

## Letters from Authors

LEVETTE JAY DAVIDSON\*

Personal letters from famous men and women have long been cherished by individual collectors and by libraries. Aside from the premium placed upon unique objects, such manuscript items are valuable because they often add to our knowledge and our understanding of past events and human behavior. Letters from authors may, also, help us to interpret their works more accurately and fully.

With some such ideas in mind, in 1922, Mr. Thomas F. Dawson, then Curator of the State Historical Society of Colorado, wrote to Mrs. Mary Hallock Foote, and requested information about herself and her experiences in early-day Leadville.<sup>1</sup> Her replies are quoted below, from the originals in the library of the State Historical Society of Colorado.

Mrs. Foote explains, in part, why her novels and stories satisfied the taste of her own day but are not widely read now. Evidently her publishers knew what the public wanted. Her pictures of Helen Hunt Jackson and of Leadville in 1879 are in the mood and the style of an earlier period, but they reflect a lively personality.

October 15, 1922.

The North Star News  
Grass Valley, California

My dear Mr. Dawson:

I answer your letter gladly and thank you for caring when we talk to you in person. It was through that intense Easterner, Helen Hunt Jackson,—who became so much the Soul of the West—that I first began to hear of Denver, or rather of the climate of Denver. Colorado gave her back her health—saved her really to finish her work. But I first saw your brilliant young city when it was much younger—on my way to join my husband at Leadville. It was where he met me—from there we took a little temporary sort of railroad to Fairplay, then the "End of the Track." Men who were careful of their wives did not allow them to go in by stage—the stages were

\*Dr. Davidson, Denver University Professor and recently elected to the Board of Directors of the State Historical Society, has contributed to previous issues of this magazine.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Mary Hallock Foote (1847-1938) wrote a number of stories and novels using as locales those frontier communities in Colorado, Idaho, and California, where she lived with her husband, a mining engineer. Best known of her works are *The Led-Horse Claim* (1882), *John Bodewin's Testimony* (1886), and *Coeur D'Alene* (1894).

full of those realities which fiction now demands. I could not get that sort of realism into my stories for I was one of the "protected" women of that time—who are rather despised nowadays. As much of Leadville life as my husband thought I could "get away with" he told me, but the men of Leadville whom I *saw* were the "sifted pickings" and they were very able men, most of them, and very charming. The Geological Survey camped that Summer just back of our little cabin that stood beside the hydraulic ditch—in the pine-woods. Emmons who was in charge and Wilson his co-adjutor both were excellent company. The mining engineers were beginning to appear on the scene—and to charm our social brilliancy. Clarence King came out with the Land Commission and never was there better talk (I at least never have heard better) than we used to have by our stone fireplace in that log cabin on the Ditch.<sup>2</sup>

When Ross Rogmond went back to New York, he sent us this little "roofer" (I believe he had a horrid cold at the time.)

"Let princes live and sneeze  
In their palaces of ease;  
Let colds and influenzas plague the rich.  
But give to me instead, a well-ventilated head  
In a little log cabin on the Ditch!"

The water of that Ditch swept by us as pure as the Snow-born Arethusa, and opposite, as we looked from our front porch, were the peaks up above timberline, wonderful colors of sunset touching their crowns of snow. We were half a mile from the town in our gulch, but the sound of the tramping feet on the new board-walks could be heard in a queer perpetual chorus mingled at nightfall (when the tramping was louder), with bands of music blaring away—there was no comfort—there was at that time hardly food or shelter for those homeless men, but every form of human excitement was provided—they had money enough, most of them with hardly a place to lay their heads—and all those heads were full of schemes and dreams!

The Led-Horse Claim was my "first novel"—written on demand. The Scribner's Monthly people said I had the material and I could do it if I'd but try. As a fact, you see, I hadn't the material except from the woman's point of view, the *protected* point of view—My poor Cecil! What a silly sort of heroine she would seem today. Yet girls were like that, "lots of them!" in my time. I ended the story at Leadville—as I believe it would have ended; the young pair would, in the order of things as they were, never have seen each other again. But my publisher wouldn't hear of that! I had to make a happy ending. I think a literary artist would have refused to do it. Yet it's unnatural to punish youth through brute circumstance.

Well, this is idle chatter, but you see you tempted me to be garrulous—and it's the easiest thing we old people can be. I thought I'd type-write it, but on the whole, it's more in character not to do so. I can't afford a smart young secretary, and my type-writing is not "smart" (I think it's rather worse than my handwriting.)

If this does not answer your real purpose in writing, let it be my personal acknowledgement of your pleasant letters.

Very sincerely yours,  
Mary Hallock Foote.

P.S. The mountains we saw from our cabin porch were the main summit of the Rockies—just over their highest ridges the waters of the continent flow towards the Pacific. One evening while I stood on the porch looking at the sunset, something happened in the town in the gulch that I might have seen with a spy-glass. Two men were just then being hung in front of the prison—and one was a "pro-

<sup>2</sup>Clarence King, author of *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (1871), was director of the U. S. Geological Survey in 1879.

fessional jumper," one a hold-up character the town had borne with long enough. My husband knew of this but he did not speak of it—nor did he do so while we lived there. That is what I mean by being a protected woman. I think it's much nicer to live that way *if one can*, nor do I think the value to my "Art" was a thing of enough consequence to pay for the realist's closer view. After all, it is the beauty that stays—the sunsets on the mountains were the real thing.

Grass Valley, Calif.

October 28, 1922.

Thomas F. Dawson: Historian  
State Museum, Denver.

My dear Mr. Dawson:

Thank you for your prompt and generous reply to my letter. My husband says it was the fall of 1878 when he went to Leadville. I went out in the spring of '79—stayed all summer—went out again the next spring (and this time I took our little son) and stayed all summer. By autumn, we were all ready to leave and go East to recuperate. My husband had been there without any change, summer and winter, for two years. He was quite "all in."

It was during the first summer we met the Jacksons. I had been one of the ardent readers and admirers of "H.H." both her stories and poems. Some of us think she reached a higher level in a literary sense in this earlier work than in *Ramona* where she was the special pleader. She called on me one day (I not knowing she was in town), on our little cabin, out on the Ditch-walk. We had a beautiful time. We had a mutual friend in the East—one very dear "mutual," Helena de Kay, who married Richard Watson Gilder—and we lost no time. That evening we four, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Foote and I, dined at "the Clarendon"—a new hotel, possibly the only one. I know the main dining room was jammed and at every table there was excited talking. The service was of the noisiest kind—waiters charging on the swing doors, kicking them open—dishes clattering, men's voices only, no women, talking above the din. We sat speechless, smiling at each other—exclamation points understood. We found that by sinking our own voices we could hear each other on a lower key. Mrs. Jackson was a charming woman. Not quite pretty, or handsome, but distinguished—a personality and all right. You knew at once she was an unusual person. She was also thoroughly *comme il faut*—nothing queer about her or her dress; an Eastern-looking lady or gentlewoman, though she was perhaps too eager and brilliant and arresting in her way of speaking, and in her animated expression, for such a conservative world. I, of course, was completely charmed by her. She was enough older and more famous to make her notice of us an honor. Mr. Jackson was a thoroughly good sort, sane and practical, a restful man for a woman with a soul that caught fire, as hers did, from any great idea. I have said enough for my very brief knowledge of her. She said we should stay. We were hoping that we might for it was a place where one could make money—but she seemed almost appalled at our idea of thinking of bringing a child out there—and she was right. Our little boy was safe with his grandmother in the East that first summer. The next we ventured to bring him out and nearly lost him. That illness of his which was "climatic" would of course have ended our hope of a home at Leadville. I, partly through anxiety about the child, became almost sleepless. It took us a year and a sea voyage to recover from that chapter in health . . . and we were in tip-top spirits at first, quite sure we could stand it. It did queer things to many persons—developed latent germs of trouble; the weakest spot (physically and morally) betrayed

itself promptly. It was a climate that selected its victims and was merciless.

Three of my stories were founded on Leadville. "The Led-Horse Claim," "John Bodewin's Testimony" and the "Last Assembly Ball." This "Last A. B." is published in one vol. with "The Fate of the Voice," a story founded on Idaho but they succeeded each other. Idaho was our next station and we stayed there 10 years.

I have talked a great deal but, of course, I'm at the age when one has "leisure" to say the least in the most words. I have quite enjoyed this bit of correspondence, having always the most vivid memories of those days. But Denver, we knew very slightly. Persons who got rich in Leadville went to live in Denver, as did the W. S. Wards. I think he lost some money later. We knew them both in Leadville and we knew the Woods. Mr. Wood was an assayer and a mining engineer and married a charming girl, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. McGivens of New York.

With kind regards from yours truly,

Mary Hallock Foote.

The year before his correspondence with Mrs. Foote, Mr. Dawson had asked Andy Adams for some autobiographical data.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Adams, whose *The Log of a Cowboy* (1903) is now rated as a Western classic, replied with the following:

Colorado Springs, Colo., June 3rd, 1921.

Mr. Thos. F. Dawson,  
Historical Curator, State Museum,  
Denver, Colorado.

Dear Sir:

Your request for a bit of personal history of myself, recd. Through no choice of my own, Indiana was selected as my birthplace, but in later years it was considered a good state to leave, and Texas afforded me asylum. It was there that I received my insight into cattle life, and later, my immaculate wagon manners. Now, when impeached, I always plead my many imperfections as due to the fact that I was raised among cattle and around a wagon. However with the maturity of years, Colorado Springs claims me a citizen.

Regarding my books on cattle life, they can be considered fiction, branded Realism. This is an age of specialists in the writing game, and given a perfect insight into any interesting subject, the story will carry authority and convince its reader. "Reed Anthony, Cowman" is not an "autobiography" of this one of the Adams boys, but a composite of a number of fine, old, Western and Texas cowmen. My work was to record their story. The firm of Hunter, Anthony & Co. is only a fictional generation of real cowmen, one of whom represented a Western State in the senate of the United States.

Trusting this covers your request, I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

Andy Adams.

