

## Higher Education in Colorado

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The celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of Harvard University at Newton, Massachusetts, brought vividly to mind the primeval and primitive conditions which attended its beginnings. However, it is quite evident that the pioneering spirit is not limited to any period, country, or race, as the history of education in Colorado reveals.

Wilbur F. Stone, in his history of Colorado, truly says that "higher education was in the minds of the pioneers who first came into this part of the territory of Kansas as early as 1860—when

\*Dr. Duncan, Chancellor of the University of Denver, was Head of the History and Political Science Department at that institution before his elevation to the Chancellorship. This address was presented before the State Historical Society at its Annual Meeting on Dec. 8, 1936.—Ed.

even the few district schools had a difficult time finding pupils to fill the few log huts." On February 26, 1861, Kansas was admitted to the Union, and on the 28th of the same month Colorado was organized as a Territory with the same boundaries as at present. In the town of Boulder, Mr. Robert Culver was the active spirit looking towards the passage of an act providing for the establishment of "The University of Colorado." Frank Hall states that Mr. Charles F. Holly "being ambitious to represent the county in the first legislature was induced by Culver to pledge himself to procure the enactment of such a law." Holly introduced the bill into the house on October 26, 1861, and it was ratified by Governor Gilpin on November 7th of the same year. Among the original fifteen trustees were: Governor William Gilpin, Edwin Scudder, J. B. Chaffee, Chief-Justice B. F. Hall, Amos Steek, Jesus M. Barela, and Allen A. Bradford. Provision was made for a fund to be known as the Seminary Fund, which "shall consist of all moneys arising from the sale of all lands which may be donated by the Congress of the United States for seminary purposes, etc." Conditions, however, growing out of the Civil War, together with the adverse economic conditions of the territory, prevented any steps being taken towards the establishment of the university for a decade.

In the session of 1870 an amendment to the original act was passed, January 25, 1870, adding five new trustees, and immediately thereafter, January 29th, the trustees designated met in Boulder and organized the University Board. Those present were Governor Gilpin, Edwin Scudder, B. M. Sanford, J. M. Smith, Granville Berkley, and Amos Widner. While no funds had been provided for buildings, three public-spirited citizens of Boulder—M. G. Smith, G. A. Andrews, and Anthony Arnett—donated fifty-two acres of land.

The legislature of 1872 refused to provide an appropriation, but the legislature of 1874 appropriated \$15,000.00 for the university on condition that a like amount should be secured in cash subscriptions. This being carried through, the corner stone of the first building was laid September 20, 1875. The legislature in 1876 made a further appropriation of \$15,000.00 to be expended in completing the building, and made provision for the election of regents by the electors of the state, then upon the eve of admission to the Union. The constitution of Colorado provided that upon its adoption the university at Boulder should become an institution of the state. The law which established the university and provided for its maintenance was passed by the first general assembly of Colorado on March 15, 1877. The constitution provides for the government of the university by six regents. The regents at their

meeting on March 28, 1877, unanimously elected Joseph Addison Sewall to the presidency.

On September 5, 1877, the university began its educational work with the President, Professor J. E. Dow in the chair of ancient languages, and Miss A. M. Sewall as assistant in the normal department, and forty-four students. During the year the students increased to sixty-six, of whom fifty-two were in the preparatory department and fourteen in the normal department. Out of the sixty-six students, fifty-five were residents of Boulder.

In 1878, Frank W. Gove became instructor in mathematics, and Mary Rippon became instructor in German and French. College classes were established in these two courses and thus was the college work of the university fairly begun with classical and scientific courses of four years each proceeding to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science. In 1884, the degree of Master of Arts and Master of Science were offered to any Bachelor of Arts or Science who should have presented a satisfactory thesis and statement of work done since graduation.

In 1883, the Medical Department was established with six professors and two students. In the same year a conservatory of music was established, but it went out of existence the next year, as did the short-lived School of Pharmacy.

In 1886, Dr. Sewall tendered his resignation, when he was succeeded by Horace M. Hale. In 1892, Dr. Hale resigned as president, and Dr. James H. Baker was appointed to take his place. From 1885 to 1892, several new buildings were completed in addition to the hospital. In 1892, the university catalog announced the organization of the Colorado Divinity School, in affiliation with the university. A complete faculty of ten members, belonging to eight distinct religious denominations, was announced. It is not recorded that there were any divinity students enrolled that year, and the attempt was abandoned. In 1892, the Medical School was completely reorganized, and in the same year the School of Law was established.

While the trustees of the University of Colorado were attempting to get the territorial legislature of Colorado to appropriate money for its university, steps were taken to establish a college in Colorado Springs. In 1871, the Colorado Springs Company, through a committee, recommended that a tract of land be set aside for educational purposes. Included in this tract was the present college reservation. On October 28, 1873, Reverend T. N. Haskell, before the Congregational Conference at Boulder, proposed to establish a college in Colorado. A committee immediately took steps to secure offers of land. The Colorado Springs Company offered to give the college seventy acres of the reservation above

named, together with a block of twenty acres of higher ground, and a cash donation of ten thousand dollars on condition that the trustees should raise forty thousand dollars more. At a meeting of the General Congregational Conference, held in Denver on January 20, 1874, Mr. Haskell as chairman of the committee, made a report in favor of the proposition. The conference elected a self-perpetuating board of eighteen trustees, who immediately proceeded to arrange to open the college. A preparatory department was opened in Colorado Springs May 6, 1874, in rooms secured near the center of the town, and their first term continued for ten weeks. Eighteen students were in attendance. In September, the college began the work of the fall term in a new frame building on the corner of Pike's Peak Avenue and Tejon Street. Afterwards it was moved to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. It continued to rent buildings until the completion of the central portion of the first college building, in the year 1880. The first catalog was published in 1875.

In connection with the work at Colorado College, in 1878 academies were established at Santa Fe and Salt Lake City, looking towards educational and missionary work among Mexicans and Mormons. Colorado College was to be the center of a wide educational movement in the new west. Similar academies were later established at Albuquerque and Las Vegas. The academies at Santa Fe and Las Vegas went down as the public school system was developed, but the others continue until this day under the auspices of the Congregational Education Society. The college grew slowly. In 1881-1882 there were 122 students, of whom 9 were of college rank. In 1882, the Bachelor of Arts degree was conferred on two students. Until 1888 the college had severe financial difficulties. In that year President William F. Sloeum entered upon his duties. A vigorous policy was at once inaugurated, and improvements were immediately apparent in financial matters, with a corresponding improvement in the college and preparatory courses.

While the territorial legislature of 1861 made provision for the establishment of a university in Colorado, the first attempt to establish a college in Colorado was made by Dr. John Evans, second territorial governor of Colorado, and one of the founders of Northwestern University at Evanston, Illinois. Being interested in education, it is needless to say that one of the first subjects he presented in his message to the Legislature, July 18, 1862, was the matter of education, and within a few days the minutes contain a notice of a bill to be introduced "To enable trustees of colleges, academies, universities, and other institutions, societies and companies to become bodies corporate." In the *Weekly Rocky Moun-*

*tain News* of November 27, 1862, there was reference to the fact that a body of substantial citizens had been organized "to superintend the erection of a seminary building in which our youth might find proper facilities for an academic education." On December 11, 1862, the same paper prints an account of "Denver Seminary" and a list of names of prominent citizens who had subscribed some \$2,475.00 under the leadership of Reverend O. A. Willard. On May 21, 1863, notice of a meeting of the Board of Trustees was printed in the *Weekly Commonwealth and Republican*, the names being: Evans, Byers, Weld, L. D. Tapping, Burton, Dennis, A. B. Case, Vawter, Gill, W. D. Pease, Moffat, Whitsett, Steck, Scudder, C. A. Cook, A. M. Clark, Morrison, Hatch, Allen, Kiskadden, Hussey, J. W. Smith, Cree, Chivington, O. A. Willard.

In July proposals for a site were published. In the Methodist Conference, which met in Denver the same month, the committee on education referred to two other educational projects, one in Golden and the other in Colorado City. The Denver Seminary seemed to have the lead, and in August the building was in process of erection at the corner of Arapahoe and Fourteenth Streets, opposite the home of Governor Evans. February, 1864, saw the Legislature in session at Golden and Governor Evans in his message refers to the need for a broad and liberal system of public education. On February 18, Mr. Hallett gave notice of an act to incorporate the Colorado Seminary. On the 27th the minutes show the act to incorporate the Colorado Seminary was taken up, considered, engrossed. On the 5th of March it was passed. The act provided for and named a Board of Trustees of twenty-eight members, who after the first ones named, were to be elected seven each year by the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church within whose bounds the city of Denver may be included. The act also provided that:

"No test of religious faith shall ever be applied as a condition of admission into said Seminary," and that "Such property as may be necessary for carrying out the design of the Seminary in the best manner while used exclusively for such purpose, shall be freed from all taxation."

The Board of Trustees reads like a page from the social and business register: John Evans, Samuel H. Elbert, W. N. Byers, A. B. Case, H. Burton, J. C. Vawter, A. J. Gill, W. D. Pease, Edwin Scudder, J. H. Morrison, Warren Hussey, J. W. Smith, D. H. Moffat, Jr., R. E. Whitsitt, C. A. Cook, John Cree, Amos Steck, J. M. Chivington, J. B. Boyle, Henry Henson, Amos Widner, John T. Lynch, Milo Lee, J. B. Chaffee, Lewis Jones, O. A. Willard, W. A. H. Loveland, Robert Berry.

