

BOOKLETS BY THE AUTHOR

Tales of Early Leadville

Tales of Early Leadville — Part Two

Tales of Early Leadville — Part Three

The Leadville Story

The Saga of H. A. W. Tabor

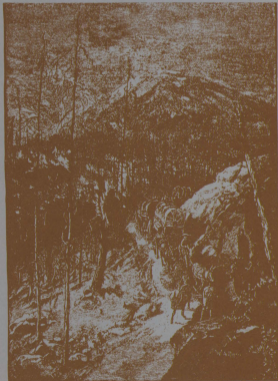
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TALES OF EARLY LEADVILLE

By RENE COQUOZ



Scene Going To Leadville — 1877

PRICE \$2.50

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

Introduction of Electricity in Leadville in 1884

The Daily Chronicle on March 8, 1884 stated as follows: "Several hundred years before Christ, Thales in his writings, refers to the fact that amber when rubbed together attracts light. This was the only known fact known to ancients.

It is possible that this scientist realized that electricity would in due course of time be utilized for illuminating purposes, but it remained for modern ages to develop it in its apparently unlimited resources, and it is without the memory of all, electricity has been used to furnish light."

The Leadville Electric Company was organized in Leadville early in 1884. The two men responsible for bringing electricity to the city were E. H. Farrow and Charles Baettcher. A substantial building was constructed on West 12th Street consisting of bricks manufactured in this city. Mr. R. H. Sterling, the State Electrician of the Brush Plant in Denver, had for some time been in the city supervising the construction of the lighting equipment.

The stringing of poles and wire had been completed as far as Harrison Avenue and Second Street on March 7. Hundreds of people gathered downtown for the formal opening of the lights many hours before they were scheduled to be turned on that evening. Many of the citizens were a little skeptical that a small bulb would be able to furnish a light. There were many who had never witnessed an electric light in their lives. The zero hour arrived and the Avenue was transformed into a magical daytime effect. There were many who just gazed at the lights and were speechless.

The citizens turned the ceremony into a celebration which lasted for nearly two days. There had been considerable betting before the lights were turned on and the winners celebrated even more. Although they were not as bright as the lights today, they were considerably brighter than the candles or the lamps.

There were a good many of the citizens that visited the huge light plant where the giant Hendey and Meyer, 80 Horsepower Steam Engine was generating the power for the lighting system. There had been no service made to the homes and was more or less on an experimental basis.

The March 8th edition of the Daily Chronicle stated: "There is no city in the universe more completely equipped than Leadville as regards to her electric lights, as the practical demonstration of last night proves — even Denver with its 280 lights supplied an inferior quality of illumination. All the latest improvements of electric apparatus has been procured, including the Brush Dynamo with a capacity of forty-five lights, where only sixteen can be obtained by the old potent and an indicator showing exactly the

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Dedicated to the Memory of

Bertha J. Coquoz

quality of the lights at a distance, which is an invention of Mr. Sterling and which is a very valuable acquisition in a plant of this kind."

"The new enterprise would seem to give the lie to rumors that are extant, that Leadville is a dead town. Hundreds of people were on Harrison Avenue last evening witnessing this new illumination and many expressions of admiration were heard on every side of the beauty of the lights, and the admirable manner in which it worked. Several trifling difficulties were apparent last evening which will be corrected within a day or two."

This was the first introduction of the electric illumination in the city and there was nothing but praise from nearly all of the persons that had turned out to see one of the wonders of the world. It was a far cry from the candle or lamp that the world had been accustomed to for centuries. Many were amazed at the power of a small bulb, and were somewhat puzzled in looking at the light bulb producing the light. The kids were perhaps the most happy ones, for they played games under the beaming shining lights above them.

The next day, the electric light company was deluged with orders to have lights installed in the homes and business houses. The business houses were given first priority, then came the homes. One year later, Leadville became one of the best lighted cities in the nation for its size of population. Thus another progressive move was completed.

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Upper Harrison Avenue and High School — Leadville.

THE TRAGIC TALE OF JAMES FENTON

James Fenton was an old prospector in Lake Park long before Turquoise Lake was ever constructed after the turn of the century. There was at the time a large number of prospectors in that vicinity who had built cabins and were living in Lake Park. James Fenton had come from New England to Leadville in 1879 during the big boom of the new El Dorado. Before Fenton had gone to the park, he prospected in the nearby hills surrounding Leadville.

James Fenton was already up in years when he decided to move to the park. He was in great pain at times from a rheumatic ailment. His hands were already setting into a crippling stage from the more than 40 of his years with rheumatism. The determination, however, of some day to make a rich strike kept his tired body struggling from day to day.

After he moved to Lake Park, he constructed himself a comfortable cabin about in the exact spot of where the center of the lake is located today. At the time, it was merely a forest of trees and willows with a beautiful stream running down through the center of the park.

In his kitchen, he had a peg board hung to the wall, and every time he tried a new claim, he would insert a peg in the slot to indicate how many claims he had worked. The peg indicated that he was now working his 12th claim. He had never been successful in the other 11 small mines that he had worked. He did manage however to sell enough mineral to make his living, but it was skimpy indeed.

The old prospector had worked for several weeks on his claim and he was now in the process of boring 4 holes in a bed of rocks to blast it with dynamite. As he drilled the holes, it seemed that with every swing of the heavy hammer, his rheumatic pains became more severe.

One morning he set out for the city to purchase supplies and dynamite. He told his friends in Leadville that he was almost positive that he would uncover some valuable minerals in the claim. He returned home about dusk that evening and he carefully laid the five sticks of dynamite that he had purchased on a table in a small shed at the rear of the cabin.

The next morning he arose early, cooked his breakfast and then went back to the mine for final preparations for the blasting. After a few hours, he was ready for blasting. He went to the shed and returned with four sticks of the dynamite. Carefully placing them in the drilled holes, he tamped them lightly and lit them. He then retreated to a safe place and awaited the explosion. Soon the small mountain trembled with a roar. When the smoke had cleared up, Fenton gathered some samples to be analyzed and took them to the small shed where he had his equipment.

Fenton found them to contain no more than his other eleven claims as far as any great value was concerned. He re-entered the mine to make certain that he had not overlooked any other mineral that would be of value. He found no more than he had the first time. Despondent and half sick with pain, he sat down on a large rock to rest for awhile. A small trickle of tears ran down his cheeks and wiping his forehead, he thought to himself, "Fenton, you're a failure".

As he was preparing to leave the mine, he noticed that in the blast, a small timber was loose and a little force behind it could bring down several tons of dirt and rock. He returned to the shed and took the last stick of dynamite and again returned to the mine. He placed the stick of powder behind the timber and then lit it. He backed up about 10 feet and laid down with his arms folded across his chest, his eyes with a piercing glance towards the Heavens and a prayer on his lips. Soon he was buried under tons of rock and dirt.

The next day, some of his prospector friends seeing no smoke from his cabin, went to investigate to see if Fenton was ill. Receiving no reply from the knock on the door, they proceeded to the mine and found his hat near the entrance and they surmised he had met with a fatal accident. They began the task of removing the debris and they found his body as he had lain prior to the blast. They knew this was no accident, but a clear suicide.

