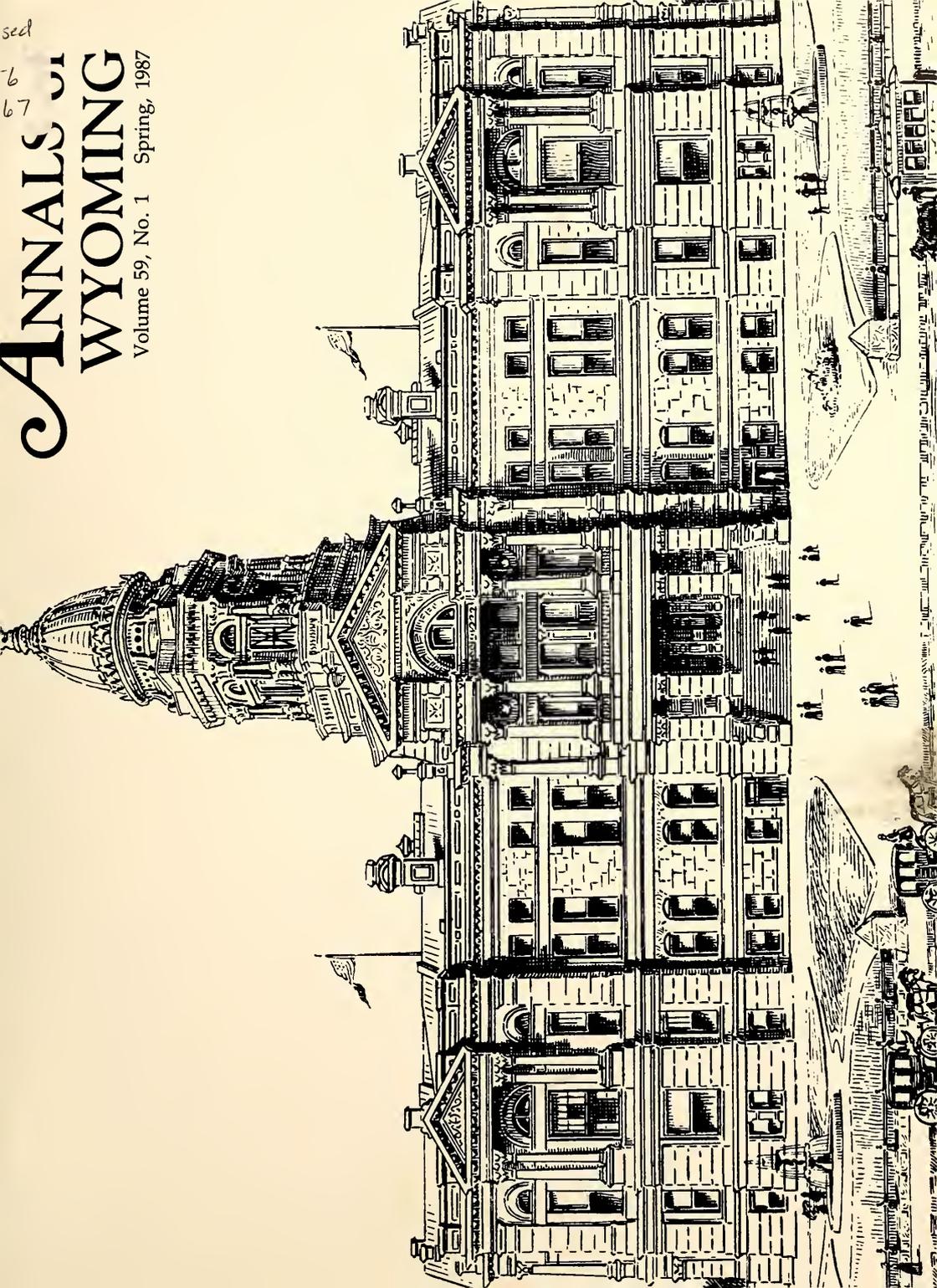


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ANNALS OF WYOMING

Volume 59, No. 1 Spring, 1987



THE WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

The function of the Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department is to collect and preserve materials which tell the story of Wyoming. It maintains the state's historical library and research center, the Wyoming State Museum and branch museums, the State Art Gallery and the State Archives. The Department solicits original records such as diaries, letters, books, early newspapers, maps, photographs and art and records of early businesses and organizations as well as artifacts for museum display. The Department asks for the assistance of all Wyoming citizens to secure these documents and artifacts. Department facilities are designed to preserve these materials from loss and deterioration. The State Historic Preservation Office is also located in the Department.

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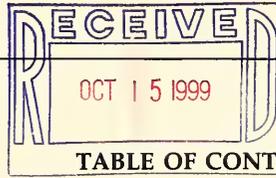
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ABOUT THE COVER—A sketch of the Wyoming Capitol in 1890, found in the Cheyenne Daily Leader, July 23, 1890. The accompanying article stated: "In all Cheyenne, which is preeminently a city of handsome buildings, no structure compares in massiveness and beauty with Wyoming's statehouse, a noble structure at the head of Capitol avenue." Wyoming will celebrate the centennial of the laying of the Capitol cornerstone on May 18, 1987. (AMH Dept. photograph)

ANNALS of WYOMING

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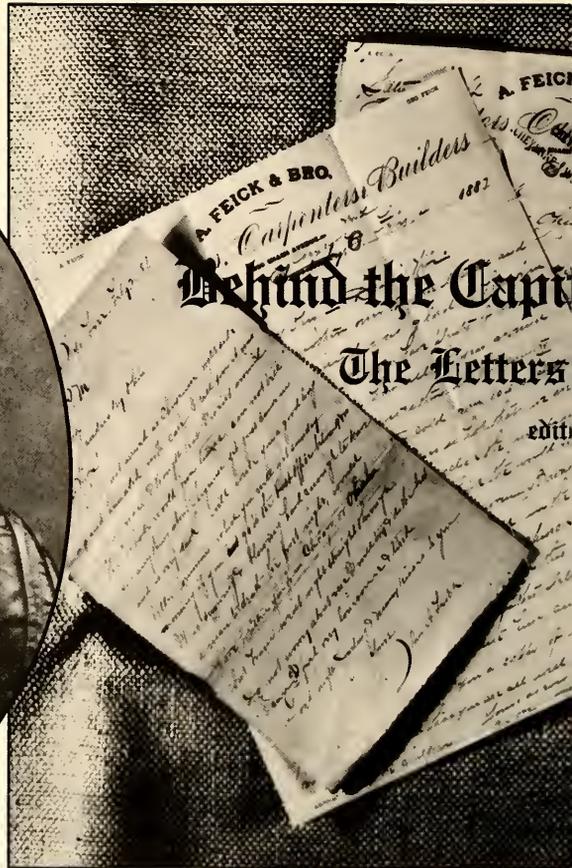
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Lizzie Feick



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY FEICK FAMILY

The Wyoming State Capitol, completed almost a century ago, still serves as the seat of Wyoming's government. The design and the construction of the structure, however, have a decidedly Ohio influence as both the architect and the construction firm came from that state. Correspondence from John A. Feick, a member of A. Feick & Bro., the firm which built the Capitol, still exists in the Feick family archives. The letters, written during John's stay in Cheyenne, provide an interesting look at the Wyoming of 100 years ago and at the construction of the Capitol.

President Andrew Johnson signed the organic act creating Wyoming Territory on July 25, 1868, although the territorial government did not officially organize until 1869. Cheyenne, the largest city, became the capital. Because there was no Capitol building, two rooms were rented, one on Sixteenth Street and one on Seventeenth Street, for use by the two houses of the legislature, the Council and the

House of Representatives. The territory rented other quarters in later years until the governor and legislature gave consideration to a permanent building in 1886.¹

Governor Francis E. Warren in his 1886 address to the legislature broached the topic of a government building. He stated "it would afford greater convenience to the public if the various territorial offices could be brought together in a central location."² The legislature agreed and authorized the Capitol to be built at a cost not to exceed \$150,000.

To begin the process of construction Warren appointed a five man Capitol Building Commission. The members first elected Erasmus Nagle, a well known Cheyenne businessman, as chairman and then began the process of selecting site and architect. The commission chose two blocks on Hill Street, now known as Capitol Avenue, for the location.³



John A. Feick

Considering bids from firms in Ohio, Minnesota and Michigan, the commission decided upon architect David W. Gibbs of Toledo, Ohio, to design the building. According to the commission's final report, Gibbs had much experience in the planning and construction of large public buildings and "had given to that class of work special and particular attention."⁴

Again drawing from Ohio, this time from Sandusky, the commission selected the firm of A. Feick & Bro. to construct the Capitol. Feick's successful bid came to \$131,275.13 for a building of wood construction with an iron tower.⁵ The contractor broke ground on September 9, 1886.⁶

Adam and George Feick founded A. Feick & Brother in 1872.⁷ Adam, born in Germany in 1832, emigrated to the United States in 1852 and settled in Sandusky, where his older brother Philip had taken up residence a few years earlier. George, younger than Adam, did not arrive in

America until 1866, when he also located in Ohio. Adam employed George in his construction firm until they formed their partnership in 1872 which lasted until Adam's death in 1893.

At the time the Capitol Building Commission awarded the contract to the Feicks, their company was completing several buildings on the campuses of Oberlin College and Lake Erie College for Women. The firm already had constructed several large stone churches in Ohio along with buildings for the Ohio Soldiers and Sailors Home.

The distance between Sandusky and Cheyenne, however, presented some problems and necessitated a long stay in the West for a member of the company. The Feicks subcontracted with Robert C. Greenlee of Denver, but still needed someone to be in Cheyenne. At first George traveled to Wyoming and made the early arrangements. He then expected to return to Ohio while his nephew, Adam's

son, John A. Feick, oversaw construction. On November 26, 1886, George wrote to John from Cheyenne:

Mr. Greenlee furnished good bond and think from present intimation all will go well as may be expected I have made contract for cut stone Have also completed contract for about 1 ½ million brick The weather just now is bad but as soon as the weather is better things can move all right I am getting prices on lumber by different home parties and will try Chicago on my way back. My present plans are as follows I will engage a small house right near the Capitol building and expect you to move out here perhaps in February or March all depending some what on the weather. Will get all lumber and (nock down) frame here by the same time you can easily take charge of all we have to do make the centers frame Joist and put frames to gether. In fact one man can take all of the wood work until the building is inclosed of course all the interior wood work will have to be prepared East and we can easily bring a few good men to put it up. This is a very lively town and you and your wife will like it very well I think better than Oberlin or eaven Sandusky. As I have learned so far if a man wants to do the right thing the people will Stand by him. Think it would be well for you when in Sandusky to have some one file a application for you to the Masonic fraternity, as it will be of some use to you and will take you about two month to become a master mason.

Will write you again from Chicago
Yours as ever
G. Feick⁸

It is not known how John, only 24, reacted to this assignment, the first where he could not commute between home and worksite, but during his stay in Cheyenne he wrote many letters to his wife of only two years, Lizzie. Her widowed father, Constantine Zipfel, was in Germany at the time visiting various spas, leaving Lizzie to care for her brothers and sisters in Sandusky and keeping her from accompanying John. They did not know when she could join him.

John's correspondence provides an interesting look at his first reaction to Wyoming and how it changed, his loneliness, the hard work involved and his many activities and acquaintances during his stay.

Feb 2, 1887

Dearest Wife!

I just arrived at Cheyenne right side up and handled with care. I tell you it was a long ride. I thought that I went around the world five times, can not tell you any thing about Cheyenne yet, just came in and is very dark, will write you a good long letter tomorrow which you will get sunday morning if you go to the post office between 9 & 10

It is snowing & blowing bad enough to scare a man to death the first night, would have written you from Chicago, or Omaha but train went right straight through.

Do not worry about me I will try & do the best I can I feel very lonesome & tired

Yours
John A. Feick

February 5 1887

Dearest Wife:

I suppose you received the letter I wrote you when I arrived. I had quite a long trip, and feel very lonesome and homesick for you, to be fifteen hundred miles away from you and in a part of the country where you have to wear a belly-band to keep your cap on your head is a pretty hard thing.

There are very wealthy people living in this town but they all look to me like Cow-boys, Lizzie you can not imagine what kind of a country this is you can go just one hundred miles straight out in the country and not see a house or a living sole, but wolves, prarie Dogs, Deer, there are some very heigh mountains that you can see from Cheyenne that have snow on the top all the year around and the cars run to the top of them and that is 8000 feet higher than Cheyenne. Cheyenne is just two and one half miles higher in the air than Sandusky is, so you can imagine how the wind blows.

I will close for two night and write you another letter in the morning, hoping to hear from you soon
Your true & faithful husband
John A. Feick

Feb 13, 1887

Dearest Wife,

I received your first letter and was glad to hear from you I thought you would never write. I am well but terrible homesick, you asked me where I was last Sunday, in the morning I had breakfast at 9 o'clock Then Mr. Greenlee & I went out after Jack Rabbits Came back at 2 o'clock and had Dinner Then we took a walk around the town Had supper at six Then I went to church till half past nine, and then to Bed. I am stopping with Commissioners Nagle's Mother a very fine place and get my meals at the Hotel. We have had very cold weather here 12 below zero, and the next day it would be so hot that I could not stand it with my under cloths on. We have some terrible winds here will write you this evening again must go to Dinner
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

Feb 14, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received another ones of your letters and two papers this evening and was glad to hear from you. I see by the papers you have plenty of rain East . . . we never have rain here all the year around but we have some very queer weather in this country in the morning it is bitter cold from 10 to 2 o'clock in the afternoon the sun shines so hot that we are looking for shade and from 2 o'clock the wind will blow so hard that you would think the world was coming

Cheyenne Wyo. Feb. 2, 1887

Wednesday night, Feb. 2, 1887

My dear Lizzie,
I received your letter

Dearst Wife!

I just arrived at Cheyenne with a
up and hundred with coal. I had an it was
a long ride. I thought that I was around
the whole world in time, can not tell
you anything about Cheyenne yet, just come in
and is very dark. Well write you a good long
letter tomorrow which you will get Sunday-
morning if you do go to the Post Office tomorrow.
It is raining & I never had enough to drink
a man to drink the first night, would
have written you from Cheyenne or Omaha
but train would not stop through.
Do not worry about me I will be & do the best
I can. I feel very homesick & tired.
Love you night Darling & many kisses & love
John A. Feick

WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT (AMH DEPT.)

John A. Feick's first letter to Lizzie from Cheyenne.

to an end. Sunday morning I was to church in the after-
noon I went for a walk in the country had supper at six
and then went to church again. We have some very nice
churches in this city. . . .

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

Feb. 17, 1887

Dearest Wife:

We had a fire here last night and the wind blew at the
rate of 75 miles an hour and now are having a terrible snow
storm but very little of the snow stays on account of the
wind, I am getting a little over my being Homesick cause
I get a letter or paper of you most every night. The mail
comes in once a day and that is in the evening after supper.
I was to see Katie Putman at the Opra House last night
it was a very good show wish you could have been here
to see it. I am getting acquainted with a good many very
nice folks. but have not been inside of a Saloon yet nor
have I touched a drop of intoxicating liquor since I left
home & don't intend to if I can holde it out which I think

I can
Your most affectionate Husband
J. F.

Feb. 18, 1887
Dearest Wife:

I received your sixth letter of Feb. 15 to night and was
very glad to hear from you. The wind done considerable
dammmage around here, a freight train of 48 cars was blown
off the track about a mile from town all telegraph wires
are down, yesterdays train was 19 hours late, The Denver
passenger train that left here in the morning was blown
off the track & rolled down a steep hill, 2 passengers were
killed and a good many had their arms & legs brooken.
The roof was blown off of the Catholic Convent which is
west to the capitol it is a large four story building (Brick)
. . . I am very sorry that I could not be home on your 20th
Birthday, but still I thought of you all the time I wanted
to buy you a small . . . it was very pretty something new that
I never saw before there were 4 nice gold leaves hooked
together & looked very rich, but the price was to rich for
my pocket Book \$42.00 is what he asked and it was not
longer than your little finger but it was a daisy, but never
mind I love you just the same only take good care of your
self. . . .
Yours as ever
John A.

A. FEICK & BRO.
Contractors, Carpenters, Builders
220 MIAMI AVENUE - Cheyenne, Wyo.
Thursday Morning
Feb. 17 1887
Sincerely,
John A. Feick
Dearest Wife!
The had a fire here last night and
the wind blew at the rate of 75 miles an hour
and now are having a terrible snow storm
but very little of the snow stays on account of
the wind, I am getting a little over my being
Homesick cause I get a letter or paper of you
most every night. The mail comes in once a day
and that is in the evening after supper. I was
to see Katie Putman at the Opra House last
night it was a very good show wish you could
have been here to see it. I am getting acquainted
with a good many very nice folks. but have not
been inside of a Saloon yet nor have I touched a
drop of intoxicating liquor since I left home &
don't intend to if I can holde it out which I think
I can
Your most affectionate Husband
J. F.

AMH DEPT.

Feby 20, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . the house that I wanted to get is rented to another man that was right close by the Capitol. Board is very high here I pay \$10.00 ten dollars a month for my room and five & a half dollars a week for my meals, so that comes very high, Meals I get at the Restaurant and the room of Mr. Nagles mother the man was at Sandusky, I have a very nice room and a good bed so I can rest well at night. But sometimes I get so homesick for you that I think I must pick up and go home, but it can not be helped, you must not worry about me will try and take good care of myself you need not be afraid of me making a mash the women that are in this city are all homely, if I was to kiss one of them it would turn my stomach, have not seen a good looking girl yet. . . . I will send you a newspaper from Cheyenne which you show to the boys and then you send it to your father which I think will interest him very much in telling old country people how they Brand Cattle in the Wild West send it as soon as you can that he will get it before he leaves there. . . .

Yours as ever

John A. F.

Feby 22 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . the weather was very warm today and tonight it is 12 below zero. You can tell L. Kinzler that I am Boarding Mrs. O'Reiley's Hotel, . . . You can tell Cap Brown if you see him that that there is plenty of game in this country such as Deer, antelope, Jack Rabbits wolves etc and if he wants to enjoy a good hunt, to come out here, give him my best regards. Cheyenne has about 15 thousand inhabitants They were all enjoying Washingtons Birthday today, They have some finer stores here than there are in the East only that everything is very expensive and the only thing I buy here for the same price as I do East is postage Stamps. . . .

John A. F.

Feby 23, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . I was in the house all day last Sunday on account of bad weather, you asked if they have any saloons here, I can tell you the town is made up of Saloons but I have not stepped inside of one yet. I am very tired and homesick but feel very well otherwise. . . .

Yours John A. F.

March 1, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letter of Saturday morn this evening

and tomorrow night I will be here just one month but that one month seems to me like one year, we are have nice summer here for the last two days & hope it will stay so for some time It seems very queer to see no snow in Cheyenne but at a hundred miles distance you can see the tops of mountains covered with snow & does not seem more than two or three miles away, this is a queer country I tell you. . . .

. . . You asked me if I had my washing done at the laundry, I have not had any cloth washed since I am here. The first day I struck town they told me any man that wore a white shirt would be shot, so I bought a blue sailor shirt or what ever you would call them in Ohio, I have not changed since nor have I had my sunday cloth on since the day I struck town and the shirt will last 3 months longer with out changing, you will think that I am a Cow-Boy when you see me again. . . .

Respectfully as ever

John A. F.

March 9, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . We have not had any rain since I am here but still have lots of wind. My cloths don't need washing yet and my socks have no bottom, but will get them washed and wear them as leggins I get shaved twice every week which costs 15c every time and 35c for a Hair Cut. . . . You need not be afraid of me looking for another bed pardner as long as I am out here, They have plenty of bad houses out here but they do not bother me.

It is true what I told you about wearing white shirts. I wish you could be out here when the corner stone will be laid The Free Masons are going to lay the stone and expect to have a grand time over it. I think George will be out when the time comes and if your father is at home then you can come with him. . . .

Yours in haste

John A. Feick

March 12, 1887

Dearest Wife:

The mail is four hours late this evening so I can not get it until morning but will try and write you a little letter tonight. I am feeling considerable better today than I have been for some time. I will move to my new palace¹⁰ as soon as my blankets come I have it fixed up in grate shape, it is a room about the size of your dining room on the East side I have four bunks two over each other, one for Chas W. one for George when he comes, and one for myself and the other is a spare bed for company when we have any I got some coffee sacks filled them with straw and that makes a very good straw tick. On the West side in one corner I have my wardrobe for my cloths & C next to that is my desk for my papers, Books & c.f. and in the west corner is my wash stand have a baisen, dipper, soap pail &

C in it under it a place for my shoe brush and blacking and other thrash and a room for a chamber but dont need any on the north side back of the door is the grand looking glass, towels, broom and C and on the South side is my trunk with shelves and c.f. over it, and in the center of the room I have a center table of my owne make. Monday the men are coming to put Electric light in my room, a lamp would have been good enough for me but the electric light is just as cheep and there is no danger with fire, the room is not very heigh just heigh enough so that I can stand up straight. I made it low on count of the wind, have two windows in the room with curtins on them so you can imagine what kind of a palice I have. If Chas. W. is not gone yet when you get this letter send two good towels and an old hair brush so that I can brush my hair once in a while. I will write you more about it & tell you how I like it when I live in it a while, my meals I shall get down town at Wilcoxes¹¹ the same as always. Having no news I will close hoping you are all well and that I may hear from you soon
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

March 15, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . I begin to like this country better every day the grass is coming out green and the leaves are coming out on the trees, the air is so clear and pure that you can see one Hundred and fifty miles and see the snow on all the tops of Mountains. Mr. Nagle took me out for a ride last Sunday and I enjoyed it very much, he has a very fast team. . . . They are blacks and are well mated and I tell you I rode just as fast as I ever want to ride in a buggy. You tell Chas Joe and Joe Lerman if they want to see nice horses and horses that are fast they should come out here. Mr. Nagle sold a horse to a Chicago man for six Thousand two

hundred dollars last Saturday. he would not have sold her, but she was a terrible kicker and he could not drive her. . . . This morning when I went to Breakfast I saw a Chinaman laying in the Street with his head cut off and it looked terrible.¹²

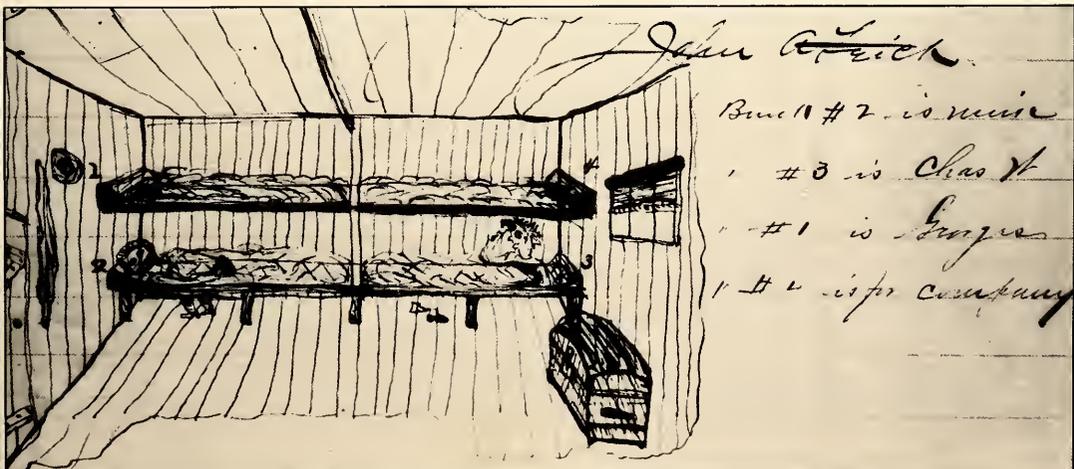
. . . You asked me in your last letter if I chewed I do and every body else in town even every little boy that can walk, there is something in the climate that makes people chew here so excuse me I never drink, they tell me the whisky a man gets here would make a man go home and rob his own trunk

You dont see as many drunkards in Cheyenne as you do in Sandusky and the town is kept very orderly other wise I think you will like it when you come out, perhaps you can get your father to come out with you for a visit when he comes back. I know he would enjoy himself very much to go out on the ranches Sunday N. [Nagle] and I were on Arbuckles ranch that is 14 miles from town, he is the only man around here that raises sheep and has two hundred thousand sheep on his ranch (Arbuckle is the man that manufactures Coffee in the East) then we went to Posts Ranch and saw 18 Stallions that he Mr. Post got from France Europe last week, he told us he had over two thousand horses on his ranch and they are all well bred horses Mr. Post has the largest horse ranch in the world he says the 18 Stallions cost him Sixty two thousand dollars.¹³ I will close for this time hoping you are all well
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

March 18, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . if you come I will not keep house but will board



Feick's drawing of the interior of his "palace" located on the Capitol grounds taken from his March 12, 1887 letter.

and sponge on the neighbors as a good many other people do. I shall stay until the building is finished if I keep well that is if you come out, if not I shall come home once to see you George will be at Cheyenne the First of April.

The carr came to Cheyenne this evening and will unload it tomorrow afternoon if everything goes all right. The apples you sent with Chas are very good But I tell you the nicest thing we have in our shanty is the electric light we take it in bed with us. . . .

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

March 19, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . We got our carr unloaded this after noon and found the cake which pleased me very much and the sausage was emence you tell Charly that I am ever so much obliged for it. Mr. OBrine¹⁴ one of the Territory Commissioners says he never saw such sausage, he eat half a pice and wanted to take the other half to his wife he says he never eat any sausage that tasted better to him than that. The cake is good and did not dry up very much for which I am ever so much obliged. . . .hoping you are all well

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

March 20, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letter this evening and was very glad to hear you are all well. I will draw you a better picture of our room when I have a little more time You can send towels that go on a roller and I will make a roller for them. Today I bought a stove and a large chair in a second handed store, 5.00 for the stove and 2.50 for the chair Allmost every body in Cheyenne has been to my room to see it and think it is very comfortable little place. . . .

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

March 29, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letter No 25 this eve but did not get any papers If Katies sister could talk English she could get work here girls are very scarce in this country and get big pay for ordinary house work they get Twenty dollars (20) a month room and board and that is a big pay for a young girl. . . . The wind blew very hard today so that a person could not see their hand before their face. . . .

Yours as ever
John A. Feick



View of the Capitol cornerstone laying ceremony, May 18, 1887. After a parade through downtown Cheyenne, people gathered for the official Masonic dedication ceremonies and speeches by Joseph M. Carey, Wyoming's delegate to Congress, and Governor Thomas Moonlight. On the left is what probably served as Feick's "palace."



AMH DEPT.

Immediately following the cornerstone laying the crowd enjoyed a barbecue held on the grounds just west of the Capitol. The menu consisted of mutton, bread, "cornerstone pickles," lemonade and roast beef. The Cheyenne Daily Sun reported "the fare was unusually good and tasted all the better from the fact of keen appetites and being eaten out of doors."

Apr. 2, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received two of your letters this evening No 29 & 30 and was glad to hear from you. I got a letter of George saying that he was going to Denver Colorado and would not be in Cheyenne till Tuesday night, he is going there to see George Cooke & his wife. If George asks you again about coming out you tell him you insist on coming out or want me to come home, I know one thing that I shall not stay here alone all Summer if I can help it. . . . You must think I look terrible raggid the way you write I have lots of mending to do and keep my cloths in good trim.

Mrs. Nagle is going to take me to the Ranch tomorrow morning and we are going to stay all day to have a nick pick. Wish you could be here to go along Having no more news I will close hoping you are all well which I am the same. . . .

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

April 7, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I have not written to you for two or three days, have allways been busy during the day and at night time we were with the Capitol Commission or at Nagles's house¹⁵ so I did not get time to write, but am sorry for and will try and be a little more prompt after this George came Tuesday night and was very glad to see some one from Sandusky. Mr. Filbys son is out here too and seems to like it very well. The towels you sent me are very nice and so is the comb & brush for which I am ever so much obliged. George sleeps on the top bunk in our castle, I will close and write you more news tomorrow night

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

April 11, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . I suppose you think it queer, because I did not write to you this and last week as much as usual George

& I were off every night and was kept very busy It is twelve oclock now, and just came home from Mr. Nagles. Sunday Mrs Nagle & I were out to the Herferd ranch all day and had a grand time & wished you were here very much. . . .

We are having very nice weather and am beginning to like this place very much. when you come I think you will have to move out here I think you will like it very much after you get aquainted

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

April 25, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . Chas & I were working at Nagles house for the last three days we had an awful snow storm here last Thursday, the snow was even with the top of our shanty and could not get out until we had shoveled our way out the snow was 15 & 20 feet in some places. . . Having no news I will close hoping you are well & that I may see you soon

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

May 1, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letter and papers and was very glad to hear from you I was not feeling very well for the last two days. We had a terrible Snow storm last night and it is terrible cold today. We are going to have a grand time at the laying of the corner stone and wish you could come by the 18th of May, it will be something that you never see before the train is here and must get this mailed to go off

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

May 2, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . People here are going crazy over the corner stone they have collected \$1800.00 Dollars to lay it with, they are going to have a Barber Cue, that is something that you or I never saw in the East, perhaps you don't know what a Barber Cue is, if you dont I'll not tell you what it is until you come to see it. The People of Cheyenne have appointed me on two committees on Committee of arrangements, and on the Committee of receptions, so you see I don't belong to you common people in Ohio any more, Inclosed find notice they sent me, was to the meeting tonight and had quite a time, Mrs. Nagle & Mrs Wilcox expect to see you by the 18th of May 87 If you come out here and stay till fall you can vote, all women have the right to vote when in the Territory 3 months.

. . . If the boys and the other children do not care,

I wish you would bring Alfred with you, speak to Chas & Joe about it I think it would do him considerable good, there are good & better Catholic schools here than there are in Ohio. Mr. Nagles little boy would like to have him come very much he has a very nice little poney & buggy and is just about Alfreds size, if he did not want to stay long he could go back by the first of Aug When Geroge or one of the Commissioners went East.

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

May 6, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letters & papers tonight and was very glad to hear from you, but not that you was not comming out for the laying of the corner stone. We are estimating for May again so I do not get time to write long letters have to sit up half of the night to get through with my work. Having no news I will close hoping to hear from you again.

Yours as ever
John A. Feick

May 26, 1887

Dearest Wife:

. . . I suppose by this time you know what kind of a time we had at the laying of the Corner Stone,¹⁶ people expect to have a larger time on Decoration day,¹⁷ I tell you this is a great country for excitement.

People are more liberal & a nicer class of people than you find in the east.

Train is here & I must close hoping to see you soon.
Many kisses.
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

May 31, 1887

Dearest Wife:

Received your letter but no paper this evening have had lots work to do and did not feel very well is the reason that I did not write so often. Before you come out go to George and have him explain to you how to come. You can go to Chicago without a sleeper you get there about 12 o'clock at night that same day you start, then you change & take the Rock Island R. R. to Omaha you get there the next night about 7 50 o'clock; on that train you can get your meals in the Dining car that costs 75c a meal, you must ask the conductor where to get your sleeping car ticket or ask George he can tell you more about it than I can rite. At Omaha you change cars again and take the Union Pacific R.R. that runs to Cheyenne, there is one that leaves for Denver at the same time so be careful that you get in the right one, you must get your sleeping car ticket at

Omaha as you go through the depot to the Union Pacific that will cost you 4.00 Dollars, the one you get at Chicago will cost 3.00 Dollars, if you take the sleeper you will be well taken care of if you dont know just what to do ask the porter on the sleeper and he will tell you just what to do, you will not have to waight more than an hour any where if you dont miss any trains. Have Geo. give you time tables of the 3 roads & explain to you so that you know where you are going Enclosed find time card of the U.P.R.R. you can telegraph when you come having no news I will close hoping to see you soon many kisses to you
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

June 1, 1887

Dearest Wife:

I received your letter and papers and was very glad to hear from you. . . You rite that you all wondred what I was doing Sunday Mr. Nagle took me to the post in his buggy we had a nice time hearing the band play then we went to the fairgrounds & saw the Base Ball game.

Hoping you will get out all right & have a nice journey I will close hoping to see you soon Many Kisses to you¹⁸
Yours as ever
John A. Feick

January 11, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

I've received no letter of you yet and am patiently waiting for one to see how you got home and what all the folks thought when they saw you come in the door. . . We are having regular summer weather it is very warm. The town has considerable life in it since Lection day, than the Legislature met last Tuesday and the Street Cars run every five minutes, there are many strange people in town and everthing is very lively about Chian. . .

Yours
John A.

January 12, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

Have received no letter of you yet but shurely aught to get one tonight or in the morning; We have had nice weather ever since you left but today it is blowing terrible hard the sand is blowing around so that a person can hardly see their hand before there face.

I have no news at present only that I miss you a great deal & feel terrible lonesome and everybody else that sees me asks where you are

Will close this hoping to hear from you tonight. . . .
Yours,
John A.

January 17, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

Just got home from the Capitol and it now is half past eleven, Mr. & Mrs Wilcox are drinking a Tom & Jerry on the head of the new mothern—law. We work all last Sunday and every night this & last week hense the delay of my writing. I think we will get home very soon so have a little patience and we will soon be together again. . . .

. . . Sam Wilcox wants me to go in Business with him and will give me a good show I am really on the fence & don't know what to do, but will want to go home once more and see all the folks & what father thinks about it. Of course I do not want to leave him if I am any help to him.

Your Dear John

January 22, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

I received your letter this evening and was very glad to hear from you, we are all well at present & hope we will be until I get home. We have regular summer weather for the last five days and it seems so funney when you say that you go out sleighing in Sandusky.

The plasterers left on the new road tonight and wanted me to go with them the worst way, & said they would pay my fare If I would go with them, They will send us a dog (Pug) to Sandusky to my address so when it comes you will have to take good care of it until I get home. They hated to leave with out me but it will not be very long before I get home.

We worked hard all day at the Capitol we have second & third stories finished and have the dome very near finished then all there will be left is the basement & first story settling up, pack our trunk & tools, sweep out the building, have our trunks taken to the depot, buy our tickets, tell them all good bye, jump on the train, kiss my best girl, ride for two days and a night on the train, then we are in Sandusky. . . .

Yours
John A

Jan'y 28, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

I received a letter of you this evening and was very glad to hear from you, I did not write to you last night I was very tired and came home late tonight we did not work at the Building but I had to work at the office awhile tonight it is now ten oclock and being my Birthday is today I send Toney over for a Growler which we quietly are drinking on the head of the Birthday, we have got to work in the morning so you cant expect much news of me tonight.

Yours
John A.

February 1, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

I received your letter this evening and was very glad to hear from you again We are having it very warm here, warmer than it was any time last summer and we are working as hard as we can to get finished and get home. . . .

Yours

John A.

Feb 9, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

. . . Lizzie how would you like to move to Denver to live I think there's where I will spend my next summer I might just as well get out of Sandusky first as last and try my luck. . .

Yours

John A.

Feb 23, 1888

Dearest Lizzie

. . . Dear Lizzie if everything goes right we will leave Chian about 4 weeks from next saturday and be in Sandusky about the 28 of March and then wont we have a bulley time. I can hardly wate till the time comes. . .

Yours

John A.

Feb 25, 1888

Dearest Lizzie

four weeks from tonight you will get a telegram of me that I leave Cheyenne

Feb 26, 1888

Dearest Liz:

I received your kind & welcome letter I suppose you will miss some of my letters the passenger going East caught a fire & burnt 15 cars Killed several and injured a good many.¹⁹ Adolph & Crist were scart to go last night they will both come to see you. . . .

Yours

John A.

March 5, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

I received all of your letters suppose you think I have forgotten you because I did not write for so long The members of the Legeslature had an excursion to Denver and invited us along so George, Gerlach, Louey, and I went. We had a nice time. John Greenlee took me all around the town, and at night we went to the Labor Opera

house and saw Fantasia it was a good show and we enjoyed it very much.

Yours

John A.

March 13, 1888

Wife Lizzie

. . . I think we can start for Sandusky a week from next Saturday if nothing happens so you can stop writing a week from tomorrow the 14/88 having no news I will close

Yours

John A.

March 14, 1888

Dearest Lizzie:

. . . we will get done here just the time I have promised and all the men will go east just that time if nothing happens I will go to Salt Lake City if I possibly can so I will be home 2 or three days later, of course this may not be for certain but want to go very much if I can. . . .

Yours

John A.

March 17, 1888

My Dearest Lizzie:

I received your kind & welcome letter this evening and was very glad to hear from you. I am well & glad to hear you are the same, only that I am terrible homesick and anxious to see you all again I suppose in a week from tonight by this time we will have all our tickets bought and on the train then I will be happy when two days are gone by so as to see Sandusky, but for some reason I hate to leave Cheyenne I dont know why I am not very much stuck on the town but I hate to leave it

Mr Nagle wants me to stay here the worst way & says he will help me in every way that he can Mrs. N. sends her best wishes to you. . .

Yours

John A.

March 20, 1888

My Dear Lizzie:

I received your letter & was glad to hear from you we are having lots of snow and bad weather, we will all be finished to go home Saturday, if I go to Salt Lake City you must not be angry with me for I would like to see it very much if I can work some skeame to get there without Geo knowing it. Mrs. Nagle sends her best wishes to you & wishes you were back again. I will telegraph you when I start for home. . .

Yours

John A



AMH DEPT.

View of the finished Capitol in 1888. Wings were added in 1890 and again in 1917.

The Capitol Building Commission accepted the completed building and submitted its final report on March 31, 1888. By that time, however, the legislature had authorized the addition of wings onto the Capitol which were completed in 1890. Wings again were added in 1917. Cheyenne contractors constructed both additions, not A. Feick & Bro.

John and Lizzie never did settle in the West. Instead they chose to remain in Sandusky. After the death of John's father in 1893, John and George formed a partnership. In the early 1900s, John started his own company and in 1914, his son, John Charles, became a partner. Still active today, the family company now is known as Feick Contractors and rehabilitates Sandusky's older buildings, many built by their ancestors.

The *Wyoming Tribune* reported on the day of the laying of the cornerstone, May 18, 1887, on what had transpired up until that time and looked ahead. "Work on the capitol was commenced September 1886 since which time a large force of men have been constantly employed. . . . The Contractor for this immense work Messrs. Feick & Brother, are deserving, and are receiving

the warmest congratulations of all our people for the elegant and artistic manner in which they are fulfilling their contract. The firm has the distinguished reputation of not only being in every way responsible, and as builders of large structures they stand second to none in the United States as the splendid capitol of Wyoming will fully testify when completed. Mr. John Feick is ably representing the firm in the work of construction here." The Feicks did construct a building in which Wyoming always has and always will be proud.

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1. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp. 64-74.
 2. *Cheyenne Daily Sun*, January 20, 1886, p. 4, c. 2.
 3. "Final Report of the Capitol Building Commission," Office of the Capitol Building Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming, March 31, 1888, p. 4, Archives Division, Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department (AMH Dept.), Cheyenne, Wyoming.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 13.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
 6. *Cheyenne Democratic Leader*, September 10, 1886, p. 3, c. 3.

7. All background material on the Feick family taken from Anita Gundlach Feick, *Building America: A History of the Family Feick (Feik-Fike)* (Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1983), and letter from Anita Gundlach Feick to editor.
8. All correspondence can be found in Feick family archives, Sandusky, Ohio. Letters are presented exactly as written.
9. This wind storm derailed four trains in Colorado. According to the newspaper report, no one was killed, but several severely injured. In Denver the storm unroofed buildings, leveled smokestack chimneys and telephone and telegraph poles, while in Cheyenne it damaged the roofs of the convent, the new Union Pacific Railroad depot and other buildings. *Cheyenne Democratic Leader*, February 18, 1887, p. 1, c. 1, p. 3, c. 1.
10. John located his new "palace" on the Capitol grounds.
11. The Wilcox' owned a restaurant in Cheyenne at 217 West 16th Street.
12. On March 14, 1887, the body of the "Chinaman" was found under the floor in a vacant house. Authorities identified the person as Charlie Thong, also known as Charlie Sevan. *Cheyenne Democratic Leader*, March 15, 1887, p. 3, cc. 1-2.
13. Morton E. Post served on the Capitol Building Commission. He arrived in Cheyenne in 1867. In 1872, he founded the PO Ranch north of Cheyenne in order to raise horses. Besides ranching, Post also owned a Cheyenne bank, Morton E. Post & Company. The Wyoming ranching industry experienced a devastating winter in 1886-1887. Post's bank, because of its many loans to ranchers, failed in 1887. Post, who lost almost everything, eventually paid back most of his creditors and moved to California. The Aruckle Coffee Company purchased the PO Ranch in 1891. "PO Ranch," by Ellen Mueller, Vertical File, "Aruckle Coffee," Historical Research and Publications Division, AMH Dept.
14. Nicholas J. O'Brien, a stockman, was a member of the Capitol Building Commission.
15. John Feick helped in the construction of Erasmus Nagle's house, located on 17th Street in Cheyenne. Nagle used stone block originally meant for the Capitol, but which the Capitol Building Commission rejected. By the 1950s, this stone began to flake and crumble, necessitating a stucco covering.
16. The Capitol's cornerstone was laid May 18, 1887. That afternoon, people from around Wyoming and from Colorado and Nebraska witnessed a parade through Cheyenne and the Masonic dedication ceremony, listened to speeches by Judge Joseph M. Carey and Governor Thomas Moonlight and enjoyed a barbecue on the grounds just west of the Capitol. *Cheyenne Daily Sun*, May 19, 1887, pp. 1, 3; *Cheyenne Democratic Leader*, May 19, 1887, p. 3.
17. Decoration Day, begun by the Grand Army of the Republic as a way to honor those who died in the Civil War, is now known as Memorial Day. Cheyenne celebrated in 1887 with a parade, the dedication of the Grand Army of the Republic monument at the city cemetery and the decoration of the graves of the Civil War veterans. *Cheyenne Democratic Leader*, May 28, 1887, p. 3, c. 2.
18. Lizzie did come out West during the summer of 1887. She returned to Ohio in January, 1888, when the letters again resume.
19. A passenger train and a freight train collided on the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad near Colton, Nebraska, on February 25, 1888. Several of the freight cars carried "gasoline oil," which burst into flame. An engineer was the only fatality, although the crash injured many. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, February 26, 1888, p. 1, c. 4.

Sketch of the Capitol after the first addition.



THE CULTURAL ROOTS OF INDIAN WATER RIGHTS

by

Michael Massie

Throughout Western history, water has played a critical role in the evolution of this arid region's economic and social institutions. In the past, this scarce resource has provided urban centers with the sustenance for growth, has converted dry, barren land into productive agricultural areas and has fostered the development of the stockraising and the mineral industries. Today, a host of interest groups competes for the right to use this dwindling water supply in order to survive and to expand in the future. Native Americans represent one of these contestants.

In 1977, the State of Wyoming sued the Arapahoes and the Shoshones of the Wind River Reservation in order to determine the tribes' claims to the Wind River. This case deals with such issues as beneficial and future uses, storage and priority rights. While the state hopes to define the quantity of the Indians' water rights in order to insure downstream Whites a definite flow of water, the tribes desire to retain enough of the resource to guarantee an economic base for their society. The Wyoming Supreme Court is now considering the case. Appeals to federal courts are possible and a final decision is years away.

