

Personal Facts about A.C. Moulton and
The Hugus & Company Store

I was born in Meredith, New Hampshire, April 24th, 1835--making me 79 years next April.

Father was a Surgeon and Physician--was a veteran of Civil War. My Mother died when I was 16 years. I finished School, and took up the study of Medicine, and would have graduated from the Medical Dep't. of Dartmouth College in the fall of 1873--but got the "Western Fever" and abandoned my studies to come West--landed in Denver on the old K.P.R.R. on July 12th, 1876.

The rest of the personal history is completed in the "Hugus Book"

I never care for publicity, but if, in writing a history of Meeker, names are to be used, I shall be very glad to be considered as among that bunch of splendid men who stood together in promoting the interests of Meeker and Rio Blanco County. Many others were there before me, but no one thought much about the future,--everything was rather unsettled,--nothing of a very permanent nature was being undertaken in the Town. But when Hugus & Co. went in there, and put up a large building--with a large stock of Merch.--investing over \$100,000.00--Everyone felt hopeful for the future, buildings built--both business and homes--Civic improvements started--in fact everything took on new life thru' out the whole County.

They had the natural advantages, and when the people were assured of the necessary things of Mercantile and Banking credit--development began. There were few, if any, legards, everyone just "put their shoulder to the wheel" and pushed, and got results.

Mr. Hugus died many years ago, and Mr. Davis was killed in the accident on D & R G Railroad at Dotsero in January 1909. A few years after Mr. Davis died, Hugus and Co. decided to quit business, as there were no heirs who were actively interested. The stores were disposed of at various points, as opportunity offered, until their holdings were reduced to Meeker, Steamboat Springs, and Pelisade, by January 1919. Early in 1919 the Bank of Meeker and Hugus Store and Mill were sold respectively to First Nat'l. Bank, and A. Oldland & Co.--and transfer was made April 1st, 1919.

I remained in Meeker, closing up the affairs of the Company until Jan. 1st, 1920, when I was called to Denver to join Mr. Rendle in an enterprise there--this affair did not materialize, and I remained in Denver six months, practically out of business, until the following June, when Hugus & Co. Mgr. at Steamboat Springs, handed in his resignation, and I was sent there to relieve him, and continued the business until it could be disposed of--six months was estimated as the time necessary to accomplish that end, but I stayed seven years, before we were able to clean up--leaving there in August 1927.

I came to Denver, bought a home--at address I've given, and am obliged to consider myself as retired--"on the shelf"--I can't say I like it, but I try to be contented, might as well, for at my age I can't expect much more of life, so far as active business is concerned.

Altho' Meeker is 45 miles off the Railroad, she can put to shame many Railroad towns, in appearance and general prosperity, even in these times of depression. The one thing in particular, that has kept things moving along safe and sane lines, thru' all these long years, is the high quality of their Public Officers in Town and County--Every man has conducted his duties as a public servant, with the same conscientious

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attention, he gave his own private affairs--There has never been a suggestion of so-called "graft".

I've just been reading the semi-annual financial statement of the county, published in the "Herald", and I think it is rather wonderful for 'now a days' than other times.

A. C. Moulton

NOTATION:

A completion of Mr. A. C. Moulton's personal history may be obtained from "The Hugus & Co. Souvenir History Book".

Also a history of the Hugus & Co. Store is contained therein.

Note: Besides these facts of personal history, which have just been written by Mr. Moulton, and mailed to Field Worker, W. O. Ball, at Meeker, you will find among other material previously forwarded, a copy of Mr. Moulton's Biography, which we have copied from the J. W. Hugus & Co. Souvenir History, which we speak of just above.

Mrs. Emma (Daum) Amick

Rio Blanco County

Meeker, Colo. Jan. 1934

I was born in or near Fondulac, Wisconsin, on April the 8th, 1868, the youngest of seven children. Later my family moved to "Russell" Kansas. A number of years later we moved to Independence, Kansas, in Montgomery County. Lived a few years in Elk City, Kansas, but moved back to Independence, where my sister and myself were attending High School. As my Father sold his business and went to Leadville, where three of my brothers had been for some time, in February 1882, the rest of the family also went to Leadville, Colorado.

In July 1884 my father (John Daum) brother Henry, and myself, started from Leadville, going by way of Tennessee Pass to Red Cliff, over Battle Mountain in a covered wagon, with White River Valley and Meeker as our destination. We ferried across the Eagle River part of the load at a time, and swam the horses across behind the ferry boat. We crossed a mountain pass they called Belly Ache Mountain, and we thought it well named, by the time we were over it. When we arrived at "Dotsero", crossed the bridge over Grand River, going, as it looked, straight up the mountains toward Carbonate Camp. We took half the load as far as Willow Springs. (They called it six miles) They were long miles. We then went back to Dotsero for the rest of the load. We decided the rest of the way up to Carbonate Camp was just as steep as the first few miles were, but the scenery was grand and to look off down in the deep canyon below, and see tiny objects moving, at times, was very fascinating. When the people at Carbonate Camp cited us, they all came to meet us, as they had not seen anybody but the mail carrier, for eight months. Only one woman had remained in the camp all winter, the Postmaster's wife, Mrs. Price. They were all looking for some freighter to bring them supplies, as they were running low on food products. We thought we were on top of the world. There was a post office, saloon, and a number of other buildings, not many of them occupied, as most of the population had left before they were snowed in. Mr. Price made drawings of the place when the snow covered all the houses, and only the stove pipes and trails they dug out from their doors were visible. They used snow shoes and skis to go out to cut the trees down for wood and snake them close on piles to cut for firewood. All the wood piles still had snow banks underneath them. The drawings were very nicely done, and very interesting to look at. Mr. Price had made his wife a work box and bird cage, out of cigar boxes, cut in the smallest pieces, shaped in diamonds, etc. polished and glued on a foundation, they were beautiful. When asked if it did not take lots of patience, Mr. Price said any one would have patience to mould bird shot if they had to spend a winter up there.

Next, we started down the mountains toward the South Fork Canyon, of the White River. There were no roads, so the going was very steep down, and very rocky for a long way, until we reached what we might call the White River plateau. Just before entering the South Fork Canyon, we had to ford the river many, many times, and as the river is very rocky, with many boulders, which at times were very difficult to avoid. We came to a very steep hill, not very long, but which ended with not much more than a wagon length at the bottom, to the river bank. A party before, had attempted to let their wagon down by ropes tied to a tree at the top of hill, but broke down, and packed their horses on through. Father and Henry cleared the road as best they could, but it was difficult and dang-

erous to make so short a turn without turning over. However, Henry made the attempt and succeeded. He then threw his hat in the air and shouted "Hurrah! We made it". That canyon echoed and re-echoed, and frightened most of the wild animals, within hearing, out of their haunts and hiding places, even the little squirrels scampered away. Later we crossed the river again, the steep grade being on the opposite side of the river. After going up the steep bank a ways, we struck solid rock and the horses could not get a foothold, so we propped the wheels of the wagon with rocks, for if it went back it would go over a cliff, into the river, then took the horses and hooked them to the end of the wagon tongue, so they were where they could stand and get a firm foothold. I was told to get a persuader, in the form of a switch, and use on one of the horses, which I did. They did not need much persuading, as they were a good steady pulling team. Late one evening, we came to the river, where we wanted to cross, before dark, when just below, we saw a bear under a tree. As we went closer she disappeared, but up in the tree were three little cubs, and they looked so cunning way up there, at a safe distance. We crossed the river, which was a difficult crossing, and by the time they rode back across, it was too dark to see. The next day we were stuck in a swampy place, and it took us all day to get out, so our camp was not far distant from where we had camped the night before. About a mile or little more from the mouth of the canyon, we drove in the middle of the river bed, and followed it down until we came out into the valley of the South Fork of the White River. It was a very hazardous ride. A little farther on, we met "Charlie Smith", an old hunter and trapper, well known on the upper White River for many years. And yet with all the seeming hardships, we paused at times, to note the beauty of God's wonderful creations, and the wild creatures we saw from time to time, in their native haunts paused to look at us, then disappeared from sight. We landed at what is known as the old "LaKamp" place on the third day of August, 1884. We went on to Meeker, but came back, and father located on North Elk Creek, joining the old Eugene Gilly place on the river bottom, at the mouth of Elk Creek. My brother, Henry and I soon returned to Leadville, going horseback over the old Ute Trail. I rode all the way with just a saddle blanket cinched on my horse, riding, as was the custom at that time, side ways. It was a wonderful trip, and we arrived in Leadville in time for the opening of the fall term of school. Henry returned to White River to remain with Father and "Andy Belott" who was located on Piceance Creek, returned with him.

