised the public:

"Persons wishing to obtain the earliest telegraphic accounts of the proceedings of the United States Congress, the Legislature of Nebraska; the progress of the Mexican and Chilian wars, and other excitable news, should subscribe at once to the *Kearney Herald*, which will furnish all items-of importance at least two days in advance of any other means of intelligence. The outfitters of the Missouri River cities will find it greatly to their interest to advertise in the *Herald*, as all freighters and passengers buy it. For sale at the Post-Office of the City and Garrison, the Stage Office, and the Pacific Telegraph Office." ("Across the Plains with Bridger as Guide," by





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Business was just as brisk in North Platte—as long as the town lasted. The *Index* was very successful printing small circulars and charging \$20 per 100 words. In fact, business was so good a new Washington hand-press was substituted for the older roller press. Once the work was finished to and beyond North Platte, the city was depopulated within 48 hours. The new inhabitants moved on to the next terminus, Julesburg, in the northeastern corner of what is now Colorado, the *Index* being the first enterprise to reach that town in January, 1867. Legh Freeman told of the shift from North Platte to Julesburg:

One day it [the *Index*] printed the outside of the paper in North Platte City, dating it Julesburg, then the outfit was put aboard of the cars and after being transported 100 miles, was set out on the greensward of the unbroken prairie, a set of tarpaulins stretched over, the locals rustled up, and Julesburg had her paper the same day the outside had been printed 100 miles away.<sup>28</sup>

The earliest extant copy of *The Frontier Index* was published at Julesburg, July 26, 1867. (Now on display at Union Pacific Historical Museum in Omaha.) A note on page three of this issue, which was printed on grocer's wrapping paper, apologized that "The *Index* is one day behind time, on account of waiting for our paper to come, but we are at last disappointed, and compelled to issue on brown wrapping paper."<sup>29</sup> Right under that item, the Freemans announced that subscribers would find their papers in the post office because "the boys are too negligent to be trusted as carriers."<sup>30</sup>

Two other notes in the Julesburg paper point out the acquisitiveness on the part of the publishers as well as their exaggerated sense of humor:

The U.P.R.R. dumped out several car loads of coal last evening in front of our office, which is now readily retailing at three dollars per bushel.

and,

The weather has been so hot for the past week that the thermometer had to be lengthened for the mercury to run up. It has ranged from 120 to 126 in the shade.<sup>31</sup>

Next stop for the peripatetic *Index* was Fort Sanders, Dakota Territory, a garrison located between Laramie and Cheyenne. McMurtrie and others<sup>32</sup> have made the statement that the *Index*

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28. Legh R. Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

29. *The Frontier Index*, July 26, 1867, p. 3.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. McMurtrie, "Pioneer Printing in Wyoming," *op. cit.*, p. 734.



published at Cheyenne for a short time in the summer of 1867, but Jacobucci refuted that claim with considerable evidence:

On October 2, 1867, appeared the item in the *Daily Denver Gazette* which was evidently the basis for McMurtrie's assumption that the *Index* was printed at Cheyenne: 'From the Julesburg *Index* we extract the following line: "The *Frontier Index* rolls on to Cheyenne tomorrow."' Whether the Freemans intended at that time to stop at Cheyenne cannot be said, but three things make it seem fairly certain that they did not issue the *Index* there, nor at any place between Julesburg and Fort Sanders. First, no mention of its being published in Cheyenne is made in *The Cheyenne Leader*. . . . Files of the *Leader* in the Wyoming State Library are almost complete from the first issue [September 19, 1867] and a careful search failed to reveal any item in reference to the *Index* as being published in Cheyenne, although the *Leader* frequently has paragraphs about other Cheyenne newspapers,—the *Argus* and the *Rocky Mountain Star*—including news of their establishment later in the fall of 1867. Second, the *Leader* does mention the *Index's* passing through Cheyenne. The following is from the issue of November 2, 1867: 'Mr. F. R. [sic] Freeman, of the *Frontier Index*, is in town, on his way to Fort Sanders. He leaves, with his press, in a few days. We shall be glad to welcome the *Index*.' References to *The Frontier Index* as a Fort Sanders publication are frequent in later issues of the *Leader*. Third, Legh Freeman never mentioned Cheyenne as a stopping place of the *Index*. Both in items in late issues of the *Index* and in his letter to C. G. Coutant he refers to the *Index's* being published at 'Kearney, North Platte, Julesburg, Fort Sanders . . . , Cheyenne being in every instance omitted.'<sup>33</sup>

Because issues of the *Index* from July 26, 1867, to March 6, 1868, do not exist, one has to rely on items in regional newspapers for a record of the *Index* whereabouts. *The Cheyenne Leader* in December<sup>34</sup> reported that the *Index* "has resumed publication at Fort Sanders, forty miles west of Cheyenne"; the *Daily Denver Gazette*<sup>35</sup> during the same month quoted the *Index* of December 24: "Our exchanges will please address the *Index* at Fort Sanders. Remember, we are on wheels—fifty miles west of Cheyenne." Nearly a month later, the *Leader*<sup>36</sup> said that the *Index* was planning

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33. Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.* See also: McMurtrie, *Early Printing in Wyoming and the Black Hills*, *op. cit.*

N. A. Baker, founder of *The Cheyenne Leader*, agreed that the paper left Julesburg destined for Fort Sanders but his information must be scrutinized carefully because he also did not remember the paper ever having published at Laramie City:

"The next stopping place (after Julesburg) was Fort Sanders—a short distance east of Laramie City. I have no knowledge of the 'Index' noted ever being in Laramie City . . . Fort Steele, was the next point of venture for the 'Index'—close to Benton. Benton was a 'red-hot' town in those days, succeeded only a brief time later by the town of Rawlins." (Letter from N. A. Baker to Grace Raymond Hebard, October 25, 1928. In Jacobucci Files, University of Wyoming Library.)

34. *The Cheyenne Leader*, December 21, 1867.

35. *Daily Denver Gazette*, December 31, 1867.

36. *The Cheyenne Leader*, January 27, 1868.



to open a branch printing office at the Sweetwater mines in western Wyoming, with the "stem" remaining in Fort Sanders.

### PROMOTERS EXTRAORDINAIRE

Apparently the Freemans wasted no time in boasting Fort Sanders as the metropolis of the West; in fact, their first issue there in December, 1867, is said to have contained a "verbose and sanguinary prophecy on the future of Fort Sanders."<sup>37</sup> It was here too that the Cheyenne newspapers and the *Index* started their epithet-filled exchanges as to which town was the better—Cheyenne or any town the Freemans boasted. An example:

The *Frontier Index* says Cheyenne will have to 'cave' to Fort Sanders, and that there is 'three or four thousand men' in that neighborhood. Pshaw! we've got three or four thousand babies in Cheyenne and adults in proportion. Dry up!<sup>38</sup>

By February, 1868, the Cheyenne newspapers were so wearied by the exaggerations of the *Index* that they referred to the paper as "the munchausen organ at Fort Sanders"<sup>39</sup> and used *Index* promotion articles as pieces of humor in their own papers.

But it could not be denied that Fort Sanders did enjoy a great measure of prosperity in the spring of 1868 and so did the *Index*. As many as 14 and 15 of the paper's 24 columns were filled with advertising, in addition to a number of paid reader's notices.

A sidelight to the *Index* story at Fort Sanders was Fred Freeman's account of a serious injury he sustained while moving the *Index* presses to that fort. It is presented here not only as part of the newspaper's history but more importantly as an example of the Freemans' method of showing themselves as heroes.

The *Frontier Index* with all its paraphernalia was transported over the Black Hills Range in three large wagons, 6 mule teams, to its new destination in charge of the senior proprietor, F. K. Freeman. . . . A serious accident happened to F. K. Freeman on the descent of the mountain. . . . He was riding horseback wrapped in heavy winter clothing and furs, the thermometer 20 degrees below zero, when he noticed an empty carriage attached to his rear loaded wagon had become uncoupled. . . . He halted the teamsters and told them to hurry back and make fast the empty vehicle. While they were busy recoupling, the front team started to move on. Mr. Freeman, numb and chilled from the cold, dismounted from his horse, ran to the front of the moving team, caught hold of the bridle reins of the off leader. . . . The sudden check frightened him, causing him to rear up and throw Mr. Freeman on his face under the mule's feet. The wagon containing 6700 pounds of castings and machinery passed over his

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37. Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.* p. 9.

38. *The Cheyenne Leader*, December 27, 1867. Quoted in Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.*

39. *The Cheyenne Leader*, February 26, 1868.





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dream metropolis. Actually, steam navigation for any distance up the Colorado River was never practical.<sup>43</sup>

Both Fort Sanders issues were devoted also to discounting rumors and stories that were derogatory of Laramie City, the city they knew would be their next destination. An editorial in the March 24 issue, for example, warned citizens that land buyers were spreading the rumor that Laramie lacked any minerals of worth, thereby hoping to get the land for low prices. "Do not sacrifice your property for a whistle," the *Index* counseled.

Because *The Frontier Index*, as most western newspapers, depended heavily upon exchange newspapers for outside news, it was little wonder that Fred Freeman would write in the March 24 *Index*:

Editors get their exchanges for their own use and not to be carried away by persons too stingy to subscribe for a paper themselves. Exchanges are to an editor what any other sort of material is to any sort of mechanic, and like all good mechanics, he likes to have his material convenient for use at any moment he desires to use it.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the paper's praise for Laramie, the *Index* preferred to remain at Fort Sanders apparently, not arriving in Laramie until the rails had passed that city. The Freemans and *Index* were in reality booted out of Fort Sanders by the commandant, a General

43. Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

In her letter to Jacobucci, Elizabeth Toohey, historian of Arizona State House (undated) said:

"I think that we would be quite safe in saying that the town of Freemansburg never materialized; at least we have no record of any settlement of that name."

At the time, the Freemans thought they had a settlement though as revealed from this advertisement which ran in the *Index* regularly:

"Freeman Bros.,  
"Real Estate Agents.  
"BUSINESS ON WHEELS.

"Buy and sell real estate at the successive termini towns of the great railroads across the continent. Also, at Freemansburg, Arizona Territory, at the mouth of the Virgen River, the head of steam navigation on the Colorado River—the Mississippi of the West—from which railroads will soon diverge to every part of the mountain territories. It is supposed that Freemansburg will be the Capital of the new Territory of Aztec.

"Also agents for lands in the town and about the harbor of San Diego . . . where there is fourteen miles of deep wharfage in a harbor better protected, and entered with less difficulty during storms and fog, than San Francisco."

44. *The Frontier Index*, March 24, 1868, p. 4.

Other news sources the Freemans and any other Western editor tapped were mentioned by Myers:

"An editor in any given town made it a point to find out what fellow residents were receiving informative letters from various quarters of the country. . . . He also knew who were the magazine subscribers, and who had friends in the East who would forward new books." Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 30.



Gibbon.<sup>45</sup> The editors said they were never afforded an explanation concerning their expulsion but they assumed it was because they had charged the general with being a North Carolina 'tar-heel' and southern sympathizer rather than the Grant man he thought himself to be. The Fremans' answer to this 'rumor':

Now who supposes that we would be so extremely foolhardy and *self-sacrificing*, in the midst of a despotic, radical republican administration of terror, while military government tyrannizes over three-fourths of the United States, as to say ought against or to impeach the politic principles of one of our soldier dignitaries! Not us! No sir! Life is sweet—the love of life would alone forbid the charge. We will not tell half of what we know until after Pendleton is put where Grant wants to be; then we will blow our long winded bazzoo to the sorrow of many a little tyrant.<sup>46</sup>

Claiming a fear of the government and pretending to be intimidated to speak out, the *Index* nevertheless spent portions of the next month's issues lambasting the general with sarcastic remarks. In the June 2 issue the editors revealed that the general had converted their Fort Sanders office into a beer saloon, that he would eventually rent out back rooms of the ex-newspaper office for a billiard hall and that he grazed his flock of sheep on government land. "But if your stock dare to touch a sprig of government grass, it is penned up and you are fined big," the *Index*<sup>47</sup> editorialized.

When newspapers as far away as Baltimore, Cincinnati, Chicago and Washington picked up the *Index* story on the general and emphasized his ownership of a beer saloon, the *Index* commented:

TOO BAD, TOO BAD— . . . Now we insist upon having General G. let alone, he is running Uncle Sam's machine, and a 'poor white citizen' has no right to question his unchangeable edicts. He is sustained by the black radical 'powers that be'—his name is legion. . . .<sup>48</sup>

In the same issue, quoting the *Rocky Mountain Herald* as saying the "*Frontier Index* will *Index* Gen. Gibbon a little closer than he thinks," the Freemans replied "No sir, military and nigger radicalism will not allow us 'poor white trash' to gainsay the actions of our soldier lords."<sup>49</sup>

Persistent in their efforts to defame the general, as they were any

45. According to Legh Freeman, the brothers had run into trouble with the military authorities at Fort Kearney as well:

"Our press has always been remarkably bold and fearless in behalf of the right. At Fort Kearney, when the military attempted to muzzle it, we moved two miles to Kearny [sic] City, just beyond the reservation line, and bombarded the fort." Legh Freeman, "Notes on printing . . .," *op. cit.*, p. 9.

46. *The Frontier Index*, May 19, 1868, p. 3.

47. *Ibid.*, June 2, 1868, p. 3.

48. *Ibid.*, June 5, 1868, p. 2.

49. *Ibid.*



time they set out to promote or demote, the editors in subsequent issues threatened to "make some body howl" when Pendleton "gets into the U.S. wagon,"<sup>50</sup> asked innocently "Don't you know you are liable to be shot or guillotined for daring to question the actions of a military officer of the United States?"<sup>51</sup> and predicted "The guillotine is ready for us, but needs oiling."<sup>52</sup>

Another Freeman dream vanished while the *Index* was at Fort Sanders. The brothers had planned a branch of the *Index* in the Sweetwater mining district near South Pass (Wyoming) but abandoned the idea when the *Sweetwater Mines*,<sup>53</sup> another migratory newspaper, set up shop there January 27, 1868.

### FINANCIALLY SOUND

As elsewhere, the *Index* prospered in Laramie too. From the first Laramie editions in April,<sup>54</sup> 1868, until the *Index* moved on in July of the same year, the paper advertised wares and services of Cheyenne, Dale City (Dakota Territory), Omaha, Salt Lake, Chicago, Green River, North Platte and Denver merchants and professional men. On the circulation side, Freeman listed selling agents at Green River, Salt Lake City, Virginia City, San Francisco and St. George (Utah). In fact, most of the issues of the *Index* published in Wyoming showed an economic stability not found in most newspapers of the West at that time. In a Green River City

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50. *Ibid.*, June 12, 1868, p. 3.

51. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1868, p. 2.

52. *Ibid.*, June 19, 1868, pp. 2, 3.

53. For more on the *Sweetwater Mines*, see: Linford, *op. cit.*, p. 278; *The Sweetwater Mines: A Pioneer Wyoming Newspaper*, Douglas C. McMurtrie (Minneapolis: privately printed, 1935) 6 pp.; Keen, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-6; *South Pass 1868: James Chisholm's Journal of the Wyoming Gold Rush*, Lola Homsher, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960) pp. 38, 42-43, 218, 234-235; Coutant, *op. cit.*, p. 637; Jacobucci Files, University of Wyoming Library; Jay Gurian, "Sweetwater Journalism and Western Myth," *Annals of Wyoming*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 79-88; original issues of *Mines* in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California; microfilm of same in University of Wyoming Library, Laramie.

In the May 22, 1868, *Index* the Freemans commented on the birth of the *Sweetwater Mines*:

"Who Got Up the Sweetwater Stampede?"

"Those who may evince a sufficient interest, can possibly catch an insight into these matters by ascertaining who were the real owners of the printing paraphernalia shipped from the *Vedette* office, to Fort Bridger, for the purpose of starting the *Sweetwater Mines*—not only the paper of the mine, but the unwarranted stampede, which has caused thousands of poor miners to exert themselves against all difficulties to reach the reported rich diggings. . . ."

54. The first issue from Laramie City that survives is that for April 21, 1868. *The Cheyenne Leader* of March 17, 1868, however indicated that the *Index* was being published in Laramie by March, 1868.





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### Freemans used in dealing with subscribers and potential subscribers:

Any young lady who will send us a club of six new subscribers, we will either marry her ourself, or use our prevailing endeavors on the young man of her choice. We have blank licenses on hand for the purpose already signed. Nothing to do but call on the parson.<sup>61</sup>

An important advertisement used in every issue of the *Index* after May 22, 1868, not only boasted about the paper's circulation and advertising revenue but also set down the *Index's* editorial policy. It is printed here in full because the Freeman brothers' many prejudices show through so plainly:

**TO ADVERTISERS!** The Frontier Index. Established 1865. The pioneer paper of the Plains—of the successive terminal towns of the Union Pacific Railroad—as the gigantic continental thoroughfare progresses westward: And of the Territory of Wyoming!!

Our travelling correspondents and agents have extended the circulation throughout Montana, Idaho, Utah, Aztec, Arizona, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Dakota, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, New Mexico, Nebraska, Kansas and the East and South!!!

It is to be found in the reading rooms of every ranch throughout the West!!!!

It is the only 'Gentile' paper that is conducted in such a concillatory manner as to have secured a general circulation among the wide-spread business element of the Mormons!!!!

It does not advocate sending an army of 'Spoonies' to plunder and lay waste the peaceful mountain homes—ravish the women; and entail starvation upon the orphaned children of an harmonious brotherhood—a brotherhood which has converted a savage sage brush desert into the happiest community in America!!!!

As the emblem of American Liberty, the *Frontier Index* is now perched upon the summit of the Rocky Mountains; flaps its wings over the Great West, and screams forth in thunder and lightning tones, the principals [*sic*] of the unterrified anti-Nigger, anti-Chinese, anti-Indian party—Masonic Democracy!!!!<sup>62</sup>

Among the advertisers, one might guess from the praise for the Mormons in the above statement, was Brigham Young. Fred Freeman met with the "cordial and friendly" spiritual leader in the spring of 1868 and claimed he came away with a "big subscription list and extensive advertising contract."<sup>63</sup>

It is very likely that the Freemans' "Business on Wheels" enterprises, plus their Frontier Hotel in Laramie, had something to do with the *Index's* financial security. The hotel was among 500 buildings that sprang up in a period of two weeks in Laramie, "chiefly devoted to the more gaudy types of sin and pleasure."<sup>64</sup> Laramie roared for awhile but as early as June 30, 1868, after the

61. *The Frontier Index*, June 16, 1868, p. 3.

62. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1868, pp. 1, 2.

63. Unpublished manuscript by Fred K. Freeman, *op. cit.*

64. McMurtrie, "Pioneer printing in Wyoming," *op. cit.*, p. 734.



railroad crews had passed beyond the town, *The Cheyenne Leader* commented "all that remains of Laramie is a cast-off undershirt, an empty bottle and *The Frontier Index*."

While at Laramie, the *Index* was edited by Fred Freeman, Legh still acting as roving correspondent, filing letters from "Eastern Terminus Central Pacific Railroad, Nevada," "Argenta, Nevada," "San Pedro to San Francisco, California," and of course, "Freemansburg, Aztec Ter., Sanctum of the American Libertarian." In most of his letters, he compared wherever he was with Laramie and the latter city always came out the better. It was during the spring of 1868 that many of his dispatches were signed "Horatio Vattel, General in Chief, and editor of the official organ of the armies of Masonic Democracy," a name he claimed was given to him by phrenologists in Nevada.

Fred Freeman, meanwhile, kept up a steady barrage against the Cheyenne newspapers and any other detractors from his belief that Laramie would become the halfway metropolis between Salt Lake and Omaha. He pointed out that 1,000 lots had been bought in Laramie during the first week of settlement and as one of his headlines proclaimed:

The People are on Tip-toe!/The Contract is Let for Machine/Shops, Blacksmith Shops, and/Round Houses at Laramie/City./Unequaled Water Power!/Water-Works in Progress!/THE TOWN<sup>65</sup>

On other occasions he predicted that "six months hence, Shian will be composed of two saloons, two dance houses—and another saloon,"<sup>66</sup> that Cheyenne will "always be a stirring little-village, but it can never become a town"<sup>67</sup> because it was too near Laramie and that the *Leader*, *Star* and *Argus* would in less than three months "be left out on the prairie, and will constitute the whole of what was once known as Shian!"<sup>68</sup>

Continually emphasizing it was on wheels, the *Index* said in a May, 1868, issue:

The Shian *Leader* is having a spell of cat fits, because the 'press on wheels' is moveable, while the *Leader*, *Argus* and *Star* are 'dead stationary!' The *Leader* is inclined towards the blues. Shian don't afford it pap enough to keep it from whining. Poor *Leader*! it has got to be the *leader* of the 'hind end.' What a pity it is that Brigham Young won't have mercy on the Shian squibs, and build them up another 'magic city.'<sup>69</sup>

All the time he was praising Laramie, Fred was also making plans to move on to North Platte Crossing, 100 miles west of Laramie, where a portable tent printing business was to be set up.

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65. *The Frontier Index*, April 28, 1868, p. 3.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *The Frontier Index*, May 5, 1868, pp. 2-3.

68. *Ibid.*



The Laramie *Index* was to remain "until the next terminus is located; and if the people desire a live paper we will give them a permanent office (in Laramie)."70 In the June 5, 1868, *Index*, Fred announced the Freemans would add a printing office to North Platte Crossing's "sixty outfitting houses, ten dance halls and two hundred saloons."71

Although the June 16 *Index* stated a part of the "Frontier Index shebang" had already gone to North Platte Crossing, by the time of the next issue, three days later, the Freemans had decided against this town as a stopping place. An advertisement in the June 19 *Index* asked for two good teams to transport the paper's printing operations from North Platte Crossing to Green River City.

Fred's importance to the *Index* can be gauged by looking at the four issues of the paper from June 23 to July 7, 1868, a period when Fred had gone back East "to visit the scenes of his childhood"72—and attend the National Democratic Convention, incidentally. During his absence, the *Index* was made up of filler material, tall tales, Shakespearean stories and other items lifted from books or exchange newspapers.

Jacobucci claimed73 the Freemans published two editions during July and part of August, 1868, one in Benton, "one of the wildest stopping places of 'Hell on Wheels,'" and the other in Laramie. Letters written in later years by Legh Freeman and an item74 in the Green River City *Index* of August 11, 1868, verified that the *Index* published at Benton but no copies survive that place. A copy of the Laramie City edition of that period has been preserved, however. It is a four page issue containing three columns and measuring seven by eleven inches as compared to the regular editions of fifteen by nineteen. Dated July 21, 1868, this miniature version of the *Index* carried an explanation that "our paper will be issued in the shape of to-day's sheet until the main office opens up at Green River City 250 miles west of here."75 Apparently the *Index*

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69. *Ibid.*, May 29, 1868.

70. *Ibid.*, June 2, 1868, p. 2.

71. *Ibid.*, June 5, 1868, p. 3.

72. *Ibid.*, June 23, 1868, p. 2.

73. Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.*

"When the main part of the printing plant started west, Fred had remained in Laramie with a job press and some other printing materials and issued in reduced size *The Frontier Index—Laramie City Edition*. . . . Soon after Fred . . . packed up the remainder of the *Index's* plant and moved on to Benton where he issued the 'Benton Edition'—probably in the same style as the smaller Laramie edition. Legh had gone on to Green River City by wagon with the larger part of the printing plant, stopping at Benton only overnight to transfer the equipment from cars to wagons." *Ibid.*

74. The item stated: "Business was so lively that we telegraphed the Laramie edition of our paper, to wheel at once to Benton, and we since learn that our new power press is threshing out the work there."

75. *The Frontier Index—Laramie City Edition*, July 21, 1868.





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has had an agent here for some weeks, appealing to the liberality of Western men to give them a bonus in order that they may move down here. The Sweetwaterites who have become citizens of Green River City say that they shoveled the way for the *Mines* into South Pass City last winter, that a petition was then handed around for contributions to build the machine a shebang; this they declined to do, and furthermore decline to shovel the way for the *Mines* back to this place or furnish them enough funds in advance to buy a new office. Our people are white people and they want no branch organs of the *Salt Lake Military Vedette* among them. If the *Mines* wanted to pioneer this country, it ought to have started with 'The Press on Wheels' several years ago. This is only the seventh railroad town that we have been at since we opened up at Kearney in '65 and we have never asked one cent of bonus. We expect to continue to give our patrons the worth of their money.<sup>82</sup>

Certain other newspapers didn't fare much better than the *Mines*. The *Salt Lake Reporter* was called a "low down skunk of perdition";<sup>83</sup> the *Idaho Statesman*, "the Chinese, Indian, African organ of Idaho Territory";<sup>84</sup> *Sioux City Register*, "the scum-skimming sheet";<sup>85</sup> the "Cheyenne Weakly Star";<sup>86</sup> and the *Index* said of the *Vedette*, ". . . the devil editor of the *Military Thumbpaper Reporter* as he sneaks thru the back alleys of Salt Lake City, on his nocturnal mission in cleaning privies, commonly advertised by such gutter snipes as 'night work. . . .'"<sup>87</sup>

As national and state elections grew nearer in the fall of 1868, the *Index* hammered away at "Useless Slaughter" and "Horse Useless Grant," and other candidates who became "sneaking, treacherous, hypocritical, two-faced, dough-headed liar and cheat,"<sup>88</sup> "the bleating, niggerized, mongrel and Judased Kidder,"<sup>89</sup> "the asinine nonentity and low-bred ignoramus from 'Shian' without brains enough to make a speech of ten lines, void of gramatical [*sic*] errors."<sup>90</sup> Describing a political meeting of an opponent, the *Index* reported his audience consisted of "two negro barbers, three Chinese laundrymen, one Plymouth Rock Puritan and a few drunken tools who were hired to be around."<sup>91</sup> Surprisingly, the *Index* did not puff up Legh Freeman's campaign for Council that year.

The Freemans exposed one candidate, the Republican nominee for delegate to Congress, as wanting to buy off the *Index*:

Burleigh, the infamous ex-Indian agent, . . . who has enriched himself

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82. *Ibid.*, August 11, 1868, p. 3.

83. *Ibid.*

84. *Ibid.*, September 22, 1868, p. 2.

85. *Ibid.*, October 6, 1868, p. 2.

86. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1868, p. 3.

87. *Ibid.*, September 25, 1868, p. 3.

88. *Ibid.*, October 6, 1868, p. 2.

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*, October 9, 1868, p. 2.



by stealing Indian goods and receiving Congressional lands, has rushed over here with his pocket full of money and his heart full of cloaked infamy and tries to throw Gen. Todd, the regular Democratic nominee, off of the track by buying enough votes in Wyoming to elect him. He sent his striker Judge Ford, to Freeman to get him to sell out the *Frontier Index* and his own soul for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars. Freeman refused to recognize Ford, the renegade. . . .<sup>92</sup>

The *Index* added that later Burleigh himself visited the Freemans and asked for the *Index's* "price." The Freemans requested a written bond for \$1,500 to, as they put it, get "him in black and white and exhibit his paper on the stump," but the candidate "smelled a mice" and would only pay in cash which was refused.

When the elections of 1868 went Republican, the *Index* headlined, "Grant and Colfax elected/The Country Gone to Halifax."

Politics played a key role in the Freemans' lives for decades—with the brothers either running for office, refusing offices or playing kingmakers. For example, one reads in the Laramie City *Index*<sup>93</sup> where Laramie citizens had petitioned the use of Fred Freeman's name for mayor (he declined "being a candidate for any office"). In one of Legh's letters later in life, he tells us he had been a member of two populist state conventions in Washington in 1894 and 1896, had been a "prominent candidate for Congress; and only missed being made United States Senator by the last legislature [*sic*], by a Scratch."<sup>94</sup> Legh was a candidate for the United States Senate again in 1910 and again was defeated. Other records showed that Fred had been a member of the Nebraska Territorial Council and when the territory became a state, he was elected state senator. (At Bear River City, Fred was nominated for mayor but worked against the nomination. While at the same city, he was urged to accept the nomination for delegate to Congress from the new territory of Wyoming for a short term ending March, 1869. He did not accept—this time because he thought he could not accomplish anything in such a short term of office.)

### "FILTHY" AND "STARTLING"

What was being said of the *Index* at this time? What was the news content of the itinerant journal?

As has been brought out before, Rocky Mountain newspapers were not sparing in their criticisms of colleagues—*The Frontier Index* definitely not an exception. The *Reveille* (place of publication unknown), is quoted in the *Index* of October 2, 1868, as saying of the *Index*:

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*, May 5, 1868, p. 3.

94. Letter to C. G. Coutant from Legh R. Freeman, April 26, 1897. In Jacobucci Files, University of Wyoming Library.



That filthy rebel sheet, *The Frontier Index*, is always filled with ribaldry and gross abuse of the government or some of its agents. It seems to gloat and grow fat with the lowest billingsgate it can command in ministering to its vulgar appetite by pouring out abuse upon anything or any person who stood by our country in the time of her trial. From the tone of the *Index* we should judge the editor would make a good member of the Ku Klux Klan. . . .

The Salt Lake *Daily Reporter* of September 12, 1868, said, "*The Frontier Index* says it is the mouthpiece of Wyoming Democracy. We were mistaken, badly mistaken, as everyone is likely to be occasionally. We had come to the conclusion that the *Index* was the entire butt end of the Democracy of Wyoming!"

Examining the contents of the *Index*, what stands out is the abundance of gossipy and sometimes trivial items, discussed here by another pioneer editor, Fred Hart of the Austin, Nevada, *Reese River Reveille*:

One day, while out in search of an item, I asked a fellow citizen 'what's the news?' 'Nothing startling,' he replied. Nothing startling! That man would never do for a newspaper reporter in a small interior town. Nothing startling indeed! Why, as he made that remark, two dogs were preparing articles for a prize fight right in front of his store; a wagon loaded with wood could be seen in the distance which was sure to pass his way, if something didn't break down. . . .<sup>95</sup>

Here is a sampling of some of the "startling" events listed in the *Index* from time to time:

CORRECTION—We stated in an issue of the *Index*, a week or two since, that Mr. Bill Summers, a well known ranchman of Little Laramie, had been killed in a personal difficulty at Wyoming. It was all a mistake; our informant begs to 'take it back.' Bill is as lively and jolly as ever. (We would have made the correction sooner, but thought his chances, as a citizen of Wyoming, for being 'knocked on the head' were pretty good, and concluded to wait a week and see if some body wouldn't confirm the reporter.) (May 29, 1868, p. 2)

Three fist fights on the streets yesterday. No body kilt. (June 9, 1868, p. 3)

One of the town's 'mollies' was on the rampage yesterday. She made the feathers fly—drunk as a 'fiddlers tincker.' She bawled and she squalled. Never before did we see the likes. (June 12, 1868, p. 3)

One badger and fourteen dog fights in Laramie on Sunday last. (June 23, 1868, p. 2)

John McCleary, who deals faro at Rounds and Morris lost \$1600 the other night. (September 22, 1868, p. 3)

The Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, are about to have a surgical operation performed in Paris which will separate the brothers from each other and from each other's wives. (July 21, 1868)

Gen'l Jack Casement came near drowning, Wednesday last, by his horse falling in the swift channel, while aiding his men in driving stock across the river. The boys helped the Gen'l out.

(July 21, 1868).

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95. Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 26.