The *Rocky Mountain News* of March 23, 1864, reports that

about six thousand dollars had been expended on the building, and by July 28th the building was ready for occupancy. The Colorado Conference Minutes reported the Colorado Seminary, and carried an advertisement regarding the opening of the school, terms and expenses, etc. The Seminary opened for its first session November 14, 1864, with Reverend George S. Phillips, A. M., as President, and Miss Almedia R. Treadway and Reverend George Richardson as members of the faculty. There were about thirty students entered. Some six weeks or more after the opening of the Seminary, the President had to return to Ohio, on account of his health, and died in April. The Reverend Richardson was elected to succeed him as President. The latter continued as President until the summer of 1866, when the Reverend B. T. Vincent succeeded him and continued to pilot the Seminary until the summer of 1867. The papers then reported that the Reverend P. D. Barnhart, late president of Fairmount Female College, Philadelphia, had accepted the presidency (August 13, 1867).

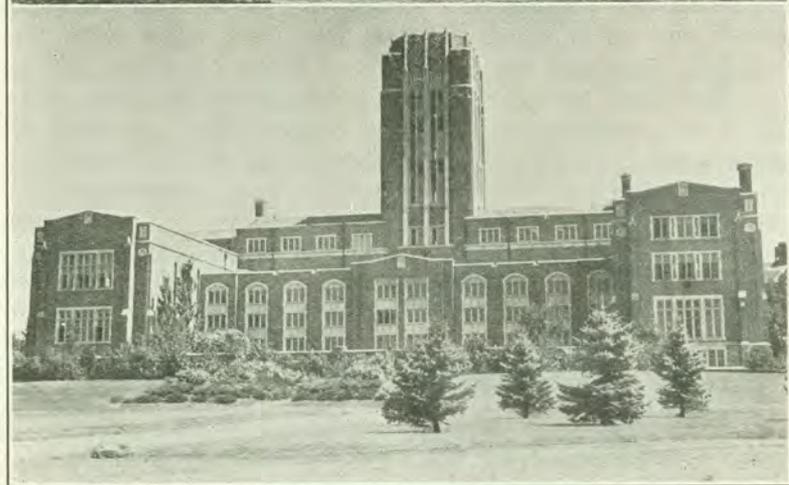
On September 9th, the new academic year started, but it was apparent that the school had severe financial problems to face, for on November 28th, the *Daily Colorado Tribune* carried an article that the President was leaving for the East, and would not return, for the Seminary was not patronized enough to induce him to remain. We know he was in Denver in May, 1868, but apparently on other business. With the going of President Barnhart, Miss S. E. Morgan, who had been a member of the faculty for sometime, became the head of the Seminary. In September, 1868, the Seminary was still listed as a private school in the Denver Directory, but in October a notice appeared that Mr. C. F. Bridges would open an Academy in the Colorado Seminary building. He had been a member of the Seminary faculty, but was apparently running his academy as a private venture. This continued for several years, although not in the seminary building. Thus it appears that Colorado Seminary as an institution under the Methodist church ceased to function as an educational institution sometime in 1868. In 1870 the building was leased by the Board of Directors of the Public School System of Denver for school purposes, and it was apparently used for several years. Committees of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the annual Conferences, reported on education and urged the ministers to take steps to reopen the Seminary. The building had been sold for debt, but Governor John Evans had bought it in, and was holding it against the day when it would open as a college.

The admission of Colorado as a State and the opening of the University of Colorado in the fall of 1877 no doubt revived the idea of opening the Seminary, for the *Denver Daily Tribune* in

August, 1878, carried a lengthy report on the discussions regarding the opening of the school. In January, 1879, the Board of Trustees of the Preachers Aid Society of the Colorado Conference met in Denver and discussed the matter. In a report published in the *Denver Daily Tribune*, it appears that it was deemed advisable to hold an educational convention in Lawrence Street Methodist Episcopal Church, beginning June 10, 1879. In this Governor Evans "offered to turn over the building to a new Board of Trustees who shall carry on a school in it, and will aid in making a success of it." On August 7, the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church opened in Pueblo. The Committee on Education made a report, and Trustees of Colorado Seminary were elected as nominated. This newly elected Board of Trustees met on September 6, 1879, and organized; officers were elected; an executive committee was appointed; and a seal was adopted. The minutes of the second meeting of the Executive Committee on October 14th show that Reverend David H. Moore, D.D., of the Wesleyan College for Women at Cincinnati, Ohio, was invited to become President of the Seminary, and that he had accepted the invitation. In March, the *Daily Tribune* states that President Moore would be assisted by Professor Sidney H. Short in Natural Sciences, and Professor O. P. Super of Dickinson College in Ancient Languages. It was also decided that the seminary building would have to be enlarged, and steps were taken to do so.

In the year 1880 the population of Denver was estimated at forty thousand. Mr. W. N. Byers of the *Rocky Mountain News* was appointed postmaster, and began establishing free postal service in Denver. In February of that year the first city telephone exchange was opened. On the 31st day of July, 1880, the *Daily Tribune* announced the arrival of David H. Moore; also "The University of Denver was incorporated last Friday, and yesterday the Board of Trustees held a meeting and elected Reverend Dr. Moore President of the Colorado Seminary, and Chancellor of the University." The Colorado Conference minutes, in the report of the Committee on Education show that the new building was 115 feet in front and 110 in depth; an average height of four stories. On October 1, 1880, the University of Denver, Colorado Seminary, opened with a College of Liberal Arts, a College of Music, a College of Fine Arts, and Colorado Seminary consisting of a Collegiate Preparatory Department, and a Junior Preparatory Department. The faculty was David H. Moore, D.D., President, and teacher of Philosophy; Sidney H. Short, B.S., Professor of Physics and Chemistry; Frances A. Fish, A.M., Lady Principal and teacher of Mathematics; O. B. Super, A.M., Professor of Languages; and H. A. Howe, A.M., Mathematics and Astronomy; C. Gilbert Wheeler,

A.M., Mineralogy; D. S. Blanpied, Mus.B., Music; Ida DeSteiguer, Drawing and Painting. In addition, there were lecturers: Reverend Earl Cranston, A.M., Christian Evidences; General C. B. Hughes, International and Constitutional Law; and Chief Justice S. H. Elbert, LL.D., Political Science.



Upper: The University of Denver Building, 14th and Arapahoe Streets, as enlarged in 1880.  
Lower: The present Mary Reed Library of the University of Denver.

At the formal opening, Dr. Evans made an address; the president spoke; and Bishop Matthew Simpson, the man who had inspired Dr. Evans many years ago, when he was a practicing physi-

cian in Attica, Indiana, gave the principal address. This year saw 150 students enrolled in all departments. A College of Medicine was added, and the first degrees granted by the University were in Medicine. In 1885, a Manual Training Department was added. This was sponsored by Mr. Jacob Haish, a manufacturer of barbed wire, who offered one-half of his receipts from the sale of wire in Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Utah, and from 1880 to 1890 he contributed \$40,000.00 which was used in erecting the Haish Building, corner of Arapahoe and Fourteenth Streets. In 1888 Schools of Pharmacy and Dentistry were opened, and in 1892 a School of Law was added. In 1884, Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff-Warren proposed to endow a School of Theology. On April 3, 1890, the corner stone of University Hall at University Park was laid. The building was finished and dedicated on February 22, 1892. On June 8th of that year the corner stone of the Iliff School of Theology was laid, and it was completed and opened for students on September 21, 1893. In 1911 the Denver and Gross Medical School of the University of Denver was united with the Medical School of the University of Colorado. In 1910 the Iliff School of Theology, after being closed for some ten years, opened for students as a separate institution.

In his *History of Colorado*, Mr. Stone states that it is rather a singular coincidence that the two great mining schools of America, the Colorado School of Mines and the Columbia University School of Mines, should have had their inception in 1864. The Colorado School owed its inception to the practical miners of Gilpin County, who set aside for that purpose a portion of the receipts derived from the recording and sale of mineral claims. Bishop Randall of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in 1868, started his proposed university at Golden, in which he made provision for a school of mines, and the original building still stands on the grounds of the Industrial School for Boys. The Territorial legislature in 1870, appreciating the design of Bishop Randall, appropriated a small amount for a building "to be connected with and to form a part of Jarvis Hall, a collegiate institution located in Golden City." Jarvis Hall was a school for boys established by Bishop Randall. With the funds appropriated by the initial law, the Commissioners constructed a small brick building of two stories and an attic, but were unable to equip it. The legislature in 1874 dissolved the partnership with Jarvis Hall, made the school a territorial institution, and substituted a board of trustees of seven members. The board of trustees, with the money appropriated, equipped the building during the summer, and the first session of the School of Mines began on September 15, 1874. When Colorado began as a state, the legislature provided for the incorporation, maintenance, management,

and support of the School of Mines. The school occupied the original building, which was inadequate, only a few years. In 1878 Jarvis Hall and the Divinity Hall of the University were destroyed by fire. Since it was decided not to rebuild them, the citizens of Golden proposed to donate a suitable tract of land as a site for the school. The offer was accepted, and the Second General Assembly made provision for the erection of a building, which is known as "the building of 1880," and was the first of the group of buildings now known as the School of Mines. The appropriation for the erection of a new building marked the end of an agitation to merge the School of Mines with the State University at Boulder. The location of the school at Golden, by the state constitution, served to stay the agitation of the legislature, and the school was given a further chance to "make good," which it did.

