

OCTOBER 1999

The Quarries of Red Rock Canyon

We all know about the Red Rock Canyon stone quarries where red Lyons sandstone was cut from a monolithic stone ridge using steam powered tools and loaded by cranes onto railroad cars. At the peak of quarrying activity in Red Rock Canyon, the quarries were a major economic enterprise in the Colorado City area with up to 500 people living in the canyon. The stepped walls of these quarries are perhaps reminiscent of Mayan temples.

Yet, when we look at the stone buildings, foundations and retaining walls in and around old Colorado City, we do not see Colorado City as a city built of this red stone. Instead, we more often see this stone (which was a premium priced material because of its color) used for architectural accents in building built mainly of other stone. The first City Hall of Colorado City at 2902 West Colorado Avenue is one prominent example of the use of red stone for accents.

Some of Colorado City's stone is from the Manitou quarries, for example in the Bancroft Park band shell. But, the most abundant stone is fine grained slightly yellow Dakota sandstone.

Our largest and most prominent Dakota sandstone building is the Midland Railroad roundhouse which now houses VanBriggle Pottery. The stone walls of this entire building are made of Dakota sandstone except for a decorative cornice of Red Rock Canyon stone at the top of the end wall.

The abundant and less expensive Dakota sandstone was also quarried locally. The quarries

were mainly above Bear Creek on the east side of the highest of the hogbacks which extend south two miles from Fountain Creek. The remnants of these quarries are plainly visible from a large area of the city as light colored rock faces which contrast with the darker uncut areas. Yet, few people recognize these light stone faces as the remnants of the quarries which supplied the stone which built Colorado City.

Examination of the rock faces in these quarries suggests that the technology used there was much more rudimentary than that in Red Rock Canyon. The stone was generally separated along bedding layers, possibly with nothing more sophisticated than a pry bar. No steam powered saws were used here. In some places, separation of the stone along the bedding layers reveals well preserved cretaceous sand ripples.

Each quarry had a level work and loading area at the base of the quarry face.

Where the Red Rock Canyon quarries were served by rail, the Dakota sandstone quarries were reached by wagon road. When the U. S. Geological Survey produced the Pikes Peak Special Map in 1909, (see map on page 7) quarries were not shown; but these roads were shown, as you can see in the enlarged map area to which the quarry sites have been added. One of these roads goes to a cliff base site from which stone was never cleaved, possibly the remnant of an early business failure. Since most of the hogback area has never been subjected to economic activity

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MAILBOX

Dear Friends,

I regret that I am unable to renew my membership to the Historical Society. Health problems preclude my participation in any outside activities. I enjoyed my association with all of you and was happy to put in a few volunteer hours as I was able.

Perhaps my situation will improve and I will once again be able to get back to those activities that I've enjoyed in the past.

Laura Lee Beyer
Colorado Springs, CO

Dear Ms. Beyer,
On behalf of the Society, I want to thank you for your past participation and involvement. Your assistance as a volunteer was greatly appreciated. All your friends here at OCCHS hope that your health will improve and our thoughts are with you.

Gordon Gray

Dear OCCHS,

My daughter is doing a report on the "gold rush" in Colorado. We have been to many web sites and have not had much luck with finding information on the subject. If there is any way you could send some information to us, it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Jewelle & Shanalin Estep
vortex@tiptontel.com

Dear Esteps,

We will give your request to one of our researchers and they will hopefully find some information on the goldrush days that will be useful for the report. Thank you for writing to us.

Dear OCCHS,

It would be nice to see when the schedule of monthly meeting times and dates are, on the web site. For those of us out of state we can then glance quickly on the web page and better schedule our flights in order to attend the meetings.

Karen Petersen
Elise4x4@aol.com

Dear Karen,

Thank you for your e-mail and we have passed it on to one of our technical folks for their review. We are in the process of updating our entire web site and this information is very timely. Thank you again for your support and ideas.

We encourage you to write or e-mail the Society with your comments, ideas, and suggestions. We welcome them.

history@oldcolo.com

Bits & Pieces

Technology Treasure Sale

Well, did we generate a little interest in our article in last month's West Word about an upcoming Technology Treasure Sale?

Start digging through all your unused computer and communications equipment (and software). OCCHS will be sponsoring a Technology Treasure sale early in 2000. We will be calling on you to donate items that you no longer need. It will be a great way for people to pick up some good equipment at great prices. We will also make money for the Society.

More information to follow in next month's *West Word*.

