Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Written by Super User
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**Source Information: Mary A. Wade, "Reminiscences: Interesting Chapters in the Life of Mary A. Wade (Mrs. Mary Wade Mitchell)," Cupertino, California, Christmas, 1934. Original in the Archives of the Old Colorado City Historical Society, Colorado Springs, Colorado.**

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Our Web site - the first one in any local Museums - helped us a acquire a priceless piece of Colorado City History. It is only the second known written eye-witness account of what life was like in the earliest days of Colorado City - 1860 to 1861 - when only a few log structures existed.

Robert and Cindy Griswold of Sacramento, California arrived at our Center Saturday, August 7th, 1999, after having learned of our new History Center, and gave the Society a 25 page manuscript written in 1934 by Bob's grandmother, Mary Wade. In it Mary recounts the two years her parents Nancy and A. B. Wade, and younger sister Dora, and she as a girl, travelled by wagon train from Lawrence, Kansas and back during the height of the Pikes Peak or Bust Gold Rush. They spent a year in the earliest Colorado City, found gold in California Gulch, and went back to Kansas, living happily ever after.

The Reminicences written by Mary Wade when she was 85, using writings of her mother as well as her own, and her own vivid memory as a 10-12 year old girl, crossing the 675 mile of Plains in ox-drawn wagons, were only discovered by the Griswolds in 1984 in an old family trunk. They have been tracking down, in Kansas and Colorado, the places and events Bob's great, great grandfather 'A.B.' and his family experienced. When they found our Colorado City web site, after confusing 'Colorado Springs' with 'Colorado City' they exchanged email with Paul Idleman, and when they arrived, historian Dave



Phoca PDF

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Hughes spent all day interviewing them on tape, finding A.B. Wade's name in other confirming documents as one of the town company investor-founders, and helping straighten the Griswold's out on why the bill of sale of the lot was dated before they arrived in Colorado City and what 'Jefferson Territory' was all about.

The manuscript relates the young girl seeing vast herds of buffalo, arriving in Denver City and then Colorado City where Nancy was greeted as 'the first white woman to live there' - and given a lot by the happy menfolk, visiting the 'soda springs', 'A.B.' building the first two-story cabin, being reduced to eating Mexican beans in the winter of 1860, and shooting Elk on April Fools day. After they travelled onward to California Gulch and her father dug out $18,000 in gold dust which her mother sewed into her bustle to thwart robbers, Indians offered to buy the blue-eyed 11 year old girl, while not being interested in her dark eyed sister because they thought she had 'Indian blood' in her!

The text of the manuscript on the Web site, is of this priceless addition to our knowledge of early Colorado City and the Pikes Peak region.

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_____ REMINISCENCES INTERESTING CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE OF MARY A. WADE (MRS. MARY WADE MITCHELL) Cuprtino, California CHRISTMAS, 1934

In Missouri, about twenty miles from St. Louis in a hewn log house, lived a family; Gordon Davidson, Sally Nailor Davidson, his wife, and eight children.

I wonder if my readers know what a hewn log house looks like,



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or how built. I will try to describe it the best I know how. Logs were cut from forest trees. These logs were cut the length the house was to be. The logs were hewn on both sides. For this a broad ax was used. This ax was about twelve inches wide with a short handle. The logs were made quite smooth on two sides, one for the inside and one for the outside of the house. They were notched at each end and were then ready for the "house raising."

The neighbors were invited to the house raising and a good dinner was provided. In one day the house was put up. One log was put above another as you would build cob houses. The cracks between the logs were closed by sticks, something like small stove wood, laid one on the other and held there by mud. The roof was made of clap-boards. These were made of shorter cuts from smaller trees which were split and laid face down and lapped. The tool used for making clap-boards was called a frow.

People who owned slaves lived in hewn log houses, while the negroes and poor whites lived in log cabins. Two log houses were usually built at the same time, about twelve feet apart. One house was used for living and bed rooms; the other for kitchen and dining room. The space between the houses was covered with a clap-board roof but the sides were left open. This space was called the entry. Instead of saying, "'in the other room", as we do now, they said, "in the other house." There was also the "loom house", where the family weaving was done. These with the negro cabins, bams, and chicken houses made a small sized town.

In just such a group of houses lived the Davidson family. Sallie,



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

the mother, was an invalid, so Nancy, a girl of nineteen, and the oldest of the children, had complete charge of the household.

All cloth used by the family was woven from wool, cotton, and flax raised on the plantation. Nancy took full charge of the weaving, that being a lady's



work. The women of that day were very proud of their skill in weaving and designing new patterns for bedspreads and linens.

In the same neighborhood lived the Wade family. Achillas Bedford Wade, a boy of eighteen, known simply as " A.B. Wade", came to see Nancy. He was seeking a wife and before long, the day was set for the wedding.

In those days a quiet home wedding was unheard of. The old colored Mammy in the kitchen was happy that she could do for the young "Missy". While making goodies for the wedding dinner, she was ruler of the kitchen and it wasn't healthy for any of the young "niggers" to be seen inside the door. If they did venture in, they were quickly driven out, for "Mammy" would seize the butcher knife, broom or whatever came handy and go after them.

Invitations were given by word of mouth. One of the young darkies was sent on horse-back to the neighbors telling them "come to the weddin' of Miss Nancy Davidson and A. B. Wade 'nex Sataday even' - early candle light."



Phoca PDF

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The many neighbors and the relatives of bride and groom made a big crowd. The wedding went off with great pomp and ceremony. There were two wedding dinners, one provided by the bride's parents and the next day a dinner was given by the groom's parents. This was called the "Infare dinner." Banquets both.

The young bride in home-spun clothes, was sweet, but the groom was really dressed up. He wore "store clothes". He had borrowed his brother's wedding suit, purchased a short time before from a clothing house 'in St. Louis. No need for him to buy a suit when that of his brother's was a perfect fit, and he would wear it only on the one occasion. The people "out west" didn't take wedding trips, but the young husband took his wife to the home he had provided - only a log cabin. Then came the "shivaree". All the men and boys from miles around came just after dark with horns, guns, tin pans, anything to make a noise, and such a noise as they made shouting and singing to the accompaniment of the racket. This they kept up till the smiling bride brought out refreshments; cake, cold meat and hot coffee, on this occasion. Coffee was made from roasted and ground rye.

The new home of the young couple was a log cabin on a small piece of ground not yet cleared of hazel brush. All the first winter Achillas dug out the hazel roots and cut the brush daytimes and together they burned it in the evenings. Nancy cooked and cleaned and found time to spin and weave cloth for the neighbors, as well as help cut hazel brush. Their furniture was handmade - Achillas' father made most of what they had. A nice hand-carved bedstead was the finest piece. Few cooking utensils were needed. Ho-cake was baked on a broken hoe in



Phoca PDF

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Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

front of the fireplace.

Everyone had a big fireplace with kettles hanging on cranes, for stoves

3

were almost unheard of at (that) time. Parents of both of the young people owned slaves. It was customary to give the bridal couple slaves when they started house-keeping but this couple was strongly opposed to traffic in human beings and would have no slaves, so Achillas' father gave him a yoke of oxen and Nancy's father gave her a horse instead of the customary slaves.

The young people were very happy earning their bread by the sweat of their brows, and when a dear baby girl came, their happiness was complete. She was born February 26, 1849; weight, two and one-half pounds; and name, Mary Ann Francis; Mary for Nancy's sister, Ann for Achillas' mother, and Francis for his brother from whom he had borrowed the wedding suit. This two and one- half pound baby grew 'till at seventy-four, when writing this, she weights 198 pounds.