Whatever the determination is, most of it will be based upon the activities surrounding the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana around the turn of the century. In the 1908 court case of *Winters v United States*, the U.S. Supreme Court supported the Assiniboines' and the Gros Ventres' claims to Montana's Milk River and established, for the first time, a general definition of Indian water rights. Since then, historians and lawyers have dwelled upon the legal foundations of this crucial interpretation. Unfortunately, they have generally ignored the social, economic and political movements that shaped this important decision and still continue to influence the contemporary status of Indian water rights.

A few historians, such as Norris Hundley in *Water and the West*, have examined the long history of Western water development and conflicts. In "The Winters' Decision and Indian Water Rights: A Mystery Reexamined," Hundley also analyzed many of the factors that eventually encouraged the federal government to defend the Indians' rights to water.

However, these previous works have not investigated the cultural, political and economic forces that significantly affected the landmark Winters decision. The history of the Assiniboines and Gros Ventres, federal Indian policy and the demands of Western Whites influenced the court's final judgment. As a result, the events centered around Montana's Fort Belknap Reservation profoundly shaped the future course of Indian water rights.¹

Neither of the Fort Belknap tribes were residents of Montana before the Whites arrived on this continent. In the 17th century, the Gros Ventres lived near the Blackfoot in the Saskatchewan River Basin of western Canada. At the same time, the Assiniboines, having separated from the Sioux Nation in northern Minnesota, traveled to the eastern Canadian grasslands. These Indians possessed a woodlands culture in which their economy depended upon hunting and agriculture.²

By the mid-18th century, portions of each tribe migrated onto the Great Plains and formed a new culture. Here, they found a large number of bison and soon depended upon this animal for their food, clothing and shelter. Agricultural practices disappeared and hunting became the central part of their economy. While some northern bands maintained a woodlands lifestyle, the southern people evolved a Plains culture.³

In evolving this Plains culture, water performed significant social and economic functions in the peoples' lives.

Important ceremonies such as the Sun Dance depended upon an abundant supply of water in order to meet the desires of a large gathering of Indians. Throughout the years, the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres searched for the river valleys in order to protect themselves from the winter wind and cold and to sustain their large horse herds on the vegetation that surrounded the streams and lakes. Since the bands often needed a fresh supply of water, they camped near a river or stream after a day's travel. As a result, water was one of the most important resources these tribes used.⁴

The destinies of the Southern Assiniboinés and Gros Ventres paralleled those of other Plains Indians. In the 1750s, the Assiniboinés were one of the first tribes in the region to receive guns from the British traders. With their allies, the Crees, they used their superior military power to expand further West and to force other tribes out of the North Central Plains. This movement displaced the Gros Ventres and these people formed an alliance with the Blackfoot in order to fight the Assiniboinés.⁵

These Indians remained enemies until intertribal warfare and White immigration forced them to cooperate. The advancing frontier decreased the bison herds of the eastern plains, and the Sioux, moving West in their search for more bison, encroached upon the Assiniboinés' territory. The large bison population of Montana also induced the Blackfeet to enter the area from the north. Soon, fights erupted as each tribe competed for the decreasing food supply. In the 1860s, caught between two powerful nations, the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres were forced to share the declining resource.⁶

As more frontiersmen settled in the region, conflicts increased between the Whites and the Indians. The tribes resisted this advancing frontier, but treaties and thefts slowly eroded the Indians' land base. By the 1870s, the bison was rapidly disappearing in most sections of the Plains. This destruction of the Native Americans' traditional economy altered their culture and drove the people onto a reservation to seek food, clothing and shelter.⁷

In 1873, the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres agreed to reside on the Fort Belknap Reserve, a small tract of land on the Milk River. The acceptance of a limited reservation marked a new era in the tribes' histories. Some aspects of their cultures changed, but many people also retained some of their traditional customs. As a result, various lifestyles and ideologies arose on the reservation as each individual attempted to deal with a new environment in his own way.

One of the last remaining herds of bison in the United States grazed on the Fort Belknap Reserve. Thus, the tribes' economy and lifestyles did not change immediately. From 1873-1888, the reserve's agents made few attempts to teach White practices to the Indians. Superintendent W. L. Lincoln encouraged some farming, but the tribes, still relying mostly on the bison for food, clothing and

shelter, ignored the agent's demands. By 1884, cultivation consisted of 350 acres.⁸

Instead of imitating Anglo customs, most of the Indians adhered to traditional values. The people continued to practice horse raids, Sun Dances, purification ceremonies and bison hunting. To demonstrate their freedom from the superintendent's control, most bands camped long distances from the reserve's headquarters. As a result, the chief maintained his leadership status while the agents exerted little authority over the Indians.⁹ As Lincoln noted, "they cling with great tenacity to many of the old usages of the race."¹⁰

This apparent independence from White authority and acculturative demands suddenly ended with the local extinction of the bison in 1884. During the winter of that year, many Assiniboinés and Gros Ventres starved or froze to death. Since these conditions compelled the tribes increasingly to rely upon federal rations for survival, most of the Indians moved closer to the agency headquarters.¹¹

With the destruction of the traditional economy, some people experienced changes in their lifestyles and beliefs. Generally, many members of the older generation continued to follow some traditional customs such as leadership roles, religious ceremonies and the tribal languages. However, many of the younger generation, especially those born after 1884, did not strictly adhere to ancestral practices.

Since the reservation confined the Native Americans' mobility and flexibility, the band organization no longer proved viable. The traditional leaders such as the chiefs, council members and warriors no longer held as much influence over the group. These authorities' past experiences and honors had little relevance to the younger generation. Even though they still possessed some significance as the bearers of the traditional society, their roles as political leaders dwindled with the increasing power of the White agent.¹²

This disruption in band organization resulted in a leadership crisis among the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres and precipitated a split in tribal unity. Those Indians who were born on the reservation and who attended St. Paul's Catholic Missionary School tended to question the power of the traditional government. Former leaders no longer provided the guidance that many members of the younger generation needed in order to cope with a new cultural environment. However, these same Indians protested the corruption and the domineering attitudes of the White agents. By rejecting traditional authority, these Native Americans formed a divisive element within the tribe yet failed to replace the former political organization with a more contemporary adaptive system.¹³

The role of tribal societies also fell into disuse or changed. These organizations no longer provided the traditional services for the band. Many dissolved shortly after 1890, but the police society continued to exist. Instead of

enforcing council decisions, these members often carried out the agents' directives. This society soon lost much of its influence within the tribe.¹⁴

Divisiveness also characterized reservation religious practices. Even though the agent prohibited most former ceremonies such as the Sun Dance, some past dances persisted on Fort Belknap. The Ghost Dance Hand Game contained many of the social elements found in past ceremonies. These functions continued to hold meaning for the older generation, but many of the younger Indians did not perceive the relevance of these traditional rites. As a result, most of them turned to White sponsored events such as square dances and rodeos. These activities contained some psychological connection to their daily lives in agriculture or in stockraising.¹⁵

Whether a person continued to follow traditional practices, accepted new ideas, or both, the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres needed to create a new economy to replace their past reliance on the bison. Not only would this financial foundation provide the necessary sustenance, but it would offer some stability in this era of ideological change. The Whites' American Indian policy greatly influenced the economic systems that arose on the reservation.

Throughout the 19th century, many reformers attempted to "civilize" the Indians. By teaching White values to the Native Americans, these humanitarians sought to end the conflicts between the tribes and the frontiersmen and to absorb the Indians peacefully into the "superior" culture. This policy of assimilation received much support in the 1870s and the 1880s. Eastern organizations such as the Indian Rights Association and many church groups desired to change the Indians' lifestyles and to prepare them for entry into White society.¹⁶

The General Allotment Act of 1887 reflected these concerns and profoundly affected American Indian policy until the 1920s. In constructing this law, most Congressmen believed that farming would provide the Native Americans with the necessary morals to become United States citizens. Through an agricultural existence, the Indians would abandon their traditional hunting lifestyle and would understand the importance of private property and Anglo economic values. Consequently, the reservation agents urged the Indians to till the land and to assume the social characteristics of self-sufficient farmers.¹⁷

In permanently establishing the Fort Belknap Reservation for the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres, the 1888 Executive Agreement reflected this American Indian policy. The pact called for the conversion of the Indians from an existence based on hunting to an economy dominated by farming. The government also granted a large amount of money to assimilate these people. Besides encouraging ". . . the Indians to build houses and enclose their farms . . .,"¹⁸ Congress gave the tribes \$150,000 for "the purchase of cows, bulls, . . . agricultural and mechanical equipment, . . . [and] any other aspect to promote their civilization."¹⁹

This desired transformation to a new lifestyle depended upon a past tribal value. In order for farming to succeed in the arid West, the Indians needed to irrigate the land. Hence, the traditional importance of water in the tribes' cultures continued on the reservation.

Even though the agents promoted farming on the Fort Belknap Reservation, many Indians preferred stockraising. Previously, the bison had determined the male and female duties in society. Essentially, the men hunted the bison while the women prepared the kill. In the agricultural economy, the men perceived farming to be the women's duty, and many refused or were reluctant to till the soil. Therefore, the tribes needed a different means of distinguishing men's and women's roles. Since the horsemanship and the other skills involved in stockherding resembled those found in bison hunting, many males chose raising cattle over growing crops.²⁰

Farming and ranching without irrigation proved disastrous for the Indians. Even though the agents tried various programs to induce the people into agriculture, continued crop failures discouraged the tribes from tilling the soil. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, agent Simmons stated that ". . . there are many seasons of drought and discouragement experienced here in agricultural pursuits and only those who have reliable facilities for irrigation succeed in the business."²¹ Many of the Gros Ventres moved away from the arid land surrounding the Milk River and settled in the mountainous area of the Little Rockies region with the hopes of grazing some cattle on the lush, stream-fed ranges. But, the stock quickly consumed the grass, and, without irrigation, the Indians were unable to grow the necessary hay to retain a large herd.²²

Beginning in 1896, the agents petitioned Congress for money to build an irrigation system on the reservation. Superintendent Hays believed that irrigation was the only way to convert the Indians into farmers and to assimilate them into White society. In his 1898 annual report, he stated that:

When these systems have been established and the Indians taught to handle the water properly, and with those already in operation, there is no reason why they should not be able to make their own living and become independent citizens. Irrigation is the only salvation in this arid section.²³

Congress agreed with Hays and biannually appropriated \$20,000 to the Fort Belknap Reservation for irrigation as a means of furthering Indian acculturation.²⁴

The watering systems greatly improved agricultural conditions. By 1905, the reservation had four irrigation projects, and nearly one-tenth of the land was suitable for growing vegetables and grains. The canals encouraged some Indian families to accept an agricultural existence. Despite these successes, though, most Native Americans continued to snub farming, and instead used the water to increase their horse and cattle herds.²⁵

By 1905, the tribal livestock industry had greatly expanded, and the reservation sold thousands of pounds of



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Irrigation system in Lodge Pole Canyon on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

beef to surrounding communities and to the nearby Great Northern Railroad. The irrigation system made possible this dramatic increase in cattle production. The people used the water to grow large fields of hay, thereby supplementing the food supply of the cattle. As a result of these higher yields in farming and stockraising, the Fort Belknap economy became more stable throughout the 1890s and the 1900s.²⁶

Despite this growth, the Indians experienced mixed economic results. The agents' insistence upon farming impeded the full development of the stock industry. Since cattle represented the only possible means of gaining financial independence in an arid region, this hindrance prevented the reservation from reaching self-sufficiency. Nevertheless, economic activity did increase due to the construction of the irrigation system.²⁷

As in the past, water continued to play a significant social role for the tribes. The increased reliability of farming and ranching that irrigation offered was important to the Indians in a time of ideological transition and disruption. Since water constituted an integral part of their life, just as it had in the pre-reservation years, anyone who threatened the supply of this resource also endangered the Assiniboines' and Gros Ventres' existence. In this instance, the policy of assimilation and the corresponding emphasis upon agriculture and stockraising fortified the traditional importance which the tribes placed upon water.

However, the tone of American Indian policy began to change around the turn of the century. By the 1900s, the Whites' optimism for quick acculturation of the Indian turned to pessimism. Congress still used assimilation as the foundation of its Indian policy, but most Anglos realized that the Native Americans would not entirely accept White values on their own volition. On many reservations, the people continued to follow traditional practices.²⁸

Most Whites recognized that assimilation might take decades to accomplish. However, instead of questioning the false, ethnocentric assumptions that characterized the policy of acculturation, the Whites assumed a more active role in coercing the Indians into accepting Euro-American values. By allowing settlers to buy or lease tribal lands, federal officials hoped that White industry would serve as an example of perseverance and enterprise for the Indians. Congress believed that the Native Americans would be forced over a long period of time to adopt the methods and ideas of their bosses. Furthermore, in extinguishing the Indians' title to their land, the government fulfilled Western desires for more territory and started the process of terminating the reservation system.²⁹ In other words, government officials used acculturation as a tool to control most of the Indians' remaining land and resources.

This attitudinal shift from optimism to pessimism greatly affected the Fort Belknap Reservation. Since most of the prime property in northern Montana had been settled by the 1890s, incoming cattlemen desired more land. Instituting its new policy of buying or leasing tribal areas,

Congress met these Western demands by purchasing 18,000 acres in 1896 from the Assiniboines and Gros Ventres. In addition, federal administrators encouraged the agents to offer inexpensive, short term leases in order to induce White businesses to move onto the remaining portion of the reservation. Many stock associations, including the Matador Cattle Company, rented good grazing tracts, and corporate officials of the Amalgamated Sugar Company perceived the reservation as a source of cheap labor and land.³⁰

As these Whites moved onto tribal areas, they too utilized the irrigation works as the basis of their economy. These settlers appropriated some of the water from the canals to increase their herds and to raise farm products and sugar beet crops. The White population grew throughout the 1890s and the early 1900s, and by 1920, non-Indians controlled over 58% of the tribes' irrigated lands. Just as the Indians, these reservation Whites depended upon Fort Belknap's watering system for economic survival.³¹

Besides expanding onto the reservation, many Whites settled around the Indian lands in northern Montana. Like the tribes, these immigrants also needed water to grow hay and to support their livestock industry. However, these Whites adhered to state water laws in appropriating the area's water.³²

In apportioning the region's scarce water supply, most states abandoned the Eastern tradition of riparian water rights and practiced the doctrine of prior appropriation. Since the areas to the east of the 100th meridian experienced sufficient rainfall for agriculture, the use of water in rivers, streams and lakes was not necessary. Consequently, riparian water law prohibited the consumption of this resource by individuals.

The aridity of the West and the region's scarce water supply prevented the implementation of the riparian system in this area. Ranchers and farmers needed irrigation water in order to raise crops and to support livestock. Therefore, Western states followed the policy of prior appropriation, which allows the first claimant of a stream or river to divert as much water as he desires in fulfilling his needs. Later settlers may also utilize this resource, but, in times of scarcity, they must yield to the initial user as much of the commodity as he presently employs. The only stipulation that accompanies this right is that the owner apply the water to beneficial purposes. By failing to meet this demand, he loses his "first settler's" status, and the priority claim passes on to the new senior property owner.³³

To Montana, the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres not only stood in the way of White expansion, but the tribes were not using the Milk River beneficially. The state's officials failed to recognize that the tribes on the reservation had utilized the water before the Whites had arrived. Because of this failure and because the federal government promoted local White control of the reservation economy, Montana did not uphold the tribes' claims to the Milk River. Instead, due to the large migration of cattlemen into

the lush grazing lands of the Upper Missouri River Basin in the 1890s, administrators issued priority patents to these migrants in order to enhance the state's economic expansion.³⁴

The completion of the Great Northern Railroad and the plentiful supply of inexpensive grazing land encouraged many people to settle around the reservation. By 1900, many cattlemen and some recently organized towns were consuming large amounts of the area's water. Downstream users such as the Fort Belknap Indians did not complain about these increased appropriations, for the Milk River contained enough water for all parties. However, droughts began to occur after 1900, and the usually abundant water supply decreased.³⁵

Thus, with state claims and support, Henry Winter, Mose Anderson and other cattlemen continued to appropriate water from the Milk River and, by 1905, cut off all of the downstream flow to the Fort Belknap Reservation. This action shattered the reservation Whites and Indians' economies. Since the local officials refused to acknowledge the tribes' water rights, the absence of water continued and threatened to destroy Fort Belknap's farming and stockraising industries.³⁶

The reservation faced a devastating situation. All of the diverse interests depended upon the Milk River for economic success. Agent Logan stated that:

So far this Spring we have had no water in our ditch whatever. Our meadows are now rapidly parching up. The Indians have planted large crops and a great deal of grain. All this will be lost unless some radical action is taken at once to make the settlers above the Reservation respect our rights. To the Indians it either means good crops this fall, or starvation this winter.³⁷

Even though the absence of water endangered the oat, wheat and vegetable crops, damage to hay production represented the greatest menace. The loss of this product would cripple the Indians' stockraising economy. In addition, the absence of a reliable water supply would discourage White business interests on the reservation. In order to prevent a complete financial collapse, Logan petitioned the District Attorney General to bring suit against the White ranchers upstream and to force them into allowing a downstream flow.³⁸

Government officials encountered a difficult situation. By following its policy of forced acculturation, Congress condoned Western progress and favored White control of tribal resources. Conversely, assimilation required a self-supporting occupation for the Indians. Officials recognized the inherent contradiction of forced acculturation. Through the events transpiring around Fort Belknap, the government realized that advancing local control endangered this self-sufficient tribal economy. Should they ignore the plight of the Assiniboinés and Gros Ventres and promote Western development, or should they preserve the Indians' rights to water and bolster the reservation's economy? The answer was not based upon legal matters but upon financial, social and political considerations.

The tribes' farms and stock depended upon irrigation. Without water, most of their economic foundation would collapse, and the only stability in a period of social change would die also. As a result, the Indians requested that agent Logan attempt to restore their traditional water supply. In an era when federal officials did not consider most Native Americans as citizens, this appeal would have gone unnoticed if the reservation Whites had not supported the tribes' demand.³⁹

Logan played a critical role in sustaining the tribes' demands for water. As a devout follower of the national policy of forced acculturation, he promoted farming as the key to assimilation. Even though most of the Indians preferred stockraising to farming, and ranching proved more successful in this arid environment, the agent continued to advocate agriculture as the route to assimilation. As Logan stated in a report to the Commissioner:

I firmly believe that the Indian has to learn to be a good farmer before he can be much good at anything else . . . I have often wondered if the Office [Commissioner of Indian Affairs] realized the magnitude of this undertaking—the heart breaking, nerve racking work that it takes to make 1300 people, who only a few years ago were savages whose energies were spent only in war and the chase, and scorned the use of the plow, into intensive farmers.⁴⁰

The absence of water destroyed many of the tribes' farms along the Milk River. In order for Logan to accomplish his goal of assimilation, he petitioned the government to uphold the Native Americans' rights to the resource. Since most of the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres spurned farming and many chose cattleraising for a living, the agent's demand for water reflected more the nation's goal of acculturation rather than the tribes' economic interests.⁴¹

Despite this desire to "civilize" the Indians, the need of the reservation Whites for a dependable water supply was the determining factor in Logan's request to uphold the tribes' water rights to the Milk River. Even though Logan perceived agricultural skills as an important factor in acculturation, he emphasized White leasing and ownership of reservation land as the key to the tribes' eventual assimilation into the dominant society. The reservation Whites would employ the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres who refused to farm and would serve as examples of industry and progress to these recalcitrant Indians. By 1905, many Whites rented or owned large sections of the tribal property. Some local settlers married Indian women and began to farm land and to graze stock for free on the reservation. Of the 5,000 acres of irrigated land, the Assiniboinés and the Gros Ventres used approximately half of this area while reservation Whites and the agricultural school tilled the remainder. Since the tribes irrigated most of their property from streams and springs, the absence of water in the Milk River affected at least as many Whites as Indians. Finally, Logan received more than \$10,000 in grazing permits that year despite canceling many leases due to the water shortage.⁴²

Besides these Whites who already lived on the reservation or who rented property, Logan was attempting to lure more businesses and ranchers onto tribal lands. The agent encouraged local farmers and corporations to grow sugar beets on the reservation in order to employ those Indians who refused to till the soil. In implementing his sugar beet program, he offered at least 10,000 acres of inexpensive irrigated land to W. B. French of Harlem, Montana, to H. H. Nelson and to David Eccles, Henry H. Rolapp and Matthew S. Browning. This acreage represented at least four times more irrigated land than the Indians presently used. Also, Logan began to negotiate with the Amalgamated Sugar Company to establish a large sugar beet operation. Moreover, he desired to lease sections of land to White ranchers, including thousands of acres to the Matador Cattle Company from Trinidad, Colorado, and to Edward A. Lacock.⁴³

Through his ambitious leasing program, Logan had induced many Whites to move onto the reservation by 1905. Additionally, he had promised thousands of acres more of land to sugar beet growers and grazers. However, a thriving White economy depended upon a reliable water supply. Many stockgrowers threatened not to renew their leases if sufficient water were not available. Before agreeing to rent land for sugar beet crops or grazing, businessmen demanded irrigated land and an adequate water source.⁴⁴

Without water, the Whites would leave the reservation. To Logan, governmental officials and many Eastern reform groups such as the Indian Rights Association, the absence of a White presence removed the "civilizing" influence from the Indians' lives. Logan believed that in order to assimilate the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres successfully, Fort Belknap needed a stable economy and a reliable water supply. As a result, the reservation Whites' economic requirements and the acculturative goals of American Indian policy were the determining factors in the federal government's support of Indian water rights. There was little interest in regaining the water in order for the Indians to build a self-supporting economy of their choice. In 1905, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Francis Leupp ordered the District Attorney General to sue Henry Winter, Mose Anderson and the other ranchers.⁴⁵

On June 26, 1905, Attorney General Carl Rasch, on behalf of the federal government and the tribes, sued the Montana ranchers and demanded that these Whites allow 5,000 inches of water to flow down the river. The defendants objected, stating that they received their priority water rights legally from Montana and that these state patents were superior to the Indians' claims. Rasch insisted that the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres had utilized the river long before the Whites had settled in the area and thus possessed a priority title. Judge William H. Hunt of the Ninth Circuit Court of the District of Montana listened to these contentions and issued his decision on August 7, 1905.⁴⁶

In addition to the legal concerns, Hunt also emphasized social, economic and political reasons for his affirmation of the Indians' water rights. He pointed out that in order to sustain their culture and society, these tribes had used the Milk River for over a century. Consequently, when the Indians relinquished their title to much of the surrounding land in the 1888 agreement, they did not release their claim to the river, for they realized that the water was necessary to survive on the arid Plains. The judge stated that:

The parties to the [1888] agreement appreciated this necessity [need for irrigation], and purposely fixed a boundary line of the reservation at a point in the middle of the main channel of Milk River . . . I believe the intention was to reserve sufficient of the waters to insure to the Indians the means wherewith to irrigate their farms.⁴⁷

Political issues also influenced the court's decision. Without water, the Indians could not achieve economic independence and hence would remain dependent upon the federal government for survival. The judge pointed out that this situation would be unfair to the tribes and to the American taxpayers. Since assimilation required a self-sufficient Indian economy, irrigation was necessary to fulfill the goals of American Indian policy.⁴⁸

This court's justifications in upholding the tribes' rights to water served as a model for other legal interpretations



Judge William H. Hunt upheld the Indians' water rights in a 1905 decision, stressing the social, economic and political concerns.

of this case. After an appeal by the Winter and Anderson parties, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals confirmed the lower branch's decision. On February 5, 1906, Judge Hawley wrote that ". . . the Government and the Indians, in agreeing to the terms of the treaty [1888 agreement], acted in the utmost good faith toward each other . . . [and] that they knew that the soil could not be cultivated without the use of water to irrigate the same."⁴⁹ Encountering failure again in the judicial system, the White ranchers turned to the Supreme Court for a different explanation of the facts.

In *Winters v United States*, the 1908 U.S. Supreme Court's decision upheld the tribes' water rights. Chief Justice Joseph McKenna concurred with the lower courts' considerations and stated that the Fort Belknap Indians preserved their resource claims in the 1888 treaty.

The Indians had command of the lands and the waters—command of all their beneficial use, whether kept for hunting, "and grazing roving herds of stock" or turned to agriculture and the arts of civilization. Did they give up all this [in the 1888 agreement]? Did they reduce the area of their occupation and give up the waters which made it valuable or adequate? . . . It would be extreme to believe that . . . Congress destroyed the reservation and took from the Indians the consideration of

their grant, leaving them a barren waste—took from them the means of continuing their old habits, yet did not leave them the power to change to new ones.⁵⁰

Even though no specific clause of the agreement defined these rights, the Indians realized that the land was worthless without water. When the tribes ceded some of their ancestral land to the United States, they obviously did not intend to relinquish all of their water.⁵¹

The court also based its decision upon federal jurisdiction of reserved land. When the Indians signed the 1888 agreement, the federal government withdrew all the public land that comprised the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Because the U.S. Supreme Court recognized the implied reservation of Indian water rights, any future state laws could not violate these Indian claims. As a result, Henry Winter's diversion of the Milk River was in violation of federal intent and national laws.⁵²

The 1908 decision set an important precedent in defining Indian water rights. The judges upheld the tribes' rights to water and denied state interference in the Native Americans' diversion of reservation rivers, streams or lakes. In spite of these provisions, however, Western pressure in Congress and the continued federal emphasis



Dam across the Milk River at high water. The Fort Belknap Indian School stands nearby.

on local White control of reservation development prevented the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres from immediately realizing the complete potential of their claims.

Economic, social and legislative issues greatly affected the Supreme Court's decision. The same forces that influenced this ruling also determined the manner in which Congress interpreted the judgment. In 1908, White society was not culturally pluralistic, and federal officials did not recognize the validity of a reservation economy controlled by the Indians. Instead, the pessimistic assimilation which characterized American Indian policy from 1900-1920 shaped the administrators' attitudes toward the Winters Doctrine.

Even though the Assiniboines' and Gros Ventres' social and financial needs influenced the federal government's decision to sue the Montanans, the decisive pressure to restore the flow of the Milk River came from the White reservation ranchers and agent Logan. Thus, Fort Belknap's conquest in the Supreme Court battle was more a victory for the Whites' motives than for the Indians' desires. Federal officials used the Winters guarantee of reservation irrigation to induce businessmen and settlers into leasing or buying more tribal lands. As a result, a court decision which supposedly upheld tribal water rights in reality promoted White ownership of the Indians' land and resources.

From 1908-1925, the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres slowly lost control of most of their resources and witnessed the erosion of their economy. Despite the *Winters* decision, Whites soon gained possession of the tribes' water. In 1909, the Bureau of Reclamation assumed jurisdiction of the reservation's Milk River Irrigation Project and increased the canals' size and lengths. Money for this construction came from the Indian Service funds, yet the agency funneled most of the additional water to off-reservation ranches. As agent Logan declared:

In some cases I think a careful investigation will show that the irrigation of the Indian lands is a secondary consideration in the calculations of the Reclamation Service, and it will be found that the canals are to be extended beyond the reservation boundary and the waters used on other lands. . . . this means a much increased cost, and if this cost is paid from Indian Service money . . . then some one other than the Indians will reap the benefit.⁵³

The Fort Belknap Indians paid for a larger irrigation system that benefitted White landowners throughout northern Montana.⁵⁴

In addition to receiving no added advantages from the Bureau of Reclamation projects, the tribes also consumed less water due to the large influx of Whites onto the reservation. The agents used the easily accessible canal system to induce many businesses and cattlemen to lease or buy Indian lands. With the promise of sufficient water and cheap property, superintendent Logan rented thousands of acres of irrigated land to sugar companies for the growing of sugar beets. By 1915, the Matador Cattle Company grazed over 15,000 cattle, about five times

the combined size of the Indians' herds. The only stipulation attached to most of these leases was the requirement of the Whites to irrigate the land.⁵⁵

Due to these leasing practices, the tribal economy was in shambles by 1925. Since Whites controlled over 58% of the tribes' irrigated lands, the Indians did not expand their businesses or increase their use of the resource. Consequently, the decade long drought that struck northern Montana starting in 1915 destroyed many of the tribes' farms and most of the stockraising industry. The agents exacerbated this situation by allowing the Whites to appropriate most of the dwindling water supply. Within seventeen years after the *Winters* decision, the Indians had lost control of their water and land, and had witnessed the disintegration of their economy. Instead of becoming a self-sufficient people, the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres owned a minority of the reservation and did not manage their resources.⁵⁶

Despite its guarantee of water, the Winters Doctrine did not prevent the economic and social disasters that the Indians encountered after 1908. There were two reasons for this. First, the Supreme Court judges provided the legal interpretation, but the legislators determined how the decision was applied to the reservation. Federal officials believed that White ownership of Indian resources best served the assimilative and economic interests of the tribes and the country. Only when the Native Americans later gained some control over reservation affairs did the *Winters* decision provide some protection of the tribes' water.⁵⁷

Second, the Winters Doctrine contained ambiguities and omissions which prevented many Indians from realizing their water rights. The 1908 decision only applied to those tribal lands such as Fort Belknap that were reserved by executive agreement between the Indians and the United States. The government administrators refused to uphold the Indians' water rights on the reservations formed by treaties, legislative bills or executive orders. Westerners continued to appropriate tribal water on most of the reservations, and a majority of Native Americans gained no immediate legal protection from the *Winters* case.⁵⁸

The court also neglected to define who owned the water rights on the ceded portions of the Indians' territory. For example, in 1905, Congress obtained sections of the Wind River, Uintah, Flathead, Blackfoot and Yakima reservations to build irrigation systems and to open these formerly arid lands for White settlement. McKenna failed to clarify whether the national or state governments exerted control over these irrigated tracts. With the Congressional emphasis upon local White ownership of tribal resources, the states assumed jurisdiction of these regions and prevented the Indians from acquiring their water rights in these areas. Confusion increased when some of these lands were later returned to the Indians, such as on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Did the tribes' priority rights on these tracts extend to the original treaty or begin when the lands were returned?⁵⁹

These omissions and vague terminology have kept Indian water rights in flux to the present. The two most controversial interpretations extending from the 1908 decision are the determination of the exact water quantity that the Indians possessed and who reserved the Indians' rights to the water. William H. Veeder and other students of tribal water rights contend that the Assiniboines and the Gros Ventres reserved the rights to the Milk River. Since these Indians had always utilized the northern Montana waters, they established an "immemorial foundation" in that they had used the Milk River as long as could be remembered. According to the law of prior appropriation, these people possessed senior water rights, and any state titles to the Milk River could not interfere with this claim.⁶⁰ These researchers note that in the 1908 *Winters* case, McKenna stated that "... the Indians had command of the lands and the waters—command of all their beneficial use."⁶¹

Other people disagree. They assert that the federal government reserved the water for the tribes. Thus, the Indians' rights to this resource began with the creation of the reservation. Any Whites who diverted the river or streams before this date had the senior water rights. The *Winters* decision also supports this position.⁶² McKenna stated that "... the government is asserting the rights of the Indians."⁶³ Later court cases have not clarified this issue.

The 1908 Supreme Court was also vague on the quantity of water that the Indians reserved. In one part of the case, the judges indicated that the tribes possessed rights to the entire flow of the Milk River. But, in another area, they contended that the Indians were entitled to the amount of water sufficient for irrigation.⁶⁴

To add to this confusion, the judges ruled that the Indians would not lose their water rights if they were not using the resource at the time. Due to population growth and the probable expansion in agriculture and stockraising, the judges recognized that the tribes' water requirements would eventually increase. In more recent court cases, other judges and many lawyers agreed with this interpretation and defined the quantity of water reserved for Indian consumption as the amount needed to fulfill present and future needs.⁶⁵

This formula was vague and confounding, for it failed to provide a precise quantity that the tribes could appropriate legally without complaints from the local Whites. Because the *Winters* decision did not clarify this ambiguous measurement, decades of litigation ensued between White ranchers and the nearby reservations. Finally, in 1963, the Supreme Court attempted to resolve this issue. In *Arizona v California*,⁶⁶ the judges determined that the Indians' portion of the Colorado River was the volume of water needed to irrigate all potential agricultural land on the reservation. This decision applied to the tribes on the Chemehuevi, Cocopah, Yuma, Colorado River and Fort Mohave reservations.⁶⁷

This interpretation clarified some aspects of the issue

but neglected to set measurable guidelines in determining the water quantity for all Indian lands. The court ruled that these Indians' water rights began with the creation of their reservations. However, these five reservations were established by either an act of Congress or an executive order. The judges remained silent on the priority rights for those tribes on reserves formed by treaties or agreements. In addition, assessing water volume by the amount of irrigable agricultural land was as imprecise and confusing as the "future use" method. As a result, the debate continues over this feature of Indian water rights.

In addition to the debate over quantity, water quality has become an important issue. Water pollution was not a pertinent question in 1908, and the *Winters* Doctrine does not directly address the problem. Nevertheless, the increased upstream contamination by industry and urban areas decreases the usable amount of Native American water claims. To many tribes, pollution minimizes the quantity of their guaranteed appropriations and, therefore, violates the intent of the *Winters* decision. The Spokane and Quinault tribes in Washington state have recently experienced problems concerning water quality.⁶⁸

As is the case with water quantity and quality, much controversy exists concerning the use of appropriated water. The 1908 court concluded that the tribes could employ their water for purposes of irrigation. However, later court decisions have contended that the Native Americans may utilize their water for agriculture and other beneficial uses. To the Indians, the "other beneficial uses" clause indicated that they could implement their water for any type of improvements that they desired. After World War II, some tribes such as the Navajo, Crow and Northern Cheyenne appropriated their water for the commercial development of their coal, gas and uranium deposits.

Since commercialization requires more water than the limited farming previously pursued on the reservations, many ranchers, industries and urban dwellers complained of these additional appropriations of a dwindling resource. Whites desired that employment of reservation water be restricted to agricultural purposes only. This definition severely confines the "other beneficial uses" clause and prevents the Native Americans from completely utilizing their water allocation. Presently, Whites continue in their attempts to restrict the application of Indian water rights and thus retard the development of tribal economic independence on some reservations.⁶⁹

Even though the 1908 Supreme Court judges appointed the national government as the protector of Indian water rights, federal officials have been among the worst transgressors of the *Winters* principles. *Tweedy v Texas Co.*⁷⁰ substantiates this charge. The United States District Court of Montana limited Native American claims by setting the reserved water quantity at what the tribes beneficially employed at the present time. This conclusion violated the future use clause.⁷¹

In the past few years, the United States Supreme Court



Group of Assiniboines ready to round up cattle.

has been reluctant to uphold Indian water rights. Culminating in the 1983 case of *Arizona v San Carlos Apache Tribe*,⁷² the court has recently permitted state courts to decide questions concerning the tribes' legal rights to water. Since local judges have not traditionally protected the Indians' *Winters* rights, their decisions could reduce the Indians' claims to the region's streams and lakes. In following this new philosophy, the Wind River Reservation tribes are presently defending their water rights in the Wyoming courts.⁷³

In addition to the courts' attempted restrictions, federal agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation blatantly ignore the *Winters* Doctrine. Throughout this agency's history, it has adhered to the strictest interpretation of Indian water rights in order to promote federal and private resource development. Even though the 1937 decision in *Shoshoni Tribes of Indians v United States*⁷⁴ prohibited federal theft of Native American priority rights, the BR continues the policy of limiting tribal water allotments. For example, the bureau sold Indian claims without tribal consent to industrial users of the Big Horn River and the Big Horn Lake. Also, the Reclamation Service's Pyramid Lake Project has reduced the Paiute water supply by one-third and has en-

dangered the tribe's economy by raising the salinity content of the lake, thereby killing the trout.⁷⁵

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has also bargained away Indian water rights. In the coal, uranium and oil leases of the 1950s and 1960s, the BIA not only leased or sold tribal resources for low royalties, but the agency also allowed White industries to appropriate much of the reservation water, just as Logan and other agents had done on the Fort Belknap Reservation earlier. Since the late 1960s, Indian activist groups such as CERT (Council of Energy Resource Tribes) and NARF (Native American Rights Fund) have regained some of these past losses.⁷⁶

Federal officials' reluctance to guarantee tribal water claims illustrates an important principle in Indian-White relations. Even though a governmental decision such as the *Winters* Doctrine upholds basic civil rights for the Indians, no White organization, including the federal government, will always preserve those liberties. The events on the Fort Belknap Reservation and the continued violations of Indian water rights support this contention. The protection of tribal freedoms occurred only after the Native Americans became active in the political and judicial pro-

cess, especially in the 1960s and the 1970s. The events surrounding the *Winters* decision demonstrate that the Indians and not the Whites must determine the tribes' futures.

Through these controversies, the *Winters* Doctrine remains important today. Unfortunately, lawyers often debate the varying interpretations of this 1908 case from a strictly legal perspective. While judicial matters certainly have significance, the more important cultural aspects rarely become a determining factor in the courts' or governments' decision making process. Yet, throughout many reservations, the Indians need water to maintain their society and to achieve some economic independence in their lives. The roots of the *Winters* Doctrine and Indian water rights stem from the social, economic and political forces surrounding the Fort Belknap Reservation at the turn of the century. These cultural considerations are crucial today for a complete understanding of the American Indians' water rights and their desire for self-determination.

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When the 11th Infantry Regiment returned from the Philippine Islands in 1904 to take station at Fort D.A. Russell near Cheyenne, Wyoming, now Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, they brought war trophies taken in 1901 from the village of Balangiga. An insurgency had broken out on the Islands in the Spring of 1899, soon after the end of the Spanish-American War, when various tribal and national interests tried to take over. The United States accepted the task of protecting and pacifying these Islands. A good part of the U.S. Army, regulars and volunteers, had been shipped to the Philippines by mid-1900 to put down the insurrection; the number of troops there peaked then at 63,000.¹ The treaty with Spain ending the Spanish-American War had resulted in the United States acquiring Puerto Rico, Guam, Cuba and the Philippine Islands. The Philippines demanded the close attention of the U.S. Army for some time.

duty, three officers and 72 enlisted. The commander of Company C, Captain Thomas W. Connell, was no newcomer to combat or the Philippines. He had graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1894, served at the Battle of San Juan Hill in Cuba, saw combat in China with the American contingent of the China Relief Expedition and had participated in several engagements against Filipino insurgents in northern Luzon. Perhaps he should have known better, but he felt that the local Filipino officials in Balangiga were sympathetic to the Americans and trustworthy, particularly the town's chief of police and the presidente.

At 6:30 on the morning of September 28, 1901, when Company C was at breakfast in the mess tent, a surprise attack occurred. The trusted chief of police triggered the attack by signaling for the church bell or bells to ring. He and the town presidente then led the assault on Company

THE F.E. WARREN AIR FORCE BASE WAR TROPHIES FROM BALANGIGA, P.I.

by Gerald M. Adams

Most important of the 11th Infantry war trophies brought back from the Philippines were two bells and a cannon. Those trophies now occupy a place of honor near the flagpole in Trophy Park at the center of Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, a part of the rich heritage of this historic western military installation.

Company C, 9th Infantry, occupied several buildings in the small garrisoned village of Balangiga on the island of Samar during the late summer of 1901, which included a convent adjacent to the church. Filipino resistance had been expected to collapse with the capture of their leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, in July, 1901. A reduction in American forces, particularly the volunteers recruited by Congress expressly for the occasion, had begun even before Aguinaldo's capture. Still, guerilla warfare continued against the American troops in different parts of the Islands with different factions, but in a less organized fashion.

Even though frequent insurgent activity continued on the island of Samar throughout the summer of 1901, it seemed that an adequate force occupied Balangiga in September of that year; 75 men of Company C were on

C with an estimated 400 native bolomen who emerged from various quarters of the village and the jungle that skirted the village.² The long bolo knife served the native as a tool and a weapon, thus the term bolomen came to be applied to these men by American soldiers. Forbidden to own firearms, the bolomen captured or stole American rifles and ammunition for their insurgent operations.

Three officers and 29 men, including the first sergeant, were killed during the initial attack, plus several others whose bodies were never found. The senior non-commissioned officer present, Sergeant Frank Betron, organized a defense which successfully held off the attackers even though they had captured a good supply of arms and ammunition. Betron judged the Americans' position in Balangiga to be untenable and so collected the wounded and loaded the survivors into five barotos (native boats) docked at the foot of the village. He hoped to reach Basey, some 25 miles up the coast of Leyte Gulf, where Company G of the 9th Infantry was located.

Before leaving the dock at Balangiga, three Americans returned to the village to try to burn the barracks and

rescue the flag. Rifle fire from the insurgents prevented burning the barracks, but Private Claude C. Wingo did succeed in recovering the American flag.

Betron reached Basey with two barotos the next morning at 4 o'clock, September 29, and gave the alarm of the attack on Balangiga. His total party consisted of 25 including 22 wounded and two who had died enroute. The loss of life was finally established at three officers and 42 men of Company C.³ Eight of those were either killed at Balangiga, burned in the barracks by the insurgents or lost in the Gulf in the barotos that failed to reach Basey. Wingo was one of those lost from a baroto seen by a survivor to swamp in the Gulf.⁴

An expedition to regain Balangiga left Basey on the steamship S.S. Pittsburg at 9 a.m. on September 29th with 55 men of Company G, 9th Infantry. Commanded by Captain Edwin V. Bookmiller, Company G landed at Balangiga after a three hour trip and quickly recaptured the village. They first secured the commissary and ordnance supplies that had not been carried away by the insurgents. Bookmiller's men then buried the three officers and 29 men killed the day before whose bodies still remained in the plaza. They were buried in the plaza in front of the church.

Bookmiller knew that his force could not be absent from Basey for too long without inviting an "insurrecto" attack on Basey. Shortly after Balangiga was burned, Company G re-embarked on the S.S. Pittsburg at 6:15 p.m. for the return trip to Basey, secure in the knowledge that not much was left in Balangiga that could help the insurgents.

While enroute from Balangiga back to Basey, Bookmiller and Company G encountered a steamer carrying Colonel Isaac D. DeRussy, commander of the 11th Infantry Regiment, with 132 men from Companies K and L. They had been ordered from Tacloban to Balangiga by Department of the Visayas Commander, Brigadier General Robert P. Hughes, to "chastise the savages if found."⁵

Although the insurgency movement on the island of Samar remained active for several more years, the Balangiga area quieted down after the September 28th attack. Units of the 11th Infantry remained at Balangiga until October 18, 1901, when they were relieved by the Marines. The Marines were in turn relieved by Company C of the 15th Infantry.

The prospect of the 11th Infantry returning in late 1903 to the United States was well received in the Regiment. "We're Going Home," has been an announcement joyously received by American troops throughout the world and throughout the nation's history. The reduction of U.S. forces in the Philippines had brought the strength there to 843 officers and 14,667 enlisted by the end of 1903, down from 63,000 in 1900.

