

An Indian Campaign and Buffalo Hunting with "Buffalo Bill"

By Luke Cahill¹

Everything was in fine shape on the great plains in 1868—grass good, water plenty, buffalo and antelope in fine condition, and all the Indian tribes at peace with each other and only at war with the white man. The Red man could do as he pleased. The Government itself was bewildered and at a standstill and daily becoming more helpless.

President Andrew Johnson issued a proclamation declaring war against the tribes of Indians known as the Cheyennes, Comanches and Arapahoes. Those were the largest tribes and most desperate Indians on the great western plains. General Grant was the General of the United States Army. He appointed General Phillip H. Sheridan to take command and organize an army and make a winter campaign against the Indians. Colonel Sturgis of the 7th Cavalry was on furlough and General Sheridan requested that Lieutenant-Colonel Custer of the 7th Cavalry be appointed to assist him. The request was granted and Custer became Second in Command. The Company of the 7th Cavalry, stationed at Fort Lyon (Colorado), was ordered to join their regiment in Kansas. I was stationed at this time at Fort Lyon. We were all sorry to see them go, as we had performed so much hard duty together.

On or about the first day of November, 1868, the 10th Cavalry arrived at Fort Lyon. General Penrose was ordered to take command and take detachments out of A Company, 5th Infantry, I Company and G Company, 3rd Infantry, and one Lieutenant, J. Worden Pope, out of Company A, 5th Infantry, and fit the command for a winter campaign against the Indians. Its chief guide was Charles Autobee with his two sons, Mariana and Jose. Jesse Nelson and "Wild Bill" (James) Hickok, the great gunman of Hays City, Kansas, and also city marshal of the above city, were scouts for the party. Lieutenant-Colonel Daniel Webster Van Horn was appointed camp trader and followed the command with sup-

¹This article is an extract from a manuscript, "Recollections of a Plainsman," written by Mr. Cahill and presented to our Historical Society a number of years ago. Mr. Cahill was born in Ireland in 1850 and came to America in infancy. He enlisted in the U. S. army in 1866 and in this year marched to Fort Union, New Mexico. During the winter of 1866-7 he acted as orderly and private secretary to Kit Carson at Santa Fe. He was discharged from the army after three years of service and took up his residence in Bent county, Colorado, where he has engaged in the livestock business for over forty years. He lives in Denver today.—Ed.



LUKE CAHILL

plies. Everything was fitted up in fine shape and on the 15th day of November, 1868, the command commenced the march from Fort Lyon for the lower Canadian River in the Indian territory. In a few days the 5th United States Cavalry arrived, commanded by Colonel and Brevet-Major-General Eugene A. Carr. Escorts from A Company, I Company and G Company of the 5th and 3rd Infantry were ordered to join the Carr command. First Lieutenant W. S. Bonsell had charge of the Infantry. I was ranking as a non-commissioned officer, and was assigned to take charge of the headquarters guard.

Everything was put in excellent condition and on the first day of December, 1868, the command was ordered to march and overtake the Penrose command on the San Francisco River in No-Man's Land.² The Mexicans called this river Agua Frio, or Coldwater. The morning we started was more like a summer day than one of winter. Our first day out we camped on Rule Creek; our next day we made a dry camp and our next march we halted at Butte Creek, about fifty miles from Fort Lyon. This command had from two to three hundred head of beef cattle to supply the two commands with fresh beef. The weather continued fine—the command pitched tents on the south side of Butte Creek at the mouth of a deep canon. William F. Cody, or "Buffalo Bill," was the chief guide or scout for the General Carr command. He helped to bed the cattle and did many valuable things that were very useful for the command.

Supper over, outside pickets placed on posts and guards posted around the camp, everything appeared to be all happiness and contentment. Those off duty retired for the night, when all at once the wind commenced to howl and it got very cold. Snow commenced to fall thick and fast; tents that were not well staked blew down; wagons turned over and it seemed hell turned loose was trying to destroy the command. This storm continued until nearly noon next day. Many of the tents could not be seen, being covered with fine snow. Of others you could see about a foot sticking through the snow. The wagons were much the same. Some had been blown over and others covered over in the deep snow. The men were getting out the best they could. Those whose tents had blown down were nearly smothered to death. They did not suffer from cold, only from lack of air. The confusion was terrible and no tongue could tell the misery of that command.

The command was put to work digging the tents, wagons, mules and horses out from under the snow. The men were under

²The panhandle of present Oklahoma was for many years known as "No Man's Land," inasmuch as it was not included in any of the surrounding states or territories. An interesting article on this area is found in the Kansas State Historical Society *Transactions*, IV, 325.—Ed.

many of these tents that blew down and could not get out from under them on account of the heavy snow on top of them. The only wonder is that all were not smothered, but the snow was light and had not packed up to this time. We got some ropes and chains tied to the tops of the tents and by main force pulled them out from under the snow. While this was going on a party of men dug out the commissary wagons, the cooks built fires and made hot coffee that gave great relief. Other parties were digging out the cavalry horses. This work continued all that day and night until noon next day. Parties were sent out to find the pickets that were about a mile from camp. The snow was not so deep out on the hills and the men were easily found, but four were dead and their horses could not be found. Many had made their way to camp when the storm started and by so doing saved their lives. The herders that had the beef cattle were compelled to turn the herd loose and they, too, made their way to camp and saved their lives. Many of the men were very badly frozen, and having no hospital or time to attend to them, they were sent back to the Fort. I understand that several of them died from the terrible exposure of that night. Many of the cattle were found dead in the canons and others drifted away and were never found as far as I could learn. That left the command without fresh meat. When everything was cleared away thirty-six horses and mules were found dead.

With the command ready to start on the march again another difficulty had to be overcome. The snow softened the earth so the wagons would sink in it up to their axles and the mules were unable to pull the wagons. They hitched ropes to the tongues of the wagons and put four cavalry horses in front of each wagon. They played the horses and mules out in trying to travel three miles the first day. That plan had to be abandoned. The clouds cleared away and the moon and stars at night would sparkle like so many diamonds. The mercury fell until it reached 28 and 30 below zero. The General ordered night marches; that made good wheeling, as the ground became frozen very hard. We camped about eight o'clock each morning and started on the march again about nine o'clock in the evening. By that time the prairie would become hard again. We continued those night marches and finally we arrived at San Francisco Creek and joined the Penrose command. The adjutant gave the place where we spent that dreadful night the name of Freeze Out Canon and it goes by that name to this day.

The Penrose command was very much disappointed on account of the great loss of the beef herd. They had had no fresh meat for over one month. The storm was not as bad on the San

Francisco as it was in Freeze Out Canon on Butte Creek. General Eugene Carr, being the ranking officer, ordered the two commands to get ready and proceed to march for the Red River next morning and the command started, but we had not gone very far until the commanding officer found out that he had many men, horses and mules in bad condition. The command marched that day about eighteen miles and camped at a place called Palo Duro (tough pole)—the Mexicans call it. This creek, consisting of little more than water holes, had plenty of timber growing on it. They called the wood hack-berry. It would burn fairly well while green. General Carr selected this place to leave the men and animals that were unable to continue the march. All such were closely inspected and left behind.

The main command started out to join Sheridan's on the lower Canadian River in the Indian territory. The weather continued to be very cold, but not a cloud in the sky could be seen during the day or night. Still the sun seemed to have no heat in it. At nights the mercury stood from 25 to 28 below zero and the atmosphere appeared to be very damp and was very hard on stock and men. General Carr sent out couriers in all directions to find the command from Texas and the command from Fort Hays under General Custer, and also the command from Fort Leavenworth under General P. H. Sheridan, and the scouts finally located the different commands. All the different generals met in council and made arrangements to surround the Indians at one and the same time and give them no chance to attack the troops. In this case the elements had more to do with subduing the Indians than all the army of the United States could do.