"Fenton came into this world with nothing, and he took nothing with him." These were the words repeated by a minister as he was laid to his final resting place at Evergreen Cemetery, looking toward Mt. Massive. This was the way Fenton wanted it to be, rather than to be a burden to others in his crippling age . . .



Robinson Smelting Works — 1885.

TALES OF WOLVES ON THE PROWL

The Leadville Daily Chronicle on January 5, 1883, reported that there were several packs of wolves on the prowl in the vicinity of the city. One pack of 12 chased Wilson Henkle while he was on his way one evening to Twin Lakes on horseback. It was believed that this was the same pack that killed Mrs. Norville and her infant baby just a short time prior. There was also a large number of sheep and cattle that had been killed by the wolf packs. During the summer months they roamed in pairs, while during the winter months, they always roamed in packs. They were sneaky and vicious and they very seldom missed their prey.

James Willbough was nearly killed by a pack of wolves one evening as he was returning from Aspen on horseback. He was in the vicinity of a ranch near Twin Lakes at about dusk when a pack of 12 to 15 wolves jumped out at him from all directions. The horse became frightened and took off on a wild gallop. The path that Willbough took was a short cut to the city, but very slippery from recent thaws. Then what he had feared most, happened. The horse slipped on the ice and as the horse was thrown against a huge rock, Willbough went sailing through the air and landed in a tree about 10 feet above the ground. The impact knocked the rider out for quite some time. When he did regain consciousness, he discovered that his arm was broken. He saw that the horse had been devoured by the wolf pack and that they were still waiting under the tree for him to make a move.

In the distance he noticed a ranch house and began yelling for help. Two ranch hands on Mr. Gilmore's ranch heard the cries and investigated. When they arrived at the scene, they saw what had



The first St. Vincent's Hospital — 1879

happened, and as each man had a rifle, they shot in the direction of the wolves and scattered them in several different ways. Mr. Ullboagh was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital for medical attention.

In the early years, wolf packs were indeed a threat to both humans and cattlemen's stock . . .

TALES OF A BEAUTIFUL AND STRANGE GIRL

It was a beautiful Sunday morning when a reporter for the Herald Democrat and two companions set out for a day of prospecting in the hills of Leadville. They had rented a team of horses and a small express wagon from one of the local livery barns.

By midafternoon they had collected a number of mineral samples and were returning to the city when they noticed a two story cabin that was almost hidden in a grove of pine trees. They realized that the horses had not eaten and decided to ask the owner if by chance he would have some hay. One of the trio was selected as spokesman and gently knocked on the door. An elderly prospector, perhaps in his 60's, with a beard down below his chin, answered the door. He appeared very hospitable and told the young man that he would find some hay in the shed in the rear. He also invited the men into his cabin after they had fed the horses. As they entered the house, they were surprised to find the cabin meticulously clean, indeed unusual for a prospector. In the corner was a small bar with several brands of whiskey that one could always find in a cheap saloon. The men were given a few drinks to which they remarked "sure hits the spot." They were then asked if they would like a lunch and the reply was, " — by all means, we are slightly hungry."

The old prospector went to a door leading upstairs and called for Inez. The trio was convinced that he was a married man which explained the neatness of the cabin.

They were dumbfounded when a pretty girl about 18 years old appeared from the door leading to the upstairs story. She was beautifully dressed with a sparkling necklace around her neck. The men were introduced to her as his housekeeper. One of the trio then remarked, "for a housekeeper like her, I could certainly take up prospecting myself," which brought laughter from all present.

In a matter of a few minutes, she had prepared a delicious lunch. During their lunch the old prospector told them many tales of his experiences while prospecting in the hills. The trio observed that the girl appeared very contented and happy, and that was all that mattered to them. After lunch, the men were asked if they would like to hear some music and singing and all replied "Yes". The girl went upstairs and came back with a guitar, another surprise to the guests. She had a beautiful voice and she played the instrument as well as any one they had ever heard. When she was asked why she chose such a secluded life, she merely replied that she was most happy with her way of life.

The time for departure had arrived as the old clock on the wall indicated that it would soon be dark. They bid the old gentleman and the girl farewell and thanked them for the wonderful hospitality and the men were off. During their drive back home, the men asked each other questions regarding the girl, but none had a reasonable explanation.

It was about a week afterwards that the reporter asked a local priest if he would go see the two in question, and after hearing the story, he agreed to do so. When he arrived at the cabin, he found it to be deserted and from all indications they had moved out the day after they had the visitors. Although the Reverend looked for a possible clue, there was nothing to be found as to its secret. A few days later, the reporter wrote a story about the mysterious couple and asked them if they would contact him at the Herald office. Nothing was ever heard and it remained a mystery to all concerned.

RICHES FROM THE VARIETY THEATRES

Ben Loeb came to Leadville during the rush period in 1879, along with the other thousands that were coming to the new city. Ben was a man with a remarkable theatrical knowledge. He soon became aware that the miners wanted some kind of entertainment besides the gambling dens and dance halls. So it was that Ben Loeb opened one of the first variety houses in the city.

Loeb's Theatre had as high as 12 performances a day for nearly two years. He employed a brass band and before each performance he would parade throughout different sections of the city. Ben, dressed in a fur coat, covered with diamonds, led the band, and thus attracted much attention. When ending back at the theatre, he always had from 50 to 100 customers that followed the band back to the theatre. Many folks often times remarked that it was a sight to watch Ben leading the band, going from side to side strutting with his large baton. Ben Loeb's Theatre soon became known from coast to coast.

Mike Goldsmith was another theatrical pioneer who came to Leadville in 1879 and opened a theatre. Like Loeb's Theatre, Mike's theatre played to capacity crowds at every performance.

With the building of the Tabor Opera House in 1879, the small variety houses were not as popular as in the first years, but they maintained good attendances for many years afterwards. The only alteration made was the reducing of performances from 12 per day to only 2 to 4 performances.

Mr. Goldsmith had only one son, and some years after he came to Leadville, the son died following a short illness. The death of the son left Mr. Goldsmith a broken hearted man and he sold his theatre and left the city never to return.

Ben Loeb and Mike Goldsmith brought to Leadville a legend that lived in the memory of all many years after they had both departed from this world . . .

A MOST BRILLIANT MIND

One of Leadville's first physicians was Dr. David H. Dougan. He was born in Niles City, Michigan on August 17, 1845. He received his education in the public schools of that city. He graduated from the 12th grade at the age of 15 and entered a printing shop in Miles City as an apprentice. During his spare time, he took a course in bookkeeping and accounting which greatly benefited him in later years.

In 1861 he accepted a position with a bank in Richmond, Indiana. A short time later, he accepted a contract as bookkeeper at the First National Bank in which he was to receive \$200 for the first year, \$350 for the second year and \$500 for the third year. During his free time, he taught in a nearby college and in return he took a course in Latin. By teaching in his spare time, he was able to take the course in Latin. After working in the banks for 11 years, he was stricken with a severe case of asthma which in time forced him to resign his position at the bank.

