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## Early History of Lamar, Colorado

By George B. Merrill\*

Since the English speaking people first gained a weak and uncertain foothold on the Atlantic Coast they seem to have been filled with an urge to move west, and the unrest caused by this urge has pushed their frontier gradually but irresistibly away from the Atlantic. The progress seemed slow but relentless through most of the generations, but just following each of the great wars the unrest in the bosom of the people assumed the proportion of a tidal wave and the rush on these occasions carried civilization hundreds of miles westward at one jump.

The greatest of these wars was, of course, the Civil War of the early '60s and this movement seemed to include almost the whole nation. Both sides of the conflict were imbued with the same idea—to get away from the memory of it—and hundreds of thousands both North and South took advantage of the liberal homestead laws passed during the war to gain new homes in the vast region beyond what was then considered the dead line of civilization.

At first this moving horde scorned what was called the Great American Desert, which was only considered fit for buffalo and grasshoppers, and crossed it in large caravans to reach the mining regions in the Rockies and on the Pacific Coast. This lasted for several years, when the rapid drop in price of silver took much of the lure out of mining. But the urge of the West was still there.

The agricultural settlement, which had gradually changed eastern Kansas from a cow country to a highly cultivated region began to push forcibly west, and the desire to own their own homes brought ever increasing hordes of new settlers from the eastern states to join them. Relentlessly they overran the large cattle ranges of western Kansas, driving the cattlemen either out of business or into small deeded pastures.

By the close of the year 1885 the new settlers were in full

\*Mr. Merrill, present proprietor of the *Lamar Register*, went to Lamar when the town was about one year old. A large part of the interesting and valuable information he presents here was gathered from the files of his paper, the pioneer newspaper of Lamar.—Ed.

possession of the Colorado border and the curtain was rising for the opening scene of the last stand in eastern Colorado of the old stockmen against the new order of things.

Here the cowmen were better fortified than anywhere before to make a successful fight. The fertile valley of the Arkansas River with its thousands of acres of excellent natural hay lands was already theirs in law as well as in possession. Under the protection of Old Fort Bent and then of Fort Lyon with its military garrison they had thrived for many years, and, between land proofs made by themselves and employees, they owned large tracts. The best of the valley land had been picked by the Indians in settlement of old claims, growing out of the alleged Chivington Massacre, and many disputes and tribal settlements of the past with the government. The stockmen either by purchase or inter-marriage with the Indians had acquired these lands—the best for stock purposes in the valley. The SS ranch at Holly, the XY ranch of Fred Harvey, just across the river, the James Graham ranch at Granada, the J. M. McMillin ranch at Carlton, the A. R. Black ranch at Blackwell, and the John W. Prowers ranch south of the site of Old Fort Bent, held all the deeded land along the river and Santa Fe Railroad for over forty miles from the state line. Both the McMillin and Black ranches had constructed small irrigation ditches from the river, but, as a whole, natural hay was the only product, stock raising the only industry. Las Animas, about sixty-five miles west of the state line and the county seat of Bent County was the supply point of the territory. Bent County, larger than the state of Massachusetts, was 84 by 105 miles in area, and Las Animas was the real business center of the whole Southeastern Colorado.

A few hardy spirits of the "Westward Ho" tribe had already invaded the territory. The Koen brothers, Festus, O. N. and Everett, and A. N. Parrish had surveyed and were promoting a large irrigation canal to extend from west of the present site of Lamar into Kansas, and then known as the Colorado and Kansas Canal. (The part of it that was constructed is now known as the Fort Bent ditch.) A few settlers were breaking in at various points in the territory and taking up land, but were not meeting with a very cordial reception.

The worst blizzard in the known history of this section dealt a staggering blow to the stockmen in the early days of February, 1886. For eleven days a blinding snow driven by a freezing and raging north wind swept the plains. When it died down the plains of Southeastern Colorado were covered with dead cattle. Along the north side of the Santa Fe right-of-way the bodies were piled for miles along the fence. The principal occupation of the cow-

boys for weeks was skinning the hides. For more than a year to come some settlers earned their living gathering bones.

Throughout the rush of settlement to Western Kansas one of the leading and most enterprising spirits had been I. R. Holmes of Garden City. He had secured the Government Land Office for that city and promoted the booming of most of the new towns along the Santa Fe railroad. He now saw a bigger opportunity than ever in the Eastern Colorado section of the Arkansas Valley, and prepared to take advantage of it.

His experience in Kansas taught Mr. Holmes that a government land office was the biggest asset to a town under those conditions, and he determined to establish both the town and the land office. Pueblo was the nearest land office. Mr. Holmes also had his eyes fixed for a location suitable for the county seat for a new county.

The first thing was to secure a location, and this was a difficult task, as the land along the railroad was almost all in the cattle ranches, or too near an already established railroad station to make moving of the station lawful. He finally picked on the southeast quarter of section 31, township 22, range 46, as the most available. It was deeded but was only three miles from Blackwell station, which A. R. Black, owner of all the land at that station, refused to allow to be moved.

Mr. Holmes organized a company with Colonel A. S. Johnson, of the land department of the Santa Fe Railroad, as president, J. E. Godding, secretary, himself as general manager, and associated with them were D. E. Cooper, M. D. Parmenter, M. L. Swift, Captain Spivey and his own brother, J. H. Holmes. Messrs. Godding and Parmenter each owned homesteads adjoining the deeded quarter, which could be proved up in the course of a few months.

The next thing was to pick a name. The Secretary of the Interior in President Cleveland's cabinet was L. Q. C. Lamar, a noted Confederate cavalry officer, and prominent for years as a U. S. Senator from Mississippi. As a land office was the ultimate object, they decided upon "Lamar" as the best name for the proposed town. Word was quietly given out at Garden City that the opening sale of town lots for the town of Lamar would be held on Monday, May 24, 1886.

The depot was now a necessity. On the afternoon of Saturday, May 22, A. R. Black received a telegram purporting to call him to Pueblo on important business, and he took the last train. After dusk a railroad work train from La Junta in command of construction chief R. A. Steen, still after forty odd years an active Santa Fe official at La Junta, appeared at Blackwell. The station

house was soon loaded on flat cars and by Sunday afternoon was on the ground at the Lamar townsite with a hastily constructed switch to accommodate necessary trains and freight cars for the proposed excursion of the morrow.

May 24, 1886, in Lamar was a beautiful day, clear, warm and sunshiny, and the early regular trains brought in many passengers. The town company had a large tent prepared for headquarters, as there was no building on the townsite. The nearest house was on the homestead of M. D. Parmenter in what is now Holmes and Parmenter Addition to Lamar. Other tents were stretched to take care of the visitors. The Garden City excursion at 10 o'clock in the morning brought in a large crowd of boomers and investors, and soon after the lot auction began. Over \$45,000 in town lots were sold before five o'clock, and the new town of Lamar was off to a grand start.

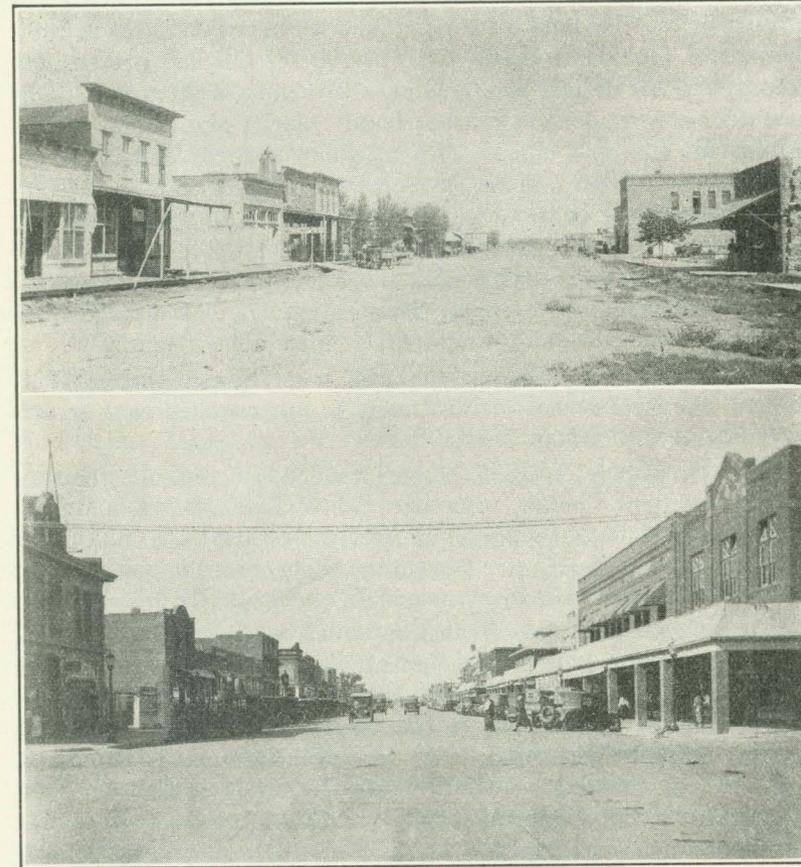
Many of those who bought lots decided to stay right on the ground, and ordered lumber and building supplies by telegraph to build homes and business houses. Fred W. Burger had bought a location for a large hotel, and he just erected a large tent and started in at once. Six weeks later he sold a half interest to his former comrade, A. Deeter of Winterset, Iowa, and they conducted the first hotel in the new town. The firm of Spivey & Holmes with C. M. Morrison as manager, opened at once a general merchandise store and a lumber yard. A half dozen saloons and an equal number of real estate offices and restaurants were open before the end of the week, and the new metropolis was on its way to a glorious future.

Judge W. R. Davis of Dodge City, Kansas, arrived in the town on June 7th with an antiquated printing outfit, and finding a floor and walls up for a new building rented it and opened up his office. This was the *Lamar Register*, the first newspaper of the town. The first issue was published on June 12, 1886, without even a roof overhead, and was printed during a hard rainstorm. The new settlers were so enthusiastic over the issue that they bought the copies as fast as they could be printed and paid such fancy prices that not even a sample copy for the files was left when the supply of paper gave out. In September the *Lamar Leader* was started by G. McGill; in April, 1887, the *Lamar Sparks* by Mrs. Metcalf.

