West





OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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August 2002

THE DEWIL'S ROPE

by Merv Casey

We all know who Billy the Kid was, and most of us know who Tom Horn was, but if it hadn't been for barbed wire, neither man would have had even a footnote in history. But how many of us know the names Haish, Glidden and Elwood? These three men literally changed the way the west was developed, for they were men born at the right time and lived in the right place and had the gift of insight into the times in which they lived. The three of them are considered the inventors of modern barbed wire. Indeed their inventions brought to an end the era of free-range cattle, influenced the post Civil War expansion into the western plains and in some respects their inventions were instrumental in causing several internal "wars" in western America.

The history of modern barbed wire really starts in De Kalb, Illinois, at the county fair in 1873 when three men looked at an exhibit of Henry Rose's attempt to control a "breachy" cow by attaching wire points to a piece of wood which in turn could be attached to a smooth wire fence. It was crude, but effective. These three residents of De Kalb - Jacob Haish, a lumberman - Isaac Elwood, a merchant - and Joseph Glidden, a farmer examined the exhibit closely and in all three cases a little light bulb popped above their head. This was no small trick considering light bulbs wouldn't be invented for another twenty or so years. So off they scurried back to their homes and that winter all three started experimenting with ways to attach barbs directly to smooth fence wire. A man of invention and vision Joe Glidden used his wife's coffee mill and a big grindstone to set the barbs on

one piece of smooth wire and then twist a second wire around them to secure them in place. While Glidden was working on his fence so were Elwood and Haish and they all were applying for patents. Prior to this surge of patent applications in America a scant half dozen had been applied for with only one of any real note, the Kelly patent of 1868, which was a variation and improvement of a prior patent. Kelly ultimately lost a court battle with Glidden et al and therefore lost his chance at joining the early millionaires club of America.

Elwood, after having taken a look at Glidden's fence, proposed a partnership with him and they formed the Barb Wire Fence Company (BWFC). Haish on the other hand decided to go it alone and the patent wars were on, and were to last for many years to finally be settled by no less than the Supreme Court of the United States, (1892) incidentally after the patents had actually expired and Haish had sold out to the successors of the BWFC. Interference suits were filed on both sides as the importance of barbed wire became evident. All eventually became millionaires but they also spent millions in litigation over the miniscule changes in the way the barbs on the wire were pointed, wrapped, how many wraps and of course where they were placed on the wire. Both sides also patented the machines that made the barbed wire and filed many variations. The BWFC soon sought out and purchased outright or pieces of other patents solidifying their position in the barb wire business. On November 24, 1874 Glidden was awarded patent continued on page 3

Old Colorado City Historical Society 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

WEST WORD

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> WEST WORD Editor c/o OCCHS 1 South 24th Street Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF EACH MONTH

MISSION

he Old Colorado City Historical Society was formed to maintain the memory of plorado City (1859-1917), to encourage research, preserve pictures, and keep ive the unique culture and spirit of West Side Colorado Springs through lucation of children and the community and through the establishment of a story Center.

MEMBERSHIPS

emberships are welcome at any time. Membership renewals are due on the iniversary date of the initial membership. Members receive the West Word wsletter, discounts, local meetings and programs.

nual membership classifications are:

Individual \$20

Family

\$25

Lifetime \$150

Business

\$ 50

Corporate

\$250

inds from a Lifetime membership are placed into a Perpetuity/Endowment Fund be used only for projects which have been approved by two-thirds of the embership. Only the interest will be used for current expenses. We welcome is to this fund, which will be credited to the donor or as a memorial.

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MEETINGS

CHS Monthly Meeting & Program is held at 11 a.m. on the second Friday of ch month, except during June, July, and August. The History Center opens at a.m. on the day of the meeting for refreshments and visitation. The program gins at 11 a.m. This meeting is free and open to the public.

> **Next Monthly Meeting** September 13, 2002 At the History Center



Explore the REAL History at the OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORY CENTER

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number 157124, which was later named "the winner". This wire is considered elemental and the father of all barb wire.