The next summer Henry returned to Leadville, by way of Meeker, New Castle Stage Route, and by way of Glenwood Springs, where they had a ferry boat to cross the Colorado River, at that place, and brought my mother and myself to the ranch on North Elk Creek, where my father was engaged in farming and stock raising. Cattle prices at that time, were nearly as low as at the present time. At that time, nearly all produce was freighted into Meeker by way of Rawlins, Wyoming, with horses and wagons, and the prices were high. A few years later, the railroad was built through and down the Colorado River, and the town of Rifle came into existence. Then the stage line and freighters did their hauling between Rifle and Meeker.

At the time of the late Ute Indian War (1887) the Indians were camped a few miles above the mouth of Elk Creek, on the hills above Big Beaver Creek. The Sheriff and his posse attempted to arrest an Indian for breaking the game laws, and so the trouble began. The Indians packed their squaws and families and started them back to the Reservation, under the cover of night. The Buck Indians were then supposedly to be on the war path. The officers followed them down the river and some sold-

iers were sent in to help. They had a fight with the Indians, miles below Meeker. One man was killed and several slightly wounded. But the stories and excitement were highly exaggerated, and many of the citizens were panic stricken. Two of my brothers in Leadville (Andrew and Lawrence) heard of the outbreak, took horses and started for the ranch, thinking the worst I guess, riding all night and arriving at the ranch. Father and Mother were still there, and persuaded them to go down to Meeker, for protection and safety. But after being there a day, none of us could see that there was any danger at the ranch, and stock and everything needing attention, we went back to the ranch and stayed there. We did see a lone Indian crossing above our place, and once in the hills, but supposed he was scotting around.

The boys then wanted to go deer hunting. I went along. After we went up in the hills, we separated, and Andy and myself took the lower trail. It being his first trip in those hills, I led him to a "deerlick" and there were seven elk. He took a shot and killed one. We returned home in a short time. The other boys did not get in until late evening, without anything, and did not want to believe in our success, until they saw the proof. As soon as the war cry died out I returned to Leadville with my brother Lawrence, to visit my sisters. We rode from Elk Creek, over the hills to New Castle, and Glenwood Springs. We met Dr. Hughes, who was also returning from the Indian War. Rode to Gypsum the next morning, in time to catch the train for Leadville, Lawrence riding on through with the horses. Gypsum was as far as the D. & R. G. Railroad was completed at that time, building on down the Colorado River, later.

The town of Meeker derived its name from the man by the name of "Meeker" that was massacred a few miles below where the town of Meeker is now located.

A number of years ago the Game Warden from Garfield County came over here to arrest some Indians, for violating the game laws. They were camped up in the Nine-Mile-Hill section. He took the Sheriff and Deputy and went up and brought them to Meeker and pitched their tents and camp in the park, in the center of town. Drove their horses off in a pasture out of town. There was a little Indian boy about three or four years old and the people seemed to delight in taking that child any toys they could buy, and gay calico for the squaws to make themselves dresses. And they were enjoying it all. The Indians put up a bear hide to pay for their defense, and they were turned loose. (There was some dispute over the bear hide, but the Judge walked off with it.) The Game Warden was not satisfied over the decision, so he decided to take them to Glenwood Springs, for trial. The officers here refused to help him take them out of this county, but he obtained help to take them out. So they took the Indians and all their camping outfit, and started for Glenwood Springs. After they had gone a ways out on the Government Road, the Indians made a break across the hills, scattering their paraphernalia all over, as they went. One Buck Indian was all they held back. They took him on to Glenwood Springs, and he was treated so nicely over there, that when they turned him loose he did not like to leave, as he was enjoying his vacation immensely.

In later years, after the Meeker Bank Robbery, there were a great many letters of inquiry received concerning the description and identity of the young man (one of the robbers) killed at that time, fearing it was a relative. One mother wrote to Mr. Amick, thinking it might be her son as she had never heard of him since he had left England as a boy, a few years previous to the robbery.

Mrs. Ewin Amick

Meeker, Colorado

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SOUTH FORK CANYON

When you make the trip through the South Fork Canyon on a good Forest Service Trail, the distance from the mouth of the Canyon to Wagon Wheel Creek is about fifteen and one half miles.

At Wagon Wheel Creek is where the Pioneers, a very few of them, came off the Flat Tops in their attempt to get down into the White River Valley.

As far as the writer knows only one outfit ever came through the Canyon with a wagon and how they ever got down through this Canyon with a wagon is pretty hard to figure out. Of course it must have been a Hobson's Choice because if they had gone any farther west on top they could not have gotten off into the Canyon because of the high cliffs, almost perpendicular, that guard both sides of this Canyon.

Coming from Wagon Wheel Creek it was comparatively easy going for a couple of miles and then the fall is very abrupt. The Canyon is very narrow and both sides steep and it is in this Canyon where the South Fork Falls are located and the drop in a distance of a mile and a half must be close to a thousand feet. The south side is covered with heavy timber and is a very steep hillside while on the north side the hills are steep but covered with bunch grass and Quaken Asp timber in patches.

The writer can not imagine how a wagon was ever brought through this Canyon before there was even a trail. This Canyon ends at Patterson Creek and from there on the floor of the Canyon is wider at some parts and the old timers must have thought that they had a boulevard through this part of the Canyon until just above Park Creek where another abrupt drop is made but not as rough as the first one.

Then again through the parks on down past Lost Solar until you reach the Canyon where is located the Granite Falls and it must have been some job to detour a wagon around this part of the Canyon and reach the parks below.

Then about three and one half miles of what to the Pioneers must have seemed rather smooth going brought them out at the mouth of the Canyon at what is now known as the Parrotte place.

The difference in altitude in the fifteen and one half miles is between four thousand and five thousand feet. This will give some idea of how steep the country that was traversed by this wagon on its trip from the Flat Tops down through the

The South Fork Canyon is one of the beauty spots of Colorado.

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Pam 343 #78
COLORADO HISTORICAL SURVEY PROJECT

W.O. Ball
Field Worker
Rio Blanco County

Meeker, Colo.
Dec. 20th. 1933

Mr. L.R. Haren,
Historian and Curator,
State Museum,
Denver, Colorado.

REPORT #2

Dear Mr. Haren:

I am enclosing to you in this letter an outline of the things of interest in Rio Blanco County as I see the structure.

I wish that you would look over this outline and point out the things that you prefer me to work the hardest, and stress the most.

At the present writing I have here in my files an accumulation of considerable information, as follows:-

- Facts about County
- Facts about Town of Meeker
- Facts about White River National Forest
- Facts about Oil and Oil Shale
- Facts (in complete pamphlet form) about the earliest and most interesting early chain of pioneer stores (J.W. Hugus & Co.) which operated from southern Wyoming down and through Northwestern, Colorado. These facts are at length and in much detail.
- Facts (Governmental Documents) (1879-80) (some 400 pages) about Ute Indians In Colorado,

I have promised interviews from the following Old Timers

H.S. Harp - Frank Snaver - Ed Wilour - H.A. Wildnack

Al Martin (is the only man that seems to be alive in these parts that was actually engaged in any of the Indian Warfare at the time of the Meeker and Thornburgh Massacres (1879) and I have not yet been able to locate his present whereabouts.

I have a report that a man now living down in Roosevelt, Utah, was an actual participant, but it is said that he cannot be investigated by mail and is a hard man to get talking even at close quarters.

REPORT #2
W.O. Ball
Dec. 20th. 1933

Winter has set in in earnest here in this country and it is not going to be an easy task to get these men in to town to talk with them. It will require patience and perseverance.

The people who have contributed what information I have on hand are reluctant to let go of it and it looks as if I will have to copy most of it, or else have it done. I can do a pretty fair job of PECK and HUNT on this old machine but I am not very fast at copy work.

Your letter of December 19th. tells me that you are especially interested in the Meeker and Thornburgh Massacres, and I had anticipated that viewpoint, as those are the two outstanding events in the past history of this section of Colorado. I will do my best along these lines.

As a matter of fact I sat up until 3:00 A.M. this day reading these old Government Documents and found much of interest that pertains to those two events spoken of above.

Later in this enclosure I am setting forth some of these excerpts and I would like to know if you have at hand anything like this information, or if you have at any time had this sort of information to use in your work. If you have had this before it will be of no avail to you in my having all this typed and sent to you.

I personally learned much in this reading that is of interest about these two massacres and if you have never had this information (some 400 pages) of the sort I submit in this letter, it seems in my opinion that a complete history that would be authentic concerning these two events would result from a compilation and arrangement of these letters, telegrams, messages, and early day scout communications between the whites, the agents, the Indians, the Department of Interior, the Office of Indian Affairs, the military, the Generals at that time, N.C. Meeker, Major Thornburgh, Ouray, White River Agency, Los Pinos Agency, Southern Ute Agency, etc.

It doesn't seem to me that I getting very far, yet I know that it all can't be done in a minute.

Then if some incidents or facts can be uncovered from some of these Old Timers that would add to the story considerably.

