HISTORICAL NOTES ABOUT "MEEKER TREE"

Some time ago we published an article written by Mrs. E.D. Stewart (now Mrs. Meeker) regarding a stone wall being placed around the "Meeker Tree," which is located on the McQueary place south of Mesa. Editor James L. Rand, of Meeker, Colorado, wanted some further information about the tree and wrote to the Editor. His letter was referred to Mrs. E.D. Stewart, and following is her history about the tree:

Editor James L. Riland
Meeker, Colorado

...sent the enclosed letter to me to answer, as I was the one who put the item in his paper regarding the "Meeker Tree." It is a large cedar or juniper tree under which Mrs. Meeker and daughter were hiding when the U. S. Soldiers came up with the Indians, who killed Meeker and took Mrs. Meeker and daughter prisoners, and started with them. Chief Ouray, and wife Chipeta, who lived near the tree, had come here and met the Indians after learning of the murder, and persuaded them to give up the women, without bloodshed.

As a member of the Garfield Chapter D. A. R. of Grand Junction, I was appointed to see the preservation of this tree, and hence the whole story. If I can serve you further let me know.

Respectfully,

Mrs. E.D. Stewart
Mr. W.O. Ball
Meeker, Colorado

Dear Sir:

I am afraid that I wrote something of the early history of Rangely too hurriedly. I'm afraid, from what I said about the Indians, that one might think them dishonest people. I would not do them such an injustice, for anything. They are the most honest people that I know.

I spoke of Mr. Hill finding an Indian in the act of robbery. This was done, not to steal goods, but to cause Mr. Hill to do something, that would give them an excuse so they could tell him to leave.

The Whites were beginning to come into Rangely, and it is plain that the Indians did not at that time, consider their treaty with the government, very binding. They were always jealous of their land.

Of course, the scare they gave me, was only a kids game. The older Indians were rather kiddyish too, sometimes. They liked to tease the women that they thought afraid of them. If the man of the house was away, they would order meals, but they did no harm.

I have thought that perhaps I should have put in my papers, the names of our two sons, Charles E. and Donald F., but it doesn't matter, I guess.

I do hope that if my manuscripts are used, that something may be put in to make it look better for the Indians.

Respectfully,

Mrs. C.F. Hill
THE TOWN OF MEEKER

Origin of Name:

The town of Meeker derives its name after N.C. Meeker, who was massacred by the White River Ute Indians, on September 29th, 1879.

Birth of the Town:

The town of Meeker was organized and incorporated in the year 1885. At that time, Meeker, or, as it was first called, The White River Agency, was in Garfield County. On November 4th, of 1885, the county court at Garfield issued an order to the effect that the incorporation of the town was duly perfected, according to law.

First Board of Trustees:

(This Board of Trustees held office until April 6th, 1886, when the first election occurred)

Mayor---------Wm.H.Clark
Trustee--------Geo.S.Allsebrook
Trustee--------Tom Little
Trustee--------C.S.Attix
Trustee--------J.L.McHatton
Trustee--------Jas. Lyttle
Town Treasurer----G.D.Thayer
Town Recorder----C.S.Attix

(Attix acted as recorder until the first election)

Town Marshal----B.L.Nichols
(Marshal by appointment)

The first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on December 26th, 1885.

The First Town Election:

The first town election was held on April 6th, 1886, and the newly elected town officers took their seats on April 12th, 1886.

Mayor---------W.H.Clark
Trustee--------Thomas B.Watson
Trustee--------G.D.Thayer
Trustee--------Tom Little
Trustee--------G.S.Allsebrook
Trustee--------J.L.McHatton
Recorder--------G.D.Thayer
Treasurer--------Thomas B.Watson
Marshal---------B.L.Nichols

The first Police Magistrate was appointed May 3rd, 1886, namely, L.J.Minor.
Colorado Historical Society
Denver Colorado.

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed is an old land grant from the U.S. Gov't to John A. Watson, and signed by President Harrison in the year 1831. Mr. Watson and his family have all passed away, only a few grandchildren are left now.

This note is from one of the grandchildren, a daughter of T.C. and Mary Walker, pioneers in the White River country near Cheyenne.

If this specimen is of any interest to the society, you may use it as you see fit. Under any circumstances it is quite unnecessary that it be returned here.

Incidently, my father was the last living member of the original town-right board of the town of Baker, and his name is one of those enrolled in the Cowboy Hall of Fame. He passed away at the age of 96 years a couple of years ago.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Mrs. William C. Speer
4807 Cypress Place
San Diego, California.
The First Town Election: (Continued)

On the evening of the first election, Mr. Tom Baker tells us, that
the bottle had been passed too freely, and Charlie Dunbar, was shot by
an outlaw, named Pete Stewart, from Piceance Creek.

The Meeker Townsite Company:

Soon after the evacuation of the Government Army Post, which is the
present site of the town of Meeker, the Meeker Townsite Company came into
existence. The following are the names of the members of the Townsite
Company, according to Mr. Tom Baker:

D. M. Richards  N. Major
G. S. Hazen    J. W. Hugus
W. H. Clark    Charlie Dunbar
Mrs. S. C. Wright  G. D. Thayer
Harry Miner    A. J. Gregory
E. P. Wilber    James Kendall
C. S. Attix    G. S. Allsebrook
Harry Goff    F. E. Sheridan
Thomas Baker

Mr. W. H. Clark became President of the Townsite Company. The primary
purpose of the Townsite Company was to divide the land, which was
situated in and near the Government Military Reservation or Post, into
lots or parcels, which might be claimed by those who had settled thereon
and built houses, or which might be sold to newcomers and future set-
tlers. All those who claimed lots at that time, got them at the cost
of recording, which was about $3.00.

This Townsite Company was organized prior to the incorporation of
the town, and was the first organized move on the part of the settlers
and inhabitants, to precipitate an incorporated town.

History of the Town's Location:

When the government troops came to the aid of Major T. T. Thornburgh,
and rescued the White River Agency inhabitants, at the time
of the Thornburgh Battle and Meeker Massacre, they established their
headquarters at what is now, the present site of the Town of Meeker.

This military reservation, which was established by these
government troops, extended four miles in every direction from the flag
pole, which was located on the parade grounds. The troops built their
headquarters, in the customary army fashion, with the buildings facing
the quadrangle or parade grounds. On the north side of these parade
grounds, the officers built their quarters, out of logs, in the form
of one-story buildings, each divided in the middle by a center hallway,
with rooms on either side. On the south side of the parade grounds,
the soldiers quarters were built, and they were long adobe buildings.
In the late summer of 1883, the government began removing the soldiers,
and the buildings were then auctioned off, and they sold from $33.00 to
$90.00 each.

And so it was, that the business part of the town of Meeker deve-
oped, facing north instead of south, because it was only natural that
the larger buildings should be bought and used for the purpose of stores,
hotels, etc. And it was also natural that the better built log houses
which had been used as officer's quarters, should be used as private
homes, because of better construction and because they were not so
large.

The Meeker Townsite Company built, what has since been known, as
the Town Ditch, and this runs through the north part of the town,
approximately three blocks north of the old parade grounds. The Town-
site Company also fenced the parade grounds, and called them Parks,
and the parade grounds were divided into two plots, each being 315'
square, with a street in between. One of these Parks belongs to the
town, and one belongs to the County. And it was also the Townsite
Company that planted the cottonwood trees, in these Parks.

The present location of the town of Meeker, is approximately
close to four and one half miles east of where the White River Agency
was situated, in Powell Valley (now Powell Park) at the time of the
Meeker Massacre. And the present A.L ranch is now the site of the former
Agency. When the White River Ute Agency was first located by Indian
Agents, prior to the coming of N.C. Meeker, it was established at a
point approximately close to eight miles east of the present Townsite
of Meeker. It was in July of 1879, that Agent, N.C. Meeker completed
the moving of the Agency, from it's first location, in what is called
Danforth Park, to the location in Powell Valley.

Location:

The town of Meeker is located on the north bank of the White River,
in Rio Blanco County, in north western Colorado, about four miles
north of the fortieth base line.

It is an inland town, without a railroad, forty-two miles north
of Rifle, Colorado, which is located on the Colorado River (formerly
Grand River) in Garfield County. It is fifty miles south of Craig,
Colorado, which is on the Beer River, in Moffat County.

The townsite is three miles east of the junction of three high-
ways, namely: the highway coming north from Rifle, which has long
been called the Government Road between Meeker and Rifle; and the
original Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway, which follows the White
River Valley, eastward into Colorado, from Salt Lake City via Vernal,
Utah, and thence past Rangely, Colorado, on to Meeker; and the high-
way, which comes south from Wyoming down through Craig, Colorado,
via Meeker, and then to the south to Rifle on the Grand River, or
Via Meeker, to Salt Lake City and the west.

Altitude:

The altitude of Meeker, at the point where the former parade
grounds, or present parks are located, is 6,240 ft.

Population:

(The population of Meeker, 1930 census, was 1,069, and Meeker is
the county seat of Rio Blanco County)

Industries:

The town is the business center of the county of Rio Blanco, which
THE TOWN OF MEEKER

has for its principal industries, the raising of Cattle and Sheep, Hogs, Poultry, Horses and Mules.

The county is noted for its record crops of Alfalfa, Wheat, Oats, Rye, Barley and Potatoes. Vegetables and the hardier fruits and berries, are also produced.

Schools:

The town of Meeker has two very excellent Schools; the Rio Blanco County High School, and the Meeker Grade School. These school buildings are up-to-date modern structures, built of local materials, namely: a high grade, red sandstone, and locally burnt red brick. Modern methods of education are used in these institutions. And they are on the accredited list, with institutions of higher learning.

Churches:

There are four churches in the town of Meeker, namely: Methodist, Catholic, Episcopal and Church of God.

Recreations:

Fishing, Hunting, all Out-Door Sports, such as: Horseback riding, Hiking, Skiing and Swimming.
Valentine Lodge No. 47, was instituted in the lodge hall in the old J.W. Hugus building in Meeker, Colorado, on the eleventh day of April, 1891, by J.L. Hays, D.D.G.M. of Glenwood Springs; the charter members being: Arthur Burnham, Wm. A. Keller, F.E. Sheridan, Harry Niblock, J. F. Porges, L.F. VanCleave, W.E. Simpson, and F.W. Fairfield. After instituting the Lodge, the following brothers were elected and installed into office:

- N.G.---------Wm. A. Keller
- V.G.--------F.E. Sheridan
- Sec'y.--------S. Porges
- Treas.--------Harry Niblock
- Warden--------F.W. Fairfield
- Cond.--------Arthur Burnham
- R.S. of N.G.---L.F. VanCleave
- I.G.---------W.E. Simpson.

The following applications for membership being present were voted on and taken through all the degrees: F.N. Johantgen, H.A. Wildhack, W.J. Tatzloff, E.O. Loyd, C.J. Sheideler, L.P. Craig, and I.G. Mitchel

The N.G. appointed:
- L.S. of N.G.---I.G. Mitchel
- R.S.S.--------H.A. Wildhack
- L.S.---------L.P. Craig
- O.G.---------W.J. Tatzloff

The V.G. appointed:
- R.S. of V.G.---F.N. Johantgen
- L.S. of V.G.---C.J. Sheideler

At the time this Lodge was instituted, the sick committee consisted of one member for each day in the week, who were appointed by the Noble Grand. Wm. A. Keller was the first Representative sent to the Grand Lodge.

On the eleventh day of May, 1892, the Lodge bought from F.E. Sheridan, the west 4/5 of lot 2 in Block 2, for the sum of $400.00.

In Oct., 1894, the Lodge moved from the J.W. Hugus building to the old School House at a rental of $50.00 per year. On the fifth day of Aug., 1896, the Trustees were instructed to trade the west 4/5 of lot 2 in block 2, to J.L. McHatton, for a 60 ft. front on the corner of 4th and Main St., paying a difference of $600.00, making the 60 ft. front cost the Lodge $1,000. Then a committee was appointed to meet with the Río Blanco County Commissioners, to arrange to rent space in a new building to be built for the use of a County Court House. The committee reported they could lease the necessary space in the new building for 10 years, at $500.00 per year. The lease was accepted and the Trustees were instructed to negotiate a loan to raise the extra money needed to build a building for the County Court House, and Dance Hall below, with Lodge rooms on the upper floor. The Loan was procured through the Fidelity Loan Association, in which sixteen or more brothers took shares. Brother H.A. Wildhack drew up the necessary papers and Brother F.E. Sheridan was appointed General Manager to supervise the building of the new Hall.

On the seventeenth day of Oct., 1896, the Brothers met and formed a Stock Company, with a Board of Directors to control the erection and management of the building, now under way.

The first dance was held in the new Hall on the 17th day of March, 1897, and at that date, the Lodge was in debt to the Fidelity Savings Ass'n, $4,000.00, and other outstanding notes and warrants of about $2,500.00. And income from the County Court House was $500.00 per year, and from the Dance Hall, Lodge dues, and all other sources, was to be used to pay the Fidelity Savings Ass'n. $64.00
per month, along with the other notes and warrents coming due. They also rented the Lodge Hall to the Woodman of the World, for their meetings, for $12.00 per month, and the middle room up-stairs to the County for $48.00 per year.

On the 26th day of April, 1897, the dedication and anniversary exercises were held. This was a big day in Odd Fellowship. These exercises were followed by a big parade in full uniform, with members from outside Lodges taking part, followed by a big dance.

On the 11th day of Aug., 1897, the Lodge gave a second mortgage on the Hall to J.W. Hugus and Co. for the amount of $3,250.00, as payment of warrents taken in by J.W. Hugus & Co. and A. Oldland & Co.

On the 5th day of April 1899, in auditing the books of the Lodge, the audit showed the building had cost $12, 606.39, on the building. On the 5th day of Feb. 1902, by a resolution of the Lodge, they voted to transfer that part of it's indebtedness covered by the mortgages on the building, to the Home Building and Securities Co., the indebtedness being due, and the Lodge being unable to meet the payments.

On the 17th day of April 1902, the Grand Lodge granted a dispensation to institute Josephine Rebekah Lodge No. 86.

On the 19th day of Oct., 1910, by order of the Lodge the trustees were instructed to send a quit claim deed to the Home Building and Securities Co. as the Lodge could no longer pay it's indebtedness.

On Jan. 1st, 1911, the Home Building and Securities Co. transferred the title to the building to Brother J.E. Rooney, and the Lodge rented the Lodge Hall from Brother J.E. Rooney for it's meetings. On the 2nd of May, 1914, the Lodge bought of Thomas Kilduff, lot 7 and the west half of lot 8 in block 9, in the town of Meeker for the sum of $480.00, and sold the same in 1919, for $500.00.

On June 19th, 1920, Valentine Lodge held it's first big fish fry which was attended by five Past Grand Masters, and other officers, and brothers and sisters, from all the Lodges on the Western Slope. At 6:00 o'clock a fish supper was served to approximately 400 guests, followed by degree work in the Lodge Hall. Craig Lodge conferred the first degree on six candidates, and after a talk by the Grand Officers and others, the meeting closed, and the dance in the lower Hall lasted until 2:00 o'clock in the morning.

The next fish fry was held on the 11th day of June 1921, with about 500 brothers and sisters present, from Lodges all over the State. At this fish fry they guaranteed the Ancient Order of Muscovites, $1,000.00 to come from Denver, and confer the Muscovite degree. At 1:00 O'clock P.M., was held a grand parade, led by the Muscovites in full uniform and followed by the different Lodges with their banners. Then while the sisters were being entertained in the lower hall, the Lodge opened in due form, and the first degree was conferred on seven candidates by Valentine Lodge, followed by talks for the good of the Order, after which the Lodge closed at 6:00 P.M., for the fish banquet; over 500 fish were served at this banquet. After the supper the dance started in the lower hall and the Muscovites took charge in the upper hall, conferring the Muscovite degree on more than 70 members. This fish fry cost the Lodge $41.50, and $1000.00 paid to the Muscovites—the last being paid by the candidates taking the Muscovite degree, at a cost of $15.00.

The next fish fry was held on the 24th day of June, 1922. This also started with a big parade at 1:00 P.M., led by the Muscovites. After the parade, the sisters took charge of the lower hall, and Lodge opened in the Lodge Hall, and some members from all the Lodges present, to make up a team, that conferred the first degree on all candidates present, followed by talks by the visiting brothers. Next in order was the fish banquet at 6:00 P.M., after which the dance started in the lower hall, and the Muscovites took charge in the upper hall, and conferred the Muscovite
degree on more than 50 candidates. This fish fry cost the Lodge $218.87, and $1000.00 to the Muscovites. This, again was paid by the candidates who took the Muscovite degree.

The next fish fry was held on the 23rd day of June, 1923. The first order was serving the 6:00 P.M. fish banquet, there being brothers and sisters present, from 32 different Lodges in the State. The supper was followed by a dance in the lower hall, and degree work in the Lodge hall, where Craig Lodge conferred the first degree on the candidates present, for which Valentine lodge presented them with a silver cup, as a token for special degree work, this was followed by talks by visiting home brothers. This fish fry cost $100.39.

The next fish fry was held on the 28th day of June 1924, and after the fish banquet at 6:00 P.M., the brothers met in the Lodge hall, and the Rifle Lodge conferred the Initiatory degree on the candidates present, followed by Delta Lodge with the first degree, both degrees being put in fine shape. This fish fry cost $106.10.

The last fish fry was held on the 20th day of June 1925. After the fish banquet, the Initiatory degree was conferred by the Delta Lodge, in a manner to win the loving cup presented by Valentine Lodge, as a token of their good work. This was followed by a team made up of Valentine Lodge and volunteer Brothers from other Lodges, to confer the first degree which was done in a fine manner. This fish fry cost $201.49.

On the 21st day of May 1929, Meeker Encampment No. 11, was instituted at Meeker by General C.L. Smith, G.P., assisted by Bro. C.H. Nelson and Brothers from the Rifle Encampment. The Charter members were:

C.A. Rogers E. VanCleave
L.R. Turner R.G. Cole
T.A. Crawford S.S. Coners
James Burke A.M. Griger
Clarence Synder E.B. Snyder
W.C. Van Horn H.H. Gizzard
Sabey Timothy Lester Burns

After the institution, the following officers were elected and installed:

C.P.-----------------E. VanCleave
H.P.-----------------L.R. Turner
S.W.-----------------E.B. Snyder
J.W.-----------------T.A. Crawford
Scribe-----------------C.A. Rogers
Treas.-----------------R.G. Cole

E. VanCleave, appointed Lester Burns 1st. watch
H.H. Gizzard 4th watch
E.B. Snyder----I.S.
A.M. Griger------Guide

C.P., C.L. Smith appointed C.A. Rogers, P.C.P., as his D.D.G.P. and the above officers were installed.

On the 29th day of Nov. 1930, Valentine Lodge bought the I.O.O.F. Hall from Bro. J.E. Rooney for the sum of $6000.00, and the furniture for $200.00. Bro. Rooney had set a price of $12000.00, to other parties for the Hall, and the Odd Fellows feeling themselves entitled to the first chance, approached Bro. Rooney to see the best price he would make to them, and Bro. Rooney stated if the Odd Fellows wanted to buy the building, he would cut the price to them to $8000.00, as he wanted to see them get the Hall back. On the night the Odd Fellows accepted Bro. Rooney’s offer, Bro. Rooney made a further donation to the Lodge, $2000.00 plus $200.00 for furniture, to be paid for out of the Lodge treasury. The Lodge appointed a committee to draw up resolutions, a copy spread in the minutes, thanking Bro. Rooney for his kindness in making
It possible for the Lodge to buy back the building, at half the price he had ever offered it to anybody else. Bro. Rooney has set an example that will be hard for any other Brother to equal, and has shown a spirit of Odd Fellowship that endears his memory to Valentine Lodge until time is, no more.

In Nov. 1931, at Rifle, Colorado, Bro. Edward S. Prohs, G.M., divided District No. 6 into two districts, the west half consisting of the towns of Rifle, Meeker, Silt, New Castle and Grand Valley, into District No. 26. Bro. Prohs appointed Bro. Fred Gaylord of Rifle, its first D.D.G.M.

The district meetings held once a month at the different Lodges, are proving a great help in reviving interest in Odd Fellowship.

In looking back over the 43 history of Valentine Lodges, it is found the high spots in membership run in cycles. Valentine Lodge No. 47 was instituted during a panic, and made it's best growth near the end of the hard times, and so we find it's history to the present time. This Lodge made it's best growth during the period of the fish frys, from 1920 to 1925, when a per capita tax of $102.50 was paid. In the year after the fish frys, our tax dropped on Jan. 1st, to $98.00, and July---$95.75, the next year to $85.05, and so on, to the year 1932 and 1933 being the low point of the later years. The high point in membership to date, was June 30th, 1922, just following the third big fish fry, and following the Muscovites meetings. That report shows 149 contributing and 9 non-contributing members, making 158 in all. After the year 1925, the membership has steadily decreased 'til in 1933 there were 81 contributing members. But 1934 will show a large increase on account of the Grand Lodge passing a law to let all subordinate Lodges cut the fees to join, to $5.00, and for re-instatement, to $1.00, ending Dec. 31, 1934. By taking advantage of this action, Valentine Lodge has raised it's contributing membership to more than 125, giving them two delegates to the Grand Lodge. On this 10th day of Feb. 1934, Valentine Lodge No. 47, is going strong.