At the suggestion of an elder brother, who was a practicing physician in Niles City, he entered the Rush Medical College in Chicago and remained there until he had completed his course. In 1873, he became a student in the Bellevue Hospital Medical College in New York. He graduated from there on March 1, 1874. He then returned to Richmond, Indiana and opened an office in that city. Some time later, he became associated with a leading physician there on a partnership basis and had great success. He remained there until 1875 and his asthmatic condition became so severe that for three months he had to sleep upright in a chair at short intervals only. Upon a suggestion from a friend, he came to Denver, Colorado and stayed in that city for 8 months. He always cherished the kindness given to him by Mr. F. J. Crane, R. E. Whitsitt and Dr. F. J. Bancroft.

The following year he opened an office in Alma in Park County, and while there, he also managed a mine for a friend from Richmond, Indiana whom he had known while he resided in that city. In 1878, he joined the hundreds of people on the trails who were going to Leadville during the start of the boom days. He opened an office in the new city, and he sat in his office for 29 days waiting for his first customer. His funds at a low ebb, he worried considerably for many days. He often said that the miners were too healthy for a doctor, or either too busy to see a doctor. On the 29th day, a messenger came to his office and told him that there had been an accident at the Iron-Silver Mine and that he was wanted as soon as possible.

This was Dr. Dougan's start to a successful career in Leadville. In his first year as a practicing physician, he made a gross income of \$12,000. He became mayor of the city in 1881. While he was in office, he fought for rigid laws and fought against corruption in the city and county offices. He was not always in accord with the

city council, and often times refused to sign a legislation passed by them.

In 1882 he organized the Carbonate National Bank and became its first president. In 1884, he resigned his position and moved to California, but was compelled to return to Colorado due to his asthmatic condition. He returned to Leadville in 1886 and was re-elected President of the bank a short time thereafter. In 1890, the bank was one of the soundest banks in Colorado . . .



"BROKEN NOSE SCOTTY"

"Broken Nose" Scotty was a man of unusual circumstances when it came to money. Scotty joined the big immigration to Leadville in the first years after the discovery of carbonate of lead ores. Scotty was a relief driver for the stage lines into Leadville until the coming of the railroads in the 1880's. He was given the name of Broken Nose after being in a run-away down Weston Pass where his nose was broken, and he also received a number of cuts about the body. After the coming of the Rio Grande Railroad, stage lines vanished, and Scotty bought a claim on Breece Hill. He had very little knowledge of the mining field, but he decided to risk a chance. To celebrate the event, Scotty came to Leadville to join some friends in a local saloon.

The men used to like to hear Scotty tell of his many experiences as a stage line driver and his narrow escapes. As the hour was drawing late, and maybe because he had several drinks too many, Scotty became disorderly and was carted away to jail by the local law. He found that he was not alone in the jail, for it was quite crowded and he soon became the joy of the inmates telling his tales of stage line drivers.

The next morning while awaiting his trial before the local Judge, he had a most pleasant visitor who offered him \$20,000 for his claim on Breece Hill. The visitor told him he was representing a large mining company and was prepared to pay the money upon signing the necessary papers. Asking the sheriff if he could have an hour of freedom, and stating his purpose, he was given permission for one hour of freedom in the custody of the mining agent. It was less than an hour when he returned with the money — this was the most Scotty had ever had and he was the happiest man in the jail.

Happy over his good fortune, Scotty paid all the fines of his fellow prisoners at the trial, and then, one by one he marched them all to a local clothing store where each man was outfitted with new clothes from head to foot. From there they went to the Saddle Rock Cafe and the best food in the house was ordered for his friends, as he called them. For some of the men, it was the best meal they had in many months. Afterwards, Scotty gave each of the men a ten dollar bill and they all parted going their own ways.

The next morning, most all of the men were back in jail, and once again Scotty paid the fines. He kept up his spending spree, but before going broke, he decided to visit his mother in Scotland. He remained with his mother for several months, and during that time, he arranged with a bank in the town to pay his mother a monthly income until the amount of \$10,000 was gone. He estimated that this would well provide for his aging mother for some years. He remarked to friends there that he wanted to provide a decent life for a mother well deserving in her aging years.

Scotty returned to Leadville and then went prospecting. He was never again lucky after his first luck, and when he died in 1909, he was buried in Potter's Field with burial paid by the county . . .

FIERY FLAMES

February 16, 1885: The New York Tea and Grocery, which was located at West 3rd Street and Spruce, was destroyed by a fire that for some time threatened the entire block. The store was operated by J. A. Schlageter. The fire was first discovered by Policeman Hight at about 2 A.M. Hight had no sooner turned in the alarm when the faithful horses of the fire department came on the gallop down Harrison Avenue pulling the fire laddies and the heavy apparatus behind them.

The firemen were handicapped for several minutes when they discovered that the hydrant was partly frozen, and when the ice broke loose in the plug, it then blocked the hose and it was several minutes before the pressure had broken the ice enough for it to come out of the nozzle. The fire department was under the direction of Fire Chief Fish.

The loss of the stock was valued at \$5,000 — fixtures at \$900, and the building was valued at \$2,100, making the total loss \$8,000. The building and contents were insured for \$6,600.

February 9, 1884: A fire broke out in the Rio Grande and South Park Railroad round-house destroying everything in its path. The large wooden round-house was located but a short distance from the depot. The fire was discovered by a watchman on duty about midnight. Mr. Kirkhopp, the watchman, realizing the danger, immediately raced with the fiery elements of hell to awaken the Amberson Brothers who were asleep in the quarters of the round house assigned to them. Kirkhopp arrived none too soon, for it was only a matter of minutes before the entire building was on fire. The oil treated wood in the round-house burned like a box of matches. The fire department used the steam pumps in an attempt to subdue the flames.

Destroyed were all the tools, 5 locomotives belonging to the Rio Grande and two locomotives belonging to the South Park. The total damage was estimated at \$50,000. The next day, a switch engine was ordered to pull the burned engines out of their quarters. It was believed that the engines could be repaired for about \$5,000.

The fire department, on January 1, 1884, had a total of 4,500 feet of hose on hand. There were 41 alarms turned in for the year of 1883 . . .

DUTCH, SAM, AND JOE

Three of the most popular horses in Leadville in the early years were Dutch, Sam, and Joe, the trained fire horses. The horses were kept in special stalls in the fire station, and whenever the fire alarm sounded, they knew exactly what to do — rush over to the fire engine and wait for the harness to drop on them, then with the swiftness of a fox, they were off pulling the heavy apparatus behind them. Trained in Chicago, they cost the city nearly \$800 each, which was considered a high price then for horses. The three horses were as gentle as lambs and were the favorite animals of all the kids throughout the city. During a fire the horses were as still as mice, and would listen only to the command of the fire laddies.

One of the most tragic accidents happened one evening about midnight, when a fire alarm was turned in on East 4th Street. As the horses were coming down the avenue on a gallop at full speed, a heavy ore wagon coming west did not hear the fire bell clanging on the fire engine and as the horses turned to go east on 4th Street, they ran head-on into the ore wagon, which resulted in the death of one horse, and serious injury to another horse. The death of Sam, and the crippling of Dutch was perhaps one of the saddest days of the early years in Leadville. Two other horses trained for this type of work were ordered from the Chicago firm. Although several of the fire laddies were scratched and bruised in the mishap, none was seriously injured . . .