On the morning of the planned attack the mercury was 28 below zero. Little did the Indians think or dream of what was taking place that would put them on a reservation and deprive them of their liberty during the period of their natural lives. The march commenced a little before daylight. The camps were surrounded. Not an Indian was in sight; only once in a while you would see a squaw or a buck stick his head out through the little opening in their little tepees—we called them tents. A few half-starved dogs would make an effort to bark. Most of the cavalry were on foot leading their horses by their bridles and great icicles streaming from the mouths and nostrils of the poor horses and mules. Most of the cavalrymen had their feet wrapped up in gunny sacks to keep them from freezing, and could not have mounted a horse if they had wanted to do so. The infantry was no better off. They could not pull the triggers of their rifles on account of the numbed condition of hands and fingers. That was

the condition of the great army of the United States surrounding three great nations of the red man. The poor troops had a mighty struggle to live and the horses and mules were in a famished condition. It is a well known fact that the Indians never provided for their ponies in the winter, but depended on the ground grass that grew plentifully all over the plains and kept their ponies in good living condition during the winter months. We found their ponies dying by the hundreds all around their camps. The soldiers were ordered to round up all they could, drive them away from their camps and shoot them and put them out of their misery. This was done, and the plan that General U. S. Grant and General Kit Carson parted the ways on when they could not agree in conference in the city of Washington in the spring of 1868, was carried out to the letter. General Grant was right when he said that it would be a costly and fearful undertaking for the troops and animals. It proved to be a fearful undertaking for the troops engaged in the campaign. General Kit Carson was correct. It was the only way known to him at that time to subdue the Indians so they would be helpless for all time.

The weather became a little warmer, but the troops were in a miserable condition. All horses and mules that were living were in a weakened condition from lack of hay and grain and many of them looked more like skeletons than live animals. The men of all the commands were feeling the loss of fresh beef. General Eugene Carr was ordered to select some of the strongest horses and mules out of all commands and proceed to march back to Fort Lyon. Our command got everything in good shape and started on the return march. The weather was still very cold, but after many hard marches we arrived on the Palo Duro, where we had left the portion of the command that were unable to go down the Canadian River and take part in the capturing of the Indians in the Washita mountains. We found them in fair condition except that the mules and horses had eaten out the range. General Carr had the command moved over to San Francisco Creek, a distance of eighteen miles, where the grass was good for the stock. They needed both feed and rest. Finally everything became normal as far as a good camp was concerned. This creek had no timber on it. We were compelled to haul wood from the Palo Duro. It took three days to make the round trip.

By this time the scurvy commenced to break out among the troops for the lack of vegetables and fresh beef. The doctor said that the command was in a fearful condition and something would have to be done soon. Here we were hundreds of miles from civilization. General Carr and the doctor one evening late, called on

Mr. W. F. Cody and stated the condition the troops were in. The General said, "Mr. Cody, do you think you could get some buffalo meat for the sick men without too much trouble?" Mr. Cody's answer was, "General, that will be a difficult job. Your mules are nearly all in poor condition and the men are but little better, going on half rations. Six mules could pull but little over the rough prairie and through the deep snow. The nearest buffalo to this camp are at least seventy-five or one hundred miles away, and such an undertaking would take from twelve to fifteen days." The General said that the time would cut no figure, that his command was nearly exhausted and could not resume the march until conditions became more favorable.

I could see that Cody did not like the undertaking. The General could also see it, but he said, "Mr. Cody, you can have all the cavalry you want; you can select the men and their mounts and also have your choice of any and all teams that you want." Cody said, "General, I love this command and every man in it and I have wonderful respect for you, General, and for that reason I will undertake the task, knowing full well what I am about to undertake." He said further, "To commence with, I want twenty teams but I do not want any cavalry. Each team will have a driver. That alone will make twenty-one men, counting one wagon master. I also want Sergeant Luke Cahill and twenty men of infantry; that will be a stiff command." General Carr told the quartermaster to furnish Mr. Cody with the above teams, forage and rations for the men. It took nearly a day to select the teams and men.

At about nine o'clock the next morning we started through snow and rough prairie. The first day out we could find no water for either man or beast. The mules were compelled to lick snow and at the few bare spots along the route we picked up all the buffalo chips that we could find with which to make a fire to boil our coffee. The ground was frozen so hard that we could not drive a stake in it to hold our tents up so that we had to spread our blankets on the ground and put the tents over them and put snow over the tents so the wind would not blow them away. Mr. Cody had the same fare that the teamsters and soldiers had and no complaint had he to make. We traveled this way for three days, but on the fourth day about noon Mr. Cody rode back to the command and at the top of his voice he said, "Boys, we will have buffalo at our banquet tonight." He said, "Look yonder," pointing towards the northeast. He was very much excited. We could see nothing with the naked eye. He handed to the wagon master his field glasses and in time every man in the command could see a large herd of buffalo grazing on a bare spot of prairie and taking things

easy. Cody said that they were about twelve miles away, as far as he was able to judge. He looked at his watch and said that it was 2:30 P. M. He said about a mile ahead we would find a buffalo wallow that had water in it and we would camp there for the night, that it was too late to do anything with the buffalo; that they might smell us and move away. He also said that they were very wild in that section and were only hunted by the Indians. He said that the Indians killed them with their spears and made no noise; that the white men hunted them with a rifle and its noise nearly frightened them to death.

We went into camp, all feeling fine, knowing that next day we would have plenty of fresh meat. Cody gave strict orders next morning that no man should fire a gun, saying that he would do that himself. He was much afraid the buffalo would discover us. Everything was as quiet as a graveyard. He also said, "Do not leave this camp until you hear shooting, and then move in the direction of the shooting." About ten o'clock the shooting commenced. We went in its direction and about two o'clock we came in sight of where the buffalo had been. Cody came in behind them. They took fright. Ahead of them was a deep arroyo filled with snow. In their fright the animals plunged into the deep snow, many of them going out of sight and many making a mighty effort to escape. Cody stood mounted on his splendid horse with an improved Springfield rifle in his hands pouring cold lead into the poor buffalo. He never shot an animal but once and not one of the buffalo escaped. The herd was composed of a few two year old and yearling bulls; all the balance were cows, heifers and calves. All the old bulls single out from the herd in the fall and make a herd of their own, and when they become old the young bulls will drive them out of the herd.

Here we had a hard job on our hands in getting the large animals out of nearly twenty feet of snow. We were compelled to get ropes and chains and get to the head of the animals and drag them out with the mules. The men on the bank took the entrails out, cut the heads off and also the feet with an axe, cut them down the back, cut down the sides, made four quarters of the animals and left the hide on each quarter so as to protect the meat. This job took all day and a portion of the night. It was a terrible job and the men were nearly exhausted, but not a word of complaint could be heard from the lips of any of those worn out men who knew that their work would save the lives of many men. Cody also had the men take out the tongues and brains, saying that the heads were

too heavy to haul. When the buffalo were counted we had, little and big, fifty-five head.

We did not have near enough to load our wagons. Cody loaded a few wagons and sent the wagons heavy-loaded with his best mules back to the main command with the hope that the supply could relieve conditions there, which it did. The men prevailed on him to send in the heads also, which he did. They made fine soup and good eating. Nothing went to waste and Cody said that we could now take things easy. We were doing fine and the mules were doing well at this place. We had much bare ground and fine buffalo and grama grass and a good supply of buffalo chips and Cody said that he and the wagon master would look out for buffalo signs, which they did, and about twenty-five miles from camp, they saw in the distance many buffalo and little snow. They returned to camp. Cody always kept two fine horses that were not afraid of the wildest buffalo, bear or lion. He said to the wagon master, "You can take my horse," calling him by name, "and lead him, and when my horse becomes jaded you catch up with me; I will mount him and finish the job. I will not be as fortunate this time as before. I will have twenty-five or thirty miles of hard riding and I will be compelled to run the buffalo ten or twelve miles before I fire a shot. They will have to be very tired before I commence on them. I will have to be careful to keep my horse on his feet. Many things might happen in such a run and I am not going to take any chances." Everything turned out as he had said it would. He killed forty-one buffalo on that run and completely exhausted his two fine horses and he himself was very badly jarred from the recoil of his heavy Springfield rifle.