Now that the school was assured of a permanent income and home, it was possible to appoint a regular president and staff of instructors. In 1880 the Board of Trustees appointed Albert C. Hale, A.M., Ph.D., as president. He began his duties September 15, with a faculty of seven members, including Professors Moss, Lakes, Board, Berthoud, Bellam, and Rice. The school opened October 13th, in the new building, with 30 students in attendance. Before the end of the year they numbered 61. In 1883 President Hale resigned to become President of the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. He was succeeded by Regis Chauvenet, A.M., B.S. For eight years after its opening the student body remained about fifty, and many of them were special students, but the number of those taking the regular courses steadily increased. The standing of the School of Mines throughout the world is well known, and it is unnecessary to discourse on it further.

The Morrill Act of July 2, 1862, made provision to give public lands to the several states and territories in order to provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts. These lands, however, were not made available until the year 1884, yet the provisions of the act were known and must have encouraged the legislators of Colorado, for the Territorial Legislature, February 11, 1870, established the Agricultural College, fixed its location at Fort Collins, and named a board of trustees, 12 in number, but appropriated no funds for the institution. The people of Fort Collins, however, took a lively interest in the college, and by 1872, two hundred and forty acres of land near that town were given for college purposes. The Legislature of 1874 made an appropriation of \$1,000.00 to aid the trustees in erecting buildings, provided they would raise an equal sum for the buildings, etc. More than the required amount was subscribed. In order to secure certain rights which were in danger from the inaction of the authorities,

the members of Collins Grange held a picnic on the college grounds. During the day 20 acres of college ground were sown to wheat, and cottonwood cuttings were planted along the north side of the grounds. This wheat land, in harvest time, produced a yield of 375 bushels. In 1876 the college became an institution of the state, and in 1877 the first general assembly provided for the support of the college.

On September 1, 1879, the college was opened for students, with Reverend E. E. Edwards, D.D., of McKendree College Illinois, as president, assisted by A. E. Blount, A.M., Professor of Agriculture, and Frank J. Annis, A.B., Professor of Chemistry. Twenty students were in attendance. There was but one course of study. During 1880, forty-five students were in attendance, and in the following year the number had increased to sixty-two. In 1882, President Edwards resigned, and was succeeded by Clarence L. Ingersoll, M.S., who continued until 1891, when he was succeeded by Alston Ellis, A.M., Ph.D., LL.D., as president and Professor of Political Economy and Logic. At this time the faculty numbered 15 in all; there were four courses, and there were 146 students. In 1899, President Ellis resigned, and was followed by Reverend Barton O. Aylesworth, A.M., LL.D., former president of Drake University. When President Aylesworth resigned in 1909, Dr. Charles A. Lory was first appointed acting president, then president, and he still holds that position, being one of the oldest college presidents, continuing service in one place, in the United States. It is unnecessary to continue further with all of the developments of this institution, which so ably meets the purposes of its creation.

Section 12 of the act which established the State University provides as follows: "The university shall include a classical, philosophical, normal, scientific, law, and other departments." It was therefore originally intended that the university should do the work of a normal school, and you will recall that a normal course was established at the university and continued to exist until the year 1889, when the State Normal School was established. However, many thought that a normal school should be established, and a group of men in Greeley, who knew at first hand the work of the normal school and colleges of the middle west and east and the educational and social benefits of such institutions upon the communities where they were located had clearly the most definite vision, so that in the act of April 1, 1889, providing for the establishing, governing, and maintaining of a normal school, provided "A state normal school is hereby established at or near the City of Greeley, in the county of Weld, and State of Colorado. \* \* \* Provided that a donation be made of a site of said normal school, consisting of forty acres of land, with a building erected thereon

according to plans and specifications furnished by the State Board of Education, and to cost not less than \$25,000.00, \$10,000.00 of which shall be paid by the State."

The government of the Normal School was by a board of six trustees, to be appointed by the Governor, for periods of six years. The City of Greeley and holders of property in Greeley provided the 40 acres and \$15,000.00 in cash, and the work of erecting the building was begun. The Normal School opened its doors to students on October 6, 1890, with a faculty of five teachers under the presidency of Thomas J. Gray. The building was not completed, so the classes were held in rooms down town—the vacant court rooms in the courthouse, the lecture room of the United Presbyterian Church, and the old Unity House Church.

On November 25, 1890, President Gray reported 76 students in the normal classes and 255 in the model school. On September 8, 1891, Z. X. Snyder became President and Professor of Psychology and Science of Education. Having been Superintendent of Schools in Reading, Pennsylvania, Principal of the Indiana (Pennsylvania) State Normal School, and a State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Pennsylvania, Dr. Snyder was not only qualified, but did heroic service in the formative years of the life of the normal school. On his death in 1915, the board of trustees selected Dr. John Grant Crabbe as his successor, who was at the time of his selection President of Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, although he was an Ohio man.

In this rather rapid, cursory, and disjointed account of the institutions of higher learning of the State of Colorado, I have limited myself to the beginnings and the early years of their existence. There has been no attempt to give in any chronological order the introduction of courses, building of buildings, etc. Suffice it to say, the beginnings of things, and institutions are not only in many cases shrouded in mystery, but when we can get behind the dimness, we find them to be the projections of a man or men, interested in the advancement of a project dear to his or their hearts and ideals.

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## Denver's First Christmas, 1858

A. O. MCGREW\*

Denver City, Dec. 29, 1858.

Editor of the Omaha Times:—A brief retrospect of occurrences since my sojourn in this portion of the country; a short account of things as they are; a description of our Christmas Festival; Masonic Dinner, and a few of the leading events of the day, including the new gold discoveries, alum mines and other deposits, and the prospects of the new towns, may not be the least interesting news matter set before your many readers, and the departure of Sander's & Co.'s express for Fort Laramie offers a favorable opportunity for sending news to the states, or, as some of the boys facetiously term it, "to America," I shall jot down such information to those who contemplate coming here in the Spring.

In regard to the route, I suppose so many have been suggested that it will be difficult for emigrants to choose, but shall offer my voice in favor of the Platte route. Those who are returning to the States for stocks, etc., invariably take this route in preference to the southern by way of the Arkansas river, in fact, the impracticability of the latter route, as expeditious or safe has been sufficiently tested by this fall's emigration to set the matter for ever at rest, so no more on that head.

Our drives were as follows: We left the river on the 27th of September last, and drove to Papillion Creek the first day; second day to Elkhorn, 3rd day to Rawhide Creek; 4th day five miles west of Fremont; 5th day, 63 miles from the place of starting, to a place called Buchanan; 6th day at Columbus; 7th day at Loupe Fork; 8th day on Prairie Creek; 9th day, 20 miles west of Prairie Creek; 10th day, 21 miles further west; 11th day, 20 miles further west; 12th day, camped on Wood river; 13th day, camped opposite Fort Kearney; 14th day, 17 miles west of Kearney; 15th day, Plum creek; 16th day, 17 miles further west; 17th day, laid over; 18th day, drove 18 miles; 19th day, camped on Cottonwood; 20th day, at Cottonwood Springs; 21st day, drove ten miles; 22nd day, drove 17 miles; 23rd day, camped at Big Spring; 24th day, drove to the crossing of the South Platte; 25th day, drove 18 miles; 26th day, drove 18 miles; 27th day, drove 18 miles; 28th day, drove 20 miles; 29th day, drove 18 miles; 30th day, camped at noon on the Bijou, and drove that night to Kiowa creek; 31st day, drove ten miles;

\*Mr. McGrew from Pennsylvania was a correspondent for certain eastern newspapers at the time of the Pikes Peak gold rush. He was known among Colorado pioneers as the "wheelbarrow man," because of his attempt to reach the mines with a wheelbarrow. After having pushed it about half way across the plains, he joined a wagon company and his vehicle was thereafter used for gathering buffalo chips for the company fire. McGrew returned to the States in 1862 in a boat on the Platte River. This article, which appeared in the *Omaha Times* of Feb. 17, 1859, was found in the old files of that paper by our Research Worker, Elmer R. Burkey.—Ed.

32nd day, drove 16 miles; 33rd day, drove 1½ miles; 34th day, drove 8 miles and camped; 35th day, drove 16 miles; 36th day, we made 12 miles; and camped within a mile and a half of our present location. The next day we moved up and commenced building our present spacious and commodious residences, which being completed, were occupied in a much shorter space of time, than it takes a fashionable establishment in New York to set itself to rights.

The country through which we passed is worthy of a few remarks. As far west as Fort Kearney, we passed through fine, rich farming lands, abundantly supplied with wood and most excellent water. The lands in the vicinity of Buchanan, Columbus and Grand Island City are all under cultivation, and being beautifully situated, must eventually become places of note. In fact, all the land in that section of the country is fine for agricultural purposes, and settlements extend to within 40 miles of Kearney. Trains can, therefore, supply themselves with grain for their cattle to the Fort, a distance of 198 miles, according to our calculation. This would make the distance from Omaha to this place 598 miles. From the Fort to Cottonwood Springs, the roads are beautiful, with an abundance of wood, water and grass—the three elements which constitute a good camping place. From Cottonwood to the Crossing, wood is not so plenty, and it is good policy to carry as much with you as possible; the roads continue firm with plenty of grass and water. The first four days' drive after leaving the crossing, the roads are very sandy, and wagons run heavy. Good water and buffalo grass is found in abundance, but there is no wood, and buffalo chips are used as a substitute. After this, the roads are excellent; wood continuing scarce until we arrive this side of Beaver Creek, after which it is found in abundance.

