

# THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

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## An Army Wife Comes West

LETTERS OF CATHARINE WEVER COLLINS  
(1863-1864)

In the late autumn of 1863, Catharine Wever Collins left "Dogwood Knob,"<sup>1</sup> her beautiful home in Hillsboro, Ohio, to visit her husband, Colonel William O. Collins<sup>2</sup> then commanding the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry at Fort Laramie, and her son, Caspar W. Collins, who was doing clerical duty at various outposts west of the fort along the old Oregon Trail, in what is now central Wyoming.

Little did Mrs. Collins dream that in the not too distant future a thriving young city in Colorado Territory would bear her husband's surname—Fort Collins; and that a mountain, a stream, a fort, and a pioneer city<sup>3</sup> in Wyoming Territory would be designated "Caspar" because her then lieutenant son made the supreme sacrifice in endeavoring to rescue a beleaguered supply train.

About two years before she began her journey into the West, Mrs. Collins had waved good-bye to the Colonel and Caspar as they

<sup>1</sup> Birthplace of Caspar W. Collins, this house still stands in Hillsboro, Ohio, on Collins Avenue. It is owned by Dr. and Mrs. R. S. Rogers, Jr.—Letter from Violet Morgan, Hillsboro, Ohio, to the *Editor*.

<sup>2</sup> William Oliver Collins, born in Somers, Connecticut, in 1809, was fitted for college at the Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Massachusetts. Later he attended Amherst College, graduating in 1833. The early death of his young wife and signs that his health was failing made Collins decide to go West. He became a law student with the firm of David Starkweather, Aaron Manelno and Dwight Zaron in Hillsboro, Ohio. He later received a degree at the Cincinnati Law School and on September 9, 1835, was admitted to the bar. From 1837 to 1840 he was prosecuting attorney of Highland County. For twenty years he served the Milford-Chillicothe Turnpike Company as secretary. Ten years after he went to Ohio, the young lawyer married Catharine Wever. Their home life was ideal. In 1849, Mr. Collins was elected president of the Hillsboro and Cincinnati Railroad Company. During 1859 and 1860, while he was president of the Highland County Agricultural Society, he advised the purchase of excellent grounds. In 1861, while a member of the State Senate of Ohio, he received his appointment as colonel of volunteer cavalry. He worked very hard to recruit volunteer troops and commanded the First Independent Battalion, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, and the Eleventh Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry until he was mustered out of service in April, 1865. Upon his discharge from the army, Brigadier General Robert M. Mitchell wrote from Headquarters, Expeditionary Troops, District of Nebraska, to Major General Grenville M. Dodge as follows: "March 7, 1865. Colonel Collins is now en route to Omaha for the purpose of being mustered out, his term of service having expired. . . Colonel Collins has been in the mountain service three years. He has traversed the mountains in every direction from Laramie to South Pass for many miles and is probably as well, if not better, posted than any white man that has not made his home with the Indians. . . ." Colonel Collins was highly respected and well liked by his men. He returned to Hillsboro in 1865 and made that his home until his death on October 26, 1880. Agnes W. Spring, *Caspar Collins*, Columbia Univ. Press (N.Y. 1927), pp. 35-36, 68-69.

<sup>3</sup> The present spelling of "Casper" now used in Wyoming began through a clerical error said to have been made in the Post Office Department, Washington, D. C. The original intent was to honor Caspar W. Collins, by using his name.—The *Editor*.

rode away from Hillsboro, with volunteer troops, recruited by her husband to participate in Civil War engagements supposedly in Kentucky or farther south. Scarcely had these eager Ohio cavalrymen joined other troops at Camp Denison, Ohio, than they were sent to Missouri. Next came orders to proceed to Fort Laramie to relieve the Fourth U. S. Cavalry.

"When the word went out among the men that we were ordered to Fort Laramie," wrote one of the volunteers,<sup>4</sup> "it created quite a stir, and the query with everyone was, 'Where is Fort Laramie?' No one seemed to know. Some said it was in New Mexico, some had it in Arizona, while one of the boys said it was in the 'mountains of the moon.' It was finally settled, however, as the Captain of Company D, Van Winkle,<sup>5</sup> was an old 'Forty-niner,' who had crossed the plains from California in the summer of 1849 and knew all about it, as his party had laid over there for several days on their trip. He was out of camp when the order was made known, and upon his return told us that Fort Laramie was 650 miles west of Fort Leavenworth, Kan., on or near the North Platte in the very heart of the Sioux Indians' country. The men were badly disappointed, and swore they did not enlist to fight Indians, but Rebels. But obedience to orders is the first thing a soldier has to learn and they soon became reconciled."

Catharine Wever Collins, daughter of Colonel Caspar Wever, an eminent engineer, of Weverton, Maryland, and Jane Catharine Dunlop Wever, was a direct descendant of General James Chambers, a founder of Chambersburg, Pa. Although of Scottish and German ancestry, Catharine Wever's people had been American-born for three generations. Educated in Baltimore, she ever clung to the traditions and loves of the Southland, yet she was loyal to her adopted state, Ohio, where she settled as a bride in 1843.

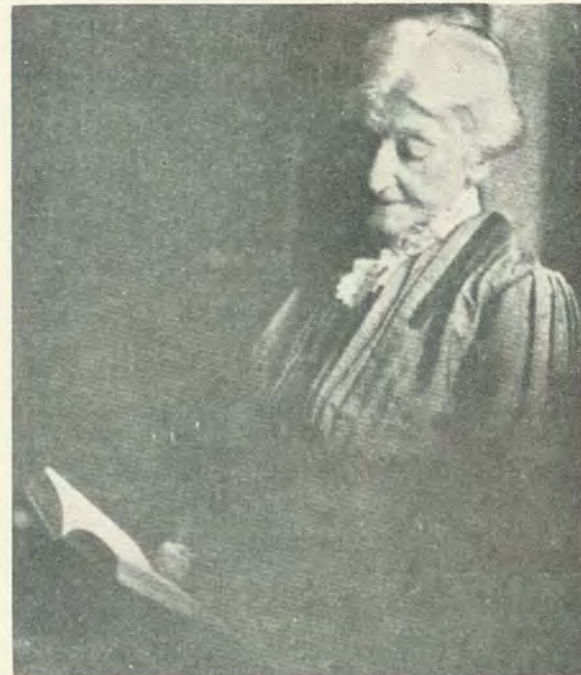
She was a skilled artist, a student of nature, and took great pride in the old-fashioned flower garden and the fruit trees which were planted in the rolling slope that stretched back towards the forest from "Dogwood Knob."

Mrs. Collins' letters written while on her western trip to eastern relatives mention the hardships of pioneer travel by train, steamboat and stagecoach. They tell of meeting outstanding pioneers and describe life at old Fort Laramie. They also detail the imminent danger of Indian attack.

<sup>4</sup>O. C. Collins, *Hillsboro (Ohio) Gazette*, June 8, 1917, p. 1, c. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Captain Peter Weldon Van Winkle of Hillsboro, Ohio, was one of the men who made the trip through the Panama in 1849. He was very proud of having carved his name on Independence Rock (on Oregon Trail) and bringing home enough gold to enable him, with a friend, to start a small store in Hillsboro.—From a Letter in Archives, University of Wyoming Library, Laramie, Wyo., written by Mrs. Fred Terrell Baum, of Marion, Indiana, wife of a grandson of Peter W. Van Winkle.

According to one letter which Mrs. Collins wrote to her daughter, Josephine, she hoped to return to Ohio in April, 1864, but evidently was detained by uncertain weather and Indian troubles. Some letters which she wrote may never have reached their destination as there are apparent gaps in the correspondence.



LARIMER COUNTY HISTORY

CATHARINE WEVER COLLINS

By the latter part of July, 1864, Colonel Collins' troopers were scattered thinly over five hundred miles of Wyoming country, with three companies on the Denver mail route between Julesburg and Fremont's Orchard in Colorado.<sup>6</sup>

On July 28, the Colonel was relieved of his Fort Laramie command and was put in charge of all posts and detachments west of Julesburg in the District of Nebraska (which included Wyoming and Colorado in so far as the westward lines of communication were concerned.)

Four days later Mrs. Collins began her homeward journey to Ohio, in an army ambulance with Brigadier General Robert B. Mitchell and an army escort. The whole western area was ablaze

<sup>6</sup>Agnes W. Spring, *Caspar Collins*, Columbia Univ. Press (New York, 1927) pp. 58-59.

with alarm over the Indian situation. When the party reached Julesburg, Colorado, on the morning of August 8, telegrams had been received there telling of the so-called "Plum Creek Massacre" between Cottonwood and Fort Kearny. Although Plum Creek station, near to the scene of the atrocities, lay on the direct route eastward, General Mitchell and his party continued on that route. They went through safely.

Sixteen days after leaving Fort Laramie, Mrs. Collins arrived in St. Joseph, Missouri,—on the very day—August 20—that Colonel Collins far away in the Rockies, issued Special Order No. 1, which changed the location of Camp Collins from the vicinity of La Porte to the present site of Fort Collins, Colorado.

Only two<sup>7</sup> of the following letters, written by Mrs. Collins on her western trip, have ever been published. Discovered in an attic box by Mrs. J. L. Benedict of Muncie, Indiana, a niece of Mrs. Collins, the letters were sent to me several years ago.—Agnes Wright Spring, *Editor*.

LETTERS OF CATHARINE W. COLLINS

St. Louis, Nov. 4th, 1863  
Wednesday Night

Dear Josie,<sup>8</sup>

I left Cint.<sup>9</sup> in the Express train last evening and arrived here about 11 A.M. and to my great disappointment found I could not leave until tomorrow at 4 in the morning. The Clerk of the House told me I could not go before, but to be quite sure I went into the ticket office and enquired. Trains leave in the afternoon, but do not go farther than Hudson or Macon City. So to-night I hope to sleep well and be fresh for to-morrow morning. I shall not stop at St. Joseph, but go on to Atchison [Kan.], whence the Overland leaves at 7 in the morning.

Tell Dr. Sams<sup>10</sup> it was a source of constant pleasure to me while crossing the prairies of Illinois that we did not live there, and that I did not see a single rose in bloom or out until I saw "*The White Rose*," a fine boat lying at the wharf of this stirring city.

Fifty miles before we reached here a young man came on board with transfer tickets, took my check enquired where I wished to go, told me to take omnibus No. 3, so that when the cars arrived at the Depot I just stepped into No. 3 and with a number of other passengers, to whom he had been equally polite, were driven into the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 154-157.

<sup>8</sup> Josephine Collins, fifteen-year-old daughter of Colonel and Mrs. William O. Collins.

<sup>9</sup> Cincinnati, Ohio.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Carlton C. Sams, brother-in-law of Mrs. Collins. Husband of her sister, Charlotte. The Sams' home was called, "The Hamlet."

ferry-boat. There were 4 omnibusses and 1 express wagon on the boat at the same time. I did wish you and Fannie<sup>11</sup> were with me when I crossed the grand Mississippi. I could hardly repress my admiration when I caught sight of the magnificent river. Your uncle would hardly believe it but I did not speak a word from three in the morning until a little while before we came to the river when I addressed two questions to burly dutch looking man I had accommodated with a seat by lifting my basket and shawls when an impolite pair dispossessed him of his while he was out Squeers'-like stretching his legs. Of some trees I saw covered with brilliant coral colored berries I asked of him the name to which query he replied in the most oracular manner "red haws" which I internally disbelieved. By the way those dismal brown prairies would kill me to live upon. I saw some beautiful wheat fields but saw no *green* grass until we began the descent towards the river. The streets here are very narrow and most exceedingly dirty. The brilliantly dressed ladies which throng them disdain to cast their thoughts upon earthly things and allow their rich dresses to carry the mud from one side to the other, without having any apparent effect upon the streets but to the manifest injury of their trains. Hoops are worn very, very small and the dresses very, very long.

I sent my card to Mr. Campbell<sup>12</sup> and did not like to go out until after he called for fear of missing him. I steered my own way to the dining room about 2 o'clock. Had the most delicious fish, fine venison, grape marengue ice cream (poor) sponge cake and almonds and raisins (so, so). A lady opposite me deliberately filled a napkin with stewed prunes, they seemed to have no syrup, raisins, almonds, and an apple and to-night at tea the father of the family

<sup>11</sup> Fannie Kellogg.

<sup>12</sup> In 1834 Robert Campbell and William L. Sublette, who had been trading and trapping in the Rocky Mountains for some ten or eleven years, decided to build a post on Laramie's Fork. It was necessary that Sublette return to St. Louis on business, so Robert Campbell remained and with a number of French Canadians and some half-breeds from St. Louis, started to work to erect a structure on the left bank of the Laramie, about a half mile above its junction with the North Platte. John Hunton, in later years, said that Campbell told him he wintered that year at Chug Springs, southwest of the fort site. Although the fort was first named Fort William and Fort John, it is said that a shipping clerk made a mistake and marked a box for "Ft. Laramie" instead of "Ft. John on the Laramie." Mr. Campbell saw at once that the name was a good one, so changed the name to Laramie. In *Wyoming Historical Collections*, Vol. 1, Robert Morris said: "Mr. Campbell changed the name of the fort. I have this fact from Mr. Campbell himself." After Campbell and Sublette sold out to the American Fur Company in 1835, Sybille and Kiplin were sent out to invite the Indians to come to the post to trade.

Robert Campbell was one of the ablest leaders of Captain William Sublette. He was quiet, dignified, and yet a man of great force. He settled disputes and bickerings with a word. When it was necessary to fight, though, he always gave a perfect account of himself, taking part in several of the worst encounters ever fought in the wilderness. He was loved by the mountain men throughout the entire country. It is not known just how long he stayed at Fort Laramie, but it was not a great while until he moved to St. Louis where he headed a large mercantile establishment which became the most popular outfitting place for fur traders and trappers. Supplies from Robert Campbell & Company were sent all over the Rocky Mountain country. In 1868 Campbell, at the request of the Government, visited Fort Laramie to treat with the Sioux. . . . *Annals of Wyoming*, October, 1941, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 239-240; John Hunton, *Early Days In Wyoming*, *Goshen News*, Torrington, Wyo., 1928.

allowed his heir apparent to take four lumps out of the sugar bowl with his fingers. The little girl with wonderful self possession replied when asked what she would have for supper "beef-steak, fried potatoes, buttered toast and green tea."

I took no supper last night but this morning at Odin had a fine hot cup of real unadulterated coffee and a pretty good meal in other respects. The cars were exceedingly crowded last night which with the most excessive noise, worse a great deal than the tearing off of shingles was an effectual preventative of sleep—and this side of Odin the road was so rough that you might easily imagine that forty thousand springs were breaking.

This pen which wrote St. Louis so beautifully will hardly write at all now so I will not indite the note to your Aunt V—thanking her for the use of her delightful shawl which I proposed to myself to do when I began this letter. Tell your aunt that Mary was very kind and sweet and that she has reason to be proud of her tall, graceful, refined looking daughter.

Mr. Campbell called, apologized for not coming sooner, offered every assistance, promised to send a message to your father which I wrote—offered me \$50 of which I took \$20—and as soon as he was gone went out and bought a pair chamois lined, fur trimmed thick soled shoes \$4, a hood not so pretty as yours \$1.25, a cologne bottle 25 cts and a scarf \$1.50 for myself and necktie for Caspar and some hooks and eyes. I wanted to take a ride in the street cars, and see the City, but it was getting so late, and besides Mr. Campbell promised to look up John M. Clarkson and tell him I was here. He is acquainted with Uncle C and David but not with John.

I hope Fannie is pleased with her dress, and that Mrs. Dreffer will make it long enough. I could pinch her for making mine so short. I have paid my bill here \$2.00 which includes dinner, supper, lodging, this paper, envelope and stamp.

I will not be able to write from St. Joseph, or Atchison as I make no stop at the former place, and arrive late at night at the latter, unless I am detained from some cause, in which case I may favor someone with an epistle.

Tell me, how you like your school, Mr. and Mrs. Turner, &. How you left the house. How Mr. Long is getting along with the roof? Whether you took out your apples, what you did with my tooth brush, &, &, &.

You may let any of your Aunt's family that chooses read this letter for I am not going to give you in it a particle of advice. Tell Dr. Sams when he goes to Pekin, I hope I will be at home to help him get ready as he was so kind and had so much trouble about the key &, &.

Mary went up street and bought me a shawl pin which is quite a comfort. I suffered so with my feet last night, but I hope the shoes I purchased this afternoon will keep them warm.

Tell Fannie she must write to me soon, if I can only get good pens I will write very often. I enclose you \$5 to pay Mrs. Buckner for my bonnet \$3.15. I have paid for everything else and also to pay for the making and trimmings of Fannie's dress. I hope you have money to buy pens &c. Good-bye, my darling child and God bless you.

Your affectionate Mother  
C. W. C.

Fort Laramie, Sunday Afternoon,  
November 15th, 1863.

Dear Virginia:<sup>13</sup>

I reached here last night after a fatiguing ride of 65 miles, along the whole of which I did not see a house, and met so warm and cordial a welcome that I forgot my fatigue. I wrote to Josie from St. Louis. I hope she received and answered my letter. The next morning at 4 o'clock I left that place, and have not since then until today had an opportunity of writing a single line. This pen is really bad and this ink is wretchedly pale, but I have so much to say and I know you are all so anxious to hear from me that I must give you at least a part of my story.

Leaving, then, St. Louis at 4 in the morning, we were tumbled about in an omnibus and finally on the sidewalk at the depot of the N.W. Missouri R.R. and, after due shrieks from the engine, launched into the darkness. The conductor, on showing him my ticket, gave me two more which, as it was too dark to read, I put in my pocket without having the faintest conception of what they were for. About daybreak all the passengers made a rush from the cars into a long tunnel-like looking structure, and from that into a ferry-boat, and then I found what one ticket was for. It entitled the holder to a passage across the Missouri at the Saint Charles Landing. I would have liked to have looked at the river, but the deck was crowded with rough-looking men, and I was forced to remain seated in the cabin until it was time to make another rush up the other bank and into another train of cars. We passed through quite a pretty varied country, well timbered and well watered, breakfasted about 10 in quite a neat wayside tavern, rushed back to the cars and went thundering along, passing two forts, some companies of cavalry, some pleasant-looking homes, some dreary-looking stations and a few—very few—pretty villages. At night I saw a prairie on fire, truly a magnificent sight, reached St. Joseph's

<sup>13</sup> Miss Virginia Wever, sister of Mrs. Collins.—Letter from Mrs. Violet Morgan, Hillsboro, Ohio, Oct. 18, 1954.

about 9 o'clock and Atchison [Kan.] at half past one at night—was charged \$.75 omnibus fare and suppose, from the way we lumbered through the heavy sand, that amount was fully earned. Went to the Massasoit House, was informed by the host that there was no possible chance of getting a passage in the stage, as it was necessary to engage a passage several days in advance, enquired the breakfast hour, time for stage leaving, etc., had a fire made in the little stove, thawed out, for I was aching with cold, and retired to rest upon the hardest mattress I ever touched. After breakfast Friday morning I walked out to find the stage office, was told it was shut, was determined to see—found a very polite black fellow who was opening it and putting it in order, inquired for the agent—was not up—sent word to him that a lady must see him; after waiting half an hour, did see him, was told I could go on payment of \$60, but could not take my trunk, could not take it even if I waited for another stage, and was assured that I was very fortunate in getting off myself, as every seat was usually engaged for several days in advance. Rushed back, made some vigorous although ineffectual efforts to get a box or basket or bag to take my 25 lbs. allowed weight, finally locked up my trunk, put it in the agent's care to be forwarded the next Monday, got a receipt on it for the 25 lbs., and took my seat in the stage, which was waiting for me at the door, and into which the porter thrust the buffalo robe. A very pleasant-looking lady with a little girl most astonishingly like Nettie Chase were in the seat where I took my corner; her little son and a very pleasant young man who was going with her to Denver City, two great Irishmen and a red-headed Missourian made up the party. If this pen were not so aggravating I would write another sheet full—but as it is, I must close for the present.

