

WEST



WORD

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 11

November 2002

A TRUE ORIGINAL

John G. Bock

As a young man, John G. Bock came to Colorado from Philadelphia in 1907 with the hope of finding relatives with whom the family had lost contact.

His first Colorado adventure came just after his train left Limon on its way to Colorado Springs. The locomotive boiler exploded killing the engineer and fireman.

John didn't know where to look for his lost kinfolk, or even their names. But, he did know Charles Evans, a Philadelphia man who had become assistant manager of the Holly Sugar Company at Swink. In fact, John had saved Mr. Evans' two sons from drowning when Mr. Evans lived in Philadelphia.

So, John took the train from Colorado Springs to Rocky Ford and got a job weighing sugar beets.

In 1907 much of the land in southeastern Colorado was government owned and open to homesteading, but unclaimed because of the dry summers and harsh winters. So, it had remained open range ... free range. For decades, one of the largest free-range cattle operations in the region had been the JJ Ranch which had its headquarters 21 miles south of La Junta. By late summer, 1907, 18 year old John G. Bock had quit his job weighing sugar beets and trudged down the road to the JJ Ranch, still with some hope of finding his kinfolk. He got a job at the JJ helping with a chuck wagon. The other JJ cowboys called him "Philadelphia".

When Philadelphia had been with the JJ Ranch a little over a year, the JJ cowboys went into La Junta for a "big blowout" after they finished loading their cattle into railroad cars at the stockyards west of town. When the cowboys had drunk their fill, they drifted back to camp. Philadelphia got into a rough fight with Tex. Tex rode back to the ranch to quit; and Philadelphia, too, soon left, leaving behind the land and the people he had come to love.

He had become infatuated with a girl at the ranch and was seeking the fortune, which would help him woo her.

He went to New York and found it so lonesome.

At the start of 1909 he took the steamship Creole from New

tonio and from San Antonio to Phoenix, seeking his fortune ever closer to Colorado where he wanted to be.

After he'd worked several months around Phoenix, Philadelphia had saved money to buy a pair of pack mules. And, in June 1909 he and his mules headed off into the Arizona desert and mountains to prospect for gold. Each day, he believed that the next day he would strike it rich. But as the weeks passed he lost faith in his imagined fortune. So, he headed north to Colorado to work at the JJ Ranch again.

Philadelphia had his eye on a place called Richard Canyon where he thought he might like to live. On November 23, 1910 he filed a homestead claim.

Homesteaders took land that had been free range. For that reason, they weren't regarded very kindly by the JJ outfit which called them "nesters". Philadelphia was immediately given his pay and discharged.

The first year on the homestead was a hard one. Then, things improved some when Philadelphia got some money and was able to buy some cattle. However, having cattle didn't improve his relation with his former employer, the JJ Ranch, which sent a couple of hired gunslingers to pay him a visit.

When the U. S. entered World War I, Philadelphia became a "draft evader". Finally, he was conscripted into the army in handcuffs and sent to the front lines. In the fall of 1918 he was wounded in the battle of St. Mihiel and was hospitalized for six months. Twenty-nine years later he was awarded the Purple Heart.

On May 10, 1919, Philadelphia was discharged from the army with exactly one year of service. Fortunately, Tom Tate had taken care of the homestead while Philadelphia was away. So, when Philadelphia returned the place was just like it had been when he left. But, it seemed very lonely.

Then, at the Fourth of July dance at the schoolhouse, Philadelphia met the girl he would marry. She was the daughter of "nesters" who had come from Kentucky. Her name was Sylvia. They were married on September 12, 1919 and lived on

continued on page 3

York to New Orleans. From New Orleans he moved to San An-

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

WEST WORD

PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH BY
THE OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
A NONPROFIT CORPORATION
©2002 OCCHS

LETTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS, ARTIFACTS AND STORIES CAN BE DELIVERED
TO THE OCCHS CENTER OR MAILED TO:

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

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF EACH MONTH

MISSION

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

MEMBERSHIPS

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

Annual membership classifications are:

Individual	\$20	Business	\$ 50
Family	\$25	Lifetime	\$150
		Corporate	\$250

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Beverly Disch	719-634-5023
Vice President	LaRue Ebersole	719-685-3265
Secretary	Jo Cervone	719-266-9096
Treasurer	David Hughes	719-636-2040
	Cynthia Estes	719-632-9124
	Nadine Gilman	719-262-6661
	Pat Fejedelem	719-473-8684
	Kristine Van Wert	719-630-2155
	Tom Hendrix	719-633-7382

MEETINGS

OCCHS Monthly Meeting & Program is held at 11 a.m. on the second Friday of each month, except during June, July, and August. The History Center opens at 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting for refreshments and visitation. The program begins at 11 a.m. This meeting is free and open to the public.

Next Monthly Meeting
November 8, 2002
At the History Center



Explore the REAL History at the **OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORY CENTER**

1 South 24th Street
(the corner of Pikes Peak & 24th Streets)
(719) 636-1225

FREE ADMISSION

Winter Hours
(September – May)

TUES – SAT 11 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
SUN 1:30 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
Closed Monday

Visit our web site for even more history!

<http://history.oldcolo.com>

stories documents
manuscript photographs
interviews biographies
Book & Gift Shop online

e-mail us at: history@oldcolo.com

Philadelphia's homestead where they built a 4 room stone house, a barn and a corral.

On April 19, 1921 Sylvia Bock gave birth to a son who was named John. A second son, Richard, was born on the homestead July 21, 1923.

Before Richard was born, his father was diagnosed with tuberculosis and realized that he would need to give up ranching. He sold his livestock to Jim Hagen who had been a wagon boss for the JJ and leased the property to Jim for 5 years. Philadelphia bought a new Ford from Tom Tate; and the Bock family drove north toward their new life in Colorado Springs.

John G. Bock had traded cattle and horses. He thought he could trade real estate. He got a correspondence school diploma in real estate and went into the real estate business with D. V. Pruitt.

Mr. Bock purchased property at 3164 W. Colorado Avenue and built a tourist camp called the "Roundup Tourist Camp". Then, he bought property across the road at 3165 W. Colorado Avenue where he operated a spotted pony riding stables called the "Roundup Saddle Stables".

He bought the old City Hall of Colorado City which he used as a historical museum for several years. And, he bought property the other side of 26th. Street which had been the "red light district". For a number of years, the Bock family made their home in the building which had been Laura Belle's "house" at 2612 W. Cucharas.

Mr. Bock leased property south of the Roundup Saddle Stables from the quarry owners so that he could use Red Rock Canyon for pony rides and pasture.

As property in the Red Rock Canyon area became available, Mr. Bock purchased it. His first purchase of Red Rock Canyon land was a 72 acre Gypsum Canyon parcel which he bought from Hattie Stewart for \$3 per acre. He bought 129 acres which had belonged to the Greenlee Stone Company for \$1,300, 45 acres that had belonged to Earth Products Company for \$500, 40 acres that had once belonged to the Colorado Stone Company for \$500, 200 acres that belonged to the Union Land and Cattle Company for \$4,000, the 87 acre Swope property for back taxes, and so on.

By 1938 John and Sylvia Bock owned most of the private land in Red Rock Canyon, Greenlee (Wild Horse) Canyon, Sand Canyon, and Gypsum Canyon, as well as a large part of the hog-backs, about 650 acres.

In the Spring of 1938, the Bock family took a vacation trip to the area where John and Sylvia had made their first home together. They found a sign on the gate of the old JJ Ranch which said "For Sale. Denver Joint Bank, Denver, Colorado." The buildings were falling down; the big trees were gone; tenants occupied what was left of the ranch; and the bank held close to \$ 20,000 in mortgages against the property.