While the 11th Infantry's experience at Balangiga proved to be much less eventful than the 9th Infantry's, the 11th Infantry brought home the war trophies. These included two large bronze bells cast in the late 19th century and a much older cannon. The bells had been taken

because one or both had been used by the insurgents to signal the attack on Company C, 9th Infantry. The cannon had been taken from the plaza in front of the church because it looked like it might make a good war trophy.

Fort D.A. Russell had been founded in 1867, concurrently with and next to the city of Cheyenne, as a temporary twelve company infantry/cavalry post to protect the Union Pacific Railroad from the Indians. The post had been declared permanent in 1884 with good brick structures replacing many of the temporary wooden buildings. A reduction in size came with the permanent post status to an eight company complement.

After the end of the Spanish-American War and with the Indian wars ended, Fort Russell came to be less important than before. No major units were assigned on a permanent basis and the post stood in immediate danger of being closed. There were other western military installations being dismantled at this time for minor reasons, but the reasons for closing Fort Russell included one major one. The army and Cheyenne had a disagreement over the division of Crow Creek water and it threatened the existence of the fort. The Department Commander's annual report to Washington, dated August 31, 1902, sounded gloomy indeed for the fort's future:

The long standing controversy between the city of Cheyenne, Wyo., and the authorities of Fort D.A. Russell, Wyo., regarding certain water rights has reached such a stage as to render it necessary that the rights of the Government be ascertained and upheld, or the post be abandoned, or the garrison greatly reduced. This matter has already been made the subject of an official report forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Army.⁶

By 1904, the water problem had been resolved, most probably with the help of Wyoming's Senator Francis E. Warren, a member of the Senate Military Affairs Committee. Dr. T. A. Larson, of the University of Wyoming, gave a good example of the Senator's well-known political pragmatism in his book, *History of Wyoming* (revised), with these words, ". . . Warren favored a large standing army, with as many men as possible stationed in Wyoming." The U.S. Army did not object and the assignment of the 11th Infantry opened a new era for Fort Russell and for Cheyenne.

On March 23, 1904, the 11th Infantry Regiment with eight companies and all their equipment, commanded by Colonel Albert L. Meyer, started arriving at Fort Russell, happy to be back in the United States.⁸ Another four companies were to follow within the year making one of the largest infantry complements that had so far been stationed at the fort. The eight companies were housed in the eight brick infantry barracks built in 1884 (still in use) on the site of the early 1867 post.

Soon after the 11th Infantry began arriving, a local newspaper report cited a sizeable appropriation forwarded to the Senate for building additional barracks and other buildings at Fort Russell to accommodate the additional units to be assigned. The article went on to say how much

Cheyenne appreciated the efforts of Warren in making Fort Russell one of the most important military posts in the United States.⁹ The post was being enlarged to become brigade size, which was achieved in 1910. A brigade usually had three regiments assigned, consisting of infantry, cavalry and artillery.

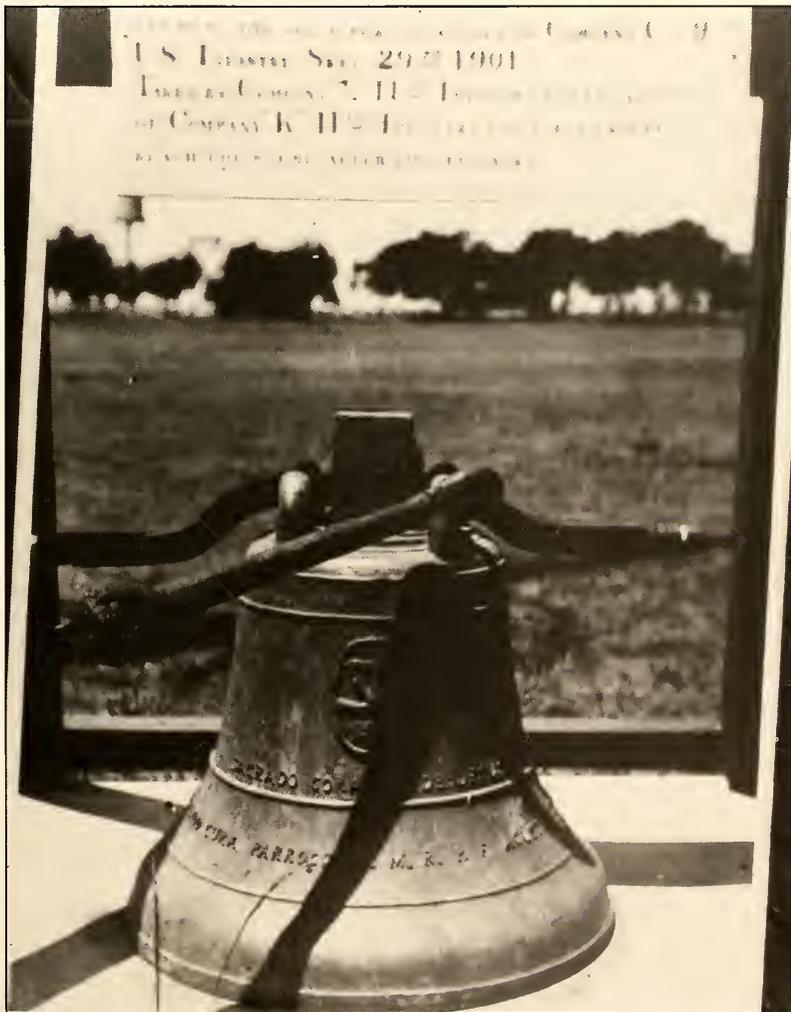
The 11th Infantry did not get around to unpacking all the war trophies from Balangiga for a while or maybe they were slow in arriving. On May 16, 1905, the *Cheyenne Daily Leader* newspaper reported that the cannon had been mounted on the parade ground near the flagpole along with other relics from the Philippines "... to include the famous bell which gave the signal for the massacre of a whole company." Two large bells three feet tall and a seven foot cannon were proudly displayed in front of the flagpole on the parade ground, named Marne Parade in

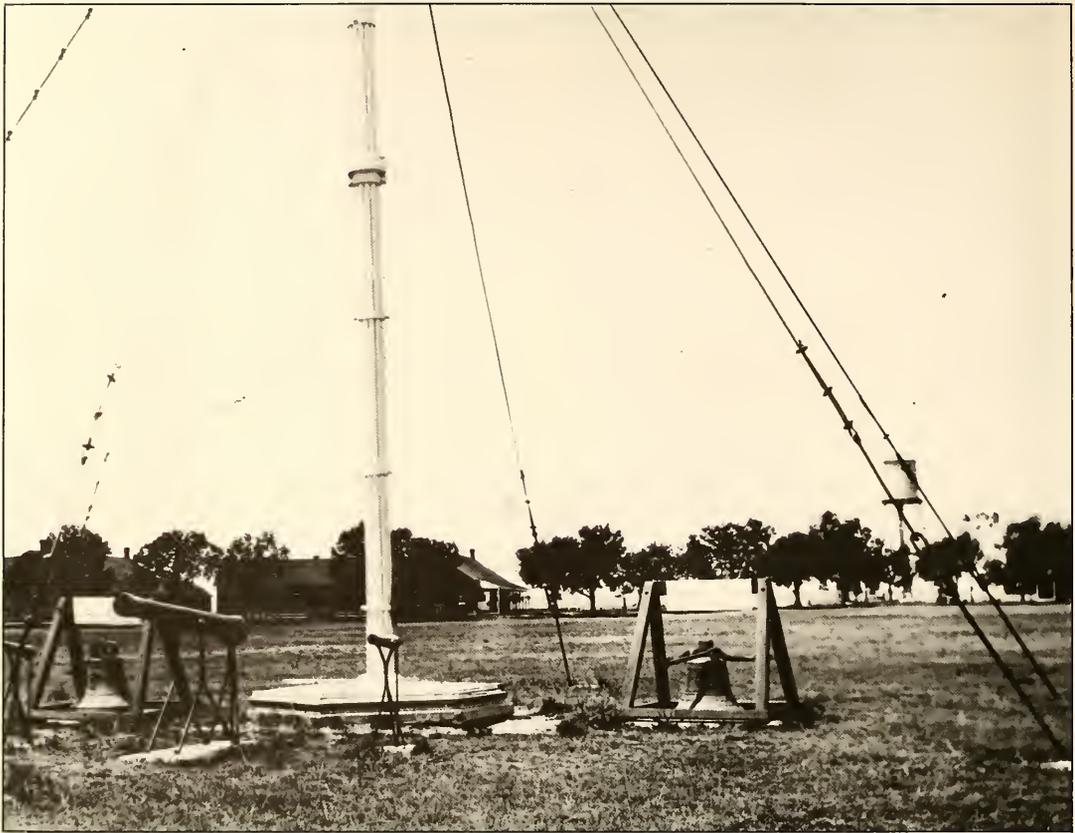
the 1920s, after the famous World War I battlefield in France. A sign was installed over one of the bells that said;

This bell hung in the church at Balangiga, Samar, PI, and rung the signal for the attack on Company C, 9th U.S. Infantry, Sept 29 [28], 1901. Taken by Company L, 11th Infantry and detachment of Company K, 11th Infantry, the first units to reach the scene after the massacre.

In 1910, Lieutenant Paul M. Goodrich, who had served with the 9th Infantry on Samar in 1901, visited Cheyenne and Fort Russell. The 11th Infantry's claim stated on the sign over the bell, of being the first to reach the scene of the massacre, disturbed Goodrich. He sent a picture of the bell and sign with a letter to the 9th Infantry Headquarters at Warwick Barracks, Cebu, P.I. The 9th Infantry promptly forwarded the letter and picture to Bookmiller in Boston

The sign above the bell erroneously credited units of the 11th Infantry with being the first to reach Balangiga after the battle. After further research, the sign was changed in 1911 giving proper credit to Company G, 9th Infantry, for recapturing Balangiga.





The army displayed the cannon and bells as war trophies on the parade ground near the flagpole on the western part of the post soon after the 11th Infantry returned from the Philippine Islands in March, 1904. The flagpole, cannon and bells were moved east on Randall Avenue in the mid-1920s to Trophy Park.

for his comment.¹⁰ When Bookmiller's statement was received, the regimental commander, Colonel C. J. Crane, requested in the 3rd Endorsement that the colonel of the 11th Infantry look into the matter and set the record straight. According to Crane, who was also in the Philippines in 1901, ". . . the best claim to priority of arrival at Balangiga after the massacre belongs to Capt. Bookmiller and his Company G of the 9th Inf."

A total of fifteen endorsements were added over the next six months from officers who were in the Philippines in 1901. In 1910, they were stationed at West Point, N.Y., Boston, Massachusetts, San Antonio, Texas, Washington, D.C. and several different Army headquarters in the Philippines. The respondents unanimously agreed with Bookmiller's report of being first on the scene with Company G, 9th Infantry, after the massacre at Balangiga in September, 1901. When this mass of evidence reached him, Colonel Arthur Williams, commander 11th Infantry on maneuvers in Texas, agreed in one of the concluding en-

dorsements: "The inscription over the bells at Fort D.A. Russell, Wyoming, clearly appears to be erroneous, and will be corrected at the first opportunity."

One of many interesting comments sparked by Goodrich's letter came from Major General James Franklin Bell at Headquarters Philippines Division in Manila. Bell had been in the Philippines in 1901, served as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army in Washington from 1906 to 1910, and was back in the Philippines in 1911. In the 7th endorsement dated March 23, 1911, he made this statement:

There seems no doubt that the 9th Infantry was first to arrive at Balangiga after the massacre. . . . In this connection it may be appropriate to question the propriety of taking (even as a souvenir) a bell belonging to the Catholic church simply because a recreant native priest either used it or permitted it to be used to sound a signal of attack on American soldiers. The bell belonged to the church and not to the priest. It was not the fault of the church but that of the priest that it was mis-used.¹¹

When the 11th Infantry departed for the Mexican border in February, 1913, in response to the dangerous situation developing in Mexico, the war trophies stayed in front of the flagpole at Fort Russell. Orders had been received at 6 p.m. and the first section of the 11th Infantry entrained at midnight for Galveston, Texas.¹² The 11th Infantry had expected to return to Fort Russell when the emergency ended in Mexico, but that was not to be. The 11th Infantry was never again able to call Fort Russell home.

As the years passed, the cannon and the bells became a familiar part of the post scene in front of the flagpole on the Marne Parade. The building program continued from 1904 to 1912 and moved the center of the post eastward toward Cheyenne. When World War I broke out in 1917, the infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments were soon in France or on their way. Fort Russell served as an induction center and when the war was over, a discharge center. It did not take long after the war to regain a full brigade status with infantry, cavalry and artillery units again in place.

In the 1920s, the flagpole was relocated from the Marne Parade eastward to a more central location on the main thoroughfare, a small triangular plot on Randall Avenue named Trophy Park. The cannon and bells went along, the cannon mounted on the same simple metal frame and the bells resting on a thin wooden platform. On January 1, 1930, the post's name changed from Fort D. A. Russell to Fort Francis E. Warren, in honor of the late and long-time Wyoming senator.

In early 1941, when America began to rearm prior to entering World War II, Fort Warren changed missions; no longer would the combat arms of infantry, cavalry and artillery be assigned. The post became a Quartermaster Replacement Training Center (QRTC) in 1941, and a very large one with troop strength reaching some 20,000 in 1943. In 1947, the mission and service changed—Fort Francis E. Warren became Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, also known as F. E. Warren AFB, with the mission of technically training young airmen. Things stayed much the same in Trophy Park with not much attention paid to the bells or cannon.

The years rolled by and memories faded, records were lost or destroyed during World War II and people forgot what the trophies were doing in Trophy Park. The bells may have been stored for a while. When the Strategic Air Command (SAC) started shopping in the mid-1950s for a suitable area to deploy the first intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), Warren AFB offered an excellent headquarters basing site. The Training Command training mission could easily be transferred to another base. The opportunity to be the first ICBM base posed an excitement indeed for the Cheyenne community, military and civilian alike.

A new command, new faces and new interests raised some new questions, or questions about some old articles,

the bells and cannon in Trophy Park. It was felt that their historical value should be established, if they had any historical value and accountability assigned to some responsible agency if the bells and cannon were to be retained at Warren AFB. There was some sentiment for shipping the bells back to the Philippines, or somewhere. So little was known about the cannon in the 1950s that it was sometimes referred to as a swivel gun, another type of gun entirely. A 1957 memo to the Base Commander from the Information Services Officer reflected the difficulty often encountered when trying to establish long dormant historical values:

Basic questions involved with regard to the bronze swivel gun and other items of historical value at Warren Air Force Base remain unanswered. Correspondence on the questionable items originated from this office as a result of a Base Inspector report that accountability for these items must be assigned to some responsible agency.¹³

As a means of trying to recapture the history of the bells and cannon, queries were sent from the base to various archival and historical agencies asking for information. The base might have indicated some willingness in those queries to dispose of both the bells and cannon. In any case, some interesting replies were received. A letter from the Historian, Thirteenth Air Force located in the Philippines, stated that the cannon had very little value but the bells were another matter.¹⁴ He suggested that it would be a very fine public relations gesture for the Air Force to return the bells to the Philippines. He also offered to work out all the details for returning the bells.

In 1982, 24 years later, the same historian related an interesting story to a Department of the Air Force historic preservation officer visiting the Philippines. According to the historian's information, the bells at Warren AFB came from a mission near Fort Stotsenberg, earlier located close to the present American Clark Air Base. These bells had been taken by American troops to prevent the mustering of Filipino "insurrectos" during the insurgency. He suggested the existence and location of the bells be verified and the possibility of their return to the Philippines be considered. The public relations benefits of returning the bells to the Philippines again was mentioned.¹⁵ There have been more recent requests for the bells and they have been answered with a polite no.

Another respondent, this one a firearms consultant in Princeton, New Jersey, speculated in 1957, that the bells and cannon were of some value and should not be destroyed. He did not think that West Point or Annapolis would be interested in the material, but the National Park Department would welcome them for installation someplace. The department had many tracts of land throughout the United States which needed some form of decoration. The Princeton consultant concluded with this, ". . . my feeling is that it is safer for posterity where some young regular Army officer will not be able to send it to be melted down the next time we have an emergency."¹⁶

After Warren AFB had been a SAC ICBM base for almost ten years, the late Colonel Robert J. Hill, commander of the 90th Strategic Missile Wing, decided in 1967, that the bells deserved a better presentation. He had an attractive curved red brick wall constructed in Trophy Park for the bells with a handsome bronze plaque on the wall between the bells telling the story of the Massacre at Balangiga. A faint inscription appears on the back of both bells that has been there many years:

USED BY PHILIPPINOS
TO SOUND SIGNAL FOR MASSACRE
OF COMPANY "C" NINTH INFANTRY
AT BALANGIGA P.I.
28TH SEPTEMBER 1901

Some uncertainty has remained as to whether there were one or two bells in the church at Balangiga, or whether one or two bells were used to signal the attack on Company C, 9th Infantry. There could have been a bell in the church and one in the plaza. Several references mention a bell and certainly most village churches in the Philippines, or anywhere else in the world, are lucky to have one bell. But the 11th Infantry brought home two large bells about three feet high and supposedly from Balangiga. If they acquired the second bell in Balangiga, did it come from the church? The caption on the sign over the bell that aroused Goodrich's ire in 1910 simply stated, "This bell hung in the church at Balangiga and rung the signal for the attack on Company C. . . ."

Both bells show the Franciscan emblem, the cross with human arms crossed in front and the stigmata on the hands. The Franciscans are a religious order founded in the 13th century. Another religious order, the Society of Jesus better known as the Jesuits and founded in 1534, had been on Samar until 1768 when they were expelled from the Philippines.¹⁷ The Franciscans carried on the work of the Jesuits. The bells were cast after the expulsion of the Jesuits, one showing a date of 1863, and the other 1889. A parish priest's name, Agustin Delgado, appears on the 1889 bell but there is no identification of church or village.

Some conjecture has appeared in recent years that the bells were brought from the Philippines to the United States on the battleship Wyoming in 1904. No evidence has been found to support such a happening. On the contrary, battleships are not good troop transports and have rarely been used for such purposes. It seems more reasonable to believe that the bells and gun were brought to the United States in 1904 along with the unit equipment of the 11th Infantry Regiment and on the same troop transport ship.

After fixing up the bells nicely in 1967, Colonel Hill apparently did not see much need to do anything for the cannon. It stayed on its simple metal stand in front of the flagpole, exposed to the elements and small children who liked to stuff things down its 2.5 inch barrel opening. Periodically the cannon would get a fresh coat of paint, usually a tepid green.

The project to reconstruct the history of the bells and cannon, started in the mid-1950s, continued through the years and did bring in some useful information, but not enough. The cannon might have gotten a new coat of paint as a result of it all. One of the most useful letters received came from retired Army Colonel William Alexander, whose father, Captain Robert Alexander, had served as quartermaster of the 11th Infantry in 1901-1904.¹⁸ Captain Alexander had been largely responsible for shipping the war trophies from the Philippines when the 11th Infantry left to take station at Fort Russell in 1904. Alexander, later a major general, had been aware of the origins of the cannon, according to his son, and had probably been responsible for selecting it as a regimental war trophy.

In 1979, and partly as a result of Colonel William Alexander's earlier letters urging that inquiries be made to England,¹⁹ Wing Historian Staff Sergeant William E. Woodbridge, Jr., wrote to the Tower of London with a description and photographs of the cannon.²⁰ The responding letter stated that the cannon was a rare English Falcon cast at Houndsditch near London by Robert Owen in the year 1557.²¹ The rose relief and the letters MR (Maria Regina) on the cannon breech were Queen Mary's monogram. The cannon had been cast during the short reign of Mary I, thus the rose, the only known cannon bearing Queen Mary's monogram. The Tower of London's Deputy Master of the Armouries, H.L. Blackmore, acknowledged that they would be pleased to acquire the cannon, either by gift or sale. If acquired, they would find it an honored place in the Tower of London next to a cannon of the making of the husband of Queen Mary (Philip of Spain).

When the cannon's vintage and ancestry became known to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., it too wanted the piece. Restoration could be done by experts there but display space would be a problem for several years, or until some additional building had been completed. Still they wanted the cannon. The Falcon had been a popular English artillery piece for ship and shore up through the 18th century. Its presence in Balangiga might have been due to the English occupying parts of the Philippines in the late 18th century. They might have left it behind then, or earlier.

Colonel Charles H. Greenley, commander 90th Strategic Missile Wing at Warren AFB in 1981, had the Falcon taken from its nondescript stand in front of the flagpole soon after its true identity and value became known. Kerry Drake, editor of the *Cheyenne Sunday Eagle-Tribune* newspaper, had written some excellent articles which gave the cannon considerable notoriety.²² Placed in a secure room in the base motor pool, the cannon awaited a decision on its next resting place. Even though a Falcon cannon weighed 700 pounds and was seven feet long, it could have been spirited away from its old stand in front of the flagpole by any strong young man with a pickup truck.

With the Tower of London and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington both anxious to acquire this rare and



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

(Above) The bells as they look today in Trophy Park. The plaque reads: "THE BELLS OF BALANGIGA: These bells came from a church in Balangiga, Samar, located in the Philippine Islands. The ringing of these bells signalled the attack by Bolo tribesmen on Sunday morning, the 28th of September, 1901, in which company 'G' of the Ninth US Infantry was massacred." (Below) The restored cannon in its new shelter.



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

ancient cannon, the decision for its disposition passed to higher headquarters. The agency that received the cannon would be responsible for its professional restoration and security.

Some sentiment surfaced for sending the cannon back to London where it came from and where it could be properly restored and displayed. Others were all for sending it to the Smithsonian where proper restoration could be done. It could also be displayed there to a wide audience as a U.S. Army war trophy. Sending the cannon somewhere, anywhere, "just to get it off the Base and out of our hair," also had some advocates among the active duty Air Force and particularly so when restoration costs and security measures were considered. The costs would be considerable and appropriated Air Force funds were not available for such projects, historic as they might be.

A strong interest in keeping the Falcon in Wyoming developed when it became apparent that it would soon be gone if something was not done quickly. Interest rose high among military retirees in Cheyenne and members of the state and county historical societies. Fortunately, Air Force retiree Edward A. Tarbell, a western history buff who served as volunteer base museum curator and vice president of the Rocky Mountain Department of the Council on America's Military Past (CAMP), was able to rally the historic preservation forces interested in keeping the Falcon at Warren AFB where it belonged.

Through Tarbell's patient but persistent efforts, meetings were held in April, 1981, with Greenley and his staff. The proposals offered were designed to convince Greenley, as well as his staff and higher headquarters, that proper restoration could be done locally in order to keep the Falcon cannon at Warren AFB. The key proposal included forming a "Save the Cannon" committee to be headed by retired Air Force Brigadier General Robert R. Scott, a former wing and division commander at Warren AFB living in Cheyenne.²³ Scott also headed the Military Retiree Council, a volunteer organization that kept in touch with the approximately 1,500 military retirees in the Cheyenne area.²⁴

As a first order of business, the help of the military retiree community in the Cheyenne area was recruited. Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Jerry Bresnahan, owner of Elbe Arms in Cheyenne and a professional gunsmith, volunteered to do the cannon restoration work. Donations were solicited from the local community, mainly the military retirees. Active duty airmen and officers were also invited to contribute. When the Warren AFB Federal Credit Union generously offered to match contributions to the "Save the Cannon" fund, the money problem disappeared. With all the local interest generated in keeping the cannon in Wyoming and the resources for cannon restoration and shelter construction coming together so well, Greenley strongly recommended to Headquarters SAC that the restored Falcon cannon stay in Wyoming at Warren AFB.²⁵

By June, 1981, SAC agreed that Warren AFB would

be the proper place to keep the Falcon cannon and that professional restoration could be done there by Bresnahan. The letter of authority to Greenley was signed by the chief of staff, Major General Andrew Pringle, Jr., and had these good words:

"Restoration of the Falcon cannon would be in keeping with F.E. Warren AFB's long and distinguished heritage. It is an ambitious undertaking. As with other museum and heritage programs, additional appropriated funds cannot be provided by this headquarters for restoration and display projects. Given the lack of funding, it is with pleasure I note Colonel Adams' interest in restoring the cannon in the local area. Once a proffer of gift has been submitted and you are personally satisfied that expertise is available to properly restore the cannon and provide for its appropriate display, proceed with the acceptance of the gift."²⁶

The formalities for the proffer of gift and acceptance of the gift, pertaining to the restoration of the cannon and construction of a secure shelter, were quickly completed. Then the long and painstaking task of restoring the cannon began. The cannon was moved from the secured room in the base motor pool to a horse stall in the old veterinary stable where water, drainage and good light made for better working conditions. A few months later, the onset of a severe Wyoming winter required the cannon to be moved again to a heated working area, this time to the Elbe Arms shop in Cheyenne. There Bresnahan spent more than 3,000 hours during the next four years restoring the cannon. Six different colors of paint were encountered—white, black, orange, gray, silver and green—and some of the colors had been applied several times to the cannon during the previous 424 years. Bresnahan estimated that there were 35-40 coats of paint on the piece.²⁷

Two concerns of all preservationists restoring ancient bronze pieces are (1) the extent of surface corrosion and bronze disease that might appear when many layers of paint are removed, and (2) saving the surface patina. After many tests and calls to other arms restorers, several kinds of chemicals and paint removers were used successfully by Bresnahan. There were some easy areas where ancient coats of paint came away as expected, but there were also hundreds of hours spent with a dental pick, Q tips and magnifying glass removing paint. When the restoration was completed in 1985, basic bronze with a good patina showed over most of the cannon surface. A few spots retained a smattering of paint on small surfaces that had granulated. Sand blasting or grinding, anathema to most arms restorationists, would have been required to remove these remaining traces. They were better left alone.

A handsome red brick and plate glass shelter with shake shingle roof and concrete base, built by the Reserve Naval Construction Force of the Naval Reserve Center of Cheyenne, housed the cannon at the dedication on September 7, 1985. Now securely protected from the ravages of Wyoming weather and small children, the Falcon rests on a wooden gun carriage constructed by the 90th Civil Engineering Squadron's carpenter shops. The carriage is

modeled after the English fortress cannon carriages of the 16th century. Located near the flagpole and bells in Trophy Park as before, a vastly improved presentation is offered of this noble war trophy.

As chairman of the "Save the Cannon" committee, General Scott presided over a proper dedication ceremony for the newly-constructed shelter and the restored Falcon cannon. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Colonel Arlen D. Jameson, commander of the 90th Strategic Missile Wing, accepted the keys to the shelter.²⁸ The Falcon cannon looked very comfortable and right in its new setting, like it might be good for another 424 years. An earlier newspaper article caption had used words most appropriate: "After 77 Years, Warren Cannon Now Has Respect."²⁹

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1. William Adleman Ganoe, *History of the United States Army* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1942), p. 47.
 2. Principal sources for the Balangiga Massacre and the retaking of the village were obtained from Captain Bookmiller's report, October 1, 1901, of the Balangiga action of September 28, 1901, found in the records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives. A copy in author's files.
 3. United States Congress, House, *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1902*, Vol IX, 57th Congress, 2d Session, 1902, p. 609.
 4. Captain F. L. Palmer's report of the statements of survivors of the Balangiga Massacre obtained from records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives. Mention is made by several survivors of Private Claude C. Wingo's brave actions and good leadership qualities. He retrieved the flag at Balangiga and offered to stay behind if there wasn't room for everyone in the barotos to leave and escape certain death. His baroto was seen to sink in the Gulf by one of the survivors in another baroto. A letter from the War Department to the Honorable W. C. Adamson, House of Representatives, dated December 20, 1905, returned a letter of Dr. J. Claude Wingo of Rock Springs, Wyoming, father of Claude C. Wingo. Dr. Wingo had requested a copy of the report of the massacre at Balangiga. Five years later, another letter from the War Department to the Honorable W. C. Adamson, January 6, 1910, revealed that Dr. J. Claude Wingo, Clarendon, Kansas, still sought a copy of the report of the massacre that cost his son his life. Extracts of Palmer's report in author's files.
 5. Actions taken following the Balangiga Massacre are found in "Final Report of Brig. Gen. Robert P. Hughes, U.S. Army, Commanding the Department of the Visayas," United States Congress, *Annual Reports of the War Department*, Vol. IX, 57th Congress, 2d Session, 1902, pp. 593-638.
 6. "Report of Brig. Gen. Frederick Funston, U.S. Army, Commanding the Department of the Colorado," United States Congress, House, *Annual Reports of the War Department*, Vol. IX, 57th Congress, 2d Session, 1902, pp. 20-29.
 7. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, rev. 1978), p. 317.

8. "Eleventh Arrives," *The Wyoming Tribune*, March 24, 1904, p. 1.
9. "More Barracks for Fort Russell," *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, April 15, 1904, p. 6.
10. The fifteen endorsements responding to Lieutenant Paul M. Goodrich's letter of 1910, complaining about the caption over the bells at Fort D. A. Russell, were obtained from the records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, AGO 1778230 filed with AGO 400401. Copy in author's files.
11. Ibid.
12. "11th Infantry Quickly Follows Artillery to Border," *Cheyenne State Leader*, February 25, 1913, p. 1.
13. Memo from Information Services Officer Captain Arthur LaCroix to Air Base Group Commander, F. E. Warren AFB, March 28, 1957, Subject: Historical Objects at Warren. On file in the Real Property Management Office, 90th Civil Engineering Squadron, F. E. Warren AFB.
14. Letter to Commander, 3450th Technical Training Wing, F. E. Warren AFB, January 28, 1958, from Mr. W. T. T. Ward, Historian, Thirtieth Air Force, in the Philippines. On file in the Real Property Management Office, 90th Civil Engineering Squadron, F. E. Warren AFB.
15. Letter to Headquarters Strategic Air Command (Mr. Stark) from Department of the Air Force Historic Preservation Officer, Ms. Joan Scott, March 16, 1982, Subject: Historic Preservation—Philippine Mission Bells. On file in the Real Property Management Office, 90th Civil Engineering Squadron, F. E. Warren AFB.
16. Letter from Mr. Mac Weller, firearms consultant, Princeton, New Jersey, January 17, 1957, Subject: Weapons at Francis E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. On file in the Real Property Management Office, 90th Civil Engineering Squadron, F. E. Warren AFB.
17. Letter to Mr. Chips Ward, Command Historian, Headquarters Thirtieth Air Force from Faculty House at Ateneo de Manila, Manila, P.I., H. de la Costa, S.J., Department of History, November 25, 1957. Father de la Costa declared that bells with Franciscan emblems properly belonged to the Franciscan order. He also informed Mr. Ward where the bells could be delivered in the Philippines.
18. Letter of inquiry to Commanding General, Frances E. Warren AFB from Colonel William Alexander, USA(Ret), October 18, 1963.
19. Letter to Post Museum, F. E. Warren AFB, from Colonel William Alexander, USA(Ret), August 2, 1968. Colonel Alexander wrote that his father knew the cannon had been cast during the reign of "Bloody Mary" and suggested the Museum write to England for more information.
20. William E. Woodbridge, Jr., "A Tudor Cannon at Warren Air Force Base," *Annals of Wyoming*, 52 (Spring 1980): 22-24.
21. Letter from H. L. Blackmore, Deputy Master of the Armouries, H. M. Tower of London, July 2, 1979. Copy in author's files.
22. Kerry Drake, "After 77 Years, Warren Cannon Now Has Respect," *Tribune-Eagle*, April 19, 1981, p. 1; Kerry Drake, "Task Force to Save Cannon Formed," *Tribune-Eagle*, April 26, 1981, p. 2; Kerry Drake, "It's Here to Stay—Warren AFB Cannon Gets Face Lift," *SunDAY Magazine of the Wyoming Sunday Tribune-Eagle*, November, 1981, p. 3; "Cannon Restoration (photo)," *Tribune-Eagle*, June 20, 1982.
23. "Task Force to Save Cannon Formed," *Tribune-Eagle*, April 26, 1981, p. 2.
24. Gerald Adams, "Military Retirees Consider Cheyenne More Popular Now," *Tribune-Eagle*, August 23, 1981, p. 20.
25. Letter to Headquarters Strategic Air Command from Commander, 90th Strategic Missile Wing, April 23, 1981, Subject: Warren Falcon Cannon.
26. Letter to Commander, 90th Strategic Missile Wing from Headquarters Strategic Air Command, June 11, 1981, Subject: Falcon Cannon.
27. Conversation with Jerry Bresnahan at Elbe Arms in Cheyenne, August 19, 1986.
28. Kerry Drake, "Tudor Cannon Dedicated at Warren Air Force Base," *Tribune-Eagle*, September 8, 1985, p. 3.
29. Kerry Drake, "After 77 Years, Warren Cannon Now Has Respect," *Tribune-Eagle*, April 19, 1981, p. 1.

THE HISTORY OF VOLUNTEERING

IN WYOMING

by Hugh Jackson

“A government might perform the part of some of the largest American companies, . . . and several states . . . have already attempted it; but what political power could ever carry on the vast multitude of lesser undertakings which the American citizens perform every day, with the assistance of the principle of association?”¹

Indeed, wherever one turns in the United States, there is an association of some sort. Volunteering, be it money or time, is an integral aspect of American society. From charities to civic groups, literary clubs to neo-Nazi organizations, the voluntary sector has entrenched itself in our lives in much the same way as have the sectors of business and government. It is the third sector, and there are very few, if any, of us who are not connected with it in some manner. This seems obvious enough today, as we are bombarded with television commercials and “junk” mail soliciting support for a multitude of non-profit, non-governmental causes. But America has always had a strong penchant for volunteering. The lines quoted were written by the French observer, Alexis de Tocqueville, 150 years ago.

People volunteer for various reasons. In Tocqueville’s time, volunteering, while taking many forms, was most often associated with the philanthropic efforts of the upper class, efforts aimed toward moral and cultural indoctrination as much as alleviating undesirable conditions. With more leisure time and the advance in material conditions, communications and other factors, middle and lower stratas of society have gained the time, the inclination and the administrative and technical skills to volunteer themselves. Today, as in the 1830s, people join together in accordance with their own needs as well as the needs of others. Charities and charitable giving have expanded greatly, but so has volunteering by people who are immediately interested in their own problems. The banker may send \$500 to the American Cancer Society and also be a member of his industry’s legislative lobbying group. The waitress may send \$5 to the American Cancer Society and also be a member of a neighborhood group attempting to get a street paved. While they have widely divergent resources or immediate goals, both recognize the benefits of volunteering and association. Whether their motives are self-serving or grounded in a benevolent concern for a cause, both the banker and the waitress are the inheritors of an American cultural phenomenon that states: if we want something done, we must do it ourselves.

Wyoming, like the rest of the nation, has had a strong spirit of volunteerism. Like people throughout the nation, volunteers in Wyoming have gathered for a veritable plethora of reasons, as evidenced by these passages from a letter by Mrs. Nellis E. Corthell, wife of a Laramie attorney, describing the first meeting of the Laramie Woman’s Club in 1898:

We began business with 135 charter members—then we hired a hall. . . . But what a crudity in ideas and of opinions and aims. Some came to embroider, some to read Schopenhauer. . . . one group of women was for making war on the trusts, another wanted to banish the tin cans from the suburbs of Laramie. We had a dear old lady in our midst who had not kith or kin or home, so we started in to build an old lady’s home around her²

Volunteering, associating, can mean many things to many people. The diversification of volunteerism is even more

astounding when one considers that the concerns expressed, from intellectual endeavors to national politics, came not from an eastern or even a midwestern city, but from the scarcely populated Wyoming of 1898.

At the same time, Wyoming was and remains, unique to the rest of the nation. Wyoming’s resources, geography, climate, all worked to forge a distinct economy, attracting few yet particular types of people and establishing a clearly identifiable cultural heritage. The shape taken by voluntary associations in Wyoming has been dictated by those tangible factors, such as the economy. Voluntary associations in the state have also been an expression of Wyoming culture. As the history of Wyoming differs from that of other states, so does the history of volunteerism within the state.

The preeminent figures in the settlement of Wyoming are those of the cattleman and his employee, the cowboy. Associated with rugged individualism, independence and hard work, the cattle culture was the progenitor of the Wyoming image. Though Wyoming was a backwater of sorts, a frontier, the image was quite in keeping with the 19th century liberal spirit as might be found in England or New York City: success or failure is wholly dependent on individual merit or the lack thereof, the best government is the least government and property is sacrosanct. In a society ever more industrialized and urbanized, where the individual seems to count for less and less, it is little wonder that Wyomingites cling to the cowboy image of independence and self-reliance. Wyomingites proudly call their home the “Cowboy State,” and they seem to agree overwhelmingly that theirs, with the bucking horse and rider, are the most distinct yet representative license plates in the union.³

When the cattlemen settled in Wyoming, they brought the principle of association with them. There were no fire departments, but there were still fires, and people faced the choice of banding together or watching property burn. Labor intensive processes such as branding and putting up hay also required neighborly cooperation and a spirit of self-help. But, probably the first formally organized voluntary associations were those which would succeed or fail in varying degrees and finally emerge as the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.

The Wyoming Stock and Wool Growers Association organized in Laramie, 1871. After changing its name to the Wyoming Stock Graziers Association and electing the territorial governor, John A. Campbell, as its president, the stockmen went to the Legislature, requesting and receiving the enactment of stiff penalties for stealing livestock.⁴ Although the extremely harsh winter of 1871-1872 wiped out stock, stockmen and the Association, this early group helped establish the close relationship the agricultural industry would share with state political power.

A new group, the Laramie County Stock Growers Association, formed in Cheyenne, 1873. Introducing cooperative roundups in an effort to curb cattle theft on



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS AMH DEPT.

Stock Growers Convention in 1914.

the open, unguarded range, the Laramie County Association evolved into the Wyoming Stock Growers Association (WSGA) in 1879.⁵ In the boom period 1880-1887, the WSGA expanded its interests to include freight rates, brand inspection, disease prevention relative to cattle and various questions concerning the use and purchase of public lands.⁶ In addition, the WSGA pushed the Maverick Law through the territorial Legislature, allowing the Association to decide who would receive unbranded cattle found in official state roundups.⁷

With the Maverick Law, it would seem the WSGA was having nothing but success in terms of protecting its interests. After all, the cattle industry was the most well-represented in the Legislature.⁸ But apparently the enactment and enforcement of laws in the territory were altogether different things, for cattlemen felt compelled to instigate the Johnson County War in 1892. Not an official act of the WSGA, the cattlemen's invasion of Johnson County to arrest rustlers, and the subsequent surrounding of the invaders by Johnson County settlers had at least unofficial support from the Association. As John Clay, then president of the Association but in Europe at the time, later wrote, "I was innocent as an unborn babe," but adds, "some of my associates were in it tooth and nail."⁹

The Johnson County War has been fought again and again in history books and Hollywood movies, the attachment of sympathy and blame differing from version to version. But assuming that the cattlemen's motives were

honorable, that the settlers were in alliance with rustlers, the invasion was still illegal. Moreover, it marked a fundamental misconception on the part of the cattle culture mentality, ably expressed in the WSGA's official history:

The invasion failed because the cattlemen did not perceive that vigilante days in Wyoming were over, that a blood purge would not accomplish a moral reform. They sadly misjudged popular sentiment; apparently they had no idea that Settlers had so many on their side, or that the invasion would arouse such swift and spirited resistance. They did not recognize the "rhythm of change" that was at that time affecting the whole country . . . historians have come to call this period the "Watershed of the Nineties." On one side of the watershed lay pioneer America. On the other side was the beginning of the modern era.¹⁰

Time has healed the wounds of the Johnson County War. But the war symbolizes a problem which the WSGA, indeed, much of Wyoming, has had to deal with since. The "modern era" required the further expansion and centralization of government and even the sacrifice of individual liberty in the face of a larger public good. Laissez-faire liberalism of the 19th century, passionately embraced by ranchers, proved inadequate in meeting the political and economic needs of the rest of Wyoming's population. The resulting conflict in views of liberty has made it increasingly difficult for a spirit of self-reliance, of independence, in short, the Wyoming spirit, to be sustained.

While not its stated aim, the WSGA has been at the forefront of maintaining the much-vaunted image of independence in Wyoming. True to the 19th century

liberalism which served as the philosophical framework for the cattle culture, government presence in Wyoming is consistently referred to as government intrusion. For instance, the 1943 expansion of Grand Teton National Park was, in the eyes of the Association, no less than a "seizure" of private property.¹¹ Regardless of the subsequent value of the Park, in terms of both aesthetics and tourist dollars, the WSGA's opposition is somewhat understandable since over one-half of Wyoming was already owned by the federal government at the time, and the creation of the Park in 1929 was thought to be the last of Wyoming land set aside for that purpose.¹²

Less understandable, and even distressing, was the WSGA's continued opposition to a mineral severance tax. Of course, taxation in general is a violation of the traditional free enterprise philosophy so prevalent in the Wyoming image. But considering the millions or even billions of dollars diverted from state revenue between statehood in 1890 and the adoption of a mineral severance tax in 1969, WSGA opposition seems to be little more than the expression of an outdated ideology, the type of anachronistic thinking which led to the Johnson County War.

While the Wyoming Stock Grower's Association may continue to espouse and attempt to preserve the independent "cowboy state" ideology, its volunteerism has taken many forms. The WSGA has donated vast historical resources to the state archives and to the University of Wyoming. This generosity, however, does not detract from the fact that the Association represents primarily a self-interested form of volunteering, its first order of business being the health and development of the cattle industry in Wyoming. The organization's success in its primary goal has been clear, and its impact on the state of Wyoming, whether through the Legislature or as custodian of the Wyoming image, has been greater than that of any other voluntary organization in the state.

A more innocuous, if less important manifestation of the cattle culture meeting volunteerism, can be found in the annual summer celebrations held in nearly every Wyoming town. These celebrations, marked by parades, rodeos, contests and other forms of entertainment, are not only a source of revenue for local economies, but also serve as an expression of civic pride. They are usually organized by a committee of volunteers in cooperation with local government and business and they invariably operate under a Western theme: Pioneer Days, Woodchoppers' Jamboree, Cowboy Days, Jubilee Days (a celebration of statehood), or, the most famous and successful in the state if not all of the West, Cheyenne Frontier Days.

Frontier Days began in 1897. Then, as now, it was planned by the Frontier Days Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, an all-volunteer group which has assured that the celebration has never missed a year since its inception. In addition, the townspeople in general give voluntary support through everything from dressing in Western garb to restoring wagons for the parade. Proceeds

from the rodeo and other events have gone toward the creation and maintenance of the parks system in Cheyenne. Moreover, Frontier Days brings thousands of visitors to Cheyenne each summer, providing profits for hotels, restaurants, bars, retail stores and other businesses. The prestige of "The Daddy of 'Em All" has attracted opera, stage and movie personalities, journalists from around the nation, and, once as President and later as Ex-President, Theodore Roosevelt. Frontier Days has also played host to visitors from around the world, including a 1962 United Nations delegation representing 30 countries.