Perhaps the most valuable of the letters from authors, in the collection of the State Historical Society, is the following recommendation by James Fenimore Cooper of E. L. Berthoud to Major General Winfield Scott. Cooper, whose bitter lawsuits against

<sup>3</sup>Andy Adams (1859-1935) attempted to present the life of the cowboy and the cattleman realistically. He succeeded admirably, only to find the publishers more eager to buy the highly-colored type of Western stories found in the pulp-paper magazines today.

some of his neighbors are famous, is here revealed in a genial mood.<sup>4</sup> His young neighbor, Mr. Berthoud, later became a Captain in the U. S. Army. As a civil engineer he not only helped to build the Panama Railroad, but surveyed the pass in the Colorado mountains which now bears his name. In the latter task he was greatly aided by Jim Bridger.

Hall, Cooperstown, Jan. 3d, 1849.

My dear Sir:

A young neighbor of mine, Mr. Edward Lewis Berthoud, goes to Washington to seek employment as a surveyor, if such service is to be had. He thinks that Col. Aberts has some powers in appointing to such situations, but I believe this must be a mistake. Will you permit me to recommend him to your kind office if the army has anything to do with the matter. The young gentleman bears an excellent character, is liberally educated, and I make no doubt would prove useful, if he could be employed.

A happy new year to you. I trust that 1849 will be a year of peace and happiness for you. The two that have preceded it will place your name in a high place on the scroll of history. The capture of Vera Cruz, the storming the heights of Cerro Gordo, the march to Mexico, and the battles of the valley make a record that would transmit far less known names to the latest posterity. You may prune your vines for the remainder of your days.

I hope you have got the better of your attack, and that your physician will advise *mountain* air next summer.

With best regards,

I remain very truly yours,

J. Fenimore Cooper.

Maj. Gen. Scott  
U. S. Army

Among the other authors represented by letters in the collection of the State Historical Society of Colorado are Elliott Cones, the historian; Dave F. Day, editor of the noted *Solid Muldoon*; Edward Eggleston, author of *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*; Kate Field, once a noted journalist and lecturer; Horace Greeley; Grace Greenwood, contributor of sketches and essays to the magazines in the 1870s; W. H. Jackson, the "pioneer photographer" author; Thomas Nelson Page, the Southern writer; Francis Parkman; A. D. Richardson, the journalist; George West, of the *Colorado Transcript*; Slason Thompson, biographer of Eugene Field; Louis B. France, Denver lawyer and author of graceful nature essays and books, such as *Mountain Trails and Parks in Colorado* (1886); and Will Irwin, a story-writer of a decade or two ago. From these letters one catches many an interesting sidelight upon the personal lives of the once great and near-great.

<sup>4</sup>Several other letters recommending Berthoud are filed along with the one from Cooper. Evidently Captain Berthoud kept them through the years, and turned them over to the Society shortly before his death. At one time he sent a letter and a sketch of a fellow soldier to Mr. Will Ferril, then Curator, from the State School of Mines, in Golden.

## Back Stage with a Medicine Show Fifty Years Ago

WILLIAM P. BURT\*

I wonder how many of our oldsters recall the days—yes, and nights—when he or she, and perhaps their families, stood amid a jostling crowd on an open lot, or occupied one of the ten-cent seats, usually consisting of eight-inch planks, resting on wooden jacks and assembled just in front of a portable stage where free entertainment was offered. During the intermissions—which were many—the boisterous cry of “Just another bottle, Doctor,” would be shouted by the high powered vendor of tonics and tinctures for the sole purpose of stimulating a reason to repeat the cry.

Your writer was asked if he knew anything about the old time medicine shows, and when a reply in the affirmative was forthcoming, a request came for an account of this once popular form of entertainment. In approaching our task, we do so with considerable apprehension, as things forgotten are of doubtful interest to some and are brushed aside by incredulous others, but please let us assure you that the incidents herein set down are actual happenings in the experience of your writer.

Let us first understand that the medicine shows of fifty years ago were like other shows of that period and of this—some were excellent, some good, some bad and others worse. In the early days they were advertising units for standard brands of medicines put out by established drug houses. Later came the stocking of medicine shows with a line of cure-alls—on an outright sale or commission basis—by the self-same drug companies, then came the boys who “rolled their own” and some were not very careful about what they “rolled.” This brought about legislative action in most states to do away with the charlatans, but the line between those who were and those who weren’t was often drawn with difficulty.

There are a few states left—a very few—where the medicine shows can and are operating today, but city and county laws present restrictions and high licenses which make for the medicine show business a precarious and none too profitable industry.

My first experience in this line of entertainment came quite unexpectedly while a member of a concert quartette known as “The Lyceum Four.” We had finished the regular winter season and were looking forward to an unprofitable summer, when our prowling top tenor popped in with the news that we could leave with an advertising unit of “Hamlin’s Wizard Oil” on the following Monday—and we did.

\*Mr. Burt is employed at present on the Colorado Writers’ Program.—Ed.

To the best of my knowledge, the Hamlin Wizard Oil Company was the first to send over the country these entertainment groups to advertise its product. In a word, it was the "pioneer" of the medicine show business, and Hamlin's Opera House, later remodeled and called the "Grand Opera House," was built with the profits made on liniment. It gave to Chicago one of its finest theaters in the gay '90s.

We had heard that these units were the last word in class, dignity and social distinction, and once we got under way we found the rumor to be a gross understatement.

As all our entertaining was done from an open coach drawn by four horses, stage wardrobe and grease paint was entirely unnecessary, but our street wardrobe was designated in our contract and paid for by us. We appeared in frock coats, then called "Prince Alberts," with the customary gray dress vests and pinstriped trousers, topped off with high silk hats and let us not forget the pearl-gray spats over patent leather shoes. The trousers might be changed for a pair with wider stripe and the vest could be of buff or white linen, with fawn spats exchanged for the pearl-gray, but when one decided to make the changes, so did we all. It was a hard and fast rule, and in order to avoid confusion, we scheduled our weekly changes. This uniform style of dressing was a trademark of all Wizard Oil advertising units.

Our stays in the various cities, towns and hamlets were from two to six weeks, according to population. Our personal entertaining abilities were kindly volunteered by our manager for church fairs and charity bazaars that might be held during our visit, and the local choirs were always augmented by Lyceum Four on Sundays, and while we were never consulted regarding these "off stage" activities, we surely learned a lot of hymns.

The most vivid recollection of this engagement was a two dollar fine—arbitrarily deducted from my salary—for daring to enter a public dining room wearing a roll collar. Wing collars were the only style for the well-dressed Wizard Oil entertainer, regardless of time or place.

By traveling far to the south in the winter and north in the summer, the Lyceum Four managed to entertain in the interest of Wizard Oil for over a year and then there came an end to the quartette. Our "prowling" top tenor became a most prominent physician in the capital city of Missouri; the bass and second tenor—who were brothers—settled in Lincoln, Nebraska, and were quite successful in the electrical supply field; while the baritone is at this moment trying to write this yarn.

It was a premeditated case of kidnapping that sent me to the second engagement in the medicine show business. I was laying off

in Kansas City when a theatrical agent—today they are called "talent scouts"—took less than ten minutes to talk me into signing a contract to manage the stage, lay out the programs, arrange the first part, do a specialty in the olio, and put on after-pieces for the "Big Sensation Medicine Company." This happened in 1892 and to this day I have been unable to figure out how it all occurred in such a short space of time. Perhaps the answer is that the pay was ample, the talent scout a persuasive talker and I needed a job.

When the train pulled into Wahoo, Nebraska—a town later made famous by "Wahoo" Sam Crawford, outfielder and slugger extraordinary of the Detroit Tigers—I found the "Big Sensation Medicine Company" was all that the name implied. It was not only big, it was colossal. No open lot here. No, sir! It was housed in tents. Not one, but two. A 60-foot round top, with a 60-foot middle piece formed a canvas theater 60 feet by 120 feet, with some 40 feet at one end for an ornately draped stage, carried off at each side with masking curtains, and back of these were the dressing rooms, partitioned off to make two on a side.

Near the entrance was a candy and lemonade stand, always presided over by some local merchant who paid a small fee for the concession. Five hundred folding canvas chairs faced the stage, and just behind them were the customary "circus seats" with a capacity of 1,000, pyramiding up and back in a semi-circle to the top of the side-walls.

The show was on when I arrived and I had ample time to look over the "set up" before interviewing the manager. The size of the whole thing amazed me. My previous medicine show job was a shrinking violet in comparison with the bombast and pretention here. A journey around the outside of the canvas presented a panorama of gaily painted banners, pennants and streamers. Across the front of a small tent near the main entrance was a banner announcing this to be the office of "The King of the Forceps." After the show I met the king, who was big, and his wife, who was also big. The combined weight of this pair would run pretty close to 400 pounds, and with the "Queen" doing the holding and the "King" doing the pulling, something had to come when the forceps came in proper contact with a tooth.

There were twenty-eight people, including a twelve-piece band, on the payroll when I arrived, and two more were added during the following week. Of these thirty-one actors, musicians and canvasmen, it was the brass band that carried the burden of the show. Eight of them formed the orchestra, the other four "doubled on canvas" in putting up the tents, but when the time came to take it down, everybody helped. You see, the pills, powders and bottled

panaceas sometimes failed to stand the test of time, so we were always in a hurry to "get out of town."

During the entertainment there was a fifteen-minute session given over to the extraction of teeth. Any aching molar in the audience would be removed without pay or pain. There was no question regarding the pay, but the "pain" was debatable. During this tooth pulling session the fiddles and bows in the orchestra were laid down, and in their stead the brass horns and bass drum took over, and from that time on to the end of the session, it was everybody for themselves, excepting the man with the aching molar. He was firmly held in the dental chair by the Amazonian "Queen," with the "King" poised like a conquering warrior, with the forceps held high in the air. This was the cue for horns and drums to burst forth as loud as possible, and not a single person in the audience ever heard the slightest moan or groan from the patient in the chair.

The medicines sold by this company were compounded from the formulas found in an old-time publication—*A Doctor in Your House*—and of course, were "home made." Yes, the "King" rolled his own, aided by the actors, whose duties were to fill the bottles, boxes and ointment tins, then affix the labels. There was one batch of the "Big Sensation Blood Tonic" that went decidedly wrong and took a most unfortunate time to demonstrate the error.

The evening's stock had been placed on sub-platforms and reached just to the edge of the stage, awaiting the call of "Just another bottle, Doctor," expected to be heard when the banjo player had finished his specialty—but he didn't get a chance to finish. The blood tonic had started to ferment and had reached the point of "bottle-strength" right in the middle of his act. He was driven from the stage by popping corks, bursting bottles and a hissing spray of "blood tonic" that must have had too many raisins.