The partnership between Glidden and Elwood was soon joined by Charles Washburn, of Washburn & Moen of Worcester, New Hampshire, where he owned a



Glidden's "The winner"

wire producing plant. He also was a man of vision for he understood that while rock walls and wood fences were fine for the east where they were plentiful the vast plains of the expanding America were for the most part treeless and devoid of a multitude of rocks. Being a wire man he saw that he was obtaining large orders for smooth wire from a burg in northern Illinois so off he went to investigate. He immediately realized that barbing wire could well be the answer to the multiplicity of problems faced by farmers and cattlemen on the open plains. So he bought into the BWFC. With his infusion of money, and industrial might and business acumen the world sat on the threshold of an unprecedented era of expansion and change. But acceptance came slowly at first then became exponential as the turn of the century approached.

At first, both sides in the farmer and cattleman worlds were skeptical and un-accepting of the new fangled product, but for entirely different reasons. The farmers thought it a "northern" scheme to further their interests in the south, while the cattlemen saw it as an attempt to close the open range. In this post Civil War era the west was being flooded with immigrants from other countries as well as easterners who were looking for a chance to have their own land. The cattlemen were trying to hold on to a way of life of the open range and inevitably they would clash, and the clash would come over a barb wire fence. Small skirmishes erupted from time to time but things progressed slowly as more land was put under cultivation and fenced with barb wire. Some fences were meant to keep animals out others to keep them in. Then into the picture stepped a super salesman named John Gates. Seeing that both sides mistrusted the wire he set up an experiment in the middle of San Antonio, Texas, in "76", in the shade of no less an icon than the Alamo. He built a small corral with his barbed wire and invited "ol' Jim, the meanest, nastiest, fence destroyer in the whole state of Texas to have a go at his fence. After several charges at the barrier ol' Jim gave up. The arena was then loaded with a small heard of tough open range longhorns and they too succumbed to the fence. Within days Gates had sold hundreds of miles of wire, pocketed a fortune in

commissions and the fencing of the open range began in earnest, at least in parts of Texas.

Barb wire sales continued to grow and from 1874 production jumped from 10,000 pounds to 80,500,000 pounds in 1880. In the mean time Gates returned to De Kalb to renegotiate his contract with the company. They turned his demands down. History tells us this was a grave mistake but then hindsight is always pretty good. Gates quit, moved to St. Louis and went into bootleg competition with the Company, now known as Washburn & Moen and I.L. Elwood. Over the years Gates set up, and encouraged others to set up, dozens of companies know as "moonshines" and produced god only knows how much barb wire in direct competition with the Company using slight variations of the patents they owned and the Haish

patent still in litigation. Thus the moonshiners didn't have to pay license fees and could undercut the cost of the legitimate sellers. In the mean time Jacob Haish continued to make his "S" patent barb wire (patent # 167240, August



Haish "S" barb

31st 1875) and pursue his suit against the Company. But in July of 1881 the two groups came to agreement and the barb wire world was now in the hands of the Company. The moonshiners were brought under control by the courts and again Gates moved on to greener pastures. Ironically Gates later bought several companies including American Steel and Wire Company, which in turn bought out Moen and company, which turned into United States Steel Corporation. Haish in turn invested wisely and designated some of the earnings from his barb wire to help the Colorado Seminary that is now the University of Denver. Glidden retired from the business early and became a wealthy man. He puttered about De Kalb enjoying his retirement and money. Ellwood invested in the stock market, joined Gates in several ventures and died a wealthy, happy man.

As to Billy the Kid and Tom Horn? In the late 1880's the proliferation of fences put up by both sides, that being the nesters and the cattle barons, became problematic. Much of the land being used by the big cattle kings was in actuality public lands that they didn't own, only used. When the farmers started claiming this land and fencing it in with barb wire tensions became high. They finally boiled over in 1878 in Lincoln County, New Mexico. John Chisholm, of the Chisholm Trail fame continued on page 6

WESTSIDE MEMORIES compiled by Jan Knox

One Hundred +Years Ago December 1901

Colorado City is to have a board of trade, on which various kinds of stocks will be dealt in. The promoters of the scheme have tried to keep the matter quiet until they should be ready to open up but it leaked out yesterday. The board of trade is to occupy the room just east of the Hoffman house. This room has been fitted up for the purpose and it is said that the board will be opened in a short time. The names of those connected with the new institution are not announced, but that it is to be established is authoritatively state. *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 12/6/1901

