

Bernice Schultz  
HARRIS STRATTON

Doc  $\frac{361}{26}$

Harris Stratton was born in 1829. He was often associated with R. Q. Tenney, both were always in the midst of whatever was going on for the public good, positive views on public matters, unusually sound and progressive and both were accustomed to backing up opinions and findings with logic and argument.

Mr. Stratton, his biographer states, was prominent in Kansas affairs during the old "border ruffian" days. He came to Fort Collins in 1865, two years after evading arrest by General Bragg's soldiers in Georgia during the Civil War.

(Mr. Stratton assisted in the construction of the "Aunty Stone" hotel and other building in Camp Collins before it became known as a fort.) When farmers began to cultivate lands on the bluffs, he took up a claim at or near the first dry creek south of Fort Collins, it was known then as Spring Creek. There Mr. Stratton cultivated his acres and conducted a dairy.

His activity in public affairs brought him into notice - a campaign to represent Larimer County in the territorial legislature of 1867 was successful and he was made sergeant-at-arms of the first state senate. In 1877, Gov. John Routt appointed him a member of the State Board of Agriculture of which body he was made secretary, holding that position for many years.

In the years of the Greenback Party agitation, Mr. Stratton was often heard debating the question of the day, and frequently declared, 'there is no difference whatever between the Republican and Democratic parties except in the effort to get into office!

The marriage Mr. Stratton and Mrs. Elizabeth Park Keyes was the first wedding in Fort Collins celebrated here in December 1866. A daughter, Mrs. P.J. McHugh, the wife of Dr. McHugh is living in Fort



Collins now. He died in 1908.

Mr. Stratton was foremost in so many of the public affairs of his day that one is puzzled to pick out one in which his ability was extended most. A country being developed requires the services of such men and his influence was felt in every public venture.

Data compiled by Bernice Schultz  
Material found in files of Express-  
Courier at Public Library, Fort Collins  
December 13, 1933



Bernice Schultz  
12/13/1933  
TAKING UP LAND in the '70's

Doe  $\frac{361}{27}$

(The men who first settled in the Cache la Poudre and adjacent valleys were permitted to acquire titles to land in several ways. There was the homestead, which had variations, soldiers of the Civil War were given preference.) A Homesteader could take up 160 acres of land with only the necessary fees as expenses. (Then was the preemption method - one could get land at \$1.25 an acre outside the area in which alternate sections were in the railroad grants; and for \$2.25 an acre in those sections where the railroad had half the acreage. Men could acquire squatters' rights to unsurveyed land by building a shack thereon and living on it.) Land was thus comparatively cheap, the greatest expense being the time one had to live on it and the cultivation necessary to hold it. For the law decreed that so many acres had to be broken, plowed the first time turning down the sod each year until the title was acquired.

The law presumed the men who took up the land intended to make homes thereon, and the provisions were drawn accordingly. A homesteader who stayed away from his land too long lost his rights, and these periods varied as laws were tampered with by Congress. One of these provisions was that a settler must erect a house on his land within a certain time, many times this was interpreted rather freely, sometimes just a foundation was started which in time got around the law.

These evasions and direct violations were not ordinary, for men who took up the greater part of the public domain intended to make homes. Any one who sought to deprive a settler of his land if the latter's intentions were honest and his needs so great that he had to skimp along as best he could - anyone who sought to jump this



man's land was harshly dealt with, and on the other hand any man who sought to gain land by unlawful methods was just as apt to meet condemnation, active and possibly physical. The first settlers <sup>were</sup> keen to keep within the law and have their neighbors do the same. All those who would try to disobey the rules of the districts fashioned after the government law were undesirable citizens, and their neighbors made them feel that their absence would be appreciated.

During the time the country was being turned from open range into cultivation in farms, two other methods of obtaining public lands were offered. One was the timber culture act by which a settler could acquire 160 acres in addition to his preempted or homesteaded quarter section by planting a certain number of trees on a stated acreage. The plains of the west were almost treeless except along the water courses, when the homemakers spread over the prairies. The government heads sought to remedy this deficiency by inducing and promoting the planting of trees, both for shade and for the future generations.

(Another act called <sup>desert</sup> land law permitted the taking up of a full share or section providing ditches were constructed to carry water to the tract within a certain length of time.

This last law was the forerunner of the vast reclamation project that has taken place and <sup>was</sup> put through by the government. For when companies of farmers' enterprises <sup>tried</sup> to promote big irrigation projects, they often met with disaster. Lack of money and failure to meet notes resulted in the loss of their homes. Time, experience, of procedure were required to make these big enterprises succeed. Often larger companies took over these and made fortunes where their predecessors failed.

*predecessors*



They originated all of the methods of making the land productive.  
It was their determination that showed what could be done and it was  
they who showed how to do it.

Data compiled by Bernice Schultz

Material found in Epress-Courier  
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Dated December 13, 1933



*Bernice Schultz* *Doc*  $\frac{361}{28}$  277  
12/13/1933

GEORGE R. METZ

George R. Metz was born in Wynn County, Ohio in 1848. He is a veteran of the Civil War. In 1866, he drove six yoke of cattle across the praires. For some time he drove cattle from various points over the Rocky Mountain states, from Montana to Texas. At various times, Indains interferred with their line of travel, some times killing some of their men and scattering or stealing their cattle. At one time, Mr. Metz assisted in paying the Indains a ransom of so many cattle for the return of two little white children they had stolen from a white settlement in New Mexico. He often with other members of his party drove the Indains back into the mountains when they attacked the white people, and attempted to burn their homes.

Mr. Metz spent most of his life in mining, having been located for the most part at Bindemingo and Basack Mines. These mines paid well, the gold was found in layers between sections of rock. The ore was chisled from the walls of the mine.

Mr. Metz was married twice, having three children from each wife. He now lives with a son at 416 North Loomis Street, Fort Collins.

*George R. Metz*

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 13, 1933



Bernice Schultz Doc 361  
29  
12/14/1933  
PETER G. and SARAH PECK TERRY

Peter G. Terry is a native of Illinois where he was born on March 19, 1840. He came to Colorado in 1869, locating at Denver. In 1870, he helped to build the Denver Pacific railroad and in 1871 came to Fort Collins and filed a homestead claim on land now covered by Terry Lake. He made this homestead a well improved farm, the logs and other material having been obtained from the mountains. A five room house was constructed and a large orchard planted. Later this ranch was sold to the Larimer and Weld reservoir company. During the years from 1879-80 he was engaged in freighting from Leadville to Denver. In 1885, he preempted 160 acres in the Boxelder district north west of Wellington. This has also been sold.

Mr. Terry helped to build the Jackson Ditch and superintended the installation of the Terry Lake headgates.

Mrs. Sarah Peck Terry is an early arrival in Fort Collins, having come here in 1871 at the age of 16. She and her family came in a covered wagon train, the journey was much the same as other trips of that time. One encounter with the Indians was near Fort Kearney where they had the protection of the U. S. soldiers who were stationed there.

Because of the bad weather when they reached Cheyenne, they were forced to stay there for some time. For shelter, they rented a cabin on a ranch until the weather broke, then continued on to Fort Collins arriving November 20, 1871.

Upon their arrival, they again rented rooms- from Peter Anderson- until a house of their own could be erected. They were impressed with the hospitality of the West - just as everyone is in the present day.

Mrs. Terry's father built the Stone Hotel on Jefferson Street. This



he later sold to Tom Moore, father of Frank Moore who is a resident of Fort Collins now. Mr. Peck took a small piece of land just east of town as part of the exchange.

Mrs. Terry recalls that upon their arrival in Fort Collins, butter was sixty cents a pound and flour was six dollars ~~an~~ hundred pounds.

In 1888, on April 4th, Mr. and Mrs. Terry were married and for some time lived on the Terry ranch. They have been in retirement for a number of years - they now live at 318 Peterson Street, Fort Collins. They Had two daughters.

*Mrs P. G. Terry*

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 14, 1933



*Good*  
*Bernice Schultz*  
WINONA WASHBURN TAYLOR  
*12/18/1933* *Doc*  $\frac{361}{30}$

Winona Washburn Taylor was born in Freeport, Illinois April 29, 1855. At the early age of three years, she heard the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Freeport.

In 1860, Mrs. Taylor came in a covered wagon with her parents across the plains to Colorado. To avoid danger, they were required to travel in small trains, each man having charge of two wagons. Mr. Washburn had his own wagon and that of A. Cameron Hunt, who later became governor of Colorado, in his charge. Mr. Ronk, grandfather of the present mayor of Walden, was in charge of the other two. No trouble was had on their trip, this was before the time that the Indians molested the travelers. A little Indian boy joined their party for several days, leaving just as ceremoniously as he came.

The Washburn family settled near Baker Spring on the west bank of the Platte River where Denver now stands, but it was then called Auraria.) A little log cabin with dirt floor and dirt and pole roof was their first home in the west. Flour sacks were used as a false ceiling to keep the dirt from falling on the beds, mice could be seen scampering along the material, and when they came too close to the edge, they fell with a thump to the floor. (As the bank of the river was much higher than the level of the water, and they were desirous of having a garden, Mr. Washburn constructed a water wheel of roughly hewn logs by which the water was brought up to the level and over the bank, then was used in irrigating. This was the first device of this kind used in Denver.)

Their next location in Colorado was in a little valley, known as Quartz Valley, about a mile from Central City, to which place they



moved in 1861. Some time later radium was found in this valley. They assisted in the livelihood of the miners by furnishing the milk and other food supplies to the miners.

(For a short time the next year, they lived on a claim on the west side of Denver, but later moved to the James Smith homestead on the Big Thompson river two miles east of what is now Loveland in 1862. Mr. Smith and Mr. Washburn were in partnership raising potatoes, garden products and hay which was hauled to Central City then the ~~most~~ leading market near due to the mining activities.)

In 1864 they left this place and bought a soldier's rights of 1812, a 160 acre farm where the road crosses the Big Thompson river near Loveland.

X Mail and communication with the outside world was had from Boulder. In about 1864, a postoffice was established at what was called the Big Thompson Postoffice - it was situated in one room of the Washburn home - Mr. Washburn served as the first postmaster. The desk with its pigeon holes used in the postoffice is still in the possession of Mrs. Taylor.)

(The mail carrier originally came from Denver up the Platte River to Fort Lupton to Burlington, then to the Big Thompson and on to Virginia Dale and Fort Laramie. Later the stage line came straight north from Denver, through the Big Thompson and on to Virginia Dale. Her father had the stage station or 'home' station as it was called, it ran for three or four years, then moved to the Mariana Place about three miles west of Loveland.) When this change was made, it was necessary to carry the mail from and to the station and the postoffice, Mrs. Taylor often did this herself. (Bob Spotswood was superintendent of the stage line when it disappeared in 1877 as the railroad took its place.)



(The first minister in the community was Rev. William Antis, who was a circuit rider. In 1862 a new board lumber barn was built on the James Smith place - this was where the first church services were held. After the school house was built, this served as the church and school both, it was the community center, and old and young participated in its activities. Bishop B. T. Vincent was the next minister and made his trips from Denver for the spiritual welfare of the surrounding neighborhood. He is well remembered for his good work.)