It is needless to say there was no medicine sale that night. The string instruments were hurriedly exchanged for brass ones. The audience was dismissed amid laughter and boos, the tent came down and the Rock Island Railroad had the "Big Sensation Medicine Company" in another state by noon the next day.

To all things there comes an end, and the end came for me a few weeks later in Thurman, Iowa, where the "King" and "Queen" fixed up a nice, fresh damage suit for themselves by actually breaking a man's jaw while extracting a deep-set tooth. After a week or two of idleness, while this suit was being settled, the show had to seek another state for operation, as Iowa refused the "King" a license. When the show moved south, I moved to Chicago, vowing to forever shun medicine shows. But the following summer found

me with a "liniment" show, fashioned along the lines of the Wizard Oil units, but sadly lacking in the dignity, class and background of the Hamlin companies.

While in Chicago I had organized a new quartette—knowing that a singing four, who could do single specialties, could furnish the entire show and demand top money—and this was the group that joined the "liniment show" at Alton, Illinois. The "sole



TROUPE OF THE LINIMENT SHOW

(The Doctor is seated in the center; the author is seated at his left)

owner, lecturer and demonstrator" of the liniment was one of the most interesting characters I had ever met. Formerly a practicing physician and surgeon, with "sheepskins" enough to cover a billboard, he had experienced a nervous breakdown and was using the medicine show business to regain his health. A magnetic speaker with his every word carrying sincerity and conviction, his liniment sales were enormous.

During the summer of this engagement I experienced two very unusual incidents. While playing some town in Illinois—the name has escaped me—a minstrel show was booked in at the opera house for one night. It was a down-at-the-heels organization, because of constantly depleting personnel, and our quartette sat in on their first part in order to give the show something it didn't have—voices. We may not have been good, but open air singing had developed volume, and we were loud.

A few weeks later we met this same company in another town. They had just finished playing on Saturday night. We arrived in the town very early Sunday morning and as we passed the livery stable, there stood about half the minstrel show—with wisps of hay sticking out of their sleeves and collars—singing and dancing on the wagon scales.

After we had taken the bunch to breakfast, we got the story. They were stranded, had been locked out of their hotel rooms; their wardrobe trunks and band instruments had been confiscated and they had sought refuge in this livery stable. When the hostler came through to feed the stock about 4 a. m. he caught a glimpse of the refugees and yelled at the top of his voice—"All out for breakfast. I got oats, corn an' hay 'nough t' feed everybody. Give your order t' th' waiter."

The other incident was wholly within the ranks of our own organization, starting and ending with drama, and a touch of comedy relief somewhere between.

The liniment was strongly advocated for the cure of rheumatism, and actually did relieve the sufferers for a while. I have seen the Doctor take away the crutches from crippled victims of the malady after a vigorous rubbing and one or two liberal applications of the drug.

There was one just such person who had walked away from the lot unaided, with a dozen bottles under his arm who was not satisfied when the pain returned, so he went after the Doctor with a gun. The Doctor, forewarned and advised that the man was really dangerous, decided to get out of town, instructing the quartette to pack up and await him at La Salle.

There was no train scheduled until late that night, so the badly frightened man set out afoot and avoided the traveled highways. It was about midnight when the Doctor heard the barking of dogs coming in his direction. He pictured a posse, led by bloodhounds. He pictured lynchers led by bloodhounds and he remembered the killer with the gun.

Just ahead of him was a large apple tree and up he went to await the worst. And it came—a rabbit being chased by a pair of rabbit-hounds passed directly under the tree. As they continued on

in their nocturnal rambling, he dropped to the ground and sought lodging at a small town a mile or so up the road.

This was the story he told when he joined us two days later at La Salle, and he laughed the loudest about climbing that tree to get away from the "blood hounds." This may not sound funny on paper, but in the telling by the Doctor—his well chosen words, his diction, and reenactment of all that happened, punctuating every statement with action and gestures—was decidedly funny. But the drama followed, for his experiences that night took everything away from him but his diplomas. His lectures became feeble—at times, pitiful. He stumbled and stammered over the most simple words. His salesmanship became nil and business with the bottles dropped to practically nothing. He plowed back all the cash in his possession into a failing business and the show finally closed at Joplin, Missouri.

My next adventure was with the "Pawnee Bill Indian Remedies," and I joined it just two weeks before it went the way of all bad medicine shows. I was with it long enough to learn that Pawnee Bill had nothing to do with the show, other than to collect a certain royalty for the use of his name. This compensation was far in arrears when I arrived on the open lot, and this accounted for the closing. But as I had received the customary two weeks' salary in advance, I lost nothing but a job when the show closed.

Summer was now in its last few weeks, with the regular theatrical season just around the corner, and as jobs were plentiful in the early '90s, I was soon back in harness with a dramatic company and thought myself forever through with the open lots. But 1893 was a pretty rough year on the theaters in particular and all business in general, so when I found the "Shaker Remedies Advertising Units" looking for talent of all kinds, I became a member of unit seven, and was eventually landed right here in Denver.

Just east of where the Albany Hotel now stands was an open lot. Here we pitched our stage after four weeks in Pueblo and four in Colorado Springs. On that open lot in Denver we stayed for six weeks. Then we journeyed to Boulder and closed after four weeks there, making eighteen solid weeks of afternoon and night shows—when the weather permitted. And before we get along too far with our story of the "Shakers" it might be well to advise that there are two other residents of Denver who can tell the story perhaps better than I can, for they were both members of that organization in 1894 and played on that same open lot.

In the opinion of your writer, the units of the "Shaker Remedies" were the very tops in medicine shows. Their product was a standard brand, just as was "Shaker" flannels or "Shaker" butter, and while the remedies had been taken over by a com-

mercial drug house in St. Louis, Missouri, on a royalty arrangement, they were all compounded from "Shaker" formulas, with the "Shaker Community" at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, keeping a watchful eye on the output.

Each unit carried a lecturer and a qualified physician, together with a visiting physician who kept a watchful eye over all units. This man was registered in twenty-seven different states, with the right to practice medicine in every one of them.

The salesmanship of many of these better class lecturers was at times uncanny, and the technique of one in particular is well worth recording here. He had a most profound superstition regarding the "first bottle sold." It had to be sold from the stage and by him, otherwise—in his opinion—the efforts of the "agents" passing through the audience, would be unrewarded, and believe it or not, the premise of his superstition held good in the great majority of cases.

There must have been some hypnotic power in the make-up of this lecturer, for he had a most annoying habit of looking over his audience until he had absolute silence, then—before starting his lecture—announce in a confidential whisper to some one of the actors the exact person who would buy that "first bottle."

Your writer had a standing bet with him regarding this effort. If the person selected failed to buy, he lost the bet, otherwise I had to pay, and to the best of my recollection, I paid about eight times out of ten.

His "build up" was a classic. With tear-filled eyes—and he could actually cry when needs demanded—and a voice trembling with emotion, he would tell a story of some helpless infant, or beloved parent, who had passed away at some place or other, and add—

"I don't mean to say this remedy would have saved that poor unfortunate, but I will tell you that had a bottle been in the house it would have prolonged that life until the doctor arrived," then, with his eyes fixed on the selected buyer, he would yell—

"And wouldn't you give a dollar to save a life by buying this bottle?" and in the flash of a second the important "first bottle" would be sold from the stage and by the lecturer. Then the "agents" would immediately be sent through the audience to take advantage of this successful "build up."

When these units were first sent out over the country, the only entertainers were psalm singers, dressed in "Shaker" bonnets and one piece gowns of "Shaker" brown; but they failed to please on the open lots, so other artists were engaged, and no salary was too high for the entertainer who could "hold the crowd."

Of course there was some "window dressing" which bespoke of the "Shakers." The lecturers wore the button-to-the-neck frock coat and straight cut trousers, with the high crowned bell-shaped hat, all of "Shaker" brown. So did the doctors, and I am sure neither belonged to the cult, but they did assume a starchy dignity when on duty.

I recall one incident that knocked the dignity into a cocked-hat right at the beginning of the doctor's discourse.

A "Punch and Judy" manipulator had joined our unit as a sort of experiment, and it turned out to be a most embarrassing one for the staid old doctor, who had followed the usual bit of "window dressing" of hurriedly removing all signs of medicine and the stage settings of the various acts in order that both show and medicine business might be forgotten while the doctor talked only of correct living, proper food, sufficient rest and religious recreation, from an undressed stage. But on this occasion the stage was not entirely undressed. The "Punch and Judy" play-box had been firmly affixed to the stage with ten-penny nails and could not be removed and as this was the closing act just prior to the appearance of the doctor, the manipulator had been told to remain quietly within the enclosure.

The doctor started—with the customary "Brother and Sister," "Thee and Thou," "Sins and Sinners" running rampant through his address—when a wooden figure peered around the corner of the play-box and a squeaky voice called "How'ye Doc, gotta match?"

The doctor paused—a snicker ran through the audience, and during that snicker the whispering voice of the doctor hissed: "George, get that infernal idiot out of that coop!" Then came a pause and the doctor took up the broken end with—"Brothers and Sisters," and again came the voice of "Punch"—"Quit kidding, Doc. They ain't your brothers 'er sisters"—The audience roared. The doctor fumed and the manipulator considered he was making the hit of his life. "George," whispered the enraged medico, "I'll murder that numbskull if you don't get him out of there!" And as "Punch" taunted and the doctor sputtered, the lecturer managed to reach in under the curtains of the play-box and drag the offending manipulator bodily off of the stage, thus ending the experiment with the "Punch and Judy" act.

With the closing of the show at Boulder, your writer ended his experience in the medicine show business, a business where paupers were made millionaires and millionaires were made paupers.