The DOCUMENTS that I speak of are: SENATE DOCUMENTS, 2nd. Session 46th. Congress, Nos. 1 to 50 except No. 17. Vol No. 1. 1879-80.

The following pages will offer some excerpts for your consideration.

Very truly,

Wright O. Ball

W.O. Ball
Field Worker
Rio Blanco County

Colorado Historical Survey Project

----- OUTLINE -----

RIO BLANCO COUNTY

Location
Area
Altitude
Population
Topography

MEEKER (County Seat) (Only Town of Importance In County)

Location
Population
Altitude
Industries
Schools
Religions
Pastimes

Important Yearly Events

New Years
Saint Patricks Day
Memorial Day
Fourth of July
Annual Rodeo
Armistice Day
Stray Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

Meeker Bank Robbery (1896) IMPORTANT and INTERESTING

1. Pictures of Dead Robbers
Site of Troop Quarters At Time of Indian Massacres and Ute Wars.
Parade Grounds now Parks.
Town Grew Up Around Parade Grounds In Old Adobe Soldiers Quarters
Sun Dial
Log Buildings (Officers Quarters) Now Private Homes (Natural State)
Public Library In One of These Log Buildings.

COLORADO HISTORICAL SURVEY PROJECT

W.O. Ball
Field Worker
Rio Blanco County

-----OUTLINE-----

GEOGRAPHY

Rivers and Streams and Lakes

1. White River

a. North Fork- South Fork- Marvine Creek- Elk Creek- Miller Creek

2. Trappers Lake- Marvine Lakes

Mountains and Peaks

Forests

Flowers

1. White River National

a. 2nd Oldest In United States.

b. Forest Fires Set By Ute Indians.

c. Development of Forest.

d. Game on Forest. (Elk, Deer, Buffalo, Lion, Bear, Bobcat, etc.)

INTERESTING

EARLY INHABITANTS

Ute Indians

Traditions- Habits- Customs

Meeker Massacre (1879)

IMPORTANT and INTERESTING

1. Monument

Thornburg Massacre (1879)

IMPORTANT and INTERESTING

1. Monument

Ute Reservation Established

Cattle Rustling After Pioneers Settled.

INTERESTING

Hunting Expeditions From Reservation In Utah Into Rio Blanco Co.

TOWNS ESTABLISHED -TRADING POSTS- POST OFFICES

Meeker
Origin
Location
Legal History

Rangely
Origin
Location
Legal History

Buford
Origin
Location
Legal History

Rio Blanco
P.O.

Marvine
P.O.

COLORADO HISTORICAL SURVEY PROJECT

W.O. Ball
Field Worker
Rio Blanco County

-----OUTLINE -----

PIONEERS

- Birtplace
- Early History
- Trails to Rio Blanco County
- Motive for Move to Rio Blanco County. : IMPORTANT
- Hardsnips endured.
- Trouble with Utes
- Homesteads
- Business Engaged In.
- Development of Business.
- Early Day Methods as Compared With Modern. :

CATTLE INDUSTRY

- Historical Characters Among Cowpunchers. ---- INTERESTING
- Roundups.
- Texas Longhorn Steers
- Mess Wagons
- Dutch Ovens
- Corrals
- Roping and Branding
- Brands
- Cattle Rustling -----INTERESTING
- Cattle and Sheep Wars (Especially important and interesting in this Co.

SHEEP INDUSTRY

- Cattle and Sheep Feuds from Early Days Until Present Time. IMPORTANT
- Sheep Driven Over Cliffs
- Cowpunchers and Shepherders Killed
- Haystacks Burned
- Cattlemen Finally Recognizing Sheepmen With A Vengeance

COAL AND MINING

OIL AND OIL SHALE

RANCHES AND FARMS AND AGRICULTURE

FISHING AND HUNTING

ROOSEVELT (Lion And Bear Hunt In 1901) IMPORTANT

Furs, Fur Farms, Bear, Deer, Elk, Lion, Bear, etc.

Trout Fishing

DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIES

Pioneer Industries and COVERED WAGON FREIGHTING

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Meeker's Musical Melange

Upon the evacuation of the White river valley by the U.S. troops and the removal of the Utes to eastern Utah, the adventurous whites gradually settled up this country. With civilization came dancing as a relaxation from earthly cares, and, fortunately, several musicians came in with the others, mostly fiddlers. In the fall of 1886, the writer of this tale found Fred Ames, first violin; Harry Gilmore, second and prompter, with Al Randall, banjo; and Jimmy Buchan (Meeker hotel clerk) violincello, an instrument well bound with baling wire to hold it together; formed the nucleus of an organization which grew in number as the settlers flocked in. That ancient cello was replaced by the writer that winter, following his arrival with a more modern one. The giving of parties and dances that winter were not few and far between, as there was little to be done on the farms and these amusements shortened the long winter nights.

At the same time plans were under way for the organization of a band with a full set of instruments, but as money was not very plentiful a benefit dance was decided upon and the date for it set for New Year's eve and well advertised. The personnel of that organization included Ames, Gilmore, Randall, Wildhack and Buchan, with F.E. Sheridan, John Houston, (our P M), F.N. Johantgen, Chas. Dressell, Rudolph Bergh, Will Hedenberg, Larkin Craig, John Gould, J.W. Wolfe, Bob Wagner and some others as willing to give it a try-out. That dance netted them \$250, and an order for the instruments was sent out immediately. Transportation in those days lacked the celerity of present day methods, but the instruments arrived before spring work was on in earnest; Jesse Lamb, the Rawlins stage driver doing well his part in making a safe delivery of them in Meeker.

A Frenchman named Henriod, then a band teacher of note, was on hand to take charge, and our troubles were soon over. After weeding out some of the poor material and adding others the band made splendid progress; in fact, by Fourth of July 1887, that natal day was celebrated in modern fashion.

Later the band disintegrated, the active ones losing interest, and laid dormant for many years, although repeated efforts to revive the sick man, but without avail. After the dawn of the new century, D.W. McMillan, a fine bandman, took charge of the fragments of the old organization, and from chaos brought to light a band which any town would be proud of. It was then that Everett Young, just entering his teens, was given a trial with a cornet, and Mac discovered a musical prodegy in that boy. To be brief, Young made good later when he left Meeker for greener pastures, being a member of a Los Angeles organization for ten consecutive years, and nearly as well in other places.

In due course of time, Meeker again had no band, but sporadic attempts brought it out again and again. Preacher Mallory and Frank Robinson putting new life into succeeding lethargic spells of the average music makers.

Now, that the public schools have bands, there may be more permanence and stability. Orchestral organizations, however, are becoming more numerous, but changes in them are frequent, as the green-eyed monster cannot be choked off with any degree of success.

H.A. Wildhack

Meeker, March 3, 1934

McBride

3/2

Pioneer Biography of Reuben Oldland

Mr. Reuben Oldland, a British subject, born near Bristol, England in 1835, and one of the early pioneers of Rio Blanco County, Colorado, came first to Colorado in 1879 and settled in Leadville, where he engaged in the mining business on Friar Hill.

Mr. R. Oldland came to Rio Blanco County, Colorado, first in 1881 and camped near Meeker, and just outside of the lines of Soldier's Post.

Here he visited for a short time and was very much impressed with the White River Valley, and while he continued in the mining business in the Leadville district for a period of two or three years, he still kept the White River Valley in his mind, and in 1884 organized a cattle company and drove overland with onethousand head of cattle from Dodge City, Kansas and located on Piceance Creek, a tributary of White River, in Rio Blanco County. Shortly after setting up his locations he moved his family from Leadville to Piceance Creek where he and his wife and four children continued to reside until 1895, at which time they moved to Meeker.

Mr. R. Oldland was elected Clerk and Recorder of Garfield County in 1885, when Garfield and Rio Blanco County were all one. He was elected Treasurer of Rio Blanco County in 1895, and re-elected in 1897.

Mr. R. Oldland,--together with some of the other pioneers of Rio Blanco County, organized and incorporated the First National Bank of Meeker in 1904, and he continued to be connected with that institution and one of its officers from the time of its organization up until his death in 1933.

Mr. R. Oldland was elected to the State Legislature, representing Garfield and Rio Blanco Counties, for the years 1929, 1931 and 1933.

From the time Mr. R. Oldland first came to Rio Blanco County in 1885 he continued to reside in this County, and was always very loyal and an enthusiastic advocate of Rio Blanco County and North-western Colorado.

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HISTORY OF JOSEPHINE REBEKAH LODGE NO. 86, I.O.O.F.