(The first teacher was Albin Washburn, mother of Mrs. Taylor, before a district was organized. Charles Bough, a young soldier from Gettysburg, and Edward Smith were the next teachers. (The first school district in Larimer County was District #1 near Loveland. The Big Thompson School, District #2, was organized in 1866 and taught by Sarah Milner for three terms, 1866-68. Mrs. Taylor finished in 1868 under Miss Milner.) This class held reunions for several years, but there are only two left. There were about twelve to fifteen pupils attending. Miss Milner was a real organizer and an excellent teacher. Exhibitions of the work being done were given several times a year to which the parents and friends were invited to these functions. Many times song fests and programs were held for the community.

In the year of 1870-71, Winona Washburn attended Wolfe Hall, the first Girls' School established in the state by Bishop Randall who was an Episcopalian minister. Her trips to Denver were made by buggy or wagon to Longmont where a train was boarded.

After a year at Wolfe Hall, Mrs. Taylor taught in the home district #2. In 1873, she went to Northwestern University where Frances Willard was one of her instructors. At this time the



Women's Building was a white framee house where forty girls were living in tiny rooms. It was one of the rules that their lamps and fires had to be out by nine o'clock so as to reduce the fire hazard. When Mrs. Washburn learned of this, she placed her daughter in a Girls' school in Chicago until the new Women's Building was finished. In March, 1874, she was called home by the serious illness of her father who later recovered. Due to finanical conditions, she was unable to return to the University.

Mrs. Taylor again taught school until her marriage in 1875 to Mr. Taylor. The first residence of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor was on a homestead near Loveland, then years later they moved to 'Cliff Cottage' which was located on the orginal road to Estes Park. They spent one year in Sheridan, Wyoming, but came back and bought the same place again. (Cliff Cottage' was the camping place used just before the big climb over Bald Mountain into Estes Park. It was also the post office called 'Winona' named for Mrs. Taylor. This was later discontinued.)

The Taylor family moved to Fort Collins in 1897 in order to give their children the advantages of attending the Agricultural College. Three of seven children survive, none live in Colorado. Mr. Taylor passed away in 1899.

Mrs. Taylor lives at 423 West Mulberry, Fort Collins, Colo. She is as active member of the Pioneer Society and is especially interested in anything pretaining to the early history of Colorado

*Mrs. Winona Washburn Taylor*

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 18, 1933



Mrs. Taylor wished that this item be added to her interview:

Mr. and Mrs. Washburn and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor as representatives of the Big Thompson Grange No. 6 took part in the Masonic Ceremony in laying the corner stone of the State Agricultural College in 1878, singing a Grange song as a quartette.



*Bernice Schultz* *Doc*  $\frac{361}{31}$   
FRANK L. WATROUS  
*12/16/1933*

With his parents, sisters and brother, Frank M. Watrous came to Colorado in 1871 from Manitowac, Wisconsin by means of the railroad which had been completed the year before to Greeley. That town then consisted of just a few houses.

Their location on a farm near Fort Collins was a coincidence. Mr. Watrous' father with a companion walked to the foothills. It became difficult for them to find their way and in their wanderings found a place that Mr. Watrous was so impressed with that he later bought it, it was used as a fruit farm. The cultivated land was always near the river where easy access to the water could be had, ditches extended about one half miles on each side of the river. The soil was the best to be had, and combined with the Colorado sunshine produced the finest vegetables, grains, pastures and other means of living. There was no market for farm products near here. Cheyenne, being located on the Union Pacific railroad was the nearest market. All necessities not to be had here were obtained through Cheyenne from the east. Sugar sold for \$10 per sack, and even apples were considered a luxury and cost about fifty cents for a small sack of them. Dried fruit was used much more than the fresh.

The main source of fruit was had through the wild varieties found in abundance in the mountains. Long trips were taken to obtain wild plums, chokecherries, raspberries and grapes. Sometimes families made these trips into camping trips and did their canning and jelly making in the hills.

<sup>owned by ranchers</sup>  
Cattle ran wild over the plains- they were mostly of the Texas variety or descendants of them, having long horns and were yellow and mouse colored.



The year of 1873 is well remembered as the time that the grass-hoppers destroyed the crops - this with the Panic of the same year made the situation very difficult for the settlers through the scarcity of money.

Mr. Watrous spent some time in North Park where he and his fellow workers surveyed the land into sections. At that time North Park was still very much western.

After attending college several years, he was sent to Rocky Ford to the Experiment Station for four years. He then came back to the Agricultural College as Assistant in Agriculture. But the lure of the farm called him - he entered this occupation and since that time has owned and sold various farms around St. Cloud and Fort Collins. These farms were usually bought as clear land, then Mr. Watrous built them up into prosperous farms with well built improvements on.

Mr. Watrous was appointed County Commissioner by Governor Ammons to fill a vacancy. During the time he was in office, he with Messrs. J.M. Graham and <sup>W.C.</sup> Graves <sup>WERE</sup> instrumental in having the Poudre Canyon Road built in 1914.

Mr. Watrous now lives at his home on Elm Street, Fort Collins.

*F. L. Watrous*

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 16, 1933



Bernice Schultz

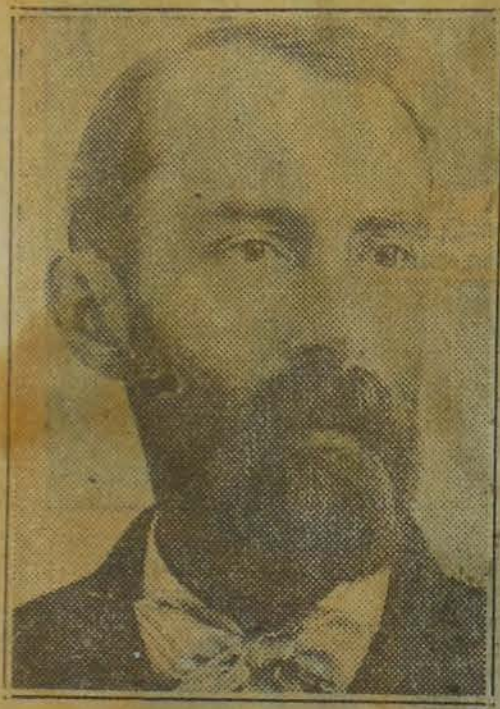
287

**Pioneer Fort Collins Schooldays  
As Recalled by Frank L. Watrous  
In Article Written 20 Years Ago**

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Frank L. Watrous, pioneer who still lives in Fort Collins, wrote twenty years ago the following reminiscences of early school days in Fort Collins, which appeared in the Fort Collins Courier of June 21, 1914:

"In the summer of 1871, the first real school house was completed in Fort Collins near the junction of



**FRANK L. WATROUS**  
(From an old photograph.)

what are now Mountain avenue and Jefferson street. It was surrounded by open prairie at that time, and the scholars often amused themselves hunting jack rabbits, prairie dogs, prairie owls and rattlesnakes at recess.)

"Miss Alice M. Watrous was the first to wield the school marm's scepter in the new building, the term beginning in the fall of 1871 and closing in the spring of 1872.

"Among those who attended school this first winter I can remember Robert and Henry Howes, Frank Chaffee, W. P. Keayes, Pierce and John Riddle, Lottie Mason and her brother Nathan, Mona Cooper and brother Harry, the last two being relatives of Andrew Ames, Clara McAdams and two twin brothers, whose father homesteaded what is now the Prospect park and Sheldon lake property. There were Antoine and Joseph Bush and Denver McGaa, said to have been the first child born in Denver. His mother belonged to the Sioux tribe of Indians, and the boy afterward became quite wealthy and prominent as one of Uncle Sam's blanket proteges.

"Most of the scholars walked or rode from one to five miles to school, but no one seemed to consider this a hardship. Wood was hauled from the mountains for

fuel, and I can remember that the younger scholars took turns sitting by the stove to warm, so that the air in the room in cold weather was redolent of burned leather and other substances which the young-

sters would slyly rub against the stove.

"The following year, if I remember correctly, L. R. Rhodes taught the winter term of school. Mr. Rhodes was at that time an aspiring young barrister whose stock in trade consisted of a hopeful disposition, a second hand copy of Blackstone's Commentaries and a large capacity for making himself heard. If I were asked what was Mr. Rhodes' most distinguishing characteristic at that time, I would say it was an unsympathetic and compunctionless abuse and maltreatment of the English language.

"That winter there was a larger attendance at school. A few more people had dropped into the settlement and the school curriculum ran all the way from A, B, C, to "higher arithmetic." Our teacher had his hands full, but at this distance it seems as though he was pretty good natured and that things went along without much friction. Once in a while during the winter, Miss Effie Cowan, substituted for Mr. Rhodes at school owing to the pressure of legal duties, and once, if I am not mistaken, the late C. C. Hawley also taught for a while. I can remember Mr. Hawley setting me a copy for a writing lesson and how I was surprised and attracted by his very beautiful penmanship. I am not absolutely sure just how or when Mr. Hawley came in as our teacher, but I am sure that his friendly and kindly presence was with us for a time.

"The following year a young man named Fleming taught for a short time. I think it is probable that Mr. Fleming taught in the early fall before boys from the farms and ranches entered school. At any rate, from Mr. Rhodes as teacher my memory jumps to John Lord as the succeeding pedagogue in the old brown school. He must have been the veritable and only original character of whom it was said, 'Old John Lord kept the village day school and a queer old man was he for he spared not the rod.' That is an absolute and solemn fact. Whatever of right or wrong he did or omitted to do he didn't spare the rod. I think Mr. Lord taught two winters in the old school house. He afterward returned and taught one



Bernice Schultz

288

## Pioneer Recalls Many Interesting Experiences in Medicine Bow Region Familiar to People of Fort Collins

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\* In the late '60's and '70's there was much lumber milling and tie cutting in the Medicine Bow mountains west and northwest of Laramie Wyo., a region well known to many Fort Collins persons because of the recreational attractions it offers. A number of camps were located at that time on the headwaters of Seven Mile creek.

A well-traveled road ran from these camps to "Wyoming" station on the old line of the Union Pacific railway, at the junction of the Big and Little Laramie rivers. In the early days many ties and much lumber were freighted over this road from the camps to the railway and not a little of this material was hauled by oxen.

Recalling these pioneer days, W. O. Owen writes in the Saratoga, Wyo., Sun interesting reminiscences as follows:

One day in the summer of 1869 or 1870, a man named Jasper Clevenger (everybody called him "Jap") was driving four yoke of oxen along this road heading for "Wyoming" station with a load of ties. Following him were another team and wagon in charge of a man whose name I never heard, but I later became well acquainted with "Jap" Clevenger. The teams were near the old Denver and Salt Lake stage road, a few miles west of Seven Mile lake (it is called Lake James on the maps) when a shower overtook them.

Clevenger had left his coat on the rear wagon so he ran back to get it, leaving his oxen team to pursue its way. He got his coat and started back to his wagon when there flashed a streak of lightning that nearly blinded him, and when he reached his team seven of his oxen lay head on the ground in perfect order, struck by lightning and felled in their tracks. The eighth ox—the off-wheeler—was standing by the wagon tongue unscathed, but moaning piteously. Jap and his partner unyoked the dead steers, backed the wagon away from them, and returned next day with a new team, leaving the dead oxen just where they fell, and for several years they lay practically undisturbed as to position.

The flesh of course had been torn from the bones by buzzards and coyotes but the skeletons remained practically where they fell. I saw them in 1872 and the vacant space where the ox that escaped stood was clearly defined and the seven skeletons had hardly been disturbed.