It has made all it's payments on the Lodge Hall to date, and expects to keep on making them. It owes $2500.00 at this date, on the hall, and expects to have a membership of more than 150 by July 1st, 1934.
Biography of W. H. Purdy

W. H. Purdy was born in Pennsylvania, in 1874. He came from Penn. with his parents to Iowa, then to Kansas. After living in Kansas a short time, the family migrated to Colorado. The method of travel during this time, was in wagon-trains, and all the hardships of the early day settlers had to be endured.

In 1882--the summer of this year was spent at Gunnison, Colorado. My father prospected at Ruby--a mining town above Gunnison. The fall of 1882 my family, and another party came to Grand Junction. It was during this trip to the Junction that we almost lost one of our wagons. The road in Black Canon on Black Mesa was so slippery and steep, that the men were compelled to tie a tree to the wagon to keep it from slipping off the road. The roads were very poorly constructed in this particular section, then, too, the fall snows were the cause of some of the trouble.

Enroute to Grand Junction, we came through Delta, which, at this time, consisted of tents, that served as houses for the few people that were there.

We were surprised to find that Grand Junction had only a few log buildings--mostly saloons, and gambling houses. The narrow gauge Railroad had just been completed into Grand Junction that fall of '82.

For a short time my brothers, sisters and myself attended the first school in G. J.

We took up land on the desert above G. J., built ditches and put in crops. The first year a water spout destroyed the ditches and all of the crops. We then moved to Kannah Creek, out east of Grand Junction, and homesteaded land on what is now known as Purdy Mesa, named for my father and uncle. Ranching was not profitable in those days. My father worked for a rancher and received only $20.00 a month--this was the average wage at this time.

From Purdy Mesa, we moved to Palisade. Here, my father constructed the first stone hotel.

I came to Rio Blanco County with my brother-in-law, George Blain, who was then in the Taxidermy business. I went into this business with him, and also guided tourists for John Goff. I worked for Goff four years, during this time Roosevelt came to Rio Blanco County for his first Lion Hunt.

Roosevelt came into Meeker in Baer's Talgho, and put up at the Meeker Hotel for the first night. The day before his arrival in Meeker, Mr. and Mrs. Goff and son, and myself left for the Keystone Ranch, which was to be Roosevelt's Headquarters, during his hunting trip. Our trip was made in a sled-wagon, and we carried with us sufficient supplies and provisions, to last during our stay at the Keystone. With the temperature at 30 degrees below zero, it was rather a hard trip for us, especially since Goff's small son had acquired the measles, and too much exposure would cause serious illness.

Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Goff, Phil Stewart and Dr. Webb came to the Keystone from Meeker, on horseback. We had everything prepared for the party.

The next evening, after their arrival, two Denver reporters came to the Keystone, but were not allowed to stay over night. So they went back to Meeker that night, and the next day, they borrowed a dead lion, which Daws Black had recently killed, and with a picture of this lion, and a picture of Roosevelt, by means of fake photography, they completed a picture with Roosevelt standing beside the lion. The Denver Post published this picture and a story entitled, "Theodore Roosevelt and his First Lion". Those reporters were bound to be the first one's to get
the story of the Lion Hunt, in its early stages. (Roosevelt had not even started on his hunting trip from the Keystone, at this time.)

The first day of their hunt, they only bagged one lion and one bobcat. One day when they were on the hunt, they trailed a lion, and the dogs finally ran him into a cave. Two of the dogs, Tony and Baldy went into the cave, and they were evidently killed, as they never returned.

It was interesting to see Goff feed his hunting dogs. Their chief food was horse meat, and this was fed them at night, after they returned from the chase. There was one old dog known as "Jim" and a gunny sack in the corner of the shed, served as his bed. If any other dog happened to lay down on this particular gunny sack, and "Jim" happened to see him, his jealous instinct caused him to throw the said dog out bodily.

The dogs often came in cut and bruised. One day the dogs chased a big lion up a cottonwood, that was crooked and leaning. Two of the bull terriers followed the lion up this tree, and every time the dog would get within reach of the lion's claws, the lion would push them out of the tree, and the fall to the ground would leave them stunned for quite a while.

The hunting party killed 14 lion and 12 bobcat, during the six weeks, their vacation lasted.

The hunting party had only two cabins for their personal use.

As I remember, Teddy was very democratic. Never an evening went by, but what Teddy would relate all of his experiences of the day, and he told his stories in a very interesting manner, and was always friendly and agreeable to everyone.

I started working as exchange manager for the M.T. & T. at Meeker, in 1906, and in July I will have given continuous service to the Telephone Company, for 29 years.

It might be interesting to know that in the fall of 1898, I killed the biggest bear that has ever been killed in Mesa County, or in this section of the country. My picture, taken with the bear, appeared on the cover of the May edition of "The Outdoor Life", a magazine that is published monthly.——This bear weighed over a 1,000 pounds, and his hide sold for $80.00 (I later learned that the man I sold the hide to, received $501.00 for it, when he sold it to some Easterner)

The wisdom and craftsmanship of this bear, seemed, for many years, to over-rule man's intelligence and reasoning powers. And so, in the following story, we learn of the eventful life of this said bear:

OLD CLUB-FOOT

In the summer of 1898 there might have been seen in the soft sand and mud along Buzzard Creek in the heart of the Rockies, the tracks of a mother bear and a cub; and if the finder had been inquisitive enough to follow up the tracks, he would have found the pair of them dispersing themselves in the cool waters of the creek. Thus we find little Club-foot at the beginning of his eventful career, a sportive, inquisitive, little grizzly bear.

The first years of his cub-hood were happy but uneventful; he had nothing to do but eat, sleep and learn from his mother what every wise bear should know:—where to find wild honey, how to dig the tender grubs and ants from out of old rotten stumps, and all the wood-lore that had been handed down to him by his ancestors ever since the beginning of all things, but above all, she taught him to avoid man.

This was impressed indelibly upon his mind by an incident that happened a few days later. He had found a slab of honey lying in a little inclosure, there was a strong scent of man in the air, but he had
stopped to investigate and suddenly found himself fast in a steel trap. After a day or two he had worked loose, but with two toes missing. After this, he carefully avoided anything that smelled of man, this was the secret of all his wisdom.

As the years rolled by little Club-foot grew into Big Club-foot, and soon had the reputation of being the wisest bear on the range. As his wisdom grew his body grew, and his track became known from far and near. Although he had never been seen, man dubbed him "Club-foot" because two toes were missing, and a bounty was laid on his head. After a while he was recognized as king of beards, and was respected by all wild things for his justice and wisdom.

Finally young Club-foot became Old Club-foot, a renegade with a price on his head to man, and a grand old grizzly bear to the wild life.

As Club-foot passed his prime there was one time in the year that he loved, that was in the spring, soon after all bears leave their winter homes, when the snow hasn't quite gone off, and the northern lights still flicker across the north like a fiery gate-way leading into the sky, and when the wolves still howl at the moon. Yet there is a slight taint of spring in the air, this is the time that all wildife goes wild, and Old Club-foot loved it as he loved nothing else. And I believe that the guardian angel of all wild animals comes out of the northern lights to hold communion, and go among her wild children at this time.

Old Club-foot loved this season and it was at this time that he met his end in the early morning while the lights still played across the sky and the wolves were singing their morning song.

The old bear was surprised by a hunter who had tracked him thro' the snow. It took fourteen shots to stop his mighty old heart, but not until he had chased the hunter up a tree. Just as dawn was breaking and the lights were dying out the guardian angel of all wild animals went back through the fiery gate-way taking the grand soul of Club-foot with her into the wild animals' paradise, thus fittingly ended the career of Old Club-foot.

LaRoy H. Purdy
Interesting Incidents and Facts as Related by different Pioneers.

H.A. Wildbach says:

That Major T.T. Thorburn was buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery, Omaha, Nebraska, and that the body was sent there by General Wesley Merritt, who came to Thownburg's relief, at the time of the Thownburg battle, when Thownburg met his death at the hands of the Ute Indians.

W. Salomonsen (commonly called "Salty") relates this incident:

Salty says that one winter, when he was helping Mr. Major in the store in Meeker, which afterwards became the Pioneer Store of J.W. Hayes & Co., that Mr. Major had on hand, a goodly number of straw hats, left from summer business. It seems that Mr. Major was at a loss as to how to dispose of these straw hats, so Salty told Major that he believed if they would price the hats at $1.50 each (the hats having originally cost 40c each) and then if they would get the white men about town to each wear one of these straw hats, on the day the Indians came to town to trade and buy their groceries, that maybe the Utes would take a notion to buy themselves some straw hats. So Major agreed with the idea, and on this particular day, when the Utes came riding into town on their ponies, all bedecked in Indian attire, they saw everyone about town, wearing straw hats in the winter time. This, of course, aroused their curiosity, and before they left town, Mr. Major had sold twenty straw hats at $1.50 each, and the Indians did better than this, and bought small ribbons, with which they tied their hats on, by using the ribbons for straps to go under their chin, and they left town in a hilarious mood, with straw hats and ribbons, and a snow-storm.

Money Matters——Then and Now

W. Hall relates:

That he came to Leadville from Clinton, Iowa, in 1890, and then decided to come to the White River Country, in 1895. He says that soon after he arrived in Meeker, he decided to bring his family, which he had left behind, and being short of funds, he needed to borrow some money. Being a stranger in these parts, he heard that Mr. Major, who operated the Pioneer Store in Meeker, was generally willing to help a man in need. However, he did not know Mr. Major, and being a newcomer, he hesitated to go and ask for a loan. Necessity, of course, caused him to go to Mr. Major's store, and explain his needs. Mr. Major told Mr. Hall that he didn't have any money to
loan, on that particular day, but he thought that a lady who
tived up street a block or two, might be able to accomodate
him. So Mr. Major pointed out this particular house, to Mr.
Hall, and Mr. Hall went forth on his mission. About a half
an hour afterwards, Mr. Hall returned to the store, and when
he came in, Major said to him, "Well, did you get your money?"
and then Mr. Hall said to Mr. Major, "Well, why in the devil
didn't you tell me that you were sending me to see your wife?"
"Yes, I got the money, but I certainly would have liked an
introduction, before I was sent to do the borrowing."
Mr. Hall says that Mr. Major always took great delight in
jilting jokes on his friends.
(It is plainly evident from this little incident, that it is
for cry from those days to these days, when a stranger needs
a lift.)
Taken from the Meeker Herald  
Saturday, August 20, 1927.

**WORK OF ERECTING A MONUMENT TO MEKER STARTED THIS WEEK**

What has been a hoot of one of Rio Blanco county’s oldest Pioneers, now bids fair to become a reality within a few days. For years Thomas Baker has talked and urged the erection of a monument to N.C. Meeker, who with other Agency employees was massacred early in the fall of 1879 near the present site of the town which now bears his name. Last year Mr. Baker started a petition to raise sufficient money for this purpose. The petition was well received by most of the old timers as well as those of the younger generation and over $200.00 was pledged for the erection of a suitable market.

Early in the fall Mr. Baker went up the river and hauled down a round granite boulder about three feet in diameter. From that time on things dragged with one delay after another. Work was put off until spring. In the meantime Mr. Baker had continued circulating the petition and has raised nearly $300.00 at this time.

A few weeks ago, Mr. Baker ordered the bronze table to be placed on the stone, from a Denver firm, and this week F.A. Carstens constructed a concrete base about four feet high—the surface of which is set with cobblestones giving a very rustic appearance. Upon this base will be placed the granite boulder with the bronze plate set in on the face of the stone. The monument will stand about seven feet high and is located at the cross roads where the Meeker-Rifle and Meeker-Rangely roads meet three miles west of town, and within a half mile of the actual sight of the massacre which is on the +L ranch.

The dedication of the monument will be held within a few weeks, a definite date to be announced later.

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Taken from the Meeker Herald  
Saturday, September 24, 1927

**WILL DEDICATE MEKER MONUMENT NEXT THURSDAY——**  
**FORTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY**

Next Thursday will be the Forty-eighth Anniversary of the Meeker Massacre. This date has been designated as most fitting for the dedication of the recently erected monument.

The monument was completed the latter part of August with the exception of placing the bronze tablet on the granite boulder. The base of the monument which was constructed by F.A. Carstens, is constructed of cobblestones set in concrete. This section is about five feet square at the base, and four feet high. Upon the cobblestone base rests a granite boulder which is approximately three and a half feet in circumference. The bronze tablet carries the name of N.C. Meeker and other members of the agency post who were killed in the massacre, and the date of that historical event. This bronze tablet will be set in the south face of the granite boulder.

This monument which the people of Rio Blanco County have erected to the memory of N.C. Meeker, is situated three miles west of town at the junction of the Meeker-Rifle and Meeker-Rangely roads. This spot is nearly a mile from the actual battle ground—but as it is the closest accessible location, it was considered to be more practical.

A program has been arranged for next Thursday afternoon which
ill take place at the monument. At least one member of the Colorado Historical Society will be here from Denver, and possibly others will be present. A special invitation is extended to all the Pioneers of northwestern Colorado to be present and assist in the dedication of this memorable event.

(Taken from The Meeker Herald Saturday, October 1, 1927)

DEDICATION OF THE MECKER MONUMENT--AT MEEKER

This Native Granite Stone

Erected by the Citizens of

Rio Blanco County, Colorado
1927

And Dedicated to the Memory of

NATHAN C. MECKER
United States Indian Agent

Who, with his Government Employees, was Massacred by the Ute Indians at the White River Ute Indian Agency, one and one half Miles West of this Spot.

September 29, 1879

Employees

W.H. Post Frank Dresser
Henry Dresser W.W. Eskridge
Mr. Price Fred Shepard
George Eaton Arthur L. Thompson
Carl Goldstein Unknown Teamster

Thursday of this week will stand out in years to come as a historic day for Meeker and Rio Blanco county. As the Forty-eighth Anniversary of the Meeker Massacre and the day of the unveiling of a monument to Nathan C. Meeker and his comrades who were there massacred, it stands as a "red letter" day in the lives of all surviving pioneers of Western Colorado. It stands as an accomplishment of the citizens of this county--which has not been without many difficulties to fulfill.

Despite the inclement weather, a crowd of several hundred people was present Thursday afternoon to pay honor to the memory of Nathan C. Meeker, sake of our fair city and one of the outstanding colonizers of the West. Among that crowd were many pioneers of Rio Blanco county who came to this fertile valley within a few years after the massacre and the ejection of the Ute from Western Colorado.

It was just forty-eight years before (September 29, 1879) that the Ute River Utes under command of Chief Douglas and Captain Jack "swooped" down upon this little colony of whites occupying the White River Indian agency and massacred all the men and took Mrs. Meeker, her daughter Josephine, and Mrs. Price captive.

N.C. Meeker, founder of the Greeley colony, had come west from New York state in the interest of Horace Greeley, a New York publisher. Mr. Meeker was visionary and a dreamer. He saw in the West possibilities of
an Empire far surpassing the already prosperous eastern states. The
greatest obstacle was the Indian tribes which still controlled most
of the Rocky Mountain territory through treaties with the Government.
Mr. Meeker firmly believed that the red man could be educated and dom-
esticated, thus transforming this vast hunting ground into productive
agriculture sections. It was with these thoughts in mind that N.C.
Meeker requested the appointment as Indian Agent of the White River
Post. Mr. Meeker was appointed to this post by President Hayes in 1878.
Upon assuming his duties at the post, Meeker started to carry out his
plans of civilizing the savage. The Utes did not take kindly to Mr.
Meeker's system and there was laid the foundation of the massacre
the next September. Despite their earnest objections, Mr. Meeker re-
mained steadfast to his convictions. The Indian chiefs carried their
protests to the Governor who in turn relayed them to the Indian Depart-
ment in Washington, but they were slow to act.

During the few months just preceding the Massacre, the situation
at the White River became so critical that even Meeker himself saw im-
pending danger. Troops were dispatched to the White River Post under
command of Major Thornburgh. The Indians, however, had no intention of
allowing this detachment of troops to reach Meeker. So it was that while
Captain Jack and his band of Utes ambushed Thornburgh and his men on Milk
Creek, Chief Douglas descended upon the White River Agency. The attack
began about 1:30 o'clock immediately after dinner, at the agency. When
the smoke cleared away, no white employee was alive to tell the story.
The three women were taken captive but were later released through the
efforts of Chief Ouray, head Chief of the Colorado Utes.

Yet it is, despite the fact that Nathan C. Meeker made many mis-
takes, we must admire him for having the courage to stand by his con-
vinctions, even unto death. It was the historic instance which caused
the subsequent removal of the Utes from Colorado and the coming of the
pioneer empire builders in their stead. It is with these thoughts in
mind that the citizens of Rio Blanco county have erected this monument
to his memory.

(The Meeker monument is placed at the cross-roads, the intersection
of the Meeker-Rifle and Meeker-Rangely roads. It is constructed of a
cobblestone base with a granite boulder mounted thereon and on the south
face of the boulder is set the bronze tablet giving the date. The
monument is erected within sight of the actual battle ground which is
located on the 4L ranch.)

The unveiling exercises took place at 2:30 p.m. with Reuben Oldland
acting as chairman. On the program were a number of pioneers as well
as members of the younger generation. The speakers were: Mayor John E.
Wix, Henry A. Wildhack, Commissioner Frank Green, W.D. Simms, R.N. Fordham,
Watson, Albert E. Sanford of the State Historical Society, and Thomas
Baker. These men in their addresses, touched all phases of the dedi-
cation—some talking on the history leading up to the Massacre; others
of Nathan C. Meeker himself and still others, of the results of the
massacre and a tribute to our pioneers of this county. The monument
which was covered by two American flags was unveiled by Pioneer Thomas
Baker, who has been the main worker for the erection of this monument.
The Meeker schools were dismissed for the dedication and the school
board assisted in the program.

This monument, in the years to come, will stand as a tribute of
honor, from the citizens of Rio Blanco county to Nathan C. Meeker, a
pioneer empire builder of the West.
Masnic History

Told by A.C. Moulton

I was made a Mason in Rawlins in 1887—and when I was sent to
there in 1889 to take charge of the business there, I was a Junior Warden
of Rawlins Lodge No. 5, and pretty well posted in the work.

As soon as I got settled in Meeker, I began to look up Masons. Mr.
Sipe of the Herald was the first one I located. He said he had located
him in the county, but Colorado Grand Lodge laws, required him to
seek a request for a dispensation to organize a Lodge, and they hadn’t
reported to do any action. I made the ninth, and at once suggested
sitting busy. Jim readily fell in with the plan, and due to his efforts,
succeeded in getting the entire number together to consult on ways and
means. I was fresh in the work and knew it well, but none of the others
did even work his way into a Lodge, they had been out of connection so
long they had forgotten about all they had learned—naturally I had to
be the lead in the work, and it certainly was some job.

We signed the request for a dispensation, and then we received it,
and started to learn the work. We went anywhere where we could be in
Hale—sometimes in the Herald Office, then down at the Niblock ranch
since I remember went on the hill back of the School House, around a
tobacco fire, that we had for light. It was a funny time and funny,
but we were in earnest and eventually "put it across" in great
effort.

We rented the upper floor of the School House, and there also, we borrowed whatever money was necessary from Hays & Co.

bought a strip of carpet to cover the back of the hall. A few common
fairs, and a carpenter made an altar, and officers pedestals—also
the necessary Aprons, Officers’ Collars, etc. Insignia. I doubt if any
one in the world ever began under such conditions.

Finally, we were ready for business, but there were not enough
hangers to fill the officers chairs, consequently we had to "double up" at
the table, and four in the table, at first. However, we were
ill and worked hard—old Cap Coon and H.C. Peterson lived near Beaver
River never absent, they knew they had to come to make a quorum and
visit us.

Those who signed the request for dispensation, as near as I can
remember, were: James Lyttle, John A. Tipton, David Smith, E.C. Peterson,
Don, H.H. Eady, F.W. Heiffer, John J. Niblock, A.C. Moulton. Ben Price
and Temple didn’t wish to discontinue their old Lodges to join us,
but Father of Piceance Creek also—but they did visit us when they were
there, and helped so much.