It is told on good authority that Healy and Biglow, who put out the then famous Kickapoo Indian Remedies, actually went out of business because they were making too much money. Somewhere in Texas there was a monument erected to Dr. Lighthall,

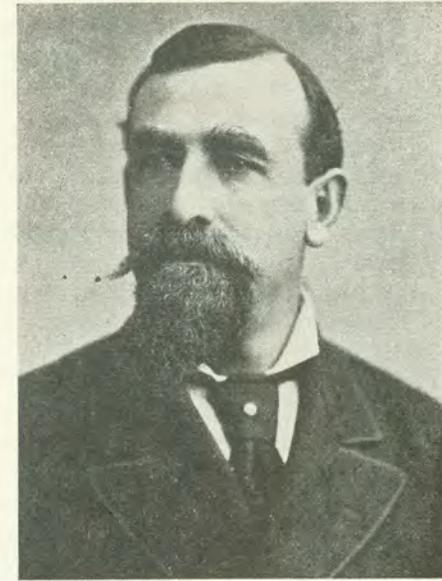
who died a pauper after giving away thousands of dollars for charity. "Diamond" Dick was killed in Oklahoma in a gun fight without a dollar in his pocket, but he still wore the diamond-set buttons on his coat and vest. Charlie White, the creator of "White's White Wonder" soap, salve and liniment, had a long streak of rainy weather and was almost broke when he reached Omaha, Nebraska. All he had was his white broad-cloth suit and white silk hat, five gross of soap and a ten dollar bill. Here is his story exactly as he told it to your writer.

"I paid three dollars to get the suit cleaned and the hat blocked. I paid two dollars for a license. I hired a white horse, hitched to a cream colored buck-board, paying three dollars in advance, I drove to a street corner and gave a boy the last two dollars to get me a pitcher of water—and the "flash" of that two dollars for a simple errand sold over three gross of that soap, at twenty-five cents each, in two hours. That night I ordered another five gross of soap, together with salve and liniment, and with the aid of a colored banjo player and singer, I averaged a little over \$100.00 a day for the next four weeks in Omaha."

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money, and I the teams, wagons and etc., to haul the goods to Denver, \$10,000 being the capital stock of the firm. I left Leavenworth July 2nd with six four-mule teams loaded with goods and arrived in Denver twenty-five days later. In the meantime Clayton had come out by coach. Kershaw did not come until the following winter.

Clayton rented a store of "Mort" Fisher on Blake Street, between 15th and 16th. Here we commenced business with Ryan Morehead & Co. on one side selling groceries, and Clayton, Lowe & Co. on the other selling clothing, boots, shoes and miners' goods.



GEORGE W. CLAYTON

We had a good cook, "Billie" Wise, now Major Wise, and messed in a shanty at the back end of the store. Here half a dozen of us lived well and lingered over our meals with as much enjoyment as gentlemen do at the Denver Club today. No hotel. Of course ours was an uncertain venture at that time, but in two months we determined to continue the business. Clayton went East by coach to Leavenworth, thence to Philadelphia and bought goods. I sent the teams to Leavenworth to meet the goods and haul them out. It was agreed that during Clayton's absence I should purchase a lot and build a store, as we would need more room. I bought General W. H. Larimer's home corner—two lots—the southwest corner of Larimer and 15th Streets, including his log cabin, for

## George Washington Clayton and Early Merchandising in Denver

Letter of PERCIVAL G. LOWE\*

Leavenworth, Kans., Aug. 24, 1899.

Hon. Moses Hallett  
United States District Judge  
Denver, Colorado

Dear Judge:

I need not tell you how shocked I was to learn of the death of our mutual friend, G. W. Clayton, one of my earliest, and, to the time of his death, one of the best friends I ever had. I loved him. I have liked many men, but have loved few.

What I have seen in the papers of Wash's early career only shows how little people remember. He was keeping a gentlemen's furnishing store in Leavenworth, when, in June, 1859, he formed a co-partnership with Jerry Kershaw and myself, each to put in an equal amount of capital, he to furnish goods, Kershaw to furnish

\*This letter was written by Mr. Lowe upon hearing of the death of G. W. Clayton. Clayton was an outstanding pioneer of Colorado and was the founder of the George W. Clayton College of Denver.

Mr. Lowe, noteworthy pioneer of Kansas, was the author of a book of valuable western reminiscences—*Five Years a Dragoon ('49 to '54) and other Adventures on the Great Plains* (1906). In it he writes of his experiences in Colorado. This interesting letter was kindly supplied by Judge George F. Dunklee of the Denver District Court. Judge Dunklee has been, for seventeen years, a Trustee of George W. Clayton College.

\$400.00, on which I built the first frame store in Denver, 30 by 60 feet, one and a half stories, with brick foundation, put in by Sam Howe—also brick fireplace and chimney, the first good burnt brick work in Denver.

Clayton arrived in good time, found me in my new home and was much pleased that I had located where I did, and neither of us ever regretted it. I hired a pair of mules and light wagon and with all the corn I could find in Denver, went down the road 100 miles and met the train. A pint of corn for each mule morning and night was a light feed, but all I could give them during the six days until they reached Denver. A terrible snow storm struck us at St. Vrain's Fort and I drove into heavy timber, built big fires, cut down cottonwood and fed the limbs to the mules, tore up half the wagon covers to blanket them, kept men brushing off snow and building fires all night. If I had not met the train it would have been destroyed.

The next day we only traveled five miles in deep snow and camped in timber as before. The next day to Jack Henderson's ranch, fifteen miles below Denver and turned the mules into his yard full of hay stacks. I drove to Denver alone, getting in at midnight, nearly frozen to death. Goods arrived in good order and mules safe but poor. Sold mules and wagon to the late J. W. Hiff for a stock of groceries. Our goods sold well and by the middle of January the shelves were pretty bare. We left Mr. Kershaw in charge and came east to Philadelphia and New York together.

I left Clayton to buy the goods and returned to Leavenworth to prepare transportation. He was the merchant, with clear head and good judgment. I was the freighter, with ten years' experience in prairie life. I bought a train of fine mules and wagons, also a train of ox teams. Having loaded both trains with our goods I started them from Atchison on the 17th of March. Mr. William M. Clayton joined me and we went through with the mule train in twenty-four days. He was one of the most agreeable, companionable men I ever met and a great comfort to me on the trip. The ox train was twice as long going through.

Our store was nearly empty and our new stock in great demand. William Clayton took an active interest, was an experienced business man and a great help. He soon bought the interest of Mr. Kershaw, but the firm name remained the same—Clayton, Lowe & Co.; our goods suited the market and sold rapidly. I sold the mules to the Overland Stage Co. for more than cost and turned the cattle on a ranch to fatten. Mr. William Clayton went East and brought his wife, and we soon had a home, such as only a lovely woman, of good taste and patient endurance can make in such a place as Denver then was. Leaving William to run the business, "Wash" and I went East, he to buy goods, I to fit out

trains to transport them. Thirty-five teams, five pairs of oxen, each with trail wagons, hauled the goods, which we loaded and started from Leavenworth the last of August, 1860.

Wash came from Philadelphia with his beautiful wife, whom he had just married, and went on by coach to Denver. Such a honeymoon can never be enjoyed on this continent again—six days and nights in a crowded coach. After all had gone I drove through with a pair of mules and a Concord buggy in twenty-two days. My traveling companion was Mr. Lewis, a young lawyer from Atchison, who, two years later, committed suicide in Montana. He was as genial, witty and interesting a man as I ever met, and deserved prosperity in his profession; but, poor soul, he could not stand the strain—the inevitable struggle necessary to success at that time.

On this trip we spread our blankets by the buggy and slept without shelter every night, no rain. Our goods arrived in good order, but the cattle were thin, owing to a disease called "Black-tongue," which prevailed from the Missouri River to the mountains and affected buffalo and deer; the cattle were turned on a ranch for the winter. The Claytons built a nice home away across the sandy prairie, south, and were permanently settled. I had inducements in the freighting line that looked well for the future, and in January, 1861, I sold my interest in Denver to the Claytons. We had been twenty months together in close business relations and intimate friendship, without a ripple of disagreement or conflict of interest. My interest seemed to lead me away, and we parted the best of friends, with mutual regret, and there has been no break in the friendship from that day to the death of these generous, honorable, noble men.

Wash Clayton's only child died in the Fall of 1861, while he was East buying goods. His wife died the following March—also during his absence East. To say that he never fully recovered from these terrible shocks is putting it mildly. He never married again. His joys and sorrows, his devoted, generous disposition no man knew better than myself, whose friendship he valued so much.

That a monument to his memory is to be erected, as lasting as Girard's,<sup>1</sup> is but just to him, and, as the years roll by, Denver will value him more and more.

I am, my dear Judge,

Very sincerely yours,

P. G. LOWE.

<sup>1</sup>Stephen Girard, famous Philadelphian, made a fortune as a colonial merchant and a banker. His most notable philanthropy was the gift of \$2,000,000 and a plot of ground for the erection and support of a college for orphan boys. One of the peculiar stipulations of the bequest was that no minister might enter the premises. In general, the George W. Clayton College was patterned after Girard College.—Ed.

## Denver Clubs of the Past

EDWARD RING\*

In the seventies of the last century Lord Dunraven of Ireland was a big game hunter, the greatest sportsman of his day. He came to Estes Park in 1875, bringing with him a party of about two hundred young Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen, the sons of great families. For several years they were familiar residents of Northern Colorado and of Denver. Their social center was the Corkscrew Club, on the second story of a building on 18th Street near Broadway. The membership of the Corkscrew Club was limited to foreigners, and its atmosphere was less like that of Denver than London, or Cairo or Bombay. Among its members was Eugene A. Von Winkler. In 1885 he bought for \$20,000.00 the land east of the City Park. In 1887 he platted it as Park Hill. Another member was Baron Walter B. Von Richthofen. He founded and laid out Montclair. In its last years the president and master spirit of the Corkscrew Club was the Baron. When he died the Club passed away.

In Colorado today the only survivor of Dunraven's party, so far as I know, is Lord Ogilvy of the *Denver Post*.

Many years ago, in the early winter evenings, as I left my law office to start for home, I was in the habit of passing through California Street, between Fifteenth and Sixteenth and, on the left hand side of the street, about half way up the block was a fine mansion whose appearance aroused my interest and curiosity because even early in the evening it was always lighted up from top to bottom. I wondered what family or what sort of a family could live in a big, pretentious home of that appearance. As I later learned, it was the home of the Lotus Club. The Lotus was a very fine club, organized in 1883, having a splendid career for ten years, and being swept out of existence by the panic of 1893. This club had among its members men like Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Kountze and Mr. Porter, and it had this unusual characteristic—it was a club that made the wives and families of its members at home. The ladies were always welcome, they spent a great deal of their time there. Once or twice a month, through the fall and winter, there were entertainments attended by the families of the members. As I have said, it went out of existence in 1893 and nothing has ever taken its place. It seems unfortunate that a club like the Lotus could not have survived.