Your affectionate sister,  
Catharine.

Ft. Laramie Deer. 16th (1863)  
Wednesday afternoon.

Dear daughter,

I have just reread your long and very satisfactory letter commenced on the 18th Novr. and finished a few days later. The Hillsborough *postmarks* are always so indistinct that I can not tell from them when a letter is mailed. You say in your letter that Mrs. Kellogg told you that Mr. K— had been quite uneasy about me, and one night could not sleep for thinking about me. I reached here very much tired it is true, the night before you had that conversation with Mrs. K— but safe and found your father quite well and very comfortably established. But he

worked too hard was constantly at work all the day and even into the night until at last he was taken sick. Ten days ago he had an attack of bilious colic and only using such remedies as would assuage the pain he was out again as usual the afternoon of the succeeding day, took cold or tired himself out and has had a severe attack of mountain fever, accompanied as it is generally here, by violent pain in the face. He is very much better now and is able to be up, has some appetite, but still suffers very much from the inflammation and pain which has now centered on the left side of his nose and has festered on the inside and out. Dr. Underhill [surgeon of the 11th O. V. C.] lanced it last night and again this morning and if he would only excuse himself from business I think he would be well in a few days. Two weeks after I got here, Mrs. Brown the wife of the Telegraph Operator, had a little daughter and I went down every morning to wash and dress the baby until your father took sick, since which time I have not been there—poor thing she could get no woman to come and live with her. The Indians they say always dread such places and the women of the Post have too much work to do. Mrs. Van Winkle<sup>14</sup> goes down every night and helps her awhile although 5 of the Lieutenants board with her, and just now Capt. Love<sup>15</sup> and his wife and little boy are there. I think I will go to see her this afternoon and a sick man at the Hospital who belongs to Capt. Rhinehart's<sup>16</sup> Co.—

<sup>14</sup> Wife of Capt. Peter Weldon Van Winkle. A letter from Mrs. Fred Terrell Baum of Marion, Indiana, wife of the grandson of Captain Van Winkle, which is on file in the Archives of the University of Wyoming Library, Laramie, Wyo., says: "During the Civil War, 1861, Mr. Van Winkle joined, or as I have been told, helped to organize the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry. . . . After they were at Fort Laramie for a time, Captain Van Winkle's wife, Margaret Kinkead Van Winkle, and her two little girls—my husband's mother, 12 years old, and her sister, six, who became Mrs. H. C. Walton, Cincinnati, Ohio, together with the wife of Captain Love and her little son, went to Atchison, Kansas, where they were to join a covered wagon train going to Wyoming or Idaho Territory. This train left on Sunday but as the women were devout Presbyterians, they asked that they might start another day. Arrangements were made for these women and their children to ride with the Pony Express. . . . They lived at Fort Laramie two years. The Sioux Indians became difficult to handle so the wives and children were sent home. They made the trip in a covered wagon train. My mother-in-law told many stories about their trip, she being 14 years old would remember this experience. The soldiers were very fond of these children and before they left for home took up a collection of the old shinpilaster money and when they reached Hillsboro, Ohio, they bought a small melodeon, which I now have. Captain Van Winkle suffered a stroke and was sent home, making the trip on a small pony which was with him until his death, August 2, 1871. He is buried in Hillsboro, Ohio."

<sup>15</sup> Captain Wesley Love, Co. G, 11th O.V.C.

<sup>16</sup> Captain L. M. Rhinehart. Early in February, 1865, Captain L. M. Rhinehart, Company G, who was under arrest awaiting sentence of court-martial, was temporarily relieved from arrest with his own consent and returned to his company to assist in repelling threatened attacks at Deer Creek and Platte Bridge. On February 13 he received word that the Indians were plundering the camp and herd of some mountaineers about twenty miles from Deer Creek. Taking ten men with him, the captain rode rapidly to the spot and, upon arriving there, charged the Indians, who shot and killed him instantly. Captain Rhinehart had splendid military ability and was prompt and brave. He was soldierly in bearing and very strict in command, but was genial and kind in manner. He was a general favorite and excelled as an officer in his regiment. His remains were later taken back to Springfield, Ohio, for interment.—Agnes W. Spring, *Caspar Collins*, Columbia Univ. Press (N.Y. 1927), pp. 71-72.

I have returned—I went first to see Mrs. King whose husband was killed by the falling of an adobe wall last Sunday week, just as he was about to return to the sawmill<sup>17</sup> about 45 miles from here. She and her 5 children had just come from Kansas about 6 weeks before, to live with her husband who had been detailed from duty as a soldier to attend the mill. He came down to the Fort about some matter connected with his business and was about to return when he met with a sudden and dreadful death. They sent after his wife and children who got here Tuesday afternoon and I accompanied your father to see the poor woman very soon after her arrival. The next day he was buried with the honors of war in the little sandy desolate graveyard of the Post. Your father was too ill to attend but insisted on my going, and I went with Dr. Underhill. The men all attended in full uniform and wearing side arms. An escort wearing white gloves fired 3 rounds over the grave. The band played a solemn dirge. The chaplain made a very appropriate address and we returned from the grave feeling deep sympathy for the widow and fatherless.

Afterwards I went in to see Mrs. Brown, she was sitting up and the little baby which is a very pretty one—was fast asleep. After I had been there a few minutes Mrs. Van Winkle came in. She said if she had known I was there she did not think she would have come, as she had a good deal to do at home. We went then to the Hospital, she to see a young man of Capt. V's company and I to see Mr. Lyman. Poor man he looks badly and may not recover. He said he wanted a piece of chicken. Mr. Bullock<sup>18</sup> sent me 6 some time ago. I told John<sup>19</sup> to kill one and take it up to the Hospital where they have very good cooks.

While I was out I saw some very queer looking figures of which I wish I could send you a drawing. I saw a wagon with a stovepipe through the cover, the team was a large pair of oxen and the driver was covered with capes, with a pair of moccasins

<sup>17</sup> A sawmill was established by the Ohio troops near the base of Laramie Peak, in 1862. In the summer of 1938, Paul Henderson, Bridgeport, Neb., wrote: "In your *Casper Collins*, I noticed that you had a reproduction of the drawing of the sawmill near Laramie Peak, made by Collins. Last summer we were on this site and the old steam boiler with other old relics are to be found there."—An old wood road left the old Oregon Trail in the vicinity of present day Wendover, Wyoming, below Fort Laramie, and went up Cottonwood Creek to Laramie Peak.—Editor.

<sup>18</sup> William Galt Bullock, agent of Post Sutler, Seth E. Ward, at Fort Laramie, 1858-1871, succeeded a man named Fitzhugh. The Sutler's store at the fort served as general supply house and was the chief banking institution for the outlying posts for hundreds of miles around. Mr. Bullock was a native of Virginia. His first wife was Mary Eliza Washington, a great-great niece of President George Washington. See: "Old Letter Book" in *Annals of Wyoming*, October 1941, pp. 238-330. "To all . . . whether white man, halfbreed, or Indian, Mr. Bullock, a Virginia gentleman of the old school, to whose hospitality and delicate courtesy we were even more indebted in 1867, gave kind and patient attention, and his clerks seemed equally ready and capable, talking Sioux, Cheyenne, or English, just as each case came to hand."—Mrs. Henry B. Carrington, *Ab-sa-ra-ka—Land of Massacre* (Phila., 1879), pp. 76-77.

<sup>19</sup> John, servant of Colonel Collins.



W. G. BULLOCK

For many years Post Sutler's Agent at Fort Laramie, Wyoming  
(Photostatic copy of an original photograph of W. G. Bullock presented to Agnes Wright Spring by Mrs. John Hunton. In turn presented by Mrs. Spring to the National Park Service Museum, Fort Laramie, Wyoming.)

on his feet. The Indian women wear nothing on their heads and their black straight hair hangs down over their cheeks and necks, some of them where it is parted have the seam painted a bright vermillion. Their usual dress is a tunic made of calico, blue drilling or even bed-ticking with a leathern belt, moccasins, leggings of blue or red cloth and over all a buffalo robe worn like a cloak. Sometimes the outside is ornamented with beads and painting but is usually plain and very dirty. The fur side is turned in. I have seen many old women but no grey hairs—perhaps going with their heads uncovered may prevent the hair from turning grey or falling off. They generally have small well shaped feet. The old woman who washes for me comes every Tuesday morning, makes up the fire and puts on the water in a little upstairs kitchen, makes some guttural noise every time I speak or sign to her and washes and starches pretty well, and I do the ironing in my own room. Last week she did it as your

father was sick but it was not very well done. The poor thing is not warmly dressed, but I am afraid if I give her any clothing she will give it her daughter who is an idle thing as she gave the dress of blue drilling I bought for her at the Sutler's—it only takes 4 yards but it was 75 cts a yard and within a day or two "Jenny" was wearing it "up town." Some of the young braves look quite gay with their painted faces and beaded leggings and I saw one with a scarlet blanket who cut quite a dash—but they are generally poor and will take the broken victuals left at your table without seeming to think it degrading.

This ink is so pale I am afraid you will not be able to read this letter. I believe I must close. Give my love to your Aunts Charlotte and Virginia—to Fannie and Mary White and to Mr. and Mrs. Kellogg. I am glad you are so much pleased with your school and household.

Your affect. Mother  
C. W. Collins

Fort Laramie Christmas 1863

My dear Josie,

When I wrote to Fannie this forenoon, I did not think I should have time by this mail to write to you but having returned from the dinner given by Co D and finding that the mail will not go out until to-morrow, I thought I might just as well give you an account of the dinner and slip your letter in with Fannie's.

The tables 3 long ones accommodated about 75. Mrs. Van Winkle, Mrs. Dr. [T. M.] Smith, Mrs. Capt. Love, Mrs. Wright and myself were the ladies present, and the rest of the places were taken up by officers, commissioned and non-commissioned and guests. They had roast pig, roast beef and cold boiled ham, jellies, pickles, coffee, tea, peaches, cake, mince pie and ice cream. The tables looked very handsomely. I cannot think where they got all their table cloths and dishes, but everything was arranged with taste and judgment. A large cake, nicely iced and a basket of flowers on it with the inscription Co D 11 O. V. C. in large raised letters was much admired. Co. D was pretty much in abeyance only represented by its officers, one of whom a gentleman of intelligence and very superior education Lieut. Boalt<sup>20</sup> did the honors and did them well, not eating at all but moving from one table to another, and by his bright smile and genial manner doing much to pass off everything well. The little Van Winkles were there—and *so was Mrs. Wright's baby*. As soon as we were fairly through, we moved off and out to give way to others. 8 or ten pleasant young fellows waited on table looking

<sup>20</sup> Lieut. Frederick H. Boalt.

as if they thoroughly enjoyed the success of their entertainment. Lieut. B—received a thorough classical education in this country and then spent several years in Germany at one of its renowned Colleges. While your father was confined to his room he brought over a little mahogany box in which there was a most wonderful amount of retorte, a blow-pipe, quantity of little bottles, hammer agate pestle and mortar, platela bowls &c &c and analyzed some lead and silver ores to his own exquisite delight and our very great pleasure. He probably is the most scientific man of the regiment although there are several of good abilities and education.

While I have been away John baked the bread that I made up and has made and is now baking some cake. I hope it will prove good as we wish some day next week to have a reception or something of the kind. We have another invitation for this evening for cake and egg-nog at Mr. Bullock's. I told Mr. B. I would call and take some cake if he would excuse me about the egg-nogg.<sup>21</sup>

Christmas night—I have been to two entertainments since I wrote the above—the first at Mr. Bullock's. He has a very pretty house and the parlor is a beautiful though not large room with handsome curtains to the 3 windows, a beautiful brussels carpet, a few pictures and other nice furniture. In one corner two very elegant bowls filled with egg-nogg and two fine cakes, with goblets and small china plates were placed on a circular table. One of the cakes was a superb fruit—the other jelly. Mrs. Van Winkle ladled out the egg-nogg. I cut the cake and Mr. B—passed it round himself. All the ladies who were at the dinner with the exception of Mrs. Wright were there and Capts. Van Winkle, Marshall, Love and Koehne and Lieuts. Glenn, Reeves, Boalt, Brown, Waters and Collins.<sup>22</sup> There were a few songs sung and I was sorry to have to leave and go to the other supper. However, go we did, and you should have seen the table. It was furnished with the greatest abundance and our "glorious banner" festooned above it. After supper your father drank to the health of Sergt. Lewis, a fine looking gentlemanly young fellow who responded in quite a happy little speech, then Sergt. Blades and Sergt. Cochran were called for, each replying in a short but patriotic manner,—they afterwards called for your father, who replied

<sup>21</sup> In 1873 a wave of reform started in Hillsboro, Ohio, that "spread through the world. It has been called 'The Whirlwind of the Lord. . . . The Hillsboro Crusade culminated in the organization of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union of the United States at Cleveland, Ohio, on Nov. 20, 1874. A white ribbon was adopted as the official badge of the organization and members were called 'white ribboners'. . . . Mrs. William O. Collins was one of the active members."—From a scrapbook owned by Catherine C. Barber, Hillsboro, Ohio.

<sup>22</sup> Peter W. Van Winkle, Levi G. Marshall, Wesley Love, Albertine Koehne, Lieuts. O. S. Glenn, John G. Reeves, Frederick H. Boalt, Brown, Waters, Caspar W. Collins.

briefly but gracefully to the compliment when we took our leave, as we supposed many of the Company were yet to eat. Last night we had a serenade from the Band, who played "Home Sweet Home", "Soft in the Stilly Night." I hope my dear daughter you attend to your music—both vocal and instrumental and if we live to get home, your father will be able to buy you a piano, and that by your voice and playing you may afford him many an evening's entertainment. You write very sensible and pleasant letters and if you would take pains to have a good pen and seat yourself in an *easy* attitude I am sure you could write pretty ones. I write by every mail to one or both of you girls and if you should fail to hear from me, once in each week, you may attribute it to storms or snow or some accident detained our mail. God bless you my beloved child prays

Yr. affect.  
Mother.

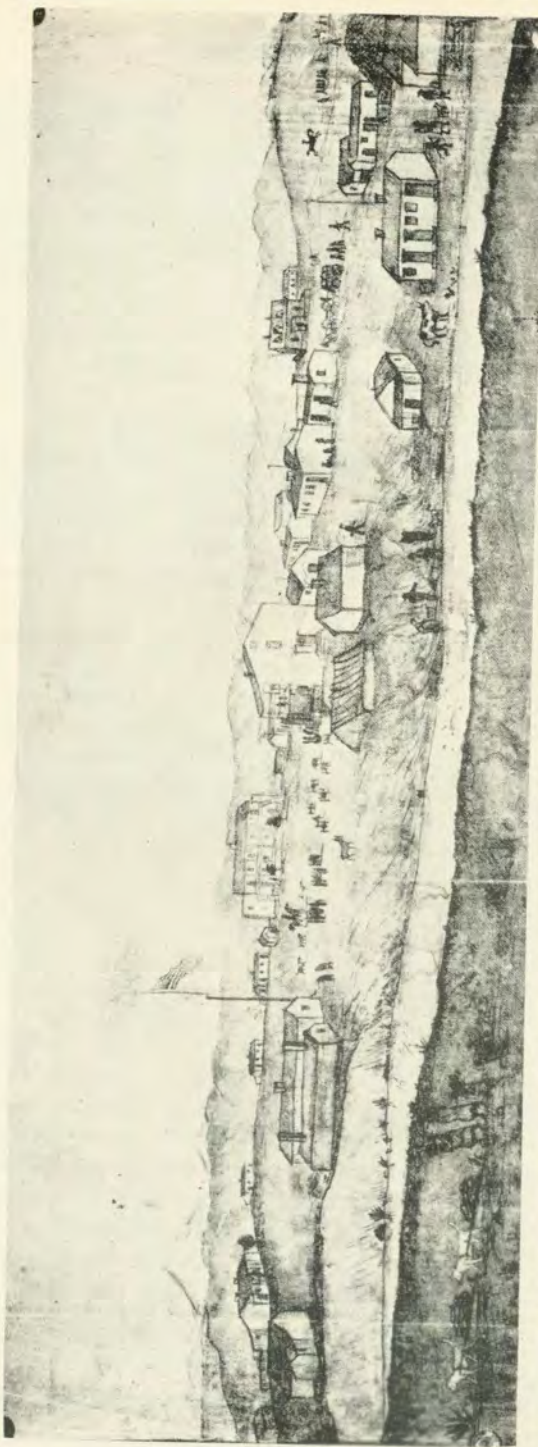
Ft. Laramie, Idaho Ter.  
Jany 16th 1864

Dear Josie :

I send you a drawing of Ft. Laramie done by Caspar. It is a very correct one, but does not include the entire post, the Quarter Master and Commissary buildings and stables, which are very extensive being on the right and outside.

He has given me a hit by drawing a grey hound and two pointers that often follow me and *Honest John*, the horse I usually ride. You will see the group in the middle of the parade ground. He always carries his head and tail so high that no one could mistake him in the picture. Though gay and fast he is not difficult to manage. I allow no one to ride him but myself. You will see Adjutant Reeves on the right going towards the stables, his horse plunging along as usual. I will ask your mother or Caspar to describe other peculiarities and localities as I have not time.

I hope my dear daughter that you and fannie are both studious and good. You have always been kind, amiable and dutiful, and I have full faith that though separated from your Mother and myself, and especially lacking her direction and counsel you will so conduct that we shall be pleased with and proud of you when we return. Fix a high standard and endeavor to satisfy yourself. Neglect no opportunity of doing kindness, forget no propriety, be self-denying, truthful and faithful and qualify yourself for usefulness in any position in which your lot may be cast. In these times of trouble no one knows what that may be. But I will not give further advice. Consult your Aunt Charlotte if you ever are



Sketched by Caspar W. Collins, 1863  
FORT LARAMIE, 1863  
Described in detail in Letter, January 16, 1864.



in doubt as to your duty, for we are too far away to give you prompt counsel. Give my love to Fannie, the Doctor and sister and all friends.

Write to us often and let the letters be long and full of detail, for everything from home interests us. If you are fond of drawing and music I should like you to cultivate both.