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THE DEATH OF "BABY DOE'S FATHER

(Capsule Form)

On May 18, 1883, H.A.W. Tabor and his bride of three months, "Baby Doe" Tabor, arrived at Lincoln, Nebraska, where Mrs. Tabor's father was seriously ill. They were accompanied by Mrs. Tabor's brother, Peter McCourt. Mr. Tabor was interviewed by reporters at the railroad station as he stepped off the train. He told the reporters that he did not like interviews as they never told the truth. When he was asked about the future of Colorado, Tabor replied that the State had not even started to be developed and predicted that the State would some day have more than a million population. Mrs. Tabor's father passed away on May 20. He was 65 years of age and had come to America from Arnagh, Ireland. . .

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CALIFORNIA CREEK

It has often times been written, that Colorado is the mother of rivers. The main rivers on the east slope are the South Platte, the North Platte, the Arkansas, and the Rio Grande. To the west, they are the Colorado, the Yampa, the White, the Gunnison, Delores and the San Juan.

Next to the Missouri River, the Arkansas River is the largest affluent to the Mississippi River. It joins the "Father of Waters" 275 miles above New Orleans. The length of the Arkansas is 2,000 miles. It ranges from 150 feet in width to one mile in sandy sections. It divides the State of Arkansas into nearly equal parts.

California Creek is a tributary to the Arkansas and originates in the mountains East of Leadville. California Gulch and California Creek both made history in 1860 when the first gold strike was discovered by Abe Lee in the gulch. Although there was plenty of water in California Gulch, water for drinking and household purposes was hauled from the Arkansas River and other nearby streams, because the water in California Gulch was always too dirty to use, due to the panning of gold by the prospectors.

In 1868, large bodies of decomposed quartz containing large gold nuggets and free gold were found in California Gulch. Jars, such as those used in drug stores, were filled with the gold and displayed in the National Banks of Denver, Philadelphia and New York, creating considerable excitement. The veins found were beautiful crystals of quartz containing the gold. The result of the gold displays in Eastern banks, was that it made huge amounts of capital available for mining companies in Colorado. So it was that California Gulch was enlarged for a distance of 12 miles which added more water for sluicing and hydraulic mining.

In 1873, W. H. Stevens and A. B. Wood interested some eastern millionaires in carbonate of lead ores and thus the "Oro Ditch and Fluming Company" was organized for the purpose of constructing a large canal to increase the water capacity in California Creek. The canal was constructed through the eastern part of the town to the Arkansas River near Birdseye and Gregory gulches. The canal was not completed until 1875, and two years later, the rush to Leadville began. When the city of Leadville was founded in 1878 and the building of homes progressed in the eastern part, heavy planks were placed over the canal and covered with dirt. It later became known as the Starr Ditch.

When California Gulch was first known to contain gold, it was but 50 to 100 feet in width. With the sluicing and hydraulic mining, the gulch ranged from 100 feet to 1,000 feet in sections. The Starr Ditch also carried the overflow of the water from the mines to California Gulch. The Arkansas River originates near Fremont Pass near Climax, some 14 miles from the city. The history of California Gulch can be found in nearly all the history books of Colorado . . .

LEADVILLE'S FIRST MOTION PICTURES

On May 13, 1908, Leadville citizens saw the first motion pictures shown in this city. The Dreamland Theatre, which was located at 608 Harrison Avenue, was just completed and was one of the neatest and most modern up-to-date movie houses in the vicinity. The first movie houses featured both pictures and vaudeville. It was under the management of Messers, Harding and Burke. Mr. Burke had a marvelous voice and along with Miss Haines at the piano, they added spice to the moving pictures. The admission price was ten cents for any seat in the theatre. The interior of the theatre was beautifully decorated in several colors with wall to wall carpeting.

To give a pleasing effect, colored lights were added throughout the entire theatre. A new asbestos curtain was installed and the most modern of electrical wiring was also installed through the interior and exterior. As a precautionary measure, two exits were constructed near the stage entrance in case of fire. Two large doors were also installed on the Harrison Avenue entrance and were fitted to open outwards into the Avenue. The most modern plush chairs were equipped for easy resting comfort during the performance. The management announced that in case of a fire, the entire theatre could be vacated in a matter of several minutes. For the admission price of ten cents, all persons attending the afternoon matinee were given a souvenir consisting of either a vase, China sets or fancy dishes. There was a complete change of programs on Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

It is interesting to note that the first movie houses had no choice in selecting the pictures to be shown, they accepted what was sent to them. This was due to the fact that so few pictures were made—the moving picture industry still being in its infancy. It is my knowledge that the first feature made was in 1903, titled "The Great Train Robbery."

The new Empire Theatre was opened on May 20, 1908 and presented movies and vaudeville. The movies were shorts and ran from 20 minutes to an hour. The rest of the program was filled with vaudeville acts.

On June 3, 1908, The Dreamland Theatre advertised Thomas Edison's latest stereoscopic creation which also included "The Merry Widow Waltz." In an advertisement in the Herald Democrat by "Spike the Agitator", he said the following, "Gee, ain't he a peach. Dem der moving pictures was great. It was a new one about a guy what got into trouble picking pockets, and say, laugh! I'm sore in de sides now from it."



Mosquito Pass.
Eight horses pulling a Leadville bound stage in 1878.



Hydraulic mining in California Gulch in 1865. The men were tough and rugged and happy. Note miner pretending he is playing a banjo.



Georgetown Loop



This scene reproduced from Frank Hall's History of Colorado. Picture was sketched about 1885.



Leonard Shaft of the Matchless Mine



The "New Leadville" as it appeared from the air in the Fall of 1961. Showing the massive Mosquito Range in the background.

TERRIBLE FATE OF FOUR MEN IN

HOMESTAKE SNOWSLIDE

The Homestake Mine, located 6 miles north of Leadville, was the scene of several snowslides in the early years which brought death to 15 men on two occasions. In 1885, there were eleven men buried in their cabin when a snowslide occurred. In 1881, there occurred one of the strangest slides of significance and instantaneous death we have ever read about. The four men who met their death were Albert Morrison, Jack Carroll, Hugh Temple and George Summers.

We begin our story with Albert Morrison writing a letter to his Mother.