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In the following issues, the new postmaster continually used his newspaper and government post to attack Wells Fargo as monopolists and poor carriers of the mail. For instance, he ended one story with "Marked copies of this issue [in which *Index* editorialized about Wells Fargo service], and others containing similar disclosures will reach the Postmaster General and his assistants, provided Wells, Fargo and Co. do not steal them out of the sack."<sup>107</sup> In still another issue, Legh's concern about the mailing of exchange newspapers made it apparent that possibly Wells Fargo was not to blame solely:

Exchanges.—We send you our papers so directed that you get it without detention from forwarding. We have stopped here for the winter. Will you be good enough to cease addressing us at our former places of publication—Kearney, North Platte, Julesburg, Fort Sanders, Laramie, Benton and Green River. . . .<sup>108</sup>

Politics were not slighted while the paper remained at Bear River City: once Legh was certain Grant had won the presidency, he advised his readers to prepare for the worst at the hands of "Grant, the whisky-bloated, squaw-ravishing adulterer, monkey-ridden, nigger-worshipping mogul."<sup>109</sup>

### BEAR RIVER CITY RIOT

Es fer law—well there jest wusn't any at all!  
 Ez fer order—it simply warn't there!  
 But the wildest uv nights and toughest uv fights  
 Wus ez free ez the clear mountain air.<sup>110</sup>

That was Bear River City.

"Roughs stand no show," the *Index* bragged in its first number at Bear River City, immediately taking a stand against the "villains now prowling around our city."<sup>111</sup> The *Index* further stated, "The gang of garroters who were recently driven away from some of the lower railroad towns . . . had better go slow or they will find this place too hot for their vocation." Whether because of *Index* stories, we don't know, but by the time of the next issue, an "All God Citizens" committee had formed and ordered "the gang of garroters . . . to vacate this city or hang within sixty hours from this noon."<sup>112</sup> (All of the lawless element did not heed the notice, however, even though the November 6 *Index* reported "most of the cut-throat gang ordered to leave have vamosed," there being only

107. *Ibid.*, November 13, 1868, p. 2.

108. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

110. The complete poem, "The Fight at Bear Town," by Elizabeth Arnold Stone appeared in *Annals of Wyoming*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 186-189.

111. *The Frontier Index*, October 30, 1868, p. 3.

112. *Ibid.*, November 3, 1868, p. 3.



to recognize the large town."<sup>101</sup> In its first Green River City edition, the *Index*, again wrongly, predicted that:

The company certainly intends to build round houses and machine shops here. This is a natural point. God Almighty made it so and the railroad company does not propose to unmake it.<sup>102</sup>

But the railroad did "unmake" it and Green River City was all but dead. By the middle of September, 1868, the *Index* saw the writing on the wall and announced, fairly accurately this time, "it will require but fifteen days more for the smoke to be ascending from the nostrils of the iron-hoofed horse at the metropolis of Green River."<sup>103</sup>

(The next stop for the *Index* was not Bryan City, but Bear River City, destined to be the burial place for the *Index*. In an early Bear River City edition, the Freemans labelled their new home town "the liveliest city, if not the wickedest in America." Three weeks later they probably believed very strongly that the city was the wickedest.) But more on that a little later.

Namecalling and editorial puffs adorned the pages of the (first *Index* (October 30, 1868) at Bear River City.) Much was made of the activities in Bryan City of a "pusillanimous puke" who had failed to pay an *Index* advertising bill at Green River City and was now "bilking" residents of Bryan in real estate deals. (On the complimentary side, Bear River City became ". . . greatest coal and timber station on the Union Pacific," a town containing oil wells in its suburbs, "five of the most superior white sulphur springs in America," and "a stratum of the purest fire-clay.")

At Green River City, Legh Freeman began a relentless protest against the postal service, imploring in one issue:

To the Benton, Fort Bridger, and Salt Lake City Postmasters—In the name of the Holy Mother of Moses, do look after our mail matter, and let us have a few more exchanges.<sup>104</sup>

Before departing Green River, he applied for the postmaster's position at Bear River City so that he would "know that it is run properly for the benefit of the community, and that our own mails come and go regularly."<sup>105</sup> Once appointed, Legh used the occasion to strike at Grant and the United States government:

. . . Directly after taking the iron-clad oath we swallowed a dose of epsom salts, to work it off. Grant's term of office does not commence until March 4th, 1869, so we entertain no fears of being ousted during this winter.<sup>106</sup>

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101. Coutant, *op. cit.*, pp. 682-683.

102. *The Frontier Index*, August 11, 1868.

103. Quoted in *Daily Denver Gazette*, September 30, 1868.

104. *The Frontier Index*, September 8, 1868, p. 3.

105. *Ibid.*, November 6, 1868, p. 3.

106. *Ibid.*





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several left "who have the mark of the beast in their forehead."<sup>113</sup> Within a week the "All Good Citizens" committee decided words were not enough to curb the lawlessness and took action as reported here:

*Three Men Hung.*—On Wednesday morning, the 11th inst., little Jack O'Neil, Jimmy Powers, and Jimmy Reed, three notorious robbers, were found hanging to a beam extending from an unfinished building. . . .<sup>114</sup>

A one man whispering campaign—launched by a debtor the *Index* had "advertised" for not paying for some job printing—accused Legh Freeman of being the "Chief of the Vigilantes," or better known as "All Good Citizens" committee. Legh replied:

It has been whispered throughout this community that we are 'Chief of the Vigilantes.' We have never been connected with the vigilantes at any time, though we do heartily endorse their action in ridding the community of a set of creatures who are not worthy the name of men. . . . When such open and high handed acts as these are committed every hour of the night or day, by men who follow murder and robbery for a livelihood, we not only justify the people in administering a sure and speedy retribution, but we say that we are in favor of hanging several more who are now in our midst. It is well known that wherever we have sojourned in the Territories, we have opposed violence in any form, and given the common law priority, but when very fiends assume to run our place of publication, there are plenty of men who rather delight in doing the dirty work of hanging without us, as was evidenced Tuesday night, and as will be witnessed again if the ring leaders are found in town by midnight of this, Friday, November the 13th.<sup>115</sup>

From this point on, the story is quite confused as there are no surviving copies of the *Index* in Bear River City after November 17. However, a first-hand account<sup>116</sup> has it that on November 19, a gang of railroad graders became quite intoxicated in the city, at which time three of them were arrested. The *Index* came out the following day with its customary law and order pitch declaring Bear River City had "stood enough from the roudy [*sic*] and criminal element and it was time to call a halt." Agitated by the *Index* statement, a mob of 200 graders hastily gathered, marched to the jail and released the prisoners. Fired with the success of this accomplishment, they then went for the editor of the *Index*. Alexander Toponce, a Bear River City meat contractor who took credit for Legh's escape, said:

There was a mule standing ready saddled at the door of my tent and I

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113. *Ibid.*, November 6, 1868, p. 3.

114. *Ibid.*, November 13, 1868.

115. *Ibid.*

116. Alexander Toponce who was a merchant in Bear River City at the time. In *Reminiscences of Alexander Toponce, Pioneer*, Alexander Toponce (Ogden: Published by Katie Toponce, 1923) pp. 167-170.



jumped on him and raced down to the editor's tent. The crowd got to the front door as I got to the back of the tent. I cut a long slit in the back of the tent with my knife and got him out in the mule and he escaped.<sup>117</sup>

(Other accounts differ, of course. Chance Harris, Legh's assistant at Bear River City, related "at the time of the onslaught, the editors, very fortunately, were in another part of the city, or they would in all probability have been killed."<sup>118</sup> Harris' version of the escape appeared in *The Deseret News*, thusly:

Mr. Harris was afterwards secured by the mob, but managed to escape by declaring that they were mistaken in the man, that he had nothing to do with the *Index*, but was cook at the Star Restaurant. Mr. Freeman was subsequently secured by the mob, who seemed determined to kill him, but through the kind offices of Patsey Marley, the pugilist, he managed to make his escape and he and Mr. Harris, through the assistance of friends and a good disguise, succeeded in escaping from the city.<sup>119</sup>)

A third interpretation written for *The Cheyenne Leader*, November 20, 1868, said the graders attacked not because of a specific campaign on the *Index's* part, but:

retaliating for injuries claimed to have been sustained by the operators of the shovel, by the execution of two or three notables recently at this city. . . . Our friend, Mr. Freeman, the editor, seems to have been absent from the office at this time, and a concerted movement with flaming torches was made against the sole progressive institution of which we can boast, encircling the building, the foremost spirits of the devilish clan entered and applied the match which soon created seething, serpent-like flames, enveloping the building and sealing the fate of the 'press on wheels' of Wyoming. The forms were made up and everything in readiness for going to press, this being the day of publication of the journal. . . . The workmen, or attaches of the office, were restrained from recovering their apparel from the ill-fated office, with threats cast of being bound, if an attempt was made in that direction, and cast into the mass, to share the fate of the burning property. . . . The only attempts at personal violence were made against the persons of the editor of the *Index* and one of the police, who, it seems, was over zealous in the discharge of his duties before the melee became general.<sup>120</sup>

A Dr. Frank Harrison, physician for the construction crews,

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117. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

118. *The Deseret News*, weekly edition, November 25, 1868, p. 8.

119. *Ibid.*

120. Jacobucci felt all three stories suffered: Mrs. Stone's account of Bear River City riot was based on the reminiscences in old age of Dr. Frank Harrison. "While Alexander Topence was an eyewitness to most of the riot, his account was written in his old age. Contemporary telegraphic dispatches were probably sent by an excited person who overestimated the number of persons killed. Although they agree in a general way, these three accounts of the Bear River fracas vary in many details." Jacobucci, "The Frontier Index," *op. cit.*



gave this description of Legh Freeman's escape, be it via the back end of a tent or from another part of town: "He was traveling so fast you could have played checkers on his coattails."<sup>121</sup>

Legh himself remembered the incident a little differently and the reason for the burn-out very differently. He said the graders "besieged the office, gutted and sacked it . . . and threatened to burn us in it, and would undoubtedly have left nothing but a greasespot of our mortal remains, but not a milk-white steed conveyed us to Fort Bridger."<sup>122</sup> He added that "the marble imposing stones were reduced to lime and the type ran down the hillside as a molten mass."<sup>123</sup> It was Legh who, later, spread the story that he was burned out because of his real estate endeavors:

And in the course of human events when we thought we had a right to lay out towns independent of the Credit Mobilier [Union Pacific finance company] ring, we did so, and for this, and for exposing the frauds of that hydra-headed monster, its chief had a riot brought on us at daylight November 20, 1868, composed of several thousand graders, headed by cut-throats of the most desperate type who were paid \$15,000 to head the mob. . . . Like an avenging nemesis, we proceeded to New York [after the riot], entered complaint against the Credit Mobilier ring, for frauds perpetrated on the American people, had the directors arrested, their safe blown open and proved by the contents the charges we made, then carried the war into Africa, by bringing out the expose in Congress. . . . This done, we camped for a time at our coal mines in Wyoming, while the material was en route to rebuild the printing office at Ogden.<sup>124</sup>

Brother Fred also remembered it had been a business dispute that spurred the graders to burn out the *Index*, but he gave it a different twist from what Legh said. According to Fred, the conflict resulted over numerous coal mines owned by the Freemans:

. . . the construction company of the Union Pacific furnished them [the Freemans] with cars to transport the coal all along the completed line of the road. They received fine prices for it, and were in possession of fabulous wealth, but when the Construction Company turned that portion of the road over to the U.P. Owners they, seeing that it was a great property, notified the discoverers to get off. . . . L. R. Freeman . . . was loath to give up the coal fields and tried to stand his ground. The U. P. Authorities forthwith called upon 1000 railroad laborers . . . , made them drunk on bad whiskey, and incited them to burn the *Frontier Index* office.<sup>125</sup>

But, whereas Legh recalled bringing the business enemies to their knees in Congress, Fred said he and his brother had been advised

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121. *Uinta County, Its Place in History*, Elizabeth Arnold Stone, (Laramie: 1924) p. 84.

122. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

123. *The Union Freeman*, June 24, 1883.

124. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

125. Unpublished manuscript by Fred K. Freeman, *op. cit.*





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confusion prevails, as it is impossible to distinguish friends from enemies.<sup>128</sup>

The mob's fury subsided during the night so that when troops arrived from Fort Bridger the next morning,—summoned by Legh Freeman some sources say—they found order restored.

Bear River City residents promised Legh their continued support and he, in turn, telegraphed Chicago for a new press. But as the rails pushed beyond Bear River City, Legh abandoned the notion of reviving the *Index* there. His new plans included these, as reported in *The Deseret News*:

#### The Frontier Phoenix

We are informed that the late *Index* will start again in the course of a few weeks at Ogden. A much larger and better establishment has been purchased in New York, and is now 'on wheels' enroute to its future home in the Great Salt Lake Valley. The pluck manifested by the Freeman brothers is commendable and worthy of liberal support. Its new style will read *Phoenix* instead of *Index*.<sup>129</sup>

Legh had told the *Salt Lake Telegraph* on December 9, 1868, that his paper "shall rise, Phoenix-like, from her ashes, to still advocate the cause of right and truth, to denounce tricksters and mobocracy, uphold the good and faithful,"<sup>130</sup> but again there is no record that the *Phoenix* was ever published.<sup>131</sup> Ogden was to have a paper published by Legh Freeman but not until 1875, after he had returned from a lecture tour of the East (talking about his adventures in the West), where he had been married. Fred Freeman left for the East in 1869, and before he left, according to his own testimony, he shipped the "main office" of the *Index* from Laramie (in 1869) to his brother in Corinne, near Ogden.<sup>132</sup>

### MORMON TROUBLES

With his bride, Legh Freeman issued volume one, number one of the *Ogden Freeman* on June 18, 1875. According to an unusually modest report by Legh, the paper was named by the Mormon hierarchy:

. . . the Mormon apostates said they had revelations of a line of Freemen, and that in the conflict for the mastery, they witnessed the

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128. *The Cheyenne Leader*, November 20, 1868, p. 4.

129. *The Deseret News*, December 16, 1868.

130. And on December 10, 1868, Legh told the *Telegraph*, "We will soon be on wheels again, to rise as Phoenix from the white heat, under the name of the *Frontier Phoenix*. A few more weeks will find us hotter than red, in the vicinity of Ogden, to advocate the right and annihilate the demons in sheep's clothing."

131. One author said the "*Phoenix* rose only in Freeman's dreams." Alter, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

132. Unpublished manuscript by Fred K. Freeman, *op. cit.*



defeat of the Kingmen, and the victory of the Freemen, and they especially urged that the name of the paper, which was to voice the interests of the Freemen of Utah should be called the *Ogden Freeman*. To this we protested on the grounds that some persons might imagine that we named it after ourselves. But they were so persistent that we finally yielded. . . .<sup>133</sup>

Mrs. Freeman handled the *Freeman* while Legh was off on his many trips and was quite proud of her accomplishments if this *Salt Lake Tribune* story be true:

The editress of the *Ogden Freeman* says: 'Be it recorded as a part of the history of Utah, that a Virginia born and bred lady came to Utah unacquainted with a single soul, and within a period of six weeks organized, established and conducted the *Ogden Freeman*; took charge of two infant sons, and gave birth to a third, and in that time was never censured, because her endeavors to assist her husband did not accord with notions.'—Six weeks is a short time; it must have been in the air, Sister!<sup>134</sup>

Everything was all right as long as she was "editress," but when Legh became involved with the paper, its non-interference policy disappeared quickly. An Ogden directory for 1883 said of Legh's arrival:

But when Freeman arrived here the policy of the newspaper was soon changed. He was a strong anti-Mormon—in fact he was sort of wild Ishmaelite—his hand was soon turned against every man that he could bulldoze, but he sometimes met with severe retaliation. . . . Freeman was in continual hot water during the time he remained here in consequence of his malignity and abuse of many of the citizens.<sup>135</sup>

Legh's pronounced anti-Mormon policy was strange not because he was without bias and because he was a great displayer of diplomacy, but rather because he had advertised his *Index* for months as "the only 'Gentile' paper that is conducted . . . to have secured a general circulation among the wide-spread business element of the Mormons!!!!" At one time he had even advocated the nomination of Mormon leader Brigham Young for president of the United States.<sup>136</sup>

133. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*, p. 10.

134. *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 29, 1875.

135. *Directory of Ogden City and Weber County*, 1883, p. 62. Other directories also made note of Freeman and his papers. *Pettingill's Newspaper Directory* in 1878, p. 185, wrote: "*Ogden Freeman*, semi-weekly, Tuesdays and Fridays. Mr. and Mrs. Leigh R. Freeman, publishers.—This office was destroyed by the Credit Mobilier mob at Bear River City, after having been published at two military garrisons and nine terminal towns. The *Freeman* being anti-Mormon, anti-Chinese, anti-Indian and favoring the revivification of the silver industries by urging Congress to remonetize silver is the favorite of the people of all the Territories. . . ."

136. *The Frontier Index*, May 29, 1868, p. 2.



Invoking the reader's sympathy for his "causes," Legh later wrote, again in vague terms, about his Ogden days:

When we began there, not a Gentile owned a foot of ground nor a shelf full of goods in town. We threw down the gage of battle so vigorously that one of the first telling scenes in the strife, was the incarceration of the editor in a Mormon Bastile. This act rallied and united all the elements of strength that we could hope for. We had with us the Federal Courts at Salt Lake, and we advised the people to appeal all cases to that tribunal. We had a double motive in this; the first to put a stop to the inflow of blood money into the Mormon treasury; and the second to create a demand for a federal court at Ogden, which would have the effect to bring the people from several of the most populous counties into Ogden, to trade.<sup>137</sup>

Legh also reminisced later in life that he did not know of a single enemy he had left in Ogden, that all the people were favorites of the *Freeman*. Apparently Legh had a short memory for in March, 1876, he had had a "business controversy" with a Joseph Blyman, a newspaper man, in the settlement of which he "used a cudgel so freely as to leave some claret stains about the sanctum. . . ." <sup>138</sup> Possibly he remembered his paper's version of the dispute which made Legh not only the victim of Blyman's attack but of a miscarriage of justice as well:

Incarcerated In A Mormon Bastile.—Martial law needed in Utah. The priestcraft attempt to suppress the free press of Utah. An emissary armed with a deadly weapon assails the editor of the *Freeman*. Mormon priests commissioned as policemen—rush in and give no chance for a possibility of bail, but drag a man from a bed of protracted sickness at the dead hour of night. Warrant retained by the Mormon sheriff-priest for 18 hours, so as to preclude release on bail. Unmercifully forced through a howling, pelting snowstorm, to the private residence of a Mormon Chief Justice of the Peace, without being allowed a wrapping, a stimulant or to attend to the wants of nature. A bilk, who has committed the highest crime known to the social laws of the Hebrews. A wife deserter, does the dirty assassin's work for the Mormons. The motive is to check the American influence of the *Freeman*, and to suppress the Press, while the Federal officials wish to make the organ of the Federal Government in Utah.<sup>139</sup>

Legh lost this case in more ways than one, for the contemporary press picked up the story and gave him a lot of adverse publicity he did not need. One paper said that Legh for some time had coveted death, that he "was not a bad showman in the maniac business."<sup>140</sup> another reported that Mormon authorities had "chucked Freeman in jail, and now the editor doesn't know whether

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137. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

138. *Utah Evening Mail*, March 31, 1876.

139. *Ogden Freeman*, April 3, 1876.

140. *Utah Evening Mail*, April 19, 1876.





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capable of acting as foreman of the shop. His advertisement ran in the *Freeman* until December 15, 1876:

The office is established on a healthy, paying basis, and is dependent on no ring, clique or party for support. Everybody reads the paper because it is made so lively, that they cannot help it. We have enough brand new newspaper material to publish a large morning daily. . . . The *Freeman* is now a semi-weekly, circulation: Utah 1100, Wyoming 550, Montana 100, Idaho 175, Nevada 750, Nebraska 100, other territories 350, other states 300, total 2925.

Self promotional matter still filled Freeman's newspaper as it had the *Index*. On May 25, 1877, one read "Drop off your surplus publications from other localities, and prepare for a first-class Daily sent out from the railroad center of the Inter-Mountains." Again on April 30, 1878, Legh promised his readers a daily but the *Freeman* remained semi-weekly.<sup>146</sup>

The *Freeman* will begin publication of a Daily, containing the telegrams, as soon as our fireproof building shall be completed; and it will rely on its own merits for sustenance, without the solicitation of any bonus or subsidy, and we pledge the people we will not beg, borrow or steal.

During 1878, this bombastic statement, characteristic of Legh, ran repeatedly in the *Freeman*:

The *Freeman* being progressive and aggressive and Anti-Mormon, Anti-Chinese, Anti-Indian and the only publication that is especially devoted to the news and the interests of the Inter-Mountains, has established circulation among two millions of liberal spending Westerners, with whom it is the favorite!

Despite such boasts, the paper dropped to weekly frequency after November 1, 1878, and eventually quit Ogden sometime after the first of July, 1879. The Freemans then headed for Montana. En route, Legh's wife, Ada, who had played such a significant role in the *Freeman's* life, was mortally wounded when a shotgun was accidentally discharged in the carriage in which she was traveling. She survived the wound seven days, four of them in Butte City, Legh's next journalistic destination.

## MONTANA AND WASHINGTON

In Butte City, Legh changed his newspaper's name back to the *Frontier-Index* (with hyphen) and published the first issue there August 5, 1879. Immediately, he and the *Index* were being persecuted, if we listen to Legh:

No sooner were we well under way here, than an unscrupulous ring of

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146. Bound files of *Freeman* from September 5, 1876, to June 27, 1879, in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.













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FRONTIER INDEX.
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Stimson Photo Collection  
Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department

BEAR RIVER CITY, 1868

nion Pacific route was the end of the line for *The Frontier Index*. This photograph was printed from a glass plate negative in the Stimson Collection.





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No sooner had we accomplished this than the same set of adventurers who had beset our path here, had printed in the *Miner* office a paper under nearly the same name, barely dropping the 's' and leaving out the hyphen. . . . no one can conceive what their object is, except to confuse the public into the belief that it is our paper . . . and induce the public to believe that their dishonest schemes are honest.<sup>151</sup>

In an ensuing court battle, Legh, however, was allowed to keep the name,<sup>152</sup> but he changed it again, this time to *Inter-Mountains Freeman*, "in order that all men might know the genuine from the fraud."<sup>153</sup> This all happened about January 1, 1881.

A logotype of an 1881 edition read:

Inter-Mountains Freeman.  
Frontier Index Series Vol. 31, No. 76  
Intermountains Freeman Series, Vol. 1, No. 46  
Butte City, Montana, Sunday, December 4, 1881.  
Established June 1850.<sup>154</sup>

The *Inter-Mountains Freeman* was consolidated with the *Daily Labor Union*, a paper published in Freeman's shop, on March 25, 1883, to form *Union-Freeman*, which, in turn, was succeeded by the *Butte City Union*, November 4, 1883, to February 24, 1884.<sup>155</sup>

From April 12 to July 5, 1884, Freeman was at Thompson Falls, Montana, a mining camp where he published another *Frontier-Index* briefly, of which the *Salt Lake Evening Chronicle* said:

That irrepressible rustler, Legh R. Freeman, has consolidated the *Chronicle, Herald, Ogden Freeman, Inter-Mountains, Daily Labor Union, Atlantic* [sic] and *Union Freeman* in one huge ten page journal called *The Frontier Index*, and finally stopped his 'press on wheels' at Thompson Falls, a 'magic city' in the pine woods on the N. P. railway. . . .<sup>156</sup>

From Thompson Falls, Legh Freeman shipped his plant to Yakima Valley, Washington. According to his son, in correspondence to Jacobucci, Legh had been urged by two directors of the Northern Pacific Railroad to start a paper in Old Yakima.

He made a preliminary trip there in the spring of 1884, and his imagination was evidently fired by the agricultural possibilities of the section, because when he returned with the plant in September 1884,

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151. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

152. *Ogden Daily Herald*, June 9, 1882, reported: "Judge Galbraith has refused the order asking for restraining Legh R. Freeman from publishing a paper in Butte, under the name of 'Intermountain.'"

153. Legh Freeman, "Notes on . . .," *op. cit.*

154. Copy preserved by Miller Freeman, mentioned in Jacobucci Files, University of Wyoming Library.

155. Files of these issues in Historical Society of Montana.

156. *Salt Lake Evening Chronicle*, April 16, 1884, in Alter, *op. cit.*, p. 167.



it was to establish the first farm paper in the state, or rather then the territory of Washington, naming it the *Washington Farmer*.<sup>157</sup>

Before the *Farmer* came into existence however, Legh had absorbed the *Yakima Record* and later the *Pacific Coast Dairyman*. With Legh as managing editor, a Capital Publishing Company established the *Washington Farmer*, September 20, 1884. Later it was renamed *Northwest Farm and Home* and was edited by Legh R. Freeman until his retirement. A 1904 book (*An Illustrated History of Klickitat, Yakima and Kittitas Counties*) revealed that the *Northwest Farm Home* traced its beginnings to 1847, "near Fort Kearney, Nebraska, by Joseph E. Johnson, who sold the plant and business to Mr. Freeman in 1859."

Another volume in 1906 (*An Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties*) showed Legh Freeman was still in the land business and still had dreams of his own city. He developed a tract of land in Washington and called it the town of Gibraltar.

### BRIEF, BRIEF SUMMARY

Because the history of American journalism, until very recently, dwelled extensively on the success stories of the metropolitan newspapers and the James Gordon Bennetts, tales such as that of the *Index*, were often lost—or worse yet deemed unimportant in books that gave only a half dozen pages total to the Rocky Mountain West region. But the pioneering roles played by the Freemans and their *Index's*, *Inter-Mountains'* and *Freeman's* must not be underestimated. For it was newspapers such as the *Index* and newspapermen such as the Freemans who had a big hand in promoting, developing, and in the *Index's* unique situation, laying out Western cities and towns. They truly opened up the West as much as did the buffalo hunter, Indian fighter or railroader.

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157. Letter from Miller Freeman to Jacobucci, February 22, 1937.



**WILL IT BE A SUCCESS?** There is a question as to whether the big Pathfinder government dam at Alcova, on the North Platte river, above Casper, is going to be a success. This immense mass of rock and cement, which has been in course of construction for some three years, has just been completed. It backs up the water into what is said to be the largest reservoir in the world, holding over 1,080,000 acre feet of water. The dam is constructed between two cliffs and is 200 feet high.

The dam is built in the main channel of the North Platte river, which runs torrents when it is at flood. During the construction of the dam, part of the water of the river was run through a large tunnel and openings were left in the base of the dam. These were calculated to be large enough to carry the normal flow of the river, the surplus flood waters being backed up and reserved for future use when the low water mark is reached. Sufficient water will then come from the big reservoir to fill the Inter-state canal, which is taken out of the North Platte river below Guernsey, Wyoming, and several hundred miles below the local-state Pathfinder canal, being about 80 miles long, will bring the waters of this big reservoir of Central Wyoming onto farms 50 miles over the state line into Nebraska.

Since the completion of the big dam, the reservoir is fast filling with water while all the outlets are open and before the Platte river has gained its flood-tide. Government engineers are said to have figured out that the flow of the river at high water is sufficient to fill two such reservoirs, and residents along the Platte valley below the big dam, and in the neighborhood of Casper, are reported to be worrying considerably as to what the result will be after the reservoir fills with the present flow of the stream, and when the June and July floods begin.

The danger of a sudden breaking away of the confined waters is feared at a point on one side of the main dam, where a declivity at the lower end of the reservoir is protected only by a small dam, under which there is no solid foundation. Engineers are said to have drilled 60 feet at this point and to have failed to locate any bedrock.

With a sudden pressure of over 1,000,000 acre feet of water, which would be exerted at this point, able engineers report that they fear the overflow at this point where the flood waters are sure to overtop the reservoir will tear away the present small dam and eat down into the soft earth below and cause disastrous floods in the Platte valley.

The only theory that has been figured out to contradict this result, is that the pressure of water at the base of the main dam, being increased as the water rises in the reservoir, will result in forcing more water through the present outlets and thereby causing the flow through them to equal that of the river.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, June, 1909





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a consequence of the post-Civil War beef bonanza then dominating the economic life of the Great Plains and Rockies.<sup>4</sup>

Part of Plunkett's diary has been lost, so little is known of his first two years in America. With his partners, Beau Watson and Alexis and Edmond Roche, he settled on the EK Ranch near the Powder River in Johnson County, Wyoming.<sup>5</sup> Britons Richard and Moreton Frewen had resided in the Powder River district for a year, but some Wyomingites were still unaccustomed to foreigners. The cowpunchers who would work for them found it hard to believe that these men "actually came from across the Atlantic."<sup>6</sup>

The first year for which a complete record of Plunkett's activities survives is 1881. As was his custom, he spent the winter months in Ireland and returned to the United States in late April.<sup>7</sup> Stopping over briefly in New York and Chicago, Plunkett traveled to Omaha to investigate opportunities for land speculation. He went also to LeMars, Iowa, where Moreton Frewen owned a 950-acre farm. The quality of the soil impressed him, and for a moment he considered becoming a sodbuster, but the romance of plowing could not offset the benefits of what John Clay later called the "cham-pagne air that was a tonic to body and soul," so the Irishman continued on his way.<sup>8</sup>

When Plunkett reached Wyoming, he spent several days in the territorial capital and roomed at the famous Cheyenne Club, where he discussed recent developments in the cattle business with his fellow members. During his winter absence, Plunkett had been elected to membership in the Wyoming Stock Growers' Association at its annual meeting. He talked with N. R. Davis, who later became president of the Association, and their conversation centered on a topic of common concern: the danger of overstocking Wyoming ranges and thus creating conditions conducive to disaster during a severe winter.<sup>9</sup>

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4. The economic appeal of the West to the Briton is discussed in Herbert O. Brayer, "The Influence of British Capital on the Western Range-Cattle Industry," *Tasks of Economic History*, Supplement, IX (1949), 85-98.

5. Digby, *Plunkett*, 21. The diary does not mention Beau Watson.

6. James H. Cook, *Fifty Years on the Old Frontier as Cowboy, Hunter Guide, Scout, and Ranchman* (New ed., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 98. Herbert O. Brayer, "The 76 Ranch on Powder River," *The Westerners* (Chicago Corral), VII, No. 10 (December, 1950), suggests that the Frewens may have influenced Plunkett's decision to reside in Wyoming. The point is not substantiated by either Plunkett's diary or Moreton Frewen, *Melton Mowbray and Other Memories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, Ltd., 1924).

7. Diaries of Sir Horace Plunkett, 1881-1931. MSS in the Plunkett Foundation for Co-operative Studies, London. Microfilm copies in the McKissick Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. April 27, 1881.

8. Diary, May 15, 17, and 18, 1881; John Clay, *My Life on the Range* New ed., (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 73.

9. *Ibid.*, 235; Diary, May 25, 1881.



At the EK, Plunkett explained to Alexis Roche a plan he had devised to relieve their overcrowded pasture. He hoped to create a safety valve by leasing farms in the Midwest, near the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Cattle could be sent there for fattening before being shipped to the Chicago market. Plunkett planned to place the Roches in charge of the feed lots while he remained in Wyoming to act as an agent for cattlemen wishing to use the facilities. Later, on a trip East, he and Alexis agreed to look for farm land in Iowa.<sup>10</sup>

In September, partnership difficulties arose. Plunkett usually disapproved of Alexis Roche's character—he evidently considered the details of Roche's frequent indulgences too indelicate to include in his diary—but this time the problem was E. B. R. Boughton, a young man not counted among the original partners. Perhaps he joined Plunkett and the others in 1880 or 1881, but in any case, he made himself immediately obnoxious to everyone. Boughton was 23 years old and endowed with a powerful conceit—the result, Plunkett concluded, of a sheltered youth. He once angered Plunkett by saying within earshot of the Irishman that he had learned more about the cattle business in two weeks than his partners had in two years. Boughton did little work around the ranch, but neither Plunkett nor the Roches could afford to buy out his interest, which must have been substantial. The conflict was resolved only after a reorganization of the partnership, the creation of a new company, and a radical change in Boughton's personality,<sup>11</sup> wrought in part, no doubt, by the socially-leveling environment.