Next morning his right shoulder and breast were a mass of blue and black. So much was it swollen that he could not put on his coat without help. The buffalo were scattered over twenty-five miles and it took us two days to gather them up. All the meat was in fine condition; the men were all in fine spirits and the mules were gaining in strength. Mr. Cody was the only man in bad shape. I will right here say that he was game and a sport of the first water. I will say without fear of contradiction that the world only had one Buffalo Bill and it will never have another. The last run did not near complete our loads. Cody said, "In a couple of days my ponies will be able to complete the contract and we will pull for camp." We moved camp and moved out to the buffalo range.

By this time Cody's horses had rested and he was nearly over

his soreness and ready for another run. Snow was becoming scarcer and conditions were fast improving for our teams to travel. Cody started out on his last and final hunt. This time he had but little trouble to find and slaughter enough buffalo to complete his load in one day's hunt. He and the wagon master killed enough to complete the loads, which were much heavier than the previous ones as Cody thought we could haul on account of the prairie becoming much better for our teams. We finally started for our main command and Buffalo Bill was the happiest man that I have ever seen. He said that we saved the lives of General Penrose's and General Carr's commands. In five days we arrived on the San Francisco Creek in No Man's Land and joined the command. The first buffalo meat that we sent in was almost exhausted.

When about four miles from camp we were met by General Penrose, Wild Bill Hickok and many cavalry officers and mounted men of the command. General Carr and General Penrose took every mother's son of us by the hand and thanked each of us for the splendid work that we had done in behalf of the troops. General Carr excused every man from doing night guard for one month and also said that he would like to give each of us double pay if he had the power to do so. Buffalo Bill came in for his share of the glory. He was wined and dined by the officers and was at once declared the Lion of the command.

The weather was fast becoming warmer and the nights were not so cold, but the condition for traveling on the plains was very bad on account of the melting snows, but the command was finally given for the troops to commence our march. The prairie was in a fearful condition, but one thing in favor of the teams was that they were not heavily loaded. This was a hard trip on the men and all animals. The cavalry horses were in such a weakened condition that they were unable to carry the men and they were compelled to march in mud and slush ankle deep. Many of the men gave out and had to be placed in the wagons. This was a long and weary march, but finally on or about the last days of March, A. D. 1869, we arrived at Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory. After lying in camp about one month, General Carr was ordered to Kansas to help guard the western section of the Kansas Pacific railroad. The 10th (colored) cavalry was ordered to march and take post at Fort Hays, Kansas. Thus ended the great expedition against the Comanches, Cheyennes and Arapahoes in that terrible winter of 1868 and 1869.

I present herewith a copy of a letter received from "Buffalo Bill" some years ago:

Albany Hotel, Denver, Colorado.

March 8, 1913.

"Mr. Luke Cahill,
Las Animas, Colorado.
My dear Comrade:

Your letter of February 28th was a happy surprise and your memory is perfect. You have mentioned many things in your letter that brought back to me the hardships and endurance that we had to pass through that terrible winter of 1868 and 1869. From what I have read of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in the winter, that expedition of ours was nearly as bad. I remember you very well as a plucky young Sergeant of the United States army butchering the buffalo with your men after I had killed them, and although it was freezing cold to butcher buffalo out in the snowdrifts, not a word of complaint from you or your men, and had it not been for what we were doing to supply meat for our command when we were nearly out of rations, there would have been much more suffering among the troops than there was.

"I would like to meet you and talk over the experiences we had during those terrible winters. However, I am certain that we will meet here in Denver at the last Grand Council in 1915 and I wish you would get into communication or see all the oldtimers of your part of the country, especially the scouts and old soldiers who actually fought Indians in those days, for I would like to get as many of those oldtimers together for 1915 as possible. I am in a great hurry this morning or I would write you more on this subject. However, at any time you will write me direct your letters to North Platte, Nebraska, and they will be forwarded to wherever I am. I am very glad that I got in touch with you and I would like to keep in correspondence with you right along. And by the way, Captain Hardy, the great shot, will be in Las Animas next Thursday. I have told the Captain about you and want you to find him and get together and have a good talk and lay plans for getting all the oldtimers together for 1915.

Your friend and comrade,

(Signed) W. F. CODY."

Supplies and Market Prices in Pioneer Denver

By LeRoy R. Hafen

Most of the parties of gold seekers who came to the Pike's Peak region in the fall of 1858 had safely stowed away in their covered wagons supplies that would last them for several months. Thus William Larimer, principal founder of pioneer Denver City, writes on December 1, 1858: "We have plenty of provisions, Will [the eighteen year old son] and I, to put us through. Flour is worth \$20 per hundred pounds here and everything is very dear, but we all have plenty and no one has to buy anything."¹

With but approximately two hundred men in the vicinity of Denver in the early winter of 1858-9 and with most of these amply supplied from their own stores hauled from the Missouri River, trading and current prices were secondary matters to men eager to find the ample wealth thought to be hidden in the sands of mountain streams. But when "Uncle Dick" Wootton, who may be called the pioneer merchant of Denver, stopped his wagon near the mouth of Cherry Creek and announced the sale of supplies brought from the famous old emporium of Taos, New Mexico, the crowd gathered quickly. Twenty years of trading in the mountains had taught "Uncle Dick" some points in sales methods. He broke in the head of one of his barrels of wet goods, hung a dipper in a convenient position, and invited every one to partake with holiday spirit. (It was Christmas day.) This undoubtedly stimulated the sale of his flour, sugar and other merchandise, but we have no record of the prices charged.²

For those who had wintered in the new "gold region" supplies were becoming scarce as spring opened. Larimer writes on April 18th:

"We are out of provisions and expect to buy a supply from those that come in this spring and summer. New Mexico has some flour, but no bacon, and not enough of either to breakfast 100,000 people. I am told that some fools did write to their friends not to bring flour—that New Mexico could supply us. This is shocking. We have received, all told, from New Mexico, say 500 or 600 sacks of flour, which is now about all used up."³

More supplies came in from New Mexico and from the Missouri River during late April, and flour was selling at \$15 and \$16 per hundred pounds.⁴ On May 14th the *Rocky Mountain News*

¹ *Reminiscences of General William Larimer and of his son, William H. H. Larimer, two of the founders of Denver City*, 84.

² H. L. Conard, "Uncle Dick" Wootton, 374.

³ Larimer *Reminiscences*, *op. cit.*, 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 155. *Rocky Mountain News*, April 23, 1859.

records: "On Saturday last [May 7th] Mr. Dunn's train arrived bringing a large supply of provisions and goods. Yesterday Mr. Fisher's train arrived bringing a large supply of provisions, goods and house furnishing materials. Many other trains are on the road and there is every prospect of abundant supplies of all kinds henceforth."

By June the vegetable gardens about Denver were contributing welcome additions to the food supply. The editor of the *News* reports (June 11th): "On Sunday last [June 5th] friend Pollock laid upon our table the first radishes of the season and we believe the first produced in this country. They were certainly as fine as grow in any country." By the 25th he writes: "Green peas are beginning to make their appearance in market. Radishes have been plenty for some time." Lettuce and onions were also being offered. In the issue of August 13, 1859, we read: "Our market is now well supplied with garden vegetables of as fine quality as can be found in the old settlements of the States."⁵

The first market quotation printed in a Denver newspaper appears in the *News* of July 9, 1859. I quote it herewith:

"Market Reports

"Below we give the current prices of provisions, groceries, &c. at Retail in Auraria and Denver market, though these rates are subject to material fluctuations from week to week owing to increased demand or supply.

Flour, States,	\$14 @ \$16 per 100 lbs.	Lard	50c per lb.
Flour, Mexican,	10 @ 15 " " "	Cheese	50c " "
Corn Meal,	\$12 " " "	Crackers	25c " "
Bacon, sides & ham,	35c per lb.	Bread	15c " "
Sugar	20c @ 25c " "	Fresh Beef	12c @ 15c per lb.
Coffee	25c per lb.		
Salaratus	35c " "	Venison	\$1 per quarter
Salt	15c " "	Milk	10c per quart
Beans	15c " "	Molasses	\$2.50 per gal.
Onions	25c " "	Whiskey	\$3 per gal.
Potatoes	25c " "	Lumber	\$100 per M
Rice	25c " "	Nails	\$25 per 100 lbs.
Butter	75c " "	Glass	\$16 per bx."