Colorado City oil enthusiasts are watching developments at the Portland mill very closely. Almost every day, a Colorado City business man goes to the well to watch the work. The Portland people have now bored 225 feet into the earth and are still boring. Shales has been encountered in large quantities, but so far no further indications of oil have been discovered. Those who are putting down the well, however, feel sure they will strike oil and certainly the surface indications point to oil under the site of the mill. If the Portland people strike oil, there is considerable Colorado City money ready to put into wells and the city will experience an oil excitement which will compare favorable with the Beaumont, Tex. excitement. There are those in this city who have long believed that Colorado City was above a big oil basin and prospecting several years ago seems to justify this belief. Eight years ago, the Colorado City Oil company, opened up a gas shoot and executed a flame of 40 feet in height, but the work of sinking deeper to discover oil was not carried out. Colorado Springs Gazette 12/11/1901

A new dramatic company has been formed in Colorado City to take the place of the Hickman-Bennet company, there having been some difficulty with respect to the old management, and in the new organization all the members will have an interest. The new company is to be known as the Colorado Dramatic Stock company and have planned to give one or two plays every month in the new Waycott building as the stage there is of very good size and well equipped with modern accessories. Next Wednesday evening, December 18, the company will present a melodrama under the title "Crawford's Claim." The play is an admirable presentation of a mining camp tale, and in the hands of this company of clever young people from Colorado City and Colorado Springs will no doubt attract a large house. The admission charge for adults will be 35 cents, and for children 25 cents. Colorado Springs Gazette 12/12/1901

An appeal is being made by the Colorado City Missionary society for aid in their work, as there is need of clothing with which to aid struggling families who feel the pressure of want. Those who can do so are requested to donate service-

able, second-hand clothing for this purpose. Shoes and garments for children are especially desirable. Contributions will be called for if a card of notification is sent to Miss H. J. Handyside, Colorado City. *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 12/12/1901

A death which is followed by sad conditions occurred in this city at 12:30 yesterday afternoon. Frank Shaw, a hot tamale vendor, well known to the residents of the city, died suddenly at his home just south of the Midland depot and a widow and six children are left in destitute circumstances. Shaw's death was so sudden as to cause Coroner Law to start an investigation. He was unable to find anything pointing to a reason for suicide nor any indication of what caused death. Shaw was 29 years old. The family is practically without the ordinary necessities of life but kind-hearted citizens took the matter up and will take care of the bereaved family for the time being. Colorado Springs Gazette 12/15/1901

The first day of the art exhibit at the Whittier school closed Saturday night. The intense cold kept many from attending and the exhibit will be kept open this afternoon and evening to allow the patrons of the school an opportunity to see the very beautiful display. There will be no charge or admission. Each room has an individual scheme of decoration, which has been carried out almost to perfection, forming a charming setting for the many statues, paintings and other works of art on sale. Candy is sold in the halls. Teachers and pupils have put much time and effort into decoration of each room and it is hoped that all the parents and friends of the school will contribute toward the success of the exhibit by attending this afternoon and evening. *Colorado Springs Gazette* 12/16/1901

Thousands of Colorado Springs people took advantage of the beautiful day and firm ice to enjoy a skate on Prospect lake yesterday afternoon. For the first time in seven years at this season, Prospect lake is one solid sheet of ice, without an air hole in it. It is thick enough to support an army and there was a small sized army on it yesterday. It is estimated by those in charge of the lake that over 4,000 people were skating on it during the day. There were over 2,000 on it at one time. The ice was as smooth as glass and better skating was never known in the city. The small fee, 10 cents, charged for the privileges of this big ice sheet makes the great winter sport in all its glory a matter of a mere trifle. The other ponds in and about the city had their share of skaters yesterday and, all told, there were probably 5,000 people sliding about on steel during the day. The weather was temperate enough to make the sport enjoyable for all. Colorado Springs Gazette 12/16/1901

Rev. Duncan Lamont of the Mt. Olive Baptist church of Denver, has been called to the pulpit of the First Baptist church of this city to succeed Rev. W. E. Powell, who recently resigned.