In requesting dispensation, it is necessary to suggest names of
important officers to be appointed, and it is a requirement that the one
named for Worshipful Master must be a Past Master. This is, at one
point in the requirements, H.C. Peterson was the only one of us
who could fill that requirement. Consequently, when the dispensation
was issued, the officers were: H.C. Peterson, W.M.; A.C. Moulton, S.W.; and
J. Tipton, J.W. Mr. Peterson said he was not good in the work—was
ill and lived too far away, but said he would accept, to help us out, and
would help him out in the work.
The plan was followed. Our first initiates were: Rev. Williams, then the Episcopal Clergyman at Meeker, and years later was Bishop of Minnesota, and Charley S. Atix, Hugus & Co. provided a hall for us in their new building. Our bank furnished the necessary funds to thoroughly equip the hall, with carpets and suitable furniture, so that no county club could have put on a better showing.

Every charter member was 'put third' the first or in other words, was elected Master in turn, as a mark of honor for services and faithful work.

We began with nine and you know how it is now. To get our charter in the fall (1893) and when regular time for election came in December, I re-elected Bro. Peterson to the East as a signal recognition of loyal service, but he is the only Master of Rio Grande Lodge who served more than the regular one year term.

I followed him and then gave way to others, and I liked the work very much, and did most of the work in the East for the first ten years. In course of time, I got dispensation for charter of a Chapter--and put a Board--serving for, or as, the First Excellent High Priest. Later succeeded in getting a Commander, organized, and was the first Grand Commander. In the two latter bodies, I was helped wonderfully by Bro. E.B. Fordham.

I have said "I", many times here, but it is not egotism, I assure you, just plain fact. If you care for more on this subject, ask Henry Black, and if you mention me, he'll give you any information you want. He has a very good memory of Masonic matters, except some early ones, which he knows only by hearsay.

A.C. Millet
HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF
RIO BLANCO LODGE NO 80, A F & A M, MEKER COLORADO
FROM 1890-------------------------TO 1930
Compiled by H.A. Wildhack
who was made a member of the Masonic Lodge in 1893

After the incorporation of the town of Meeker and the establishment of a weekly newspaper in its midst, in the year of 1885, the few Masons in the valley of the white and the surrounding country kept their eyes open on the new-comers for enough material to establish a Lodge of Masons. The long cherished desire of Mr. James Lyttle to be made a Mason led him to be easily induced to make the necessary trips to Glenwood Springs where he was initiated, passed and raised. These trips began in 1887 and ended during the spring of 1888; and Bro. Lyttle earnestly joined in the search. The following year the requisite number were here, and then the obtaining of a charter from the Grand Lodge took a lot of time, but they never faltered, although at times slightly discouraged.

About the first of December, 1889, at one of their infrequent informal meetings, they resolved to petition for a charter. After delays innumerable, the necessary number of dimes were obtained and sent into Denver for the inspection of the Grand Officers. Then, more delays. However, about the first of April, 1890, the precious document (permission to organize) arrived. Then came the setting of a date agreeable to the Grand Officers as well as to the petitioners, as the mails and the traveling in those days were different from the present time.

On Wednesday evening, April 16th, Rio Blanco Lodge was duly organized and permitted to go to work, U.D., (under dispensation). The preliminaries over with, an immediate election was held by the eleven local brethren and the Grand Officers duly installed the following officers:

Worshipful Master---------Henry Clay Peterson
Senior Warden-----------Arthur Channing Moulton
Junior Warden----------Marcus Coon
Treasurer-------------John Adams Watson
Secretary--------------James Lyttle
Senior Deacon----------George W Temple
Junior Deacon----------F.W. Herman Pfeiffer
Senior Steward--------Thomas Baker
Junior Steward--------Henderson H Eddy
Tyler-----------------David Smith
Chaplain--------------Ben Price

The membership was scattered over quite an expanse of country. Bros. Peterson and Coon resided on Big Beaver creek, Bro. Temple on what is now the J E Kilduff ranch, Bro. Pfeiffer on Bear river, Bro. Eddy at Axial, Bro. Foote on Piceance creek and Bro. Price on the Keystone ranch. One can realize their troubles in getting a quorum for the transaction of business. During the summer following the Lodge succeeded in raising two new members, one, the Rev A L Williams, who, in later years became Episcopal Bishop of Omaha, the other, Charles S. Attix, our then post-Master. As time went on the rustling for a quorum became easier.
In September, 1890, the Grand Lodge issued a charter to an even thirteen members, namely, Brothers Peterson, Moulton, Lyttle, Niblock, Sady, Baker, Coon, Pfeiffer, Foote, Watson, Smith, Williams and Attix.

Of the above, but four still retain their membership here; they are; Bros Moulton, Watson, Baker and Smith. Bros Pfeiffer and Foote are probably still on this earth, having dimitted many years ago, while all the others have stations and places with the Grand Architect of the Universe.

Seven of the charter members were elected and installed as Worshipful Masters, namely, Bros Peterson, Moulton, Lyttle, Pfeiffer, Baker, Watson and Smith. To these must be given the credit of forming a nucleus for an everlasting Lodge. Nevertheless, many of the other Masters the Lodge has had within the past forty years are likewise entitled to more than ordinary praise.

Admitted from other lodges, some from other jurisdictions, who still hold their membership here, might be of interest to those who peruse this book, and their names follow: Brothers A L Strehlke, Chas H Arthing, Cyrus L Shuman, Richardson H Taylor, James M Hamilton, Fred Hamilton, D Kirk Shaw, John R Clark, George E Butler, L P Creagh, James W Edwards and Glen McNary.

The year 1920 was the banner year for lodge work, no less than fifty-six degrees being conferred, divided nearly equally between the First, Second and Third. Brother Dr Taylor, a Kentuckian, was then in the East.

Twelve of our Past Masters have answered the dread summons, twenty-three are still on our list of members, while four have their membership elsewhere.

Rio Blanco Lodge now has a membership of 160. Of the nearly two hundred who were raised within the past forty years, 144 yet remain with us. Deaths, dismissions and other causes account for the reduction.

Our honored members are Brothers Moulton, Watson, Baker and Smith. As hereinabove stated, there were originally THIRTEEN, a figure which the very superstitious look upon with awe, consternation or dread. However, in our case, nothing unusual is to be chronicled in the history of those thirteen.

At no time since that charter was granted has there been a lack of interest among the craft, and each responded to the call whether for work or for play. Nor have any of the petty jealousies or misunderstandings (which did appear occasionally) cause a ripple on the surface; clearer heads, with diplomatic tendencies, handled each case successfully, to the satisfaction of all concerned and to the credit of the Lodge.

IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE LODGE

Bro John A Watson, one of the surviving charter members, is our oldest Mason. In less than two weeks he will have reached and passed the 82nd milestone of his earthly career, fifty-six years of which as a Mason. And, today, is still "in the collar" apparently with no thoughts of taking a lay-off. In the matter of age, Bro Henry E Phelps
comes next, being nearly four years younger. However, the latter has a record of only seventeen Masonic years to his credit.

On the other hand, Bro Reginald H Nichols is our youngest member, having reached his majority but ten months ago. The next younger is Bro Richard Gillis, just eleven months beyond his majority; and each of them as a Master Mason barely three months.

Bro Albert L Strehlke has the distinction of being the eldest Colorado-born on our list of members. Fifty other "natives" follow him. The nativity of the remaining membership of the lodge might as well be given here, namely: Missouri 15, Kansas 11, Illinois 10, Iowa 9, the British Isles 9, Nebraska 7, Virginia 4, and one or more from New York, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Texas, Utah, Ohio, Kentucky, Montana, Indiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, West Virginia, Wyoming, Arizona, California, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Germany and Sweden.

THE FIRE

In the spring of 1911, when the mud on Main street was nearly a foot in depth, the Lodge was burned out of house and home. An account of that misfortune was briefly given in our quadri-centennial history, and as it tells the story concisely we will here give it as it then was told:-

"On Friday, March 10, 1911, at 2:30 a.m., fire broke out in the rear of the Hugus & Co. building, but owing to the hour it was some time before our citizens got together to do anything. Our present master (J.L. Tagert) who was Tyler at the time, was one of the first to arrive on the scene and the lodge room was evidently uppermost in his thoughts. In a few seconds he was at the inner door, and upon entering found the flames eating their way up on the wainscoting in the rear. He realized quickly that nothing could be saved—not even his sword and belt. The building was a mass of ruins in a couple of hours and Rio Blanco Lodge was homeless. However, but one meeting was missed (March 11th) for by March 25th we had a duplicate charter and met in the district court room of the court house. Our insurance of $1,000 on piano and paraphernalia came in very handy. The Hugus Company erected a new building, the lodge and ante-rooms being rearranged, and in December, 1911, Rio Blanco Lodge moved into its new home."

We are there yet.
A Letter from A.C. Moulton Steamboat Springs, Aug. 19, 1922

To H.A. Wildhack, Secretary Rio Blanco Lodge No. 89, A.F. & A.M

Dear Sir and Brother:

I have your request for some incidents or data concerning the early days of our Lodge and am glad to respond as best I can, although I do not believe that I can add much to facts already in your possession, and the chances are that it will be merely a repetition of matters and details with which you are all more or less familiar from having heard the "old ones" exchange reminiscences. It is extremely unfortunate that our old records were lost in the fire.

In speaking of old times in Masonry, it is very likely that I may be accused of egotism, but it would be unfair to call a plain statement of facts egotism. From a combination of circumstances, I took such a part in the organization of Rio Blanco Lodge No 89 that I have often been called by friends familiar with details, "the father of Masonry on White river", and it is something of which I have always been very proud.

You say you believe I had "more or less to do with it". You are very right, I did, and all I may say I know will be corroborated by my old associates in the same great cause. Further, I was the prime mover, assisted strongly by Brother Fordham, in the organization of the Chapter also, and again in the organization of the Commandery; so why should I not feel pride in such accomplishments, which were not due to any special ability, but only to time and inclination, together with a love of Masonry and the aid of loyal, able brother Masons.

I came to Meeker in August 1889, and you, better than most people, know what it was in those days. As soon as I got located I began to think of Masonry, for I was a comparatively new Mason with the work fresh in my mind, and only recently elected Junior Warden of the Lodge at Rawlins, Wyoming. In conversation with Brother Lyttle, I learned that he had a list of the Masons living in the county; that there were only eight of them; that they had talked of the possibility of a Lodge, but had given it no serious consideration as it required nine signatures to a petition for a dispensation--I made the ninth. I was enthusiastic and fresh, the others had been out of Masonic work for a long time, Brother Lyttle, however, having been raised at Glenwood Springs a year or so previous, but never in a Lodge room since such raising. They came from various jurisdictions, one (Brother Smith) from Scotland. One day I said to Brother Lyttle, "Let's now get busy and see if we can't get a Lodge here." He made the reply "Glad you feel that way. Go to it and we'll do what we can to help." That was the beginning.

He got word to the eight Masons and in due time a meeting was held in the Herald Office. Am not sure whether all were present, but enough to make it interesting, and we busied ourselves first with the proving to each other that we were Masons, which was easy enough except in the case of Brother Smith, he having come to this country very soon after receiving the degrees in Glasgow, and could not remember even one detail of the work. We took him on his own statement of the bare facts, and I remember we had to wait for his dimit to come from Scotland before we
could use his name on the request for a dispensation—but it finally came.

The next thing to learn was the necessary procedure to form a Lodge and I was asked to write for full instructions. In course of time the instructions, with the proper application blank, came, and then followed the getting of the required signatures. This took some time, as the brethren lived in Meeker, Axial, and up and down the river, and it was long before the days of automobiles. Finally the preliminary details were complied with and the request for dispensation started to Denver. My recollection is that the signatures were those of H.C. Peterson, Marcus Reen, John J. Niblock, David S. lith, John A. Watson, H. H. Eddy, F. W. H. Pfeiffer, James Lyttle and A.C. Moulton. Ben Price was there, also Dr. Roote and Geo W. Temple, but neither of them wished to sever their connection with their old-time Lodges. Nevertheless, they helped us wonderfully and were on hand with nearly as much regularity as the others.

In requesting a dispensation it was necessary that we specify our selections for appointment as W. W. S. W and J W, and it was also required that our selection for W M be a Past Master. Brother Peterson was the only possible choice, he having at one time been W M of the Lodge at Jet Collins. He objected strenuously, saying he was too old to go into active work again, wouldn't try to learn the work which he had long since forgotten, etc. However, rather than be the cause of a failure of the project, he finally consented, with the understanding that he was merely to be a figurehead—someone else to do the work. Our selections were then: H C Peterson, W M; A.C. Moulton, S W: James Lyttle (I believe) J W; and the minor appointments, which I cannot now recall.

I think we received our dispensation in April 1899, and our charter at the session of the Grand Lodge in the fall of the same year. From April until the Grand Lodge met, I think we raised two candidates, Bro. Rev. A L. Williams and Chas S. Attix, and their names, in addition to the original nine, appeared on the charter. The officers above named, served until regular election in December, and then as a matter of courtesy and gratitude we elected Brother Peterson as W M for 1891, he being the only W M to ever served more than one year in our Lodge. During his incumbency of nearly two years he conducted the routine work splendidly; but, true to his word, would not learn the initiatory work, and it devolved on the S W to do that part of it, so that upon his election as W M for 1892, he was pretty well equipped for the job. Altogether he had close to three years of what might be called legitimate experience; and following that, many years in the third degree work for others who could not find time to learn it, or, like Brother Peterson, did not care to. This is explained when you know that it was early determined that the originators should go through the chairs as an honor deserved by their unusual efforts, and that if any one was prevented from learning all the work by any cause or reason whatever some one else would do such work. However, the time came when the newer element came along and shouldered all the burdens and responsibilities and carried everything through to the credit of themselves and the Lodge. "So mote it ever be."

Let us go back. I had brought with me a copy of the ritual used in Wyoming, and while we were arranging the petition for a dispensation, a matter of quite a long time, we kept busy learning that ritual by word of mouth, and it was some job, as there was but the one book for reference, and I was the only one who had committed the work. When we received the dispensation we were also sent a copy of the Colorado ritual; and as that differed greatly from the one we had been using, our task was a heavy one; we had to unlearn much and learn much more. We would get to-
gather, two or more, and translate carefully, letter by letter, frequently coming to a letter, or several of them, that neither our Wyoming ritual nor the utmost stretch of our imagination could interpret. In that case we made a note of the page, line and letter, and sent to the Grand Lecturer for an exemplification and would get the letter back with the proper word written above each letter. It was a long tedious process, but a thorough one, and getting the knowledge in that way impressed it on our minds for all time. We would go over to Eddy\'s ranch at Axial, down to the Niblock ranch, or any other place where we could talk without being overheard, sometimes fighting the cold and occasionally the mosquitoes. I remember once, going with one or two up in the sage brush back of the school house, night or day, Sunday or week day--it made no difference. We chose any opportune time or place where we could be together and talk.

We certainly were enthusiastic, and our experiences remind me of the privations and adventures we read about as having been undergone by pioneers; only ours were not dangerous nor very serious. There was lots of pleasure and amusement and a great satisfaction in accomplishment. At first we rented the hall in the old school house. A carpenter named Mitchell made the platforms, pedestals and alter. We bought the few small implements necessary from a regular supply house and a strip of very common ingrain carpet to stretch around the edge of the floor; also a couple of dozen common kitchen chairs. This was our outfit, and I venture to say we did just as good work and made just as good Masons as we have ever done since.

J.W. Hugus & Co. decided, early in 1890, to build a new store. All of the management and most of the employees were Masons, and Mr. Davis said that he would like to put on a second story as a Lodge room if we thought we could use it at a modest rental. Rev. A.L. Williams heard of this proposition and came to me with the remark that he hoped it would be carried out, as the town needed the hall, that he was interested in Masonry and intended to petition for membership and knew of others who felt likewise; also, that he was an Odd Fellow and would do his best to have a lodge of that order organized, who might also rent the hall. His enthusiasm and optimism carried the day and the hall was built. We moved from the school house to the new location in 1891, and our pioneer furniture was so out of place that we finally decided to buy a good complete outfit, suitable for the new quarters, so that within two years of our organization we had a Lodge Room equal to most and suitably furnished. A pretty good record. Our membership also had increased more rapidly than we had expected.

We moved along until the fire of 1911, which cost us a big loss, the most important being our records. However, we never lost heart, but went right ahead. And here I want to say that in the organization of all the Masonic bodies in Meeker, together with the furnishings and equipment, no one was ever called upon to contribute money. In all cases the money was borrowed from the Bank of Meeker and repaid from initiation fees.

Reminiscing just a little--I must recall the time when the Craig Lodge was instituted. Brother Peterson was commissioned by the Grand Master to go there as his representative, present the charter and institute the lodge in regular form. He asked some of us to go with him to assist. I don\'t remember all who went, but I think Walbridge was one, and my recollection is that I went with him in a buggy drawn by a bay horse he used to own. We went to Eddy\'s ranch one afternoon, stayed there
all night, and started for Craig early the next morning. We did all the Masonic work in the evening and adjourned to a so-called restaurant for a big "banquet". The menu was water oyster soup (canned oysters), canned corned beef, cut into about four squares to the can, bread slices two inches thick, gobs of cake, coffee and condensed milk. Say, it makes me laugh now, but it tasted mighty good then. Those were days when the public eating houses were more of a joke than they are even now, although at home every one lived fairly well.

Well, I've rambled along considerably. Don't know whether anything I've written will serve as material for your purpose. If not, let me know definitely and I will try it again. I can keep on unboundedly on this subject, but you are as familiar as I am with the Lodge History, except those earliest days.

I have forgotten to speak of the real heroism of some of our first members, more particularly of Brothers Peterson and Coon. No matter how inclement the weather, those two brothers never failed to show up at a meeting (sickness alone keeping them at home), driving those twenty odd miles when it meant a good portion of two days. They knew if they failed us that the chances were that we could have no meeting. Our members were and if a single one was absent it meant that in initiation work we would have to "double up" on our jobs. I have often taken two, and even three, characters in one evening.

There were many funny incidents, as you can imagine. Most of them I've forgotten until they are brought to my mind by some yarn of one of the old-timers. Either Jim Lyttle, John Watson, Dave or Walbridge should be able to furnish you some material. If you show them what I have written, things may occur to them that I have overlooked or forgotten.

With best regards, I am

Fraternally yours,

A.C. Moulton
Interview with H.S. (Simp) Harp
Who actually participated in the Meeker Bank Robbery Oct. 13, 1936

"Simp's" Own Story

Those fellows stood in front of my liver, barn on Main St., five minutes before they robbed the bank. It was a fine day, just as hot as it was this October.

Jerm Beerd gave the alarm.

Duffy was sitting there on a box with me in the barn. About that time in came Jerm and he was the whitest boy you have ever seen. He says, "They are holding up the bank and they have killed Dave Smith. I was the cashier." Duffy said, "I'll go down the end and see." Pretty soon he came running back faster than a race horse could run, and said, "Where's your gun, Simp? When I got down there to the bank I stepped up to the door and a fellow said 'Hand 'em U.' I said, 'I can't have time.' --About that time Duffy said to me, 'That was nice.' I said, "I guess that trick just fell off the scaffolding and there at the hotel, where he is working." --Somebody had shot.

I walked down the street and Tom Shervin and Phil Borchardt was out on the street, and I said to them, "I wonder where their (referring to the Bank Robbers') horses are?" Then I went back thru the Hotel Lobby and thru the Hotel kitchen and the Cook "John the Chinaman" was in there. And I stepped out the back door of the kitchen onto the back of the Hugus & Co. platform back of their store.

Hengsten was there and I said, "Don't shoot in there because they'll start shooting and kill the whole works." Frank said, "I'd like to shoot that big devil, he's breaking all the guns." And I said, "Don't get excited and don't shoot, hold on a minute boy.

Joe Rooney was in the lead about that time. This fellow, Shirley, got up with a gun, shot Bill Clark and run. Bill Clark and Vic Dikemen was shot twice.

There was a big two b. four gate back of Hugus & Co.; I took Frank by the hand, unhooked that gate and was just across an eight-foot sidewalk from Lew.

The "Kid" was standing down by the trees. He was after Dikemen. You'd swear he couldn't have shot that close without scalping Dikemen (Dikemen was shot thru the hat.) They shot the "Kid" in the wrist and the bullet lodged in the elbow joints. The "Kid" had his gun in a firing position and the second time he was shot both ways under the arm, with big guns. -- It was quick.

Frank said, "There goes the devil that was breaking all the guns" and about that time he, Law, fell. There wasn't a man in the outfit knew him but Hengsten. He was shot thru just like that--and when they got down there, McDow and Judge Ryan and two or three fellows were there. Judge Ryan asked this fellow, Law, if he had anything to say. Law said, "Where are the other boys?" and then he said, "Mother, mother--" Judge Ryan said, "You ought to have thought about your mother before you came here.

All the time old man Welch was standing across the street where the bank was and he was dogging the block--and they were holding the gun.
which was using a shot gun; and I know that shot gun drew the blood on both Booth and Herrick. Those fellows were picking off the bricks, right around close to where old men Welch was standing.