The annual trip to the Chicago cattle market interrupted ranch routine, temporarily ending the round of arguments between the partners. Plunkett left the EK to catch the Union Pacific, but on his way he met Richard Frewen, who spoke of a fantastic scheme he and his brother had concocted to obtain from the federal government a monopoly on tourist accommodations at Yellowstone Park. With the backing of several railroads, they hoped to build hotels in the park and provide them with everything for the tourists' comfort, including a fine selection of boats and carriages. Visitors would enter the park, Frewen said, via stagecoach from the Utah Northern line. He invited Plunkett to join the venture, but the Irishman hesitated, noting privately that Richard Frewen was the worst businessman he knew—except for Moreton, who would be the third partner.<sup>12</sup>

Plunkett and his associates had an unusually difficult time shipping their cattle in 1881. Through railroad error, the beeves were

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10. *Ibid.*, June 3 and July 6, 1881.

11. *Ibid.*, September 1 and October 17 and 28, 1881.

12. *Ibid.*, September 4, 8, 9, 16, and 17, 1881.



not loaded on time and had to be penned overnight without feed. Once they were aboard, Plunkett had little time to rest. During each of the train's frequent stops, he had to walk beside the cars, prodding the cattle to make them stand. They were crowded twenty to a car, and if they lay down, there was a chance that some would suffocate.<sup>13</sup> It was hard work, and Plunkett must have been frustrated by the knowledge that, despite his efforts, prospects for selling beef at high prices were poor, since shipments that season had been heavy. Indeed, when Plunkett reached Chicago, he found the market gorged with 12,000 head of cattle. Not until the last day of September could he dispose of his beef, and only then at wretched prices.<sup>14</sup>

Plunkett and his partners began the 1882 season by making extensive cattle purchases. They were very nearly cheated by N. W. Wells, a man who attempted to do business by telegraph. Wells misrepresented the size of his herd, for which the partners had been willing to pay \$47,000, sight unseen. They discovered the ruse in time and saved their money. From other sources, they bought some 1,450 head of stock for their range.<sup>15</sup> Later, Plunkett went into business with two men named Windsor and Coble on range near the headwaters of the Powder River. With that venture launched, Plunkett approached Thomas Sturgis, one-time secretary of the Wyoming Stock Growers' Association and considered by some to be the territory's leading man, about forming a cattle company. Apparently, they reached a tentative agreement, but Plunkett's diary mentions no further arrangements in 1882. Sturgis did suggest that N. R. Davis might have a herd the two could buy. Plunkett investigated and found that Davis was asking \$510,000 for 17,000 head of cattle, including calves. Davis valued his 384 horses at \$40 each.<sup>16</sup>

In 1882, Moreton Frewen formed the Powder River Cattle Company, Limited, a joint stock company to which he traded his Wyoming holdings in return for managership for five years and one-third of the shares of common stock.<sup>17</sup> Through his assistant manager, Frank A. Kemp, Frewen offered Plunkett \$175,000 for the EK Ranch. Plunkett was mildly amused but dampened Frewen's hopes of expanding his new company by replying that the partners would consider a figure nearer \$260,000 for cattle and range rights.<sup>18</sup>

At the end of the year, Plunkett contracted EK cattle to the

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13. *Ibid.*, September 23, 1881.

14. *Ibid.*, September 25 and 30, 1881.

15. *Ibid.*, June 6, 7, 20, and 21, and July 4, 1882.

16. *Ibid.*, September 7, 11, 14, and 29, and October 17, 1882.

17. Brayer, "The 76 Ranch," 77.

18. Diary, August 18 and 22, 1882.





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The Chicago market was flooded again in 1883. Plunkett sold his cattle at below average prices but noted in his diary that Moreton Frewen, on the five-cent deal of the year before, had lost \$6,000.<sup>23</sup>

While Plunkett was preparing to leave for his winter holiday in Ireland, Thomas Sturgis asked if he would dispose of \$500,000 worth of Sturgis' Union Cattle Company stock in Europe. He offered Plunkett a commission of five per cent, payable in stock transferred to his name, and managership of the Union company at an annual salary of between \$3,000 and \$3,500. Plunkett agreed to act as Sturgis's agent.<sup>24</sup>

In May, 1884, Plunkett and Gilchrist bought 40,000 acres of Union Pacific land near the property of the Wyoming Development Company and adjoining a small spread in which the two men held an interest. They bought the land, which sold for one dollar per acre, because it was adjacent to the rapidly-expanding Swan Land and Cattle Company, and they hoped to make a profit when the Swan outfit ran out of range. Within a week, Boughton added 95,000 acres to the partners' property, and the three men formed a land and cattle company capitalized at \$2,000,000. The \$135,000 owed for the railroad acreage was payable in ten annual installments at six per cent interest. But in less than a month, the partners turned the financial tables on the Swan company by selling it 50,000 acres at a net gain of fifty cents per acre.<sup>25</sup> Later in the year, Plunkett and Gilchrist organized the Frontier Land and Cattle Company, capitalized at \$1,100,000, with shares selling for \$100 each. Plunkett became president at \$3,000 per year, and Gilchrist served as vice-president and general manager, while Boughton, the largest investor, was appointed treasurer. Trustees of the company included Plunkett's other partners, Alexis Roche and Windsor and Coble.<sup>26</sup>

Depression marked the beginning of the 1885 season, but Plunkett optimistically believed that good times would return to Wyoming. In Plunkett's absence, the Frontier Land and Cattle Company had struggled through the winter. Its capital was untouched, and shares were still worth par value, so Plunkett hoped that at least the initial investment could be saved. That other ranchers also were losing money became apparent by late October, when measures to reduce cowboys' wages and abolish free board at

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23. Diary, October 10, 1883. Brayer, "The 76 Ranch," 80, suggests that the Frewens refused to comply with the terms of the contract. The diary does not substantiate this.

24. Diary, October 14, 1883.

25. *Ibid.*, May 8, 9, 12, and 15, and June 7, 1884. See also Harmon Ross Mothershead, *The Swan Land and Cattle Company, Ltd.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 117-118.

26. Diary, July 17 and October 13, 1884.



ranches were introduced at a Wyoming Stock Growers' Association meeting. The season, Plunkett commented, was his worst since 1881.<sup>27</sup>

In the spring of 1886, a quarrel began that would destroy completely any vestiges of friendship remaining between Plunkett and Moreton Frewen. During 1885, the Powder River Cattle Company, under Frewen's management, consisted of 48,625 head of cattle and landed property valued at \$258,000. Yet, high operation costs displeased the company's directors, who blamed the situation on Frewen. He agreed to resign if the directors would appoint T. W. Peters of Cheyenne to take his place, and so saying, he left Wyoming. In February, 1886, the directors created a special board to investigate the affairs of the company in America, and its report cleared Frewen of any charges of extravagance. Still, he had several enemies among the directors, men to whom he owed large sums of money, and because of their opposition, he was not reinstated as manager.<sup>28</sup>

In March, Frewen heard a rumor that the directors might offer Plunkett managership of the company. Irritated by the directors' failure to act on his recommendation of Peters, Frewen wrote to Plunkett, saying that should the Irishman accept the position, he would file suit in Wyoming to regain it. A few days later, the directors formally asked Plunkett to take the job. He accepted, and Frewen and his brothers vowed revenge.<sup>29</sup> Apparently, they had not forgotten the five-cent fiasco of 1882.

When Plunkett arrived in Wyoming to assume his duties for the Powder River Cattle Company, he received word from London that Moreton and another Frewen, Edward, had been appointed directors. Plunkett was shocked by the news. He fully expected to be relieved as manager. Suddenly, however, Moreton, for reasons known only to himself, assured Plunkett of his support on the board. Richard Frewen, angered by his brother's defection, abandoned the vendetta, and tempers were allowed to cool.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile, Plunkett confronted problems of a more immediate nature. The EK foreman had been arrested for horse stealing. To be without one's foreman at round-up was bad enough, but Plunkett missed his services as an intermediary between the partners and the ranch hands. Because they believed Plunkett to be a

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27. *Ibid.*, May 6 and 12, October 26, and December 31, 1885.

28. Walter Baron von Richthofen, *Cattle-Raising on the Plains of North America* (New ed., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 55; *London Economist*, March 20, 1886, 365; Brayer, "The 76 Ranch," 79-80. Allen Andrews's recent biography of Frewen entitled *The Splendid Pauper* (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1968) has little to say about either Plunkett or the feud.

29. Diary, March 21 and 26, and April 29, 1886.

30. *Ibid.*, May 3 and 12, 1886.



leader in the cattlemen's efforts to reduce their wages, the cowboys had become openly hostile. During the long winter, some had announced that they were considering shooting him. Plunkett tried to take their threats in good humor, but the tenseness of the situation unnerved him. He resented the accusations of men whom he considered blackguards.<sup>31</sup>

In October, 1886, financial difficulties within the Frontier Land and Cattle Company forced the partners to divide company property among themselves. It was an attempt to purchase individual control, but Plunkett, concerned that he might be accused of chicanery as president, decided to take only a share of the assets remaining after the property had been divided by the other partners.<sup>32</sup> While Plunkett worked to salvage the investment, a prairie fire spread across company land, burning fences and feed and scattering the cattle. Two weeks later, the hard winter of 1886-87 struck, and Plunkett wrote in his diary that the snow was so deep that the tops of the fences were not visible.<sup>33</sup>

Plunkett resigned as manager of the Powder River Cattle Company in February, 1887, and noted that everyone but Edward Frewen was anxious for him to reconsider. Publicly, he declined, but privately he indicated a willingness to continue for an increased salary. Moreton Frewen again changed his allegiance, and at a meeting in March, he castigated Plunkett before the board. His raving had no apparent effect on the directors, who again urged Plunkett to take the job. A month later, Frewen filed suit in Wyoming to regain the managership, and Plunkett expressed fear that the action would wreck the company.<sup>34</sup>

Upon returning to Wyoming, Plunkett met with Thomas Sturgis to discuss a cattle trust that Sturgis had proposed. Sturgis hoped to pool several Wyoming ranches with the holdings of Nelson Morris, a Chicago meat packer. The scheme, as Plunkett understood it, was an attempt to make cattle paper—notes and mortgages in which livestock was offered as security—a medium of speculation. As Gene M. Gressley has pointed out, the possibility of a gigantic trust involving all of the major beef-producers in the United States had been rumored throughout the West since 1886. Sturgis's plan later materialized as the American Cattle Trust. Interestingly enough, in 1888, Richard G. Head of New Mexico, one of the trust's western representatives and an associate of Sturgis, told Plunkett that the idea had originally been a huge swindle designed by Sturgis to save his failing Union Cattle Company.<sup>35</sup>

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31. *Ibid.*, June 18, 1886.

32. *Ibid.*, October 18, 1886.

33. *Ibid.*, November 4 and 19, 1886.

34. *Ibid.*, February 15, March 29, and April 18, 1887.

35. *Ibid.*, April 17, 1887, and May 24, 1888; Gene M. Gressley, *Bankers and Cattlemen* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 258-262.





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Plunkett kept an interest in both the Wyoming Development Company and the Powder River Cattle Company, although the property of the latter soon fell into the hands of Fred Hesse, who had become its major creditor. The accounts of the Frontier Land and Cattle Company were not settled until 1911. Plunkett transferred much of his Wyoming property to the Nebraska and Wyoming Investment Company of Omaha, with which he corresponded on business matters until five years before his death.<sup>39</sup>

Plunkett witnessed within ten years the advent and dissolution of the great American beef bonanza. The decade was a tumultuous one, and it marked him for the rest of his life. His name became legend among Wyoming cattlemen, some of whom ascribed incredible feats to the frail Irishman. Charles A. Guernsey's contention that Plunkett could play two games of chess "with separate opponents at the same time, calling his moves from the court near by while playing tennis" would surely have embarrassed Plunkett, had he lived to read it.<sup>40</sup> And even after his departure from the High Plains, the Irishman could not escape notice as a one-time cattleman. The romantic appeal of that earlier day followed him back to Europe, and when he died in 1932 at the age of seventy-eight, even the stodgy London *Times* acknowledged that Plunkett had once lived somewhere in the remote American West. "A lover of outdoor life, with the temperament of a pioneer," the obituary said, "he bought a ranch in Montana."<sup>41</sup>

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39. *Ibid.*, October 21 and 24, 1890; Brayer, "The 76 Ranch," 80; Horace Plunkett to John Chaplin, April 13, 1911, and Horace Plunkett to W. Lieberoth, October 30, 1917. MSS in the Plunkett Foundation for Co-operative Studies, London. Microfilm copies in the McKissick Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

40. Charles A. Guernsey, *Wyoming Cowboy Days* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936), 74.

41. *The Times* (London), March 28, 1932, 12.



# *Soda Springs:* *Curiosity of the Trail*

By

ROBERT L. MUNKRES

This is the last in a series of five articles on the Oregon Trail by Dr. Munkres which have been published in the *Annals of Wyoming* since April, 1968. The manuscripts are based on emigrant diaries, primarily those in the collection of Paul C. Henderson, of Bridgeport, Nebraska. The present-day town of Soda Springs, Idaho, took its name from this spring noted by the emigrant diarists. Ed.

Those who journeyed west along the Oregon-California Trail during the days of an expanding frontier saw widely varying scenery. Some, like Windlass Hill in Ash Hollow, they would just as soon have forgotten; others they marveled at—the wind-eroded starkness of Chimney Rock, the spectacle of the Canyon of the Platte, the rocky ruggedness of the Devil's Gate, and the green beauty of the Fort Bridger valley. Between Fort Bridger and Fort Hall, the emigrants encountered a brand new type of natural phenomenon—Soda Springs—which a surprising number of them described in the same way.<sup>1</sup> The following are typical examples of travelers' initial reactions:

A few yards from our camp is a curious spring called the Soda Spring.<sup>2</sup>

These Springs are a greate natural curiosity.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The naming of Soda Springs has not been fixed, either as to the time of naming or as to the person who performed the act. Charles Kelly and Dale Morgan, however, suggest that Caleb Greenwood may have done the honors. For their statement, see Charles Kelly and Dale Morgan, *Old Greenwood*. Revised edition. (Georgetown, Calif.: The Talisman Press, 1965. p. 73.

2. "Diary of Jason Lee". Copied from the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for 1916. Vol. XVII. January 26, 1949, by Devere Helfrich. p. 17, entry for Wednes, July 9, 1834. Unless otherwise indicated, this and subsequent footnotes refer to materials in the files of Mr. Paul Henderson of Bridgeport, Nebraska. The author hereby gratefully acknowledges Mr. Henderson's cooperation and encouragement.

3. Charles L. Camp (editor), *James Clyman, Frontiersman 1792-1881. The Adventures of a Trapper and Covered-Wagon Emigrant as told in his own Reminiscences and Diaries*. (Portland, Ore.: Champoeg Press, 1960). p. 101, entry for Sept. 7, 1944.



There are quite a number of springs here which are certainly a great curiosity.<sup>4</sup>

They are the greatest curiosity to be seen on the route. Cover 40 acres of ground. . . .<sup>5</sup>

These springs are indeed a great curiosity—hollow cones nearly three feet in diameter and four feet high are formed by the mineral water. . . . There are over twenty of these cones in this vicinity.<sup>6</sup>

Daniel Toole, writing to his brother from Fort Hall in August of 1846, expressed what was surely the majority attitude when he wrote that "The curiosities that are to be seen upon the plains, are enough to compensate me for all my troubles. The soda springs are a curiosity indeed."<sup>7</sup> There were, however, those who were considerably less impressed. John Howell (1845) agreed that "The soda springs are a curiosity but I was very much disappointed from reports."<sup>8</sup>

Many diarists, of course, recorded lengthy descriptions of this natural wonder. Several of such descriptions will suffice for our purposes, however, because they tend to be quite similar.

MRS. MARCUS (NARCISSA PRENTISS) WHITMAN (1836):  
Went ten miles off our route with Husband, Mr. McLeod & a few other, to visit Soda Springs. Was much delighted with the view of the wonders of Nature we saw there. The first object of curiosity we came to were several white mounds on the top of which were small springs of soda. These mounds were covered with a crustation made from the evaporation of the water which is continually running in small quantities from these springs.<sup>9</sup>

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4. Raymond W. Settle (editor), *The March of the Mounted Riflemen: First United States Military Expedition to travel the full length of the Oregon Trail from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Vancouver May to October, 1849, as recorded in the journals of Major Osborne Cross and George Gibbs and the official report of Colonel Loring.* (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1940). p. 157, entry for August 1.

5. "Diary of James Frear 1852," p. 10, entry for Tuesday, June 15th.

6. "Diary of E. W. Conyers, A Pioneer of 1852, Now of Clatskanie, Oregon." As copied from the *Transactions of the Thirty-Third Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, June 15, 1905. p. 25, entry for July 22, Thursday. Hereafter, this source will be referred to as the "Diary of E. W. Conyers".

7. "Daniel Toole to His Brother, Fort Hall, August 2, 1846" in Dale Morgan (editor), *Overland In 1846: Diaries and Letters of the California-Oregon Trail.* Volume II. (Georgetown, Calif.: The Talisman Press, 1963). p. 631.

8. "Diary of an Emigrant of 1845, Diary of John Ewing Howell". p. 147, entry for 5, Tuesday (August, 1845).

9. Clifford Merrill Drury (editor), *First White Women Over the Rockies: Diaries, Letters, and Biographical Sketches of the Six Women of the Oregon Mission who made the Overland Journey in 1836 and 1838.* Vol. I: *Mrs. Marcus Whitman, Mrs. Henry H. Spalding, Mrs. William H. Gray, and Mrs. Asa B. Smith.* (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1963). p. 76, entry for July 30th (1836). Hereafter, this source will be referred to as "Mrs. Marcus Whitman".





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The mounds or cones, so frequently noted, were formed by a process explained by at least two observers. Mrs. Velina Williams (1853) stated that "The water contains a gas, . . . and when exposed to the sun and air it passes but a short distance before it forms a crust or solid of scarlet hue, so that the constant boiling of any of these springs will form a rock on the height of its source."<sup>12</sup> George Keller (1850), physician to the Wayne County Company, described the process in more sophisticated terms.

The water is impregnated with carbonic acid, which gives it the property of holding certain minerals in solution. As it issues from the surface it loses this gas, and the minerals are precipitated. By this process large mounds of calcareous matter have been formed.<sup>13</sup>

Not far from Soda Springs, almost all travelers observed an even more unusual sight. The need for brevity, as well as diarists' tendencies toward descriptive similarity noted earlier, make unnecessary the reproduction of a great many lengthy comments about this site. Excerpts from the diaries of Joel Palmer (1845), John C. Fremont (1843) and Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly (1849), more than adequately convey the general impression experienced when viewing Steamboat Spring.

JOEL PALMER: Three hundred yards below the crossing of this branch, and immediately on the bank of the river, is the Steamboat Spring. The water has formed a small cone of about two and a half feet in height, and three feet in diameter, at the base. A hole of six inches in diameter at the top, allows the water to discharge itself. It swells out at intervals of eight or ten seconds, and sometimes flows four or five feet in disjointed fragments. . . . It produces a sound similar to the puffing of a steamboat, but not quite so deep. It can frequently be heard at the distance of a quarter of a mile. About six feet from this is a small fissure in the rock, which is called the escape-pipe or gas-pipe. It makes a hissing noise, corresponding with the belching of the spring.<sup>14</sup>

JOHN C. FREMONT: In a rather picturesque spot, about 1,300 yards below our encampment, and immediately on the river bank, is the most remarkable spring of the place. In an opening on the

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12. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, "Diary of a trip across the plains in 1853. Supplemented by the recollections of O. A. Stearns, a nephew of Mrs. Williams." Copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-Seventh Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, (Portland, Oregon: Chausse-Prudhomme Co., Printers, 1922), p. 25, entry for August 8.

13. Geo. Keller, *A Trip Across the Plains and Life in California, A Description of the Overland Route; Its Natural Curiosities, Rivers, Lakes, Springs, Mountains, Indian Tribes, &c., &c.: The Gold Mines of California: Its Climate, Soil, Productions, Animals, &c., With Sketches of Indian, Mexican and Californian Character: To which is added, A Guide of the Route From the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean.* (White's Press: Massillon 1 - 51), p. 23.

14. Joel Palmer, *Journal of Travels Over The Rocky Mountains.* p. 19, entry for August 4 (1845).



rock, a white column of scattered water is thrown up, in form like a *jet-d'eau*, to a variable height of about three feet, and, though it is maintained in a constant supply, its greatest height is only attained at regular intervals, according to the action of the force below. It is accompanied by a subterranean noise, which, together with the motion of the water, makes very much the impression of a steamboat in motion; and without knowing that it had been already previously so called, we gave to it the name of the *Steamboat spring*. The rock through which it is forced is slightly raised in a convex manner, and gathered at the opening into an urn-mouthed form, and is evidently formed by continued deposition from the water, and colored bright red by oxide of iron. . . . Within perhaps two yards of the *jet-d'eau* is a small hole of about an inch in diameter, through which, at regular intervals, escapes a blast of hot air with a light wreath of smoke, accompanied by a regular noise.<sup>15</sup>

GEIGER AND BRYARLY: The greatest curiosity of all, however, is what has been named "The Steamboat Spring." This is situated upon the edge of the river, half a mile from the first spring. Out of solid rock, with a hole 1 foot in diameter, gushes forth the water, foaming, whizzing, sizzling, blowing, splashing & spraying. It throws it up from two to three feet high. There is a little intermission of a few seconds every now & then, which makes it resemble more "The Palaces of the Deep." A few feet from this large one are two smaller ones, which are phizzing away all the time and somewhat resemble the scape-pipe of a Steamer.<sup>16</sup>

The noises produced by Steamboat Spring reminded most emigrants of steam whistles, steam pipes or steam boats, as illustrated by those diarists just cited. J. Goldsborough Bruff (1849), however, was struck by "The resemblance of the sound it gives, to that of a steamboat's paddles, under water,"<sup>17</sup> while Orange Gaylord (1850) thought it "sounds something like the noise of a water wheel."<sup>18</sup> Jason Lee (1834), on the other hand, described "a hole . . . where the atmosphere strongly impregnated with sulphur issues in a manner that strongly resembles respiration and with such

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15. Brevet Colonel J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.* pp. 173-174.

16. David Morris Potter (editor), *Trail to California: The Overland Journal of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly*. (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 145, entry for Wednesday, July 11th, 1849. Elisha Perkins (1849) somewhat more vividly described the waters as coming out "in gusts like throwing pails of water in the air." Thomas D. Clark (editor), *Gold Rush Diary: Being the Journal of Elisha Douglass Perkins on the Overland Trail in the Spring and Summer of 1849*. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 91, entry for Wednesday, Aug. 8.

17. Georgia Willis Read and Ruth Gaines (editors), *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and other papers of J. Goldsborough Bruff, Captain, Washington City and California Mining Association April 2, 1849-July 20, 1851*. Centennial edition. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 91, entry for 17 (August, 1849).

18. "Diary of Orange Gaylord to California and Oregon 1850", compiled by Lillie Moore, a granddaughter. As copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-fifth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Portland, July 19, 1917. p. 6, entry for July 2.



force as to be heard several rods and is quite warm.”<sup>19</sup> In like manner, Asahel Munger (1839) noted that the spring “would seem to be gasping for breath drawing in wind which makes a guggling (*sic*) noise when passing in, then out comes the water in a half steam, as though mixed with gas and pressed out with tremendous force.”<sup>20</sup> The hole from which these noises issued was labeled by Richard Owen Hickman (1852) as “an aperture in the stone, through which a hissing noise proceeds . . . called the Safety Valve of the Steamboat Spring.”<sup>21</sup> John Kearns (1852) provided an explanation for the cacophony of sound produced in this vicinity. It was, he wrote, “caused by soda coming in contact with the Alkali, which is abundant here, and water continually uniting them.”<sup>22</sup>

The combination of elements referred to by Mr. Kearns not only created noise, it also produced appreciable amounts of gas, the effects of which were most pronounced. In July, 1836, Narcissa Whitman looked at “some rocks a little below in the opening” where she saw “dead flies & birds in abundance which had approached so near the crater, as to be choked with the gas which it constantly emits.”<sup>23</sup> Mrs. Whitman went on to note that “On putting the face down, the breath is stopped instantly, & a low rumbling noise like the roaring of fire is heard beneath.”<sup>24</sup> Orange Gaylord (1850) agreed that “The water boils and foams all around the edges, just as if there was a hot fire under it, and so strong with acid that, if a person holds his head a little below the surface of the ground, they cannot draw more than one-half of a breath in the natural way of breathing.”<sup>25</sup> Joel Palmer (1845) and John Kearns (1852) both felt that the gas given off was potentially quite dangerous; Palmer noted that “The gas emitted from this fissure is so strong that it would suffocate a person, holding his head near the ground,”<sup>26</sup> while Kearns described “a vapor so strong that no

19. “Diary of Jason Lee”, *op. cit.*

20. “Diary of Asahel Munger and Wife”, p. 8, entry for 16 (July, 1839).

21. M. Catherine White (editor), *The Journal of Richard Owen Hickman: An Overland Journey to California in 1852*. Historical Reprints, Sources of Northwest History No. 6. Reprinted from the Historical Section of *The Frontier, a magazine of the Northwest*, published at The State University of Montana, Missoula. Vol. IX, No. 3, March, 1929. p. 15, entry for July 5th, '52.

22. John T. Kearns, “Journal of Crossing the Plains to Oregon in 1852,” As copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-Second Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneers Association*, Portland, June 25, 1914. p. 16, entry for Thursday, July 22.

23. “Mrs. Marcus Whitman”, *op. cit.*

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

25. “Diary of Orange Gaylord to California and Oregon 1850”, *op. cit.* pp. 5-6.

26. Joel Palmer, *op. cit.*





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One final physical characteristic attracted the attention of some passers-by. A number of the springs had dried up, but the subterranean passages through which water had flowed remained. The result was described by Major Osborne Cross (1849) and J. Quinn Thornton (1846). The former noted "a hollow sound as you walk or ride over them,"<sup>36</sup> while the latter observed that "The ground in many places emits a hollow sound, upon receiving the tread of feet."<sup>37</sup> Samuel Parker (1845) used more colorful language: "to gelip (gallop) a horse, it sounds like wood hitting an empty barrel, all hollow."<sup>38</sup>

The unusual geographic features of the area were attributed by many to, in the words of Osborne Russell (1834), "volcanic action . . . (of) some remote period the evidences of which, however still remains in the deep and frightful chasms which may be found in the rocks, throughout this portion of country which could only have been formed by some terrible convulsion of nature."<sup>39</sup> In like manner, John Boardman (1843) wrote that "The country for miles is full of fissures, very deep, where the rock are rent and thrown into many shapes,"<sup>40</sup> while Celinda Himes (1853) commented simply "There were large holes in the ground and rocks had been thrown up sometimes for rods in length. . . . Stones looked as if they had been burned."<sup>41</sup> As was so frequently the case, John C. Fremont (1843) gave a more detailed description of the "very remarkable, yellow-colored rock, soft and friable, con-

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*Transactions of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Portland, June 19th, 1907. p. 8, entry for Aug. 22 (1847).

36. Raymond W. Settle, *op. cit.*

37. J. Quinn Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

38. "Diary of Samuel Parker, 1845," p. 5, entry for July, 26. A copy of this diary is held by the Oregon Historical Society. The original is in the possession of a granddaughter, Miss Cornelius Parker, Portland, Ore., Feb. 28, 1933.

39. *Osborne Russell's Journal of a Trapper*, Edited from the original manuscript in the William Robertson Coe Collection of Western Americana in the Yale University Library; with a biography of Osborne Russell and maps of his travels while a trapper in the Rocky Mountains, by Aubrey L. Haines. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society MCMLV.) Champoeg Press, Reed College, p. 4, entry for July 7, 1834. Hereafter, this source will be cited as Osborne Russell.

40. "The Journal of John Boardman: An Overland Journey From Kansas to Oregon in 1843," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Volume 2, October, 1929, Number 4. p. 10, entry for Thursday, 7th.

41. "Diary of Celinda E. Himes, (Afterwards Mrs. H. R. Shipley), 1853." As copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-Sixth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Portland, June 20, 1918. p. 21, entry for Mon, Jul. 25.

Elisha Perkins (1849) "picked up numerous specimen of fused metal sulphates etc. also petrifications & lava" but quickly found that "the limited weight of my packs will not admit of my carrying home with me". Thomas D. Clark, *op. cit.*



sisting principally of carbonate of lime and oxide of iron, or regular structure, which is probably a fossil coral."<sup>42</sup>

Joel Palmer (1845) and Richard May (1848) were among those who described some of the other features of the immediate vicinity of Soda Springs. Palmer noted that "a grove of cedar and pine timber extends from the river back to the mountain, a distance of two and a half or three miles; the space between the road and the river is covered with grass; but between it and the mountain it is barren of vegetation of any kind."<sup>43</sup> The description recorded by Mr. May is more eloquently poetic.

Nature has dealt out bountifully of her best gifts here. She has given the live invigorating stream, a beautiful little river, a mountainous and healthy country, also a tolerable good soil and mountain streams to irrigate it, fine and wholesome grass for any quantity of cattle. The very ground on which these springs are situated are nicely decorated with the evergreens of the forest. Add to all this the magnificent grandeur of the surrounding mountains covered with pine, cedar, fir and quaking asp.<sup>44</sup>

Just as most diarists at least mentioned Soda Springs, a very large percentage also imbibed of the local beverage. As might, perhaps, be expected, the opinions held about the taste and effects of the liquid were as mixed as were the components of the water itself. And the extent of the latter mixture was best conveyed by John C. Fremont (1843), who indicated that "By analysis, one quart of the water contains as follows:"

	Grains
Sulphate of magnesia	12.10
Sulphate of Lime	2.12
Carbonate of lime	3.86
Carbonate of magnesia	3.22
Chloride of calcium	1.33
Chloride of magnesium	1.12
Chloride of sodium	2.24
Vegetable extractive matter, &c.	0.85
	26.84 <sup>45</sup>

The extent of divided opinion about the soda waters of Idaho is easily illustrated. Of a sample of 27 diarists, 16 expressed the opinion that the waters were good and 11 adopted a contrary

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42. Brevet Colonel J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.* p. 175.

43. Joel Palmer, *op. cit.*

44. Richard May, "A Sketch of a Migrating Family to California." Entry for Aug. 3rd (1848).

45. Bvt. Col. J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.* George Keller (1850) also analyzed the water of Soda Springs. He fixed the following percentages: "Carbonate of Lime 95.50; do. Magnesia .50; Silica, Alumina, and loss 7.90". Geo. Keller, *op. cit.*



position. The range of disagreement is highlighted when one juxtaposes a series of conflicting evaluations.

The water was fine, only needed lemon syrup, to render it perfect soda water.<sup>46</sup>

The taste of the water is somewhat metallic and by no means pleasant compared with the springs in the bottom and immediately in the vicinity of this place.<sup>47</sup>

The water is clear and has a smart taste like small beer, though it has more of the sting to it than any beer I ever drank. I drank freely of it. It had a very good effect.<sup>48</sup>

The Strongest Spring . . . is so highly charged that it almost takes your Breath to drink a cup of it Quick from the Spring.<sup>49</sup>

The water . . . sparkles and tastes just as a glass of soda will, pure and cold.<sup>50</sup>

Many of the emigrants relish the taste of this soda water and drink freely of it, but I cannot endure it.<sup>51</sup>

Drunk freely of the water, found it very pleasant.<sup>52</sup>

. . . the famous Soda Springs . . . are not so good as has been represented. Only one or two of our company liked it. It tasted like weak vinegar with a little saleratus in it.<sup>53</sup>

The water, sweetened and mixed with acid, makes a beautiful effervescing draught.<sup>54</sup>

Its taste was to me unpleasant being that of soda water without any syrup or flavoring, slightly acid, also a very distinct metallic taste, & a foetid old swamp like flavor combined.<sup>55</sup>

. . . encamped near Soda Springs, where we took a good drink of the best soda water that I ever tasted.<sup>56</sup>

There is considerable gas rises at this place through the earth that gives the water a peculiar flavor but rather disagreeable than otherwise.<sup>57</sup>

The physical effects of drinking these waters was also the subject of at least modest differences of opinion. The company to which Count Leonetto Cipriani (1853) belonged "drank a deal of the water, and it produced on all of us a satisfying, purgative effect."<sup>58</sup>

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46. Georgia Willis Read and Ruth Gaines, *op. cit.*

47. Raymond W. Settle, *op. cit.*

48. "Diary of Asahel Munger and Wife", *op. cit.* p. 7.