When I was a baby, matches had not been invented. Fire was made by striking flint and getting a spark on fine shavings or rubbing together two sticks, as the Indians did, a long slow process, so the house-wives carefully covered live coals with ashes at night and they stayed alive all night and were ready to start the fire 'in the morning. One morning Mama found her fire was dead - not a spark. She bundled me up, jumped on a horse



Phoca PDF

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and shovel in hand went to the nearest neighbor to "borrow fire". One the way back the horse shied and the shovel of hot coals came against the back of my baby neck and my shoulder. I was on her arm and I received a 'terrible burn, leaving ugly scars, which I still have.

It was the time of the great gold rush to California and Papa wanted to go. Mama got her younger sister to stay with her. She knew she could support herself and me by spinning and weaving. Beautiful home-spun cotton, linen and wool articles were made that year. The lovely bedspreads I remember best.

In the year 1850, my father, A. B. Wade, and brother Sam joined a wagon train starting for the gold fields of California. The train was made up a Westport, Missouri, where they bought needed supplies, wagons, oxen, etc. The wagons were Prairie Schooners, drawn by two or more oxen according to the load; two to four men for each wagon. They followed the old Santa Fe or California trial. This trail led up and over Mt. Oried, where the Kansas State University now stands. After climbing this steep hill, the train was halted to give the oxen a rest. Papa sat resting and looking to the north saw a beautiful piece of country; the Kaw, or Kansas River, with green trees on its banks and streams running north and south through fields of green grass. Always a lover of nature, he was much impressed. Turning to his companions, he said, "Boys! If I live to get back, when this country is opened up for homesteads I'm coming here and locate. Do you see that oak tree standing alone? I will put my house beside it."

The journey to California was a hard one. Wondering how the loved ones left behind were faring, tramping day after day



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

beside the oxen, fighting the

4

Indians men and cattle sometimes famishing for water. At last they reached Sacramento, having traveled 2500 miles.

Papa didn't get rich as he thought he would. After prospecting for one year and nine months, he decided to come home. He had enough to pay his passage home and have some left over, so sailing from San Francisco, around Cape Hom and up 'into the Gulf of Mexico to the Mississippi River, thence on a river boat up the Mississippi to St. Louis, he reached home.

In October of 1854 the Territory of Kansas was bought from the Indians and opened up for homesteading, and Papa located his claim just where he said he would; built a small log cabin, which was one of the first built in Lawrence, Kansas. Mr. Stems and Papa were working together on their cabins. They finished Mr. Stems' cabin the day before Papa's, so Mr. Steams' was first. After doing the required amount of plowing to secure his homestead, Papa went back to Missouri for his family. There he settled up his affairs and with his household goods in the ox wagon with Mama and me, he returned to our new home.

According to the Homestead Law, one could not be off their claim over a certain time. That time expired the day before we got there, for we had been delayed by our wagon breaking down on that same steep hill from which Papa had selected his claim. When we reached the claim we found the goods Papa had there outside the cabin and the door nailed shut. Fastened



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

to the door was a note saying that since Papa had been gone over the time allowed by law, these parties had taken possession of the claim. The "claim jumpers," as they were called, had gone for provisions. Papa soon had us settled in our cabin where the claim jumpers found us when they returned some time later.

Not far from the cabin, flowing from a rock, was a lovely spring whose waters made music all the time as they fell into the river. It was near the cabin, beside the path leading to the spring that the claim jumpers put their tent. They refused to leave.

This so provoked Mama that she determined to drive them off. One morning early on her way to the spring, she cut two big triangular holes in their tent. "What you do'in? What you do'in that for?" came in frightened tones from the tent. "Just giving you some fresh air," she answered, "And if you don't get off this land, you will get something worse," then went away. A few days after this when the men were away Mama cut the ropes of the tent, rolled it up and hid it under some leaves in a nearby ravine. Papa knew nothing of this. When the men came back and accused him of stealing their tent, he insisted he was innocent and told them to search the house, which they did. Not finding their tent, they left, swearing vengeance. They returned later. We had not been long in the small cabin when Papa began preparing for a

5

larger house. All winter he cut down trees and hewed logs. He



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

was working on this house one morning when the claim jumpers came and wanted to know, "What you thin you're doing?" He answered, "I'm building a bigger house. This cabin is too small; besides, I expect my brother and next winter some of my wife's relatives so while I have the time I'm getting ready. With oaths and strong language they told him he had no right to the place, he had failed to comply with the law and they had taken possession. Hadn't he read the notice on the door when he came back? They had camped there two weeks trying to get him to leave. Now they had brought their families and for him to get out. Papa tried to reason with them, telling of the accident which had delayed him, but they declared, "The law is on our side and we'll hold this claim at any cost! " Then one of the men who seemed to be the leader, said, "That's enough, boys, burn down the logs. We'll show this Missourian who owns this land!" The other two men kicked together a pile of sticks, leaves and chips and built quite a fire against the logs. Papa was helpless as he had no weapon and all three men had guns. Mama had been watching from the cabin window and when she saw the smoke, she went to the rescue; taking the ax from the wood pile as she passed. She soon scattered the burning chips, then turned on the men who were too astonished at such bravery in a woman to offer resistance, and brandishing the ax, shouted, "Now the first one that starts another fire on this place will have his head cut open with this ax, and if one of you lays your dirty hands on my husband, he'll get the same! Now mind what I say! You're a miserable pack of wolves, cowards! He hasn't a show against you three toughs! I'm a woman but I'll show you I can and will protect my husband and our property!" There she stood with snapping black eyes and after a little the men slunk away and never retained.



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

Before this house was finished, a company from the East bought the 160 acres, also Mr. Stems' 160 acres, and laid out the town of Lawrence, Kansas. Pa-pa took these same logs and built the house on a farm one and one-half miles from Lawrence.

Life in a newly settled country had its drawbacks. Not the least of these was the "Fever and ague". How I did suffer from chills! They would come on about the same time every day and my teeth would chatter and I would shake for a while, then it would pass off till next day. I found I could drive the chill off by sitting in the sun, so many a time I sat in the sun to get over the chill in time to go somewhere I wanted to go. Quinine was the standard remedy, not in pills or capsules either. But worse than that was the dose Mama gave me when cayenne pepper was recommended as a cure. I couldn't swallow that so took tissue paper, put the pepper in it, and swallowed paper and all.

While still in the one room cabin, 12 X 16 feet, we had three boarders, two of them, the Short Brothers, sleeping on the floor. C. W. Babcock the day boarder, had a ferry across the Kaw River. He afterwards built a toll bridge over which Papa had a lifetime pass. Mr. Babcock was a dreadful tease and delighted in tormenting me.

6

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Our cabin had only a dirt floor. It was a common thing for field mice or wood rats to dig under and sometimes a woodchuck would dig a hole and get in. One day Papa said, "Nancy, there



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

was a woodchuck under the bed last Might. You have the candle ready and hold it when I say, and I'll shoot him to- night!" When the animal was stirring around next night, Mama lit the candle and held it down so Papa could see. Two eyes gleamed and he fired. He was a skunk! We called them polecats.

Did you ever smell one? If you did, you can imagine the cries of the two men sleeping on the floor. After that Mr. Babcock had only to say, "Mary see if there is a polecat under the bed!" to send me scurrying to Mama for protection. I was only five years old and was so frightened that for a long time when it got dark and the candle was lit, I thought I could see little black and white kittens in every corner. It was weeks before the scent was entirely gone.

Our first church was built of sod and had one door and one window. The window as only two feet square. Coming in from the brightness outside, it was dark even when several tallow candles were burning. Here I went to Sunday school and we needed no light to read the songs, for we sang from memory or the leader "lined" the songs that were not well known.