After getting backing from his friend Spencer Penrose and

continued on page 7

FROM THE OCCHS ARCHIVES

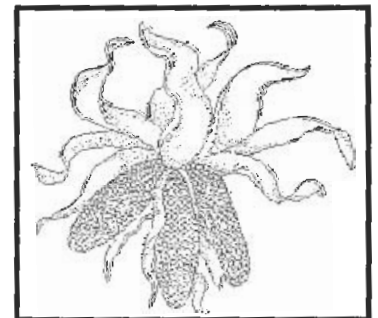
The oldest map known to historians dates from about 2000 BC. It depicts a farm field in ancient Mesopotamia. While none of the maps in the archives of the Old Colorado City Historical Society are quite that old, the Society does have many important, and in some cases rare, maps in its collection.

These maps convey various aspects of the history of Colorado and Old Colorado City. For example, the development of tourism can be traced. An intrepid automobilist early in the last century might have consulted "Main Roads in Colorado Now Open to Travel," published by the Colorado State Highway Department in 1911, or "Clason's Guide Map of Colorado," issued by the Clason Map Company of Denver in 1916. It shows both "Transcontinental Roads" and "Local Roads." Some of the former included the "Omaha-Denver Road," the "Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Golden Belt Route," and the "Santa Fe Trail." Then, within a few years those oil company road maps we have all used became available, such as the "Auto Trails Map, State of Colorado, 1921" given out by the Continental Oil Company (Conoco), which also is in the Society's collection.

Some of the most interesting original maps in the archives detail Colorado's mining history. These include a stunning, large "Bird's Eye View of Cripple Creek" and maps of the "Gunnison Gold Belt, 1896" and the "San Juan Mining Region, 1891." The regional railroad heritage is represented by copies of a "Map of the Yards, Shops, Etc., Colorado Midland Ry., Colorado City, February 1900," and the "Colorado Midland Railway, April 1913." There also is a full color map of Colorado Railroads in 1943, among others.

All of the nearly 200 maps in the Society's archives are catalogued and computer "keyword searchable." For the true map aficionado, there is even a 1946 map showing "Colorado Springs Parking Meter Numbers." Remember that ticket you got? Now you can pinpoint exactly where you were parked.

Mike Olsen
Archivist



WESTSIDE MEMORIES

compiled by Jan Knox

One Hundred Years Ago
(Colorado Springs Gazette)
 October 1902

From present indications it is likely that the preliminary work on the erection of the buildings for the Colorado Steel Castings company will be begun much sooner than has been anticipated. Mr. Sanger, of the Colorado Title & Trust company, and one of the directors is now in St. Louis, inspecting the steel plants of that city, and Mr. Springer left last night for Chicago where he will meet Mr. Sanger Tuesday. The two will spend several days in Chicago and Cincinnati getting details from several different plants, and on their return in about 10 days, it is expected that work on the new factory will be at once begun. 10/12

The matter of street crossings at the corner of Colorado avenue and Fifth street has been discussed in several recent meetings of the city council, but no definite action has as yet been taken. The chief difficulty so far has been to obtain a material that will withstand the heavy hauling that is a common feature of Colorado avenue traffic. It is very likely, however, the crossings will soon be put in, either of vitrified brick or cement. The great improvement made by the new walks on either side of Colorado avenue, has made very obvious, the necessity for suitable crossings. 10/12

A. J. Radebaugh will begin work tomorrow on the new cold storage building to be erected by the Coors Brewing company of Golden, opposite the H. & R. G. depot. The building will be of brick and will cost about \$1,800. 10/12

Considerable local interest is being taken in the coming lunar eclipse, which is schedule to take place on the night of October 16 at 9 p.m. The eclipse will be plainly visible from this city if it is a clear night and preparations are being made by local scientists to observe it. The eclipse will last for about an hour and a half. The eclipse will be important from an astronomical standpoint, although most laymen will observe it simply as a good show. 10/14