49. Charles L. Camp, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102.

50. "Diary of Mrs. E. A. Hadley, Across in 1851," *op. cit.*

51. "Diary of E. W. Conyers", *op. cit.*

52. "Mrs. Marcus Whitman", *op. cit.*, p. 77.

53. "Diary of Mrs. Elizabeth Dixon Smith Geer", *op. cit.*

54. Mrs. Cecelia Emily McMillen Adams, "Crossing the Plains in 1852." As copied from the *Transactions of the Thirty-Second Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association* for 1904, p. 12, entry for Sun, Aug. 15.

55. Thomas D. Clark, *op. cit.*

56. "Diary of James Frear 1852", *op. cit.*

57. "Diary of an Emigrant of 1845, Diary of John Ewing Powell", *op. cit.*

58. Ernest Falbo (Translator and Editor), *California and Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani from 1853 through 1871 Containing the*





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lives, are fond of finding some fancied resemblance to the luxuries they rarely have the fortune to enjoy."<sup>65</sup>

Although most pioneers used the terms "Soda Springs" and "Beer Springs" interchangeably, at least two emigrants believed they referred to different locations. Rufus Sage (1857) distinguished between them on the grounds that "The water of the one he finds on tasting to be excellent *natural soda*, and that of the other, slightly acid and beer-like; the draught will prove delicious and somewhat stimulating, but, if repeated too freely, it is said to produce a kind of giddiness like intoxication."<sup>66</sup> Henry Allyn (1853), after passing the fork of the Port Neuf and Bear Rivers, "came to the Beer Springs, as great a natural curiosity as the Soda", whose water "boils up from the bottom like a common spring, which keeps the surface in motion, but it is not forced up by gas, like the Sodas, but runs spontaneously."<sup>67</sup> Mr. Allyn rather liked the water of Beer Springs, whose "taste very much resembles small beer and to me is not at all disagreeable."<sup>68</sup> He went on to add:

I drank nearly a pint and it had no bad effect, but set me to belching wind from the stomach, on which it set very light. But I am not acquainted enough with chemistry to explain the phenomena of either this or the Soda Springs.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to being drunk, there was another use to which the waters of Soda Springs could be put; according to Major Osborne Cross (1849), "It was also used in making bread and was a very good substitute in the place of saleratus."<sup>70</sup> In fact, Richard May (1848) thought that "The water taken from these springs is much better than saleratus to mix up bread stuff. It rises very well and is much sweeter."<sup>71</sup> The ultimate accolade, however, came from Sarah Smith (1838) who compared the water most favorably with yeast; she found "it excellent for making bread, no preparation of the water is necessary, take it from the fountain & the bread is as light as any prepared with yeast."<sup>72</sup>

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65. Bvt. Col. J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

66. Rufus B. Sage, *Rocky Mountain Life; or, Startling Scenes and Perilous Adventures in the Far West, During an Expedition of Three Years*. (Boston: Wentworth & Company; 86 Washington Street, 1857), p. 257.

67. "Journal of Henry Allyn, 1853. A record of daily events during a trip from Fulton County, Ill., Across the Plains to the Willamette Valley, Oregon Territory. In the year 1853; with a brief description of the scenery and curiosities along the road." As copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-Ninth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneers Association*, Portland, June 16, 1921. pp. 30-31, entry for July 14, Thursday. Hereafter this source is cited as the "Journal of Henry Allyn, 1853".

68. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

69. *Ibid.*

70. Raymond W. Settle, *op. cit.*

71. Richard May, *op. cit.*

72. "Diary of Sarah White Smith", *op. cit.* Saleratus as a substitute for



The water of Steamboat Spring, when compared to those of Soda Springs, was held in decidedly lower esteem by those who sampled it. Although George Keller (1850) maintained that "In chemical constitution this water is somewhat similar to that of the Soda Springs,"<sup>73</sup> no one else was aware of much similarity. Orange Gaylord (1850), for instance, noted that the water "foams and has the taste of Soda-water and is warm,"<sup>74</sup> while the best Major Osborne Cross could say for it a year earlier was that "The taste of the water is said to be much the same as the other springs in the bottom, but to my taste it was more metallic, warmer, and not so highly impregnated with gas."<sup>75</sup> Joel Palmer (1845) did not even describe the taste of Steamboat Spring's produce; rather, he noted an interesting peculiarity about it. The water, he wrote, "is luke-warm, and has a milky appearance; but when taken in a vessel becomes as transparent as crystal."<sup>76</sup> Other travelers gave pungent evidence of more negative reactions. John C. Fremont (1843) and Richard Owen Hickman (1852) expressed markedly similar opinions. The former described the water as having "a pungent and disagreeable metallic taste, leaving a burning effect on the tongue,"<sup>77</sup> while the latter noted it had "a sharp, biting taste and leaves a sort of metallic (*sic*) taste in the mouth."<sup>78</sup> It is no wonder that John Boardman (1843) "Traveled till 10 at night to find water, and made a poor camp" since the water of Steamboat Spring "tastes much of copper."<sup>79</sup> By all odds, however, Nathaniel Wyeth (1834) gave the most succinct evaluation when he observed that "here a warm spring . . . throws water with a jet . . . which is like Bilge water in taste."<sup>80</sup> Richard May (1848) perhaps found the most useful characteristic of the water.

I laid off my hat and adjusted my clothing so as to bathe my face thinking that if it had a wholesome influence on the system when drank it would have a like influence when bathed in.<sup>81</sup>

The waters of Steamboat Spring may have been unpalatable, but

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yeast was first encountered in the Sweetwater Valley and particularly in the vicinity of Independence Rock and Devil's Gate. The reactions to it were not quite as varied as those to the waters of Soda Springs; most emigrants thought saleratus a reasonably satisfactory replacement for yeast.

73. Geo. Keller, *op. cit.*

74. "Diary of Orange Gaylord to California and Oregon 1850", *op. cit.*, p. 6.

75. Raymond W. Settle, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.

76. Joel Palmer, *op. cit.*

77. Bvt. Col. J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

78. M. Catherine White, *op. cit.*

79. "The Journal of John Boardman: An Overland Journey From Kansas to Oregon in 1843", *op. cit.*

80. Nathaniel Wyeth, July 8, 1834. Cited in Georgia Willis Read and Ruth Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 619, footnote 267.

81. Richard May, *op. cit.*



another spring in this vicinity was actually dangerous. "Near the soda spring is a poison spring," Myra Eells (1838) recorded, "and it generally proves fatal to whatever drinks it. A number of our horses feel its sad effects today; one belongs (*sic*) to the company died; supposed to have drunk freely of the water."<sup>82</sup> In 1851, John Zeiber probably saw the same spring, which he described as "an alkali basin of clear water, where one of Bowman's oxen sickened and died on the morning of."<sup>83</sup> Most emigrants apparently avoided this source of potential difficulty and danger, perhaps for the reason noted in the *Dinwiddie Journal* (1853): "After leaving the springs we crossed a very pretty creek of clear looking water, but said in some of the guides to be poisonous water. . . ."<sup>84</sup>

Natural phenomena seem to elicit the same reaction from a great many observers; something in the make-up of humans leads them to attempt to interfere with such phenomena, apparently just to see what will happen. Soda Springs and Steamboat Springs were no exception. For reasons best known to himself, a member of Vincent Geiger's and Wakeman Bryarly's (1849) party "reached a cup into it (Steamboat Spring), when it was immediately drawn from his hand into the hole. He, however, delved down for it, & found it the length of his arm in, & required a considerable jerk to get it out."<sup>85</sup> Orange Gaylord (1850) was also intrigued by Steamboat Spring, particularly by the water which "when forced from the spring, is thrown up perpendicularly two feet high and from that to five feet."<sup>86</sup> After "The water flew in my face several times . . . I threw several large stones in the hole, but it did not seem to make any difference in the leaping of the water."<sup>87</sup> A more direct effort to impede the flow of Steamboat Spring was made by Jason Lee (1834) who "put a wet tuft of grass upon it

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82. "Journal of Myra Eells: Kept while passing through the United States and over the rocky mountains in the spring and summer of 1838." As copied from the *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association, Seventeenth Annual Reunion*, Portland, Oregon, June 18, 1889. p. 20, entry for Wed, July 25.

83. "Diary of John S. (Shunk) Zeiber, 1851." As copied from the *Transactions of the Forty-eighth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, Portland, July 1, 1920. p. 16, entry for Thu, Aug. 7.

84. Margaret Booth (editor), *Overland From Indiana to Oregon: The Dinwiddie Journal*. Sources of Northwest History No. 2. Reprinted from the Historical Section of *The Frontier, A Magazine of the Northwest*, published at the State University of Montana, Missoula, Vol. VIII, No. 2. March, 1928. p. 9, entry for Friday 15th (July, 1853).

85. Davis Morris Potter, *op. cit.* This story is somewhat reminiscent of the one about the cowboy's hat which, sucked into a hole in the ground, led to the discovery of Wind Cave in South Dakota.

86. "Diary of Orange Gaylord to California and Oregon 1850", *op. cit.*, p. 6.

87. *Ibid.*





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waited until the water began to recede, then took off his pants and seated himself on the crevice. In this position he waited for the flow. He did not have to wait very long for the flow. It came gradually at first, but increased in force every moment. Doyle soon began bobbing up and down at a fearful rate. At this stage of the fun several of the boys took hold of Doyle and tried to hold him on the crevice, but in this they failed, for the more weight they added to Doyle the more power the spring seemed to have, and Doyle kept on bobbing up and down like a cork. Finally Doyle cried out: "Boys, ther is no use trying to hold the divil down. It can't be did, for the more weight you put on the more the devil churns me. I am now pounded into a beefsteak."<sup>93</sup>

Those who traveled the road west had deliberately pulled themselves away from that which they had previously known, but all carried memories of other more familiar places. As a result, diarists were sometimes moved to compare new sights with old memories. Charles Putnam, writing to his father from Fort Hall on August 8, 1846, told how "We stopped three days at the Soda Springs where we enjoyed ourselves as much as though we had been at Saratoga N.Y."<sup>94</sup> The peripatetic Colonel Fremont (1843) gave evidence of how seasoned a traveler he was by observing "The *Beer* or *Soda springs* . . . are agreeable, but less highly flavored than the *Boiling* springs at the foot of Pike's Peak, which are of the same character."<sup>95</sup> And Elisha Perkins (1849), remembering a valley in far-off Ohio, remarked that the Bear River was "much more of a stream than I had supposed . . . , quite as large as the Muskingum above Zanesville."<sup>96</sup>

Not all emigrants, being daily exposed to new experiences, saw the present in terms of the past. A number, rather, looked at new territory and saw possibilities for the future. Osborne Russell (1834) and James Frear (1852), separated from each other by almost two decades, made similar predictions about the future of Soda Springs. Russell, a trapper himself, speculated that "This place which now looks so lonely, visited only by the rambling trapper or solitary Savage will doubtedless at no distant day be a resort for thousands of the gay and fashionable world, as well as Invalids and spectators."<sup>97</sup> Mr. Frear wrote simply that Soda Springs was "destined to be one of the most noted places of resort in North America."<sup>98</sup> Henry Spalding (1838) added another dimension to these prognostications by suggesting that "when a railroad connects the waters of the Columbia with those of the

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93. "Diary of E. W. Conyers", *op. cit.*

94. "Charles F. Putnam to Joseph Putnam, Fort Hall, August 8, 1846" in Dale Morgan (editor), *op. cit.*, p. 633.

95. Bvt. Col. J. C. Fremont, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

96. Thomas D. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 89, entry for Monday, Aug. 6 (1849).

97. Osborne Russell, *op. cit.*

98. "Diary of James Frear 1852", *op. cit.*



Missouri, this fountain may be a source of great gain to the company that shall accomplish such a noble work."<sup>99</sup> Richard May (1848) agreed that "Here everything does allure and must in time attract the capitalist and fashionable as well as the valitudinarians of the land,"<sup>100</sup> but he saw the possibility of another type of commercial venture: "About midway between the upper spring and the Steamboat spring there is a mill site where the water could be thrown upon an overshot wheel 22 feet in diameter."<sup>101</sup>

Intriguing though these speculations are, they all proved to be inaccurate. Soda Springs and its immediate environs today are under water, covered by the Soda Point Reservoir. Predicting the future was as hazardous then as it is now!

During the years of greatest travel on the Oregon-California Trail, emigrants frequently encountered Indians, usually Shoshoni, in the vicinity of Soda Springs. As an example, Mrs. Velina Williams (1853) noted "The Shoshoni Indians have a village near here",<sup>102</sup> while the entry in James Frear's diary (1852) was even briefer—"Shoshoni Indian. Village."<sup>103</sup> Mrs. E. A. Hadley was more informative in her account, writing "we are pretty well in the mountains and among the shoshone or snake Indians. They at present appear friendly."<sup>104</sup>

Indians had, of course, discovered Soda Springs long before white men ever penetrated the region; they were apparently also aware of the unique qualities of its waters, setting "a great reliance upon their virtues for a numerous class of disorder."<sup>105</sup> Unlike the white man, Indians found the natural properties of the earth, as well as the water, useful. In 1852, Richard Owen Hickman observed that "The earth around it (Steamboat Spring) for miles is the color of ochre . . .";<sup>106</sup> two years earlier, Orange Gaylord (1850) saw "two other springs, the water of which is a bright vermilion red. They foam and boil the same as the other springs. There happened to be an Indian there. He told us that they used it

99. Clifford Merrill Drury (editor), *The Diaries and Letters of Henry H. Spalding and Asa Bowen Smith relating to the Nez Perce Mission 1838-1842*. (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1958), p. 235.

100. Richard May, *op. cit.*

101. *Ibid.* He also noted another interesting feature: "This little stream runs under a natural bridge which the road crosses and falls into Bear River."

102. Mrs. Velina A. Williams, *op. cit.*

103. "Diary of James Frear 1852", *op. cit.*

104. "Diary of Mrs. E. A. Hadley, Across in 1851", *op. cit.* Of all the tribes encountered by emigrants in present-day Nebraska, Wyoming and eastern Idaho, the Shoshoni most consistently maintained a reputation for friendship toward the whites.

105. Burnett, cited in Georgia Willis Read and Ruth Gaines, *op. cit.* p. 619, footnote 267.

106. M. Catherine White, *op. cit.*



for painting themselves."<sup>107</sup> "There is also large beds of clay in the vicinity of a snowy whiteness", according to Osborne Russell (1834), "which is much used by the Indians for cleansing their clothes and skins, it not being inferior to soap for cleansing woollens or skins dressed after the Indian fashion."<sup>108</sup> Asahel Munger (1839) likened the whiteness of the clay to that of "our common earthen (ware)"; he also indicated that it was "used by the Indians in all parts of the mountains for whitening skins &c."<sup>109</sup>

Although the Shoshoni were generally friendly, as noted earlier, they liked horses as well as any tribe of the high plains and mountains. To acquire horses they, in common with all tribes of the region, raided the herds of neighboring bands. Not surprisingly, when white men took the road west in increasing numbers, the Indians simply considered their horse herds as additions to the list of possible targets for acquisitive activity. John Kearns (1852) was luckier than many.

I came near upsetting an Indian last night who sought to steal while I was on guard. I happened to see him between me and the moon as it was going down about 11 o'clock at night, and I kept a close lookout for him, and as he came around near where I was laying behind one of the oxen, I leveled my gun to shoot him. but the tumbler of the lock being out of order, it went when I let go of the hammer, so I missed him, but I had the pleasure of hearing him set his feet down pretty fast for half a mile.<sup>110</sup>

An acquaintance of the Reverend Edward Evans Parrish (1844) was not so fortunate. On a cloudy Sunday in September, "an Indian and his squaw came to us and I traded for some antelope meat. The Indian speaks English and is quite intelligent . . . A Mr. Mahan bought a horse from the Indian and paid for him, the animal to be delivered in the morning."<sup>111</sup> The next day the party reached Soda Springs which, Reverend Parrish observed, "are a curiosity indeed";<sup>112</sup> he then added the intelligence that "The Indian did not deliver the horse as agreed, so the pay was lost."<sup>113</sup>

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107. "Diary of Orange Gaylord to California and Oregon 1850", *op. cit.*, p. 6.

108. Osborne Russell, *op. cit.*

109. "Diary of Asahel Munger and Wife", *op. cit.*, p. 8.

110. John T. Kearns, *op. cit.*, p. 16, entry for Friday, July 23.

111. "Crossing the Plains in 1844: Diary of Rev. Edward Evans Parrish." As copied from the *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association Sixteenth Annual Reunion*, Portland, Oregon, June 15, 1888. Himes Printer, Portland, Oregon. p. 19, entry for Sun, Sep 8.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 19, entry for Mon, Sep 9.

113. *Ibid.* White men, of course, had a long record of failure to deliver on promises made to Indians through treaties and other agreements. One such treaty was the Soda Springs Treaty, which was signed with the Shoshoni and Bannocks on October 14, 1863. For an account of the terms and





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“bought some horses of the Mexicans”, increasing the size of their herd to “18 head, which look well . . . .”<sup>124</sup>

No matter how spectacular or interesting a landmark might be, almost all pioneers viewed it from the perspective of the journey they had undertaken, as Richard May illustrates: “These springs are situated on Bear River about 60 miles east of Fort Hall and near 1300 from Independence, Missouri.”<sup>125</sup> For most of them, the trail west was the link between a remembered yesterday and a hoped-for tomorrow. Some maintained the link with memory by writing to those left behind and by recording their names for the information of any who came after them. Mrs. E. A. Hadley (1851) is an example: “At Thomases Fork, was a chance to send letters to Fort Leavenworth on the Mo. and one of the whites who registered the names of the emigrants. We had ours put down . . . .”<sup>126</sup>

Others came to trail’s end at Soda Spring, and, except for members of the immediate family and perhaps other members of the train, their names were shortly forgotten. As other trains passed the site of last rites, brief entries might be made in diaries, as they were in those of Mrs. Cecelia Adams and Mrs. Maria Belshaw. On July 22, 1853, Mrs. Belshaw wrote “Passed three graves, three dead cattle”;<sup>127</sup> just less than a year earlier, on Sunday, August 15, 1852, Mrs. Adams noted briefly “Passed two graves. . . Encamped tonight at Soda Springs.”<sup>128</sup>

Most emigrants, however, looked ahead to the next step to be taken on the way west. Half a dozen miles beyond Soda Springs earlier decisions were implemented and close friends sometimes parted company—as others had back down the trail at the “Parting of the Ways” in southwestern Wyoming. Here the Oregon-California Trail divided, “the left goes to California and the right to Oregon, they part in a pretty level place . . . .”<sup>129</sup> While “. . . some of the California emigrants go up to Ft. Hall”,<sup>130</sup> for the

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124. *Ibid.*

125. Richard May, *op. cit.*

126. “Diary of Mrs. E. A. Hadley, Across in 1851”, *op. cit.* Carving one’s name in prominent stone outcroppings was another popular method of recording the fact that one had passed that way. Two of the favorite places for such activity were Register Cliff and Independence Rock along the North Platte and Sweetwater Rivers respectively.

127. “Diary Kept By Mrs. Maria A. (Parsons) Belshaw”. Copied from *New Spain and the Anglo-American West* by Herbert Eugene Bolton, pp. 219-243 inclusive. Copied by Devere Helfrich, March 8, 1950. p. 10, entry for July 22nd (1853).

128. Mrs. Cecelia Emily McMillen Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 12, entry for Sun., Aug. 15.

129. Margaret Booth, *op. cit.*

130. “Diary of Celinda E. Himes (Afterwards Mrs. H. R. Shipley) 1853”, *op. cit.*



most part those bound for Oregon "left the track of the Californians . . . for good about six miles from the spring."<sup>131</sup>

So they went their separate ways and pursued their individual dreams. But as stories of the road west were handed down to second and third generations, we may be certain that some of them told of that "curiosity of the trail" called Soda Springs.

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131. Mrs. Cecelia Emily McMillen Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 12, entry for Mon., Aug. 16.



**DETECTIVE JOE LaFORS AFTER SHEEP RAIDERS.** Joe LaFors, the celebrated detective, who established a reputation when he trapped Tom Horn, the notorious range murderer, who played an important part in the capture of the seven men charged with the raid upon the Springs Creek sheep camps and murder of Alleman, Emge and Lazier, and was instrumental in bringing to a close the cattlemen's fight upon Crook county sheepmen, a few days ago, left for northern Wyoming today.

LaFors has been in the employ of the Wyoming Wool Growers' association for some time and is working in the interests of the sheepmen generally in putting a stop to sheep camp raids, sheep-stealing, burning of camps and wagons, the woolgrowers' association being compelled to employ detectives and attorneys to enforce the laws against the outlaws, as in many counties the authorities are either afraid to do their duty or are grossly negligent. While there is not a single instance on record where sheepmen have retaliated against their persecutors, and they do not intend to do so now, they demand that raiders, incendiaries and murderers pay the penalty for their crimes.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, June, 1909

**CASPER PROGRESS IN A NUTSHELL.** The following short editorial in the *Natrona County Tribune* of Casper tells the progress of the metropolis in a nutshell:

With a new ten thousand-dollar depot, and a new twenty-five-thousand-dollar state hospital, a new thirty thousand-dollar Masonic temple, besides several new business blocks and numerous new residences to be built in Casper this summer, and the many handsome business houses and fine residences and the beautiful court house already built, and the putting in of two hundred thousand dollars worth of asbestos machinery on Casper mountain, and the re-opening of the oil refinery in this city, and the operation of the old oil wells at Salt Creek and the drilling of numerous new ones, and the building of a pipeline from the wells to the refinery, the prospect for Casper becoming the greatest and best city in Wyoming is not in the least discouraging.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, June, 1909





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Lieutenant A. W. Vodges, 4th Infantry, gives a *er* good account of the fort in the late sixties and early seventies.<sup>2v</sup> y

Like most military establishments at that time Fort Fetterman was serviced by civilians who were either employed directly by the army or took contracts for the supply of various goods, and in the summer of 1869 Hiram B. (Hi) Kelly and John Richard Jr., took a sub-contract from Wilson and Cobb to furnish the post with wood and hay. According to their no-doubt gentleman's agreement, Kelly was to supply the oxen and put in the wood, and Richard was to supply the mules and put in the hay.

Hi Kelly was one of Wyoming's legendary characters. Born in Missouri in 1834 he had traveled all over the West, prospecting for gold in California and Colorado, driving freight wagons to New Mexico and Utah, and working at most of the military establishments in Wyoming. In 1864 he had married Elizabeth Richard, daughter of old mountain man Peter Richard, and cousin of John Richard Jr. To Kelly this was probably just another wood job; his great break was to come the following year when he would take 200 head of cattle into the Chugwater Valley and within fourteen years make himself a quarter of a million dollars in the stock business.<sup>3</sup>

John Richard Jr. (the name was pronounced and sometimes written as Reshaw) was the half-blood son of the old Indian trader John Richard Sr. Young John was born about 1844 and grew up in the vicinity of the Fort Laramie and Platte Bridge areas, assisting his father in the Indian trade. In 1864 he freighted goods to Virginia City, Montana, and there went into partnership with W. S. McKenzie and F. Lund trading with the Crow Indians. Assisted by his brother Louis, Baptiste 'Big Bat' Pourier, and Minton 'Mitch' Bouyer, he was principal in supplying Fort C. F. Smith with goods and provisions when it was under siege by the Sioux. Returning to Wyoming in 1868 he had been one of the half-breed runners sent to the Sioux camps to bring the chiefs in for the Laramie Treaty. He was a man of undoubted intelligence and astuteness, with many business interests in and around Fort Laramie. Chiefly an Indian trader, he appeared willing to turn his hand to anything and was in partnership with several people in various enterprises. John Richard was a well-known and in some respects popular young man but had two unfortunate failings; a penchant

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2. Adams, Donald K., ed. "The Journal of Ada A. Vodges 1867-71" *Montana, the Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 2-17.

3. Letter from Hiram B. Kelly, Denver, to H. E. Crain, 22 March 1915, reprinted in the *Wyoming State Tribune* 29 July 1923. See also Jones, Brian, "Hi Kelly: Pioneer" *The English Westerners' Brand Book*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 6-10.



for hard liquor and a weakness for women. These were to prove fatal.<sup>4</sup>

He also had the unhappy knack of getting into trouble with the authorities, whether by his own design or the manifestations of others, and an example of this came to light in a letter written by Captain R. S. Lamotte from Fort Ellis, Montana Territory, to Brevet Major General W. A. Nichols at St. Louis. Lamotte, who was the military agent for the Crows, reported that 100 head of beef cattle delivered to the Crows in the summer of 1868 by Colonel H. M. Matthews and supplied by John Richard Jr., had been reclaimed by Richard and driven to Laramie. "What was done with them no one knows, but from Richard's anxiety to have the Crows send the cattle back, and his taking them away afterwards, it looks as if there were some [mis?]understanding between him and Dr. Matthews."<sup>5</sup> Richard had allegedly informed the Indians that by accepting the cattle they virtually sold their lands to the Government and would be obliged to relinquish their rights to these lands.

Moreover Richard had stated that he was a friend of the Crows and an enemy of the whites, and had advised them to form an alliance with the Nez Perces, Blackfeet, Sioux and Shoshonis, and thereby overcome the whites with ease. "This Richard is, I understand, making strenuous efforts to obtain the contract for building the Crow mission, in which I hope he will not be successful, as I attribute a good deal of the distrust and difficulty among the Crows to his representations."<sup>6</sup>

Richard's rejoinder was to seek the assistance of General John B. Sanborn, late of the Indian Peace Commission, who wrote to N. G. Taylor, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, refuting the charges supposedly made by "Bear Tooth and other chiefs of the Mountain Crows." Sanborn dismissed the question of the beef cattle by quoting statements and certified vouchers from Richard, Matthews, the "said chiefs", and Lieutenant Colonel L. P. Bradley, all of

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4. For fuller discourses on John Richard Sr. and the Richard family in general see McDermott, John Dishon, "John Baptiste Richard" *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*, Leroy R. Hafen ed. (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1965). Vol. 2, pp. 289-303, and Jones, Brian, "Those Wild Reshaw Boys" *Sidelights of the Sioux Wars*, (London: English Westerners' Special Publication No. 2, 1967) pp. 5-46.

5. Captain R. S. Lamotte, Fort Ellis, to Brevet Major General W. A. Nichols, Assistant Adjutant General, Military Division of Missouri, 24 December 1868. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-81, Upper Platte Agency 1869, Record Group 75. National Archives. (Hereinafter referred to as Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs.)

6. *Ibid.*



which proved that the cattle had been supplied to and consumed by the Crows.<sup>7</sup>

On the more serious charge of incitement he stated:

The charge that he endeavored to incite the Indians to war, otherwise than to join our troops against the Sioux, is absurd and preposterous. Our fears at the time were that the Crows would join the Sioux against us. The messengers were all charged to do their utmost to prevent such a result. No other one did so much to prevent this as John Richard, Jr. He visited the Crows and induced them to come all the way to Laramie, where they had not been since 1851, to meet the Commission. When he had accomplished this, he went to the Sioux camp of Man Afraid of his Horse and Red Cloud, with his life in his hand, where he came very near to laying it down, and held a council with both of these chiefs, and brought to the Commission their sayings and conclusions, viz., that they would not make peace until the military posts were removed from the Powder River Road. Although this demand, if granted, was in direct conflict with his individual interests, for he was a heavy contractor with the Government at these posts and was fast accumulating a fortune thereby.

I therefore feel confident that the Crow chiefs never made the statements ascribed to them, and that the charges had their origin in the interested and fertile brain of some interpreter who appreciates filthy lies above truth, and therefore request that they shall not be construed as creating a stain upon Richard in the department.<sup>8</sup>

Taylor endorsed this letter: "I know the facts stated within to be true."

On 6 February 1869 John Richard Jr. obtained a license from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to trade with the Powder River Sioux. Adolph Cuny and Allen T. Chamblin stood as sureties, while the employees were listed as Adolph Cuny, clerk, and Louis Richard and Baptiste Bondi (Pourier?), traders.<sup>9</sup> This was quite a coup for Richard, as an order had been issued in November 1868 forbidding anyone to trade with the Indians off their reservation.<sup>10</sup> Richard's license, which had been drawn up under the supervision of John B. Sanborn, was accompanied by a permit signed by General W. S. Harney, another peace commissioner, which afforded that the trader would be free from military interference. Harney later claimed that he had been tricked into signing the permit, that he had not intended to allow Richard to trade in the places designated, and that the license should be revoked as soon as possible. But by this time Richard had departed for his trading grounds having promised General C. C. Auger, Commanding the Depart-

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7. John B. Sanborn, Washington D. C., to N. G. Taylor, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 February 1869. Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, 1869.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Licenses for the Indian Trade, 1849-73, Record Group 75, National Archives.

10. Spring, Agnes Wright, "Old Letter Book Discloses Economic History of Fort Laramie 1858-1871" *Annals of Wyoming*, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 287.





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Sanborn and King referred this letter to E. S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with the observation that "from our knowledge of the writer we deem him incapable of any course of action that would merit the course that seems to have been pursued towards him. We respectfully suggest that the matter be referred to the proper officer immediately in the vicinity of Ft. Fetterman with instructions to authorize Richard to continue his trading with the Indians under his license and in accordance with its terms, unless consideration of some policy require otherwise." This letter was endorsed over to Governor Campbell for investigation. Campbell apparently requested that Richard come in to see him but receiving no reply he let the matter rest, after having advised the Indian Office.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, within the space of a few months John Richard had two brushes with the military which, while trivial, were no doubt annoying, and he could not have been in a frame of mind receptive to army authority when in the fall of 1869 he quarrelled with a soldier at Fort Fetterman. According to Baptiste Pourier, who was employed by Richard at the time, John was in the house of a "loose woman" when a corporal—unnamed—had entered and ordered him to leave. Richard would have contested this order but a display of arms by the military promptly altered the situation and being unarmed he left the house, warning his man that he would get even with him.<sup>16</sup>

Richard's camp was about three miles from the fort, and staying there were his mother and father, his squaw, his sisters Josephine and Rose, and Hi Kelly's wife Elizabeth. Nearby was a camp of mixed half-breeds and Mexicans. In the early hours of 9 September a band of horse-stealing Indians put in an appearance, ran off about a dozen head of stock from the Mexicans and half-breeds, and paid a visit to Richard's camp. Old man Richard later managed to get into the fort where he reported that his camp was surrounded and he feared everything would be captured. Captain Henry W. Patterson, commanding officer at Fort Fetterman, immediately dispatched 1st Lieutenant P. H. Breslin, Company E, 4th Infantry, with 35 men to protect the camp and move it closer to the post. Breslin marched up river and soon came across a party of Sioux blandly sitting in their tipis announcing that they were "peaceable Indians." After a brief parley with the Indians the lieutenant returned to the fort, much to Patterson's chagrin. Ada Vodges gives a graphic account of this raid, describing how

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15. Sanborn and King, Washington, D. C., to E. S. Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 July 1869. Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, 1869.