The town now had a reputation far and wide and was growing so rapidly that the business directory had to be changed daily. Lawyers, doctors, and various business institutions were coming in fast, and saloons and real estate offices faster. By the first of July it was estimated there were five hundred people on the townsite. An unofficial town council was organized to look after the

proper enforcement of law and the care of the streets. J. E. Godding was chosen as acting mayor of this organization, and D. E. Cooper, F. W. Burger, U. H. VanOrsdale, J. H. Holmes and A. H. Rogers as trustees.

The first church services were held on June 27, 1886, and were conducted by Rev. H. P. Case of the Congregational Church.



LAMAR, COLORADO

Upper: Photograph taken in 1897. Lower: Present day view.

He was superintendent of Sunday Schools for his church in the State, and after the service organized the first Sunday School of the new town with a membership of forty-four. Early day church services were held by the Episcopalians, Methodists and Catholics in the order named. The first regular church organization was the Methodist with Rev. H. R. Beardsley as the pastor. The Christian Church was next organized with Rev. J. T. Sherrard as pastor.

The first church building was constructed by the Methodists and dedicated on September 4, 1887.

The Postmaster General ordered a new postoffice opened in Lamar and appointed J. W. Decker, who had a drug store in the new town, as its first postmaster. The first mail was received and the office formally opened to the patrons on August 14, 1886.

Mr. Holmes had moved at once upon Congress to secure the passage of the new land office bill, and with his usual effective work the matter was soon settled. By July 28 the bill had passed both houses and was signed by President Cleveland on August 5. The new district was named the Bent Land District and Lamar named as seat for the land office. The necessary records had to be obtained from Pueblo and books from Washington, and it was not until the 3rd day of January, 1887, that the formal opening took place with Frank P. Arbuckle of Denver and F. H. Schrock of Pueblo as Register and Receiver respectively. The first week's rush was so great as to swamp the office and it took a large force of clerks weeks to catch up with the regular office records.

Professor F. C. Stevens the first week in September, 1886, started a private school with so many pupils enrolled that he was forced at once to get an assistant.

On December 21, 1886, Superintendent of Schools John A. Murphy of Bent County, organized School Dist. No. 14, and held a meeting which elected J. S. Porter as president, D. E. Cooper secretary, and G. S. Hunter treasurer. Prof. Stevens was the first elected teacher, and the term opened December 29, 1886.

The people at a special election called on November 23, 1886, voted to organize a town government, and the election for officers was held on December 27. C. M. Morrison was elected Mayor and F. W. Burger, U. H. VanOrsdale, S. D. Rall, George Trommlitz and M. Noble as Trustees. At the organization on January 3, 1887, Jas. K. Doughty, newly arrived attorney from Larned, Kansas, was made both first city attorney and city clerk.

Thus in just a little over seven months from the date of birth the New Year found Lamar with Mr. Holmes' program for it at the start completed, except for the new county and county seat. This represented a far more serious problem. The old timers were thoroughly entrenched at Las Animas, the seat of Bent county. They had possession of the courts, the records, the sheriff's office and the representative in the legislature. Much had to be accomplished before a new order of things could be established. Steps were taken to organize for the county election in November, 1887. It was a big fight and a bigger victory. The old regime was dealt a staggering blow, losing nearly every county office. The fight

was then carried to the election of a member of the legislature and district judge in the fall of 1888. Here again the new settlers won out. Hon. James Swift, a leading merchant of Lamar, was elected to the legislature and Judge Julius C. Gunter, of Trinidad, afterwards Governor of Colorado, to the District Judgeship. After a long hard fight in the Seventh General Assembly the bills creating Prowers County and several others, from the territory of Bent County, safely passed the assembly, and were signed by Governor Job A. Cooper. Mr. Swift was ably assisted by Hon. C. C. Goodale and B. B. Brown, as Lamar's committee, in pushing the bill through.

Prowers County was 39 by 42 miles in area and named for John W. Prowers, the first cattleman in the valley. Lamar was made the temporary county seat, and Governor Cooper appointed the following as temporary county officials:

Board of Commissioners, A. H. Rogers and F. W. Burger. J. D. Martin was held over having been elected commissioner the fall before in Bent County. Other county officers were:

County Judge, James K. Doughty; County Clerk, Frank P. Allen; County Treasurer, T. H. Cecil; County Sheriff, H. A. Bilow; County Assessor, I. L. Maxwell, held over also from old Bent County; County Superintendent of Schools, Frank E. Irwin; County Coroner, A. Deeter.

The new county commissioners organized and officially started the county government on May 3, 1889. A strong fight was started by the people living in the east part of the new county to take the county seat away from Lamar but in the election that fall Lamar won over all other towns combined by a handsome majority, and was made the permanent county seat.

With the firm establishment of the county government at Lamar the town settled down. The hectic boom days of 1886 to 1889 were over. The real estate internal wars that had resulted in the hiring of such notorious western gunmen as Bat Masterson, Ben Daniels, and others, well known through the Southwest, came to an end. The shooting up of the scenery by roving bands of merry-making cowboys gradually disappeared, even as the romantic wild cowboy himself accepted civilization and settled down to farm or town life. The sudden subsidence of the western urge in the minds of the eastern people burst the real estate bubble of the West, and carried hundreds of fortunes and thousands of ambitious dreams with it into thin air.

Lamar felt the slump as badly as any of the other boom towns of the West and dwindled rapidly in population. It had gained the land office its founders desired, but there was no one who

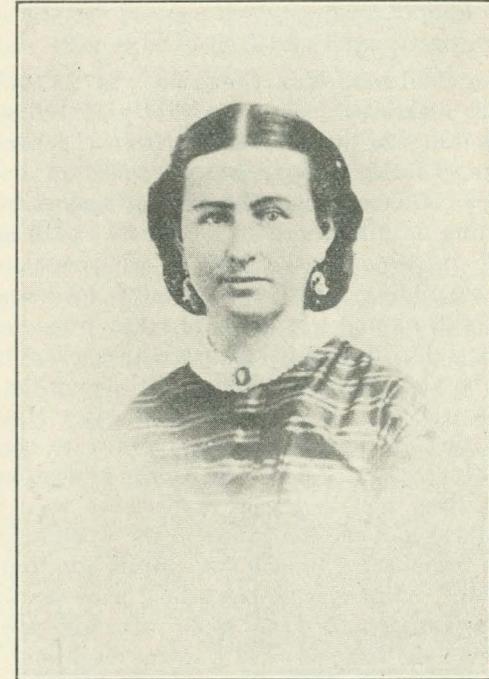
wished land. It had gained the seat of county government, but there were only a handful left to govern.

However, outside influences had dealt kindly with the town. The farmers and a few ditch builders had been making, almost unnoticed during the real estate turmoil, much progress in the work of establishing irrigation canals to cover the available lands in the valley, and on this sound foundation was built a new prosperity far more vital, more enduring and more effectual than the thin real estate bubble that had bursted.

The Fort Lyon canal, the Amity canal, the Fort Bent ditch, the Lamar canal and a dozen smaller canals soon gave Prowers County one of the largest irrigated areas of any county in the State, and the advent of Mr. J. K. Mullen's flour mill in the fall of 1892, followed later by the beet industry, alfalfa meal mills, the milk condensary, and many other factories, have given a market for its products. Under this impetus the county received a new life and has grown rapidly, and Lamar has kept stride with its surrounding territory. In the 37 years since the Lamar flour mill was established Lamar's story has been a simple one of constant growth and increasing prosperity.

Elbridge, Simpson, George and Mrs. Cushman still live. They took up their residence in a two-story log house in Auraria, now West Denver; "and we considered ourselves lucky to get so commodious a dwelling," said Mrs. Cushman in conversation with the writer. "Two-story buildings were scarce here then," she added.

Just two weeks after her arrival Miss Sopris was engaged in school teaching. She had had some experience in this line of work before coming to the new country and she found such need for the



MISS INDIANA SOPRIS

## Colorado's First Woman School Teacher

Thomas F. Dawson\*

Mrs. Indiana Sopris Cushman, who resides with her brothers, S. T. and George L. Sopris<sup>1</sup>, at 1337 Stout Street, Denver, has the distinction of being the second person to organize and teach a school in Denver and of being the first lady to perform service as a teacher here. Until she was married to Mr. Samuel Cushman in 1866, Mrs. Cushman was Miss Indiana Sopris. She is the daughter of Captain Richard Sopris, a leading pioneer in Colorado, who came to Colorado from Indiana. She was born at Brookville, Indiana, in 1839, and although now 82 years old enjoys the best of health and is in possession of all her faculties.

Captain Sopris preceded his family to the Pikes Peak gold region. He came in 1859 and they followed in the spring of 1860, arriving in Denver on the 23d day of April of that year. The family consisted then of the wife and mother and eight children, namely: Allen B., Indiana, Irene (later Mrs. J. S. Brown), Elbridge B., Simpson T., Henry C., Levi, and George L., of whom

\*Mr. Dawson, former Historian of the State Historical Society, interviewed Mrs. Cushman and wrote this article in November, 1921. It was submitted to Mrs. Cushman and signed by her. The original manuscript is in the library of the State Historical Society.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Cushman and her brothers George L. and Simpson T. have since died.—Ed.

continuation of this service that she lost no unnecessary time in getting started anew. "There were several children in our own family and also many other youngsters who stood in need of the discipline and training of a school," she said, "and I immediately set about establishing a place for their accommodation. I found immediate encouragement among the parents and I started as soon as I could get a suitable room. I was fortunate in that respect. Tom Pollock, the pioneer blacksmith, had built a frame house on Ferry Street. There was plenty of demand for the entire building, but in those days a young girl could get almost any thing she wanted, and when I made known my wishes Mr. Pollock considerably rented it to me in preference to others. Here then, in a

small room in the Pollock house I began business as a teacher in Colorado on the 7th day of May, 1860. I had at first only twelve or fifteen pupils and they were small, but the number increased and I soon had about all that I could take care of. Of course, our accommodations were the crudest. The children occupied wooden benches for seats and such desks as there were were made of rough native lumber. There was a variety of text books such as had been brought by the parents from widely scattered sections of the country. Hence there was difficulty in organizing classes, much less the establishing of grades, which was not thought of. Still, the children got on pretty well and I enjoyed myself with them."