I was used to seeing Indian children, but when I saw two white boys coming, I ran to tell Mama, greatly excited. "Indians?" Mama asked. "No!" white boys!" I said. Sure enough it was new neighbors, Dave and "Dock" Adams. David said "Pa saw a grindstone here and kin we sharpen our ax?" Mama said "Sure." After the ax was sharpened the boys thanked Mama. "Now boys," she said, "my husband is way down 'in the field and I haven't enough wood cut to bake my bread. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give my little girl, when she grows up, to the boy who cuts the wood." "I'll do it!" Dock was quick to answer and



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

he always claimed me for his girl on up until the time "the right one" came.

I must tell you of our picnic, July 4,1855. It was a great celebration. The men, not only of the town but of the surrounding country, got together in the grove selected for the event and made tables. Just logs split with a broad ax. Cross pieces were laid on stumps and the logs, smooth side up, placed on them. The influential men of the town were the speakers: James Lane, John Brown, Lawyer Emery, C. W. Babcock and Mr. Robinson, who afterwards become our first governor, and others I fail to remember. Indian chiefs were there, representing those from whom the land had been bought. I was much impressed by the gorgeous feathered head-dresses of these chiefs. They were very friendly and when the horn was blown for dinner, they squatted on the ground while the white men and women stood at the tables. Rev. Cordley, the preacher from the sod church, gave thanks. Then how those Indians did eat! Such a feast! There was enough for all. After we had eaten, the children too; for children in that day had to wait till their elders were through, the horn sounded and we seated ourselves on the

7

grass to listen to the speeches. I suppose the speeches were fine but way beyond my childish mind to grasp. I wouldn't dare say how many were then. It seemed to me a great host. Everyone was welcome and few stayed away. To me it was the greatest Fourth of July celebration I have ever known.



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

These were stirring times 'in Kansas in 1856, while the question was being decided as to whether it should be a slave or free state. It was on the border and both parties had a strong representation. Papa and some of the other farmers refused to take sides. They didn't believe 'in slavery and yet they were opposed to freeing the slaves without paying the masters for them. They were between two fires and times had to hide for a few days along the river among the brush. Papa, Mr. Adams and another neighbor were hiding this way when Mama and Mrs. Adams to their camp, a deserted cabin, to carry provisions. It was night. I was left with the Adams' children. There were, six of them and it was a treat to me, for at that time I was an only child. David, the eldest, sixteen years old, was always up to some mischief. This time he told us he was was afraid the "Bush-whackers" would come. The "Bush-whackers" were roving bands of outlaws, who pillaged and murdered on their raids. The men they would sometimes kill but did not harm women or children. On fast horses they would ride up to a house, ransack the house, carry away what they wanted, especially any firearms or horses, and if the man resisted, shoot him. When David said "Bush-whackers" we were "scairt." He thought we better go to the camp where our parents were, but better be armed. He himself carried an old rusty rifle. Martha carried a broom stick, Will a poker, James a hoe; Mary and I had little Henry were too young to fight, but trailed along last. A thunder storm was coming and the night was dark. By the flashes of lightning we managed to keep the path, - a cow path through the pasture. We stumbled along single file; we were not afraid of the storm but of "Bush-whackers. " At last we came to the cabin. David decided to stand guard while we went in. After our frightened parents heard our story, David's father declared,



Phoca PDF

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"If I could get my hands on that boy, he'd think the "bush-whackers" had him sure." However, David led us home when we came from the cabin and I think he escaped punishment.

One day Mama had to go to town. There was on old gun with the charges of powder and bullets stuck in it, but Mama said, "If the Bush-whackers get this they'll fix it up, so I'll hide it while i'm gone." There seemed no place on the one room cabin to hid it except the stovepipe. She lifted the pipe off the stove. I held it up while she put the gun in the pipe. It was dark and cold when we got home. Mama had the milking to do as Papa was hiding. She forgot the gun and started the fire, telling me to sit right there by the stove till she came back from milking. She had just started milking when she heard the explosion. It sounded like a cannon, so many charges of powder had been rammed into the old gun. Before she reached the house, I ran out crying, "i'm shot! i'm shot!" On examination she found I was not hurt. The only damage was soot and ashes on the floor and stove.

8

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Sometime before this Mama had a narrow escape. Papa gave me his gun to take to the house and give to Mama, showing me just how to carry it. I carried it just right but as I came to the door I raised the gun to my shoulder, as I had seen Papa do, and crying, "I'll shoot you Mama!" pulled the trigger and missed her by a narrow margin.

When I was five years old, an uncle of the same age was visiting us. Sam, my uncle, found a cap for a gun that had not



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

been exploded. Together we found stones and pounded it till it was flat, but it wouldn't go off. "Let's put it in the fire." Says Sam. He pulled a coal out on the hearth, put the cap on it and we blowed and blowed. At last he gave an extra big blow - the cap exploded and a piece of it went in his eye. Papa took him to the family doctor who removed the piece, but Sam was blind in that eye ever after.

The bush-whackers got all our horses but one. This horse, a Kentucky thorough- bred, four years old, Papa had kept hid in the cornfield. Corn grows high in Kansas - seven to eight feet tall. It was necessary for Papa to go to Kansas City, forty miles away. He knew the horse would carry him if he didn't get held up on the way, as he would be if a Bushwhacker saw that horse. The trip was made in safety. Late that night he returned, having rode eighty miles. The horse was sweaty and tired. It was in August, so Papa took off the bridle and turned him into the lot to roll and cool off before giving him water and feed. He went in and ate his supper. When he went out after supper, the horse was gone. He was a kindhearted man and I believe he felt worse thinking of the poor horse having to run for miles without food or water than he did for his loss, and Mama scolded because he fed himself first.

When Papa had to be away Mama had the milking to do. One morning when she went to milk the cows she found they had been taken from the pen. She knew pretty well where to look for them, for government troops had been stationed in Lawrence and their supplies were obtained from the surrounding country. She went in to Lawrence to the corral where the cattle were and demanded her cows. Of course the guards wouldn't let her have them. She went to the commanding officer, with no better



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

success. Then she applied to Dr. Prentiss, our family physician. He was a man of influence, strong against slavery. He went with her to the commanding officer, who, at Dr. Prentiss's request, gave the order for her to take our cows if she could pick them out from among the hundreds of cows in the slaughter pens. The guards, on presentation of the order, let down the bars for her and she began to call. One by one as they heard their names called, they came Twining to her. She didn't stop with calling her own cows, but called all of her nearest neighbor's Mr. Adams' cows, whose names she remembered. She started for home and after her came the cows. When they came to the land leading to Mr. Adams' place, his cows turned off and ran lowing home, wager to be milked. You see the prairies were not fenced but were used in common as pasture land, each farmer branding his cattle as they do now on the large western ranches. Each farmer would have five or six cows, all

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named. At sundown, either Papa or Mama would go to the corral gate and call. "S-o-o-k s-o-o-k Betty, s-o-o-k Larkie, s-o-o-k Lazy, s-o-o-k Floos, s-o-o-k Spot!' All would come lowing, glad to yield the big pails of milk from the full udders. The cows were kept in the corral all night. After being milked 'in the morning, they were turned out to fill themselves on the prairie grass. One cow wore a bell. The others followed the bell cow, so they stayed together.

Another morning, when Mama went to milk the cows, she found a neighbor, Scudded by name, had let down the bars and was



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

taking the cows. She called them back by name, put up the bars, and then, turning to the man who stood near the gate she demanded, "What do you mean by coming on my farm and letting out my cows?" He replied. "These cows are wanted for the soldiers to eat!" She told him she had gone to town, only a few days before, and had those same cows released, but he insisted he would have those cows for the soldiers. He was one of the men who had been quite disagreeable before this. He now started to again let-down the bars. Mama picked up a big stick and holding it up declared, "Now the moment you try to let down another bar I'll knock you on the head with this Even the meanest of those frontiersman wouldn't fight a woman, so he gave up the attempt but not until he had used the vilest language he could think of. When Papa heard of this, he declared he would lick Scudder the first time he saw him. A few days later he met the man at a neighbor's place. "Good Morning, Mr. Wade!" said Scudder. Papa's answer was "Scudder, I've got a crow to pick with you!" "Have you got a bag to put the feathers in?" Scudder replied. "Don't need it," said Papa. "You'll not damn and curse my wife either again!" and he proceeded to give him such a beating that the man was ready to promise to leave the country as soon as he could sell out, which he did.