On their way to Meeker, the Bank Robbers stopped on the mesa, cut the fences and gates, then crossed the river down by these old trees back of town, rode up and tied their horses to the freight wagons, that were back of the Hugus store, and then walked right into the bank. Two walked in the front door and one walked in the back door. They shot at Joe Smith, and if they hadn't shot at him they'd gotten away with it, but they shot at him, and then stayed in there long enough for Ben Nichols to run home twice for guns. Their idea was to make a run, get out behind these bushes and get their horses. They were going to foil the police by going out south and across the river, where they had cut the fences, when they came in: then go northwest to where Sam Herr later ran into their camp—on the head of three-mile gulch on Strawberry. Sam found three horses, three rifles, and a lot of bedding. The horses were tied up; one was dead from starvation, the other two were nearly dead.---This was about seventeen days later.

Law was about thirty-three or forty, and weighed 135 pounds; George Law was his proper name; a brother-in-law to Charlie Graves in Brown's Park, a place fifteen miles northwest, near the Wyoming line.

Shirley was about forty-five; Shirley was one of the most pleasant men you've ever seen. He always had a nice camp outfit, and was the best cook-tender I've ever seen. Also the nicest cook, and always had a nice little cabin.---He worked for me two years.---In Fairfield was the one that identified Shirley, who had on seven shirts, two sweaters and a vest; he had stood right in front of Duffy and I, thirty minutes before the Bank was robbed.

The "Kid" was never found out; they called him Pierce. He came from Long--his name wasn't Pierce the, there was a fellow in there who told me all about him, his father and everything, but I forget.

After it was all over there was a fellow came up the street with his hands still up, and I said, "You can put your hands down, it's all over now."

Frank Williams was sheriff and the robbery scared him so bad, he didn't wear a hat for three days.

While the Robbery was going on, Ben Nichols went thro' Burg's Blacksmith shop, and about the time Ben got there, Burg, who ran the shop, ran out. And when it was all over Ben went back to look for Burg, as he was digging himself in among the hardwood in the shop. He was so scared Nichols had to dig him out.

Soon afterwards there was about three or four fellows came in here and they stayed around at the hotel and they was swearin' around and looking out to see wher'd shot the Bank Robbers horses. Old man Fleming was long and said, "I'll tell you what ought to happen to you, there ought to be a rock tied to your necks and all of you thrown in the river and I'll tie the rocks to your necks"---and they left.

About two weeks or so after that, I was going to Rifle and I met the toughest-looking gang I've ever seen; three men with two rifles each sent word back over here, to look out.

Those fellows came right in here and Williams told them to get out. Of the hard fellows came down from Brown's Park. These fellows sat down here, everyone belonged to that gang of about twentyfive or thirty, and everyone of them was killed within the next year.
Ralph Lovejoy Meeker passed on at the home of his cousin, Miss
Kadie M. Meeker, at Greeley, Colorado, Monday, December 5th, 1931,
after an illness of only four days, from pneumonia.

He moved to Greeley to make that his permanent home after finish-
ing forty years of capable and valuable service on the New York Herald
in September, 1920. He was the first secretary of the Union colony (the
Greeley district,) and fully intended to make that city his permanent
home.

In his long service on the New York Herald he was given many im-
portant assignments, and traveled and saw much of the world. In 1875
he traveled 2,000 miles on the Missouri river, from agency to post,
unraveling the agents and other frauds for the
Herald. In 1877 he was the Russian-Turkish Correspondent for the
Herald. He was also stationed in Europe at various other times by the
Herald management. In the early days he was also sent to New Mexico, to
expose a big mining stock swindle. He was the military correspondent with
General Grant at the fall of Port Dalhousie. This is only a short review
of a long and active life in one of the largest new papers in the coun-
ty.

In November of this year he visited the town of Meeker for the
first time. In his address here he told you how his mother had impressed
on him the idea to visit this wonderful country, and what she and his
other thought of the White River valley.

He was entranced with what he saw here—everything—but was particu-
larly interested in the mineral wealth. He would ask for information,
and call for the data and the proof. Conclusive evidence was furnished and
then, and not until then, was he satisfied.

Now that Mr. Meeker has passed to his reward, we shall use part of
his letter written to us November 28th—just a week before his death—co-
menting the newspaper fraternity, and giving his real views of the
country we have labored so seriously and harmoniously for—for so many
years:

"Say, the western slope can hold her own in journalism with the
best of 'em—whether of the native born class or the high-priced import-
ged grade of writers and type-setters, linotypers, or just plain good
Colorado newspaper men who stopped mining once a week, long enough to
set up a batch of giant-power literature, make it up on a tombstone,
and go to press with gunny sacks for paper.

Well, I am thanking Providence many times a day that the good fair-
ies or some other influence sent me over the range on the Moffat road
flying machines, to see the wonderful country of the White and Bear
River Empire. Its possibilities are of unbounded promise. I am sure
that Meeker is to become the center of vast wealth and industries. It al-
ready has uncounted millions at its doors. It will be the making of
railroads. It will do for transportation, then transportation can go for the Allegheny—of the western slope. You all know my regard for
Meeker and its magnificent citizens. But to be honest, I must say many
good words for Craig, its people and its imperial prospects for a golden
future. What a live-wire—newspaper atmosphere the town has to inspire it
And I might add to a decent appreciation of Steamboat Springs, Oak Creek and other centers of lively business and much joy, along the Moffat railroad, should I point in letters of honey and gold, for it is only a question of time when the wealth and intelligence of that Heaven favored country will make it a power, not only in Colorado, but in the New West, stretching from the Rockies to the Pacific. My father's life was not given in vain for that wonder-land of wealth and measureless hospitality.

Yours for all the years,

Ralph Meeker

- Not withstanding the facts that Mr. Meeker had been faithful to one trust for forty years, and had returned to the heart of the colony established by his father (of which he was the first secretary,) to spend his days, he learned to see the western slope, to see the section his father told him of. At the first opportunity he made the journey—and even days before his demise he jotted down part of his views and feelings.

The Commercial club tendered Mr. Meeker and Miss Meeker a reception as becoming better acquainted. The old times will not soon forget the talk he made. It can be said with pride that everyone treated them with the greatest courtesy.

But the visit here worked a transformation in the visitor, and he turned all his plans. He loved the country and the people, and at once the arrangements to buy, lose, and build, and these plans were uppermost in his mind until the end. He did not even wait to wait until spring to return.

Northwestern Colorado lost a true friend, and one who would have been extremely helpful had he been spared, but all can gain inspiration to take courage from his last message.

Mrs. Meeker was expected from New York state Thursday, and services will probably be held in Greeley, Friday of last week.
THE OLD SUN DIAL

In the show window of the Commercial club is the old sun
dial made and set up by the detachment of occupation, after
the massacre and the battle of Thornbury. It is a piece of
sandstone twelve or fourteen inches square, with iron tri-
gle property set, and the markings indicating the time
chiseled on the marble. The stone is held to its foundation
by a strong iron stirrup.

Besides its sun and time-keeping device, the stone if of
historic interest. Graven on its surface is the following:

"Fourth, Seventh and Fourteenth Infantry,
Third and Fifth Cavalry,
Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert, Commanding
Ute Expedition-1879-1880"

It is said the letters and figures will be chiseled a little
deeper, given a touch of paint to make them more legible, en-
closed in plate glass, and the stone set up in the park. A very
good plan.

(The writer first saw this dial the first week in June,
1883, on its original foundation)

Letter written to Mr. James Riland--January 15, 1934

Dear Mr. James Riland:

Sir, I see in one of your papers that you say that the
first coal banks were opened below Meeker. As well as I re-
collect, when I went in that country that the first was up
Coal Creek. They told me that it was opened for the Old
Agency, Rock, and a man by the name of Panson went in there
and got coal, and I sold my part to Mr. Bloomfield; and they
got the coal for a long time; and how Mackee got hold of it
is more than I know.

And you speak of the Burk baby being the first baby
girl. I think that if you will hunt the records up, you will
find that Miss Elizabethbook was the first baby born in
Meeker, for I have heard that she was.

H.V. Tomlinson
A Letter from H.A. Wildhack, Judge,
County Court of Rio Blanco, Co.

Meeker, Colorado
April 8, 1931

Mrs. Mary E. Logan
King Junction, Colorado

My Dear Madam:

Pardon me for not sooner answering your letter of March 30th regarding marking the site of the historical Meeker massacre. In reply I state that there are many versions of the affair and some have a little authenticity about them.

About the only history I have of the massacre, is the one written by Alice Pott Hill, in "Colorado Pioneers in Picture and Story", copyrighted in 1915. Its account of it, has a number of errors, one of the most flagrant being that the agency was removed during Mr. Miller's administration, twenty miles from White River to Powell's post.

The agency at no time was ever more than half a mile from the river and at the time of the massacre it was practically on the banks of the White.

To get something definite to write you I called upon Mr. Henry J. Hay, who is now over 70, who first came to the valley in the spring of 1880 and had him read your letter. He at once "opened up" and from him I learned a good deal myself, or rather, had my memory refreshed as to many of the details.

Mr. Hay says that he visited the spot where the males at the agency were killed by the Indians, their bodies having been buried where they fell (not exactly buried, but mounds of earth shoveled over bodies—not enclosed in coffins, either), and the mounds containing Mr. Miller and Mr. Price were pointed out to him, and the effluvia emanating the place therefrom was quite noticeable. This was in the early summer of 1880 and the bodies were removed from there that fall. Mr. Hay has been to the place once or twice since, and remembers seeing the pits where the ground was disturbed, after the bodies were removed.

Mr. Hay thinks he can locate the spot without much trouble, and during our talk he expressed a willingness to visit the scene at any date as possible, and erect some sort of a temporary marker at the place, and I believe a permanent monument would be erected there by the government if its attention was called to it. And I am anxious to go with him, but we do not know just when we will be able to go down there, it being at a point about a mile south and four miles west of Meeker—but we thought possibly the coming month. And, possibly, we might induce Mr. Hay to write up his version of the affair, coupled with his personal experiences as to what he actually saw and heard, as it is handy with the pen and can write a good article—especially if the spirit just moves him right.

I shall write you again, when I find out more.

Very respectfully,

H.A. Wildhack
SITUATED ON THE RANCH OF C.H. Wolcott, TWENTY-Four MILES FROM MEKER,
NORTH OF BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO. MADE OF SENDRock Slabs. Size: 4'6"
AT BASE, 3' AT TOP; 3'9" FROM BASE, EACH SIDE SLOPES UP SLIGHTLY TO
POINT, MAKING THE SHAFT ABOUT 4' HIGH.

INSCRIPTION ON SOUTH FACE:

"IN MEMORY OF
OFFICERS, SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS
OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY
MEN KILLED AND WOUNDED IN
BATTLE WITH THE UTEs
29TH SEPTEMBER, TO 5TH OCTOBER, 1879

TROOPS ENGAGED:
CO's. F AND D, 5TH CAVALRY
E OF 3RD CAVALRY
D OF 9TH CAVALRY

KILLED:
MAJOR T.T. THORNBURGH, U.S.A.
1ST SERGEANT, JOHN DOLAN
WAGONER, AMOS D MILLER
PRIVATE, JOHN BURNS, MICHAEL FIRESTONE
SAMUEL MCKEE, MICHAEL LYNCH
THOMAS MOONEY, CHARLES WRIGHT
AND DOMINICK COFF.
WAGON MASTER, WILLIAM WYNNERY
TEAMSTER, "F. MCGUIRE."

INSCRIPTION ON WEST FACE:
ASS'T SURGEON B.R. LORD, U.S.A.--SERGEANT, JOHN MCKINLEY--TRUMPEETERS
FREDERICK SUTCLIFF, JOHN MCDONALD--PRIVATE, WILLIAM SHERMAN--JAMES S.
HES--JOHN HROXLEY, EMM KUSSMANN--EUGENE PATTERSON, FRANK E. SIMMONS--
EUGENE SHICKEDONZ--CARTER STEINER--NICHOLAS W. MCKEEN--FREDERICK BERN--
THOMAS LYNCH--ERNST MILLER--SERGEANTS JAMES MONTGOMERY, ALLEN
WYATT, CORPORALS, CHAS T. MICHWARZELL, FRANK HUNTER, "F. MCGUIRE, W.
NABERT."

INSCRIPTION ON EAST FACE:
"WOUNDED--PRIVATE, JOSEPH BUCKS, JAMES COMSAY, JOHN CROWLEY, WILLIAM
E. CLARK, JOHN DONOVAN, ORLANDO H. DAVIS, THOMAS PETERSON, THOMAS LEWIS,
RAYD LEVILL, WILLIAM W. MITCHELL, JOHN C. HEDLEY, THOMAS MCNAUGHT, AND
JOSEPH PATTERSON--TEAMSTER, THOMAS GAIN AND FRED NELSON--SCOUT,
FRANK B. LOWRY."

NORTH FACE, PLAIN
SNUDDGING OF THE RAINBOW

by J. J. Donnelly, Meeker, Colorado

Come on to Colorado,
And see your Doctor bills,
Where the snudging of the rainbow
Will cure all human ills.

This snudging of the rainbow
Is the greatest thing that is;
It will cure tuberculosis
And also rheumatism.

And for the mumps and measles,
Diphteria and whooping cough,
And chronic indigestion
It's the greatest thing that's out.

And for the diabetes,
It is simply out of sight;
It will regulate your liver,
And fix your "hendix" right.

It is great on influenza.
And paralysis, and then,
They say that it's infallible
For three score years and ten.

You'll feel a 'lectric current
Running up and down your spine
When you get a two-pound rainbow
A tussieg on your line.

He'll dart out through the water,
Then up in the air he'll split,
And he'll cut the greatest monkeyshines
A dancing on his tail.

They will kinder show their temper,
If you hook 'em in the mouth;
But there're millions more ferocious
When the wiler flies are out.

And when you're cured of all your ills,
And feel all safe and sound,
You won't be near so grouchy like
And won't go belly-a-ching 'round.

So come out to Colorado
And dispel all doubts and fears,
And help to snudge the rainbow,
And live a hundred years.

And when the hundred years is up,
With the faithful we'll be found,
A snudging of the rainbow,
On the happy hunting grounds.

By a disciple of Isaac Walton

Meeker, Colorado--January, 1916
BATTLE RELICS—METAL LIQUOR CONTAINER

Last year (1935) Zach Kenney and George Berg broke up some new ground on the old Henry Volcott ranch, the site of the Thornburg battle in August—September, 1879. Agent N. J. Meeker had sent for troops for protection, and the war department sent in a detachment from (then) Fort D. A. Russell, Cheyenne. This little force was ambushed on Milk Creek, and for six or seven days were besieged and fired upon, losing many killed and wounded from a small force. Reinforcements from Fort Russell finally reached them and the siege was lifted.

Travel was not as de luxe then as now, and instead of being fitted out with trucks, and fresh food daily, they carried everything with them traveling slowly, and in compact mass for security.

That is the reason such a variety of stuff was stored up, but how it remained there for over fifty years and was gotten into the ground by the elements, is the mysterious part.

The boys salvaged the following articles, turned up by the plow shares:

A silver dime minted in 1835.
Black rubber pocket hair comb, with the same zest for patent rights.
An old black felt hat, in which the imprint "manufactured by" can still be deciphered.
Old bridle bits.
Brass spurs.
Jockey, snap-stick.
Chim hobbles.
Two log chains, 9 or 9 ft. long, to cut more trees on the heavy supply wagons to negotiate the hills, for the highways were not in grade then.

And most peculiar of all, a little bag full of old-style, big bore, rifle ammunition. The lead bullets in part of the shells had partly corroded away, but the powder would "let go" after all these years. This ammunition likely fell just out of reach of the beleaguered soldiers, and every move they made drew fire from the enemy.

There are still thousands of people living in Colorado who remember the troublesome days of 1879.

Metal Liquor Container

Recently Cecil Collins, a Meeker youth, found an officer's relic that had been buried near Twelfth and Main streets, but the owner did not go to it, some buck private stole, "killed" and buried the relic.

It was (and is) a metal whiskey bottle, three inches in diameter and nine inches long, and originally had a slender handle. It may have been made of pewter, and might have been more valuable material. It was molded in beauteous design, and was then (and is yet) a handsome ornament for a side-board or mantlepiece, but badly battered from time and exposure.

It has a raised and smooth shield on one side, on which were engraved or molded the letters BOURBON, which might be called the directions on the bottle. Some member of the army of occupation (over 50 years ago) stole his superior officer's bottle, drank the contents, and buried the container. At that early day the sage brush was four to six feet high in that territory.
A Personal Correspondence from Levi Nixon to H.A. Wildbeck.

Oak Hill, Illinois

Mr. Meeker, Meeker, Colorado

Dear Sir:

In August 1863 I was driving government team from Rawlins, Wyo. to Meeker, Colorado, and I was one of the teamsters detailed to stay till after the sale of the post, which was 10 days after the rest of the soldiers had left.

I was very much taken up with the beauty of the place and the hunting, which the country afforded, and thought I would like to buy some of the buildings, but some of the people who had been there longer seemed to think Old Colorado would come down from the hills and massacre all of the people; so I gave up the idea of buying any of the property. As I remember the buildings sold from $33.00 to $90.00 each. There was a lot of settlers at the sale, and I have often wondered if the place settled up, proved successful, and if the village had built up, and what the people follow for a living. I do not remember one who lived there at that time but one, that was Dr. LeCompte, and I think he had a store at that time.

If you could give me any information concerning the progress of the country, I would be very glad to hear from you.

Find enclosed self-addressed envelope for reply.

Respectfully,

Levi Nixon

[Answered January 22, 1933]

Levi Nixon, Esq.
Oak Hill, Illinois

Sir:

I was more than pleased when our faithful postmaster handed me your letter, undated, but evidently just received to-day.

To begin, I will give a reminiscence, so you will know who is writing you, as T. B. Scott, our P.M., came to Meeker about the beginning of this century, while I came in October 1886—over 45 years ago.

I was born and reared in Pekin, Illinois. As your town is not very far from there, you may have been there and possibly know some of my people, or relatives. Father and mother came there in 1850; father died there in 1911, age 81, and mother died there in 1924, age 83. I left home in 1880, and after living in Leadville 6½ yrs., came to Meeker, where I've been ever since.

By the way, Meeker had a resident, who came to White River valley in May 1880. His name is Henry J. Hay, who was born July 23, 1847, on the Sicks Creek that you now live on—the Kickapoos, a very familiar name to me, but don't now hear it often. With his brother, Fletcher Hay, they arrived in Powell Park, where they saw the dirt mounds—covering the bodies of Nathan C. Meeker, the agent, and others of his escort, who were massacred by the Ute Indians in September 1879. I've heard Henry telling about Dr. LeCompte quite often, but that gentleman had left before I got here. In 1912 was organized a Pioneer Society here Mr. Hay, the oldest resident, was made historian; and he and I got up a history, furnishing most of it and I type-writing it. Among this record we got up a list of all persons we knew who were early residents,
but who had moved elsewhere. Your name is not on the list, but that of Dr. LeCompte is—about 500 others. Likely you remember Hank Golden, Harvey Shankland, and the Fairfield brothers, Sam and Freeman, who all were freighting between here and Rawlins, when I arrived here. Sam Nichols, who carried mail here before my time, about 85 now, is still in the valley.

In 1887 the town "proved up" on the town site, Wm. H. Clark, the surveyor, was the Mayor, with G. D. Thayer as town clerk. As a Notary, I acknowledged every deed the mayor issued to town lots, and have a record of each deed.

I guess you knew all the Morgans in (then) Routt County, and Jos.H. Iles, Gene and Will S. Taylor, the Colloms and the Kelloggs and the James', etc.

Well, the country has settled up pretty well, hills as well as the various valleys; Meeker has a population of nearly 1,000. The adobe buildings have all disappeared; I'm living in a house of brick. You now would hardly know Northwestern Colorado; and should you decide on making Meeker a visit you will miss the many big holes and the countless stretches of highway which were, at times, nearly impassable; and you'd miss numberless hills which needed "doubling up" of horses for division of loads to conquer them. They are a thing of the past—especially since the advent of the auto—which are now thicker than flies used to be.

But the depression has just the same, and the turning point of it is not yet in evidence. Still, we're not to bed off as thousands of other places. Most of the people lived at too fast a pace and didn't take a tumble till it was too late; in fact, they lived beyond their income, ran deeply in debt and when the crash came they were most forcibly and pitifully stranded upon the rocks.

While the organized industrialists are drawing good wages; that is, some of them, the rank and file are working for their board and lodging; on we have many of the latter. This inequality in wages, however, will stand itself to some extent as time goes on, but in the meantime a revolution of some kind appears to be in the offering if the depression doesn't end; or conditions change materially from the past three years. The election last November clearly indicated the feelings of the people. Poor Hoover!

Would be pleased to hear from you. I still have a lot more to say; I want a little encouragement, naturally so. Any news from my native state will be welcome; I used to know many people back there. However, 13 years is a long time; I visited there five or six times in that span, though.