Your Affectionate father

Wm. O. Collins

Dear Josie,

Your father wishes me to explain this picture to you. It was taken from one of the low sand hills, on the south side of the Laramie and just opposite Headquarters<sup>23</sup> which is the large building with the two trees in front, and is the one in which we live. You see it has two outside staircases and ought to have a double stack of chimneys. Mrs. Van Winkle, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Love live in the block of low buildings with two trees in front. I believe they are all the trees at the Post. They are cottonwoods and not *now* green. The block by the flagstaff is the quarters of Co. E—the three small buildings opposite are occupied by QM. Averill, Lt. [Oliver S.] Glenn and Lt. [John G.] Reeves, the Adj. the very small building between them and Headquarters is the Adt. office. Dr. Underhill and Chaplain Adams have the Eastend of the Headquarters—the next block is occupied by Lts. Brittany [Bretney], & Collins & Capt. Rhinehart & Evans<sup>24</sup>—the large building towards the river contains the quarters of Cos G & A—and adjoining is the bakery, where you see three Indians with their backs against the wall is the sutler's store—and the Gothic cottage is his residence—Back of it and partly hid by it is the Hospital—stretching over that hill in the East is the grave-yard. Laramie Peak is to the West or North West. Just below the graveyard you see the Telegraph wires, that low building, close to the most prominent post is the Operator's office and residence—that yellowish looking pile is the corn belonging to Government and stored up in bags—in wet weather they stretch over it tarpaulin—but you know there is seldom any rain here and most of the snow blows away. Some of the houses near the water are occupied by the Co. laundresses. In the foreground is the tame antelope which I believe is the Pet of the Post. Back of it are the small cannon called mountain howitzers. The water wagon with three white mules is followed by three prisoners in charge of a guard who carries his

<sup>23</sup> This Headquarters Building was known as "Old Bedlam" and was "used at various times as officers' quarters, post headquarters, and social center. It is the sole survival of the post's original buildings. Immortalized in Capt. Charles King's historical novel, *Laramie, or the Queen of Bedlam*, which vividly recreated the life of the fort, Old Bedlam recalls its past as does no other structure at the post."—*Fort Laramie National Monument, Wyoming*, U. S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, 1942, p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Capt. H. C. Bretney, Capt. W. H. Evans, 11th O.V.C.

gun under his arm as the thermometer is 20° below zero, and has his hands in his breeches. The sentinel before the guard named O'Day, the same. The old squaw that has the two dogs hauling wood is often about the Fort picking up or stealing a little to take home is often seen about the Fort.

The channel of the Laramie is so deep that from this side we have but a glimpse of its waters.

Yrs.

C.W. C.

Febr 4th (1863)

Dear Josie,

I send you in addition to the chemise I spoke of—a band and sleeves I worked for you—if the band is too long cut off what is necessary at the end on which you will put the button—of course the sleeves must have gussets and the band must be set on with small ones. Miss Green and Mrs. Poor I am sure will show you how to put it together. Get the muslin at Mr. Harris' and have it shrunk before it is cut out—3 yards will be the greatest abundance. Make it yourself but do not confine yourself too much. You may have it on a hand a month and it will still be ready for Spring wear. Do not fret about the money your Uncle Adam so kindly sent you. It shall be replaced as soon as I am able to do so—and then you can buy something handsome for a keepsake. Tell Fannie I will work her a band and sleeves and she can make a chemise too, but she must send me the length of the band—in inches.

The mail came in yesterday bringing your Aunt Charlotte's charming letter of Dec. 16th and 5 or six from you and Fannie ranging in date from Dec. 21st to Jan. 11th. You need send but one letter a week—you and Fannie on alternate weeks, but I would like to have the letters long ones and you may write as often as you like in the same letter—for instance you may begin one after Sunday School telling me all about it you think worth mentioning—who were there & &. Then you may leave the letter open and sometime through the week, add whatever is of interest and if Fannie has mailed a letter that week do not close yours until the next. Take good sized paper and one good *long* letter, telling me everything about yourselves, the school, your Aunt's family, the "on dits" of the town & & will afford me more pleasure than five or six short notes coming as they do all *in bunches*. We only have a mail now once in two weeks, and sometimes only once in three—so you must not expect a letter every week—tell Fannie to take the same plan and send me a *long* letter once in two weeks—

I am sorry you did not commence your music lessons in the beginning of the session. I am sure I wrote that you should do so

Note: Written along the side of the letter in Mrs. Collins' handwriting is: "Your father is not Brig. Genl."—Ed.

but perhaps you did not get my letter. Be as cheerfull as you can. Make diligent use of all your present advantages—begin your music lessons now if you can arrange them to suit your other classes.

I think letters mailed on Monday will have a better chance to come direct than at any other time—but am not sure—perhaps Saturday morning will be a better time. You send one the first Saturday morning after receiving this and Fannie the next Saturday and so on. of course it must be put in Friday night. I am sorry that Mrs. Hays is troubled with rheumatism. We had many pleasant hours together and enjoyed her companionship very much. Does not Katie Trimble visit you? Did you return Ellen Price's visit? Did you go to see Salla Mathews and Salla McMicken in the vacation—Go and see Mrs. McDowell. She and her daughters have always been very kind to you. Call in sometime and see Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Steele—take some pleasant afternoon and call at all these places and tell the ladies I sent my love to them. Get whatever you need at Mr. Harris' store and don't allow yourself to get bare of clothes—there is no economy in it. I rec'd the braid. Your father thinks he has answered all your letters but the last one.

I wrote to Fannie a few days ago a long letter—by Mr. Ward<sup>25</sup>—who was returning to the States and would probably mail it at Omaha. Give my love to Fannie—and my kind remembrance to Miss Green and Miss Warren—

Your affect. Mother  
C.W. C.

Fort Laramie  
Feb. 5, 1864

Dear Josie:

Well! Yesterday morning your father called me out to see the Indians, who were approaching from the west. We went out to the back upper porch, and down in the valley of the Laramie was a confused mass of color and motion amidst which we could occasionally descry a scarlet blanket or headdress of feathers.

They approached with a sort of song and beating on their skin drums; but as they were very slow and confused in their movements, we went into the house until they made their appearance on the parade ground in front. I wished very much you could have seen them, for they presented a very singular and striking spectacle. They arranged themselves in a large circle composed of 8 or 10 musicians, who were men, all wrapped in buffalo robes,

<sup>25</sup> Seth E. Ward, Post Sutler at Fort Laramie, was a pioneer trader in the Platte River region and a freighter on the old Santa Fe Trail. Subsequently he was an influential and prominent resident of Westport, a suburb of Kansas City, Mo. He was a native of Virginia.—Editor.

but affording glimpses of very peculiar underclothing; the rest of the circle made up of squaws of all ages down to girls of apparently not more than twelve.

In the center were some hideous old women who seemed to have done their very best to make themselves look as ugly as possible, painting their faces with lead color and black and having everything about them as dismal as possible. They were said to be clowns of the performance. They had branches of trees in their hands, and one or two had rattles made of shot pouches with long handles, which they shook and, running about in the middle of a circle, seemed to challenge some display of skill or merriment. Then the musicians beat the drums, and the whole circle, standing close together, lifted themselves slightly and shoved round and round, keeping the most exact time to their rude music. They did not raise their feet but very slightly and kept together and revolving about the old women in the middle. All had their faces painted, and most of the young ones had the good taste to use vermilion, which is very becoming to them; but lead color, blue and black stripes and spots of one kind or another all required. One man had his hair painted green. One had a great wolf skin pinned over her head, while another wore a tremendous headdress of wild turkey feathers arranged around a scarlet cowl, and each feather was a scarlet twirl of which they were made I could not tell. All the women danced in their blankets and buffalo robes, but beneath them some had very beautiful dresses made of antelope skin, which is like white kid; and one that I particularly admired had a yoke wrought with beads and a deep fringe like that of a Canton crepe shawl.

Their dresses fit pretty close to the figure and are not divided like ours into waists and skirts but are more sacque fashion, and they wear belts, sometimes covered with beads or buttons. None of the men except the musicians were in the circle. One of the men had the coat of a lieut. of artillery, which has broad red shoulder straps; another had a jacket with buttons down the seams behind. All wore moccasins and leggins. The latter are generally of cloth and fit ankle and leg.

They kept up their dance, with occasional intervals of jabbering of the old women, for two or three hours, when the officers made up a subscription for them and sent for flour, meat and rice, and they went away in very good humor. They ought to have had coffee, of which they are very fond.

C. W. C.

Fort Laramie. March, 23d, 1864  
Wednesday Noon—

Dear Josie,

I received your letter of Feby. 26th day before yesterday. The mail comes in now pretty regularly at noon on Mondays, and goes out about as regularly on Wednesday afternoons. They, the driver and guard, go about 15 miles and camp, which means they light a fire, make some coffee, spread their blankets on the ground, picket their mules and stay all night. The next night they reach Ficklin's,<sup>26</sup> which is a telegraph station, in the most dreary place imaginable with no possible recommendation but the water which flows by and the distant view of Scott's Bluffs. The next night they reach "Mud Springs" another telegraph station, the next night they "camp" on Pole Creek, and the next they get to Julesburgh. Ten days is allowed for going and returning. And two teams and sets of drivers are employed. When the first reaches Julesburgh they telegraph their arrival and as soon as convenient the next one is dispatched.

Tell Fannie that I have the band and one sleeve worked for her and hope to finish the other sleeve and send them by next mail. I wish, my dear daughter, you would get yourself a lot of good pens, and just as soon as one fails in the least throw it in the fire, and try another. I enclose you ten cents for that especial purpose and would send 25 if I had the change. I had left my veil at the store. I have since got it. Tell Mrs. Thos. Barry that "Fred" says he has written to her three times but has received no answer, but that he has the keepsakes she gave him, and that from the German and English bible she sent him, he has learned a great deal. As the poney belongs to you, you might have lent him to Miss Fannie with perfect propriety, but as Spring has now opened, it will not I suppose, be convenient for Mr. Reiniger to do without him. At any rate ascertain whether he can be spared, and if he is well shod before you lend or ride. It is just as well, and will save you many applications to say he is in Mr. R's care but that you and Fannie can have him when Mr. R. can spare him and that you have permission to lend him to Miss F. K—from your mother. I have not yet determined when I shall leave here not before the 1st of May I think and as I wish to spend a short time with Aunt Clarkson, will not probably reach home before the last of the month. I hope Mrs. Hanlin will carry on the garden just as if I were at home

<sup>26</sup> B. F. Ficklin, general superintendent of Russell, Majors and Waddell, is credited with having originated the idea of the Pony Express. Hubert H. Bancroft in his *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming*, p. 228, says: "The pony express was the next step. It was the conception of F. A. Bee, W. H. Russell and B. F. Ficklin, managing officers of the Central Overland and Pike's Peak Express company, incorporated by the Kansas legislature in the winter of 1859-60, to keep messengers going for over 1,700 miles, flying at the rate of from seven to nine miles an hour for ten days."

and that it will prove profitable to us both, but she cannot do it unless she has one of her boys to help her. Tell her that as soon as I return I want one of them to live with me. Give my love to Annie Hays—and tell her when I come home she must come out and eat strawberries and get flowers.

I wrote to Aunt Clarkson, but have received no answer perhaps she did not receive it, as I directed to the care of John M. Clarkson (her son) in St. Louis, as I could not remember the name of her P. O. Did you receive my letter containing \$10. I think you had better have your hats fixed up for the Spring and not get new ones, but ask your aunt about it. If they will do for best, you could get dark ones for common. As you must have something of the kind. Do not be extravagant but you must have what dress is required in your situation—and there is no one better qualified to advise you than your kind Aunt Charlotte. If I could only fly home, and save the \$120 it will cost—to take me back I could dress you quite handsomely with it.

You need not take drawing lessons any longer but you *must* pay attention to your penmanship. Tell Miss Warren that I would rather you would give up some of your difficult studies and give more time to simple writing. Your letters really distress me, by their carelessness, and incorrectness, and you must no longer neglect neatness, punctuation, accuracy and style in their composition. A young lady almost sixteen, to make blunders in spelling, leave out stops, and words and send a scrawl 1000 miles to her mother! My child I do not wish to distress you but you *must* and can do better.

Love to Fannie, and to Mr. and Mrs. Kellogg.

Your affectionate Mother,

Catharine W. Collins.

Fort Laramie, April 7th, 1864  
Wednesday Night.

Dear Josie,

Your father, Caspar, and the men that assisted in making the road for about 10 miles—beginning 40 miles from here, returned last Thursday and although they had been much exposed, did not suffer. You may imagine my relief when they returned. They say that the rocks and pine trees sheltered them from the wind and they were able to keep up a fire. They slept on the ground without tent or other covering and although rather cold most of the time, did not freeze. Their provisions got rather short and

about 22 miles from here at Richards<sup>27</sup> (pronounced Rishaw) an old settler with an Indian wife) they got some provisions on their return. The last day Caspar shot (the only day he hunted) shot 3 wild geese and some ducks—two of the ducks had *teeth* along their mandibles, which aided them no doubt in the consumption of fish on which they had fattened. But after stuffing and roasting them very nicely, we came to the conclusion that the finny tribe were better food before they had been converted into *fowl*. Wa-con-la, however said it was Wash-tay (good)—but I do not think your father's superb looking dog, "Buffalo" liked them much better than we did. The geese were good eating but not very fat.

Capt. VanWinkle, Lieuts. Glenn and Reeves who went on to Fort Halleck<sup>28</sup> have not yet returned and just now a dreadful storm is raging. The wind has been furious all day and almost constantly the snow is driving but the cold is not severe, and if they are sheltered in cañons or wooded defiles they will not suffer.

Before this reaches you I shall probably be on my way home. Indeed, when I received Sister C's letter of the 16th March last mail (last Sunday) in which she said that you had not been well and were very homesick, I felt like starting as soon as possible and as the mail goes out every Thursday, would have liked to go in it but your father does not wish me to leave until the weather becomes pleasant. Of course with such a storm raging I could not leave, unless it was upon some life and death matter, and as your aunt is always kind and is especially attached to you, I soon began to think that I did wrong to be so uneasy. Dear, darling daughter, you do not know how I love you and desire your hap-

<sup>27</sup> John Richards or Richard, a French-Canadian, who had an Indian wife, had various trading posts and in 1852 had a toll-bridge across the North Platte river at the site of the later-day Casper, Wyo. William L. Sublette said in 1843 that he met "John Rishaw (Richard) . . . one of the party of the company of Sabille and Adams who has a fort on the river Platte near the mouth Laramie's fork. He had some cows & 6 buffalo calves & one young elk also 5 or 6 one (horse) waggons loaded with robes."—*Miss. Valley Historical Review*, VI, p. 110. In *The California and Oregon Trail*, (Author's Edition, 1901), p. 93, Francis Parkman says of John Richard: "His dress was rather singular; his black curling hair was parted in the middle of his head, and fell below his shoulders; he wore a tight frock of smoked deerskin, very gayly ornamented with figures worked in dyed porcupine quills. His moccasins and leggings were also gaudily adorned in the same manner; and the latter had in addition a line of long fringes reaching down the seams." A daughter of John Richard married Hi Kelly, pioneer ranchman of the Chugwater area in Wyoming.—Ed.

<sup>28</sup> When the Postmaster General on July 11, 1862, ordered the Overland Mail Company to abandon the North Platte and Sweetwater part of the route through Nebraska and Idaho Territories (now Wyoming) and to remove their stations and stock to a southern route running from Julesburg across Colorado to the Big Thompson, La Porte, then up into the Laramie Plains and on west, a change was soon made. The transfer was made immediately after the arrival of the Ohio troops at South Pass, and not one mail was missed or delayed. Company A, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, under Major John O'Farrell, escorted the stage property directly south from the Sweetwater to the new locations. After performing the escort duty, this company selected a site and constructed on the stage route the buildings of Fort Halleck near the base of Elk Mountain. This became a very important post in southern Wyoming. While the Ohio troops were at Fort Halleck they sometimes furnished escorts for surveying parties of the Union Pacific Railroad.—Arnes W. Spring, *Casper Collins*, Columbia Univ. Press (N. Y. 1927), pp. 42-43.

piness. I have felt sorely disappointed that the last two mails have brought no letters from you or Fannie, but I hope next time to get a whole budget. After you receive this, write to your father or Caspar. When I get to St. Joseph, I will telegraph to you—or if I make any stay there write to you, as telegraphing is rather expensive business.

Please say to your Aunt Charlotte that if she writes to your Uncle Henry to tell him I wrote twice to him. Once a long letter, I think in Jany, and last week a *reasonable* one.

These two scraps of paper look rather shabby but if they will bear all the love I send by them you will be quite satisfied. My own sweet, precious child always obedient, gentle and kind. Dear Josie, I was pleased but not surprised when I learned that Mr. Turner said you kept the rules better than anyone in school. You have always been so truthful and conscientious and are indeed a great blessing and comfort to me. May God grant that I reach home in safety and clasp you to my heart. I hope you are quite well, and enjoy going out to see the flowers, and grass and trees "at home." Here April has been very stormy and when the wind blows off the snow, one does not see the sprouting grass but barren sand—however when it becomes suitable weather, your father intends planting a garden, and its products will no doubt be very welcome and salutary but it will require much care to bring them to maturity. It is said that the soil is fertile and that with irrigation it yields immense crops.

Goodnight, my dear, precious child.

Your affectionate Mother—

Catharine W. Collins.

Give my love to sister Charlotte and tell her I thank her very much for her letter of the 10th March.

Friday Morn. The mail did not go out yesterday, as the one that went down was retarded in reaching Julesburg by the snow at Scott's Bluffs, which they say had to be dug out before the ambulance could pass. The party from Ft. Halleck arrived yesterday afternoon bringing with them Lieut. Drake and Dr. Finfrock,<sup>30</sup> the latter you saw in Cint. with Dr. Underhill when Mrs. Moyers

<sup>30</sup> Dr. John H. Finfrock, born in Ohio in 1836, was educated in Richland Co., afterwards studied medicine at the University of Michigan, Ohio Medical College, and Long Island Hospital. He entered the Union Army as hospital steward, and was afterward Captain of Ohio Volunteers; also serving as Assistant Surgeon from 1863 to 1865. He was sent to Fort Halleck in the latter capacity in 1863, being one of those who rescued one of the Collet family. He had a son, William Edwin Finfrock, born at Fort Halleck, Oct. 16, 1865, whom he thinks is the first white person born in Wyoming. He settled at Laramie City in 1868. He was coroner, probate judge, and county physician. He was a member of the city council in 1872-3, county superintendent of public schools of Albany County in 1880, and was appointed in 1880 one of the board of penitentiary commissioners, of which board he was president for two years. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming*, The History Co., (San Francisco, 1890), Vol. XXV, pp. 716-717.

tried so hard to get off Archimedes. This morning is calm and bright and I hope the stormy weather is over. I have a good deal of sewing to do for your father but will if possible try to visit shops, Commissary and every place open to the public, that I may carry home an intelligible account of Fort Laramie—as to visiting any part of the neighborhood or catching a most distant glimpse of the Rocky Mountains I have given up the idea. Give my love to Fannie. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Kellogg. I am dear child your loving Mother and trust very soon after you receive this to be on my way to you my beloved but I must close—

Your affect. Mother

C. W. C.

Ft. Laramie. April 18th, 1864

Dear Daughter

I am glad that you have quite recovered from your bad cold and hope you were able to enjoy your week's vacation; I am very anxious to be at home on your account, and that I might see to the trees, orchard, garden &c, but your father does not know when he will leave this Post and I do not like to go away until something definite is known as to the summer arrangements. I could not remain, were I not confidant that Mr. Reiniger would attend to the stock and all he has in charge just as well while I am away as when I am at home. I hope he will manure the garden well, plough it and trim and tie up the rasp-berries and tell Mrs. Hanlin that I depend upon her to see to the rest of the work in the garden and attend to the chickens.