We now lived in a log house - not a log house like the first one, but a good-sized hewn log house, 18 X 20 feet, with two large rooms and a large old-fashioned fireplace. The one room down-stairs was used for parlor, sitting-room, bed-room and kitchen. The room above was the same size and was bedroom and store room, and, as there was neither lath or plaster, the rafters afforded grand places for nails on which the dried pumpkin,



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

seed corn, strings of red peppers, bundles of horehound and catnip, and various other herbs were hung. This room was also the spare bedroom. The guest were few, but with one of these our story properly begins.

Our house, being the largest in that part of the country, was the one to which the belated traveler usually came for a night's lodging, and I am glad to say that no stranger was ever turned from our door. Our latchstring was always out, "showing the welcome," as father used to say.

10

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It was in the fall of '59 that someone hallooed at the front of the house and wanted to know if they could get a night's lodging for three men and feed for a team. They said they had been six weeks traveling from the Rocky Mountains to this place, had been camping out all of the time on the way. Their provisions had given out, but they had plenty of money to pay for their entertainment. All they wanted was the particular privilege of sleeping in a house and eating from a table the victuals cooked by a woman.

It wasn't long before Mama had a good supply of victuals on the table and the men ate a hearty supper. After supper the table was cleared off and the fireplace hearth swept of the ashes and embers which collected during the cooking. I was tucked in my trundle bed, and Mama and Papa and the three men sat around the fireplace telling their adventures and visiting. These men had some very 'interesting and exciting adventures to tell, I



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

assure you I well remember some parts of their story, especially where they had been chased by Indians, narrow escapes from wild beasts, etc., but as these do not concern our story, we will let them pass.

Gold had been discovered at Pike's Peak, Colorado, while these men were there. We had not heard of this yet. As my father had spent the years 1850 and 1851 in California, he was much interested in what the men had seen and heard. The most interesting point of all, and the one which interested father most, was that they had satisfied themselves that there was gold and lots of it in Colorado. They were now on their way back East to organize a company to go farther into the mountains and explore more thoroughly, and to stay until they would make themselves rich. They urged Papa to join the company, thinking that his experience 'in California would be beneficial to them. So before the sun had risen next morning, he and Mama had decided to go to Colorado. Papa was to try his luck once more in the gold fields.

Preparations for the trip were begun at once. The farm was rented for two years. Suitable clothes were made to last that long. We disposed of all of our cows but one, selling some and trading some of them for oxen to haul the wagons which were to carry us to Pike's Peak. One riding horse was kept. Three yoke of oxen were secured to draw the wagon. April 15th was thought to be about the best time to start and it was decided that all should be ready at that time, for, as you may imagine, the news spread like wildfire and before the winter was over, quite a number had decided to go, so that when it came time to start, the company numbered twenty-eight wagons.



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

In the spring of 1860, on April 15th, we started. Mama and I and little sister Dora, who was only six months old, were stored away in a large canvas covered wagon, drawn by three yoke of fat oxen. Our wagon headed the train. We did not get an early start that first morning, as the Captain of the train had to be chosen. By an unanimous vote, my father was chosen to lead them. He was the only one who took his family.

11

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We went, it seemed to me, a very long way that first day, while in reality, we traveled only about sixteen miles. In fact I had begun to think that we were surely half way and had asked one of my uncles if we couldn't begin to see the mountains pretty soon if not, we would surely see them the next day. He had a good laugh at my expense. I have been over this road by rail, in a wagon, and even on horseback since then, and it seems only a short distance. I often wonder at it seeming so long then, but in thinking it over, my longest journeys in those days were among the neighbors and to town, which was only a mile and a half from home.

Our camping place that first night was near where now is situated the State Capitol Building of Kansas. How we watched the moving train as we went into camp, forming a corral. This was done by placing the wagons in a circle, as well as could be done with the oxen, and then, after the oxen were taken away, by pulling them closer together by hand until the tongue of each wagon reached under the wagon ahead. In this corral, campfires were built and all the men were inside, except those



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

detailed to stand guard. Only one guard was stationed outside the first few nights. He was relieved three times a night, but signs of Indians soon became noticeable, and it was thought best to have two.

Our first night in camp, sleeping in a tent with no protection over us but the canvas, was a novel experience to me but I soon got used to it. Our evenings were all about the same, and days too, for that matter. About five o'clock, Papa would ride ahead some distance and select a camping place where wood and water were plentiful. Papa had a good riding horse. When the wagons got there it would be sundown and time to stop. This made long days to travel, and still plenty of time for the oxen to fill themselves and have a good rest.

After everyone was done for the night, my uncles, who were good fiddlers, would take their fiddles, as they were then called, from the wagons, and we would spend the evenings listening to such tunes as "Arkansas Traveler," "Money Musk", "Haste the Wedding," "Devil's Dream," "Bumble Bee in the Pumpkin Blossoms," etc. which became very familiar, as you may suppose, after hearing them every night for eight weeks.

Camping places where the wood and water were plentiful were sometimes difficult to find, and we often had to content ourselves with just a sway, or low place on the open prairie, sometimes without either wood or water. Water for use in cooking and drinking was always carried in five and ten gallon kegs suspended under the wagons by ropes or chains.

Our dear old mulley cow was lead by a rope tied to the back of a wagon and she



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

12

became so accustomed to following that when the oxen were driven up to be yoked, she would deliberately go and put her head down behind the wagon to be tied. She soon got so that we didn't tie her at all, but let her follow behind with the rope. She was milked twice a day and the milk used. If any was left after a meal, it was put in a stone churn and set in the wagon and jar of the wagon churned the milk into butter. You may be sure the cow was given plenty of water. If water for the other cattle could not be had, she got some out of the kegs under the wagons. But thanks to the my father's good judgment and previous experience on the plains, only twice were we without water for the oxen on that journey, then only for two days at a time. Others who took the northern route had a great deal more trouble to get water than we did. In many cases the men walked for miles after their cattle perished, dragging a few things and leaving the rest by the roadside, before they could find water.

Wagons would often pass us, drawn by mules or horses, the drivers laying on the whip, and making fun of our slow-moving oxen. Their wagon sheets were decorated with such expressions as: "Pike's Peak or Bust", "Gold we want, gold we must have". "Hurrah for Pike's Peak", etc. They made all kinds of fun of our slow-going teams, but it was the tale of the hare and the turtle over again, for we would pass these same by the roadside a week or two later; mules given out, one of the team dead, wagon broken, or something else wrong, proving true the old adage, "Much haste makes much waste."



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

The Indians along the way were mostly friendly. We would hear, once in a while, of some roving band sweeping down on a train and stampeding their cattle, ransacking the wagons, taking what they wanted and burning the rest. However, about the only annoyance we had from the redskins was their stealing everything they could get their hands on. To swap was to trade buffalo hides, ponies, blankets, beads, in fact everything they possessed for anything they could get. I remember that Mama often let me trade a slice of bread for a heavy string of beads. Some of them were quite pretty too. While the trade was going on, you had better keep an eye on the other Indians, for they would steal anything they could lay hands on. Occasionally they would stampede some of our oxen and that would delay us for a day or two.