We are now at the mouth of Cherry Creek, the goal to which so many are looking with such intense anxiety in the spring. Here we find already, two flourishing towns—Auraria, on the west side, and Denver City, on the east side. The latter place has been selected as the county seat, and is even spoken of as the Capital, in case a new Territory is stricken off. Five and a half miles above is Arrappahoe City and a mile and a half further up is Plumb Creek settlement. Three miles below Denver City is Curtis' Ranche, and on the opposite of the river is Spooner's Ranche, our present place of residence. Chat. D'Aubrey's trading post is three miles below; nine miles further down is Sander's Ranche; five miles further is Fort Lancaster; two miles further is Fort William, formerly Lupton's Ranche; ten miles further down is St. Vrain's Fort; and five miles further down is Cache la Poudre, where the shot gold is found. The latest and richest gold diggings found, are at the base of what is known as Table Mountain, where, already, a town, known as Mountainvale, has been laid out and several houses erected while

others are in progress of erection. At the head of Cherry Creek, the town of Russelville has been laid out, and a large number have gone to commence building operations. This comprises the list of towns and settlements.

In regard to mining, the operations in that line have not been carried on to any great extent this winter, on account of the streams being either frozen or dry. Those, however, who have mined, have done well, and everyone looks forward to the opening spring with anxiety. Parties are preparing themselves for a more thorough exploration of the mountains in the spring, and some rich disclosures are anticipated. I have spoken of the streams being frozen, and from this one would suppose the weather was very severe. Such, however, is not the case. Thus far it has surprised even the old mountaineers, and Christmas Day was as bright and genial as a May morning. For three weeks we have had real Spring weather until today, when we were visited by a snow storm, and it is now growing colder.

Talking of Christmas, Mr. Editor, have you poor frozen victims of the States, the remotest idea of what a real old-fashioned Christmas celebration is, and would it hurt your feelings or spoil your appetite, if I were to rehearse some of the sayings and doings of that eventful day; and set before you our "bill of fare" on that occasion, not an imaginary one, either, but a faithful record of the luxuries under which the board groaned—enough to tempt the appetite of the most fastidious gourmand? And as the day waned, and the good cheer disappeared, wit and sentiment flowed as freely as the sparkling wine, from which they emanated.

In order to have the affair come off with as much eclat as possible, a meeting was called to make suitable arrangements. The meeting was called Dec. 21st, and I make the following extract from the minutes of the secretary:

"At a meeting held at Camp Spooner for the purpose of making arrangements for celebrating Christmas Day in a suitable manner, J. S. Lowry, Esq., was called to the chair, and Hon. Wm. Clancy appointed secretary. Mr. Lowry having in a brief speech set forth the object of the meeting.

"Mr. E. Matthews that committees be appointed, whose business it should be to make the necessary arrangements. Carried.

"On motion of Mr. J. C. Latta, Messrs. Spooner, Perkins, and Long were appointed a committee of arrangements.

"On motion of Mr. E. H. Warner, Messrs. Baker, M'Lachlin, and M'Grew appointed a committee on resolutions.

"On motion of Jno. Burssee, Messrs. Franklin, Way and Stevens were appointed a committee on toasts.

"On motion of Mr. Perrin, Messrs. Forbes, Hobbs and Dumont were appointed a committee on invitation.

"On motion of Mr. E. Hay, Messrs. Frary, Sullivan and Crum were appointed chief cooks."

Among the invited guests, were General Larimer, E. P. Stout, Esq'r, S. S. Curtis, and about fifty others. The day, as I said before, was as bright and beautiful as ever shone upon the face of animated nature; not a breeze whispered through the leafless branches of the trees, and everything seemed to be enjoying a general repose. The boys, with their invited guests, lolled lazily around on the logs, smoking their pipes or spinning innumerable yarns about their gold prospecting and hunting expeditions. The cooks, or rather, "Culinary professors," were steaming over their different departments, now turning a choice saddle of venison, then looking to the pastry to see that it was done to a nicety. One was moulding the fresh rolls of butter into all kinds of fantastic shapes, another cracking the nuts, so as to be ready for mastication. Anon, a head would protrude from a cabin door, with a cry of "more wine for the pudding sauce," would again disappear within those precincts, which were at least sacred for the time, to the labors of the disciples of "Soger." But, I am forgetting the dinner, which was the great feature of the day. The guests having taken their seats at the board, Hon. William Clancy was invited to take the head of the table; on his right was General Larimer, and on his left, Dr. Steinberger, who acted as secretary. Dinner having been fully discussed, the chairman called the board to order, and while they are coming to order, I will tempt you with the bill of fare:

#### PLATTE RIVER GOLD DIGGINGS

##### Bill of Fare

Christmas.....1858

##### Soups

Oyster Soup Ox Tail

##### Fish

Salmon Trout, with Oyster Sauce

##### Boiled

Corned Beef, Buffalo Tongue, Mutton, Pork, Ham, Beef Tongue,  
Elk Tongue

##### ROAST

Venison, a la mode; Buffalo, smothered; Antelope; Beef; Mutton;  
Pork; Grizzly Bear, a la mode; Elk; Mountain Sheep, Mountain Pig.

##### GAME

Mountain Pheasants; Mountain Rabbits; Turkeys; Ducks; Sage  
Hen; Prairie Chickens; Black Mountain Squirrel; Prairie Dog;  
Snipe; Mountain Rats; White Swans; Quails; Sand Hill Cranes.

##### EXTRAS

Potatoes, baked; Potatoes, boiled; Rice; Beans, baked and boiled;  
Beets, Squashes, fried; Pumpkins, stewed.

##### DESSERT

Mince Pie; Current Pie; Apple Pie; Rice Pie; Peach Pie; Mountain  
Cranberry Pie; Tapioca Pudding; Bread Pudding; Rice Pudding.

##### FRUITS

Brazil Nuts; Almonds; Hazel Nuts; Filberts; Pecans; Wild  
Currants; Raisins; Prickley Pear; Dried Mountain Plum.

##### WINE LIST

Hockheimer; Maderia; Champagne; Golden Sherry; Cherry  
Bounce; Hock; Monongahela Whiskey; Claret; Brandy; Scotch  
Whiskey; Ja. Rum; Bourbon Whiskey; Taos Lightning.

If you have done with the bill of fare I will trouble you for your attention while the meeting proceeds. Order being restored, Mr. Clancy read the following resolutions, which on motion were incorporated with the proceedings of the meeting:

Resolved, That we hereby tender our thanks to Capt. R. A. Spooner, for the able and efficient manner in which he conducted our train through from Nebraska to this point, and for his kindness in everything that contributed to the comfort and happiness of all the members of the company.

Resolved, that we also tender our thanks to our secretary, Dr. Steinberger, for his attention to his duties and kindness to the whole party.

Resolved, that we are fully satisfied with our prospects for gold digging, and the general appearance of the country, sufficiently so to make it our permanent home.

Resolved, that a copy of the proceedings of this day, together with a small sample of the dust obtained from these diggings, be furnished the *Omaha Times*, and that the editor be requested to publish the same, in order that persons in the States may know how people "out of America," live, move, and have their being.

Resolved, that all papers in Kansas, Nebraska and the several states, who are friendly to the opening of this rich mineral country, be requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting.

Toasts and songs being next in order, the following were offered; some of which were received with a hip, hip, hurra, and a tiger.

##### REGULAR TOASTS.

May all the emigration to this El Dorada find as comfortable quarters as we have in this beautiful camp, and may they succeed in realizing their brightest golden anticipation; hoping that Kansas and Nebraska may not want for good fat beef, no more than we

do for fat venison, elk, mountain sheep, antelope, wild turkies, etc.—Gen. Larimer.

The good health and prosperity of Capt. R. A. Spooner—hoping that he may succeed as well in taking back bags of gold dust to Nebraska as he did in conducting our train out.—Hon. William Clancy.

Our Cabins and Our Homes.—Both containing our hearts' dearest treasures; the former peopled with pictures of our fondest imaginations; the latter by the reality from which we are separated.—James Kimes.

SONG.—The Star Spangled Banner.

The Day We Celebrate.—May we never be less able to celebrate it than at present, and may we enjoy many a happy return of it.—Volunteer.

Women and Wine.—May they both attain that which ruins the one and improves the other; viz: old age.—B. Franklin.

Our Homes and Those We Left Behind.—May our toil and industry repay us for the parting and separation.—B. Franklin.

SONG.—The Girl I Left Behind Me.

Doctors and Ducks.—May the quack of the former be as harmless and of as little use as that of the latter.—Volunteer.

The Miners and the Mines.—May the latter be as prolific of treasures as the former are pregnant with high hopes.—Volunteer.

The Carpenters.—Although not blessed with the presence of women, may they, in the spring find a lucrative employment in the manufacture of cradles.—B. Franklin.

SONG.—Rosalie, the Prairie Flower.

Taos. (pro. Touse) and its productions.—Although there are good things come up from Old Taos,

Its Whiskey ain't worth three skips of a Louse.—Volunteer.

The Past, The Present, and The Future.—Let that first ever be in remembrance; a bright look for the second; and hope be our guiding star for the third.—B. Franklin.

The New Territory of Colona.—May she soon realize her brightest anticipations, and take her place in the galaxy of stars, as a State.—Mr. Blake.

SONG.—The Home of My Boyhood.