16. Interview between Baptiste Pourier and Eli S. Ricker, 7 January 1907. Nebraska Historical Society.



the Indians dashed through the garrison at full speed, yelling and hollowing like wolves, and how Lieutenant Breslin returned from his expedition without having fired a shot. "The commanding officer, Capt. Patterson, was furious with him as he was sent out to *kill* them and not to have pow-wow."<sup>17</sup>

The lack of power that Indian chiefs had over their people is indicated by the fact that Man-Afraid-of-his-Horses had already sent word that this war party had left the Tongue River and was heading south. The Indians were Laramie Loafers under the leadership of Cut Penis and a half-breed named Henry Goule, and neither Man-Afraid-of-his-Horses nor Red Cloud could control them. Patterson ended his report of the raid sadly lamenting the fact that he had no mounted men available to pursue or punish the maulauders.<sup>18</sup>

And as if Captain Patterson did not have enough on his plate, in the afternoon or early evening of 9 September John Richard Jr., fired two shots into Corporal Francis Conrad of Company E, 4th Infantry. Patterson's report of this shooting is as follows:

On the 9th inst. John Richard a half breed, subcontractor under Wilson & Cobb, without any provocation shot and killed Corporal Conrad of Comp "E" 4th Infty., who was standing unarmed near the sutler's store. No one was near except two unarmed citizens, and the desperado rode off with his squaw and is supposed to have gone to the Sioux.

Richard is a very dangerous and smart man, if he has gone to join the indians he will make a great deal of trouble.

I have taken possession of all the property he left, in value about two thousand dollars, and will hold it until directed to give it up.

His train is now on the Sweetwater, if it comes in I will seize it.

This murder was without excuse, he killed the man from mere bravado. Richard is well known throughout all this country, has property, I am told in Omaha and Cheyenne, he will of course try to get hold of his property, and I would respectfully suggest that his description be telegraphed through the Department. He formerly lived in Montana. He is about twenty-five years of age, five feet eight or ten inches high, a dark moustache, slight figure, of good appearance and address, speaks English well.<sup>19</sup>

Ada Vodges, to whom this must have been one of the most disturbing days of her life, records the incident in brief and colourful fashion. Her diary entry for Thursday 9 September reads:

This p.m. we had quite another excitement. One of the half breeds (John Reshaw) shot one of our best sergeants, in a drunken fit, and

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17. Adams, Donald K., art. cit., p. 9, and Captain Henry W. Patterson, 4th Infantry, to Brevet Brigadier General George D. Ruggles, 14 September 1869. Letters Sent, Fort Fetterman, Record Group 393. National Archives.

18. Patterson to Ruggles, cited above.

19. *Ibid.* Also Patterson to Brevet Brigadier General F. F. Flint, 13 September 1869. Letters Sent, Fort Fetterman, Record Group 393. National Archives.



the whole garrison was in arms against him. To night the sentinals, are posted in all directions to catch him in case he should try to get in to night after his things. As Wayne [Anthony Wayne Vodges, her husband] is Officer of the day, & has to visit the guard, & these sentinals, every two hours, I feel quite anxious about him, as he [Richard?] said he would be in again. The orderly sleeps here to night, in case he should be wanted.<sup>20</sup>

Captain Patterson's assertion that this killing was without excuse and was an act of bravado seems an illogical conclusion. Richard really had nothing to gain from a show of bravado, especially in front of only two unarmed civilians, and it is difficult to see whom he would be trying to impress by such an act. Baptiste Pourier's version of this affair is that some soldiers had gone to Richard's camp to move it closer to the fort and in doing so had tipped over a wagon, destroying his property and stealing much of his goods. Richard had been on a haying trip and when he returned and found the condition of his camp and property he was very angry. He got into the fort with a load of hay, sought out Big Bat and asked him not to interfere with him, saying that he had stopped him a good many times before. This would seem to indicate that the slightly older Pourier had been a steadying influence on the hard-drinking, reckless Richard, and such a request would surely have warranted a query as to his intentions. Nevertheless Big Bat assured him that he would not interfere with him. Richard later shot Conrad and rode back to his camp in seemingly leisurely manner where he remained an hour before fleeing to the Sioux, taking with him his squaw and a village of Cheyennes that had been camped nearby. It must be pointed out that Pourier did not actually witness the shooting as he had been sent out to collect the results of the fall election, and he learned of the incident on his return. Big Bat's testimony is understandably a little confused with the passing of some forty years, but it remains as one of the best indications of Richard's motive at that particular time.<sup>21</sup>

In the light of Patterson's report and Ada Vodges' diary entries it would appear that any damage to Richard's camp or property was committed by the aforementioned Indians, and that the soldiers had gone to the camp to protect it from further molestation. However it is not entirely without the bounds of possibility that the troops, finding themselves on a wild goose chase, behaved in a generally riotous manner and took the opportunity to help themselves to some of Richard's trade goods. It is significant that Corporal Conrad was from Company E, and it was probably Company E men that were sent to the camp. Evidently there was

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20. *Ada Vodges' Diary*. Manuscript HM 29201, p. 130, reproduced by kind permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

21. Pourier-Ricker Interview, previously cited.





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printed in the *Omaha Weekly Herald* in December must have fostered the notion that Richard was out to cause big trouble with the Sioux. Written by the Whetstone "Traveler" Whistler and dated 22 November it stated that three young Sioux Indians from Red Cloud's camp on the Powder River had arrived at the Whetstone Agency with rather startling information:

John Reshaw, or Richards, who murdered a soldier at Fort Fetterman, some time ago, immediately after committing the deed, fled to "Red Cloud's" camp, who is known to be the most bitter enemy of the whites in the entire Sioux nation. Here Reshaw, who is a half-breed Sioux, and a very intelligent one, and acknowledged to possess great courage, worked arduously and constantly to perfect a peace between the northern Sioux and Crow Indians, who have, from time immemorial, been bitter enemies. In this he was partially successful. Visiting the Crow camp, beyond the Big Horn river, where he has heretofore resided for five years, and whose dialect he speaks fluently, and where he had established for himself quite a reputation as a hunter and warrior, he had but little trouble in gaining his ends. He succeeded in inducing about half the Crows to visit the Sioux and make a treaty, the main object of which is to wage a terrible and continued war against the whites.<sup>25</sup>

In retrospect it seems ludicrous to suppose that the Sioux would even make peace with the Crows let alone join them in battle, and Richard would certainly have been a remarkable man if he could have effected such a union. Nevertheless the Whetstone Traveler earnestly drew General Auger's attention to the above, and forecast that there would be lively times on the eastern and southern borders of Montana, Sweet Water, and on the Union Pacific Rail Road between Cheyenne and Green River, and also around Forts Laramie and Fetterman, and Fort Buford near the mouth of the Yellowstone. "If Reshaw puts himself at the head of this new arrangement, with his natural cunning and nerve, and consummate knowledge of the whites and the entire country, you may depend upon it there will be a long and hard fight."<sup>26</sup>

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to Billy Garnett. It would appear that between September 1869 and June 1870 (the period that Richard was with the Indians) only two soldiers were killed by Indians in the vicinity of Fort Fetterman. These were privates John A. McCallister and George McKenna of Company K, 2nd Cavalry, who were killed at LaPrele Canyon, about 15 miles from the post, on 29 October 1869 while on a hunting trip. Neither body was scalped or mutilated, nor were their possessions taken except their horses. This was barely more than a month after Richard had fled among the Sioux, and his frame of mind may have been such that he could have been with the party responsible for these killings. This does not mean that he was definitely implicated, but if his boast was true then this would seem to be the only incident in which he could have been involved. See Billy Garnett's interview with Eli S. Ricker, 10 January 1907. Nebraska Historical Society, Adams, Donald K., art. cit. p. 9, and Field, Sharon Lass, *op. cit.* p. 6.

25. *Omaha Weekly Herald*, 8 December 1869.

26. *Ibid.*



On the same day that this item appeared Jules Ecoffey wrote the following letter from Omaha to John B. Sanborn:

You have probably heard of John Richard, Jr. killing a soldier last fall at Ft. Fetterman when he was on a drunken spree. He is now with the Indians and if reports are correct, he is trying to get the Sioux and Crows to make peace together for the purposes of making war on the whites. These reports I do not believe, as I have heard from him lately, and he wishes to know if there is any show for him to get clear of that murder. Please inform me if there is any way that he can be helped out of this trouble. If he remains an outlaw, I am afraid he will put himself at the head of hostile Indians and the Government will have a bitter war with them. Please see Mr. Parker and get his advice.<sup>27</sup>

And so once again Sanborn found himself called upon in defense of John Richard. His letter of 6 January 1870 to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs is an eloquent plea on Richard's behalf, and contains an interesting reason for the shooting which the half-breed was to stick to thereafter:

You are already aware that John Richard Jr killed a soldier at Fort Fetterman last autumn, and immediately fled to the camp of the Ogallalla Band of Sioux. He now remains with these Indians. He has a large number of relatives in the western bands of Sioux and in the Crow Tribe. He has hitherto been a most zealous and faithful friend of our government and people, and performed service of inestimable value. He saved the garrison at Fort C. F. Smith from starvation and capture during the winter of 1866 after the massacre at Fort Phillip Kearney, and to do it exposed his person and property to destruction both by hostile Indians and the severity of the weather in that latitude and altitude in winter. It was through his influence that the Crow Nation at this critical time were prevented from joining the hostile Sioux and at length with these same Sioux brought into council with our Commission and induced to make and maintain peace. He has done much other valuable service for our government and people. The man he killed was a stranger to him and one against whom he could have had no malice. It seems that he had given information of some whisky dealers and had been warned to be on his guard as they had threatened to kill him. While under this apprehension he became intoxicated and killed a man who was his friend or at least not an enemy. His act would not constitute murder under our State laws. His exile among Indians or his destruction is to the government the loss of a most influential and valuable servant. I therefore respectfully ask for him an investigation of the circumstances and causes of the homicide by some military or other officer stationed in that vicinity who shall be required to extract the facts in the case and make such recommendations as justice and the interests of the public service require. I make this application to your Bureau instead of the War Department for the reason that I am of the opinion that the public

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27. Jules Ecoffey, Omaha, to John B. Sanborn, 8 December 1869. Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, 1869.



interests to be effected by the proceedings asked come almost exclusively within its control and management.<sup>28</sup>

In true governmental fashion the Commissioner handled this letter like a hot brick and swiftly passed it on to the War Department with the observation that "Richard is a dangerous man, and while in the situation of an outlaw, at large among wild Indians, may be able to produce great mischief and I think it very important that some action be taken, immediately, but as he is with Indians who are not upon a reservation and not under the supervision of this office but under the jurisdiction of the War Department who also may have full report of the killing at Fetterman, I respectfully recommend that General Sanborn's letter be referred to that Department for such action as they may deem proper."<sup>29</sup>

On 10 January a petition was sent to the President from the Whetstone Agency pleading that Richard be pardoned for the "unfortunate affair" for which he was now called "among Indians located in or near Powder river country." Somehow the petitioners had managed to locate the killing at Fort Laramie and date it as **August instead of September. The concern was that:**

Richard, being a half-breed, has great influence among said Indians, and on account of his supposed banishment from among the whites—his former associates—we have been led to fear that he would use his influence to create among them a increased animosity to the whites and endeavour to bring on a war in the Spring.<sup>30</sup>

However, having been informed by his father and friends that if pardoned by the Government he would return to his people and use his influence among the Indians for peace, and in every way conduct himself as a good citizen of the United States, the petitioners requested that he be pardoned and allowed to return, "believing as we do, that it will result in much good toward preserving peace—not only among Indians now away from reservations but also among those upon reservations." There then followed 73 signatures headed by the Indian Agent Captain DeWitt C. Poole, 2nd Lieutenant Fielding L. Davies, and 1st Lieutenant A. O. Woodson.

28. John B. Sanborn, Washington, D. C., to E. S. Parker, 6 January 1870. Letters Received, Department of the Interior, Indian Affairs Division, Record Group 48. National Archives.

29. E. S. Parker, Washington, D. C., to J. D. Cox, Secretary of the Interior, 12 January 1870. Letters Received, Department of the Interior, Indian Affairs Division, Record Group 48. National Archives.

30. Petition from the Chiefs and Head Men of Brule and Ogallala Sioux, Half-breeds, Whites and Officers of the United States Army, resident and located at and near Whetstone Agency, Dakota Territory, to the President of the United States, 10 January 1870. Case File No. C-274. Records of the Office of the Pardon Attorney, Department of Justice, Washington National Records Center. Record Group 204. National Archives (Hereinafter referred to as Case File No. C-274)





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The Indians who put their marks to the paper were Spotted Tail, Swift Bear, Two Strike, Blue Horse, Black Bear, Standing Elk, Fast Bear, Lone Bear, Big Crow, Whirl Wind, Blue Tommyhawk, Beans, Big Foot, Knock Down, Present the Pipe, and Tall Man. The remaining signatures were of half-breeds and squawmen residing in the area, prominent among them the Bordeaus and Bissonettes.<sup>31</sup>

Brevet Major General John E. Smith submitted a testimonial to the Adjutant General's Office stating that while in command of the Mountain District, comprising Forts Reno, Phil Kearny, and C. F. Smith, he had known Richard as trader and interpreter at Fort C. F. Smith during the years 1867-1868:

He has great influence over the Mountain Crows as well as several Bands of the Sioux, (with the latter he is connected by marriage.) His services were very valuable, and he had the entire confidence of the Authorities on the Plains. I do not know anything of the circumstances of his killing a soldier at Fort Fetterman, but in view of his past services as well as future usefulness I would recommend that he be not only leniently dealt with, but if possible pardoned. This would be sound policy in the present condition of affairs in the Powder River Country, as I consider Richard would be very dangerous as an Outlaw.<sup>32</sup>

On 7 February General Sanborn wrote to the Adjutant General's Office enclosing the petition and Colonel Smith's report, and requesting the return of Richard's merchandise which had been impounded by the military. He was curtly informed that "the Secretary of War decides that Richard should deliver himself to the civil authorities of Wyoming, but his goods should not be delivered to him until his guilt or innocence is determined by proper investigation."<sup>33</sup>

The one fact that emerges from all the foregoing is that Richard was generally regarded as a dangerous and influential man, capable of stirring the Indians into various kinds of mischief. If the frontier readers of the *Omaha Herald* took the Whetstone Traveler's warning seriously then the non-appearance of hordes of combined Sioux and Crow warriors must have considerably allayed their fears. However in March came news that again caused great apprehension among the settlers. John Richard Jr., sent word through his father to Colonel F. F. Flint, Commanding Officer at Fort Laramie, that Red Cloud and Man-Afraid-of-his-Horses, together with 1,500-2,000 warriors, would visit the post at the end of the month to

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31. *Ibid.*

32. Endorsement of Colonel and Brevet Major General John E. Smith, War Department, to the Adjutant General's Office, 8 February 1870. Case File No. C-274.

33. E. D. Townsend, Adjutant General, Washington, D. C., to John B. Sanborn, 15 January 1870. Case File No. C-274.



trade in accordance with the late treaty, or to fight if not allowed to trade. This report caused Flint, "an accomplished Gentleman and a superior soldier", to send a slightly panicky telegram to the Adjutant General's Department stating that this information was credited by the older residents, and requesting "a strong force of Cavalry should be here prepared for any emergency."<sup>34</sup>

One could reasonably wonder whether the fighting talk were Red Cloud's or John Richard's, although the fact that the Sioux—or some of them—were evincing a hostile attitude is indicated in a letter from Major Alex. Chambers, Commanding Fort Fetterman, in which he states that chiefs of the Northern Cheyennes had arrived at that post professing peace and wishing to disassociate themselves from the Sioux who had "too many notions", meaning that there was a "difficulty of controlling the young men by the different Chiefs, some being for war and others for peace."<sup>35</sup> In fact, Red Cloud himself appears to have been hedging towards a peaceful solution to the troubles besetting his people, and his sudden and unexpected request to visit Washington for peace talks took many by surprise. Both of Red Cloud's biographers are rather vague about this incident, and while Hyde suggests that it was a put up job arranged by a Mr. Benjamin Thatham of New York City,<sup>36</sup> Olson says that "John Richard Jr. seems to have had a great deal to do with it."<sup>37</sup> Billy Garnett and George W. Colhoff, interviewed by Judge E. S. Ricker, go so far as to state that the whole affair was arranged by John Richard in conjunction with certain others.<sup>38</sup>

According to Garnett, Richard was at that time in partnership with Jules Ecoffey and Adolph Cuny running an establishment elegantly known as a hog ranch a few miles below Fort Laramie—probably the Three Mile Ranch or its predecessor—and while suffering his self-imposed exile among the Sioux his interests were being looked after by his brother Louis. Occasionally John would slip down to attend to business, and on one of these clandestine visits a scheme was cooked up, with W. G. Bullock involved, by

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34. Telegram from Brevet Brigadier General F. F. Flint, Fort Laramie, to General G. D. Ruggles, 11 March 1870. U. S. Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Department of the Platte. Record Group 393, National Archives.

35. Major Alex. Chambers, Fort Fetterman, to the Assistant Adjutant General's Department, 11 April 1870. Letters Received, Department of the Platte, 1870, and telegram from Chambers to General G. D. Ruggles, 1 April 1870 U. S. Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Department of the Platte, Record Group 393. National Archives.

36. Hyde, George E., *Red Cloud's Folk* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957) pp. 173-174.

37. Olson, J. C., *op. cit.* p. 93.

38. Garnett-Ricker Interview, and interview between George W. Colhoff and Eli S. Ricker, 22 November 1906, Nebraska Historical Society.





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Indians. His father was a citizen of the United States and a native of Missouri; his mother was a full-blood Dakota Indian, which made him a member of the Dakota Nation of Indians.

His version of the shooting is that two months prior to the homicide he was asked by Colonel William McEntire Dye, then Commanding Fort Fetterman, whether he knew any of the persons who had brought whiskey onto the post the previous day and distributed it among the soldiers. Richard replied that on the previous day he had in fact encountered four men about seven miles from Fort Fetterman, on the road between Cheyenne and the post, with a cart and two horses tandem carrying 40 gallons of whiskey. His description of the men was so good that within a short time two of them were arrested and punished and the liquor was destroyed.

Several friends of these men, among them the soldier he later killed, were "greatly aggravated and enraged against him" for giving the information that had led to their arrest, and threatened to take his life as soon as Colonel Dye was relieved of his command and left the post. This threat was often repeated in front of certain persons at the fort, being Taylor a servant of Colonel Dye, George Lake, John Hutton, Frank Yates, and one Carr. Lake, Carr, and Yates, who knew the soldiers well, told Richard that they believed these threats and that he should be on his guard.

On the fatal day (25 August according to Richard) he entered the post and visited the blacksmith's shop. While riding in the fort he observed that he was being closely watched by the soldier he afterwards killed. This soldier, whose name he did not know, was one of those who had been the loudest in their threats against him. On his return to his camp outside the post he was warned by Thomas Reed to look out as one of the men who had threatened him had been round the sutler's store ever since he went in. Being greatly excited and believing that the soldier was lying in wait to kill him, he rode back to the post and fired his pistol twice at the soldier who fell mortally wounded. His excuse was, therefore, self-defense, and he had shot the man, whom he "verily believed was a desperado" solely to protect his own life as there were no peace officers in the country.

He furthermore stated that he was and always had been a "true, faithful, and zealous friend of the United States and the government and people thereof" and that he had never levied war against them but had often fought against his own people and had encouraged and aided the troops of the United States in every way possible, often at the peril of his own life. He had some influence among his people and believed that if protected and encouraged by the United States he could do a lot of good among his people and save much life and "treasure" for the Government.

He had done all in his power to keep his people and nation peaceful yet the people of Wyoming believed that he was trying to induce the Indians to go to war against the whites, and for this



reason he was sure that he would not get a fair and impartial trial in the Territory, and that the jury—"made up of women as well as men"—would bring in a verdict that expressed public sentiment, which was unjustly annoyed at him.

He therefore pleaded either that the President would grant him amnesty and pardon for the offence he had committed, or that the Attorney General would order the District Attorney of Wyoming Territory to enter a *nolle prosequi* on the indictment for murder.<sup>44</sup>

Accompanying this affidavit was a petition from the "citizens of the Territory of Wyoming" on behalf of "John Richaw . . . a half breed of the Sioux tribe of Indians, a nephew of Red Cloud and first cousin of Spotted Tail powerful chiefs of that warlike nation."<sup>45</sup>

The petitioners thought that this homicide "though wholly unjustifiable and perhaps inexcusable, yet had in it some mitigating circumstances which uneducated savages or those inured to their habits and customs might deem in strict accordance with justice." There then came the story of the shooting which closely followed Richard's own account:

. . . afterwards fearing the consequences Richaw fled to his tribe and being a man of superior intelligence and influence has probably exorcised them to stir up strife against the whites in order to save himself from capture. Your Petitioners would further represent that said Richaw has no desire to be hostile to the whites but would rather assist them in opposition to any war which may be waged upon them by the Indians and that said Richaw with his great influence could probably succeed in inaugurating a terrible war or of checking one in accordance with his position as friend or foe.<sup>46</sup>

The petitioners earnestly requested that Richard be pardoned because "as a matter of public policy it might be better to do so . . . if by doing so a dangerous and formidable foe can be converted into an active and efficient ally, and thus avoid a further and extensive loss of human life."<sup>47</sup>

This petition was signed by more than 60 leading citizens, merchants, firms, and companies of Wyoming, mostly from Cheyenne. Two of the signatories have become very well known in Cheyenne's history—R. S. Van Tassell and Posey S. Wilson.

While Richard was making his affidavit, three friends of his were supplying a glowing testimonial before Notary Public Fredk. Koonen. Having been duly sworn, William G. Bullock, G. P.

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44. Affidavit of John Richard Jr., in regard to the homicide committed by him at Fort Fetterman in August A. D. 1869, Washington, D. C., 4 June 1870. Case File C-274.

45. Petition from citizens of the Territory of Wyoming to His Excellency U. S. Grant, Pres. of the United States, undated. Case File No. C-274.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*



Beauvais, and Jules Ecoffey stated that they had traded with and been intimately connected with the Oglala Band of Sioux for more than 20 years, and during this time had been well acquainted with Richard, and that:

John Richard Jr. has always been a quiet, steady, upright business man and always been true and friendly to the whites; that at various times he has made great sacrifices of property and exposed his life to comply with the wishes and execute the orders of officers of the army in the Indian country; that he has repeatedly served as scout, guide and messenger for officers of the military and civil service, and has always been faithful and reliable; that he has never been a disorderly person, but has always been respectful of the rights of others; and that from their acquaintance with the man they fully believe that he would never kill any man unless in self defence; that he has great influence among the Indians, which he has heretofore always used for our government and people and which they fully believe he will continue to use, and that they fully believe that the welfare of our whole frontier and of the Indians will be greatly subserved by amnesty being extended to him, or the entering of a *nolle prosequi* on the indictment found against him in Wyoming Territory.<sup>48</sup>

A character reference for these three men themselves was supplied by S. A. Strickland, U. S. District Attorney from Nebraska, while S. F. Nuckolls, delegate from Wyoming, scrawled a hasty note on a spare piece of paper:

I respectfully recommend that amnesty be granted to John Richard or that a *nolle prosequi* be entered on the indictment found against him in Wyoming Territory. I would also state that I am well acquainted with W. G. Bullock, G. P. Beauvais and Jules Ecoffey and that they are men of the highest business standing and that their statements are entitled to full credit whether made on oath or not.<sup>49</sup>

Some consideration must be given to Richard's account, and Captain Patterson could hardly have been expected to connect the shooting with an incident that happened before he took command of Fetterman. Nevertheless there are inconsistencies from other accounts; Richard makes no mention of the Indian raid, the damage to his property, and fails to acknowledge a fact that others had attested to—that he was drunk at the time. Also when he makes such a mistake over the date one can only wonder how much of his testimony is accurate. The writer has tried unsuccessfully to locate the District Court Records for the Territory of Wyoming for the years 1869-70, and has therefore not seen the original indictment or the statements of any witnesses—should they exist. It would be

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48. Testimonial of William G. Bullock of Fort Laramie, W. T., G. P. Beauvais of St. Louis, Mo., and Jules Ecoffey of Omaha, Neb., Washington D. C., 4 June 1870. Case File No. C-274.

49. Endorsement of S. F. Nuckolls, Delegate from Wyoming, Washington D. C., 4 June 1870. Case File No. C-274.





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Such extenuating circumstances are shown to the President to exist in relation to the case of John Réchard, jr. otherwise called John Richards, jr. who is indicted in the Territory of Wyoming for murder, as satisfy him, that, if tried and convicted, it would be a proper case for the exercise of executive clemency; and as public considerations of grave importance render it more suitable that if such clemency is to be extended, action should be had at once, you are directed to enter a *nolle prosequi* upon that indictment, and not to have any process issued for the arrest or detention of said Richard upon that charge.<sup>54</sup>

Yet strangely enough, on the same day that the above letter was written a document purporting to be a pardon was issued:

274

*John Richard jr*

Wyoming T.

Offence—Homicide, committed at Fort Fetterman August 1869

Sentence

Date

(Fugitive from justice) Filed June 8, 1870

Recommended for pardon by the Chiefs & Head-men of the Sioux, officers of the U.S. Army and many citizens of the Territory as a matter of public policy.

U.S. Attorney directed to enter a *nol. pros* June 8, 1870

(See Instructions book "B" p 53.)<sup>55</sup>

It is plain to see that this so-called pardon simply reiterates the letter directing a *nolle prosequi* to be entered on the murder indictment, and it would appear to have been issued merely so that Richard could carry a piece of insurance in his pocket. Joseph M. Carey, the U. S. District Attorney for Cheyenne, acknowledged the Attorney General's directive on 16 June,<sup>56</sup> and on 29 June 1870 the Secretary of War requested that an official copy of the pardon be transmitted to the War Department.<sup>57</sup>

By July Richard was back brazenly carrying on his business around Forts Fetterman and Laramie. On 31 July he found himself in a place where no doubt certain officers would have liked to see him some months earlier—the guardhouse at Fort Fetterman. But he was merely being held as a witness to the attempted killing of one "Toussaint" by his cousin Joseph Richard.<sup>58</sup>

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54. E. R. Hoar, Attorney General, Washington, D. C., to District Attorney Joseph M. Carey, 8 June 1870. Attorney General's Office *Instruction Book A*, Vol. 2, pp. 531-532, Record Group 60. National Archives.

55. *Record of Pardon Cases*, Vol. C, p. 274, Records of the Office of the Pardon Attorney, Record Group 204. National Archives.

56. Joseph M. Carey, South Pass City, to E. R. Hoar, 16 June 1870. Records of the Attorney General, Record Group 60, National Archives.

57. Secretary of War, Washington, D. C., to the Attorney General, 29 June 1870. Records of the Attorney General, Record Group 60. National Archives.

58. On 22 July 1870 Cheyenne Indians attacked the party of John and Joseph Richard and "Toussaint" (Toucon) about ten miles from Fort



On 11 March 1871 the *Cheyenne Daily Leader* announced in its column headed "Our Fetterman Letter" that: "John Richard, the murderer of James McCloskey, was married again at Laramie the other day. His other legitimate wife lives here."<sup>59</sup> Richard's bride was undoubtedly Emily Janis, the half-blood daughter of Nicholas Janis. His other "legitimate" wife was probably Louise Merrivale, daughter of Jose Merrivale; Baptiste Pourier states that Richard had married Louise in 1864 and that they had afterwards settled in Bozeman, Montana, and certainly John was associated with Jose Merrivale in Bozeman.

It turns out that Richard was not the murderer of James McCloskey. This act was committed by one John Boyer who shot McCloskey and a soldier named John Lowry at the Six Mile Ranch on 27 October 1870. Like Richard, Boyer fled among the Sioux, but unlike Richard he had no friends in high places and in April 1871 paid the supreme forfeit for his crimes.<sup>60</sup>

But retribution of a kind was not far off for John Richard. When the Red Cloud Agency was established near Fort Laramie in July 1871 he moved in with Jules Ecoffey, trading under the firm of Richard & Company. Things appeared to be going well for him when, on a summer evening in 1872, he again pulled the trigger of his gun in a drunken fit of anger and killed his former brother-in-law Yellow Bear, following an argument over one of the chief's sisters. Scarcely was the deed done when the chief's friends fell upon him with their knives, and John Richard received his death from their blades.<sup>61</sup>

And so on 17 June 1870 died this strange man. A man of acknowledged courage, intelligence, and influence, he could have done so much to help his people the Sioux, yet could not overcome the peculiar homicidal streak in his character that eventually brought him down.

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Fetterman en route for Box Elder Creek. The Richards returned to the post then left for Fort Laramie in company with Jules Ecoffey (E. Coffee). On the 31st John Richard and one "Calluff" with three squaws came into Fort Fetterman where Richard reported the killing of Toussaint by Joseph Richard on the road between Fort Laramie and Fort Fetterman. While John Richard and Calluff were detained in the guardhouse as witnesses, 1st Lieutenant Carl Veitenheimer, 4th Infantry, was sent with four men to Louis Richard's wood camp on Box Elder to arrest Joseph Richard. It was subsequently discovered that John Richard's report was incorrect, and that while murder was certainly attempted Toussaint had managed to escape. See the Daily Journal of Events, and Post Return for Fort Fetterman, July 1870.

59. *Cheyenne Daily Leader* 11 March 1871.

60. *Cheyenne Daily Leader* 21 April 1871.

61. Billy Garnett's eyewitness account as told to Eli S. Ricker is the best source for this particular incident.



The coal fields of Wyoming cover about 2000 sq. miles. Thirteen new mines are reported opened for the past year but the coal production is lower than for 1907, owing to a strike last spring which tied up the mines for a period.

Much interesting information regarding the Wyoming coal fields in detail is to be found in the Bulletins of the U. S. Geological Survey, which is engaged in a study of these fields in connection with the other fuel supplies of the west.

In the northern district, the new mines are most numerous and the demand for the product almost unprecedented. The coal is lignite, of a high grade usually and the Big Horn basin mines especially are only the outposts of a great army of producers which will be mustered in the next few years.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, August, 1909

More attention has been directed to the oil and gas fields of Wyoming during the past year than for the previous 10, and by a class of men competent to handle the problem successfully. The two most accessible and best known fields have been tied up in useless litigation and dispute for the past three years and production has been nothing in consequence.

There are 19 recognized oil fields in Wyoming and the greatest possible range of product has been noted, but active development is necessary and fair freight rates essential before any commercial uses may be generally made of these oils.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, August, 1909

The mines of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co. at Sunrise, in Laramie county, produce the iron mined in Wyoming. This is a great up-to-date plant, equipped for economical work and steady production. The ore is a hematite, similar to the Lake Superior ores and the quantity is enormous.

A similar deposit occurs at Bradley Peak in northern Carbon county, but so far is undeveloped, being 50 miles from the nearest railroad transportation. There is a smaller body of ore at Rawlins, on the Union Pacific railroad.

During the past year many eastern iron firms had representatives in Wyoming seeking investment lands and prospecting work has been quite active in many sections.

A find of chrome iron has been opened south of Glenrock, in Converse county and some test shipments made and indicated a high grade of material.

The titaniferous iron deposits, well known locally for many years have been again prospected this year, but no results of tests made public. Tungsten and iron ores have been reported from the Wind River range above Lander.

—*Wyoming Industrial Journal*, August 1909





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residents poured into the canyon—several hundred in a few months. Most settled in shacks, tents, and dug-out hillside caves in previously depopulated Hartville, but some moved into new houses at the upper end of the canyon, which the “C. F. and I.” was building into a separate camp, “Sunrise.” Hartville, still virtually without the public resources and services of a permanent community, was incorporated as a Wyoming town in mid-1901. Its physical dimensions were limited by its frontier origins—it bordered on several still workable mining claims. One claim, the “Jehosiphath,” protruded into what would be the very center of town. Hartville was still effectively run by a small clique of tavern owners. Two taverns had survived from the mining camp years, and the owners of one, Chris Fletcher and his family, virtually “bossed” Hartville affairs in 1901. Despite Hartville’s town charter, it continued to look and to act like a frontier camp.<sup>1</sup>

Hartville had a population of 776 in 1900, and 500 to 800 more people lived in Sunrise and other unincorporated areas nearby.<sup>2</sup> Their combined population was a blend of several waves of in-migrants who had come in response to the area’s changing economic situation. Almost all of the early Black Hills miners were gone, but some ex-soldiers and cattlemen had continued living near the canyon through the eighties and nineties, and they now constituted a distinct group of “old settlers.” Retail stores and service establishments had been opened by a group of small businessmen who had moved to Hartville from nearby small towns during the 1899 boom. Many recently arrived foreign immigrants came to the canyon from 1899 on, to work as unskilled laborers for the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company.