Probably the most novel system of getting hold of voters ever introduced in Colorado politics will be commenced on a considerable scale this week. It was inaugurated last week by Sheriff W. R. Gilbert and the effect was so good that it was decided to make the system general throughout the city. The plan is to hold meetings at the private residences of the workers, getting the prominent and active people in the surrounding precincts together, and talk over the situation. The primary idea is to foster registration, the meetings being to secure volunteers to work and get out the voters and have them registered. One meeting was also held at the home of Chairman R. L. Chambers last week and was well attended. The meetings are in a way a social gathering and in addition to talking politics, a general social time is enjoyed. It is altogether a new and unique way of getting at voters, but that it is certain to be successful was shown by the increased registration after the meetings at Mr. Gilbert's and Mr. Chambers'. There are now about 8,000 names on the registration books and the indications are that during the next seven days several thousand more will be put on. The total vote cast at the last city election was 8,067 and in the county 10,021. There is every indication that the vote this year will be fully as large. Both parties will make strenuous efforts to get every unregistered voter in the county to Temple theater during this week. 10/14

The school board met last night at the Longfellow building for the purpose of paying off the several amounts still due to the contractors who had in charge the construction of the new buildings. The larger part of the payments had already been made, the entire amount, including the last payments, which were made last night, being as follows: To John Neiswinter, \$17,500, to A. J. Radebagh, \$12,075; to J. Dillen, \$1,300; to H. W. Davis & Co., \$5,200 10.17

The work of putting in the new cement walks, ordered by the city council, is still going forward, and it will not be long until the work is completed on both sides of Colorado avenue from First street to

Eleventh. The Artificial Granite company, whose factory is at the Ninth street corner, is doing the greater part of the work, and is at present laying the sidewalk in front of Mr. Jackson's new block at Sixth street. 10/17

Bills of exception were yesterday filed in the district court in the cases of the Crissey-Fowler Lumber company et al, the Sun and seven insurance companies and the British-American Assurance company vs. The Denver & Rio Grade Railroad company. These are the famous cases originating from the fire of four years ago which destroyed the Antlers hotel and much other property. The court recently permitted the plaintiffs to file amended or supplemental complaints and the defendant took exceptions, being allowed a specified time to file the fills of exception, which was done yesterday. 10/19

Regardless of the fact that business has been unusually quiet for the past two or three weeks, there is a confident expression on the part of the leading business men, that Colorado City is now entering upon one of its greatest eras of commercial activity. There seems to be now but very little question that the Colorado Steel Castings company will soon begin work on the erection of their plant, Mr. Springer and several of the directors of the com-

pany being expected early this week from the east, where they have been inspecting numerous steel plants. It is stated on good authority, that the old Colorado slant of the United States Reduction company which has been running its crushers now for some time, on account of the surplus of ore, will be running full force by the first of the month. The Telluride mill has also broken ground for its new 150-ton addition, and expects to have the work completed by the first of the year. All signs, in fact, point to a speedy revival of business and real estate activity in Colorado City. 10/19

Mrs. Lena K. Boss of the Whittier school, entertained a number of her friends at the residence of F. F. Schreiber Friday evening. Ping-pong was enjoyed and refreshments were served by the hostess. Those present were Misses Kinney, Roswell, Long, Bridges, Sawhill, Keiser, Keiso, Field, Lucas, Adams and Franks, and Messrs. Grafton, Heinly and Dr. Morrison and R. E. and Ed Johnson. A delightful time is reported. 10/19

Center Has New Computer

Our faithful old NT computer, which has had tens of thousands of accesses to our History Web Site, and helped out in our many office tasks is finally showing its age. You would too if you were turned on 24 hours a day for the past 5 years!

Well its been replaced and upgraded. Using the \$3,000 the Board authorized for the purchase of a new computer and its professional installation as a web and network server, with the systematic transfer of our entire web site and hundreds of key files from the old one to the new one, while upgrading things, we bought a powerful Dell Windows 2000 machine set up as a server. And we retained the services of Paul Fong, a highly qualified computer and networking expert, to spend the many hours day and evening to accomplish the myriad technically tasks it took after thoroughly researching the subjects. Going from one operating system to another is very tricky.