It has been said that Mrs. Cushman was the first teacher in Denver, but she makes no such claim, freely conceding that honor to O. J. Goldrick, who had preceded her to the bank of Cherry Creek by several months and who set up a school in Auraria during the fall of 1859. Goldrick also had been a teacher before coming West, and finding nothing more attractive as a calling after arriving here, had opened a small school in what was known as the Loggery, which building Mrs. Cushman says stood near the site of the present City Hall, and was used for many purposes of a public nature. Coming third in the list of original teachers is Miss Lydia Maria Ring, who also has been credited with being the first. Miss Ring began her school in about two weeks after Miss Sopris had opened hers. Mrs. Cushman gives high praise to both her rivals. She says that Goldrick was a man of college education and a good teacher. Miss Ring had had more experience as a teacher than either of the others and she continued in the work here longer than either of them, numbering among her pupils children of many of the best families. After closing her school here she went to reside with a niece in Kansas and when, some years ago, she returned to Denver for a visit she was accorded a warm reception. Of the first three teachers Mrs. Cushman only survives.

But while Mrs. Cushman makes no claim to being the first teacher in a private school in Denver she does insist that she was one of the very first instructors in a public school. The public school system was provided for by act of the Territorial Legislature in 1861, but it was impossible to put the machinery in operation before 1862. Two districts were organized, one in Denver on the east side of Cherry Creek, and the other in Auraria on the west side of the Creek. Of the former Mr. H. H. Lamb was principal and of the latter, Mr. Abner R. Brown. As Auraria was the larger of the two divisions Brown was given two assistants while Lamb had only one, who was Miss Sopris, now Mrs. Cushman. Heretofore the authorities have generally credited Brown with getting started on the 1st of December while it is generally stated

that Lamb's school did not open until the 10th of that month, both in 1862. Mrs. Cushman says, however, that both began on the same day. She says that the East side school first occupied two rooms in what was called the Buffalo House, which was near the old Buffalo Corral, corner of 16th and Wazee streets, but that soon afterward the institution moved to the Bayaud row. She occupied the front room of the Buffalo building with the girls and Mr. Lamb the rear room with the boys. Her recollection is that there were about fifty or sixty pupils all told in the school. The Bayaud building was a row of frame structures that stood on 16th street below Larimer, and was considered a quite pretentious affair at the time. In the row Miss Ring maintained her school and also her residence for several years. The buildings were erected by Thomas J. Bayaud, a gentleman of means who had come from New York and who engaged extensively in business here. He was prominent in the early day Episcopal Church activities and he it was for whom Bayaud street was named.

In those days the ordinary teachers received \$50 a month, but the principals received somewhat more, \$80 being paid to one of them. The pay in the private schools depended, of course, upon the number of pupils and the amount paid for each one. In the beginning only the elementary branches were taught, but it was not long until there was demand for more elaborate instruction until ultimately Denver came to have a reputation for educational institutions equal to that of any place in the country.

Mrs. Cushman retains a vivid recollection of her trip across the Plains, which was made in a covered Michigan wagon with other members of the family, and of the conditions accompanying their first efforts at housekeeping here. Naturally they did not undertake to bring any furniture with them from so great a distance and it became necessary to make purchases after their arrival. There was but one place to go for this purpose and this was to Moyn & Rice's planing mill, located well down on the banks of Cherry Creek. This primitive establishment, which she says was the beginning of the extensive works of Hallack and Howard, undertook to outfit all comers with all wooden articles needed and did so after a fashion; "but, as their furniture was made of the rough native lumber, the articles supplied were nothing to brag of. All the bedsteads were made of common pine, as were lounges and chairs. For common chairs we paid four dollars, while the rocker cost twelve dollars. The rocker was stronger than the other seats and when an unusually heavy gentleman visitor leaned back and broke one of the ordinary chairs we transferred him to the rocker and always afterward seated him in it. You see furniture was too scarce to take the chances on any more mishaps. The freighters

charged exceptionally high rates for bringing in furniture, because of its bulky character." Even as late as 1866, when she was married and her husband sent back to St. Louis for furniture for their home he was compelled to pay 30 cents a pound freight on some of it.

In the early days there were many distinguished visitors to Denver, and some of them are well remembered by Mrs. Cushman, among them Bierstadt the painter, whose painting of "The Storm in the Rocky Mountains" attracted much attention; Fitzhugh Ludlow, the author; Bayard Taylor, A. D. Richardson, Samuel Bowles, editor of the *Springfield Republican*, and Vice-President Colfax. She says that Bierstadt spent much time here and that his favorite sketching place was a point on Cherry Creeek not far from the present site of City Hall from which he obtained an especially satisfactory view of the mountain range. Ludlow accompanied him. They were intimate friends and when Ludlow died Mrs. Cushman says Bierstadt married his widow. Ludlow was a victim of the drug habit and was supposed to be here seeking a cure. All these made frequent trips to the mountains and found much satisfaction in writing about and painting them.

Mrs. Cushman also relates many interesting incidents in connection with the early days of the Denver churches, but she thinks it unnecessary to reproduce them, especially in view of the fact that she gave her recollections concerning both churches and schools to The Denver Trail of some years since, of which publication she supplies a copy to go with this interview, which she says is correct.

One incident, however, possesses such a characteristic flavor of the frontier that this writer feels that it would be unfair to future generations to omit it. In those days religious services were held at any place at which it was possible to find a room big enough to hold a crowd, and instead of making objection to such places the preachers were pleased to have them. Thus it happened that at one time the Presbyterians were forced to take a hall over a saloon. The minister's name was Rankin, and one Sunday soon after the Church moved in and while in the midst of his sermon, a row broke out in the den below. Some of the preliminary noise was audible to the churchgoers, but no one thought anything of mere words. When, however, a shot rang out the officials were forced to take notice, in view of the thinness of partitions and the lack of ceilings. Captain Sopris, Mrs. Cushman's father, was one of the trustees, and Andrew Sagendorf and William Clayton the other two. The service was allowed to conclude, but when it was

over they got together and decided to move the church to more quiet precincts.

During her married life Mrs. Cushman lived most of the time in Central City and in Deadwood, S. D., but since the death of her husband in 1899 she has remained in Denver the greater part of the time.

## Across the Plains and in Denver, 1860

A Portion of the Diary of George T. Clark.\*

Sunday, May 6, 1860. Left Big Grove at 7 o'clock. It was quite cool and we had a pleasant drive over the prairie until we struck Council Bluffs when it became quite hot and tedious. We got into the city of the Bluffs at 2 o'clock. From there we drove to the ferry and crossed the Missouri to Omaha City and put up at the Douglass House. Saw Wyman's people at the postoffice. Also saw S— on his way to the Mines. Rained here some this night. Walked around town, found a letter at the postoffice from Hobart.

Monday, May 7, 1860. Got up at 6 o'clock and after breakfast we started out to buy our outfit. Bought our groceries at the store of McGreath & Brother. Found everything as cheap as at Madison. Saw the Stonnes and Slavens. Wrote a few letters and sent by the eastern mail.

Tuesday, May 8, 1860. Finished buying our traps and started to fix the wagon and tent. Rained very hard this afternoon. Very windy. Went down to the Lone Tavern, played a game of euchre at a beer saloon.

Wednesday, May 9, 1860. After breakfast, went to work at our tent. Wind blowing very hard. Got our wagon done and the goods on at . . . and then went to dinner. After dinner commenced packing. Got everything done at 6 o'clock and left Omaha and drove to Taylor's and put up for the night. Wallace & Co. met us.

Thursday, May 10, 1860. Left Taylor's at 8 o'clock. Before we went Wallace traded his watch for a pony. Took dinner on the Elk Horn River and drove on and put up for the night beside a

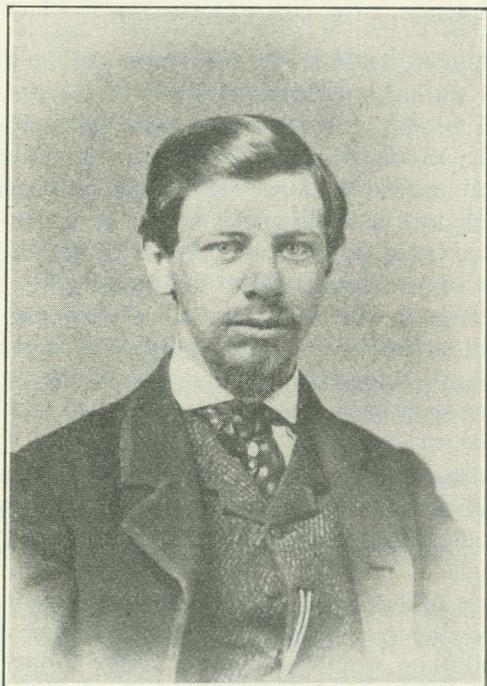
\*Mr. Clark was born in Massachusetts, February 24, 1837. He became one of the leading pioneers of Colorado. He was mayor of Denver in 1865-66, was the first cashier of the First National Bank of Denver, and engaged in banking in Central City and Georgetown. He was capable, generous and popular. In 1864 he married Miss Katherine Goss, who had also come to Colorado in 1860. Mr. Clark died November 6, 1888. His widow survived him, living until March 24, 1929.

The original Clark diary is in possession of Mrs. W. G. Wigginton of Denver, daughter of Mr. Clark. The diary records a typical trip across the plains. It is written in lead pencil. Occasionally one or more words are illegible and at such places omission marks have been inserted in the text.

Mr. Clark left Madison, Wisconsin, April 24, 1860, headed for the Pike's Peak region. We take up the diary at Council Bluffs, Iowa. The diary extends from April 24 to July 31, 1860.—Ed.

stream. First night of camping, put up our tent, made some tea and ate cold bread and bologna sausage for supper.

Friday, May 11, 1860. Got up at 4:30 o'clock and made some coffee, toasted bread and fried bologna. Got hitched up and left at 7 o'clock. Soon came in sight of the Platte River. Road good on a level plain or valley. Passed one train of 22 wagons. Did not stop for dinner. Turned off the North Platte and struck for Shim's Ferry, found Wallace waiting to get over. Crossing the Platte,



GEORGE T. CLARK  
From a photograph taken in the '60s.

bad. Broke our whippetrees today. Crossed the main Platte at 7 P. M. and camped on the south side, on the bank of the Platte River. Today warm and rather dusty. Passed about 50 teams, 72 miles from Omaha.

