

## **HENRY M FOSDICK**

Because of his Harvard education and engineering background, Henry M. Fosdick became an important player in the organization of the physical town site of Colorado City.

Participating in the organization of the Colorado City Town Company and the founding of Colorado City on August 12, 1859, Fosdick surveyed and platted the town, completing the legal plat on November 1, 1859.

And, a few days later on August 15, 1859, Fosdick along with his fellow town promoters formed the El Paso Claim Club, a vigilante form of early civil government that recorded real estate claims and settled land disputes. The Claim Club's members elected Fosdick the Justice of the Peace and one of seven directors of the Claim Club.

Besides advertising his engineering business in The Colorado City Journal in November 1861, Fosdick also farmed several acres in grains and vegetables on his farm on the south side of Fountain Creek next to the town site. According to Anthony Bott, Fosdick was the first farmer to successfully farm in the area during the spring and summer of 1860.

When he returned to Boston to fetch his wife and children for Colorado, he got his plat, plus other information about the Town Company printed as both a legal-description document and a town-promotional item.

One of his children, Lucy Fosdick, who was only 11 when they started across the plains by train and wagon, so vividly remembered the trip she wrote the celebrated "Across the Plains in '61" story which was published in the Cambridge Mass papers in 1905.

The text of that story, is in the August, 2011 "West Word" Society Newsletter which you can access from the [history.oldcolo.com](http://history.oldcolo.com) section on this web site. You can also access general information about the Colorado City Plat in the June/July, 2011 Newsletter, and how to relate current Old Colorado City/Westside streets and addresses to the 1861 plat map in the Aug/September 2011 Newsletter.

The Fosdick's lived for a time in Colorado City, which paid him in cattle, timber, and a building to live in for his work, but his wife did not like being hustled by

## Fosdick, Henry M.

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Indians nor the rattlesnakes, so he left Colorado City permanently for the town now named Fowler, Colorado, along the Arkansas River, where many of his descendents live today. He did extensive surveying of waterways branching off the Arkansas for agricultural purposes, , including one which legally is still owned by an Indian tribe.

Note: The Fosdick Plat is the earliest and most extensive layout map of the 2 mile long, 1 mile wide 1280 acre plat of Colorado City. A copy of the map is in possession of the Old Colorado City Historical Society in its Hughes Collection. Recently, the OCCHS Historical Society was able to purchase a very rare original copy of this plat which has been digitized. A large replica of the plat hangs in the Old Colorado City Historical Society Display Room.

This plat map of original Colorado City, containing all 302 Blocks, with 9,664 lots and the original street and avenue names. It also lists all the Directors of the Colorado City Land Company as well as promotional information.