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The “Hartville gang”—Chris and Daisy Fletcher, Chris’ brother Jack, and their cronies—completely controlled Hartville political affairs in 1901. The town even appointed a special policeman “to guard and protect the property of C. D. Fletcher and to officiate in and around the buildings of C. D. Fletcher to wit: Theater and Saloon.”<sup>3</sup> An opposition faction was organized, and accusations, arrests, and brawling highlighted election day in 1906. The 1910 election featured a series of fights and arrests which ended with a private citizen “relieving” the town marshal of his gun, the mayor seizing the marshal’s badge, and another citizen swearing out an

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1. Hartville was one of only several dozen incorporated towns in the entire state in 1901.

2. Hartville’s population was only about 200 in 1920, and the population of Sunrise was 518.

3. *Hartville Town Record*, I, 15.



arrest warrant against the hapless law officer for having “wrongfully appropriated . . . chickens.” The town’s justice of the peace was also jailed after that election. In 1912, the outgoing political administration locked its successors out of the town hall, which forced them to hold their initial meeting in the Eagles’ lodge building. In addition, two holdover councilmen chose not to attend council meetings, and so the town government ceased operation entirely for several months because it lacked a quorum. But from 1913 on, a series of candidates won elections with comfortable pluralities, and election strife disappeared. “Compromise” mayors who did not actively support any political faction were elected. In 1918, the formerly controversial Chris Fletcher quietly became mayor without any significant political strife. The Hartville frontier politics had metamorphosed into the relatively unexciting small town variety in less than two decades.<sup>4</sup>

Public facilities and services created during the 1900-20 period were also of a “transitional” character. A Hartville schoolhouse opened for a few local school-age children in 1901. By about 1907, the town began grading its main street. Beginning in 1910, an effort was made to develop conventional sources of revenue: water rate bills and real estate assessments were instituted. These were not the customary revenue-raising devices of a frontier community and so both were initially difficult to collect—the town remained chronically short of money. Street lights, public garbage collection, and privately-owned telephone service were instituted between 1910 and 1912. The town’s frontier jail had been a cage fabricated out of railroad ties, and one prisoner had escaped by merely removing the hinges from its door. A new masonry jail replaced it in about 1913.<sup>5</sup> A serious interest in sanitary reform developed in 1910: pigs were to be kept out of town, and cattle kept near the residential area were declared to be “annoying and disagreeable to the neighborhood. . . .”<sup>6</sup> Some Greek herders who operated milk and cheese businesses watered their goats and sheep at a town hydrant until 1915, when they were told to keep their flocks at least a mile away from the town. Hartville finally prohibited all livestock maintenance in a strongly worded ordinance passed in 1917. Despite all of these elementary improvements, Hartville did not get a stable, small town revenue system until about 1920. In 1917, the town was still giving its citizens a choice of paying taxes or contributing their own labor toward the repair of

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4. *Hartville Uplift*, June 25, 1910, p. 1; *Hartville Town Record*, I, 198-212, 250, 287; *Ibid.*, II, 54, 79.

5. *Hartville Town Record*, I, 133, 146, 160, 203, 215, 219; Interview with Mrs. Ella Covington Webb, early Hartville area resident, March 8, 1967; *Hartville Uplift*, February 9, 1910, p. 1.

6. *Hartville Town Record*, I, 136-137.



the streets. In the same year, the town's water pumping equipment was repaired without cost through the agency of a nearby lime quarry owner, who received a parcel of town property for the bargain price of one dollar in lieu of more conventional compensation.<sup>7</sup>

Hartville's most difficult political problem was inherited from its frontier years: a Black Hills prospector's 1888 copper and iron claim, the "Jehosiphat," included within its bounds the future center of Hartville. The land had been sold to a Fort Laramie teamster named Charley Wright, who together with his friend, Joe Wilde, threatened to develop the claim's theoretical mineral potential after 1900, and its greater value as real estate had become obvious. The Jehosiphat land probably had no substantial mineral value, but its central location in the developing community, in an attractive, wide portion of the canyon, and the fact that it contained the natural spring which was the main source of Hartville water made it an essential future acquisition for the town.<sup>8</sup> Hartville officials obtained patent to the entire Hartville townsite on December 13, 1902, and from then on, there were two apparently valid claimants for the Jehosiphat land. Portions of the "Keystone," "Modoc," and "Independent" claims were also included in the townsite, but the Jehosiphat's owners and their friends were the only claimants who pushed their interests vigorously.<sup>9</sup>

The townsite case impoverished Hartville by delaying public facilities improvements and depressing the value of local property until it was settled by the United States Secretary of the Interior in 1910. By then, the struggle had gone through the local land office, a district court, and the Wyoming Supreme Court. Wilde and Wright won the patent case, and they proceeded to extract money from the many disgruntled occupants of town lots on their claim, including the Town of Hartville itself, which was forced to purchase the fifty-front-foot lot on which the town hall stood for \$1200, an outrageous price during the 1900-1920 period. Joe Wilde even threatened to charge the town a rental fee for the past use of his property. In 1916, he announced that he had only sold town lots, but had retained his title to subsoil rights on his mining claim. He then refused to pay a full assessment for paving of sidewalks and alleys and instead offered the town a flat \$100 for all of his property assessments. The financially depressed town government eventually accepted his offer, but went on litigating in 1918 in an effort at making the Jehosiphat assessable "the same as

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7. *Ibid.*, I, 239; *Ibid.*, II, 2-3, 56, 60, 63-65, 112, 115.

8. "Map of Hartville," 1907; Alice Catlin Guyol, "Hartville," a Works Progress Administration typescript; *Cheyenne State Leader*, May 6, 1910, p. 7.

9. Platte County Clerk's Office, *Hartville Townsite Deeds*, Book No. 127, dated February, 1904.





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Crimes of violence were relatively less frequent after 1910. Guns and knives sent fewer men to the hospital, and there were few court cases involving violence. Almost all of Hartville's genuinely sensational criminality occurred before 1915, including, of course, the fracas associated with elections. Neither gambling nor prostitution had been totally eliminated by town ordinances by 1920, but gambling was strictly licensed and forced out of sight in 1919, and prostitutes were regulated at least as early as 1907, when their business locations and hours were restricted. Prostitutes were later forced out of Hartville entirely.

Hartville's criminality may have been abated through state law enforcement as well as through community evolution. In 1913, Wyoming's governor J. M. Carey complained of towns in which "gambling is running wide open . . . [and] under the pretext of these being 'wide-open' towns or 'frontier' towns, the good people . . . close their eyes to the daily breaking of the law. . . ." <sup>14</sup> The state was able to take increased cognizance of Hartville's criminal infractions from then on, because a 1912 reorganization of Wyoming counties brought the county seat (and county sheriff) from distant Cheyenne to Wheatland, sixty miles nearer Hartville. The state's interest in law enforcement undoubtedly helped eliminate this aspect of the frontier in Hartville, but so did, in at least equal measure, the growth of a proportionately larger female, and then juvenile population. Hartville was increasingly made up of families and family residences, and the number of young single men proportionately, and probably absolutely decreased between 1910 and 1920.

Hartville "boosting," the characteristic American method of merchandising a frontier community, began before there was an incorporated town. Hartville was to be "the Pittsburgh of the West," claimed its *Iron Gazette* in 1899. It would have steel and iron works, and other ancillary industries. <sup>15</sup> However, there was no community-wide effort to develop a sense of cohesion and to generate interest in public works and public services in frontier Hartville. But in 1909, the *Wyoming Tribune* (Cheyenne) published some material which generated a major community reorganization movement in Hartville. The *Tribune* announced that the Hartville "authorities . . . make the law to suit themselves," and that "the town mentioned has not yet thrown off the habiliments of the frontier." The article provided an ample quantity of lurid detail. <sup>16</sup>

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14. *Cheyenne State Leader*, August 4, 1913, p. 2.

15. *Iron Gazette* (Hartville), November 17, 1899, p. 6; *Ibid.*, February 2, 1900, p. 1; *Wyoming Industrial Journal*, I, No. 4 (September, 1899), p. 67; *Ibid.*, II, No. 8 (January, 1901), p. 221.

16. "Says Lid is Off at Hartville," *Wyoming Tribune* (Cheyenne), April 9, 1908, p. 8.



The response in Hartville was electric. A new newspaper, the *Hartville Uplift*, was established in January, 1910, to answer the *Tribune*. The *Uplift* did not engage in extravagant boosting for city status on the basis of a hoped-for steel industry (which the town had never ceased to regard as a possibility). Instead, it advertised the town's solid commercial and residential advantages, and discounted its frontier reputation. The *Uplift's* editor continually reminded his readers of the need for improved sanitation, more trees and grass, a railroad depot, a bank, and a lumberyard. The impetus for the development of these and other community facilities encouraged the development of a more complex community social structure. A Commercial Club was organized in 1910, and Eagles, Woodmen of the World, Oddfellows, Rebeccas, Royal Neighbors, the Salvation Army, and a number of ethnic organizations were functioning by 1912. The Sunrise settlement had a new Y.M.C.A. building after 1915, which in turn brought more new activities, including ice skating, bowling, Boy Scouts, and knitting classes. In February, 1911, a Hartville audience responded enthusiastically to a visiting Episcopal bishop's plea for improved morality and for the establishment of a new church. The "Church of Our Savior" was built, and church and Sunday School affairs were soon a major concern of a group of Hartville housewives. The Hartville community spoke and organized itself so as to allay permanently the charge that it was a frontier town.<sup>17</sup>

At least half the people living in Hartville and Sunrise during the 1900-1902 period were recent immigrants from Europe and Asia, including 200 or more Italians, about 200 Greeks, dozens of Scandinavians, English, Syrio-Lebanese, and Japanese, and a scattering of other groups. The first few Greeks, Italians, and Syrio-Lebanese who came to Hartville had stumbled into the area through fortuitous circumstances, but most post-1899 Hartville area immigrants quit Europe because of encouraging news from a relative or friend who lived near the Sunrise mines. There is no evidence that war, crop failures, or personal disaster forced their departure from home. Many were young, single, lower-middle class men who had lived in or near fairly small European towns. Their adjustment to the American environment was considerably affected by the behavior of their fellow residents in Hartville and Sunrise.<sup>18</sup>

The contrast between older residents and immigrant newcomers was not great. Hartville and Sunrise, as a frontier area with a

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17. *Cheyenne State Leader*, May 6, 1910, pp. 6-7; *Hartville Uplift*, February 6, 1910, p. 4; *Ibid.*, June 11, 1910, p. 4; *Ibid.*, June 25, 1910, p. 1; Guyol, "Hartville," pp. 5-7; *Hartville Town Record*, I, 174; Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, *Industrial Bulletin*, 1917, *passim*.

18. Interviews with twenty early Hartville area residents, 1966-1967.



limited variety of economic activities, tended to attract a population which was homogenous in respect to age, sex, social class, and general attitude and motivation. Even many of the early businessmen and mine personnel were young, unmarried, and often middle-to-lower middle class, optimistically seeking some measure of adventure and economic betterment in an unstructured community. In some respects then, the immigrants fitted relatively well into the frontier Hartville area community.

At first, the immigrants lived in ethnically-segregated residential areas both in Hartville and Sunrise, such as the Sunrise "Greek boarding house." By 1910, however, immigrants were selecting housing on the basis of physical attractiveness and proximity to the mines, and ethnic residential divisions were already blurred. Immigrants were first employed as unskilled labor at Sunrise. They advanced rapidly. By 1904, a recent Italian immigrant had become a foreman, and others attained positions of increasing responsibility within the next several years. In Hartville, Greek and Italian bakeries, grocery stores, and saloons were common in 1910. An equitable proportion of the members of the 1910 Hartville Commercial Club were recent immigrants. Hartville itself employed immigrants in teaming work for street repair, one of the few jobs that the town had to offer. The Testolin brothers, who were recent Italian immigrants, made money from teaming, real estate, home building, and operating an exceptionally large general store and saloon.<sup>19</sup>

The Hartville immigrants integrated socially with relative ease. An Italian immigrant had joined the essentially Anglo-American Woodmen of the World organization as early as 1904. Many Italian and Greek men married "American" girls. The Episcopal Church was apparently available for use by Hartville and Sunrise Catholics (mostly Italians) until a Catholic church began functioning, and many Greeks attended Episcopal services.<sup>20</sup>

An immigrant's success in politics probably depended upon his social and economic acceptance in the community, and upon his citizenship status. A Syrio-Lebanese became a town council member and then acting mayor before 1910, and an Italian was elected mayor in 1914. In general, immigrants were somewhat under-represented in the Hartville government, but ethnic background was apparently not a major factor in town elections.<sup>21</sup>

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19. *Ibid.*, *Range Book*, *passim.*; *Hartville Uplift*, February 19, 1910, p. 1; *Ibid.*, March 5, 1910, p. 1; *Hartville Town Record*, I, 127.

20. Interview with Mrs. Elizabeth Annie Howe, early Hartville area resident, March 6, 1967; Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, *Camp and Plant*, January 30, 1904, p. 68; C. E. Coffey, "A Survey of Certain Phases of the Public School of Sunrise, Wyoming," (Unpublished Master's dissertation, Department of Education, University of Wyoming, 1933), p. 14.

21. *Hartville Town Record*, I, 192; *Ibid.*, II, 20.





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could raise enough capital to sell liquor to his fellow countrymen on a small scale, sometimes as a sideline in a grocery store or bakery. Expansion capital could be derived from initially high profits. License fees for both wholesale and retail establishments were formally set by the state legislature, but the Hartville Town Council re-set them locally. Rate adjustments were frequent. Retail licenses cost \$1000 in 1906, \$700 early in 1907, and \$200 later in the year. They were raised in June, 1908, lowered in September, and raised again in December. They were \$1000 again in 1909, when wholesale license fees began to shift as rapidly as retail fees had previously done.<sup>22</sup> Saloon license fees tended to rise sharply when more people applied for licenses, but when disappointed applicants withdrew their requests, license fees were lowered, and occasionally incumbent saloonkeepers were given refunds. The Town Council probably over-represented the interests of the incumbent saloon owners, but it appears that fees were not used as a means of discriminating against immigrants. Recent immigrants were able to open saloons at least as early as 1907, and several immigrants operated saloons in 1910. Neither were higher fees invoked to solve Hartville revenue problems. Hartville's greatest projected expansion of public works occurred in 1910 and 1911, after the wholesale fee had dropped, and complaints about a dearth of public funds were more frequent from 1914 on, when liquor license rates had been stabilized and new forms of tax assessment were in effect.

The number of saloons was kept at about six, except during several brief prosperous periods, when there may have been ten or more. In 1915, the Town Council voted to routinize its procedure: a maximum of three saloons and two coffeehouses were to be licensed. From 1916 on, the number of annual saloon license requests did not exceed three.<sup>23</sup> The amount of available liquor business and the number of entrepreneurs who could profitably share it had been definitely established. Additional saloons might drive existing saloonkeepers out of business. Since community growth prospects no longer retained any measure of frontier optimism, saloonkeepers accepted small town status for Hartville before 1920.

Brothel operations were controlled on the same general basis. Prostitution in Hartville was flourishing at the turn of the century, but in 1907, the Town Council appointed a committee "to govern and regulate Baudy Houses [*sic*] and Lewd Women in the town of Hartville." Refutation of brothels served another small town-developing function: despite their commercial importance, they

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22. *Hartville Town Record*, I, 15, 38, 53, 69-76, 82, 95, 137, 161, 164; Platte County Clerk's Office, *License Register*, Book 1.

23. *Ibid.*



were not socially acceptable, and had to be made inobtrusive. The 1907 Town Council ordered prostitution off Main Street, while providing a town lot for two men who openly expressed their interest in developing a new brothel on it. In 1908, "lewd women" were excluded from "wine rooms," in another apparent effort to create a "respectable" main street. Inmates of the brothels were fined five dollars a month, beginning 1908, and brothel proprietors were fined ten dollars.<sup>24</sup>

The regulations enacted by the Town Council during the transition years did not eliminate, or even greatly diminish prostitution in Hartville. The deliberations of the town fathers centered around eliminating the disreputability associated with the brothels, rather than the brothels themselves. The fines were collected approximately every other month from the same persons, and they did not cause the demise of the offending business establishments. Fines were not, in effect, used as punitive charges, but rather as tax assessments which must have been quite helpful in financing new public facilities during the transition years. They were also a sop to a group of petitioners, who beginning in 1910, became increasingly vocal and organized in opposition to Hartville prostitution.<sup>25</sup> Hartville became more conventionally respectable, and it began to create more conventional small town techniques for raising revenue after about 1910. Fewer young, single men came to work at the Sunrise mine because there was only a limited amount of work to be done, and there was to be no steel industry in the canyon area. The men of Eureka Canyon grew older, and many married. Women and children were an increasingly important part of the local population. Brothels, as well as the old-time saloons, were frontier businesses in Hartville, and they were disappearing at the close of the transition period.

Hartville and other recent American communities like it, which grew from frontier camps into small towns, made a complex series of transitional adjustments. Study of the process by which small town communities were created is needed. Understanding this process requires the future examination, in historical perspective, of the political, social, and economic mechanisms used to effect community change, and of the groups and individuals who used them. Comparative studies of communities which began developing in various eras of American history, and comparisons between urban and small town development from frontier antecedents would be most instructive in contributing to a better general understanding of the growth of American residential communities.

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24. *Hartville Town Record*, I, *passim*.; Interviews; "Justice Docket," Hartville; Town of Hartville, "Financial Record of the Town Hartville," p. 3.

25. *Hartville Town Record*, I, *passim*.



# *Third Segment of the Oregon Trail*

DOUGLAS TO INDEPENDENCE ROCK

Trek No. 22 of the Historical Trail Treks

Compiled by

MAURINE CARLEY

The third segment of the Oregon Trail, from Douglas to Independence Rock, was covered by the trek on July 11, 1971. No attempt has been made to give mileage of the trail, as it was frequently necessary to travel on the freeway because of fencing and detours.

SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1971

7:30 P. M. The Pioneer Association of Wyoming graciously permitted the trekkers to congregate at their Pioneer Log Cabin on the State Fair Grounds in Douglas. On behalf of the Association Miss Alzire Cross gave a warm welcome and the ladies of Douglas, with Mrs. Juanita Rice, chairman, served coffee, lemonade and cookies to the assembled crowd. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Henderson of Bridgeport, Nebraska, showed slides of a trek along the Overland Trail.

SUNDAY, JULY 11, 1971

177 participants, 72 cars

GUIDES: Leroy Moore and Joe Keenan

7:30 A.M. The Pioneer cabin was the meeting place for registration, introductions and a group picture which was recorded on videotape.

8:00 A.M. A recent flood made it impossible to go to the first known grave on the Oregon Trail in Wyoming so the story was told in Douglas.

JOEL J. HEMBREE'S GRAVE, 1843

By Joe Keenan

On May 18, 1843, about 1,000 American men, women and





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ground he chanced on a black stone with writing on it and saw the name Hembree engraved there. This led to the discovery of the Hembree boy's grave.

The mileage and location of the grave by Nesmith's calculations were almost perfect. The father or friend who carved the date and the boy's name on that particular black rock did an excellent job as it is as legible today as the day it was made. The Hembree boy was one of thousands who died following the Oregon Trail west. Most are resting in unmarked graves along the same trail today.

8:15 A.M. We departed west on the old highway, crossed the Platte, drove under the freeway and took a right turn on the Cold Springs road for a short distance then continued west. After six miles we passed the Bill Hooker marker on the Bozeman Trail at our left. Although Pizon Bill Hooker bullwhacked on the Medicine Bow-Fort Fetterman Road only four years in the 1870s, he is still eulogized by this stone. Another marker close by states that the Oregon Trail was four miles south and Fort Fetterman seven miles north.

After crossing La Prele Creek (La Prele is the French name for a kind of grass that grows in the vicinity) the countryside changed from cultivated fields to sagebrush. At 12 miles we entered the freeway to exit four miles later on the Barber Road. A turn to the left under the freeway brought us to a "private road" which led to the Barber ranch where we passed through their barnyard, crossed the Little Box Elder and proceeded up a sloping hill for two miles to the Mary Kelly grave. A sign on the fence reads, "This enclosure provided by John H. Wiggins in memory of his cousin, LITTLE MARY KELLY. Wyoming State Historical Society. 1966."

## STORY OF LITTLE MARY KELLY

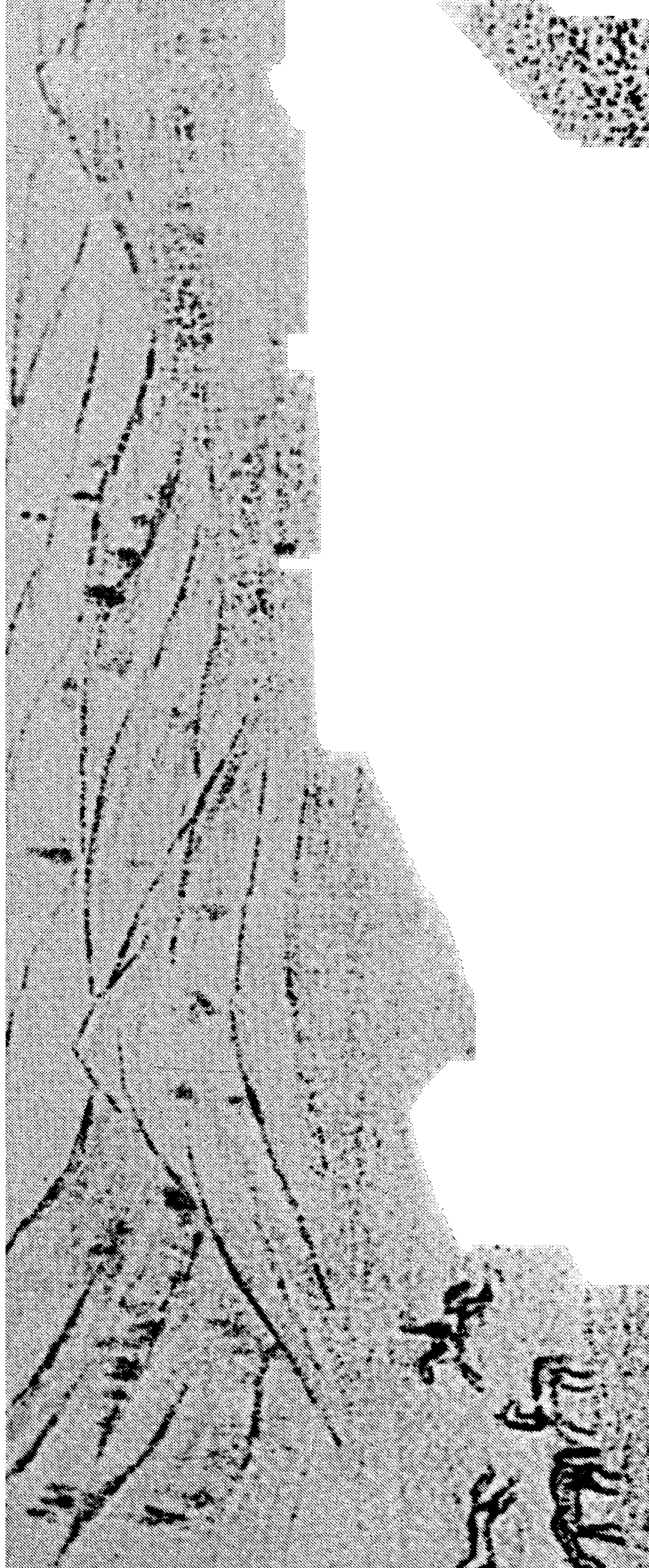
By W. W. Morrison

On May 17, 1864, a party consisting of six souls left Geneva, Kansas, by covered wagon enroute to the gold fields of Montana. In the party were Josiah Kelly, his wife Fanny Wiggins Kelly, their adopted daughter Mary, a child of about ten years of age, Gardner Wakefield and two colored servants known only as Frank and Andy.

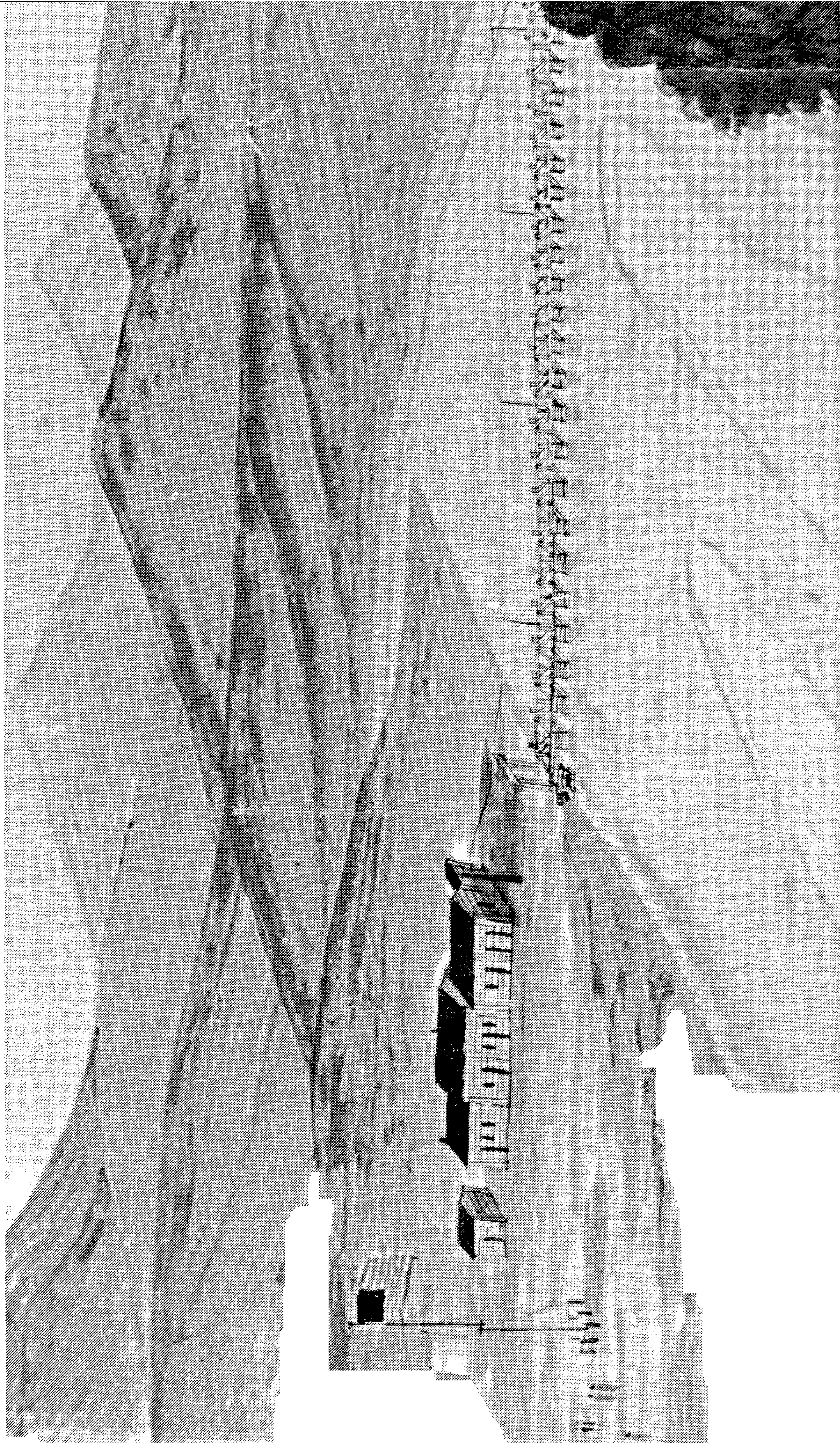
Soon after starting they were joined by Mr. Sharp, a Methodist minister. Sometime later they overtook a larger wagon train. Mr. Larimer, his wife Sarah, and their eight-year-old son, left the large train and joined the Kellys in their small train. Not long after this, a Mr. Taylor joined the Kelly train, making a total of eleven in all.

Their route was along the Big and Little Blue rivers, thence up













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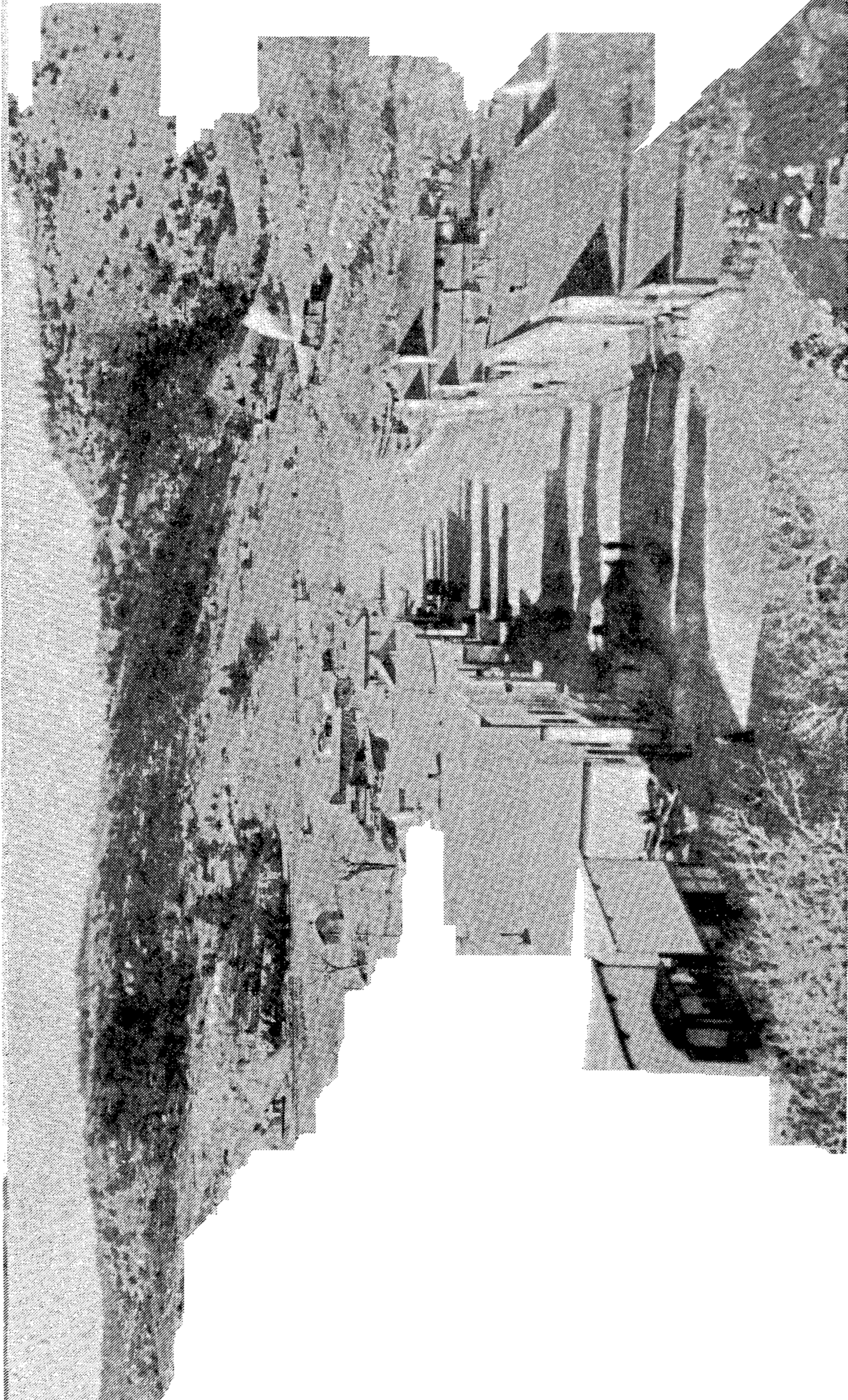
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the south side of the Platte to Lower California crossing and over the divide to Ash Hollow. From there they followed the south side of the North Platte river to where the "Bow String" leaves the river near Horseshoe Creek. They came to the south bank of the river again some few miles east of Deer Creek, where there was a station consisting of a telegraph office and a few soldiers.