I have already referred to the old Barrel Springs station on the Denver and Salt Lake road. It lies in the heart of the Bitter creek country with an ocean of sagebrush and greasewood for its environment. It is, or at least was, a spring of bubbling crystal-clear water almost ice-cold! We all know what vile water

the streams in the Bitter creek country carry and it is a surprise beyond expression when one runs across this wonderful supply. Some of the stage station people had knocked the head out of a 50-gallon whiskey barrel and set it in the ground around the spring flush with the surface to keep the water clear, and this barrel gave the stage station its name.

We surveyed this country in 1875 and in due course of time pitched our camp not far from the spring. A short distance from camp we found what appeared to be a grave from all appearances a very shallow one. We dug down about a foot and found a box or very rude coffin in which was the skeleton of a child of about 12 years of age, and, judging from the things we found in the box we decided it must have been a girl.

Most of the flesh had disappeared but tendons and small strips of skin still held the bones in articulation and we had no difficulty in removing the entire skeleton from the box. Within the clasp of the small skeleton arms, lying on the child's chest, was a big doll about half as large as the girl herself. Its body was of bedticking, over-stuffed, with a huge china head attached to the cloth body. The girl had been buried in a short gingham dress, and about her neck was a string of glass beads fastened with a metal clasp and from which there hung a tiny crystal cross. Beside the little girl we found a set of small china dishes—plates, cups, saucers, teapot, pitcher, etc., and three or four tiny knives and forks.

It was interesting to watch the behavior and faces of the members of those two surveying parties while this exhumation and examination proceeded. Every man in both parties participated—about 16 in all—and I noticed tears in the eyes of some of the older ones. Out of cracker boxes and other material we had in camp we shaped a pretty fair coffin and in it placed the skeleton and everything else we found in the box, and, covering the whole with flour sacks and burlap nailed the lid down securely.

We then dug a grave full six feet deep and with every man in camp standing around the box with bared head and in reverential attitude, we lowered the little girl to the bottom. There was one man in camp who always carried a Bible. Some of the boys got it and one of them read a chapter which they deemed appropriate and that ended the ceremony. We threw the soil back in the grave, and at the head set a stone on which one of our cornermen had crudely chiseled the one word—"Unknown."



*Bernice Schultz Doe*  $\frac{36}{32}$   
12/9/1935 LERAH G. McHUGH

Lerah Stratton McHugh is truly a real Fort Collins pioneer, having been born in what is now known as the Fort Collins Pioneer Cabin. She is a daughter of Harris Stratton and Mrs. Elizabeth Park Keays. Mrs. Keays with her small son, Wilbur, came from Illinois in a covered wagon train. Her many experiences on the trip were recorded in the diary she kept on the journey which required about six weeks. Mrs. Keyes came to her aunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Stone who owned the Pioneer Cabin, then used as a sort of hotel. A short time after her arrival, Mrs. Keays taught school <sup>in one room</sup> in the upstairs of the cabin, thus being distinguished as the first school teacher in the Poudre Valley. On December 29, 1866, Mrs Elizabeth Park Keays and Harris Stratton were united in marriage, this was the first marriage ceremony to be performed at the Camp. Their wedding trip was a horse back ride to LaPorte where a wedding dance was held in their honor, at the stage station there.

When Lerah Stratton was three weeks old, the family moved to a ranch two and one half miles south west of Fort Collins - this was the first ranch to be taken off the river in this vicinity, their water supply came from a very small stream near by.

Until there was a country school established near, the Stratton children attended the Public Schools at Fort Collins. A pony was their pet, means of transportation and fun.

Lerah Stratton McHugh entered the State Agricultural College in 1883, she and her sister were the sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth students to register in this institution. The only course offered was that of the Bachelor of Science. Subjects of interest to girls were Wood Carving and Hammering of Brass, many beautiful things were made under the direction of Professor Lawrence. The Literary



Societies under Greek names were the chief means of entertainment among the students. They were wholly beneficiary in their results, they met every Friday night for programs of Public Speaking or Orations. Very often, the different classes put on programs for the other classes. Her graduation took place in 1887 with three other members of the class.

Lerah Stratton McHugh held the position of Librarian of the Agricultural College until 1891. The Library was first located in Old Main, but later moved to a new building now used the Veterinary Hospital.

In 1891, Lerah Stratton was united in marriage to Dr. P. J. McHugh who is a prominent practicing physician in Fort Collins. Their residence is at 137 Remington Street of this city. They have two sons living.

Mrs. McHugh is an active member of the Pioneer Society and Society of Pioneer Women, and is also connected with the Public Library of Fort Collins, Colo., serving as President of the Library Board.

*Lerah Stratton McHugh*  
*(Mrs P. J.)*

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 9, 1933



Bernice Schultz

ALFRED AUGUSTUS EDWARDS

Doe  $\frac{361}{33}$

A man whom everyone in Fort Collins knows for his many years in active public work and whose interest has never ceased for all public good is Mr. A.A. Edwards. He was born <sup>in 1851</sup> on his father's farm near Mercer, Pennsylvania. His father was John Edwards and mother Charlotte Calista Edwards. His ancestors were of Welsh and English birth. The widowed mother lived on the farm until 1867 when she sold the farm and moved to Mercer where her son could receive better education.

As a boy, Mr. Edwards read 'Wild Western Scenes', Richardson's 'Beyond the Mississippi' and articles of travel through Colorado. When the opportunity arose to come west with the Rev. William McAdam party, he won the consent of his mother to accompany it. The party consisted of Rev. McAdam, his son George, William Smith, George Sykes, Thomas Bohn and Mr. Edwards.

Their departure from their home on August 2, 1869 was an eventful day, many of their friends were present to bid them goodbye, fully expecting that the Indians would soon get them and they would never see them alive again. The party went by wagon to New Castle where they entrained for Rochester, Penn., and continued <sup>to</sup> Monmouth, Illinois where they remained for about two weeks. Here Rev. McAdam assisted by Messrs. Smith and Sykes purchased fourteen American Thoroughbred mares and horses, his plan and intention being to take them to Colorado for breeding purposes, that growing country being in need of heavier draft and driving horses.)

They started from Monmouth on their long journey on August 16, reaching Sagetown, Ill. that evening and spending the night there. The next day they loaded on a ferryboat <sup>at</sup> Shawacon, Ill., and were



taken up the river to Burlington, Iowa. Part of their outfit was a four mule team and wagon which was loaded with the baggage and bedding. Mr. Smith drove the four mule team and the rest of the party rode and lead the horses. They traveled across the state of Iowa in this manner making an average of about twenty five miles per day and ~~camping~~ camping out wherever night overtook them. They closely followed the C. B. & Q. Railroad. From Red Oak to Council Bluffs was raw prairie with occasional homesteaders starting new homes.

The party arrived at Council Bluffs on August 30, 1869. The next morning they ferried across the Missouri River. Upon interviewing merchants and citizens of Omaha, the party decided to go by train to Cheyenne, Wyoming instead of traveling as they had across Iowa. The reports were that the Indians were hostile and troublesome along the route they were to travel and that they were taking great chances if they proceeded as they were unarmed.

They loaded their outfits on to a Union Pacific freight train and left Omaha for the west on Aug. 31, 1869. The trip to Cheyenne was uneventful except that they saw <sup>herds of</sup> great/antelope and other wild game from the train. A few hostile Indians were seen lurking on either side of the Platte River and just after crossing the North Platte, they passed several hundred new tents which were occupied by the Pawnee tribe of friendly Indians.

The train arrived at Cheyenne in the afternoon of September 2, and here spent the night.

(On the morning of September 3, they left Cheyenne for overland trip to LaPorte, Colorado, passing on the way Terry's road ranche on Lone Tree Creek, Round Butte, Burned Station (a stage station



burned by the Indians a few months before), spending the night at the E. W. Whitcomb ranch. They reached LaPorte about noon of the 4th of September, 1869. (Upon their arrival they were met by Mr. Addas Carter and his brother-in-law, Captain James Hanna. Mr. Carter had a general store there and had charge of the Post-office and stage station. Captain Hanna was in command of a detachment of Ohio troops stationed at the Fort Collins for protection of settlers and travelers from the hostile Indians that infected that section of the west.)

The Cache laPoudre Valley had always been a favorite spot of the Indians, and in the fall of the year they would congregate there to pass the winter in the shelter of the adjacent mountains. Up the river in the valley known as Pleasant Valley, the dead bodies of former Indian Chiefs were still to be found, wrapped in the skins of wild animals of the plains and securely tied up in the large cotton wood trees along the river banks. The next year the tie drivers searching for Indian relics tore down and destroyed the receptacles of the Indian dead.

(LaPorte was a small village with not more than two hundred inhabitants including those residing on farms and ranches. There was only one practicing physician in the whole valley from where the river left the mountains and until emptied into the South Platte River. This was Doctor T. M. Smith, and his home and office were located on the present highway at the old Edson Warren corner about three miles northwest of Fort Collins.) (There was only one minister to administer to the spiritual wants of the settlers and that was George Washington Swift, who divided his time and efforts to promote interest in Christian religion between the settlers of the Little Thompson & the Big Thompson and Cache la Poudre valleys. Rev. Swift was a pioneer Methodist preacher.) There was no practicing lawyer in the Poudre Valley at that time.



(Antoine Janis was among the first to come to the valley as he acted as interpreter for the Indians and the white men. He filed on the first homestead in 1844 and made <sup>first</sup> proof of residence in the state and obtained first patent.) Benjamin H. Eaton lived near where Windsor is now located and became Governor of our state in recent years.

After the party had become settled in LaPorte for several weeks the Rev. McAdam, Messrs. William Smith, George Sykes and Addas Carter proceeded to file on a body of land near Fort Collins. The City Park and Lake, Loomis Addition, West Side Addition, and other blocks are located on the land which the Mercer <sup>Poudre</sup> people first acquired by Government filings.)

(With the intention of improving their claims, these men formed the Mercer Pole and Ditch Company at once.) A party of men of which Mr. Edwards was a member was sent to the mountains to cut poles and posts to fence their land. They intended to have them float down the river the next spring, this plan didn't work out as well as they had thought, the long logs formed jams and it was impossible to get them down. (The construction of the Mercer Ditch, which was to divert water from the Poudre River at the dam located a short distance above LaPorte. Mr. Edwards worked on this for short time; due to lack of funds this project was abandoned, but was later re-organized in the New Mercer Ditch Company, the ditch was constructed to cover a much larger tract, and irrigated a fine body of land lying south and west of Fort Collins.)

Due to the illness of his brother, Mr. Edwards accompanied him back to his old home in Pennsylvania, in June of 1870. He remained there until 1876 when he brought another brother to Denver for his health. The following winter was spent about fifteen miles from Fort Collins on the Buckhorn Creek on the Fletcher ranch with his brother and a



Mr. Milt Williamson. The next spring, he took a few lessons in sheep shearing and did this during the season. Working at farming, threshing and cattle punching were the occupations during the year of 1877. During this year, the Colorado Central Railroad was completed into Fort Collins having been extended from Golden, Colo.

(During the summer of 1878, Mr. Edwards started to work for the Colo. Central Railroad Company as the assistant to the agent, Thos. J. Montgomery at Fort Collins. His services were no longer needed when this company was acquired by the Union Pacific, in 1879.)