\*Mr. Ring, prominent Denver attorney and clubman, has contributed previous articles to our magazine.—Ed.

In the late nineties Denver had a club known as the Candle Light club. It was a dinner club. It had a membership of two hundred—a wonderfully popular and successful club at the time. It held meetings once a month down in the dining room of the old Windsor Hotel, which was then the finest institution of the sort between Chicago and San Francisco. There was a flare and a splendor about the Candle Light Club that are difficult to describe. In front of each plate was a lighted candle in its little silver candlestick, giving an indescribably beautiful glow to the entire scene. At the head of each program was the sentiment from Charles Lamb: "Hail candle light! Without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindest luminary of the three."

The Candle Light Club was a discussion club, whose programs confined themselves, as I remember, to local issues and questions of current interest—the acquisition of the water system by the city, then and for many years a burning issue; the great question as to whether or not there should be a segregated district, and other questions of civic administration and reform. The speakers were local celebrities, like Dean Hart and Judge Platt Rogers and Senator Thomas—a most interesting, charming club. At the end of three short years, however, the lights of the Candle Light Club sputtered and went out forever.

### Place Names in Colorado (P and Q)\*

*Padroni* (180 population), Logan County farming settlement, and one of the largest beet stations operated by the Great Western Sugar Company, owes its existence to the North Sterling reservoir. Until establishment of the reservoir, in 1909, Padroni was but a section house,<sup>1</sup> built about 1899 when the Burlington Railroad came through the district. It was named for two Italian farmers of the vicinity, George and Tom Padroni.<sup>2</sup>

*Pagoda* (7 population), Routt County, was founded in 1890 by Senator H. H. Eddy (state senator from Garfield County, 1887-89), and named for nearby Pagoda Peak (11,257 altitude), so-called because it resembles an oriental pagoda.<sup>3</sup>

*Pagosa Junction* (50 population), Archuleta County, see *Pagosa Springs*.

\*Prepared by the Colorado Writers' Program, Work Projects Administration. An (\*) asterisk indicates that the population figure is from the 1940 Census. Unless otherwise credited, all information or data has been sent to the Colorado Writers' Program.

Incorporation dates are from the *Colorado Year Book, 1939-1940*, "Gazetteer of Cities and Towns."

<sup>1</sup>Emma Burke Conklin, *History of Logan County*, 182-83.

<sup>2</sup>Data from Arthur King, Commissioner State Land Board, to the State Historical Society in 1935.

<sup>3</sup>*Routt County Year Book-Directory, 1935*, 24.

*Pagosa Springs* (1,591 population), seat of Archuleta County. This region was long occupied by prehistoric agricultural Indians, and is dotted with the ruins of their dwellings and burial places.<sup>4</sup> Later, the nomadic Ute, finding the medicinal waters beneficial for many ills, made the springs a favorite camping place, and gave them the name *Pagosah*, "healing waters." The springs were first seen by whites in July, 1859, when the U. S. Topographical Engineers under command of Captain J. M. Macomb, explored the region. After 1876, settlers came. To safeguard them from the Utes, Fort Lewis was established here in 1878. The early settlement boasted a population of several thousand people.<sup>5</sup> Because of the value of the waters and the mammoth size of the Great Spring, President Hayes, in 1880, designated one square mile surrounding the springs as a town site. It was platted by the government in 1883, and in 1885 building lots were sold from the land office to the highest bidder.<sup>6</sup> Incorporated March 18, 1891.

*Paisaje* (San Rafael) (221 population), Conejos County, was founded in 1857 as San Rafael.<sup>7</sup> After the establishment of a post office in June, 1890,<sup>8</sup> the name was changed by postal authorities because of the many places in the neighborhood called "San." The present name, *Paisaje* (Pa-e-sah-hee), Spanish for "landscape,"<sup>9</sup> refers to the beautiful view seen from the village.

*Palestine*, Park County, see *Jefferson*.

*Palisade* (855 population), Mesa County, first called Palisades, flourishes in the center of the "fruit bowl" of Mesa County, almost concealed by the peach orchards that cover even the city lots. Early settlers soon discovered that the high perpendicular bluffs edging the valley on the north,<sup>10</sup> and for which the settlement was named,<sup>11</sup> served as a conserver of heat and as a director of the air current, called the Million Dollar Breeze, which prevents the settling of frost in early spring when the orchards are in bloom.<sup>12</sup> Incorporated April 4, 1904.

*Palmer* (8 population), Jefferson County, was settled in 1859 by Joel Palmer, farmer. Many years later the Denver Tramway Company built a station here and named it for him. The first rural telephone in the United States is said to have been placed in Palmer's adobe home.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>4</sup>*The Trail*, XV, No. 9, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup>*Colorado Magazine*, IX, 91-2.

<sup>6</sup>Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, IV, 70.

<sup>7</sup>Data from J. D. Frazev, Secretary Chamber of Commerce, Antonito, Colorado, in 1936, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>8</sup>*Denver Republican*, June 11, 1890.

<sup>9</sup>Data from Charles Hurst, Postmaster, Antonito, Colorado, in 1936.

<sup>10</sup>*The Railroad Red Book*, XXXX, No. 1, 158.

<sup>11</sup>Data from the Superintendent of Schools, Grand Junction, Colorado, in 1935 to the State Historical Society.

<sup>12</sup>*The Railroad Red Book*, XXXX, No. 1, 158.

<sup>13</sup>Data from Mary E. Hoyt, Librarian, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado, August 25, 1941.

*Palmer Lake* (269 population), El Paso County resort town, was built around a spring-fed lake, once known as Divide Lake. The original railroad name for the station was Divide, but the post office department called it Weissport, for C. A. Weiss, first station agent for the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (1871-1880).<sup>14</sup> Dr. Finley Thompson, who settled in the region in 1882, had a section of land surveyed and platted, established the town, and was its first mayor.<sup>15</sup> The present name of the town, as well as the lake, honors General William J. Palmer, of Denver & Rio Grande Railroad fame. The lake was christened Palmero by Kate Field, noted lecturer, but the name was soon altered to Palmer.<sup>16</sup> Incorporated March 12, 1889.

*Palo*, Fremont County, is a Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad station. *Palo* is a Spanish word meaning "stick," "timber," or "stalk of fruit."

*Pandora* (35 population), San Miguel County, mining town, was settled about 1881, and called Newport. The name was changed to Pandora in August, 1881, when it was discovered that there was another Newport in Colorado.<sup>17</sup> The town was named for the Pandora mine and company, whose forty-stamp mill, boarding houses, and offices were located here.<sup>18</sup> (See also *Newport*.)

*Paonia* (1,117 population), Delta County, chief supply point for a rich horticultural and agricultural area, and termed "the gold buckle of the fruit belt,"<sup>19</sup> was founded in 1881 by Samuel Wade, who located a ranch, planted an orchard, and established the pioneer general merchandise store of the region. Mr. Wade secured a post office and suggested the name Peony (genus *Peonia*), for a flower common in the region, which postal authorities saw fit to change to Paonia. The post office was established June 7, 1882.<sup>20</sup> Incorporated September 2, 1902.

*Papeton* (Curtis) (200 population), El Paso County. In August, 1899, W. W. Curtis, Colorado Springs financier, opened the Curtis Coal Mine. The settlement that grew up around the mine was known as Curtis, in his honor, and a post office was established under that name about 1900. In 1903, when the settlement had a population of some 250, a miner's strike developed; the resulting trouble between the strikers and the Negro strike

<sup>14</sup>George A. Crofutt, *Crofutt's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*, 92, and data from D. R. Hays, former Superintendent of Schools, Palmer Lake, January 4, 1941.

<sup>15</sup>E. C. Gard, comp., *Palmer Lake and Environments*.

<sup>16</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, III, 383.

<sup>17</sup>*Ouray Times*, August 20, 1881.

<sup>18</sup>*La Plata Miner* (Silverton), February 12, 1883.

<sup>19</sup>*The Railroad Red Book*, XXXX, No. 1.

<sup>20</sup>*Colorado Magazine*, IV, 68, 70; V, 162.

breakers caused the removal of 150 of the white miners and their families. They established a settlement about a half-mile south, calling it Papeton, for John Pape, their leader. Soon all the adjoining coal-mining settlements became known by that name.<sup>21</sup>

*Paradox* (24 population), Montrose County mining and stock-raising village, lies on the banks of Paradox Creek in isolated Paradox Valley. The first settlers, who arrived in the early 1880s, found the valley almost inaccessible, and were forced to unload their wagons, take them apart and lower the pieces with ropes from a ledge to the floor of the canyon. The creek and settlement were named for Paradox Valley, so called because the Dolores River cuts through its cliff walls at right angles, an unusual phenomenon.<sup>22</sup> Post office established in March, 1882.<sup>23</sup>

*Parkdale* (40 population), Fremont County, was also known as Current Creek Station,<sup>24</sup> and is believed by early settlers to have been thus named because the Arkansas Valley widens into a park-like country here. The town was originally situated on the old freight road to Silver Cliff and Leadville, and it was here that the Arkansas River was forded.<sup>25</sup> A post office was established in August, 1880.<sup>26</sup>

*Parker* (Parkers) (200 population), Douglas County, was in early days a station of the stage line from Denver to Colorado Springs on the old Happy Canon Road.<sup>27</sup> The post office, first called Pine Grove, was later changed to Parker in honor of James S. Parker, who served thirty-three years as postmaster,<sup>28</sup> and who in the early 1860s, was a stage driver on the Smoky Hill route.<sup>29</sup> In 1890, Mr. Parker bought the ranch that was the site of the station and post office.<sup>30</sup> Many railroad stations in Colorado bear family names, with a terminal "s" added. Thus, Parker was called Parkers by the railroad, and Bailey was known as Baileys.<sup>31</sup>

*Park Siding*, Jefferson County, see *Foxton*.

*Parlin* (135 population), Gunnison County farming and stock-raising settlement, was settled in 1877 by John Parlin, a dairy rancher. About 1880, officials of the now abandoned, narrow gage

<sup>21</sup>Data from Charles Ozias, County Clerk and Recorder, Colorado Springs, Colorado, February 25, 1941.

<sup>22</sup>"Paradox Valley—An Historical Interpretation of its Structure and Changes," Thesis by Lee Emerson Deets, Columbia University, 1924.

<sup>23</sup>*Denver Tribune*, March 16, 1882.