Remember: One man's junk is another man's treasure!!!

Membership Directory Updates

Please update your directory with the following new members (N) and member changes (C):

Deanna Bowman (N)
14810 Herring Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80908
(719) 495-3122

Eugene Current (N) Jackie Kozdras (N)
3455 S. Corona Street
Englewood, CO 80110
(303) 806-9291
8006 Ferncliff
Colorado Spgs, CO 80920
(719) 282-3342

John & Kathy Fish (N) John & Patricia Wall Loverin (N)
2326 Wood Avenue
Colorado Spgs, CO 80907
(719) 475-8991
2205 W. Pikes Peak Ave.
Colorado Spgs, CO 80904
(719) 473-1387

Patrice Grinham (N) Betty E. Rapjack (N)
8445 Williamsbug Dr
Colorado Spgs, CO 80920
(719) 593-9615
1905 Mesa Road
Colorado Spgs, CO 80904
(719) 634-1227

Irene Hagen (N) Barbara & Richard Rhodes (N)
3012 Adams Circle
Lynnwood,
(425) 778-3554
2217 W. Uintah Street
Colorado Spgs, CO 80904
(719) 477-0080

A BIG welcome all the new members.

From the Board

I thought some of our members might be interested in the history of the buildings in the historic district and other bits of Colorado City history.

The Waycott Opera House was at 2432 West Colorado Ave., where Meadow Muffins is presently. The building was constructed in 1901. It was built and owned by Ernest and R.H. Waycott, who were general contractors in Colorado City. For years the building was used as followed: Mack's Ice Cream store was in the basement (the sign is still on the building) with an entrance from the front sidewalk. The Idle Hour Theater had Vaudeville performances and later films were on the first floor. On the second floor was the Opera house. It had a good size stage, fair lighting and seated several hundred people. The third floor was used as a meeting hall by several lodges. In the front of the meeting hall were several offices that had bay windows looking out onto Colorado Ave. West Side Furniture Mart then occupied the building.

According to the Colorado City and Manitou Business Directory of 1909, Butler and Farrell were the proprietors of "The New Method Wet Wash Laundry Company" at 521 Colorado Ave. Their advertisement showing a woman washing clothes in an old wooden barrel sitting on a turned over chair with the slogan "Let Us Be Your Washer Woman." They boasted that "We call for, wash, blue and wring and average family washing for 75 cents. Delivering clothes to you in about 24 hours, ready to be ironed out of the basket." They gave these reasons why laundry should be sent to them.

- First - Your clothes are kept separate from others.
- Second - We put no ink marks on clothes.
- Third - We do not use bleach or acid to injure clothes
- Fourth - Our method is sanitary. Our service prompt, dependable, and simplifies the servant problem
- Fifth - The dread of Wash Day spoils many a Sunday. We give all the excellence of a home washing with none of the work, or worry or bother.

Mr. Charles C. Cullett was the proprietor of the Standard Barber Shop at 605 1/2 Colorado Avenue. Haircuts were 25 cents, a shave 10 cents, and a Neck shave was free. Cullett had installed a new model electric massage machine whose application cost 25 cents and he also advertised Cigars and tobacco.

Jan Knox has stocked the bookstore with a host of new books. Authors have finally acknowledge that women were a part of the migration to the West as well as men. There dairies, accounts, and lives are being published. Some of the titles reflect this;

No Life for a Lady Molly Brown, Unraveling
On Side Saddles to Heaven 1000 White Women
Women Who Charm the West
Lady Pinkerton Gets Her Man

Speaking of women, Jan MacKell has documented the number of prostitutes in Old Colorado City as well a persons associated with them. And did you hear Laura Bell comment at the Cemetery Crawl that "The only thing men

are good for is money." At our November meeting we will ask those present to guess the number of prostitutes who were in Colorado City. The person who guesses correctly or closest to the correct number will win a prize.

From the Aristocrat of the Colorado City High School is a picture of the class of 1914. The book was dedicated to Isaac Steward Nichols who served on the Board of Education from 1897 to 1915. He was very instrumental in promoting a two year High School and did not rest with a four year High School until standard courses and the best faculty available was obtained.

The class of 1914 included Alice Nobel, Ina Langridge, Luther McKnight, Ruth Zimmenht, Elvessa Courtright, Irvin Evans, Grace Lawrence, Eva Shiveman, Gladys Nichols, Irene Harry and Miss Joseph, their teacher.