One evening two squaws from a near-by camp were squatted near the fire watching Mama as she took the butter from the churn. She gave Papa a cupful of buttermilk and he drank it with evident enjoyment. At that, the squaws made signs that they wanted a drink of buttermilk too, so Mama gave them some. Never before had they tasted anything like that. They became frightened and spitting and sputtering they ran home. It was funny! How we laughed! Our mirth was soon turned to anxiety for the chief and several braves came scowling to our camp. They were in an ugly mood, for they thought Mama bad tried to poison their squaws. Papa drank of the



buttermilk, persuaded them to taste it, and after much parleying



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

succeeded in convincing them it was not poisonous.

We fared sumptuously every day in the way of fresh meat as buffalo, antelope and Jack-rabbit were plentiful all along the way. I wish I could describe to you in such a way that you could see with your mind's eye those large herds of buffalo as they stretched away over the prairies. All the other animals ran away from the train when we approached them, but with the buffalo it was different. When we first came in sight of them, they would be grazing or lying unmolested on the plain. By the time we were within a mile or two of them, they would start on a lope across the road ahead of the train. The few who were lucky enough to possess a horse would now have a chance to show their skill, both in horsemanship and the use of the gun. They would ride on as if to head them off until near enough to choose a young cow or steer and then shoot it back of the shoulder. They sometimes brought them down the first shot, but oftener it took two or more to kill them, their hair was so thick and their hide so tough. Antelopes were still harder to kill, as it was difficult to get near enough to shoot them except with a long range rifle.

I thought it was great fun to mount my Indian pony, that we had traded a box of dried herring and a cup of sugar for, and take a small pistol of which I was the proud possessor and chase after the men; never getting near enough, however, to try my skill as a buffalo hunter. Some of the men would shoot the animals just for fun, but Papa never allowed this when he knew it. They were allowed to kill them when meat was needed and, as there were no flies, the meat would keep nicely for days. Often we would make what the plains men called "jerked buffalo". This was made by cutting the meat into small strips, which were



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

strung upon a stick or iron rod taken from the end of the wagon, and fastened over a slow fire until thoroughly smoked. The pieces were then strung on a string and suspended from the wagon bows on the inside.

One bright morning, after we had traveled steadily for eight weeks, we could just make out a dark line away off 'in the West, which Father said was the Rocky Mountains. The men cheered, and our hearts beat faster, thinking that only a day or two more would bring us to the "Haven of Gold." But Papa told us that it would still be a week before we reached the mountains, and it was just eight days from the time we first saw the outline until the whole range loomed up before our eyes. Each day the dark line would get plainer. First you could just discern the higher peaks, then the lower, and so on until the whole range was in view.

Many of the men thought it foolishness to lay by on the Sabbath Day, but Papa had seen the folly of not resting on Sunday in crossing the plains before, and insisted on resting the teams one day in seven. Often those who persisted 'in going ahead were overtaken or left behind with wornout oxen or broken wagons. In such cases we



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would double up, that is, take all we could of their stuff in our wagons and leave the rest. We had lots of room now, though, as our wagons were becoming lighter by the provisions being eaten. The men gladly walked the rest of the way, often cursing



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

themselves for their foolishness in not taking it easier.

One of our party who, after traveling with us for four or five weeks, got impatient and urged his oxen on ahead so fast that he soon left us far behind. His oxen gave out in another week or two and we overtook him. He was then very glad to travel with us.

Towards the last, we began to meet men coming back with, oh! such pitiful tales of woe and discouragement. Some told how they had been all through the mountains and all the gold they found you might easily put in your eye. Others begged us to go back, saying that we would be sorry if we went any further, that it was all a hoax and there wasn't any truth in it. Still others said, "Yes, I think there is gold and plenty of it probably, but there are men starving to death. There is nothing to eat, nothing to buy, and every one will surely starve before the winter is over.

Of course, as would be expected, some of our own party believed these reports and turned back. But Papa urged them on, told them that he had met just such before and it had all turned out untrue. The main trouble was that they had expected to gather gold as grapes from vines or shovel it up as sand, and, failing in this, they became discouraged and returned home worse off than if they had never left there, and blaming everyone but themselves.

It was amusing to see some of the conveyances they had put together. Some had Mexican donkeys with their blankets, sacks of provisions and luggage on the donkey's back. Frying pans, tin plates, fin cups, and other utensils were tied on the sides. About all you could see of the poor donkey was his ears and



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

tail.

Others had the two wheels of a wagon with their luggage tied on and themselves taking the place of the horses. One poor man, who could provide himself with neither wheels nor donkey, rigged up a cart with wooden wheels, such as we see boys playing with in the street. A cracker box, holding his necessary cooking utensils, was fastened on the wheels. Now whether these men ever reached the States or not I cannot tell. I am sure that if they did, they would be ashamed of themselves, especially after the glowing reports of those who kept on reached the States, that they would hardly own that they had been to Colorado or so near there and turned back.

These men who had told us of the gold told us to strike far up into the mountains and not to stop in the foothills, even if we did see signs of gold. The gold found there would be only on the surface and not enough to pay. So we pushed on. Our



oxen were in fair condition as there was an abundance of grass. We passed through where now is the beautiful city of Denver, then only a trading post of a few log and sod houses. This was the first time since leaving home that we could renew our stock of provisions, and we were very glad of the opportunity.

The men were all anxious to be on the way and to get over the mountain range to where the gold was, as here in Denver we heard glowing reports of great finds. Nuggets of gold had been found as large as hickory nuts - yes! as large as hens' eggs,



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

etc., so they said. You can imagine the impatience of those who had been believing the discouraging reports. They now wanted to see for themselves. So, after one night's stay in Denver, we started again with renewed courage and renewed provision boxes, (It was two days' travel from Denver to the mountain proper.) Here we camped over night , giving our teams a good rest, as the next day a mountain had to be climbed. The mountain was so steep that six yoke of oxen had to be hitched to each wagon in order to dray it to the top. Thinking it over now, I sometimes wonder why the road was over this mountain; why not around it, or through passes. While the men were getting the wagons up this mountain, it began to snow. It came straight down in great flakes. It lasted only a few minutes - just a passing cloud. It seemed very strange to us to see snow in June. Papa cut with his knife on a tree, "June 20, Snow", and signed his name, "A. B. Wade, " just below.

Well, it took almost all the day to get the wagons up to the top and, when once up there, it wasn't a great while before we started down again. After we reached the valley again, it was warm and nice. The grass was green and the water pure and cold. After two or three days' travel through these mountains, we came to a miners' camp. It probably was a half-way house between Denver and the gold camp - a place where miners could buy supplies without going so far as Denver. There was a store here 'in a tent where one could buy bacon, dried fish, flour, meal, salt, pepper, tobacco, and whisky - just the "necessities" of life. Here, too, they butchered beef. There was blacksmith shop under a large tree. The forge was a large tree chopped in two. The fire was built of pine slabs or chips. Ms heated the iron to mend the miners' picks and shovels. This



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

place is now called Canyon City.

We stopped here only a day or two. Our ambition was to reach Russell's Gorge as soon as possible. This was the name of the canyon our friends had told us to come to. I don't remember how long it took to go from Canyon City to where our friends were, or if anything of importance happened before reaching there. We were just going down off of a high mountain range when we first caught sight of the long cabins, tents, bush houses, and covered wagons of Russell's Gorge.

How the men cheered and shouted! And they were answered by those in the camp! I shall never forget how glad we all were to know that our tiresome journey was at an end, at least, for a few days or weeks. Here we met the men who had stopped at

16

our house the fall before, and had given the glowing reports of the gold finds. These men did as they said they would; they directed Papa and his party to where there was gold to be found. They told him to go some miles over the mountains and, after equipping themselves with campers' outfits, they started off afoot, leaving Mama and little sister Dora and I to live in a tent and sleep in the wagon. The wagon box was taken off and set on the ground with the cover still on and made a very comfortable bedroom. They found gold in abundance and we were soon transferred over the mountain to the camp, where Papa had make a very comfortable log cabin of pine logs, covering it with pine bark and bows and a foot or two of dirt.