We also were able to buy a new, better, and lot's cheaper scanner, which can even scan color slides into graphic images. And

upgrade our two older workstations.

As soon as we can upgrade FileMaker Pro to a high enough version, we can also reinstall our accession's data base and continue documenting all our Society's holdings. We can then move the old computer to the main exhibit room for patron use and replace the laptop there which finally died of old age.

For you geeks the new system has a 1Gb speed processor, 512k of Ram, two 80Gb hard drives, and two Ethernet ports.

So your society, once again is 'state of the art' technologically, still connected to the Internet at high speed wirelessly at T-1 speed, free. And can do even more things in the future. So point your web browser at <http://history.oldcolo.com> and see its improved performance. And think of what we should do next. I'm already experimenting with Bluetooth wireless so patrons carrying hand held Palm computers can get in-depth information about each exhibit while standing in front of the display. Eat your heart out, Pioneer's Museum!

Dave Hughes, treasurer

From the Bookstore

By Agnes Johnson



Did you know there's a town in Colorado called Platoro? I never heard the name until I saw a book by Leland Feitz with the name on the cover. He titled the book, **"Platoro, Colorado, A Quick History, Mining Camp and Resort Town."**

I think most people know where Summitville mine is located. A 1917 map shows the mining district of Platoro. Summitville, Platoro is 50 miles west from Monte Vista, 65 from Alamosa, and 48 miles from LaJara.

In 1880 gold and silver were both discovered near the headwaters of the Conejos River. Below the mines were meadows and it was in this location that the town of Platoro was founded, mainly as a place for miners who worked at Summitville. According to Leland the name formed by two Spanish words: Plato for silver, and oro for gold. It lies at 9,000 feet. At the beginning Platoro had a few log houses, shacks, bars and gambling halls. A mercantile store during the day became a Saturday night dance hall. When a road from Del Norte to Summitville was completed, Platoro was not quite so isolated though the ores were still carried 40 miles by burro. When the first ore arrived at Del Norte and it became known that the ore was valuable a rush of miners flooded the area. Many mines were opened and started to yield silver and gold. The largest of these was called Mammoth because the ore veins were so huge. Although most ores were carried out by burros read the story about O.C. LaDice who decided to walk out with his ore in a leather pouch.

The population reached around 300 by 1900 with a few boarding houses, a livery stable, a blacksmith shop, and barbershop. However most miners lived in tents or shacks. By 1906 with the Mammoth closed Platoro was almost a 'ghost town'.

The revival began in 1912 as gold was found in the Gilmore Mine on Klondike Mountain. The ore was the same type as that found in Cripple Creek. Hundreds again came. The photo at the top of page 8 shows the town in 1913. Platoro boasts a doctor a one-room hospital, old stores opened again; there was regular mail service and a new Post Office. A new tall road into Conejos Canyon to Jasper and Stunner made it easier to come to Platoro. Even so it was costly to bring goods into Platoro and made it very expensive to live there. The prices quoted by Leland sound cheap by today's grocery prices. The author states, "a man could get a good meal for twenty-five cents."

On July 4th, 1913 Platoro had a "red letter day." People came to celebrate from the San Luis Valley as well as all the mines. There was a parade, horse race, ball game and \$1,000 in prizes. It ended with a big dance and fireworks. Alas, the ore played out and once again Platoro became a 'ghost town.'

There was one asset that didn't go away from Platoro. With the Conejos River running through the northern part of town, men as early as 1900 came to fish. No limit was imposed then as the photo at the bottom of page 12 shows – the two hours catch. Sam Mix and Otto Blake decided they might draw tourists for fishing and bought some old miner's cabins and with slight renovations, rented them to fishermen. It soon became known that there was also a good supply of deer and elk. This started the town from mining camp to resort town. Mr. & Mrs. Clint Wiley in 1945 along with a new road brought almost 100 men to work there. The dam is at an elevation of 10,034 feet making it the highest man-made lake in North America. There is also a lake named for Sam Mix. The lake is stocked every year with Rainbow trout, KoKonee, and German Browns. Farmers in the San Luis Valley use the water in the dam.