The board members were J.S. Greenlee, A.W. Clark, Mrs. Mary Courtwright and Duncan Lamont.

(contributed by: Agnes Johnson, Board Member)

The President's Corner

This past month has been busy for the Society. Our fall program schedule has begun and the presentation at the October meeting on the Florrisant Fossil Beds was excellent. If you have not been out to the National Monument, it is only a short drive West into the mountains and is well worth the short trip.

I am pleased to report that two grants that the Society applied for have been awarded to us. One is from the State Historical Fund and is in the amount of \$12,300, of which OCCHS will have to match a portion. This grant will be used to produce a book entitled, "Walking Tour Guidebook of Old Colorado City." The book will be authored by Cathleen Norman, with research assistance from OCCHS members. The entire proceeds from the sale of this book, as well as the future production rights will be the Society's. We hope to have this project well under way in the next month and the book in production early next year. The second grant, in the amount of \$5,000, was awarded to us by the Colorado Springs Community Trust. This grant was awarded for operating funds and will be used to help us meet some of our much needed monthly operating expenses. Both of these grants are much appreciated and will be spent wisely by your Board of Directors.

I hope that you have made plans to attend the Bed & Breakfast Tour on December 5th. This annual event is sponsored by the Westside Innkeepers and the proceeds are donated to the Society. Please show your appreciation to the Innkeepers by purchasing a tickets for yourself and your friends and neighbors. It will be a fun afternoon touring these beautiful homes that will be decorated for the Holidays. After the tour, refreshments and social activities will be at the Center.

Until next month.

Gordon

(From the Board continued on page 5)

November 12th
OCCHS Monthly Program

From the Board (continued from page 4)

The Fairview Cemetery Crawlers

The November program will be at the Center and will be a unique presentation. Our guests will be some of the "residents" of Fairview Cemetery. On September 11th and 12th, the OCCHS Second Annual Cemetery Crawl took place at Fairview Cemetery. This year 15 actors portrayed people who are buried in the cemetery that were well-known and played an important part in the history of Colorado City.

Since many of our members were not able to come out for this event and "crawl" through the cemetery, we invited some of the actors to bring their show to our monthly meeting.

Make your plans now to attend the November meeting.

MEET ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

Meet a grandmother who according to the younger generation is "cool." Technology is no mystery to this lady and she is currently volunteering to enter data into our computer.

Adele Dean was born in Niagara Falls, U.S., grew up on Thousand Island, N. Y., graduated as an R.N. in Syracuse, N.Y., and became an Army nurse in World War II. She was stationed in England and Germany.

She met John in 1943 when he was stationed in Syracuse, N.Y. with the 5th Army Division and married him in 1946 at Alexander Bay.

They came to Colorado Springs in 1948 and lived in Manitou where John became a fireman. In 1952, they bought the building at 2802 West Colorado Avenue (across from the Amarillo) and called the business AAA. The sold rubber stamps and identification articles.

She has three daughters and two live in the Springs. When she retired, Adele devoted time to making dolls and prefers small dolls. She molds the porcelain bodies, makes the clothes, and has a craft show three times a year.

She keeps in frequent touch with all of her grandchildren by e-mail.

Treasurer's Report

Because of one day of rain, we only netted \$306 from our Cemetery Crawl in September. We added \$630 to our Endowment fund from the contributions in memory of the passing of Bev Disch's mother.

We have received two grants, one from the Community Trust Fund for \$5,000 and one from the State Historical Fund for \$12,300 for a quality Guide Book, which we must match with about \$4,200 by next year. Over the life of the sale of the Guide Book we could net over \$20,000 for our 'investment' of \$4,000. But the return will take time, 2 to 3 years or more.

Our cash position is still OK, but we are now entering the long days of winter, when our revenues will drop substantially from summer events and traffic, and our costs will go up. So one thing members can do is to order lots of our Historical Books or give a \$20 Membership for Christmas gifts! Remember, we can now process your purchases with credit cards.

(Dave Hughes, Treasurer)

History Center

JOBS Bulletin Board

Our "needs" are posted!

YOU can help us !!!

Take an assignment!!

(the Board is in the office at the Center)

Bygone Days

in the Pikes Peak Region

The June 27, 1874, issue of the "Gazette" gives the following reminiscences of 10 years before the heading of "The Disaster of Sixty Four." A copy of this article was given to the Society by Joyce Johns.