MEEKER COLORADO

Josephine Rebekah Lodge No. 86, I O O F was constituted April 18, ___
with the following Charter members:

Nellie Sheridan	Frank Clark
Carrie Mootz	Fannie JoHantgen
Maude DeLaney	Frank Sheridan
Adelaide Walbridge	Frank JoHantgen
Mary Lord	Arthur Burnham
William H. Clark	

The Lodge was organized by the President of the Rebekah Assembly, Mrs. Nellie Sherman, and the Grand Secretary, Mrs. Ernestine V.L. Beggs, with 12 charter members and seventeen others. Total of 29 members.

The Lodge was named for Josephine Meeker, who was captured by the Indians in the Meeker Massacre in 1879, and was held captive between two and three months.--Her father was Nathan C. Meeker, for whom Meeker was named.

At the first meeting the following officers were elected:

Noble Grand-----	Frances M. Clark
Vice Grand-----	Adelaide Walbridge
Recording Sect'y.-----	Maggie Henry
Financial Secretary----	Mary Lord
Treasurer-----	Carrie Mootz

Appointed Officers

Conductor-----	Addie Fairfield
Warden-----	Nellie Sheridan
Chaplain-----	Pearl Blaine
Right Supporter to the Noble Grand----	Frank Sheridan
Left Supporter to the Noble Grand----	Fannie JoHantgen
Right Supporter to the Vice Grand----	Ida Clark
Left Supporter to the Vice Grand-----	Lena Hartke
Outside Guardian-----	Arthur Burnham
Inside Guardian-----	Edgar M. Cole

Noble Grand elect did not serve in the office, so it was taken over by the Vice Grand, Adelaide Walbridge, who served till the end of the term.

Arthur Burnham was the first delegate to the Rebekah Assembly.

The Lodge now has 70 members--one veteran member, Nannie Ball. The Lodge has always advocated charity, benevolence and good will.

Jane Amick

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W.C. Ball

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THE MEEKER HOTEL

THE PIONEER HOTEL OF MEEKER AND RIO BLANCO COUNTY

Down in Laurens, South Carolina, in the year 1847 a girl was born, who was, in later life, to be one of the outstanding pioneers in the development and settlement of the Great West. Her name was Susan C. Ball. When she grew into womanhood, she married a man by the name of Wright, and not long afterwards they moved to the state of Mississippi where they lived until the death of Mr. Wright.

Shortly after the death of Mr. Wright, Susan C. Wright journeyed farther westward and lived for a while in the states of Kansas and Nebraska. It was at this time that the spirit of the westward movement was finding its way into the minds and hearts of adventurous people and the spirit of westward migration lead Susan C. Wright from the corn fields of Nebraska and Kansas out into the state of Wyoming, to the pioneer town of Rawlins.

It was in the spring of 1883 about the month of March, that Mrs. Wright heard of the White River country and Northwestern Colorado, and with the company of Charlie Dunbar she traveled southward over cattle trails and roads of dim outline, and finally arrived on the north slopes of the White River Valley. In those days the people that came to this country sought land and a place to make their home. Mrs. Wright located a claim near the foot of what is known as Nine-Mile Hill; just to the north of what was then the Government Military Reservation, which was established by the troops who were sent to the aid of the White Settlers at the time of the Meeker Massacre on September 29, 1879.

In the late summer of 1883, the Government started removing the soldiers from the Government Military Reservation, and this evacuation was completed Sept. 6th, 1883. The Government buildings were then auctioned off, and brought but trifling prices. Mr. Major bought the long adobe building for approximately fifty dollars, and moved his goods from the trading post in Powell Valley, where the Meeker Indian Agency was located, up into this adobe building, and so began the first store in the town of Meeker. Later this store building came to be the headquarters of the pioneer chain store system of J.W. Hugus & Co.

At the time of the auction of these Government buildings, Mrs. Wright came to the town of Meeker, which was then in its very beginning and bought the long adobe building adjoining that building bought by Mr. Major. Charlie Dunbar bought the adobe building alongside of the building bought by Mrs. Wright. These buildings were in block number one, town of Meeker.

Mrs S.C. Wright and Charlie Dunbar then established the Meeker Hotel, and what was to become the first saloon of Meeker. J.W. Hugus & Co. had taken over the bar and club room which had belonged to the officers' quarters during the occupancy of the Government troops. Mrs. Wright bought this bar from Hugus & Co., for which she went in debt \$1500.

In February of 1883, Ed Wilber went to work for George Wright, (who was no relation to Susan C. Wright) who had the contract for supplying the meat for the Military Post. Ed worked for him until the Government Sale began on August 13, 1883. Then Ed went to work for Hugus and Adams, and worked for them until the first election in November '83. The day before election, Charlie Dunbar employed Ed Wilber to help him behind

the bar. On the day of the first election Charlie Dunbar, who was a professional gambler, was shot and killed by Pete Stewart. This killing was the result of a gambling grievance.

Ed Wilber stayed in the employe of Mrs. S.C. Wright, and in 1884, he acted in the capacity of a match-maker, and thru' a mutual friendship Mrs. Wright married a man by the name of Burke. Soon after this Ed Wilber went on the Bear River Round-up, and Burke tended bar for Mrs. Wright in the Hotel, but the drink habit soon got the best of him. Mrs. Wright sent a letter down to Ed Wilber, who was on the Round-up, and *said* "Ed come back and help me out and take your pay out of the money-drawer." So Ed cut his horses out and came back and tended bar for Mrs. Wright. That winter they paid off the fifteen hundred dollar mortgage, which Mrs. Wright owed J.W. Hugus & Co. for the bar purchased from the Sale of the Government property.

Not long afterwards, H.S. (Simp) Harp became associated with Mrs. Wright in the hotel business. Harp and Wright were also agents for the Studebaker line of wagons, plows, and buggies. They were also agents for J.I. Case & Co. plows.

The Meeker Herald issue of July 3rd, 1886 carried the following article:-

Simp Harp, the genial manager of Meeker Hotel, was the busiest man in town in the past week preparing for the Fourth of July celebration. The French glass recently arrived from Denver, has been placed behind the bar and adds greatly to the appearance of the saloon. The 4th of July goods arrived on Wednesday; beer by the wagon load, whiskey by the barrel, gin and wines by the keg, champagne by the case, and in fact everything in the liquor line. The average man cannot step in the saloon without being tempted to "take something", even be it a "little soda with whiskey on the side". The dining room is being refitted, consequently Dick the head-waiter, is all smiles and will see the boys get plenty to eat on the day we celebrate. The Chinaman force in the kitchen will be there "all-a-same-ee-white-man."

Susan C. Wright was one of the most picturesque characters and history builders of the early West. Her policy in the conduct of the hotel business was, that no person, regardless of financial condition, should be turned away without food or shelter, and with the easy and free hospitality of the day the Meeker Hotel became a landmark of the West.

It has been said by the Old Timers and Early Day Settlers that no man ever came to Mrs. Wright's Hotel when in need of food and a place to sleep, was ever turned away regardless of whether he had money or not

One of the habits which Mrs. Wright had and which was noticeable, because it was the habit of a woman, was that she enjoyed smoking a good cigar. And while she did not indulge in smoking in public to any great extent, it was not an uncommon thing to find her enjoying a good mild cigar in her own privacy and among close friends.

It was in the lobby of the Meeker Hotel with Ed Wilber tending bar, that James Lyttle, who had ridden horseback from Leadville, Colo-

rado, received his first greeting as a newcomer. Jim had ridden all the way from Leadville to Meeker, to look over the prospects of starting a newspaper, and this ride resulted in the establishment of a newspaper which was to be the first one in Meeker, and the second in Northwestern Colorado. On this particular night Jim had come into the hotel and not being of a robust physic, he had slumped into a chair and showed the signs of a weary man, after a long and arduous trip. Ed Wilber was not used to seeing such frail men in this frontier land, and he looked over at the stranger and said, "Feller, you look like you need a drink", and thereupon Jim took a drink and braced up, and Ed soon had him down at the store of Hugus & Co. introducing him to the clerks.

Susan C. Wright was known among the early settlers as the "Old Lady" as her friends loved to call her; and as "Widow Wright"; and more often, according to Ed Wilber, as "The Mother of Meeker". And Ed Wilber tells us that Newton Major, "Maj" as he was fondly called, was generally termed "The Father of Meeker".

On June 6th, 1890, a young southerner, at the age of twenty three years, arrived in the town of Meeker. This young southern boy hailed from the state of South Carolina. This was his first trip out into the great Western States. He was born August 12, 1867 in Laurens County, South Carolina, and his parents were Dr. Reuben G. and Mahala Tolland Ball. Dr. Reuben G. Ball was, in his early life a dentist, but afterwards a farmer until his death, which occurred in 1887. His wife passed away in 1872. They had only two children, and these were boys, one of whom was named Hugh T., and the other Reuben Sanford Ball. Reuben S. Ball spent his early life in the state of South Carolina, and received common school advantages. In those days he used to pick cotton all day long for thirty five cents a day, and he learned his penmanship, which was exceedingly good, by walking five miles to a country school house to obtain his instructions.