Saturday, May 12, 1860. Left our camp at 9 o'clock. Wind blowing hard. Had to get up at 1 A. M. and fix our tent which blew over. Did not light up our stove last night or this morning. Supped and breakfasted on bologna sausage and soda crackers. We got to Clear Creek at 3 o'clock. Found about 25 teams coming. Wind blowing a perfect gale, sand filling our eyes and making it

very disagreeable. Camped about 5 o'clock on the bank of the Main Platte River. Put up our tents after a good deal of trouble, built a fire in the stove and fried ham. Made a cup of tea for supper. Wind still blowing very hard. Met a good many Indians for the last two days.

Sunday, May 13, 1860. Got up this morning at 8 A. M. and fried ham and made coffee for breakfast. After eating mended my pants and took a good wash and washed my clothes. Put on some ham to boil. W—made some short biscuits, fried some ham and invited Wallace and Co. to dinner. After dinner went over and made Slavens and Stonnes a visit, who were camped a little way above us. Wind is a perfect hurricane. Water in the Platte very dirty but it was the only water on the route and had to use it. Country a flat prairie, not a house in sight. Undertook to do a little washing but gave it up.

Monday, May 14, 1860. Left our camp at 6:30 A. M. Wind blowing and quite dusty. Drove within a few miles of Pawnee Village and stopped for dinner. There was camped near us about 40 wagons, one drove of horses and one of sheep. It did not look like a barren wilderness to see so many teams camped and men walking around and traveling all toward the land of gold. Passed through Pawnee Village at 3 P. M. and camped on the banks of the Platte. About a mile from us was a large train camp with about 30 wagons and 150 yoke of cattle. Got supper, ham and coffee, good well of water near camp.

Tuesday, May 15, 1860. Left our horses out to grass and commenced watching. Took my turn at 12 o'clock this morning and went off at 4 o'clock. Got breakfast and left camp at 7 o'clock. Met two government trains, one going to Denver City; one from Utah to Nebraska City. Each had 26 wagons, six yoke of oxen to a wagon. Drove on to the Pawnee Mounds at 11 o'clock and left them at 4 o'clock and drove on to camp beside the Platte River. Got supper and went over to Stonnes Camp. Word from . . . also camp below us. Went 25 miles today without water, although at times it was an . . . Weather warm and pleasant. Had a small sprinkle of rain at 1 P. M.

Wednesday, May 16, 1860. Got up at 4 o'clock and Wallace and me got breakfast. Had chipped beef stew, baked potatoes. McNeil made some griddle cakes. Wallace and I on watch last night. George Stones got very badly hurt by being run over by his team which ran away and two wheels ran over him. Took lunch beside the Platte about a mile from the road. Stonnes passed by us for Fort Kearny. Camped beside the Platte River at the juncture of all the roads leading to the Mines on the south route. At least 100 teams camped near us. Got supper and made some

bread. Bought 3 quarts of milk tasted very good. Took my watch tonight until 12 o'clock. Road good, weather fine. 10 miles from Ft. K.

Thursday, May 17, 1860. Left our camp at 6:30 A. M. and arrived at Ft. Kearny at 9:30 A. M. Went to the P. O. and around the Fort. The Fort is only a collection of wood and mud buildings, had a good many brass cannon, 3 rgt. soldiers. Left the Fort at 10 A. M., drove to Kearny City and put our team out to grass. Mack has traded his pony off for a mule. Saw men gambling in front of store, one playing poker, the others 3 card monte. Stonnes at this place getting along well. Weather fine, roads good. Passed about 200 teams today. The road lined with teams. I saw a great many buffalo carcasses beside the road. Camped on the Platte at 5 P. M. Met about 50 Indians.

Friday, May 18, 1860. Left our camp at 6 o'clock. Cold this morning but got quite warm at 10 o'clock. Drove on to Plumb Creek Ranch and waited for the boys to come up. After they came we drove on about a mile and took our lunch in the afternoon to Willow Island Ranch and camped for the night beside the Platte River. Had pancakes for supper. Rode the mule some today. I saw a great many buffalo carcasses. Three buffalo crossed the road behind us today. Did not see them. Roads very good today. Drove 30 miles.

Saturday, May 19, 1860. Left our camp at Willow Island on Platte River at 6 o'clock. I took the mule and went back on to the bluffs to look for buffalo. Did not see any, but saw two antelope. Hills covered with trails. Drove on till 11 o'clock, stopped and fed the horses and took a lunch. The afternoon after we started was very windy and dusty. Passed a great many teams. Overtook Iv. Mann at 15 Mile Point. Had a good long talk with him. He camped with us on the Platte at 5 o'clock. Very windy and looks like rain and lightened very sharp and forked. Roads good. Drove 32 miles today.

Sunday, May 20, 1860. Was on watch last night until 12 o'clock. Had a very severe thunder storm. Never saw it rain so hard before. Drops as big as a teacup. Got up this morning at 6 A. M. and after breakfast went to work and made some bread. Made two nice loaves. Carter cooked some beans. After 10 went to work mending my pants. Put two patches on my knees. Played euchre this evening at Palmer's tent. Geo. Stonnes came over to see us tonight. Getting along well. Ed Saxe passed here today with two ladies and a boy. Iv. Mann camped with us. Dry and cool after the rain.

Monday, May 21, 1860. Left our camp at 15 Mile Point at 6

A. M. Beautiful cool morning. Drove on to Fox Ranch and took a drink with Iv. Mann. Passed the Cottonwood Spring, took another drink at McDonald Ranch. Registered our names on the logs, took lunch at 11:30 A. M. Left Iv. Mann at this point. Drove on to . . . Got in and rode with Wallace's team. Saw a lot of prairie dogs, gnats very bad this afternoon. Bit us all up, face covered with red pimples. Reached Fremont's Slough at 5 P. M. Camped with Palmer and Stonnes. Grass the best we have had on the route. Roads good. Passed about 100 teams.

Tuesday, May 22, 1860. Came on watch at 12 M. At 4 A. M. built fire and got breakfast. Left our camp at 7 o'clock. Morning cool and fine. Faces very much swelled from the bites of the gnats. Passed an Indian village with ten tents. Ed Saxe was at a blacksmith's shop getting an axle fixed. Took a lunch beside the road at 12 M. Wind came up, very disagreeable. Camped at 5 P. M. beside the Platte at a point on the cards near O'Fallon's Bluffs. Some men camped near the Bluffs lost all their horses last night from a stampede made by the Indians. Road very good some sand.

Wednesday, May 23, 1860. Left our camp at 7 A. M. Weather cool and looked like rain, but it soon cleared off and the sun came out, warm. Saw lots of prickly pears today and a village of prairie dogs. Stopped for dinner at 11 A. M. Got water out of a sulphur spring. Left our camp at 2 P. M. and drove on to our camp beside the Platte River, this afternoon. Very warm indeed. Got camped at 5 P. M. Made a loaf of bread tonight. My face very much swollen from the bites of gnats. Wallace & Co. driving Mack's mule, making a spike team. Took 200 lbs. of our flour on to their wagon.

Thursday, May 24, 1860. Left our camp at 6 A. M. Roads not very good—a good deal of sand. Stopped for dinner on the Platte. Whilst there a lot of Shian Indians came up on horses, prepared for war with the Pawnees. They had a great quantity of silver ornaments on them. They were armed with spears, swords, guns and bows and arrows. After dinner the wind came up and it was very dusty. Roads very sandy, mostly sand hills. Camped on the Platte  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile above a Shian Indian village. They had a great number of horses. Their tents are made of elk hides and are very nice. A great many of the squaws came to our tent. Went on watch until 12 M.

Friday, May 25, 1860. Left our camp at 6:30 A. M. Very windy and dusty. Roads very sandy. Met yesterday 20 teams returning from Pike's Peak. Camped on the Platte for lunch. Came through a great deal of alkali country for the last few days. Saw wild sage in great quantities today. Met 5 teams returning from the

Peak today. Report that it is not worth going out for gold. Took lunch beside the Platte, drove on this afternoon about 3 miles beyond the Lillian Springs and camped for the night. Made some hasty pudding for supper. Wind went down this evening, very pleasant.

Saturday, May 26, 1860. Left our camp beside the Platte at 5:30. Roads very sandy, no wind. Got quite warm at 10 o'clock. Stopped for dinner on the Platte at 11:30 just above Indian Village. Overtook Tom Slason here. Indians had plenty of horses. Mack taken quite sick. Stopped at Stage Station. I saw Kate that used to be at Fanny Millers. Saw Mann of . . . Station. Mack rode with Wallace Co. I drove the team, camped on the Platte just below Indian Village Sioux. Great many came to tents begging. Mack went to bed sick. My watch at 12 M. tonight. Warm this afternoon. Roads poor.

Sunday, May 27, 1860. Went off watch this morning at 4:30. Got breakfast; after that we started for a short drive. Roads were very good indeed until we came to Beaver Creek . . . Found it very hard crossing that stream. Passed about a mile beyond and camped on the Platte. After we got the tent up, went to making bread, made 4 loaves. Had a fuss with Tom Slason. He was going to whip me but did not undertake it. Wind blowed quite hard all day. Camped at 2 P. M. Met 7 teams returning from the Peak. Mack feeling better today. Had a game of pitch in our tent tonight.

Monday, May 28, 1860. Woke up this morning at 4 A. M. on hearing the cry that the tents were going to blow over. The wind was blowing a perfect gale mixed with a cold rain. Got breakfast and then hitched up for a start. Drove on pretty lively until 11 A. M. when the wind had increased to such violence that it was impossible for us to travel. The gravel was thrown on to us like snow, filling our eyes full. We drove down to a stage station to see if we could get a chance to stay, but could not. We stood in the barn about 3 hours. Iv Highfield went off to find camp with Wallace, leaving Carter to drive the mule. Carter soon went off on the mule. In about half an hour we started, the wind increasing and the gravel and sand blowing in our faces making it an impossibility for us to see. We drove about 3 miles, met Carter returning on the mule, saying he could not find Wallace & H. We then drove to the Bluffs on the Bijou Creek and camped. It commenced to rain and made it very disagreeable for us, as Wallace had all of the tent ropes and pins, but we took our tent and pitched it by covering the wall part with sand. We got some bologna and coffee for supper. Roads today sandy, the most disagreeable day we have had on the road. Got to camp at 3:30 P. M. feeling very

cold and wet. Went to bed at 6 o'clock feeling very tired, cold and wet.