Very truly yours,

H.A. Wieland

II. Farming and (especially) stock-raising has been the chief industry in this county (Rio Blanco). Rifle is nearest R. R. point to the south (44 miles) while Craig is nearest to north, 30 miles. The main highways are typical Boulevards now; Altitude, Meeker, 5340 ft. above sea level. Nearly all Meekerites have garden patches, but tomatoes or corn seldom ripen; but roasting corn do, though.

Wieland

Hand's reply February 5th already submitted for date on the early farmers, etc.

Meeker, Colorado
February 12, 1933
Levi Nixon, Esq.

Oak Hill, Illinois

My Dear Nixon:

Your letter of the 16 duly received, followed by receipt of a copy of the Peoria Transcript--Journal (Sunday edition) which brings back to me the days of the 70's when each was a separate paper, the Transcript being published by Enoch Emery in Peoria and the Journal by one Bernard at Pekin, but later transferred to Peoria, and then later consolidated once or twice with Peoria publications, eventually Transcript--Journal, subscription to which were many years ago as low as 10 cents a week for the daily editions to any one of them, but W. J. S. having been the Pekin correspondent and agent for the Peoria Journal, that change in about 40 years, when McDowell ran the Peoria Democrat!

After learning the wagonmaker's trade in Nichols Station, Iowa (near Muscleine) in 1875-6, I got work in the Pekin Press, a German weekly, where I mastered the printer's trade; left there in March 1880 for Leadville Colorado, to work on the Deutsche Zeitung, getting into English papers (dailies) in 1881 to 1888; then in October of that last mentioned year staged it (from Red Cliff) all the way to Camp on White River, as the military called the town of Meeker--and likely before many more years I'll be taken up on the hill to the south just across the river, where the military had a "lookout" station made of cottonwood logs, about 12 feet square; likely you saw that lookout in 1883.

From your letter, I now see that when I referred to Henry Jeff as an old-time resident, I failed to mention that he had passed away in 1924; wish he was now alive as I then could have answered your inquiries forever, in that book that he and I got up in 1913, I find we have an old-timer yet who well remembers Wolfe, and your letter brought back to me just where that garden was on the road to Rawlings. He is Horace "Blue" Herp, who came here in 1884, but had taken a trip and out here in September 1882, Herp has been our stage mail contractor about 37 years out of the 40 years he's been here, continuously, and he shared the joy with me in going over your letters. Nichols, whom I referred to in my first letter, and who is still here, came here also in 1884, but lives well the river now at Rangel (where there is an oil field) about a dozen miles from Utah's boundary line; and when I get to see him I'll remit him with your letters and doubtless I'll get more or less information to write you in the future. He will likely remember some of those freighters you speak of.

Tomorrow I'll mail you copies of the two Meeker papers, each of which give an account of the Pioneer Society's annual gathering a week ago, Friday last, Feb. 3rd.

You mentioned Johnny McGand, as wagon boss. Both Herp and I are of the opinion that John M'Donald and Johnny McAnes are and is the and the same person. I remember meeting M'Donald in my early days, as he came up to Meeker occasionally, and I knew him as having been the official interpreter for the Ute Indians when the military was here (in Agent Meeker's time) and he proved up on a pre-emption of 160 acres about 45 miles down the river and then left the valley, and I haven't heard anything about him since.

Also, C. F. Wagner. That book gives the name of George M. Wagner.

He carried the rifle mail when I first came here in 1883, he bringing me in on his mail wagon (a 3-seated light rig). He pre-empted the 160 acres the spot where Agent Meeker was killed. Possibly he was a freighter originally; he died about 1890. Knew him very well; he was considered about half crazy; dull in intellect, but loud in talk. No
record of the other names you gave.

Congratulations on your approaching birthday! Eighty years is certainly quite a span; I will make it in August 1933— if I am spared the intervening 3½ yrs. Was knocked out four years ago with a prostate gland trouble, and, although having suffered no pain whatever, am weakening ever since and may "cross the range" at any time.

Guess I've given you enough for the present, although haven't run out of material or subjects to write about; but will gather some more for my next, as the supply is inexhaustible.

Will be pleased to hear from you again, when you get "in the notion"

Very truly yours,

H.A. Wildheck

Meeker, Colorado
March 3, 1933

Mr. Nixon:

I recently sent you copies of our local papers and trust that they were duly received. The Herald was established in 1885, while the Review started in 1882. Herald's publisher, for whom I worked—nearly 50 years, died in 1925, but his son carries on. The Review's publisher, was also an old-time Leadville printer, and I worked with both of them during the years 1881 to 1886. Rilend, of the Review, came to Colorado in 1873 or 1877, before Leadville was on the map; he's a few months younger than I, but, like myself, is on the verge of the grave; we may reach the 80 mile-post, but I doubt it.

Will ring off now. Another installment for you later, as the spirit moves me.

Very truly yours,

H.A. Wildheck

Notation: Excerpt from Wildheck's letter to Nixon, March 3, 1933

Oak Hill, Illinois
March 6, 1933

H.A. Wildheck, Esq.
Meeker, Colorado

My Dear Sir:

I have before me your letter of Feb. 10th which I will try and answer after so long a time.

You mention the name of Horace S. Hart who made a trip to Meeker in Sep. 1862. Saying he has been your stage and mail conductor for 49 yrs and he shared the joy with you in going over my letters. Ask Mr. Hart if he remembers a stage driver by the name of Pat Burk, a little Irishman, who drove stage from Rawlings to Meeker about 1881 and 82. At one time thru' to Meeker he had one passenger, a colored lady and I think he said the first colored lady ever to arrive at Meeker, and I thought Mr. Hart might remember it. I do not think Geo. Wagner and H. Wagner are the same which I mentioned in my first or second letter to you. (———)

Say, I remember Craig but only as a ranch and cannot get it fixed in my mind. How far north of Mountain Meadows does the R.R. go today? I used to cross Bear River west of the Meadows, about 2 miles, if I remember rightly. It would sure be a pleasure to me to come over the
old trail from Rawlin to Meeker and not find any mud holes, but a common sense road.

Say I sure enjoyed reading the Meeker papers you sent me, it does not seem possible that the village could have about 1,000 population, but a lot can happen in 50 years. When I first remember Peoria, Ill., all the business was done on Water Street and I do not suppose the population was over 2 or 3 thousand, but now over one-hundred and five thousand. Some change I say in the span of one's life.

I will close, hoping to hear from you when you feel like answering. Thanks for your nice letters.

Yours truly,

Levi Nixon

Excerpt from Nixon's letter to Wildbeck, in which he answers Wildbeck's letters of the 13th of Feb. and the 3rd of March.
Taken from the White River Review 1903

Saturday night of last week, May 27, 1903, was a big day in Odd Fellow circles in Meeker, the district meeting being held here, which had a very large attendance. It was the regular district meeting, and members from the lodges in the towns of Grand Valley, Rifle, Silt, New Castle, and Meeker were present.

On account of the press of business, messers Governor Ed. C. Johnson could not be present. A regular program was carried out—speeches, music, banquet and dancing.

Charles E. Adams, Eumorose, past grand master, spoke on the book "Silver Dollar," a slander on the living and a libel on the dead of the early day settlers. For the justification of his remarks, he pointed to the two following lists of names; pioneers from Lasellville, who settled in and made the valley what it is today. And beside these, others from Lasellville (and the mining camps) settled up the eastern slope. The speaker, and the society, made out a strong case for the Lasellville pioneers, among whom was Geo. T. Hock, who established and founded the Odd Fellows Home at Canon City.

Other speakers were C. H. Nelson, Grand Junction, Past Grand Priorarch and Mrs. Blanche Burns, Cedaredge, who spoke for the Resolutions.

The meeting was one of the largest and best attended district gatherings yet held.

The following living Lasellville pioneers in this section were invited to the meeting:

Mrs. Carrie Keyrell
Mrs. Bertha Metzger
Mrs. Annie T. Loyd
Joseph Beldorf
Fred Beldorf
James A. Davis
Erae M. Keyrell
James L. Tagert
Mrs. Emma Anick
A. L. Strehlke
John Kesey
H. A. Wildnack
Henry E. Phelps
R. H. Reynolds
Mrs. Mary J. Holland
Mrs. Emma Anick
Mrs. Gertrude Graham
Mrs. Rose Beldorf
Mrs. Ed. N. Davis
Mrs. Ruth Meyer
Olof Anderson
Laurence Daum
Reuben Olden
Albert J. Cole
Peter Johnson
Evan G. Thomas
A. P. Verlick

James L. Kiland

The following is a list of the dead, from Lasellville, who assisted in the development of this section:

John E. Rooney
E. M. Johansen
Peter Stewart
A. C. Holland
Mrs. Katharine Murray
Mrs. A. Keller
James Burke
August Anderson
Otto Metzger
Mrs. Emma Marshall
Thomas F. Dunn
L. S. Bloomfield
Mrs. V. A. Keller
Andr. Ryan
Robert Metzger
J. C. Holland
Mrs. Nora Schneider
J. A. Youker
Samuel Martin
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<td>Gene O. Jones</td>
<td>Niels Hansen</td>
<td>Herman Richener</td>
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<td>Henry Pearson</td>
<td>George Smith</td>
<td>Wm. Nimick</td>
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<td>John M. Walsh</td>
<td>Mrs. John V. Walsh</td>
<td>John J. Niblock</td>
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<td>George Niblock</td>
<td>John T. Thomas</td>
<td>E.V. Watson</td>
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<td>Fred Whiteman</td>
<td>John Weldon</td>
<td>Elwin Amick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Lena Hartke</td>
<td>John Daum, Sr.</td>
<td>John Daum, Jr.</td>
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<td>Andrew Daum</td>
<td>Henry Daum</td>
<td>G.V. Augustine</td>
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<td>Julius Strehlke</td>
<td>Owen Lumney</td>
<td>Thomas Lunney</td>
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<td>Thomas Kilduff</td>
<td>W.D. Cunningham</td>
<td>Thomas Watson</td>
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<td>Thomas Thomas</td>
<td>Isaac Baer</td>
<td>Mrs. Isaac Baer</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.W. Pierce</td>
<td>Albert M. Pierce</td>
<td>Henry J. Hay</td>
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<td>J.T. Hay</td>
<td>Patrick Hayes</td>
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<td>James Hayes</td>
<td>Michael Hayes</td>
<td>J.H. LeKemp</td>
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<td>B.Z. Bretherton</td>
<td>Louis Johnson</td>
<td>James Little</td>
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<td>James M. Cole</td>
<td>Mrs. J.M. Cole</td>
<td>William Jew</td>
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<td>James Hutchinson</td>
<td>James Reagan</td>
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<td>Robert Reagan</td>
<td>J.D. Schmitzer</td>
<td>John Reagan</td>
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<td>Mrs. Joe Ranguis</td>
<td>David Steele</td>
<td>W.T. Thompson</td>
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<td>George M. Heathway</td>
<td>Farrell McLaughlin</td>
<td>Orvil E. Dudley</td>
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<td>Monzo Mijer</td>
<td>L.T. Rien</td>
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<td>Henry Larson</td>
<td>John Williams</td>
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<td>Martin Slifka</td>
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Either list may be incomplete and incorrect, having been gotten up hurriedly, but it gives the part the mining industry played in the development of agriculture in this valley.
By Thomas Baker--A Pioneer of Meeker since 1883

The first man that I met coming to Meeker, which was then a Military Post, was the Post Master, Mr. T. J. Hezen, a very fine gentleman—a veteran of the Civil War and a brother of General T. B. Hezen, of Civil and Indian War fame. He became the first Judge of Garfield County. He had wide knowledge of law and a lot of good horse sense. Mr. J. B. Harbut was located at the five-mile post on the Gov’t. road, with a herd of sheep, which he had driven from California in 1882. He was a fine character, one of the big honest-to-goodness men. His home ranch was at the mouth of Parachute Creek, now Grand Valley. He was the first settler in Garfield County—and paid the first taxes in it.

I met Lieut. Patterson of the U.S. Army, also L. G. or Yellowstone Kelly, the great scout. He taught me how to pack a horse and to throw the diamond hitch. He located a ranch on Lower Grand River and started a herd of cattle—later went into the U.S. Service again, and served with distinction in the Philippines. I had heard that he was retired and was living at Riverside, California. I sent a picture of the Monument we had erected to him, but he had died one month before, and was buried at Billings, Montana.

I also met Mr. Duncan Blair, who had a herd of cattle below Yellow Creek. His brand was the Square and Compass, and he was a member of the Mystic Tie—He was a Pioneer of the first order, every traveller passing was entertained at his ranch. He always had a big stock of hay, free, for the horses to feed on. Mrs. Blair was an Indian woman, not of the Ute tribe. It was said that when she saw a dust in the distance on the road, she stirred up the fire and prepared to entertain them. Mr. Blair had an unquenchable thirst for whiskey. When he shipped his beef to Chicago, once a year, he thoroughly quenched it then did not see whiskey for another year. But when the Saloons came, he drank and gambled away his fine herd of cattle.

(In the late summer of ’83, the Gov’t. started removing the Soldiers and when nearly all had gone, the buildings were auctioned off. They brought but trifling prices. There were but few people here to buy. Messrs. Ilce, Hulet and Torrence, and some others from Axial Basin, came and bought some of the buildings to get the lumber from the roofs to improve their ranches. The big Adobe buildings, and most of the others hadgood shingled roofs, new floors of lumber, which had been shipped from the far east. Mr. Major, the head of Hugus Co., bought the first one, where the present Hugus block now stands. I think it only brought $50.00—the rest only brought small amounts. Mr. Allsbrook bought the one where the Odd Fellow building now stands, for $50.00. The rest of the officers quarters was bought by Mr. Sam Fairfield, for $100.)

Mr. Major also bought the big stock of hay which they said was one hundred tons, and fenced by cord wood, four feet wide and eight feet high, all for $100.00. Then came one big long blast of the Bugle, and the last of the Soldiers departed.

Mr. Major moved the goods from the trading Post in Powell Park, into the Adobe Building.

The Townsite Company had built the ditch, planted the trees, fenced the Park, and donated it to the people free of costs. All those who claimed lots, got them at the cost of recording, which was about $5.00.

In the evening of the first election, the battle had been passed too freely. Charlie Dunbar was shot by an outlaw named Pete Stewart, from Piceance Creek. (Pie-ciance). I do not know it, that creek, but it's name—but it was spelled in three syllables on Hayden's Map. I do not know either, how Flag Creek got it's name, but there was a big pole standing when I first came, about ten miles out. I had heard that Utes had raised a flag of truce—and that they had shot a Lieut., who went to it for a parley.

The Utes had retreated over this same road, and the soldiers had followed them—and for years afterwards, the posts made by the heavy kegs, could be seen.---On account of the thick timber, and—swamps, the Utes could not follow this road all the way. Coont Kelly found the place to Grand River—the same road that is now the Torr, road—and the soldiers marked it by Mile Posts—each showing the distance from Pecos. (There were also Mile Posts from Rawlings—each showing the distance, also a Telegraph line running to Pecos. At Torr River too, there was a Military Post, but not as big as the one at Pecos.

Messrs. Attix and Eakers, the latter known as White River Eicker, and veterans of Indian wars, were discharged here, and located ranches. Also three Gov't. Termites, Messrs. Morgan, Daes, and Beach, all located ranches and became settlers. Two who were outstanding figures in the early "eighties" were Messrs. Allenbrook and McHale, the former extended the Agency ditch to Strawberry Creek, and was the first to propose the Flour Mill and the New County.---and the latter was the first to grow Alfalfa, he also brought in the 3rd Mill and raised the first lumber. Messrs. Kendel and Wilber brought in the 10th bottle—the former located the 10th ranch. Mr. Kendel was a big kind-hearted man, who would have taken off his shirt and given it to a man, if he was cold. Mr. Will Clark was one of nature's noblemen, who had his heart in his hand, was always a booster for Pecos, and its chief apostle, nearly all his life.

A company of farmers built the Flour mill, which was later acquired by Hugus and Co., who had a chain of stores and banks in L.W. Wyoming, and N.W. Colorado. They were almost the backbone of this country. They gave almost unlimited credit to the farmers and took in their wheat and oats every fall, so they could square up their accounts, also loaned money to farmers and started them in the cattle business, after the big herds failed. When they replaced the flour clerks, they sent in young men, who were singers, or musicians, that became social assets to the community—their outstanding figure, Mr. Poulton, built the first Brick Block, and when it burned down, replaced the more modern one, now owned by Oldland and Co., who succeeded their business, and carried it on under the lines, until the flour mill burned—and later the depression. They opened the first store.

Mrs. Wright, who was living on her nine-mile ranch, had bought the next adobe building, moved in and started the Hotel and Restaurant. Soon after, a gentleman from Denver, named D.W. Richards, came and organized the Townsite Company. He wanted every settler to take an interest and make Pecos the county seat of Garfield. He was a great booster—called meetings, and made lots of patriotic speeches. A week or so before election, he sent Mr. Wilber to Piceance, and me up the river, to round up settlers, to come in for a grand rally. They were all too busy to come to a meeting, but all promised to come on Election Day. The permanent County Seat had not been selected, but was to be voted on. I believe the Carbonate Camp was supposed to be the County Seat, and that a court had been held there.

The Election followed, Mr. Richards appointed me to keep all incendiaries away from the Polls, but only one appeared, and a bottle had been
pulled on him before I got the e. Mr. Richards had gone to Glenwood, to
boost for Meeker. All the county offices had been promised to Grand
River men, on their promise to vote for Meeker. But they broke their
promises, so we got nothing but one County Commissioner, and lost the
County Seat by 27 votes. It was said that Glenwood voted a lot of names
up at Aspen.

Mr. W.H. Clark and his party of surveyors, who had been running base
line, came in on the 9th of November. I remember it, because it was the
first snow-storms of the season. They all became permanent settlers. Mr.
Clark then took a lively interest in Meeker, and became President of the
Townsite Company. Meeker was in the center of the Military Reservation,
which extended four miles in every direction from the Flag Pole, and no
one could make filings on it, until 1900, when it was thrown open to
settlement. Mr. Clark, who was the first mayor, proved up on it for the
people.

When I first came, there was no cattle or horses here—except the
Blair herd, below Yellow Creek—but in 1884, big herds were brought in.
It was said 40,000 were turned loose.

First, the IO7 ranged mostly in the Flag Creek country. The N7
ranged on Sulphur—the Keystone on Sureberry—the Oelund Co. ranged
on Piccience. The leading herd was the biggest on Little Beaver and Coal Creek.
Mr. Letham and Richards on Yellow Creek, the Critchlow herd and the
Green herd also ranged there. Mr. Schutte was the first to bring cattle to
Piccience. There were also lots of cattle and horses turned loose.

The horses' increased very fast, especially the Indian Ponies. Nero
Dox said an Indian could raise a colt at every change of the moon.
In those days there was lots of grass everywhere. The splendid blue
grain grew up two feet high, and the cattle did fine, and increased. In
the fall at the first snow, they started to drift down, like the deer,
and the lanes were full of cattle running day and night, until all had
gone down, almost to Utah. In the spring, they would be rounded and
driven up again.

In 1889 it was, I believe, a very airy summer, and very hot. I had
never before or since, seen it so airy and hot. The air was scintillating
with heat and the heat waves scintillated with heat. And crickets
nestled much like the snake. Then the grass got all eaten up, and there
was no hay to feed the cattle, except what a few ranchmen had to feed
their smaller bunches. That year seventy-five percent of the cattle
died. Then the big cattlemen quit the business. Messrs. Oelund, and
Critchlow, stayed on and picked up again. The smaller cattle farms and
ranchmen commenced to put up hay—fed in the winters, and increased
their herds. There were lots of cattlemen that I have not named, that
left out and sold what few cattle they round up, for as little as
$0.00 per head.

The outstanding men in later years were Mr. John Hibberd, and the
Honorable Isaac Beer, who carried thru' the Miller Creek Witch-end
Hedges. Hay and Walbridge. I could name lots of splendid Pioneers, who
were Nature's noblemen and women, who lived according to the
Golden Rule, and never had any cases in the law courts, but it was not
an unusual thing to see the Sheriff, the Justice of the Peace, and the
Prisoner all gambling together, in the corner of the Saloon. Mr. Tom
Fairfield got slightly sick and his folks called in the Dr., who ordered
him to go right to bed—but he would not go to bed—he said, "I knew if
I ever got me in bed, I'd be a goner."

Mr. Major, who had an ample waistline—also Colorow, who had one
too, and when they would meet, they approached each other and compared
waist lines.