Colonel E. A. Slack, in reference to the celebration he helped to found, stated: "It is simply remarkable that the entire affair is managed by local talent."¹³ This remark seems as relevant today as when it was said in 1903. Indeed, the unqualified success of Cheyenne Frontier Days, as well as smaller yet similar celebrations throughout the state, suggests that the "cowboy spirit" in Wyoming is quite amenable to the spirit of volunteering.

To be sure, Wyoming is most often nicknamed the Cowboy State. Yet the nickname as acknowledged on the state seal recognizes the state as the first to allow women's suffrage. The very first Legislature of the Wyoming Territory, 1869, allowed women over the age of 21 and residing in Wyoming the right to vote and hold elective office. Women's suffrage was retained in the state constitutional convention of 1889, and Wyoming has since been officially nicknamed "The Equality State."

Esther H. Morris, the "first woman judge," served as Justice of the Peace in South Pass City for eight and one-half months in 1870. Two months after leaving the bench, she wrote to the National Woman's Suffrage Association Convention: "So far as woman's suffrage has progressed in this territory we are entirely indebted to men."¹⁴ There was no women's agitation for suffrage in 1869 or 1889. In fact, there were hardly women, the man to woman ratio in those years being six to one and three to one, respectively. It would seem, then, that the men of Wyoming were particularly forward-looking and enlightened relative to the rest of the country. Certainly there were men who supported suffrage as an egalitarian cause. But the granting of women's suffrage in Wyoming was, more than anything else, part of an effort to remedy Wyoming's perennial problem of attracting population. As Wyoming's senior historian, T. A. Larson, concludes: "Without the public relations angle, Wyoming's first legislature almost certainly would not have approved the suffrage bill."¹⁵

If any women decided to settle in Wyoming hoping to enjoy equal rights, and there is no evidence to suggest any did, they would soon have met with frustration, for Wyoming remained a man's world. Women's role in the rest of American society was an expanding one, the Civil War eventually affording them an opportunity to make contributions to the economy and to support the nation in other areas. Wyoming's symbolic offer of suffrage was simply not enough to draw women away from more pop-

ulated regions, and the practical reality was even less inviting; women's political influence and representation actually lagged behind that of the surrounding states of Colorado, Idaho and Utah.¹⁶ The women of Wyoming did not yet seem interested in fighting for political power. For many, volunteering was an active, acceptable and sufficient manner in which to affect their environment and be heard.

The Woman's Club of Cheyenne organized in 1894, with only five charter members. The Club was abundant in public spirit, sponsoring numerous fund-raising campaigns and even furnishing the maternity room at the County Hospital.¹⁷ In 1903, Mrs. William Guiterman of the Cheyenne Club became interested in the advantages of collective action. In 1904, the Wyoming Federation of Women's Clubs held its first meeting in the Cheyenne Carnegie Library with delegates of fifteen clubs from around the state in attendance.¹⁸

The Wyoming of the early 20th century did not easily lend itself to a statewide voluntary organization. Towns were few and far between, and travel, if not wholly impossible in winter, was difficult at best. The executive officers of the Federation of Women's Clubs could rarely meet more than once a year, and delegates to the state convention weathered what were often arduous, expensive and time-consuming journeys.¹⁹ No doubt the Stock Growers Association faced a similar predicament, particularly before 1900 when transportation and communications were even less developed. But the ranchers organized out of self-interest and viewed their Association as an economic and

political necessity. The Wyoming Federation of Women's Clubs, on the other hand, organized out of beneficence and civic responsibility. Overcoming the challenges posed by a rustic environment frequently involved sacrifice. In this light, the early achievements of the WFWC are all the more admirable.

A popular conception of women's clubs was expressed, rather condescendingly, by a Glendo, Wyoming, man answering his granddaughter's inquiry as to Grandma's whereabouts: "She is at club. The ladies today, are to decide whether to make the pot holders round or square."²⁰ Granted, women's clubs often discussed "ladies" concerns about food preparation, sewing and cleaning. And the WFWC had a Home Economics Division under a Department of Applied Education. This Department, as outlined in the President's Annual Address to the WFWC in 1921, "has four subdivisions: Food, Clothing, County Cooperation and Thrift. The conservation of natural resources has also had a place on our programs and Wyoming will always on account of her vast forests and national parks be greatly interested in this division. Under this head comes Forestry, Waterways, Bird and Natural Life."²¹ There is no mention of pot holders, round or square and Grandpa's remark expresses ignorance as much as levity.

In addition to the Department of Applied Education, the WFWC had Departments of American Citizenship, Fine Arts, Press, Public Welfare and Legislation. The Federation's success under these six departments were substantial and, compared to any number of men's associa-

*The Owls, a
Newcastle Women's
Club, 1907.*



tions of the same period, far more important to Wyoming's long-term development.

A notable interest of the WFWC was higher education. Internally, the Federation established an endowment fund to provide scholarships for women. Externally, it advocated a women's residence hall and the creation of a Domestic Science Department at the University of Wyoming.

Believing that "the greatest gift to any state is its boys and girls . . . so what better work could we enlist in,"²² the Federation petitioned the Legislature for a reformatory for boys. In 1911, the petition was answered with allocation of state funds for the Wyoming Industrial Institute. The WFWC maintained an active concern for conditions at the Institute, staunchly advocating continued Legislative funding and generally receiving the same.²³ Comparable success with the Legislature resulted from a WFWC campaign for a constitutional amendment which established the state juvenile court system.²⁴

During World War I, the Federation joined with the rest of the nation to aid the war effort through promoting the purchase of Liberty Bonds, focusing attention on bettering conditions in army camps, supporting education in food production and conservation and establishing furlough homes for American soldiers in France. Similar goals were undertaken in World War II, including the organization of USO centers and scrap metal campaigns.²⁵

A major WFWC accomplishment was to firm the foundation for the organization and preservation of historical material in the state. In attempting to remove the political patronage associated with the office of State Historian, as well as create a more harmonious relationship between the state and the university in regard to preservation of historical resources, the Federation immersed itself in political controversy. Controversy ended in compromise, and, much to the chagrin of the Federation, the State Historian would continue to be appointed by the governor. But the system for preservation and organization of state archives was enlarged and improved (with support of the Stock Growers Association, it should be added), and the Federation's efforts met with at least qualified success.²⁶

With their support of women's education or the boys' reformatory, the Women's Clubs voiced concerns which may have gone unheard. At the same time, issues raised by the Clubs were often little more than echoes of a national mood. For instance, in the early 20th century, the Federation advocated Prohibition, embraced the movement for higher morality in motion pictures and was an integral force in the Americanization of immigrants. But whether introducing ideas or restating fashionable ones, the role of the WFWC has been vital to the history of volunteerism in Wyoming. If the Federation is not as active today as it once was, it is perhaps due to the changing economic climate in America which has placed women in the work force and left them little time for volunteering. But that is a problem of the present and not the past.

What is clear about the past is that Wyoming women

were eager volunteers. It is true that some volunteered out of the boredom that must have accompanied the Wyoming frontier. As one woman reminisced: "We really pioneered for several years, living first in a tar paper shack Within a year . . . I had become a member of the Tuesday Study Club (of Lingle) Membership in this small club was all that kept me from rustivating completely."²⁷ Certainly the clubs were fun, offering recreation and relief in the place of day-to-day drudgery. But the Federation's achievements represent an expression of altruism and civic pride on the part of most Federation members. The voluntary spirit of Wyoming women is perhaps best expressed by an outsider, a regional director of the League of Women Voters in Wyoming, Montana, the Dakotas, Iowa and Minnesota: "I really feel more in touch with the women of Wyoming through these splendid club reports than I do with any of my other states"²⁸

To be sure, the people of Wyoming take pride in their heritage as residents of the Equality State. It is similar, if less pronounced, to the affection they hold for the Cowboy State theme. Equally significant to the state's development is Wyoming's ethnic heritage. Yet that aspect of Wyoming's cultural identification is less apparent, and perhaps invisible. For some of the groups who came to Wyoming early and in large numbers—Eastern Europeans, Germans, Greeks, Italians or Irish—have since become fully assimilated into American society. The passage of time, periodically aided by the nationalism of World Wars and Red Scares, has removed many descendants of these groups from their European backgrounds, interest in foreign languages or cultures dying among successive generations.

Such was not always the case. Early Wyoming immigrants, while desirous of success in the American system for themselves and for their children, also felt the ties to their original lands:

If persons are differentiated by color or complexion, language, or any other means, they need to feel a part of something which is uniquely their own. Foreign-born residents in an area where they are called upon to interact on a daily basis with persons of different backgrounds feel the need for establishing themselves as something special in a foreign land.²⁹

Immigrants expressed these feelings through retaining traditional foods, language, music or art and religion. The "need to feel a part of something which is uniquely their own" also led to the establishment of voluntary ethnic organizations.

Ethnic groups in the state of any substantial population organized in one or another form. The Maennerchor Society, a German men's singing group in Laramie from about 1880 to the early 1900s, the Dante Alighieri Society, formed by Sunrise-Hartville Italians in 1906, the American Hellenic Education Progressive Association and the Greek American Progressive Association, plus the Swedish Benevolence Society of Cheyenne were only a few of the many organizations, some still in existence, which were concerned with mutual aid and cultural preservation. One of the most popular and active of these was the German

Turnverein Society of Cheyenne. Mention in the *Cheyenne Daily Leader* newspaper in 1868 of a Turnverein ball establishes it as one of the earliest as well.³⁰

The Turnverein Society built its own hall in Cheyenne in 1891. It was large, and the community in general as well as the Society made use of it. Formally opening with a classical concert by the New York Philharmonic Club, the hall hosted social events, church bazaars, balls, political rallies, prize fights, theatricals and weekly Turnverein meetings for nearly twenty years.³¹ While the Society's basic goal was the preservation and continuance of German culture, it proved to be a valuable asset to many Cheyenne citizens. With later generations, interest in things German declined, along with membership in the Society, and the hall was sold. Not surprisingly, World War I rendered German culture decidedly out of vogue and the Society disbanded.

If the Stock Growers Association represents volunteering for self-interest, and the Federation of Women's Clubs for beneficence, then the ethnic organizations represent both. Like the WFWC, the ethnic societies were often involved in community service. Like the WSGA, the ethnic societies were formed to preserve a way of life and work for the betterment of a homogeneous group sharing similar, often identical interests. The cattlemen joined for economic and cultural survival, as did the ethnics. The Stock Growers Association is a moderate success by any standards. Relative to such groups as the Turnverein Society, the WSGA success is unqualified. To be sure, Wyoming is the Cowboy State, not Little Germany or Little Italy. Perhaps societies like the Turnverein simply could not outlive their usefulness. On the other hand, there are still cowboys in Wyoming, as there are still people who take pride in and celebrate their ethnic backgrounds, and the two groups are not mutually exclusive. That one type of association has outgrown and survived the other is testament to the fact that the history of volunteering in Wyoming is integrally linked to the broader story of Wyoming's cultural development.

It may come as something of a surprise, then, that there have been voluntary organizations in the state which, far from representing traditional perceptions of Wyoming, seem indigenous to other, more "civilized" areas. Few people nationwide, or in the state for that matter, might expect the cradle of American individualism and the do-it-yourself attitude to have actively supported orphanages. Perhaps fewer still would guess that the home of Frontier Days long has been charmed by the presence of a local theatre group or a literary society. While none may have gone as far as Nellis Cortell, who routinely painted out the cowboy on his license plate each year,³² many people throughout Wyoming's history were far more concerned with creating a productive, enlightened environment than promoting the cowboy image.

One of those so concerned was Patrick A. McGovern, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cheyenne. Although the Epis-

copal Cathedral Home in Laramie, dating from 1910, and the more recently established State Home for Dependent Children in Cheyenne, offered facilities for homeless children in the state, McGovern discovered in the early 1920s that 77 Wyoming children were being sheltered in three Denver orphanages. Apparently of the mind that Wyoming children should be cared for within Wyoming, McGovern set the wheels in motion for the creation of an orphanage in the state. In 1924, at a price so low it amounted to a gift, a 93 acre farm was acquired near Torrington. Between 1925 and 1928, the state was canvassed and \$175,000 raised. Ground was broken in the spring of 1929, and St. Joseph's Children's Home opened on September 1, 1930.³³

The year 1930 was singular for the opening of an orphanage. Father John Henry, the first superintendent at St. Joseph's, concisely and accurately noted the effects of the Depression, writing: "When our income decreases our enrollment increases."³⁴ Yet during the 1930s, St. Joseph's added a barn and other outbuildings, pavement and sidewalks, landscaping to remove the "penitentiary" look of the building and a chapel. While these additions left the institution substantially in debt, the amount owed had been reduced to \$10,000 by 1944,³⁵ suggesting not only efficient administration on the part of the orphanage, but generous giving on the part of Wyoming donors.

While St. Joseph's was open to children of all denominations, it was run by Catholics. Torrington had only a small population of Catholics, and many local residents initially viewed the orphanage with skepticism. It did not take long, however, before the town took pride in St. Joseph's. The school system cooperated splendidly and townspeople were quick to befriend the children, as well as offer part-time employment. The children became very active in local organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and 4-H, the latter with the assistance of area farmers and ranchers. The annual Christmas pageants staged by the children were sell-outs. Indeed, the people of Torrington, it seems, wanted the children "to believe that the world beyond St. Joseph's would be a friendly and hospitable place."³⁶

Any discussion of St. Joseph's, or Wyoming volunteerism in general, would be sorely lacking were no mention made of T. Joe Cahill. A "man with a million friends," it seems Cahill solicited funds from all of them for St. Joseph's. On a more personal level, he was loved by the children, frequently visiting them or taking them on excursions, particularly to Frontier Days, another voluntary effort to which he gave 30 years of dedicated service. Born in Wyoming in 1877, Cahill loved the state and was a true inheritor of the cowboy image (he presided over Tom Horn's hanging, at Horn's request). Yet Cahill, far from the strong, silent type so often associated with perceptions of the Cowboy State, was a tireless and vocal supporter of a benevolent cause. Said Bishop Hubert Newell, at Cahill's funeral in 1965: "Wherever its [St. Joseph's] story

Patrick A. McGovern, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cheyenne, was instrumental in the founding of St. Joseph's Children's Home in Torrington.



is told in the future decades or even a century from now, the name of T. Joe Cahill will be mentioned with reverence and love, the children who have benefited through his generosity will sing his praises to God and man."³⁷ Those who view the Cowboy State as simply that and little more should be surprised to find such words describing a man who was so frequently referred to as "Mr. Wyoming."

St. Joseph's and Cahill are only two examples of a cultural diversity in Wyoming that transcends the cowboy image. Another is the existence of "Broadway in Cow Country" as represented by the Cheyenne Little Theatre Players. Inspired by the free theatres of Europe and similar groups in Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Pasadena and other cities, the Little Theatre Players sought to fill the void left by road shows which had either gone bankrupt or settled down in larger cities. Boasting a vaudevillian-turned-businessman, a former *Redbook* cover-girl, an aspiring actor with experience in motion pictures and active support from several local volunteer groups, the CLTP presented its first public performance on May 7, 1930. By 1979, the CLTP had acquired properties in excess of a half-million dollars and a reputation as one of the oldest community theatres in the United States.³⁸

The Cheyenne Little Theatre was not the only cultural, "high-brow" volunteer group in Cheyenne. In 1901, the

Young Men's Literary Club held its first meeting. The Club was composed of the most prominent men in the community, if not the state, including former and future governors, senators, congressmen, judges and people of comparable importance. In their weekly meetings, these men would hold lively discussions about the political questions of the day or deliver papers on academic topics ranging from Aristotle to Zoroaster. They were also beneficial to the community in a practical sense, addressing issues such as public lands use or sewer systems, and donating 40 acres to a boys' lodge.

The existence of the Little Theatre Players and the Young Men's Literary Club suggests that Wyoming was not as backward or culturally destitute as many might believe. It is only fair to add that both clubs were exclusive, their membership rosters reading like the Cheyenne social register. Volunteering in Wyoming, then, often might take the appearance of a class affair. Even the Federation of Women's Clubs, ostensibly a benevolent association, fell under criticism on this point. To be sure, Wyoming, like the rest of the nation, has had clearly identifiable class lines between, say, the lawyer and the miner. But within a small population, such as Wyoming's, the interests of lower and upper class are more frequently intertwined with one another than might be the case elsewhere:



The Cheyenne Little Theatre Players, 1940, from the play, "Yes and No."

Perhaps we were all the "Babbitts" of *Main Street* that Sinclair Lewis ridiculed. He never knew the joys of achievement, the vicissitudes and happy surprises of life in a small town. To him had been denied the realization of the compelling activity inspired by the golden bonds of friendship that transcend that of David and Jonathan. There were lost to him the pleasures of exchanged ideas; lives snatched from defeat to be crowned in victory; tragedy and sorrow dispelled by happiness as the strong arm of a powerful and influential Club member, without ostentation, grasped the hand of a true and helpless friend.³⁹

When Harry B. Henderson delivered these remarks to the Young Men's Literary Club, he spoke as a "powerful and influential Club member," not a "helpless friend," and he may have romanticized or exaggerated the democratic character of small towns. At the same time, a project where success or failure is dependent on voluntary effort often cannot afford to be class exclusive, and Henderson's sentiments regarding volunteering in small towns ring at least partly true.

Lower or upper class, self-serving or benevolent, there is no doubt that volunteering in Wyoming has been surprisingly diverse and has manifested itself in a multitude of forms. Those noted here represent only an introduction to private, non-profit groups and much work remains to be done. Rotary Clubs and fraternal organizations, such as the Elks and Kiwanis have a long history in the state, knowledge of which would very likely be a source of pride for Wyomingites. The efforts of churches may very well constitute the largest single voluntary contribution to the state in an organized sense, and their story should be told

as well. Voluntary support of the University of Wyoming is a perennial source of both pride and controversy, and one might ask if any volunteer group has ever been organized to assist the University in any significant way beyond the promotion of athletics. An accurate list of all non-profit, non-governmental associations, clubs and societies in the state, both past and present, would be a very long one. Yet the history of each, aside from being interesting in itself, would say something about the state in general. The countless occasions of neighbor helping neighbor, without ever organizing formally, would probably say more about the people of Wyoming than would the history of any association, club or society, but that type of volunteering is rarely documented, hence, difficult to research and its story may remain untold.

The cowboy image, the equality theme and a small population necessarily produce a type of volunteering in Wyoming which differs from that of other areas. Other general themes of Wyoming history remain unaddressed relative to volunteering. For instance, much of the state's economic instability is a result of what is often referred to as economic colonialism, where investment for industry comes from outside the state and profit from industry leaves the state. From the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1860s to the oil companies in the 1980s, economic colonialism has been a major theme in Wyoming's development. How has volunteering been affected when profit from the minerals industry has left the state? Has volunteering suffered because a corporation operating in

Wyoming has had its best and brightest working out of an office in Colorado, Texas or Pennsylvania? Or have corporations in the state given generously to Wyoming voluntary enterprises? Similar questions could be asked in the context of a north-south political split, an inordinate federal presence or the boom-bust cycle.

Much has been written about politics and economics in Wyoming. Volunteering, on the other hand, is too often viewed as the activity of do-gooders, innocuous and of only minor importance. It is ironic that there has been so little written about volunteering in a state which prides itself in its independence, where the much-vaunted image of self-reliance professes to put faith in people and not government. Perhaps this is due to overshadowing by glamorous, romantic tales of rustlers and lawmen, cavalry and Indians, trappers and entrepreneurs. The history of volunteering seems pale by comparison. Yet without the impact of the Stock Growers Association, the benefits derived from Frontier Days, the Federation of Women's Clubs or St. Joseph's Children's Home, the cultural contributions of the ethnic societies, the Cheyenne Little Theatre Players and the Young Men's Literary Club, Wyoming would be much different, frequently much less, than what it is.



T. Joe Cahill

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"A Cheyenne Woman in the Robes of a Secret Society," by Leonard Baskin, color lithograph, 1974.



**AMAZONS, WITCHES
AND
'COUNTRY WIVES':**

**Plains Indian Women
in
Historical Perspective**

by
Thomas Schilz
and
Jodye Lynn Dickson Schilz

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY AMON CARTER MUSEUM, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Describing the tribes of the Great Plains for the first time, American males praised the bravery and self-confidence of the Indian men while admiring the women solely for their beauty and grace. Often long deprived of female companionship, such White men ignored these women's skill and courage, preferring instead to concentrate on, as William Clark put it, their amorous dispositions.¹ Standards of beauty even determined how Indian women were categorized, either as comely "maidens" or plain "squaws." Indian males reinforced White ideas of masculine superiority on the plains by their frequently abusive treatment of their wives. As a result, many White observers regarded Native American women as the virtual slaves of their male masters.² Yet Plains Indian women enjoyed a much broader and more complex role in tribal society than most of these Whites could have imagined given their ideas as to "a woman's place." Native American women, on the whole, enjoyed greater economic and social freedom than their White contemporaries. Even more importantly, Indian women often engaged in occupations usually reserved for men, and, with an attitude lacking in most White males, their Indian counterparts often openly encouraged and supported those females within their tribe who took on roles of leadership.

Women provided important economic services in the tribal community, making clothing, tipi covers and tools as well as butchering and preserving meat plus dressing hides and pelts. Their performance of such tasks gave casual White observers the impression that Indian women were confined solely to roles as domestic servants, but such was not generally the case. In many instances, Plains Indian women possessed the sole right to dispose of the hides, snowshoes, goosedown blankets, moccasins, agricultural products and other goods that they produced.³ Through these means women became active entrepreneurs who exercised a great deal of control over the distribution of trade goods. In most tribes, women possessed their own personal property such as tipis, horses and assorted household items. While it is true that a man could cut off his wife's nose or beat her for adultery, she could divorce him by simply throwing his goods out of her lodge, and, if necessary, she could even kill him.

Indian societies were dynamic systems that allowed an individual to seek self-fulfillment. Custom defined specific roles for the sexes, as it does in all societies, but individuals of both sexes could satisfy themselves by participating in nontraditional activities without fear of social censure.⁴ Indian women often engaged in three occupations generally reserved for men: as warriors, shamans and diplomats. In these areas, individual women excelled and were frequently mentioned by White observers not so much because of their uniqueness in Indian culture, perhaps, but rather because such roles were denied to White females.

The number of women among Plains tribes who served as warriors is unknown. Warriors were deemed successful because they had special spiritual power, or medicine.

Generally speaking, this power was acquired through visions. Women did not as a rule seek visions, but if they did, their power was considered as potent as a man's medicine.

In critical situations where the survival of a band was at stake, women normally fought alongside men. In one notable instance, Old-Lady-Grieves-the-Enemy, a Pawnee, defended her village when it was attacked by Poncas.⁵ Pawnee men, seeing themselves outnumbered and believing the Poncas intended to burn the village, resigned themselves to their fate and cowered in their lodges. Old-Lady-Grieves-the-Enemy, however, smeared soot on her face as war paint and sallied forth to face the Poncas on her own. Aroused by her bravery, the men followed suit and defeated the enemy. Years afterward, when warriors from both tribes reviewed this battle, the Poncas praised the courage of the old man who had defeated them, and were astonished to discover that the warrior had been a woman.

Several women became warriors out of choice rather than necessity. Perhaps the best known of these was a Crow called Woman Chief. A Gros Ventre by birth, Woman Chief had been captured in a raid at about the age of ten and was reared as a Crow. Her foster father encouraged her desire to assume a warrior role and gave her weapons and horses. Upon his death, she began providing meat for his household. Described as a tall and muscular woman, Woman Chief wore traditional female clothing but possessed her own lodge, horse herd and weapons. She preferred to hunt rather than to engage in domestic pursuits.⁶ Unlike some other women who became warriors, Woman Chief never married because she refused to subordinate herself to a husband. She became the third ranking chief among the Crows and acquired four "wives," or female servants, who took care of her belongings.

Woman Chief acquired her status as a warrior during a battle with the Blackfeet. In this encounter, several Crow men were killed and the remaining warriors, with their women and children, took refuge in the stockade of a trader's fort. Refusing to run away from the Blackfeet, Woman Chief rode out alone to face the enemy. She shot and killed three Blackfeet who came forward to parley with her and escaped unharmed from the remaining Blackfeet.⁷

Woman Chief quickly became an important war leader and collected a number of followers. Her medicine was regarded as especially strong, and male warriors eagerly joined her raiding parties because they were always successful. On her first raid, she captured 70 horses from a Blackfeet camp and killed one of the enemy.⁸ Following the Fort Laramie Treaty in 1851, a Gros Ventre war party ambushed and killed her.

Other women also adopted the lifestyle of warriors. Two Crow women, The-Other-Maggie and Finds-Them-and-Kills-Them, took part in the Battle of the Rosebud in 1876. A military column under General George Crook, searching for Indians led by Crazy Horse and Dull Knife, encountered a large war party of Sioux and Cheyennes under Crazy Horse on Rosebud Creek in Wyoming. Sev-



"Dance of the Mandan Women," by Carl Bodmer, engraving, c. 1840.

eral Crows, including the two women warriors, accompanied the White soldiers as scouts. During the course of the battle, The-Other-Maggie counted coup on a Sioux warrior while Finds-Them-and-Kills-Them shot several of the enemy using a borrowed rifle. Finds-Them-and-Kills-Them also rescued a Crow warrior whose horse had been killed.⁹

Several women fought on the other side in the Battle of the Rosebud. Buffalo Calf Road Woman, a sister of the Cheyenne Chief Comes-in-Sight, followed her brother into battle and participated in several Cheyenne charges against Crook's troops. When Comes-in-Sight's horse was shot, Buffalo Calf Road Woman rescued him by riding into the melee and helping him up on her own horse.¹⁰ The Cheyennes referred to this engagement with Crook's soldiers as "the battle where the girl saved her brother," in remembrance of Buffalo Calf Road Woman's deed.

One month later, when General George Custer's Seventh Cavalry attacked the Sioux-Cheyenne village on

the Little Big Horn, a Sioux woman named Moving Robe led Gall's warriors into the fight. Carrying the weapons of her brother, who had been killed in the Battle of the Rosebud, Moving Robe inspired Sioux men to fight harder to prevent being outshone by her.¹¹

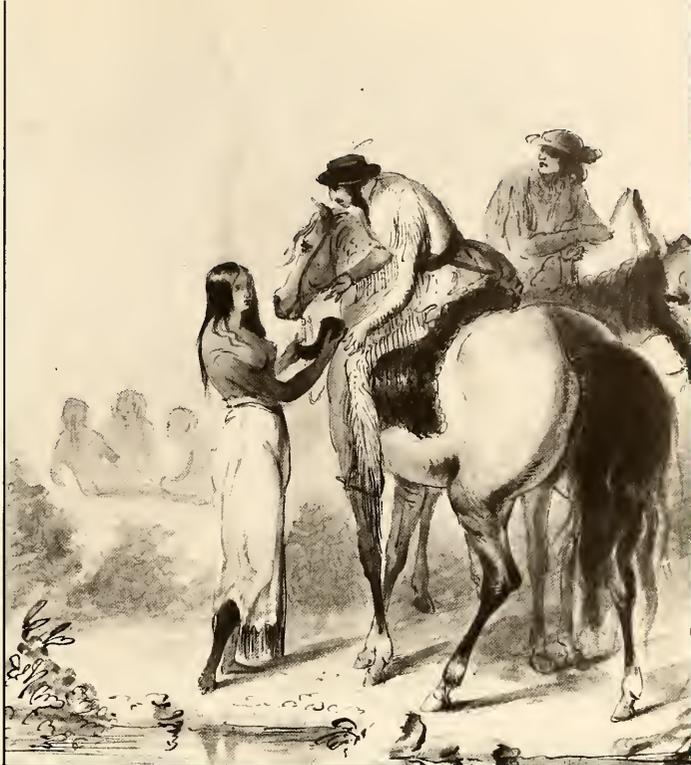
Moving Robe and The-Other-Maggie became warriors to seek revenge and quiet the dead's spirits who demanded an eye for an eye. Other women also sought revenge for relatives slain in battle. Running Eagle, a Piegan, sought to avenge her husband who had been killed by the Crows. In her first raid, Running Eagle brought back three Crow horses. On another occasion, her medicine, which was alleged to give her prophetic powers, enabled her to foretell of an encounter with a Nez Perce camp while her war party was exploring the Yellowstone River. In accordance with her prediction, the Piegans encountered an enormous Nez Perce encampment. Unable to retreat, the Piegans dug rifle pits and repulsed several Nez Perce attacks. The Piegans



"Indian Women Moving," by Charles M. Russell, oil on canvas, 1898.

"The Silk Robe," by Charles M. Russell, oil on canvas, c. 1890.





(Above) "Receiving A Draught of Water from an Indian Girl," by Alfred Jacob Miller, pencil/pen/ink with grey wash, c. 1837. (Below) "Lewis and Clark on the Lower Columbia," by Charles M. Russell, watercolor, 1905.



later attributed this victory to Running Eagle's medicine.

Running Eagle often discarded her role as a warrior and dressed as a woman to gain entry to enemy camps where a member of her sex would not be suspected of being a spy. By this means, she was able to steal large numbers of horses. Her career ended when the Flatheads killed her during a raid.¹²

Accounts of women warriors run throughout the histories of tribes on both the northern and southern plains. In the south, the Tonkawas, for example, produced a number of such leaders. This tradition took firm root in 1872, when Tonkawas, scouting for the army, were led into battle by a young woman who was the daughter of Johnson, the tribe's war chief. Two years later, when Ranauld MacKenzie's troops attacked the Southern Cheyennes, Comanches and Kiowas at Palo Duro Canyon, several women accompanied the scouts. These Tonkawa women rounded up horses, counted coup on wounded Comanche warriors and collected trophies of the campaign.¹³

Women in Plains Indian society who were denied the excitement of battle for one reason or another found solace in their participation in scalp dances. In some instances, women were allowed to torture male captives, but female captives were generally safe from torture or mutilation from any member of a tribe. Despite the role of women in warfare, most tribes subscribed to the old Gros Ventre adage that "women and children do not make good charcoal."

Some Indian women who sought adventure chose to find it in the pursuit of spiritual powers rather than war honors. Among some tribes, like the Comanches and Cheyennes, tradition held that the medicine man, or shaman, was expected to have a female assistant—usually his wife, sister or daughter. If a man could not find a female relative who wanted to learn his art, he could seek female help elsewhere. Spiritual power of this nature was considered so volatile that a woman's presence was thought necessary to help control it. Women who could not ordinarily become shamans on their own in some tribes, usually wielded power through their male associates in this fashion. Often these women carried on as shamans after their male comrade's death.

In several tribes, women could become shamans on their own. Pawnee women were often shamans or "witches" by profession, specializing in love magic and controlling weather. War Leader Woman, an important Pawnee shaman, kept a live rattlesnake under her pillow as an animal helper and was feared by her people for her power to bewitch her family's enemies. On one occasion her son, Lone Chief, had quarreled with another warrior over the distribution of horses taken in a raid. As a result of this dispute, War Leader Woman and the mother of Lone Chief's rival argued as well. Most of the tribe attributed the sudden death of Lone Chief's enemy to War Leader Woman's sorcery.¹⁴

Sometimes a shaman's power was said to be gained from a near brush with death or a freak accident. Such was

the case with the Apache medicine woman Tze-go-juni, who, in her youth, had been taken as a slave and lived among the Mexicans of Sonora for five years. After returning to her people, Tze-go-juni was attacked by a mountain lion and badly mauled. She survived that ordeal only to be struck by lightning. Once again she recovered, and from that time forward the Apaches attributed her power as a shaman to her encounters with nature.¹⁵

A number of medicine women used their powers to heal the sick. Feather Woman, a Crow shaman, had been captured during a raid on an Oglala Sioux camp along with many other women and children. After several entreaties by the Sioux, the Crows agreed to return their captives in exchange for horses. The Sioux refused to take Feather Woman or her young daughter because they claimed she had stabbed her husband to death. Instead, the Crows adopted Feather Woman and she began to practice healing arts. Her medicine animal, the mountain lion, was greatly revered by the Crows, who regarded her association with this animal and her own powerful visions with awe. Feather Woman was reputed to be able to cure the sick simply by touching them with her hand.¹⁶ The Mandan medicine woman Stays Yellow, on the other hand, used a thorough knowledge of wild plant pharmacology to work her cures.

Women held important roles in tribal religious rites as well. In the Blackfeet Sun Dance ceremony, for instance, a female leader called a medicine woman organized the ritual by vowing to undergo the sacrifice of leading the Sun Dance. Among the medicine woman's many duties was the preparation and distribution of buffalo tongues, the holy food used in the Sun Dance communion meal. Cheyenne women were expected to play an important role in the construction of the Sun Dance lodge, Pawnee women were the major contributors in the tribe's planting ceremonies and Arapaho women summoned the buffalo herds through their own rituals.¹⁷

Among the Sioux, the culture hero, White Buffalo Maiden, was responsible for giving her people buffalo and teaching them how to live. Similar beliefs were found among tribes on the southern margins of the Great Plains in New Mexico.

The arrival of Europeans on the plains led to intermarriage between White men and Indian women. White traders and Indian chiefs often arranged these "country marriages," as Europeans called them, in order to secure alliances through wedlock that would bring about increased trade. "Country wives," the women who participated in these marriages, often served as diplomats between their own people and those of their husbands. They smoothed rough feelings caused by the inevitable cultural friction and served as bridges for cultural exchange.¹⁸

One such woman diplomat was Owl Woman, the "country wife" of trader William Bent. As the daughter of Yellow Wolf, a noted Cheyenne chief, Owl Woman was a shaman respected by her tribe who nurtured relations



"Indian Maiden," by Charles M. Russell, watercolor, 1898.

between her people and white traders. Another "country wife," Medicine Snake Woman, was a Blood Indian who married Alexander Culbertson, the *bourgeois* of Fort Union, in 1828. Her influence among the chiefs of the Blackfeet confederacy, especially with her brother, Seen-from-Afar (head chief of the Bloods), and her cousin Little Dog (head chief of the Piegans), allowed American traders to enter the Blackfeet territory peacefully—a privilege not previously granted to Whites. Her influence helped the United States sign a treaty with the Blackfeet in 1855, and she made important contributions to Lewis Henry Morgan's study of North American ethnology, by providing him with information on the kinship systems of her people.¹⁹

Deer Little Woman was another of these women diplomats who contributed to American-Indian peace. An Assiniboine who married Edwin Denig, Culbertson's successor as *bourgeois* at Fort Union, Deer Little Woman influenced her husband to further the careers of her brothers, First-to-Fly and The Light. As a result of their good relations with this White trader, both First-to-Fly and The Light were able to supply their tribe with an abundant supply of trade goods, and this, in turn, enabled them to become prominent Assiniboine chiefs. Like Medicine Snake Woman, Deer Little Woman made important contributions in ethnology through her husband's writings about the Indian tribes of the upper Missouri.²⁰

In Canada, Thanadethur, a Chipewyan woman captured by Crees and given to the English, brought her own tribe into closer economic relations with the White men and arranged peace between the Chipewyans and Crees. Among the Arapahoes, Kit Carson's marriage to Singing Wind probably saved his life since the Arapahoes had a reputation for their inhospitable treatment of other White trappers. As a kinsman by marriage, Carson could move about freely in the Arapahoes' territory and gather pelts for trade. Other "country wives" such as Sacagawea, a Shoshoni, and Marie Dorion of the Iowas, served as guides and interpreters for White explorers.²¹

As with their counterparts in White society, Indian women fulfilled traditional roles as mothers, wives and keepers of the family household. Yet Indian women were not confined to these roles exclusively. Sometimes, as in Comanche and Crow society, they were allowed to speak in council and thereby attained a measure of political influence.²² Other Indian women broke completely from the traditional mold to assume identities as warriors, sorcerers, chiefs and diplomats. In doing so, they made names for themselves among their own people. Unlike their counterparts in the White world, these women were not looked upon as aberrant nor criticized for betraying their sex. Instead, they were judged on their worth as individuals and encouraged to fulfill their potential.

1. Rudolph Kurz, *Journal of Rudolph Freidrich Kurz: An Account of His Experiences Among Fur Traders and American Indians on the Mississippi and the Upper Missouri Rivers During the Years 1846 to 1852*, trans. by Myrtio Jarrell, ed. by J.N.B. Hewitt (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 38.
2. Pierre Antoine Tabeau, *Tabeau's Narrative of Loisel's Expedition to the Upper Missouri*, ed. by Annie H. Abel (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939), p. 149.
3. George F. Will and George E. Hyde, *Corn Among the Indians of the Upper Missouri* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 19.
4. Robert Lowie, *The Crow Indians* (New York: Holt and Reinhart, 1935), p. 48. Men also adopted female roles and dress in many Indian societies. These berdaches, or "men-women," were considered important individuals.
5. Gene Weltfish, *The Lost Universe: Pawnee Life and Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), pp. 42-43.
6. Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, ed. by John C. Ewers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 196.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Frank B. Linderman, *Pretty Shield* (New York: John Day Company, 1972), pp. 228-230.
10. George Bird Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 324.
11. Charles Eastman, "Rain-in-the-Face, The Story of a Sioux Warrior," *Outlook* 34 (October 27, 1906): 507-512.
12. John C. Ewers, "Deadlier than the Male," *American Heritage* 16 (June 1965): 12-13.
13. Robert Carter, *On the Border with MacKenzie, or Winning West Texas from the Comanches* (Washington, D.C.: Eynon Press, 1935), pp. 488-493.
14. Weltfish, *The Lost Universe*, p. 336.
15. Thomas E. Mails, *The People Called Apache* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 147.
16. Linderman, *Pretty Shield*, pp. 177-179.
17. John C. Ewers, *The Blackfeet, Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), pp. 175-180; Weltfish, *The Lost Universe*, pp. 95-96; Alfred Kroeber, *The Arapaho*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 210-225; Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p. 281.
18. Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), pp. 28-29.
19. John C. Ewers, *Indian Life on the Upper Missouri* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), pp. 62-63.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, pp. 66-67; David F. Hawke, *Those Tremendous Mountains: The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1980), pp. 187-189. Many women also married prominent leaders of other Indian tribes, thereby improving intertribal relations.

ANNALS REVIEWS

J. E. Stimson: Photographer of the West. By Mark Junge. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1985. 210 pp. Cloth \$29.95.

Mark Junge's *J. E. Stimson: Photographer of the West* is the biography of a Wyoming photographer whose career extended from the late 1880s through the first half of the 20th century. Joseph E. Stimson was born in a rural area of South Carolina in 1870, moved with his family to Nebraska and, in 1889, settled in Cheyenne where he purchased a photographer's studio and equipment to initiate his life-long pursuit of promotional and portrait photography. Endowed with a particularly good eye and appreciation for pastoral settings, Stimson took a countless number of scenic pictures for the Union Pacific Railroad, the Wyoming Department of Immigration and even the United States Bureau of Reclamation. His work, which exists today in the form of nearly 7,500 glass-plate and nitrate negatives, is of such high quality that his self-proclaimed title as "scenic artist" is not an idle claim. The majority of Stimson's negatives are at the Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department, where author Mark Junge first became engrossed in their historic and fascinating properties.

J. E. Stimson is essentially a coffee-table book with the added benefit of excellent scholarship and perceptive thematic comments. In a brief but lucid fashion, Junge suggests, with ample documentation, a belief that Stimson deserves a place within the "pantheon of Western photographers" for two reasons. In the first place, Junge contends that Stimson, whose most productive period was the opening decade of the 20th century, was able to capture the essence of the West at a moment when that region crossed a threshold from the frontier to a more modern state of existence represented by cities with elaborate brick structures, large-scale coal mines, productive oil fields and intricate railroad networks. Stated Junge: "What Stimson offers is a frontal view of the American West as it wanted to see itself, at a time when it was proudly emerging from rude, frontier beginnings." Junge elaborates by commenting that Stimson's photographs fill a hiatus between Francis Parkman's "Idyllic West" and David Plowden's more contemporary scene. Second, the author argues that Stimson's claim to enduring recognition is based in part on the fact that he is one of the very few professional

photographers who spent their careers photographing the Rocky Mountain region. In this respect, Junge compares Stimson to William H. Jackson and Timothy O'Sullivan.

Junge's book works both as a collection of fine photographs and as an interpretative analysis of Stimson's contributions to the recording of the development of the West in the early 20th century. Through Stimson's camera lens, Junge perceives the West as a dynamic region which has endeavored to create and promote its claim to scenic beauty, economic vitality and historic importance. Through his own skill at organizing textual materials, Junge presents Stimson's photographs in a series of subject-oriented sections that include chapters on portraits, urban settings, railroads, farms and ranches, and the industrial and mining West. Within each chapter is a sprinkling of notable facts to enhance an understanding of many of the photographs, a number of provocative comments on the significance of Stimson as a photographer, and a generous number of black and white photographs that range from farm and mountain settings of Wyoming and Colorado to street scenes and buildings of such picturesque settings as Salina, Kansas, Deadwood, South Dakota, Omaha, Nebraska, and Salt Lake City, Utah. *J. E. Stimson: Photographer of the West*, in short, is the well organized, well researched, thought provoking and interesting account of a Western photographer whose accomplishments merit serious consideration by those who wish to understand the importance of the history of the American West.

WALTER R. JONES

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Teepee Neighbors. By Grace Coolidge. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, New Edition Reprint, 1984 (Originally published: Boston: The Four Seas Co., 1917). Index. 163 pp. \$7.95 paper.

Grace Wetherbee Coolidge was the wife of The Reverend Sherman Coolidge, a full-blooded Arapahoe and minister of the Episcopal Church. She was born in Boston of a very proper family. Early in her life the family moved to New York City, where her father owned two hotels.

Runs-on-Top, or Sherman Coolidge, was born sometime in 1862 near Goose Creek, in the Wind River Country of Wyoming. His parents were Arapahoes and his early years were filled with the dangers with which all persecuted peoples must contend.

In the springtime of 1870, Runs-on-Top's band was attacked by a large band of Shoshones and the youngster was taken captive. Not long afterward he was given to American troops. The lad was befriended by an army surgeon and renamed after General William Tecumseh Sherman. Later that same year, Captain and Mrs. Charles A. Coolidge adopted him.

Sherman Coolidge's position among both Whites and Indians was unique. He was respected by the White community because of his education and manner and because he was Captain and Mrs. Collidge's son: on the other hand, he was accepted by the Indians, though somewhat hesitantly, because of his lineal descent from Arapahoe leaders.

Teepee Neighbors is filled with the historical and sociological perspectives of a woman who witnessed the daily hardships of the Arapahoes and Shoshones in the early 20th century.

Mrs. Coolidge's candid and straight-forward portrayals of the everyday lives of ordinary people on the Wind River Indian Reservation leaves us one of the most revealing accounts of White-Indian relations of the period and an insight into the roots of the problems of many Indians on and off reservations today.

A woman is a woman and can talk to other women, regardless of ethical, racial or even language barriers and Mrs. Coolidge talked to her dusky-skinned neighbors. By the time she had gotten around to setting down her opinions and experiences she had identified herself with those neighbors. The book is thus laden with personal insights into the lives and condition of the Indians during that period.