"San Ysidro Mine, Homestake Mountain

My Dear Mother,

I trust that you will not form an opinion as to my latest venture until you will have learned all the facts; and that then, whatever conclusion you may reach regarding the wisdom of the step, you at least will credit me with the best possible motives. In every movement, I most desire to please you." [Mr. Morrison continues his letter by saying that he may have made a mistake in leaving his job at the local postoffice to join the other three men in a partnership venture in mining. He then gives the names of the other three men and explains to her that all three are experienced miners and considerably older than he is in age. He wrote that he was worried about her aging years, her future and the mortgage that hung over her little farm in Fentonville, N.Y.] The letter continues, "Under ordinary circumstances, I should have submitted my plans to you before taking any decided action, but the circumstances were quite out of the ordinary, as presently you shall see. I was obliged to take an option and embrace an opportunity seldom offered to a young man without waiting for your sanctions, or sacrifice it altogether. You know dear mother, it takes a full month for a letter to go to you and an answer to be returned under the most favorable circumstances, and I was not privileged to dally with the proposition that long. Hence I resigned my position in the post-office, put my little savings into the venture reserving only a sufficient amount to pay the next quarters interest on the farm mortgage, which I sent you by registered mail, and came out here to begin work of digging a fortune from the eternal hills, staking all upon the hazards.

Up in this country, the winter months are very severe and we spent considerable time in hauling our supplies and taking extra precautions to safeguard us against the hazards of winter. As tomorrow will be Christmas Day, I will have plenty of time to complete this letter which will be very lengthy.

I expect to spend the greater part of the night in communing with you both. [Referring to his fiance as well as his mother.] The

cost of living in a mining town is extremely high, and the salaries are insufficient to enable men to make a decent living. All of the supplies coming to Leadville were transported by wagon trains and the tariff was exceedingly high. It was not until in September of 1880 that the first train arrived into Leadville which was less than 13 months ago.

I could scarcely save more out of my income that would suffice to pay the interest on the mortgage and even that would be contingent upon keeping my health, losing no time and having no bad luck. I realized that the note was maturing, that the principle soon would be due, and that unless you could manage to reduce that, an unlikely circumstance, the holder might foreclose and take the dear old homestead, leaving you and the children without a roof to shelter you. The thought, my darling mother, was agonizing to me. It haunted me by day and troubled my dreams at night. I came west, as you know, with the sole purpose of making enough money to raise that accursed mortgage, to put the place in good repair and once again provide you with the comforts you have not had since father died. That done, I felt that, with your blessing, I might claim Charlotte as my own, and settle down somewhere near you in the quiet enjoyment of a life of honest and fairly required toil.

Your years are multiplying, my dear mother. Do not persuade yourself that I fail to note the change that has been going on — the lengthening of the lines of care upon your face, the silvering of your hair, the increasing tendency to stoop of your shoulder, the growing feebleness of your step, the gradual dimming of your dear eyes. To this all, I might sorrowfully have reconciled myself but I have been conscious it was the result of natural and unavoidable causes, the developments of life, the unyielding to decay. But this dear mother, was denied me. I too well knew that you were prematurely aging and I was conscious of the cause of it. The knowledge affects me, oh my dear mother, as I may not be able to make you understand; it unfitted me for active work at home, and resolved me to go out into the world in search of that which I could not hope to find there. It was a desperate thing to do, mother — to leave you and the little ones to battle against adversity, but I consoled myself with the reflection that it would not be for long; that soon I should be able to provide for your present needs, satisfy the interest demands, and eventually lift the incubus that has hung over the little farm like a pall for so many years.

I have tried to be thankful for the measure of good fortune that has fallen to my lot, and to contend with the trifling ail I have been able to extend to you. Elsewhere I might have continued indefinitely and uncomplainingly; but here dear mother, where great fortunes are made in a day and squandered in a night, where the very dust of the streets in town would yield returns from the smelting furnace, and where, for lack of lead, the water mains are joined together with a base bouillion.

Like the birds and the flowers, though our ears seldom hear, the one hand grasps the other, and a new hope springs eternally;

and without it, life indeed would be a barren idealty. (Note: Was the strange wording that Mr. Morrison used a premonition that some dreadful tragedy was about to take place?)

An act of faith has guided my hand into new surroundings and perhaps I will acquire great wealth from my mining enterprise. It was not easy for me to leave the farm, leaving you and the children and Charlotte to come west and seek new hopes. I have but one ambition to achieve, and that is to make more money to clear the mortgage on the farm and to marry Charlotte. My Sainted Mother, share with me the confidence I feel that is coming. Sunshine will bring warmth and cheer to hearts that are doubting and desolate. Faith it is, or something else for you and Charlotte.

The mine we are working at Homestake Mountain, was at one time operated by the Spaniards, long before the white settlers ever dreamed of Colorado. The tunnel is about 400 feet in length and the depth of the shaft is some 160 feet down. The timbers in the tunnel and the shaft are fairly well rotted away, and it will take considerable work in repairing them before too much prospecting can be attained.

With huge spruce logs crackling in the fire-place, the scene presented within on this eve of the gladsome Christmas, is far from inspiring. Carroll worn out from the days work, is asleep in his bunk, doubtless dreaming of the yule log and mistletoe, and fat stockings and plum pudding. Summers and Temple are enjoying a game of cards called "hunky-punky", over there by the fire, and I am not so sure but that their thoughts also are far away; mingling unconsciously with those of loved ones in distant New England homes.

This letter is not one-half finished, but an old clock there, on our improvised cupboard, is about to strike twelve; so, for tonight I will content myself with wishing you, dearest mother and Charlott

(The letter ended there, on the final word of Charlotte. It never was completed, for tragedy struck — death prevailed in the entire room. In the letter that Postmaster J. Watson of Leadville wrote to Mr. Morrisons' mother, he tells of the tragedy of the four men.)

March 9, 1882
Mrs. William Morrison
Fentonville, New York

My Dear Madame:

I am in receipt of your letter of March 6 with instructions, and it is with a heart filled with grief that I essay a reply, for your boy was to me as that of another not of my own blood well could be. On the day you wrote the anxious letter to me, we laid him away in Evergreen Cemetery, side by side with his companions. Their remains were followed to their last resting place by the largest concourse of people ever gathered for a purpose in this city of sympa-

thetic hearts. Already money is being subscribed for a suitable monument to their memory, and this it is intended shall be ready for unveiling on the next Decoration Day.

Let the newspaper containing the account of the calamity that overwhelmed them shall not reach you, I will undertake briefly to give you the painful facts. But first, let me state that your son Albert was my loyal employee for a year before going over to Homestake Mountain, and was so loyal and faithful and true that I gave him up with great reluctance, feeling that he was likely to better his financial condition by the change. This, as you should know, is a country of great opportunities for young and dauntless spirits — and after reconciling myself to his loss, I joined others in helping to obtain a favorable lease on the San Ysidro mine.

It was understood when the boys left Leadville some time in December, that one of them would periodically come to town for their mail. Along the first of the year, I inquired of the general delivery clerk if the boys had been in lately, and was advised that Summers had applied for letters only a day or two before. Time passes very rapidly in this busy mining metropolis, my dear madame, and I am almost ashamed to acknowledge that a full two months passed by before I made a second inquiry. Then I learned by consulting the receiving stamps on the mail that had accumulated for the boys, that no courier from Homestake had been in since the close of the year. The discovery sent through me a chill such as I seldom have ever experienced. I reasoned with myself however that the boys were safe enough; that they could not be in want of provisions; that fuel was plentiful in the neighborhood and that if any calamity had happened to one of them, information certainly would be sent to the city by the others. I could not rid myself of the dreadful fear that early took hold of me and would not entirely release me. Acting quickly upon an impulse, I dispatched one of my most trusty men — a person who had carried mail over the mountains on snowshoes during a number of hard winters to the San Ysidro mine property with the location of which he was perfectly familiar, determined that another night without definite information as to the fate of Albert and his companions would torture my present state of mind.