I expect you and Fannie went out very often during your week's vacation to look at your borders and perhaps the weather was pleasant enough to clean them off and put them in order.

What became of my share of tobacco that John Young raised? I never heard from it, after I left home. Did you receive ten dollars to pay for your music lessons? Caspar remitted \$50 to Dr. Sams of which \$10 was for you—not from him, however, but from your father. Get what shoes, clothing &c you need at Mr. Harris', have your hats fixed for the Spring in some *simple*, pretty fashion, and I will, if I can, bring you each a summer dress from Cint. Your blue mousseline with the cape to match will be very pretty for the Spring. *You* must have new cotton stockings—but no, I think you had a supply last Summer and will not need them.

I have received no answers from Aunt Clarkson and cousin Helen, but I think I will stop in St. Joseph, and if the latter (Mrs. Motter) is at home will get from her proper directions to take me to Aunts'. Of course it will delay me in getting home, but probably

I will never have another opportunity to visit my beloved Mother's only remaining sister.

We have had very little pleasant weather, the wind blows most of the time and it has been cloudy with occasional gusts of snow nearly all this month, we had one rain which really looked home-like.

Mrs. Van Winkle thinks of returning to Hillsborough and spending the summer there, but has not decided upon the time she shall leave here, it will depend upon the Capts. movements. If Maj. Converse's resignation is accepted he (Capt. V. W.) will most probably be appointed Major as he is the Senr. Capt. in the service here. No information as to any portion of the 12th Cavy. has being sent here has been received. There are 150 men on the road here, they are now at Ft. Kearney and probably more will be sent to fill the regiment. These, that are here, are well equipped in every particular and well drilled, and soldierly in their appearance and bearing—and make a fine appearance on "dress parade". There is trouble apprehended in the Northern part of this Territory with the Indians, as report says they are determined to prevent the passage of emigrants through their country to the new mining districts, but if your father is clothed with proper authority, it will not exist long as his wisdom, justice and promptness will enable him soon, to quell disorder and protect the peaceable and industrious, or well meaning either white or Indian. Some time ago, an Indian came a long way to complain to him, that one of the soldiers of Co. H, in coming from Sweet-water, fired at a mare of his and killed [her] and her young colt died in consequence. Your father sent for the Sergeant of the Co., ascertained the facts and then assured the Indian that he should have reparation—a mare and colt of the same value as the ones he lost. The soldier, I suppose, will have his pay withdrawn until they are paid for and will probably be careful hereafter of letting such "accidents" happen.

I think it would please Caspar very much to receive one of your Aunt Charlotte's lively, well-written letters, as he told me when I first came out no one wrote to him. I wrote three or four weeks ago to your Aunt Virginia and hope to hear from her before I leave here. Write to your father hereafter instead of to me and do not be disturbed if you do not get immediate answers as he has much to attend to, and many anxieties.

Your loving Mother

C. W. C.

Fort Laramie May 7th 1864  
Saturday Night

Dear Josie,

The mail did not go this morning but is expected to leave tomorrow. I wrote last night to your Aunt Charlotte and to Mr. Turner enclosing \$50 which I hope he will receive. Your letter to me of April 11th arrived a few days ago; there were evidences of improvement in the handwriting, but you must read your letters over before you seal them, so as to put in any omitted words or correct any other mistakes you may have made. Casper received your letter and gave it to me to read. He seemed pleased with it. He is gone now and will be absent two or three weeks. Your father wishes me to see something of this country and has engaged John, who was his servant for six months, to come here and keep the table and he and other officers will board with him, and so will I for what time I remain. I am very glad of the arrangement and if my time is prolonged hope to make some drawings of the beautiful wild flowers of the sand hills and cliffs of this neighborhood.

I am glad, my dear child, that you have thus early in life dedicated yourself to the service of God, and hope you may grow in grace and in knowledge, and be a comfort to your parents, and a blessing to all around you. Do not suppose that uniting with the Church will free you from sin, but, Our Saviour tells us we must confess him before men and he will acknowledge us before God. It is right for us to obey and as we go forward in life to do each day the duty of the day leaving results to Him who has said that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice. Look daily to Him for spiritual food as well as for temporal. Enjoy the blessings of your lot, as good and gracious gifts from His hand. Pursue your studies and accomplishments as the present work for you to do, and may you my darling enjoy as much happiness as is for your good in this world and finally be made partaker of everlasting blessedness.

Your father has just brought in a piece of drilling of which he desires me to make for him, 2 pairs of drawers and several shirts so very probably it will be two or three weeks before I turn my face homewards. I feel that you and Fannie are well placed and that 2 or 3 weeks more or less spent here will be of no moment and I would rather be with him until he goes up the road, which he may do before long and be absent from this Post for several months.

It is growing late and with love to Fannie I must good night to you, take as much love as can be sent in a letter,

from your affectionate Mother—

Catharine W. Collins.

P. S. Your father says he likes you and wants to see you and if it could be done by riding all night, he would see you in the morning—that he loves you and has good hopes of you—in all which I join.

C. W. C.

P. S. Your father says he sends you this check instead of enclosing the \$50 to Mr. Turner. Of course you will pay him that amount, then pay the tuition bills for last Sessions and *you* are to have the remainder to use as you see fit. I know *you* will spend it discreetly. He wishes you to have such dress &c as is suitable and pretty. He knows you are to be trusted. Goodnight—my love and God bless you.

Your loving Mother

C. W. C.

Open carefully

[Written in pencil]—Ed.

Ficklins', August 5th. 1864

My dear Daughter,

I left Laramie, yesterday afternoon on Genl. Mitchell's<sup>31</sup> 4 mule ambulance a little after one o'clock in the afternoon. Dr. Hitz<sup>32</sup> and Dr. Willy of Fort Kearney started in one drawn by two mules. Florence Schnyder is with me. Her father gave me \$300 for her benefit. She and I occupy the back seat and Gen. M— and his aid-de-camp, Lieut. Rankin,<sup>33</sup> the middle one, of course the driver is on the front seat where he could easily accommodate another passenger. Our baggage is in a wagon. Last

<sup>31</sup>General Robert B. Mitchell, known as "Fighting Bob of Kansas," "was born in Ohio, came to Kansas as a pro-slavery Democrat. The conduct of the Missourians and the early Kansas troubles, made him an anti-slavery Democrat. When the War broke out he was for fighting, and became immediately the Colonel of the Second Kansas. He was in the Lyon campaign in Missouri and was in the battle of Perryville where he lost 700 men in seven minutes. He was in many skirmishes and used to say that up to date, he was in two more battles in number than any Brigadier in the service." General Mitchell was an exceedingly handsome man, with a full, dark-brown curly beard and mustache.—Eugene Ware. *The Indian War of 1864*, p. 144. At the time he escorted Mrs. Collins eastward from Fort Laramie, General Mitchell was in command of the District of the Platte.

<sup>32</sup>Dr. Rudolf B. Hitz. In addition to his regular duties at Fort Laramie, Colonel Collins did some valuable work for the Smithsonian Institution. A letter from that institution dated November 30, 1863 asked him to collect eggs of birds inhabiting Laramie Peak and the region west of it, eggs of the prairie-dog owl, buffalo hides, buffalo skulls, winter specimens and skins of grouse, sage cocks and blue grouse, and also to collect fossils. In this work Caspar took a great delight; he aided his father materially in the collection of specimens, especially of rabbits and grouse. The Colonel also kept a meteorological register.

So excellent was the work that it attracted the attention of many persons in Washington. In March, 1864, John Hitz, Jr., Acting Consul-General of Switzerland, wrote a letter to Colonel Collins introducing Captain Alfred de Wattewyl of the Swiss army and asking that he be permitted to join the regiment that he might gain knowledge of the West for his country and might pursue the collection of specimens. Captain de Wattewyl was accompanied by Dr. Rudolf B. Hitz sent by the Smithsonian Institution.—Agnes W. Spring. *Casper Collins*, pp. 27-28, based upon original letters in the file of Colonel William O. Collins. Eugene F. Ware in *The Indian War of 1864*, pp. 164-5 mentions Dr. Hitz and Alfred de Wattewyl passing through Cottonwood Springs on their way up to Fort Laramie in April, 1864.

<sup>33</sup>Lieut. John K. Rankin, described by Eugene Ware, *Idem.*, p. 218, as "a very brave and capable cavalry officer from Kansas."



DENVER PUB. LIBY. WEST. COLL.

## BRIG. GENERAL ROBERT B. MITCHELL

Who Escorted Mrs. Collins on Her Homeward Journey from Fort Laramie

night we camped in a beautiful meadow opposite the Indian Agency 28 miles from Fort Laramie. We took our supper seated round a camp chest and soon after retired to our respective tents. I believe the best one is pitched for my use and Florence<sup>34</sup> and I sleep on buffalo robes with a bearskin bolster. We were up at two o'clock this morning and breakfasted and on the road by 4 o'clock.

We came to this place by 12 o'clock and staid in the telegraph office until the baggage wagon came up—where I saw young Mr. Ambrose who says he married Dr. Holmes' daughter Julia, and that he is clearing 80 dollars a month. He is quite a fine looking young man. I have many things to tell you about the Indians we saw yesterday evening and this morning but must wait until I see you. Our tents are pitched in the boiling sun for

<sup>34</sup> The young woman in the party undoubtedly was the daughter of Postmaster Leodegar Schnyder of Fort Laramie as he had, at that time an 11-year-old daughter named Florence.—Information in a letter from David L. Hieb, Superintendent, Fort Laramie National Monument, Sept. 23, 1954.

there is not a tree in sight. The grass is alive with grasshoppers. The gentlemen are beguiling themselves with cards. We will go no further this evening but expect to leave at the same early hour tomorrow. I would like very much to give myself a bath and change my dusty dress but do not think I could stand shutting up the tent. I made my dinner of some cold ham and biscuits and a cake as I thought Genl. M had guests enough without me.

We will not reach Ft. Kearny for eight more days and may be a day or two longer on the road. I expect to return by Omaha as it is thought the cheaper and pleasanter road but not near so expeditious. I hope my lawn will be in order for me to put on as I have had but one summer dress. I believe I must stop and fan myself. The view here is very uninteresting. The broad sandy Platte and one meadow, grazed close by the stock of the thousands of emigrants that have passed over it this summer.

Good by darling. Love to all

Your affectionate Mother

Catharine W. Collins.

August 8th Dear Josie. We arrived at Julesburg<sup>35</sup> this morning after in some respects a very comfortable trip from Laramie, and as the "ranche" here is now kept by very nice people we had a good breakfast about 10 O'clock as we had taken our early meal before 3 A.M. the escort of 20 mounted men that accompanied us to our encampment last night 25 miles from here started back at the time we left camp—and behold when we got here Genl. M. learned by telegraph that the Indians had attacked and burnt a train<sup>36</sup> between Cottonwood and Kearney so we are just in as much need of an escort as ever, but I trust that the good Providence that has watched over and protected me throughout my long journey will save me to my journey's end. It seems as if there was to be a general Indian War which must lead to the extirpation of the

<sup>35</sup> On the south side of the South Platte, perhaps about a mile east of the mouth of Lodgepole Creek, a Frenchman by the name of Jules had started a trading-post. The place was a great Cheyenne crossing-ground going north and south, and a frequent place of Cheyenne rendezvous. It was also much used by the Sioux. . . . At the time of which I write (1864), nothing was left of the Jules ranch; . . . but the stage company had a large stable there, and a large boarding-house, a blacksmith shop, a telegraph station, a large sod corral, a wareroom built of cedar logs, and about eighty tons of shelled corn in sacks stored therein. . . . I would say there were fifty men there, all armed to the teeth and with everything arranged so they could fight behind sod walls, and make a desperate resistance. "Julesburg Station," as it was then called, was situated well down on the flats near where the course of the river then turned, and the main wagon-road ran alongside of the houses. There is a present town Julesburg, but it is on the other side of the river, and several miles farther down. Eugene F. Ware. *The Indian War of 1864*, p. 249.

The station was burned by Indians on Feb. 2, 1865.—Ed.

<sup>36</sup> This was the so-called Plum Creek Massacre, which occurred on August 7, 1864 at the bluffs and canon near Plum Creek Station, between Cottonwood Springs and Fort Kearny. According to the *History of the State of Nebraska*, Western History Co., (Chi. 1882), p. 616, the Indians killed eleven emigrants, plundered and burned their wagons in what is now Dawson County, Nebraska.



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

DR. RUDOLPH B. HITZ  
A Traveling Companion

race along this great thoroughfare. The stages it is said are crowded and if Genl. M. renews his offer of conveying me to Omaha I shall accept it with gratitude. I hope you received the \$150 your father sent you and have paid Mr. Turner. I sent \$20 previously in one letter towards that object and \$12 to Fannie to pay Miss Green which latter sum you wrote me was never received. Good bye dear, sweet beloved child and may God bless you, prays your

Affectionate mother

C. W. C.

Sunday, August 21st, 1864  
St. Joseph. M.

Dear daughter,

It was with a thankful heart to the good Providence of God that had protected me, in my perilous journey from Laramie here that I dictated the telegram I sent to Dr. Sams yesterday. We left the Fort the 4th inst, your birthday. I wrote a letter on the way down and left it at Julesburg to be mailed, but as the troubles have been so great on that road perhaps you have not received it. I would have written again at Cottonwood or Fort Kearney as at each place we were detained two days but the mail was not running. The Co. having taken off the stock and the stations being deserted by the frightened inhabitants.

When we reached Julesburg the morning of the 8th Genl. Mitchell received telegrams from Plum Creek giving accounts of the horrible massacres that had been committed near that Station that very morning. He had dismissed his escort at 3 o'clock that morning at Lodge Pole Creek 25 miles back and of course they were far away on the road to Laramie. He expected to find 2 companies at Julesburg which had been ordered there but had not yet arrived. After some anxiety and deliberation, telegraphing & he [Genl. M] decided to leave at our usual early hour and I that have such a dread of fire arms travelled two days amidst loaded revolvers and wishing all the time that I could load and fire a pistol. Genl. M told me if we were attacked that he should immediately "coral" the wagons and that Florence and I should lie down flat upon the ground that the balls might pass over us. The evening of the second day we met the companies going West and an escort of 20 men was detailed to accompany us to Fort Kearney. We got there Sunday, this day a week ago. On Monday Dr. Hitz crowded himself on the stage for Omaha and took his joyful departure. The stages to Atchison and Nebraska City were not running, and of course the ones to Omaha were filled to suffocation. Florence and I with 11 other passengers left Kearney on Wednesday morning last and after a most-fatiguing ride reached Omaha Friday morning at 2 o'clock and went immediately on the steam-boat *Denver*, which landed us at wharf here about 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. St. Joseph is seated on more hills than ancient Rome but the omnibus brought us and our traps out here, where we had a warm reception and when Cousin Helen sent *down* after her husband, I sent him the telegram to Dr. Sams which I hope he received. Of course I paid first. I feared you would have heard of the terrible atrocities committed on the road and would be very anxious about me. At Kearney we met with the kindest hospitality from Mrs. Major Wood, until we reached that Fort



we had slept every night in a tent—and it was pleasant once more to be in a house. I will stay here several days and must make a visit to Aunt and Uncle Clarkson as they expect me. The cars leave at 3 in the morning and I must write to Aunt when to meet me as there are no accommodations at the nearest station which is seven miles from their house.



NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Steamboat DENVER on right, on which Mrs. Collins made journey from Omaha to St. Joseph

Cousin Helen is delightfully situated living in a very pleasant house, prettily situated well finished and furnished, with a kind, sensible handsome husband, four fine children, a carriage, horses, and servants.

Of course I will write to you from Aunt C.'s and tell you when to expect me. I received the letters and shawl. Love to sister and all.

Your affectionate Mother  
Catharine W. Collins

I have not heard from your father since I left Julesburgh.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Collins returned to her home in Hillsboro, Ohio, which continued to be her place of residence until her death at the age of 93 in 1911. Colonel William O. Collins received his discharge from active duty in the army on April 1, 1865.

After the death of Captain Rinehart, previously mentioned, Caspar Collins was placed in command of Company G, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, and on May 1, 1865, was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant; but the records show that he was not mustered to that position, probably on account of delay in orders being transmitted.

On July 26, 1865, Caspar W. Collins was killed in a fight with Indians at Platte Bridge,<sup>37</sup> near the site of present Casper, Wyoming, when he attempted to lead a rescue party to the relief of a wagon train that had been attacked near Red Buttes.

Before her death, Mrs. Collins donated to the Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College Library, at Fort Collins, a number of the possessions of Colonel Collins. One of the relics, a genuine peace pipe, is made of sacred pipestone and was once the property of Lone Horn, head chief of the "Minne Kongue"<sup>38</sup> nation on the Upper Missouri River. Probably the most important of the gifts were the maps made by Caspar Collins and his father during their reconnaissance work in Colorado and Wyoming, formerly Dakota, Idaho and Nebraska Territories. These maps show the trails, roads, rivers, mountains, fords and other important physical features. Denver appears on the map, and Fort Collins is a speck compared to Laporte, which at that time was a small town but is now only a village lying west of the City of Fort Collins. There are also maps and floor plans of the telegraph stations along the Oregon and Overland Trails.

The Original Order<sup>39</sup> issued by Colonel Collins which created the permanent Fort Collins was found among the Colonel's papers when I visited Hillsboro, Ohio some years ago. I placed it in the library files at Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College, where it is being preserved.—Ed.

<sup>37</sup> See: "Platte Bridge and The Platte Bridge Fight," Chapter XII, pp. 79-101, Agnes W. Spring. *Caspar Collins*. Columbia Univ. Press (N. Y. 1927).

<sup>38</sup> This is the same spelling as used by Colonel William O. Collins. *Op. Cit.*, p. 176-177. According to the *Handbook of American Indians*, the preferred spelling is Miniconjou.

<sup>39</sup> Agnes W. Spring. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 184-185.



PAINTED BY JOSEPH ALLWORTHY

PHOTO BY J. F. ABERNATHY

## PORTRAIT OF DAN CASEMENT

In the Saddle and Sirloin Club, Chicago, 1939

## Pioneering the Unaweep

DAN DILLON CASEMENT

(Casement is a name indelibly inscribed upon the Annals of the West. General John Stephen Casement, affectionately called "General Jack," with his brother, Dan Casement, helped to build the Union Pacific Railway. According to General Dodge, "The entire track and a large part of the grading on the Union Pacific Railway was done by the Casement Brothers. . . . Their force consisted of 100 teams and 1,000 men, living at the end of the track in boarding cars and tents."\* General Casement also participated in many similar big projects. His son, Dan Dillon Case-

\* Maj.-Genl. Grenville M. Dodge. *How We Built The Union Pacific Railway*, p. 38.

ment, born in Painesville, Ohio, July 13, 1868, began pioneering in livestock raising and ranching in Western Colorado in the 1880's soon after the smoke of the Utes' last campfires had faded in that area. For a time he was a resident of Colorado Springs, and also owned Juniata Farm near Manhattan, Kansas. Dan D. Casement made an international reputation with his purebred cattle, fine sheep, and his "Steel Dust" horses, including his famous stallion, Concho Colonel.