Our Destiny.—Westward the star of Empire takes her way, and she has now lodged in the Rocky Mountains, where the original clans see (Clancy) the clouds lowring (Lowry) o'er the peaks of Laramie. (Gen. Larimer.)—S. S. Curtis.

Direct Communication.—May the opening of Spring, give us direct communication with our friends in "America," by a regular mail, and although we all acknowledge the benefits derived from our present *fee mail*, (50 cents per letter,) may we be blessed with

an abundance of the genuine article of genus female during the coming summer.—A. O. McGrew.

The Press.—That mighty engine which contralls Powers and Principalities, converts the howling wilderness into smiling fields and busy marts of commerce, sheds its blessings alike upon the rich and poor, the great and the small, the lowly and the exalted; the lever which moves the world. May its influence never be perverted to serve base purposes; may our *case* not be to *copy* after others, but may we make it *rule to stick* to our *sheets* (when we get one) as long as there are quoins (coins) in the *bank*, after which we will *down with the dust*, even though *imposing stones* rear themselves before our *forms* in our arduous *chase* after the precious *metal*.—A. O. McGrew.

That last toast was received with three times three, and a tiger, after which was sung the beautiful song, entitled, "The Mountain Boy's Call." Gen. Larimer being called upon for a speech, then rose and made some very appropriate remarks, of which I send you a brief synopsis.

The general remarked that he had no prepared speech for the interesting occasion; that he had not expected to have been called upon, but that he would take pleasure in giving utterance to such ideas as the movement suggested. He remarked that the time and place would certainly call forth some good reflections, even from one not well skilled in oratory. He continued, "we are now in a new country, and have found matters to be very different from what they were represented, prior to our leaving home. A gentleman in Leavenworth remarked to me that he spoke from the record when he said, 'we would find eight months' snow and four months' winter at Pikes Peak.' He must have had reference to the summit of the Peak, where such a report might be partially true; for I have been told that the Peak had been seen partially capped with snow, even in August. But this does not effect us here, in these lovely valleys. Here we are, in the midst of winter, on this glorious Christmas Day, and what do we find? On my way down this morning, to your hospitable ranche, walking without an overcoat, I found the perspiration passing down my face, as though it had been mid-summer; and so it has been for the last month. True, we had a little brush of winter about the middle of November, but it amounted to nothing at all."

He then spoke of the day we celebrated, and remarked that many divines had serious doubts upon the subject of the birth of our Savior, on what we now call the twenty-fifth day of December, from the fact that upon that glorious occasion, the people were all summoned up to Bethlehem to be taxed. This in the middle of winter would be deemed impracticable, if not impossible, as many

of them would have long distances to travel, and no accommodations. The Bible says that Mary and Joseph were obliged to submit to such accommodations as a stable, offered them when our Lord and Savior was born. If that eastern country was as warm as we find it out here, at the base of Pikes Peak and the Rocky Mountains the inhabitants could travel anywhere, and could lodge in stables, or camp where they pleased with impunity. "But," continued the General, "this is no part of my speech. I wish the emigrant, who come hither, to test the country fairly and fully. For my part, I am satisfied that, aside from the rich deposits of gold, alum, coal, marl, etc., that have already been discovered, we could live longer and better to settle in this country. But we have mineral treasures, sufficient to justify emigration to its fullest extent. Beds of granite, equalling in beauty the far-famed brown stone of the east, lines the banks and fills the beds of our streams. Lime can be produced, from the best of limestone, at a moderate price. Our pineries are convenient, and will last for generations to come. Already a large number of my friends are engaged in making arrangements to open up farms in the spring, getting out lumber, timber, and shingles, for the purpose of erecting dwelling houses, barns, stables, and graineries. Three large hotels are in progress of erection, and will soon be completed. Two houses of public worship are also being erected, and, even under the present circumstances, as each succeeding Sabbath rolls around and ushers in a day of rest from toil, and peace of mind from the cankering cares of the busy world, we are blessed with the ministrations of a holy man of God. This country is bound to settle up. Manifest Destiny has shaped its end, and discovered its long hidden treasures.

"The late financial crisis, which has prostrated every department of trade, and has been felt from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Maine to California, will have its effect in sending from every State, numbers of their most enterprising inhabitants." He spoke at some length upon the prospects of the Great Pacific Railroad, and the incalculable advantages that will accrue to this country when it shall have been completed. "I have no doubt," continued he, "that the road will be built at an early day, and even without a branch at this point, we could tap it at the crossing of the North and South Fork of the Platte River, a distance of 175 miles, but with 150 miles to Fort Laramie, taking a most direct course (the present traveled road is 190 miles). Let the great Pacific Railroad be put under way; the North, the West, the East demand it, Leavenworth City demands it; nay, every city, town and village on the Missouri River, above the Kansas river demand it. The Hannibal and St. Joseph R. R. demand it, and the four great leading railroads across the State of Iowa demand it; Denver City demands it; Salt Lake City demands it, and all of California, Oregon and Washington

Territories demand it; and why is it not commenced." The general then remarked that the gaieties of forty-nine Christmas festivals had passed over his head, and although not in the sere and yellow leaf, still, he could feel the leaden impress of Time's untiring footstep on his brow; but that the pleasures of the present moment, the happiest Christmas he had ever spent, caused him to revert to the days of his youth, and made the young blood boil and tingle again in his veins as it did in days of yore, when revelling in those sacred halls where his boyhood's happiest hours were spent. Here, becoming somewhat excited, he raised his voice and exclaimed, "And now, with the blessings already enumerated, what more do we want?" (A voice from A. O. McGrew, who came out with a wheelbarrow, caused a universal shout of laughter from the crowd) "Woman and the consequent responsibilities." "Yes," continued the general, "Eve's fair daughters are wanting; a very essential part of our body social is lacking; and although Time has silvered my locks, my views in regard to that matter are unchanged. But we shall soon have them here. One family has arrived today, and others are expected daily." After a few more remarks the general took his seat. Mr. McGrew being called upon for a song, gave the following, composed expressly for the occasion:

"A HIT AT THE TIMES."

Way out upon the Platte, near Pikes Peak we were told  
There by a little digging, we could get a pile of gold,  
So we bundled up our duds, resolved at least to try  
And tempt old Madam Fortune, root hog, or die.—Chorus.

So we traveled across the country, and we got upon the ground,  
But cold weather was ahead, the first thing we found.  
We built our shanties on the ground, resolved in spring to try,  
To gather up the dust and slugs, root hog, or die.—Chorus.

\* \* \* \*

Speculation is the fashion even at this early stage,  
And corner lots and big hotels appear to be the rage,  
The emigration's bound to come, and to greet them we will try,  
Big pig, little pig, root, hog, or die.—Chorus.

\* \* \* \*

Let shouts resound, the cup pass 'round, we all came for gold,  
The politicians are all gas, the speculators sold,  
The "scads" are all we want, and to get them we will try,  
Big pig, little pig, root hog, or die.—Chorus.

\* \* \* \*

Surveyors now are at their work, laying off the towns,  
And some will be of low degree, and some of high renown.  
They don't care a jot nor tittle who do buy  
The corner lots, or any lots, root hog, or die.—Chorus.

The doctors are among us, you can find them where you will,  
 They say their trade it is to cure, I say it is to kill;  
 They'll dose you, and they'll physic you, until they make you  
 sigh,  
 And their powders and their lotions make you root hog, or  
 or die.—Chorus.

The next in turn comes Lawyers; a precious set are they;  
 In the public dairy they drink the milk, their clients drink  
 the whey.  
 A cunning set these fellows are; they'll sap you 'till your dry,  
 And never leave you 'till you have to root, hog, or die.—  
 Chorus.

A Preacher, now, is all we want, to make us all do good;  
 But at present, there's no lack of *spiritual* food,  
 The kind that I refer to, will make you laugh or cry,  
 And its real name is Taos, root, hog, or die.—Chorus.

I have finished now my song, or, if you please, my ditty;  
 And that it was not shorter, is about the only pity.  
 And now, that I have had my say, don't say I've told a lie;  
 For the subject I've touched, will make us root, hog, or die.—  
 Chorus.

The song being finished, and ordered to be incorporated in the proceedings of the meeting, the party broke up, just as the brilliant day God was hiding himself behind the summits of the snow-capped mountains, bathing the mist-covered valley with a golden light, rendered still more brilliant by the reflection from the glaciers while a gentle breeze, laden with the warmth and fragrance of the sunny South, wafted over the vale. Adjourning to Auraria, we found the town alive with an influx of miners, some of whom were dressed in the most fantastic and grotesque manner that an active imagination, and the application of the skins of wild beasts could possibly devise. In a short time an immense fire was blazing in the public square, and Terpsichore answered to the voice of Orpheus. Light hearts, merry countenances, and active feet were soon in motion, and the dance continued until midnight. Beneath many a rough exterior were hearts that throbbed with pleasant thoughts of home. Groups of Indians, with their squaws and papooses, filled up the background. It was a picture that Rembrandt would have contemplated with delight. On Monday the *Masons* held their annual celebration in honor of St. John's Day, and in the evening had a fine supper; as I am not so fortunate as to belong to the fraternity, I was not present.