For convenience and speed Josiah Kelly's little wagon train, consisting of four wagons and eleven people, had traveled a goodly part of the way alone. They camped with larger trains on a few occasions, where rivers were to be forded. It is recorded that their four wagon-beds were used in crossing the South Platte, and they were manned by about twenty men.

At outposts and ranches along the way they were given assurance that the Indians were peaceful, and there would be nothing to fear. At both Fort Laramie and Horseshoe Station they were reassured of the safety of the road and the friendliness of the Indians.

Late afternoon of July 12th, the little wagon train wound its way through the timber skirting Little Box Elder. Crossing the stream they ascended the opposite bank up a gentle slope of some two or three hundred feet to where the road leveled off again for a half mile or so. This crossing is now covered by waters from a dam which you can see to the southeast of us. The historic crossing was located about two hundred feet upstream from the dam.

Immediately upon reaching the level stretch of road, a party of about 250 Indians, painted and equipped for war, appeared on the bluff before them to the northwest without warning, uttering their war whoops and firing a volley of guns and revolvers in the air. The main body of Indians moved down toward the train, halted for a while, then sent out part of their band to circle the train from a distance.

The wagon train came to a halt, and Mr. Kelly advanced to meet the chief, endeavoring to find out their intentions. The savage leader, Ottawa, a war chief of the Ogalalla band of the Sioux nation, rode forward striking himself on the breast and saying, "How! How! Good Indian me." He pointed to those around him and assured Mr. Kelly they were, "Heap good Indians, hunt buffalo and deer".

The Indians collected around the wagon train, shaking hands and requesting food and clothing, growing more insolent each moment in their demands. The men of the train were all busy preparing food for the savages when all of a sudden the Indians displayed their true intentions. There was a simultaneous discharge of arms, and when the smoke cleared Mr. Wakefield was mortally wounded, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Taylor and one of the servants, Frank, lay dead upon the ground.

The Indians sprang into the wagons, tearing off covers, breaking



open boxes and trunks and distributing or destroying the contents. A short distance in the rear a man on horseback and a family in a lone wagon came in sight. The chief quickly dispatched part of his band to capture or cut them off. The horseman riding ahead was overtaken and killed. The husband of the family quickly turned his team around and started back at full speed. Giving the whip and lines to his wife, who held in her arms their youngest child, he went to the back of his wagon, keeping the Indians at bay with his revolver. The Indians finally left the wagon and rode back to the terrible scene of massacre. In the race with death the wagon cover was riddled with bullets and arrows, one passing through the sleeve of the child in its mother's arms.

When the shots were fired at the massacre site Mr. Larimer ran into some nearby timber. Mr. Kelly, Mr. Wakefield and the colored servant, Andy, hid in some tall grass and sage brush, until it became dark. In trying to find these four men one savage approached within a few feet of Mr. Kelly. The only thing that saved his life was a huge rattlesnake lying close by which gave a warning rattle, causing the savage to back away from the spot.

Mrs. Larimer, her son, Mrs. Kelly and little Mary were put on horses and led northward over the hills by the savages into captivity. Mrs. Larimer and her son escaped during the second night with the Indians; but Mrs. Kelly was a captive for more than five months before being delivered up by the Indians at Fort Sully.

After the Indians had left the scene of the massacre, Mr. Kelly and Andy left their hiding places and retraced the trail to where a large wagon train was in camp and there took refuge for the night. The next morning they moved on with the large train and soon came upon the massacre site. After searching for some time they found Mr. Wakefield still alive in his hiding place, pierced by three arrows. Mr. Larimer had spent the night in trying to elude his savage pursuers and had been shot with an arrow in one of his legs.

The bodies of Mr. Sharp, Mr. Taylor and the colored servant, Franklin, were discovered where they had fallen. A wide grave was prepared, and the four bodies, including the dead horseman, were lowered into it. A buffalo robe was placed over them, and the loose earth was piled upon the grave. Then the wagon train continued on its way to Deer Creek station where a report was made to Captain Rhineheart, commanding officer there.

During the first hour ride into captivity Mrs. Kelly planned an escape for little Mary who was riding behind her on their horse. She told the girl to drop gently down, hide among the sage brush for a while then try to find her way back to the trail, where she might be found by some passing emigrants. She added that she had scattered small bits of her letters along the way for Mary to





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## THE UNTHANK STORY

By Leroy Moore

Thousands of emigrants died on the western trails. Ezra Meeker, who traveled to Oregon by oxteam, estimated that 5,000 persons were buried in the year 1852 along the Oregon Trail. The great majority died of cholera and were buried in unmarked graves. Only a few have permanent markers such as this Unthank grave.

There is very little documented information concerning Alvah H. Unthank in the registration papers at old Fort Laramie, Wyoming. The records consist primarily of a few old newspaper clippings and a copy of compiled genealogy of the Unthank family.

Alvah H. Unthank was a member of a party of goldseekers on the way to California. The group left the town of Newport in Wayne County, Indiana, on March 30, 1850. Newport was located in the extreme east-central part of the state and later changed its name to Fountain City.

Alvah Unthank was only 19 years of age when he carved his name on Register Cliff near present-day Guernsey. Less than a week later he became ill, and died of cholera on July 2, 1850, and was buried about four miles east of present day-Glenrock. Dr. Huff of Fountain City had a diary written by Henry W. Puckett, a member of the party who made it to California. The diary contains a graphic description of Unthank's sickness and death.

After Alvah's death, members of his family visited Fountain City in an effort to find the names of the people in his caravan but were unable to find many. However, they did discover the names of 12 men who were in the party. Two of them, Albertson Lamb and H. Lanter, passed away before Alvah Unthank did. Samuel Curtis died in what is now Idaho. The four men were buried along the trail in the same manner.

The Unthank headstone and grave were shown on the program, "The Winning of the West," on nation-wide television which was narrated by Gary Cooper. His comment was, "Here was one who didn't make it."

It is interesting to note that in 1869, O. N. Unthank, a cousin of Alvah's, also carved his name on Register Cliff. He served as telegraph operator at old Fort Laramie from 1869 to 1874. His son, L. B. Unthank, carved his name on the cliff in 1931. It is no longer possible to carve names there as a high wire fence surrounds the bluff.

Another little story connected with the deaths along the Oregon Trail is that of Mrs. George Masiker who was traveling west in July 1852. While her wagon train nooned near the Platte River she noticed a grave nearby and walked over to inspect it. The whitened shoulder blade of a buffalo with a name written on it in lead pencil caught her attention. By looking carefully at the writing she deciphered the name of Salomon Trumble. Startled,



she read it again thinking her eyes had deceived her but there was no mistake. It was the name of her father who had started west the year before and had never been heard from. She had found the answer at last.

As a tribute to the pioneers who traveled the Oregon Trail and to those who lost their lives helping settle this country, I have here a poem that expresses the importance of preserving their memory. This poem is from the book, "The Oregon Trail", by Walter Meacham.

There are no new worlds to conquer,  
Gone are the last frontiers,  
And the steady grind of wagon wheels,  
And of the sturdy pioneers.

But their memory lives like a thing divine,  
By their valorous deeds and brawn,  
For the trail that led to the storied west,  
Was the long hard trail to Oregon.

10:15 A.M. We returned to the cars and followed the guides to Glenrock where a turn to the right in the middle of town took us to the site of Deer Creek Station. Joe Keenan has made an attractive stone monument to perpetuate the site. Between the pillars of stone an iron Pony Express rider gallops above an old covered wagon wheel.

## DEER CREEK STATION

By Joe Keenan

Deer Creek Station, situated about one-fourth mile south of where Deer Creek empties into the Platte River, has seen many famous pioneers, scouts and hundreds of emigrants who were on their way west to settle in California or Oregon or the Salt Lake area.

General J. C. Fremont, with Kit Carson as guide, camped here July 26, 1842. They left their wagons hidden in the brush along the creek and proceeded westward by pack train.

The Mormons played a definite role in Deer Creek history. Brigham Young with his party of 148 people, 72 wagons, 94 horses, 53 mules, 66 oxen, 17 dogs, some chickens, farming implements, tools and a small cannon camped here June 10, 1847. The following excerpt is taken from the *Latter Day Saints Emigrant Guide* which was published in 1848. "Deer Creek 30 ft wide 2 ft deep. Latitude 42-52-50 Altitude 4,864 Lovely place to camp Swift current, clear water and an abundance of fish. Nice grove of timber on banks and a coal mine about ¼ mi up on the east side."

Many emigrants crossed the Platte here in those early days. Some were taken across in crude boats for the sum of \$3.00 each, and some were drowned while fording. On June 20, 1849, seven



men were drowned in two days while trying to get their wagons across the river 12 miles above here. The cold water and swift current made this crossing very dangerous and difficult. One emigrant had this to say about his crossing on June 23, 1849: "In one place there were six men towed ashore by hanging to the tail of one mule and a rider on him at that. While in another place they were making extreme efforts to save a man from drowning. A boat sank with a wagon containing women and children, but it struck a sandbar and they were saved. I was carried outside the cattle by the swift current and saved myself by catching the tail of one as I passed him and letting him tow me to shore: We will long remember the crossing of the Platte."

The first Christmas in this area was celebrated here in 1859 by some members of the German Lutheran church, some soldiers and a few Indians complete with a tree and gifts. Music was supplied by a German violin player and an army captain with a flute. After the gifts were distributed an Indian squaw asked why the Great Spirit didn't give them full sacks of sugar and flour instead of such little amounts.

In 1860, Deer Creek became a Pony Express Station. By October, 1861, the first transcontinental telegraph line was completed, and it then became a telegraph station with Oscar Collister, a small man weighing only 100 pounds, the operator.

At that time there was quite a settlement here consisting of 18 buildings and three corrals. The road ran in a westerly fashion dividing the town. On the south side were 12 buildings owned by the government—a long telegraph office, a store room, officer's quarters, a commissary, laundry, mess room, kitchen, blacksmith shop, quarters for soldiers and a stable. A French trader by the name of Bissonette owned the six buildings and one corral on the north side. All the buildings were made of logs and the corrals were built stockade fashion with the logs nine feet high set close together in the ground and sharpened at the top to prevent the Indians from climbing over.

The Indians, although marveling at the mystery of the "Singing Wires", hated them and fearing their strange power, cut them down repeatedly. Often they would burn the poles and carry away great lengths of wire. On the day Abe Lincoln delivered his annual message to Congress, Collister's wire was cut and he had to go to a point near Box Elder Creek to make repairs before he could relay the message to California.

During Collister's stay at the Station the chief amusement was dancing. Soldiers, emigrants and Indians entered wholeheartedly in the fun. The Indian women couldn't speak English but quickly learned to dance the quadrille to the lively tunes of a French fiddler.

Several Indian chiefs became friendly with Collister. Among them was Sitting Bull who was trying to learn to read so Collister





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Mr. Bishop said that Ada, the three-year-old daughter of the Magill's, became ill at Deer Creek Station but the family continued west. They stopped here where she died. Her parents buried her in a little box and walled the grave with rocks. Later a brother ate a poison weed and he also died along the way.

W. W. Morrison added this information—that he had researched the grave and found that the little girl's father was a freighter through here in the 1860s. When the two children died in 1864 the family was on its way from eastern Kansas to Oregon. Mr. Morrison has a picture of Ada's mother given to him by a descendant of the Magills.

In the early 1900s my brother and I discovered this grave when we were looking for our Indian ponies. At that time the Indians from Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas would start the first of September to migrate from their reservations to Indian Territory which is now Oklahoma to spend the winter months. They came back to their own reservations early in the spring. If we didn't get our ponies when we heard they were coming our horses would be driven off with their herd. In 1906 we moved to the Locket Ranch just across the track here and during the next few years we visited this little grave quite often to keep it well marked with stones and decorated with wild flowers.

The old wagon road between Glenrock and Casper was located very near this grave. About 1911 or 1912, when the first automobiles were in use, the state engineers surveyed this area for a new graded road. We kids worried that the new road would go right over the grave. About that time Maud Dawes, county superintendent of schools, came to Glenrock and hired a team and buggy from the livery stable to take her to the Big Muddy community to visit the school. I happened to be at the stable and told her about the new road going over the grave. When she returned to Douglas she immediately contacted the state engineers and the county commissioners and had the remains moved to the present site.

If you will look about and ponder for a moment I think you will agree that the position of this little grave is a focal point from which you can see many historical locations and developments in Converse County. Next to the grave is an Oregon Trail marker and a Pony Express marker. Just a few feet north is the Chicago and North Western Railroad track which was laid in 1886. Across the Platte River just a mile north is the Burlington Railroad which was built in 1912 and on which I worked as a mule skinner. A mile or so north on the divide is the old Bozeman Trail.

Much credit for the care of the grave sites you have visited today should be given to Howard Jackson, a deputy sheriff in the late 1890s and early 1900s. He personally built the first fence around the Unthank grave and around the Parker and Ringo graves just two miles east of this spot.

Others who tended this grave were W. W. Morrison and his



daughter, Wanda, who in 1946 planted lilies here. Before this trek Joe Keenan cleared off the grave, cut the weeds so the stone could be read, and painted the fence.

11:30 A.M. We continued on the old highway to the freeway and passed the Big Muddy Oil Field sign on our right. After 17 miles we came to the outskirts of Casper, passed the refinery, rode through Mills, crossed the Platte and stopped at the Isaac Walton Park for picnic lunches. The Natrona County Chapter had prepared coffee and lemonade for us.

After lunch there was time to visit the museum at Fort Caspar and wander around the grounds inspecting the old buildings and the pilings of the famous Platte River Bridge. At 12:15 we gathered under the shade of a tree to hear the story of Fort Caspar.

## FORT CASPAR

By William Judge,  
Curator, Fort Caspar Museum

The city of Casper welcomes the members of the Wyoming State Historical Society trek to Fort Caspar, for the old fort is maintained by the city of Casper without help from the county, state or federal government. The citizens of Casper are proud of their historical background and their affiliation with this old fort which has had much publicity in films, magazine articles and on television. Each year on July 26 the people of Casper commemorate the death of Caspar Collins, for whom the city was named, with a suitable memorial ceremony.

In the early 1800s the United States became interested in the West. The government gave leaves of absence to army officers and granted franchises to fur companies in exchange for information about the country. Many of our landmarks in Wyoming bear the names of these early travelers—Fremont Peak, Sublette and Sheridan Counties and Bonneville Dam.

Soon Oregon and California became the mecca of the West. The jumping-off place for all western directed traffic was the state of Missouri. The northern route led along the Platte River for 700 miles and became known as a manifold trail as some of the trails took short cuts, others took more circuitous routes but all struck the Oregon Trail sooner or later. At the time the Platte River was sometimes described as a river of rushing and wild waters a thousand feet wide.

The early travelers followed the Platte after crossing over to it from the Blue River in Nebraska. The south side of the river was the more appealing route for there were not so many bad lands and sand hills. There were fresh, spring-fed mountain creeks of pure water located conveniently at the right distances for camping.



Mr. Bishop said that Ada, the three-year-old daughter of the Magill's, became ill at Deer Creek Station but the family continued west. They stopped here where she died. Her parents buried her in a little box and walled the grave with rocks. Later a brother ate a poison weed and he also died along the way.

W. W. Morrison added this information—that he had researched the grave and found that the little girl's father was a freighter through here in the 1860s. When the two children died in 1864 the family was on its way from eastern Kansas to Oregon. Mr. Morrison has a picture of Ada's mother given to him by a descendant of the Magills.

In the early 1900s my brother and I discovered this grave when we were looking for our Indian ponies. At that time the Indians from Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas would start the first of September to migrate from their reservations to Indian Territory which is now Oklahoma to spend the winter months. They came back to their own reservations early in the spring. If we didn't get our ponies when we heard they were coming our horses would be driven off with their herd. In 1906 we moved to the Locket Ranch just across the track here and during the next few years we visited this little grave quite often to keep it well marked with stones and decorated with wild flowers.

The old wagon road between Glenrock and Casper was located very near this grave. About 1911 or 1912, when the first automobiles were in use, the state engineers surveyed this area for a new graded road. We kids worried that the new road would go right over the grave. About that time Maud Dawes, county superintendent of schools, came to Glenrock and hired a team and buggy from the livery stable to take her to the Big Muddy community to visit the school. I happened to be at the stable and told her about the new road going over the grave. When she returned to Douglas she immediately contacted the state engineers and the county commissioners and had the remains moved to the present site.

If you will look about and ponder for a moment I think you will agree that the position of this little grave is a focal point from which you can see many historical locations and developments in Converse County. Next to the grave is an Oregon Trail marker and a Pony Express marker. Just a few feet north is the Chicago and North Western Railroad track which was laid in 1886. Across the Platte River just a mile north is the Burlington Railroad which was built in 1912 and on which I worked as a mule skinner. A mile or so north on the divide is the old Bozeman Trail.

Much credit for the care of the grave sites you have visited today should be given to Howard Jackson, a deputy sheriff in the late 1890s and early 1900s. He personally built the first fence around the Unthank grave and around the Parker and Ringo graves just two miles east of this spot.

Others who tended this grave were W. W. Morrison and his





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However, the Mormons usually traveled north of the Platte River.

This point on the Oregon Trail at the Big Bend of the river was known as Camp Platte. Its location was too strategic to be long neglected because it was approximately half way between Missouri and Oregon, half way between Missouri and the gold fields in California, half way between the winter quarters of the Mormons in Iowa and their destination in Utah. Here was the end of the plains road and the beginning of the mountain road. A constant stream of emigrants passed through here from 1840 to 1860.

Brigham Young, leading the first party of Mormon settlers, was detained here by a flood on June 12, 1847. Instead of waiting for the waters to recede he sent a party of men to the Black Hills to get timber for a ferry boat. During the ten days he spent here other wagon trains arrived and he ferried them across the river. Brigham Young was not one to neglect business opportunities so he left a crew of nine men to operate the ferry for the benefit of other western travelers and home-seekers as well as for himself.

Camp Platte then became known as the Mormon Ferry and retained that name until 1859 when the famous Platte bridge was built by Louis Guinard. The bridge was a 1000 feet long, 13 feet wide and had 28 cribs or piers for support which were 30 feet apart. The cribs were built of interlaced logs and were filled with rocks for ballast against the ice-laden waters of the spring floods. The cribs were spaced 30 feet apart with only one on the far side of the river.

The fort was used as a stage station from 1851 to 1862 when it became necessary to transfer the stage line south to the Overland Trail because of the aggressive Indians. The Pony Express operated here during its short-lived but romantic existence from April 23, 1860, until October 22, 1861. Its termination was brought about by the building of the first transcontinental telegraph line which began operations October 24, 1861. Many of the stations along the Oregon Trail saw all these methods of communication used.

Due to their low-powered source of electrical power, these stations were relay stations. Thirty to 40 miles seemed to be the maximum distance messages could be sent. Deer Creek Station to the east and Sweetwater Station to the west were the nearest stations to this fort.

In 1865 Platte Bridge Station became a permanent fort consisting of stores, a blacksmith shop, a telegraph station and enough adobe buildings to garrison 100 men. The most tragic day in the history of the fort occurred on April 26, 1865, when Caspar Collins, a twenty-year-old lieutenant, led 25 young men against 3,000 Indians to his death. On November 21, 1865, Platte Bridge Station was officially named Fort Caspar in his honor.

When the fort was abandoned in 1867, most of the hardware



and furnishings were sent down to the new Fort Fetterman near Douglas. The buildings which could not be salvaged were said to have been burned by the Indians within 24 hours after the garrison withdrew.

The people of Casper wanted the old fort rebuilt. Although it required several years to raise the necessary funds it was finally accomplished when matched by money from the federal government. A blade was brought out and the surface soil removed until the old foundations and hearthstones were found. The fort was rebuilt to the original plans and specifications of the original buildings. The upper parts of the fireplaces were constructed from the original foundation stones.

Besides being a recognized historic site, it has the reputation of housing one of the finest small museums in the entire west. It maintains an informal atmosphere that appeals to the majority of people.

**GUIDES:** Henry Jensen and William Judge

1:45 P.M. Directly outside the Fort Caspar gates we turned left to cross the Platte, ride through Mills and turn left again on Highway 20. After three miles we made another left turn on the new Poison Spider road just south of the tank farm. The Oregon Trail, which was also the Mormon Trail here, paralleled our route to the south through the sand hills.

After seven miles we again turned left on a good county road to the south. Our road went through a break in the hills known as Emigrant Gap. By looking closely we could see the old trail winding down a hill on the left. The ridge above was known as Emigrant Ridge. The creek at the bottom of the Gap was called Poison Spider Creek because many of the emigrants drank from it and became ill. It was on this creek that Robert Stuart built his cabin, the first in Wyoming, in 1812.

2:00 P.M. After traveling three miles on this road we turned left on the "Oregon Trail Road" which is practically on the old trail. Evidence of the trail is shown by more abundant vegetation where the wheels passed. The country is desolate with many patches of alkali. Eight miles down the road is another landmark to the right which is called the Avenue of Rocks. This is a stretch of rim rocks several yards in length and from ten to 30 feet in height. Many emigrants made this a resting place and carved their names on the rocks.

Willow Creek, hardly visible today as it meanders through the grass on the left, was a welcome sight to the travelers long ago.

Thirteen miles from the beginning of the "Oregon Trail Road" we took the left hand road at the fork. In two miles we arrived at Willow Springs, a place eagerly anticipated by the pioneers.



## WILLOW SPRINGS

By Helen and Paul Henderson  
(Read by Bill Dubois)

Today Willow Springs are several cool, pure water springs surrounded by a few clumps of willow brush and a small meadow of lush native grasses. In early times they were an important landmark for the mountain men and covered wagon pioneers. Now they are an almost forgotten spot along the great Emigrant Road of yesteryear.

They are located approximately 28 miles southwest of Casper, Wyoming, in a cove on the northern slopes of Ryan Hill. For the ox teams, they were at the end of a two-day drive over a rough, sandy and highly alkaline region from the North Platte and Sweetwater Rivers. The fur trappers, emigrants and other early travelers frequently referred to them as an "oasis" in this stretch of semi-desert land. In former times a much greater growth of willows existed here. The campers' axes thinned them out until now only a few small clumps remain to perpetuate the name, Willow Springs.

Before the white man's emigration period this small spot of "nature's blessings" was a favored camping grounds for the various Indian tribes that roamed the "Mako Sica" region. Later the French trappers referred to the country as "les mauvaises terres a truser." As one gazes today upon this once vital spot in the lives of our forefathers he may probably ponder on who was the first man to drink of these pure waters and perhaps camp here. Credit for it cannot be given to Robert Stuart and his little party of Astorians in 1812 as they closely followed the route of the North Platte River in their memorable journey through this heretofore unexplored region. However, they did go into winter quarters for a short time on the banks of the river some 15 miles northeast of Willow Springs. It appears that Jim Clyman might have been the first man here in 1824, as he traveled eastward from the Rocky Mountains. He could have been making a short cut at the bend of the Platte river.

In 1827, William H. Ashley led a fur brigade into the mountains and the Salt Lake Valley. In this outfit he had a small cannon mounted on wheels. It is possible that those wheels left a track for the Smith, Jackson and Sublette expedition laden with Indian trade goods in 1830, as they went into and out of this Indian country.

Two lonely fur traders, Gordon and Brown, came along in 1831, and spent some 30 days here at Willow Springs hiding from a band of roving Indians.

W. H. Anderson, traveling westward with William Sublette's fur caravan, wrote in his diary, "June 6, 1834 . . . On the divide as it is called, of the Platte and its tributary, the Sweetwater, there is a





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However, the Springs here deteriorated considerably in the last forty years. At one time Willow Springs had a flow that could accomodate any wagon train within reason. Now where you see clumps of willows it is an indication that there is a small spring, but no longer do these flow enough to merge into a good sized creek. There was also at one time an attempt to create a small reservoir here but evidently there has been a cloudburst that destroyed the dam.

During the period of migration and even up to the late 1960s there was evidence of the Oregon Trail dividing itself here into a traffic pattern that wound its several ways past the various springs that dotted the valley. The trails converged at the top of the ridge to the southwest to head across the level prairie for Independence Rock, the Sweetwater and Devil's Gate.

As romantic and appealing as Willow Springs and the vicinity is, I could never reconcile the descriptions given the vicinity by army stories and diaries. In particular was the one graphic account by an officer relating the events of one night when the Indians had stolen stock and vanished over a nearby saddle in the hills to make good their escape in short order. I made several trips to this vicinity trying to fit the action to the terrain without any satisfactory answer.

Finally, an elderly shepherd riding a horse gave me the answer when I related my dilemma to him. He answered that he had been told by returning soldiers and other early civilian settlers that the Army had not used, or camped at, the same lower Willow Springs as the civilian travelers but rather had camped at an upper Springs just below the ridge to the north. When I saw the upper Springs, to which he pointed, there was the saddle gap perfectly outlined as in the army stories. The reason for this separate camp was that the army cut several miles off a dogleg that the civilians made by following the water course of Willow Creek. The telegraph line had been built on the shortest route between relay stations and of course took advantage of any short cut to save money in materials and time consumed by the army on its patrols.

Willow Springs is noted as the last overnight stop made by Sergeant Amos J. Custard and his wagon train escort of 23 enlisted men before their death on the 26th of July, 1865, near the Platte Bridge Station.

3:05 P.M. We continued on our way up Prospect Hill. It didn't seem like a hill to us in our cars but it was hard going for the wagon trains. We crossed a dam on Fish Creek and saw on our right an Indian rock alignment perhaps 150 yards long. No one knows why the Indians placed the stones in this long line.

The view ahead was spectacular as we could see several mountain ranges in the distance—the Seminoe, Ferris, Granite, Green and Rattlesnake, forming a massive panorama of strength against



the sky. As we traveled along and looked closely we could also see Devil's Gate, a deep gash, and Independence Rock, which looks like a huge sleeping hippopotamus.

At the end of the "Oregon Trail Road" (32 miles long) we turned right on the Casper-Rawlins highway. As we made the turn we could see the gully in the hills across the road where Ella Watson and Jim Avereli, accused rustlers, were hanged from a tree which overhung the gully.

On our left we passed several of the Soda Lakes, which caused the emigrants much trouble as well as sickness, and came to Independence Rock. In 1822, the Ashley-Henry Expedition on its first journey to the West for furs, camped at this rock on July 4th. During the celebration the rock was christened "Independence Rock," the name by which it has been known for 150 years.

4:05 P.M. As we were behind schedule we went directly to the site of Sweetwater Station, a lovely spot located one mile east of Independence Rock above the Sweetwater River.

## SWEETWATER STATION

By Edness Kimball Wilkins

I don't know when or why the road past Independence Rock was changed. Originally the Oregon Trail, the Overland Trail, the stagecoaches and the Pony Express all passed between the Sweetwater River and Independence Rock, two of the most famous landmarks on the route of early-day travelers to the West from the days of the trappers and mountain men.

Independence Rock was named by Father DeSmet "The Register of the Desert" because of the many names carved on its surface, but his own name and those of Jim Bridger, Captain Bonneville, General Fremont, the Whitmans and Spaldings and many others famed in our history cannot now be found. Apparently they were lost when emigrants celebrating the 4th of July, placed gun powder in a crevice in the great rock, lit a long fuse, and blew off the west face of the great granite mass.

There are several stories of how the river received the name of "Sweetwater." One is that a party of trappers had a pack-mule loaded with their supply of sugar. The animal slipped while crossing the stream, the pack fell into the water, the sugar, of course, was dissolved, making the water sweet.

Another story is that William Ashley, the famous fur trader, had come across the country with his trappers in 1823, and finally camped beside the unnamed river. The water was clear, cold and delicious as compared to other streams in the area that contained alkali. It left a pleasant taste in the mouths of the trappers, and so Ashley called it Sweetwater.

That great granite mass called Independence Rock played a



strange part in the campaign for election of a president of the United States in 1856, and is considered one of the issues that defeated a famous general. John Charles Fremont, great western explorer, was at Independence Rock on the Sweetwater on August 22, 1842, and that evening Fremont chiseled his name among the others on the great black granite mass, and he also carved on the Rock the emblem of Christianity, the cross. He carefully recorded the event in his official journal:

“Here, not unmindful of the custom of the early travelers and explorers in our country, I engraved on the rock of the Far West the symbol of the Christian faith. Among the thickly inscribed names I made on the hard granite the impression of a large cross, deeply engraved, which I covered with a black preparation of India rubber, well calculated to resist the influence of wind and rain. It stands amidst the names of many who have long since found their way to the grave, and for whom the huge rock is a giant grave-stone.”

It was one of Fremont's finest gestures. But 14 years later his eloquent words were used against him in one of the bitterest campaigns in our history, with fanatical religious intolerance and hatred playing a vital role in the outcome. His opponents charged that the General was a “secret papist”—a member of the Roman Catholic church, and they offered as proof on pamphlets widely broadcast throughout the country, the excerpt from his report. “J. C. Fremont's Record. Proof of his Romanism. Imitating other Roman Catholic explorers, and those alone, in his expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1842, he made on the Rock Independence the sign of the cross, a thing that no Protestant explorer ever did or ever would do.” Independence Rock which you have just passed on our trek, was used as the bitter weapon in the campaign that defeated General Fremont for the presidency of the United States.

Establishment of Sweetwater Station where we are now standing, and of others along the Trail, was the result of building of the telegraph line. You have heard the history earlier of the Oregon or overland trail, and the migration of half a million people over this route on their way to California or Oregon. One of the great problems of the early days on the frontier was lack of communication with the East. Letters to various army posts were usually sent to Fort Leavenworth, and then forwarded whenever possible. Many never arrived. A stage line for mail was finally established in 1851, carrying mail and packages from St. Louis to Salt Lake City. The government contract required the roundtrip journey to be made in 42 days, and after a time the trip was made twice a month. Passengers were also carried. About that time Louis Guinard built a bridge here across this river, called the Sweetwater Bridge.

With the great migration and settlement of the West, military





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is here, paying off the men. This is the worst country for winds I ever saw. Yesterday, very soon after we started, it commenced blowing and raining full in our faces, and after a while it turned to hail and it came down so hard that they had to stop the train until it slackened. After we got in camp it commenced to blow, and it is blowing yet. . . . Our guide, Major Jim Bridger, went off this morning up in the mountains to get out of the wind. He says he is going to get in some canyon and make a large fire. . . . Yesterday morning Mr. Pallady shot an antelope near the camp, and he and I and our French servant dragged him to the tent before my father and Major Bridger were up. Antelope is the finest flesh ever tasted. It resembles venison a little but it is not so dry. . . . The Indians keep stealing horses and other stock from the mail stations, and now and then they shoot a man, but troops cannot get near them. Wherever a few men are stationed, they are as quiet as lambs. . . . We see bear every day or two but have shot none yet, they running away too fast. They are the regular grizzly, and one of them was so large one of our officers mistook him for a buffalo.”

Two years later Caspar Collins had entered the Army and because of his experience out here in the West, had been commissioned a second lieutenant. He was 19 years old.