In 1897, Dan Casement married Olivia Thornburgh, daughter of Maj. T. T. Thornburgh, who was killed by Indians on Milk Creek, Colo., in 1879.

In December, 1952, *Country Gentleman* carried a picture of Mr. Casement as the "Man of the Month" and said "If American agriculture had a Hall of Fame, we are sure that one of the charter members would be this veteran cowman from Kansas. As a breeder, a feeder and exhibitor for more than a half century, Dan Casement has lent a useful hand in remolding the form of the beef animal from the gaunt, bony Longhorn of yesterday to the blocky, meaty baby beef that is desired today. If you say it with affection, you may say that Dan Casement is a crusty individualist who believes that American agriculture was built in the fine tradition of self-reliance. We say it with affection. He has the cowman's belligerent desire to be let alone in running his business yet he is the kindest of friend to countless thousands of America's cattlemen. At 84 he is showing cattle this fall and winter at all the big stock shows. If you are there you will recognize him in his store suit—as colorful as the bright sunsets of Kansas. A salute, then, to this American, whose most notable quality, frequently demonstrated, is dauntless courage."

For twenty-five years or more Dan Casement won grand championships on carloads of fat and feeder cattle at major shows. In 1946 his American Royal victory, according to the Editor of *Western Farm Life*, was like "winning the Kentucky Derby, Belmont and Preakness all in the same season with the same horse. His grand champion carload of Hereford calves claimed a new world record price in the auction following the show."

Those calves came from the ranch of his son, Joseph (Jack) Stephen Casement, then of West Plains, Colorado. Jack Casement, who is now ranching nineteen miles west of Peetz, Colorado with his postoffice at Padroni, has ranched on Elk river, north of Steamboat Springs, and before that, on the old Unaweep Ranch of his father and grandfather over in Western Colorado. Following in his father's footsteps, Jack Casement has become a well known breeder of livestock, especially of winning Quarter Horses and prize Herefords.

Dan D. Casement died at the age of 84 in March, 1953. A few years previous to his death he wrote a delightful autobiography for his family and friends. In closing it he said: "I've sure had a grand time, and with all my heart can echo the words of Montana's late great Charley Russell: 'Whenever I cash in now, I win.'"

At present the eyes of the entire world are focused on those sunny slopes and rugged canons of Western Colorado, which Dan Casement first knew seventy years ago. Men with geiger counters, geologists with surveying instruments and helicopters, and many others are today searching those slopes for that "yellow stuff"—carnotite—uranium. We believe a story of some of the early days over on the Western Slope as told by Dan Casement will interest our readers.

From his story entitled, "The Abbreviated Autobiography of a Joyous Pagan," we bring you Dan Dillon Casement's picture of his pioneer days on the Western Slope.—*Editor*.

## THE UNAWEEP

Then hey, for boot and horse, lad,  
And round the world away;

At the end of our year in Columbia, Tot<sup>1</sup> and I hurried out to the Colorado ranch. This property had been located and promoted by Charles N. Cox, a son of Genl. J. D. Cox, ex-governor of Ohio, a life-long friend of my father. In the fall of 1882 when the Uncompahgre Utes were moved out of western Colorado to Utah, Charley Cox was engaged in mining at Rico. He straightway dispatched two typical western characters, Jack Hall and Bob Allison, to the newly opened region with instructions to locate a cattle ranch, while he hurried East to secure financial backing for the project. Because of old acquaintance and close family ties, he came first to my father and had no difficulty in enlisting his support, since it was quite characteristic of The General, as remarked by his eulogist at his funeral, "to seem to delight in gathering money in order that he might scatter it with both hands." Tot's father acquired a third interest in the property a year later, moved, I imagine, mainly by his good nature and his friendship for my father.

In the summer of 1883, being in Denver on a visit to our old friends, General and Mrs. John Pierce, father, my brother and I—then 15—had made a trip of inspection to the new ranch. The D. and R. G. Narrow Gauge had just been built over Marshall Pass, through the Black Canyon and on across Utah to Salt Lake City. Traveling by this route we landed one evening on a desolate 'dobe flat on the lower Gunnison, thirteen miles short of its juncture with the Grand River<sup>2</sup>—now the Colorado—at Grand Junction. A section house in the sage brush was the only visible sign of habitation. The station was called Whitewater. Charley Cox, heavily armed and riding a handsome Kentucky Whip mare, met us with a four-horse team and a heavy wagon. We spent the night in the near-by cabin of a settler, after shooting a deer in a tangle of cottonwoods and willows along the river.

Next day we drove up the Whitewater Slope, descended into Cactus Park, traversed it to the UnawEEP Canon and proceeded up the canon about fifteen miles to the ranch headquarters on Fall Creek. Here we were about fourteen miles from the eastern boundary of Utah.

The UnawEEP Canon is absolutely unique in that it cuts a deep gash through the Uncompahgre Plateau for a distance of fifty miles from the Gunnison to the Dolores and has a distinct

<sup>1</sup> Charles Augustus Otis, Jr., of Cleveland, Ohio, a Columbia University classmate. His father at one time was mayor of Cleveland.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the Grand River was changed to Colorado River by the State Assembly in 1921. (L. '21, p. 162, #1; C. L., #8253).

divide about midway of its extent. At this point the canon is nearly a mile wide and quite a half mile deep. Rising here, East Creek flows into the Gunnison, West Creek into the Dolores. The canon takes its name from a Ute word signifying "dividing of waters." The walls of the canon at both ends are of red sand rock but in most of its extent it cuts deep into the underlying structure of grey granite, so, for many miles on either side of the Divide, the lower half of the walls are of this material. Above the granite a continuous bench or offset marks the base of the sand rock cap and testifies to its greatest susceptibility to the forces of erosion. The northern wall of the canon, more directly exposed to the sun, is rough and sparsely timbered with juniper and pinon, types indigenous to lower altitudes, while the opposite wall, where the snow lies deep in winter, is less rugged and supports a denser growth of oak brush, aspen, pine and spruce—typical growths of that region at altitudes between seven and nine thousand feet, the actual elevations encompassed by the wall from the base to summit.

Three miles west of the Divide, at the ranch site, Fall Creek, in spring, when the winter's snow is melting on the high mesa above, tumbles over the granite in an 800-foot cascade. The canon's whole extent affords unusual scenery of surpassing beauty.

Probably such a minute description of the UnawEEP as I have here given can be explained and justified only by the fact that nearly sixty years of my life are closely linked with this locality. Here I spent my most formative years and obtained the most important part of my education in the business of living. Here I learned the dignity and delight of hard manual labor; the joy of life supported only by the most elemental essentials; the deep satisfaction that accrues from finishing tasks involving hazard and hardship. Complete dependence on the horse for every economic and social function incident to living gave me an invaluable appreciation of equine nature and not infrequent nobility. Here I gained something of tolerance and understanding by sharing fully the lives of natural men who lived simply and, for the most part, bravely, who had gained their practical wisdom by experience, who saw life objectively, whose actions and convictions were ordered by sound, age-old intuitions and by reason which ascribed a purely biologic basis to the truths by which successful and satisfactory lives are invariably lived.

My first visit to the UnawEEP was brief. Father approved the proposed improvements, we climbed to the summer range on Pinon Mesa by an Indian trail strewn with broken tepee poles and other evidences of its recent use by the banished Utes. We found the forage on top luxuriant, the water abundant, the nucleus of the herd fat and contented. We shot deer and grouse and I for one

succumbed completely to the charm of a virgin country untouched by civilization and bearing lightly the marks of its use by wild men only.

Tot's introduction to the Unaweep occurred nearly two years later. The health of his brother, Will, had failed while in Yale and he had been sent to the ranch to recuperate. There Tot joined him while still a student in Andover and lived some months in a log cabin in one of the ranch's meadows on which his brother was completing proof of title. I had made a second brief trip to the ranch preceding my senior year in Princeton, at which time I went on a very thrilling and successful bear hunt with Mack Thomason, who, two years later, became our foreman.

It was, then, to the Unaweep, that Tot and I, filled with glamorous anticipations, repaired on leaving Columbia. We landed in Grand Junction on the 4th of July 1891 and were warmly welcomed in the Windsor, The Senate, The Board of Trade, the Bucket of Blood and similar convivial institutions, wherein the entire business and social life of the town centered. Journeying some thirty-five miles to the ranch next day we took temporary residence with the family of Charley Cox, third partner in the property, who had served as its salaried manager from the inception of the enterprise. The outfit had just pulled in from the spring round-up and we went to work in the hay field.

Not long thereafter our fathers purchased the Cox interest and installed us as joint managers. Within a few years they deeded the property to us. Tot, twenty-eight years thereafter, conveyed his half to his son, Bill, whom I later bought out. I gave the entire spread to my son, Jack, on the occasion of his marriage in 1931. He sold the land ten years later. Thus the place had been in part or complete ownership by three members of our family for more than fifty-eight years.

During these years the Unaweep Cattle Range, as it was first named, encountered all the difficulties and mutations which changing conditions enforced on the pastoral industry in that period. Starting on the open range with a breeding herd and the three-year-old beef steer as its normal product, it ran through the whole scale of commonly accepted practices and ended by marketing registered Herefords, bulls produced by a small herd of select cows confined to the home meadows. It twice experienced exhaustion of the open range by overstocking, resorted in desperation to illegal fencing, grazed its stock under government permit after the creation of the National Forests and finally shrank within the boundaries of the comparatively small area to which it had undisputed title. For half a decade in the early part of the present century cattle stealing became epidemic in that country.

When Tot and I took possession of the ranch we installed Mack Thomason as our foreman. Mack, a native of Eastern Oklahoma, was a typical Colorado mountaineer of the 1880's. He had mined, freighted and punched cows but his most congenial occupation was big game hunting. For this he had a real gift that entitled him to professional standing. A crack shot with both rifle and revolver, he was a skillful trailer and had to a surprising degree the ability to outwit his quarry. As a meat hunter for construction crews in the mountains he had killed hundreds of deer, elk, antelope and bear. His retentive memory enabled him to recount in every detail the exact circumstances attending the fall of every one of his myriad victims. . . . Mack was a passable cowhand but as a mighty hunter he had few equals.

When, after our arrival that summer, the hay was all stacked, we shod our saddle stock, packed our beds and went "on top" to meet the Pinon Mesa Round-up for the annual fall beef gather. The names of the mounts in our remuda seem indelibly printed on my memory: Navajo, Dandy, Croppy, Bay Johnny, Little Blue, Taylor, Brownie, Joe, Red Buck and the wise pack mare, Grey Nelly, who would fairly squat to help you load a deer and never objected to the smell of a dead bear. The best of these horses were small and had a strong strain of Spanish blood. It was on the fall ride that year that I bought Jack Paw from Harry Leighton. He was a small bay Quarter Horse who could turn on a dime and give you a nickel in change. His wisdom and skill won my admiration and affection to a degree equalled by few horses I have since owned. When I bought him he had some local fame, since it was he whom Mack Miller was riding when he roped and "drug" Paw Buzzard, a notorious and belligerent character. To Jack Paw I personally owe an incalculable debt. He taught me the high art of working cattle.

Gradually the beef herd was gathered and driven down the Thimble Rock trail into a precipitous pasture that clung to the canon's southern wall. So soon as the round-up finished the fall work we trailed our shipment to the railroad at Whitewater and loaded out for Omaha. Tot accompanied the cattle. The trip to market in those days was a thrilling experience. The track was narrow gauge up the Gunnison to Delta, thence to Montrose via the Uncompahgre, over Squaw Hill into the Black Canon and on to Gunnison, a division point. Then the road ran up the Tomiche to the foot of Marshall Pass, which it climbed in most spectacular fashion and dropped down the eastern slope into Salida where we unloaded and transferred to broad gauge cars at the entrance of the Royal Gorge. At that time the cabooses of every freight train on this run was fully equipped with rifles

and fishing rods. When in the shipping season our stock trains side-tracked at Deer Run for the west bound passenger, the entire crew usually took arms and went deer hunting. Or, if delays occurred in the Black Canyon or above Sapinero, fly fishing was the order of the day. Descending Marshall Pass as the sun rose, revealing all hands on top of the swaying cars, frantically freezing the brakes with pick handles while the train swung perilously around twenty-degree curves, was a hair raising experience. The memory of the "licker" which preceded the "stack of wheats" at Salida's nearest bar, as we left the caboose at dawn, persists to this day and I would gladly feel again the warm glow it then imparted.

If my memory serves, this, our first shipment, grossed on the Omaha market less than three cents a pound. The range business in that year was at its lowest ebb. After disposing of the cattle, Tot took a holiday on my Kansas farm,<sup>4</sup> thence going to Colorado Springs and Cleveland, where he awaited my arrival before embarking on our annual trip to New York for the Yale-Princeton football game which then and for years thereafter we never failed to attend.

In the meantime, out in the Unaweep, I was joined by my old college chum, Jerry Black<sup>5</sup>, and his lovely wife, Isabel, who, following their marriage, had spent some time in New Mexico and, to my delight, had then consented to lend their presence to bring our isolated ranch a much needed, husky and congenial corral hand and the refining influence of a charming Farmington girl.

Before I left for New York that fall, Mack and I spent several days on the Escalante killing a supply of winter meat. On this trip we caught two beaver and landed an even hundred native trout from one small pool. Returning later to load the deer we had hung, we found that a mountain lion had shouldered and marched away with one of the carcasses.

When, after our annual fling in New York that fall, Tot and I returned to the ranch we found the family circle enlarged by the presence of a baby girl, Mary Dawson Black, who, in the invigorating air of the high country, soon waxed big and bonny.

That winter Jerry was the official chore boy, and he and Tot manned the hay sled while Mack and I, with our winter horses and a pack, betook ourselves to our cabin on East Creek about sixteen miles from the ranch where we holed up by night and daily scouted the winter range for "weak ones." Our winter country was of wide scope comprising Cactus Park, Hell's Half

<sup>4</sup> Juniata Farm, Manhattan, Kansas.

<sup>5</sup> Of York, Penn.

Acre, The Bridgeport and Whitewater Slopes, Poverty Flat, East Creek Canon . . .

On our daily prowls we were usually accompanied by Gus Britt and Trus Blair of the Two-half-circle outfit, who rode from their winter quarters at Gibler's, where a small spring miraculously emerged among the pinons and junipers of the desert park, and by George Hughes and Phil Sherrard who wintered at their ranch up the creek from our cabin.

Phil, who ran the SK brand, was a younger son of a typical English family of the country gentry class. At home he had a brother in the Navy, another in the Army, a third in the Church and several spinster sisters who lavished their maidenly attentions on the Vicar. He rode in his winter string—with painfully short stirrups—two grey horses identically alike, Irish . . . and Jock . . . Under his chaps he wore riding breeches of the most extreme and fashionable cut I have ever seen. His drawl was delightful and inimitable. He accepted all the circumstances of our rude life with rare grace, but time and space were powerless to sever completely the ties that bound him to his highly civilized background. When not otherwise occupied in camp, he poured over the pages of a London periodical devoted to sport, the latest copy of which he always carried on his saddle. Its many columns of fine print were entirely given over to description in minutest detail of the weekly meets and runs of every hunt club in the British Isles. My warm memories of Phil have been a rich resource for many years. He eventually returned to his home-land and Pinon Mesa lost a most picturesque figure.

If the snow lay deep in the Park, the day's work might consist of gathering a sizable bunch of distressed cattle, trailing them out and over the rim onto Bridgeport Slope, where we vainly hoped the feed might be more available, and then drifting them down to the flats on the Gunnison over difficult and obscure trails known only to the old timers. This practice, as we soon learned, was worse than futile, for the cattle were deeply attached to their beds in the dry sand under the overhanging cliffs which rimmed the Park on the north. These nightly resting places were literally the only semblance of comfort their lives held. Accordingly as we rode out next day at sun-up, we would often meet the herd of the previous day in single file wearily retracing their steps to recover their only recompense for living.

Mostly we spent our days prowling the country, tracking cattle through the scrub and appraising their strength when finally overtaken. Those that seemed about to go "on the lift" were slowly trailed to a trap near our camp. On the long days we were fortified at noon by "lunch," carried in our slickers. This consisted

invariably of three small baking powder biscuits, two containing chunks of fried sowbelly, the third, by way of dessert held dried fruit—peaches or apricots—thoroughly stewed.

On the rare occasions when we got back to camp before sundown we would lay a poison drag for varmints. In this practice I would ride ahead, dragging at my rope's end the skull or shank of the beef or buck on which we were currently using, having first seared it over the fire to add allurements and savor to its odor. Mack rode behind and at intervals dotted the trail with bits of liver folded over deadly doses of strychnine. Next day we would tend the line, collect our kill, and put in half the night skinning coyotes, swifts and bobcats.

About every week or ten days, having worked a certain scope of country, we would bunch our gather and point it up the long, weary trail to the home ranch and the hay pile. In the dead of winter traffic through the Canon for some miles on both sides of the Divide, by reason of the heavy snowfall, was often closed to wagons or even sleds. Infrequent horsemen, however, by following in the identical tracks of those who had gone before, would pack a narrow path. The slightest deviation from this path by either horse or cow brute would leave the hapless animal floundering helplessly. Consequently our homeward journeys were always slow and arduous. With Grey Nelly and her pack in the lead, the weak cattle strung out in single file. Mack, afoot, and leading his horse, followed in the tracks of the leaders, while I, warmly bundled in overcoat, German socks and arctics, trudged behind the drags. At the long day's end, lights in the little red ranch house and in the cabin beyond, which sheltered Mack's family, cheered us with their grateful promise of warmth and comfort.

With each bunch of cattle that Mack and I delivered to the feed ground the duties of Tot and Jerry were correspondingly increased. It was no light task daily at dawn, with the thermometer below zero, to bridle Clipper and Turk, first breathing on the frosty bits, to hitch them to the bob-sled and then wallow to the distant stacks in the snow-bound meadow. Life for them was a constant round of hay heaving to which Jerry's mighty muscles responded with the same amazing success that had made him the campus hero of three Princeton-Yale games. His chore of extracting milk from Cherry and Brownie twice daily and competing therefor with their lusty offspring led to a declaration of his intention to write a thesis to be entitled, "From Corral to Calf Pen; or How To Keep The Milk Cow's Calf From Getting The Milk Cow's Milk."

When not too exhausted by his strenuous days, Jerry, hoping to emulate his illustrious grand sire, read law at night. It was his custom on such evenings to take a quart of claret from our case

of Zinfandel and place it tenderly behind the stove that it might acquire the proper temperature. At his elbow always reposed a jug of the best Medford rum. Thus armed and accoutered he was all set to begin his wrestle with Blackstone and Parsons. Tot and I, ever ready to encourage his ambition, came nobly to his assistance whenever he paused to pour libations to the mythical patron of his future profession.