The messenger did not return until long after nightfall, so deep was the snow and so difficult was it to make any headway through the unbroken country. I did not need to ask the results of his mission, it was pictured on his face. My worst fears had been verified. The mouth of the tunnel was not visible. The cabin was no where to be seen.

At the time, the great public calamity was turned over to General Cook, pioneer of exhausted resources, and upon this occasion he proved equal to the emergency. Fifty mounted men, with sleds and snowshoes, picks and shovels, also long poles and under the command of General Cook left through the piney outskirts of the city at the break of day the following morning, dispatched for

Homestake Mountain. They arrived before noon, and at once began work. Before nightfall, they had reached the roof of the cabin, still intact and after a few hours of additional labor the snow had been removed from one of the windows as to admit a passage for the rescuers to the interior.

Scarcely had any snow sifted in, although the cabin had been covered by the slide to a depth of fifty feet. The stillness of death prevailed the single room, although three human forms sat there as in life, and outlines of another silhouetted against the strange light in the bunk yonder, wrapped in a wakeless sleep. This was Jack Carroll. Sitting opposite each other at a table, with cards before them and in their hands, were Summers and Temple. The clock in the cabin had stopped at one minute past twelve.

On the opposite side of the room, at a little table, sat your son Albert, as life-like as when I had last seen him. He had been engaged in writing a letter to you, and when the awful shock came, his hand was still holding the pen (I am sending it to you in the mail) with the point of the pen on the final letter "e" of the word Charlotte.

I need not tell you, my dear madame, how your son died, or how the lives of his companions went out, some scientific mind will explain to you, if you do not know, the effects of creating a vacuum by a sudden fall with such force of thousands of tons of ice and snow upon a frail inhabitation like that. It is enough to know that death was instantaneous and necessarily painless.

The remains of the boys were tenderly raised to the surface by loving hands and laboriously brought to the city on sleds that had been provided, followed by as a sorrowful a conclave as ever entered into the gates. After laying in state for thirty-six hours, they were buried in the manner that I have disclosed.

Their friends elsewhere could not be notified or their wishes ascertained for some reason that the blizzard that had prevailed with unrelenting fury for the last week had prostrated the wires in all directions.

If words could still be anguish of your heart at this moment, Dear Madame, be assured I would spare them, it seems to me, as I write, the tenderest, humanest thing I can do, is to leave you along with your Holy Grief, and commend you to the Mother of Sorrows for consolation.

Joshua Watson,
Postmaster

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TALES OF UNDERGROUND MINING

[In the early years, there were hundreds of construction jobs, in railway tunnels, underground mining, or building railroad tracks through tortuous mountain passes. They were all considered a risk, but this did not bother the men seeking adventures on the various jobs. While a great many of the men were married and had families, there were also the single men called "Wandering Willies". There were a large number of these wanderers that had police records, or were wanted in some State on some charge. They were called by the other men, "Nomads".

The pay usually attracted the "Wandering Willies" to construction camps as well as the steady employment. The work was filled with excitement, sufficient enough to make the blood tingle. Payday was the most awaited day of any other day of the year, for they would all go to the nearest town or city for an evening of pleasure. Across the green clothed tables in Black Jack, poker, dice and other games, and across the plain or mahogany bars, it was rapidly spent. After all the money had been spent, it was back to work till the next payday.

A SERIOUS TRAGEDY

It was a cold January day in 1885, the temperature was down below zero and a scent of snow filled the cool air. A group of workmen entered into the Granite Mountain where a railway tunnel was under construction. The men had bored into the tunnel about 400 feet and were in the process of blasting a bed of large rocks. The normal size of a tunnel then was considered about 20 feet high and 24 feet wide. After the fuses were lit, all the men rushed to a safe distance from the scene of the blast, then with a roar of more than a dozen sticks of dynamite, the entire ground seemed to shake beneath them. After the smoke had cleared, the men reentered the scene of the blast to make way for more blasting, while other men began to remove the rocks and dirt. Evidently, some of the charges had failed to explode, and while the men were in the process of drilling more holes in the rock, the drill hit an unexploded charge which resulted in a terrific blast. Three of the men were killed and several more were injured. It was not a very pleasant sight to see three of your buddies lying dead and the others wounded. For the rest of the afternoon, the men were quiet and none talked very much during the remainder of the shift.

Most of the men ate very little during the evening meal. That night, they just sat around the bunk house with very little conversation. Finally the silence was broken when a big brawny Cornishman said, "What the -ell is the matter with you chaps? Looks like you are holding funeral services before they be due! The lads be gone, and our sitting here as silent as mice at a cheese fandog, or like hard shelled baptisms before taking a dip in the blooming cold pond water, will not bring them back. Let's shake it and brace up."

He was no sooner finished when a big bulky American who claimed Virginia as his native state, knocked the ashes from his pipe and in a drawl talk said: "Dick was a good fellow and we've been together for the last 5 years and have worked in all the big bores from Maine to California. During that time, we've had a lot of close calls, but this closes the partnership. Well, we all look for it sooner or later. No use kidding, we all have to take our chances of taking the medicine when the great doctor hands out the dope. He was a good fellow, straight as a string and stood by a partner through all the mists of life, and for sure he will get some credit for that where he has gone. To show you lads what kind of a chap he was, I will tell you of an incident that happened to us a few years ago. It was in Idaho. Both of us were dead broke. All we possessed on earth were the clothes that we stood in, with a change of underwear and socks, and of course our blankets. One afternoon, footsore and weary and hungry, we struck a camp. I think it was in Warder. That makes no difference. Several shifts were working, so we made tracks for the nearest one. The boss was on top so we asked him for a job. At first he told us that he was full handed and suggested we try some other mine for work. He said that he had heard that such and such a mine was in need of men. How our stomachs did growl, as we had nothing to eat for 34 hours, and tramping over the hills of Idaho, packing our blankets, especially on an empty stomach, is not work for a baby. As we reached the door, he called us back and said that the company had a claim that required work each year to maintain the land. He said he thought this was about the right time and asked us if we wanted the job."

"The work is all done on a contract. The first thing to be done is the sinking of a shaft 100 feet, present depth is about 200 feet; company furnishes engineer, tools, powder, a cook and some extra men to help us."

When they reached the boarding house to await further orders, it was nearly time for the evening meal and how that aroma of food did smell good to the two men. "Lads, it was blessed providence that made the boss think of that work. When we got to the house it was supper time, so reported to the boarding house missus. She showed us the washing rooms; guess our appearance suggested to her the necessity of using soap and water; then she told us where the bunk house was, and wound up with the cheerful news that supper would be served in half an hour."

Lads, what a feast that was for us two hungry mortals. A great hunk of corned beef, with plenty of boiled potatoes, cabbage and turnips, and a huge steaming platter of the finest Irish Stew I ever smacked my lips over. Then there was fresh home made bread, none was ever better, good pure milk and tea and coffee. Dick and I did honor to the lady cooking, and after a pipe full of good smoke, we turned in for the night."