continued on page 8

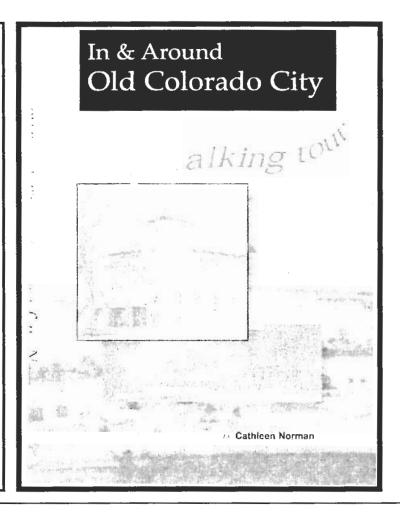
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WEST WORD

Every community has a story to tell, and what better way than through its architecture. Old Colorado City's historic buildings and neighborhoods reveal its rich heritage. Colorado City began as the earliest permanent settlement in the Pikes Peak Region. The town briefly served as the territorial capital and as a gateway to the gold and silver mining regions in Colorado's Rocky Mountains. During the 1890s Cripple Creek gold mining boom, it became an important railroad hub and milling center. Colorado City was annexed as a suburb of Colorado Springs in 1917, but still celebrates its colorful and lively past. This portable, easy-to-read guide takes you on tours through Old Colorado City. A walk through the area's historic commercial district and the neighborhood residences shows how the city began and how it grew. In and Around Old Colorado City is published by the Old Colorado City Historical Society.

Taken from by back cover of the book

Get your copy at the OCCHS bookstore at 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904



Treasurer's Report

Through June, 2002 we are still in good financial shape - still on course to making a slight surplus by the end of the year - probably less than \$1,000 over where we started in January.

Most of our activities are bringing in less than they did during corresponding periods last year. The drop in tourism from the Fires, the lingering uneasiness over 9/11, the very hot summer, has diminished visits to our center, and buying in the park, cabin, and at other events. Book store sales were only \$255 in June, and we had one \$299 wholesale order for our Guide Book. Slow month.

Our efforts with a volunteer booth on the Avenue dur-

ing Territory Days, combined with Bake Sales in the Cabin netted us almost exactly \$1,000. The Baked goods brought in \$350! We can probably do better in future years as we gain experience on how to sell to the 100,000 people who walk past all the tent booths all three days.

Our Endowment stood at \$64,091, and we had cash in the bank of \$25,999 as of the end of June, 2002. Starting July 15th we will incur costs of \$1,000 a month for our new Archivist, who can complete the pile of work started years ago by our paid and unpaid staff. Dr Olsen will help us greatly make our Society and its historical artifacts and paper holdings quite professional, and in accordance with national archive standards. Quite an accomplishment for such a lil old Society and Museum.

We continue in sound fiscal shape.

Dave Hughes Treasurer and as portrayed by John Wayne in later days, had fenced much of the public lands to the disgruntlement of the nesters and small ranchers. Everybody started cutting fences and soon the Kid had a job killing people, and all over the barb wire fences in the area. The same was true in Johnson County Wyoming only a decade later and with a different set of players. The Wyoming Stock Growers Association became disenchanted with the fences and rustlers in the area, so one bright summer morning they rode out to a local ranch and hanged a couple of suspected fence-cutter/rustlers. With the death at the end of a hemp rope for Cattle Kate and her companion Jim Averill the fracas known as the Johnson County War was on. The association supposedly hired Tom Horn to rid the country side of rustlers and fence cutters, which he did.

These so called range wars were fought for a multiplicity of reasons. But it boils down to just a couple of good ones. The west was changing, transportation was becoming the watch word, roads were being built across the land, railroads were moving west as were the farmers and everybody wanted access across the land. Fences prohibited this movement and it became unacceptable. As a sign of the changing times some farmers fenced the land in, some cattle barons fenced the land out.

Vast amounts of public lands had been placed in private ownership by the government through the homestead act (s). These parcels were small 320-640 acres were the average size. Whether it was pride in ownership or a desire to keep people and other animals off of their land is problematic. Be that as it may, millions of miles of barb wire fences have been strung across the west since 1874 and for that matter are still being replaced or new wire is being put up. In all there have been some 364 patents granted for barb wire as of 1958. It is estimated that the actual number of different types of barb wire exceeds 400. Obviously not all patented.

I have personally found barb wire here in El Paso County that is over a hundred years old.

The newest display at the History Center is, what else, barb wire. Come by and see it. Barb wire changed America, it found its way into every town, across every pasture, in people's back yards and yes, if you just wander around Old Colorado City you will still find barb wire fences, some undoubtedly older than the oldest citizen of the region.