Frank Shaver, who was one of the very Early Settlers of Rio Blanco County, happened to be in Rifle, Colorado on the day that this southern boy arrived there, on the train. At that time Mr. Shaver says that the depot was a box-car, and that this young southern boy was very much disgusted when his trunk was dumped out of this would-be depot, and happened to light in a swampy place. Mr. Shaver says that Rube Ball was ready to turn around and go back to South Carolina, without completing his journey to Meeker.

After Reuben Ball had visited with his sister, Mrs. S.C. Wright, who was then running the Meeker Hotel in Meeker, in the old adobe buildings, which formerly housed the soldiers at the time of the Meeker Massacre, he then went to the mining town of Creed, Colorado. Here in Creed he and a partner engaged in the saloon business, and he remained there until the famous Creed fire, at which time he and his partner lost their entire business and investment in that fire. Then he returned to the town of Meeker, and engaged himself in the Hotel business, assisting his sister, Mrs. S.C. Wright.

From Herald Files, Dated March 25, 1893

Death of a Pioneer

On Tuesday morning the inhabitants of Meeker were again brought to the stern realization of the fact that "in the midst of life we are in death". At 8 o'clock Mrs. S.C. Wright, who had been ailing for some time past, breathed her last. Her death, although not unexpected, was painless and came with scarcely a moment's warning. A few minutes previous she was in the best of spirits, and advised her brother, Mr. W.H. Ball, to get his breakfast, as she felt very well and the attendant could administer to her wants. Before the brother left her room, however, she was taken with a fit of coughing, causing a slight hemorrhage and she thereupon exclaimed: "Send for Rube and the doctor; I believe I'm dying" These were her last words, and she expired a few moments later.

The funeral obsequies took place on Thursday afternoon, and the citizens of Meeker turned out en masse to pay their last tribute to the departed loved one. The Rev. O.E. Ostenson conducted the services in an impressive and touching manner at St. James church and at the grave, and Messrs. Wear, Tovey, Wilber, Warner, Burnham and Mootz were the pallbearers.

Deceased was born in Laurens, South Carolina, forty-six years ago, and in March, 1883, landed in the White river valley, which has been her place of residence ever since. In the fall of '83 she opened the Meeker Hotel, and run it up to the time of her death. Last fall her health began failing, and a trip to the home of her youth was her earnest desire. She stopped at Glenwood Springs to recuperate somewhat before making the journey, but her condition did not improve, so she returned to Meeker, and shortly after took to her bed, to which she has been confined almost continuously since. The best of medical skill was always at her command, but she was beyond human aid.

Many an old-timer will feel the moisture coming to his or her eyes when they learn that the "old lady," as her friends loved to call her, is no more. While she (like humanity in general) had her faults, she had good qualities and they largely predominated. She was generous to a fault. The poor were always her especial charge. In matters of public concern there was at no time a disposition on her part to let an opportunity pass by whereby the town could be benefitted, and her subscriptions, whether large or small, were given cheerfully.

Mrs. Wright's surviving brothers, Messrs. W.H. and R.S. Ball, were very much attached to her, and their last parting was a touching one. The sympathy of the entire community goes out to them in their bereavement.

WILL

ESTATE OF SUSAN C. WRIGHT

FILED MARCH 31, 1893

H.A. WILDHACK, JUDGE

In the name of God, Amen; I, Susan C. Wright of Meeker, Rio Blanco County, Colorado, of the age of forty-six being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make, ordain, publish, and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament:

That is to Say:-

First, after all my just debts are paid and discharged I give and bequeath to my brother, Reuben S. Ball, all my property both real and personal, situated in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, or elsewhere:-

Provided, that he takes care of me and moves me back to my old home in South Carolina in case of my death.

I, hereby, make, constitute and appoint my executor Reuben S. Ball to be executor of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former and other wills by me made.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three.

Witnesses:

J. E. Rooney

Ora H. Watson

Susan S. Wright

Will filed for Probate
12th day of June, A.D. 1893

Taken from Herald Files dated March 25, 1893

Rube Ball returned from Glenwood Tuesday, whither he went to purchase a metallic coffin in which to carry the remains of his sister, the late Mrs. S.C. Wright, to her old home in South Carolina, where they will be interred in conformity with her wishes while in the flesh. The remains were taken up yesterday and enclosed in the hermetically sealed casket, which was one of the handsomest that Mr. Ball could procure, and taken to Rifle this morning from which point they will be shipped to their final resting place in the Sunny South.

The particular reason which caused Mrs Wright to request in her Will that her remains be removed to her old home in South Carolina, was her aversion to having her grave covered with snow during the long winters in Colorado. This seems particularly unusual and is rather an outstanding characteristic of Mrs. Wrights', when it is considered that she had adapted herself completely in all other respects, to the ways of the West, with it's early day trials, and the rough features of living conditions, which were undoubtedly no easy barrier to overcome when people drifted into this Western country from their early day homes, where advantages were so common-place as to make the thought of them almost negligible.

Taken from Meeker Herald June 10th, 1905

THE NEW MEEKER HOTEL

The year 1904 did not witness the erection of many public or private buildings in Meeker. Most of our citizens seem to be putting off building enterprises, both for residential and business purposes, until actually forced by necessity to build. However, the building that has been done is of a very substantial character and accredit alike to the builders and the town.

The most important building enterprise of last year was the erection of the two wings to the Meeker hotel, work on the interior of which has just been completed by the installation of elegant new furnishings throughout both the new and old wings.

When the main, or central part, of the hotel was erected a few years ago, it was thought it would meet all demands for several years to come, but it did not. The business soon outgrew its capacity, and for the past two years Landlord Ball has found himself very much lacking in room to take care of his constantly growing patronage. Hence, early last spring he had plans drawn for two wings to the hotel and no time was lost in getting the work under way. The services of Contracting Carpenter I.G. Mitchell, who designed and built the main part of the hotel, were secured and early in the summer the east wing was under way.

This wing sets flush with the sidewalk line and has a frontage of 35 feet, running back 60 feet. The ground floor is principally taken up by the large and handsomely appointed drug store of Strehlke Bros. (here to fore described in these columns). Dr. Bruner has a handsome office suite, and the Colorado Telephone Company also has quarters on this floor (connected with the drug store). On the second floor are nine large rooms, four of which are used as the private apartments of Mr. and Mrs. Ball. All are furnished in elegant and up-to-date style.

The west wing, which corresponds with the east in architectural features and also sits flush with the sidewalk line, has a frontage of 28 feet and a depth of 115 ft., running back same distance as main part of the hotel. There are fifteen commodious rooms on the second floor which are reached by a front stairway and also a spacious hallway connecting with the main structure. The front rooms are en suite and Dr. Bell occupies one suite and the H.A. Dennison Real Estate Company the other. The ground floor of this wing is taken up by the front room in which is a finely appointed cigar stand and a public writing room. These apartments are separated from the bar room by panelled quarter-sawed oak partitions with art glass settings. The bar room is 20'X28' and is resplendent in solid mahogany and quarter-sawed oak furnishings and French plate glass; in fact, in point of fittings there are few in the state which curpass it in elegance. It is separated from the large billiard room in the same manner as the cigar and public writing room. The furnishings and fixtures of these apartments are all beautiful in design and finished in the highest workmanship of the wood-workers art.

Adjoining the billiard room are two large storage rooms, which take up the balance of the space on the ground floor of this wing.

The whole structure is built and arranged in accordance with modern hotel requirements, and is a credit to the town and its enterprising proprietor, Mr. Ball. No town of its size in the state, has a hotel that will at all favorably compare with the New Meeker, and our citizens are justly proud of it.

Every settler in White River valley should feel in duty bound to extend every encouragement and a most liberal patronage to the man whose enterprise made such a structure a possibility.

Taken from Meeker Herald June 10th, 1905

Tuesday, June 6th, marked the date on which Rube Ball arrived in this town, fifteen years ago, and the day was fittingly observed by the formal opening of the New Meeker hotel. A very appropriate way in which to celebrate such an anniversary. May the genial host of the New Meeker hotel have many more auspicious celebrations of the day, is the wish of his many friends in White River valley; and, in the language of the immortal "Rip Van Winkle," may he live long and prosper.

R.S. Ball Passed Away On Coast After Long Illness

Taken from Meeker Herald files November, 1930

Word reached Meeker last Sunday afternoon that Mr. R.S. Ball, pioneer of Meeker, had passed away in Long Beach, California that morning. His death did not come as a surprise to his many friends, for they all knew that he could not long withstand the ailments which were incurable. Mr. Ball had been operated upon twice in an effort to stop the cancer but each time the malady returned finding him in a weaker condition. Early last spring he went to the Coast in an effort to try the new cancer treatment hoping that it might be successful but the doctors could do no good and it was then only a matter of time until his weakened body gave out and life slowly ebbed away.