At this time, gold was the sought for metal at Leadville, and everyone who could leave their locations went there to seek possible wealth. A party of five went including Mr. Edwards, but were disappointed in the result. From there they went to The Gunnison Country with the same purpose, they returned a good deal poorer but much wiser. He again assumed his duties as assistant to the station agent. He remained in this capacity until 1881 when he accepted a position as bookkeeper for Mr. H. E. Tedmon who was engaged in the hardware and plumbing business on Jefferson Street in Fort Collins.

On December 20, 1883, he married Miss Phebe G. Edson whose parents moved from Auburn, New York a few years before. (Mr D. A. Edson, father of Mrs Edwards was then engaged in the milling business,) and shortly after their marriage, Mr. Edwards took charge of the book and office of this company. He was employed at this until Mr. Edward N. Garbutt, then County Treasurer of Larimer County employed him as Deputy County Treasurer and Deputy Clerk of the District Court.

As Mr. Garbutt's third term was about to expire and his health wasn't the best, he persuaded Mr. Edwards to run as a candidate on the Republican ticket for the office of County Treasurer and <sup>he</sup> was elected that fall, in 1885. He was the first treasurer to occupy the office of County Treasurer in the new Court House Building. Dur



ing his first term in office, he made a special effort to clean up all delinquent taxes. A notice by mail was sent to all those who were behind in their taxes, <sup>on personal property</sup> they were then placed in the hands of Sheriff Eph Love who collected those due <sup>and remaining uppaid</sup>. The tax rolls were cleaned up and a new start made. He was re-elected and served in this office until July 1, 1890.

A short time after this, he entered in partnership with J. A. C. Kissock and J. T. Budrow in the abstract business, purchasing the only set of abstracts in the county, that having been started by A. H. Patterson who was County Clerk of the County in an earlier day. With this business, they combined real estate and insurance business.

(On February 26, 1881, the Larimer County Ditch Company filed its articles of Incorporation to engage in the irrigation business in Larimer and Weld Counties. During the following ten years, this company constructed and operated an irrigation system which started the reclamation of about 50,000 acres of fine land in these two counties. It constructed the Larimer County Ditch with headgates on the Poudre about 2 miles up from LaPorte, and running east through the counties of Weld and Larimer, a distance of about sixty miles and terminating at the Denver Pacific Railway some three miles north of the present town of Ault. It also constructed the Chambers Lake Reservoir, located in the channel of the Poudre about seventy miles west of Fort Collins and at the elevation of about 9200 feet. The water stored in this reservoir was carried down through the channel of the river and diverted into the Larimer County Ditch for the use of farms under the system. This reservoir was constructed to hold seventeen feet in depth of water with the capacity of 134,000,000 cubic feet or about 3000 acre feet. Filled each year from the flow and extra water during the flood period in spring and early summer.



(In June of 1891, during a very rainy season and the stream swollen from floods, the earthen dam which held this stored water in Chambers Lake went out and was carried out into the river and down through the canyon and plains country to the South Platte River. This flood caused considerable damage to property and ranches all along the stream and resulted in several damage suits being brought against the Ditch Company.)

Suits were settled and it <sup>was</sup> thought best to re-organize in to a new company. Accordingly, (on July 23, 1891, the Water Supply and Storage Company filed its articles of Incorporation, with the following named as Corporators: I. W. Bennett, Isaac Thomas, Gus. A. Lyckman, John <sup>y</sup>Had<sup>y</sup>en, A. L. Johnson, Alex Mead, Clinton Farrar, Morton B. Williams and Samuel H. Southard. The first Board of Directors was: I. W. Bennett, Edward H. Hall, John <sup>y</sup>Had<sup>y</sup>en, F. C. Avery, A. A. Edwards and Asaph E. Mead. Mr. Edwards acted as secretary. The Company developed its system of plains reservoirs, which after completion, together with Chambers Lake reservoir furnished storage capacity for about 20,000 acres feet of water. The plains reservoirs were filled through the Larimer County Ditch, but lying below the line of said ditch, the water was utilized and used by farmers under the system by exchanging with other systems and water users located <sup>in</sup> below the Counties of Larimer and Weld.)

(The surveys and construction of the Laramie River or 'Sky Line' Ditch which was to divert the West Branch and other smaller tributaries of the Laramie River and carry the water thus intercepted a distance of about five miles and into the Chambers Lake Reservoir. The Laramie River Ditch was completed in the fall of the year 1893, and was used in its full capacity in 1895.

Mr. Edwards continued to act as secretary of the company until March 1895 when he was elected President and Manager of the Company, there



by placed in entire charge of operation of the system, both as to further construction and as to operation and maintenance and distribution of the water to the stockholders. He continued in this capacity until 1910 when he resigned.

(In 1910, he took charge of the affairs of the Larimer-Poudre Reservoirs and Irrigation Company as its new manager, with principal office in Fort Collins to succeed Mr. Wellington Hibbard. The Company at that time was engaged in driving a tunnel through the range of mountains which lies between the head streams of the Poudre and Laramie Rivers in Larimer County, Colorado. This tunnel was nearly three miles long and an altitude of from 8500 to 8700 feet and a system of collection canals was intended to capture a good deal of water in flood periods. This was completed in 1911)

(He continued as Superintendent and Manager of the Laramie-Poudre System of ditches and reservoirs until the year of 1923 when a re-organization of all interests in the same was agreed to at a mass meeting held in Greeley, Colorado. A committee of five was appointed consisting of H. D. Parker, George Houston of Greeley, W. S. Cliff of Denver, J. N. Agan of Pierce and A. A. Edwards of Fort Collins with power to form a new company. Accordingly the Laramie-Poudre Irrigation Company was formed said company owning and operating said system from then to the present time.)

Mr. Edwards was appointed Inspector for the Reclamation Service by Commissioner F. T. Newell in 1913 and made various trips of inspection, including examination and inspection of the Belle Fourche Project and others making and furnishing written reports and recommendations to the commissioner.

In April of 1905, he was made a member of the State Board of Agriculture through an appointment by Governor McDonald. At the expiration of his term in 1913, he was again appointed for a second



term , or in 1909 he was elected President of this Board and served in t his capacity until his third eight year d term expired in 1929, making a total of twenty four years as a member of the Board and twenty years as its President. Also in 1905 he was appointed by the City Council to represent the second ward as alderman. During this period of 1905-1907 he was in office, he fill- ed the position of chairman of the Committee on Streets, Alleys and Bridges, the outstanding accomplishment was the construction of the first stomm sewer for the city. He also was on the Charter Com- mittee whose meetings resulted in the form of a Commission form of government for the city. He was elected and served as Commis- sioner and City Treasurer during the first term under the Commis- sion form of city government in Fort Collins.

Practically all of Mr. Edwards' life has been spent in public welfare. He has given his duties the best of his ability which re- sulted in remarkable success. Since the early beginning of Fort Collins history, He has had a part in its steady progrsss to what it is today.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwards now live at 402 West Mountain, Fort Collins. They had three children, two of whom are living.

*A. H. Edwards*

This material was compiled through interviews with Mr. Edwards and various clippings and material he has saved.

Dated December 23, 1933



Schultz

Bernice Schultz  
12/27/1933

CAROLINE FRAZER TAFT

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One of our older pioneers is Mrs. Caroline Frazer Taft who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1847. She came with her parents in a covered wagon drawn by oxen to Colorado. This was a safe journey having taken place before the Indian outbreak. They arrived in Denver on the thirteenth of October, 1862, this was Mrs. Taft's fifteenth birthday. Their plan was to continue to California but it was so late in the season that they decided to stay the winter in Denver. Just several days after Christmas of that same year her father died in a blizzard leaving her mother with five children, the oldest being Mrs. Taft.

Mrs. Taft's education far exceeded that of many who have spent a good many years at school. In the year of 1865, she went back east to visit and become acquainted with her father's people, returning in 1866.

In 1870, she was married to Walter DeWitt Taft, they spent the next two years at Georgetown, Colorado, where Mr. Taft was engaged in mining.

Mr. and Mrs. Taft arrived in LaPorte in 1872, coming here from Georgetown. Mrs. Taft has many pleasant memories of the social activities of seventies.

One of the sources of amusement or entertainment was the squaw dances held often at the homes of John Provost, Johnny Palmer, Ben Claymore, Le Roque whose wives were squaws.

John Provost lived on the south side of the river near LaPorte during this time. He later moved to the north side living in the old log house which burned just a few years ago.

A good many throughout the country attended these dances. They began at early candle light and lasted until dawn. The fiddlers



furnished the music, most of the dances were square dances with an occasional schottische, money musk or Virginia reel. The squaws were very anxious to have their food cooked like that of the white people and needless to say that they put much effort into this. The squaw wives were very courteous to their guests and while they talked but little, they seemed to be having a good time. One squaw whose partner undertook to have some conversation with her replied, "Me dance, me no talk."

Dancing was not the only amusement, but when one was given, it was sure to be well attended. A number of families drove oxen and it was necessary to start early, then when it was time to start home, the oxen took them safely home in due time.

This country had a charm which it seems to have lost throughout the years as it grew more settled. People lived simply and happily. There was a hospitality as wide as the country itself. The first question asked a guest was, "Have you had your dinner?".

During those years you could tell about how long people had lived here by the clothes they were wearing. They wore those that they had brought West with them until it was absolutely <sup>had opportunity</sup> necessary to buy other clothes.

Mrs. Taft related a bread making incident that was unique. Shortly after arriving in LaPorte, Mr. Taft obtained logs for fencing from the foothills with his oxen. One day when he was ready to start for another load of logs, he insisted that Mrs. Taft accompany him. She had bread raising and thought that she could not go but being persuaded she took her pan of dough along and kneaded it down during the day and baked it when she arrived at home that evening.

(The Tafts later moved to a place two miles northwest of Fort Collins, and that was their home for forty six years. It was located on what is known as Taft Hill.) One year during the boom at Leadville



much of their hay was shipped to this place.

Mr. Taft was a well known and highly respected citizen in the valley. He was known far and wide for his hospitality. He died in 1917.

Mrs. Taft has a wealth of treasures in her little home at 306 South Meldrum, Fort Collins. One is immediately impressed with the library she has collected through out the years. It contains the world's most famous classics and each book is one of her best friends even though she cannot see well enough to read them. They are so well fixed in her memory that she can pick up one and tell which it is. She is unusually well read. (Also in her home are several oil paintings from the brush of Alexis Compaert, a Denver artist of the eighties. One of his oil paintings was an Indian Tepee with a squaw and her children gazing over an expanse of prairie.)

A few years after the passing of Mr. Taft, the old home was sold and a little house was bought in Fort Collins, in which after many months she succeeded in making a new home. In it the passing years are gliding quietly and uneventfully by.

Interviewed by Bernice Schultz

Dated December 27, 1933

Caroline F. Taft



Bernice Schultz

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**Old Newspaper Article Tells Story  
Of Circus Visiting Pioneer Laporte  
In 1867, and of Spectators Attracted**

\* The story of a circus visiting Laporte more than 66 years ago was told by Charles E. Roberts in The Fort Collins Courier of Jan. 22, 1914 as follows:

"It was in the summer of 1867 that the John Robinson circus, enroute from Denver to Cheyenne, pitched its tents just east of the hotel or eating station on the great Overland stage route. Laporte at that time was headquarters for the Cache la Poudre valley and a good place for a circus to stop. The admission was \$2, children half price.