Tuesday, May 29, 1860. Mack got us up at 3 o'clock. Wind had gone down and it looked quite pleasant. We got started at 5:30 A. M. Stonner and Slason went the old road. Palmer and Mack took the cut off. Did not see or hear anything from Wallace & Iv today. Overtook Ed Saxe again today and camped near him at noon, got to Bijou Creek at 10 A. M. watered and drove on to the well and watered our teams. Reached a sheep ranch at 5 o'clock and got some water and went about half a mile and camped for the night. Roads good, pretty good grass. Tonight 51 miles from Denver. Moses killed an antelope.

Wednesday, May 30, 1860. Left our camp at 7 A. M. and had fried antelope for breakfast, was first rate. Saw the Rocky Mountains plain for the last two days. Weather fine and roads good. Saw a good many dead cattle on the road, killed by alkali. Stopped by the side of the road at a spring and took our lunch. Left at 2 P. M. Saw a great lot of dogs all day and antelope. Got into camp at 6:30 P. M. Had an antelope potpie for supper at nine o'clock. Saw a jackass rabbit run past our tent. Ed Saxe camped below us. Kept no watch this night at all.

Thursday, May 31, 1860. Left our camp at 8:30 A. M. and started on our journey to Denver. The mountains looked beautiful this morning. Crossed the toll gate creek, did not pay. Gate within 8 miles of Denver. Drove on and came in sight of the town at 2 P. M. Entered the town at 2:30. Drove to our camp on the Platte and went up to the postoffice. Got a pack of papers, no letters. Saw John Fillmore, Sweet Harris, Colo. Bill. Wallace came in at 5 P. M. Went up town in the evening and saw the gamblers play. Bands of music, &c. Went down to the billiard saloon, saw Harris Day. Town rather dull. Roads good today.

Friday, June 1, 1860. Got up at 5:30 A. M. went to the post-office with Wallace. After breakfast hitched up and went 1½ miles down Cherry Creek and camped near Sweet Harris and Ostrandors with a hand car. I set down and wrote 22 pages of a letter to mother and John. Went down to the P. O. with it and got a letter from John dated May 3rd, forwarded from Omaha, postage 34 cents. Sweet & Co. started for the Gregory Mines at 3 P. M. Went up town with N. Ostrander in the evening to see the gamblers play. Watched the game until 10:30 o'clock, then went home, took dinner with Ostrander.

Saturday, June 2, 1860. Got up 7 A. M. and after breakfast hitched up our team and went up town and stored our traps in a warehouse. Then took on a few provisions from Wallace & Co., Polman & Co. Cole started with us to go to the Gregory diggings.

Got off at 3 P. M. and drove out to Arapahoe and camped for the night on Clear Creek. Wallace & Co. and Poland & Co. on horse back. Took a walk out to the village tonight, town deserted. Weather very pleasant, road good. Horses put off in the night but got them again.

Sunday, June 3, 1860. Got up at 9 A. M. ate breakfast, Carter took a pan and washed out a few scales by the side of Clear Creek. Went up to Arapahoe and saw them selling gold dust at \$16 per ounce. It was very fine and not very clean. Got started 1:30. Mann broke a whiffletree crossing a little ditch. Arrived at Golden City at 2:30. Found Mr. Chaney of Chicago keeping a hotel. Left Golden City at 3:30 P. M. and drove to Golden Gate. Here we entered the Rocky Mountains. Toll gate at the entrance. Road pretty tough. Drove about 6 miles into the mountains and camped after tea. Wallace Cole and myself took a walk up on one of these peaks, rode right up a ravine all the way.

Monday, June 4, 1860. Got off at 7:30 A. M. Palmer & Co. started off for the mines, leaving Wallace & Co. and Cole with Mack and myself. We found the roads very rough up and down the mountain. One hill we hitched on a rope and four of us got hold of it to let the wagon down. Scenery beautiful. Met a good many returning. Mack and I have had a row about the horses. Mack would not drive the team through to Mountain City but camped within 2 miles of the town. Carter who was ahead came back and Palmer and Co. and I continued. Rained a little tonight. Camped at 5 P. M. Report from the mines are good for crushers. Went down to Mountain City tonight. Coming back met a man who said there was a lion 300 yards ahead of us. Scart some.

Tuesday, June 5, 1860. Got up this morning after a very hard night's rest. Found it very cold, some snow fell. Started at 8 A. M. with Wallace to look at the mines. Went first to Gregory's water crusher. Then up the gulch, met Sweet and his company. Cole and ourselves started with Sweet to look things over. Went to the first steam crusher and then up to Missouri City, Spring Gulch, then to Russell Gulch. Saw Curly Hollister of Tomah who gave us some fried cakes and brandy. Went also with Harris to Leavenworth and California and other gulches. Went over the mountain to . . . Gulch in Eureka. . . . Got back to camp at 6:30 P. M. Very much fatigued. Cole started for Denver at 4 o'clock.

Wednesday, June 6, 1860. Got up this morning at 7 A. M. Found ice in our pails 1 inch thick. It was not very cold. After breakfast, Iv. Mack and John started out prospecting. Carter and Smith went down town, Wallace and myself staying at tent, cooking, &c. Sweet Harris, Kimball Filmore and Winchester passed here for Golden City. Wind commenced and quite warm. Four

men came in front of our tent and staked out some claims. We followed up the gulch and staked out claims for each one. They called it "Elkhorn." Wallace and myself dug on ours and found the color of gold. Great many passed both ways bound for the states blue. Iv had no luck prospecting. Played a game of pitch beside our fire.

Thursday, June 7, 1860. Got up at 7 A. M. and after breakfast packed our traps for a start back to Denver. Got started at 10:20 A. M. Mack driving the two mules. We stopped for dinner in the mountains about 12 miles from Gregory. Started at 2 o'clock and at 6 o'clock passed through Golden Gate, at 6:30 passed through Golden City and down on to Arapahoe for camp. Expected to see Sweet, did not. Met Dan Cleghorn at Arapahoe down looking after his crusher. Camped at 8:30 P. M. at the same place we camped on Clear Creek on Saturday last. Got to bed at 11 P. M.

Friday, June 8, 1860. Sweet came to our camp this morning before we were up, having rode from Denver. Said that he had got me a place in Hinckly (?) & Co.'s express office. We left our camp at 9 A. M. and arrived at Denver at 11. Went to warehouse to see about goods. Hunted up Cole, did not find him until after dinner. Took dinner at City Bakery. After dinner went to express office and went to work copying off order for letters. Saw Cole's rig which he bought after tea. Went up to Mack's camp and stayed all night, Wallace & Co. going back to Gregory's Mines on Cleghorn's lead.

Saturday, June 9, 1860. Got up at 7:30 A. M. and walked into town, got a cup of coffee and went to work at copying. Sweet came in to see me. Received a letter from John dated May 28. Went to dinner with Sweet at the City Bakery. About 3 P. M. went over to the warehouse and changed my clothes. Had not much to do in the afternoon. Went in to the postoffice and sorted out papers for H. & Co.'s express. Took tea at the Bakery. Went over the river with Filmore to see Baugh. Wrote a letter in the office this evening. Went and slept with Filmore at the Kansas House. Slept on the floor.

Sunday, June 10, 1860. Took breakfast at the Kansas House after breakfast went down to the office and commenced to write to John. Wrote him 32 pages. Postage &c 49 cents. Went down to Sampson's tent. I also saw Brown from Clinton, Wisconsin. Settled with McNeal, paid him \$5.00 for my passage up to Mountain City and back. In the evening took a walk with Charles TenEyck and Alf. Gillis. Went to Gillis's camp or farm house to sleep. Found a young fellow from M. M. . . . and had a good long talk with him on things in general.

Monday, June 11, 1860. Went to the office as usual and com-

menced taking off list of orders. In the afternoon C. M. Rous came in from Fairplay Diggings. Reported the diggings good. Worked in the office getting out letters for the Mountain Weather firm. Slept with John Filmore at Kansas House. Received some packages of papers from John. No letters. Kit Carson in town. Wishes to get 100 men to go over to the western slope. A great many Indians in town. McNeal left for the Blue and Arkansas with the Winn boys from Portage.

Tuesday, June 12, 1860. Went to work in the office getting out letters. Spaid & Son of Chicago came in to the office today, also Wood and Straub of Madison. Straub gone to Mountain City. Had his wife with him. Very busy all day with the letters. Weather fine. Giles out buying mules. G. going to Tarryall also West. Tilton takes West run to M. C. Worked in office until 11 o'clock. Slept with Chas. TenEyck up over the office. Good bed, antelope skin and buffalo robes. Went and saw Geo. Brown of B. . . .

Wednesday, June 13, 1860. Went to work as usual on the letters. John Filmore of M. . . . came to work with me. A man was brought in town who was murdered by his partner some 8 miles from town; killed him with an ax. They were from Leavenworth. Trouble about camping. Had a fine rain this afternoon mixed with hail. Extra coach in. Felt very tired tonight. After tea went down to work in the office. A man was stabbed by another in front of the office. A good deal of excitement about it. Parties, Germans, quarreled about a pipe; wound not mortal but bad. Slept with Chas. TenEyck.

Thursday, June 14, 1860. Got up this morning at 5:30 A. M. Found it a beautiful cool morning after the rain. The man that murdered the other had his trial today. They sentenced him to be hung tomorrow between the hours of 2 and 5 P. M. Saw Kit Carson in the office today. He is a young looking, short, thick set man with a red moustache, 50 years old. Saw Elmore of Milwaukee today. Had a fall of hail this afternoon. Very busy all day getting out letters. At night made up the express for the mountains. Had quite a run. Slept up stairs with Charley.

Friday, June 15, 1860. After breakfast went at my usual round of picking out letters, but Hinckly soon set Charley and myself to work copying on to the list. Quite warm this forenoon. About 3 o'clock went down to see the "German" hung. The gallows was erected a short distance below the Kansas House. There was a great crowd and a good many ladies present. He was very cool to the last moment. Had a prayer and his confession read. Did not make a struggle after he dropped. Everything about the hanging went off quiet. Took a walk after tea.