We still had our cow and she still gave a goodly supply of rich milk. Mama established a milk route. I was the carrier and sold



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

milk at twenty cents per quart. Mama also made dried apple pies and sold them to the men who were her customers and who would quickly give twenty-five cents for a quarter of a pie and a glass of milk.

After spending the summer in this way, it was thought best to go down into Denver for the winter, so we went over the mountains again, getting into Denver before the winter set in. Here I was sent to school for four months. The school house was a long cabin with only one room and there were fifteen scholars. Here, too, I went to my first theatre. A small troupe had found its way to Denver and, although it would undoubtedly have been called a "bum" show by theatre goers of today, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Nothing of importance happened this winter. We bought another yoke of oxen meanwhile and, as soon as the mountain passes were so we could get through, we went again to dig gold. The route this time took us through Colorado City, then only a few log and sod huts. Lots were selling very cheap. We were compelled to stop here for a few weeks, as we were told that the mountain passes farther in were impassable. Papa invested in some lots and built the first two story log house in the town. Mama was given a lot for being the first white woman to live in the place.

Colorado City is very near the foot of Pike's Peak. Right at the foot of the mountain were the soda springs of which we read so much. It was only a little way for us to walk out to them. Soon there were five girls living 'in Colorado City and we would walk out to the soda springs on Sunday afternoons. The Garden of the Gods was near. There were the overhanging rocks on the



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

mountain side, the evergreen trees of spruce, pine, and balsam fir, and many other things were very interesting.

We spent our second winter here in Colorado City very pleasantly until we had consumed all our flour and bacon, and our mulley cow was now a mother and still supplying us and others with milk. I must tell you of one little incident that happened here. The snow had so blocked the mountain passes that it was impossible for the Mexicans to bring provisions into the town. These were brought



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on donkeys or on little Mexican "Jackasses," as they were called. The townspeople were almost starving, having nothing to eat but Mexican beans. We had the milk to go with them, but one morning in March we found our dear old cow in the creek. The creek was called Fountain Cuboya. Colorado City then had a store and twenty-five houses or log cabins. Everything eatable had long since been sold from the store, only a few sacks of beans remaining. How we were able to exist on beans I hardly know, but we did for weeks. On the first of April, my father, who was always an early riser, proved the old adage, "The early bird catches the worm." He saw a large herd of Elk grazing on the mountain side some two miles away. He had no gun but was a good huntsman, and knowing that the next door neighbor had a rifle, he stepped next door and borrowed it. Then, as he went down the only street, he called at every door and told them of the Elk, but they thought it only an "April Fool" joke and stayed in bed. Probably a half dozen followed and



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

brought back the most of three Elks, which supplied the town for some time. You may be sure the man who owned the gun got a generous piece!

The Soda Springs, or Manitau, as it is now called, was situated near the foot of Pike's Peak and the Garden of the Gods. It was in a small valley where the soda bubbled forth from holes in the ground and formation of soda collected around. There were a number of these springs, one large and several small ones. The small ones were copper and not fit to use, but the large ones tasted a great deal like the soda pop we get in bottles. The Indians worshipped these springs, and often brought their sick to drink of the water. In payment for the healing they appeased the gods by throwing beads into the water. When we left Colorado for the last time, we passed by the Soda Springs. We stopped our ox team long enough to get a jug of the delicious soda water, to carry along with us 'into the mountains. Papa said, "Nancy, mark my word, the day is coming, though it may not be in our lifetime, but it will come; there will be a big hotel built here, and people will come from all over the States to get some of this soda water, thinking there are great medical qualities in it. Somebody will get independently rich off these springs!": Mama Said, "Well, Papa, why don't you do that?" "No, I can't lie fast enough, but some of those smart Yankees will and people will flock here by the thousands," he answered. His prediction came true long before he died, as you can see to this day.

In May we went farther into the mountains and across the divide, to try our luck again. Here we were more successful. We found a place called California Gulch, and found some of the claims paying big, but all taken and being worked for all they



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

were worth. Papa heard of a claim that was for sale. The parties that owned it supposed that they had exhausted all the ore from the ground. After prospecting and looking around a bit, Papa decided to buy it. They asked $450 for it, but took $400 in cash. He now went to work digging and tunneling 'in the opposite direction from the digging of the others, and here he was successful. He worked this claim that summer, and, as the two years were up that fall, and they already had more than they had anticipated, they decided to sell the claim and mining outfit, and return to their farm. As my mother's father had died in her absence, she felt more anxious to return and they decided to let well enough alone, and be satisfied with what they had. The problem now was how to get the gold to the mint. The nearest mint was at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Of course we had to return as we went, overland, and we decided to buy a span of mules, as we could make better time with them. Besides, traveling alone, we were in danger of being robbed. Another problem was the method of carrying the eighteen thousand dollars in gold dust. But Mama's mother-wit soon got us over that difficulty. She took bed ticking, and doubled it over, making a double sack. Then she stitched this across at intervals of five inches, making pockets for the sacks of gold. The gold sacks, make of buckskin, were put in these pockets and sewed up firmly, then a strong belt was sewed on. (This was all done by hand.) Mama then wore this around her waist as a bustle. There was no danger of detection, as bustles were worn in those days. and large ones too.

The night before we started, it was a very stormy night, raining in torrents, and very dark; a man knocked on the door casing, as there were no doors, a blanket being hung over the



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

entrance. Papa called, "What's wanted?" The man said, "For God's sake, let me come in out of this storm. I am afraid of falling in one of these hell-holes." (These holes were made by the men digging for gold. They would dig down straight until they came to pay-dirt, as they called it, then they would dig tunnels following the vein, as for coal. They hauled the dirt up by windlass, in large wooden tubs. The gold was then separated from the dirt and sand by washing the black sand, which was as heavy as gold, and had to be removed by magnet.) Papa told the man he had no bed or place for him to sleep. He persisted saying he would lay on the floor under the table 'ust to get in out of the rain. We had arranged our bedstead by placing a log across one end of the cabin, over which pine boughs were laid, with a feather bed on top.

My feet were near the headboard where Papa's head was, and the bustle of gold was under this head with his pistol. I was awakened in the night by someone touching my feet. Papa had been awakened by the slight touch on the bed, but I hollered out, "Papa! Somebody is touching my feet." Then the man spoke up and said, "Well, well, what's the matter with the little girl, was she dreaming? I think it has stopped raining so I guess I'll be jogging along." Papa said, "Yes, I think you better go." Evidently this man had heard that Papa was getting ready to go back and was trying to find his gold.

So now all was ready; the mules, provisions and so forth. Our route lay along the Platte River, as here was abundance of wood and water. I will tell you one or two instances that happened while on our return home. I had with me a puppy, about half- grown. We thought a great deal of him and let him share the wagon part of the time, and part of the time he trotted



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

beside or under the wagon. We shared our

19

meals with Mountain, as he was named. But one morning when we called he was nowhere to be found. As there was an Indian camp not far away, Papa went to see if he had been stolen by them. What was his amazement, when he was near enough to see, to behold two forked sticks stuck in the ground, with the dead dog stretched between, over a slow fire, roasting. Once 'in a while, a squaw would turn him over. Indians say that fat puppies are as good eating as pig. This being the fall, the Indians were preparing for Winter, and we saw all the Indians we cared to see. The first few days went swiftly. One Might we had to camp 'in a very lonely place. The timber was thick around us, and there were overhanging rocks; just an ideal place for robbers, not an ideal spot to camp. However, Papa was brave, and Mama just as brave, but not caring to use a gun she used strategy. It was quite dark when we had eaten our supper and Papa had tied the mules to a nearby tree. Mama had carefully hidden the gold by the side of a certain tree, and covered the bags, or bustle, with leaves. We went to bed. Papa laid under the wagon with ears open to every sound. After an hour or so he heard the coyotes, "Little wolves,": snapping at each other and cracking bones, the remnants of our supper. He thought of the gold and called to Mama, asking of she could get the gold in the dark. He was afraid the wolves would get at the bags and carry them off, or tear them to pieces and scatter the gold dust. So she went and got the bustle and laid it across the hounds of the wagon, over Papa's head. She got back into the



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

wagon and went to sleep. All was quiet till daybreak, when Papa aroused us by hitching the mules to the wagon. He said he wanted to get out in the open where, if he was attached, he would have a chance to defend himself. We had driven a few miles when he turned to Mama and said, "Honey, where is your bustle?" She had such a frightened look that he immediately stopped the team. She said, "I put it on the hounds of the wagon last night. Didn't you take it off before you started out?" He said, "No! Well, I guess the gold is gone." To his and her great surprise, however, it was still hanging on the hounds, perfectly safe. You may be sure they felt better after that.