From the Bookstore

By Agnes Johnson

As a sequel to his earlier book, <u>I Never Knew that About Colorado</u>, Abbott Fay has gathered more interesting tales in his new book, <u>More that I Never Knew About Colo-</u>



<u>rado</u>. He has divided the stories into seven categories which are: about interesting people, about arts, music entertainment and athletics, about interesting places, about questionable behavior and outright lawlessness, about disastrous events, about the Queen City, and about this and that. Most of the tales in the 164-page book are only one page long. I have selected one episode from each category that hopefully will give the reader some insight as to the contests and perhaps encourage his to buy the book.

While working at New York University Medical College, Dr. Isaac Davis discovered that he had tuberculosis. As Colorado was noted for cures, he arrived in Manitou Springs in 1871. In a brief time with the sun, rest and the mineral waters, he recovered his health. Because he wished to help others who were ill, he dispensed patent drugs. This led to his opening the first drug store in town to fill his own prescriptions. He became the coroner to certify deaths. He was also a mortician, embalmer, and sold caskets. The burial location was on his property. After he sold the site he supervised the reburials to Crystal Valley Cemetery. He attempted to mummify a drunk by the name of Tom O' Neal. He salted the body heavily and put it out in the sun in front of his pharmacy. When the doctor died someone stole the dummy and displayed Tom as a petrified Indian!

How many of you remember the Koshare Indian dancers? James Frances "Buck" Burshears became engrossed in the study of Indian traditions while in college. He learned under many knowledgeable people. He moved to La Junta where he graduated from high school. When he became a scoutmaster of troop 10 in La Junta he formed the "Koshare Indians". According to the author, Koshare means fun-maker. The troop studied American Indian lore and learned the dances. Each person made their own costumes and supplied their props based on the authenticity of their research. He worked for sixty five years with the Boy Scouts of America and troop 10 became the model of over 500 Eagle ranks given during the years of his leadership. Even native tribal leaders came to study their lost traditions. The Koshare Kiva was his life long work and it has a renowned collection of art worth millions. It is a popular place for visitors to view. He received presidential citations for his work. His admonition to thousands of Scouts was, "don't wait to become a great man, be a great boy". He died in 1987.

There is a unique story on page 72 called "Frivolity in the graveyard". The only remaining grave in the Ruby-Irwin Cemetery is that of Mary Bronbraugh. She died in 1881 from diphtheria. She was seventeen. She was to have been married continued on page 7

in four days. Her epithet is in the form of a poem. However, the response to her message, left by someone unknown, wonders which way she went.

In" An Exciting Sunday School Hike", a Sunday school class gathered in Manitou Springs around Williams Canyon. In hunting for some of the members who had strayed from the group, they found the strays near an entrance to a cave. Using their candles they entered the cave and upon further penetration discovered a room with strange formations Pushing on they found a larger room with even more and different structures. They had discovered what is now known as the Cave of the Winds. Of course, others also claimed to be the first to discover the caves.

In the "Leadville first" an investigative reporter by the name of Orth Stein interviewed the physicians of the city. Some certificates came from non-existing schools and others with fraudulent claims. As a result many "doctors" left town.

His most significant story was his discovery of the divorced wife of the man who killed President Garfield. He became a national figure from stories of his interviews with her. To keep the notoriety, he told stories of the huge serpent in Twin Lakes; of a skeleton with a collar around his neck and food just out of reach. He escaped a murder charge and stole his mother's jewelry. He fled to New Orleans, contracted TB and died there.

Ever wonder why there's a run-away truck ramp on Monarch Pass? A school bus with 48 people and the Gunnison Jr. High School football team were on their way to play a game in Salida. At the summit the driver attempted to shift gears and apply the brakes. Nothing worked. The driver somehow got as far as Garfield when he lost control and the bus rolled 2 ½ times. Thirty-nine people were tossed from the bus. The coach and eight players were killed and most occupants sustained injuries some critical. This tragedy led to a federal investigation and as a result many improvements were made in the construction and safety features to make buses safer. On that stretch of the road alone 111 accidents occurred and five deaths were added to the bus rollover.