Having at length got through with the celebration, I shall refer to a few things which I have omitted as I went along. First, the

game; we came across buffalo at Plum Creek and having killed in the neighborhood of twenty on our way out, we were pretty well stocked with that kind of meat, in addition to the game mentioned in the bill of fare, and of which there is a great abundance; we are cursed with the greatest abundance of wild beasts; but, which, however, are rapidly disappearing before the crack of the huntsman's rifle, or that subtle poison, strychnine, or are being driven to the mountain fastnesses. Every day hunters are arriving with their wagons loaded with the choicest of wild game, so that meat is the cheapest thing we eat. The savage beasts comprise wolves of every description; from the small kiota, to the heavy mountain wolf, wild cats, panthers, catamounts, prairie tigers, mountain lions, not to mention the grizzly bear, who walks lord and monarch of them all.

In addition to the new mines recently discovered at the base of Table Mountain, on Long's Creek, a bed of alum has just been discovered at the base of the range, about fifteen miles distant. A bed of marl has been opened on the other side of the river, immediately below Denver City, and a bed of most excellent bituminous coal has been discovered. The whole country is in a perfect state of excitement, and there are some who, having the bumps of inquisitiveness and acquirativeness very fully developed, have not been able to withstand the temptation, and have gone to the mountains, notwithstanding the danger attendant upon an expedition of the kind at this time of year. Others believing in the motto, "discrimination is the better part of valor," are making extensive preparations for the spring campaign, getting their teams in perfect order, and engaging Indian guides. This latter institution, however, I do not place much confidence in; and notwithstanding their professed friendship, should rather watch them narrowly while in their neighborhood, than employ them for guides.

I believe I have said all that I can at present. You may doubtless hear many reports in the States; some of which are doubtless true, while others are false. Many come here who, because they cannot make independent fortunes in a day, leave, and curse the country. Let them go; we have no use for them here; they are much better at home, where they can have someone to wash their faces every morning, and see that they do not stray too far from home. We are satisfied with our prospects here, and intend to stay here until the whole country is explored. If we could only hear from home oftener, or even see an occasional paper, it would do us a great deal of good. The first cry of the boys in the morning when they open their cabin door, is, "Who stole my paper?" "Where the devil do the police keep themselves?" and thus, like the young man in the Arabian Nights, they imagine the feast even though they cannot enjoy it, *verb sap*.

## Proposal for Navigation of the Colorado River, 1866

Letter of COL. ANSON MILLS to JUDGE C. S. EYSTER\*

Fort Bridger Utah [present Wyoming]

December 16th 1866

My Dear Judge.

I have now been here over a month and am more than ever convinced that my projected Expedition up the Colorado River is practicable.

I propose to send a Lieutenant from this Post with 25 men overland to Fort Mohave on the Colorado near the Gulf of California; to go myself to Sanfrancisco and have Constructed a small but strong boat of about 12 tons with an Engine of double the Strength usual for that sized boat and capable of giving twice as many revolutions to its wheel and drawing from 12 to 15 inches of water, and would have it carried round from Sanfrancisco by steamer to the mouth the Colorado where I would meet the 25 men about the middle of July I would then take on board supplies for two months and am satisfied I could reach this latitude, a point on Green river 30 miles east of this Post, in 30 days. I am satisfied that Green river is more susceptible of navigation than the Missouri far above this point for over four months in the year. It is generally believed that the Rail Road will cross Green river in this vicinity and the moment it is completed the navigation of this river in both directions will become important both to Gov't and the settlers.

If it is in your power to aid me in this project, I request the favor. I will make application about the 1st of Jan. to the Secretary of War through the Chief Engineer. Gen'l Steedman, Senator Doolittle and Judge Evans of Texas all in Washington are friends of mine. Remember to your wife

Yours Truly

ANSON MILLS

Bvt. Lt. Col. U. S. Army

Comdg Post

Fort Bridger

Utah

JUDGE C. S. EYSTER

Denver City

Colorado

\*This letter was among the papers recently presented to the Historical Society by Mr. F. C. Sibley, grandson of Judge Eyster.—Ed.

## Stagecoach Holdups in the San Luis Valley

ELLEN F. WALRATH\*

The narrow gauge train was pulling into the frontier town of Alamosa in the early morning. With the hissing of steam, squealing of brakes, and ringing bell, it came to a stop at the little brown wooden depot, the end of the railroad. From here one had to take the stage coach for points farther on. Depot workers pushed carts and hand trucks hurriedly away, and most of the crowd wended its way to the Perry House for a trout breakfast.

Stepping jauntily from the last coach of the train was a slender, well dressed, young man. From the top of his good-looking hat to the bottoms of his small boots, size number four, he was a well dressed city man, weighing about one hundred and twenty pounds. In no hurry, he followed the crowd to the hotel for his breakfast, his ever-alert eyes seeing the town and its people, without an apparent effort. His perfect ease and composure left him unnoticed. Thus Billie Le Roy entered upon his career in the San Luis valley, with Alamosa as his starting point.

The saloons were numerous and attractive, men and women gambling, and gun plays were of no interest to the westerners, but the eastern man was surprised at the large amounts of money and the dare-devil spirit that prevailed in these places.

Le Roy was much interested in it all—to his undoing—for after a few drinks, he grew reckless and lost his money to these people who were used to picking young kids, and later he got gloriously drunk.

The stage coach, in perfect order, the high-stepping, well-groomed, and perfectly-matched teams, the pride of the stock tenders, whose only duty it was to keep them fit, was the next step on the road. The stage road ran up the Rio Grande River, the first stop being Riverside, the next, Venable—twelve miles between each station into Del Norte—and on to Lake City. At each station was a stock tender, who unhitched the incoming team and hitched in the fresh team for the next twelve miles. At Venable there was a Swede who was known among the men as a great spinner of yarns, not usually true, but his worst trouble came from carelessness, with the horses. The fourteen or fifteen drivers were severe sometimes, when the teams were not in order, and then Swede would improve.

Jim Madison, George Stout, and Three-Finger Jack Hayes were some of the well-known drivers. Three-Finger got his name from the fact that he drove his team of six horses with a hand that had

\*Mrs. Walrath lives in Crestone, Colorado.—Ed.

only three fingers on it. Stokes was another driver who had worked for the company for years, but as he grew older, he was too heavy for a driver, weighing about two hundred pounds, so he was given all the grain hauling to the stations from Alamosa to Lake City. His wagon and trailer were drawn by eight big horses, and always loaded to capacity.

A man from Kansas City came west to drive a stage. He was nicknamed "K. C." because of his constant reference to that city. Mr. and Mrs. Stout took him into their home to board, feeling sorry for a tenderfoot.

The largest livery barn in Alamosa was owned by a man by the name of Greenstreet. Here were good horses to rent, both riding and driving. To him went Billie Le Roy in search of a fast horse, which he obtained for a few hours. He rode out of town and up the river road leading west. His head was not feeling any too pleasant. Careless of consequences, and desperate for funds, he put his brain to work to perfect his half-formed plans.

Riding for nine or ten miles, he found a suitable place in the road that fitted into his plans nicely, and there he dismounted to fix his trap for the west-bound stage. He dressed the bushes with handkerchiefs and a hat or two, drew a heavy fence post directly across the road, hid his horse as well as he could, and behind his barricade, he lay down and waited for his prey. The stars were exceptionally bright, giving him what light he needed, the night fine, and with patience he worked it out alone.

At last the eleven o'clock stage was heard, its wheels crushing the pebbles in the road. The horses were coming at a lively trot, the stage, with its human cargo, their money, valuables, the mail pouch, the express were almost his.

On the still night air a voice rang out: "HOLD UP YOUR HANDS!" The driver pulled his horses to a stop, and the passengers sat in the coach with hands above their heads. Money was carried in the way pouch, a big leather envelope that was thrown into the coach with the mail. The fourteen passengers were relieved of their money, jewelry—in fact, all they possessed. Then the voice called to "K. C.", who was the driver: "Unlock the mail sacks, throw them down; that way pouch, too. Be quick! but get them all!"

So fifteen thousand dollars was Billie Le Roy's winnings that night. "Drive on!" the voice called out again, and drive on they did, as the man's shaking hands could not hold the excited horses, who rushed on into the night. "K. C." asked for his time on his return to Alamosa, and left that night for his beloved Kansas City. He had had enough of the West.

The spot where the hold-up had taken place was a queer sight in the light of day. The ground was strewn with bits of papers

which had been letters; but in his haste, Billie had overlooked a lot of money, which was still enclosed in the torn envelopes. Everywhere were the prints of a small boot—Billie's number four. For a while, officers thought a woman had held up the stage. With his harvest of money and jewelry, Le Roy went back to town. His horse was returned and paid for at Greenstreet's, and he was ready for his return to the East. At the Perry House, he ate his supper, listening to the lamenting passengers, whom he had broke.

He took the night train for Pueblo, but on the way he aroused the suspicions of a mail inspector, who watched him closely, because he was very particular about a big grip and satchel in his possession. This was the man who later started the search for Le Roy, and was rewarded for his suspicions when Billie was caught and arrested at Kansas City. A deputy United States marshal started on the way back with Le Roy, who seemed disposed to be obedient. While in the lavatory, Le Roy picked the lock of his handcuffs with the mainspring from his watch, opened the window, slipped gently through and dropped to the ground. He perfected his escape, went back, got his brother, and together they came back to Colorado and the rich field around Alamosa for another stage coach hold-up.

Billie Le Roy's second visit to Alamosa was not so public as his first, for he and his brother had decided to hold up the stage between South Fork and Wagon Wheel Gap. There was no need of a barrier this time, as they thought it both safe and easy to plan without any extra help, for there would be two now where one had been successful before. On each side of the road they hid to await the on-coming stage. The team of six large sorrel horses, with flaxen manes and tails, nervously picked their way along with great speed. This team was the pride of the road, the best team the company owned here. The driver was a well known Del Norte man and very popular.