Christmas that winter in the Unaweep was celebrated with an elaborate dinner. Isabel was radiant in a Paris gown that had been a year in retirement. We men resurrected our tails and white ties. I had previously made a difficult trip to Grand Junction and had brought in the goods essential to the occasion. There was a big turkey stuffed with chestnuts. Hidden under the table, until the appropriate moment, a quart of champagne cooled in a bucket of snow. This by way of a surprise to Jerry. The glasses in which it was served had taxed the resources of all the bars in Grand Junction. Although they were of orthodox shape with long, hollow stems, they were plainly peerless in their weight and thickness. Put to their proper use only on that memorable evening, one of them, at least, survived the ravages of time for nearly fifty years. A staunch reminder of the long ago, there it was, when last I looked in the ranch house cupboard.

Later that night, after the nursing mother had divested herself of her finery and retired, Mack and George Hughes joined us to round out the evening over the jug of Medford. Of all the stirring anecdotes related that evening the only one my memory has clearly retained is Mack's very detailed account of his altercation with Piccolo Jim in the Senate saloon. I will not attempt to retell it. No blood, it seemed, had been shed and the tale reflected no glory on either of the combatants, but the war cry of Piccolo Jim, as recalled by Mack, struck me as one of the most picturesque and preposterous declarations I had ever heard.

Although a regular correspondence had been maintained with Boston and my heroine of the roof-top romance,<sup>6</sup> my isolated situation had aroused the solicitude of several of my college friends who had either volunteered or been playfully commissioned to interest some blessed damsel in my benighted state. Moreover I had actually bargained with Isabel to give her the beautiful little filly I was then breaking should she find for me THE GIRL. The filly's name was Connermara and I have never encountered a more willful bit of equine femininity. Fortunately the deep snow seriously handicapped her pitching propensities, but nevertheless she

<sup>6</sup>A romance which was carried on by Dan Casement, when a Columbia student, with a young woman who was attending a fashionable girls' finishing school separated by only two buildings from the apartment where Casement and his friend, Tot, lived.—Ed.

threw me so often and so high that, had it not effectively cushioned my falls, most of my bones would have been broken. Five years elapsed before Isabel made good her share of the bargain, and, despite my best efforts, it had taken me all of that time to convert Connermara into a safe mount for a lady.

With the advent of spring the snow gradually disappeared in the canon. Fall Creek plunged in a muddy torrent over its high cliff, daily attaining its maximum flow about 4 P.M. It inundated the meadows. The range came to life. Tot and Jerry forsook the feed sled and began to clean the ditches while Mack and I started to drift the surviving cattle from the lower reaches of the winter range toward the higher country. Throwing in with other outfits, we first worked the country sloping to the Gunnison and then rode west to the Dolores, where the cattle were notoriously wild and snakey. The drift climaxed with a big round-up on the Divide, whereat the cattle using the Uncompahgre Plateau as their summer range were cut and driven up the canon's southern wall, while those detained to summer on Pinon Mesa climbed the old Ute trail to the north.

For a few weeks brushing the meadows and irrigating claimed all hands. The work stock was turned on top to recuperate for the haying. About July 1, the Pinon Mesa branding ride began.

Our working life in the Unaweep digressed very little from the pattern I have outlined. Our duties were more or less stereotyped and seasonal. At the home ranch irrigating and hay making occupied our time in spring and summer. In the fall, "when the work's all done," according to the optimistic lyricist, our duties always seemed to multiply and become more urgent, as we fenced stacks and prepared for the drab winter task of sledding hay to the hungry cattle.

The riding job provided the greatest variety and excitement. The various outfits on Pinon Mesa were organized in a round-up association which for the summer work supplied a chuck wagon and directed two rides annually, the first for branding calves, the latter for gathering beef. We also represented with the wagon of the Dominguez Association that worked the opposite side of the canon. On the round-up, life although always strenuous, was never monotonous, being filled with rough comradeship, salty humor and risky adventure.

The range cattle of that time and locality were just beginning to show evidences of improvement through better breeding. The use of Shorthorn bulls had to some extent modified their color and shape but in the main their habits as well as their conformation confirmed their Spanish origin. This was especially true in regard

to the cattle wearing the S Cross, VV, 2S and Bar Eleven brands. These were outfits of considerable size which summered on the western end of Pinon Mesa and wintered on the Utah desert between the Grand and the Green. Our own outfit, the Triangle Bar, shortly before our advent, had begun to use a few Galloway bulls, but they were far from satisfactory. We supplemented them later with some Herefords and Devons. Now I recognize in looking back that few serious efforts had been made systematically to improve range cattle previous to that period. Even then it was too often the custom of a roper to shout, as he dragged to the branding fire an especially lusty calf distinguished only for speed, "Let him go for a bull!" On our end of "The Mountain" the outfits were generally smaller and the cattle showed more of the milk pen influence.

The round-up worked the summer range systematically from east to west, moving camp as the ride progressed. Bunch-grounds bore such euphonious and picturesque names as The Little Oaks, The Lone Pine, The Tent Ground, Buck Springs and The Big Basin. The western end of the mesa, lying between the Dolores on the south and the Chiquita Dolores on the north, was a notoriously wild country known as Renegade Point. Here were many mavericks. The branded cattle also had unanimously reverted to the wild state and reckless riding and skillful roping were always in order if any were to be reclaimed.

Most of the men who followed the ride were unforgettable characters. Jim Jones, Henry Knowles and Billy Wells—a brave and competent trio—represented the S Cross, Frank Sleeper and Sam Pollock rode for the VV. Nemaseo Espinosa was the top hand of the 2A. Joe Selby and Al Sagers handled the Bar Elevens. Although prices were the lowest and the range was rapidly deteriorating from over use, these men and the many others with whom I rode in those days preserved their courage and integrity under every temptation and discouragement. Good feeling was universal and the lathstring hung out of every camp on "The Mountain."

In the summer of 1892 Jerry with his family returned to York, Pa., to uphold the family tradition in the practice of law. There, long before, his illustrious grand sire had retired to his estate, Brockie, and there, too, his distinguished father made his home at Willow Bridges. The vacancy his departure left in our household was intermittently filled by visits from friends of our college days, who on one pretext or another had drifted into the West. In the spring of 1893 my cousin, "Shiner" Casement, one of Tot's fraternity brothers in Sheff, came to the ranch and killed two bear. Another Yale friend, Bob Ireland, dropped in on us the same season. William Silas Whitehead, Princeton, '91,



spent two winter months with me. My very dear friend, Wallis Huidekoper of Philadelphia, who was already a seasoned ranchman of the North Dakota Bad Lands,<sup>7</sup> joined me one fall on a self-guided hunting trip through the White and Bear River country, where we had excellent sport with elk, deer and antelope. My Princeton roommate, Rock Channing,<sup>8</sup> was in later years, often my guest in the Unaweep.

Our social contacts in Grand Junction, the local metropolis, thirty-five miles from the ranch, were typical of the time and of the conditions that commonly characterize a frontier community. The atmosphere was decidedly cosmopolitan. The banker was an Exeter graduate who had had his eye teeth cut as manager of a cow outfit in the La Sal Mountains, where the alteration of brands had been raised to such a fine art that, in due course, he had found his modest DP cunningly converted into a rakish Cartwheel R. In the life of the town he was an outstanding leader, a kindly and generous gentleman.

The real estate broker was a graduate of the Boston Latin School. He, too, had recently emerged from a home on the range, having run for a share of the increase, the big Bar X outfit owned by a wealthy Boston patron. He was a scholar and his familiarity with the classics made him a congenial companion. On coming to town I always looked him up. On one such occasion we were rudely interrupted by the appearance of his former range foreman, a much respected and usually well disposed cow man, brandishing a Winchester, and threatening to kill him unless a note, long overdue, were immediately paid. The intruder violently resented my attempt to intervene. Under his carbine's menacing muzzle I sat, reproached by the consciousness that only a short time before I had imbibed a few friendly glasses with him at the Board of Trade bar and had thus undoubtedly contributed to his excitement. While I dejectedly contemplated an appropriate course, Jim inadvertently pulled the trigger and the ball crashed through the floor so close to my feet that I was instantly galvanized into action, grabbed the gun, pumped the magazine empty and thereby became in Jack's eyes the heroic saviour of his life. Jim's suicide three weeks later may have testified to Jack's jeopardy that day.

The lawyer was a brilliant and beloved character whose early schooling in life had been acquired as a miner and occasional wayfarer in hobo camps. When he rather belatedly took a wife his host of friends tendered him a pre-nuptial dinner which made

<sup>7</sup> Later of Montana.

<sup>8</sup> Mr. Casement said: "Of my many friends the closest were Jerry Black and Rock Channing. Rock's indomitable spirit, which often carried Princeton to victory on the football field, has since won for him highest honors in his profession. In later years he was President of the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company." Dan Casement, *Autobiography of a Joyous Pagan*.

history in the social annals of Grand Junction. I was acclaimed that evening for my grace and skill in dancing the full length of the banquet board carrying my pointer dog, Scamp, in my arms without disturbing a single dish or decoration. When Judge Caswell, who presided with dignity, was unable to restore quiet for the guest of honor to make a few appropriate remarks, Jim Smith promptly solved the dilemma by pulling a Colt .45 from his pants band and threatening the entire crowd.

The headquarters of the Two-half-circle outfit, belonging to "Pate" and Jim Smith, adjoined our home ranch but the brothers were usually to be found in town since they had a large land interest in the Grand Valley and were pioneers in converting that section into its present prosperous position as the peach basket of Colorado. Pate was a graduate of Swarthmore; Jim, of the University of Pennsylvania. Before engaging in the cattle business they had mined silver at Lake City. They were progressive and intelligent in their cattle operations and were the first to introduce and consistently use Hereford bulls. They bought most of their bulls from Gudgell and Simpson. I recall accompanying Pate fifty years ago to that celebrated shrine of American Herefordism on which occasion I must have seen, though all unwittingly, the renowned Beau Brummel himself with many of his sons.

Pate, the bachelor, was a grand companion in any enterprise. Our exploit in measuring the distance from Whitewater to the ranch was remembered so long as any of our contemporaries survived in the country. Drifting out of town one morning on Caliente I overtook Pate at Whitewater headed for the Unaweep with a team hitched to the running gear of a wagon. The distance to the ranch had never been accurately measured. It occurred to us that this was a good time to do it. We measured the circumference of a rear wheel, tied a rag around the felly, lashed a case of beer to the hounds, and set forth with Pate driving from an insecure seat on the bolster, while I, perched on the reach, counted the revolutions. The enterprise was given official recognition by Jim Page, the station agent, who accompanied us on the first mile, at the end of which we gravely dismounted, conscientiously consumed a bottle of beer each and erected a pile of rocks to support an upright barrel stave marked W 1 M. With each succeeding mile this rite was repeated while the piles became smaller and the staves less erect. As we started on our 21st mile, Pate rolled off the bolster and our public spirited undertaking was ignominiously abandoned.

Louis Scott, recently from the East, owned a prune orchard in the Valley and contributed his full share to the spirit of good fellowship that ebbed and flowed around the Windsor Bar and

its genial tender, Joe Delmaine. Louis often joined me at the ranch. One spring we requisitioned an old boat and floated down the Gunnison from Delta to the Junction, shooting ducks enroute. He owned a pair of buckskin Ute ponies named Boodaddy and Fuzzy-Wuzzy, which we drove tandem to a Myopia cart.

With Louis I associate Chappie Morgan, Ralph Henry Barbour and St. John Robinson who sojourned briefly in the Valley. Our group was often enlivened by the presence of Pierre Randolph Morris, a proud scion of two of the nation's founders. Pete owned a ranch at Parachute, far up the Grand.

In retrospect it seems to me that my activities centering in the Unaweep could have left no time for other interests. The fact is, however, that each fall, discarding chaps and spurs, Tot and I hurried East in order to attend the Yale-Princeton game, to refresh old friendships and briefly to pound Fifth Avenue in frock coats and silk hats. On these occasions I always visited Juniata Farm which was administered by my faithful friend, George Collister, during his entire life.

Our most hazardous adventure was on an elk hunt in the fall of '93 on the head of the Williams Fork of Bear River. As we broke camp after killing our full quota of bulls, a heavy snow began quietly to fall. We were not well equipped for rough weather, but anticipated no difficulty in making our way out. We had a string of loose horses and several packs. Billy Hill, our guide, chose the most direct route, which led over the summit of Sleepy Cat, one of the highest mountains on the divide between the Bear and the White. By the time we reached the top the storm had become a howling blizzard. Our packs were slipping and, hoping the storm would abate by morning, we decided to unpack and hole up for the night in the dense spruce forest. We built a big fire of dead trees and John Wooden, the cook, baked a batch of bread in the Dutch oven. The night brought no comfort nor abatement of the tempest. Huddled in the drifts amid our wet soogans and raw elk hides, we took turns busting out at intervals to drag in fresh fuel for our fire. As day broke the fury of the storm increased. We saddled fresh horses, abandoned the remuda and our packs, and taking only our guns, an axe, and the scanty remnant of the last baking, started out afoot, leading our horses and taking turns breaking trail. Soon we were forced to cross a wide field of slide rock. There my horse lost his footing, rolled down the mountain and arose with a broken leg. The others got safely across and took refuge in the timber. I clambered down, unsaddled, shot my horse and made my way back to the scene of our night's discomfort, where I caught a fresh mount and managed

to rejoin my companions. They had attempted to guide me by firing their guns but the fury of the wind was such that I had failed to hear them at a distance of scarcely fifty feet. Billy made a futile attempt to direct our course, but it was soon evident that we were getting nowhere. I then proposed that we follow the first depression we came to, trusting it to lead us to lower ground and less snow. Following this plan we finally emerged from the timber toward evening to look down upon a snow-clad waste of open country which Billy falsely identified as the Milk Creek Basin. We continued down our gully until night again overtook us. Huddled under a spruce around a big fire, we conscientiously apportioned our small dab of bread. Next morning we continued our way and shortly reached and forded a stream of considerable size, which Billy was unable to identify. As a matter of fact we had followed Lost Creek to its junction with the North Fork of White River. Keeping on down the stream we soon sighted a cabin. This was Billy Hill's own habitat but so completely had the storm obliterated all familiar land marks that he failed to recognize it until his partner Billy Wells came out of the door. There was a pile of recently killed bucks in front of the cabin on which we feasted. Wells gave our frosted feet and fingers emergency treatment and we suffered no serious effects from the adventure. It was not until the following August that the snow on Sleepy Cat's summit was melted enough to permit the recovery of our packs. . . .

Tot quit the ranch in the spring of '94. . . . Shortly thereafter, while on the Dominguez round-up, I received from him the following message: "I have the head-ropes on the old man but he's the devil to heel." This reference was to his prospective father-in-law. That he eventually got him heeled was attested by my subsequent summons to act as best man at his marriage to Lucia Edwards. The wedding was a brilliant event, attracting to Cleveland notables from all quarters. I accompanied the happy couple to the boat on which they sailed for a protracted European honeymoon, and returned disconsolate to the Unaweep.

I missed Tot. We had shared many joys, some hardships and much drudgery. Once when I attempted to lighten the latter by painting rosy pictures of future joys, as we assailed with our forks the winter's odorous accumulation behind the stable, Tot tersely remarked: "Heck, you're always pitching anticipation." Evidently the phrase fitted. I guess I've been pitching it ever since.

(NOTE: In *The American Hereford Journal*, 31st Herd Bull Edition, July 1, 1954, there appears a greatly enlarged autobiographical account by Dan D. Casement, entitled—"Random Recollections—The Life and Times of a 20th Century Cowman."—ED.)

## Finis P. Ernest

HARRY E. KELSEY, JR.\*

On Bijou Creek near Deer Trail, Colorado, in the year 1873, John Hittson discovered gold. It was not the placer gold that Green Russell found farther west some thirteen years earlier but a more common variety that would produce wealth and create fortunes long after the mines had closed. The gold that Hittson found was the grass and water of the Bijou range. One of the men who followed Hittson to this haystack El Dorado was Finis P. Ernest.

Fine Ernest—the nickname was an almost automatic derivative of Ernest's given name and was used interchangeably by Ernest's contemporaries—was born on his father's Arkansas plantation on March 19, 1843.<sup>1</sup> He had no opportunity for formal education but possessed a very keen mind, which was more necessary for success than formal education in the early southwest. It is quite likely that he worked in the fields with his father's slaves, as was the custom in the old southwest. A short biographical sketch by Richard E. Leach asserts that Fine Ernest's father owned a large herd of cattle, and that Ernest tended this herd and thus became an experienced cowboy several years before the tremendous expansion of the industry in the southwest.<sup>2</sup>

At the age of eighteen Ernest travelled to Missouri and joined the Confederate forces of General Sterling Price as a private soldier.<sup>3</sup> Although the Confederate loss at Booneville, Missouri, in June, 1861, may have come too early for Ernest's participation, he was probably engaged in the fight at Wilson's Creek in the following August, a fight that ended in the death of the Union General Nathaniel Lyon and victory for the Confederate Army.<sup>4</sup>

Harvey Riddle, the Denver attorney, says that Ernest once admitted being with Quantrill's guerillas during the sack of Law-

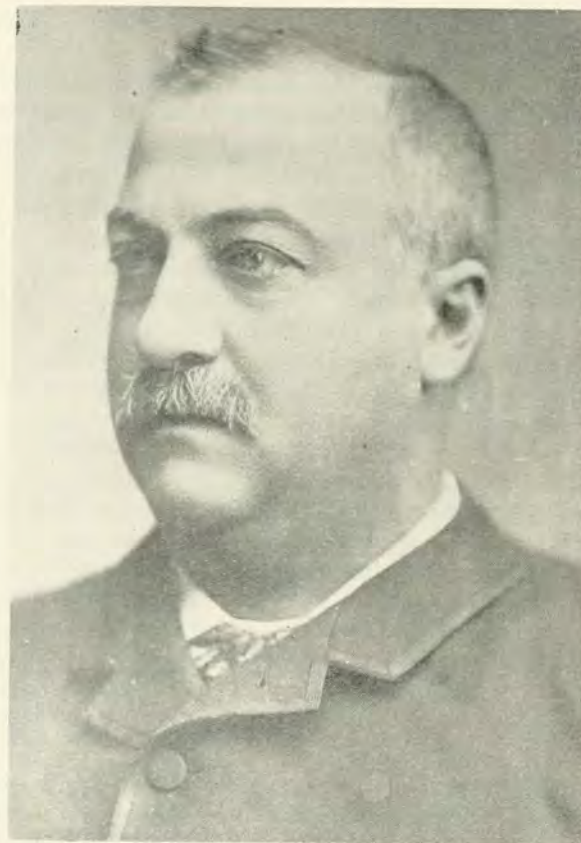
\* Harry E. Kelsey, Jr., who received his Master's Degree in History from the University of Denver in the summer of 1954, prepared his thesis on the subject of Clay Allison. He became so intrigued with the story of Finis P. Ernest while he was doing his thesis work that he decided to write Ernest's story, which we are pleased to print. The article is based upon extensive research and upon an interview with George E. Cranmer of Denver, nephew of Finis P. Ernest.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> Richard E. Leach, "Finis P. Ernest," *The Trail*, VIII (November, 1915), 21. This article, identified as the "13th of a series of sketches of departed pioneers," is probably based on information given to the author by the family.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Loc. cit.* Leach gives Ernest's age as seventeen in this article; he is obviously in error since the war did not begin until April, 1861. The point of his statement is that Ernest joined the C. S. Army in the first year of the war. No evidence has been found to show that Ernest rose above the rank of private but the fact of his subsequent service in Porfirio Diaz' army might indicate better-than-average military aptitude.