In 1943 one of Denver's councilmen was able to pass an ordinance making squirrels a public nuisance. If one saw a squirrel committing a crime, one called the police. How many innocent squirrels were killed? This ordinance remained on the books until 1956. The mid-block traffic lights that were installed were known as squirrel crossings.

A horse named Elijah was stranded in the winter about timberline. All efforts to reach him failed. Therefore, pilots dropped food for him and he survived the winter. Hence the name Elijah, the prophet, who was kept alive by God sending ravens to save him from starvation. The horse survived and once again became a saddle horse at Mt. Princeton and Mt. Yale but he never liked women in slacks or automobiles.

There are so many more interesting, informative and amusing stories in this book, I'm sure you would enjoy it.



Events Coordinator's Corner

"Old Fashioned Saturday in the Park" was held June 29th in Bancroft Park. Snow Cones & Popcorn were sold as well as Lunches & tickets for An Old Fashioned Cake Walk & Raffle. Entertainment was provided by the local African Drumming group. Thanks to all the volunteers who showed up to help out! We especially thank the Colorado Springs Conservatory who volunteered 2 young ladies! Even with conflicting activities such as the Pikes Peak Hill Climb, the event earned a small profit (\$38). So thanks for coming out and supporting your History Center!! Donations were received from King Sooper, Safeway, Walmart & Sams for purchase of sodas & waters (we have a nice stock for Founders Day use). Special Thanks for the many Cakes Donated by our Members for the Old Fashioned Cake Walk! Local merchants donated their "Saturday in the Park" as well as the gifts for use in the Raffle.

Founders Day August 10th & 11th

Jan Knox has once again organized a great Founders Day schedule. Crafts will be for sale in the park, local entertainment groups & More! Come celebrate Founders Day in Bancroft Park Saturday & Sunday and remember to say "Yes" when Bev calls for volunteers!

> Cemetery Crawl September 7th & 8th! Be sure and mark your calendar!

President's Message

We are excited about welcoming our new archivist, Dr. Michael Olsen, who taught Western History for 31 years at New Mexico Highlands University. He was the first archivist the University had in 101 years.

He has many short and long term goals regarding the development of the archives for our Society. The goals will form the basis of his work plan for the next year. Mainly, he wants to make our documents and photos more accessible to researchers and the public.

He is already hard at work organizing and sorting things in our computer room and our library. Welcome, Mike, we are delighted to have you with us. Come in and greet him as he will be here from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM most days for a while.

Beverley Disch,

President of Old Colorado City Historical Society

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The call is unanimous but it is not known whether Mr. Lamont will accept or not. Mr. Lamont is one of the promising young ministers of the Baptist denomination in Colorado. He has been pastor of Mt. Olive church in Denver for about three years and has been very successful in that field. He was called to this city at a meeting of the congregation after church Sunday morning. *Colorado Springs Gazette* 12/18/1901

The trouble which has been brewing among the stockholders and more particularly the directors of the Citizens State bank is at last settled. John T. McDowell, the cashier of the bank, who controlled the majority of the stock, has sold out to the interests represented by M. T. Burwell, the president, and that gentleman is now in control. The transfer has been made and Mr. McDowell is out of the bank. New blood has come into the board of directors, but it could not be learned yesterday who the parties are. The idea of a national bank for Colorado City has been exploded by Mr. Burwell. He opposed the Kansas gentlemen who tried to get into the bank to turn it into a national bank, it is said, because he could not get the control of the stock. Mr. Burwell succeeded in keeping the Kansas men out side, but could not get the control himself. John T. McDowell had the control and an effort was being made to oust Burwell from the head of the institution.

This plan was succeeding until Mr. Burwell induced some of his friends to interest themselves in this bank and got them to buy out Mr. McDowell. The bank will continue as the Citizens State bank. The transfer has been made and the new parties are now in control with Mr. Burwell at the head of the institution. This settles the trouble which has been on ever since the national bank idea was first promulgated. One of the reasons Mr. McDowell sold out was his health, which is failing under the heavy strain of business. *Colorado Springs Gazette* 12/19/1901

CELEBRATE OLD COLORADO CITY'S 143rd BIRTHDAY
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SATURDAY, AUGUST 10rd: 8 A.M. - 4 P.M.
SUNDAY, AUGUST 11rd: 10 A.M. - 4 P.M.

Cemetery Crawl September 7th & 8th!