"There was the usual assembly of trained horses, trick mules and the clown. An Indian was always afraid of an insane person, and they thought the clown was a little off his balance, so to that crowd of whites and Indians the clowns were half the show.

"What a crowd there was! They came on horseback, in wagons and oxcarts and on foot. There was the trapper with his long cap, ball rifle and buckskin suit. In fact, nearly everyone wore buckskin pants, and there were the squaws with their colored blankets around them and all the half-breed children as well as white ones that gathered around the tent in amazement and expectation of this wonderful caravan that had dropped into their midst from nowhere.

"There were some people there that you might have known in after years. That young man on the sorrel horse is Ab Loomis, and the tall young man with the black mustache is Joe Mason. That big whole-souled fellow that is laughing so much is Ben Whedbee. He and Bill Obenchain are running a saw-mill up in Pleasant Valley, and that neat looking man with the beautiful dark haired wife is Bill Taylor. There is Antoine Janis and his Sioux wife. Those older children of his are half-Cheyenne. There is Mr. Yeager, Jake Flowers and the Bingham boys from 'Robbers Roost! There is Squire Mathews who runs the store.

"There are Charlie Howell and wife, Mr. and Mrs. John Hardin, Fred and Henry Smith, H. P. Blevins, Zeke Stone, Jim Patton, the horse thief; Ben and John Claymore, Rock Bush and family, Hi Kelley and the Whitcombs from Boxelder, the Peilocks from Park station, Andy Downs and Denver McGaa.

"Do you see that soft-spoken, gentlemanly, young man? He is Judge Howe. There are Pete Dion Jones, Bill Stover and John Lyon. Buckskin Fred, Norm Meldrum, John

Provost, Phillip Covington, Jim Arthur and Tom Gill, Preston Taft, John Chamberlain, Wesley Tharp, A. R. Chaffee. There are Louis Orleans, J. G. Coy, Jimmy Allen, Ike Adair, LaRoque and Tom Cline and so many others whose names have been forgotten.

"The show was a success financially and otherwise and like many other things has passed from the memory of man. But of all the people that were there that day, only a very few are left. The most of them have their names inscribed upon their tombstones of our cemeteries and launched their frail barks upon that silent sea whose waves are breaking upon the shores of eternity."



Bernard Schultz Doc 361/35 304

# The Story of the North Poudre

By F. C. GRABLE

How fast the years come and go for us all.  
"Time goes you say? Ah no!  
Time stays! We go!"

I thought of these lines as I poured over the records at the Larimer County Court house covering the ditch building days of Carter-Cotton nearly a half century ago; the ditch that later became the foundation of the great North Poudre Irrigation company system.

Stormy days, those, for Carter-Cotton, for was he not turning water from its natural channel, and causing it to run where it was never intended that it should go? And that is always enormously expensive. Law suits were piling up against the perplexed ditch promoter, as the court dockets show, while he breasted the financial waves that beat against him, and by which he was finally submerged. Among the plaintiffs, with Carter-Cotton defendant, were Joseph Mason, A. L. Emigh, Jessie Harris, E. R. Barkley, Twiford Corbin, William C. Stover, all old residents of Fort Collins, and many others.

There was money due for livestock used on the ditch work, many debts for labor, food at the grocers, lumber for the flumes and dams, and there were hardware, tools, and other materials all past due in the hands of anxious creditors and persistent lawyers during those wearisome years for the harassed debtor thruout 1886 and 1887.

Francis L. Carter-Cotton had done his best thru the preceding years. All the money he possessed had gone into his irrigation enterprise, and for land. Likewise, all the money he could get from his relatives, friends and acquaintances in England, his former home.

Then he had borrowed from the Travelers Insurance company of Hartford, Connecticut, all they would loan him. It was this last mentioned debt that was the cause of his undoing. Foreclosure was begun by them on the fateful day of November 26, 1886, along with garnishment proceedings. William B. Miner, banker, cattleman, farmer and Republican party leader in Larimer county became surety for costs in the court proceedings against the defendant. Under this suit the Travelers Insurance company got title in 1887 to all the ditch and reservoir work that had been done, and for the lands that had been bought of the Union Pacific Railroad company and paid out on. In this suit which was conducted by Charles H. Toll, a prominent attorney of Denver, legal notices were served on Jay Gould and Russel Sage officers and directors of the Union Pacific, these two men being then among the most conspicuous financiers in the United States.

Carter-Cotton was an engineer by profession and of English nationality. His hyphenated name is characteristic of the people of that country who thus perpetuate family names. An English colony had settled here of which he was a part. Then and later were the Gilpin-Browns, brothers who were cattlemen north of Livermore.

Also Lord Ogilvie who had a farm to which he conducted the Ogilvie ditch taken out of the Cache La Poudre. Later he became a correspondent of the Denver Post where he still has his office, and is one of the veteran writers of that newspaper. He was a pall bearer at the recent funeral of Editor Bonfils. Then there was the well known Englishman of much local fame, Earl Dunraven, who purchased a large part of Estes Park, and erected a hotel there to which he gave his own name. A deed is on record at the court house in Fort Collins made to him as the Right Honorable Windham Thomas, Earl of Dunraven, dated May 14, 1885. Also in the colony were Charles Craddock and Cecil Moon, both designated with the title of "Lord". By the way it was not

easy to be a lord in England as are told. One such becomes the head of the house and of all property interests. All the rest of the relatives are on his payroll for life and they all must be kept comfortable and satisfied which is not easy to do.

The English colony had a headquarters at the Tedmon hotel that had been built in 1879 by B. S. Tedmon. It stood near where the Union Pacific depot now stands, and for years was the principal hotel in Northern Colorado. In this hotel many enjoyable times were had by those English gentlemen of much culture, social graces, and more or less conviviality. Near Laramie was another English colony of which Algernon Sartoris was a member, who married Nellie Grant at the White House, daughter of President Grant, and which it was said did not turn out to be a happy marriage, even though by her marriage she became a part of the royalty of the British empire.

Carter-Cotton was an unusual man. He was well educated, as shown by the fact that when he left Fort Collins he became an editor of a newspaper in Vancouver, British Columbia. And it is further shown by his successful entry into the political situation of that country and becoming the presiding officer in their Parliament. He was of an impressive personality, and could get people to do what he wanted done. He had vision and courage as seen in the land purchase contract wherein he engaged to buy from the Union Pacific Railway company a vast area totaling 52,620 acres in Laramie county alone, besides all the land he



in Weld county. In the court proceedings there was a stipulation that section 1, 3, 5, in township 10, range 67, should be released to the defendant, land that no doubt he had sold.

He was energetic to the point of really being an athlete. Cattle on the range used to herding on horseback are exceedingly wild when handled by any one on foot. Some one made a wager with Carter-Cotton that he could not cut out a steer from the herd in the Box Elder valley and deliver it at the stock yards in Cheyenne on foot.

No sooner said than done. In going the 40 miles he probably went 200 miles but he did what he set out to do and won his bet.

In irrigation circles, the one who files on a stream of water for ditch building purposes first, is recognized in the courts as having prior rights. So February 1, 1880 became a memorable day, for two rivals contested for priority on the North Poudre river at the one point feasible to take out a ditch for the purpose intended. To go higher up the river would make it prohibitory, for the mountainous conditions that existed there would add too much to the expense. To start further down the river would make it too low for the water to get over the divide into the upper Box-elder valley where the lands were situated that it was intended to irrigate. There had been a good deal of talk about a ditch for that purpose. John C. Abbott, John C. Mathews, and William C. Stover, all citizens of Fort Collins, had made a preliminary survey in 1878, but had not filed on the water for lack of capital to build the ditch. They had however established the fact that the line was practical.

John C. Abbott had been a Greeley man, locating there with the famous Union Colony that had been established in 1870 fostered by that great editor of the New York Tribune, Horace Greeley, who wrote columns and pages from the text: "Go West, young man, go West." In connection with Benjamin Eaton who afterwards became governor of Colorado, they had built the Larimer County Canal No. 2; also the Lake Canal; and part of the Pleasant Valley and Lake Canal as well. Then Mr. Abbott moved to Fort Collins. He became state auditor later. His son, Frank, D. was connected with The Fort Collins Abstract company until he moved away, while another son Albert D. is still in business here.

It just happened that on February 1, 1880 the contesting forces went into action, one headed by John C. Abbott, the other by Carter-Cotton. They started up the Cache la Poudre to make a permanent survey for the new ditch. Mr. Abbott had spent many days for several years in the ditch building business, and fully realized the

value of early morning hours, but he miscounted when he came to reckoning with his formidable rival. When he reached the field of operations, Carter-Cotton was there ahead, and had driven the stakes that had made him winner much to the disappointment of Mr. Abbott and his associates. From then on for years there was activity along the line of that ditch that extended all the way to the Box-elder valley, a distance of many miles, more miles by far than an airplane would take, for a ditch follows the contour of a locality, and weaves in and out as altitudinal conditions permit.

Carter-Cotton's water filings were made in the name of the North Poudre Land, Canal, and Reservoir company, a Colorado corporation, that he formed naming himself president. The shares in the company were put up later as collateral with the Travelers Insurance company when a loan was obtained from them on the water as well as on the land that had been brought of the Union Pacific Railroad company, and upon which foreclosure was started on November 26, 1886, over six years after the date of the race between Mr. Abbott and Carter-Cotton. It took 21 years for the title to this ditch and land system to reach its present ownership in the North Poudre Irrigation company which was incorporated in 1901, and which has become one of the outstanding irrigation companies in the state.

There was one fateful defeat in this undertaking that was begun in 1880, and because of it much trouble came to Carter-Cotton and others, both owners and creditors. It seems strange now that the trouble was not seen then and avoided. But nearly everybody has to learn everything by experience.

The ditches of the Cache la Poudre valley had all been planned with the view to running water direct to the lands under them, beginning in May each year and ending in October. That was six months for water users to irrigate thru their ditches. That left six months for storage in reservoirs for the next season. But the ditches then built had no reservoirs. That was where the great reservoir system came in, as planned under the Carter-Cotton ditch, a dozen or more reservoirs that would hold three billion cubic feet of water secured from those six months of winter storage.

But! Ah, fateful oversight! The only way seen at that time to get the water out of the river under the February 1, 1880 filings was by a flume to be built along the side of the mountain which was done. A flume a mile long, built of two inch plankings, sides and bottom, reinforced with iron boltings; built four feet deep, and ten feet wide; supported on tressels of heavy and



costly wooden material; material that warped in the sun, and decayed thru the years: a flume that had to be built in such an inaccessible place that wagons and teams could not deliver the lumber; but it had to be strapped onto the sides of burrows that were turned loose, and sent single file along a path up one side of the mountain and down the other side at great expense, to the flume under construction. When finally finished, their great mistake developed. Instead of building a tunnel under the mountains where the water would flow voluminously and uninterruptedly in the warmth and security of that underground passage, it would not flow in the flume they had built, but would freeze solid from the top to the bottom and on top of that the drifting snow would blow, and bury it out of sight for the entire winter with not a drop of water running to the empty reservoirs out on the plains.