<sup>4</sup> This is based on the previous assumption that Ernest joined the C. S. Army in the first year of the war. It seems likely that he would wait until the crops were planted and maturing before leaving the plantation.



FINIS (FINE) P. ERNEST

rence, Kansas, August 21, 1863. Accepting Mr. Riddle's reporting as accurate, the story itself is open to question. In the first place, there is no available evidence to support the account. Furthermore, Ernest had a very sharp wit, and the whole story may have been the product of his imagination, supplemented by stories of the raid heard during his service in Missouri with General Price. The story, as Ernest continued it, was that he later met a person who had lived in Lawrence at the time of the raid. He questioned this person about the raid, without revealing his own participation, and considered the witness' account to be a great exaggeration.<sup>5</sup>

Ernest's sternly religious parents had taught him that gambling was evil; nonetheless, he began playing cards to pass the time and soon became such a consistent winner that he was able

<sup>5</sup> Statement by Harvey Riddle, undated interview in the Biographical File of the Colorado State Historical Society Library, Denver, Colorado.

to hire a "striker" to do K. P. whenever he was assigned that distasteful duty.<sup>6</sup>

At the close of the Civil War he drifted to Mexico and enlisted in the revolutionary army of General Porfirio Diaz. He witnessed the execution of Maximilian in June, 1867, and the election of Juarez.<sup>7</sup>

Ernest claimed that, for a short time during his stay in Mexico, he and a pretty Indian girl lived in a cabin atop Popocatepetl. He and some of his Mexican comrades-in-arms would pass the time gambling in this little house on the sacred mountain.<sup>8</sup>

Shortly after the re-election of Juarez in the fall of 1867, Fine Ernest moved to Palo Pinto County, Texas.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps it was on this trip back across the border that he was wounded in a gambling affray. Ernest and two Texas cowboys stopped at a saloon in one of the lawless little towns that dotted the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. They began playing cards with the local professional, and, after awhile, one of the Texans accused the Mexican dealer of taking his own cards off the bottom of the deck. They both drew, but the Texan was faster, and the gambler fell dead at the table. The three then ran for the door, firing at random into the crowd that tried to block their escape. Some of the dead man's friends returned the fire, and Ernest was wounded in the right upper-thigh. His gambling partners half-carried, half-dragged him to his horse, and they departed in haste for the Rio Grande, pursued by the dead man's friends.

Before they were able to reach the river, Ernest became so weakened from the loss of blood that he knew he could not remain in the saddle. About that time, he noticed a lighted building off to the left of the road, and he swung his horse in that direction. George Cranmer, to whom Ernest told this story, says that it was a Spanish tradition—borrowed from the Arabs—that a fugitive seeking asylum in one's home could not be refused, regardless of his crime. The building turned out to be the hacienda of a rather prominent Mexican general, who, so the story goes, happened to be on an extended journey into the interior. However, the general's "charming wife and two beautiful daughters" were at home, and they were as good as their tradition of refuge. Without a question they allowed Ernest to enter and saw that his wounds were dressed.

<sup>6</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954. Mr. Cranmer was Ernest's nephew; both his father—W. H. H. Cranmer—and Ernest married daughters of John Hittson.

<sup>7</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>9</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22. After being defeated in the fall elections, Diaz retired to his farm in Oaxaca to await a more propitious moment for re-entering the political arena. Ralph Roeder, *Juarez and His Mexico* (New York: The Viking Press, 1947), II, p. 686. The political defeat of his leader may have been the deciding factor in Ernest's move to Texas.

Ernest spent a month recuperating in these agreeable surroundings, and then proceeded in safety to the opposite side of the Rio Grande. Before he left he emptied all the gold coins from a money belt that he wore and divided the money with his feminine protectors.<sup>10</sup>

John Hittson,<sup>11</sup> later to become Ernest's father-in-law, and W. H. H. Cranmer,<sup>12</sup> who later married Hittson's older daughter, were also probably living in Palo Pinto County at this time, and it is possible that Ernest became acquainted with them there. In 1868 Ernest drove a herd over the Pecos Trail into Colorado, crossing the Arkansas at the present site of Rocky Ford.<sup>13</sup>

In 1869, probably near Cimarron, New Mexico, he married Elizabeth Stockton, whom R. E. Leach identifies as "the seventeen-year-old daughter of the well-known New Mexican cattleman."<sup>14</sup> She was possibly the daughter of Tom Stockton, who built the Clifton House just south of present-day Raton, New Mexico, in 1867; Tom Stockton and his brother M. B. Stockton were at that time the only prominent New Mexico cattlemen of that name.<sup>15</sup>

Whether Ernest and his bride remained in northeastern New Mexico or returned to the ranch in Palo Pinto County, Texas, is not certain. Lamar Moore, who has made an amazingly detailed and accurate study of early cattlemen in the Southwest, says that Ernest's "first venture in the cow business was in New Mexico in 1871."<sup>16</sup> Cattle rustlers and Indians were increasing their depredations in the Palo Pinto country, and this fact could have induced Ernest to move. John Hittson, who ran 50,000 head of cattle on that range, began to transfer his herds to Colorado in 1873 for that very reason. He had acquired the Six-Spring Ranch near the Deer Trail station of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, and, though he owned only one-half section of land, he controlled "all the water existing for many miles in all directions."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954. Mr. Cranmer later noticed the scar when he and Ernest were in the Turkish baths located in the basement of the Barclay Building. He questioned Ernest about the scar, and Ernest told him the story given here.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph G. McCoy, *Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest* (Kansas City, Missouri: Ramsey, Millett & Hudson, 1874), p. 345, erroneously calls it "Palo Pinto County." James S. Brisbin, *The Beef Bonanza; or How to Get Rich on the Plains* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1882), p. 75 refers to Palo Pinto County as "Pinto County."

<sup>12</sup> Edgar C. McMechen, John Hittson, Cattle King," *The Colorado Magazine*, XI (September, 1934), p. 169.

<sup>13</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Ernest was probably not the owner of this herd, for he had left Mexico only a few months before. In addition, E. C. McMechen notes that "the only cattlemen to use the old Chisholm Trail into New Mexico in the year 1868 were: John Chisum (Chisholm), John Hittson, Rube Gray and a brother-in-law (White), John and Tom Owens, Martin Cosner and the Snyders." McMechen, *op. cit.*, p. 167, quoting J. M. Hunter (Ed.), *The Trail Drivers of Texas*, Vol. II, p. 476.

<sup>14</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Interview, Clarence Stockton, March 25, 1954.

<sup>16</sup> Lamar Moore, "Cattle Brands" (microfilm copy of an undated, unpublished manuscript in the files of the Colorado State Archives, Denver, Colorado), pages unnumbered.

<sup>17</sup> McCoy, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

By 1874 Ernest's cattle herd had increased to such an extent that he was able to lease a part of the Maxwell Land Grant and drive 3,000 head of cattle onto this new range.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the Panic of 1873, which plunged cattle prices to the bottom and, coupled with the recent demand for a better grade of beef, turned the eyes of Texas cattlemen to the grasslands of Colorado and New Mexico, had some influence on this move.

In the fall of 1874 there was a great rush of settlers to the Maxwell Land Grant; settlers rushed in to homestead the nearly two million acre tract because the land department of the national government had rejected the claim of the Maxwell Land Grant and Railway Company to ownership of the area and had opened the land to general settlement.<sup>19</sup> Among these settlers was George W. Coe, who was destined to become prominent through his association with Billy the Kid. In the spring of 1875 these settlers began to plow the grazing land and to drive the cattle out of their fields. In Coe's own words, "The little squad of inoffensive pioneers endeavored to protect, by fair means or foul, their precious and hard-earned assets." The settlers finally began filling the cattle with buckshot, and Fine Ernest swore out warrants against some twenty-five of them. On May 4, 1875, these men left their fields and their families and journeyed into Cimarron, then the county seat of Colfax County, only to have the trial postponed for several days. The new date arrived, and the trial was postponed again.

After two weeks of postponement, Clay Allison, from the Texas Panhandle, whose reputation as a quick-drawing gunfighter had preceded him into New Mexico, heard of the difficulty and decided that the settlers needed a champion. He rode into Cimarron on a Saturday and told the settlers to be packed and ready to leave by Monday. As he walked away from their gathering, he saw Ernest walking toward him down the street. After a short exchange of words, "Allison tapped him suggestively on the head-piece, whirled him around a couple of times, and then, with proper emphasis and a few descriptive adjectives, continued; [sic] 'Now take this advice, you dirty cur, and don't let the sun go down on you in this town.'" According to Coe, Ernest did not hesitate to comply.

On the following Monday at ten in the morning the trial was held, as Allison had promised it would be. Each of the farmers was directed to give bond of \$100 and to appear at the fall term of

<sup>18</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pages unnumbered. The files of *The Cimarron News* for September, 1874, indicate that Ernest was not only well-known in Cimarron at that time but was also prominent in Civic affairs; therefore, it seems likely that he moved to Colfax County some time before 1874.

<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that throughout 1874 the Maxwell Land Grant and Railway Company published notices in *The Cimarron News* that trespassers would be prosecuted, if necessary, in the courts. This notice, of course, did not give the company any better title to the land, but it should have served as an indication that the decision of the land office would be protested by the company.

the court.<sup>20</sup> Coe does not give the final outcome of the case; perhaps, with the excitement over the murder of Rev. F. J. Tolby and the consequent mob rule in the fall of 1875, the matter was simply forgotten.

In the spring of 1876 Ernest, whose wife had recently died, moved his herds to a ranch on Bijou Creek near Deer Trail, Colorado. His cattle numbered close to 7,000 head by that time, and he undoubtedly wanted a quieter range than the troubled Cimarron for his expanding herd.<sup>21</sup> Then, too, mob-ruled Colfax County was hardly a good environment for his four small children.

A number of other Texas cattlemen were beginning to move to Deer Trail; among these were: W. H. H. Cranmer, Joseph P. Turner, Henry Gebhard, W. J. Wilson, and Andrew D. Wilson. All of these men later became prominent Denver businessmen.<sup>22</sup>

It is said that this entire "Texas colony" built Southern style homes on their Deer Trail ranches with high porticos, separate kitchens, and the other characteristics of the southern manse.<sup>23</sup> George Cranmer recalls only John Hittson's spacious mansion; he asserts that the other men spent only the summer on their ranches, and rented homes in Denver for the winter.<sup>24</sup>

Ernest did not neglect the social side of life, and on February 13, 1879, he was among the guests at the Valentine's Eve Costume Ball given by ex-Governor William Gilpin in his residence on Champa Street. Most of the men wore plain evening dress, and many wore masks; the ladies, however, were attired in imaginative costumes of silk and velvet and adorned with plumes and jewels such as one would not expect to find in a frontier town.

A description of the costumes worn by the ladies was carried next day in the *Rocky Mountain News*, doubtless for the edification of the less fortunate subscribers. The article said, in part:

Mrs. Gilpin, the hostess, appeared as a court lady in a magnificent combination of garnet velvet and white satin, with overdress of print applique, earrings and necklace of diamonds, emeralds and burnt topaz. . . . Mrs. Judge H. A. Clough made a charming Madame la Pompadour. . . . Miss Archer was Joan of Arc, in black and blue silk, with coat of mail. . . . Miss Sallie Jones was a chocolate [whatever that might be] in pink and white.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> George W. Coe as told to Nan Hillary Harrison. See her *Frontier Fighter* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), pp. 10-15. Lamar Moore summarizes the events as follows: "There was a bunch of nesters on Sugarite Creek, and the cattle ruined his crops [his cattle ruined their crops]. They in turn dogged and killed the cattle until Ernest swore out warrants against them. However, due to the interference of Clay Allison in their behalf the case was dropped." Moore, *op. cit.*, pages unnumbered.) This summary may have been based on Coe's account, although the wording seems to indicate an interview with an early settler.

<sup>21</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pages unnumbered.

<sup>22</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>23</sup> McMeichen, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>24</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>25</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, February 14, 1879, p. 4.

Perhaps it was in the stately Hittson home that Finis P. Ernest married Salina Virginia Hittson in the spring of 1880. Salina was probably about eighteen at the time and was quite pretty and charming.<sup>26</sup> She was very popular in Denver Society and was doubtless quite a "catch" for Ernest, who himself was considered the most eligible bachelor in the area.<sup>27</sup> By the early 1890's the family had moved to a large house at 1579 Emerson, which was at that time in the middle of the "acceptable" Denver residential area.<sup>28</sup>

Salina became an excellent mother for Ernest's four children and in the ensuing years had five children of her own. George Cranmer, whose father, W. H. H. Cranmer, died when George was only seven years old, says that Ernest loved children and was a great pal to his own children and to George himself.<sup>29</sup>

Ernest often took the boys out hunting in his buggy. They would shoot rabbits or doves on the same land on which Mr. Cranmer's home is now located, then drive the buggy down to the cottonwood groves near Cherry Creek and cook a picnic dinner along the banks of the creek.<sup>30</sup>

Fine Ernest's gambling skill was legendary in early Denver. Joshua Grozier, an attorney for Ernest, tells the following story of Ernest's skill with cards:

On one occasion three men from Cuba came to Denver to play poker with Ernest, having heard of his reputation as a gambler through some mutual friends. They expected to break him. Mrs. Ernest heard of the proposed game and begged her husband not to go. He persisted, however, and Mrs. Ernest sat up all night waiting for his return. He came home in the morning looking as though he had been run through a wringer and Mrs. Ernest jumped to the conclusion that he had lost heavily. She began to berate him, saying that he would ruin them and lose all their money. Ernest listened for some time without making any reply and then began to pull large rolls of bills from every pocket. After he had emptied all, the money was counted. He had \$77,000 on his person.<sup>31</sup>

George Cranmer describes his uncle as being well over six feet tall and of a very powerful build with great, powerful hands. He had a sharp sense of humor and loved to tell stories, but he could assume an inscrutable "poker face." Mr. Cranmer recalls that

<sup>26</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>27</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, September 10, 1879, p. 8. It has not been possible to establish the exact date of Ernest's marriage to Salina Hittson; an article in the *Rocky Mountain News*, July 9, 1880, p. 5, notes that Ernest and his wife are going on "a tour through the mountain resorts."

<sup>28</sup> Agnes Leonard Hill, *The Colorado Blue Book* (Denver: James R. Ives & Co., 1892) p. 167. The building has recently been converted into an office building; the front porch has been removed, and the building has been covered with a stucco coating, but the general outline of the exterior remains much the same as it originally was.

<sup>29</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, June 2, 1954.

<sup>31</sup> Statement by Joshua Grozier, undated interview in the Biographical File of the Colorado State Historical Society Library, Denver, Colorado.

H. A. W. Tabor and E. H. Harriman, the railroad magnate, were among the people who played poker with Ernest.<sup>32</sup>

The following gambling story that involved E. H. Harriman was told to Mr. Cranmer by Horace W. Bennett. Harriman had been in San Francisco on a business trip and had been "cleaned" in a poker game with some wealthy San Franciscans. When he passed through Denver on his return to the East, he was told of Fine Ernest's gambling skill, and he immediately invited Ernest to return with him to San Francisco for another game with these men. Ernest accepted, and the two travelled to San Francisco in Harriman's private railroad car; the game was begun immediately. Nothing unusual happened for several hours; then, when Ernest had the deal, he gave every man in the game a good hand. Ernest raised every bet, and all the other players, thinking he had an unusually good hand, dropped from the game. Naturally Ernest won, and naturally everyone wanted to see his cards. He refused to show his hand and said that he had to get back to his cattle, anyway. The players insisted on seeing the hand, and Ernest finally agreed to leave the cards in a sealed envelope in Harriman's possession, on the condition that the envelope not be opened until he had gone. The players agreed, and Ernest sealed the cards in an envelope and left. When the seal was broken, it was found that he had won the pot on a pair of deuces.<sup>33</sup>

Lamar Moore says that Ernest secured water front acreage along the Bijou that allowed him to control 1,500,000 acres.<sup>34</sup> While this hardly seems probable, it is known that he was considered to own the largest herds in Colorado in the 1880's. In 1882 he was said to own 25,000 head of cattle; this was after he had purchased all ranching property and 5,000 head of livestock from S. E. Wetzel for the sum of \$110,000.<sup>35</sup> In 1884 he drove in an additional 10,000 head of Texas cattle;<sup>36</sup> he added another 20,000 head in 1885, and this brought his total holdings to 36,000 head.<sup>37</sup> He imported so much blooded Durham stock to improve his herd that the newspapers began to refer to him by the alliterative title "Duke de Durham."<sup>38</sup>

He was on the Board of Directors of the Exchange Bank of Denver<sup>39</sup> and a charter member of the Denver Chamber of Com-

<sup>32</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>33</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>34</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pages unnumbered.

<sup>35</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, February 14, 1882, p. 8; February 18, 1882, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, March 15, 1884, p. 2, quoting the *Trinidad News* (date not given).

<sup>37</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pages unnumbered.

<sup>38</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, March 26, 1884, p. 2. It was then popularly supposed that a Durham bull and a Texas cow would produce a calf "nearly two-thirds Durham." (Erisbin, *op. cit.*, p. 70.) McCoy, *op. cit.*, p. 238, says: "But little trace of the mother is transmitted to her offspring, which sell upon the eastern markets quite as well as other Durham grades of equal fatness."

<sup>39</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, January 29, 1879, p. 4.

merce, which was organized January 8, 1884.<sup>40</sup> At one time he was president of the American National Bank of Denver.<sup>41</sup>

In 1889 Ernest and his brother-in-law, W. H. H. Cranmer, liquidated most of their cattle and ranch holdings to finance the construction of the Ernest and Cranmer Building,<sup>42</sup> Denver's first modern office building, located at Seventeenth and Curtis Streets. An architect's conception of the proposed building, published in the *Denver Times*, November 23, 1889, pictures the exterior of the building in exactly the same form and proportions that it had before the recent exterior renovations. Estimated construction cost was \$400,000. The eight-story building was to be constructed in "the style known as the slow burning . . . each story . . . [being] supported independently by iron columns and girders." Brick for the exterior was shipped from St. Louis, the red sandstone trim coming from Colorado quarries.<sup>43</sup>

Ernest and three Denver associates, Henry M. Porter, J. A. Thatcher, and Dennis Sullivan, purchased and improved a square mile parcel of land near Galveston, Texas, at a cost of about \$160,000. The U. S. Government paid the promoters \$170,000 for the part of the land bordering the Gulf and later built a seawall and boulevard on this strip. In addition to the construction of a street car line to connect the subdivision with Galveston, the promoters had to give away 2,000 lots to encourage purchase of the remaining lots.<sup>44</sup>

In 1891, Ernest combined with Jacob Scherrer, George W. Ballantine, Frank Church, William Geddis, I. B. Porter, James M. Wilson and others to plat the Alta Sita and Denver-side subdivisions in East St. Louis.<sup>45</sup>

In the early 1900's, probably the spring of 1903, the Ernest family moved to St. Louis, where Ernest had additional real estate holdings. The family returned every summer to visit relatives in Denver and to vacation in the popular Manitou area.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, January 9, 1884, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

<sup>43</sup> *The Denver Times*, November 23, 1889, section 2, page 11. The *Times* evidently could not resist the obvious pun on Ernest's given name, so the article was headlined "The Finest."