The order rang out: "Hold up your hands!" but the sudden appearance of the men frightened the horses, who immediately ran away, dragging the coach and its passengers on down the road.

Mad with defeat at the failure of their plans, the Le Roys shot and killed the driver, and seriously wounded a passenger. When news reached Del Norte, the excitement grew to fever heat. The popular driver's friends and the company men were seen in small groups, which grew to an excited mob in no time. Then a posse was formed. Armstrong, then sheriff of Rio Grande County, headed the small band, which consisted of himself, Dan Soward, George Stout and Max Frost. Armstrong's orders were "Take them alive if possible—if not, kill them! But get them!" Their trail was plain, leading up the Rio Grande River and on up above the Creede of today.

When the posse reached the "Slumgullion" they spread out to hunt the district. Through the night the hunt went on, to be rewarded in the morning when George Stout saw a smoke, toward which he cautiously made his way. Near the river a campfire burned. Keeping it in sight, he carefully worked his way forward through the timber, until he saw a man cooking breakfast. Just one man, not two. Patiently he watched, and was soon joined by Max Frost, and together they lay hidden in the brush waiting for the other man. Billie was absent, his brother being the cook. The bushes parted, and Billie came into camp. He had gone for a bucket of water, which he held in his hand.

"Hold up your hands!" echoed the demand, but Billie jumped for his Winchester which was leaning against a nearby aspen. His brother ran for cover in the nearby timber. A Winchester, not Billie's, spoke and the brother stopped, crumpled to the ground with a broken leg. The game was up, Billie realized, and he turned and faced his captors, his hands high above his head. The other two men of the posse came on the run at the sound of the shot to find the catch had been made, and the trip back was started.

The prisoners were taken into Del Norte, where they were lodged in the old county jail for safekeeping. With the usual speed and thoroughness of those days, a mob formed and marched to the jail where the sheriff was told to hand over the keys, or take the consequences. He tendered the mob the keys, and the two prisoners were brought out. Ropes were quickly adjusted, and the highwaymen were soon hanging from the limbs of the old cottonwood that stood directly in front of the present depot at Del Norte. A photographer adjusted his camera, and took their pictures hanging to the tree. The men were cut down, stood up against the wall in the jail yard, and photographed again. In this one, the broken leg wrapped in a sack can be plainly seen.

The anti-climax of these hold-ups was the one pulled on a moonlight night by two men on "Six Mile Hill." One man, rather large, wore a slouch hat pulled down over his eyes, the other a black rag over the lower part of his face. The six horses driven by George Stout were walking up the hill. The only passenger this night was a man by the name of Charles Peck, at that time undersheriff of Rio Grande County. The two men, being good friends, were talking and were wholly unprepared for trouble when the other two men, one on each side, stepped out, and the words so full of peril rang out: "Hold up your hands!" The lead horse near the large man was nervous and commenced to prance and twist in the harness, exciting the rest of the team. The big man stepped forward, took hold of the rein and said quite clearly, "Whoa, Hawk." The horses, knowing the voice, stood still. At once Stout recognized the voice

as belonging to the Swede stock tender at Venable, but no one but Stout noticed the highwayman's slip, not even the man himself. Stout quickly kicked the way pouch and express packages down into the boot, and in throwing up his hands, pushed a rug over them. Both Stout and Peck were searched. Stout's money and an old silver watch went out of his possession, but Charles Peck, who had considerable money, a good watch and a six-shooter, was the real loser—not a good-tempered one either.

After the Swede had sobered up—his pardner still drunk from the celebration—he found himself in the toils of the law, as laid down by Sis Warner and Frank Hyatt. However, the spoils were never recovered or returned; and Charles Peck was always cross about losing his valuable six-shooter.

The subject was not referred to at the Stout home except one evening at supper. Mrs. Stout looked across the table at her husband and said softly: "How big was that gun, George, the one Swede held you up with?" The answer was: "As big as the hole in a pickel barrel."

## Samuel Hawken, Gunsmith and Fifty-Niner

ROY T. KING\*

One of Denver's pioneer gunsmiths was Samuel Hawken who emigrated from Missouri in the spring of 1859. Arriving with a party of gold seekers on June 30, 1859, he engaged in mining for a short time, then operated a gun shop in Denver for a while before returning to Missouri. His description of his trip, which required fifty-seven days, and of "the diggins" is one of the earliest of this region.

Born in Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1792, Samuel Hawken had fought in the War of 1812. He moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he arrived on June 5, 1822, and opened a gun shop. In 1832 he organized the "Northern Fire Company," a volunteer fire fighting unit. This was incorporated by the General Assembly of Missouri in 1837 as the "Union Fire Co. No. 2," and he remained an active member until its dissolution in 1855.<sup>1</sup>

His gun shop became widely known among fur traders and mountain men as the manufactory of the "Hawken rifle." His rifles were distinguished for their accuracy, and although many were sold they are now quite rare as museum pieces. Expert in

\*Mr. King is the newspaper librarian of the State Historical Society of Missouri.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Tom Lynch, *The Volunteer Fire Department of St. Louis* (St. Louis, 1880), 109.

the repair and making of guns and pistols he engaged in this work in Denver during the summer of 1859.<sup>2</sup>

After returning to Missouri he retired to a farm in St. Louis county, and lived there until his death on May 9, 1884.<sup>3</sup> His body was buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery.

His letter describing his western experiences was printed in the *St. Louis Weekly Missouri Democrat* of September 16, 1859, and is as follows:

Denver City, K. T., Aug. 29, 1859.

*Editors of the Missouri Democrat:*

Well, here I am, in the new El Dorado of the far distant West, in the thriving city of Denver, which is situated at the mouth of the famous Cherry Creek; and as it is now customary almost with every one to write home something for the newspapers, giving their opinions and ideas of this country, &c., I think that I am entitled to say something myself in regard to this country, for I am one amongst the oldest men that crossed the Plains for the ever memorable Peak this spring, footing as I did nearly all the way with my rifle on my shoulder, a good part of the time, which is a distance, I think, of near 800 miles.

After a residence of thirty-seven years in St. Louis amongst you, I think I have some little claims upon the St. Louis press, and believing so, I shall ask your indulgence to give my letter publication in your journal. I will now give you a hasty sketch of my trip across the Plains, and then give you *my* opinion of the "gold mines."

I left St. Louis on the 20th of April, in company with seven young gentlemen of St. Louis, on board the "good steamer" A. B. Chambers, crowded with "Pike's Peak" adventurers, and arrived in Kansas City, our starting point, in due time, with safety. We then went out a distance of six miles to Mr. Wm. Bent's farm, and there camped for one week waiting for the grass and to recruit our cattle; and on the 2d day of May pulled up stakes and launched out upon the "beautiful green prairie," bound for the Peak, and "no back out," all of us being in excellent health and good spirits.

<sup>2</sup>The following advertisement appeared in the *Rocky Mountain News* of January 25, 1860:

"GUN MAKER

"S. Hawken, for the last thirty-seven years engaged in the manufacture of the Rocky Mountain rifle in ST. LOUIS, would respectfully say to the citizens of Denver, Auraria, and his old mountain friends, that he has established himself in the Gun business, on Ferry street, between Fourth & Fifth, next door to Jones & Cartwright's, Auraria, and is now prepared to manufacture his style of rifles to order. Repairing done at short notice.

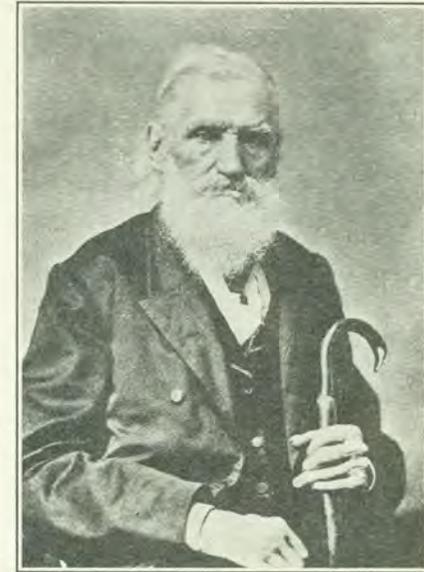
"N. B. In addition to the above, he is prepared to do light iron work of all kinds. Door keys made and repaired—instruments also repaired."

In the April 4, 1862, issue of the same paper appeared this note:

"Mr. Hawken, son of the worthy and well known Uncle Samuel, of Hawken rifle notoriety, the western world over, has removed his gun shop to F street, sign of the 'Big Gun,' where everybody can go and have their guns and pistols put in order, on sure and scientific principles."—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>*Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis* (1899), II, 1003.