On the Fourth of July '84, Meeker had it's first celebration. Mr.
Alsebrook read the Declaration of Independence, and Mr. Clark made a
patriotic speech, in the old Hospital building. Also the school was held
his same building, and the teacher was Mrs. Harry Goff, who taught for $40.00 per month. Miss Agnes Hazen came in and taught, the following year. She was a fine teacher, a musician and a singer. In the early eighties there were three very talented young men, who had just finished High School, viz: Will S. Love, who was the walking encyclopedia, who could sing and make nice speeches; Ed Brown, later known as the Million-Hoof, a musician and a singer with a fine tenor voice; and Willie, who described scenery, much so fine, and could write poems on any occasion, was editor of the Rio Blanco News.

I was friendly with two very agreeable Indians. Bay, who was the son of Colorow, and a tall straight Indian, would come and have dinner with us, and liked to take a piece of pie for his Squaw. The Utes were very moderate eaters and did not beg much—at one time, when a lot of them came, they paid $4.00 for a fat sheep. Bay lived at the spring, on what is now the LeGrange Ranch—he used to call it his ranch, and a lot of them camped at little Flag Creek. A very happy little old Indian, I think they called him Litle Washington, made us an after-dinner speech, he could describe the ocean and the rolling of the waves; he said me some compliments. He said, "Pretty nice Ranch, Pretty nice cattle—and pretty fine Squaw."

I believe the Townsite Co. planted the trees, Miss Hazen planted me, and named it for Gen. W.T. Hazen, her uncle.

Meeker had a unique character, stuttering Ed Smizer, who could not arrested. He was desperate, and an outlaw. When Meeker was going to kill an Indian, who came in to make peace, Smizer said, "You kill him, I'll kill you." When Gen. Harrison accused him of stealing, he said, "I try to steal your stuff, but could not carry it out of the country. I believe that was the case when a man named Bert Fairchild was shot for stealing beef, and for complicity in blowing up the Boise Reservoir, and made a dash for liberty and was never since heard of.

Shortly after the running out of the Utes, sheriff Randel disappeared, and was never again heard of. The shee, also met the fate of the Utes, and were run out—the Harburt herd of 3,000 were run over the Bob Cliffs, and the harder was shot.

In the fall of '84, Mr. vonBrandis, a cattleman, and a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War, called a meeting in which he proposed to call a posee, and go and order the Utes to go back to the Reservation, and if they did not go, forcibly drive them back. Mr. Alsebrook opposed it, and nothing was done at that time.

The first Doctor name was Resher, he brought in 100 head of cattle, and they did well, up to the time of the big loss, five years afterwards, and Ike Collier, who had charge of them, told me he only rounded up 11 head.
Twenty Years After
Taken from the Neeker Herald May 13, 1898

William McDowell of Deboque, an early day settler of this valley, was in town this week after an absence of twenty years—having left here the year after the late war.

Mr. McDowell has been in the Grand valley for many years, where he has been a successful fruit grower and prominently identified with the development of the oil and other resources.

At the time of the late unpleasantness Bill was among the central and prominent figures; his partners were Sam C. Hammond, John C. Calhoun and Major Otiswell; the latter was in the commissary department, and issued meat tickets for the sheriff's mess.

Mr. McDowell was in the settle at Ranchey; he and the eight horsemen ride into the pocket, where seven were killed and wounded (two killed and five wounded) and the eight horses killed; he made Jack Yard comfortable in his dying moments, tied up the wound of Ed. Felts (who received the same bullet in the head that went through Yard's body) and a rude counselor of the lower White—to keep the Colorado Springs militia company on the north side of the river, but one militiaman killed his vigilance and swam the river, got in the willow on the south side and shouted for help.

Bill was corporal of the guard that was detailed to guard the 800 captured Indian ponies; his devoted but exhausted little force was assailed by the allied forces of settlers, visitors, tourists, war correspondents, volunteers and horse thieves, but he succeeded in saving 50 of them, which he turned over to Col. George Crook of the United States army, which undoubtedly averted a war between the United States and Colorado.
A Brief Pioneer History of Thomas H. Warren

I was born in Ontonagon, Michigan, September 18, 1866.

went to Colorado when I was four years old. Lived at Central City, then to Georgetown, then to Brownsville, where I lived until I was sixteen, then moved to Robison in 1890. I worked in the Robison Mine, also on our own claim on the head of Eagle.

I was 20 years old, when I came to White River. I came with my Dad and Mom Brady. We came to Detero, then to the Carbonate Camp, then came over Ute Trail, came down on White River to the mouth of Dry Creek.

I took up the ranch where I now live, in 1894.

I voted at the first election held in Meeker.

I have farmed every since I've been here. The prices would compare with the same as those to-day. But wages were a lot less, and went a lot in buying things. I worked on the road here, for 1 or 2 days, steadied myself.

All the hauling was done by oxen, and there was no Model T Ford.

The Meeker Massacre occurred before I came to Meeker. My Mom and 9 children were in town when the Bank Robbery occurred.

I've heard lots of good yarns but can't remember how they go, so it's of no use to you. I could probably tell you more if I could think to you.

I hope this will be of some help to you.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas H. Warren
"Pioneer Autobiography" written by Zack P. Methes

I was born in Tennessee, Davidson County, in 1866. Just after my twentieth birthday I made up my mind to go west, just as far into the wilderness as I could get, and grow up with the country. I picked the western slope of northwestern Colorado, as I saw there was no railroad.

My father was well to do, a good farmer and stockman, and nicely situated on the L. N. R. R. 12 miles north of Nashville, on a highway, that is now the Dixie highway. But there was six children of us, and one sixth didn't suit me. I had just completed a four course at Jennings Business College, Nashville, and I thought ready for something. Three other boys came west with me, the three went to Del Norte, and I was my first stop at Genoa City, Colorado. I had three cousins that had been there 30 or 40 years. Nervin, Len and Bob Gardner. They ran a big cow outfit, branded the Q brand. Len says, "If you will go with me on the spring round-up, I will take my mess wagon, and a couple core boys and go with you, I want to see that western slope, I have heard so much talk about it." So I went on round-up, from Passes Vista, to Garden Park, a distance of eighty miles. Some Round-up.

In the first part of August, 1886, Len and I, Vel Parker and Sam Weston, came over to the western slope. Came through on the range into Teller Park, then over the Taylor Range to Aspen, down Roaring Park, to Grand River, down Grand river to where there was only a tent. Then Jack Moe was in it, afterwards got killed in the Ute War. Then on to Meeker, and I could look over the White River, the Bear River and Blue River country. I made up my mind the White River country was good enough for me, so I located. In Scenery Gulch, a fellow by the name of Jones, had located a ranch, and filed on it. I gave Jones $400.00 to pull up his stake and let me have it. Jones held it, until March 8th, 1887, and I filed on it. (Having become of age) This ranch was about eight miles from any neighbors, although there were Liens and other game to listen to.

In the fall of '87, I was conscripted and forced into the Ute War, by being made a Deputy Sheriff by Kendall. — Wasn't much, a running fight from the head of Beaver to nine miles below Rengely. We were trying to arrest 3 or 4 Indians for killing Coyotes, and they wouldn't give them up. It gave the country a considerable scare. Soldiers came in, and Ed Miller scouted for them. They found out we were taking them down the White and Bear River divide, and by a stroke of coincidence, they ran right into these Indians about the mouth of Wolf Creek. Captured them, drew them into a bend of the White River. But it came up a big rain and hail storm, and Ed and the old Major ducked into the brush, and when it was over, the Indians had flew the Cat Hole. The Sheriff and us came along about then, hot on their trail, and run into Ed and the old Major, and they told us their troubles, so we rode the rest of the day, and practically all night and caught those Indians 30 or 40 miles further on, to be exact, 9 miles below Rengely. It was sun-up in the willow patch, at the mouth of a big draw. Then the race was on, when in a couple of miles from the camp, we nearly run into one of the Indian scouts. He turned and rode for his life, to camp, notified the rest and when we got there, they were on the move, as they had their horses brought up and ready, or they were kept tied up all night, but they were on the move the next day. I don't know when I first got a shot. Jack Ward was killed, Lui Falcon, President Cleveland's wife's cousin, and a fellow we called Curley Dr. Durmont, got badly.
badly wounded; another fellow, I forget his name, got all the skin
shot off his chin. We stayed at Rangely several days, doing Guard
day and night for a week, but the Indians didn't come back, and
we never had any trouble with them, afterward. None of us were ever
paid for our trouble in making the country safe for others to follow.
I captured their entire camp and about 500 head of horses.

The winter of '86 and '87, was a hard one for me. I went to work
on the saw mill mountain, at a saw mill owned by MeKennon, and Sher-
son. Sam Weirfield was the Log Contractor. I worked all winter in 5'
of snow, went in and out on snow shoes, cut my trees down on snow
shoes, and thought I was making about two dollars and my board. Drew
hardly anything, not over $6.00 or $8.00.

The first of April came and Sam claimed he was broke, didn't get a
caller, neither did the rest of us loggers, so I left there a foot
and a half way to Meeker and met Dicker (his real name was Edwards)
and he said he wanted a man, and I told him I was his man. So I went
back in that snow and worked all through April, cutting poles, wages
were forty dollars there. ——- I got my money.

Then everything was brought in by ox teams, and in winter times
it was a long time between mails. When the Iron Springs were showed
in, we were cut off from the rest of the world. My father died the
10th of November 1886, and I didn't know he was dead for four months.

The Ranch in Scenery Gulch was partly a stock ranch and without
stock you couldn't make a living on it, but I held it. I took up a
caret claim under the high line ditch, in Powell Park. It sure was a
slow, hard drive. A.C. Moulton was the manager of J.W. Hugus and Co.,
and the first year he lent me $500.00, the second year another $500,
still no crop, but it wasn't my fault, the new ditch sunk in fields.

Moulton got scared, but he put up another $500.00 to protect the $1,000
well, the third year I made the biggest crop ever raised by one man
in this country. 4166 bushels of wheat and oats; 1200 bushels of
timber wheat and 600 bushels of oats piled up in one pile. Paid him
all I owed him, and had a little grub stake left. He saw I was a stay-
er and a go-getter, honest and industrious, and he knew I had this stock
ranch. He told me to sell out on Strawberry Creek and go into the Cow
Business, and he would back me, and I did. I got the limit of the bank
lots of times, as the records will show, and have had over-drafts of
as high as $2400. But times have changed for me, and if they don't get
better soon, we will all lose 50 years of close application and industry.

When A.C. Moulton or Hugus and Co., closed out, they were paid every
toller. The Ranch in Scenery Gulch sold for $30,000.

You asked what made me come west; it must be the indomitable
spirit of my forefathers, who inherited it and became Pioneers in the
western march of civilization.

About my pedigree: George Mathes, my remote ancestor, came to
America in 1720, from Ulster, north of Ireland; Scotch extraction; he
settled in Virginia, with Samuel Doak. Sr. Four of his sons moved to
Washington County, Tennessee, at a period anterior to the admission of
the state, just after the Revolution War. Samuel Doak Jr., from
Monendoah Valley, Virginia. Used the same pack horse, Roosevelt referred
to, as the "flee-bitten gray."

Alexandria Mathes, my great grandfather, gave 50 acres of land to
Washington College, founded by Samuel Doak Jr. Alexandria Mathes was a
surveyor and civil engineer and for 46 years a member of the board of
Constitutional Trustees of Washington College, and now is at the head
of Washington College. A descendant of the Mathes family, Mr. Hubert
Samuel Lyle, who was appointed President of the College in 1923.
Washington College was the first Institution west of the Alleghenies
mountains. The Mathes family traces descendants to the most remote period.

Zack P. Mathes
Personal History of a Pioneer—Tom Baker

I was born in England in 1832. Emigrated to Ottawa, Canada, in 1870. Came into the U.S. in 1874. Minneapolis was a good place to work, but I had invested money in a Silver Mine at Boulder, so came to Boulder County, Colorado, in 1879 to see about my Silver interests, and also to see about land claims.

While I was in Boulder County, I became acquainted with G.S. Allisbrook, who was primarily interested in the sheep business at that time. Allisbrook had previously run sheep in Australia.

I came to the White River in 1883 by wagon, in company with G.S. Allisbrook, and W.F. Morton, and was engaged with them in the sheep business.

I was dissatisfied with the moving about and uncertain location of the sheep industry, so I withdrew and started in a modest way with cattle, a business that was centered in one place, and more restful. In 1883 I located the ranch on which I am now living.

In the early days, my hardships were few, but in later years the making of a long-ditch has kept me hard up.

For 25 years I was voluntary observer for the U.S. Weather Bureau.

Tom Baker
I was born in Georgia in 1865, and went to Arkansas, when I was nine years old.

My brother George, and I made an agreement to come to Colorado and "see our wild oats." We came in the fall of 1867, and I landed in Meeker, March 1, 1868. I was 23 years of age, and came alone, direct from Arkansas.

I came on the train as far as there was a railroad, Glenwood Springs. From there to Purseron, I rode on a freight wagon, then caught the Wagner Stage. We transferred from wagon to sled, and back to wagon, pushing up hills, and digging through snowbanks. The first night we stopped at Frank Morgens (now the Alley Place) getting into Meeker the second day.

The first month I ever worked out was for Kilcuff and Isaac Beer, the latter having $500.00 invested in Rio Blanco County at that time. I worked there over time, and when I left they offered me a home, horse and sadder at any time I needed it, until I could get a job I wanted.

My brother and I took up pre-emption in Black's Gulch, now known as Scenery Gulch and engaged in the sheep business later on, which for awhile was prosperous. Prices in those days were much higher than now, all of the freight coming in from Rawlins, Wyoming.

Most of the buildings in Meeker were adobe, Mrs. Wright, Reuben Bell's sister, owned the hotel and saloon which were combined. One day while loafing in the hotel, Mrs. Wright, seeing I was a stranger, came to me at once, showing her kind Southern hospitality, made me feel at home, and told me there was board and bed for me at any time, whether I had the money or not. I never had to take it that way, but I always appreciated her kindness.

During the time of Roosevelt's Lion Hunt, I was hunting and acting as guide to tourists, especially engaging in hunting mountain lion, which were plentiful at that time.

Mr. Foreman, living at Thite River City, and a strict democrat, told me after keeping Roosevelt over night, that it was a pity we didn't have such a man at the head of our ticket. "He could eat bacon the same as any man."

I have lived in Colorado ever since I came, I like the weather, the cold, snowy winters, and the bright sunshine. Colorado with its healthy climate gave me back my health.

Some Hunting Yarns (true)

Englishmen are Good Sports.

Verschoylewell known Englishman, and a tiger hunter of India, bought five thousand dollars worth of horses from Solon Patterson. He was going into the lion-hunting business. Really not knowing anything about the business, he engaged me to go with him on his first hunt.

We hunted all day, following an old lion track, and it was about sundown and we were a long way from home. We had just about decided to turn back, it being 20 degrees below zero, and late too, when our six dogs treed the lion. We rushed to the tree, and Verschoyle shot three times, without hitting the lion. It jumped out and ran up another tree, the dogs at it's heels. The Englishman kept shooting, and the lion jumped out and into still another tree. Verschoyle being somewhat excited and no doubt tired, after the long day's ride, failed to hit it, so I shot it in the shoulder and it fell out, among the dogs. It, at once began fighting desperately for its life, when the Englishman rushed madly toward it with his knife. I tried to call him back but he would not listen. The lion, seeing the men, left the dogs and headed straight
Vereschopje, who was only a few yards down the hill from him, Verescal, all running toward the lion, stumbled and fell headlong in the snow. The two largest hounds, old Mike and Drum, grabbed the lion by the tail, and held on. They were on one side of a bush, the lion had fallen over on the other side, and thus they held him, until I could put a .44 bullet in his head.

It was growing dark by this time, and we took our lion and started for home. The Englishman was a good sport throughout the hunt, but the last day he had to go to the doctor—his ears had been frost bitten.

But the Preacher Wasn't There

I had just taken Preacher Mallory and Mr. Donnelly home from a men's lion hunt. But not one lion had we seen all week, although we had shot several bob cats.

I decided to go hunting again the next day, and went along with my dogs, in about the same territory, near White River City.

I found some tracks and followed them nearly all day. Finally, by the barking of the dogs, I could tell they had found something. I rushed quickly to them, and there lay a five point buck recently killed, and the lions devouring it rapidly. The dogs tried one of the lions and I shot it at once, leaving it lie where it fell, while I followed the other two, which all ran in the same direction. I followed them for about two miles, when I found them—all three in a big junip. tree, and my eight dogs surrounding the tree, and barking loudly.

It was growing dark by this time, and I knew if I didn't get all of the lions at once, it would be too late to follow them further that night. I only had old Betsy, my single-shot 45-70 Winchester, and how was I to get three lions? I put one cartridge in the barrel and two between my fingers. Each must do its work! I shot at the lowest one first, then the second, and the third. I think the third was falling dead as the first one hit the ground. I had gotten all four lions with the help of my dog and dogs, but the Preacher wasn't there.

Dawson W. Black
Early Transportation in Rio Blanco Co.

Mr. H.A. Wildhack's story of Transportation in the early days of Meeker, and Transportation developments in other parts of Western Colorado.

In the early days of Meeker, after the removal of the Ute Indians from the White River valley, commodity prices were high, owing to the fact that transportation facilities were very meagre, the first outlet to the outside world being by way of Rawlins, Wyoming. U.S. mail between that city and Meeker was carried by wagons and stage coaches, with three-day schedule for each trip, which, for quite a while, ran on a continuous basis; that is to say, two days and one night for each trip, 150 miles.

Glenwood Springs was then no larger than Meeker, but when the D & R G and the Midland railroads raced to be the first road to reach Aspen, Glenwood grew rapidly. A weekly mail, by horseback, was first established, but of short duration. Then a weekly mail, by wagon, succeeded the pack horse; this was in 1886.

When the D & R G extended its line from Red Cliff down the Eagle, the Midland had nearly completed its Hagerman tunnel, and the Grande got to Aspen first, via Glenwood. Then the pioneer railroad extended its line to Grand Junction, the Midland following, but the latter went no farther than New Castle.

By another year a daily mail between Rifle and Meeker, Sundays as well as each week day, was established. About a generation later this service was doubled; that is to say, a mail coach left each terminus every morning. And that schedule was later superceded by two round trips daily, except on Sundays, when but one was made; and that schedule persists at this writing.

At the beginning of this radical change, the Rawlins outlet was discontinued, and Craig became the northern terminus, the Moffat Road having been built to that town. Schedules on this northern route were varied from time to time, but is now tri-weekly.

Other mail routes out of Meeker are: To Rangely, Mervine, Moharugh, Price-Creek and Little Beaver.

Modes of transporting the mails, as well as transporting everything else, has undergone a wonderful evolution within the past half century. The advent of the automobile, which at first was considered by many as a toy, marked a new era.

On April 12, 1904, a specimen of the new contraption glided into Meeker, and the writer hereof, had the pleasure of taking a 5x7 photo of the stranger, and a lot of people, old and young, also had the pleasure of having their "phases" in the picture, showing the first automobile which got into the White river valley.

It was a 2-cylinder Cadillac, Simp Harper holding the seat of honor with the driver-demonstrator. As for looks, well, it had no wind-shield, and the word "streamline" had not yet been coined, nor thought of, at this early day. Mr. Harper used that car for quite a while on the Rifle-Meeker mail route, but then it proved such a failure in lending the passenger where and when it should have done, that old dabbin had to come to the rescue altogether too often.
However, other cars, of various makes and styles, gradually replaced the horse-drawn vehicles, so that now the improved "bus" doesn't miss a trip—when they start, they get to their destination, just like a locomotive.
WITH THE COUGAR HOUNDS

by Theodore Roosevelt

SECOND PAPER

Illustrations from Photographs by Philip K. Stewart

We rode in to the Keystone Ranch late on the evening of the second day after leaving Meeker. We had picked up a couple of bobcats on the way, and had found a cougar's kill (or bai't, as Goff called it)—a doe, almost completely eaten. The dogs puzzled for several hours over the cold trail of the cougar; but it was old, and ran hither and thither over bare ground, so that they finally lost it. The ranch was delightfully situated at the foot of high wooded hills broken by cliffs, and it was pleasant to reach the warm, comfortable log buildings, with their clean rooms, and to revel in the abundant, smoking-hot dinner, after the long, cold hours in the saddle. As everywhere else in the cattle country nowadays, a successful effort had been made to store water on the Key- stone, and there were great stretches of wire fencing—two improvements entirely unknown in former days. But the foremen, William Wilson, and his two punchers or cow-hands, Sebey and Collins, were of the old familiar type—skilled, fearless, hardy, hard-working, with all the intelligence and self-respect that we like to claim as typical of the American character at its best. All three carried short saddle guns when they went abroad, and killed a good many coyotes, and now and then a gray wolf. The cattle were for the most part grade Herefords, very different from the wild, slab-sided, long-horned creatures which covered the cattle country a score of years ago.