Finally Carter-Cotton went away—went away forever and aye. In the midst of all his money raising

and debt paying worries, two workmen came to him at the Tedmon hotel, and demanded the money due them. He did not have it and could not raise it. They threatened him. Talking together in his room, he entertained them in the pleasing way he had until he heard the whistle of the train near by. Excusing himself, he left the room, and closed the door that had a spring lock. They were locked in, and he was aboard the train speeding toward Denver. After waiting a long time, they decided to leave, but they couldn't. The larger one tried to climb out by way of the transom and got stuck. The smaller one succeeded. They were never paid. I suppose the saddest thing, and the most humorous thing in the marvelous career of Carter-Cotton was in his leave taking of Fort Collins. And finally this restless many sided man was at rest for he was dead.

How things happen is a never failing source of wonder to me. Away back in the year 1859 a young man from America was in England. Buying a ticket at the Leamington railroad station in London the agent offered him a traveler's accident insurance policy. He had never heard of such a thing but he took it. Thinking about it on his way back to his home at Hartford, Conn., lead to his establishing a new business in the United States. It was to cover accidents and he called it the Traveler's Insurance company, its first policy being issued in 1864 and signed by J. L. Batterson, president, the man who had bought the ticket at the depot in London. It was the first company in our country to issue accident policies and it grew to be the biggest company in the world. A railroad collision soon after its business was

inaugurated set it forward rapidly in its particular line of business. It was from the funds of the Traveler's Insurance company that Carter-Cotton had gotten his loan that resulted in their foreclosing and obtaining title in 1887.

J. C. Ulrich was a resident of Fort Collins in those days. He was a civil engineer and a good one. John W. Barrows of Denver agent of the Traveler's Insurance company selected Mr. Ulrich to take charge of what had been the Carter-Cotton properties. He in turn chose E. J. Gregory, likewise a civil engineer, to be his assistant. Mr. Gregory had only come to Fort Collins that year. That was before the days of Mrs. Gregory, and he lived out along the ditch line without steam heat or any of the comforts of home such as we now have found it quite difficult to do without. He had men under him working on the ditches and reservoirs. Later Mr. Ulrich

moved to Monte Vista, Colo., where he had charge of another property that the Traveler's Insurance company secured by foreclosure, leaving Mr. Gregory in charge here. Because of those and other foreclosures the Traveler's Insurance company organized the Hartford Loan & Trust company to care for that line of their business.

For seven years, from 1880 to 1887 Carter-Cotton and his company, the North Poudre Land, Canal and Reservoir company, owned and operated the property. The next nine years, from 1887 to 1896 the Traveler's Insurance company were the owners and managers. During those sixteen years development proceeded some times fast and sometimes slow. Work was done on ditches and reservoirs; laterals were built; some farm houses were erected; some land was plowed and farmed; some alfalfa was sown; a few pieces of land were sold and settled upon. Gustave Wich bought eighty acres southeast of where Wellington was afterwards located. He built a house and lived on his farm until his death a while back. John Wich, his son, is one of Wellington's business men, a worthy successor to his dependable father. James Garrett, whose farm was directly south of the section Wellington is in, and Charles Q. Wilson, who owned the farm where the town of Wellington stands, have both long been residents of that town. Mr. Wilson, for years, had the distribution of water for irrigation from the North Poudre ditch system.

On Aug. 1, 1896, this writer received a deed from the Traveler's Insurance company, signed by J. L. Batterson, president, and on Sept. 1 of the same year a deed from the North Poudre Land, Canal and Reservoir company signed by Francis L. Carter-Cotton, president, the latter instrument being acknowledged in the province of New West-aster, in the British District of

Columbia. The latter deed was without consideration to the grantor and only made to perfect the transfers on the Larimer county records.

The two deeds covered the filings of Carter-Cotton on the North Poudre river made on Feb. 1, 1880; also the dam in the river; the mile long flume at the head of the ditch clinging to the mountain side; all ditches and laterals wherever built; the houses that had been erected; all reservoir sites and filing rights to fill them; the capital stock of the North Poudre Land, Canal and Reservoir company; the unpaid contracts due on land that had been sold; and finally 16,000 acres of land in the Boxelder valley that had been paid out on to the Union Pacific Railroad company. No valuation was put on the property, item by item, or on the land by the acre, but \$750,000.00 as a total was mentioned. The writer paid with Denver property wholly, receiving the Larimer county land, ditch and reservoir system free of all encumbrances.

It was thirty-six years ago when that exchange was made. Among the properties that went with the deal was the Glenarm hotel, renamed the Hotel Carlton, located at Glenarm and 15th street only one block from the courthouse now being demolished. It had been the leading hotel of Denver. Editor Borage, of the Laramie Boomerang when lecturing before the Methodist brotherhood of Fort Collins recently, said when he came to Colorado as a boy with his parents that they had to give up their rooms at the Glenarm hotel to accommodate General Grant. Another transfer of property that of lots on the opposite side of the street from the Brown Palace hotel where the fine Cosmopolitan hotel is situated and which has become one of the desirable locations of the Capital city.

My mind dwells on Fossil Creek reservoir because it was such an important factor in assuring the prosperity of the North Poudre Irrigation company. John Nelson planned the dam's physical structure. He was a civil engineer of Swedish nationality, and lived on a farm several miles south of that reservoir site. He was recognized throughout northern Colorado as a man of rare good judgment, and of more than ordinary experience and intelligence in his profession of engineering.

Mr. Nelson planned a dam of about 250 feet width on the bottom with a slope that would leave it 50 feet wide at the top where a public roadway was located over the embankment. The biggest road plow in the state was borrowed and the base of the dam was thoroughly corrugated. That is, a furrow was made by the plow being hauled with a half dozen heavy teams, and then a smaller one was shipped



thruout the whole of the 250 feet of width, and the half mile of length, the boundary of the dam. This was to prevent the water when the reservoir was full, and a great pressure on it, from finding a smooth surface over which the water might work its way out.

William Bradbury, contractor from Denver, was the lowest bidder in response to an advertisement for bids for the dam. He brought scores of dump wagons onto the job, and two giant machines that plowed up the earth for a half mile around, elevated it, and filled the wagons which the teams hauled to this immense earth consuming dams. Hundreds of thousands of tons of earth went into the embankment, and the teams and loaded wagons passing over it packed it down to a tightness that more than thirty years of wear has failed to weaken.

Fossil Creek was a running stream and a great water gatherer. Sometimes floods pour down that waterway that might send the waters over the top of the embankment, and cause a washout that would create a calamity. So a spillway was built 600 feet wide off to the south of the dam that would carry the excess waters to the river and insure the safety of the structure. The stone and concrete outlet, and the three heavy steel gats were so perfectly fitted to work together that the slightest movement of the wheels at the top would raise and lower the gates.

One of the most difficult things in connection with this project was in buying the big acreage that was to be covered by the waters of the reservoir. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Darnell's farm was a part of the land wanted. They were the parents of Mrs. Senator Drake. That was where she had lived all her early life. Mrs. Darnell would not listen to the idea of selling the farm. No price was any inducement. It was home, and she intended to stay there as long as she lived. Here was the house they had built and in which they were living in comfort. Here their children had been born. Here were the apple trees and the grape vines and the flowers they had set out. And here was the spring of running water that couldn't be duplicated in all Colorado. Think of a situation like that. When the writer finally got the deed after days and weeks of struggle he felt as if he could go to Mexico single handed and capture Villa.

Mr. Bradbury also had the contract for building the inlet ditch to the Fossil Creek reservoir from the Poudre. We had to get the right of way for this five miles of ditch across farms where the owners did not want the ditch to run. We had to pay as high as \$1,000 sometimes to cross an 80 acre farm and courts and juries set those high prices when we could not agree. I will always remember James

Cuthbertson with great kindness for we crossed 180 across of his land. "I'll tell you what", said that amiable gentleman, "some of my land is low and seeped, and I will give you the right of way for \$175." The North Irrigation company owes a debt of gratitude to this considerate friend of a then struggling enterprise.

A monetary incident is worthy of a place here in connection with the building of this reservoir. An advertisement by the company for bids for rip-rapping with stone the great inner sloping surface of the dam had only one bid which was \$13,000. The writer said "we can save on that". So we secured the services of Jonas Finger, a Fort Collins man of stone laying experience and other accomplishments as superintendent; leased stone quarries in the hills west of town; contracted with men to quarry stone by the ton; and hired men with teams to haul the rock from the hills to the dam. Twenty-five men were working at the quarries, and one hundred and forty men were hauling with their teams. Once the drivers all went on a strike. Not a team moved or a wheel turned. They selected a strikers committee, headed by that splendid citizen Walter J. Prendergast, a pioneer of the Cache la Poudre, dating back to 1860. If every strike was represented by a man like that, no one would have any trouble. The next morning the sun was shining, the men were smiling, the teams were moving, and they were stopped until finis was written at the end.

Saturday night was always payday, and Mr. Gregory and the writer worked until morning many nights. We had to figure out the weight checks and pay the 140 teamsters, some of which checks were scattered and in the hands of grocers and feed stores, making double work for us. We also had to compute the amount due each quarryman from the weights. Then we had to work out the sums due the lessors on the stone quarried. We never once went home until every check on the bank was delivered to the men who were waiting, or was in the mails. Stores stayed open until we were thru.

What a sight it was to see all that stone scattered by loads over the valley. One hundred and forty loads a day for weeks made an enormous amount. When the earth of the dam was all in place, we made stone beds, and fastened them low down under the wagons, gathered the stone all up, and hauled it to the dam where thirty men put it in

These were days that were not long enough to do all that was to be done. It was before the time of the swift going automobiles, and travel was slow. To get from Fort Collins to the head of the ditch meant a day to go and one to come, and it was tiresome. Now the round trip only takes a few hours, and the luxury of going is perfect. At that

time John Gault and Charlie Fay had a big livery stable near the Tedmon house filled with teams and buggies and carriages, and our company was their best patron. Afterwards they sold out to S. H. Clammer who was then just starting on his busy career.

One of the things we did was to develop a barb wire telephone system. Whenever there was a fence, we used the top wire for a telephone line. At the gates we planted a tall post on each side high enough for a load of hay to clear, then tied the smooth wire to the barb wire which we ran up one post and across to the other, and down where we tied it again to the barbed wire, doing the same across the roads. The exchange was at the home of Sherman Grable who was the operator when at home, while Mrs. Grable performed these duties if he was away. We reached nearly every settler, and the line extended to the head of the ditch in the mountains, also to Fossil creek, and to Fort Collins and Cheyenne.

Sherman was devoted Sunday adherent, and urged the people not to use the line on Sunday. But it was hard for him to carry out his ideas in that respect. One Sunday morning he inserted a plug so his telephone couldn't ring, and was happy. But along in the afternoon in a down pour of rain two "trouble men" came along hunting for the break in the line. Someone wanted to get Denver. Sherman then recalled the plug he had used earlier in the day, and told them about it. They say Sherman never heard profanity like that in his life. Later on we turned our exchange over to the Fort Collins exchange, and in time they established an office at Wellington.