<sup>24</sup>George Crofutt, *Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*, 1881, 129.

<sup>25</sup>Data from J. Burkhand, Postmaster, Parkdale, Colorado, in 1936.

<sup>26</sup>*Denver Tribune*, August 27, 1880.

<sup>27</sup>*Record-Journal* (Castle Rock), December 16, 1921.

<sup>28</sup>*Colorado Magazine*, XII, 144.

<sup>29</sup>*Denver Times*, June 27, 1909.

<sup>30</sup>*Denver Republican*, August 28, 1890.

<sup>31</sup>Data from Benjamin C. Hilliard Jr., Denver, Colorado, to the State Historical Society.

South Park Railway wanted to buy 1,600 acres of land here for a right-of-way and told Parlin to set his own price. The old man, in his goodness of heart, said, "You can have 1,500 acres free if you will put a depot over there by the dairy and make your trains stop for five minutes," to permit the train crew as well as the passengers to drink a glass of milk. The road was built and for a time the agreement was kept. A post office was established the same year and named for John Parlin.<sup>32</sup>

*Parrott City* (Parrot City, now La Plata) (21 population), La Plata County. In the summer of 1873, Captain John Moss, sponsored by the San Francisco banking house of Parrott & Company, led a party of prospectors from California into the San Juan Country. After prospecting the region with satisfactory results, Moss executed a private treaty with Ignacio, chief of the Southern Ute Indians, for the right to mine and farm thirty-six square miles of country, with the center at a point where Parrott City now stands. For this privilege the Indians received one hundred ponies and a quantity of blankets. The settlement which they founded was named in honor of Tabucio Parrott (Parrot) of Parrott & Company.<sup>33</sup> The name was later changed to La Plata. (See also *La Plata*.)

*Parshall* (75 population), Grand County, agricultural and stock-growing settlement. In 1907, or thereabouts, a Mr. Dow set up a small store here and circulated a petition for the establishment of a post office. The name Parshall, honoring a pioneer of the region, was suggested, and was accepted by postal authorities, because at that time, there was no other office of that name in the United States.<sup>34</sup>

*Peaceful Valley*, Boulder County, was named about 1918 or 1920 for its picturesque setting by John T. Roberts, when he built a summer resort here.<sup>35</sup>

*Pea Green* (8 population), Montrose County. The community consisting of a store, blacksmith shop, school, and community hall, was named for the district's first school house, built in 1887, and painted pea green.<sup>36</sup>

*Peckham* (30 population), Weld County, a side track on the Union Pacific Railroad, was established in 1898, when John Peckham opened a cheese factory here.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Data from Edna Tawney, Field Staff Writer, Grand Junction, Colorado, in 1929.

<sup>33</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 169-70.

<sup>34</sup>Data from Rachael Decker, Postmaster, Parshall, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>35</sup>Data from O. C. Twigg, Assistant County Superintendent of Schools, Boulder, Colorado, in 1938.

<sup>36</sup>Data from Helen W. Brown, Montrose, Colorado, November 25, 1940.

<sup>37</sup>Data from J. Bright, Peckham, in 1938.

*Peetz* (207 population), Logan County farming center settled about 1889,<sup>38</sup> was named Mercer by the Burlington Railroad when a section house and depot were built here.<sup>39</sup> Because the name was similar to that of a town in western Colorado, the settlement was renamed in 1904 for Peter Peetz, a pioneer homesteader who lived near-by.<sup>40</sup> Incorporated May 17, 1917.

*Pella*, Boulder County, see *Hygiene*.

*Penrose* (90 population), Fremont County farming village, was settled in 1908 by the Beaver Park Land and Water Company, and named in honor of the late Spencer Penrose, Colorado Springs capitalist and the company's largest stockholder.<sup>41</sup>

*Pershing* (21 population), Routt County agricultural settlement, was established in 1916 by J. Harry Abbott, and named for General John J. Pershing. There had been a post office known as Theisen here in 1909.<sup>42</sup>

*Petersburg*, Gunnison County abandoned silver camp, lay about thirty miles east of Ruby Camp, in the Spring Creek District. It was organized November 22, 1880, and Phil Peters of Louisville, Kentucky, one of the founders of Irwin, was elected president of the town company. Honoring him, the town company named the camp Petersburg.<sup>43</sup>

*Peyton* (123 population), El Paso County farming town, was settled in 1888 by George Peyton. The site was surveyed December 25 of that year, and Mr. Gilson, of the townsite company, received a fifty per cent interest for the expense of surveying and platting. Originally called Mayfield, the settlement was renamed in honor of Peyton after a post office had been refused under the old name.<sup>44</sup>

*Phippsburg* (150 population), Routt County farming settlement, was established about 1906 as a division point on the Denver & Salt Lake Railway between Kremmling and Steamboat Springs. It was named for Colorado's United States Senator Lawrence C. Phipps (1925-1931), because of his interest in the extension of the railroad.<sup>45</sup>

*Pictou* (150 population), Huerfano County coal camp, was established in 1887 by Thomas Louthier, first superintendent of the Pictou mine. It was originally called Sulphur Springs, for the

<sup>38</sup>Data from Arthur King, State Land Board, Denver, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>39</sup>Conklin, *op. cit.*, 175.

<sup>40</sup>Data from Henri Prud'homme, Peetz, February 13, 1941.

<sup>41</sup>Data from E. L. McBeth, Penrose, in 1940.

<sup>42</sup>Data from Mrs. Blanche E. Thompson, Postmaster, Pershing, February 4, 1941.

<sup>43</sup>*Denver Tribune*, January 1, 1881.

<sup>44</sup>Data from Mrs. J. C. Zimmerman, Peyton, March 24, 1941.

<sup>45</sup>Data from Senator L. C. Phipps (personal interview) in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

twenty-one sulphur springs on the site. These were later drained by the Pictou mine, and the site renamed by Mr. Louthier for his home town Pictou, Nova Scotia. The camp, owned by the Colorado Coal & Iron Company, now the Colorado Fuel & Iron Corporation, was operated until 1922 and then dismantled.<sup>46</sup>

*Piedra* (Piedras) (10 population), Archuleta County. A post office was in operation here on a ranch<sup>47</sup> as early as 1878,<sup>48</sup> and by 1882 the village had a population of fifty.<sup>49</sup> *Piedra* is a Spanish word meaning "stone."

*Pierce* (343 population), Weld County agricultural center. Long before there was a settlement here, the Union Pacific Railroad built a switch and water tank on the site, calling it Pierce. The name was retained when the town was established in 1907 by John E. and Bert A. Shafer.<sup>50</sup> It honors General John Pierce, former Surveyor General of Colorado Territory,<sup>51</sup> and one-time president of the Denver Pacific Railroad.<sup>52</sup> Incorporated August 30, 1918.

*Pike View* (150 population), El Paso County coal mining community, lies six miles north of Colorado Springs, where a splendid view of Pikes Peak is to be had. The Pike View or Pikes Peak View mine started operating in 1886, and the settlement that soon clustered here was named for the mine.<sup>53</sup>

*Pine* (60 population), Jefferson County summer resort. A post office was established under the name Pine in April, 1882,<sup>54</sup> although the now abandoned narrow-gage railroad name for the settlement was Pine Grove.<sup>55</sup> The groves of pine trees in the vicinity suggested the name<sup>56</sup> for this popular pioneer resort.

*Pinecliff* (26 population), Boulder County summer resort, was named about 1900 by Dr. Craig, a minister,<sup>57</sup> for an unusually beautiful cliff near-by.<sup>58</sup> The settlement had originally been called Gato.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>46</sup>Data from Helen L. Allen, Pictou, November 15, 1940.

<sup>47</sup>Croft, *op. cit.*, 130.

<sup>48</sup>*Colorado State Business Directory*, 1878, 37.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, 1882, 56.

<sup>50</sup>Data from John E. Shafer, Pierce, January, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>51</sup>Data from Donald L. White, Field Staff Worker, Greeley, Colorado, May 22, 1939.

<sup>52</sup>James F. Willard and Colin B. Goodykoontz, *Experiments in Colorado Colonization, 1869-1872*. (University of Colorado, 1926), 361.

<sup>53</sup>Data from Tom Allen, State Coal Mine Inspector, December 18, 1940.

<sup>54</sup>*Denver Tribune*, April 20, 1882.

<sup>55</sup>*Colorado State Business Directory*, 1882, 56.

<sup>56</sup>Data from May E. Hoyt, Librarian, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado, August 25, 1941.

<sup>57</sup>Data from C. C. Dieter of the Victor-American Fuel Company, Denver, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>58</sup>Data from Mrs. Mary Kiteley, Librarian, Longmont, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>59</sup>Data from Ed. Sonergren, Chief Draftsman, Denver & Salt Lake Railroad, Denver, Colorado, March 13, 1940, to the State Historical Society.

*Pinkhampton* (Pinkham), Jackson County, was founded by and named for George Pinkham, who came to the North Park in the early seventies.<sup>60</sup> Pinkham kept the first post office, and later engaged in stock-ranching.<sup>61</sup> By 1884 the village, then in Grand County, had a population of 150.<sup>62</sup>

*Pinnacle* (52 population), Routt County coal-mining town, began with the opening of the Pinnacle Coal Mine in 1909 by George Morrison, who came to Colorado from Scotland in 1872.<sup>63</sup> It was probably named for near-by Pinnacle Peak (12,200 feet altitude.)<sup>64</sup>

*Pinneo* (45 population), Washington County, was surveyed May 25, 1888, by the Lincoln Land Company, and the plat filed September 10 of that year.<sup>65</sup> About the time the stations in this vicinity were being laid out, B. F. Pinneo, deputy sheriff, was sent to Rock Springs, where whisky was being sold to railroad workmen. Because of his part in handling this situation, the station was named for him.<sup>66</sup>

*Pitkin* (156 population), Gunnison County mining town, was first known as Quartzville, and was laid out in April, 1879. The name was changed late in the summer of that year<sup>67</sup> to honor Governor F. W. Pitkin, a friend of the first postmaster, Frank Curtis.<sup>68</sup> By 1882 the town had a population during the mining season of 2,500 people.<sup>69</sup>

*Placerville* (46 population), San Miguel County, originally a gold-mining town, was settled about 1881,<sup>70</sup> and named for the placer mines in the vicinity.<sup>71</sup> In September, 1909, the town was almost completely washed away by a flood;<sup>72</sup> the site was then abandoned and a new depot and business houses were established about half a mile up the river.<sup>73</sup> Today it is an important shipping point for cattle and sheep.