The next day, January 14th, we got our first cougar. This kind of hunting was totally different from that to which I had been accustomed. In the first place, there was no need of always being on the alert for a shot, as it was the dogs who did the work. In the next place, instead of continually scanning the landscape, what we had to do was to look down now to be sure not to pass over any tracks; for frequently a cold trail would be indicated so faintly that the dogs themselves might pass it by, if unassisted by Goff's keen eyes and thorough knowledge of the habits of the quarry. Finally, there was no object in making an early start, as what we expected to find was not the cougar, but the cougar's trail; moreover, the horses and dogs, tough though they were, could not stand more than a certain amount, and to ride from sunrise to sunset, day in and day out, for five weeks, just about tested the limits of their endurance.

We made our way slowly up the snow-covered, pinyon-clad side of the mountain back of the house, and found a very old cougar trail which it was useless to try to run, and a couple of fresh bobcat trails which it was difficult to prevent the dogs from following. After criss-crossing over the shoulders of this mountain for two or three hours, and scrambling in and out of the revines, we finally struck another cougar trail, much more recent, probably made thirty-six hours before. The hounds had been hunting free to one side or the other of our path. They were now summoned by a blast of the horn, and with a wave of Goff's hand away they went on the trail. Had it been fresh they would have run out of hearing at once, for it was fearfully rough country. But they were able to work but slowly along the loops and zigzags of the trail, where it led across bare spaces, and we could keep well in sight and hearing of them. Finally they came to, where it descended the sheer side of the mountain and crossed the snow-covered valley beneath. They were still all together, the pace having been so slow, and in the snow of the valley
the scent was fresh. It was a fine sight to see them as they rushed
across from one side to the other, the cliffs echoing their chiming.
Jim and the three bitches were in the lead, while Boxer fell behind,
as he always did when the pace was fast.

Leaving our horses, we slid and scrambled after the hounds; but
when we reached the valley they had passed out of sight and sound, and
we did not hear them again until we had toiled up the mountain opposite.
They were then evidently scattered, having come upon many deer places;
but while we were listening, and working our way over to the other side
of the divide, the sudden increase in the baying told Off that they
had struck the fresh trail of the beast they were after; and in two or
three minutes we heard Jim's deep voice "berking tree." The three
hunters, who had been trotting at our heels, recognized the difference
in the sound quite as quickly as we did, and plunged at full speed to-
toward it down the steep hill-side, throwing up the snow like so many
snow-ploughs. In a minute or two the chorus told us that all the dogs
were around the tree, and we picked our way down toward them.

While we were still some distance off we could see the cougar in
a low pinyon moving about as the dogs tried to get up, and finally
knocking one clean out of the top. It was the first time I had ever
seen dogs with a cougar, and I was immensely interested; but Stewart's
whole concern was with his camera. When we were within fifty yards of
the tree, and I was preparing to take the rifle out of the scabbard,
Stewart suddenly called "halt," with the first symptoms of excitement.
I had shown, and added, in an eager undertone: "Wait, there is a rabbit
right here, and I want to take his picture." Accordingly we waited, the
cougar not fifty yards off and the dogs yelling and trying to get up
the tree after it, while Stewart crept up to the rebate end of the kodak
some six feet distant. Then we resumed our march toward the tree, and
the cougar, not liking the sight of the reinforcements, jumped out.
She came down just outside the pack and ran up hill. So quick was she
that the dogs failed to seize her, and for the first fifty yards she
went a great deal faster than they did. Both in the jump and in the run
she held her tail straight out behind her; I found out afterward that
sometimes one will throw its tail straight in the air, and when walking
along, when first roused by the pack, before they are close, will, if
angry, lash the tail from side to side, at the same time grinning and
snarling.

In a minute the cougar went up another tree, but, as we approached,
again jumped down, and on this occasion, after running a couple of
hundred yards, the dogs seized it. The worry was terrific; the growling,
snarling, and yelling reng among the rocks, and leaving our horses we
plunged at full speed through the snow down the rugged reving in which
the fight was going on. It was a small, though old female, only a few
pounds heavier than either Turk or Jim; and the dogs had the upper hand
when we arrived. They would certainly have killed it unassisted, but as
it was going to some damage to the pack, and might at any moment kill a
dog, I ended the struggle by a knife-thrust behind the shoulder. To
snoot would have been quite as dangerous for the dogs as for their
haul. Three of the dogs were badly scratched, and Turk had been bitten
through one foreleg, and Boxer through one hind leg.

As will be seen by the measurements given before, this was much the
smallest full-grown cougar we got. It was also one of the oldest, as its
teeth showed, and it gave me a false idea of the size of cougars; al-
though I knew they varied in size I was not prepared for the wide varia-
tion we actually found.

The fighting dogs were the ones that enabled me to use the knife.
All three went straight for the head, and when they got hold they kept
their jaws shut, worrying and pulling, and completely absorbing the
attention of the cougar, so as to give an easy chance for the death-blow.
The hounds meanwhile had seized the cougar behind, and Jim, with his alligator jaws, roughly did as much damage as Turk. However, neither in this nor in any other instance, did any one of the dogs manage to get its teeth through the thick skin, when cougars fight among themselves their claws and fangs leave great scars, but their bites are too thick for the dogs to get their teeth through. On the other hand, a cougar’s jaw is very powerful, and dogs are frequently killed by a single bite, the fangs being driven through the brain or spine; or they break a dog’s leg or cut the big blood-vessels of the throat.

I had been anxious to get a set of measurements and weights of cougars to give to Dr. Hart Merriam. Accordingly I was carrying a tape, while Goff, instead of a rifle, had a steel yard in his gun scabbard. We weighed and measured the cougar, and then took lunch, making as important a distribution of it as was possible among ourselves and the different members of the pack; for, of course, we were already growing to love the fellow-feeling for each individual dog.

The next day we were again in luck. After about two hours’ ride we came upon an old trail. It led among low hills, covered with pine and oak, and broken by gulches and washouts, in whose sharp sides of clay the water had made holes and caves. Soon the hounds left it to follow a trout, but we had a lively赶到 through the timber, dodging the sharp edge of the dead branches as best we might. One got into a hole in a side washout; Baily went in after it, and the rest of us, men and dogs, clustered about to look in. After a considerable time we put the catt out of the other end of the hole, nearly a hundred yards off, close to the main washout. The first we knew of it we say it coming straight toward us, its tail held erect like that of a white-tail deer. Before either we or the dogs quite grasped the situation it bolted into another hole almost at our feet, and this time Baily could not find it, or else could not get at it. Then we look up the cougar trail again. It crossed every direction. We finally found an old "cat," a buck. It was interesting to see the way in which the cougar had prowled from point to point, and the efforts it had made to approach the deer which it saw or scented. Once we came to where it had set down on the edge of a cliff, sitting on its haunches with its long tail straight behind it and looking all across the valley. After it had killed, according to the invariable custom of its kind, it had dragged the deer from the open, where it had wrenched it, to the shelter of a group of trees.

We finally struck the fresh trail; but it, also, led neither and neither, and we got into such a maze of tracks that the dogs were completely puzzled. After a couple of hours of vain following and fro, we gave up the effort, called the dogs off, and staked back beside a side washout which led along between two ridges. Off, as usual, was leading, the dogs following and continually skirting to one side or the other. Suddenly they all began to show great excitement, and then one gave furious tongue at the mouth of a hole in some sunken and broken ground not thirty yards to our right. The whole pack rushed toward the challenge, the fighters leaped into the hole, and in another moment the one inside told us that they had found a cougar at home. We jumped off the run down to see if we could be of assistance. To get into the hole was impossible, for two or three hounds had jumped down to join the fighters, and we could see nothing out their stumps. Then we saw Turk backing out with a dead kitten in his mouth. I had supposed that a hunter would defend her young to the last, but such was not the case in this instance. For some minutes she kept the dogs at bay, but then gradually gave ground, leaving her three kittens. Of course, the dogs killed them instantly, much to our regret, as we would have given a good deal to have kept them alive. As soon as she had abandoned them, away she went completely through the low cave or hole, leaped out of the other end, which was some thirty or forty yards off, scaled the bank, and galloped
into the woods, the pack getting after her at once. She did not run more than a couple of hundred yards, and as we tore up on our horses we saw her standing in the lower branches of a pine only six or eight feet from the ground. She was not snarling or grinning, and looked at us as quietly as if nothing had happened. As we limped out of the saddles she jumped down from the tree and ran off through the pack. They were after her at once, however, and a few yards further on she started up another tree. Either Tony or Beady grabbed her at the tip of the tail, and lost her footing, for a moment, and the whole pack seized her. She was a powerful female of about the average size, being half as heavy again as the one we first got, and made a tremendous flight; and savage though she looked, her ears tight back against her head, her yellow eyes flashing, and her great teeth showing as she grinned. For a moment the dogs had her down, but biting and striking she freed her head and upper quarters from the fighters, and faced us as we ran up, the hounds still having her from behind. This was another chance for the knife, and I cheered on the fighters. Again they seized her by the head, but though absolutely stanch dogs, their teeth, as I have said, had begun to suffer, and they were no longer able to make their holds good. Just as I was about to strike her she knocked large loose with a blow, but Beady, as usual, her head being free, turned upon me. Fortunately, Tony caught her free paw on that side, while I jammed the gunbutt into her jaws with a left hand and struck home with the right, the knife going straight to the heart. The deep gash marks she left in the stock, biting the corner of the shoulder clean off, gave me an idea of the power of her jaws. If it had been a large male couger which I afterward killed, the stock would doubtless have been bitten completely in two.

The dogs were pretty well damaged, and all retired and lay down near the trees, where they licked their wounds, and went to sleep; growling savagely at one another when they woke, but bursting into the most extravagant affection, and trotting eagerly out to share our lunch as soon as we began to eat it. Unaided, they would ultimately have killed the couger, but the chance of one or two of them being killed or crippled was too great for us to allow this to be done; and in the mix-up of the struggle it was not possible to end it with a rifle. The writhing, twisting, tangle offered too shifting a mark; one would have been as apt to hit a dog as the couger. Goff told me that the pack had often killed cougers unassisted; but in the performance of such feats the best dogs are frequently killed, and this was not a risk to be taken lightly.

In some books the writers speak as if the male and female cougers live together and jointly seek food for the young. We never found a male couger anywhere near either a female with young or a pregnant female. According to my observation the male only remains with the female for a short time, during the mating season, at which period he travels great distances in search of his temporary mate—for the females far outnumber the males. The couger is normally a very solitary beast. The young—two or four in number, though more than one or two rarely grow up—follow the mother until over half grown. The mother lives entirely alone with the kittens while they are small. As the males fight so fiercely among themselves, it may be that the old he-cougars kill the young of their own sex; a fact which I know once found the body of a young male couger which was evidently been killed by an old one; but I cannot say whether or not this was an exceptional case.

During the next ten days Stewart and Webb each shot a couger. Webb's got by as pretty an exhibition of trailing on one part of Goff and his hounds as one could wish to see. We ran across its tracks while coming home on Wednesday, January 16th. The next day, Thursday, we took up the trail, but the animal had travelled a long distance; and, as cougers so often do, had spent much of its time walking along ledges, or at the foot of the cliffs, where the sun had melted the snow off the ground.
In consequence, the dogs were often at fault. Moreover, bobcats were numerous, and twice the pack got after one, running a couple of hours before in one instance, the cat went into a cave, and, in the other, took to a tree, where it was killed by Webb. At last, when darkness came on, we were forced to leave the cougar trail and ride home; a very attractive ride, too, loping rapidly over the snow-covered fields, while above us the great stars fairly blazed in the splendor of the winter night.

Early next morning we again took up the trail, and after a little mile found where it was less than thirty-six hours old. The dogs now ran well, but were thrown out again on a large bare hillside, until Boxer succeeded in recovering the scent. They went up a high mountain and we killed after them. Again they lost the trail, and while a fault jumped a big bobcat—which they ran as a tree. After shooting him we took lunch, and started to circle for the trail. Most of the dogs kept with Goff, but he got off to one side on his own account; and suddenly his baying told us he had jumped the cougar. The rest of the pack tore toward him and after a quarter of a mile run they had the quarry crouched. The ground was too rough for riding, and we had to do some stiff climbing to get to it on foot.

Stewart's cougar was a young-of-the-year, and, according to his account, he took several photographs of it. Then he tried to poke it so that it would get into a better position for the camera; whereupon it jumped out of the tree and ran headlong down hill, the yelping dogs at its feet behind. Our horses had been left a hundred yards or so below, where they all stood, moping, with their heads drooped and their eyes half shut, in regular cow-pony style. The chase screamed by now a yard from their noses, but evidently failed to create even an emotion of interest in their minds, for they barely looked up, and made not a movement of any kind when the cougar crept again just below them.

We killed several bobcats; and we also got another cougar, this one in rather ignominious fashion. It had been running a deer, having a cool Colossus gallop, during the course of which Stewart's horse turned a u-turn. Without our knowledge the dogs changed to the fresh trail of a cougar, which they ran into its den in another cut bank. Then we reached the place they had gone in after it, Baldy dropping into a hole at the top of the bank, while the others crawled into the main entrance, some twenty-five yards off at the bottom. It was evidently a very rough house inside, and above the baying, yelping, and snarling of the dogs we could hear the rumbling overtone of the cougar's growl. On this day we had taken along Queen, the white bull bitch, to "cher" her at a cougar. It was certainly a lively experience for a first entry. We reached the place in time to keep Jim and the hound bitches out of the hole. It was evident that the dogs could do nothing with the cougar inside. They could only come at it in front, and under such circumstances its claws and teeth were the odds against them hopeless. Every now and then it would charge, driving them all back, and we would then reach in, seize a dog and haul him out. At intervals there would be an awful yelling and a hound would come out bleeding badly, quite satisfied, and without the slightest desire to go in again. Poor Baldy was evidently killed inside. Queen, Turk and Tony were badly clawed and bitten, and we finally got them out too; then went in three times, and came out on each occasion with a fresh slash or bite. Turk was, at the last, the only one really anxious to go in again. Then we tried to smoke out the cougar, for as one of the dogs, having gotten into the cave through an upper entrance, we supposed the cougar could get out by the same route. However, it either could not or would not bolt; coming down close to the entrance where we had built the fire, it stayed until it was smothered. We returned to the ranch carrying its skin, but not over-pleased, and the pack much the worse for wear. Dr. Webb had to sew up the wounds of three of the dogs.

The Tony, was sent back to the home ranch, where he died. In such rough
hunting as this, it is of course impossible to prevent occasional injuries to the dogs when they get the cougar in a cave, or overtake him on the ground. All that can be done is to try to end the contest as speedily as possible, which we always did.

Judging from the experience of certain friends of mine in the Argentine, I think it would be safe to crawl into a cave to shoot a cougar under normal circumstances; but in this instance the cave was a long, winding hole, so low that we could not get in on hands and knees, having to work our way on our elbows. It was dark inside, so that the rifle sights could not be seen, and the cougar was evidently very wary and had on two or three occasions charged the dogs, driving them out of the entrance of the hole. In the dark, the chances were strongly against killing it with a single shot; while if only wounded, and if it had happened to charge, the man, in his cramped position, would have been utterly helpless.

The day after the death of the smoked cougar Stewart and Webb started home. Then it snowed for two days, keeping us in the ranch. While the snow was falling, there was no possibility of finding or following tracks; and as a rule wild creatures lie close during a storm. We were glad to have fresh snow, for the multitude of tracks in the old snow had become confusing; and not only the southern hillside but the larger valleys had begun to grow bare, so that trailing was difficult.

The third day dawned in brilliant splendor, and when the sun arose all the land glittered dazzling white under his rays. The hounds were rested, we had fresh horses, and after an early breakfast we started to make a long circle. All the forenoon and early afternoon we plodded thro' the snowdrifts, up and down the valleys, and along the ridge crests, without striking a trail. The dogs trotted behind us or circled from side to side of the other. It was no small test of their staunchness, vigor, and fresh as they were, for time after time we crossed bands of deer, to which they paid no heed whatever. At last, in mid-afternoon, we suddenly struck the tracks of two cougars, one a very large one, evidently an old male. They had been playing and frolicking together, for they were evidently mating, and the snow in the tracks showed that they had started abroad before the storm was entirely over. For three hours the pack followed the cold trail, through an exceedingly rugged and difficult country, in which Soff helped him out again and again.

Just at sunsets the cougars were jumped, and ran straight into and through a tangle of spurs and foothills, broken by precipices, and given by long deep ravines. The two at first separated and then came together, the result that Tree'em, Trono, and Jimmy got on the back trail and were left for behind; while old Boxer also fell to the rear, as he always did when the scent was hot, and Jim and the hitches were left to do the running by themselves. In the gathering gloom we galloped along the main divide, my horse once falling on a slippery slickrock, as I followed heedless after Soff—whose riding was like the driving of the ten of Nimshi. The last vestige of sunlight disappeared, but the full moon was well up in the heavens when we came to a long spur, leading off to the right for two or three miles, beyond which we did not think the trace could have gone. It had long run out of hearing. Making our way down the rough and broken crest of this spur, we finally heard far off the humerus baying which told us that the hounds had their quarry at bay. We did not have the fighters with us, so they were still under the weather from the result of their encounter in the cave.

As it afterward appeared, the cougars had run three miles before the dogs overtook them, making their way up, down and along such difficult cliffs that the pack had to keep going round. The female then went up a tree, while the pack followed the male. He would not climb a tree and come to bay on the edge of a cliff. A couple of hundred yards from the spot, we left the horses and scrambled along on foot, guided by the
After a minute or two I made out first the ball and then the head of theCougar, who was lying on a narrow ledge only some eight feet below me, his body hidden by the overhang of the cliff. Thanks to the steepness of the incline, I could not get off the rock with my left hand, because I should have rolled over; so I got hold of the projecting ledge, and grasped me by my legs. He then lowered me gently down until my head and shoulders were over the edge and my arms free; and I shot the cougar right between the ears, he being in a straight line underneath me. The dogs were evidently confident that he was going to be shot, for they had all gathered below the cliff to wait for him to fall; and sure enough, down he came with a crash, luckily not hitting any of them. We could hear them seize him, and they all, dead cougar and worrying dogs, rolled at least a hundred yards down the steep slope before they were stopped by a gully. It was a very interesting experience for one which I shall not soon forget. I clambered down to where the body was, admired our victim, and made up our minds not to try to skin him until the morning. Then we led down our horses, with some difficulty, into the snow-covered valley, mounted them, and cantered home to the ranch, under the cold and brilliant moon, through a white wonderland of shimmering light and beauty.

Next morning we came back as early as possible, intending first
to skin the male and then to hunt up the female. A quarter of a mile before we reached the cairns we struck her fresh trail in the snow of the valley. Calling all the dogs together and hustling them forward, we got them across the trail without their paying any attention to it; for we wanted to finish the job of skinning before taking up the hunt. However, when we got off our horses and pulled the cougar down to a flat place to skin it, Nellie, who evidently remembered that there had been another cougar besides the one we had accounted for, started away on her own account while we were not looking. The first thing we knew we heard her baying tongue on the mountains above us, in such rough country that there was no use in trying to hear her off. Accordingly we jumped on the horses again, rode down to where we had crossed the trail and put the whole pack on it. After crossing the valley the cougar had moved along the ledges of a great spur or chain of foothills, and as this prevented the dogs going too fast we were able to center alongside them up the valley, watching them and listening to their chiming. We finally came to a large hillside bare of snow, much broken with rocks, among which grew patches of brush and scattered pines. Here the dogs were at fault for over an hour. It evidently had been a favorite haunt of the cougars; they had moved to and fro across it, and had lain sunning themselves in the dust under the ledges. Owing to the character of the ground we could give the hounds no assistance, but they finally puzzled out the trail for themselves. We were now given a good illustration of the impossibility of jumping a
cougar without dogs, even when in a general way its haunt is known. We rode along the hillside, and quartered it to and fro, on the last occasion...
ion coming down a spur where we passed within two or three rods of the crush in which the cougar was actually lying; but she never moved and it was impossible to see her. When we finally reached the bottom, the dogs had disentangled the trail, and they passed behind us at a good rate, going up almost where we had come down. Even as we looked we saw the cougar rise from her lair, only fifty yards or so ahead of them, her red side showing bright in the sun. It was a very pretty run to watch while it lasted. She left them being at first, but after a quarter of a mile they put her up a pinyon. Approaching cautiously—for the climbing was hard work and I did not wish to frighten her out of the tree if it could be avoided, lest she might make such a run as that of the preceding evening—I was able to shoot her through the heart. She died in the branches and I climbed the tree to throw her down. The only skill needed in such shooting is in killing the cougar outright so as to save the dogs. Six times on this hunt I shot the cougar through the heart. Twice the animal died in the branches. In the other four cases it sprang out of the tree, stood and tail erect, eyes blazing, and the mouth open in a grin of savage hate and anger; but it was practically dead when it touched the ground.