The remains were prepared and shipped to Meeker, arriving Wednesday morning, accompanied by his devoted wife and Wright and Ethel who have been with their father during these last months. The other son, Reuben, arrived from the East Thursday afternoon. The funeral services were held yesterday afternoon from St. James' Church, Rev. Chas. D. Evans officiating. The active pallbearers were old time friends of the family, while the honorary pallbearers were all pioneers and friends of the deceased since the early days. The high regard in which Mr. Ball was held in this community was manifested by the beautiful floral tributes sent from all parts of the county. The Church was crowded with friends who came from all parts of the county and many from other towns to pay their last tribute to this pioneer citizen of Meeker.

Reuben S. Ball was born August 12, 1867 in Lawrens county, South Carolina, and passed away, November 2, 1930 in Long Beach, California at the age of 63. Mr. Ball's boyhood days were spent in the South. As a young man he came to Colorado where his sister, Mrs. Wright was already located as proprietress of Meeker's only hotel. Mr. Ball later went to Creede, one of Colorado's leading mining towns where he engaged in the hotel business. After the fire in Creede he returned to Meeker and became part owner in the famous hostelry, The Meeker Hotel. Within a few years Mr. Ball became owner of the hotel and operated it as owner and manager until a few years ago when it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Mathes. Mr. Ball was a natural hotel man. His genial personality made him a favorite with the traveling public. The Meeker Hotel became widely known over the state and in many parts of the country. Meeker was the center of big game hunting and the Meeker Hotel, under direction of Mr. Ball was the main stopping place. In addition to the hotel Mr. Ball acquired the famous Marvine lodge and the two places were run in connection.

Mr. Ball was one of the best boosters Meeker has ever had. He was ever ready to contribute financial assistance to any movement for the betterment of our town. Whenever the town celebrated he was one of the foremost to push the program and gave liberally to its financing. He was always ready to give towards the support of our school athletics. It was that spirit of good will that endeared the deceased in the hearts of the people of Rio Blanco county, both young and old.

Mr. Ball was a nature lover and a fine sportsman. He was instrumental in securing the first fish hatchery in the county which was then located at Marvine lodge, giving freely of his time in stocking our streams. (To the Editor: As I believe that it may be of interest to your readers to know what has been accomplished at Marvine Fish hatchery during the past season, I herewith submit to you a report of the work done and expenditures made during the season of 1908.

On May 29th W.S. Kincaid the state fish expert, Charles Tryor, manager of the Marvine hatchery, W.F. Givens, F.A. Gordon, Frank Gerard, Joe Hill, H.T. Dawson, John Quinton and Commissioner Farr's son, all of the state game department, went up to Marvine lodge for the purpose of instituting the work there. I accompanied them, together with Messrs. Green and Frost. Work was at once commenced; fish collected in Marvine lakes and stripped of their spawn, and in due course the hatchery was ready to distribute its fish. These were planted as follows:

Where Planted, and by Whom.

- The hatchery placed in Marvine creek, 35,000.
- In the South Fork, by W.L. Parrotte, 50,000
- In the White river at the Hay & Walbridge bridge and Joe Wharton's, by J.L. Beavers, 40,000.
- In the White river at the K-T ranch, by Isaac Baer, 30,000.
- In the White river at Meeker by Messrs. Gifford & House, 40,000.
- In the North Fork by S.T.B. Himes, 15,000.
- In Big Beaver, and at the Warren and Archer ranches, by E.A. Moran, 20,000 each.
- In Elk creek, and in the White river near Elk creek, by Col. B.F. Montgomery, 20,000 each.
- In the White river at Veatch's grove, by F.A. Carstens, 50,000.
- And at various other points, by the department and others, 58,000.
- Making a grand total of 428,000 trout placed in our local waters by our own hatchery this year.

All the gentlemen above named very kindly donated their services in the distribution of the fish, and the thanks of myself and the fish department of the state are tendered for their kindly help.

This work cost as follows: For building the hatchery, labor, and keeping the plant in running order, \$354.93

Donations

Toward this expense the following gentlemen contributed as follows:

J.C. Davis-----	\$100
W.L. Parrotte-----	35
L.S. Hill-----	6
E.A. Martin-----	5

Total-----\$146

Leaving a net expense to me personally of \$208.93, besides about five weeks' time and the trouble and worry of seeing that all necessary supplies and materials were kept at Marvine during the hatching season.

As to the expense account of \$345.93, I desire to say that an itemized statement thereof can be seen at any time at the Meeker Hotel, and any person desiring to contribute toward the expense account will be gladly permitted to do so. Yours truly, R.S. Ball.

Meeker, Colorado, Sept. 29, 1908.

The work of restocking the White river undertaken by Mr. Ball is timely. The stream is peculiarly adapted to trout culture, and the reputation of the stream should be kept up. Thousands come to Colorado an-

nually on account of the hunting and fishing, and as the hunting will soon be a thing of the past it behooves all to see that the fishing is kept up to the standard. But this public work should not be left to one man. It is the concern of all. Instead of being closed up next year, the capacity of the plant should be increased. Every fisherman should go to the assistance of Mr. Ball in this restocking proposition.) During the years he managed the Meeker Hotel he gathered together one of the best collections of mounted wild life to be found in the state. The collection has made the hotel lobby a show place with the traveling public.

Mr. Ball was a member of the Elks Lodge at Grand Junction, having joined that benevolent order twenty five years ago. A number of his brothers Elks from Rifle and Grand Junction came to Meeker to attend the funeral services.

The deceased leaves to mourn his passing his devoted life partner, two sons, Wright and Reuben and one daughter, Ethel, together with a host of friends in all parts of Rio Blanco county.

Taken from Meeker Herald November, 1930

Reuben Ball Is Dead

Those few words flashing swiftly over wires, and passing quickly by word of mouth brought more genuine sorrow and grief to Rio Blanco county and more especially to older residents of this county than any words in recent years. On Thursday, November Sixth, it became the sorrowful duty of this writer to go to the end of the trail with the man, who many years before, extended the hand of friendship to a stranger in a strange land.

Reuben S. Ball, as a young Southerner, came to Meeker in the year of 1890 to carry on the hotel business of his sister, Susan C. Wright, one of the most picturesque characters and history builders of the early West.

A giant in stature, with strength and endurance given to but few, he was a fitting personality to cope with, and master the hardships, privations, joys, happiness and freedom of the wild, desolate land which was in the making, and which today is Rio Blanco county.

Carrying on the policy of his sister, that no person, regardless of financial condition, should be turned away without food or shelter, and with the easy and free hospitality of the day, the Meeker Hotel became a land mark of the West, where came many of the historic characters of the early day--"Calamity Jane," Jim Shirley, and his two companions who committed the famous Meeker Bank Robbery, General Adams who brought in troops and established the saw mill on the old Craig ranch, that great hunter and statesman, Theodore Roosevelt, and many other noted and famous characters, including early day gamblers and gun men.

To carry on and survive it was necessary to live as others lived and to meet the rough conditions in kind--to meet men who lived much alone, men of few, but strong friendships.

Reuben Ball, having made more money than probably any other man in Rio Blanco county, spent with prodigal hand, giving to his friends, and others in need, with that free generosity and love of friendship that were the dominant traits of his character.

The town of Meeker was his special pride, and he, more than any other, gave unstintedly towards it upbuilding and worked tirelessly for its betterment.

He helped to build and watch grow, the present town of Meeker from

the few log buildings and adobe houses, and here began the enactment of one of life's tragedies that befell so many of the pioneers of our country.

Upon the foundation of their hardships, privations and dangers endured, they saw the fulfillment of their hopes and endeavors in the coming of roads, splendid homes, good schools, and the ushering in of a new order, only to find that they could not meet the swiftly changing conditions, nor cope, nor understand the speed of present day methods, and while we would like to close the chapter otherwise, we must remember Reuben Ball as a splendid figure of another day--the giant frame unbowed by the passing of the years--his face drawn in lines of suffering from an incurable malady, yet with the stately courtliness of his Southland, which the breezy West could not efface--his head held high--passing confidently into the shadow, as he had lived, asking fear or favor of no man--personifying the spirit of the old West.

Reuben S. Ball was born August 12, 1867, in Laurens county, South Carolina, and died November 2, 1930 at Long Beach, California, at the age of 63 years.

May 29, 1894, he married his childhood sweetheart, Nannie Owings, of Gray Court, South Carolina, bringing his bride to Meeker where she has been his constant companion through the years.

Wright O. Ball, and Ethel Mahala Rittmayer, of Long Beach, California, and Reuben C. Ball of Montclair, N.J., are his children.

His funeral, one of the largest ever held in Rio Blanco county, marked the passing of one of the best known pioneers in Northwestern Colorado.