The author in her preface wrote: "The objection has often been made to these sketches that they are sad. People won't read such painful stuff, editors have said to me. Then I slowly look over and consider my pages. Am I justified in changing this or that? There is only one response for me to make; I'm sorry, but they are all true. I cannot alter them."

During this period the infamous manual labor training schools, instituted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and modeled after the Carlisle "experiment" were flourishing. Grace Coolidge was bitterly opposed to the practice of separating children from their parents and thoroughly disliked and condemned the "Carlisle system" of Indian education. She was never reconciled to the idea and philosophy of boarding schools for Indian children, even when some of these schools were established nearer to tribal lands than Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Teepee Neighbors is important to Native American studies because it is a sympathetic, objective social history

of the Arapahoes and Shoshones as wards of the federal government. It is simple, it is moving, and Grace Coolidge's humanity will undoubtedly leave something behind for everyone.

NEAL L. BLAIR

The reviewer is former Editor of Special Publications for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Custer's Fall: The Indian Side of the Story. By David Humphreys Miller. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1985. Bib. Illus. Map. Table. 271 pp. \$7.95.

Historians have written more about the 1876 battle of the Little Bighorn than any other military engagement in the world's history. Despite this intensive study, several aspects of the fight remain questionable, particularly since most of the early investigators ignored the Indian participants who were the only surviving eyewitnesses of the battle with Custer. However, David Humphreys Miller sought to remedy this omission. For twenty years, Miller interviewed many of the Crow, Arikara, Cheyenne, Arapahoe and Sioux who participated in this conflict, and he later published his findings in *Custer's Fall*, a 1957 work which the University of Nebraska's Bison Books has recently reprinted.

As the Northern Cheyenne and Sioux moved onto reservations in the late 19th century, they were reluctant to discuss the battle of the Little Bighorn, for they distrusted the Whites and feared reprisals for their victory in Montana. Because Miller had visited or lived on the reservations for approximately twenty years and spoke the Lakota language, many of these Indians trusted him and began to elaborate on the details of the battle. After speaking to more than 71 eyewitnesses individually and in groups and to the surviving Crow and Arikara scouts, Miller reconstructs the battle of the Little Bighorn from the viewpoints of the Native Americans.

Following a brief chapter that places the battle into historical context, the author provides an overview of the 1876 military campaign against the Northern Plains tribes and a detailed account of the Indians' and Whites' actions on the Little Bighorn. He also explores many of the controversial issues surrounding the battle, such as Custer's alleged Indian mistress and child, his desire to become President, his reasons for attacking a village of approximately 12,000 Indians, Major Reno's attack, retreat and eventual survival, the reports of suicides among the soldiers and the Indians' mutilations of the corpses. He also notes that Custer was mortally wounded or killed early in a fight that lasted for less than 30 minutes. In the final chapter, Miller relates that myths about this battle were created almost immediately, such as the incredible story

that Sitting Bull had attended West Point with Custer and graduated as a better tactician than the horse-soldier.

While a few books relating a particular Indian's exploits in the battle were printed in the 1930s, Miller's work is the first attempt at a comprehensive account of the Little Bighorn fight from the Native Americans' point of view. In 1957, *Custer's Fall* provided new information that could not be found in other reports of the battle, such as the tribes' motives for resisting a forced reservation existence, a detailed description of the destruction of Custer's command and the Indians' reactions to their victory. The book also dispelled many popular myths about this fight.

Despite these important strengths, the book suffers from a few weaknesses. The absence of footnotes prevents the reader from verifying Miller's conclusions and from analyzing his sources. This is particularly troublesome for a work based primarily on oral interviews. In addition, Miller does not indicate how he dealt with conflicting or inaccurate information, which invariably occurs when one tries to interview 70 eyewitnesses 60 to 80 years after an event transpired. Finally, Bison Books should add an index and an updated preface that places Miller's work into a historiographical context.

Regardless of these problems, *Custer's Fall* provides important information that any student of the battle of the Little Bighorn will need to know. By focusing on the Indians' view of this fight, Miller demonstrates that the cultural conflicts that precipitated this battle were more significant than the military engagement in determining the future of the Sioux and Cheyenne participants. This is an important message for those researchers who seek to unravel every unexplained detail of Custer's last minutes while ignoring the cultural forces that symbolized the battle and have continued to affect the American Indians for the past century.

MICHAEL MASSIE

The reviewer is historian and curator of South Pass City Historic Site.

Historic Ranches of Wyoming. By Judith Hancock Sandoval. Casper: Nicolaysen Art Museum, 1986. List of Photographs. 97 pp. \$12.00.

Wyoming's image is that of the "Cowboy State." We are essentially rural and agricultural and—despite the presence of oil wells, coal mines and farms—ranches are symbols of that environment. Articles, books and films have been done about ranches, ranch life, rodeos and rodeo cowboys, but no one has systematically documented with narrative and photographs the state's ranch architecture.

With tenacity and aggressiveness, Judy Sandoval has visited and photographed a number of Wyoming ranches, and has managed to get her exhibit published as a book. Ms. Sandoval's self-assigned task helps us realize that there is a treasure of ranches and ranch structures found

in this state and her work is a step toward their preservation.

The book begins with an essay which, written by the "Dean" of Wyoming historians, Dr. T. A. Larson, is a scholarly and proper introduction. Robert Roripaugh's essay near the end of the book is a wonderful reminiscence that educates while it entertains—a nice touch to the book by a well-known Wyoming author. One of the photo captions contains an interesting sidelight by Lucille Hicks and there are occasional pieces of information from ranchers that give the book flavor.

Ms. Sandoval admits on page one that the book is only preliminary and that is the main reason why she can be forgiven for the book's shortcomings. One of these shortcomings is organization. It is non-existent. There are no table of contents, and no index, only a list of photographs. A state map contains dots to indicate the location of ranches but the dots are not numbered to correspond with ranches or photographs. Cattle, sheep and dude ranches are mixed together as if ranches are just ranches. The book was adapted from an exhibit and maybe all pictorial books do not need to be rigidly organized. But if *Historic Ranches of Wyoming* was designed to be a photo essay only, there is no need for extended captions with extraneous information.

Ms. Sandoval states that 40 per cent of her caption material is from published sources and 60 per cent from information provided by ranchers, but no documentation exists for either. If nearly half of the book relates to published sources, a bibliography would be helpful so that other ranch studies, such as *Wyoming's Pioneer Ranches* by Burns, Gillespie and Richardson, at least could be recognized. In short, the book is not a scholarly work, even though it contains a scholarly essay by Dr. Larson. Neither is it prose, even though it contains a prose essay. The narrative is a broken and arbitrary approach to documenting ranches, and appears to be a quick transcription of field notes.

In some cases photo captions do not provide enough information about ranches—including their founders or owners—in order to give you an understanding of them. Basic information such as north-south directions is lacking even though non-essential data is plentiful. Names of people appear as if we had already been introduced to everyone. For example, on pages 23 and 29 Sandoval writes about sheep "jugs," stating: "Old Man Perry, who built them, died of tick fever. Before the vaccine was invented a man could pick 30 ticks off his body in a day and not get them all before one got him." Who is "Old Man Perry?" And, if the statement about ticks is not Sandoval's, which probably it is not, who gets the credit? Who is Mary Taylor Beach and what relation does she have to the Taylor Ranch in Uinta County (p. 42)? Where, in that same entry, are the Uinta and Shoshone Reservations? Where is Sam Parker's Mill and why is he important to the Bovee Ranch (p. 53)? Why are L-shaped barns good against roaring winds and blizzards (p. 29)?

Occasionally people are introduced whose identity you do not learn until later. For example, Gerry Spence is mentioned on page sixteen, but you do not find out that he is the famous Wyoming lawyer until page twenty. The name David Williamson appears more than once, long before his accomplishments as a stonemason are related on page 48. One wonders why so many names are included. If it is a matter of being polite, even the people whose names appear in print could be offended because it may be that not everyone was included who should have been. The casual reader is offended, however, because he is asked to read a string of names that mean nothing to him without more background information.

Leased and deeded acreage is provided in some ranch entries and not in others. The same is true of cattle and sheep numbers, or tons of hay produced, or dates of original water rights, or altitudes of ranches. Why are various ranch buildings listed when they are not shown in the photo? Some information is totally useless. For example, on page 57, who cares that within weeks after the sale of the Hereford Ranch bull, Lerch, progeny performance and semen sales paid off? It has the ring of an auctioneering advertisement. Why should it be noted that an etching of a deer in a forest adorns a ranch house front door if you cannot see it in the photograph (p. 53)?

Some statements are simply untrue. For example, in the caption relating to the Horse Barn on the Lloyd Ranch in Albany County, it is stated that no other buildings in the state "have such an interesting history dating back to the first settlement period by the white man" (p. 29). There are still a few buildings along the Overland Trail dating back to 1862, and a number of other buildings exist which date back to the first settlement period by the White man, depending upon the settlement since some areas of the state were settled later than others. On page 58, Ms. Sandoval asserts that Cheyenne Indians made their "last stand" at the Graves Ranch on Upper Red Fork of the Powder River. The Cheyenne were not destroyed as a tribe at that engagement, nor did they make a "stand." They were routed out of their tepees by Colonel Mackenzie's troops and retreated to the Powder River Basin, eventually reaching the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail Agencies. On page 88, it is stated that A. A. Anderson convinced President Roosevelt to create the first forest reserve in 1902 when, in fact, the Yellowstone Timberland Reserve was created in 1891 by President Harrison.

Ms. Sandoval's strength is not documentation and organization; rather, it is the accomplishment of being able to visit as many ranches as she did in such a short period of time. Given her access to so many ranches and ranching people, it is a pity she did not take more time to study Wyoming's ranch industry. The result is a work that is neither fish nor fowl, neither scholarly nor coherent as a

photo essay. The lack of thoroughness might be due to Ms. Sandoval's short tenure in the state. She is from New York City and had to absorb a lot of information during her stay in Wyoming. That may be why the East Fork of the Wind River is described as the "East Fork of the Wind River Canyon" (p. 16); the term "cross-hairs telescope" used instead of "transit" (p. 16); or the "Laramie Peak Range" (p. 45) and "Laramie Mountain range" (p. 48) used instead of "Laramie Range." It is perhaps why the term "log men" (p. 70) is used instead of "tie hacks." It may be why the Kite Ranch (p. 45) is described as being located north of the Fetterman Road, a north-south trail. Although north-south roads can take east-west bends, the exact location of this particular ranch is not clear. It may be why the location of the Hardpan Ranch is given as the valley of the Shoshone River (p. 75) although the river has two major forks. It may be the reason why, on page 30, a stock range can be described in such mixed terms as having "extended from Clarks Fork to Owl Creek, covered the south side of the Big Horn River and the land along the Rocky Mountains." On the other hand, lack of familiarity with the state is not a reason for misspelling the word, Hambletonian (pp. 42, 66).

The photographs in *Historic Ranches of Wyoming* demonstrate the need for another work on Wyoming's ranch architecture in which large-format photography is used instead of small-format or 35mm, photography. A pictorial work on architecture needs large-format photography for clarity as well as perspective correction. Some of the book's prints are too grainy and some are too soft, if not slightly out-of-focus, such as photographs #31, 50 and 64. The quality of the photography is not consistent, even for small-format photography. Some entries such as #7, 26, 47, 49, 50 and 57 could have been done by anyone with a 35mm camera who bothered to get out of the car and shoot. Finally, the book's design is such that you have to flip a page or two forward or backward in order to see in a photograph what the author describes in the caption.

Nevertheless, some photographs of ranch equipment and outbuildings are interesting, since one does not usually see lambing sheds, root cellars and slaughterhouses. Some photographs display good composition, exposure, focus and flair, such as entries #4, 24, 25, 37, 43, 53 and 74.

In summary, the *Historic Ranches of Wyoming* is an attempt at something which should have been done long ago: documentation of Wyoming's ranch architecture. However, it needs to be done in a more systematic, comprehensive fashion using proper camera equipment and incorporating more research.

MARK JUNGE

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INSIDE WYOMING

Annals of Wyoming will be experiencing several changes in the upcoming issues. First of all, the editorial staff has started this column, "Inside Wyoming," which will become a regular feature. The editors will include such things as editorials, discussions of interesting historical topics, intriguing oral history interviews or descriptions of important collections held in the Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department.

Another item to be started will be a "Letters to the Editor" section. Anyone may write to *Annals* and comment on any article or book review included in the journal. If you have more information you would like to share or perhaps find something you believe to be in error, please write in and tell us. We ask that letters be limited to 200 words.

The editors reserve the right to select those which will be included and to edit the letters if necessary.

Wyoming will celebrate its centennial in 1990. The editorial staff wishes to publish two special issues of *Annals of Wyoming* in honor of the celebration. We are issuing a call for papers to include in those issues. Topics could be the drive for statehood, the constitutional convention, woman's suffrage, early government or other relevant issues. However, they need not be confined to these issues, but could explore any number of subjects and how they have changed throughout Wyoming's history. Proposals should be submitted to the editor and should include the title of the paper along with a 200 word summary and a resume. Deadline is January 1, 1988.

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WYOMING STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wyoming State Historical Society was organized in October, 1953. Membership is open to anyone interested in history. County chapters of the society have been chartered in most of the twenty-three counties of Wyoming. Past presidents of the society include; Frank Bowron, Casper, 1953-55; William L. Marion, Lander, 1955-56; Dr. DeWitt Dominick, Cody, 1956-57; Dr. T. A. Larson, Laramie, 1957-58; A. H. MacDougall, Rawlins, 1958-59; Mrs. Thelma G. Condit, Buffalo, 1959-60; E. A. Littleton, Gillette, 1960-61; Edness Kimball Wilkins, Casper, 1961-62; Charles Ritter, Cheyenne, 1962-63; Neal E. Miller, Rawlins, 1963-65; Mrs. Charles Hord, Casper, 1965-66; Glenn Sweem, Sheridan, 1966-67; Adrian Reynolds, Green River, 1967-68; Curtiss Root, Torrington, 1968-69; Mrs. Hattie Burnstad, Worland, 1969-70; J. Reuel Armstrong, Rawlins, 1970-71; William R. Dubois, Cheyenne, 1971-72; Henry F. Chadey, Rock Springs, 1972-73; Richard S. Dumbrill, Newcastle, 1973-74; Henry Jensen, Casper, 1974-75; Jay Brazelton, Jackson, 1975-76; Ray Pendergraft, Worland, 1976-77; David J. Wasden, Cody, 1977-78; Mabel Brown, Newcastle, 1978-79; James June, Green River, 1979-80; William F. Bragg, Jr., Casper, 1980-81; Don Hodgson, Torrington, 1981-82; Clara Jensen, Lysite-Casper, 1982-83; Fern Gaensslen, Green River, 1983-84; Dave Kathka, Rock Springs, 1984-85; Mary Garman, Sundance, 1985-86.

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Life Membership	\$100
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ROOTING THE CHINESE

Rock Springs White Miners
Drive Them Out.

ALL THEIR HOUSES BURNED

Three of the Mongolians Known to
Be Killed and Probably More--
The Troubles Reach a Climax.

Special to THE SUN:

ROCK SPRINGS, Wyoming, September 2.—The long brewing troubles between the white miners and Chinese employed by the Union Pacific company here broke out today, culminating in a bloody attack upon the latter. The trouble commenced this morning about 7 o'clock at mine and a fight occurred bet-

CHINESE MASSACRE SEPTEMBER 2, 1885

Further From the Scene of Bloodshed and Fire at Rock Springs.

PIGTAIL DONE.

Rock Springs Exhibits a Dislike of
the Celestials,

Drives Them Out With Slaughter
and Conflagration.

Yesterday afternoon a LEADER of the white miner party received information that Sheriff Tisdell was to pay at Rock Springs. The report was that the miners there had killed hundreds of the Chinese miners and had burned the Chinatown of that place, and that soldiers had been ordered from Fort Lincoln to quell the riot. Forthwith the sheriff hunted up Mr. L. M. Tisdell, of Rock Springs, who is here attending the teachers' institute, but he having left

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A Reign of Terror and Disgrace Western Wyoming.

Yesterday morning Governor Warrington telegraphed from Rock Springs that every Chinaman in that place, 500 in number, had been driven out. He said that at that time fifteen dead bodies had been found and that is probably not half of those killed by assault and burned to death. Fifty houses belonging to the Union Pacific railroad company have been burned, and fifty more belonging to Chiuamen. The Chinese Chinamen who were driven out.

THE WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

The function of the Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department is to collect and preserve materials which tell the story of Wyoming. It maintains the state's historical library and research center, the Wyoming State Museum and branch museums, the State Art Gallery and the State Archives. The Department solicits original records such as diaries, letters, books, early newspapers, maps, photographs and art and records of early businesses and organizations as well as artifacts for museum display. The Department asks for the assistance of all Wyoming citizens to secure these documents and artifacts. Department facilities are designed to preserve these materials from loss and deterioration. The State Historic Preservation Office is also located in the Department.

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ABOUT THE COVER—The Cheyenne newspapers carried extensive coverage of the event which is now known as the "Chinese" or "Rock Springs Massacre." White miners rioted, killing 28 Chinese, wounding fifteen and chasing hundreds out of Rock Springs. Governor Francis E. Warren played an active role in the resolution of this crisis as can be seen in the article, "Governor Francis E. Warren, The United States Army and the Chinese Massacre at Rock Springs."

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ANNALS OF WYOMING is published biannually in the Spring and Fall by the Wyoming State Press. It is received by all members of the Wyoming State Historical Society as the official publication of that organization. Copies of previous and current issues may be purchased from the Editor. Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor. Published articles represent the views of the author and are not necessarily those of the Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department or the Wyoming State Historical Society. ANNALS OF WYOMING articles are abstracted in Historical Abstracts. America: History and Life.

THE MOUNTAIN MAN DOCUMENTARY AS THE CONTRA WESTERN

by Patrick McCarthy

. . . there are in these prairies, and the forests of the Rocky Mountains, beaver and fur trappers, who live at their own cost. . . . They are, for the most part, enterprising, robust men, capital riflemen, and, from their rude course in life, are able to endure the greatest hardships.¹

Few early day travelers were as fortunate as German Prince Maximilian to witness the mountain man—the fur trapper and/or trader of the 19th century trans-Mississippi West. Maximilian's account is testimony to the mountain man's image in the late 1830s—the declining years of the heyday of the western fur trade.

Once a subject left to historians and writers of popular literature, this historical figure has been re-created in twenty documentary films released over the past 35 years. His presence on celluloid has led to a "sub-genre" of films which can be termed "mountain man documentaries." Despite his extensive characterization on-screen, what the cinematic trapper symbolizes to society and how he compares with any other media heroes have never been determined. Therefore, this essay summarizes the depiction of the mountain man in the documentary mode while contrasting his screen "persona" with that of a more popular media figure—the cowboy—in the classic Western movie.

The mountain man documentary and the Western have endured because of common features; namely larger-than-life protagonists like the mountain man and the cowboy. Both characters have qualities generally exceeding human capabilities because they perform extraordinary feats of strength and endurance. On a more earthly level, they are brave and robust men who ride horses and carry

guns. These mutual attributes find them living in the same place: the Intermontane West. Yet, their loyalties are divided between the Western wilds and society; that is each man has one foot in the wilderness and one foot in civilization. This personal tension mirrors a theme shared by both types of films: civilization versus the "wide open spaces" and the intrinsic conflicts therein. Given such similar characteristics, one might think that the universe of the mountain man documentary matches the classic Western; however, closer inspection reveals that vast differences exist between their filmic worlds.

These dissimilarities can be explained by using a method of inquiry known as genre criticism. This approach simply enables one to identify a category of films by generic elements: (1) characterization; (2) iconography; (3) theme; (4) setting; (5) plot structure; and (6) style (aesthetic techniques).

Characterization basically refers to how an individual, such as the mountain man or cowboy, is developed over the course of a motion picture or series of films. In short, what attributes make these dwellers of the cinematic West distinct personalities? As a bold and resourceful drifter, the mountain man goes wherever he wants, with whomever he wishes and when he desires—in a womanless world. He is an adventurer-explorer who does little trapping or



COURTESY, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

A contemporary mountain man.

trading, and he enjoys male companionship almost exclusively. This self-contained soul is essentially a wilderness stoic who directs all his energies to “surviving” in the wilds. His home is where he puts his head, which is neither on a mattress nor next to a woman. Narration in the documentary film, *The Mountain Men* (1964; Barr films), amplifies the autonomy the mountain men relishes on celluloid: “Life in the mountains required tough, hardy men, men as wild and free as the country in which they lived.”

Even though he and the cowboy are restless people “on the move,” the latter is a forerunner of society and protector of civilization. Scholar Will Wright says the classic Western “is the story of the lone ranger who rides into a troubled town and cleans it up, winning the respect of the townsfolk and the love of the schoolmarm.”² Accordingly, “Women are primary symbols of civilization in the Western.”³ Scholar Philip French writes:

... there are two kinds of women [in the Western]. On the one hand there is the unsullied pioneer heroine: virtuous wife, rancher’s virginal daughter, schoolteacher, etc.; on the other hand there is the saloon girl with her entourage of dancers. The former are in short supply, to be treated with respect and protected. The latter are reasonably plentiful, sexually available and community property.⁴

In the course of his activities, the cowboy interacts with women and various townspeople. While he maintains contact with civilization on a regular basis, the mountain man is a refugee from society; his only constant companions are horses and the nightly campfire.

Iconography—what a character wears and manipulates as part of his daily existence—reveals that the celluloid mountain man is “fitted” to the outdoors by the way he dresses. He wears animal skins and usually a hat made of fur. This is earthy clothing of a woodsman, a “natural” man whose attire is practical and blends with the forest. In such outdoor surroundings the mountain man enjoys unrivaled mobility through the ready access of transport and the skill by which he uses horses and other means, such as watercraft, of getting around. An additional horse or two may serve as a pack animal; for the mountain man takes with him all his earthly possessions wherever he goes. Large accessories are packed by horses or mules; some small items go into a “possibles sack,” which hangs from his neck. Nothing impedes the mountain man’s wanderlust.

The cowboy travels equally as light; his pony carries the cowboy himself, saddlebags and a blanket roll.

However, his costume is strikingly different from the buckskin worn by the mountain man. The cowboy generally wears a white, ten-gallon hat, is clean-shaven, and his clothes are often well-pressed. His boots, chaps, heavy shirt and bandana symbolize a mixture of dandyism and utilitarianism. In contrast, the mountain man's clothing clearly illustrates that he identifies with wild creatures, and like them he is a full fledged denizen of the woods. He and the cowboy depend on natural instincts and few material possessions to survive, but the trapper needs little help from civilization.

How these two "westerners" lead their lives is also determined by another icon—the gun. Unlike the cowboy, who usually packs around a little, short pistol, the mountain man lugs a big, long, heavy, frontloading rifle. This death-dealing instrument is used expertly by the mountain man to kill wild game with a skill that qualifies him as a premier hunter on a plane with "the deerslayer." Most often, his muzzleloader, as a symbol of machismo and

power, remains draped across one of the mountain man's wide shoulders; for he participates in virtually no violence involving humans. He is potentially as explosive as the cowboy is violent in westerns, yet the mountain man's virility—as represented by guns—is sublimated or diffused through his association with nature.

In opposite fashion, the cowboy, according to scholar Robert Warshaw, is a "killer of men."⁵ He adds the gun tells us that the cowboy "lives in a world of violence, and even that he 'believes in violence.'" Scholar John Cawelti asserts:

The most important implication of this killing procedure seems to be the qualities of reluctance, control, and elegance which it associates with the hero. . . . The cowboy hero does not seek out combat for its own sake and he typically shows an aversion to the wanton shedding of blood. Killing is an act forced upon him and he carries it out with the precision and skill of a surgeon and the careful proportions of an artist.⁷

To maintain this code of honor, the cowboy participates in gunfights, fistfights and various duels with men. The celluloid mountain man would have none of this; he is a



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

pacifist who seeks in men comradeship and friendship, although such meetings are brief. He enjoys what author Leslie Fiedler terms "homoerotic relationship," or strong friendships among men.⁸

The ultimate "foe" for the mountain man turns out to be nature. Seasonal weather patterns, precipitous mountains, attacks from grizzlies and freezing, turbulent rivers are among the threats to his well-being. Inasmuch as nature does not directly claim any mountain man's life in these films, he becomes a "survivor." Referring to him in this manner would be the supreme compliment. Still, there are no material rewards associated with his punishing lifestyle. Unlike the real mountain man, this filmic figure participates in "surviving" not as a direct outgrowth of any trapping/trading ventures. It is a more basic gratification which impels the cinematic trapper to endure the greatest hardships imaginable in the western wilds. What is at stake for him is some masculine ideal.

The man versus nature theme takes a different turn in the classic Western. Whereas nature is the mountain man's home, as well as a proving ground for him, the cowboy views unsettled country in strictly an adversarial light. Wilderness, then, should be subdued or conquered in paving the way for civilization in the eyes of the cowboy. Conversely, the trapper seeks not to harness the land; he simply wants to exist peacefully and in harmony with the outdoors. Thus, he winds up as an inhabitant of the deep forest, a dark and frightening place where few cowboys go.

Setting—the physical environment where the film(s) takes place—is further important insofar as the West in mountain man films has not been made into an East, with all the materialism of society. While the Western seeks to preserve civilization, which extends from the East, the mountain man's universe has largely been left unchanged by his appearance on the scene. Civilization has tainted the seductive landscape of the West in Hollywood "shoot-em-ups," but there are no disturbing remnants of society, such as ghost towns, in mountain man documentaries; the impermanence of life is found only in moccasin tracks and the ashes of campfires.

While the campfire acts as a social facilitator in bringing mountain men together on rare evenings, the great gathering of these staunch individualists occurs at filmic restagings of the historical "rendezvous"—yearly meetings of fur trappers, traders and Indians during the halcyon years of the western fur trade (1825-1840). On this occasion the celluloid trapper experiences his only contact with civilization because he trades for goods with suppliers from the East. In a sense, the rendezvous is the mountain man's answer to the cowboy's saloon or "watering hole." However, this get-together of the he-men in some high valley is less an open-air bar and brothel than a chance to re-establish the male camaraderie which unites these celibate backwoodsmen.

Rendezvous (1976), a documentary made in Wyoming, and the only mountain man film exclusively devoted to

re-creating this event, is a short motion picture about three trappers who meet on the way to this "fofarow" of old. They are depicted as backslapping buddies and outdoorsmen with unusual skills. One member of this threesome even catches a trout with his bare hands, a "fish" story if there ever was one. Once they get to the rendezvous, it is not trading furs which occupies their time, but participating in the festivities of the occasion. At another point in the film, Roy Kerswill, the producer of this documentary, is seen—brush in hand—putting the finishing touches on a painting. His voice-over is a telling tribute to this film's characterization of the mountain man:

One has to live the life of a mountain man to really be able to paint him. I think in every mountain man there was that little spark of a need for total freedom. And he was as close to real freedom as anyone could get. Once a year he had to attend the rendezvous where he'd pick up more black powder. But other than that he was totally free. He could go anywhere he wanted to go. All his physical needs were right there. And I think maybe this . . . [pause] this is what we look for—all of us—one way or another we look for this. There are times, perhaps, I wish I could put my buckskins on and take off.

This illusory portrait of the mountain man mirrors the image painted of him by the combined plot structure of these various documentary films. In essence, this generic component relates to story lines built around "segmentation," a term which breaks down a filmic narrative into a beginning, middle and an end usually developed in chronological order. Mountain man documentaries generally lack this cohesive organization because plot structure portrays the trapper mainly as a "pathfinder"; only what motivates him to follow so many different paths virtually remains a mystery. One clue is that his major activity is traveling to and from locations which are practically unknown to the viewer. Therefore, wanderlust appears to be an end in itself.

Because of the various people the cowboy encounters, and since he is basically an extra-legal agent on the side of law and order, the classic Western may incorporate involved plot structures to deal with the complexity of human relationships. Whereas this generic element is loosely arranged and quite simple in mountain man documentaries, the Western features plot "twists" which create suspense and alter expectations of the viewer. Plot structure, then, is peripherally important to the mountain man documentary.

Style—the final genre component—pertains to what visual and aural techniques the filmmaker uses to present subject matter. Such techniques include cinematographic elements relating to the camera (i.e., shot types, angles, camera movement, framing and composition); principles

of editing; aural devices (i.e., sound effects and narration); lighting strategies; and special effects, such as (map) animation, created by a film lab. These aspects are not discussed owing to their diverse nature, and because content about the mountain man apparently does not demand that documentarists use other than fundamental techniques in portraying him. However, subject matter in the classic Western is often depicted through the use of sophisticated aesthetic techniques.

By any standards, the mountain man emerges on celluloid as an imposing, yet enigmatic, figure. Characterization reveals that he has the leathery look of an outdoorsman and the rugged qualities to match his appearance. Iconography also gives him the exterior image of a woodsman through the clothing he wears, his gun and horse—a symbol of grace, dignity and power. Setting places him in the Rocky Mountain West, and the theme of man versus nature shows that he gets his masculine identity from being able to survive in the wilderness. That he leads a rootless, homeless and, outwardly, an aimless existence is disclosed by examining plot structure. Subsequently, applying these genre elements to the mountain man documentary strongly suggest that the trapper's separation from civilization is complete.

How does one personalize this remote individual who seems so detached from society? Initially, one can think of a host of unflattering terms by which to characterize his behavior. He could be thought of as gynophobic because he seems to fear women. He could also be considered a misanthrope since at the very least he seems to distrust people. In addition, he may be deemed a mysogamist because he appears to avoid or detest marriage. However, any figure who would risk being known by all these terms must find reward in his lifestyle beyond the individuality and freedom he already has.

Perhaps author Phyllis Klotman provides a key to understanding him as a type of "Running Man." To use her description of this phrase, the mountain man is "the protagonist who rejects the values of the culture or society in which he finds himself by birth, compulsion or volition, and literally takes flight."⁹ As a person who rejects society, the trapper seeks happiness through introspection and his wandering ways, and without the help of a mountain "ma'am." For him, domesticity and responsibility are out. Symbolically speaking, he does not want to cut the lawn, paint the picket fence white, feed the dog, take out the garbage and put diapers on the baby; let alone take a nine to five job. Moreover, the mountain man's life is simple and austere. He has few creature comforts, such as a house, and his world is not cluttered by modern conveniences, urban congestion and complexity. This man finds reassurance in a tactile or sensory universe (i.e., what he cannot feel, touch or smell does not exist). Moreover, he is a universalist who identifies with all living things in the forest. Klotman, therefore, may have the answer to what ultimately propels the cinematic mountain man:

Perhaps he [Running Man] represents, in the romantic tradition, not what we were but what we wished to be. Perhaps it is simply the desire to be free, unfettered, unconstrained; the desire *not* to adjust; *not* to accommodate; *not* to belong; alienation by choice.¹⁰

It seems that the mountain man documentary has resurrected James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo from *The Leatherstocking Tales* or Rousseau's "natural man," the romantic inhabitant of the forest. As a figure in real life, the latter first captivated the public's imagination in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He was a frontiersman then, when Americans began moving West from under the shadow of the Alleghenies and the Great Smoky Mountains.

However, as author Marshall Fishwick notes, this forerunner to the historical mountain man eventually "traded coonskins for sombreros, long rifles for six shooters, and moccasins for spurs, without losing for a second . . . [his] fascination for the hero-loving American public."¹¹ In the meantime, the mountain man became a transitional figure between the frontiersman of Daniel Boone's time and the cowboy, who was more at home on the Great Plains. Eventually, the cowboy fell heir to the broad landscape of the West, which the buckskin-clad mountain man, and the frontiersman before him, once had claimed for themselves.

That the cowboy remains such a popular figure today is owing to the dime novels and other popular paperbacks which kept his image alive long after the cattle drive and range wars became things of the past. It was only natural, then, that mass media would adopt him, instead of the mountain man, as "the Man of the West."

Furthermore, why the cowboy is more of a hero than the mountain man could be traceable to the cinematic trapper's salient characteristics. Because of his wanderlust, the mountain man personifies democratic ideals, such as individuality and freedom, and represents America's "tradition of mobility." Historian Ray Allen Billington believes that this last characteristic "was an integral part in the raw, sweaty drama that was western economic development."¹² The trapper's mobility, in turn, mirrors the restlessness of the American people. Words once penned by Robert Louis Stevenson attest to this characteristic:

For my part
I travel not to go anywhere, but to go
I travel for travel's sake
The great affair is to move.¹³

Yet, the mountain man is such a mobile and solitary figure that he becomes simultaneously an attractive and repulsive character. Author Martha Wolfenstein writes about filmic figures who have the trapper's qualities:

Perhaps the thing from which the hero suffers most, and which contributes to the semblance of his guilt, is that he is alone . . . Americans tend to feel uneasy alone; they feel they are unloved and therefore unworthy of love—there must be something wrong with them. . . . The image of the outcast . . . is uncongenial. Thus, if the hero is alone, even though we know that the suspicions against him are unfounded, he tends to retain an aura of guilt.¹⁴

Thus, the cinematic mountain man has almost too much individuality and freedom for Americans to embrace him



COURTESY AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Scene from the National Film Board of Canada production, "The Voyageurs."

wholeheartedly as a cultural hero. Americans seem to admire the autonomous lifestyle of the cinematic trapper, but in the end he is also a threatening figure owing to his solitary nature, as well as his wanderlust.

In the final analysis, the cowboy has always enjoyed overwhelming approval as America's chief western hero, perhaps, because he has a clean, upright appearance, while the mountain man is dark, disheveled and hairy. By these characteristics the cinematic mountain man is also too "uncivilized" to play any "civilized games," such as protecting society, as the cowboy does in motion pictures. Even if the mountain man were in the cowboy's shoes for a short time, from what intruders would this earthy backwoodsman protect society? The traditional enemy of civilization in the Western is the Indian. However, the human being the filmic trapper most resembles is the red man. As such, the mountain man is nomadic, lives off the land and participates in an alternative lifestyle which is unacceptable to society at large, which the cowboy ultimately protects. Overall, then, the classic Western may represent aspects of civilization such as the machine age, rational culture and population density. Clearly, the mountain man documentary turns this orientation upside down.

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5. Robert Warshow, "Movie Chronicle: The Westerner," in Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen, eds., *Film Theory and Criticism* 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 475.
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During the middle years of the last century, the valley of the Platte, leading up to South Pass, acted as a great funnel which led thousands of migrants and adventurers westwards across the Plains and through Wyoming. Whether this westward crossing was made in the company of one of the many ox-wagon trains which rolled along the trail in the late 1840s, or as part of the much more lightly-equipped "handcart migration" of the Mormons a decade later, all of those who recorded their impressions of the trek spoke of the numerous privations and dangers they faced.¹ For the most part, the increased traffic along the trail as the years passed did little to reduce the sum of those difficulties. It is true, of course, that some of the hazards of the journey, such as the dangers of the river crossings and the threat of Indian attacks, were gradually reduced as more ferries and fords were set up along the trail. Yet as each year went by and as each season advanced, parts of the trail suffered further overgrazing and the increased rutting of the various paths further slowed one's passage.

Some groups, like the gold-seeking forty-niners, for whom the crossing seemed but a frustrating obstacle to a fortune awaiting them in the Sierra Nevada, were often less well-prepared for the difficulties of the trip. Because they needed to get to the Californian gold fields as quickly as possible, the gold-seekers were often tempted to take greater risks than other users of the trail, and sometimes paid for these with their lives. Seldom were they willing to halt their journey for any length of time to recuperate their animals, or to wait often for days at a ferry point to cross a river. Too often they were unprepared to jettison equipment and supplies in order to lighten the load. As a result, during the peak months of the gold rush the trail became littered with the evidence of defeat, with dead animals and abandoned provisions. As one Englishman who joined the trek to California from the mines of Wisconsin noted in 1850: "you would be surprised to see the property left and destroyed on that road: it was a hard time with a great many in crossing, the provisions getting short and no means to get more. The migration across the plains last season was estimated at 80,000 persons and reports said 5000 died on the way."²

There is now a vast literature on the overland emigrants and especially those who joined the gold rush. Well over 100 preserved travel diaries, written by overland emigrants during 1849 alone, have been analyzed to see what they tell of the difficulties of the passage and the travelers' reactions to them.³ Remarkably, little evidence has come to light of European parties who made up part of this westward flow. Coming from the more crowded and tamed environments of Europe, these migrants could be expected to find the dry, empty West an even greater challenge than their American counterparts.

Prominent among the Europeans rushing to the gold-fields were considerable numbers of Cornish miners who were either being attracted away from the declining tin and copper mines of southwest England, or who were moving

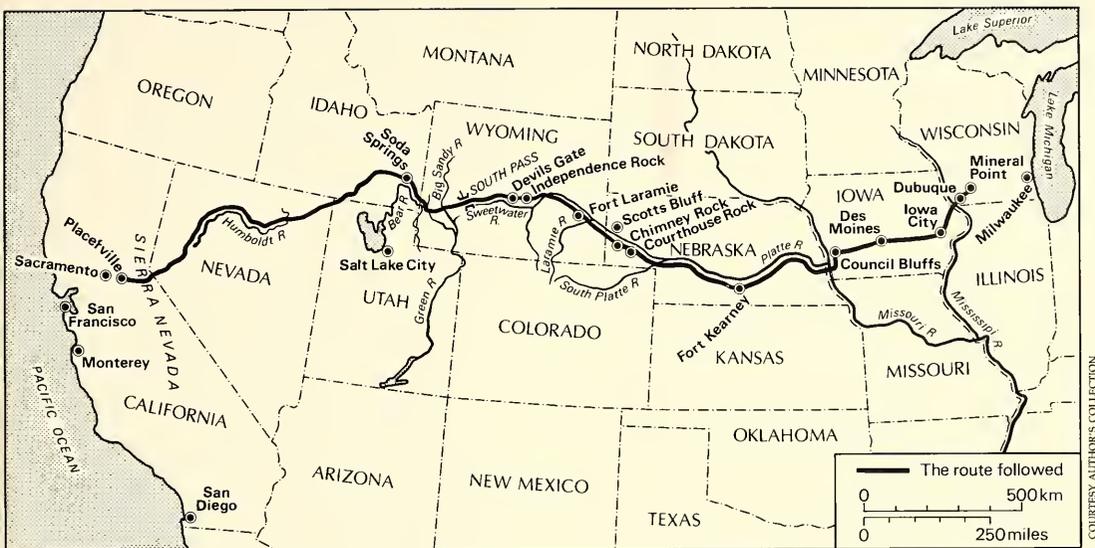
Crossing Wyoming with the Forty-Niners: Cornish Impressions of the Trek West

by Brian P. Birch

on from the Wisconsin lead-mining district to which they had gone from Cornwall by the thousands in the 1830s and 1840s. No record exists of the number of Cornish who were enticed from Cornwall or Wisconsin to the far West, but thousands gathered in the goldfields. Nevada County, California, for example, had 500 English miners among its population by 1860, and most of these were from Cornwall.⁴

No record exists of the number of Cornish who found their way to California by the various routes open to them. Some undoubtedly took direct sea passages from England to San Francisco via Panama while some endured the 17,000 mile, eight month voyage around Cape Horn.⁵ It seems likely, however, that just as many made the overland journey west from New York or Wisconsin. Not only was the land route a shorter way to California—especially for those already in Wisconsin—but it was also generally a quicker and less expensive way west, and few Cornish miners could afford to spend many months on route without an income. Going overland also avoided the extra cost of getting inland to the goldfields once one had disembarked at San Francisco at the end of a long sea voyage.⁶

As a result, not only did hundreds of Cornish miners in Wisconsin hit the overland trail to California, but many others coming from England rejected the longer sea passage to San Francisco. They instead chose a shorter Atlantic crossing to New York, or some other port on the Atlantic seaboard, followed by travel overland often via Wisconsin, where one might also join up with other Cornishmen planning the journey west.



COURTESY AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Route followed by Walters-Uren party from Wisconsin to California.

The recent discovery of the daily journal of a miner from Cornwall who took this route to California provides some graphic detail of the experiences of one small group of Cornishmen on the California trail. These experiences paralleled those recorded by a few of the many others whose letters home to Cornwall have been preserved.⁷

Little can be discovered of the writer of this journal, a major portion of which is reproduced here. He did not even reveal his name although we know that he joined up with his Cornish cousin John Walters and William Uren, another Cornishman, in Wisconsin for the trek to the goldfields. We also know that the writer of the journal left Cornwall early in April, 1849, and reached Quebec seven weeks later. He continued his journey on to Wisconsin by river and lake boats to Milwaukee which he reached by early June. He stayed in Wisconsin for nine months working, presumably as a miner. Then at the end of March, 1850, he left Mineral Point, Wisconsin, with his compatriots Walters and Uren, on the four month trek west that was to be full of dangers and privations.

In several ways the journal of the Walters-Uren party shows the conditions and pace of their crossing were not unlike those endured by many other Cornish miners heading for California at about this time. Three similarities in particular can be noted.

First, the four month period which it took the Walters-Uren group to reach the goldfields from Wisconsin was of the same order of duration as for many other parties of miners caught up in the rush, and was a faster crossing

than achieved by those who were not spurred on by the same panic. John Grenfell, another Cornishman who reached the goldfields in July, 1850, and within a few days of the Walters-Uren party, also took four months on the overland route from east to west.⁸ Edward Dale, a Cornishman who reached California in September, 1850, took a little longer.⁹ He spent three months covering only the second half of the journey from Laramie to California mainly because he took a fifteen day break in Salt Lake City to recuperate. He later regretted this lost time although those who took no time off did find the trek very exhausting. Grenfell noted it as a "tiresome journey both for man and beast" and concluded it "has wasted my strength considerably and I was getting very thin."¹⁰

In contrast to the forty-niners, those going west at this time who were not caught up in the gold fever normally took longer on the journey in order to reduce the fatigue and the perils, especially from being caught in the mountains in the winter and from over-working their animals. Again we can quote the case of a Cornishman, Samuel James, who, fresh from England, set out from Wisconsin with a party heading along the California trail in October, 1850, with Oregon as their eventual destination.¹¹ But they did not reach this point until eleven months after leaving eastern Wisconsin, mainly because they chose to over-winter for five months in Iowa before attempting the most hazardous part of their trek.

When on the move, however, all groups seemed to go along at about the same pace, covering ten to twenty miles

a day depending on local conditions and the type of animals being used. There is little to suggest that progress got slower the longer the trail extended. Indeed, the Walters-Uren group seemed to make their slowest progress on the first leg of their journey across Iowa and to speed up considerably on the more grueling westerly parts of the trek when the need to cover ground was most urgent.