About every week thereafter during the remainder of the year these reports appeared. The prices were more stable than one

⁵ Arthur Chapman is in error when he says (*Story of Colorado*, 114) that "as there was no agriculture in these first years the people had no vegetables." On September 13, 1861, the *News* reports that the "Denver market is fairly glutted with vegetables and melons."

might expect, but some changes are noted. The coming in of large supplies from the East and from New Mexico brought a drop in some items. In the report of August 13th "States" flour drops to \$14, Mexican flour to \$10, bacon to 30 cents, rice to 20 cents, beef to 10 cents and lumber to \$70 per thousand feet. Other items remained unchanged. For another month prices remained stationary; then a drop is again recorded. On September 29th "States" flour is quoted at \$12.50, bacon at 25 cents, sugar at 22, beans at 12½, beef at 8 cents, and lumber at \$60. Whiskey has now taken on degrees of quality and is quoted at \$2 to \$4 per gallon. On October 20th cabbages, beets, parsnips and carrots appear on the list and are quoted at 10 cents per pound.⁶ Potatoes drop to 10 cents on November 10th and Swiss cheese is added at 75 cents per pound.

Winter brings a rise in the price of some commodities. Butter rises to \$1 on December 28th, beef to 10 cents and flour to \$16. Sugar pushed up to 35 cents on January 18th. On March 28th butter is quoted at 75 cents, beef at 12, potatoes at 15, while flour soared to \$25 per hundred. Wild game had a prominent place during the winter. In the *News* of January 11, 1860, we read: "Game is abundant in our markets just now, and can be purchased at very reasonable prices. Venison, 7 and 8 cents per pound, bear meat, 30 to 50 cents per pound, turkeys, very large and fat, \$1 and \$2 each, grouse and ducks 50 cents per pair."

Flour declines to \$20 in May and to \$15 in June. Other typical prices in May, 1860, were: potatoes, 20 cents; onions, 25; beans, 15; bacon and ham 30; beef, 15;⁷ butter, 75; eggs, 60 to 75 per dozen; whiskey, \$3 to \$5 per gallon; lumber \$60 per thousand; hay, \$20 per ton; wood, \$5 per cord, delivered. There was little change through the summer of 1860, although flour dropped to \$12 and \$14 and bacon to 25 cents.⁸

⁶ The farm of William Kroenig on the Huerfano was probably the source of these vegetables. Watermelons, muskmelons, cabbages, squashes, etc., were on sale in Denver in September, 1859. These had been brought from farms on the Huerfano and from Fountain City (site of modern Pueblo).—*News* of September 17, 1859. About 125 acres were farmed in this region in 1859 and 600 acres in 1860, according to the *News* of June 13, 1860.

⁷ Colorado grown beef was supplying the Denver market. The *News* of May 16, 1860, states: "Sowers and Co. recently brought in a large herd of cattle from the Arkansas River below Bent's Fort. They are without exception the best lot of beef cattle ever offered in this market." William Bent's cattle ranch near the mouth of the Purgatory River dated back to the forties.

⁸ As an indication of the amount of these importations let me quote from the *News* of May 2, 1860. Major Bradford had just returned from the East. "He informed us that he had purchased, and will about the 1st of June begin receiving eight hundred wagon loads of goods ["A 'wagon load' as generally applied in this country means 3 tons, and is drawn by five or six yoke of oxen"—*News* of October 17, 1860.], one item alone is twenty-five hundred sacks of flour. Only think of the transportation of 4,800,000 pounds of freight over the plains for one house alone, and then imagine what is the 'commerce of the prairies.'" In the issue of November 20, 1862, we read: "The carrying trade of the Platte valley is immense. . . . One freighting house alone doing business here, Messrs. A. & P. Byram, have brought to Denver from Nebraska City during the past summer

In July, 1860, Colorado-made cheese appears on the market. This was brought from the Huerfano. The *News* of July 18, 1860, thanks "Mr. Kroenig and Mr. McLaughlin and Mr. Dunn for a generous supply of the first lot of cheese made at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. In our opinion it is fully equal if not superior to the famous 'Western Reserve.'" ⁹

The fall of this year revealed a new and unexpected source of supply for the Denver market. In October large trains began to arrive from Utah, laden with food supplies. Flour dropped to \$10 in November, \$9 in December and to \$8 in January. The *News* of October 10, 1860, comments interestingly upon this new importation:

"There arrived yesterday a vast quantity of fresh eggs, butter, a large quantity of onions, barley, oats, etc., only fifteen days from the city of the Saints. . . . We hear also of 12,000 sacks of Utah flour now on the road; 5,000 bushels of corn, a large quantity of barley, onions, etc., now enroute for this city, in the trains of Miller, Russell and Co. This is a new and unexpected branch of trade. Nobody here dreamed of any supply of provisions coming from the West. The fact that the supplies for Camp Floyd [Utah] are still transported from the Missouri River, even the corn and oats that is fed to stock, being hauled from Western Missouri and Iowa, makes it seem strange that Utah is now able to ship thousands of sacks of flour eastward to this country. The Mormons must be prospering, and Uncle Sam must be very short sighted or some of his agents are great rascals."

The retail price on dressed beef was 6 and 8 cents in November and December, 1860, eggs brought 40 cents per dozen and beans and potatoes sold for 8 cents in January.

The coming of the Civil War did not result in soaring "war prices" in Colorado. In fact the opposite condition prevailed, but it was due more to a slump in mining than to the existence of war. For instance the *News* of June 20, 1861, explains that hay sold in the mountains for \$100 per ton the year previous but was now a drug on the market at \$30 and \$40. "The dull times amongst the quartz miners, and the partial suspension of operations in many of the lodes is one cause of this hay pressure. We wish matters were different, but that don't help the matter." Flour declined to \$6 and \$7 in July and in August reached a low point of \$4.50. At the

and fall over three million pounds of freight. . . . The stock will be wintered here, where it costs nothing but the trouble of herding, and their main herd of oxen this winter will number over 2,000. Messrs. Byram are only one of the heavy firms in the business, though they perhaps do more than any other one. An immense item in the trade is that done by individuals. Many of these use mules and horses."

⁹ The *Commonwealth* of June 11, 1863, says cows are worth \$37 apiece, butter 40 cents a pound, cheese 20 cents, and milk 10 and 15 cents a quart. "There are now nearly as many cows as people in Colorado."

same time the price for freight transportation from the Missouri River to Denver was \$4 to \$6 per hundred pounds. Bacon was selling in August at 12½ and 14 cents. An interesting sidelight is found in this item from the *News* of July 17, 1861: "A drove of 252 hogs arrived here yesterday from the Missouri River. One year from now pork will be abundant in this region."¹⁰

Wild fruit found a place on the Denver market. We read in the *News* of August 19, 1861: "Cherries very large and fine are offered now daily at \$1.50 per bushel. Plums are ripening and a few have already found their way into market." The first orchard trees came to Denver by express late in April, 1860, and the announcement was made that Myron H. Strong would offer for sale on or before May 20th a large assortment of apple, pear, and plum trees, grape vines, berry and currant bushes.¹¹ It was to be some time, however, before home grown fruit was to be had. The *Commonwealth* of September 24, 1863, tells of apples selling in Denver at ten cents apiece and comments, "They are worth that for old association." The same paper mentions that Major Wynkoop had just received some peaches and grapes as a present from Brigham Young and asks, "Why can't we raise some here?" It is reported that when Father Raverdy went on a mission to Utah in 1864, he sent a box of peaches to Bishop Machebeuf, upon which the express charges were \$60. The bishop sold enough of the peaches at \$1 each to pay the charges and had enough left for a good treat for himself and the Sisters of St. Mary's Academy.¹²

The summer of 1861 saw bacon selling for 10 and 12 cents, eggs at 25 cents per dozen, hay at \$15 per ton, lumber at \$15 per thousand, and wood at \$4 per cord. In September flour rose to \$10 per hundred, stimulated by the purchases to supply local troops. It remained at this level until April, 1862, when it rose to \$25 in Denver and \$40 in Gregory Gulch. However, in June following it was down to \$5 again; bacon sold at 11 cents; beef, 9 cents; cheese, 20 cents; and other things in proportion.