Everything went smoothly for a week till we were where we had no fear of robbers and could take it more easy and give the mules more rest, that they might be able to carry us back to the States. One evening we were camping and Papa had built a fire of dry sticks. We were now following the Platte River, and the Cottonwood trees were here in abundance. He had gone to water the mules, while I was back in the covered wagon straightening the bed clothes. Mama was standing on the tongue of the wagon mixing some flour to make our bread. Little sister Dora was sitting by the fire watching the blaze, where Mama had put the bacon to fry. We heard Dora say in her baby tongue, "You better twit dat! I tell my Mama on you." At this Mama looked up and saw an Indian on the opposite side from the child helping himself to the bacon with a pointed stick. He stopped when he saw Mama looking. Mama sliced some more bacon and as soon as the bread was done, Papa helped the Indian to a generous portion. His appetite seemed especially good and he had



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

several helpings. After supper the Indian rolled himself up in his blanket and went to sleep. The next morning he was ready for breakfast, then went away after saying, "how!" but we had gone only a few miles when he reappeared on his pony, and rode leisurely behind the wagon. At noon he let his pony graze as we did our mules. He squatted himself by the fire and waiting patiently for dinner, which we gave him, of course. It would not have been prudent to have refused. When we started out again, the Indian came along also. We asked ourselves why the Indian wanted to follow us in this manner. He followed us all that day, ate breakfast the next morning and along about ten o'clock he went away over the plain. We watched until he seemed only a speck. Papa said, "Well, I guess that is the last of our Indian. I guess he only wanted something to eat and is filled up now." But along in the afternoon he made his appearance with an antelope he had killed, and threw it down at Papa's feet, for at this time we were getting ready to camp for the night. After supper he said by signs and Indian language that he wanted to buy me for his squaw, and Mama said by signs that I would cry. He said that he would give me sugar, and I would be chief squaw and that, when the grass grew next summer, he would bring me back to the States. Finally he offered his blanket, pony, gun, but of course this was nothing in Mama's mind. But to see what he would say, she told him to take sister Dora, but he struck his breast with his hand and said, "No! Too much Indian!" and pointed to her eyes which were black. He thought all people with black eyes had Indian blood, I suppose, and my eyes were blue. But when he found out that he couldn't trade,



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
Published: Tuesday, 29 July 2008 02:17
Written by Super User
Hits: 2686

he said, "How! How!" and went back his two days' travel. Mama was quite worried for days for fear he would steal me away, but fear never entered my head; I was too much excited over my first proposal. We have never heard of him since.

The journey homeward was a tiresome one, especially for little two year old Dora, and we all tried to amuse her. One game she never tired of was seeing who would be first to see buffalo after starting in the morning, and every day she would sing, "I she a bushalo way ober yoner!"

When we at last reach Denver, the first from which we could send the gold to a mint (the nearest was Fort Leavenworth) we were sure glad to be rid of it and the anxiety. We were now nearing the homeland and began to feel more cheerful. The plains were covered with the bleached white bones of the buffalo that had been killed by lawless white men for the fun of shooting. Buffalo nor antelopes - in fact no animal was ever slaughtered by the Indians for sport. So without any mishap we arrived at Grandfather's farm, two and one-half miles from our own farm. It is needless to say that we were welcomed by all, but sadness was manifest, for dear Grandpa had passed away during our absence.

This was the first house little sister Dora had been in since she was sixmonths old, and the log cabins and tents never had doors, so after the door in the house was shut she missed the opening and said, "Mama, where's the hole I came in at?" This made





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Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

a great laugh of course. The next morning we went to our own home, found the renter all ready to leave as he expected us. His two years were now up. We soon got comfortably settled.

The Civil War was 'in progress and Kansas was over-run by Bushwhackers, of whom the cruelest and most feared was Quantrell. It was August 21, 1863, that he made a raid on Lawrence. I well remember that morning. Papa came to the door and called Mama. "Nancy, I think Quantrell is in town!" Then I heard such exclamations as "There! Did you hear that shot?" "There goes another!" "See that smoke!" "Looks like a house burning!" By this time I was up and dressed and at door with them. At this time we were living four miles from Lawrence but we could hear the sound of the firing of pistols and see the smoke rising from burning houses until it seemed to me the whole town must be afire. Papa said, "I can't stand this!" "I've got to see what's going on." Quickly catching his horse, he threw on the saddle, grabbed his rifle, and was off, Mama calling to him to "Be careful!" That was a long day for us, waiting and watching for Papa's return. On reaching Lawrence, Papa found the raiders were gone. The farmers, who, like Papa, had come to Lawrence, quickly organized a posse of about one hundred men and chased the outlaws even to the Missouri line where the outlaws scattered. On the return, the men picked up boots, shoes, bolts of cloth, blankets, and other loot which the raiders had been forced to discard because of the posse following them so quickly.

It was three days before Papa would let Mama and I go to town. "Too awful for you to see!" he said. Even then it was bad



Phoca PDF

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enough. The stench of burnt horses and cattle, the smoke of smoldering fires and the blackened ruins of once beautiful homes were terrible. The principal hotel, the Eldridge House, was a smoking ruin. It seemed to me that all buildings of any size were burned. In a building they were using as a morgue, were over one hundred unidentified bodies with cloths thrown over their faces.

Most of the men of the town were in the army and as a home guard one hundred boys had been recruited and stationed in a camp at Lawrence, where they were being drilled. Their rifles had not yet been received. While still asleep in their tents, they were all slain. The few prominent men not slain were saved by strategy. As Quantrell had lived in Lawrence, he knew where to find these men. His plans were carefully laid. Each of the three hundred outlaws had his orders; to call in front of the door and when the man opened it, shoot him and then ride away. If the man didn't appear, the women were given five minutes to bring out valuables then the house was burned. Every outlaw went to his appointed task. Some of the men, who were not among the first victims, hid 'in the corn fields, or down in the wells or cisterns. One man, who went into the well, didn't come out when the danger was over. His son went in to see if he was there. He, too, remained in the well. They were both killed by "fire damp", a poisonous gas formed by the heat from the



burning house and the water. One man escaped by dressing in his wife's clothes, sun bonnet hiding his face. Another acted like



Phoca PDF

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a maniac, going through the street tossing up a loaf of bread then biting it and laughing, till he reached the river bank, when he ran to safety.

C. H. Duncan lived on the outskirts of town. He was a well known abolitionist and, when he heard firing he knew if it was Quantrell, he would be a victim. His wife told him to get between the feather ticks. When armed men rode up and demanded Duncan, his wife begged to be allowed to save some of their household goods. She was given five minutes to do so and you may be sure she and their daughter pulled and hauled out those feather beds. When it was all over, the house and most of the furnishings were a smoldering heap, she went to the bed and pulled off one tick and out jumped a big darkey who had heard her tell her husband to hide there but he saw him leave. Her husband had bid in the cornfield, but she was sure he had been burned up and she was almost crazy with grief. We couldn't blame her for losing her temper and telling him when he came back, "Charlie Duncan, I wish you were dead!" but he knew she didn't mean it.