## The Scene of Fremont's Disaster in the San Juan Mountains, 1848

Frank C. Spencer.\*

It was eighty years ago last winter that one of the most appalling tragedies in the history of exploration in Colorado occurred. Captain John C. Fremont, "the Pathfinder," after having assured the conquest of California by the Americans, had returned to the States filled with enthusiasm by the prospect of a great future for the Pacific West and the world trade which might be assured by the construction of a transcontinental railway and a line of steamers to the Orient.

This enthusiasm was shared by his father-in-law, the great Thomas H. Benton, Senator from Missouri, who tried in vain to make his colleagues in Congress see the wonderful advantage such a railway to the Pacific connected to a line of steamers to China, Japan, and India would give to the United States. He alone could see that such a route would bring the riches of those countries thousands of miles nearer than the routes by way of the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal or around Cape Horn.

His dramatic declaration as he pointed to the West, "There lies India, there lie the riches of the Orient," stirred many to realize the importance of such an undertaking; but the financial interests of that time were timid and short sighted. They said the time was not ripe for such a gigantic enterprise. The prospect of a thousand miles of railroad through a trackless wilderness to a few feeble settlements along the Pacific Coast did not appeal to them. They were wholly incapable of catching the larger vision of the Orient.

Nevertheless a few enterprising citizens of St. Louis were so certain of the final success of the enterprise that they were willing to join hands with Fremont and Senator Benton in financing a survey of a route along the 38th parallel of latitude. Such a route they thought might avoid the rigors of a line farther to the north.

It was a well equipped expedition which left St. Louis in that fall of 1848. In addition to the usual instrument men and laborers there were expert geographers, geologists, botanists and artists. It was late in getting started; too late to make the venture at all a safe one. Bent's Fort, the last outpost of civilization, was not reached until the fifteenth of November. An unusually severe winter was

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already setting in. All the trappers, guides and Indians gathered about the post warned Fremont not to attempt to cross the continental divide in such a season. But nothing could dissuade this intrepid explorer, for it was his purpose to see the route at its worst—a railroad must be operated in winter as well as in summer. Then also, he had accomplished the impossible in his former explorations in spite of the warnings of frontiersmen; and thus emboldened he pressed on.

He had hoped to meet and engage his former guide and trusted friend Kit Carson at this fort, but Kit was on a sick bed at his home in Taos, New Mexico, and so could not join the party as he had planned. This was a deplorable misfortune, for no one knew the trails of the western wilderness as did he; others had traveled the ways but none were so observant as this remarkable scout. Instead of Carson, Fremont employed "Parson Bill" Williams, who was generally considered reliable as a guide and especially valuable as an Indian interpreter. Like most of the trappers of his day, Williams spent the pleasanter part of the year hunting and trapping, while the severe winters were passed about the trading posts. This left them unacquainted with the mountains in their winter aspect.

With this guide Fremont now hurried on into the forbidding mountains. He had thirty-three men with one hundred twenty pack and riding mules. For the animals he had secured at Bent's Fort an extra supply of grain, so he felt confident of success. Ascending the Huerfano, he crossed the rugged Sangre de Cristo by way of Robidoux Pass, then following the north bank of the Rio Grande Del Norte through the San Luis Valley he came to the canyon where the river emerges from the San Juan range. He had written from Bent's Fort that he expected to follow this river to its headwaters.

It is this letter which seems to have deceived most writers concerning the stream which he actually ascended to the inaccessible San Juan range. It is very probable that the guide, Williams, knew that the pass at the headwaters of the Del Norte was not only impassable during such a winter, but would not lead him to any stream he might follow to the desired goal, and so dissuaded Fremont from attempting this route.

It is quite evident he had changed his mind regarding the ascending of the Del Norte, for he writes: "We found ourselves at the north of the Del Norte Canyon, where that river issues from the St. John's Mountain, one of the highest, most rugged and impracticable of all the Rocky mountain ranges, inaccessible to trappers and hunters even in the summer time. Across the point of this elevated range our guide conducted us and having still great

confidence in his knowledge, we pressed onwards with fatal resolution."<sup>21</sup>

It seems reasonable to believe that "Parson Bill" intended to ascend the Saguache to the Cochetopa Pass, which was known to the early Spanish and American traders, but alas! for fleeting human knowledge; he could not locate that stream when all the mountains were covered with a blanket of snow.

The canyon to the north of the Del Norte is the La Garita and up this stream the party seems to have struggled to disaster.<sup>2</sup> Let the Pathfinder tell of this in his own words. "We pressed up towards the summit, the snow deepening; and in four or five days reached the naked ridges which lie above the timbered country, and which form the dividing grounds between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. . . . Meanwhile, it snowed steadily. The next day we made mauls and beating a road or trench through the snow crossed the crest in defiance of the *pouderie* and encamped immediately below in the edge of the timber. The trail showed as if a defeated party had passed by; packsaddles and packs, scattered articles of clothing, and dead mules strewed along. A continuance of stormy weather paralyzed all movement. We were encamped somewhere about 12,000 feet above the sea. Westward, the country was buried in deep snow. It was impossible to advance, and to turn back was equally impracticable. . . .

"I determined to recross the mountain more towards the open country, and to haul or pack the baggage (by men) down to the Del Norte. With great labor the baggage was transported across the crest to the head springs of a little stream leading to the main river. A few days were sufficient to destroy our fine band of mules. . . . I determined to send in a party to the Spanish settlements of New Mexico for provisions. . . . In the meantime, we were to occupy ourselves in removing the baggage and equipment down to the Del Norte, which we reached with our baggage in a few days after their departure (which was the day after Christmas)."<sup>23</sup>

It was certainly one of the most desperate situations one can imagine. Death in its most terrible form stared the little band in

<sup>21</sup>Letter of Fremont to his wife, dated at Taos, New Mexico, January 27, 1849. This is printed in John Bigelow, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Fremont*, 365-373.

<sup>22</sup>Thomas E. Breckenridge, a member of the expedition, describes his terrible experiences in the *Cosmopolitan* of August, 1896. After advancing some distance up the Rio Grande, Fremont again talked with Williams, says Breckenridge, "and Williams advised returning to the Saguache, or south to New Mexico; but Colonel Fremont evidently thought he could make a short cut over La Garita Mountains and accomplish the same thing, for we turned north, left the Rio Grande, and began to ascend the mountains, following a little stream which I think is now called Embargo Creek." Either this route or one up La Garita Creek would have brought the party to approximately the same point in the mountains.—Ed.

<sup>23</sup>Bigelow, *op. cit.*, 367-9.

the face. A few more days passed and no word having been received from the party, Fremont himself determined to head a small party in an attempt to make his way to Taos if succor was not sooner found.

Somewhere in the San Luis Valley he came across a band of Ute Indians and secured from them enough wretched ponies to mount himself and companions. With these he hurried toward Taos. A short time afterward he came across the first party sent out. One man had already died and the other three were in the last stages of despair. From a village located in the southern part of the valley he received his first aid, which enabled him to reach the home of his friend Carson, who immediately organized a rescue party to search for the survivors. These were found in straggling parties scattered over the great valley in a deplorable condition, half starved, badly frozen, and some in a partly demented condition. In all, twenty-two were finally gathered together at the historic old Mexican town; one-third of the party had perished miserably. Such is the story of the disaster graphically told by Fremont himself.

It has seemed strange to the writer that eighty years have been allowed to pass and yet the scenes of this remarkable tragedy remain wrapped in mystery or error. Writers taking their cue from the letter dispatched from Bent's Fort by Fremont continue to assert that he followed the Del Norte to its source; notwithstanding his later record stating that he was "at the north of the Del Norte Canon." It was to clear up these errors and if possible to locate definitely the scenes of this remarkable catastrophe that an exploration of the region was attempted late in August of last year.

Since the camps were, as Fremont states, in the most inaccessible part of the San Juan Mountains, some hardships were to be expected. The party was made up of the guide, Albert Pfeiffer, son of the famous Colonel Pfeiffer, friend and companion of Kit Carson; the Forest Ranger; and the writer. Saddle horses, pack animals and supplies for a three day trip were needed since there are no wagon roads which can be traveled to this day.

Fortunately, the camp made beyond the high naked ridge was easily located. It lies at the head of Wannamaker creek, a branch of the Saguache, and tallies closely with the description in Fremont's narrative. Here was the stream flowing to the westward, here was the little grove of trees, and here were found stumps which had been cut as much as eighteen feet from the ground, showing that the place had been occupied when the drifts of snow were very deep. Near this camp bones of mules were found and in the grove a Forest officer had found a soldier's belt buckle, together

with a mule's foot shod with an ox shoe. The elevation was as stated by Fremont, about 12,000 feet. On the right ridge back of this camp near a large rock slide the Forest men had made a gruesome monument by piling the mule bones in a heap.

The second camp lies on the east side of the ridge in a clump of timber bordering on the head springs of Embargo Creek, the "little stream leading to the main river," noted by the explorer. It is but a few hundred yards from this camp to the north, to the headwaters of La Garita Creek, up which the party had made its



ALBERT PFEIFFER ON THE SITE OF FREMONT'S CAMP AT THE HEADWATERS OF WANNAMAKER CREEK

The two dead trees at the right were evidently topped when the snow was about 18 feet deep.

perilous way. Both are on the east slope of Mesa Mountain, which Fremont believed to be a part of the Continental Divide, and indeed this ridge is higher than the Divide, which is some five miles to the westward.

It was at this camp that our guide had the previous summer found roughly hewn sledges such as Fremont's men had used to drag their supplies and equipment back over the ridge when mules were no longer available. The time remaining did not permit searching for further evidence, but enough had been found to make practically certain that we were following the trail of the ill-fated expedition.

It would be fitting if the State of Colorado would erect

markers at these places; for if a series of misfortunes had not followed in the wake of this journey, the history of Colorado would have read very differently and the roar of the Iron Horse would have been heard in the State almost a score of years before it actually sounded.

Fremont's expedition of 1848 was a daring attempt of a daring and remarkable man who deserves better of his country than he received.