Prices on building materials in pioneer Denver show some interesting figures and changes. The first houses were crude log cabins, but buildings of better appearance were soon erected. The second number of the *News* (May 7, 1859) is enthusiastic over the

¹⁰ In partial fulfillment of this prediction I quote from the *Commonwealth* of August 6, 1863: "We don't wish to be voted a growler or bore, but we are requested every day to call attention to the nuisance known as hogs, infesting pretty generally, the whole town. A few people buy hogs in the spring, pasture them in the streets and grow rich out of the proceeds, but every housekeeper is daily pestered with them. Nothing but a sentry at the door keeps them out of the house. . . . Anything left for a moment out of doors is rooted over and eaten up. . . . Will not the Council take means to abate the nuisance." In September a petition was being signed asking the City Council to require owners of hogs to keep them penned.

¹¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 2, 1860.

¹² Howlett, *Life of Bishop Machebeuf*, 322.

new buildings: "Everyone must be struck with the beauty and superior quality of the building timber used in our thriving city. Most of the houses are built of Pine logs about 12 inches in diameter and from 20 to 50 feet long, straight as masts. The pines are cut down, hewn to a thickness of six inches and then ripped with a whip saw, making two building logs, each three inches in thickness which when laid up make most beautiful walls, requiring but little chinking and pointing, then the roofs are of the very best quality pine shingles, altogether making a very respectable appearance."

The first market report, that of July 9, 1859, lists lumber at \$100 per thousand feet and nails at \$25 per hundred pounds. In the same issue of the paper is noted the location of the Oaks and Street saw mill in the pinery some twenty miles south of Denver. By August lumber was selling at \$70 and by September at \$60 per thousand feet. During the ensuing winter extensive plans for lumber production were worked out. In the *News* of January 11, 1860, we read that the Excelsior Mill Co. was constructing a boom on the Platte River at Denver for the reception of logs from the mountains. "They have contracted for two million feet of logs. About forty men are now employed in cutting and hauling logs to the river in the Platte canon to be in readiness for the breaking up of the ice." On February 22nd it was reported that thirty men and forty-eight yoke of oxen were employed in the pinery and that three million feet of logs would be run into the boom at Denver.

The "Commercial Report" in the *News* of June 6, 1860, lists the prices current on the chief building materials:

Lath, \$15 per M; lime, 75 cents per bu., delivered; lumber, \$60 per M; shingles, \$6 @ \$8 per M; brick, \$12 per M at yard; nails, 18 @ 25 cents per lb.; iron, 20 @ 30 cents per lb.; steel, 75 cents @ \$1 per lb.; glass, 8x10, \$8 per half box; white lead, \$25 per cwt.; linseed oil, \$3.50 per gal.

A further decline was noted by October 3, 1860, when lumber was listed at \$35 and lime at 40 cents, other items remaining practically unchanged. Summer of the following year saw still further reductions. From the quotations of July 3, 1861, I quote: lumber, per M, \$20; shingles, per M, \$3; lath, per M, \$8; lime, per bu., 40 cents; iron, 15 @ 20 cents; steel, 35 cents per pound; nails, 15 cents per pound.

Oil, now playing so prominent a part in our industrial and commercial life, had its place in pioneer Denver. The drug store was then the service station. Witness this advertisement from the *News* of March 7, 1862.

“SPECIAL NOTICE
COAL OIL! COAL OIL!
PRICES REDUCED

Having 500 gallons on the way, shortly to arrive, I have reduced the price to \$2.50 per gallon in coin or \$3.00 in Gold Dust. Mexican onion seed I offer at lower prices than any other house. Gold Dust of fair quality taken at \$16.00 per ounce.

Wm. Graham, Graham's City Drug Store.”

Within a year thereafter the home production of oil was under way. The *News* of January 8, 1863, reports that Roup, Cassady and Pratt are pushing improvements on their oil spring six miles northwest of Canon City. The bore was down twenty-three feet and the machinery for the refinery on the ground. The issue of February 26, 1863, acknowledges receipt of a sample of the oil and asserts: “It burns with a beautiful clear red flame and we inaugurate its use in Denver in writing this notice by its light. The well yields about a barrel a day. They are still sinking deeper and have already tapped two veins at the depth of 22 and 24 feet. They will soon be able to supply the demand of the country.”

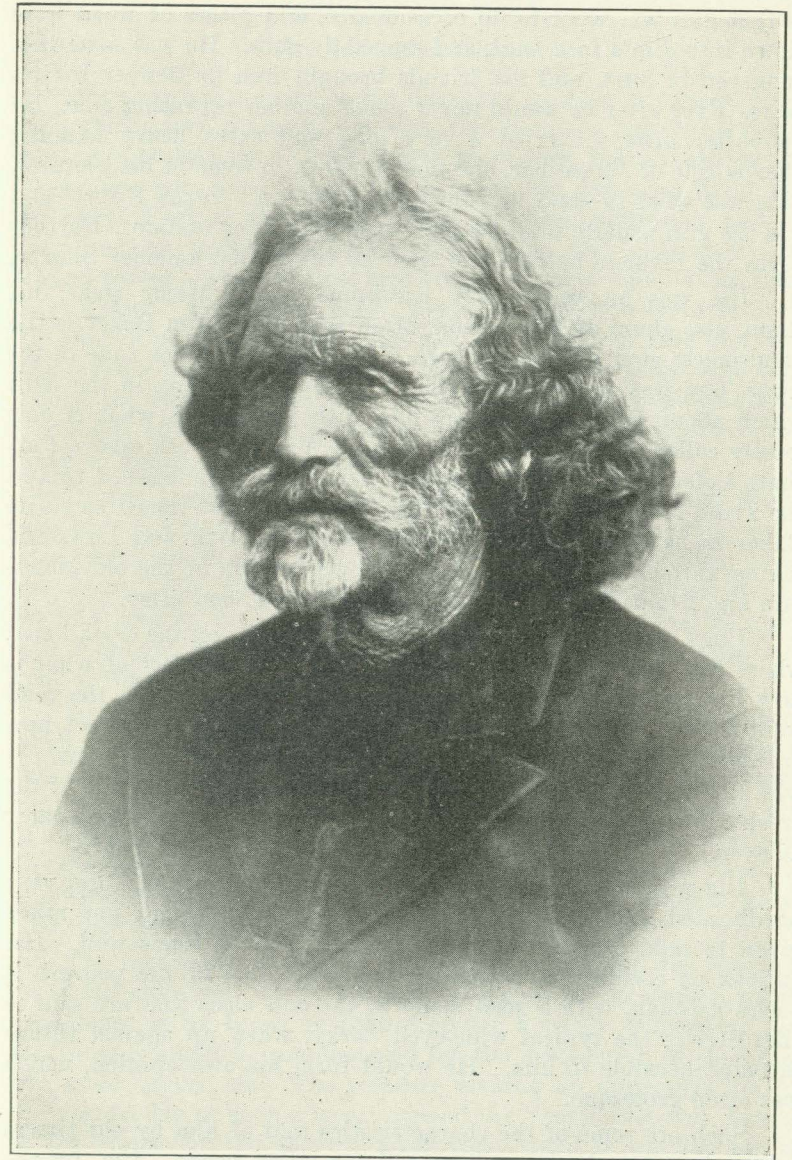
Some Characteristics of Jim Baker

By Chauncey Thomas

Jim Baker, the famous old scout, had some queer ways. Old friends of mine, who knew him well for years, tell me this—

Old frontiersman that he was, he could not cook. He never carried any cooking utensils, and usually, when he could, killed a deer and cut out only the ribs. These he would brace up against the open campfire with a stick, the bone side to the fire, and roast. Then he would feed on them till they began to spoil, when he would kill another deer and do as before. Between meals he packed the roasted ribs in his saddlebags, and cooked thus once every two or three days.

Jim carried a small short-handled ax in a scabbard under his left arm pit, concealed by his coat. This was the only sidearm he ever did carry, never a pistol or knife, except a knife, of course, as a common tool. He also packed a small flat whetstone, and as a pastime, much as some men used to whittle, Jim would get out his little ax and sharpen it indefinitely, although he never needed it. Nor is there any record of his ever using this ax. He seems merely to have carried and whetted it.