The next morning the men were told to proceed to the mine,

that the other men had gone ahead with the supplies and the cook. The mine was located in a desolate region, but they found that the bunk house was in good condition, and that was all that mattered. The work had gone along well and the contract was nearly up and completed. They had worked with a rickety hoist that every once in a while would slip and the bucket would drop to the bottom of the shaft. When this happened, the engineer would apply resin to the belt until it took a good hold at least for a little while.

Al continued his story as follows: "Dick went up about 30 feet to a little station where the powder was kept and sent down the stuff for the 4 holes that we had drilled for blasting. I loaded them and set the 'snuffs' under each fuse, got in the bucket and gave the signal to the engineer. She started all right and went up about 15 feet and the belt began to slip and the bucket started for the bottom. It got there in good shape. Again I felt her begin to move and this time we got up about 10 feet, when the belt got a foolish streak on, and once more the bucket went to the bottom. By this time the four fuses had 'spit' and I began to think that the bottom of the shaft was just a trifle too hot for me at this time."

Dick hollered down, 'Climb the rope, you cayuse, unless you are prepared to climb the golden stairs. For Gods sake do something to get out of there! Climb the foot-wall and I will pull on the rope.'

I glanced up, and will you believe me? There was the good fellow pulling like a horse on the rope, and Dick was as strong as a bull. He made some impression. At least I always gave him the credit for starting the bucket and saving me from a premature grave. I felt the bucket move just the slightest bit, Dick was still hauling like a horse on the rope. Then she started in good shape. I got as far down into the bucket as it was possible; got my head between my legs and covered up with both arms. The bucket was about 20 feet when the four shots went off, one after another. You've heard blokes telling you about all he-- popping? It sure did that time for me, to use a military saying. When the smoke had cleared, Dick yelled, 'Are you killed?'. I laughed back and told him that I was not hurt, with the exception of a cut over my right ear, I was alright. When we reached the top of the shaft, the engineer was shaking and was pale as a ghost and he said, 'Boys, it wasn't my fault. Old Sallie was just slipping, all I could do was to put all the resin I had on her belly, but she slipped. I quit right now.' We talked of quitting. The contract was finished 10 days afterwards without any more mishaps. Dick and me, when we got our money, we made a straight line for Colorado."

THE TAMPER

Lying in a bunk was a well built Cornishman who had listened to Al's story about Dick and himself. He had a vernacular peculiar to his native country. He stated that Dick was a good chap, but his days of tamping holes and working in mines was now completed on this earth. He told the boys that he too had a buddy and that they had worked together on many jobs around the country. He told of his buddy who was a devil may care man when it came to tamping dynamite in the holes and that he would rather take a chance with his life than to avoid it. He hailed from Missouri and they joined up several years prior. Although the two had worked throughout the country, always making good money, they were always broke. He went on telling the boys about how they gambled with the cards and lost their money over night, sometimes their earnings from a months work. Pulling his chair closer to the men, he said, "Don't intend to give you a sermon on morality, so I will fill my pipe and tell the tale. We had a contract with a company in Boulder County to clean away several hundred feet of rock for a wagon road. The work was simply an open cut and it was all blasting. Jim was the very devil to tamp a hole good and stiff and he believed that the harder you tamped the stuff down on the powder, the more power the giant would have. I told him time and again that this was all wrong, that all one had to do was to put sufficient tamping over the powder to make the hole air tight and in that way, the giant would break as much ground as if the tamping was driven down as hard as a brick. He could never see it in that light and held on to his own theory, which in the end caused his death. The boys nicknamed him 'the tamper'. We had several men and were getting along nicely and breaking rock as only good miners can. One day we had put down a hole and the tamper shoved in a half dozen sticks of giants into it. Somewhere we had picked up an iron bar, which he started to use as a tamping stick. I told him he was crazy and to throw it away, but he only laughed and said, 'Watch the rocks fly when this hole goes off.'

I left him getting some sand, so I picked up the tools and other things and started for the cache. I had barely reached the place when I heard a loud report and looking around, I saw some object flying through the air with something sticking through it. I rushed to look for Jim, but he was not to be seen. One of the men belowed to me that he had been blown up and was flying through the air. I at once started to the place where I had seen the object hurtling through space and when I got there, the sight made me sick. There laid Jim, stone dead with the iron tamping bar sticking through his chest. The force of the explosion had carried the body 250 feet from where he had been working. He was on his knees and of course was leaning over the collar of the hole as he kept shoving and tamping; he must have given it an extra hard lick which set off the powder and drove the bar clean through him. It entered about the center of the chest and about a foot of it was

sticking out of his back. It was stuck there so hard and fast that I had to have help to pull it out. Jim never knew what hit him, and he was in kingdom come before he knew it. I have never used an iron tamping bar, nor allowed anyone on the works with me to use anything but a wooden stick."

"YOU SAVED MY WIFE AND KID"

Seated in a chair on the opposite side of the bunk house, was a big Swede who had listened to the tales with great interest. As he stood up, his powerful frame showed muscles twitching which stood out like whipcords; he was a giant, and few men ever dared to cross him. The men always said that he was too large for a man, and too small for a horse. He was known as just plain Andy to his fellow workers. When he was yet a boy in Sweden, he was hired out as a cabin boy on a freighter and he had traveled nearly all around the world. He told the men on how many occasions the ship nearly went to "Davey Jones' Locker" during severe storms. When he reached the age of 20, he shipped out on a vessel bound for Rio De Janeiro, which later took him to San Francisco. He spent two weeks in Frisco taking in the many sights; after all it was his first trip to America. He finally ended up broke, and while in a saloon, he met another fellow who hailed from his native country. They spent the evening talking about their adventures, and finally ended up talking of mining. He was persuaded to join up with his friend and take up mining. They came to Colorado and took to the mining region of Leadville. Andy liked his job in the mine very well.

One day the boss came to Andy and told him they were going to sink a shaft another 200 feet and he asked if he would consider the contract. He was told by the foreman that the company would furnish the timbers and sharpen the tools. He was told that he



could select his own partner for the contract, and he asked a Welshman who was a buddy of his if he would take the job. They had only one complaint — that was, the engine runners would hoist and lower the bucket on express time. They kicked about it, but nothing was done about it.

Andy then started to tell the following story: "We were working a vein of ore, I think they called it a fissure, and it was dipped somewhat from the vertex. The shaft was lined with 2 inch boards, 18 feet long and over a foot wide; the ladder-way was partitioned off and everything was in ship shape order.

One night after eating, my buddy, he was a Welshman, married and a good man, started to load dirt, while I picked down the loose rocks from both of the walls. When this was done, I helped my buddy and the bucket was going up and down in jig time. The dirt was nearly all hoisted, and when the bucket was coming down on about its last trip, Taffy said to me, "What is that?" I listened and heard something coming down the shaft and it was not the bucket. I yelled to him to get under the ladder-way, and in that manner if it was a rock coming down he would be protected and escape death. He had a wife and a baby, and I was just a wanderer without any load on my shoulders.