It seems strange that no resistance was made till one understands that this raid occurred at daybreak and the raiders were at the doors before anyone knew they were in town. Only two hours and they were gone, and during the time of their stay, Quantrell sat on his horse in front of a hotel enjoying his breakfast.

Schools in the early days of Kansas were quite primitive. I went to a one-room, frame, school house. In the center was a chunk stove. Fastened to three sides of the room were wide, smooth planks; a continuous bench was inside this lank table. On this



Phoca PDF

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we sat facing the windows, and 'in winter, toasting our backs. In summer we put our milk bottles in the spring, tying them securely to the roots of trees overhanging the spring. Our lunches were tied up in cloth or carried in pails. John Will Bush, a tall boy, always brought a two quart pall of milk with corn bread broken up 'in the milk. Spell-downs were of frequent occurrence. In school we were taught the three "R's" and geography.

The first winter we were home from the Colorado trip, my parents decided to spend the winter with relatives in Missouri. I was left with Aunt Sarah to go to school in Lawrence. I don't remember about the school, but I do remember an incident which occurred at this time. Aunt Sarah's husband, Uncle Ed Harris, was a printer and he and Aunt Sarah had tickets to various entertainments. I wanted to go to a certain concert and Uncle Ed took me. We were just nicely seated when I pulled out my handkerchief, gave it a shake, and wiped my nose. Uncle Ed whispered, "What have you on that handkerchief?" "Perfume", says 1. As long as he lived he teased me about using turpentine for perfume, but I like the smell. Another time, Aunt Sarah had curled my hair by wetting it and combing it around her finger. I was

23

sitting on the porch waiting for the sun to dry it, so it would stay curled, when some boys went by. This is what they sang:

"Fine shoes and stockings on, Pretty curly hair, Ribbon all



Phoca PDF

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - People
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Hits: 2686

around her neck and not a dress to wear."

The summer of 1865 was a trying time. Help was very scarce and the women and girls often had to take a man's place on the farm. Papa told the station agent, a friend of his, to send him any man getting off the train that wanted work. It so happened that after the war closed Dan Mitchell having returned to his home in Illinois decided to go west and leaving the train at Lawrence was directed to our place for work.

Papa was pitching hay from the wagon. I was on the hay-stack placing it when I saw a man coming down the road. I called to Papa, "There's a man coming! You hire him!" Dropped my fork and ran into the house. Peeking from behind the curtain I saw him pull off his coat and start pitching hay. "No more hay pitching for us", I told Mama, and Papa was quite as pleased as we were. All winter Dan worked for us and one day towards spring he told me that his brother Charlie was coming and Charlie was just the finest kind of a man. When Charlie came, it was love at first sight with both of us. I will tell you of his first sight of me.

Mama had been "sitting up" all night with a sick neighbor and as she rode home lost an overshoe, so sent me back as far as the creek to find it. I had very heavy, long dark hair. Bare-headed, hair flying, sitting on the back of a galloping pony was Charlie's first glimpse of his future wife.

In the early spring, when I was seventeen, it was arranged that I should attend Lane University, in Lecompton, fifteen miles from home. A large lime-stone building, with none of the attractive grounds of modern colleges, or the educational advantages



Phoca PDF

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either. A graduate of the university in those days could scarcely enter one now. My engagement to Charlie didn't stop my going to the University. Papa would drive me over to Lecompton Monday mornings and he or Charlie would come for me Friday afternoons. We furnished our own provisions. The folks were well pleased when they found that I was to have Martha Cardwell as a room mate. Martha was a minister's daughter, crippled so she must go with a crutch. However, she could think of more mischief than I could.

The floors of the dormitory were bare - we had to furnish our own rooms - and the rats were so bad that everything had to be hung on nails out of their reach; provisions, too. We didn't mind it much till one night a rat ran across the bed and



nipped my eyelid. I told Martha then, "We're going to have a rat killing tomorrow night!" and we did. First we stopped all the holes around theroom but one, then after waiting in the dark till there were a number of rats in the room, we shoved the frying pan over that hole, lit the lamp, and the fun began. Martha sat on the floor in the door between our kitchen and bedroom and intended to kill the rats with her crutch as they tried to pass her. The first three met the expected fate, then I was trying to kill them with a stick of wood, but the rats were so frightened they ran across Martha so fast she couldn't get any more and I didn't kill any.

Next morning, one of the faculty, Prof. Green, rapped on our



Phoca PDF

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door. I went to the door. "Miss Wade, I have an unpleasant duty to perform". I began to feel solemn. "Last night there was considerable noise in your room, greatly disturbing the whole house. You must have had a large company here." "No, Professor Green", I said, "there were only Martha and I here. We were killing rats". "Oh!" he said. "Now, perhaps you could be quieter the next time you kill rats". We didn't try it again.

Lane University was a Baptist school and worldly amusements were frowned on. The members of the faculty all took their noon dinners away from the building. There was a piano in the Assembly Hall, and with one always on guard, we who lived in the building and those who carried their lunches, had many a dance during the noon hour. We were never caught at it for we were lustily singing hymns when the faculty returned. It was there I learned to dance the Schottish, Waltz and Polka.

While I attended the University, Mama made my wedding clothes and prepared the dowry of bedding and linens which brides always had in that day.

I came from school at the end of the term, - Friday night - and on the following Sunday morning, June 19th at a simple home wedding with a few relatives and friends present, I became the wife of Charles W. Mitchell, one of the finest men I have ever known. Rev. Weaver, President of Lane University, performed the ceremony.

We went to housekeeping in the house Grandpa Davidson had built. Papa had bought Grandpa's farm from the other heirs and as a wedding present gave me the eighty acres with the house on it, and Charlie bought twenty acres of this same farm, known



Phoca PDF

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Hits: 2686

as the "Gordon Davidson place". Thus ends the girlhood of Mary Wade.

25

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Extract of Records of Sale of Colorado City properties from a list of transactions. T.H. Warren is shown on Fosdick's Nov 1st, 1859 Plan of Colorado City as the 'Vice President' of the Colorado City town company. A.B. Wade's name appears, with most all of the other Town founders, in Ormes 'Book of Colorado Springs" 1932 which relates the organization of Colorado City.

TH WARREN }

TO }

A B WADE }

KNOW ALL MEN BY THERE PRESENTS THAT I THOMAS WARREN FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION OF ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO ME IN HAND PAID BY A B WADE, THE RECEIPT WHEREOF I DO ACKNOWLEDGE HAVE BAR-GAINED, SOLD AND QUIT-CLAIMED UNTO THE SAID A B WADE THE UNDIVIDED ONE HALF OF MY ORIGINAL SHARES IN THE TOWN OF COLORADO, K.T. IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF I HAVE HERE SET MY HAND AND SEAL THIS 24TH DAY OF DECEMBER AD 1859

IN PRESENCE OF }

T.H. WARREN (Seal)

J.B. ATKINS }

KANSAS TERRITORY}



Phoca PDF

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ARAPAHOE COUNTY }

PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE ME A NOTARY PUBLIC AND FOR SAID COUNTY THE ABOVE NAMED THOS WARREN AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE EXECUTED THE SAME OF HIS OWN FREE WILL; AND I CERTIFY THAT HE IS THE IDENTICAL PERSON WHO EXECUTED THE SAME.

DEC 24TH 1859 J.B. ATKINS

(Seal) RECD FOR RECORD JANY 22D 1860 MS BEACH RED

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