JIM BAKER

At one time up Cherry Creek a Spencer repeating carbine exploded with one or more cartridges in the magazine in the stock, as that gun was wont to do occasionally, and pieces of wood were blown into Jim's face, neck and especially chin. He was somewhat dangerously hurt, and his friends brought him to Denver for repairs. Ever after he would never touch another repeating rifle. He thereafter always carried a very long and extra heavy hammer Sharps rifle of .50 caliber, one that is shown in some of his pictures. This was what is—and was then so called—a "Texas Fifty" and was the gun usually used on the Texas plains for buffalo. Farther north the favorite buffalo gun was the 45-125-550 hammer Sharps.

Jim was an exceedingly handsome man. Major Oaks, his chum, also chum of Kit Carson, often said that "Jim Baker is the handsomest man I have ever seen." In the *News*, some time in the early '60s, was an interview with Jim about his being in the fight which about 50 or 60 trappers had with Indians on what is now locally called Battle Creek, a branch of Williams Fork, above Parshall, Colorado, in 1823. About 10 years ago I republished this in the *Trail*, from an old copy of the *News*. The last time I saw Jim Baker he was in a carriage at the corner of 17th and Lawrence taking part in some parade, I think a celebration of the old Mountain and Plains Festival in the '90s. He died soon after.

Jim's cabin on Clear Creek near Denver was on the creek bank, where the then stage road crossed the creek at the foot of what is now Inspiration Point, or rather that hill, around which the road went to avoid the grade. It was not where Tennyson Street now crosses the creek, as is so often and incorrectly stated in print. It was nearly one-fourth mile farther upstream. On which side of the creek I do not know, but probably on the south side, because nearer Denver.

Jim was unlettered, and "not broke to civilization," and very hardheaded and opinionated in his own way, though not much given to talk, except, of course, among those he knew well. His outlook on civilization resembled somewhat that of the proverbial backwoodsman, with a good many of the odd ideas that are said to characterize the typical wide-eyed darky, when up against things incomprehensible to him. He would form his own opinion, which was often grotesque.

Such are some of the characteristics told of him by old timers I have known, who knew him well for many years. Jim, by the way, was never a poser, nor "Injun fighter," like too many of them.

Relations with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in Colorado to 1861

By Lillian B. Shields

For some years prior to the discovery of gold in present Colorado, the eastern plains of our state had been the home of wandering tribes of Indians. Chief among these were the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, who lived principally between the Arkansas River and the North Fork of the Platte. They had been plundered and demoralized by unlicensed traders—Mexicans and citizens of the United States—who procured and traded to them liquor from Taos, New Mexico. Prices were high; sugar and coffee brought seventy-five cents a pound, ten cent calico sold for a dollar a yard and corn was seventy-five cents a gallon. The country was large—the wars among the various tribes were ceaseless.¹ It was these conditions that made advisable the appointment of agents in particular territories to remedy this situation.

It was suggested that the Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Sioux, who had migrated to the upper Platte, and such wandering tribes who, from time to time, would be in the country should come under one agent. The first agent appointed was Thomas Fitzpatrick.² He had been in the Rocky Mountains since 1822; served as guide with Fremont in 1843 and is described by Smiley as “a frontiersman of the better stripe.”

In his first report (1848) Fitzpatrick gives us information, which he attained through his own experiences and observations in this western country. It was his opinion that Indians had always kept far ahead of the whites in the perpetration of rascality, and to keep pace with them the whites had resorted to mean practices. Benefits derived from the traders, as a whole, were greater than the impositions, which were put upon the Indians by traders whose character and standing were not of the highest type.³

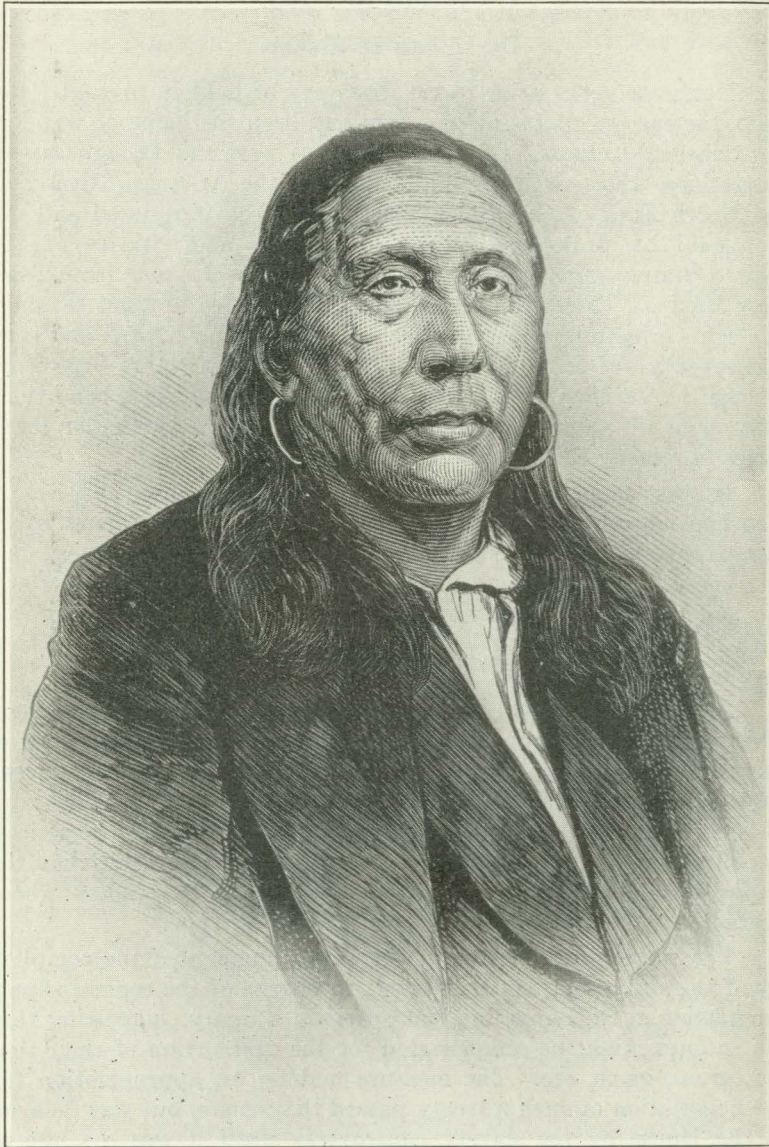
The increasing number of white men augmented the complexity of the situation. D. D. Mitchell, in charge of the central superintendency at St. Louis, in 1850 proposed a treaty, suggesting that the Indians might be compensated for the destruction of their timber, grass, game, etc. The measure making an appropriation for the negotiation of such a treaty passed the Senate, but was delayed in the House by the slavery controversy until it was too late to carry it into effect that year.⁴

¹ Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Senate *Executive Documents*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., No. 1, p. 293.

² House *Executive Documents*, 30th Cong., 2d sess., No. 1, pp. 392-3.

³ *Ibid.*, 470-3.

⁴ Senate *Executive Documents*, 31st Cong., 2d sess., No. 1, pp. 47-49.



LITTLE RAVEN, ARAPAHO CHIEF

The years prior to 1861 are important in the life of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne Indians, for they mark the turning point in the struggle between the Indians and the whites which resulted in the final subjugation of the Indians. Previously the Indians had been pushed by the whites whenever their needs demanded the territory which the Indians occupied; however, the "lack of deliberate evil intent which pervaded the Indian affairs of the forties disappeared shortly after the negotiation of the Fort Laramie Treaty" (1851).⁵ In the summer of 1854 the first land office in the Indian country was opened across the border from Missouri to retail the tribal lands which had been dedicated to perpetual Indian use.