After commissioning he was returned to the West where he had been serving, and was placed in charge of four stations. His headquarters were at Sweetwater Station where we are now standing, and his responsibility covered 104 miles of this wild territory, protecting the telegraph line and escorting emigrant trains as far as the top of the South Pass Country. Here is the description he wrote home on December 13, 1864, from Fort Laramie, Idaho Territory, as Wyoming was then called:

“I am now stationed on Sweetwater River, a tributary of the Platte. I have four block stations under my charge. The first is Sweetwater Bridge, the bridge by which the emigrants cross the river on their way to California and Oregon; the second is Three Crossings of the Sweetwater Bridge, the bridge by which the emigrants cross the river on their way to California and Oregon; the second is Three Crossings of the Sweetwater; the third, Rocky Ridge; and the fourth is South Pass. I make my headquarters at the first. I was summoned down here on a court-martial and came down in five days, two hundred and twenty miles, by myself most of the way, but I had places to sleep at night.

“The weather was awful, but I was well protected and had a horse that would travel eight miles an hour for twelve hours, and I came right through. I rode from Le Bontes Creek to Horse Shoe Station, twenty-five miles, in two hours and ten minutes, the thermometer 10 degrees below zero all the time.”

Sweetwater Station was fairly large and well constructed. It had been built by the men of Company D of the 11th Ohio, and was intended to house 40 men with their horses, mules and equip-



ment, but at that time there were only 20. Blockhouses were at two corners of the station, and a 15-foot high palisade or stockade surrounded part of the buildings. The same protection of lookouts and blockhouses and palisades also helped protect Three Crossings. Lt. Collins visited the four stations monthly, sometimes making the round trip in five days.

Four months later the picture had changed in many ways. Lt. Collins had word that a very large number of troops were on the road; the 11th Kansas was said to be between Sweetwater Station and Fort Laramie. Some of Collins' men from the 11th Ohio had been killed by Indians and supplies captured, but he assured his family in Ohio that he had the station well defended and invulnerable to Indian attack. In the same letter he stated:

"The weather at this post is excellent at present; but above here at South Pass, which is also under my command, two men froze lately. . . . I have just returned from that abominable section of country. Dr. Rich and I went up together. We were two days getting twenty-five miles, and then had to leave our horses on account of the snow and walk in. I frosted my feet. . . . There are places there where the snow is ten feet deep for miles, the crust hardly bearing a man. The lowest point in the pass is about eight thousand feet above the sea; and about twenty miles off, but appearing as if close at hand are the Wind River Mountains, hiding their heads in the clouds. The pass has never been impassible for the same length of time. It closed up about the middle of October, and no sign of thaw yet, all the snow that has fallen during the winter being still on the ground. There are drifts in the canyons on the Sweetwater below the station sixty or seventy feet deep. . . . We are all much rejoiced to hear of Lee's surrender, but our spirits were thrown into a deep gloom today by receipt of the intelligence of the assassination of our beloved President. The country will find it difficult to replace its loss. I would write oftener but it is almost impossible to get letters from here to Fort Laramie, the road being unsafe for mail carriers, and large bodies of men cannot be spared from the post on this road.

"I have written twice since New Year's but as you did not get them I suppose they miscarried. I have received four letters from you this month, some of them rather old."

The young lieutenant added a postscript to the letter to his mother, saying, "If anything happens to me, I will telegraph."

It was a prophetic ending. Three months later he was dead, killed in an attempt to rescue a military wagon train near what is now Old Fort Caspar, named in his memory.

In the meantime Sweetwater station had been attacked time after time by the Indians. The great increase of troops that had been expected did not materialize. His garrison and many others were fighting against tremendous numbers of Indians, an almost hopeless war.



The Civil War had ended, and the demand was under way for economy, for cutting down the army, for demobilizing the men who had enlisted for the duration of the Civil War. Many troops mutinied against being kept in the army to fight Indians in the West. Great leaders such as Red Cloud had developed among the Indians. They had little trouble holding their own against the inferior numbers of the white troops. They had secured vast amounts of guns and ammunition from their attacks on the wagon trains, stage coaches and stations along the mail routes. The Indians felt they were becoming masters of the situation in the war against the whites.

Gold had been discovered on the South Pass, and gold seekers flocked in. The Indians ran off their stock time after time, and killed and scalped the miners and settlers, freighters and supply parties. Parleys were held, treaties were signed and broken. Troops were withdrawn, and the power of the government in this western country became weaker and weaker.

The government and the people in the East were sick of the Civil War and of all wars—especially the Indian wars that were so far away. Politics and politicians entered the picture. The cry was for economy, and as has happened so often in our country after a war, the economizing was on the army. The military stations along the old Oregon Trail were ordered abandoned—Sweetwater Station and South Pass and Fort Caspar and all the others—and the telegraph stations were left without protection of troops, to be burned by the Indians.

Sweetwater Station, Independence Rock, and this western country had again become the property of the Indians, while Lt. Caspar Collins, just 20 years old, and the stations he had defended, and the men he had led, had become our history. Note: Quotations from Lt. Collins' letters are from the book *Caspar Collins*, by Agnes Wright Spring.

4:30 P.M. The caravan retraced its way back to the highway and turned toward Casper. Twenty miles down the road the Pathfinder Reservoir and Dam are between us and the Pedros Mountains. It was in a cave in those mountains that a pygmy mummy was found several years ago.

We traveled slowly on the "picture turn off", a look-out point, to see beautiful Alcova Lake and the Fiery Narrows. It was here that Fremont, known as the Pathfinder, lost most of his equipment when his boat capsized. Near here are also Fremont Canyon and Jackson Canyon, named for the pioneer photographer.

Later we passed an old government bridge built to aid the construction of Pathfinder Dam in 1903 and crossed Bates Creek, named for Captain A. C. Bates of Bates Hole fame. On the left are the red rocks where John Wayne's "Hell Fighters" was filmed.





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to move down the Platte to some safer spot. Accordingly on the 13th of December they left their snug abode and began a cold miserable journey to a second winter camp near the present town of Torrington.

It is a coincidence that this first white man's habitation in Wyoming is less than five miles from the Oregon Trail which was later traversed by hundreds of thousands of Americans going West.

5:50 P.M. In just a few miles we made our last stop of the day across the highway from a marker commemorating the Battle of Red Buttes.

## STORY OF SERGEANT CUSTARD'S FIGHT

By Tom Nicholas

The exact spot where Sergeant Amos Custard and his men were killed has never been definitely located. Many historians still study diaries to gain new clues to the location. Others with metal detectors and shovels go over the ground to find the site, but the mystery still remains to baffle this and perhaps future generations.

The morning of July 26, 1865, Captain Henry C. Bretney with ten men arrived at Platte Bridge Station, having come from Sweetwater Station enroute to Fort Laramie. Bretney reported to the commanding officer, Major Anderson, and told him that a rescue party should be sent immediately to Willow Spring Creek to bring in Sergeant Custard's wagon train that was returning from Sweetwater Station. He added that he had seen thousands of Indians lurking in the hills around the station.

The following is a quotation from A. J. Mokler's book, *Fort Caspar*: "About 11 o'clock, looking to the west, the men at Platte Bridge Station saw the wagon train consisting of twenty-four soldiers and three wagons coming toward the fort. They were on the hill less than five miles distant. The soldiers at the station knew they could not make their way through the thousands of Indians and rescue the men of the wagon train, and they twice discharged the old brass cannon to warn them that there was danger ahead. The men on the hill could hear the warning, but at the same time they saw a great number of Indians coming toward them. The train kept coming forward with all possible haste until it reached a point just about four miles due west from the fort.

"The advance guard of five men on their horses, in charge of Corporal James W. Schroeder, made a run for the river, which was about a quarter of a mile to the south. A few Indians pursued them. The soldiers on their horses plunged into the stream, but James Ballew was shot and fell from his horse when he was about thirty yards from the south bank. His body was never found. The remaining four men arrived safely across, but had proceeded less than a mile when Edwin Summers was shot and killed. The



other three, Corporal Schroeder, Byram Swain and Henry Smith, continued to work their way toward the fort."

During this time Sergeant Custard and the 19 men left with the train stopped on a hill and formed three sides of a square with the wagons. The west side was open. Lt. W. Y. Drew's diary tells the sad story. "From the roof of the station and with the aid of a large spyglass, we had a good view of what was going on at the train. The first Indians that came in to the scene charged right on to the train but were repulsed, and as more of them arrived they again made a charge but were again driven back. After this for some time there did not seem to be much going on, but every once in awhile we would see a puff of smoke from the wagons, which showed that the fight was still going on. . . . When the puffs were getting closer and closer together we knew the end could not be far off." The soldiers requested that they be allowed to go to the aid of their comrades but this was refused. The Indians finally set fire to the wagons and killed Sergeant Custard and his brave men in their improvised fortress.

Mr. Mokler, Casper's historian, continues with the story: "On the same day, (July 28) that Lt. Hubbard was sent out to bury the nineteen men, Corporal Schroeder was sent out on the south side of the river to find and bury the bodies of his comrades, Summers and Ballew. He found the body of Summers about one mile south of the river, where he dug a grave and buried it. He said that while he was digging the grave for Summers he could plainly see the twenty-five men in command of Lt. Hubbard on the hill on the north side of the river digging the trench in which Custard and the nineteen men were to be buried.

Corporal Schroeder was in Casper a few days during the summer of 1926, and he attempted to locate the spot where Sergeant Custard and his brave men were massacred and buried, but the condition of the country had changed so much in the interim of sixty-one years that he was unable to recognize any of the landmarks that were familiar to him at the time of the battle, and he said he would not attempt to say where the men were buried. Neither was he able to find the grave of Edwin Summers, whose body he buried on the second day after the battle.

There are three Fort Caspar cemeteries. The one in the hills north of us, one at the Fort Caspar east gate and the one just west of Isaac Walton Park where we had lunch today.

6:10 P.M. A pleasant day was drawing to a close and everyone was hungry so we hurried toward Casper.

The Natrona County Historical Society had arranged an informal dinner at Lee's Restaurant on the Natrona County Fair Grounds. It was a buffet with plenty of good food and good fellowship. A fine climax for our 1971 trek!



# Book Reviews

*I Have Spoken.* Virginia Irving Armstrong, compiler. (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc. 1971). Index. 206 pp. \$6.

Seattle's words, in 1854, "The White Man will never be alone," were prophetic. "When . . . the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone . . . they will not be alone. At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land . . . Dead, did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds."

Whether it be in the Finger Lakes area of New York, where, through some strange phenomenon of sounds, the valleys reverberate with the death drums of the Senecas, or in the vastness of Wyoming, where "talking rocks" are records of the exploits of the long ago fathers, the spirit of the Red Man lingers. The plaintive cry of a Cayuga chief (1808) seems to repeat itself: "Have we, the first holders of this region, no longer a share in your history?"

We of the white race are saddened by the realization that we are no more able to understand the words of the past when "old men talk in the winds" than to interpret the sunset. We are not even capable of deciphering the petroglyphs and pictographs, for which no key has been found.

Virginia Irving Armstrong, compiler of *I Have Spoken*, has performed a singular service in the field of literature with her anthology of Indian orations, which chronologically arranged, briefly sketch the history of the Indian from the 1700's to the present day. There is pathos as well as pride and courage in the speeches. And, throughout, there is an undying devotion to the land.

The Secretary of War, in 1789, voiced the opinion that if it were possible to instill in the Indian a love for exclusive property, it would be the first step in the civilizing process. The orations show a complete disregard for private ownership. Tecumseh, answering for the Shawnees, summarized the universal attitude of his people.

"Sell a country! Why not sell the air, the great sea, as well as the earth? Did not the Great Spirit make them all for the use of his children?" When offers and bribes could not induce the Red Man to relinquish his land—his Mother Earth—other methods had to be found to satisfy the avarice of the White Man. Finally, the Indians were pushed from one location to another until they were "penned up in little spots"—their reservations, which in many cases were then taken from them.

We regret that Mrs. Armstrong omitted reference to the Great Treaty Council of 1851, though brief allusions are made to it in





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Drawing primarily, but by no means exclusively, on the extensive resources in the Swan Collection of the Western Range Cattle Industry Study in the State Historical Society of Colorado, this painstaking work skillfully weaves the many factors which are the history of the Swan Company. Without belaboring the matter of the development of the western range cattle industry, which is amply summarized in the opening pages, the author focuses immediately upon the founding of the Swan Land and Cattle Company, Ltd., and upon its founder and first manager, Alexander Hamilton Swan.

While the book deals intricately with the corporate structure and business operations of the company, these matters are inseparable from the personalities around whom the business was built and through whom it flowed. Personalities such as Alexander Swan, John Clay, the late Curtis Templin and Finlay Dun and their relationships to the company emerge in sharp focus.

Far from being a sentimental appraisal of times past, yet not devoid of sentiment, matters of mismanagement, accusations of embezzlement, illegal fencing, good times and bad all are discussed with equal candor and supported by extensive documentation. The reader is intimately involved with the company from its optimistic birth in 1883, the throes of financial plight and near ruin in 1887, reorganization, introduction of sheep to the ranges and the advent of the dry farmer, renewed optimism with the rise of prices during World War I, postwar depression years, sale of the Scottish company and incorporation of The Swan Company in Delaware in 1926, the beginning of final liquidation in the 1940s through dissolution in 1951.

If one were to seek serious fault with the book, he would be hard-pressed to find it. Some readers might find distracting the many references to financial transactions in the British monetary system if, indeed, they are concerned about the intimate details of those transactions and are not familiar enough with that system to convert it to dollars and cents. A Wyoming reader may question the reference to Willie Nichol as the alleged victim of Tom Horn because he is aware that it was Willie Nickell. But such things should not distract the reader seeking the story of the company and they most certainly do not detract from the readily apparent excellence of scholarship with which the author pursued his subject.

One of the most puzzling questions is why The Swan Company, incorporated under Wyoming laws on August 2, 1951, was not discussed in slightly more detail.

While Mr. Templin's efforts to have the company incorporated under Wyoming law rather than Delaware law are discussed, the "Swan Company" (*sic*) of Wyoming is but briefly referred to in the closing lines.

It may have been interesting to note that the Swan Company name did not pass with the passage of the Delaware corporation in



1951. On the same day the Delaware corporation ceased to exist, August 2, The Swan Company filed for incorporation under Wyoming law with capital stock of \$2,699.75, or 10,799 shares at 25 cents each and Curtis Templin as agent. The incorporation certificate, in fact, was not revoked until February 8, 1971. While only a faint vestige of the original company, The Swan Company of Wyoming was a corporate reality. It must be kept in mind, however, that the final revocation of the corporate certificate of the Swan Company of Wyoming is something which the author could quite justifiably have been unaware of.

What emerges from this work is a beautifully researched, thoroughly documented, significant contribution and tribute to Wyoming history, the West, the Swan Company and the men who made—and unmade—it.

*Wyoming State Archives and  
Historical Department*

JOHN W. CORNELISON

*Union Pacific Country.* By Robert G. Athearn. (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1971). Index. Illus. 480 pp. \$15.

Scholars have awaited the publication of this book with excited anticipation. Robert Athearn, a history professor at the University of Colorado, is the first researcher permitted access to the records and correspondence of the Union Pacific Railroad Company. The author proposed to study "how the American West was penetrated, settled, and developed," not the exclusive story of a railroad corporation. *Union Pacific Country* details the years from its conception to its bankruptcy in 1897. The book broadens our knowledge and attempts to satisfy the critics' indictments of earlier Union Pacific histories.

The book has many merits. To his credit, Athearn has generally dispensed with the details of construction. He sympathetically treats the entrepreneurial motives and risks of the railroad's leadership; but too frequently, the story reverts to the traditional tale of finance and management.

Athearn also utilized the extensive archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and reveals the heretofore unfamiliar, persistent, and mutually profitable intimacy between the railroad's executives and the elders of Zion.

Agricultural settlement and production in Nebraska were essential for the road's early income. For the military, the road reduced freight costs, eliminated scattered forts, and expedited strategic mobilization against the Plains Indians.

Following the thesis of Thomas C. Cochrane's *Railroad Leaders*, the author contends that the Union Pacific built or took over branch lines in Colorado, Utah, Montana, and the Northwest as a



defensive counter against the thrust of other railroads into its economic domain. Four chapters detail this expansion. The author asserts that the cumulative restrictions of the road's special relationship with the federal government, particularly the Thurman Act of 1877, caused its financial trials and ultimately its bankruptcy.

The book, however, is a qualified success. Foremost, it lacks analysis; instead, it substitutes description and hyperbole. Secondly, the author has failed to enter the recent debates of railroad history. An afterthought dispenses with the seminal contention that this enterprise was economically premature; and he ignores the systematic critique drawn by Wallace Farnham in his assessment of earlier Union Pacific histories contained in Gene Gressley's *The American West: A Reorientation*. Athearn suggestively notes the railroad's role in stimulating urban development, but this topic and the expanding metropolitan net of Omaha over the region merits a chapter to itself.

This raises another concern. What specifically was the Union Pacific Country: an economic hinterland? an interstate political borough? As a practical necessity, the railroad participated in state and national politics but this involvement is discussed only as an incident to the construction of the branch lines.

The book neglects to discuss the effects of freight rates, comparative receipts of the different branches, agrarian discontent, labor relations, and the cultural role of the railroad for western settlement.

In balance, however, both scholars and lay readers should welcome this book. Multiple, successive dependent clauses, which a conscientious editor should have pruned, mar an otherwise smooth style. The book is abundantly endowed with illustrations and competent maps; but again, the absence of graphs or any charts reflects the disinterest of the book in quantitative measurement. In one volume, Robert Athearn has synthesized a considerable mass of sources into a readable, generally comprehensive history of a large region and its single most important economic institution. He has competently told the story of penetration and settlement, and one may hope that *Union Pacific Country* will stimulate renewed interest and several monographs on the role of the railroad among western historians.

*Cheyenne*

MICHAEL V. LEWELLYN

*Wyoming Country Before Statehood. Four Hundred Years Under Six Flags.* By L. Milton Woods. (Worland: Worland Press, 1971). Index. Illus. 218 pp. \$7.95.

For any person interested in the history of Wyoming, this is a fine reference book. For specific points of interest, the book is





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The last half of the book weaves through the maze of territorial changes. The author gives us a convenient recapitulation and chronology near the end of the book. It shows (and the text gives the pertinent history) that parts of our country were embraced in the boundaries of 13 different territories. That certainly must be a world's record!

Some of the territories took title because nobody else wanted it. For the most part, it was just land—very few people. But, remember, we are talking about a time before Wyoming became a territory in 1868 and backwards to 1800, when Indiana Territory received part of the district of Louisiana.

Did you know that the Congressional Act which created Indian Territory in 1834 was passed just one month after William Sublette broke ground for Fort William, later to be known as Fort Laramie?

The stories of the frontier forts, or the trails, or the hunters, or the building of the railroads are not, of course, elaborated upon in this book. The brief understanding of what led up to those stories makes a most worthwhile and readable story.

*Rawlins*

J. REUEL ARMSTRONG

*Garden in the Grasslands.* By David M. Emmons. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971). Index. Illus. 220 pp. \$10.

In this attractively packaged, medium length (198 pages), slightly over-priced (\$10) elaboration of his 1969 University of Colorado dissertation, David M. Emmons has attempted a two-fold purpose: to chronicle the "boomer literature" of land promotion in the Central Great Plains; and to study the potency of the idea "America the Garden" as worked out in that region.

What emerges at the surface level is a well-researched survey of the boomer literature of Kansas and Nebraska in the 1870-1890 "sod house frontier" era. "Boomerism" is studied in all of its aspects: Who were the land boomers? Who sponsored and benefited from their activities? Where was locus of their efforts? What tactics and strategy did they employ? What generalizations can be made about their literature? What results can be attributed to their efforts? All these points and more concerning the movement are dealt with by Emmons. His result is a volume that is a major contribution to the history of land promotion in general, and to the history of Kansas and Nebraska in particular.

A geographer, who generally delimits his regions based upon a criterion of similar characteristics existing in most sub-areas of the region, might well question Emmons' chosen area of study. His "Central Great Plains" include Kansas, Nebraska, and eastern Colorado and Wyoming. If one were delimiting his region accord-



ing to principal economic activity, historical chronology, and geographic conditions, a much better case could be made for inclusion of the Dakotas than for the included portions of Wyoming and Colorado. However, once having chosen to include Wyoming Emmons should have consulted the specialists of Wyoming's territorial political climate, cattle kingdom era, and Johnson County War (Gould, Gressley, Larson, H. H. Smith, and others) prior to making simplistic judgements on these topics.

Whereas Emmons is quite successful in surveying the boomer literature of his region, he does stumble a bit with his analysis of the "Garden" image as revealed in boomer literature and related to the Great Plains development. In part, his ineffectiveness arises from the task, not his treatment. Numerous historians (including Hofstadter, H. N. Smith, P. N. Carroll, Leo Marx, Rod Nash) have grappled with only mixed success with the problem of detecting the temper of the "American mind" toward the ideas of conquest of wilderness, virtues of yeomanry, and creation of America the Garden at particular places and times in our past. In Emmon's case, he has shown that the Garden image was most evident in boomer literature; he has done nothing to show the impact of this idea upon the American Mind at his chosen time and locus.

The major thrust of the book is directed toward demonstrating that in Kansas and Nebraska the Garden image was employed in the 1870s and 1880s to confront and defeat the commonly-held Desert image that had been created as a result of the journals of Pike, Long, Parkman and Gregg. In short, Emmons is dealing with a clash of ideas! Immediately one wonders if (as Emmons states) the Desert concept was dominant in the 1840s, only to be superseded by the Garden image by 1870, then, why did the boomers spend the next twenty years (and Emmons the next 170 pages) attacking the Desert image. Emmons calls it "one of the strange ironies of American history" that the Desert image was strongest at a time (1840s) when Americans were proclaiming their Manifest Destiny over the same region. Instead, this might be merely testimony to the weakness of the image on the public mind. What is truly ironical is that the "myth of the Garden" was employed to confront the "myth of the Desert". In the end both were proven erroneous.

Emmons further states that it "is here irrelevant" whether or not the Desert image was popularly held. Not so! He is tracing the clash of conflicting ideas; a knowledge and elaboration of the relative strength of each over time is essential for successful completion of his task. This reviewer suspects that the Desert image was only narrowly held, that it was actually "used" by promoters as sort of a "straw man" to be devastated by the Garden image rather than being a force to be confronted, and that the author has missed this subtlety. Another idea, inherent in the historical march toward achievement of the American Dream, is that of "progress." For



“progress” to occur, a certain amount of wilderness and desert had to be present as the testing ground for the virtuous and hardworking yeoman to carve out his paradisiacal Edenic Garden: A society could not start with perfection and aspire to “progress!”

Beyond this, there are several questions that should have been dealt with in any treatment of the Garden idea for the author's chosen time and place. How did the “myth of the Garden” arrive at the “sod house frontier”? How had over two centuries of historical experience modified the Puritan view of the perfect society? What effect did life on the “sod house frontier”, did Hofstadter's increasing “commercial realities,” and did the fact of constant agrarian population mobility have upon the idea of the Garden? How did the idea leave the region? *In sum*, the author has portrayed the Garden idea as a constant of American history. This view fails to account for the ongoing modification of the idea resulting from ever-changing events and conditions of the American historical experience.

*University of Wyoming*

CHARLES G. ROUNDY

*The First 100 Years. A History of The Salt Lake Tribune 1871-1971.* By O. N. Malmquist. (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, 1971) Index. Illus. 454 pp. \$8.00.

*The Salt Lake Tribune* is not the biggest, most influential, most quoted or even the “best”—however, one may choose to apply that adjective—newspaper in the United States. But surely it was founded under a set of circumstances unique in American history, for its role was that of a spoiler for the Mormon Church 100 years ago, in a day when the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was pretty much in control in Utah Territory.

It is quite possible that with this unusual background, *The Salt Lake Tribune* might very well lay claim to having preserved the Mormon faith, or at least the LDS church as the strong and viable entity that it is today. For what the *Tribune* did in the first 40 years of its existence was to provide a foil for what had begun to evolve as a powerful church-state organization that controlled not only the religious beliefs of its members who made up perhaps a majority of the citizens of Utah, but their economic and political life as well.

It would seem likely that had this situation been allowed to prevail, the Mormon movement, at least as we know it today, might have been destroyed by the counter-forces generated outside Utah. As it was, the collection of gentiles (non-Mormons) and apostate Mormons, and even those within the church itself who for reasons best known to themselves covertly opposed some Mormon politico-economic policies, that marched behind the banner of *The Salt*





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by Kearns in 1913. Kearns, who served only four years in the Senate before he was politically upended by Reed Smoot, an apostle of the Mormon Church, apparently was badly in need of an amanuensis and confidant as well as an adviser, and young Fitzpatrick provided all three. Furthermore, when Kearns died apparently of a stroke only five years after employing his male secretary, Fitzpatrick stood by to loyally and honestly serve the ex-senator's widow as representative of the family's ownership in the *Tribune*. By this time the newspaper, which had been something of afterthought of an ambitious politician when it was purchased by Kearns 17 years earlier, was beginning to loom as a major asset in his estate because of the marked decline of the once opulent mine in Park City.

From 1918 to 1960 and perhaps even beyond, to the present, the *Tribune* largely was a creature of J. F. Fitzpatrick who directed it most ably until his death in the latter year. Possibly his greatest contribution to the Kearns estate was buying the half-interest in the paper owned by David Keith, Kearns partner in the silver mine, for \$300,000 in 1918 shortly after the death of both Keith and Kearns. Given full rein in conducting the family's business affairs, Fitzpatrick did not hesitate in making a \$30,000 down payment for the Keith interest, thus putting the Kearns heirs in full ownership, and Fitzpatrick in full control of the *Tribune*.

Fitzpatrick made the *Tribune* the newspaper it is today, and without doubt the greatest investment Tom Kearns made was in the rather simple and nominal act in 1913 of hiring this man as his secretary:

O. N. Malmquist has done a notable job under the aegis of the Utah Historical Society in compiling the story of the *Tribune*. In many ways it is a history not only of the *Tribune* but also of Salt Lake City and the state of Utah, which is as it should be for a newspaper that does a job well.

*Editor, Wyoming State Tribune*

JAMES M. FLINCHUM

*Citadel on the Santa Fe Trail. The Saga of Bent's Fort.* By Robert Murray. (Bellevue, Nebr.: Old Army Press, 1970). Illus. 50 pp.

This book is a synopsis history of the famous Bent's Fort, fur trading post for Southern Plains tribes and oasis for travelers, mountain men, and military patrols. Murray has produced an excellent synthesis which places Bent's Fort in its historic perspective. He briefly discusses the fur trade and the frontier in general terms and then describes the lives and careers of Ceran St. Vrain and Charles and William Bent, partners in the Bent's Fort



venture. Excellent descriptions of the fort, both while under construction and after completion, are included.

The historical significance of the fort is clearly delineated, and ample attention is devoted to sketching, trading, and treating with Indians, supplying military patrols before and during the Mexican War, and hosting explorers and adventurers. Murray has done one other thing many historians neglect. He has traced the history of the post after its abandonment and partial destruction in 1849, after being occupied for 16 years. The use of the fort by stage lines, the removal of interest in the site by Colorado citizens and the final acquisition of it by the National Park Service: these, too, are a part of the story of Bent's Fort.

The work is well illustrated with contemporary pictures of the fort, and people and events connected with it. A "Pictorial Portfolio" includes plans of Bent's Fort and contains photographs of objects found during the course of NPS excavations at the site. The illustration of a lens from a telescope is somewhat insignificant, a Northwest tradegun sideplate is erroneously identified as "from [a] Hudson's Bay Company trade musket", parts from Indian trade rifles shown are not identified as being from Deringer rifles, and the engraving of Jim Beckwourth has, by this time, become shopworn from overexposure in Western literature.

Murray has, in *Citadel on the Santa Fe Trail*, produced a popular work about Bent's Fort that will serve the general reader well. Scholars may find it of limited use as a ready reference on a topic and phase of Western history.

*Wyoming State Archives and  
Historical Department*

JAMES A. HANSON

*Born to be a Soldier: The Military Career of William Wing Loring.*

By William L. Wessels, (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1971). Index. 120 pp.

The career of one of America's most capable, yet unacknowledged, military leaders is briefly told in this book by William L. Wessels. W. W. Loring did not attend West Point, nor did he receive any other formal military training. His first experience came when, as a volunteer in the Florida Militia, he fought in the Seminole War. Although he enlisted as a private, by 1837 he had attained the rank of second lieutenant.

After the war, Loring returned to private life, but in 1846 was commissioned a captain in the newly-formed regiment of Mounted Riflemen. Serving with this regiment in the Mexican War, Loring was twice breveted for gallant and meritorious service at the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, and later at Chapultepec. In the latter battle he lost his left arm. This was not, however, too great



a handicap, for he ultimately rose to the rank of colonel in the Mounted Rifles.

Even later, Loring resigned from the United States service and quickly attained the rank of major general in the Confederate Army. His military career did not even end after the Civil War. For a period of ten years, Loring was a key figure in the Egyptian army where in 1879 he retired with the rank of Fereck Pasha.

Wessell's account of Loring's pre-Civil War career is unfortunately, but necessarily, shallow. A lack of material has left the author with a problem, but he succeeds quite well in using the material he does have, and manages to relate Loring and his life to the whole of United States military involvement in the Trans-Mississippi West. Of special importance to those interested in Western history are those brief, yet concise, chapters dealing with movements of Loring and the Mounted Rifles as part of the small and scattered western army of the period. They served not only on the Oregon frontier, but fought Indians in the South West, and took part in the Mormon War of 1857. Loring's controversial career in the Civil War is well covered and the account of his days on the banks of the Nile River is also well done. The particular part of the story dealing with his career in Egypt is aided in the Appendix, with the inclusion of a newspaper interview which gives many insights into that part of his life.

In covering a period of over half a century in so few pages, the author makes a number of generalizations which will not stand up to the criticism of learned students and readers. Quite unfortunately, Mr. Wessells seems to become a little too highly involved with and impressed by his subject. W. W. Loring is indeed an unsung figure in the settlement of the western United States. Yet, it is doubtful, as the author contends, that his name deserves to be ranked alongside those of Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and John Charles Fremont.

Unfortunately for the more serious reader the book's index is somewhat brief, and there are no footnotes. Indeed, the exclusion of a bibliography is especially unfortunate.

On the whole this book is well written and enjoyable to read. It is also a highly acceptable addition to the library of anyone interested in military or western history.

*Laramie*

JAMES H. NOTTAGE

*The Gilpin Gold Tram.* By Mallory H. Ferrell. (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1971). Index. Illus. 112 pp. \$8.95.

Gilpin County, once one of Colorado's great gold mining areas, is now a well-known tourist attraction, centered at Central City. Even the casual visitor cannot miss the significance of mining in





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# Contributors

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PHILIP J. MELLINGER is working toward his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago and is a part-time instructor in American History at Van der Cook College of Music in Chicago. He has taught at the Illinois Institute of Technology and plans to teach at the University of Indiana. He did his undergraduate work at the University of Chicago and received his M.A. from Roosevelt University in Chicago. Mr. Mellinger is a member of professional historical associations as well as national organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, Wilderness Society and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He and his wife Janet have one son.



## ERRATUM

The fourth paragraph, page 290, should read as follows: "I am now stationed on Sweetwater River, a tributary of the Platte. I have four block stations under my charge. The first is Sweetwater Bridge, the bridge by which the emigrants cross the river on their way to California and Oregon; the second is Three Crossings of the Sweetwater; the third, Rocky Ridge; and the fourth is South Pass. I make my headquarters at the first. I was summoned down here on a court-martial and came down in five days, two hundred and twenty miles, by myself most of the way, but I had places to sleep at night."





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