An accident overtook us in those days of rush and worry. John Douglass had moved here in 1879, and had bought land north of Fort Collins on Dry creek along with his brother James whose son Earl is now one of the professors at the Agricultural college. On that land was a reservoir site that we wanted. John was the negotiator for the brothers, and a good one. He thought we had to have that reservoir site and he put a price on it that weeks of effort could not change to the extent of a single cent. John would agree with everything you said, and would go on smiling and looking pleasant, but continued as immovable as the rock of Gibraltar. We finally got the land at his price however, and proceeded to build a reservoir. It is now and forever will be known as Douglas reservoir, a monument to two good families.

It was in connection with this undertaking that our accident occurred. We hired a young man to oversee the concrete work, and to make sure the proper mixture was made, as between cement and sand. He had studied dam building, but did not have the practical experi-



ence that the years bring to us all. So he allowed the contractor to haul sand for the work from the Larimer county ditch near by instead of from the Cache la Poudre river some miles farther away. But this sand, washed from the river, and carried a long distance in the ditch, had lost its adhesiveness and efficiency, and was mixed with dirt more or less. So when the job was finished, and pressure came on the concrete work from the force of the water in the reservoir, out it all went, and a torrent of water poured down Dry creek and into the river. If that cement work had held until Douglas reservoir was full, and then given way, the property damage would have been great, and lives might have been destroyed, for it broke in the night, and in the morning just a muddy hole was left where our dam had stood. Rebuilt with the care that comes from experience, that great reservoir has done yeoman service ever since, and will continue for a lifetime.

Nearly the whole of two busy years were used along the line of water betterments after the organization of the North Poudre Irrigation company on July 31, 1901.

Henry C. Andrews, president of the City National bank of Kearney, Nebr., who had been the writer's business partner for ten years, had come to that organization meeting and was elected one of the first five directors of the company. He was a helpful factor in every move for this country's development at that time and for years later. He died two years ago. As I write the surprise grows on me that nearly all are dead who took part in the work of those early days.

During those first two years more thought and time was given to the court proceedings that established the water priorities for the ditch and for the reservoir system of the company. Those court hearings were before the district judge and day after day and session after session testimony would be taken by short hand which would then be transcribed and placed before the judge who later rendered his decision. This became a court decree and was binding in its turn for that amount of water if it was in the river.

Every ditch company in the Cache la Poudre valley was represented in these court sessions and their lawyers would argue learnedly and eloquently for and against the claims of the various contesting factions. One decision rendered by the district judge at Fort Collins was appealed by the ditch companies of the Sterling-Fort Morgan country and carried to the supreme court of Colorado. They appointed one of their number of nine judges to take the testimony and report to the full bench. At the hearing he gave the attorneys of each side just one hour to argue and present their case. One hour to understand an involved subject that affected thousands of people and their farms and

water rights running into millions in value! It was a case covering winter storage in the reservoirs of the ditches of the Cache la Poudre as against direct irrigation thru the ditches to farms far down the Platte river into which the Poudre empties. The decision that those farms could be irrigated in the winter was decided by the supreme court and it was wrong. It has been appealed from and should be set aside.

Irrigation in the United States really had its inception here, save only the slight efforts of the Mormons at Salt Lake at a little earlier date. Here at Fort Collins and Greeley the opinions promulgated by attorneys and the decision rendered by judges are the established law and cited as such in other controversies in different sections of the West, just as the basic laws of our nation were interpreted and made permanent by the famous decisions of John Marshall who was this government's chief justice of its supreme court. Law libraries contain many citations touching the water problems of the Fort Collins-Greeley court decisions from 1870 when the Union colony of Greeley built the first important ditch out of the Cache la Poudre. Now there are sixty ditches that tap that stream and bear its life-sustaining and crop-producing waters to farmers where only money compensation is from that dependable source.

Those two years of work on water priorities to which was added all the splendid achievements of succeeding administrations of the company, has resulted in appropriations of 606.93 cubic feet of water per second for the ditch when the water is in the river and for a combined storage from decrees aggregating 2,578,100,000 cubic feet of water for the 27 reservoirs owned by the company. This is unquestionably more reservoirs than is owned by any other ditch company in the world, and is about half the storage of all the reservoirs that belong to all the Cache la Poudre ditches.

Enlargements of the operations of the North Poudre company brought about a change in its capitalization from its original 3,000 shares of stock with a par value of \$150,000 to 10,000 shares totaling \$500,000. Twenty-five shares are used to water 80 acres of land which would equal 400 eighty-acre farms or a total of 32,000 acres. Only a few shares are held by owners without land, as an investment for renting purposes. The average farm is about 100 acres. So there are approximately 300 families totaling about 1,500 people dependent upon this company for a living for parents and children; for a college education for some; for savings for the old age period when the rocking chair, the automobile, radio, newspapers and visiting with friends takes the place of crop raising and stock feeding. All must come from these lands that could produce nothing much without the water that flows in this ditch. It was no doubt

because the editor saw all this; how these 1,500 happiness seekers were all tied together for the course of their natural lives mostly; with their material comforts all emanating from the same source; with an undivided ownership in an enterprise they did not know the full history of, that he asked for this story to be written of the North Poudre Irrigation company. It is a company so important that its water system alone has been appraised at the enormous sum of \$3,624,266.

There were thrills as we went along, in those early ditch building days. Here is one:

I was anxious to do something about saving the steady flow of water in the upper Boxelder stream. So in May 1904, three years after the organization of the company, I invited T. C. Avery, J. A. Brown and B. D. Sanborn to go to see it. When we arrived at our destination in the early afternoon there was a flowing stream that surprised no one as much as myself but I didn't let on to them. It grew bigger every minute as we looked at it in the rain from our carriage. They expressed their surprise at such a tremendous waste of water. But would you believe it, that proved to be a flood! The biggest flood that was ever witnessed in the Boxelder. It washed out every bridge in the entire course of the stream. When we reached Fort Collins on our return we found a flood also in the Cache la Poudre river that was so high and swift people had quit crossing the bridge at the Hottel mill because it wasn't considered safe. My three companions hurried across on foot while I turned my team north and didn't see Fort Collins again for days. We were busy repairing washouts in the ditch and rebuilding a stonewall flume that was swept out that day. Those who prophesied that no more water would be carried in the ditch that season were mistaken. We were irrigating farms within thirty days.

The sale of the land of the North Poudre Irrigation company devolved on the writer and it was not easy to do. There were 16,000 acres of it and I had bought 14,000 acres additional to go with it. In the selling the company always was given the preference for I thought more of its interest than my own. To go into states where there was no irrigation to be seen and where crops matured from natural rainfall; where many had never seen an irrigation ditch or knew the value of having water put on crops exactly when wanted; to get people to leave their homes and come to a new country to investigate conditions was very difficult. Bankers and merchants and newspapers did not want any one to leave their own community to settle elsewhere and used their influence against it. But week by week, and month by month, and year by year for nearly



six years the work went on and Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa yielded up some of their best citizens who became farm owners under the North Poudre system most of whom came to remain. There have been ups and downs here, it is true, for there is no place exactly perfect. But mostly mild winters have been enjoyed here and cool summers when there have been cold winters and hot summers in the eastern states. And in this most healthful of all places nearly all are living out the time allotted to us. So there may be few regrets among those who came.

Those land selling days were all too short for the work to be done. Traveling back and forth from Fort Collins to the states named, going to see agents, to see customers to bring people out, to deliver deeds and make settlements, the total mileage traveled must have been equal to twice around the globe. Sixty-six land buyers comprised the largest party that came. Sometimes they were met at La Salle with teams and brought from there while at times they went to Denver and thence to Fort Collins by train. It was only towards the last that automobiles came into use.

With autos the same work could have been accomplished in a third the time. Our headquarters were at the Tedman hotel for a couple of years with Mrs. Harris as hostess, later Mr. Sholine succeeding her. Then the trade was given to the Linden hotel where Postmaster Nightingale's brother was proprietor at first—succeeded by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Beals, she being the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Scott who had so many friends here. Then we went to the Northern hotel where the activities ended. It all meant much business for the hotels, merchants, liverymen, blacksmiths who shod the horses, workmen who repaired the carriages, carpenters who built the houses, painters, lumbermen, clerks, extra help in the County offices for recording instruments, circulars, pamphlets and advertising by the printers, while abstracts were a heavy item. Messrs. Edwards, Budrow and Kiasock were the abstractors then and their bids run into the thousands of dollars. It was in that way the writer came in close contact with Mr. Edwards whose sterling qualities were so appealing that it resulted in an abiding friendship between us.

During those years the writer not only sold 20,000 acres in the Wellington-Waverly district, but 25,000 acres east of Greeley in the Crab Creek valley, and 20,000 acres south of Laramie City making a total of 65,000 acres handled, nearly all sold in a retail way, and the work and responsibility and worry was beyond any poor words of mine to convey fully to the reader the effort put forth and the tax on mind and body needed to carry it thru. No business probably costs as much in outlay as the work of col-

onization. The expenses are great and never ending. Then too, there were losses. Here is a sample. Joel Clark who had a homestead east of Wellington had discovered and filed on Clark's lakes sites north of Wellington. They were valuable and we bought them for the North Poudre company. He could survey and he laid out for us what became known as Clark lateral and he built that ditch. This brought me into close acquaintanceship with him and he induced me to build a flood water reservoir northeast of Buckeye. It cost \$20,000 and was a failure. The reservoir built in a dry creek depending on floods can ever be a success. It took experience to learn this.

Another loss was in the fire that consumed my home where Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Whitaker Jr. now reside. My house cost \$30,000 on which I carried only \$4000 insurance. So the loss was \$26,000. The carpenters had built the coal bin in the same room in the basement with the furnace and only eight feet away. Twelve ton of coal scattered thru it produced instantaneous combustion an explosion that set the house on fire. This information may save some other home sometime.

Carrying the Carter-Cotton ditches, reservoirs and lands from early 1896 the date of my becoming owner, to July 1901 when conveyance was made to the North Poudre cost enormously. The very first year I put in \$30,000 cash on ditch improvements.

One day \$10,000 was lost in ten minutes in a hail storm that ruined hundreds of acres of wheat which we were ready to cut the next day.

The reader I know will pardon these personal references. But because of my fifteen years connection with irrigation in this vicinity someone might tell the story a quarter of a century hence if I did not tell it myself. And losses and gains are history. People are history.

We sold the land of the company in most all cases plowed and ready for a crop. Employment was given to a good many men to do this work by the acre. Also a contract was made with F. S. Wendelken to plow 3,000 acres with tractors that turned the sod under fast enough to keep out of the way of the land buyers. He had a bunk house on wheels that was hitched behind one of the tractors and hauled to the new jobs from time to time. One morning the writer found a huge shaggy dog with the plowing outfit. "That dog saved my life," said Mr. Wendelken. "It was tremendously cold last night," he said. "I hadn't covers enough and would have frozen if it had not been for that dog."

Those two tractors pulled four plows each and going once around 160 acres or more a great showing was made. Once I witnessed a

sight that was memorable when those tractors were at work about three miles north of the cherry orchards at Rocky Ridge. There must have been a thousand prairie dogs on the land being plowed. As the furrows were turned over on the two sides and two ends those little barking, quick moving animals were driven into a mere condensed area with every round of the tractors. Such a din, such scurrying, such yelping and flipping of their tails—such real despair I never saw before in the animal world. It was heartrending and I couldn't forget that picture in a lifetime.

Speaking of prairie dogs, here is something about them it will be hard for you to believe.