To understand the situation better, we must know something of these two tribes. Both belonged to the Algonquian family. In the beginning they lived in fixed villages and farmed. The Cheyennes were driven out of Minnesota by the Sioux while the Arapahoes moved south and west into Missouri. The time of their alliance is not known. The southern Arapahoes moved toward the Arkansas, while the northern branch moved along the mountains about the headwaters of the North Platte. In 1804 Lewis and Clarke found some Cheyennes living about the headwaters of the Cheyenne River of South Dakota. Both tribes were interested in fur trade and when Bent's fort was built it attracted many of them to seek their homes near it. The Arapahoes were brave, kindly and accommodating; while the Cheyennes were proud, contemptuous and brave. At the time Lewis and Clarke met them, they were described as timid, but they learned much after that because we generally think of them as the fighting Cheyennes.

Here, in Colorado, their history is one of alternately hostile and friendly behavior. The trappers and hunters, who knew this country as no others, thought the Cheyennes the most treacherous and untrustworthy,⁶ at all times and in all places, of any of the tribes of the West. The Arapahoes made occasional depredations against the whites, but they were somewhat different in temperament. They were not sullen and morose as the Cheyennes, less treacherous in their dealings and more honest.⁷ In describing Indian character, Parkman in his *Oregon Trail* says, "any appearance of timidity, weakness or security offered temptation to them. One should always be prepared to deal with strange and unbridled impulses." There is every reason to believe that sparseness of settlement in the West and lack of proper protection for these settlements offered temptations to them to seek revenge, whereas,

⁵ F. L. Paxson, *History of the American Frontier*, 426.

⁶ Irving Howbert, *The Indians of the Pike's Peak Region*, 16.

⁷ Randall Parrish, *The Great Plains*, 33.

if there had been strength in the beginning, these massacres and murders might never have occurred.

The buffalo furnished them with most of the necessities of life and the rapid disappearance of the buffalo with the coming of the white man had a tremendous influence in the attitude of the Indian toward the newcomer.

On September 17, 1851, a treaty was negotiated by D. D. Mitchell and Fitzpatrick with the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Sioux, Crows, Assiniboins, Grosventres, Mandans and Arikaras. Peace was to be observed; roads, military and other posts to be established; the Indians protected; restitution or satisfaction made for any wrongs committed by any band or individual after the ratification of the treaty upon people of the United States while lawfully residing or passing through their respective territories. It was also agreed to pay the sum of fifty thousand dollars per annum for a term of fifty years.

The territory specified as belonging to the Cheyennes and the Arapahoes commenced at "Red Butte or the place where the road leaves the North Fork of the Platte River, thence up the North Fork of the Platte River, thence along the main range of the Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Arkansas River, thence down the Arkansas River to the Crossing of the Santa Fe road, thence in a northwesterly direction to the forks of the Platte River to the place of beginning. The aforesaid Indian nations do not hereby abandon or prejudice any rights or claims that they may have to other lands. And further that they do not surrender the privilege of hunting, fishing or passing over any of the trails of the country heretofore described. All national business will be conducted by the selected principals or head chiefs for their respective nations."⁸

After the Indians had signed this treaty the United States Senate reduced the term of years for which payment was to be made from fifty to fifteen.⁹ The treaty was proclaimed and "assumed to be operative by both parties," although the Indians did not ratify the change until 1853. We shall see that the treaty was broken by both sides.

D. D. Mitchell, superintendent of Indian affairs, in his report of November 11, 1851, thought that fifty thousand dollars was a small amount to be distributed among fifty thousand Indians. The white man was rapidly taking away all means of support "by what may be considered a partial occupancy of the soil." A little later

⁸ C. J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties*, II, 595.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 595. "For improvement of their moral and social customs and for damage which has or may occur, to deliver to the Indian nations fifty thousand dollars per annum for ten years with the right to continue the same at the discretion of the President of the United States for a period not exceeding five years thereafter in provisions, merchandise, domestic animals and agricultural implements in such proportions as may be deemed best adapted."

in the same year, Mitchell suggested that due to an increase in the number of half breeds, colonies should be established as a semi-civilized place around which the wild Indians would assemble. He suggested such a place at the headwaters of the Arkansas.¹⁰

In 1852 Mitchell felt the treaty had done the Indian no good. But should we expect a great change in such a short time? Civilization cannot be hastened; it is a gradual growth. When urged to turn their attention to agriculture or mechanical pursuits, the reply would be, "What is the use? In a few more years we will be driven back into the plains or the Rocky Mountains."

Vast quantities of their game, the only means of subsistence, had been destroyed. Disease had scattered among them. In 1849 several bands of Cheyennes were almost exterminated by cholera and in 1850 about two-thirds of their number had died.¹¹

The Indians faithfully kept their part of the treaty. Mitchell thought that the modifications of the treaty were proper because the condition of the wandering horde would be entirely changed in the next fifteen years, but urged that the treaty be sent to the Indians for their sanction. Unless this was done the large amount used by the government on them would be utterly wasted and the Indians would be more dissatisfied. In the next year the treaty was ratified by the Cheyennes and Arapahoes.¹²

Thomas Fitzpatrick, agent at that time, in his report of 1853 gives us a vivid picture of these Indians.¹³ They were in a starving condition. "They are in abject want of food half of the year, and their reliance for that scanty supply in the rapid decrease of the buffalo, is fast disappearing. The travel upon the roads drives them off or else confines them to a narrow path during the period of emigration and the different tribes are forced to contend with hostile nations in seeking support for their villages. Their women are pinched with want and their children are constantly crying with hunger. Their arms, moreover, are unfitted for the pursuit of smaller game and thus the lapse of a few years presents only the prospects of a gradual famine. Already, under pressure of such hardships, they are beginning to gather around the few licensed hunters of that country, acting as herdsmen, runners and

¹⁰ House *Executive Documents*, 32d Cong., 1st sess., No. 2, pp. 322-6.

¹¹ F. W. Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, 253. "They suffered terribly from cholera in 1849, several of the bands being nearly exterminated. Culbertson writing a year later states that they lost about 200 lodges, estimated at 2,000 souls, about two-thirds of their whole number, before the epidemic."

¹² Senate *Executive Documents*, 33d Cong., 2d sess., No. 1: "It was necessary before the issue of goods took place that as many be present as possible in order to ratify the alterations made on the treaty of Laramie by the United States Senate. Some ten or twelve days were required to send runners to bring them in. . . The signatures attached, however, are those of the recognized chiefs of the nations and of the braves of greatest influence and authority." This is contrary to Paxson's statement in his *History of the American Frontier*, 426.

¹³ Senate *Executive Documents*, 33d Cong., 2d sess., No. 1, pp. 297-304.

interpreters living upon their bounty; while others accept most immoral methods with their females to eke out an existence. This description does not equal the reality. To leave them, as they are, would be inhuman. To isolate them in small territories where they cannot subsist would be to deliver them over to the ravages of disease in addition to the miseries of failure.''

Fitzpatrick thought that trade was the best civilizer if the licensed traders complied with the law, but he asserts that the emigrants paid no attention to the restrictions for Indian traders. Hence, it was a farce. They were introduced to the vices instead of virtues of the white man. The traders should live with the Indians. They should accustom the Indians to a more civilized life with congenial occupations.

In 1854-1855 the tribes were having trouble among themselves. One party of Arapahoes lived on the Arkansas and the other on the North Platte. Some years before, the head of the Arkansas band had been killed by the North Platte band and since that time they had not met. The Cheyennes were divided into three bands. One resided on the Arkansas, another on the South Platte, and the third on the North Platte. The Cheyennes had not been together since the treaty (1851). The North Platte Cheyennes were much dissatisfied.¹⁴

The Cheyennes had made their first raid into New Mexico in 1853.¹⁵ Governor Merriweather of New Mexico met the Indian agent (1854) and asked him to recover some Mexican prisoners taken by the Cheyennes. The Cheyennes agreed to return all prisoners (they had one white boy and two Mexicans) and the Indians promised they would not disturb the Mexicans if the Mexicans would leave the buffalo alone.

In this year (1854) some of the Indians (most of the North Platte Cheyennes and about half of the Platte Arapahoes) met the agent at Fort Laramie. The speaker of the Cheyennes said that travel over the Platte would have to stop. The next year they wished four thousand dollars and the balance of their annuity in guns and ammunition. Also, they wished one thousand white women for wives.¹⁶

They departed but later almost two hundred returned and fired three guns. Whitfield, who had replaced Fitzpatrick as agent, thought they were angry because he had forced another band to give up some prisoners. "They, I learned, had been told that now, as they had given up prisoners, next year I would make them give

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 302-303.