The Honorary pallbearers, Simp Harp, Frank Shaver, Ed Wilber, Joe Rooney, Rube Oldland, Al Pierce, Al Strehlke, Owen Lunney, John Watson, Tom Baker, Buck Nimerick, Ben Nichols, Solon Patterson, Link Tagert, J.R. Coltharp, and Henry Wildhack, their gray hairs attesting to the years of friendship made in the history making days of our community. Claude J. Wilson, honorary pallbearer of the Woodmen of the World, represented this Association, of which Mr. Ball had long been a member.

From Elks Lodge 575 Grand Junction, traveling many miles, came Eugene Welsh, Honorary pallbearer, accompanied by many members as representatives of a great lodge, without pomp or ceremony, paying their last sad tribute to a departed brother.

One of the most pathetic scenes of the last rites was the arrival in Meeker of Morris Hertz, his first visit in thirty-five years, but absence and the span of years could not erase the beautiful and enduring friendship that had its beginning many years before.

The active bearers, friends of a later day, were Raymond Sykes, George L. Baelz, Clyde B. Stephenson, Thomas J. Cassidy, John R. Clark and John E. Wix.

Reuben S. Ball was buried in Highland Cemetery, Meeker, Colorado, and here, at journey's end, may we close the book, leaving to the gentle enduring lanes of memory--a husband and lifelong companion--a proud, indulgent father--a fine old friend.

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to express our thanks and appreciation to our many friends for their kind deeds and floral offerings during our recent bereavement.

- MRS. R. S. BALL
- W. O. BALL and FAMILY
- R. C. BALL and FAMILY
- ETHEL and JACK RITTMAYER
- Mrs. and Mrs. Geo. Aichers
- Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Woolley

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PERSONAL INTERVIEW OF MR. ED WILDER

Pioneer since 1882

I was born on Sept. 22nd, 1861 in Schenectady County, New York. I worked for \$10. a month in New York; and I began to think there was some place where a boy could make it easier than digging it out of the rocks of New York State. From New York, I went to Buffalo; I worked on boats on the Great Lakes in the summer of 1880. Then worked in the Harvest Fields in Illinois--just a roost-about. The winter of '80 I was pile-driving on the docks in Chicago. So in the spring of 1882; J.A. Duncan, my buddy; and myself started west---Duncan came only as far as Denver. Summer of '81 I shipped on the Blue River in Middle Park, and worked on the grading of the railroad there, that summer. Went back to winter in Denver, until February, 1882, at which time I went to Cheyenne and shipped on the Oregon Shortline, March 1882; They'd just started to lay the track. Didn't stay long there, because of the Boarding House conditions which were lousy.

On our trip back from Copeville to Evanston, Wyoming, a distance of seventy-five miles, we had one mule--and our travel was on foot, packing our blankets on our backs.

The night we left Evanston a store was robbed and the blame rested on us, because we had left that same night, headed for Rawlins. But they didn't locate us until we got to Rawlins where they arrested and locked us up. After being in jail two days and two nights, we were turned loose, because they got three local boys that committed the robbery. While in Rawlins, I found out that Jack Davis, head of Hugus stores, was manager of the freight outfit at Rawlins. Davis got me to go down and fix to come with them, and I came with the first supplies to Meeker, April 1, 1882. On this trip they used horse teams, mule teams and bull teams, and I travelled with the mess wagon. My buddy, J.A. Duncan, was whacking 8 teams of bulls--these handled three wagons. I skinned six mules--horse and mule teams made better time, but it took us eight teen or twenty days to make the trip. From Rawlins we came down to the Snake River at Baggs, named after George Baggs, who ran a cow ranch; then over the Iron Springs divide, and crossed Bear River at the old Government bridge, about two miles below Charley Duffy's ranch. (Coming down this side of Iron Springs divide there is a gulch, and up this gulch is a spring, and Iron Springs divide there got it's name from this spring. There was a stage station at this point ofr years and years.) Then we dropped into Axial Basin, then out over nine-mile; and came in over the old 4-mile road. My wagon was loaded with lumber, and had a barrel of bottled beer strapped on the top, and coming down nine-mile hill, the barrel shook off, and us-fellers had a great time there.

Duncan and I quit the teams when we got Meeker, and went to work on the wood contract. At this time coal, wood and hay was all under contract, for the Government, with Hugus at the Head. We took five teams, the cook and the boss, and we were the first wagons by north fork of the White River. We cut 1,500 or 1,800 cord of wood at Ute Creek. Most of it was paneled stuff, out of which they built a gymnasium out of the 6 X 8's. (Gymnasium built by the Government here in Meeker)

We would haul the wood to the river, throw it in, then float and

I worked 48 days in the river. The wood would pile up once in a while, break a jam, and away she'd go, but we had ver little trouble, because no water had been taken out for irrigation in those days.

Worked on the boom here at Meeker, floating wood to shore to be loaded. Out of some of this wood we built 3 or 4 big corrals, that were used to brand cattle in.

When the reservation was thrown open in '83, the settlers had to get back form the 4-mile post of the Governments. (In Sept. of '82 when I was coming down on the wood-drive I had located my place) I was located above Meeker seven miles and away from the post, on the north side of the river. N.H. Tomilson, located on the South side. That fall, we helped each other build our cabins. Neither one of us were married, as no girl would have us at that time.

On the old Craig ranch they had left from 6 to 12 outstone fire-places, cut below roof and rough above, se each one of us took down these fire-places to put in our cabins. There was still the boiler of an old saw mill there when we came. Nearly everybody supposes it was burned when Meeker was massacred, but Dave Lorgen, aich about ninety-three years old now, living at Craig, told me that he moved the saw mill down in '73 from Fort Steele, Wyoming, for the Government and the Indians burned it in 1873. At this time George Wright had charge of the I.D. Cattle for the Government, and their old slaughter house was where Bob Russell's place is now. At this place there was a stack of hoofs and heads that would dern near fill this ovvice. We could also see broken peices of the saw mill.

On Sunday's, West and I used to go up and gather Indian beads. West would do them up and ship them back to his girl in Illinois.

The Government build a racetrack 1 mile long, and it came past my place. When I was grubbing sage-bruch, I wished they'd made a race track of the whole business.

West Tomlinson, myself and Gilley who had located at the mouth of Elk Creek, were the only men on the river above the post that winter, 1882.

In the fall of '82, George Wright and myself moved Newton Major's from North Platte, Wyoming, to Meeker. In February '83 I went to work for G eorge Wright, who had the contract for supplying meat for the Post. We lived on what is now known as the Cross L ranch, at the old Meeker well, about where the flag staff is now. I worked for him 'til Government Sale, August 13, 1883. After that I went to work for Hugus and Adams, worked for them until the election--first one, 1886.

The man that started this Meeker Hotel, Charlie Dunbar, was running a bar room and lodging house. The day before election Charlie Dunbar, ~~xxx xx~~ said, "Ed, I want you to help me behind the bar", and I said, "I don't know a dern thing about it". He said, "Well, I don't either, but you can wash and dry glasses". So I got "Maj." to let me off for that afternoon, and this same afternoon Pete Stewart shot Charlie. It happened this war: the Boy's were full, all had been celebrating,

and Dick, a friend of Charlie's and mine, was too full, so we took him to bed. Later Charlie said, "Ed, go and see if Dick is in bed!" I did, and he wasn't, so I came back and told Charlie. The Wilson boys and fellers from down the river, had it in for Dunbar, because he was a professional gambler; and so when Charlie went down there, Stewart had Dick pasted against the wall, and was beating him. Charlie grabbed Stewart, and pasted him in the eye, then he, Charlie, took Dick and started out the door with him. Dick caught hold of the door--meanwhile Stewart came too, and when Charlie turned to loosen Dick's hold, Stewart shot Charlie in the corner of the mustache, and the bullet lodged in the back of his head.

Mrs. Wright came down in the spring of '35, from Rawlins, before coming to Rawlins, she had lived in Kansas and Nebraska for quite awhile, and while there she had married a man, by the name of Davis, but they had parted. In 1884 I got Burke to liking Mrs. Wright, so they got married, then I went down on Bear river to the roundup, and Burke tended bar, but he got drunk too much. So Mrs. Wright sent a letter down to me and said, "Ed, come back and help me out, and take your pay out of the money drawer." So I cut my horses out, and came back to tend bar for her.

Hugus & Co. had taken over the bar and club room of the Government and Mrs. Wright bought this from Hugus & Co. which indebted her \$1500. or \$1800.; and with my help, we paid the debt off, that winter.