## The Hayden Survey in Colorado in 1873 and 1874

Letters from James T. Gardiner,  
with notes by Roger W. Toll.\*

During the period from 1870 to 1880 there were three important surveys conducted in Colorado. These are commonly known as the Hayden, the Wheeler and the Clarence King surveys. Their importance was far reaching, since they not only furnished the first reliable and accurate maps of the state, but also made available much information regarding the natural resources of the state and its mineral deposits.

Of these three, the Hayden survey was the most important to Colorado in several respects. It covered a larger area of the state than did the other surveys; the atlas that was published shows contours, which most of the Wheeler maps did not, and therefore gives a clearer and more accurate presentation of the topography. In several portions of the state which have not been resurveyed by the U. S. Geological Survey, the Hayden atlas, although more than fifty years old, is still the best and in some cases almost the only source of topographic information.

The Hayden Survey, officially known as the United States Geological and Geographic Survey of the Territories, extended over a number of years and covered a large area in several states. In 1867 Dr. Hayden worked in eastern Nebraska; in 1868 the survey was extended into Wyoming; in 1869 a geological reconnaissance was made along the eastern portion of the Rocky Mountains, from Cheyenne to Santa Fe; in 1870 and 1871 much valuable work was done in Wyoming and in 1872 the field included portions of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. Dr. Hayden says: "During the summer of 1873, the geographical, as well as the geological, corps was more complete and better prepared for its duties than at any previous period. The Territory of Colorado was assigned to

\*Mr. Toll, former Superintendent of the Rocky Mountain National Park, is now Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park. An enthusiast for the out-of-doors, he has also interested himself in the scientific explorations of others. The letters he presents here exhibit the activity of the men of the Hayden survey.  
—Ed.

it as the field of its labors." In 1874, 1875 and 1876 the work in Colorado was continued.

The results of the Hayden surveys are published in several volumes of government reports, and include articles by Dr. Hayden and many of his assistants. Much of this material is technical and scientific. The personal experiences and adventures of the members of the parties are largely forgotten or omitted from the printed records. The following letters from James T. Gardiner, one of Hayden's principal assistants, are here published for the first time and throw interesting side-lights on the work that was done by this party in Colorado in 1873 and 1874.

These letters were obtained at the suggestion of Mr. Francis P. Farquhar of San Francisco, from Mrs. Margaret D. Fayerweather of New Lebanon, New York. Mrs. Fayerweather is the daughter of James T. Gardiner, and has kindly given permission for the use of these letters.

With reference to the two ways in which Gardiner spelled his name, Mrs. Fayerweather says: "The name was originally Gardiner. My great-grandfather dropped the 'i' for no known reason, and his son, Daniel, and the latter's sons, Eugene and James, used the form without the 'i.' When my father married my mother, who was his second wife, she made him put back the 'i' into his name, and I have an amusing letter from Clarence King's mother, Mrs. Howland, congratulating him on having regained the use of his 'i.'" Mrs. Fayerweather prefers the spelling that Gardiner used throughout his later life, and that appears on his gravestone, although in 1873 and 1874 he was using the shorter form.

### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

#### OF JAMES TERRY GARDINER TO HIS MOTHER

(Denver, March 18, 1873)

Here I am with all my party, as nice a set of fellows as one could wish, and Mr. Stevenson our quartermaster has gotten everything in readiness so that I have very little bother.

I am agreeably surprised to find that there is no snow here, though the season is very backward. We shall not be able to enter the mountains for two weeks.

(Denver, June 1, 1873)

My work thus far has been most successful. Mr. Stevenson and his assistant Mr. Adams are very efficient men in carrying out any plans for equipping the parties, so that the labor has been comparatively light in that department. The whole corps is admirable material, harmonious and spirited. Three of the prin-

cial parties are already in the field. Our photographic party are getting a fine set of views of this front of the Rocky Mountains which sweeps right up ten thousand feet above the plains; first bare, then forest covered, then sheeted with glittering snow. I have been using a buggy and span of horses. I have had to drive about 250 miles in the past ten days. I could not have stood so much work in the saddle at the opening of a campaign. Drove in last night from the camp to dine with the governor of the territory and go to church today. I value church out here far more than in the east. The contrast with the rough materialistic life of the camp is delightful. I come in and take off my old buckskins and flannel, and put on a boiled garment (white shirt) and store clothes and feel like myself. If I could only have a little look at you and the baby I should be well contented.

(Camp in the Sierra Madre, 10 miles west of Twin Lakes,  
July 27, 1873.)

We are in the full tide of successful career, camping almost every night at 11,000 or 12,000 feet above the sea and climbing peaks 14,000 feet and over, their tops overlooking crested ridges and grand rock walled amphitheaters where the old glaciers were born.

I cannot tell you how I am enjoying this wonderful region. Our assistants are all doing admirably and there is no longer any question that we are going to have a grand success. I am gloriously well and strong, able to lead in every enterprise. I shall have the finest maps that have yet been produced outside of the Coast Survey work in this country. I am going to beat my old work all out of sight. I fear my letters smack too much of the energy of campaign but I am concentrating every faculty to produce a great success, so you must excuse it.

Yours of the 12th and 16th have just reached me by incoming courier. For the moment I lost all consciousness of the roaring torrent, the grey walls and overhanging forests of the canon, and sit by you and Miss Eaton on the piazza and watch the children play. What a sweet sight and how wonderfully contrasted with the terrible grandeur around me here where life is represented by the grim bears crawling along the edges of perpetual snow fields or the mountain sheep scaling the shattered crags. One thing appeals to my heart in these tremendous climbs—above all trees, above all grass, among the wildest rocks where disintegrated granite gives a foothold, close to the ground grows a little blue flower of deep blue cobalt like the clearest zenith sky. It is a true forget-me-not; and there is something in the purity and force of the color

that seems to enter the depth of the heart and waken every tender remembrance.

(Camp on Eagle River, Aug. 25, 1873.)

We have just made a tremendous climb to the top of the grandest peaks in the Rocky Mountains, about 13,000 feet high and 6,000 above the surrounding country. We could not get our animals within many miles on account of fallen timber and the trip had to be made on foot packing the great 50-pound theodolite, while three men carried the photographic apparatus weighing 100 lbs. Expecting to reach the peak and return in one day we only carried a little lunch, two slices of bread apiece. This was all we had to eat for two days of tremendous climbing, while at night we lay on the mountainside without shelter or covering. We succeeded in getting splendid observations and photographs. One large photograph, 12x14 inches, shows the peak culminating in a dark precipice 3,000 feet high on which rests the great White Cross, 1,500 feet long, as perfect in form as you can imagine. Dr. Hayden worked like a hero. At the end of the second day a relief party met us at the foot of the mountain. A U. S. Engineer party has been exploring here but they failed to reach this great culminating peak on account of the difficulties. We are undoubtedly the first who ever reached this peak. I do not feel in the least over-fatigued. Am very well and strong.

We are just sending out to post office but it will be two weeks before I can send again.

I am just going through the beautiful Middle Park.

(Middle Park, Sept. 3, 1873.)

I am swinging around to Longs Peak on the east front of the Rocky Mountains, from which there is one of the grandest views in the country. We are all well in spite of low diet. It will be a week before we reach settlements and get supplies.

(Middle Boulder, Sept. 10, 1873.)

In spite of hard marching and unceasing work, I am behind time. I cannot see my way east till November first though I shall march and climb with all my might.

Saturday we make the ascent of Longs Peak. Anna Dickinson goes up with us. She spent part of yesterday at our camp. She has pledged herself as an advocate of our cause, and she is no mean power to enlist. Dr. Hayden seems to make friends everywhere and I do not wonder, for he is full of good feeling when his belligerent power is not aroused. Every day of good work that we do

gives me fuller confidence in our success next winter. The sympathy of the people seems to be with us.<sup>1</sup>

When I leave here I shall go right to Washington and make arrangements for board. It is not safe to go there before November.

Should my health hold out I will control American geographical work in three years, and make a name that will not be forgotten.

(Denver, Sept. 20, 1873.)

Here we are back in civilization again after nearly three months absence—a long time to be away from towns. My hair has not been cut since April and it hung in long waving locks down to my shoulders, while my tawny beard touched the breast. In buckskin from head to foot, with a ragged edged picturesque slouched hat, I looked very different from the office man of the east. It was almost a disguise to one who only knows me in civilization; but Miss Dickinson had only seen me by the camp fire and on the cliffs and when I took tea with her last night, close cropped, white shirted and clad in Widenfeld's best cut, she bemoaned my changed appearance, especially the loss of what she was pleased

<sup>1</sup>Anna E. Dickinson, in *A Ragged Register*, published by Harper & Brothers, New York, 1879, pages 268-271, refers to her climb of Longs Peak with the Hayden party. The date of the climb seems to be fixed by Gardiner's letter as September 13, 1873, though it has been incorrectly given in print as 1870 or 1871. Miss Dickinson was one of the first, and possibly the first woman to climb Longs Peak.

The following portion of Miss Dickinson's description is of interest in this connection:

"That would have been our last climb (Grays Peak) for the summer had we not been taken in hand by the Hayden party, thereby gaining the experience and memory of Longs Peak, and the companionship through a few days of men who ought to be immortal if superhuman perseverance and courage are guarantees of immortality.

"What a pair of heads had that party! Hayden, tall, slender, with soft brown hair and blue eyes—certainly not traveling on his muscle; all nervous intensity and feeling, a perfect enthusiast in his work, eager of face and voice, full of magnetism. Gardner, shorter, stouter, with amber eyes and hair like gold, less quick and tense, yet made of the stuff that *takes* and holds on.

"I remember that after supper when we were camping at timber line, Gardner took one of his instruments and trotted up the side of the mountain to make some observations. He *expected* to be gone half an hour, and *was* gone, by reason of the clouds, nearer three hours, 'but,' as he quietly said when he came back, speaking of the clouds, 'I conquered them at last.'

"I looked at him, and at all the little party, with ardent curiosity and admiration, braving rain, snow, sleet, hail, hunger, thirst, exposure, bitter nights, snowy climbs, dangers of death—sometimes a score on a single mountain—for the sake not of a so-called great cause, nor in hot blood, but with patience and unwearied energy for an abstract science—no more, since the majority cannot work even for fame.