¹⁵ Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, 253. "In 1853 they made their first raid into Mexico, but with disastrous result, losing all but 3 men in a fight with Mexican lancers."

¹⁶ House *Executive Documents*, 33d Cong., 2d sess., No. 1, pp. 302-3.

up horses. I found this band of Cheyennes the sauciest Indians I had ever seen. The great majority of Indians in this agency have no respect for the government. Nearly every immigrant who passes through the country has to pay with sugar and coffee. There are no roads in the United States that need protection more badly than the North Platte and Arkansas roads.¹⁷ The Arapahoes, according to Whitfield, could never live together. They were as hostile to each other as almost any tribes of the plains.

The annuity goods in 1855 were not distributed among the Arapahoes. This was one means of punishment, to withhold the annuity goods. Heavy charges were made against them for killing sheep and cattle. The claims amounted to more than fifteen thousand dollars and that would stop the annuity among these Arapahoes for several years. In council they admitted they were greatly at fault but excused themselves, saying they were starving and that smallpox was raging in their lodges, preventing their hunting buffalo. They were willing to have their annuity stopped until the owners of the sheep and cattle were fully paid.

Both tribes applied for a blacksmith and farmer. Bands of Indians suffered greatly from the scarcity of buffalo. Conditions became more difficult each year. Indian trade was entirely stopped and the agent suggested an increase in the annuity and more military posts to overawe the Indians.¹⁸

In 1857 all the tribes were peaceable with the exception of the Cheyennes.¹⁹ These Indians had tried to get the Sioux and the Arapahoes to join them against the United States, but they had not listened to the Cheyennes. However, there were many reasons for this bitter feeling.

One cause was that in 1856 the Cheyennes had stolen four horses. Under pressure they returned three. The Indian having the third would not return it. For this offense, certain Cheyennes were ordered arrested, one Indian was killed and another who had committed no offense was put in prison and finally died there. The relatives of this Indian, Wolf Fire, fled and their possessions were confiscated.²⁰

Another cause occurred in that same year (1856).²¹ A war party of Cheyennes going against the Pawnees, approached a mail wagon because one of the Indians had suggested to a half breed that he stop the driver and ask for some tobacco. This frightened the driver and he fired at the Indians. The Indians returned this fire. The older Indians reprimanded these younger ones, but it

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 302-3.

¹⁸ House *Executive Documents*, 34th Cong., 1st sess., No. 1, pp. 398-9.

¹⁹ Howbert, *The Indians of the Pike's Peak Region*, 16.

²⁰ G. B. Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes*, 107-8.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 108-110.

was too late to make amends and the next morning troops arrived. After having been attacked and robbed, the Indians fled their camp, and coming upon a small wagon train, killed two white men and a child. Later a Mormon train was attacked and two men, a woman and a child were killed and a woman carried off. These acts were the direct consequences of the blunder of Captain Stewart, who commanded the troops against the Indians. It led them to believe that the government wished to fight and they began encouraging the growing feeling of antagonism which culminated in the campaign of Colonel Sumner against the Cheyennes.

This campaign of Sumner in 1857 is interesting, as it gives us a sidelight on Indian superstitions. The Cheyennes went into battle near a lake in which the medicine man had told them they had but to dip their hands and victory would be easy, and that they had merely to hold up their hands and the balls would roll from the muzzles of the soldiers' guns, harmless at their feet. Colonel Sumner, however, ordered the soldiers to charge with sabres and this made the Indians panic stricken.²² According to Sumner's report, he made an attack on a large body of Cheyennes (about 300). They were well armed and "stood with remarkable boldness until we charged and then broke in all directions and we pursued them for seven miles, but their horses were fleet and fresh and we were unable to overtake them." About nine Indians were killed and a great number wounded. Sumner destroyed their principal village which they had deserted.²³

Millar, the agent at this time, called attention to the unusual number of Mexican traders that were continually roving over the country to whom many difficulties with the Indians might be traced. They came ostensibly to trade, but in reality introduced their miserable Mexican whiskey to the Indians. There were several around Bent's Fort and Millar was informed by an Arapahoe that the Mexicans were in league with the Cheyennes and had determined to massacre every white in the fort if Colonel Sumner had not prevented this. Certainly, the Indians at this period were greatly disturbed by evil and designing men and were not capable of separating true from false reports.

In 1858 gold was discovered in Colorado and the frantic efforts of the gold seekers made the Indians think that these men were insane. The tribes were widely scattered and it took very little to disturb them and wild tales were told to create excitement. They did not have sufficient experience to form just opinions or a correct judgment of passing events. Another disturbing element

²² *Ibid.*, 113-4.

²³ Secretary of War Report in House *Executive Documents*, 35th Cong., 1st sess., No. 2, pp. 96-99.

at this time to the Cheyennes and Arapahoes was the the war parties which the Crows and Blackfoot tribes were constantly sending against them.

After the fight with Sumner the Cheyennes wanted peace and desired to be taught agriculture. Buffalo were scarce and they must find other means of subsistence.

In June, 1860, thirty-five thousand dollars was appropriated for the purchase and transportation of provisions and presents to meet the necessary expenses in holding a council with the Arapahoes and Cheyennes. The white man felt the need of more Indian territory—valueless soil had become valuable.

On February 18, 1861, at Fort Wise, Kansas, a treaty was negotiated between the Arapahoes and Cheyennes by Albert G. Boone and F. B. Culver. The territory given the Indians at this time was to be known as the Reservation of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes of the upper Arkansas and was bounded as follows: "Beginning at the mouth of the Sandy Fork of the Arkansas River and extending westwardly to the mouth of the Purgatory River to the western boundary of the territory of New Mexico; thence west along the said boundary to a point where a line drawn due south from a point on the Arkansas River, five miles east of the Huerfano River, would intersect said northern boundary of New Mexico; thence due north from that point on said boundary of the Sandy Fork to the place of beginning."²⁴

The reservation was to be surveyed and divided. Each member would receive forty acres; one hundred and sixty acres for the agent; one hundred and sixty acres out of each division for the establishment and support of schools. All the intermediate land was owned in common. All trade and intercourse laws which had been passed by Congress should be observed. No white, except in the employ of the United States government, should be allowed to reside or go upon any portion of the reservation without written permission from the superintendent of the central superintendency or agent of the tribe. The land was assigned by the Secretary of the Interior and was not to be alienated except to the United States or to members of the Cheyenne or Arapahoe tribes. It was exempt from taxation, levy, sale, and forfeiture. Protection was to be given the two tribes and thirty thousand dollars a year for fifteen years. Additional aid was to be given the aged, infirm, and helpless orphans. Annuities ceased unless the Indians showed reasonable or satisfactory efforts to advance. Five thousand dollars a year for five years was to be given for mills, mechanical shops, mechanics and farmers. All members should participate and there

²⁴ Kappler, *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, II, 807-810.

was a possibility of additional aid. Changes in this treaty could be made by the President with the assent of Congress.

The operation of this treaty was shortlived, for open war broke out with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in the middle sixties. That period and struggle, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

Indian history shows a constant moving of tribes into less desirable territory, pushed there by the white man, who at the time thought the territory worthless to him. It is a history of misunderstanding. The white man did not understand the Indian and the Indian could not understand the white man. With this misunderstanding went fear, which had a tremendous influence on their relationships. Usually it was the innocent who suffered. With the Indians, the individuals who committed the depredations ran away, while the friendly camps, easily found, were attacked and the inhabitants slaughtered. The innocent white man suffered the same fate from the Indians, who had listened to false tales, taken bad whiskey or wished to see revenge for some deed committed by other white men.

Seeing the same faces all the time, the Indians did not realize the power and extent of this country. Certainly, if the Indian had been as bloodthirsty as he is sometimes pictured, he could have wiped out, many a time, the small white settlements in Colorado. The fact that he spared our pioneers should be proof of the fact that he was not altogether bad.