In August, late after the Government sale, I took a wagon load of goods, loaded up by Major, consisting of saddles, bridles, and calico-- Indians were just like 'niggers, they wanted something flashy and pretty. Went to the mouth of the river, where Hugus had trading post with the Indians. Below cotton wood creek, I made a 45-mile drive thro' the bad land country with only 1 keg of water, with which to get breakfast. I'd got on the mesa and into a little park, when the leader of my team jack-knifed around on me, I thot I could see something ahead of me, it was about daybreak, and it proved to be a fresh mound of dirt. I pulled up, and made my morning camp, and when I looked around I discovered that mound of dirt was a fresh grave. The day before, Andy Strong, starter of the Kay Ranch, came out from Ouray, a town at the mouth of where the white empties into the Green, and he ran onto the dead man in the trail. This man, Bill Redman, had unsaddled his horse, cut his name in the cantle of his saddle, and being 18 or 20 miles from water, he was so exhausted that he laid his head back on the cantle and clowed his brains out. He was one of the county officers of Grand County that was making his getaway. Andy had gone back to Ouray and a bunch come out and buried him.

Spring 1884, left with J.C. Kendell, Harry Rock, Lee Johnson, Frank Kelly--the cook and myself left on the 13th. day of May to go and receive the 107 Cattle. Left here on the 13th. day of May, camped on snow water on top of Nine-Mile. Next morning Kendell took horses on the old mail carrier's trail, and we ran the wagon over the snow or crust for three miles until we had gotten around nine-mile hill; went over to Bear river bridge, then down to Kay Ranch, ferried Green river, then trailed them west to Juab County, Utah. We branded 33,000 head of cattle for the 107 then trailed them back up Salt Creek, out over Soldier's Summit, around divide, down into Thistle Valley over Uintah range, dropped into Strawberry valley. Uintah reservation by the old

town of Ashley, was the only settlement from there until we struck the Provo river; came around Blue Mountain, dropped from the foot of Wolf Creek onto White River. After we had started, we picked up nineteen Mormon Boys, and they helped us brand those cattle. It was all brush and timbered country, and with the cows, calves and yearlings, calves up to four years old steer, we had a pretty hard time. (Not one of those 19 Mormon boy's fathers had less than two women.--Polygimist was right in it's bloom)

(Harry Goff and I started the first feed stable, where Simp's old barn was. Lots of Cowboys had no place to put their horses, so we started these Feed Stables. That winter Mrs. Goff was poorly, and Harry had the mail contract to take mail from Meeker to Rifle, and from there to Ferguson. Packed mail to first Rifle post office, two miles, from where Rifle is now, and to Ferguson, where Silt is now. I took this job so Goff could stay home with his sick wife.)

(Bill Kissenger had the first mail contract, and he used to pack mail over the divide, on snow-shoes.) On this mail route we followed the old Government road--up gulch by Daddy Devoreaux's place. This was a Government road, from here to Grand River, with mile-posts every mile. The post office this side of Rifle, was run by Sam Parker, and in addition to running the post office he was also grubbing off sage-brush, so he wrote on his door, "If I ain't grubbing sage-brush, I'm working on the ditch", and some feller wrote under this sign, "If you can't read, I holler."/)

Twenty of us was in the Townsite Co. Uncle Sam Fairfield, Frank Sheridan and myself ran the first ditch with a tripod, in the spring of '84.

From that time on, until 1890, I followed riding.

(My wife and I was married on Christmas Day, 1888, first couple married under a religious ceremony. (Iry Hamilton was the first man married by Justice Mow, winter of '83 and '84---He was a gun man.)

I didn't move onto my ranch till 1896, I got it fenced, and water on it, along 1886. Leased it until my wife and I moved there. I had gotten my ranch by pre-emption, the only act you could use on this reservation at that time.)

My wife's people came to Greeley by rail, and their only way to come here was in Covered Wagons. The day they arrived in Meeker, I said to a cowpuncher by the name of Jones, "Here, take these two guns, and go out there on the street and empty 'em.", and He did. This was the party's warm welcome to Meeker.

Spring of '85 went to Green River, started roundup over the whole country, there were seven or eight wagons. I run Jack Niblock's wagon four years on the round-up.

The big herds of cattle were in here, long before the sheep came. Allesbrook brought in the first sheep, and if he would have been satisfied to stay here, there would have been no sheep wars, but he went to Utah, and started the sheep coming in, and started hell to pop. We

We finished our Round-up in '85, just in time to celebrate the fourth of July--when I got to Strawberry on the round-up they sent me to Bear River, and when I was here, Mrs. Wright called me back to the hotel.

Celebration of Dewy's Victroy at Manilla was a big event in Meeker. We had a ball game, and I was coaching for the boys, and I told them to close in on Glenwood, just like they were closing in on 'em at Manilla. Our boys won the ball game.

Spring of '86 I worked for the Niblock brothers.

We trailed all of our beef to Lawlins, 300 miles, lots of hard work--night work, too. Shipped nearly all of our cattle to Chicago, and some to Omaha, received 3-3 1/2 to 4¢---big money then. The cattle were mostly all Texas Longhorns, lots from Utah.

Fleming, Gregory came in from Laramie plains.

Wilson boys--over plains from Denver.

Boot outfit from Denver plains.

At the time of the Meeker Bank Robbery, I was sheriff, but had a under-sheriff, so Al Pierce was just coming in from our cow outfit, when a runner caught me at K-T ranch, I got on my horse and came down and Harry Niblock and I took care of those Bank Robbers.

I filled Al Elison's vacancy.

Also served 4 years as marshall.

LOCKED



(Locked antlers found in Powell Park, near Meeker, Colorado. Mounted by Blaine & Purdy. Presented to PRES. ROOSEVELT by Gates Kersburg, of Grand Junction.)

RIVER REVIEW

(BY JAMES L. RILAND.)

All the News of Northwestern Colorado.

Issued Every Saturday, at Meeker, the County Seat of Rio Blanco County.

TWO DOLLARS A YEAR. ONE DOLLAR SIX MONTHS

Resources of the County - Live Stock, Hay, Grain, Coal, and Others as yet Undeveloped.

In reply to your favor of

Meeker, Colorado, Jan. 23, 1933

Mr. Le Roy R. Hapen, Jurator,
Denver Colorado.
Dear Sir -

Mr. W. C. Ball, this county,
just called.

In re to the first paper
in Glenwood Springs, Colo.

I started the first paper
in organized county (which
included Rio Blanco Co.
then. It was called the
Glenwood Echo. It was
owned by B. CLARK WHEELER,
a mining man of Aspen, &
who died in California a
few years ago.

It was started in APRIL,
1885. The Mt. Chief, another
weekly, was started in
September (or October) that
same year, by J. D. Swan
and Mrs. Reed.



(Locked antlers found in Powell Park, near Meeker, Colorado. Mounted by Blaine & Purdy. Presented to PRES. ROOSEVELT by Gates Kersburg, of Grand Junction.)

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In reply to your favor of

Meeker, Colorado,

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I had been at Carbonate, a mining camp on the Flat Tops, in 1883, to start a paper, which would have been called The Garfield County Standard.

In Fairplay, in the winter of 1876 packed up the type, with P. M. JONES (died in Ogden, year ago) and G. S. WARNER, for the REVELLE, the first paper in Leadville, and helped assemble the type and put to press. Warner died in a coal camp near Canon City, year ago.

I belong in the 1875 batch. Regards to Mr. W. B. Sanford, Jones, etc.
James Leroy Riland.



BY JAMES L. BLISS.

All the News of Northwestern Colorado.

Issued Every Saturday, at Meeker, Rio County Seat of Rio Blanco County.

TWO DOLLARS A YEAR. ONE DOLLAR SIX MONTHS.

Special section found in Town of Park, near Meeker, Colorado. Mined by Union & Park. Powered by Park. Shows no more mining, of about American.

Resources of the County Live Stock, Hay, Grain, Coal, and Others as yet Undeveloped.

In reply to your favor of

Meeker, Colorado, Jan 23 1913

Mr. East Colohan,
Glenwood Springs, Colo.

Dear Sir,
You should have told me what you wanted.

I am old, sick, and in all kinds of a "depression".

I started the first paper in Garfield county. The Glenwood Echo. It was started in APRIL, 1880. It was owned by B. CARR WHELER, a mining man of Aspen.

In September (or October) of that year J. S. SWAN and Wm REED started the VTE CHIEF. Rio Blanco county was a part of Garfield then.

I was in CARBONATE camp in 1880, prepared to start the Garfield county Standard, but did not set up shop.



(Locked antlers found in Powell Park, near Meeker, Colorado. Mounted by Blaine & Purdy. Presented to PRES. ROOSEVELT by Gates Kersburg, of Grand Junction.)

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In reply to your favor of

Meeker, Colorado,

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Hon. John V. Bonanza,
your town can verify this.
John and I are the only ones
left of that early day in
Glenwood that we can
recall (grown folks.)

A drunken printer stole
my files.

Tip McInish Bailor
might have the files, I
don't know.

To know anything else
that would be useful
to you, can be going Mr.
W. C. Ball, here, all I can.

Yours truly,
James L. Piland,
Meeker, Colorado.