Although these cougars were mates, they were not of the same color, the female being reddish, while the male was slate-colored. In weighing this male we had to take off the hide and weigh it separately (with the head and paws attached), for our steelyard only went up to 150 pounds, then we came to weigh the biggest male we had to take off the quarters as well as the hide.

Thinking that we had probably exhausted the cougars around the Key- stone Ranch, we spent the next fortnight off on a trip. We carried only that we could put in the small saddle-pouches—our baggage being as strictly limited as it ought to be with efficient cavalry who are on an active campaign. We worked hard, but, as so often happens, our luck was in proportion to our labor.

The first day we rode to the Mathes brothers' ranch. On the high divides it was very cold, the thermometer standing at nearly twenty degrees below zero. But we were clad for just such weather, and were not uncomfortable. The three Mathes brothers lived together, with the wives and children of the two married ones. Their ranch was in a very beautiful and wild valley, the pinyon-crowned cliffs rising in walls on either hand, deer were abundant and often in sight from the ranch doors. At night the coy wolves came down close to the buildings and howled for hours among the precipices, under the light of the full moon. The still cold was intense; but I could not resist going out for half an hour at a time to listen to them. To me their baying, though a very eerie and lonesome sound, full of vaguely sinister associations, has, nevertheless, a certain wild music of its own which is far from being without charm.

We did not hear the cougars calling, for they are certainly nothing like as noisy as wolves; yet the Mathes brothers had heard them several times, and once one of them had crept up and seen the cougar, which remained in the same place for many minutes, repeating its cry continually. The Mathes had killed but two cougars, not having any dogs trained to hunt them. One of these was killed under circumstances which all illustrate the queer nature of the animal. The three men, with one of their two cattle dogs, were walking up the valley not half a mile above the ranch house, when they saw a cougar crossing in front of them, a couple of hundred yards off. As soon as he saw them she crouched flat on her back toward them, remaining motionless, too, with the dog, stayed where they were, while the other ran back to the ranch house for a rifle and for the other dog. No sooner had he gone than the cougar began to crawl toward the men who were left. She came on slowly but steadily, crouched almost flat to the ground. The two unarmed men were by no means pleased with her approach. They waved their hands and jumped about
and shouted; but she kept approaching, although slowly, and was well
within a hundred yards when the other brother arrived, out of breath,
accompanied by the other dog. At sight of him she jumped up, ran off
a couple of hundred yards, went up a tree, and was killed. I do not
suppose she would have attacked the men; but as there was an unpleasant
possibility that she might, they both felt distinctly more comfortable
and their brother rejoined them with the rifle.

There was a good deal of snowy weather while we were at the Mathes.
Such, but we had fair luck, killing two cougars. It was most comfortable,
for the ranch was clean and warm, and the cooking delicious. It does not
seem to me that I ever tasted better milk and butter, hot biscuits, rice,
potatoes, pork and bul berry and wild plum jam; and of course the long
nights on horseback in the cold weather gave an edge to our appetites. One
stormy day we lost the hounds; and we spent most of the next day in find-
ing such of them as did not come struggling in of their own accord. The
country was very rough, and it was embarrassing to see some of the places
and down which we led the horses. Sometimes I found that my horse
climbed rather better than I did, for he would come up some slanted-look-
ing slope with such a rush that I literally had to scramble on all fours
to get out of his way.

There was no special incidents connected with killing either of
these two cougars. In one case I off myself took the lead in working out
the trail and preventing the hounds getting off after bobcats. In the
other case the trail was fresher and the dogs ran it by themselves, get-
ing into a country where we could not follow; it was very rough, and the
diffs and gorges rang with their baying. In both cases they had the
cougar treeed for about three hours before we were able to place them and
mix up to them. It was hard work, toiling through the snow over the
diffs toward the baying, and on each occasion the cougar leaped from the
tree at our approach, and ran a quarter of a mile or so before going up
another, where it was shot. As I come up to shoot most of the dogs paid
no attention, but Boxer and Meloa always kept looking at me until I
actually raised the rifle; when they began to spring about the spot
were they thought the cougar would come down. The cougar itself always
aimed to recognize the men as the dangerous opponent; and so I strode
round to find a place where I could deliver an instantaneously fatal
shot, it would follow me steadily with its evil yellow eyes. I come up
very close, but the beasts never attempted to jump at me. Judging from
what one reads in books about Indian and African game, a leopard under
such circumstances would certainly sometimes charge.

Three days of our trip were spent on a ride to Colorow Mountain; we
went down to Judge Foreman's ranch on White River to pass the night. We
met another cougar on the way. She must really be credited to Jim. The
other dogs were following in our footsteps through the snow, after having
made various futile excursions of their own. Then we found that Jim was
rissing, we tried in vain to recall him with the horn, and at last started
to hunt him up. After an hour's ride we heard him off on the mountain,
apparently following a trail. But equally evidently not yet having jumped
the animal. The hounds heard him quite as quickly as we did, and started
toward him. Soon we heard the music of the whole pack, which gave
fainter and fainter, was lost entirely as they disappeared around a spur,
and then began to grow loud again, showing that they were coming toward
us. Suddenly a change in the note convinced us that they had jumped the
hurry. We stood motionless; nearer and nearer they came; and then a
sudden burst of clamor proclaimed that they were barking tree. We had
to ride only a couple of hundred yards; I shot the cougar from across a
little revine. She was the largest female we got.

The dogs were a source of unceasing amusement, not merely while
hunting, but because of their relations to one another when off duty.
Queen's temper was of the shortest toward the rest of the pack, although, like Turk, she was fond of literally crawling into my lap, when we set down to rest after the worry which closed the chase. As soon as I began to eat my lunch, all the dogs clustered close around and I distributed small morsels to each in turn. Once Jimmie, Queen, and Boxer were sitting side by side, tightly wedged together. I treated them with entire impartiality, and soon Queen's feelings overcame her, and she unostentatiously but firmly bit Jimmie in the jaw. Jimmie howled tremendously and Boxer literally turned a beck somersault, evidently fearing lest his turn should come next.

On February 11th we rode back to the Keystone Ranch, carrying the three cougar skins behind our saddles. It was again very cold, and the snow on the divides was so deep that our horses wallowed through it up to their saddle-girths. I supposed that my hunt was practically at an end, for I had but three days left; but as it turned out these were the three last lucky days of the whole trip.

The weather was beautiful, the snow lying deep enough to give the horses easy trailing even on the southern slopes. Under the clear skies the landscape was dazzling, and I had to wear snow-glasses. On the first of the three days, February 12th, we had not ridden half an hour from the ranch before we came across the trail of a very big bobcat. It was so heavy that it had broken through the crust here and there, and we decided it was worth following. The trail went up a steep mountain to the top, and we followed on foot after the dogs. Among the cliffs on the top they were completely at fault, hunting every which way. After while Goff suddenly spied the cat, which had jumped off the top of a cliff into a prairie. I killed it before any of the dogs saw it, and at the shot they all ran in the wrong direction. When they did find us skinning it, they were evidently not at all satisfied that it was really their bobcat—the one which they had been trailing. Usually as soon as the animal was killed they all lay down and chased off; but on this occasion they kept hurrying about and then in a body started on the back trail. It was some time before we could get them together again.

After we had brought them in we rode across one or two ridges, and down the spurs without finding anything, until about noon we picked up a long winding valley where we came across one or two old cougar trails. The pack were following in our footsteps behind the horses, except Jim, who took off to one side by himself. Suddenly he began to show signs that he had come across traces of game; and in another moment he gave tongue and all the hounds started toward him. They quartered around in the neighborhood of a little gulch for a short while, and then streamed off up the mountain-side; and before they had run more than a couple of minutes we heard them barking treed. By making a slight turn we rode almost up to the tree, and saw that their quarry was a young cougar. As we came up it knocked Jimmie right out of the tree. On seeing us it jumped down and started to run, but it was not quite quick enough. Turk seized it and in a minute the dogs had it stretched out. It squirmed, hissed, and made such a good fight that I put an end to the struggle with the knife, fearing lest it might ruin one of the hounds.

While Goff was skinning it I wandered down to the kill near which it had been lying. This was a dear, almost completely devoured. It had been killed in the valley and dragged up perhaps a hundred yards to some water. I soon saw from the tracks around the carcass that there was another cougar with the younger one—doubtless its mother— and walked back to Goff with the information. Before I got there, however, some of the pack had made the discovery for themselves. Jim, evidently feeling that he had done his duty, had curled up and gone to sleep, with most of the others; but old Boxer and the three bitches (Pete had left her paws and joined us about the time we roused the big bobcat), hunted about until they struck the fresh trail of the old female. They went off at a great
the trail led them across a spur, into a valley, and out of it up the precipitous side of another mountain. When we got to the edge of the valley we could hear them barking tree nerly at the summit of the mountain opposite. It was over an hour's silv-climbing before we made our way around to them, although we managed to get the horses up to within a quarter of a mile of the spot. On approaching we found the cougar in a leaning pinyon on a ledge at the foot of a cliff. Jimmie was in the lower branches of the pinyon, and Turk up within a couple of feet of the cougar. Evidently he had been trying to tackle her and had been knocked out of the tree at least once, for he was bleeding a good deal and there was much blood on the snow beneath. Yet he had come back into the tree, and was barking violently not more than three feet beyond her stroke. She sat up a few seconds, and as soon as I appeared, fixed her yellow eyes on me, glaring and snarling as I worked around into a place from which I could kill her outright. Meanwhile Ioff took up his position on the other side, hoping to get a photograph when I shot. My bullet went through her heart. She hit her paw, stretched up her head, and bit a branch, and then died where she was, while Turdi leaped forward to the neck of the rifle and seized her in the branches. I had some difficulty in scaling him and Jimmie out of the tree as I climbed up to throw down the cougar.

Next morning we started early, intending to go to Juniper Mountain, where we had heard that cougars were plentiful; but we had only ridden about half an hour from the range when we came across a trail which by the size we knew must belong to an old cat. It was about thirty-six hours old, and led into a tangle of bad lands where there was great difficulty in working it out. Finally, however, we found where it left these bad lands and went straight up a mountain-side, too steep for the horses to follow. From the plains below we watched the hounds running to and fro till they entered a patch of pinyons in which we were certain the cougar as killed a deer, as ravens and magpies were crows round in the trees. In these pinyons the hounds were again at fault for a little while, but at last evidently found the right trail, and followed it up over the hill-top and out of sight. We then galloped hard along the plain to the left, ring-around the end of the ridge and turning to our right on the other side. Here we entered a deep narrow valley or gorge which led up to a high plateau at the farther end. On our right, as we rode up the valley, by the high and steep ridge over which the hounds had followed the trail in the left it was still steeper, the slope being broken by ledges and precipices. Near the mouth of the gorge we encountered the hounds, who had worked the trail down and across the gorge, and were now hunting up the steep cliff-shoulder on our left. Evidently the cougar had wandered in and out over this shoulder, and the dogs were much puzzled and worked in zigzags and circles around it, gradually getting clear to the top. Then old Boxer suddenly gave tongue with renewed zest and started off on a run almost on top of the ridge, the other dogs following. Immediately afterward they jumped the cougar.

We had been waiting below to see which direction the chase would take and now put spurs to our horses and galloped up the ravine, climbing the hillside on our right so as to get a better view of what was happening. A few hundred yards of this galloping and climbing brought us again in sight of the hounds. They were now barking heavily and were clustered around a pinyon below the ridge-crest on the side hill opposite us. The fighters, Turk and Queen, who had been following at our horses' heels, anticipated what had happened as soon as we did, and, leaving us, ran up into the valley, and began to work their way through the deep snow on the hillside opposite, toward where the hounds were. Our was an ideal position for seeing the whole chase. In a minute the cougar jumped out of the tree down among the hounds, who made no attempt to seize him, but
followed him as soon as he had cleared their circle. He came down hill at a great rate and jumped over a cliff, bringing after him such an avalanche of snow that it was a moment before I could get sight of him again, this time crowning on a narrow ledge of a cliff some fifteen or twenty feet below the brink from which he had jumped, and above as far above the foot of the cliff, as the steep hill-side again began.

He bounded soon found him again and came along the ledge working loudly, about venturing near where he lay resting when, with his back arched like a great cat, Turk and Queen were meanwhile working their way up hill, and got directly under the ledge and could not find a way up. Queen went to the left and in a minute we saw her whole form as she made her way through the dark-colored bushes straight for the cougar. "That's the end of queen," said Goff; "he'll kill her now, sure." In another moment we had made her rush and the cougar, bounding forward, vanished her, and as we afterward discovered had driven his great fangs right through the side of her head, fortunately missing the brain. In the struggle he lost his footing and rolled off the ledge, and when they struck the ground below he let go of the bitch. Turk, who was near where they struck, was not able to spring for the hold he desired, and in another moment the cougar was coming down hill like a quarter horse. We lumbered perfectly still, as we were travelling in our direction. Queen was on her feet almost as quick as the cougar, and she and Turk were after him, the hounds flowing in a few seconds, being delayed in getting off the ledge. It was astonishing to see the speed of the cougar. He ran considerably more than a quarter of a mile down hill, and at the end of it had left the men more than a hundred yards behind. But his bolt was shot, and after perhaps a hundred yards or so up the hill on our side and below us, climbed a tree, under which the dogs began to dig profitably, while we scrambled toward them. When I got down I found him seeking safety right on a big branch, his forepaws hanging over another higher branch, his sides portioned, and evidently completely walled. In rambling up the prairie he must have struck a pitch of steam, for it was torn a handful of hair off from behind his right forearm. I shot him through the heart. At the shot he sprang clean into the top of the tree, and down till up, and his face fairly deranged with rage; but before he reached the ground he was dead. Turk jumped up, seized him as he fell, and the two rolled over a low ledge, falling about eight feet into the snow, Turk never losing his hold.

No one could have wished to see a prettier chase under better circumstances. It was exceedingly interesting. The only dog hurt was Queen, and very miserable indeed she looked. She stood in the trail, refusing to lie down or to join the other dogs, as, with prodigious snarls to one another, they ate the pieces of the carcass we cut out for them. Dogs hunting every day, as these were doing, and going through such terrific exertion, need enormous quantities of meat, and as old horses and crippled steers were not always easy to get, we usually fed them the cougar carcasses. On this occasion, when they had eaten until they could eat no more, I gave most of my lunch to Queen--Boxer, who after his best could hardly move, nevertheless waddling up with his ears forward, to beg a share. Queen evidently felt that the lunch was a delicacy, for she ate it, and then trotted home behind us with the rest of the dogs. To my astonishment, next day she was all right, and as eager to go with us as ever. Though one side of her head was much swollen, in her work she showed no signs of her injuries.

Early the following morning, February 14th, the last day of my actual hunting, we again started for Juniper Mountain, following the same course on which we had started the previous day. Before we had gone three miles, that is, only about half way to where we had come across the cougar track the preceding day, we crossed another, and as we deemed a
fresher, trail, which Goff pronounced to belong to a cougar even larger than the one we had just killed. The hounds were getting both weary and foot sore, but the scent put fresh into them and away they streamed. They followed it across a sage-brush flat, and then worked along under the base of a line of cliffs — cougar being particularly apt thus to travel at the foot of cliffs. The pack kept well together, and it was pleasant, as we centered over the snowy plain beside them, to listen to their baying, echoed back from the cliffs above. Then they worked over the hillside we spurred ahead and turned to the left, up the same gorge or valley in which we had killed the cougar the day before. The hounds followed the trail straight to the cliff shoulder where the day before the pack had been puzzled until Boxer struck the fresh scent. Here they seemed to be completely at fault, circling everywhere, and at one time following their track of yesterday over to the pinyon-tree up which the cougar had first gone.

We could barely hear the hounds; they had followed their scent trail in the preceding day, toward the place where we had first come across the track of the cougar we had already killed. We were utterly puzzled, too, Goff being completely at fault, and we finally became afraid that the track which the pack had been running was one which, instead of having been made during the night, had been made by the dead cougar. This meant, of course, that we had missed it without noticing it, both going and coming, on the previous day, not knowing Goff’s sense for a track I could not believe this. He, however, thought we might have confused it with some of the big wolf tracks, or with a number had crossed our path. After some hesitation, he said that at any rate we could find out the truth by getting back onto the flat and following around to where we had begun our hunt the day before, because if the dogs really had a fresh cougar before them he must have so mort a start that they were certain to lose him by the time they got across the ridge crest. Accordingly, we scrambled down the precipitous mountainside, galloped along the flat around the end of the ridge and new rein at about the place where we had first come across the cougar trail on the previous day. Not a dog was to be heard anywhere, and Goff’s. hiker that the pack was simply running a back track seemed more certain, both in his mind and mine, when Jim suddenly joined us, evidently giving up the chase. We came to the conclusion that Jim, being fresher than the other dogs, had discovered his mistake while they had not; he just naturally quit,” said Goff.

After some little work we found where the pack had crossed the head flat valley into a mass of very rough broken country, the same in which I had shot my first big stag by moonlight. Cantering and scrambling through this stretch of cliffs and valleys, we began to hear the dogs, and a first were put fresh because once or twice it seemed as though they were barking treed or had something at bay; always, however, as we came nearer we could again hear them running a trail, and when we finally got tolerably close we found that they were all scattered out. Boxer was far behind, and Nellie, whose feet had become sore, was soberly accompanying him, no longer giving tongue. The others were separated one from the other, and we finally made out Tres’em all by himself, and not very far away. In vain Goff called and blew his horn; Tres’em disappeared up a high hillside, and with muttered comments on his stupidity we galloped the horses along the valley around the foot of the hill, hoping to intercept him. No sooner had we come to the other side, however, than we heard Tres’em evidently barking treed. We both looked at each other, wondering whether he had done across a cobweb, or whether it had really been a fresh cougar trail after all.

Leaving our horses we scrambled up the canon until we got into sight of a large pinyon on the side, underneath which Tres’em was standing, with his preposterous tail arched like a pump-handle, as he
geared solemnly up in the tree, now and then uttering a bark at a huge
cougar, which by this time we could distinctly make out standing in the
branches. Turk and Queen had already left us and were running hard to
join Tressen, and in another minute or two all of the hounds, except the
beloved-Bossy and Nellie, had also come up. The cougar having now re-
covered his wind, jumped down and centered off. He had been running for
three hours before the dogs and evidently had been overtaken again and
again, but had neither refused to tree, or if he did tree had soon come
down and continued his flight, the hounds not venturing to follow him,
and he paying little heed to them. It was a different matter, however,
with Turk and Queen alone. He went up the hill and came to bay on
the top of the cliffs, where we could see him against the skyline. The
hounds surrounded him, but neither they nor Turk came to close quarters.
Queen, however, as soon as she arrived rushed straight in, and the
cougar knocked her a dozen feet off. Turk tried to seize him as soon as
Queen had made her rush; the cougar broke bay, and they all disappeared
over the hilltop, while we hurried after them. A quarter of a mile be-
ond, on the steep hillside, they again had him up a pinion-tree. I
approached as cautiously as possible so as not to alarm him. He stood in
such an awkward position that I could not get a fair shot at the heart,
but the bullet broke his back well forward, and the dogs seized him as he
struck the ground. There was still some amount of flight in him, and I ran
as fast as possible, jumping and slipping over the rocks and the bushes
to the cougar and dogs rolled and slid down the steep hillside, of course,
every minute's delay meant the chance of a dog being killed or crippled. It was a day of misfortunes for Jim, who was knocked
completely out of the fight by a single blow. The cougar was too big for
the dogs to master, even crippled as he was; but when I came up close
Turk reared and got the great beast by one ear, stretching out the
cougar's head, while he kept his own forelegs tucked up so that the
cougar could not get hold of them. This gave me my chance and I drove
the knife home, leaping back before the creature could get round me.
Bossy did not come up for half an hour, working out every inch of the
trail for himself, and croaking away at short intervals, while Nellie
trotted calmly beside him. Even when he saw us skimming the cougar he
would not hurry nor take a short cut, but followed the scent to where the
cougar had gone up the tree, and from the tree down to where we were;
then he meditatively bit the carcass, strolled off, and lay down, satis-
fied.

It was a very large cougar, fat and heavy and the men at the ranch
believed it was the same one which had at intervals haunted the place
for two or three years, killing on one occasion a milk cow, on another
steer, and on yet another a big work horse. Goff stated that he had on
several occasions killed cougars that were quite as long, and he
allowed even an inch or two longer, but that he had never seen one as
large or as heavy. Its weight was 237 pounds, and as it lay stretched out
it looked like a small African lioness. It would be impossible to wish a
better ending to a hunt.

The next day Goff and I centered thirty miles into Meaker, and my
holidays were over.

Location: Story taken from Scribner's Magazine November 1901.
Magazine sent in by Mr. Zack Mathes, one of the Mathes
brothers, who lived in the home ranch when Roosevelt
was on his famous Cougar Hunt, to the lower White River.
Roosevelt spent 19 days hunting lion on the Scenery,
Gulch ranch of the Mathes Brothers.