A second point of similarity in the experience of many of the Cornish, like others, on the gold rush trail was the degree of privation they suffered on the western, mainly desert, parts of the journey, and their general underestimation of the dangers that faced them. The Cornishman, John Grenfell, believed he fared better than many in not losing any horses to fatigue or to the Indians, and in having to jettison only a few belongings, but when his party reached the Sierra Nevada they found that they had to cross snow up to twenty feet deep. Edward Dale, another Cornishman, lost his prized ox after only a two hour illness on the Humboldt River and told of many who had lost far more in this area. As he wrote: "The destruction of property in this desert is beyond my description. You will scarcely believe me when I say that I do not think \$250,000 will cover the loss of property on this 45 miles; dead horses, mules, oxen, wagons, harness, and all kinds of outfits were strewn all over the place; the stench from so many dead cattle were almost insupportable."¹² The Walters-Uren party similarly suffered and had finally to abandon its wagon and join up with another Cornish party before reaching the Sierra Nevada, but as the journal which follows makes clear they witnessed other trekkers who suffered far more than they.

A third point of similarity in all of these accounts by the Cornish on the California trail can be seen in their common reaction to Wyoming and their first encounter there with a western mountain environment. After the relative tedium and ease of crossing the grassy plains of Nebraska, Wyoming confronted the Cornish, like others, both with greater difficulties and delays and yet a quality of scenic grandeur which, for the spirit at least, offered some compensation. The West, and especially the Mountain West was a region that appeared larger than life. As a result, their accounts of the trek through Wyoming and the Rockies are often fuller than for any other part of the journey. The Walters-Uren journal that follows clearly shows that they experienced no major delays on the trek west until they reached and attempted to cross the Green and other rivers in Wyoming, rivers which they heard claimed the lives of others who risked too much in attempting to wade across. In a similar way, the Cornishman Edward Dale, on his group's passage through Wyoming, reported very long delays at the river ferries which he said were "so crowded that there was no chance for us crossing the Platte for a week so we thought we had better build a boat and put ourselves across." They then sold their boat "at a high price" and continued their journey, but not before hearing of another adventurer upstream who was

making \$3,000 a day from ferrying emigrants across the Platte.¹³

All of these difficulties on the Wyoming part of the trek, which were but a prelude to much greater privations awaiting the forty-niners to the west, also provided the Cornish with time to admire the mountain scenery, much as the English have always taken an interest in their surroundings.¹⁴ Once they had gotten as far as Nevada, they found nothing of interest to relieve the harshness, but in Wyoming there was much to soothe the frustrations. At several points west of Scotts Bluff, the writer of the Walters-Uren journal was clearly impressed with the mountain scenery, part of which he rather grudgingly described as "grand and picturesq." But other Cornishmen on the trek were more fulsome like Samuël James who believed the scenery just east of Fort Laramie resembled "some fine scenery in Old England" and saw the upper Platte Country as "delightful country fit for angels to dwell in."¹⁵

The first part of the Walters-Uren journal is simply a description of the writer's Atlantic crossing and onward journey to Wisconsin. There he met up with his two Cornish compatriots and recommenced his journal as they set out for California.

I left Mineral Point March 28th 1850 in company with cousin John Walters and William Uren for California and reach'd Dubuque on the 29th and started the next morning for Iowa City and reach'd it on April 3rd. Came through Cascade, Animosa, Iowa City moving on, and went off the road to Montezuma. Came though Newton, Fort Desmoine. Cross'd the Mokokida [Maquoketa], Cedar, Iowa, Skunk, Desmoine, Coon and three other rivers and reach'd Kawsville [Council Bluffs] on the 22nd. We have paid \$1.75 per hundred for hay and \$1.00 per bushell for corn. We left Kawsville on the 25th and cross'd the Missouri river on the 26th on the south side of the Platt river.

Sunday 28th we encamped on Salt Creek. 29th we had a very stormy night, had our tents blown down. May 1st saw the remains of several waggons that were deserted by persons that was carried provisions out to the forts. We struck the Platt bottom and kept on the south side of it. 2nd we came through a large Indian village, it was deserted. The part of the country we have come through is very thinly timbered. 6th reach'd Fort Kearney 246 miles from the Missouri river. Saw several young buffaloes which they had kept into a yard. 12th we cross'd the south fork of the Platt river. It is a wide stream about from a ¼ to ½ mile wide and a sandy bottom, several teams got stuck into it. Game appears to be more plentiful than before and feed better. In the evening five men from our company went out to hunt buffalo and killed one and next morning 13 of us went out for some of it and killed another, about six or eight hundredweight. Antelope and wolves very plenty. 15th killed another young buffalo and met with a great number of Sioux, Sioux or Siux Indians which appears to be very friendly and beggin of every team that pass by. We came through Ash Hollow today, feed very scarce, scenery rather more picturesq than what we had previously pass'd.

16th and 17th we met with a great deal of Indians and came through their village. They would trade anything for whiskey, sugar or bread but money they did not care about. 18th we pass'd by what is called the Courthouse Rock and got in sight of the Chimney Rock. 20th we got up to it, it is said to be 200 feet high and it is composed of a kind of clay. 21st we pass'd

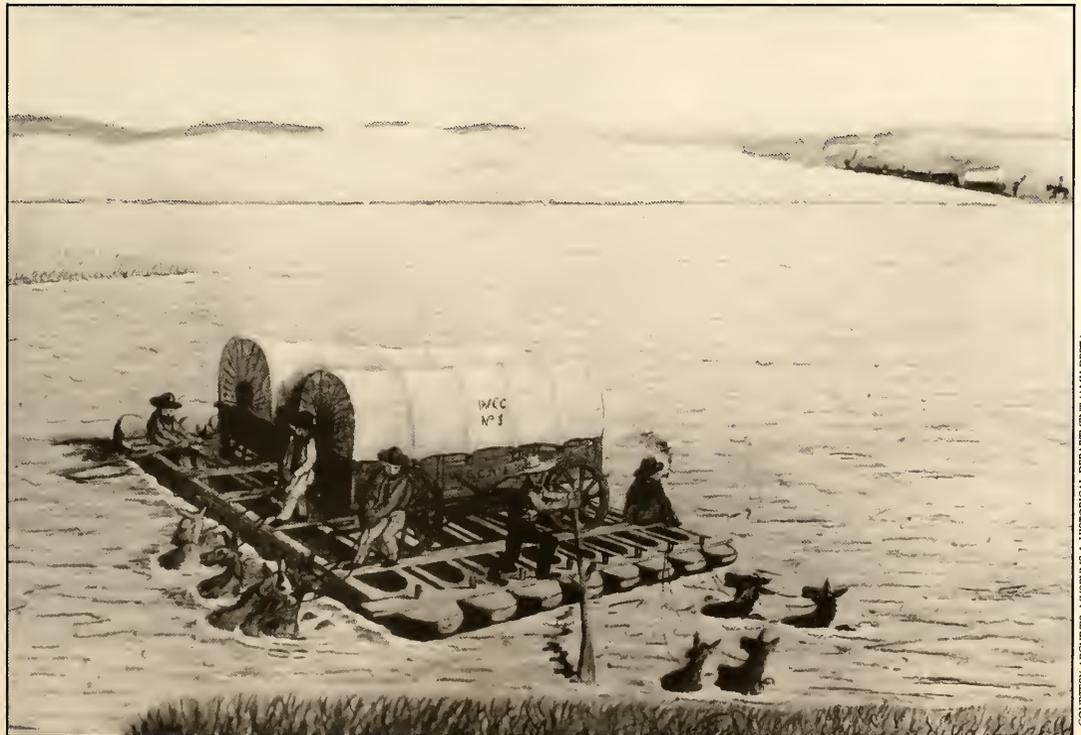
Scots Bluffs and Cold Springs at which last place their is a trading post. The scenery that we pass'd through today was grand and picturesq, the bluffs high on each side and thinly scatter'd over with cedar wood. 22nd we pass'd another trading post. 23rd we reach'd fort Laramie. The fort is situated on the Laramie river. We had to ford it to reach the fort. We stopt their and got some bread at 14 cents per lb, and then went out about 1½ miles and encamp'd. 24th Black Hills in sight. Had a hail and thunderstorm. 25th encamp'd on Horseshoe creek. 26th laid over, had wind, rain, hail, snow, hot and cold. 27th drove about 30 miles over the Black Hills, roads bad and feed verry scarce. 29th we cross'd Deer creek and struck the Platt river again. Weather verry warm, see snow on the tops of the mountains. 30th we reach'd the ferry, had to pay \$4.00 per waggon and 25 cents per horse for crossing. 31st we cross'd the river and drove out about 12 miles through a sandy country thickly covered with wild saige and encamp'd on some minerall springs.

June 1st we pass'd some alkali springs. 2nd we pass'd near some alkali lakes and saw a great quantity of saleratus and encamp'd close to Independence Rock which rock is worthy the emigrants notice. 3rd we pass'd the Devils Gate. It is a narrow pass through which the Sweetwater river runs, the sides of which is 400 feet high. 6th we came by considerable snow and went a snowballing one another. 7th we reached the famous South Pass of the Rocky mountains. 8th we came to the junction of California and Oregon roads. We took the right-hand road and encamp'd near the Big Sandy. 9th we left the Big Sandy about 4 o'clock in the afternoon for the desert lying between the Sandy and Green river which we consider about 45

or 50 miles. We reached the river about 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning when we had to swim our horses across the river, some men rafting, and others took off the box of their waggons to cross the river. There was one man wash'd off his horse in fording the river and drowned. 11th there was two men drowned. We got ferry'd over in the evening, pay'd \$10 per waggon and had to work the boat a good deal ourselves to get across. 12th we left Green river. The country that we pass'd through was very mountainous. 13th just the same. Reach'd Hams fork of Bear river. Here we had to see a little of the Elephant.¹⁶ We had to take out all our things out of the waggon and haul them across the stream in a waggon box and take the waggon aboard and put it over in the same way. 14th and 15th we had verry cold weather, hail and snow. 15th we cross'd several branches of Bear river and descended some verry steep mountains. 16th we reach'd Thomas's fork of Bear river where we had to take our things out of the waggon, and carry them across the stream on horseback. Verry cold, snow'd a great part of the night, good grass now.

18th we reach'd the Sodaw springs and drank out of them and near by we came through an Indian encampment [Snake tribe] and bought a poney. About two miles from here the road forks, one going to Fort Hall and the other the cutoff to California. The road through the cutoff is generally through a mountainous country and is said to be 108 miles through to the Fort Hall road again but it is from 125 to 135 miles. Sunday 23rd we cross'd several streams and made about 6 or 8 miles. 25th we reach'd the Salt Lake road again. 26th we came up by Goose Creek and took a desert of fifteen miles. 27th we came through Thousand Springs valley, feed verry scarce a great part of the

Crossing the North Platte above the mouth of Deer Creek by ferry.





Devil's Gate

way. Friday 28th I saw some hot springs and wash'd my hands in it. It was so hot I could not bear to keep my hands in it. Saturday 29th we reached the Humbolt river and had to take our things across the stream in the waggon box. Sunday we lay over and ferry'd severall waggons across the stream.

July 1st we went down the river and cross'd another stream. Their was good grass some part of the way down the river and a great part of the way there was scarce any grass and watter bad. Sunday 7th we reach'd what we supposed was St. Mary's sink where we stopt to cut grass to carry across the desert. There was one man drown'd crossing the river to see about grass.

8th we started in the evening about 8 o'clock expecting to drive to the sulphur springs but was sadly disappointed. Then we kept down the river until Sunday where we found plenty of good grass. Through the last week we have seen a great quantity of horses left on the road some dead and some alive and waggons left at almost every camping place. We left our own waggon and took Thomas Prisks and joined teems with Gregory Phillips and the Davys. Their is no grass to be got from where we started last Monday to where we now are except going into watter and mud two or three feet deep. Saw a great many nearly out of provisions, some entirely so. One company killed a mule to try and eat for want of other food. The watter is bad down in this part of the river but we have to use that or none. We have seen dead horses floating down the river near where we was using it and yesterday there was a man seen floating in the watter but they could not take him out. 14th and 15th we lay over to rest our horses hoping to put them across this dreaded desert. 16th we left the slough about 6 o'clock in the

evening and drove down to the sulphur springs where we reach'd in the morning some very steep mountains and pass'd the summit of the Sierra Nevada or California mountains and the most horrid roads that even came under my notice. Snow very deep in the mountains. Meeting a great many speculators every day going out with provisions to meet the emigrants.¹⁷ 27th we drove about 1 mile south of the road and lay over just all day. 28th we came within about 1 mile of Weavertown. 29th we drove into the town and sold one of our horses for \$55 and saw a great many folks diggin which all appear to be getting some gold. 29th we commenced to work in Neber Creek two or three days and then removed to Hangtown or Placerville.

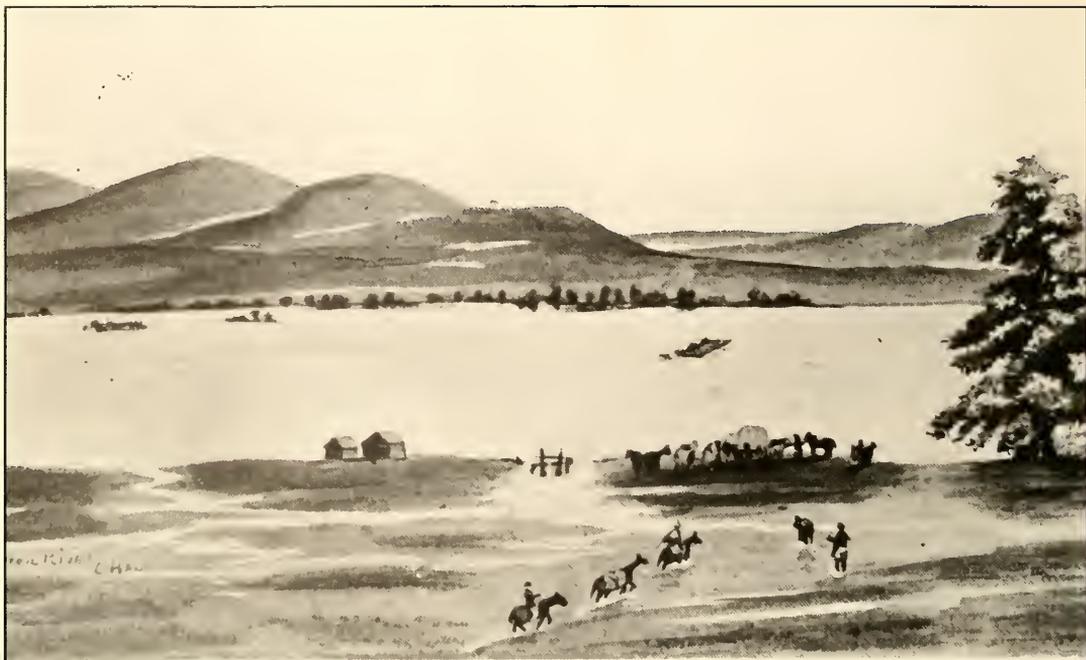
The journal ends on the writer's arrival in the gold-fields apart from a short note on his return journey to England less than a year and a half later.¹⁸ He had spent fourteen months searching for gold. The journal gives no indication of his success apart from a reference to his selling twelve ounces of gold dust at seventeen dollars an ounce at Sacramento at the end of his stay in California, but we cannot know if that was the total of his find.

It is of interest to note, however, that on deciding to return to England, the writer of the journal chose the sea route via San Francisco and Panama where he walked across the isthmus. He was clearly not alone in making this choice of route for his return journey, and many of the Cornish, like others leaving California, did everything to avoid



SOUTH PASS

The Gateway of the Rockies. Over this easy upland way during open months of the year passed the high tide of covered-wagon migration.



EMIGRANT TRAIN ON THE OREGON TRAIL, CROSSING GREEN RIVER
 From an original painting made in 1853.

AMH DEPT.

another crossing of the continent by land. As John Grenfell wrote after reaching California by the overland crossing in 1850: "I should be very sorry to have to travel it again. . . . I believe I shall take the timbering horse [sailing ship] next trip."¹⁹ In choosing the sea route back to England the writer of the journal was able to reach Southampton less than two months after leaving the gold-fields and to enjoy such an uneventful journey that it only rated these few lines:

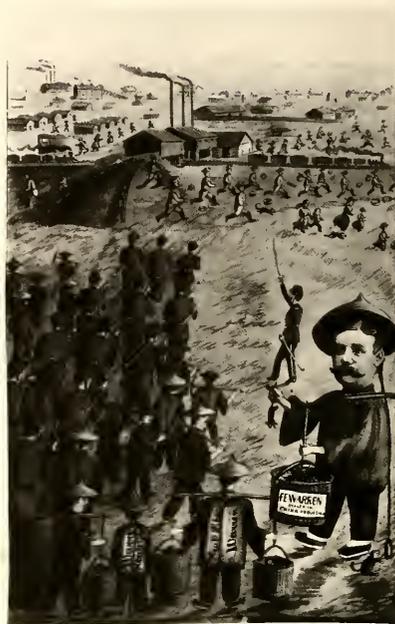
Staid in the gold mines until the 28th day of September 1851, on which day I left for Sacramento and home in company with Christopher Clemence and several others going to Wisconsin to their families. We reached Sacramento City on the 29th about 11 o'clock in the forenoon and left it again about 2 o'clock in the afternoon for San Francisco which we reached about 11 o'clock in the evening. We left San Francisco on October 1st for Panama on board the steam ship Oregon. On our way down we put into Monterey and St. Diego and Aucapulco and reach'd Panama on the 18th of October and walk'd about 11 or 12 miles across the Ismus of Panama and took lodgings for the night in a rag house. We reach'd Cruses the next evening and stop that night at Millers Hotel and next morning 20th hired a boat to take us down to Chagres for which we had to pay \$5.00 each (60 miles). 23rd we went on the Medway steamship bound for Southampton. We sail'd from Chagres and put into Carthagena for the mail and arrived at St. Thomas on the 31st where we had to stop until the 5th of November taking in cargo and to stop for the mail when we again started for Southampton and reach'd it on the 26th.

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1. See R. H. Brown, *Historical Geography of the United States* (New York, 1948), p. 502, and John D. Unruh, *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60* (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1979).
 2. Letter from John T. Grenfell, a Cornish miner in California, in *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 16, 1852. Grenfell's figure of 80,000 crossing the plains in 1850, a peak year, was probably an over-estimate. Others have suggested little more than half that figure. Nor did 5,000 die although the best recent estimate suggests that 2,000 may have died on the trails in 1849, another peak year like 1850. Nevertheless, Grenfell was right to point, as many others did, to the scenes of desolation along the way as animals died, equipment was abandoned and parties turned back. Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 152.
 3. Dale Morgan, "The Significance and Value of the Overland Journal," in K. Ross Toole et al., *Probing the American West* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1962), pp. 26-34.
 4. The two main sources on Cornish miners in America are A. C. Todd, *The Cornish Miner in America* (Glendale, California: Arthur Clark Co., 1967), and J. Rowe, *The Hard-Rock Men, Cornish Immigrants and the North American Mining Frontier* (Liverpool University Press, 1974). For information on Cornish miners in Wisconsin, see L. A. Copeland, "The Cornish in South-West Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Historical Collections* 14 (1898), and J. Schaefer, *The Wisconsin Lead Region* (Madison, 1932).
 5. O. Lewis, *Sea Routes to the Gold Fields* (New York, 1949). As many as 16,000 gold seekers took the Cape Horn route to San Francisco and the gold fields in 1849 compared with about 25,000 who crossed the plains, but it is not known how many of those were from England or from Cornwall. See D. Wright, "The Making of Cosmopolitan California: An Analysis of Immigration 1848-1870," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 19 (1940): 323-43.
 6. Few details are available of the costs of passage on the variety of routes available from England to the California gold fields. One report in an English newspaper in early 1849 indicated that there were plenty of ships going out by various routes in order to cater for what it termed the "goldmania" then sweeping England. These rates started at £25 sterling and the route to Galveston, Texas, was particularly recommended. *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 19, 1849. Taking into account the combined cost of their fare and wages lost during the time on route, a faster, overland route would generally be the cheapest. On the basis of the cost of the fare alone, one English newspaper, the *West Briton*, in December, 1850, gave the Cape Horn route as cheaper than the alternative across Central America either through Panama or Nicaragua, but made no mention of a land route such as that westwards from New York. *West Briton*, December 13, 1850. For more general information on the relative advantages and costs of each route, see Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 400-403.
 7. *Diary of a journey made in 1849 to Canada and the USA*, Cornwall Record Office document FS.3/81. This is a 31 page handwritten journal of which the first half is a daily log of the writer's Atlantic crossing to Quebec. The second half of the journal, reproduced here with permission, describes the four month onward journey the writer made from Wisconsin to California. The writer wishes to acknowledge the help of the Cornwall County Record Office, Truro, and Mr. H. Douch, of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, Truro, in tracking down the materials used in this article. The journal is published with the permission of the Cornwall Record Office.
 8. *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 16, 1852. Four months was about the average time for the overland journey in the late 1840s, but this fell to about three and a half months in the 1850s. These averages, however, are based on the time taken to cross only from the outfitting towns, normally on the Missouri, to California. The Walters-Uren party started their journey 300 miles farther east and took nearly a month to reach the Missouri River. See Unruh, *The Plains Across*, p. 403.
 9. Letter from Edward Dale, a Cornish miner in California, in *West Briton*, August 29, 1851.
 10. *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 16, 1852.
 11. D. James, *From Grand Mound to Scatter Creek* (Olympia: State Capital Historical Association of Washington, 1980).
 12. *West Briton*, August 29, 1851.
 13. *Ibid.* Trail stories and the West in general led to exaggerated claims of which this is one example. Ferrymen generally charged three to five dollars a crossing so that no single ferry could make \$3,000 a day, although large sums were made during the course of a season leading to a proliferation of ferry points on the North Platte.
 14. For an account of another later 19th century Englishman who admired the scenery of part of Wyoming, see Brian P. Birch, "From Old England to Old Faithful: A Victorian Englishman's View of the West," *Annals of Wyoming* 54 (Spring 1982): 2-9.
 15. D. James, *From Grand Mound to Scatter Creek*, p. 15.
 16. A term used on the trail referring to the need to disassemble equipment to get across a river.
 17. Over the years the trail attracted many traders and others anxious to cash in on the needs of the travelers. Unruh devotes no less than two of his eleven chapters to this aspect of the overland emigration. See Unruh, *The Plains Across*, pp. 244-301.
 18. The Walters-Uren group was not unusual in staying only a few months in the gold fields. Most saw California as a place in which to try to make a fortune and then to leave as quickly as possible.
 19. *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 16, 1852.
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Governor Francis E. Warren,
The United States Army
and the
Chinese Massacre at
Rock Springs

❖ F. E. WARREN, THE CHINESE PROTECTOR. ❖



❖ "PACK THE JURY, THEY MUST BE CONVICTED." ❖

No white miner can afford to vote for Warren
and his Chinese record.

—◆—◆—◆—
"Guilty, or not guilty, they must be convicted."

He believes in protecting American labor.
See other side.

—◆—◆—◆—
"More soldiers and bayonets, my friends the Chinese must be
protected."

—◆—◆—◆—
He is peculiar for ways that are dark and
tricks that are vain.

—◆—◆—◆—
"I propose to keep the Chinese here and if you make any fur-
ther trouble with them, I'll leave a hole in the ground where Army
now stands."

—◆—◆—◆—
If he can't keep his Chinese friends in the
mines, he is going to employ them to bid
down his fraudulent pre-emption claims.

by Murray L. Carroll

(Above and left) Two sides of poster published by the Evanston Register during Warren's Gubernatorial campaign in 1890 blasting him for his role in the events following the Chinese Massacre in Rock Springs in 1885.

To all Knights of Labor and workingmen in Laramie and vicinity:

Whereas, Miller & Benson, proprietors of the Wyoming House, have refused to take any notice of our request that they employ other than Chinese cooks, you are hereby notified that an order of boycott has been issued against said firm of Miller & Benson, and we request our friends and instruct our members to use all lawful means to withdraw patronage from said firm until their practice of employing Chinamen is discontinued.

Dawn of Light Assembly 3256²

The "Chinese Massacre" at Rock Springs, Wyoming, occurred on September 2, 1885. For Francis E. Warren, Governor of Wyoming Territory, it was a major crisis, possibly the most serious crisis to face a governor in the nearly sixteen years of the Territory's existence.

Beyond the inherent seriousness of the situation itself, for Warren it was a personal political crisis. A republican, he had been appointed by lame-duck President Chester A. Arthur on February 27, 1885, less than a week before democrat Grover Cleveland's inauguration. As expected, the republican-controlled senate confirmed his appointment, but it also was anticipated that he would be replaced shortly by a democrat. Although Warren was generally liked and respected throughout the territory, Wyoming democrats wanted one of their number in the governor's chair. From the establishment of Wyoming as a separate territory, the White House had been under republican control, and all the territorial governors had been republican.

W. H. Holliday of Laramie, recently defeated by republican Joseph M. Carey for the seat as delegate to Congress, was mentioned frequently in democratic newspapers as a potential nominee. Forty-one year old Warren, a wealthy Cheyenne merchant and stock grower, was the first Wyoming resident appointed to the governorship. He had been active in territorial politics for many years, having served as Territorial Treasurer, Mayor of Cheyenne and as a member and President of the territorial legislature. He did pass up a chance to enter the national political scene by refusing his party's nomination as territorial delegate in the 1884 election. This powerless position was not sought after, and both parties had trouble finding nominees in 1884.

Although the outbreak of trouble in Rock Springs at this particular time came as a surprise, the seeds of the dispute had been sown ten years earlier. When the Union Pacific Railroad opened the coal mines in Rock Springs in 1868, most of the miners were European immigrants from Scandinavia and the British Isles. Following a bitter labor dispute and strike in 1875, during which army troops were called in to restore order, the Union Pacific contracted with Beckwith, Quinn & Company of Evanston to provide Chinese miners for the mines at both Rock Springs and Almy. Later, Beckwith and Quinn furnished miners of all nationalities for the railroad's mines handling all the details such as payrolls, hiring, firing and operating the company stores.¹ For the most part, there was no open antipathy between the Chinese and the White miners, but there was a strong, underlying, latent resentment of the Chinese by the White miners. The Chinese kept to themselves, worked hard without complaint, often in areas where other miners refused to work. All along the Union Pacific Railroad line, the Knights of Labor organized the mines and railroad shops, as well as other industries. One major goal of this growing national labor movement was the exclusion of Chinese labor from the United States.

In April, 1885, for example, the following advertisement appeared in the *Laramie Daily Boomerang*:

There was no pay differential between the Chinese and European miners, both were paid at the same rate per ton, although the White miners averaged a little more per day in wages, probably owing to higher production on their part.³ The Chinese, however, would not strike, nor would they join the White miners in complaining to the Union Pacific or Beckwith, Quinn & Company about working conditions. Out of the some 500 miners employed in Rock Springs in September, 1885, 150 were White and the balance Chinese. There were 100 or more unemployed White miners living in town as well.⁴ Since Rock Springs was a company town, the plight of the unemployed miners was particularly difficult.

On the morning of September 2, 1885, a conflict between White and Chinese miners over work assignments at No. 6 mine apparently was the catalyst precipitating the mob action that has come to be known as the "Chinese Massacre."⁵ About 2 p.m., a mob of some 150 White miners armed with rifles opened fire on the Chinese section of town and then set it afire. All of the residents not killed or wounded fled into the surrounding hills. The Whites killed 28 Chinese, either by gun or fire, severely wounded fifteen and forced some 500 to leave town. About \$148,000 worth of property was looted or destroyed.⁶ The railroad immediately instructed its train crews to pick up any refugees found along the right-of-way and transport them to Evanston. Special trains carrying food, water and medical supplies were dispatched in both directions from Rock Springs to provide aid to those who had taken refuge in the hills. Those rescued were taken first to Green River, then to Evanston.

Neither the town officials in Rock Springs nor the Sweetwater County officials were able to restore order or protect the Chinese and their property. Joseph Young, the Sweetwater County Sheriff, was at the county seat in Green River. When he became aware of the conditions in Rock Springs, he requested help from the territorial government.⁷ Sheriff Young arrived from Green River on the evening of September 2, but, as he had notified Governor Warren, he found it impossible to restore order without outside aid. Later he told a reporter from the *Salt Lake Tribune* that he could not have gotten the services of three men to suppress the riot, or maintain order after it was suppressed; he therefore turned to the territorial government for help.⁸

Warren was almost as helpless as the sheriff. Wyoming Territory did not have a militia, and Warren did not have the authority to declare martial law even if there had been

a militia for him to call upon to enforce it. In 1856, the United States Attorney General had ruled that territorial legislatures, not territorial governors, were vested with the power to declare martial law.⁹

Warren telegraphed General O. O. Howard, Commander of the Department of the Platte in Omaha, for troops. He also telegraphed Secretary of War William C. Endicott.¹⁰ Neither Howard nor Endicott had the authority to help him. As a result of a struggle between a republican president and a democratic congress over federal intervention in elections in the South, the Army Appropriation Act for 1879 included a provision commonly called the Posse Comitatus Act, which prohibited the use of any part of the army as a *posse comitatus* for the execution of laws except as provided by the Constitution or by act of congress.¹¹ On September 3, Warren appealed directly to the president for aid.¹²

He was advised by telegraph that he must make personal application to the president in the manner and form indicated in the Constitution and statutes. At the same time, however, at the president's direction, Endicott ordered the movement of two companies to Rock Springs under his authority to prevent interference with the United States mail or mail routes.¹³

Meanwhile, Warren and Union Pacific Superintendents Wurtele and Dickenson went to Rock Springs by special train. They stopped in Laramie and picked up N. K. Boswell, Chief Detective of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. Boswell was a close friend of Warren and had served as a special agent for the Union Pacific since 1867. Boswell was undoubtedly the most experienced law enforcement officer in the territory.¹⁴ Before leaving Cheyenne, Warren had taken the precaution of making a personal call on Colonel John S. Mason, commander of Fort D. A. Russell, alerting him to the problem, and suggesting that he have troops ready to move if approval for the use of Federal troops was received.¹⁵

When he arrived in Rock Springs, Warren found conditions even worse than he had been led to believe from the communications he had received. All the buildings in the Chinese community, as well as railroad section houses which the Chinese occupied, had been burned. The mob had ordered the Superintendent of Mine Number 6, James Evans, and W. H. O'Donnell, store manager and contract labor manager for Beckwith & Quinn in Rock Springs, to leave town. The smoldering ruins of the burned buildings were looted for money or other valuables the Chinese may have cached and not been able to retrieve.¹⁶ Later, in an interview with a reporter from the *St. Louis Republican*, Warren stated:

It is the most damnable and brutal outrage that ever occurred in any country. Those fellows actually attacked the Chinese in their own abodes while they were packing to get away, and in many instances shot them unresistingly, and pushed them back into the shanties and roasted them like so many rats, and for miles around Rock Springs on the morning when I arrived—which was the morning after the riot—the air was fairly reeking with the smell of burnt human flesh.¹⁷

On September 3, the governor and his party conferred with Sweetwater County officials in Green River before returning to Cheyenne. A message was received from Evanston that the arrival of the Chinese who fled Rock Springs was creating friction between the White and Chinese miners in Almy, three miles from Evanston. The danger of the Rock Springs outrages being repeated in Evanston and Almy appeared imminent.¹⁸

Warren and party proceeded to Evanston on September 4.¹⁹ He telegraphed the president from Evanston stating there was open insurrection in Rock Springs; the Chinese who had taken refuge in Evanston had been ordered to leave; the sheriffs were powerless; and, since Wyoming had no territorial militia, troops were needed not only to protect the mail and mail routes, but to support civil authority.²⁰ Warren returned to Rock Springs on September 5 and again telegraphed the president, pointing out that the legislature of Wyoming was not in session and could not be called in time to request help as required by law.²¹ The Salt Lake newspapers noted that Warren's first request ignored Section 4, Article III of the Constitution requiring applications for aid to be from the legislature if it could be convened. He also telegraphed S. R. Calloway, General Manager of the Union Pacific, suggesting that the railroad complain vigorously to Howard's headquarters in Omaha, and through its Boston offices directly to the secretary of war, charging insurrection and conspiracy.²²

Since tensions in the Evanston-Almy area remained high, Warren and party returned there September 7. Large numbers of White miners had quit work at Almy. They threatened the Chinese with death if they did not leave. They also held public meetings in Evanston and Almy to incite action against the Chinese. Anonymous threatening letters were received by Union Pacific officials and prominent Evanston residents who were known to support the Chinese.²³

In compliance with the president's instructions to Endicott of September 3, Lt. Colonel H. L. Chipman and two companies of the 7th Infantry from Fort Fred Steele were sent to Rock Springs. In response to Warren's September 4 telegram, Lt. Colonel T. M. Anderson and one company of the 14th Infantry from Fort D. A. Russell were sent to Evanston.²⁴

At the same time, Colonel A. McD. McCook, Commander of the 6th Infantry at Camp Murray, Utah, was alerted to the possible movement of his troops. Camp Murray was fourteen miles from Wauship Station, the nearest rail and telegraph connection, adding to the communications difficulties. On September 8, McCook received orders to send six companies to Wauship Station for transportation by rail to Evanston where they would be under the command of Anderson. The orders were received at 4:30 p.m., and the troops departed for Wauship Station at 6:30 p.m., and entrained for Evanston shortly after midnight.²⁵

On September 7, Warren had again telegraphed the president from Evanston, stating:

—the unlawful organized mobs in possession of coal mines at Almy, near here, will not permit Chinamen to approach their own homes, property, or employment. From the nature of the outbreak sheriff of county cannot rally sufficient posse and Territorial government cannot sufficiently aid him. Insurrectionists know through newspapers and dispatches that troops will not interfere under present orders, and moral effect of presence of troops is destroyed. If troops were known to have orders to assist sheriff posse in case driven back, I am quite sure civil authorities could restore order without actual use of soldiers; but unless United States Government can find way to relieve us immediately, believe worse scenes than those at Rock Springs will follow and all Chinamen driven from the Territory. I beg an early reply and information regarding the attitude of the United States Government.

Francis E. Warren
Governor²⁶

Warren sent the message because the miners found out through the Salt Lake newspapers, and probably from the soldiers, that the army's role was limited to protecting the mail and mail routes. He feared they would assume that the mines and the Chinese were fair game unless the civil authorities had the army to back them. Major General John M. Schofield, commander of the Division of Missouri, and Endicott, tried to find some means of meeting Warren's requests and at the same time not violate the *Posse Comitatus Act*. Schofield was of the opinion that since the Union Pacific had been established by an act of Congress and was an indispensable military and mail route, it should be placed under the protection of United States Army troops. His definition included the property and employees and extended to the mines and miners since they were necessary for the continued operation of the railroad.²⁷

Endicott and Secretary of State Bayard came up with a more unusual solution, however. Under Article VI of the Constitution, treaties are part of the supreme law of the land; under Article II, the power to enforce the law is vested in the president. The United States had signed a new treaty with China on November 17, 1880. Article III of this treaty stated in part:

If Chinese laborers, or Chinese of any other class, now either permanently or temporarily residing in the territory of the United States, meet with ill-treatment at the hands of any other persons, the Government of the United States will exert all its power to devise measures for their protection, and to secure to them the same rights, privileges, immunities, and exemptions as may be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation, and to which they are entitled by treaty.²⁸

It was because of this treaty, and the president's responsibility to enforce it, that the companies of the 6th Infantry were dispatched to Evanston to reinforce Anderson. This avoided martial law, and politically was a more palatable reason for intervention than Schofield's.

Meanwhile, Warren and the Union Pacific officials met with a delegation of six miners from Almy, Leban Heward, John Haldane, John Shaw, William Reese, Samuel Young and Hezekiah Turner. An agreement was reached to return all the Chinese miners to Rock Springs and use only White miners at Almy.²⁹ This decision was made in spite of the fact that Evanston had a large Chinese population, and with its Joss House was one of the major Chinese social



Francis E. Warren

COURTESY AMH DEPT

and cultural centers in the United States. There are indications that members of this delegation later may have been subject to some retaliatory measures by the Union Pacific Coal Company or Beckwith & Quinn.³⁰

It is fortunate that the presence of the army seemed to calm the situation without the need for actual use of force, since the president vested the direct control over the use of the troops in Schofield in Chicago:

If necessity actually exists for the actual employment of this force in protecting life and property and aiding the civil authorities in preserving the peace and in the arrest of those committing offenses against the laws, you are authorized to use it for these purposes.—The President desires that the commander of each detachment communicate with you and receive instructions directly from you, to make sure that the force is not unnecessarily used.³¹

Schofield telegraphed Warren repeating the instructions he had received from the president. This severely limited the latitude of authority of the field commanders. It also removed the post commanders at Forts D. A. Russell and Fred Steele from the chain of command, as well as Howard, Commander of the Department of the Platte in Omaha. It made it clear that Warren had no authority over



Harper's Weekly, in its September 26, 1885, issue, printed this drawing by T. de Thulstrup of the Chinese Massacre.

the use of the troops beyond making suggestions to the respective commanders in Evanston and Rock Springs for Schofield's decision.

On September 9, a train carrying approximately 700 Chinese miners, laborers, their families and some civilian officials departed Evanston for Rock Springs. It was preceded by another train carrying four of the six companies of the 6th Infantry to protect the returning Chinese enroute and to reinforce the troops already in Rock Springs.³²

A delegation of White miners from Rock Springs went to Denver for a meeting with the general manager of the Union Pacific to protest the return of the Chinese to Rock Springs, but received no satisfaction. Warren stayed in Rock Springs until September 11. Although the situation remained tense, the presence of the governor and the troops seemed to prevent more violence.³³

The government directors of the Union Pacific, General E. P. Alexander, M. A. Hanna and Judge James W. Savage, happened to be in the West making an inspection tour of the railroad. They met in Rock Springs on September 17-18 with members of the examining commission established by order of the Chinese Minister, and consisting of Colonel F. A. Bee, Chinese Consul General from San Francisco,

his interpreter, Tseng Hoy, and Huang Sih Chen, Consul General from New York. The Commission was escorted by McCook, 6th Infantry Regimental Commander. United States Attorney A. C. Campbell and Warren represented the territory. The directors agreed to meet with the miners' delegation which had met previously with the railroad officials in Denver, and any other residents who wanted a hearing. The Chinese commission established the identity of its deceased countrymen and made arrangements for the disposition of the remains. Jointly, the Chinese officials, the directors, Warren and Campbell met to take testimony from some of the Chinese survivors and others in order to try and determine what had happened, and who had participated.³⁴

On September 21, the mines reopened. The railroad issued a notice that mines 1, 3, 4 and 5 would resume operations at 7 a.m., and that all miners and other employees were expected to report to work at that time. All those not intending to work were instructed to pick up their time checks. Some known or at least suspected participants in the riot had been discharged. Those discharged and those who refused to return to work were not to be employed by the company in the future.³⁵ They were offered passes for themselves and their families to leave Rock

Springs at the company's expense, provided they accepted the offer before September 26. Warren, Chipman and the railroad officials agreed that the tensions would be eased if the unemployed White population was encouraged to leave the area. Some did leave. The results, however, were not all that had been hoped. Many had no place to go, and failing to take advantage of the railroad's offer, were forced to remain in Rock Springs. Others who could leave chose not to, feeling that in time the Union Pacific would be forced to compromise. Simultaneous with the reopening of the mines, two more companies of troops from the 21st Infantry at Fort Sidney, Nebraska, were sent to Rock Springs.³⁶ Schofield, members of his staff and Warren, who had returned to Cheyenne to meet the general, arrived in Rock Springs September 22.³⁷

Newspapers in the West vehemently criticized the decision to return the Chinese to Rock Springs. The editor of the *Boomerang* for example wrote:

Does the Union Pacific company, the firm of Beckwith, Quinn & Company and other Chinese sympathizers, realize the task they are undertaking. If they are so blind as to expect to rule by the use of bayonets and bullets, they deserve the fate which is reserved for them. —It is easy to say: "We will enforce our rule by the use of troops," but soon the dynamite and the torch will be called into requisition, and the railroad company will find too late that they have made a bargain with the devil.³⁸

The *Salt Lake Tribune* questioned the wisdom of employing Chinese, pointing out that the railroad's property extended for some distance without any protection except the "forbearance and good will of the people."³⁹ The

Knights of Labor threatened a general strike which it was sure would be respected and joined by the other railway unions, paralyzing the Union Pacific from Omaha to Ogden. The following notice was posted prominently in Cheyenne on the night of September 26:

A FAIR WARNING!
ALL CHINAMEN found in the City of Cheyenne after
October 1st will be subject to a
COAT OF TAR & FEATHERS
AND RIDDEN from the City on a rail.
WORKING MEN,
THE CHINESE MUST GO!

In messages to A. C. Campbell, U.S. Attorney, N. N. Craig, Laramie County Sheriff, A. H. Reel, Mayor of Cheyenne, E. W. Mann, Prosecuting and County Attorney for Laramie County, and T. Jefferson Carr, U.S. Marshal, Warren cited the contents of the poster and made it clear that he had no intention of allowing any more anti-Chinese activity in Wyoming. To each of the addressees he stated, "I trust you will find a way to bring the perpetrators of this to justice, and to this end I desire to call the matter to your official attention."⁴⁰ Warren also urged Calloway not to compromise with the White miners because he felt that the good order of the Territory and the discipline of the railroad were both at stake.⁴¹

Sixteen men had been arrested and held in Green River for suspicion of murder based on Chinese testimony. The Sweetwater County Grand Jury opened hearings in early October, and on October 7 they announced their findings:



Chinese preparing to board box cars for return to Rock Springs from Evanston, September 9, 1885.



In the foreground of this photograph of Rock Springs can be seen New China Town and Camp Pilot Butte Center, circa 1888.

that although they had examined a large number of witnesses, "no one was able to testify to a single criminal act committed by any known white person that day." The Grand Jury report went on to state:

While we find no excuse for the crimes committed, there appears to be no doubt of abuses existing that should have been promptly adjusted by the railroad company and its officers. If this had been done, the fair name of our Territory would not have been stained by the terrible events of the 2nd of September.⁴²

It was implied by the Grand Jury and in the press that the Chinese themselves had fired their homes, although no explanation was offered for this strange charge. The findings were not too surprising, since of the sixteen grand jurors, eleven were from Rock Springs.

That evening, a large rally was held in Green River to protest the continued use of Chinese labor in the mines and the presence of troops to enforce the laws. Petitions were drawn up on both issues together with a resolution to send the petitions to the territorial delegate in congress to be presented to the president. Among the prominent speakers present was Melville C. Brown from Laramie, at-

torney for the White miners. Brown was one of Warren's most bitter enemies, both political and personal, although they were both members of the republican party.⁴³ The next day, the men who had been jailed in Green River were greeted by a large crowd at the railroad station in Rock Springs and welcomed home as heroes.