<sup>60</sup>*Mountain and Plains Farm Weekly* (Fort Collins), October 13, 1939.

<sup>61</sup>M. W. Rankin, *Reminiscences of Frontier Days*, 105.

<sup>62</sup>*Colorado State Business Directory, 1884*, 290.

<sup>63</sup>Data from Mr. Spangler, Clayton Coal Company, Denver, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>64</sup>Data from Mr. C. C. Dieter, Victor-American Fuel Company, Denver, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>65</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 335.

<sup>66</sup>Data from M. B. Gill, Fort Morgan, Colorado, in 1938.

<sup>67</sup>*Gunnison Review*, June 26, 1880.

<sup>68</sup>Data from H. L. Curtiss, Paonia, Colorado, June 2, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>69</sup>*Colorado State Business Directory, 1882*, 244.

<sup>70</sup>Data from Ruby Thompson, Placerville, March 24, 1941.

<sup>71</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 317.

<sup>72</sup>*Alamosa Empire*, September 15, 1909.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, June 1, 1910.

*Plateau City* (57 population), Mesa County post office village, lies in a cattle range country. It was named for its location on a plateau between Battlement and Grand Mesas.<sup>74</sup> The post office was established January 5, 1884.<sup>75</sup>

*Platner* (100 population), Washington County, was settled by the Plattner, Kling and Millitt families in 1891 or 1892. Upon the establishment of a post office in 1893, the settlers requested the name Harmon; this was rejected by postal authorities because there was another office of that name in Colorado. The present name (revised spelling) honors N. Plattner, prominent rancher of the community.<sup>76</sup>

*Platoro*, Conejos County ghost camp, lay on the eastern side of Conejos Peak along the slopes to the Conejos River.<sup>77</sup> The name is a combination of the Spanish words *plata*, "silver," and *oro*, "gold." The camp reached its heyday in the late eighties,<sup>78</sup> and in 1891 a \$13,000 toll road assuring Platoro a year around outlet was completed.<sup>79</sup>

*Platte Valley*, Weld County, see *Hardin*.

*Platteville* (561 population), Weld County colony town, now the center of a prosperous irrigated farming region, was founded in May, 1871, when the Platte River Land Company purchased several thousand acres in the valleys of the South Platte and St. Vrain Rivers, from the Denver Pacific Railway and Telegraph Company. A central location, on the east bank of the Platte River, was chosen for their town,<sup>80</sup> which they named for the stream.<sup>81</sup> Incorporated January 1, 1887.

*Pleasant Valley*, Fremont County, see *Howard*.

*Plumbs*, Weld County, is a sugar beet station on the Burlington Railroad. It was here that J. Plumb, first Territorial senator from Weld County, homesteaded in the early 1860s.<sup>82</sup>

*Plum Valley* (40 population), Las Animas County, was formerly a farming and stock-raising community in the "Dust Bowl"

<sup>74</sup>Edna Tawney, *op. cit.*, 1937.

<sup>75</sup>*Denver Tribune*, January 10, 1884.

<sup>76</sup>Data from George Plattner, Platner, February 12, 1941.

<sup>77</sup>Data from J. D. Frazey, Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, Antonito, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>78</sup>State Historical Society, Pamphlet 367, No. 28.

<sup>79</sup>*The Wason Miner*, December 12, 1891.

<sup>80</sup>Willard and Goodykoontz, *op. cit.*, 429-430.

<sup>81</sup>"Pleasant Platteville," Thesis by Mary O'Donnell, Loretto Heights College, 1936.

<sup>82</sup>Data from George Hodgson, Curator Meeker Museum, Greeley, Colorado, to the State Historical Society.

area. W. H. Ogden opened a general store and a post office here in 1916. Farmers on adjacent lands have drifted away and little of the settlement remains today.<sup>83</sup> This section has long been known as the Plum Valley country; a few wild plums found in Plum Canon by early settlers suggested the name.<sup>84</sup>

*Pomona* (22 population), Mesa County agricultural community, lies just at the edge of Grand Junction,<sup>85</sup> center of Colorado's famous fruit growing region. Pomona was the Roman goddess of fruit.<sup>86</sup>

*Poncha Springs* (94 population), Chaffee County. The hot springs, ninety-nine in number, which burst from the mountain some three-quarters of a mile above the town, were known to the Indians for centuries,<sup>87</sup> and were regarded by them as "great medicine waters."<sup>88</sup> The settlement was laid out July 3, 1879, by Thomas Atwood, and the plat filed July 6, 1880, by James P. True.<sup>89</sup> By 1880, when the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (narrow gage) was building into this district, Poncha Springs had developed into a prosperous town of more than a thousand people. After the railroad built beyond the settlement, however, it gradually declined.<sup>90</sup> It was named for the famous Poncha Pass, at whose foot it lies. Two explanations of the origin of the name have been given: first, that *Poncha* the misspelled form of *pancho*, (Sp. "paunch" or "belly") was applied as descriptive of the low bend in the mountain range here;<sup>91</sup> and second, that it is an Indian word meaning tobacco, and was given because of a weed that grows abundantly on the pass. The plant, highly valued by the Indians, affords an excellent substitute for tobacco.<sup>92</sup>

*Portland* (377 population), Fremont County, began in 1898 with the establishment of the Portland Cement Company by Charles Boettcher, a pioneer in the cement and sugar beet industries of Colorado. Boettcher named his settlement for the Portland process of manufacturing cement, first used in Portland, England.<sup>93</sup> Controversy arose when incorporation papers were filed, as to

<sup>83</sup>Data from Lou Robertson, Tobe, Colorado, February 2, 1941.

<sup>84</sup>Data by C. H. Payne, Postmaster, Plum Valley, January 21, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>85</sup>Data from Mrs. Nellie M. Marsh, Pomona, November 6, 1940.

<sup>86</sup>Henry Gannett, *Origin of Certain Place Names in the United States* (1905), 67.

<sup>87</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 80.

<sup>88</sup>*The Trail*, VII, No. 10, p. 6.

<sup>89</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 80.

<sup>90</sup>State Historical Society, MSS. XXIII-281.

<sup>91</sup>Data from Mrs. Georgianna Kettle and Ranger Roy Truman, San Isabel National Forest, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>92</sup>*Gunnison Review*, August 21, 1880.

<sup>93</sup>Data from Charles Boettcher (private interview), Denver, Colorado, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

whether the older town of Portland in Ouray County, founded by Preston and Enos Hotchkiss, was not entitled to the name. After proof that the older settlement had been partly abandoned, the Fremont County town received its name.<sup>94</sup>

*Portner* (30 population), Larimer County shipping point on the Union Pacific Railroad, was named by the railroad for Roy A. Portner of Fort Collins, who donated the land for the settlement and the railroad right of way.<sup>95</sup>

*Poverty Bar* or *Poverty Hill*, Routt County, see *Hahn's Peak*.

*Powderhorn* (76 population), Gunnison County trading center and health resort, lies near Cebolla Hot Springs (see also *Cebolla*) and Carbonate Springs in a stock-raising district. It was founded as White Earth in 1876.<sup>96</sup> There are two explanations of the origin of this unusual name: first, Cebolla Valley has the appearance of a huge powderhorn; and second, one of the first white men who came into the valley found a powderhorn on the creek flowing into the Cebolla (now Powderhorn Creek).<sup>97</sup>

*Powell*, Logan County, a small station on the Union Pacific Railroad in a dry-farming district, was named for William J. Powell, who came to eastern Colorado about 1874, from Oxford, Mississippi.<sup>98</sup>

*Price Creek* (2 population), Moffat County. A post office was established here in 1912. The village was named for the small stream upon which it lies. The creek was so called for an old-time ranch owner<sup>99</sup> and cattle man, Benjamin Price, who homesteaded here in 1892.<sup>100</sup>

*Primero*, Las Animas County ghost site. Only the walls of a church and the concrete bases of the mine tipples remain to mark the site of this once-flourishing coal-mining town which was abandoned in 1925. In 1902 the settlement boasted a population of 2,000. The mines then produced more than 68,000 tons of coal each month.<sup>101</sup> *Primero* is a Spanish word meaning "first."

*Pring* (4 population), El Paso County, is in a cattle-raising community on Jackson Creek. It was settled in 1880 by J. W.

<sup>94</sup>Sidney Joeknick, *Early Days on the Western Slope of Colorado*, 152-53.

<sup>95</sup>Data from Sam Portner, son of Roy A. Portner (by Glenn A. Cole), Fort Collins, Colorado, February 17, 1941.

<sup>96</sup>Hall, *op. cit.*, IV, 146.

<sup>97</sup>Data from W. M. Brown, Olathe, Colorado, September 18, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>98</sup>Conklin, *op. cit.*, 338.

<sup>99</sup>Data from Grace S. Deming, Postmaster, Price Creek, February 23, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>100</sup>Data from Hilda M. Fickle, Price Creek, November 30, 1940.

<sup>101</sup>*Colorado, A Guide to the Highest State* (New York: Hastings House, 1941), 347.

Pring, who owned about 1,000 acres in this area. The village was named for him.<sup>102</sup>

*Pritchett* (495 population), Baca County, the center of a dry-farming and dairying district, is the western terminus for a branch of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. It began with the advent of the Santa Fe in 1926, and was named in honor of Dr. Henry S. Pritchett, one of the directors of the railway. The completion of this branch line marked the decline of the village of Joycoy, three miles west, and the rise of Pritchett.<sup>103</sup>

*Proctor* (75 population), Logan County agricultural village, was established in 1908, through the efforts of J. D. Blue, then of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Blue, with several friends, purchased a tract of five thousand acres, much of which is now known as the Blue Ranch, and laid out the townsite along the railroad. The settlement was named for General Proctor, Indian fighter, who came to Logan County with General Crook.<sup>104</sup>

*Prospect* (Prospect Valley) (50 population), Weld County, was settled in 1922 by John G. Michael, and named for the Prospect Valley School, so called because the valley is one of the most fertile in the State.<sup>105</sup>

*Providence*, Boulder County, see *Camp Providence*.