"We sat around the great fire that was kept heaped with the whole trunks of dead trees and watched the splendors of sun-setting till they were all gone, and these vanished, still sat on by the blazing fire circled by the solemn stately majesties, talking of many things—strange stories of adventure in mountain and gorge, climbs through which a score of times life had been suspended simply on strength of fingers, or nice poise on a hand-ledge thrust out into eternity, wild tales of frontier struggles—intricacies of science, discussions of human life and experience in crowded cities, devotion and enthusiasm as shown in any cause—all things, in fact, that touch the brain and soul, the heart and life, of mortals who really live, and do not merely exist.

"A talk worth climbing that height to have and to hold."

to call my beautiful golden hair. It reminded me of the old child days when you thought so much of these yellow locks. Before being shorn of my glory and stripped of buckskin I had my photograph taken with the little rifle over my shoulder that has so often supplied us with meat this summer.

The day after my hungry letter left the Middle Park I shot, on the face of a precipice, two mountain sheep. It was Parkview



JAMES T. GARDINER

Photograph taken at Denver in September, 1873, after five months spent with the Hayden Survey in Colorado.

Peak, 12,000 feet high. I looked from the top over an abrupt edge and saw the wild creatures jumping from rock to rock on the cliff. At a slight noise from me they stopped, looked up, and with two quick shots I sent two of them tumbling a thousand feet down. It

was the most delicious meat we have had. You have no idea what attachment one gets for a gun that supplies much needed food.

I am off for Pikes Peak Monday A. M. and shall be near town for the rest of the season.

(Undated letter probably from Washington, D. C.)

Yesterday we got our money from the Deficiency Bill.

We had a tremendous struggle with the Engineers on the very last night of the session. They did not want Congress to put in the Bill that our money should be spent in Colorado and they succeeded in having it taken out; but we rallied all our friends and forced it back into the Bill. So that the law now not only gives us the money, but the ground which we wish to survey. The Secretary of War was up at the Capitol lobbying against us but we beat him completely. It was a great triumph and if Wheeler goes onto our ground now, he goes against the express law of Congress. There were technical difficulties in the way of consolidating with Powell this year. So the matter rests.

(Washington, June 3, 1874.)

We have had a grand triumph today. Yesterday it was discovered that the Appropriation Committee were going to cut down our appropriation in a way that would have crippled us very badly. We all went to work on all the friends we could rally and today succeeded in carrying through the Committee the full amount that we asked for. This was a great triumph, when everybody else is being cut down. Mr. Wheeler stood by us nobly. Our success was mainly due to his exertions, because he was in the best position to help and had our cause at heart. Monroe too did us good service. If I had been away we should probably have lost \$20,000. I dare not leave here till I see the bill safely in its passage. It provides for the consolidation of Powell's Survey with ours, and I am now drawing the plans of consolidation for the Secretary of Interior. It is a vitally critical time for I am laying now the foundations for a great permanent Survey of the interior of America which will last many years after I am dead.

(Manitou, Aug. 11, 1874.)

From Denver down to Colorado Springs I had one of the most delightful rides of my life. The road lies along the foot of the mountains through a region of green slopes and wooded knolls with pleasant looking houses presiding over well cultivated farms and dairy ranches. It was delightful to be again in this fine invigorating air, riding along on my little gray mule, refreshing the eyes with beauty and thinking only of what the eyes dictate, and then

lying down at night to feel the full force of restoring sleep, which one can never do under a roof. Every afternoon we have showers that cool the air and keep the grass green.

I have one very good assistant and companion, Professor Atkinson of Hiram College, Ohio. He is a faithful and religious man. He has the consumption and evidently sought the place for his health. I shall look with interest to see the effect of such exposure on one in his condition. My other companion is more congenial and effective—Mr. Adams—a highly cultivated Philadelphia fellow who practices law during most of the year, but being of consumptive tendencies he has spent the last four summers with Dr. Hayden's parties as assistant quartermaster. He is wealthy and from the top of society but brave, energetic and a good manager of pack trains. So I am relieved of much responsibility. My head packer, too, has been with me many years and knows all my wants without telling. One of the most difficult places to fill is always that of cook. I was fortunate in getting a Frenchman who had kept a good restaurant, had been burned out and lost everything and was very glad to get a new start by going out with me at \$65 per month.

For the past few days I have been having a rough time on Pikes Peak. Spent two days and a night upon this lofty summit, 14,146 feet.<sup>2</sup> It snowed and blew bitterly cold but there were hours of wonderful clearness when I saw points 150 miles off. There are three observers stationed on the summit since last October; two of them were supposed to have the consumption a few years ago in the east. Both are well and strong and have taken no colds though exposed to cold and storms all through the winter.

Directly under Pikes Peak and seven thousand feet below it, lies Manitou, in a most picturesque canon. Here are the famous mineral springs which have already made it a place of resort for hundreds of people. Within the last two years six hotels have been built and some beautiful private residences. I am staying tonight in the most beautiful of all, a little ideal home of a wealthy and refined English gentleman, Dr. Bell.

(Kerber Creek, San Luis Valley, Sunday, Aug. 24, 1874.)

I am thoroughly enjoying the repose of the day after a hard ride and climb yesterday. I rode a trotting mule twenty miles to a mountain and up it as far as mules could go, to the edge of snow, then climbed the rocky peak itself, 2,000 feet in an hour, and on its summit, 14,000 feet high, built a large stone monument. It was four o'clock when we finished work; but we climbed down again to our mules and rode twenty miles back again to camp by

<sup>2</sup>The accepted elevation of Pikes Peak is now 14,110 feet.

10 o'clock in the evening. Am I the same man that left Washington a month since with hardly life enough to pack up? It does not seem possible. Partly it is good living. I have a French cook who does admirably and we are near a ranch where peas and beets, carrots and new potatoes, milk and butter are always to be had. Our cook too is a great sportsman and the country abounds in rabbits. From the old ones he make delicious soup and the young broil like chickens.

I shall have my main camp in this beautiful valley for nearly three weeks and make short excursions of a day or two into the surrounding mountains. The ranch by which we are camped is also a post office. It seems almost like Switzerland where one can enjoy the hardships of mountain climbing and the comforts of civilization side by side. The work here is going to take so long that I can only make a short two weeks' trip into the unsettled country west.

(Saguache, Sept. 17, 1874.)

I have at last finished my work about this settled region and for a month shall strike into the great forests to the west; but even then some letters will reach me for a mail goes once a week to the Indian Agency and an Indian runner will follow me with your welcome weekly epistle. I have received all to date.

Think of my climbing seven great peaks in nine days. Three of these ascents were over 14,000 feet. For these climbs we rise between three and four in the morning and breakfast by candle light, sitting on the ground in the frosty air with a few coals under our tin plates and cups to keep our food and drink from freezing, for the peaks are already dusted with new snow and the frosts are hard. This does not seem like comfort to eat in the dark wrapped in a great overcoat, but I assure you that with such appetites as we have and such good cooking, I enjoy myself more than at many a meal that had all the surroundings of luxury. My party are so faithful and capable and with all so good natured and harmonious that it is very pleasant to sit at the table with them. I never was so good natured myself, either.

(Cochetopa Creek, Sept. 26, 1874.)

I have just returned from a severe battle with the snow, but also from a success. We reached our high peak and climbed it though a foot of new snow had just fallen. I do not take my main train and party on these difficult raids into the upper regions, but with one trusty man, Kelsey, and with our instruments and baggage on one mule I penetrate the most inaccessible mountains making our little bivouacs up above the snow line among the last pines

that cling to the rocks. When animals can go no further we pack our heavy loads of instruments on our backs. On this last trip we made our little camp just between two great peaks whose slopes of snow and jutting precipices shining in the moonlight I shall never forget. Rolled in my buffalo robe nestled under two towering dark spires of spruce, the last thing I saw at night was the beautiful silvery ridge with the brightly flashing stars going down behind it, one after another.

Our breakfast we get by moonlight in the morning so as to climb over the snow before the sun softens it.

The cold on the summits is very great, but I do not seem to take any cold. On this climb I wore four heavy shirts and a thick buckskin coat. The snow blew so that I had to wear spectacles to protect the eyes while observing, and also in the ascent they are a great help from the glare of the sun on the new snow. Yesterday we were almost frozen on the peak and today I have been riding in my shirtsleeves through the forest twenty miles back from our climbing camp to the main camp where a delicious dinner of game soup, trout, macaroni, etc., awaited us.

Sept. 28th. Have made another climb. The weather is glorious. My observations are far better than in summer. All say that we are likely to have a month now without a storm. By the 20th of October I shall be out in the San Luis Valley again marching toward Denver.

(Lapato, Oct. 17, 1874.)

We are waiting here for a storm to pass. The grand Sierra Blanca rises above us in the clouds. It is the last great 14,000 foot peak that I have to ascend this year. Though already white with snow there is not too much to baffle me. When, however, the dark clouds lift, a smooth white mantle may be left that will forbid all climbing this season.

I camped on this stream whose name is at the head of the letter and went to the ranch nearby to talk with the owner about the country. In this lonely spot I find a cultivated New York gentleman, Mr. West, devoting himself to cattle raising. Most of his neighbors are Mexicans, very ignorant and poor. This morning I breakfasted with a Mexican to see how they lived.

(Denver, Oct. 29, 1874.)

I am just in and shall in a few days be ready to start east. All of the parties have been very successful and Dr. Hayden seems to feel very happy over the summer's results.

The last night in camp we had a bitterly cold hurricane. My tent had become weak and tore away in the night, leaving me on

the open plain. I got up in my shirt and drawers, rolled the blankets and packed them on my back to a log stable near by and found shelter. It was very breezy work to be trotting around in my night clothes on the prairie but I took no cold. The exposure that one can endure here is remarkable.

(Chicago, Nov. 9, 1874.)

I have just spent a very pleasant Sunday with Mrs. and Mr. Farwell at their beautiful home. Lake Forrest is indeed a lovely spot. The ground rolling and cut with picturesque ravines is well wooded and overlooks the lake with a bluff shore a hundred feet high. Sixteen years ago this spot was selected for a residential town by some enterprising man who called Mr. Fred Olmsted to lay it out. He made one straight avenue by the lake, but all the rest of the streets are curved for landscape effect and so planned as to bring out the best capabilities of the surface for building. We should call it a park rather than a town, in the east, and yet it is a town if we may judge from the hundred and fifty votes.

I leave tonight for Oberlin to spend a day with the Monroes, and then come on to New York where I can spend a day before going to Washington.