To add to the problems of Warren and the railroad, the miners at Carbon went on strike October 1 in sympathy with the miners at Rock Springs and Almy. There were no Chinese miners in Carbon, and neither the railroad nor Beckwith, Quinn & Company had any plans to use them there. Warren characterized the miners at Carbon as "disposed to be a little ugly."⁴⁴

Despite the continued tension, the War Department proposed withdrawing all the troops from Evanston and the majority from Rock Springs by the end of October. Except for the mine officials, the Chinese and possibly the prostitutes and saloon keepers, most of the residents of Rock Springs probably would not have missed the soldiers. However, several residents of Evanston petitioned Warren to have the military presence retained in that city.⁴⁵ Except for two companies at Rock Springs and one at



COURTESY, SWEETWATER COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, GREEN RIVER

Pilot Butte was a little more elaborate, consisting of double barracks, 200 feet long by 28 feet wide, housing two companies, 104 men, orderly rooms, kitchens and mess halls. Opposite the barracks, two triple sets of officers' quarters stood. Other buildings on the post included stables, warehouses and service buildings. A special spur was laid from the main line of the railroad to the camp site. The camp was built along Bitter Creek, adjacent to the site of the burned-over Chinese settlement. The railroad leveled this area and constructed 62 frame and two log buildings to replace the destroyed Chinese homes.⁵⁰

The *Laramie Boomerang* editorialized: "The Mongolians will not feel entirely at home, however, until they get their homes in a comparatively filthy state, nor will they feel free of fear for some time to come, even though they have a Gatling gun there to protect them."⁵¹ This probably reflected the opinion of most of the residents of the territory. Coal production was down, and rumors persisted that when the railroad had established its control unequivocally, the White miners would be invited back to work.

Warren and the railroad had no intention of knuckling under to public opinion or to the White miners, however. Beckwith, Quinn & Co. recruited some Mormon miners from Utah for both the Almy and Rock Springs mines, but continued to use mostly Chinese miners in Rock Springs. The policy announced when the mines reopened on September 21 remained in effect. Those miners who had not reported back were struck from the roles and could not expect future employment with the company. Winter found many Rock Springs residents in difficult circumstances. The company offered low-cost transportation out of Rock Springs at the rate of one cent per mile. Many who had chosen to stay in September now no longer had the means to leave at any price.

In early December, the buildings at both Camp Pilot Butte and Camp Medicine Butte were finished. The troops abandoned their tent camps and settled into permanent quarters.⁵²

Despite increased tension in Rock Springs, caused by the hardships suffered by the unemployed White miners, the winter passed quietly. In March, 1886, Howard asked Warren and the Union Pacific officials about the advisability of removing the troops. Both agreed that the troops could leave Evanston safely, but recommended that the troops should be left in Rock Springs "until there is a more settled feeling among laboring men in that vicinity." Warren pointed out that many of the White miners who had been in Rock Springs when the trouble started were still there, that they were unrepentant and sullen and that their hatred of the Chinese was unabated.⁵³

For some reason, Camp Medicine Butte was not completely abandoned until April 4, 1887.⁵⁴ Camp Pilot Butte continued in use until February, 1899. It was a sub-post of Fort D. A. Russell in Cheyenne for the last years of its existence.⁵⁵ The other major military posts in Wyoming when Camp Pilot Butte was founded, Fort Bridger, Fort

Evanston, all the troops returned to their home duty stations by November 1.⁴⁶ The Gatling gun detachment members in Evanston returned to their parent regiments. The Gatling gun itself was transferred to Rock Springs, indicating the army was prepared to use major force should trouble flair up again.⁴⁷

The railroad assigned six special agents, possibly Pinkerton Detectives, to Rock Springs. These six carried deputy sheriff's commissions from Sheriff Young as well as deputy marshal's commissions from United States Marshal Carr. Warren also tried, unsuccessfully, to make similar arrangements with Sheriff Rankin of Carbon County. Carr did agree to deputize the railroad special agents for duty in Carbon if necessary.⁴⁸

Special Order 105, Platte Department, dated October 20, 1885, designated the camp at Rock Springs Camp Pilot Butte, and the one at Evanston Camp Medicine Butte.⁴⁹ The Union Pacific Railroad started construction of permanent buildings for both camps. Camp Medicine Butte consisted of a single 50-man barracks, a guardhouse and a warehouse. The detachment officers lived in private facilities, such as the Pacific Hotel, owned by the railroad. Camp

Fred Steele, Fort McKinney, Fort Laramie, all relics of the Indian Wars, had been abandoned. In a strange twist of irony, the last unit to garrison Pilot Butte was Company "K," 24th Infantry Regiment, a Black unit.⁵⁶

The presence of the troops did seem to help keep the peace in Rock Springs, since in the entire thirteen and a half years the troops were there, they were never called upon to intervene on behalf of the Chinese. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, and the 1892 ten-year extension, resulted in a declining availability of Chinese labor. By the time the army abandoned Camp Pilot Butte, miners representing several nationalities were employed in Rock Springs, including many Japanese.⁵⁷

Warren's actions in Rock Springs aroused hostile response in the democratic press, and generated strong protests among the largely democratic labor organizations. He not only had problems with the democrats, but Wyoming republicans split on the issue as well. Many, such as Judge James W. Hayford, editor of the *Laramie Sentinel*, and Melville C. Brown, were out-spokenly anti-Chinese and were critical of Warren's handling of the affair. While Hayford recognized that Warren had done his duty as a federal officer, he was critical of the return of the Chinese to Rock Springs and of some of the governor's statements. His political opponents on both sides continued to raise the issue throughout his political career. Former Governor Fenimore C. Chatterton noted in his memoirs that after the Rock Springs incident, Warren often was referred to as "Chinese Warren."⁵⁸

It may temporarily have cost him political support within Wyoming, but the speed of his reaction, his personal attention to the situation and the fact that order was restored without further loss of life or property damage did not go unnoticed. In their report for 1885, the government directors of the Union Pacific Railroad stated:

The conclusion forced upon the directors was that the massacre was without cause or excuse, unless a violent and wide-spread race prejudice may furnish the latter. To such feelings, however, the governor of Wyoming afforded a conspicuous exception. His firmness and courage, together with the ready response made by the President to his requisition for troops, prevented a more general uprising, in which the property and interests of the Government and the road might have been alike sacrificed.⁵⁹

The support of powerful individuals such as Mark Hanna, James Savage and E. P. Alexander, as well as that of an institution as important as the Union Pacific Railroad, made it unlikely that President Cleveland summarily would replace Warren as governor. His decisions on the Rock Springs massacre appear to have been made with less concern for his own political future than with fulfilling his responsibilities as governor. He saw what occurred in Rock Springs as illegal, inhumane and beyond the willingness or ability of local authorities to control. The massacre was a challenge to the authority of the territorial government, in danger of spreading and possibly increasing in intensity and seriousness. It was a situation that needed to be met quickly and firmly and controlled by the most expedient

means available. He also saw it as a violation of the rights of the Chinese miners, both legal and human, which was intolerable. He was well aware of the violent anti-Chinese sentiment prevalent throughout not only the territory but the entire West, and that supporting the rights of the Chinese over the claims of the Whites would not be a popular position with either his party or the democrats. He made the choice of asking for military assistance because it was the only option open to him to restore order and assert the authority of the territorial government. He supported the return of the Chinese miners to Rock Springs both as an expression of support of their rights and as a message to those who had instigated and participated in the riots that their lawlessness might go unpunished by law but would not be rewarded by a moral victory.



Although the Chinese Massacre probably was not the key factor in launching Francis E. Warren on a major political career, it undoubtedly played an important role. Had he failed to act decisively, or had the situation escaped his control, he certainly would have been replaced immediately and his political future placed in serious jeopardy. Instead, he continued to serve under the first Cleveland administration for almost half of its term, despite the constant clamor of the democratic party for his replacement by one of their own. He had made politically powerful allies and had gained favorable publicity on a national level, both important factors in establishing a successful political career. After a two and a half year hiatus, he returned as governor during the last eighteen months of Wyoming's territorial days, and was the first elected governor of the state. He resigned the governorship after one

month to accept appointment to the United States Senate, where, except for the period 1893 to 1895, he represented Wyoming continuously until his death in 1929.

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After the "Massacre," the Union Pacific Railroad built "New China Town" in Rock Springs.



Photograph taken of Camp Pilot Butte from southwest bank of Bitter Creek. Buildings (left to right) are Officers Quarters, Quartermaster Warehouse, and Enlisted Barracks. Note freight car on siding and dugout houses in the bank of Bitter Creek.

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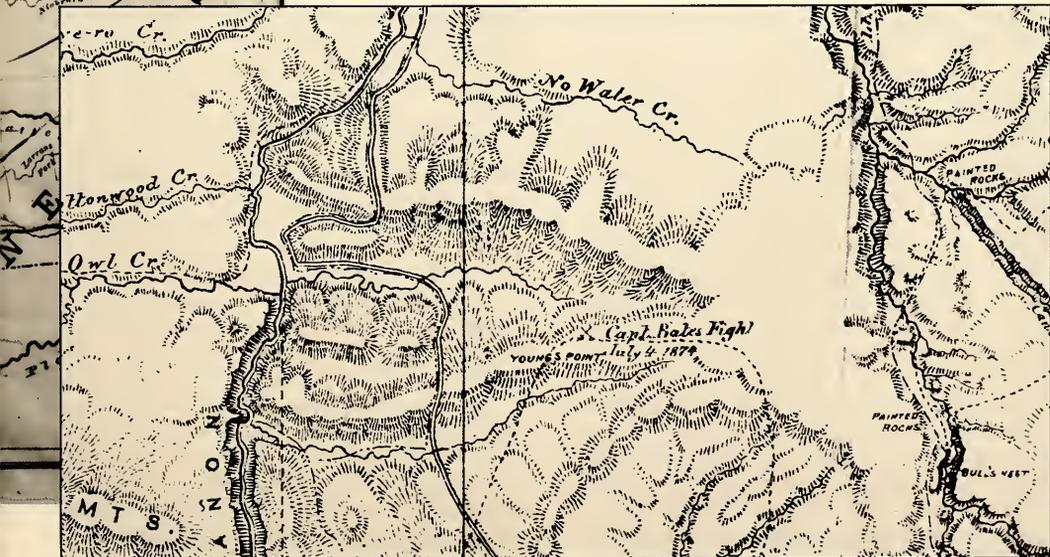
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Map found in J. H. Triggs "History of Cheyenne and Northern Wyoming," 1876.

The Little Known Battle of Snake Mountain

by David M. Delo



Map taken from "Report of Expedition Through the Big Horn Mountains, Yellowstone Park, Etc., by Lieutenant General P.H. Sheridan," dated September 20, 1881.

MAPS COURTESY AMH DEIT.



COURTESY LAWRENCE FROST PRIVATE COLLECTION

Captain Alfred Elliott Bates

June 30, 1874, Camp Brown, Territory of Wyoming: "Scene of unusual activity at the post," recorded Dr. Thomas Maghee in the post medical journal. Touring military brass had arrived, including Regional Commanding General Philip Sheridan of Civil War fame. The same day, Chief Washakie's Shoshone scouts reported they had found a camp of Northern Arapahoes and Sioux hidden in the Owl Creek Mountains.

The Owl Creeks were off-limits to reservation Indians and there was reason to believe the warriors of that village were responsible for six years of raids in the valley. When Sheridan heard the report, he approved of a full punitive expedition, which meant the Shoshones would accompany the cavalry.

The Second Cavalry and Chief Washakie's Shoshones had often worked together. Not only was Camp Brown located on the Wind River Indian Reservation in the Wind River Valley, its primary mission was to protect the Shoshone tribe from their enemies.

The Shoshones had migrated from the Green River to the Wind River Valley for their annual fall buffalo hunt since the 1840s. The advantages that made the area a choice location—abundance of game, warm winter weather and

an interstitial position between Sioux, Crow and Cheyenne territories—also made it a frequent battleground.

Until the late 1860s, the Shoshones were frequently challenged by roving Teton Blackfoot. They also lost hundreds of warriors in a protracted conflict with the Crow. In a bloody three day contest called the Battle of Crowheart Butte, Chiefs Washakie and Big Robber of the Crow settled the issue of hunting rights by personal combat. Washakie, then nearly 60 years old, allegedly killed his opponent, ripped out his heart and ate it to signify his prowess and the Shoshone victory. The Crow and Shoshones made peace in 1870.

But as of 1874, Washakie still had enemies, because in 1865 he had rejected Red Cloud's offer to join the Sioux in the fight against the Whites. That decision also made him an enemy of the Cheyenne and Northern Arapahoe, the Sioux's allies.²

These three tribes had not only harassed Washakie's people, they had taken the lives of more than 50 residents in the mining towns of South Pass City, Atlantic City and Miner's Delight since 1867.³

The location of the reservation—granted to the Shoshones at the treaty of Fort Bridger in 1868—had been Chief Washakie's choice.⁴ But his tribe was relatively weak in 1868. He had recently lost 30 of his best men to the Sioux, and no Indian Agency had been put up for his people. He thus refused to occupy his new home until the United States government provided military protection. Somewhat belatedly, the military established the Shoshone Agency and Camp Augur (later named Camp Brown), which it garrisoned with 50 men.⁵

In retrospect, Washakie's request appears well justified, for both Camp Brown's infantry and cavalry had skirmished with raiding Indians from the first days of summer, 1869, through the summer of 1876. The situation at Camp Stambaugh⁶ was identical.

The June 30 discovery of the Owl Creek village came several weeks after two men from A Company, 13th Infantry, had had a brief run-in with a roving band of Indians near Bull Lake. The soldiers, part of Captain Robert Torrey's road construction gang,⁷ had been ordered back to the post on muleback, to pick up the mail.

The two soldiers scrambled to the top of the closest bluff and prepared to defend themselves. The Indians, which the men later identified as Sioux, sent one warrior forward who questioned them about the location of Washakie and his Shoshones.⁸

Torrey's muleback mailmen made their report to Captain Alfred Elliott Bates, Company B, Second Cavalry, who was in charge while Torrey was away. Bates, who had arrived at Camp Brown four months earlier, had spent a hectic spring with Lieutenants Robert H. Young and Frank V. Robinson and Company B, chasing Indians who were raiding local settlements.⁹

The next day, with a combined force of cavalry and Shoshones, Bates tracked the Sioux band, but quit when

the trail left the valley via the Owl Creeks. Washakie assigned six braves to "dog" the trail. When they returned and reported that the trail led into the Big Horn Valley, Young allegedly urged Washakie to send additional scouts to explore the source of Nowood and Bad Water Creeks in the southern rim of the Big Horns. Washakie concurred and it was there his scouts found the village.¹⁰

"The atmosphere was almost festive," penned Maghee in retrospect. "We knew the village was the rendez-vous, the infernal nest of the hellish, murderous scoundrels which had infested this country since the white people had attempted to make an honest living there."¹¹

Camp Brown's assault force, 56 men of Company B under second-in-command Lieutenant Robinson, plus twenty Indian scouts under Lieutenant Young, 4th Infantry, was issued four days of rations and 200 rounds of ammunition.¹² Medical officer Maghee was accompanied by a wagon and four hospital men. A ten mule pack train carried extra ammunition.

The Shoshone contingent under Washakie included his English-speaking sub-chief, Narkok, and 167 warriors. Six White hunters, who resided near the post or were employed by the government, went along.¹³ The officer in charge was Bates.

The war party rode out from Camp Brown at eight o'clock the evening of July 1. Years later, Post Trader James K. Moore¹⁴ told his son he remembered the stately Shoshone's battle parade around the post prior to their departure.¹⁵

The troupe traveled east, past the mouth of the Little Wind River to Big Wind River where they made camp. After the 35 mile night march, Maghee wrote ". . . under the bluffs, secreted in timber and bushes, we remained all day. No fires."

The column remounted when the sun set. By dawn, they covered 45 miles of "mean country" to the confluence of the Bridger and Bad Water Creeks. Maghee said alkali made the creek look like milky soap suds and advised against drinking it.¹⁶ As the men spread saddle blankets in the tall sage and cottonwoods, Robinson was struck by the silence. Horses and men alike "took on that quiet business air that is so noticeable when all realize something serious is at hand."¹⁷ Once again, no fires.

North of their bivouac, an outcrop of deep magenta was visible in the sharp foothills which marked the end of open desert. Farther north, at the entrance of Bridger Creek Trail and Cottonwood Canyon, the color changed to red-orange. A lonely hump of land marked the track of Bad Water Creek, then the plain stretched south towards the Oregon Trail.¹⁸

That night, the warriors pressed north into the mountains, unaware their target was still 30 miles away. Maghee recalled "sorrowful calls" of the coyote that rose from the front ranks to advise advance scouts of the command's position. The column probably saw the Wind Rivers on their left. In late evening, it stands up on the horizon as



Dr. Thomas Maghee

a long grey shadow with an uneven crest, sometimes crowned by a thunderhead, or a cape of white.

Robinson noted from the stars that they traveled north-east. "No sounds except the occasional click of horses feet on rocks. Good trail and good time." Maghee had a contrasting opinion. "We had several boggy, alkali creeks to cross and deep arroyos, ravines, high sandy ridges and infernal sage brush deserts found the terrain treacherous and taxing," he wrote.¹⁹

The original location of the village, described by Robinson as a "close valley,"²⁰ was deserted, but scouts captured two Sioux horses. The village, they concluded, was still near. So Bates called a quick council. "Flowing hair and swarthy countenances [of the Shoshones] mingled with the eager faces and courtly uniforms of the officers, a scene worthy of the pencil of the artist," penned Maghee in his diary.

Washakie sent out scouts, but Bates could not wait. Robinson said he ordered everyone to mount. They galloped across the high plateau for nearly an hour. The pack train with the extra ammunition would have to try to find us on its own, he recalled. Now, time was of the essence, for daylight was breaking upon the command and surprise could be lost if they did not hurry.

Scouts rode in to say the village was less than a mile away, so Bates took a scout and galloped away to see for himself. The village stretched along a narrow valley 500

feet below the edge of the rock strewn plateau.²¹ A Y-shaped stream meandered east along the valley floor. The downslope approach from Bates' position was easy on horseback, yet the slope on the opposite side to the north, behind the village, was too steep to escape from on horseback.

While Bates was away, Shoshone warriors a half mile to the rear began to don war dresses and sing their war chant. Robinson cursed and shouted to Washakie, "in Heaven's name" to stop them or "all hope of surprising the village would be at an end." In desperation, he repeated what his commanding officer had done earlier that morning—ordered everyone to mount.

Robinson met Bates coming back. Still mounted, the captain informed him the village was not 40 lodges as reported, but 112. Robinson wrote that he contemplated his death that July 4th, while Bates described his plan.

Bates ordered Young to descend into the canyon from the head of the west fork of the stream.²² He (Bates), Robinson and Company B would attack from the heights of the tableland. Bates' first report to his Commanding Officer, Torrey, perhaps in hindsight, declared that the Shoshone would have to keep the Arapahoes from taking the bluffs on the far side if the attack was to be successful. No one knows, however, whether that message was delivered loudly and clearly to Washakie's interpreter, Narkok, before the fight. This point was to become a bone of contention later.

In early July, the morning sun lights the tops, then the flanks of the tablelands. The gorge in which the village was ensconced remained in shadow. As the sun rose, it popped up behind the northeast shoulder of Battle Mountain,²³ and shone directly on the slope Young was ordered to take into the gorge.

Bates decided the cavalry must attack on foot, so he ordered Sergeant Fuller and every fourth man to hold the horses. That left 32 men for the charge. Each trooper had 80 cartridges in his belt for his Springfield .45 carbine and a colt revolver.

As for the Shoshones, Maghee said they remained mounted in a straight line. Robinson, who never referred to more than 50 Shoshone warriors at any time, said they were afoot, behind them. "In the sleepy village, all was silent as death, the ponies lying lariatied at the doors of the teepees [sic]," stated Maghee's medical journal.

Bates ordered the men to descend at the double. "We had gone but a short distance," stated Robinson, "when, seeing such a hot time ahead of us, Bates and I and many of the men threw away our blouses, for we preferred to meet it in blue shirts." Halfway down the hill, they heard yells and the cracks of rifles to their left. Young and the scouts entered into the battle.

Bates' men pressed into the village in close skirmish order. The Shoshones fired into the village over their heads. To Robinson, the attack was almost a complete surprise; to Maghee, less complete than it could have been.²⁴

Horses broke their pickets and fled through the village. Young killed a medicine chief before his party lost two Shoshones. Fighting was hand to hand—"in some instances, men fighting for the same rifle."²⁵ By the time the attackers dominated the village, more than a dozen enemy lay dead in the valley.

Many Arapahoe, rifles in hand, had escaped down the ravine that ran through the village and climbed crevices up the far slope. One hundred feet up that hillside, directly above the village, was a narrow plateau the length of a football field. The Shoshones, Bates emphasized in his report, had not been aggressive enough to deny the enemy the heights.

Robinson reported yells, cries and curses rang out far above the incessant rattle of the carbines and the sharp crack of the Winchesters with which the Arapahoes were armed. Young, a squad of soldiers and a force of Shoshones under Washakie, attempted to dislodge the Arapahoes with a flank attack. They moved up a draw north of the village, but came under sharp fire.

While Company B held the center of the village, Maghee set up his field hospital at a tepee. The assault party around him remained in hot engagement, killing Indians at close range with revolvers. A wounded Indian fired at Bates from less than twenty feet. Bates dispatched him with a pistol shot.

Bullets whined around Maghee as he tended a wounded Shoshone. One bullet creased his forehead. "When an Indian rushed from a lodge and took aim at one of our men," said Robinson, "Maghee dropped his bandages, picked up a carbine and shot the man, then coolly returned to work."

Momentum of the fight shifted as the Arapahoes consolidated their position on the bluff. Within one minute's time, Private James M. Walker was shot through the head and Private Peter F. Engell through the lungs and heart. A ball went through Private C.D. French's nose into his eye (which he later lost).

As Young, Cosgrove, Yarnell and Indian scouts fought their way up the bluff, Leslie Gable was shot in the arm and Pierson was shot through the hand. Several Shoshones were immediately killed and two more wounded. The fight was sharp and confusing, partly because there were so many horses in the way.²⁶ Then Young was shot in the upper thigh.

About that time, Bates decided to pull out of the village. Enemy fire was becoming too effective. Ordering the surgeon to move to a safer locality, he withdrew towards the hill from which they had attacked. Maghee wrote that Bates could have burned the village, but his men had reported the lodges full of children and women. "Besides," he added, "Bates fully intended to return."

When Washakie saw the captain withdrawing, he told Cosgrove and Le Clair to get Young off the cliff. They hoisted Young on Cosgrove's horse, then Cosgrove mounted another and led Young out. With Bates' men out

*Crowheart Butte, where
Chiefs Washakie and Big
Robber fought and settled
the issue of hunting
rights between the
Shoshones and Crow.*



AMH DEPT

of range, the full enemy above turned on Young's party. Washakie and his men covered the rear as the men descended the bluff.

Nearly three hours had passed.²⁷ Young's estimates of casualties, according to Maghee, was "up to a hundred killed and 175 wounded." An "Eye Witness" account printed in the *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, July 14, 1874, said about 50 were killed and twice the number wounded. Robinson said that as nearly as he could count, the enemy lost 60 in the village. At least 250 horses had been captured.

The command, however, was at a disadvantage. The enemy was still strong, well armed and in position. Young and seven others were wounded and ammunition was running low.²⁸ Shoshones also reported seeing smokes from

above the bluffs. The Arapahoes were signaling a friendly group whose identity, size and location were unknown. To try to re-enter the canyon to destroy the village or root the Arapahoes from their perch could be costly. With four dead, eight wounded and an anxious band of Shoshones, Bates gave the signal to withdraw.

The day had been hot, the journey back, slow. Robinson and the ten men who had held the horses served as rear guard. Robinson wrote that the enemy followed them with some force, but as they were tired and also probably low on ammunition, did not attack. When the sun set, the column halted by a creek near the eastern end of the Owl Creek Mountains, far north of their original route.

Bates sent two noncommissioned officers on fresh

stock to Camp Brown to alert Torrey of the fight and their need of assistance. Two hours later, the column moved on, and about daylight crossed near the head of Bad Water Creek. At ten that morning they hit the Big Wind River. The command bivouacked, and after lying down, Robinson said they "all were like dead men."²⁹

At sundown, July 5, Torrey met the column about 30 miles east of the post. After resting four hours, the command moved to big bend of Wind River where many settlers had gathered. Ambulances and medicine were on hand. The battle group made it to the post by 3:00 p.m. July 6.³⁰

Torrey's initial report reflected what Bates had told him. "Owing to the failure of the Shoshones to perform their part allotted them," wrote Torrey, "the enemy obtained possession of a high sandstone bluff, . . . and from this point in a few minutes inflicted severe loss on the party." He approved of Bates' decision to terminate the attack, not only because he was low on ammunition and the enemy was still strong and building signal fires, but because he had been unable "to get any assistance from his Indian allies to carry the bluff occupied by hostile forces."³¹

Maghee was kinder. He differentiated between young, diffident Shoshones who had not been in battle before, and veteran Shoshones under Washakie whom he said had fought well. Robinson made no mention of Shoshone performance.

Shoshone Indian Agent James Irwin was infuriated. When General Sheridan wrote that the battle did not end as satisfactorily as desired due to bad conduct on the part of the Shoshones, he wrote the Commission of Indian Affairs.³² The "Shoshones," he said, "lost as many killed and wounded as the white troopers." Then he addressed the rear guard action the Indians had taken to protect Young's evacuation.

Irwin also wrote that several young Indians told him they were alarmed when Bates and his men started shooting desperately towards the slopes. They did not have any markings to separate them from the Arapahoes and feared the cavalry would shoot them as well.

"Finally," added Irwin contritely, "The interpreter has several times complained to me that he could not understand Captain Bates, as he speaks fast and uses better language than the poor fellow had been used to hearing."³³ He concluded his letter by saying that "Captain Bates is a young officer . . . and did his work well, but may perhaps have expected too much of others."

Robinson, who referred to the battle as "one of the most gallant and spirited fights that ever occurred in the West," added that "Bates deserves well of his country and the hearty thanks of the settlers in the Wind River Valley country even to the present day."

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1. Also known as the Battle of Bates.
2. Colonel J. M. Chivington's troops massacred several hundred men, women and children in an Arapahoe-Cheyenne village at Sand Creek, Colorado, November, 1864. The following month, after a 1,000 lodge council at Cherry Creek, the two tribes joined the already warring Sioux to initiate the Sioux Indian War of 1865-1868. See *Fort Laramie and The Sioux* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1967).
3. The raids began July, 1867, the summer that placer miners, working the streams in South Pass, located the gold-rich Cariso shelf that marked the beginning of the South Pass gold rush. A letter to editor, *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, March 14, 1874, listed men killed on the Sweet-water since 1867.
4. Although a successful war chief, Washakie was also a noble, intelligent man who had promoted peace with Whites and had favored the reservation system as early as 1850. See Indian Agent Luther Mann's reports, "Utah Superintendency Records," Vols. 27-30, *Annals of Wyoming*.
5. Letter from Governor Campbell to Indian Commissioner, May 18, 1869, in Letters Received by Office of Indian Affairs from Wyoming Superintendency, microfilm files, Denver Archives. Note: Camp Augur (1869-1870), was renamed Camp Brown (1870-1879), which was then renamed Fort Washakie (1878-1909). Until 1871, Brown was located at present day Lander, Wyoming, then relocated fifteen miles north to the Popo Agie, the site of current Fort Washakie.
6. Stambaugh was established at Atlantic City in June, 1870, to protect the mining towns. See Major J. Lambert, *One Hundred Years With The Second Cavalry* (Topeka, Kansas: Press of the Capper Printing Co., Inc., 1939).
7. Captain Torrey was Camp Brown's Commanding Officer from May, 1871, until January, 1875 (minus a leave of absence). He developed the first 90 miles of the road to Yellowstone National Park, which was finally punched through Togwotee Pass in 1898. Robert was also the brother of Lin Torrey, the Wyoming Representative who created Torrey's Rough Riders for the Spanish-American War in 1898 and who ran the M- (EMBAR) ranch in the Owl Creeks. See David M. Delo, "Yellowstone Road," *Wind River Mountaineer*, Spring, 1986. See also, J. Lin Torrey file, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
8. The story of the two soldiers, printed in the *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, July, 1874, was submitted by "Lone Star" from Fort Washakie. This author believes Lone Star is Assistant Medical Officer Thomas Maghee who maintained a diary, wrote the Fort Washakie medical journal between 1873 and 1878, and recorded bits of Indian lore.
9. Lambert, *One Hundred Years*. Company B was also the most active of all Second Cavalry companies the previous summer when it was stationed at Camp Stambaugh.
10. The Jim Bridger Mountains.
11. *Fort Washakie Medical Journal*, Denver Public Library.
12. Brigadier General Robinson's account of the Snake Mountain expedition—one of the two eyewitness accounts—originally written for an organization called the "Order of Indian Battle," in 1933, as reprinted as Appendix 28 in Lambert, *One Hundred Years*.
13. The six included Texan Nelson Yarnell, friend and assistant to Thomas Cosgrove, Camp Brown's chief scout, and John Dwight Woodruff, a legend in his own right as an early Wyoming hunter, mountaineer,

- trapper, explorer, miner and military scout and guide. *Medical Journal*. See also, "Diary of Dr. Maghee," *Nebraska History Magazine*, 12 (July, 1931).
14. From a 1956 letter by James K. Moore Jr. James K. Moore Sr. was Post and Indian Trader from the fall of 1870 until 1906. See David M. Delo, "Post Trader, Indian Trader," *Wind River Mountaineer*, Fall, 1986, and Winter, 1987.
 15. The Shoshones' precision battle parade, which impressed fur traders as early as rendezvous in the late 1820s, was the subject of a painting by Alfred Jacob Miller. V. C. Trenholm and M. Carley, *The Shoshones: Sentinels of the Rockies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964).
 16. Maghee identified the stream as Bad Water Creek because of the alkali water. Robinson was sure it was Bridger Creek, a tributary of Bad Water.
 17. Robinson, "Order of Indian Battle," p. 293.
 18. The author hiked the country the first week of July, 1986.
 19. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, July 25, 1874.
 20. This might have been Cottonwood Canyon.
 21. The battleground occurred in central Wyoming—30 miles north of Lysite in the Jim Bridger Mountains, at the northern end of a dissected plateau.
 22. Young's sortie consisted of himself, twenty scouts, the six hunters, Washakie, Narkok and an unknown number of Shoshones. *Medical Journal*.
 23. Snake Mountain's name on current Topographic maps.
 24. Maghee said the young and inexperienced Shoshones raised a ruckus that prevented a complete surprise.
 25. Robinson, "Order of Battle," p. 295.
 26. In their haste to secure the bluff—according to Robinson—the enemy had driven 150 horses up with them. Many were killed during the battle.
 27. The only reference to the length of the battle was made by Indian Agent Irwin. Letter to The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July (no day given), 1874.
 28. The ammunition train that was left behind in the rush had never found the command.
 29. Robinson was the only person to describe the return trip.
 30. Captain Robert A. Torrey, "Preliminary Report" to Asst. Adjutant General, HQ Dept. of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska, July 7, 1874.
 31. *Ibid*.
 32. Letter, Dr. James Irwin, Shoshone Indian Agency to Indian Commissioner, July 15, 1874, Denver Archives.
 33. *Ibid*. Note: Narkok was one of many who, in 1859, "set Washakie aside" to raid White settlers and emigrant trains with chiefs Pocatello, Sagowitz and Sanpintz. After Colonel Connors defeated the raiders at the Battle of Bear River in 1862, Narkok returned to Washakie. See "Utah Superintendency Records," Vols. 27-30, *Annals of Wyoming*.
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DESERT DOCUMENTARY:

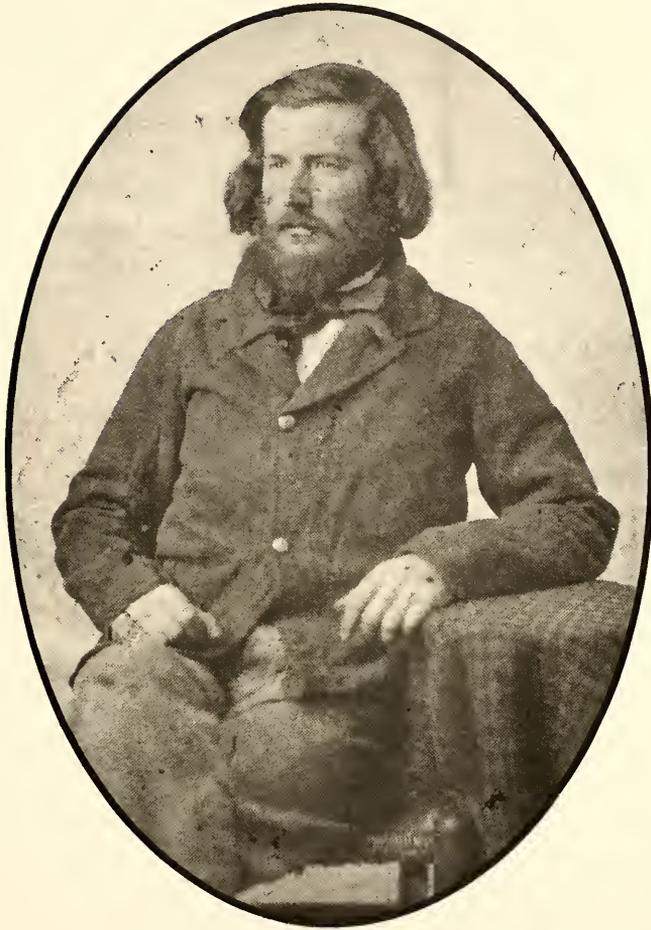
THE WILLIAM LEE DIARY

ACCOUNT OF THE

JAMES H. SIMPSON EXPEDITION,

1858-1859

by John P. Langellier



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

William Lee

When the author of this article first read the manuscript account which serves as the basis of the following narrative, it started a hunt to find the "missing" photographs from the Simpson Expedition. After several years, he located what may well be the earliest photographs taken of the American West, scattered among four institutions. Examples of these pictures accompany the text of William Lee's 1858-1859 "diary" now held by the Library of Congress. Several of the accompanying photographs first appeared in William P. MacKinnon's article, "125 Years of Conspiracy Theories: Origins of the Utah Expedition," Utah Historical Quarterly, Volume 52, Number 3, Summer, 1984.

EDITOR

In the wake of the war with Mexico the spirit of Manifest Destiny continued to fire American expansion. Acquisition of new territory and the discovery of gold in California also stimulated this westward course of empire. Often, elements of the United States Army contributed to the march toward the Pacific. Nowhere was the military's influence felt with more effect than as a result of expeditions conducted by Uncle Sam's elite Corps of Topographical Engineers.

Indeed, during the 1850s, many of these "Topogs" followed the example set by Lewis and Clark, Zebulon Pike and John C. Fremont. Some sought routes for the construction of railways so that the nation would be linked with ribbons of iron from coast to coast. Others looked to the establishment of wagon roads to carry the ever increasing numbers of pioneers to the edge of the continent.

These military men did more than map the regions they explored. They led complements of geologists, paleontologists, naturalists and other men of science and letters who helped chart and change the image of the "Great American Desert." In so doing, they opened the way for the conquest of the frontier.¹

Captain James H. Simpson characterized the officers involved in this dynamic work. A native of New Jersey, Simpson was only fifteen years old when he entered the United States Military Academy in 1828. Shortly after his graduation from West Point, the new "shavetail" received a post graduate education in the Florida swamps against the hard fighting Seminoles. Then, in 1838, he transferred from the Artillery to the newly formed Topographical Engineers. For the next two decades he remained active in this branch which took him to various assignments in the East and the South.² Having built a solid reputation, Simpson caught the eye of Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, who, during the late 1850s, commanded a large field force raised to march for Utah. This unit of more than 2,000 men responded to orders from Washington to accompany Utah's new chief executive and a number of lesser territorial officials sent to replace Brigham Young, so that the Mormons would not thwart federal authority.³

Originally, Simpson was to prepare itineraries and maps for various reinforcements sent out from Fort Leavenworth since Johnston went in the vanguard with only part of his authorized strength. The captain began to carry out this assignment with the aid of many able assistants, including junior officers and civilians who performed a wide range of scientific and technical tasks. He also brought "a photographic apparatus" with him along with all the "necessary chemicals." Simpson realized that other expeditions had attempted similar experiments with the camera as a means to record their journeys. He confessed that in "every instance, and even with operators of undoubted skill, the enterprise" had proven a failure in the past. For this reason he exhibited little faith in the daguerreotype which he said provided fair portraits and could capture "objects close at hand," but was no match for the

trained illustrator when it came to "extensive mountain chains and other objects having considerable extent"—the meat of any expedition to the vastness of the West. Given this attitude, Simpson dismissed the efforts of the two photographers who accompanied him. He even declined to mention their names in his published *Report of the Explorations Across the Great Basin in 1859*, the resume of the entire trip which he presented at the conclusion of his assignment.

Fortunately, one of his young civilian assistants thought more highly of the photographers and their ability. William Lee, an adventurous youth of some means, found the camera an ideal way to record his sojourn. As a consequence, he kept a number of the images and placed them with his own unpublished notes. These views, along with Lee's diary, flesh out Simpson's excellent, yet impersonal official narrative. Select pictures and excerpts from Lee's account help document this fascinating footnote of American heritage, and appear here as windows to the past.

Lee began his journal the day he left Washington, D.C., April 11, 1858. Boarding a train for Cincinnati he met some others from the party, including Charles S. McCarthy, the taxidermist for the group.⁴ They passed through Harpers Ferry, soon to become a milestone in national history, but to Lee was merely a stop for dinner on the first leg of the trip. The train traveled through the night. Rain and excitement made it impossible for him to "sleep a wink."⁵

Two days later, Lee reached Ohio where he received word to join Simpson and the rest of the contingent on Wednesday. Reporting at the appointed time and place introductions were made. It seemed as if everyone took stock of their new traveling companions. Once on the train, the quiet broke. Soon, every man became "very talkative and cracking jokes all the way" to St. Louis. Arriving in the bustling river city, each member sought lodging and food. Once they took care of these needs, most purchased items for the trip and enjoyed one last glimpse of "civilization." Lee even managed to see a circus and attended Senator Thomas Hart Benton's funeral.⁶ The death of this champion of national expansion came at the very time that Lee and his associates were about to help further the famous politician's dreams.

After this brief layover, the men boarded a steamboat bound for Fort Leavenworth, an important outpost which overlooked the banks of the Missouri River since its founding in 1827. The craft, the *Minnehaha*, boasted "a fine band on board and a nine-pounder whose business it was to salute every boat it meets." Lee pronounced the cuisine "excellent but the company bad." While playing cards, "a gentlemanly sharper" bested him for \$2.50 before being put off the boat when he was discovered as a cheat. The gambler and some other unsavory sorts went ashore at midnight while a drenching rain fell to dampen their larcenous spirits.⁷

Sunday the 18th proved less exciting, although Lee met

Fort Leavenworth's dragoon barracks, erected in the 1830s under the supervision of Stephen Watts Kearny, served as Lee's "hostelry" during his first night in Kansas. The officers quarters to the left were erected in 1855 and are still standing.



some Bostonians and enjoyed the magnificent scenery along the Missouri. Later, he joined in singing and dancing. By Tuesday, after "a rousing big supper with wine of all kinds furnished by the boat . . . everyone got tight and had a free fight by night." The next day they landed at Leavenworth where Lee spent a more subdued evening "in the barracks with soldiers." This was the last time he would sleep indoors for many months.⁸ On the morning of April 22, he breakfasted with the legion of teamsters who drove the massive freight wagons that supplied Johnston's army with its lifeblood. With a full stomach, Lee then made his way with others to report to Lieutenant Kirby Smith, destined to become a Union Volunteer infantry colonel in a few more years.⁹

The subaltern saw to it that the party received tents. They spent that night under canvas, but awoke chilled from the morning frost.¹⁰ When Simpson arrived on the 23rd, he arranged for blankets and other equipment which made things somewhat more comfortable. Lee contended that he began "to get used to camp life" after that, although he admitted that after a month away from his family he heard "a sweet female voice" sing *Annie Laurie*, which triggered a bit of homesickness.¹¹ The melancholy faded soon since Lee and his colleagues started to learn the mysteries of their astronomical and magnetic instruments, along with gaining familiarity with the transit and sextant.

The completion of this training phase coincided with improved relations in Utah, yet Simpson's people still had

a valuable mission to perform. On May 31, 1858, they left the nest at Fort Leavenworth for the long trek west. The first miles followed the rut-worn tracks taken by so many earlier military columns. Sometimes, during these opening days, Lee simply threw himself on the ground and slept exhausted, under the stars. He eventually thought better of this and pitched a tent, but after waking up one night in the middle of a "young river," he learned to dig a trench around his shelter in the event of rain.¹²

Moving forward, Lee helped Henry Engleman, the major scientist of the group, gather geological specimens and fossils.¹³ He performed a number of other duties, observed the strange surroundings and tasted his first buffalo which he found "very like beef."¹⁴

Comradeship strengthened. Data expanded. The party pressed through Nebraska. Here they celebrated the Fourth of July with the troop escort turning out in full dress and firing volleys of musketry.¹⁵ Two days later, Lee observed his first Sioux. He recorded, "They traded almost everything they had for sugar." With this discovery, Lee was able to obtain a bow and arrows and a pair of moccasins. The tribesmen seemed just as intrigued with white accoutrements since Lee noticed one Oglala with a watch chain just like his.

Indians became more common sights as the column continued. No clashes erupted, however, as they passed villages of Native Americans. Countless prairie dog villages dotted the countryside too. The only thing which seemed to outnumber these amusing little creatures were swarms



On July 25, Lee noted that the expedition "stopped at Courthouse Rock on our road today and Mills took a picture. Engleman and myself ascended the bluff—it is 300 feet high—formed by sandstone—very steep with several names cut on top, but bears a very slight resemblance to a Court House."

In mid-August, the group reached Independence Rock and Devil's Gate. Lee found the second landmark to be "merely an opening in the mountains through which the Sweetwater [River] passes." Nevertheless, he kept the three pictures of this formation which the photographer took from various distances.



of mosquitoes. These pests caused Lee and his tent mates to burn gunpowder inside to drive them away.¹⁶

Toward the end of July, the rather passive nature of the trip was shattered. Two of the men started an argument. Finally, one attempted to strike the other with a spade. His opponent responded with lightning quick thrusts of a Bowie knife. He inflicted "three severe wounds, one being just below the apex [sic] of the heart." On July 21, the victim died. A drum head court martial found the killer guilty. The sentence was discharge from the train, some 188 miles from the nearest settlement, Fort Kearney, Nebraska.¹⁷ The man forfeited most of his belongings and with only his blankets strapped on his back, he set out on foot, hoping to reach his destination before natural or human dangers overtook him. Later, the man's kit was sold at auction.¹⁸

After the harsh realities of frontier justice, more cheering news reached the men when they chanced upon the peace commissioners returning from Salt Lake. They confirmed the settlement which avoided bloodshed with the Latter Day Saints.¹⁹ From then on, the remainder of the trip seemed less urgent. During the following weeks Lee enjoyed his work and went with Engleman and the photographer, C. C. Mills, to Court House Rock for a picture.