<sup>44</sup> Henry M. Porter, *Autobiography of Henry M. Porter* (Denver, 1932, no publisher listed), pp. 58-59. Ernest and Porter became acquainted in Colfax County, New Mexico, where they were both on the Board of Directors of The Industrial Association of New Mexico, which was a sort of Chamber of Commerce for Colfax County (*The Cimarron News*, October 10, 1874, p. 4).

<sup>45</sup> Leach, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>46</sup> Interview, George E. Cranmer, June 2, 1954.

On March 27, 1910, Ernest was struck by an automobile at the corner of Seventeenth and Champa Streets in Denver; the automobile was driven by Mrs. E. B. Lunbeck, whose husband was bookkeeper for the Denver Type Foundry. The accident, given only a small space at the top of page four, was graphically described by a reporter for the *Rocky Mountain News*:

Mrs. Lunbeck was accompanied by her husband when the accident occurred. According to witnesses, she was driving slowly, but Ernest became confused between two automobiles. Mrs. Lunbeck's car struck him in the back and knocked him forward. He was rolled along a few feet, but the wheels did not pass over him.

Immediately Mr. and Mrs. Lunbeck went to the assistance of Ernest and summoned a physician. Before the doctor arrived Ernest was taken to the hotel.

Samuel C. Adams, a Denver real estate broker and Ernest's friend, drove him to the Brown Palace Hotel, where he was treated by the house physician. Ernest walked from the automobile to the elevator and remarked to several friends that he was not hurt.<sup>47</sup>

Regardless of how he felt immediately following the accident, he soon began to suffer strokes of temporary paralysis. The attacks were short but severe, and later in 1910 Ernest divided his \$5,000,000 estate, half going to his wife, and most of the remainder being divided among his nine children. At the same time he drew up a will which provided for disposition of the remainder of the estate, amounting to "several hundred thousand dollars," in much the same way; no sizable bequests were made outside his immediate family.<sup>48</sup>

In June, 1912, Ernest visited Denver again. On the night of June 20, 1912, while returning to St. Louis, he suffered a stroke so severe that he had to be removed from the train at St. Joseph, Missouri, and hospitalized. He was later removed to St. Louis, and he died at his home in that city on the night of June 26, 1912.<sup>49</sup>

Finis P. Ernest, though perhaps not a typical Denver pioneer, is representative of a bold, hard-working, keen-minded element in the post-Civil War west. His type was exemplary of the initiative, enterprise, and independence of thought and action that has characterized the west in popular fiction.

<sup>47</sup> *Rocky Mountain News*, March 27, 1910, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> *The Denver Post*, July 4, 1912, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> *The Denver Republican*, June 27, 1912, p. 1.

## Reminiscences of My Grandmother Maranda Ann Montgomery Loveland

By HOBART LOVELAND

(Arranged and submitted by Harold M. Dunning.)\*

The first recollection of my grandmother,<sup>1</sup> was when I was about five years old and I had the honor of sleeping with her all night; of course the big attraction was her feather bed. My brothers and I fought for this honor.

This all took place at her home in Lakewood, Colorado, west of Denver, where grandfather passed away in 1894. I was born in 1888 so the year must have been about 1893. We lived with

\* Harold M. Dunning, Loveland, Colorado, has written many articles about Colorado pioneers, some of which have appeared in *The Colorado Magazine*. For some time he has been collecting all possible data pertaining to W. A. H. Loveland, for whom his home city is named.

<sup>1</sup> Maranda Ann Montgomery Loveland, second wife of William Austin Hamilton Loveland, capitalist, railway builder, and pioneer was born in Chatham, Mass., May 30, 1826. He died at Lakewood, his country residence, near Denver, Colo., December 17, 1894. Mr. Loveland fought in the Mexican War, followed the gold rush to California in 1849, and came to Colorado ten years later with the Pikes Peak gold rush. He was one of the founders of Golden, Colorado. Through his influence Golden was for several years the capital of the Territory. Mr. Loveland early became a political leader of the state and was chairman of the Statehood Convention. He was president of the Colorado Central Railroad and was actively connected with many business enterprises. His first wife was Philena Shaw of Brighton, Ill. She died in 1854. On August 25, 1856 he married Miranda Ann Montgomery of Alton, Ill. They had two sons: Francis W. Loveland and William Leonard Loveland.—Will C. Ferril, Ed., *Sketches of Colorado*, Vol. I. Western Press Bur. Co., (Denver, 1911), pp. 278-279.



her for a short time after grandfather, Loveland, had gone, too. We were three little boys in red bath robes<sup>2</sup>—and giving everyone a merry old time. There was the old red windmill in the back yard—how fascinating that was to three youngsters! There were the horses and cows, milking time and the rich cream that we always had on the table.



"GRANDMA" LOVELAND CAMPS OUT

I remember it all so well, the yellow rose bushes with their spicy smell; the old-fashioned flower gardens on each side of the walk leading to the road, no order, just thrown in anywhere, but grandmother knew every flower and she seemed almost to worship them. One of the bright spots on the place was her conservatory of flowers and plants. She was always nursing and fondling God's gifts to mankind. The Autumn's crisp leaves with their blaze of glory, their fire-like foliage burning brightly were always hanging in her room. She loved them. She lived with them.

Beyond all of this were the rolling foothills with their wild flowers and for a beautiful background were the Rocky Mountains, their magnificent color, their snow-capped peaks, all so grand and majestic. One never forgets impressions like these that have been so instilled on the young mind.

We had to walk about a mile to the little red school house. Now and then a jack rabbit would jump out from behind the sagebrush and scare the daylight out of us. One of our greatest pleasures on a hot day was to wade in the irrigation ditch. At bedtime

<sup>2</sup> Francis Jerome, Edwin Benedict and Abner Hobart Loveland.

grandmother would tell us stories of "injuns" and how the people of Golden would use grandfather's store for a blockhouse from attack. The trip that her boys took up in Middle Park and were lost most of the summer, was another favorite story. How the early inhabitants would spy Indians in the distance and remain in hiding until all was clear and safe, grandmother being one of the early inhabitants.

One day, grandmother and the rest of us took a trip up on top of Table Mountain; the incident that I remember was when my brother, Edwin, fell out of the carriage and we didn't miss him for quite a while. We drove back and there he was sound asleep in the road. We would take trips up Clear Creek Canyon and once up Chimney Guleh—what a trip that was! We would go about ten feet and then brake the carriage. This went on and on until we finally reached the top. No one can really know what this means unless they have tried it. We would take a picnic lunch and large watermelons along; and "a big time was had by all." Yes, those early days of mine, living with grandmother in Lakewood will always be remembered by me.

Let us start at the beginning, what was the motive behind all this; there always is a motive, and that motive was the pioneer blood that ran to overflowing in the veins of both grandmother and grandfather, whose ancestors for many generations back, were of adventurous and roaming dispositions; most of them were pioneers.

In 1859 the tales of the gold discoveries in Colorado brought back the lure of the West, an experience that grandfather had as a Forty-Niner of the gold discoveries of California; so he and grandmother with their two boys, the older being two and the other an infant, braved the hazards of the western plains and started on their perilous journey with a wagon train with goods suited to the region. They weren't very far on their way when the two boys were in the throes of whooping cough. I am sure that this didn't help much in the face of the many other anxieties that they had to meet. They always lived with dreadful fear of Indian attack, the massacre that might come to them through the savage warfare of the Indians, their killings, the burning of all their possessions, slaughtering of their animals and the greatest terror of all was the brutal scalping that could come to them by these savages.

Then there was the way they had to exist, bathing and washing their clothes when the opportunity presented itself. I believe that the greatest kick that grandmother had on the trip was the cooking of the meals over fires of buffalo chips, this she told over and over. Then there was the baking of biscuits and corn bread in Dutch

ovens, flavored with sand blowing up by the wagons, the animals and the winds that sent the tumbleweeds rolling by. There was the danger of rattlesnakes. When night came they would retire to their beds and be lulled to sleep by such songs as the long, loud and wailing cry of wolves accompanied with the barking of coyotes. Added to this, they were always in fear of "INJUNS . . . INJUNS."

They kept driving, plodding, turning of wheels and eating dust, but God was close and attentive, ever ready to hear their prayers. Thus they escaped the horrors that might have befallen them, and finally they arrived at their destination to start the new life that was a part of the building of the great State of Colorado and which became an epoch in its settlement and advancement.

Grandfather has been referred to as the "Prince of Pioneers," I am sure that my *Grandmother*, Maranda Loveland was a *Princess* . . . of Pioneers.

When I was about ten years old we moved back to Evanston, Illinois and grandmother came with us. (Grandfather Loveland had passed away in 1894 and this was in about 1898.) Grandmother was the grandest baby-sitter in the world as she was always living for us boys and trying to make life interesting for us; sometimes I believe that we made life interesting for her. She would take us swimming at the beach of the Northwestern University; what a thrill we had! She took us to Lincoln Park on the open trolley cars. When I was older, we were always taking trips together. She loved to go places and I loved to go with her. One time we spent the day in Golden and had our lunch in the park that grandfather gave to the city; she told me how she and grandfather would nurse and water the trees that they had set out, striving to make the place look like a park. What a shame that this park never seemed to be appreciated, although as Miss Mary Hoyt<sup>3</sup> in one of her letters to me mentioned, "I only wish we might have found you sooner. We were looking for Loveland heirs several years ago when the city wanted to sell the beautiful park, that your grandfather had given them in the early days of Golden's settlement."

We always went to church together, grandmother was very religious. Always had her Bible by her side and spent a good part of her evenings reading it. She also read the daily paper, every word of it, why shouldn't she, at one time in his life, grandfather owned several papers. She was a good Democrat and anybody that the party put up was good enough for her. We had a lot of fun kidding her, trying to make her a Republican, but no soap.

When she was about eighty years old her daughter-in-laws were always bickering over her diamonds; what does she do but

<sup>3</sup> Retired Librarian of the Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado.

sell them and take a trip to Europe to see the "Passion Play" in the village of Oberammergau. This was on a Cook's Tour. She had a wonderful time. So that was that.

One morning she was dressed up in her old clothes to run down to New York City for the day. My mother took one look at her and exclaimed, "Mother, you can't go to town looking like that, why don't you dress up?" Her come-back was, "So what, do you think that I am going to wear out my good clothes on people that I don't know!"

One day she came down the hall grinning all over. I said, "Grandmother, why so happy?" Her reply was, "You know that Mrs. Abernathy and I are getting along fine to day." (That was mother's mother who also lived with us.) So I said, "How come?" "Oh, we aren't talking," was her cunning reply.

One Sunday morning, coming out of church in Ormond, Florida, grandmother and I were introduced to Mr. John D. Rockefeller and then the bout started, back and forth they went at each other over their ages, he was just in the prime of life and no one could ever guess his age, this went on for about half an hour; I am sure that grandmother won, as the old man went out to his car chuckling to himself. This must have been one of the best church services he had ever attended.

When she was living with me in Miami, Florida, we went over to Miami Beach for a swim, I thought that she was all set, she was, she was swimming with the Governor of Pennsylvania, she could pick them out from nowhere.

When one of the children was baptised, she attended all dolled up in her best and finest silks, you could hear her coming a block off, she sat on the sofa with the preacher, her fan going a mile a minute. She had captivated his attention. Just as soon as I could I asked her what she was trying to do, she said, "I was just trying to see if I had it in me." She did, as the preacher has never forgotten it.

Once while staying in Denver, she was taken ill. An operation seemed imperative. So Mrs. Brown, (I have forgotten her first name), fixed up one of her bedrooms as a hospital room. Grandmother had her operation there and recovered in good health. None of us ever knew of it until later in life. She was like that.

When in Michigan, she over-indulged in corned-beef and cabbage, how she loved it! The next morning she had pneumonia and her heart almost stopped beating; the nurse thought quickly and gave her a shot of whisky in her arm, this saved her life. She came home to the farm at New City, New York to recuperate and her legs started to swell, so we called the doctor.

He looked at her and said, "Madam Loveland, you will have to stay in bed for about a year, you have phlebitis."

She said, "You little whippersnapper get out of my way. God gave me these legs to walk on and I am going to walk on them." She did, she could out walk me.

Every night, my wife and I would visit her before retiring. She would greet us with a remark, "Tell me something funny, a nice story, I want to laugh." This was a must and it kept me busy.

Let me quote from a letter I received lately from a daughter of a pioneer in Golden: "I recall your father<sup>4</sup> and mother<sup>5</sup> very well. It was quite an event in my young life when your mother came calling, riding in her landau with the little French parasol cocked at a becoming angle over her head. Then fruit, cake and wine were served. Your mother and father gave the land where our church, Presbyterian, stands. She also signed the petition for the founding of the Presbyterian Church. The church has been enlarged and altered and a good parsonage added. The petition (copy) for founding the church hangs on the wall."

I am also quoting from a letter from Miss Hoyt: "Your grandmother Loveland, was well known to me, when I was a young girl. She was a great friend of my Grandmother, Mrs. J. M. Johnson. She was a fascinating person and I enjoyed listening to their many thrilling stories of pioneer days."

Grandmother loved people, people loved her. A day very seldom went by that she didn't receive a letter. People never forgot her and the loving and witty disposition that was hers; and many would say that she had the most unforgettable and lovable personality that they had ever met.

When she passed away in my arms on the farm,<sup>6</sup> I lost the closest and dearest friend I ever had.

## Glimpses of Kiowa County

BY F. L. BEHYMER\*

Although I've never considered myself to be a Colorado pioneer, or even the son of a pioneer, yet I have some recollections of early days on the prairies of the state.

My parents, Perry and Julia Behymer, came to the State from North Central Indiana just about ten years after it had been admitted to the Union.

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<sup>5</sup> Frances E. Loveland, wife of W. L. Loveland.

<sup>6</sup> Nanuet, New York.

\* Mr. Behymer, State Printing Commission, was for thirteen years editor of the *Farmer and Miner*, Frederick, Colo. He has written this reminiscence upon request.—Ed.

Reaching Pueblo, Dad learned of a proposed irrigation project that was to run into the Arkansas Valley and heard of a place named Arlington that seemed destined to become a real city in that portion of the state. Accordingly, he filed on a homestead claim about one and one-half miles from the little burg, and it was at that place I learned some few things about rattlesnakes, centipedes, coyotes, and what it meant to live in that dry western end of Kiowa County. He built a two-room frame house that was to be our home for the three years necessary to prove up the claim. He later took up a timber claim and did the necessary work to get clear titles to it.

Our only neighbors, two families by the names of Foote and Ware, inter-related, had homes on claims between our place and the little town, too far away from us to do much visiting.

In 1887, the Missouri Pacific built their line from Pueblo, through Eads to Kansas City. Mother and I watched impatiently for the first passenger train to come around the bend, about twenty miles across the prairie; Dad was in town to welcome it at the new depot. Finally, we saw the smoke from the engine, saw the white steam, as the engineer whistled for the stop at Arlington; then the faint sound of the whistle reached our ears. The town then began to take on airs and became a shipping point for the cattlemen. At that time it boasted of a two-story hotel, a barbershop, a saloon and a few other small establishments.

Father built a small business building and opened up a small general store. His first order of the wholesale house was expected to be enough stock to last for an entire year. The next day after it arrived and before it was unpacked, a big cattle outfit dropped by and bought the entire stock. Encouraged by this unexpected windfall, Dad reordered, increasing the order to some extent. But "Lightning didn't strike twice" in the same place and accordingly he had quite a well-stocked establishment.

Our home was located near the divide road used by the cattlemen to drive their herds of horses and cattle to rangeland.

Dad owned two horses, one a big bay gelding, and the other a well-trained dapple dun cow pony named Dandy. He generally used the latter as his mount for the daily trek to and from town. One morning he decided to use the bay horse and staked Dandy out on the plains to graze. A fairly large herd of horses came past the place and Dandy became excited and broke away from his picket-pin. I was heartbroken when I saw him disappear into the herd, but an expert wrangler easily lassoed him and brought him back to the picket-pin and fastened him securely so he could continue his grazing. Another time, Dandy figured in a rather excit-

ing experience. Father used to carry a gallon jug when he went to town and bring back a jug full of milk each evening. He tied a light strap to the handle and would throw this over his shoulder and let the jug hang at his side. One morning Dad started out. Dandy was a trifle more frisky than usual. As Mother and I watched, the pony was speeding up with Dad hanging on for dear life. The strap slipped out of place and the jug flew around in front of the pony's nose. It was then he used one of his cow-pony tricks by throwing out his front legs and stopping very suddenly. Dad kept on going, turned a complete somersault and landed in a sitting position on the dusty, sandy road. Dad, although shaken up a bit, was uninjured except for his pride, for he knew he was being watched. Dandy raced into town while Dad walked the rest of the way.

Money was a pretty scarce article in those days and a five-cent piece was the smallest piece, except for a few of those old fashioned two-cent copper pieces. There were no pennies used. I learned how to sail the small flat stones and decided that coins would sail longer than the stones; so I opened my small bank and started throwing coins out over the prairie, until my mother stopped me. I've often wondered whether or not any of those coins have ever been picked up.

Since our house afforded the only shade for miles, on hot sunny days rattlesnakes, both large and small, slithered into the shade. Learning of this, Mother always kept a hoe and a long-handled shovel at the back door. Seeing one of the reptiles, she would pin it down with the hoe and proceed to cut its head off with the shovel. She put many a snake out of existence in this manner.

In 1887 came the Big Blizzard, remembered by all of the old-timers. Father had assured Mother he would never venture out in one. So, when the winds began to howl, Mother brought in an extra supply of coal and wood and battened down the place in preparation for a long hard storm. Things were cozy and warm when something fell against the front door. On investigation, we discovered that Dad had failed in his promise and was lying in the snow, exhausted and nearly frozen after his mile-and-a-half walk. However, he suffered no ill effects and was able to go back to town the next day. One of our neighbors was not so fortunate, for a big steer that was drifting with the wind plunged through a window of their home and almost wrecked the house.

As stated above, Arlington boasted of an old-fashioned saloon, operated by a man whose given name was Jake, who had often been accused of adulterating the bar whiskey, which he bought by the barrel. The day following the Big Blizzard, he came into Dad's

store. Upon being asked how the cold weather had affected his business, he answered: "Huh! Whiskey's all froze up."

As time rolled around for proving up both the Homestead and Timber claims, Dad began to look around for a change of residence. About that time, his relatives in Indiana began writing about the natural gas discoveries at Elwood, Indiana, and glowing reports were given of the new city of Spokane, Washington.

As he was undecided as to where he should go, he flipped a coin and the Hoosier city turned out to be the choice.

Thus the flip of a coin became a factor in my own life.

Finally, in 1930, I came back to the Centennial State for my permanent residence.