The summer weather is pleasant the winter's severe with snow sometimes 84 inches deep. Even the Bureau of Reclamation stays no later than Nov 1. In 1965 they left by weasel with 52 inches of snow. Almost no one stays for the winter.

In the chapter, "The Late History," 30 years later finds Platoro with some changes but still a wonderful, unspoiled mountain vacation atmosphere. The Skyline, after a ruinous fire was rebuilt. The present owners J.R. and Lana Heady still hold 4th of July celebrations.

Like most of Colorado, Platoro has seen land prices sour as people from many states have built summer homes. There is much to enjoy, some are fascinated and probe around the mines, many wildflowers attract others, some to watch wildlife or count birds while others search for the many and varied kinds of mushrooms. There were still open streams and lakes on open land people arrive the middle of June when the roads have been plowed and the Bureau of Reclamation personnel arrive for the summer. By November most have gone and houses closed. Only snowmobiles can come in winter. Although there are now four roads to Platoro none are fast as Leland says, "this adds to the resorts quiet charm."

These books are pure gems. There is so much history in a brief, concise manner, and related in very interesting ways that it is always a pleasure to read them. Oh if the history books in schools would follow the example he sets, students wouldn't be saying, "it's so boring." His research is solid and extensive and his characters come to life. This is enhanced by his ability to garner photos from many private citizens as well as the usual resources. These are vivid pictures of the area.

There are many other stories in the book but for those I recommend you purchase the book. If you live out of town the bookstore will be happy to ship you a copy.



Events Coordinator's Corner

In conjunction with National Bed & Breakfast Open House, thirteen Pikes Peak area Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Inns will participate in the OCCHS **Eight Annual Victorian Bed & Breakfast Tour on Sunday, December 1st, from 2-6 p.m.** Refreshments and a gift drawing featuring gifts from Old Colorado City Merchants will be held at the OCCHS Center at 1 South 24th Street. All proceeds benefit the History Center and is the biggest fund raising event OCCHS hosts. Please be sure to purchase a ticket! **tickets \$10 per person (Advance Ticket before December 1st) \$12 (At the door) - See ticket purchase locations listed below.**

This year's tour includes thirteen beautiful and historic homes lovingly converted to bed and breakfast inns and New This Year is the Historic McAllister House Museum!. The participating properties are located in or near Old Colorado City Historic District, Downtown Colorado Springs, Historic Manitou Springs, and Cascade at the foot of Pikes Peak. Start your holiday season with a peek inn-side bed and breakfast homes and museums decorated for Christmas in the Rockies.

Participating: Rocky Mountain Lodge & Cabins, Gray's Avenue Hotel, Heart of Manitou B&B, Blue Skies Inn, Spring Cottage, Holden House B&B Inn, Our Hearts Inn Old Colorado City, Spurs and Lace Inn, The Hearthstone Inn, Cheyenne Canon Inn, Crescent Lily Inn, Room at the Inn, Peacock B&B, and the McAllister House Museum.

November 8th, Special Open House with Refreshments 10:00 a.m. for our new Archivist, Dr. Michael Olsen! Monthly Meeting & Free Program, Myths and History of the Santa Fe Trail presented by Dr. Olsen at 11:00 a.m.

OCCHS is honored to have Dr. Olsen, recently retired from the History Department at New Mexico Highlands University, as OCCHS Archivist. We invite all members to come to this Special Open House at 10:00 a.m. to meet Dr. Olsen and extend a Warm Colorado Springs Welcome!

He has spoken and published widely on the history of the Trail and has received various awards from the Santa Fe Trail Association and the National Park Service for his work in preserving, protecting, and promoting Trail history.