The next day, they spied Chimney Rock which Lee found more interesting. He maintained "it is one of the most singular works of nature I have ever seen." At twenty miles it appeared to him as "a lighthouse and you can easily imagine the broad prairie 'water.'" It consists of sandstone and is a long chimney (as it were) on top of a high and perfectly conical hill. . . .²⁰

While Lee mentioned that the photographers made views through High Bluff the day after sighting Chimney Rock, no pictures remain to record this portion of the journey. By July 30, however, the men had set the camera up again. On that day they came to Fort Laramie, a former trading post purchased for the United States Army in 1849.²¹ Lee favored the place more than Fort Kearney, perhaps because he spent one night with several of his colleagues in Mills' tent drinking "Longworth's Sparkling Catawba," a gift from one of the local officers on August 3.²²

After this brief rest, the expedition again broke camp and continued. They saw many new sites and even witnessed a victory dance of some Arapahoes at the Platte River Trading Post where these "finelooking fellows" displayed the scalp of a fallen Ute enemy. Diversions, duties and hunting forays left the band with few idle hours as they followed the Oregon Trail and passed such land-

When the party arrived at Fort Laramie, Lee found the installation "a pleasanter place than Kearny [Kearney]," perhaps because he helped empty "a few bottles of Longworth's Sparkling Catawba" there on August 3.



marks as Independence Rock, Devil's Gate, the Sweet-water and the Green River.²³

On September 2, 1858, they reached Fort Bridger in the far southwestern corner of modern Wyoming.²⁴ Jim Bridger originally selected this spot more than a decade and a half earlier to supply the last of the fur trappers and traders, as well as to provide goods for the overland pioneers who came in increasing numbers after the death of the beaver hat industry. Bridger eventually left the area in haste when Brigham Young sent out a posse of more than 100 "avenging angels" from Salt Lake to arrest the old scout for alleged infractions in his dealings with the Indians. Years later, when Johnston's army marched against the Mormons, Bridger guided them back to his former business locale.²⁵ The site had changed since his tenure, for the industrious Mormons made many improvements, including the completion of a substantial stone stockade which replaced Bridger's crude wooden facility. When news came that the U.S. Army approached, the Mormons abandoned the compound, but not before torching the buildings and whatever other material they had to leave behind, thus denying it to the oncoming enemy.

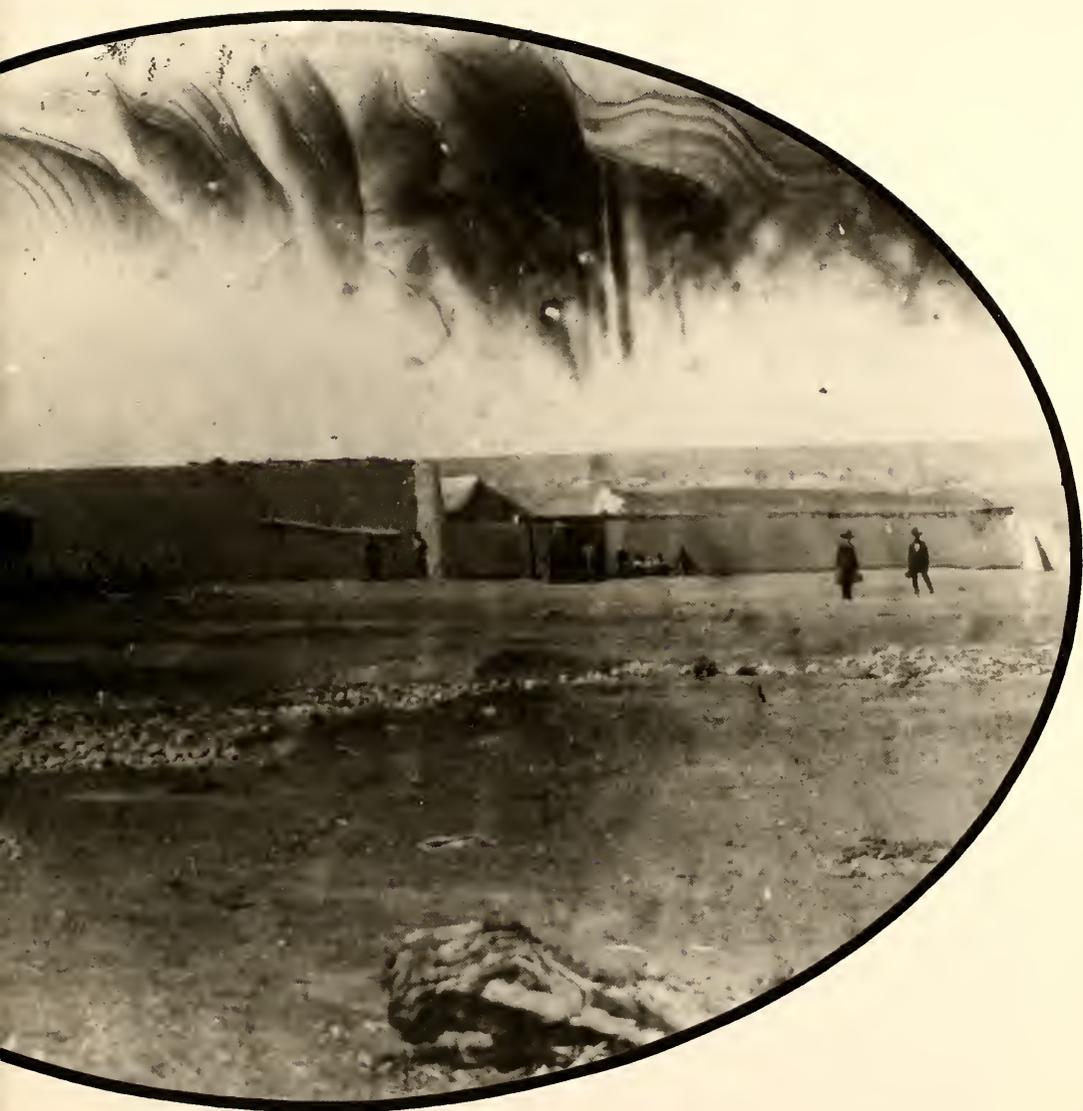
When Johnston's advance force arrived, they gathered at a nearby area which they called Camp Scott. Some detachments went back to Fort Bridger and attempted to make it habitable. All suffered in the valley, spending a miserable winter with short supplies. Eventually, they left Camp Scott. While the main body proceeded to Utah, Johnston left behind a garrison to repair and expand Fort Bridger. To maintain his lines of communication with this post, he ordered Simpson's men to survey a road to his new headquarters at Camp Floyd, Utah.²⁶ The engineer, who had raced ahead of Lee and most of the other expedition members, accomplished this task before the group reached Bridger Valley. After a brief rest there, they continued the march over the new road Simpson had surveyed.

As they entered Utah, Lee noticed evidence of the preparations the Mormons had made to repel the military units sent against them. At Echo Canyon they took advantage of the strongpoint nature provided them and enhanced the defenses with "piles of rocks in the shape of barricades" on the heights. Ditches crossed the road as did breastworks, while the bushes concealed the remains of huts for the defenders to use as shelter while not on the lookout for their federal foes.²⁷

These relics of the war that never exploded slipped by as the column neared Salt Lake. On September 13, they plodded over the roughest part of the road yet encountered. They were rewarded for their efforts by a glimpse of Salt Lake City. Lee exclaimed, "it was a beautiful sight." Anxious to obtain a closer view, Lee hastily left his things in camp and went with McCarthy into town. The place continued to impress him, especially since he discovered that "there were some fine looking women in the city."²⁸

The following day brought the entire force into the community, "with colors flying and the band playing





Lee spent a considerable part of the winter of 1858 at Fort Bridger working with the road survey between that former trading post and Salt Lake. The stone stockade was erected by the Mormons after they replaced Jim Bridger and his more primitive wooden outpost. The U.S. Army used the facility for many years until they demolished it to make way for a new barracks late in the Victorian era.

which created quite a sensation." After the grand entrance, Lee again wandered about and concluded that "there are several fine stores here and a prison" with only a handful of Indians as inmates. Two or three gambling houses also existed, "but they are frequented only by Gentiles," Lee maintained. That night, a Mormon visited their camp and a friendly conversation followed. In general, the party enjoyed good relations with the local population despite the fact the two sides had recently been ready to fight each other.²⁹

While the people were civil, Lee did not like the dust which covered the countryside. Yet, life in the territory was much improved over that on the trail. When Lee and the others reached Simpson at Camp Floyd on September 15, they not only saw a circus performance, but also they took in a presentation at the post theater. The following evening Lee partook of an excellent dinner at one of the officer's quarters and met General Johnston at last.³⁰

After these exchanges, Lee headed back to Fort Bridger where he was to perform a number of duties, including some survey work. He managed to accept some dinner invitations from the post commander and his wife in addition to other social events, but Lee mostly concentrated on his assignments.³¹

Winter set in just as Lee and his crew concluded their efforts. At the end of November they mounted, having broken camp, and started back to Camp Floyd. Sub-zero

temperatures, wind, snow and storms slowed their movement. Lee and several others sustained frostbite. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that some of the government property had to be abandoned, "with the exception of the ambulance with ten mules attached to it." Lee went on, leaving McCarthy and two wagons with several of the other men behind. On December 18, his contingent linked up with a rescue party sent out by Johnston. Lee directed them to McCarthy. He then brought his weary comrades into Camp Floyd the next day. Here, quarters awaited them. The comforts were most welcome.³²

During the holiday Lee revived, obtained a new hat and some boots and watched another theatrical offering. A grand review and the drumming out of a thief likewise caught his eye in the days just after Christmas. New Years brought a round of visiting and the arrival of McCarthy and his party. With the exception of a horse race, where "bets ran high," and the arrival of some Ute Indians into Camp Floyd, Lee found little to say in his journal for the remainder of the winter.³³

The approach of spring unlimbered his pen once more. On April 20, 1859, Lee again visited Salt Lake City where he "met a great many Mormons emigrating north." He "noticed in almost every wagon a man with at least two wives and lots of children." His jaunt about town also brought him into contact with the territorial governor, Alfred Cummings, and Brigham Young's brother-in-law.³⁴



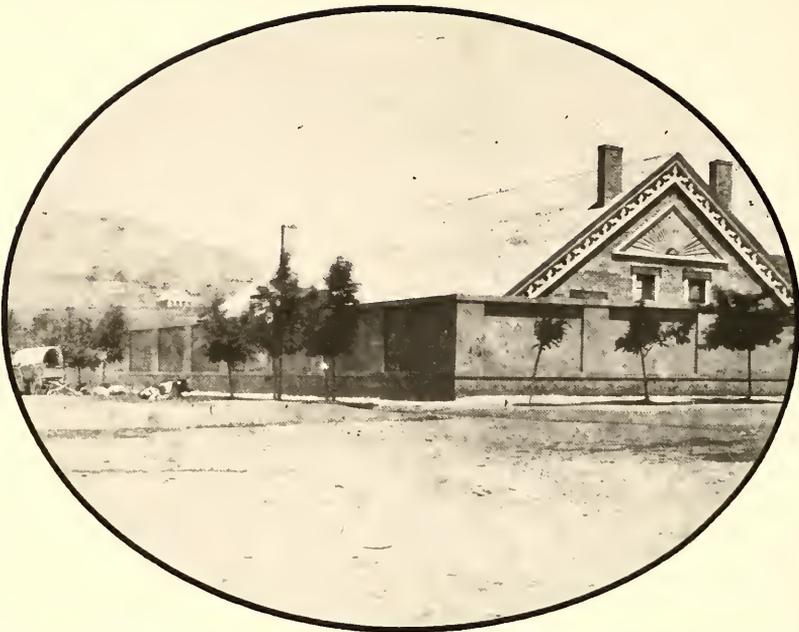
Lee casually mentioned that on January 20, 1859, "a party of 6 Ute Indians visited . . . and the quartermaster provided them with a Sibley tent [the teepee shaped shelter in-the background] and provisions." The central figure in this portrait is "Arapene (Sinnearoach) the head chief" of the Utes, and "Luke the interpreter" was another member of the tribal delegation.



Lieutenant Smith, destined to die as a Union officer in the Civil War, works with Lee and McCarthy to make solar observations at Camp Floyd late in 1858.



Salt Lake City greeted the weary column when it arrived on September 13, 1858. Lee seemed particularly interested in "Brigham Young's Harem—a house (surrounded by a high wall) with 60 windows each window lighted a room with a wife in it. On the outside was a porch with a lion carved in granite." The stately structure can still be visited today.



The Tabernacle was another prominent feature of early Salt Lake. Lee described the community as having many unburnt brick homes, "several fine stores," a prison and two or three gambling houses which were "frequented only by Gentiles." He also took note of "some fine looking women" while passing through town for the first time.

Lee made these rounds with John Reese, the founder of Genoa, the first settlement in Nevada.³⁵ This trail blazer was hired to guide Simpson's group on their next, and most important assignment, the exploration of a direct route to northern California. Before setting out, Lee completed some last minute shopping. His souvenirs consisted of a pair of moccasins to send home, two copies of the *Book of Mormon* and a daguerreotype portrait of Brigham Young made from the original taken the previous July. With purchases in hand, he soon retraced his steps to Camp Floyd.³⁶

Final preparation lasted but a few days. By May 3, Simpson gave the order to his men and their military escort to begin their historic foray. During the next several months, the 64 member expedition crossed desert and mountain, reaching Genoa, a small settlement at the base of the Sierra Nevadas on June 13. Here, Simpson left his tired command, then caught the stage to Placerville. Once in California, he made his way to San Francisco where he reported his progress to his superiors. Toward the end of the month he rejoined his men, setting out for the return to Camp Floyd on July 24.³⁷ Lee's diary essentially mirrors Simpson's report during this phase of the story.³⁸ What neither man's account records is the importance of this accomplishment. Within days of the party's return in early August to Camp Floyd, pioneers repeated the route Simpson's party blazed. Their efforts cut off some 250 miles to San Francisco, thereby reducing the journey by an average of two weeks through very rugged terrain.

Emigrant traffic flowed over the trail on a regular basis thereafter. The Pony Express also selected his northern route as its course through this region. The telegraph lines followed suit. In modern times, U.S. Highway 50 continues to run along Simpson's road for most of its length through the Great Basin.³⁹

When Lee's train pulled into Washington, D.C. on October 25, 1859, he must have returned with a sense of satisfaction.⁴⁰ His overland odyssey ranks as one of the most significant chapters in the opening of a vital region. While the major credit for this feat belongs to Simpson, Lee's part, and that of his companions, deserves to be recorded along with the other explorers who helped build a nation.

JOHN P. LANGELLIER, Ph.D., former Head of the Wyoming State Museum, is now Senior Research Historian and Head of the Library at the Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum in Los Angeles. His most recent book, *The Drums Would Roll: U.S. Army Bands on the Frontier, 1866-1900*, is the first in a series printed by Arms and Armour Press of London.

1. For details on this subject consult William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).
2. Francis B. Heitman, comp., *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 888, and *Report of the Explorations Across the Great Basin in 1859* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1983 reprint), pp. 6a-6b.
3. Harold D. Langley, ed., *To Utah with the Dragoons and Glimpses of Life in Arizona and California 1858-1859* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1974), pp. 1-16 provide a useful overview of the complex activities related to the Utah Expedition. Also see Leroy R. and Ann W. Hafen, eds., *The Utah Expedition, 1857-1858* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1958).
4. *Report of the Explorations.*
5. William Lee, "A Copy of My Notes Taken While on a Journey Across the Plains from Washington, to Genoa, Carson Valley Utah. From April 11th 1858 to Oct. 25th 1859" (unpublished MSS, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Lee-Palfrey Family Collection, Box 4). Hereafter referred to as "Lee Diary" with dates of entry.
6. Some suggestions about this influential man's thoughts on westward expansion can be found in Thomas Hart Benton, *Thirty Year's View*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Greenwood Press, 1968).
7. "Lee Diary," April 14-April 17, 1858. For a basic account of Fort Leavenworth's early years read Elvid Hunt and Walter E. Lorence, *History of Fort Leavenworth, 1827-1837* (Fort Leavenworth: Command and General Staff College, 1937).
8. "Lee Diary," April 18-April 21, 1858.
9. Joseph Lee Kirby Smith, a New Yorker, graduated from West Point in 1857, receiving a commission as a second lieutenant of Topographical Engineers. During the Civil War, he became the commander of the 3rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He died in October, 1862, from wounds received at the Battle of Corinth, Mississippi. Heitman, *Historical Register*, p. 901.
10. "Lee Diary," April 22, 1858.
11. *Ibid.*, May 9, 1858.
12. *Ibid.*, May 10-June 2, 1858.
13. Examples of Engleman's work can be found in *Report of Explorations*, pp. 169-207, 247-336, 435-447.
14. "Lee Diary," June 12 and June 22, 1858.
15. *Ibid.*, July 4, 1858.
16. *Ibid.*, July 6-7, 1858.
17. Established in 1848 on the right bank of the Platte River near present-day Kearney, Nebraska, the post served as one of the original guardians of the Oregon Trail. It continued in use until 1871. D. Ray Wilson, *Fort Kearney on the Platte* (Dundee, Illinois: Crossroads Communications, 1980). The "Lee Diary" entry for June 18, 1858, described it as "a mean place-4 wooden houses and a few mud huts for the garrison."
18. "Lee Diary," July 2-21, 1858.
19. *Ibid.*, July 23, 1858.
20. *Ibid.*, July 25, 1858.
21. A former fur trade site, Fort Laramie came into the hands of the U.S. Army in 1849. Many fine histories treat various aspects of this post's past. Perhaps the best known account continues to be Leroy R. Hafen and Francis Marion Young, *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West 1834-1890* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).
22. "Lee Diary," July 30 and August 3, 1858.
23. *Ibid.*, August 16-31, 1858. Aubrey L. Haines, *Historic Sites Along the Oregon Trail* (Gerald, Missouri: The Patrice Press, 1981), pp. 197-269 provide a summary of the route followed by the Simpson Expedition as it went along the Oregon Trail during this period.
24. R. S. Ellison, *Fort Bridger: A Brief History* (Cheyenne: Wyoming State Archives, Museums and Historical Department, 1981), details the history of this one-time trading post that became a U.S. military installation from 1858 through 1890.
25. Two biographies discuss this colorful character. They are: J. Cecil Alter, *Jim Bridger* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982); and Stanley Vestal, *Jim Bridger Mountain Man* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970).
26. First called Camp Floyd in honor of the Secretary of War, John Floyd, when founded in 1858, the post was renamed Fort Crittenden at the outbreak of the Civil War. The founding of Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City, in 1862, led to the abandonment of the earlier post which was located at Provo, Utah. Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 166.
27. "Lee Diary," September 10, 1858.
28. *Ibid.*, September 13, 1858.
29. *Ibid.*, September 14, 1858.
30. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1858. For a useful biography of this interesting military figure obtain Charles P. Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston, Soldier of Three Republics* (Austin: University of Texas, 1964).
31. "Lee Diary," September 29-October 30, 1858.
32. *Ibid.*, November 28-December 19, 1858.
33. *Ibid.*, December 21, 1858-March 20, 1859.
34. *Ibid.*, April 20, 1858.
35. "In the spring of 1851 Reese and his companions loaded ten wagons with flour, bacon, butter, eggs and many other articles, and set out for Carson Valley." They arrived and purchased Mormon Station, founded in 1849, and renamed Genoa in 1855. This trading outpost became the first permanent settlement in Nevada, and Reese enjoyed a fairly active role in early Nevada political history. Effie Mona Mack and Byrd Wall Sawyer, *Our State: Nevada* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1956), pp. 57, 171.
36. "Lee Diary," April 21, 1859.
37. *Ibid.*, May 3-July 24, 1859.
38. "Lee Diary" for the months of May and June closely parallel segments of Simpson's *Report of Explorations* for the same period.
39. *Report of Explorations*, p. 6c.
40. "Lee Diary," October 25, 1859.

ANNAL'S REVIEWS

Seeds-Ke-Dee Reflections. Published by the Sublette County Artist's Guild.
Printed by Modern Printing, Laramie, 1985. 393 pp. Illustrated.

The Crow Indians called it Seeds-Ke-Dee Agie or Prairie Hen River. Today, we know it as the Green River. It is a thread that winds through the tapestry of one of Wyoming's most important ranching regions. And it ties together the lives and experiences of the area's residents.

Like people in other areas of Wyoming, the people of the Green River Valley are often isolated from each other by distance and weather. So they cherish the opportunities they have to get together and share stories of their experiences, their good times and their difficulties. The Sublette County Artist's Guild has long served a useful function in gathering some of those stories and publishing them. *Seeds-Ke-Dee Reflections* is the third such publication from that organization and it is served up with a liberal sprinkling of local artwork and poetry.

In the introduction, the guild's Book Committee says the purpose of the book is to preserve a part of the history of the Green River Valley. And, the committee writes, the stories have been "written as life has been lived here, honestly, and simply."

And so it is. You will find no scholarly treatises here, no footnotes, no bibliographies. None are needed. What you will find is a cornucopia of short historical sketches. Most are first-hand accounts written by the people who were participants in the events described, and family histories written by children and grandchildren of the people who settled the valley. Some of the stories tell of significant events. Others tell of everyday events—the things that will not make the history books of the future. And it is these stories which give us a valuable look at life as it was lived.

As with most books of this type there are high points and lows. Among the best stories are "The Ferry Boat and Footbridge," by Caryn Murdock Bing, "His Last Tune," by Madge McHugh Funk, "The Changing Face of Hay-ing," by Pearl Budd Spencer, "The Green River Bar—Daniel, Wyoming," by Pat Walker and "Community Halls Areas Community Halls Do," by Wilda Springman. Also worthy of note are "Electric Power in Pinedale," by Barbara Wise, "Vint Faler—My Father, My Friend, My Pal," by Faren Faler, "Pay Dirt for the Preacher or Our Favorite

Poker Game," by Helen Sargent and "A Study in Contrast," by Peggy Kvenild.

Those who enjoy homespun poetry will find a feast of material here as the historical sketches are interspersed with a wide variety of verse. As with most books of local history, this one would be more useful had an index been included.

LOREN JOST

The reviewer is first vice-president of the Wyoming State Historical Society and Public Information Officer, Central Wyoming College, Riverton.

Letters from Honeyhill: A Woman's View of Homesteading 1914-1931. By Cecilia Hannel Hendricks. Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1986. Introduction. Illustrations. Postscript. Index. 704 pp. \$22.95 cloth.

In December, 1913, Cecilia Hannel, a professor at Indiana University, married John Hendricks, a seriously wounded veteran of the Spanish American War who turned to homesteading in Wyoming in an effort to recover his health. To her family and close circle of university friends, the marriage and the move to Wyoming in January, 1914, must have seemed dubious.

But for Cecilia Hannel Hendricks, the marriage and the homesteading experience proved catalysts to her artistic temperament. In John she found more than a husband, she found a soul mate with whom she could share "ideas and ideals"; a partner whose love, courage, sympathy and general "live-ability-with" fostered her artistic growth.

The homesteading experience on Honeyhill Farm in the Shoshone Valley near Powell, where she and John kept bees and produced honey provided the raw information for meticulously detailed—usually typed—letters to her parents and sisters back home in Indiana. The almost daily letters home provided her family with richly catholic vignettes of homesteading. There are details on raising bees, marketing honey, canning, butchering, churning butter, baking bread, irrigating, gardening, cooking, making improvements and all the operations involved in converting "raw desert to full bloom."

Letters from Honeyhill is much more than a factual eyewitness account of homesteading. It chronicles technological developments—automobiles, airplanes, radios, picture shows, "talkies," telephones, victrolas and

electricity—with a freshness and a sense of the marvelous. It reminds us of important roles played by the railroads and mail order catalogs in connecting Wyoming's rural population with the outside world. It provides us with patriotic and sometimes nativist glimpses of life on the home front during World War I.

The letters also serve as reminder that for much of Wyoming the 1920s was the start of the Great Depression. They powerfully convey the struggle against forces—unpredictable prices, growing competition, rising freight rates, taxes, bad investments and weather—which spelled ruin for thousands of homesteaders. And they portray the heroic efforts of families “up against it,” fighting to preserve their places. One cannot read the letters without feeling the numerous parallels between the Great Depression and the agricultural crisis of the 1980s. But despite mounting sense of financial crisis in the volume, there is a counterbalancing optimism, part of which is rooted in values—self-reliance, hard work, frugality and faith—the Hendricks and other homesteaders lived by.

Yet another source of their optimism was a community spirit reflected in numerous activities and organizations: charivari, gargantuan dinners, booster clubs, ladies aid groups, churches, good roads organizations, chautauqua, fairs, carnivals, circuses, oyster feeds, the Red Cross and so forth. Neighbors helping neighbors is a recurrent theme throughout the volume.

Mrs. Hendricks' portraits of rural and small town life are not romanticized, but sharply drawn and realistic statements covering a range of emotions: amusement, frustration and occasional disbelief. We share her amusement over paper wads in church, party line gossips and hired hands who always show off with a car. We catch her frustration with long-winded ministers and prudish mentalities who label O'Henry a “nasty” author. And we smile at her disbelief and frustration with wives who make a crusade of rescuing spinsters from the stigma of remaining single.

At the heart of *Letters from Honeywell* is the unmistakable presence of the author doing what she did best: working and sacrificing for her family and practicing her craft—writing. And that craft reflects her many-sided interests—women's issues, teaching, literature, music, politics, farming, community, family and university life.

When growing financial pressures forced Mrs. Hendricks to return to Indiana University in 1931, the long separations from John intensified their love. Their correspondence reflects a deeply sacrificial love and is poignantly moving. By 1936, John's health had failed and Cecilia returned to Billings, Montana, where he was hospitalized. Following his death in December, 1936, Cecilia took him back to Indiana for burial, retracing the same route they had taken on their honeymoon.

The editorial work of the Hendrick's daughter, Cecilia Hendricks Wahl, is an admirable contribution to the *Letters*. Her introduction, postscript and photos provide a valuable focus.

Letters from Honeyhill rightfully deserves a place alongside Elinore Pruitt Stewart's classic: *Letters of a Woman Homesteader*.

ROBERT CAMPBELL

The reviewer is an Associate Professor, University School, University of Wyoming.

New Courses for the Colorado River: Major Issues for the Next Century. Edited by Gary D. Weatherford and F. Lee Brown. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986. 253 pp. \$35 cloth. \$17.50 paper.

This book is the uneven result of collective scholarship. The work of sixteen different authors is based on the proceedings of the Colorado River Working Symposium held at Santa Fe, New Mexico, May, 1983. Weatherford and Brown have compiled a useful history of the Colorado River Compact in particular and the management and political manipulation of western water resources in general. It does not carry the profound impact of Donald Worster's *Rivers of Empire* (1986), but the editors have done us a service by displaying the range of interests in western water.

The separate articles are given scope by Arizona's Governor Bruce Babbitt as he briefly lays out the nature of political ventures in water development. Roderick Nash, the indefatigable keeper of the “wilderness mind” in America, gives evidence that he is now in danger of becoming irrelevant. A prestigious scholar cannot afford to be out of step with political realities and to plead simply, that “development has gone far enough.” As much as we may search for “wilderness values” and agree with the need to “transcend utilitarianism,” we need also to realize that the changes civilization brings to the natural landscape are also part of the inevitable result of our very human existence.

At the same time, B. Delworth Gardner's reflexive commitment to a “free market economy” nears self-caricature. He is as surprised as though it were a fresh revelation that “political and legal criteria would allocate water on the basis of constitutional right” rather than on purely economic criteria. He appears actually to be unaware, if not insensitive, that these very acts of political influence are the American method of creating a democratic process.

As we have come to expect, it is Norris Hundley who provides the necessary historical sweep of western water law. He makes the case for a “West against itself.” It is the rivalry, ambitions and fears of the states, a cautious, inconsistent Supreme Court, and the political calculations of Congress which manifest the political contest called federalism.

Between the idealists focusing on the need for an “ethic of (human) responsibility” in natural development and the undisturbed seeing only an urgency for the “economic good,” we learn a good deal of history in this useful volume.

We are given renewed insight into the vitality of federalism. Indeed, the courts, Congress and the states have

been overly deferential to the custom of *laissez-faire*. If there is any unifying theme to these disparate essays, it is a call for new federal-interstate relations in terms of water development.

We see that the recent rulings of the Supreme Court declaring water to be an article of interstate commerce actually make fiction out of a state's (e.g. Wyoming's) claim to "ownership" of water. The concerns of the states of the Colorado River Basin, such as Wyoming, are intrinsically involved in foreign affairs; their concern cannot only be with domestic consumption.

Interstate water compacts do not bind the Indian tribes; Indians' water rights exist whether or not they actually use the water. Reservation "rights" are superior to later non-Indian rights. Indian water claims, via the Winters Doctrine, represent an enormous collection of possible preemptive claims.

While the particular works of Worster, Hundley or Gates may be more penetrating, there are not many recent volumes more useful than this in reflecting policies and attitudes toward western water.

ROY JORDAN

The reviewer is Associate Professor of History, Northwest Community College, Powell, Wyoming.

The Native Home of Hope: People and the Northern Rockies. Edited by Thomas N. Bethell, Deborah E. Tuck and Michael S. Clark. Salt Lake City and Chicago: Howe Brothers, 1986. xi + 196 pp. Illustrated. \$12.50 paper.

Historians prefer the comfortable distance of several generations to provide them with historical perspective on the larger events which shape an area or a region. Journalists, on the other hand, are constantly faced with the need for front page news, and in their rush to chronicle current events they frequently report immediate facts without analyzing the larger issues involved. *The Native Home of Hope: People of the Northern Rockies* is a successful synthesis of both current events and historical perspective, and it functions admirably as a contemporary oral history of concerned citizens from Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

As the central Rockies prepared for the onslaught of mineral and energy extraction produced by inflation and the energy crisis in the 1970s, numerous governmental associations and groups formed to help rural communities cope with distinctively urban problems. Most of those groups have dissolved as boomtowns have gone bust, but one group which remains, the Northern Lights Research & Education Institute, continues to provide thoughtful commentary on current economic and environmental issues. This book is a result of that involvement, and it takes its title from Wallace Stegner's statement that "Angry as one may be at what heedless men have done and still do to a noble habitat, one cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is the native home of hope."

This book rings of promise and hope without wallowing in self-delusion. Times are tough across all segments

of the Western economy from agriculture to mining, and the bloom is definitely off the energy rose. Traditional economic mainstays and lifestyles are being threatened, and the optimistic in-migration of the 1970s has given way to retrenchment and out-migration in the 1980s. All these issues as well as commentary on water rights, higher education, agricultural debt, MX missiles and regional political action are thoughtfully addressed in *The Native Home of Hope*, which is a careful compilation of superbly edited oral histories by 25 farmers, ranchers, conservationists, politicians, businessmen, students, unemployed miners, wildlife experts, white water guides, artists, scholars and Hispanic organizers.

Interviews by labor leaders, Indian filmmakers and environmentalists also speak to the deep sense of community which abides in the small towns and ranching areas of the West. Rugged individualism must of necessity give way to concessions and compromise, and though few political conservatives are interviewed, most of the views expressed in these pages focus on the need to retain traditional family values and unexploited open space. The theme "quality of life" runs like a hidden thread through every oral history.

The volume features fine photographs by Mike McClure and a useful introduction by Montana writer William Kittredge. Dan Whipple of the Northern Lights Institute also provides a succinct "Guide to the Northern Rockies" as an informational appendix. The book's only problems are in presentation not in content. To be useful, the photographs should have been captioned with date and place. The oral histories also should have been dated. The table of contents should have clarified in a few words the context of each interview rather than simply listing the names of the interviewees. For example, to state that Tom Preuit is a beet farmer and rancher, and that Gretchen and Harry Billings edited *The People's Voice* would have increased the book's value as a reference work. As it is, with edited interviews in lieu of thematic chapters, and without an index, finding subject references can be unnecessarily time consuming.

The Native Home of Hope: People and the Northern Rockies is a highly successful book in a very readable format which will stand as a major contribution to understanding the 20th century West in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. The precise oral histories clarify that however rural and remote, international economics reach to the heart of every Western town dependent on dollars from agriculture, energy or tourism. The reader comes away with a much better understanding of how Westerners must grapple with the vagaries of the marketplace while retaining their own communities and sense of rootedness.

ANDREW GULLIFORD

The reviewer is Director of the Western New Mexico University Museum in Silver City.

The well-known western historian and historian of the American West, Robert G. Athearn, presents a convincing account as to how and why the mythic West has survived in a highly technical, industrial and urbanized American society of the 20th century. For Athearn, the legendary traditions inherited from this country's last frontier, located in the plains and Rockies region of the United States, are now so firmly entrenched in the American mind that they have become an integral part of our national identity and cultural experience. The myth has become real because our view of the past, be it based in legend or reality, influences our expectations and hopes for the future.

However, Athearn proceeds well beyond rehashing or redefining the role of myth in the American West. He, instead, examines the on-going interrelationships between the romantic legacies of the plains and Rockies frontier (Old West) and the events and circumstances of the 20th century.

Despite the interpretive nature of *The Mythic West*, Athearn is able to avoid becoming overly academic for a general audience while, at the same time, presenting enough substance to challenge the interests of those with more scholarly inclinations. Rather than plaguing the reader with innumerable details and bits of data, the author offers insight and anecdotal passages which spark a degree of introspection and even wonderment.

This clearly is a book full of messages about serious issues confronting a unique region of this country. Within the context of exploring the mythic West in modern times, the author examines a variety of subjects including: psychological uncertainty and economic depression in the West during the 1920s and 1930s; tourism's increasing role in the western economy; the dilemma of colonialism; continued perpetuation of the Old West through fictionalized accounts; and controversy over the appropriate use of public lands.

Athearn's selection of themes is apropos for the 1980s when states as Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and the western segments of other Great Plains states from North Dakota to Texas, exist in a cultural environment partially created by the interaction of modernizing forces with those values, behaviors and traditions associated with the Old West.

Athearn devotes the beginning chapters of his book to describing the affects of rapid change on the West of the Rockies and Great Plains. Rather quickly the Old West passed from the scene as the forces of industrialization swept over the country near the turn of the century. In the West, the livestock industry with its enduring connection to the frontier and the frontier hero-type, the cowboy, increasingly found itself sharing the land with farmers who formed communities, plowed up the land at an alarming rate and finally succumbed to industrial agriculture. These

20th century westerners, though still hundreds of miles from any modern, urban center, eagerly sought the benefits of technical progress in the form of paved streets, motion picture houses, automobiles, radios and a wealth of merchandise from mail-order houses.

One spin-off of this maturing process in the West is what Athearn calls the "nervous years." As the nation was finding a sense of identity in the values of the Old West, westerners were busy searching for respectability and economic stability. Their nervousness stemmed from sweeping social changes impacting the West during the early 20th century and from a national expectation that the West should continue to be the repository of the country's raw and dynamic past at a time when the West was more interested in shaking off the turbulence of its frontier heritage.

If the reader is looking for a polemic on the West as being the last bastion of genuine Americanism, Athearn will prove disappointing since he quickly exposes the standard myths surrounding the western traits of rugged individualism, independent mindedness, tolerance, patriotism and progressiveness. Throughout the book, Athearn is more concerned about hard realities and paradoxes facing the West and refrains from getting sidetracked into intellectualizing the mythic theme. One example of this approach is his treatment of the mythic West during the depression of the 1930s.

The Great Depression did more than devastate the West economically, it also threatened the popular image of a region. Rather than being self-sustaining the fragile western economy was highly dependent on natural forces, outside investment and, now with the New Deal, the largesse of the federal government. After adequately describing the negative impact the depression had on the West, Athearn presents a dilemma confronting westerners—the reality of dependency versus the mind set and image of championing independence and individualism. Westerners, such as latter day beef barons, quickly criticized the "foreign power on the banks of the Potomac" and eastern financial interests for infringing upon their domain. Athearn, however, accurately recognizes that the economic security of the West rests with outside influences, be it the federal government, oil companies or tourists. The depression of the 1930s in combination with the dust bowl severely called into question certain mythic qualities of the West.

Economic colonialism is not entirely a pejorative phenomenon for Athearn, because in his view westerners were not always the victims of outside forces but often learned to play the game as in the case of tourism. Many western communities with their staged gunfights, rodeos and wild west depictions learned the value of hawking nostalgia despite their resentment of the "dudes" who showed up to grab a part of the mythic West within the content of its majestic landscape. The Irma, Cody, Wyoming's, \$80,000 luxury hotel, which opened in 1902, and

the more than 100 dude ranches in Wyoming alone were designed to capture the tourist dollar. The author recognizes that during most of the 20th century, the mythic West has been used as a means for turning a buck.

For those who were unable to see the "real" thing firsthand, the fictional West, as presented through novels, movies and television, offered them the cowboy, a hero type possessing simple tastes, a strong character, rugged qualities, righteous wrath and impeccable survival skills. Author Owen Wister, in his book *The Virginian* (1902), first captured the essence of what would become the archetypical American hero, the cowboy. Despite brief periods of declining audience or reader interest, the western movie, television show and novel persisted, and in Athearn's opinion have made the mythic West such an integral part of American folklore that we now need it as a staple part of our cultural diet.

While recognizing the mythic West's national appeal and its usefulness as a binding force and element in the collective experience of Americans, Athearn resists the temptation to apply mythic frontier qualities to the 20th century residents of this region. For example, he views westerners as being more oriented towards conservatism and provincialism than to experimentation and broad-mindedness. Trying to fit Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier traits into the West and westerners of the 20th century is anachronistic and distorts reality, but this distortion or exaggeration, it appears, has become vital to perpetuating the mystic West. A specific contribution of the author is his ability to explain the myth and how it functions without losing sight of actual historical and behavioral patterns.

One chapter in the book was not written by Athearn, who died in 1983, three years before this book was published. An associate of Athearn, Elliott West, and other friends pulled the book together into final form with one chapter, "The Wilderness Evangelists," being written by West, who drew extensively from Athearn's notes. Presented in this chapter is an overview of a struggle between conservationists and preservationists over how public

lands of the West either should or should not be used. The wilderness evangelists or preservationists favor maintaining nature in as a pure a form as possible, which necessitates severely restricting human use of pristine regions of the West. They are outspokenly opposed to the increased economic and recreational exploitation of the West's natural wonders. For them, the preservation of these natural assets is essential to sustaining the spirit of the United States and is, therefore, symbolic of the promise of the country's future.

Others, labeled as conservationists, are more inclined towards wise usage of the land, be it for livestock grazing, reservoir development, mining, timbering or tourism. There has emerged what the author calls the dilemma of purity or growth.

After tracing the philosophies and impact of key conservationists and preservationists, the author concludes the chapter by recognizing how even the most diehard proponents of multiple use (of land) have been influenced by the wilderness evangelists. Though the reader might disagree with Athearn's or West's slant on the issue of preservation versus conservation, one must recognize how well the chapter ties this issue in with the historical and symbolic West of the 20th century.

Throughout *The Mythic West*, Athearn skillfully sifts through the complexities of modern developments in the West and clearly explains how societal changes moulded people's perceptions about the land, themselves and the frontier legacy. In addition to being a highly respected scholar, Athearn also is a keen observer of his western environment. Through *The Mythic West*, he has left us with a lively, thought provoking account of how myth and reality have become so intertwined that a knowledge of both are required to provide us with a basis for understanding the modern West.

JIM JOHNS

The reviewer is Social Science Division Director, Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

I would like to comment on Mark Junge's review of my exhibition catalog, "Historic Ranches of Wyoming," which appeared in the Spring, 1987, issue of *Annals of Wyoming*. I particularly wish to rebut the reviewer's comments with regard to: the photography; the alleged "errors"; and the content, style and organization of the exhibition and captions.

First, the photographs. Mr. Junge argues that 35mm photography does not provide the clarity and perspective correction available with 4x5 and larger format cameras, but, in fact, 35mm cameras with perspective corrective lenses are the format most often used in surveys of historical architecture. The 35mm format provides advantages that larger cameras do not. For example, the smaller format camera equipment better captures the mood and activities on a ranch site for documentary purposes when nothing is staged. In addition, representatives of the Wyoming Council for the Humanities, the University of Wyoming, the Nicolaysen Art Museum and the University of Nebraska Press, as well as Mr. Junge, all reviewed my work prior to beginning this project and no one criticized or questioned the 35mm format. The photographs stand on their own merit. I hope that anyone who wishes to truly judge the quality of my work will view the original photographs (at the American Heritage Center) and not simply the reproductions which appear in the catalog.

Second, the alleged "errors." Mr. Junge suggests that not enough information is included in the captions to give the reader an understanding of the ranches and the people associated with them. But in most instances they are mentioned and the catalog contains a variety of facts, colorful stories, and humanizing detail. I believe this pioneering work provides the viewer/reader with a sense of the subject, the questions scholars should ask when studying material culture, and leads for future investigation. The catalog answers the questions raised by the Larson and Roripaugh essays, tells us what Wyoming ranches look like and what is important about these places. Finally, Mr. Junge takes words or phrases out of context and then charges that what I say is not true. To this, I can only say that I did my research and I have sources for the statements he questions.

And finally, the content, style and organization. The content is based on a prodigious amount of research covering twenty-eight months, fourteen of which were spent in the field. I researched thousands of sources including books, oral interviews, maps, etc. I know more Wyoming history and geography than 75% of the state's residents. I read it, lived it, walked

it. I hunted through cemeteries, hauled my truck out of mudholes and found remote abandoned sites by horseback and hiking. Ask the hundreds of people I have called and gone to see how thorough my research is.

This is not a "photo essay" (those appear in magazines); it is an exhibition and exhibitions are unique. Each exhibition has its own format and design. As exhibition catalogs go, this one is pretty good. It promotes the beauties of Wyoming and the ranch culture, the main purpose of the project.

The content and style of the captions are cohesive, sensitive, careful combinations of information from many kinds of sources, including direct observations. They give the humorous side of the story and my audience keeps reading and looking.

If Mr. Junge did not see the organization in this book he wasn't paying attention. The photographs cover from early to late buildings in the major sections (time). The buildings of different kinds of materials are grouped—stone, log, frame. The kinds of building are grouped—houses, other dwellings, barns, other work buildings. The kinds of buildings for sheep ranching are together. The guest ranches are at the end, then come the graveyards—of people and machinery. It took thirty years of experience designing exhibitions to be able to coordinate the information and visual images from hundreds of places in sixteen counties in a way that makes seeing the show a pleasure, not a lesson. All of the people I have heard from who have seen the exhibition—people of all ages, professions and levels of society seem to understand it and be intrigued by it.

Finally, I resent Mr. Junge's remark about my place of birth and residence, New York City. This is the worst kind of chauvinism, an attitude Wyoming should avoid like the plague as it seeks to attract tourists and international business enterprises into the state.

Anyone who wishes is welcome to improve, expand upon, or write poetry about the beginning I made with "Historic Ranches of Wyoming." I developed and carried out the project in hopes someone would. For the past several months I have been trying to raise the money to provide my archive of 11,000 photographs—with the survey forms, maps, interviews and documentation—to a state institution. Most of the people in Wyoming have been extremely helpful, generous and wonderful to me, particularly the ranchers. Thank you, Wyoming—I will never forget you.

JUDITH SANDOVAL

(This letter was shortened.)

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