*Pryor* (500 population), Huerfano County, was named in honor of Maek and Ike Pryor, who settled here just after the Civil War and entered the cattle business. At the present time Pryor is principally a coal-mining settlement. The mines now operated by the Pryor Coal Mining Company, were opened in 1897 by the Union Coal & Coke Company.<sup>106</sup>

*Pueblo* (52,162 population), seat of Pueblo County and second largest city in Colorado, has been a settlement for almost one hundred years, occupied at intervals by Spaniards, trappers, Indian traders, and Mexicans.<sup>107</sup> In 1806 Zebulon M. Pike erected a crude log building at the site of the present city, and Major Jacob Fowler (trapper) built a log house here in January, 1822, but these structures soon disappeared. By 1841 houses had been built by traders and trappers, who banded together and constructed an adobe fort. It was occupied most of the time until

<sup>102</sup>Data from H. H. Hadley, El Paso County Superintendent of Schools, December 6, 1940.

<sup>103</sup>"History of Early Baca County," J. R. Austin (1936).

<sup>104</sup>Conklin, *op. cit.*, 172.

<sup>105</sup>Data from R. Cecil Montgomery, Superintendent School District 96, Keenesburg, Colorado, October 1, 1940.

<sup>106</sup>Data from W. H. Donovan, Vice President, Pryor Coal Mining Company, Pryor, October 24, 1935, to the State Historical Society.

<sup>107</sup>*The Trail*, XV, No. 11, 16.

Christmas Day, 1854, when the inhabitants were massacred by Utes. In the fall of 1858, the town of Fountain was started east of the mouth of the Fountain Creek (see also *Fountain City*). During the winter of that year a group from Independence, Missouri, established a rival settlement west of the Fountain, which absorbed the earlier town. Known first as Independence, the name was soon changed to Pueblo (Sp. "town," or "village.")<sup>108</sup> Pueblo was incorporated under the laws of the Territory of Colorado, March 22, 1870. South Pueblo was organized and incorporated October 27, 1873, and Central Pueblo, June 21, 1882. In April, 1886, the city of Pueblo, the city South Pueblo, and the town of Central Pueblo were consolidated, and on March 21, 1894, the town of Bessemer (see also *Bessemer*) was annexed to the city.<sup>109</sup>

*Purcell* (35 population), Weld County agricultural settlement. During 1910 the Union Pacific Railroad built a stub line and erected a station here, naming it Hungerford, for the superintendent of the Pullman Car Company. A petition for a post office was circulated, and the name Purcell, honoring Lawrence M. Purcell, upon whose land the town was located, was requested. During September of 1910 the Purcell Land and Investment Company had the townsite surveyed.<sup>110</sup>

*Puritan*, Weld County, surrounded the Puritan Coal Mine, and consisted of nearly one hundred small houses, a boarding house, a store, and a pool hall. Several years ago the mine was completely dismantled, and the machinery moved some three miles south. Most of the houses were sold and moved away.<sup>111</sup>

*Quartzville*, Gunnison County, see *Pitkin*.

*Querida*, Custer County, was known as Bassickville<sup>112</sup> until 1881.<sup>113</sup> The camp grew around the Maine or Bassick Mine, discovered by E. C. Bassick in 1877<sup>114</sup> (see also *Bassickville*). It has been said that David Livingstone, nephew of the famous African explorer, who was at one time a resident of the camp, called it *Querida* (Sp. "darling," or "beloved"), because, he said, it was the one place in all the world that suited him.<sup>115</sup> Today the mills are stilled, the sluices empty, and the once roaring camp is no more.

<sup>108</sup>*Colorado Magazine*, IX, 181.

<sup>109</sup>*Pueblo County History* (Issued under the sponsorship of the Pueblo Chapter of the D.A.R.), Section II, 3-4.

<sup>110</sup>Data from H. D. Waldo, in a letter to his grandson, Ralph E. Waldo, Greeley, Colorado, in 1937.

<sup>111</sup>Data from Agnes J. Beynon, Postmaster, Frederick, Colorado, January 7, 1941.

<sup>112</sup>*Colorado State Business Directory*, 1880, 219.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, 1882, 254.

<sup>114</sup>Charles W. Henderson, *Mining in Colorado* (1926), 47.

<sup>115</sup>Data from Georgianna Kettle and Ranger Roy M. Truman, San Isabel National Forest, in 1935, to the State Historical Society.

## Old Lige

AUGUSTA HAUCK BLOCK\*

The strains of a song,

“A band of angels, comin’ after me,  
Comin’ fer to carry me home,  
Swing low, sweet char-i-ot,  
Comin’ fer to carry me home. . .”

floated on the breeze from a busy street corner.

The singer, Elijah Wentworth, a pious old colored man, known as “Lige” to everyone in and around Denver, had been a slave belonging to William Wentworth, who owned a large plantation in Loudon County, Virginia. It was from this family that Lige received his surname.

He resented being called “Uncle Lige” by white folks outside of his owner’s family. One day a man addressed him as “Uncle” and was immediately rebuked by Lige, who said, “Now don’ youse ‘Uncle’ me, fer ef I wuz yo’ah shor ’nuf uncle, you’d be ’shamed, an’ you’d try to hide de fae’.”

None knew this faithful old Negro’s age, for Lige did not know where or when he was born, nor who his parents were. He had been in the Wentworth family long before William was born.

When the family moved from Virginia to Independence, Missouri, on the new western frontier, they took Lige with them. He had always lived under a religious influence and consequently knew the Bible well. He never overlooked an opportunity to preach a sermon, even stopped his work if there was someone present to listen to him, as he discoursed his religious theme.

This stooped, gray-headed Negro was very apt. He could turn his hand to anything, from cooking, gardening or cleaning to acting as butler in the home of his master. He had grown up in service and was happy to be of assistance to anyone who needed help in any way; and if he had no “crying” job, he would go to the homes of citizens to lend a helping hand.

While in Independence in the early summer of 1860, Lige heard that Mr. James Smallwood, whom he had known as a good friend of the Wentworths in Virginia, was making ready to take a large number of mule-drawn covered wagons loaded with freight to Denver, and was in dire need of a good cook for the trip.

Cornelius and Chester, the two young sons of his master, had joined the Smallwood wagon train as drivers, so Lige begged to be allowed to accompany the train as cook. Mr. Wentworth granted the request, much to the satisfaction of the sons and Mr. Smallwood.

“Connie” and “Chet,” as the boys were nicknamed, were glad and were not homesick, for their old slave was with them. At night after the evening work was done, the trio sat by the campfire and watched Mother Nature spread her star-studded curtain over the great plains.

They found the dwellers in the new village of Denver a hospitable folk, which pleased old Lige. He said to the Wentworth boys, “I’ll allus call dis he’ah place home.”

Lige, who soon became known and respected by every man, woman and child, was a prominent personage in Denver between the years 1860 and 1880, for he was gifted with the talent of making rhymes to extol the cause in his profession as a town crier.

Lige always was on hand to meet covered-wagon trains which pulled into the young city of Denver, and later he was among the first who met the trains drawn by the “Iron Horses” which came into the station at Twenty-second and Wewatta streets.

Even the tourists felt as though they knew him, having heard all about Lige from the stage drivers or the train men before their arrival, and they expected to see him when the trains halted.

Ringling the hand-bell to attract attention, Lige began to tell in his own eloquent way, with rhymes, the advantages to be had by stopping at the hotels by which he was employed as “runner.” Incidentally he would bring in something about the wonderful climate and scenery. He seemed imbued with the idea that he was called upon to tell the people to stay in “Sunny Colorado.”

Besides being a good booster, Lige was a very necessary person, for when the Ladies’ Aid supper or concert was scheduled, Lige with his bell, was hired to announce the event by going up and down the streets, telling the news to the people. And like the “Pied Piper of Hamelin,” scores of children followed him along the streets of the town.

Business men engaged him to “cry” the coming sale of lots or land, or perhaps an auction of livestock. All kinds of meetings were cried by the old Negro as he went, ringing his bell, stopping now and then to preach a sermonette, or sing a hymn.

But Lige’s specialty was to find lost children. In a voice that was far-reaching, he would cry, “Lost chile, lost chile,” and then sing rhymes of his own making which told the name, color of eyes and hair, and further description of the missing youngster. Many

\*Mrs. Block is a former President of the Pioneer Women of Colorado.—Ed.

people hearing Lige's crying voice, would come out on the door step to hear the good or bad news.

Shortly after Lige came to Denver, James Smallwood and Joseph Thatcher built a frame house for the old Negro on the east side of Seventeenth, between Stout and California Streets.

In 1866, when the Volunteer Fire Companies first organized, they were supplied with turkey-red flannel shirts and other accessories for showing uniforms. The red shirts appealed greatly to old Lige, and he frequently expressed a desire to own one. So one day a box was delivered to him with a card on which was written:

"To Lige Wentworth, with compliments from the Volunteer Firemen of Denver, Colorado."

The happy old Negro wore the red shirt on all festive occasions. On Fourth of July celebrations, Lige in the red shirt was out early, and when the Volunteer Firemen's conventions were held in Denver, he was present in his red finery, ready to run errands for the firemen.

One fine Sunday, Mr. William E. Roberts and the Misses Evans were taking a walk down Seventeenth Street, when nearing Lige's home, they heard loud quarreling voices. Mr. Roberts, who was an agile young fireman, said to his companions, "I'll stop this dispute."

He grabbed up a tin pail which was on the ground, and climbed quietly upon the roof and placed it over the stove-pipe. Mr. Roberts and his friends went slowly on their way to await results.

Soon Lige and a big negress came running out of the smoke-filled house crying "Fi'ah, fi'ah, fi'ah!"

In a short time the Volunteer Fire Company was on hand. They poured a stream of water into the house—then a fireman discovered the covered stove pipe.

A crowd which had gathered to see the fire were sorry that old Lige was a victim of a practical joke and took up a collection, which amounted to twenty-five dollars. This they gave to the old Negro to repair the damage done by water to his house and contents. After all of the excitement was over, Lige said, "Ah wouldn't min' havin' another fi'ah."

When the old colored man became too feeble to work, merchants of Denver supplied his wants. James Smallwood, whose trade was that of tailor, saw that Lige had clothes, while other business men supplied groceries and meats, and the charitable "Lady Aiders" looked after his other wants.

Finally, in 1880, after several months of illness, the day came when old Lige heard a heavenly "Crier" singing

"Swing low, sweet char-i-ot,  
Comin' fer to carry you home. . ."