In 1863, Colorado City made a little spurt. Settlements increased along the Fountain, and people also began to take up claims on the Divide. This, and the fact that one or two newcomers to the town opened up with considerable spirit, encouraged the citizens to hope that better times were in store. But the following year, '64 was one of the great disaster and discouragements, and the last straw seemed to be laid on the camel's back, so as to take away all hope of getting upon its feet.

First came a great flood which drowned several people in the Fountain valley and washed out two-thirds of the crops. Two or three months later came the grasshoppers and cleared off all that the waters had left to mature. And, after the grasshoppers came the Indians, driving all the farming population from their ranches and throwing the whole district into a state of alarm. It was blow after blow to a community just struggling to live' and there were many who were thoroughly disheartened, as well they might be, and who gave up in despair.

The great flood — The flood occurred on the 10th of June, 1864, a few days after the great Cherry creek flood which swept away a large part of the city of Denver.

There had been several thunder-showers and the creeks were somewhat swollen though not so much so as to cause any apprehension. But about o'clock on the afternoon of the day named, a heavy cloud came up over Cheyenne mountain, and the sky gathered blackness until nearly sun down, when hail and rain began to fall in tremendous torrents. The thunder and lightning were incessant; the rain came down, not in drops, but in floods; the hail consisted of huge lumps of ice, some of them over three inches in diameter; the whole surface of the country was flooded as though it were a vast lake, and in some of the ravines the water rushed along in torrents 20 or 30 feet deep.

The storm continued in full violence until about 9 o'clock, when it ceased 'and there was a great calm' — overhead was a clear starry sky, but below was a desolate waste of waters..

The area of the storm was confined within small limits, its violence being spent upon Cheyenne mountain and the country within a radius of three or four miles. Ten or a dozen miles down the Fountain the people living along the bottom knew nothing of it, but their ignorance, unfortunately, resulting in destruction to several of them. The vast quantity of water shed from the mountains gathered in the valley and swept downward in a wide torrent, covering all the low country adjacent to the creek. About midnight, the people from 20 to 30 miles below Colorado City were alarmed to find a flood

of water rushing down upon them, without warning, and threatening to wash them away. Some took refuge on the tops of their houses; others, fearing to trust the stability of their homes, fled for their lives and several of these were drowned. Crossing the country in the darkness of midnight, they fell into holes or ravines where the water was many feet deep, and perished without help or hope.

Among those who were thus drowned, were a family of six, named Thatcher, consisting of father, mother and four children, who were living where Thomas Own now lives; a child named Hunter, which was dropped by its parents in their hurried flight; and a man and woman who were living on what is known as Widow Campbell's place. The bodies of some of these were recovered weeks afterwards, but the bodies of others were never seen again.

Had these unfortunately people remained in their houses, they would have been in safety, for the water was in no case higher than two feet in any house which it entered, and in most cases it was much less. In Thatcher's house, a coop of chickens was found on a chair the next morning after the flood, without a feather wet. But the alarm of the people drove them forth and thus they perished.

The crops, as we have said, were almost totally destroyed, and hundreds of acres were covered with 'wash' so as to be ruined for purposes of cultivation.

The flood was followed by several heavy rains in the mountains and the streams were high for many weeks. For a month or more it was impossible to ford the Fountain below Colorado City.

Traces of the flood are still visible. The immense quantity of gravel around the mouth of Cheyenne creek is one of its legacies; and other evidences of its violence might be pointed out.

This deluge is the only one which has occurred within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, so it may be hoped that it was a very exceptional phase of Colorado's very exceptional climate. The rain which we had a few weeks ago was, so far as we can learn, the heaviest which there has been since '64.

**Do you have an interesting
article on the history of
Colorado City?
If so, send it to us and we
will publish it in the
West Word.**

Red Rock Canyon (continued from Front Page)

except grazing since the quarries closed, all of the quarry roads can still be located. All of the quarries can also still be located.

The Dakota sandstone quarries with their simpler technology were probably started considerably earlier than the Red Rock Canyon quarries. Anthony Bott was the owner of land in the area where these quarries were operated, and had a listing in the directory which indicated that he was in the building materials business.

When General Palmer built Glen Eyrie, his property had an abundance of stone. Not wanting a quarry in his back yard, it is reported that he obtained stone from Bear Creek quarries for his castle.