D. G. Kiersey used to run the Golden Rule store in the rooms in the Avery block where the Montgomery Ward store is now located. He had moved here from Humansville, Mo., and two of his home town friends had come to visit him. Incidentally they wanted to look at land to lay aside for an advance and not to farm. So we took them to the Crow Creek valley east of Greeley about thirty miles. We left Fort Collins in the evening by train, stayed all night at Greeley and made an early morning start by team, taking our lunch along. The sun shone bright and there was every promise of a perfect day. Our two visitors had never seen a prairie dog and expressed desire to do so. "Wait until we're in the farming section and there will be plenty," we told them. But much to our surprise not once on that sixty mile drive did we see one. In the prairie dog towns where they lived, the holes that housed them had dirt covers all over them and not a single inhabitant in sight. These wise little animals knew a flood storm was in the making and they had gone into their dens and packed the tops full of earth so no water could get in.

I had never seen such a thing before or since and have never talked with any one who had witnessed any similar occurrence on the part of these little amiable, prairie grass eating, excitable and joyous creatures.

The brightness of the morning of that changeable day gave way by mid-forenoon to a sky filling up with restless clouds that all the time grew darker and darker and faster in movement as the wind grew from a zephyr like quietness to a whirlwind in velocity. All in our party predicted a savage storm. Soon after noon it came. We had hurried to the home of a man who had a herd of sheep that we could see near by drifting before the rapidly approaching storm away from the ranch in spite of all the efforts of the man and his wife and their children who were trying to turn them toward the corrals.

There was a shed on the place that we drove the team and carriage under while the rain came down harder than I had ever seen before or since. In twenty min-



utes Crow Creek valley was running a flood of water that was falling from above as well as pouring in from the surrounding high ground and hurrying away to the creek. "We must cross Crow creek quickly if at all," I told my friends "for the bridge will go out as soon as all this water reaches the bed of the stream." So as soon as the downpour slacked up a little we started, driving our team at a gallop and the mud splashed all about

and over us. Five minutes after we were over, the bridge went out. I read in the Greeley Tribune several days later that "no one crossed Crow creek since the storm." Two miles further on our way home we witnessed the drowning of a herd of 500 sheep that were swept away by the raging waters while the herders on horseback tried frantically to save them. That incident I also saw in the Greeley paper. All the way to Greeley we drove thru a scene of utter desolation. The crops that were so fine as we went by them earlier in the day going out, were entirely destroyed by that storm. Fields of wheat nearly ready to harvest, thousands of acres of alfalfa and potatoes all were beaten into the ground and were a total loss.

That storm reached Fort Collins, but in a modified way. It gave us our first flood in Fossil Creek. Leaving my three companions at Greeley I telephoned to Fort Collins to ask that the ditch be patrolled to make sure the first flow would not find a weak spot and cause a washout. Then I got a fresh team and started for the Fossil Creek reservoir where I arrived during the night. I found three men with lanterns at different points on that five mile ditch walk-

ing back and forth on the search for trouble but none came.

Dismissing my Greeley driver I took my place with the men until morning. One of the men was Oscar Darnell whose mother was so unwilling to sell us her farm.

It is needless to say that no land sale followed that day's trip.

J. B. Barnett, president of the bank at Humansville, Mo., father-in-law of Mr. Kiersey, was a devoted friend of the North Poudre and had bought \$10,000 of its stock. Once I went with him to the head of our ditch, stopping with him for the night at Livermore. On the way back to Fort Collins on a hot, tiresome afternoon, we came to forks in our road where it said on one of the sign boards "19 miles to Fort Collins," while the other sign said "200 yards to beer on ice." The latter pointed toward trees and shade and rest and quiet. I stopped my team just where they could go one way as easily as the other. "Which road shall we take Mr. Barnett?" I asked. "Suit yourself," he replied with the smile he was rarely without. I touched the team with my whip and the horses started.

When E. D. Sanborn stepped aside from the presidency of the North Poudre Irrigation company at the annual meeting in 1905, after having served in that capacity for four years, he did so at the earnest request of Geo. M. Houston who was the secretary of the company. Mr. Houston was Mr. Sanborn's business partner at Greeley and later became his son-in-law.

"Mr. Sanborn must quit the company's work and make some money for himself," said Mr. Houston. Up to that time no one connected with the company ever received any pay for their services. We were all too busy getting it under way to think of any compensation.

So Mr. Sanborn withdrew from his connection as above, and started to follow Mr. Houston's advice and make some money for himself. He built Boyd lake near Loveland and put into it \$125,000 and lost it all. It impoverished him financially and hastened his death. Mr. Sanborn was succeeded to the presidency by Peter Anderson, and he too is dead.

In the 33 years since the company's organization there were six presidents as follows: Burton D. Sanborn, Peter Anderson, C. M. Liggett, L. C. Moore, J. F. Vandewark and Ed E. Munroe, the latter serving in his eleventh year while Mr. Moore served nine years and then resigned. In resigning he made this important statement: "This company is now one of the best irrigation systems in the state of Colorado. Its future prosperity seems assured."

Eight secretaries served the company in that capacity, the names being here given: George M. Houston, E. J. Gregory, Miss M. E. Kauffman, M. J. Fitzpatrick, Miss Love C. Buttorff, Arthur J. Whittleman Miss Lucene Simonson, and Miss Stella M. Newell who is still the secretary.

Five directors are elected each year there having been 44 up to now, some having been elected a number of times. Their names are here set down:

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| H. C. Andrews    | F. C. Avery       |
| Peter Anderson   | H. A. Atherton    |
| Harris Akin      | Victor Akin       |
| Jas. A. Brown    | E. M. Bushnell    |
| John S. Cusack   | James A. Curtin   |
| S. H. Clammer    | W. A. Drake       |
| J. S. Elder      | M. J. Fitzpatrick |
| J. M. Fisher     | A. E. Goodwin     |
| Geo. M. Houston  | H. E. Hawkins     |
| O. S. Jones      | Van R. Kent       |
| Aaron Kitchel    | C. M. Liggett     |
| L. C. Moore      | E. F. Munroe      |
| Thomas J. Miller | H. M. McGrew      |
| Alex Nelson      | H. E. O'Neill     |
| S. A. Osborn     | C. B. Orcutt      |
| Ed S. Pinney     | J. M. Purdie      |
| A. J. Platt      | C. H. Ramsey      |
| F. N. B. Scott   | John A. Slayton   |
| B. D. Sanborn    | J. F. Vandewark   |
| R. F. Walter     | W. Ed. Wright     |
| Wm. F. Waddels   | W. H. Webster     |
| O. P. Yarger     | Watson Zeigler    |



Some of the things — just some, that those capable and devoted business workers have done are here enumerated:

A tunnel under the mountain at a cost of \$73,184 took the place of the Carter-Cotton flume that clung to the side of the mountain and which had proved so unsatisfactory because the water froze in it during the winter months.

An enlargement of the ditch was made so as to increase its carrying capacity, at a cost of \$40,000, during one period.

The Mountain Supply Ditch company was merged with the North Poudre, and all that company's water rights and reservoirs became the property of the latter company which included the Michigan ditch that brought the water from over the range.

Halligan reservoir was built in the bed of the North Poudre river at a cost of \$230,000. The dam was constructed 69 feet high, and the capacity of the reservoir is 279,100,000. It drains an area 365 square miles.

Some of the oldest rights in the river were purchased aggregating 43 cubic feet of water per second which was transferred to the head-gate of the North Poudre ditch.

Approximately \$275,000 was put into reservoirs in their purchase and improvements which included the building of Fossil Creek reservoir.

Certain rights were sold in reservoirs 5 and 6 to the Greeley Poudre Irrigation district upon which there was paid by the latter company to the North Poudre company \$190,000 and then was lost to the Greeley Poudre District, reverting back to the North Poudre company.

The enlargement of the Scurvin ditch was made at a cost of \$15,000.

Much of the work done so thoughtfully and efficiently by those selected each year to represent the North Poudre company as officers and directors, is too close to the present to be written about at this time. It needs a perspective which time only can bring. Someone may rise up to tell about it in the future as I have tried to carry the reader back to the troubles and successes of that earlier period wherein so many who took part are no more.

**Addendum**

John Currie, one of Fort Collins well known business citizens made a trip to British Columbia about twenty five years ago and while there called to see Carter-Cotton in Vancouver. He was conducting a morning newspaper and worked all night every night, sleeping a little in the day time. His son managed the paper during the day. Mr. Currie said Mr. Cotton owned a whole business block in the city and was worth a million dollars.

A. A. Edwards tells of reading in the newspapers of that day of the

tragic death of Carter-Cotton. His life ended in the waters that border on the city of Vancouver. It was an unsettled question in the newspaper reports as to whether it was suicidal or a natural death while bathing. If the mystery was ever settled we do not know. Water was his undoing here and maybe there. His was an unusual life and full to the brim with happenings out of the ordinary.

J. M. B. Petriken deserves this acknowledgment. A banker, especially if he is an officer of a national bank rarely endorses unreservedly a new enterprise. But he did. He was cashier of the First National bank of Greeley, and is now its president. When we were trying to place the 150 Fossil Creek Preferred rights at Greeley at \$300 each so as to build that reservoir, he gave us every help and had us meet his own depositors in the private room of his bank. He bought some rights which he still owns and he has seen his investment double in selling value.

"How much was saved by doing the rip-rap work on the Fossil Creek dam," I am asked. The Bradbury bid was \$13,000. We quarried the stone, hauled it and put it on the inner embankment for a little less than \$7,000, so the saving was about \$6,000, all of which went to the North Poudre company, there being no charge made to the company for superintendence or for becoming responsible for this enterprise.

Fred C. Barnes of Fort Collins writes: "Your account of Carter-Cotton's trouble with the workmen the night he left for Denver reminds me vividly of the more successful way you handled the Fossil Creek teamsters strike in your room at the old Tedmon hotel, where, 32 years ago, I was helping you with your accounts, when the "committee" arrived. Verily, you performed a feat that day."

"When you and Mr. Barnett came to the forks of the road that time where one sign board said 'nine-teen miles to Fort Collins' and the other '200 yards to beer on ice' which road did you take?" I will answer my friend's question by asking him a question. "Welchen Weg Wuerden sie gegangen sein?"

There was a particularly delightful occasion at the time of the visit here of an ambassador from far off Egypt, where the great Assuan Dam was built across the river Nile, backing the water up for nearly 200 miles. He was sent from his country to the United States to study irrigation. The authorities of our government at Washington sent him to Fort Collins as the best place to go. Officers of the Agricultural college and business men and farmers to the extent of fifteen carriage loads escorted him to Wellington and then to Fossil creek. Mrs. Sherman Grable prepared our dinner at her home near Wellington and C. S. Miner went after it, taking it to the home of Mrs. Darnell at Fossil Creek, where a delightful dinner for sixty was served. We were all sorry for N. C. Alford, then president of the Poudre Valley National bank who was delayed by one of his horses giving out. He and his party of four had to eat at the second table. The guest made a most favorable impression upon our people because of his fine appearance, dignified bearing, and conversational powers. One of the delicious delicacies of our dinner was strawberry shortcake and lots of it. Mrs. Darnell brought to the table big pitchers full of rich, sweet thick cream from her spring house that she had skimmed from the tops of the crocks of milk sitting in a trough with the cool water from a spring running all around them. That cream and that shortcake—how good life is.

THE END.