Whatever was coming down the shaft was getting louder, closer and closer to every beat of my pulse and making a terrible racket. I hugged the northeast corner of the shaft and shoved my arms over my head and stood stright as an arrow. Then something skiffed my shoulder tearing the sleeve out of my digging shirt and hit the bottom of the shaft with a thud that sent cold shivers creeping down my back and then I was covered with broken splinters from the size of a match to a foot long. I knew what had happened — one of the lining boards of the shaft had been knocked off by the bucket and had fallen 250 feet. If it had hit me, I would have been split in two, and my mining days would have been over with. Taffy came over to me, shook my hand and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. All he could say was, "You saved the wife and the kid. Let's go on top." It was a close call for us both. We went on top, and what we did to the runner was something fierce. He left the job and the camp that night."

It was late when the boys turned in for the night. The next morning they all turned out for the funeral services of their three companions, killed the day before. Andy said, "No man of the cloth was present, but a college graduate, one of the boys, recited the burial service of the Episcopal Church from memory, and four of the boys, an American, Welshman, Cornishman and a Scotchman sang Nearer My God To Thee. Dirt was thrown on the three boxes laying side by side in an open trench. They were returned to another earth. The service of the civilized was performed and the men all returned to their quarters, and then back to work, and the dead, forgotten, lie."

THE CASE OF THE PETRIFIED BODY

It was very common for a man to disappear in the treacherous hills of the vicinity, such as the corpse of the petrified man found near Ptarmigan Peaks Southwest of the city.

On July 2, 1882, two prospectors came to Leadville from the South Park region for the purpose of purchasing supplies. The two men decided to take a short cut to Leadville via Mosquito Range of mountains. They had planned to take the route over Ptarmigan Peak and come to the old Weston Pass road in Union Gulch. They found the passage over the peaks was rough and difficult, but the men did not mind this if it meant making the trip in record time. The rugged cones and desolate head of Ptarmigan Peak rise to 13,296 feet above sea level. It was so named after the abundance of Ptarmigan birds that built their nests there in the proper season.

The Mosquito Range is composed mostly of delomitic limestone which is found in caves and mineral springs. As a matter of fact, few caves are found in a country with no limestone formation. The following was written by a Chronicle reporter concerning the petrified body.

"While picking their way laboriously among the immense masses of rock, they came to a spot where a stream of water trickled out of a shelf like a recess on the mountain side and falling into a tiny cascade some 5 or 6 feet high, ran down among a confused chaos of boulders to a small depression where it formed into a pond, or rather morass, some 12 or 15 feet in diameter in one direction, and only 10 feet in the other. At the edge of this pond being partly embedded in a soft slimy ooze, and the remainder covered by the water, they saw lying what they instinctively knew to be the corpse of a human being. It was difficult to approach, but they succeeded after an infinite amount of slipping and sliding among the sharp rocks in reaching it, and here comes the strangest part of the story. All indications pointed to the fact that a corpse must have lain there a long time. The clothing, shoes and other covering had mostly rotted away and portions of the limbs and body had also disappeared, but when they took hold of the remains, for the purpose of pulling it out of its bed of slime and water, they found to their astonishment and horror, that what was left of what had once been the abode of an immortal soul, he had completely petrified and turned into stone. The remains of the body were perfectly rigid and hard, very much discolored and the features perfectly undistinguishable. They said after arriving in Leadville, that it would have been very easy with a hammer to have broken the corpse into pieces as it was so much like stone."

The two men felt it only proper to give the body a decent burial but neither had a pick nor a shovel. They spent considerable time trying to find some sort of a suitable grave, but the area consisted of nothing but rocks. They did find a little stream that was leading from the pond where they had found the body. They fol-

lowed this stream which led them a short distance below where they found an irregular funnel fissure in the ground where the water fell and disappeared at the bottom. After examining the aperture it seemed to penetrate the earth to an unknown depth. Looking around, they found several more in the vicinity. They found one about five feet in depth. They determined this by holding a long pole down the fissure. They selected this as the grave of the unknown corpse.

With infinite labor, they succeeded in performing the horrid task, which caused them to have their hair stand on their heads and sent cold shivers down their spines. When they had dropped the body of the petrified man in the fissure, they covered the opening with huge rocks.

That evening, when they arrived in Leadville, they recounted their strange tale to friends, who in turn notified a Chronicle reporter. When the men left the next day, they told friends that they made their last trip by way of Ptarmigan Peaks, and would return by another route if it meant going 20 miles further . . .



Girl's Styles — 1800



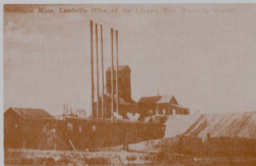
Colorado Midland Rotary Plow. Oscar Reed seated on rotary blade



The early day YAK Mine.

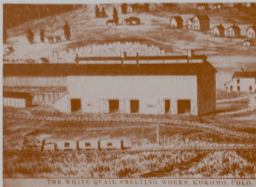


Tabor Grand Hotel, constructed in 1885 by a company headed by W. A. H. Tabor. The hotel was started in 1884, but the company found themselves with insufficient funds and then sought the help of Mr. Tabor. (Now the Vendome Hotel.)



Climax Mine, Leadville (One of the Largest Zinc Mines in World)

It was at this mine that a huge underground banquet was held after the turn of the century. It is being said, that due to poor ventilation, many had to leave before the dinner was over.



THE WHITE QUAIL MELTING WORKS, KOKOMO, COLO.



Scene at Climax Molybdenum Company before any houses were constructed. This same scene will be duplicated in 1963 due to the houses being moved to Leadville.

Acknowledgment

"The Early Years of Colorado" is composed of a number of short stories which bears the title of "Tales of Early Leadville". The stories are in a condensed form when possible. Many are taken from the research in the early day publications of the Daily Chronicle and the Herald Democrat.

We are sincerely grateful to the Herald Democrat, for without their co-operation, these stories could not have been written. In what is known in a newspaper office as the "Morgue", where files are kept of daily publications, there are thousands upon thousands of articles similar to the ones that appear in this booklet.

The first Leadville newspaper of significance was the Daily Chronicle which first appeared in the homes and on the streets on January 29, 1879. In 1880, it was the largest newspaper west of Chicago extending to the Pacific Coast.

While most of the stories are true happenings, there are some that were entirely the imagination of early day reporters. Such a reporter was Orth Stein who wrote of his fabulous discovery of an underground cavern that sparkled with rich minerals worth millions of dollars. He also wrote of the huge ship found embedded in huge rocks near Red Cliff. These two stories however, do not appear in this booklet. Stein's stories were reprinted in magazines and newspapers throughout the world.

The Daily Chronicle purchased the Democrat in 1882 and the Herald in 1885. The Daily Chronicle then became the Carbonate Chronicle, while the other two papers were combined into one — The Herald Democrat.

From 1880 and for many years, there were three editions of the Daily Chronicle with a circulation of nearly 30,000 daily. For some years there was a morning newspaper and an afternoon paper . . .