Please join us in welcoming Mike Olsen who has proven to be an immediate & valuable asset as Archivist to OCCHS. Mark your calendars and stop by to meet Mike November 8th!

negotiating with the banker, Mr. Bock was able to buy the 720 acres that remained of the ranch along with 500 shares in stock of the Nine Mile Ditch Company, free and clear, for \$6,000. Philadelphia wanted revenge on the men who had ruined the JJ Ranch. He wanted to restore some of the way of life that had been lost there. After buying this 720 acres, he also bought other properties which had once been part of the JJ Ranch until he had put together a 3,000 acre holding and 514.25 shares of the Nine Mile Ditch Company.

Philadelphia reopened the dance hall at the JJ Ranch and held dances every Wednesday and Saturday night, and had a good time until bootleggers started to take over. He hoped to make the place a cowboy center with a rodeo ground, a hotel, and a sightseeing concession from Colorado Springs.

Then, the irrigation ditch went dry. Philadelphia thought that the ditch company wanted to stop him from raising a crop. To prevent the ditch company from getting an assessment against the ranch when there was no water in the ditch he tried to sell his ditch company shares and served notice on the ditch company to remove the unwanted ditch and keep their ditch riders off his property. He began packing a gun to guard against trespassing ditch riders. In time he came to feel that his gun was his only friend. Yet, when Philadelphia finally sold the ranch in 1946, he was very sad to leave.

Sylvia did not want to re-experience any of the hardships of homestead life. She and the boys never went to visit her husband's JJ holdings. And, she was very glad when he sold the ranch to a Texas banker.

Since the time that land in Red Rock Canyon was homesteaded in the 1860's and 1870's, there had been a public road into Red Rock Canyon, the Red Rock Canyon Road. When John and Sylvia Bock became owners of much of the Red Rock Canyon land, this road became their access route to their land. Then, in 1943 the Red Rock Canyon Road was closed by the owners of a trailer park. John and Sylvia needed the road for access and also wanted it to remain open as a public road. So, they filed suit against the trailer park owners, the city of Colorado Springs and the Midland Terminal Railway. Judge Miller ruled against the Bocks who then appealed the case and obtained a favorable ruling. The defendants then appealed the case to the Colorado Supreme Court which ruled in their favor and permanently closed the road.

The Bocks were forced to buy an additional piece of property and build a new road.

Mr. Bock blamed Sylvia's religion and her good neighbor attitude for the closing of the road.

He was sent to Fort Logan Mental Hospital for an examination; and the Veterans' Administration ordered a guardian appointed for him.

John G. Bock was outraged. He went to Phoenix where the Veterans' Administration did not agree with the finding and refused to comply with the Denver order.

continued on page 8

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ONE SOUTH TWENTY-FOURTH STREET
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80904-3319

**NONPROFIT
ORG.
US Postage**

PAID

**COLO SPGS, CO
PERMIT
#491**

He bought 40 acres of farm land just outside Scottsdale and spent the next ten years alone there in an old house trailer.

Scottsdale grew and annexed Mr. Bock's property which rose in value from \$500 an acre to \$25,000 an acre. By his own account, Mr. Bock had become a rich man. He kept part of the Scottsdale land for a new 10 x 40 foot trailer and hired a secretary to help him with his writings and to act as his chauffeur.

His secretary drove him on one last trip to the southeast Colorado country he had ridden as a cowboy some 50 years before. John G. Bock spent \$73,000 of his Arizona fortune to buy the trailer park which had closed the Red Rock Canyon Road. Hoping he might get a road into Red Rock Canyon through another property, he also bought the undeveloped subdivision of East Manitou which had been platted in 1889 and which adjoined his Red Rock Canyon holdings on the west.

John G. Bock willed his property to his two sons, John and Richard. John G. Bock wrote two short autobiographies which were the source for the material in this article:

1. In Canyon Land (Vantage Press, New York, 1964)
2. In Red Rock Canyon Land (Privately published, undated)

Annual Appeal

Enclosed in the newsletter is our annual appeal letter.

We hope you will be able to help us and all gifts are greatly appreciated.

Please mail you donation (marked annual appeal) to:

**OCCHS—President
1 South 24th St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904**

Your gift is tax deductible
Thank you!