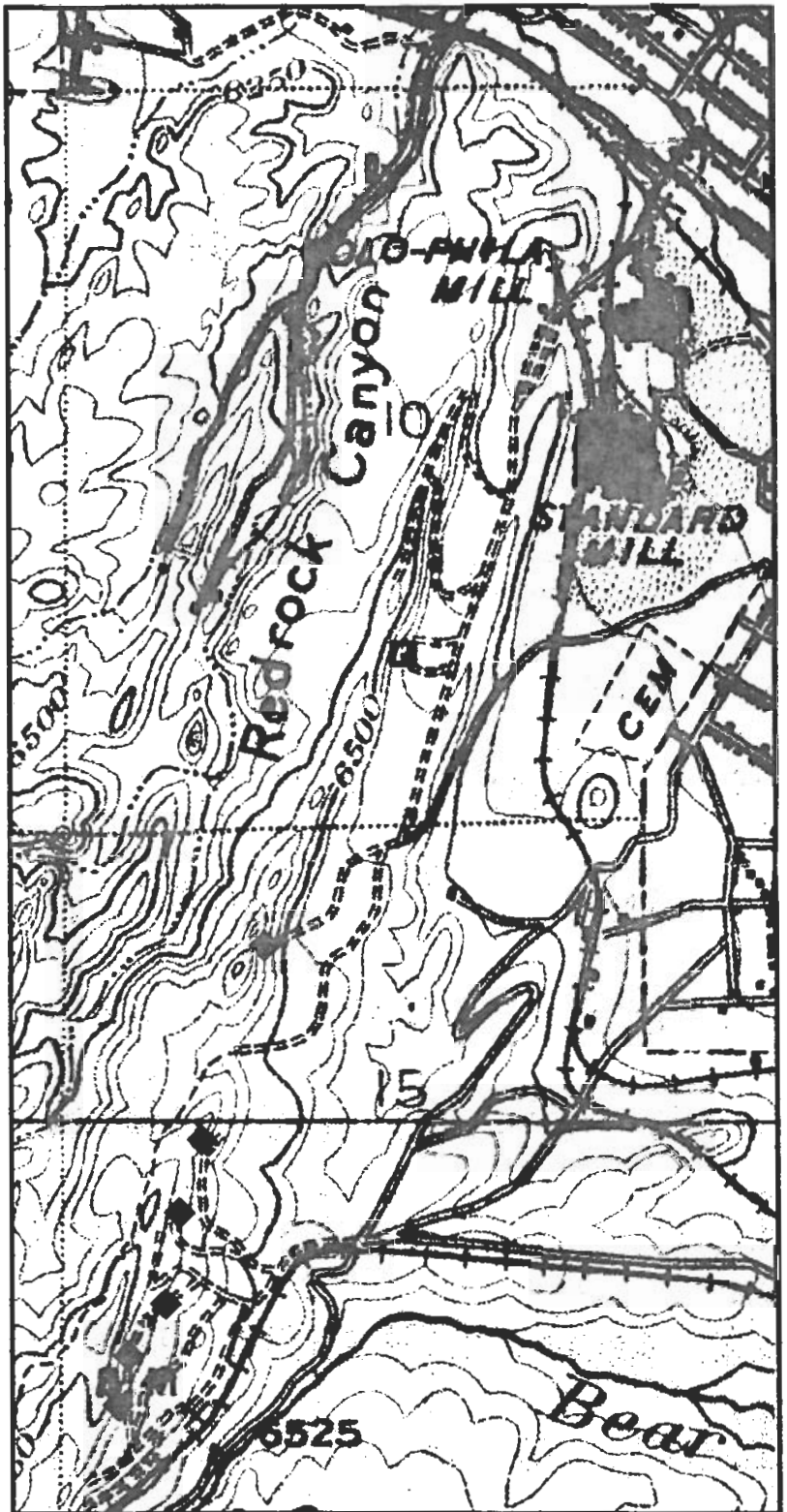
There is one quarry on the hogbacks from which a different stone was taken. This quarry is located between and a short distance west of the Colorado Philadelphia and Standard mill sites. The stone that was quarried there was Niobrara limestone which would have been very poor building material.

The hogbacks quarries present a very interesting and little known chapter in the history of Colorado City which will be explored further in the future, especially with the present interest in preserving the Hogback and Red Rock Canyon areas as open space.

by Don Ellis

Map Caption

Hogbacks area from U. S. Geological Survey "Pikes Peak Special Map", 1909. Dakota sandstone quarry locations have been added as diamonds, underdeveloped quarry site as an open square.



Have YOU Asked a Friend
to Join OCCAS?