For the former we were under obligations to Divine Providence, and for the latter for our own "buoyant hopes and courage." Nothing scarcely worthy of note took place until we arrived at the "Cottonwood," more than getting our wagon stuck fast in a mud hole once in a while; but through the kindness of some of the passing Pike's Peakers, who would take some of their cattle, and hitch them on before our six yoke, with whooping and hallooing, we always made her come. At the Cottonwood we got into the buffalo country, and first met the disappointed and "home sick" Pike Peakers, with long faces, all telling the same yarn of Pike's Peak



SAMUEL HAWKEN

From the frontispiece of *The Volunteer Fire Department of St. Louis*, by Tom Lynch (1880).

as a humbug, when *not one* in a hundred had ever got to Cherry Creek, at Denver City, not finding the sand in that stream (of which there is plenty) pure gold dust, turned right around in one hour after their arrival, "homeward bound," crying "humbug," not having been up in the mountains, or panned out *one* pan full of dirt. During our trip across the Plains I saw *no* suffering whatever on our route, (the Arkansas) all had plenty of food, and those going back had plenty to sell. We saw but few Indians and they were quite harmless. We saw thousands of buffalo. In one herd there must have been over ten thousand, I think. One party killed a number of them, and for some time we had plenty of buffalo

meat. Of all those we met, I saw really but one happy man, and he was the happiest man that I have seen since I left St. Louis. He was riding on his horse, laughing and highly pleased, with his violin in his hand, playing the "Arkansas Traveler," and on inquiry, he said he was "going home to see Katy and the baby." We arrived in Denver City on the 30th of June, having been fifty-seven days in performing the trip, but we lost much time owing to the heavy rains, &c. Otherwise, we would have made the trip in a little over forty days. After arriving in Denver City, we camped on the Platte for a day or two, and then we started to the mines for the famous "Gregory diggings," and on the 4th of July your humble servant was crossing the Rocky Mountains on foot; and here let me say that thirty-seven years ago, on the 5th day of June, I arrived in St. Louis, then the far "distant West," being one of its early pioneers, and now again here I am in the still farther distant West, one of the pioneers of the Rocky Mountains of "Pike's Peak celebrity." Our party were all pretty well fatigued at night, I assure you, for climbing over these steep, rugged mountains is no "school boy's play." On the evening of the 4th of July we camped in "Echo Valley," and here we saw quite a display of celebrating the 4th by a party who had camped near us who formed themselves into a line and marched up to our camp. Two of them had an ox yoke on their necks, while another had a "tar bucket" for a hat, and with a fife and tin pans for music "had its charms." We gave them three hearty cheers for the 4th, and they passed on, highly pleased, to another group.

The next day we arrived in the famous Gregory and Russell's diggings, and here everything presented activity and business. Here, for the first time in my life, I saw the miners at work washing out the "precious stuff," and then I was fully convinced that "Pike's Peak" was *no* humbug, notwithstanding the hue and cry that was raised to the contrary. Our party remained in the mines for about one week. We then returned to Denver City, and disbanded, and shared our effects, as it was a "joint stock company." Since that, some have gone to the mines, while others are engaged at other occupations, and here I am once more at my old trade, putting guns and pistols in order "how to shoot."

Now, in regard to the mines. That there is gold in large quantities in these mountains, I think *no one* will any longer doubt, for I believe there are millions of gold in the Gregory mountain alone. When they get out the necessary machinery to crush the quartz, of which there is now a good deal taken out, it will then begin to tell. At present there is not a quartz mill in the country. Miners who have had good claims have made from ten to twenty dollars a day and upwards, while hundreds again have not made

one dime. In my opinion, where one succeeds and makes a fortune, hundreds will not make anything. I would not advise any one who is making money at home, to leave it to come here to do better. But to those who are doing nothing, and who are fond of a "romantic life" and "hard work," I would say come, and you *may* make a fortune, if you persevere.

This city is improving very rapidly. New houses are going up every day, and more would be going up was it not owing to the scarcity of lumber, which sells readily at \$75 per 1000 feet. It has about three hundred houses; last January, I am told, there was ten houses here. Auraria, situated across Cherry Creek, is also improving rapidly. The want of a banking house here is severely felt, as coin is scarce, and there is no place where miners can sell their dust. If there was a banking house here gold dust would then go into the States in much larger quantities by express than it does now. The climate here is delightful, and my health and appetite never were better. The nights have been so cool and pleasant this summer, that I have slept with comfort under one and two pairs of heavy blankets. I am now living in company with Mr. Wm. Graham, well known in St. Louis as a druggist, who was one of the young gentlemen who accompanied me out here. We keep "bach together," and live in a log cabin, one of the first that was built here. I will now close, for my letter is already too long. I have now given you all the news of my trip and the mines, worthy of interest at present, but will promise you more at some future time.

P. S. I forgot to mention to you what a *sumptuous* dinner we had, which consisted of hard biscuit and fat bacon, with a glass of "Adam's Ale," which flows out of the mountain as clear as crystal.

I remain your old friend,

S. HAWKEN.

## The Passing of the Railroad in the Pike National Forest

PAUL P. McCORD\*

Perhaps no Forest in the Colorado region has been so overrun with railroads as was the Pike National Forest a quarter of a century ago. The Iron Horse had pushed his steam and cinder-spouting nose across the Forest in nearly a dozen places.

One of the longest of these, the South Park branch of the C. & S., puffed and snorted its way up the South Platte to the town

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—Ed.

of South Platte, with a four-mile branch extending up to Night-hawk, while the main line went on up the North Fork of the South Platte, over Kenosha Pass, across South Park through Como, Garo and Antero Junction, across Trout Creek Pass and finally down to the Arkansas River a short distance below Buena Vista. There were two branches, one from Como across Boreas Pass to Breckenridge and Leadville, and one from Garo up into the Alma mining region.

Another road, the Colorado Midland, was constructed through Ute Pass from old Colorado City to Divide, Lake George, through Eleven Mile Canyon and across South Park to Antero Junction from which point it paralleled the C. & S. to the Arkansas River. This road had a branch from Divide to Cripple Creek which was known as the Midland Terminal.

Cripple Creek, that lusty offspring of the mining boom days, was not content with one railroad: the Colorado Springs-Cripple Creek Railroad circled around the south side of Pikes Peak from old Colorado City; and the Florence-Cripple Creek Railroad came in from Florence to the South.

Another, and perhaps the best known was the C. & S. running up Clear Creek to Idaho Springs, Georgetown and over the Georgetown Loop to Silver Plume. It is reported that in its heyday as many as seven special passenger trains ran over this road in one day, the passengers being attracted by the superb scenery of the region and that engineering spectacle, the Georgetown Loop, on which they got the thrill of making a complete loop, passing on a trestle over the tracks on which they had ridden a few minutes before. There was also a short line called the Argentine Central running on beyond Silver Plume.

Besides these roads there were several others for which surveys were made but no construction undertaken.

The railroads were built primarily for the development of a rich mining country. Those that traversed South Park also hauled many head of fat cattle and lambs, and tons of native hay to the markets in Denver. They were, to some extent, a necessity to the development of these resources, and their memory will ever be a monument to those pioneers who had the nerve to invest their brains and capital.

However, there was much overdevelopment and the system soon toppled of its own weight and much of the mileage was abandoned after a few years use and today, the Iron Horse on the Pike, like his flesh and blood counterpart, is making his last stand against the softly treading but nevertheless ruthless onslaught of the automobile.

In his heyday, the Iron Horse boasted about 400 miles of track in and adjacent to the Pike, but this has now shrunk to about 200 miles. Main trunk lines are not included in the above figures.

The short stretch of the C. & S. from South Platte to Night-hawk no longer operates. The road from Garo to the Arkansas River is torn up and the former branch to the Alma mining region is now the main part of the road.

The Colorado Midland no longer runs from Divide through Eleven Mile Canyon to the Arkansas River. That portion from Colorado City to Divide is now known as the Midland Terminal, along with the original holder of that name and is, by the way, the only railroad now running into Cripple Creek, which, in the meanwhile, has grown into a rather tired old man who has recently been somewhat rejuvenated by a jag induced by a favorable labor cost-gold value ratio.

The Colorado and Southern to Silver Plume is still in existence, but the Argentine Central has long since passed out of the picture.

What has happened to these monsters of steel and steam that once infested the Pike Forest? Without exception the inoperative roads have been junked, the rails picked up by dealers for old iron, the ties picked up by indigent settlers for firewood, and a goodly portion of the spikes picked up by unfortunate motorists for flat tires.

The abandoned portion of the Colorado Midland is used in part for a roadway for U. S. Highway 24 (formerly 40-S) and the scenic Eleven Mile Canyon Road.

The Colorado Springs-Cripple Creek grade is now the location of the Corley Mountain Highway. The Florence-Cripple Creek grade is an auto road known as the Phantom Canyon Road, and for real thrills a trip over its ancient railroad trestles built in curves high above the canyon floor is hard to beat.

Passenger specials no longer run over the C. & S. to Silver Plume, although an occasional "combination" still operates. The Georgetown Loop is now viewed by motorists passing on the Loveland Pass State Highway.

There are, then, only three railroads now remaining. Of these the South Park branch of the C. & S. will probably be abandoned before many years, the owners having a petition for so doing before the Interstate Commerce Commission at the present time. The only thing that keeps the Midland Terminal operative is the mining boom at Cripple Creek and when the effect of that wears off there is every probability that this road will cease to operate. With the decision to build a highway up Clear Creek we may say of that branch of the C. & S. that the end is in sight, and we don't mean the caboose.

To replace this system of railroads the Pike Forest is gradually having built up a system of State and Forest Highways, Minor Roads, and Truck Trails designed so as to develop resources such as timber, recreation and mining, while at the same time holding inviolate a sufficient territory of remote areas important for wild life and other forms of recreation use.

And so we speed the departing Iron Horse on his way. While we needed him he was very important, snorting his way smoothly among our hills, but now that he is of little import, he wheezes slowly along over uneven tracks and may one day in the not too far distant future, pass with one last sigh into the limbo of the past.